THE ESSEX Bird Report 2018

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THE ESSEX Bird Report 2018

Editor: Simon Wood

The ESSEX BIRDWATCHING SOCIETY

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List of Officers and Committees

The Essex Birdwatching Society
(Founded 1949)

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

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D. Acfield, R. Neave, S. Nixon, P. Wood.

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G. Smith, 48 The Meads, Ingatestone, CM4 0AE.

Acknowledgements and Editorial

by Simon Wood

This is the third *Essex Bird Report* to be published within a year and gets us right back up to date. As I have said previously, it has taken a fantastic effort from Mick Tracey, the County Recorder, all the sub-section writers and sub-editors, as well as countless others who have helped in the background. With 2018 now complete, the aim is to publish every Report around the end of the following year or within the first two months of the next. This, however, means that we need your records as soon as possible as data is distributed to the section writers in May; any records received after that date will not get in the next to be published Report.

2018 sees the introduction of the International English bird names in accordance with the BOURC British list, following their adoption of the IOC World Bird List. Some of the names are quite different to the ones we are used to, and in these cases the traditional English name is given. I guess we will get used to them eventually….

Adoption of the IOC List has also seen two species being added to the Essex List with Bean Goose split into Taiga and Tundra Bean Geese and Least Tern split from Little Tern. Both Isabelline Shrike and Siberian Stonechat have also been split into two species each; Turkestan and Daurian in the case of the former and Siberian and Stejneger's in the latter. However, all Essex records of both are unassignable to one species so are listed as species pairs. The Annual Summary makes a welcome return in the capable hands of Andy Goodey; thank you to him for volunteering to put this section together.

Once again our Recorder, Mick Tracey, has provided me with much support and done a magnificent job collating, consolidating and sorting all the data. Alf Mullins produced the Wetland Bird Survey tables and Gazetteer. The Wetland Bird Survey counters/co-ordinators do a fantastic job collecting and inputting their data on line promptly. Special thanks must also go to Howard Vaughan for compiling the East London Birder Forum records. Steve Entwistle summarised the Mersea Island data and Andy Field the data for Friday Wood Colchester, whilst Paul Griggs kindly provided records from SOGnet and Kas Aldous the data from the Holland Haven website.

Scott Mayson and Heidi Mellan at the British Trust for Ornithology assisted Mick with Birdtrack and Wetland Bird Survey queries, as did Rod Bleach, who is the local British Trust for Ornithology Representative (for North-east Essex). Thanks also to Paul Davis for the data collected by the Essex Little Tern Project.

Members of the Editorial and Identification Panels have provided me with invaluable support throughout. Particular thanks go to David Jobbins for managing our file-sharing facility, which continues to evolve a kind of sentience!

Dr Simon Cox has again produced an informative report on the birds ringed or colour-ringed in Essex during 2018 and some of the more noteworthy recoveries or sightings. And it should be mentioned that having produced his section of the Report (Divers to Cormorant) for the FIFTIETH consecutive year, he will be laying down his pen. An incredible achievement. Simon will be missed, and so we need an editor to put forward this section going forward. The main paper is effectively a 'Part II' about migration along the north-east coast by Paul Brayshaw, particularly in the Frinton-on-Sea and Holland Haven area, all based on a decade's observations, and concentrating on [mostly] passerines. There is also a paper from Paul Roper on the radio-tagged Brant Geese that were originally caught at Blue House Farm in early 2018. Nick Croft also gives a short description of how the Wanstead Rustic Bunting was found; it captures the thrill of the patch watch, 'viz-miging' and stumbling upon a mega Essex/London rarity.

The Identification Panel worked its way through various submitted descriptions and I thank them for all their time and efforts. The Panel has also spent time deliberating certain sub-species and has met to discuss various identification and procedural matters. It now meets twice a year and has become more pro-active on identification matters in this new era of rather fluid avian taxonomy.

Just when you think you knew everything to know about bird identification, someone comes along and moves the goal posts!

Sean Nixon has acted as the photographic and art editor and pulled together some fantastic work.

And thanks to all those, of which there are too many to mention, who helped answer many and various questions on all things Essex birding.

YOU WILL NOTE FROM THE LIST BELOW THAT YOURS TRULY WROTE FIVE SECTIONS OF THE REPORT. THIS CANNOT GO ON. WE NEED MORE VOLUNTEERS.

Sub-editors for the Systematic List

Colin Mackenzie-Grieve	Brant Goose to Eurasian Teal
Paul Brayshaw	Red-crested Pochard to Ruddy Duck
Simon Wood	Red-legged Partridge to Common Pheasant
Simon Cox	Red-throated Loon to Great Cormorant
David Jobbins	Western Osprey to Common Buzzard
Mark Bridges	Water Rail to Common Crane
Paul Brayshaw	Eurasian Stone-curlew to Ruddy Turnstone
Alf Mullins	Red Knot to Common Greenshank
Paul Wood	Black-legged Kittiwake to Atlantic Puffin
Graham Smith	Rock Dove to Common Cuckoo
Chris Balchin	Western Barn Owl to Short-eared Owl
John Hart	European Nightjar to European Green Woodpecker
Colin Mackenzie-Grieve	Common Kestrel to Peregrine Falcon
Simon Wood	Rose-ringed Parakeet to Northern Raven
Simon Wood	Bohemian Waxwing to Bearded Reedling
John Sutherby	Woodlark to Barn Swallow
Neil Murphy	Cetti's Warbler to Dartford Warbler
Mark Bridges	Common Firecrest to Common Starling
David Hutley	Ring Ouzel to Mistle Thrush
Kate Williams	Spotted Flycatcher to Northern Wheatear
Simon Wood	White-throated Dipper to Dunnock
David Jobbins	Western Yellow Wagtail to Eurasian Rock Pipit
Simon Wood	Common Chaffinch to Eurasian Siskin
David Wimpress	Lapland Longspur to Common Reed Bunting
Barry Jones	Category D and Escapes

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David Jobbins
Colin Mackenzie-Grieve
Alf Mullins

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Glen Moore
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Paul Roper
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We are always looking for good photographs and artwork for reproduction in the *Essex Bird Report*. Please contact the Editor for further details.

Front cover photograph – Pallas's Leaf Warbler, The Naze, October (KIT DAY)

Seasonal Summary of 2018 Records

January

The year began with rather changeable weather and was unseasonably mild. The high winds early on were the result of Storm Eleanor. Toward the middle of the month, a period of colder weather prevailed, thereafter resuming the changeable, mild conditions of earlier in the month in southern Britain. Further north and west, however, were cold with significant snow.

Although not usually added to the year list until around the end of September, 2018's first Yellow-browed Warbler was an individual at Fairlop Waters on the first day of the year. Next day, the Dartford Warbler that had resided at Abberton Reservoir was reported for the last time. On the same day, the wintering flock of Snow Buntings at Jaywick reached a peak of 14 birds. This site was recently declared the most deprived area in the UK (for humans but not for the site-faithful buntings). Numbers declined somewhat but remained until mid-February. In what proved to be another poor year for the species, three Tundra Swans were at Abberton Reservoir on 3rd. On 4th, the year's first Iceland Gull was at Rainham Marshes with a further one or two in the general area up to April.

Another year's first was Eurasian Bittern, at Abberton Reservoir on 6th being reported again the following day. On 7th, a Eurasian Tree Sparrow was observed coming to peanuts in a garden at Richmond's Green Thaxted, a good inland sighting. A Common Loon that had been present at Hanningfield Reservoir from the previous year was reported finally on 9th and next day, a male Black Redstart was located at the University of Essex, a former breeding site. It stayed until early March but apparently failed to attract a mate, at least at this site. An unseasonable Sandwich Tern was off Frinton-on-Sea on 12th.

Mid-month saw a Bohemian Waxwing at Braxted Park and wildfowl included 78 Greater White-fronted Geese north passed Frinton-on-Sea, 100 Pink-footed Geese at Hamford Water and two Whooper Swans at various sites in the Crouch/Roach area (where there was also a Red-necked Grebe). There was a Black Brant in the latter area and Colne estuary with 1-2 in the Naze/Hamford Water area. Another Black Redstart was at Tilbury Fort on 16th with possibly the same individual at Tilbury itself on 30th.

Passerines included the seventh County record of Little Bunting at Walthamstow Wetlands on 19th (obligingly remaining until 3rd April) and three Snow Buntings at Hamford Water on 21st. The month ended with a Glaucous Gull at Leyton (also seen at other sites until mid March) and 220 Red-throated Loons off Frinton-on-Sea on 29th and another Black Redstart, this one at East Mersea on 31st remaining until the end of March.

No doubt for many, however, the high point of the period was the continued presence of the previous autumn's Hawfinch influx. Our resident population, if indeed it still exists, appears to be reaching the point of extirpation from the County and it remains to be seen if this influx is anything more than a temporary situation; unfortunately, early signs seem to show it to be just that. Birds were regularly seen at Hatfield Forest, Marks Hall Coggeshall, Thorndon Park, Epping Forest and Thundersley with observers commenting on them being more approachable than usual, a word not usually associated with the species in this Country.

February

Below average temperatures were felt for the first weeks of February, thereafter it was mainly dry with temperatures recovering somewhat until the last days of the month when the Beast from the East, as it became known, brought widespread cold and snow.

The opening day of the month provided the only Twite record of the year, a single at East Tilbury. A relatively quiet period produced a Eurasian Bittern at Abberton Reservoir on 3rd and five Bohemian Waxwings in Harwich (until 11th). On 10th, a decent sized flock (by nowadays standards) of 11 Horned Larks was on Wallasea Island, some of these birds remaining until 22nd. The 10th also

produced a European Serin at Walthamstow, which stayed into March while next day the year's only Ring-billed Gull was found at North Woolwich, the first for seven years. The peak count of Smew was made at Abberton Reservoir on 14th where ten were present.

Aerial survey photos using a drone to monitor Red-throated Loons off the east coast enabled the identification of a male Surf Scoter on 17th. A Eurasian Bittern was at Seventy Acres Lake Holyfield next day. On 20th three European Tree Sparrows were at Beaumont: this species is teetering on the edge as a regular within the County. Not far away, there were nine Snow Buntings at Seawick with five at Colne Point two days later. A Redwing photographed in Colchester during the month could prove to be of the Icelandic race, coburni, which has never been identified in the field in Essex, although there are museum and ringing recovery records. A single Common Redpoll was in Colchester on 21st, with perhaps the same recorded just under a month later.

March

The cold continued, the result of the easterly air flow. Snow was experienced in many parts of the Country with below freezing temperatures in the south, which increased after the first week bringing a period of wet, cloudy weather whilst the north and west were drier. More snow from the east, albeit on a lesser scale than before, came on 17th. Towards the month end, it was unsettled for most with milder temperatures.

Early in the month, interest was provided by the ever scarce Jack Snipe with eight at Rainham Marshes on 2nd. A Common Loon was at Fairlop Waters Barkingside on 3rd. Rare ducks came in the form of a Ferruginous Duck at Leez Reservoir Hartford End and the Ring-necked Duck at Abberton Reservoir, which had been here or at sites nearby and now nearing the end of its stay. A Horned Lark was along The Dengie during this period with another at Bradwell Bird Observatory on 7th, a Little Auk at Harwich and scarce grebes included the highest count of the year of eight Horneds off East Mersea on 7th and a Red-necked at Stow Marsh North Fambridge on 8th. A Eurasian Bittern was seen at Rainham Marshes on this day and remained until the end of the month. The second European Serin of the year appeared at Gunners Park Shoebury, remaining until the 23rd. At Marks Hall Coggeshall, seven Shags must have made an unusual sight on 12th, although this species has something of a penchant for being blown well inland at times, often turning up at out of the ordinary places. It is tempting to link this sighting with the Beast from the East, which was prevalent at the time. On this day also, a Eurasian Spoonbill was at Rainham Marshes.

Next day, the year's first Barn Swallow was reported from Holland Haven and Frinton-on-Sea but this sighting was trumped at the latter site by a Common Crane. Further early migrants came in the form of Northern Wheatear with singles at both The Hythe and Upminster next day. There were then two Bluethroat records. Both were of the white-spotted race as befitting the early time of year; the first was at Clacton on 19th while the other was found at Walthamstow Wetlands on 23rd. Also on this date, what was presumed the earlier North Woolwich Ring-billed Gull, was at Rainham Marshes for a few days. Up to five Common Redpolls graced Canvey Wick for five days from 23rd. The year's third European Serin was at Canewdon on 26th and another species enjoying a good year was Eurasian Spoonbill with singles at Gunners Park Shoebury and at Rainham Marshes on 29th, from where a Western Osprey was also reported the same day and the year's first Garganey, two days later. The last day of the month saw 317 Red-throated Loons off Frinton-on-Sea.

April

Although less severe than March, April began rather wet and cold with snow restricted to higher ground. This soon changed to cloudy, unsettled conditions up to the middle part of the month. From 18th, very warm weather was experienced with the highest April temperatures since 1949. This proved to be only temporary before rainy conditions returned to much of England and Wales.

Early April was notable for a number of scarce migrants. The first Ring Ouzel was at Wanstead Flats on 3rd, followed by a Eurasian Hoopoe on 6th for two days at Walthamstow Wetlands, the same day that a Black Kite was seen over Wanstead Flats and then at other sites across London. This later

species can turn up virtually anywhere on its spring overshoots, whether it be the more expected coastal sites or those inland but this individual chose a site already having been blessed with other goodies in recent times. Five Black Redstarts appeared at Frinton-on-Sea next day and the period was also notable for a number of inland, or near inland, Brant Goose records: Little Baddow, Walthamstow, Hanningfield Reservoir, Rainham Marshes and King George V Reservoir. This last site held a Red-throated Loon on 10th and on 12th a Eurasian Bittern was recorded at Langdon Hills.

Attention temporarily switched to the north-east coast on 13th with a single Common Redpoll at Frinton-on-Sea with a Eurasian Spoonbill there on 14th and a Blue-headed Wagtail being found at The Naze with two the following day, before interest returned to the opposite end of the County. At Rainham Marshes, there were five Ring Ouzels on 19th, and there was also a Continental Black-tailed Godwit at Walton Hall Marshes. Rarities included an Alpine Swift at Frinton-on-Sea on 23rd and Red-rumped Swallows were found at Rainham Marshes on 26th and Hanningfield Reservoir and Nazeing Gravel Pit on 28th, the latter until 30th.

The month closed with a Eurasian Spoonbill at Blue House Farm and five Bar-tailed Godwits at Russell Green Gravel Pit Boreham on 30th.

May

Unsettled weather at the start of the month gave way to warmer, sunnier conditions. The warmest early May Bank Holiday was experienced before cooler temperatures returned. High pressure dominated in the second part of the month producing warm conditions from the east, this tempered by slightly cooler and cloudier weather in eastern areas. During the last week, rain was present in the south and central areas with accompanying bouts of thunderstorms.

A second calendar year female Red-footed Falcon at Old Hall Marshes started the month in fine style on 1st. It was observed with two Common Kestrels hawking insects over the Bale Field. Nearby, a Channel Wagtail was at Abberton Reservoir. Up to three of our scarcer breeding ducks may have bred in 2018: Garganey nested at Old Hall Marshes whilst both Eurasian Wigeon and Eurasian Teal were present for prolonged periods in suitable habitat at Rainham Marshes and Broomhouse Flash Langham respectively, and both probably bred.

Three female Pintails at Langham were also of interest, although there was no suggestion of breeding. A Glossy Ibis was at Abberton Reservoir on 10th and a Eurasian Spoonbill at Rainham Marshes on 12th began a lengthy stay. The following day, a Naze regular found a male Kentish Plover for its third successive year – is it a returning bird? The other rare wader of the period was Black-winged Stilt with records from four birds on and off at Bowers March from 7th-11th, two of the four then at West Canvey Marsh from 13th-19th and another at Old Hall Marshes on 15th. The final European Serin of the year was a female at Colne Point the same day. On 19th, there was a Red-rumped Swallow at The Naze followed two days later by what was considered to be a different individual at the same site. This day also produced the year's first White-winged Terns with two at Rainham Marshes. In a poor year for the species, a Common Quail was reported at Orsett Fen.

The 23rd produced three Manx Shearwaters and a European Honey Buzzard at Frinton-on-Sea and other interest was provided by the month-long stay of a summer plumaged Black-necked Grebe at Bowers Marsh from 26th and Montagu's Harrier at Hamford Water and The Naze on the same day.

An unseasonable Merlin was reported from Great Henny on 27th, and perhaps equally surprisingly, at Little Henny in June. On 25th, the first Red-backed Shrike of the year was at Deal Hall Dengie. The dearth of records of Wood Warblers in the County nowadays reflects the national decline but one was at Marks Hall Coggeshall on 28th.

June

More settled weather and increasing temperatures were felt, these being above average in northern and western areas. Onshore winds in the east meant cooler conditions. It was generally cloudy mid month but by 21st, the majority of the Country enjoyed warmer and sunnier conditions, temperatures reaching at least 30°C a few days later. It was generally dry in the east.

In these days of constant bad news regarding our beleaguered wildlife, to actually be able to report on a species' success is a rare treat. Northern Ravens were relentlessly persecuted in former times to the point where breeding was last recorded in the County in 1890. Recent years have seen a welcome upsurge in records with breeding now annual. 2018 saw breeding at 2-3 locations and very possibly at a number of others. On a national scale, however, Northern Ravens continue to be targeted. The June influx of Rosy Starlings into parts of Europe resulted in three of these being found in Essex; two of these were at Colne Point on 3rd and one at Rayleigh on 9th-13th. It proved to be the largest influx ever recorded in the County.

An intriguing report came on 6th with a Black Redstart in a Tiptree garden that was seen again in July. Interesting duck records at this time included the only summer record of Eider this year at Colne Point on 9th and 17 pairs of Gadwall breeding at Rainham Marshes. This site also held a Marsh Warbler for the second successive year and breeding was strongly suspected. Other breeding information includes a continuing and somewhat inevitable path to County extinction for European Turtle Doves. 2018 saw only 47 birds from 25 sites. Spotted Flycatcher fared no better and managed only four pairs whilst Fingringhoe Wick's important population of Common Nightingales was slightly down to 20 territories, although there were 26 singing males at Friday Wood Colchester.

The remainder of the month was typically quiet as regard to highlights although the 21st saw a Long-tailed Duck at Walthamstow Wetlands, a Common Quail at Tillingham and, best of all, a second calendar year Bonaparte's Gull at Rainham Marshes on 25th.

July

For much of the Country, the first half of the month was dominated by high temperature resulting in hot and dry weather. The second half continued similarly but was slightly less settled with rain and changeable conditions ending the month.

For many years, Little Terns have struggled to maintain their breeding status within the County and remain vulnerable. The Essex Little Tern Project seeks to address this situation with an ambitious plan to improve habitat and breeding success at traditional sites. Decoys have been placed in order to attract the species. This year there were only 11 young fledged from four sites, a situation that can hopefully now be improved.

The good run of Eurasian Spoonbill records continued with two now at Rainham Marshes on 1st. With the species now breeding regularly in Britain, hopefully this year's spate of records will be more typical in future. What was probably the earlier Bonaparte's Gull was at Creekside Beckton, also on 1st. The only confirmed breeding record of Grey Partridge came from Colne Point, whilst a European Honey Buzzard over Shut Heath Wood Tiptree on 6th was the second of the year. The Tiptree Black Redstart reappeared on 8th, while a male Common Merganser spent much of the summer at Lexden Park Colchester although it was discovered to have had a damaged wing.

After a Long-tailed Duck was found at Abberton Reservoir on 24th, the month ended on a high point with a juvenile Marsh Sandpiper at Rainham Marshes on 27th for a couple of days.

August

In the south, the early part of August was warm and sunny, thereafter, more unsettled weather with cooler temperatures. The final days were generally unsettled.

On 1st, a Eurasian Stone-Curlew was reported at Bowers Marsh, then being seen intermittently to 17th. Despite the scarcity of Wood Warblers generally, this year saw a positive glut of records early in the month with singles in the Ingrebourne Valley on 1st, Bedfords Park on 6th and Dagnam Park Harold Hill two days later. On 4th, Abberton Reservoir played host to a drake Ferruginous Duck that remained until October and on the same day, a White Stork visited Jaywick and St Osyth for two days. Single Glossy Ibises appeared at five sites during the month, probably involving 2-3 birds.

It is rare indeed for Smew to appear in this section of the Seasonal Summary but a redhead of unknown origin was observed at various Lee Valley sites with the last sighting at Olympic Park Stratford on 9th. The same day saw the arrival of the first of two Red-backed Shrikes to be found at

Brightlingsea this year. On 20th a count of 20 Garganey at Hanningfield Reservoir was the highest site count since 1994. Prompting the usual questions of where its usual spring/early summer whereabouts are, the Ring-necked Duck reappeared at Abberton Reservoir on 12th, choosing to remain site faithful until the year's end. The heaviest Pied Flycatcher passage for many years occurred with two distinct falls that included peaks of 11 at The Naze and seven at Holland Haven on 3rd and then around 21st, when there were 13 at The Naze.

A quiet period was broken by the presence of a Eurasian Bittern at Blue House Farm (to 29th). Another Wood Warbler was found again in the Ingrebourne Valley on 26th. This date also revealed two Eurasian Spoonbills at Fingringhoe Wick and Cudmore Grove East Mersea until 23rd September. On 27th, two European Tree Sparrows flew south at Frinton-on-Sea and the month drew to a close with a Red-backed Shrike at Wanstead Flats (staying into the next month).

September

Southerly areas began much as the previous month with warmer weather. In the north it was more unsettled and this duly spread to the remainder of the Country. Windy conditions were experienced during the second half of the month. In the last week, it was more anticyclonic with more settled conditions in the south. In Essex the wind blew continuously from westerly quarters apart from the first three and last three days of the month.

Predictably a rather busy month (though largely lacking in drift passerines because of the winds), the month began well with a Purple Heron at Abberton Reservoir and a Red-necked Phalarope at Vange, both on 1st. Next day, Abberton scored again, this time with a Eurasian Bittern. A Eurasian Stone-Curlew at Canewdon began a 26 day stay on 2nd and a male Montagu's Harrier visited Blue House Farm and put in a return visit on 14th. A juvenile White-winged Tern flew by Canvey Point on 5th.

Eurasian Wryneck, like Eurasian Hoopoe, is a species whose visits can often occur well away from the normal coastal watchpoints, however, if one were to predict the most likely location in the County to find one, then The Naze would surely top such a list. So it proved and one was recorded there on 7th; another was seen briefly on Wallasea Island three days earlier. From the 9th onwards, began an influx of Western Cattle Egrets into the County. This continued until the first week of November and, while many of the observations were of 2-3 (once four) birds at sites in the east and south of the County, it is perhaps tempting to think that more were involved than was actually estimated.

The middle part of the month continued in a rich vein with a Red-necked Grebe at Mistley and a Northern Gannet at Abberton Reservoir, both on 11th. On 12th, five European Tree Sparrows were at Bradwell Bird Observatory, the species remaining here, albeit in fewer numbers, until 29th. Next day, eight Eurasian Spoonbills must have been an impressive sight as they flew over Gunners Park Shoebury and this day also saw a Marsh Sandpiper at Vange. On 15th groups of six and nine Eurasian Spoonbills outnumbered the earlier Gunners Park Shoebury flock as they passed Frinton-on-Sea, being also noted at Holland Haven and St Osyth. Rather less spectacular, but still impressive, there was a count of 14,806 Eurasian Teal at Abberton Reservoir on 16th, a site record. The 19th saw a Glossy Ibis drop in to Bowers Marsh for almost ten days.

A Common Quail at Salcott on 22nd sadly met its death, being possibly caught by a cat. Also this day, there was a Pectoral Sandpiper at Canewdon, three European Tree Sparrows at Frinton-on-Sea and an excellent record of a European Pied Flycatcher well inland at Stansted Airport Lagoons, the first site record for many years. On 23rd a Leach's Storm Petrel passed Frinton-on-Sea whilst the next day there were two Common Cranes over Deal Hall Dengie. The same day, a Red Phalarope started a two day stay at Abberton Reservoir.

The first Yellow-browed Warbler of the autumn appeared at Wanstead Flats on 29th and up to six were at The Naze the next day.

October

There was high pressure over southern England at the beginning of the month. Whilst central and northern areas experienced a westerly flow, warmer than average temperatures were the result of southerly winds. Storm Callum brought wet and windy conditions on 12th then a more settled spell was felt before a northerly outbreak brought a cold close to October with showers on high ground. Again however, at least in Essex, easterly winds were in short supply.

The month began rather slowly until 6th when a Yellow-browed Warbler was at St Osyth and on 7th three sites held the species: Colne Point, Frinton-on-Sea (up to three) and Holland Haven. Another was at Dagnam Park Harold Hill on 10th, the day after a Red-breasted Flycatcher was found at Frinton-on-Sea. This site continues to produce every year due mainly to the excellent coverage it receives and one wonders what must have been missed in previous years when the word Frinton-on-Sea was scarcely mentioned in most *Essex Bird Reports*? A Red Phalarope was found at nearby Holland Haven on 13th.

Yellow-browed Warbler continued to be found, one on this day at Fairlop Waters Barkingside and others at Bradwell Bird Observatory and Wanstead Flats on 17th. Following this last record, a Rustic Bunting, only the second for the County, was found at the same site and remained until 20th, a date which saw Rainham Marshes shine (pun intended!) with a Eurasian Bittern and a European Honey Buzzard passed over Holland Haven. The largest Red Crossbill flock of the year numbered 20 over Beckton while the largest gathering of Common Buzzards was a hefty 46 around Hamford Water on 21st. Scarcities continued aplenty with Leach's Storm Petrel at Deal Hall Dengie, a Yellow-browed Warbler at South Woodham Ferrers and up to three European Tree Sparrows at Rainham Marshes on 24th and Red-backed Shrike at Brightlingsea on 25th.

A typically bird filled month continued from 28th with seabirds coming to the fore in a strong north-easterly airflow. Canvey Island produced Leach's Storm Petrel, three Manx Shearwaters and an Atlantic Puffin, there was a Little Auk and Sooty Shearwater at Frinton-on-Sea (with two Little Auks there the previous day) plus two Manx Shearwaters, an exceptional 49 Pomarine Jaegers, a single Long-tailed Jaeger. This date also began a good run of Rough-legged Buzzard records with one at Brightlingsea. Others were present at Rainham Marshes where 1-2 were seen into November and Wallasea Island. A Yellow-browed Warbler was at Gunners Park Shoebury on 29th. The last day of the month saw a Dusky Warbler at The Naze (a fifth site record) and a Lapland Bunting at Broomhouse Flash Langham.

November

A cold period began at the opening of the month but soon changed with southerly winds and was generally rather wet in much of the Country, except for East Anglia and the south-east where it was fine and dry. A more settled period ensued mid month, the result of a high over much of Scandinavia, it being somewhat cloudy. Easterly winds on 19th continued for a week and it was generally cold with rain in the east and south-west. All areas experienced mild, wet weather at the end of the month.

As well as the Rainham Marshes Rough-legged Buzzard, singles were also reported from Frinton-on-Sea on 2nd and Old Hall Marshes on 24th. Yellow-browed Warblers were at Mardyke Valley and Thurrock Thameside Mucking.

Things were quietening down in the transition of autumn to winter. Three Common Loons (an inland flock, no less) were at King George V Reservoir on 11th. The following day produced a Northern Goshawk at Heybridge and the season's first Horned Lark was at Point Clear St Osyth on 13th. On 14th, two swift seen over Hamford Water unfortunately could not be conclusively identified but the late date made the consideration of them being Pallid a distinctive possibility. Elsewhere, an adult and two juvenile Tundra Swans were at the species' favoured site, Abberton Reservoir, and they were present up to at least 20th. Abberton Reservoir achieved two record counts during this period: Great Crested Grebes numbered 2,243 on 15th and on 16th, no less than 17 Great Egrets were counted.

The sole Pallas's Leaf Warbler record of the year concerned two at The Naze on 17th and there was a Red-necked Grebe at Wrabness on the same day. Much of the rest of the month was mainly quiet,

although two Sooty Shearwaters passed both Holland Haven and Frinton-on-Sea on 20th and two Tundra Swans were in-off nearby at The Naze next day. Inland loons were a feature with Common at Fishers Green on 23rd and a Black-throated at Walthamstow Wetlands on 24th. This date was also notable for the only Tundra Bean Goose record of the year with two at Hanningfield Reservoir whilst a late Ring Ouzel was at Wigboro Wick Farm St Osyth from 21st-27th. The last day of the month saw a moulting adult American Golden Plover photographed in Salcott Channel off Old Hall Marshes.

December

December began mild with westerly winds up to 9th, followed by cold conditions in the north. A blocking Scandinavian high resulted in cold in the east. Widespread freezing rain mid month was the result of Storm Deirdre. More changeable weather from 16th then turned more settled from 24th and a generally westerly flow gave mild and cloudy conditions to most except eastern Scotland and north-east England.

On 2nd, a visit to Heybridge Gravel Pit produced a female Dartford Warbler. The first Black Guillemot in the County since 2006 was at Frinton-on-Sea and the year's final Little Auk was off Holland Haven on 9th. The main interest was then centred around Black Brant with the returning bird at West Mersea seen again and two being reported at Foulness on 9th and a single passed Frinton-on-Sea on 15th and 18th. Mersea also played host to a Horned Lark on Stone Point that resided to the year's end. A Lesser Whitethroat was found in a garden on Foulness Island mid month that could prove to be the County's first record of the Siberian race blythi.

As might be expected for the time of year, geese continued to provide interest. A flock of 37 Pink-footed Geese at Holland Haven included one with a Norwegian fitted neck collar. The final days of the year saw an Essex record of 1,441 Red-throated Loons off Frinton-on-Sea on 27th, a Glossy Ibis at West Mersea on 30th and a single Bohemian Waxwing at Clacton on 27th with 16 at Boreham on New Year's Eve.

With thanks to the Met Office

SYSTEMATIC LIST 2018

INTRODUCTION

In all, a total of 264 species was recorded in 2018, approximately 67% of the Essex List, which increases to 394 species after the split of Bean Goose into Tundra and Taiga Bean Geese and Little Tern into Little and Least Terns (254 and 65% in 2017).

The only abbreviations used in the Systematic List (except for the much-used St for Saint in place names) are ♂ for male (and ♂♂ for males) and ♀ for female (and ♀♀ for females).

The following books may be referenced in the text:

- Dennis 1996 – *Tetrad Atlas of the Breeding Birds of Essex*. Mike Dennis. Essex Birdwatching Society 1996
- Wood 2007 – *Birds of Essex*. Simon Wood. Christopher Helm, London 2007

Places names have been standardised. The full names and descriptions of sites mentioned in the text can be found in the Gazetteer on page 161. Only those places mentioned in the current Report are now listed in the Gazetteer.

The Systematic List follows the generic order within the BOURC British List 9th Edition (2017) together with changes published in BOURC Reports since.

The reason for using the new order now, but not the new splits, is Editorial convenience; having just taken over the Editor's role, I wanted to standardise much of what we do as soon as possible. The generic order seemed a sensible immediate change as this does not affect recording but the splits have been left alone until 2018, so watch this space...

International World Bird List names have been introduced this year but where these are significantly different to those we are used to, the British vernacular name is given along side in brackets.

Trinomial Latin names (e.g. *Burhinus oedicnemus oedicnemus*) are, where applicable, used and those sub-species occurring within Essex are identified wherever possible. In some cases, the identity of sub-species occurring in the County is uncertain and this is mentioned in the individual status lines (see below). Where it is unknown which sub-species is occurring in the County, the Latin name is marked with an asterix * e.g. *Phasianus colchilus**

In the body of the Systematic List, you will notice a number of coloured numbers and letters, as shown in the species' headings below.

Great Auk *Pinguinus impennis* — **UK EX REX**

Vagrant, especially after alcohol. — **EBSIP (3, 2, 5)**

Passenger Pigeon *Ectopistes migratorius* — **UK**

Vagrant, although no records for 200 years. — **BBRC (5, 0 5)**

Legend

UK denotes a UK Red List species; Birds of Conservation Concern 4 (2015)

UK denotes a UK Amber List species; Birds of Conservation Concern 4 (2015)

EX denotes one of the five Essex Biodiversity Action Plan species (Bittern, Grey Partridge, Stone-curlew, Song Thrush, Skylark)

REX denotes the Essex Red Data species

BBRC (5, 0 5) – the species requires a description that should be forwarded to the British Birds Rarities Committee (see page 187).

EBSIP (3, 2, 5) – the species requires a description that should be forwarded to the Essex Identification Panel (see page 187).

In both instances above the figures in brackets (1, 2, 3) 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 EBSIP. The numbers 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, are only counted the first time of occurrence, not each and every time they arrive.

2. the total number of records since the Birds of Essex [Wood 2007] up to and including those in 2018.
3. the total number of Essex records to the end of 2018.

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

Records are not published in the *Essex Bird Report* until accepted by the British Birds' Rarities Committee (BBRC) or British Ornithologists' Union Records Committee (BOURC).

Note that where a species has EBSIP but no numbers after it in brackets, the species has either recently bred and/or is too common to be able to assess actual numbers occurring, but none-the-less a description is still required by the Identification Panel.

Beneath the species' English and Latin names is a brief description of the species and its sub-species (where appropriate) within the county. The following broad definitions are used -

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	2-10 records annually or restricted to specific habitats.
Very scarce	1-2 records each year.
Rare	occurs less than annually.
Very rare	11-20 records in the past 50 years.
Vagrant	ten records or less during the past 50 years.

Wetland Bird Survey tables are provided for certain species, the monthly totals being derived from the mid-monthly Wetland Bird Survey counts. In the top left of each table are two numbers. These are, firstly, in blue (e.g. **GB 700**), the qualifying level for a site to be of National importance, and secondly, in red (e.g. **IN 2,500**), the qualifying level for the site to be of International importance (as assessed by the Wildfowl and Wetland Trust).

Where a monthly count at a particular site is above the GB threshold then that count is highlighted in blue, e.g. **1,234**, whilst if it exceeds the International threshold then it is highlighted in red, e.g. **5,678**.

The letters 'nc' denote that 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 Wetland Bird Survey localities, including sites that may not be listed in the table. Figures for the Stour Estuary 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.

Data were supplied by the Wetland Bird Survey (WeBS), a partnership between the British Trust for Ornithology, the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds and the Joint Nature Conservation Committee (the last on behalf of the statutory nature conservation bodies: Natural England, Natural Resources Wales and Scottish Natural Heritage and the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs, Northern Ireland) in association with the Wildfowl and Wetland Trust.

Although Wetland Bird Survey 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 Wetland Bird Survey data, enquiries should be directed to the WeBS team at the British Trust for Ornithology, The Nunnery, Thetford, IP24 2PU (webs@bto.org).

BRANT GOOSE *Branta bernicla*

UK REX

Dark-bellied Brant *Branta bernicla bernicla*

Very common passage migrant and winter visitor.

In the first three months of the year there were no inland records but, intriguingly, there was a flurry in April, with one at Church Road Pits Little Baddow on 4th, one at Walthamstow Wetlands on 11th, one nearby at King George V Reservoir on 12th and five there on 15th, when there were also two at Hanningfield Reservoir. Quite what caused this small influx is unclear, coming as it did at least some three weeks after the second of the two late-winter cold spells. In the second half of the year, the only inland record came from Abberton Reservoir on 9th November.

Along the inner Thames Estuary, most records as usual came from the area between Tilbury and Thurrock Thameside Mucking. In the first half of the year at the former there were 1-4 on several dates between 6th January and 1st April, with 12 on 1st February, while at the latter there was a peak of six on 4th March Autumn saw monthly peaks of 23 at Mucking on 27th October and 25 at Tilbury on 24th November but only one in December, at Thurrock Thameside Mucking on 9th. Further upstream, at Rainham Marshes, there were singles on several dates from the start of the year to 31st March, followed by an unexpected 24 on 4th April, then three on 19th August and 1-2 between 21st November and 10th December. Finally, at Beckton, one on 18th November increased to three a week later.

Principal monthly Wetland Bird Survey counts were:

GB 980 INT 2,400	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
WeBS Total	**24883**	**24546**	**15520**	**1398**	**3**	**132**	**14007**	**21576**	**18619**
Stour Estuary	372	507	736	710	0	0	nc	nc	nc
Hamford Water	**5579**	**2514**	**3245**	nc	nc	0	0	45	159
Colne Estuary	**2998**	**2640**	517	76	0	0	121	652	**2201**
Blackwater Estuary	**6229**	**6966**	**3634**	496	0	2	302	**3966**	**4556**
Dengie	**4099**	**1650**	888	0	0	0	141	**1850**	**1037**
Crouch/Roach/Wallasea	**4659**	**2334**	**2763**	8	0	82	14	220	**2145**
Foulness/Thames	941	**7935**	**3737**	107	3	48	**13429**	**14843**	**8520**

The only non-Wetland Bird Survey count of 3,000+ not otherwise mentioned below was of 3,000+ at Leigh-on-Sea on 11th November but there were counts of 2,500 at Wallasea Island on 24th January and again on 24th December and 2,300 at Mayland Creek on 20th January.

No sample counts of juveniles were received in the first winter additional to those already reported in *Essex Bird Report 2017*. In the closing months of 2018 and into the first months of 2019 (i.e. winter 2018/19) Dave Lowe undertook a full survey, visiting 26 Brent Goose sites around the coast from Canvey Island to Mistley, counting adults and juveniles at every site. His counts produced an average of 10.34% juveniles. One family party, feeding on its own at Shoebury on 27th October, contained two adults and no less than nine juveniles.

In spring there was the usual period of rapid departure in late May. As in 2017, birds were still present at ten sites in the last ten days of that month. At Mistley there were 180 on 23rd, with 75 nearby at Wrabness the next day and, further south, 236 still at Two Tree Island on 26th. A last exodus then took place, with 589 flying north past Frinton-on-Sea on 28th and 268 on 29th, with a further 46 on 31st. After that almost none remained. Apart from eight more past Frinton-on-Sea on 2nd and 14 there on 10th, June records came only from the Blackwater Estuary, with three at Old Hall Marshes on 7th, four at Maldon on 6th (with one still there on 9th) and two at Bradwell-on-Sea on 17th.

In July there were 1-3 at five sites but the only record in the first three weeks of August was of one bird at Gunners Park Shoebury on 1st. A trickle of presumed returning birds started with two at Canvey Point on 21st August, followed by eight passing Frinton-on-Sea on 31st. There were then no

more until four passed Frinton-on-Sea on 15th September, followed there by ten on 18th, 34 on 24th, and 47 on 29th. The only birds elsewhere in late September were all on 28th, 15 at Bradwell Bird Observatory, 44 at Wakering Stairs and 11 at Canvey Point.

The main October passage was relatively subdued. As often in recent years, the benchmark was the detected movement past Frinton-on-Sea where, apart from 863 on 7th, no other count reached three figures until 3,690 were counted on 19th; the only other three-figure counts there in the month involved 674 on 27th and 832 on 28th. Excluding Wetland Bird Survey counts, no other site produced counts of more than 500 in the month. However the mid-October count on 14th revealed that 7,760 had reached the Thameside section of Foulness Island, along with 2,127 at Wakering Stairs and 3,100 at Two Tree Island (all included in the totals in the above table).

Pale-bellied Brant *Branta bernicla hrota*

Uncommon winter visitor.

Records in the early months of the year mirrored the poor showing in late 2017. A cluster of reports from the outer Colne Estuary and Mersea Strood between 13th January and 26th March perhaps involved just two birds and a handful of records from the Crouch Estuary between similar dates probably accounted for a further three, the only record away from these areas being of one in Hamford Water on 22nd January.

In the second winter one flew past Frinton-on-Sea on 18th November. December records of two at East Mersea on 23rd (with one the next day) and singles at West Mersea on 21st and Alresford on 30th could all have referred to just two birds. In the south of the County the only report was of two at the mouth of the Crouch Estuary from Foulness on 9th December.

Black Brant *Branta bernicla nigricans* EBSIP

Rare winter visitor.

Records in the first half of the year came mainly from three distinct areas. At Walton Hall Marshes/The Naze/Hamford Water, singles were seen on five dates between 22nd January and 14th March, with two at the first location on 22nd January. In the Colne Estuary, singles were reported from Fingringhoe Wick/Brightlingsea/Mersea Island on nine dates between 16th January and 5th April, with two at Mersea Strood on 24th March and at Brightlingsea two days later. On the Crouch there were singles at Deal Hall Dengie, Foulness Island, Wallasea Island and Burnham-on-Crouch on 11 dates between 19th January and 15th March, with two at Wallasea Island on 5th February. Elsewhere singles were seen passing Frinton-on-Sea on 27th January, at Maldon on 7th April and at Bradwell Bird Observatory on 22nd January.

In the second winter two singles (or the same bird twice?) flew south past Frinton-on-Sea on 15th and 18th December, while one at West Mersea on four dates in early December was presumably the returning bird from previous winters. Finally two were on the Crouch side of Foulness on 9th December.

Estimated monthly totals of birds present:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Numbers	5	3	4	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	4

As it has become impossible to assess the number of returning and new birds annually, record totals are no longer estimated.

RED-BREASTED GOOSE *Branta ruficollis* BBRC (7, 6, 13)

Vagrant.

2016 Addendum

Deal Hall Dengie and Foulness Island	One	13th January-6th February	DLo *et al.*

Recently accepted by British Birds Rarities Committee.

CANADA GOOSE *Branta canadensis canadensis*

Common, naturalised, resident.

Breeding records were received from 55 sites (43 in 2017). At Blue House Farm eight broods were seen while on Foulness Island 27 pairs raised 38 juveniles. At Bowers Marsh 17 pairs fledged 30 young, at Vange Marsh there were at least six pairs and at Rainham Marshes 57 pairs produced 32 broods. At Hainault Forest on 13th May there was a crèche of 27 along with three distinct broods and at Fairlop Waters Barkingside there was a total of 60 young on 11th June. At Connaught Water Epping Forest there were 13 occupied nests on 22nd May. At Walthamstow Wetlands, 48 chicks survived to fledging from 13 broods. No other site reported more than four pairs/broods but the species was not among those for which full survey results were produced at Old Hall Marshes or Wallasea Island in 2018.

Principal monthly Wetland Bird Survey counts were:

GB (600)*? INT ?	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
WeBS Total	**2075**	**1670**	**1075**	**719**	**2525**	**4051**	**2892**	**2948**	**2276**
Stour Estuary	2	4	0	19	131	20	nc	nc	nc
Hamford Water	18	25	15	nc	nc	0	0	0	0
Colne Estuary	17	19	7	8	0	0	0	0	18
Blackwater Estuary	286	82	3	60	0	134	153	172	97
Crouch/Roach/Wallasea	474	238	133	64	202	**812**	**1006**	251	**908**
Foulness/Thames	3	223	219	114	146	**1304**	335	**607**	194
Abberton Reservoir	139	16	15	31	**1151**	341	202	134	92
Hanningfield Reservoir	129	99	41	46	279	532	126	552	51
Lee Valley	354	399	189	62	46	155	209	281	193

Counts of 350+ not included in the above figures were as follows (site maximum in each case): Langham, c350 on 14th December; Abberton Reservoir, 1,100 on 7th July; Hanningfield Reservoir, 500+ on 5th August; Wallasea Island, 600+ on 13th August; Rainham Marshes, 410 on 10th August. In addition, counts of 250 or more were received from Cattawade, Blue House Farm, West Canvey Marsh, King George V Reservoir and Fisher's Green Holyfield.

BARNACLE GOOSE *Branta leucopsis* UK

Scarce winter visitor but fast increasing naturalised population.

There were no reports of confirmed breeding but ten were in Hamford Water on 19th May and 1-4 presumed feral birds were reported from various sites in the spring and summer.

In the first winter, much the largest counts again concerned the Hamford Water feral flock, 130 being counted on 18th March and 250 on 12th April. Elsewhere the highest count was of 36+ at Brightlingsea on 11th January. These birds were seen to fly off north-north-east, so 18 flying south off Frinton-on-Sea the next day could have been part of the same group. Otherwise the only other double-figure counts involved a flock of ten, which was seen intermittently at both Bowers Marsh and West Canvey Marsh on various dates in January and February. In the second winter the only reports of more than ten concerned a group of 12, which moved between Tollesbury Wick and Old Hall Marshes in late November and December

BARNACLE/CANADA GOOSE *Branta leucopsis/Canadensis*

The Blue House Farm flock of hybrids was present throughout the year. The highest counts were 57 on 5th January, 50 on 8th February and 39 on 4th September.

GREYLAG GOOSE *Anser anser anser* UK

Common, naturalised, resident.

Breeding was reported from 43 sites (30 in 2017, 42 in 2016). At Rainham Marshes 21 pairs raised 14 broods (19 pairs producing 11 broods in 2017) and at Bowers Marsh eight pairs fledged 17 young. At Walthamstow Wetlands 34 chicks survived to fledging out of 13 broods. There were six broods at Marks Hall Coggeshall and four pairs each at Foulness Island, Vange Wick, Belhus Woods Aveley, Hainault Forest and Warren Gorge Chafford Gorges. The species was not among those fully surveyed at Old Hall Marshes, Blue House Farm or Wallasea Island in 2018.

Principal monthly Wetland Bird Survey counts were:

GB 1,400*	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
WeBS Total	**1788**	**1405**	**716**	**500**	**1445**	**861**	**1179**	**1708**	**1137**
Hamford Water	414	383	142	nc	nc	0	0	0	0
Holland Haven	195	91	2	0	95	nc	133	3	0
Colne Estuary	187	134	108	27	0	20	175	4	166
Blackwater Estuary	445	372	121	246	0	130	196	282	67
Crouch/Roach/Wallasea	206	39	68	36	112	233	10	47	149
Foulness/Thames	0	51	61	9	16	26	185	24	47
Abberton Reservoir	102	10	1	32	913	144	113	621	325
Hanningfield Reservoir	43	72	65	62	214	194	243	262	170

The only single-site count of more than 300 came from Rainham Marshes, where there were 604 on 3rd October. Counts of 300 (or approximately that figure) not included in the above table came from Langham, The Hythe Colchester, Abberton Reservoir, Hanningfield Reservoir and Ingrebourne Valley.

PINK-FOOTED GOOSE *Anser brachyrhynchus* UK

Scarce passage migrant winter and visitor.

The first winter produced much the highest count of the year, a flock of 100 reported from Stone Point The Naze, during a Wetland Bird Survey on 21st January. There was no further sign of these birds, and indeed no further records at this season north of the Crouch Estuary. A single bird was present on Wallasea Island from 22nd January to 21st March. Further south, a bird seen at Rainham Marshes on 5th and 9th March was conceivably the same individual as one present at Fairlop Waters Barkingside on 10th to 12th March and perhaps accounted also for one at Mayesbrook Park Dagenham on 11th to 15th April. Meanwhile one at Sewardstone Marsh on 9th March was presumably the same as the bird then seen in the Holyfield Hall Farm/Fishers Green area on various dates between 24th March and 2nd May.

Second winter arrivals started fairly early, with six at Rainham Marshes on 23rd September and either those birds or another group of six flying north at Frinton-on-Sea that afternoon. The next sighting was five at Bradwell Bird Observatory on 4th October, after which there were no further records until late November, when there was one at Beckton on 18th and three nearby at Rainham Marshes on 25th, with a single at Bradwell Bird Observatory on the latter date. One appeared at Old Hall Marshes on 30th November, subsequently seen there and across the creek at Copt Hall Marshes sporadically into 2019. In December, a group of ten which flew west at Stow Marsh North Fambridge on 12th appeared at Hanningfield Reservoir later that day, staying until 14th (with one laggard on 15th), the largest flock to land at that reservoir since 1956. A one-day flock of 37 at Holland Haven on 19th included a bird carrying a neck collar, which had been ringed in Norway. Finally, there was one (possibly the Old Hall Marshes bird) at Steeple on 27th.

TUNDRA BEAN GOOSE *Anser serrirostris* UK EBSIP (170, 152, 322)

Scarce winter visitor.

Hanningfield Reservoir	Two	24th November-20th December	DAc *et al.*

These birds constituted only the third record for Hanningfield and the first there since 2001.

GREATER WHITE-FRONTED GOOSE *Anser albifrons* UK
European Greater White-fronted Goose *Anser albifrons albifrons*

Uncommon passage migrant and winter visitor.

Following the modest showing at the end of 2017, the species was again scarce in the first months of the year. Much the largest flock was of 78 flying north at Frinton-on-Sea on 13th January. The only other records in the north of the County at this time, both in January, were of four at Abberton Reservoir on 7th and two at Garnham's Island Hamford Water, on 21st. Further south there was one at Hanningfield Reservoir on 31st January and 1st February, while 2-4 were seen at several sites along the Crouch Estuary (but mainly at Wallasea Island) between 5th January and 21st March. Further south again, in March one was at Netherhall Gravel Pit Nazeing on 16th and three at Rainham Marshes on 18th, with a surprising late group of 26 there on 25th.

The first autumn records were in November when, in the north of the County, ten in Hamford Water on 10th were followed by four at The Naze on 23rd and 13 at Wix on 25th, this latter group presumably the same as 13 which flew south past Frinton-on-Sea on 2nd December (one at Netherhall Gravel Pits Nazeing on 5th September is considered of suspect origin). In the south in November, two at Burnham-on-Crouch on 8th were perhaps the same as two across the river at Wallasea Island on 30th and there were seven at the latter site on 17th December. There were also five at Upminster on 23rd November but these were thought to be probably the feral birds, which have been in the area for some time.

In addition, four distant grey geese passing Frinton-on-Sea on 10th January and 18 at Tilbury on 11th October were considered by the observers to be probably this species.

Greenland Greater White-fronted Goose *Anser albifrons flavirostris* EBSIP (8, 0, 8)

Vagrant.

For details of an assumed escape, see Appendix II, page 149.

MUTE SWAN *Cygnus olor* UK

Common resident and winter visitor.

In total, 80 pairs were counted at 63 sites (79 at 65 in 2017). (Some sites reported broods, some reported pairs and some reported both. In cases where only broods were reported it has been assumed that the numbers of pairs equaled the numbers of broods). There were four broods at both Old Hall Marshes (one in 2017) and Bowers Marsh, three broods at Walthamstow Wetlands (seven pairs, six broods in 2017) and three pairs at both Wallasea Island (one pair in 2017) and Rainham Marshes (three pairs in 2017). No other site held more than 1-2 pairs.

Principal monthly Wetland Bird Survey counts were:

GB 500 INT 320	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
WeBS Total	**349**	**404**	**357**	**307**	**480**	**675**	**339**	**424**	**363**
Stour Estuary	111	136	167	107	8	225	nc	nc	nc
Hamford Water	14	17	18	nc	nc	12	1	0	0
Colne Estuary	4	3	6	2	0	2	8	23	15
Blackwater Estuary	31	20	9	7	6	28	17	20	14
Crouch/Roach/Wallasea	39	74	67	58	45	3	3	60	110

GB 500 INT 320	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Foulness/Thames	28	27	5	20	30	62	10	107	97
Abberton Reservoir	24	45	23	47	300	216	165	115	75
Hanningfield Reservoir	3	9	4	4	64	57	9	8	2
Lee Valley	70	48	41	39	14	17	73	34	11

Excluding those tabulated counts, the highest count from Abberton Reservoir was 160 on 23rd July. Counts on the Stour Estuary related almost entirely to the flock between Manningtree and Mistley, which peaked at 350 on 20th January. Elsewhere the only three-figure flock came from Foulness Island during the November count, where the figure included a flock of 102 on the Crouch side of the island.

TUNDRA SWAN *Cygnus columbianus bewickii* (Bewick's Swan) UK

Uncommon passage migrant and winter visitor.

With a maximum of just 14 individuals during the year, it is sobering to report that this was the poorest showing in the County since 1958. With 2016 and 2017 not much better (after reasonable numbers in 2015 – at least by the standards of recent years), it must be hoped that this species is not now slipping away as a regular winter visitor to Essex.

Abberton Reservoir has long been the stronghold and almost all records came from there. In the first winter, there were three on 6th January, with two the next day, plus a surprising late record of one during a Wetland Bird Survey on 18th April. At the end of the year, an adult and two juveniles were present from 14th to 20th November, while in December there was a juvenile on 9th December, one (the age of which was not reported) two days later and two adults on 12th.

The only birds from other sites were two in the Ingrebourne Valley on 6th January and two seen flying in off the sea at The Naze on 21st November.

WHOOPER SWAN *Cygnus cygnus* UK

Scarce passage migrant and winter visitor.

In the first winter on the Crouch/Roach estuaries, two adults first seen at Paglesham Churchend on 13th January remained in the area until at least 21st February, being seen at several sites but mainly on Wallasea Island. Further north, an adult was briefly at Old Hall Marshes on 14th January. In February there were singles at Bathside Bay Harwich on 19th and at Hanningfield Reservoir on 23rd. In March one joined the Mute Swans at Mistley/Manningtree on 9th March and was seen there on various dates to 5th April: some observers questioned the wild origin of that bird and there must be doubts too over origins of the adult which was seen again at Garnham's Island Hamford Water on the first three Wetland Bird Surveys of the year. What was presumably the latter bird was seen again, at Bramble Island Hamford Water, on 9th November.

The only other birds in the second half of the year were a juvenile seen on the sea from both Holland Haven and Frinton-on-Sea on 25th September and a brief inland bird in the Colne Valley at White Colne on 8th December.

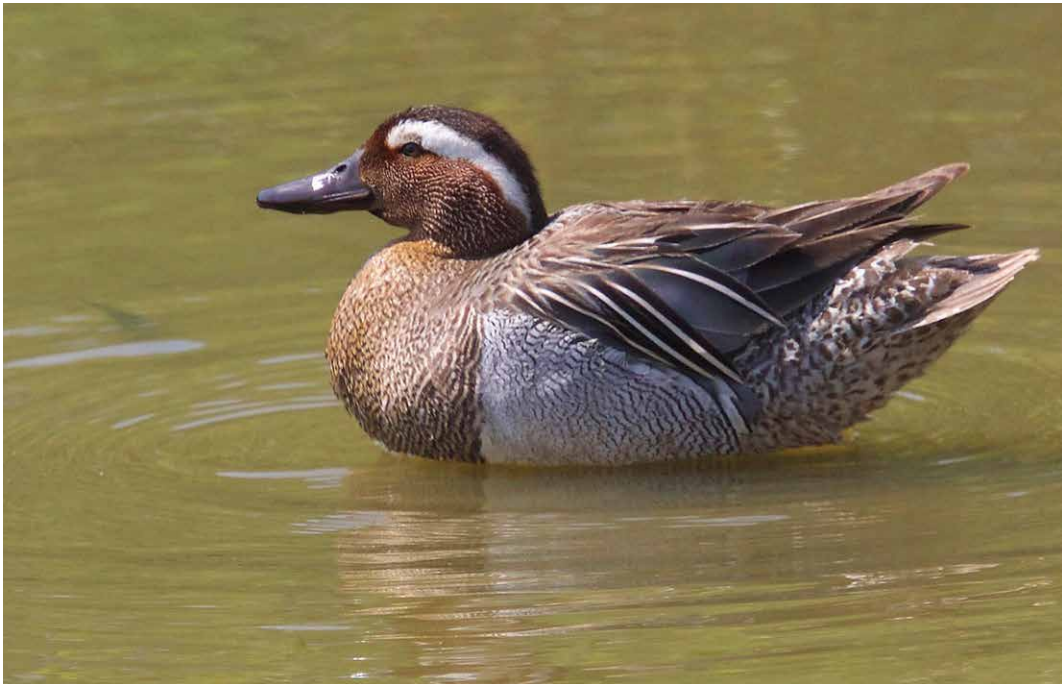
EGYPTIAN GOOSE *Alopochen aegyptiaca*

Fairly common, but increasing, resident.

The spread of this species as a breeder continued, with nesting confirmed from 20 sites (12 in 2017). Three broods were seen at Walthamstow Wetlands and single broods (or, in one case, an occupied nest) were seen at Broomhouse Flash Langham, Cattawade, Docura's Farm Little Horkesley, Ardleigh Reservoir, Abberton Reservoir, Salcott, Chigborough Lakes, Shoebury Park, Stanford Warren, Thurrock Thameside Mucking, Dagenham Chase, Mayesbrook Park Dagenham, Bow Creek, Wanstead Flats, Stubbers Adventure Centre Corbets Tey, Fairlop Waters Barkingisde, Holyfield Lake, Seventy Acres Lake Holyfield and Glen Faba Roydon.

Reports without confirmation of breeding (and not necessarily in the breeding season) came from

Two Tundra Bean Geese with single Greylag behind, Hanningfield Reservoir, December (DAVID ACFIELD)



Garganey, Abberton Reservoir, May (PAUL CHAMBERLAIN)

Common Merganser, Colchester, February (SEAN NIXON)

Black-throated Loon, Gunners Park Shoebury, December (SEAN NIXON)

a further 71 sites (83 in 2017). This slight decline was reflected also in the number of sites reporting double-figure flocks, which this year was 17 (21 in 2017). Sites reporting 20 or more were as follows (site maximum in each case): Abberton Reservoir, 54 on 7th July; Stubbers Adventure Centre Corbets Tey, 31 on 8th September; Fairlop Waters Barkingside, 23 on 18th October; Wanstead Park, 20 on 5th September; Wanstead Flats, 44 on 14th September; Cornmill Meadows Waltham Abbey, 24 on 20th January; Fishers Green Holyfield, 22 on 4th January. The count at Abberton Reservoir was a County record. As usual, there was doubtless overlap between several of these sites. Other sites reporting double-figures (again with duplication likely) were Mistley, Boreham, Hanningfield Reservoir, Bowers Marsh, Belhus Woods Aveley, Mayesbrook Park Dagenham, Barking Park, Valentine's Park Ilford, South Park Ilford and Walthamstow Wetlands.

COMMON SHELDUCK *Tadorna tadorna* UK

Locally common resident, passage migrant and winter visitor.

Coastal breeding was confirmed (by broods seen, and in one case a nest) at 16 sites (20 in 2017). There was no full brood count at Old Hall Marshes but three broods were seen on 1st June, totaling 24 young. At Foulness Island there were 29 pairs and 87 juveniles. Six broods were counted at both Paglesham Lagoon and Rainham Marshes. No other site reported more than two broods but at Bowers Marsh there were considered to be nine breeding pairs.

Inland there were single broods at Walthamstow Wetlands (none surviving to fledging), Hanningfield Reservoir and Bradwell-juxta-Coggeshall Gravel Pit.

Principal monthly Wetland Bird Survey counts were:

GB 470 INT 3,000	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
WeBS Total	**8067**	**5406**	**3425**	**976**	**112**	**408**	**1217**	**4215**	**3735**
Stour Estuary	397	293	410	158	20	25	nc	nc	nc
Hamford Water	**974**	453	**721**	nc	nc	2	0	32	35
Colne Estuary	**1051**	**624**	305	74	10	1	88	431	**474**
Blackwater Estuary	**3924**	**2594**	**722**	271	13	314	**791**	**2862**	**1631**
Dengie	58	228	42	8	0	0	3	32	170
Crouch/Roach/Wallasea	**1208**	**582**	**596**	248	0	0	291	**471**	**1024**
Foulness/Thames	432	**606**	**577**	152	64	37	40	377	387

Single-site counts of 200+ not included in the above table were as follows (site maximum in each case): Mistley, 1,000+ on 5th January and 15th February; Fingringhoe Wick, 250 on 22nd December; Heybridge Basin, 310 on 27th November; Wallasea Island, 528 on 5th January; Holehaven Creek Canvey Island, 210 on 4th February; Stanford Wharf, 200 on 6th November; Thurrock Thameside Mucking, 795 on 5th October; East Tilbury, 377 on 13th December. Some of the same birds are likely to have been involved in the last three of these counts.

Inland records away from the breeding sites came from a further 38 sites (28 in 2017). At the major reservoirs peak counts were: Abberton, 45 on 18th April; Hanningfield, 15 on 2nd April; Walthamstow, 18 on 1st May; King George V, four on 11th March and 18th April. Other double-figure 'inland' counts came from Chigborough Lakes, 17 on 14th March, and Bowers Marsh, 50 on 11th April, but both sites are only a stone's throw from estuaries. Otherwise all reports were in single figures and again most were very close to estuaries (or in the Lee Valley, where one or two wandering pairs in early spring may have accounted for many of the records). Otherwise sites furthest inland were Mole Hall Widdington, where there were two on 19th January and again on 15th May, and Amberden Hall Reservoir Widdington, where there was one on 20th June.

MANDARIN DUCK *Aix galericulata* REX

Slowly increasing, naturalised resident.

In the favoured area of Epping Forest, breeding was proved at three sites: Strawberry Hill Pond, Connaught Water and Earl's Path Pond Loughton, each of which held one brood. Elsewhere there were single broods at Weald Park and Boxted.

Double-figure counts came almost entirely from Connaught Water and Strawberry Hill Pond in Epping Forest. At the former there were seasonal maxima of 43 on 23rd January, 21 on 13th July and 21st August and 20 on 29th December. At the latter all the highest counts came in the second half of the year, with a peak on 27 on 11th October. In addition, c.36 were counted, apparently at a separate site (but very close to Strawberry Hill Pond) at High Beach Epping Forest on 10th November.

Elsewhere, the species was seen at a further 26 sites, all records being of 1-5 birds. Most of these were again in the south of the County. Sites in the west, north of Lee Valley were Hatfield Broad Oak, Hatfield Forest and Saffron Walden.

GARGANEY *Spatula querquedula* UK

Breeds occasionally. Uncommon, but annual, passage migrant.

At Old Hall Marshes, a pair successfully fledged six young. This was the only breeding record in the year.

The first of the spring was at Rainham Marshes, a ♀ on 31st March. This was followed by another ♀, at Stow Marsh North Fambridge on 5th April, with a pair at Boreham the next day, the Rainham Marshes bird being seen again on 7th. Apart from a ♂ at The Naze on 13th, there was then a gap until 20th, when a ♂ arrived at Bowers Marsh, it (or perhaps other single drakes) then being seen there very intermittently until 9th June. A ♂ arrived in the Ingrebourne Valley on 21st and was still there on 24th. One was at King George V Reservoir on 22nd and a drake at Blue House Farm on 26th was joined by a ♀ on 29th, the ♂ still being present there on 1st May. Another ♂ was at Walton Hall Marshes on 27th, joined by another the next day and one or the other being seen until 6th May. At Old Hall Marshes a pair arrived on 28th April and was seen into early May before disappearing, perhaps to breed. Finally, in April, one was at Lower Raypits Canewdon on 30th.

In May, there were two (sexes not reported) at Abberton Reservoir on 6th and again on 18th, then a pair from 21st to at least 2nd June. At The Hythe Colchester, there were two ♂♂ on 6th-7th and at West Canvey Marsh, a ♂ on 13th was joined by a pair on 15th and 19th, a ♂ still being present on 21st. A ♂ was at Old Hall Marshes on 18th and two were there on 24th. One was at Audley End on 20th and a pair was at Boreham on 24th.

Autumn passage peaked early, with ten (including the fledged brood) at Old Hall Marshes on 30th July and, in early August, 17 at Hanningfield Reservoir on 5th rising to an impressive 20 on 12th. The latter is the highest single-site count reported since 1994 (but numbers were historically much higher, with plentiful breeding, in the 1950s and 1960s – see Wood 2007). At Vange Marsh in August there were eight on 20th and six on 29th but no other site held more than four. Passage had begun in mid-July with a ♀ at Stow Marsh on 13th, followed by a pair (perhaps the breeders) at Old Hall Marshes on 17th and one at Bowers Marsh on 22nd-23rd. Thereafter autumn records can be tabulated as follows (breeding record excluded):

	July	August				September		
Week commencing	**30th**	**6th**	**13th**	**20th**	**27th**	**3rd**	**10th**	**17th**
Numbers	23	23	20	16	9	2	5	3
Locations	4	3	6	5	4	2	4	2

The last birds of the year were two at Abberton Reservoir on 22nd September.

NORTHERN SHOVELER *Spatula clypeata* UK REX

Breeds in small numbers. Fairly common passage migrant and winter visitor.

Sites reporting nests/broods were: Cattawade, one brood; The Naze, a nest with nine eggs by the seawall on 29th April; Holland Haven, one brood; Abberton Reservoir, one brood; Old Hall Marshes, no formal brood count by the RSPB but at least five broods were reported by casual observers (and 41 pairs were counted by the RSPB in a survey in early May, reducing to 18 in early June); Foulness Island, one brood; Rainham Marshes, 25 pairs produced 16 broods; Seventy Acres Lake Holyfield, one brood. At other south Essex RSPB reserves no broods were seen but early season breeding pairs were counted as follows: Bowers Marsh, five; Vange Wick, three; Vange Marsh, one.

Elsewhere in the breeding season (taken as May/June), reports came from a further 19 sites, none of which reported more than single pairs in that period.

Principal Wetland Bird Survey counts were:

GB 190 INT 400	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
WeBS Total	**767**	**840**	**1193**	**282**	**412**	**2027**	**2540**	**1496**	**595**
Stour Estuary	2	0	0	0	0	0	nc	nc	nc
Hamford Water	23	32	25	nc	nc	2	0	0	0
Holland Haven	3	8	33	63	2	nc	1	0	5
Colne Estuary	60	68	36	2	0	0	7	11	32
Blackwater Estuary	49	**192**	110	89	0	3	16	85	66
Dengie	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	4
Crouch/Roach/Wallasea	80	45	170	33	0	0	4	0	24
Foulness/Thames	12	34	68	22	12	11	13	38	32
Abberton Reservoir	**394**	**399**	**673**	30	**337**	**1784**	**2069**	**1055**	**302**
Hanningfield Reservoir	9	7	33	27	61	182	**366**	143	106
Lee Valley	124	54	43	16	0	33	54	110	16

Except at Abberton Reservoir, where there were numerous reports of three-figure flocks throughout the year, there were no counts of 150+ that are not included in the above table and only the following of 130+: Blue House Farm, 134 on 7th April; Rainham Marshes, 149 on 4th April; King George V Reservoir, 130 on 14th September.

GADWALL *Mareca strepera strepara* UK REX

Uncommon breeder. Slowly increasing, fairly common, passage migrant and winter visitor.

As in 2017, breeding was proved at nine sites. Five of these were the same in both years: Rainham Marshes was again the stronghold, with 17 pairs producing 11 broods (five broods from 12 in 2017); three broods were seen at Abberton Reservoir (six in 2017) and one brood each at Langham Lagoons (two), Broomhouse Flash Langham (one) and Blue House Farm (one). Single broods were also seen at Docura's Farm Langham, Bradwell Bird Observatory, East Tilbury and the first breeding record of this species in the Mardyke Valley, all sites where breeding did not occur in 2017.

Sites with apparently breeding pairs in May/June (but no broods or nests found) were: Old Hall Marshes, five; Bowers Marsh, nine, and single pairs at Foulness Island,

West Canvey Marsh, Vange Wick, Vange Marsh, Waterworks Leyton and Seventy Acres Lake Holyfield. There were three pairs at Walthamstow Wetlands but no sign of breeding. In the same period, reports of 2+ birds, but with no mention of pairing, came from a further 13 sites.

Principal Wetland Bird Survey counts were:

GB 310 INT 600	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
WeBS Total	**606**	**528**	**344**	**150**	**769**	**892**	**520**	**337**	**560**
Stour Estuary	0	0	0	4	0	0	nc	nc	nc
Hamford Water	113	25	54	nc	nc	28	0	0	0
Colne Estuary	12	12	1	0	0	0	1	4	12
Blackwater Estuary	10	5	7	14	0	32	5	1	1
Crouch/Roach/Wallasea	42	24	34	15	0	11	0	2	17
Abberton Reservoir	123	244	96	54	**464**	**780**	**369**	126	**326**
Hanningfield Reservoir	67	88	34	16	266	0	38	23	80
Lee Valley	189	99	69	26	6	31	82	116	104

Summer counts, which are not tabulated above, included 662 at Abberton Reservoir on 24th July and 464 there on 21st August, and 266 at Hanningfield Reservoir on 12th August, which was the highest count of the year at that site. Other three-figure flocks (not included in the above counts unless stated and only the site maximum given) came from Colemans Reservoir Little Braxted, 100 on 25th January; Tilbury, 110 on 17th December; Bowers Marsh, 100 on 17th August; Dagenham Chase, 111 on 28th January; Wanstead Park, 105 on 18th November and Rainham Marshes, 110 on a Wetland Bird Survey count on 18th February.

EURASIAN WIGEON *Mareca penelope* UK

Erratic breeder. Common passage migrant and winter visitor.

Breeding was not proved this year but a pair summered at Rainham Marshes and there was an interesting series of late spring/early summer records from Bowers Marsh, where a drake present throughout May was suddenly joined by five others on 30th. Then, in June, a duck appeared on 5th and 9th, accompanied by two drakes on the first date and three on the second but no further sightings were received for that month. At Old Hall Marshes, a pair lingered for much of May but there were no reports in June. There was a similar pattern at Blue House Farm where up to three were still present in May, the last bird being seen on 1st June. Elsewhere in May/June there were singles at Holland Haven on 18th May, Abberton Reservoir on 26th May and Paglesham Lagoon on 15th May and 12th June.

Principal Wetland Bird Survey counts were:

GB 4,500 INT 15,000	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
WeBS Total	**12911**	**11479**	**8046**	**269**	**13**	**1954**	**3201**	**16061**	**14342**
Stour Estuary	406	409	723	150	0	49	nc	nc	nc
Hamford Water	857	854	435	nc	nc	0	0	24	145
Holland Haven	625	240	182	15	0	nc	36	120	100
Colne Estuary	729	993	270	8	0	0	152	504	744
Blackwater Estuary	4410	**4598**	2412	41	0	216	1360	3737	3467
Dengie	119	42	3	0	0	0	20	518	546
Crouch/Roach/Wallasea	3892	951	1306	18	0	48	257	1827	**4951**
Foulness/Thames	158	727	656	11	1	404	1019	**7688**	2951
Abberton Reservoir	1601	2230	1746	1	12	1137	316	1453	1205
Hanningfield Reservoir	60	363	240	25	0	98	35	168	152
Lee Valley	54	72	73	0	0	2	6	10	81

Counts of more than 1,000 birds not included in the above table were as follows (site maximum in each case unless stated): Old Hall Marshes, 1,500 on 10th January; Tollesbury Wick, 2,000 on 4th

January and 1,770 on 8th February; Wallasea Island, 1,335 on 5th January, 2,000 on 1st February and 1,500 on 24th December; South Fambridge, 2,000 on 2nd December; Two Tree Island, 1,000+ on 13th October; Rainham Marshes, 1,100 on 17th January. In addition, there were reports of "1,000" from several sites which are assumed (and in one or two cases were stated) to have been rough estimates only.

MALLARD *Anas platyrhynchos platyrhynchos* UK

Common and widespread resident, passage migrant and winter visitor.

Breeding season counts of pairs and/or broods (with 2017 figures in brackets where available) came this year from: Broomhouse Flash Langham, five broods; Braintree and Bocking, 30+ pairs (30+ pairs); Old Hall Marshes, 65 pairs but no count of broods or young (58 pairs fledged 21 young); Chigborough Lakes, seven broods; Heybridge Basin, three broods; Boreham, five broods; Blue House Farm, 14 broods (ten broods); Wallasea Island, 12 breeding pairs; Foulness Island, a minimum of 23 pairs raised 32 juveniles (32 pairs fledged 23 young); Paglesham Lagoon, four broods; Bowers Marsh, seven pairs but only one brood reported; Vange Wick, 11 pairs fledged six young; Rainham Marshes, 46 pairs produced 35 broods (43 pairs and 32 broods).

