NORTH NORTHUMBERLAND BIRD CLUB

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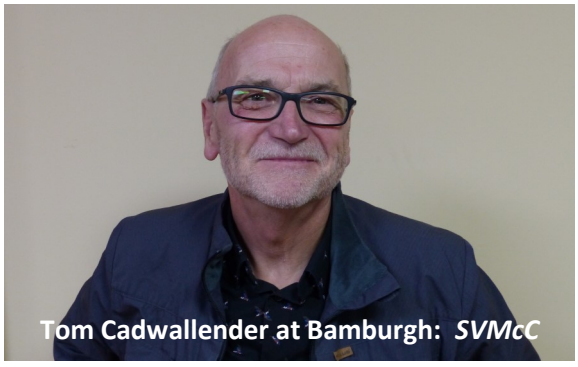

Tom Cadwallender at Bamburgh: *SVMcC*

"JUST MY CUP OF TEA" TOM CADWALLENDER

A good number of people turned out to hear this popular local speaker, who entertained the audience with his excellent photos and amusing anecdotes from his trip to Sri Lanka in search of the island's colourful birdlife, (with a particular focus on its numerous endemic species.) Fiona Southern captures the enjoyment of the evening in her report on page 3.

'Dull-blue Flycatcher at Little World's End…'

WHAT'S IN A NAME?: There's a certain magic to hearing such splendid bird names as 'Crimson-backed Flameback' rather than, say, a prosaic 'Red Woodpecker', and Sri Lanka has many wonderful bird names to savour eg 'Blue-faced Malkoha' or 'Malabar Pied Hornbill'. As Editor, I must say I felt sorry for this pretty little endemic to be saddled with the epithet **DULL** in its name, especially one relegated to 'World's End' as its home address! Surely it's time for the Dull-blue Flycatcher to star on our front cover……

BIRD RECORDS for **OCTOBER** are on p.4 including what will be a regular monthly addition—the peak monthly counts from LNNR .

Graham Wren ; *Photo Fiona Southern*

WHAT'S NEW ON THE WEBSITE: Philip Hanmer's report for October on Ringer's Roundup is his **Annual Barn Owl Report**, where he tells of a frustrating season with many failed attempts , the poorest he has known in twelve years. The new look Website is now up and running, with most, though not all headings fully updated. Check back for updates.

AN APPRECIATION of ornithologist Graham Wren, who recently died, appears on page 2.

NOTICEBOARD

INDOOR MEETINGS — BAMBURGH PAVILION

- **Friday, 9th November,2018 at 7.30pm (Bamburgh Pavilion)**
  AGM followed by 'From the Notebook' : STEWART SEXTON

We continue our recent pattern of squeezing in a short Annual General Meeting at the start of the November meeting, before welcoming a return visit from an all-round naturalist and patch-birder whose wildlife blog 'From the Notebook' has a large following which stretches well beyond Boulmer…….

- **Friday, 7th December,2018 at 7.30pm (MIZEN HOTEL, BAMBURGH)** Our traditional Christmas Dinner takes place on the first Friday of the Month; You can view and select your choices from the attractive menu using the separate attachment sent with this e-newsletter. If you wish to attend the event, please print the menu with your choices and return it to John Lumby [Shearwater, 2 St Cuthbert Close, North Sunderland, Seahouses, NE68 7WG] with a cheque for the appropriate amount made payable to 'North Northumberland Bird Club' before 3rd December.

- **Friday, 14th December,2018 at 7.30pm (Bamburgh Pavilion) MEMBERS' NIGHT** Following a similar format to last year's event , join us on the second Friday of the Month for mulled wine and festive nibbles which will accompany three varied short talks featuring birds and other wildlife from around the World. Travel with ALAN & MARGARET GOODALL as they share their recent trip to Australia, STEWART & ALISON MCCORMICK on their adventures in Patagonia & the Pantanal, and PETER LEES on the Galapagos Islands.

FIELD TRIPS & RESIDENTIALS [For all Field Trips Read please Risk Assessment on Website beforehand .

[For last-minute Cancellations e.g. adverse weather conditions, check our Facebook Page.]

