THE ESSEX Bird Report 2019

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48 Churchill Avenue, Halstead CO9 2BE

Telephone (01787) 476524
Email: petedwyer@petedwyer.plus.com

THE ESSEX Bird Report 2019

Editor: Simon Wood

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List of Officers and Committees

The Essex Birdwatching Society (Founded 1949)

List of Officers as voted at the AGM for 2019–2020

President	SIMON WOOD, 46 Freshwater Crescent, Heybridge, Maldon, CM9 4PA (E-mail: simon.wood27@gmail.com)
Vice-Presidents	Dr SIMON COX, NICK GREEN, ANTHONY HARBOTT, ROY LEDGERTON, MARGARET MITCHELL, GRAHAM SMITH, JOHN THOROGOOD, DAVID WIMPRESS
Chairman	GERRY JOHNSON, 4 Bunting Close, Chelmsford, CM2 8XR 07775 663166 (E-mail: gerry2johnson@aol.com)
Vice-Chairman	STEVE GRIMWADE, Swan Cottage, 370 London Road, Stanway, Colchester, CO3 8LU (E-mail: swallowbirder@gmail.com)
Treasurer	TONY GALES, The Chalet, Old Mead Road, Henham, Nr. Bishop's Stortford, CM22 6JL 01279 815266 (E-mail: ebwsgiftaid@btinternet.com)
Secretary	EMMA ROBINSON (E-mail: Info.EBwS@gmail.com)
Assistant Secretary (Minutes)	SIAN BEWICK (E-mail: sianbewick@hotmail.co.uk)
Assistant Secretary (Gift Aid)	TONY GALES, The Chalet, Old Mead Road, Henham, Nr. Bishop's Stortford, CM22 6JL 01279 815266 (E-mail: ebwsgiftaid@btinternet.com)
Membership Secretary	PETE DWYER, 48 Churchill Avenue, Halstead, CO9 2BE 01787 476524 (E-mail: petedwyer@petedwyer.plus.com)
Indoor Meetings Organiser	SUE WATTS (E-mail: susieq5256@gmail.com)
Field Trip Meetings Organiser	GERRY JOHNSON, 4 Bunting Close, Chelmsford, CM2 8XR 07775 663166 (E-mail: gerry2johnson@aol.com)
Publicity Co-ordinator	Position Vacant
Archivist	TERRY JEFFREYS, 20 Mopsies Road, Basildon, SS14 1GA (E-mail: terry.jeffreys@btinternet.com)
Social Media (Facebook)	PETE DWYER, 48 Churchill Avenue, Halstead, CO9 2BE (E-mail: petedwyer@petedwyer.plus.com)
Social Media (Twitter)	STEVE GRIMWADE, Swan Cottage, 370 London Road, Stanway, Colchester, CO3 8LU (E-mail: swallowbirder@gmail.com)

Editor of *Essex Birding* Magazine	Position Vacant
Editor of *Essex Bird Report*	SIMON WOOD, 46 Freshwater Crescent, Heybridge, Maldon, CM9 4PA (E-mail: simon.wood27@gmail.com)
Art Editor	SEAN NIXON
Editor of 'Newsletter'	STEVE GRIMWADE, Swan Cottage, 370 London Road, Stanway, Colchester, CO3 8LU (E-mail: swallowbirder@btinternet.com)
Senior Recorder	MICK TRACEY, Robins, Hayhouse Road, Earls Colne, Nr. Colchester, CO6 2PD 07500 866335 (E-mail: EBwSRecorder@gmail.com)
Recorders	Position Vacant
Wetland Bird Survey (WeBS) Count Co-ordinator	ANTHONY HARBOTT, 5 Allnutts Road, Epping, CM16 7BD 01992 575213 (E-mail: anthonyharbott@gmail.com)
Chairman of Recording Committee	SIMON WOOD, 46 Freshwater Crescent, Heybridge, Maldon, CM9 4PA (E-mail: simon.wood27@gmail.com)
Conservation Committee	C/O 'Essex Records partnership' scheme in association with the Essex Field Club. PETER HARVEY (E-mail: grayspeterharvey@gmail.com)
Legal Advisor	A. J. Bryce, 14 Archway Court, Barton Road, Cambridge, Cambridgeshire, CB3 9LW 07889 833457 (E-mail: Andrew@ehslaw.co.uk)
Auditor	Connah Goldsworthy, 12 Station Court, Station Approach, Wickford, SS11 7AT

The Essex Birdwatching Society Committees

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

Additional members were recruited throughout the year to fill vacant positions.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE: Gerry Johnson (Chairman of the Society), other Officers of the Society and assistants to the Committee, Annette Adams, Andrew Ducat, John Smart, Neil Sumner, Steve Swinney, Kate Tomlinson, Matt Turner.

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

IDENTIFICATION PANEL: David Acfield, Sean Nixon, Bob Pease, Mick Tracey, Paul Wood, Simon Wood.

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

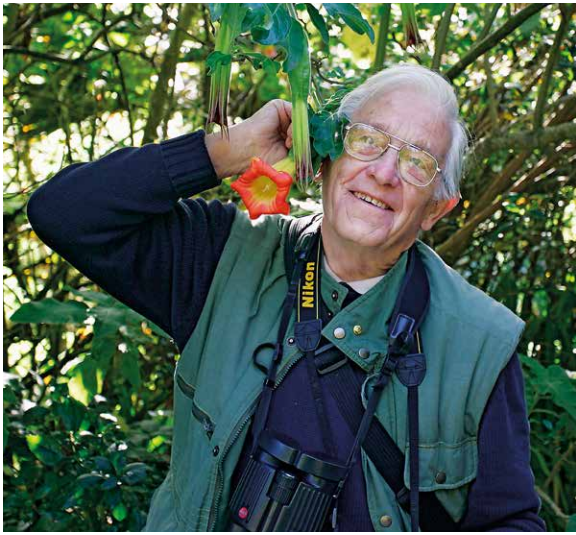
TRUSTEES: Andrew Bryce, Pete Dwyer, Tony Gales, Steve Grimwade, Anthony Harbott, Gerry Johnson, Alan Rutland, Kate Tomlinson, Simon Wood.

BRADWELL BIRD OBSERVATORY COMMITTEE: Anthony Harbott (Chairman), Cynthia James (Vice Chairman), Clive Barton, Jeff Colombe, David Low, Chris Noller, Bob Pease, Terry Pankhurst, Dee Reese, Graham Smith, John Sutherby.

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

Sam Shippey

20th September 1933
to 1st December 2020



(PHOTO: JONATHAN LETHBRIDGE)

On Tuesday night - I lost my third Granddad. I was fortunate to grow up with a full suite of Grandparents all of whom lived to a ripe old age, so to inherit another one was one of those rare bonuses that life throws your way.

I suspect I knew Sam for something like 35 years starting from early visits to Dagenham Chase when I was under the wing of Ken Barrett and then through my fervent 1990s birding scene when I was also asked to become art editor for the Essex Bird Watching Society. Sam, like me, was one of the artistic contributors and I remember asking him for specific pieces to put into the publications.

In 1997 we ventured to the Isles of Scilly in the October where the combination of Sam, Jim Smith and Barry Hough made for an enlightening week away, with a Yellowthroat fresh in from America to spice things up and a return twelve years later with the 'lads' was no less exciting.

In July 2000 the RSPB bought Rainham Marshes from the MoD and I was asked to find ten birding volunteers to assist with surveying the site which of course also gave us access to the fabled east end where we had never set foot before. Sam had birded the area since 1955 if memory serves and was an obvious choice.

He also offered to help with guided walks and we managed to fit in a few each year that slowly became a weekly fixture even before the doors officially opened in November 2006. These sporadic ventures morphed into the Wednesday Walk and twenty years later Sam was still with us and had become my indispensible 'second' on my regular tour around the trails with the public.

To be fair in the last five years of so it became Sam's walk rather than mine as my job kept me inside more but his ability to engage and enthuse with the public made him a winner with the punters many of whom would go onto be fast friends.

We had some great times on those walks together and found some wondrous birds over the years but probably none more so than the White-tailed Plover in July 2010. 'Have a look in my scope' he said knowing full well what he had found. I glanced, swore and picked Sam up off the ground in a massive 'thank you' bear hug that he would always tell people about thereafter.

In 2005 I began taking some of the Rainham regulars with me on trips further afield. Our group became known as the Boozy Birders and once again Sam was my constant companion – not a second – but an equal to share the delightful task of enlightening others to the natural wonders around us.

We stood together on cliff tops engulfed in the fishy odour of a hundred thousand seabirds, watched fishball flocks of Knots twirl and whirl across a pink painted Wash at dawn, stalked Bluetails in the gloom of a Norfolk wood, froze on the Harty Watchpoint as raptors and owls floated by and similarly at Stubbs Mill with bugling Cranes and wild geese across a winter sky, stumbled on more punky crested Hoopoes than any tour group ever should, endured howling squalls to seawatch for hours and listened to the last Golden Orioles whistling from the poplars while Bitterns boomed. We stood on heathland after dark battling mossies and hoping the Nightjars would wake up and eat them all, savoured a Nags Head dawn chorus of Pied Flycatchers, Redstarts and Wood Warblers and

watched the steady rise and return of the Red Kite, making trips to the Chilterns just to see them whereas now they breed so close to home. We endured a white out at Dingle as we crunched through the snow covered shingle for Buntings and Larks, followed winter Waxwings around Kentish supermarkets and nearly drowned on a particularly wet January day chasing rare geese around the Buckenham Marshes.

It was never just about the birds and there were trips to the hot Surrey Heaths just to look for dragonflies or summer woodlands to wait for Purple Emperors to descend and beat their wings in annoyance in your face. Downland butterflies were followed through hazy flower meadows, huge Raft Spiders were watched stalking Damselflies and Bee Wolfs were studied as they despatched their Honey Bee prey.

Lunchtime was an important fixture of any day out and a convivial picnic atmosphere was always present although only very rarely was there actually any booze! We would find a spot and spread out and enjoy a leisurely repast. At Dungeness we always sat outside and did so, on the benches in the snow one winter's day while I am still trying to forget the Oare Marshes visit when a front garden may have been commandeered despite my protestations.

And through all this Sam was always a focus of attention. He did not like a fuss being made but it was impossible not to be drawn to him. He had stories to tell and I sincerely regret not sitting down with him and writing them down as promised. He would tell of his days ringing at Romford Sewage Works when Tree Sparrows were so common you just let them go and Red-backed Shrikes nested in the local hedgerows. Listening to Sam always made it all the clearer what we have lost in the last few decades from this country's avifauna. I can notice the changes during my nearly fifty years but Sam had a further 35 years of memories to call upon. We listened in wonder at a different era of birding.

I remember his tale of a poorly Pelican at Canvey that they picked up and even earlier, a species of Darter sitting on the beach there that waddled back into the Thames and swam away with just its serpentine neck and dagger bill showing. Sam was disappointed that he could not find his original 1955 notes from that day for a species that is not even on the British list! But the big one in his head that got away was a little brown bird up on the silt lagoons at Rainham one October in the 1960s that flashed a blue tail as it dashed away. Back then it would have been unthinkable to find a Red-flanked Bluetail in the UK but now they are an expected autumn waif although Essex still hasn't been graced by one and it seems likely that Sam did indeed have a county first all those years ago. In fact when he saw the one in Norfolk in 2015 he turned and said to me, 'yep, that's what I had...' with a big knowing smile.

Sam would come to Lesvos with us whenever he had the chance and he quickly fell in love with this beautiful Greek island, its wildlife and the people that make it such a special place. It was just the right balance between a good day's birding and sipping a cold beer that appealed to his laid back character.

The last eight months have been troubling and trying times for all of us but Sam's spirit never wavered and when it became possible once again to get out and about we were able to appropriately meet up and explore some of the local Kentish summer countryside and share magical butterfly, orchid and dragonfly encounters along with a host of other insect and plant life. Those last few days out will always remain very special to me.

I knew that losing Sam would hurt but it is actually more difficult that I could ever have imagined. He was there, we spoke and then he was gone just a few days later. There was no chance to say goodbye.

I will celebrate his long life and his guidance and friendship and all that this gentlest of souls was able to share with me and those around him.

Sam loved his birds, his Spitfires and his painting and there will always be an ornithological moment to trigger a memory, the chance of a guttural Merlin engine roaring overhead to make me look up and smile and his wonderful artwork forever on my wall.

Howard Vaughan, 3rd December 2020

Acknowledgements and Editorial

by Simon Wood

This is my fourth and last *Essex Bird Report* of my 21st Century tenure (I jointly edited the 1994 and 1995 Reports). As I have said previously, it has taken a fantastic effort from our County Recorder Mick Tracey, all the sub-section writers and sub-editors, as well as countless others who have helped in the background. I can hand over to the next editor (s) knowing that I achieved what I set out to do, namely, to get the Report back to being promptly and regularly published.

Many of you will notice yet another change to the order of the Systematic List as DNA research rewrites our understanding of relationships amongst the families. Who would have thought that Loons/Divers would occupy a position getting on for half way through the Systematic List...when I first started birding, the List started with them. I can remember nightly bird logs at Colne Point with the late Reg Arthur starting with, "Right then, any divers..." or the Isle of Scilly October log starting in a similar vein. Likewise, my 'bible' following its publication in 1984, *The Birds of Essex* by Dr Simon Cox, starts with the divers. And change will continue to happen as more research takes place – three species of Pheasant anyone?

Once again, Mick Tracey has provided me with much support and done a magnificent job collating, consolidating and sorting all the data, well beyond the call of duty. 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 online promptly. Special thanks must also go to Howard Vaughan, not only for fielding countless questions, but also for compiling the East London Birder Forum records and for the Annual summary this year, to which Andy Goodey has added weather information to add context to Howard's excellent summary. 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 Paul Brayshaw and Simon Cox 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 Beach-nesting Birds Group.

Members of the Editorial and Identification Panels have provided me with invaluable support throughout. Particular thanks go to David Jobbins, who despite a difficult year personally, has managed our file-sharing facility and also to Jeff Delve, David Darrell-Lambert and Paul Baker for dealing with numerous questions.

Dr Simon Cox has handed the reins of the Ringing Report over to David Wilkinson who has produced an informative report on the birds ringed or colour-ringed in Essex during 2019 and some of the more noteworthy recoveries or sightings.

And thanks to Sean Nixon who once again acted as the photographic and art editor.

There is no main paper this year, rather several small ones. Thanks to Andrew Neal for a very important paper on the threatened Nightingale of Middlewick Colchester. It is a travesty that the site is threatened at all given the plight of the species. John Buchanan and John Smart assisted me with putting together notes on the first breeding of Cattle Egret in Essex and a summary of the status of Common Swift respectively. And finally, the members of the Identification panel assisted with the drafting of a paper setting out how we will consider records of certain sub-species going forward. It was an interesting exercise, which proved that we are all still learning!

My apologies if I have missed anyone, I know there were an awful lot of you that helped me!

And so that is it, I will now sign off...

We are still looking for members to sub-edit the *Bird Report* as several people are still writing more than one section.

Sub-editors for the Systematic List

Kate Williams	Red-legged Partridge to Common Pheasant
Colin Mackenzie-Grieve	Brant Goose to Green-winged Teal
Paul Brayshaw	Red-crested Pochard to Ruddy Duck
John Hart	European Nightjar to Eurasian Collared Dove
Mark Bridges	Water Rail to Black-necked Grebe
Paul Brayshaw	Eurasian Stone-curlew to Ruddy Turnstone
Alf Mullins	Red Knot to Common Greenshank
Paul Wood	Black-legged Kittiwake to Atlantic Puffin
Paul Brayshaw	Red-throated Loon to Little Egret
Simon Wood	Western Osprey to Common Buzzard
Chris Balchin	Western Barn Owl to Short-eared Owl
Graham Smith	Eurasian Hoopoe to European Green Woodpecker
Colin Mackenzie-Grieve	Common Kestrel to Peregrine Falcon
Graham Smith	Rose-ringed Parakeet to Northern Raven
Ian Woodward	Bohemian Waxwing to Bearded Reedling
John Sutherby	Woodlark to Red-rumped 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
David Wilkinson	House Sparrow to Dunnock
Simon Wood	Western Yellow Wagtail to Eurasian Rock Pipit
Neil Sumner	Common Chaffinch to Eurasian Siskin
Simon Wood	Lapland Longspur to Common Reed Bunting
Barry Jones	Category D and Escapes

Proof Readers

Paul Baker
Paul Brayshaw
Simon Cox
Andy Goodey
David Jobbins
Colin Mackenzie-Grieve
Alf Mullins

The Identification Panel

David Acfield
Sean Nixon
Bob Pease
Mick Tracey
Paul Wood
Simon Wood

Artists

Richard Allen
Simon Patient

Photographers

David Acfield
Paul Chamberlain
Simon Cox
Steve Grimwade
Jonathan Lethbridge
Glen Moore
Sean Nixon
Simon Patient
Tony Wells
Simon Wood

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 – Avocet, Brightlingsea, January (SIMON COX)

Seasonal Summary of 2019 Records

Howard Vaughan, with weather summaries by Andy Goodey

Editor's note: The very nature of this exceptionally detailed summary means that some unconfirmed reports are likely to creep in so please refer to the Systematic List for accepted records of scarce and rare species.

January 2019

The opening days of the New Year began with high pressure and were rather dry and settled though somewhat cloudy. In the second week, this high moved away resulting in warmer and less settled weather with some sunshine in eastern areas as opposed to the mainly cloudy conditions to the west. North-westerly winds predominated the second half of the month and it was generally colder than at the start of the month. From 17th for about a week, frost and snow were recorded from around the country. The 24th saw the beginning of a few days of milder and more unsettled weather but rainfall was generally low, but the month ended with the frost and snow returning. The north and east experienced much sunshine though cloud continued in the west.

RSPB Rainham Marshes

There was little change across the marsh in variety in January other than the steady rise in water levels and a corresponding increase in wildfowl. Eurasian Wigeon doubled to nearly 1,200 and Northern Pintail broke the 50 mark which is unusual for the site. Northern Lapwing remained at about 2,000 with occasional Ruff and European Golden Plover sightings amongst them, Pied Avocet reached a new site high of 70 on the 22nd and Grey Plover, Green and Common Sandpiper, Ruddy Turnstone and Jack Snipe were all noted. Our Short-eared Owl were somewhat sporadic in their appearances while up to six Western Marsh Harrier continue to winter including the Norfolk tagged ZR immature. The same number of Peregrine Falcon are using the marsh along with Common Buzzard and occasional sightings of both male and female Merlin. A Red Kite on the 9th was the first for the year.

There was some good gulling to be had with several counts of four or five Caspian, adult Mediterranean, Yellow-legged and a hulking juvenile Glaucous from the 16th. The Erith Bonaparte's Gull did the decent thing and allowed itself to be seen from Coldharbour Point on several dates from the 21st. A Great Egret flew through on the 24th but the Northern Raven have been only rarely seen. A solitary Brant Goose was noted on a few dates and Pink-footed and Egyptian were also seen. A Common Firecrest was seen several times in the woodland and Eurasian Blackcap have been seen around the centre while the Bearded Reedling have been showing very well on the trails.

Metropolitan Essex (London Natural History Society area)

The King George V Reservoir Greater Scaup flock became four and a drake Smew was seen again from the 18th and up to three Red Kite were noted over towards Epping Forest while four Northern Raven visited on the 6th. Up to ten Black-necked Grebe have been on the adjacent William Girling Reservoir and the drake Greater Scaup remained on Walthamstow Wetlands all month. Up the Lee Valley there was still a pair of Smew and at least 16 Common Merganser (Goosander) around the Seventy Acres complex and a drake Red-crested Pochard was found on Holyfield Lake on the 24th. Common Merganser (Goosander) sightings came from several other sites with up to five on Connaught Water Epping Forest, nine in Weald Park and a couple in the Roding Valley. The near adult Caspian Gull remained at Eagle Pond and two first-winters were seen on Wanstead Flats (from 19th) with others at Creekmouth Barking and Fairlop Waters Barkingside. A Common Goldeneye at the latter site on the 2nd was a good record. Eurasian Bittern were seen at Seventy Acres Lake, Warren Gorge and in the Ingrebourne Valley but were showy nowhere. The Ingrebourne Valley had regular Eurasian Woodcock and occasional Brambling sightings along with a Red Kite (9th). Other Kite were seen regularly in the north Epping Forest area. Black Redstart were discovered wintering at Beckton, and Upminster sewage works – both private sites - but wintering Common Firecrest were thin on

the ground with just singles in Wanstead Park and Warley but it was good to report that Lesser Spotted Woodpecker were noted at Higham's Park Lake, Weald Park, Wanstead Park and Thorndon. A Marsh Tit in Valentine's Park Ilford on the 26th was unexpected and was the only area record in 2019...

