



# February Newsletter



Speaker George Smith



George with a Peregrine

## In this issue...

### Club Information

Things you need (or might like) to know about North Northumberland Bird Club page 2

### Noticeboard

Lots of news and other stuff that might be of interest to you page 3

### Speaker's Presentation

The Peregrine Project with **George Smith** See **Alan Yeoman's** report page 5

### Field Trip Report

Branton & Hedgeley, led by **Chris Cobb & Alan Goodall** reported by **John McCutcheon** page 8

### Bird Sighting Records

Sightings made by club members last month, compiled by our Recorder **Paul Armstrong** page 11

### What's Up on WhatsApp

A quick look at some recent posts on the clubs WhatsApp Group page 13

### Members' Contribution

Photos from **Steve Newman** and **Colin Bradshaw** page 14

### Ringer's Roundup

**Phil Hanmer's** roundup of recent ringing outings, with information on what was found page 17

### Epilogue

..and finally page 20



# Club Information

## Chair

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## Vice Chair

John Lumby



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## Committee

### Member

Liz Harrison



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## Committee

### Member

Alan Goodall



## Honorary President

Graham Bell



## Committee

### Member

Kevin Lever



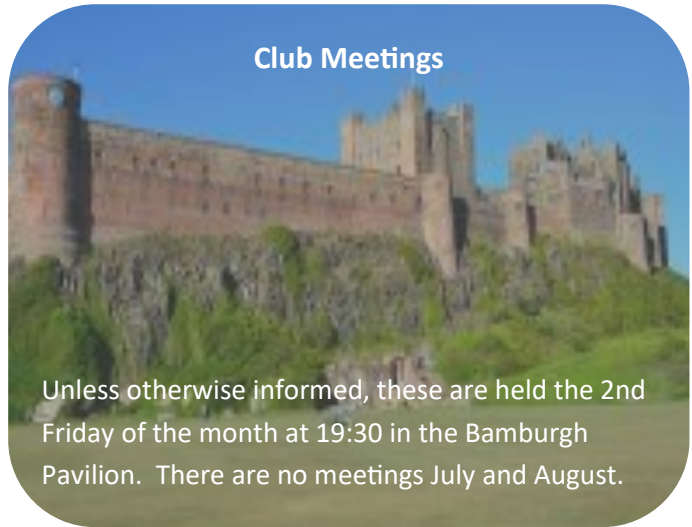
## Committee

### Member

Chris Cobb



## Club Meetings



Unless otherwise informed, these are held the 2nd Friday of the month at 19:30 in the Bamburgh Pavilion. There are no meetings July and August.



## Bird Recorder

Paul Armstrong

[nbcrecords@yahoo.com](mailto:nbcrecords@yahoo.com)



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On our web site at:

[northnorthumberlandbirdclub.co.uk](http://northnorthumberlandbirdclub.co.uk)



On our Facebook page at:

[www.facebook.com/NorthNorthumberlandBirdClub](https://www.facebook.com/NorthNorthumberlandBirdClub)



Email us at:

[ringouzel@northnorthumberlandbirdclub.co.uk](mailto:ringouzel@northnorthumberlandbirdclub.co.uk)



Members WhatsApp Group Chat

NNBC Chat (Join by requesting a [link](#))



# Noticeboard

Dear all,

Once again, we will soon be in need of a few new committee members. Sarah has recently stood down, and very soon Fiona and Liz will be stepping down, following admirably long stints.

We have received one likely candidate, but with a male majority we would like to try and redress the balance by attracting a few more women, although males are welcome to put their names forward too.

We are a friendly and inclusive club, with the role of the committee being very straightforward. We meet once a month to discuss any issues prior to our Bamburgh indoor evening; with perhaps small advance roles being issued for the pavilion. Our ideal would be to retain a full committee quota of 10, thereby easing the quest for our continued success.

Please feel free to contact myself, or any member of the committee at any time.

Neil Hinchliff

Friday will be your last chance.....otherwise your committee will be an all male cast!! Job description...an occasional, yet essential doddle, accompanied by coffee and cakes Come on girls.....

## Upcoming Field Trips

**Thursday 24th April 2025 at 10:00**

Harthope Valley - Details next page

**Sunday 11th May 2025 at 05:15**

Dawn Chorus, Ford & Etal - Details next page

**Also on horizon...**

Saturday May 24th - St Abbs

Monday June 9th—Upper Teesdale

To look forward to...

We are also considering putting together more trips during this coming year...these may include longer day trips to the likes of Fairburn Ings and Tophill Low (Yorkshire); Blacktoft Sands (Lincolnshire); and perhaps multi-day trips to say Dumfries next wintertime.

For all Field Trips please read the Risk Assessment on our Web site beforehand. For dates and times and last minute changes / cancellations check our Facebook Page, NNBC Chat, or directly with Leaders for the event. Give your emergency contact phone number to leader at start of trip. Please car share if you can. Thank You.



