

THE DIPPER



THE GWENT ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY

Registered charity number 1088830

GOS WEB SITE: www.gwentbirds.org.uk

Due to the current restrictions this newsletter is only being distribute by e-mail

Newsletter No. 154

Spring 2020

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All photographs provided by Keith Roylance

ALL GOS MEETINGS ARE CURRENTLY SUSPENDED

DO NOT LEAVE YOUR HOME TO CARRY OUT ANY BITD SURVEYS ORGANISED BY THE BTO

See advice at <https://www.bto.org/community/news/202003-bto-and-covid-19>

Committee Summary

Cathy Gregory

Firstly, Happy New Year to Everyone. Thank you to everyone who came out to the AGM on a murky January evening. Thank you to everyone on the committee for all your hard work over the year. Thank you to Dave Brassey who (although he stepped down as Outdoor Programme Secretary) has put together an Outdoor Programme in record time. Thank you to John Coleman for all his work on the Annual Report; he has now stepped down as Editor. Also, a thank you to Goytre Village Hall for the use of their facilities over the year.

Welcome to Blair Jones, Wildlife Occulus, who joins the committee this year. Farewell to Chris Field and Gavin Vella who stepped down from the committee.

Summary of GOS Committee Meeting, Wednesday February 12th, 2020

The lolo talk at the Lysaght was a great success. Thanks to lolo for such generosity with his time. Thanks especially Hannah Daniels, Indoor Programme Secretary, who did fantastic work with organising and ticketing and gave so much of her time. Thanks to all involved. This was a good central location with an exceptional speaker and a good time was had by all. Lots of non-members attended with some new members signing up and there was quite a lot of interest in upcoming talks. There was an immense amount of traffic on The Lysaght's own Facebook page and the manager has asked if we were putting on this event again. As it stands this was a one-off and any repeat would require more volunteers.

In addition to the traditional Indoor Meetings, the committee is considering meetings at alternative times and locations, possibly Cwmbran. We hope to make such meetings accessible to people who use public transport or no longer drive at night and to bring events closer to more of the general population. Please feel free to suggest locations for these additional meetings.

It was agreed that going forward, GOS members who give a talk at the Indoor Meetings free of charge, would be given a small gift of chocolates or a bottle of wine.

The committee is thankful to Chris Field for providing us with a projector for the indoor meetings as well as for his many years of hard work on the committee.

Work is ongoing to remove superfluous plugins from the new website, thanks to Andrew Cormack. Please remember to check the detail of the events schedule; there may be more than one event in a given week and unfortunately the upcoming events headline on the front page only shows the first event; anyone who can help with the website programming, please let us know.

AGM attendance was lower this year possibly because the lolo event was 'headlined' and the AGM was hidden away in the 'small print' of the website.

Note that Storm Dennis has led to the postponement of the Slimbridge visit from Sunday 16th February to Sunday 23rd February.

GOS will be at GWT "Life on Marsh" festival on July 11th.

Books for Fair Isle have been collected and a list sent to the observatory for their perusal.

The Committee has been made aware of concerns about wildfowling, although this may be legal depending on the location. Any witness with concerns can contact the police; if the Committee were to report this second hand it would simply be hearsay.

The society has received an enquiry about the Burt Hamar Bursary for deep Willow Tit boxes in Wentwood which will be considered when the application is formally received. (Noted that it is not impossible to pay the bursary twice in a year).

The upkeep of Goytre House Woods was discussed in particular tree surgery will be carried out. The public right of way must kept clear. Other relevant location will have signs "Private Property / No Public Right of Way" and bramble clearance will have to wait for drier weather.

The Annual Report is out thanks to John Coleman; mis-recorded SEWBRec records (Swans in nest boxes!) have been painstakingly sorted out.

Darryl Spittle's presentation at the AGM gave a good insight into recording sightings and the uses of sighting information.

We need a new Editor for the Annual Report - please volunteer or suggest someone.

Young People Involvement: The suggested provision of Camera Nest Boxes for schools would require maintenance and installation; we may have to reduce the number of boxes that we would offer and provide a small sum of money to the schools for installation/maintenance; school staff must be involved and enthusiastic.