Down on the Thames there were at least 370 Black-tailed Godwit wintering between Grays and Rainham along with five Ruddy Turnstone and the shared Pied Avocet flock. The Kent Northern Raven were seen over Grays on a couple of dates. Northern Raven were once again prospecting to the north of our recording area.

South-east Essex

There were some good river watching opportunities during January and notable counts included highs off Canvey Point of 27 Red-throated Loon (Diver) (6th), up to three Black-throated Loon (Diver) (7th), 255 Great Crested Grebe (5th), Little Gull (29th), 35 Northern Gannet (5th) and three Razorbill (6th). Nine Red-throated Loon (Diver) were also seen off Gunners Park Shoebury (18th) along with a European Shag and Common Loon (Great Northern Diver) too. Mediterranean Gull peaked at 40 on Southend Pier (6th) with European Shag and Black-throated Loon (Diver) on the 19th and a very impressive flock of 16 Common Eider (25th). The two Tundra Bean Geese from Hanningfield Reservoir (last seen on the 3rd) visited the RSPB's South Essex Marshes reserves from the 10th-29th and two Russian Greater White-fronted Geese on the 7th increased to seven from the 26th. Up to three Jack Snipe were seen on Vange and Spotted Redshank, Common Greenshank, Green Sandpiper and Whimbrel are all wintering in the area. A Red-necked Grebe was seen off East Tilbury on the 9th when a good count of 885 Eurasian Teal was also made.

Up on the Crouch five Tundra Swan (Bewick's) were at Blue House Farm on the 2nd and a Red-necked Grebe was there on the 25th. A Common Eider and 35 Red-throated Loon (Diver) off Bradwell on the 20th were the Observatory highlights. Merlin were reported from several spots along with other ring-tailed Hen Harrier and Short-eared Owl. A Greater Scaup was seen regularly on Paglesham Lagoon and a Great Egret was seen on the 1st while a Common Crane over Coombe Wood Thundersley on the same date got 2019 off to a good start. The Dartford Warbler stayed on Hadleigh Downs until at least the 14th whilst there was an Icelandic Redwing at Bradwell Bird Observatory on 6th.

Mid-Essex

Great Egret at Abberton Reservoir peaked at 12 on the 14th and the reservoir played host once again to a fine assortment of wildfowl including: 93 Common Merganser (Goosander) (1st), four Smew, two Long-tailed Duck, five Black-necked Grebe, two drake Ring-necked Duck, up to nine Tundra Swan (Bewick's) (10th), three Greater Scaup, drake Green-winged Teal (20th-21st), Eurasian Bittern (20th) and Eurasian Spoonbill (3rd). A Red Knot on the 10th was a good site bird and a Short-eared Owl was seen on the same day.

A drake Ring-necked Duck was also seen at Old Hall Marshes and it is quite possible that three males were in the area! The reserve had a good month with the Eurasian Spoonbill on the 14th and 20th, Rough-legged Buzzard (2nd), regular Short-eared Owl and Merlin sightings, two Common Loon (Great Northern Diver) and Black-necked Grebe, a single Pale-bellied Brant and Water Pipit (both 27th). The 7th saw some good birds up the Blackwater from Tollesbury with Velvet Scoter, Black-necked Grebe, Horned Grebe (Slavonian), two Common Eider and Whimbrel. The mouth of that estuary from West Mersea was quite productive with seven Mediterranean Gull, Black and Pale-bellied Brant, up to four Common Loon (Great Northern Diver), five Horned Grebe (Slavonian) and Black-throated Loon (Diver) (10th and 17th). At the other end of the island in the mouth of the Colne 12 Horned Grebe (Slavonian) and 250 Great Crested Grebe were seen on the 18th. The Horned Lark (Shore) remained at Cudmore Grove East Mersea until the 4th and three Russian Greater White-fronted Geese were there on the 3rd. A Black-necked Grebe and Black-throated Loon (Diver) were seen from the adjacent Brightlingsea on the 4th and Merlin were regularly seen over the Fingringhoe reserve. A drake Greater Scaup was seen at Heybridge Gravel Pit on the 20th and a Jack Snipe was put up at The Hythe the same day.

North-east Essex

Sea-watching off Frinton-on-Sea provided some good movements with just ten counts accounting for nearly 3,000 Red-throated Loon (Diver). The fishing offshore must have been very good with peak days of the 20th – 507 and 27th – 720. Six Common Loon (Great Northern Diver) on the 20th was the peak day count and there were good numbers of Great Crested Grebe, Great Cormorant and a few auks cashing in on the abundant food. A Red-necked Grebe was seen on the 24th. Nine Russian Greater White-fronted Geese were at Holland Haven from the 4th-18th with two Tundra Swan (Bewick's) on 26th and three Common Loon (Great Northern Diver) on the 20th were presumably part of the Frinton-on-Sea tally. A single Purple Sandpiper lingered and a Twite with Common Linnet on the 11th was a great find. Seven Snow Bunting remained faithful to Jaywick and a single flew over The Naze on the 23rd where Black Brant (12th) and Common Firecrest (19th) were also seen. Seven Barnacle Geese were seen again out on Howlands Marsh St Osyth on the 22nd and 15 Russian Greater White-fronted Geese were inland at Broomhouse Flash Langham on the 26th. Northern Raven were seen over Writtle, Stickling Green Clavering and Terling which is encouraging. Up on the Stour the drake Smew remained at Manningtree all month and the peak counts from the river were 32 Common Goldeneye, 45 Red-breasted Merganser, two Horned Grebe (Slavonian) (all on the 3rd) and a Red-necked Grebe on the 26th while a single Hen Harrier was seen over Beaumont on the 2nd.

February 2019

In the north and east, there were cold, snow showers at the start of February and some more general areas of snow in southern England. From 4th to the 12th, it turned milder in comparison with westerly winds. Thereafter, it was very mild and sunny in the majority of the country, a result of a southerly incursion from north Africa, except for the northwest which experienced cloud and rain. Following a brief spell of changeable weather, warm and record breaking, sunny conditions returned although night temperatures were low with frost and fog.

RSPB Rainham Marshes

Gulls continued to be a firm feature throughout February with a Black-legged Kittiwake and two Little Gull on the 1st to get things started. The juvenile Glaucous Gull from the 26th January turned out to be a new bird and it stayed into March while a second-winter bird was also present from the 12th-22nd. Five Caspian Gull on the 6th was the peak count and several Mediterranean Gull were reported. A Great Egret was seen briefly on the 17th with four more south on the 22nd and Little Egret numbers slowly increased too. Pied Avocet remained in the mid-30s and up to four Ruff were seen along with the first returning Eurasian Oystercatcher. A Eurasian Woodcock was seen on the 6th. Four Russian Greater White-fronted Geese flew through late on the 7th and a drake Common Goldeneye on the 11th was the only new winter arrival. A Merlin was seen occasionally, and Red Kite were seen on the 22nd with two on the 27th while at least six Western Marsh Harrier were noted along with several good Common Buzzard days, but the remaining Short-eared Owl was only seen twice. Bearded Reedling started to become tricky as the month drew on and the Eurasian Blackcap were still gorging on apples near the centre while Water and Rock Pipit numbers had started to drop off.

Metropolitan Essex (London Natural History Society area)

The four Greater Scaup on King George V Reservoir stayed into February with at least two staying all month. The male Smew was seen again on the 13th and Common Goldeneye peaked at 44 on the 23rd and Common Merganser (Goosander) at 24 on the 25th. Three Black-necked Grebe were found on the 21st and stayed into March while a Mediterranean Gull on the 10th was new for the year along with a male Western Marsh Harrier through on the 25th. The drake Greater Scaup stayed at Walthamstow Wetlands with six Common Merganser (Goosander) (11th) and a Black-tailed Godwit (14th) being notable there. There was a good spread of other Common Merganser (Goosander) around with at least 22 between Seventy Acres Lake and Holyfield Lake, three pairs at Roding Valley Meadows Chigwell, four in Weald Park, four at Connaught Water Epping Forest, five at Mollands Lane South Ockendon and three in Highams Park Lake. Conversely the only other Smew

was a female at Seventy Acres. A drake Ferruginous Duck was popular on Holyfield Lake from the 5th-9th and a drake Red-crested Pochard was also seen at this time while three Russian Greater White-fronted Geese at the nearby Holyfield Hall Farm from the 15th were a good find. A single Eurasian Bittern was seen at Seventy Acre Lake Holyfield with another in Warren Gorge Grays and two in the Ingrebourne Valley while a Great Egret over the first site continues the upward trend in recent records. Likewise, Northern Raven were noted over Ardleigh Green and Orsett and Common Buzzard and Red Kite sightings predictably increased. A very early Western Osprey was over Upminster on the 23rd and the local Peregrine Falcon were becoming active. Gulling produced a Caspian and four Yellow-legged Gull at Thames Barrier Park (15th) and four more Caspian and two Mediterranean Gull at Ockendon Tip on the 17th. Two Black Redstart were noted within Beckton Sewage Works, on 22nd. Common Firecrest were seen in Warley and Warren Gorge Grays and Lesser Spotted Woodpecker were in Weald and Thorndon Parks.

A little survey to try and find out how many Eurasian Blackcap have been wintering in the area since Christmas has revealed a total of 48 male and 25 female from 48 different urban sites. I wonder how many more were out there this winter?

South-east Essex

The 1st saw a trio of loon (diver) species off Canvey Island with 11 Red-throated and single Common (Great Northern) and Black-throated along with two Razorbill. The Black-throated was seen again on the 4th with Common Eider on 6th and 11th and a flurry of Black-legged Kittiwake in the first week making for some good viewing. Eight Common Eider were off Southend Pier on the 19th when 26 Mediterranean Gull were loafing at the end. Up to four Great Egret were seen around Paglesham Lagoon, Potton and Wallasea Islands during the month and are presumably from the dwindling Abberton Reservoir wintering population. These sites also shared Hen Harrier, with two ring-tail and a male reported, along with Merlin and up to six Short-eared Owl. Red Kite were noted over Great Braxted, South Woodham Ferrers, Hanningfield Reservoir and Paglesham Lagoon. A European Shag was at Blue House Farm on the 15th and the Whimbrel continued its winter sojourn at Burnham-on-Crouch until at least the 12th while a Short-eared Owl was at Stow Marsh South Woodham Ferrers on the 15th. Wallasea Island also hosted 33 newly arrived Mediterranean Gull on the 27th and two Russian Greater White-fronted Geese on the 20th while the seven remained on the RSPB's South Essex Marshes until the 27th. Spotted Redshank were wintering at Wallasea Island and Wat Tyler with Common Greenshank at the latter site and Two Tree Island with a high of eight on the 3rd while Water Pipit were again picked up on Bowers Marsh and at South Fambridge. Inland, a Lesser Spotted Woodpecker was at Langdon Hills and three Northern Raven were over Mill Green (4th). Up the Thames it was fairly quiet with two Short-eared Owl at Thurrock Thameside Mucking and a Eurasian Bittern there from the 16th but the four Twite at East Tilbury from the 16th were the showstopper.

Mid-Essex

Great Egret at Abberton Reservoir rapidly dropped off with no more than five all month but otherwise it remained fairly static although exceptionally good! Peaks included 35 Common Merganser (Goosander), ten Smew, pair Long-tailed Duck, six Black-necked Grebe, two drake Ring-necked Duck (one until at least the 17th) and ten Greater Scaup, whilst the drake Green-winged Teal popped up again on 3rd. West Mersea saw the best of the Blackwater counts with five Common Loon (Great Northern Diver) (6th), two Red-throated and Black-necked Grebe, 27 Red-breasted Merganser (4th) and a Horned Grebe (Slavonian) (10th). Up river there were 115 Red-breasted Merganser off Goldhanger on the 21st as well as the only Black Brant report of the month. Two Twite and four Pink-footed Geese there made for a good day. Nearby Tollesbury had two Russian Greater White-fronted Geese on the 2nd and 14 Barnacle, two Pink-feet, Great Egret and Hen Harrier on the 13th.

A female Hen Harrier was on Langenhoe on the 10th and the flooded meadow at Fingringhoe Mill held at least ten Water Pipit along with several Scandinavian Rock Pipit for much of the month along with a Common Greenshank on the 23rd. Two more Water Pipit were further up the Colne at The

Hythe all month and Common Firecrest (10th) and Northern Raven (25th) in Wivenhoe were also seen. Further inland there were 29 Common Merganser (Goosander) at Rivenhall Place on the 24th and a drake Red-crested Pochard was at Russell Green Gravel Pit Boreham on the 20th. Lesser Spotted Woodpecker were drumming at Shut Heath Wood Great Totham and there was a chance encounter with a Long-eared Owl in Terling and three Bohemian Waxwing in Colchester from 1st-3rd were a reminder of the Waxwing Winter that never materialised!

North-east Essex

A single Bohemian Waxwing in Little Clacton on the 3rd got the month off to a good start and the seven Snow Bunting at Jaywick lingered until at least the 6th. A Glossy Ibis photographed on the Walton-on-the-Naze greensward on the 28th was not seen subsequently. Holland Haven had 19 Russian Greater White-fronted Geese on the 7th which increased to 30 on the 12th. The first date also saw Common Loon (Great Northern Diver) and Mediterranean Gull reported with two Purple Sandpiper on the latter. A single Russian Greater White-fronted Goose was at The Naze on the 2nd when the wintering Common Firecrest was once again seen. Two Horned Grebe (Slavonian) were off Wrabness on the 8th but there was no other Stour news. Inland the female Lesser Spotted Woodpecker continued to visit a Halstead garden and two Grey Partridge were seen near Great Dunmow on the 14th while 11 Common Merganser (Goosander) at Boxted on the 19th was very notable. Northern Raven were seen at a couple of sites along with Red Kite in now-to-be expected areas.

March 2019

The first half of March was dominated by many rain belts from off the North Atlantic with attendant westerly and north-westerly winds and the odd bright, showery spell. Periods of windy and wet weather throughout were significant enough in force to be named storms Freya and Gareth. In the south it was generally mild but in central and in the north, sleet and snow were prevalent even away from upland areas. Milder and more settled conditions from 18th occurred and it was dry and cloudy up to 23rd when more sunny weather prevailed until the month's end.

RSPB Rainham Marshes

The juvenile Glaucous Gull stayed until the 9th and then two were seen on the 27th so may have even been new birds. Mediterranean Gull and the odd Caspian were reported. At least eight Western Marsh Harrier were on site and putting on a great show and Red Kite were seen on the 2nd and 17th, but the single Short-eared Owl only put in sporadic appearances. Peregrine Falcon were active with some great hunting action. There was some wader passage with the wintering Ruff being joined by four others and a little flurry of Black-tailed Godwit on their way to Iceland that reached 73 on the 12th. Several Jack Snipe and the first Spotted Redshank (17th) of the year were noted and a freshly arrived Little Ringed Plover on the 20th soon became two. Two Eurasian Spoonbill paid an elusive visit on the 20th but there were no other rare herons. The first Sand Martin zipped through with Northern Wheatear on the 16th, Barn Swallow and Western Yellow Wagtail on the 30th and a Sedge Warbler on the 22nd which is our earliest ever. Common Chiffchaff, Eurasian Blackcap and Cetti's Warbler were on territory by mid-month. Two Black Redstart on the 23rd were part of this migrant arrival. Northern Lapwing were already on the nest on the 22nd and the marsh was alive with them and noisy Common Redshank while up on the landfill the first jangling Corn Bunting had returned.

Metropolitan Essex (London Natural History Society area)

Red Kite were literally everywhere and there were nearly 80 sightings across the area often of multiple birds, especially in the mid-Lee Valley and around the Hornchurch/Upminster area where 14 were counted moving through on the 23rd alone. Raptors were on form at Copped Hall at the top of Epping Forest where at least 15 Red Kite and 25 Common Buzzard were noted on the 25th along with Merlin, Northern Goshawk, Peregrine Falcon and the eventual pinning down of a female Hen Harrier that had been eluding scrutiny all winter. Northern Raven were also seen here and over various Lee Valley sites. There was a real mix on seasons in March with the King George V Reservoir amply showcasing this with up to four Black-necked Grebe and a drake Smew all month along with

two Greater Scaup through to the 3rd and small numbers of Common Merganser (Goosander) and a peak of 55 Common Goldeneye. A Rough-legged Buzzard on the 17th was a top-notch patch find. Common Scoter (30th) and Little Gull (three on 28th and four on 30th) dropped in and there was a good smattering of migrants with an almost February Sand Martin on the 1st, Northern Wheatear (17th), Western Yellow Wagtail and Sedge Warbler (24th), Black Redstart and Little Ringed Plover (25th) and Barn Swallow and Common House Martin (31st). Down the Valley at Walthamstow Wetlands the male Greater Scaup remained all month and a Little Ringed Plover (19th) and four Little Gull (31st) were seen. A Western Cattle Egret heading through on the 8th was the best find and undoubtedly one of the duo that had wintered in Cheshunt before heading over into Essex and onto Hall Marsh Holyfield from the 4th. They roamed a little and one was also seen at Cornmill Meadows Waltham Abbey while another was seen over Romford on the 24th. Early Eurasian Hobby were seen over Wanstead Flats (29th) and Sewardstone (30th) and the Flats also hosted Northern Wheatear (17th), Common House Martin (23rd) and a cracking drake Garganey (31st). A Greater White-fronted Goose there on the 25th may have been one of the Holyfield Hall Farm trio that were still around on the 13th at least. There were further signs of spring with a few Redwing and Fieldfare heading north and Brambling suddenly appeared with a few singles and two nice groups of at least 30 in Ongar Park Wood Epping Forest and Hooks Marsh Waltham Abbey. Migrants were thinly scattered but there were some further early arrivals with Willow Warbler at Belhus Woods Aveley (8th), Common Whitethroat at Upminster (27th), Common Tern at Gallions Reach Beckton (23rd), Ring Ouzel at the Olympic Park Stratford (23rd) and Barn Swallow at Copped Hall Epping Forest (25th). A Woodlark north over Upminster (30th) and a European Shag over South Woodford were also rewards for garden sky-watching.

South-east Essex

Wallasea Island continued to host some good raptor action with up to four Short-eared Owl, two ring-tail Hen Harrier and a Merlin throughout the month. Mediterranean Gull began to return too with 38 on the 1st and 35 on the 20th. Two Great Egret were seen on Potton Island from here on the 20th as the wintering birds finally departed back to the continent. Twenty Mediterranean Gull were also seen at Gunners Park Shoebury (19th) and the first Sandwich Tern went past there on the 31st. A Eurasian Spoonbill was at Blue House Farm on the 22nd and 23rd and a ring-tailed Hen Harrier was at Bradwell Bird Observatory on the 20th when six Northern Wheatear were noted. These were the first along with a single at Canvey Point the same day. A Great Skua off the Point on the 31st was the only other notable sighting from there. Up to ten Water Pipit remained at Vange Marsh and the reserve shared its birds with Bowers Marsh with two Little Ringed Plover and drake Garganey (from the 24th), Barn Swallow (21st) and Sand Martin (31st). Vange had four Jack Snipe on the 9th with one until the 31st while two Russian Greater White-fronted Geese remained on Bowers until at least the 30th. There were 12 scattered reports of Red Kite and Northern Raven were seen again around Tilbury. Lesser Spotted Woodpecker were seen in Laindon.