**Prize Raffle at  
this Friday's  
meeting**

## Upcoming Meetings

**Friday 11th April 2025 at 19:30**

To Antarctica & Back with Arctic Terns with **Chris Redfern**

**Friday 9th May at 19:30**

South East Australia & The Outback with **John Lumby**

**Friday 13th June at 19:30**

Balkan Birding with **Dr Colin Bradshaw**

See web site for details of other Meetings



## Field Trip - Thursday 24th April 2025 Harthope Valley

Meet Hawsen Burn Car Park at 10am  
Grid Ref:-NT958225  
W3W: Recipient. Holidays. Nylon

Leaders Neil and Liz

If it is a large group we will probably split up, allowing each group the chance to look for returning Ring Ouzels up the Hawsen Burn, as well as a walk up the Harthope Burn towards Langleeford Hope. Possible sightings Redpoll, Common Sandpiper, Tree Pipit, Cuckoo, Whinchat etc.

The Harthope valley is well known for adders and members should be also aware of the possibility of ticks and take necessary precautions.

Bring lunch and drinks; boots or strong shoes recommended. Nearest cafes and toilets are in Wooler.

Please note the road from Earle to Langleeford is badly degraded with some deep potholes.

Ample parking at the Hawsen Burn, but please share transport if possible.

## Field Trip - Sunday 11th May Annual Dawn Chorus visit to Ford & Etal

Once again, James and Harriet Joicey have offered to hold another Dawn Chorus outing. I'm sure regular club attendees will be looking forward to this event, but for those of you who have yet to experience the dawn chorus, I can promise you something very special that will remain with you forever.

The plan this year is for all to meet at Tindal House Farm (NT 923 412 & W3W windmills.school.motivate) at 05:15.

This is a section of the Ford & Etal Estate that hasn't been visited by the club for a few years, yet will perfectly express our morning of birdsong.

Strong footwear is recommended, plus there may be one or two undulations -suggesting perhaps walking poles for those who normally use them. Breakfast will be served afterwards at Etal Manor, where Harriet will be encouraging a donation towards her current local charity.

Following 2024's bumper turn-out, James and Harriet would like the club to restrict attendees to 20, so those wishing to attend will be able to add their names to a list which will be alongside Fiona's membership desk this coming Friday at our monthly indoor meeting. Any slots remaining after Friday evening may then be claimed from Saturday onwards by emailing Fiona at her email address above. Please note that only those names on the list may attend.

I will be announcing all this again on Friday evening, and I will be on hand to answer any questions.

Neil Hinchliff



# Speaker's Presentation

## George Smith - The Peregrine Project

At his very first RSG (Lothian & Borders Raptor Study Group) meeting, George was appointed as the Buzzard records coordinator. Shortly afterwards he was also working with the late George Carse on Peregrines as they were also making a comeback in the region. Over the next few years George became one of the most productive members of the group and is presently species coordinator for three key species: Peregrine, Buzzard and Raven.

He is best known for his work with Peregrines, monitoring an extraordinary number of nest sites every year, ringing chicks and trapping adults, every year - even during the 'off season' - George is working on Peregrines, looking for sites he might have missed and modifying known sites to make them more secure from the elements or from persecution.

He has published several papers and articles about his work and is contributing to a much better understanding of Peregrine demography in the region, and especially the effect that persecution is having on this species.



George frees a peregrine he has trapped on its nest, while ecologist Rebecca Dickson records its data.

The peregrine is a species that has had mixed fortunes, at times benefiting and at times suffering from the hand of man. With the removal of most of Scotland's original native forest cover (and consequent increase of open country prey species) there was probably great scope for population expansion of peregrines. The bird was highly prized for falconry purposes and its nest sites (or at least some of them) seemingly carefully protected for this purpose.

Then with game management came sustained persecution of the peregrine, especially at its breeding sites.

Protective legislation ensued, there was some population recovery, but this was followed by the era of organochlorine pesticide contamination which led to a sudden and unprecedented peregrine decline in most parts of Scotland. With the gradual phasing out of the more damaging chemicals there came a welcome recovery in the peregrine population coupled with range extension. There are however continuing problems.





# Speaker's Presentation



The criminal persecution of peregrines persists on some grouse moor estates and there is much criticism from pigeon fancying interests. These days there are also issues with wind farms resulting in peregrine casualties.

The peregrine's breeding habitat has been seen traditionally as craggy hill country and sea cliffs but there is a trend towards more breeding in lowland areas (especially in quarry sites) which to some extent at least has matched the possibly prey-related decline in the more remote uplands. Peregrine eggs are laid mainly in early to middle April and usually on a cliff ledge, an incubation period of some thirty days ensues and the young

leave the eyrie at about six weeks of age, generally in the second half of June. They remain dependent on their parents for food for some two months but disperse thereafter.

## Peregrines and PIT tags

In 2004 the use of PIT (passive integrated transponders) tags that allow the recapture of individuals electronically began to be used. These transponders are also known as microchips and are often used to identify pets and livestock. These tags in blank rings are placed on the leg opposite to the one on which the BTO ring is fitted. Each tag has a unique alphanumeric code. These tags can then be "read" automatically by a battery-powered reader placed in the nest.