News from NWR: The number of waterfowl has been low this year presumably because of the warm weather. Kevin Dupé has just finished cutting the reedbed lagoons, creating bittern habitat. A grey phalarope was reported at the lagoons on the 11th February and there have been 4 female goldeneye. The glossy ibis has stayed all winter.

Llandegfedd Reservoir: GOS has objected to the resubmitted planning application.

CALM Update: There is a fear that the M4 plan will be resurrected; CALM are looking into ways of protecting the compulsory purchased land.

BTO Surveys: Volunteers are still needed for the Willow Tit survey 2020. Richard Clarke has arranged with Glamorgan free training course for anyone (Gwent/Glam) interested in taking part in survey who has reasonable knowledge of birds sight/sound.

More volunteers are needed for BBS squares. Richard would be interested to hear

from anyone who would like to do some detective work in following up historical heronry sites.

BTO now working on finalising the list of sites for the 'Breeding Waders of Wet Meadows' survey.

Living Levels, Bird box project: 100 Tree Sparrow boxes installed on Caldicot Levels - a further 100 are in preparation; 10 Barn Owl boxes - 3 already erected, 7 in production; Kestrel and Little Owl boxes will get underway next month.

There will be a nest box assembly weekend [of Feb 23rd] at Red House Barns, Goldcliff. All welcome - free BTO nestbox booklet to anyone who takes part.

Trip to Tregaron & Aberystwyth, January 19th, 2020



Only four GOS members set out from Abergavenny bus station on a cold & frosty Sunday morning to head up to Tregaron and Cors Caron Bog. Temperatures were as low as -5C on the journey but had risen to -3C at 9:00 am on arrival at the bridge just outside Tregaron overlooking the southern section of the NNR. Two additional members joined us by 10:00 am after staying overnight in Aberystwyth and enjoying a hearty 'full english' before making the short journey to Tregaron.

Sightings were few and far between on this occasion although a sizeable flock of Fieldfare in a distant field were notable. Red Kites were feeding in a field with gulls whilst three Goosander were mobile along the river. Apart from a lone Buzzard, there was no sign of Hen Harrier or Marsh Harrier as is usual from this location. As we

were unable to gain access to the hide in the centre of the reserve due to the annual Tregaron 10K run being held on the paths and tracks we made our way to the north end of the reserve. A short walk gave us views of Buzzard, Stonechat & Meadow Pipit. Ravens were calling in the vicinity.

By early afternoon we headed to Borth & Ynys Las beach to search for waders were several species were seen – Golden Plover, Oystercatcher, Ringed Plover & Knot were amongst the species seen. On the sea at Borth a raft of 14 Common Scoter were quite close inshore.

The final stop of the day was at Aberystwyth for the Starling roost at the pier it did not disappoint with high numbers in separate flocks flying in from all directions. It was good to see Purple Sandpiper on the rocks as well as a Kingfisher checking out the rock pools.

The usual fish & chip supper concluded the trip before returning to Gwent.



Species seen: Greylag Geese, Canada Geese, Shelduck, Wigeon, Mallard, Pintail, Shoveler, Common Scoter, Goosander, Pheasant, Little Grebe, Great Crested Grebe, Cormorant, Little Egret, Grey Heron, Red Kite, Buzzard, Merlin, Coot, Oystercatcher, Ringed Plover, Golden Plover, Knot, Purple Sandpiper, Snipe, Curlew, Turnstone, Black-headed Gull, Lesser Black-backed Gull, Herring Gull, Great Black-backed Gull, Woodpigeon, Kingfisher, Great Spotted Woodpecker, Meadow Pipit, Rock Pipit, Wren, Robin, Stonechat, Blackbird, Fieldfare, Willow Tit, Blue Tit, Jay, Magpie, Carrion Crow, Raven, Starling, Chaffinch & Reed Bunting.



Gwent UKBS Report for December 2019

Chris Hatch

Highlights

A male Smew was present at Llandegfedd reservoir (2nd to 26th). Presumably the same bird was also seen on the river south of Usk (27th to 30th). A Bittern was reported from Newport Wetlands (4th). A Great Northern Diver was present at Llandegfedd reservoir (15th).