Principal Wetland Bird Survey counts were:

GB 6,700 INT 45,000	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
WeBS Total	**2639**	**2431**	**1724**	**1014**	**3096**	**3815**	**2720**	**2800**	**2813**
Stour Estuary	59	116	61	62	19	39	nc	nc	nc
Hamford Water	637	339	271	nc	nc	32	19	9	61
Holland Haven	9	10	3	3	13	nc	8	15	6
Colne Estuary	100	72	16	85	22	18	54	109	128
Blackwater Estuary	337	240	167	180	88	422	269	414	247
Dengie	95	52	20	24	38	0	129	117	53
Crouch/Roach/Wallasea	260	147	139	115	141	45	311	308	531
Foulness/Thames	276	358	312	117	256	454	143	259	271
Abberton Reservoir	307	413	283	112	1527	1791	764	547	517
Hanningfield Reservoir	53	44	39	28	448	506	259	193	308
Lee Valley	293	284	233	126	119	159	306	325	265

Summer counts, not shown in the above table, included, at Abberton Reservoir, 1,160 on 24th July and 1,527 on 21st August and, at Hanningfield Reservoir, 448 on 12th August. Three-figure counts not forming part of the Wetland Bird Survey came from the following additional sites (site maximum in each case): Manningtree, about 100 on 22nd September; Broomhouse Flash Langham, about 100 on 23rd July; Stansted Airport Lagoons Takeley, 150 on 25th September; Mole Hall Widdington, 154 on 10th November; Mayland, 150 on 5th September; Hampton Barns Great Stambridge, 100 on 25th November; Bowers Marsh, 200 on 17th August; Vange Marsh, 150 on 10th August; Tilbury, 162 on 25th September; Rainham Marshes, 167 on 28th July; Connaught Water Epping Forest, 140 on 28th December; Fishers Green Holyfield, c.100 on 9th November.

NORTHERN PINTAIL *Anas acuta* UK

Breeds occasionally. Fairly common passage migrant and winter visitor.

There was no indication of breeding. Apart from an interesting record of three ♀♀ at Broomhouse Flash Langham, on 11th May, only singles were seen during the period May/July, namely a ♀ at Old Hall Marshes on 24th May, a ♂ which remained at Rainham Marshes until late May and a ♂ at Abberton Reservoir on 21st July.

Principal Wetland Bird Survey counts were as follows:

GB 200 INT 600	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
WeBS Total	**1199**	**811**	**861**	**104**	**7**	**326**	**696**	**706**	**724**
Stour Estuary	105	104	68	97	0	6	nc	nc	nc
Hamford Water	25	10	41	nc	nc	0	0	0	0
Blackwater Estuary	**761**	**574**	**399**	0	0	1	112	**240**	**343**
Dengie	**202**	46	47	0	0	0	0	**237**	**276**
Crouch/Roach/Wallasea	106	41	122	0	0	0	1	28	79
Abberton Reservoir	0	19	168	1	7	**285**	**576**	**200**	10
Hanningfield Reservoir	0	0	0	0	0	30	7	1	0

Other counts at Abberton Reservoir included 100+ on 1st January, 373 in Wigborough Bay on 2nd November and 150 on 2nd December, but otherwise the tabulated count was the highest of each month at that site. On the Blackwater Estuary it was again the formal high-tide monthly counts that produced the biggest figures, shown above. On one of a series of low-water counts (which take place five-yearly on selected estuaries as part of the Wetland Bird Survey), 392 Pintail were seen feeding on the mud between Mill Beach Heybridge and Northey Island on 12th January. At Old Hall Marshes there was a peak of 130 on 10th January. The only other area producing three-figure totals outside the monthly counts was the Crouch Estuary in the area between North Fambridge, South Fambridge and Bridgemarsh Island, where counts included 112 on 22nd January and 194 on 30th December.

EURASIAN TEAL *Anas crecca*

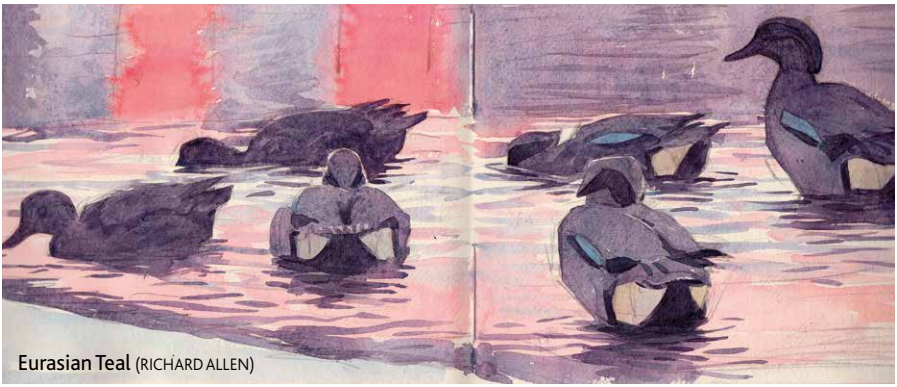
UK REX

Breeds occasionally. Common passage migrant and winter visitor.

The species almost certainly bred at Broomhouse Flash Langham where, after sightings of a pair in late April and early June, a fully-fledged brood of four was seen (with an adult pair) on 3rd July and again (but by then only three young) with an adult ♀ on 25th July. At Bowers Marsh the RSPB considered that there were two potentially breeding pairs but no young were seen. At Rainham Marshes one pair summered.

There were no other reports suggestive of breeding other than the usual plethora of sightings of small numbers in May and June, this year from 11 locations, in addition to the sites mentioned above. These included reports of single pairs in late May at Old Hall Marshes and Hanningfield Reservoir and in early June at Wallasea Island. Also, as usual, when it comes to assessing possible breeders, the waters were muddied by the small flocks, this year including 10+ at Abberton Reservoir on 26th May, seven both at Blue House Farm on 28th May and at Rainham Marshes on 5th June, and 12 at Wallasea Island on 4th June; non-breeders or early returning birds?

Principal Wetland Bird Survey counts were:



Eurasian Teal (RICHARD ALLEN)

GB 4,300 INT 5,000	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
WeBS Total	**13845**	**13541**	**8811**	**871**	**1760**	**17025**	**8021**	**10985**	**20719**
Stour Estuary	168	420	382	140	0	144	nc	nc	nc
Hamford Water	2022	1786	929	nc	nc	136	18	213	140
Holland Haven	145	30	50	35	52	nc	150	255	230
Colne Estuary	635	475	279	47	0	37	85	215	623
Blackwater Estuary	**5446**	3528	1512	146	13	533	1254	2034	3447
Dengie	0	2	7	0	0	0	6	1	19
Crouch/Roach/Wallasea	2341	1208	580	75	95	283	1051	1423	2754
Foulness/Thames	544	1045	828	293	30	500	226	1049	1260
Abberton Reservoir	2166	**4673**	4079	110	1500	**14806**	**4836**	**5223**	**11593**
Hanningfield Reservoir	240	302	28	9	65	511	200	365	565
Lee Valley	108	47	101	16	2	48	150	140	66

The numbers counted at Abberton Reservoir in the autumn were exceptional. The September count, at 14,806, is the highest yet recorded at that reservoir. The previous highest was 12,230 in December 1959 (see Cox S., *A New Guide to the Birds of Essex* page 75) followed by 11,483 in September 1990 (see *Essex Bird Report 1990* page 41). Since then until 2018 there had been no other five-figure counts. The December 2018 count of 11,593 at Abberton Reservoir is therefore the third highest yet. The October and November figures were more in line with some corresponding counts in recent years but still very respectable. The September influx may be explained by the water levels being lower than usual on the expanded reservoir, allowing vegetation to grow in extended shallows and providing ideal feeding conditions for the species. It should be added that professional consultants for the water company carry out the counts at Abberton Reservoir. The Wetland Bird Survey count team, which counts on a different day, found considerably smaller numbers, perhaps indicating significant movement of Teal between Abberton and the coast.

The highest non-Wetland Bird Survey counts again came from the Crouch Estuary, where there were 3,000+ at North Fambridge on 2nd December, about 1,000 at Wallasea Island on 14th January and again on 9th December, 1,500 at Blue House Farm in mid-January and 600 there on 4th November, 500 at Clementsgreen Creek South Woodham Ferrers on 23rd January and, at Stow Marsh North Fambridge, 1,100 on 8th March and 950 on 28th December, no doubt with considerable movement (and therefore duplication) between the various sites. At Abberton Reservoir, counts not reflected in the above table included 1,800 on 22nd September and 1,300 on 15th November (but will only have been counts of part of the reservoir). On the Blackwater Estuary counts not tabulated above included peaks, all in January, of 900 at Old Hall Marshes on 11th, 600 at Tollesbury on 4th, 500 at Heybridge Basin on 23rd (and again on 30th March) and 1,700 nearby on a low-tide count at Mill Beach Heybridge on 12th. On the Thames Estuary, three-figure counts outside the monthly surveys included (site maximum in each case) 529 at East Tilbury on 11th January and 500 at Rainham Marshes on 13th January and 21st December.

RED-CRESTED POCHARD *Netta rufina*

Scarce, naturalised, resident, uncommon passage migrant and winter visitor.

There was a marked reduction in breeding records, with just three broods at Hanningfield Reservoir, (16 pairs from six sites in 2017) but it is unclear if this is due to under-reporting or a true change in status.

Sightings otherwise conformed to the expected pattern, with a build-up at Hanningfield Reservoir from the late winter into summer followed by dispersal to Abberton Reservoir in early autumn. Estimated numbers, with peak counts at the two main reservoirs, were as follows:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Numbers	**3**	**14**	**29**	**22**	**33**	**23**	**33**	**44**	**64**	**3**	**4**	**5**
Locations	2	3	6	4	3	2	2	2	2	2	1	3
Abberton Reservoir	1	6	6	-	-	-	8	8	20	2	-	2
Hanningfield Reservoir	2	4	10	14	28	22	25	36	44	1	4	2

Birds were reported from a further ten sites with counts greater than two as follows:

Wrabness, five on 13th March; Russell Green Gravel Pits Boreham, three on 19th March; Ingrebourne Valley, four on 18th March; Walthamstow Wetlands, four on 13th February, in April, five on 3rd, six on 4th, reducing to three by 20th which remained until 1st May.

COMMON POCHARD *Aythya ferina*

UK REX

Uncommon breeder. Common passage migrant and winter visitor.

Confirmed breeding reports totalled 40 pairs from 11 sites (50 from 17 in 2017, 24 from 11 in 2016). Sites holding more than two pairs were (previous year in brackets): Old Hall Marshes, three (ten); Hanningfield Reservoir, three; Paglesham Lagoon, seven; Bowers Marsh, 21; Vange Marsh, five; Vange Wick, six; Rainham Marshes, 11 (six), Walthamstow Wetlands, eight.

Principal monthly Wetland Bird Survey counts were:

GB 230 INT 3,000	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
WeBS Total	**1065**	**565**	**586**	**203**	**2916**	**4166**	**2169**	**1544**	**1265**
Blackwater Estuary	39	22	31	74	1	23	0	15	0
Crouch/Roach/Wallasea	0	8	10	29	0	0	0	0	0
Foulness/Thames	0	58	60	34	46	15	33	1	2
Abberton Reservoir	**839**	**317**	**355**	10	**2679**	**4021**	**1926**	**1389**	**1124**
Hanningfield Reservoir	42	48	48	27	179	81	95	23	73
Lee Valley	115	73	40	0	0	20	101	100	39

There was a marked upturn in reporting with 38 counts of 200 or more (six in 2017). These all came from Abberton Reservoir where monthly (non-Wetland Bird Survey) peaks were: 500 on 14th January, 200 on 28th July, 400 on 28th August, 1,566 on 4th September, 200 on 18th October, 500 on 26th November and 800 on 22nd December.

FERRUGINOUS DUCK *Aythya nyroca*

BBRC (37, 9, 46)

Rare passage migrant and winter visitor.

Leez Reservoir Hartford End	Immature	3rd March	GBB
Abberton Reservoir	♂	4th August-1st October	DJR

The first since 2015.

RING-NECKED DUCK *Aythya collaris*

EBSIP (8, 3, 11)

Vagrant.

The ♂, first noted in 2016, was seen again at Abberton Reservoir, Abbotts Hall Farm and Old Hall Marshes until 6th March. It was next observed at Abberton Reservoir on 12th August, remaining in the area until the year end. Sightings from both Abberton Reservoir and Abbotts Hall Farm occurred on 6th November raising the unlikely, but ultimately inconclusive, possibility of two birds being involved.

TUFTED DUCK *Aythya fuligula*

Common, resident, passage migrant and winter visitor.

The fluctuations in reported confirmed breeding pairs/broods continued with 64 reported from 24 sites (54 from 28 in 2017, 81 from 27 in 2016), although there remains a lack of consistency from individual sites year on year. The only sites with more than five pairs were: Bowers Marsh (59 fledged, estimated at ten pairs); Vange Wick, eight; Rainham Marshes, 14 (13 in 2017) and Walthamstow Wetlands, 16.

Principal monthly Wetland Bird Survey counts were:

GB 1,300 INT 12,000	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
WeBS Total	**1944**	**1777**	**1753**	**917**	**3505**	**4185**	**5829**	**3768**	**1298**
Hamford Water	50	58	120	nc	nc	6	0	0	0
Colne Estuary	4	4	10	14	0	0	2	0	0
Blackwater Estuary	26	54	24	47	0	3	10	1	12
Crouch/Roach/Wallasea	10	12	36	39	30	3	0	0	0
Foulness/Thames	0	16	29	33	4	4	65	0	1
Abberton Reservoir	310	259	533	370	**2501**	**3444**	**4256**	**1698**	671
Hanningfield Reservoir	139	467	194	106	905	444	172	171	86
Lee Valley	1177	630	496	98	13	232	1283	**1812**	421

Peak counts reported showed a continued improvement with 29 non-Wetland Bird Survey reports in excess of 200 from four sites, with monthly peaks as follows: Abberton Reservoir, 500 on 22nd January, 300 on 28th August, 850 on 22nd September, 320 on 6th October, 500 on various dates in November; Hanningfield Reservoir, 400 on 3rd and 24th February, 300 on 4th-5th March, 300 on 17th July, 700 on 5th August; King George V Reservoir, 250 on 4th February, 712 on 12th July, 700 on 5th August, 300 on 24th September, 225 on 14th November; Walthamstow Wetlands, 450 on 27th October. No counts were received for the latter site during the traditional late summer peak (2,113 in 2017).

GREATER SCAUP *Aythya marila* UK

Uncommon passage migrant and winter visitor; occasional in summer.

A more typical year after the high numbers during 2017. Coastal records comprised: Frinton-on-Sea: two singles (♂ and ♀) north on 28th October, the latter also seen at Holland Haven; Brightlingsea, ♀ on 29th October; Old Hall Marshes, ♂ on 10th January, ♂ on 1st-12th December; Heybridge Basin / Gravel Pit, ♀ on 12th January, ♂ on 7th-20th November; Deal Hall Dengie, two on 31st August, three on 24th September; Wallasea Island, a pair on 14th-15th March with the ♂ remaining until 22nd; Paglesham Lagoon, ♂ from 21st-30th December; Canvey Island, three ♂♂♂and a ♀ on 19th November; Gallions Reach Beckton, 22 on 28th February.

Inland sightings came from four sites: Abberton Reservoir, at least three during January increased to four in February and a peak of eight on 15th March, with three remaining to 18th April; in the autumn, four on 16th October, six on 15th November and three on 13th December, with singles variously reported throughout this period; Hanningfield Reservoir, ♀ from 16th-23rd March, juvenile from 7th October to 13th November, ♀ on 5th December, ♂ on 8th December; King George V Reservoir: ♂ from 2017 remained until 13th April, being joined by a further two ♀♀ on 4th March; two ♂♂ from 6th-12th July, a ♀ on 12th November was joined by a ♂ two days later and remained to at least 28th December, with a third bird present on 16th; Walthamstow Wetlands, ♂ to 26th March and then from 8th December.

Estimated monthly totals were:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Numbers	11	25	15	4	0	0	1	2	3	8	14	11
Locations	6	2	5	2	0	0	1	1	1	4	5	6

COMMON EIDER *Somateria mollissima* UK

Declining passage migrant and winter visitor with small numbers in summer.

In total 72 records were received from 21 sites in the year, with six double-figure counts from a strong late autumn passage (16 in 2017, six in 2016, two in 2015).

Early winter records were all in January and comprised three past Holland Haven and Frinton-on-Sea on 7th, two seen off Canvey Point and Tilbury on 8th, two at Brightlingsea the following day, and two at Wrabness on 12th and 23rd.

Spring passage birds were one at Tollesbury Wick on 13th April, four at The Naze on 4th May, and two north at Frinton-on-Sea on 16th May.

The only summer record comprised one at Colne Point on 9th June.

Autumn passage commenced with two south at Frinton-on-Sea on 23rd September, with two off Canvey Point five days later. Movement then occurred from 19th October to late December, principally from the north-east coast and Thames Estuary, with a clear peak over 18th-20th November in fresh to strong easterly winds. At Frinton-on-Sea a total of 113 were noted on 13 dates with peaks in November of 27 on 18th (12 of which were also noted at The Naze) and 45 on 20th. Canvey Point recorded 43 on 19th (26 of which were also noted at Mucking), while ten were offshore Gunners Park Shoebury on 24th November. A single was well upriver at Gallions Reach Beckton on the latter date.

Very low numbers were again reported from the Blackwater Estuary, with only three reports of a single ♀ between 29th October and 11th December but up to three were noted in the Crouch Estuary during 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
2018	9	0	0	1	6	1	0	0	2	12	161	37
2017	5	4	1	2	6	0	0	3	0	18	61	37
2016	14	4	3	1	1	2	2	1	1	19	121	4

SURF SCOTER *Melanitta perspicillata* EBSIP (1, 2, 3)

Vagrant.

Offshore north-east coast (TM2508)	Adult ♂	17th February	MSc

This was identified from aerial survey photographs, a new and high-tech way for identifying vagrants! The third record for the County.

VELVET SCOTER *Melanitta fusca* UK

Scarce passage migrant and winter visitor, rare in summer.

The poor numbers in autumn 2017 were reflected in just a single early winter record of one at Horsey Island Hamford Water on 18th February.

A light autumn passage commenced with two at Deal Hall Dengie on 31st August, with the next records in October: two at Canvey Point on 18th; one south at Frinton-on-Sea on 27th; three offshore Gunners Park Shoebury on 28th. Movement peaked over 19th-20th November with five and two reported from Canvey Point respectively; three at Holland Haven on 19th; and one north past Frinton-on-Sea on 20th. Thereafter a single was noted on the Blackwater Estuary between West Mersea and Tollesbury Channel between 30th November and 10th December, and two flew

south past Frinton-on-Sea on 5th December.

There were no inland records reported.

Another average year with an estimated total of 21 birds (21 in 2017, 34 in 2016, 8 in 2015).

COMMON SCOTER *Melanita nigra* UK

Locally common passage migrant and winter visitor with small numbers in summer.

An average year with a poor autumn passage in comparison to recent years.

Inland records came from five sites (singles unless otherwise stated): Abberton Reservoir, two on 18th January, two on 18th April, two from 9th-16th November with a third present on 15th; Hanningfield Reservoir, 13th-14th January, two on 25th March, 15th April, 21st November; King George V Reservoir, two from 8th -13th April, with eight on 9th and ten on 10th, 10th May, two on 13th May, five on 8th July, 16th August; Walthamstow Wetlands, two on 8th–9th April (assumed same as King George V Reservoir above), 6th November.

Inner Thames records (again singles unless otherwise stated) came from East Tilbury/Thurrock Thameside Mucking: 28 on 28th October, four on 18th and two on 25th November; Rainham Marshes: four on 25th March, an excellent 42 on 9th April, singles on 14th April, 11th May, 6th and 15th October, with two on 17th, and 17th 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
2018	107	41	33	117	71	103	35	45	122	615	455	90
2017	99	32	25	66	91	148	250	291	110	528	1,385	202
2016	147	10	48	18	13	35	16	48	292	142	2,727	270

Autumn passage past Frinton-on-Sea noted 1,115 between July and December (2,118 in 2017, 2,582 in 2016, 1,274 in 2015). Typically passage peaked between late October and mid November with daily maxima of: 419 on 27th and 101 on 28th October (in fresh winds from the northern quarter), and 116 on 15th November. Coastal passage was noted from other watchpoints but the only other three-figure count was of 135 at Canvey Island on 19th November.

The highest winter count from the Blackwater Estuary was only 28 on 1st January, with few records of low numbers received.

LONG-TAILED DUCK *Clangula hyemalis* UK

Declining, scarce, passage migrant and winter visitor.

A return to more typical numbers with a few long staying individuals and some unusual mid-summer appearances.

The early months produced just two records: one at Blue House Farm on 18th January, and three at Goldhanger on 15th February.

Mid-summer produced two unseasonal sightings: a pair at Walthamstow Wetlands on 21st June, and one at Abberton Reservoir on 24th July.

Late October produced an immature ♀ at Old Hall Marshes on 29th, subsequently being seen on 4th and 11th November. Presumably a different bird was noted at Abberton Reservoir from 6th November, before being joined by a second (possibly the earlier bird) from 16th intermittently to the end of the year. The only other records were also in November and related to singles: south past Frinton-on-Sea on 20th November; Burnham Wick Solar Farm on 25th.

Estimated County totals over the last ten winters have been:

	2018/17	2017/16	2016/15	2015/14	2014/13	2013/12	2012/11	2011/10	2010/09	2009/10	Average
Numbers	12	62	4	10	15	14	8	12	2	15	15.4

COMMON GOLDENEYE *Bucephala clangula clangula* UK

Common passage migrant and winter visitor; occasional in summer.

Principal monthly Wetland Bird Survey counts were:

GB 190 INT 11,400	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
WeBS Total	**314**	**286**	**334**	**15**	**4**	**2**	**6**	**174**	**250**
Stour Estuary	51	9	12	0	0	0	nc	nc	nc
Blackwater Estuary	41	10	0	0	0	0	0	4	4
Abberton Reservoir	156	**211**	**270**	12	4	2	4	129	**213**
Hanningfield Reservoir	40	36	23	3	0	0	2	21	33
Lee Valley	25	14	27	0	0	0	0	20	0

The last reported bird of the spring was at King George V Reservoir on 24th April with the first returning birds in July at the same site from 1st and Abberton Reservoir on 21st.

There were only three non-Wetland Bird Survey counts in excess of 50, all from Abberton Reservoir: 80 on 22nd March, 60 on 23rd November, 50 on 9th December.

A poor autumn coastal passage was noted between 26th October and 25th November from Frinton-on-Sea and Canvey Point with peak counts of three on 17th and 20th November, and 28th October respectively.

SMEW *Mergellus albellus* UK

Uncommon winter visitor occurring in variable numbers.

Another poor year with low numbers in both winter periods.

Birds were reported from four sites during the year as follows: Old Hall Marshes, in January, one on 16th, five on 26th; Abberton Reservoir, peaks of eight on 31st January, ten on 14th February, nine on 8th March, four on 1st April, four on 26th November and six on 20th December; Stour Estuary, an early bird presumably accounted for two reports on 24th August and 4th September, more typical were singles at Cattawade on 27th November and Manningtree on 20th December, the latter a ♂; Lee Valley, reported from Friday Lake Waltham Abbey, Seventy Acres Lake Holyfield, King George V Reservoir and Olympic Park Stratford with a degree of duplication assumed. All sightings were of singles (but involving both sexes) with the exception of a pair at Seventy Acres Lake Holyfield on 19th December.

At least one red-head, of unknown origin, was present in the Lee Valley during the summer months being reported from 20th April-11th May at Friday Lake Waltham Abbey, 5th and 8th August, at Seventy Acres Lake Holyfield and Olympic Park Stratford on the latter date.

Estimated monthly numbers were:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Numbers	16	13	10	6	1	1	-	3	1	-	7	9
Locations	5	4	2	3	1	1	-	3	1	-	4	3

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

COMMON MERGANSER *Mergus merganser merganser* (Goosander)

Locally common passage migrant and winter visitor.

Principal monthly Wetland Bird Survey counts were:

GB 150 INT 2,700	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
WeBS Total	**93**	**73**	**85**	**2**	**0**	**0**	**3**	**28**	**163**
Abberton Reservoir	38	42	49	2	0	0	0	20	131
Hanningfield Reservoir	5	15	0	0	0	0	0	2	16
Lee Valley	25	5	20	0	0	0	3	3	2

Sites holding double-figure monthly maxima, in addition to the Wetland Bird Survey, were as follows: Ardleigh Reservoir, 12 on 21st March; Wivenhoe, 16 on 21st January, 21 on 9th February; Brightlingsea, 12 on 15th March; Abberton Reservoir, 38 on 13th January, 42 on 14th February, 49 on 15th March, 44 on 27th November, 131 on 13th December; Rivenhall End, 11 on 6th March; Great Baddow, 14 on 3rd March; Hanningfield Reservoir, 16 on 24th January, 22 on 24th February, 20 on 10th March, 20 on 18th December; Holyfield Lake, 15 on 29th December; King George V Reservoir, 16 on 30th January, 20 on 4th February, 18 on 13th March, 10 on 14th November; Weald Park, 18 on 26th December.

The last reported bird of the spring was a single at Little Baddow on 7th May, with the first returning bird at Sewardstone Marsh on the late date of 4th October. A ♂ was present at Lexden Park Colchester for much of the summer; it appeared to have a damaged wing.

Unusually no coastal movement was reported during the autumn, although five at Rainham Marshes and Beckton on 28th October were notable. Some cold weather movement was observed past Frinton-on-Sea in the early winter period comprising: one on 10th January and three on 1st March.

RED-BREASTED MERGANSER *Mergus serrator*

Fairly common passage migrant and winter visitor; occasional in summer.

Principal monthly Wetland Bird Survey counts were:

GB 100 INT 1,700	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
WeBS Total	**177**	**181**	**51**	**11**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**40**	**52**
Stour Estuary	18	43	4	0	0	0	nc	nc	nc
Hamford Water	2	18	2	nc	nc	0	0	0	0
Colne Estuary	38	5	10	2	0	0	0	0	2
Blackwater Estuary	118	96	27	9	0	0	0	40	44
Dengie	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Crouch/Roach/Wallasea	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0

The last of the spring were two north past Frinton-on-Sea on 7th May, with the first returning bird passing south past the same site on 3rd September. There were no summer records received.

Inland records came from: Abberton Reservoir, a ♂ from 2017 remained until 14th February, four on 17th November with a ♀ on 26th, then a ♂ on three dates during December; King George V Reservoir, ♂ from 6th-11th March; Walthamstow Wetlands, two immatures on 17th November. Additional Inner Thames records comprised (singles unless stated): East Tilbury, three on 3rd March and 4th November; Thurrock Thameside Mucking, 7th October; Rainham Marshes, two on 11th October, then in November, 15th, two on 17th and 20th, and 27th; Gallions Reach Beckton, 28th October.

Autumn passage was again light with 52 passing Frinton-on-Sea, with peaks of 15 on 28th October and 11 on 17th November. The peak count at Canvey Point was eight on the former date.

The highest non-Wetland Bird Survey counts were: Stour Estuary (Wrabness to Manningtree), 31 on 31st January, 46 on 27th October, 47 on 17th November; Blackwater Estuary (peak counts from Old Hall Marshes/Tollesbury Wick), 40 on 4th January, 70 on 17th February, 40 on 27th March, 39 on 9th December.

RUDDY DUCK *Oxyura jamaicensis*

Now rare, naturalised, non-breeding visitor.

As in recent years, 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.

Six records were received relating to two birds at two sites. A ♀, possibly lingering from 2017, was reported from one site on three dates between 1st and 5th January, with a ♀ noted at another site on 14th July and 1st August.

RED-LEGGED PARTRIDGE *Alectoris rufa rufa*

Fairly common and widespread, naturalised, resident.

In total, 508 records were received (490 in 2017, 485 in 2016). A total of 195 sites (141 in 2017, 135 in 2016) was involved from across the County. Breeding was noted at six sites with four young noted at Chigborough Lakes. Observers are encouraged to send in all reports of breeding activity given that the species is released. The highest count, of 160 at Elmdon and Strethall on 6th December, involved released birds, whilst there were 120 at The Street, Pleshey on 4th October and about 100 at Clementsgreen Creek South Woodham Ferrers the day before. Clearly the release of birds by shoots makes it difficult to assess a permanent population.

GREY PARTRIDGE *Perdix perdix perdix* UK EX REX

Much declined and now scarce resident.

There were just 47 records received for this species across 35 locations (58 from 34 in 2017, 57 from 39 in 2016). Only Ingrebourne Valley (six) produced any more than five records during the year. Whilst records came from all over the County the majority came from the eastern half of the County.

Breeding was confirmed at Colne Point with four well-grown young noted whilst six further locations reported pairs in the breeding season. Counts of nine were noted between Dovercourt and Little Oakley on 24th October, The Dengie on 3rd November and Long Green Epping on 30th September, whilst there were eight at Abbotts Hall Farm on 20th August and counts of six at three further sites.

COMMON QUAIL *Coturnix coturnix coturnix* UK

Scarce passage migrant and summer visitor, subject to influxes.

Orsett Fen	One	20th May
Tillingham	One	21st June
Salcott	One – Found dead in garden, probable cat kill.	22nd September

A quiet year for a species that bred for the first time in seven years in 2017.

Annual minima for singing ♂♂ and confirmed breeding pairs are:

	2018	2017	2016	2015	2014	2013	2012	2011	2010	2009	Average
Numbers	2	10	4	4	4	3	9	12	7	9	6.4

COMMON PHEASANT *Phasianus colchicus**

Common and widespread naturalised resident, many different subspecies released annually many of which hybridise and naturalise with existing populations.

There were 1,808 records submitted (1,641 in 2017) of this very commonly released gamebird. Breeding was confirmed at four sites: Fingringhoe Wick, Wallasea Island, Orsett Fen and Tillingham. Various breeding activity was recorded across a further 29 sites.

Many observations do not include quantities, but peaks of 250 at The Street Pleshey on 4th October and 200 at Great Braxted on 3rd December must surely have involved recently released

birds. Double-figure counts were returned from 33 locations but this is clearly a significant under-recording of the County's Pheasants. The release of birds by shoots and their subsequent dispersal makes assessing the population an impossible task and the impact of such huge releases on the environment are increasingly being questioned.

RED-THROATED LOON *Gavia stellata* (Red-throated Diver)

Common passage migrant and winter visitor.

Inland: King George V Reservoir, one on 10th April; Hanningfield Reservoir, one in flight on 28th October.

Coast and estuaries: records were received from Wrabness on the River Stour round to Gallions Reach Beckton on the Thames with the largest numbers, as in recent years, off Frinton-on-Sea. In the first winter, 92 off Holland Haven on 7th January were followed by counts off Frinton-on-Sea of 351 on 12th and 220 on 29th, then 164 on 3rd February, 317 on 31st March (when 250 were seen from The Naze), 260 on 2nd April, 111 still on 13th and finally 11 on 21st. Elsewhere, 36 were seen off Bradwell-on-Sea on 17th January and 25 off Canvey Point on 8th January.

One was seen passing Frinton-on-Sea on the unusual date of 29th June with the first of autumn from the same site on 29th September. Only small numbers were recorded until December when there were counts, all from Frinton-on-Sea, of 51 on 10th, 374 on 14th, 463 on 20th, 483 on 21st, 794 on 25th and an Essex record total of 1,441 on 27th. The previous highest count of 1,086 on 2nd February 2016 was from the same location. Only small numbers were seen at other sites, the one at Gallions Reach Beckton occurring on 11th November.

BLACK-THROATED LOON *Gavia arctica arctica* (Black-throated Diver) UK

Uncommon passage migrant and winter visitor.

Inland: Walthamstow Wetlands, one from 24th-26th November.

Coast and estuaries: in the first winter, one off Frinton-on-Sea on 13th January was the sole record from the north-east coast but there were seven reports of a single bird between 1st January and 5th February from Gunners Park Shoebury or Canvey Point; also, two off Southend Pier on 4th February.

In the second winter, two were seen off Frinton-on-Sea on 7th and 28th October and off Holland Haven on 6th December. The remaining records were all in the Thames Estuary: four off Canvey Seafront on 19th November and three there the following day, then one on 25th with possibly the same seen from Southend Pier the same day. In addition, a sick bird in predominantly summer plumage was present in Gunners Park Shoebury from 29th November-1st December.

COMMON LOON *Gavia immer* (Great Northern Diver) UK

Scarce passage migrant and winter visitor.

Common Loon (RICHARD ALLEN)

Inland: Hanningfield Reservoir, one from December 2017 remained until 9th January; Fairlop Waters Barkingside, one on 3rd March; King George V Reservoir, three on 11th November then two until 2nd December; Fishers Green Holyfield, one on 23rd November.

Coast and estuaries: in the opening quarter, single birds were recorded at Wrabness, The Naze and Hamford Water, Frinton-on-Sea, the Colne Estuary, the River Crouch and the Southend-on-Sea/Canvey Island section of the Thames, also two off Canvey Point on 27th March. The Blackwater Estuary including West Mersea, however, was, as usual, the most favoured area with up to five on many dates and eight on 6th February and seven on 6th March.

In April, 1-2 were reported up to 17th at Frinton-on-Sea, the Blackwater Estuary and Bradwell-on-Sea then in May there were two off West Mersea on 16th and one off Frinton-on-Sea on 23rd.

One was seen on the River Thames at Rainham Marshes and further east towards Purfleet on 28th October after which all remaining sightings were from 30th November to the year's end with up to three off Frinton-on-Sea or Holland Haven, 1-2 off Mersea Island and in the Blackwater Estuary on many dates, one on the Crouch at Canewdon on 2nd December, and three off Southend-on-Sea on 24th December.

LEACH'S STORM PETREL *Oceanodroma leucorhoa leucorhoa* UK EBSIP (201, 37, 238)

Scarce, principally autumn, passage migrant.

Frinton-on-Sea	One	23rd September	PBr
Deal Hall Dengie	One	23rd October	DWa
Canvey Point/Southend Pier	One	28th October	JDv, JSa *et al.*

Annual totals over the last decade have been:

	2018	2017	2016	2015	2014	2013	2012	2011	2010	2009	Average
Numbers	3	5	2	0	0	7	6	1	0	1	2.5

NORTHERN FULMAR *Fulmarus glacialis glacialis* UK

Uncommon passage migrant and non-breeding visitor.

There were no inland sightings.

Estimated monthly totals from coastal sites were:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Numbers	5	1	7	39	37	6	1	2	1	4	1	0

Typically, the majority of the sightings came from Frinton-on-Sea with a few at The Naze, one at Deal Hall Dengie and a total of seven in the Thames Estuary including three on 27th October at Mucking. Peak day counts at Frinton-on-Sea were seven on 24th April and six on 2nd May with four on 29th January notable for that month.

In the above table, sightings from a single location on different days are summated though quite possibly in some cases the same individuals are involved.

SOOTY SHEARWATER *Ardenna griseus* EBSIP (152, 84, 236)

Uncommon, principally autumn, passage migrant.

Frinton-on-Sea	One	28th October	PBr
Frinton-on-Sea/Holland Haven	Two	20th November	PBr, JMi

Annual totals over the last decade have been:

	2018	2017	2016	2015	2014	2013	2012	2011	2010	2009	Average
Numbers	3	8	9	6	1	1	3	6	12	3	5.2

MANX SHEARWATER *Puffinus puffinus* UK

Uncommon, principally autumn, passage migrant.

All records are listed and are of single birds unless stated otherwise.

Frinton-on-Sea, 16th May, 23rd May (three), 18th, 23rd, 24th and 29th September, 1st October and 28th October (two); Deal Hall Dengie, 21st and 28th September; Canvey Point/Seafront/Gunners Park Shoebury, 16th May, 23rd and 28th September, 28th October (three).

Annual totals over the last decade have been:

	2018	2017	2016	2015	2014	2013	2012	2011	2010	2009	Average
Numbers	19	11	7	3	0	3	9	48	9	18	12.7

Although a minor degree of duplication is possible in this year's records, the total assumes all were different.

LITTLE GREBE *Tachybaptus ruficollis ruficollis*

Fairly common resident, passage migrant and winter visitor.

By including pairs seen in potential breeding habitat with those for which stronger evidence of a nesting attempt was provided, approximately 145 pairs were located indicating a stable population. Prime sites, as usual, were Rainham Marshes with 28 territories (29 in 2017) and Blue House Farm where an estimate of 15 pairs was the same as last year. Seven pairs on Foulness Island and at Bowers Marsh were the third highest number reported.

Principal monthly Wetland Bird Survey counts were:

GB 150 INT 3,900	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
WeBS Total	**403**	**366**	**164**	**40**	**167**	**221**	**206**	**225**	**170**
Stour Estuary	31	14	7	0	0	0	nc	nc	nc
Hamford Water	120	88	27	nc	nc	9	17	0	0
Blackwater Estuary	51	70	10	6	0	22	64	28	28
Crouch/Roach/Wallasea	24	12	23	12	27	13	3	51	33
Foulness/Thames	48	103	47	2	58	79	20	48	33
Abberton Reservoir	6	4	1	6	39	39	57	29	12
Hanningfield Reservoir	10	8	2	1	38	42	11	25	20

Typically, the largest non-Wetland Bird Survey gathering was at Paglesham Lagoon: 74 on 21st August. A count of 60 on the Walthamstow Wetlands on 2nd November was also noteworthy.

RED-NECKED GREBE *Podiceps grisegena grisegena* UK

Uncommon passage migrant and winter visitor.

Single birds were seen as follows: River Crouch, on frequent dates from 16th January-8th February with the same or another at Stow Marsh North Fambridge on 8th March; Heybridge Gravel Pit, on 19th January; Mistley, on 11th September; Wrabness, on 17th November.

Annual totals over the last decade have been:

	2018/17	2017/16	2016/15	2015/14	2014/13	2013/12	2012/11	2011/10	2010/09	2009/08	Average
Numbers	4	6	5	4	8	5	10	4	6	5	5.7

GREAT CRESTED GREBE *Podiceps cristatus cristatus*

Fairly common resident, passage migrant and winter visitor.

Records received indicate that 54 pairs at 26 sites at least built a nest with most hatching young. Walthamstow Wetlands, with eight broods, was again the prime site though this was two fewer than in 2017. Additionally, some 24 pairs were recorded in potential nesting habitat, some of which were deemed by the observers to be 'probably breeding' so that the true total was likely to have been the highest for several years.

Principal monthly Wetland Bird Survey counts were:

GB 170 INT 3,500	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
WeBS Total	**524**	**577**	**502**	**310**	**831**	**1448**	**2361**	**2499**	**657**
Stour Estuary	22	20	6	1	4	17	nc	nc	nc
Colne Estuary	5	10	4	2	0	0	0	3	3
Blackwater Estuary	39	90	60	28	0	35	34	38	48
Crouch/Roach/Wallasea	7	11	17	7	1	8	0	7	14
Foulness/Thames	51	88	84	6	0	0	12	0	10
Abberton Reservoir	**282**	122	**220**	**181**	**654**	**1078**	**1859**	**2243**	**525**
Hanningfield Reservoir	0	71	19	32	157	**261**	**388**	136	48
Lee Valley	110	79	63	10	14	41	65	66	8

The November count of 2,243 at Abberton Reservoir on 15th November exceeded the previous record of 1,953 set on the same day at the same site last year.

Non-Wetland Bird Survey counts on tidal waters were lower than in many recent years with 158 off Old Hall Marshes on 21st February and 156 off Canvey Point on Christmas Day the largest.

HORNED GREBE *Podiceps auritus auritus* (Slavonian Grebe) UK

Scarce passage migrant and winter visitor.

The incidence and distribution are summarised below:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Abberton Reservoir	0	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	0
Hanningfield Reservoir	1	0	2	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
King George V Reservoir	2	2	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Walthamstow Wetlands	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
Bowers Marsh	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Stour Estuary	4	4	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	3
Frinton-on-Sea	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	4
Colne/Blackwater complex	3	4	8	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
Crouch/Roach complex	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
Thames Estuary	1	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
Monthly Totals	**12**	**13**	**15**	**5**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**8**	**10**

In the above table, the highest single monthly count at each location is shown but this may, in a few cases, under-estimate the true numbers involved, especially in the Colne/Blackwater complex where reports came from a range of vantage points. The highest single count came from Cudmore Grove East Mersea where eight were seen on 7th March. The Thames Estuary sightings were principally from Southend Pier or Canvey Point apart from one counted as the same seen from Thurrock Thameside Mucking on 8th and 10th April. The last of the first winter was at Abberton Reservoir with the first returning bird at Wrabness on 7th November.

BLACK-NECKED GREBE *Podiceps nigricollis nigricollis* UK

Scarce passage migrant and winter visitor; occasionally nests.

There were again no reports to suggest a nesting attempt though one in summer plumage remained on Bowers Marsh from 26th May-18th June.

The incidence and distribution are summarised below:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Abberton Reservoir	0	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	1	1	5	5
Hanningfield Reservoir	0	0	2	3	1	0	0	6	5	1	0	0
Lee Valley waters	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	1	0	0	2
Bowers Marsh	0	0	0	1	1	1	0	2	0	0	0	0
Frinton-on-Sea	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Stour Estuary	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
Colne Estuary	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Blackwater Estuary	1	2	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Thames Estuary	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	0
Monthly Totals	**5**	**4**	**4**	**8**	**2**	**1**	**0**	**12**	**7**	**3**	**6**	**9**

Last year, a good series of records was received from William Girling Reservoir Chingford, traditionally the County's prime site for this grebe, but this year only a single report of three there on 11th January reached the database, the remaining Lee Valley sightings all coming from the King George V Reservoir. Thus, figures in the above table, which use the highest monthly count from each location, may not fully reflect the true numbers present.

The highest single count received this year refers to six at Hanningfield Reservoir on 26th and 28th August.

WHITE STORK *Ciconia ciconia ciconia* EBSIP (30, 15, 45)

Rare passage migrant and summer visitor.

Jaywick/St Osyth	One	4th-5th August	RLd DLd KAl

Found by a local farmer and his son during harvesting, the bird went missing for much of its two day stay and there was an unconfirmed report of it near Brightlingsea on 6th.

GLOSSY IBIS *Plegadis fulcinellus* EBSIP (14, 37, 51)

Rare, but increasing, and now almost annual, visitor.

Mersea Island/Blackwater Estuary	One	From 2017 to 18th February
Abberton Reservoir	One	10th May
Hanningfield Reservoir	One	5th-8th August
Rainham Marshes	One	9th August
Bowers Marsh	One	9th-14th August
Vange Marsh	One, as above	12th August
Abberton Reservoir	One	14th and 24th-28th August
Bowers Marsh	One on four dates	19th-27th September
West Mersea	One	30th December

With the increase in records, it is becoming increasingly difficult to assess the number of birds occurring annually. The timing of records in 2018 strongly suggests, however, that in addition to the 2017 bird which made visits at the beginning and end of the year, two, perhaps three other birds were involved.

EURASIAN SPOONBILL *Platalea leucorodia leucorodia* UK

Uncommon passage migrant and rare winter visitor.

In the first quarter, there were single birds, all in March, at Rainham Marshes on 12th and both Colne Point and Gunners Park Shoebury on 29th.

In the second quarter, singles passing Frinton-on-Sea on 14th April and at Blue House Farm on 29th were followed by a series of reports from Rainham Marshes where one was present on many dates from 12th May to 26th June, then two into July. Perhaps one of these was seen at Purfleet on 20th June and there was one on Wallasea Island on 3rd and 4th June.

Two remained at Rainham Marshes to 3rd July, one to the 13th and one, possibly of these, visited the Ingrebourne Valley on 10th and 11th. Next was one at Harold Wood on 22nd August following which two were seen at Fingringhoe Wick and, on one occasion, at Cudmore Grove East Mersea on many dates from 26th August-23rd September. One was on the Blackwater off Heybridge Gravel Pit on 28th August. Eight over Gunners Park Shoebury on 13th September were followed by 15 on 22nd (in groups of six and nine) flying south past Frinton-on-Sea, Holland Haven and St Osyth with the six pausing to feed at Colne Point. Other September records were of singles at Hanningfield Reservoir on 13th-16th and 23rd and Rainham Marshes on 25th.

Single birds were seen in October at East Tilbury on 18th, Frinton-on-Sea on 27th, the Geedon Saltings Fingringhoe next day and Goldhanger on 31st. November records came from Abberton Reservoir on 4th then intermittently to 18th December, Frinton-on-Sea and Tollesbury Wick on 12th, Rainham Marshes on 18th and finally there were other December sightings at Old Hall Marshes on 9th and 29th and nearby Goldhanger on 10th, these thought likely to be the bird mentioned above at Abberton Reservoir.

EURASIAN BITTERN *Botaurus stellaris stellaris* UK EX REX

Uncommon passage migrant and winter visitor.

All records this year relate to single birds and all are shown.

In the first half of the year, reports came from Abberton Reservoir on 6th and 7th January and 3rd February, Seventy Acres Lake Holyfield on 18th February, Rainham Marshes from 8th-31st March and Langdon Hills Plotlands on 12th April.

In the second half of the year, the first report was at Blue House Farm from 23rd-29th August and again on 13th September. Subsequently individuals were seen at Abberton Reservoir on 2nd September, Cattawade on 3rd October, Seventy Acres Lake Holyfield from 10th-24th October and Rainham Marshes intermittently from 20th October-10th December.

WESTERN CATTLE EGRET *Bubulcus ibis* EBSIP (2, 30, 32)

Scarce passage migrant and summer visitor.

Abberton Reservoir	Three	9th September	mo
	Four	10th-11th September	mo
	Two	12th September	mo
Blue House Farm	Two	13th-14th September	DWa, GSm *et al.*
Rainham Marshes	One	9th-28th October	mo
	Two	3rd- 4th November	mo
	One	12th November	mo
Wanstead	Two, assumed as Rainham birds	4th November	NCr

A further two unsubstantiated records were received.

A minor influx occurred in the autumn though it is possible that as few as four individuals were involved. This expanding species has now been recorded in ten of the last 12 years.

Annual totals for the last decade are:

	2018	2017	2016	2015	2014	2013	2012	2011	2010	2009	Average
Numbers	4	6	4	0	0	1	2	2	4	1	2.4

GREY HERON *Ardea cinerea cinerea*

Common resident, passage migrant and winter visitor.

Details of occupied nests are given below:

	2018	2017	2016	2015	2014	2013	2012
St Osyth	8	10	9	17+	18	9+	11
Foulness Island	3	2	5	5	4	4	4
Beazley End	nc	nc	nc	nc	7	18	18
North Fambridge Hall	20	18	14	8	6	7	6
Barrow Wood Highwood	5	4	nc	5	nc	nc	5
Mayesbrook Park Dagenham	1	nc	nc	nc	3	nc	3
Ingrebourne Valley	7	nc	nc	nc	4	6	12
Holyfield Lake	4	8	4	nc	nc	nc	nc
Waltham Abbey	4	0	1	0	0	0	0
Walthamstow Wetlands	43	5+	nc	33	30	15	nc
Netherhall Gravel Pit Nazeing	31	39	32	38	35	38	32
Chigborough Lakes	13	13	10	10	5	6	7
Langham Treatment Works	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc
Abberton Reservoir	16	25	19	20	14	6	1
Warren Gorge Chafford Gorges	10	10	7	7	7	7	8
Paglesham	1+	3	3	0	0	0	0
Childerditch Pond	3	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	3
Fairlop Waters Barkingside	3	nc*	nc	nc	nc	nc	0
Valentine's Park Ilford	0	1	nc	2	1	1	1
Hylands Park Chelmsford	0	nc*	0	0	0	0	0
Danbury Park	0	nc*	0	0	0	4	0
Total	**172+**	**136+**	**100**	**144**	**134**	**117+**	**111+**

The total is the highest since 2011, when 174 nests were reported, and probably reflects more complete coverage, especially at the Walthamstow Wetlands site. At Paglesham, nest(s) were present but not counted accurately whilst at Langham, a pair and two juveniles were seen but their origin was uncertain.

Principal monthly Wetland Bird Survey counts were:

GB 450 INT 2,700	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
WeBS Total	**107**	**99**	**78**	**86**	**121**	**150**	**145**	**151**	**120**
Stour Estuary	0	1	0	2	2	8	nc	nc	nc
Hamford Water	7	10	4	nc	nc	0	0	0	1
Colne Estuary	4	2	0	2	2	1	4	8	7

GB 450 INT 2,700	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Blackwater Estuary	11	6	4	3	3	17	26	30	18
Crouch/Roach/Wallasea	13	4	5	14	15	14	5	15	10
Foulness/Thames	8	21	14	5	35	25	18	12	10
Abberton Reservoir	13	13	11	34	34	39	28	26	40
Hanningfield Reservoir	0	1	0	0	13	22	31	32	12
Lee Valley	44	33	30	20	8	6	12	12	12

Numbers away from the heronries were unremarkable.

PURPLE HERON *Ardea purpurea purpurea*

EBSIP (25, 5, 30)

Rare passage migrant.

Abberton Reservoir	One	1st-2nd September	DAl *et al.*

One further unsubstantiated record was received.

Annual totals for the last decade are:

	2018	2017	2016	2015	2014	2013	2012	2011	2010	2009	Average
Numbers	1	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.3

GREAT EGRET *Ardea alba alba*

Scarce passage migrant and visitor at all seasons.

Numbers recorded in the County further increased with reports received in every month and from nearly 50 different sites though some were only short distances apart. Single birds were involved unless stated otherwise.

First quarter: 1-2 frequented Abberton Reservoir throughout with three present on 25th January. Elsewhere, there were sightings in January at Hanningfield Reservoir, Old Hall Marshes, Wanstead Flats and Fairlop Waters Barkingside (two); in February, 1-2 at sites in the Maldon area, Little Baddow, Potton Island Great Wakering and Chafford Gorges Grays; in March, at Chigborough Lakes, Copt Hall Marshes, Bradwell-on-Sea, Paglesham, Wanstead Flats and Rainham Marshes.

Second quarter: in April at Abberton Reservoir (two), Cattawade, Old Hall Marshes, Bradwell-on-Sea, Mardyke Valley and Rainham Marshes; in May at Abberton Reservoir (two), Old Hall Marshes and Chafford Gorges Grays; in June just one in flight over Thorpe-le-Soken on 29th.

Third quarter: at Abberton Reservoir throughout with monthly peaks of four in July, two in August and eight in September (20th and 21st). Elsewhere, in July at Fingringhoe Wick, Belhus Woods Aveley, West Canvey Marsh and Rainham Marshes; in August at 14 scattered sites including two at Abbotts Hall Farm; in September at ten scattered sites including two at Hanningfield Reservoir, Colne Point, and Mardyke Valley.

Fourth quarter: at Abberton Reservoir throughout with monthly peaks of ten in October (11th and 16th), a County record 17 in November (16th), and 15 in December (13th). Elsewhere, in October at 18 scattered sites including six passing Frinton-on-Sea (19th), two at Hanningfield Reservoir, two at Mistley and three at Beaumont Quay; in November at Old Hall Marshes, Cooper's Creek Mundon, Ingrebourne Valley, Fairlop Waters Barkingside and East Tilbury; in December at Old Hall Marshes, Potton Island Great Wakering and Rainham Marshes.

LITTLE EGRET *Egretta garzetta garzetta*

Common resident, passage migrant and winter visitor. First bred in 2000.

Reports of breeding pairs were received as follows with 2017 figures in brackets:

Foulness Island, four (eight); Chigborough Lakes, ten (ten); St Osyth, 12 (15); Paglesham, 22

Horned Grebe, Hanningfield Reservoir, March (DAVID ACFIELD)

Cattle Egret, Abberton Reservoir, September (SEAN NIXON)

European Shag, Marks Hall Coggeshall, March (GLEN MOORE)

Eurasian Sparrowhawk, Stanway, November (STEVE GRIMWADE)

(seven); Walthamstow Wetlands 28 (17 broods); North Fambridge Hall, 24 (12) ; Warren Gorge Chafford Gorges, 16 (12); Netherhall Gravel Pit Nazeing seven (seven); Abberton Reservoir, 6+ (27); Benfleet Downs, eight (five); Wakering Stairs, one (nil).

The increase from 120 pairs reported in 2017 to 138 this year was in part due to better access to the Walthamstow Wetlands site enabling a more accurate count. Nests of this species are sometimes closely bunched in trees or dense bushes making accurate counting difficult from distance.

As is now the norm, this species was recorded at numerous sites with maximum numbers in the period July-November in most cases.

Peak non-Wetland Bird Survey counts from sites that recorded 40 or more were: Stour Estuary (Cattawade-Wrabness), 100 on 9th November; Hamford Water, 73 on 10th November; Fingringhoe Wick, 44 on 23rd September; Blackwater Estuary (Goldhanger-Heybridge Basin), 111 on 8th October; Chigborough Lakes/Lofts Farm Gravel Pits Heybridge, 115 on 20th August; Roach Estuary, 62 on 24th July; Crouch Estuary 59 on 12th August; Two Tree Island/Leigh-on-Sea Creek, 110 on 7th September; Rainham Marshes, 46 on 3rd July: Abberton Reservoir, 113 on 3rd December. It is likely that some of the same birds were involved in the above series.

Principal monthly Wetland Bird Survey counts were:

GB 110 INT 800	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
WeBS Total	**127**	**230**	**78**	**97**	**504**	**932**	**691**	**690**	**339**
Stour Estuary	0	4	0	1	64	117	nc	nc	nc
Hamford Water	21	22	15	nc	nc	19	15	13	3
Colne Estuary	26	24	1	12	24	35	95	**118**	46
Blackwater Estuary	34	47	11	19	33	**267**	**293**	**211**	76
Dengie	6	21	5	16	22	34	34	73	35
Crouch/Roach/Wallasea	7	23	5	9	91	105	73	57	52
Foulness/Thames	27	78	37	21	**191**	**285**	**142**	**187**	63
Abberton Reservoir	2	2	0	11	70	59	26	24	50

NORTHERN GANNET *Morus bassanus* UK

Common passage migrant and non-breeding summer visitor.

Inland: in September, juveniles were seen in flight over Abberton Reservoir on 11th and 24th (two).

Estimated monthly totals from coastal sites were:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Row A	8	2	12	59	97	2	12	6	272	351	421	64
Row B	8	0	5	1	0	33	0	6	186	184	39	0

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

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

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

Numbers overall were modest by recent standards, the only three-figure counts being 108 on 23rd September, 137 the following day and 248 on 3rd November, all off Frinton-on-Sea and 122 on 6th October off Gunners Park Shoebury.

EUROPEAN SHAG *Phalacrocorax aristotelis aristotelis* UK

Fairly common passage migrant and winter visitor.

Inland: Abberton Reservoir, an immature bird from 5th-20th January; Marks Hall Coggeshall, seven on 12th March.

Estimated monthly totals from coastal and estuarine sites were:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Numbers	7	6	10	1	0	0	0	0	0	5	3	3

Coastal records were spread from the River Stour round to Rainham Marshes on the Thames and were all of 1-2 individuals apart from three flying south at Frinton-on-Sea on 12th March.

This species is noted for occasional 'wrecks' but for seven to be grounded at Marks Hall Coggeshall was highly unusual.

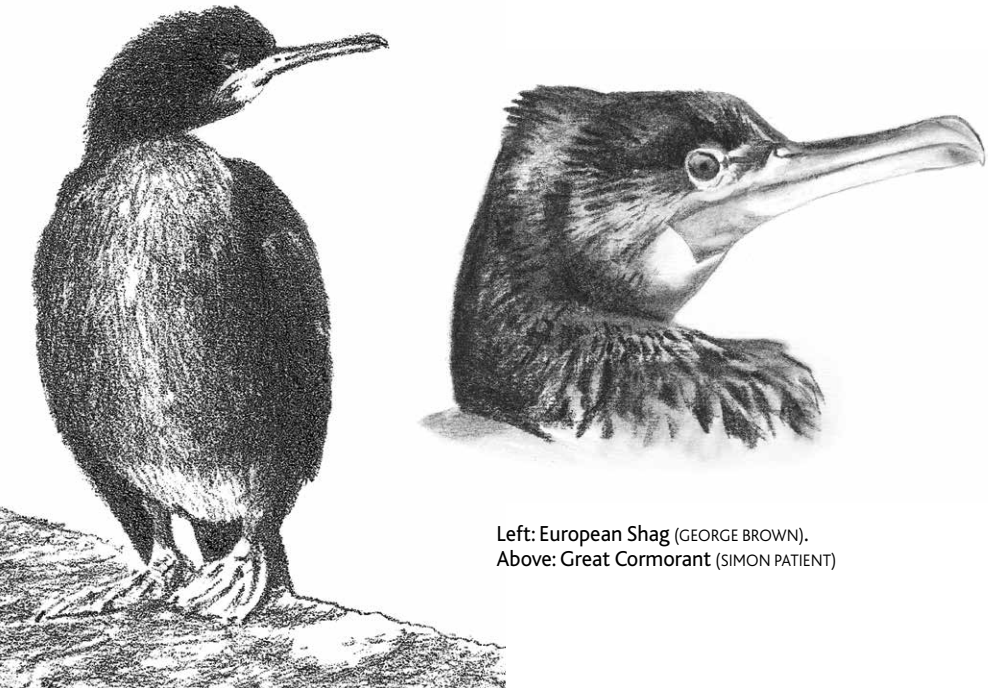
See Ringing Report on page 168 for details of two additional birds found dead.

GREAT CORMORANT *Phalacrocorax carbo carbo/sinensis*

***P. c. sinensis* is a scarce resident, common passage migrant and winter visitor whilst *P. c. carbo* is a common resident, winter visitor and passage migrant.**

Nest counts were as follows:

	2018	2017	2016	2015	2014	2013	2012	2011	2010	2009
Abberton Reservoir	nc	179	195	150	137	145	184	144	160	166
Walthamstow Wetlands	168	133	129	159+	113	178+	226	142	nc	125+
Netherhall Gravel Pit	1	1	0	0	3	0	0	1	0	0
Holyfield Lake	34	38	35	32	45	31	27	28	nc	nc
Lofts Farm/Chigborough	10	12	6	13	0	2	10	3	2	0
Warren Gorge,										
Chafford Gorges	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
Total	**?**	**363**	**365**	**354+**	**299**	**356+**	**447**	**318**	**?**	**291+**



Left: European Shag (GEORGE BROWN).
Above: Great Cormorant (SIMON PATIENT)

At Abberton Reservoir, no accurate count was made though, based on the 2019 figure (available at the time of publication), it is likely that the number of nests was similar to 2017, perhaps even higher.

Principal monthly Wetland Bird Survey counts were:

GB 620 INT 1,200	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
WeBS Total	**1371**	**958**	**393**	**427**	**2993**	**2109**	**2667**	**1901**	**966**
Stour Estuary	4	14	5	6	18	37	nc	nc	nc
Hamford Water	101	82	55	nc	nc	1	3	0	6
Colne Estuary	430	80	29	13	0	5	40	89	66
Blackwater Estuary	307	159	20	28	13	151	208	165	251
Dengie	0	49	9	2	8	0	5	9	5
Crouch/Roach/Wallasea	15	13	16	2	5	27	26	25	32
Foulness/Thames	5	80	74	11	63	93	101	141	92
Abberton Reservoir	129	131	73	281	**2185**	**1176**	**1207**	356	107

Note the 'Internationally Significant' numbers at Abberton Reservoir in July and August, this year's peak of 2,185 approaching the estimate of 2,500 on 27th September 2017.

Non-Wetland Bird Survey or non-breeding colony counts of significance were 239 passing Frinton-on-Sea on 26th March and 92 roosting in Chafford Gorges Grays on 13th December.

WESTERN OSPREY *Pandion haliaetus haliaetus* UK

Uncommon, but increasing, passage migrant.

Another excellent year with 38 or so reported, (40 in 2017, 32 in 2016, 18 in 2015). There appeared to be no long-term lingering individuals, with most clearly on passage.

There were 14 spring records, including one at Rainham Marshes on the early date of 29th March. Autumn migration began with one at Old Hall Marshes on 21st July, with a final record for the year at Woodford Green on 7th October.

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
Numbers	0	0	1	9	3	1	1	9	13	3	0	0
Location	0	0	1	9	3	1	1	9	13	3	0	0

EUROPEAN HONEY BUZZARD *Pernis apivorus* UK EBSIP (312, 60, 372)

Uncommon passage migrant.

Frinton-on-Sea	One	23rd May	PBr
Shut Heath Wood Great Totham	One	6th July	JSu
Holland Haven	One	20th October	PBr

It is difficult to discern trends, given the historic reluctance of observers to supply substantiated records, but 2018 appears to be in line with the average for supported records over the past decade. Three records were accepted but the number of records without an accompanying description or photograph has fallen this year to three.

Annual totals over the last decade:

	2018	2017	2016	2015	2014	2013	2012	2011	2010	2009	Average
Numbers	3	2	3	2	1	1	2	1	4	5	2.4

EURASIAN SPARROWHAWK *Accipiter nisus nisus*

Common resident, passage migrant and winter visitor.

In excess of 1,700 records, some of more than one individual, were received, (1,800 in 2017 and 2016), confirming the Sparrowhawk's wide distribution in a variety of habitats across the County.

There were reports of 23 pairs in suitable habitat in the breeding season, with an additional 20 reports of display or other behaviour indicative of breeding. Only seven breeding records were confirmed (16 in 2017, 14 in 2016, seven in 2015).

Prey targets included Common Moorhen, Northern Lapwing, Feral Pigeon, Common Wood Pigeon, Eurasian Skylark, Common Starling, Common Blackbird, House Sparrow and Common Chaffinch.

NORTHERN GOSHAWK *Accipiter gentilis gentilis*

EBSIP (65, 42, 107)

Rare breeder. Very scarce resident and passage migrant.

Heybridge Basin	One	12th November	SDW

No evidence of breeding in the County was received.

Only one record was accepted, and a dearth of substantiating evidence remains an issue when assessing the status of this species in the County. Ten unsubstantiated records were received.

WESTERN MARSH HARRIER *Circus aeruginosus aeruginosus*

UK REX

Fairly common summer visitor, common passage migrant and winter visitor.

Some 18 potential breeding pairs were reported, on a par with the past two years. At Old Hall Marshes two pairs bred with one nest located containing three eggs. At Rainham Marshes nest building was observed and two pairs bred, with six juveniles fledged.

Annual breeding pairs over the last decade:

	2018	2017	2016	2015	2014	2013	2012	2011	2010	2009
Confirmed/Probable	18	20	20	25	13	23	23	16	23	25

At the main roosts, peak numbers were as follows: Hamford Water, 13 on 6th January, 16 on 14th January, 14 on 10th November, 16 on 7th and 8th December, 13 on 9th December, 17 on 20th December and 26 on 22nd December; Old Hall Marshes, 13 on 22nd January, 26 on 18th February, 20 on 16th March, 12 on 21st October; Wallasea Island, 12 on 3rd November and Langenhoe Marsh, 13 on 30th December.

There was a further increase in the number of sites from which birds were reported, to 116 from 104 in 2017. As has been noted, separating migrating individuals from local dispersals makes a safe assessment of migration problematic.

Inland records were scarce, involving ten sites (Abberton Reservoir, Boreham, Stubbers Adventure Centre Corbets Tay, Great Baddow, Little Baddow, Hanningfield Reservoir, Hornchurch, Ingrebourne Valley, Wanstead Flats and Lee Valley) with the majority at the two reservoirs.

HEN HARRIER *Circus cyaneus*

UK REX

Uncommon passage migrant and winter visitor.

With low numbers in the County at the end of 2017, there was evidence of a slight increase in January, to 11, three more than in the same month of 2017. There were 12 individuals in February and seven in March. There were six April sightings, two more than in the same month in both 2016 and 2017 with the last at Rewshalls Marsh West Mersea on 24th.

The first bird of the autumn was an adult ♂ at Bradwell Bird Observatory on 4th October, closely followed by a ringtail at Colne Point on 7th October.

Wallasea Island was again the primary site in the County with up to three individuals on several dates during October, four in November and three in December.

There were no inland records.

Approximate monthly numbers were as follows:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
Numbers	11	12	7	6	0	0	0	0	0	17	20	13
Locations	7	9	5	5	0	0	0	0	0	9	12	10

MONTAGU'S HARRIER *Circus pygargus*

UK EBSIP

Has bred on four occasions; otherwise scarce passage migrant.

Hamford Water	First calendar year	26th May	PBr
The Naze	Same as above	26th May	BCo
Blue House Farm	Adult ♂	4th September	DHa DWa
Blue House Farm	Adult ♂ same as above	14th September	GSm

Two individuals were involved in the reports supported by descriptions. There was no evidence of breeding. One further unsubstantiated record was received.

Annual totals for the past ten years:

	2018	2017	2016	2015	2014	2013	2012	2011	2010	2009	Average
Numbers	2	0	2	0	1	2	3	2	1	5	1.8

RED KITE *Milvus milvus milvus*

Increasing passage migrant. Recent (re) colonist.

There was no conclusive evidence of breeding after the confirmation in both 2016 and 2017. However, a pair was present about the site occupied in those years from June to September. Evidence of probable breeding came from two further sites and possible breeding from two more.

Red Kites occurred throughout the year but were scarcer during winter. Most were passage or wandering birds with obvious passage between March and June and then a barely discernible autumn movement.

Number of locations at which Red Kite were recorded in each month:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Numbers	31	19	53	89	70	74	31	12	26	17	9	9

Most sightings were of single birds but there were 18 of three or more. Nine in the Ingrebourne Valley on 21st April was notable; six were over a hay meadow in Little Bardfield during hay cutting on 27th June. There were two records of five and four records of four.

Numbers continue to increase steadily and a comparison with five years ago shows a significant upturn in occurrence.

BLACK KITE *Milvus migrans migrans*

EBSIP (18, 14, 32)

Rare passage migrant.

Wanstead Flats	One	6th April	NCr

Three further, unsubstantiated, records were received.

ROUGH-LEGGED BUZZARD *Buteo lagopus lagopus* EBSIP

Scarce passage migrant and winter visitor.

Brightlingsea	One	28th October	JBu
Rainham Marshes	One	30th October-3rd November	mo
Rainham Marshes	Two	31st October	mo
Wallasea Island	One	31st October-6th November	mo
Frinton-on-Sea	One	2nd November	PBr
Old Hall Marshes	One	24th November	ITa

An above average year.

There was one unsubstantiated report in the first winter.

In the second winter, three individuals stayed long enough to be seen by many observers at two well-watched sites. Up to three other individuals were identified and two further unsubstantiated reports received.

Annual totals for the last ten winters:

	2018/17	2017/16	2016/15	2015/14	2014/13	2013/12	2012/11	2011/10	2010/09	2009/08	Average
Numbers	0	1	4	2	2	0	6	4	0	1	2.0

COMMON BUZZARD *Buteo buteo buteo*

Common resident, passage migrant and possible winter visitor. Recent (re) colonist.

In 1989, four records of Common Buzzards in the County were regarded as "average", according to the *Essex Bird Report* for that year. A decade later, there were one confirmed and three potential breeding records and a further 27 reports outside the breeding season. By 2008 a breeding population was firmly established with nine confirmed and 26 possibly breeding. At other seasons the number of records was too numerous to list.

The number of reports of Common Buzzard in the County now exceeds 3,300, often of more than one individual, although allowance should be made for repeat sightings of resident birds.

Reports were received of 107 pairs in suitable territories during the breeding season (92 in 2017,73 in 2016,74 in 2015). Breeding was confirmed for 25 pairs, with a further 47 probably breeding. The true figure is almost certainly higher. There were records of 28 recently fledged young (16 in 2017).

Areas	Confirmed Breeding Pairs
North-east	12
North-west	1
Central	1
South-east	4
South-west	7
Total	**25**

In the first three months of the year, records included 20 at Fingringhoe Wick on 13th March, 17 at Braxted Park on 18th January, with 14 there on 29th January, 14 at Wanstead Flats on 16th March and 13 at Rainham Marshes on 16th March.

Rainham Marshes was the hotspot for spring migration with 35 on 14th April. Observers recorded 26 there during autumn migration on 29th September, but this was overshadowed by an amazing 46, described as "unprecedented", at Hamford Water on 21st October. Other notable counts included 16 at Rainham Marshes on 15th September, 15 at Blue House Farm on 26th September, and 15 at Brook Farm Upminster on 5th October.

WATER RAIL *Rallus aquaticus aquaticus* REX

Scarce resident, passage migrant and winter visitor.

Sightings were reported from 98 sites across the County. Breeding was confirmed at Rainham Marshes (four territories) and possibly four other sites with young birds also observed at Marsh Farm South Woodham Ferrers and Vange Marsh.

Counts of 2-3 birds came from 24 sites while counts of four or more came from Ingrebourne Valley, four on 30th March and 14th November, six on 15th November; Jacques Bay Wrabness, four on 18th February; Fishers Green Holyfield, four on 7th January; Mucking, four on 13th January; Rainham Marshes, five on 9th January, 16th February and 23rd December; Vange Marsh, eight on 30th March, four on 9th November and 27th December.

Approximate monthly totals were:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Numbers	62	65	72	26	7	12	8	12	10	29	49	45

COMMON MOORHEN *Gallinula chloropus chloropus*

Very common resident, passage migrant and winter visitor.

At least 101 pairs/territories were reported from 81 sites (110 from 60 in 2017, 120 from 60 in 2016). Breeding was confirmed at 49 sites. Summering was reported from a further 98 locations.

Observers are encouraged to report all possible/confirmed breeding.

Principal monthly Wetland Bird Survey counts were:

GB 3,000 INT 20,000	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
WeBS Total	**434**	**438**	**212**	**164**	**226**	**253**	**352**	**427**	**279**
Stour Estuary	0	0	0	1	0	3	nc	nc	nc
Hamford Water	73	49	31	nc	nc	3	0	1	0
Holland Haven	4	6	6	6	5	nc	5	6	9
Colne Estuary	65	38	0	20	4	4	29	24	20
Blackwater Estuary	23	24	12	10	8	28	15	20	26
Crouch/Roach/Wallasea	28	19	13	21	36	2	4	17	9
Foulness/Thames	26	67	22	9	35	40	35	49	40
Abberton Reservoir	7	17	4	10	34	19	24	21	2
Hanningfield Reservoir	2	1	1	2	25	9	2	6	0
Lee Valley	85	98	65	40	44	47	108	145	57

Non-Wetland Bird Survey counts of 40 or more were reported from: Audley End, 44 on 24th November; Braintree, 40 on 30th June; Chigborough Lakes, 45 on 6th March; Hanningfield Reservoir, 50 on 7th August.

EURASIAN COOT *Fulica atra atra*

Common resident, passage migrant and winter visitor.

At least 220 pairs were reported from 85 sites (200 from 78 in 2017, 149 from 67 in 2016). Reports of more than ten pairs came only from Rainham Marshes (52) and Bowers Marsh (38). Summering birds were reported from a further 67 locations.

