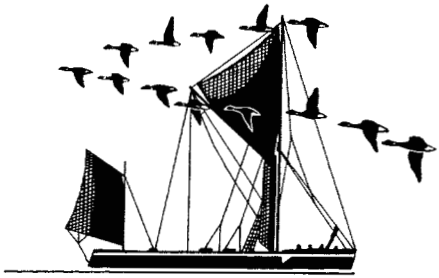
THE ESSEX Bird Report 2015

THE ESSEX Bird Report 2015

Editor: Graham Smith



The ESSEX BIRDWATCHING SOCIETY

1992-95

1997

Best Annual Bird Report
2000 (3rd =)

Published by the Essex Birdwatching Society
May 2018

Printed by Swallowtail Print
Drayton Industrial Park,
Taverham Road,
Drayton,
Norwich,
Norfolk NR8 6RL
Phone: 01603 868862
www.swallowtailprint.co.uk

Front cover: Rough-legged Buzzard (SEAN NIXON)

Contents

		Page
List of Officers and Committees 2015-2016	*Gerry Johnson*	4
Map of Essex		6
Please Read This	*Graham Smith*	7
Acknowledgements & Editorial	*Graham Smith*	9
Seasonal Summary of 2015 Records	*Graham Smith*	11
County Records 2015		
Systematic List Introduction	*Graham Smith*	20
Systematic List		22
Appendix I: Category D Species	*Graham Smith*	131
Appendix II: Category E Species	*Graham Smith*	131
List of Contributors	*Graham Smith*	133
Request for Information	*Mick Tracey*	136
Earliest and Latest Dates of Summer and Winter Visitors	*Graham Smith*	138
Wetland Bird Survey (WeBS) Count Table	*Anthony Harbott*	140
Gazetteer	*Graham Smith*	141
Essex Ringing Report for 2015	*Simon Cox*	146
Essex Birdwatching Society – receipts and payments	*Anthony Harbott*	152
Submission of Records: Guidelines for Observers	*Nick Green*	154
Notice to Contributors	*Nick Green*	167
Reservoir Permit Holders	*Graham Smith*	168

The Essex Birdwatching Society

(Founded 1949)

List of Officers as voted at AGM for 2015–2016

President	Mrs M. MITCHELL
Vice-Presidents	M. CHETTLEBURGH, Dr S. COX, N. GREEN, A. HARBOTT, R. LEDGERTON, J. THOROGOOD, D. WIMPRESS, S. WOOD
Chairman	G. JOHNSON, 4 Bunting Close, Chelmsford, CM2 8XR 07775 663166 (E-mail: gerry2johnson@aol.com)
Vice-Chairman	S. COLLINS, 37 Springham Drive, Colchester, CO4 5FN 07733 003048 (E-mail: stephencollins247@btinternet.com)
Treasurer	A. HARBOTT, 5 Allnutts Road, Epping, CM16 7BD 01992 575213 (E-mail: anthonyharbott@talktalk.net)
Secretary	J. & Mrs L. SYKES, 14 Acres End, Chelmsford, CM1 2XR 01245 355132 (E-mail: john.sykes@btinternet.com)
Assistant Secretary (Minutes)	Position Vacant
Assistant Secretary (Gift Aid)	J. THOROGOOD, 18 Smallwood Road, Shrub End, Colchester, CO2 9HA 01206 768771 (E-mail: thorogood.john@btinternet.com)
Membership Secretary	P. DWYER, 48 Churchill Avenue, Halstead, CO9 2BE 01787 476524 (E-mail: petedwyer@petedwyer.plus.com)
Indoor Meetings Organiser	Position Vacant
Field Trip Meetings Organiser	G. JOHNSON, 4 Bunting Close, Chelmsford, CM2 8XR 07775 663166 (E-mail: gerry2johnson@aol.com)
Sales Goods Organiser	P. DWYER, 48 Churchill Avenue, Halstead, CO9 2BE 01787 476524 (E-mail: petedwyer@petedwyer.plus.com)
Publicity Co-ordinator	Position Vacant
Events Co-ordinator	Position Vacant
Archivist	T. JEFFREYS, 20 Mopsies Road, Basildon, SS14 1GA 01268 (E-mail: terry.jeffreys@btinternet.com)
Social Media (Facebook)	S. COLLINS, 37 Springham Drive, Colchester, CO4 5FN 07733 003048 (E-mail: stephencollins247@btinternet.com)
Social Media (Twitter)	T. JEFFREYS, 20 Mopsies Road, Basildon, SS14 1GA (E-mail: terry.jeffreys@btinternet.com)
Editor of *Essex Birding'* journal	S. & Mrs L. COLLINS, 37 Springham Drive, Colchester, CO4 5FN 07733 003048 (E-mail: stephencollins247@btinternet.com)

Editor of *Essex Bird Report*	G. SMITH, 48 The Meads, Ingatestone, CM4 0AE 01277 354034 (E-mail: silaum.silaus@tiscall.co.uk)
Senior Recorder	L. STEWARD, 6 Creek View, Basildon, SS16 4RU 01268 551464 (E-mail: les.steward@btinternet.com)
Recorders	M. TRACEY, (E-mail: micktrac@aol.com)
Wetlands Birds Survey (WeBS) Count Co-ordinator	A. HARBOTT, 5 Allnutts Road, Epping, CM16 7BD 01992 575213 (E-mail: anthonyharbott@talktalk.net)
Chairman of Recording Committee	Position Vacant
Conservation Committee	C/O. 'Essex Records partnership' scheme in association with the Essex Field Club
Solicitor	A. J. Bryce & Co., Cambridge Science Innovation Centre, Unit 23, Cambridge Science Park, Cambridge, Cambridgeshire, CB4 0EY
Auditor	Connah Goldsworthy, 12 Station Court, Station Approach, Wickford, SS11 7AT

THE ESSEX BIRDWATCHING SOCIETY COMMITTEES:

The Chairman, Vice-Chairman, Secretary and Treasurer of the Society are *ex-officio* members of all Committees.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE
G. Johnson (Chairman of the Society), other Officers of the Society and assistants to the Committee, R. Flindall, S. Grimwade, D. Preston.

RECORDING COMMITTEE
Editor(s) of the *Bird Report*, the Recorder(s) and the Identification Panel.

IDENTIFICATION PANEL
D. Acfield, C. Atkins, R. Neave, S. Nixon, R. Pease, P. Wood.

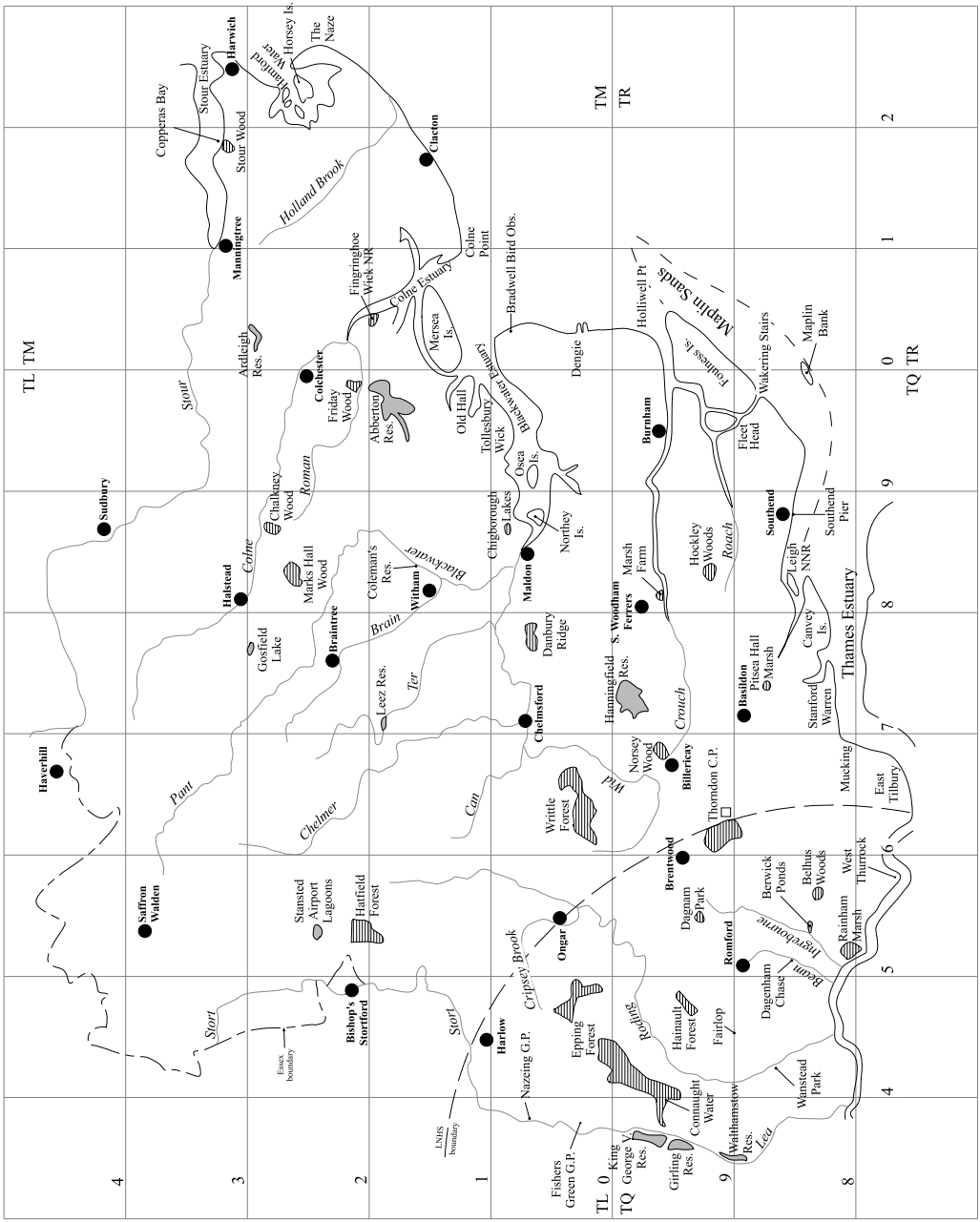
CONSERVATION SUB-COMMITTEE
C/O. Essex Records partnership in association with the Essex Field Club.

TRUSTEES
A. Bryce, P. Dwyer, A. Harbott, G. Johnson, Mrs M. Mitchell, A. Rutland, J. Sykes, Mrs L. Sykes.

BRADWELL BIRD OBSERVATORY COMMITTEE
M. Chettleburgh (Chairman), Ms C. James (Vice Chairman), C. Barton, G. Colombe, A. Harbott, D. Low, C. Noller, R. Pease, T. Pankhurst, D. Reese, G. Smith, J. Sutherby.

SECRETARY TO BBO COMMITTEE
G. Smith, 48 The Meads, Ingatestone, CM4 0AE.

Map of Essex


Haverhill
Sudbury
Saffron Walden
Halstead
Braintree
Witham
Colchester
Manningtree
Harwich
Clacton
Maldon
Chelmsford
Harlow
Bishop's Stortford
Ongar
Brentwood
Romford
Billericay
Basildon
Burnham
Southend
Stansted Airport Lagoons
Hatfield Forest
Gosfield Lake
Chalkney Wood
Marks Hall Wood
Coleman's Res.
Leez Res.
Friday Wood
Abberton Res.
Ardleigh Res.
Fingringhoe Wick NR
Mersea Is.
Old Hall
Tollesbury Wick
Osea Is.
Chigborough Lakes
Northey Is.
Danbury Ridge
Hanningfield Res.
S. Woodham Ferrers
Marsh Farm
Dengie
Bradwell Bird Obs.
Colne Point
Holliwell Pt
Foulness Is.
Maplin Sands
Wakering Stairs
Fleet Head
Maplin Bank
Southend Pier
Leigh NNR
Canvey Is.
Stanford Warren
Pitsea Hall Marsh
Hockley Woods
Norsey Wood
Thorndon C.P.
Dagnam Park
Berwick Ponds
Belhus Woods
Rainham Marsh
West Thurrock
East Tilbury
Mucking
Thames Estuary
Wat Tyler Country Park
Dagenham Chase
Hainault Forest
Fairlop
Epping Forest
Writtle Forest
Hatfield Forest
Wanstead Park
Connaught Water
Girling Res.
King George V Res.
Walthamstow Res.
Fishers Green G.P.
Nazeing G.P.
Stansted Airport Lagoons
Essex boundary
LNHS boundary
Copperas Bay
Stour Estuary
Stour Wood
Manningtree
Harwich
Horsey Is.
The Naze
Holland Brook
Colne Estuary
Roman
Colne
Blackwater
Brain
Ter
Can
Chelmer
Pant
Stour
Roding
Crouch
Roach
Ingrebourne
Beam
Lea
Crippsey Brook
Wid
Start
TL TM
TM
TR
TQ TR
TL 0
TQ 0
1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9

PLEASE READ THIS

by Graham Smith

This piece was included by an earlier editor, Nick Green, in the 2007 EBR under the title 'A Last Request'. It has also been included in each subsequent EBR, and is repeated here as the problems it discusses are ongoing.

- PLEASE PLEASE record – if possible - all your observations on an Excel spreadsheet on an ongoing basis. Records can be entered directly onto the Society website at **www.ebws.org.uk.** It is a very simple file with five columns requiring just:
  - **Species** e.g. Dark-bellied Brent Goose, Red-throated Diver, Blackbird (see Guidelines for Observers)
  - **Location** e.g. The Naze, Heybridge GP, Seventy Acres Lake (see Gazetteer)
  - **Number** numeric e.g. 1, 2, 250+, 2399 but **NOT** "One" or "Two"; "Several" or "common" is not very helpful!
  - **Date** Note dd/mm/yyyy format [please use forward slash "/" delimiter] but **NOT** "12.01.08" (wrong delimiter) nor "20th May"
  - **Comment** e.g. description attached
- Please submit your year's sightings/Excel file before 31st March to the County Recorder. The County Recorder's postal address and email address can be found in the List of Officers in the Bird Report and on the Fixture Card. The earlier the database can be consolidated, the earlier it can therefore be distributed to the sub-editors - the earlier the Bird Report can be finalised.

BTO Bird Track

Alternatively, please use the BTO's Bird Track facility of bird record entry at website: www.bto.org/birdtrack

Rarities:

Please consult 'Submission of Records: Guidelines for Observers' on page 154. **This has recently been revised and updated**. Any **national rarity** will require a FULL DESCRIPTION and will be judged by the British Birds Rarities Committee (BBRC). Any county rarity will need a description/notes and be assessed by the Essex Birdwatching Society's Identification Panel (EBSIP). The appropriate form can be downloaded from the EBWS website on the Bird Records page.

- Any digital images/photographs will be greatly welcomed by both BBRC and EBSIP.

WeBS counters

Please can you ensure that all counts are submitted to the respective WeBS organisers for the areas concerned or to the British Trust for Ornithology (BTO) on a timely basis.

Photographers

If you have any good images, please send them to the Editor ASAP for consideration to be included in the next Bird Report. The digital age has certainly revolutionised things for EBWS publications but slides and photographs are still welcomed.

Artists

Please liaise with the Editor of the EBR, Graham Smith, (address on page 5) for submission of drawings.

Papers/Articles

The Editor will always welcome contributions. Please follow the guidance in the Notice to Contributors at the end of this Report and consult the Editor with any questions about the format and style.

Recruitment of New Blood

The EBWS always welcomes new blood to help with the production of its publications, events and/or to serve on its Executive or Recording Committees.

If you would like to help in any way with particularly the production of the *Essex Bird Report* and would like further information, please contact the Editor or Chairman as soon as possible. Ideally, 4-5 people need to be involved to spread the workload as much of it is tedious in the extreme.

Sub-editors are always needed to analyse the raw data and produce the text for the Systematic List. Nick Green, the previous editor, wrote no less than nine sub-sections of the 2007 EBR himself. This is not a road I am prepared to travel, given that the Society has around 600 members, and the appearance of the 2010, 2011, 2012, 2013 and 2014 EBRs (late as they were) would not have been possible had it not been for some new volunteers stepping forward and existing sub-editors increasing their workload.

Conclusion

With over **50,000** records being submitted by observers on an annual basis, plus a further **70,000** via the BTO's Bird Track Scheme, it is essential that the jobs for the County Recorder(s), WeBS Coordinator, EBR Editor and Identification Panel are made as easy as possible – all EBWS posts are unpaid and voluntary.

Please can you therefore:

- On an ongoing basis, type your bird records on to an Excel spreadsheet. Please ensure you use the correct species' name, standard locality name and date format.
- Email the Excel file/submit your records to the County Recorder as soon as possible in the January of the following year and in any case before 31st March. Alternatively, paper copy from observers who do not own a computer or are unfamiliar with Excel spreadsheets is acceptable.

Acknowledgements & Editorial

by Graham Smith

Special thanks to Howard Vaughan for compiling the ELBF records, and also to Andy Field for compiling data not only for the Mersea birders but also for summarising data for a special Ministry of Defence breeding bird survey in Friday Wood. Similar thanks are also due to Dave Morrison for providing data on Peregrines. As usual, the Recorders, the late Les Steward and his replacement, Mick Tracey, helped with many things outside their remit. Also thanks to Anthony Harbott, our Treasurer, for compiling the WeBS figures.

For their ready co-operation and help in various ways throughout the year, our thanks are due to the Editor of British Birds (Roger Riddington) and the Secretary of its Rarities Committee BBRC, until recently Nigel Hudson, now Chas Holt, the Rare Birds Breeding Panel (RBBP) and its Secretary Mark Holling, the East London Birders Forum, the Officers of the Essex Wildlife Trust, the London Natural History Society, the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds, the Southend Ornithological Group, the Essex Field Club and, finally, Essex & Suffolk Water.

Since the *Birds of Essex* (Wood 2004) was published the status figures for rare birds that we include alongside the species' heading in the systematic list has – for a variety of reasons – often gone awry. In 2013 Simon Wood valiantly ploughed his way through all the records of rare birds in Essex over the years and produced a definitive report on the status of each one. This is the benchmark we will be using in future and thanks are due to Simon for continuing to see that we do not go awry again!

Dr Simon Cox has again produced an informative report on the birds ringed or colour ringed in Essex during 2015 and some of the more noteworthy recoveries or sightings.

The Identification Panel worked its way through various submitted descriptions and we thank them for all their time and efforts. The sub-editors and the whole team worked to a strict deadline (more or less!) and are sincerely thanked for all their work.

Sub-editors for the Systematic List

Colin Mackenzie-Grieve	Swans to dabbling ducks
Paul Brayshaw	Diving ducks to Ruddy Duck
Graham Smith	Partridges to Pheasants
Simon Cox	Divers to Spoonbill
David Jobbins	Honey Buzzard to Osprey
Colin Mackenzie-Grieve	Falcons
David Edwards	Water Rail to Moorhen
Paul Brayshaw	Black-winged Stilt to Turnstone
Alf Mullins/Graham Smith	Knot to Common Snipe
Paul Wood	Auks, skuas, gulls and terns
Graham Smith	Doves to Cuckoo
Chris Balchin	Owls
David Jobbins	Pipits and wagtails
John Hart	Swifts to Woodpeckers
Graham Smith	Shrikes to Raven
Ian Woodward/Graham Smith	Goldcrest to Bearded Tit
John Sutherby	Larks to martins
Neil Murphy/Graham Smith	Warblers
Kate Williams	Waxwing to Starling
David Hutley/Graham Smith/Colin Mackenzie-Grieve	Thrushes
Sean Minns/Colin MackenzieGrieve/Graham Smith	Spotted Flycatcher to Wheatear

Paul Brayshaw	Dunnock to Tree Sparrow
Simon Wood	Finches
David Wimpress	Buntings
Graham Smith	Appendices I and II
Graham Smith	Appendix III and IV
Graham Smith	Appendix III and IV

Without their help and that of the proof reading team of Paul Baker, Paul Brayshaw, Simon Cox, Andy Goodey, David Jobbins, Colin Mackenzie-Grieve, Simon Wood and Alf Mullins this report would never have been published.

Front Cover: Rough-legged Buzzard (Sean Nixon)

Artists

George Brown	g.b.brown@hotmail.co.uk
Sam Shippey	Samuel.shippey@sky.com

Photographers

Reston Kilgour	rpkilgour@mail.com
Sean Nixon	seannixon@btinternet.com
Dr Simon Cox	Simonandpat.cox@btinternet.com
Alan Shearman	
Graham Oakes	
David Acfield	
George Brown	g.b.brown@hotmail.co.uk
Neil Higginson	

WeBS data, etc.

I must also thank the following re the collation of Essex WeBS data:

- Andy Musgrove of the BTO for much advice and assistance in gaining access to the BTO WeBS site and the downloading of various data.
- Rick Vonk for Stour Estuary and Cattawade data.
- Dr Simon Cox for help with Colne Estuary and Holland Haven data.
- John Thorogood for assistance with Blackwater Estuary data.
- Anthony Harbott for help with Dengie data.
- Bill Godsafe (EWT Reserve Warden) for making available Hanningfield Reservoir data.
- Brian Cooper for Mersea Island data.
- Chris Lewis for Foulness data and helpful advice.

Appeal

If all Essex WeBS counters/coordinators can enter their invaluable data online as soon as possible on the BTO web site, this will make the WeBS Coordinator's and Editor's jobs very much easier.

Seasonal Summary of 2015 Records

Late Winter: January-February

Both months were generally mild and often sunny; indeed, they contributed to what was to prove to be the sunniest winter since 1929. There were a few frosts, but nothing exceptional, and the severest storms were confined to northern Britain.

Birdwatchers could be forgiven for feelings of *deja vu* in a mild winter as bird populations display little change between visits to favourite sites and at times you seem to be recycling the same birds over again. Stormy conditions offshore can sometimes compensate for this by driving seabirds closer inshore, particularly the north-east coast and Thames estuary, but this failed to happen, the few highlights concern four Black-throated Divers at Frinton-on-Sea on 16th January followed by 125 Kittiwakes on 23rd, while single Pomarine Skua and Bonxie were seen off Southend Pier on 1st January and 23rd February respectively. As usual, there were regular sightings of both Glaucous and Iceland Gulls from the Thameside landfill sites and these were reported from various other locations along the river. Up to 26 Mediterranean Gulls were also present in the latter locality and seven Caspian and eight Yellow-legged Gulls at Rainham.

The sprat and herring shoals that moved inshore during the early months brought good numbers of their regular predators with them but few of the scarcer divers, grebes and sea-duck. The long staying Surf Scoter on the Stour remained until 19th February, by which time it had acquired full adult male plumage, while up to 71 Red-breasted Mergansers and six Slavonian Grebes were present in the same area. Elsewhere, there were counts of 450 Cormorants in the Colne and 800 Red-throated Divers along the Dengie coast while a dozen Scaup were seen at Beckton on 4th January.

The spectacle presented by high tide wading bird roosts included up to 9,000 Golden Plovers and

Slavonian Grebe, Wanstead Park
(ALAN SHEARMAN)

3,600 Lapwings gathered on the fields at Marshhouse Outfall, Dengie in January and 1,150 Avocets, 1,080 Black-tailed Godwits and 10,100 Dunlin on the marshes at E. Tilbury. Raptors were well represented. Red Kites were reported from 17 localities, although there was much duplication; the roost of Marsh Harriers at Old Hall peaked at 43 on 18th January; Wallasea's wintering Rough-legged Buzzard finally departed on 5th April, and a Goshawk was present inland in the Mardyke Valley from 30th January until 2nd February. Wallasea Is. also hosted an impressive 11 Short-eared Owls.

Serin, Gunners Park (RESTON KILGOUR)

Abberton Reservoir can be the coldest place in Essex, especially when an onshore wind is blowing, but a comfortable EWT centre and a decent café has lessened the pain in recent years! Highlights during the opening two months included up to nine Bewick's Swans from 3rd-6th January, eight White-fronted Geese throughout the period (with a similar number at Howlands Marsh at the same time), five Tundra Bean Geese between 8th-10th February, and up to 56 Ruff, 33 Goosanders and eight Smew. One of the ten Bitterns reported at this time also resided here. Hanningfield had a poor start to the year but the Lee Valley reservoirs supported 50+ Goosanders and six Black-necked Grebes.

Farmland birdwatching can be hard work in winter, as flocks of finches and other small birds are increasingly confined to game cover or specially sown bird seed crops. Flocks of 200 Yellowhammers at both Gt Horkesley and Coggeshall – impressive gatherings by modern day standards – were presumably attracted by such food sources, as were the 338 Corn Buntings and 290 Linnets on Wallasea. At Sunnymead Farm, 249 Yellowhammers were ringed along with 303 Linnets and 198 Reed Buntings. Elsewhere, 240 Corn and 136 Reed Buntings were reported from Stow Marsh and up to 250 Chaffinches at Boreham. The largest flock of Siskins and Redpolls was of 120 of the former at Cornmill Meadows with 40 Redpolls in Hockley Woods. The only Hawfinch sighting came from Braxted on 24th February. On the coast, Twite were reported from five sites and Lapland Buntings from four, a flock of around 27 Snow Buntings frequented Jaywick, separate groups of 1-12 Tree Sparrows were present at Wigboro Wick, Gt Horkesley and Langham and two Serins delighted visitors to Gunners Pk between 29th January and 13th March. Also of note, a Dartford Warbler was seen at Gunners Pk on 30th January and again on 9th-11th February.

Finally, there were a few records of note concerning wintering summer migrants. A Little Stint was present at Wrabness and a White Wagtail at Colne Pt throughout the period and a Black Redstart at Mundon on 24th-25th January, while a Siberian Chiffchaff was reported from Hanningfield Reservoir on 9th February.

Spring: March, April and May

March was generally unsettled but the showery days were interspersed with drier and brighter ones as a series of weak high pressure ridges came and went. Winds were mostly from the west but sometimes moved to a colder north-westerly direction. There was little in the way of southerly winds to encourage migration.

South-westerly winds during the first ten days of March brought a few early migrants to our shores, including a Wheatear at White Roding on 6th, a Sand Martin at Buckhurst Hill on 8th and five Spoonbills at Kirby Cross on 9th, three of which were also seen at Holland Haven. At Frinton-on-Sea 14 Shags passed north offshore. The 13th saw the arrival of a Little Ringed Plover to Boreham and a very early Yellow Wagtail at Braintree. That evening one of the year's most unexpected visitors, an immature White-tailed Eagle, was seen at Stow Marsh. Next morning it spent a couple of hours at nearby Blue House Farm pursuing wildfowl and was later watched flying over Wivenhoe on its way north along the east coast. Two Garganey at Hanningfield Reservoir, also on 14th were followed by a Woodlark at KGV Reservoir on 17th and the first Swallow of the spring at Hanningfield Reservoir on 22nd. The trickle continued with a House Martin at Rainham on 26th, two Ospreys at Wat Tyler on 27th, a Willow Warbler at Saffron Walden on 29th, a Common Tern at Beckton on 30th and a Glossy Ibis at Wat Tyler on 31st.

The beginning and end of April were unsettled, the latter period producing some of the sharpest frosts of the winter. In between, high pressure systems dominated, leading to the sunniest April since 1929, and it was often unusually warm, temperatures in the south-east peaking on 15th, when 25.6 °C was recorded at Faversham, Kent.

April is traditionally the month of the spring 'surge ´, when summer migrants push northwards in large numbers and coastal headlands often witness large 'falls' of birds, grounded by bad weather. Essex only ever had a modest share of these arrivals, as our indented coastline is overshadowed by Norfolk and Kent, but in recent years evidence of this migration at sites like The Naze, Holland

Cuckoo (RESTON KILGOUR)

Haven, Bradwell and Foulness has all but ceased. The only such 'fall' this April was a paltry 17 Willow Warblers at Bradwell BO on 16th and 18 Wheatears at Rainham on 18th. Elsewhere, Wanstead Park witnessed a steady passage of Meadow Pipits, peaking at 100 on 6th, while among the scarcer spring migrant Whinchats were recorded from 16 sites, Redstarts from ten, and Ring Ouzels from 13, including peak daily counts totals of four at both Wrabness and Wanstead. Raptor migration was much in evidence: Red Kites were reported from 38 sites in March, 48 in April and 34 in May, although there was considerable duplication, while double-figure counts of Buzzards came from six localities with an impressive 36 at Rainham on 4th, and sightings of Osprey came from a further seven sites. Inland tern and Little Gull passage is now a regular feature at our larger inland waters in spring and the Lee Valley was particularly favoured this year with KGV Reservoir hosting a peak of 44 Little Gulls on 23rd and 120 Common and 25 Arctic Terns on 30th. Disappointingly, the largest number of Black Terns was just six, at Boreham on 24th. Wader numbers of note included 2,500 Black-tailed Godwits at Mucking and 2,000 at Maldon, while 50 Whimbrels were counted at Old Hall on 27th.

The volume of migrants visiting Essex may have declined but there is still the occasional rarity among them. Unfortunately, the majority were unaccompanied by supporting notes and cannot be included here. Great White Egrets were reported from seven sites and Spoonbills from nine while the only other species that could be accepted were a Wood Warbler at Wanstead on 25th-26th, and a Pectoral Sandpiper at Rainham Marshes from 29th April which then relocated to Bowers Marsh on 3rd – 4th May.

May was a cool, wet and windy month with predominantly north-westerly winds. The month opened promisingly with a Red-rumped Swallow at Gunners Park on 1st but thereafter was very disappointing, the only other birds of note being a Golden Orioles at Colne Point on 12th, 20 Guillemots off Canvey Pt on 23rd, up to four Temminck's Stints at Rainham from 28th-30th and Bowers Marsh on 30th, and a Red-necked Phalarope at Holland Haven on 31st.

Summer: June and July

June was a quiet month weather-wise and an even quieter one for birds. A westerly or north-westerly airflow dominated throughout but there was plenty of sunshine in our part of the world and rainfall levels were only 30% of average. Southerly winds at the beginning of July produced record temperatures in the south-east, peaking at 36.7°C at Heathrow on 1st. The rest of the month was unsettled though, a predominantly westerly airflow depositing nearly twice the average rainfall on East Anglia, making up for the lack of it the previous month

Early June can sometimes deliver a few surprises by way of scarce migrants but not this year. Neither were there any exceptional breeding records. The Ravens that nested in 2014 failed to return this spring although one was seen at nearby Stansted on 1st July. Red Kites continued to appear regularly, being reported from 29 localities in June and 19 in July, but they still show no signs of settling in the county. Quail were heard calling at four sites while Spoonbill and Great White Egret – both of which, given recent events elsewhere in the country – could potentially breed here, were each seen in two localities.

From mid-June onwards small numbers of Crossbill and, more particularly, Siskin began to be reported and this movement continued during July. The former was seen in widely scattered areas and included up to six at Braxted and Havering and seven at Alresford and in the Lee Valley. Siskin passage was most obvious at Frinton-on-Sea, peaking between 2nd and 23rd July with a notable 187 on 14th. These were the forerunners of what was to prove an excellent winter for this species. Two other widely divergent species were also on the move. Counts of 154 and 103 Yellow-legged Gulls came from Rainham and E. Tilbury respectively while Swift passage at Frinton-on-Sea peaked at 4,079 on 22nd. Frinton also produced the month's rarest species, two Bee-eaters on 21st.

Autumn: August, September and October

Apart from a week-long warm spell mid-month, August was dominated by a westerly airflow which brought strong winds and frequent showers.

August is the peak month for the passage of those wader species that prefer fresh water to salt and a few notable counts were reported. As is often the case Old Hall proved to be particularly favoured with up to 40 Spotted Redshanks, 31 Green and eight Wood Sandpipers but there were also reports of 108 Whimbrels moving south off Frinton-on-Sea on 20th and 123 there on 23rd, up to 41 Spotted Redshanks at Abberton, 28 Common and 22 Green Sandpipers at Hanningfield and six Wood Sandpipers at E. Tilbury. The rarest species was a Pectoral Sandpiper at Wat Tyler CP on 23rd.

Tern passage is another regular feature in August. Notable counts of Common Tern included 258 at E. Tilbury and 226 at Old Hall, while the former site also hosted 47 Sandwich Terns on 23rd (on which date 36 Arctic Terns were seen at Frinton-on-Sea) and shared up to 47 Black Terns with nearby Canvey on 31st. A White-winged Black Tern called in at Abberton on 30th. Other seabirds were few and far between, but single Manx Shearwaters were seen off Frinton-on-Sea on 25th-26th and a Balearic Shearwater on the latter date.

Raptors on the move included Red Kites, which were reported from around 20 sites, and what was presumably the same long staying Osprey at Abberton from 7th August-5th September. This reservoir also played host to 1-3 Great White Egrets for much of August and September while 1-5 Spoonbills toured the north-east corner of the county during the period 2nd August-9th September.

Wheatear and Whinchat are two of our regular autumn migrants, whatever the weather, but a brief spell of easterlies late in the month boosted numbers. Counts of 36-40 Wheatears were received from Holland Haven, Dengie and Wanstead and 14-15 Whinchats from Thorrington, Alresford and Dengie. Redstarts are far less common than they used to be, so a count of ten at Wanstead on 30th counts as impressive. Wrynecks were reported from St Osyth, Gunners Park, Chingford and Wanstead while a Red-backed Shrike remained at Bowers Marsh from 11th-19th.

In contrast to recent years September was wetter in southern England than in the north but the unsettled weather was interspersed with anticyclonic conditions that produced above average

Black Tern, Hanningfield Reservoir (DAVID ACFIELD)

sunshine levels. Winds were variable and seldom prolonged in any one direction but were sufficient to create a set pattern to migration.

Easterly winds at the beginning of the month produced a Honey Buzzard at Frinton-on-Sea on 1st, only one of two among a series of sightings to be accompanied by a description. It also brought a Red-backed Shrike to The Hythe on the same date, and a Wryneck and a noteworthy 13 Spotted Flycatchers to Wanstead on 2nd. Commoner migrants on the move included up to 54 Common and 27 Lesser Whitethroats at The Naze, five Firecrests at that locality and four at Bradwell BO.

Mid-month saw some large southerly movements of hirundines at several sites, peak daily counts at Frinton-on-Sea being 6,153 Swallows on 20th and 1,190 House Martins on 21st while 3,900 Swallows were on the move at E. Tilbury on 17th and an impressive 15,000 at Bradwell BO on the same date. Bradwell BO additionally recorded 60 Chiffchaffs and 40 Blackcaps. It was also the best period for activity on the sea. Canvey Pt produced up to 15 Arctic and six Great Skuas, a Long-tailed Skua and a Roseate Tern. Sooty Shearwaters (not inconceivably one bird) were reported from The Naze, St Osyth and Deal Hall, Dengie on 11th-12th. There were also impressive counts of 281 Mediterranean Gulls at Paglesham on 9th and 70 Gannets on the Maplin Bank on 16th.

A Wilson's Phalarope which turned up at Vange Marsh on 21st obligingly remained ***in situ*** until the 3rd October while a Dotterel at Colne Pt on 12th, a Glossy Ibis at Wat Tyler (which remained until

Firecrest (SEAN NIXON)

6th December) was also worthy of note. Common Buzzards were on the move in force, double-figure counts coming from KGV Reservoir, Hanningfield, Braxted and Paglesham, the last site producing the highest count, 15 on 9th.

A return to an easterly airflow in the last few days of the month resulted in a further arrival of land-based migrants. Yellow-browed Warblers were one of the principal species involved, with individuals at The Naze, Holland Haven and Wigboro Wick on 27th. The Naze also reported a Dartford Warbler on 27th. This movement carried on into the first ten days of October with Yellow-browed Warblers at four further sites, a Pallas's Warbler on Fingringhoe Ranges on 4th and Frinton-on-Sea on 11th, and a Long-eared Owl at Frinton-on-Sea and a Dartford Warbler at Holland Haven on 10th. Goldcrests made landfall at coastal sites in good numbers, including 64 at Frinton-on-Sea on 3rd and there were four Firecrests at Warley Place on the same date. A Sooty Shearwater at Frinton-on-Sea on 13th was the only notable seabird seen during the month.

The middle of October was dry and settled but this broke down at the end of the third week, storms and strong north-westerly winds dominating the next week. Finch passage at Frinton-on-Sea peaked prior to the storm's arrival, the period 17th-19th producing maximum daily counts of 2,674 Goldfinches, 588 Chaffinches, 336 Siskins, 166 Redpolls, 39 Bramblings and ten Tree Sparrows (following a count of 18 on 8th). A count of 120 Goldcrests and six Firecrests there on 12th-13th was followed by a Dartford Warbler there on 17th and 100 Goldcrests on Foulness on 18th. Following

Rough-legged Buzzard (SEAN NIXON)

the storm, thrushes arrived in force at the same site, the 26th producing 1,173 Redwings, 892 Blackbirds and 480 Song Thrushes. Ring Ouzels were also widely reported at this time, mostly 1-2 at each site but there were four at Wigboro Wick on 18th. Further Yellow-browed Warblers were seen at Frinton-on-Sea and Colne Pt and Pallas's Warblers at the first named site on 18th and 27th. Great Grey Shrikes made landfall at three sites on 17th – Frinton-on-Sea, Heybridge GP and Rainham – what was probably the Frinton bird touring other localities in the north-east during the next ten days. A juvenile Rose-coloured Starling at E. Mersea on 18th remained until 2nd November while a Rough-legged Buzzard that turned up at both Holland Haven and Frinton-on-Sea on 20th remained in that corner of the county until the end of the year. This productive spell culminated with a huge southerly migration of Wood Pigeons on Thames-side, peak counts being 8,000 at Upminster, 18,090 at Orsett and 25,000 at Thurrock. The month ended with Dartford Warblers at E. Tilbury and Rainham (the latter remaining until the year's end), a Long-eared Owl and six Short-eared Owls at Frinton-on-Sea on 30th, and a Shore Lark there, and a very late Red-backed Shrike at Holland Haven, all on 31st.

Early Winter: November-December

Atlantic weather systems dominated during November and it was often mild but windy. An exception occurred between 20th and 23rd when cold northerly winds set in, bringing frequent showers of rain and sleet. This period saw considerable activity off the coast, migrating seabirds being forced inshore. The Frinton-on-Sea area was the main beneficiary, the tally there on 21st including 43 Kittiwakes, 31 Little Gulls, 12 Guillemots, five Little Auks, while 16 Guillemots, three Pomarine Skuas and two Sooty Shearwaters were seen at Canvey. The bad weather also forced an unusual number of wild swans to make landfall in the county, flocks including 60 Whooper Swans at Frinton-on-Sea and 17 at Bradwell BO and 21 Bewick's Swans at both Hanningfield and Abberton Reservoirs, up to 11 of the latter remaining until the end of the year.

The rest of the month was quiet although Siskin passage continued apace at Frinton-on-Sea, with

a peak of 522 on 16th, while on 25th 600 Skylarks were recorded during the monthly WeBS count along the North Dengie. Apart from a scatter of Great White Egrets, the rarest visitor was a Ferruginous Duck which frequented Dagenham Chase from 22nd November to 2nd December.

December was an exceptionally mild month, as the weather throughout was dominated by moist tropical air masses, resulting in the warmest December since 1910, average temperatures being 5C° above normal. Seabirds were again to the fore. Up to 34 Bonxies and 1-2 Pomarine Skuas remained off Frinton-on-Sea all month while a peak of 182 Red-throated Divers occurred there on 23rd and there was a late Sooty Shearwater on 24th. At Bradwell BO there were 150 Red-throated Divers and 33 Little Gulls on 13th while, in the south of the county, 160 Gannets and 40 Kittiwakes were reported off Gunners Park on 13th. Both Glaucous and Iceland Gulls were seen at Rainham.

Other birds of note included up to 14 Water Pipits and seven Short-eared Owls at Rainham, eight Snow Buntings at Jaywick and a Long-eared Owl at Wat Tyler. Among noteworthy flocks of commoner birds there were 17,500 Golden Plover at Marshhouse Outfall, Dengie, 3,200 Lapwings at Tollesbury Wick, 450 Linnets at Stow Marsh and 100 Siskins at Cornmill Meadows.

Bewick's Swan Hanningfield Reservoir (GRAHAM OAKES)

Systematic List 2015

Introduction

Initials, which are given against a record, are included in the List of Contributors which follows the Systematic List. In addition, the following abbreviations are used:

Atlas - *Tetrad Atlas of the Breeding Birds of Essex* (Dennis 1996)
Guide - *The Birds of Essex* (Wood 2007)

♂	Male	**LV**	Lee Valley
♀	Female	**Lt.**	Little
Bradwell BO	Bradwell Bird Observatory	**NNR**	National Nature Reserve
BBS	Breeding Birds Survey	**NR**	Nature Reserve
CBC	Common Birds Census	**Old Hall**	Old Hall Marshes RSPB ReserveRSPB Reserve
CP	Country Park	**Rainham**	Rainham Marshes RSPB Reserve
EBR	*Essex Bird Report*	**OPC**	Outdoor Pursuit Centre
ELBF	East London Birders Forum	**Pk**	Park
EWT	Essex Wildlife Trust	**Pt**	Point
Fm	Farm	**R.**	River
GC	Golf Club	**Res.**	Reservoir
GP	Gravel-pit	**Stour Reserve**	Stour Wood, Copperas Wood and Bay
Gt	Great	**SW**	Sewage Works
Is.	Island	**The Hythe**	Colchester Hythe and nearby lagoons
KGV Res.	King George V Reservoir	**The Naze**	The Naze at Walton
LBR	*London Bird Report*	**WeBS**	Wetland Bird Survey
LNHS	London Natural History Society	**WWT**	Wildfowl and Wetlands Trust

Rarer species may have three numbers in brackets after their English and Scientific names, *e.g.* (1,2,3). The figures refer to:

1 the total number of Essex records up to and including those detailed in the Birds of Essex [Wood 2007], together with any records for that period subsequently accepted by BBRC/BOURC or EBWS. The number relates to the number of individuals not the number of records, so for example a flock of three Ring-necked Duck would be recorded as three records, not one. Also, individuals recorded in several years e.g. a returning Red-breasted Goose or Black Brant, is only counted the first time it occurs, not each and every time it arrives.

2 the total number of records since the Birds of Essex [Wood 2007] up to and including those in 2015.

3 the total number of Essex records.

For some rapidly increasing species, e.g. Great White Egret, or widely wandering and long-lived species, e.g. Black Brant, these figures are often no more than a best guess given the difficulty in establishing just how many individuals may be involved

References may be made to the British Birds' Rarities Committee (BBRC) or British Ornithologists' Union Records Committee (BOURC) where the record may still be in the process of review.

To the right of the English and scientific names of certain wildfowl and wader species are two numbers. These are firstly (*e.g.* GB 700), the qualifying level for a site to be of national importance, and secondly (*e.g.* IN 2,500), the qualifying level for the site to be of international importance (as given by the WWT). An asterisk (*) next to the figure indicates that where 1% of the British population is less than 50 birds, 50 is normally used as the minimum qualifying level. A plus sign (+) indicates that the population is too small for a meaningful figure to be obtained. Occasionally, where no such designations are available for a species, the threshold count for inclusion in the 2000-2001 WeBS report is used as a guide for count significance. Tables with such counts are clearly identified and the counts appear in ***italics***.

Species account layout: the first line under the species' heading is a brief statement on status using the following definitions:

Abundant: occurs in large numbers in suitable weather and habitat.

Common: occurs regularly or is widely distributed in suitable habitat.

Fairly common: occurs in small numbers in suitable habitat and season.

Locally common: occurs in small numbers but restricted to specific habitats.

Uncommon: occurs annually in small numbers.

Scarce: 1-2 records each year or restricted to specific habitats.

Rare: occurs less than annually.

Very rare: 6-25 records in the past 30 years.

Accidental/Vagrant: less than six records in the past 30 years.

Where a table is included under a wildfowl or wader species, the totals are derived from the mid-monthly Wetland Bird Survey (WeBS) counts. The letters 'nc' denote 'no count' was made or, if it was, that no details were received for that month, whilst a zero indicates that the species was not present. Where 'WeBS total' appears in a table, the figure represents the summed total for that month for all WeBS localities that may not all be listed in the table. Figures for the R. Stour include counts for the whole estuary, including the Suffolk shore, in order to include birds that feed in Essex but use Suffolk roosts at high tide when the counts are generally made. Foulness figures include Potton Is.

Data was supplied by the Wetland Bird Survey (WeBS), a joint scheme of the British Trust for Ornithology, The Wildfowl & Wetlands Trust, Royal Society for the Protection of Birds and Joint Nature Conservation Committee (the last on behalf of the Countryside Council for Wales, the Environment and Heritage Service, Natural England and Scottish Natural Heritage). Although WeBS data are presented within this report, in some cases the figures may not have been fully checked and validated. Therefore, for any detailed analyses of WeBS data, enquiries should be directed to the WeBS team at the British Trust for Ornithology, The Nunnery, Thetford, IP24 2PU (webs@bto.org).

Changes to WeBS areas and Essex recording boundaries were discussed by Stephen Harris in EBR 2000 (p.18).

A line drawn due north from Lower Hope Pt, Kent, is taken to separate the Inner and Outer Thames regions.

The sequence and scientific names of the following Systematic List follow that recommended by the BOURC and be found on the BOU web site www.bou.org.uk/recnews.html.

The WeBS tables were changed in 2009. Wallasea Island is now included in the Crouch/Roach figures rather than the Thames and there has been no attempt to separate the latter area into Inner and Outer Thames. This is because the BTO website collates records in this way and it makes it far easier, when extracting the figures, to follow their practice. These changes have been necessary to simplify a process that has caused Editors many problems over a number of years.

MUTE SWAN *Cygnus olor* GB 740 IN 320

Common resident with a stable breeding population.

In total, 68 breeding pairs were counted at 44 sites (76 at 53 in 2014). There were seven pairs at Walthamstow Reservoirs (six in 2014) and at Old Hall (nine in 2014), four in the Wanstead area, four at Rainham (four in 2014) and three on Foulness. No other site reported more than 1-2 pairs. Monthly WeBS counts were as follows:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
WeBS Total:	**720**	**508**	**456**	**502**	**822**	**909**	**773**	**605**
Stour	191	181	175	180	168	147	160	166
Hamford Water	67	54	47	nc	36	49	48	66
Colne Estuary	21	21	15	20	2	9	21	19
Blackwater Estuary	70	12	22	11	21	17	24	22
Crouch/Roach/Wallasea	56	92	46	95	60	36	34	18
Foulness/Thames	122	29	14	31	93	142	157	109
Abberton Res.	85	17	34	53	309	236	99	54
Hanningfield Res.	2	4	20	27	71	84	114	96
Lee Valley	99	94	82	70	64	163	112	51

Excluding WeBS counts, the highest numbers came from Manningtree/Mistley Quay, where the resident flock peaked at 150 on 29th January and 4th October; Abberton Res., peaks of 140 on 29th May and 150 on 22nd August, and Chigborough Lakes, where an early-winter gathering peaked, again at 150, on 12th December. Other three-figure counts came from the R. Lee between Tottenham Lock and Springfield Marina, 103 on 1st February, and Hanningfield Res., 108 on 2nd December.

Mute Swan and Cygnets (DR SIMON COX)

BEWICK'S SWAN *Cygnus columbianus* GB 70 IN 200

Regular winter visitor and passage migrant.

All records are given or summarised.

In the first winter, very few birds remained from the flurry of arrivals in late 2014. At Abberton Res. in January five adults were seen on 3rd and one on 4th, with nine birds on 6th. Elsewhere, the only records (again all in January) involved singles at Mundon and Paglesham Churchend on 2nd and Stow Marsh on 19th, while four were on Wallasea Is. on 13th.

The second winter saw a small influx on 21st-22nd November, when at least six were at Holland Haven on the first date (with seven the next day) and these were followed on 22nd by 12 on the Stour Estuary and two at The Naze. In addition, on 21st, a group of 15 wild swans on the sea off Holland Haven were considered by some observers to be Bewick's but by others to be Whoopers. At Abberton Res. a herd of 21 Bewick's (19 adults and two juveniles) flew over the Visitor Centre on 22nd. Prior to that, at Abberton in early November there had been four on 6th, eight (six adults and two juveniles) on 8th and four on 11th, but those birds seemed to move on, as did the fly-over flock. Four were then seen there on 30th, increasing to 11 on 1st December. Groups varying in number between two and 11 were then reported at the reservoir to the end of the year.

The only other records in the second winter, both in November, were of one at Hanningfield Res. on 18th and two at Brightlingsea on 26th.

WHOOPER SWAN *Cygnus cygnus* GB 110 IN 210

Scarce but regular winter visitor and passage migrant.

The only report in the first winter was of two adults flying north-east over Tendring on 22nd January.

In the second winter an impressive movement was noted on 21st-22nd November and at Bradwell BO the next day. At the former site, in addition to the group of 15 wild swans mentioned above (which from Frinton-on-Sea were considered to be Whoopers), four groups of Whoopers were noted at Frinton, totalling 45 birds in groups of seven, six, 23 and nine. The next day at Bradwell BO a herd of 17 (15 adults) flew north.

The only other reports in the second winter were of one at Frinton-on-Sea on 30th October, two heading for Foulness from Deal Hall on 31st October and three immatures at Russell Green GP on 7th December.

BEAN GOOSE *Anser fabalis* GB 3* IN 6,000

Tundra Bean Goose *A. f. rossicus* EBSIP

Very scarce, but usually annual winter visitor.

Five were at Abberton Res. on at least 8th-10th February	mo

PINK-FOOTED GOOSE *Anser brachyrhynchus* GB 3,600 IN 2,700

Scarce winter visitor and passage migrant.

A very poor year for the species. All records are given.

In the first winter/spring, there were four at Stow Marsh on 4th February and singles at Old Hall on 13th January and 4th February and at Bowers Marsh on 4th May. In the second winter, four flew west at Stow Marsh on 30th September and the same number (perhaps the same birds?) were at Deal Hall on 20th November. Passage at Frinton-on-Sea in October produced one flying south on 11th and eight moving north on 19th. There were two on Foulness on 18th October and a single bird was at Rainham on 24th and 27th October and 14th November, with possibly the same bird visiting Brook Fm, Upminster on 2nd November.

WHITE-FRONTED GOOSE *Anser albifrons* GB 24 IN 10,000

European White-fronted Goose *A. a. albifrons*

Winter visitor and passage migrant in variable numbers.

If the year was a poor one for Pink-footed Goose it was even worse, in relative terms, for this species. All records are given or summarised.

In the first winter almost all reports received were of the same two small groups. At Abberton Res. in January, three on 1st increased to six by 25th which remained until 15th March. At Howlands Marsh, St Osyth, five from 27th January increased to eight on 8th February and nine on 8th March, with three remaining until 16th March. Elsewhere in January there were three at Belhus Wood CP on 8th, six nearby at Hangman's Wood on 16th, two at Foulness on 17th-18th and three at Rainham on 18th. In February, two were at The Hythe on 13th and three in the Ingrebourne Valley on 14th-17th. The last bird of the first winter was at Brightlingsea on 8th April.

The only reports of the second winter were of singles at Abberton Res. on 17th October and 31st December.

GREYLAG GOOSE *Anser anser* GB 1,400*

An introduced resident.

Breeding was reported from 25 sites (30 in 2014, 23 in 2013, 24 in 2012). Much the highest count again came from Old Hall, where there were 214 pairs (213 in 2014), but there was no assessment of breeding success. At Hamford Water (where there had been 45 nests in 2013 and no count in 2014) five broods were reported but there was no full survey. At Walthamstow Reservoirs 24 broods were found totalling 72 young (21 broods of 63 young in 2014) and there were six broods nearby at Walthamstow Marsh. At Blue House Fm, ten broods were reared and at Foulness Is. seven pairs bred (eight in 2014). At Rainham eight pairs reared four broods. All other sites reported 1-2 pairs or broods.

Key WeBS counts were as follows:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
WeBS Total:	**1426**	**1842**	**1687**	**668**	**1890**	**1724**	**1946**	**1382**
Stour Estuary	151	52	72	36	256	2	88	167
Hamford Water	227	508	588	nc	47	320	133	131
Holland Haven	5	2	2	4	256	170	175	45
Colne Estuary	30	298	238	83	40	75	215	336
Blackwater Estuary	319	338	368	191	360	307	439	173
Crouch/Roach/Wallasea	65	82	29	39	239	145	178	67
Foulness/Thames	138	94	121	65	20	131	38	81
Abberton Res.	225	20	74	43	274	86	378	88
Hanningfield Res.	169	394	61	69	259	310	120	195

Highest non-WeBS counts from the main sites (those holding 200+ birds) were: Broomhouse Flash, Langham, 240 on 29th July; Cattawade Marsh, 450 on 21st September; Abberton Res., 200 on 3rd October; Old Hall, 350 on 20th September; Heybridge GP, 300 on 15th November; Russell Green GP, 200 on 19th August; Bowers Marsh, 300 on 23rd January.

CANADA GOOSE *Branta canadensis* GB ?* (600) IN ?

An introduced resident with a stable breeding population.

Breeding records were received from 31 sites (37 in 2014). The number of pairs/broods was almost constant, at 214 (215 in 2014). The highest count came from Old Hall, where there were 57 pairs (no count of young available) while at Walthamstow Reservoirs 179 young were raised from 52

broods and at Foulness 39 pairs raised 69 young. There were 19 pairs at Rainham (12 in 2014), which reared 12 broods. No other site reported more than 1-4 pairs/broods.

WeBS counts from the main sites were as follows:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
WeBS Total:	**3060**	**2096**	**2057**	**874**		**3628**	**2931**	**2445**
Stour Estuary	699	390	364	65		394	215	371
Hamford Water	38	30	47	nc		132	50	4
Colne Estuary	79	40	76	27		13	53	108
Blackwater Estuary	172	163	220	63		357	122	177
Crouch/Roach/Wallasea	211	177	135	53		1024	463	378
Foulness/Thames	972	521	568	315		780	952	817
Hanningfield Res.	302	235	292	77		197	450	190
Abberton Res.	83	140	56	53		125	243	21
Lee Valley	504	397	295	211		598	375	360

The highest single-site non-WeBS counts received (from sites reporting 250+) were (site maximum in each case): Broomhouse Flash, Langham, 400 on 9th January; Cattawade, 250 on 1st March and 5th December; Abberton Res., 500 on 25th June; Wallasea Is., 800 on 7th September; S. Fambridge, 285 on 31st October; Bowers Marsh; 240 on 24th January; Wat Tyler CP, 290 on 3rd December; Holyfield Hall Fm, LV, 280 on 10th January. Other counts of 200+ came from Blue House Fm and Rainham.

BARNACLE GOOSE *Branta leucopsis*

GB 330 IN 270*

Scarce winter visitor but fast increasing feral population.

There was again no count of breeding birds from Horsey Is. though up to 18 had been seen there in late March/early April, some of these birds no doubt accounting for small numbers seen elsewhere in the Hamford Water area in May and June. Otherwise the only records at this season involved singles at Abberton Res., Old Hall and Lower Raypits.

In the first winter 14 flew south past Frinton-on-Sea on 15th February and up to 19 were present at Old Hall during the first two months of the year. Otherwise, 1-2 were seen at several sites in the Stour Valley and 1-6 at The Naze, Easthorpe, Abberton Res., Tollesbury Wick, Hanningfield Res., Stow Marsh, Bowers Marsh and W. Canvey Marsh.

In the second winter there were no double-figure counts and just reports of single birds at Broomhouse Flash (Langham), Holland Haven, Heybridge GP, Hanningfield Res., the River Roach, Wallasea Is. and Walthamstow Reservoirs.

Barnacle Goose was added to BOU Categories C2 and E (in addition to Category A) in The British List: A Checklist of the Birds of Britain (7th Edition) published by the BOU on 20th July 2006. As the feral population in the UK continues to grow, it is becoming increasingly difficult to determine whether birds occurring in the county are Category A, C2 or E. Given the long-term presence of several hundred feral birds in Suffolk, it seems likely that most of the birds reported above were of relatively local stock.

BARNACLE/CANADA GOOSE *Branta leucopsis/canadensis*

The hybrid flock was present throughout the year at Blue House Fm and nearby sites. Numbers peaked at 65 in early March, 37 in June and 90 in October.

BRENT GOOSE *Branta bernicla*

Dark-bellied Brent *B. b. bernicla* GB 910 IN 2,000

Very common winter visitor and passage migrant.

There was another very poor showing inland, again involving just one bird in the Lee Valley, this one being seen at a number of sites up to 8th March.

Inner Thames: first-winter records came from E. Tilbury, five on 3rd January and six on 28th February, with possibly the same six being seen at Mucking on 18th January; Rainham, up to four on several dates in the first half of January, 17 on 2nd February and one in early April. In the second winter at E. Tilbury, five were seen on 13th September, then 45+ on 29th September, 248 on 11th October and single-figure groups on a few other dates to the year end. At Rainham, one was seen on 27th September (with presumably the same bird also being seen at Beckton on that date) and eight on 28th December.

Key monthly WeBS counts were:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
WeBS Total:	**36808**	**48393**	**39410**	**3167**	**1236**	**23040**	**23574**	**24268**
Stour Estuary	695	1000	1456	2707	65	1607	1516	1619
Hamford Water	6812	6922	5223	nc	39	799	3991	4462
Colne Estuary	3237	6829	6234	129	5	288	2368	1010
Blackwater Estuary	10053	9726	8740	80	16	2683	6735	7441
Dengie	3517	4840	2974	12	20	475	3950	2890
Crouch/Roach/ Wallasea	3656	7082	1791	0	6	37	693	2471
Foulness/ Thames	8408	10193	12642	259	1078	17151	4124	4372

Non-WeBS counts of 3,000+ not otherwise mentioned below were (site maxima in each case): 4,000 at Holliwell Pt on 11th February, with the same number (presumably the same flock) being on Potton Is. on 8th March; Deal Hall, Dengie, 3,000 on 13th November; Foulness Pt, an impressive 6,500 on 18th October; Wakering Stairs, 3,000 on 9th January; Leigh-on-Sea, two estimated counts of 6,000 from one observer on 6th and 10th October, with a detailed count from another observer of 5,742 on 7th October (indicating commendable accuracy on the part of the estimating observer!).

Sample counts of juveniles were received for the first winter from Mistley, Bradwell BO, Deal Hall (Dengie), Blue House Fm and S. Woodham Ferrers. Percentages of juveniles were remarkably constant, with all falling between 20% and 24.4%, apart from one count (at Bradwell) of 16.5%. In autumn and the second winter, the samples received came from three counts of the Deal Hall flock in November and December, plus single counts at Shoeburyness and Wakering Stairs, both on 7th October. These counts all showed just a tiny proportion of juveniles, falling between 0.5% and 1.24% and pointing to a very poor breeding season.