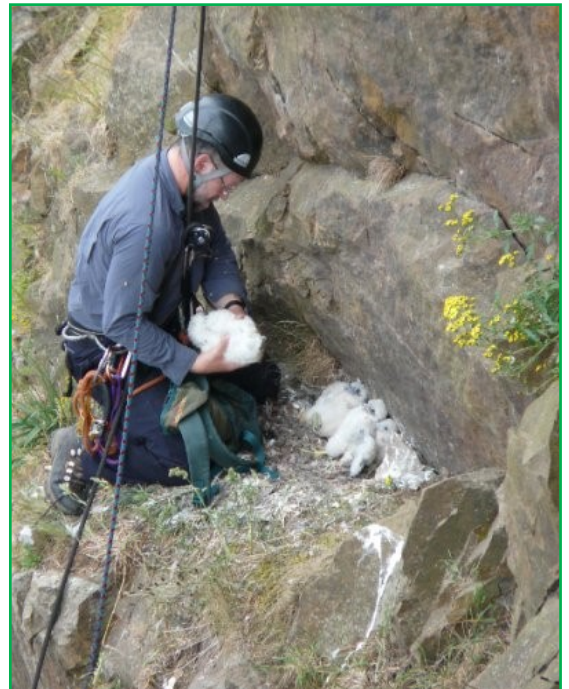
The way this works is that the reader excites the pit tag when it passes within the electromagnetic field surrounding the reader's antenna. The pit tag then transmits a unique code which is logged by the reader. When retrieved, the reader records the tag number and identifies the bird. With this bit of technology, breeding individuals when they visit the nest to incubate, brood or feed chicks. The tag has no moving parts and requires no battery, so should last forever.

The benefits of this system are that birds do not have to be physically recaptured. George begins each season by checking which falcons have returned and to which sites. Once they settled in and produced eggs, he abseils down to the nest to trap the adult bird.

Once a peregrine is chipped, a microchip reader in the nest will provide information about the bird's movements: for example the frequency and ratio of visits by the male and female parents.

## Wildlife Crime

From about 2016 something odd started cropping up in George's records. Ten nests were inexplicably failing, healthy birds would make a nest and then the eggs or chicks would disappear. Over the years George has come to know the birds individually, their traits and unusual colourings, and whose chicks are whose. He knows what each





# Speaker's Presentation



one looks like and how it behaves. It's soul destroying to go out and find the nests have failed. In early 2021 Police Scotland had begun an investigation of its own.

In April 2021, the police approached George, asking if his records suggested any possible theft of chicks. Had he noticed anything odd? Over the next two years, his data would form part of the bedrock for a huge wildlife investigation: Operation Tantallon, which has gone on to uncover organised crime throughout the country. The first case has now been concluded in court, and police say there are more in the pipeline. House raids, seizure of live chicks and extensive forensic testing are helping police uncover a

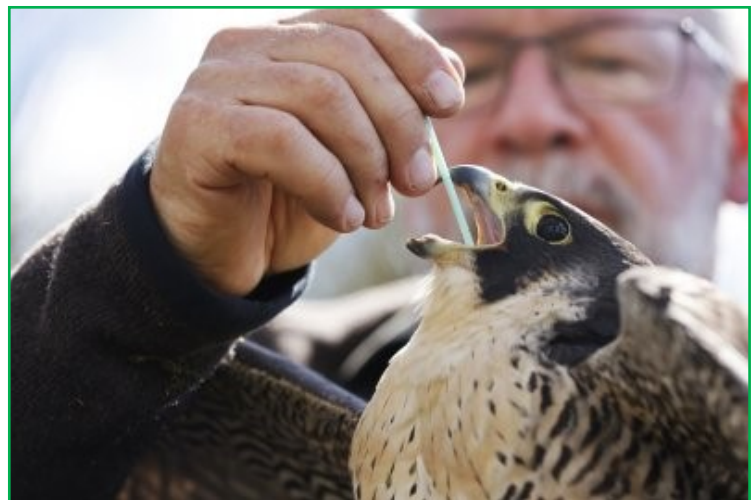
multimillion-pound international trade plagued by illegality. DNA techniques have helped to prove that many of these historical birds were also wild caught. At least 22 peregrine falcons were taken from Scottish cliffs, and seven or eight are now being raced in Dubai.

The United Arab Emirates is the largest importer of live raptors. Captive-bred peregrine falcons can be legally sold, but wild birds are protected: to take eggs or chicks, sell the birds or keep them in captivity is a serious crime. According to the National Wildlife Crime Unit (NWCU) high status racing falcons can sell for up to £250,000 in the Middle East. Legally, captive-bred peregrine falcons can be traded, but the birds cannot be taken from the wild.

In recent years Operation Tantallon, the UK's biggest wildlife crime police investigation, has led to prosecutions and convictions for the alleged theft and smuggling of wild peregrines in Scotland and northern England. The data gathered by Smith and his colleagues forms the forensic bedrock, leading to more than 3,000 active inquiries.

## Creating a DNA database

Dr Lucy Webster has been drawing up a map of the UK, showing sites from which falcon DNA has been gathered. Lucy, a senior wildlife forensic scientist at Science and Advice for Scottish



Agriculture, part of the Scottish government, has been co-ordinating DNA testing on the birds. By studying similarities between different samples, the lab is building up a map of wild family relationships. Creating this database will make it even harder to get away with laundering wild birds, because the team can pinpoint the chick's parents in the wild, proving it was stolen. No other country is known to have such a comprehensive wild bird DNA database, and it is continuing to grow.



# Field Trip Report

## Hedgeley and Branton Ponds –21 March 2025 - Led by Chris Cobb and Alan Goodall

Twenty-one intrepid explorers (aka NNBC members) met at the small car park at Hedgeley Nature Reserve for the start of a day's birding. With some orderly (if not chaotic) parking, everyone managed to leave their cars without mishap. There was of course no chance that anyone else could get parked anywhere nearby. Quite a bit of spotting went on before the 'official' start time of 10:00, with three lists already highlighting quite a few species. It's always best to have a volunteer, but when no one did so, Maureen was elected to be the official recorder for the trip. There was a suggestion that she be the official recorder for all trips, but (unfortunately) I don't think she agreed.



