

THE DIPPER



THE GWENT ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY
Registered charity number 1088830

GOS WEB SITE: www.gwentbirds.org.uk

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All photographs provided by Keith Roylance

Summary of GOS Committee Meeting: TUESDAY SEPTEMBER 24TH, 2019

The new website is live and looking good thanks to the hard work Verity Picken, Chris Field and Andrew Cormack amongst others. Any feedback would be welcomed and if you know anyone with suitable skills to help maintain this, please let us know.

The M4 relief road is not going ahead at the moment and CALM have asked GOS to support them in preventing any future reinstatement of the relief road.

The committee discussed again giving camera nest boxes to a few carefully selected schools and looked at the merits of various nest box designs and prices.

Providing for the future maintenance of Goytre House Wood was discussed and funds will be set aside to cover any large expenditure such as fence repair or felling in the case of disease. Richard Evans has prepared nest boxes and hopefully GOS members will be able to help him put these up. The local scouts' group are also interested in putting up a box on their property.

A new annual report writer(s) is needed as John Coleman will be stepping down after this year. Also Dave Brasseley has stepped down as outdoor programme secretary, so please volunteer if you can. Keith Roylance has been looking back at past events to see which outdoor events were popular so maybe give your feedback about what makes a good outing. Heather Daniels, indoor secretary, is working hard arranging the talk that Iolo Williams will be giving in the New Year as well as the regular programme of talks.

Summary of GOS Committee Meeting: TUESDAY JUNE 18TH, 2019

It was astounding news to hear that the M4 relief road is not going ahead. Mark Drakeford took the environmental side unlike the inquiry inspector who was allegedly very dismissive of the environmental arguments. A lot is owed to the Future Generations Commissioner.

On the subject of future generations, the committee discussed giving camera nest boxes to a few carefully selected schools in Gwent; this may depend on the enthusiasm of particular staff members at a school and the schools are yet to be selected.

Donations agreed at the last committee meeting have been paid: £500 to the GWT, Bridewell Common Appeal; £100 to the BTO Spotted Fly Catcher Appeal; £100 to the RSPB: Ring Ouzel Appeal

Work on the new website is ongoing with updates to the URL's to get the prototype layout working properly. Ideally a society member would look after the website maintenance, so if you know anyone with suitable skills, please let us know. Also, if anyone has any ideas for an article for the Annual Report please get in touch; John Coleman is willing to help polish up the articles.

The maintenance of Goytre House Wood was discussed, including nest boxes and hedges and options for the longer term.

Sadly, there was not much breeding success NWR with predation by crows and a buzzard.

The 2019 Indoor programme restarts in September and in the meantime, Alan Williams kindly agreed to lead a walk through Goytre House Wood on the 20th of July. Ways of boosting numbers at indoor and outdoor meetings were discussed, including the possibility of occasionally pooling resources with other groups for larger events at alternative venues and dates or times. The membership density seems to be concentrated in Newport/Cwmbran, followed by Abergavenny, then Chepstow/Monmouth; maybe members would welcome some events closer to their doorsteps.

GOS will be in the hide at "Life on Marsh": Magor Marsh Saturday 13th July,

LLANDEGFEDD RESERVOIR WALK - CHANGE OF DATE

The walk at Llandegfedd Reservoir scheduled to take place on Saturday November 30th has had to be re-arranged. It will now take place on Saturday December 7 th .

Meet in Fisherman's Car Park at the North end of the reservoir at 9:00 am for a gentle stroll around parts of the reservoir. (2-3 hours)

Have you visited our new website?

It's still in the same place at <http://www.gwentbirds.org.uk/> but has two new fresh looks, depending on whether you are viewing on a computer or a mobile device. Members have been sent a password to use to publish sightings directly onto the website. Non-members can still report sightings but they are subject to a pre-publication check. The home page summarises the latest sightings, next event and latest news.

NEST BOXES IN GOYTRE HOUSE WOOD

Since having Goytre House Wood the Society has always maintained a number of nest boxes within the reserve. Over the years a number have deteriorated significantly whilst others have been lost to trees falling and regrettably a few to vandalism.

This autumn we have had the help of Richard Evans (See www.projectnestbox.co.uk) who has made 31 boxes for us. 15th October saw Richard and a couple of helpers erect them throughout the wood ready for next year's breeding season.

Richard will also undertake monitoring of the boxes during the breeding season in 2020 and subsequent years.



Walk Report: 20th July – Goytre House Wood & Canal tow path walk.

Six members joined Alan Williams at Goytre Village car park for a leisurely stroll through Goytre House Wood, the Society's own nature reserve, leading on to the tow path of the Mon & Brecon canal. Walking along the tow path to Goytre Wharf where a well-deserved refreshment break was taken. We then headed back towards Goytre Village through Goytre Hall wood and along the road to return to our starting point. A pleasant three and a half hour walk undertaken in initially overcast conditions which soon brightened to a pleasant warm & sunny morning.