In May the species was once again widespread in small numbers through much of the month and along much of the coast, with several counts in the low hundreds in the first two weeks and an impressive 850 at Osea Road on 16th. Late-May passage at Frinton-on-Sea did not reach the levels of 2014, but there were still three-figure counts on four out of the last ten days of the month, peaking at 377 on 26th. Elsewhere in June reports of 1-2 birds were received from just three sites, perhaps a sign that there were fewer "pricked" or injured birds than usual. Unusually there were no reports at all in July.

August produced the usual scattering of sightings which could either have been summering or the first returning birds. Although early, ten at Old Hall on 11th August were perhaps in the latter category, as there had been no similar group in the county during the summer, and (on the same

reasoning) four which flew in off the sea at Frinton-on-Sea on 20th were perhaps also new arrivals. Otherwise it was not until early September that clear return passage began, with three at Rat Is. in the R.Colne on 2nd, followed by four flying south past Frinton-on-Sea on 6th. Double-figure counts then became widespread and there were 400 at Canvey Is. on 12th but no higher counts until 652 passed Frinton-on-Sea on the last day of the month. In October, there was nothing to match the events of 30th October 2014, passage at Frinton-on-Sea peaking at 3,209 on 10th and the largest gathering being the flock at Leigh-on-Sea already mentioned above.

Pale-bellied Brent *B. b. hrota* **GB 34 IN 70**

Scarce annual visitor.

First winter period: Mistley, one on 31st January; Bradwell BO, 1-2 on several dates between 21st January and 11th March; Deal Hall, one on 1st and two on 25th January and four on 11th February; Blue House Fm, one on 19th January; Potton Is., one on 8th March.

Second winter period: Frinton-on-Sea and Holland Haven, one seen flying south past both sites with a group of Dark-bellied Brents on 20th December; Brightlingsea, one on 14th December; Old Hall, one on 26th November; Deal Hall (Dengie), three on 18th November and one on 16th December; Stow Marsh, two on 31st December; Foulness Pt, one on 18th October; Leigh-on-Sea, one on 28th September and 2nd October and two on 7th October.

Black Brant *B. b. nigricans* **EBSIP**

Scarce visitor, but annual in recent years.

First winter period:

Walton Marina	One	12th February	SC
Frinton-on-Sea	One	19th January	PBr
Holland Haven	One	7th-8th February	SC, DS
West Mersea	Adult	21st January	SGri
Old Hall	Adult ♀	9th March	SH
Bradwell BO	One	18th January	GS, CB
	One	22nd February	BBO
Deal Hall, Dengie	Three adults (two ♂♂, one ♀)	1st January	DLo
	Two adult ♂♂		
	Four (three adult ♂♂ and one ♀)	25th January	DLo
	Two		
	One	11th February	DLo
Blue House Fm	Two (adult and juvenile)	19th February	DLo
Stow Marsh		27th February	AShe
South Woodham Ferrers	One adult	25th February	DLo
	Two adults		
Brandy Hole		25th January	DLo
Potton Is.		8th March	DLo

While the above was a strong showing, it seems possible that the first three records (in the north of the county) all referred to the same bird and that one individual was seen at both W. Mersea and Old Hall. Similarly, just a few birds (but a minimum of four) could have accounted for all the records at Bradwell, on the Dengie and along the rivers Crouch and Roach.

Second winter period:

West Mersea	One	8th November to the year end	mo SH
Old Hall	One	14th December	CB
Bradwell BO	One	21st October	DLo
	Adult ♂	3rd December	BBO
	Adult	13th and 16th December	DLo
Deal Hall, Dengie	One ♂	13th November	DLo,
	Adult	16th December	DW
	Two ♂♂	26th December	DLo
Marsh Farm, South Woodham Ferrers	One	17th December	AShe
Foulness Is.	Two (♂ and ♀, not paired to each other)	18th October	DL
	One ♂		
Leigh-on-Sea		2nd October	DL

The bird at Old Hall was watched by the observer at the same time as others were watching the bird at W. Mersea, so two were involved, and the same was the case with the birds at Bradwell and Deal Hall on 16th December. The two birds at Deal Hall on 26th December were considered to include the bird from Bradwell.

The BBRC withdrew Black Brant from the list of rare species and races that it considers from 1st July 2005. Observers should note, however, that a detailed description is still required by the ID Panel and that descriptions should include details on the elimination of Dark-bellied Brent Goose x Black Brant hybrid, which has become an increasing problem in recent years.

RED-BREASTED GOOSE *Branta ruficollis* BBRC (7, 4, 11)

Vagrant, the true status of which is blurred by frequent escapes from captivity.

Frinton-on-Sea One 30th September PBr
This bird flew south with Dark-bellied Brents and had been seen passing Landguard Bird Observatory in Suffolk earlier the same morning.

See Appendix II for apparent escapes and feral birds.

EGYPTIAN GOOSE *Alopochen aegyptiacus* GB 10*

Scarce resident; increasing. Becoming a regular breeder in small numbers.

Breeding was confirmed (single pairs unless stated) from Brightlingsea, Boreham, Hanningfield Res., Thorndon CP (two pairs, with broods of six and five), E. India Dock, Leyton Flats (one, possibly two, broods) and Walthamstow Reservoirs (two pairs, with broods of seven and eight).

Reports without confirmation of breeding were also received from a further 51 sites, at many of which birds were present throughout the year. Although this appears a significant increase on the 38 sites in 2014, many of the 2015 locations were close together and it seems likely that the same birds were often seen at more than one site.

Double-figure counts came from (site maximum in each case): Abberton Res., 21 on 19th July; Salcott, 36 on 31st August; Old Hall, 15 on 2nd December; Hanningfield Res., 31 on 6th December; Chigborough Lakes, ten on 12th December; Stubbers Adventure Centre, Corbets Tey, 12 on 15th August; Brook Fm, Upminster, 25 on 20th September; Dagenham Chase, 11 on 23rd November; Valentines Pk, Ilford, 30 on 26th November; Hainault, 11 on 14th February; Walthamstow Marsh, 13 on 17th May; Wanstead Pk, 14 on 15th October; Wanstead Flats, 18 on 9th November; Tottenham Marshes, ten on 26th April; Three Mills, Bow, 11 on 2nd July.

The Salcott flock matched the previous largest in the county, at Dagenham Chase in August 2013. While the number of sites holding double-figure flocks was at a new high, several were from neighbouring sites and it is likely that there was considerable duplication between them.

SHELDUCK *Tadorna tadorna* GB 610 IN 3,000

Locally common breeding species, numbers greatly augmented in winter.

Coastal breeding was reported at eight sites (15 in 2014). At Foulness Is. there were 30 pairs (32 in 2013) but only nine fledged young were seen. At Old Hall 32 pairs fledged 24 young between them. There were three broods at Rainham. All other sites reported 1-2 broods. Inland, two pairs fledged young at Walthamstow Reservoirs and three broods were seen at Hanningfield Res., while two broods were found at Broomhouse Flash (Langham) and single broods at Langham Waterworks, Stansted Airport Lagoons and Holyfield Fm, LV.

Monthly WeBS totals for the county and for the significant sites were as follows:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
WeBS Total:	**9757**	**7605**	**5050**	**1821**	**719**	**1442**	**3178**	**6161**
Stour Estuary	2609	1168	810	358	164	427	824	1118
Hamford Water	1413	1221	835	nc	139	165	520	1015
Colne Estuary	1167	1183	734	522	102	254	327	418
Blackwater Estuary	3031	2623	1356	132	59	250	994	2351
Dengie	349	185	251	5	0	0	0	26
Crouch/Roach/Wallasea	303	669	374	262	35	100	177	494
Foulness/Thames	858	508	633	461	220	246	332	732

Single-site non-WeBS counts of 250+ were as follows (site maximum unless stated): Mistley, 770 on 17th January; Frinton-on-Sea, 251 flew south on 29th December; Southey Creek, 510 on 8th February; E.Tilbury, an impressive series of counts in May/June, building from 273 on 16th May to 930 on 27th June – perhaps gathering ahead of the annual moult-migration to Holland and Germany? (see Guide, p.97) – this mid-summer flock has been reported in previous years but not in such numbers.

Inland records away from the breeding sites came from a further 19 locations. Almost all were near the coast or in the Lee Valley, exceptions being birds at Hatfield Forest, Bradwell (nr Coggeshall), Terling (where there was a maximum of 14 on 24th April), Lt Baddow and Boreham (where there were up to nine in February).

MANDARIN *Aix galericulata* GB 10*

An introduced species with an increasing resident population.

Three broods were seen at Strawberry Hill Ponds and one at Connaught Water. A pair was seen prospecting at Terling but there was no evidence of breeding.

In the first winter double-figure counts (site maximum in each case) came from:- Connaught Water, 28 on 25th January; Strawberry Hill Ponds, 19 on 4th January; Wanstead Pk, ten on 21st February; Heath Drive, Gidea Pk, ten on 2nd February. In the second winter the highest count was of 37 at Connaught Water on 29th November. The only other site to report double-figures was Heath Drive, Gidea Pk, with a maximum of 15 on 3rd December.

Reports of 1-7 birds came from a further 25 sites around the county (16 in 2014). Four of these sites were locations in or close to Epping Forest (additional to those mentioned above) and all but four (Bradfield, Gt Holland Pits, Weeleyhall Wood and The Hythe) were in the south of the county.

Wigeon (RESTON KILGOUR)

WIGEON *Anas penelope*

GB 4,400 IN 15,000

Common, often abundant, winter visitor and passage migrant. Erratic breeder.

There were again no reports indicative of breeding but a number of birds were reported in May/June, as follows: Howlands Marsh, two from 4th to 25th May; Hanningfield Res., two on 8th May and a single to 21st June; Lower Raypits, a pair on 8th May and a single on 8th and 21st June; Rainham, three on 10th and one to 30th May.

WeBS counts were as follows:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
WeBS Total:	**18921**	**17381**	**7139**	**116**	**1964**	**14164**	**20171**	**14803**
Stour Estuary	1934	1318	1014	11	232	1298	1344	1646
Hamford Water	1633	1534	725	nc	248	983	2854	1207
Holland Haven	510	605	242	0	6	62	80	385
Colne Estuary	2464	2259	704	56	21	116	1864	806
Blackwater Estuary	4696	5120	2608	1	349	4007	4549	4442
Dengie	220	156	46	0	0	145	175	170
Crouch/Roach/Wallasea	1290	2847	608	4	3	1116	4071	1916
Foulness/Thames	1569	920	562	28	310	4146	3594	2424
Abberton Res.	3902	2000	295	16	756	1979	1112	1306
Hanningfield Res	490	510	325	0	23	90	323	310
Lee Valley	213	112	0	0	16	222	205	191

Excluding WeBS counts, four-figure counts were reported from the following sites (the highest non-WeBS count at each site being given): Tollesbury Wick, 1.400 on 18th February; Lower Raypits, 1,300 on 10th January; Marsh Fm (S. Woodham Ferrers) 1,100 on 17th December; W. Canvey, 1,800 on 25th December; Bowers Marsh, 2,000 on 10th February; Rainham, 1,200 on 15th January.

GADWALL *Anas strepera*

GB 250 IN 600

Slowly increasing winter visitor and passage migrant. Stable breeding population.

Breeding was confirmed at just two sites (seven in 2014). One brood was seen at Dovercourt. At Rainham, 15 pairs summered, and four broods were seen. At Old Hall, nine pairs were counted but no young were seen and at Foulness four pairs were counted, again no young being seen.

Apart from those mentioned above, pairs in suitable habitat in the breeding season (single pairs unless stated) were also reported from: St Osyth Priory (two pairs), Boreham, Lower Raypits (three pairs), Vange and the Mardyke Valley. In addition, breeding season (May/June) records of two or more birds (but with no mention of pairing) were received from 27 further sites.

Monthly WeBS totals from selected key sites were:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
WeBS Total:	**913**	**723**	**544**	**319**	**722**	**802**	**743**	**867**
Stour estuary	37	35	17	5	0	0	0	0
Hamford Water	99	69	76	nc	37	33	38	113
Colne Estuary	12	9	28	49	3	0	4	0
Blackwater Estuary	172	10	33	7	5	12	21	28
Crouch/Roach/Wallasea	40	158	126	24	30	9	13	65
Abberton Res.	192	99	36	92	499	479	204	41
Hanningfield Res.	124	64	77	54	89	134	242	294
Lee Valley	198	216	44	39	38	103	150	269

The highest non-WeBS counts again came from Wanstead Pk, where numbers in the first winter peaked at 407 on 18th January and in the second at 360 on 30th November. Excluding WeBS counts, other sites recording three-figure counts were (non-WeBS site maximum in each case): Chigborough Lakes, 150 on 28th November; Hanningfield Res., 130 on 2nd December and Wanstead Flats, 100 on 16th October.

TEAL *Anas crecca*

GB 2,100 IN 5,000

Common winter visitor and passage migrant. Very scarce breeding species.

There were no reports of confirmed breeding but at Broomhouse Flash, Langham, a pair and six juveniles on 3rd July were thought possibly local breeders. At Rainham one pair summered. This is a species where some birds linger into May before leaving, while a few returning (or wandering) birds are back by mid-June. Other sites reporting birds in May/June were: E. Bergholt, The Naze, Holland Haven, Howlands Marsh, Cudmore Grove, Abberton Res., Old Hall, Lower Raypits, Blue House Fm, Foulness, Vange and Warren Gorge (Chafford Hundred).

Monthly WeBS counts were:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
WeBS Total:	**21701**	**18868**	**9265**	**1253**	**6553**	**11767**	**18439**	**16459**
Stour Estuary	1555	1300	658	154	277	771	847	1710
Hamford Water	2710	2286	1142	nc	1379	1967	3887	2985
Holland Haven	185	65	62	14	41	40	75	250
Colne Estuary	1031	2505	1230	358	606	181	1092	833
Blackwater Estuary	4612	5218	2156	156	1304	2755	2906	4251

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Dengie	338	75	54	0	0	0	0	55
Crouch/Roach/Wallasea	1749	2320	901	30	331	697	1572	838
Foulness/Thames	3447	2268	2025	171	379	794	1601	1457
Abberton Res.	5740	2368	704	332	2069	4096	4896	3631
Hanningfield Res.	209	131	144	74	109	145	342	306
Lee Valley	123	292	166	52	6	297	139	107

Non-WeBS counts of 500 or more were received from the following sites (the highest count at each site being given): Horsey Wade, 750 on 3rd December; Frinton-on-Sea, 554 flying south on 9th September; Abberton Res, 500+ on 27th November; Old Hall, 500 on 3rd November; Tollesbury Wick, 500 on 15th-21st February; Heybridge Basin, 1,000 on 14th February; Hanningfield Res., 500+ on 1st December; Stow Marsh, 1,200 on 25th January; Blue House Fm, 680 on 22nd January; Wallasea Is., 700 on 15th November; Two Tree Is., 800 on 15th November; Thurrock Thameside EWT, 1,000 on 25th February; Mucking Flats, 564 on 16th February; E.Tilbury, 680 on 15th March; Rainham, 700 on 15th January.

GREEN-WINGED TEAL *Anas carolinensis*

EBSIP (18, 10, 28)

Vagrant.

Abberton Res.	♂	29th March-1st April	mo

This species (or subspecies according to many authorities) put in an appearance for the fourth year running, on similar dates to the bird in 2014. It also occurred annually between 2001 and 2007.

MALLARD *Anas platyrhynchos*

GB 6,800 IN 20,000

Common and widespread resident, winter visitor and passage migrant.

In total 265 broods/summering pairs were reported from 45 sites (253 at 70 sites in 2014). As usual the numbers were more an indication of observer coverage than any measure of actual breeding numbers of this numerous species. The BTO Breeding Bird Survey indicates that the species is stable or increasing as a breeder in south-east England. Numbers are no doubt boosted by birds released for shooting.

Full breeding reports came this year (with 2014 figures in brackets where available) from: Old Hall, 87 pairs fledging just 24 young (56 fledging 74); Blue House Fm, 18 broods (22); Foulness, 69 pairs fledging 22 juveniles (20, with no count of fledging); Rainham, 24 pairs producing 17 broods (11 producing nine); Walthamstow Reservoirs, six broods (four). Fledging success (or failure) rates at Old Hall and Foulness pointed to an even more difficult breeding season for this species than 2014.

WeBS totals were as follows:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
WeBS Total:	**3797**	**3368**	**2408**	**1557**	**3621**	**3690**	**3968**	**3273**
Stour Estuary	283	97	90	56	49	174	154	95
Hamford Water	594	608	464	nc	504	812	1016	799
Holland Haven	12	5	4	8	2	8	19	6
Colne Estuary	96	135	121	127	71	34	96	56
Blackwater Estuary	473	293	258	105	560	437	450	436
Dengie	258	80	78	19	51	12	31	49
Crouch/Roach/Wallasea	293	405	145	134	190	278	162	185
Foulness/Thames	651	628	541	389	417	286	404	427

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Abberton Res.	566	556	234	255	1177	898	852	565
Hanningfield Res.	141	108	79	103	199	245	367	152
Lee Valley	430	453	384	331	364	405	330	389

The only non-WeBS count of 200+ received came from Rainham, where there were 294 on 15th August. Other sites reporting non-WeBS counts of 100+ were Widdington, Langham, Old Hall, Terling, Hanningfield Res., Blue House Fm., E.Tilbury, Bowers Gifford, Bowers Marsh, the Mardyke Valley, Rainham and Connaught Water.

PINTAIL *Anas acuta*

GB 290 IN 600

Passage migrant and winter visitor. Occasionally breeds.

There were again no reports suggestive of breeding nor any of summering. The only record from May to July was of two at Marsh Fm, S. Woodham Ferrers, on 6th July.

Key monthly WeBS counts were:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
WeBS Total:	**1648**	**1065**	**420**	**2**	**218**	**952**	**822**	**1044**
Stour Estuary	429	229	218	0	63	114	109	229
Hamford Water	82	27	4	nc	0	60	62	39
Blackwater Estuary	784	500	168	2	42	186	143	431
Dengie	125	117	0	0	0	2	14	250
Crouch/Roach/Wallasea	72	118	1	0	4	5	116	20
Abberton Res.	150	36	0	0	104	547	346	74
Hanningfield Res	0	0	0	0	5	36	33	1
Lee Valley	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Paglesham Lagoon	0	38	8	0	0	0	0	0

Three-figure non-WeBS counts were received as follows (only the highest non-WeBS count at each site being given): Wrabness, 180 on 10th February; Old Hall, 185 on 5th February; Osea Road, 100 on 29th December; Heybridge Basin, 300 on 18th February; Southey Creek, 180 on 14th February (probably part of the Heybridge flock, as the same birds move fairly widely around the inner Blackwater); Blue House Fm, 400 on 28th December.

GARGANEY *Anas querquedula*

GB+* IN 20,000

Scarce passage migrant. Sporadic breeder.

There were no confirmed breeding records. The only June records came from: Abberton Res., two ♂♂ on 1st; Hanningfield Res., one on 27th; Bowers Marsh, a ♂ intermittently from 12th to 20th.

The first birds of the spring were a pair at Hanningfield Res. on 14th March and there were no others in that month. Subsequent reports in April/May (all singles and all ♂♂ unless stated) came from: Walthamstow Reservoirs, singles on 21st April and 12th May; Rainham, two on many dates from 2nd to 28th April, with three on 12th, then one to 1st May, singles on 15th and 22nd May and two on 27th May; Fairlop Waters, one on 20th April; Vange, a ♂ on 2nd-4th May; Bowers Marsh (all ♂♂), one on 21st April then, in May, singles on 2nd, 9th, 24th and 31st, with two on 21st; Foulness, a pair on 17th May; Paglesham Lagoon, one on 23rd May; Old Hall, in April a pair on 5th-11th and a second ♂ on 9th; Abberton Res., in April a ♂ on 18th and a pair on 23rd and, in May, 1-2 ♂♂ on 24th-31st; The Hythe, a ♀ on 18th April; Dovercourt, a ♀ on 8th April; Manningtree a ♂ on 13th-15th May.

Autumn passage began on 4th July and was back to the low levels of 2012-13. Reports came from 11 sites (ten in 2014), none of which held more than two birds on any one day apart from Hanningfield Res., where there were four on 29th August. Records are summarized in the following table:

	Jul					Aug				Sep	
Week commencing	2nd	9th	16th	23rd	30th	6th	13th	20th	27th	3rd	10th
Week number	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36	37
Numbers	2	1	4	2	1	-	2	10	6	6	3
Locations	1	1	3	1	1	-	1	5	2	4	3

The last bird of the autumn was one at Wat Tyler CP on 15th September.

SHOVELER *Anas clypeata* GB 180 IN 400

Passage migrant and winter visitor, with a small breeding population.

In the breeding season (taken as May/June) 49 pairs were reported from nine sites. In addition, birds not reported as pairs were seen in 2014 at a further nine sites in the breeding season. Much the highest numbers in 2015 again came from Old Hall, where 28 pairs were found (but there was no report on fledging success). The only sites to report broods were Blue House Fm, where there were six and Rainham, where there were four (from six pairs).

Monthly WeBS counts were as follows:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
WeBS Total:	**838**	**891**	**774**	**440**	**1922**	**2436**	**1647**	**697**
Stour Estuary	17	85	35	5	0	6	2	6
Hamford Water	36	33	51	nc	6	1	19	91
Holland Haven	20	7	10	5	4	2	2	5
Colne Estuary	38	53	146	170	6	2	9	25
Blackwater Estuary	127	32	99	47	1	17	71	106
Dengie	26	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Crouch/Roach/Wallasea	118	158	126	32	12	2	16	15
Paglesham Lagoon	0	56	40	17	0	0	0	0
Foulness/Thames	72	70	70	4	33	21	43	45
Abberton Res.	282	340	222	223	1756	2129	1294	313
Hanningfield Res.	9	20	4	17	18	61	132	46
Lee Valley	93	93	11	17	86	195	60	48

Non-WeBS three-figure counts came from the following sites (only the highest non-WeBS count at each site being given): Abberton Res., 450 in Wigborough Bay (with others not counted elsewhere on the reservoir) on 8th November; Old Hall, 133 on 19th March; Paglesham Lagoon, 218 on 23rd November; Bowers Marsh, 200 on 5th September; Rainham, 150 on 20th January.

RED-CRESTED POCHARD *Netta rufina*

Scarce (feral) resident, uncommon passage migrant and winter visitor.

The only breeding record came from Hanningfield Res, where a single brood of seven was noted. Birds were reported at this site in every month bar January, peaking at 43 on 8th September prior to dispersing.

Elsewhere: Abberton Res., ♂ intermittently reported from 1st January to 9th May, six on 15th August increased to a peak of 19 on 21st September before dropping to five in October with the last on 4th November; Ingrebourne Valley, 26th February to 13th March with four on 5th-8th; Belhus Wood CP, two on 4th March; Lee Valley, Tottenham Lock, four on 30th March; Lee Valley, Olympic Pk, five on 26th April; Walthamstow Res., five on 26th April, six on 17th May, ♀ on 5th July; The Hythe, 26th May-3rd June; Bowers Marsh, ♂ from 4th-11th September.

Estimated numbers as follows:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Numbers	1	9	26	44	48	13	21	48	63	15	15	1
Locations	1	3	5	3	4	2	2	2	3	2	2	

POCHARD *Aythya ferina*

GB 380 IN 3,500

Common winter visitor and passage migrant with a small breeding population.

A total of 60 broods/pairs was reported to the Recorder from eight sites (64 from 11 in 2014 and 63 from 14 in 2013) as follows (previous year in brackets): Old Hall, 30 (36); Hanningfield Res., one; Foulness, 20, with nine young seen (five pairs); Paglesham Churchend, one; Paglesham Lagoon, at least one (18 young noted); Wanstead, one pair with four young (two pairs); Walthamstow Res., five (six); Wat Tyler CP, one. Separately (but presumably including the foregoing), the British Birds Rare Breeding Birds Panel received details of 14 pairs confirmed breeding and 76 territorial pairs.

Key WeBS totals were:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
WeBS Total:	**1232**	**1020**	**619**	**375**	**2038**	**2192**	**2220**	**1399**
Blackwater Estuary	179	87	137	83	2	1	26	37
Crouch/Roach/Wallasea	2	54	5	0	0	1	40	0
Paglesham Lagoon	0	103	12	0	0	0	0	0
Foulness/Thames	68	26	74	61	12	8	12	16
Abberton Res.	596	236	157	10	2002	2122	1923	1216
Hanningfield Res	290	341	91	98	112	139	2	20
Lee Valley	94	140	72	41	14	56	219	110

Overall numbers reported were low with only six other counts of 200 or more from three sites: Abberton Res., 510 on 2nd January, 220 on 25th August, 420 on 1st September and 330 on 1st December; Old Hall, 209 on 21st January; Paglesham Lagoon, 220 on 7th February. The regular moulting flock at Walthamstow Res. peaked at 142 on 9th August, continuing the downward trend from 2014 and 2013.

FERRUGINOUS DUCK *Aythya nyroca*

EBSIP (37, 7, 44)

Rare passage migrant and winter visitor

Dagenham Chase	one	22nd November-2nd December	Photo ID

TUFTED DUCK *Aythya fuligula*

GB 1,100 IN 12,000

Common winter visitor and passage migrant with a stable breeding population.

A total of 90 pairs/broods was reported from 16 sites (117 from 22 in 2014, 72 from 25 in 2013). The only sites with five or more pairs were: Old Hall, 27 pairs, with six fledged young seen; Foulness, 23 pairs, with two juveniles seen; Walthamstow Res., 11; Paglesham Lagoon, eight; Russell Green GP, five.

Key sites for WeBS were:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
WeBS Total:	**2435**	**2806**	**2975**	**2550**	**4735**	**5309**	**3972**	**3048**
Hamford Water	62	94	130	nc	48	13	46	49
Colne Estuary	6	11	20	64	4	1	0	1
Blackwater Estuary	178	166	267	63	13	12	8	13
Crouch/Roach/Wallasea	0	26	17	19	0	0	2	0

Tufted Duck (DR SIMON COX)

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Paglesham Lagoon	0	103	12	0	0	0	0	0
Foulness/Thames	175	178	213	163	53	70	59	114
Abberton Res.	819	668	832	799	2869	2112	1608	1179
Hanningfield Res.	0	307	452	637	1492	650	448	695
Lee Valley	1195	1282	923	693	97	2443	1789	977

Numbers reported remained low with 17 reports in excess of 200 as follows: Walthamstow Res., 200 on 3rd January, 300 on 8th February, 300 on 5th July building to a site record peak of 2,860 on 9th August before reducing to 732 and 256 on 2nd and 19th September respectively, 400 on 29th December; Hanningfield Res., 200 on 13th July and 15th August, 450 on 14th October, 550 on 2nd December; KGV Res., 530 on 15th July; Abberton Res., 375 on 25th August, 200 on 27th November.

SCAUP *Aythya marila*

GB 52 IN 3,100

Winter visitor and passage migrant, usually in small numbers. Occasionally summers.

Reported from just seven sites during the year again in low numbers. All records are given: Walthamstow Res., the ♂ from 2014 was joined by two immature ♂♂ on 4th January and then a ♀ on 8th February. Up to four birds (but possibly relating to six different individuals) were noted up to 22nd March with the final two recorded on 7th April. A ♂ returned on 29th November and remained on Lockwood Res. to the end of the year. It is assumed that the single at KGV Res. on 27th December related to the same individual; Abberton Res., a ♀ from 9th-28th January and 27th March to 22nd April; Beckton, 12 on 4th January; Stour Estuary (Mistley-Wrabness), ♀ on 5th-6th January, 18th October; W. Canvey Marsh, ♂ 21st-28th March; Dagenham Chase, 22nd November; Hanningfield Res., two immature ♂♂ from 5th December to the end of the year.

In addition a "Scaup-like" hybrid was present at W. Canvey Marsh at both ends of the year.

An estimated summary of all records is given below:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Numbers	17	4	6	2	-	-	-	-	-	1	2	3
Locations	4	1	3	2	-	-	-	-	-	1	2	3

EIDER *Somateria mollissima* **GB 550 IN 12,850**

Winter visitor and passage migrant with small numbers in summer

Just 49 records were received in the year with only two double-figure reports (three in 2014, four in 2013). There were very few records from the Blackwater estuary where this species has often been found in the past. All records are therefore listed (singles unless stated otherwise).

Early winter/spring: The Naze, from 2015 until 28th March, Blackwater Estuary (Bradwell BO and Old Hall), 6th-18th January and 11th March to 18th April; Frinton-on-Sea, 12 south on 18th February; Rainham, 1st March.

A single summer record came from The Naze on 11th July.

Autumn passage birds were noted as follows: Frinton-on-Sea, two south on 11th October (presumably the same birds also being noted at Bradwell BO and Gunners Pk the same day), seven south on 12th November, 21st November, and in December southbound movements of eight on 8th, 17 on 29th (when two passed at Holland Haven) and seven on 31st. In addition, on 22nd November, six moved north at this site (with two and five noted from nearby The Naze and Holland Haven respectively), two were at Gunners Pk and a single at Canvey Pt.

The sole late winter record was of a single at Wrabness from 10th-20th December.

Estimated monthly totals with the previous two years' figures for comparison were:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
2015	2	13	3	4	-	-	1	-	-	2	17	33
2014	8	1	1	5	2	1	2	2	2	4	50	12
2013	19	5	8	5	2	2	1	2	-	18	62	13

LONG-TAILED DUCK *Clangula hyemalis* **GB 110 IN 20,000**

Declining winter visitor and passage migrant.

A very poor year with just four records of five birds. Singles were noted at E. Tilbury on 18th February, Hanningfield Res. from 8th-12th September, a ♀ and immature at Deal Hall on 26th September, and ♀/immature north at Frinton-on-Sea on 22nd November.

Estimated county totals over the last ten years have been:

	2015	2014	2013	2012	2011	2010	2009	2008	2007	2006
Totals	5	18	23	14	8	12	12	12	12	17

COMMON SCOTER *Melanita nigra* **GB 1,000 IN 16,000**

Winter visitor and passage migrant. Red List species.

Another poor year with a further reduction from the low numbers noted in 2014.

Inland and Inner Thames records (singles unless stated otherwise): Hanningfield Res., two on 20th March; KGV Res. 20th March, 28th November, 27th-28th December; Rainham, five on 24th March, in April, one on 2nd, two on 3rd, one on 18th, two on 13th July, 24th July, three on 16th September, four on 8th November; Beckton, 12th April; E. Tilbury, two on 10th July, 52 on 21st November with two the following day; Walthamstow Res., three from 17th-21st August, one remaining to 26th; Abberton Res., 14 on 21st October and 22nd November.

Estimated monthly maxima with the previous two years' figures for comparison were:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
2015	4	16	82	42	163	-	6	57	148	648	281	369
2014	248	4	204	35	207	145	281	152	77	327	690	74
2013	1120	204	109	1179	81	546	777	37	354	525	3412	533

As usual, most records came from regular sea-watching at Frinton-on-Sea where a notable spring movement occurred on 2nd-3rd May with 63 and 100 noted respectively. In autumn at Frinton-on-Sea, just 1,374 were noted between July and December (1,434 in 2014, 5,148 in 2013). Peak movements were 77 on 9th September (when 86 noted at Bradwell BO), 254 and 242 on 29th and 30th October respectively, 193 on 21st November (when 180 noted at Canvey Pt.), and 148 and 65 on 14th and 16th December. No other counts in excess of 50 were received, and unusually no double-figure counts from the Blackwater Estuary.

VELVET SCOTER *Melanitta fusca*

GB 25 IN 10,000

Scarce winter visitor and passage migrant. Rare in summer.

First winter period: a young pair present at Abberton Res. from 29th March to 9th April was the only record, and the single inland report for the year.

Autumn passage was only observed at three sites with no winter records. At Frinton-on-Sea, two flew south on both 9th September and 29th October; Wrabness, one from 8th-23rd October; Gunners Pk, immature upriver on 22nd November.

A very poor year with an estimated annual total of only eight birds (26 on 2014, 41 in 2013).

SURF SCOTER *Melanitta perspicillata*

EBSIP (1, 1, 2)

Vagrant

Wrabness/Bradfield	imm ♂	2014 – 28th February	mo

The first winter male from 2014 continued to draw admirers as it transitioned into adult male plumage.

GOLDENEYE *Bucephala clangula*

GB 200 IN 11,500

Common winter visitor, a few usually summer.

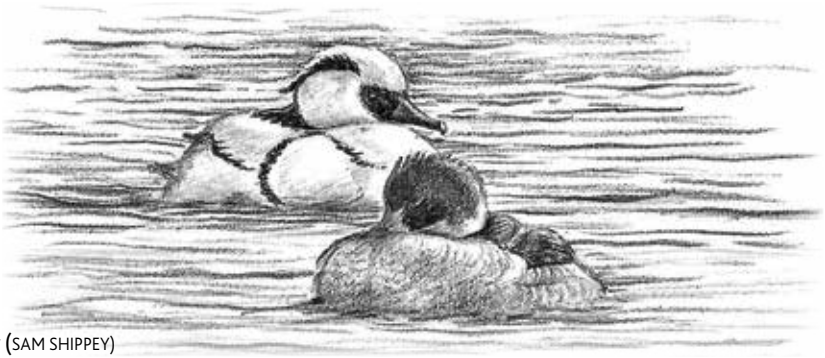
The last birds of the spring were a pair at Abberton Res. on 1st May with the first returning bird at Colne Pt on 2nd August. Other August records came from KGV Res. with two on 17th and 29th.

WeBS totals were:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
WeBS Total:	**456**	**424**	**567**	**4**	**0**	**9**	**82**	**425**
Stour Estuary	139	42	22	0	0	0	13	70
Blackwater Estuary	106	14	5	0	0	0	0	42
Crouch/Roach Estuary	0	6	6	0	0	0	0	0
Abberton Res.	150	242	434	4	0	5	42	233
Hanningfield Res.	33	44	31	0	0	3	6	41
Lee Valley	23	66	69	0	0	1	19	36

There were only three sites reporting non-WeBS counts of 50 or more, as follows: Stour Estuary (Mistley-Manningtree), 50 on 6th January, 56 on 2nd February, 60 on 22nd November, 54 on 23rd December; Blackwater Estuary (boat count), 60 on 31st January; Abberton Res., 120 on 8th February, 50 on 16th March.

Autumn passage was noted primarily from Frinton-on-Sea/Holland Haven and concentrated during strong N-NW winds over 21st-22nd November (peaks of six on both days), and mid-late December (maximum nine on 29th).



Smew (SAM SHIPPEY)

SMEW *Mergus albellus* GB 2* IN 400

Uncommon winter visitor occurring in variable numbers.

A poor year with low numbers in both winter periods. Birds were only reported from three areas: Abberton Res., peaks of seven on 9th January, eight on 9th February, and two from 23rd November to the year end; Lee Valley, peaks of four on 2nd January (Hooks Marsh) and 28th February (Friday Lake), then two from 15th November at either KGV Res. or Friday Lake; Old Hall/Tollesbury, up to three during January-March, with a single on 26th and 28th December.

The last report of the first winter period concerned a single at Connaught Water on 1st April with an early returning bird at KGV Res. reported on four dates between 13th August and 2nd September.

Estimated monthly numbers were:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Numbers	14	14	4	1	1	1	-	4	5
Locations	5	3	2	1	1	1	-	2	4

Estimates of numbers have assumed the largest single count from any Lee Valley site is that for the entire area.

RED-BREASTED MERGANSER *Mergus serrator* GB 84 IN 1,700

Winter visitor and passage migrant. Occasionally summers.

The last of the spring was noted at Mistley on 25th April, with the first returning bird north past Frinton-on-Sea on 28th September. No summer records were received.

Inland records came from: Abberton Res., ♂ on 18th January was joined by a ♀ on 25th, also being seen on 8th February with five reported on 15th, and singles on 18th March, 8th and 25th November, 6th December to the end of the year; KGV Res., 21st April, two on 30th October. Inner Thames records comprised (singles unless stated): Beckton, two on 20th January; Rainham, one on 24th October, two on 15th December; E. Tilbury, in November, a ♂ on 21st and two ♀♀ on 22nd.

WeBS totals were:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
WeBS Total:	**187**	**189**	**188**	**32**	**0**	**41**	**81**	**179**
Stour Estuary	73	83	84	31	0	19	20	69
Hamford Water	7	0	1	nc	0	0	1	15
Colne Estuary	13	39	48	1	0	0	12	12
Blackwater Estuary	90	44	45	0	0	20	46	77
Dengie	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
Crouch/Roach/Wallasea	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0

Southbound autumn passage offshore returned to normal levels, with 99 noted passing Frinton-on-Sea between October and December. Peak counts were ten on 22nd November, and, in December, 19 on 14th and 11 on 16th.

The highest non-WeBS counts were: Stour Estuary (Wrabness to Mistley), monthly peaks of 72 on 17th January, 60 on 19th February, 70 on 21st March, 67 on 26th October, 54 on 11th December; Blackwater Estuary (boat counts), 70 on 31st January, 70 on 21st March.

GOOSANDER *Mergus merganser*

GB 120 IN 2,700

Winter visitor.

Monthly maxima at the sites holding double figures were as follows:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	Oct	Nov	Dec
Abberton Res.	17	18	11	6	7	7	29
Billericay	-	-	-	-	-	-	12
Rivenhall Place nr Silver End	29	15	-	-	-	-	-
Colchester-Wivenhoe, R Colne	28	-	12	-	-	-	1
Hanningfield Res.	21	24	11	-	-	-	15
KGV Res./Wm. Girling Res.	-	50	11	-	-	10	21

Small numbers were reported from numerous other sites in the Lee Valley during both winters but only a pair on two occasions in the Chelmsford area, where records continue to decline.

The last reported bird of the spring was at Little Baddow on 11th May, with the first returning bird being one at KGV Res. on 12th September. Coastal movement was noted from end October to early December as follows:

Frinton-on-Sea, two on 26th October, and, in December, one on 7th, six on 9th and three on 10th; E. Tilbury, one on 21st November, possibly the same also being seen at Rainham the same day; St Osyth Beach, four on 22nd November.

RUDDY DUCK *Oxyura jamaicensis*

Scarce non-breeding visitor

In view of the sensitivities surrounding this species and the ongoing DEFRA initiative to cull Ruddy Ducks details of specific locations have again been withheld.

Sixteen records were received relating to just a single bird at one site from 4th to 30th May (five records from four sites in 2014, 42 records from eight sites in 2013). The deletion of this species from the county's avifauna would appear imminent.

Goosander
(GRAHAM OAKES)

RED-LEGGED PARTRIDGE *Alectoris rufa*

Fairly common and widespread introduced resident.

In total, 499 records were received (276 in 2014, 291 in 2013), 210 of which were Birdtrack records from Terling, a most impressive effort! A total of 120 sites was involved, encompassing all corners of the county. At least 24 pairs were reported from 21 sites (38 from 12 in 2014, 22 from seven in 2013). There were no reports of more than 1-2 pairs from any site and a significant decline was noted at Ashen (Ridgewell) Airfield. In addition, two or more birds were reported from a further 28 locations during the breeding season. Breeding was confirmed at two sites. Observers are again encouraged to send in all reports of confirmed/possible breeding.

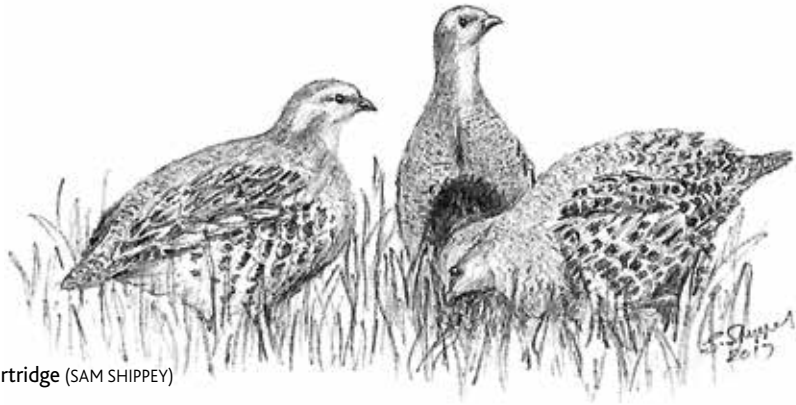
Outside the breeding season, peak counts came from Elmdon, 50 on 20th October; Bulmer, 30 on 30th December; Orsett Fen, 37 in January; Terling, up to 30 in January-February; Langley Green, 40 on 18th October; Colne Pt, 29 on 29th October. These records relate to birds released for shooting. The release of birds by shoots makes it difficult to assess the permanent population.

GREY PARTRIDGE *Perdix perdix*

Much declined now scarce resident. Red List species. Essex BAP.

In total, 74 records were received from 31 locations (67 from 41 in 2014, 59 from 27 in 2013). There were no records of confirmed breeding, but paired birds were seen during the breeding season (May-July) at eight sites.

Outside the breeding season, the only double-figure counts came from Sunnymead Fm, ten on 9th November; Chrishall Grange, 14 on 30th November.



Grey Partridge (SAM SHIPPEY)

QUAIL *Coturnix coturnix*

Scarce summer visitor and passage migrant, subject to influxes. Red List species.

Four birds at five sites makes for a fairly typical summer (seven from five in 2014, four from three in 2013).

Rainham	one	14th-16th June	PHa, LE
Orsett Fen	one	1st July	RB
Lt Clacton	one	7th August	P. Giles per SC
Colne Pt	one	20th August	CSB

Annual minima for singing territorial males plus confirmed breeding pairs are:

2015	2014	2013	2012	2011	2010	2009	2008	2007	2006
4	4	3	9	12	7	9	7	7	6

PHEASANT *Phasianus colchicus*

Common and widespread introduced resident.

The species remains a common breeding resident in the county with a total of 1,554 records received (1,074 in 2014, 790 in 2013). There were three reports of confirmed breeding, from The Naze, Colne Pt, and Sunnymead Fm (six in 2014, two in 2013).

Counts of 25 or more were reported Bulmer, 35 on 21st January and a similar number on 22nd December; Orsett Fen, maximum of 33 on 14th January; Terling, 30 on 23rd August and up to 100 in September; Colne Pt, 50 on 28th October. The release of birds by shoots and their dispersal makes it difficult to assess the permanent population.

RED-THROATED DIVER *Gavia stellata* **GB 170 IN 3,000**

Common winter visitor and passage migrant.

Inland: there were no reports from inland waters this year apart from one on 24th November at Stanford Warren, just a short distance from the R. Thames.

Coast and estuaries: in the first winter, an estimated 800 off the N. Dengie coast on 16th January was by far the largest count of the year, numbers elsewhere being modest. Off Frinton-on-Sea, monthly maxima were 39 on 16th January, 60 on 20th February and 65 on 22nd March with only a few lingering into April, the latest being one on 28th. There were 63 off the N. Dengie on 8th February but no more than 12 (at Old Hall) were encountered at other coastal sites.

The first returning bird was one off Frinton-on-Sea on 5th October but few were recorded until the final few weeks of the year. Off Frinton-on-Sea, 22 were seen on 22nd November, then 118 on 13th December--there were 150 off the N. Dengie also on this day--and a peak of 182 on 23rd December. At nearby Holland Haven, the largest count was 133 on 20th December.

In the Thames Estuary, 15 off Gunners Pk on 29th December was the highest count and there were reports of 1-2 further upriver at E. Tilbury.

BLACK-THROATED DIVER *Gavia arctica* **GB 6* IN 3,750**

Uncommon winter visitor and passage migrant.

Inland: Abberton Res., one from 6th-14th December.

Coast and estuaries (N to S): in the first four months of the year, reports were received from Frinton-on-Sea, four on 16th January; Holland Haven, one on 20th February; Jaywick, one on 29th March and 1-2 from 4th-12th April; Blackwater Estuary, perhaps the same individual in St Lawrence Bay on 17th February and next day off Tollesbury Wick.

In the closing months of the year, reports came from the R.Stour, one on 18th December; Frinton-on-Sea, singles on 5th and 10th October, then in December one on 14th, three on 16th and one on 27th; Abbotts Hall, one on 26th November; Gunners Pk, one on 18th October.

GREAT NORTHERN DIVER *Gavia immer* **GB 25* IN 50**

Scarce winter visitor and passage migrant.

Inland: KGV Res., one reported on eight dates from 17th November-28th December and Fairlop, one from 22nd November to the year's end.

Coast and estuaries: singles, unless otherwise stated, were seen in the first quarter on the R. Stour at Wrabness or Bradfield on five dates in January; Frinton-on-Sea on 16th and 22nd January 21st and 23rd (three) March; Blackwater Estuary, 1-2 on many dates to 21st February; Southend Pier, on 21st January, 6th and 9th February.

In the final quarter, sightings (again singles unless otherwise stated) came from the Stour Estuary from 16th November-30th December including two on 20th November; Frinton-on-Sea, on 10th October, 19th November and 29th December; Colne Estuary, off Brightlingsea on 15th November and again, also off Fingringhoe Wick, on 1st December; Blackwater Estuary, from 11th October onwards including one seen from Bradwell flying out of the estuary; Southend area, on 22nd November, 13th and 24th December.

Great Northern Diver (RESTON KILGOUR)

FULMAR *Fulmarus glacialis*

Declining non-breeding visitor and passage migrant.

There were no inland reports this year.

Monthly totals, all from sites along the NE coast from Dovercourt to St Osyth, are shown below:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Total	0	1	16	8	6	9	2	6	7	1	0	0

The majority of sightings came from Frinton-on-Sea where there were ten on 26th March, otherwise 1-3 on many dates.

Although records on different days are summated, it seems quite likely that in some cases the same individuals may be involved.

SOOTY SHEARWATER *Puffinus griseus* **EBSIP**

Uncommon passage migrant – one June record.

Frinton-on-Sea: singles on 26th August, 13th October and 24th December (PBr)

St Oysth: one flying north on 12th September (RAJ) was seen shortly afterwards off The Naze (CJM-G)

Canvey Pt: two on 21st November (NC)

A likely total of six individuals is the most in a year since 2010 and includes the first county record for December, the previous latest being one off Frinton-on-Sea on 30th November 2009.

MANX SHEARWATER *Puffinus puffinus*

Uncommon, principally autumn, passage migrant

Frinton-on-Sea: one on 25th August and two the following day.

BALEARIC SHEARWATER *Puffinus mauretanicus* **EBSIP (7, 11, 18)**

Very rare passage migrant

Frinton-on-Sea: one on 26th August (PBr)

GANNET *Morus bassanus*

Common passage migrant.

The estimated monthly totals, all of coastal sightings, are as follows:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
A	5	1	23	3	3	46	15	12	127	17	66	100
B	3	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	102	24	15	180

Row A includes all sightings between the Stour and Crouch estuaries.

Row B refers to the Thames Estuary from Wakering Stairs to Rainham.

It is likely that in some cases individuals flying out of the Thames Estuary are later counted off the north-east coast and vice-versa, hence the two rows are not summated.

December apart, numbers were generally lower than in the last few years, counts of over 25 being: 70 passing the Maplin Bank on 16th September, 40 off Bradwell and 29 at E. Tilbury both on 17th September, 30 off Frinton-on-Sea on 22nd November and 27 at the same location on 28th December and 160 passing Gunners Pk on 13th December. One in the Thames Estuary reached Rainham on 14th October.

CORMORANT *Phalacrocorax carbo*

GB 350 IN 1,200

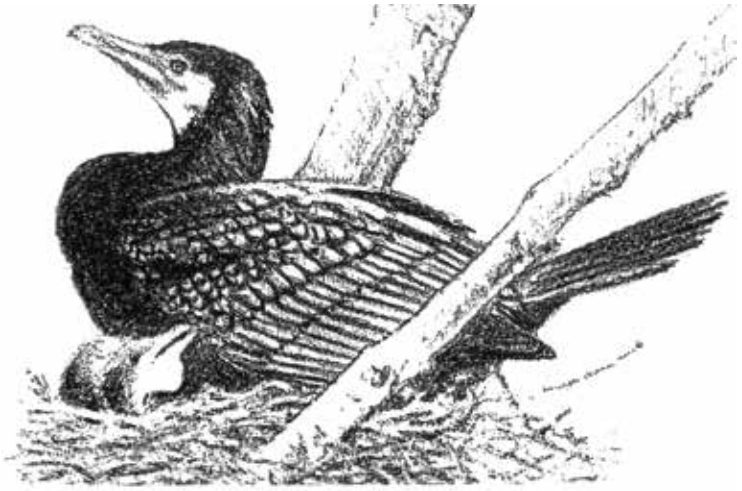
Common resident, winter visitor and passage migrant.

Nest counts were as follows:

	2015	2014	2013	2012	2011	2010	2009	2008	2007	2006
Abberton Res.	150	137	145	184	144	160	166	296	320	214
Walthamstow Res.	159+	113	178+	226	142	?	125+	263	274	258
Netherhall GP	0	3	0	0	1	0	0	0	2	0
Holyfield Lake	32	45	31	27	28	?	nc	nc	Nc	32
Lofts Fm	13	0	2	10	3	2	0	0	0	0
Warren Gorge	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	354+	299	356+	447	318	?	291+	562	596	504

The recent trend in falling numbers is reversed and the true number of nests at Walthamstow Res. was almost certainly higher, some nests being out of view.

WeBS counts in the most important areas were as follows:



Cormorant (GEORGE BROWN)

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
WeBS Total:	**749**	**847**	**801**	**478**	**1428**	**1301**	**1734**	**1781**	**1226**
Stour Estuary	27	14	12	16	108	128	18	48	44
Hamford Water	23	24	81	nc	nc	56	70	153	283
Colne Estuary	36	62	36	22	0	64	39	82	12
Blackwater Estuary	130	120	82	14	43	165	174	269	101
Dengie	12	8	10	0	5	4	3	14	49
Crouch/Roach/Wallasea	11	87	28	9	0	5	16	30	32
Foulness/Thames	89	67	37	51	39	64	74	136	95
Abberton Res.	41	156	89	102	926	477	667	669	440

Note the impressive total of 926 at Abberton Res. on the 17th August WeBS count with 669 there again on 17th November; also, there were 500 at Hanningfield Res. on 4th October. Coastal movements were prominent off Frinton-on-Sea in March with 619 counted on 9th and there were 440 off Bradwell on 4th February and 450 (presumably many of the same birds) off Colne Pt the following day. A count of 52 at Rainham on 20th January was also notable.

SHAG *Phalacrocorax aristotelis*

Fairly common winter visitor and passage migrant.

The estimated monthly totals were:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Stour Estuary	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	2
Frinton/Holland Haven	3	0	14	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
Jaywick	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Blackwater/West Mersea	2	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1
Southend area	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0
Total	**7**	**3**	**16**	**1**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**2**	**2**	**2**	**4**

As last year, there were no inland records nor any sightings during the summer months. A total of 14 passed Frinton-on-Sea on 9th March, coinciding with an exceptional movement of Cormorants for this site (see above), otherwise numbers and distribution were unremarkable except that a juvenile remained in the Southend area for several weeks early in the year, an unusually lengthy stay for this species at that site.

BITTERN *Botaurus stellaris*

Uncommon but annual visitor and passage migrant. Red List species. Essex BAP.

There were no reports this year during the months April-July but there was a good scattering of records in both winters though slightly fewer than in 2014. Sightings were all of single birds unless stated otherwise.

First winter: Abberton Res., present to at least 8th February including two on 17th January; Fingringhoe Wick, 3rd and 30th January; Wat Tyler CP, 2nd and 3rd January; Vange, 16th March; Seventy Acres Lake/Fishers Green, frequent reports up to 7th February including two on 6th January; Warren Gorge, 2nd February; Mill Wood, Grays, 5th March; Rainham, on seven dates from 17th January-7th March.

Second winter: Abberton Res., 11th August to 1st September including two on 17th August, then from 20th November to the year's end; Fingringhoe Wick, 15th October and 24th November; Ingrebourne Valley, 23rd October; Lee Valley, frequent reports of 1-2 from 12th September to at least 20th December from Seventy Acres Lake/Fishers Green, the N. Metropolitan Pit and Sewardstone Marsh, perhaps more than just two individuals involved.

LITTLE EGRET *Egretta garzetta* GB? IN 800

Increasingly common resident, passage migrant and winter visitor: first bred in 2000.

Reports of breeding pairs were received as follows with 2014 figures in brackets: Foulness, 12 (17); Chigborough Lakes, 12-15 (ten); St Osyth, 12+ (17); Paglesham, ten (estimate 12); Walthamstow Res., 17 broods totalling 43 young (19 broods, 54 young); N. Fambridge Hall, 28 (24); Warren Gorge, six (six); Netherhall GP, five (seven), Abberton Res, 2+ (probably one), Mayesbrook Pk. Numbers this year suggest that the steady increase in recent years has at least 'paused for breath'.

Peak numbers were, as usual, mainly in late summer and autumn, highest counts from sites recording at least 50 being: Brightlingsea, 50 on 3rd October; Mersea Is., 93 on 17th August; Old Hall, 80 on 17th August; Goldhanger, 65 on 15th October; Northey Is., 96 on 13th September; Copt Hall, 50 on 19th July; Chigborough Lakes, 58 on 12th September; Crouchside, 100 on 15th August; Tewkes Creek, 54 on 7th September; Two Tree Is., 143 on 14th September; Benfleet Creek, 224 on 19th September; Abberton Res., 86 on 14th October; Walthamstow Res., 51 on 6th and 13th December. No doubt many of the same individuals would have been involved in some of these observations which refer to locations only a short distance apart.

This species continues to be recorded at numerous sites involving most areas of the county

The WeBS table shows the counts at those area covered by the survey at which at least one double-figure count was recorded.

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
WeBS Total:	**260**	**203**	**320**	**266**	**819**	**856**	**903**	**616**	**337**
Stour	10	3	16	11	118	150	174	58	37
Hamford Water	26	25	16	nc	nc	119	80	54	36
Colne Estuary	41	27	40	32	128	53	40	90	33
Blackwater Estuary	49	31	63	12	114	268	240	128	64
Dengie	33	25	42	26	72	41	50	56	29
Crouch/Roach/Wallasea	16	24	25	31	47	59	69	31	24
Foulness/Thames	77	61	103	84	294	135	151	148	95
Abberton Res.	1	1	4	43	36	27	86	36	13

GREAT WHITE EGRET *Egretta alba* EBSIP

Rare but increasing.

Great White Egret, Abberton Res., (RESTON KILGOUR)

Reports were received in every month bar February and June although not all sightings were supported by notes. Abberton Res. was the prime site this year with probably a continuous presence from 20th August-29th October including, in September, two from 5th increasing to three from 11th-21st then two again until 30th.

Elsewhere, singles unless otherwise stated were reported as follows: March, Mardyke Valley on 12th and 23rd; May; August, Upminster on 18th; September, three in flight over Bowers Marsh and probably one of these at Wat Tyler CP on 27th; October, Frinton-on-Sea/Holland Haven on 1st, Rainham on 2nd, 3rd and 10th, Wigboro Wick/Colne Pt on 11th; November, in the Mardyke Valley on 16th; December, Colchester on 27th.

No doubt some of the above sightings involved the same wandering individuals. As it is now impossible to estimate the true number of individuals involved, statistics will no longer be included in the Bird Report.

GREY HERON *Ardea cinerea*

GB 610 IN 2,700

Common resident, winter visitor and passage migrant.

Details of occupied nests are given below:

( ) estimates in brackets	2015	2014	2013	2012	2011	2010	2009
St Osyth	17+	18	9+	11	10	9	14
Foulness	4	4	4	4	6	2	6
Beazley End	nc	7	18	18	19	18	18
N. Fambridge Hall	8	6	7	6	4	5	7
Barrow Wood, Highwood	5	nc	nc	5	6	7	6
Mayesbrook Pk, Dagenham	nc	3	nc	3	3	nc	4
Ingrebourne Valley	nc	4	6	12	3+	7	16
Holyfield Lake, LV	nc	nc	nc	nc	4	9	9
Waltham Abbey	0	0	0	0	0	1	3
Walthamstow Reservoirs	33	30	15	nc	71	66	92
Netherhall GP	38	35	38	32	28	33	33
Chigborough Lakes	10	5	6	7	8	10	6
Langham Treatment Works	nc	nc	nc	nc	3	nc	nc
Parkhall Wood, Gosfield	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	9
Abberton Res.	20	14	6	1	nc	nc	1
Warren Gorge	7	7	7	8	5	5	5
Paglesham	0	0	0	0	0	2	1
Pitsea	0	0	0	0	nc	nc	2
Vange Heights	0	0	0	0	nc	nc	1
Navestock	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	2
Childerditch Pond	nc	nc	nc	3	2	2	0
Fairlop Waters	nc	nc	nc	0	1	0	0
Valentine's Pk, Ilford	2	1	1	1	1	0	0
Total	**144**	**134**	**117+**	**111+**	**174**	**176**	**235**

Numbers reported show a small increase for the fourth consecutive year but remain well below the 2009 peak.

WeBS totals were as follows:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
WeBS Total:	**140**	**148**	**136**	**101**	**171**	**126**	**224**	**164**	**124**
Stour Estuary	5	12	15	6	13	11	17	20	16
Hamford Water	6	7	4	nc	nc	12	26	9	9
Colne Estuary	4	14	13	16	9	9	2	8	7
Blackwater Estuary	15	6	21	4	10	11	18	18	12
Crouch/Roach Estuary	15	10	14	4	14	16	14	5	6
Foulness//Thames	33	16	28	25	43	23	22	22	21
Abberton Res	6	26	11	22	48	29	53	41	25
Hanningfield Res	8	8	5	4	11	5	35	19	4
Lee Valley	48	47	24	18	17	7	30	20	22

Away from the heronries, the largest gatherings were recorded during WeBS counts, as shown in the table above.

WHITE STORK *Ciconia Ciconia*

EBSIP (13, 30, 43)

Rare visitor: 36 records of 35-37 individuals.

Rainham	24th August	LNHS

Glossy Ibis (GRAHAM OAKES)

GLOSSY IBIS *Plegadis fulcinellus*

EBSIP (14, 25, 37)

Former vagrant, now an annual visitor

Reports, all of single birds, were received as follows: Wat Tyler CP., on 31st March, then on at least 16 dates from 17th September-4th November and again on 6th December; Vange Marsh, presumably the Wat Tyler bird on 21st September and 20th October; Abberton Res., on 20th October; Walthamstow Res./Tottenham Marshes, 22nd October; Rainham, 22nd October.

Wat Tyler CP was favoured by this species in 2014 so it is possible that this year's sequence from that site refer to a returning individual. Perhaps just three birds were involved.

SPOONBILL *Platalea leucorodia*

EBSIP

Increasing non-breeding visitor. Annual in recent years.