Newport Wetlands Reserve

Several late Swallows were recorded (1st). A female Hen Harrier was seen (1st), whilst sightings of Marsh Harriers were reported throughout the month. The long-staying Glossy Ibis was still present. A female Merlin was reported (8th). Up to 36 Avocets were recorded (28th). A juvenile Whooper Swan was seen (31st) as was a Water Pipit (also 31st).

Other sites

Three Water Pipits were reported from Sluice Farm (1st). 17 Pintail were offshore at Peterstone (4th). Mediterranean Gulls were reported from the Nedern (7th) and Sudbrook (10th). Two Short-eared Owls were seen at Waunafon Bog (9th). 14 Goosanders were recorded at the Waun Pond, Brynmawr (17th). Two Whooper Swans were seen at Llangybi (21st), whilst four Whooper Swans were present at Magor Marsh (from 20th). A Merlin was present at Pant y goetre (25th), as were twelve Little Egrets (27th).

Highlights

The drake Smew was still present at Llanllywel (from 4th). The Glossy Ibis was reported from Newport Wetlands all month. A Black-necked Grebe was also present at Newport Wetlands (from 5th). A Long-tailed Duck was seen at Ynysyfro reservoir (from 11th).

Newport Wetlands Reserve

17 Avocets were recorded (18th). A female Hen Harrier was reported (18th). Male and female Marsh Harriers were seen throughout the month.

Other sites

A Short-eared Owl was reported from Mathern Pill (7th). Two Whooper Swans were observed at Redwick (10th). 35 Mandarin ducks were recorded at Llandegfedd reservoir (25th).

Gwent UKBS Report for February 2020

Chris Hatch

Highlights

The Glossy Ibis was still present at Newport Wetlands Throughout the month. The Black-necked Grebe was also still present early in the month.

Newport Wetlands Reserve

Male and female Marsh Harrier sightings were reported regularly throughout the month. A Hen Harrier was seen (6th). 34 Avocets were recorded (7th).

Other sites

Two Whooper Swans were reported from Redwick (1st to 4th). The male Smew was still present at Llanllywel (1st). A Short-eared Owl was seen at Waunafon Bog (3rd to 5th).

A Barn Owl was reported from Langstone (17th). Separate Mediterranean Gulls were seen at Redwick (20th and 21st) and at Malpas (22nd).

Books offered to members

We have the books listed below which were donated to the society to offer to members on a first come basis. All we ask is that you give a donation to the society for any books taken. (Suggested minimum donation £1.00 per book).

All requests must be made by email to Verity Picken at books@gwentbirds.org.uk.

Unfortunately due to the wide variety of books we cannot undertake posting of any volume to recipients.

Please send your requests to books@gwentbirds.org.uk with the title, author and box number of the book(s) you require together with your contact details – email & telephone. We will notify you if your book is unavailable and where and when you can collect them.

