**Annual Bird Report 2024.**

Bird recording in the county by RNHS is now virtually restricted to the reservoirs and one or two other sites, so it is impossible to know how the birds of Rutland are faring across our area in the face of climate change, increased building development and the proposed solar farms. Wildfowl counts were collated for Rutland Water, Eyebrook Reservoir, Fort Henry Ponds and Rygate Lake, Banthorpe Gravel Pit and Holywell Lake (which is actuallyi n Lincolnshire).

There were records of scarcer species from both reservoirs. Rutland Water attracted a Long-tailed Duck, a Leach’s Petrel, a Little Auk, a Long-eared Owl, a Great Grey Shrike and a much appreciated singing Savi’s Warbler. Eyebrook Reservoir saw a Green-winged Teal, a Pectoral Sandpiper, a Long-billed Dowitcher, a Sabine’s Gull and a Roseate Tern. Other ’goodies’ were White-fronted Geese at Banthorpe and Waxwings near Oakham.

Former common migrants – Cuckoo, Spotted Flycatcher and Nightingale – continue to struggle and will probably be lost in the next few years. They are now , apparently, joined by the introduced Little Owl. On the positive side, Ospreys continue to thrive and expand their population and it was good to confirm breeding Hobby and Peregrine.

My thanks to the following members and friends for their records:-

T.P.Appleton, R.F.Baker, D.& J.Ball, T.Barker, A.J.& L.Biddle, T.Collins, A.Comber, G.Chiverton, B.Fox, Lord Gainsborough, Dr.C.H.Gallimore, N.Gibson, M.& G.Griffin, LROS, P.& B.Lewis, T.Macrill, M.Markham, D.Masters, K.Mathers, I.Misselbrook, T.Mitcham, B.Moore, J.Morrell, P.Murray, D.Needham, J.W.Nourish, M.Nourish, C.I.Park, P.Robinson, J.S.& J. Rodgers, RWNR, D.Scott, T.Sexton, W.O.Smith.

Abbreviations Used.

ArmW - Armley Wood Norm - Normanton

BGP - Banthorpe Gravel Pit Oak - Oakham

BarnsW - Barnsdale Wood Pick - Pickworth

Barr - Barrow PGW - Pickworth Great Wood

Bel - Belmesthorpe QF - Quarry Farm

Braun - Braunston Rid - Ridlington

BFP - Burley Fishponds RWDam - Rutland Water Dam

BW - Burley Wood RWEg - Rutland Water Egleton Reserve

Cott - Cottesmore RWLynd - -Rutland Water Lyndon Reserve

Emp - Empingham RWMW - Rutland Water Main Water

Ext - Exton RWNA - Rutland Water North Arm

EBR - Eyebrook Reservoir RWSA - Rutland Water South Arm

FHP - Fort Henry Ponds RWVTC - Rutland Water Vol. Training Centre

Greet - Greetham Stam - Stamford

Hamb - Hambleton StokeW - Stoke Wood

Kett - Ketton Tin - Tinwell

KettQ - Ketton Quarry TunnW - Tunneley Wood

Lang - Langham Upp - Uppingham

LCast - Little Casterton WardW - Wardley Wood

Luff Airfield - Luffenham Airfield WestW - Westland Wood

ML - Mounts Lodge Whit - Whitwell

**See also Wildfowl Counts.**

**Brent Goose.** Single birds were at RWDam on 04.01., RWNA on 17.10. and EBR on 12.11.

**Canada Goose.** Bred RW and BGP(a pair and two goslings on 13.05.) 12 flew north at FHP on

08.06. and there were five there On 16.06. 12 were by Rygate Lake in Ext Park on 18.11. with 11 still present on 14.12.

**Barnacle Goose.** One was at Rygate Lake and later RWNA on 06.01. and at FHP on 19. and

24.02. A pair was at BGP between 16.04 and 23.05. and at RWEg4 on 09.07. and BFP on 27.07.

**Greylag Goose.** Bred RW, EBR and BGP. Away from RW, high counts at FHP were 311 on

19.02., 324 on 24.02. and 151 0n 30.11.

**Pink-footed Goose.** Spring singles were at EBR on 26./27.04. and RWEg between 26.04. and

08.05. Autumn flocks overflew RW:- 26 north-east on 11.11., 130 east on12.11., 80 on 28.11. and 430 on 15.12.

**White-fronted Goose.** Three were at BGP between 08.03. and 24.03. and one was at RWEg1 on

07./08.05.

**Mute Swan.** Bred RW, EBR, BGP and FHP (one pair).

**Bewick’s Swan.** Two were at EBR on 07.01. and RWNA on 11.01. One was at RWEg1/4 on

17.02. and six were on RWEg4 on 30.11.

**Whooper Swan.** On 06.01. 23 flew over RW and there were seven at EBR, with 24 there next

day. Eight were in RWNA on 11.01. with two on Eg1 on 26.02. and seven on Eg4 on 29.03. Two at RWEg1 and 11 at EBR on 27.10 were the first autumn birds. 22 flew west at Emp on 01.11., There were eight at RWNA on 08. and 12.11. and two at EBR on 11.11. with four on Eg4 on the last of the year.