Mid-Essex

March continued much as February at Abberton Reservoir with Black-necked Grebe (four), Greater Scaup (nine), Smew (five), Common Merganser (Goosander) (nine) and Long-tailed Duck (two) lingering almost all month. The Red-breasted Merganser was seen again on the 1st, but the peak Great Egret count was only two on the 26th. Barn Swallow and House Martin appeared in the last week with Little Gull, four Common Scoter and five Mediterranean Gull adding interest on the 27th and a drake Garganey drawing admirers on the 30th. A Great Egret was also seen on Northey Island from Maldon on the 23rd along with 22 Common Buzzard and a Short-eared Owl. The first Northern Wheatear was on East Mersea on the 17th and two Common Loon (Great Northern Diver) and ten Common Scoter were off the west end of the island on the 1st. A Black-necked Grebe and two Common Merganser (Goosander) were on the Colne off Alresford on the 4th, but it was the immature White-tailed Eagle that overflew Wivenhoe on the 19th that won all the prizes especially as it was Richard Allen's second garden record! Up to six Water Pipit remained at Fingringhoe Mill until the 22nd along with a couple of White Wagtail whilst a singing male Serin was at Bradwell Bird

Observatory on 27th. Inland, Boreham scored an early double with Willow Warbler on the 11th and Barn Swallow on the 19th and Common Firecrest in Friday Wood Colchester and Lesser Spotted Woodpecker in Shut Heath Wood Great Totham and Brookes Wood Greenstead Green proved popular while a pair of Black Redstart in Coggeshall on the 28th was unusual. There were at least ten Red Kite sightings across the area.

North-east Essex

Visible migration at Frinton-on-Sea started to pick up during the month with notable movements of loons (divers), Great Cormorant and Brant Geese. At least 1,100 Red-throated were seen (most over the 23rd and 27th) along with 12 Common (Great Northern); over 2,000 Great Cormorant; 1,270 Brant Geese and 12 European Shag (20th); a few Northern Fulmar and good Northern Gannet numbers and three Great Skua. The first Northern Wheatear were ten on the 20th and the 23rd saw a good finch and corvid movement with 1,761 Common Chaffinch, five Brambling, 46 Eurasian Siskin, 26 European Greenfinch and a Hawfinch being most significant. Common Firecrest and Black Redstart added early spring mix on this date while a Yellowhammer on the 27th was a less than annual occurrence. The Hamford Water harrier roost peaked at 14 Western Marsh Harrier on the 24th and both male and female Hen Harrier were seen along with a Eurasian Spoonbill on the 1st. Two Common Firecrest were at The Naze on the 16th with Northern Wheatear and Black Redstart there on the 30th. Holland Haven had a great day on the 28th with Jack Snipe, Short-eared Owl and Water Pipit for Winter and Little Ringed Plover and drake Garganey for Spring. The Water Pipit had risen to four by the 31st. Merlin were seen at The Naze (9th) and over Wix (21st) and Red Kite and Northern Raven were being seen with some regularity in two areas in the north of the county which is good news while Marsh Tit were becoming vocal in their traditional woodlands. And finally, the County's earliest ever Red-rumped Swallow was at Fingringhoe Wick on 19th.

April 2019

April began cool with showers and longer spells of rain, these bringing sleet and snow to high ground especially. From 5th, it turned generally warmer overall but somewhat unsettled with the winds from the east. Mid-month temperatures decreased giving overnight frosty, though dry and sunny weather. Conditions from 17th settled, it being sunny and warm culminating in record breaking temperatures for Easter Sunday. The final week of the month saw Storm Hannah being felt with its attendant strong winds and generally more unsettled weather.

RSPB Rainham Marshes

Spring was a little slow off the mark and to be honest most of the attention was focused on the river rather than marsh where the first Common Tern was seen on the 4th. Sandwich Tern were not far behind and the first two Arctic Tern on the 10th were followed by several singles and then four on the 2nd and six on the 28th with a single Black Tern on the 19th. Mediterranean Gull were an almost daily feature but the 87 seen on the 10th was completely unprecedented. Smaller numbers followed but 24 on the 19th and 20 on the 21st would both have previously been site records! Poor weather at the start of the month predictably brought down Little Gull on their way north with 14 on the 8th and a superb 43 the next day. Common Scoter were also noted at the same time with a high of 22 on the 9th and four Red-breasted Merganser and two early Parasitic Jaeger (Arctic Skua) were seen the same day along with a scattering of early passage waders including three Sanderling, three Grey Plover and the first Whimbrel. Red Knot (13th) and Common Greenshank (15th) were added to followed by Wood Sandpiper, Bar-tailed Godwit and Spotted Redshank in the last week. The last Jack Snipe was seen on the 9th and Water Pipit (13th) and Pink-footed Goose (from 29th) were reminders of past seasons.

A White Stork was much appreciated on the 12th and returned for further circuits but no touchdowns on the 16th and 20th and a Western Cattle Egret was rather bizarrely seen on the same two latter dates. Scarcer migrants were just that with Common Redstart on the 9th, 11th and 18th, Ring Ouzel on the 18th and 25th. There were very few Western Yellow Wagtail or Northern Wheatear but most of the commoner warblers were in good numbers including two Common

Grasshopper Warbler and three male Common Cuckoo were in by the 18th with Common Swift not far behind from the 24th. Red Kite drifted through on the 1st, 10th and 20th and a female Merlin was seen on several dates while the first Eurasian Hobby was nice and early on the 7th. Western Marsh Harrier were well settled, and the local Northern Raven became more regular as they fed growing young. One Short-eared Owl was still present on the 30th. All the dabblers were still present until late in the month and Garganey were seen on the 6th and a pair on the 17th.

Metropolitan Essex (London Natural History Society area)

The Lee Valley was an expected focus for migration through the area and the King George V Reservoir was a regular draw (for permit holders). Five Little Gull on the 1st were the forerunner for the 8th when 51 were counted with smaller numbers through to the 11th. The 8th also saw Water Pipit, Black-necked Grebe and a Ring Ouzel with eight Common Scoter, Arctic Tern and Pied Avocet the next day. Six more Common Scoter were seen on the 10th when three more Arctics dropped in and two more were seen on the 28th. Five Black Tern were seen on the 19th with a single on the 22nd and a Little Tern on the 24th! The drake Smew stayed until the 10th and Common Merganser (Goosander) and Common Goldeneye lingered but two Red-breasted Merganser on the 10th were new arrivals. Yellow and White Wagtail were seen, and a Common Redstart was found on the 16th. Down the Valley the male Greater Scaup remained at Walthamstow Wetlands and the site had a good run of birds with a drake Garganey on and off from the 16th, Little Gull on five dates including 27 on the 8th, both Black and Bar-tailed Godwit, three Sandwich Tern (5th), a colour ringed Western Osprey (8th), two Black-necked Grebe (24th) and a cracking male Blue-headed with 19 Western Yellow Wagtail on the 8th. Nine more Little Gull were at Holyfield Lake (8th) and one of the two Western Cattle Egret was seen at Hall Marsh Waltham Abbey on the 19th.

Great Egret were seen over Cely Woods South Ockendon (14th) and Wennington (20th) and the Rainham White Stork was over Wanstead Flats (16th). The Flats had daily Common Redstart sightings from the 2nd but there were three on the 10th and another the next day. Ring Ouzel were seen on the 11th and 21st with a Whinchat on the latter date. A singing Wood Warbler on the 29th was a great find although it was upstaged by the Yellow-browed Warbler at Snaresbrook on 5th. Other Common Redstart were seen on Walthamstow Marsh (3rd) and Wetlands (12th-13th), Nazeing (5th), Hainault Forest (13th), Fairlop Waters Barkingside (14th) and Lakeside Thurrock (15th) making it a notable spring for the species. A male Black Redstart sang in Brentwood (2nd-4th) and others were at Three Mills Stratford (5th) and Walthamstow Marsh (two on 14th). Further Ring Ouzel were noted at Great Warley (16th) and Sewardstone (23rd) with another in Beckton Sewage Works (7th-13th) and one at nearby Gallions Reach (14th). There were 22 Common Scoter off here on the 9th, Jack Snipe (7th), two Arctic Tern (14th), four Brant Geese, Sandwich Tern and eight Mediterranean Gull (19th). The 10th saw 19 Mediterranean Gull over Barking Bay as part of the huge influx into the south-east. A Pied Avocet was a great find in the Ingrebourne Valley (4th) and Jack Snipe (5th), two Mediterranean Gull (10th) and a Whinchat (27th) added to a good month. There were over 20 Red Kite sightings, a Western Osprey over Gidea Park (29th) and local Common Buzzard, Peregrine Falcon and Northern Raven seemed to be faring well.

South-east Essex

Vange and Bowers Marshes had a great combined month and often shared birds. At least five Water Pipit remained with just the one still on the 13th and a Eurasian Spoonbill was seen from the 5th-8th when a Black Tern and a first-winter Bonaparte's Gull was seen all too briefly. A drake Garganey from the 6th became seven on the 14th and 15th and two Black-winged Stilt tantalised for just two days from 12th-13th. A Wood Sandpiper on the 24th was joined by a Marsh Sandpiper on the 25th and 26th, the latter being seen at Blue House Farm on 26th. Three Black-necked Grebe were found on the 24th and a pair lingered while the two Russian Greater White-fronted Geese were last seen on the 17th. The ringed drake Ring-necked Duck from Abberton Reservoir was a great find on the 29th and stayed into May. A Black Redstart was at Gunners Park Shoebury (7th-9th) with three Arctic Tern (27th) and 14 Little Tern (30th) through there and a Western Osprey the same day. A Manx Shearwater was a good spring record off Canvey (15th) with three Black Tern (23rd) and five Arctic

Tern (27th). The only Great Egret sighting was over Ashingdon on the 18th. Drake Garganey were on the Lower Ray Pits Canewdon (9th) and East Tilbury (11th) with two male and a female at Russell Green Gravel Pit Boreham (24th) and a final pair at Hanningfield Reservoir from the 15th. The Reservoir also hosted up to nine Red-crested Pochard and also had two Arctic Tern (13th). Common Grasshopper Warbler were on Bowers Marsh and at South Woodham Ferrers and there was a good scattering of Common Nightingale while the Lesser Spotted Woodpecker were seen again at Westley Heights. Four Short-eared Owl and a Hen Harrier remained until mid-month on Wallasea Island and there were numerous Red Kite sightings. A Black Kite over Burnham-on-Crouch on the 17th was a great find as was four Common Crane over Rayne on the 19th. A female Hen Harrier was at Blue House Farm (7th), and the site also hosted Ring Ouzel (14th), 23 Mediterranean Gull and the County's only spring Tree Pipit so far (18th).

Mid-Essex

It was all about Abberton Reservoir again with a great selection of winter species lingering on the reservoir. Two Great Egret were still to be found and the pair of Long-tailed Duck stayed until the 23rd with the last three Greater Scaup on the 19th. The ringed drake Ring-necked Duck was around again from the 16th- 24th before moving to Bowers Marsh and three Black-necked Grebe made it to the 1st. Presumably the drake Green-winged Teal seen on 24th was the same as the one earlier in the year...A Blue-headed Wagtail was seen on the 2nd and another was at Billets Farm from the 22nd but played second fiddle to the male Ortolan Bunting that resided there from the same date until the 25th. Black Tern dropped in on the 18th, 22nd and 25th with three Little Gull on the 12th. There were several Red Kite sightings, and a female Hen Harrier was seen on the 3rd. Elsewhere four Water Pipit were still at Fingringhoe Mill on the 3rd with a Western Osprey over there on the 30th and four Common Loon (Great Northern Diver) were off West Mersea on the 6th and 9th with a European Shag there on the latter date too. Another Western Osprey was over Tollesbury on the 1st and two Common Crane were seen drifting over Moverons Brightlingsea on the 22nd. Up the Colne a Eurasian Stone-curlew was a superb find at The Hythe on the 11th and 12th although it had apparently been photographed at Fingringhoe earlier on the first date. A Great Egret was at Lofts Farm with a Little Gull on the 11th and a drake Garganey was on the Chigborough section the next day.

North-east Essex

Several Common Firecrest were noted at The Naze but it was a very quiet month up north. A Water Pipit and drake Garganey were seen at Holland Haven (10th) and a Common Nightingale on Howlands Marsh St Osyth (12th) and Common Redstart at Wigboro Wick Farm St Osyth (16th) were the only notable passerines. A Hoopoe at Holland Haven on18th gave the briefest of views before heading off along the coast never to be seen again. Frinton-on-Sea produced some good movements including a very impressive 695 Northern Gannet and 56 sightings of Northern Fulmar during April, 377 Eurasian Curlew (16th), 34 Mediterranean Gull and 14 Little Tern (22nd) and two Common Eider (24th). A Serin flew by Frinton-on-Sea on 5th.

May 2019

Cloud and showery weather, the result of shallow low pressure and weak fronts, prevailed over most of the country at the start of the month. From the 3rd, wintry showers and frosts were felt in the north and east particularly in low-lying areas. The unsettled conditions continued to the 9th then high pressure built close to the country bringing dry and warm, sunny weather. This lasted to the middle of May, but showery and cooler conditions occurred to the 24th. Thereafter it turned rather changeable up to the end of the month when it turned very warm during the last two days.

RSPB Rainham Marshes

Wader passage carried on much the same vein as April with small numbers of Bar-tailed Godwit, Red Knot (eight on 8th and 16th), Whimbrel, Sanderling (including nine on 17th and seven on 31st), Grey Plover, Dunlin and Common Ringed Plover (43 on 17th) moving through with odd Common

Greenshank, Ruddy Turnstone and peaks on the 17th of 12 Common Sandpiper and 13 Ruff. Two Temminck's Stint were seen for a short while on the 12th and the odd Common Snipe and Green Sandpiper were reported. Among the small numbers of Common Tern there were some good Arctic Tern days with 24 (8th), 38 (16th) and 28 (17th) being the highest counts. A Little Tern was seen on the 17th and there were eight Black Tern on the 8th and singles on the 15th and 16th. A White Stork was seen over on the 23rd and a Western Cattle Egret which was picked up on the 2nd stayed all month with two present on the 20th. A breeding plumaged Great Egret on the 2nd and 3rd was replaced by a winter one on the 6th while Eurasian Spoonbill briefly dropped in on the 6th and 22nd. Eurasian Hobby peaked at 12 on the 7th before predictably dispersing and four Red Kite through on the 21st was notable and coincided with a mass movement through Kent. Peregrine Falcon sightings were mostly of immatures and the quartet of other expected raptors were seen every day. A Short-eared Owl was still around on the 14th and at least five male Common Cuckoo were using the site. A Pink-footed Goose was found with the Greylag on the 2nd and stayed until the 18th and the drake Garganey reappeared on the 17th and became two on the 20th. Two Whinchat were seen on the 7th and there were a few late Northern Wheatear and two Spotted Flycatcher (12th and 17th) while a pair of foraging Eurasian Bullfinch along the river wall on the 6th suggests that they are breeding again somewhere nearby.

Metropolitan Essex (London Natural History Society area)

There were some good records of passage terns through the Lee Valley with two Arctic (5th) and three Black (7th) through Walthamstow Wetlands and four more Black through King George V Reservoir the same day with a single and two Arctic on the 9th. A single was at Seventy Acres Lake Holyfield on the day in between. King George V Reservoir also had two Ruddy Turnstone on the 15th and a Whinchat on the 22nd while back at the Wetlands the drake Garganey reappeared on the 14th. Other Whinchat were noted in North Ockendon (two on 2nd), Fairlop Waters Barkingside (6th), Waterworks Leyton (two on 7th), Ingrebourne Valley (7th and 9th) and Wanstead Park (three on 7th) while Spotted Flycatcher were back in two churchyards and migrants were noted on Wanstead Flats and in Harold Wood. Two singing Wood Warbler were picked up with males in Romford (10th) and South Woodford (26th).

Down on the Thames there was a Western Osprey over Gallions Reach Beckton (2nd) with Great Egret and five Arctic Tern (18th) and three Black-legged Kittiwake (26th). Down river at Creekmouth Barking there were two Little and two Mediterranean Gull, two Arctic Tern, Black Tern and a Whimbrel on the 17th! Another Great Egret was seen in the Mardyke Valley Stifford-Aveley (21st) and a Eurasian Spoonbill flew over the Ingrebourne Valley (5th). Red Kite were very regular around Epping Forest from top to bottom with others in the north-east corner and at other semi-urban sites. Three Red Crossbill were the first of the year over Ardleigh Green on the 24th and two Common Quail were put up from a path in Upminster on the 27th.

South-east Essex

Bowers Marsh continued its good run with a superb Whooper Swan on the pools on the 1st along with a Wood Sandpiper while the drake Ring-necked Duck was around until the 18th. Whinchat (7th), Eurasian Spoonbill (14th) and three Black-necked Grebe were noted. A female Red-footed Falcon was on a golf course in Billericay from the 29th April to 1st May. A Western Osprey was at South Woodham Ferrers on the 7th. Temminck's Stint dropped in to Blue House Farm on 2nd and 7th. A pair of Garganey were seen at Hanningfield Reservoir along with a Bar-tailed Godwit on the 5th with two Black-necked Grebe (7th) and a pair of Greater Scaup (8th) adding winter interest in the spring and a Common Redstart was in a Billericay garden on the 7th. Short-eared Owl were seen on Wallasea Island and Foulness Island and the latter site held at least six pair of European Turtle Dove and others were seen at Great Wakering and Fleet Head where a female Hen Harrier was also noted on the 18th. A male Eurasian Dotterel was seen in a pea field at Bradwell-on-Sea on the 1st and again on the 5th and 6th and both Common Firecrest and European Turtle Dove were seen around the Observatory on the 13th. A male Garganey was seen on Wallasea Island and at Paglesham Lagoon. River watching off Gunners Park Shoebury produced two Common Eider (4th), six Black

Tern (4th) Manx Shearwater (10th) and Western Osprey (12th) while there were counts of 16 Arctic Tern and 57 Northern Gannet off Canvey Point on the 17th.

Mid-Essex

Abberton Reservoir had another blinding month with a 1st summer Bonaparte's Gull being found on the 2nd and being joined the following day by a Little Gull and incredibly five White-winged Tern. The terns and Little Gull were still around the following day and the Bonaparte's Gull stayed until the 10th. There were 19 Black Tern on the 7th along with a stunning summer plumaged Red-necked Grebe and even one of the Ring-necked Duck came back to visit on the 19th for three days. Two Western Cattle Egret were seen on the 6th with a male Golden Oriole being heard the same day. Another Western Cattle Egret was seen on the 26th and two Great Egret were still around on the 4th while a Eurasian Spoonbill dropped in on the 29th. There were several area Northern Raven sightings including a family party and Red Kite were noted with some regularity. A Black Kite was over East Mersea on the 20th and another Western Cattle Egret was at Chigborough Lakes within the Little Egret colony on the 30th.

North-east Essex

A Black Kite was over Holland Haven on the 20th and could have been the same bird seen earlier over Mersea. The Naze scored with a singing male Eastern Subalpine Warbler (24th), Tree Pipit (25th) and a singing immature male Common Rosefinch (31st). A Eurasian Spoonbill was at Colne Point on the 1st and there seemed to be a few purring European Turtle Dove reported with at least four at Wrabness where there were still 300 Brant Geese on the 2nd. Red Kite seem to be prospering particularly in the north-west corner. Frinton-on-Sea had some good dates as you would hope during May: 1st: 48 Sandwich Tern, two Barnacle Geese, Parasitic Jaeger (Arctic Skua); 2nd: 79 Sandwich Tern, two Arctic Tern, 23 Western Yellow Wagtail, two Great Egret south, 13 Northern Fulmar, 271 Barn Swallow, 135 Common House Martin, 32 Whimbrel, 3rd: three Eurasian Hobby and a Western Osprey in off, Spotted Flycatcher, European Turtle Dove, 143 Northern Gannet, two Velvet Scoter, Red-throated Loon (Diver); 6th: Western Cattle Egret; 8th: 23 Black Tern; 10th: two Black Tern, two Eurasian Hobby; 11th: 87 Whimbrel, 356 Barn Swallow, four Eurasian Hobby in off, 18 Sandwich Tern, seven Pomarine Jaeger (Skua); 16th: three Black-legged Kittiwake; Parasitic Jaeger (Arctic Skua); 17th: five Pomarine Jaeger (Skua), five Black Tern, 23rd: 344 Brant Geese; 24th: four Common Eider; 28th: Spotted Flycatcher; 29th: Red-throated Loon (Diver), 99 Brant Geese.

June 2019

A ridge of high pressure was present at the start of the month bringing warm, sunny weather, especially the south and east. Further north it was cloudier with some rain. From the 3rd for a week spells of bright, though showery weather alternated with spells of heavier rain and it was briefly cooler for a period, unseasonably so with winds from the northeast. Generally warmer weather from the 14th to the 20th occurred although it was rather unsettled and there were thunderstorms in parts of the south-east on 18th and 19th. Warm, humid conditions prevailed for much of the remainder of the month with further rain and thundery outbreaks until 29th, which was hot and sunny with temperatures reaching 34°C in the London area.