TITLE	AUTHOR	BOX
Arrivals & Rivals: a birding oddity	Adrian Riley	4
Birding in Glamorgan	Alan Rosney, Richard G Smith	1
Birdwatching	Alex Horne	1
Birds in England	Andy Brown & Phil Grice. English Nature	5
Avon Bird Report 2002	Avon Ornithological Group	3
Avon Bird Report 2003	Avon Ornithological Group	3
Avon Bird Report 2004	Avon Ornithological Group	3
Avon Bird Report 2005 (2 Copies)	Avon Ornithological Group	3
Avon Bird Report 2006	Avon Ornithological Group	3
Avon Bird Report 2007	Avon Ornithological Group	3
Avon Bird Report 2009	Avon Ornithological Group	3
How to Watch Wildlife	Bill Oddie	7
Birding with Bill Oddie	Bill Oddie (BBC)	4
the Atlas of British Birdlife	Bob Scott	10
Brecknock Wildlife Trust Reserves	Brecknock WT	4
British Birds - July 2013, Vol 106. 363 - 426	British Birds	10
The Oxford book of Birds	Bruce Campbell	10
Birdwatchers Year Book & Diary 2003	Buckingham Press	3
Birdwatchers Year Book & Diary 2004	Buckingham Press	3
Birdwatchers Year Book & Diary 2005	Buckingham Press	3
Birdwatchers Year Book & Diary 2006	Buckingham Press	3
Birdwatchers Year Book & Diary 2008	Buckingham Press	3
Birdwatchers Year Book & Diary 2011	Buckingham Press	3
British Tits	Christopher Perrins	5
Collins Bird Guide 1st Edition	Collins Field Guide	8
British Birds - Volume 77, 1984	Cramp	10
British Birds - Volume 76, 1983	Cramp	10
Handbook of the Birds of Europe, the Middle East & North Africa, Volume IX Buntings & New World Warblers	Cramp & Perrins Oxford University Press	4
Handbook of the Birds of Europe, the Middle East & North Africa, Volume V111 Crows to Finches	Cramp & Perrins Oxford University Press	4
Birds in Cumbria, 1989	Cumbria Natural History Societies	4
The Lakeland Eagles	D G Walker	4
To see every bird on earth	Dan Koepfel	8
The Fieldfare : Hamlyn Species Guide	David Norman	4
Where to watch birds in Wales	David Saunders	7
Bird Photography	David Tipling	2
Birdwatchers guide to digital photography The	David Tipling	2
Where to Watch Birds in Britain & Ireland	David Tipling	2

An Atlas of Breeding Birds in West Glamorgan (1992)	Derek K Thomas	2
Lapland, A Natural History	Derek Ratcliffe	1
Life on the Wing	Derwent May	1
Waders - breeding haunts and watchers	Desmond and Maimie Nethersole - Thompson	9
Devon Bird Report 2005	Devon Bird Watching & Preservation Society	3
Rarebirds in Britain and Ireland	Diamond, Fraser and Gantlett	9
Bird Migration	Dominic Couzens	7
Birds by Behaviour	Dominic Couzens	4
Birds ID Insights	Dominic Couzens	4
Field Guide to the Birds of North America	ed: Jon L Dunn & Jonathan Alderfer	2
Birds of Wiltshire, The	edited: John Buxton	2
EBCC Atlas of European Breeding Birds, The	edited: Ward J M Hagemeijer, Michael J Blair	2
RSPB pocket birds	Elphic and Woodward	8
Seabirds of the World - photographic handbook	Enticott and Tippling	8
British Thrushes	Eric Simms	4
Woodland Birds (Collins New Naturalist Series)	Eric Simms	2
Raptors of the World A field guide	Fergusson-Lees and Christie	5
Pocket guide to British Birds, The	Fitter and Richardson	7
North Atlantic Seabirds -Storm Petrels and Bulwers's Petrel	Flood and Fisher	5
Garden Birdsongs and Calls	Geoff Sample	7
Graves' Garden Birds	George Graves	8
Birds of the World - recommended English names	Gill and Wright	10
Eastern Glamorgan Bird Report No 50 2011	Glamorgan Bird Club	4
Eastern Glamorgan bird report no.48 2009	Glamorgan Bird Clud	6
Gloucester Bird report 2007	Gloucestershire Ornithological Coordinating committee	6
Birds of the West Midlands The new	Graham and Janet Harrison	5
Where to watch Birds in Dorset, Hampshire and the Isle of Wight	Green and Cade	7
Taking Flight - journeys of migration	Guilhem Lesaffre	8
Gwent bird report 2001	Gwent Ornithological Society	6
Gwent bird report 2002	Gwent Ornithological Society	6
Gwent bird report 2003	Gwent Ornithological Society	6
Gwent Bird Report 2010	Gwent Ornithological Society	6
The Birds of Gwent	Gwent Ornithological Society	5
The Gwent Atlas of Breeding Birds	Gwent Ornithological Society	5
Gwent Bird Report 2006	Gwent Ornithological Society	3
Gwent Bird Report 2007	Gwent Ornithological Society	3
Gwent Bird Report 2008	Gwent Ornithological Society	3
Gwent Bird Report 2005	Gwent Ornithological Society	3
Where to watch birds Somerset, Avon, Gloucester and Wiltshire	Hall and Govett	7