**Egyptian Goose.** Away from the stronghold at RW (breeding confirmed) a pair was at Rygate

Lake all year, except between 04.08. and 06.10. Two pairs were present there on 26.11. and 14.12. Seven were at BGP on 11.10. and two were at FHP on 10.11.

**Shelduck.** An apparently declining visitor at both reservoirs with at least one pair breeding at RW.

Six were in RWNA on 06.01. A pair at FHP on 08.06. was the only Ext record.

**Ruddy Shelduck.** One was at EBR on 17.06. RW and at RWEg/NA on six dates between 29.06.

and 18.09.

**Mandarin Duck.** Regular at RWBFP. One was at FHP on 24.02. There were April records

between 12.04. and 21.04. from Geest (three males on 12.), BGP (one on 16.04.) and QF (four males on 19.04.). Two flew south at FHP on 21. with a pair there on 27. Four were at RWEg on 17.05. There was a pair at Rygate Lake on 19.10. and at FHP on 18.11.

**Garganey.** There were spring records from EBR and RW between 01.04. and 22.06. of one or

two birds. Autumn birds were reported between 08.08. and 05.10., mainly from RWNA with one or two at EBR between 01.09. and 22.09. The RW peak was four on 10.08.

**Shoveler.** Reported from both reservoirs. Absent from FHP only between 12.02. and 23.02. with

two pairs breeding on lower lake. Broods of eight (22.06.) and five (21.07.) were hatched. There was a good autumn passage peaking at 94 on 21.09.

**Gadwall.** Reported from both reservoirs, FHP and Rygate Lake. Peak counts at FHP were 62 on

21.01. and 80 on 14.09. Two pairs bred at FHP with broods of five and just one and at least two pairs bred at RWEg.

**Wigeon.** A common winter visitor at both reservoirs and FHP with one or two summering. There

were 66 on a flooded field at Cott on 08.01. Present at FHP to 23.03. with a max. of 129 on 24.02. 34 were at Rygate Lake on 28.01. There were two at RWEg4 on 11.05. with one on 18.05. Birds were back at FHP from 09.09. with a peak of 90 on 28.12.

**Mallard.** A widespread and under-recorded species with breeding confirmed at both reservoirs,

FHP (at least five broods), BGP, Geest and Rygate Lake. The peak count at FHP was 152 on 09.09.

**Pintail.** A passage and winter visitor at both reservoirs. One or two were at FHP between 09.09.

and 19.10.

**Teal.** A passage and winter visitor at both reservoirs, FHP, BGP and Rygate Lake. Up to eight

were at FHP to 30.03. There was a pair at BGP on 17.21.06. Autumn birds were at FHP from 10.08 with an autumn peak of 110 on 19.10. An exceptional 75 were at Rygate Lake on 29.12.

**Green-winged Teal.** One was at EBR between 01. and 03.01. A rare visitor from America.

**Red-crested Pochard.** A male was in BFP on 03.02. All other reports were from 15.10. to 16.12.

with birds at RW and EBR, peaking at six at RW on 14. and 16.12.

**Pochard.** Reported in declining numbers from both reservoirs. At least one pair bred at RWEg.

**Tufted Duck.** Present all year at both reservoirs and FHP with one or two at Rygate Lake and

BGP. Winter peaks at FHP were 68 on 21.01. and 82 on 09.12. There were two broods at RWEg3 on 25.07. and one in RWNA on 27.07. One pair bred at FHP, fledging three young.

**Scaup.** All records in the first winter period were from RW, mainly NA with birds present to 12.04.

and a max. of nine on 24.02. Autumn birds were reported from 28.09 (RWSA3) to the end of the year, mainly one or two at EBR from 12.10. to 04.11. but up to five in RWNA between 07. and 31.12.

**Common Scoter.** There was a good scatter of reports from both reservoirs with up to three

between 11.02. and 26.04. on five dates. One was at EBR on 13.07 with three at RWDam on 16.07. 14 were in RWSA on 23.09.and there were further RW records between 03.10 and 16.11 on seven dates with a max. of six on 31.10.

**Long-tailed Duck.** A female was at RWEg3 on 30.03. and between 10. and 13.04.

**Goldeneye.** A winter visitor at the reservoirs. 30 were at RWDam on 02.04. No autumn records

were received.

**Smew.** Present at both reservoirs in both winter periods. At RW birds were seen to 17.03. with a

max. of two on 13.03. EBR, always a popular site, had birds to 09.03. and a peak of eight on 09.02. Few were reported in the second winter period with one or two at EBR from 29.11. and RW from 10.12. to the end of the year.

**Goosander.** A winter visitor at the reservoirs, occasional elsewhere. Increasingly seen in

summer. One was on the flooded field at Cott on 07.01., four were on Rygate Lake on 28.01.and and a pair were on the R.Welland at Tin on 04.02. Our last spring bird was at RWEg4 on 22.03. A female was at BGP on 01.05. and a female was at RWDam on 12.08. Eight were at this site on 12.10. and three were at Rygate Lake on 29.12.

**Red-breasted Merganser.** An immature male was at RWDam between 18.09. and 04.10. and a

male was over RWMW.

**Ruddy Duck.** An eclipse male was on RWEg3 on 24.08.

**Red-legged Partridge.** Well distributed where birds are released for shooting, as at Ext. No

counts or breeding records.

**Grey Partridge.** Almost all records were from Ext Park with birds noted between 03.02 and

11.08. with a covey of five on the latter date. Three were at QF on 24.04. and six at Bel on 27.12.