Observers are encouraged to send in all records of breeding pairs and broods.

Principal monthly Wetland Bird Survey counts were:

GB 2,000 INT 17,500	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
WeBS Total	**2404**	**2117**	**1517**	**657**	**5618**	**8365**	**10088**	**3878**	**1744**
Hamford Water	59	40	42	nc	nc	17	1	0	0
Colne Estuary	27	32	9	13	8	5	9	10	26
Blackwater Estuary	54	65	23	42	8	34	17	17	62
Crouch/Roach/Wallasea	82	108	138	65	46	2	2	18	9
Foulness/Thames	154	49	69	20	57	47	50	81	185
Abberton Reservoir	222	578	509	148	**3828**	**6332**	**7125**	1134	731
Hanningfield Reservoir	150	165	107	46	1413	1498	641	474	269

Non-Wetland Bird Survey counts of 150 or more were reported from:Abberton Reservoir (selected totals from 19 reports), 250 on 22nd January, 400 on 22nd February, 1,050 on 21st July, 1,140 on 5th August, 2,300 on 22nd September, 250 on 18th October and 1,350 on 7th November; Bowers Marsh, 424 on 10th August and 200 on 17th August; Colemans Reservoir Little Braxted, 290 on 25th January; Fishers Green Holyfield, 200 on 24th December; Hall Marsh Scrape Waltham Abbey, 170 on 10th January; Hanningfield Reservoir, 150 on 20th June, 300 on 5th August, 250 on 21st August and 200 on 15th September; King George V Reservoir, 500 on 24th September and 255 on 14th November; Thurrock Thameside Mucking, 174 on 5th August and 150 on 25th September; Walthamstow Filter Beds, 170 on 20th January.

COMMON CRANE *Grus grus*

UK EBSIP (125, 47, 172)

Scarce, less than annual, mainly autumn passage migrant.

Frinton-on-Sea	One	13th March	PBr
Deal Hall Dengie	Two	24th September	DWa

An average year.

Annual totals over the last decade have been:

	2018	2017	2016	2015	2014	2013	2012	2011	2010	2009	Average
Numbers	3	12	5	1	0	2	3	6	8	0	4.0

EURASIAN STONE-CURLEW *Burhinus oedicnemus oedicnemus*

UK EX EBSIP

Very scarce passage migrant. Last bred in 1999.

Bowers Marsh	Juvenile	1st, 6th, 10th-17th August	ABr, SAr
Lower Raypits Canewdon	Adult	2nd-27th September	JDv

Two records, both long-stayers, provided many observers the opportunity to catch up with the species in the County. One further unsubstantiated record was received.

Annual totals over the last decade have been:

	2018	2017	2016	2015	2014	2013	2012	2011	2010	2009	Average
Numbers	2	1	3	0	0	2	2	4	1	1	1.6

EURASIAN OYSTERCATCHER *Haematopus ostralegus ostralegus* UK

Resident, passage migrant and winter visitor.

Thanks to surveying by the Essex Little Tern Project breeding numbers increased on 2017 with a total of 111 confirmed breeding pairs reported from 22 sites (58 from 16 in 2017, 144 from 24 in 2016). The primary sites were (2017 figures in brackets): Hamford Water, four ("substantial"); Cobmarsh Island off West Mersea, 16 pairs – five fledged (-); Packing Shed Island off West Mersea, 16 pairs (-); Tollesbury Recharge, five pairs (-).; Tollesbury Wick, five (-); Old Hall Marshes, five (nc); Wallasea Island, 16 (nc); Two Tree Island, five (nc); Bowers Marsh, nine; Rainham Marshes, seven (seven).

Inland birds showing evidence of breeding comprised pairs at Langham (two), Gosbeck's Farm Colchester, Russell Green Gravel Pits Boreham, Hanningfield Reservoir; Wanstead Flats (three).

The number of inland records away from tidal water continues to increase with 190 (170 in 2017), although the only count of more than two birds away from breeding areas was ten at Ardleigh Reservoir on 18th September.

Diurnal passage past Frinton-on-Sea included an unusual movement of 59 north on the late date of 27th May. Autumn passage was moderate to heavy with monthly totals of 172 and 211 in July and August respectively with a peak of 99 on 16th July.

Principal monthly Wetland Bird Survey counts were:

GB 2,900 INT 8,200	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
WeBS Total	**16235**	**18672**	**4215**	**1964**	**12446**	**9805**	**16148**	**17301**	**12151**
Stour Estuary	64	138	44	42	86	105	nc	nc	nc
Hamford Water	497	703	678	nc	nc	0	0	0	0
Colne Estuary	428	277	170	87	202	230	179	482	424
Blackwater Estuary	1100	1362	560	420	327	506	485	812	565
Dengie	2152	1210	932	495	1568	250	**3800**	1753	954
Crouch/Roach/Wallasea	175	131	227	132	25	52	59	172	264
Foulness/Thames	**11819**	**14850**	1593	783	**10208**	**8662**	**11625**	**14082**	**9944**

Non-Wetland Bird Survey four-figure counts were received from three sites: Bradwell Bird Observatory, 3,000 on 15th September; Gunners Park Shoebury, 2,000 on 23rd January, 1,000 on 13th and 24th November; Two Tree Island, 1,000 on 13th October.

BLACK-WINGED STILT *Himantopus himantopus* EBSIP (22, 38, 60)

Rare passage migrant.

Bowers Marsh	Pair – both second calendar years	7th May	mo
Bowers Marsh	Pair - adults	8th-11th May	mo
West Canvey Marsh	Pair – assumed same as above	13th-19th May	mo
Old Hall Marshes	♀	15th May	JDa

The Bowers' adults presumably moved to West Canvey Marshes from 13th-19th May where some tentative nest building behaviour was noted. Three further unsubstantiated records were received.

It is assumed that all of the records in the first half of the year refer to the same four birds.

Annual totals over the last decade have been:

	2018	2017	2016	2015	2014	2013	2012	2011	2010	2009	Average
Numbers	4	7	3	6	4	1	0	4	1	0	3.0

PIED AVOCET *Recurvirostra avosetta* UK REX

Increasing summer visitor, passage migrant and winter visitor.

Confirmed/likely breeding records were estimated as 127 pairs from 12 sites (195 from 14 in 2017, 96 from 10 in 2016), although reporting was sporadic. Estimated numbers from sites holding double-figures were (2017 total in brackets): Old Hall Marshes, 28 (ten); Wallasea Island, 12 (25); Bowers Marsh, 47 (120).

Inland reports away from tidal waters were as follows (singles unless stated): Abberton Reservoir, 17th April, 31st August, five on 12th October, two on 6th and six on 16th November, 12th December; Church Road Gravel Pit Little Baddow, 2nd April; Hanningfield Reservoir, six on 14th February, four on 6th July, 28th July, ten on 6th and five on 20th August; King George V Reservoir, 26th March; Walthamstow Wetlands, 19th November.

Principal monthly Wetland Bird Survey counts were:

GB 87 INT 730	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
WeBS Total	**2058**	**1665**	**995**	**61**	**53**	**67**	**675**	**1123**	**475**
Stour Estuary	**212**	1	2	13	0	2	nc	nc	nc
Hamford Water	**495**	**461**	**201**	nc	nc	0	0	0	0
Colne Estuary	**482**	**376**	**221**	2	0	1	24	**89**	**114**
Blackwater Estuary	**482**	**233**	**135**	10	0	49	**426**	**696**	**208**
Crouch/Roach/Wallasea	**190**	**227**	**210**	0	10	4	**150**	**145**	32
Foulness/Thames	**197**	**367**	**226**	30	43	11	75	**193**	**121**

As usual the largest non-Wetland Bird Survey counts came from the East Tilbury area, where there were peaks of: 1,445 on 28th July, 2,762 on 30th August, and 2,580 on 9th September. Other significant counts were: Hamford Water, 800 on 1st February; Osea Island Blackwater Estuary, 501 on 28th October; Fingringhoe Wick, 600 on 23rd December.

NORTHERN LAPWING *Vanellus vanellus* UK REX

Uncommon resident. Common passage migrant and winter visitor.

Very few confirmed breeding records were received, amounting to just 85 pairs from 16 sites (105 from 15 in 2017). Key sites were: Cattawade Marshes, 13; Old Hall Marshes, 15; Wallasea Island, 12; Bowers Marsh, 17. The only confirmed inland breeding concerned pairs at Gosbeck's Farm Colchester and Little Baddow.

Principal monthly Wetland Bird Survey counts were:

GB 6,200 INT 20,000	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
WeBS Total	**11175**	**18296**	**539**	**102**	**807**	**718**	**1817**	**12234**	**13109**
Stour Estuary	73	669	20	3	27	35	nc	nc	nc
Hamford Water	1075	1162	35	nc	nc	0	0	31	189
Holland Haven	175	355	48	1	48	nc	76	130	315
Colne Estuary	562	365	1	9	0	55	146	611	1087
Blackwater Estuary	3912	5851	116	58	116	252	284	4964	3636
Dengie	542	730	0	0	0	0	63	132	831
Crouch/Roach/Wallasea	3231	5017	239	20	151	82	202	2021	5004
Foulness/Thames	1339	3567	66	10	290	54	123	2327	1847
Abberton Reservoir	134	503	12	0	156	131	790	1907	133
Hanningfield Reservoir	110	74	0	0	17	40	108	99	58
Lee Valley	22	3	2	1	0	0	0	11	9

Non-Wetland Bird Survey counts of 2,000+ came from five sites with peaks as follows: Blue House Farm; 2,000 on 26th January and 1st February; North Fambridge, 2,200 on 2nd February, 2,300 on 30th November; Wallasea Island, 3,000 on 24th November; Rainham Marshes, 2,000 on 10th February and 31st December.

Inland, counts of 250+ came from four sites: Broomhouse Flash Langham, 290 on 14th December; Abberton Reservoir, monthly peaks of 300 on 28th January, 500 on 15th February, 382 on 14th July, 790 on 16th October, 1,907 on 15th November, 500 on 29th December.

A small cold weather movement was noted on 17th January with 108 south at Frinton-on-Sea, and again in late February with 228 over Waltham Abbey on 28th February. There were several reports of emaciated and dying birds in early March during the "Beast from the East".

EUROPEAN GOLDEN PLOVER *Pluvialis apricaria*

Common passage migrant and winter visitor.

The last spring birds were in May at Bradwell Bird Observatory on 6th May (one), five at Old Hall Marshes on 12th, and one at Irlam's Beach Dovercourt on 23rd. There were then no records until a single at Hanningfield Reservoir on 11th July, with two at Heybridge Basin on 20th and 14 past Frinton-on-Sea the next day being the vanguard to a more widespread return.

Principal monthly Wetland Bird Survey counts were:

GB 4,000 INT 9,300	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
WeBS Total	**21712**	**21868**	**929**	**13**	**627**	**2175**	**2787**	**14514**	**9170**
Stour Estuary	18	27	0	0	1	0	nc	nc	nc
Hamford Water	3826	699	97	nc	nc	9	322	0	25
Colne Estuary	420	1002	60	0	1	200	58	769	736
Blackwater Estuary	**11328**	**5230**	286	0	346	1595	914	**6483**	2989
Dengie	2000	**9700**	0	0	0	0	1000	2500	2555
Crouch/Roach/Wallasea	3450	1904	216	0	121	118	152	2378	2075
Foulness/Thames	420	3255	269	13	153	253	323	2001	784

In a break from the norm, the highest non-Wetland Bird Survey coastal counts came not from the Dengie and Blackwater Estuary area but from close by: Old Hall Marshes, 3,100 on 30 January, 6,000 on 21 February, Tollesbury Wick, 3,000 on 4th January; Wallasea Island, 6,000 on 13 November, 7,000 on 24th December.

The highest inland counts (50+) were: Abberton Reservoir, peaks of 70 on 8th January, 51 on 14th February, 200 on 24th October, 600 on 23rd November, and 70 on 29th December; Blackley Lane Gravel Pit Willows Green/Leez Reservoir Hartford End, 100 on 6th February, 170 on 25th March increasing to 220 on 1st April; Kelvedon, 400 on 25th February; Boreham, 125 on 28th February increasing to a peak of 265 on 2nd April; Fuller Street, 80 on 21st November; Mole Hall Widdington, 200 on 11th February; Quickbury Farm Lower Sheering, 120 on 10th November.

AMERICAN GOLDEN PLOVER *Pluvialis dominica*

EBSIP (1, 3, 4)

Vagrant.

Old Hall Marshes	Moulting adult	30th November	MGr

The second consecutive year that the species has occurred in the County; perhaps a returning bird?

GREY PLOVER *Pluvialis squatarola squatarola* UK

Common passage migrant and winter visitor.

June and July records comprised 29 from eight sites, of which four related to double-figure counts. The peak count in June was ten at Dengie North on 17th, with a noticeable increase in returning birds at the end of July: Old Hall Marshes, 24 on 30th, Fingringhoe Wick, 20 on 31st.

Diurnal autumn migration was again light with Frinton-on-Sea recording a total of 86 between 18th October and 7th November (60 in 2017, 39 in 2016) with a peak of 24 on 5th September.

Inland records away from tidal waters comprised (singles unless stated) at: Abberton Reservoir, 29th May, 28 on 29th August, 9th October, 23rd November; Cornmill Meadows Waltham Abbey, 2nd March; King George V Reservoir, 4th March.

Principal monthly Wetland Bird Survey counts were:

GB 330 INT 2,500	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
WeBS Total	**16462**	**7811**	**4533**	**234**	**673**	**3249**	**2931**	**6414**	**7654**
Stour Estuary	246	116	321	13	32	7	nc	nc	nc
Hamford Water	**917**	**925**	**1181**	nc	nc	9	72	**443**	15
Colne Estuary	**407**	**705**	92	1	92	154	**409**	291	139
Blackwater Estuary	**1599**	**1859**	**554**	215	61	**1436**	**1110**	**3149**	**1554**
Dengie	**11435**	**1067**	**1077**	1	30	0	**650**	**594**	**4145**
Crouch/Roach/Wallasea	**1108**	**618**	227	4	0	4	266	**1040**	**1035**
Foulness/Thames	**750**	**2521**	**1081**	0	**458**	**1639**	**424**	**897**	**766**

COMMON RINGED PLOVER *Charadrius hiaticula* UK REX

***C. h. hiaticula* is an uncommon resident and common passage migrant and winter visitor whilst *C. h. tundrae* is a common passage migrant and winter visitor. There are no ringing recoveries to suggest *C. h. psammodromus* has occurred as a passage migrant.**

Just ten likely breeding pairs were reported from six sites (12 from five in 2017, 14 from six in 2016) as follows (2017 figures in brackets): Hamford Water, three (six); St Osyth Stone, one (two); Colne Point, two (three); Cobmarsh Island off West Mersea, one (-); Tollesbury Wick Recharge, two (-); Old Hall Marshes, one. 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 (singles unless stated): Abberton Reservoir, 31st January, 15th March, two on 29th April, then present from 19th August to 25th November with monthly peaks of 36 on 29th August, 76 on 11th September, 30 on 24th October and 62 on 6th November; Church Road Gravel Pit Little Baddow, two on 7th April; Hanningfield Reservoir, present from 6th August to 5th November with a peak of 60 on 15th September; Hatfield Broad Oak, two on 16th September; Wanstead Flats, two on 8th July; King George V Reservoir, 18th March, 24th and 27th May, 10th August, 14th September; Walthamstow Wetlands, 9th March.

Principal monthly Wetland Bird Survey counts were:

GB 420 INT 730	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
WeBS Total	**594**	**469**	**247**	**27**	**305**	**1978**	**843**	**628**	**346**
Stour Estuary	68	27	3	10	38	102	nc	nc	nc
Hamford Water	56	63	64	nc	nc	2	0	0	1
Colne Estuary	84	47	23	2	8	90	94	6	28
Blackwater Estuary	100	98	9	1	7	**785**	275	81	52
Dengie	0	2	0	0	95	260	23	0	15
Crouch/Roach/Wallasea	219	94	40	0	16	136	214	412	104
Foulness/Thames	67	138	107	14	137	**520**	212	119	146

There were two non-Wetland Bird Survey counts of 250+ as follows, Old Hall Marshes, 391 on 13th September; Coalhouse Fort East Tilbury, 293 on 30th August.

LITTLE RINGED PLOVER *Charadrius dubius curonicus* REX

Uncommon summer resident and passage migrant.

Breeding was confirmed at eight sites with 12 pairs reported (eight from 11 in 2017).

The first birds of the spring were at Walthamstow Wetlands on 15th March and Rainham Marshes the following day. Low numbers were then widely reported until mid-April. The only site counts in excess of four came from: Abberton Reservoir, peak of six on 26th April, 19th and 23rd May; and Wallasea Island, six on 18th May.

Autumn double-figure counts came from four sites: The Hythe Colchester, monthly maximum of 20 on 6th July; Abberton Reservoir, 14 on 21st July; Rainham Marshes, ten on 22nd July, 12 on 26th August. Numbers reduced rapidly in late August, with the last birds reported from Rainham Marshes on 17th September.

Estimated monthly totals were as follows:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Numbers	0	0	10	44	44	40	93	29	6	0	0	0
Locations	0	0	9	23	19	16	19	7	3	0	0	0

KENTISH PLOVER *Charadrius alexandrinus alexandrinus* EBSIP (52, 6, 58)

Rare passage migrant.

The Naze	♂	13th-15th May	DSt

The third year in succession raising the question of whether the same returning individual is involved.

Annual totals over the last decade have been:

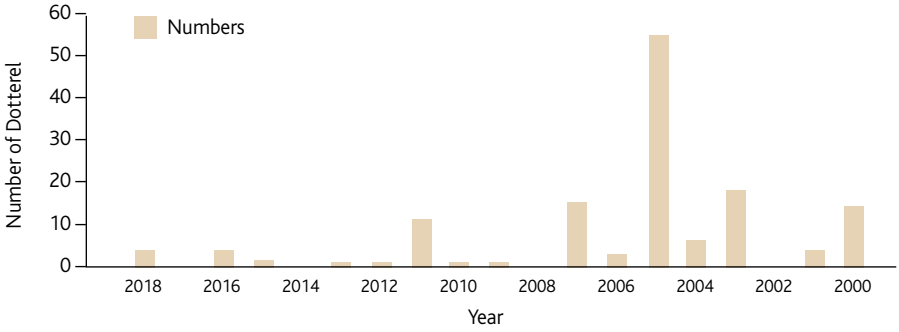
	2018	2017	2016	2015	2014	2013	2012	2011	2010	2009	Average
Numbers	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0.5

DOTTEREL *Charadrius morinellus* UK

Scarce passage migrant.

A blank year. Visits by this enigmatic mountain wader appear to be declining as the annual totals over the last two decades show:

Annual totals of Dotterel recorded 1999–2018



WHIMBREL *Numenius phaeopus phaeopus* UK

Common passage migrant; occasional in winter.

Wintering birds remained from 2017, with singles at Fobbing Marsh, the Croach/Roach Estuary, and up to two at Old Hall Marshes. A single at Heybridge Basin on 22nd January was presumably one of the latter.

Spring passage commenced with a single at Stone Point The Naze on 18th March, with presumably the same seen at Frinton-on-Sea and The Naze over the following days. After an early group of 22 at Blue House Farm on 6th April small numbers were reported until later in the month bar 45 at the same site on 15th. Peak passage occurred in the last week of April and the first week of May with five sites holding 20+ birds, with maximum counts as follows: Alresford Creek, 50 on 7th May; Mersea Strood, 20 on 4th May; Abbotts Hall Farm Great Wigborough, 60 on 25th April; Old Hall Marshes, 46 on 3rd May; Stow Marsh North Fambridge, 25 on 29th April.

Offshore passage at Frinton-on-Sea was reduced compared to 2017, but still significant, with 202 in April and 228 in May. Peaks were 138 on 27th April, 88 on 1st May, and 58 on 7th May.

Return passage was noted from mid-June, but only involved eight double-figure counts, all in August: Frinton-on-Sea, southbound movements of 23 on 23rd; ten on 24th; Alresford Creek, 21 on 23rd; Old Hall Marshes, ten on 24th; North Dengie, ten on 12th; Blue House Farm, 20 on 27th; Wakering Stairs, 16 on 12th; Two Tree Island, 39 on 1st.

The final passage birds departed in mid-October leaving wintering birds at the Outer Crouch Estuary and Fobbing Marsh.

Inland records (singles unless stated) were received from: Broomhouse Langham, 16th April; Abberton Reservoir, reported between 15th April and 7th May with a peak of nine in early May, 1st August; Rushmoor Drive Braintree, 19th May; Boreham, three on 8th April; Chafford Hundred Grays, 13th April, two on 4th May; Wanstead Flats, two on 27th April; Pole Hill Epping Forest, 23th August; King George V Reservoir, up to two reported on four dates between 13th and 22nd April; Walthamstow Wetlands, three on 10th May, 23rd July.

EURASIAN CURLEW *Numenius arquata arquata* UK

Common passage migrant and winter visitor.

Inland counts came from (singles unless otherwise stated): Broomhouse Flash Langham, 11th March, 7th September; Abberton Reservoir, reported from 1st January to 1st May, peak to 70 on 14th January, six on 29th August, 9th September, then 16th November to 29th December, peak of eight on 23rd November; Church Road Gravel Pit Little Baddow, 28th February; Hanningfield Reservoir, 3rd July, 10th November; Rayleigh, 11th June; Belhus Woods Aveley, 13th March; Fairlop Waters Barkingside, two on 11th-12th March; Sewardstone Marsh, 11th March, 2nd April; King George V Reservoir, 10th-11th March, 1st July.

Principal monthly Wetland Bird Survey counts were:

GB 1,200 INT 8,400	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
WeBS Total	**2806**	**5052**	**1840**	**2048**	**2578**	**4102**	**2782**	**5158**	**2246**
Stour Estuary	210	395	246	358	399	498	nc	nc	nc
Hamford Water	560	564	359	nc	nc	19	5	0	31
Holland Haven	0	8	0	1	5	nc	0	1	0
Colne Estuary	144	318	16	44	1	48	186	349	350
Blackwater Estuary	1097	897	482	232	405	1050	**1357**	1038	976
Dengie	222	203	87	4	252	2	119	323	70
Crouch/Roach/Wallasea	300	179	166	32	199	34	90	173	208
Foulness/Thames	261	**2488**	480	**1376**	**1317**	**2451**	1025	**3273**	610
Abberton Reservoir	12	0	4	1	0	0	0	0	1

Coastal passage was light in June and early July with a peak of 25 south past Frinton-on-Sea on 20th June. The peak spring movement of 52 north was noted on 30th March. The only notable non-Wetland Bird Survey counts was from Two Tree Island with 500 on 29th September.

BAR-TAILED GODWIT *Limosa lapponica lapponica* UK

Common passage migrant and winter visitor; a few during summer.

Recorded throughout the year, with lowest numbers in June: Fingringhoe Wick, two on 9th; East Tilbury, two on 9th and 15th.

Inland records away from tidal water came from four sites: Church Road Gravel Pit Little Baddow, one on 12th January; Russell Green Gravel Pits Boreham, five from 30th April-1st May; Hanningfield Reservoir, two on 14th September, one on 5th November; Walthamstow Wetlands, 36 on 29th April.

Birds were recorded well up the Inner Thames at: Rainham Marshes: intermittently from 2nd March to 30th May, peak of nine on 29th April, then singles on 26th August, 9th November, 10th and 18th-19th December; Barking Bay, 86th on 29th April; Beckton, two on 8th April.

The spring peak in late April also produced 100 at Blue House Farm on 27th and 76 at Wallasea Island on 30th. The only other notable count concerned 225 north past Frinton-on-Sea on 7th May.

Return passage was underway by 10th July when 183 were at Old Hall Marshes, but was slight, with only one other non-Wetland Bird Survey three-figure figure count reported, 100 south at Frinton-on-Sea on 26th August, until December, when 200 were at Fingringhoe Wick on 23rd.

Principal monthly Wetland Bird Survey counts were:

GB 500 INT 1,200	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
WeBS Total	**4077**	**2930**	**3768**	**2**	**581**	**468**	**764**	**2287**	**2356**
Stour Estuary	70	0	31	0	0	0	nc	nc	nc
Hamford Water	**953**	371	**542**	nc	nc	0	1	0	0
Colne Estuary	213	90	69	0	3	1	6	5	1
Blackwater Estuary	70	99	20	0	0	6	19	0	148
Dengie	57	210	40	0	70	0	1	50	250
Foulness/Thames	**2710**	**2159**	**3066**	2	499	460	**737**	**2226**	**1956**

BLACK-TAILED GODWIT *Limosa limosa* UK
Icelandic Black-tailed Godwit *Limosa limosa islandica*

Much increased passage migrant and winter visitor.

The first winter period saw low numbers reported with only two four-figure non-Wetland Bird Survey counts: Mistley Walls, 1,000 on 5th January; Heybridge Basin, 1,200 on 23rd February; with a lower than usual spring passage e.g. a maximum of 1,871 on the Blackwater at Goldhanger on 20th March. Peak numbers were in the inner reaches of the Thames with peak site counts in April including 3,215 at Hole Haven Creek Canvey Island on 15th; and 1,563 at East Tilbury on 26th.

Birds returned rapidly in early autumn with 25 four-figure counts between 25th August and 31st October with maxima as follows: Two Tree Island, 2,250 on 8th September; Thurrock Thameside Mucking, 2,432 on 16th September; East Tilbury, 2,268 on 13th October.

A total of 231 records was received from 13 inland locations with the more notable counts: Broomhouse Flash Langham, 35 on 25th July, five on 14th December; Abberton Reservoir, present in early January then from 3rd July to 16th December, peaking at 500+ on 22nd September; Hanningfield Reservoir, up to eight to 24th January, then 27th June to 22nd December, maximum 200 from 16th-19th October; Walthamstow Wetlands, 21 on 20th July.

Principal monthly Wetland Bird Survey counts were:

GB 390 INT 610	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
WeBS Total	**5039**	**5118**	**4208**	**3808**	**1871**	**5990**	**2525**	**2345**	**1458**
Stour Estuary	**921**	**442**	3	381	**690**	**1016**	nc	nc	nc
Hamford Water	368	**660**	128	nc	nc	87	192	166	0
Holland Haven	1	2	4	1	0	nc	23	14	20
Colne Estuary	157	272	275	86	0	20	134	97	41
Blackwater Estuary	**1848**	**2199**	**2366**	12	**510**	**1985**	**1199**	**850**	372
Crouch/Roach/Wallasea	**409**	124	**395**	109	79	221	**451**	**787**	**696**
Foulness/Thames	**1292**	**1419**	**1037**	**3218**	**421**	**2412**	217	288	324

Continental Black-tailed Godwit *Limosa limosa limosa* EBSIP (0, 4, 4)

Vagrant, probably over-looked.

Walton Hall Marshes	One	16th April	DSt

This individual was colour-ringed (see Ringing Report p173 for full details).

A number of additional claims of this subspecies were received this year. The Identification Panel continues to undertake a full review of the subspecies' status in Essex, together with criteria for identification. All records have been held pending until a review is published in due course. In certain plumages, this subspecies can look quite striking and different from *islandica*.

RUDDY TURNSTONE *Arenaria interpres interpres* UK

Fairly common passage migrant and winter visitor.

Recorded throughout the year, with six June records spread throughout the month: Hamford Water/The Naze, six on 16th, two on 17th; Colne Point, six on 17th; Brightlingsea, one on 28th; Rainham Marshes, one on 8th; Hanningfield Reservoir, 2nd-5th.

Other inland records came from three sites (singles unless stated): Hanningfield Reservoir, 4th-7th August, with a second on 6th-7th; Thaxted, 11th August; King George V Reservoir, 7th and 12th May, two on 21st-22nd July, 27th July, two on 16th August.

Principal monthly Wetland Bird Survey counts were:

GB 400 INT 1,400	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
WeBS Total	**1119**	**1558**	**1044**	**549**	**296**	**717**	**782**	**1278**	**1627**
Stour Estuary	37	114	102	132	79	39	nc	nc	nc
Hamford Water	81	54	85	nc	nc	0	0	0	0
Holland Haven	0	0	5	0	3	nc	0	0	0
Colne Estuary	118	125	43	189	13	6	163	137	181
Blackwater Estuary	**447**	**453**	**440**	146	97	326	390	**556**	**828**
Dengie	76	60	11	0	46	0	63	50	60
Crouch/Roach/Wallasea	51	12	21	0	9	0	8	5	10
Foulness/Thames	309	**740**	337	82	49	345	158	**530**	**548**

The only non-Wetland Bird Survey counts of 350 or more came from: Bramble Island Hamford Water, 500 on 1st January; Southend Pier, 350 on 9th March, 400 on 29th November.

RED KNOT *Calidris canutus islandica* UK

Common passage migrant and winter visitor; a few during summer.

Inland records consisted of singles at: Walthamstow Wetlands on 1st and 5th March; Hanningfield Reservoir on 26th August; Abberton Reservoir on 15th November.

There were no June records. July records were received from four sites (four in 2017): The Naze, 15 on 30th; Fingringhoe Wick, single on 31st; Old Hall Marshes, single on 10th and 105 on 30th; Wallasea Island, ten on 31st.

The only five-figure counts not included in Wetland Bird Survey table were: Tollesbury Wick, 10,000 on 4th January; Bradwell Bird Observatory, 10,000 on 28th October.

Principal monthly Wetland Bird Survey counts were:

GB 2,600 INT 4,500	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
WeBS Total	**56721**	**45306**	**24813**	**6**	**22**	**95**	**12705**	**21333**	**28239**
Stour Estuary	**5050**	1010	110	1	0	0	nc	nc	nc
Hamford Water	2075	1001	158	nc	nc	0	401	0	0
Colne Estuary	880	2218	505	1	7	0	7	212	26
Blackwater Estuary	**16452**	**17872**	**5436**	4	0	67	263	**4756**	**3230**
Dengie	**14500**	**12100**	**8501**	0	0	0	**9200**	**4880**	**15250**
Crouch/Roach/Wallasea	164	100	1	0	0	0	35	0	12
Foulness/Thames	**17600**	**11005**	**10102**	0	15	28	**2798**	**11484**	**9721**

RUFF *Calidris pugnax* UK

Common passage migrant and winter visitor.

In the first winter period, non-Wetland Bird Survey double-figure counts came from (maximum counts): Old Hall Marshes, 26 on 21st February; Blue House Farm, 16 on 6th April; Rainham Marshes, 21 on 28th January.

In autumn and the second winter period, double-figure counts came from six sites (six in 2017) with the following maximum counts: Abberton Reservoir, 20 on 4th September and 11th November; Old Hall Marshes, 18 on 3rd August; Blue House Farm, 21 on 29th June; South Woodham Ferrers, 15 on 20th September; Bowers Marsh, 13 on 1st August; Vange Marsh, 15 on 14th September.

Principal monthly Wetland Bird Survey counts were:

GB 9 INT 12,200	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
WeBS Total	**1**	**36**	**19**	**2**	**2**	**78**	**3**	**24**	**8**
Holland Haven	0	0	0	0	2	nc	0	0	0
Colne Estuary	0	**14**	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Blackwater Estuary	0	**19**	0	2	0	3	0	0	0
Crouch/Roach/Wallasea	0	0	**10**	0	0	1	0	0	0
Foulness/Thames	0	0	6	0	0	0	0	0	0
Abberton Reservoir	0	0	0	0	0	**53**	0	**22**	4
Hanningfield Reservoir	1	0	0	0	0	**16**	3	2	4

CURLEW SANDPIPER *Calidris ferruginea* UK

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

There were no records in either winter period.

In spring, the only records were singles at: The Naze on 14th May; Rainham Marshes on 18th May and 31st May-1st June.

Autumn passage peaked in late July to early August with double-figure counts at three sites (none in 2017). Maximum counts were: Langenhoe Marsh, 15 on 10th August; Old Hall Marshes, 23 on 31st July; Wallasea Island, 18 on 31st July.

Inland autumn records came from: Abberton Reservoir, single on 22nd-25th September: Hanningfield Reservoir, single on 6th August, 2-8 from 10th-16th September.

Estimated minimum monthly totals were:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Numbers	0	0	0	0	3	1	51	44	33	0	0	0
Locations	0	0	0	0	2	1	5	14	8	0	0	0

TEMMINCK'S STINT *Calidris temminckii*

EBSIP (193, 49, 242)

Scarce, almost annual passage migrant.

A blank year, the first since 2013.

Annual totals over the last decade have been:

	2018	2017	2016	2015	2014	2013	2012	2011	2010	2009	Average
Numbers	0	3	2	5	1	0	9	4	1	4	2.9

SANDERLING *Calidris alba alba*

UK

Fairly common passage migrant and winter visitor; occasional in summer.

June records came from: East Tilbury, four on 2nd; Abberton Reservoir, single on 5th; The Naze, 16 on 16th; Colne Point, 27 on 17th.

Inland records were (singles unless stated): Abberton Reservoir on 23rd May, 5th June and 5th August; King George V Reservoir, on 12th, 21st and 24th May, five on 27th May.

Principal monthly Wetland Bird Survey counts were:

GB 200 INT 1,200	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
WeBS Total	**324**	**1462**	**436**	**43**	**81**	**514**	**102**	**922**	**236**
Hamford Water	32	36	28	nc	nc	0	0	0	0
Colne Estuary	12	8	50	9	70	4	0	0	24
Dengie	0	0	25	3	0	0	12	0	10
Foulness/Thames	**280**	**1416**	**330**	31	11	**510**	90	**922**	**202**

DUNLIN *Calidris alpina alpina/schinzii/arctica*

UK

***C. a. alpina* is a very common passage migrant and winter visitor, whilst *C. a. schinzii* is a passage migrant. The status of *C. a. arctica* in the County is uncertain.**

Inland records at the main reservoirs are summarised below (maximum monthly counts):

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Abberton	14	3	3	0	0	0	1	0	15	9	58	30
Hanningfield	11	1	1	0	0	1	1	8	33	10	2	7
King George V	0	0	26	1	1	0	1	12	0	0	0	0
William Girling	0	0	30	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

The only June record was a single at Hanningfield Reservoir on 30th.

Principal monthly Wetland Bird Survey counts were:

GB 3,400 INT 13,300	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
WeBS Total	**35690**	**50091**	**13775**	**1112**	**595**	**882**	**12493**	**39174**	**25433**
Stour Estuary	2745	1561	1019	140	0	3	nc	nc	nc
Hamford Water	2370	**3627**	1304	nc	nc	15	81	20	160
Colne Estuary	2710	**3575**	980	142	35	11	847	2529	2837
Blackwater Estuary	**15421**	**13215**	**5218**	760	3	503	**4757**	**16284**	**11233**
Dengie	2044	**7537**	1802	0	183	22	**4136**	**4025**	**3545**
Crouch/Roach/Wallasea	**4735**	**6626**	718	20	2	35	252	**3986**	3103
Foulness/Thames	**5654**	**13948**	2734	50	370	251	2417	**12272**	**4525**
Abberton Reservoir	0	1	0	0	0	9	0	58	29

There were no five-figure counts, the highest being 8,000 at Tollesbury Wick on 4th January.

PURPLE SANDPIPER *Calidris maritima* UK

Uncommon, and declining, passage migrant and winter visitor.

First winter records came from (singles unless stated): Manningtree on 17th April; The Naze from 20th January-22nd March; Holland Haven, 1-2 from 6th March-3rd April; Old Hall Marshes on 14th January; Goldhanger on 15th February; Bradwell Bird Observatory on 7th March; Deal Hall Dengie on 7th March; Grays from 18th-21st March.

In the second winter period: Irlam's Beach Dovercourt on 7th September; Frinton-on-Sea/Holland Haven, two on 24th August then 1-2 intermittently from 14th November to the end of the year; St Lawrence on 14th and 27th December; Bradwell Bird Observatory on 24th October; North Fambridge on 30th November; Southend Pier on 1st October; Canvey Point on 24th September and 28th October.

LITTLE STINT *Calidris minuta*

Regular autumn passage migrant, very scarce in spring; occasional in winter.

First winter records came from (singles unless stated): Abberton Reservoir, 1-3 from 1st January-17th February; Bowers Marsh, from 2nd January-11th March; East Tilbury on 11th January.

Spring passage was light with singles recorded at nine sites and two at Stow Marsh North Fambridge on 15th March. The only inland record was at Hanningfield Reservoir on 4th March.

Autumn passage was very light with an estimated total of 38 individuals from 15 sites (130 from 32 in 2017). The highest count was seven at Rainham Marshes on 14th September with the last at East Tilbury on 7th October.

Estimated minimum monthly totals were:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Numbers	5	4	4	1	3	2	2	12	25	1	0	0
Locations	3	2	3	1	2	2	2	5	9	1	0	0

PECTORAL SANDPIPER *Calidris melanotos* EBSIP (65, 49, 114)

Very scarce passage migrant, mainly in autumn.

Lower Raypits Canewdon	Juvenile	22nd-24th September	JDv
Rainham Marshes	Juvenile	23rd-30th September	GBe

Below average by recent standards. One further, unsubstantiated, record was received.

Annual totals for the last decade:

	2018	2017	2016	2015	2014	2013	2012	2011	2010	2009	Average
Numbers	2	6	3	2	3	3	6	4	6	1	3.6

EURASIAN WOODCOCK *Scolopax rusticola* UK

Very rare breeder. Fairly common passage migrant and winter visitor.

There were no sightings indicative of breeding.

There were 23 occurrences involving more than singles (25 in 2017), all of them in the first half of the year (two unless stated): Cattawade to Flatford on 2nd March; Pewit Island Hamford Water on 21st January; Garnham's Island Hamford Water, five on 21st January; Frinton-on-Sea on 1st March; Cudmore Grove East Mersea on 2nd March; Hadleigh Downs on 18th February, three on 21st March; West Canvey Marsh on 21st March; Canvey Wick, three on 13th January; Beckton on 11th February; Great Loveney Hall Mount Bures, six on 10th February; Copford, three on 1st March; Shut Heath Wood Great Totham on 23rd April; Hazeleigh Wood, three on 5th March; Bungate Wood Braintree, four on 27th January; Prior's Wood Takeley on 17th January; Boreham, five on 13th January; Bicknacre on 26th March; Hanningfield Reservoir on 3rd February; Fairlop Waters Barkingside on 1st January, 21st January and 10th February; Walthamstow Wetlands on 1st March.

Estimated minimum monthly totals were:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Numbers	47	30	61	7	0	0	0	0	0	3	12	10

JACK SNIPE *Lymnocryptes minimus*

Scarce passage migrant and winter visitor.

There was an increase in numbers with 72 records from 31 locations (54 from 28 in 2017). Estimated minimum monthly totals were:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Numbers	2	13	25	5	0	0	0	0	0	5	9	8
Locations	2	11	15	5	0	0	0	0	0	5	5	7

Multiple records in the first winter period were (two unless stated): Vange Marsh on 9th March; East Tilbury on 10th and 17th February; Orsett Fen, four on 5th March; Rainham Marshes, eight on 2nd and 18th March.

The last was at Rainham Marshes on 15th April with the first returning bird at Waterworks Leyton on 14th October.

In the second winter period multiple records were (two unless stated): Ramsey Marsh St Lawrence, three on 27th December; West Canvey Marsh on 8th December; Vange Marsh from 4th-6th December; Thurrock Thameside Mucking on 16th December.

COMMON SNIPE *Gallinago gallinago gallinago* UK REX

***G. g. gallinago* is a very rare breeder, common passage migrant and winter visitor. The status of *G. g. faeroeensis* in the county is uncertain given the lack of ringing recoveries in Essex.**

There were no reports of attempted breeding.

Principal monthly Wetland Bird Survey counts were:

GB 10,000 INT 20,000	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
WeBS Total	**21**	**51**	**32**	**10**	**17**	**43**	**17**	**27**	**52**
Stour Estuary	9	11	3	6	0	0	nc	nc	nc
Hamford Water	5	18	15	nc	nc	0	0	0	1
Holland Haven	0	0	0	0	1	nc	7	5	0
Colne Estuary	1	2	0	1	0	0	0	0	4
Blackwater Estuary	3	4	1	0	0	25	2	4	11
Crouch/Roach/Wallasea	1	0	0	1	2	1	0	0	10
Foulness/Thames	1	9	10	2	0	0	4	13	10

Above: Hen Harrier, Wallasea Island, October
(PAUL CHAMBERLAIN)

Right: Eurasian Stone-curlew, Canewdon, September
(JEFF DELVE)

Black Tern, Abberton Reservoir, August (SEAN NIXON)

Western Barn Owl, White Colne, March (SEAN NIXON)

Counts of 50 or more came from five sites (one in 2017). Maximum counts were: Blue House Farm, 80 on 25th September; Bowers Marsh, 80 on 13th March; Vange Marsh, 100 on 29th December; Rainham Marshes, 140 on 23rd December; Ingrebourne Valley, 60 on 2nd January.

RED-NECKED PHALAROPE *Phalaropus lobatus*

UK EBSIP (76, 16, 92)

Very scarce passage migrant.

Vange Marsh	Juvenile	1st-6th September	MHe PBa

Annual totals over the last decade have been:

	2018	2017	2016	2015	2014	2013	2012	2011	2010	2009	Average
Numbers	1	3	1	1	1	2	0	0	3	1	1.3

RED PHALAROPE *Phalaropus fulicarius* (Grey Phalarope)

EBSIP (96, 26, 122)

Scarce passage migrant.

Abberton Reservoir	One	23rd-24th September	SEn CJo
Holland Haven	Adult	13th October	PLo

An average year, totals over the last ten years being:

	2018	2017	2016	2015	2014	2013	2012	2011	2010	2009	Average
Numbers	2	2	1	0	4	0	0	1	2	2	1.4

COMMON SANDPIPER *Actitis hypoleucos*

UK

Common passage migrant and scarce winter visitor.

Estimated minimum monthly totals were:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Numbers	22	8	13	55	71	8	227	206	123	31	7	5
Locations	9	7	8	31	30	7	46	62	46	20	6	2

There were no double-figure counts in the first half of the year, the largest being seven at Walthamstow Wetlands on 25th April.

In autumn, double-figure counts were received from nine sites (eight in 2017). Maximum counts were: Heybridge Basin, ten on 28th July; Dengie Flats, ten on 14th September; River Roach, 11 on 20th July; Purfleet, ten on 20th August; Rainham Marshes, ten on 20th August; Beckton, 15 on 13 July and 8th September; Abberton Reservoir, 11 on 24th July; Hanningfield Reservoir, 31 on 29th July; King George V Reservoir, 21 on 20th July.

GREEN SANDPIPER *Tringa ochropus*

UK

Common passage migrant and much increased winter visitor.

Estimated minimum monthly totals were:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Numbers	27	26	52	63	5	52	119	165	119	73	47	36
Locations	21	17	28	31	5	18	32	47	40	36	22	20

In the first winter the maximum count was three at Bowers Marsh on 21st February.

Spring passage was higher than last year with 172 records from March-June (135 in 2017). Three sites held double-figure counts (none in 2017): The Hythe Colchester, 13 on 26th June; Tollesbury

Wick, ten on 22nd April; Great Waltham, 12 on 30th June.

Autumn passage was again light with 476 records in July-October (413 in 2017). Double-figure counts came from (maximum site counts): The Hythe Colchester, 15 on 10th July; Fingringhoe Ranges, 13 on 19th August; Old Hall Marshes, 14 on 23rd July; Blue House Farm, 20 on 18th September; Potton Island Great Wakering, 11 on 12th August; Bowers Marsh, 14 on 11th August; Vange Marsh, 11 on 29th August; Hanningfield Reservoir, ten from 4th-5th August.

In the second winter period, the highest count was five at William Girling Reservoir Chingford on 22nd December.

COMMON REDSHANK *Tringa tetanus totanus/robusta*

UK REX

***T.t. totanus* is an uncommon resident, common passage migrant and winter visitor, whilst *T. t. robusta* is a common passage migrant and winter visitor.**

Breeding was confirmed at 11 sites (three in 2017) with probable breeding at a further ten locations. Number of pairs, with the number of chicks shown in brackets, where known were: Cattawade; Old Hall Marshes, ten (c20); North Dengie plus Bradwell Bird Observatory to Sales Point, (chicks seen); Clementsgreen Creek South Woodham Ferrers; Foulness Island, 18 (four); Wallasea Island, 11 (seven); Lower Raypits Canewdon, (two); West Canvey Marsh, four (four); Bowers Marsh, 11 (three); Vange Marsh, one; Rainham Marshes.

The only non-Wetland Bird Survey four-figure count was of 1,000 at Two Tree Island on 13th October.

Principal monthly Wetland Bird Survey counts were:

GB 940 INT 2,400	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
WeBS Total	**6442**	**8343**	**3579**	**2238**	**2307**	**4656**	**5098**	**4930**	**5279**
Stour Estuary	363	505	525	644	116	145	nc	nc	nc
Hamford Water	**1345**	**2008**	764	nc	nc	215	131	4	80
Colne Estuary	**964**	**1180**	236	459	5	185	**1272**	**1008**	**1177**
Blackwater Estuary	**2153**	**1850**	828	629	389	**1698**	**1993**	**2255**	**2661**
Dengie	81	227	87	8	45	4	118	57	87
Crouch/Roach/Wallasea	913	862	540	45	218	601	469	542	742
Foulness/Thames	622	**1710**	598	445	**1533**	**1804**	**1114**	**1062**	529

MARSH SANDPIPER *Tringa stagnatilis*

BBRC (9, 4, 13)

Vagrant.

Rainham Marshes	First calendar year	27th-29th July	PHa
Vange Marsh	Age uncertain	13th September	ACo

The first records since the Heybridge Gravel Pit bird of August 2008. This is the first year that more than one bird has occurred in Essex.

WOOD SANDPIPER *Tringa glareola*

UK

Scarce passage migrant.

Estimated minimum monthly totals were:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Numbers	0	0	0	7	13	0	3	10	6	0	0	0
Locations	0	0	0	4	7	0	3	6	2	0	0	0

In spring, reports of more than singles came from: The Naze, two on 7th May; Blue House Farm, four on 19th April (the first of the year); Lower Raypits Canewdon, four on 21st May; Bowers Marsh, two from 7th-9th May; Rainham Marshes, two on 21st May.

The last birds of the spring were two at Rainham Marshes on 21st May with the first returning bird at William Girling Reservoir Chingford on 16th July.

In autumn, reports of more than singles came from (two unless stated): Old Hall Marshes on 3rd August; Abberton Reservoir on 4th and 10th August; Blue House Farm on 21st August and 5th September; Rainham Marshes on 31st August; Walthamstow Wetlands, four on 6th September (which were the last birds of the year).

SPOTTED REDSHANK *Tringa erythropus* UK

Fairly common passage migrant and scarce winter visitor.

Estimated minimum monthly totals were:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Numbers	11	9	3	17	5	28	47	73	51	19	9	10
Locations	7	8	3	11	2	5	5	10	12	8	5	5

In spring, double-figure counts were reported at two sites (one in 2017): Abbotts Hall Farm, 14 on 20th June; Old Hall Marshes, ten on 17th June.

Double-figure counts in autumn came from two sites (four in 2017), with peak totals as follows: Old Hall Marshes, 43 on 3rd August; Vange Marsh, 14 on 20th and 29th August and 16th September.

All inland records occurred in September with maximum counts being: Abberton Reservoir, five on 22nd; Hanningfield Reservoir, two on 16th-17th.

COMMON GREENSHANK *Tringa nebularia* UK

Common passage migrant and scarce winter visitor.

Estimated minimum monthly totals were:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Coastal	23	19	17	83	48	10	197	380	388	153	55	24
Inland	0	0	0	8	7	1	8	8	14	4	1	0
Numbers	23	19	17	91	55	11	205	388	402	157	56	24
Locations	14	12	11	39	25	7	33	52	42	26	13	9

In spring, double-figure counts came from: The Hythe Colchester, ten on 26th April; Vange Marsh, 19 on 26th April.

In autumn, counts of 20 or more were reported from (maximum site counts): Colne Estuary, 33 on 26th August; Fingringhoe Wick, 62 on 27th August; Mersea Strood, 20 on 5th October; Old Hall Marshes, 22 on 5th and 28th September; Goldhanger, 23 on 10th September; Heybridge Basin, 58 on 4th September; Crouchside Foulness Island, 83 on 12th August; Two Tree Island, 52 on 9th September.

Principal monthly Wetland Bird Survey counts were:

GB 8*+ INT 2,300	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
WeBS Total	**3**	**10**	**4**	**6**	**116**	**119**	**34**	**13**	**1**
Stour Estuary	2	4	1	1	7	**25**	nc	nc	nc
Hamford Water	0	0	0	nc	nc	1	2	0	0
Blackwater Estuary	0	4	0	1	4	**51**	1	0	0
Crouch/Roach/Wallasea	0	0	0	0	4	1	10	0	0
Foulness/Thames	0	1	2	0	**101**	**36**	**15**	**12**	1

BLACK-LEGGED KITTIWAKE *Rissa tridactyla tridactyla* UK

Fairly common passage migrant and winter visitor; occasional in summer.

Another year with no significant influxes into the County.

Estimated monthly totals were:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Numbers	225	32	250	15	6	2	22	2	1	240	345	95

During January and February double-figure counts came from: Frinton-on-Sea, 34 on 1st, 68 on 3rd and 14 on 29th January; Holland Haven, 17 on 7th January; Southend Pier, 13 on 4th February; Canvey Point, 20 on 8th January; Thurrock Thameside Mucking, ten on 7th January.

Spring passage was generally light, with double-figure counts coming from: Frinton-on-Sea, 19 on 4th and 58 on 18th March; Rainham Marshes, 128 on 13th and 30 on 16th March, ten on 9th April.

Summer records came from: Wrabness, 20th July; Frinton-on-Sea, six on 2nd and 14 on 10th July; Canvey Point, 10th June; Eastern Esplanade Canvey Island, 14th July; East Tilbury, 23rd June.

Autumn passage through to the end of the year was also light, the only double-figure counts coming from: Frinton-on-Sea, 12 on 28th October, 12 on 20th, 19 on 21st, 26 on 22nd and ten on 23rd December; Holland Haven, 25 on 28th October; Gunners Park Shoebury, 12 on 28th October; Canvey Point, ten on 18th and 30 on 28th October, 51 on 19th, 165 on 20th and 21 on 25th November; Thurrock Thameside Mucking, 83 on 27th and 27 on 28th October, 74 on 20th November; East Tilbury, 11 on 24th November; Tilbury, 40 on 27th October.

There were just four inland records: Abberton Reservoir, 18th March; Canvey Heights Country Park, 19th March; King George V Reservoir, 28th October; Howlands Marsh St Osyth, 28th November. In addition, birds reported up-river from: Wrabness, 20th July; Creekmouth Barking, 19th November; Beckton, two on 28th February, 4th May and 12th August.

SABINE'S GULL *Xema sabini* EBSIP (113, 37, 150)

Uncommon, almost annual visitor, mainly in autumn.

A blank year.

Annual totals over the last decade have been:

	2018	2017	2016	2015	2014	2013	2012	2011	2010	2009	Average
Numbers	0	1	2	0	2	4	5	2	2	10	2.8

BONAPARTE'S GULL *Chroicocephalus philadelphia* BBRC (1, 5, 6)

Vagrant.

Rainham Marshes	Second calendar year	25th June	MPa
Creekside Beckton	Second calendar year	1st July	JPa, DSh *et al.*

Both records are assumed to relate to the same bird.

BLACK-HEADED-GULL *Chroicocephalus ridibundus* UK

Abundant resident, passage migrant and winter visitor.

Breeding records from the main colonies (with 2017 figures where known) were as follows:

Hamford Water	No formal count, most nests flooded by high tides; but 30 chicks ringed (404+ pairs; 2,150 nests during last comprehensive count in 2015)
Stone Point The Naze	No details (17 pairs)
Rat Island River Colne	No details
Abberton Reservoir	Similar numbers to recent years on tern rafts (25+ pairs)

Cindery Island Brightlingsea Creek	A few pairs attempted to breed (5-6 pairs)
Heybridge Gravel Pit	300-400 pairs (600)
Wallasea Island	Bred, but no details (623 nests)
Foulness Island	No details (134 pairs raised 75 young)
Blue House Farm	13 nests (34)
Paglesham Lagoon	60 pairs (78)
Russell Green Gravel Pit Boreham	150+ pairs (150+)
Seventy Acres Lake Holyfield	43 chicks and fledged juveniles (12 young)

Non-Wetland Bird Survey counts of 1,500 or more came from: Mistley, 2,000 on 26th January; Wrabness, 2,000 on 14th March; Frinton-on-Sea, 6,500 south on 22nd July and 2,573 south on 14th October; Abberton Reservoir, 5,000 on 21st September, 1,601 on 6th November; West Thurrock Marshes, 2,379 on 1st January; Rainham Marshes, 3,000 on 4th and 6,000 on 7th January, 3,200 on 18th February.

Principal monthly Wetland Bird Counts were:

GB 22,000 INT 20,000	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
WeBS Total	**9626**	**7623**	**7071**	**8300**	**7467**	**8263**	**6484**	**6297**	**2822**
Stour Estuary	421	1181	1162	115	1116	1025	nc	nc	nc
Hamford Water	1163	1079	999	nc	nc	351	256	44	27
Holland Haven	110	40	115	294	33	nc	335	40	60
Colne Estuary	97	81	112	70	142	145	49	198	66
Blackwater Estuary	733	359	470	735	699	471	262	567	464
Dengie	6	19	99	26	942	0	382	75	23
Crouch/Roach/Wallasea	8	62	384	170	234	260	71	292	95
Foulness/Thames	1952	2483	1757	862	3534	4030	1632	1474	887
Hanningfield Reservoir	33	204	120	78	232	498	422	529	197
Lee Valley	2653	295	1016	110	18	44	912	979	140

LITTLE GULL *Hydrocoloeus minutus*

Rare summer visitor, fairly common passage migrant and scarce winter visitor.

An improvement over 2017 (only 100 birds in total), but no significant influxes were recorded in 2018.

Estimated monthly totals were:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Numbers	2	-	108	62	2	1	1	3	8	20	56	2
Locations	2	-	8	13	2	1	1	3	8	5	6	1

Spring passage commenced on 2nd March: Frinton-on-Sea, two; Southend Seafront, five; Canvey Seafront, seven and Rainham Marshes, ten. Thereafter, double-figure counts were 37 north on 3rd and 18 on 4th March at Frinton-on-Sea and 14 at King George V Reservoir on 14th April.

Just two were recorded in the summer months: Old Hall Marshes on 25th June and the The Hythe Colchester on 8th July.

Autumn passage commenced on 29th August with an adult at both Beckton and Rainham Marshes and two juveniles at East Tilbury. The only double-figure counts thereafter came from: Frinton-on-Sea, ten on 28th October; Canvey Seafront, 32 on 20th November; Mucking, 11 on 20th November.

MEDITERRANEAN GULL *Ichthyaetus melanocephalus* UK

Increasing resident, passage migrant and winter visitor.

Breeding records came from:

Hamford Water	4-5 pairs, no young fledged
Wallasea Island	31 pairs, success unknown

There were no three-figure counts reported in 2018, with double-figure counts (excluding Wallasea Island in the breeding season) as follows: Frinton-on-Sea, 61 on 17th July, 46 on 23rd September, 20 on 7th, 64 on 14th and 43 on 19th October; Mersea Island, 26 on 13th October; Tollesbury Wick, 29 on 4th April; Crouch Estuary, 59 on 21st August and 24 on 18th September; Gunners Park Shoebury, 27 on 27th June, 40 on 4th August; Southend Pier, 30 on 18th January, 20 on 4th February, 22 on 16th November; Southend Seafront, 31 on 21st January, 53 on 22nd July, 21 on 6th September, 26 on 11th and 25 on 29th November, 21 on 15th December; Canvey Point, 48 on 4th August, 20 on 28th September.

MEW GULL *Larus canus* (Common Gull) UK

Common Gull *Larus canus canus*

Common passage migrant and winter visitor.

There were few reports of 200 or more outside of the Wetland Bird Survey: Wrabness, 3,000 on 14th March; Frinton-on-Sea, 450 on 3rd and 250 on 4th March, 237 on 17th November; Weeley, 450 on 13th March; Fordham Heath, 200 on 11th April; The Strood Mersea Island, 250 on 7th September; Danbury, 200 on 22nd March; Wanstead Flats, 200 on 4th and 16th and 400 on 27th January, 500 on 25th February, 400 on 5th and 600 on 19th March, 300 on 3rd December.

Principal monthly Wetland Bird Counts were:

GB 7,000 INT 16,400	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
WeBS Total	**616**	**651**	**1125**	**65**	**431**	**1085**	**1092**	**1104**	**814**
Stour Estuary	36	52	10	0	3	2	nc	nc	nc
Hamford Water	10	9	16	nc	nc	1	1	0	0
Colne Estuary	2	2	13	0	0	0	0	2	2
Blackwater Estuary	50	65	138	15	24	25	4	72	73
Crouch/Roach/Wallasea	1	2	0	0	3	600	0	36	4
Foulness/Thames	52	319	407	39	350	420	582	265	54

RING-BILLED GULL *Larus delawarensis* EBSIP (22, 9, 31)

Very rare passage migrant and winter visitor.

North Woolwich	Adult	11th February	JPa ,DSh
Rainham Marshes	Adult	23rd and 25th March	DMi

Both records are assumed to relate to the same bird and are the first since 2012 (an adult at Pitsea on 2nd and 11th February).

GREAT BLACK-BACKED GULL *Larus marinus* UK

Fairly common passage migrant and winter visitor; a few during summer.

Three-figure non-Wetland Bird Survey counts came from: The Naze, 150 on 23rd November; Frinton-on-Sea, 138 on 17th and 450 on 25th November, 427 on 2nd December; Abberton Reservoir, 300 on 20th January, 100 on 29th December; Thurrock Thameside Mucking, 150 on 6th November; Rainham Marshes, 121 on 2nd January, 100 on 30th October.

Principal monthly Wetland Bird Counts were:

GB 760 INT 4,200	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
WeBS Total	**421**	**160**	**188**	**8**	**33**	**229**	**324**	**691**	**312**
Stour Estuary	4	3	8	1	5	12	nc	nc	nc
Hamford Water	31	31	119	nc	nc	0	2	0	1
Holland Haven	1	3	8	0	0	nc	0	1	0
Colne Estuary	3	4	22	0	1	2	5	20	5
Blackwater Estuary	9	6	5	6	2	12	9	42	20
Dengie	5	1	6	0	1	0	6	7	3
Crouch/Roach/Wallasea	1	2	2	0	0	9	2	0	0
Foulness/Thames	135	82	9	0	11	70	159	413	163

GLAUCOUS GULL *Larus hyperboreus hyperboreus*

UK EBSIP

Uncommon passage migrant and winter visitor.

Just one individual in 2018, compared to eight in 2017.

Leyton	Juvenile	28th January-19th March	JPa
Walthamstow	Juvenile as above	23rd, 24th and 26th February	DBr PWh
Olympic Park Stratford	Juvenile as above	18th March	SFi

One further unsubstantiated record was received.

Annual wintering totals over the last decade have been:

	2017/18	2016/17	2015/16	2014/15	2013/14	2012/13	2011/12	2010/11	2009/10	2008/09	Average
Numbers	2	7	2	3	4	5	0	2	3	3	3.1

ICELAND GULL *Larus glaucoides*

EBSIP (99, 61, 160)

Iceland Gull *Larus glaucoides glaucoides*

UK EBSIP (99, 60, 159)

Scarce passage migrant and winter visitor.

Rainham Marshes	Juvenile	4th January-14th April	mo
Rainham Marshes	At least two, including above	6th, 7th and 14th March	mo
Creekside Beckton	Up to two second calendar years	On and off 24th February-17th April	mo

It is difficult to know how many birds were involved in the above records, but it seems likely that three wide-ranging individuals were involved. Three other unsubstantiated records were received.

Annual winter totals over the last decade have been:

	2017/18	2016/17	2015/16	2014/15	2013/14	2012/13	2011/12	2010/11	2009/10	2008/09	Average
Numbers	4	3	2	6	3	3	18	3	5	2	4.9

EUROPEAN HERRING GULL *Larus argentatus argenteus/argentatus*

UK

***L.a. argenteus* is present all year round and breeds in small numbers. Passage migrants and winter visitors also occur. *L. a. argentatus* is a common passage migrant and winter visitor.**

Summering and breeding records came from (2017 numbers in brackets where known): Hamford

Water, no count (213 nests in mixed breeding colony with Lesser Black-backed Gulls); Frinton-on-Sea, two pairs (two pairs); Point Clear St Osyth, one pair; Cindery Island Brightlingsea Creek, 40+ pairs (40+ pairs); Wivenhoe, one pair (one pair); Braintree, four pairs; Chelmsford area, a total of 23 pairs; Walthamstow Reservoirs, one pair (three pairs); Beckton, 57 pairs.

The highest non-Wetland Bird Survey counts were: Frinton-on-Sea, 350 south in three hours on 17th November; Holland Haven, 220 on 19th November; West Mersea, 300 on 4th February; Abberton Reservoir, 350 on 24th September; Bowers Marsh, 300 on 11th May; West Thurrock Marshes, 983 on 1st January; Rainham Marshes, 1,086 on 9th and 700 on 18th July; Orsett Fen, 200 on 9th June, 700 on 11th September; North Stifford, 1,800 on 26th November.

Principal monthly Wetland Bird Counts were:

GB 7,300 INT 10,200	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
WeBS Total	**1284**	**1511**	**1437**	**832**	**1268**	**2649**	**1027**	**1057**	**1359**
Stour Estuary	62	157	47	97	149	69	nc	nc	nc
Hamford Water	159	45	240	nc	nc	13	9	2	2
Holland Haven	90	25	175	55	25	nc	80	15	40
Colne Estuary	9	23	29	7	45	30	30	11	28
Blackwater Estuary	127	70	43	293	99	95	59	106	109
Dengie	32	33	94	16	205	0	351	136	192
Crouch/Roach/Wallasea	5	59	288	4	20	148	20	17	104
Foulness/Thames	363	1044	463	326	650	1980	297	595	722
Abberton Reservoir	281	2	3	2	71	307	92	122	103
Hanningfield Reservoir	7	5	3	5	2	5	6	33	42
Lee Valley	130	2	0	1	0	1	75	3	1

CASPIAN GULL *Larus cachinnans*

UK EBSIP

Locally uncommon late summer visitor, mainly along the Thames; occasional in winter.

The Thames area continues to dominate records of this species in Essex and the only records away from the area were: Wrabness, one on 10th January; Holland Haven, adults on 8th and 19th November; Hanningfield Reservoir, adult on 13th January; King George V Reservoir, 4th calendar-year on 21st January; Fairlop Waters Barkingside, 3rd calendar-year on 3rd-4th March.

As in 2017 there were reports from 16 sites, many of them close together along the Thames. The monthly maxima from the Thames as a whole are shown in the following table:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Rainham Marshes	1	1	2	0	1	0	4	4	2	2	19	8
Thames Barrier Park	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	2	1	1
Other Sites	1	2	3	1	0	0	1	2	0	0	3	2
Total	**2**	**4**	**5**	**1**	**1**	**0**	**6**	**7**	**2**	**4**	**23**	**11**

It is becoming increasingly difficult to estimate the total number of individual birds seen in the County during the year due to the number of reports, but estimated annual totals over the last decade have been:

	2018	2017	2016	2015	2014	2013	2012	2011	2010	2009	Average
Numbers	40	25	25	15	20	15	15	20	20	20	21.5

YELLOW-LEGGED GULL *Larus michahellis michahellis* UK

Fairly common late summer visitor, mainly to the Thames and scarce winter visitor.

Estimated monthly totals were as follows:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Rainham Marshes	7	2	5	2	1	2	42	72	29	6	12	6
Barking Bay	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Thames Barrier	0	1	2	2	0	0	12	0	0	0	2	6
East Tilbury/Thurrock Thameside	0	0	0	0	4	4	31	21	72	2	1	1
Other Sites	14	4	9	1	1	2	4	8	8	4	4	3
Total	**21**	**7**	**16**	**7**	**6**	**8**	**89**	**101**	**109**	**12**	**19**	**16**

As in previous years the vast majority of records are from the Thames and nearby sites. The apparent decline in number continues and it is perhaps partly related to the closure of the majority of the landfill sites along the Thames, as well as the reduction of food waste sent to landfill through recycling initiatives in recent years.

The peak counts in the July to September period were: Rainham Marshes, 42 on 18th July, 79 on 9th August, 29 on 20th September; East Tilbury/Thurrock Thameside Mucking, 31 on 21st July, 21 on 29th August, 72 on 13th September; Thames Barrier Park, 12 on 16th July; Tilbury, 16 on 29th August.

Away from the Thames area the only site to record more than two was Hanningfield Reservoir, with up to four during the July to September period.

LESSER BLACK-BACKED GULL *Larus fuscus graelsii/intermedius* UK

***L. f. graelsii* is present all year and breeds in increasing numbers, as well as being a common passage migrant. *L. f. intermedius* is a (common?) passage migrant.**

Summering and breeding records came from (2017 numbers in brackets where known): Hogmarsh Island Manningtree, one pair; Hamford Water, no count (213 nests in mixed breeding colony with European Herring Gulls); Clacton-on-Sea, one pair; Cindery Island Brightlingsea Creek, nine pairs (ten pairs); Beckton, 65 pairs.

Non-Wetland Bird Survey counts of 75 or more came from: Hamford Water, 100+ on 19th May; West Thurrock Marshes, 82 on 1st January; Rainham Marshes, 86 on 9th and 100 on 18th July; Beckton, 100 on 8th July; South Woodham Ferrers, 75 on 20th June; King George V Reservoir, 80 on 13th April; Walthamstow Wetlands, 80+ on 29th April; Roding Valley Meadows Chigwell , 300 on 3rd April.

Principal monthly Wetland Bird Counts were:

GB 1,200 INT 5,500	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
WeBS Total	**367**	**256**	**248**	**196**	**255**	**268**	**207**	**192**	**119**
Stour Estuary	30	23	39	41	84	70	nc	nc	nc
Hamford Water	11	11	55	nc	nc	4	0	0	0
Holland Haven	0	6	5	4	0	nc	4	1	0
Colne Estuary	1	0	2	1	2	5	2	1	0
Blackwater Estuary	25	33	14	93	56	34	28	21	12
Dengie	0	0	1	21	5	0	0	2	1
Crouch/Roach/Wallasea	0	0	2	1	4	18	11	1	5
Foulness/Thames	153	159	52	17	33	60	28	50	72

SANDWICH TERN *Thalasseus sandvicensis* UK

Local summer visitor and common passage migrant.

Estimated monthly totals were:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Numbers	1	0	14	75	207	41	85	375	780	45	1	0

A single was off Frinton-on-Sea on 12th January.

Spring passage commenced on 14th March, with two north past Frinton-on-Sea. Passage remained light during April with only one double-figure count, 17 off Frinton-on-Sea on 27th April, but picked up during May when the following double-figure counts were recorded: Frinton-on-Sea, 18 on 1st, 59 on 7th, 19 on 8th, 14 on 24th and 17 on 27th; Gunners Park Shoebury, 11 on 7th, ten on 23rd and 11 on 31st. Unusually, spring passage continued into early June, with 11 off Frinton-on-Sea on 12th.

Autumn passage started with a few birds in early July, with double-figure counts coming from The Naze, with 11 on 14th and 12 on 30th and ten off Frinton-on-Sea on 23rd.

The peak passage was in late August and September, with counts of 25 or more coming from: The Naze, 40 on 2nd September; Frinton-on-Sea, 48 on 4th, 46 on 18th, 76 on 19th, 31 on 22nd, 179 on 23rd and 56 on 24th September; Canvey Point, 26 on 4th, 35 on 18th, 55 on 23rd, 45 on 26th, 27 on 29th and 29 on 31st August, 30 on 2nd, 35 on 3rd, 30 on 4th, 30 on 5th and 25 on 6th September. Passage continued into October, with the peak count being 11 at Rainham Marshes on 7th and the last bird of the year was off Bradwell-on-Sea on 4th November.

Inland records came from: Abberton Reservoir, one on 17th April; Hanningfield Reservoir, five on 5th July; Bowers Marsh, one on 6th June; King George V Reservoir, six on 6th and singles on 8th, 9th, 11th and 19th April; William Girling Reservoir Chingford, one on 16th-17th July.

LITTLE TERN *Sternula albifrons* UK REX

Declining summer visitor and passage migrant.

Breeding records came from: Horsey Island Hamford Water, 15 nests, five young fledged (22 pairs with eight fledged young in 2017); Colne Point, one nest with no fledged young; Old Hall Marshes, five nests with five fledged young; Tollesbury Wick, one nest with one fledged young.

The Essex Little Tern Project placed decoys at four Essex breeding sites (Colne Point, Cindery Island Brightlingsea, Old Hall Marshes and Tollesbury Wick) and monitored breeding success during the year. The ongoing project hopes to improve habitat on known Little Tern nesting sites, past and present, as well as deploying decoys in the hope of increasing breeding numbers of the species in the County.

As in 2017 the first of the year was inland: a single at King George V Reservoir on 19th and two on 20th April, with further records from Colne Point on 22nd April and Frinton-on-Sea on 27th April. Double-figure counts came from Frinton-on-Sea, 28 on 7th May; Hamford Water, 20 on 19th May and The Naze, 40 on 13th May.

Double-figure post-breeding and passage counts came from: Old Hall Marshes, 22 on 17th and 15 on 30th July; Bradwell Bird Observatory, 12 on 22nd August; Canvey Point, 21 on 3rd and 13 on 5th September; East Tilbury, 18 on 26th August and 20 on 1st September; Tilbury, 15 on 1st September.

Inland records came from (singles unless otherwise stated): Hanningfield Reservoir, 20th June and 21st August; King George V Reservoir, 19th April, 20th April (two) and 6th May.

The last of the year was off Mucking on 30th September.

ROSEATE TERN *Sterna dougallii dougallii*

UK EBSIP (39, 8, 47)

Rare passage migrant.

Another blank year with just one unsubstantiated report.

Annual totals for the last decade have been:

	2018	2017	2016	2015	2014	2013	2012	2011	2010	2009	Average
Numbers	0	0	2	1	0	1	0	0	0	1	0.5

COMMON TERN *Sterna hirundo hirundo*

UK

Common summer resident and passage migrant.

Summering and breeding records came from (2017 numbers in brackets where known): Langham, two pairs (one pair); Cindery Island Brightlingsea Creek, one pair; Sunnymead Farm Wivenhoe, three pairs (three pairs); Abberton Reservoir, several young on tern rafts (10+ pairs); Old Hall Marshes, 25+ pairs (24 pairs); Heybridge Gravel Pit, about 20 pairs (31 pairs); Wallasea Island, 43 pairs (26 pairs); Paglesham Lagoon, six pairs; Blue House Farm, one pair (one pair); Hanningfield Reservoir, 3+ (ten young fledged); Wat Tyler, five pairs (17 fledged young); Brook Farm Upminster, one pair; Seventy Acres Lake Holyfield, two pairs; Fairlop Waters Barkingside, one pair.