Following one at Colne Pt on 24th February, five flew over Kirby Cross on 8th March and this party may have included the three seen at Holland Haven the same day and again on 9th. One was present at Old Hall on 19th, then, in April, four were seen at Rainham on 7th, one remaining until 13th, and single(s) were also recorded at Dovercourt on 8th, and both The Naze and Holland Haven on 18th. There were two May records, both of a single individual, at Abberton Res. on 1st and Bowers Marsh on 27th, then two at Old Hall on 7th June.

One was seen at Bowers Marsh on 5th July and there was a spate of sightings in August starting with one at W. Mersea on 2nd, then four at Colne Pt next day, three at Fingringhoe Wick on 8th and five at Brightlingsea on 13th, this group, or fragments of it, visiting various sites in the Colne Estuary over the next four weeks. There were also two at Rainham on 13th August.

Away from the Colne, there were September records at Gunners Pk, two on 2nd; Old Hall, one on 19th and 23rd, whilst at Abberton Res., one was observed on many dates from 20th September-30th October. The final sightings of the year concerned one at Rainham on 25th October and it or another two days later at W. Canvey Marsh.

LITTLE GREBE *Tachybaptus ruficollis* GB 160 IN 4,000

Fairly common resident, passage migrant and winter visitor.

Although confirmation of a nesting attempt was lacking in some cases, reports received indicated that some 133 pairs held territory or at least were in potential breeding habitat. Though slightly lower than in the last two years, no figure was received for Marsh Farm at S.Woodham Ferrers where there were eight in 2014, so probably little change overall. The principal sites, as usual, were Rainham, 38 territories; Bluehouse Fm, 21 pairs; Old Hall, 12 territories. Only five broods were seen on Walthamstow Res. compared with seven last year.

Counts from sites holding more than 15 in a single month and overall WeBS totals for the county are shown in the following table:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
WeBS Total:	**405**	**382**	**244**	**106**	**158**	**335**	**308**	**297**	**377**
Stour Estuary	34	30	14	0	8	12	9	11	35
Hamford Water	105	95	37	nc	nc	58	49	63	87
Blackwater Estuary	50	43	37	12	21	35	27	14	21
Crouch/Roach/Wallasea	24	21	13	27	10	5	27	14	21
Foulness/Thames	111	102	79	38	68	118	95	107	129
Abberton Res.	1	10	6	4	17	56	21	15	8
Hanningfield Res	30	19	9	8	18	44	27	27	51
Paglesham Lagoon	0	6	14	6	0	0	0	0	0

The largest count reported at a single site was, as often in recent years, at Paglesham Lagoon, where there were 61 on 17th August. Counts of at least 20 were received from 19 sites though some of these involved fairly extensive areas.

GREAT CRESTED GREBE *Podiceps cristatus* GB 190 IN 3,600

Fairly common resident, passage migrant and winter visitor.

Breeding season data came in different formats, once again making it impossible to record precisely how many pairs actually nested. At Walthamstow Res., nine broods totalling 17 chicks was fewer than of late but there were 12 pairs at Old Hall and nine at Ardleigh Res. of which at least four reared broods. Territorial birds in spring or summer were reported at some 30 additional sites, several of which held 2-3 pairs, and broods or nests were recorded at approximately two-thirds of this total. A rough estimate of around 60 breeding pairs for the whole county is again well below the numbers recorded at the turn of the century.

WeBS counts at sites holding a minimum of 25 birds:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
WeBS Total	**460**	**494**	**644**	**534**	**538**	**740**	**1425**	**1650**	**1250**
Stour Estuary	45	25	59	67	72	117	81	111	91
Colne Estuary	8	7	15	9	6	1	0	8	4
Blackwater Estuary	42	29	89	15	14	27	49	98	92
Crouch/Roach /Wallasea	7	6	11	11	2	0	1	4	7
Foulness/Thames	34	12	253	33	2	4	10	7	102
Abberton Res.	27	253	110	268	294	213	907	1276	833
Hanningfield Res.	168	25	15	29	114	339	220	56	86
Lee Valley	102	123	64	76	12	42	128	54	28

The late autumn/early winter numbers at Abberton Res. reached a peak of 1,276 on 17th November which was unprecedented at the site. The WeBS counts of 907 on 14th October and 833 on 17th December were also exceptional and, as shown in the table, there were 339 at Hanningfield Res. on 13th September.

On tidal waters, the peak counts were: Stour Estuary, 75 on 17th January; Blackwater Estuary, 366 at Old Hall on 20th February; Thames Estuary, 94 off Canvey Pt on 1st February.

RED-NECKED GREBE *Podiceps grisegena*

GB 1* IN 150

Uncommon winter visitor and passage migrant.

Inland: Abberton Res., one on 24th October.

Coast and estuaries: single birds were seen at Fingringhoe Wick on 26th February, Old Hall from 9th-25th September, at various points on the R. Stour from 15th-27th October, and in Heybridge Basin on 26th November.

SLAVONIAN GREBE *Podiceps auritus*

GB 11* IN 55

Scarce winter visitor and passage migrant.

The incidence and distribution are summarised below:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Abberton Res.	0	1	3	0	1	1	6	5	2
Hanningfield Res.	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
KGV Res.	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	1
Wanstead Park	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Stour Estuary	6	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3
The Naze	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0
Frinton	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
Colne Estuary	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	0	1
Blackwater Est.	3	4	4	0	0	0	0	0	0
Shoebury/Wakering	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
Total	**10**	**6**	**7**	**0**	**1**	**1**	**10**	**9**	**9**

As last year, overall numbers were lower than in the recent past with noticeably fewer reports from the Blackwater Estuary, which has been this species' winter stronghold for many years. Only the highest single-day counts are shown, so possibly one or two more were present.

The individual in Wanstead Pk was recorded from 3rd-18th January.

BLACK-NECKED GREBE *Podiceps nigricollis*

GB 1* IN 2,200

Scarce passage migrant and winter visitor.

Although no reports were received that confirmed a nesting attempt, one was present at Bowers Marsh from 6th April-20th May with two from at least 16th-24th April. There was also one on several dates on Chigborough Lakes from 18th April-20th May and one remained on Hanningfield Res. from

Black-Necked Grebe (GRAHAM OAKES)

30th May-23rd June but these individuals were not paired; also one visited KGV Res. on 3rd May.

The William Girling has generally been the favoured reservoir in the Lee Valley for this species but this year there were marginally more reports received from the KGV and at least one bird visited the Walthamstow Res. It is possible that some on the William Girling went unrecorded.

The incidence and distribution are summarised below (some interchange between sites is possible):

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Abberton Res.	0	0	1	0	0	0	3	2	2	1	1	1
Hanningfield Res.	0	0	0	2	1	1	1	0	1	0	0	0
Lee Valley Res.	0	7	6	0	1	0	0	0	2	3	1	1
Ardleigh Res.	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Bowers Marsh	0	0	0	2	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Chigborough Lakes	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Coast*	2	2	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	**3**	**9**	**9**	**5**	**4**	**1**	**4**	**2**	**5**	**4**	**2**	**2**

* The few records from tidal waters were divided between the Stour, Colne and Blackwater estuaries.

WHITE-TAILED (SEA) EAGLE *Haliaeetus albicilla*

BBRC (15, 2, 17)

Very rare vagrant

Stow Marsh	one	13th March	AShe
Blue House Fm	one	14th March	NHi, ST
Wivenhoe	one	14th March	RA

Last recorded in 2010. These records refer to the same individual, a bird that was later reported further north along the east coast.

HONEY BUZZARD *Pernis apivoris*

EBSIP

Uncommon passage migrant.

Frinton-on-Sea	one	1st September	PBr
The Naze	one	4th October	DGR, MFP

White-Tailed Eagle, Blue House Farm, March (IAN HIGGINSON)

In total 11 were reported in 2015 compared with 20 in 2014, but only these two were supported with notes. Observers are requested to provide the detail required by the County Recorder and the Identification Panel, to ensure that this species is properly recorded.

There were no reported spring sightings (three in 2014, 12 in 2013).

RED KITE *Milvus milvus*

Uncommon but increasing passage migrant and potential resident. Red List species.

Recorded in every month of the year, Red Kite reports approached 300 in 2015, although these include repeated sightings of a small number of lingering individuals.

While there was no evidence of breeding in 2015, a pair was observed displaying and the number present in the late spring and summer suggests it is only a matter of time.

Most occurred during an extended spring passage, from mid-March to June, with concentrations in the Lee Valley corridor. In the latter month, there were frequently reported settled individuals at specific sites. Autumn passage was up on 2014 with 28 individuals noted compared with 15.

There were two multiple sightings (more than two together) with three at Cornmill Meadows on 7th April and at Wanstead Pk on 17th May.

Sightings of two birds were noted as follows: February: Wallasea Is., 17th February; March: Chingford on 13th, Galleywood on 22nd, Stansted Mountfitchet on 23rd; April: KGV Res. on 4th, Elsenham on 6th, Upminster on 8th April, East India Dock on 9th, Beckton on 12th, Walthamstow on 12th, Epping Forest, Warlies Pk on 20th; May: Upminster on 10th, Blue House Fm on 19th, Rainham on 27th; June: Walthamstow on 18th; July: Waltham Abbey on 23rd, August: Gt Dunmow on 2nd; November: Saffron Walden on 26th.

When corrected for possible duplication, some 228 birds were reported, up from 180 in 2014.

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
2015	6	8	42	78	45	39	26	14	7	7	7	5
2014	4	10	37	27	22	47	6	2	9	3	6	6
2013	6	7	21	66	35	25	14	10	3	8	12	5
2012	2	3	49	20	92	31	5	6	4	3	2	1
2011	11	7	25	65	35	20	5	0	2	1	2	8

MARSH HARRIER *Circus aeruginosus*

Fairly common summer visitor, breeding annually since 1999, common passage migrant and winter visitor. Amber List species.

Up to 25 potential breeding pairs were reported in 2015, a significant improvement on 2014. Old Hall remains the stronghold for this species, with six nests monitored, of which two were predated. A minimum of four birds fledged. The well-watched pair at Hanningfield Res. again nested in an extensive reed bed, but the young were probably predated and the attempt failed.

	2015	2014	2013	2012	2011	2010	2009	2008	2007
Confirmed/Probable	25	13	23	23	16	23	25	26	20

At the main roosts, peak numbers in the first winter were: Old Hall, 43 on 18th January, 32 on 15th February and 15th March; Fingringhoe Wick, ten on 13th January. In the second winter, highest counts were at Old Hall, 22 on 18th October, 22 on 15th November, ten on 21st December; Fingringhoe Wick, ten on 24th November.

Overall there were records from 130 sites, up from 113 in 2014. With the number of resident birds at its current level, separating local dispersal from migration makes assessment of migration numbers, particularly in the autumn, problematic.

Inland records are scarce, but involved six sites (Abberton Res., Boreham, Chingford, Easthorpe, Hanningfield Res., and Lee Valley).

HEN HARRIER *Circus cyaneus*

Winter visitor and passage migrant. Red List species.

Only 15 mainly long-staying individuals were reported in January, six fewer than in 2014, falling to 14 in February and to seven in March. There were ten April reports. Well-defined coastal areas were favoured, including the Colne, Blackwater, Crouch and Roach estuaries. Most frequented locations included Abberton Res., Blue House Fm, Bradwell BO, Foulness, Old Hall, and Wallasea Is.

The only roost reported concerned two 'ringtails' on Wallasea Is., during January, while three was the maximum daytime count at any one site (Foulness Is. on 17th January, and Bradwell on 1st April).

There was one May record (none in 2014, one in 2013, seven in 2012), of a male at Bradwell on 6th. Bradwell also recorded the first of the autumn, an adult male on 11th August.

There were reports of two individuals in September and only nine noted in October including three at Bradwell on 18th.

In the second winter period, the only concentrations of note were of three at Bradwell on 25th November and at Wallasea on 26th December. Overall numbers in the county were however up slightly to 18 compared with 14 in 2014 and 33 in 2013.

The Hen Harrier continues to be a regular feature of winter birding in the County. The overall decline in 2015 as a winter visitor may well reflect its precarious position as a breeding species in England. Caution is necessary in drawing conclusions from the data, as the records received include repeated sightings of the same individuals, leading to some degree of over-estimation.

Approximate monthly totals were as follows:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Numbers	15	14	7	10	1	0	0	2	2	9	9	9

First winter numbers are as follows:

	2015	2014	2013	2012	2011	2010	2009	2008	2007	2006	Average
Peak	29	23	37	50	46	42	26	17	15	24	29

MONTAGU'S HARRIER *Circus pygargus* **EBSIP**

Scarce passage migrant. Has bred.

Five reports were received but none was accompanied by a description. Therefore 2015 has to go down as the first blank year for over a decade.

2015	2014	2013	2012	2011	2010	2009	2008	2007	2006	2005	2004	2003
0	1	2	2	2	1	6	6	1	11	8	12	3

GOSHAWK *Accipiter gentilis* **EBSIP**

Uncommon resident and passage migrant. First bred in 2006.

Mardyke Valley	one	30th January-2nd February	RB
Terling	one	17th September	DG
Terling	one	28th September	DG

No evidence of breeding in the county in 2015 was received, following the circumstantial evidence in 2011. However, the Rare Breeding Birds Panel recorded one pair possibly breeding.

Reports of 14 individuals were received but the above are the only records for which descriptions were provided. Some nine records (of 12 birds) are pending, including three birds in Epping Forest (14 in 2014, 14 in 2013, 21 in 2012). The true status of this secretive species in the county remains obscure. Observers are requested to specify gender of the bird seen and to supply a full description. Reports without supporting details will not be considered for inclusion.

SPARROWHAWK *Accipiter nisus*

Widespread and increasingly common resident and passage migrant following rapid range expansion.

A further increase in reports received to more than 1,800, (1,700 in 2014, 1,400+ in 2013) indicates a wide distribution in a variety of habitats from the coast and countryside to suburbs and town centres.

The number of reported breeding pairs/ territories fell slightly to 35 (37 in 2014,26 in 2013, 30 in 2012. Display was noted in 21 instances, probable breeding in seven, and confirmed breeding in seven (14 in 2014, 12 in 2013, four in 2012).

Targeted prey species recorded included Starling, Meadow Pipit, Blackbird, Collared Dove, Feral Pigeon, House Sparrow, Chaffinch, Greenfinch, Fieldfare and Kingfisher (unsuccessful). A bat roost was also targeted but whether any were taken was not reported.

Rough-legged Buzzard (SEAN NIXON)

ROUGH-LEGGED BUZZARD

Buteo lagopus **EBSIP**

Scarce winter visitor

Wallasea Is.	Juvenile	1st January–5th April	mo
Wigboro Wick Fm, St Osyth	two	17th-18th October	CA
Colne Pt	one	18th October	DAl KK
Holland Haven	Juvenile	20th October - 2016	mo

Two long-staying individuals gave many Essex birders the opportunity to observe this species. Wallasea's had lingered from 2014 and stayed until just into April. It also visited Paglesham during its stay. The Holland Haven individual remained into the New Year, wandering to Frinton-on-Sea on occasions. Three further records were submitted without descriptions.

COMMON BUZZARD *Buteo buteo*

Rapidly increasing visitor at all seasons. Recent colonist.

Common Buzzard is now the most widespread bird of prey in Essex, with the number of reports exceeding 2,000, frequently of more than one individual. With inevitable repeat sightings of the same resident individuals compounded by complex migration patterns, it is impossible to arrive at exact numbers.

Although clearly an established breeding bird, proof of breeding is often difficult to establish. Some 74 reports were received of pairs in suitable territory during the breeding season (48 in 2014, 33 in 2013, 50 in 2012). Of these 17 probably bred, while 28 were confirmed. There were records of 15 recently fledged young (14 in 2014, ten in 2012 and 2013).

Area	Breeding pairs
North-east	2
North-west	1
Central Essex	17
South-west	2
South-east	6

In the first three months of the year records included 15 at Boxted on 23rd March and ten at Stow Marsh on 30th March. Spring migration peaked with 36 at Rainham on 5th April.

Double-figure autumn migration counts included 15 at Paglesham on 9th September, ten at KGV Res. on 8th October and 14 at Gt Braxted on 18th October.

OSPREY *Pandion halietus*

Uncommon, but increasing, passage migrant.

A relatively poor year with 18 or so individuals recorded (36 in 2014, 30 in 2013, and 45 in 2012), with only one long-staying bird, at Abberton Res. between 7th August and 6th September.

There were nine spring records, including two at Wat Tyler CP on 27th March (the only occurrence of more than one) and one June record, probably of a wandering non-breeder.

Autumn passage was light, with the last sighting at Boreham on 27th October.

	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct
Number	3	1	5	1	-	2	7	1
Location	2	1	5	1	-	2	7	1

WATER RAIL *Rallus aquaticus*

Scarce resident, winter visitor and passage migrant.

No records of breeding were received this year, (eight territories were reported from four sites in 2014, seven from one in 2013, nine from two in 2012). Three possible juveniles were reported from Hanningfield Res. Summering birds were also present at Belhus Woods CP, Cornhill Meadows, Holland Haven, Mardyke Valley, Rainham, Stow Marsh, Vange Marsh and Wat Tyler CP.

Counts of five or more outside the breeding season came from: Ingrebourne Valley, five on 7th March, Marsh Fm, South Woodham Ferrers, five on 3rd April, Rainham, seven on 16th January, Wat Tyler CP, five on 9th October. Totals reported on WeBS counts were as follows:-

Water Rail, Rainham (ALAN SHEARMAN)

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
WeBS totals	8	12	3	4	2	4	3	2

Approximate monthly occurrence, excluding confirmed breeding individuals, is summarised in the following table:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Numbers	56	45	36	23	8	9	2	7	17	38	36	27

CORNCRAKE *Crex crex* **EBSIP**

Very rare passage migrant; formerly nested. Red List species

2013 EBR Additional record:

Holland Haven	22nd September	One	PNs

The first record in the county since 2003. It remains to be seen whether, following the re-introduction programme in the fens, the species will become a more frequent visitor.

MOORHEN *Gallinula chloropus*

Very common resident and passage migrant.

At least 106 pairs/territories were reported from 47 sites (124 from 60 in 2014, 91 from 52 in 2013). Summering was reported from a further 125 locations. Reports of five or more pairs came from Pebmarsh, Preston Lake, six; Walthamstow Res., five. Observers are encouraged to report all possible/confirmed breeding.

WeBS Totals were as follows:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
WeBS Totals	**403**	**474**	**429**	**229**	**302**	**338**	**243**	**290**
Stour Estuary	12	13	23	11	30	19	15	13
Hamford Water	55	60	45	NC	46	37	39	29
Holland Haven	4	4	8	3	7	9	7	5
Colne Estuary	16	23	16	30	22	16	25	18
Blackwater Estuary	37	36	55	7	23	27	15	18
Crouch/Roach/Wallasea	32	43	40	28	20	11	6	29
Foulness/Thames	130	139	124	64	53	107	49	73
Abberton Res.	9	9	8	8	25	13	16	16
Hanningfield Res	12	20	20	15	32	19	4	4
Lee Valley	101	132	91	58	34	63	44	51

Non-WeBS count of 50 or more were reported from: Ingrebourne Valley, 50 on 2nd January, Rainham, 50 on 15th November. This remains a very under-reported species.

COOT *Fulica atra* **GB1,100 IN 15,000**

A common resident, passage migrant and winter visitor.

At least 139 pairs were reported from 106 sites (341 from 67 in 2014, 92 from 39 in 2013, 180 from 44 in 2012). Reports of more than ten pairs came only from Blue House Fm, 45, and Walthamstow Res., 12. Summering birds were reported from a further 98 locations. Observers are encouraged to send in all records of breeding pairs and broods.

WeBS totals were as follows:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
WeBS Totals	**2520**	**2701**	**2473**	**1436**	**8376**	**13481**	**7552**	**5155**
Hamford Water	85	43	78	NC	46	28	18	25
Colne Estuary	18	49	62	34	19	21	21	24
Blackwater Estuary	317	58	228	54	6	12	19	28
Crouch/Roach Estuary	134	207	146	94	35	14	21	27
Foulness/Thames	533	543	398	189	385	235	151	204
Abberton Res.	203	450	618	638	5973	9748	5113	671
Hanningfield Res	109	131	205	93	1427	1614	752	2917

COMMON CRANE *Grus grus*

EBSIP

Rare visitor: less than annual.

Gt Burstead	one	October 8th	JFB
Wat Tyler CP	one	October 9th	Photo ID

These records are assumed to relate to the same individual.

BLACK WINGED STILT *Himantopus himantopusa*

BBRC (22, 24, 46)

Very rare passage migrant.

Bowers Marsh	14th-17th and 20th-21st April	Pair	mo
	26th May	Pair	PW, TB
Old Hall	21st April	Pair	NL, MDD
Fingringhoe Wick	30th June	Pair	KH, LB

The first two sites continuing their good run of records in recent years.

Black-Winged Stilt, Bowers Marsh
(RESTON KILGOUR)

AVOCET *Recurvirostra avosetta*

GB 75 IN 730

Increasing summer visitor, passage migrant and winter visitor.

There was a further decrease in pairs attempting to breed, with just 70-73 pairs at 13 sites (88 at 11 in 2014, 152 at 21 in 2013) but with no reports from some significant recent sites. Estimated minimum numbers were as follows (2014 figures for numbers of nesting pairs in brackets): Cattawade, three; Dovercourt, one; Walton Hall Marshes, one (one); Horsey Is., 10+ (seven); Holland Haven, one+ (two); Colne Pt, one (three); The Hythe, one; Old Hall, nine pairs hatched 13 young, 12 of which were predated (25); South House Fm, Maldon, an adult with one chick in late July; Heybridge GP, five pairs bred but no chicks survived; Blue House Fm, 13-16 pairs reared 11+ young (seven); Foulness, 21 pairs with just two fledged young (26); Wallasea Is., three.

Inland reports were as follows: Claybury Pk (Clayhall), four on 6th March; Abberton Res., 18th March, two on 13th June, in September, two on 6th and four on 12th; KGV Res., 4th April; Hanningfield Res., four on 3rd August, 11th September. Birds were also reported from Rainham Marshes from January to October with a peak of seven on 27th September, with two further upstream at Barking Bay on 6th April.

WeBS data from the most important areas were as follows:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
WeBS total	**3945**	**3450**	**2248**	**513**	**1508**	**2323**	**3970**	**2812**
Stour Estuary	97	150	70	42	1	65	120	143
Hamford Water	1121	823	564	NC	123	244	476	497
Colne Estuary	752	612	3	15	328	412	677	885
Blackwater Estuary	649	820	274	77	43	610	804	310
Crouch/Roach/Wallasea	71	83	8	36	1	1	22	62
Foulness/Thames	1255	962	1309	314	212	991	1871	1415

As usual the largest single site counts came from the favoured area around E. Tilbury, where there were peaks of 760 on 17th January, 1,200 on 18th February, 1,050 on 3rd March, 1,129 on 17th July, 1,294 on 15th August, 898 on 13th September, 916 on 17th October, 1,130 on 14th November and 967 on 20th December. The only other count of 500+ was at Fingringhoe with 600 on 9th December.

OYSTERCATCHER *Haematopus ostralegus*

GB 3,200 IN 10,200

Resident, passage migrant and winter visitor.

A total of 147 breeding pairs/territories was reported from 16 sites (167 from 25 in 2014, 94 from 26 in 2013). Individual sites reporting five or more pairs were as follows (2014 figures in brackets):

Cattawade, 20; Colne Pt, 10-12 (ten); Old Hall, 32 (27), Dengie (Howe to Sandbeach), five; Bridgemarsh Is., 17; Foulness, 51. No counts were received from a number of traditional sites.

Inland, birds were again noted at various sites in early spring but the only confirmed breeding was of single pairs at Hanningfield Res., Russell Green GP, Boreham GP and Langham.

Other inland records included: Abberton Res., reported between 8th February and 31st August with peaks of four on 15th February, 30th April and 30th June, ten on 22nd March, six on 30th March; Claybury Pk, Clayhall, two on 6th March; Bradwell GP, Coggeshall, one on 12th April; Hanningfield Res., six on 24th May; Seventy Acres Lake, one on 22nd April; Walthamstow Res., 26th April.

Light diurnal passage was particularly noted from Frinton-on-Sea in July and August with monthly totals of 20 and 140 respectively. The peak movement of 44 occurred on 24th August.

WeBS data from the most important areas were as follows:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
WeBS total	**17053**	**9485**	**12876**	**2341**	**13226**	**14617**	**12493**	**11905**
Stour Estuary	520	468	502	283	821	838	445	698
Hamford Water	490	618	786	nc	589	630	714	479
Colne Estuary	1090	300	564	350	268	208	339	140
Blackwater	838	539	934	137	397	798	732	917
Dengie	3400	3585	1607	47	1193	2700	2350	1370
Crouch/Roach/Wallasea	117	40	162	114	4	50	23	51
Foulness/Thames	9196	2237	7903	1298	9954	9393	7209	7442

Non-WeBS four-figure counts came from four sites: Shoebury East Beach, 1,500 on 8th January; Canvey Pt, 1,500 on 9th August; Bradwell BO, 1,000 on 30th August and 21st October; Foulness, 3,000 on 25th October. In addition, a leucistic bird was noted at Wakering Stairs on 25th July.

GOLDEN PLOVER *Pluvialis apricaria*

GB 4,000 IN 9,300

Common passage migrant and winter visitor.

There was a single May record at Old Hall on 10th then none until five at Marsh Fm South Woodham Ferrers on 6th July. Autumn passage then commenced later in the month with four past Frinton-on-Sea on 20th.

WeBS data from the most important areas were as follows:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
WeBS total	**21914**	**35227**	**14618**	**12**	**5359**	**11993**	**27282**	**41743**
Stour Estuary	500	0	0	0	213	16	68	550
Hamford Water	3024	4251	5325	nc	1487	4113	3028	7044
Colne Estuary	1862	3600	1142	0	692	608	7230	1404
Blackwater Estuary	3211	10906	2324	6	1647	4549	7451	12601
Dengie	9030	6052	5650	0	346	1896	7000	16100
Crouch/Roach/Wallasea	1982	5495	20	0	349	295	949	2493
Foulness/Thames	1900	921	157	6	631	390	1119	1551

The highest coastal counts all came from Marshhouse Outfall, Dengie, although some counts were made from the northern side of the Blackwater Estuary. The only other notable count was of 5,000 at Althorne on 11th February.

The highest inland counts came from: Abberton Res., peaks of 600 on 2nd January, 1,000 on 5th and 27th February, 1,100 on 30th October, 2,000 on 8th November; Boreham, 250 on 17th January increased to a peak of 350 on 6th February with 105 remaining to 22nd March; Wormingfield Airfield, 120 on 19th January; Coploe Hill, Strethall, 442 on 20th November.

Golden Plover (GRAHAM OAKES)

GREY PLOVER *Pluvialis squatarola*

GB 430 IN 2,500

Common winter visitor and passage migrant.

Thirty records were received from 13 sites during June and July.

Double-figure counts came in July from two sites and illustrated the steady increase in autumn passage: Old Hall, ten on 14th, 56 on 25th, 68 on 30th; E. Tilbury, 14 on 25th, 23 on 28th and 43 on 31st. It is likely that 1-2 birds summered at the latter site.

Diurnal autumn migration was light with Frinton-on-Sea recording a total of 135 from July to November with a clear peak of 118 on 23rd August.

Inland records were restricted to singles at Abberton Res. on 15th February, 12th September, 17th and 25th October; Wormingfield Airfield, 11th August. A single was also recorded at Beckton on 1st February.

WeBS data from the most important areas were as follows:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
WeBS total	**6923**	**5308**	**6908**	**1297**	**3827**	**6472**	**11167**	**8064**
Stour Estuary	722	600	750	250	516	1208	765	602
Hamford Water	1152	781	895	nc	360	1030	1590	1643
Colne Estuary	580	1091	1001	414	366	291	537	260
Blackwater Estuary	1576	1030	2081	47	879	1635	2052	1683
Dengie	1000	420	1310	0	1057	780	2565	1585
Crouch/Roach/Wallasea	170	89	67	50	0	77	129	36
Foulness/Thames	1723	1297	104	571	649	1450	3529	2255

There were six counts of 1,000+, all from the Bradwell BO/North Dengie/Blackwater Estuary areas and largely coincident with WeBS counts other than 1,000 on 8th March, and 2,000 on 28th October at the former.

LAPWING *Vanellus vanellus* GB 6,200 IN 20,000**

Declining breeding population. Numerous passage migrant and winter visitor.

Breeding was very under-reported with a minimum of 124 pairs from 15 areas (164 from 24 in 2014), of which 16 pairs were at seven inland sites (18 from nine in 2014). The only counts greater than five were (2014 figures in brackets): Old Hall, 38, with four young fledged (43); Blue House Fm, 27 pairs reared 37-38 young (34); Cattawade, 21; Foulness, seven pairs, Abberton Res., six. As in previous years no records indicating breeding were received from many historic sites, whilst counts from other sites are likely to be under-recorded. However, birds were widely reported from numerous sites during the breeding season.

WeBS data were as follows:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
WeBS total	**33847**	**38029**	**1344**	**399**	**1955**	**3967**	**12156**	**19279**
Stour Estuary	1447	2410	264	95	201	252	307	676
Hamford Water	2666	2578	290	nc	306	496	1090	2354
Holland Haven	155	295	52	12	81	160	145	0
Colne Estuary	7084	5444	77	48	214	292	823	1143
Blackwater Estuary	6684	7693	204	79	392	944	1854	7371
Dengie	4300	4800	0	0	0	15	493	1425
Crouch/Roach/Wallasea	5609	5514	103	62	128	715	2550	2116
Foulness/Thames	6789	3182	320	11	493	707	2063	4005
Abberton Res.	4220	5572	30	80	132	374	2651	113
Hanningfield Res	193	38	2	4	5	3	166	45
Lee Valley	0	236	2	7	3	9	14	31

Lapwings (SAM SHIPPEY)

Non-WeBS counts of 1,500 or more were reported as follows (monthly site maxima in each case): Rainham, 1,500 on 15th January; Blue House Fm., 2,595 on 22nd January, 3,300 on 4th February; Tollesbury Wick, 2,000 on 18th February, 3,200 on 26th December; Stow Marsh, 1,500 on 28th December.

Inland, counts of 250+ came from just two sites: Abberton Res., monthly peaks of 1,100 on 2nd January, 1,500 on 15th February, 250 on 11th October, 1,000 on 27th November, 750 on 1st December; Boreham, 295 on 17th January.

Light diurnal movement was recorded at Frinton-on-Sea during the autumn peaking with 240 south on 25th October.

A leucistic bird was noted at Wat Tyler CP on 16th and 27th January.

LITTLE RINGED PLOVER *Charadrius dubius*

Summer resident and passage migrant.

Breeding season records suggested that a total of 14 pairs attempted to breed at 12 sites (14 from 12 in 2014) as follows (2014 figures in brackets): Stansted Airport Lagoons, one (two); Langham, one; Sunnymead Farm, Wivenhoe, three (one); Bradwell GP, Coggeshall, two; Boreham, one; Hanningfield Res, one (one); TL9622 [Gosbeck's Colchester], one; Wallasea Is, one; Bowers Marsh, one (one); Vange Marsh, one; E. Tilbury, one.

The first birds of the spring were reported from Boreham on 13th March and Rainham the following day. Arrival appeared late with few other locations reporting sightings until early April. Spring passage produced further peak counts of five or more as follows: Abberton Res., seven dates between 9th-28th April with seven on 15th, 19th and 26th; Olympic Pk LV, six on 26th April; Stansted Airport Lagoons, five on 5th May; Bowers Marsh, five on 29th May; Rainham, five on 30th-31st May.

The only double-figure reports in autumn came from: Vange Marsh in July, with peaks of 21 on 12th and 11 on 23rd; and Abberton Res., 15 on 25 July. Maxima from other sites recording five or more were: Hanningfield Res., six on 2nd July; Rainham, six on 9th July; Bowers Marsh, six on 11th July; Stansted Airport Lagoons, eight on 11th July; Wat Tyler, five on 17th July. The final record of the year came from Vange Marsh on 26th September.

RINGED PLOVER *Charadrius hiaticula* **GB 340 IN 730**

Resident, passage migrant and winter visitor.

Confirmed or possible breeding pairs totalled 19 from five sites (15 from five in 2014, 30 from seven in 2013) as follows (2014 figures in brackets): The Naze/Walton Hall, two (two; 29-31 in Hamford Water, including The Naze); St Osyth Stone, two (two); Colne Pt, ten (eight); Peewit Is Bradwell BO (one); Foulness, four (two). Observers are again requested to check all potential breeding sites as this species remains under-reported.

Inland records came from seven sites during the year: Abberton Res., singles on 5th, 8th and 22nd February, 13th-15th April, 3rd and 9th May, with four on 24th and 31st, then monthly peaks of two on 19th-22nd July, 35 on 24th August, 45 on 12th September, 100 on 28th October, and 50 on 11th November; Wanstead Flats, three on 26th April; Broomhouse Flash Langham, one on 15th June; Hanningfield Res., two on 12th and one on 19th July, up to three reported on nine dates between 11th August and 30th September with a peak of seven on the former date, singles on 16th and 20th November; Walthamstow Res., singles on 26th April and 10th May; Stansted Airport Lagoons, up to three from 30th May until l2th July, when four reported (no comment regarding potential breeding); Mayflower Close Eastwood, one flew west on 26th October. In addition, one was noted at East India Dock Basin on 19th April.

Eight counts of 250+ were reported, all in August and September, and from just two sites:

E. Tilbury, 267 on 15th August increased to a peak of 500 on 28th with 512 on 13th September; Old Hall, 377 on 11th September reduced to 338 on 30th.

WeBS data from the most important areas were as follows:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
WeBS total	**694**	**468**	**241**	**118**	**2928**	**1293**	**432**	**764**
Stour Estuary	54	73	21	12	334	54	30	25
Hamford Water	66	45	53	nc	428	369	47	117
Colne Estuary	25	58	50	37	365	26	2	0
Blackwater Estuary	170	88	19	5	477	288	68	81
Dengie	1	1	3	0	172	70	0	0
Crouch/Roach/Wallasea	231	93	12	7	136	195	44	86
Foulness/Thames	350	110	83	57	630	291	161	455

DOTTEREL *Charadrius morinellus* **EBSIP**

Rare passage migrant, mainly in autumn.

Wallasea Is.	26th April	three (♂♀♀)	TB, PMG
Colne Pt	12th September	one	CSB, CA

WHIMBREL *Numenius phaeopus* **GB 50 (passage) IN 6,800**

Common passage migrant. Occasional winter visitor.

First-winter records came from Old Hall, two on 13th January with a single on 30th; and Wrabness, 28th January.

Spring passage was widely reported. The first spring migrants were singles at Rainham on 23rd March and 5th April. The highest counts came from Old Hall, maxima of 50 on 27th April and 45 on 8th May; Frinton-on-Sea, peak northbound movements of 23 on 22nd April and 31 on 3rd May, with 23 on the golf course on 7th, Wallasea Is., 20 on 7th May.

Return passage was also widespread, but the only significant counts related to southerly passage past Frinton-on-Sea in August, 30 on 7th, 108 on 20th and 123 on 23rd. In the second winter, one was at Old Hall on 7th December.

Inland records were received from: Abberton Res., several dates between 30th April and 8th May (maximum three); Roman River Valley, 13 on 4th May; Friday Wood, two on 15th May; Olympic Pk LV, 26th July; Hanningfield Res., 20 south on 27th July; three on 20th August and one on 29th; Mardyke Valley, three on 2nd August.

CURLEW *Numenius arquata* **GB 1,500 IN 8.500**

Common passage migrant and winter visitor.

Inland counts came from (singles unless otherwise stated): Abberton Res., present from 1st January to 15th February with peaks of nine on 17th January and eight on 8th February, then 29th March, 16th July, 7th August, 9th December; Claybury Pk, Clayhall, six on 6th March; Boreham, two on 17th March; Broomhouse Flash, Langham, one on 20th March; Bulmer Village, 7th October.

Monthly WeBS totals were:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
WeBS Total:	**5929**	**6070**	**4819**	**1885**	**3321**	**5521**	**4152**	**5241**	**3946**
Stour Estuary	769	502	941	305	765	811	909	514	477
Hamford Water	1223	1047	426	nc	nc	339	249	500	398
Holland Haven	0	39	22	12	nc	6	5	0	13
Colne Estuary	285	635	260	122	nc	221	189	319	247
Blackwater Estuary	1123	1425	915	174	171	1770	1109	1311	1061

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Dengie	830	174	181	9	60	77	291	230	200
Crouch/Roach/Wallasea	467	759	246	75	2	134	183	209	216
Foulness/Thames	1221	1478	1822	1118	2323	2153	1217	2158	1332
Abberton Res.	11	11	6	0	0	0	0	0	2

Coastal passage was prominent in late June and early July with a peak of 59 south past Frinton-on-Sea on 28th June. Very few high non-WeBS counts were received, the peaks being: Maldon, 500 on 22nd March; Blue House Fm., 500 on 4th April.

BLACK-TAILED GODWIT

Limosa limosa

GB150 IN470

Much increased passage migrant and winter visitor.

Black-Tailed Godwit (SEAN NIXON)

Icelandic Black-tailed Godwit

L.l. islandica

In the first winter period, the highest counts were all in March: 2,300 at Heybridge GP on 8th; 2,500 at Thurrock Thameside Pk on 20th; and 2,000 at Maldon on 22nd. Numbers then declined into April with spring peaks from the same general vicinities: Northey Is., 1,000 on 3rd; E. Tilbury, 1,190 on 11th and 1,370 on 18th; Heybridge GP, 1,000 on 19th.

Late summer and autumn records peaks were as follows: Two Tree Is., 2,167 on 1st August; Hogmarsh, 1,500 on 1st September; Manningtree, 1,527 on 13th September, 1,500 on 15th November; E. Tilbury, 1,679 on 20th October.

Inland records came from: Abberton Res., recorded in all months bar March and April, counts of 20 or more were made on six dates during the autumn, peaking at 100 on 25th October; Claybury Pk, Clayhall, one on 6th March; Nags Head Lane, Brentwood, two on 17th-18th March; Cornmill Meadows, one on 20th March; Hanningfield Res., reported on 47 dates between 9th July and 13th December with maxima of 11 on 25th July, 13 on 12th August, and 11 on 18th November; Broomhouse Flash, Langham, noted on five dates between 15th July and 20th October with maximum of 30 on the former date; Stansted Airport Lagoons, one on 22nd July; Russell Green GP, one on 24th and three on 27th July; Boreham, two on 27th July.

Monthly WeBS totals from the most important areas were:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
WeBS Total	**5015**	**5898**	**7700**	**5761**	**6822**	**6525**	**6586**	**7672**
Stour Estuary	136	279	612	771	1711	1360	1371	1824
Hamford Water	512	198	138	nc	1330	1020	428	507
Holland Haven	5	9	20	4	46	25	24	14
Colne Estuary	124	1376	775	1758	843	132	739	668
Blackwater Estuary	1555	979	493	389	1424	1664	1169	681
Crouch/Roach/Wallasea	748	443	333	309	7	71	822	447
Foulness/Thames	1935	2445	1729	2530	1450	2141	1961	3522

BAR-TAILED GODWIT *Limosa lapponica* GB 620 IN 1,200

Common passage migrant and winter visitor. A few usually summer.

Recorded throughout the year, with just three June records received: E. Tilbury, two on 6th; Rainham, one on 23rd; Frinton-on-Sea, two south on 28th.

Inland records came from four sites: KGV Res., 21st April; Walthamstow Res., 25th April; Hanningfield Res., three on 25th April and 17th August; Abberton Res., two on 3rd and 15th October, singles on 15th and 27th November.

Inner Thames records came from: E. Tilbury, January-November, peaks of 20 on 18th February and 18 on 29th April; Rainham, January, April- June, August-November, all singles bar nine on 14th May and two intermittently between 16th September and 1st October.

Low numbers were reported during spring passage, the highest counts being: Old Hall, 30 on 8th April; River Colne (Alresford Creek to Wivenhoe), 80 on 25th April, with counts of 50 and 43 on 28th and 29th respectively.

Autumn passage saw notable counts of: Wakering Stairs, 100 on 6th August; Frinton-on-Sea, 1,573 south on 23rd August (with hundreds more distant unidentified large wader sp probably this species); Bradwell BO, 450 on 13th September.

The monthly WeBS totals in the more important areas were:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
WeBS Total:	**7321**	**2419**	**2216**	**272**	**759**	**2552**	**6620**	**8450**
Stour Estuary	451	0	240	19	31	125	10	415
Hamford Water	198	215	472	nc	61	132	1021	623
Colne Estuary	131	0	1	240	12	13	0	0
Blackwater Estuary	1958	170	538	3	7	378	87	375
Dengie	600	600	153	0	450	1400	1100	502
Foulness/Thames	5590	1434	810	10	198	504	4402	6535

TURNSTONE *Arenaria interpres* GB 640 IN 700

Passage migrant and winter visitor.

Present in every month with reports from three sites in June: Rainham, one on 1st, two on 2nd; Two Tree Is., one on 6th and 18th; Wallasea Is., two on 15th. Counts of over 200 were received from: Leigh-on-Sea, 234 on 28th September; Southend Pier, 240 on 26th December.

Inland records were received from (singles unless otherwise stated): Abberton Res., 8th September; Hanningfield Res., 13th July, reported on ten dates between 2nd August and 8th September with four on 15th August and two from 17th-21st; KGV Res., two on 15th May, 15th August; Walthamstow Res., 31st August. In addition, two at East India Dock Basin on 25th April were notable.

WeBS counts were as follows:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
WeBS Total:	**1090**	**728**	**1204**	**303**	**213**	**698**	**869**	**1281**	**1446**
Stour Estuary	139	137	408	112	124	93	206	350	483
Hamford Water	135	120	99	nc	nc	170	214	119	222
Holland Haven	0	0	0	3	0	0	0	0	1
Colne Estuary	41	35	35	38	0	38	20	104	1
Blackwater Estuary	387	292	331	62	11	304	326	367	283
Dengie	6	11	40	5	17	68	16	40	26
Crouch/Roach/Wallasea	19	41	0	4	0	0	18	22	11
Foulness/Thames	363	92	291	79	60	24	69	279	418

KNOT *Calidris canutus* GB 3,200 IN 4,500

Winter visitor and passage migrant. Small numbers usually present in summer.

The only inland records came from Hanningfield Res., one on 8th and 27th August, four on 28th, and three on 30th with one on 9th September and one on 30th November.

There were no sightings in June but 1-2 were reported in July from The Naze, Heybridge GP, Northey Is., E. Tilbury and Two Tree Is.

WeBS data from the most important areas were as follows:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
WeBS total	**37606**	**17724**	**15696**	**204**	**1850**	**16575**	**26001**	**45309**
Stour Estuary	0	2500	70	0	0	2	156	1733
Hamford Water	3812	2451	1490	0	0	598	3366	666
Colne Estuary	225	60	43	0	1	28	176	65
Blackwater Estuary	7051	5210	187	0	23	165	487	9910
Dengie	10000	6060	13800	200	440	7410	10500	4200
Crouch/Roach/Wallasea	0	0	0	3	1	0	1	1
Foulness/Thames	14018	4903	106	1	1385	8372	11315	28740

RUFF *Philomachus pugnax* GB7 IN 12,500

Common passage migrant and winter visitor.

In the first-winter a flock at Abberton Res., peaked at 56 on 8th February, numbers rapidly declining thereafter. Elsewhere, the highest counts at this time were nine at Old Hall on 9th January, eight at Stow Marsh on 4th February, six at Tollesbury Wick on 21st February, and six at The Naze on 14th March.

The highest counts during autumn passage were from: Abberton Res., 40 on 22nd August, 30 on 12th September, 25 throughout October, 50 on 11th November and 27 on 6th December; Old Hall, 20 on 25th July, 46 on 30th August and 40 on 2nd September; Vange, ten on 21st August.

Apart from the Abberton birds the only gathering of note during the second-winter period came from Tollesbury Wick, ten on 30th December.

Monthly maxima at the most regular sites were as follows:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Vange			-	5	1		6	17	9	7	1	1
Old Hall	9	1	2	1			20	46	40			1
Rainham	1	4	4	1	1		2	9	2			-
Abberton Res	25	56	2			3	3	60	49	36	50	27

WeBS data from the more important areas were as follows:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
WeBS Total	**16**	**21**	**39**	**1**	**1**	**31**	**23**	**78**	**22**
Hamford Water	0	0	4	NC	NC	0	2	45	5
Holland Haven	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0
Colne	0	0	1	1	0	1	0	1	3
Blackwater Estuary	6	7	0	0	0	2	0	0	0
Crouch/Roach/Wallasea	0	2	2	0	0	0	0	0	0
Foulness/Thames	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0
Abberton Res.	10	12	37	0	0	22	21	27	14
Hanningfield Res.	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	5	0

CURLEW SANDPIPER *Calidris ferruginea* GB ? IN 10,000

Passage migrant, rare in spring, regular in autumn in variable numbers.

The only record relating to the two winter periods was one at Marshhouse Outfall, Dengie on 13th December.

Autumn passage extended between 25th July (Old Hall) and 4th October (Potton Is.) but was very poor, the weather being dominated by westerly winds. Exceptionally, there were no inland records while, on the coast, single birds were reported from three localities in July, eight in August (with two at Old Hall on 8th and 28th) and five in September, sightings of two coming from Tewkes Creek on 7th and E. Tilbury on 17th.

TEMMINCK'S STINT *Calidris temminckii* EBSIP

Scarce spring and autumn migrant.

Rainham	28th May	Four	mo
	29th May	Three	mo
	30th May	One	mo
Bowers Marsh	29th May	One	mo

The three Rainham records are thought to involve the same individuals.

SANDERLING *Calidris alba* GB 160 IN 1,200

Winter visitor and passage migrant. Occasional in summer.

Unusually there was only one June record: one at Rainham on 2nd. Inland records came from KGV Res., two on 25th July, Hanningfield Res. two on 24th and four on 31st May, and two on 12th August, and Abberton Res., two on 6th September.

WeBS data were as follows:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
WeBS total	**791**	**36**	**495**	**1210**	**875**	**1088**	**186**	**738**
Hamford Water	61	15	26	NC	48	25	41	22
Colne Estuary	24	9	23	6	0	3	37	0
Dengie	0	0	0	0	143	0	0	8
Foulness/Thames	695	9	430	1204	680	1055	107	708

DUNLIN *Calidris alpina*

GB 3,500 IN 13,300

Very common passage migrant and winter visitor.

Inland records were as follows: Abberton Res., peaks of 90 on 2nd January, 80 on 16th February, 50 on 23rd September, 50 on 11th November, and 25 on 13th December; KGV Res., up to three in April, singles on 15th May and 15th July, six on 25th July, one on 19th August, one on 4th October, and two on 22nd November; Hanningfield Res., singles on scattered dates in March, April, May and June, with two on 26th July, four on 11th-

Dunlin (GEORGE BROWN)

12th August, and two on 19th November; Boreham, one on 4th April; Walthamstow Res., one on 26th April, six on 15th August; Cornmill Meadows, one on 9th August; Bradwell GP, Coggeshall, one on 22nd August.

June coastal records came from Old Hall, The Naze, Frinton-on-Sea and Rainham.

WeBS data at the more important sites were as follows:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
WeBS total	**73655**	**58548**	**26223**	**3486**	**4552**	**23532**	**37139**	**61324**
Stour Estuary	5203	4642	3169	1133	434	4453	3113	5515
Hamford Water	6021	3609	2007	NC	1337	1933	3302	5116
Colne Estuary	8509	7152	4306	1812	422	1260	1881	1565
Blackwater Estuary	19380	17845	4188	44	602	8061	8396	17374
Dengie	2500	3700	3810	0	795	4060	1400	3550
Crouch/Roach/Wallasea	3742	1683	651	112	69	304	601	3682
Foulness/Thames	28300	19917	8091	385	842	3460	18363	24522
Abberton Res.	0	0	0	0	51	1	83	0

Two non-WeBS counts of 2,500+ were received during the year with peak site counts as follows: Mistley, 3,650 on 18th January; E. Tilbury, 5,650 on 7th March.

PURPLE SANDPIPER *Calidris maritima* GB 130 IN 750

Declining winter visitor and passage migrant in small numbers

The bulk of the records again came from the reliable wintering site in the north-east, between Frinton-on-Sea and Clacton-on-Sea but generally around Holland Haven. Up to four were recorded in the early winter period with the last sighting of two on 18th April. Single birds were also recorded at Rolls Fm, Tollesbury on 3rd March and Mayland Creek on 7th March.

In the second-winter period the first record was one at Holland Haven on 22nd October. Thereafter, 1-3, were present in this area until the year end, with occasional sightings at The Naze and Jaywick. There were no records away from the north-east corner,

LITTLE STINT *Calidris minuta* GB 1 IN 2,000

Regular autumn passage migrant, very scarce in spring. Occasionally winters.

There was one first-winter record (none in 2014, two in 2013, four in 2012) , a single bird at Wrabness on 4th and 24th Januuary and 8th February. In spring, single birds were seen at Stow Marsh on 17th April and Wakering Stairs on 25th May.

Autumn passage commenced with a single at Wrabness on 25th July. Numbers were much the same as in 2014 with a maximum of 58 birds noted from 12 sites (59 from 11 in 2014) with a peak in mid-September as summarised below:

Peak counts involving four or more birds came from: E. Tilbury, four in late August, six on 27th September; Vange Marsh, seven on 21st and five on 27th September. There was a single winter record from Rainham on 13th December.

	Jul		Aug				Sep				Oct		
Week commencing	23rd	30th	6th	13th	20th	27th	4th	11th	18th	25th	2nd	9th	16th
Week number	30	31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38	39	40	41	42
Numbers	4	3	2	5	5	5	4	14	6	8	10	2	1
Locations	3	2	2	3	2	2	2	5	2	4	3	2	1

PECTORAL SANDPIPER *Calidris melanotos* EBSIP

Rare passage migrant, mainly in autumn.

Rainham	29th-1st May	One	mo
Bowers Marsh	3rd-4th May	One	mo
Wat Tyler CP	23rd-24th August	One	mo

It would seem very likely that the Rainham bird relocated to Bowers Marsh.

WILSON'S PHALAROPE *Phalaropus tricolor* BBRC (5, 1, 6)

Rare vagrant.

Vange Marsh	21st September-3rd October	Juvenile	mo

The sixth Essex record (and the first since 2001). Unfortunately, it remained at some distance from the observers throughout its stay and the many photographers were only able to secure record shots.

RED-NECKED PHALAROPE *Phalaropus robatus* EBSIP

Very scarce passage migrant.

Holland Haven	female	31st May	mo

COMMON SANDPIPER *Actitis hypoleucos* GB?* IN?

Common passage migrant. A few winter.

Reported in all months with estimated minimum numbers as follows:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Number	21	19	8	68	51	4	156	345	163	16	7	16
Locations	12	15	7	31	31	3	40	88	46	11	7	10

There were no double-figure counts in spring.

Autumn passage peaked in late July and early August. Double-figure counts were received from 13 sites (maximum counts given): Hanningfield Res., 28 on 19th July; Beckton, 16 on 10th August; KGV Res., 15 on 15th July, 19th August and 1st September; Potton Is., 14 on 1th August; Brightlingsea, 14 on 29th August; Old Hall, 13 on 17th August; Barking Bay, 12 on 4th September; Abberton Res., 12 on 17th August; The Naze, 11 on 5th August; Stow Marsh, ten on 30th July

GREEN SANDPIPER *Tringa ochropus* GB?* IN?

Common passage migrant and much increased winter visitor.

Recorded in all months with estimated minimum numbers as follows:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Number	35	46	64	138	3	37	375	856	398	171	91	74
Locations	17	23	19	42	3	12	34	55	55	34	33	25

In the first-winter the peak count was of seven at Hanningfield Res. on 17th January, with 1-5 at numerous other sites. Spring passage peaked in April, the maximum count being nine on 13th April.

Autumn passage was considerably higher when compared to recent years, peaking throughout July and August. Maximum counts at sites recording seven or more on any date were:

Green Sandpiper, Hornchurch CP (RESTON KILGOUR)

	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep
Abberton Res.		5	3	7
Bowers Marsh	1	5	10	6
E. Tilbury	1	9	22	6
Fleet Head			7	2
Hanningfield Res.	4	6	22	11
Howlands Marsh		2	8	1
Hythe Lagoons	1	13	10	5
Ingrebourne Valley	1	5	8	3
Langenhoe/Fingringhoe Wick			15	4
Lower Chingford Flood Relief Channel		10		
Old Hall Marsh		11	31	11
The Hythe	4	11	9	5
Vange Marsh		14	18	8
West Canvey Marsh		1	11	7

SPOTTED REDSHANK *Tringa erythropus*

GB +* IN 1,500

Regular passage migrant. A few winter.

Recorded in every month with estimated numbers as follows:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Number	13	20	11	27	8	6	78	150	142	75	40	49
Locations	7	7	5	12	6	4	8	16	17	9	6	8

Numbers followed a similar pattern to recent years, with a modest spring passage and steady autumn passage from late June into October. However, second-winter figures showed a significant increase.

Double-figure counts came from six sites, all in autumn, with peak day totals as follows: Abberton Res., 49 on 17th August; Abbotts Hall, 38 on 16th September; Old Hall, 41 on 25th July; Vange Marsh, 21 on 13th September; Wat Tyler CP, 11 on 18th July and 16th August.

Apart from Abberton Res., the only inland records were from Hanningfield Res. from 13th-16th August, with two on 13th.

GREENSHANK *Tringa nebularia*

GB +* IN 3,000

Common passage migrant, a few winter.

Estimated monthly totals were as follows:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Coastal	7	16	21	104	85	42	182	440	378	160	132	144
Inland	0	0	0	12	5	0	35	40	18	10	11	0
Total	7	16	21	116	90	42	217	480	396	170	143	144
Locations	7	8	7	29	18	7	31	60	44	17	13	12

Spring passage was considerably higher than in 2014. The highest count was 28 at Vange Marsh on 26th April. The only other counts over 20 were at The Hythe, 21 from 29th April to 1st May.

Autumn passage was also higher than in 2014, peaking in September. Double-figure counts were recorded at 15 sites (17 in 2014) with 20 or more reported as follows (maximum for each site): Fingringhoe Wick, 34 on 17th September; Abberton Res., 24 on 21st July; Old Hall, 20 on 20th September; Heybridge Basin, 50 on 27th September; Crouchside, 64 on 16th August; Potton Is., 21 on 13th September; Two Tree Is., 41 on 2nd September; Deep Fleet, 40 on 16th August.

WeBS counts were as follows:

Greenshank (GEORGE BROWN)

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
WeBS Total:	**7**	**5**	**4**	**31**	**197**	**140**	**63**	**11**	**16**
Stour Estuary	2	1	0	12	78	49	17	2	10
Hamford Water	0	0	0	NC	0	25	18	2	0
Blackwater Estuary	1	4	4	4	21	25	13	3	0
Crouch/Roach Estuary	0	0	0	0	2	1	1	0	0
Foulness/Thames	4	0	0	8	90	30	6	4	6

WOOD SANDPIPER *Tringa glareola*

Scarce passage migrant.

Estimated monthly totals were:

	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep
Number	5	2	1	6	44	3
Locations	4	2	1	6	20	3

The spring records were all of single birds except for two at Rainham on 26th April.

In autumn, all reports of more than a single bird were in August: Broomhouse Flash, four on 14th; Mersea Is., two on 17th; Old Hall, nine on 17th; East Tilbury, six on 24th; Lower Raypits, three on 16th with two on 31st; Abberton Res., two on 31st; Boreham, two on 30th; Rainham, two on 14th; Hythe, two on 19th; Vange Marsh, two on 30th.

REDSHANK *Tringa totanus*

GB 1,100 IN 1,500

Resident, passage migrant and winter visitor.

A total of 111 pairs was reported, compared with 158 in 2014, with breeding records being received from seven sites (ten in 2014). Breeding success is given where known. Reports of territorial and/or breeding pairs were received from the following locations (2014 figures in brackets): Broomhouse Langham, two (two); Cattawade, eight (ten); Howlands Marsh, one, one young; Old Hall, 70 (63), 30 young; Two Tree Is., one, four young; Foulness 25 (31), three young; Vange Marsh, four.

The only four-figure non-WeBS counts were: Heybridge Basin, 1,500 on 14th February; Fingringhoe Wick, 1,000 on 1st October.

WeBS counts were as follows:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
WeBS Total:	9176	8410	7854	1790	2929	7042	8908	7852	7722
Stour Estuary	544	763	723	492	1243	523	1252	1007	1307
Hamford Water	2192	1347	988	NC	NC	794	1162	900	844
Colne Estuary	1526	2025	1708	613	0	1129	907	1188	783
Blackwater Estuary	1982	1797	1452	87	406	3114	2937	2434	2574
Dengie	259	393	240	34	21	324	244	181	253
Crouch/Roach/Wallasea	373	726	573	124	45	278	753	510	629
Foulness/Thames	2298	1355	2170	428	1209	897	1448	1627	1329

JACK SNIPE *Lymnocryptes minimus*

GB? IN?

Scarce passage migrant and winter visitor.

Monthly totals were:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Number	6	10	6	7	2	5	4	2
Locations	4	6	4	5	2	4	1	1

In the first-winter period all the records related to singles except: Hythe Lagoons, 2-3 on 3rd February, 1-2 on 12th February; Woodham Fen, two on 9th February; E. Tilbury, two on 21st March, two on 11th April. The latest record was at Old Hall on 20th April.

The earliest autumn passage report was of one at Hopping Bridge, Mistley on 8th September. In the late autumn/second-winter period, the only multiple sighting was of three at Rainham on 7th November.

WOODCOCK *Scolopax rusticola*

Regular passage migrant and winter visitor. Small breeding population.

There were no sightings indicative of breeding.

Monthly totals were:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	Oct	Nov	Dec
Number	31	34	33	1	3	18	13
Locations	23	28	27	1	3	13	12

There was a marked increase in sightings relating to more than a single bird, with 27 reported (11 in 2014). As in 2014, the majority of these occurred in the first-winter (two unless otherwise stated): Hadleigh Downs, 15th January, 17th January, three on 8th February, 9th February; Warley, four on 17th January, 24th January, 7th February; Boreham, 17th January, three on 25th January; Benfleet Downs, 21st January; Elmstead Market, ten on 24th January; Great Loveney Hall, five on 24th

January; Brentwood, Lower Belt, 24th January; Crays Hall Farm, 25th January; Writtle Forest, five on 26th January; Hanningfield Res., 29th January, 13th February, 15th March; Shut Heath Wood, 16th February, 21st March; Maldon, 22nd February.