**Pheasant.** Well distributed across the county, especially where birds are released for shooting as

at Ext. No records.

**See also Wildfowl Counts for Divers, Grebes, Herons and Cormorants.**

**Great Northern Diver.** Two were at RWDam on 06.01. increasing to at least four on 17.02 Two

were seen to 26.03. with one remaining to20.04. One was at RWDam on 27.10. with one or two reported to 09.12. and three on 11. and 13.12.

**Leach’s Petrel.** One was in RWNA on 28.09., a rare inland record of this diminutive sea-bird.

**Little Grebe.** Present all year but a local breeder with nesting confirmed at RWEg and FHP. Nos

at FHP peaked at 11 on 26. and 30.11.

**Red-necked Grebe.** A juv. was at RWDam between 01. and 19.12.

**Great Crested Grebe.** Present all year at both reservoirs with breeding confirmed at both. One

was at FHP on 12.02.

**Slavonian Grebe.** Two were at RWNA/SA from 01.01. to 21.03. with one in NA/SA3 from 12.10

to the end of the year.

**Black-necked Grebe.** One was at RWEg3 between 15/27.10. with two at EBR on 30.11. and one

in RWSA3 on 13.12.

**Spoonbill.** This distinctive species is becoming a more regular visitor. One or two were at RWEg

on three dates between 24.04 and 01.05. with two on 09.05. One flew over EBR on 02.06. and there were singles at RWEg on 22./24.10. and 26.10.

**Bittern.** One was booming from the RWEg3 reed bed between 05.05. and 18.05. One was

photographed on Eg2 on 02.08.and one was in flight over Eg3 on 14.12.

**Cattle Egret.** Singles were noted on seven dates between 24.02. and 06.05. at RWEg/SA. One

was at EBR on 01.08. and 15.09. and one was at RWEg1 on 17.10 and 16./17./11., associating with the cattle.

**Grey Heron.** Regular at both reservoirs (bred at RW), FHP, BGP and Rygate Lake. Two were

fairly regular at FHP throughout the year.

**Great White Egret.** Regular at RW throughout the year with birds also reported from EBR. There

were six records from FHP, in Jan, Feb, Oct and Dec. One was at Rygate Lake on 29.12.

**Little Egret.** Regularly present at both reservoirs with breeding at RW and also reported from

BGP (seven on 30.08), FHP (three on 08.03.) and Rygate Lake (singles in June, July, Sept. and Nov.).

**Cormorant.** Present at the reservoirs with breeding at RWBFP, where 73 nests were counted on

15.06. A regular visitor to FHP with a max. of four on 21.01. and 06.09., Rygate Lake (three on 09.03.) and BGP.

**Osprey.** The first bird was back at RW on 12.03. and there were regular reports from EBR from

15.03. and throughout the summer. Wandering birds were seen over Bel on 22.04. and Ext Park on 22.06. and 11.08. Twelve pairs bred across the area, fledging 25 young. Of these, seven pairs were in Rutland where one pair failed at the egg stage and the remaining six pairs fledged 14 young. One was at EBR on 01.09. with two at RWBFP on 14.09. and the last there on 05.10.

**Sparrowhawk.** A well distributed species, regular in gardens (Barr and Oak) where prey included

Feral Pigeon in Oak on 08.02. Display was noted over BW, WestW and EBR in Jan. and March and birds carrying prey, indicating local breeding were in Ext Park on 07.07. and BFP on 27.07. On 10.12. one was ‘clocked’ at 30-35mph as it flew alongside a car on Braun Hill and on 17.12. one was perched near active bird feeders at BFP without upsetting the feeding Blue Tits and Great Tits.

**Marsh Harrier.** There were records from RWEg in every month except June with three over Eg3

on 11.05. Singles were in Ext Park on 16.05. and 03.08. and a female/imm. was at EBR between 28.07. and 14.08. with a juv. there on03.09. A juv. quartered game crops at BGP on 15.11.

**Hen Harrier.** A ’ring-tail’ was at RWEg4 on 06.12.

**Red Kite.** A widespread species and probably the commonest raptor in the county with records

from all parts of Rutland. Seven were attracted to a deer carcase at PGW on 09.01. Two mobbed a Brown Hare near Walk Farm on 10.02. c. 40 were at the Ext winter roost in Feb with 25 noted there on 06.11. Breeding was confirmed at QF, FHP and CottW.

**Buzzard.** A widespread species which is now rarely reported. Display was noted over all Ext

woodlands and FHP IN March and April. Probably bred again in QF wood and fledged young were heard in Ext Park in Aug.

**Water Rail.** Present throughout the year at FHP, breeding on both parts of the reserve. Tape

playback revealed 35 responses on 16.02. and 43 on 06.12. Singles were heard or seen at FHP on 20.01., 06.11. 16.11. and 26.11.

**Moorhen.** A common species by water courses, ponds and lakes across the county. Occasional

at the QF ponds. At FHP nos. peaked at 82 on 09.09., when the water level in top lake was very low.

**Coot.** This species prefers larger water bodies than the Moorhen and was reported from both

reservoirs, FHP, Rygate Lake and BGP. Peak winter counts at FHP were 138 on 07.01. and 155 on 14.12.