Thirty bird species were noted whilst mammals and butterflies were also encountered.

Bird Species: Mallard, Grey Heron, Red Kite, Buzzard, Moorhen, Lesser Black-backed Gull, Woodpigeon, Swift, Great Spotted Woodpecker, Swallow, House Martin, Grey Wagtail, Wren, Dunnock, Robin, Blackbird, Song Thrush, Mistle Thrush, Chiffchaff, Willow Warbler, Goldcrest, Blue Tit, Nuthatch, Magpie, Jackdaw, Carrion Crow, Starling, House Sparrow, Greenfinch, Goldfinch.

Mammals: Rabbit, Frog, Grey squirrel and Field Mouse.

Butterflies: Red Admiral, Wall Brown, Large White, Speckled Wood, Small White, Meadow Brown, Gatekeeper.





GOS Llanwenarth birding walk 14th September 2019

Six of us met at Llanwenarth Citra on a sunny September morning at 9am. Initially, we explored the church graveyard and found it to be alive with active birds. Nuthatch, Treecreeper, Goldcrest and numerous Chiffchaff's were some of the birds picked up here, as well as Thrush species feeding on Yew berries. We then made our way across to the River Usk and had views of a good range of riverine birds. Grey Wagtails were numerous with at least 10 observed and a Dipper's creaky song was heard. Two Kingfishers' further lifted our spirits with a flash of blue and with Cormorants overhead. We approached the floodplain and were rewarded with views of several Goosander on the river and a pristine Mistle Thrush, resplendent in the sun, singing from the top of a Hawthorn tree. As we crossed



the floodplain a Sparrowhawk flew by and a Green Woodpeckers laughing call was heard. We worked our way back and picked up Meadow Pipit in the final field, arriving at the walk's start point at about noon. A splendid morning's birding resulted in us recording 38 species.

Species recorded:

- | | | |
|--------------|--------------------------|---------------|
| Blackbird | Great Spotted Woodpecker | Mistle Thrush |
| Blue Tit | Greenfinch | Moorhen |
| Buzzard | Grey Heron | Nuthatch |
| Carrion Crow | Grey Wagtail | Pied Wagtail |
| Chaffinch | House Martin | Raven |
| Chiffchaff | Jackdaw | Robin |
| Coal Tit | Jay | Song Thrush |
| Cormorant | Kingfisher | Sparrowhawk |
| Dipper | Long-tailed Tit | Treecreeper |
| Duncock | Magpie | Wood Pigeon |
| Goldcrest | Mallard | Wren |
| Goosander | Meadow Pipit | |



PORTLAND 4th – 6th October 2019

The GOS annual trip to Portland Bird Observatory took place over the weekend of 4th – 6th October. Fourteen members made the journey down with various car sharing groups deciding on alternative routes and stop-off points along the journey.

Stopping off at RSPB Arne, Dartford Warbler were seen. A group of 48 Spoonbills were on the lagoons and estuary. Two Green Woodpeckers were foraging in one of the fields whilst a Slow Worm was located under a corrugated iron shelter and Parasol Mushrooms were evident along hedgerows.

Activity at Portland Observatory was relatively quiet although at least three Firecrest and similar number of Goldcrest feeding in the front garden was a highlight for Saturday morning. Trips to Ferrybridge and RSPB Lodmoor brought up a few more species – a Grey Phalarope and Little Gull at Lodmoor being the most memorable.

Sunday saw a repeat visit to RSPB Lodmoor and a drop in at RSPB Radipole. A Ruff at Lodmoor was easily visible from the footpath.

The journey home saw a stop off at RSPB Greylake in an effort to see the reported Spotted Crake, which failed to show. A short stop at Ham Wall reserve gave us brief sightings of Bittern & Marsh Harrier.

A total of a minimum 81 species was noted over the weekend. It was an enjoyable weekend away.



Next year's visit is booked for the weekend of October 2nd – 4th 2020.

What Three Words?

Two of the mediterranean gulls spotted during the weekend at Portland had coloured rings, one at Ferrybridge and one at Lodmoor. As we were reporting the one at Lodmoor, to the French co-ordinator of the ringing project, we realised that OS map co-ordinates were probably not that helpful in working out the location of the map. Having recently read a news report on an app called *What Three Words* which enables you to locate any 3m² square anywhere in the world (<https://what3words.com/people.graver.sprouted>), we used that to pass the information on. Using the satellite view, we could demonstrate where the bird had been seen. Although I would not recommend using it on social media, it could be extremely helpful in passing information to county recorders, where on a large site, a bird had been seen, when there are no useful landmarks to site it against.



Highlights

The long-staying Glossy Ibis remained at Newport Wetlands (4th). Two Common Cranes were also seen at this site (11th), as were three Garganey (14th). An Osprey was reported from Llanwenarth (23rd).