In the second-winter, multiple sightings were received from (two unless otherwise stated): Jasper's Green, three on 15th November; Frinton-on-Sea, 21st November, 23rd November; Terling, 22nd November; Canvey Wick, 29th November; Cranham Golf Course, 6th December; Benfleet Downs, three on 24th December.

COMMON SNIPE *Gallinago gallinago*

GB? IN 20,000

Common passage migrant and winter visitor. Very rare breeder.

There was no evidence of any attempted breeding but 1-4 birds were present in late May-June.

Monthly WeBS totals were:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
WeBS Total:	**191**	**251**	**169**	**44**	**30**	**72**	**67**	**182**
Stour Estuary	40	43	24	1	2	1	16	83
Hamford Water	36	14	5	NC	5	8	5	5
Holland Haven	1	0	0	0	2	6	2	0
Colne Estuary	13	100	27	11	10	10	29	19
Blackwater Estuary	11	6	8	1	7	23	9	32
Crouch/Roach/Wallasea	14	5	4	8	1	6	4	4
Foulness/Thames	67	29	85	16	3	13	7	33

In the first-winter period counts of 50 or more were reported from: Woodham Fen, 127 on 9th February; Vange Marsh, 50 on 25th January, 102 on 18th February; Bartonhall Creek, 60 on 24th January; Bowers Marsh, 60+ on 14th February.

In the second-winter period counts of 20 or more were reported from (maximum count for each site): Broomhouse, Langham, 20 on 20th October; Langenhoe Marsh/Fingringhoe Wick, 20 on 22nd November; Old Hall, 37on 7th October; Mayland Creek, 22 on 13th December; Ingrebourne Valley, 33 on 21st October; Bowers Marsh, 27 on 3rd December; Vange Marsh, 67 on 3rd October; Rainham, 30 on 27th October.

POMARINE SKUA *Stercorarius pomarinus*

EBSIP

Late autumn passage migrant. Scarce at other times.

A below-average year in the county, with 19 birds reported. Monthly totals:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Numbers	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	8	8

Annual totals for the last ten years are (average 43):

	2015	2014	2013	2012	2011	2010	2009	2008	2007	2006
Numbers	19	45	16	79	100	18	44	54	41	16

The sole record during the first winter period was one seen from Southend Pier on 1st January.

None were recorded on spring passage.

Autumn passage commenced with two at Frinton-on-Sea on 29th September. However, there were no further records until 21st November when there were sightings of: one at The Naze, four at Frinton-on-Sea, two at Holland Haven (accepted as same birds as those at Frinton) and three at Canvey Pt. The December records were all from Frinton-on-Sea: two on 7th, one on 8th, two on 10th, one on 24th and two on 27th.

Observers are reminded that a written description is required for this species.

ARCTIC SKUA *Stercorarius parasiticus*

Autumn passage migrant. Scarce at other times.

Numbers were again well below average with an estimated 87 birds recorded during the year. Figures for the last ten years are given (average 242):

	2015	2014	2013	2012	2011	2010	2009	2008	2007	2006
Numbers	87	203	128	253	369	252	271	311	441	112

There were no records during the first winter period.

Spring passage consisted of just a single record: Frinton-on-Sea, one on 3rd May.

Autumn migration commenced on 1st August with three off Wakering Stairs. Thereafter, passage remained fairly light, with birds recorded to 13th October, as shown below. The only double-figure counts came from: Canvey Pt/Seafront, 15 on 7th and 11 on 16th September.

	Aug					Sep				Oct			
Week commencing	1st	8th	15th	22nd	29th	5th	12th	19th	26th	3rd	10th	17th	24th
Week number	31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38	39	40	41	42	43
Numbers	3	9	1	15	5	32	16	2	1	-	-	2	-

Just one was recorded in the second winter period: Frinton-on-Sea, 21st November.

There were no inland records in 2015.

Estimated monthly totals were:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Numbers	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	31	53	2	1	-

LONG-TAILED SKUA *Stercorarius longicaudus*

EBSIP

Very scarce autumn passage migrant.

Just a single record in 2015:

Canvey Pt	Adult	21st September	CS

A below-average year. Figures for the last ten years are (average five):

	2015	2014	2013	2012	2011	2010	2009	2008	2007	2006
Numbers	1	5	1	3	8	3	1	4	5	15

GREAT SKUA *Stercorarius skua*

Late autumn passage migrant. Scarce at other times.

An above-average year with an estimated 182 recorded during the year. Estimated annual totals for the last ten years are (average 166):

	2015	2014	2013	2012	2011	2010	2009	2008	2007	2006
Numbers	182	205	120	222	234	153	237	98	177	34

There was just a single record in the first two months of the year: Southend Pier, one on 28th February.

There were no spring records.

Autumn passage commenced with one at Canvey Pt on 13th August and remained very light from then until the end of October, with an estimated 20 birds recorded.

The second winter period saw very late passage, particularly in December, with the vast majority of birds reported moving south offshore. Records came from: Frinton-on-Sea, one on 22nd November, then in December, 34 on 10th, 1-7 on 11 dates between 12th and 27th, 30 on 28th, 18

on 29th, 13 on 30th and three on 31st; Holland Haven, three on 18th, two on 20th, three on 22nd, 23 on 28th, 17 on 29th, 16 on 30th and one on 31st December (with a large degree of overlap between the latter two sites); St Osyth, one on 29th December; Brightlingsea, one on 17th November; Gunners Pk, one on 22nd November; Canvey Pt, two on 14th and two on 22nd November.

Estimated monthly totals were:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Numbers	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	2	15	4	7	151

PUFFIN *Fractecula arctica* EBSIP

Very scarce winter visitor and passage migrant.

There was just a single record in 2015 after a blank year in 2014:

Gunners Pk	29th December	PBa, NC

Annual total for the last ten years are (average two):

	2015	2014	2013	2012	2011	2010	2009	2008	2007	2006
Numbers	1	-	3	1-3	2	2	1	1	4	1

RAZORBILL *Alca torda* EBSIP

Uncommon passage migrant and winter visitor.

Another very poor year with no records in the early months of the year.

The sole spring/early summer record came from Frinton-on-Sea, two on 10th June.

There was a slight improvement in the second half of the year: Frinton-on-Sea, three on 21st and one on 22nd November; Holland Haven, two on 21st November; St Osyth, one on 21st November; Gunners Pk, one on 22nd November; Southend-on-Sea, one on 24th December; E Tilbury, one on 22nd November; Beckton, Gallions Reach, one on 10th September.

LITTLE AUK *Alle alle*

Scarce winter visitor, but subject to periodic influxes.

An improvement over 2014, but still a poor year with just 21 reported on two dates in November: Frinton-on-Sea, seven on 21st and five on 22nd November; Holland Haven, two on 21st and three on 22nd November; Canvey Pt, singles on 21st and 22nd November; Gunners Pk, one on 22nd November; Grays Riverside, one on 22nd November.

Annual totals for the last ten years are:

	2015	2014	2013	2012	2011	2010	2009	2008	2007	2006
Numbers	21	4	11	3	17	5	5	1	186	164

GUILLEMOT *Uria aalge*

Passage migrant and winter visitor.

There was just a single record in the early part of the year: Jaywick, one on 31st March. This compares to an estimated 305 birds in the first three months of 2014.

After a single bird off Frinton-on-Sea on 29th April, the only other spring record was of an estimated 20 birds at Canvey Pt on 23rd May. While unusual, the latter is not unprecedented and previous high spring counts have come from offshore northeast coast (19 on 14th May 2003), Bradwell (14 on 22nd May 1980), Wakering Stairs (nine on 3rd June 2001) and the outer Thames (55-70 on 15th May 2003).

The first two of the autumn were off Canvey Pt on 8th September. Numbers remained low for the remainder of the year with just two double-figure counts. Records came from: Frinton-on-Sea, two

on 9th September, four on 21st, 12 on 22nd and one on 24th November, singles on 10th and 30th and two on 31st December; Holland Haven, singles on 21st and 24th November, two on 22nd and singles on 28th and 29th December; Colne Pt, one on 27th November; Brightlingsea, one on 23rd November; Deal Hall, one on 29th September; Gunners Pk, singles on 12th and 19th October, four on 22nd November, one on 13th and seven on 29th December; Southend Pier, one on 27th November; Southend-on-Sea, six on 24th December; Canvey Pt, one on 9th September, one on 1st October and 16 on 21st November; Beckton, Gallions Reach, singles on 13th September and 3rd October.

Estimated monthly totals were:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Numbers	-	-	1	1	20	-	-	-	7	4	38	16

LITTLE TERN *Sternula albifrons*

GB 50* IN 190

Summer visitor and passage migrant; declining.

In Hamford Water, in recent years the main Essex breeding site for this species, 17 pairs nested but no young were thought to have fledged. A flock of 67 adults there on 8th July presumably involved birds that had already left other sites. Three pairs also laid eggs at St Osyth Stone but all failed. Elsewhere, an adult was seen carrying food to Cindery Island, Brightlingsea, but neither a nest nor young were confirmed; up to eight birds frequented Colne Pt but were not thought to have laid eggs.

The first of the spring were three at Hanningfield Res. and two at KGV Res. on 23rd April.

There were again no three-figure counts in 2015 (100 at Walton Backwaters on 23rd May, 100 at Langenhoe Pt on 19th July and 203 at Foulness on 6th August in 2011 were the last three-figure counts in the County). The only double-figure counts received (apart from the one mentioned above) were: The Naze, ten on 25th May, 12 on 26th July, 14 on 2nd August; Frinton-on-Sea, 14 on 14th May; Langenhoe Pt, 20 on 18th July; Bradwell, 12 on 19th August; Wakering Stairs, 22 on 12th September; E Tilbury, 29 on 24th August.

The only records away from tidal waters were the first of the spring noted above, with the two at KGV Res. remaining until 29th April.

The last records for the autumn were 22 at Wakering Stairs on 12th September and two at Bradwell the same day.

Little Tern (SIMON COX)

CASPIAN TERN *Hydroprogne caspia*

BBRC (6, 1, 7)

Vagrant.

Holland Haven	Adult	1st August	MR *et al*

Just the seventh Essex record, but only present briefly. This is the first record in the County since one was at Heybridge GP on 20th-22nd June 1981.

BLACK TERN *Chlidonias niger*

IN 7,500

Regular passage migrant.

The first of the year were four at Abberton Res. on 16th April. Spring passage was very light thereafter, with just 26 reported in total (38 in 2014); the other records coming from: Abberton Res., one on

22nd, one on 23rd and four on 24th April, two on 3rd and one on 16th May; Hanningfield Res., two on 23rd April; Russell Green GP, six on 23rd April, one on 3rd May; Canvey Pt, two on 17th April; Creekmouth, one on 29th April; E India Dock, one on 25th April.

There were two mid-summer records, both at Abberton Res., on 26th and 28th June.

The first of the autumn was one at E Tilbury on 25th July. Passage thereafter was very light with no large movements. Double-figure counts came from: Maplin Bank, 35 on 6 August; Canvey Pt, 30 on 7th, 26 on 13th, 13 on 24th and 47 on 31st August; E Tilbury, 11 on 20th, 15 on 24th and 25 on 31st August; Tilbury, 26 on 20th and 43 on 31st August; Hanningfield Res., 19 on 21st August.

The last of the year was one at Rainham on 8th October.

Estimated monthly totals were:

	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov
Coastal	2	-	-	1	247	18	1	-
Inland	20	4	2	-	58	31	4	-
Total	22	4	2	1	305	49	5	-

WHITE-WINGED BLACK TERN *Chlidonias leucopterus* **EBSIP (51, 13, 64)**

Very scarce passage migrant.

Abberton Res.	Juvenile	30th August	Details received

The 23rd record from Abberton Res. and on a typical date (the majority of juveniles recorded in Essex have occurred in the period from late August to early September).

SANDWICH TERN *Sterna sandvicensis* **GB 200 IN 1,700**

Local summer visitor and passage migrant.

Two pairs laid clutches on the north side of Horsey Is. but in neither case did the eggs hatch. The last confirmed Essex breeding was in 2005 when a pair nested on Hedge End Is., Hamford Water, and one was seen carrying food to this location in 2008 but in that instance no confirmation of breeding was forthcoming.

The first record of the spring was of two at Canvey Pt on 3rd April. Spring passage was again very light, with the highest counts being six off Frinton-on-Sea on 30th April and eight off Canvey Pt on 31st May.

Weekly figures were:

	Mar				Apr					May			
Week commencing	5th	12th	19th	26th	2nd	9th	16th	23rd	30th	7th	14th	21st	28th
Week number	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22
Numbers	-	-	-	-	10	2	17	14	12	1	4	4	12

In autumn, the highest counts were: The Naze, 14 on 11th, 15 on 15th, 43 on 18th, 71 on 26th and 23 on 31st July, 20 on 2nd August; Frinton-on-Sea, 16 on 11th and 13 on 23rd July, 14 on 30th August; Wakering Stairs, 27 on 1st August; Canvey Pt/Seafront, 15 on 25th July, 23 on 24th and 15 on 30th August, 16 on 7th, 14 on 8th, 16 on 9th and 12 on 16th September; E Tilbury, 47 on 23rd August; Tilbury, 18 on 23rd August; Beckton, 18 on 13th August, N Woolwich, 41 on 30th August.

Weekly figures for the main autumn passage period were:

	Jul					Aug				Sep			
Week commencing	2nd	9th	16th	23rd	30th	6th	13th	20th	27th	3rd	10th	17th	24th
Week number	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38	39
Numbers	-	34	72	120	79	27	40	104	114	94	54	22	29

There were two late autumn records: Frinton-on-Sea, one on 26th October; Gunners Pk, one on 22nd November.

A series of records in December from several sites around the NE coast presumably relate to one over-wintering bird: Brightlingsea, 3rd-4th, Frinton-on-Sea, 7th and 28th, Pt Clear, St Osyth, 17th and The Strood, Mersea Is., 26th.

There were four inland records: Lee Valley, two on 23rd April were seen at Hall Marsh, KGV Res. and Waltham Marsh; Hanningfield Res., one on 15th August, two on 11th and four on 26th September.

Estimated monthly figures were:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Numbers	-	-	-	49	27	14	265	322	201	1	1	1

COMMON TERN *Sterna hirundo*

GB 200 IN 1,800

Summer resident and passage migrant.

The first of the spring was one at Beckton on 30th March.

Breeding records came from (2014 figures in brackets where known): Horsey Is., 12 pairs; Daltes Lane GP, St Osyth, 20 pairs nested and 30 juveniles or chicks were seen (20); Cindery Is, Brightlingsea, nil (one); Blue Gates, Alresford, ten pairs laid eggs but subsequently deserted; Abberton Res., 32 (20); Ardleigh Res., no count (six); Old Hall, no count (seven); Pewet Is, Blackwater, no count (25); Heybridge GP, no count (four); Blue House Fm., two, one young reared (one); Paglesham Lagoon, one (22); Lower Raypits, 13 (four); Two Tree Is., eight (two); Vange Marsh, one (one); Bradwell GP, near Coggeshall, one pair fledged two young (one); Hanningfield Res., five; Russell Green GP, three (nine); Belhus Woods CP, three (four); Walthamstow Res., seven, no young fledged (12); Langham, one.

Three-figure counts came from: Barking Bay, 100 on 25th April; KGV Res., 120 on 30th April; Old Hall (roost counts) 226 on 15th, 170 on 16th and 148 on 19th August; Canvey Pt, 156 on 13th August, 105 on 7th and 105 on 9th September; E Tilbury, 258 on 23rd and 134 on 31st August; Rainham, 146 on 23rd August; Beckton, 170 on 13th and 114 on 31st August.

The last report of the year was of one at Wallasea Is. on 23rd October.

ROSEATE TERN *Sterna dougallii*

EBSIP (39, 6, 45)

Rare passage migrant.

Canvey Pt	Adult	16th September	(PBa, NC, JSa)

This is the first record in Essex since one at Canvey Pt on 3rd September 2009. The Thames has also produced all the other recent records with one in 2001, two in 2003 and three in 2005. The most recent record away from the Thames was of two at The Naze on 29th August 1999.

ARCTIC TERN *Sterna paradisaea*

GB 50 IN 20,000

Passage migrant.

The first of the spring were five at Beckton and two at Hanningfield Res. on 11th April. A good spring passage followed, concentrated in the last two weeks of April, with an estimated 220 recorded (317 in 2014, 93 in 2013, 286 in 2012 and 102 in 2011). Double-figure counts from: Abberton Res., 14 on 26th April; Gunners Pk, 25 on 30th April; Beckton, 13 on 3rd May; KGV Res., 12 on 23rd April; Tottenham Marshes, ten on 26th April; Walthamstow Res., 15 on 3rd May. Weekly figures were:

	Apr					May				Jun			
Week commencing	2nd	9th	16th	23rd	30th	7th	14th	21st	28th	4th	11th	18th	25th
Week number	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26
Numbers	-	20	55	103	61	4	2	-	-	-	-	-	-

Autumn passage commenced on 24th July, with six at Rainham and thereafter passage numbers were about average with approximately 197 recorded (116 in 2014, 215 in 2013). Double-figure

counts came from: Frinton-on-Sea, 36 on 23rd August; Beckton, 15 on 25th July, 18 on 9th and 29 on 31st August; Hanningfield Res., 25 on 11th August. Weekly figures for the main passage period were:

	Aug				Sep				Oct				
Week commencing	6th	13th	20th	27th	3rd	10th	17th	24th	1st	8th	15th	22nd	29th
Week number	32	33	34	35	36	37	38	39	40	41	42	43	44
Numbers	45	34	51	39	10	10	2	3	-	2	1	-	-

The last of the year was one seen off Goldhanger on 15th October.

KITTIWAKE *Rissa tridactyla* **IN 20,000**

Winter visitor and passage migrant: a few usually during summer.

Numbers were low at the beginning of the year, with the only double-figure counts coming from: Frinton-on-Sea, 20 on 1st, 46 on 15th, 24 on 16th and 125 on 23rd January; Abberton Res., 11 on 30th March.

There were just two records in May: Beckton, singles on 3rd and 11th.

There were no midsummer records and the first of the autumn was off Bradwell on 29th July.

In autumn, numbers were again low, with double-figure counts from: Frinton-on-Sea, 43 on 21st November, 32 on 7th and 27 on 30th December; Gunners Pk, 40 on 13th December; Canvey Is., 45 on 16th December; E Tilbury, ten on 13th December; Tilbury, 12 on 30th December.

The only inland record was from Abberton Res., with nine on 29th and 11 on 30th March.

Estimated monthly figures were:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Numbers	235	4	23	-	2	-	1	4	5	3	52	254

BLACK-HEADED-GULL *Chroicocephalus ridibundus* **GB 22,000 IN 20,000**

Abundant resident and passage migrant.

Details from the main breeding areas are as follows (2014 figures in brackets where known): Hamford Water, 2,150 nests counted (no count); Colne Pt, two (one); Cindery Is, Brightlingsea, one large chick seen but several failed nests (3-4); Rat Is., R. Colne, no count (no count); Heybridge GP, 100+ (no count); Pewet Is., Bradwell Waterside, no count (50+, one chick); Abberton Res., 85-90 pairs, 73 chicks ringed (45 pairs, 30+ chicks); Foulness, no count (207); Paglesham Lagoon, 80 pairs (147); Lower Raypits, 100+ pairs (one); Boreham GP, 50+ pairs (none); Russell Green GP, 168 nests counted (200+).

WeBS counts were as follows:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
WeBS Totals	**10301**	**8792**	**17160**	**9757**	**14120**	**10077**	**9278**	**5958**
Stour Estuary	1084	1106	7414	663	944	1110	768	350
Holland Marshes	280	35	83	6	60	85	100	70
Hamford Water	1311	1011	3796	nc	4014	2793	2910	1657
Colne Estuary	72	100	120	160	273	102	176	167
Blackwater	7435	444	845	969	873	460	523	447
Dengie	35	145	54	0	1043	12	18	60
Crouch/Roach	60	60	335	699	360	96	118	42
Foulness/Thames	5985	2532	3564	1433	5234	2986	2254	1969
Lee Valley	413	3128	377	310	233	1124	1156	572
Hanningfield Res.	182	72	150	270	975	230	397	54

Four-figure counts were reported as follows: Manningtree, 1,024 on 8th March; Mistley Walls, 8,500 on 15th October; Seafield Bay, Stour Estuary, 1,500 on 9th August; Hamford Water, 2,500 on 31st May; Frinton-on-Sea, 1,752 south on 11th October; Alresford Creek, 1,750 on 15th August; Pitsea Landfill Site, 15,000 on 21st March; Bowers Marsh, 1,200 on 18th February; E Tilbury, 1,150 on 17th January, 3,200 on 18th July, 2,250 on 15th August and 1,450 on 13th September; Rainham, 1,000 on 2nd and 1,500 on 20th January, 1,600 on 8th November and 3,000 on 26th December.

A leucistic bird was seen on Pitsea Landfill Site on 7th February.

LITTLE GULL *Chroicocephalus minutus*

GB 5* IN 1,100

Regular passage migrant.

Unusually there were no records in the first winter period.

Spring passage commenced on 16th April (nine at KGV Res.) and extended through to 29th May (two at Abberton Res.) with an estimated 108 birds passing through the county (37 in 2014, 190 in 2013, 95 in 2012) There were just two double-figure counts: E. India Dock, 13 on 23rd April; KGV Res., an impressive 44 on 23rd April.

There was just one midsummer record: two at Old Hall on 14th June.

Autumn passage was well below average with just 17 recorded in the period July-October (195 in 2014, 185 in 2013, 200 in 2012) as follows: Frinton-on-Sea, two on 16th October; Colne Pt, one on 26th July; Sunnymead Fm, Wivenhoe, one on 29th October; Bradwell, two on 12th September; Burnham-on-Crouch, two on 17th August; Canvey Pt, one on 8th and two on 30th September; Tilbury, one on 29th September; Rainham, singles on 16th and 31st August; Beckton, one on 27th September; KGV Res., singles on 15th and 17th August.

In the second winter period records came from: Frinton-on-Sea, two on 14th and 31 on 21st November; Tollesbury Wick, five on 30th December; Bradwell, 33 on 13th December; Blackwater Estuary, one on 13th December; Rainham, one on 21st November, two on 13th December.

Estimated monthly totals were:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Numbers	-	-	-	91	17	1	1	6	7	3	34	41

MEDITERRANEAN GULL *Larus melanocephalus*

GB 18 IN 770

Increasing year round visitor. Breeds in small numbers.

Records from known breeding areas were (2014 figures in brackets where known): Hamford Water, five adults in the Black-headed Gull colonies on 30th May (nine pairs); Bridgemarsh Is., R. Crouch, five (three).

Mediterranean Gull (SIMON COX)

Double-figure counts away from the breeding sites came from: Frinton-on-Sea, 24 on 26th March; Southend Seafront, 15 on 8th January, 20 on 7th February, ten on 22nd April, 43 on 2nd July, 20 on 12th October; Southend Pier (monthly maxima), 26 on 1st January, ten on 6th and 11th February, 17 on 1st March, 15 on 14th October, 13 on 27th November, 18 on 26th December; Canvey Pt/Seafront, 28 on 7th and 11 on 30th September; Leigh-on-Sea, 15 on 1st July; Paglesham Lagoon, 281 on 9th September; Pitsea Landfill Site, 12 on 14th March.

The count of 281 at Paglesham Lagoon on 9th September is the highest ever recorded in the County (previous highest counts being 186 on 28th July 2013 and 144 on 29th July 2006, both from Southend Seafront).

Approximate monthly totals are given, based on maximum counts at each site:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Numbers	75	55	80	145	105	80	120	35	425	140	45	40

COMMON GULL *Larus canus*

GB 7,000 IN 16,400

Common passage migrant and winter visitor.

Counts of 200+ birds reported in 2015 were as follows: Mistley Walls, 1,000 on 15th October; Frinton-on-Sea, southbound movements of 200 on 11th October, 526 on 21st November; Abberton Res., 500 on 27th January; Bradwell/Dengie, 223 on 18th January, 255 on 8th February, 258 on 13th September, 300 on 22nd October; Rainham, 220 on 26th December; Wanstead Flats, 500 on 16th November, 400 on 13th December; Wormingford, 230 on 19th January, 250 on 16th March, 270 on 3rd September.

WeBS counts were as follows:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
WeBS Totals	**1019**	**1009**	**1010**	**315**	**1050**	**515**	**1165**	**523**
Stour Estuary	258	25	429	169	89	73	87	40
Hamford Water	40	20	2	nc	9	11	5	25
Colne Estuary	2	4	1	0	1	1	25	0
Blackwater Estuary	42	63	143	1	23	28	83	37
Crouch/Roach/Wallasea	8	7	18	0	17	5	5	6
Foulness/Thames	283	129	175	140	617	292	236	208

LESSER BLACK-BACKED GULL *Larus fuscus*

GB 1,200 IN 10,200

Common passage migrant. Present all year. Breeds in increasing numbers.

Records of summering birds came from (2014 data in brackets): Hamford Water; the mixed colony of Lesser Black-backed and Herring Gulls was not counted (no count); Rat Is., no count (present and believed to have bred, but number not recorded); Cindery Is., Brightlingsea, ten adults present on 6th July, but breeding not confirmed; Pewet Is., Bradwell Waterside, 81 pairs (bred, 69 adults and five chicks on 15th June); Vange Marsh, one; Braintree, no count (five); Foulness, no count (one); Walthamstow Res., 15 pairs, 30 young seen (12 pairs, 22 young).

WeBS counts were as follows:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
WeBS Totals	**272**	**503**	**215**	**218**	**336**	**270**	**327**	**224**
Stour Estuary	32	24	35	45	62	48	51	24
Holland Marshes	1	2	3	4	5	3	3	0
Hamford Water	4	20	42	nc	23	14	14	68
Colne Estuary	1	4	3	11	7	1	1	1
Blackwater Estuary	16	28	47	14	64	59	43	17
Dengie	8	5	0	0	1	0	1	2
Crouch/Roach/Wallasea	2	0	3	0	3	0	1	7
Foulness/Thames	73	42	54	81	133	73	83	50

The only significant counts reported were as follows: Hamford Water, 100 on 31st May; Pitsea Landfill Site, 150 on 21st March; Rainham, 164 on 23rd and 177 on 26th December; Roding Valley, 150 on 18th August; White Roding, 120 on 19th August; Chrishall Grange, 300 on 30th July; Elmdon, 150 on 20th November; Chigwell, 240 on 25th May, 200 on 5th August.

HERRING GULL *Larus argentatus* GB 7,300 IN 10,200

Common winter visitor and passage migrant. Present all year. Breeds in small numbers.

Records of summering pairs came from (2014 data in brackets where known): Hamford Water; numbers not recorded from the mixed colony of Lesser Black-backed and Herring Gulls (bred, numbers not known); Clacton-on-Sea, scattered pairs on rooftops (no count); Jaywick, two; Brightlingsea, two (four); Rat Is., no count (no count); Old Hall, no count (one pair, one chick); Pewet Is., Bradwell Waterside, 85 pairs (46 adults and four chicks on 15th June); Braintree area, no count (one pair); Chelmsford, no count (14 adults on 28th June); Foulness, no count (13 pairs); Southend, no count (one pair); Southend Hospital, no count (one pair); Walthamstow Res., five pairs, 11 young (six pairs, ten young).

WeBS counts were as follows:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
WeBS Totals	**1959**	**1483**	**2279**	**1599**	**2722**	**1565**	**1088**	**1190**
Stour	72	45	331	135	87	138	100	69
Holland Marshes	100	50	19	65	130	105	75	110
Hamford Water	117	128	72	nc	265	105	174	124
Colne Estuary	21	39	65	69	66	6	17	59
Blackwater Estuary	122	83	200	57	170	98	158	110
Dengie	70	105	50	0	113	98	34	70
Crouch/Roach/Wallasea	34	65	8	10	255	82	16	36
Foulness/Thames	1207	435	1478	1256	1552	908	417	552
Hanningfield Res.	11	13	3	0	3	0	23	8
Abberton Res	6	14	10	0	81	20	35	30
Lee Valley	13	278	2	7	0	5	39	22

The following counts of 250+ were reported: Mistley Walls, 1,600 on 15th October; Frinton-on-Sea, southbound movements of 850 on 23rd and 675 on 29th January, 1,714 on 21st November, 1,200 on 6th, 1,253 on 7th, and 432 on 9th December; Pitsea Landfill, 1,500 on 21st March; E Tilbury, 230 on 17th January, 210 on 17th October; Rainham, 1,000 on 7th and 250 on 24th January.

Leucistic birds were reported from: Pitsea Landfill Site on 3rd and 24th January, 14th February, 4th April; Bowers Marsh, 22nd and 23rd January; Holehaven Creek, 3rd March; Bedfords Pk, 3rd March.

YELLOW-LEGGED GULL *Larus michahellis* GB 11 IN 7,000 EBSIP

Late summer visitor to the R. Thames. Scarce elsewhere and at other times.

Records were received from 39 localities (32 in 2014, 31 in 2013, 45 in 2012,), the vast majority from sites on or adjacent to the Thames. The two main sites for significant numbers were again the Thames foreshore in the E Tilbury/Mucking area, and Rainham. The peak counts recorded were: E Tilbury/Mucking, 34 on 4th July, 102 on 1st and 78 on 15th August and 42 on 13th September; Rainham, 154 on 24th July, 111 on 12th August and 15 on 13th September.

There were also double-figure counts from: Tilbury, 21 on 6th and 39 on 18th August and 19 on 17th September.

Outside the main July-September period, the only double-figure counts were at Rainham: 12 on 2nd and ten on 23rd October, 12 on 25th November and ten on 15th December.

Approximate monthly totals are shown in the following table:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Number	29	12	6	8	3	9	204	273	108	38	27	31
Sites	12	5	3	8	2	3	11	13	12	11	9	10

CASPIAN GULL *Larus cachinnans* **IN 7,000 EBSIP**

Scarce, but increasing visitor.

The landfill sites at Pitsea and Rainham continue to be the prime locations for this species in Essex, with records summarised as follows:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Pitsea	5	5	6	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1
Rainham	6	1	1	2	-	1	1	-	-	1	2	3

Records at other sites are listed below:

Beckton	Adults	4th-15th January	GAJ
Bowers Marsh RSPB	First-summer	16th and 27th May, 14th June	PMG
Holehaven Creek	First-winter	20th February, 2nd March	TB
Clayhall	??	6th March	DMi
Wat Tyler CP	First-summer	18th-19th September	PMG, TB
Holehaven Creek	First-winter	21st November	NC
Wanstead Flats	First-winter	Intermittently 27th November to 17th December	mo
North Woolwich	??	Two 19th, one 27th and 31st December	NPS
West Thurrock Marshes	First-winter	27th December	DD-L

Observers are reminded that Caspian Gull remains an EBSIP species – and that a written description and, where possible, photographs are to be submitted to the County Recorder in support of their records.

ICELAND GULL *Larus glaucoides* **IN 2,000 EBSIP**

Scarce winter visitor and passage migrant.

An average year in the County, with the following records:

Rainham	Third-winter (Norwegian-ringed)	16th January and 6th March	DMi
Tollesbury	Juvenile	10th February	CP
Hanningfield Res.	Juvenile	22nd February	AS
Gallions Reach	Adult	12th and 29th-30th April	GAJ *et al*
Rainham	Juvenile	7th-8th December	DSm, ATw, PS *et al*

The third-winter bird seen at Rainham on 16th January and 6th March had been ringed on 12th April 2013 at Frognerparken, Oslo, Norway (1,142km NE of Rainham).

Figures for the last ten years are (average five):

	2015	2014	2013	2012	2011	2010	2009	2008	2007	2006
Numbers	4	5	1	20	4	4	2	6	-	6

In addition to the above, a controversial second-winter bird was seen at Pitsea Landfill Site on 31st January and 28th February, Rainham on 16th-17th February, Holehaven Creek on 20th February and

3rd March (and also at Queen Mother Res., Bucks, Beddington Farmlands and Island Barn Res., Surrey on various dates). Despite being seen well and photographed and input from various gull experts the bird was not conclusively identified and is therefore noted as either an Iceland or Glaucous Gull. It is a reminder to all observers of how difficult some individual "white-winged" gulls can be to identify and that records of both Iceland and Glaucous Gulls require the submission of a written description to the County Recorder.

GLAUCOUS GULL *Larus hyperboreus*

IN 10,000 EBSIP

Uncommon winter visitor and passage migrant.

Another poor year in the county with just the following accepted records (the Pitsea dates being dates of first sighting):

Pitsea Landfill Site	Juvenile	3rd January	mo
Pitsea Landfill Site	Juvenile	24th January	mo
Pitsea Landfill Site	Female	21st March	ringed and photographed
Rainham	Second-winter	30th December	RSPB

The two juveniles located on Pitsea Landfill Site were seen together on several occasions up to 5th February (dates of first sightings given in table above) and both were also seen at nearby Bowers Marsh and Holehaven Creek on many dates, with the last report of one on 9th April at Bowers Marsh.

The figures for the last ten years (average 3-4) are:

	2015	2014	2013	2012	2011	2010	2009	2008	2007	2006
Numbers	4	4	2	2	2	4	4	7	4	3

A hybrid gull superficially similar to Glaucous Gull was at Bowers Marsh on at least 20th-27th May.

GREAT BLACK-BACKED GULL *Larus marinus*

GB 760 IN 4,200

Winter visitor and passage migrant. Small non-breeding population in summer.

Three-figure counts received were: Frinton-on-Sea, a heavy southward passage offshore in December, with 232 on 3rd, 110 on 5th, 240 on 6th, 2,642 on 7th, 1,148 on 8th, 1,562 on 9th, 773 on 10th, 753 on 12th, 275 on 24th and 299 on 27th; Bowers Marsh, 300 on 5th January; Rainham, 113 on 20th January, 117 on 31st December.

There were no significant counts during the mid-summer period.

The Norwegian-ringed leucistic bird first recorded in September 2013 was seen again at Pitsea Landfill Site on 3rd, 24th and 31st January and 7th February.

WeBS counts were as follows:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
WeBS Totals	261	175	96	33	271	284	321	919
Stour Estuary	4	5	6	4	11	15	31	30
Holland Marshes	2	0	3	0	1	0	0	25
Hamford Water	11	18	4	nc	17	24	63	84
Colne Estuary	1	2	1	5	10	1	0	0
Blackwater	35	18	2	1	54	33	44	20
Dengie	10	1	1	0	4	7	10	7
Crouch/Wallasea	3	1	0	0	2	3	0	1
Foulness/Thames	549	80	69	19	106	152	144	562

ROCK DOVE/FERAL PIGEON *Columba livia*

Common and widespread resident.

There were no breeding records worthy of mention. The largest flocks at other seasons were as follows: Manningtree, up to 100 at both ends of the year; Valentines Pk, Ilford, 200 on both 24th January and 26th December; Wanstead, 100 on 2nd September; Lockwood Res., LV, 110 on 2nd September; Rainham, up to 340 on the landfill site in January.

STOCK DOVE *Columba oenas*

Resident and passage migrant.

Recorded during the spring and early summer (April-early July) from around 168 sites (140 in 2014), of which 64 (58) were in the south of the county, 58 (68) in the north and north-east, and 46 (14) in the north-west, the increase in the last area probably reflecting better coverage. Evidence of breeding activity came from around 50 of these sites, involving at least 111 pairs, (53 and 78 in 2014). The increase on 2014 is again in part due to a valuable series of breeding records from the extreme north of the County. On Foulness, 13 pairs bred (14 in 2014) while 13 nests were found at Sunnymead Fm, St Osyth. Other counts of more than two pairs or singing males came from Wormingford, eight; Lamarsh area, five; the Belchamps, five; Pebmarsh, three; Wickham St Pauls, three; Ashen (Ridgewell Airfield), three; Boreham, three.

Reports of three-figure flocks during the early part of the year came from Boreham, 125 on 10th January; Stow Marsh, 250 on 25th January and 172 on 6th March; Wallasea Is., 400 throughout January and 500 on 10th March; Paglesham, 160 on 11th February; Foulness, 109 on 11th January; Chigwell, 100 on 30th March; Bradwell BO, 120 on 8th March.

The only diurnal passage of note in the autumn came from Frinton-on-Sea, where 64 flew south in five hours on 12th November.

There were two three-figure counts at the end of the year, 115 on Foulness on 20th December and 120 at Colne Pt on 26th.

WOODPIGEON *Columba palumbus*

Abundant resident, passage migrant and winter visitor.

The only record worthy of note relating to the breeding season came from Foulness, where at least 30 pairs were located (79 in 2014).

The huge acreages of oilseed rape and winter wheat in the more intensively farmed areas of the county once again attracted some large flocks of hungry pigeons. Gatherings of 500+ during the period January-April were reported as follows: January: Terling, 500 throughout; Wormingford, 1,200 on 13th; Orsett Fen, 520 on 13th. February: Terling, 2,000 on 7th and 1,000 on 24th; Wallasea Is., 1,000 on 4th; Orsett Fen, 1,350 on 10th; Foulness, 768 on 22nd; Boreham, 500 on 25th. April: Northey Is., 500 on 5th.

As usual, autumn migration peaked during October and early November, and was most evident in the south of the county (all records of 500 and over are given): it began with a count of 4,400 at Upminster and 1,885 at Tilbury on 25th October while next day 25,000 flew south over W. Thurrock, by far the largest count of the autumn. On 1st November 1,920 were reported from Langdon Hills, followed by 18,000 at Orsett Fen and 1,000 at Waterworks NR, LV, on 3rd. Subsequent high counts were 8,000 at Upminster on 8th, 2,000 at Hanningfield Res., and 1,046 flying south at Frinton-on-Sea on 9th (with a further 852 in the last locality on 11th), and 1,000 at Bulmer on 10th. A count of 648 on Foulness on 28th October was probably unrelated to this movement.

The only count of more than 500 birds in the closing two months of the year was 1,200 in Mill Wood, Grays on 20th November.

COLLARED DOVE *Streptopelia decaocto*

Common resident.

The were no reports of more than 1-5 breeding pairs.

At other seasons flocks of 25+ birds were reported as follows: Gt Dunmow, 43 on 1st January; Terling, 30 on 15th January and 50 on 29th October; Boreham, 45 on 23rd January; Iltney Fm, Mundon, 40 on 4th February; Rainham, 32 on 14th February and 56 on 28th November; Warren Gorge, 25 on 1st September; Tye Hall Fm, Roxwell, 29 on 13th September; Salcott, 33 on 27th October; Foulness, 26 on 20th September and 54 on 18th October.

TURTLE DOVE *Streptopelia turtur*

Summer resident and passage migrant. Red List species.

The number of territories or singing ♂♂ remains at a low level, albeit a little improved on the previous year, reports being received of around 84 birds from 52 sites (75 at 43 sites in 2014, 56 at 37 in 2013, 55 at 44 in 2012). As in 2014 one lucky observer at Boreham had regular visits from this species to his garden bird feeders, at least 14 individuals being identified, while two juveniles were seen in July. The number of birds visiting a garden at Weeley fell to six in 2015 from a maximum of 11 in 2014. On Foulness the number of breeding pairs was down to six pairs from the 14 found in 2014, but still an improvement on the all rime low of three in 2003. All other reports referred to 1-2 pairs only apart from up to four singing ♂♂ at Wakering.

In total, there were reports from around 90 (100 in 2014) localities during the summer, of which 51 (61) came from the north-east, 14 (24) from the south, and 25 (16) from the north-west. The figures for the north-east and the south of the County were down on 2014 but rose for the second year running in the north-west, the reason for which is unclear but may be due to improved coverage.

The first sighting of the spring was made at Boreham on 23rd April while the last of the autumn was seen at Connaught Water on 27th October.

CUCKOO *Cuculus canorus*

Summer resident and passage migrant.

The 129 territories/singing ♂♂/ pairs which were reported was considerably higher than the 117 in 2014 and the number of sites was also slightly up, 105 compared with 96. Of these, 43 reports came from south Essex (49 in 2014), 47 (42) from the north-east, and 15 (five) from the north-west. Additional records, without any indication of breeding activity mentioned by the observers, came from approximately 90-95 further sites during May and June, compared with 103 last year. Three or more territories/singing ♂♂ were reported from the following sites (with 2013 figures in brackets where available): Foulness, 12 (18); Heybridge GP 3-4, Two Tree Is., 3-4; Fordham, three. In addition, ten birds were seen at Old Hall on 14th June (ratio of sexes unknown).

The first birds of the spring were seen at both Hanningfield Res., and in the Chelmer Valley on 10th April. Later in the season juveniles were seen at Wivenhoe, Old Hall, Bradwell BO, Stow Marsh, Mucking and Bowers Marsh. At Bradwell BO, 15 presumed migrants flew south during the course of 5th July, including five between 6pm and 9pm. The latest record was the juvenile seen at Old Hall on 25th September.

Records of the scarcer rufous (hepatic) morph females came from Abberton Res., on 24th May; and Hanningfield Res., on 25th May.

2014 EBR correction: The report of one at Bradwell BO on March 30th was a misprint on the species file. The first spring record was one at Wickham Bishops on April 10th.

BARN OWL *Tyto alba*

Local resident, primarily in low lying coastal areas.

In total, 617 records involving at least 206 individuals were received from 131 sites (421 records of 371 individuals in 2014, 556 records of 201 individuals in 2013). The Society received reports of 44 confirmed breeding pairs (68 in 2014—an exceptional year), with a further pair present in a nest box without eggs or young, and from these 103 chicks were ringed. However, the BTO Online Ringing Report for 2015 states that 123 chicks were ringed in Essex suggesting a further 8-10 pairs and it is likely that a few others were undetected or unreported. The recent EWT initiative to promote Barn

Owls via the Living Landscapes scheme has resulted in both an increase in the number of boxes erected and a more efficient system of monitoring them so that a truer picture of the current population of this species should become apparent in the next few years. Although the majority of the breeding pairs reported are from the low-lying coastal areas in the north-east of the county, the area south-west of Colchester towards Tiptree also holds a significant number. Six ringed birds were found dead during the year and another was found weak and taken into care and later released.

Outside the breeding season, records peaked in January and February, when 55 were reported (32 in December 2014, 72 in January 2013, 43 in January 2012).

All sightings will be welcomed by the Recorders.

LITTLE OWL *Athene noctua*

Fairly common and widespread resident.

There were 282 records concerning 131 individuals from 92 localities (386 records of 183 individuals from 128 sites in 2014, 210 records of 115 individuals from 87 sites in 2013).

A disappointing six breeding records were submitted with a further one suspected (16 in 2014 plus 41 suspected, eight in 2013, 15 in 2012). There was no breeding reported in the western half of the county (using Chelmsford as the midpoint).

Not a good year for this species after the success of 2014, with numbers of individuals quite a bit down on the ten-year average of 164. Hopefully this species' fortunes will improve in 2016.

Two chicks found on the road, one from Copford and one from Gt Bromley, were taken into care during the year and successfully released; another individual was found dead having been hit by a car in Handley Green on 4th July.

TAWNY OWL *Strix aluco*

Common resident.

In total, 183 records were received concerning 114 individuals from 101 locations (229 records of 145 from 126 locations in 2014, 146 records of 95 individuals from 92 locations in 2013). In general, the species has a wide distribution in the county.

Breeding was proved for four pairs at four locations plus a further ten suspected as breeding (12 pairs in 2014 plus suspected breeding at 31 locations, five pairs in 2013). The upper valley of the Colne appears to be one area where this species is doing well and the majority of breeding records received came from this area.

2015 was a poor year by recent standards. The ten-year average for the number of birds reported is 157. Evidence of breeding was worryingly low, though it is acknowledged that it is not easy to confirm, and the reality may be better than the results suggest. Only 14 sites had birds reported during both halves of the year, another potential pointer to a decline in this species.

Seven birds were taken into care; all of them were successfully rehabilitated. One bird was killed by traffic near Navestock Church on 16th June.

All records are welcomed and hopefully this will clarify the status of this species. Tawny Owls can breed very early and young may have fledged by the beginning of March. It is possible to start recording territorial birds as early as the New Year. Observers are encouraged to record birds holding territory, even if breeding is not proved, to allow the most complete picture of the species' status to be given.

LONG-EARED OWL *Asio otus*

Scarce resident, regular passage migrant and winter visitor.

There were 15 records concerning six birds, all singletons from four locations (ten records of 13 birds from eight locations in 2014, 30 records of 18 birds from 16 locations in 2013). Disappointingly there was no evidence of breeding in the county in 2015 (four in 2014, one in 2013).

Once again, there was no evidence of a winter roost in either winter period or any significant evidence of migrants. The latest record was one at Wat Tyler C P on 28th December.

2011 EBR: Correction two pairs are known to have bred in the County, not one as stated.

SHORT-EARED OWL *Asio flammeus*

Rare breeder, coastal passage migrant and winter visitor.

In total, 474 records concerning 119 individuals from 62 locations were received (231 records of 74 individuals from 45 locations in 2014, 190 records of 74 individuals from 50 locations in 2013). The majority of records came from coastal areas.

Having bred in the county in 2012 and 2013 it was disappointing that, as in 2014, there was no evidence of breeding in 2015.

Outside the breeding season, the monthly maxima were:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Total	28	32	21	23	1	11	63	46	33

Numbers in the first-winter period reflected the moderate influx at the end of 2014. In the second-winter period numbers were higher but nearly half the birds seemed to have moved on by December. In the first-winter period the highest count was of 11 on Wallasea Is. on 17th February, of which ten went to roost together, and there were five at Old Hall on the seawall together on 21st February. Elsewhere other sites had one or two birds. There were occasional records between May and August (with three on Wallasea Is., on 27th August of interesting) but none in June and July. The second-winter period showed birds appearing from early September onwards. The highest count was eight birds on Rainham on 28th October. There was a noticeable drop in the number of birds on Wallasea Is., where no more than two were seen on any day.

What was probably the first migrant appeared on 2nd September, when one was seen high over Frinton-on-Sea. Further migrants arrived in small numbers through the autumn and on 25th October birds were noted at 11 different locations.

Short-eared Owl, Rainham (ALAN SHEARMAN)

SWIFT *Apus apus*

Common summer resident and passage migrant.

There was little evidence of confirmed breeding. The reports overall can at best be distilled to 64 breeding pairs from 22 locations (70 – 90 from 15 in 2014). One diligent observer in the north of the County submitted one third of the location reports. There are over 1,200 records in the database from across the county, many in the breeding rather than passage season. More recent work on the Save Our Swifts (SOS) initiative indicates that there are known breeding locations which do not achieve an appearance in the data received by the Recorder. It is to be hoped that SOS will not only yield more breeding Swifts but more reports of breeding Swifts.

The first sighting of the year was an early bird at Grays on 3rd April, but the main arrival was from 16th April onwards. The final sighting for the year was on the unexceptional date of 23rd September when one was observed at Sewardstone Marsh, LV.

Four-figure counts were received as follows: 1,000+ at Hanningfield Res., on 25th and 31st May (both these records were annotated "several thousands") and 1,000 at Wallasea Is., on 3rd June. Additionally, there were five large counts of passage birds at Frinton-on-Sea: 2,475 on 13th June; 1,198 on 2nd July; a staggering 13,214 over six hours on 19th July; 1,828 on 20th July and 4,079 on 22nd July.

HOOPOE *Upopa epops* **EBSIP**

Uncommon visitor

Just one record:

Lee Valley, Waterworks NR	16th April	JP, AD & JWD

A typical spring overshoot. Following two bumper years in 2010 and 2011 the species has reverted to its former pattern with only one record per year in the last three years and none in 2012.

BEE-EATER *Merops apiaster* **EBSIP (43, 15, 58)**

Very rare summer visitor and passage migrant

Just one record:

Frinton-on-Sea	21st July	Two	PBr

Two birds were observed flying south at 07:19. One other record was received for this species but was not substantiated.

KINGFISHER *Alcedo atthis*

Resident and passage migrant

Only two confirmed breeding reports were received, from Walthamstow Res., LV and Rainham. Stretching the evidence, possible breeding occurred in nine other locations. This contrasts with probable breeding in 21 instances at 18 locations in 2014. *Prima facie* this represents a significant fall in breeding numbers. Other evidence of low breeding and survival comes in the form of the winter counts. In the first winter period there were 95 reports from 77 localities (172 from 67 in 2014) and in the second 73 reports from 67 localities (235 from 90 in 2014).

To balance the gloom there are still 1,100 + records in the database (1,200 in 2014), although both years carry duplicate entries or multiple observations of the same birds. Also, a significant number of records refer to two or three birds without any commentary on possible breeding. Whilst it is clear that Kingfisher breeding is in decline, it appears likely that the actual status is not as bleak as the available records suggest.

The highest individual count was four birds, observed at Foulness on 17th January and Rainham on 5th August. As ever all records would be appreciated, not least to clarify the contradictions evident from the 2015 data.

WRYNECK *Jynx torquilla* **EBSIP**

Uncommon passage migrant, mainly in autumn

All records are given, each of single birds.

Gunners Pk	14th August	mo
Wanstead Flats	31st Aug – 2nd September	mo
St Osyth	31st August	SC
Wivenhoe	1st September	RA *et al*

All the observations are in the prime period to see the species. The overall number of reports is a little below par.

Green Woodpecker (RESTON KILGOUR)

GREEN WOODPECKER *Picus viridis*

Resident

The number of records in the database continues to increase, now totalling 2,700+ (2,600 in 2014). The burgeoning number of BirdTrack reports (over 1,600) is a major contributor to the upward trend in reporting in recent years.

In contrast breeding reports are moving slightly in the opposite direction. The 2015 numbers were 78 territories from 46 locations (90 from 48 in 2014). As in the previous year assiduous reporting by one observer in the north of the County has provided a major share of the records, whereas few breeding reports have been received from whole swathes of suitable locations in the rest of the county where this resident species is demonstrably present in significant numbers. The highest individual count was 19 birds in Belhus Woods on 6th July.

The message is clear. The bird is ubiquitous and its numbers are underpinned by more sustained breeding than is evident from the reports submitted to the Recorder. (There are some additional records which include instances of possible breeding but these have been discounted for present purposes.)

GREAT SPOTTED WOODPECKER *Dendrocopos major*

Resident and scarce passage migrant

The overall number of records in the database has increased to 1,870+ (1,720 in 2014). The BirdTrack submissions accounted for over a thousand of these. Breeding records totalled 79 territories in 50 locations, an improvement on the preceding year (56 from 36). These figures are, however, well down on the number of breeding records which were received historically. The highest individual count was 13 at Hockley Woods on 28th March.

The species is widespread and well established. Most of the breeding evidence came in the form of observed pairs and sustained drumming. All the evidence points to under-reporting of breeding overall.

There was little information to support migratory activity although two were seen to fly in-off the sea at Gunners Pk on 17th September. Single birds flying past Frinton-on-Sea on 20th and 26th September and 25th October in a southerly direction may also have been examples.

LESSER SPOTTED WOODPECKER *Dendrocopos minor*

Scarce resident. Essex Red List species

The data yields only four potential breeding records from four locations (five from five in 2014). These were Danbury (pair); Shut Heath Wood (drumming); Hockley Woods (drumming) and Westley Heights (male carrying food).

Overall there were 90 reports (100 in 2014) from 30 locations. However, four of these locations (Shut Heath Wood, Hockley Woods, Langdon Hills and Westley Heights) contributed over half of these reports between them. Many of the reports undoubtedly refer to the observation of the same birds. For example, 19 of the reports came from observers who took the well-trodden path down to Shut Heath Wood, which achieved the highest individual total of three birds on 19th February.

Other biases came in the form of geographical spread – only one record from north of Shut Heath Wood – and seasonality – only seven of the reports dated later than 8th June by which time seeing and hearing the species becomes very difficult.

Whilst the status of the species in Essex remains dire it does not appear to have worsened in 2015. There are a few hotspots where with a little luck a sighting may be obtained; outside these any encounter is all down to serendipity. As ever all records would be much appreciated.

Lesser Spotted Woodpecker (SAM SHIPPEY)

KESTREL *Falco tinnunculus*

Widespread but declining resident with some seasonal movement.

Breeding was confirmed for 27 pairs at 20 sites (34 from 26 in 2014). However, no breeding reports were received from some regular sites. All reports were of single pairs apart from the Foulness area (including for this purpose Wakering Stairs and Potton Is.) where, as in 2014, five pairs bred, Rainham (three pairs) and Braintree and Bocking, where at least two pairs bred. Fledging success was again not mentioned by most observers, being confirmed for just four sites, at each of which 2-3 young were fledged. In addition, a further 24 pairs were reported at 21 additional sites (15 from 15 in 2014) in the breeding season (April/July) without confirmation of breeding and, at a further site, juveniles seen in late July were probably locally bred.

Reported observations were up again, at 2,794 (2,259 in 2014) but, as previously, many of these were multiple sightings of the same individuals. The only site to report double-figure counts was Foulness, where the highest counts (in the same extended area as for breeding – see above) were of 21 (22 in 2014) on 8th March and 16th August. Elsewhere the highest counts were of nine at Rainham on 25th September and eight at Bradwell BO on 17th September.

MERLIN *Falco columbarius*

Increasing winter visitor and passage migrant. Red list species.

The number of observations during the year, 258, was slightly down on the figure in 2014 (296) but from an increased number of sites, 58 (47). As usual, most involved repeat sightings of the same few birds. All 2015 records were of one or two birds apart from four in the Bradwell BO area on 13th December and three there on 18th October.

Three late birds were seen in May, at Colne Pt on 3rd, E.Tilbury on 10th and the North Dengie on 17th. There were no June records and the first returning birds were in late July, at Wallasea Is. on 29th and Gt Stambridge and Rainham, both on 30th. However, there was a long gap after these until the next, at Rainham on 4th September.

Inland, the only location producing multiple sightings was again Abberton Res., where there were reports on 9th, 18th and 25th January, 15th February, 13th and 25th October and on 9th (two birds, a ♂ and a ♀), 12th and 19th December. Elsewhere inland, records came from a further ten sites (nine

in 2014), with a ♂ at Boreham on 1st and 9th January, singles at Easthorpe on 28th January, Orsett Fen on 1st and 10th February, Walthamstow Reservoirs on 4th April, Walthamstow Filter Beds on 13th October, Bulmer on 10th November, a ♂ at Abbess Roding on 24th November, and, in December, singles in the Mardyke Valley on 1st and Tillingham on 4th and a ♂ at Gt Leighs on 31st.

Estimated monthly totals are given below. Again, the totals may well be over-estimated. As in 2014 they assume, for example, that sightings on either side of the Colne, at Colne Pt and Fingringhoe Wick, involved different birds and that the same was true for sightings from the two sides of the Blackwater, at Bradwell and Old Hall, unless proved otherwise. By way of counterbalance, it is again assumed that, as has appeared to be the case in the past, there was some movement between close or adjacent sites (for example between Abberton Res. and Abbotts Hall/Copt Hall/Old Hall and between Colne Pt, Wigboro Wick, Howlands Marsh and Brightlingsea) unless birds were seen at both sites on the same date. It is also assumed that, at any given site, only one bird was involved in all the month's sightings unless proved otherwise:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Numbers	23	18	8	9	3	0	3	0	9	13	12	22
Locations	21	17	12	9	3	0	3	0	7	14	11	23

HOBBY *Falco subbuteo*

Uncommon breeder but widespread summer visitor and passage migrant.

Breeding was confirmed from just three sites (eight in 2014), with a pair probably breeding at a fourth site and breeding considered to have possibly occurred at a fifth. In addition, birds were seen in summer at seven of the sites at which they had been present in one or more of the previous three breeding seasons. At two of these, groups of four birds seen in early/mid-August could perhaps have been family parties from a local nest. Allowing for the fact that this is a difficult species to prove breeding, the 2015 figures are still disappointing. The table below uses the same pair numberings as EBRs 2012-2014 and shows the status in 2015 of the pairs listed for the previous year(s). No new breeding sites were reported in the year.

Pair one	Established	One pair possibly bred.
Pair two	Established	No reports received in the breeding season.
Pair three	Re-established	No midsummer sightings but a group of four on one date in early August had perhaps come from a local nest site.
Pair four	Established	One pair raised two young.
Pair five	Established	No midsummer sightings but a group of four on one date in mid-August had perhaps come from a local nest site.
Pair six	Established	One pair raised two young.
Pair seven	Established	1-2 birds seen on several dates in midsummer but no proof of nesting reported.
Pair eight	Re-established	No reports received.
Pair nine	Established	One bird seen on one date in July.
Pair ten	Re-established in 2012	No reports received.
Pair 11	First reported in 2012	No reports received.
Pair 12	First reported in 2012	No reports received.
Pair 13	First reported in 2012	One pair bred.
Pair 14	First reported in 2012	No reports outside passage periods.
Pair 15	First reported in 2012	No reports received.
Pair 16	First reported in 2012	No reports outside passage periods.

Pair 17	First reported in 2013	One bird seen on three dates in July.
Pair 18	First reported in 2013	No reports received.
Pair 19	First reported in 2013	No reports received.
Pair 20	First reported in 2014	2014 site checked but no birds seen.
Pairs 21 and 22	First reported in 2014.	No reports received.
Pair 23	First reported in 2014	One pair probably bred.
Pair 24	First reported in 2014	1-2 birds seen in early July but all other reports in passage periods.

Apart from these breeding records, birds were seen between mid-June and the end of July at a further 45 sites (37 in 2014). All these mid-summer sightings were of single birds except at one site, where the presence of a pair on one date in mid-June and three on 20th July was perhaps suggestive of local breeding.

The first record of the spring was of a bird coming in off the sea at Jaywick on 6th April, the next arrivals being at Abberton Res. on 9th, Creeksea on 13th, Rainham and Dovercourt on 15th and Two Tree Is. on 16th. More widespread arrivals came from 19th onwards, but the only April report of more than two was of four at KGV Res. on 30th.

In May the highest counts, each of eight birds, came from Rainham, on 10th, 13th and 27th, the next highest being of six in the Ingrebourne Valley on 2nd and at Hanningfield Res. on 8th. No other sites reported more than three birds on a day. Although individual day totals were relatively low, the pattern of sightings suggested that at least 21 birds passed through Rainham and 19 through Hanningfield Res. during May. After the dip in 2014, the estimated county total for that month (166) was the highest reported in EBR since monthly figures for this species were first tabulated in 2009. It has to be recognised, however, that these figures can be at most a very rough approximation – see further below.