RSPB Rainham Marshes

Our final count of nesting waders for the reserve reached new highs of 82 pairs of both Northern Lapwing and Common Redshank. When you add six pairs of Eurasian Oystercatcher for our stretch of the Thames, two pairs of Little Ringed Plover with broods and our very first successful pair of Pied Avocet between two attempting pairs, a total of 92 pairs of waders in and around the reserve is a magnificent achievement. The Western Cattle Egret left on the 3rd and an immature Eurasian Spoonbill was seen on the 7th and 8th and one of the drake Garganey was seen again on the 3rd and 5th. Mediterranean Gull were still being seen now and then and at least three Western Marsh Harrier chicks had fledged by mid-month. A Red Kite (13th) and occasional Eurasian Hobby were noted. Bearded Reedling had a great breeding season. Return wader passage was already underway by the

15th with Green Sandpiper predictably the first species back while three Common Ringed Plover (19th), Spotted Redshank (20th and 24th), Common Greenshank, Common Snipe and flurry of Black-tailed Godwit *limosa* on 26th, 27th and 12 *icelandica* from 30th.

Metropolitan Essex (London Natural History Society area)

June often throws up a surprise or two and a drake Ring-necked Duck at Seventy Acres from the 2nd to 15th was just that while the Eurasian Stone-curlew on the King George V Reservoir on the 28th and 29th was equally unseasonal. The reservoir also held a drake Greater Scaup from 22nd, Common Goldeneye from 29th and a late female Greenland Northern Wheatear on the 1st. A few Green Sandpiper were noted from mid-month with a first for Dagnam Park on the 27th and others in the Ingrebourne Valley where a female Blue-headed Wagtail was seen on the 19th. A Eurasian Curlew over Walthamstow Wetlands on the 25th was a typical summer passage bird but the Black-legged Kittiwake at Beckton Sewage Works on the 10th was certainly not that. Mediterranean Gull were seen here and at Blackshots Thurrock and a Great Egret was over the Mardyke Valley Stifford-Aveley on the 2nd.

South-east Essex

A female Red-crested Pochard was seen until the 5th and a Eurasian Stone-curlew was a great find on the 24th. A Black-necked Grebe was at Hanningfield Reservoir on the 2nd and Red-crested Pochard peaked at 20 on the 8th. A Eurasian Spoonbill flew over Russell Green Gravel Pit Boreham on the 10th and an early southbound Western Osprey was seen over Hyde Hall East Hanningfield on the 29th. A couple of Spotted Redshank at Vange Marsh on the 15th and 21st were mirrored across the County and Great Egret at South Fambridge on the 24th was not totally unexpected. Fifty Mediterranean Gull were at Rochford golf course on the 24th, 34 were at East Tilbury on the 27th and seven were back on Southend Seafront on the 21st when a Razorbill was also seen.

Mid-Essex

Abberton Reservoir was quiet bar the return of a Ring-necked Duck on the 14th until the 19th (hence overlapping with the Lee Valley drake) and a brood of Little Ringed Plover proved popular. A female Mandarin on the 25th was a good local record. A male Cinnamon Teal appeared briefly on the dump pool at Maldon on the 16th and 26 Spotted Redshank were the highlight from Old Hall Marshes on the 25th. A single Red Crossbill over Berechurch Colchester on the 29th was the County first for the summer.

North-east Essex

Wigboro Wick Farm St Osyth hosted a fine male Red-backed Shrike on the 15th and a ringtail Montagu's Harrier on the 20th while a Western Cattle Egret overflew Kirby Cross on the 6th. Two Common Eider and three Mediterranean Gull were seen in Hamford Water on the 26th and diligent inland surveying from Martin Peers has once again yielded a superb amount of rural village and farmland data including at least three pairs of Spotted Flycatcher during June. The immature male Common Rosefinch at the Naze stayed until the 1st.

July 2019

At the start of the month, there was a north-westerly flow across the country and it was often showery and cool. The majority of the first half of July, however, was dry and sunny, especially in south and western areas and south Wales. Cloud was more prevalent elsewhere. More unsettled conditions dominated the second half of the month with westerly and south-westerly winds. From the 22nd to 26th a hot spell saw record-breaking temperatures throughout much of the country, with thunderstorms being widespread.

RSPB Rainham Marshes

Wader passage trickled on with Wood Sandpiper on the 11th, 29th and 31st along with several Ruff, a good flock of Black-tailed Godwit, Common Greenshank and the odd Common Snipe, Dunlin, Whimbrel and Common Ringed Plover. Common Sandpiper were on the pools and foreshore and an impressive count of 40 was made on the 30th. Garganey were seen on the 28th and 30th and a single

Northern Pintail on the 30th was an early arrival. An adult Western Cattle Egret was seen on the 14th but did not linger and a Eurasian Spoonbill arrived the same day and stayed until the 20th. Two Great Egret dropped in on the 19th and singles were then seen on the 21st and 27th. The young Western Marsh Harrier were now independent of their parents, but it seems unlikely that the second pair were successful. Young Red Kite were seen on several dates and one even landed – two were seen together on the 29th while a Hooded Crow x Carrion Crow hybrid was a first on the 11th. Eurasian Hobby and Peregrine Falcon have been regular. A few Western Yellow Wagtail started to drift over but there were no other early passerine movements bar a few hirundines and Common Swift. Down on the Thames the expected arrival of Yellow-legged Gull was slow to get going but there were 67 by the 22nd and possibly as many as 180 by the 30th with several Caspian Gull lurking amongst them. A few Mediterranean Gull sightings included a colour ringed German juvenile that had flown 550 miles at least to get here. Three Sandwich Tern were now expected July visitors on the 29th.

Metropolitan Essex (London Natural History Society area)

There were a few more waders moving through the area during the month and the Lee Valley attracted Whimbrel (7th and 14th), Sanderling (28th) and a few Dunlin and Common Sandpiper to King George V Reservoir while Walthamstow Wetlands attracted plenty of the latter and a Black-tailed Godwit. A Eurasian Treecreeper there on the 28th was the first for many years and a Sandwich Tern flew through the same day. Up to six Green Sandpiper and a Little Ringed Plover were at Dagenham Chase and Wood and Common Sandpiper and Common Greenshank on the 31st added to the *Tringa* fest. More Green Sandpiper were in the Ingrebourne Valley and a Common Greenshank was also here on the 14th. A Northern Wheatear was good and early in Loughton on the 28th and a young Common Cuckoo flew over an Ardleigh Green garden on the 29th. A Mediterranean Gull was anting there on the 25th and there was a scattering of Yellow-legged Gull along the Inner Thames with others on Wanstead Flats on several dates.

South-east Essex

Wood Sandpiper were seen at Bowers Marsh on the 23rd and 26th while Hannginfield Reservoir hosted five Little Ringed Plover and ten Red-crested Pochard on the 16th and a Garganey on the 30th. Black-tailed Godwit peaked at 1,136 at Mucking on the 14th and 92 Common Tern there on the 25th was the largest movement noted along with the only Arctic on the 31st. Four Black Tern were off Canvey the same day and three Northern Gannet and a Common Eider were seen there on the 28th. Four Spotted Redshank were at Vange Marsh (20th) and a Merlin was unseasonal at Fleet Head Little Wakering on the 27th. Further out onto Foulness Island there was a very good selection of early returning waders on the 16th with hundreds of Godwit, Sanderling and Red Knot but there was also a count of 289 Mediterranean Gull there that day and a covey of seven Grey Partridge. A Blue-headed Wagtail was still on territory on Wallasea Island and an early Northern Wheatear was at South Fambridge on the 28th. There were also at least 30 Mediterranean Gull anting over Edwards Hall Park Rayleigh on the 5th and a few along the Southend seafront. Out at Gunners Park Shoebury there was a solitary Brant Goose on the 28th and a Northern Fulmar the day after.

Mid-Essex

The biggest news was the confirmed breeding of a pair of Western Cattle Egret at Chigborough Lakes with four young fledging from the nest late in the month. Amazingly a 1st summer Night Heron was also seen here on the 23rd and 24th June. This pair of Western Cattle Egret probably accounted for a few scattered local sightings from Abbotts Hall and Old Hall Marshes. Meanwhile at Abberton Reservoir it was quiet bar the odd sighting of the Ring-necked Duck and a single Great Egret from the 9th which became two from the 29th. A few passage waders were noted, and Black-tailed Godwit peaked at 103 on the 15th. A Eurasian Stone-curlew was reported on the 18th and a single Ruddy Shelduck from the 2nd became two on the 10th and were part of an east coast arrival. Four Red-crested Pochard were seen on the 8th and the female Mandarin was seen again on the 9th. There were some good wader counts from the Colne with a Curlew Sandpiper at East Mersea on the 20th, 77 Common Greenshank, 600 Black-tailed Godwit (and a Eurasian Spoonbill) at Fingringhoe

Wick on the 31st, 18 Common Greenshank, five Whimbrel and 242 Black-tailed Godwit from Alresford on the 17th and a fine count of 12 Green Sandpiper at The Hythe Colchester on the 1st. A Great Egret flew over Stanway on the 3rd and a European Honey Buzzard was over Friday Wood Colchester on the 6th. Five Brant Geese and two Spotted Redshank were seen at Old Hall Marshes on the 6th and three Northern Raven over Chalkney Wood on the 16th perhaps suggesting local breeding. A Pectoral Sandpiper dropped in to Hanningfield Reservoir on 28th with a different bird at Old Hall Marshes the next day which stayed into August.

North-east Essex

Three Ruddy Shelduck were at The Naze along with two Mediterranean Gull on the 20th, with a Temminck's Stint in Hamford Water on 21st. The Splodge at Cattawade Marshes hosted seven Common Greenshank and 92 Black-tailed Godwit on the 25th and it looks like Western Marsh Harrier have bred there successfully. Sea-watching off Frinton-on-Sea produced some good days late in the month with 26th: six Ruddy Shelduck, seven Common Scoter, four Mediterranean Gull, two Brant Geese and two Great Egret; 27th: 43 Whimbrel, 55 Common Greenshank, Black Tern and three Mediterranean Gull; 28th: 25 Northern Gannet, 71 Whimbrel, 4 Curlew Sandpiper, 5,195 Common Swift, three Red Crossbill and a staggering 114 Common Greenshank; 30th: 118 Common Scoter and a Northern Fulmar.

August 2019

Warm sunshine at the beginning of the month together with thundery showers were the result of a ridge of high pressure. More unsettled conditions were then felt, and it was generally rather breezy with longer spells of rain with deep depressions affecting Scotland especially in the middle of the month. From 21st, sunny and hot conditions in mid and southerly areas which then spread to much of the country from 24th to 26th and a record temperature was set for the late August bank holiday. The final days were cooler with heavy rain in Scotland and northern England.

RSPB Rainham Marshes

A juvenile Western Cattle Egret got the month off to a grand start and stayed until the 12th when an adult was also seen, and another was seen on the 23rd and 24th. A Great Egret flew through on the 10th and another lingered from 25th to 27th with two more briefly on the 31st. Four Eurasian Spoonbill were seen early on the 14th but were gone all too soon. Wader passage was stymied by poor water levels, but a Wood Sandpiper (12th) was seen amongst the more regular *Tringas* and a European Golden Plover on the 25th became the first of the season. Pied Avocet and Black-tailed Godwit numbers rose, and Whimbrel and Eurasian Curlew were seen. Tern passage was rather odd with almost no Common Tern at all but with no favourable conditions at all on the 24th there were suddenly 13 Sandwich Tern and an unprecedented flock of 14 juvenile Little Tern. Three more Sandwich Tern were seen on the 26th when a flock of 16 Arctic Tern headed high up river. Two more Arctics were seen on the 30th. There was little flurry of Mediterranean and Caspian Gull including a couple of immaculate juveniles of each and Yellow-legged Gull numbers started to drop off.

Eyes to the skies produced the usual raptor selection with a couple of Red Kite in addition to a Western Osprey on the 18th and 16 kettling Common Buzzard on the 23rd. Frustratingly Culver the young White-tailed Eagle from the Isle of Wight re-introduction was satellite tracked across the west end of the reserve on the 31st on his maiden circuit of the south-east but was not seen by anyone at all during his entire Essex journey! Hopefully this is a taste of things to come. A Northern Raven on the same day was the first for some time.

The first Whinchat arrived on the 22nd and were seen most days thereafter with five on the 25th when four Northern Wheatear were also seen. Spotted Flycatcher were found on the 19th and 26th and European Pied Flycatcher and Common Redstart were both seen on the 25th and 26th with others of the latter on the 19th and 31st. There were good numbers of Western Yellow Wagtail with the cattle. There were lots of commoner warblers on the move with Common Whitethroat being especially common including an impressive 53 on the 26th. Fourteen Willow Warbler on the same

day was equally noteworthy.

Metropolitan Essex (London Natural History Society area)

It was mostly about passerine passage with the magnet that is Wanstead Flats dragging in a wealth of drift migrants. So, to summarise: European Pied Flycatcher: recorded on ten dates with a high of six (24th); Whinchat: recorded on 15 dates with highs of seven (24th), six (29th) and ten (27th); Northern Wheatear: a high of 12 (28th); Tree Pipit; recorded on an amazing 14 dates with highs of five (14th), four (17th) and six (21st); Common Redstart: recorded on ten dates with highs of seven (29th), four (30th) and six (31st). Add to this a Wood Warbler (7th), a smattering of Spotted Flycatcher, Red Kite and a Great Egret (28th), the site had a great month. Most of these species cropped up at several other sites. European Pied Flycatcher were noted in the Ingrebourne Valley, King George V Reservoir, Bonnetts Wood Corbets Tey, Thorndon Country Park, Alexander Lake Thurrock, Hall Marsh Waltham Abbey, Walthamstow Wetlands and Dagnam Park on three dates. Common Redstart were seen in the Ingrebourne Valley, Woodford Green, Thorndon Park and Dagnam Park on three dates while Tree Pipit were noted there and at Gallions Reach Beckton. Whinchat and Spotted Flycatcher were seen at many sites and a Wood Warbler was at Dagnam Park on the 20th. Two Eurasian Wryneck made brief appearances in the Ingrebourne Valley (24th) and Bonnetts Wood Corbets Tey (27th). The Wetlands also scored with two Garganey from the 15th and a Western Osprey on the 19th. A Western Marsh Harrier was a good record for Chingford Plain (2nd) while a Short-eared Owl was quite early over Beckton Sewage Works on the 21st. Arctic Tern were seen at Gallions Reach Beckton with six (1st) and 21 (25th) when two Sandwich and 17 Common were seen. Eleven Sandwich were off Beckton on the 24th. Wood Sandpiper were in the Ingrebourne Valley on the 3rd and 10th with Common Greenshank at Dagenham Chase (9th) and Ruddy Turnstone on King George V Reservoir (4th) being the pick of passage waders. Dagenham Chase also hosted its first ever Western Cattle Egret with two on the 20th.

South-east Essex

The invisible White-tailed Eagle that is Culver was quite literally the biggest bird of the month although he evaded any detection on his journey east on the 31st despite being at just 200 feet along the Southend Seafront before spending time on the beach at Wakering Stairs and roosting in a small copse there! River-watching was fairly quiet although two Black Tern were off Canvey on the 2nd with a good day there on the 9th with Pomarine Jaeger (Skua), two Great Skua and a juvenile Sabine's Gull. A Common Eider was seen on several dates from the 26th and 110 Little Egret were counted from there on the 16th. Down river there were 38 Little Tern amassed on Shoebury East Beach on the 26th and Wakering Stairs had Western Osprey on the 19th and 20th and two on the 26th. An amazing eight Western Cattle Egret were at Wat Tyler from the 23rd to 29th and West Canvey Marshes had a Curlew Sandpiper on the 2nd and two Wood Sandpiper on the 13th. Two more Wood Sandpiper were at Bowers Marsh on the 2nd (with a Garganey there on the 5th) with another duo at Fleet Head Little Wakering on the 4th and another at Blue House Farm on the 14th while nearby Stow Marsh South Woodham Ferrers held 46 Western Yellow Wagtail on the 23rd and 50 Mediterranean Gull were up anting at South Fambridge on the 8th. Black-tailed Godwit peaked at 3,273 at East Tilbury on the 11th with 878 Pied Avocet also recorded there. A trip of four Eurasian Dotterel found the fields at Deal Hall Dengie to their liking from 24th-27th. There were some good tern movements with high counts of Common of 187 (21st) and 498 (28th), a staggering 76 Little Tern in one flock (26th), with two on the 27th and four on the 28th and a scattering of odd Arctic and seven Black and a Little Gull on the 27th. A Garganey was at Hanningfield Reservoir on the 7th with Wood Sandpiper the same day until the 11th. A Horned Grebe (Slavonian) was seen on the 31st. There was a good selection of drift migrants with Whinchat, Spotted Flycatcher and Northern Wheatear across the area along with at least seven Tree Pipit, five Common Redstart and 11 European Pied Flycatcher.

Mid-Essex

Western Cattle Egret continued to be in the headlines with up to seven at Abberton Reservoir until the 8th while Great Egret had reached three by the 26th. The two Ruddy Shelduck lingered and Red-crested Pochard had reached eight by the 23rd. Four Garganey were seen on and off and the Ring-necked Duck reappeared on the 8th, 11th and 16th. A Black Tern was seen on the 3rd and a Black-legged Kittiwake the same day was unseasonal. Wood Sandpiper on four dates were the wader highlight. Northern Wheatear, Whinchat and Western Yellow Wagtail were all seen and a Western Osprey on the 18th was the first of the autumn. Three European Pied Flycatcher were seen on Mersea on 24th with another at Wivenhoe the next day where a Great Egret was also seen. The Pectoral Sandpiper was at Old Hall Marshes until 2nd and two Wood Sandpiper, Curlew Sandpiper and ten Spotted Redshank were there on the 4th. Other Curlew Sandpiper were at Fingringhoe (with 53 Common Greenshank) on 8th and at Heybridge on the 26th.

North-east Essex

The last ten days of the month were quite busy on the north-east coast with Holland Haven proving popular with two Eurasian Wryneck from the 26th and 12 Northern Wheatear at the same time. A Eurasian Spoonbill and European Pied Flycatcher were seen on the 25th. The Naze did well with European Pied Flycatcher on most of those days with highs ten (22nd), six (25th) and nine (29th). Tree Pipit were noted on the 20th and 25th with 15 Northern Wheatear on the first date too and two Common Redstart on the 22nd. A Western Cattle Egret was seen in the Hamford Backwaters on the 24th and 26th but the rarest bird at The Naze was a Marsh Tit that was seen sporadically from the 4th. The same period at Frinton-on-Sea saw ten Tree Pipit, eight European Pied Flycatcher and a few Whinchat and Spotted Flycatcher as well as a Western Osprey on the 18th, 19 early Brant Geese, Little Stint and 114 Sandwich Tern on the 21st and 26 Mediterranean Gull on the 23rd. A male Hen Harrier was a nice early record over Beaumont Quay on the 4th and 15 Common Greenshank and two Curlew Sandpiper were in Hamford Water on the 1st. A juvenile Eurasian Dotterel made a very brief visit to Colne Point on 25th.

September 2019

A series of fronts emanating from the west produced rain at the start of September. Conditions settled somewhat up to the middle of the month with warm temperatures which peaked around 19th-24th. There then followed several periods of rain with 25-50mm being recorded from various sites such that average September rainfall was easily exceeded.

RSPB Rainham Marshes

Eurasian Spoonbill were a theme for the month with singles on the 1st-3rd, 8th, two on the 26th and three on the 30th. Most birds were seen heading south with just a couple lingering on Aveley Pool. A Western Cattle Egret was seen on the 18th-20th with a Great Egret through on the 22nd and two on the 23rd to complete the 'interesting white birds'. Common Murre (Guillemot) were seen on the 9th and 21st and were the first for some years and two Common Scoter were noted on the 18th. A juvenile Black Tern was briefly on the Pool on the 5th and 140 Arctic Tern powered through in one flock on the 5th with 18 on the 9th. Again, only two Common Tern were seen. Yellow-legged Gull were still to be found and several Caspian Gull were seen. There was no notable raptor movement, but a Western Osprey drifted south on the 12th.