Newport Wetlands Reserve

Wader numbers remained high throughout the month.

Other sites

Churring Nightjars were reported from Wentwood(One on 23rd) and Beacon Hill (Three on 28th).

Two Ring-necked Parakeets were seen at Blackwood (25th).

There were several reports of late spring migrants from a number of locations. Sadly Lapwing and Curlew have almost disappeared as a breeding species in the north-west of the county.

Highlights

A Wood Sandpiper was reported from Newport Wetlands (4th). A Spoonbill was also present at this site (8th to 26th), as was the long-staying Glossy Ibis (16th to 22nd).

Newport Wetlands Reserve

A Fulmar was present (8th). A male Marsh Harrier was seen on several dates (between 15th to 22nd).

350 Manx Shearwaters were recorded offshore (16th). Four Mediterranean Gulls were reported (16th).

Other sites

Five Yellow Wagtails were seen at Llanbadoc (1st). Mediterranean Gulls were reported from Peterstone Gout (two on 15th) and Collister Pill (17th). A Hawfinch was seen at Caerleon Church (18th). Two Grasshopper Warblers were recorded at Waunafon Bog (22nd)

Gwent UKBS Report for July 2019

Chris Hatch

Highlights

The Glossy Ibis stayed at Newport Wetlands for most of the month. A Great White Egret was also seen at this site (15th), as were two Spoonbills (24th to 30th) and a Wood Sandpiper (29th to 31st).

Newport Wetlands Reserve

A Mediterranean Gull was seen (6th), with three Mediterranean Gulls later present (11th). A male Marsh Harrier was reported (13th).

Other sites

Up to three Mediterranean Gulls were seen in the Blackrock/ Sudbrook area at various dates during the month.

Gwent UKBS Report-August 2019

Chris Hatch

Highlights

A Little Gull was reported from Llandegfedd Reservoir (1st). Up to two Wood Sandpipers were reported from Newport Wetlands (1st to 5th). A Spoonbill was also present at Newport Wetlands (3rd to 16th), as was the long-staying Glossy Ibis (8th to 31st). Two Great White Egrets were present at Newport Wetlands (12th). A Wryneck was reported from Peterstone (29th).

Newport Wetlands Reserve

A male Merlin was reported on two occasions (3rd and 24th). Two Mediterranean Gulls were seen (3rd), with a further single bird seen (5th). An early Short-eared Owl was reported (11th). A Fulmar was seen offshore (11th). Other sightings of note included a Hen Harrier (26th), a female Marsh Harrier (31st) and three Curlew Sandpipers (28th).

Other sites

Two Gannets were seen offshore at Sudbrook (10th). A male Common Scoter was reported from Llandegfedd Reservoir (23rd). A Barn Owl was recorded at Marshfield (24th).

Gwent UKBS Report for September 2019

Chris Hatch

Highlights

A Semi-Palmated Sandpiper was present at Newport Wetlands (3rd to 4th). The long-staying Glossy Ibis was reported throughout the month. An Osprey was present at

Monmouth (10th to 12th), whilst two Ospreys were reported from Llandegfedd reservoir on several dates. A Lapland Bunting was recorded at Coldharbour Pill (13th). Eight Great White Egrets were seen at Newport Wetlands (16th), whilst seven Spoonbills were also present at this site (22nd). A Woodlark flew over Newport Wetlands (26th) and a juvenile Red-necked Phalarope was also seen at this site (30th).

Newport Wetlands Reserve

Wader numbers were high, with species of note including a Little Stint (2nd), two Curlew Sandpipers (10th) and two Spotted Redshanks (21st). Marsh Harriers were reported on several dates. A Mediterranean Gull was seen (18th)

Other sites

A Mediterranean Gull was reported from Sudbrook (16th and 25th).

BIRDWATCHING AT LLANDEGFEDD RESERVOIR

Birdwatching permits are required for Llandegfedd Reservoir from October 31st - March 1st. They can be purchased from the Welsh Water visitor centre located at the Dam end of the reservoir at a cost of £8.00.

For entry to the north end of the reservoir you will need a key for the car park gate. The keys cost £6.00 and you can obtain them from the visitor centre at the same time as the permit. If you already hold a key from a previous year you do **NOT** need a new one.

The 'Opening Times' for the North End are 08:30 – 16:00 during the period 1st November to 1st March. Outside of those hours a different padlock is in place so your access key will not function.

Your Indoor Programme:

All meetings will be held at Goytre Village Hall, commencing at 7:30 pm unless indicated *otherwise

Sat Oct 26 th	Ed Drewitt	Urban Peregrines
Sat Nov 9 th	Dave Brassey	Scotland 2018
Sat Nov 23 rd	John Coleman	Turkey
Sat Dec 7 th	Neil Glenn	Valley Parade – Wildlife of the Lower Rio Grande Valley
2020		
Sat Jan 25 th	AGM	Members photos 4 x 15 min