Tits, Nuthatches and Treecreepers - Helm identification guide	Harrap and Quinn	9
Bird Identification field guide	Harris, Tucker and Vinicombe	6
What's That bird	Hayman and Everett	8
Birds of the Middle East & North Africa	Hollom Porter, Christensen, Willis	4
Beguiled by Birds	Ian Wallace	7
Wild about the Wild	Iolo Williams	7
Isles of Scilly Bird & Natural History Review 2003	Isles of Scilly Bird Group	3
Isles of Scilly Bird & Natural History Review 2006	Isles of Scilly Bird Group	3
Isles of Scilly Bird & Natural History Review 2007	Isles of Scilly Bird Group	3
Isles of Scilly Bird & Natural History Review 2009	Isles of Scilly Bird Group	3
Birds of East Africa	J G Williams and M Arlott	6
Seabirds (Collins New Naturalist)	J. Fisher & R.M.Lockley	1
Hérons and Egrets of the World - a photographic journey	James Hancock	10
Birds of the Welsh Coast	Jarrold Area Guide	4
time to Fly - exploring bird migration	Jim Flegg	7
A Notebook of birds 1907 - 1980	Jim Flegg	7
Popular Garden Birds	Joe Firmin	4
Mute Swan, The	John Fair	1
Birds of North America Complete	Johnathan Alderfer	6
Watching Water Birds	Kate Humble and Martin McGill	6
Field guide to advanced birding	Kaufmann	6
Birds New to Norfolk	Keith Dye Mick Fiszler & Peter Allard	4
Kite Country (bi lingual English / Welsh)	Kite Conservation	4
The Breeding birds of the London Area	London Natural History society	10
Winter Birds, The	M A Oglivy	10
Birds of the Southern Third of Africa - Series 2, Volume 1	Mackwort-Praed and Captain C H B Grant	10
Grebes of the World	Malcom Oglivie	8
Wildfowl of the World - photographic handbook	Malcom Oglivie and Steve Young	8
Population Trends in British Breeding Birds	Marchant, Hudson, Carter and Whittington	10
RSPB British Bird Finder	Marianne Taylor	6
The Cley Year - a birds guide	Mark Golley	7
Bird Identification & Fieldcraft	Mark Ward	2
Red Data Birds in Britain	Nature Conservancy Council	5
Modern Wildlife Painting	Nicholas Hammond.	8
The Shorebird Guide	O'Brien, Crossley and Karlson	5
Life on the Wing	Ostling and Ullman	6
Popular Handook of British Birds, The	P A D Hollom	10
Nature Atlas of Great Britain	Pan ordance survey	10
Warblers of the Western Palaearctic	Parmenter and Byers	5
Peregrine Falcon	Patrick Stirling-Aird	2
Ducks in the Wild	Paul Johnsgard	6
Collins complete guide to British Birds	Paul Sterry	2
The Wild Geese of the Newgrounds	Paul Walkden, WWT	4
The Chiffchaff : Hamlyn Species Guide	Peter Clement	4