As in 2014, there were no double-figure autumn counts. In August the highest count was of five at Alresford on 26th but there were no other counts of more than three apart from the possible family parties mentioned under breeders, above. In September, the highest counts were of six, at both Stow Marsh and Rainham on 6th and Paglesham Lagoon on 9th. Rainham still held five on 10th and there were four in Wanstead Pk on 6th and at Brightlingsea the next day, all other counts being of 1-3. October produced 12 birds (15 in 2014), including three at Bulmer on 10th, with the last a late bird at Holyfield Hill Fm, LV, on 25th.

The species continues to be widely reported, with 664 records from 149 sites (remarkably similar to the 673 from 155 in 2014). As usual these numbers are to a large extent a reflection of observer coverage with, particularly at the most popular sites, multiple observers reporting the same birds on multiple dates, so the actual number of birds involved will have been substantially lower than the number of records submitted. As in 2014, the following totals make no allowance for duplication between sites but (by way of counterbalance) assume that, at any given site, the same birds lingered all month unless the pattern of records for that site clearly indicates otherwise:-

	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct
Numbers	0	46	166	57	46	83	97	15
Locations	0	31	65	38	41	58	57	14

PEREGRINE *Falco peregrinus*

Uncommon but increasing winter visitor, passage migrant and breeding resident; first bred 1998.

Pairs were observed in the breeding season at six sites (eight in 2014). Breeding was successful at three sites (three in 2014), seven juveniles being fledged in total (eight in 2014). Of the remaining pairs, two failed and one summered but did not breed. Three previously occupied sites were not used in 2015.

The number of observations declined for the third successive year, with 854 records (913 in 2014). Most observations were of one or two birds, but there were five together at Marshhouse Outfall on the Dengie on 18th January (plus a sixth bird elsewhere on the Dengie on that day) and four on the Dengie on 23rd September. Elsewhere, there were sightings of three birds together at six further sites outside the breeding season.

Peregrine (DAVID ACFIELD)

Inland observations came from 54 sites (57 in 2014), 26 of which were inside the M25. Most of the rest were near the coast or estuaries. The only report in the north-west came from Stansted Airport Lagoons, where one was seen regularly in January and February.

Sightings again pointed to individual birds covering considerable areas. The following table has been prepared using the same assumptions as in 2014, in particular that the same individual is responsible for all sightings of a single bird at any given location during the month unless ageing and/or sexing shows more than one bird to have been involved and, second, that sightings at multiple locations along (or close to) the Colne, Blackwater and Crouch estuaries refer to the same individual(s) using the full length of the relevant estuary. The table therefore gives estimated monthly minima of birds. It includes birds reported near possible and probable breeding sites during summer months but not confirmed breeders.

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Numbers	32	25	30	26	16	12	18	20	32	30	24	35
Locations	39	35	38	38	17	12	18	25	35	42	30	38

The apparent arrival in December is noteworthy and included three of the sightings of three birds together, while at least two were present at five further sites. To improve the accuracy of the tabulated figures, observers are again encouraged to record the age and sex of birds seen.

RING-NECKED PARAKEET *Psittacula krameri*

Scarce but increasing resident and visitor. First confirmed breeding in 2004.

Confirmed breeding was reported from: the Mardyke Valley between Stifford and Aveley, six pairs going to nest holes and a minimum of four juveniles seen; Belhus Woods CP, a pair at a nest hole on 1st May; Hangman's Wood, Blackshots, a pair seen feeding a juvenile on 2nd June; Orsett Fen, a pair feeding three juveniles on 1st July. In Wanstead the species was noted as now a regular breeder and, at Walthamstow Reservoirs, birds were present all year and assumed to have nested on the islands, although no nest holes could be seen. One or more birds were seen at a further 30 sites during the period May-July (21 in 2014), which suggests that this species is still increasing its presence in south-west Essex.

During 2015, reports were received from 74 sites (68 in 2014). The majority were again within the M25 but with increasing numbers in the areas between Grays and Basildon and between Weald CP and Epping. Slightly further afield, there were singles at Kelvedon Hatch, Ongar, Hatfield Heath and Westcliff but none in the north of the county.

The highest numbers this year came once more from Leyton. During the early months of the year there were peaks of 670 on 17th January and 630 on 7th February. These counts were dwarfed in autumn, when numbers reached a new peak of 2,110 on 25th October. Other three-figure counts (only the site maximum being given in each case) came from: the Mardyke Valley, 175 on 1st February; Dagenham Chase, 255 on 29th December; Ingrebourne Valley, 170 on 30th October; Lockwood Res., 120 on 25th September; and Walthamstow Marsh, 150 on 3rd September.

The impact of this alarmingly successful feral species on native birds remains to be fully understood.

GOLDEN ORIOLE *Oriolus oriolus* EBSIP

Very scarce passage migrant and summer visitor. Has bred.

Colne Pt	12th May	immature ♂	CB
Friday Wood	22nd May	Immature ♂	RA

RED-BACKED SHRIKE *Lanius collurio* EBSIP

Uncommon passage migrant, mainly in autumn.

Fairlop	25th May	Male
Bowers Marsh	11th-19th August	Female
The Hythe	1st September	Immature
Holland Haven	31st October	Immature

There has only been one later record than the Holland Haven bird, an immature at Wanstead SF on 1st November 1980.

GREAT GREY SHRIKE *Lanius excubitor* EBSIP

Scarce passage migrant and winter visitor.

Frinton-on-Sea	17th October	One flew south	PBr
Heybridge GP	17th October-26th November		SDW
Old Hall	18th October		mo
Wigboro Wick	18th October		CA
Colne Pt	18th-22nd October		SC
Dagnam Pk	24th-25th October		mo
Bowers Marsh	3rd-4th November		mo

An excellent year, with six records, although it is possible that the Frinton, Old Hall, Wigboro Wick and Colne Pt sightings refer to the same individual.

There was also one other report for which no description was received.

Above left: Red-backed Shrike, Bowers Marsh (GRAHAM OAKES).
Above right: Great Grey Shrike, Heybridge GP (DAVID ACFIELD)

MAGPIE *Pica pica*

Common resident.

The species remains under-recorded in the breeding season, with breeding confirmed from just 17 areas (24 in 2014) although probable/possible records were reported from many others. There were no reports of more than 1-5 pairs.

Counts of 30+ birds came from nine locations, all in the south of the county: Chafford Gorges Nature Pk, 85 on 2nd January; Romford GC, 55 on 2nd January and 60 on 10th December; Leyton, Oliver Road/Orient Way area, 54 on 4th January; Loughton, 39 on 9th January; Langdon Plotlands, 39 on 14th January; Roding Valley NR, 86 on 18th January; Hackney Marsh, 40 on 1st May; Rainham, 44 on 14th October; Harold Wood SW, 40 on 29th November.

Jay (RESTON KILGOUR)

JAY *Garrulus glandarius*

Common resident and occasional passage migrant.

Another under-recorded corvid, with confirmed breeding records coming from just four sites, single pairs being involved in each case. It was, however, reported from around 95 other sites during the breeding season (May-July). There is some evidence that this species may be in decline in parts of Essex, particularly the north-west, where many woodland areas have been denuded of a shrub layer by a combination of lack of recent coppicing and deer damage. Thus, all records of confirmed breeding would be welcome.

During the spring, odd birds were again reported in May and June at Bradwell BO, but these observations may relate to wandering locals, and no other reports of the species in unusual locations were received.

In contrast to 2014 there was little evidence of autumn passage, gatherings of 10-14 birds at five sites in the south of the county - Langdon Plotlands, Mardyke Valley, Dagnam Pk , Leyton Flats and Roding Valley Meadows – during October and November being as likely to reflect a good breeding season as migration.

There were no double-figure counts reported from other parts of the county.

JACKDAW *Corvus monedula*

Common resident, passage migrant and winter visitor.

The species is widely reported during the breeding season but very few confirmed breeding records are received.

A very similar situation to 2014, with confirmed breeding reported from ten sites (13 in 2014), all relating to 1-2 pairs. Just two sites reported three or more pairs on territory (2013 figures in brackets): Foulness, 15 (11); Colchester (TL9925), five.

Roost and pre-roost counts were similar to 2014 with two sites recording 500 birds or more birds: Boreham, 500 on 17th January and 800 on 5th February; Clay Tye Woods, Upminster, 600 on 10th January, 700 on 8th February and 1st March.

A further 15 sites recorded counts in excess of 100 birds.

The only indication of autumn migration consisted of eight birds moving on 10th October at Frinton-on-Sea. (ENE).

ROOK *Corvus frugilegus*

Common resident, passage migrant and winter visitor.

A minimum of 363 nests was counted at ten rookeries compared with 610 at 17 in 2014 and 281 at 11 in 2013. There was just one site holding 50 or more nests: St Osyth Priory, 110 nests (80 in 2014).

Three-figure counts in excess of 300 – involving both roosting and feeding flocks -were: Clay Tye Woods, Upminster, 400 in January, March and July, 600 in August, September and December; Boreham, 320 on 17th January; R. Crouch – Blue House Fm to Althorne, 500 on 20th January, Gt Horkesley, 350 on 2nd February; Stow Marsh, 400 on 4th February and 1,000 on 2nd December.

No significant spring or autumn passage was noted.

CARRION CROW *Corvus corone*

Common resident and migrant.

Like other corvids, Carrion Crows are severely under-recorded when breeding. Nesting was confirmed from just 15 sites (16 in 2014), the majority involving single pairs. Counts of over three pairs came from just two sites (2014 in brackets): Blue House Fm, three pairs (three); Walthamstow Res., four pairs.

At Frinton-on-Sea a total of 19 birds flew south in four hours on 4th October and 18 birds in a similar time period on 25th may point to a minor movement, but equally, given the very small number, these may be local wanderers.

Counts of more than 200 came from just one site: Canvey Marsh, 800 on 3rd July.

RAVEN *Corvus corax* **EBSIP (outside LNHS area)**

Scarce resident and visitor.

The Raven is now more common in Essex than at any time since the late 1890s. Records in Metropolitan Essex and the west of the County are now regular but the species remains rare east of Ongar and north of the A13. Thus, notes on identification are still required from sites outside the LNHS recording area.

Sadly, the nest site west of Hatfield Forest, where three young fledged in 2014, was not occupied this year, although two birds were seen in the vicinity on 9th March and at nearby Hatfield Broad Oak on 5th April.

It is difficult assessing the number of birds involved in observations in the metropolitan area but a pair was reported from Rainham on numerous occasions and 1-2 birds from Waltham Abbey in January, Purfleet, Copped Hall, Upshire and Cornmill Meadows in February; Romford, Beckton, Warlies estate (Epping) in April; Pitsea and Bowers Marsh in May; Brentwood and Hall Marsh LV in October, and KGV Res., in October and November, and Hayes Hill Fm LV in November..

In Outer Essex, i.e. those areas outside the London Recording area, there were two at E. Tilbury on 21st February and one at Terling on 10th December. Two other sightings were unaccompanied by descriptions.

Goldcrest (ALAN SHEARMAN)

GOLDCREST *Regulus regulus*

Common resident, passage migrant and winter visitor.

A minimum of 42 singing ♂♂/territories was reported from 28 sites (27 from 17 in 2014), but the species was observed during the period April-July at a further 58 sites. Four sites recorded counts of three singing ♂♂/territories: Langham; Easthorpe; Lamarsh/Bures Hamlet; Westley Heights.

In January and February, a minimum of 250 birds was reported from 116 sites. This is similar to normal levels, following an unusually poor year in 2014 (98 from 35 sites). The highest counts were from Hylands Pk, 10+ on 4th January; Epping Forest Burial Pk, nine on 5th January; Langdon Hills, seven on 9th January.

Spring passage was light, with only one double-figure count from Hanningfield Res., 20 on 18th April. In contrast, a substantial autumn passage movement occurred. Three coastal sites reported counts of 100+ during October: The Naze, 200 on 12th; Frinton-on-Sea, peak count 121 on 20th; Foulness Pt, 100 on 18th. The total in October was considerably higher than all other months, based on the maximum monthly counts from each site (see table below). In reality, the total number of birds involved will have been much higher than the table suggests in October, as most individual passage birds will have moved quickly through. The 181 Goldcrests ringed at The Naze during September to November, and the 71 at Holland Haven during the same period must represent only a small proportion of the total passage.

Following the autumn influx, numbers in November and December were much higher than usual for these months, with 660 birds reported from 140 sites (229 from 86 in 2014; 102+ from 46 in 2013). The highest counts came from: Hockley Woods, 30 on 20th December; Langdon Hills, 30 on 2nd November; Belhus Woods, 20 on 10th November.

Summary table of monthly distribution (excluding May to July).

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Monthly totals	179	125	108	105	49	290	1217	494	361
Monthly sites	76	68	55	52	26	67	133	104	78

FIRECREST *Regulus ignicapillas*

Uncommon passage migrant and winter visitor: breeds occasionally.

Once again there were no confirmed breeding records, although singing ♂♂ were reported from four sites (one in 2014): Danbury Common, one on 22nd May; Westley Heights, one on 8th May and two on 9th May; Langdon Hills, one on 9th and 10th May; Warley Place, one on 1st, 4th and 25th April. One at Leyton Flats on 2nd July suggests possible presence in the local area during the breeding season but may have been a very early passage bird.

Records were received from just six sites in January and five in February (11 in both months in 2014), including long-staying birds at Hockley Woods (1-2); Bedfords Pk; Woodford Green; Leyton Flats (1-2); Snaresbrook Crown Court (1-2). The latter two sites are adjacent and these records may have involved the same birds.

Records were received from four coastal sites in April, all single birds, with the only other records in March and April coming from Warley Place (details above) and three of the wintering sites.

The first autumn record was inland at Doddinghurst on 29th August. The main passage movement began on 11th September with five at The Naze and continued throughout October, with further records from four coastal sites in November. Passage numbers were particularly high, and the peak monthly count was the highest since 2004 (see tables below). This year's autumn totals probably underestimate the actual number of birds involved as they are based on the maximum count at each site each month, so do not take the turnover of passage birds at some sites into account. The underestimation may be partially offset as some individuals are likely to have been seen at more than one site.

Following the autumn passage, birds remained present at a higher number of sites than normal in November and December (see table), compared with just five birds at four sites in 2014). Longer staying birds were at Langdon Hills (1-2); Mardyke Valley (1-2); Mill Wood; Chafford Gorges; Sewardstone Marsh; Dagenham Chase (1-3); Woodford Green; Wanstead Pk/Flats (1-2), Leyton Flats/Snaresbrook Crown Court (1-2).

Summary table of monthly distribution (excluding the May and July records referred to above).

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Monthly totals	9	5	3	6	1	21	50	34	19
Monthly sites	6	5	3	6	1	13	29	23	14

Summary table of peak monthly counts since 2004

Year	04	05	06	07	08	09	10	11	12	13	14	15
Peak Monthly total	76	27	17	29	24	38	25	24	40	34	16	50
Month	Oct	Oct	Oct	Oct	Nov	Oct	Nov	Oct	Oct	Apr	Jan	Oct

BLUE TIT *Cyanistes caeruleus*

Abundant resident. Passage migrant in small numbers.

This species continues to be under-reported, with a minimum of 147 pairs/singing ♂♂ recorded from 13 sites (198 from 11 in 2014), and breeding confirmed at a further four sites. No count was received from Braintree and Bocking this year (40+ pairs in 2014). Six sites recorded double-figure counts (2014 figures in brackets): Sunnymead Fm, Wivenhoe, 22 (20); Brookes Reserve, 16+; Orsett Fen, 13 (six); Mardyke Valley (Stifford to Aveley), 28 (38); Belhus Woods, 21 (22); Warren Gorge, ten (seven).

Possible passage movement was again observed at Frinton-on-sea, where 30 flew high south on 8th October.

Counts of 40+ birds were made at 11 sites, the same number as in 2014: Gunners Pk, Shoebury, 40 on 31st August; Sunnymead Fm, 50 on 18th December; West Bergholt, 50 on 7th September; Writtle Pk Fm, 53 on 11th February; Epping Forest Burial Pk, 108 on 5th January; High Beach, Epping Forest,

50 on 31st January; Weald Pk, 40 on 19th August; Langdon Plotlands, 59 on 3rd June; Mardyke Valley, 54 on 8th June; Chafford Gorges, 56 on 2nd February; Belhus Woods, 87 on 1st June.

Interesting behaviour was noted at Langford on 9th April, where a pair was observed attacking and partially cannibalising a third individual trapped in a gap in tree bark (SSh).

GREAT TIT *Parus major*

Very common resident. Passage migrant in small numbers.

A minimum of 80 singing ♂♂/ territories was reported from 12 sites, a decrease from 2014 (152 from 11 sites), but the totals are not directly comparable as no records were received from several larger sites counted in 2014. Counts of 10+ territories were made at only two sites (six in 2014), with the counts at both these sites being the same or higher this year: Orsett Fen, 13 (11 in 2014); Mardyke Valley (Stifford to Aveley), 24 (24).

Passage movement was noted at Frinton-on-Sea, where 38 were counted moving high south on 8th October.

Counts of 30 or more were made at ten further sites, in addition to the count at Frinton (six in 2014): Sunnymead Fm, Wivenhoe, 35 on 20th November; W. Bergholt, 50 on 7th September; Terling, 30 on many dates between January and March; Hockley, 30 on 7th March; Writtle Pk Fm, 35 on 11th February; High Beach, Epping Forest, 40 on 31st January; Langdon Plotlands, 65 on 17th June; Mardyke Valley, 64 on 4th June; Chafford Gorges, 39 on 2nd January, 14th September and 19th November; Belhus Woods, 62 on 1st June.

COAL TIT *Periparus ater britannicus*

Common resident.

Just 21 pairs /territories / singing ♂♂ were reported from 14 sites (40+ from 17 sites in 2014). However, no records were received this year from the four sites with the highest counts in 2014, and if these are excluded, the 2014 total would be similar to this year (18 from 13 sites). The only counts of three or more pairs in 2015 came from: Pebmarsh (four); Westley Heights (four). Further sightings (without breeding information) occurred during March to July at an additional 62 sites.

The British race is not noted as a passage migrant, but four were seen moving through Frinton-on-Sea on 27th September and one on 10th October, and another in October in south Maldon was noted by the observer to be very rare at the site.

The highest counts were: Broaks Wood, Halstead, 12 on 20th January; High Beach. Epping Forest, 11 on 20th June; Norsey Wood, ten on 19th February; Upshire, ten on 3rd November.

Continental Coal Tit *Periparus ater ater*

Birds showing characteristics of the continental race of Coal Tit were observed at Frinton-on-Sea, six on 8th October; and Shoebury, three on 18th October. Another bird, positively identified when caught and ringed at Black Notley on 1st November remained in the same area until at least 9th December.

Observers are reminded that notes are required for this race as identification is not straightforward.

Continental Coal Tit on the left and Coal Tit on the right, Black Notley (GEORGE BROWN)

Marsh Tit (RESTON KILGOUR)

MARSH TIT *Poecile palustris*

Scarce, sedentary resident. Amber List species.

The Marsh Tit remains scarce following long-term declines, although the species is continuing to survive at favoured sites, and the number of sites from which the species has been reported has remained relatively constant in recent years.

Juveniles were observed at three sites, Twinsted; Pebmarsh; and Broaks Wood, Halstead. Birds were also thought to have bred at Belchamp Water (one territory) and the Aubrey Buxton Res, Stansted Mountfichet (1-2 pairs). Other records during the breeding season (March to July) came from a further ten sites: Gt Henny; Loshes Meadow; Castle Hedingham, eight on 18th March; Gosfield Wood; Brookes Reserve; Terling; Mann Wood; Hatfield Forest.

Outside the breeding season, it was reported from 11 additional sites (ten in 2014). Only two records came from the south-west of the county: North Weald Common, 22nd November, Upminster, St. Lawrence Church, one on 24th September. Also observed at: The Naze, one on 5th and 7th August; Brundon to Rodbridge, February and December; Gt Loveney Hall, 19th September and 10th October; Wethersfield, one on 25th August; Shut Heath Wood, 16th February; Lyonshall Wood, 8th February; Westwood, Lt Sampford, 30th August; Gt Dunmow, 25th January; Birchanger Wood and Hall Fm, November/December.

Summary table of peak monthly counts since 2004.

Year	04	05	06	07	08	09	10	11	12	13	14	15
Pairs	17	29	21	17	11	2+	9+	1+	4+	5+	4+	5+
Sites	21	24	19	25+	32	24	24	18	28	21	18	26

BEARDED TIT *Panurus biarmicus*

Scarce winter visitor and passage migrant. Erratic breeding population.

Breeding records came from at least five sites: Old Hall (2+ pairs); Hanningfield Res (juveniles seen on 22nd May); Vange Marsh (three pairs, family group on 27th September); Wat Tyler CP (juveniles

on 30th May); Bowers Marsh (three males, juveniles on 11th August). Juveniles were also seen at W. Canvey Marsh on 3rd July, possibly hatched on the reserve but perhaps from Bowers Marsh. Breeding also seems likely at Rainham, where it occurred in 2014, as birds were recorded regularly here during the breeding season. Records during the breeding season also came from: Stanford Warren, present on 30th April; Osea Road, one on 16th May; Blue House Fm, two on 17th April and four on 11th June; Thameside N. R., Thurrock, four on 13th April and three on 9th July; Mardyke Valley, two juveniles on 2nd August.

Wintering records occurred from nine sites during the first winter (five in 2014) and just six sites during the second winter (12 in 2014). The only double-figure count during either winter period was at Hanningfield Res., 20 on 11th January.

Spring movement was noted from Brightlingsea, one on 8th March; North Dengie, two on 8th March; Marsh Fm, S. Woodham Ferrers, one on 23rd April. As usual, autumn movement was more widely observed. Early records included two at Blue House Fm on 22nd August and two at Bradwell BO on 30th August. Away from the regular sites, there were then records from two coastal sites in September and from six sites in October with the highest count being four at The Naze on 8th October.

WOODLARK *Lullula arborea* **EBSIP**

Uncommon passage migrant. Formerly bred.

Observers are reminded that notes on this species are still required by the ID Panel.
King George V Res., 17th March; Rainham, 2nd and 20th October.

SKYLARK *Alauda arvensis*

Common resident, passage migrant and winter visitor. Red Listed.

Despite the major contribution from one observer in the north of the county, records submitted this year were down, with a lack of information from several well-known sites. This is reflected in the lower number of recorded territories for 2015, with 582 reported from 47 sites (722 from 63 in 2014, 503 from 54 in 2013).

Locations reporting ten or more singing/territorial birds were as follows (2014 figures in brackets): Ashen Airfield, 14 (15); Gestingthorpe, 15 (14); Henny Street.

12 (16); Wormingford, 58 (60); Pleshey to Terling, Essex Way, 25; Abberton Res., 40 (32); Old Hall, 16 (12); Willingale to Pleshey, Essex Way, 20; High Ongar, Essex Way, 15; Blue House Fm, 75 (89); Bradwell BO, St. Lawrence to Howe Outfall, 69 (72); Orsett Fen, 21 (21); Wallasea Is, ten (11); Bowers Marsh, ten; Paglesham, 15 (15).

The largest flock reported in the first winter period was of 80 at Wormingford on 19th January; followed closely by 75 at Iltney Fm, Mundon on 4th February. Other flocks of 50 or more were: 50 at Walton Hall Marshes on 31st January, and 53 from St. Lawrence to Howe Outfall, Dengie on 8th February.

Skylark (ALAN SHEARMAN)

Autumn/second winter three-figure counts were recorded as follows:113 recorded moving north at Frinton-on-Sea on 18th October; 600+ arriving in off the sea at Bradwell BO in small groups on 25th November. Elsewhere flocks of 50 or more were noted as follows: 70 at Wormingford on 23rd September; 50 at Bradwell BO on 14th October, 25th October and 15th November; 71 south at Frinton-on-Sea on 20th October; 60 at Blue House Fm on 31st October; 55 at Rainham on 3rd November; 85 at Bradwell BO on 4th November; 50 at Gt Horkesley on 23rd November; 60 at Benfleet Creek on 26th November; 100 at Aimes Green, Epping Forest on 31st December.

Unfortunately, the Skylark is being under reported throughout the year and it would be helpful if observers could submit numbers when using Birdtrack, not just record as "present", and if possible to indicate whether birds are singing on territory.

SHORE LARK *Eremophila alpestris*

Scarce but annual visitor and passage migrant. Amber Listed.

Another poor year with just a single bird recorded.

Frinton-on-Sea	one	31st October	PBr

SAND MARTIN *Riparia riparia*

Locally common summer visitor and passage migrant. Amber listed.

This must be the worst year for breeding Sand Martins in the county and, if the records received are anything to go by, then it would suggest that the Sand Martin is close to extinction as a breeding bird in Essex. Hopefully it has been greatly under reported and, as with other species, it must be stressed that "present" in a submitted report during the breeding season, or any other time for that matter, does not confirm breeding or numbers present. There were only four sites reported where nest holes or colonies were being used but the number breeding was not established. These were: Bradwell GP, nr Coggeshall, 37 holes not all occupied, although a proper survey could not be carried out; Ardleigh Res, 30 birds with some using nest holes at GP; The Naze, 50+ birds around the colony; Brightlingsea GP, ten birds with a few pairs visiting holes.

The first birds of the spring were reported on 8th March with one at Redbridge Lakes, Buckhurst Hill, two at Alexandra Lake, Thurrock and three at Rainham. Six days went past without any more seen then low numbers, mostly single figures, were reported from around the county up to the end of March and into April. On 10th April 50 were reported from Vange Marsh and 30 on 16th April. On 19th April, there were 40 at KGV Res, and 30 at Walthamstow Marshes. Numbers remained unremarkable throughout the rest of April except for 70 at Vange Marsh on 25th, and 80 at Lockwood Res. on 26th. Numbers gradually increased into May and 50 or more were reported at: Vange Marsh, 100 on 4th; The Naze, 50 on 9th; Blue House Fm, 100 on 11th; Rainham, 200 on 13th; Colchester Hythe, 50 on 14th; Saffron Walden, 50 on 15th.

Also cause for concern was that there were only ten three-figure late summer/autumn counts reported with the highest being just 250 birds: Frinton-on-Sea, southbound movements of 177 on 19th July, 200 on 21st July, 150 on 15th August; Walthamstow Res, 150 on 26th July; Boreham, 135 south/southwest on 27th July; Hanningfield Res, 200 south on 27th July, 250 on 6th September; Abberton Res, 250 on 1st September, 100 on 5th September and 8th September. In addition, there were a further 11 double-figure reports of 50+.

The last reported birds of the year were four at Belhus Woods CP on 6th October.

SWALLOW *Hirundo rustica*

Common summer visitor and passage migrant. Amber Listed.

There were reports of 149 breeding pairs from 29 sites (214 from 35 in 2014). Any breeding site records should be submitted to the County Recorder. Reports of double-figure breeding numbers came from: Lamarsh and Bures, ten; Wormingford, ten (12 in 2014); Frowick Hall Fm, St. Osyth, 22 clutches from 10+ pairs (13 in 2014); Thorpe Cross, 17 clutches from 8-9 pairs (14 in 2014); Gunners Pk, Shoeburyness, 15.

The first of the year, a single, was reported from Abberton Res on 22nd March. The next was a single at KGV Res on 27th March. Then from 30th March single figures were reported from widespread locations daily until 6th April when double figures started to be reported with 15 at Chigborough Lakes, ten at Abberton Res and ten at Bowers Marsh. Mid April indicated the start of the main arrival with several three figure counts at: Blue House Fm, 100 on 17th April; Hanningfield Res, 100 on 19th April; Harold Wood SW, 120 on 26th April; Abberton Res, 100 on 27th April. May saw three-figure counts at: Creekmouth, 120 on 5th; Frinton-on-Sea, 143 south on 7th; Rainham Marsh, 150 on 13th; Hanningfield Res, 200 on 18th and 300 on 31st.

Autumn passage got under way in late July and August, when there were 19 three-figure counts from nine sites (31 from 17 in 2014). There were no four-figure counts during these months (four from three sites in 2014). It peaked in September with some heavy movement reported and four-figure counts were: Frinton-on-Sea, 1,869 south on 2nd, 1,391 south in three hours on 13th, 6,153 south in 6.5 hours on 20th; Woodham Fen, 1,200 west-northwest on 17th; Bradwell BO, an impressive 15,000 south in three hours on 17th Walthamstow Res, 3,000 on 18th; Wanstead Flats, 1,000 on 18th; Foulness Is; 1,000 south on 21st; E.Tilbury, 3,900 heading upriver on 17th. There were also counts of 500+ reported from: Abberton Res, 600 on 1st; Fingringhoe, 500 west on 18th; Frinton-on-Sea, 622 south in two hours on 1st, 660 south in two hours on 3rd, 518 south in two hours on 21st; Marsh Fm, South Woodham Ferrers, 516 on 2nd; W. Canvey Marsh, 800 on 5th; Rainham, 565 on 19th. There were a further 40 counts of 100+ from 24 sites. Three-figure counts for October were: Gunners Pk, Shoeburyness, 150 on 3rd; Frinton-on-Sea, 147 south in four hours on 18th, 254 south in four hours on 20th.

Late reports for November were: Frinton-on-Sea, all of birds moving south, one on 3rd, one on 10th, two on 11th, one on 16th, two on 21st; Heybridge GP, one on 12th; The Naze, two on 20th; Abberton Res; two on 24th and 25th, one on 26th, 27th and 29th. There were two remarkable records in December, possibly overwintering birds: Frinton-on-Sea, one on 8th, and the last of the year from The Naze of two on 17th.

HOUSE MARTIN *Delichon urbica*

Common summer visitor and passage migrant. Amber Listed.

Reports were received of 107 pairs from 18 sites (199 from 29 in 2014, 144 from 20 in 2013). It would appear that the House Martin has declined further in Essex or reporting has declined. Hopefully it is the latter as there were many reports of the bird being "present" and several of "nesting/activity". Observers are requested to submit all breeding records. There were just two reports of double-figure breeding sites: Lamarsh 20; Wormingford 20.

The first bird(s) of the year was a report from Rainham on 26th March as being "present". This is a perfect example where "present" in a submitted report is uninformative and the request goes out once again for observers to be a little more communicative with their records. The first confirmed report of the year was of a singleton at Little Warley Common on 2nd April. Spring passage during April and May was much improved on last year with many reports of double-figures reported county wide. Reports of 50+ in April were from: Gunners Pk, Shoeburyness, 90 on 26th; Harold Wood SW, 50 on 26th and 70 on 29th; Walthamstow Res, 50 on 26th. In May reports of 50+ were: Ingrebourne Valley, 50 on 1st; Russell Green GPs, near Chelmsford, 50 on 3rd; Abberton Res, 100 on 10th; Blue House Fm, 100 on 11th; Hanningfield Res, 50 on 18th and 100 on 31st.

Late summer congregations and autumn passage were both improved this year, with 46 counts of 100 birds or more. These included one exceeding 1,000 birds: Frinton-on-Sea, 1,190 south in two hours on 21st September. Also included were 14 of 300 or more: W. Bergholt, 300 on 7th August, 500 on 12th September; Gunners Pk, Shoeburyness, 300 on 31st August, 600 south west in 30 minutes on 3rd September, 400 on 7th September; Walthamstow Res, 385 on 4th September, 500 on 22nd September; Hanningfield Res, 400 on 6th September, 350 on 25th September; Rainham, 300 on 9th September, 500 on 22nd September, 300 on 23rd September; Frinton-on-Sea, 328 south in three hours on 13th September; Tilbury, 350 on 19th September.

There was just the one November record, and last of the year, of two birds at Rainham on 7th.

RED-RUMPED SWALLOW *Cecropis daurica* EBSIP (19, 6, 25)

Very rare passage migrant:

Gunners Pk, Shoeburyness	one	1st May	(MC *et al*)

Gunners Pk scores again! The last county records were of two singles in 2010, one of which was also at Gunners Pk, the other being at Chigborough Lakes.

EURASIAN BLACKCAP *Sylvia atricapilla*

Summer visitor and passage migrant. Small numbers winter.

Some 1,053 singing ♂♂/territories from some 246 sites were reported (996 from 231 in 2014), sites with ten or more as follows (2014 figures in brackets): Abberton Res., 18 (16); Fingringhoe Wick, 18 (16); Fingringhoe Ranges, 16 (15); Friday Wood, 29 (28); Heybridge GP, 24 (20): Creeksea, 11 (12); Hanningfield Res, 32 (28); Ingatestone, 20 (18); Doddinghurst, 24 (26); Langdon Plotlands, 36 (39); Crays Hall Fm, 19 (15); Belhus Woods CP , 28 (24); Ingrebourne Valley, 19 (17); Bedfords Pk, 20 (18); Mardyke Valley, 26 (21); Broaks Wood, 19 (17); Chalkney Woods, 16 (13); Chappel, 14 (11); Daws Hall, 28 (26); Bulmer, 24 (22).

There were 92 reports of some 46 individuals from 39 sites (39 individuals in 2014) in the period from January to the first week in March, with two or more reported from: Rainham, six, South Benfleet, three and Wickford, two.

Numbers of obvious migrants reported in spring were again high with double-figure counts in April coming from numerous well scattered locations.

In autumn, the highest double-figure inland counts were from Wanstead Flats with 12 on 17th August, ten on 14th September, 24 on 18th and still ten on 28th. Received counts at coastal watch-points were about average, the September maxima being: Bradwell, 18 on 25th; The Naze, 26 on 16th and 29 on 30th. October: The Naze, 12 on 13th.

In the last two months, there were 28 records of 26 individuals from 19 sites (33 individuals in 2014) with two reported from Colchester, Leyton and Ilford.

Blackcap, Rainham, February (ALAN SHEARMAN)

GARDEN WARBLER *Sylvia borin*

Declining summer resident and passage migrant.

Reports of some 101 singing ♂♂/territories were received from 67 sites (112 from 75 in 2014). Sites with three or more (2014 figures in brackets): Chalkney Woods, three (four); Gosfield Airfield, eight (13); Bower's Hall, three (three); Langley Wood, four (four); Pod's Wood, three (three); Fishers Green, eight (four); Netherhall GPs, three (three).

The earliest spring record was from Gunpowder Pk, Lee Valley, on 15th April, with the main arrival from 24th onwards.

In autumn, the highest count was from Wanstead Flats with three on 24th August, dropping to one on 10th September.

The last record was from Woodford Green on 28th September.

LESSER WHITETHROAT *Sylvia curruca*

Declining summer resident and passage migrant.

Reports of some 221 territories were received from 125 sites (221 from 125 in 2014). Sites with four or more (2014 figures in brackets): Wivenhoe, six (five); Fingringhoe Ranges, 16 (14); Old Hall Marshes, six (six); Foulness, seven (eight); Wat Tyler CP, six (five); Vange Marshes, six (seven); Mucking, four (four).

In spring, the first three records were all from Metropolitan Essex on 16th April, with the main arrival commencing on 19th April. Passage was fairly steady, although again no particularly high counts were recorded.

In autumn, the highest counts received were: August: Old Hall, 12 on 17th, The Naze, 18 on 26th and 14 on 30th, Rainham, four on 31st. In September, the highest numbers were: Old Hall, ten on 7th and six on 17th, The Naze, 24 on 7th, 12 on 18th and four on 29th, Gunners Pk, three on 10th, Wanstead Flats, six on 8th, eight on 14th and five on 19th. The last report was a bird at Frinton-on-Sea on 18th October.

Lesser Whitethroat (ALAN SHEARMAN)

COMMON WHITETHROAT *Sylvia communis*

Summer visitor and passage migrant.

Some 1,203 singing ♂♂/territories from 211 sites (1,294 from 218 in 2014) were reported. Sites with 15 or more singing males being (2014 figures in brackets): The Naze, 17 (18); Langenhoe/ Fingringhoe Ranges, 43(45); Braintree / Bocking, 22 (24); Old Hall, 17 (18); Heybridge GP, 19 (18); Foulness, 26 (100); Paglesham, 16 (18); W. Canvey Marsh, 24 (25); Belhus Woods CP, 14 (11); Fobbing Marsh, 15 (14); Rainham, 26 (22); Ingrebourne Valley, 28 (26); Bures, 22 (24); Bulmer / Belchamp, 26 (28); Henny St, 23 (20).

In spring, the first record was on 6th April from Barking with the main arrival commencing around 13th April. Passage was good and peaked around 23rd April to 7th May, with double-figure counts coming from numerous widely scattered sites.

Autumn passage was again high, as in recent years. The highest counts in August were at Old Hall, 22 on 25th; Wanstead Flats, 21 on 26th; Bradwell, 15 on 30th; The Naze, 32 on 29th. September: Old Hall, 24 on 9th; Rainham, 15 on 13th; Wanstead Flats, 15 on 15th. The last record was from Frinton-on-Sea on 17th October.

DARTFORD WARBLER *Sylvia undata*

EBSIP (46, 52, 98)

Scarce visitor.

Gunners Pk, Shoeburyness	Male	30th January to 11th February		SOG
The Naze	One	27th September		KK, KM
Holland Haven / Frinton	Juvenile	10th October	(ringed)	SC
Frinton-on-Sea		17th October		PBr
Rainham	One	27th October – 31st December		RSPB
East Tilbury	First winter	31st October		PW
East Tilbury	Male	20th and 28th December		

A superb year after becoming very scarce in recent years.

COMMON GRASSHOPPER WARBLER *Locustella naevia*

Uncommon summer resident and passage migrant. Essex Red List Species.

Only five reeling ♂♂ were considered to have established territories and were reported from a mere four sites (15 from ten in 2014), although several more were reported singing on spring passage. Counts of two or more as follows (2014 figures in brackets): ; Rainham Marshes, two (five).

The earliest report was from Rainham on 13th April.

There were six autumn records, the last at Rainham on 13th September.

In total, just 52 records were received covering some 17 sites (99 from 33 in 2014).

SEDGE WARBLER *Acrocephalus schoenobaenus*

Common summer resident and passage migrant.

Some 271 territories from 73 sites (294 from 78 in 2014) were reported, localities with six or more singing ♂♂ were as follows (2014 figures in brackets): Judas Gap, 20 (22); Langenhoe/Fingringhoe Ranges, 21 (23); Old Hall, 14 (16); Heybridge GP, 17 (18); Bradwell BO, 20 (19); Blue House Fm, 35 (37); Rainham, 41 (43); Fishers Green, six (seven); Netherhall GPs, six (five).

The earliest report was from Rainham on 6th April, with the main arrival from 12th April.

The last reported bird was at Rainham on 4th October.

EURASIAN REED WARBLER *Acrocephalus scirpaceus*

Locally common summer resident and passage migrant.

Some 653 singing ♂♂/territories were reported from some 118 sites (725 from 125 in 2014), with ten or more (2014 figures in brackets) from: Judas Gap, 15 (19); Hamford Water, 16 (18); Langenhoe/Fingringhoe Ranges, 32 (36); Heybridge GP, 30 (34); Old Hall, 31 (38); Mundon, 11 (12; Bradwell BO, 19 (16); Blue House Fm, 51 (60); Stow Marsh, 13 (15); Paglesham, 15 (14); W. Canvey Marshes, 19 (16); Vange Marshes, 26 (28); Stanford Warren, 11 (12); Rainham, 56 (146).

The first report in spring was of one at Rainham, on 10th April, with the main arrival from 20th April.

In autumn, there were several large counts as follows: Bradwell, 11 on 28th August; Old Hall, 19 on 16th August declining to eight on 12th September; Rainham, 27 on 28th July reducing to 15 on 8th September. The last record was of one trapped and ringed at Holland Haven on the late date of 8th November.

CETTI'S WARBLER *Cettia cetti*

Locally common and increasing breeding resident.

This species continues to maintain its presence with some 262 singing ♂♂/apparently occupied territories reported from 86 sites (237 from 77 in 2014). Records were mainly from the coast, Lee and Ingrebourne valleys, with the Thames marshes being a particular stronghold.

Counts of four or more (2014 figures in brackets): Old Hall, 13, (11); Heybridge GP, eight (six); Canvey Marshes, 11 (nine); Wat Tyler CP, six (seven); Vange Marsh, ten (eight); Two Tree Is., five (five); Bowers Marsh, seven (six); Fobbing Marsh, 12 (ten); Rainham, 33 (27); Ingrebourne Valley, 62 (55); Belhus Woods, five (four); Fishers Green, nine (ten); Netherhall GP, five (five).

A total of 1,086 records was received covering some 97 sites (994 from 83 in 2014).

LONG-TAILED TIT *Aegithalos caudatus rosaceus*

Common resident.

Reports of territorial pairs or evidence of confirmed breeding came from 31 sites (51 in 2014) but it was common and widespread throughout the county during the summer months. The only site that reported more than 1-2 pairs was Langdon Hills NR, with four.

Counts of 30+ were recorded from 12 sites: Bedfords Pk, 40 on 7th January and 33 on 7th February; Belhus Woods, 38 on 24th May and 38 on 10th November; Chafford Gorges, 46 on 23rd May and 30-40 between July and December; Mardyke Valley, Stifford to Davy Down, 42 on 22nd May and

again on 14th August; up to 35 in October-December; Halstead, 34 on 24th July; The Naze, 40 on 15th July and 30 on 27th August; W. Canvey Marshes, 40 on 5th September; Terling, 30 on 1st October; Hanningfield Res., 30 on 4th October; Leyton, 30 on 12th October; S. Woodham Ferrers, 50 on 25th October; Frinton-on-Sea, 38 on 27th October.

PALLAS'S WARBLER *Phylloscopus proregulus* EBSIP (39, 10, 49)

Rare passage migrant.

Fingringhoe Ranges	4th October	one	RPH
Frinton-on-Sea	18th October	one	PBr
Frinton-on-Sea	27th October	one	PBr

YELLOW-BROWED WARBLER *Phylloscopus inornatus* EBSIP

Scarce passage migrant.

Wigboro Wick	27th September	One	CA
The Naze	27th September	One	GM
Holland Haven	27th September	One	PBr
The Naze	28th September	Two	MFP
Colne Pt	28th September-1st October	One	CB
The Naze	30th September	One	mo
Frinton-on-Sea	1st October	One	PBr
Woodford Green	1st October	One	LNHS
Frinton-on-Sea	3rd October	One	PBr
Frinton-on-Sea	19th-20th October	One	PBr

Numbers of individuals for the last eleven years are as follows:

Year	2015	2014	2013	2012	2011	2010	2009	2008	2007	2006	2005
Total	8-10	5+	6	3	3	2	1	6	8	3	9

Three further records were unsupported by descriptions.

WOOD WARBLER *Phylloscopus sibilatrix*

Ucommon passage migrant; no longer breeds.

Wanstead	25th-26th April	One
Lingwood Common	25th April	One
The Backwarden, Danbury	2nd May	One
Whitehouse Plain, Epping	25th August	One
Wanstead	30th August	One

An average year by recent standards.

CHIFFCHAFF *Phylloscopus collybita*

Abundant summer resident and passage migrant. Uncommon winter visitor.

Double-figure counts of singing males or pairs came from (2014 figures in brackets): Wormingford, 13; Broaks Wood, Gosfield, 12 (ten); Fordham 16 (11); Abberton Res., 14; Fingringhoe Wick, 30 (12); Norsey Wood, 15; Belhus Woods, 28 (22); Mardyke Valley, 20 (17). Other double-figure counts did not specify how many were singing males.

Spring passage was disappointing, with no indication of marked migration in coastal areas.

During January and February birds were reported from 37 sites (34 in 2014), all 1-2 except for up to six at Harold Wood SW, five at Beckton SW, four at Rainham, the same number at Waterworks NR, LV., and three at Lockwood Res., LV.

Autumn double-figure counts were noted from August through to mid-October with 20 or more seen as follows: August: Wanstead Pk, 30 on 20th. September: Dagnam Pk, 20 on 1st; Wanstead, a peak of 40 on 8th; Walthamstow Marsh, 43 on 13th; Olympic Pk, 20 on 13th; Frinton-on-Sea, 29 on 19th; Bradwell BO, 25 on 13th, 60 on 20th and 35 on 23rd; Foulness, 30 on 21st; Deal Hall, Dengie, 25 on 25th; October: Rainham, 28 on 2nd; The Naze, 20 on 3rd, 23 on 5th, and 20 on 20th; Gunners Pk, 27 on 3rd and 20 on 19th; Olympic Pk, 24 on 4th; Bradwell BO, 20 on both 4th and 8th; Frinton-on-Sea, 20 on 17th and 24 on 18th;

In November and December it was reported from 52 sites (43 in 2014), all records involving 1-4 birds apart from five at Waterworks NR on 5th November and six at Seventy Acres Lake on 20th December.

Siberian Chiffchaff *Phylloscopus collybita tristis*

Vagrant.

Hanningfield Res.,	one	February 9th and 21st	DA, RF

Four further records were unaccompanied by descriptions.

WILLOW WARBLER *Phylloscopus trochilus*

Common but declining summer resident and passage migrant.

Between late April-June, around 99 pairs/singing ♂♂ were reported from 63 sites (96 from 46 sites in 2014) supporting potential breeding habitat. Counts of four of more came from: Abberton Res., five; Fordham, four; Gosfield Airfield, five; Boreham, four; Writtle, four; Broadfields Fm, Cranham, four.

The first spring record was from Saffron Walden on 29th March, with the main spring arrival in the county from 3rd April onwards. Passage was very light with no more than eight birds at any one site.

Autumn passage peaked as usual in late August. All double-figure counts are listed: August: The Naze, 70 on 27th and 19 on 29th; Frinton-on-Sea, 22 on 15th, ten on 25th, and 39 on 27th; Deal Hall, Dengie, 30 on 25th and ten on 29th; Langdon Hills, 30 on 25th; Coombe Wood, 15 on 19th; Havering atte Bower, ten on 30th; Mardyke Valley, 15 on 25th; September: Ingrebourne Valley, 20 on 1st; The Naze, 21 on 1st; Bradwell BO, 12 on 2nd.

The last of the year was one at Frinton-on-Sea on 17th October.

WAXWING *Bombycilla garrulus*

An almost annual winter visitor and passage migrant in variable number.

No records in 2015 – the first "blank" year for the species in the County since 1995.

NUTHATCH *Sitta europaea*

Sedentary resident, currently stable.

Some 36 pairs/territories were reported from 14 sites (42 from 27 in 2014). Unfortunately, the site at Stansted Mountfitchet that boosted the 2014 totals by 11 territories was not recorded in 2015. The species was present during April to July at a further six sites. Eight counts of multiple pairs/territories were received: Writtle Forest, five territories; Dagnam Pk, Harold Hill, and Broaks Wood, Gosfield, three territories; Pebmarsh, Warley Place NR and Langdon Hills NR, two territories.

Outside the breeding season, sightings occurred at 49 other sites.

Nuthatch (RESTON KILGOUR)

TREECREEPER *Certhia familiaris*

Common resident.

Twenty-five pairs/singing ♂♂ were reported from 16 sites. There were no breeding records received but family groups were seen in June and July at four sites and juvenile birds at a further two sites. There were four pairs at Dagnam Pk, Harold Hill and Writtle Forest; otherwise all reports were of 1-2 pairs. Breeding is almost certainly under-recorded for this unobtrusive species, which was seen at a further 60 localities between April and July, and at 56 more sites during the rest of the year.

The highest counts received came from: Hylands Pk, Chelmsford, ten on 4th January and Writtle Forest, eight on 26th January.

WREN *Troglodytes troglodytes*

Abundant and widespread resident.

The current UK population of this small but delightful bird continues to show an increase. There is good evidence that mortality rates are severely affected by cold, winter weather thus a warming climate may have benefited this species, although there is only circumstantial evidence for this.

BBS field work continues to indicate a rise in the population in the county, the mean count per 1km square having risen to 7.7 in 2015 from 6.5 in 2014.

Singing ♂♂ were reported from 11 sites with the highest counts at Mardyke Valley, 32 on 22nd May; Copperas Wood, 27 on 7th April; Belhus Woods CP, 24 on 10th April. Nest building was observed from the hide at Thurrock Thameside Nature Park and at Langford, and breeding was confirmed at Hanningfield Res. where adult birds with young were seen.

STARLING *Sturnus vulgaris*

Abundant but declining resident, passage migrant and winter visitor. Red List species.

The abundance of breeding Starlings in the UK has fallen rapidly, particularly since the early 1980s and continues to be strongly downward. There is good evidence that changes in first-year overwinter survival rates best account for observed population change. Although the ecological drivers of Starling decline are poorly understood, changes in the management of pastoral farmland are thought to be largely responsible.

No breeding counts were received but breeding was confirmed at Walthamstow Reservoirs on 13th May were a pair were seen feeding young in the nest. Many nesting pairs were noted around Hythe Quay in Maldon, the sound of the noisy birds making the recorder quite nostalgic. There were two post-breeding counts of 1,000+: Bradwell BO, 1,200 on 15th July; Wivenhoe, 1,000 on 16th July.

Notable first-winter flocks: Blue House Fm, 1,145 on 5th January, Rainham, 1,500 on 7th January; Stow Creek, North Fambridge, 1,000 on 27th February; Frinton-on-Sea, northbound movements of 1,047 on 19th and 1,012 on 21st March.

The highest counts in the autumn were from Bradwell BO, 5,000 on 14th October and Tollesbury Wick NR, 3,000 on 12th October. Monthly totals of 2,839 and 1,079 were noted in October and November respectively from Frinton-on-Sea, with a peak of 1,895 on 25th October.

During the second winter only Rainham reported four-figure counts, with the highest being 2,500 on 9th December.

ROSE-COLOURED STARLING *Pastor roseus* **EBSIP (16, 2, 18)**

Rare vagrant.

East Mersea	5th October-2nd November	juvenile	RA, SBe, CJM-G, PT, NCh, EH

The first for the county since 2011 when an immature was seen in West Bergholt on 15th -29th November.

RING OUZEL *Turdus torquatus*

Passage migrant.

Records during spring migration were received from 25 localities (18 in 2014, 16 in 2013) and involved 42 birds (24 in 2014, 18 in 2013). The earliest arrival was one at Dagenham Chase, on 9th April; the latest spring record was an individual at KGV Res., on 4th May. As with last year, the majority of records were of 1-2, however there were four present at Wanstead on 13th April and the same number at Wrabness on 17th-19th April, with three on 20th.

Autumn passage was much lighter than last year, records coming in from 17 sites (29 in 2014, 16 in 2013). Sightings involved 26 individuals (85 in 2014, 65 in 2013). All records were of 1-2 birds apart from three at Gunners Pk on 17th October and three at Wigboro Wick, St Osyth, also on 17th October, with four there and three on Foulness the next day. The first sighting of the autumn was a single at Rainham on 2nd October with the last record another single at Wigboro Wick on 25th October.

BLACKBIRD *Turdus merula*

Abundant resident, passage migrant and winter visitor.

A detailed breeding bird survey by the WREN Group in the Wanstead area revealed a total of 100 territories, which was felt to be an underestimate. It included 51 in Wanstead Pk, 40 on Wanstead Flats and nine at Gilbert's Slade. Other sites reporting double-figure counts of singing males/territorial males/pairs in the breeding season were as follows:- Mardyke Valley, Stifford/Aveley,17; Belhus Woods, ten; Orsett Fen, 13; Foulness, 15.

In the first winter the highest counts all came from Foulness, with 169 on 18th January, 83 on 8th February and 42 on 8th March. The only other reports of 30+ came from (in January) Walthamstow Reservoirs, 35 on 1st; Chafford Gorges, 30 on 15th; Blue House Fm, 33 on 22nd; and (in February) Writtle Park Fm, 35 on 11th.

There were no reports indicative of spring passage.

Autumn passage included an impressive peak of 892 moving south at Frinton-on-Sea in three hours of evening passage (after dark) on 26th October. Other October counts from this site of birds moving south included 98 in four hours on 16th and 129 in six hours on 21st, with a total for the month of 1,240. Elsewhere a series of counts from The Naze peaked in October at 37 on 6th and in November at 43 on 22nd while at Foulness there were 60 on 18th October and 34 of 15th November. At Frinton-on-Sea the number counted passing in November was 279. The only other reports of 30+ at this season came from Wivenhoe, 34 on 27th November; E. Mersea, 30 on 15th October, and Terling, 30 on 22nd November.

The only December count of more than 30 came from Foulness, 147 on 13th.

FIELDFARE *Turdus pilaris*

Common winter visitor and passage migrant. Has summered.

During the first winter period three-figure flocks were reported from 40 sites (23 in 2014, 65 in 2013). The largest was of 700 between Maldon and Hazeleigh on 7th February, while there were 250 south-west of Maldon the same day and 300 nearby at Mundon on 24th January. The only other record of 250+ came from Bulmer, where there were up to 260 in January (with 210 still present on 7th February). In addition, there were counts of 200+ at eight further sites, four of which are in the north-west of the County: January: Handley Barns (nr. Ingatestone), 200 on 17th; Tillingham, 200 on 15th (and also on 16th February); Wycke Hill (nr. Woodham Mortimer), 200 on 24th; Cobler's Green (nr Felsted), 200 on 3rd; Boblow Hill (nr Helions Bumpstead), 200 on 8th. February: Helions Bumpstead, 200 (perhaps the Boblow Hill flock) on 20th; Hadstock, 200 on 8th. April: a late flock of 210 at Gt Becketts, near Arkesden, on 4th.

The last bird in the spring was at The Hythe on 25th April.

The first record of the autumn was of three at Rainham on 3rd October. The next record in October was of 48 at Copt Hall, Lt Wigborough, closely followed by 354 counted moving south in two hours

over Frinton-on-Sea on 12th and 180 (including 100 moving west) at Colne Pt the same day. Then on 16th 213 went south at Frinton-om-Sea and the next day there were 200 at Wigboro Wick Fm, St Osyth, 107 at Leigh-on-Sea and 300 over Wanstead Flats. Flocks of 100 at Mistley and 110 at Wivenhoe, both on 20th, were no doubt part of the same arrival. The total counted passing Frinton-on-Sea in October was 589.

There were ten three-figure flocks in November, the largest being of 270 at Grays on 22nd, 200 at Terling on 14th, 196 in the Mardyke Valley (Stifford/Aveley) on 16th and 190 at Elmden on 20th. In December three-figure counts came from 12 sites, easily the largest being of 400 at Foulness on 19th. Flocks of 200 were seen at Terling on 17th and Canvey Wick on 16th, with no other count of more than 160.

SONG THRUSH *Turdus philomelos*

Common resident, passage migrant and winter visitor. Red List species.

The total of possible, probable and confirmed breeders (using BTO criteria) was at least 311 at 166 sites. The former figure is very much a minimum, as well over half the total comes from BirdTrack, which does not require contributors, if giving a total number of birds seen, to indicate for how many of these some evidence of breeding was established. Where no further information is given, it has therefore been necessary to assume that every BirdTrack report which gave a breeding code involved just one singing male/territorial male/pair, regardless of the number of birds reported. In reality, no doubt, many counts will have involved several singing males or pairs, so the actual total will have been higher. However, as with many other common species, these totals are primarily a reflection of observer effort and bear no relation to the actual breeding numbers in the county. They are included here only because this is a Red List species.

Where breeding records have been sent direct to the Recorder, observers have in many cases given more detailed information. These submissions (along with other sources) show that double-figure counts of breeders were found at: Wansted Pk, 27; Wanstead Flats, 13; Roding Valley Meadows NR, ten; Belhus Woods NR, ten and the Mardyke Valley (Stifford/Aveley), 12. At Wanstead the counts are of territories (thanks to a detailed survey by the WREN Group) and at the other sites mainly of singing males.

In the first winter, double-figure counts came from seven sites, the highest being of 21 at Rainham on 20th January.

Autumn passage included an impressive count from Frinton-on-Sea of 480 flying south in three hours during the heavy thrush passage on the evening of 26th October. This was much the largest movement of the autumn at that site (next highest count, 33 on 17th October; total for the month, 603) and was not picked up elsewhere. Double-figure October counts came from a further seven sites, the highest being of 24 at Wigboro Wick Fm, St Osyth, on 16th October. In November and December there were no reports of more than a dozen birds at any site.

REDWING *Turdus iliacus*

Common winter visitor and passage migrant.

Leaving aside a significant return movement (see below), the species was widespread in the first winter but generally in small numbers, with three-figure flocks being found at only three sites in that period (12 in 2014 and 2013). Much the largest flock was of 200 at Church Broom Wood, Lt Leighs, on 10th February, while there were 100 at Bedfords Pk during January and 102 at Writtle Forest on 26th January.

The return movement mentioned above was primarily recorded at Frinton-on-Sea, where in late March 116 flew north in two hours on 23rd and 354 in 0.75 hours the next day, when there was also a count from Wivenhoe of 150 moving north-west in three groups.

The last bird of the spring was at Holland Haven on 18th April and the first of the autumn at KGV Res. on 20th September.

In October there was nothing to match the movements noted in 2013 and 2014 but there was still a fairly concentrated passage in mid/late month. This began with 236 over Frinton-on-Sea and 100

at Woodford Green on 12th, then two days later (14th) 250 were counted at Alresford and 211 at Leigh-on-Sea, all moving west, while there were 127 at Rainham, 120+ over Wanstead Pk and 385 over Leyton Flats. On 16th a further 253 flew over Frinton-on-Sea and the next day there were 150 at Terling, 100 at Heybridge GP, 200 at Dagnam Pk, Harold Hill, and 500 over Wanstead Flats. A further 300 flew over the latter site on 19th, after which there was a lull until 26th when the highest number of the autumn, 1,173, flew over Frinton-on-Sea in three hours during the nocturnal thrush movement noted above (for Blackbird and Song Thrush), and 100 Redwing were counted flying over Boreham in 90 minutes mid-evening. The next day there were 200 at Connaught Water.

November was, as usual, quieter for this species, the only three-figure count being of 108 flying south over Frinton-on-Sea in 6.25 hours on 21st (out of a month total for that site of 121, compared to 1,925 in October). The next highest count was of 82 in the Mardyke Valley on 16th. In December the species was, as at the start of the year, widespread in small numbers but with two notable concentrations in the south of the County where, at Orsett Fen, a flock peaked at 186 on 15th, while at Roding Valley NR numbers increased from 108 on 13th to 686 on 19th.

MISTLE THRUSH *Turdus viscivorus*

Locally common resident and partial migrant. Red List species.

The total of possible, probable and confirmed breeders (using BTO criteria) was at least 100 at 79 sites. As with Song Thrush, the majority of these breeding records have been drawn from BirdTrack submissions. The comments made in relation to BirdTrack records under that species are also applicable here, though in the case of Mistle Thrush most of the BirdTrack records were of 1-2 birds, so the degree of understating is probably lower. This species was moved from the Amber List to the Red List by Birds of Conservation Concern 4 (see Eaton *et al*. in *British Birds* 108 at p.708ff). As with Song Thrush, the number of breeders reported here will bear little relation to the actual population in the county of this widespread species.