The first of the year were three at Rainham Marshes on 3rd April. There were no three-figure counts of passage birds in spring, the highest reported being: Frinton-on-Sea, 87 on 2nd and 82 on 7th May; Abberton Reservoir, 75 on 23rd April and 95 on 1st May; Old Hall Marshes, 80 on 7th May; Rainham Marshes, 61 on 17th April and 60 on 10th May; King George V Reservoir; 50 on 23rd May.

Three-figure counts during autumn passage came from: Abberton Reservoir, 154 on 24th July and 101 on 1st August; Old Hall Marshes, 311 on 28th August; Canvey Point, 100 on 23rd, 105 on 26th and 215 on 29th August, 100 on 5th September; East Tilbury, 120 on 10th, 160 on 23rd and 634 on 30th August, 664 on 1st and 106 on 5th September; Tilbury, 178 on 29th August, 252 on 1st and 201 on 5th September; Beckton, 390 on 29th August.

The final birds of the year were three off Canvey Coastguards on 28th October.

ARCTIC TERN *Sterna paradisaea*

UK

Fairly common passage migrant. Bred in 1959 and 1960.

Estimated monthly totals were:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Coastal	0	0	0	97	142	0	5	220	408	105	0	0
Inland	0	0	0	73	23	0	0	0	2	0	0	0
Totals	**0**	**0**	**0**	**170**	**165**	**0**	**5**	**220**	**410**	**105**	**0**	**0**

The first of the year was at Rainham Marshes on 3rd April.

Double-figure counts on spring passage were as follows: Frinton-on-Sea, 78 on 2nd, 32 on 7th and 12 on 15th May; Canvey Point, 22 on 29th April; Canvey Seafront, 18 on 27th April.

The first birds of the autumn were at Old Hall Marshes, with four on 10th and one on 30th July. Thereafter double-figure counts came from: Canvey Point, 16 on 18th and 30 on 24th August, 12 on 3rd and 20 on 5th September; Thurrock Thameside Barkingside, 23 on 23rd September, 22 on 7th October; East Tilbury, 54 on 28th September, ten on 7th October; Rainham Marshes, 21 on 16th August, 20 on 5th, 21on 14th, 43 on 21st, 36 on 22nd and 16 on 23rd September, 46 on 6th October; Beckton, 14 on 27th and 22 on 29th August, 34 on 2nd, 20 on 13th, and 27 on 16th September.

The final bird of the year was at Canvey Point on 29th October.

WHITE-WINGED TERN *Chlidonias leucopterus* EBSIP (51, 19, 70)

Very scarce passage migrant.

Canvey Point	Juvenile	5th September	NCh *et al.*
Rainham Marshes	Two adults	21st May	ATw *et al.*

The first spring record since one at Abberton Reservoir on 10th May 2007.
Annual totals over the last decade have been:

	2018	2017	2016	2015	2014	2013	2012	2011	2010	2009	Average
Numbers	3	1	1	1	1	1	0	1	1	1	1.1

BLACK TERN *Chlidonias niger niger*

Fairly common passage migrant.

Estimated monthly totals were:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Coastal	0	0	0	0	20	0	0	215	430	0	0	0
Inland	0	0	0	1	115	1	16	115	95	6	0	0
Total	**0**	**0**	**0**	**1**	**135**	**1**	**16**	**330**	**525**	**6**	**0**	**0**

The first of the spring was a single in Barking Bay on 14th April. No further reports were received until 7th May when two were on the River Roach. Passage during May produced double-figure counts from: Frinton-on-Sea, 16 on 24th; Abberton Reservoir, 14 on 21st and 16 on 28th; East Tilbury, ten on 24th; Rainham Marshes, 29 on 21st; King George V Reservoir, 11 on 24th.

Autumn passage commenced with four at East Tilbury on 21st July. Passage was heavy in August and early September, with double-figure counts coming from: Canvey Point, 37 on 4th, 28 on 23rd, 43 on 29th and 19 on 31st August, 26 on 1st, 120 on 2nd, 40 on 3rd, ten on 4th and 15 on 5th September; Thurrock Thameside Mucking, 41 on 26th August, 12 on 16th September; East Tilbury, 151 on 1st, 16 on 2nd, ten on 3rd and 32 on 5th September; Tilbury, 31 on 1st September; Beckton, 14 on 27th and 15 on 29th August, 30 on 1st September; Hanningfield Reservoir, 12 on 1st September.

The last bird of the year was one at Hanningfield Reservoir on 20th October.

GREAT SKUA *Stercorarius skua* UK

Uncommon, principally late autumn, passage migrant.

During the first winter period the only records were from: Frinton-on-Sea, 7th January; Southend-on-Sea, 2nd January; Canvey Point, 1st and two on 3rd January.

A single bird at Manningtree and Mistley Walls on 9th April was unusually far upriver and was the only spring passage record.

One was seen off Frinton-on-Sea on 10th July and another was at Canvey Point on 9th August, before the first autumn passage bird was seen on 2nd September at The Naze.

Double-figure counts then came from: Frinton-on-Sea, 30 on 23rd September, ten on 8th December; Canvey Point, 25 on 5th and 55 on 23rd September; Mucking, 12 on 23rd September.

Estimated monthly totals were:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Numbers	3	0	0	1	0	0	1	1	115	25	20	35

Estimated annual totals over the last decade have been:

	2018	2017	2016	2015	2014	2013	2012	2011	2010	2009	Average
Numbers	201	196	205	182	205	120	222	234	153	237	195

POMARINE JAEGER *Stercorarius pomarinus* (Pomarine Skua)

Uncommon, principally late autumn, passage migrant.

The second best year of the last decade after 2011.

Estimated monthly totals were:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Numbers	0	0	0	0	4	1	0	0	10	70	2	0

Estimated annual totals over the last decade have been:

	2018	2017	2016	2015	2014	2013	2012	2011	2010	2009	Average
Numbers	87	29	16	19	45	16	79	100	18	44	45

The only spring passage birds were four north off Frinton-on-Sea on 7th May and one off Canvey Point on 4th June.

The first birds of the autumn were seven off Canvey Point on 5th September, with further singles off Frinton-on-Sea and Mucking on 23rd and Canvey Point on 28th September.

October produced the following records: Frinton-on-Sea, one on 7th, five on 26th, one of 27th and an exceptional 49 on 28th; Holland Haven, two on 28th; Colne Estuary, one on 27th; Deal Hall Dengie, one on 23rd; Canvey Point, two on 18th and eight on 28th; Thurrock Thameside Mucking, two on 28th.

There were just two singles in November, off Frinton-on-Sea on 3rd and 20th.

PARASITIC JAEGER *Stercorarius parasiticus* (Arctic Skua) UK

Fairly common, principally autumn, passage migrant.

Estimated monthly totals were:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Numbers	0	0	0	1	4	1	3	27	182	11	1	0

Estimated annual totals over the last decade have been:

	2018	2017	2016	2015	2014	2013	2012	2011	2010	2009	Average
Numbers	230	160	89	87	203	128	253	369	252	271	204

The first of the spring was at Rainham Marshes on 8th April. All further records came from Frinton-on-Sea with one on 2nd, two on 17th and one on 21st May with one on 10th June.

The first of the autumn were two off The Dengie on 15th and one off Frinton-on-Sea on 18th July. Passage remained light through August with five or more only recorded at Canvey Point, five on 24th and East Tilbury, seven on 30th.

September produced the bulk of the year's birds with double-figure counts coming from: Frinton-on-Sea, 17 on 23rd; Canvey Point, 14 on 3rd, 39 on 4th, 15 on 5th, 11 on 12th and 35 on 23rd; East Tilbury, 16 on 13th.

Thereafter passage was very light (singles unless stated otherwise): Frinton-on-Sea, 7th, 13th, 19th and 28th October and 3rd November (the last bird of the year); Southend Pier, 1st October; Canvey Point, 18th (four) and 29th October; East Tilbury, 18th October.

LONG-TAILED JAEGER *Stercorarius longicaudus* (Long-tailed Skua)

Very scarce autumn passage migrant. **EBSIP (147, 50, 197)**

Frinton-on-Sea	Juvenile	28th October	PBr

One further unsubstantiated report was received.

Annual totals over the last decade have been:

	2018	2017	2016	2015	2014	2013	2012	2011	2010	2009	Average
Numbers	1	3	0	1	5	1	3	8	3	1	2.6

LITTLE AUK *Alle alle alle*

Scarce winter visitor, but subject to periodic influxes.

Harwich	One	7th March
Frinton-on-Sea	Two	27th October
Frinton-on-Sea	One	28th October
Holland Haven	One	9th December

The last significant influx into Essex was in 2007 when an estimated 186 were recorded in October and November.

Annual totals over the last decade have been:

	2018	2017	2016	2015	2014	2013	2012	2011	2010	2009	Average
Numbers	5	15	16	21	4	11	3	17	5	5	10.2

COMMON MURRE *Uria aalge aalge/albionis* (Common Guillemot) UK

Both races are passage migrants and winter visitors.

A below-average year, with very low numbers throughout, although as in 2017 there was an influx of presumably passage birds in February.

Estimated monthly totals were:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Numbers	11	30	1	0	0	0	0	0	5	16	11	33

The only records of five or more (and which made up 80% of the total recorded in the year) were from: Frinton-on-Sea, seven on 27th October, five on 3rd November, 28 on 5th December; Gunners Park Shoebury, 25 on 3rd February; Southend Pier, five on 1st and 15 on 4th February.

Extreme dates were 21st March (one off Bradwell Bird Observatory) and 5th September (two off Canvey Point and one off Coalhouse Fort East Tilbury).

RAZORBILL *Alca torda islandica* UK

Uncommon passage migrant and winter visitor. *A. torda torda* may occur in Essex waters but there have been no ringing recoveries to confirm this.

Very low numbers throughout the year, apart from a small influx in mid-late November.

Monthly totals were:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Numbers	2	5	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	22	1

The only records of more than one were: Frinton-on-Sea, four on 20th November; Gunners Park Shoebury, four on 3rd February; Canvey Point, five on 17th and 11 on 19th November.

BLACK GUILLEMOT *Cepphus grille arcticus* UK EBSIP (9, 2, 11)

Vagrant.

Frinton-on-Sea	One	5th December	PBr

The first substantiated record in Essex since 2006 (Deal Hall Dengie on 6th September).

ATLANTIC PUFFIN *Fractecula arctica* UK EBSIP (97, 26, 123)

Very scarce passage migrant and winter visitor.

Canvey Point	One	28th October	NCh *et al.*

After two blank years, one substantiated and two further unsubstantiated records were received.

Annual totals over the last decade have been:

	2018	2017	2016	2015	2014	2013	2012	2011	2010	2009	Average
Numbers	1	0	0	1	0	3	3	2	2	1	1.3

ROCK DOVE/FERAL PIGEON *Columba livia livia*

Common resident.

There were again no breeding records worthy of mention. As usual, the largest flocks at other seasons came from urban areas, where many tall buildings provide a close approximation of this species' wild ancestors' cliff-face nesting habitat, and in addition a constant supply of discarded scraps of human food on which the feral birds seem to largely subsist. All records of three-figure flocks are given: Westcliff-on-Sea, up to 175 in January and 160 in October, Rainham Marshes, 240 on 1st January and 250 on 26th March, both on the landfill site; Wanstead Town Centre, 100 on 22nd January; Clacton-on-Sea, 100 on 22nd February; King George V Reservoir, 100 on 13th April; Barking Abbey, 200 on 9th September; Hamford Water, 200 on 24th December.

STOCK DOVE *Columba oenas oenas* UK

Resident and passage migrant.

Recorded during the spring and early summer (April-early July) from around 206 sites (166 in 2017), of which 89 came from the south of the County, 96 from the north and north-east, and 21 (20) in the west and north-west. Evidence of breeding activity came from around 56 of these sites (26 in 2017) and involved a minimum of 118 breeding pairs or territorial ♂♂ (75 in 2017). Counts of more than two pairs or singing ♂♂ came from Braintree and Bocking area, ten (ten); Foulness Island, ten (11); Boxted, eight; Abberton Reservoir, six; Friday Wood Colchester, seven (three); Bures, five; Blakes Wood Little Baddow, five; Pebmarsh, four; Warren Gorge Chafford Gorges, four; Great Henny, three; Gutteridge Hall Weeley, three; Belchamp Walter, three; Paul's Hall Belchamp St Paul, three.

Reports of three-figure flocks came from Wallasea Island, 205 on 4th January, 200 on 22nd March, and 100 on 4th December; Bowers Marsh, 200 on 10th February; Stow Marsh North Fambridge, 136 on 23rd March, 140 on 5th April, 199 on 25th September, and a notable count of 500 on 12th December; Orsett Fen, 150 on 14th August; Blue House Farm, 175 on 26th September.

As mentioned in the 2017 EBR, despite being protected by law this species is continuing to experience population declines and is now amber-listed. It is, of course, a hole-nesting species and a lack of suitable nest sites may be a contributory factor. Thus, notes on these, where known, would be welcome.

2017 Addendum

Friday Wood Colchester – number of breeding pairs was three pairs with nine in 2016.

COMMON WOOD PIGEON *Columba palumbus palumbus*

Abundant resident, passage migrant and winter visitor.

The only records worthy of note relating to the breeding season came from Friday Wood Colchester where 93 pairs were located (160 in 2017) and Foulness Island, where at least 44 pairs were located (20 in 2017).

As usual, the huge acreages of oilseed rape and winter wheat in the more intensively farmed areas of the County again attracted some large flocks of hungry pigeons. Gatherings of 400+ during the period January-March were reported as follows: January: East Mersea, 430 on 31st. February: Stow Marsh North Fambridge, 660 on 2nd; Abberton Reservoir, 400 on 7th; Doddinghurst, 1,000 on 15th; St Lawrence Bay, 516 on 18th. March: Brook Farm Upminster, 1,000 on 2nd; Orsett Fen, 432 on 5th; Ingatestone, 500 on 5th; Wormingford, 800 on 6th.

Spring passage was noted at Frinton-on-Sea, where 1,541 flew north in 3.75 hours of sea-watching on 26th March.

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 700 at Rainham Marshes on 17th October, and was quickly followed by 8,000 moving south at Chafford Hundred Grays on 19th, 11,000 at Brook Farm Upminster and 700 at Wanstead on 20th, 6,000 at Chafford Gorges Grays on 23rd and 800 at Rainham Marshes on 25th. A brief lull then occurred but the momentum resumed on 5th November, when 1,000 were reported from East Tilbury and 500 at Wanstead, with 850 there the next day, and 4,243 at Chafford Hundred. A further 2,500 flew over Brook Farm Upminster on 6th, on which date also there were 661 at Belhus Aveley Woods and 500 at Rainham Marshes, while 1,200 were reported from Woodrodon Hill, Epping Forest on 7th. Passage concluded with a movement of 1,200 at Brook Farm Upminster on 9th.

Away from the south of the County, the only report of visible migration came from Frinton-on-Sea, where 726 flew south in two hours on 6th November.

There were no counts in excess of 400 birds in late November and December.

2017 Addendum

Friday Woods Colchester – number of breeding pairs was 160 with 88 in 2016

EUROPEAN TURTLE DOVE *Streptopelia turtur turtur*

UK REX

Rapidly declining summer resident and passage migrant.

It is difficult to be optimistic about the continued presence of this species as a breeding bird in Essex unless there is a radical change in the way we farm. The situation is now so critical that the Rare Breeding Birds Panel is collating all records of proven or probable breeding attempts.

The number of territories or singing ♂♂ was at around the same level as the previous year, approximately 47 birds being reported (40 in 2017) from 25 sites (30). One or more birds were recorded regularly throughout the midsummer period from the following well watched sites: Abberton Reservoir, Abbotts Hall Farm, East Tilbury, Fingringhoe Wick, Wakering Stairs and Wrabness. Garden bird feeders at Boreham and Canewdon both attracted a regular stream of adult birds between May and July, indicative of a breeding population somewhere in their vicinity. At Canewdon, up to three birds were involved on occasion while at Boreham the first sighting was 21st April, after which they visited regularly until the 23rd June. Six different adult birds were identified on plumage/gender (one fewer than in 2017) by comparing images particularly of the covert feathers. Three visited together on the 8th and 9th June while there were many sightings of pairs and of single birds. On Foulness Island, the number of breeding pairs increased from seven to 12 pairs, while 2-3 pairs bred at Wycke Farm Tolleshunt d'Arcy and 2-4 purring ♂♂ were reported from Ferriers Farm Bures; Mount Bures; Chrishall, and Tollesbury. Worryingly, there were no reports of juveniles, although young are known to have fledged at Wycke Farm.

In total, there were 233 reports from around 66 localities (65 in 2017, 61 in 2016) during the summer, of which 46 (45) came from the north and north-east, 14 (13) from the south, and six (seven) from the west and north-west.

The first sighting of the spring was made at King George V Reservoir on 15th April while the last of the autumn was seen at Lion Creek Canewdon on 13th September.

EURASIAN COLLARED DOVE *Streptopelia decaocto decaocto*

Common resident.

The only report of note relating to the breeding season was of 60+ pairs in the Braintree and Bocking area, a similar number to 2017.

At other seasons flocks of 25+ birds were reported as follows: Brook Farm Upminster, 27 on 4th January; Church Road Chelmsford, 35 on 12th January; South Woodham Ferrers, 36 on 17th January; St Lawrence Bay, 30 on 15th April; Stanford Rivers, 28 on 26th September.

This species remains common in residential areas, where a variety of ornamental conifers provide ideal nest sites. It is much more thinly distributed in the wider countryside.

COMMON CUCKOO *Cuculus canorus* UK

Declining summer resident and passage migrant.

The number of territories/singing ♂♂/ pairs (134) and the number of sites (89) were a little higher than in 2017 (122 and 84 respectively). Of these, 46 (45) came from the north-east, 39 from south Essex (33), and four (six) from the west and north-west. Additional records, without any indication of breeding activity by the observers, came from approximately 70-71 further sites during May and June, compared with 63-68 in 2017. Three or more territories/singing ♂♂ were reported from the following sites (with 2017 figures in brackets where available): Foulness Island, 23 (15); Rainham Marshes, six (five); Canvey Wick, four (four); Heybridge Gravel Pit, three (3-4); Old Hall Marshes, three (three); Bowers Marsh, five; Wat Tyler, three. The Foulness Island figure is remarkable.

The first bird of the spring was seen at Dagenham Chase on 22nd March. Later in the season juveniles were seen at Benfleet Downs, Bowers Marsh, East Tilbury, Blue House Farm, and Rainham Marshes, the Blue House individual, on 29th August, also being the latest record of the year.

Records of the scarcer rufous (hepatic) morph ♀♀ came from Abberton Reservoir on 15th and 25th May, Chigborough Lakes, 1st June; South Woodham Ferrers, 6th June.

There can be little doubt that this iconic species is continuing to decline in the County, especially in the intensively farmed areas of the north and north-west, where the once common farmland birds which it parasitises have severely declined in the last few decades.

WESTERN BARN OWL *Tyto alba* REX
Barn Owl *Tyto alba alba*

Local resident, primarily in low lying coastal areas.

In total, 612 records involving at least 399 individuals were received from 165 sites (539 records of at least 417 individuals in 2017, 658 records of 243 individuals in 2016). The Society received reports of 63 breeding pairs, which produced 161 chicks; there were also ten suspected breeders (77 plus three suspected in 2017 producing 173 young, 56 plus five suspected in 2016).

Though down on last year, this was another good year for breeding, the ten year average being 47.

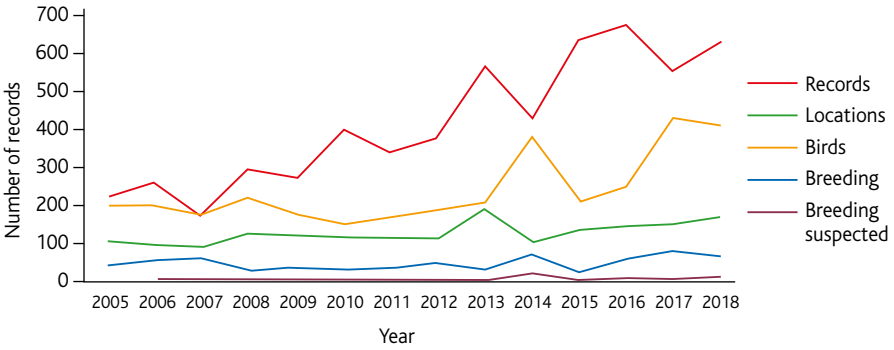
Outside the breeding season, records peaked in March, when 39 were reported (33 in January 2017, 48 in January 2016). Only 24 birds were seen in December, though December counts are often low.

Dead birds were reported from Wallasea Island where one was observed in a fatal prolonged battle with a Common Buzzard on 28th October (JDe) and two were found long dead at Bradwell Bird Observatory on 9th December. One bird was found injured near Great Sampford on 17th May; it was successfully rehabilitated and released in the same area.

This species has its stronghold in the coastal low-lying areas between the Blackwater and Stour estuaries in the north-east, with far fewer records coming from the western part of the County. However, there may still be some under-reporting, so the species may be faring better than this report suggests.

The Recorder would welcome all sightings.

Number of records of Barn Owl from 2005–2018



TAWNY OWL *Strix aluco sylvatica* UK

Common resident.

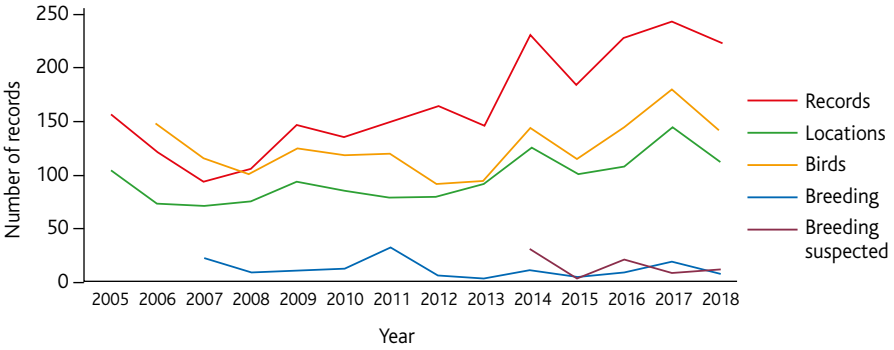
In total, 223 records were received concerning 143 individuals from 113 locations (241 records of 181 individuals from 146 locations in 2017, 226 records of 146 individuals from 109 locations in 2016). In general the species has a wide distribution in the County.

Breeding was proven for nine pairs at 11 locations at which five juveniles were confirmed plus a further seven where breeding was suspected (21 pairs in 2016 plus seven suspected, 11 pairs in 2016 plus 21 suspected). The north-east of the County appears to be one area where this species is doing well and the majority of breeding records received came from this area. As in previous years 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.

In summary 2018 was not a good year for this species, with a decrease in numbers being observed and the places they occur; it is possible 2017 was an exceptional year and the species is now at a more normal population level. There were 19 potential territories that had birds present during both halves of the year but showed no evidence of breeding and a further 58 locations that were occupied for only one half of the year.

Four birds were taken into care; all of them were successfully rehabilitated. No dead birds were found. Daylight calling was noted at two locations.

Number of records of Tawny Owl from 2005–2017



All records are welcomed and hopefully this (coupled with a British Trust for Ornithology Tawny Owl survey being undertaken in 2018/2019) 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.

It is likely that that these figures are a significant underestimate of the County population and illustrate how little quality data is received for some species.

LITTLE OWL *Athene noctua vidalii*

Fairly common resident.

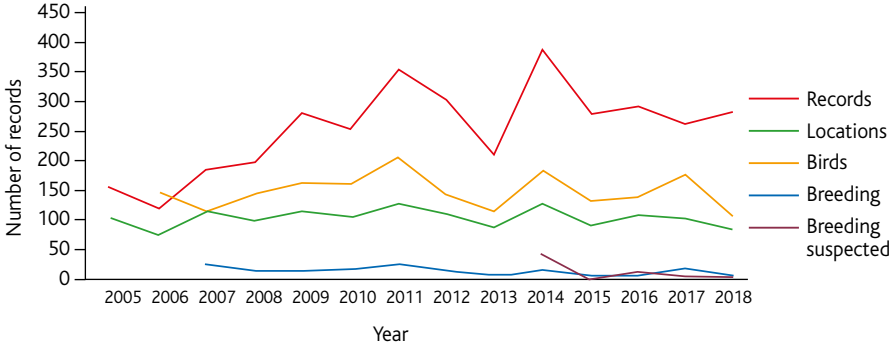
There were 284 records concerning 109 individuals from 87 localities (264 records of 178 individuals from 104 locations in 2017, 298 records of 141 individuals from 112 locations in 2016).

Only seven breeding records were submitted with a further four suspected (16 plus four suspected in 2017, seven plus 12 suspected in 20165). Breeding reports came mostly from the north-east of the County, although for the first time since 2014 breeding was confirmed in south-east Essex. Overall this was not a good year for this species with the lowest number recorded for over ten years; 109 is well below the ten-year average of 153.

One bird, a juvenile, was taken into care at Hall Farm Frating and later released. One was found dead at The Hythe Lagoons Colchester on 5th August.

Confirming breeding for this species is not easy and all suspected breeding needs to be reported to the Recorder as the figures reported greatly underestimate the breeding population.

Number of records of Little Owl from 2005–2017



LONG-EARED OWL *Asio otus otus* REX

Rare breeder, scarce passage migrant and winter visitor.

There were 28 records involving eight birds, from five locations (45 records of 16 birds from five sites in 2017, 17 records of 14 birds from seven sites in 2016).

There was no evidence of breeding (three in 2017, two in 2016).

Once again there was no evidence of a significant winter roost in either winter period, although three were noted at one site. Neither was there any evidence of migration.

Monthly maxima were:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Numbers	3	0	2	1	2	0	1	0	0	0	1	4
Locations	2	0	1	1	2	0	1	0	0	0	1	2

SHORT-EARED OWL *Asio flammeus* UK REX

Rare breeder, regular passage migrant and winter visitor.

In total, 232 records concerning 64 individuals from 40 locations were received (270 records of 85 individuals from 47 locations in 2017, 615 records of 111 individuals from 83 locations in 2016). As would be expected the majority of records came from coastal areas.

Having bred in the County in 2012 and 2013, this was the fifth year running without a breeding record, though a bird was observed displaying in April. Also two birds were noted at different locations in June.

Monthly maxima were:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
2018	4	6	12	11	7	2	0	1	10	30	26	21
2017	33	23	16	23	10	1	1	2	12	17	16	7
2016	46	30	31	36	19	2	1	0	1	32	19	32
2015	28	32	21	23	0	0	1	3	11	63	46	33
2014	14	0	7	5	0	2	3	4	10	30	35	29
2013	21	25	19	15	2	1	1	1	1	16	12	11

The year started with a similar number of birds in the County to that of December 2017. There was a noticeable influx in March, though this seems to be primarily due to more birds being seen at the sites that already held the species. The majority of the wintering birds departed in May. In the second winter period numbers were higher and included an inland record with one seen at Great Waltham on 17th November.

Migrants appeared from 9th September when one was seen flying south past Frinton-on-Sea. In the first winter period there were no significant counts. In the second winter period the largest gathering was five at Wallasea Island on 24th December.

EUROPEAN NIGHTJAR *Caprimulgus europaeus europaeus* UK EBSIP

Rare passage migrant and summer visitor.

A fourth blank year in a row.

Annual totals over the last decade have been:

	2018	2017	2016	2015	2014	2013	2012	2011	2010	2009	Average
Numbers	0	0	0	0	1	0	2	1	0	0	0.4

Given the healthy breeding populations in Norfolk and Suffolk it is surprising that more are not recorded in the County.

ALPINE SWIFT *Tachymarptis melba melba* EBSIP (17, 9, 26)

Very rare migrant.

Frinton-on-Sea	One	23rd April	PBr

Records were received in successive years between 2001-2003 and 2010-2012 followed in each case by several blank years. The pattern restarted with a record in 2017 – a remarkable coincidence (so far). One further, unsubstantiated, record was received.

COMMON SWIFT *Apus apus apus* UK

Common summer resident and passage migrant.

Confirmed and probable breeding showed a welcome uplift to 66 pairs from 22 locations (53 from 11 in 2017). The only double-figure counts were 15 in Braintree and Bocking (18 in 2017) and ten in Friday Wood Colchester area (eight in 2017). There are obvious difficulties in assessing breeding

Right: Little Owl, Birch, September
(TONY WELLS)

Below: Tawny Owl, Hatfield Forest, February
(GLEN MOORE)

Left: Short-eared Owl, Wallasea Island, December
(JEFF DELVE)

Below: Common Kingfisher, Little Baddow, February
(GLEN MOORE)

numbers and the above figures have been extrapolated from the information available. Some reports mention small colonies or parties of screaming birds without numbers attached. Some under-reporting from known strongholds is also evident. Our modern lifestyles are not helpful to the survival of the species and various initiatives are underway to support it. To monitor progress and to increase confidence levels in the data, all breeding reports would be appreciated together with estimated numbers wherever possible.

The first sightings of the year were of three over Loughton and one over Colchester on 20th April. The final report of the year was from Hamford Water on 14th November. This is an exceptionally late date causing the observer to ponder whether the sighting was of a Pallid Swift (two having been reported at The Naze earlier in the month). There were in fact three November reports this year (although none in October and only eight in September) and whilst all are assumed to be Common, these could have all been Pallid... In 2011 a Common Swift was seen on November 19th. However, even this does not secure the trophy as the latest bird; that belongs to a one over Bradwell-on-Sea on 4th December 2004.

Reports of large flocks (1,000+) are in severe decline. 2018 only mustered one: 1,000 at Brook Farm Upminster on 25th July (one of three groups totaling 1,490 birds passing the observer in the period between 14:45 and 16:00 hours).

2017 Addendum:

1. A survey of the breeding population was carried out around Westcliff-on-Sea. In all, a total of 17 nests were located but it was considered that the breeding population was in the region of 25 pairs. The known nest sites were all in terraced or semi-detached houses of more than 100 years in age (AJL).
2. Friday Wood Colchester – number of breeding pairs was eight, with five in 2016

PALLID SWIFT *Apus pallidus** BBRC (1, 0, 1)

Vagrant.

The report from The Naze referred to above is currently with the British Birds Rarities Committee.

COMMON KINGFISHER *Alcedo atthis ispida* UK

Fairly common resident and passage migrant.

Confirmed or probable breeding totalled 13 from ten locations (13 from 12 in 2017). Five other reports cited possible breeding. Prima facie this is a pleasing outcome given the potential impact of the 'Beast from the East' on breeding numbers. The British Trust for Ornithology Breeding Bird Survey (BBS) reported a 38% decline in breeding numbers nationally between 2017 and 2018, a figure that cannot be easily reconciled with the Essex figures. Breeding numbers, however, continue to be well down on the figures achieved in the early part of this century.

In the first winter period there were 262 reports from 91 locations (101 from 90 in 2017) but circa 17% of these came from just three locations. In the second winter period there were 118 reports from 51 locations (122 from 94 in 2017). Again three locations dominated by providing some 25% of the total reports. Duplication, aided and abetted by Birdtrack, is a clear factor both in terms of multiple records of the same bird or reports of the same bird over successive days.

There are a number of paradoxes in the data. Only circa 900 reports were received for the year (1,200 in 2017) yet there was a massive uplift in the first winter period numbers (without a change to the number of locations); the breeding status is constant in contrast to the national picture and there is no significant change to the number of second winter reports yet a huge drop in the number of locations. The evidence perhaps suggests that better reporting has masked a decline in numbers for the year resulting from the sustained extreme weather conditions in February and March. All records would be appreciated to help with a better grip of the anomalies inherent in the 2018 data.

The highest location count was seven on 2nd July at Warren Gorge Chafford Gorges when two family parties were observed.

EURASIAN HOOPOE *Upupa epops epops* EBSIP (194, 29, 223)

Scarce passage migrant.

Walthamstow Wetlands	One	6th-7th April	mo

A typical spring overshoot. One other record was received but not substantiated. There were no records in 2017 and just one in each of the years 2013-2016. It is necessary to go back to the exceptional years of 2010 and 2011 for multiple records – five in each case.

Annual totals over the last decade have been:

	2018	2017	2016	2015	2014	2013	2012	2011	2010	2009	Average
Numbers	1	0	1	1	1	1	0	5	5	0	1.5

EURASIAN WRYNECK *Jynx torquilla torquilla* EBSIP

Scarce passage migrant, mainly in autumn.

The Naze	One	7th September	LGE
Wallasea Island	One	4th September	DLi

A marginal improvement over last year's blank (which was only the second such occurrence in the Society's history). However the total is well short of the ten year average of 5.4 per annum. Disappointingly, three other records were received but not supported by descriptions. Autumns sighting are the norm for this species.

Annual totals over the last decade have been:

	2018	2017	2016	2015	2014	2013	2012	2011	2010	2009	Average
Numbers	2	0	3	4	8	13	4	5	10	5	5.4

LESSER SPOTTED WOODPECKER *Dryobates minor comminutus* UK

Scarce resident.

There were no reports of confirmed breeding. Probable breeding of single pairs occurred at seven locations (four from four in 2017) with the supporting evidence coming almost exclusively in the form of drumming.

Overall there were 64 reports from 25 locations (53 from 22 in 2017). Just three reports noted the presence of two birds at the same time. Two locations dominated the numbers: Langdon Hills area (15 reports) and Shut Heath Wood Great Totham (ten). The latter in particular denotes a welcome return to form following the comment last year that the location appeared to be in decline as an Essex stronghold. A ♀ associating with a tit flock in Wanstead Park from 17th November was the first for quite a few years, as the few recent records have involved ♂♂ (NCr *pers. comm.*).

All records for this Red List species would be appreciated.

GREAT SPOTTED WOODPECKER *Dendrocopos major anglicus/major*

***D. m. anglicus* is a common resident whilst *D. m. major* may occur as a rare passage migrant.**

Possible or confirmed breeding amounted to 110 territories from 73 locations (128 from 82 in 2017). Seventeen pairs were reported from Friday Wood Colchester. The total number of records at 2,200+ (1,950+ in 2017), the shortage of reports from known strongholds and the observation of multiple birds not supplemented by breeding information all point to under-reporting of breeding numbers, rather than to any dilution of the species as a well-established member of the Essex avifauna.

The highest location count was 12 at Norsey Wood Billericay on 10th February. One bird was ringed at The Naze on 27th December, an unusual time for the species to be present in this area.

2017 Addendum
Friday Wood Colchester – the number of breeding pairs was 19 in 2017 and 12 in 2016.

EUROPEAN GREEN WOODPECKER *Picus viridis viridis*

Common resident.

The number of records received was just short of 2,600 (2600 in 2017). Probable or confirmed breeding reports totalled 90 from 46 locations (94 from 51 in 2017). Just two observers provided the lion's share of the breeding evidence. Thirteen pairs were reported from Friday Wood Colchester.

The species is plainly widely distributed in the County and observed on virtually every day in the year. Its ubiquity is not matched by the breeding records available.

2017 Addendum
Friday Wood Colchester – the number of breeding pairs was nine in 2017 and three in 2016.

COMMON KESTREL *Falco tinnunculus tinnunculus* UK

Fairly common resident, passage migrant and winter visitor.

Breeding was confirmed for 29 pairs at 22 sites (39 at 28 in 2017). All reports were of single pairs except for three each at Foulness Island and Rainham Marshes and two each at Wix, Abbotts Hall Farm and New Hall Farm Little Wigborough. Broods were reported at 18 of these sites, the largest brood size reported being four. As in 2017, only two fledged young were seen from the pairs on Foulness Island. In addition, a further 14 pairs were reported in the breeding season (taken as April-July) at 11 additional sites (16 at 14 in 2017). In the Breeding Bird Survey conducted by the British Trust for Ornithology, the species was recorded in 17 out of 59 squares surveyed in Essex in 2018 (15 out of 61 in 2017, 16 out of 59 in 2016), suggesting no obvious changes in occurrence. So the lower breeding numbers noted above may be more a result of changes in observer coverage (although at Walthamstow Wetlands a regular observer reported that the species failed to breed for the first time in many years).

In total there were 3,110 reported sightings (2,857 in 2017), as usual mainly from Birdtrack and as usual mainly multiple sightings of the same individuals during repeated visits (top contributors being Rainham Marshes with 326 reports, Abberton Reservoir with 169 and Wallasea Island, 150 – a clear reflection of observer coverage at these well-watched sites).

Wetland Bird Surveys on Foulness Island produced counts of 15 on 18th February, 18 on 12th August, 21 on 8th September and nine on both 10th October and 11th November. The only other double-figure counts came from Wallasea Island, 12 on 20th March and ten at both Old Hall Marshes on 13th September and Blue House Farm on 26th September. Elsewhere the highest counts (site maximum in each case and all in September unless stated) were: nine on the North Dengie on 9th; eight at Orsett Fen on 11th, Rainham Marshes on 13th and Fingringhoe Ranges on 19th August; seven at Potton Island Great Wakering on 18th February and at both Colne Point and Abberton Reservoir on 24th.

RED-FOOTED FALCON *Falco vespertinus* EBSIP (28, 6, 34)

Rare passage migrant and summer visitor.

Old Hall Marshes	Second calendar year ♀	1st May	CJM-G

This bird was watched hawking insects over Bale Field for five minutes with two Common Kestrels before drifting away north-east, still hawking.

Annual totals over the last decade have been:

	2018	2017	2016	2015	2014	2013	2012	2011	2010	2009	Average
Numbers	1	0	1	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0.4

MERLIN *Falco columbarius aesalon* UK REX

Increasing passage migrant and winter visitor.

The total number of reports received, 210, continued at the low level of 2017 (when there were 208, as against 265 in 2016). The number of sites involved remained relatively constant, at 50 (47 in 2017, 45 in 2016). There were three records of three birds in a day, at Stow Marsh North Fambridge on 8th March, at Wallasea Island on 13th November and at Coalhouse Fort East Tilbury on the early date (for a multiple sighting) of 30th August. The latter involved a "brown" bird (♀ or immature), which flew south towards Cliffe in Kent, followed by another in similar plumage ten minutes later and an adult ♂ mobbing a Peregrine later in the day. All other records were of 1-2 birds.

Apart from the inland records mentioned below, the last bird of the spring was at Old Hall Marshes on 26th April and the first of the autumn was at Lower Raypits Canewdon on 19th August.

Inland records a stone's throw from the coast came from Chigborough Lakes on 4th February and 22nd November. Further inland, single birds were seen in the first winter at Abberton Reservoir on 5th January and Sewardstone Marsh on 31st March and, in the closing months, at Orsett on 4th October, Langham Airfield on 24th October and Wanstead Flats on 16th November. Falling into neither of these periods was a bird at Great Henny on 27th May and Little Henny on 4th June (DAu). Inland records in May are exceptional – prior to this there had been only five such records since the first *Essex Bird Report* in 1949 – and there had been none previously in June. The bird, a ♀, gave good views on both dates. Given the rarity of inland birds at this season, it was considered by the observer that the same bird was involved in both sightings.

Estimated monthly totals are given below, using the same assumptions as made in the *Essex Bird Reports* for 2013 to 2017. In particular therefore they assume that birds seen on opposite sides of outer estuaries involved different individuals but that there was movement between adjacent or close sites and that, at any given location, only one bird was involved in all the month's sightings unless proved otherwise.

Merlin (RICHARD ALLEN)

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Numbers	9	8	10	4	1	1	0	4	10	13	14	5
Locations	15	13	11	5	1	1	0	2	11	18	16	8

Accuracy in estimating numbers can be improved if observers could please note (and report) details of the age and sex of individual birds. It is recognized that this will not always be easy and may be impossible with a brief distant sighting. In 2017 just over 30% of records included some or all of this information, which was an improvement on 2016.

EURASIAN HOBBY *Falco subbuteo subbuteo*

Uncommon breeder, fairly common passage migrant.

Just two pairs definitely bred and a third almost certainly did so. At a fourth site there were frequent mid-summer sightings and juveniles seen in August, all pointing to breeding in the immediate vicinity. At a new (fifth) site, birds were heard calling on two dates in late July and August: no nest could be found but an adult with three juveniles was seen on 21st September, again pointing strongly to successful local breeding. The table below gives details from 2018 for sites, which have previously held confirmed or probable (but not possible) breeding pairs. It uses the same pair-numberings as in EBRs 2012-2017 and shows the status in 2018 of the pairs listed for the previous year(s). Sites where no birds were seen in the last two years (2017 and 2018) are omitted:

Pair one	Established	Singles on a few dates in late June/July.
Pair two	Established	A pair fledged two young.
Pair six	Established	A pair summered and a juvenile was seen in the suspected breeding area.
Pair seven	Established	None reported in June or July.
Pair ten	Re-established in 2012	One on 10th June.
Pair 17	First reported in 2013	One on 20th June.
Pair 18	First reported in 2013	1-2 adults seen on numerous dates during the summer and three probable juveniles on 21st August.
Pairs 21 and 22	First reported in 2014	One pair fledged one young.
Pair 23	First reported in 2014	A probable pair present in mid-summer.
Pair 24	First reported in 2014	Two on 13th June but none seen later in June or July.
Pair 27	First reported in 2016	No reports received.

There were also records, but with no indication of breeding, from a further 48 sites during the second half of June and July. Given how secretive this species can be during the breeding season, there must be every chance that pairs are going undetected. But the continuing gradual decline in proved breeding (from a peak in 2004) is disappointing. Numbers have fluctuated considerably in the recent past so the hope must be that the decline is temporary.

The first bird of the spring was at Weeley on 6th April. This was followed in mid-April by singles at Rainham Marshes on 14th, Brook Farm Upminster on 15th and Deal Hall Dengie on 17th, with a steady trickle from 21st increasing to a more widespread arrival in the last four days of the month.

May was the high point of the year, with 150 birds estimated (109 in 2017, 138 in 2016). The biggest counts again came from Rainham Marshes, with an early peak of 14 on 6th, these birds gradually moving on (numbers dropping to five on 16th and 17th) before a second influx produced 18 on 18th. No other site recorded double figures in May but there were nine at Blue House Farm on 9th, with six still present on 12th, six at Hanningfield Reservoir on 6th, five at Broomhouse Flash Langham on 11th and four at both Abberton Reservoir on 14th and Old Hall Marshes on 3rd. All May records from other sites were of 1-3. Very late in the spring passage, there was an arrival of 11 at Blue House Farm on 3rd June and five at Rainham Marshes two days later but this was not reflected elsewhere, all other June records away from breeding sites being of 1-2.

Autumn passage was well down on 2017, with estimated totals of 89 in August (117 in 2017) and 110 in September (144 in 2017). The most seen at any site on one day in August was just four (at Blue House Farm on 30th and King George V Reservoir on 24th). In September there were seven at Beckton on 7th, six at Leez Reservoir Hartford End on 17th, five at Blue House Farm on 6th (with four there on several days to 10th), five at Rainham Marshes on 3rd and 13th (with four on 6th) and four at Hanningfield Reservoir on 20th. All other sites held 1-3.

Five birds were seen in October, the latest being one seen well at Hadleigh Downs on 13th.

Despite the relatively quiet autumn, the total numbers of records received was well up on recent years, with 799 reports from 177 sites (689 from 165 in 2017, 691 from 144 in 2016). As in 2014-2017, 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 arrivals for that site (e.g. that at Rainham Marshes in May – see above) clearly indicated otherwise.

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Numbers	0	0	0	36	150	67	40	90	113	5	0	0
Locations	0	0	0	31	70	42	32	64	67	5	0	0

PEREGRINE FALCON
Falco peregrinus peregrinus

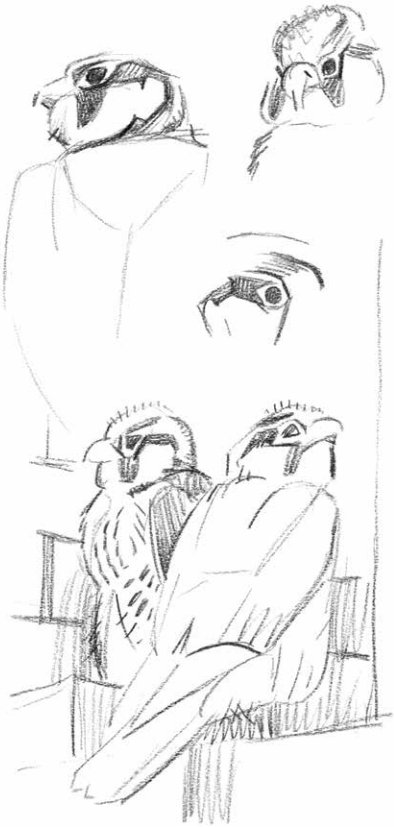
Uncommon resident, passage migrant and winter visitor.

Pairs were observed in the breeding season at 13 sites (11 in 2017). Breeding was successful at eight of the 13 sites (six in 2017) with 15 young being fledged in total (16 in 2017). Of the five other sites where birds were present, there was no evidence of breeding at four, while at the fifth a pair nested on a pylon but the outcome was not known.

The total number of records received during the year was 1,073 (914 in 2017). As usual most of these involved duplicate records of the same few birds seen by many observers on multiple dates at well-watched sites. Also, as mentioned further below, it is likely, particularly along the coast, that the same individual will have been seen at several sites. Changes in the numbers of records submitted between one year and another will be at least as much a reflection of observer coverage as they are of any changes in overall numbers of the species in the County.

Away from the vicinity of breeding sites the only record of more than three birds in a day came from Abberton Reservoir, where there were four on 6th November.

Inland observations came from 68 sites (72 in 2017) out of a total of 153 (179 in 2017). What constitutes "inland" can be a



Peregrine Falcon (RICHARD ALLEN)

matter for debate and there could be some duplication in these figures, with some observers perhaps ascribing different names to closely connected locations. Reports from the poorly watched north-west came from Strethall, Little Chesterford, Rickling Green and Saffron Walden.

The minimum numbers of birds estimated to be present across the County in each month are shown in the following table. The figures have been prepared using the same assumptions as in 2014-2017, 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. As in the previous four years it has also been assumed, in the absence of evidence to the contrary, that sightings at multiple locations along the Stour, Colne, Blackwater and Crouch/Roach estuaries refer to the same individual(s) hunting along the full length and on both sides of the relevant estuary. For the much longer Thames estuary, a similar approach has been adopted but dividing the estuary loosely into three sections and assuming duplication only within each section. The totals include birds reported near possible or probable breeding sites during the breeding season (taken for this purpose as May-July) but not confirmed breeders or their young (the figures for which are already given above).

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Numbers	32	34	34	27	19	15	14	22	29	32	25	29
Locations	46	45	43	46	27	23	14	28	35	43	30	37

As in previous years, these numbers could well be under-estimates and it would increase the accuracy of the figures if observers could give the age and sex of birds they are reporting. Obviously, for a bird on its own this may not always be feasible, as judging size and therefore sex may be difficult. Likewise, on a distant bird it may not be possible to obtain sufficient plumage detail to assess age. In 2017 age or sex was given in 199 reports out of the total of 1,073 and both aspects in only 62 sightings (with most of these coming from the same few observers). Many reports of pairs perhaps take it as read that the birds were adults: this will not always be the case, so an indication either way would be helpful.

Prey species reported in 2018 included a Common Tern, which a juvenile ♀ Peregrine attempted to catch off East Tilbury. The falcon eventually caught its prey, only to drop it, at which point the tern was retrieved from the water by an adult ♂ Peregrine, which then passed the tern talon-to-talon to the juvenile. As the juvenile lumbered off it was mobbed by a Merlin but this time it clung onto its trophy. (PLa).

ROSE-RINGED PARAKEET *Psittacula krameri borealis/manillensis*

Scarce but increasing, naturalised, resident and visitor. First bred in 2004.

A significant jump in records received to 912 (687 in 2017 and 721 in 2016) suggests that this species is consolidating its range in the south-west of the County but there remain, thankfully, few signs of the species moving out into the rest of Essex, although there is perhaps an incremental spread occurring along the Thames.

Up to seven pairs were noted at nests holes in the Mardyke Valley and two nesting pairs were noted at Orsett Fen, with up to five juveniles seen subsequently.

Despite the increase in records, no three-figure counts were received for 2018, with only one site, Belhus Woods Aveley, regularly recording more than 50, with numbers peaking here at 84 on 25th January. Elsewhere, there were 47 at Mayesbrook Park on 29th August and 42 at Wanstead Flats on 25th August. No other sites recorded more than 30 birds.

Away from the core area, there were just 13 records across the rest of the County, five in the east and eight in the south. Most were single birds on odd days, and many perhaps involved one wandering individual but there were four at Galleywood on 28th December and three at East Tilbury on and off in the later half of the year.

RED-BACKED SHRIKE *Lanius collurio* UK EBSIP

Very scarce passage migrant, mainly in autumn.

The Naze	♂	4th June	DSt
Brightlingsea	Juvenile	9th-13th August	DSt
Brightlingsea	One	25th-26th October	DSt
Deal Hall Dengie	♀	25th May	RPe DWa
Wanstead Flats	Juvenile	28th August-7th September	NCr

Five records is the best since 2002 when there were also two in spring and three in autumn; three further, unsubstantiated, records were received. The Wanstead bird may well have been present for about a week previously (NCr pers. comm.).

	2018	2017	2016	2015	2014	2013	2012	2011	2010	2009	Average
Numbers	5	1	0	4	0	4	0	3	1	0	1.8

ISABELLINE/RED-TAILED SHRIKE *Lanius isabellinus/phoenicuroides* BBRC (1, 1, 2)

Vagrant.

With the adoption by the British Ornithologist's Union Record's Committee of the International Ornithological Committee List, Isabelline Shrike splits into the two above named species. However, separating these two closely related species in first-winter plumage is notoriously difficult and both Essex records, on current knowledge, can only be attributed to the species pair and so statistics will continue to be listed as shown above. It is quite possible that the two Essex records will never be identifiable to either.

GREAT GREY SHRIKE *Lanius excubitor excubitor* EBSIP

Scarce passage migrant and winter visitor.

A blank year, with winter 2017/18 the first without a record since 2009/10.

Winter totals over the last decade have been:

	2018/17	2017/16	2016/15	2015/14	2014/13	2013/12	2012/11	2011/10	2010/09	2009/08	Average
Numbers	0	5	5	1	4	1	6	2	0	1	2.5

EURASIAN JAY *Garrulus glandarius rufitergum/glandarius*

***G. g. rufitergum* is a common resident whilst *G. g. glandarius* may occur as a rare passage migrant.**

In total 1,729 reports were received (1,473 in 2017) of this widely reported species. As a breeding species it is under-recorded, it being surprisingly inconspicuous in the breeding season, despite its colourful plumage. A total of 51 pairs were noted nesting or on territory, of which at least seven were known to have raised young; 15 territories in Friday Wood Colchester was by far the largest site count, although there were also six pairs around Pebmarsh and five around Braintree and Bocking where numbers were considered by the observer to be stable.

Double-figure counts came from eight sites with 12 in Mardyke Valley on 10th and 17th April and 1st May, Epping Forest Burial Ground on 5th July and Cymbeline Meadows Colchester on 18th February.

There were hints of migration or perhaps local dispersal with ten at The Naze on 17th and eight on 21st October (the species occurs regularly in very small numbers all year here) and several birds were noted flying south over Frinton-on-Sea in October, one in four hours on 8th, two in two hours the next day, eight in 5.5 hours on 13th and one in 2.5 hours on 21st. In addition, 1-2 birds were seen on the Bradwell Bird Observatory feeders in March, May, September, October and November.

2017 Addendum
Friday Wood Colchester – territories totalled 11 in 2017 and eight in 2016.

EURASIAN MAGPIE *Pica pica pica*

Common resident.

One of our most widely reported species with 4,478 individual records in 2018 (3,667 in 2017).

Breeding is largely under-recorded, with 31 sites reporting possible breeding, a further 26 probable breeding and a further 12 sites reporting confirmed breeding involving about 22 pairs. A total of 12 territories was noted in Friday Wood Colchester.

Double-figure counts were received from nine sites, often relating to birds going to/coming from roosts. The highest count was a peak of 100 in Chafford Gorges Grays on 7th November, followed by a peak of 53 in Roding Valley Meadows Chigwell on 18th January and 50 at Writtle on 19th March and Epping on 28th December.

2017 Addendum
Friday Wood Colchester – territories totalled 32 in 2017 and 31 in 2016.

WESTERN JACKDAW *Coloeus monedula*
Jackdaw *Coloeus monedula monedula*

Common resident, passage migrant and winter visitor.

Another well-reported species, with 2,859 records received in 2018 (2,390 in 2017). As with the other corvids, however, much under-recorded in the breeding season with possible breeding coming from 18 sites, probable breeding from another 18 and confirmed breeding coming from just four further sites and involving eight pairs. A total of 49 territories were noted in Friday Wood Colchester.

Counts of 200 or more came from 17 sites with three-figure counts coming from three: Abberton Reservoir, 2,000 on 20th January; Brook Farm Upminster, 1,000 on 17th September and 5th November; Hatfield Broad Oak, 1,200 on 12th August.

Western Jackdaw
(RICHARD ALLEN)

Possible migration was noted over Frinton-on-Sea, with 12 south in six hours on 25th October and the same number south three days later.

2017 Addendum
Friday Wood Colchester – territories totalled 120 in 2017 and 46 in 2016.

"Nordic Jackdaw" *Coloeus monedula spermologus* EBSIP (0, 6, 6)

Status uncertain.

Several claims of this subspecies were again received this year. The Identification Panel continues to undertake a full review of the subspecies' status in Essex, together with criteria for identification. All records have been held pending publication of the review published in due course.

ROOK *Corvus frugilegus frugilegus*

Common resident, passage migrant and winter visitor.

In total 1,437 records were received (1,325 in 2017). Possible breeding records were received from just three sites, probable breeding from a further ten sites and confirmed breeding from a further 13 sites. In all, approximately 200 nests were reported, including around 130 in St Osyth Priory Estate.

Counts of 300 or more came from eight sites, mostly involving birds moving to/from roosts. The largest roost was in Thundersley Glen where 1,270 were counted on 30th June and 957 on 9th July. Elsewhere there were 700 in fields at Brook Farm Upminster on 17th September with counts of 600 at roost in six months of the year from nearby Clay Tye Woods Upminster. There were also 500 on fields at Stow Marsh South Woodham Ferrers on 7th January and the same number heading to roost over Clacton-on-Sea on 9th March.

Single birds heading south over Frinton-on-Sea on 26th March and 4th April and five on 3rd May may have been migrants but could equally have been local wanderers, a comment which also applies to three over there on 19th October and 15 on 14th October.

CARRION CROW *Corvus corone corone*

Common resident and passage migrant.

Just short of 6,000 records were received (4,157 in 2017) making the species one of the most reported of all Essex birds. That said, and in common with the other corvids, breeding records were sparse. Possible breeding occurred at 23 sites, probable at a further 27 and was confirmed at a further 34 (29, 27, 13 in 2017).

Double-figure counts were received from five sites during the year with the highest being 170 feeding on the tip at Orsett Fen on 19th June, 150 north of Lofts Farm Gravel Pits Heybridge on 20th December and 130 at Southey Creek Mundon on the late date of 5th May.

Apparent migration passing Frinton-on-Sea was more evident this year, at least during the spring with 14 passed on one day in March, a total of 89 during April with a peak of 24 south on 21st April and 23 on two dates in May.

NORTHERN RAVEN *Corvus corax corax*

Scarce resident and visitor.

In total 134 records were received throughout the year (119 in 2017) again emphasising the steady increase within the County.

Breeding occurred at two, perhaps three locations. At the site used last year, a pair raised three young. At a second site, one fledged young was seen, whilst at a third, two juveniles were seen during May. In addition, anecdotal evidence was received of breeding at a fourth site, although as this was close to the first breeding site mentioned above, this should perhaps be viewed with caution.

It is clearly becoming difficult distinguishing breeding birds and young from wandering individuals. Estimated monthly totals, including young birds were:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Numbers	6	6	3	4	10	5	3	5	7	10	7	6

The low numbers in March and April perhaps point to the species becoming secretive whilst on and around the nest, although in 2017 the highest count was in March, so perhaps the table simply illustrates that numbers reported vary markedly from month to month, for reasons unclear. The numbers are quite similar to those in 2017, so the spread into the County remains a very slow march.

Geographically, the species is likely to be recorded in any part of the County now, remaining commonest in the south-west, although breeding now occurs in the south and central parts of Essex. The Raven remains rare in coastal districts; ironically it was the coastal regions that were the refuge for the last surviving Ravens during the 19th century prior to their extinction.

BOHEMIAN WAXWING *Bombycilla garrulus garrulus*

Almost annual winter visitor and passage migrant in highly variable numbers.

Just seven birds in the first half of the year and 17 in the second winter:

Braxted Park	One	13th-28th January
Harwich	Five	7th-11th February
Southend-on-Sea	One	9th-13th April
Clacton-on-Sea	One	27th December
Boreham	16	31st December

COAL TIT *Periparus ater*
Coal Tit *Periparus ater britannicus*

Common resident.

Breeding records were received from 33 locations involving some 56 pairs/singing ♂♂/territories (41 from 75 locations in 2017); the number of sites at which the species was recorded in the breeding season also fell from 97 in 2017 to 82 this year.

The main counts came from: Friday Wood Colchester, six territories (12); Boxted, Braintree and Bocking area, Middleton, Mount Bures and Pebmarsh, all four territories at each.

Peak counts were also down on 2017, with just four sites reporting double-figures: Boxted, 11 on 17th February; Marks Hall Coggeshall, 15+ on 7th February; Weald Park, 10 on 15th July; Epping Forest Burial Park, 11 on 5th July.

Records involving local movement/dispersal or continental birds (see below) came from The Naze, where there were two on 14th April, and Bradwell Bird Observatory on 25th April.

2017 Addendum

Friday Wood Colchester – territories totalled 12 in 2017 and seven in 2016.

Continental Coal Tit *Periparus ater ater* EBSIP

Rare migrant but subject to periodic influxes

A number of claims of this subspecies were received this year. The Identification Panel continues to undertake a full review of the subspecies' status in Essex, together with criteria for identification. All records have been held pending until the review is published in due course.

MARSH TIT *Poecile palustris dresseri* UK REX

Scarce, sedentary resident.

A slight reduction on last year with records coming from 27 sites this year (32 in 2017) but, with breeding confirmed at five sites, and possibly at a sixth, and several pairs reported at two further sites, it was a very good year by recent standards.

At Farnham at least three juveniles were noted in June whilst adults were seen carrying food in Elmdon. At Belchamp Walter a pair was seen feeding two fledged young and a pair with two fledged young was also seen at Foxearth Meadows, and a family party was seen near Langham Treatment

Works. In addition, two young were seen in a mixed tit flock in July at Pebmarsh; these could, however, relate to wanderers from beyond the County boundary, given the late date. In addition pairs were present at Hatfield Forest, where there were 'several', and Alphamstone.

Other records during the breeding season (March-July) came from a further eight sites: Hyde Wood Canewdon (probably present from March-August at least); Friday Wood Colchester; Marks Hall Coggeshall; Earls Colne; Gosfield; Westwood Great Sampford; Holyfield Lake.

Outside the breeding season, Marsh Tit were reported from a further nine sites, including Magnolia Park Hawkwell on 24th November.

The two records from the south-east of the County (Canewdon and Hawkwell) are of note.

EURASIAN BLUE TIT *Cyanistes caeruleus obscurus/caeruleus*

***C. c. obscurus* is an abundant resident that only disperses locally. *C. c. caeruleus* is probably a rare passage migrant.**

In total 4,406 records were received in 2018, largely through Birdtrack.

Possible breeding was reported from 22 sites, with probable breeding occurring at a further 25 sites and confirmed breeding at 40 sites. Assessing the total number of pairs involved has not been attempted as interpreting the various breeding data is challenging.

Counts of 20 or more pairs/singing ♂♂ came from (2017 figures in brackets): Friday Wood Colchester, 90 (109); Braintree and Bocking, 40 (40); Belhus Woods Aveley, 31 (31); Mardyke Valley, 26 (20).

Counts of 40 or more birds were made at 16 sites (four in 2017) with peaks at each of the sites being: Abberton Reservoir, 50 on 5th January; Belhus Woods Aveley, 41 on 3rd June (including 24 juveniles); Chafford Gorges Grays, 43 on 20th November; Chalkney Wood, 40 on 27th January; Epping Forest Burial Ground, 40 on 1st February; Friday Wood Colchester, a mixed tit flock of 150 on 22nd September was almost entirely Blue Tit; Hanningfield Reservoir, 50+ on 1st September; Langdon Hills Plotlands, 46 on 7th June; Leyton Flats, 40+ on 25th June; Mardyke Valley, 58 on 12th June; Marks Hall Coggeshall, 40+ on 7th February and 3rd December; Roding Valley Meadows Chigwell, 42 on 4th December; Sunnymead Farm Wivenhoe, 40 on 10th January; The Hythe Colchester, 50 on 22nd September; Thorndon Park, 40 on 17th January; West Bergholt, 50+ on 31st August.

2017 Addendum

Friday Wood Colchester – territories totalled 109 in 2017 and 47 in 2016.

GREAT TIT *Parus major newtoni/major*

***P. m. newtoni* is a very common resident whilst *P. m. major* is a scarce passage migrant and winter visitor.**

In total 3,783 records were received in 2018, again largely through Birdtrack.

Possible breeding was reported from 51 sites, with probable breeding occurring at a further 28 sites and confirmed breeding at 42 sites. Assessing the total number of pairs involved has not been attempted as interpreting the various breeding data is challenging.

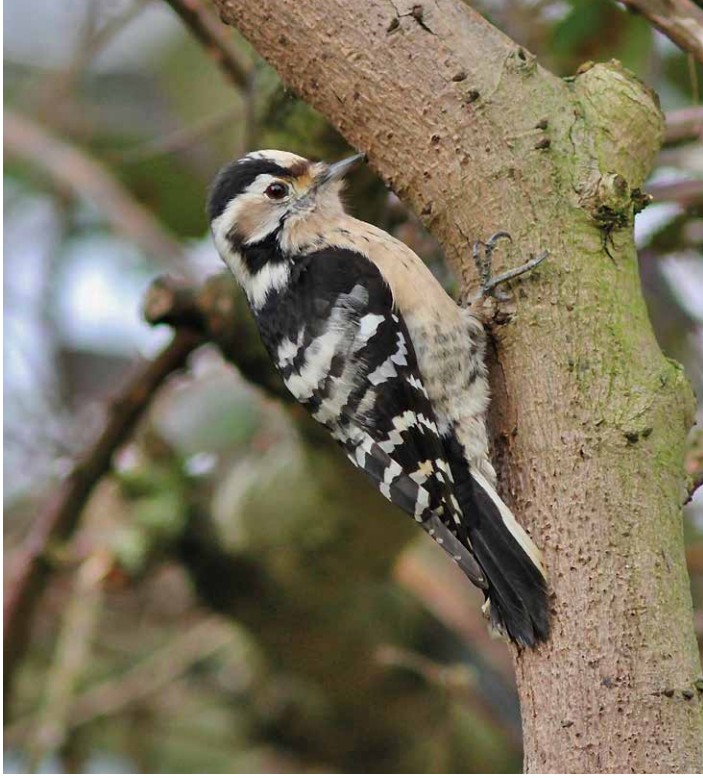
Counts of ten or more pairs/singing ♂♂ were made at four sites (2017 figures in brackets): Friday Wood Colchester 44, (55); Braintree and Bocking, 30 (30); Belhus Woods Aveley, 22 (25); Langdon Hills Plotlands, 28 (17); Mardyke Valley, 31 (18).

Counts of 30 or more were made at nine sites (eight in 2017): Hanningfield Reservoir, 40 on 20th June; Flitch Green Little Dunmow, 30 on 7th April; Langdon Hills Plotlands, 54 on 7th June; Belhus Woods Aveley, 43 on 3rd June; Hangman's Wood Little Thurrock, 32 on 6th June; Chafford Gorges Grays, 60 on 14th June; Mardyke Valley, 67 on 1st June including 49 juveniles; Connaught Water Epping Forest, 32 on 23rd January.

Three high-flying birds were noted heading south over Frinton-on-Sea on 25th September.

2017 Addendum

Friday Wood Colchester – territories totalled 55 in 2017 and 34 in 2016.



Right: Lesser Spotted Woodpecker, Halstead, January (TONY WELLS)

Below: Horned Lark, East Mersea, December (SEAN NIXON)

Pallas' Leaf Warbler, The Naze, October (KIT DAY)

Dusky Warbler, The Naze, November (PAUL CHAMBERLAIN)

BEARDED REEDLING *Panurus biarmicus biarmicus* (Bearded Tit) REX

Variable breeding population. Scarce passage migrant and winter visitor.

Breeding records came from four sites (seven in 2017): Old Hall Marshes, bred - no count but at least three broods seen on 31st July; Hanningfield Reservoir, bred – eight juveniles seen on 18th June; Bowers Marsh, bred – five pairs with a juvenile seen on 16th May; Wat Tyler, bred – food carrying seen on 17th June. In addition, breeding may have occurred at Fingringhoe Ranges, where birds were present on 1st July, Vange Marsh where four pairs were present all summer, Vange Wick, with one pair present and East Tilbury where three juveniles were seen on 7th July. Birds were also seen during the breeding season at: Tollesbury Wick, one on 12th May; Blue House Farm, two on 24th May; Purfleet, one on 12th June; Beckton Sewage Works, one on 30th June.

During the autumn, up to 16 were noted Rainham Marshes (on 3rd September) whilst birds were noted at the following locations away from traditional areas: Canvey Wick, one on 21st October; Goldhanger, one on 21st October; Gunners Park Shoebury, one on 16th October; Olympic Park Stratford, one on 4th October; The Hythe Colchester, singles on 19th October and 26th November.

Winter records during the first winter occurred at 12 sites (12 in 2017) and in the second winter at seven (14 in 2017). Double-figure counts were made at just two sites: Hanningfield Reservoir, ten on 10th November; Bowers Marsh, a maximum of 14 on 31st December. Observations came from several less typical locations: Bradwell Bird Observatory to Howe Outfall Dengie, two on 21st March; Abberton Reservoir, one on 20th January; Beckton, one on 14th and 28th January.

WOODLARK *Lullula arborea arborea* EBSIP

Scarce passage migrant. Very rare breeder – last nested 1990.

Five unsubstantiated records were received, so 2018 goes down as another blank year.

There is a history of reluctance from observers to submit descriptions of this species, but it must be noted that a description must be submitted to the ID panel via the County Recorder for acceptance.

Annual totals over the last decade have been:

	2018	2017	2016	2015	2014	2013	2012	2011	2010	2009	Average
Numbers	0	1	1	3	4	5	9	0	0	1	2.4

EURASIAN SKYLARK *Alauda arvensis arvensis* UK EX REX

Common resident, passage migrant and winter visitor.

The steady climb of breeding birds and sites reported over the last few years appears to have levelled out this year with 895 territories recorded from 107 sites, (905 from 93 sites in 2017, 799 from 95 sites in 2016). Eleven further sites were reported to have singing or territorial birds but recorded only as "present" with numbers provided.

There were 21 locations reporting ten or more singing/territorial birds (23 in 2017): Old Hall Marshes, 20 (ten in 2017); Tollesbury Wick, 35 (24); Bradwell Bird Observatory to Weymarks, 12; Wallasea Island, 131 (129); Foulness Island, 81 (138); Great Stambridge to Paglesham Churchend, 16; Bowers Marsh, 18; Foxearth, 14; Borley, 30; Bulmer, 12 (21); Henny Street, 12 (17); Ridgewell Airfield Ashen, 15 (14); Langham, 15 (12); Wormingford, 63 (71); Abberton Reservoir, 30 (25); Abbotts Hall Farm, ten (ten); Blue House Farm, 17; Orsett Fen, 21(25); Chigwell, 11; East Tilbury, 20; Rainham Marshes, 47 (49).

Two additional sites reported 25 or more birds during the spring and summer but without mention of singing or territories: Fairlop Waters Barkingside, 50 on 18th March; St Lawrence Bay to Marsh House Dengie, 65 on 15th April, 47 on 7th June, 70 on 15th July.

During January and February 21 reports of 25 or more birds were received (42 in 2017). Of these there were just seven reports of 50 or more: Wix, 180 on 6th January; Bowers Marsh, 50 on 23rd January, 50 on 9th February; Wallasea Island, 56 on 15th February; St Lawrence Bay to Marsh House

Dengie, 80 on 18th February; Foulness Island, 97 on 18th February; Breach Barns Farm Waltham Abbey, 77 on 28th February.

The second autumn/winter period produced 49 reports of 25 or more birds (38 in 2017). Of these reports, 17 were of 50 or more, including nine of 100 or more (two in 2017): Frinton-on-Sea, all in October, 409 south in seven hours on 19th, 118 south in 2.5 hours on 24th, 139 south in six hours on 25th; Holland Haven, 105 on 20th October; Canvey Point, 200 on 28th October; Wallasea Island, 300 on 2nd November, 100 on 9th December; Wormingford, 180 on 8th November; Foulness Island, 120 on 11th November.

HORNED LARK *Eremophila alpestris flava* (Shorelark) UK

Scarce but annual passage migrant and winter visitor.

A much better year for this species that, although in recent years appears to have declined, is still prone to periodic influxes. Up to this year the most recent double-figure count had been of 13 in the winter of 2010/11.

All records are shown below:

Wallasea Island	Eleven	10th-13th February
Wallasea Island	Ten	14th-15th February
Wallasea Island	Nine	15th February
Wallasea Island	Eight	23rd February
Deal Hall Dengie	One	5th March
Bradwell Bird Observatory	One	7th March
Point Clear St Osyth	One	13th and 15th November
Stone Point Mersea Island	One	12th-31st December

Winter totals over the last decade have been:

	2018/17	2017/16	2016/15	2015/14	2014/13	2013/12	2012/11	2011/10	2010/09	2009/08	Average
Numbers	15	3	1	2	3	1	5	13	5	1	4.9

Horned (Shore) Lark (RICHARD ALLEN)

SAND MARTIN *Riparia riparia riparia* REX

Locally common summer visitor and passage migrant.

Confirmed breeding territories were reported from eight sites: Wrabness, three; The Naze, 30; Fingringhoe Gravel Pit, 14 (some of the bank collapsed during the summer possibly reducing breeding success); Ardleigh Reservoir, number of territories not recorded but young heard calling from nest holes; Bradwell-juxta-Coggeshall Gravel Pit, 146 (last bred in 2015 but site became unstable; now using a recently excavated area); William Girling Reservoir Chingford, four; Olympic Park Stratford, six; East Tilbury, a report of nesting in sand pile with recently fledged young.

There were a further three reports of possible/probable breeding but not confirmed: Brightlingsea, ten birds in "nesting habitat" in June; Barking, nest building by birds "present" in May and 20 birds visiting nest holes in June; King George V Reservoir, 30 birds/pairs? "on suitable habitat" in April. All breeding records should be submitted to the County Recorder.

Birds were recorded in varying numbers throughout the spring and summer at numerous other sites with no further details supplied, but probably most refer to passage birds and feeding congregations.