A bevy of Mute Swans entertained the group as we looked over the nearest pond. There was lots of to-ing and fro-ing as they tried to establish whose lake this was. Smiles all round: the leaders were Alan and Chris and after emergency contacts were recorded the group set off over the field, through the gate and on the track down to the river.

In a small space of time and distance we had listed Mutes, Mallard, Coot, Oyster Catchers, Tufted Duck, Gadwall, Little Grebe and both Canada and Greylag Geese. A little way along the track, the oversight of a welcome and introductions was carried out. The group reached the river,

took a quick look and in the absence of any birds, went through the gate to walk along to the various lakes. From a distance the lakes looked quite well populated with wildfowl. A few Woodpeckers, Pheasant, Jackdaw, Pied Wagtail, Yellowhammer and the now omnipresent Chiffchaff were spotted enroute.

The lakes did indeed present quite a few species including Teal, Mallard, Gadwall, Mutes, Moorhen, Shelduck, Redshank and three Common Ringed Plover. The gull family were well represented with Greater and Lesser Black Backed, Herring, Black-headed and Common variants observed. Highlights were perhaps the Little Egret, Snipe (doing a fly past), Great Crested Grebe and Goosander. As well as a couple of Curlew there were quite a lot of Wigeon.

Quite a while was spent surveying the lakes and surrounding areas before the group turned down towards the river and headed back







# Field Trip Report



to the car park. The weather had been reasonably kind - it stayed dry and when the sun did poke through it was quite warm; when it stayed hidden some were pleased that they had dressed with warmish coats. At this point a few members had to leave early so did not join the group for part two of the trip. Lunch was planned for back at the car park; however, the next destination also has a small carpark so off we popped to get a space, have lunch and an early peek at the ponds.

I visit Branton Ponds quite a lot and usually circumnavigate anti-clockwise from the car park on the basis that the tracks at that end tend to be muddy, so when passing through the gates to the second pond, the drier track and grass lets you get rid of the mud from your boots – I know it sounds strange! The group decided to go clockwise and some banter followed that I would have a whole new experience....

The usual Robin, Wren and Blue Tit started our list from the car park, as well as a single Cormorant resting on the island. As in the Hedgeley ponds, there were quite a few Goldeneye around and again Goosander and Great Crested Grebe. As we got to the west end of the ponds a flock of Golden Plover flew overhead, while a Grey Plover and some Reed Bunting were seen lakeside. One member who popped to the bridge (over to Ingram Valley) reported a Dipper on the River. Coal, Great and Long Tailed Tits added to our tally.

At the top of the track between lakes we stopped at the point where Adders are regularly reported and were not disappointed, as a single snake was seen coiled up taking a little of the rather weak sunshine. It obviously didn't appreciate its audience and quickly slithered off into the undergrowth. A Song Thrush sang as the snake disappeared.

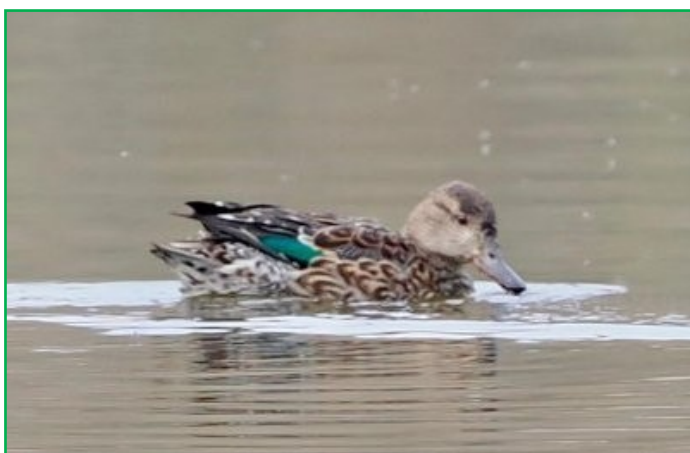


After spotting some really bright Linnet and a couple of Grey Wagtail we approached the eastern end of the ponds, and after some searching a Treecreeper popped into view. A Greenfinch was perhaps the last contribution to our list of 60 species for the day.

Arriving back at the car park, everyone seemed to have had a great time and enjoyed the experience. The three species lists were consolidated and Maureen (the official recorder for the day) was thanked for her valuable contribution. Thanks go to Chris and Alan for managing the gang and to the members for contributing to a grand field trip.



# Field Trip Report



Photos courtesy of Neil Hinchliff and John McCutcheon

## Species List (60)

Black-headed Gull	Duncock	Great Cormorant
Canada Goose	Blackbird	Great Crested Grebe
Carrion Crow	Blue Tit	Great Tit
Coal Tit	Bullfinch	Grey Heron
Buzzard	Coot	Grey Plover
Chaffinch	Curlew	Grey Wagtail
Chiffchaff	Jackdaw	Greylag Goose
Goldeneye	Oystercatcher	Lesser Black-backed Gull
Gull	Treecreeper	Little Egret
Kestrel	Wigeon	Little Grebe
Linnet	Wren	Long-tailed Tit
Magpie	Green-winged Teal	Mallard
Moorhen	Golden Plover	Mute Swan
Pheasant	Greenfinch	Northern Lapwing
Redshank	Herring Gull	Pied Wagtail/White Wagtail
Reed Bunting	Robin	Rook
Ringed Plover	Gadwall	Song Thrush
Shelduck	Goldcrest	Tufted Duck
Snipe	Goosander	White-throated Dipper
Woodpigeon	Great Black-backed Gull	Yellowhammer



# Bird Sighting Records

Below are the highlights for March 2025...