This species was, like Song Thrush, the subject of a breeding survey by the WREN Group at Wanstead. This identified in the area covered a total of nine territories: Wanstead Flats, four; Wanstead Pk, three: Gilbert's Slade, two. The only other sites reporting more than two potential breeders (in these cases, singing males) were Mundon and Weald CP, at each of which there were three.

No post-breeding flocks were found of more than 15 birds. Flocks of 15 were found at White Roding on 6th August and the Olympic Pk, Stratford, on 12th September. The next highest figures came from Tillingham, 14 on 5th September and Walthamstow Marsh, 13 on 31st August, no other flock being of more than a dozen.

SPOTTED FLYCATCHER *Muscicapa striata*

Declining summer resident and passage migrant. Red list species.

Five pairs were proved to have bred (six in 2014, 14 in 2013), with single pairs at Sturmer, Gt Braxted, Felstead, Writtle and Henny Street. Birds were recorded at 22 further sites (17 in 2014, 14 in 2013) in the breeding season, with singing males or pairs showing nesting or feeding behaviour from 15 sites and single birds at a further seven sites. The only record of two pairs was from Morris Green near Sible Hedingham on 9th June. Most of the reports relating to breeding birds involved large gardens, churchyards, woodland or parkland.

Spring passage was difficult to detect inland, with singles at Bow Creek Ecology Pk (the first bird of the spring) on 21st April, Wanstead Flats on 26th April and Walthamstow Reservoirs on 4th May being the only records inland away from likely breeding spots in the spring. Passage on the coast was also very light with, in May, singles at Holland Haven on 5th and Foulness on 9th and two at Frinton-on-Sea on 22nd, plus a very late bird (for spring) at the latter locality on 21st June.

In autumn, passage lasted from early August to early October but with a marked peak in the last week of August and the first week of September. Reports in August came from 39 sites (excluding for this purpose sites holding confirmed or probable breeders) and were mainly of 1-4 birds. Higher numbers were seen at Wanstead Flats, where regular counts peaked at eight on 28th, Weald CP, with a peak of six on 29th, and Dagnam Pk, where there was a maximum of five on 29th. In September

Spotted Flycatcher (ALAN SHEARMAN)

numbers at Wanstead Flats reached 13 on 2nd but otherwise the only counts of more than three birds came from Boyles Court, Gt Warley, where there was a maximum of six on 1st-2nd, and Rainham, where 1-2 were present on many dates in the first three weeks of the month with a peak of four on 18th. Otherwise reports of 1-3 came in that month from a further 33 sites. The last sighting of the year was at W. Thurrock on 1st October.

ROBIN *Erithacus rubecula*

Abundant and widespread resident and passage migrant.

The only counts of 20+ during the early part of the year concerned (site maximum in each case) 20 at Orsett Fen on 10th February, 28 at Chafford Gorges on 2nd January, 26 at Langdon Plotlands on 11th February and 21 at Belhus Woods CP on 15th February.

A breeding bird survey carried out by the WREN Group in the Wanstead area identified 207 territories, of which 145 were in Wanstead Pk, 44 on Wanstead Flats and 18 at Gilbert's Slade. Otherwise, double-figure counts of singing ♂♂ on territory came from just four sites (site maximum in each case): Grays Gorges, 12; Mardyke Valley, 20; Belhus Woods, 32 and Orsett Fen, 18. However a number of double-figure counts recorded on BirdTrack in the breeding season probably referred largely to singing ♂♂ but this could not be confirmed from the information given.

Autumn migration was again evident along the coast during September and October. Peak counts at The Naze were, in September, 34 on 17th, and 28 on 18th, and, in October, 25 on 6th, 35 on 16th and 48 on 17th. At Frinton-on-Sea all the highest counts came in October: 34 on 10th, 54 on 16th, 47 on 17th, 30 on 18th and 25 on both 19th and 27th. Other double-figure coastal counts, again in October, were of 20 at Bradwell BO and 38 at Foulness, both on 18th, and 27 at S. Woodham Ferrers on 11th.

There were also several high inland counts suggestive of either a good breeding season or an influx of continental birds (site maxima in each case and all in October unless stated): Olympic Pk, 21 on 4th; Chafford Gorges, 33 on 14th September and 45 on 1st; Mardyke Valley, 24 on 11th September and 29 on 22nd; Orsett Fen, 29 on 2nd; Belhus Woods, 22 on 6th; Langdon Plotlands 24 on 21st. The same inland sites produced the highest counts of the closing months, the highest being 32 at Chafford Gorges NR on 1st November and 28 at Belhus Woods on 18th December.

NIGHTINGALE *Luscinia megarhynchos*

Summer resident and passage migrant.

The first record of the year came from Fingringhoe Wick on 6th April.

In total, 175 singing ♂♂ were reported from 52 sites (148 at 54 in 2014). The annual systematic survey at Friday Wood in the Roman River Valley produced 32 singing ♂♂, while other high counts came from Fingringhoe Wick, 30, and Abberton Res., nine, while there were seven each at Twinstead, Danbury Common, Foulness and Fishers Green Is., LV.

There were no autumn records. The last report was of a late singing bird at Wrabness on 6th July.

PIED FLYCATCHER *Ficedula hypoleuca*

Rare spring but fairly common autumn passage migrant.

There were no spring records.

Autumn passage started on 11th August (Wanstead Flats) and finished on 22nd September (Vange). With a minimum of 41 birds at 19 sites (28 at 17 in 2014, 23-25 at 16 in 2013), numbers were at their highest since 2004, when there were 74. The stronghold was Wanstead Flats, where birds were seen on at least 12 dates between 11th August and 13th September. The majority at that site were singles but there were two between 28th August and 2nd September, with three on 30th August. Otherwise the most productive site was Gunners Pk, with singles on four dates and two on 1st September. At The Naze there were singles on 23rd August and 17th September and three on 11th September, while nearby at Frinton-on-Sea there were, all in August, two on 15th and singles on 23rd and 29th. The only other sites to report more than singles were Foulness, two on 16th August, and Langdon Hills, two on 25th August.

BLACK REDSTART *Phoenicurus ochruros*

Small breeding and wintering population. Passage migrant in small numbers.

In the first winter period there was only one record, a female or immature near Mundon on 24th and 25th January.

Reports of birds likely to have been on spring passage (as distinct from breeders) were received from eight sites (six in 2014, 23 in 2013). Frinton-on-Sea produced both the first (on 9th March) and the last (a late bird on 14th-15th June). Otherwise the only site with more than one individual was Colne Pt, where there were singles on 22nd-23rd March, 5th April and (again late) 9th June. The other records came from, in March, Gunners Pk on 12th, Abberton Res. on 22nd-24th, St Osyth Beach on 25th and Howlands Marsh on 28th, while there was one at Brightlingsea on 3rd April.

Reports of singing ♂♂ all came from the Metropolitan area, led by Stratford Olympic Pk where two were found on 29th May, one still present on 31st May, and one was seen alarm calling on 4th September , when at least one other bird was present (one bird also being seen on 12th September). Other singing ♂♂, both singles, were at Mill Meads on 2nd May and Hackney Wick on 16th May, and there was a bird at Barking Creekmouth on 1st May which was also in potential breeding habitat.

Autumn reports of probable migrants came from 15 sites (14 in 2014, eight in 2013). The highest counts, both of three birds and both in

Black Redstart (SEAN NIXON)

October, came from The Naze on 28th and Havengore Is. (Foulness) on 31st. All other autumn sightings involved single birds apart from two at Gunners Pk on 28th October. All were on the coast (including for this purpose the inner Thames) apart from October singles at Boreham on 29th, Roding Valley NR on 31st and KGV Res. on 26th.

In the second-winter period singles were at Colchester (Irvine Road) on 15th November, Belhus Woods on 7th December, Rainham on 23rd November and Banbury Res. on 24th November, while there were two at Stratford Olympic Pk on 8th November.

REDSTART *Phoenicurus phoenicurus*

Regular passage migrant in small numbers. Formerly bred.

The first spring migrant was seen at Beckton on 6th April. Subsequently, reports were received of 13 birds from a further 12 sites (nine sites in total in 2014) between 8th and 30th April, all referring to single birds.

Autumn migration began with one at Frinton-on-Sea on 15th August. Passage was up on the previous year, with a minimum total of about 89 birds at 36 sites (63 at 29 in 2014). The well-watched Wanstead Flats enjoyed a particularly strong run, with birds seen on at least 26 days between 17th August and 20th September. In August, numbers there built from an arrival of five on 25th to a peak of ten on 30th, with a second "fall" on 12th-13th September, peaking at six on the latter date. The only other site reporting more than 1-3 birds was Alresford, where there were four on 29th August.

The last bird of the year appeared at Two Tree Is. on the very late date of 8th November, staying for six days to 13th. It was considered to show characteristics of one of the eastern races.

WHINCHAT *Saxicola rubetra*

Regular passage migrant. Has bred.

The first spring records were of singles in mid-April at Rainham on 14th, Bradwell BO on 15th and Wanstead Flats on 16th. Passage was at a very similar level to that in 2014, with 29 birds from 17 locations (27 from 17 in 2014, 39 from 14 in 2013). All were singles apart from two at Rainham on 19th April and 3rd May, two at Wanstead Flats on 26th April, two at North Weald GC on 1st May and three in the Ingrebourne Valley on 28th April. The last spring sighting was of one at Wanstead Pk on 16th May.

There was again an intriguing mid-summer record, of one at Walthamstow Res. on 17th July.

The earliest autumn bird was a single between South House Fm and Northey Is. on 2nd August. Passage peaked in the last week of August, a week earlier than in 2014, and was back to the rather lower levels of 2013. Passage during the main period is estimated and summarised in the table below. In compiling the table, it has been assumed that, for any given site in any given week, the total number of birds occurring was equal to the highest number counted on any one day unless there was evidence to indicate that birds had moved on and been replaced by others.

	Aug				Sep				Oct		
Week commencing	6th	13th	20th	27th	3rd	10th	17th	24th	1st	8th	15th
Numbers	12	36	55	115	59	80	45	15	1	3	1
Locations	6	15	13	30	20	23	18	9	1	2	1

Counts of seven or more in autumn were as follows: August: Rainham, ten on 19th and 20th; Deal Hall (Dengie) 15 on 25th; Wanstead Flats, eight on 30th rising to 12 the next day; Alresford, ten on 27th rising to 14 the next day, with ten still on 29th; Holland Haven, eight on 27th; Old Hall, eight on 29th; Goldhanger, eight on 30th. September: Wanstead Flats, 11 still present on 1st and eight the next day, then a reduction before numbers built again to eight on 13th; Holland Haven, eight on 2nd; Walthamstow Marsh, 11 on 3rd; Rainham, eight on 12th and 13 on 13th.

The last bird of the year was at KGV Res. on 31st October.

STONECHAT *Saxicola rubicola*

Small breeding population. Regular passage migrant and winter visitor.

Four pairs bred at E. Tilbury, raising at least two broods, while one pair almost certainly did so at Bowers Marsh, where a juvenile was seen in late May. At Two Tree Is., a pair was seen on 4th April, the male remaining until 24th, while a single bird was seen at The Hythe on 18th April.

Stonechat (ALAN SHEARMAN)

Year	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Pairs/Territories	26	12	9	6	6	2	3	5	5	5
Locations	12	7	6	6	5	2	2	3	5	2

In the first winter period numbers were much higher than in 2014, perhaps reflecting the exceptionally mild conditions during the early part of the winter, but were considerably lower than in 2014 during the second winter period.

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Numbers	90	113	30	9	20	71	127	82	70
Locations	39	40	18	6	8	26	49	27	31

The highest counts in the autumn were as follows: August: E. Tilbury, five on 6th. September: E. Tilbury, 15 on 23rd. October: Holland Haven, five on 22nd; Colne Pt. seven on 19th; Old Hall, six on 20th; Bradwell BO, ten on 28th; Foulness, 11 on 18th; Gunners Pk, six on 10th; E. Tilbury, six on 31st; Rainham, 14 on 18th.

The highest counts of the first winter period were: Abberton Res., five on 15th February; Bradwell BO, six on 8th February; Gunners Pk, six on 3rd January and ten on 18th February; Wallasea Is., five on 21st February; Rainham, 11 on 20th January and 12 on 6th February. In contrast to 2014 there were no particularly high counts in the second winter period; due perhaps to a poor breeding season: November: Colne Pt, five on 25th; Old Hall, five on 26th; Benfleet Creek, six on 26th; E. Tilbury, six on 8th; Rainham, nine on 3rd. December: Bradwell BO, five on 13th; Bowers Marsh, six on 3rd; Foulness, 19 on 7th; Rainham, 12 on 28th.

WHEATEAR *Oenanthe oenanthe*

Common passage migrant. Occasionally breeds.

The earliest spring migrant was a single bird at White Roding on 6th March. Spring passage can best be tabulated as follows:

	Mar			Apr				May			
Week commencing	15th	22nd	29th	5th	12th	19th	26th	3rd	10th	17th	24th
Numbers	7	6	5	15	62	66	64	25	13	6	2
Locations	4	6	4	11	24	28	23	14	11	5	1

Double-figure counts came from: Rainham, 18 on 23rd April: Southminster, ten on 30th April. The last of the spring was at Old Hall on 14th June.

There were no records indicative of breeding or over-summering. Autumn migration commenced with a single bird at Bradwell BO on 1st August. The migration was prolonged but poorer than in

2014. Numbers in the third week of August were boosted by counts of 40 at Deal Hall, Dengie on 25th and 39 at Holland Haven on 27th; and the following week by 36 at Wanstead on 31st. Otherwise, the only double-figure count was of 16 at Frinton-on- Sea on 27th August. The final sighting of the year was of a single bird on the Dengie coast on 15th November.

	Aug					Sep				Oct		
Week commencing	2nd	9th	16th	23rd	30th	6th	13th	20th	27th	4th	11th	18th
Numbers	2	3	22	131	67	25	28	23	22	17	8	12
Location	2	3	11	23	19	13	21	17	13	11	7	11

Greenland Wheatear *O.o.leucorrhoa*

Passage migrant.

Six birds showing characteristics of this race were reported (seven in 2014), five in spring and one in autumn. All were single birds except two together at Rainham on 8th May. The autumn bird was at Rainham on 28th August.

DUNNOCK *Prunella modularis*

Abundant and widespread resident.

The Dunnock population declined substantially between 1975 and 1985 and numbers have never recovered to the levels recorded before that period. The population seems to have stabilised in recent years, but the species still meets amber-list criteria.

This species continues to be widely reported, with 2,820 records received during the year, primarily through BirdTrack. No confirmed multiple breeding counts were reported although counts of males in April included peaks of 13 at Mardyke Valley on 4th and 11 at Orsett Fen on 11th (20 and 17 in 2014 respectively). Please could observers mark clearly in their records if breeding has been confirmed and any site trends.

Autumn passage was noted at three sites with peak counts of: The Naze, 30 on 17th September; Frinton-on-Sea, 34 on 19th October; Bradwell BO, 25 on 18th October. Away from coastal passage, 34 counts of 15 or more were reported, with peaks of 30 and 25 at Sunnymead Fm, Wivenhoe, on 20th January and 16th February respectively, and 21 at Belhus Woods CP on 4th March.

Dunnock (RESTON KILGOUR)

HOUSE SPARROW *Passer domesticus*

Abundant resident. Red List species.

Very few records indicated breeding, with all records listed, although there were numerous counts during the season across the county: Fordham, 40 pairs (20 in 2014); Tillingham, two broods; Gt Baddow, fledging reported. Observers are encouraged to count and report breeding counts.

Three-figure counts came from eight sites (nine in 2014), with reports of 50+ from a further ten. Peak counts were as follows: Wakering Stairs/Gt Wakering, 150 on 21st March, 120 on 9th May; Manor Fm, Upminster, 130 on 28th July; Pebmarsh, 100 on 5th August; Rainham, 160 on 5th August, 110 on 1st October; Gunners Pk, 120 on 15th August and 150 on 2nd September; Rectory Road, Grays, 122 on 18th August, 112 on 9th September; Drake Road, Chafford Hundred, 107 on 13th September, 112 on 1st October; Langdon Plotlands, 102 on 16th December.

TREE SPARROW *Passer montanus*

Declining passage migrant. Bred until 1999. Red List species.

There were again no records indicative of possible breeding, indeed no sightings were reported from 10th February to 14th August.

The species was recorded at four sites during the first-winter with flocks remaining from 2014 in three cases: Wigboro Wick Fm, St Osyth, up to nine noted 1st-17th January; Langham, up to eight noted in January, reducing to three by 4th February; Whitepark Fm, Gt Horkesley, 12 on 2nd February; Brightlingsea, one on 10th February.

Autumn passage was average with some good coastal diurnal passage counts, reports coming from five sites as follows (singles unless stated): Gunners Pk, 14th-19th August; Bradwell BO, 2nd September, 22nd October; Frinton-on-Sea, six on 19th September; and in October, 18 on 8th, ten on 19th, three on 20th, two on 25th; Rainham, 10th October, 26th October; Mistley, 13th October.

The only late-winter record was of two at Church Langley, Harlow, on 14th November.

YELLOW WAGTAIL *Motacilla flava flavissima*

Declining summer visitor. RSPB Amber List.

A very poor year with only 23 probable or confirmed breeding records at nine locations compared with 87 pairs at 28 sites in 2014 (69 from 18 in 2013, 100 from 25 in 2012). Only five pairs were located on Foulness, compared with 24 in 2014 (16 in 2013), while Wormingford Airfield held up to eight, with scattered pairs distributed across the County. A decline of this magnitude, if sustained, bodes ill for this species in Essex, reflecting a grim national picture.

The first spring record was at Braintree on the very early date of 13th March – the earliest ever being 8th March (Wood, 2007). During April, double-figure counts were recorded at 13 locations (three in 2014, ten in 2013, eight in 2012) with some gatherings remaining for several days: Abberton Res, 15 on 16th, 30 on 18th, 12 on 22nd, rising to 55 on 23rd before dropping back to 16 on 24th, 18 on 27th, 20 on 28th, and ten on 30th; Blue House Fm, 23 on 17th; Bowers Marsh, ten on 17th; Chigborough Lakes, 11 on 14th; Fairlop Waters, 11 on 20th, 12 on 23rd, 15 on 26th; Harold Wood SW, ten on 26th; KGV Res., 30 on 23rd; Lower Raypits, 20 on 18th; Old Hall, ten on 27th; Wallasea Is., 20 on 12th, ten on 27th; Walthamstow Reservoirs, 12 on 26th.

Double-figure counts in May were as follows: Abberton Res., 50 on 10th, 12 on 7th; Bradwell, 25 on 9th; Wallasea Is., ten on 2nd and 25th, 15 on 30th, N. Dengie, 14 on 17th and 30th; Mundon, 12 on 17th; Burnham-on-Crouch, ten on 7th.

Apart from the Wormingford Airfield breeding record, there was only one count of ten or more birds in June: Abberton Res., 12 on 25th. In July there were three: Wormingford Airfield, 23 on 14th (including three pairs still feeding young in nests); Wallasea Is., 20 on 22nd, Orsett Fen, 13 on 1st and 12 on 20th.

Autumn passage was observed at 86 sites (73 in 2014, 91 in 2013, 84 in 2012) with 13 counts of 30 or more (17 in 2014, 14 in 2013, 14 in 2012): August: Bradwell BO, 30 on 2nd, 66 on 16th; Wallasea Is., 100 on 15th, 50 on 21st; Old Hall, 67 on 19th, 60 on 28th; Frinton-on-Sea, 52 on

Yellow Wagtail (RESTON KILGOUR)

29th; Paglesham, Bartonhall Fm, 45 on 17th; Blue House Fm, 40 on 22nd. September: Bartonhall Creek, R Roach, 79 on 1st; Paglesham Lagoon, 37 on 9th; W. Canvey Marsh, 30 on 5th September, Rainham, 50 on 13th. In October, there were records from nine sites with the last at Frinton-on-Sea on 27th.

No records were received for Blue-headed Wagtail, *M.f. flava*, or for any of the other sub-species occasionally reported in the County.

GREY WAGTAIL *Motacilla cinerea*

Increasing resident breeder and passage migrant.

Confirmed breeding was reported from six sites and thought probable in a further three (16 pairs/territories from 13 sites in 2014, 15 from 13 sites in 2013, 26 from 22 in 2012).

All counts during the first three months of the year were of 1-2 birds, apart from three at the Bow Creek Ecology Pk on 20th, Elmstead Market on 8th February, Harold Wood SW on 15th February, Tilbury on 28th February, Roding Valley on 8th March; and four at Gt Braxted, 1st January and at Olympic Pk, LV, on 1st March.

Reports outside the breeding season were widely distributed and up on recent years:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Numbers	113	114	164	74	111	147	81	49
Locations	57	59	56	25	70	84	54	39

Records of four or more birds in autumn were as follows: August: Hanningfield Res., five on 12th; Frinton-on-Sea, four on 29th. September: Frinton-on-Sea, five on 13th, 12 on 19th and 20th, four on 27th; Hanningfield Res., six on 13th; KGV Res., four on 2nd; Epping Forest, Wanstead Flats, four on 5th and 14th; Leyton Flats/Snaresbrook Crown Court, four on 7th; Ardleigh Res., four on 15th; E. Tilbury, four on 20th; Walthamstow Reservoirs, four on 22nd. October: Frinton-on-Sea, four on 3rd, four on 4th, ten on 8th; six on 17th, five on 18th, Rainham Landfill, ten on 31st; KGV Res., eight on 7th and four on 8th.

At the end of the year records of three or more birds came from: Creekmouth, six on 22nd November; KGV Res., four on 4th November; Waterworks NR, LV, three on 3rd November; Ardleigh Res., three on 25th November; Bowers Marsh, three on 27th November; Langham, three on 17th December.

PIED WAGTAIL *Motacilla alba yarrellii*

Common resident and passage migrant.

Confirmed breeding records were received for six pairs from six sites (15 pairs from 11 in 2014, 27 from 14 in 2013, 32 from 20 in 2012) while probable breeding occurred in a further 14 localities. This species remains seriously under-recorded.

Major roosts during the first winter period were reported from Copford SW, 210 on 19th February; Hanningfield Res., 200 on 25th February, Harold Wood SW, 125 on 10th January and 100 on 26th January; Danbury, 80 on 1st January; Epping, High Street, 80, on 2nd, 3rd and 17th February; Althorne, 53 on 22nd January. Reports of smaller roosts, containing 20-50 birds, came from The Naze, 43 on 14th February, Old Hall, 27 on 6th January; Stansted Mountfitchet, 20 on 18th February.

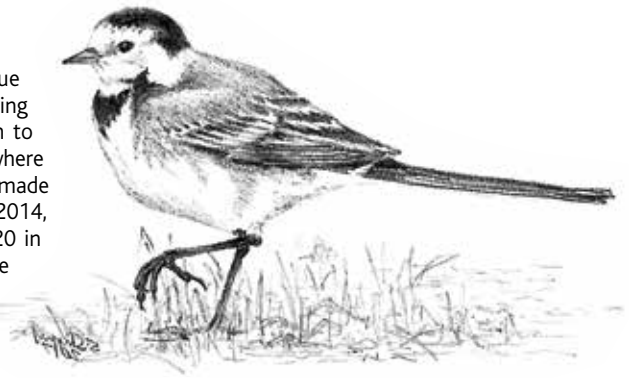
There was for the second year running no evidence of spring passage. Counts of 25 or more during autumn passage were: Lee Valley, Walthamstow, Low Hall, 70 on 18th September, 39 on 8th October; Lee Valley, Walthamstow Marsh, 50 on 23rd October, 60 on 29th October; Abberton Res., 50 on 23rd August; Hanningfield Res., 50 on 22nd September, 40 on 26 September; 50 on 5th October; Colchester, 28 on 12th September, 50 on 21st October; Frinton-on-Sea, 36 on 7th October, 32 on 20th October; Gt Warley, 31 on 17th October; The Naze, 26 on 31th October; Vange Marsh, 25 on 8th September; Bradwell BO, 25 on 8th October; St Clere's Hall, St Osyth, 25 on 11th October.

Roost counts of 50+ birds late in the year came from Bowers Marsh, 110 on 2nd December, 80 on 3rd December, 136 on 9th December, 160 on 30th December, Wivenhoe, 109 on 6th November; Harold Wood SW, 80 on 8th; Epping, 60 on 1st December; Wallasea Is., 50 on 17th December.

White Wagtail *M. a. alba*

Fairly common passage migrant.

The first record was reported at Blue House Fm on 20th March. Spring passage continued through March to late April, with a total of 17 where identification was confidently made from 14 sites (12-14 from 11 in 2014, 17 from eight in 2013, 63 from 20 in 2012). The only records of more than one bird (two in each case) came from Langham, 3rd April; Wallasea Is. 12th April; Bradwell BO, 20th April; Harold Wood SW, 29th April.



White Wagtail (SAM SHIPPEY)

A confirmed female was present at Harold Wood SW on 18 July, paired with a male Pied, accompanied by two juveniles.

Autumn passage was light, with reports of around 17 birds from eight sites (19 from 11 in 2014, 13 from two in 2013, 28 from four in 2012). The first report of the autumn was of four at Harold Wood SW on 17th September with the last also of four at Great Warley on 15th November.

TREE PIPIT *Anthus trivialis*

A rare and decreasing summer visitor and passage migrant.

The first record of proven breeding occurred since 2003. Perhaps this is a hopeful sign after several years of declining numbers of singing/displaying males. There were no other records suggestive of possible breeding.

Monthly distribution and numbers during the migration periods was as follows:

Month	Apr	May	Jun	Aug	Sep	Oct
Localities	8	0	1	13	11	1
No. of Birds	11	0	1	24	16	1

The first reported spring migrant was at Fairlop Waters on 9th April. Three birds were present at Wanstead Flats on various dates in April.

In autumn, sightings of more than 1-2 birds were as follows: Chingford Plain, five on 30th August; Bedfords Pk, four on 30th August; Wanstead Flats, three on various dates in August; Gunners Park, three on 6th September.

The last bird of the year was at Heybridge GP on 11th October.

MEADOW PIPIT *Anthus pratensis*

Common resident and passage migrant.

There was a further slight improvement with 144 probable territories being reported from 12 sites (102 from 11 in 2014, 76 from ten in 2013, 123 from 19 in 2012). The highest counts (2014 figures in parentheses) came from: Blue House Fm, 46 pairs (48), Old Hall, nine (nc), and Foulness, four territories (ten). This species remains under-reported and all breeding records should be submitted.

First-winter counts from January to mid-March of 30 or more came from eight sites (up from just two in 2014, eight in 2013 and 2012): Maldon, 200 on 7th February, Northey/Limbourne area, 30 on 21st February; South House Fm/Northey, 60 on 14th February, 40 on 15th, 47 on 24th February, and 50 on 11th March; Terling, 30 on 17th January, 30th January, and 9th February, with 50 there on 14th February; Thameside Warren, 40 on 2nd February; White Notley, 50 on 11th March; Wivenhoe, 42 on 8th February. Counts of 20-25 birds came from a further 12 sites.

Spring passage from late March until early May was reported from nine locations (46 in 2014, 51 in 2013, 35 in 2012) with six counts of more than ten. The highest counts came from: Cornmill Meadows, 20 on 23rd March and 50 on 7th April; Frinton-on-Sea, 12 on 18th March, 15 on 21st March, and 13 on 23rd March; The Scrubs, Hockley, 15 on 23rd March.

Autumn migration was in evidence from early September and was relatively light with reports from 50 sites (85 in 2014, 76 in 2013). The only three-figure counts came from Bradwell BO, 120 on 17th September; and Frinton-on-Sea, 122 on 17th September, 121 on 19th September, 201 on 20th September, 129 on 26th September, 192 on 18th October. A total of 1,360 passed Frinton-on-Sea on 22 days over this period.

Second winter counts came from 78 sites (72 in 2014, 83 in 2013, 58 in 2012), with counts of 40 or more from: Orsett Fen, 56 on 15th December; Hanningfield Res., 50 on 13th December; and N. Dengie, 41 on 13th December.

ROCK PIPIT *Anthus petrosus*

Scandinavian Rock Pipit *A. p. littoralis*

Winter visitor to coast. Scarce passage migrant inland.

First winter records came from some 46 sites (36 in 2014, 54 in 2013, 44 in 2012) with counts of five or more recorded as follows (site maximum in each case): Rainham, seven on 4th January, eight on 22nd February; Old Hall, six on 21st January, nine on 23rd January; N. Dengie, nine on 8th February, eight on 8th March; Althorne, eight on 22nd January; Goldhanger, six on 20th January, eight on 23rd January; Wivenhoe, eight on 31st January; Paglesham East End, six on 10th January, Northey/Limbourne area, five on 21st February; Southey Creek, five on 11th January, five on 24th January; The Naze, five on 10th February. There were two April records, at South House Fm/Northey Is. on 4th April and Abberton Res. on 9th.

The first arrival of the autumn was a single at Colne Pt on 2nd August. Counts of five or more were as follows: Blue House Fm, 14 on 23rd October; Frinton-on-Sea, 11 on 18th October; Colne Pt, seven on 19th October; Rainham, 11 on 29th October; Bradwell BO, six on 21st October; Colne Pt, six on 30th October; The Hythe, six on 22nd October; Heybridge, five on 11th October; Mill Beach/Rolls Fm, five on 15th October; Stow Marsh, five on 15th October.

Second winter counts came from 36 sites (35 in 2014, 53 in 2013, 38 in 2012). Counts of five or more were as follows (site maximum in each case): November: Old Hall, ten on 26th November, seven on 25th November; W. Mersea, eight on 25th November; Bradwell BO, six on 15th November; Colne Pt, six on 25th November and 27th November; N. Dengie, six on 15th November; St Osyth, six on 15th November; Wivenhoe, six on 27th November. December: N. Dengie, 13 on 13th December; Bradwell BO, five on 9th December, Mill Beach/Rolls Fm, five on 14th December; Osea Road, five on 12th December.

WATER PIPIT *Anthus spinoletta* **EBSIP**

Scarce winter visitor and passage migrant.

The monthly distribution and numbers was as follows:

Month	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	Oct	Nov	Dec
Localities	4	1	4	1	4	2	6
No. of birds	5	2	4	1	6	7	21

All records were of one or two birds apart from the following: Rainham, 14 on 21st December, nine on 4th November, six on five dates in 15th November, five on three dates in November, four on 7th November, and three on 18th January, four dates in November, and on 13th December.

The last bird of the spring was at Rainham on 10th April, while the first of the autumn was at Hanningfield Res. on 4th October.

BRAMBLING *Fringilla montifringilla*

Uncommon passage migrant and winter visitor in variable numbers.

Recorded totals were once again low, albeit numbers in the second half of the year were higher than in 2014. That said, the October total was once again made up predominantly of migrants passing over Frinton-on-Sea, with the aggregate of 158 there making up just over 60% of the county total. In all, Bramblings were recorded from 15 sites (23 in 2014) in the first winter period and 48 (36 in 2014) in the second winter period.

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Numbers	5	5	5	8	2	259	44	16
Locations	3	5	3	8	2	33	19	8

During the first winter the highest count was just three at Langham on 21st March, with the only other counts of more than one bird coming from Boreham on 17th and Bradwell GP, near Coggeshall on 25th January.

In the autumn the first individuals were singles at Chingford Plain, Epping Forest and Frinton-on-Sea, both on 27th September. At Frinton-on-Sea there were four double-figure counts of migrating birds during October: 17 on 17th, 57 on 18th, 39 on 19th, 27 on 25th. Elsewhere, the only other double-figure counts came from: Wanstead Flats, Epping Forest, 17 on 19th and 13 on 22nd October; Holland Haven, ten on 25th October. All other counts were of 1-8 birds.

As in many previous years, numbers wintering in the county remain extremely low, although the total of 16 birds in December is an improvement on the single bird reported in December 2014.

CHAFFINCH *Fringilla coelebs*

Common resident, passage migrant and winter visitor.

The species remains a very common breeding bird with records coming from over 300 locations. Such reports are very difficult to analyse on an annual basis so it would be useful in future to receive more general comments on trends at particular sites from observers.

Outside the breeding season, it was another relatively poor year, although there were signs of an influx around mid/late January.

During the first-winter there were 24 counts in excess of 50 (13 in 2014) and six three-figure counts (none in 2014 and two in 2013): a peak of 250 going to roost at Boreham on 17th January; 160 at Handley Barns, near Mill Green on 17th January; 150 in Writtle Forest on 26th January; 150 near Mundon, Old Church on 24th January; 100 at Helions Bumpstead on 8th January; 100 in Duck Wood LNR, Harold Hill on 22nd February.

A small spring passage was evident at Frinton-on-Sea where 76 flew north on 24th March. Elsewhere, at Boreham the winter roost decreased rapidly in early March whilst a small build up in numbers at several inland sites pointed to a movement that was far less obvious than the autumn arrival. Counts of 30-40 at the end of April on feeders at Bradwell BO suggest on-going migration at quite a late date.

Autumn passage was most evident at Frinton-on-Sea from mid-September where totals for September, October and November (with 2014 counts in brackets) were: 55 (114), 1,509 (2,189), 299 (73) – a total for the three months of 1,863 (2,376). Peak counts in October were 588 north on 18th, 223 south on 25th, 126 north on 17th, 120 south on 20th and 119 south on 7th and suggesting a far more concentrated migration than last year. In November, an influx occurred during mid-month with 99 south on 10th and 107 south on 11th. Elsewhere the only other coastal counts of 50 or more came from: Gunners Pk, Shoeburyness, 50 on 25th Oct; Colne Pt, 50 on 12th October. Away from the coast, a further three sites recorded more than 50 birds: Stapleford Tawney, 200 on 18th; Wanstead Flats, Epping Forest, 100 on 17th and 20th October; Whitefarm Pk, Nayland, 100 on 23rd November; Lee Valley, Walthamstow Marsh, 80 on 14th November; Langdon Hills EWT, 60 on 17th November.

The last month of the year was even quieter than last year with only a couple of sites recording counts of 50 or more: Abberton, 50 on 1st and Aimes Green, a peak of 100 on 26th December.

HAWFINCH *Coccothraustes coccothraustes*

Very uncommon and local resident.

All records are given:

Lee Valley, Holyfield Hall Farm	1st January	One
Braxted Pk	24th February	One
Woodford Green	18th March	One
Woodford Green	28th October	Three
Dagnam Pk LNR, Harold Hill	26th October	One
Braxted Pk	28th October	One
Woodford Green	26th November	Two
Coombe Wood, Thundersley	13th December	One
Woodford Green	19th December	One

The species is clinging on in the county, but for how much longer?

BULLFINCH *Pyrrula pyrrula*

Declining resident. Essex Red List species.

In all, the species was recorded from just over 80 locations during the breeding season, with counts rarely numbering more than a couple of individuals. Records were thinly spread throughout the county, but most came from that part of the county north of the A120/A12 corridor where land management is generally less intensive. There were very few confirmed breeding records although three pairs were reported as breeding successfully from Broaks Wood, Gosfield, along with four pairs with young near Pebmarsh in August.

During the first winter period, there were counts of more than five birds at seven localities, the highest being eight at both Broaks Wood on 20th January and Pebmarsh on 27th February.

Unlike last year, there were no records of birds in unusual coastal locations.

During the second winter period there were just two counts of over five birds: six at both Chigborough Lakes on 29th November and Wickham St Paul on 10th November.

Although it is difficult to draw too many conclusions, it seems to have been a poor year for the species.

GREENFINCH *Chloris chloris*

Common but recently declined resident and passage migrant.

Despite the recent declines attributed to ***Trichonomosis,*** the species remains widespread across the county, with records coming from well over 200 sites during the breeding season. More comments on breeding trends would be welcomed.

During the first winter the number of counts in excess of 50 fell to just two (three in 2014): 50 at Bradwell BO on 1st February and 70 at Gainsborough Close, Billericay on 3rd February.

Once again, there were no post-breeding flocks in excess of 50, and like last year the highest gathering was 40 around the feeders at Bradwell BO during August.

As usual, the main visible migration period was during October and observations were largely restricted to Frinton-on-Sea where a total of 393 flew over, with a peak of 117 north on 18th, 104 south on 8th and 52 on 25th. No other migration counts of in excess of 50 were noted.

Numbers in the second winter period showed a slight increase over 2014, but even so there were just two counts of 50 or more: 50 at Sunnymead Fm, Wivenhoe, on 29th December and 70 roosting in Priory Pk, Southend on 8th December. The next highest winter count was just 22 at Rainham on 24th December.

An analysis of the number of counts of 50+ appears to confirm the on-going decline.

No. of sites recording flocks of 50+ Greenfinch

LINNET *Linaria cannabina*

Common but declined resident and passage migrant.

The 250 or so sites from which records were received were spread widely across the county, although there appears to be a preference for coastal areas and river valleys, where presumably, there is more rough habitat that is to the species' liking.

From the few comments received, numbers present during this year's breeding season were similar to last year. Of the very few counts made, the largest by some way, was 18 pairs around Wormingford, including nine on the airfield, a slight decline on 2014.

During the first winter period, just two sites produced three-figure counts: Wallasea Is., where the flock peaked at 290 on 3rd February; Whitepark Fm, Gt Horkesely, 250 on 2nd February.

Spring passage was very light with the only three-figure counts being at Colne Pt, where there were 100 on 2nd April with 120 on 5th. At Frinton-on-Sea, in April and May, the total of 257 birds included monthly totals of 78, and 77 respectively with the highest day count being just 69 on 27th April.

A count of 100 on Wormingford Airfield on 16th June is, presumably, suggestive of a good local population. The only late summer three-figure count came from South House Fm, Maldon where there were 120 on 31st August, by which time autumn passage was beginning. A count of 300 on 6th September on Wallasea Is., like the South House one, in all probability refer to an early autumnal movement. Numbers steadily built during mid-September, particularly along the coast, and by the end of the month good numbers were moving through with passage continuing through October. At Frinton-on-Sea passage was lighter than in 2014, with totals of (2014 figures in brackets) 192 (561) in September,

Linnet (ALAN SHEARMAN)

226 (959) in October and 189 in November. Passage was also light just down the coast at Colne Pt but coverage was less intensive than in recent years and just 145 were recorded in September compared to 1,500 in 2014; however, 631 were recorded in October including 250 on 15th and 200 on 28th. Along the Thames, numbers at Rainham included 200 on 26th September and 150 on 21st and 29th October. Counts of up to 300 during September on Wallasea Is. were probably mostly migrants as, unlike last year, few were recorded during the winter. Elsewhere other counts in excess of 150 were: Stow Marsh, 180 on 30th September; Coggeshall Hamlet, 190 on 13th September.

There were seven three-figure counts during the second winter period, but only one was in excess of 150: 450 at Stow Marsh on 2nd December. There were counts of 150 at Rainham on 3rd November and Aimes Green on 31st December.

At Sunnymead Fm, a total of 310 were handled between 20th January and 27th April.

TWITE *Linaria flavirostris*

Uncommon winter visitor and passage migrant.

In the first winter, a total of 31 birds were reported from six sites (15 from two sites in 2014): Old Hall, up to 14 during January with eight still on 11th March; Two Tree Is., two on 5th January; Stow Marsh, singles on 19th and 25th January; The Naze, five on 2nd January and three on 28th February; Colne Pt, three on 5th April.

The second winter period was much quieter with just 16 reported from five sites (64 from four in 2014): Lee Valley, Sewardstone Marsh, one on 16th October; Abberton, five on 18th and one on 30th October; Brightlingsea, one on 28th November; S. Dengie, eight on 13th December; Old Hall, one on 28th December.

After last year's apparent slight improvement in numbers, the Twite's status reverted to that of recent years.

Two colour-ringed birds at Old Hall during February had been ringed at Rushworth Moor, South Yorkshire, in September 2014.

Sites recording double-figure counts of Twite

LESSER REDPOLL *Acanthis cabaret*

Formerly resident, now a scarce and decreasing passage migrant and winter visitor.

Double-figure counts during the first winter period came from just nine sites (14 in 2014), with only two counts in excess of 30, both from Hockley Woods, with 32 on 3rd and 40 on 15th February. The next highest count was 20 from Weald CP on 17th January.

Apart from four over Maldon on 4th July, the first birds of the autumn were two over Frinton-on-Sea on 6th September. Passage here was stronger than in 2014 with 462 moving through in October (83 in 2014 and 221 in 2013) with peaks of 166 on 17th and 80 on 18th. Passage continued into

November, totalling 64 birds including 25 on 3rd. Elsewhere there were seven counts of 25+: Leyton Flats, 30 on 24th November and 25 a day earlier; Bulmer, 31 on 10th November; Ingrebourne Valley, 25 on 25th October; Gunners Pk, Shoeburyness, 25 on 25th October; Fairlop Waters CP, 26 on 23rd November; Holland Haven, 29 on 7th October.

In the second winter, eleven sites held double-figure counts, with the largest being at Leyton Flats/Snaresbrook Crown Court where there were 45 on 2nd December. Other counts of 30+ came from: Goldhanger, 30 on 13th December; Bulmer area, 35 on 24th December; Canvey Wick, 35 on 31st December.

Estimated minimum monthly totals were-

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Number	83	108	44	9	0	0	4	0	78	924	518	363
Locations	13	16	10	2	0	0	1	0	16	47	47	35

In all, an average first winter, followed by an impressive late autumn influx with most migrants appearing from the second half of October.

MEALY REDPOLL *Acanthis* sp. EBSIP

Scarce but regular winter visitor.

Chigborough Lakes	31st December	SDW

COMMON CROSSBILL *Loxia curvirostra*

Irregular visitor in very variable numbers. Has bred.

An improvement on 2014 with records occurring in all months from May to October.

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Numbers	0	0	0	0	3	31	10	20	1	6	0	0
Locations	0	0	0	0	2	5	4	4	1	4	0	0

A typical pattern of occurrence.

The first two birds of the year were over Coombe Wood on 22nd May, with the last individual over Colchester, Hythe Hill, on 31st October. There were only two double-figure counts: 15 flew west over Havering CP on 2nd August; ten flew west over Alresford Grange on 15th June. The next highest count was seven over Walthamstow Marsh on 8th June.

GOLDFINCH *Carduelis carduelis*

Common but declined resident and passage migrant.

Whilst records came from around 300 sites during the breeding season, this species is very inconspicuous and confirmed breeding records were virtually non-existent.

Like last year, numbers seemed low in the first winter period with just two flocks of 50 or more: Whitepark Fm, Nayland, 50 on 2nd February; Kelvedon, 60 on 15th February.

Spring migration was not evident this year apart from a very small movement at Frinton-on-Sea, peaking at 25 on 31st May.

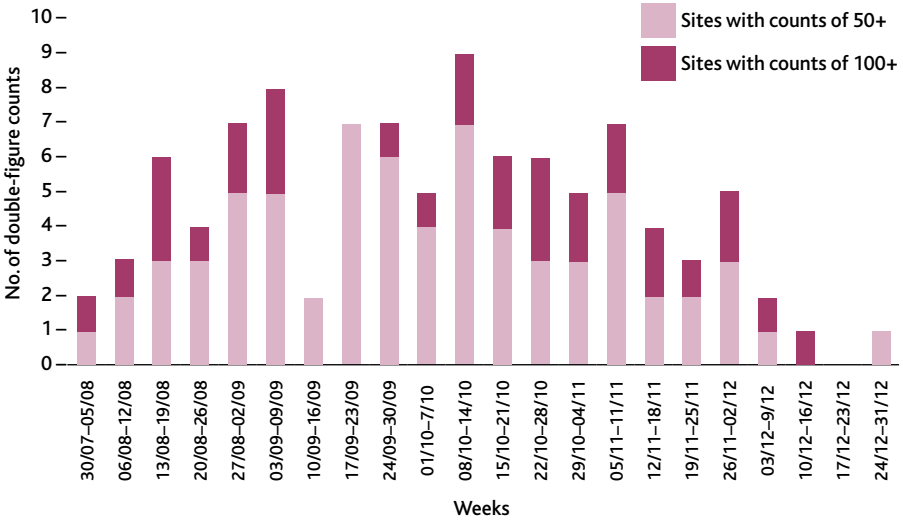
Post breeding gatherings were far more evident than last year with five sites regularly recording three-figure flocks. Counts at each site were: 110 at Hackney Wick on 8th August; Lee Valley, Olympic Pk, a peak of 180 on 12th July; Rainham, a peak of 200 on 23rd and 29th August; 112 at Roding Valley on 16th August; Wat Tyler CP, 300 on 29th August.

Autumn passage over Frinton-on-Sea was particularly heavy, and again concentrated in October, where a total of 7,274 passed over, with 275 in September and 1,191 in November. Peak counts came on 17th and 18th October with 2,674 north in four hours on the former and 1,344 north on the latter date. Coastal passage was also evident from several other sites but the highest counts

were just 130 at Holland Haven on 7th October, 120 at The Naze on 17th October and the same number over Leigh-on-Sea on 8th October. Further up the Thames, there were 330 in Barking Bay on 4th September, a peak of 300 at Rainham on 9th September and 200 at Coalhouse Fort on 5th September.

Numbers in the second winter period were once again unexceptional with the only three-figure counts being 123 in Mardyke Valley on 1st and 100 at Harold Wood SW on 6th December; there were only two further counts of 50 or more.

Sites recording 50+ and 100+ Goldfinches



SERIN *Serinus serinus*

EBSIP (14, 14, 28)

Rare passage migrant.

Gunners Park	29th January-13th March	Two	A. Armstrong

Despite being almost annual in the recent past this is, surprisingly, the first record since 2011.

SISKIN *Spinus spinus*

Locally common winter visitor and passage migrant. Very rare breeder.

It is highly likely that 6-10 pairs bred in Braxted Pk with family parties totalling up to 12 birds recorded during June.

An extremely quiet first winter with just three locations holding double-figure flocks, all in January: Weald CP, ten on 17th; Epping Forest Burial Pk, 20 on 5th; Colchester, 12 on 5th. The next highest count was four at Rainham on 4th February.

A very sparse spring migration saw six in Boreham on 30th March, the highest count, amongst a total of just 16 records involving 26 birds.

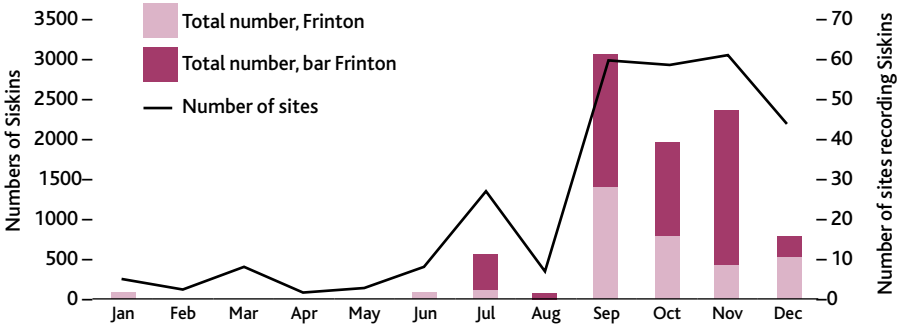
Away from Gt Braxted, of the remaining eleven June records the highest counts were six south over Frinton-on-Sea on 6th June and ten in Sutton Road Cemetery on 27th June. Apart from four at Holland Haven on 6th June, all other records were of 1-2 birds. It is likely that these were all dispersing non-breeders or juveniles from the nearby Brecks.

Significant dispersal occurred throughout July, with quite exceptional numbers recorded over Frinton-on-Sea. Of a July total of 445 birds recorded over 35.5 hours, there was an impressive 187 flew west in just one hour on 14th with 56 south in 0.75 hours on 16th and 32 south in 0.25 hours

on 15th. Elsewhere double figure counts came from: Braxted Pk, a peak of 24 on 20th (locally bred?); Hooks Marsh, Lee Valley, ten on 14th; Rochford, 20 on 15th; Rochford GC, ten on 19th. Numbers dipped significantly in August, a trend highlighted in the occurrence graph below.

This suggests a two-phase movement through the county, firstly dispersal from nearby breeding sites, such as the Brecks and then a subsequent, larger arrival comprising birds from more distant locations such as Scotland and Scandinavia. It should, however, be borne in mind that observer coverage may decline during August, traditionally the peak family holiday period. The highest August count was just 21 over Frinton-on-Sea on 10th August.

Monthly occurrence of Siskins during 2015



Passage increased in the first week of September with the first three-figure count from Frinton-on-Sea coming on 9th September when 303 flew north in four hours, the highest count of the month, after which there were four further three-figure counts from here in September. The September total here was 1,622 birds. Elsewhere the highest counts during September of 50+ were: 80 at Bradwell BO on 17th; 50 over Wanstead Flats on 13th; 60 at Gt Braxted on 19th; 85 at Gunners Pk, Shoeburyness on 6th; 56 at Rainham on 6th.

October passage continued at the high level seen the month before with the peak count from Frinton-on-Sea being 336 north in four hours on 17th, one of four three-figure counts from there out of a monthly total of 1,160. Elsewhere, overall numbers declined from the September peak with the highest counts coming from just two sites: Brentwood Leisure Centre, 70 on 24th October; Terling, 40 on 17th and 23rd.

Numbers passing over Frinton-on-Sea peaked during November, although away from here numbers continued to decline. A total of 1,922 flew over here during the month with the peak count being 522 south in just 1.5 hours on 16th whilst 363 flew the same direction in two hours on 11th. There were a further three three-figure counts from here. Elsewhere, the highest count by some way was 50 at Nayland on 23rd November.

Passage over Frinton-on-Sea continued during the first few days of December, peaking at 65 on 7th December (monthly total 213). Elsewhere, a wintering flock of 100 was present at Cornmill Meadows, Lee Valley from mid-month, whilst there were 50 at Stansted Mountfitchet on 14th and counts of 20+ from six other sites; somewhat lower figures than perhaps to be expected following one of the strongest and prolonged autumn passages ever recorded through the county.

SNOW BUNTING *Plectrophenax nivalis*

Locally common passage migrant and winter visitor.

Jaywick held the largest flock in the early part of 2015 with up to 27 birds seen from early January, down to 12 by 27th February. Elsewhere single, birds occurred at Old Hall (9th, 19th and 22nd January) with three at Frinton-on-Sea on 5th.

Autumn produced birds at Frinton-on-Sea on 25th and 27th October and 27th November; also there were four at Jaywick on 29th November and eight there and/or nearby at St. Osyth on December 6th, 13th and 25th.

LAPLAND BUNTING *Calcarius lapponicus* **EBSIP**

Uncommon winter visitor and passage migrant in variable numbers.

There were four in Hamford Water and four, possibly the same birds, at Walton Hall Marsh on 31st January. Then four were at Stow Marsh on 4th February.

In the autumn and early winter single birds were seen at Frinton-on-Sea (23rd September), Blue House Fm, N. Fambridge (23rd October) and in November at Rainham (23rd) and Old Hall (26th) with another on 26th December on Stow Marsh.

YELLOWHAMMER *Emberiza citrinella*

Common but declining resident. Essex Red List species

During the breeding season, 236 singing males were reported from 66 sites (266 from 65 in 2014, 250 from 54 in 2013. Reports of five or more singing ♂♂/ pairs were reported as follows (the previous year's figure in brackets where known): Bulmer, 15 (15); Henny Street, six (six); Wormingford, seven (six); Gestingthorpe, 11; Belchamp, six; Fordham, 16 (16); Ashen, nine (eight); Ardleigh, six; Wickham St Paul, seven (six); Maldon, six; Orsett Fen, ten (ten).

In the first winter period, flocks of 25 or more were reported as follows (all in February unless stated): Langham, 50 on 8th; Whitepark Fm, near Gt Horkesley, 200 on 2nd; Prestons Lake, Pebmarsh, 50 on 27th; Sunnymead Fm, 249 handled in the period, including 69 retraps from previous years; Perry Green (near Coggeshall), 170 on 22nd; Bradwell GP (near Coggeshall), 70 on 25th January; St Lawrence, 27 on 8th; near Writtle, 30 on 8th March.

Autumn numbers were lower. Flocks of 20 or more were as follows:- October: Steeple Bumstead, 20 on 9th; Stansted Airport Lagoons, 20 on 12th; Brightlingsea, 22 on 22nd; Abberton Res., 30 on 15th. November: near Elmdon, two flocks on 20th, of 30 and 42; Abbotts Hall Fm, 40 on 26th; near Writtle, 30 on 22nd. December: Moverons, Brightlingsea, 30 on 21st; Aimes Green, Epping Forest, a maximum of 40 on 26th; Orsett Fen, 24 on 15th.

Yellowhammer (RESTON KILGOUR)

REED BUNTING *Emberiza schoeniclus*

Much declined resident, winter visitor and passage migrant.

Singing ♂♂/territorial pairs were reported as follows (with 2014 figures in brackets where known): Old Hall, 16 (24); Othona Community/Bradwell Waterside, 26 (16); Blue House Fm/Althorne boatyard, six; Foulness, 17 (15); Vange Marsh, six.

Coastal flocks of 20 or more birds in the first winter period were as follows:- January: 30 at Walton Hall Marsh on 31st; 100 at Southey Ck on 2nd: 40 at Bradwell on 15th; 41 between St Lawrence and Marshhouse outfall on 18th; a maximum of 100 on maize stubble at Stow Marsh on 24th; 49 at E. Tilbury on 1st; 22 at Rainham on 19th. February: 25 at the Naze on 7th; 25 at Colne Pt on 22nd; up to 55 between St Lawrence and Marshhouse Outfall during the month; 135 at Stow Marsh on 5th; a maximum of 35 at Rochford/Hawkwell on 23rd. March: 21 at Howe Outfall on 9th. At Sunnymead Fm, Wivenhoe, 234 were handled between 20th January and 17th April.

Inland flocks in the first three months included 40 at Langham on 9th January and, in February, 65 at Whitepark Fm, Gt Horkesley, on 2nd and 60 at Langham on 4th.

Evidence of passage movements off the North Sea came from Frinton-on-Sea with small numbers moving south, the largest total being 20 on 18th October.

Late autumn/winter flocks exceeding 20 birds were reported as follows: October: Colne Pt, 24 on 18th; Blue House Fm, a maximum of 43 on 23rd. November: Gt Horkesley, 20 on 23rd; Old Hall, 31 on 26th; Benfleet Creek 20 on 26th. December: St Lawrence/Howe outfall, 52 on 18th; Blue House Fm, 25 on 28th; Bowers Marsh, 22 on 9th.

CORN BUNTING *Emberiza calandra*

Declining resident: Red list species.

During the breeding season a minimum of 108 singing ♂♂/pairs were recorded from 26 sites (99 from 37 in 2014, 138 from 33 in 2013). The following sites held five or more pairs (2014 figures in brackets where known): Wormingford Airfield, 12 (14); Colne Pt, six; Burnham-on-Crouch, ten; Wallasea Is. ten; Foulness, five (12).

Flocks of 20 or more in the first winter period were as follows: January: Colne Pt, 20 on 8th; Southey Creek, 100 on 2nd; Bradwell-on-Sea/St Lawrence, a maximum of 53 on 18th; Stow Marsh, 240 on 19th; Wallasea Is., a maximum of 150 on 11th; Paglesham East End, 30 on 6th; Rochford, 20 on 25th. February: Colne Pt, 80 on 14th; Wallasea Is., a maximum of 338 on 3rd; Paglesham East End, 41 on 2nd; Rochford, 100 on 14th; E. Tilbury, 45 on 14th. March: 70 at Marsh Fm, South Woodham Ferrers, on 20th; Wallasea Is., 100+ still present to mid-April.

In late autumn and the second winter period, counts of 25+ were as follows:- October: Abberton Res., 30 on 25th; Bradwell-on-Sea area, a maximum of 80 on 15th; Wallasea Is., 50 on 25th. November: Colne Pt, 25 on 26th; Abberton Res., a maximum of 60 on 8th; Bradwell-on-Sea area, 30 on 9th; Wallasea Is., 80 on 22nd. December: St Lawrence/Howe outfall, 66 on 13th; Stow Marsh, 37 on 2nd; Wallasea Is., a maximum of 150 on 18th; E. Tilbury, 24 on 20th.

Corn Bunting (Sam Shippey)

APPENDIX I: CATEGORY D SPECIES
APPENDIX II: CATEGORY E SPECIES

BLACK SWAN *Cygnus atratus*

Australia and New Zealand.

There were reports from nine sites, a minimum of 12 birds being involved: Audley End, one on 21st February; Manningtree/Mistley, one on several dates between 17th March and 14th May and up to five from 15th-22nd November; Brightlingsea, one on 4th September; Hanningfield Res., one from 8th September until the close of the year; Wallasea Is., one on 6th March; Gunners Pk, one from 20th September-13th December; Vange Marsh, one between 23rd-30th August; Bowers Marsh, one from 1st May-6th October.

Year	2015	2014	2013	2012	2011	2010	2009	2008	2007
Numbers	12	3-4	11	11	9+	16+	20+	14+	11+
Locations	9	3	5	7	11	13	13	13	13

TRUMPETER SWAN *Cygnus buccinator*

North America

Dovercourt, one on 20th May

RED-BREASTED GOOSE *Branta ruficollis*

Eastern Europe and Russia

In addition to the accepted record of a wild bird flying past Frinton (see Systematic List), records of presumed feral birds came from three sites as follows: Hamford Water, a pair present on 10th May in the area where they previously bred but no confirmed breeding this year; The Naze, two on 7th March (perhaps/probably the Hamford Water pair); Abberton Res., two on several dates between 25th June and 12th September.

SWAN GOOSE *Anser cygnoides*

Northern China, Mongolia and S.E. Russia.

Abberton Res., one on 9th February.

ROSS'S GOOSE *Anser rossii*

North America.

Langdon Plotlands, one on 12th August.

BAR-HEADED GOOSE

Central Asia.

Flatford-Cattawade, one on 14th March; Old Hall, one from 27th April-4th May.

CHINESE GOOSE

Domesticated.

Abberton Res., one throughout the year.

RUDDY SHELDUCK *Tadorna ferruginea*

S.E.Europe, Central and S.E.Asia

Hanningfield Res., one on several dates between 26th June and 16th October.

In addition, single birds either this species or Cape Shelduck (but probably this species) were seen at The Naze on 7th March and Wallasea Is. on 24th October.

CAPE SHELDUCK *Tadorna cana*

South Africa

Brightlingsea, one on 12th March; Bowers Marsh, one, 30th April-4th May.

AMERICAN WIGEON *Anas americana*

NorthAmerica

Old Hall: a tame female on a pond with Mute Swans on 18th October was presumed to be an escape (though tameness does not necessarily preclude wild origin).

CHILOE WIGEON *Anas sibaltrix*

South America.

Paglesham, singles on 3rd March and 18th December.

RINGED TEAL *Callonetta leucophrys*

South America.