Brook Farm Upminster recorded the first birds of the year for the second year running with two reported on 10th March (two on 4th March in 2017). Thereafter small numbers were recorded almost daily into the first week and half of April with double figures rarely seen, with the exception of Abberton Reservoir recording 40 on 5th, 60 on 9th and 50 on 11th. Rainham Marshes recorded 100 on 12th and 60 on 13th. Into the second half of April birds were being reported around the County in increasing numbers with 50 or more reported from: Fingringhoe Wick, 50 on 17th; King George V Reservoir, 50 on 18th; Abberton Reservoir, 50 on 20th, 24th and 25th. A big arrival on 28th saw 50+ at Abberton Reservoir, 250 at Thurrock Thameside Mucking and 150 at Walthamstow Wetlands, followed by 85 at Boreham and 90 at Nazeing Gravel Pits on 29th and 100 at Abberton Reservoir on 30th.

Numbers recorded during May and June dwindled, and apart from those at some of the breeding sites there were no reports exceeding 50 birds.

Late summer numbers reported this year were down with no three-figure counts in July at all (12 in 2017) and only two reports of 50 or more: Bradwell Bird Observatory, 51 on 15th; Heybridge Basin, 50 on 28th.

There were no four-figure counts received in August (two in 2017) and only three counts of three figures (12 in 2017): Beckton Sewage Works, 150 on 18th, and 130 on 27th; Abberton Reservoir, 100 on 28th. There were a further six records of 50 or more birds during the month: Heybridge Basin, 50 on 8th; Hanningfield Reservoir, 50+ on 12th; Bradwell Bird Observatory, 60 on 22nd; Abberton Reservoir, 50 on 26th; Walthamstow Wetlands, 80 on 27th; Beckton, 50 on 29th.

September fared better with five three-figure counts reported (five in 2017): Brook Farm Upminster, 201 south in one hour 20 minutes on 2nd; Walthamstow Wetlands, 100 on 5th; Heybridge Basin, 100 on 9th; Abberton Reservoir, 150 south-west on 20th, and 600+ on 22nd. There were also two reports of 50 or more: Brook Farm Upminster, 53 south in one hour 20 minutes on 3rd; Hanningfield Reservoir, 50 on 7th. The last few days of the month saw only a few scattered records and there were just two records in October: Hanningfield Reservoir, one on 3rd and 12 days later the last birds of the year were three at Sewardstone on 15th.

BARN SWALLOW *Hirundo rustica rustica*

Common summer visitor and passage migrant.

Once again the Barn Swallow was widely reported around the County during the spring and summer, but reports of confirmed breeding pairs or territories were even fewer than those received for2017. There were 144 reports from 29 sites (191 from 44 in 2017, 201 from 73 in 2016). An additional 25 sites where possible/probable breeding was suspected were reported but without any confirming details (22 in 2017, 19 in 2016). As can be seen the confirmed territories and sites have decreased, whereas the number of suspected sites has increased. All breeding records should be submitted to the County Recorder.

There were three sites reporting ten or more territories (four in 2017): Naze, 30; Cattawade Marshes, ten; Braintree and Bocking, ten (ten in 2017).

The first bird of the year was a single feeding along the seawall adjacent to Frinton-on-Sea golf course on 13th March. Then from 17th until the month's end there were just occasional sightings.

The first week of April saw an increase of sightings from widespread locations with double figures reported from: Little Baddow, 14 on 1st and 5th, and 16 on 7th; Abberton Reservoir, 20 on 5th; Hanningfield Reservoir, 48 on 6th; Boreham, 15 on 7th; Wanstead Flats, 13 on 7th. A further increase came in the second week of April with many double-figure counts reported, the largest being of 60 at Langham on 11th. There were no significant numbers reported during the third week of April, although the species was more widespread. The main arrival began on 23rd with 243 moving north in 2.5 hours at Frinton-on-Sea, followed by 100 at Abberton Reservoir on 25th and 100+ at Bowers Marsh on 27th. During the last three days of April and the first day of May there were many records received including 18 three-figure counts:

28th April		29th April		30th April		1st May	
Naze	100+ N	Old Hall Marshes	100	Abberton Reservoir	300	Frinton-on-Sea	136 N
Frinton-on-Sea	113 N	West Canvey Marsh	100	Nazeing Gravel Pits	150+	Lofts Farm Gravel Pits Heybridge	150
Bowers Marsh	150+	Boreham	178	King George V Reservoir	300		
Abberton Reservoir	500+	Nazeing Gravel Pits	300	William Girling Reservoir Chingford	300		
Hanningfield Reservoir	300	Walthamstow Wetlands	400				
Fairlop Waters Barkingside	150						
Walthamstow Wetlands	300						

Apart from Bradwell Bird Observatory reporting 100 on 23rd July there were no more three-figure counts until August. However, there were plenty of double-figure counts probably of feeding groups and birds starting to congregate.

During late summer and autumn there were no four-figure counts but many three-figure counts were reported. Apart from Frinton-on-Sea (see table below) there were 14 counts in August including two exceeding 500: Bradwell Bird Observatory, 540 on 12th; Stow Marsh North Fambridge, 891 west on 24th. There were 21 counts in September including two exceeding 500: Abberton Reservoir, 700 on 22nd; Bradwell Bird Observatory, 800+ south on 26th.

Frinton-on-Sea three-figure counts during late summer were as follows (all heading south):

	Aug			Sep					
Date	21st	24th	25th	11th	15th	18th	24th	26th	27th
Numbers	132	524	581	852	217	654	125	231	182

There were no three-figure counts in October and only four double-figure counts reported: Holland Haven, 55 on 2nd; Frinton-on-Sea, 16 south in 2.5 hours on 4th, and 34 south in 5.75 hours on 6th; Gunners Park Shoebury, 14 on 6th. Thereafter until the end of the month reports of small numbers were received from widespread locations.

Single birds were reported on five days during November: Frinton-on-Sea, 1st, 12th, 15th; Gunners Park Shoebury, 13th. The last bird of the year was also at Frinton-on-Sea, on 17th.

COMMON HOUSE MARTIN *Delichon urbicum urbicum*

UK REX

Common summer visitor and passage migrant.

Reports of 214 occupied nests from 33 sites were received (205 from 21 in 2017, 249 from 32 in 2016); however, four of the sites, although confirming breeding, gave no details of numbers. Some observers commented that numbers were lower this year and that breeding was later too, but multiple broods were reported as well. Reports of double-figure breeding sites were (last year figures in brackets): Frinton-on-Sea, 18; Foulness Island, 12 (19); Lamarsh, 12 (14); Braintree and Bocking, 60+ (60+); Orsett Fen, ten (11). There were a further 16 sites that reported possible/probable breeding with no confirming details. All breeding records should be submitted to the County Recorder.

The first bird(s) of the year to be reported was "present" at Chelmsford on 17th March. No more were recorded for almost two weeks until two at Lofts Farm Gravel Pits Heybridge on 29th. Single figures then came in from 2nd April up to 9th when there were ten at Chigborough Lakes, and 15 at King George V Reservoir. For the rest of the month low double- and single-figure counts were reported around the County but with 50 or more from: Frinton-on-Sea 54 north in 2.5 hours on 23rd; Paglesham Lagoon, 50 on 25th; Hanningfield Reservoir, 50 on 28th; Nazeing Gravel Pits, 90 on 29thand a big arrival of 250+ on 30th.

During May low double figures and single figures were the norm except on 1st when 50 were recorded from both Lofts Farm Gravel Pits Heybridge and Abberton Reservoir.

Figures throughout June mirrored those of the previous month except for 120 reported from Braintree and Bocking (breeding birds previously reported) on 30th.

July started to see an increase in numbers with juveniles very much in evidence. 50 or more reported were: Orsett Fen, 50 on 4th; Ingrebourne Valley, 50 on 24th and 25th; The Naze 75 on 30th.

There were 19 reports of 50 or more from around the County during August including eight three-figure counts: Hanningfield Reservoir, 150+ on 12th, 200+ on 29th; Bradwell Bird Observatory, 600 south on 22nd; Paglesham Lagoon, 100 on 27th; Walthamstow Wetlands, 120 on 27th; Sewardstone, 200 on 28th; Wrabness, 150 on 30th; King George V Reservoir, 200 on 30th.

September usually sees the largest gatherings/movements across the County and 2018 was no exception. There were 24 three/four-figure reports (32 in 2017), ten of which involved 500 or more birds (six in 2018): Frinton-on Sea, 990 south in three hours on 8th September, 512 south in five hours on 18th, 1,890 south in seven hours on 23rd; Hanningfield Reservoir, 1,500+ on 10th, 1,000+ on 20th, 1,500+ on 22nd; Rainham Marshes, 500 on 12th, 600 on 23rd; Abberton Reservoir, 1,000+ on 22nd; Bradwell Bird Observatory, 1,200+ south on 26th.

There were few records in the first eight days of October mainly involving single figures, but a total of 170 heading south during the afternoon over Thundersley on 5th and 32 from Rainham Marshes on 6th were the exceptions. There were no further records until 17th when there was one at Naze and six Wanstead Flats. The last record of the year was of two birds at King George V Reservoir on 31st.

RED-RUMPED SWALLOW *Cecropis daurica rufula*

EBSIP (19, 11, 30)

Rare passage migrant.

Rainham Marshes	One	26th April	ATw *et al.*
Hanningfield Reservoir	One	28th April	CSh *et al.*
Nazeing Gravel Pits	One	28th-30th April	AWi *et al.*
The Naze	One	19th May	BCo DSt
The Naze	One	21st-22nd May	LHu DSt

The two records at The Naze involved different birds. The best year on record for this beautiful swallow. The Nazeing Gravel Pits bird and the second Naze bird were the first to remain for more than one day since 2002.

Annual totals over the last decade have been:

	2018	2017	2016	2015	2014	2013	2012	2011	2010	2009	Average
Numbers	5	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	2	1	1.0

CETTI'S WARBLER *Cettia cetti cetti*

Locally common and increasing breeding resident.

The "Beast from the East", which greatly reduced other populations in East Anglia, caused Essex breeding numbers to fall by a third. In total 201 singing ♂♂/apparently occupied territories were reported from 81 sites (339 from 106 in 2017). Records were mainly from the coast, Lee and Ingrebourne valleys and the Thames marshes. Counts of six or more (2017 figures in brackets): Beckton, eight; Creekside Beckton, six; Heybridge Gravel Pit, ten (12); Ingrebourne Valley, six (nine); Mardyke Valley, seven; Rainham Marshes, 17 (51); Stanford Warren, six; The Naze, six.

LONG-TAILED TIT *Aegithalos caudatus*

Long-tailed Tit *Aegithalos caudatus rosaceus*

Common resident.

Reports of territorial pairs or evidence of confirmed breeding came from around 30 sites (40 in 2017) but it was common and widespread throughout the County during the summer months. Several sites reported more than 1-2 pairs but many more clearly go unreported. Twenty-one territories were noted in Friday Wood Colchester.

The effects of the severe weather in February and March clearly affected numbers, as counts of 30+ were recorded from just eight sites, in comparison to 15 in 2017: Belhus Woods Aveley, 48 on 2nd January and 52 on 21st November; Bradwell Bird Observatory, 35 on 31st May; Chafford Gorges Grays, 42 on 4th November; Chigborough Lakes, 50 on 2nd January; Frinton-on-Sea, 36 on 8th October; Langham, 40 on 4th February; Mardyke Valley, 40 on 22nd January and 55 on 18th November; Rochford Golf Course, 40 on 17th November.

Long-tailed Tits are very sedentary so counts of 34 on 3rd and 36 on 8th October on the undercliff at Frinton-on-Sea almost certainly involved local birds.

2017 Addendum

Friday Wood Colchester – territories totalled 33 in 2017 and 30 in 2016.

WOOD WARBLER *Phylloscopus sibilatrix*

UK REX

Scarce passage migrant. Bred until 1991.

Marks Hall Coggeshall	One	28th May
Ingrebourne Valley	One	1st August
Bedfords Park Havering-atte-Bower	One	6th August
Dagnam Park Harold Hill	One	8th August
Ingrebourne Valley	One	26th August

A more-or-less average year by recent standards.

Annual totals over the last decade have been:

	2018	2017	2016	2015	2014	2013	2012	2011	2010	2009	Average
Numbers	5	2	4	5	10	6	6	7	10	2	5.7

YELLOW-BROWED WARBLER *Phylloscopus inornatus*

Uncommon passage migrant.

Fairlop Waters Barkingside	One	1st January
The Naze	Two	29th September
The Naze	One	2nd and 7th October
Wanstead Flats	One	29th September
The Naze	Five	30th September
Frinton-on-Sea	Two	4th and 6th Ocotober
Wigboro Wick Farm St Osyth	One	6th October
Colne Point	One	7th October
Frinton-on-Sea	Three	7th October
Holland Haven	One	7th and 9th October
Frinton-on-Sea	Two	8th and 9th October
Dagnam Park Harold Hill	One	10th October
The Naze	Two	13th October
The Naze	One	16th and 20th October
Fairlop Waters Barkingside	One	15th October
Bradwell Bird Observatory	One	17th October
Frinton-on-Sea	One	19th October
Gunners Park Shoebury	One	19th October
Wanstead Flats	One	17th October
South Woodham Ferrers	One	24th October
Gunners Park Shoebury	One	29th October
Mardyke Valley	One	2nd November
Thurrock Thameside Mucking	One	3rd November

Just how many go un-noticed both along the coast and inland is anybody's guess.

Annual totals over the last decade have been:

	2018	2017	2016	2015	2014	2013	2012	2011	2010	2009	Average
Numbers	30	12	37	10	5	6	3	3	2	1	10.9

If numbers continue as they are, individual listing of records will soon be a thing of the past!

PALLAS'S LEAF WARBLER *Phylloscopus proregulus* **EBSIP (39, 17, 56)**

Rare passage migrant.

The Naze	Two	17th-18th November	DSt

Annual totals over the last decade have been:

	2018	2017	2016	2015	2014	2013	2012	2011	2010	2009	Average
Numbers	2	1	4	3	0	0	1	3	0	0	1.4

DUSKY WARBLER *Phylloscopus fuscatus fuscatus* **EBSIP (4, 4, 8)**

Vagrant.

The Naze	One	31st October-2nd November	DSt

The first at The Naze since one back in 2001; this is the fifth record from that site.

WILLOW WARBLER *Phylloscopus trochilus trochilus/acredula* UK

***P. t. trochilus* is a common, but declining, summer resident and passage migrant, whilst *P. t. acredula* is probably a fairly common passage migrant.**

Between late April-June, around 85 pairs/singing ♂♂ were reported from 68 sites (125 from 77 sites in 2017) supporting potential breeding habitat. Counts of four of more came only from Tiptree Heath, four (six).

The first spring record was from South Woodham Ferrers on 14th March, with the main spring arrival in the County during the week commencing 6th April. Passage was fairly light but several counts of 6-8 were received during the third week of April.

Autumn passage peaked as usual in late August. All double-figure counts are listed: August: Bradwell Bird Observatory, 70 on 22nd; Chigborough Lakes, 15 on 13th; Frinton-on-Sea, 12 on 24th; Westley Heights Langdon Hills, ten on 10th and 20 on 24th; The Naze, 15 on 10th; Walthamstow Wetlands, 17 on 30th; September: Walthamstow Wetlands, ten on 5th.

The last of the year was one at Belhus Woods Aveley on 2nd October.

COMMON CHIFFCHAFF *Phylloscopus collybita*
Chiffchaff *Phylloscopus collybita collybita/abietinus*

***P. c. collybita* is an abundant summer resident and passage migrant, whilst *P. c. abietinus* is probably a passage migrant. Small numbers, of uncertain subspecies, occur in winter.**

Between mid April-June, around 660 pairs/singing ♂♂ were reported from 253 sites (801 from 242 sites in 2017). Double-figure counts of singing ♂♂ or pairs came from (2017 figures in brackets): Foulness Island, 14; Belhus Woods Aveley, 20 (12); Braintree and Bocking, 20 (20); Fordham, 17 (24); Lamarsh, ten (ten); Mardyke Valley, 14; Pebmarsh, 13 (11); Wormingford, 15; Friday Wood Colchester, 25 (42).

During January and February birds were reported from 33 sites (44 in 2017), all 1-3 except for, Creekside Beckton, 12.

Spring passage was as expected, with large numbers reported from mid-March onwards.

In autumn only two counts of 20 or more were noted as follows: September: Ingrebourne Valley, 20 on 16th; Wanstead Flats, 25 on 23rd.

In November and December, the species was reported from 25 sites (32 in 2017), all records involving 1-4 birds apart from: Sewardstone Marsh, five on 31st December; The Naze, six ringed on 27th December; Walthamstow Wetlands, eight on 2nd November.

2017 Addendum

Friday Wood Colchester – territories totalled 42 in 2017 and 33 in 2016.

Siberian Chiffchaff *Phylloscopus collybita tristis* EBSIP (15, 13, 28)

Rare passage migrant.

A number of claims of this subspecies were received this year. The Identification Panel continues to undertake a full review of the subspecies' status in Essex, together with criteria for identification. All records have been held pending until the review is published in due course.

SEDGE WARBLER *Acrocephalus schoenobaenus*

Common, but declining, summer resident and passage migrant.

Some 336 territories from 77 sites (236 from 79 in 2017) were reported, localities with six or more singing ♂♂ were as follows (2017 figures in brackets): Benfleet Creek, six; Blue House Farm, six; Bradwell Bird Observatory, ten (eight); Manningtree, six (12); Dovercourt, six; Heybridge Gravel Pit, 11 (14); Fishers Green Holyfield, six; Old Hall Marshes, seven (six); Rainham Marshes, 122 (28); The Hythe Colchester, eight (six); The Naze, six (eight); West Canvey Marsh, seven. The species appears to be well recorded in a few main locations but is still showing worrying declines elsewhere.

Apart from an unsubstantiated record on 10th March, some seven days earlier than the previous earliest Essex records, the first bird was at Rainham Marshes on 5th April, with the main arrival beginning from around 11th April.

The last reported bird was at Rainham Marshes on 29th September.

EURASIAN REED WARBLER *Acrocephalus scirpaceus scirpaceus*

Locally common summer resident and passage migrant.

Some 950 singing ♂♂/territories were reported from some 124 sites (577 from 118 in 2017), with ten or more (2017 figures in brackets) from: Blue House Farm, 12 (14); Bowers Marsh, 36 (26); Bradwell Bird Observatory, 16; East Tilbury, ten (12): Hanningfield Reservoir, 18 (26); Heybridge Gravel Pit, 40 (27); Judas Gap Flatford, 22; Mardyke Valley, 15 (11); Vange Marsh, ten; Vange Wick, 14; Marsh Farm South Woodham Ferrers, 97; Marsh Road Burnham-on-Crouch, 20; Maydays Farm West Mersea, ten; Old Hall Marshes, 16; Olympic Park Stratford, 14 (11); Rainham Marshes, 238 (206); Thameside Foulness, 12; Foulness Island, 15 (15); Wallasea Island, 12; Warren Gorge Chafford Gorges, 13; Wivenhoe, 12 (ten).

The first report of the spring was one at Fingringhoe Wick, on 31st March, with the main arrival from around 20th April.

In autumn, there were very few large counts as follows: Rainham Marshes, ten on 4th increasing to 24 on 11th August; Langham, ten on 21st August; Holland Haven, 15 on 1st September.

There was a single October record, one at Rainham Marshes on 17th. The last record of the year was from Walthamstow Wetlands on the exceptionally late dates of 10th and 11th December.

MARSH WARBLER *Acrocephalus palustris*

UK REX EBSIP (22, 15, 37)

Breeds occasionally. Rare migrant and summer visitor.

Rainham Marshes	Singing ♂	RSPB

Breeding was strongly suspected; the second consecutive year at the site.

COMMON GRASSHOPPER WARBLER *Locustella naevia naevia*

UK REX

Uncommon summer resident and passage migrant.

Just 56 records were received from a total of 14 sites, involving 23 singing ♂♂, although at only four sites, Canvey Marsh, Bowers Marsh, East Tilbury and Rainham Marshes were birds heard on more than one day. The only sites with more than one singing ♂ were (2017 figures in brackets): Canvey Wick, three; East Tilbury, three; Rainham Marshes, six (four).

The earliest report was from Rainham Marshes on 14th April, which also reported the last bird of the year on 14th July. The main arrival was from around the third week of April. Number of sites reporting the species, by month, were:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Locations	0	0	0	7	8	1	1	0	0	0	0	0

EURASIAN BLACKCAP *Sylvia atricapilla atricapilla*

Common summer visitor and passage migrant. Small numbers winter.

Some 1,215 singing ♂♂/territories from some 315 sites were reported (1,048 from 233 in 2017); sites with 15 or more were as follows (2017 figures in brackets): Belhus Woods Aveley, 29 (22); Boxted, 15 (17); Braintree and Bocking, 15 (15); Chafford Gorges Grays, 22 (21); Fingringhoe Wick, 21; Friday Wood Colchester, 87 (114); Ingrebourne Valley, 18; Langdon Hills Plotlands, 22 (22); Mardyke Valley, 15 (21); Pebmarsh, 15; Walthamstow Wetlands, 15.

There were 70 reports of some 48 individuals from 38 sites (52 individuals in 2017) in the period from January to the first week in March, with two or more reported from: Ashingdon, two; Fishers Green Holyfield, two; Great Totham, two; Hanningfield Reservoir, three; Rainham Marshes, three;

Rayleigh Mount, two; South Benfleet, two; Waltham Abbey, two; Wickford, three.

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 Belhus Woods Aveley, 12 on 7th August; Chafford Gorge Grays, 22 on 2nd September; Chigborough Lakes, 11 on 10th September; Dagnam Park Harold Hill, 12 on 31st August: Fairlop Waters Barkingside, 17 on 26th August; Fishers Green Holyfield, 18 on 8th August; Mardyke Valley, ten on 26th August; Walthamstow Wetlands, 14 on 5th August; Wanstead Flats, 15 on 12th September. Received counts at coastal watch-points were about average, the September maxima being: The Naze, ten on 15th and 13 on 29th; Two Tree Island, 26 on 3rd and 19 on 17th. No double-figure counts were received during October.

In the last two months, there were 31 records of 24 individuals from 20 sites (30 individuals in 2017) with two or more reported from: Rainham Marshes, three; South Benfleet, two; Wickford, two.

2017 Addendum

Friday Wood Colchester – territories totalled 114 in 2017 and 74 in 2016.

GARDEN WARBLER *Sylvia borin borin*

Declining summer resident and passage migrant.

Reports of some 102 singing ♂♂/territories were received from 75 sites (135 from 70 in 2017). Sites with three or more (2017 figures in brackets): Fingringhoe Wick, four (four); Fishers Green Holyfield, four (five); Hanningfield Reservoir, five (11); Pebmarsh, four. The earliest spring record was from Chigborough Lakes, on 5th April, with the main arrival during the last week of April.

In autumn, just two sites reported two birds or more during August and there were 11 reports for September.

The last record was from Earls Colne on 30th September.

2017 Addendum

Friday Wood Colchester – territories totalled seven in 2017 and five in 2016.

LESSER WHITETHROAT *Sylvia curruca*
Lesser Whitethroat *Sylvia curruca curruca*

Declining summer resident and passage migrant.

Reports of some 205 territories were received from 112 sites (228 from 116 in 2017). Sites with four or more (2017 figures in brackets): Abberton Reservoir, four; Bowers Marsh, five; Braintree and Bocking, five (five); Canvey Wick, five; Chigborough Lakes, eight; Heybridge Gravel Pit, eight (nine); Mersea Island, four; Foulness Island, nine (nine); Rainham Marshes, five (five); The Hythe Colchester, six; The Naze, four (four).

In spring, the first record was from The Hythe Colchester on 11th April, with the main arrival commencing on 14th April. Passage was fairly steady, with high counts of 17 from Canvey Wick on 20th and 15 from Frinton-on-Sea on 22nd April.

In autumn, the highest counts received were: August: Bradwell Bird Observatory, 12 on 22nd, Old Hall Marshes, 12 on 5th, The Naze, 13 on 27th, Wrabness, ten on 30th. In September, the highest numbers were: Frinton-on-Sea, 12 on 1st, Gunners Park Shoebury, 12 on 2nd, Old Hall Marshes, ten on 2nd, The Naze, 17 on 2nd. The last report was a bird at The Hythe Colchester on 14th November.

2017 Addendum

Friday Wood Colchester – territories totalled eight in 2017 and three in 2016.

Siberian Lesser Whitethroat *Sylvia curruca blythii*

Vagrant.

A bird showing characteristics of this race was present on Foulness Island in December. The photographs point to this bird being blythii, which all wintering birds in the United Kingdom that have had their DNA taken have proved to be. The record is still being considered by the Identification Panel.

COMMON WHITETHROAT *Sylvia communis communis*

Summer visitor and passage migrant.

Some 1,365 singing ♂♂/territories from 217 sites (897 from 215 in 2017) were reported. Sites with 15 or more singing ♂♂ being (2017 figures in brackets): Bowers Marsh, 16; Braintree and Bocking, 25 (25); Burnham-on-Crouch, 15; Fordham, 16 (28); Foulness Island, 179 (193); Friday Wood Colchester, 36 (29); Haven Point Wakering Stairs 16; Heybridge Gravel Pit, 15; Little Baddow, 15; Mardyke Valley, 18; Nevendon Washlands, 20; Orsett Fen, 15 (15); Rainham Marshes, 118 (36); St Lawrence Bay, 23; The Hythe Colchester, 16; The Naze, 15; Two Tree Island, 30; Wormingford, 18 (21). Although lower than last year the Foulness Island count is notable.

In spring, the first record was on 24th March from Wrabness with the main arrival commencing around 14th April. Passage was good and peaked around 19th to 30th April, with double-figure counts coming from several widely scattered sites.

Autumn passage was again high, as in recent years. The highest counts in August were at: Bradwell Bird Observatory, 35 on 22nd; The Naze, 20 on 10th; Walthamstow Wetlands, 20 on 11th. September: The Naze, 20 on 7th. The last record was from Abberton Reservoir on 9th October.

2017 Addendum

Friday Wood Colchester – territories totalled 29 in 2017 and 30 in 2016.

DARTFORD WARBLER *Sylvia undata dartfordiensis*

UK EBSIP (46, 65, 111)

Scarce, mainly winter, visitor.

Dartford Warbler (RICHARD ALLEN)

Abberton Reservoir	♂	from 2017- 2nd January	EWT
Heybridge Gravel Pit	♀	2nd-11th December	SDW, CDa
Wivenhoe	First winter or ♀	20th February	RA

In addition, there were two unsubstantiated records received.

An average year.

Winter totals over the last decade have been

	2018/17	2017/16	2016/15	2015/14	2014/13	2013/12	2012/11	2011/10	2010/09	2009/08	Average
Numbers	5	2	8	2	1	1	0	0	7	8	3.3

2017 Addendum

Weymarks Dengie	♀	5th, 11th and 22nd December	PWo

MOLTONI'S/SUBALPINE WARBLER *Sylvia alpina/cantillans* BBRC (10, 2, 12)

Vagrant.

Subalpine Warbler taxonomy is in a state of flux. What was originally considered one species has now been split into two: the monotypic Moltoni's Warbler (*Sylvia subalpina*); Subalpine Warbler (*Sylvia cantillans*), of which the four races are split in to two taxonomic groups 'Western Subalpine Warbler (*S. c. cantillans/albistrata*) and 'Eastern Subalpine Warbler (*S. c. iberiae/inornata*). Both species are very similar and both genetic and field identification remain fluid. All records of both species are required by BBRC for assessment.

In the meantime, the species pair and statistics will continue to be listed as shown above. It is quite possible that the dozen Essex records will never be identifiable to species.

COMMON FIRECREST *Regulus ignicapilla ignicapilla* REX

Breeds occasionally. Otherwise, uncommon passage migrant and winter visitor.

Once again there were no confirmed breeding records, although singing ♂♂ were reported from three sites across the County (four in 2017and 11 in 2016) between 27th March and 5th May.

Records were received from eight sites in January and nine in February (seven in both months in 2017, 15 in January 2016 and 11 in February 2016). Long staying birds were at Rainham Marshes and Wanstead Park.

Records of up to 11 birds (The Naze on 27th) were recorded at seven coastal sites in March, six (The Naze on 6th) at seven coastal sites in April and none recorded at coastal sites in May. A maximum of two birds were recorded at ten inland sites in March, with birds at three inland sites in both April and May.

The first autumn record was a single bird at Highams Park Lake on 10th September, with single birds at a further two inland sites. No records were received of birds at coastal sites during September. Passage movement was very light in October with only single birds recorded at one coastal and four inland sites.

In November and December, records came from 11 (four coastal) and nine (one coastal) sites respectively. All records were of single birds apart from (maximum counts): Hockley Woods, three on 9th December; Stifford Hall grounds, two on 13th November; The Naze, two on 17th November; Wivenhoe, two on 6th December. Long Stayers were at Belhus Woods Aveley, Brook Farm Upminster and Wanstead Flats.

Estimated monthly totals were:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Numbers	11	9	50	25	3	1	0	0	3	6	20	12
Locations	8	9	17	10	3	1	0	0	3	5	11	9

GOLDCREST *Regulus regulus regulus*

Common resident, passage migrant and winter visitor.

A minimum of 65 singing ♂♂/territories was reported from 42 sites (75 from 66 in 2017, 75 from 55 in 2016), including 11 in Friday Wood Colchester, but the species was observed during the period April – July at a further 88 sites.

In January and February, a minimum of 730 birds was reported from 152 sites (970 from 164 in 2017, 1390 from 194 in 2016). Counts of ten or more were received from: Chigborough Lakes, ten on 2nd January; Copford, 15 on 1st January; Wrabness, 21 on 21st February.

Spring passage was light, the only double-figure counts coming from Wanstead Park, 11 on 10th March and The Naze, ten on 30th March.

Autumn passage was stronger than recent years, nine coastal sites reported double-figure counts through October and November; Bradwell Bird Observatory, 11, 12, and ten respectively on 5th, 11th and 12th November; Frinton-on-Sea, 33 and 14 respectively on 19th and 30th October, 28, 18, 11 and 20 respectively on 10th, 11th, 12th and 20th November; Gunners Park Shoebury, 12 on 20th October and 20 on 29th October; Hamford Water, 25 on 10th November; Harwich, 20 on 20th October; Holland Haven, ten on 2nd October; The Naze, 70, 20, 13, 11, 23 on 20th, 21st, 22nd, 27th and 28th October and 20, 12, 12, 30, 12, 14 respectively on 1st, 3rd, 10th, 17th, 18th and 24th November; Wrabness, ten on 17th November. Double-figure counts of between ten and 21 were received from a further ten inland sites during October and November.

A minimum of 420 birds was reported in December from 65 sites. Counts of ten or more were received from: Beeleigh, ten on 4th December; Belhus Woods Aveley, 18 on 4th December; Chafford Gorges Grays, 12 on 12th December and ten on 13th December; Chigborough Lakes, 11 on 3rd December; Hockley Woods, ten on 9th December; Langdon Hills Plotlands, 14 on 6th December; Wanstead Park, 17 on 3rd December.

2017 Addendum

Friday Wood Colchester – territories totalled 16 in 2017 and nine in 2016

EURASIAN WREN *Troglodytes troglodytes indigenus/troglodytes*

***T. t. indigenus* is an abundant and widespread resident. *T. t. troglodytes* may occur as a rare passage migrant.**

The Wren's current UK population estimate is the highest for any species and, on the latest figures, one in ten of the UK's breeding birds is a Wren. Abundance can vary sharply from year to year and numbers in the UK can be greatly depleted by cold winters.

Singing ♂♂ were only reported from 18 sites, a decrease over previous years. Pairs/territories were reported from 23 sites including 50 pairs at Friday Wood Colchester, 30+ pairs in the Braintree and Bocking area and 83 territories at Rainham Marshes. Possible/probable breeding was reported from 138 sites. Breeding was confirmed at Bowers Marsh, Canvey Wick, High Woods Colchester, Cornmill Meadows Waltham Abbey, Olympic Park Stratford, Thurrock Thameside Mucking, The Naze, Vange Wick, Vange Marsh, West Canvey Marsh, Walthamstow Wetlands and Wanstead Park. Additionally, recently fledged young were reported from Belhus Woods Aveley, Brook Farm Upminster, Chafford Gorges Grays, Langdon Hills Plotlands, Mardyke Valley and Orsett Fen.

2017 Addendum

Friday Wood Colchester – territories totalled 117 in 2017 and 89 in 2016

EURASIAN NUTHATCH *Sitta europaea caesia*

Sedentary resident, currently stable.

Forty pairs/singing ♂♂ were reported from 28 sites and possible/probable breeding was reported from 17 sites. Breeding was confirmed at Belchamp Walter, Pebmarsh, Colchester, Saffron Walden, Chalkney Wood Earls Colne, Connaught Water Epping Forest, Lake Meadows Billericay, Belhus Woods Aveley and Thorndon Park North. Breeding is almost certainly under-recorded.

Records came from a further 39 sites between April and July, and at 81 more sites during the rest of the year.

Counts of between three and ten birds were reported from 29 sites, the highest counts being: Thorndon Park North, 11 on 14th April; Weald Park, 14 on 15th July.

EURASIAN TREECREEPER *Certhia familiaris britannica*

Common resident.

Forty-two pairs/singing ♂♂ were reported from 19 sites and possible/probable breeding was reported from 13 sites. Breeding records were received from five sites: Ardleigh Reservoir, Boxted, Pebmarsh, Leyton Flats and Mardyke Valley.

Breeding is almost certainly under-recorded.

Records came from a further 40 locations between April and July, and at 73 more sites during the rest of the year.

Counts of between three and six birds were reported from 30 sites, with the highest being: Shut Heath Wood Great Totham, ten on 23rd March.

ROSY STARLING *Pastor roseus* EBSIP (16, 5, 21)

Vagrant.

Colne Point	Two adults	3rd June	CBa, SCo CJM-G
Rayleigh	One adult	9th-13th June	JBu

One other unsubstantiated record was received.

The Rayleigh bird was in a built-up urban area and proves the point that rare birds can really turn up anywhere! This was the largest influx yet recorded into Essex, two in 1997 being the only other 'multiple' arrival.

COMMON STARLING *Sturnus vulgaris vulgaris* UK

Abundant but declining resident, passage migrant and winter visitor.

No breeding counts were received but breeding was confirmed at 27 sites.

The largest post- breeding flock containing juvenile birds reported was from Rainham Marshes, 200 on 1st June. Flocks of between 20 and 60 birds containing juveniles were reported from a further ten sites.

Notable first winter counts: Rainham Marshes, 600 on 1st March and 800 on 11th February; Wat Tyler, 1,000 on 29th January; Blue House Farm, 750 on 1st February; Stow Marsh North Fambridge, 1,800 on 11th February; Wormingford, 600 on 6th March. Counts of between 50 and 500 birds were reported from a further 51 sites.

The highest counts in the autumn were from: Gunners Park Shoebury, 1,000 on 17th September; Beckton, 2,000 on 28th October; Canvey Point, 2,000 on 28th October; Wanstead Flats, 1,600 on 28th October; Leigh Creek, 1,500 on 12th September; Stow Marsh North Fambridge, 1,100 on 14th September; Holland Haven, 1,500+ on 28th October; Frinton-on-Sea, 5,471 on 28th October. Counts of between 50 and 1,000 birds were reported from a further 47 sites.

During the second winter, the highest counts were reported from: Vange Marsh, 1,000 on 9th November; Rainham Marshes, 2,500 on 21st November; Bowers Marsh, 1,000 on 14th November; Wallasea Island, 1,000 on 4th and 24th December. Counts of between 50 and 1,000 birds were reported from a further 48 sites.

RING OUZEL *Turdus torquatus torquatus* UK

Passage migrant.

The earliest spring record this year related to a single bird at Wanstead Flats on 3rd April. Reports received during spring migration were slightly up on last year and involved 25 individuals from 13 sites (23 at 12 in 2017 and 16 at 15 in 2016). The largest count was five at Rainham Marshes on 19th

April with the majority of other records involving singles. The last spring report received was a single ♀ at Wigboro Wick Farm St Osyth on 2nd May.

The first returning autumn bird was a ♀ at Warren Gorge Chafford Gorge on 25th September, the only September record.

Autumn passage was very poor with just 13 individuals at eight sites (25 at 17 in 2017 and 80 at 27 in 2016). The last of the year was at Wigboro Wick Farm St Osyth from 21st – 27th November.

Estimated monthly totals were:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Numbers	0	0	0	26	1	0	0	0	1	8	3	0
Locations	0	0	0	13	1	0	0	0	1	5	3	0

COMMON BLACKBIRD *Turdus merula merula*

Abundant resident, passage migrant and winter visitor.

Counts of more than 15 singing/territorial ♂♂/pairs in the breeding season were as follows: Friday Wood Colchester, 40; Braintree and Bocking, 75; Foulness Island, 32; Rainham Marshes, 31; Belhus Woods Aveley, 17; Mardyke Valley, 16; Langdon Hills Plotlands, 15.

In the first winter the highest counts were well down on 2017 with the highest being 65 at Stow Marsh North Fambridge on 8th March; other counts of 30 or more were January: 34 (peak count) at Chigborough Lakes on 26th; 31 at Langdon Hills Plotlands on 4th; February: 32 at Thames Barrier Park on 14th.

Counts of visible migrants at Frinton-on-Sea produced 255 during March (166 in 2017) and 641 in October (359 in 2017), although clearly observer coverage and weather conditions are two factors that make such totals variable from year to year. The highest single report of note was 107 at The Naze on 28th October. Double-figure flocks of 30 or more were reported as follows: October: 50 at The Naze on 17th; 50 at Brightlingsea on 28th; 40+ at Wanstead Flats on 17th; 20 at Cornmill Meadows Waltham Abbey on 19th. November: 50 at The Naze on 1st and 17th; 40 at Rainham Marshes and Chigborough Lakes on 1st and 26th respectively with 40 at the latter on 7th; 39 at Mardyke Valley on 15th and 38 on 18th; 30 at Chafford Gorges Grays on 4th. The only December count of 30 or more was a roost count in Epping Forest on 28th of 50.

2017 Addendum

Friday Wood Colchester – territories totalled 82 in 2017 and 62 in 2016

FIELDFARE *Turdus pilaris* UK

Common passage migrant and winter visitor. Has summered.

Three-figure flocks in the first winter period increased sharply on last year with records from 42 sites (23 in 2017 and 27 in 2016). The largest reported flock related to 550 in Wormingford on 3rd March. Others of 250+ were (site maximum in each case), in January: 500 at Tillingham on 14th; (more of a movement than a flock) 460 past Frinton-on-Sea in 1.5hrs on 17th. February: 400 at Walthamstow Wetlands on 27th; 400 at Wanstead Flats on 28th; 346 at Orsett Fen on 4th; 300 at Bowers Marsh on 9th; 260 at Perry Green Bradwell-juxta-Coggeshall on 11th; 250 near Hazeleigh Wood on 5th.

The last report of the first winter period was one at Walthamstow Marsh on 16th April.

The first record of the second winter period was a single on 13th September at Wivenhoe. As with the last couple of years there were no four-figure flocks reported. However, the number of three-figure flocks was up on 2017 with reports coming from 26 sites (14 in 2017 and 24 in 2016). Aside of the 950 past Frinton-on-Sea over 8.5hrs on the 24th and 25th October, reports more than 250 were (site maximum in each case), October: 836 at Wanstead Flats on 28th. November: 350 at East Mersea on 25th; 296 at Great Loveney Hall Mount Bures on 24th. December: 500 at Thurrock Thameside Mucking on 9th; 310 at Orsett Fen on 3rd; 289 at East Tilbury on 6th; 277 at St Mary's Lane Upminster on 10th.

REDWING *Turdus iliacus* UK

Redwing *Turdus iliacus iliacus*

Common passage migrant and winter visitor.

Reports were again widespread in the first winter period but generally in small numbers, although reported three-figure flocks were slightly up at seven (five in 2017 and 2016). January: 200 at Colchester on 15th. February: 120 at Hanningfield Reservoir on 1st; 200 at Chafford Hundred on 28th. March: 252 at Brook Farm Upminster on 2nd; 211 at Orsett Fen (maximum count) on 5th; 200 at Dagenham Chase and Tolleshunt d'Arcy on 17th and 24th respectively.

Visible migration in significant numbers was again mainly noted at Frinton-on-Sea in March but reported numbers were down on last year with a total of only 452 birds reported. The last reported birds of the first winter involved two at Connaught Water Epping Forest on 16th April.

The first report of the second winter period was three at dawn at Brook Farm Upminster on 9th September. Return passage reports were again received from Frinton-on-Sea with a monthly total for October of 922 birds in 74 hrs.

Three-figure flocks were reported at 17 sites (19 in 2017), October: 530 (maximum count) at Lockwood Reservoir Walthamstow Wetlands on 21st; 353 at Wanstead Flats on 28th; 262 at Walthamstow Marsh on 20th; 225 (maximum count) at Rainham Marshes on 11th; 201 at Warley on 8th; 200 at Walthamstow Wetlands on 28th. November: 180 at Twinstead on 26th. December: 400 at Canvey Wick on 28th; 210 at Benfleet on 27th; 200 at Fairlop Waters Barkingside on 8th.

Icelandic Redwing *Turdus iliacus coburni* EBSIP (5, 0, 0)

Probably a very scarce passage migrant and winter visitor.

A bird showing characteristics of this subspecies was photographed in Colchester in February (see photograph opposite). Although thought to be a very scarce winter visitor and passage migrant the only previous County records have involved either museum specimens, trapped and ringed, or dead birds. The Identification Panel is currently considering the identification criteria of the sub-species and will report on this record in due course.

SONG THRUSH *Turdus philomelos, philomelos/clarkei* UK EX REX

***T. p. clarkei* is common and largely resident, whilst *T. p. philomelos* is a passage migrant and winter visitor.**

The total of possible, probable and confirmed breeders (using British Trust for Ornithology criteria) was at least 567 at 211 sites (348 at 217 in 2017). 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. When no information is given, it has therefore been necessary to assume that every BirdTrack report, which gave a breeding code, involved just one singing ♂/territorial ♂/pair, regardless of the number of birds reported. In reality, no doubt, many counts will have involved several singing ♂♂ 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 six sites: 13 at Friday Wood Colchester; 20 at Langdon Hills Plotlands; 14 at Mardyke Valley, 12 at Belhus Woods Aveley; 10+ at Braintree.

In the first winter double-figure counts came from 11 sites, the highest being 22 at Mardyke Valley on 22nd February. In addition, a nocturnal movement of 18 was recorded over Chafford Hundred on 13th March.

Autumn passage was heavier than the last couple of years at Frinton-on-Sea with a total October count of 539 in 29.75 hours (129 in 2017 and 279 in 2016).

Fieldfare, White Colne, March (GLEN MOORE)

Redwing, Colchester, February (SEAN NIXON)

Left: Spotted Flycatcher, Halstead, May (TONY WELLS)

Below: Black Redstart, University of Essex, Colchester, January (SEAN NIXON)

Elsewhere in October, double-figure reports were as follows: 25 at Cornmill Meadows Waltham Abbey on 15th; 23 at Belhus Woods Aveley on 14th; 21 at The Naze on 28th; 20 (maximum count) at Wanstead Flats on 23rd; 19 (maximum) at Rainham Marshes on 17th; 15 at Chafford Gorges Grays on 16th; 13 at Mardyke Valley on 18th (remaining into November).

The flock at Mardyke Valley remained into December, but reduced slightly to ten on 10th, the only double-figure count in the month.

2017 Addendum

Friday Wood Colchester – territories totalled 30 in 2017 and 15 in 2016

MISTLE THRUSH *Turdus viscivorus viscivorus* UK

Locally common resident and partial migrant.

The total of possible, probable and confirmed breeders (using BTO Criteria) was at least 153 at 89 sites (115 at 79 in 2017). 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. 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.

Seven sites recorded two territories, somewhat down on the ten recorded last year, whilst a further four sites recorded three territories, (Belhus Woods Aveley, Boxted, Gosfield and Mardyke Valley). A further five sites recorded 3+ territories: Friday Wood Colchester, four; Hainault Forest, four; Rainham Marshes, four; Wormingford, four; Middleton to Great Henny, seven.

The largest post-breeding flock involved 30 birds at Leyton on 20th September with 18 being at Olympic Park Stratford on 15th August. A further four double-figure flocks were reported, all of less than 15 birds.

2017 Addendum

Friday Wood Colchester – territories totalled two in 2017 and seven in 2016

SPOTTED FLYCATCHER *Muscicapa striata striata* UK REX

Declining summer resident and passage migrant.

Only four pairs were proved to have bred, a big reduction on previous years (seven in 2017, eight in 2016). Interestingly, of these four, two pairs were at the same location and one pair at another location had a second pair close by.

There were pairs, singing ♂♂or single birds present at a further 18 sites (20 in 2017, 16 in 2016) in the breeding season, with singing ♂♂ or pairs showing nesting or feeding behaviour from 11 sites and single birds at a further seven sites.

Once again most of the reports relating to breeding birds came from large gardens, churchyards or parkland. This year locations included a school grounds and a tennis and cricket club.

Spring passage was light and took place during the second half of May. The first bird recorded was inland at Wanstead Park on 11th May, followed by birds arriving at the coast with one at The Naze on 13th May followed by birds at Frinton-on-Sea, The Hythe Colchester and South Woodham Ferrers.

Autumn passage started in mid-August and continued through to 1st October. Reports in August came from 32 sites (excluding for this purpose sites holding confirmed or probable breeders) and were mainly of one or two birds. Counts of three or more were made at seven sites with three at Hainault Forest and Bonnetts Wood Upminster; four at Braintree, Fairlop Waters Barkingside, Walthamstow Wetlands and Wanstead Flats; and a maximum of eight at Dagnam Park Harold Hill on 27th August.

In September reports came from 29 sites and most records were of one or two birds with counts of four at The Naze on 1st, three there on 17th and three at both Ingrebourne Valley and Leez Reservoir Hartford End. The last bird of the year was reported from Wanstead Flats on 1st October.

Estimated monthly totals using maximum count per site per month were:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Numbers	0	0	0	0	19	18	15	64	57	1	0	0

EUROPEAN ROBIN *Erithacus rubecula melophilus/rubecula*

***E. r. melophilus* is an abundant, widespread and relatively sedentary resident whilst *E. r. rubecula* is a relatively common passage migrant and also winter visitor in small numbers.**

Wintering birds remaining from 2017 swelled the numbers at the start of the year with several high counts reported (site maximum in each case). January: Chafford Gorges Grays, 34 on 16th; Langdon Hills Plotlands, 26 on 24th; Belhus Woods Aveley, 27 on 25th. February: Langdon Hills Plotlands, 29 on 15th.

Singing birds were recorded in every month, with streetlights often encouraging ♂♂ to sing, even at night. High counts of singing ♂♂or territories were as follows: Belhus Woods Aveley, 19 territories; Braintree and Bocking area, 25 pairs (considered stable); Chafford Gorges Grays, 17 territories; Chigborough Lakes, 17 singing; High Beach Epping Forest, 29 territories; Flitch Green Little Dunmow, 20 singing; Friday Wood Colchester, 45 singing; Heybridge Basin, 12 singing; Langdon Hills Plotlands, 17 territories; Mardyke Valley, 17 territories; Rainham Marshes, 27 territories. Breeding was confirmed by observing fledglings or adults carrying faecal sac or food at 12 sites.

Counts from Frinton-on-Sea were reduced compared to 2017 with counts from the undercliff totaling 27 over two days in September and 146 over six days in October (143 and 110 respectively in 2017) with a peak count of 36 on 14th October. Inland, none of the regularly watched sites reported any clear signs of influxes.

2017 Addendum

Friday Wood Colchester – territories totalled 116 in 2017 and 71 in 2016

BLUETHROAT *Luscinia svecica svecica/cyanecula* EBSIP (47, 5, 52)

Rare passage migrant.

White-spotted Bluethroat *Luscinia svecica cyanecula* EBSIP (12, 4, 16)

Vagrant.

Clacton-on-Sea	One	19th March	ACm
Walthamstow Wetlands	One	23rd March	DD-L

The first multiple occurrence since 2002 when there were singles at Holland Haven (White-spotted) and Cudmore Grove East Mersea (Red-spotted).

Annual totals over the last decade have been:

	2018	2017	2016	2015	2014	2013	2012	2011	2010	2009	Average
Numbers	2	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0.4

COMMON NIGHTINGALE *Luscinia megarhynchos megarhynchos* UK REX

Summer resident and passage migrant.

The first record of the year came from Fingringhoe Wick on 10th April. In total, 128 singing ♂♂ were reported from 31 sites (2017: 103 at 33; 2016: 119 at 47). Friday Wood Colchester held a total of 26 singing ♂♂ whilst Fingringhoe Wick held a maximum of 20 birds on territories, which was a little down on 2017 (25 singing ♂♂ in 2017, 15 in 2016, 30 in 2015). Other counts of more than five singing ♂♂ were as follows: Canvey Wick, six on 23rd April; East Tilbury, six on 19th April; Hazeleigh Wood, ten on 27th April; Wakering Stairs, seven in May.

There was little evidence of definite breeding but breeding was confirmed at East Tilbury where a ♂ was seen at a nest site with food and young birds were seen in Hazeleigh Wood. The last record of the year was a single bird at Fingringhoe Wick on 26th August.

2017 Addendum
Friday Wood Colchester – territories totalled 37 in 2017 and 22 in 2016

EUROPEAN PIED FLYCATCHER *Ficedula hypoleuca hypoleuca* UK

Rare spring, but fairly common autumn, passage migrant.

There were two spring records, both at The Naze: one on 12th-13th April and one on 1st May.

Autumn passage was exceptional by the standard of recent years (the strongest since at least 1997 but still way short of the numbers recorded in the 1980s and previously). Most records came in August with birds being seen from 2nd to 13th and then again from 21st to the end of the month. In the earlier period there were at least 36 birds at 14 locations and in the later period at least 30 birds at nine locations. There were two distinct "falls". The first was unusually early, on 3rd, when there were 11 at The Naze (assumed in the totals to have included three which had been seen there on 1st), seven at Holland Haven and two at Colne Point. The second was on 21st, when there were 13 at The Naze, two at Frinton-on-Sea and one at Holland Haven. In each period a marked arrival on the coast preceded a scatter of inland records, possibly suggesting onward movement or maybe just a reflection of the different migration patterns typically shown by this species inland and on the coast (see Wood 2007).

Early September produced a further nine birds (plus one remaining from August) at nine locations. Passage continued until 9th September with one final sighting on 22nd September at Stansted Airport Lagoons Takeley, much the furthest inland of the year and the first seen by the observer at that location in 26 years.

In total some 75 birds were recorded in the autumn from 25 sites, of which 15 were inland (almost all either close to the Thames Estuary or in the Lee Valley). Apart from records already mentioned above, the only reports involving more than 1-2 birds were three in the Mardyke Valley on 5th August and three at The Naze on 29th August.

Autumn passage is summarised in the table below:

	July	August				September		
Week commencing	30th	6th	13th	20th	27th	3rd	10th	17th
Numbers	26	10	2	18	10	7	0	1
Locations	7	9	1	5	6	6	0	1

RED-BREASTED FLYCATCHER *Ficedula parva* EBSIP (29, 4, 33)

Rare passage migrant.

Frinton-on-Sea	One	9th October	PBr

None for a decade and then singles in 2017 and 2018.

BLACK REDSTART *Phoenicurus ochruros gibraltariensis* UK REX

Small breeding and wintering population. Passage migrant in small numbers.

In the first winter period all records were of single birds: Tilbury Fort on 16th; January; Galleywood on 22nd January; Tilbury, a ♂ on 30th (possibly the above bird); Rainham Marshes on 12th February. There were two locations that held a bird for extended periods: East Mersea from 31st January to 26th March, reported as a first winter ♂; University of Essex Colchester, a ♂ from 10th January to 5th March that favoured the area around the amphitheatre.

Reports of birds likely to have been on spring passage (as distinct from breeders) were reported from 17 sites (11 in 2017 and 18 in 2016). Passage lasted from 14th March to 5th May and was

mostly coastal and of single birds. Noticeable influxes were recorded on 19th March, 2nd April, 7th April and 13th April with five birds recorded on 7th April at Frinton-on-Sea. Single birds were recorded at four inland sites in April.

No breeding was confirmed and only one singing ♂ was recorded, observed in Olympic Park Stratford on 20th May. A ♀ or immature bird was recorded on three days between 6th and 11th June and again on 8th July in a garden in Tiptree, suggesting it had remained in the area during the breeding season.

Autumn passage was very light and occurred only through October. Five single birds were recorded at five different sites, all coastal or wetland areas. A single bird was recorded in the winter, a ♀ on 20th December at Bradwell Power Station.

Estimated monthly totals using maximum count per site per month were:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Numbers	5	3	23	20	2	2	3	2	0	5	0	1

COMMON REDSTART *Phoenicurus phoenicurus phoenicurus* UK

Regular passage migrant in small numbers. Bred until 1993.

The spring migration was light, the first bird being seen at Wanstead Flats on 5th April and the last two birds on 1st May at Wanstead Flats and The Naze. Other reports came from eight more sites (nine in 2017, 20 in 2016) between 11th and 26th April. Most reports were of single birds, a minimum of 12, half were coastal around The Naze, half were recorded in the south of the County. Two birds were reported at Ingrebourne Valley and Rainham Marshes in mid-April. No reports were received for June or July.

The first bird of the autumn was at Ingrebourne Valley on 13th August. Autumn passage was very light compared to previous years, with a minimum total of around 21 birds at 14 sites (31 at 19 in 2017, 75 at 33 in 2016). Birds were confined to the coast and south of the County. Counts of more than two birds were recorded at: Gunners Park Shoebury, three on 22nd August; Rainham Marshes, three on 30th August. The last bird of the year was seen on 16th October at Frinton-on-Sea.

Estimated monthly totals using maximum count per site per month were:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Numbers	0	0	0	14	2	0	0	15	6	3	0	0

WHINCHAT *Saxicola rubetra* UK

Regular passage migrant. Formerly bred.

The first spring record was a single bird at Walthamstow Wetlands on 20th April. Passage was light with a minimum of 23 birds seen at 17 sites (2017: 19 from nine; 2016: 40 from 22). All records were either coastal or in the south of the County. Most records were of single birds, but three were recorded at Abberton Reservoir on 1st May; two at Blue House Farm on 26th April; two at East Mersea on 29th April, two at Fobbing Marsh on 29th April and two at Rainham Marshes on 25th and 28th April. The last spring sighting was one at The Naze on 30th May.

No breeding behaviour was observed and no birds were seen in June and only one in July, on 20th at Gunpowder Park Waltham Abbey.

Autumn migration started on 2nd August with two birds at Bowers Marsh and one at Hall Farm Holyfield but peaked in the last week of August and first week in September, a little later than in 2017. Numbers were higher than 2017, most sightings were coastal, including estuaries, or at reservoirs and gravel pits. Passage during the main period is summarised in the table below, showing totals of the highest count of birds at all sites in each week:

	July	August				September					October	
Week commencing	29th	5th	12th	19th	26th	2nd	9th	16th	23rd	30th	7th	14th
Numbers	3	6	12	38	53	95	40	13	12	0	4	2
Locations	2	3	7	15	18	25	17	8	8	0	3	1

Passage had petered out by October with just six sightings at four sites. Counts of eight or more in autumn were all coastal as follows: Old Hall Marshes, eight on 25th August; Frinton-on-Sea, 11 on 5th September; Holland Haven, 13 on 5th September; The Hythe Colchester, eight on 6th and 11th September; The Naze/Walton Hall Marshes, 14 on 5th and 20 on 6th September. The last bird of the year was seen on 15th November at Frinton-on-Sea.

EUROPEAN STONECHAT *Saxicola rubicola hibernans* REX

Small breeding population. Regular passage migrant and winter visitor.

Possibly a poor or under-reported year with only four pairs reported from three locations: Foulness Island (one pair - two young), East Tilbury (two pairs – two young) and Rainham Marshes (one pair – two young). Singing ♂♂s were reported from two more sites: East Mersea and Thurrock Thameside Mucking.

Breeding records for the last decade are summarised in the table below:

	2018	2017	2016	2015	2014	2013	2012	2011	2010	2009
Pairs/territories	4	11	10	5	5	5	3	2	6	6
Locations	3	7	7	2	5	3	2	2	5	6

The highest counts of the first winter period were: January: Rainham Marshes, six on 13th and eight on 26th; The Naze, six on 27th; February: The Naze, ten on 8th; Bowers Marsh, ten on 9th; Rainham Marshes, ten on 17th.

The highest counts in the autumn were: August: Coalhouse Fort East Tilbury, three on 2nd; Rainham Marshes, three on 20th; September: Rainham Marshes, nine on 29th; Old Hall Marshes, eight on 30th; October: Colne Point, eight on 2nd; Rainham Marshes, 12 on 17th; Holland Haven, eight on 21st.

The highest counts of the second winter period were: November: Rainham Marshes, seven on 9th; December: Thurrock Thameside Mucking, six on 9th; Rainham Marshes, six on 14th and 28th.

Estimated monthly totals using maximum count per site per month were:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Numbers	104	105	41	16	7	10	10	11	78	126	77	76
Locations	49	46	25	13	5	4	5	6	30	49	36	37

SIBERIAN/STEJNEGER'S STONECHAT *Saxicola maurus*/stejnegeri* BBRC (3, 1, 4)

Vagrant.

Of all the passerines on the British List, Stonechat taxonomy has been and continues to be the most turbulent (see *British Birds*, 'Eastern Stonechats' in Britain. September 2019. 112: 517-534.) Recently Stejneger's Stonechat has been separated from the five taxa that now comprise Siberian Stonechat, but there is little doubt that this situation is likely to change in future.

None of the Essex records have been sub-specifically identified and so for now the species pair and statistics will continue to be listed as shown above. It is quite possible that the four Essex records will never be identifiable to species.

NORTHERN WHEATEAR *Oenanthe oenanthe*

Northern Wheatear *Oeananthe oenanthe oenanthe*

Occasionally breeds. Common passage migrant.

The earliest spring migrants were singles at The Hythe Colchester and Brook Farm Upminster on 14th March. Spring passage occurred a week later than in 2017 peaking in the last two weeks of April and can best be tabulated as follows:

	March			April					May		
Week commencing	11th	18th	25th	1st	8th	15th	22nd	29th	6th	13th	20th
Numbers	9	2	12	20	47	39	144	226	11	8	4
Locations	6	2	8	10	21	17	33	37	9	7	3

Double-figure counts came from ten locations but the bulk of these records came on just two days: 29th April: 20 at East Mersea; 11 at Fobbing Marsh; ten at Blue House Farm. 1st May: ten at Bowers Marsh; ten at Cudmore Grove East Mersea; 29 at Frinton-on-Sea; 22 at Tilbury; 11 at Walthamstow Wetlands; 26 at The Naze. The last birds of the spring were three at The Naze on 30th May.

There were no records in June and only three in early July, all of single birds at three different locations.

Autumn migration commenced on 31st July with single birds at Blue House Farm and Stow Marsh North Fambridge. This was a week later than in 2017 and the migration finished a week earlier. Double-figure counts came from three locations early in September: 12 at Blue House Farm on 4th; 28 at Frinton-on-Sea on 5th; 17 at Holland Haven on 5th.

	August				September					October		
Week commencing	5th	12th	19th	26th	2nd	9th	16th	23th	30th	7th	14th	21st
Numbers	13	24	47	37	92	27	17	25	9	9	8	1
Locations	9	13	21	18	23	16	10	13	6	6	6	1

The final sightings of the year were single birds at Frinton-on-Sea on 14th-15th and Holland Haven on 17th November, quite possibly the same bird.

Greenland Wheatear *Oenanthe oenanthe leucorrhoa*

Passage migrant.

Six birds showing characteristics of this race were reported (four in 2017, five in 2016), all in spring. One ♂ at Stow Marsh North Fambridge on 20th April; one ♂ at Canvey Island on 29th April; one ♂ at Abberton Reservoir on 1st May; two (♂ and ♀) at Blue House Farm on 1st May; one ♂ at Bradwell Bird Observatory on 3rd May.

However, it seems likely that many of the high numbers of Wheatear recorded at the very end of April and early May were of this race, which typically moves through much later than the nominate race.

HOUSE SPARROW *Passer domesticus domesticus* UK

Locally abundant resident.

Slightly fewer than 2,900 records were received (2,849 in 2017). Breeding continues to be under-reported with possible breeding at 15 sites, probable at a further 30 and confirmed breeding at 21.

In all, 20 counts of 100 or more were received from nine sites (12 in 2017). The largest count was 215 between St Lawrence and Bradwell Bird Observatory, with 181 of these located in St Lawrence Bay itself where there were also 157 on 17th June and 135 on 18th February. Elsewhere there were up to 140 (16th August) at Rainham Marshes and up to 130 (11th September) at Orsett Fen. In addition, there were a further 40 counts from 21 sites of 50-99 birds.

EURASIAN TREE SPARROW *Passer montanus montanus* UK REX

Declining passage migrant. Bred until 1999.

A poor year, with perhaps no more than 18 birds involved (65 in 2017).

Satisfactory records came from just six locations in 2017. One came to peanuts in a garden at Richmond's Green Thaxted on 7th and 14th January whilst three came to roost in brambles on 20th February at Beaumont. At Frinton-on-Sea two flew south on 27th August and three on 22nd September. A single bird was at Coalhouse Fort East Tilbury on 8th September. The feeders at Bradwell Bird Observatory attracted birds between 12th September and 29th November. Five birds were present on 12th September with singles present on five other dates; whether different birds were involved is unclear. Rainham Marshes held two on 24th October increasing to three two days later.

DUNNOCK *Prunella modularis occidentalis/modularis* UK

***P. m. occidentalis* is an abundant and widespread resident prone to some southward movements outside the breeding season, whilst *P. m. modularis* is likely to be a passage migrant and winter visitor.**

Although widely reported, with nearly 2,800 records being received (a similar number to 2017), the species is under-reported during the breeding season. Possible breeding was reported from 88 sites with probable breeding from a further 25 sites and confirmed breeding at a further 12. Around 25 pairs (25 in 2017) were present around Braintree and Bocking area.

Being such a secretive and unassuming species, it is often difficult identifying migrants from amongst local residents. However, periodic small influxes are seen along the coast, usually in the autumn, and at Frinton-on-Sea in October, there was 31 on the undercliff on 3rd with 32 on 14th. Away from the coasts, diligent recording can produce regular double-figure counts, even from small sites. A total of 28 on 6th March in the Mardyke Valley Aveley was the largest non-coastal count with a further 19 sites producing double-figure counts

2017 Addendum

Delete the reference to a count of 50 at Braintree and Bocking on 30th June. This in fact referred to an estimate of 25 breeding pairs in the area.

WESTERN YELLOW WAGTAIL *Motacilla flava*
Yellow Wagtail *Motacilla flava flavissima* UK REX

Declining summer visitor.

Probable and confirmed breeding records totalled 79 pairs from 15 locations, up from 72 at 14 in 2017. Foulness and Wallasea Islands each accounted for 18 pairs.

The first birds of the year were singles at Abberton Reservoir and Boreham on 2nd April. Abberton Reservoir accounted for most of the double-figure counts in April (15 on 10th, 30 on 14th, 35 on 15th, 15 on 16th, 20 on 20th, 15 on 22nd, and 50 on 25th), with 12 each at Barking Bay on 29th and King George V Reservoir the following day.

There were three counts of ten or more in May: Abberton Reservoir, 14 on 1st May and 12 on 4th May; Lawling Creek Maylandsea, 12 on 27th. June double-figure counts, all of ten individuals, were reported from Abberton Reservoir on 13th, Burnham on Crouch, on 12th, and Wallasea Island on 4th and 16th.

Wallasea Island recorded the greatest numbers in July, holding 30 on 30th with 55 on 31st, with 20 reported at Lower Raypits Canewdon the same day.

Autumn migration was concentrated at eight locations each of which at times held 30 or more individuals, namely Abberton Reservoir (50 on 15th August, 30 on 18th August, and 45+ on 12th September); Blue House Farm (30 on 17th August, 27th and 6th September and 100 on 10th September); Bradwell Bird Observatory (35 on 1st August, 30 on 15th August, 40 on 19th August and 70 on 22nd August); East Tilbury (32 on 25th August); Gunners Park Shoebury, (40 on 1st

September); Old Hall Marshes (40+ on 15th September); Rainham Marshes (31 on 25th August) and Wallasea Island (40 on 1st August and 50 on 13th August).

Passage passed Frinton-on-Sea included 52 on 24 August and 49 on 22nd September, whilst the last bird of the year was there on 14th October.

Channel Wagtail *Motacilla flava flava* x *flavisimma*

Scarce summer visitor.

Abberton Reservoir	One	1st May
Bowers Marsh	One	6th May

Blue-headed Wagtail Motacilla flava flava
Scarce summer visitor.

The Naze	♂	14th April
The Naze	Two	15th April
The Naze	One	21st April

It is difficult to say exactly how many individuals were involved but comparable with the ten year average.

Annual totals over the last decade have been:

	2018	2017	2016	2015	2014	2013	2012	2011	2010	2009	Average
Numbers	3	4	5	0	2	3	3	4	1	9	3.4

GREY WAGTAIL *Motacilla cinerea cinerea* UK

Increasing resident breeder and passage migrant.

Breeding took place at 11 sites with 15 pairs confirmed, six probably bred and a further nine possibly bred (eight confirmed sites in 2017), suggesting a stable or even increasing breeding population.

Most reports in the first three months of the year were of 1-2 birds, with the following exceptions: Bulmer, four on 13th March; Copford, four on 1st March; Beckton, four on 17th February; Hainault, four on 7th March; King George V Reservoir, four on 24th February; Roding Valley Meadows Chigwell, three on 18th February; Walthamstow Filter Beds, three on 20th February; Walthamstow Wetlands, four on 25th January.

Spring counts of three or more came from: Braintree, six on 21st April; Ardleigh Reservoir, three on 23rd May.

Autumn migration past Frinton-on-Sea was light, with seven on 11th and six on

22nd September and four on 4th October. Elsewhere, records of four or more birds came from: Walthamstow Wetlands, 15 on 11th September and four on 30th September; King George V Reservoir, six on 1st August and 14th September; West Thurrock Marshes, five on 15th October; Beckton, four on 8th and 27th August; Beeleigh, four on 7th August; Gunners Park Shoebury, four on 9th September; William Girling Reservoir Chingford, four on 26th October. Comparison of numbers reported in autumn 2018 with the same period in 2017 seem to confirm that passage generally was lighter this year.

In the final months of the year totals of three or more came from: King George V Reservoir (four on 14th and three on 17th November); Walthamstow Wetlands, three on 17th November.

Estimated monthly totals were:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Numbers	57	56	65	64	42	33	21	52	72	65	49	36
Locations	47	44	42	45	30	20	19	19	37	43	41	28

WHITE WAGTAIL *Motacilla alba*
Pied Wagtail *Motacilla alba yarrellii*

Common resident and passage migrant.

Reports of confirmed breeding were received for 31 pairs at 21 sites (40 pairs at 22 sites in 2017) with breeding possible or probable at a further 14, representing an apparent significant decline on 2017.

Major roosts during the first winter period were reported from: Copford Sewage Works, 83 on 9th January; Epping High Street, 213 on 10th January, 231 on 23rd February, 231 on 24th February, 259 on 14th February, 259 on 18th February; Hanningfield Reservoir, 100 on 11th January, 120+ on 21st January and on 24th January; Thurrock Thameside Mucking, 80 on 30th January. Reports of roosts of 20-59 birds came from 11 other locations.

There was a light spring passage, with nine past Frinton-on-Sea on 26th March, the only report of any substance.

Autumn migration past Frinton-on-Sea was also light with no day accounts in excess of 20. The only double-figure counts there were of 15 on 4th October, 15 on 7th October, and ten on 13th and 19th October.

Counts of 20 or more during September and October were as follows (all September unless stated): Abberton Reservoir, 30 on 11th, 25 on 12th, 21 on 16th, 20 on 20th; Blue House Farm, 32 on 25th; Brook Farm Upminster, 32 on 30th October; Hanningfield Reservoir, 30+ on 10th, 40+ on 12th; King George V Reservoir, 30 on 5th; Roding Valley Meadows Chigwell, 31 on 8th October; The Naze, 20 on 8th; Walthamstow Marshes, 50 on 27th, 30 on 31st October; Walthamstow Wetlands, 30 on 11th.

Records of 50 or more birds at the end of the year came from: Bowers Marsh, 30 on 4th December; Epping, 67 on 17th and 84 on 31st December; Upminster, 57 on 22nd November, 73 on 6th December and 67 on 23rd December.

White Wagtail *Motacilla alba alba*

Fairly common passage migrant.

The Recorder and Recording Committee are having particular difficulties with the recording of this subspecies.

Some 302 records have been received attributed to Motacilla alba alba across all the recording formats. Of these, 44 involving 110 birds were from prior to March and 49, involving 156 birds, after the end of October and 33, of 45 birds, were mid-summer records. It is clear that these records almost certainly refer to yarrellii rather than alba, but how does the Recorder sort these out, and what does he do about the mix of records that must be present for the period March-May and August-October? So, a plea – please make absolutely sure as to what you are recording, yarrellii or alba; it is very easy with the new recording mediums to make this clear.

For the purpose of this Bird Report, only those records specifically mentioning alba are included here.

Just 12 records from six sites were received. Covering the period 21st March-24th April, the reports involved some 18 birds. Counts of three were noted at: The Naze on 14th April; Frinton-on-Sea on 7th April; Langham on 21st March. There were two at Walton Hall Marshes on 21st April and Abberton Reservoir on 24th April; the remaining records were of singles.

MEADOW PIPIT Anthus pratensis UK

Common resident and passage migrant.

A further decline in breeding territories was noted, to 39 from 19 sites (50 from 22 sites in 2017, 76 from 18 in 2016). Observers at Bradwell Bird Observatory reported a "disastrous crash". Around Maldon area the species has all but disappeared as a breeding species. Clearly the breeding fortunes of this species require careful monitoring.

Nevertheless, the number of records remained constant across the County. First winter counts of

30 or more from January to mid-March came from Abberton Reservoir, 34 on 22th January; Abbotts Hall Farm, 35 on 17th January; Benfleet Creek, 30 on 6th January; Mill Meadows Billericay, 32 on 13th February; Boreham, 42 o 19th January and 52 on 19th February; Foulness Island, 44 on 18th February; Great Baddow, 100 on 3rd January, 40 on 28th January, and 50 on 4th March; Hanningfield Reservoir, 40 on 11th January, 80+ on 21st January, and 70+ on 24th January; Church Road Gravel Pit Little Baddow, 42 on 19th January and 52 on 19th February; Rainham Marshes, 35 on 6th February; Stow Marsh North Fambridge, 30 on 11th February, Tilbury Fort, 32 on 16th January. Counts of 20 or more came from another 17 sites.

Spring passage was heavier than in 2017 with 53 individuals noted on the move from Frinton-on-Sea.

Other significant counts included: Foulness Island, 38 on 18th March; Lower Raypits Canewdon, 20 on 13th April; Olympic Park Stratford, 45 on 18th March; Rainham Marshes, 32 on 18th March; Wanstead Flats, 20 on 26th and 27th March, and 30 on 11th April.

Autumn migration was heavy with more than 3,500 passing Frinton-on-Sea during September and October, including an astonishing 1,521 in 6.5 hours on 22nd September, 281 on 24th September, and five further counts in excess of 100 during the two months.