Warbler passage was actually quite heavy with some good counts of Common Chiffchaff (34 on the 10th), Eurasian Blackcap and Common Whitethroat and Willow Warbler and Lesser Whitethroat were to be found almost daily. A few Goldcrest and two more Coal Tit (13th and 18th) were seen and there was a visible Eurasian Blue Tit passage on the 19th and 20th with perhaps 50 birds heading west in small parties. Spotted Flycatcher were seen on several dates with two very late birds on the 30th. Common Redstart were found on the 10th and 21st, Tree Pipit on 1st, 14th and three on 15th, three Eurasian Tree Sparrow coasted on the 12th and Whinchat peaked at ten on the 4th and most stayed for over a week with new arrivals from the 30th. A Ruddy Turnstone on the 6th and 9th was the only different passage wader of note which was disappointing.

Metropolitan Essex (London Natural History Society area)

Passerine passage was still good throughout the area with Spotted Flycatcher, Whinchat, Northern Wheatear, Western Yellow Wagtail and general warbler species at many sites. European Pied Flycatcher were seen at five sites with three at Wanstead Flats (1st, 21st, 22nd), Gallions Reach Beckton (1st), Fairlop Waters Barkingside (1st), Woodford Green (2nd) and two at Dagnam Park (13th). Common Redstart were seen on Wanstead Flats on five dates with six on the 1st with others seen at Dagenham Chase (5th), Chingford Plain (8th), Ingrebourne Valley (8th), Fairlop Waters (15th) and Walthamstow Wetlands (8th and 13th). An Ortolan Bunting was picked up on nocturnal migration recording over Chafford Hundred (9th) with six Tree Pipit (6th) and the first Redwing (20th). Five Tree Pipit were also seen on the Flats and late Wood Warbler were in the Mardyke Valley Stifford-Aveley on the 5th and on Wanstead Flats on 7th with a daylight Redwing in Upminster on the 26th. A single Red Crossbill was seen in Thorndon park on the 14th in a poor season for the species locally. Two Garganey were on Walthamstow Wetlands from 3rd and a Little Stint was there on the 8th with another the same day on King George V Reservoir where there were three Black Tern on the 21st. A Black-necked Grebe was on William Girling Reservoir on the 22nd. Eyes to the skies produced regular Northern Raven sightings between Brentwood, Warley and Kelvedon Hatch with others over Ardleigh Green (15th) and Romford (two on 1st). Western Osprey were seen over Gallions Reach Beckton (8th), Woodford Green (12th) and Wanstead Flats (28th) and a female Northern Goshawk was encountered near Hainault Forest on the 23rd. A Great Egret was in the Ingrebourne Valley (21st) and the following day two were tracked over Walthamstow Wetlands and then King George V Reservoir. A flock of 75 Common Swift at Walthamstow Wetlands on the 3rd was late for so many and the last nine were seen there on the 12th.

South-east Essex

The Western Cattle Egret flock remained around Wat Tyler all month with seven on some days and six until month end. Ten Spotted Redshank were seen there on the 13th and a Great Egret was present from the 24th. Another Great Egret was at Wallasea Island on the 17th-18th and another dropped into Bowers Marsh on the 7th while a Spotted Crake on the 15th proved popular until the 25th and two Northern Raven flew over 'kronking' on the 16th. Two Tree Island hosted 114 roosting Little Egret on the 14th and a Curlew Sandpiper on the 29th. Brant Geese had already peaked at 1,700 there on the 26th. A respectable 145 were as far upriver as Coalhouse Fort on the 20th with a Common Murre (Guillemot) the next day. A Western Cattle Egret was at East Tilbury on the 5th with good counts of 429 Common Tern and two Curlew Sandpiper (19th) and 1,227 Pied Avocet, ten Arctic Tern, and two Northern Gannet (26th). Just down river Black-tailed Godwit at Thurrock Thameside Mucking peaked at 1,004 (8th) and a Northern Raven flew over. River watching off Canvey Point produced some good sightings: Manx Shearwater, 15 Parasitic Jaeger (Arctic Skua), Long-tailed Jaeger (Skua), two Great Skua, 33 Arctic Tern, 11 Black Tern (7th); 50 Mediterranean Gull, Sabine's Gull (18th); Black-necked Grebe (19th-22nd); Atlantic Puffin (20th), Northern Fulmar and Common Eider (21st) and two Great Skua and a Long-tailed Jaeger (Skua) (22nd). Seven Common Eider were at Wakering Stairs (1st) with Common Redstart (5th) and Northern Fulmar (21st) and other Common Redstart were at Gunners Park Shoebury on three dates with two European Pied Flycatcher there on the 1st and one on the 3rd. A Purple Sandpiper with the huge Sanderling flock was popular from the 30th. Western Osprey were seen over Coombe Wood Thundersley on the 1st and Wallasea Island on the 17th and 18th and another was over Bradwell Bird Observatory on the 15th when 118 Little Egret were also seen. Two Lapland Longspur (Bunting) were on Stow Marsh South Woodham Ferrers on the 18th and a Black-necked Grebe at Hanningfield on the 24th. A single Red Crossbill was heard over Burnham-on-Crouch on the 13th.

Mid-Essex

Abberton Reservoir remained on good form with Great Egret numbers slowly increasing to a high of eight on the 22nd. A solitary Western Cattle Egret was seen on the 14th and two juvenile Eurasian Spoonbill took up residence from the 8th and showed incredibly well. The Ruddy Shelduck also stayed throughout and Egyptian Geese reached 64 on the 4th! Mandarin is a rare bird here and the

single of August had increased to three on the 19th. A count of 1,500 Great Cormorant was impressive on the 20th and Black Tern were noted on the 4th and 7th while eight Red-crested Pochard (2nd) and Long-tailed Duck (22nd) were amongst the other waterfowl with the elusive male Ring-necked Duck. A Manx Shearwater was probably bird of the month as it scythed across the water on the 11th. Northern Wheatear and Whinchat were seen and a Eurasian Tree Sparrow on the 10th was a notable find. A Western Osprey was out on Geedon Saltings from the 2nd and Northern Raven flew over Layer-de-le-Haye on the 22nd. A Great Egret was at Chigborough Lakes on the 12th and two Curlew Sandpiper off Maldon Prom on the 24th were the only local ones. A count of 53 Little Egret was made at Cudmore Grove East Mersea on the 29th with 14 Mediterranean Gull the same day and a Common Eider on the 25th. A Eurasian Wryneck was along the Colne at Brightlingsea on the 16th and 17th and a pale phase Parasitic Jaeger (Arctic Skua) was well up the Colne at Wivenhoe on the 6th.

North-east Essex

The Naze was quiet until the last ten days of the month with European Pied Flycatcher from the 21st with a high of three on the 23rd when a Tree Pipit and three Common Firecrest were also seen amongst a good scattering of warblers, chats and Spotted Flycatcher. Four Common Redstart were seen on the 10th and a Lapland Longspur (Bunting) on the 20th along with a Yellow-browed Warbler with another at Frinton-on-Sea the next day. A Eurasian Wryneck was seen at Holland Haven on the 7th and a Red-backed Shrike the next day stayed until the 15th and proved very obliging. A late Common Swift was also seen here on the 9th and a Common Grasshopper Warbler trapped on the 23rd. Western Osprey were a big feature of the month with sightings at Walton Hall and Frinton-on-Sea (both 7th), Colne Point (7th and 13th), Cattawade (14th) and Manningtree (29th). A Lapland Longspur (Bunting) and four Eurasian Tree Sparrow were at Wigboro Wick Farm St Osyth on the 21st and a Common Redstart was seen in Wix on 8th. Inland a Wood Sandpiper was found on Stansted Airport Lagoons Takeley on the 4th. "Vis migging" from Frinton-on-Sea appeared fairly quiet with highlights as follows: 7th: 44 Sandwich Tern; 13th: two Eurasian Siskin, three Eurasian Tree Sparrow, Common Swift; 20th: 78 Common Scoter, 427 Brant Geese, 57 Northern Gannet, Great Skua, 12 Parasitic Jaeger (Arctic Skua), Red-throated Loon (Diver); 21st, Leach's Storm Petrel and three Sooty Shearwater (also seen from Holland Haven); 22nd: Common Redstart and 28th: 608 Meadow Pipit, Common Swift, Pomarine Jaeger (Skua) and Eurasian Spoonbill.

October 2019

October began on a warm, showery note in southern areas although cooler air soon flowed from the north followed by a transient high pressure ridge, low pressure and associated fronts returned by 4th. Unsettled conditions then prevailed until 20th, with rain and low pressure systems noted countrywide. The jet stream was further south than usual bringing in frontal systems in south and east England. Following a quieter period from 21st and a spell of wet weather, colder but dry and sunny conditions lasted in most areas to the month end.

RSPB Rainham Marshes

Eurasian Spoonbill continued into October and we suspect that all were different as they headed off west with two on the 1st and one on the 3rd while a Great Egret on the 18th was surprisingly the only sighting. With water appearing at last duck and wader number slowly increased and Black-tailed Godwit peaked at 370, Eurasian Curlew at 14 and Northern Lapwing at 300. More species were seen on the river especially on the murky 24th when 32 Red Knot, three Sanderling, 48 Dunlin, 22 Golden and two Grey Plover were counted. A Curlew Sandpiper on the 15th was the first of the year and two Common Sandpiper were still along the foreshore while two Wood Sandpiper on the 6th were unseasonal and sitting just a few feet away from the first Jack Snipe. A Eurasian Woodcock on the 12th was new in. Common Scoter were seen on the 21st, 24th and 30th when two female Common Goldeneye and three Red-breasted Merganser made for a good duck haul. Two Mandarin up river on the 12 were only the fourth record and Brant Geese were seen on four dates. A Little Gull on the 8th was followed by five on the 21st when Arctic and Black Tern were also seen. Sandwich

Tern on the 2nd and Common on the 18th made for a good tern month. At least five different Caspian Gull were seen on various dates and there were still a few Yellow-legged Gull to be found.

Late Spotted Flycatcher were seen on the 1st and 2nd and an even later Common Redstart was seen on the 23rd. The last Sand Martin was on the 13th and a few Barn Swallow and Common House Martin dribbled through while overhead passage included an unprecedented Western Jackdaw movement between the 17th and 20th with 1,555 counted heading west. Meanwhile a few thousand Common Wood Pigeon went south with good numbers of Stock Dove caught up with them. Pipits, wagtails, the first winter thrushes, Eurasian Skylark and finches were also moving with 20 Eurasian Siskin (19th), seven Lesser Redpoll (25th), Eurasian Bullfinch (24th), Brambling (15th), five Corn Bunting and a Yellowhammer (17th) and late Western Yellow Wagtail on the 19th and 29th. Ring Ouzel were seen on six dates with five on the 16th and two on the 20th and Coal Tit of near-Continental appearance were seen on five dates and even photographed for the first time. The last Northern Wheatear was seen on the 19th and Stonechat numbers increased, and it was not overly surprising that a Dartford Warbler was seen on the 31st. Both Water and Scandinavian Rock Pipit were back on site from the 15th and rather bizarrely Ring-necked Parakeet have reverted to daily flocks with 168 on the 17th being the peak! Northern Raven are once again regular and the usual other raptors and even the Western Barn Owl have been putting on a good show. Only a Merlin on the 25th was a new sighting and the first of the season.

Metropolitan Essex (London Natural History Society area)

It was a month of continued quality passerine passage with Ring Ouzel featuring prominently with 12 birds seen across six sites along with good numbers of Fieldfare and Redwing including 225 of the former over Wanstead Flats and 270 over Walthamstow Wetlands both on the 29th. There were a couple each of late Northern Wheatear, Whinchat and Spotted Flycatcher and Common Firecrest started to appear from mid-month with three sites holding birds while a Yellow-browed Warbler in Walthamstow Forest on the 10th was the first local one this autumn. A Goldcrest x Common Firecrest hybrid was trapped at Walthamstow Wetlands on the 5th. Finches were on the move with a few single Brambling, Eurasian Siskin and Lesser Redpoll while two Red Crossbill were over Bonnetts Wood Corbets Tey (28th) and a Hawfinch was over Woodford Green the same day. There were some good Common Chaffinch movements with Wanstead Flats recording 300 (20th) and 364 (22nd) and 400 went through the Ingrebourne (13th). Walthamstow Marsh hosted two Black Redstart and a Common Redstart on the 25th and another was at Gallions Reach Beckton on the 24th where Black Tern and Great Egret (13th), Brant Goose (20th) and Northern Goshawk (27th) made for a good month. Two more Great Egret were over Chafford Hundred on the 2nd and Cornmill Meadows Waltham Abbey hosted another on the 31st as well as a Northern Goshawk on the 31st. There were two additional Northern Goshawk sightings from Woodford Green on the 7th and 25th and a fifth for the month over King George V Reservoir on the 17th. A ringtail Hen Harrier was high over Romford on the 22nd with a Northern Raven and a Western Marsh Harrier and Red Kite were seen over Wanstead Flats. King George V Reservoir also hosted an Arctic Tern (16th), Common Merganser (Goosander) (17th), Scandinavian Rock Pipit (25th and 29th), two Black Redstart (from the 22nd) and a Sanderling (29th). Further Rock Pipit were over Walthamstow Wetlands (12th) and Wanstead Flats (23rd) where Short-eared Owl was recorded the same day. A staggering 787 Ring-necked Parakeet were seen there on the 29th and 400 went through Walthamstow Wetlands on the 21st with Short-eared Owl and 14 Barnacle Geese the same day. A Jack Snipe was seen at Waterworks (28th) and Common Wood Pigeon were well on the move with 11,000 (29th) and 16,000 (20th) over Chafford Hundred being the biggest days. The Western Jackdaw movement noted at Rainham was mirrored in other areas during the same four days from the 17th with 1,248 through Walthamstow, 144 over Chafford Hundred and 250 through Collier Row. A Eurasian Bittern was back at Seventy Acres Lake Holyfield from the 15th and another was over Chafford Hundred on the 29th.

South-east Essex

River watching off Canvey Island proved worthwhile with some notable dates: 5th: Manx Shearwater,

six Common Scoter, Great Skua, Little Gull; 21st: 628 Northern Gannet, 19 Common Scoter, Black-throated Loon (Diver), 12 Great Skua, 11 Common Murre (Guillemot); 23rd: three Red-throated Loon (Diver), Black-throated Loon (Diver), seven Common Scoter, two Common Eider; 29th: 12 Northern Gannet, 220 Common Scoter, two Long-tailed Duck, 21 Red-breasted Merganser, two Common Murre (Guillemot), two Common Loon (Great Northern Diver), Great Egret, Pomarine Jaeger (Skua), three Great Skua, 12 Black-legged Kittiwake, Little Gull; Purple Sandpiper, two Short-eared Owl; 30th: 150 Common Scoter, Common Eider, two Long-tailed Duck, four Red-breasted Merganser, Common Loon (Great Northern Diver), three Red-throated Loon (Diver), Black-throated Loon (Diver), five Leach's Storm Petrel, Pomarine Jaeger (Skua), Little Gull; Razorbill, ringtail Hen Harrier: 31st: eight Common Eider, two Red-throated Loon (Diver), 60 Common Scoter, two Parasitic Jaeger (Arctic Skua), two Long-tailed Duck. Not bad for an otherwise quiet October! Some of these impressive days were mirrored up river in the Coalhouse Fort/Tilbury/Thurrock Thameside Mucking stretch with 5th: 67 Brant Geese; 20th: a staggering 370 Brant Geese; 21st: 73 Northern Gannet, Common Goldeneye; 29th: 125 Brant Geese, five Common Goldeneye, six Red-breasted Merganser, 61 Common Scoter, four Common Eider, 12 Black-legged Kittiwake and a Razorbill; 30th: male Long-tailed Duck, 12 Common Scoter. Black-tailed Godwit peaked at 1,897 here on the 3rd and a Curlew Sandpiper was seen on the 10th. Thurrock Thameside Mucking also continued to host a Black-necked Grebe from mid-September. Seven Velvet and four Common Scoter were good flybys off Wakering Stairs on the 13th. Five Western Cattle Egret were last seen at Wat Tyler on the 3rd along with a Great Egret. Another of the latter was out on West Canvey Marsh on the 28th with up to three on Wallasea Island from the 20th. Further Great Egret were at Russell Green Gravel Pit (10th), Bradwell Bird Observatory (20th) and Hanningfield Reservoir (9th and 20th) with Black-necked Grebe also present and a Curlew Sandpiper there on the 27th. Wallasea Island also held three Short-eared Owl from the 31st and a ringtail Hen Harrier from the 18th while seven Curlew Sandpiper and a Little Stint on the 19th were getting late as was the solitary Black Tern on the 1st. A count of 350 Sanderling at Gunners Park Shoebury on the 10th was superb and the site did well with European Shag on the 8th and 30th and a good flurry of Ring Ouzel with seven on the 8th and six others before the 20th. A Yellow-browed Warbler was trapped and ringed on the 22nd and a Black Redstart was seen the same day with two on the 24th. Other Black Redstart appeared at the same time in Hockley, Foulness Island and Fobbing. South Woodham Ferrers mirrored Gunners Park with a Ring Ouzel and Yellow-browed Warbler on the 12th. A Water Pipit was also seen on Stow Marsh South Woodham Ferrers (5th) with three more at Ropers Farm Barling on the 31st. Four Whooper Swan were nearby at Paglesham Lagoon on the 27th while Merlin dashed through Bowers Marsh, Canvey, Gunners Park Shoebury, Wallasea Island and Thurrock Thameside Mucking. Northern Raven were seen over Stow Marsh and Tilbury and four Ring Ouzel were out on Bowers Marsh on the 9th. Common Firecrest were seen at Tilbury (27th) and Shoebury (29th) with two at both sites. Coal Tit were noted in gardens where they do not normally occur, and the feeling was that these were near-Continental in origin.

Mid-Essex

Abberton Reservoir continued with its Great Egret and Eurasian Spoonbill theme from September with a high of ten of the former on 2nd, but still about six by month end. The Eurasian Spoonbill duo were joined by a third from the 5th and were still around on the 10th. The two drake Ring-necked Duck were seen on and off and a single Long-tailed Duck was noted on four dates with the first two Common Merganser (Goosander) on the 12th and six by the 19th. Two Common Scoter were seen on the 3rd with another and a female Greater Scaup were seen on the 23rd. A Little Gull was seen on the 3rd and Ring Ouzel (19th), Northern Wheatear (19th) and Lesser Whitethroat (28th) added passerine interest. Nearby there were five Western Cattle Egret at Old Hall Marshes on the 15th. The Colne was quite busy with Fingringhoe Wick holding male Greater Scaup (17th), 600 Pied Avocet and Merlin (25th) and Hen Harrier (30th) with nine Western Marsh Harrier roosting out on Langenhoe Ranges. Woodlark and Curlew Sandpiper were seen up at Alresford (20th) and Purple Sandpiper and Common Eider were seen at Brightlingsea (13th) with a Great Egret there on the

10th. East Mersea had a good run with Purple Sandpiper (14th), Curlew Sandpiper (15th), two Eurasian Spoonbill from the 16th, Common Crane and two Little Auk (22nd), Common Firecrest (28th) and two Barnacle Geese with the Brant Geese (30th). West Mersea drew in some good passerines with Ring Ouzel (12th, 14th and 17th) and Black Redstart (23rd and three on the 27th) while a Common Redstart was late on the 20th. A single Arctic Tern was seen at Lofts Farm Heybridge on the 9th.

North-east Essex

The Naze was well watched and produced some good finds with Yellow-browed Warbler (two on 6th, 7th, 9th and two on the 12th and 24th), Pallas's Leaf Warbler (29th-30th), Common Firecrest on several dates (including nine on the 24th), Barred Warbler (9th), late Spotted Flycatcher and Willow Warbler (13th), Snow Bunting (10th), Lapland Longspur (Bunting) (23rd and 27th), Ring Ouzel (eight between the 6th and 15th), two Woodlark and Whinchat (15th), Hawfinch (12th), Northern Wheatear and Short-eared Owl (9th). A late Western Yellow Wagtail was seen at Holland Haven (9th) with a similarly tardy Tree Pipit (10th), Whinchat (13th) and two incoming Short-eared Owl (16th). A total of nine Woodlark flew over Frinton-on-Sea during the month, including five on 15th. A Common Firecrest was seen on the 29th with a solitary Snow Bunting at Jaywick on the 27th. Black Redstart were seen on Holland-on-Sea (23rd) and at Colne Point (22nd) with Merlin on a couple of dates and a Dartford Warbler (24th) also at the latter site while another Snow Bunting was at St Osyth on the 30th where five Little Gull blew by on the 14th. Further Ring Ouzel were noted at Wigboro Wick Farm St Osyth with four on the 13th and inland at Halstead on the 16th. Northern Raven were seen both Woodham Walter and Belchamp Walter on several dates while two Great Egret over Great Horkesley were a good inland find.