The Wheatear	Peter Condor	9
European Bird Guide	Peter H Barthel & Paschalis Dougalis	2
Bird - ultimate illustrated guide to birds of Britain and Europe	Peter Hayman and Rob Hume	6
Birds of Prey - a pocket Guide	Peter Hayman and Rob Hume	5
Birdwatchers Pocket Guide - The New	Peter Hayman and Rob Hume	8
Coastal Birds - a pocket Guide	Peter Hayman and Rob Hume	8
RSPB Birds - their hidden world	Peter Holden	6
RSPB Book of British Birds, The	Peter Holden & J T R Sharrock	2
RSPB Handbook of British Birds	Peter Holden & Tim Cleeves	2
Observations of Wildlife	Peter Scott	8
Bird-Watchers Dictionary The	Peter Weaver	4
Field Guide to the Birds of Britain & Europe, A	Peterson, Mountfort, Hollom	2
Book of British Birds	Readers Digest	10
Most amazing Birds to see in Britain, The	Readers Digest	1
The Crossley Guide - Eastern Birds	Richard Crossley	6
North Atlantic Shorebirds	Richard J Chandler	5
A Twitchers Diary	Richard Millington	1
Martin Mere - A dream comes true	Richard Underwood	7
Plovers	Richard Vaughn	5
Birds by Character field guide to Jizz	Rob Hume	6
Birds of Britain	Rob Hume	2
Life with Birds	Rob Hume	7
RSPB complete birds of Britain and Europe	Rob Hume	7
Birdwatching	Rob Hume	1
Seabirds (Bird behaviour guide)	Rob Hume, Bruce Pearson	1
The Goshawk	Robert Kenward	9
Birdwatchers Diary	Roger Lovegrove and Peter Barrett	8
Field Guide to the Birds Eastern Land & Water Birds, A	Roger Tory Peterson	2
Complete of British Birds, The	RSPB	7
A bad birdwatchers companion	Simon Barnes	2
Waders of Europe, Asia and North America	Stephen Message and Don Taylor	5
A Skyfull of Starlings	Stephen Moss	8
How to Birdwatch	Stephen Moss	2
The private life of Birds	Stephen Moss	10
This Birding Life	Stephen Moss	8
Understanding Bird Behaviour	Stephen Moss	7
Crows and Jays	Steve Madge & Hilary Burn	9
Wildfowl	Steve Madge & Hilary Burn	1
Field guide to Bird Photography, A	Steve Young	2
Sutherland Birds	Stewart Angus	7
Birds of the Welsh Coast	T G Walker	5
Dorset Bird Report 2005	The Dorset Bird Club	3
British Birds	The Rev. F O Morris	4
Bewick's British Birds	Thomas Bewick	2
Running Sky, The	Tim Dee	1

Dutch Birding Volume 23 2001	various	1
Birds of Gwent	Venables, Baker et al	6
Birds of Town and Village	W D Campbell	8
Birds of Town & Village	W.D.Campbell	1
Oxford book of Birds, The	Watson and Campbell	10
A Season of Birds - A Norfolk Diary 1911	Weidenfeld and Nicolson	10
Birds of Britain	Wilfred Willett	8
Common British Birds - a pocket book	Willett and Hall	8
Welsh Birds Vol 5 No 6, 2009	WOS	4
Rare & Scarce Birds Report 1998-1999	Yorkshire Naturalists Union	3
The handbook of bird identification - Europe and Western Palearctic	Mark Beaman & Steve Madge	7
The Wildfowl Trust		10



Spring update for Gwent

Richard M. Clarke

BTO Regional Representative

bto@gwentbirds.org.uk

The current advice from the BTO is:

BTO Surveys in the wider countryside

BTO's senior leadership team has reviewed the government advice and is asking our networks of volunteers to follow the advice and remain at home.

Do not travel to survey squares or fieldwork sites, or participate in BTO surveys and monitoring if by doing so you would be in breach of the government advice.

Please check their website for more information when the current government advice is changed.

The update below is for information only, having been produced before the coronavirus outbreak began

Most widespread species for BBS

Gwent in 2019

Species	Squares	Percentage of all squares surveyed	Individuals
Blackbird	35	100%	496
Carrion Crow	35	100%	349
Woodpigeon	34	97%	424
Wren	34	97%	400
Chaffinch	34	97%	229
Great Tit	34	97%	189
Robin	33	94%	256
Blue Tit	32	91%	208
Song Thrush	31	89%	124
Dunnock	31	89%	100

Breeding Bird Survey (BBS)

This annual survey monitors the population changes of UK's breeding bird species and is only

possible because dedicated volunteers visit randomly selected 1km Ordnance Survey squares each spring.

Data from the survey are used widely including for the UK Wild Bird Indicators: All-species; Habitat specific bird index; Specialist bird index; and, Generalist bird index.

Some information is also now available at the Gwent level such as the most widespread species and most numerous species.

A number of opportunities to take part in this important national survey have come up in Gwent and if you can identify birds by sight, song and call then please consider volunteering.