<b>Brent Goose</b>	50 at Fenham-le-Moor on 7th	JPL
<b>White-fronted Goose</b>	2 at Newton Hall on 21st (European)	JPL
	39 at Monk's House Pool on 1st (European)	PCA
<b>Pintail</b>	10 at Fenham-le-Moor on 7th	JPL
<b>Ring-necked Duck</b>	1 at Powburn on 28th	PCA
<b>Scaup</b>	1 at Branton on 3rd	JMcC
	1 at Branton on 29th	P&AH
	1 at Branton Ponds on 3rd and 15th	PCA
<b>Goosander</b>	2 at Branton/Hedgeley on 3rd	JMcC
	1 at Branton/Hedgeley on 21st	NNBC
<b>Red-breasted Merganser</b>	1 at Warkworth on 15th	JHB
<b>Grey Partridge</b>	2 at Football hole on 29th	PCA
<b>Avocet</b>	4 at Newton Scrape on 10th and 2 on 21st	JPL
	1 at River Coquet on 30th	JHB
	9 at Newton Scrape on 27th	PCA
<b>Grey Plover</b>	1 at Alnmouth on 6th	JHB
	1 at Branton/Hedgeley on 21st	NNBC
<b>Snipe</b>	1 at Warkworth on 6th	JHB
	1 at Branton/Hedgeley on 21st	NNBC
<b>Green Sandpiper</b>	1 at Bamburgh on 22nd	PCA
<b>Sparrowhawk</b>	1 at Powburn on 25th	PCA
<b>Barn Owl</b>	1 at Boulmer on 26th	P&AH
	1 at Hunting Hall on 24th	P&AH
	1 near Wooler regularly through month	SV&AJM
<b>Kingfisher</b>	1 at River Coquet on 2nd	JHB
<b>Jay</b>	1 at South Charlton on 28th	PCA
<b>Raven</b>	1 at Warkworth on 14th	JHB
	1 at Ford Moss on 8th	PCA
<b>Nuthatch</b>	4 at Howick on 25th	P&AH
	1 at Doxford on 1st	PCA
<b>Treecreeper</b>	1 at Harwood Forest on 28th	JMcC
	1 at Branton/Hedgeley on 21st	NNBC
<b>Black Redstart</b>	1 at Boulmer on 26th	JHB
<b>Dipper</b>	1 at Rothbury on 24th	JMcC
	1 at Branton/Hedgeley on 21st	NNBC
	1 at Ingram on 25th	PCA
	2 at Harthope Valley on 23rd	SV&AJM
<b>White Wagtail</b>	1 at River Coquet on 26th	JHB
<b>Bullfinch</b>	1 at Warkworth on 6th	JHB
	1 at Branton/Hedgeley on 21st	NNBC
<b>Greenfinch</b>	1 at Branton/Hedgeley on 21st	NNBC
<b>Siskin</b>	4 at Harwood Forest on 28th	JMcC



# Bird Sighting Records

## Contributors

Paul Armstrong (PCA)  
Jon Bowen (JHB)  
Phil & Alison Hanmer (P&AH)  
John Lumby (JPL)  
Stewart & Alison McCormick (SV&AJM)  
John McCutcheon (JMCC)  
NNBC Field Trip (NNBC)