Saturday, 10th November 2018: Hauxley and Chevington. Meet at the Discovery Centre CarPark, Hauxley at 10 a.m., (O.S. **NU 283025**) where we will begin our visit to NWT's flagship centre at Hauxley before visiting East Chevington and perhaps *some* of the other Druridge Bay reserves based on current knowledge. Wear suitable clothing, stout footwear and bring a packed lunch. [This replaces last month's field trip which was cancelled due to severe weather warnings.]

Leaders: Alan & Margaret Goodall

NNBC TRIP TO SPAIN 16th –23rd MAY 2019

This visit is already guaranteed to go ahead, but there are still a few places available if any other members wish to join those already 'signed up' for this two-centre holiday with 4 nights in Extremadura and 3 nights in the Gredos mountains. It is a renowned area for birding covering a wide variety of habitats including many birds of prey and the world's largest population of Great and Little Bustards. Accommodation is in family run establishments and all rooms have private facilities. The Gredos hotel has an award winning restaurant and a cellar of over 500 wines!

This trip is organised through Naturetrek and costs £1545 with a single supplement of £195. This includes flights from Edinburgh to Madrid, accommodation, all food except for lunch on day one, guides throughout and transport. If you would like to join us or know more about what may be seen etc. please contact Fiona Southern Tel. 01668214481 or email jfs@robincottage.co.uk

It is with sadness we report the sudden death of **Graham Wren** at his home in Ross-on-Wye, Herefordshire, on 15th October. He was 82. In the 1970s he spent three full seasons as a warden on the Farne Islands, a place he loved and continued to visit regularly on his many trips north, often following his passion for photographing rare birds, their nests and eggs. A regular speaker on ornithological topics, he was our guest speaker in May this year when he also visited the Scottish Ornithologists' Club to present them with a complete reference set of his photos. As recently as 10th Oct he was speaking to local SOC groups in Melrose and Dumfries. A kindly knowledgeable man, he will be greatly missed by his many friends in the north.

Graham Wren with Tom Hendry on Staple Island, June

"JUST MY CUP OF TEA" : BIRDS & OTHER WILDLIFE OF SRI LANKA

Chestnut-backed Owlet

Crimson-backed Flameback

It was a whistle-stop tour of Sri Lanka: What's not to like, with plenty of temples, good food, lovely people and wonderful wildlife. They started off in Kitulgala, a very wet lowland forest area, accessed across a long rope bridge followed by another river crossing in a vessel that had the notice "Disaster management centre" on it! Here they saw their first endemic species, a Chestnut-backed Owlet.

The next stop was Horton Plains National Park which features cloud forest and grasslands. No plastic is allowed in at all, no bottles of water, though plenty available and no plastic food wrappings. We saw many photographs of the regular species including the dramatic Crimson-backed Flameback. There was also the Grizzled Giant Squirrel (which was nearly a metre long) and two types of Bee Eater. Heading on to Little World's End , they hoped to see the endemic Dull-blue Flycatcher; after walking for miles, it was in the car park on their return! (See photo on p.1)

Sri Lankan Jungle Fowl

Victoria Park produced many species then on to the wetlands where there were many buffalo, many familiar birds as well as Little Cormorant, the impressive Stork-billed Kingfisher and Painted Stork.

After the National Park it was on and up to Nuwara Eliya and the tea plantations and then higher in to the forest where leech suits were the order of the day or certainly well covered as the leeches dropped all around from the trees! But the birds made it all worth it and there were many of them.

In the rainforest the birds follow the Laughing Thrushes so more variety. While waiting in someone's extremely remote kitchen to see the Sri Lankan Jungle Fowl which looks like a chicken and the Spur Fowl (another chicken) a very rare Mouse Deer appeared. What a bonus!

The final destination was Mirissa by the sea from where whale watching trips departed. The Blue Whales were a sight to behold. The Sri Lankans have a policy of three sightings and you then leave the area to reduce disturbance. This was another example of their wildlife conservation. They now have a policy that NO elephants are taken from the wild for tourism, logging or any work at all. When those in captivity die that is the end.

It was a wonderful entertaining and amusing talk with excellent photography. There were so many extraordinary birds one could not even hope to name even the endemic species.

It may have been Tom's "cup of tea" but it was ours as well.

