

Berwick Wildlife Group

www.berwickwildlifegroup.org.uk



Monthly Review: February 2018.

WILDLIFE REPORTS

Weather

The weather pattern this month was true to form with the old rhyme 'February filldyke – both black and white'

During the first week, cold north-west winds brought a spell of rain over the 3rd/4th, followed by a frost on the 5th and an inch of snow on the 6th. After a milder week, another day of rain on the 11th brought a total of 19mm (0.75 inches).

The weather seemed to settle down over the next 10 days with some frosty nights, sunshine and showers with light north-west winds. During the last four days of the month the weather changed again, with a huge high pressure area building up over Europe, forcing the Atlantic jet stream into reverse and bringing a very cold wind down from Siberia into Southern Europe and up towards the UK.

On the 26th the barometric pressure unusually reached a high 1040 millibars. With it came a bitter north east wind and wintry showers of snow and hail. The final day of the month (28th) brought a touch of the Arctic, with minimum temperature of -5C(24F) and temperatures below freezing all day. Blizzard conditions for a five hour period through the middle part of the day dumped 14 cm (5.5inches) of snow causing transport 'mayhem' countrywide. Like I said at the beginning, both black and white, but nobody expects it quite like that!! It's got to improve next month, hasn't it?! Total rainfall this month 53mm (1.98 inches).

Birds

This month is normally a quiet month for birds, as most are in their winter sites with only severe conditions causing species to move around.

A flock of **162 Greylag Geese**, **2 Whooper Swans** and **186 Lapwing** at Cocklawburn(2nd), with **2 Gannets** offshore were of note. At 6.40a.m.(3rd) a **Song Thrush** was in full song under the street light, well before dawn in Cornwall Avenue. A party of **140 Wood Pigeon** were in the trees of Ord Country Park(4th), with a **Mistle Thrush** in song at Gainslaw. The wintering **Black throated Diver** was still around the Pier and **3 male Red breasted Mergansers** on Calot Shad.

A flock of **193 Golden Plover** were at Cocklawburn(7th) along with **186 Greylag Geese**, with **14 Tufted Ducks** and **12 Teal** on the pond there. A flock of **120 Lapwing** roosted at New Water Heugh(8th) along with **58 Wigeon** and **52 Redshank**. A group of **3 Tree Sparrows** were seen near Pier House.

A group of **8 Redwing** were feeding round the sheep troughs at West Ord(11th) and a **Gt. Spotted Woodpecker** was heard 'drumming in trees at Ord Country Park. A flock of **248 Pink footed Geese** were with **204 Greylag** grazing at Cocklawburn(16th) with a pair of **Gadwall** on the pond. This duck is still a bit of a rarity around the Tweed area. A flock of **46 Twite** were among the cattle and **2 Immature**

Kittiwakes, 6 Red throated Divers, 52 Common Scoter and 17 **Guillemots** were on the sea here. Further up the coast another flock of 36 Twite were seen at Sea House.

A good record of an over-wintering **Chiff-chaff** was seen by a member in trees at Palace Green, on the Berwick walls(17th). A flock of 10 **Bar-tailed Godwit** were on Little Beach(18th) with a single **Grey Plover** on Calot Shad. A flock of 66 **Fieldfare** were at Middle Ord along with a party of 26 **Goldfinches**.

A **Little Owl** was reported from Kentstone, Beal (21st) - worth a mention as it is a very scarce bird within our area. A roost of c.1,000 **Black headed Gulls** were on Spittal Bay(22nd) with a flock of c.40 Wigeon off shore. The following day, saw a Red throated Diver in the Estuary over Calot Shad, with 4 Guillemots in Meadow Haven.

A pair of **Grey Partridge** were at Billylaw(25th) with 4 Wigeon and 8 Teal on Middle Ord pond. A large flock of c.160 Fieldfare had gathered at Murton Crags along with c.40 **Chaffinches** under the Beech trees there. Three individual Gannets were noted flying south over Spittal Bay.

Mammals

A group of 4 **Brown Hares** were in fields by the Tweed at West Ord(4th), with another two on Billylaw(18th). A dog **Otter** was feeding amongst rocks offshore at Cargies Cove, Sea House(16th)

Other sightings

A number of insects were on the wing (5th)on a mild quiet day: a **Lacewing** being an early record, seen near the Leaping Salmon Inn.

Website delays mean that I suggest that members wishing to add their records to the newsletter, as a temporary measure, should send them directly to me by the 30th of each month at **m.hutcheson08@btinternet.com**