Blue House Fm., one from 31st January-20th April; Wat Tyler CP, 7th September.

WHITE-CHEEKED PINTAIL *Anas bahamensis*

South America, Caribbean and Galapagos.

Abberton Res., one from 18th April-30th May; Stanford Warren, one on 24th November.

ROSY-BILLED POCHARD *Netta peposaca*

South America.

Heybridge GP, one on 12th August.

WOOD DUCK *Aix sponsa*

North America.

Valentines Pk, Ilford, singles on 11th February and 26th December; Hanningfield Res., 26th June.

MUSCOVY DUCK *Cairina moschata*

Central and South America

Wivenhoe, 25th August; Hainault, one on 113th January, 17th March, 8th November and 1st December; Seventy Acres Lake LV, 14th March.

INDIAN PEAFOWL *Pavo cristatus*

South Asia.

Black Notley, one on 2nd May; Epping Forest Burial Pk, singles on 12th May and 5th October.

AMERICAN WHITE IBIS *Eudocimus albus*

Americas

Holland Haven/ Gt Holland Common, one on 12th May.
Presumably the same bird that had resided in Kent for several weeks earlier in the year.

HARRIS HAWK *Parabuteo unicinctus*

Americas

Earls Hall Fm, St Osyth, one on 22nd and 24th May.

AFRICAN GREY PARROT *Psittacus erithacus*

Equatorial Africa

Hockley Woods, one on 17th December.

List of Contributors

mo = many observers

Acfield, D (DA)
Acott, M
Adams, G
Agar, J
Aldous, K
Aldridge, A.B.
Allen, A
Allen, C
Allen, D (DAl)
Allen, N
Allen, P
Allen, R (RA)
Allen, S (SA)
Amos, T
Anderson, Brandon
Anderson, Brian
Anderson, N
Antrobus, P
Appleton, G
Archer, J
Arlow, S. (SAr)
Archer, L
Astley, H
Astley, J
Atkins, C (CA)
Atkinson, R
Austin, D
Austin, M
Avery, M.I.
Avis, D.V. (DVA)

Bacon, S (SBa)
Bailey, M (MBa)
Bailey, S
Bain, D
Baker, P (PBa)
Balchin, C (CSB)
Baldock, A (AB)
Baldock, B
Ball, M
Ballard, J
Banham, N
Barton, C (CB)
Banks, S. (SB)
Barnes, R.L. (RB)
Barrett, D
Barrit, T
Barry, S
Bartram, C.R. (CRB)
Bates, A.W.H.
Bradwell Bird Observatory
Beacon, M
Beard, L
Beard, P
Beary, L (LB)
Beckenham, P
Bee, P (PB)
Beischer, B.R.
Belfield, S (SBe)
Bell, A
Bell, D (DB)
Bell, T
Bennett, K
Bergdahl, P
Bingley, J.H.
Bird, M
Birdguides
Birkett, J
Bishop, B (BB)
Bishop, D
Bissett, D
Blackmore, B
Blow, M
Bloys, R
Bloys, I
Blurton, D (DBl)
Bodini, L
Bonsor, R
Boswell, S.A.
Bourne, T (TB)
Bowden, L
Bradnum, D
Bradshaw, D
Bradshaw, H
Bradshaw, I
Braun, A
Braun, M
Brayshaw, P (PBr)
Breeze, P
Bremner, J.W.(JWB)
Bridges, M
Brierley, S
Bright, A
Bright, J.F. (JFB)
Brooker, S
Brooks, C
Brown, B
Brown, G.B. (GBB)
Brown, L
Brown, P
Brown, T (TBr)
Bruce, D
Bruty, M
Buchanan, J
Buckel, V
Buckell, S
Bufton, T
Bullock, I
Burchell, D
Burchell, T
Burgess, R
Burgum, N
Burkett, D
Burrough, R
Bushell, J
Butler, M
Butson, P
Buxton, S

Calder, D
Camp, J.P.
Canham, T
Canny, G
Carolan, K
Carpenter, B.R.
Carter, P
Carter, S
Carter, T
Catlin, S A
Cawdron, D
Chambers, D
Chambers, N (NC)
Chambers, V
Charles, M
Charles, P
Church, C
Churches, B (BC)
Clancy, T
Clark, F.C.
Clark, N
Clarke, M (MC)
Cock, M
Collins, D
Collins, L
Collins, P
Collins, S
Colson, R
Combes, B
Condon, M
Connett, V & T
Connor, N
Conroy, C.R.
Cook, C
Cook, D
Cook, K
Cook, R
Cooke, J (JC)
Coombs, T
Cooper, S
Coppard, G
Corbet, P
Corbett, L
Cornwell, D
Cornwell, L
Cowlin, J
Cox, A
Cox, J
Cox, S (SC)
Coxall, S
Cracknell, M (MCr)
Cresswell, M
Criddle, P
Cripps, R.J.
Croft, N (NCr)
Crooks, W
Cruddace, S
Crump, D
Cumming, L
Cunningham, M

Dagley, J.R.
Daly, J
Dandridge, P
Darrell-Lambert, D (DDL)
Davies, J.W.
Davies, K.W.
Davies, S
Davis, A (AD)
Davis, P (PDa)
Davis, T
Dawson, D
Dawton, B
Decouto, M (MD)
Delve, J (JRD)
Dent, A
Dent, M.D. (MDD)
Dickens, J
Digby, J
Ditzell, P
Dives, D
Dixon, J
Dobie, J
Dobson, J
Douch, I
Downie, I.S. (ISD)
Drake, S
Drewitt, E.J.A.
Drummond, L
Duckworth, N.A.
Durhsen, R
Durnerin, P (PD)
Dwyer, P

Eagles, R
Eaton, A
Ebbs, L
Edwards, E.Y.
Ekins, G.R.
Elders, C
Eldridge, T
Ellam, C
Elliott, H
Elliott-Moustache, G
Elmes, J-P
Elsden, D. (DE)
Elsey, N.J.C.
Emmens, R.P.
Entwistle, S
Erickson-Hull, D
Eva, J
Evans, G.D. (GDE)
Evans, L. (LE)

Fair, G
Fairweather, C
Farrar, A.R.
Farrell, C
Faulkner, T
Feltham, A
Ferris, P
Field, A
Field, J
Finch, P.J.
Firmin, R.J.
Fisher, S.
Fisher, S.L. (SLF)
Flindall, R. (RF)
Foakes, I
Foot, J
Ford, A.E.
Ford, K
Foster, G
Francis, G.J.
French, P
Fuller, L+
Fuller, M
Fuller, R, The late
Furley, C

Gibson, C
Gibson, M
Giddings, T.H.
Gifford, D.L.
Given, Q
Goddard, G
Goldsbrough, P
Gomer, D (DG)
Goodey, A
Gooding, J
Goodrick, R
Gordon, J
Gough, L.A.
Gower, A
Gram, G
Graves, R
Gray, P
Gray, R
Green, B
Green, C
Green, N C (NG)
Greenwood, J
Gregory, M (MRG)
Gregory, S (SDG)
Griffiths, D
Griggs, P M (PMG)
Grimwade, S (SGri)
Gross, R.D.
Gymer, P (PGy)

Hack, D.F.
Haines, W
Hale, D
Hale, P
Hall, A
Halley-Frame, V (VH-F)
Halsey, S.A.
Halstead, S
Hamilton, S
Harbison, Y
Harbott, A.G.
Harding, G
Harper, M
Harris, A (AH)
Harris, D
Harris, N.G.
Harris, T
Harrison, D W
Harrison, H
Harrison, L
Harrison, R
Hart, J
Hart, M
Hart, P (PHa)
Hart, T
Hartnett, K
Hartwell, C
Harvey, M
Harvey, N (NH)
Harvey, S
Hatton, W.A.
Hawgood, G
Hawkins, K.J.
Hawkins, P (PH)
Haxell, R
Haydon, R.M.
Healey, S.J.
Heaton, R.A.
Hennessey, D
Henry, M (MH)
Heywood, M.J.
Higginson, N (NHi)
Hill, M
Hipkin, A
Hoare, J
Hobart, C
Hobson, A
Hodgson, J
Hogg, J
Holden, D & T
Hollamby, G
Holland Haven Website
Holloway, K
Holm, M (MHo)
Holmes, A.L.
Holt, E
Holwell, B
Honey, M
Hopkins, P
Horwood, R
Hough, S
Howard, R (RH)
Howie, S
Hubbard, L
Huckle, S
Hudgell, K (KH)
Hudson, A
Huggins, S
Hughes, M
Hume, J
Hume, N
Humpage, K
Hunt, D
Hunter, J
Hunting, S (SH)
Hutchings, E.W.
Huxley, E (EH)
Hyland, P

Iddon, M
Ixer, M

Jackson, M
Jacobs, R.A. (RAJ)
James, G
James, G.A. (GAJ)
James, P
Jaques, L
Jarrett, S
Jarvis, K (KMJ)
Jayne, T
Jeffreys, T (TJe)
Jeffries, P
Jeffries, R
Jenner, R
Jennings, S
Jobbins, D
Johnson, A
Johnson, B
Johnson, M
Johnston, D
Jolly, M
Jones, B (BJ)
Jones, C
Jones, J (JJ)
Jones, R.J.
Jordan, M (MJ)
Jude, E
Jupp, C

Keane, D
Kearney, T (TK)
Keeble, E (EK)
Keeble, M
Kennnedy, K (KK)
Kennelly, A.D**.
Kennelly, T
Kennington, C
Kettle, A
King, D
Kinsler, V (VK)
Kirby, M.S.
Kite, P
Knight, D
Knight, G
Knowles, A

Lacey, H (HL)
Lambert, P
Lanfear, J
Lang, I.M
Larkin, P (PL)
Last, A.J. (AJL)
Lathey, P.A.
Lawes, C
Layfield, A.R.
Layton, H.M.
Leach, D
Leatherdale, S
Leavett, R
Ledgerton, R.J.W.
Leeder, E (EL)
Leerjet, E (ELj)
Legg, D
Legge, C
Leport, B (BL)
Lethbridge, H
Lethbridge, J (JLe)
Lewis, A
Lewis, C (CL)
Lewis, P
Lidington, A
Lincoln, N (NL)
Lindsell, N
Linnell, A
Low, D (DLo)
Lowen, J (JL)
Luther, F
Lyburn, A
Lycett, I
Lynes, H (HLy)

Macfarlane, C
Mackenzie-Grieve, C.J. (CJM-G)
Macrow, F.C.
Mander, R
Mantle, P
Mapp, B
Marchant, J.H.
Marriner, N
Martin, H
Martin, J.R.
Mason, R.C.
Massey, P.R.
Matthews, D
May, K (KM)
May, N
Mayfield, D
Mayhew, T
McCafferty, A
McCleary, M.J.
McGeeney, S
McGilvray, K.L.
McGowan, C
McLaughlin, J
McManus, K.J. (KMcM)
Mead, P
Meadows, B
Meaton, A
Mee, G
Mendham, T
Merchant, P
Messenger, C
Messenger, M
Middleton, A
Middleton, J
Miller, B
Miller, D
Minns, S
Mirrington, S
Mitchell, D (DMi)
Mitchell, M
Mitchell, M.T.
Mo, J (JMo)
Moore, G (GM)
Moore, H
Moore, R.C.
Moore, S
Moorhead, R
Moran, N.J.
Morgan, D
Morrison, D
Morrison, J
Muller, J
Mullins, A (AM)
Mumford, L
Murphy, N
Murray, J (JM)
Murray, J Snr (JM Snr)
Murtagh, C (CM)
Mynott, C.A.

Nash, C
Nasir, J
Neal, J
Neave, R (RNe)
Neller, E
Newman, D (DN)
Newman, K
Newson, P (PNs)
Newton, D
Newton, P (PNt)
Nice, S
Nixon, S (SN)
Noble, S.D.
Norris, R
North, D
North, P
North, S
Norton, J
Nowers, M
Nugent, F

Oakland, M
Ogilvy, A
Oliver,C
Olsen, K.M.
Orton, G.R.
Orwell, T
Osborne, B.A.

Outen, M (MO)
Owen,R

Padmore, M
Palfrey, G
Palmer, J
Palmer, K.J.
Palmer, L
Pankhurst, T
Papps, S (SP)
Parish, N.M.
Parker, L
Partridge, J
Paterson, C
Patient, S
Patmore, S
Pearce, N
Pearson, P
Pease, R M (RMP)
Peeling, J
Peers, M.F. (MFP)
Pett, K
Petts, D
Phillips, I
Phillips, S
Phillpot, V
Pilgrim, J
Pitcher, L
Platt, A (AP)
Pledge, D
Polain, G
Poldervaart, H
Ponting, T
Poolle, (CP)
Poole, P
Porter, D
Powell, R
Prentice, I
Preston, N
Price, K
Pryor, D
Pyke, P

Quantrill, T.M.J.
Quigg, A

Radford, M
Rae, A
Rae, R
Rae, R
Rafinski, A
Rank, M
Rawlings, N.D.
Rayment, K
Read, D
Read, S
Reed, M
Rees, D.G. (DGR)
Reeve, G
Reid, A
Reynolds, A
Rhodes, P
Rhymes, D (DJR)
Richardson, J
Riches, C
Riches, G
Riddell, C
Rimmell, M
Rivoire, J.R.
Roberts, A
Roberts, M
Robinson, T
Rodwell, M (MR)
Rolf, J
Rome, K
Rooney, M
Root, B
Roscoe, A
Rose, I
Ross , C
Rowe, W
Rufus-Marshall, C
Rush, M
Russell, L
Russell, M
Rutland, A
Ryan, L
Ryland, C
Ryland, G (GR)

Sabiniak, G.T.
Sanford, S
Sapsford, T
Satchell, S
Saunders, P
Saward, J (JSa)
Sawtell, G
Seabrook, J
Seale, J
Searle, M
Self, A
Selfe, J
Sellar, J
Selley, D (DSe)
Sellwood, J
Senior, B
Senior, N P (NPS)
Seymour-Fairey, D
Shaw, I
Shayler, D (DSh)
Shearman, A
Shearring, A (AShe)
Shepherd, M
Shields, C (CS)
Shippey, S
Shorrock, A.T. (ASho)
Shuter, M
Sidnell, C.J.
Sillitoe, T
Simmons, M
Simms, O
Sketch, P.A.
Smar, J
Smith, A & T
Smith, D (DSm)
Smith, L
Smith, G (GS)
Smith, I
Smith, K
Smith, M
Smith, N
Smith, P
Smith, P & H
Smith, R
Smith, R.H.
Smith, S
Smith, T
Snell, C
Spence, L (LS)
Spicer, N
Spooner, B
Stachnicki, I.A.
Stallard, B
Stallard, W
Steele, A.J.
Stevens, P
Steward, L, the late
Stewart, G
Stewart, I
Stewart, K.C.
Stile, D (DS)
Strangeman, P.J.
Street, P. (PS)
Stroud, A (AS)
Stuart, S
Sumner, N
Surridge, D
Sutherby, J.C.
Sutherland, M.P.
Sutton, D.R.
Sutton, G
Swaby, S (SSw)
Swan, J
Swinney, S (SS)
Sykes, J
Symons, F

Tanner, N
Tarbin, I
Tarling, K
Tassell, S (ST)
Taylor, D
Taylor, G & S
Taylor, J.F.
Theakston, B.P.
Thomas, A
Thomas, J
Thomas, S
Thompson, A.P.
Thorley, M
Thorogood, J
Thorpe, S
Tillbrook, L
Tiller, A (ATi)
Tongue, A
Treen, P
Trevett, F
Triston, P (PTr)
Trollope, C.E.
Tuck, D
Tunnicliffe, K
Tunnicliffe, K.S.
Turner, H
Tusa, F
Tusa, S
Tweed, A (ATw)
Twydell, M
Twyford, N
Tyas, C
Tyler, D
Tyler, J.P.
Tyler, P

Underwood, D (DU)
Upton, G
Urquart, D

Vale, M
Vaughan, H (HV)
Vaughan, P
Vaughan, R
Vennell, F (FV)
Verlander, N
Verrall, A
Vonk, R

Wagstaff, D (DW)
Wair, S
Walker, J
Wallace, M (MW)
Wallis, G
Walton, A
Ward, J
Wardill, A
Warren, D
Wasse, J (JWa)
Watkinson, C
Watson, I.S.
Watson, S
Watts, P.J.
Watts, R
Webb, E
Wei, E
Wells, A
Wells, E
Wells, G
Wheil, J
White, C
White, G
Whitehead, T
Whitelegg, D
Whiteman, P
Whitfield, J
Widgery, R
Wilby, T (TWby)
Wilcox, M
Wildlife Enquiries Team,
Wilkin, D.R.
Willett, I
Willett, J.D.
Williams, C
Williams, H
Williams, K
Williams, L
Williams, M
Willmott, G
Wills, C (CW)
Wilson, A
Wilson, T
Winn, A.C.
Winstanley, A
Witts, A.J.
Womack, G.P.
Wood, A.R.
Wood, P.R. (PW)
Wood, S.D. (SW)
Woodard, G.D.
Woodhouse, A
Woodrow, L
Woods, L
Woodward, I.D.
Woodward, R
Woollard, S
Wren, I
Wright, J (JW)
Wyatt, M
Wyatt, R

Yates, K
Yates, S
Young, R

Request for Information 2015

BBRC Records

Species	Site	No	Date
Pacific Swift	KGV Res.	1	7th July
Spectacled Warbler	Deal Hall, Dengie	1	29th August

Records for which no, or insufficient, information has been received

Species	Site	No	Date
Taiga Bean Goose	South Woodham Ferrers	4	19th January
Ferruginous Duck	Abberton Res.	1	21st-22nd August
Leach's Petrel	Frinton-on-Sea	1	5th October
Sooty Shearwater	Deal Hall, Dengie	1	11th September
Great White Egret	Foulness	1	17th January
Great White Egret	Boreham	1	17th January
Great White Egret	Potton Is.	1	8th March
Great White Egret	Stour Estuary	1	13th March
Great White Egret	The Naze	1	22nd March
Great White Egret	Loughton	1	27th March
Great White Egret	Rainham	1	12th May
Great White Egret	Wallasea Is.	1	2nd October
Great White Egret	Witham	1	6th November
White Stork	Rainham	1	24th August
Honey Buzzard	Gt Holland	1	22nd August
Honey Buzzard	Walthamstow Res.	1	22nd August
Honey Buzzard	Rainham	1	30th August
Honey Buzzard	Colchester	1	3rd September
Honey Buzzard	Beckton	1	6th September
Honey Buzzard	Stow Marsh	1	6th September
Honey Buzzard	Boreham	1	17th September
Honey Buzzard	Rainham	1	19th September
Black Kite	Writtle	1	16th May
Black Kite	Writtle	1	19th May
Black Kite	Gt Baddow	1	25th May
Black Kite	Ford End	1	7th June
Black Kite	Beckton	1	24th October
Montagu's Harrier	Wallasea Is.	1	27th April
Montagu's Harrier	Canewdon	1	4th May
Montagu's Harrier	Foulness	1	17th May
Montagu's Harrier	Marks Tey	1	9th July

Species	Site	No	Date
Montagu's Harrier	Deal Hall, Dengie	1	26th September
Goshawk	Roding Valley Meadows	1	21st January
Goshawk	Woodham Fen	1	28th February
Goshawk	Epping Forest	3	8th March
Goshawk	Bradwell BO	1	8th March
Goshawk	Tiptree	1	29th March
Goshawk	Fishers Green	1	25th April
Goshawk	Rainham	1	28th October
Goshawk	KGV Res.	1	31st October
Goshawk	Woodham Fen	1	31st October
Rough-legged Buzzard	Blue House Fm	1	20th October
Rough-legged Buzzard	Foulness	1	25th October
Corncrake	Bowers Marsh	1	10th May
Corncrake	Colchester Hythe	1	15th September
Black-winged Stilt	Heybridge Basin	1	4th December
Pectoral Sandpiper	Abberton Res.	1	6th September
Grey Phalarope	Brightlingsea	1	31st October
Grey Phalarope	Frinton-on-Sea	1	29th November
Puffin	Beckton	1	6th April
Iceland Gull	Tollesbury	1	10th February
Bee-eater	Marks Tey	8	26th June
Red-footed Falcon	Woodford Green	1	7th June
Great Grey Shrike	Rainham	1	17th October
Raven	Stanstead	1	1st July
Raven	Wivenhoe	2	22nd October
Woodlark	South Woodham	1	19th February
Woodlark	KGV Res.	1	17th March
Woodlark	Rainham	1	2nd October
Woodlark	Frinton-on-Sea	2	18th October
Woodlark	Wanstead	1	20th October
Woodllark	Wigboro Wick	1	25th October
Yellow-browed Warbler	Dagenham Chase	1	27th June
Yellow-browed Warbler	Warley Place	1	27th September
Yellow-browed Warbler	Woodford Green	1	1st October
Yellow-browed Warbler	South Woodham	1	1st October
Siberian Chiffchaff	Cornmill Meadows	1	11th January
Siberian Chiffchaff	Rainham	1	20th January
Siberian Chiffchaff	Thames View	1	15th October
Siberian Chiffchaff	Sewardstone Marsh	1	9th December

Earliest and Latest Dates of Summer Visitors

Species	Arrival Date	Location	Departure Date	Location
Garganey	March 14th	Hanningfield Res.	September 15th	Wat Tyler CP.
Little Ringed Plover	March 13th	Boreham	September 26th	Vange Marsh
Whimbrel*	March 23rd	Rainham	October 19th	Burnham-on-Crouch
Temminck's Stint	May 28th	Rainham		
Wood Sandpiper	April 13th	Blue House Fm	September 27th	Abberton Res.
Little Tern	April 23rd	Hanningfield Res./KGV Res.	September 12th	Bradwell BO/ Wakering
Black Tern	April 16th	Abberton Res.	October 8th	Rainham
Sandwich Tern*	April 3rd	Canvey Pt	November 22nd	Gunners Pk
Common Tern	March 30th	Beckton	October 23rd	Wallasea Is.
Arctic Tern	April 11th	Beckton/Hanningfield Res.	October 15th	Goldhanger
Turtle Dove	April 23rd	Boreham	October 27th	Connaught Water
Cuckoo	April 10th	Hanningfield Res./Chelmer Valley	September 25th	Old Hall
Swift	April 3rd	Grays	September 23rd	Sewardstone Marsh
Wryneck			September 1st	Wivenhoe
Hobby	April 6th	Jaywick	October 25th	Holyfield Hill Fm LV
Sand Martin	March 8th	Buckhurst Hill/Redbridge/ Rainham	October 6th	Belhus Woods
Swallow*	March 22nd	Abberton Res.	November 29th	Abberton Res.
House Martin	March 26th	Rainham	November 7th	Rainham
Garden Warbler	April 15th	Gunpowder Pk, LV	September 28th	Woodford Green
Lesser Whitethroat	April 16th	Rainham/Beckton/East India Dock	October 18th	Frinton-on-Sea
Common Whitethroat	April 6th	Barking	October 17th	Frinton-on-Sea
Grasshopper Warbler	April 13th	Rainham	September 13th	Rainham
Sedge Warbler	April 6th	Rainham	October 4th	Rainham
Reed Warbler	April 10th	Rainham	November 8th	Holland Haven
Wood Warbler	April 25th	Wanstead	August 30th	Wanstead
Willow Warbler	March 29th	Saffron Walden	October 17th	Frinton-on-Sea
Ring Ouzel	April 9th	Dagenham Chase	October 25th	Wigboro Wick Fm
Spotted Flycatcher	April 21st	Bow Creek Ecology Pk	October 1st	West Thurrock
Nightingale	April 6th	Fingringhoe Wick	July 6th	Wrabness
Pied Flycatcher	-	-	September 22nd	Vange
Common Redstart	April 6th	Beckton	November 13th	Two Tree Is.
Whinchat	April 14th	Rainham	October 31st	KGV Res.
Wheatear	March 6th	White Roding	November 15th	Dengie
Yellow Wagtail	March 13th	Braintree	October 27th	Frinton-on-Sea
White Wagtail**	March 20th	Blue House Fm	November 15th	Gt Warley
Tree Pipit	April 9th	Fairlop GP	October 11th	Heybridge G P

* Overwintering records in systematic list

Latest and Earliest Dates of Winter Visitors

Species	Arrival Date	Location	Departure Date	Location
Bewick's Swan	January 19th	Stow Marsh	November 6th	Abberton Res.
Whooper Swan	January 22nd	Tendring	October 30th	Frinton-on-Sea
Pink-footed Goose	May 4th	Bowers Marsh	September 30th	Stow Marsh
European White-fronted Goose	April 8th	Brightlingsea	October 17th	Abberton Res.
Scaup	April 22nd	Abberton Res.	November 22nd	Dagenham Chase
Long-tailed Duck	February 18th	E. Tilbury	September 8th	Hanningfield Res.
Velvet Scoter	April 9th	Abberton Res.	September 9th	Frinton-on-Sea
Goldeneye	May 1st	Abberton Res.	August 2nd	Colne Pt.
Smew	April 1st	Connaught Water	August 13th	KGV Res.
Red-breasted Merganser	April 25th	Mistley	September 28th	Frinton-on-Sea
Goosander	May 11th	Lt. Baddow	September 12th	KGV Res.
Red-throated Diver	April 28th	Frinton-on-Sea	October 5th	Frinton-on-Sea
Black-throated Diver	April 12th	Jaywick	October 5th	Frinton-on-Sea
Great Northern Diver	March 23rd	Frinton-on-Sea	October 11th	Blackwater estuary
Bittern	March 16th	Vange	August 11th	Abberton Res.
Red-necked Grebe	February 26th	Fingringhoe	September 9th	Old Hall
Slavonian Grebe	April 6th	Abberton Res.	August 16th	Abberton Res.
Hen Harrier	May 6th	Bradwell BO	August 11th	Bradwell BO
Purple Sandpiper	April 18th	Holland Haven	Octobe 22nd	Holland Haven
Jack Snipe	April 20th	Old Hall	September 8th	Mistley
Guillemot	May 23rd	Canvey Pt	September 8th	Canvey Pt
Merlin	May 17th	Bradwell BO	July 29th	Wallasea Is.
Shore Lark			October 31st	Frinton-on-Sea
Fieldfare	April 25th	Colchester Hythe	October 3rd	Rainham
Redwing	April 18th	Holland Haven	September 20th	KGV Res.
Yellow Wagtail	March 13th	Brainntree	October 27th	Frinton-on-Sea
Rock Pipit	April 9th	Abberton Res.	August 2nd	Colne Pt
Water Pipit	April 10th	Rainham	October 4th	Hanningfield Res.
Brambling	April 21st	Bradwell BO	September 27th	Frinton-on-Sea/ Epping/Chingford
Twite	April 5th	Colne Pt	October 16th	Sewardstone Marsh
Siskin*	May 17th	Coombe Wood, Thundersley	July 2nd	Leyton
Snow Bunting	February 27th	Jaywick	October 25th	Frinton-on-Sea
Lapland Bunting	February 4th	Stow Marsh	September 23rd	Frinton-on-Sea

** Summering record in systematic list

Wetland Bird Survey (WeBS) Totals for Essex 2015

Care should be taken when interpreting these figures as no records were available from several sites and there were no counts in some months from other areas.

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Mute Swan	720	508	456	502	822	909	773	605
Greylag Goose	1426	1842	1687	668	1890	1724	1946	1382
Canada Goose	3060	2096	2057	874	3628	2931	2445	2656
Dark-bellied Brent Goose	36808	48393	39410	3187	1236	23040	23574	24265
Shelduck	9757	7605	5050	1821	719	1442	3178	6161
Wigeon	18921	17381	7139	116	1964	14164	20171	14803
Gadwall	913	723	544	319	722	802	743	867
Teal	21701	18868	9265	1253	6553	11767	18439	16459
Mallard	3797	3368	2408	1557	3621	3690	3968	3273
Pintail	1648	1065	420	2	218	952	822	1044
Shoveler	838	891	774	440	1922	2436	1647	697
Pochard	1232	1020	619	375	2038	2192	2220	1399
Tufted Duck	2435	2806	2975	2550	4735	5309	3972	3048
Goldeneye	456	424	567	4	0	9	82	425
Red-breasted Merganser	187	189	188	32	0	41	81	179
Ruddy Duck	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Red-throated Diver	855	123	5	0	0	0	0	17
Little Grebe	405	382	244	106	335	308	297	377
Great Crested Grebe	460	494	644	534	740	1425	1650	1250
Cormorant	759	847	801	478	1301	1734	1781	1226
Little Egret	260	203	320	266	856	903	616	337
Grey Heron	140	148	136	101	126	224	164	124
Water Rail	8	12	3	4	2	4	3	2
Moorhen	403	474	429	229	302	338	243	290
Coot	2520	2701	2473	1436	8376	13481	7552	5155
Oystercatcher	17053	9485	12876	2241	13226	14617	12493	11995
Avocet	3945	3450	2248	513	1508	2323	3970	2812
Ringed Plover	694	468	241	118	2928	1293	432	764
Golden Plover	21914	35227	14618	12	5359	11993	27282	41743
Grey Plover	6923	5308	6908	1297	3827	6472	11167	8064
Lapwing	33847	38029	1344	399	1955	3967	12156	19279
Knot	45778	24781	11967	1	630	8930	31129	41853
Sanderling	791	36	495	1210	875	1082	186	738
Dunlin	73655	58548	26223	3486	4542	23532	37139	61324
Ruff	16	21	39	1	31	23	78	22
Snipe	191	251	169	44	30	72	67	182
Black-tailed Godwit	5015	5898	7700	5761	6822	6525	6586	7672
Bar-tailed Godwit	7321	2419	2216	272	759	2552	6620	8450
Curlew	5929	6070	4819	1885	5521	4152	5241	3946
Redshank	9176	8410	7854	1790	7042	8908	7852	7722
Greenshank	7	5	4	31	140	63	11	16
Turnstone	1090	728	1204	303	698	869	1281	1446

Gazetteer

Abberton Manor	TL 99 19
Abberton Reservoir	TL 98 17
Abbotts Hall Farm NR EWT	TL 96 14
Abridge	TQ 46 96
Aimes Green	TL 39 02
Aldham	TL 92 25
Alexandra Lake, Wanstead Flats	TQ 40 86
Alresford	TM 06 21
Alresford Grange	TL 05 20
Althorne	TQ 91 99
Ardleigh	TM 05 29
Ardleigh Reservoir	TM 03 28
Arkesdon	TL 48 34
Ashdon	TL 58 42
Armoury Fm, W. Bergholt	TL 97 27
Asheldham Bridge	TQ 96 01
Ashingdon	TQ 86 92
Aubrey Buxton NR, near Stansted	TL 52 26
Audley End	TL 52 37
Aveley	TQ 56 80
Aveley Landfill	TQ 55 81
Backwarden, Danbury	TL 78 03
Banbury Reservoir, Lee Valley	TQ 36 91
Bardfield	TL 67 30
Barking	TQ 45 84
Barking Bay/Marsh	TQ 45 81
Barking Park, Barking	TQ 44 85
Barling Marsh	TM 93 90
Barrenley's Wood, Billericay	TQ 70 94
Barton Hall Creek, R. Roach	TQ 91 90
Basildon	TQ 72 89
Bateman's Tower, Brightlingsea	TM 07 16
Bathside Bay, Dovercourt	TM 25 32
Battlesbridge	TQ 78 94
Batts Hall, Kirby-le-Soken	TM 22 21
Beachet Wood	TL 49 00
Beauchamp Roding	TL 58 10
Beaumont	TM 17 25
Beazley End	TL 74 30
Beckton	TQ 44 81
Beckton SW	TQ 45 82
Becontree, Dagenham	TQ 47 85
Beddalls Green, near Braintree	TL 74 21
Bedfords Park EWT, Havering-atte-Bower	TQ 51 92
Beeleigh	TL 84 07
Belchamp Otten, near Sudbury	TL 80 41
Belchamp Walter, near Sudbury	TL 81 40
Belfairs Wood NR, Hadleigh	TQ 82 86
Belhus Wood CP, Havering	TQ 57 82
Bendysh Wood	TL 61 40
Benfleet	TQ 77 86
Benfleet Creek, Canvey Island	TQ 78 85
Berechurch, Colchester	TL 99 21
Berwick Ponds, Rainham	TQ 54 83
Bicknacre	TL 78 02
Bigod's Wood, Gt Easton	TL 62 25
Billericay	TQ 67 94
Birch	TL 94 19
Birch Lake	TL 94 20
Birchanger	TL 50 22
Birdbrook	TL 70 41
Bittern Watchpoint, Lee Valley	TL 37 03
Black Cat, Fyfield	TL5509
Black Notley	TL 76 20
Blackmore	TL 60 01
Blackmore End	TL7330
Blake's Wood, near Danbury	TL 77 06
Blue House Farm EWT, North Fambridge	TQ 80 97
Boarded Barns Farm, Ongar CBC	TL 56 05
Bocking	TL 76 24
Boreham GP	TL 74 10
Borley	TL 84 42
Bournes Green, Southend-on-Sea	TQ 91 86
Bower Hall, Silver End	TL 81 19
Bowers Marsh RSPB	TQ7586
Boxted	TM 0032
Bradfield	TM 14 30
Bradwell Bird Observatory (BBO)	TM 03 08
Bradwell-on-Sea	TM 00 06
Bradwell GP, nr Colchester	TL 80 22
Braintree	TL 76 23
Brandy Hole	TQ 82 95
Braxted Park	TL 85 15
Brent Hall, Lawns Farm, near Finchingfield	TL 67 33
Brentwood Leisure Centre	TQ 59 95
Bretons, Hornchurch	TL 51 84
Brickhouse Farm, Peldon	TL 99 16
Bridgemarsh Island, Crouch Estuary	TQ 89 96
Bridgewick Farm, Dengie	TR 02 00
Brightlingsea	TM 08 17
Broaks Wood, Gosfield	TL 78 31
Brookes Reserve EWT, near Greenstead Green	TL 81 26
Broomfield, Chelmsford	TL 70 10
Broomhouse, Langham	TM 0334
Broxted	TL 58 27
Buckhurst Hill	TQ 41 93
Bully Pt NR, Stratford	TQ 37 83
Bulphan Fen	TQ 64 86
Bumbles Green	TL 4105
Bumpstead	TL 67 41
Bulmer	TL 84 40
Bures	TL 90 34
Burnham-on-Crouch	TQ 94 96
Burstead	TQ 67 92
Canewdon	TQ 90 94
Canning Town	TQ 40 81
Canvey Coastguards	TQ 77 82
Canvey Island, Thames Estuary	TQ 81 82
Canvey Point	TQ 82 83
Canvey Seafront	TQ 82 80
Canvey Wick	TQ 76 83
Carrolls Farm, Sewardstone	TQ 38 96
Cattawade Marsh/Splodge	TM 09 32
Catmere	TL 4939
Cely Woods, Thames Chase	TQ 55 83
Chafford Hundred, Thurrock	TQ 60 79
Chalkney Wood	TL 87 27
Chantry Wood, Wickham Bishops	TL 84 13
Chesterford	TL 51 41
Chigborough Lakes	TL 87 08
Chignall Smeally	TL 66 11
Chignall St James	TL 66 09
Chigwell	TQ 44 93
Childerditch	TQ 61 89
Chingford	TQ 38 94
Chingford Marsh, Lee Valley	TQ 36 92
Chingford Plain, Epping Forest	TQ 39 95
Chipping Ongar	TL 56 03
Chrishall	TL 44 39
Church Langley	TL 47 10
Cindery Island, Brightlingsea Creek	TM 09 16
City of London Cemetery, Wanstead	TQ 42 86
Clacton-on-Sea	TM 17 15
Clavering	TL 47 31
Clayhall, near Wix	TQ 42 90
Cleeshall Great Wood, Alphamstone	TL 87 33
Coalhouse Fort, East Tilbury	TQ 69 76
Coate Outfall, Dengie	TR 03 99
Cobmarsh Island, near West Mersea	TM 00 12
Cockaynes Wood, near Alresford	TM 05 21
Coggeshall	TL 85 22
Coggeshall Hamlet	TL 85 21
Colchester Hythe Hill	TM 01 24
Cold Norton	TL 84 00
Coleman's Farm	TL 83 15
Coleman's Reservoir	TL 83 15

Collier Row, Romford	TQ 49 91
Colliers Reach, R. Blackwater	TL 07 88
Colne Engaine	TL 8530
Colne Pt	TM 10 12
Connaught Water, Epping Forest	TQ 40 95
Cooksmill Green, Writtle	TL 63 06
Coombe Wood, Thundersley	TQ 78 88
Coopers Creek, Blackwater Estuary	TL 90 05
Coopersale	TL 47 02
Copford SW, near Stanway	TL 93 24
Coploe Hill, Strethall	TL 49 42
Copped Hall Estate, Epping Forest	TL 43 01
Copped Hall Warren, Epping Forest	TQ 43 00
Copperas Bay, Stour Estuary	TM 19 32
Copperas Wood	TM 20 31
Copt Hall, Little Wigborough	TL 98 14
Corbets Tey	TQ 56 85
Cornmill Meadows, Lee Valley	TL 38 01
Corringham	TQ 70 83
Coryton	TQ 74 82
Cranham Marsh, Upminster	TQ 57 87
Crays Hill, Wickford	TQ 70 93
Crays Hall Farm	TQ79
Creekmouth, near Beckton	TQ 45 81
Creeksea, near Burnham-on-Crouch	TQ 93 96
Cressing, near Braintree	TL 78 20
Cripplegate, Southminster	TL 96 00
Crowsheath Wood, near Hanningfield Reservoir	TQ 72 96
Cudmore Grove CP, Mersea Island	TM 06 14
Curry Farm, Bradwell	TM 99 05
Dagenham	TQ 50 84
Dagenham Chase	TQ 51 85
Dagenham Corridor	TQ 49 87
Dagnam Park, Harold Hill	TQ 55 93
Danbury	TL 78 05
Danbury Common	TL 78 04
Deal Hall, Dengie	TR 01 97
Debden	TL 55 33
Debden Green	TQ 43 98
Decoy Point, Heybridge Basin	TL 89 06
Dedham	TM 05 33
Distillery Pond, Colchester	TM 01 23
Dobbs Weir, Nazeing	TL 38 08
Docura's Farm, Little Horkesley	TM 02 33
Doddinghurst	TQ 59 98
Donyland Wood	TM 01 22
Dovercourt	TM 25 31
Dovers Corner GP, Hornchurch CP	TQ 52 83
Downham, near Wickford	TQ 72 95
Duck Wood LNR, Harold Hill	TQ 55 92
Dunton	TQ 66 88
Dutton Hill, Thaxted	TL 61 31
Earls Colne	TL 85 28
East Donyland	TL 03 21
East Ham	TQ 43 83
East India Dock	TQ 63 75
East Mersea	TM 04 74
East Tilbury	TQ 68 77
Easters, The (see Good & High Easter)	
Easton Lodge, near Great Dunmow	TL 59 23
Eastwood, near Southend-on-Sea	TQ 84 88
Elmdon	TL 46 39
Elmshaws Farm Woods, Billericay	TQ 65 93
Elmstead	TM 06 25
Elsenham Hall, near Stansted Mountfitchet	TL 54 25
Epping	TL 46 02
Epping Forest	TQ 42 98
Epping Forest Burial Park	TL 39 03
Essex Filter Beds	TQ 36 86
Regiment Way GC, Chelmsford	TL 96 24
Fairlop	TQ 45 85
Fairstead, near Terling	TL 77 17
Farnham, near Bishops Stortford	TL 47 24
Felsted	TL 67 20
Fernholls, Epping Forest	TQ 39 97
Finchingfield	TL 68 32
Fingringhoe	TM 02 20
Fingringhoe GP	TM 04 20
Fingringhoe Mill	TM 03 20
Fingringhoe Wick NR EWT	TM 09 19
Fishers Green, Lee Valley	TL 37 03
Flag Creek, St Osyth	TM 10 16
Fleet Head, Wakering	TR 94 89
Fobbing	TQ 71 83
Fordham	TL 92 28
Fordham Heath	TL 94 26
Fordstreet	TL 92 26
Forest Gate	TQ 40 85
Foulness Pt	TM 04 95
Frating	TM 09 23
Friday Lake, Lee Valley	TL 37 03
Friday Wood	TL 98 21
Frinton-on-Sea	TM 23 19
Fryerning, near Ingatestone	TL 63 00
Fryerns, Basildon	TQ 72 89
Fullbridge, Chelmer	TL 85 07
Fuller Street, River Ter	TL 73 15
Galleycable Wood, Gt Leighs	TL 75 17
Galleyhill Wood, near Waltham Abbey	TL 39 03
Galleywood, near Chelmsford	TL 05 18
Gallows Corner, Danbury	TQ 53 90
Gallows Green, near Stanway	TL 92 26
Garnetts Wood, Great Dunmow	TL 63 18
Geedon Saltings, Colne Estuary	TM 04 18
Gestingthorpe	TL 81 38
Gidea Park, Romford	TQ 52 29
Gilwell Park, Roxwell	TQ 39 97
Girling Reservoir, Lee Valley	TQ 36 94
Glebe Outfall, Dengie	TM 03 06
Gloucester Park, Basildon	TQ 70 89
Gobions Pit, near East Tilbury	TQ 68 97
Goldhanger	TL 98 08
Good Easter	TL 62 12
Gosbeck's Farm, Colchester	TL 97 22
Gosfield	TL 78 29
Gosfield Airfield	TL 77 31
Gosfield Lake	TL 78 29
Grangewaters	TQ 61 82
Grays	TQ 61 77
Great Baddow, Chelmsford	TL 72 05
Great Braxted	TL 86 14
Great Bromley	TM 08 26
Great Chesterford	TL 50 42
Great Cob Island, Blackwater Estuary	TL 98 10
Great Dunmow	TL 62 22
Great Edney Wood, near Margaretting	TL 66 03
Great Hallingbury	TL 51 19
Great Henny	TL 86 37
Great Holland	TM 21 19
Great Holland Pits NR	TM 20 19
Great Horkesley	TL 97 30
Great Leighs	TL 73 38
Great Loveney Hall	TL8931
Great Maplestead	TL 80 34
Great Notley	TL 74 21
Great Oakley	TM 19 27
Great Parndon, Harlow	TL 43 08
Great Sampford	TL 65 36
Great Totham	TL 86 12
Great Wakering	TR 94 87
Great Waltham	TL 69 13
Great Wigborough	TL 96 15
Great Yeldham	TL 76 38
Greenstead Green	YQ 52 03
Gunners Park, Shoebury	TQ 93 84
Gunpowder Park, Sewardstone	TQ 37 98
Hackney Marsh	TQ 36 86
Hackney Wick	TQ 87 34
Hadleigh	TQ 81 87
Hadleigh Castle CP	TQ 80 86
Hadleigh Downs	TQ 80 86
Hainault Forest CP	TQ 47 93
Hall Farm, Coggeshall	TL 86 20
Hall Marsh Scrape, Lee Valley	TL 37 01

Halstead TL 81 30
Hamford Water TM 22 25
Hampton Barns, R. Roach TQ 90 91
Handley Barns Farm, Ingatestone TL64 01
Handley Green Farm, Margaretting TL 65 01
Hangman's Wood, Blackshots TQ 63 79
Hanningfield Reservoir TQ 73 97
Hargreave's Scout Camp, Little Heath TQ 46 89
Harlow TL 45 10
Harold Wood SW TQ 56 91
Harrow Lodge Park, Hornchurch TQ 53 86
Harwich TM 25 30
Haselbury TL 60 37
Hatfield Broad Oak TL 54 16
Hatfield Forest TL 54 19
Hatfield Heath TL 52 15
Hatfield Peverel TL 78 11
Haven Point, Wakering Stairs TQ 97 87
Havengore Island, Foulness Group TQ 97 88
Havering CP TQ 50 93
Havering-atte-Bower TQ 51 93
Hawkwell TQ 84 92
Hayes Hill Farm, Lee Valley TL 38 03
Hazeleigh Wood TL 83 04
Heckfordbridge TL 94 21
Hedge End Island, Hamford Water TM 24 24
Helions Bumpstead TL 65 41
Hempstead Wood TL 65 38
Henny Street TL 88 38
Heybridge Basin TL 87 07
Heybridge GP TL 86 06
Hickford Hill TL 77 44
High Beach TQ 40 97
High Easter TQ 62 14
High Ongar TL 56 03
High Roding TL 60 17
Highams Park, London E4 TQ 38 91
Highwood, Mill Green TL 63 04
Hockley TQ 84 92
Hockley Woods TQ 83 91
Hole Haven, Canvey Island TQ 76 82
Holland Haven TM 21 17
Holland-on-Sea TM 20 16
Hollingsons Mead, River Stort TL 47 12
Holliwell Pt, Dengie TR 02 96
Hollow Pond, Leyton Flats TQ 39 89
Holyfield Hall Farm, Lee Valley TL 38 03
Holyfield Marsh, Lee Valley TL 38 03
Hooks Marsh, Lee Valley TL 37 01
Hornchurch TQ 53 86
Hornchurch CP TQ 53 82
Horndon-on-the-Hill TQ 66 83
Horsey Island, Hamford Water TM 23 24
Horsey Wade, Hamford Water TM 23 23
Howe Outfall, Dengie TM 02 02
Howlands Marsh NR, St Osyth TM 11 16
Hullbridge TQ 81 94
Hunsdon Meads TL 41 10
Hutton TQ 63 95
Hydemarsh, Crouch Estuary TQ 87 97
Hylands Park, Chelmsford TQ 68 04
Ilford TQ 44 86
Iltney Farm, Mundon TL 88 04
Ingatestone TQ 64 99
Ingatestone SW TQ 66 98
Ingrebourne Valley TQ 53 84
Iron Latch NR EWT, Eight Ash Green TL 95 26
Jaywick TM 15 13
Judas Gap, Flatford TL 84 10
Kelvedon TL 86 18
Kelvedon Hatch TQ 57 99
King George V Reservoir (KGV), Lee Valley TQ 37 95
Kirby Cross TM 21 20
Kirby-le-Soken TM 22 22
Laindon TQ 68 89
Lamarsh TL 89 35
Lambourne, near Abridge TQ 47 96
Landermere TM 19 23
Landwick, Dengie TL 99 00
Langdon Hills NR EWT TQ 68 87
Langenhoe TM 00 18
Langenhoe/Fingringhoe Ranges TM 04 17
Langford, near Maldon TL 83 08
Langham TM 03 33
Langley, near Clavering TL 43 34
Larkswood, Chingford TQ 38 92
Latchingdon TL 88 00
Latton Common, Harlow TL 46 08
Lauriston Farm, Goldhanger TL 92 08
Lawford, near Manningtree TM 09 31
Lawling Creek, Blackwater Estuary TL 91 04
Layer Breton TL 94 18
Layer Marney TL 92 17
Layer-de-la-Haye TL 96 20
Lee Valley Reservoirs: see Banbury, Girling, King George V (KGV), Lockwood & Walthamstow TQ 35 87
Lee Valley, Walthamstow Marsh TQ 35 87
Leabridge, Leyton TQ 35 86
Leez Reservoir TL 20 18
Leigh Marsh TQ 83 85
Leigh-on-Sea TQ 84 86
Lexden TL 97 25
Leyton Flats TL 39 86
Leyton Marsh TQ 37 85
Limbourne Creek, Blackwater Estuary TL 87 05
Lingwood Common TL 77 06
Lippitts Hill, Epping Forest TQ 39 96
Liston TL 85 44
Little Baddow TQ 78 07
Little Baddow Heath TL 77 07
Little Braxted TL 83 14
Little Canfield TL 58 21
Little Chesterford TL 51 41
Little Clacton TM 16 18
Little Dunmow TL 65 21
Little Hallingbury TL 50 17
Little Heath TQ 46 88
Little Oakley TM 21 29
Little Sampford TL 65 33
Little Wakering TQ 93 88
Little Waltham TL 70 12
Littlebury TL 51 39
Littlebury Green TL 48 38
Littley Wood, Debden TL 5361
Lockwood Reservoir, Lee Valley TQ 35 90
Lofts Farm GPs, Heybridge TL 86 06
Long Hills North, Epping Forest TQ 40 96
Long Running, Epping Forest TQ 43 99
Long Wood, Langdon Hills TQ 67 86
Loughton TQ 42 96
Lower Raypits, R. Crouch TQ 92 94
Maldon TL 85 06
Manningtree TM 10 31
Mann Wood, Gt Leighs TL 74 17
Manuden TL 49 26
Maplin Bank TQ 98 83
Mardyke Valley TQ 56 79
Margaretting TL 67 01
Margaretting Tye, near Margaretting TL 68 01
Marks Gate, Dagenham TQ 48 90
Marks Tey TL 91 23
Markshall Wood, Coggeshall TL 83 26
Marsh Farm, South Woodham Ferrers TQ 81 96
Marsh House Decoy, Dengie TM 01 04
Marshhouse, Dengie TM 03 04
Matching Church TL 52 12
Matching Green TL 55 10
Maydays Farm, Mersea Island TM 02 15
Mayesbrook Park, Dagenham TQ 46 84
Mayland TL 92 02
Maylands GC TQ 56 92
Meeting Lane, Mersea TM 0414
Mersea Island TM 03 14
Mersea Strood TM 01 15

Middleton	TL 87 39
Middlewick Farm, Dengie	TR 01 98
Mill Green	TL 64 01
Mill Meads, Stratford	TL 38 83
Mill Meadows, Billericay	TQ 67 94
Mistley	TM 12 32
Mollands GP, South Ockendon	TQ 59 82
Monkhams Hall	TQ 40 92
Monk Street, Dunmow	TL 61 28
Morley Grove, Harlow	TL 44 10
Mount Bures	TL 90 32
Mountnessing	TQ 63 97
Moverons, near Brightlingsea	TM 06 18
Mucking	TQ 68 81
Mucking Creek, R. Thames	TQ 69 80
Mundon	TL 87 02
TLMundon Old Church	TL 88 26
Nags Head Lane Fishery, Brentwood	TQ 57 91
Navestock	TQ 53 97
Nayland	TL 97 34
Naze, The	TM 26 24
Nazeing GP, Lee Valley	TL 38 07
Nazeing, Lee Valley	TL 41 06
Nazeingbury	TL 38 06
Netherhall GP, Lee Valley	TL 39 08
New England Island, Foulness Group	TQ 97 89
Newney Green, near Roxwell	TL 65 07
Newport	TL 52 33
Norsey Wood, Billericay	TQ 68 95
North Fambridge	TQ 86 97
North Ockendon	TQ 58 94
North Weald	TL 49 03
North Woolwich	TQ 80 43
Northey Island, Blackwater Estuary	TL 88 06
Norton Heath	TL 52 33
Norton Mandeville	TL 58 04
Oakley Marshes, Hamford Water	TM 23 28
Old Hall Marshes NR RSPB	TL 98 11
Oliver's Orchard, Colchester	TL 96 21
Olympic Pk,., Lee Valley	TQ 37 84
Ongar	TL 56 03
Ongar Park Wood	TL 50 02
Oozedam, Coryton	TQ 73 83
Orplands (managed retreat), Bradwell	TL 98 06
Orsett, Thurrock	TQ 64 81
Osea Island, Blackwater Estuary	TL 91 06
Ovington Hall, Ashen	TL76 42
Oxenham Farm, Great Wakering	TQ 96 88
Pages Wood, Upminster	TQ 55 91
Paglesham	TQ 92 93
Paglesham Lagoon	TQ 92 90
Parkeston	TM 22 32
Parndon, near Harlow	TL 44 06
Parsloes Creek, Dagenham	TQ 47 84
Passingford Bridge	TQ 51 97
Paynes Lane GP, Nazeing, Lee Valley	TQ 38 05
Pebmarsh	TL 8533
Peldon	TL 99 17
Pete Tye Common	TM 00 18
Pewet Island, Blackwater Estuary	TL 99 08
Pewit Island, Hamford Water	TM 23 26
Piercing Hill, Epping Forest	TQ 44 99
Pitsea	TQ 74 88
Pitsea Marsh	TQ 74 87
Plaistow	TQ 40 82
Pod's Wood, Tiptree	TL 90 17
Point Clear, St Osyth	TM 09 14
Pole Hill, Chingford, Epping Forest	TQ 38 95
Potton Island, Foulness Group	TQ 95 91
Prior's Wood, near Takeley	TL 56 21
Priory Park, Southend	TQ 87 87
Purfleet Chalk Pits	TQ 56 78
Purfleet-on-Thames	TQ 56 78
Pyefleet Channel, Mersea Island	TM 04 16
Pyrgo Park, Havering	TQ 52 93
Quendon	TL 51 29
Radwinter	TL 6037
Rainham	TQ 52 82
Rainham GP	TQ 54 82
Rainham Marshes NR RSPB	TQ 52 80
Ramsden Heath	TQ 71 95
Ramsey Island, Blackwater Estuary	TL 94 05
Ramsey, near Harwich	TM 21 30
Rat Island, Colne Estuary	TM 05 17
Rawreth	TQ 78 93
Ray Sands, Dengie Coast	TM 04 00
Rayleigh	TQ 80 90
Rayne	TL 73 23
Redlands, Chrishall	TL 44 39
Redward Outfall, Crouch Estuary	TQ 98 96
Reeveshall Marsh, Mersea Island	TM 04 16
Rettendon	TQ 76 98
Richmond's Green, Thaxted	TL 6229
Rickling Green	TL 65 25
Ridgewell Airfield, Ashen	TL 75 42
Ridley Hall, near Fuller Street	TL 75 15
Rivenhall End	TL 84 16
Rochford	TQ 87 90
Rochford GC	TQ 86 89
Rock Farm, Colchester	TM 01 22
Roding Fields	TQ 43 94
Roding Valley NR	TQ 42 95
Rolls Farm, nr Tollesbury	TL 95 08
Roman River Valley	TL 96 20
Rowhedge	TM 02 22
Rowney Wood, Debden	TL 57 33
Roxwell	TL 64 08
Royal Albert Docks, R. Thames	TQ 43 90
Roydon	TL 40 10
Runwell	TQ 74 94
Rushey Mead	TL 49 19
Russell Green GPs, near Chelmsford	TL 7512
Saffron Walden	TL 54 23
Salcott	TL 94 13
Sales Point, Dengie	TM 03 08
Saling, near Braintree	TL 70 25
Sandbeach, Dengie	TR 02 05
Sandon GP, Great Baddow	TL 74 05
Sawbridgeworth Marsh	TL 48 14
Sawyer's Hall, Brentwood	TQ 59 94
Seven Kings	TQ 45 88
Seventy Acres Lake, Lee Valley	TL 37 03
Sewards End, Saffron Walden	TL 57 38
Sewardstone	TQ 38 98
Sewardstonebury	TQ 39 95
Shadwell Wood, near Ashdon NR EWT	TL 57 41
Sheering	TL 50 13
Shell Haven, Coryton	TQ 74 81
Shenfield	TQ 60 94
Shoebury	TQ 93 84
Shoeburyness	TQ 93 83
Shopland, near Southend-on-Sea	TQ 89 18
Shotgate Thickets, near Wickford	TQ 76 93
Shrub End	TL 9723
Sible Hedingham	TL 77 34
Silver End	TL 81 20
Silvertown	TQ 40 79
Skipper's Island, Hamford Water	TM 21 24
Skreens Park	TL 62 07
Slough House Farm, near Heybridge	TL 87 09
Snaresbrook, Waltham Forest	TQ 39 89
South Benfleet	TQ 78 86
South Green	TM 04 20
South Hanningfield	TL 74 97
South House Farm, Maldon	TL 86 05
South Ockendon	TQ 58 81
South Park, Ilford	TQ 45 86
South Shoebury	TQ 92 84
South Weald	TQ 57 93
South Woodford	TQ 40 90
South Woodham Ferrers	TQ 80 97
Southchurch Park, Southend-on-Sea	TQ 89 45
Southend Pier	TQ 88 84
Southey Creek, Blackwater Estuary	TQ 88 05

Southminster	TQ 95 99
Spitalfields	TQ 37 84
South Weald Cricket Ground	TQ 57 49
Springfield, Chelmsford	TL 72 07
St Lawrence, Dengie	TL 95 06
St Osyth	TM 12 15
St Osyth Beach	TM 12 12
Stambourne, near Steeple Bumpstead	TL 72 38
Stambridge	TQ 89 91
Stanford Rivers, near Chipping Ongar	TL 53 00
Stanford Warren	TQ 68 81
Stanford-le-Hope	TQ 68 82
Stansgate, near St Lawrence	TL 93 05
Stansted Airport Lagoons	TL 55 22
Stansted Mountfitchet	TL 51 25
Stanway GP	TL 94 23
Stanway Green	TL 95 23
Stapleford Tawney	TQ 50 99
Star Lane Pits, Wakering	TQ 93 87
Stebbing	TL 66 24
Steeple, Dengie	TL 93 03
Stickling Green, Clavering	TL 47 32
Stock	TQ 68 98
Stondon Massey	TL 5800
Stone Marsh, The Naze	TM 24 25
Stone Point, Mersea Island	TM 07 15
Stone Point, The Naze	TM 24 25
Stones Green, Wix	TM 16 26
Stour Reserve	TM 19 31
Stow Creek, North Fambridge	TQ 84 96
Stow Marsh	TQ 83 96
Stratford	TQ 38 84
Strawberry Hill Pond, Epping Forest	TQ 42 97
Strethall	TL 48 39
Stubbers OPC, Corbets Tey	TQ 57 84
Sturmer Mere, near Haverhill	TL 69 43
Sunnymead Farm	TM 0522
Sutton Road C emetary	TQ 88 87
Takeley	TL 56 21
Tednambury Marsh, Gaston Green	TL 49 16
Tendring	TM 14 24
Terling	TL 77 15
Tewkes Creek, Canvey	TQ 80 84
Thames Barrier	TQ 41 79
Thames Chase	TQ 5885
Thaxted	TL 61 31
The Chantry,Little Horkesley	TL 97 32
The Hythe, Colchester	TM 01 24
The Mores Wood, near Brentwood	TQ 56 96
The Naze at Walton	TM 26 24
The Strood, Mersea Island	TM 01 15
The Warren (see Stanford Warren)	
Theydon Bois, Epping	TQ 44 98
Theydon Garnon, near Theydon Bois	TQ 47 99
Thorley Wash, Stort Valley	TL 48 18
Thorndon CP (North)	TQ 60 91
Thorndon CP (South)	TQ 62 90
Thorpe Bay	TQ 91 85
Thorpe-le-Soken	TM 18 22
Thorrington	TM 09 20
Thundersley	TQ 79 88
Thurrock Thameside EWT	TQ 69 80
Tilbury	TQ 63 76
Tilbury Power Station	TQ 66 75
Tillingham	TL 99 03
Tillingham GP	TL 99 03
Tilty	TL 5926
Tiptree	TL 89 16
Tollesbury	TL 95 10
Tollesbury Wick NR EWT	TM 04 19
Tolleshunt d'Arcy	TL 93 12
Tolleshunt Knights	TL 91 14
Tolleshunt Major	TL 90 11
Toot Hill	TL 51 02
Turncole Farm, Dengie	TQ 99 88
Twinstead	TL 86 36
Two Tree Island, Leigh-on-Sea	TQ 82 85
Tylers Common, Upminster	TQ 56 90
Ulting	TL 80 08
University of Essex, Colchester	TM 02 23
Upminster	TQ 56 87
Valentines Park, Ilford	TQ 43 87
Vange Marsh	TQ 72 85
Vicarage Wood, South Weald	TQ 57 93
Virley Channel, R. Blackwater	TL 95 13
Wake Arms Pond, Epping Forest	TQ 42 98
Wake Valley, Epping Forest	TQ 41 98
Wakering Boatyard	TQ 94 88
Wakering Stairs	TQ 97 87
Wallasea Island, Crouch/Roach Estuaries	TQ 96 93
Waltham Abbey	TL 38 00
Walthamstow Reservoirs, Lee Valley	TQ 35 89
Walton-on-The-Naze	TM 25 21
Wanstead Flats, Epping Forest	TQ 40 86
Wanstead Park	TQ 41 87
Warley	TQ 59 92
Warley Place NR	TQ 58 90
Warren Gorge	TQ 59 79
Warren Pond, Epping Forest	TQ 39 94
Waterworks NR	TQ 36 86
Wat Tyler CP, Pitsea	TQ 73 86
Watts Wood, Purfleet	TQ 56 78
Weald CP, near South Weald	TQ 57 94
Weeley	TM 14 22
Weeleyhall Wood	TM 15 21
Wendens Ambo	TL 51 36
Wennington	TQ 54 81
West Bergholt	TL 95 27
West Ham	TQ 40 83
West Hanningfield	TQ 73 99
West Mersea	TM 00 12
West Thurrock	TQ 58 77
West Tilbury	TQ 66 77
West Wick, near Burnham-on-Crouch	TQ 97 98
West Wood EWT, Great Sampford	TL 62 33
Westcliff-on-Sea	TQ 86 86
Whetmead NR, nr Witham	TL 83 13
Whipps Cross	TQ 38 88
White Colne	TL 87 30
White Notley	TL 78 18
White Roding	TL 56 13
Whiteash Green, near Halstead	TL 79 30
Whitepark Fm	TL 97 33
Wicken Bonhunt	TL 49 33
Wickford	TQ 75 93
Wickham Bishops	TL 83 12
WickhaM St Paul	TL 83 36
Widford	TL 69 05
Wigborough Bay, Abberton Reservoir	TL 96 16
WigboroWick Farm, St Osyth	TM 11 14
William Girling Reservoir, Lee Valley	TQ 36 94
Willingale	TL 59 07
Willows Green, Great Leighs	TL 72 19
Wimbish	TL 59 36
Wintry Wood, Epping Forest	TL 47 03
Witham	TL 81 15
Wivenhoe	TM 03 21
Wix	TM 15 03
Wixoe	TL 71 42
Woodford	TQ 40 91
Woodford Green	TQ 41 92
Woodham Fen	TQ 79 97
Woodham Mortimer	TL 96 16
Woodham Walter	TL 80 06
Woodrolfe Creek, Blackwater Estuary	TL 97 10
Woolwich	TQ 43 79
Wormingford, Colchester	TL 93 31
Wrabness	TM 17 31
Writtle	TL 67 06
Writtle Forest	TL 65 03
Writtle Park	TL 65 03
Yardley Hill, Epping Forest	TQ 38 95

Essex Ringing Report for 2015

Simon Cox

The total of 14,828 birds ringed in Essex during 2015 is the most since 2010. The Mute Swan and gull totals reflect the efforts made by the East Anglian Swan Group and the North Thames Gull Group respectively. Not a single Tree Sparrow was ringed in Essex in 2015 but the Bullfinch total was the highest for several years despite the species being much declined in the county overall. The warbler totals reflect the relative abundance of the individual species and Glaucous Gull features in the list for the first time.