Report by Fiona Southern

All photos (including Dull-blue Flycatcher on page 1) by kind permission of Tom Cadwallender

BIRD RECORDS OCTOBER 2018

Whooper Swan	2 at Branton Ponds on 1st & 6 on 3rd /4th (I&KD), 7 at Fenham Flats on 14th (SV&AJM).
Barnacle Goose	300 at Fenham Flats on 7th (I&KD), 250 at Beal on 14th (SV&AJM), 22 over Stag Rocks on 27th (PS).
Pintail	3 at Fenham Le Moor on 6th (JDL).
Shoveler	10 at Monk's House Pool on 6th (JPL,JDL).
Goldeneye	3 off Holy Island on 31st (PS).
Common Scoter	100 off Holy Island on 31st (PS).
Black Scoter	1 male off Cocklawburn beach on 22nd (A&MG).
Goosander	8 at Branton Ponds on 16th (I&KD), 46 on River Tweed at Horncliffe on 9th(JDL).
Red-throated Diver	1 at Craster on 14th (D&TLB), 2 at Boulmer on 27th (I&KD).
Black-throated Diver	1 at Boulmer on 27th (I&KD).
Great Northern Diver	1 at Boulmer on 27th (I&KD).
Manx Shearwater	2 at Boulmer on 27th (I&KD).
Goshawk	1 at Holburn on 15th (CD).
Little Egret	2 at Fenham Flats on 14th (I&KD), 1 at Horncliffe on 3rd & 18th (JDL).
Black-tailed Godwit	many at Monk's House Pool all month (JPL,JDL)
Ruff	1 at Monk's House Pool on 6th (JDL).
Greenshank	1 at Hedgeley Ponds on 13th (I&KD).
Phalarope *sp.*	1 at Monk's House Pool on 6th (JDL).
Bonaparte's Gull	1 at Low Newton Scrape on 14th (A&MG).
Long-eared Owl	1 at Boulmer on 27th (I&KD).
Short-eared Owl	2 at Holy Island on 14th & 21st (SV&AJM,I&KD).
Merlin	1 at Seahouses on 6th & 1 at West Mains on 22nd (JPL), 1 at Low Cocklaw on 14th & 1 near Oxford Farm on 23rd (D&TLB).
Peregrine	1 at Chathill on 3rd (JPL), 1 at Branton on 10th (I&KD), 1 at Horncliffe on 22nd(JDL).
Cetti's Warbler	1 at Holy Island on 21st (I&KD).
Yellow-browed Warbler	7 at Holy Island on 14th (I&KD,SV&AJM).
Bearded Tit	2 at Holy Island on 14th (I&KD).
Pied Flycatcher	1 at Holy Island on 14th (SV&AJM).
Redstart	1 at Holy Island on 14th (SV&AJM).
Brambling	200+ at Holy Island on 14th (SVM,I&KD), 1 at Spindlestone Wood on 14th(GW).
Lapland Bunting	1 at Holy Island on 14th & 2 on 20th (I&KD).
Snow Bunting	1 at Holy Island on 7th & 14th (SV&AJM,I&KD), 3 at Stag Rocks on 28th (PS).

Observers Ian & Keith Davison (I & KD), Chris Duncan (CD), Alan & Margaret Goodall (A&MG), David & Trish Lloyd-Blake (D&TLB), James Lough (JDL), John P Lumby (JPL), Stewart &Alison McCormick (SV&AJM), Paul Snell (PS), Gillian Wolverson (GW).

November Records please submit records by 3rd December to the Recorder, John Lumby, Shearwater, 2 St Cuthbert Close, North Sunderland, Seahouses, NE68 7WG.TEL:01665-720654 j.lumby@yahoo.co.uk. or.com if any difficulty.

SELECTED PEAK COUNTS from LINDISFARNE NATIONAL NATURE RESERVE for OCTOBER

6500 **Pink-footed Geese** on the 7th

4500 **Barnacle Geese** on the 5th

16138 **Wigeon** on the 14th

100 **Whooper Swans** on the 25th

2800 **Golden plovers** on the 14th

Black Scoter on the 14th

3600 **Light-bellied Brent Geese** on the 13th