Other counts in excess of 80 were reported from: Wanstead Flats, 265 on 22nd September and 110 on 24th September; Colne Point, 261 on 24th September; and Rainham Marshes, 100 on 23rd September.

Reports were received from 87 sites in the last two months of the year (97 in 2017). Counts of 40 or more came from Hanningfield Reservoir, 30+ on 3rd November and 35+ on 10th November; Breaches Farm Waltham Abbey, 55 on 30th December; Bowers Marsh, 50 on 4th December; Wormingford, 40 on 8th November; Tollesbury Wick, 30 on 12th November.

TREE PIPIT *Anthus trivialis trivialis* UK REX

A rare and decreasing summer visitor and passage migrant.

There was again no indication of breeding this year after expectations were raised in 2015 and 2016.

Estimated monthly totals were:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Localities	0	0	0	10	3	0	0	9	5	0	0	0
Numbers	0	0	0	8	3	0	0	6	5	0	0	0

The first reported migrant was at Dagenham Chase on 11th April.

The largest counts in the spring were just two, from Rainham Marshes on 12th and 14th April.

In the autumn records of two birds came from Rainham Marshes on 18th August and Gunners Park Shoebury on 1st September. The last bird of the year was at Rainham Marshes on 24th September.

WATER PIPIT *Anthus spinoletta spinoletta* UK

Scarce winter visitor and passage migrant.

Estimated monthly totals were:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Localities	8	11	7	6	0	0	0	0	0	4	4	6
Numbers	11	15	12	10	0	0	0	0	0	10	14	13

All records were of 1-3 birds except for Rainham Marshes, which remains the hotspot for this scarce species in Essex.

Numbers at Rainham Marshes were low in the first winter period. Peak counts at the end of the year were as follows: October: seven on 17th, five on 29th, five on 30th, six on 31st:November: six on 4th, four on 10th, ten on 14th, five on 18th, four on 21st; December: seven on 1st, four on 10th, and eight on 31st.

The only other sites recording more than single birds were: Walton Hall Marshes (two); Wrabness (two); Bourne Valley Colchester (two); The Hythe Colchester (two); Vange Marsh (three).

The last bird of the spring was at The Hythe Colchester on April 11th, and the first of the autumn was at Hanningfield Reservoir on 3rd October.

From 1st January 2018 the Identification Panel no longer considers Water Pipit records.

EURASIAN ROCK PIPIT *Anthus petrosus*
Scandinavian Rock Pipit *Anthus petrosus littoralis*

Passage migrant and winter visitor to the coast. Scarce passage migrant inland.

First winter records came from 75 sites (63 in 2017), with counts of five or more recorded as follows (site maximum in each case): Heybridge Basin, five on 1st March; Rainham Marshes, eight on 3rd March; Colne Point, ten on 22nd January; Old Hall Marshes, nine on 13th January and six on 6th March; Brightlingsea, five on 21st January; The Naze, five on 3rd March.

Three locations reported birds in April: Old Hall Marshes, one on 1st; Stow Marsh North Fambridge, two on 5th; Langham, two on 6th, 11th and 13th.

The first arrival of the autumn was one past Frinton-on-Sea on 29th August, followed eventually by two at King George V Reservoir on 24th September. Counts of five or more were recorded at: The Hythe Colchester, seven on 25th October and eight on 7th November; St Osyth Stone, ten on 18th December; Northey Island Blackwater Estuary, seven on 10th December; Heybridge Gravel Pit, five on 7th November; Heybridge Basin, six on 27th November; Colne Point, ten on 8th November and six on 30th November.

The only significant passage count was of five past Frinton-on-Sea on 7th October.

COMMON CHAFFINCH *Fringilla coelebs, gengleri/coelebs*

***F. c. gengleri* is an abundant resident whilst *F. c. coelebs* is a common passage migrant and winter visitor.**

As usual, breeding season records do not call for particular comment.

Compared to 2017, a quieter first winter period, but heavier spring and autumn passages, the latter particularly heavy, by recent standards.

The first winter period saw 11 (13 in 2017) sites recording counts in excess of 50, including three (eight in 2017) reporting three-figure flocks: Bowers Marsh, a maximum of 200 on 9th January; Ingrebourne Valley, 200 on 21st January; Fishers Green Holyfield, 150 on 12th February.

Apart from 44 south in 2.5 hours on 28th February, passage at Frinton-on-Sea was not noticeable until March with the monthly total of 1,379 in 19 hours being higher than in recent years and including 623 north in 2.5 hours on 25th March and 541 the same direction in 3.75 hours the next day making up much of the total. Unlike recent years passage here continued in to April with a total of 414 during a cumulative 24 hours of observations. Elsewhere 125 flew north-west over Wivenhoe, also on 25th March and 52 were in a Canewdon garden on 28th March. At Bradwell Bird Observatory there were 50 on 4th February, 40 on 14th March and 30 on 4th April. Inland it was more difficult to discern spring passage but at many sites it appears from the data that numbers increased during March.

Late summer gatherings were noted in August at Good Easter where there were 65 on 26th and at Great Wigborough where there were 30 on 29th, followed in September by 70 at Copt Hall Marshes (possibly same as the Great Wigborough birds) on 8th.

By 12th September, low level passage or local dispersal was noted at Bradwell Bird Observatory where there were 25 on 12th and 21 the same day at Rainham Marshes.

Mid-September saw the start of migration past Frinton-on-Sea where monthly totals were: September, 30 in 15.5 hours (133 in 21 hours in 2017); October, 4,496 in 91 hours (1,987 in 82); November, 267 in 33 hours (1,507 in 59.25). The total for the three months was 4,793 (3,627) with the main movement apparently occurring earlier than in 2017. The largest day movement by some way was an exceptional total of 1,948 south in 5.75 hours on 6th October, the next highest being

503 south in six hours the next day. Elsewhere, a significant movement took place at the end of October. On 28th, 550 were noted over Wanstead Flats, 275 over Gallions Reach Beckton, 95 over Walthamstow Wetlands, 100 over Cornmill Meadows Waltham Abbey, 60 over King George V Reservoir and 50 over Epping Forest; all were generally moving north-west. Further counts of 188 over Wanstead Flats on 29th and 106 over Beckton Sewage Works were noted.

A further four sites reported counts of 50 or more in November, but at only one of these, Ambresbury Bank Epping Forest, did the count reach three figures; 140 on 26th.

December was, as usual, very quiet with just three sites (three in 2017) recording counts of 50 or more: King George V Reservoir, 60 on 11th; Bulmer, 100+ on 9th; Paglesham Lagoon, 200 on 26th.

BRAMBLING *Fringilla montifringilla*

Uncommon passage migrant and winter visitor in variable numbers.

About average numbers during the first winter with slightly higher than average figures during autumn but typically low numbers by winter.

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Frinton-on-Sea	0	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	9	181	2	0
Elsewhere	48	49	34	43	0	0	0	0	1	58	34	3
Numbers	48	49	37	43	0	0	0	0	10	259	36	3
Locations	15	11	18	18	0	0	0	0	2	24	15	2

Just two sites recorded double-figure counts in the first winter: Alresford, 13 on 26th January with 12 still on 27th February; Court Hill Little Leighs, 10+ on 7th January. Otherwise, records came from a total of 21 sites (19 in 2017).

There was little sign of passage through the County during March, unlike in 2017, with the highest counts being five at both Burnham-on-Crouch on 18th and Canewdon on 31st. However, a late passage occurred during April (none were reported in April 2017) with counts of six at King George V Reservoir and Canewdon on 10th and Walthamstow Wetlands the next day with five at The Naze on 14th. The last birds of the spring were singles at Lodge Farm Epping Green and The Naze on 22nd.

Autumn migration commenced during late September (none in 2017) with a total of nine birds over Frinton-on-Sea on 25th, 26th and 29th and one at Rainham Marshes on the last day of the month. During October, the only site to produce counts of ten or more was Frinton-on-Sea where they were noted on five days, the highest being 37 on 19th, 45 on 25th and 38 on 26th. Other sites recording counts of five or more were: The Naze, five on 16th; Colne Point, five on 7th; Steeple, five on 7th; Thorndon Park North, five on 20th; King George V Reservoir, seven on 20th. November saw just one count of five or more, with five at Westley Heights Langdon Hills on 4th.

Few birds were recorded after mid-November with just three being reported in December: one at Wivenhoe on 3rd and two along the banks of the Colne at Earls Colne/Whites Colne on 14th.

HAWFINCH *Coccothraustes coccothraustes coccothraustes* UK REX

Extremely rare, perhaps extinct, resident; rare passage migrant and winter visitor. Major influx autumn/winter 2017/18.

The influx that occurred during the autumn of 2017 continued into 2018, although it appeared that during January and February flocks had largely settled down in favoured areas resulting in the largest flocks to be seen in the County for decades building up, including one that was the largest since 1942. The table below assumes that the maximum individual count at a site was the number of birds actually present at the site.

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Numbers	160	134	83	61	0	0	0	0	0	5	3	0
Locations	26	13	19	14	0	0	0	0	0	3	2	0

Water Pipit, The Hythe, March (SEAN NIXON)

Brambling, Colchester, March (SIMON PATIENT)

Hawfinch, Hatfield Forest, February (SEAN NIXON)

Rustic Bunting, Wanstead Flats, October (JONATHAN LETHBRIDGE)

Numbers in January and February were higher than apparently present at the end of 2017. Either birds continued to arrive in the County or they were becoming more conspicuous. Certainly at some sites, for instance Hatfield Forest, they became relatively confiding and afforded observers excellent views.

Principal counts at the sites recording more than five Hawfinches were:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr
Braxted Park	32	12	0	1
Chalkney Wood	6	0	0	0
Chafford Hundred	0	0	6*	0
Epping Forest	7	5	5	2
Hatfield Forest	27	70	30	33
Marks Hall Coggeshall	22	10	18	0
Ongar Park Wood	0	7	0	0
Pound Wood Thundersley	7	4	4	1
Thorndon Park North	25	12	0	0

* Nocturnal recordings of birds flying over

The count of 70 at Hatfield Forest occurred on 26th February and was considered a minimum. Several counts of 50+ were also reported during January to March from there.

The data suggest that the species began to disperse quite early in the year, perhaps as food sources dried up, although it is equally possible that "observer weariness" became a factor as the novelty of going out looking for Hawfinches waned and only those sites with largest numbers received the attention.

That birds were on the move during March is evident from nocturnal recordings picking up six flying over Chafford Hundred on 13th, but it was not until April that any appeared along the coast with The Naze recording two on both 12th and 14th, Frinton-on-Sea two on 9th and four on 19th, Wigboro Wick Farm St Osyth, one on 8th and Bowers Marsh, one on 15th.

It may have perhaps been hoped that with such a huge influx, some would have stayed to breed, as appears to have occurred during the 19th Century, but alas, the last report of the spring was of two birds in Epping Forest on 20th April.

The autumn saw a total of eight birds reported, all in the west of the County: Brook Farm Upminster, three flew south-west on 29th October; Highams Park Lake, two on 16th November; Woodford Green, one on 19th October and 17th November; Wanstead Flats, one on 18th October.

EURASIAN BULLFINCH *Pyrrhula pyrrhula*
Bullfinch *Pyrrhula pyrrhula pileata*

UK REX

Declining resident.

Always an elusive species, this is particularly the case in the breeding season and it is thus not surprising that there were just three confirmed breeding records, although in several instances pairs with young were seen close to presumed territories. In all, records came from around 110 sites during the breeding season, similar to 2017. Around 70 pairs/territories (50 in 2017) were reported from around the County, the majority in central and northern Essex. Almost all records were of 1-2 pairs but there were three noted between Middleton and Daw's Hall Lamarsh along the Stour, four around Pebmarsh, four around Braintree and Bocking area and a total of seven in Friday Wood Colchester.

During the first winter period, counts of five or more came from 13 sites and although this was down on the same period last year (18), counts at individual sites were much higher with three sites recording double-figures in January: Chigborough Lakes, a maximum of 12 on 2nd and 16th, far more than usual for the site; Hatfield Forest, a minimum of 12 on 1st; Thorndon Park North,

12 on 6th. The higher counts follow on from the apparent influx in autumn 2017.

Unusually, a ♂ flew north over The Naze on 4th April but unlike in 2017, no possible autumn migrants were noted.

The second winter period saw counts of five or more at just two sites, the same as in 2017: Chigborough Lakes, six on 3rd December; Beeleigh, five on 4th December.

2017 Addendum

Friday Wood Colchester – territories totalled three in 2017 and five in 2016.

EUROPEAN GREENFINCH *Chloris chloris chloris*

Common but recently declined resident and passage migrant.

A total of 709 records (530 in 2017) was received from around 180 sites during the breeding season (160 in 2017).

During the first winter period, counts of 50 or more came from just one site: Priory Park Southend-on-Sea, 120 on 20th January with 80 still present on 13th March (*cf* 2017). Otherwise, just one site held 30 or more: Court Hill Little Leighs, 30+ on 7th January.

Unlike recent years there was no March build up in numbers on the feeders at Bradwell Bird Observatory but at Canewdon, 32 on garden feeders on 19th, was the largest flock for some years according to the observer. A total of 23 were also noted from Wanstead Flats on 12th. There was no other evidence for migration during the spring.

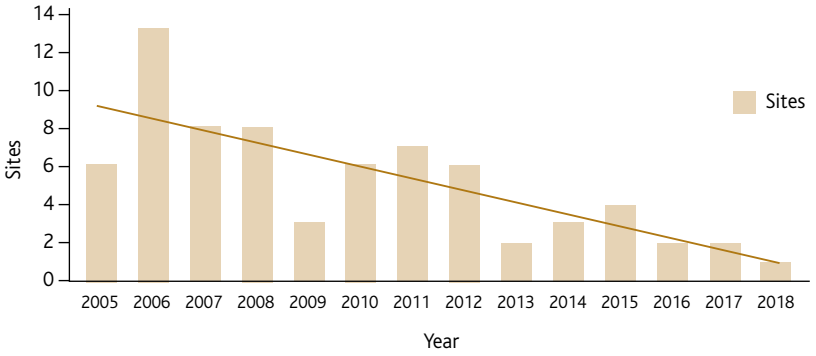
Encouragingly, there was an increase in the number of sites reporting double-figure post-breeding flocks in late summer with records from eight locations (three in 2017), although at only two of these were more than 15 reported: Bradwell Bird Observatory, 20 on 29th August; Bowers Marsh, 18 on 23rd July.

There was little of note to report as far as the autumn migration. At Frinton-on-Sea, numbers were particularly low with a total of just 29 recorded in 21.5 hours between 20th and 27th October (376 in 2017). Away from here passage was equally poor with double-figure counts coming from 12 sites, with just six sites (four in 2017) reporting 20 or more: Bradwell Bird Observatory, 40 on 12th and 17th September; Bowers Marsh, 20 on 16th November; Rainham Marshes, 21 on 17th and 18th October; Alphamstone, 20 in game cover on 26th November; Belhus Woods Aveley, 28 on 14th October; Dagnam Park Harold Hill, 20 on 3rd November.

During December there were no counts of 50 or more, with the highest being just 22 at Brook Farm Upminster on 14th December with 20 at Bowers Marsh on 31st December the only other count of 20 or more.

Overall, a not very encouraging picture. The number of flocks of 50 or more continues to decline.

Number of sites recording wintering flocks of 50+ Greenfinch.



TWITE *Linaria flavirostris pipilans/flavirostris* UK

Both subspecies are very rare passage migrants and winter visitors.

East Tilbury	One	1st-10th February

Just one bird is an all-time low. It looks like the days of the species wintering in Essex are numbered; the decline in numbers has been remarkable. As recently as 2014, a flock of 30 was present in Hamford Water.

COMMON LINNET *Linaria cannabina cannabina* UK REX

Common but declined resident and passage migrant.

The species was recorded from about 280 sites (300 in 2017) throughout the year, with breeding season records coming from about two thirds of these (similar to 2017).

Little can be said generally about the species in the breeding season other than it appears to be widespread and that in suitable habitat good numbers of Common Linnet will breed. Thus at Rainham Marshes some 58 pairs were reported, similar to the 52 pairs reported last year, whilst in the far north of the County, one recorder located 53 territories in his local area, albeit that at the time of observation (early June) there was still little sign of breeding, suggesting a late breeding season here.

During the first winter, three-figure counts came from five sites (11 in 2017): Burnham-on-Crouch, 200 on 26th January; East Tilbury, a maximum of 200 on 4th and 16th February; Abberton Reservoir, a maximum of 225 on 22nd January; Great Loveney Hall Mount Bures, 140 on 10th February; King George V Reservoir, 127 on 3rd February.

Flocks of about 250 on Wormingford Airfield on 6th March and 100 at East Tilbury on 16th March may have been migrants or wintering flocks. However, as has been noted previously, movements on the coast are rarely reported until the middle/end of March so the latter does seem more likely.

At Frinton-on-Sea, monthly totals from March to May were 63, 661 and 296, a total of 1,020 (76, 125 and 128 totalling 329 in 2017), relatively heavy passage by recent standards. Peak counts in April were 110 south in 1.75 hours on 16th and 117 south in 2.5 hours on 19th, with counts in excess of 50 on four further dates, whilst in May, the peak count was 88 south in two hours on 3rd and the same number north in 2.5 hours on 17th, with counts of 50 or more on one other date. It was difficult to discern passage elsewhere although it seems that at many inland sites numbers were slightly higher during April. The only counts of 50 or more were of 100 in fields at Borley on 24th April, 50 at Chigborough Lakes on 9th April and 50 at Walthamstow Marshes on 16th April. Sixty at Boxted on 6th June were assumed to involve a late build-up of local breeding birds.

Post-breeding flocks began to build up from early August at most sites, with smaller numbers beginning to move past coastal sites from late in the month, and perhaps involving birds from further afield. Three-figure counts, all in August, came from three sites (three in 2017): Bradwell Bird Observatory, 120 on 22nd; Beckton, 110 on 12th; Orsett Fen, 174 on 6th increasing to 207 on 14th. Counts of more than five came from two further sites, both in August.

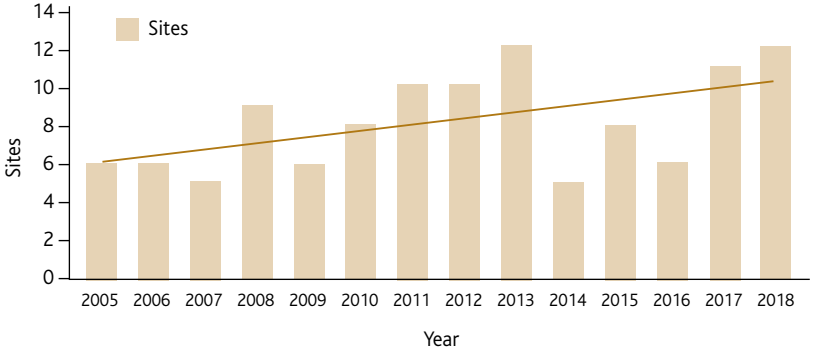
Passage at Frinton-on-Sea was more subdued than the last two years with monthly totals of 297 in September, 414 in October and nine in November; a total of 720 for the three months (1,653 in 2017 and 1,121 in 2016). Three-figure counts occurred on just two days (six in 2017), with 185 north in three hours on 29th September and 109 south in 2.5 hours on 3rd October. Elsewhere, three-figure counts came from 12 sites, seven of which were on the coast (19 and 13 in 2017). Counts of 200 or more came from: The Strood Mersea Island, 200 on 8th October; Thurrock Thameside Mucking, 250 on 30th September, 200 on 6th October and 300 on 6th November; Rainham Marshes, 300 on 16th October; Leez Reservoir Hartford End, 200 on 11th November (note wintering flock below); Orsett Fen, 220 on 11th September.

Despite the apparently smaller numbers reported on migration than in 2017, three sites reported three-figure counts compared to just one in 2017: Bulmer, about 100 on 9th December; Leez Reservoir Hartford End, 200 on 29th December; King George V Reservoir, 200 on 11th December.

Counts of 70 or more came from just one further site, Tilbury area, where there were 83 on 11th December.

The number of large flocks reported over the last decade or so has generally increased, although it should be borne in mind that observer coverage has probably increased over the same period.

Number of sites recording wintering flocks of Linnet.



2017 Addendum

Page 135 fifth line should read "...than in recent years with three-figure counts coming from..."

COMMON REDPOLL *Acanthis flammea flammea*

UK EBSIP

Scarce passage migrant and winter visitor in variable numbers.

Frinton-on-Sea	One	13th-14th April	MLo
Colchester	One	21st February	SNi
Colchester	One	12th March	SNi
Canvey Wick	Up to five	23rd-27th March	TBo

A further seven (involving nine birds), unsubstantiated, records were received. Whilst some individuals can look quite striking others can be more difficult to pin down.

Winter totals over the last decade have been:

	2018/17	2017/16	2016/15	2015/14	2014/13	2013/12	2012/11	2011/10	2010/09	2009/08	Average
Numbers	8	2	4	0	6	0	0	1	0	26	4.7

LESSER REDPOLL *Acanthis cabaret*

UK REX

Formerly resident, now a scarce and decreasing passage migrant and winter visitor.

During the first winter period there were no three-figure flocks noted, with double- figure counts coming from seven sites, with just two of these recording 30 or more birds: Church Lane Little Leighs, around 75 present during February and March; Eagle Pond Leyton area, a maximum of 45 on 1st January.

It was difficult to discern spring passage away from Frinton-on-Sea where the species was recorded on one day in March and two in April, with 16 of the total of 19 birds occurring on 19th April. Double-figure flocks remained at two of the wintering sites and new ones were found at just four sites away from the coast, the largest counts coming from Chafford Gorges Grays where there was a maximum of 27 on 8th March, and Doddinghurst where there were 23 on 3rd March. There

Lesser Redpoll (GEORGE BROWN)

were no records from the coast. The last two records of the spring involved singles over Henny Street on 18th April and Wanstead Flats on 2nd May.

The first birds of autumn were three at Bradwell Bird Observatory on 26th August with the next over Grays Cemetery on 6th September. Passage was light. Frinton-on-Sea recorded a total of 60 over seven dates in October with the largest count by far being 26 on 24th. Elsewhere, double-figure counts came from seven sites: The Naze, 12 on 22nd October; Fingringhoe Wick, 20 on 19th November; Canvey Wick, 15 on 21st October; Highwoods Colchester, ten on 19th November; Thorndon Park, 40 on 10th November; Chafford Gorges Grays, 20 on 4th November; Belhus Woods Aveley, 16 on 6th November.

Numbers in the second winter were relatively low with double-figure counts coming from just four sites: Thorndon Park, 50 on 29th December; Roding Valley Meadows Chigwell, 14 on 5th December; High Beach Epping Forest, ten on 24th December; Highams Park Lake, 20 on 2nd December.

Estimated monthly totals were:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Frinton-on-Sea	0	0	2	17	0	0	0	0	0	60	0	0
Elsewhere	185	174	251	73	1	0	0	3	4	100	143	130
Numbers	185	174	253	90	1	0	0	3	4	160	143	130
Locations	36	30	30	24	1	0	0	1	2	23	15	17

Note that many records are submitted as Redpoll sp.; unless it is clear that a significant influx of Common Redpoll is occurring, it is assumed that all these records refer to Lesser Redpoll.

RED CROSSBILL *Loxia curvirostra curvirostra*

Has bred. Irregular visitor in very variable numbers.

After last year's blank, a relatively quiet year with records in six months of the year:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Numbers	0	0	0	1	0	7	0	6	0	24	8	2
Locations	0	0	0	1	0	3	0	1	0	2	2	1

The only spring record was a ♂ at Cudmore Grove East Mersea on 15th April.

The early dispersal from presumably breeding areas in England was light and occurred during June with records coming from: Frinton-on-Sea, three on 22nd; Cudmore Grove East Mersea, three on 10th; Rayleigh, one on 10th.

Autumn and early winter saw small numbers passing through with by far the largest count being 20 over Beckton on 20th October while other counts in excess of five were: Clacton Leisure Centre, seven on 4th November; West Mersea, six on 26th August. Otherwise two were over Frinton-on-Sea on both 25th and 27th October, one was over Thundersley on 30th November and the last of the year were two flying south over Heybridge Gravel Pit on 2nd December.

EUROPEAN GOLDFINCH *Carduelis carduelis britannica*

Common but declined resident and passage migrant.

The commonest of the finches, with 3,851 records received for 2018, with Chaffinch the next commonest with 3,192. Records came from around 270 sites during the breeding season (250 in 2017) but as mentioned previously, the species' inconspicuous breeding habits preclude further comment.

During the first winter, counts of 50 or more came from ten sites (three in 2017) and three-figure counts from three of these, all in February: Boreham/Little Baddow, 165 feeding on stubble on 19th; Doddinghurst, 100 on 18th; Romford, 212 on 2nd. Such numbers are unusually high and the count at Romford is significant for February.

Spring passage was more evident than in recent years with Frinton-on-Sea seeing 43 over on 25th March and 111 the next day and then in April, a total of 135 on five dates from mid-month onwards. Passage continued in to May with a total of 163 over six dates, the highest count being 50 south in two hours on 3rd. Elsewhere on the coast/estuaries, at least 100 flew over Rainham Marshes in small flocks on 11th March (with 50+ there on 23rd), 60 flew over the north Blackwater Estuary on 15th April and 62 were on garden feeders at Boreham on 1st March. Counts of 25 or more came from a further seven sites, including 50 at Great Totham on the late date of 17th May.

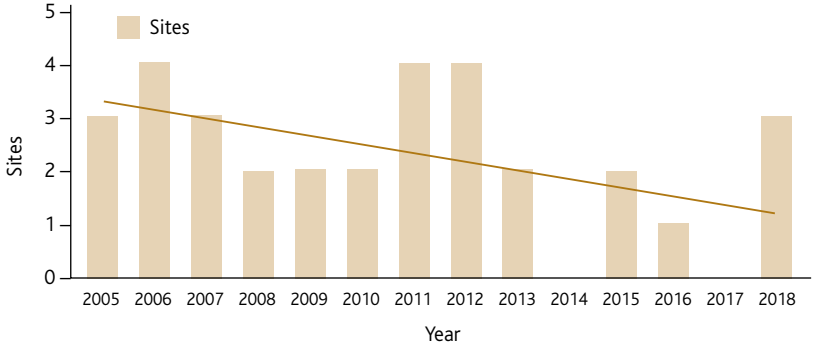
By late July, post-breeding flocks were building rapidly and three-figure flocks were noted in August at: Bowers Marsh, a peak of 220 on 10th; Thurrock Thameside Mucking, 140 on 5th; Rainham Marshes, a peak of 150 on 22nd; Great Loveney Hall Mount Bures, 106 on 17th. There was little obvious sign of movement along the coast at this time, and many of the larger gatherings were presumably made up of aggregations of local birds.

Movement along the coast was intermittent from the second week in September with Frinton-on-Sea recording very small movements on just two dates. Overall, passage was subdued compared to recent years and particularly in comparison with 2017, a record passage year, with totals for the months September to November being just 16, 2,512 and 606 (978, 17,269 and 925 in 2017). Three-figure movements occurred on 11 dates with no four-figure counts (six in 2017). Passage involving more than 500 birds occurred on just one day, 19th October, when 597 flew north in seven hours. Three-figure counts were noted at just six other locations and all were in the very low hundreds: Gunners Park Shoebury, 160 south-west on 24th October; Bowers Marsh, 100 on 16th November; Thurrock Thameside Mucking, 100 on 6th October; Rainham Marshes, 100 on 1st and 21st September; Abberton Reservoir, 120 on 12th September; Great Loveney Hall Mount Bures, 200 on 15th September.

Following on from the poor passage, numbers were low in December with the highest counts being just 60 from Laindon on 1st and Thurrock Thameside Mucking on 9th.

Annual wintering totals have declined over the last decade or so, if the number of large flocks being reported is anything to go by:

Number of sites recording wintering three-figure flocks of Goldfinch.



EUROPEAN SERIN *Serinus serinus*

EBSIP (14, 21, 35)

Rare passage migrant.

Colne Point	♀	18th May	CBa
Canewdon	♂	26th March	JDv
Gunners Park Shoebury	♂	10th-23rd March	mo
Walthamstow Wetlands	♂	10th February-8th March	mo

One further, unsubstantiated, record was received. Although relatively close, the Shoebury and Canewdon individuals were different birds.

Annual totals for the last decade are:

	2018	2017	2016	2015	2014	2013	2012	2011	2010	2009	Average
Numbers	4	1	2	2	0	0	0	1	0	2	1.2

EURASIAN SISKIN *Spinus spinus*

Very rare breeder. Locally common passage migrant and winter visitor.

As in 2017 and 2016, there was no evidence of breeding.

Following on from the high numbers at the end of 2017, double-figure counts came from 16 locations. The largest flock by some way, and a count of note, spent its time wandering around the Hooks Marsh/ Cornmill Meadows area in the Lee Valley and peaked at 220+ at the former on 19th February. Weald Park held 50 on 4th February with the next highest counts being 36 at King George V Reservoir on 4th February and a peak of 30 in Hatfield Forest on 10th and 16th January.

Spring passage, which was fairly heavy, was evident at the end of March over Frinton-on-Sea with birds occurring on six days from 24th and including 91 north in 3.75 hours on 26th. Passage built here in early April with counts of 155 north in 2.25 hours on 10th and 106 the same direction the next day in 2.5 hours, part of a monthly total of 447 birds. (c.f. 2017 when there were only four April records across the County). Elsewhere, there were still 160+ in the Lee Valley on 15th March whilst a flock of 183 was in Belhus Woods Aveley on 13th March. Great Loveney Hall Mount Bures and Distillery Pond Colchester both held 50 on 31st and 3rd March respectively. There were no other counts of 50 or more.

It was difficult distinguishing between the end of the spring passage and start of the early 'autumn' dispersal from breeding sites in Suffolk and Norfolk. Passage continued throughout May and June with, in May, three over Tillingham on 4th, singles over Rayne on 8th, The Naze on 14th and Frinton-on-Sea on 16th with two there on 24th. A break until one over The Hythe on 23rd June perhaps suggests the arrival of the first dispersing local breeders, as there were seven over Frinton-on-Sea the same day.

Another month passed before the next record, of 11 over Frinton-on-Sea on 23rd July.

The next records were in September, with one over Rainham Marshes on 7th, signifying the beginning of the main passage. A total of 295 passed over Frinton-on-Sea in September, with 688 in October and 55 in November, a grand total of 1,038 (30, 539 and 132 and a total of 701 in 2017), with peak counts, of birds moving south, in September of 60 in five hours on 24th and in October three-figure counts of 111 in six hours on 7th, 119 in 2.5 hours on 16th and 146 in seven hours on 19th October whilst in November the peak count was 31 in three hours on 12th.

Away from Frinton-on-Sea, double-figure counts came from just five sites during September and October and only three counts of 20 or more: Rayne, 25 on 24th September; Wanstead Flats, 20 on 8th and 24th October; Cornmill Meadows Waltham Abbey, 35 on 28th October.

By November, distinguishing between passage and newly established wintering flocks becomes more difficult. Double-figure counts came from eight sites with four counts of 20 or more: Langdon Hills Plotlands, 32 on 14th and 21 on 23rd; Belhus Woods Aveley, 27 on 6th; Cornmill Meadows Waltham Abbey, 120+ on 15th.

Wintering numbers in December were low with double-figure counts coming from just six sites, with just four sites holding 20 or more: Weald Park, a peak of 70 on 23rd; Belhus Woods Aveley, 31 on 4th; Wanstead Park, 25 on 26th; Gunpowder Park Waltham Abbey, 25 on 26th.

Estimated monthly totals were:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Frinton-on-Sea	0	0	169	447	3	7	11	0	295	688	55	2
Elsewhere	215	524	743	210	5	1	0	0	76	231	303	215
Totals	215	524	912	657	8	8	11	0	371	917	358	217
Locations	25	36	54	38	4	2	1	0	9	26	22	18

LAPLAND LONGSPUR *Calcarius lapponicus lapponicus* (Lapland Bunting) UK

Uncommon passage migrant and winter visitor in variable numbers.

An extremely poor year, with just the one acceptable record, of a single bird at Broomhouse Flash Langham on 31st October.

SNOW BUNTING *Plectrophenax nivalis insulae/nivalis* UK

***P. n. insulae* is a passage migrant and local winter visitor with *P. n. nivalis* perhaps also, rarely, occurring.**

In the first winter period a flock was reported from the traditional site at Jaywick-Seawick (maxima of 14 on 2nd January and 9th February, nine on 20th and 12 on 22nd February). In addition there were three at Hamford Water on 21st January, and five at Colne Point on 22nd, perhaps some of the Jaywick flock. A single bird was seen at Old Hall Marshes on 7th March.

Second winter numbers were even smaller, with the first recorded at The Naze on 11th October. One was at Frinton-on-Sea on 30th October whilst one was at Deal Hall Dengie on 28th October, increasing to two on 3rd November with three there on 6th. Singles were at East Mersea and Frinton-on-Sea on 19th and 27th November respectively whilst the last record of the year saw four return to Jaywick on 28th.

CORN BUNTING *Emberiza calandra calandra* UK REX

Declining resident.

Reports of 164+ singing ♂♂ or pairs (151+ in 2017) likely to have been involved in breeding came from 32 sites, many in the south-east of the County, although a few were found in the north-east, particularly on the coast, but a few were also noted inland towards the Suffolk border. All counts are given, with last year's figures in brackets: Wormingford, 11 (13); Mistley, one; Dovercourt, one; Horsley Cross, one; Kirby Cross, three; Colne Point, 3+; Fordham, one; Abberton Reservoir, ten (six); Tolleshunt d'Arcy, one; Tollesbury, two (one); Goldhanger, one; Hazeleigh, two; Bradwell Bird Observatory, nine (four); Middlewick Farm Dengie, five; Tillingham, three (one); Marsh Farm/Clementsgreen Creek South Woodham Ferrers, two; Blue House Farm, three (four); South Fambridge, two; Great Stambridge, 7+; Bolts Farm Barling, one; Paglesham East End, two (three); Wakering, four; Foulness Island, 17 (19); Wallasea Island, 48 (69); Southend Airport, one; West Canvey, one; Bowers Marsh, 10+ (two); Fobbing Marsh, four; East Tilbury, two; Stanford-le-Hope, one; Thurrock Thameside Mucking, one; Rainham Marshes, two (two).

Double-figure counts came from 18 sites in the first winter with counts of 50 or more from eight sites where the maxima were: Colne Point, 67 on 1st April; Abberton Reservoir, 145 on 24th March; Heybridge Gravel Pit, 70 on 1st March; Marsh Farm South Woodham Ferrers, 50 on 25th March; Burnham Wick Solar Farm, 60 on 26th January; Paglesham, 60 on 12th February; Wallasea Island, 100 on 19th March; East Tilbury, 69 on 3rd March.

By August, flocks were increasing in size with 80 at Hampton Barns Great Stambridge on 23rd and a monthly maximum of 45 at Bradwell Bird Observatory on 22nd.

Autumn and the second winter saw double-figure flocks recorded from 18 locations with counts of 50 or more from four where the monthly maxima were: Abberton Reservoir, 93 on 6th November; Copt Hall Marshes, 50 on 1st October; Heybridge Gravel Pit, 50 on 24th December; Wallasea Island, 150 on 24th December.

Monthly distribution of double-figure counts:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Numbers	6	8	8	10	0	2	1	4	3	5	8	8

YELLOWHAMMER *Emberiza citrinella caliginosa* UK REX

***E. c. caliginosa* is a common but declining resident, whilst *E. c. citrinella* may be a scarce migrant.**

Reports of possible/probable/confirmed breeding were received from 58 sites involving around 189 singing ♂♂/territories/pairs. Sites with more than two singing ♂♂/territories/pairs, with last years figures, if available, in brackets were: Hamford Water, three; Ridgewell Airfield Ashen, 13; Wormingford, 23 (21); Lamarsh, six (six); Henny Street, six (six); Mount Bures, four; Bures, three (one); Little Horkesley, six (five); Fordham, 11 (14); Abberton Reservoir, 12 (eight); Kelvedon, seven; Flitch Green Little Dunmow, eight; Braintree and Bocking, five (five); Tye Hall Farm Roxwell, six; Fobbing, six; Orsett Fen, ten (7+); Stanford Rivers, five; Chigwell, three. Around the inland part of the north-east regularly counted, numbers of breeding pairs were estimated to be down by 10% on the 2010 level (MPe). Just five records of confirmed breeding were received, although juveniles were widespread by June.

During the first winter period double-figure flocks were reported from 17 sites with flocks of more than 20 from seven sites where the maxima were: Langham, 44 on 4th February; Abberton, 25 on 22nd January; Rivenhall Place, 50 on 13th January; Thorndon Park, 50 on 13th January; Copped Hall Epping Forest, 50 on 17th March; Ingrebourne Valley, 30 on 1st February; Orsett Fen, 22 on 4th February.

Small double-figure flocks continued to be recorded in to April although these were all less than 20 in size.

Flocks begin to increase again from September with a total of 14 sites recording double-figure

flocks in the second winter period with flocks of more than 20 recorded at six sites where the maxima were: Ridgewell Airfield Ashen, 24 on 30th November; Alphamstone, 65 on 28th November; Bulmer, 30 on 9th December; Elmdon, 30 on 6th December; Wormingford, 36 on 8th November; Leez Priory/Reservoir Hartford End, 120 on 29th December, the largest flock in the County this year.

LITTLE BUNTING *Emberiza pusilla* EBSIP (6, 1, 7)

Vagrant.

Walthamstow Wetlands	First winter	19th January-3rd April	DBw, IBw

Incredibly, the last Little Bunting record was as long ago as 1995, so the species was long overdue for a return visit.

RUSTIC BUNTING *Emberiza rustica* BBRC (1, 1, 2)

Vagrant.

Wanstead Flats	First winter ♀	17th-21st October	NCr

Only the second Essex record and the first since the ♂ at Bradwell-on-Sea in 1966 on the early date of 18th September. See the finder's write-up on page 178.

COMMON REED BUNTING *Emberiza schoeniclus schoeniclus* UK REX

Much declined resident, passage migrant and winter visitor.

Reports of possible/probable/confirmed breeding were received from 76 sites involving around 323 singing ♂♂/territories/pairs. Breeding was confirmed in less than a handful of cases. Sites with more than three singing ♂♂/territories/pairs, with last year's figures, if available, in brackets were: Cattawade, seven (7+); Langham, six (five); Wormingford, six (five); Abberton Reservoir, ten (six); Old Hall Marshes, ten; Heybridge Gravel Pit, five; Bradwell Bird Observatory Sales Point to Weymarks, 14; Wallasea Island, 61 (65); Foulness Island, 23 (34); Bowers Marsh, 12 (three); Mardyke Valley, four; Orsett Fenn, six; East Tilbury, four; Vange Wick, four; Rainham Marshes, 54 (47); Walthamstow Wetlands, four (two); Cornmill Meadows Waltham Abbey, five.

During the first winter period double-figure flocks were reported from 26 sites with flocks of more than 20 from eight sites: Langham, 50 on 11th March; Old Hall Lane Tollesbury, 20 on 18th February; Rolls Farm Tollesbury, 45 on 22nd February; Joyce's Marsh Goldhanger, 80 on 19th February; Burnham-on-Crouch, 30 on 18th March; Wallasea Island, 23 on 2nd and 14th January; Ingrebourne Valley, 50 on 21st January.

As in 2017, counts along the Dengie borrowdykes revealed good numbers of Common Reed Bunting, with 33 between St Lawrence Bay and Marshouse on 15th April.

Coastal movements were again small with a total of 47 recorded at Frinton-on-Sea between 6th and 14th October with 34 of these heading south on the latter date in six hours. Exactly 100 were ringed (plus two recaptures from previous years) between 28th August and 25th October at Holland Haven.

During the second winter period double-figure flocks were reported from 11 sites with flocks of more than 20 from six sites where the maxima were: The Hythe Colchester, 30 on 5th and 7th November; Old Hall Marshes, 63 on 5th November; Tollesbury Wick, 20 on 10th December; North Dengie to Sales Point, 27 on 9th December; Wallasea Island, 50 on 24th December; Bowers Marsh, 30 on 4th and 17th December.

APPENDIX I: Category D Species

RUDDY SHELDUCK *Tadorna ferruginea*

South-east Europe, central and south-east Asia

Abberton	One	22nd March and 16th October
Boreham	One	On and off from 4th-15th April
Little Baddow	One	5th April
White Colne	One	19th April

The March and April records probably relate to the same individual.

APPENDIX II: Category E Species

BLACK SWAN *Cygnus atratus*

Australia and New Zealand.

There were again no reports of breeding.

Over 180 reports were received throughout the year mainly from the Stour Estuary area from Cattawade east to Mistley. The maximum count was five at Mistley Quay on 20th January, with four still present in the area at the year-end. Two were seen at Boxted whilst singles were reported from Audley End, Abberton Reservoir (all year), Blue House Farm, The Naze and Hatfield Heath.

Annual totals over the last decade have been:

	2018	2017	2016	2015	2014	2013	2012	2011	2010
Numbers	10+	8+	10+	12	3-4	11	11	9+	16+
Locations	13	11	12	9	3	5	7	11	13

SWAN GOOSE *Anser cygnoides*

Northern China, Mongolia and south-east Russia.

Abberton Reservoir	One	20th May, 3rd June and 22nd September

BAR-HEADED GOOSE *Anser indicus*

Central Asia.

Fairlop Waters Barkingside	One	28th April
Potton Island Great Wakering	One	12th August

EMPEROR GOOSE *Chen canagica*

Bering Sea/Alaska and Kamchatka.

Broomhouse Flash Langham	One	14th December

GREENLAND GREATER WHITE-FRONTED GOOSE *Anser albifrons flavirostris*

Greenland and wintering largely in Ireland and south-west Scotland.

Holland Haven	One	25th September-8th November	Liz Huxley *et al.*
Landermere	One, assumed as above	3rd November	Liz Huxley *et al.*

Seen in the Greylag flocks at Holland Haven and Landermere, this race is rare in south-east England and was the first in the County since 1996. Unfortunately, neither the early arrival date, nor the company it kept, can enhance its credentials as a wild bird, though some do reach their winter quarters by late September. (see *Handbook of the Birds of the Western Palearctic*, Volume 1 p.406). On balance it was felt that this bird was an escape.

MUSCOVY DUCK *Cairina moschata*

Central and South America.

Distillery Pond Colchester	2-4	21st February-14th November
Hainault Forest	One	31st August
Thurrock Thameside Mucking	One	10th July

RINGED TEAL *Callonetta leucophrys*

South America.

Connaught Water Epping Forest	Two	9th September, 26th October and 19th December
William Girling Reservoir Chingford	One	14th February

CHILOE WIGEON *Anas sibilatrix*

South America south of central Argentina and Falkland Islands.

The Hythe Colchester	One	25th-26th March

WHITE-CHEEKED PINTAIL *Anas bahamensis*

Caribbean and mainly central South America.

A pair of what may have been hybrids was at present at Bowers Marsh from 21st April to 21st June, the ♀ being reported with eight ducklings on 21st June. A single bird was seen again on 14th August.

CINNAMON TEAL *Anas cyanoptera*

Western North America, Central America and mainly western and southern South America.

Heybridge Gravel Pit	Two ♂♂ and a ♀	27th November – 31st December

No rings were seen on any of the birds. One ♂ was seen across the estuary on the pool next to the old Maldon dump.

HYBRID GEESE AND DUCKS

Fishers Green Holyfield	Emperor x Barnacle Goose	15th March
Walthamstow Wetlands	Pochard x Tufted Duck	31st March
West Canvey Marsh	Blue-winged Teal x Shoveler	13th-18th May
Rainham Marshes	Ruddy x Cape Shelduck	14th-15th May

HELMETED GUINEAFOWL *Numida Meleagris*
Southern Africa.

Middleton	Two	4th and 13th April
Witham	Five	21st May
Kelvedon	"present"	6th March
Galleywood	Maximum 28	10th April
Bowers Marsh	Six	11th August

INDIAN PEAFOWL *Pavo cristatus*
South Asia.

Boxted	One	14th July
Kelvedon	"Present"	6th March
Phyllis Currie Reserve	"Present"	1st June
Terling	One	25th April
Epping Forest Burial Park	Maximum of four	6th September

Birds are also known to be resident at Marks Hall Coggeshall.

COCKATIEL *Nymphicus hollandicus*
Australia.

Bowers Marsh	One	1st April
Rainham Marshes	One	19th July

BLUE-AND-YELLOW MACAW *Ara ararauna*
South America from Venezuela to Brazil, Bolivia, Colombia and Paraguay.

Abberton Reservoir	Two	10th April

BUDGERIGAR *Melopsittacus undulatus*
Australia.

Rainham Marshes	Singles	27th May, 10th July and 13th-16th August
Roding Valley Meadows Chigwell	One 'blue'	24th-25th January
Wanstead Flats	One 'white'	29th August-7th September

A common escape.

ALEXANDRINE PARAKEET *Psittacula eupatria*
India and south-east Asia.

Holland Haven	One	21st and 31st October and 10th November
Frinton-on-Sea	One	2nd October

All records presumably relate to the same bird.

MONK PARAKEET *Myiopsitta monachus*

Central South America.

Grays	One	15th June
Wanstead Flats	One	29th August

WHITE-CHEEKED TURACO *Tauraco leucotis*

Sudan, Ethiopia and Eritrea.

Wanstead Flats	One	11th-12th March

Perhaps the same bird that has been reported periodically since 2009? If so, presumably it is a free flying bird rather than a true escape as it would be surprising if it could have survived this long without human intervention.

EAGLE OWL (Eurasian Eagle Owl) *Bubo bubo*

Eurasia and northern Africa (largely sedentary).

South Woodham Ferrers	Two	22nd June

UNSUBSTANTIATED RECORDS

Cattle Egret

Chafford Gorge Grays	One	19th October
Wanstead Flats	Two flew over	4th November

Purple Heron

North Weald	One	20th April

European Honey Buzzard

The Naze	One	14th July
Marsh Farm South Woodham Ferrers	One	9th May
Rainham Marshes	One	22nd May

Goshawk

Fingringhoe Wick	One	7th May
South Woodham Ferrers	One	17th September
Stow Marsh North Fambridge	One	26th October
Beckton	One	22nd July
Woodford Green	Singles	12th and 13th June, 15th July
Holyfield Weir	One	29th April
Cornmill Meadows Waltham Abbey	One	5th April
Fairmead Bottom Epping Forest	One	21st August

Montagu's Harrier

Stow Marsh North Fambridge	One	14th September

Black Kite

Copford	One	26th April
Wanstead Flats	One	6th April
Harold Hill Dagnam Park	One	10th October
Walthamstow Wetlands	One	24th April

Rough-legged Buzzard

Burnham-on-Crouch	One	7th November
Burnham-on-Crouch	One	8th November
Blue House Farm	One	18th January

Eurasian Stone-curlew

Rochford	One	19th April

Black-winged Stilt

Hamford Water	One	29th October
Blue House Farm	Two	18th May
Vange Marsh	One	21st June

Pectoral Sandpiper

Rainham Marshes	One	15th April

Roseate Tern

Rainham Marshes	Juvenile	23rd September

White-winged Tern

Canvey Point	Juvenile	5th September

Long-tailed Jaeger

Canvey Point	Juvenile	18th October

Puffin

Canvey Point	One	4th September
Canvey Point	One	20th November

Alpine Swift

Gidea Park	One	2nd August

Bee-eater

Rainham Marshes	One	28th June

Hoopoe

Aveley	One	11th November

Wryneck

Wrabness	One	1st September
Holland Haven	One	5th September
Chafford Gorges Grays	One	7th September

Red-backed Shrike

The Naze	♀	30th May
The Naze	Juvenile	29th August
The Hythe Colchester	?	11th August

Woodlark

Maydays Farm West Mersea	One	15th October
Burnham-on-Crouch	One	11th September
Rainham Marshes	One	20th October
Belhus Woods Aveley	One	19th April
Walthamstow Wetlands	One	17th March

Dartford Warbler

Goldhanger	One	15th February
Theydon Bois	One	15th February

Rosy Starling

Billericay	One adult	7th June

Common Redpoll

Alresford	One	27th February
Little Waltham	Two	5th February
Chelmsford	One	4th February
Earls Colne	Two	8th December
Billericay	One	25th January
Doddinghurst	One	3rd March
Rainham Marshes	One	20th October

European Serin

Colne Point	One	6th June

Records considered Not Proven

EBSIP species

Rough-legged Buzzard	Brightlingsea	29th October
Rough-legged Buzzard	Blue House Farm	14th November
Richard's Pipit	Chafford Hundred	19th October

BBRC species and subspecies

Franklin's Gull	Southend-on-Sea	9th March

List of Observers

mo = many observers

Acfield, D [DAc]
Abrahams, C
Adamoulas, A
Agar, J
Aldous, K [KAl]
Allen, A
Allen, D [DAl]
Allen, M
Allen, R
Allenby, K
Alley, S
Allison, J
Anderson, B
Anderson, J
Anderson, M
Anderson, N
Anderson, S
Andersson, M
Andrews, D
Anpilov,S
Antram, F
Appleby, S R
Appleton, G F
Arlow, S [SAr]
Armstrong, A
Arnold, J
Astley, H
Astley, J
Atkins, C
Atkinson, R
Atkinson, S
Attiwell, J
Auld, D
Austin, D [DAu]
Austin, T
Avery, J
Avery, M I
Avis, D V
Aylward, J
Aylward, P J
Aylward, S
Bacon, S
Bacon, M
Bailey, O
Bailey, S
Baines, C
Baines, G
Baker, C
Baker, I
Baker, J
Baker, P [PBa]
Baker, R
Baker, T
Bakewell, D
Balchin, C [CBa]
Baldock, A
Baldwin, C
Ball, J
Ball, P S
Balstone, N
Baltruschat,S
Banks, S
Banthorpe, A
Bantock, H
Banwell, A
Barber, G
Barker, J R
Barker, P
Barnes, C
Barnes, D J
Barnes, R
Barrett, D
Barritt, T
Barry, L
Barry, S
Bartlett, S
Bartram, C R
Basham , E
Bater, S
Batho, G S
Bradwell Bird Observatory
Beach, C
Beale, J
Beard, P
Beardmore, M
Beckenham, P
Beevor, G [GBe]
Bell, A
Bell, D
Bell, T
Benham, A J
Benn, R
Bennett, A J
Berryman, A
Bessick, D
Bhatia, Z
Bidwell, A
Bingley, J H
Bird, M E
Birdguides
Birkett, J
Bissett, D J
Black, I
Blackman, R
Blackwell, A
Bleach, R
Blow, M
Blows, T
Bloys, I
Bloys, R
Bluemore, D
Blurton, D L
Bodini, L
Boersch-Supan, P
Bolderstone, T
Bolton, B
Bonsor, R
Bookless, D (Rev)
Boult, P
Bournat, M
Bourne, T [TBo]
Bowen, M
Bowles, E
Boyes, G
Bradnum, D (DBr]
Bradshaw, B
Bradshaw, C
Bradshaw, D [DBw]
Bradshaw, I [IBw]
Bratton, B
Braun, A
Brayshaw, P [PBr]
Brazier, H
Breaks, M T
Bridges, M
Brierley, S [SBr]
Bright, A [ABr]
Bright, J
Brittain, P
Broad,G
Broadley, D
Brolly, M
Brooke, K
Brown, A
Brown, B
Brown, G B [GBB]
Brown, L
Brown, R
Brown, S
Brown, T
Bruty, M
Buchanan, J
Buckel, V
Buckton, S
Burchell, T
Burfield, J [JBu]
Burgess, G
Burgess, R
Burgum, N
Burns, A N
Busch, S
Butler, J [JBu]
Butler, T
Butson, P
Cadera, J & J
Callahan, D
Cameron, D
Camp, J
Campbell, D K
Cantelo, J
Carpenter, B R
Carter, N
Carter, P
Cartwright, T
Chamberlain, P
Chambers, D W
Chambers, N [NCh]
Chanter, B
Chapman, P
Chilton, G
Churches, B
Clancy, T
Clark, C
Clark, F C
Clarke, M
Clarke, T
Coates, P
Cockerell, W
Coe, H
Coleman, M
Coles, C
Colling, K
Collins, L
Collins, M
Collins, P
Colson, R
Combes, B [BCo]
Comer, A (ACm)
Connor, S
Cook, C
Cook, K
Cook, R
Cooper, A
Cooper, B
Cooper, C
Cooper, J C
Cope, R
Copleston, K
Copp, J
Coppard, G
Corbett, M
Cornell, C
Cornwell, D
Cornwell, L
Cossey, S
Coulthard, E
Courtney, A
Cousins, D
Cox, A [ACo]
Cox, D
Cox, M
Cox, P
Cox, S [SCo]
Coxall, S
Cracknell, M
Crafford, C
Cresswell, M
Cripps, R J
Critchell, A
Croft, N [NCr]
Crossley, M
Cummings, L
Cummins, T
Cunningham, M
Curle, D
Cuthbert, L
Dagley, J R
Dandridge, P
Danstrom, D
D'aranjo, L
Darbyshire, S
Darnell, A
Darnell, C

Darrell-Lambert, D [DD-L]
Darsley, M
Davidson, J
Davie, S
Davies, J
Davies, L
Davies, P
Davies, S
Davies, T
Davis, A
Davis, C [CDa]
Davis, J [JDa]
Davis, M
Davis, P
Davis, R
Davison, M
Dawson, D
Dawton, B
Dawtrey, P
Day, E
de la Cruz Muñoz, A
Dean, R
Deane, G
Dee, J
Delve, J
Dent, A
Dent, M
Dewey, R A
Dewsnap, I
Dickens, A
Dickens, J
Dillon-Hooper, E
Dives, D
Dobbie, J
Dobson, D
Dodd, B
Dodd, P
Doe, J
Donovan, T
Douglas, A N
Drake, S
Drew, M J
Drewitt, C
Drewitt, E J A
Drummond, J
Dudley, M
Duncan, K
Dunn, D
Dutta, A
Dutton, S
Duxbury, A
Dwyer, P
Dye, J
Ebbs, L
Ekins, G
ELBF
Ellam, C
Ellisdon, D
Elmes, J P
Elsey, N J C
Elwell, S
Emerson, C
Emerson, J
Emmens, R P
English, C
Entwistle, S [SEn]
Essex Wildlife Trust [EWT]
Evans, C
Evans, L G R [LGE]
Evans, M
Evans, P
Evans, R
Evans, S
Fahey, R
Fair, G
Fairley, M
Fallan, A
Farley, J
Farrar, A R
Farrell, C
Farrell-Morris, C
Farthing, C
Faulkner, T
Feaviour, A
Feaviour, R H
Fell, J
Feltham, A
Fenton, J
Ferguson, J
Fernando, L
Field, A
Field, J
Firmin, R J
Fisher, M
Fisher, S [SFi]
Fisher, T
Flesher, R
Fletcher, B
Fletcher, D
Fletcher, J M
Fletcher, P
Flinn, G
Folsom, G
Ford, A E
Ford, K J
Foreman, J
Forster, T J
Francis, G J
Freeland-Haynes, L
Froud, A
Fuller, U C
Gaffney, D
Gage, J
Gales, A
Gannaway, C R
Gardella, L
Gardner, R
Gates, J
Gatward, N M
Giddings, A
Gilbert, T
Given, Q
González, C D
Goodey, A
Goodey, B
Gooding, A
Gooding, J
Gordon, P R
Gorst, T
Gotts, D
Gouldstone, A
Gram, G
Grealy, M [MGr]
Green, N
Green, T
Greenhalgh, J
Gregory, M
Gregory, S
Griggs, C
Griggs, P
Grimwade, S
Grimwood, S
Grube, M
Gymer, P
Hack, R
Hackett, P
Hagge, A
Haines, B
Hale, B
Hale, D [DHa]
Hall, R
Halley-Frame, V
Hamilton, S
Hampson, D K
Haney, L
Hannam, J C
Harbott, A G
Harding, G
Hardwick, M
Hare, M
Hargreaves, R
Harringay Birder
Harris, A
Harris, M
Harris, N G
Harris, S
Harris, T
Harrison, D W
Harrison, H
Harrison, L
Harrison, R
Hart, J
Hart, P [PHa]
Hart,S E
Hartnett, K
Hartwell, C
Harvey, M S
Harvey, S
Hasegawa, R
Hatcher, J J
Hatton, W A
Hawes, C
Hawkins, P
Hayward, T
Haywood, T
Headley, J
Heal, J
Heath, P [PHe]
Heggs, M
Hellicar, M [MHe]
Hellstern, H
Henry, M
Herschell, G
Herschell, K
Herts Website
Heywood, J
Heywood, M J
Hibberd, M
Hicks, M
Hicks, R
Hill, B
Hilliard, D J
Hillier, B
Hills, D
Hoare, J
Hodgson, J
Hogg, J
Hoit, M
Holland Haven Website
Hollocks, A
Holmes, A L
Holt, C
Hopkins, P
Horgan, C
Houston, T
Howard, R
Howey, S
Howie, G
Huckle, S
Hudgell, K
Hudson, J
Huggins, S
Hughes, M
Hull, R
Humble, J
Humm, J
Humphries, J
Hunter, J
Hurley, J
Hurst, F
Husband, B
Hutchings, E W
Hutchings, F
Hutley, D
Huxley, L [LHu]
Hyatt, A
Hyde, M
Hyland, P
Hythe Lagoons website
Iddon, M
Jackson, A
Jackson, B
Jackson, D
Jackson, E D
Jackson, M
James, C
James, G A
Jarvis, K
Jefford, S
Jeffries, P
Jennings, P
Jennings, S
Jobbins, D
Johnson, D
Johnson, M
Johnston, D
Jones, B
Jones, C [CJo]
Jones, J
Jones, J F
Jones, R
Jones, S E
Jordan, J
Jordan, M

Jordan,T
Jupp, C
Karunanayake, K
Keane, D
Keeble, E
Keirnan, S
Keith, R
Kelly, S
Kempa, M
Kennedy, K
Kennelly, A D
Kennelly, T
Keogh, N T
Kerrigan, S
Kettle, A
King, J
King, M
King, P
Kinnerman, J
Kinsler, V
Kirby, M S
Kirkland, M
Kirkman, K
Klarenberg, I
Klavins, J
Knapton, R
Knight, A
Knight, B
Knight, G
Kohler, M
Kortlandt, D J
Lacey, H
Laffling, M
Lamb, J
Lambert, P
Lamsdell, C
Lane, M
Lanfear, J
Langton, C
Larkin, P [PLa]
Last, A.J.
Last, W
Lathey, P A
Laurie, P
Law, A
Law, D
Lawler, L
Lawrence, B
Lawrence, R
Lawton, S
Lay, J
Lay, N
Layfield, A R
Leach, D
Leavett, R
Ledgerton, R J W
Lee, D C
Lee, P
Leeder, E
Lees, A
Leonard, C
Leport, B
Leslie, S
Lethbridge, J
Levy, S
Levy, T
Lewis, A
Lewis, G H
Lewis, J
Lewis, P
Lilley, J
Linacre, G
Lindeman, G
Lindsay, S
Lindsey, D (DLi)
Lindsell, S
Litchfield, A
Litvinoff, A
Lonsdale, M [MLo]
London Birder
Lopez-Salas, E
Lord, R [RLd]
Lord, D [DLd]
Loud, P [PLo]
Low, D [DLo]
Lycett, I
Lynch, S
Mackenzie-Grieve, C [CJM-G]
Madgwick, T
Malin, M
Maltby, M
Manias, F
Mann, D
Mann, O
Mapp, B
Mapp, S
Marchant, J H
Marsala, T
Martin, J
Martin, J P
Martin, R
Maskell, J
Mason, T
Massey, A
Mathias, H
Matthews, D
May, K
May, N
Mayson, S B
McAvoy, S
McBride, J
McCafferty, A
McCarthy, J
McCartney, L
McGeeney, A
McGilvray, K L
McGlaughlin, J
McGough, D
McKay, P
McLaughlin, J
McManus, K J
McNeil-Watson, N
McSporran, K
Meadows, A
Mee, G
Merchant, P
Merryweather, A
Messenger, M
Mickelsen, P
Middleton, A
Mieton, A
Mileman, V
Millen, R
Millen, Z
Miller, B
Minns, S
Minton, J [JMi]
Mitchell, D [DMi]
Mitchell, M
Moates, G K
Mobley, L
Mogensen, S
Montieth, E
Moore, G
Moore, S
Moran, N J
Moreton, G
Morgan, F C
Morgan, P
Morgans, C
Morrell, D
Morrison, D
Mortimer, N
Moss, B
Moss, L
Moura, N
Mulholland, D
Mullins, A
Murphy, N
Murphy, R
Murray, J
Murray, K
Muse, W
Musgrove, A
Musker, C
Musker, M
Nash, C
Newbold, S E
Newman, S
Nibbs, R (Prof)
Nicholls, D
Nichols, S
Nixon, S [SNi]
Noble, K
Noble, S D
Noble, S K
Norman, I
North, D
Norton, T
Nowers, M D
Nugent, F
Nunn, D
Oakland, M
Oakes, G
Oates, S J
O'Brian, T
O'Dowd, B
Okamoto, J
Oliver, C
Orchard, M
Orwin, R
Osborn, P
Outten, M
Owen, H J
Owens, C
Padmore, M
Paisley, K
Palethorpe, A
Pallash, D
Palmer, J
Palmer, K
Palmer, M [MPa]
Papps, S
Parikian, L
Park, N
Parker, M
Parkes, G
Parmenter, M
Parry-Davies, D
Partridge, J (JPa]
Patel, S
Patmore, S
Pattinson, M
Paxton, E
Payne, D
Payne, N
Pearce-Higgins, J W
Pearson, P
Pease, R [RPe]
Peck, T
Peers, M F [MPe]
Pell, E A
Pell, T
Peppaitt, R
Peters, M
Petts, D
Phillips, M
Phillips, N
Piccolo, A
Pictures, D
Pinch, J
Pinch, P
Pinkham, R
Piotrowski, S
Plume, A
Plummer, J
Poole, C
Poskitt, T
Price, G
Prideaux, R H
Priestnall, S
Pritchard, D
Puttock, B
Pyrah, R J
Quantrill, T
Radford, M
Radford, P
Rafinski, A
Railton, J
Rand, C
Rankin, J D K
Raper, S
Rawlings, N D
Rawlings, T
Rayner, I
Redfern, M
Reed, C
Reeves, J
Reid, A
Renowden, J
Rex, C
Reynolds, A
Reynolds, T

Rhymes, D J [DJR]
Rhodes, P
Richards, J
Richards, M
Richardson, J
Richardson, P
Richardstone, P
Ridley, M
Rigby, P
Rimmell, M
Rivoire, J R
Roast, E
Roast, M
Robertson, B D
Robinson, E
Robinson, J A
Robson, C
Robson, I
Rolf, J
Rose, I
Rose, P
Ross-Smith, V H
Rowland, J
RSPB
Ruis, C
Rumsby, B
Rumsby, M
Rush, M
Russell, L
Rustay, C
Rutt, P J
Ryland, C
Ryland, G
Sabiniak, G T
Sanford, S
Satchell, S
Saul, C A
Saville, D
Saward, J [JSa]
Saward, P
Scammell, B W
Scheibel, S
Scott, M
Scott, P
Scott, S
Seabrook, R J
Seaton, C
Seaward, J
Self, A
Selley, D
Senior, N
Sharp, P
Shaw, M D
Shayler, D
Shearman, A
Shearring, A
Sheilds, C [CSh]
Sheldon, R
Shelley, S
Shepherd, D [DSh]
Shepherd, M
Shepherd-Wells, M
Sheppard, B
Sherriff, R
Shilland, E
Shippey, S
Shuttleworth, P
Simmons, W
Simon, T B
Simpson, F
Singleton, M
Siskos, G
Slee, J
Smart, J
Smethurst, A
Smith, D
Smith, G [GSm]
Smith, J
Smith, M
Smith, N
Smith, R
Smith, S
Smith, T
Smykla, J
Snapes, D
SOG
Soor, S
Spall, T
Spangenburg, D
Sparkes, C
Speller, T
Spensley, D
Spicer, N
Stachnicki, T
Stallard, B
Standen, D
Stanley, R A
Steele, A
Stephens, D
Stephens, R
Stevens, C
Stewart, A
Stewart, G
Stewart, I
Stewart, S
Stile, D [DSt]
Stobart, E
Street, P
Stroud, A
Stylianou, J
Sumner, N
Surridge, D
Sutherby, J [JSu]
Sutton, G
Sutton, P
Swaby, S
Swanson, I
Swatt, J
Swift, H
Swinney, E
Swinney, S
Szimuly, G
Tann, T
Tanner, A
Tarbin, I [ITa]
Teixeira, J
Teixeira, M
Telford, J
Tew, N
The Urban Birder
Thomas, A
Thomas, J
Thomas, K
Thomas, T
Thomon, C
Thompson, S
Thorley, C M
Thorley, M
Thorneycroft, T
Thorogood, D
Thorogood, J
Thorpe, S
Threadgold, D
Tickle, S
Tiller, A
Todd, A W
Toloi, F
Tomlin, S
Tordoff, A
Torrice, D
Tracey, M
Tranfield, B
Triston, P
Trollope, C E
Tuck, D
Tunnicliffe, K
Turner, C
Turner, M
Turner, R
Turton, M
Tutt, D
Tweed, A [ATw]
Twells, G
Twyford, N
Tyas, C J
Tyler, D
Tyler, P
Underwood, D
Undrill, C
Upton, G (Prof)
Urquhart , D
Vale, M
Vaughan, A
Vaughan, B
Vaughan, H
Vaughan, L
Vaughan, P
Vaughan, R
Viles, D J
Vowles, G
Wadeson, D
Wagstaff, D
Wakefield, L
Wakerling, V
Wallace, D
Waller, D
Wallis, G
Walsh, M
Walthamstow Birders
Wanstead Birders
Ward, M
Ward, N
Wardell, A
Wardman, M
Warren, D
Wasse, J
Waters, R
Watkin, A
Watling, Y
Watson, I R
Watson, S
Watts, C
Watts, P
Webb, M
Webb, N
Webber, D
WeBS
Wells, A
Werran, R
Weston, N
Westrip, J
Wheeler, J
Wheeler, M
White, A
White, C
White, G
White, J
White, L
Whitehead, A
Whitelegg, D
Whiteman, P [PWh]
Whitfield, J
Whitlock, B
Wiffen, J
Wiggans, G
Wilkin, D R
Wilkins, R
Wilkinson, A
Wilkinson, S
Willett, J
Williams, K A
Williams,N
Williamson, S
Wilson, A [AWi]
Wilson, C
Wilson, G
Wilson, K
Wilson, R
Wilson, S
Wimsett, M
Winkworth, M P
Winn, A C
Winstanley, A
Winterton, S
Womack, G P
Wood, P
Wood, S D [SDW]
Woodcock,R
Woodhouse, A
Woodrow, L
Woodward, I D
Woodward, L
Woodward, R
Worland, P [PWo]
Worsfold, S
WREN Group
Wright, C
Wright, J
Wrycraft, D
Yates, K
Young, B
Zöckler, C
Zahner, T

Earliest and latest dates for Summer Visitors 2018

Species	Arrival Date	Location	Departure Date	Location
Garganey	31-Mar	Rainham Marshes	22-Sep	Abberton Reservoir
Little Ringed Plover	15-Mar	Walthamstow Wetlands	17-Sep	Rainham Marshes
Whimbrel**	18-Mar	Stone Point The Naze	14-Oct	Wat Tyler
Temminck's Stint		None recorded		None recorded
Wood Sandpiper	19-Apr	Blue House Farm	6-Sep	Walthamstow Wetlands
Sandwich Tern**	14-Mar	Frinton-on-Sea	4-Nov	Bradwell Bird Observatory
Little Tern	19-Apr	King George V Reservoir	30-Sep	Mucking
Common Tern	3-Apr	Rainham Marshes	28-Oct	Canvey Coastguards
Arctic Tern	3-Apr	Rainham Marshes	29-Oct	Canvey Point
Black Tern	14-Apr	Barking Bay	20-Oct	Hanningfield Reservoir
Turtle Dove	15-Apr	King George V Reservoir	13-Sep	Lion Creek Canedwon
Common Cuckoo	22-Mar	Dagenham Chase	29-Aug	Blue House Farm
Common Swift	20-Apr	Colchester/Loughton	14-Nov	Hamford Water
Eurasian Hobby	6-Apr	Weeley	13-Oct	Hadleigh Downs
Sand Martin	10-Mar	Brook Farm Upminster	15-Oct	Sewardstone Marsh
Barn Swallow	13-Mar	Frinton-on-Sea/ Holland Haven	17-Nov	Frinton-on-Sea
Common House Martin	17-Mar	Chelmsford	31-Oct	King George V Reservoir
Wood Warbler	28-May	Marks Hall Coggeshall	26-Aug	Ingrebourne Valley
Willow Warbler	14-Mar	South Woodham Ferrers	2-Oct	Belhus Wood Aveley
Sedge Warbler	10-Mar	Tollesbury Wick	29-Sep	Rainham Marshes
Eurasian Reed Warbler	31-Mar	Fingringhoe Wick	11-Dec	Walthamstow Wetlands
Grasshopper Warbler	14-Apr	Rainham Marshes	14-Jul	Rainham Marshes
Garden Warbler	5-Apr	Chigborough Lakes	30-Sep	Earls Colne
Lesser Whitethroat	11-Apr	The Hythe Colchester	14-Nov	The Hythe Colchester
Common Whitethroat	24-Mar	Wrabness	9-Oct	Abberton Reservoir
Ring Ouzel	3-Apr	Wanstead Flats	27-Nov	Wigboro Wick Farm St Osyth
Spotted Flycatcher	11-May	Wanstead Park	1-Oct	Wanstead Flats
Common Nightingale	10-Apr	Fingringhoe Wick	26-Aug	Fingringhoe Wick
European Pied Flycatcher	12-Apr	The Naze	22-Sep	Stansted Airport Lagoons Takeley
Common Redstart	5-Apr	Wanstead Flats	16-Oct	Frinton-on-Sea
Whinchat	20-Apr	Walthamstow Wetlands	15-Nov	Frinton-on-Sea
Northern Wheatear	14-Mar	The Hythe Colchester/ Brook Farm Upminster	17-Nov	Holland Haven
Western Yellow Wagtail	2-Apr	Abberton Reservoir/Boreham	14-Oct	Frinton-on-Sea
Tree Pipit	11-Apr	Dagenham Chase	24-Sep	Rainham Marshes

** for winter records please see the Systematic List

Latest and earliest dates for Winter Visitors 2018

Species	Departure Date	Location	Arrival Date	Location
Pink-footed Goose	2-May	Holyfield Farm	23-Sep	Rainham Marshes
White-fronted Goose	26-Mar	Rainham Marshes	8-Nov	Burnham-on-Crouch
Tundra Swan (Bewick's Swan)	18-Apr	Abberton Reservoir	14-Nov	Abberton Reservoir
Whooper Swan §	23-Feb	Hanningfield Reservoir	25-Sep	Frinton-on-Sea/ Holland Haven
Velvet Scoter	18-Feb	Horsey Island Hamford Water	31-Aug	Deal Hall Dengie
Long-tailed Duck*	15-Feb	Goldhanger	29-Oct	Old Hall Marshes
Smew*	1-Apr	Abberton Reservoir	24-Aug	Stour Estuary
Common Merganser (Goosander)*	7-May	Little Baddow	4-Oct	Sewardstone Marsh
Red-breasted Merganser	7-May	Frinton-on-Sea	3-Sep	Frinton-on-Sea
Red-throated Loon*	2-May	Frinton-on-Sea	29-Sep	Frinton-on-Sea
Black-throated Loon	5-Feb	Canvey Point	7-Oct	Frinton-on-Sea
Common Loon (Great Northern Diver)	23-May	Frinton-on-Sea	28-Oct	Rainham Marshes
Red-necked Grebe	8-Mar	Stow Marsh	11-Sep	Mistley
Horned Grebe (Slavonian Grebe)	11-Apr	Abberton Reservoir	6-Nov	Wrabness
Eurasian Bittern	12-Apr	Langdon Hill Plotlands	23-Aug	Blue House Farm
Hen Harrier	24-Apr	Rewsalls Marsh West Mersea	4-Oct	Bradwell Bird Observatory
Purple Sandpiper	17-Apr	Manningtree	24-Aug	Frinton-on-Sea
Jack Snipe	15-Apr	Rainham Marshes	14-Oct	Waterworks Leyton
Common Murre (Guillemot)	21-Mar	Bradwell Bird Observatory	5-Sep	Canvey Point/Coalhouse Fort East Tilbury
Merlin*	26-Apr	Old Hall Marshes	19-Aug	Lower Raypits Canewdon
Bohemian Waxwing	13-Apr	Southend-on-Sea	27-Dec	Clacton-on-Sea
Horned Lark (Shore Lark)	7-Mar	Bradwell Bird Observatory	13-Nov	Point Clear St Osyth
Fieldfare	16-Apr	Walthamstow Wetlands	13-Sep	Wivenhoe
Redwing	16-Apr	Connaught Water Epping Forest	9-Sep	Brook Farm Upminster
Water Pipit	11-Apr	The Hythe Colchester	3-Oct	Hanningfield Reservoir
Eurasian Rock Pipit	13-Apr	Langham Lagoons	29-Aug	Frinton-on-Sea
Brambling	22-Apr	The Naze/Lodge Farm Epping Green	25-Sep	Frinton-on-Sea
Twite	10-Feb	East Tilbury		None recorded
Eurasian Siskin	24-May	Frinton-on-Sea	23-Jun	The Hythe Colchester
Lapland Longspur (Lapland Bunting)		None recorded	31-Oct	Broomhouse Flash Langham
Snow Bunting	7-Mar	Old Hall Marshes	11-Oct	The Naze

* for summer records please see the Systematic List (some may be feral birds)
§ Assumes Hamford Water/Stour bird is not a wild bird

Wetland Bird Survey (WeBS) Totals for Essex 2018

Care should be taken when interpreting these figures, as records from some sites may be incomplete.