All that is needed is three visits to a square between April and June – a recce and two morning visits – to record the birds you see and hear and to note the habitat. GOS members already contribute greatly to this survey and I was delighted that there was further interest at the GOS AGM and at the recent BBS training event held by

Most numerous species for BBS

Gwent in 2019

Species	Individuals	Squares	Percentage of all squares surveyed
Blackbird	496	35	100%
Jackdaw	458	25	71%
Woodpigeon	424	34	97%
Wren	400	34	97%
Carrion Crow	349	35	100%
Shelduck	319	2	6%
House Sparrow	269	25	71%
Robin	256	33	94%
Blackcap	236	29	83%
Chaffinch	229	34	97%

Glamorgan and Gwent BTO regions at Rudry on 15 March. So, if you haven't signed up already why not claim your patch and help reveal important changes in bird numbers. See the table that follows for available squares in Gwent. Go to <https://www.bto.org/our-science/projects/bbs> for further information about the survey or contact me direct on the e-mail address at the start of this article.

Available BBS squares in

Gwent

SO2318	Crickhowell	SO3613	Llanvapley
SO2719	Sugar Loaf	SO3624	Llancillo
SO3228	Longtown	SO3726	Rowlstone
SO3304	Penperlleni	SO4502	Llansoy
SO3307	Llanfair Grange	SO4708	Cwmcarvan
SO3504	Kemeys Commander	ST2097	Newbridge
SO3519	Llangattock Lingoed		

Breeding Waders of Wet Meadows – CANCELLED

The breeding waders survey planned for this year has been scrapped.

The purpose of the survey had been to assess the importance of both existing and new wet lowland grassland and also other lowland breeding wader habitats (as provided by agri-environment schemes - AES) for declining breeding waders including Curlew, Lapwing, Redshank and Snipe, in England and Wales.

Material for the next issue should be sent to newsletter@Gwentbirds.org.uk by 31st May 2020. Items and photographs on what you have seen from your garden are particularly sought.

Additional ideas for garden birding can be found in this Guardian article: <https://www.theguardian.com/travel/2020/mar/25/birdwatching-from-your-garden-the-wildlife-travel-drama-on-your-doorstep>

Friday January 10 2020 | THE TIMES

New songbirds discovered on pioneer's isles

Rhys Blakely Science Correspondent

In the 1850s the British naturalist Alfred Russel Wallace helped to shape the theory of evolution by documenting the wildlife of southeast Asia.

Now, in a region named after him, researchers have found ten species and subspecies of songbirds on three tiny Indonesian islands, the most from such a small area in more than a century.

The species were discovered on the islands of Taliabu, Peleng and Batudaka, which are part of a region known as Wallacea. "They range from colourful, bright-red honeyeaters with decurved beaks for feeding on nectar, all the way to shy, inconspicuous brown grasshopper warblers of the forest undergrowth," Dr Frank Rheindt, of the National University of Singapore, said.

They narrowed their search for new species using sea levels. Islands now surrounded by waters more than 120 metres deep would have remained isolated over the past two million years, even during periods of glaciation.

The team's paper in the journal *Science* also sounded a warning: Taliabu and Peleng, they said, have suffered "rampant forest destruction".

Several of the new species may be in danger, including the Taliabu grasshopper warbler. Its habitat appears to have been shrunk by logging to a few square kilometres. "Urgent, long-lasting conservation action is needed," the researchers wrote.

RUSSIA

Texting eagles leave scientists with soaring phone bills

By Conrad Smith

A Russian wildlife group is seeking donations after eagles they were tracking racked up big mobile phone bills abroad.

Elena Shnayder, of the Centre for Wild Animal Rehabilitation, said the group had fitted young eagles with transmitters programmed to send text messages with their positions four times a day.



The eagles spent summer in a part of Kazakhstan without mobile phone coverage, so the researchers expected a flood of accumulated messages when the birds migrated south. They were expected to pass through Kazakhstan or Russia where a text message is cheap.

Instead, some skirted those areas and did not pick up a signal until they reached Iran, where messages are more expensive – many times what the scientists had planned for in their budget.