Frinton-on-Sea had a very busy month with 'vis mig' and it was a month dominated by westerlies but a couple of decent days with wildfowl moving so reasonable totals of 10,535 Brant Geese and 1,202 Common Scoter, eight Long-tailed Duck and three Great Egret. However, a Bean Goose sp., only 227 Northern Gannet, no shearwater, no Little Gull, just seven auk (all bigger ones!). Jaeger (Skua) totalled just 15 (two Pomarine, eight Parasitic (Arctic), five Great Skua). However, passerines were much better represented with totals of six Woodlark, 644 Eurasian Skylark, 1,685 Meadow Pipit, 5,473 Common Starling, 19 Eurasian Tree Sparrow, 813 Common Chaffinch, 15,428 European Goldfinch, 308 Eurasian Siskin (although 66% of those on one day), 3,413 Common Linnet, 37 (Lesser) Redpoll, 28 Brambling. The latter two have been quite scarce so far this autumn, whist 79 European Greenfinch is a meagre return reflecting the status of this bird and the lowest total yet (years 2006-2013 averaged over 1,000).

November 2019

It was wet and mild at the start of the month, the result of low pressure close to the west of Britain which continued until the 14th. Temperatures turned colder with sleet and snow locally but especially on higher ground on 8th and 9th and again on 13th and 14th. A quieter spell thereafter with below average temperatures was followed by more wet and mild weather from 21st until 27th when a northerly outbreak brought cold but bright conditions.

RSPB Rainham Marshes

Rising water levels saw an increase in wildfowl but the generally mild conditions brought little extra reward with a Whooper Swan on the 10th being the only incoming winter addition. A Bar-tailed Godwit was with the 50 Black-tailed Godwits on the 15th and there were a couple of Eurasian Woodcock and Jack Snipe sightings along with two wintering Ruff and a peak of 38 Pied Avocet. A juvenile Northern Gannet was seen on the river on the 20th and the first returning Caspian Gull were noted including three on the 11th. Five Western Marsh Harrier were wintering, and a Merlin was seen on the 16th, but it was a perched male Northern Goshawk for 45 minutes on the 29th that proved most popular although it was briefly seen on the 15th too. Northern Raven sightings increased and at least two each of Short-eared and Western Barn Owl were often out patrolling. A Snow Bunting was seen briefly on the 1st and another entertained on Purfleet Scrape on the 19th

and 20th. The Dartford Warbler was seen briefly on the 1st but not subsequently but there were still Eurasian Blackcap, Common Chiffchaff and Goldcrest to be found and up to four Common Firecrest were in the scrub. Bird of the month was obviously the superb Penduline Tit that posed for just a minute or so on the 17th. Bearded Reedling and Cetti's Warbler were showy on the trails and a Eurasian Tree Sparrow around the centre on the 17th was most unexpected.

Metropolitan Essex (London Natural History Society area)

In the Lee Valley, the two Western Cattle Egret returned for the winter to Hall Marsh Waltham Abbey from the 25th and a Eurasian Bittern was seen occasionally on Seventy Acres Holyfield along with a female Smew and a few Common Merganser (Goosander). The drake Greater Scaup remained on Walthamstow Wetlands and the Hooded Merganser was last seen on the 1st on King George V Reservoir where the drake Greater Scaup also remained. A Northern Pintail on the 24th was only the second this year and up to eight Common Merganser (Goosander) and 11 Common Goldeneye were recorded. A Scandinavian Rock Pipit was noted on the 8th. A Common Goldeneye was a good record for Wanstead Flats on the 10th and a Dark-bellied Brant Goose in the Ingrebourne Valley on the same day was equally noteworthy along with a drake Common Merganser (Goosander) back on Connaught Water Epping Forest from the 19th. The adult Caspian Gull returned to Eagle Pond Leyton from the 23rd and down on the Thames there were two Common Scoter off Gallions Reach Beckton on the 8th while 17 Little Egret near Upminster on the 24th was a good count for the season. Common Firecrest were noted at five sites. There was a scattering of single Eurasian Siskin and Brambling and a few winter thrushes, and a Black Redstart in Upminster on the 15th. Northern Raven were seen over Roding Valley Meadows and Thorndon Park.

South-east Essex

Wallasea Island was a draw all month with a peak of seven Short-eared Owl (10th), three Hen Harrier (including a silver male), ten Western Marsh Harrier, regular Merlin and Peregrine Falcon, up to three Great Egret throughout, and even a wintering Curlew Sandpiper (1st). Two more Short-eared Owl were on Foulness Island and further Great Egret were seen at Lower Ray Pits Canewdon (20th) and on Bowers Marsh (7th). Two Whooper Swan remained at Paglesham Lagoon until the 9th and two Red-crested Pochard were there the same day with eight Common Goldeneye on the 30th being a good local count. Nine Common Eider and a European Shag were off Gunners Park Shoebury on the 30th and Common Firecrest was there on the 19th and another six Common Eider were seen off Canvey again along with small flocks of Common Scoter and a Purple Sandpiper on the 15th and 16th. Nineteen Mediterranean Gull and a European Shag were off Southend Pier on the 8th and 134 was the peak count for the Two Tree Island Little Egret roost on the 1st while a Eurasian Bittern was back at Wat Tyler from the 14th. Upriver there were 39 Common and a female Velvet Scoter off East Tilbury on the 30th where both Twite and Little Auk were noted on the 19th and a Great Skua was off Tilbury on the 5th. The Black-necked Grebe remained at Thurrock Thameside Mucking until at least the 3rd. Up at Bradwell Bird Observatory a Dartford Warbler was seen between the 6th and 13th and two Short-eared Owl, two Merlin and both male and female Hen Harrier made for good 'raptoring'. Northern Raven were noted over Bowers Marsh and East Tilbury and inland at Hanningfield Reservoir there were three female Greater Scaup, 27 Common Goldeneye, six Black-tailed Godwit and 11 Dunlin on the 19th.

Mid-Essex

Abberton Reservoir was the bird hub for the area once again with up to 11 Great Egret throughout the month. The white bird fest was added to by the arrival of five Western Cattle Egret from the 18th and the first two Tundra Swan (Bewick's) from the 8th, increasing to six on the 29th. Common Merganser (Goosander) numbers rose steadily to 17 on the 7th and there were 56 by the 17th. Similarly, Greater Scaup rose from two females on the 7th to nine on the 18th, Just the one female Smew was seen from the 10th and two Red-crested Pochard were seen on the 8th. The single Long-tailed Duck became two from the 8th and two Black-necked Grebe were around from the 18th with at least one drake Ring-necked Duck back until the 19th. A Little Auk was a superb find on the 16th

but amazingly did not get consumed and was still paddling around on the 19th! A ringtail Hen Harrier was seen on three dates from the 10th. Elsewhere there were two Western Cattle Egret at Old Hall Marshes on the 16th and adjacent Abbotts Hall held four Horned Grebe (Slavonian), 320 Northern Pintail and a Short-eared Owl on the 21st. A Common Loon (Great Northern Diver) was off West Mersea on the 15th and two Great Egret and another Horned Grebe (Slavonian) were at Fingringhoe Wick on the 5th with Hen Harrier and Merlin there on the 29th. A Whimbrel and Common Sandpiper were at Heybridge Gravel Pit on the 3rd.

North-east Essex

The Naze continued to host some good birds with Common Firecrest, Merlin and up to 16 Snow Bunting on several dates along with a Black-throated Loon (Diver) (9th), Little Auk (4th and 23rd), Lapland Longspur (Bunting) (6th and 29th), Water Pipit (5th), Pallas's Leaf Warbler (7th), two Horned Lark (Shore) (16th and 24th), Black Brant (9th) and a Pomarine Jaeger (Skua) on the 16th. A single Snow Bunting was at Holland Haven on the 4th with a Bohemian Waxwing there on the 10th and two more Snow Bunting nearby at Frinton-on-Sea on the 29th. A Dartford Warbler and late Barn Swallow were at Colne Point on the 3rd and a Merlin was there on the 19th while the harrier roost in Hamford Water produced 15 Marsh and two male and a female Hen as well as Merlin and a Lapland Longspur (Bunting) on the 29th. Another ringtail Hen Harrier was over Weeley on the 18th and a Little Auk was found in a Dovercourt garden on the 10th. A wander around Beacon Hill Fort Harwich on the 3rd produced 100 Long-tailed Tit with 60 Goldcrest and eight Common Firecrest.

There were some good 'vis mig' days off Frinton-on-Sea: 5th: 509 Common Scoter, three Common Eider, Sooty Shearwater, six Barn Swallow; 15th: eight Common Eider, four Common Goldeneye, Black-legged Kittiwake, Little Auk, three Great Skua, Pomarine Jaeger (Skua); 17th: three Short-eared Owl; 24th: 74 Red-throated Loon (Diver), Black-throated Loon (Diver), Common Loon (Great Northern Diver), 32 Common Eider, Great Skua and the big day of the 30th: 220 Red-throated Loon (Diver), five Black-throated Loon (Diver), three Common Loon (Great Northern Diver), 22 Common Eider, 711 Common Scoter, three Long-tailed Duck, two Pomarine Jaeger (Skua), Great Skua, 122 Great Cormorant, European Shag, Black-legged Kittiwake and a late Arctic Tern.

December 2019

The closing month of the year started with high pressure close to the UK but resuming frontal systems and low pressure from 4th saw some large daily rainfall totals for the next three weeks. The last week was somewhat mild for much of the country with fewer frosts and colder snaps than normal in what was generally a rather mild month.

RSPB Rainham Marshes

A quite final month of the year with ever increasing water levels but little change. A Western Cattle Egret was seen for a while on the 3rd and two Ruff were still to be found amongst the Northern Lapwing flocks while Pied Avocet reached a new high of 44 on the 5th. A Little Stint on the 12th was amazingly the first for the year and a Jack Snipe occasionally bobbed for the punters from the Butts Hide. There were almost no European Golden Plover, but Dunlin hit a healthy 1,107 on the 5th and two Red Knot were with the godwit on the 31st. Caspian Gull were seen on several dates and a combined total of ten birds were seen between the 5th and 6th. The male Northern Goshawk was seen again on the 5th and 18th and a juvenile female Hen Harrier was a real treat on the 11th when a Merlin was also seen. Up to five Western Marsh Harrier, Common Buzzard and Peregrine Falcon kept things active and a Red Kite was seen on the 3rd. Eight Brant Geese circled on the 18th with a single on the 29th and a Common Merganser (Goosander) was seen going upriver on the 7th. Northern Raven dropped in occasionally, but Short-eared Owl appearances were scarce although the Western Barn Owl were superb. Bearded Reedling were still showing on the trails and Water Pipit and Common Firecrest were still to be found. The last new year bird of 2019 was a European Shag bringing up about a total of 178 which is well down on recent years.

Metropolitan Essex (London Natural History Society area)

In the Lee Valley, the two Western Cattle Egret continued to loiter around Hall Marsh Waltham

Abbey and the drake Greater Scaup did likewise at Walthamstow Wetlands while single Eurasian Bittern and female Smew were around Seventy Acres Lake Holyfield with up to 21 Common Merganser (Goosander) in the general area. Holyfield Hall Farm attracted a Northern Raven (13th) and over 150 Common Chaffinch and with them were a Brambling and up to 26 Yellowhammer and winter thrush numbers slowly increased across the area. Down the Valley the drake Greater Scaup also remained on King George V Reservoir where a male Merlin (6th) and drake Smew (29th) were seen while back at the Wetlands there were still two Common Firecrest and the crest hybrid to be found along with a Common Sandpiper. Another three Common Sandpiper were at Bow Creek. The adult Caspian Gull at Eagle Pond Leyton was joined by a second calendar year bird for a few days and down at Creekmouth Barking an early first calendar year Iceland Gull was seen on the 27th and 30th. The site also hosted at least 11 Common Chiffchaff along with a Black Redstart. Eurasian Woodcock were seen in the Ingrebourne Valley and at Warren Gorge where there was also a Eurasian Bittern on the 3rd. Common Firecrest were seen here, in Purfleet and at Warley Place while two Rock Pipit on Wanstead Flats (15th) were decidedly late in the season to be inland. Common Merganser (Goosander) away from the Lee Valley were seen at Connaught Water Epping Forest and at Hainault Forest where there were three on the 15th. The year finished off in style with six Red Crossbill over Romford (30th) and a ringtail Hen Harrier through Beckton Sewage Works on the 31st.

South-east Essex

Wallasea Island was still popular with a peak of seven Short-eared Owl (1st), three ringtail and an adult male Hen Harrier, 15 Western Marsh Harrier, regular Merlin and Peregrine Falcon and up to three regular Great Egret. A second calendar year Glaucous Gull was seen on the 1st and five Twite dropped in on the 28th. Two Great Egret were also at Paglesham Lagoon on the 25th and two Whooper Swan were at Fleet Head Great Wakering on the 27th. Two Northern Raven were here and at other local sites from the 27th to the 30th with another over Wat Tyler (5th) while Red Kite were seen over South Fambridge and West Canvey Marshes. Three more Whooper Swan overflew Wickford on the 4th and a male Hen Harrier was seen at North Fambridge on the 22nd. Two European Shag were off South Fambridge on the 7th and 8th while three Water Pipit were still being seen at Vange Marshes and a Western Cattle Egret was on Fobbing briefly on the 1st. Bradwell Bird Observatory had Short-eared Owl, Merlin and a Twite on the 4th which later became 18 on the 15th and 28 from the 18th which is the highest local count for some years. A Dartford Warbler was also seen there on the 11th. Common Firecrest were wintering at Gunners Park Shoebury (two) and in St Mary's in Shoebury (three). There were some good loon (diver) counts off Canvey with a peak of 54 Red-throated on the 22nd with at least two Black-throated on several dates too. A Velvet Scoter and Common Eider were seen with 60 Common Scoter on the 1st and Great Crested Grebe reached 130 on the 17th. A European Shag was seen on the 21st and at least five Mediterranean Gull were drifting around. A Great Skua was loafing off the end of Southend Pier on the 26th and 15 Mediterranean Gull were mumping scraps out there too. Up Thames there were 16 Brant Geese, 12 Common Scoter and a Red-throated Loon (Diver) off Thurrock Thameside Mucking on the 1st with a Black Redstart near the Visitor Centre on the 3rd and the three Twite continued to be seen until the at least the 11th at Coalhouse Fort along with a high of 27 Corn Bunting. Inland a Long-tailed Duck was at Hanningfield Reservoir on the 1st and 12 Common Merganser (Goosander) was the peak on the 9th.

Mid-Essex

Abberton Reservoir was (as so often is the case) the centre of attention once again. Five Western Cattle Egret lingered until the 1st and then a singleton appeared from the 12th. Great Egret peaked at 11 on the 21st and the six Tundra Swan (Bewick's) stayed until the 1st with four new ones arriving from the 15th. Greater Scaup reached six on the 4th and the two Long-tailed Duck, Black-necked Grebe and drake Ring-necked Duck were all in attendance. Common Merganser (Goosander) numbers dropped to 36 on the 4th and a pair of Smew on the 15th was joined by another female from the 21st. A whopping 4,210 Eurasian Teal were counted in one group on the 18th and Merlin and ring-tailed Hen Harrier were both seen. The Black Brant was last seen at West Mersea on the 8th

with seven Mediterranean Gull and a Pale-bellied Brant Goose there on the 15th and three Common Loon (Great Northern Diver) in the mouth of the Blackwater by the 28th. Upriver there was Red-necked Grebe off Tollesbury on the 12th which was then seen off Osea Island (19th) along with five Horned Grebe (Slavonian), Common Loon (Great Northern Diver), 64 Red-breasted Merganser and 14 Common Scoter. Old Hall Marshes held a Black Brant on the 18th and three Short-eared Owl and two Spotted Redshank on the 22nd. A European Shag was at Heybridge on the 12th and a Great Egret was inland nearby at Langford on the 22nd. At East Mersea there was another Red-necked Grebe sighting and a Common Eider on the 27th with three Tundra Swan (Bewick's) over on the 15th. The Colne was quiet save for a juvenile male Hen Harrier at Alresford on the 21st and a very late Barn Swallow at The Hythe on the 5th and a Common Loon (Great Northern Diver) and three Russian Greater White-fronted Geese over Brightlingsea on the 30th.

North-east Essex

The Naze continued to host the same good birds as November with up to three Common Firecrest, regular Merlin and Short-eared Owl and up to 15 Snow Bunting down on Stone Point. A Little Auk was paddling around offshore on the 10th. Five more Snow Bunting were at Colne Point on the 7th and a Black Brant was there on the 18th while three Tundra Swan (Bewick's) over St Osyth on the 15th were tracked south. The Stour was quiet with peaks of 19 Red-breasted Merganser, 11 Common Goldeneye, Horned Grebe (Slavonian) and Common Loon (Great Northern Diver) on the 18th off Wrabness and a high of 30 Red-breasted Merganser and seven Greater Scaup off Mistley Quay on the 12th. The harrier roost in Hamford Water hosted 21 Marsh and three Hen on the 15th along with two dashing Merlin and a Short-eared Owl was seen at Kirby-le-Soken on the 23rd. Back on the coast four Purple Sandpiper were along the Holland Haven sea front and there were some good loon (diver) days off Frinton-on-Sea: 16th: 181 Red-throated, two Black-throated; 17th: 41 Red-throated, three Greater Scaup; 18th: 204 Red-throated, Common (Great Northern), Red-necked Grebe, Razorbill, two Common Murre (Guillemot), two Velvet Scoter, 93 Common Scoter, 192 Great Cormorant, Great Skua; 21st: 221 Red-throated, Black-throated, two Common (Great Northern), 48 Black-legged Kittiwake.

With thanks to the Met Office for the weather information.

Systematic List 2019

INTRODUCTION

In all, 261 species were recorded in 2019 (264 in 2018 and 254 in 2017), approximately 66% of the Essex List, which remains at 394 species following BBRC acceptance of a 1998 record of Falcated Duck at Old Hall as the first for the County (see Systematic List) and the demotion of Steep Grey Shrike to a race of Great Grey following adoption of IOC taxonomy.

The only abbreviations used in the Systematic List are:
♂ for male (and ♂♂ for males) and ♀ for female (and ♀♀ for females).
BTO – British Trust for Ornithology
DEFRA – Department for Environment, Farming and Rural Affairs

The following books may be referenced in the text:

- M. Dennis 1996 – *Tetrad Atlas of the Breeding Birds of Essex*. Mike Dennis. Essex Birdwatching Society 1996
- S. 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 189. 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.

International World Bird List names are now used, but where significantly different to the more commonly recognised English name, this is also given.

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 not known which sub-species is occurring in the County, the Latin name is marked with an asterix * e.g. *Phasianus colchicus**

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 (Eurasian 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 216).
EBSIP (3, 2, 5) – the species requires a description that should be forwarded to the Essex Identification Panel (see page 214).

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 relate 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 2019.

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).

Systematic List 2019

RED-LEGGED PARTRIDGE *Alectoris rufa rufa*

Fairly common and widespread, naturalised, resident.

First introduced into the UK for shooting in 1770, around 6.5 million captive-bred birds are released in the UK each year. It is not usually possible in the field to distinguish genuine wild birds from those captive-bred and released. The native breeding population has declined in the last 25 years. As an introduced species this population decrease is not of conservation concern, however, there is evidence that shooting based on large scale releases of Red-legged Partridge can lead to local extinctions of the native Grey Partridge which is a Red Listed species (BTO).

In total 503 records were received (508 in 2018, 490 in 2017) from around 184 sites (195 in 2018, 141 in 2017) encompassing all corners of the County. A minimum of 49 pairs were reported from 23 sites. Reports of more than two pairs came from: Braintree and Bocking, 15+; Borley, three; Brookes Wood Greenstead Green, five; Great Henny, three; Pebmarsh, five; Twinstead, five. In addition, two or more birds were reported from 14 further locations during the breeding season (May-July). There were no reports of confirmed breeding.

Outside the breeding season coveys of 25+ were reported as follows: January: Wakering Common, 20 on 18th; Mundon, 21 on 29th. February: Sible Hedingham, 40 on 6th. August: Stow Marsh South Woodham Ferrers, 260 on 23rd. September; Fleet Head Great Wakering, 62 on 21st. November: Twinstead, 22 on 19th. December: Fleet Head Great Wakering, 30 on 29th and 30th.