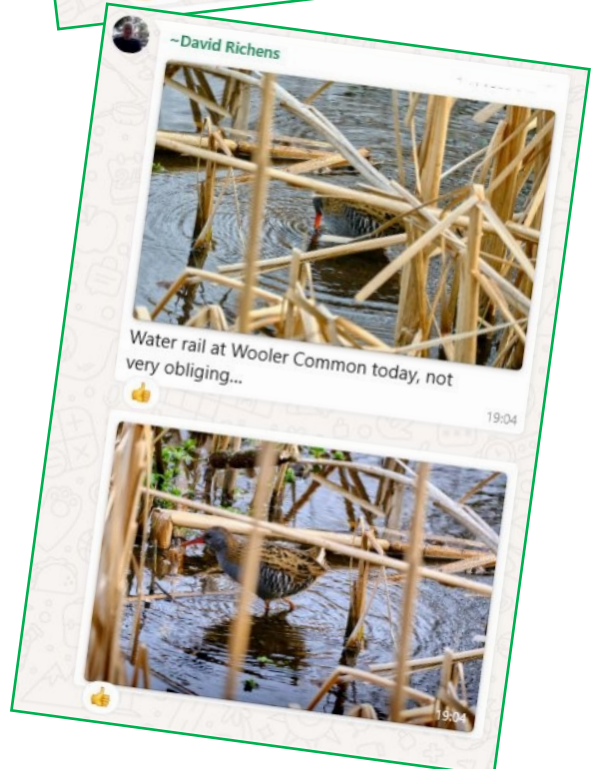
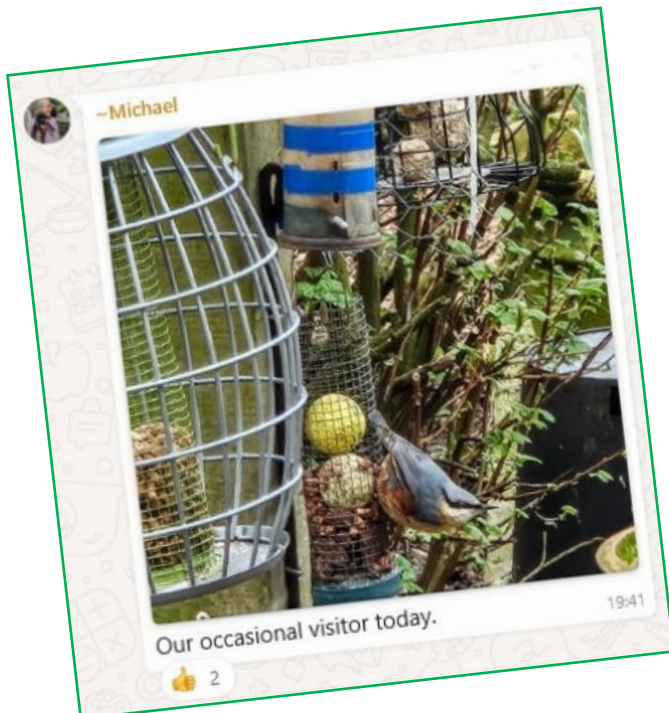
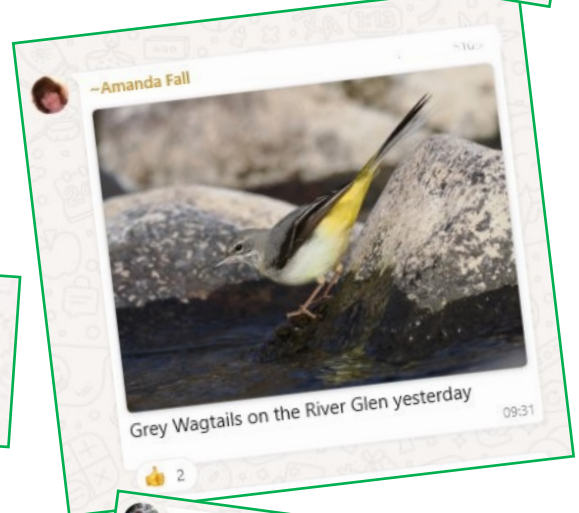
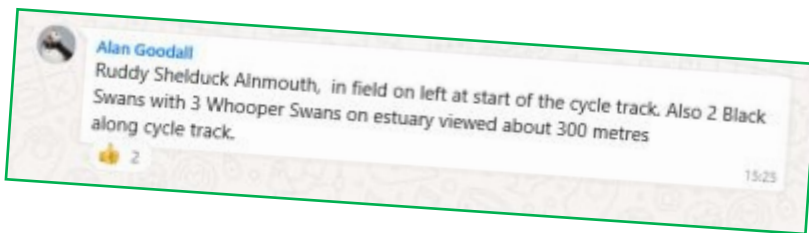
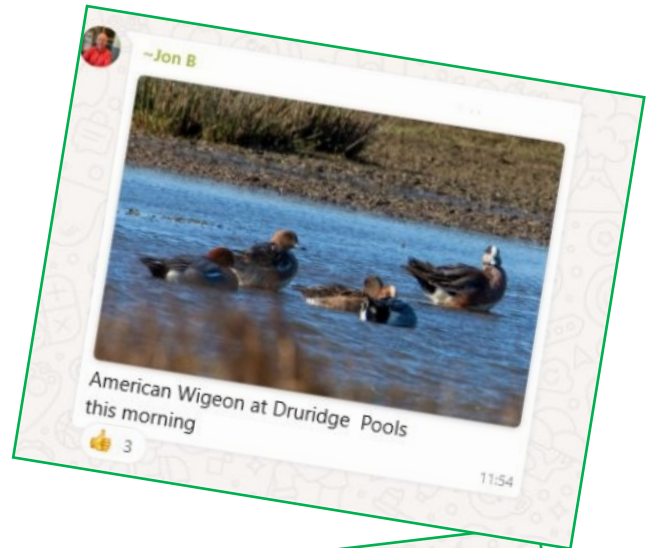
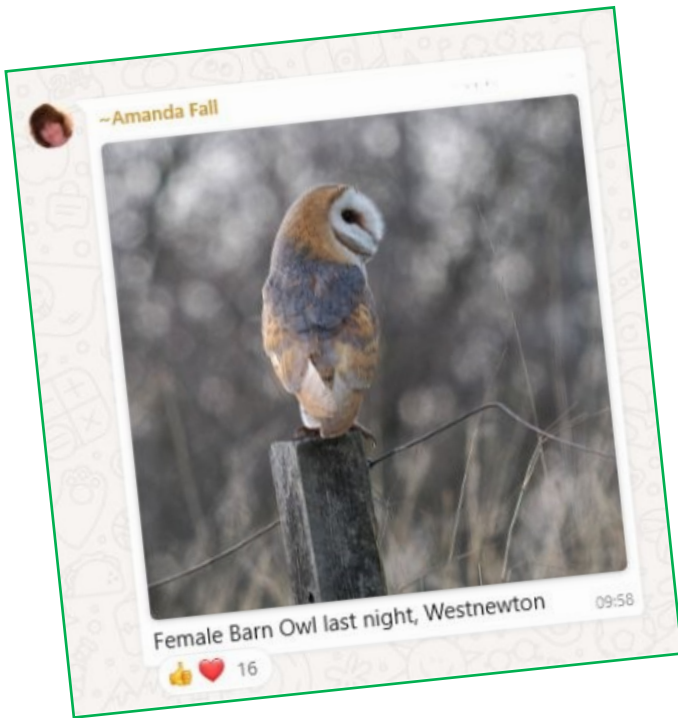
Greater Scaup at Branton with comparison Tufted ducks  
Phil Hamner

