

Berwick Wildlife Group

www.berwickwildlifegroup.org.uk



Monthly Review: August 2019.

WILDLIFE REPORTS

Weather

August turned out to be a warm, but rather wet month, even if most of the rain came overnight or late each day. To summarize, it was a month of sunshine and showers.

The warmest days came at the beginning and end of the month. Thunder storms came on the 5th, 6th and 20th, with a spectacular display of 'flash' lighting late on the 7th. Following that storm, the temperature fell and brought a day of steady rain on the 11th. A total of 28mm (1.1 inches) falling in a 24 hour period.

Things settled down again mid-month, with sunshine and showers, often with fresh winds in a westerly direction.

The last week of the month saw the wind drop, with high pressure bringing several calm and very warm days. A peak of 78F was reached on the 24th. The wind increased again in the last days of the month to a mild south-westerly - all the signs of approaching Autumn..

Several cool nights mid-month brought dew to the vegetation, the temperature falling to 7C (46F) overnight on the 13th.

Rainfall figures were quite high with a total of 104mm. (4.2 inches)

Birds

The return of our post-breeding waders to our coast and estuaries are the first feature of August, with a steady move into a more general autumn migration.

This has been the feature this month, with 126 **Lapwing**, 196 **Curlew** and 64 **Redshank** all noted at Yarrow Slake(1st). A strong north-west wind saw a good movement of **Gannets** past the Pier, early on the 2nd, with 850 an hour passing northwards. A spectacular and noisy sight was the arrival of a very large flock of 360 **Greylag Geese** on the saltmarsh at New Water Heugh(4th) coming down the Tweed from the west. Obviously, it has been a successful breeding season for these feral birds, but where did they all come from?

At Little Beach a group of 5 **Knot**, held two still in summer 'red' plumage, in company with 6 **Dunlin**. A large roost of 270 **Kittiwakes** were in the Calot Shad gull roost. At Cocklawburn(6th) a small group of waders contained 5 **Sanderlings**, 16 **Ringed Plover**, 2 **Greenshank** and a single **Whimbrel**. A windy

day(9th) saw a group of 26 **Teal** flying north over the sea at Berwick pier, with 52 **Goosander** roosting on Sandstell Point, Spittal.

Most of the local **Swift** population left our area on the 10th, so 3 Swifts over East Ord(12th was notable, with another single on the 15th.

Yarrow Slake (15th) held a single **Ruff** with the 210 Lapwing in the roost. Also of note were 3 **Little Egrets** and 21 **Grey Herons**. A single **Willow Warbler** was noted passing through gardens in Cornwall Avenue (16th) with a party of 42 **House Martins** and 3 Swifts, gathered over Ord Country Park early on the 17th.

A single **Bar tailed Godwit** was on Calot Shad(18th), a Greenshank and 2 Sanderling were on Little Beach(20th) and a party of 46 **Swallows** had gathered on the abutment along the Walls at Flagstaff Park. The calm conditions saw 76 **Sandwich Terns** feeding over Spittal Bay.

Another Swift was noted flying south over Cocklawburn(22nd) along with 3 **Sand Martins**. At Saltpan rocks a group of 12 **Arctic Terns** gathered in a low tide roost.

The gull roost at West Ord (25th) held 220 **Common Gulls** and 170 **Black headed Gulls**. A flock of 82 **Canada Geese** had gathered at New Water Heugh. A Whimbrel was with Curlew on Yarrow Slake (26th) and 7 Sandwich Terns were noted in with the roosting Black headed Gulls. The first returning **Golden Plover** came to Cocklawburn (27th) with 5 birds with the Lapwing. A **Whitethroat** was also noted here.

A **Wheatear** appeared on the shoreline at Little Beach (28th) in the odd company of a male **Whinchat**, a bird normally seen on moorland terrain. A bird I have never seen on the shore before. More Wheatears were seen next day at Billylaw(29th) with four feeding in a ploughed field.. At West Ord the gull roost was expanding with 560 Black headed Gulls recorded with a large flock of 140 Canada Geese. On the coast, 36 Gannets were feeding close to the shore on the high tide, in the company of 10 Arctic Terns.

Mammals

A lone **Pipistrelle Bat** was noted flying around the trees near Cornwall Avenue (4th)early morning at dawn. **Brown Hares** have been noted at Cocklawburn, Longlands School and West Ord, with three leverets seen at the latter site(29th)..

Insects

Butterflies - Although the spectacle of the large numbers of **Painted Ladies** seemed to have peaked last month, there are still records of double figures coming from our members.

Peacock and Large Whites are also around in double figures with **Red Admiral, Small Tortoiseshell Small White, Green veined White** also reported regularly through the month. As the 'browns' end there season they are well represented by the second flight of **Wall Brown** throughout our area. **Comma** has been seen in Hiveacres and Castle hills, with **Small Skipper** seen on the Golf Course and East Ord.

Good numbers of **Silver Y Moths** are also reported, but **Hummingbird Hawk Moths** records have been absent.

Common green Grasshopper (*Omocestus viridulus*) records came from the Flower Meadow in Coronation Park and in a Hiveacres garden.

Other news There seems to be more than one pod of **Bottle nosed Dolphins** recorded along our coastline, with one group of 6 at Cheswick Black rocks and another group of 12 seen at Spittal Bay at the same time on the 22nd.

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Can members wishing to add their records to the newsletter send them directly to Malcolm Hutcheson by the 30th of each month, at **m.hutcheson08@btinternet.com**