**Crane.** Five flew south-west over Oak on 08.04.

**See also Rutland Water Wader Counts.**

**Oystercatcher.** One was back at RWEg on 10.02. and four pairs were on Eg4 on 23.02. Four

were at EBR on 10.03. and a pair were by the R.Gwash at Ry on 16.04. Bred at RWEg. Two were at EBR on 06.06. with singles there on 22. and 29.06. One was at RWDam on 24.09.

**Avocet.** Four were at RWEg on 09. and 22.03. with two on 27.04. A good run of records at EBR

saw up to six between 05. and 26.05. Eight were at RWEg on 21.06. and there were singles at EBR on 14./18.08. and RWEg1 on 14.09.

**Lapwing.** Monthly counts at EBR were 1700 on 14.01., 105 on 11.02. four on 10.03., eight on

06.06., 268 on 21.07., 372 on 18.08. 118 on 20.10., 66 on 17.11. and 921 on 15.12. c.130 were near Turnpole Wood on 16.01. and 200 flew over QF on 19.01. There were breeding season records from RWEg, EBR and BGP with breeding confirmed only at RW.

**Golden Plover.** A winter and passage visitor. EBR had 20 on 08.01., 37 on 30.01. and 150 on

04.02. 30 flew east over QF on 26.03., our last spring record. There were c.300 at RWEg4 on 18.10. EBR had 1450 on 17.11. and 866 on 15.12.

**Grey Plover.** A passage visitor, mainly in spring. Early birdS were at RWEg on 30.03. and

01.04. Spring passage there was between 30.04. and 21.05. with a max. of three on 12.05. Three were at EBR on 15.05.

**Ringed Plover.** One at RWEg4 on 25.02. was the first arrival with five there on 11.05. Spring

birds were at EBR between 04.05. and 29.06. with five on 23.05. An excellent autumn passage at EBR between 18.08. and 06.10. saw double figure counts from 24.08. to 07.09. and a max. of 42 on 26.08. 13 were in RWNA on 07.09.

**Little Ringed Plover.** No early records were received. Five were on RWEg4 on 05.05.

Increasing to six on 21.06. Noted at EBR from 29.06. to 14.07 with a peak of seven on 05.07. Also at EBR there were two on 18.08., four on 24.08. and singles on 05. and 21.09.

**Whimbrel.** Spring passage at RW was between 21.04. and 04.05. with reports on nine dates and

a max. of nine on 27.04. Three early autumn birds were at EBR on 10.07.

**Curlew.** Reported from RWEg in every month except June. The only records away from there

were singles over Cott Airfield on 11.05. and Ext on 01.07. with one at EBR on 01.09.

**Bar-tailed Godwit.** One or two spring birds were at RWEg4 between 22.04. and 03.05. One was

at EBR on 07.11.

**Black-tailed Godwit.** Three were at EBR on 13.04. c.100 Icelandic migrants were on RWEg4 on

06.04. with two or three to 24.04. Three were at EBR on 28.04. Autumn birds were seen from 28.06. when there were 12 on Eg4 and two there on 23.07. The main autumn passage was at EBR, where there were birds from 10.07. to 21.09 on 15 dates and a max. of nine on 18. and 24.08. Singles were at RW on 12. and 24.10.

**Turnstone.** Spring singles were at EBR on 09./10.05. and RW on 11.and17.05. Two were in NA

on 08.05. The first autumn birds were at EBR on 16.07. and RWBFP on 12.08. There were further EBR records from 02.09. (six) to 22.09. and singles at RW on 01, 24. and 26.09.

**Knot.** An early single was on RWEg4 on 27.03. The first autumn bird was at EBR on 31.08. with

one at RWEg4 on 09.09. Up to five (06.11.) were at EBR between 03. and 11.11. and one was there on 15.12.

**Ruff.** No late winter or spring birds were reported with six at EBR and three at RWEg on 09.07.

were the first. The main passage was again at EBR where up to three were regular between 20.07. and 06.10. There were two in RWNA on 14.08.

**Curlew Sandpiper.** Our only record was of a juv. at EBR on 02./03.09.

**Sanderling.** Singles were at RWEg on three dates between 27.04. and 26.05. At EBR up to four

(16.05.) were noted between 11.05. and 03.06.

**Dunlin.** There were records in every month. EBR counts were:- 47 on 14.01., 19 on 10.03., ten

on 23.05., 19 on 03.09. and 14 on 30.11. Nos. at RW were very low this year with 25 on 11.02. the highest count.

**Little Stint.** There was one spring record, at RWEg4 on 22.04. Autumn birds were at EBR on

14./18.08. and 31.08/04.09. One was at RWEg4 on 31.08.

**Pectoral Sandpiper.** One was at EBR on 10/11.07., an uncommon passage visitor.

**Long-billed Dowitcher.** A rare passage migrant, a juv. was at EBR on 06./07.10.

**Woodcock.** In the first winter period up to six (04.02.) were flushed in TunnW between 07.01. and

03.03. A remarkable 64 were seen along the rides in BW on 16.02. Autumn birds were noted between 30.11. and 22.12. in TunnW ( six on 30.11.), CottW, StokeW (15 on 14.12. and LCast.

**Jack Snipe.** Two were ringed at RWEg on 18.01. and one was at EBR on 21.01. One was on

Eg4 on 16.03. There were two autumn records of singles at RWEg on 10.10. and 17.12.