*"I'm very happy being me, although sometimes  
I'd love to be a bird so that I could fly"*  
Joy Fielding



# What's Up on WhatsApp

NNBC Chat—A quick look at some of the posts on the club's WhatsApp Group page





# Members' Contributions

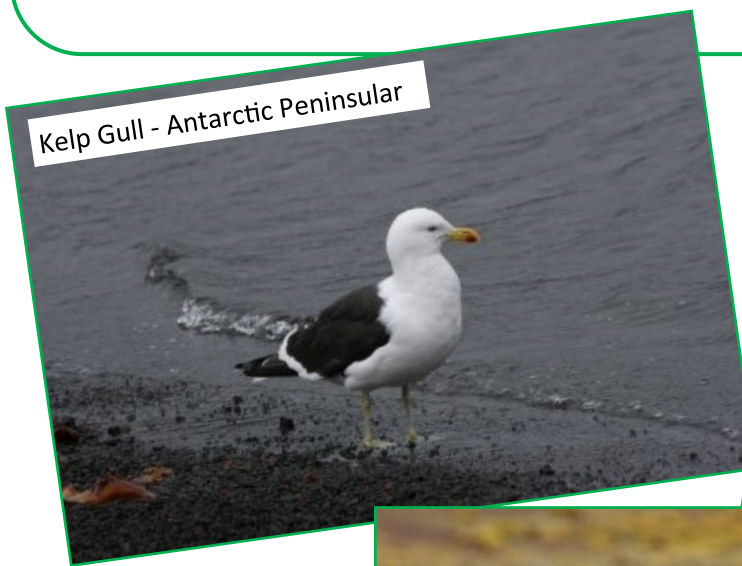
## Gulls by Steve Newman

As a travel writer I get sent all over the globe and although this means I see some wonderful places it also allows me to indulge in my hobby of birding.

I'm also fascinated by the families of birds and how they differ across the world be they Doves, Owls or Gulls. I have become fascinated by the latter in the past few years.

The Kelp Gull is the most southerly recorded gull as one was seen flying over the South Pole a few years ago!

According to the World Bird List, seagulls have 53 species segmented into ten genera so here is short selection of photos I have taken over the years.





# Members' Contributions

## Jan & Feb by Colin Bradshaw

A selection of photos taken by Colin with his Sony A1 camera fitted with either a 600mm f4 lens with a 1.4x converter or (for the Buff Bellied Pipit) a Sigma 500mm f5.6 lens

Rock Pipit - Low Newton



Song Thrush - Low Newton



Greater Scaup - Fenham-Le-Moor



Raven - Bamburgh



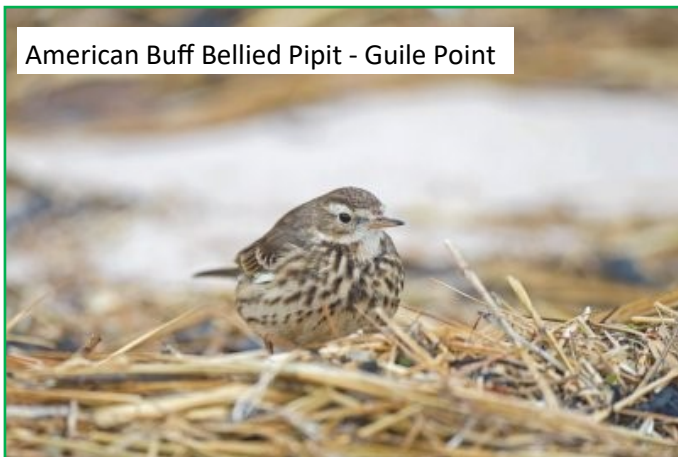
Pintail - Fenham-Le-Moor





# Members' Contributions

Jan & Feb by Colin Bradshaw... cont







# Ringer's Roundup

## A Ringer's Year - March 2025

Having missed the first two weeks of March by travelling to see some of the Natural History of Costa Rica I was worried I would not have enough to write about, but my C Ringers and Trainees have continued to undertake the March check of Barn Owl boxes and done an excellent job of it. Most Barn Owls are not actually nesting yet but in doing emergency repairs (*replacing whole boxes in a couple of locations*) and cleaning-out boxes (*usually from the trouble caused by jackdaws*) we locate a number of roosting owls and sometimes pairs. This tells us which boxes are likely to be used for nesting and whether its going to be an 'early' or 'late' season for owls in North Northumberland.