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Brent Goose (Dark-bellied)	24883	24546	15520	1398	3	132	14007	21576	18619
Canada Goose	2075	1670	1075	719	2525	4051	2892	2948	2276
Greylag Goose	1788	1405	716	500	1445	861	1179	1708	1137
Mute Swan	349	404	357	307	480	675	339	424	363
Shelduck	8067	5406	3425	976	112	408	1217	4215	3735
Shoveler	767	840	1193	282	412	2027	2540	1496	595
Gadwall	606	528	344	150	769	892	520	337	560
Wigeon	12911	11479	8046	269	13	1954	3201	16061	14342
Mallard	2639	2431	1724	1014	3096	3815	2720	2800	2813
Pintail	1199	811	861	104	7	326	696	706	724
Teal	13845	13541	8811	871	1760	17025	8021	10985	20719
Pochard	1065	565	586	203	2916	4166	2169	1544	1265
Tufted Duck	1944	1777	1753	917	3505	4185	5829	3768	1298
Goldeneye	314	286	334	15	4	2	6	174	250
Goosander	93	73	85	2	0	0	3	28	163
Red-breasted Merganser	177	181	51	11	0	0	0	40	52
Little Grebe	403	366	164	40	167	221	206	225	170
Great Crested Grebe	524	577	502	310	831	1448	2361	2499	657
Grey Heron	107	99	78	86	121	150	145	151	120
Little Egret	127	230	78	97	504	932	691	690	339
Cormorant	1371	958	393	427	2993	2109	2667	1901	966
Water Rail	3	9	6	3	0	0	1	2	3
Moorhen	434	438	212	164	226	253	352	427	279
Coot	2404	2117	1517	657	5618	8365	10088	3878	1744
Oystercatcher	16235	18672	4215	1964	12446	9805	16148	17301	12151
Avocet	2058	1665	995	61	53	67	675	1123	475
Lapwing	11175	18296	539	102	807	718	1817	12234	13109
Golden Plover	21712	21868	929	13	627	2175	2787	14514	9170
Grey Plover	16462	7811	4533	234	673	3249	2931	6414	7654
Ringed Plover	594	469	247	27	305	1978	843	628	346
Curlew	2806	5052	1840	2048	2578	4102	2782	5158	2246
Bar-tailed Godwit	4077	2930	3768	2	581	468	764	2287	2356
Black-tailed Godwit	5039	5118	4208	3808	1871	5990	2525	2345	1458
Turnstone	1119	1558	1044	549	296	717	782	1278	1627
Knot	56721	45306	24813	6	22	95	12705	21333	28239
Ruff	1	36	19	2	2	78	3	24	8
Sanderling	324	1462	436	43	81	514	102	922	236
Dunlin	35690	50091	13775	1112	595	882	12493	39174	25433
Snipe	21	51	32	10	17	43	17	27	52
Redshank	6442	8343	3579	2238	2307	4656	5098	4930	5279
Greenshank	3	10	4	6	116	119	34	13	1
Black-headed Gull	9626	7623	7071	8300	7467	8263	6484	6297	2822
Common Gull	616	651	1125	65	431	1085	1092	1104	814
Great Black-backed Gull	421	160	188	8	33	229	324	691	312
Herring Gull	1284	1511	1437	832	1268	2649	1027	1057	1359
Lesser Black-backed Gull	367	256	248	196	255	268	207	192	119
Total	**270888**	**269676**	**122876**	**31148**	**60338**	**102147**	**133490**	**217629**	**188455**

Gazetteer of place names used in the 2018 report

Bold type identifies how the name appears in the Systematic List

Abbreviations :

ECC Essex County Council
EWT Essex Wildlife Trust
FC Forestry Commission
LVRP Lee Valley Regional Park
MOD Ministry of Defence
NT National Trust
RSPB Royal Society for the Protection of Birds
WT Woodland Trust

Site	Grid reference
Abberton Reservoir (including EWT Visitor Centre)	TL 9817
Abbotts Hall Farm Great Wigborough EWT Reserve	TL 9614
Alphamstone	TL 8735
Alresford	TM 0621
Alresford Creek	TM 0619
Amberden Hall Reservoir Widdington	TL 5530
Ambresbury Bank Epping Forest	TL 4300
Ardleigh Reservoir	TM 0328
Ashingdon	TQ 8693
Audley End	TL 5237
Aveley	TQ 5680
Barking	TQ 4484
Barking Abbey	TQ 4483
Barking Bay/Marsh	TQ 4581
Barking Park	TQ 4485
Barleylands Billericay	TQ 6991
Barrow Wood Highwoods	TL 6302
Bathside Bay Harwich	TM 2532
Beaumont	TM 1725
Beaumont Quay	TM 1824
Beazley End	TL 7430
Beckton	TQ 4481
Beckton Sewage Works	TQ 4582
Bedfords Park Havering-atte-Bower (including EWT Visitor Centre)	TQ 5192
Beeleigh	TL 8407
Belchamp Walter	TL 8140
Belhus Woods Aveley Country Park ECC	TQ 5782
Benfleet	TQ 7786
Benfleet Creek	TQ 7885
Benfleet Downs	TQ 7885
Bicknacre	TL 7802
Billericay	TQ 6794
Blackley Lane Gravel Pit Willows Green	TL 7219
Blackmore	TL6001
Blackwater Estuary	TL 9707
Blake's Wood Little Baddow NT	TL 7706
Blue House Farm North Fambridge EWT Reserve	TQ 8097
Bocking	TL 7624
Bolts Farm Barling	TQ 9189
Bonnetts Wood Upminster	TQ 5584
Boreham	TL 7509
Boreham Gravel Pit	TL 7410
Borley	TL 8442
Bourne Valley Colchester	TM 0023
Bow Creek Ecological Park LVRP	TQ 3980
Bowers Marsh Bowers Gifford RSPB Reserve	TQ 7586
Boxted	TM 0032
Bradwell Bird Observatory	TM 0308
Bradwell Power Station	TM 0008
Bradwell-juxta-Coggeshall Gravel Pit	TL 8022
Bradwell-on-Sea	TM 0006
Braintree	TL 7623
Bramble Island Hamford Water	TM 2126
Braxted Park	TL 8515
Breach Barns Farm Waltham Abbey	TL 4002
Bridgemarsh Island Crouch Estuary	TQ 8996
Brightlingsea	TM 0817
Brook Farm Upminster	TQ 5987
Broomhouse Flash Langham	TM 0334
Bulmer	TL 8440
Bungate Wood Braintree	TL 8324
Bures	TL 9034
Burnham-on-Crouch	TQ 9496
Canewdon	TQ 9094

Site	Grid reference
Canvey Heights Country Park	TQ 8183
Canvey Island	TQ 8182
Canvey Point	TQ 8283
Canvey Seafront	TQ 8280
Canvey Wick RSPB Reserve	TQ 7683
Cattawade	TM 1033
Cattawade Marshes/The Splodge RSPB Reserve	TM 0932
Chafford Gorges Grays EWT Nature Park	TQ 5879
Chafford Hundred Grays	TQ 6079
Chalkney Wood Earls Colne ECC	TL 8727
Chelmsford	TL 7007
Chigborough Lakes Heybridge EWT Reserve	TL 8708
Chigwell	TQ 4493
Childerditch Pond	TQ 6190
Chrishall	TL 4438
Chisbon Heath St Osyth	TM 1318
Church Lane Little Leigh	TL 7117
Cindery Island Brightlingsea Creek	TM 0916
Clacton Leisure Centre	TM 1715
Clacton-on-Sea	TM 1715
Clavering Farm Fish Lakes	TL 4633
Clay Tye Wood Upminster	TQ 5986
Clementsgreen Creek South Woodham Ferrers	TQ 8296
Coalhouse Fort East Tilbury	TQ 6976
Cobmarsh Island off West Mersea	TM 0012
Codham Hall Farm Great Warley	TQ 5988
Colchester	TL 9925
Colemans Reservoir Little Braxted	TL 8415
Colne Estuary	TM 0617
Colne Point St Osyth EWT Reserve	TM 1012
Connaught Water Epping Forest	TQ 4095
Cooper's Creek Mundon	TL 9005
Copford	TL 9223
Copford Sewage Works	TL 9324
Copped Hall Epping Forest	TL 4300
Copt Hall Marshes Little Wigborough NT Reserve	TL 9814
Cornmill Meadows Waltham Abbey LVRP	TL 3801
Court Hill Little Leighs	TL 7117

Site	Grid reference
Creekside Beckton Nature Reserve	TQ 4582
Creekmouth Barking	TQ 4581
Crouchside Foulness Island	TQ 9991
Cudmore Grove East Mersea Country Park ECC	TM 0614
Cymbeline Meadows Colchester	TL 9826
Dagenham Chase Local Nature Reserve	TQ 5185
Dagnam Park Harold Hill	TQ 5593
Danbury Park County Park ECC	TL 7704
Daw's Hall Lamarsh	TL 8836
Deal Hall Dengie	TR 0197
Debden Green	TQ 4398
Dengie Flats	TR 0399
Distillery Pond Colchester	TM 0123
Docura's Farm Little Horkesley	TM 0233
Doddinghurst	TQ 5998
Dovercourt	TM 2531
Eagle Pond Leyton	TQ 3989
Earl's Path Pond Loughton	TQ 4196
Earls Colne	TL 8528
Eastern Esplanade Canvey Island	TQ 8082
East Mersea	TM 0474
East Tilbury	TQ 6878
Elmdon	TL 4639
Epping	TL 4602
Epping Forest	TQ 4298
Epping Forest Burial Park	TL 3903
Fairlop Waters Barkingside Country Park	TQ 4585
Fairmead Bottom Epping Forest	TQ 4096
Farnham	TL 4724
Ferrier's Farm Bures	TL 8938
Fingringhoe Gravel Pit	TM 0420
Fingringhoe Ranges MOD	TM 0318
Fingringhoe Wick EWT Reserve	TM 0919
Fishers Green Holyfield LVRP	TL 3703
Flatford Mill	TM 0733
Flitch Green Little Dunmow	TL 6620
Fobbing Marsh EWT Reserve	TQ 7184
Fordham	TL 9228
Foulness Island	TR 0092
Foxearth Nature Reserve	TL 8344

Site	Grid reference
Foxearth Meadows	TL 8345
Friday Lake Waltham Abbey LVRP	TL 3703
Friday Wood Colchester	TL 9821
Frinton-on-Sea	TM 2319
Fuller Street Fairstead	TL 7416
Galleywood	TL 7002
Gallions Reach Beckton	TQ 4481
Garnham's Island Hamford Water	TM 2125
Geedon Saltings Fingringhoe	TM 0418
Glen Faba Roydon LVRP	TL 3909
Goldhanger	TL 9008
Good Easter	TL 6212
Gosbeck's Farm Colchester	TL 9722
Gosfield	TL 7829
Grays	TQ 6177
Grays New Cemetery	TQ 6378
Great Baddow	TL 7205
Great Braxted	TL 8614
Great Henny	TL 8637
Great Loveney Hall Mount Bures	TL 8931
Great Notley	TL 7421
Great Oakley	TM 1927
Great Sampford	TL 6435
Great Stambridge	TQ 8991
Great Totham	TL 8612
Great Waltham	TL 6913
Great Wigborough	TL 9615
Gunners Park Shoebury EWT Reserve	TQ 9384
Gunpowder Park Waltham Abbey LVRP	TQ 3798
Gutteridge Hall St Osyth	TM 1421
Hadleigh Downs	TQ 8086
Hainault	TQ 4592
Hainault Forest including Country Park	TQ 4793
Hall Farm Frating	TM 0822
Hall Marsh Scrape Waltham Abbey LVRP	TL 3701
Hamford Water	TM 2225
Hampton Barns Great Stambridge	TQ 9091
Hangman's Wood Little Thurrock	TQ 6379
Hanningfield Reservoir (including EWT Visitor Centre)	TQ 7397

Site	Grid reference
Harold Wood	TL 5490
Harwich	TM 2530
Hatfield Broad Oak	TL 5416
Hatfield Forest NT Reserve	TL 5419
Hatfield Heath	TL 5215
Haven Point Wakering Stairs	TQ 9787
Hazeleigh Wood	TL 8304
Henny Street	TL 8838
Heybridge Basin	TL 8707
Heybridge Gravel Pit	TL 8606
High Beach Epping Forest	TQ 4097
Highams Park	TQ 3891
Highwoods Colchester Country Park	TM 0026
Hockley Woods Local Nature Reserve	TQ 8391
Hogmarsh Island Manningtree EWT Reserve	TM 1032
Hole Haven Creek Canvey Island	TQ 7582
Holland Haven Country Park	TM 2117
Holyfield Hall Farm LVRP	TL 3803
Holyfield Lake LVRP	TL 3704
Hooks Marsh Waltham Abbey LVRP	TL 3701
Hornchurch	TQ 5386
Horsey Island Hamford Water	TM 2324
Horsley Cross	TM 1127
Howe Outfall Dengie	TM 0202
Howland Marsh St Osyth EWT Reserve	TM 1016
Hyde Wood Canewdon	TQ 8793
Hylands Park Chelmsford	TQ 6804
Ingatestone	TQ 6499
Ingrebourne Valley	TQ 5384
Irlam's Beach Dovercourt	TM 2427
Jacques Bay Wrabness	TM 1531
Jaywick	TM 1513
Joyce's Marsh Goldhanger	TL 9208
Judas Gap Flatford	TL 8410
Kelvedon	TL 8618
King George V Reservoir Chingford LVRP	TQ 3795
Kirby Cross	TM 2120
Laindon	TQ 6789
Lake Meadows Billericay	TQ 6894
Lamarsh	TL 8935

Site	Grid reference
Landermere	TM 1923
Langdon Hills Plotlands EWT Reserve	TQ 6587
Langenhoe Marsh/Fingringhoe Ranges MOD	TM 0417
Langham	TM 0333
Langham Airfield	TM 0131
Langham Treatment Works	TM 0134
Lawling Creek Maylandsea	TL 9104
Leez Priory Hartford End	TL 7018
Leez Reservoir Hartford End	TL 7018
Leigh Creek	TQ 8385
Leigh Marsh Leigh-on-Sea	TQ 8385
Leigh-on-Sea	TQ 8486
Lexden Park Colchester Local Nature Reserve	TL 9724
Leyton	TQ 3887
Leyton Flats	TL 3986
Lion Creek Canewdon EWT Reserve	TQ 9295
Little Baddow	TQ 7807
Little Bardfield	TL 6530
Little Chesterford	TL 5141
Little Henny	TL 8538
Little Horkesley	TL 9632
Little Oakley	TM 2129
Lodge Farm Epping Green	TL 4206
Lofts Farm Gravel Pits Heybridge	TL 8608
Long Green Epping	TL 4205
Loughton	TQ 4296
Lower Raypits Canewdon EWT Reserve	TQ 9294
Magnolia Park Hawkwell Nature Reserve	TQ 8692
Maldon	TL 8506
Manningtree	TM 1031
Mardyke Valley Stifford-Aveley	TQ 5679
Marks Hall Coggeshall Arboretum and Gardens	TL 8426
Marsh Farm South Woodham Ferrers Country Park ECC	TQ 8196
Marsh House Dengie	TM 0103
Maydays Farm West Mersea	TM 0215
Mayesbrook Park Dagenham Public Park	TQ 4684
Mayland	TL 9202

Site	Grid reference
Mayland Creek	TL 9103
Mersea Island	TM 0314
Middleton	TL 8739
Middlewick Farm Dengie	TR 0198
Mill Beach Heybridge	TL 8807
Mill Meadows Billericay	TQ 6794
Mistley	TM 1232
Mistley Walls	TM 1132
Mole Hall Widdington	TL 5431
Mount Bures	TL 9032
Mucking	TQ 6881
Nazeing Gravel Pits LVRP	TL 3807
Netherhall Gravel Pit Nazeing LVRP	TL 3908
Netherhall Roydon	TL 3908
Nevendon Washlands	TQ 7291
New Hall Farm Little Wigborough	TL 9815
Newport Sewage Works	TL 5234
Norsey Wood Billericay Local Nature Reserve	TQ 6895
North Fambridge	TQ 8697
North Fambridge Hall	TQ 8597
North Stifford	TQ 6080
North Weald	TL 4903
North Woolwich	TQ 4379
Northey Island Blackwater Estuary NT Reserve	TL 8806
Old Hall Lane Tolleshunt d'Arcy	TL 9512
Old Hall Marshes Tolleshunt d'Arcy RSPB Reserve	TL 9811
Old Thorndon Pastures	TQ 6190
Olympic Park Stratford LVRP	TQ 3784
Ongar Park Wood Epping Forest	TL 4902
Orsett	TQ 6481
Orsett Fen	TQ 6283
Osea Island Blackwater Estuary	TL 9106
Paglesham	TQ 9293
Paglesham Churchend	TQ 9293
Paglesham East End	TQ 9492
Paglesham Lagoon	TQ 9290
Packing Shed Island off West Mersea	TL 9912
Paul's Hall Belchamp St Paul	TL 7943
Pebmarsh	TL 8533
Perry Green Bradwell-juxta-Coggeshall	TL 8122

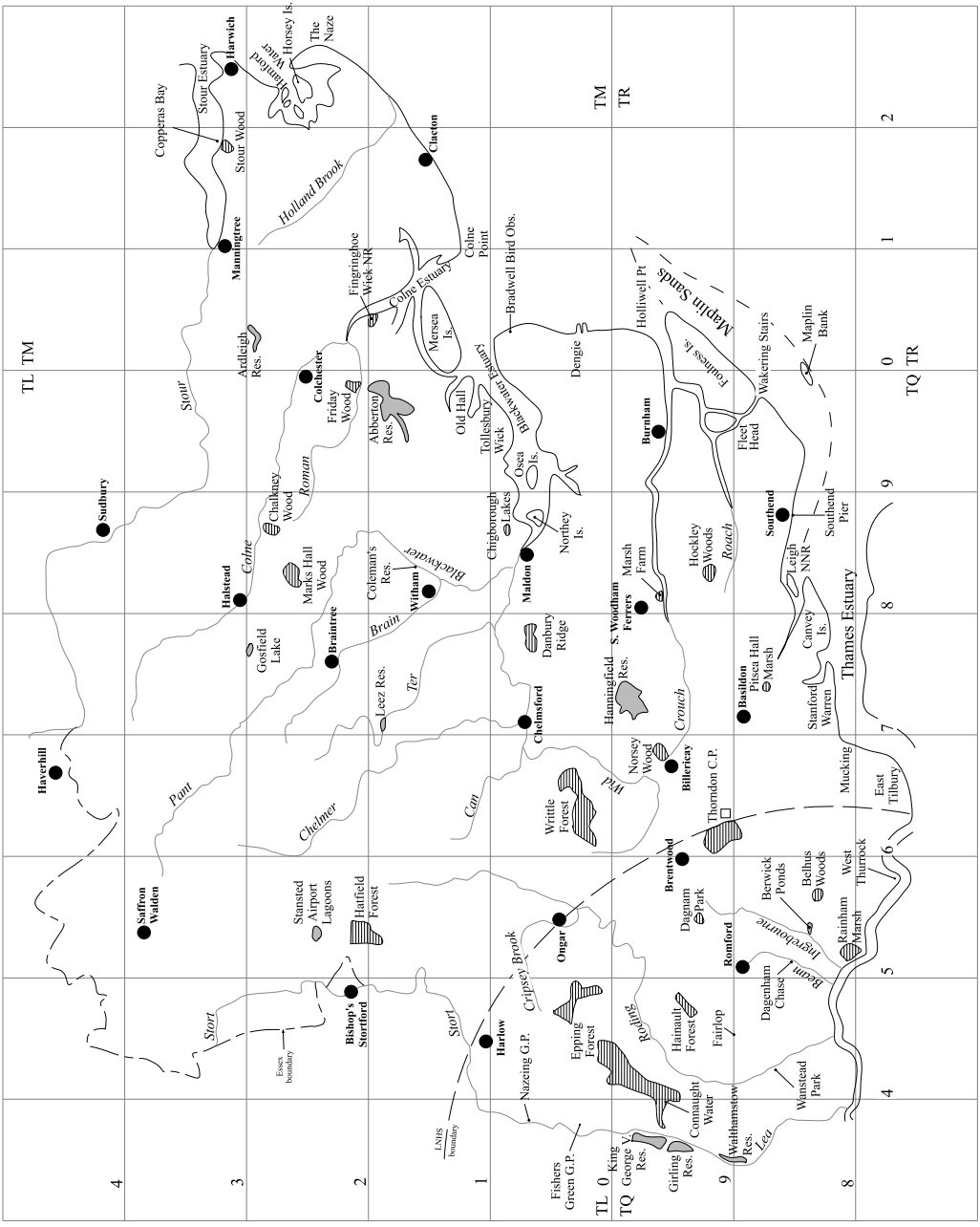
Site	Grid reference
Pewit Island Hamford Water	TM 2326
Phyllis Currie Reserve Great Leighs EWT Reserve	TL 7218
Pitsea Landfill	TQ 7386
Pitsea Marsh	TQ 7487
Point Clear St Osyth	TM 0914
Pole Hill Epping Forest	TQ 3894
Potton Island Great Wakering	TQ 9591
Pound Wood Thundersley EWT Reserve	TQ 8288
Prior's Wood Takeley	TL 5621
Priory Park Southend-on-Sea	TQ 8787
Purfleet	TQ 5678
Quickbury Farm Lower Sheering	TL 4914
Rainham	TQ 5282
Rainham Marshes RSPB Reserve	TQ 5280
Rainham Tip	TQ 5279
Ramsey Marsh St Lawrence	TL 9305
Rayleigh	TQ 8090
Rayleigh Mount	TQ 8090
Rayne	TL 7323
Rewshalls Marsh West Mersea	TM 0413
Richmond's Green Thaxted	TL 6229
Rickling Green	TL 6525
Ridgewell Airfield Ashen	TL 7541
Rivenhall End	TL 8316
Rivenhall Place Silver End	TL 8218
Roach Estuary	TQ 9893
Rochford	TQ 8790
Rochford Golf Course	TQ 8690
Roding Valley Meadows Chigwell EWT Reserve	TQ 4395
Romford	TQ 5289
Russell Green Gravel Pits Boreham	TL 7512
Saffron Walden	TL 5423
Salcott	TL 9413
Sales Point Dengie	TM 0308
Seawick St Osyth	TM 1212
Seventy Acres Lake Holyfield LVRP	TL 3703
Sewardstone	TQ 3898
Sewardstone Marsh LVRP	TQ 3798
Shoebury	TQ 9384
Shoebury Common Southend-on-Sea	TQ 9184

Site	Grid reference
Shoebury East Beach	TQ 9484
Shoebury Park	TQ 9385
Shoeburyness	TQ 9383
Shut Heath Wood Great Totham EWT Reserve	TL 8513
South Benfleet	TQ 7886
South Fambridge	TQ 8595
South Park Ilford	TQ 4586
South Woodham Ferrers	TQ 8097
Southend Airport	TQ 8789
Southend Pier	TQ 8884
Southend-on-Sea	TQ 8685
St Lawrence	TL 9506
St Lawrence Bay	TL 9603
St Osyth	TM 1215
St Osyth Priory	TM 1215
St Osyth Stone	TM 0815
Stanford Rivers	TL 5300
Stanford Warren EWT Reserve	TQ 6881
Stanford Wharf RSPB Reserve	TQ 6881
Stanford-le-Hope	TQ 6882
Stansted Airport Lagoons Takeley	TL 5521
Stapleford Tawney	TQ 5098
Steeple	TL 9303
Stifford Hall	TQ 6080
Stone Point Mersea Island	TM 0715
Stone Point The Naze Walton-on-the-Naze	TM 2425
Stour Estuary	TM 1733
Stow Marsh North Fambridge	TQ 8496
Strawberry Hill Pond Epping Forest	TQ 4297
Strethall	TL 4839
Stubbers Adventure Centre Corbets Tey	TQ 5784
Sunnymead Farm Wivenhoe	TM 0522
Terling	TL 7715
Thames Barrier Park	TQ 4179
Thaxted	TL 6131
The Hythe Colchester (and Lagoons)	TM 0124
The Naze Walton-on-the-Naze (inc EWT Visitor Centre)	TM 2624
The Street Pleshey	TQ 6614
The Strood Mersea Island	TM 0115

Site	Grid reference
Theydon Bois	TQ 4498
Thorndon Park (North) Country Park (inc EWT Visitor Centre) ECC	TQ 6091
Thorpe-le-Soken	TM 1822
Thundersley	TQ 7988
Thundersley Glen	TQ 7887
Thurrock Thameside Mucking Nature Park EWT Reserve	TQ 6980
Tilbury	TQ 6376
Tilbury Fort	TQ 6475
Tillingham	TL 9903
Tiptree	TL 8916
Tiptree Heath	TL 8814
Tollesbury	TL 9510
Tollesbury Channel	TL 9810
Tollesbury Recharge	Tl 9809
Tollesbury Wick EWT Reserve	TM 0419
Tolleshunt d'Arcy	TL 9311
Twinstead	TL 8636
Two Tree Island Leigh-on-Sea EWT Reserve	TQ 8285
Tye Hall Farm Roxwell	TL 6308
University of Essex Colchester	TM 0223
Upminster	TQ 5687
Upper Green Langley	TL 4434
Valentine's Park Ilford	TQ 4387
Vange Marsh RSPB reserve	TQ 7285
Vange Wick RSPB Reserve	TQ 7385
Wakering Common	TQ 9587
Wakering Stairs	TQ 9787
Wallasea Island Canewdon RSPB Reserve	TQ 9693
Waltham Abbey	TL 3800
Walthamstow Filter Beds LVRP	TQ 3588
Walthamstow Marshes LVRP	TQ 3587
Walthamstow Wetlands LVRP LWT	TQ 3589
Walton Hall Marshes	TM 2623
Walton-on-The-Naze	TM 2521

Site	Grid reference
Wanstead	TQ 4088
Wanstead Flats	TQ 4086
Wanstead Park	TQ 4187
Warley	TQ 5992
Warren Gorge Chafford Gorges Grays	TQ 5979
Wat Tyler Country Park Pitsea	TQ 7386
Waterworks Leyton Nature Reserve LVRP	TQ 3686
Weald Park South Weald Country Park	TQ 5794
Wendons Loft	TL 4638
West Bergholt	TL 9527
West Canvey Marsh RSPB Reserve	TQ 7784
West Mersea	TM 0012
West Thurrock Marshes	TQ 5876
West Wood Great Sampford EWT Reserve	TL 6233
Westcliff-on-Sea	TQ 8686
Westley Heights Langdon Hills Country Park	TQ 6886
Weymarks Dengie	TM 0109
White Colne	TL 8728
Wickford	TQ 7593
Wigboro Wick Farm St Osyth	TM 1114
William Girling Reservoir Chingford LVRP	TQ 3694
Wimbish Saffron Walden	TL 5936
Wivenhoe	TM 0321
Wix	TM 1503
Woodford Green	TQ 4192
Woodrodon Hill Epping Forest	TQ 4299
Wormingford	TL 9331
Wormingford Airfield	TL 9130
Wrabness EWT Reserve	TM 1731
Writtle	TL 6706
Wycke Farm Tolleshunt d'Arcy	TL 9309

Map of Essex


Haverhill
Sudbury
Saffron Walden
Stansted Airport Lagoons
Hatfield Forest
Bishop's Stortford
Harlow
Nazeing G.P.
Fishers Green G.P.
King George V Res.
Girling Res.
Walthamstow Res.
Wanstead Park
Epping Forest
Hainault Forest
Fairlop
Dagenham Chase
Romford
Ongar
Chipsey Brook
Roding
Connaught Water
Lea
Stort
Essex boundary
LNHS boundary
Pant
Chelmer
Can
Wid
Writtle Forest
Norsey Wood
Billericay
Thorndon C.P.
Brentwood
Dagnam Park
Berwick Ponds
Belhus Woods
Rainham Marsh
West Thurrock
East Tilbury
Mucking
Thames Estuary
Ingrebourne
Beam
Basildon
Pitsea Hall Marsh
Stanford Warren
Canvey Is.
Leigh NNR
Southend
Southend Pier
Wakering Stairs
Fleet Head
Maplin Bank
Foulness Is.
Maplin Sands
Holliwell Pt
Burnham
Dengie
Bradwell Bird Obs.
Colne Point
Colne Estuary
Mersea Is.
Old Hall
Tollesbury Wick
Blackwater Estuary
Osea Is.
Northey Is.
Maldon
Chigborough Lakes
Danbury Ridge
Chelmsford
Hanningfield Res.
S. Woodham Ferrers
Marsh Farm
Hockley Woods
Roach
Crouch
Leez Res.
Ter
Brain
Blackwater
Coleman's Res.
Witham
Braintree
Gosfield Lake
Marks Hall Wood
Chalkney Wood
Roman
Colne
Halstead
Abberton Res.
Colchester
Friday Wood
Ardleigh Res.
Stour
Fingringhoe Wick NR
Clacton
Holland Brook
Manningtree
Stour Estuary
Stour Wood
Copperas Bay
Harwich
Harwich Harbour
Horsey Is.
The Naze
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Essex Ringing Report for 2018

Simon Cox

The British Trust for Ornithology database lists a total of 12,812 birds ringed in Essex during 2018, a slightly lower number than in each of the last three years with reduced access to Pitsea Landfill site a contributory factor. It should be pointed out that the 1km square TL3909 is counted as an Essex square although it includes a small fragment of the Rye Meads RSPB reserve in Hertfordshire and it is possible that a 'single-figure' number of birds ringed there may have been included in the total.

Table 1 Totals of birds ringed in Essex 2018

Species	2018 Total
Brant Goose	18
Canada Goose	257
Greylag Goose	7
Mute Swan	32
Mallard	14
Eurasian Teal	5
Common Pochard	1
Tufted Duck	2
Little Grebe	1
Grey Heron	23
Little Egret	13
Eurasian Sparrowhawk	11
Western Marsh Harrier	4
Common Buzzard	4
Common Moorhen	8
Eurasian Coot	22
Eurasian Oystercatcher	2
Pied Avocet	2
Northern Lapwing	1
Common Ringed Plover	2
Little Ringed Plover	3
Black-headed Gull	208
Mediterranean Gull	1
Great Black-backed Gull	17
Herring Gull	179
Lesser Black-backed Gull	19
Common Tern	29
Stock Dove	38
Common Wood Pigeon	45
Eurasian Collared Dove	30
Common Cuckoo	2
Western Barn Owl	190
Tawny Owl	6

Species	2018 Total
Little Owl	10
Common Kingfisher	11
Great Spotted Woodpecker	34
European Green Woodpecker	3
Common Kestrel	32
Eurasian Jay	8
Eurasian Magpie	22
Western Jackdaw	36
Rook	1
Carrion Crow	2
Coal Tit	102
Marsh Tit	19
Eurasian Blue Tit	3,654
Great Tit	1,347
Bearded Reedling	2
Sand Martin	4
Barn Swallow	395
Common House Martin	73
Cetti's Warbler	11
Long-tailed Tit	331
Willow Warbler	42
Common Chiffchaff	216
Sedge Warbler	80
Eurasian Reed Warbler	220
Common Grasshopper Warbler	1
Eurasian Blackcap	573
Garden Warbler	17
Lesser Whitethroat	54
Common Whitethroat	158
Common Firecrest	8
Goldcrest	177
Eurasian Wren	190

Species	2018 Total
Eurasian Nuthatch	16
Eurasian Treecreeper	34
Common Starling	362
Common Blackbird	396
Fieldfare	110
Redwing	39
Song Thrush	57
Mistle Thrush	4
Spotted Flycatcher	3
European Robin	260
European Pied Flycatcher	1
Whinchat	7
European Stonechat	1
Northern Wheatear	1
House Sparrow	264
Dunnock	274
Western Yellow Wagtail	28
Grey Wagtail	6
Pied Wagtail	9
Meadow Pipit	146
Common Chaffinch	225
Brambling	22
Eurasian Bullfinch	35
European Greenfinch	353
Common Linnet	34
Redpoll sp.	1
Common Redpoll	1
Lesser Redpoll	48
European Goldfinch	850
Eurasian Siskin	52
Yellowhammer	16
Common Reed Bunting	128
Grand Total	**12,812**

Table 2 Selected recoveries/controls involving Essex reported during 2018

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 recently, are included and dates in brackets are approximate. The term control refers to a bird captured and released by another ringer.

Species/ring number	Age/ details	Date	Locations	kms
Egyptian Goose	Adult	09/07/14	Hampton, Greater London	
1459591	Field record	15/11/18	Walthamstow Wetlands	30
Little Egret	Nestling	05/05/12	Netherhall, Roydon	
GR58405	Field record	31/05/13	Nene Washes, Cambridgeshire	93
	Field record	05/10/16	Pitsford Reservoir, Northamptonshire	89
	Field record	29/07/18	Deeping Lake, Lincolnshire	102
Northern Gannet	Nestling	12/06/94	Ortac, Alderney, **Channel Islands**	
CIJ F18189	Long dead	14/03/18	West Mersea	321
European Shag	Nestling	15/06/17	Fidra, Firth of Forth, East Lothian, Scotland	
1490304	Freshly dead	12/03/18	Holland Haven	542
European Shag	Nestling	21/07/17	Isle of May, Fife, Scotland	
1493338	Freshly dead	07/01/18	Alresford Creek	536
Common Buzzard	Nestling	07/06/15	Wymbleton Farm, South Holmwood, Surrey	
GR47777	Freshly dead	19/03/18	Theydon Bois	60
Eurasian Coot	Adult ♀	09/06/11	Abberton Reservoir	
GR04642	Shot	29/01/18	Chetney Marshes, near Sittingbourne, Kent	45
Pied Avocet	Nestling	05/06/11	Orfordness, Suffolk	
EW43223	Field record	19/07/16	Old Hall Marshes	60
	Field record	17/02/18	Brownsea Island, Poole Harbour, Dorset	291
	Field record	09/09/18	Fingringhoe Wick	51
Pied Avocet	Nestling	12/06/12	Seal Sands, Teesmouth, Stockton-on-Tees	
EY04573	Field record	13/03/13	Two Tree Island	364
	Field record	23/11/14	Lytchett Bay, Poole Harbour, Dorset	436
	Field record	27/03/15	Pett Level, East Sussex	432
	Field record	22/10/15	Topsham, Exe Estuary, Devon	465
	Field record	04/11/15	Two Tree Island	364
	Field record	08/11/16	Two Tree Island	364
	Field record	23/11/17	Kingsmill Lake, Cornwall	509
	Field record	28/11/17	Two Tree Island	364
	Field record	13/02/18	Two Tree Island	364
Pied Avocet	Nestling	04/06/13	Greenabella Marsh, Graythorpe, Hartlepool	
EY04813	Field record	11/06/13	Greenabella Marsh, Graythorpe, Hartlepool	
	Field record	25/06/15	Alkborough Flats, North Lincolnshire	112
	Field record	28/03/16	Seal Sands, Teesmouth, Stockton-on-Tees	3

Species/ring number	Age/ details	Date	Locations	kms
	Field record	15/07/16	RSPB Saltholme, Port Clarence, Stockton-on-Tees	4
	Field record	25/04/17	RSPB Saltholme, Port Clarence, Stockton-on-Tees	5
	Field record	31/12/18	Heybridge Basin, Blackwater Estuary	347
Pied Avocet	Nestling	12/06/16	Great Marsh, near Beaulieu River, Hampshire	
EZ13620	Field record	17/07/18	Hamford Water	221
Grey Plover	1st year	16/09/16	Makkevika, Giske, More og Romsdal, **Norway**	
NOS DA17438	Field record	25/05/18	Fingringhoe Wick	1,224
Wood Sandpiper	1st year	26/07/17	Revtangen Ornithological Station, Klepp, Rogoland, **Norway**	
NOS 8B81911	Field record	07/05/18	Walton Hall Marshes	810
Black-headed Gull	1st year	30/03/91	Pitsea Marsh	
ER14741	Controlled	18/12/10	Rainham Tip	23
	Leg only found	11/05/18	Baltrum, Ostfriesische Insein, **Germany**	523
Mediterranean Gull	Nestling	11/06/14	Wejdyki, Ryn, Warminsko-Mazurskie, **Poland**	
PLG FN16153	Field record	14/10/14	Gunners Park, Shoebury	1,420
	Field record	01/03/15	Crosby Marine Lake, Liverpool, Merseyside	1,615
	Field record	05/03/18	Shoebury Common, Southend-on-Sea	1,421
Mediterranean Gull	Adult ♂	15/05/12	Wejdyki, Ryn, Warminsko-Mazurskie, **Poland**	
PLG FN16120	Field record	24/03/15	Pett Level, East Sussex	1,451
	Field record	11/07/18	Holland Haven	1,382
Great Black-backed Gull	Nestling	14/07/16	Kandalakshskiy Nature Reserve, Murmansk Oblast, **Russian Federation**	
RUM DS0081633	Controlled	17/01/18	Pitsea Landfill	2,466
	Field record	06/04/18	Barnes Wetland Centre, Greater London	
Caspian Gull	1st year	25/03/17	Pitsea Landfill	
GV55266	Field record	27/03/17	Barnes Wetland Centre, Greater London	52
	Field record	14/04/17	Katwijk Aan Zee, Zuid-Holland, **The Netherlands**	277
	Field record	23/07/17	Fulham, Greater London	51
	Field record	01/01/18	Barnes Wetland Centre, Greater London	52
	Field record	06/03/18	Happisburgh, Norfolk	
	Field record	11/03/18	Crayford, Greater London	
	Field record	13/04/18	Amsterdam, Noord-Holland, **The Netherlands**	
	Field record	08/06/18	Warszawa:ul.Dewajtis, Mazowieckie, **Poland**	1,400
	Field record	08/06/18	Vistula River Warsaw, Mazowieckie, **Poland**	
	Field record	28/07/18	Thames Barrier Park	
Yellow-legged Gull	2nd year	11/02/12	Rainham Tip	
GR53849	Field record	17/03/18	Linne, Roermond, Limburg, **The Netherlands**	399
Western Barn Owl	Nestling ♀	07/07/18	near Mappleton, East Riding of Yorkshire	

Species/ring number	Age/ details	Date	Locations	kms
GV92167	Freshly dead, car	14/11/18	near Dunmow	227
Eurasian Blue Tit	Adult ♀	16/04/18	Bridgenorth, Shropshire	
ABC0294	Controlled	01/11/18	Rowney Wood, Debden	196
Sand Martin	Adult ♀	21/08/17	Old Hall Marshes	
S930359	Controlled	22/08/18	Pointe D'Offoy, Cayeux-sur-Mer, **France**	185
Barn Swallow	1st year	04/10/10	Pett Level, Sussex	
L388417	Controlled	24/08/18	Newport Sewage Works	125
Barn Swallow	Adult ♂	06/09/14	Pett Level, Sussex	
D358436	Controlled	13/06/15	Newport Sewage Works	125
	Retrapped	26/04/17	Newport Sewage Works	
	Retrapped	28/04/18	Newport Sewage Works	
Barn Swallow	1st year	23/08/16	Holland Haven	
S272385	Dead, hit glass	16/05/18	Whimpwell Green, Happisburgh, Norfolk	114
Barn Swallow	Full-grown	30/04/16	Tancat de Milia, Sollana, Valencia, **Spain**	
ESI 4L64178	Controlled	28/04/18	Newport Sewage Works	1,410
Willow Warbler	Juvenile	05/08/16	Wenden Lofts	
HYR247	Controlled	22/04/18	Gibraltar Point,Skegness, Lincolnshire	121
Common Chiffchaff	1st year	03/11/17	Fief de la Villeneuve, Bazoges-en-Pareds, Vendee, **France**	
FRP 3L2308	Controlled	07/04/18	Rowney Wood, Debden	599
Sedge Warbler	1st year	19/09/16	Holland Haven	
S479424	Controlled	08/05/18	Melvich, Highland, Scotland	817
Eurasian Reed Warbler	1st year	16/08/15	Wenden Lofts	
Z672493	Controlled	26/06/18	Potteric Carr, Doncaster, South Yorkshire	184
Eurasian Reed Warbler	1st year	25/08/18	Ely Beet Pits, Cambridgeshire	
S751109	Controlled	06/09/18	Holland Haven	91
Eurasian Blackcap	1st year ♂	10/09/17	Swindon Sewage Works, Swindon	
AYA6354	Freshly dead	23/04/18	Blackmore	148
Eurasian Blackcap	1st year ♀	24/09/17	Haven Point, Wakering Stairs	
S280153	Controlled	24/09/18	Chenac-Saint-Seurin-D'Uzet, Charente-Maritime, **France**	683
Goldcrest	1st year ♂	05/11/18	Castricum, Noord-Holland, **The Netherlands**	
NLA AJB184	Controlled	27/12/18	The Naze	238
Eurasian Treecreeper	Juvenile	13/09/18	Wenden Lofts	
KCH231	Controlled	23/10/18	Nuthampstead, Hertfordshire	6
Common Starling	Juvenile ♂	04/06/17	Little Clacton	
LJ73268	Field record	10/01/18	Near Belmont, Bolton, Lancashire	317
Common Blackbird	1st year ♂	24/10/17	Trimble Ings, NorthYorkshire	
LK42440	Controlled	26/02/18	Stocking Green, Radwinter	258
European Robin	1st year	27/09/17	Gibraltar Point, Skegness, Lincolnshire	
Z914722	Retrapped	30/09/17	Gibraltar Point, Skegness, Lincolnshire	
	Controlled	30/01/18	Holland Haven	155
Meadow Pipit	1st year	12/10/17	Orfordness, Suffolk	
S082938	Freshly dead	02/03/18	Great Oakley	34
Meadow Pipit	Adult	22/09/18	Beckton	

Species/ring number	Age/ details	Date	Locations	kms
ALE9313	Controlled	05/11/18	Nuthampstead, Hertfordshire	53
Eurasian Rock Pipit	Full-grown ♂	22/08/17	Makkevika, Giske, More og Romsdal, **Norway**	
NOS ED08443	Field record	04/01/18	Brightlingsea	1,225
Eurasian Rock Pipit	1st year ♀	14/08/16	Maletangen, Fraena, More og Romsdal, **Norway**	
NOS ED05095	Field record	15/02/18	Tilbury	1,340
Eurasian Rock Pipit	Full-grown ♂	30/03/17	Maletangen, Fraena, More og Romsdal, **Norway**	
NOS ED09398	Field record	13/03/18	Holland Haven	1,286
Common Chaffinch	Full-grown ♀	18/10/17	Berendrecht, Antwerpen, **Belgium**	
BLB 15072095	Controlled	14/04/18	Wimbish, Saffron Walden	285
Lesser Redpoll	Adult ♂	07/10/17	Holland Haven	
AAB1040	Controlled	09/05/18	Killegowan, Dumfries and Galloway, Scotland	497
Lesser Redpoll	Adult ♀	23/10/16	Waterhay, Ashton Keynes, Wiltshire	
S425137	Controlled	08/11/18	Rowney Wood, Debden	156
Lesser Redpoll	Adult ♀	23/10/17	Wethersfield	
S719087	Controlled	27/01/18	Chilworth, Surrey	111
Lesser Redpoll	1st year	30/10/17	Holland Haven	
AAB1189	Controlled	30/03/18	Beechamwell, Swaffham, Norfolk	100
European Goldfinch	Adult	18/10/17	Upper Green, Langley	
AYA8590	Controlled	05/05/18	Leswalt, Dumfries and Galloway, Scotland	474
European Goldfinch	Adult ♂	06/11/15	Stocking Green, Radwinter	
Z890814	Controlled	08/04/18	South Walney, Barrow-in-Furness, Cumbria	325
European Goldfinch	1st year ♂	07/02/18	Little Clacton	
S929734	Found injured	08/06/18	Bridlington, East Riding of Yorkshire	269
European Goldfinch	Adult ♂	18/10/17	Burnt Leys Farm, Hodthorpe, Derbyshire	
S967398	Killed by raptor	31/03/18	Upper Green, Langley	168
Eurasian Siskin	Juvenile	21/08/17	Drummond, Inverness, Scotland	
AHA0548	Controlled	21/02/18	Chisbon Heath, St Osyth	713
Eurasian Siskin	1st year ♂	26/04/17	Drummond, Inverness, Scotland	
S895387	Controlled	06/03/18	Clavering Farm Fish Lakes	669
Eurasian Siskin	1st year ♂	22/03/16	Halstead	
Z944482	Controlled	22/01/18	Leswalt, Dumfries and Galloway, Scotland	504
Common Reed Bunting	1st year ♀	19/02/14	Sunnymead Farm, Wivenhoe	
D749271	Retrapped	19/02/16	Sunnymead Farm, Wivenhoe	
	Controlled	04/08/18	Donington-on-Bain, Lincolnshire	180

Additional Recovery Summaries

Cormorant: nestlings ringed at Abberton Reservoir were subsequently re-sighted in Norfolk, Suffolk and Hampshire.

Western Marsh Harrier: a chick ringed and wing-tagged in Norfolk in June 2018 was subsequently re-sighted at Rainham Marshes, Burnham-on-Crouch, and over Dartford Marshes, Greater London.

Black-tailed Godwit: in addition to many re-sightings in Essex of colour-ringed birds of the race islandica, an individual of the race *limosa*, ringed as a chick in **The Netherlands** on 18th May 2018, was subsequently re-sighted in the 2016/17 and 2017/18 winters in **Portugal** before arriving in April 2018 in Rye Harbour and then moving north to Hamford Water where it spent several days and was photographed on Walton Hall Marsh on 16th April 2018.

Red Knot: intensive fieldwork by Ed Keeble resulted in at least 111 colour-marked individuals being identified on the River Stour during 2018. Of these, 13 had been ringed on spring migration in **Norway**, 32 on spring migration in Iceland and 65 when moulting on the **Waddensee** in early autumn or early spring. One bird ringed on Merseyside was also recorded, confirming a link between birds using South-east England and North-west England. A flagged bird, KTU, a Stour regular, was seen in a huge flock at Snettisham, Norfolk, on 27th October 2018 and then at Wrabness, three days later.

Common Redshank: two individuals ringed in Norfolk were found dead in Essex.

Black-headed Gull: re-sightings of birds ringed in Essex included reports from Cornwall, Scotland and Ireland.

Common Gull: one ringed as an adult in **Schleswig-Holstein** in 2006 returned to the Colne Estuary in October having been recorded there in five previous winters.

Great Black-backed Gull: birds ringed at Pitsea Landfill were re-sighted in **Norway**, **Sweden**, **The Netherlands** and **France**.

Herring Gull: one ringed as a chick in Suffolk in 1994 was re-sighted at Clacton-on-Sea on 3rd February.

Re-sightings of birds colour-ringed at Pitsea Landfill included one that was seen in France in two consecutive winters, then in two consecutive summers in Angus, Scotland.

Lesser Black-backed Gull: there were movements linking Essex with **Sweden**, **Germany** and **Spain**.

Common Kestrel: there were two birds found dead and one reported alive involving Essex that had moved 50-60 kms.

Peregrine Falcon: the nesting pair on the Jumbo Tower in Colchester again included the ♀ ringed as a chick in **The Netherlands**.

Southern Colour Ringing Group Brant Goose study update

Paul Roper for the Southern Colour-ringing Group

Introduction

Following the succesful capture and colour ringing of 18 Brant Geese on 27 January 2018, a second catch of 14 birds was taken at Blue House Farm on the Crouch Estuary, Essex on 7th January 2019.

For the 2019 catch all 14 birds were colour-ringed along with five birds which were fitted with neck collars carrying satellite tracking devices from Ecotone (coded BRAN01 to BRAN05). Most of the birds that were satellite tracked appeared paired and work in the field by David Low and others has determined the pairs with colour-ringed birds.

All of the 14 geese ringed on 7th January have been re-sighted at least once since release, mainly by David at Blue House Farm. Four of the colour-ringed birds from 2019 have also been sighted in The Netherlands and Germany in March and April 2019. Of the 19 geese ringed in 2018, six have been re-sighted back in the United Kingdom in the 2018/19 winter. Interestingly one of these birds, Green AN, was seen in the United Kingdom on 10th October 2018, but from 28th January 2019 to 2nd February 2019 was at Havre de Regneville France, suggesting that it winters on the north-west French coast. This bird was also seen at Hollum, The Netherlands on 1st April 2019.

Information on the movements of all colour-ringed geese from both catches can be found on the SCRG web site:

http://www.southern-colour-ringing-group.org.uk/index.php/recoveries/Brant-goose

This update will specifically discuss the results of the satellite tracking between 7th January and 6th June 2019 when the last tracker stopped working.

Of the five trackers fitted two failed after a short period, one failed in mid-April and one on 1st May. The final tracker stopped sending data back on 6th June. Work has been undertaken with the suppliers and, as all these trackers are under warranty, all will be replaced at no cost. The supplier has also identified the possible reasons for failure and this can be rectified along with a re-design of the collar, which we hope will help with some issues of feather loss around the base of the neck.

The remainder of this report will look at tracking results of the five neck collared birds.

Tracking Results

BRAN01 (Green CD) Adult ♀ (paired with Green CF)

This transmitter gave data from 7th January to 22nd February when it stopped transmitting and gave 243 location fixes. The bird stayed in the Crouch Estuary for the whole period, apart from one trip to the coast on 5th February (see Figure 2). We do, however, know this bird was still alive on 5th May. BRAN01 was observed on Hallig Hooge (an island in Germany) with an un-ringed bird and what was thought to be its mate CF. Clearly this bird made the migration, although unfortunately due to tracker failure, we were unable to track the route and timing to Germany. However, the three birds we did track all took a virtually identical route so we are assuming this bird took a very similar route.

Figure 1 - BRAN01 one of the Brant Geese ringed and satellite tracked on 7th January at Blue House Farm

Figure 2 - Map for BRAN01 showing four data points each day from 7th January 2019 to 22nd February 2019

BRAN02 (Green CA) Adult ♂ (apparently un-paired)

This bird stayed in the Crouch estuary until 2nd April (Figure 3) when it moved out to the coast just off Foulness Island and remained there from 10pm until midnight at which point it flew directly across the North Sea covering 340km in six hours.

Figure 3 - Map for BRAN02 showing four data points each day from 7th January 2019 to end of 6th June 2019

After a short stop on Richel in The Netherlands, this bird then moved to Terschelling where it remained until 11th April.

On 11th April, it moved onto the Dutch mainland and remained there until late May. At the end of May, the bird moved very quickly to Germany and then across northern Germany/southern Denmark and on 6th June stopped transmitting whilst staging in Denmark (Fig 3)

BRAN03 (Green CC) Adult ♀ (Paired with Green DL – also a transmitter bird)

This bird's transmitter operated from 7th January to 29th January giving 91 location fixes whilst it worked, all in the Crouch Estuary. We know this bird was still alive some weeks after the tracker stopped working as it was observed by David Low at Blue House Farm. It remained in the Crouch Estuary for the whole period. This bird was very faithful to roosting on Bridgemarsh Island and feeding on the grazing fields at Blue House Farm and along the Crouch (Figure 4).

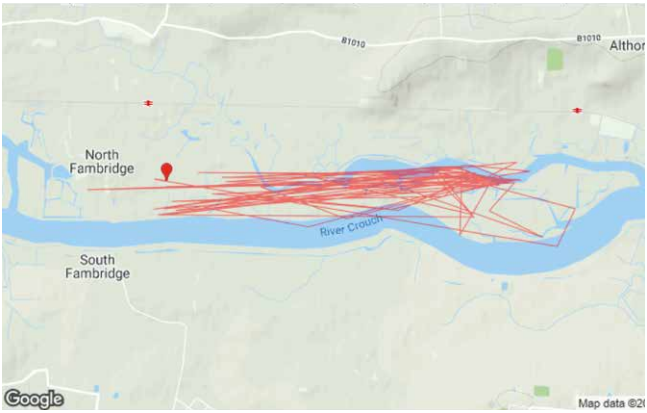


Figure 4 - Map for BRAN03 showing the faithfulness to the Crouch up to 29th January 2019.

BRAN04 (Green DL) Adult ♂ (Paired with Green CC – also a transmitter bird)

This bird remained in the Crouch Estuary until 9th March when it moved overnight to the Dutch Wadden Sea. It remained here for one day and then on 10th March it took a further flight to Simonsberg in Germany where it remained until 1st May (Figure 5). Unfortunately, on 1st May, the signal appears to have gone down on this tracker and there is no evidence that this bird died so we are in a position where it looks like this tracker has now also failed. This tracker gave 732 location fixes whilst it worked.

Figure 5 - Map for BRAN04 showing the movement on 10th March and staging up to 1st May 2019.

The staging in the German estuary, as in the Crouch, showed a very limited area used and the bird was faithful to a very tight area through the whole of April 2019.

BRAN05 (Green CM) Adult ♀ (Paired with Green DD)

This bird remained in the Crouch Estuary from 7th January until 13th March. On 13th March it undertook an overnight flight direct to the German Wadden Sea with an apparent short stop on the sea off the coast of The Netherlands. On arrival, it remained for a very short time on Juist before moving to Nordeney where it remained until 20th April. This bird then moved on 20th April some 60km further east and gave data for a couple more days before stopping transmitting (Figure 6).

Figure 6 - Map for BRAN05 showing the faithfulness to the Crouch up to 23rd April 2019.

Summary

The data supplied by the five transmitting birds has yielded some interesting facts. The maps shown above are taken from tracking of four data points a day. However, we are able to interrogate the trackers further and obtain half hourly data points via SMS downloads. This has allowed us to be a little more confident in our analysis and suggestions regarding bird movements and site fidelity.

Firstly, within the Crouch Estuary in Essex we discovered that all the birds were incredibly faithful to the grazing fields at Blue House Farm and local area within a 7km range either side of the river. It also appeared that the north side of the river was favoured and birds used grazing fields rather than crops, which are predominantly on the south of the Crouch. The birds also seemed to favour roosting on one of three saltmarsh areas with the favoured and most used being Bridgemarsh Island. However, other areas of salt marsh were used for roosting at various times, for reasons unknown.

The three birds that were tracked migrating from the UK to their staging areas all made the move at night. Most of them took around six hours to do the 300+ km journey to reach the Dutch coast. All three left around midnight and made landfall at dawn. Analysis shows that the first thing they seem to try to do is find fresh water, probably for a drink and a bath. All three left the Crouch Estuary around 10pm and spent up to three hours just off the coast of Foulness Island before leaving around midnight and flying directly across the North Sea in a shallow curved line towards the north-west coast of The Netherlands. All three seemed to take an almost identical route.

One bird staged in The Netherlands and two in Germany. What has also become clear is that on each staging ground the home range is also quite small and birds are faithful to very tight and small areas. The following is a rough calculation of each home range on each staging area:

BRAN02 – 12km off the Terschelling coast and 4km of the Dutch mainland and no more than 1km from the coast.

BRAN04 – 7km off the German coast where it staged with a couple of apparent trips up to 5km.

BRAN05 – 2.3km off the coast of Nordeney and no more than 1 km off the coast.

It is somewhat disappointing that all of the trackers failed so quickly. Work with the Company has established that there were likely design faults with the neck collars. All are being replaced under warranty with a modified design and our proposition is to trial these replacements next winter to see if this improves the return rate of data. We hope to take a further catch this coming winter and fit the replacement satellite trackers to continue the study of Brant Geese in the Crouch Estuary.

A Wanstead Rustic

Nick Croft
@WansteadBirding

Out on the patch there are days when you think it's going to be good and, less frequently, it is. Today (17th October) – grey and drizzly – it felt good, it took all day, but I think it worked out in the end!

Rob Sheldon joined me for some 'viz mig' briefly before setting off on his own to check the brick pit and sometime later I saw him wandering back along the edge of Long Wood, but he'd disappeared (and wasn't answering his phone) when a Short-eared Owl appeared from the east and began circling high over the brooms. Luckily the owl lingered, avoiding the interest of the local corvids, and as Rob finally appeared he got his first SEO on patch.

He was happy and headed off to the park for a shameless Eurasian Wigeon tick. I chose the Alexandra Lake for a bit more 'viz mig' and while things were on the move was more than happy just to pass the time standing there.

A Yellow-browed called...or the guy's squeaky bike that passed me? Over an hour later the warbler got a bit excited for few seconds, but another hour passed before I got a quick glimpse of it in the drowned willows.

With time moving on and the day as gloomy as it started I was ready for home. Back by Coronation Copse a few wagtails are feeding on the footy pitches, with some looking good for White – a few snaps may confirm this later, that is they might have done if not for a doggy flushing the whole lot. On their way off the pitch one took a dip at a little brown bird I hadn't noticed on the grass. Mipit natch! (*Ed. This means 'Likely a Meadow Pipit... '*). The bird landed a bit further off and popped its head up to have a look around, showing off a rather pronounced white supercilium. With hands on my camera rather than on my bins I got a few shots in before it headed for a hawthorn south of the enclosure.

I am about to head off there, when I was distracted by a quiet call behind me, rather like a Common Reed Bunting–so a second bird then? But try as I might I couldn't find it in the burnt out broom. The call is virtually continuous, but I still couldn't see anything but a Mistle Thrush a few feet away. I had to check through the bins to actually see its beak opening slightly. That mystery sorted I was back on track, but the 'bird' had flown! I give it a few minutes, luckily only a Common Reed Bunting I was thinking...

I checked the back of the camera, then the camera against the Collins app... "that cannot be right, surely?"

With the almost certain knowledge I was setting myself up for ignominy and imminent social media exposure (again!), I plumped for Twitter to have its say...

...Well that didn't go too badly! Now I knew that it's only the third for London and some people thought that I knew what I was doing!

Before too long there were three or four of us wandering around in circles trying to find the elusive bird in the gathering darkness with one, perhaps, not putting as much effort in as the others!

They were hoping that it would be there in the morning and so bring happiness to many (and as a result one poor soul to his knees).

Grey and drizzly? Love it!

(Ed. The bird was ultimately present from 17th-21st October and attracted birders from far and wide).

Diurnal passage migration along the North-East Essex Coast

Paul Brayshaw

Introduction

Regular sea-watching observations from Frinton-on-Sea since 2006 have revealed a significant spring and autumn diurnal passage of passerines as part of over 1.67 million birds logged. This has proven to be one of the most consistently recorded coastal sites in Essex in recent years allowing an enhanced understanding of the timings and nature of movements along our coastline. The movement of seabirds has been considered as part of a previous paper (EBR2017): this paper considers the diurnal movement of passerines highlighting species and timings identified through my personal experiences over the past 12 years.

General Observations

At all times of the year passerines moving along the coast (coasting), as opposed to arriving in off the sea, typically move into the wind. Therefore birds will tend to move in a north/north-east direction when the wind is from the north-eastern quarter, and south/south-west when the wind is from the south-western quarter. Light winds with limited or high cloud cover result in birds moving at height, making observation and identification more challenging, whilst winds above a Force Four typically reduce movement – although the antecedent conditions can influence the latter e.g. if the winds have been strong, a reduction to this strength can result in a strong movement at peak times. Coasting movement is always heaviest for the first couple of hours after dawn, with an occasional passage noted in the last hour before sunset. The exceptions to this can be hirundines and Common Swift, which can move throughout the day, and birds arriving off the sea in the autumn. The latter are best observed with either northerly headwinds, or rapidly changing conditions with increasing wind and the onset of rain.

From a Frinton-on-Sea perspective, birds moving north-east along the coast are referred as moving "north", whilst those moving south-west are "south". Birds arriving in off the sea either continue on a north-westerly course, or divert to follow the coast in either direction.

Flight paths through north-east Essex

Regardless of season a few general observations can be made with respect to where to observe movement.

- Northbound movement past Frinton-on-Sea appears to follow the coastline past The Naze but is rarely observed at Landguard, Suffolk, suggesting that passage follows the coast past Dovercourt before crossing the river inland of the Bird Observatory.
- Conversely southbound movements observed at Landguard often appear to bypass The Naze (or perhaps are not reported), with limited observations suggesting movement through Hamford Water, both along Walton Channel but also passing along the southern side of the Wade, before joining the coast between Walton Pier and Central Avenue Frinton-on-Sea. Conversely there is evidence (Darrell Stile *pers. comm.*) that movement can be further over the sea, cutting out Hamford Water and joining the coast between The Naze and Walton Pier. The latter is perhaps more prevalent in west or north-westerly winds as birds are pushed out to sea from Landguard and then pass offshore, as observed at Frinton-on-Sea. Flocks of finches and pipits can also be observed passing over Frinton town from Hamford Water (particularly in lighter winds), indicating a broad front of passage. There is then a similar diffuse flight line from Holland Haven, with birds passing over the scrape and behind Holland-on-Sea, as well as following the coastline onwards past Clacton-on-Sea.

Larger birds, particularly birds of prey, have been well documented (Wood, 2007) as moving

directly from Hamford Water to Colne Point, passing across Great Oakley, Beaumont Quay, then Great Holland and Great Clacton. Birds following the coast over the sea have been observed passing parallel to the beach or heading further offshore, whilst individuals have also been observed gaining height over Frinton-on-Sea before similarly striking out over the sea to the south where presumably the Thanet coastline is visible.

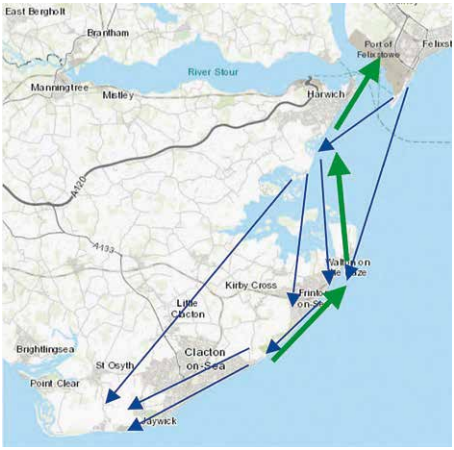


Figure 1 – Possible Coastal Diurnal Flight Lines

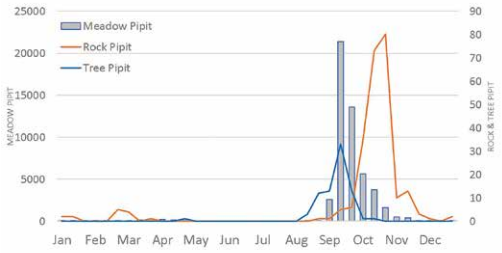
Winter

Cold weather movements are occasionally noted, comprising small numbers of Eurasian Skylark and thrushes, generally comprising coasting birds but sometimes arriving in off the sea. Fieldfare can be prominent, moving on days with clear sky, but generally there is little diurnal movement to be observed.

Spring

Passage commences in late February with the occasional Eurasian Skylark, before movement increases by mid-March. Meadow Pipit and Common Chaffinch (Figures 2 and 3) provide the bulk of the early movement, supported in some years by large numbers of Common Wood Pigeon and Common Starling (Figure 4). The latter passage is often more pronounced following strong easterly winds – the outstanding peak of 4,024 on 23rd March 2013 occurring in such conditions. Common Chaffinch movements can be impressive in winds from the northern quarter, with five counts in excess of 500 during mid-March to early-April, these larger movements often being observed elsewhere in the County. The addition of a dog to the household, and associated pre-dawn walks, has revealed that Redwing passage can be pronounced during March, but, as in autumn, grounded birds depart rapidly inland at first light.

Cumulative totals by month



Percentage totals by wind direction

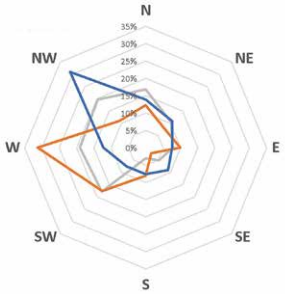


Figure 2 – Seasonal Occurrence of Meadow, Eurasian Rock and Tree Pipit

A feature of early spring is a small movement of corvids. It is unclear whether these relate to local birds wandering or true migrants but observations of groups from far offshore arriving would suggest some further origin. The occurrence of Western Jackdaw showing characteristics of more eastern races (and indeed the wandering Pied Crow observed arriving with Carrion Crow at Holland Haven during spring 2019) supports this possibility.

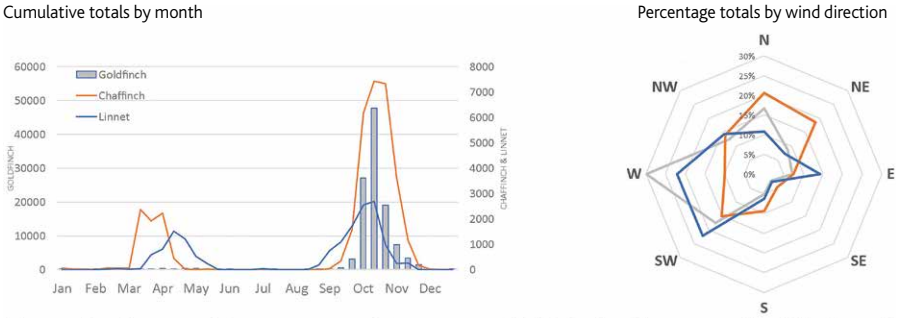


Figure 3 – Seasonal Occurrence of European Goldfinch, Common Chaffinch and Common Linnet

April sees hirundine passage commence but numbers generally remain on a small scale relative to autumn. Common Linnet become the commonest finch, with European Goldfinch increasing from mid-month into May (Figure 2). Northern Wheatear are noted in small numbers from mid-March but peak counts typically occurring in light south-westerly winds with early morning rain from mid-April. A northerly passage of Common Wood Pigeon in settled conditions in May was a feature from 2006 to 2012 but has been rarely observed since (Figure 4).

Summer

Unsettled weather with rain fronts promotes Common Swift movements, often in dramatic fashion e.g. 3,169 on 6th June 2017 in W8-9 and blustery showers. Small hirundine movements can also be associated with such weather systems whist two calling European Bee-eaters had me rushing out of the house to watch them pass in 2015. A small Red Crossbill passage is noted most years from early June through July – 34 on 19th June 2012 the standout count.

Autumn

By mid-July autumn passage has commenced with Common Swift and Sand Martin moving south (Figures 4 and 5), and in some years a notable early passage of Eurasian Siskin e.g. 445 in 2015, presumably relating to post-breeding dispersal from East Anglia. Common Swift passage can be incredibly impressive and widespread across the sea and coastal strip but, given the early dawn, can be over by 6am! In 2017 over 37,000 were noted in the nine-day period from 27th July, with an estimated 16,000 before 8am on 28th alone. Fresh winds from the west combined with cloud and showers are best, concentrating the birds along the coast and at lower altitude, meaning that pulses of movement can occur throughout the day.

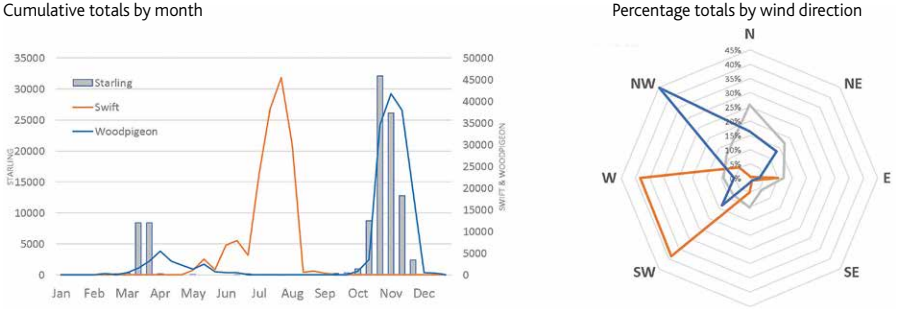
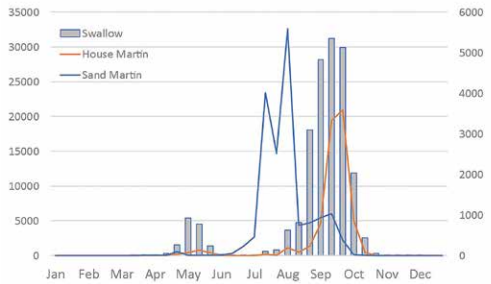


Figure 4 – Seasonal Occurrence of Common Starling, Common Swift and Common Wood Pigeon

Barn Swallow join the movement through August: a count of 2,112 on 4th in 2017 was exceptionally early with four-figure totals otherwise restricted to late August, September and early October (Figure 5). Variety otherwise remains light with Western Yellow Wagtail movement picking up in the last ten days of the month (Figure 6). Passage is generally best in a west-south-west wind, which presumably also pushes more birds towards the coast as they head south through East Anglia.