**Snipe.** In the first winter period, UP TO 09.04. records came from RW (ten ringed on 11.01.),EBR

(six on 12.01.), FHP and BGP. Two were at BGP on 14.08. and there were monthly records to the end of the year from Sept. at RW with 11 on 20.12.

**Red-necked Phalarope.** One was on RWEg1 on 27.05.

**Common Sandpiper.** One or two were at RW on spring passage from 6.04. to 21.05. Three

were at FHP on 04.05. with two late birds at EBR on 29.06. Autumn passage was noted from 08.07 at RW and EBR with a max. of five at EBR on 03.09. and the final three at RWDam on 24.09.

**Green Sandpiper.** One was at RWEg on 10.02. and one at FHP on14.04. Presumed returning

birds were noted at EBR from 08.06. and birds were regular at both reservoirs to 17.11. with peak counts of nine atRWEg3 on 08.08. and four at EBR on 01./02.09. Noted at FHP between 26.08.and 13.10 with three on 14.09.

**Redshank.** Noted at RW in every month except Aug. 31 were at EBR on 28.04. with ten there on

09.07. and one or two in Sept., Nov. and Dec.

**Wood Sandpiper.** All records were of autumn birds. One was at EBR on 15./18.07. and there

were two at RWLynd on 30.07. Two were at EBR between 03. and 06.09 and there were singles at RWEg on 12. and 15.09.

**Spotted Redshank.** One was at RWEg4 between 25.04. and 05.05. with one at EBR on 09.05.

Other singles were at RWEg on 11.06. and 24.08.

**Greenshank.** Spring birds were at RWEg between 18.04. and 17.05. with three on 11.05.

Autumn passage at EBR was between 10.07. and 06.10. with a max. of four on 05.09. and 06.10. One or two were at RWEg/NA between 14.08. and 22.09.

**Kittiwake.** One was at RBFP on 25.05.

**Sabine’s Gull.** A juv. was at EBR on 22.09.

**Black-headed Gull.** Present throughout the year, breeding at RWEg, with large nos. of

continental birds in winter. Some RW counts were:- 346 on 09.04., 140 on 11.06., 611 on 23.07 and 1210 on 20.08. At EBR there were 444 on 10.03. and 321 on 18.08.

**Little Gull.** Singles were at RWEg1 on 07.and 09.03. with one at EBR on 09.03. and five there on

31.03. Singles were at RW on 02. 09. and 11.05. with two at EBR on the latter date and one there next day.

**Mediterranean Gull.** An occasional visitor at the reservoirs, often found in evening roosts. One

was at EBR on 07.02 with one at RW on five March dates from 05.03. and one on 04./05.04.

**Common Gull.** A winter and passage visitor, often numerous on spring migration. Some RW

counts were:- 8500 on 21.01. 12 on 23.07. and 20.08 and six on 22.09. EBR had 400 on 22.03., 55 on 07.04. and 500 on 09.11.

**Great Black-backed Gull.** Present at RW and EBR all year with mainly imm. birds in summer.

RW had ten on 09.04., 17 on 20.08. and 34 on 22.09.

**Herring Gull.** A winter and passage visitor at the reservoirs. 1500 were at the EBR roost on

21.01.

**Caspian Gull.** A scarce visitor at the reservoirs on passage and in winter. Birds were reported as

follows:- one at EBR on 20./21.01., with all others at RW, two on 13.01. one on 13.02., one on 13.04, up to three between 20. and 30.07. and one or two between 01. and 05.08 and on 14.09. One was in RWNA on 05.10.

**Yellow-legged Gull.** A passage visitor, most regular in summer and autumn. Noted at RW from

Feb. with a pair nesting on Eg4 and producing two chicks – a rare inland occurrence. The July peak was 11 on 23.07. Three were at EBR on 17.08. with two on 20.10. One was at FHP on 13.10.

**Lesser Black-backed Gull.** A regular passage visitor at the reservoirs, less common in winter.

No significant counts were received.

**Sandwich Tern.** At RWEg there was one on 09.04., eight on 13.04. and one on 05.06.

**Little Tern.** This nationally rare seabird was well reported There were April singles at EBR on

22./23. and 29.04. whilst RWEg had one on 04.05., three on 10.05. and one on 12.05. One was at RWEg on 02.06. with two at EBR on 07.06. and a single on 10.06.

**Roseate Tern.** A rare visitor, one was at EBR on 28.07.

**Common Tern.** One at EBR on 03.04. was the first arrival. Bred on the lagoons and at BFP at

RW where some counts were 54 on 11.06., 43 on 23.07. and 60 on 20.08. 40 were at EBR on 06.06. Two at RWDam on 14.09. was our last record.

**Arctic Tern.** A fairly light spring passage was mainly at RW between 07.04. and 11.06. with a

max. of only 15 on 21.04. Up to three were at EBR between 08.04. and 04.05. The only autumn report was of a single at EBR on 05.09.

**Black Tern.** Spring passage was at both reservoirs from 26.04. to 12.05. with max. counts of

seven at RW on 05.05. and six at EBR on 12.05. Autumn birds were mainly at RW between 01.08. and 26.09. with 11 on 12.08. the peak count. One or two were at EBR between 03. and 28.09.

