

## **The London Bird Report 2014**

The latest issue of the London Bird Report has just been published and contains a wealth of information for people who live or work in London, or bird watch in London. This is one of the annual publications that members of the London Natural History Society (LNHS) receive as part of their membership. See [www.lnhs.org.uk](http://www.lnhs.org.uk) for details about how to join the LNHS. If you just want to buy a copy of the London Bird Report you can also find details on that website.

This issue of the London Bird Report includes a paper about the Peregrine Falcon in Central London, details of only the third ever record of Blyth's Reed Warbler in London and a study of the influx of Great Skuas in London in October 2014. The report also gives a summary of the status of all the birds that were reported in London in 2014.

Extracts of two of these are given below as well as the full contents list.

# THE BONXIE INFLUX IN LONDON IN OCTOBER 2014

ANDREW MOON

## Introduction

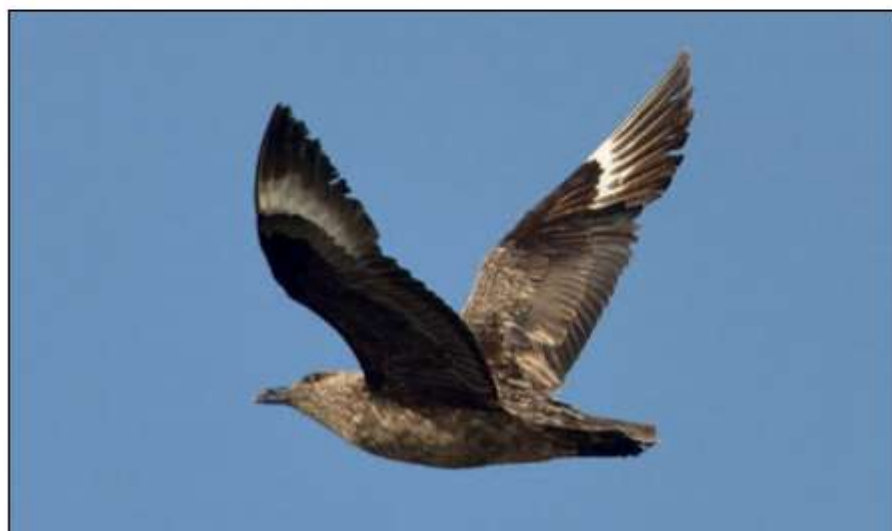
This paper documents the remarkable invasion of Bonxies that took place, primarily in London, during October 2014. It also discusses the possible causes behind this event, as well as speculating as to the origins of the birds involved. At least 44 birds were recorded, which almost doubled the previous total in our area.

## Account

The Great Skua *Stercorarius skua*, perhaps colloquially better known as simply 'Bonxie', is the largest and most predatory of all the skuas; although its food items are principally fish, it often obtains this by scavenging or simply through food-piracy from birds up to the size of a Gannet. It also shows no compunction in killing other birds and mammals - this includes birds up to the size of Great and Lesser Black-backed Gull and even Grey Heron.

The breeding range lies entirely within the northern hemisphere, with a huge 50% of the world population breeding along the north-west coasts of Britain and Ireland, most of which are on Shetland and Orkney; elsewhere there is a substantial population on Iceland with smaller numbers in the Faroes, Svalbard and Norway. The British population was estimated at about 9,634 pairs in 2004 (with the world total being about 16,000 pairs), but it may well have increased since then. Birds will normally return to the breeding colonies between late March and April and then disperse southwards from late

*Adult Bonxie over Rainham on 17th October. (Russ Sherriff)*



# THE PEREGRINE FALCON IN INNER LONDON

DAVID JOHNSON

<http://www.lnhs.org.uk/Publications.htm#LBR2014>

## Abstract

Following the recovery of the Peregrine Falcon *Falco peregrinus* in south-east England from the 1980s onwards, this species expanded its range westwards along the Thames in the 1990s and it was only a matter of time before the Peregrine would breed in Inner London (the Inner London recording area of the LNHS). When I spoke to the late Derek Ratcliffe about Peregrines breeding in Central London he said, "They should flourish as they have all they need; tall buildings to nest on and a plentiful supply of food in the form of the Feral Pigeon." Having been involved with Peregrine Falcons for over 30 years - either flying or observing them - it was wonderful to see them in London in the late 1990s. This paper deals with the issues that arise for the Peregrine in the truly urban environment of Inner London from 2001-2014.

## Breeding pairs

The first pair of Peregrines to breed in the LNHS recording area (the 'London Area') was at Docklands in 1998. It was not long before a pair bred in Inner London at Battersea

*Adult male on his lookout perch at the Tate. (David Johnson)*



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**Links to files on the LNHS website**

**Full and Short Gazetteers of Sites (see page 8)**

**Checklist and Guide (see page 239)**

On the London Bird Club webpage - scroll down to 'Bird Recording':

<http://www.lnhs.org.uk/ornithology1.htm>

**Rarities**

As above. Click on the 'Rarities' link.

**Foreign-ringed Black-headed Gulls (see page 185)**

**The Peregrine Falcon in Inner London (see page 189)**

On the Publications webpage:

<http://www.lnhs.org.uk/Publications.htm#LBR2014>