Cumulative totals by month



Percentage totals by wind direction

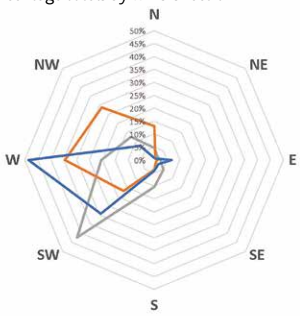
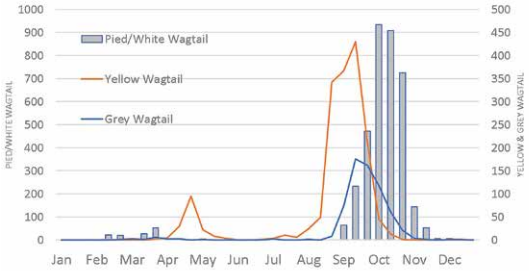


Figure 5 – Seasonal Occurrence of hirundines

September holds anticipation of increasing variety and numbers but often starts slowly. Hirundine passage peaks, with Barn Swallow moving earlier than Common House Martin. Meadow Pipit movement commences within the second week with birds arriving in off and continuing north-west inland, or coasting, in any reasonable conditions and often passing at a rate of up to 30 a minute (Figure 2): the two peak counts both occurred on 17th September, 1,909 in 2009 and 2,294 in 2016. Tree Pipit are scarce but calling birds are often identified within these movements, contrary to expectations of an earlier passage associated with the departure of British birds, whilst a strong movement of Grey Wagtail is observed some years. Overnight arrivals of European Robin and Dunnock can be joined by diurnal arrivals of chats when the wind is from the easterly quarter.

This is also the peak month for the larger birds of prey that can be observed heading south over land or offshore. Western Marsh Harrier are regular, with Common Buzzard numbers increasing in line with the general County and UK population (41 on 30th September 2017 being unprecedented with only one other double-figure count). Western Osprey are seen most years with European Honey Buzzard noted on six occasions – five passing south on 13th September 2008 as part of a widespread arrival in East Anglia included birds cutting across from Hamford Water to Great Holland, and others thermalling up and out to sea.

Cumulative totals by month



Percentage totals by wind direction

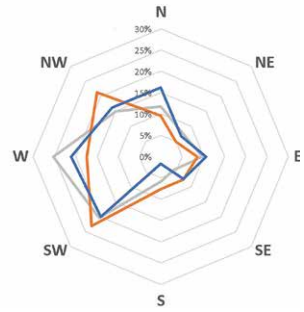


Figure 6 – Seasonal Occurrence of wagtails

October is dominated by finches, European Goldfinch in particular, with groups up to 70 strong "twinkling" their way past in the first few hours after dawn. The sight and sound of flock after flock is both challenging to identify and count, and also impressive migration at its best. Other finch flocks comprise Eurasian Siskin, European Greenfinch, Common Linnet, a few Brambling, and later in the month, redpoll. The supporting cast include continued Meadow Pipit passage, plus a few European Rock Pipit (Figure 2), White Wagtail (Figure 6), Eurasian Tree Sparrow and Common Reed Bunting.

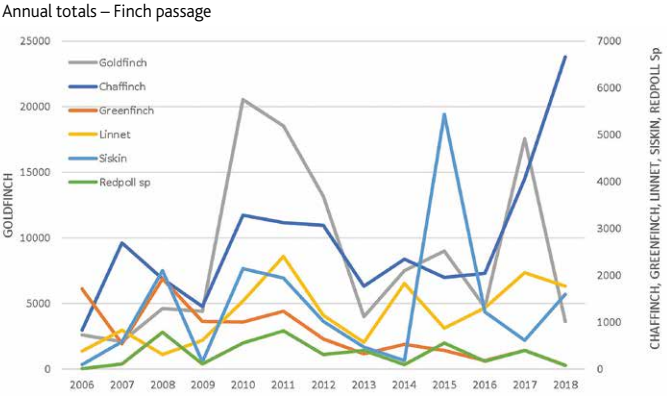


Figure 7 – Annual totals of finches

Whilst annual finch totals vary markedly, presumably due a combination of breeding success, weather conditions during peak migration, in addition to observer coverage, there are some general observations to be made:

- European Greenfinch show a marked reduction in line with the general population with a peak of 1,923 in 2008 (and five of the six years from 2006 recording four-figure totals), to a total of only 81 in 2018
- The Eurasian Siskin movement in 2015 was more than twice the total of any other year, and very prolonged, running from July through to December.
- Common Chaffinch arrivals can be strong into northern or westerly headwinds with rain (Figure 3). The weather on 6th October 2018 was classic, starting with light winds and fair weather which will have encouraged birds to leave North Sea shores to our east. By midday the wind had increased with a rain front, leading to an impressive arrival of loose groups up to 550 strong, and a day total of 1,948.
- European Goldfinch totals vary massively year to year with the extreme October totals of 2,393 in 2013 and 18,090 (out of an autumn total of 20,458) in 2010. Four days have recorded greater than 2,000 with the peak day count of 2,910 on 4th October 2012. Westerly winds are most productive, presumably focusing the southbound movements along the coastal strip.

There are inevitably many unidentified calls and birds passing but October provides the best opportunities for connecting with scarcer passerines, which have included Richard's Pipit, Woodlark, Horned Lark, Hooded Crow, Northern Raven, Lapland Longspur and Snow Bunting. Some species, such as Red Crossbill (peak of 53 on 19th October 2011), Hawfinch (37 in autumn 2017) can be noted in irruption years. Short-eared Owl are also regularly observed heading out to sea, coasting or arriving in, whilst Long-eared have been positively identified on five occasions: an arriving bird on 24th September 2010 memorably mobbed by a Great Skua as it approached the shore.

The last ten days of October sees a subtle change with winter migrants becoming more prominent. Northerly winds, or weather fronts from the south-west with rain, can see large mid-morning arrivals of Common Starling that had presumably left the Low Countries at dawn (Figure 4). Whilst

the typical flock size is 30-40, groups of 800+ have been noted – a particularly heavy shower in north-east winds on 28th October 2018 saw over 5,000 stream in on the leading edge. A truly memorable sight.

Thrush movement peaks (Figure 8) but whilst birds are often heard passing over at night in huge numbers, these are rarely observed during daylight. When conditions ground migrants the undercliff and Greensward can be awash with Common Blackbird and Redwing pre-first light, but the birds tend to move on quickly as the light increases. These conditions can result in observations of Ring Ouzel as they noisily depart the coast. The exception was a large Common Blackbird arrival during the afternoon of 6th November 2011, in north-west winds and drizzle, with 1,405 counted, and the nearby golf course showing black "tide lines" along the hedge edges as exhausted birds sought cover.

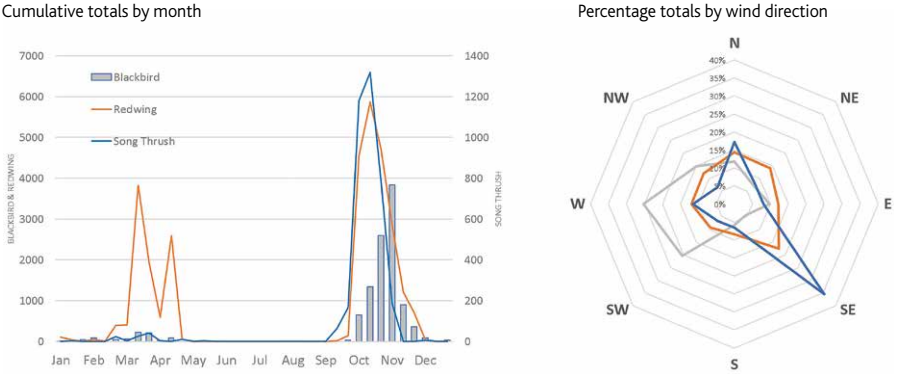


Figure 8 – Seasonal Occurrence of Common Blackbird, Redwing and Song Thrush

Common Wood Pigeon movement can also be dramatic but is heavily influenced by weather conditions. Clear conditions with fresh north-westerlies associated with a cold front passing overnight are most reliable (Figure 4). Five-figure counts have occurred in these conditions: 10,507 on 14th November 2007, 16,703 on 16th November 2007, 12,496 on 10th November 2013, and 18,540 on 22nd October 2014. However large movements can be observed at Landguard, Suffolk to the north and none at Frinton-on-Sea, with observations suggesting that during lighter winds the flight lines come inland down the western side of Hamford Water then cutting across the Tendring peninsula. Observations suggest that these birds are generally not arriving in off the sea but drifted east towards the coast due to the weather conditions.

Thereafter a few tardy pipits and finches can be noted into early December, but diurnal migration is largely over by mid-November.

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank all those who have observed and shared their experiences with me over the past 12 years. Also, the Holland Haven birders who have suffered my personal obsession and updates but are now also actively counting, and my family, who put up with breakfasts on the balcony before school to click-count Meadow Pipits and my inability to just go for a walk along the prom without constantly stopping to observe passing migrants...

Any diurnal passage or sea-watching records from Frinton-on-Sea would be welcome for inclusion in the daily log (to paulandsambrayshaw@gmail.com).

References

Essex Bird Report 2017

Wood S., 2007. *The Birds of Essex*.

The Official Essex List and Submission of Records

Simon Wood and Mick Tracey

Below is the official List of species, and sub-species, recorded in the County from circa 991, (White-tailed Eagle and Raven in the famous poem The Battle of Maldon) until the end of 2018.

Further information on the make-up of the list can be found below.

Submission of records to the Society is now far easier than at any point in the Society's history. Members can submit their records via

1. The Essex Birdwatching Society website;
2. The British Trust for Ornithology's BirdTrack website;
3. Email to the County Recorder, Mick Tracey, but please ensure that if at all possible you send in the information in the form that is requested by Mick Tracey. If in doubt, please ask Mick for a standard Excel spreadsheet for your use.

The Society welcomes all records, but please be aware that the Recorder, the Recording Committee and the Society, may require descriptions for a number of species which are scarce in Essex, but not sufficiently rare to require a submission to the British Birds Rarities Committee (see below). This description could in its simplest form be **JUST ONE PHOTOGRAPH**, provided the species is identifiable from it. It would help the Society, and particularly those involved in the production of the *Essex Bird Report* if you could send your photo(s), drawings, copies of notebooks, descriptions in as quickly as possible after the observation(s). The Society does not ask for a description because the record is doubted; it is simply standard scientific procedure where a record is slightly out of the ordinary. **In addition, the Recorder may ask for clarification of a record or records of species, not highlighted in the List as requiring a description, should this be considered to be appropriate (for example, an exceptionally high count or an unusual location or date).**

If a photo(s) and/or description is/are not submitted then the record will not be published in the *Essex Bird Report* or species' totals therein. This is a frustration for all parties involved!

The conservation status of species is also shown by coloured-squares preceding the species' name:

- UK Red List species – Birds of Conservation Concern 4 (BoCC 4), 2015
- UK Orange List species – BoCC 4, 2015
- E Essex Biodiversity Action Plan species – see http://www.essexfieldclub.org.uk/portal/p/Essex+BAP+species
- X Essex Red List species – see essexfieldclub.org.uk/portal

Records of the rarest species (in Categories A, B, C and D of the British List) should be sent to the British Birds Rarities Committee (BBRC) via their website. The BBRC is keen to promote online submission of records, including photographs, drawings, notebook copies etc. Please also ensure a copy of the record is sent to Mick Tracey, the County Recorder, so that the Society is kept aware of the record. In the list below, those species that require descriptions sent to BBRC are shown in **green** type and have the number of records to date in **green** in the Essex totals column.

Similarly, those records of species that should be sent to the Essex Identification Panel (EBSIP) are in **blue type** and have the number of records to date in **blue** in the Essex totals column.

More common species on the EBSIP species' list, or those that once bred and for which calculating total records is therefore not possible, do not have totals in the EBSIP column.

The British List is managed for the British Ornithologists' Union by its Recording Committee (BOURC). In 1997, categorisation was revised to assist protection under national wildlife legislation, especially of naturalised species. Category C was expanded to allow species with different histories of introduction and naturalisation to be distinguished; Category D (not included in the List totals) was reduced in scope, and a Category E (not included in this list) was introduced to enable local and national recorders to monitor escaped species.

Category A

Species recorded in an apparently natural state at least once since 1 January 1950.

Category B

Species recorded in an apparently natural state at least once between 1 January 1800 and 31 December 1949, but which have not been recorded subsequently.

Category C

Species that, although introduced, now derive from the resulting self-sustaining populations.

- **C1** – Naturalised introduced species - species that have occurred only as a result of introduction, e.g. Egyptian Goose *Alopochen aegyptiacus*
- **C2** – Naturalised established species – species with established populations resulting from introduction by Man, but which also occur in an apparently natural state, e.g. Greylag Goose *Anser anser*
- **C3** – Naturalised re-established species – species with populations successfully re-established by Man in areas of former occurrence, e.g. Red Kite *Milvus milvus*.
- **C4** – Naturalised feral species – domesticated species with populations established in the wild, e.g. Rock Pigeon (Dove)/Feral Pigeon *Columba livia*.
- **C5** – Vagrant naturalised species – species from established naturalised populations abroad, e.g. possibly some Ruddy Shelducks *Tadorna ferruginea* occurring in Britain. There are currently no species in category C5.
- **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 Category A except that there is reasonable doubt that they have ever occurred in a natural state. Species placed in Category D only form no part of the British List, and are not included in the species totals.

Category E

Species recorded as introductions, human-assisted transportees or escapees from captivity, and whose breeding populations (if any) are thought not to be self-sustaining. Species in Category E that have bred in the wild in Britain are designated as E*. Category E species form no part of the British List (unless already included within Categories A, B or C).

Category F (list being compiled by BOURC)

Records of bird species recorded before 1800.

The Essex List follows the British List except with regard to Ruddy Shelduck and Snow Goose, which are regarded as Category D species within the county. They are not considered part of the Essex List but details can be found in the Category D section following the Essex List.

International English names listed in the British List (which follows the IOC World List v7.3 which was adopted (and subsequent updates) by the BOURC from 1st January 2018) are used but the commonly recognised English names are also shown.

Because of the increasing interest in sub-species, trinomial Latin names have been included throughout the *Essex Bird Report 2018* and are included in this List. Whilst some sub-species have been recorded in Essex, there are others whose occurrence is most likely but there has never been a confirmed record. It is hoped that with a focus on these sub-species, some of the holes in our knowledge can be filled. Where possible the number of times sub-species have been recorded in Essex has been included (and whether the sub-species requires a description sent to BBRC or EBSIP). Where it is not know which sub-species occurs in Essex, the Latin name is followed by an asterix * e.g. *Phasianus colchicus**

The List also provides the year of the very first confirmed written record of each species/sub-species, the last year in which recorded and the number of years since the last record.

Those species/sub-species with the symbol § after their name are those which represent not only the first Essex record but also the first British record. White-tailed Eagle and Raven are probably also British firsts, although it has to be said that the poem in which they appear, the *Battle of Maldon*, may have been written a century after the event (*circa* 911) and probably "embellished".

The current Essex List (Categories A, B and C) stands at 394 species as of 31st December 2018, with 35 additional sub-species identified. The two new species added this year are the result of splits due to the adoption by the BOURC of the IOC World Bird List. Thus Bean Goose has split into two species, Taiga and Tundra Bean Geese and Least Tern has been split from Little Tern. Note that four of the "species" on the Essex list are actually difficult-to-separate species pairs – Daurian/Turkestan Shrike, Western/Eastern Bonelli's Warbler, Subalpine/Moltoni's Warbler and Siberian/Stejneger's Stonechat , as none have, as yet, been identified to species level in Essex.

Essex Category D totals 11 species as of the same date, whilst 148 are in Category E.

And finally, *British Birds Magazine* publishes, at the end of every year (usually in October or November), a full listing of the BBRC accepted, and rejected, rarity records. Subscriptions are available from 4 Harlequin Gardens, St Leonards-on-Sea, East Sussex, TN37 7PF. Tel/Fax (01424) 755155 subscriptions@britishbirds.co.uk

	Cons. status			English Name	IOC: World Bird List Name	*Latin Name*	Essex Records to 2017			
	R	A	E	X				Nos	First	Last	Years since last record
1.				X	BRANT GOOSE	Brent Goose	*Branta bernicla*		1730	2018	0
					Dark-bellied Brant		*Branta bernicla bernicla*		1730	2018	0
					Pale-bellied Brant		*Branta bernicla hrota*		1879	2018	0
					Black Brant §		*Branta bernicla nigricans*	60	1957	2018	0
2.					RED-BREASTED GOOSE		*Branta ruficollis*	13	1871	2016	2
3.					CANADA GOOSE		*Branta canadensis canadensis*		1836	2018	0
4.					BARNACLE GOOSE		*Branta leucopsis*		1830	2018	0
5.					GREYLAG GOOSE		*Anser anser anser*		1822	2018	0
6.					TAIGA BEAN GOOSE		*Anser fabalis*	37	1838	2017	1
7.					PINK-FOOTED GOOSE		*Anser brachyrhynchus*		1841	2018	0
8.					TUNDRA BEAN GOOSE		*Anser serrirostris*	322	1838	2018	0
9.					GREATER WHITE-FRONTED GOOSE	White-fronted Goose	*Anser albifrons*		1845	2018	0
					European White-fronted Goose		*Anser albifrons albifrons*		1845	2018	0
					Greenland White-fronted Goose		*Anser albifrons flavirostris*	8	1962	1996	22
10.					LESSER WHITE-FRONTED GOOSE		*Anser erythropus*	4	1986	2017	1
11.					MUTE SWAN		*Cygnus olor*		1247	2018	0

	Cons. status			English Name	IOC: World Bird List Name	*Latin Name*	Essex Records to 2017			
	R	A	E	X				Nos	First	Last	Years since last record
12.		■			TUNDRA SWAN	Bewick's Swan	*Cygnus columbianus bewickii*		1837	2018	0
13.		■			WHOOPER SWAN		*Cygnus cygnus*		1730	2018	0
14.					EGYPTIAN GOOSE		*Alopochen aegyptiaca*		1868	2018	0
15.		■			COMMON SHELDUCK	Shelduck	*Tadorna tadorna*		1730	2018	0
16.				X	MANDARIN		*Aix galericulata*		1947	2018	0
17.					BAIKAL TEAL§		*Sibirionetta formosa*	2	1906	2010	8
18.		■			GARGANEY		*Spatula querquedula*		1835	2018	0
19.					BLUE-WINGED TEAL		*Spatula discors*	6	1989	2006	12
20.		■		X	NORTHERN SHOVELER	Shoveler	*Spatula clypeata*		1835	2018	0
21.		■		X	GADWALL		*Mareca strepera strepara*		1837	2018	0
22.		■			EURASIAN WIGEON	Wigeon	*Mareca penelope*		1714	2018	0
23.					AMERICAN WIGEON		*Mareca americana*	2	1962	2004	14
24.		■			MALLARD		*Anas platyrhynchos platyrhynchos*		1714	2018	0
25.		■			NORTHERN PINTAIL	Pintail	*Anas acuta*		1714	2018	0
26.		■		X	EURASIAN TEAL	Teal	*Anas crecca*		1714	2018	0
27.					GREEN-WINGED TEAL		*Anas carolinensis*	28	1956	2015	3
28.					RED-CRESTED POCHARD		*Netta rufina*		1844	2018	0
29.					CANVASBACK		*Aythya valisineria*	1	1997	2001	17
30.	■			X	COMMON POCHARD	Pochard	*Aythya ferina*		1730	2018	0
31.					FERRUGINOUS DUCK		*Aythya nyroca*	46	1880	2018	0
32.					RING-NECKED DUCK		*Aythya collaris*	11	1979	2018	0
33.					TUFTED DUCK		*Aythya fuligula*		1821	2018	0
34.	■				GREATER SCAUP	Scaup	*Aythya marila*		1830	2018	0
35.					LESSER SCAUP		*Aythya affinis*	2	2003	2006	12
36.					KING EIDER		*Somateria spectabilis*	1	1977	1977	41
37.		■			COMMON EIDER	Eider	*Somateria mollissima mollissima*		1865	2018	0
38.					SURF SCOTER		*Melanitta perspicillata*	3	1997	2018	0
39.	■				VELVET SCOTER		*Melanitta fusca*		1829	2018	0
40.	■				COMMON SCOTER		*Melanita nigra*		1730	2018	0
41.	■				LONG-TAILED DUCK		*Clangula hyemalis*		1832	2018	0
42.		■			COMMON GOLDENEYE	Goldeneye	*Bucephala clangula clangula*		1777	2018	0
43.		■			SMEW		*Mergellus albellus*		1819	2018	0
44.					COMMON MERGANSER	Goosander	*Mergus merganser merganser*		1830	2018	0

	Cons. status	English Name	IOC: World Bird List Name	*Latin Name*	Essex Records to 2017			
	R A E X				Nos	First	Last	Years since last record
45.		RED-BREASTED MERGANSER		*Mergus serrator*		1826	2018	0
46.		RUDDY DUCK		*Oxyura jamaicensis jamaicensis*		1958	2018	0
47.		RED-LEGGED PARTRIDGE		*Alectoris rufa rufa*		1777	2018	0
48.	R E X	GREY PARTRIDGE		*Perdix perdix perdix*		1600s	2018	0
49.	A	COMMON QUAIL	Quail	*Coturnix coturnix coturnix*		1777	2018	0
50.		COMMON PHEASANT	Pheasant	*Phasianus colchicus**		1059	2018	0
51.		RED-THROATED LOON	Red-throated Diver	*Gavia stellata*		1777	2018	0
52.	A	BLACK-THROATED LOON	Black-throated Diver	*Gavia arctica arctica*		1840	2018	0
53.	A	COMMON LOON	Great Northern Diver	*Gavia immer*		1813	2018	0
54.	A	EUROPEAN STORM PETREL	Storm Petrel	*Hydrobates pelagicus pelagicus*	72	1801	2017	1
55.	A	LEACH'S STORM PETREL	Leach's Petrel	*Oceanodroma leucorhoa leucorhoa*	238	1823	2018	0
56.	A	NORTHERN FULMAR	Fulmar	*Fulmarus glacialis glacialis*		1834	2018	0
57.		CORY'S SHEARWATER		*Calonectris borealis*	11	1978	2017	1
58.		SOOTY SHEARWATER		*Ardenna griseus*	236	1969	2018	0
59.		GREAT SHEARWATER		*Ardenna gravis*	3	1990	2012	6
60.	A	MANX SHEARWATER		*Puffinus puffinus*		1866	2018	0
61.	R	BALEARIC SHEARWATER		*Puffinus mauretanicus*	19	1975	2016	2
62.		LITTLE GREBE		*Tachybaptus ruficollis ruficollis*		1838	2018	0
63.	R	RED-NECKED GREBE		*Podiceps grisegena grisegena*		1837	2018	0
64.		GREAT CRESTED GREBE		*Podiceps cristatus cristatus*		1838	2018	0
65.	R	HORNED GREBE	Slavonian Grebe	*Podiceps auritus auritus*		1838	2018	0
66.	A	BLACK-NECKED GREBE		*Podiceps nigricollis nigricollis*		1821	2018	0
67.		BLACK STORK		*Ciconia nigra*	10	1881	2014	4
68.		WHITE STORK		*Ciconia ciconia ciconia*	45	1842	2018	0
69.		GLOSSY IBIS		*Plegadis falcinellus*	51	1872	2018	0
70.	A	EURASIAN SPOONBILL	Spoonbill	*Platalea leucorodia leucorodia*		1815	2018	0
71.	A E X	EURASIAN BITTERN	Bittern	*Botaurus stellaris stellaris*		1820	2018	0
72.		AMERICAN BITTERN		*Botaurus lentiginosus*	1	1826	1826	192

	Cons. status	English Name	IOC: World Bird List Name	*Latin Name*	Essex Records to 2017			
	R A E X				Nos	First	Last	Years since last record
73.		LITTLE BITTERN		*Ixobrychus minutus minutus*	13	1835	1970	48
74.		BLACK-CROWNED NIGHT HERON	Night Heron	*Nycticorax nycticorax nycticorax*	19	1839	2017	1
75.		SQUACCO HERON		*Ardeola ralloides*	1	2004	2004	14
76.		WESTERN CATTLE EGRET	Cattle Egret	*Bubulcus ibis*	32	1995	2018	0
77.		GREY HERON		*Ardea cinerea cinerea*		1594	2018	0
78.		PURPLE HERON		*Ardea purpurea purpurea*	30	1839	2018	0
79.		GREAT EGRET	Great White Egret	*Ardea alba alba*		2002	2018	0
80.		LITTLE EGRET		*Egretta garzetta garzetta*		1950	2018	0
81.	A	NORTHERN GANNET	Gannet	*Morus bassanus*		1830	2018	0
82.	R	EUROPEAN SHAG	Shag	*Phalacrocorax aristotelis aristotelis*		1820	2018	0
83.		GREAT CORMORANT	Cormorant	*Phalacrocorax carbo*		1600s	2018	0
		Cormorant		*Phalacrocorax carbo carbo*		1600s	2018	0
		Continental Cormorant		*Phalacrocorax carbo sinensis*		?	2018	0
84.	A	WESTERN OSPREY	Osprey	*Pandion haliaetus haliaetus*		1730	2018	0
85.		EGYPTIAN VULTURE		*Neophron percnopterus percnopterus*	1	1868	1868	150
86.	A	EUROPEAN HONEY-BUZZARD	Honey Buzzard	*Pernis apivorus*	372	1837	2018	0
87.		GREATER SPOTTED EAGLE	Spotted Eagle	*Clanga clanga*	3	1891	1908	110
88.		EURASIAN SPARROWHAWK	Sparrowhawk	*Accipiter nisus nisus*		1835	2018	0
89.		NORTHERN GOSHAWK	Goshawk	*Accipiter gentilis gentilis*	107	1100s	2018	0
90.	A X	WESTERN MARSH HARRIER	Marsh Harrier	*Circus aeruginosus aeruginosus*		1823	2018	0
91.	R X	HEN HARRIER		*Circus cyaneus*		1738	2018	0
92.		PALLID HARRIER		*Circus macrourus*	2	1993	2011	7
93.	A	MONTAGU'S HARRIER		*Circus pygargus*		1832	2018	0
94.		RED KITE		*Milvus milvus milvus*		1768	2018	0
95.		BLACK KITE		*Milvus migrans migrans*	32	1971	2018	0
96.	R	WHITE-TAILED EAGLE		*Haliaeetus albicilla albicilla*	17	c991	2015	3
97.		ROUGH-LEGGED BUZZARD		*Buteo lagopus lagopus*		1836	2018	0
98.		BUZZARD		*Buteo buteo buteo*		1830	2018	0

	Cons. status			English Name	IOC: World Bird List Name	*Latin Name*	Essex Records to 2017			
	R	A	E	X				Nos	First	Last	Years since last record
99.					GREAT BUSTARD		*Otis tarda tarda*	2	1879	1890	128
100.					LITTLE BUSTARD		*Tetrax tetrax*	12	1823	1969	49
101.				X	WATER RAIL		*Rallus aquaticus aquaticus*		1830	2018	0
102.					CORN CRAKE	Corncrake	*Crex crex*		1822	2013	5
103.					LITTLE CRAKE		*Porzana parva intermedia*	4	1873	1973	45
104.					BAILLON'S CRAKE		*Porzana pusilla*	3	1874	2012	6
105.					SPOTTED CRAKE		*Porzana porzana*	85	1838	2017	1
106.					COMMON MOORHEN	Moorhen	*Gallinula chloropus chloropus*		1863	2018	0
107.					EURASIAN COOT	Coot	*Fulica atra atra*		1819	2018	0
108.					COMMON CRANE	Crane	*Grus grus*	172	1888	2018	0
109.			E		EURASIAN STONE-CURLEW	Stone-curlew	*Burhinus oedicnemus oedicnemus*		1832	2018	0
110.					EURASIAN OYSTERCATCHER	Oystercatcher	*Haematopus ostralegus ostralegus*		1730	2018	0
111.					BLACK-WINGED STILT		*Himantopus himantopus*	60	1947	2018	0
112.				X	PIED AVOCET	Avocet	*Recurvirostra avosetta*		1700	2018	0
113.				X	NORTHERN LAPWING	Lapwing	*Vanellus vanellus*		1668	2018	0
114.					SOCIABLE LAPWING	Sociable Plover	*Vanellus gregarious*	4	1976	2005	13
115.					WHITE-TAILED LAPWING	White-tailed Plover	*Vanellus leucurus*	1	2010	2010	8
116.					EUROPEAN GOLDEN PLOVER	Golden Plover	*Pluvialis apricaria*		1845	2018	0
117.					PACIFIC GOLDEN PLOVER		*Pluvialis fulva*	2	1896	2000	18
118.					AMERICAN GOLDEN PLOVER		*Pluvialis dominica*	4	2004	2018	0
119.					GREY PLOVER		*Pluvialis squatarola squatarola*		1842	2018	0
120.				X	COMMON RINGED PLOVER	Ringed Plover	*Charadrius hiaticula*		1838	2018	0
					Ringed Plover		*Charadrius hiaticula hiaticula*		~	2018	0
					Eurasian Ringed Plover		*Charadrius hiaticula tundrae*		~	2018	0
121.				X	LITTLE RINGED PLOVER		*Charadrius dubius curonicus*		1947	2018	0
122.					KENTISH PLOVER		*Charadrius alexandrinus alexandrinus*	58	1876	2018	0
123.					GREATER SAND PLOVER		*Charadrius leschenaultii**	1	1992	1992	26
124.					EURASIAN DOTTEREL	Dotterel	*Charadrius morinellus*	337	1830	2017	1

	Cons. status	English Name	IOC: World Bird List Name	*Latin Name*	Essex Records to 2017			
	R A E X				Nos	First	Last	Years since last record
125.	R	WHIMBREL		*Numenius phaeopus phaeopus*		1819	2018	0
126.	R	EURASIAN CURLEW	Curlew	*Numenius arquata arquata*		1826	2018	0
127.	A	BAR-TAILED GODWIT		*Limosa lapponica lapponica*		1547	2018	0
128.	R	BLACK-TAILED GODWIT		*Limosa limosa*		1834	2018	0
		Continental Black-tailed Godwit		*Limosa limosa limosa*	4	2007	2018	0
		Icelandic Black-tailed Godwit		*Limosa limosa islandica*		1834	2018	0
129.	A	RUDDY TURNSTONE	Turnstone	*Arenaria interpres interpres*		1826	2018	0
130.	A	RED KNOT	Knot	*Calidris canutus islandica*		1777	2018	0
131.	R	RUFF		*Calidris pugnax*		1833	2018	0
132.		BROAD-BILLED SANDPIPER		*Calidris falcinellus falcinellus*	7	1988	2010	8
133.		STILT SANDPIPER		*Calidris himantopus*	1	1973	1973	45
134.	A	CURLEW SANDPIPER		*Calidris ferruginea*		1826	2018	0
135.		TEMMINCK'S STINT		*Calidris temminckii*	242	1835	2017	1
136.	A	SANDERLING		*Calidris alba alba*		1828	2018	0
137.	A	DUNLIN		*Calidris alpina*		1824	2018	0
		Scandinavian Dunlin		*Calidris alpina alpina*		~	2018	0
		Greenland Dunlin		*Calidris alpina arctica*		~	2018	0
		West European Dunlin		*Calidris alpina schinzii*		~	2018	0
138.	A	PURPLE SANDPIPER		*Calidris maritima*		1833	2018	0
139.		BAIRD'S SANDPIPER		*Calidris bairdii*	3	1972	2010	8
140.		LITTLE STINT		*Calidris minuta*		1826	2018	0
141.		WHITE-RUMPED SANDPIPER		*Calidris fuscicollis*	11	1964	2011	7
142.		BUFF-BREASTED SANDPIPER		*Calidris subruficollis*	16	1975	2007	11
143.		PECTORAL SANDPIPER		*Calidris melanotos*	114	1949	2018	0
144.		SEMIPALMATED SANDPIPER		*Calidris pusilla*	2	2010	2011	7
145.		WESTERN SANDPIPER		*Calidris mauri*	1	1973	1973	45
146.		LONG-BILLED DOWITCHER		*Limnodromus scolopaceus*	9	1979	2011	7
147.	R	EURASIAN WOODCOCK	Woodcock	*Scolopax rusticola*		1735	2018	0
148.		JACK SNIPE		*Lymnocryptes minimus*		1838	2018	0
149.		GREAT SNIPE		*Gallinago media*	21	1825	1989	29

	Cons. status			English Name	IOC: World Bird List Name	*Latin Name*	Essex Records to 2017			
	R	A	E	X				Nos	First	Last	Years since last record
150.				X	SNIPE		*Gallinago gallinago gallinago*		1735	2018	0
151.					TEREK SANDPIPER		*Xenus cinereus*	3	1978	2002	16
152.					WILSON'S PHALAROPE		*Phalaropus tricolor*	6	1977	2015	3
153.					RED-NECKED PHALAROPE		*Phalaropus robatus*	92	1842	2018	0
154.					RED PHALAROPE	Grey Phalarope	*Phalaropus fulicarius*	122	1838	2018	0
155.					COMMON SANDPIPER		*Actitis hypoleucos*		1819	2018	0
156.					SPOTTED SANDPIPER		*Actitis macularius*	7	1978	2011	7
157.					GREEN SANDPIPER		*Tringa ochropus*		1832	2018	0
158.					SOLITARY SANDPIPER		*Tringa solitaria**	2	1967	1974	44
159.					LESSER YELLOWLEGS		*Tringa flavipes*	15	1921	2016	2
160.				X	COMMON REDSHANK	Redshank	*Tringa totanus*		1826	2018	0
					Common Redshank		*Tringa totanus totanus*		~	2018	0
					Icelandic Redshank		*Tringa totanus robusta*		~	2018	0
161.					MARSH SANDPIPER		*Tringa stagnatilis*	13	1956	2018	0
162.					WOOD SANDPIPER		*Tringa glareola*		1835	2018	0
163.					SPOTTED REDSHANK		*Tringa erythropus*		1832	2018	0
164.					COMMON GREENSHANK	Greenshank	*Tringa nebularia*		1738	2018	0
165.					GREATER YELLOWLEGS		*Tringa melanoleuca*	2	1949	1995	23
166.					CREAM-COLOURED COURSER		*Cursorius cursor cursor*	2	1858	1984	34
167.					COLLARED PRATINCOLE		*Glareola pratincola pratincola*	3	1861	2005	13
168.					ORIENTAL PRATINCOLE §		*Glareola maldivarum*	1	1981	1981	37
169.					BLACK-WINGED PRATINCOLE		*Glareola nordmanni*	1	1960	1960	58
170.					BLACK-LEGGED KITTIWAKE	Kittiwake	*Rissa tridactyla tridactyla*		1835	2018	0
171.					SABINE'S GULL		*Xema sabini*	150	1862	2017	1
172.					BONAPARTE'S GULL		*Chroicocephalus philadelphia*	6	1994	2018	0
173.					BLACK-HEADED-GULL		*Chroicocephalus ridibundus*		1662	2018	0
174.					LITTLE GULL		*Hydrocoloeus minutus*		1845	2018	0
175.					LAUGHING GULL		*Leucophaeus atricilla**	3	1974	2017	1

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176.				FRANKLIN'S GULL		*Leucophaeus pipixcan*	3	2000	2016	2
177.				MEDITERRANEAN GULL §		*Ichthyaetus melanocephalus*		1866	2018	0
178.				MEW GULL	Common Gull	*Larus canus*		1835	2018	0
				Common Gull		*Larus canus canus*		1835	2018	0
				Russian Common Gull §		*Larus canus heinei*	1	1984	1984	34
179.				RING-BILLED GULL		*Larus delawarensis*	31	1979	2018	0
180.				GREAT BLACK-BACKED GULL		*Larus marinus*		1838	2018	0
181.				GLAUCOUS GULL		*Larus hyperboreus hyperboreus*		1885	2018	0
182.				ICELAND GULL		*Larus glaucoides*	160	1887	2018	0
				Iceland Gull		*Larus glaucoides glaucoides*	159	1887	2018	0
				Thayer's Gull		*Larus glaucoides thayeri*	1	2010	2010	8
183.				EUROPEAN HERRING GULL	Herring Gull	*Larus argentatus*		1730	2018	0
				Scandinavian Herring Gull		*Larus argentatus argentatus*		~	2018	0
				West European Herring Gull		*Larus argentatus argenteus*		~	2018	0
184.				CASPIAN GULL		*Larus cachinnans*		1995	2018	0
185.				YELLOW-LEGGED GULL		*Larus michahellis michahellis*		1973	2018	0
186.				SLATY-BACKED GULL §		*Larus schistisagus*	1	2011	2011	7
187.				LESSER BLACK-BACKED GULL		*Larus fuscus*		1838	2018	0
				Common Lesser Black-backed Gull		*Larus fuscus graelsii*		~	2018	0
				Intermediate Lesser Black-backed Gull		*Larus fuscus intermedius*		~	2018	0
188.				GULL-BILLED TERN		*Gelochelidon nilotica nilotica*	6	1901	2003	15
189.				CASPIAN TERN		*Hydroprogne caspia*	7	1959	2015	3
190.				SANDWICH TERN		*Thalasseus sandvicensis*		1738	2018	0
191.			X	LITTLE TERN		*Sternula albifrons albifrons*		1820	2018	0
192.				LEAST TERN §		*Sternula antillarum*	1	1991	1991	27
193.				BRIDLED TERN		*Onychoprion anaethetus**	2	1991	2006	12
194.				ROSEATE TERN		*Sterna dougallii dougallii*	47	1973	2016	2

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195.					COMMON TERN		*Sterna hirundo hirundo*		1821	2018	0
196.					ARCTIC TERN		*Sterna paradisaea*		1867	2018	0
197.					FORSTER'S TERN		*Sterna forsteri*	2	1999	2016	2
198.					WHISKERED TERN		*Chlidonias hybrida hybrida*	5	1967	2009	9
199.					WHITE-WINGED TERN	White-winged Black Tern	*Chlidonias leucopterus*	70	1912	2018	0
200.					BLACK TERN		*Chlidonias niger niger*		1829	2018	0
201.					GREAT SKUA		*Stercorarius skua*		1820	2018	0
202.					POMARINE JAEGER	Pomarine Skua	*Stercorarius pomarinus*		1828	2018	0
203.					PARASITIC JAEGER	Arctic Skua	*Stercorarius parasiticus*		1837	2018	0
204.					LONG-TAILED JAEGER	Long-tailed Skua	*Stercorarius longicaudus*	197	1842	2018	0
205.					LITTLE AUK		*Alle alle alle*		1832	2018	0
206.					COMMON MURRE	Common Guillemot	*Uria aalge*		1861	2018	0
					Scandinavian Guillemot		*Uria aalge aalge*		~	2018	0
					West European Guillemot		*Uria aalge albionis*		~	2018	0
207.					RAZORBILL		*Alca torda islandica*		1840	2018	0
208.					BLACK GUILLEMOT		*Cepphus grille arcticus*	11	1869	2018	0
209.					ATLANTIC PUFFIN	Puffin	*Fractecula arctica*	123	1842	2018	0
210.					PALLAS'S SANDGROUSE		*Syrrhaptes paradoxus*	90	1863	1908	110
211.					ROCK DOVE/FERAL PIGEON		*Columba livia livia*		1886	2018	0
212.					STOCK DOVE		*Columba oenas oenas*		1838	2018	0
213.					COMMON WOOD PIGEON	Woodpigeon	*Columba palumbus palumbus*		1843	2018	0
214.				X	EUROPEAN TURTLE DOVE	Turtle Dove	*Streptopelia turtur turtur*		1818	2018	0
215.					EUROPEAN COLLARED DOVE	Collared Dove	*Streptopelia decaocto decaocto*		1957	2018	0
216.					COMMON CUCKOO	Cuckoo	*Cuculus canorus canorus*		1818	2018	0
217.				X	WESTERN BARN OWL	Barn Owl	*Tyto alba*		~	2018	0
					Barn Owl		*Tyto alba alba*		1738	2018	0
					Dark-breasted Barn Owl		*Tyto alba guttata*	10	1843	2002	16
218.					SCOPS OWL		*Otus scops scops*	3	1821	1888	130
219.					SNOWY OWL		*Bubo scandiacus*	2	1963	2014	4
220.					TAWNY OWL		*Strix aluco sylvatica*		1832	2018	0

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221.				LITTLE OWL		*Athene noctua vilidii*		1865	2018	0
222.				BOREAL OWL	Tengmalm's Owl	*Aegolius funereus funereus*	1	1877	1877	141
223.			X	LONG-EARED OWL		*Asio otus otus*		1829	2018	0
224.			X	SHORT-EARED OWL		*Asio flammeus flammeus*		1587	2018	0
225.				EUROPEAN NIGHTJAR	Nightjar	*Caprimulgus europaeus europaeus*		1738	2014	4
226.				WHITE-THROATED NEEDLETAIL §		*Hirundapus caudacutus caudacutus*	1	1846	1846	172
227.				ALPINE SWIFT		*Tachymarptis melba melba*	26	1871	2018	0
228.				COMMON SWIFT	Swift	*Apus apus apus*		1818	2018	0
229.				PALLID SWIFT		*Apus pallidus**	1	2001	2001	17
230.				EUROPEAN ROLLER	Roller	*Coracias garrulus garrulus*	4	1865	1976	42
231.				COMMON KINGFISHER	Kingfisher	*Alcedo atthis ispida*		1838	2018	0
232.				EUROPEAN BEE-EATER	Bee-eater	*Merops apiaster*	58	1854	2016	2
233.				EURASIAN HOOPOE	Hoopoe	*Upupa epops epops*	223	1667	2018	0
234.				EURASIAN WRYNECK	Wryneck	*Jynx torquilla torquilla*		1818	2018	0
235.				LESSER SPOTTED WOODPECKER		*Dryobates minor comminutus*		1830	2018	0
236.				GREAT SPOTTED WOODPECKER		*Dendrocopos major anglicus*		1832	2018	0
237.				EUROPEAN GREEN WOODPECKER	Green Woodpecker	*Picus viridis viridis*		1838	2018	0
238.				LESSER KESTREL		*Falco naumanni*	1	1974	1974	44
239.				COMMON KESTREL	Kestrel	*Falco tinnunculus tinnunculus*		1890	2018	0
240.				RED-FOOTED FALCON		*Falco vespertinus*	34	1873	2018	0
241.				ELEONORA'S FALCON		*Falco eleonorae*	1	2008	2008	10
242.			X	MERLIN		*Falco columbarius aesalon*		1829	2018	0
243.			X	EURASIAN HOBBY	Hobby	*Falco subbuteo subbuteo*		1818	2018	0
244.				PEREGRINE FALCON	Peregrine	*Falco peregrinus peregrinus*		1823	2018	0
245.				ROSE-RINGED PARAKEET	Ring-necked Parakeet	*Psittacula krameri*		1971	2018	0
				Asian Ring-necked Parakeet		*Psittacula krameri borealis*		~	2018	0
				Indian Ring-necked Parakeet		*Psittacula krameri manillensis*		~	2018	0

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246.	■				RED-BACKED SHRIKE		*Lanius collurio*		1818	2018	0
247.					ISABELLINE/ RED-TAILED SHRIKE	Daurian/Turkestan Shrike	*Lanius isabellinus/ phoenicuroides*	2	1988	2016	2
248.					LESSER GREY SHRIKE		*Lanius minor*	3	1989	2008	10
249.					GREAT GREY SHRIKE		*Lanius excubitor excubitor*		1827	2017	1
250.					STEPPE GREY SHRIKE		*Lanius pallidirostris*	2	1994	1996	22
251.					WOODCHAT SHRIKE		*Lanius senator senator*	23	1872	2016	2
252.	■				EURASIAN GOLDEN ORIOLE	Golden Oriole	*Oriolus oriolus*		1830	2016	2
253.					EURASIAN JAY	Jay	*Garrulus glandarius rufitergum*		1878	2018	0
254.					EURASIAN MAGPIE	Magpie	*Pica pica pica*		1838	2018	0
255.					SPOTTED NUTCRACKER	Nutcracker	*Nucifraga caryocatactes macrorynchos*	26	1855	1968	50
256.					RED-BILLED CHOUGH	Chough	*Pyrrhocorax pyrrhocorax pyrrhocorax*	2	1888	1888	130
257.					WESTERN JACKDAW	Jackdaw	*Coloeus monedula*		1857	2018	0
					Jackdaw		*Coloeus monedula monedula*		1857	2018	0
					Nordic Jackdaw		*Coloeus monedula spermologus*	?	2006	2018	0
258.					ROOK		*Corvus frugilegus frugilegus*		1838	2018	0
259.					CARRION CROW		*Corvus corone corone*		1835	2018	0
260.					HOODED CROW		*Corvus cornix cornix*		1835	2018	0
261.					NORTHERN RAVEN	Raven	*Corvus corax corax*		c991	2018	0
262.					BOHEMIAN WAXWING	Waxwing	*Bombycilla garrulus garrulus*		1835	2018	0
263.					COAL TIT		*Periparus ater*		1890	2018	0
					Coal Tit		*Periparus ater britannicus*		1890	2018	0
					Continental Coal Tit		*Periparus ater ater*	?	1952	2018	0
264.					EUROPEAN CRESTED TIT	Crested Tit	*Lophophanes cristatus**	4	1829	1844	174
265.	■			X	MARSH TIT		*Poecile palustris dresseri*		1890	2018	0
266.	■			X	WILLOW TIT		*Poecile montanus kleinschmidti*		1912	2005	13
267.					EURASIAN BLUE TIT	Blue Tit	*Cyanistes caeruleus obscurus*		1884	2018	0
268.					GREAT TIT		*Parus major*		1890	2018	0
					British Great Tit		*Parus major newtoni*		~	2018	0
					Eurasian Great Tit		*Parus major major*		~	2018	0

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269.				EURASIAN PENDULINE TIT	Penduline Tit	*Remiz pendulinus pendulinus*	16	1982	2016	2
270.			X	BEARDED REEDLING	Bearded Tit	*Panurus biarmicus biarmicus*		1738	2018	0
271.				WOODLARK		*Lullula arborea arborea*		1832	2017	1
272.			E X	EURASIAN SKYLARK	Skylark	*Alauda arvensis arvensis*		1865	2018	0
273.				HORNED LARK	ShoreLark	*Eremophila alpestris flava*		1862	2018	0
274.				GREATER SHORT-TOED LARK	Short-toed Lark	*Calandrella brachydactyla**	3	1965	1999	19
275.			X	SAND MARTIN		*Riparia riparia riparia*		1818	2018	0
276.				BARN SWALLOW	Swallow	*Hirundo rustica rustica*		1818	2018	0
277.			X	COMMON HOUSE MARTIN	House Martin	*Delichon urbicum urbicum*		1818	2018	0
278.				RED-RUMPED SWALLOW		*Cecropis daurica rufula*	30	1969	2018	0
279.				CETTI'S WARBLER		*Cettia cetti cetti*		1976	2018	0
280.				LONG-TAILED TIT		*Aegithalos caudatus*		1854	2018	0
				British Long-tailed Tit		*Aegithalos caudatus rosaceus*		1854	2018	0
				Northern Long-tailed Tit		*Aegithalos caudatus caudatus*	6	1912	2004	14
281.			X	WOOD WARBLER		*Phylloscopus sibilatrix*		1821	2018	0
282.				WESTERN/EASTERN BONELLI'S WARBLER		*Phylloscopus bonelli/orientalis*	1	1988	1988	30
283.				HUME'S LEAF WARBLER	Hume's Warbler	*Phylloscopus humei humei*	1	2004	2004	14
				YELLOW-BROWED WARBLER		*Phylloscopus inornatus*		1957	2018	0
				PALLAS'S LEAF WARBLER	Pallas's Warbler	*Phylloscopus proregulus*	56	1960	2018	0
				RADDE'S WARBLER		*Phylloscopus schwarzi*	3	2000	2008	10
				DUSKY WARBLER		*Phylloscopus fuscatus fuscatus*	8	1987	2018	0
288.				WILLOW WARBLER		*Phylloscopus trochilus*		1818	2018	0
				European Willow Warbler		*Phylloscopus trochilus trochilus*		~	2018	0
				Eurasian Willow Warbler		*Phylloscopus trochilus acredula*		~	2018	0
289.				COMMON CHIFFCHAFF	Chiffchaff	*Phylloscopus collybita*		1818	2018	0
				Common Chiffchaff		*Phylloscopus collybita collybita*		1818	2018	0

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				Siberian Chiffchaff		*Phylloscopus collybita tristis*	?	1987	2018	0
290.				GREENISH WARBLER		*Phylloscopus trochiloides viridanus*	3	1983	2017	1
291.				ARCTIC WARBLER		*Phylloscopus borealis*	1	2004	2004	14
292.				GREAT REED WARBLER		*Acrocephalus arundinaceus arundinaceus*	3	1965	2004	14
293.	■			AQUATIC WARBLER		*Acrocephalus paludicola*	9	1957	2008	10
294.				SEDGE WARBLER		*Acrocephalus schoenobaenus*		1818	2018	0
295.				PADDYFIELD WARBLER		*Acrocephalus agricola**	2	1987	1999	19
296.				BLYTH'S REED WARBLER		*Acrocephalus dumetorum*	3	2003	2014	4
297.				EURASIAN REED WARBLER	Reed Warbler	*Acrocephalus scirpaceus scirpaceus*		1819	2018	0
298.	■		X	MARSH WARBLER		*Acrocephalus palustris*	37	1983	2018	0
299.				BOOTED WARBLER		*Iduna caligata*	1	2006	2006	12
300.				MELODIOUS WARBLER		*Hippolais polyglotta*	10	1961	2012	6
301.				ICTERINE WARBLER		*Hippolais icterina*	26	1962	2009	9
302.	■		X	GRASSHOPPER WARBLER		*Locustella naevia naevia*		1819	2018	0
303.	■			SAVI'S WARBLER		*Locustella luscinioides luscinioides*	5	1981	2011	7
304.				BLACKCAP		*Sylvia atricapilla atricapilla*		1818	2018	0
305.				GARDEN WARBLER		*Sylvia borin borin*		1819	2018	0
306.				BARRED WARBLER		*Sylvia nisoria nisoria*	59	1961	2016	2
307.				LESSER WHITETHROAT		*Sylvia curruca curruca*		1819	2018	0
308.				ASIAN DESERT WARBLER		*Sylvia nana*	1	1975	1975	43
309.				COMMON WHITETHROAT	Whitethroat	*Sylvia communis communis*		1818	2018	0
310.		■		DARTFORD WARBLER		*Sylvia undata dartfordiensis*	111	1837	2018	0
311.				MOLTONI'S/ SUBALPINE WARBLER		*Sylvia subalpina/ cantillans**	12	1971	2016	2
312.			X	COMMON FIRECREST	Firecrest	*Regulus ignicapilla ignicapilla*		1878	2018	0
313.				GOLDCREST		*Regulus regulus regulus*		1738	2018	0
314.				EURASIAN WREN	Wren	*Troglodytes troglodytes indigenus*		1874	2018	0

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315.				EURASIAN NUTHATCH	Nuthatch	*Sitta europaea caesia*		1838	2018	0
316.				EURASIAN TREECREEPER	Treecreeper	*Certhia familiaris britannica*		1835	2018	0
317.				SHORT-TOED TREECREEPER		*Certhia brachydactyla**	2	1975	2006	12
318.				NORTHERN MOCKINGBIRD		*Mimus polyglottos**	1	1988	1988	30
319.				ROSY STARLING	Roe-coloured Starling	*Pastor roseus*	21	1856	2018	0
320.	■			COMMON STARLING	Starling	*Sturnus vulgaris vulgaris*		1832	2018	0
321.				WHITE'S THRUSH		*Zoothera aurea aurea*	1	1894	1894	124
322.	■			RING OUZEL		*Turdus torquatus torquatus*		1831	2018	0
323.				COMMON BLACKBIRD	Blackbird	*Turdus merula merula*		1735	2018	0
324.				RED-THROATED THRUSH		*Turdus ruficollis*	1	1994	1994	24
325.				NAUMANN'S THRUSH §		*Turdus naumanni*	2	1990	1997	21
326.	■			FIELDFARE		*Turdus pilaris*		1834	2018	0
327.	■			REDWING		*Turdus iliacus*		1831	2018	0
				Redwing		*Turdus iliacus iliacus*		1831	2018	0
				Icelandic Redwing		*Turdus iliacus coburni*	5	1940	1963	55
328.	■		E X	SONG THRUSH		*Turdus philomelos*		1676	2018	0
				West European Song Thrush		*Turdus philomelos clarkei*		~	2018	0
				Continental Song Thrush		*Turdus philomelos philomelos*		~	2018	0
329.	■			MISTLE THRUSH		*Turdus viscivorus viscivorus*		1890	2018	0
330.	■		X	SPOTTED FLYCATCHER		*Muscicapa striata striata*		1818	2018	0
331.				EUROPEAN ROBIN	Robin	*Erithacus rubecula*		1838	2018	0
				British Robin		*Erithacus rubecula melophilus*		~	2018	0
				European Robin		*Erithacus rubecula rubecula*		~	2018	0
332.				BLUETHROAT		*Luscinia svecica*	52	1936	2018	0
				Red-spotted Bluethroat		*Luscinia svecica svecica*	6	1957	2002	16
				White-spotted Bluethroat		*Luscinia svecica cyanecula*	16	1958	2018	0
333.	■		X	COMMON NIGHTINGALE	Nightingale	*Luscinia megarhynchos megarhynchos*		1768	2018	0

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334.	■				EUROPEAN PIED FLYCATCHER	Pied Flycatcher	*Ficedula hypoleuca hypoleuca*		1822	2018	0
335.					COLLARED FLYCATCHER		*Ficedula albicollis*	1	1979	1979	39
336.					RED-BREASTED FLYCATCHER		*Ficedula parva*	33	1959	2018	0
337.	■			X	BLACK REDSTART		*Phoenicurus ochruros gibraltariensis*		1879	2018	0
338.		■			COMMON REDSTART	Redstart	*Phoenicurus phoenicurus phoenicurus*		1818	2018	0
339.	■				WHINCHAT		*Saxicola rubetra*		1819	2018	0
340.				X	EUROPEAN STONECHAT	Stonechat	*Saxicola rubicola hibernans*		1831	2018	0
341.					SIBERIAN/ STEJNEGER'S STONECHAT		*Saxicola maurus*/ stejnegeri*	4	1984	2012	6
342.					NORTHERN WHEATEAR	Wheatear	*Oenanthe oenanthe*		1819	2018	0
					Northern Wheatear		*Oenanthe oenanthe oenanthe*		1819	2018	0
					Greenland Wheatear		*Oenanthe oenanthe leucorrhoa*		1952	2018	0
343.					DESERT WHEATEAR		*Oenanthe deserti**	3	1958	2012	6
344.					BLACK-EARED WHEATEAR		*Oenanthe hispanica**	2	1989	1997	21
345.		■			WHITE-THROATED DIPPER	Dipper	*Cinclus cinclus*	15	1830	2013	5
					Black-bellied Dipper		*Cinclus cinclus cinclus*	3	1950	2013	5
346.	■				HOUSE SPARROW		*Passer domesticus domesticus*		1808	2018	0
347.	■			X	EURASIAN TREE SPARROW	Tree Sparrow	*Passer montanus montanus*		1833	2018	0
348.					ALPINE ACCENTOR §		*Prunella collaris collaris*	1	1817	1817	201
349.		■			DUNNOCK		*Prunella modularis modularis*		1890	2018	0
350.	■			X	WESTERN YELLOW WAGTAIL	Yellow Wagtail	*Motacilla flava*		1820	2018	0
					Yellow Wagtail		*Motacilla flava flavissima*		1820	2018	0
					Blue-headed Wagtail §		*Motacilla flava flava*		1834	2018	0
					Grey-headed Wagtail		*Motacilla flava thunbergi*	17	1954	2012	6
					Channel Wagtail hybrid		*Motacilla flava flava x flavissima*		1999	2018	0

	Cons. status			English Name	IOC: World Bird List Name	*Latin Name*	Essex Records to 2017			
	R	A	E X				Nos	First	Last	Years since last record
351.				CITRINE WAGTAIL		*Motacilla citreola citreola*	3	1976	2006	12
352.	■			GREY WAGTAIL		*Motacilla cinerea cinerea*		1831	2018	0
353.				WHITE WAGTAIL	Pied Wagtail	*Motacilla alba*		1876	2018	0
				Pied Wagtail		*Motacilla alba yarrellii*		1876	2018	0
				White Wagtail		*Motacilla alba alba*		1836	2018	0
354.				RICHARD'S PIPIT		*Anthus richardi*	30	1968	2016	2
355.				TAWNY PIPIT		*Anthus campestris*	16	1951	2012	6
356.		■		MEADOW PIPIT		*Anthus pratensis*		1838	2018	0
357.	■		X	TREE PIPIT		*Anthus trivialis trivialis*		1818	2018	0
358.				OLIVE-BACKED PIPIT		*Anthus hodgsoni yunnanensis*	4	1992	2013	5
359.				RED-THROATED PIPIT		*Anthus cervinus*	5	1982	1994	24
360.		■		WATER PIPIT		*Anthus spinoletta spinoletta*		1923	2018	0
361.				EURASIAN ROCK PIPIT	Rock Pipit	*Anthus petrosus littoralis*		1835	2018	0
362.				COMMON CHAFFINCH	Chaffinch	*Fringilla coelebs*		1732	2018	0
				British Chaffinch		*Fringilla coelebs coelebs*		~	2018	0
				European Chaffinch		*Fringilla coelebs gengleri*		~	2018	0
363.				BRAMBLING		*Fringilla montifringilla*		1835	2018	0
364.	■		X	HAWFINCH		*Coccothraustes coccothraustes coccothraustes*		1600s	2018	0
365.		■	X	EURASIAN BULLFINCH	Bullfinch	*Pyrrhula pyrrhula*		1838	2018	0
				Bullfinch		*Pyrrhula pyrrhula pileata*		1838	2018	0
				Northern Bullfinch		*Pyrrhula pyrrhula pyrrhula*	40	2004	2005	13
366.				TRUMPETER FINCH		*Bucanetes githagineus**	1	1985	1985	33
367.				COMMON ROSEFINCH		*Carpodacus erythrinus erythrinus*	18	1981	2016	2
368.				EUROPEAN GREENFINCH	Greenfinch	*Chloris chloris chloris*		1871	2018	0
369.	■			TWITE		*Linaria flavirostris*		1820	2018	0
				British Twite		*Linaria flavirostris flavirostris*		~	2018	0
				Scandinavian Twite		*Linaria flavirostris pipilans*		~	2018	0

	Cons. status			English Name	IOC: World Bird List Name	*Latin Name*	Essex Records to 2017			
	R	A	E	X				Nos	First	Last	Years since last record
370.	■			X	COMMON LINNET	Linnet	*Linaria cannabina cannabina*		1832	2018	0
371.		■			COMMON REDPOLL		*Acanthis flammea flammea*		1835	2018	0
372.	■			X	LESSER REDPOLL		*Acanthis cabaret*		c1805	2018	0
373.					ARCTIC REDPOLL		*Acanthis hornemanni exilipes*	11	1976	2008	10
374.					PARROT CROSSBILL		*Loxia pytyopsittacus*	7	1861	2013	5
375.					RED CROSSBILL	Crossbill	*Loxia curvirostra curvirostra*		1826	2018	0
376.					TWO-BARRED CROSSBILL		*Loxia leucoptera bifasciata*	2	1846	1866	152
377.					EUROPEAN GOLDFINCH	Goldfinch	*Carduelis carduelis britannica*		1838	2018	0
378.					EUROPEAN SERIN	Serin	*Serinus serinus*	35	1976	2018	0
379.					EURASIAN SISKIN	Siskin	*Spinus spinus*		1838	2018	0
380.		■			LAPLAND LONGSPUR	Lapland Bunting	*Calcarius lapponicus lapponicus*		1872	2018	0
381.		■			SNOW BUNTING		*Plectrophenax nivalis insulae*		1830	2018	0
382.	■			X	CORN BUNTING		*Emberiza calandra calandra*		1838	2018	0
383.	■			X	YELLOWHAMMER		*Emberiza citrinella caliginosa*		1877	2018	0
384.					PINE BUNTING		*Emberiza leucocephalos leucocephalos*	1	1992	1992	26
385.					ORTOLAN BUNTING		*Emberiza hortulana*	29	1908	2016	2
386.	■				CIRL BUNTING		*Emberiza cirlus*	18	1854	1978	40
387.					LITTLE BUNTING		*Emberiza pusilla*	7	1892	2018	0
388.					RUSTIC BUNTING		*Emberiza rustica*	2	1966	2018	0
389.					YELLOW-BREASTED BUNTING		*Emberiza aureola aureola*	1	2002	2002	16
390.					BLACK-HEADED BUNTING		*Emberiza melanocephala*	3	1979	1998	20
391.		■		X	COMMON REED BUNTING	Reed Bunting	*Emberiza schoeniclus schoeniclus*		1890	2018	0
392.					DARK-EYED JUNCO		*Junco hyemalis hyemalis*	1	2016	2016	2
393.					BALTIMORE ORIOLE		*Icterus galbula*	1	1992	1992	26
394.					ROSE-BREASTED GROSBEAK		*Pheucticus ludovicianus*	1	1975	1975	43

Category D Species (not part of the Essex List)

All Essex records have been included here whether the report clearly involved an escape or may have been a wild bird.

SNOW GOOSE	*Anser caerulescens*	57+	1911	2016	2
ROSS' GOOSE	*Anser rossii*	9	1996	2015	3
RUDDY SHELDUCK	*Tadorna ferruginea*	128	1885	2018	0
WOOD DUCK	*Aix sponsa*	73	1960	2017	1
FALCATED DUCK	*Mareca falcata*	3	1994	2006	12
MARBLED DUCK	*Marmaronetta angustirostris*	2	2006	2007	11
WHITE-HEADED DUCK	*Oxyura leucocephala*	3	1995	2003	15
GREATER FLAMINGO	*Phoenicopterus roseus*	8	1963	2011	7
GREAT WHITE PELICAN	*Pelecanus onocrotalus*	4	1975	2000	18
SAKER	*Falco cherrug*	12	1984	2014	4
RED-HEADED BUNTING	*Emberiza bruniceps*	5	1958	2002	16

Category E Species (not part of the Essex List)

Based on the chapter 'Appendix 2 Catergory E species" in Wood (2007) and updated to 2017 and includes species for which introductions were attempted in 19th Century.

Modern recording of escapes only began in the mid-1980s so this list is likely to be incomplete.

Some species in this list may also occur in the main Essex List e.g. Common Buzzard, of which examples with jesses have been noted.

Greater Rhea	Australian Shelduck	Rosy-billed Pochard
Red-winged Tinamou	Pink-eared Duck	New Zealand Scaup
Magpie Goose	Muscovy Duck	Barrow's Goldeneye
White-faced Whistling Duck	Maned Duck	Hooded Merganser
Black-bellied Whistling Duck	Ringed Teal	Helmeted Guineafowl
Fulvous-whistling Duck	Hottentot Teal	Northern Bobwhite
White-backed Duck	Puna Teal	California Quail
Red-breasted Goose	Silver Teal	Red Grouse
Nene	Red Shoveler	Chukar Partridge
Cackling Goose	Cinnamon Teal	Japanese Quail
Bar-headed Goose	Blue-winged Teal	Silver Pheasant
Emperor Goose	Australian Shoveler	Swinhoe's Pheasant
Swan Goose	Chiloe Wigeon	Reeves' Pheasant
Lesser White-fronted Goose	Cape Teal	Golden Pheasant
Black Swan	White-cheeked Pintail	Indian Peafowl
Black-necked Swan	Red-billed Teal	Chilean Flamingo
Trumpeter Swan	Yellow-billed Teal	Marabou Stork
Ruddy-headed Goose	Chestnut Teal	African Sacred Ibis
South African Shelduck	Brown Teal	American White Ibis

African Spoonbill	Burrowing Parrot	Greater Blue-eared Starling
Dalmatian Pelican	Nanday Parakeet	Red-chested Sunbird
American Black Vulture	Scarlet-fronted Parakeet	Sudan Golden Sparrow
Booted Eagle	Mitred Parakeet	Masked Weaver sp.
Harris' Hawk	Blossom-headed Parakeet	Village Weaver
Red-tailed Hawk	Alexandrine Parakeet	Black-headed Weaver
Common Buzzard	Red-rumped Parrot	Red-billed Quelea
Black Kite	Crimson Rosella	Yellow-crowned Bishop
Purple Swamphen	Eastern Rosella	Red Bishop sp.
Crowned Crane sp.	Red-flanked Lorikeet	Zanzibar Red Bishop
Sarus Crane	Budgerigar	Black-winged Red Bishop
Demoiselle Crane	Red-headed Lovebird	Northern Red Bishop
Spur-winged Plover	Rosy-faced Lovebird	Jackson's Widowbird
Masked Lapwing	Fischer's Lovebird	Cut-throat Finch
Silver Gull	Masked Lovebird	Orange-cheeked Waxbill
African Collared Dove	Crested Caracara	Black-rumped Waxbill
Red Turtle Dove	Lanner Falcon	Common Waxbill
Laughing Dove	Blue Magpie sp.	Orange-breasted Waxbill
Diamond Dove	Rufous Treepie	Zebra Finch
White-cheeked Turaco	Mongolian Lark	White-rumped Munia
Eurasian Eagle Owl	Red-whiskered Bulbul	White-capped Munia
Rock Eagle Owl	Red-vented Bulbul	Pin-tailed Whydah
Cockatiel	Spotted Laughingthrush	Shaft-tailed Whydah
Galah	Red-tailed Laughingthrush	Chinese Grosbeak
Sulphur-crested Cockatoo	Silver-eared Mesia	Japanese Grosbeak
Grey Parrot	Red-billed Leiothrix	Pine Grosbeak
Senegal Parrot	Rufous Sibia	Yellow-fronted Canary
Monk Parakeet	Vinous-throated Parrotbill	Atlantic Canary
White-fronted Parakeet	Hill Mynah sp.	Indigo Bunting
Blue and Yellow Macaw	Common Mynah	
Turquoise-fronted Amazon	Chestnut-tailed Starling	

In addition, many varied hybrids mainly, but not exclusively, ducks have been recorded.

Essex Birdwatching Society

Receipts and Payments Account for the year ended 31st December 2018

Receipts	£
Subscriptions received	8,244.00
Donations	310.00
Sales of *Essex Bird Reports*	107.00
Sales of *Essex Birding*	20.00
Field Meetings	4,520.00
Lectures	956.00
Conference Tickets	1,420.00
Conference Raffle	798.00
BTO Subscriptions	1,010.00
BTO Donations	5.00
BTO Gift Aid receipt	217.00
Mugs	10.00
Victuals	123.00
RSPB Stand Conference	20.00
Swift boxes	206.00
Essex Field Club fees	7,268.00
Car Stickers	3.00
Advertising	60.00
Legacy	500.00
Gift Aid/Net Covenants received	2,101.00
Raffle	29.00
C.A.F	0.00
Swinton Insurance	0.00
Bank interest	250.00
	28,177.00

Payments	£
Lecture fees	480.00
Room Hire Committee	91.00
Room Hire Meeting	239.00
Essex Bird Report costs	5,021.00
Essex Birding costs	6,365.00
Officer's expenses	122.00
Insurance	567.00
Field Trips	3,935.00
Bradwell Bird Observatory - Bird Seed	1,194.00
Bradwell Bird Observatory - Calor Gas	90.00
Swift Boxes	241.00
	18,345.00
Miscellaneous	
Website	101.00
Lanyards - Conference	280.00
Postage - Conference	27.00
Lecture Fees - Conference	240.00
Printing - Conference	69.00
Badges - Conference	30.00
Venue - Conference	1,689.00
Swinton Insurance	0.00
Envelopes - Conference	22.00
Ticket Refund - Conference	20.00
Ringing Project	5,000.00
Bradwell Bird Observatory - Rates	163.00
Bradwell Bird Observatory - Gift Aid Transfer	217.00
Bradwell Bird Observatory - Tea	0.00
British Birds Records	276.00
Printing	455.00
Accountancy Fees	396.00
Victuals	28.00
Fixture cards	0.00
DVDs	0.00
Photo prizes	0.00
Raffle Tickets	0.00
RSPB Stand	0.00
Projector Screen	0.00
	9,013.00
Excess of Income over Expenditure	819.00
	28,177

Essex Birdwatching Society

Cash Statement for the year ended 31st December 2018

1st January 2018	£
Balance of Current Account brought forward	6,974.00
Balance of Business Premium Account **7724 brought forward	19,100.00
Balance of Business Premium Account **0696 brought forward	201.00
Balance on Metro Bank Account brought forward	25,000.00
Balance on Metro Bank Instant Account brought forward	0.00
Balance on Field Meetings Cash Float brought forward	60.00
Balance on Bradwell Bird Observatory Account brought forward	1,700.00
	51,335.00
Excess of income over expenditure	819.00
	£53,854.00

31st December 2017	£
Balance of Current Account carried forward	7,595.00
Balance of Business Premium Account **7724 Account carried forward	19,138.00
Balance of Business Premium Account **0696 Account carried forward	202.00
Balance on Metro Bank Account carried forward	25,205.00
Balance on Metro Bank Instant Account carried forward	6.00
Balance on Field Meetings Cash Float carried forward	60.00
Balance on Bradwell Bird Observatory Account carried forward	1,648.00
	£53,854.00

Connah Goldsworthy
Chartered Certified Accountants
12 Station Court
Station Approach
Wickford
Essex SS11 7AT

1st March 2019

Reservoir Permit Holders 2019/20

The Essex & Suffolk Water Company, in conjunction with English Nature, has over recent years restricted access to Essex Birdwatching Society members at both Abberton and Hanningfield Reservoirs.

Abberton Reservoir

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. Society members and the public are requested to strictly observe any signage regarding access restrictions at all times on any part of the site.

Hanningfield Reservoir

There are up to ten, non-transferable, permanent permit holders, plus four "floating" day permits held at the Essex Wildlife Trust Visitor Centre. Essex Birdwatching Society 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 Essex Birdwatching Society member to accompany the permanent permit holder in restricted areas, as long as the current Essex and Suffolk Water Terms and Conditions are observed at all times by all parties.

The issuing of these permits by Essex and Suffolk Water to the advised chosen Essex Birdwatching Society 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 Essex and Suffolk Water for the permits, which are monitored annually by the Essex Birdwatching Society and Essex and Suffolk Water.

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 Essex Birdwatching Society Recorder, unless there are 'special' mitigating circumstances.

It is mandatory for the holders of all types of permit to:

- Note and observe the current Essex and Suffolk Water Terms and Conditions
- Notify the Hanningfield Control Room (01245 400132) when you enter and leave the site
- Notify the Essex Wildlife Trust Visitor Centre of any bird sightings
- Send their bird sightings to the Society

The following hold permanent, non-transferable, permits for Hanningfield Reservoir -
D. Acfield, G.R. Ekins, D. Jobbins, S. Satchell, C. Shields, S. Shippey, G. Snowden, W. Swift, J. Tayler, R. Widgery.

Special access conditions have been negotiated with Essex and Suffolk Water and Essex Wildlife Trust if a rarity should be present on either Abberton or Hanningfield Reservoirs

The ESSEX BIRDWATCHING SOCIETY

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