**Little Auk.** One was at RWMW on 10.12.

**Feral Pigeon**. Local populations were noted in Oak, Upp and Kett Cement Works. Up to 150

regularly flew out from Stam to feed on fields by QF. 11 fed regularly in an Oak garden in Feb.

**Stock Dove.** A well distributed resident of woodland and farmland. Reported from QF, FHP, Ext

woodlands and RW. Fed regularly in a Barrow garden in Jan. and Feb. with a max. of nine on 14.01. One or two fed in an Oak garden in Feb. Bred in a Barn Owl nest box in Ext Park.

**Woodpigeon.** A common farmland and suburban species where mature trees provide nest sites.

Up to 19 fed in an Oak garden in Feb. c..500 fed in fields by QF in Oct.

**Collared Dove.** Mainly a suburban and village species which exploits garden feeding stations.

Some decline noted but 44 were on telephone wires in Eg village on 12.10.

**Cuckoo.** A declining summer visitor, hopefully under-recorded. First noted at RW on the late

date of 30.04. Singing birds subsequently reported only from QF, Geest, Pick and Man with an early last date of 28.06.

**Barn Owl.** An uncommon resident whose numbers fluctuate with declines following harsh winters.

There were reports from 12 sites (seven last year). Bred in nest boxes at RWEg, Whit (five young), Ext Park (three young ringed), Ext and Geest.

**Tawny Owl.** A resident of woods and parkland. There were records from eight sites (five last

year) with breeding confirmed in Ext Park and at a nest box in Oak.

**Little Owl.** An introduced species noted at RWNorm (bred in nest box), BFP, Bel and Edith

Weston – just four sites, the same as last year.

**Long-eared Owl.** There was an interesting record of one in an outbuilding at BFP on 22.07.

**Short-eared Owl.** Two were at Luff Airfield on 24.02

**Swift.** A declining summer visitor with the first two birds at RW on 23.04. Few records were

received with the only ‘screaming parties’. of c.15 birds, at Emp and Barr in June. No significant last date.

**Kingfisher.** A scarce resident on rivers but more frequent at the reservoirs. Away from RW

records came from EBR, FHP, BGP, Tin and Foster’s Bridge (R.Chater).

**Great Spotted Woodpecker.** A well distributed resident with drumming noted from 28.01. in

TunnW and then from Barrow, ArmW, PGW, QF and BarnsW. Garden feeders were visited at Ext and Upp. Brief drumming was heard in Ext Park on 29.12. Noted at only nine sites (11 last year).

**Green Woodpecker.** Widespread across the county but greatly under-recorded with reports from

only seven sites (eight last year) and breeding confirmed at Norm.

**Kestrel.** Thinly distributed across Rutland with records from ten sites (nine last year). In

Ext Park three nest boxes were occupied but no young were ringed.

**Merlin.** One was at EBR on 11.10.

**Hobby.** A scarce summer visitor with our first record of three at RWEg on 30.04. Also noted at

Geest, and EBR. Up to five were at RWEg between June and Aug. A pair fledged three young at one site. Singles were at RWEg on 07. and13.10.

**Peregrine.** A rare breeder, present throughout the year. Regular at RW and reported from EBR

on 01.09. Two pairs bred at established sites, last year’s tree nesting pair again fledging three young at a different Carrion Crow nest. The Stam pair at All Saint’s church were also successful. Singles roosted on Oak church on 13.09. and Greet church on 13.10.

**Great Grey Shrike.** One was briefly at RWEg1 on 10.11.

**Jay.** Well distributed in woodland across the county. Under recorded. Reported at RWEg, Ext

estate woods, FHP , Pick and PGW.

**Magpie.** A common bird with a widespread distribution where there are overgrown hedgerows

and scrub. Frequent in suburban gardens. QF remains a stronghold with up to 15 regularly reported.

**Jackdaw.** Common at quarries, in woodland along hedgerows with mature trees and in urban

areas. No records were received.

**Rook.** A widespread species where a mix of arable land and pasture provide good feeding

opportunities. No rookery counts and the QF rookery was abandoned.

**Carrion Crow.** A widespread and common species from open country to woodland and the

suburbs with nos. controlled on shooting estates. No records were received.

**Raven.** An uncommon but increasing species with records from 11 sites (eight last year) and

breeding confirmed at six sites; Bel (two young), FHP (four young), Norm (three young), Kett, BW and CottW.

**Waxwing.** Two were at Oak water treatment works on 05.01.

**Coal Tit.** Well distributed in coniferous and mixed woodland. Noted at feeders in Ext, Oak and

TunnW, where up to five a time were seen.

**Marsh Tit.** A local woodland resident with birds reported from TunnW, PGW, BFP, EBR and PC.

**Blue Tit.** A common and widespread species in woodland and gardens. Up to 15 at a time visited

TunnW feeders in both winter periods.

**Great Tit.** A common and well distributed species in woodland and gardens. Up to ten at a time

visited TunnW feeders in both winter periods.

**Skylark.** A breeding bird on farmland and waste ground with a marked autumn passage. Song

was heard near Pick on 29.01. Remains well established in Ext Park on wide field margins and at QF.

**Sand Martin.** One at RWDam on 12.03. was the first with records from EBR by the end of the

month. Bred in the two artificial banks at RWEg and in a stone wall at Norm (eight pairs). Our last record was at FHP on 14.09.