GREY PARTRIDGE *Perdix perdix perdix*

UK EX REX

Much declined and now scarce resident.

In the UK the Grey Partridge has declined by 92% since the late 1960s (measured by the Breeding Bird Survey). The primary cause appears to be poor chick survival due to decreasing food availability as a result of agricultural intensification. Sadly, despite research and the Biodiversity Action Plan, efforts to increase numbers in the countryside have been unsuccessful.

In total 92 records were received from 37 locations (47 from 35 in 2018, 58 from 34 in 2017, 57 from 39 in 2016). One confirmed breeding record was received: a pair was seen with seven chicks at Colne Point on 17th June. Otherwise, a singing ♂ was heard at Bowers Marsh on 28th April and single pairs were seen during the breeding season (May to July) at two other sites: Mount Bures on 15th May; Great Horkesley on 14th June.

Outside the breeding season there were only two double-figure counts. Counts of eight or more were as follows: August: Bridgewick Farm Dengie, 20 on 25th; Blue House Farm, eight on 26th; Colne Point, eight on 30th. October: Colne Point, eight on 15th. November: Bridgewick Farm Dengie, 11 on 10th. December: Tollesbury Wick, eight on 29th.

COMMON QUAIL *Coturnix coturnix coturnix*

UK

Scarce passage migrant and summer visitor, subject to influxes.

A species of a very secretive nature more often heard than seen, this bird often remains undetected. Another quiet year for this species with just three birds reported from two sites (2018: three from three; 2017: ten from seven; 2016: four from four.) No singing birds this year.

Bonnetts Wood Corbets Tye	Two flushed	27th May
Bedfords Park Havering-atte-Bower	One	10th July

Annual minima for singing ♂♂ and confirmed breeding pairs over the last decade have been:

	2019	2018	2017	2016	2015	2014	2013	2012	2011	2010	Average
Totals	0	2	10	4	4	4	3	9	12	7	5.6

COMMON PHEASANT *Phasianus colchicus**

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

A native of Asia, the Pheasant was introduced into Europe with the first records in Britain coming prior the 10th century. In the UK, the Pheasant breeding population is significantly determined by the release of captive-bred birds for shooting. About 38 million captive-bred birds are released each year and the breeding population is thought to be around 2.2 million ♀♀. BTO research indicates that large releases of gamebirds may increase the populations of generalist predators such as Common Buzzard and Carrion Crow, in turn putting predation pressure on other species.

This species remains a breeding resident in the County with a total of 1,571 records received (1,808 in 2018, 1,641 in 2017).

Confirmed breeding was reported from six sites: Abberton Reservoir; Bonnetts Wood Corbets Tye; Old Hall Marshes; Orsett Fen; Roding Valley; Rainham Marshes, which held 16 crowing ♂♂ and three broods of chicks were seen.

Counts of 20 or more were reported from: Epping Forest Burial Park, 24 on 3rd January; Wallasea Island, 30 on 20th February; Epping Forest Burial Park, 20 on 11th April; Great Braxted, 52 on 20th August; Greenstead Green, 20 on 20th September; Fingringhoe Wick, 20 on 21st October; Wallasea Island 20 on 17th November; Great Henny, 50 on 4th December.

Interestingly, recent DNA analysis of the Common Pheasant suggests that it may in fact be three species (Liu *et al*. 2020), which will make a real headache for the BOURC, so perhaps it should be removed from the British List which would then make it a real legal nightmare for Pheasant shoots to attempt their mass releases as they would then have to be licenced to do so. As it happens, as this was being written it was confirmed that all releases of Common Pheasant will now require licencing, following a legal challenge by Wild Justice.

BRANT GOOSE *Branta bernicla* UK REX

Dark-bellied Brant *Branta bernicla bernicla*

Very common passage migrant and winter visitor.

There were no inland reports in the first nine months of the year. Apart from a single bird just inland at the Ingrebourne Valley on 10th November, the only record in the last three months of the year was a group of about 30 at Abberton Reservoir on 20th October. Although Wood (2007) had reported a then-recent trend to increased numbers at that reservoir, with flocks of up to 200 recorded, that seems to have come to an end in the 1990s. The single bird there in November 2018 was more typical of recent years, the last double-figure count at that site being in 1996.

The first winter also saw a very modest showing on the Inner Thames, just single birds at Rainham Marshes on three dates in January and two at Thurrock Thameside Mucking on 31st March, plus an interesting spring record of four birds flying north at Gallions Reach Beckton on 19th April. Many more reached the Inner Thames in the autumn, when the area had its share of the marked arrival on 20th September (as to which see further below), with 30+ at Thurrock Thameside Mucking, 172 at Tilbury and one at Beckton on that date. Elsewhere on the Inner Thames, there was a series of records from Rainham Marshes, beginning with singles in October on 5th, 7th and 13th (when there was also another at Beckton) and peaking with 18 on 24th October and four on 29th November. There were 50 at Stanford Warren on 30th October and a further 16 at Thurrock Thameside Mucking on 1st December.

Principal monthly Wetland Bird Survey counts are shown on the next page.

These figures are remarkable in two respects. In the first place, there was a very substantial increase between the December 2018 total of 18,619 and the January 2019 figure of 36,083 shown above. This influx had not been detected in any unusual coastal movements in the intervening period, but mid-winter movements often seem to pass unobserved. The total count for Foulness Island and the Thames in October 2019 is the second highest estuary total ever noted in the County, exceeded only by the October 1990 figure (from the same sites) of 33,109, which however came during a

period of much higher numbers generally than those recorded in recent years. The 2019 figure included no less than 17,960 on the Thames Estuary side of Foulness Island, with other substantial counts at Wakering Stairs and Two Tree Island. These figures were not mirrored in any other exceptional figures at the other estuaries, where if anything October totals were unusually low. The Foulness/Thames area often has the largest early arrivals, with significant flocks only reaching the other estuaries as winter advances. This dichotomy had been noticeable in October 2018 and was even more pronounced a year later.

GB 980 INT 2,100	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
WeBS total	**36083**	**31912**	**13414**	**4284**	**224**	**305**	**34889**	**30798**	**33991**
Stour Estuary	**1998**	**3902**	**3892**	**3150**	222	242	**1590**	**2377**	**4956**
Hamford Water	**4347**	**2912**	531	nc	nc	4	487	**3563**	**6133**
Colne Estuary	**1430**	**1596**	476	34	nc	0	267	**2233**	**2064**
Blackwater Estuary	**7276**	**5598**	**6050**	910	1	2	**1429**	**5967**	**7364**
Dengie	**2600**	**4670**	319	0	0	0	819	**1360**	**7358**
Crouch/Roach/Wallasea	**5429**	**4949**	221	8	0	57	20	**1216**	**2138**
Foulness/Thames	**12958**	**8285**	**1925**	182	1	0	**30275**	**13831**	**3627**
Abberton Reservoir	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Hanningfield Reservoir	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Lee Valley	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Other	45	0	0	0	0	0	2	251	350

Away from the Wetland Bird Survey, very few full counts of the larger flocks were received. The dedicated team at Bradwell Bird Observatory reported a flock of 2,000+ east of the power station in January/February and a similar number at Deal Hall Dengie on 6th February while, again in February, a regular observer at Wallasea Island counted 2,500 on 12th and 2,600 on 20th.

Counts of juveniles in autumn indicated that 2019 had been the best breeding season for some years. Two observers in particular produced some comprehensive counts. At Colne Point, Chris Balchin counted 13 small groups in October/December of which 24% were juveniles, while at five sites along the Blackwater, Crouch and Thames estuaries Dave Low analysed eight larger flocks, in which 19% were juveniles. There were some large families, including one of two adults and six young at Blue House Farm: the whole of this family was caught and ringed at that site and later observed in the field. The success of the breeding season was no doubt a factor in the exceptional October Wetland Bird Survey count at Foulness Island and the Thames Estuary, reported above.

Late spring passage calls for little comment. For the third year running birds were reported from ten sites in the last 12 days of May but in 2019 there was only one three-figure count, of 344 moving north past Frinton-on-Sea on 23rd. Spring departure ended with 18 passing the same site on 1st June. Mid-summer stragglers were seen at four sites in June and four in July. All records were of 1-2 birds apart from up to five at Old Hall Marshes in July.

Only two August records were received. The first, of one in the Bradwell Bird Observatory area on 4th, probably refers to a summering bird, but 19 flying south past Frinton-on-Sea on 21st were surely the vanguard of the autumn arrival. There were no more until September, when a handful of records of 1-2 in the first two weeks preceded a more sustained arrival from the third week of the month. This was most pronounced on 20th when records came from ten sites and included 343 at Leigh-on-Sea and 427 passing Frinton-on-Sea, followed at the former by 1,150 on 28th and at the latter by 686 on 22nd and 1,247 on 24th. The main feature of October was the build-up in the Thames already mentioned; passage in that month at Frinton-on-Sea was modest compared to some recent years, with maxima of 2,906 on 16th and 1,848 on 29th.

Pale-bellied Brant *Branta bernicla hrota*

Uncommon winter visitor.

Numbers were very thin indeed in both winters. In the early part of the year, one was seen between The Strood Mersea Island and West Mersea on several dates between 25th January and 20th March, while singles at East Mersea on 3rd January and Old Hall Marshes on 20th January could have referred to the same bird. Similarly, sightings of one on Foulness Island on 20th January, at Deal Hall Dengie on 1st February and at Blue House Farm on 1st March could equally relate to just one bird.

In the second winter all records were of singles in October, on Foulness Island on 13th, at West Mersea on 15th and 31st and one flying south past Frinton-on-Sea on 16th.

Black Brant *Branta bernicla nigricans*

Rare winter visitor. **EBSIP**

As with Pale-bellied, Black Brant gave a poor showing in 2019. In the first winter, just four birds could have accounted for all sightings. In the north of the County there was one at The Naze on 12th January. On the Blackwater Estuary there was one at West Mersea on 4th January and 2nd February, with perhaps the same bird at Goldhanger on 21st February, while on the Crouch two on Foulness Island on 20th January were presumably the same as two seen at Deal Hall Dengie on 29th, one or other of these probably accounting for singles at the latter site on 3rd February and at Blue House Farm on 1st March.

The second winter showed very similar distribution and numbers, all possibly explained by returning birds. One at The Naze on 6th November was followed by one at The Strood/West Mersea on many dates between 15th November and 15th December (with two on the latter date) and one (of these?) at Colne Point on 18th December. On the Crouch there was one on Foulness Island on 13th October, followed by two at Blue House Farm on 1st December.

CANADA GOOSE *Branta canadensis canadensis*

Common, naturalised, resident.

Breeding records were received from 46 sites (55 in 2018). On Foulness Island 22 pairs reared 78 juveniles and at Rainham Marshes 66 pairs produced 41 broods. There were crèches of 40 young at Hainault Forest on 14th June and 50 at Raphael Park Romford on 15th May. All other sites where there was confirmed breeding reported between one and three nests and/or broods but there were no full counts at Old Hall Marshes, Wallasea Island or Walthamstow Wetlands.

Principal monthly Wetland Bird Survey counts were:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
WeBS total	**3787**	**2621**	**1943**	**1338**	**2044**	**4076**	**3600**	**4131**	**2184**
Stour Estuary	728	532	526	540	788	654	646	756	440
Hamford Water	9	29	54	nc	nc	0	75	0	0
Colne Estuary	15	16	4	4	nc	0	0	4	12
Blackwater Estuary	82	50	65	50	25	250	352	369	37
Dengie	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Crouch/Roach/Wallasea	403	256	173	118	6	179	1144	1393	278
Foulness/Thames	676	430	154	225	86	1381	446	809	199
Abberton Reservoir	177	92	16	24	813	351	192	31	290
Hanningfield Reservoir	228	94	45	28	118	345	67	196	28
Lee Valley	372	449	295	116	112	881	349	234	278
Other	1097	673	611	233	96	35	329	339	622

Counts of 350+ not included in the above figures were as follows:- Cattawade, 350 on 28th August; Abberton Reservoir, 350 on 25th June: Heybridge Gravel Pit, about 350 on 2nd September;

Hanningfield Reservoir, 500+ on 31st August and 19th November; Blue House Farm, about 500 on 7th February; River Roach, 800 on 26th September. In addition, counts of 250 or more were received from Wat Tyler, Brook Farm Upminster, Valentine's Park Ilford, Wanstead Flats, Walthamstow Wetlands and Fishers Green Holyfield.

BARNACLE GOOSE *Branta leucopsis* UK

Scarce winter visitor but fast increasing naturalised population.

There were no reports of confirmed breeding but the naturalised flock in Hamford Water peaked at 29 on 25th May and about 50 on 14th August. Elsewhere there were a few reports of 1-3 presumed feral birds during the summer months.

In the first winter the only double-figure count involved up to 14 seen at Tollesbury Wick and Old Hall Marshes between 7th January and 13th February. In October 13 were at Walthamstow Wetlands on 14th while at Blue House Farm there were 15 apparently pure-bred birds in the hybrid flock on 26th. There were no double-figure counts later in the year.

BARNACLE/CANADA GOOSE *Branta leucopsis/canadensis*

Maximum counts of hybrid birds at Blue House Farm were 12 on 29th January, 20+ on 26th April and 17th May, 39 on 5th and 12th September and 39 again on 9th November.

GREYLAG GOOSE *Anser anser anser* UK

Common, naturalised, resident.

Breeding was reported from 30 sites (43 in 2018, 30 in 2017). Much the highest count came from Rainham Marshes, where 35 pairs raised 23 broods, but there was no full breeding survey of this species at Walthamstow Wetlands, Foulness Island, Wallasea Island or Old Hall Marshes (where one observer noted a minimum of seven broods in June/July from casual observations). Elsewhere the highest breeding numbers were reported at Hamford Water (five broods and two occupied nests on 25th May), Lofts Farm Gravel Pits Heybridge (seven broods on 10th May), Warren Gorge Chafford Hundred (six broods on 10th May) and Hainault Forest (seven broods on 14th June).

Principal monthly Wetland Bird Survey counts were:

GB 1,400	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
WeBS total	**2207**	**1706**	**1019**	**585**	**1292**	**2256**	**3235**	**2582**	**2720**
Stour Estuary	10	92	88	148	306	790	346	640	432
Hamford Water	521	352	346	nc	nc	6	654	198	809
Colne Estuary	52	82	19	4	nc	0	17	149	62
Blackwater Estuary	258	320	96	134	95	379	697	520	127
Dengie	0	0	2	2	0	0	0	0	0
Crouch/Roach/Wallasea	122	115	24	34	0	48	184	34	141
Foulness/Thames	36	200	31	31	120	96	144	106	21
Abberton Reservoir	355	162	12	50	330	439	217	130	411
Hanningfield Reservoir	130	5	76	45	268	180	168	59	114
Lee Valley	197	140	107	77	27	101	106	78	59
Other	526	238	218	60	146	217	702	668	544

Counts of 200+ not included in the above figures came from Cattawade, 250 on 28th August; Holland Haven, a maximum of 295 on 18th November; Abberton Reservoir, a maximum of 300+ on 4th December; Old Hall Marshes, 290 on 5th August; Bradwell-Juxta-Coggeshall Gravel Pit, 276 on 8th September; Boreham, 325 on 19th February; Hanningfield Reservoir, a maximum of 500 on 31st August; Stanford Warren, 300 on 30th October; Mayesbrook Park Dagenham, 200+ on 7th June; Rainham Marshes, a maximum of 553 on 13th October.

PINK-FOOTED GOOSE *Anser brachyrhynchus* UK

Scarce passage migrant winter and visitor.

There was a modest showing in the first winter. All records are given. January started with one at Steeple on 1st, followed by five (the largest group of the first winter) at Deal Hall Dengie on 2nd, when there was also one at Rainham Marshes which stayed until 4th, with one at Blue House Farm on the latter date. There were no further January records but in February two were seen at Tollesbury Wick on 13th, with presumably the same birds at Old Hall Marshes on 17th and four at Goldhanger on 22nd. There were then two surprisingly late records, of one at Old Hall Marshes on 19th April followed by two there on 27th April and one at Rainham Marshes on several dates between 29th April and 18th May. The origin of these spring birds must perhaps be open to question.

The only records in the second half of the year were both in October, a group of ten flying north past Frinton-on-Sea on 3rd (perhaps displaced birds returning to the Norfolk wintering grounds) and one at Deal Hall Dengie on 29th.

TUNDRA BEAN GOOSE *Anser serrirostris* UK

Scarce winter visitor. **EBSIP (170, 152, 322)**

Two lingering from 2018 at Hanningfield Reservoir were seen on 3rd January and perhaps then moved to the Thames Estuary, where two were seen at Vange Marsh on several dates between 10th and 19th before being seen at Bowers Marsh on 20th and 27th and perhaps also accounting for one at West Canvey Marsh on 29th.

BEAN GOOSE sp. *Anser serrirostris* or *fabalis*

Frinton-on-Sea	One	29th October

GREATER WHITE-FRONTED GOOSE *Anser albifrons* UK

Russian Greater White-fronted Goose *Anser albifrons albifrons*

Uncommon passage migrant and winter visitor.

There was a reasonable showing in the first winter by the standards of recent years but with records concentrated in just a few sites. On the northern County border there were 15 at Broomhouse Flash Langham on 26th January and 14 there on 1st February. At Holland Haven, nine first reported on 11th January stayed for the rest of the month, increasing in February to 29 on 2nd and 30 on 6th and 12th, the last record being of 20 the following day. Elsewhere there were three seen at both East and West Mersea on 3rd January and, on 2nd February, one at The Naze and six at Tollesbury Wick.

In the south of the County records were concentrated in the outer Thames Estuary and the Lee Valley. In the first of these areas the main focus was on Bowers Marsh, where two first reported on 7th January increased to five on 18th January and seven on 14th February which stayed at least intermittently to 27th February, with smaller numbers on several other dates in between. The same group presumably accounted for up to seven seen at West Canvey Marsh on at least four occasions during this period. Two then re-appeared at Bowers Marsh on 27th March, remaining until 14th April. In the Lee Valley there were up to three seen mainly in the Holyfield area but also at other sites between 12th January and 13th March. Elsewhere in the south there were eight on 3rd February on Foulness Island, two on Wallasea Island on 20th February and 20th March, with perhaps one of these birds at Blue House Farm on 8th March, four at Rainham Marshes on 7th February and one at Wanstead Flats on 26th March.

By contrast, the only records in the second winter were singles at Holland Haven on 24th-28th November, Woodford Green on 15th December and two at Abberton Reservoir on 31st December.

MUTE SWAN *Cygnus olor* UK

Common resident and winter visitor.

In total 85 pairs were reported from 68 sites (80 from 63 in 2018). (Some sites reported pairs, others reported nests or broods and some reported a combination of these. In the absence of other information it has been assumed that the number of broods or nests at any given site was the same as the number of pairs.) There were four broods at Walthamstow Wetlands and three broods at both Rainham Marshes (where however only one chick fledged out of the three broods) and Chigborough Lakes. At Old Hall Marshes six pairs produced only two broods between them. All other sites reported 1-2 pairs. On the Chelmer between Heybridge and Beeleigh a pair raised 11 cygnets successfully.

Principal monthly Wetland Bird Survey counts were:

GB 500	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
WeBS total	**719**	**731**	**680**	**596**	**1001**	**583**	**836**	**880**	**628**
Stour Estuary	316	414	306	286	360	126	408	456	366
Hamford Water	16	17	12	nc	nc	11	22	19	20
Colne Estuary	15	9	12	1	nc	12	1	13	0
Blackwater Estuary	20	29	31	12	8	5	17	28	19
Dengie	20	0	8	2	0	0	0	0	0
Crouch/Roach/Wallasea	42	40	96	53	58	44	3	31	9
Foulness/Thames	92	28	40	23	7	31	19	127	26
Abberton Reservoir	68	128	87	172	448	155	117	56	85
Hanningfield Reservoir	6	2	2	12	92	81	90	45	20
Lee Valley	81	40	34	10	17	86	124	99	56
Other	43	24	52	25	11	32	35	6	27

The August count at Abberton Reservoir was the highest since 2011. Higher counts were regular in the 1980s and 1990s. Other three-figure counts came, as usual, only from the Stour Estuary (where the main flock is always at Mistley) and Foulness Island. The highest counts at both sites were the Wetland Bird Survey counts shown in the table. In December, when there was no official count on the Stour Estuary, observers at Mistley counted 140 on 27th and 175 the following day.