A selection of recoveries and controls is shown though once again some sightings of colour-ringed birds that have not been added to the BTO database would have qualified for inclusion, had details been more readily available.

Table 1: Totals of birds ringed in Essex 2015

Species	2015 Total
Mute Swan	86
Greylag Goose	1
Mallard	2
Little Egret	6
Grey Heron	12
Sparrowhawk	14
Moorhen	3
Avocet	3
Oystercatcher	1
Lapwing	4
Redshank	4
Common Tern	26
Black-headed Gull	842
Common Gull	11
Lesser Black-backed Gull	27
Herring Gull	920
Yellow-legged Gull	4
Caspian Gull	1
Glaucous Gull	1
Great Black-backed Gull	67
Stock Dove	33
Woodpigeon	47
Collared Dove	20
Turtle Dove	3
Cuckoo	1
Barn Owl	142
Little Owl	6
Tawny Owl	3
Kingfisher	4
Green Woodpecker	10

Species	2015 Total
House Martin	58
Cetti's Warbler	27
Long-tailed Tit	331
Chiffchaff	324
Willow Warbler	63
Blackcap	459
Garden Warbler	8
Lesser Whitethroat	47
Whitethroat	143
Dartford Warbler	1
Grasshopper Warbler	3
Sedge Warbler	60
Reed Warbler	179
Nuthatch	9
Treecreeper	28
Wren	292
Starling	772
Blackbird	342
Fieldfare	1
Song Thrush	57
Redwing	10
Mistle Thrush	2
Spotted Flycatcher	1
Robin	411
Nightingale	1
Pied Flycatcher	1
Redstart	2
Whinchat	1
Stonechat	1
Dunnock	475

Species	2015 Total
Great Spotted Woodpecker	42
Kestrel	32
Magpie	18
Jay	8
Jackdaw	16
Rook	2
Goldcrest	492
Firecrest	8
Blue Tit	2,300
Great Tit	1,068
Coal Tit	107
Marsh Tit	8
Bearded Tit	2
Sand Martin	13
Swallow	734

Species	2015 Total
House Sparrow	164
Yellow Wagtail	50
Grey Wagtail	4
Pied/White Wagtail	11
Meadow Pipit	14
Brambling	1
Chaffinch	436
Bullfinch	104
Greenfinch	987
Linnet	317
Lesser Redpoll	9
Goldfinch	871
Siskin	9
Yellowhammer	257
Reed Bunting	309
Grand Total	**14,828**

Table 2: Selected recoveries/controls involving Essex reported during 2015

In the table below, the first line of each entry shows ringing details including the age and sex of the bird if known. The following lines indicate the locations of subsequent reports or captures and the distance of the movement in kms. Note some old recoveries of interest, not reported until 2014, are included. The term control refers to a bird captured and released by another ringer. A date in brackets indicates that the date shown may not be the exact date when the bird was found.

Species/ring number	Age/ details	Date	Locations	kms
Greylag Goose	Nestling	10/07/13	Markshall, Coggeshall, Essex	
5237275	Shot	22/11/15	N.Fambridge, Essex	30
Canada Goose	Nestling	02/07/10	Twickenham, Greater London	
5256606	Field record	12/04/15	Walthamstow Res., Essex	23
Gadwall	Adult male	19/08/11	Abberton Res., Essex	
FH19192	Shot	01/10/15	Lt Addington, Northamptonshire	114
Gadwall	Full-grown male	12/02/12	Rodenhuize, Oost-Vlaanderen, Belgium	
BLB L908044	Shot	10/01/15	Latchingdon, Essex	222
Teal	Adult female	03/11/14	Borough Fen Decoy, Peterborough	
EX35182	Shot	02/01/15	Latchingdon, Essex	127
Teal	1st y male	18/10/14	Hickling, Norfolk	
EY78301	Shot	30/12/15	W. Mersea, Essex	118
Teal	Full-grown male	10/03/92	Amager Andekoje, Tarnby, Kobenhavn, Denmark	
DKC 6093294	Dead	(15/05/14)	Colchester, Essex	869
Pintail	Adult male	10/11/07	Abberton Res., Essex	
FH10765	Shot	10/05/15	Diyur, Izhemsky Dist., Komi, Russian Federation	3,354
Pintail	Adult female	06/08/12	Abberton Res., Essex	
FH19236	Freshly dead	26/08/15	Frampton Marsh, Boston, Lincs	138

Species/ring number	Age/ details	Date	Locations	kms
Tufted Duck	Adult female	14/02/14	Blunham, Bedfordshire	
FH65324	Shot	07/11/15	Tilbury, Essex	91
Goldeneye	Adult female	25/05/83	Kirchsee. Preetz, Schleswig-Holstein, Germany	
DEW 4083502	Ring only found	08/08/15	Hatfield Peverel, Essex	703
Cormorant	Nestling	09/06/11	Mageoerne, Bogense, Fyn, Denmark	
DKC 2H4567	Field record	28/11/13	Hanningfield Res., Essex	769
	Field record	07/11/15	Hanningfield Res., Essex	
Marsh Harrier	Nestling female	18/07/13	Elmley Marshes, Kent	
GC97578	Field record	14/12/13	N Fambridge, Essex	30
	Field record	16/02/14	Old Hall, Essex	43
	Field record	20/04/14	Upton Warren, Worcestershire	223
	Field record	24/04/14	Wilstone Res., Hertfordshire	114
	Field record	10/05/14	Lakenheath Fen, Suffolk	115
Sparrowhawk	1st y male	30/09/12	Ormesby St Margaret, Norfolk	
DB81989	Controlled	30/10/13	Walton-on-the-Naze, Essex	94
	Retrapped	31/10/15	Walton-on-the-Naze, Essex	
Oystercatcher	1st y	12/10/96	Canvey Pt, Essex	
FA91677	Controlled	07/02/15	Snettisham, Norfolk	153
Curlew	Adult female	02/06/14	Slikalatva, Pohjois-Pohjanmaa, Oulu, Finland	
SFH CT179021	Field record	01/12/15	Old Hall, Essex	2,003
Knot	Adult	29/11/97	Canvey Pt, Essex	
SX58629	Controlled	26/07/13	Leverton Outgate, Lincolnshire	168
Knot	1st y	15/08/04	St Peter's Chapel, Bradwell, Essex	
SV97910	Controlled	11/02/12	Snettisham, Norfolk	132
Woodcock	1st y	23/09/11	Dmitrovskiy Dist, Moscow Oblast, Russian Feder'n	
RUM PS10724	Shot	03/01/15	Hill Farm, nr Copford, Essex	2,435
Sandwich Tern	Nestling	22/06/94	Maplin Bank, Shoeburyness, Essex	
DK72743	Controlled	11/07/15	Seal Sands, Teesmouth, Stockton-on-Tees	371
Black-headed Gull	Nestling	09/07/86	Hamford Water, Essex	
EN78251	Field record	29/01/15	Frinton-on-Sea, Essex	7
Herring Gull	Nestling	27/06/93	Orfordness, Suffolk	
GG92142	Freshly dead	11/01/15	W. Mersea, Essex	57
Yellow-legged Gull	2nd y	22/02/14	Rainham Tip, Essex	
GR92818	Field record	27/02/14	Blaringhem, Nord, France	179
	Field record	09/04/14	Preverenges, Vaud, Switzerland	720
Iceland Gull	1st y	12/04/13	Frognerparken, Oslo, Akershus, Norway	
NOS 4261758	Field record	16/01/15	Rainham Tip, Essex	1,142
Glaucous Gull	Adult female	21/03/15	Pitsea Tip, Essex	
GV15782	Field record	23/03/15	Wellingborough, Northants	304
	Field record	24/03/15	Stanwick GP, Northants	310
	Field record	18/04.15	Stanwick GP, Northants	
Barn Owl	Nestling, female	08/07/05	Nr Gt Oakley, Essex	

Species/ring number	Age/ details	Date	Locations	kms
GN98106	Controlled	09/09/07	Flatford Mill, Suffolk	16
	Controlled	10/09/15	Lawford, Essex	15
Barn Owl	Nestling, male	14/07/10	Castledon Farm, Wickford, Essex	
GC46736	Controlled	07/06/13	Creeting St Mary, Suffolk	74
	Controlled	16/09/13	Creeting St Mary, Suffolk	
	Controlled	09/08/15	Creeting St Mary, Suffolk	
	Road casualty	18/12/15	Stowmarket, Suffolk	72
Kestrel	Nestling, female	15/07/09	Brett's Hall. Tendring, Essex	
EW31375	Found sick	02/03/15	Mayland, Essex	32
Kestrel	Nestling, female	24/06/15	Everleigh, Wiltshire	
EZ12028	Road casualty	04/12/15	Between Bradwell-on-Sea & Tillingham, Essex	187
Kestrel	Nestling, female	15/06/15	Nr Lt Thornage, Norfolk	
EX71251	Found sick	22/12/15	Jaywick, Essex	125
Peregrine	Nestling, female	23/05/12	Nr Barking, Essex	
GR38659	Field record	13/03/15	Lake Lothing, Lowestoft, Suffolk	155
	Field record	15/03/15	Lake Lothing, Lowestoft, Suffolk	
Peregrine	Nestling, male	19/05/08	Sussex Heights, Brighton, Sussex	
GC50949	Long dead	13/05/15	Stratford, Essex	81
Goldcrest	1st y female	09/10/13	Wenden Lofts, Essex	
EPR198	Controlled	08/04/15	Heysham Harbour, Lancashire	303
Goldcrest	Full-grown male	22/10/15	Nr St Osyth, Essex	
JEP112	Controlled	03/11/15	Queen Mary Res., Surrey	117
Sand Martin	Juvenile	19/06/13	Brightlingsea, Essex	
D181986	Controlled	01/08/13	Hiers-Brouage, Charente-Maritime, France	680
Swallow	1st y female	27/09/14	Holland Haven, Essex	
Z005858	Controlled	28/05/15	Locker Low Wood, nr Hawnby, North Yorkshire	325
	Controlled	30/06/15	Locker Low Wood, nr Hawnby, North Yorkshire	
Swallow	Adult male	06/09/14	Pett Level, Sussex	
D358436	Controlled	13/06/15	Newport Sewage-works, Essex	125
Swallow	1st y male	23/08/14	Belton Marshes, Norfolk	
D810585	Controlled	18/05/15	Newport Sewage-works, Essex	117
Chiffchaff	Juvenile	25/06/15	Mickley Square Football Field, Northumberland	
HNJ085	Controlled	08/10/15	Walton-on-the-Naze, Essex	404
Chiffchaff	Juvenile	20/11/14	Walton-on-the-Naze, Essex	
EYE242	Controlled	14/12/14	Sussex Farm, nr Burnham Market, Norfolk	128
Blackcap	1st y female	31/08/14	Burnham Wick, Essex	
L276755	Controlled	10/10/15	La Pilarica, la Pueblo Del Rio, Sevilla, Spain	1,705
Blackcap	Adult male	06/10/12	Getteron, Varberg, Halland, Sweden	
SVS 1ET57397	Controlled	15/11/14	Walton-on-the-Naze, Essex	918
Sedge Warbler	1st y	11/08/15	Holland Haven, Essex	

Species/ring number	Age/ details	Date	Locations	kms
Z747044	Controlled	25/08/15	Urdains, Villefranque, Pyrenees-Atlantiques, France	951
Reed Warbler	1st y	12/08/14	Borrevannet, Horten, Vestfold, Norway	
NOS HE06987	Controlled	31/08/14	East Newlands, Foulness, Essex	1,050
Reed Warbler	1st y	03/09/14	Blixoya Sivet, Valer, Ostfold, Norway	
NOS HC60894	Controlled	27/09/14	Holland Haven, Essex	1,036
Reed Warbler	1st y	19/09/13	Hondarribia, Gulpuzcoa, Spain	
ESA 1Y19117	Controlled	11/07/15	Holland Haven, Essex	966
Starling	Juvenile male	22/05/15	Little Clacton, Essex	
LH94077	Controlled	29/08/15	Wyberton, Lincolnshire	148
Blackbird	Adult female	18/05/13	Sonderho Strandvej, Fano, Ribe, Denmark	
DKC 8A90665	Caught by cat	12/01/15	Parkeston, Essex	609
Blackbird	Adult male	08/11/11	Nidingen, Hallands Lan, Halland, Sweden	
SVS 4621034	Found dead	24/11/15	Messing, Essex	940
Robin	Adult	08/08/15	Carburton, nr Worksop, Nottinghamshire	
Z184279	Freshly dead	07/11/15	Ashingdon, Essex	218
Robin	Adult	07/10/12	Sint Kruis, West-Vlaanderen, Belgium	
BLB 12255176	Freshly dead	(03/01/14)	Canvey Island, Essex	189
House Sparrow	1st y male	28/07/69	Lexden, Colchester, Essex	
SE92163	Long dead	14/12/15	Marks Tey, Essex	8
Chaffinch	Full-grown fem.	10/11/12	Kings Moss, Merseyside	
Y999891	Freshly dead	28/12/14	Southminster, Essex	317
Greenfinch	1st y male	15/12/14	Astcote, Towcester, Northamptonshire	
TV80837	Freshly dead	12/04/15	Althorne, Essex	135
Twite	Adult male	23/09/14	Booth Wood Res., Rishworth, West Yorkshire	
D979491	Field record	05/02/15	Old Hall, Essex	281
Twite	Adult	02/10/14	Booth Wood Res., Rishworth, West Yorkshire	
Z380516	Field record	05/02/15	Old Hall, Essex	281
	Field record	28/02/15	Old Hall, Essex	
Goldfinch	1st y female	17/12/13	Hall Farm, Brentingby, Leicestershire	
D564129	Controlled	16/12/14	Clavering Farm Fish Lakes, Essex	109
Goldfinch	1st y female	11/04/14	Burnham Deepdale, Norfolk	
D456087	Controlled	11/11/15	Stocking Green, Essex	109
Siskin	1st y male	08/04/13	Upper Green, Langley, Essex	
D310102	Controlled	02/05/13	Fort Augustus, Highland, Scotland	649

Additional Summaries

Cormorant: chicks from Abberton Res. were reported in The Netherlands, Hartlepool, Redcar and Cleveland, East Riding of Yorkshire, Staffordshire, Nottinghamshire, Suffolk and Kent.
Spoonbill: two chicks ringed in The Netherlands were re-sighted at Old Hall, one also being reported in Kent, Suffolk and Norfolk.
Avocet: three chicks ringed at Seal Sands, Teesmouth and one at Greenabella Marsh, Hartlepool were re-sighted in Essex (there were additional sightings from Dorset, Devon, W.Yorkshire, Cumbria and Suffolk) and a chick ringed near Gt Oakley was re-sighted on Brownsea Is., Dorset.
Black-headed Gull: foreign recoveries of birds ringed in Essex included one from Pitsea seen twice in Switzerland, one from Rainham seen in Scotland and a chick from Hamford Water seen in Ireland.
Mediterranean Gull; there were movements between Essex and Hungary, Poland, Belgium, The Netherlands and France.
Common Gull: two Estonian-ringed chicks and a German-ringed adult were sighted in Essex and adults ringed at Pitsea were found dead in Denmark and Finland.
Lesser Black-backed Gull: adults ringed in Essex were re-sighted in Norway, Sweden, Denmark and France; birds from Norway and The Netherlands were seen in Essex, as was a bird ringed in Bristol and later seen in Spain.
Great Black-backed Gull: there were movements between Essex and Norway, Sweden, The Netherlands, Germany, France and oil rigs in the North Sea and North Atlantic Ocean.
Great Spotted Woodpecker: a 1st year male ringed at Langley Upper Green on 18/12/06 was recaptured on five occasions up to 22/06/15 (at Langley Lower Green).
Blackcap: a juvenile male ringed at Loughton on 08/08/06 was recaptured on 24/05/07, 05/06/09 and 26/05/15.

Essex Birdwatching Society

Receipts & Payments For The Year Ended 31st December 2015

Receipts	2015
Subscriptions received	9,658
Donations	1,531
Gift Aid Received	2,056
C.A.F.	20
Sales of Essex Bird Reports	182
Sales of Essex Birding	28
Migration Conference	1,200
Victuals	158
Field Meetings	5,651
Advertising	140
Calendars	306
Anniversary Dinner	682
Clothing	77
Raffle	98
Book Sales	166
Bank Interest	19
	£21,972

Payments	2015
Postages and Incidentals	
Officers' Expenses	20
Lectures	
Fees	440
Hire of Rooms	361
Publications	
Essex Birding	
No.125	3,361
No.126	2,640
Essex Bird Report	
2012	4,699
	3,361
Other Expenses	
Fixture Cards	118
Birds of Essex	80
Car Stickers	320
Field Meetings	4,275
Landguard Fees	45
Leaflets	392
Display Boards and Flags for Exhibition	259
Calendars	500
BBO - Calor Gas	89
Council Tax	173
Bird Seed	1,378
Miscellaneous	73
Victuals	37
Photocopying	48
Anniversary Dinner	678
Accountancy Fees	373
Insurance	473
Posters	85
	20,917
Excess of Expenditure over Income	1,055
	£21,972

Cash Statement For The Year Ended 31st December 2015

1st January 2015		31st December 2015	
Balance of Current Account Brought Forward	4,214	Balance of Current Account Carried Forward	4,507
Balance of Business Base Rate Tracker Investment Account Brought Forward	201	Balance of Business Base Rate Tracker Account Carried Forward	201
Balance on Business Saver Account Brought Forward	38,556	Balance on Business Saver Account Carried Forward	38,576
Balance on Field Meetings Cash Float Brought Forward	60	Balance on Field Meetings Cash Float Carried Forward	60
Balance on Bradwell BO Account Brought Forward	481	Balance on Bradwell BO Account Carried Forward	1,223
			44,567
		Excess of Expenditure over Income	(1,055)
	£43,512		**£43,512**

Connah Goldsworthy
Chartered Certified Accountants
12 Station Court
Station Approach
Wickford
Essex SS11 7AT

January, 2016

Submission of Records

Guidelines for Observers

Records are the backbone of the Bird Report. The more that are submitted, the more accurate a picture the Report will give of the birding year. To answer the often-asked question "What records does the Society wish to receive?", a list of guidelines has been drawn up detailing the exact data required for each species on the official Essex List. These guidelines are reviewed annually to ensure that declines/increases in numbers of particular species can be monitored. Records are submitted to either the British Birds Rarities Committee (BBRC) if the species is sufficiently rare to be on their recognised list (see British Ornithologists' Union's The British List 1997, which highlights each species) or to the Society for all other species.

1) National Rarity Records.

Any reports of species currently assessed by the BBRC require FULL DESCRIPTIONS to be sent to their Secretary (see Appendix 1). Description forms are available from the County Recorder(s) whose address appears on page 2.

A copy of any correspondence with the BBRC should be sent via the County Recorder to ensure that the Society is kept fully informed. All Category D records (for details of British List Categories see Appendix 2) should also be sent to the BBRC for consideration. It should be noted that it is the current policy of the Society not to publish a national rarity record in the Bird Report until it has been accepted by the BBRC and, in the case of a British first, by the British Ornithologists' Union Rarities Committee (BOURC), at which point it is deemed accepted by the Society. All records on the official Essex List accord to this convention.

2) Essex Records

Observers may now submit their records via the BTO web site using the Birdtrack facility and should access the following web site: www.bto.org/birdtrack/

Otherwise all records from categories A, B, C, D and E (see Appendix 2) should be submitted via the County Recorder. Guidelines for individual species are set out below. In addition to the criteria listed, any records relating to plumage aberrations e.g. melanism, leucism and notes on any hard-weather movements would be gratefully received. Category D includes White Pelican, Greater Flamingo, Wood Duck, Baikal Teal, Red-headed and Indigo Buntings. Note that Category E refers to ALL escapes – this currently includes Black Swan and Ruddy Shelduck (actually in Category B but all records since 1950 are considered to relate to escapes).

It should, however, be pointed out that these are only guidelines and any record that the observer feels is important should be submitted whether or not it is covered by the listed comments.

Whilst the Society welcomes records, observers should be aware that the Recorder, on behalf of the Recording Committee and the Society, need descriptions or notes (as indicated against the relevant species below) for a number of species which are scarce in Essex but not sufficiently rare to require submission to BBRC. Observers should please supply these descriptions/notes as a matter of course, without waiting to be asked. This is not because the Recorder doubts your record: it is simply a matter of normal scientific procedure to ensure that all records of scarcer species have been demonstrated to be correct. In addition, the Recorder may ask for clarification of a record or records should this be considered the appropriate action (for example, an exceptionally high count or an unusual location or date). Again, such a request does not imply disbelief in the integrity of a record or records. It is an ongoing attempt to ensure that all records are of the highest calibre and reflect the expertise of the observer and the Society. Please note that, if a description or note (as appropriate) is not submitted where required or requested, the record will not feature in the Report and will not be included in any County totals for the relevant species.

Traditionally accepted and commonly-used English names have been used instead of the new BOU names, as the Editors feel that, until regularly accepted, the existing names should be maintained.

Those species below with a status BBRC are nationally rare that require descriptions. Those with a status of EBSIP (Essex Birdwatching Society's Identification Panel) are rare and unusual species for Essex and require descriptions or notes.

The three figures after BBRC or EBSIP follow the rules defined by Wood (1996):

- The first figure denotes the total number of records in Essex up to and including those detailed in the Guide (Cox 1984) plus any historic records that have since been accepted by BBRC/BOURC/EBSIP e.g. 1826 American Bittern, 1868 White-tailed Eagle.
- The second figure denotes the total number of records from the period 1981/82 to present, since the publication of the Guide in 1984.
- The third figure denotes the total number of Essex records.

Species	Data Required	Status
MUTE SWAN	All breeding records. Counts of 50+.	
BEWICK'S SWAN	All records.	
WHOOPER SWAN	All records.	
TUNDRA BEAN GOOSE	Notes	EBSIP
TAIGA BEAN GOOSE	Description	EBSIP
PINK-FOOTED GOOSE	Notes.	
WHITE-FRONTED GOOSE	All records.	
Greenland White-fronted Goose	Description.	EBSIP
LESSER WHITE-FRONTED GOOSE	Description.	BBRC
GREYLAG GOOSE	Breeding survey data and trends and unusual breeding records. Counts of 50+.	
[ROSS'S GOOSE]	Description	BBRC
CANADA GOOSE	Breeding survey data and trends and unusual breeding records. Counts of 50+.	
BARNACLE GOOSE	All records.	
BRENT GOOSE		
Dark-bellied Brent	Counts of 250+. Assessment of numbers of juveniles as a percentage of flocks. Early and late dates. Comments on large numbers arriving early/departing late. All inland and Inner Thames records.	
Pale-bellied Brent	All records	
Black Brant	Description (to include how hybrid was eliminated)	EBSIP
RED-BREASTED GOOSE	Description.	BBRC
EGYPTIAN GOOSE	All records.	
[RUDDY SHELDUCK]	Description.	EBSIP
SHELDUCK	All breeding records. All inland records. Coastal counts of 100+.	
MANDARIN	All records. Sex.	
WIGEON	All breeding records. Counts of 50+.	
AMERICAN WIGEON	Description.	EBSIP
GADWALL	All breeding records. Counts of 20+.	
[BAIKAL TEAL]	Description	BBRC
TEAL	All breeding records. Counts of 100+.	
GREEN-WINGED TEAL	Description.	EBSIP
MALLARD	Breeding survey data and trends and unusual breeding records. Counts of 50+.	
PINTAIL	All breeding records. Counts of 20+ and all Inner Thames records.	

Species	Data Required	Status
GARGANEY	All records. Age/sex.	
BLUE-WINGED TEAL	Description.	BBRC
SHOVELER	All breeding records. Counts of 20+.	
[MARBLED DUCK]	Description	BBRC
RED-CRESTED POCHARD	All records. Sex.	
POCHARD	All breeding records. Counts of 20+.	
CANVASBACK	Description.	BBRC
RING-NECKED DUCK	Description.	EBSIP
FERRUGINOUS DUCK	Description.	EBSIP
TUFTED DUCK	All breeding records. Counts of 50+.	
SCAUP	All records. Age/sex.	
LESSER SCAUP	Full description.	EBSIP
EIDER	All records. Age/sex.	
KING EIDER	Description.	BBRC
LONG-TAILED DUCK	All records. Age/sex.	
COMMON SCOTER	All records. Age/sex. (RED LIST SPECIES)	
SURF SCOTER	Description.	EBSIP
VELVET SCOTER	All records	
GOLDENEYE	All records. Age/sex.	
SMEW	All records. Age/sex.	
RED-BREASTED MERGANSER	All records. Age/sex. Inland – Notes.	
GOOSANDER	All records. Age/sex.	
RUDDY DUCK	All records.	
[WHITE-HEADED DUCK]	Description	BBRC
RED-LEGGED PARTRIDGE	Breeding survey data and trends and unusual breeding records. Counts of 10+.	
GREY PARTRIDGE	All records. (RED LIST SPECIES)	
QUAIL	All records. (RED LIST SPECIES)	
PHEASANT	Breeding survey data and trends and unusual breeding records. Counts of 30+.	
RED-THROATED DIVER	All records. Plumage e.g. summer / winter.	
BLACK-THROATED DIVER	All records. Plumage e.g. summer / winter.	
GREAT NORTHERN DIVER	All records. Plumage e.g. summer / winter.	
LITTLE GREBE	All breeding records. Counts of 10+.	
GREAT CRESTED GREBE	All breeding records. Counts of 10+.	
RED-NECKED GREBE	All records. Plumage e.g. summer / winter.	
SLAVONIAN GREBE	All records. Plumage e.g. summer / winter.	
BLACK-NECKED GREBE	All records. Plumage e.g. summer / winter.	
FULMAR	All records.	
CORY'S SHEARWATER	Description.	EBSIP
GREAT SHEARWATER	Description.	EBSIP
SOOTY SHEARWATER	Notes	EBSIP
MANX SHEARWATER	All records.	
BALEARIC SHEARWATER	Description.	EBSI
STORM PETREL	Description.	EBSIP
LEACH'S PETREL	Notes	EBSIP
GANNET	All records. Age.	

Species	Data Required	Status
CORMORANT	All breeding records. Counts of 20+.	
SHAG	All records. Age.	
BITTERN	All records. (RED LIST SPECIES)	
AMERICAN BITTERN	Description.	BBRC
LITTLE BITTERN	Description.	BBRC
NIGHT HERON	Description.	BBRC
SQUACCO HERON	Description.	BBRC
CATTLE EGRET	Notes	EBSIP
LITTLE EGRET	Breeding records. Counts of 10+.	
GREAT WHITE EGRET	Notes.	
GREY HERON	All breeding records. Counts of 10+.	
PURPLE HERON	Description.	EBSIP
BLACK STORK	Description.	BBRC
WHITE STORK	Description.	EBSIP
GLOSSY IBIS	Description	EBSIP
SPOONBILL	All records	
HONEY BUZZARD	Description.	EBSIP
BLACK KITE	Description.	EBSIP
RED KITE	All records. (RED LIST SPECIES)	
WHITE-TAILED EAGLE	Description.	BBRC
EGYPTIAN VULTURE	Description.	BBRC
MARSH HARRIER	All records. Age/sex. (AMBER LIST SPECIES)	
HEN HARRIER	All records. Age/sex. (RED LIST SPECIES)	
PALLID HARRIER	Description.	BBRC
MONTAGU'S HARRIER	Description. To include notes on elimination of Pallid Harrier.	EBSIP
GOSHAWK	Description.	EBSIP
SPARROWHAWK	All records. Age/sex.	
COMMON BUZZARD	All records. Age.	
ROUGH-LEGGED BUZZARD	Description.	EBSIP
SPOTTED EAGLE	Description.	BBRC
OSPREY	All records	
LESSER KESTREL	Description.	BBRC
KESTREL	All breeding records. Counts of 5+	
RED-FOOTED FALCON	Description.	EBSIP
MERLIN	All records. Age/sex. (RED LIST SPECIES)	
HOBBY	All records. Age.	
ELEONORA'S FALCON	Description	BBRC
PEREGRINE	All records. Age/sex.	
WATER RAIL	All records.	
SPOTTED CRAKE	Description.	EBSIP
LITTLE CRAKE	Description.	BBRC
BAILLON'S CRAKE	Description.	BBRC
CORNCRAKE	Description. (RED LIST SPECIES)	EBSIP
MOORHEN	All breeding records. Counts of 10+.	
COOT	All breeding records. Counts of 50+.	
LITTLE BUSTARD	Description.	BBRC
GREAT BUSTARD	Description.	BBRC

Species	Data Required	Status
COMMON CRANE	Notes	EBSIP
OYSTERCATCHER	All breeding records. All inland and Inner Thames records. Counts of 50+ elsewhere.	
BLACK-WINGED STILT	Description.	BBRC
AVOCET	All records.	
STONE CURLEW	Notes	EBSIP
CREAM-COLOURED COURSER	Description.	BBRC
COLLARED PRATINCOLE	Description.	BBRC
ORIENTAL PRATINCOLE	Description.	BBRC
BLACK-WINGED PRATINCOLE	Description.	BBRC
LITTLE RINGED PLOVER	All records.	
RINGED PLOVER	All breeding records. All inland records. Counts of 50+ elsewhere.	
KENTISH PLOVER	Description.	EBSIP
GREATER SAND PLOVER	Description.	BBRC
DOTTEREL	Description.	EBSIP
AMERICAN GOLDEN PLOVER	Description.	EBSIP
PACIFIC GOLDEN PLOVER	Description.	EBSIP
GOLDEN PLOVER	All records May to July. Counts of 50+ rest of year.	
GREY PLOVER	All records May to July. Counts of 100+ rest of year. All inland and Inner Thames records.	
SOCIABLE PLOVER	Description.	BBRC
WHITE-TAILED PLOVER	Description	BBRC
LAPWING	All breeding records. All other records May to July. Counts of 100+ rest of year.	
KNOT	All records May to July. Counts of 100+ rest of year. All inland and Inner Thames records.	
SANDERLING	All records May to July. Counts of 20+ rest of year. All inland and Inner Thames records.	
SEMIPALMATED SANDPIPER	Description	BBRC
WESTERN SANDPIPER	Description.	BBRC
LITTLE STINT	All records.	
TEMMINCK'S STINT	Description.	EBSIP
WHITE-RUMPED SANDPIPER	Description.	EBSIP
BAIRD'S SANDPIPER	Description.	BBRC
PECTORAL SANDPIPER	Description.	EBSIP
CURLEW SANDPIPER	All records.	
STILT SANDPIPER	Description.	BBRC
PURPLE SANDPIPER	All records.	
DUNLIN	All records May to July. Counts of 300+ rest of year. All inland records.	
BROAD-BILLED SANDPIPER	Description.	BBRC
BUFF-BREASTED SANDPIPER	Description	EBSIP
RUFF	All records.	
JACK SNIPE	All records.	

Species	Data Required	Status
SNIPE	All breeding records. Counts of 10+.	
GREAT SNIPE	Description.	BBRC
LONG-BILLED DOWITCHER	Description.	BBRC
WOODCOCK	All records.	
BLACK-TAILED GODWIT	All possible breeding records. All records June and July. Counts of 30+ rest of year. Race of spring-plumaged birds. All inland and Inner Thames records. (RED LIST SPECIES)	
BAR-TAILED GODWIT	All records from May to July. Counts of 50+ rest of year. All inland and Inner Thames records.	
WHIMBREL	All records.	
CURLEW	All inland and Inner Thames records. Counts of 50+ elsewhere.	
SPOTTED REDSHANK	All records.	
REDSHANK	All breeding records. All inland records. Counts of 50+ elsewhere.	
MARSH SANDPIPER	Description.	BBRC
GREENSHANK	All records.	
GREATER YELLOWLEGS	Description.	BBRC
LESSER YELLOWLEGS	Description.	BBRC
SOLITARY SANDPIPER	Description.	BBRC
GREEN SANDPIPER	All records.	
WOOD SANDPIPER	All records.	
TEREK SANDPIPER	Description.	BBRC
COMMON SANDPIPER	All records.	
SPOTTED SANDPIPER	Description.	BBRC
TURNSTONE	All records May to July. Counts of 30+ rest of year. All inland and Inner Thames records.	
WILSON'S PHALAROPE	Description.	BBRC
RED-NECKED PHALAROPE	Notes. (RED LIST SPECIES)	EBSIP
GREY PHALAROPE	Notes	EBSIP
POMARINE SKUA	Notes to include details of age, weather conditions, distance, optics, experience.	EBSIP
ARCTIC SKUA	All records. Age.	
LONG-TAILED SKUA	Description to include details of age, weather conditions, distance, optics, experience.	EBSIP
GREAT SKUA	All records. Age.	
SABINE'S GULL	Description.	EBSIP
KITTIWAKE	All records. Age.	
BONAPARTE'S GULL	Description.	BBRC
BLACK-HEADED GULL	All breeding records. Counts of 500+.	
LITTLE GULL	All records. Age.	
LAUGHING GULL	Description.	BBRC
FRANKLIN'S GULL	Description.	BBRC
MEDITERRANEAN GULL	All records. Age.	
COMMON GULL	All records May to August. Otherwise counts of 250+.	
RING-BILLED GULL	Description.	EBSIP
LESSER BLACK-BACKED GULL	All breeding records. Counts 50+ May to August. Otherwise counts of 200+.	
HERRING GULL	All breeding records. Counts 50+ May to August. Otherwise counts of 200+. Counts in roosts of argenteus and argentatus.	

Species	Data Required	Status
YELLOW-LEGGED GULL	All records, notes away from Thames outside peak July to October period.	EBSIP
CASPIAN GULL	Notes from Thames; description from other areas..	EBSIP
ICELAND GULL	Description.	EBSIP
THAYER'S GULL	Description	BBRC
GLAUCOUS GULL	Description.	EBSIP
GREAT BLACK-BACKED GULL	All records May to August. Otherwise counts of 100+.	
GULL-BILLED TERN	Description.	BBRC
CASPIAN TERN	Description.	BBRC
SANDWICH TERN	All records. Age.	
ROSEATE TERN	Description. (RED LIST SPECIES)	EBSIP
COMMON TERN	All breeding records. All inland records. Early and late dates. Counts of 20+.	
ARCTIC TERN	All records. Age.	
FORSTER'S TERN	Description.	BBRC
BRIDLED TERN	Description.	BBRC
LITTLE TERN	All records. Age.	
Least Tern	Description.	BBRC
WHISKERED TERN	Description.	BBRC
BLACK TERN	All records. Age.	
WHITE-WINGED BLACK TERN	Description.	EBSIP
GUILLEMOT	All records.	
RAZORBILL	All records	EBSIP
BLACK GUILLEMOT	Description.	EBSIP
LITTLE AUK	All records.	
PUFFIN	Notes. All records.	EBSIP
PALLAS'S SANDGROUSE	Description.	BBRC
ROCK DOVE/FERAL PIGEON	Breeding survey data and trends and unusual breeding records. Counts of 50+.	
STOCK DOVE	All breeding records. Counts of 20+. Notes on nesting sites, ie: natural or man made.	
WOODPIGEON	Breeding survey data and trends and unusual breeding records. Counts of 250+.	
COLLARED DOVE	Breeding survey data and trends and unusual breeding records. Counts of 50+.	
TURTLE DOVE	All records. (RED LIST SPECIES)	
RING-NECKED PARAKEET	All records. Sex.	
CUCKOO	All breeding records. Identity of parasitised species. Early and late dates. Records of hepatic phase.	
BARN OWL	All records.	
Dark-breasted Barn Owl	Description	EBSIP
SCOPS OWL	Description.	BBRC
SNOWY OWL	Description.	BBRC
LITTLE OWL	All records.	
TAWNY OWL	All records.	
LONG-EARED OWL	All records.	
SHORT-EARED OWL	All records.	

Species	Data Required	Status
TENGMALM'S OWL	Description.	BBRC
NIGHTJAR	Description. (RED LIST SPECIES)	EBSIP
WHITE-THROATED NEEDLETAIL	Description.	BBRC
SWIFT	All breeding season data, trends and unusual records.. Early and late dates. Counts of 100+.	
PALLID SWIFT	Description.	BBRC
ALPINE SWIFT	Description.	EBSIP
KINGFISHER	All records.	
BEE-EATER	Description.	EBSIP
ROLLER	Description.	BBRC
HOOPOE	Notes.	EBSIP
WRYNECK	Notes. All records. (RED LIST SPECIES).	EBSIP
GREEN WOODPECKER	Breeding season data, trends and unusual records	
GREAT SPOTTED WOODPECKER	Breeding season data, trends and unusual records	
LESSER SPOTTED WOODPECKER	All records. Age/sex. (RED LIST SPECIES)	
SHORT-TOED LARK	Description.	EBSIP
WOODLARK	Notes. (RED LIST SPECIES).	EBSIP
SKYLARK	All records. (RED LIST SPECIES).	
SHORELARK	All records.	
SAND MARTIN	Breeding survey data, trends and unusual records. Early and late dates. Counts of 100+.	
SWALLOW	Breeding survey data, trends and unusual records. Early and late dates. Counts of 100+.	
RED-RUMPED SWALLOW	Description.	EBSIP
HOUSE MARTIN	All breeding records/nest counts; trends and unusual records. Early and late dates. Counts of 50+.	
RICHARD'S PIPIT	Description.	EBSIP
TAWNY PIPIT	Description.	BBRC
OLIVE-BACKED PIPIT	Description.	EBSIP
TREE PIPIT	All records.	
MEADOW PIPIT	All breeding records, trends and unusual records. Counts of 30+. Records/counts indicative of migration or passage.	
RED-THROATED PIPIT	Description.	BBRC
ROCK PIPIT	All records.	
WATER PIPIT	All records	
YELLOW WAGTAIL	All records. (AMBER LIST SPECIES). Notes on breeding habitat.	
Blue-headed Wagtail	All records. Age/sex.	
Other sub-species: Ashy-headed, Grey-headed and Black-headed Wagtails	Description.	BBRC
CITRINE WAGTAIL	Description.	EBSIP
GREY WAGTAIL	All records. Age/sex.	
PIED WAGTAIL	Breeding survey data, breeding trends and unusual breeding records. Counts of 20+.	
White Wagtail	All records.	
WAXWING	All records.	
DIPPER	Description.	EBSIP

Species	Data Required	Status
WREN	Breeding survey data, breeding trends and unusual breeding records.	
NORTHERN MOCKINGBIRD	Description.	BBRC
DUNNOCK	Breeding survey data, trends and unusual records. Records/counts indicative of migration or passage.	
ALPINE ACCENTOR	Description.	BBRC
ROBIN	Breeding survey data, trends and unusual records. Records/counts indicative of migration or passage.	
NIGHTINGALE	All records.	
BLUETHROAT	Description.	EBSIP
BLACK REDSTART	All records. Age/sex.	
REDSTART	All records. Age/sex.	
WHINCHAT	All records. Age/sex.	
STONECHAT	All records. Age/sex. Notes on race.	
SIBERIAN STONECHAT	Description.	BBRC
WHEATEAR	All records. Age/sex.	
Greenland Wheatear	All records.	
BLACK-EARED WHEATEAR	Description.	BBRC
DESERT WHEATEAR	Description.	BBRC
WHITE'S THRUSH	Description.	BBRC
RING OUZEL	All records. Age/sex. (RED LIST SPECIES)	
BLACKBIRD	Breeding survey data, trends and unusual records. Records/counts indicative of migration or passage.	
NAUMANN'S THRUSH	Description.	BBRC
RED-THROATED THRUSH	Description.	BBRC
FIELDFARE	Counts of 50+. Early and late dates including unusual numbers at atypical times of year. Summering records.	
SONG THRUSH	All records. (RED LIST SPECIES) Notes on breeding habitat.	
REDWING	Counts of 50+. Early and late dates including unusual numbers at atypical times of year. Summering records.	
MISTLE THRUSH	All breeding records. Counts of 20+.	
CETTI'S WARBLER	All records	EBSIP
GRASSHOPPER WARBLER	All records. (RED LIST SPECIES)	
SAVI'S WARBLER	Description. (RED LIST SPECIES)	BBRC
AQUATIC WARBLER	Description. (RED LIST SPECIES)	BBRC
SEDGE WARBLER	Breeding survey data, breeding trends and unusual breeding records. Counts indicative of migration or passage. Early and late dates.	
BLYTH'S REED WARBLER	Description.	EBSIP
PADDYFIELD WARBLER	Description.	BBRC
MARSH WARBLER	Description. (RED LIST SPECIES)	EBSIP
REED WARBLER	Breeding survey data, breeding trends and unusual breeding records. Counts indicative of migration or passage. Early and late dates.	
GREAT REED WARBLER	Description.	BBRC
BOOTED WARBLER	Description.	BBRC
ICTERINE WARBLER	Description.	EBSIP
MELODIOUS WARBLER	Description.	EBSIP

Species	Data Required	Status
BLACKCAP	Breeding survey data, trends and unusual records. Counts of 10+ indicative of migration or passage. All wintering records.	
GARDEN WARBLER	All breeding records, trends and unusual records. Counts indicative of migration or passage. Early and late dates.	
BARRED WARBLER	Description.	EBSIP
LESSER WHITETHROAT	Breeding survey data, trends and unusual records. Counts indicative of migration or passage. Early and late dates.	
ASIAN DESERT WARBLER	Description.	BBRC
WHITETHROAT	Breeding survey data, trends and unusual records. Counts indicative of migration or passage. Early and late dates.	
DARTFORD WARBLER	Notes. (RED LIST SPECIES)	EBSIP
SUBALPINE WARBLER	Description. This species has now been split into two species, Eastern and Western Subalpine Warbler. Assign where possible for submission to BBRC.	EBSIP
GREENISH WARBLER	Description.	EBSIP
ARCTIC WARBLER	Description.	BBRC
PALLAS'S WARBLER	Description.	EBSIP
YELLOW-BROWED WARBLER	Notes	EBSIP
HUME'S WARBLER	Description.	BBRC
RADDE'S WARBLER	Description.	EBSIP
DUSKY WARBLER	Description.	EBSIP
WOOD WARBLER	All records.	
CHIFFCHAFF	Breeding survey data, trends and unusual records. Counts of 10+ indicative of migration or passage. All wintering records.	
Siberian Chiffchaff	Description.	BBRC
WILLOW WARBLER	All breeding records, trends and unusual records. Counts of 10+ indicative of migration or passage. Early and late dates.	
GOLDCREST	Breeding survey data, trends and unusual records. Counts of 5+ indicative of migration or passage.	
FIRECREST	All records. Sex.	
SPOTTED FLYCATCHER	All records. (RED LIST SPECIES) Notes on breeding habitat.	
RED-BREASTED FLYCATCHER	Description.	EBSIP
COLLARED FLYCATCHER	Description.	BBRC
PIED FLYCATCHER	All records. Age/sex.	
BEARDED TIT	All records. Age/sex.	
LONG-TAILED TIT	Breeding survey data, trends and unusual records. Records/counts indicative of migration or passage.	
Northern Long-tailed Tit	Description.	BBRC
MARSH TIT	All records. (RED LIST SPECIES)	
WILLOW TIT	Description. (RED LIST SPECIES)	EBSIP
COAL TIT	Breeding survey data, trends and unusual records. Records/counts indicative of migration or passage.	
Continental Coal Tit	Notes.	EBSIP
BLUE TIT	Breeding survey data, trends and unusual records. Records/counts indicative of migration or passage.	
GREAT TIT	Breeding survey data, trends and unusual records. Records/counts indicative of migration or passage.	
CRESTED TIT	Description.	EBSIP

Species	Data Required	Status
NUTHATCH	All records.	
TREECREEPER	Breeding survey data, trends and unusual records. Records/counts indicative of migration or passage.	
SHORT-TOED TREECREEPER	Description.	BBRC
PENDULINE TIT	Description.	BBRC
GOLDEN ORIOLE	Description.	EBSIP
ISABELLINE SHRIKE	Description, including racial characters.	BBRC
RED-BACKED SHRIKE	Notes. Age/sex. (RED LIST SPECIES)	EBSIP
LESSER GREY SHRIKE	Description.	BBRC
GREAT GREY SHRIKE	Description.	EBSIP
SOUTHERN GREY SHRIKE	Description.	BBRC
WOODCHAT SHRIKE	Description.	BBRC
JAY	Breeding survey data, trends and unusual records. Records/counts indicative of migration or passage.	
MAGPIE	Breeding survey data, trends and unusual records. Records/counts indicative of migration or passage. Counts of 20+.	
NUTCRACKER	Description.	BBRC
CHOUGH	Description.	EBSIP
JACKDAW	Breeding survey data, trends and unusual records. Records/counts indicative of migration or passage. Flocks of 50+.	
ROOK	Breeding survey data, trends and unusual records. Records/counts indicative of migration or passage. Flocks of 100+.	
CARRION CROW	Breeding survey data, trends and unusual records. Records/counts indicative of migration or passage. Flocks of 50+.	
HOODED CROW	Notes. To include notes on how Carrion x Hooded Crow hybrid was eliminated.	EBSIP
RAVEN	Notes (all records outside LNHS area)	EBSIP
STARLING	All records. (RED LIST SPECIES)	
ROSE-COLOURED STARLING	Description.	EBSIP
HOUSE SPARROW	All counts of 50+ (RED LIST SPECIES) Notes on winter food sources.	
TREE SPARROW	All records. (RED LIST SPECIES)	
CHAFFINCH	Breeding survey data, trends and unusual records. Counts of 30+. Records/counts indicative of migration or passage. Notes on winter food sources.	
BRAMBLING	All records. Age/sex.	
SERIN	Description.	EBSIP
GREENFINCH	Breeding survey data, trends and unusual records. Counts of 50+. Records/counts indicative of migration or passage. Notes on winter food sources.	
GOLDFINCH	Breeding survey data, trends and unusual records. Counts of 50+. Records/counts indicative of migration or passage. Notes on winter food sources.	
SISKIN	All records. Age/sex.	
LINNET	All records (RED LIST SPECIES) Notes on winter food sources.	
TWITE	All records. (RED LIST SPECIES)	
LESSER REDPOLL	All records. Age/sex.	
COMMON/MEALY REDPOLL	Description, all races	EBSIP

Species	Data Required	Status
ARCTIC REDPOLL	Description.	EBSIP
TWO-BARRED CROSSBILL	Description.	BBRC
CROSSBILL	All records. Age/sex.	
PARROT CROSSBILL	Description.	BBRC
COMMON ROSEFINCH	Description.	EBSIP
TRUMPETER FINCH	Description.	BBRC
BULLFINCH	All records. Age/sex. (RED LIST SPECIES)	
Northern Bullfinch	Description.	EBSIP
HAWFINCH	All records. Age/sex.	
LAPLAND BUNTING	Notes. Age/sex.	EBSIP
SNOW BUNTING	All records. Age/sex.	
PINE BUNTING	Description.	BBRC
YELLOWHAMMER	All records. (RED LIST SPECIES). Notes on winter food sources	
CIRL BUNTING	Description. (RED LIST SPECIES)	EBSIP
ORTOLAN BUNTING	Description.	EBSIP
RUSTIC BUNTING	Description.	BBRC
LITTLE BUNTING	Description.	EBSIP
YELLOW-BREASTED BUNTING	Description.	BBRC
REED BUNTING	All records. (RED LIST SPECIES) Notes on winter food sources	
[RED-HEADED BUNTING]	Description	BBRC
BLACK-HEADED BUNTING	Description.	BBRC
CORN BUNTING	All records. (RED LIST SPECIES) Notes on winter food sources	
ROSE-BREASTED GROSBEAK	Description.	BBRC
BALTIMORE ORIOLE	Description.	BBRC

APPENDIX 1 – NATIONAL RARITY RECORDS

Rarity Descriptions should be sent via the County Recorder (address on Page XX) to British Birds Rarities Committee (BBRC): Website: bbrc.org.uk/recorders.htm

Note that it is now BBRC policy to accept descriptions and digital images online wherever possible.

N.B. *British Birds Magazine* usually publishes every November or December a full listing of BBRC accepted (and rejected) rarity records: 4 Harlequin Gardens, St Leonards-on-Sea, East Sussex TN37 7PF

Tel/Fax: (01424) 755155 Email: subscriptions@britishbirds.co.uk

APPENDIX 2 – THE BRITISH LIST

The British List is the official list of species that have been recorded in Great Britain and has been maintained for over 100 years by the British Ornithologists' Union (BOU). Each species is categorised according to its status in Britain. The Systematic List provides a summary of published information, since scientific records began about species that have occurred in Essex and fall into the British Ornithologists' Union categories defined as follows:

- **Category A:** Species that have been recorded in an apparently natural state at least once since 1st January 1950.
- **Category B:** Species that were recorded in an apparently natural state at least once up to 31st December 1949, but have not been recorded subsequently.
- **Category C:** Species that, although originally introduced, either deliberately or accidentally, have established breeding populations derived from introduced stock, that maintain themselves without necessary recourse to further introduction.

- (C1) Naturalised introductions Species that have occurred only as a result of introduction e.g. Egyptian Goose.
- (C2) Naturalised establishments Species with established populations as a result of introduction, but which also occur in an apparently natural state e.g. Canada Goose.
- (C3) Naturalised re-establishments Species with populations successfully re-established in areas of former occurrence e.g. Red Kite.
- (C4) Naturalised feral species Domesticated species with populations established in the wild e.g. Rock Dove.
- (C5) Vagrant naturalised species Species from established naturalised populations abroad e.g. some/all Ruddy Shelducks occurring in Britain.
- (C6) Former naturalised species – species formerly placed in C1 whose naturalised populations are either no longer self-sustaining or are considered extinct, e.g. Lady Amherst's Pheasant *Chrysolophus amherstiae*.

Category D: Species that would otherwise appear in Categories A or B except that:

- (D1) there is reasonable doubt that they have ever occurred in the wild state.
- (D2) they have certainly arrived with a combination of ship and human assistance, including provision of food and shelter.
- (D3) they have only ever been found dead on the tideline; or
- (D4) species that would otherwise appear in Category C except that their feral populations may or may not be self-supporting.

Category E: Species that have been recorded as introductions, transportees or escapees from captivity, and whose breeding populations (if any) are thought not to be self sustaining.

APPENDIX 3 – THE ESSEX LIST

Note that both Ruddy Shelduck and Snow Goose are regarded as Category E species within the county.

Five species (Ross's Goose, Baikal Teal, Marbled Duck, White-headed Duck & Red-headed Bunting) have been added to the list as the BBRC are requesting all records with a view to forming a pattern of occurrence. This may well result in the upgrading of any or all to the British list in the future.

There were no new species recorded in 2015, the Essex total therefore remains at 386.

For more details on the decisions of the BOURC see Recent news and decisions from Records Committee (BOURC) on their website: www.bou.org.uk

Notice to Contributors

The Editorial Committee welcomes original noted or papers concerning the ornithology of the county, which should be submitted to the Editors by not later than 31st August for publication in the same year. They should be submitted in a Microsft Word document or written, preferably typed, on one side of the sheet only, with double spacing. Proofs will be sent to the author for checking only if specifically requested.

To preserve uniformity of presentation, certain conventions of style and layout should be used. This and previous issues of the Report provide guidance in this respect. Particular attention should, however, be paid to the following:

- English species names to have capital initials for each word, except after a hyphen, but group names should not e.g. Great Crested Grebe, Red-necked Grebe, grebes.
- If included, scientific names to be given after the first mention of the species, italicised but not in brackets or as an appendix.
- Dates to take the form 16th January 2016 except in tables, where appropriate abbreviations may be used.
- Normally, words to be used for single numbers i.e. up to ten, but numerals for numbers of 11 or more. Exceptions are numbers combining fractions e.g. 5½, linked by a hyphen e.g. 3-5, or where they refer to a table or diagram.
- Tables and diagrams to be on separate sheets, clearly labelled, and point of insertion in the text indicated. Preferably the tables should be designed to fit the width of the page, or a whole page lengthways.
- Any Microsoft Excel files/graphs must only be presented in black-and-white (i.e. NOT colour). For simplicity, these should be submitted together in their own file and be clearly labelled.
- Use Indian ink for line drawings.

Please consult the Editor(s) regarding the submission of any work.

Reservoir Permit Holders

The Essex & Suffolk Water (E&SW), in conjunction with English Nature, has over recent years restricted access to Essex Birdwatching Society (EBWS) members at both Abberton and Hanningfield Reservoirs.

With regard Abberton, no permits will be available until further notice following the completion of the major construction work to raise the water level to meet future customer demands and the subsequent sensitive nature of the activity to the environment and habitats of the Special Protection Area (SPA). Society members and the public are requested to strictly observe any signage regarding access restrictions at all times on any part of the site.

At Hanningfield, there are up to ten, non-transferable, permanent permit holders plus four "floating" day permits that are held at the Essex Wildlife Trust (EWT) Visitor Centre. EBWS members may book a "floating" permit in advance or borrow on the day, subject to availability. The Visitor Centre is open between 09.00 and 17.00 from February to October and 09.00 to 16.00 from November to January, seven days a week, except for Christmas Day and Boxing Day.

Each permanent permit includes a guest permit that allows one other EBWS member to accompany the permanent permit holder in restricted areas, as long as the current ES&W Terms and Conditions are observed at all times by all parties.

The issuing of these permits by E&SW to the advised chosen EBWS members is considered a very special 'privilege' and they must be used to their full potential by active recipients for the regular recording and constant monitoring of the birds at the Hanningfield Reservoir site. This is the reason stipulated by the E&SW for the permits, which are monitored annually by the Society and E&SW.

The ten permits have been distributed at the discretion of the Executive Committee based on continued information and guidance received from the Recorders. All permits are reviewed and renewed on the basis that regular records have been submitted to the EBWS Recorder, unless there are 'special' mitigating circumstances.

- It is mandatory for the holders of all types of permit to:
- Note and observe the current E&SW Terms and Conditions
- Notify the Hanningfield Control Room (01245-400132) when you enter and leave the site
- Notify the EWT Visitor Centre of any bird sightings
- Send their bird sightings to the Society

The following held permanent, non-transferable permits for Hanningfield Reservoir in the year of this Report:

D. Acfield, G.R. Ekins, R. Flindall, N.C. Green, D.Jobbins, S. Shippey, G. Snowden, J. Tayler, R. Widgery,

Special access conditions have been negotiated with E&SW and EWT if a rarity should be present on either Abberton or Hanningfield Reservoirs.

Wood Sandpiper (GRAHAM OAKES)

The ESSEX BIRDWATCHING SOCIETY

Published by the Essex Birdwatching Society
May 2018
£10.00