**Swallow.** A well distributed summer and passage visitor. One at RWBFP was the first record

but nos. seemed low this year and there were few subsequent reports. Our last one was at RWBFP on 15.09.

**House Martin.** A well distributed summer and passage visitor, first seen at RW on 06.04. with

‘good nos.’ at EBR on 09.04. No breeding records were received and our last record was at RWBFP on 15.09.

**Cetti’s Warbler.** Present on both parts of RW reserve throughout the year. Two were singing at

Geest on 20.05. and one at FHP on 06. and 10.11. was a first record for the site.

**Long-tailed Tit.** A widespread resident of scrubby areas, visiting garden feeding stations in

winter. Up to three visited two Oak gardens in Feb. 22 were along a hedge near ML on 08.11.

**Yellow-browed Warbler.** A rare passage visitor, two were ringed at RWEg on 04.10. Between

04. and 15.10. six were ringed at Luff Airfield and one was at FHP on 06.10.

**Willow Warbler.** An apparently declining summer visitor. First heard at RWEg on 28.03. with the

next at QF on 03.04. Poorly reported during the breeding season, our last record was at FHP on 30.08.

**Chiffchaff.** A widespread summer and passage visitor with increasing records of wintering birds.

There were no records during the first winter period with one singing at RWEg on 10.03. the first of the year. Seven were at Luff Airfield on 15.03. Noted in Ext woodlands and QF throughout the summer with the last at QF on 15.10. Singles were at RWBFP on 16. and 30.11. and at RWEg on 01.12.

**Sedge Warbler.** RWEg/Lynd remain the main sites for this species with singing birds also at

EBR. There were no significant arrival or departure dates

**Reed Warbler.** First heard at RW on 06.04. and common in the reed beds there. Five or six were

singing at Geest on 20.05. with two at QF next day. One sang at FHP on 22.06. Our last record was at RWEg on 24.09.

**Grasshopper Warbler.** A very local summer and passage visitor. One sang at RWTTW from

24.04. into May and seven were ringed at Luff Airfield on 28.07.

**Savi’s Warbler.** One sang in the reed bed at RWEg3 from 03. to 24.05. A rare visitor to Rutland.

**Blackcap.** Up to three were in three Oak gardens from 01.01. to 18.02. Three were in a North

Luff garden on 10.01. with four there on 15.03. Song was first heard at QF on 21.03. with birds present there to 11.09. Autumn birds were at RWDam on 24.09. and RWEg on 18.10. with a female in a Stam garden on 29.12.

**Garden Warbler.** A summer visitor in woodland and spinneys, under recorded. Our first record

was from RWSL on 23.04. Also reported from RWEg and Lynd, Ext woodlands and BW. There was no significant last date.

**Lesser Whitethroat.** Our first record was from RWEg4 on 12.04. Two were singing at QF

on19.04. There were no other reports.

**Whitethroat.** A common and widespread summer visitor. First heard at EBR on 08.04. with the

next at QF on 13.04. Five held territory there. Present at RWEg to mid-Sept.

**Goldcrest.** A resident of mixed and coniferous woodland. There were no records.

**Wren.** A woodland and hedgerow resident. No records were received.

**Nuthatch.** A woodland species reported from RW Woods, Ext Park woods and QF (13.08.).

Feeders were visited at Ext, TunnW and BFP.

**Treecreeper.** An overlooked species with records from Ext Park woods and BFP.

**Starling.** A resident, passage and winter visitor. No records were received.

**Blackbird.** A common resident and a passage and winter visitor. 17 were at QF on 15.10.

**Fieldfare.** A common and widespread passage and winter visitor. 650 were at Luff Airfield on

15.01. 40 were in Ext Park on 19.02. with 20 RWEg on 22.03. and ten at FHP on 24.03. our last record. It was a very late and light autumn passage with a poor berry crop to detain arrivals with 12 at RWNorm on 13.11. our first birds with 25 at BCF on 30.11. the only other notable count.

**Redwing.** A common passage and winter visitor. Few records were received. There were 30 at

QF on 09.01. and ten on 05.03. Five at RWEg on 22.03. were our last birds. Autumn arrivals were noted over RWDam from 12.10. but passage was light with 810 flying west at Luff Airfield on 15.10 by far the largest flock. 17 were in Ext Park on 29.12.

**Song Thrush.** A widespread but sparsely distributed resident and passage species. No records

were received.

**Mistle Thrush.** Our scarcest resident thrush. Singing birds were at FHP, Ext Park, RWDam and

Norm, where ten were in the paddock on 26.07. and seven fed on Yew berries in Oct.

**Spotted Flycatcher.** Now a scarce summer visitor. There were records of singles in Emp on

03.05., BarnsW on 11.05. and Rid on 16.05. In July there was a pair in GG, a pair bred in Eg Meadows at RW and it was seen at Norm all month. One was in Ext Park on 21.07.

**Robin.** A popular and common species but rarely reported. There were no records.

**Nightingale.** A very local and declining summer visitor. Two sang at QF between 13.04. and

15.05. with two also reported from RWEg from 21.04. to at least 11.05. One was ringed at Luff Airfield on 01.08. Again there were no records from PGW, once a key site for the species.