In one box near Longhorsley we found a female Tawny Owl which I ringed back in 2010 and I know she has nested most years since then (see photo). However in 2024 she laid eggs and tried to incubate them for nearly two months (they should hatch after one month) but they did not hatch and we suspect at 16 years old she might have laid infertile eggs. It remains to be seen what happens this year.

Another Tawny was seen (and left undisturbed) in a box near Mindrum. Six pairs of owls were found in boxes in the far north of the county, including a very interesting pair which was found in one of the new Owl Sheds built by Coast Care volunteers. The female of this pair was owl [GY55803] which was ringed in her nest as a chick in 2017 much further south near Bilton. So, at 8 years old and having moved north it will be interesting to see if she nests successfully. Another owl was seen to emerge from a hole in a tree very close to an empty box. The scrutiny of the cavity revealed 3 early eggs!

Another Owl Shed much further south, on the coast, has an owl in residence along with a Stable that's been given over to owls. The pair that nested at Howick last year is back again (*with their very own excellent view of the Hall*) and a new female has actually laid four eggs in a traditional site new Boulmer.





## Ringer's Roundup

Two boxes near the coast held Stock Doves (*a high-class pigeon; some would say*). Half a dozen boxes were occupied inland south of Rothbury but in general it does not look like it will be an early Barn Owl year. The above photos show a female (spotty) Barn Owl and a male (with no spots).

The very first day that I was back from travelling, found my colleague Hilary and I down to meet a medium sized Van from 'Green Future Buildings' by a farm lake near Longhorsley. This was to help put up an artificial Sand Martin Bank (see photos).



Hilary had proposed we seek funding for this through the Coquetdale Wildlife Group by making an application to the Wingates Wind Farm Community Fund. This had been successful and we have now filled all the nesting tubes with sand to encourage the Sand Martins to nest.

Finally at a site near East Linden we had a morning ringing session on the 24<sup>th</sup>. This proved successful in catching 4 newly arrived (probably returned from Africa) Chiffchaffs (see photo.). There was also an adult Marsh Tit [BAB4432] (see photo.) that we had originally ringed (at one year old) on the 26/4/24 at the same location and a surprise Tree Sparrow.

The Tree Sparrow was carrying a numbered coloured ring and we quickly discovered it had come from a breeding site to the east of Morpeth and had been ringed in April 2024 (see photo).



## *Ringer's Roundup*

There were also other birds including a nice Nuthatch, a male Siskin, a pair of Long Tailed Tits and several Goldfinches.



Next month Tawny Owls and Goldeneye ducks get down to nesting.

**Phil Hanmer**

S Ringer/Trainer, Natural History Society of Northumbria Ringing Group (Hancock Museum)

Email: [tytoalbas@btinternet.com](mailto:tytoalbas@btinternet.com)



## Membership Fees

After more than 10 years of no increases in the annual membership fees for the Club, the Committee feel we have to respond to significant increases in costs ranging from hire charges for The Pavilion, to speaker expenses and costs like insurance and printing. We have begun to draw on Club reserves to support running costs, and although these remain healthy, this is not a sustainable or sensible approach.

We hope that by acting now we can protect the future of the Club and prevent more difficult changes later. After careful consideration, we have decided to raise annual membership fees to £15 for individuals, and to £25 for couples and families in one household. Student membership remains free. These changes will apply from September 2025.

We hope that you agree Club membership remains good value - and feel confident that the change will help the Club move confidently into the future.

## Suggested Trips for 2026

For May 2026, the club is proposing a long weekend venture to the hot birding spots in (and perhaps beyond) Yorkshire. Chris Cobb will shortly be putting together a suggested plan; including accommodation, and with the likely birding venues we will be visiting.

For September 2026, Fiona Southern will also be putting together a 6+ day plan to visit Southern Spain, enabling us to witness the marvellous raptor migration into Africa.

At this stage, we are simply wishing club members to express their wishes to attend either of these, the information then being the base as to how we should build and offer the final trip.

May I therefore suggest that if you are interested in either, or both, that you contact either Chris or Fiona, either in person at Bamburgh meetings, or via their emails. All committee members will always be approachable too.

## A Blast from the Past - this month's hint

Swallows return this month to breed. If you have property (barn, garage, outhouse, shed, porch etc) where they might nest, please check that they access to a nest site (eg a narrow ledge or beam) through an open door, window, old broken pane or other suitable gap.

*Hints are from Graham Bell's early newsletters*

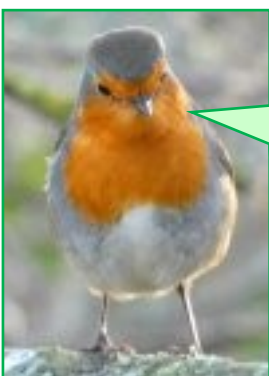


## Members' Contributions to the Newsletter

Several members have submitted articles for publishing in the Newsletter, offered on their own volition to add interest, inform and entertain the other members.. so far all have been very interesting and much appreciated. BUT we need more, so please consider an offering you think will interest, enlighten or simply amuse your fellow members.

In 99.9% of cases, they should of course relate to birding!

Look forward to receiving your offerings!



*Got something  
you'd like to add?  
Please let us know.*

## Content for the Newsletter

Submissions for inclusion in the form of notes, articles, photographs etc are welcomed. These should be Emailed to the Newsletter Editor. Deadline for copy is the first Friday of the month, but earlier is preferred. The target date for distribution is the weekend before the club's meeting, usually on the Sunday.