**Black Redstart.** On 24.10. there were singles at Kett and RWVTC.

**Redstart.** A scarce passage migrant and former breeder. Spring migrants were at RWEg on 08.

and 12.04. Three were ringed at Luff Airfield on 28.07. and a moulting male was at FHP on 11.08.

**Whinchat.** A scarce passage migrant. A male at EBR on 14.04. was the only spring record. Two

were at EBR on 17.08. with three there on 15.09 and one on 21.09. Three were at RWEg1 on 17.09.

**Stonechat.** A passage and winter visitor which has bred. A female was at FHP on 13.01. with a

pair at EBR next day. A pair were at RWEg1 on 17.02. Ten were at Luff Airfield on 20.02. with five at North Luff Christmas tree farm next day. A pair bred at EBR with two juvs. with adults seen on 11.05. and birds present to at least 03.08. Present at RWEg from 19.09. to the end of the year with seven present on10.11. One was in Ext Park on 12.10.

**Wheatear.** The first arrivals were single birds at Luff Airfield on 15.03. and EBR on 26.03. Four

were near LCast on 20.04. with singles at RWDam on 23. and 29.04. June birds were at Luff Airfield on 04. and RWDam on 20. Few were reported in autumn with singles at RW on 30.07., Luff Airfield on 21.08. (ringed) and RWDam on 28.09. and 2-4./10.

**House Sparrow.** Common in villages and suburbs where nos. are maintained by regular feeding.

No records were received.

**Tree Sparrow.** A scarce and declining resident. For the first time no records were received.

**Dunnock.** An unobtrusive species along hedgerows, and woodland and gardens. No records

were received.

**Yellow Wagtail.** Passage migrant and local breeder. Declining. Nine at EBR on 09.04. were the

first arrivals with 17 at RWDam on 15.04. The only records away from the reservoirs were a single near Kett on 11.05. and two at BGP on 03.06. Autumn birds were noted from 18.08. when there were 20 at EBR with 11 on 01.09. Two were at RWDam on 24.09. and the last, a single, was at EBR on 06.10. A ‘Channel Wagtail’ was at RWDam on 15.04.

**Grey Wagtail.** A passage and winter visitor and a scarce breeder. One was in an Oak garden for

‘several days’ in Jan. Singles were at RWDam on 14.04. and 21.05. and two were at Braun on 11.05. Autumn birds were well reported from 11.08. with records from Ext Park, FHP, Bel, Norm, RWBFP and Ext.

**Pied Wagtail.** A common resident and passage species. No records were received.

**White Wagtail.** Singles were at RWEg4 on 18. and 31.03. and two were at EBR on 26.04.

**Meadow Pipit.** A common passage visitor and scarce breeder with some overwintering.

Wintering records were of 29 at EBR on 14.01., ten at FHP on 21.01. and 30 at RWNorm on 27.02. Breeding activity was noted at Luff Airfield and Cott Airfield in May. There were no autumn records.

**Rock Pipit.** A regular autumn migrant, scarce in spring. Noted at RW and EBR on five dates

between 21.09. and 21.10. All were singles except for four at RW on 03.10.

**Chaffinch.** A common but declining resident and a passage and winter visitor. Few records were

received. 30 were in Ext Park on 13.01. and 20 on a wild bird seed plot at BGP on 02.02.

**Brambling.** A passage and winter visitor. There were spring records between 20.03. and 07.04.

from Ext, Luff Airfield, Oak and BCF with four ringed at Luff Airfield on 16.03. the highest count. Two were at feeders at BFP on 19.10.

**Hawfinch.** The large national autumn movement seemed to largely pass us by. There were

singles at TunnW on 24.09., Clips on 01.11. and Ext Park on 03.11. with two over RWNA on 19.11.

**Bullfinch.** A widespread species of scrubby areas and overgrown hedgerows. There were

records from Pick Drift, RWEg, QF, Rid and TunnW.

**Greenfinch.** A widespread species, much reduced in nos. The only record was of 15 at feeders

in an Oak garden in Feb.

**Linnet.** A common species of arable farmland and scrubby areas. Few records were received.

30 were on a wild bird seed plot at Bel on 02.02.

**Common Redpoll.** All records were from the feeders at RWBFP with one regular between 9.01.

and 02.03.

**Lesser Redpoll.** Four were at feeders at RWBFP on 20.01. with one there on 24.02. Two were

in an Oak garden on 06.02. with one on 24.02.

**Goldfinch.** A common species on waste ground and regular at garden feeders. c.60 were in an

Oak garden on 27.01. 30 were on Teasel at QF on 16.12.

**Siskin.** A regular passage and winter visitor. Most records in the first part of the year were from

gardens in Oak, BFP and Rid between 20.01. and 01.04. with a max. of six. c.20 were in Alders at GtCast on 28.01. A late bird was at Oak on 17.05. Five were at RWBFP on 09.11., two were at Geest on 28.11. and c.50 were in the carpark at RWEg on 15.12.

**Yellowhammer.** Widespread but declining on farmland and areas of scrub. Noted at Ext Park,

QF, Bel and BGP.

**Reed Bunting.** A resident of wetland sites and arable land in winter. c.30 were on wild bird crops

at Bel in Jan. Breeding season records were from QF and RWEg.

Terry Mitcham

(Bird Recorder)

16/01/25

joterpat@btinternet.com