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

Uncommon passage migrant and winter visitor.

In the first winter period all records were confined to January: five at Blue House Farm on 2nd and two at Little Bromley on 22nd with perhaps the same two at Holland Haven on 26th while at Abberton Reservoir three on 2nd gradually increased to nine on 10th, with smaller numbers until the last sighting, of five on 18th.

In the second winter all the records came from Abberton Reservoir, where two arrived on 1st November, after which 1-3 were seen throughout that month before increasing to six on 29th and 30th. In December there were six on 1st, then four for the rest of the month.

WHOOPER SWAN *Cygnus cygnus* UK

Scarce passage migrant and winter visitor.

In the first winter there were just three records, all in early January and conceivably all relating to the same two birds, at Hill Hall Theydon Mount on 3rd, Abberton Reservoir on 6th and Tollesbury Wick on 11th. The first of these sites was a particularly surprising location: the birds were on the lake and a guide was able to confirm to the observer that they had only just arrived. These records were followed in the spring by another intriguing record, of an adult which spent one day at Bowers Marsh on 1st

May. A mid-summer record of one on Bramble Island, Hamford Water, on 17th June was thought to relate to a rehabilitated bird which had been released a few years ago on Horsey Island – this doubtless explains similar records from the same area mentioned in the *Essex Bird Reports* for 2016-2018.

In the second half of the year there was a flurry of records in late autumn. Four were seen at Paglesham Lagoon on 27th October and two of these probably accounted for records of two at the same site on 9th November and nearby at Roper's Farm/Barling Marsh on 28th and 31st October. Then, again on 9th November, there were 14 at Coalhouse Fort East Tilbury and one at Rainham Marshes. The only later records involved three at Cudmore Grove East Mersea and two flying south at Fleet Head Great Wakering, both on 27th December.

EGYPTIAN GOOSE *Alopochen aegyptiaca*

Fairly common, and increasing, resident.

Breeding was confirmed at 18 sites (20 in 2018). Five broods were located at Walthamstow Wetlands, the highest total yet at that site. No other site reported more than one brood, though at a few the spread of dates suggests that more than one could have been involved. The other sites reporting confirmed breeding were Cattawade Marshes, Sunnymead Farm Wivenhoe, Abberton Reservoir, Chigborough Lakes, Heybridge Gravel Pit, Shoebury Park, Thurrock Thameside Mucking, Stubbers Adventure Centre Corbets Tey, Raphael Park Romford, Valentine's Park Ilford, Mayesbrook Park Dagenham, Cody Dock Newham, Walthamstow Wetlands, William Girling Reservoir Chingford, Fairlop Waters Barkingside, Connaught Water Epping Forest and Glen Faba Roydon.

Reports without confirmation of breeding (and not necessarily in the breeding season) came from a further 81 sites (71 in 2018). Roughly half of these were along the Thames Estuary or in the Metropolitan area, the others being well spread with the usual exception of the north-west, where lack of both suitable habitat and observer coverage were doubtless factors.

The number of sites reporting double-figure counts was down again, to 12 (17 in 2018) but at the two principal sites, Abberton Reservoir and Wanstead Flats, numbers reached new highs. At the former, numbers peaked at 64 on 4th September, only to be eclipsed by 66 at Wanstead Flats on 15th December, both of these beating the previous County record (54 at Abberton Reservoir on 7th July 2018). The only other sites to record 20 or more were Old Hall Marshes, where there were 30 on 20th October, Boreham, where the highest count was 24 on 1st January, and Walthamstow Wetlands, where there were also 24 on 1st December. Other double-figure counts came from Broomhouse Flash Langham, Heybridge Basin, Hanningfield Reservoir, Leyton Flats, Walthamstow (presumably birds flying over from a nearby water), Walthamstow Marshes and William Girling Reservoir, with obvious likelihood of duplication between several of these sites.

COMMON SHELDUCK *Tadorna tadorna* UK

Locally common resident, passage migrant and winter visitor.

Coastal breeding was confirmed at 26 sites, compared with 16 in 2018 and 20 in 2017. These fluctuations will be more a reflection of observer coverage than anything else, with the County breeding population as measured by full surveys being at least five times the number of breeding pairs reported in a typical non-survey year (see Wood 2007). On Foulness Island 16 pairs were counted but only 20 juveniles. There were six broods at Paglesham Lagoon on 1st June and four broods at Alresford on 17th July. At Rainham Marshes four broods were noted from 42 summering birds. No full breeding survey of this species was carried out at Wallasea Island or Old Hall Marshes but there were at least three broods at each, as there were at East Tilbury. No other site reported more than two broods.

Inland there were three broods at Walthamstow Wetlands, the highest number there since 2012, and single broods at Walthamstow Marshes, Bowers Marsh, Abberton Reservoir, Bradwell-juxta-Coggeshall Gravel Pit and, in the north-west, at Mole Hall Widdington. The last-named was particularly noteworthy, as it was also the site furthest inland of any reported during the year.

Principal monthly Wetland Bird Survey counts were:

GB 470 INT 2,500	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
WeBS total	**9161**	**5018**	**3733**	**1604**	**526**	**1207**	**3872**	**7679**	**8601**
Stour Estuary	**2484**	**866**	**840**	**658**	458	**782**	**1594**	**2748**	**4158**
Hamford Water	**812**	364	**494**	nc	nc	25	312	**1049**	**822**
Colne Estuary	**619**	**540**	144	65	nc	23	153	270	**651**
Blackwater Estuary	**3608**	**2096**	**1320**	**534**	34	164	**1205**	**2387**	**1572**
Dengie	9	79	137	61	0	2	16	9	25
Crouch/Roach/Wallasea	**875**	**600**	**563**	104	4	176	441	**728**	**1248**
Foulness/Thames	**652**	360	85	137	20	35	54	420	46
Abberton Reservoir	18	24	22	29	10	0	0	1	8
Hanningfield Reservoir	0	1	4	4	0	0	0	0	0
Lee Valley	9	5	5	2	0	0	0	0	2
Other	75	83	119	10	0	0	97	67	69

Outside the Wetland Bird Survey, single-site counts of 200+ were received as follows (site maximum in each case): Mistley, 780+ on 27th December; Fingringhoe Wick, 290 on 28th December; Maldon Promenade, about 520 on 24th January; Wallasea Island, 1,010 on 13th December; Thurrock Thameside Mucking, 656 on 23rd September; East Tilbury, about 350 on 23rd June; Barking Riverside, 200 on 10th July.

Inland records away from the breeding sites came from a further 40 locations (38 in 2018). At the major reservoirs peak counts were: Abberton Reservoir, about 76 on 13th September (this was an exceptional one-day peak, all other counts being in single figures apart from 23 flying north on 3rd May and 17 on 28th December); Hanningfield Reservoir, 20 on 16th September (again, all other counts were in single figures apart from 15 on 15th April); Walthamstow Wetlands, 37 on 22nd September (yet again a one-off peak, the highest count otherwise being 16 on 24th March); William Girling Reservoir, four on 31st March; King George V Reservoir, three on 10th April.

The only other double-figure inland counts came from: Broomhouse Flash Langham, 12 on 18th March; Lofts Farm Gravel Pits Heybridge, where there were several March/April records of 10+, peaking at 15 on 13th and 18th April; Chigborough Lakes, 12 on 21st March and ten on 30th September; Beeleigh, about 20 on 3rd May; Hockley Woods, 18 on 14th January (presumably flying over); Connaught Water Epping Forest, 11 on 18th September; Wanstead Flats, 17 on 25th September. All of these sites apart from the last two are barely a stone's throw from the coast or estuaries and this was true of most of the other inland sightings.

MANDARIN DUCK *Aix galericulata* REX

Slowly increasing, naturalised resident.

The only confirmed breeding records came from Connaught Water Epping Forest, a brood of two on 26th May, and South Weald, a brood of six on 1st June.

In the first winter almost all double-figure counts came from Connaught Water, which has long been the stronghold of this species in the County. Counts there peaked at 54 on 22nd January. The only other site reporting ten or more was Strawberry Hill Pond Epping Forest, where there were 15 on 18th January and ten on 7th March. In the second half of the year only Connaught Water held double-figures, with a maximum of 39 on 18th September.

Small numbers were reported from a further 26 sites, almost all of which were either in Epping Forest or in the Lee Valley, with outliers in the Roman River Valley south of Colchester and nearby at Abberton Reservoir, and a scattering of sites in between these areas. Further north the only reports came from Daws Hall Lamarsh and Great Holland Pits while, in the west of the County to the north of the favoured areas, the species was seen at Mole Hall Widdington and at Hatfield Broad Oak. All reports were of 1-5 apart from records, both in Epping Forest, of eight at Warren Pond on 12th February and seven at Knighton Wood on the same day.

GARGANEY *Spatula querquedula* UK

Breeds occasionally. Uncommon, but annual, passage migrant.

There were no confirmed breeders despite a number of summer sightings (as to which see below).

The species had its best spring for several years. Birds were reported from 19 sites (14 in 2018, ten in 2017). Among these, Rainham Marshes, Walthamstow Marshes, Vange Marsh, Hanningfield Reservoir, Old Hall Marshes and Abberton Reservoir all produced a prolonged series of sightings. After the first arrival, a ♂ at Bowers Marsh on 24th-25th March, spring passage can be tabulated as follows:

	March	April					May	
Week commencing	26th	2nd	9th	16th	23rd	30th	7th	14th
Numbers	5	3	14	8	8	7	5	6
Locations	5	3	7	6	4	3	3	4

Much the highest count was a group of seven (two pairs and three ♂♂) at Vange Marsh on 14th and 15th April. There were three (two ♂♂) at Russell Green Gravel Pits Boreham on 24th April, three (a pair and a ♂) at Hanningfield Reservoir on 1st May and three (one ♂) at Abberton Reservoir, again on 1st May. All other records were of 1-2.

Passage ended abruptly in mid-May but there were mid-summer records of one at Rainham Marshes in the first week of June, a pair at Hanningfield Reservoir on 19th June, one at Bowers Marsh on 3rd July and 1-2 at Old Hall Marshes on several dates from 21st May to 11th June. The prolonged stays earlier in the spring gave reason to hope that breeding would occur. However, no proof of breeding was found, nor was there any sign of broods among the birds seen in the rather meagre autumn passage, which is summarised in the following table:

	July			August				September	
Week commencing	16th	23rd	30th	6th	13th	20th	27th	3rd	10th
Totals	2	8	7	11	8	8	8	8	6
Locations	2	4	4	5	2	5	2	3	2

In contrast to 2018 there were no double-figure counts in autumn, though much the most respectable showing again came from Hanningfield Reservoir, where a comprehensive series of counts from one regular observer included maxima of four on 30th July, six on 18th and seven on 31st August and, in September, six on 7th, four on 10th and three on 23rd. The last but one bird of the autumn was at the same site on 25th while the last was an unusually late (but not unprecedented) bird at Old Hall Marshes on 20th October.

All other autumn records were of 1-2 birds apart from three at Bowers Marsh on 26th July and four at Abberton Reservoir on 8th August.

NORTHERN SHOVELER *Spatula clypeata* UK REX

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

The only site to undertake a full breeding season survey was Rainham Marshes, where 28 pairs produced 17 broods. At Old Hall Marshes there was a full count of pairs early in the breeding season but no formal count of broods. The pairs count gave a figure of 109 pairs but casual observers later in the season reported only 3-4 broods, perhaps indicating that many of the apparent pairs did not breed, at least not at that site. The only other site where broods were recorded was Wallasea Island, where at least two broods were seen in July. The species was seen at 21 other sites in the breeding season (taken as May/June): none of these reported more than two pairs.

Principal monthly Wetland Bird Survey counts were:

GB 190 INT 650	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
WeBS total	**1078**	**1371**	**1425**	**716**	**409**	**2209**	**1270**	**1755**	**894**
Stour Estuary	10	16	8	10	0	0	8	12	10
Hamford Water	52	31	52	nc	nc	5	7	6	38
Colne Estuary	48	32	15	1	nc	0	1	26	43
Blackwater Estuary	155	**228**	**200**	75	0	13	95	136	45
Dengie	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	14
Crouch/Roach/Wallasea	153	**245**	**329**	109	0	12	34	**345**	165
Foulness/Thames	67	65	34	27	2	10	27	16	19
Abberton Reservoir	**325**	**402**	**483**	**480**	**400**	**1796**	**445**	**973**	**368**
Hanningfield Reservoir	9	8	10	6	6	**206**	**444**	21	1
Lee Valley	140	153	52	6	0	156	142	143	108
Other	119	191	242	2	1	11	67	77	83

The autumn peak at Abberton Reservoir has exceeded 2,000 in every year (except two) from 2013 to 2019. The peak count for that reservoir reported in Wood 2007 had been 1,387 in September 1961 but in most years maxima had not reached four figures. Figures for Rainham Marshes are not shown in the above table: maximum counts by regular observers at that site included 180 on 17th January, 314 on 29th March and 149 on 28th December. Other counts of 140+ came from (site maximum in each case): Old Hall Marshes, 144 on 20th March, Blue House Farm, 145 on 14th April, Wallasea Island, 200 on 20th March and Paglesham Lagoon, 350 on 15th December.

GADWALL *Mareca strepera strepara*

UK REX

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

Breeding was confirmed at five sites (nine in both 2017 and 2018). The only full count came from Rainham Marshes, where 21 pairs summered, and 12 broods were seen. At Old Hall Marshes there were full early-season surveys, revealing 20 pairs, but no later surveys for broods (and no broods were reported by casual observers). Elsewhere single broods were found at Broomhouse Flash Langham, Walton Hall Marshes, Ardleigh Reservoir and Walthamstow Wetlands.

At Abberton Reservoir four pairs were reported in early May and there were two pairs each in May/June at Langham, Hatfield Broad Oak and Wallasea Island. Other sites reporting single pairs in May/June were Holland Haven, St Osyth Priory, Colne Point, Chigborough Lakes and Lower Raypits Canewdon. Reports of 2+ birds present in May/June, but with no mention of pairing or breeding, came from a further 21 sites.

Principal monthly Wetland Bird Survey counts were:

GB 310 INT 1200	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
WeBS total	**1071**	**1353**	**573**	**426**	**839**	**682**	**612**	**599**	**665**
Stour Estuary	28	8	32	84	0	0	0	2	0
Hamford Water	84	38	47	nc	nc	12	48	21	60
Colne Estuary	18	14	6	4	nc	0	0	4	2
Blackwater Estuary	7	6	18	13	0	7	7	1	10
Dengie	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Crouch/Roach/Wallasea	13	43	40	35	0	0	6	5	0
Foulness/Thames	6	20	5	5	5	9	0	0	4
Abberton Reservoir	**396**	**909**	191	239	**790**	288	98	127	**336**
Hanningfield Reservoir	85	94	41	27	19	202	179	130	37
Lee Valley	304	105	86	19	25	164	216	244	163
Other	130	116	107	0	0	0	58	65	53

Three-figure counts from sites not included in the above table were (site maximum in each case): Paglesham Lagoon, 200 on 28th November; Tilbury, 159 at Tilbury on 9th January; Vange Marsh, 104 on 5th January; Rainham Marshes, 101 on 29th March. After three-figure counts in the previous two years, numbers at Wanstead Park peaked at 65 on 6th November.

FALCATED DUCK *Mareca falcata*

Vagrant. **BBRC (0, 1, 1)**

Addendum 1998.

Old Hall Marshes	Second calendar year ♂	16th January and 11th April	mo

Following a review of old records, the British Ornithologist's Union Records Committee finally, after 30 years deliberation, accepted Falcated Duck onto the British List in 2019. The subsequent review of all the records by the British Birds Rarities Committee saw a total of seven individuals accepted, one being the Old Hall Marshes record which becomes the first and only Essex record.

EURASIAN WIGEON *Mareca penelope* UK

Erratic breeder. Common passage migrant and winter visitor.

There were no confirmed records of breeding. At Rainham Marshes, a pair summered but did not breed. At both Old Hall Marshes and Blue House Farm, birds were seen in late June (two at Old Hall on 20th, three at Blue House on 29th) but none had been reported earlier in that month or in May. At Abberton Reservoir, two were seen on 5th May but the only later spring record was one on 14th May. Otherwise in May/June there were just singles, at Osea Road Heybridge on 21st May, at Hanningfield Reservoir on 19th May, on Wallasea Island on 3rd, 8th and 13th May and at Walthamstow Marshes on 3rd, 8th and 13th June.

Principal monthly Wetland Bird Survey counts were:

GB 4,500 INT 14,000	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
WeBS total	**18708**	**13617**	**4748**	**262**	**649**	**1803**	**9673**	**12580**	**16298**
Stour Estuary	3956	3284	1224	26	644	226	952	1780	**4546**
Hamford Water	1094	368	36	nc	nc	32	552	1042	1012
Colne Estuary	1208	1029	151	0	nc	0	146	539	952
Blackwater Estuary	4399	3083	1759	145	0	114	1968	3627	3273
Dengie	4	16	15	1	0	0	0	152	185
Crouch/Roach/Wallasea	2164	2684	482	47	0	11	1608	3361	4033
Foulness/Thames	3045	528	170	0	1	905	4003	1126	468
Abberton Reservoir	679	984	126	35	4	431	368	248	525
Hanningfield Reservoir	564	334	194	8	0	84	28	131	275
Lee Valley	28	57	52	0	0	0	18	42	66
Other	1567	1250	539	0	0	0	30	532	963

Away from the Wetland Bird Survey counts, single-site records of 1,000+ were received as follows (site maximum unless stated): Abbotts Hall Farm, 1,400 on 21st November; Tollesbury Wick, 1,350 on 14th February; Stow Marsh South Woodham Ferrers, 1,400 on 31st January; Wallasea Island, 1,500 on 20th February, 2,774 on 13th December and 4,500 on 23rd December; Rainham Marshes, 2,000 on 28th December.

MALLARD *Anas platyrhynchos platyrhynchos* UK

Common and widespread resident, passage migrant and winter visitor.

Breeding season counts of pairs and/or broods (with 2018 figures in brackets) came from Braintree and Bocking, 30+ pairs (30+ pairs); Old Hall Marshes, 126 pairs (65 pairs); Chigborough Lakes, four broods seen in early July (seven broods); Paglesham Lagoon, six broods (four broods); Foulness Island, 22-37 pairs fledged 28 young (23+ pairs fledged 32 young); Rainham Marshes, 51 pairs raised

41 broods (46 pairs produced 35 broods); Walthamstow Wetlands, six broods (four broods). There was again no count of broods at Old Hall Marshes, so nothing to indicate whether the apparent twofold increase (from 2018) in the number of pairs counted in early breeding-season surveys (as stated above) actually represented an increase in breeding birds.

Principal monthly Wetland Bird Survey counts were:

GB 6,700 INT 20,000	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
WeBS total	**4428**	**2359**	**1948**	**1671**	**2483**	**4216**	**3550**	**3180**	**3008**
Stour Estuary	608	192	152	140	290	220	334	170	392
Hamford Water	475	76	161	nc	nc	895	738	704	653
Colne Estuary	141	77	58	14	nc	24	69	45	111
Blackwater Estuary	466	204	321	220	160	372	387	385	304
Dengie	77	31	46	39	21	50	12	42	25
Crouch/Roach/Wallasea	274	196	140	116	91	137	265	435	310
Foulness/Thames	553	317	157	207	57	543	116	177	136
Abberton Reservoir	373	333	139	415	1176	821	469	371	360
Hanningfield Reservoir	358	168	161	137	279	382	389	230	97
Lee Valley	516	359	268	189	206	417	429	394	326
Other	587	406	345	194	203	355	342	227	294

Three-figure counts not forming part of the Wetland Bird Survey came from the following additional sites (site maximum or seasonal peak counts in each case): Mistley, 180 on 27th December; Mole Hall Widdington, 270 on 31st January and 239 on 17th November; Old Hall Marshes, 145 on 25th January; Chigborough Lakes, 130 on 9th July; Wallasea Island, 100 on 20th February; Rainham Marshes, about 200 on 3rd February and 183 on 13th October; Connaught Water Epping Forest, 114 on 20th January and 157 on 22nd September; Cornmill Meadows Waltham Abbey, 150+ on 11th October; Fishers Green Holyfield, about 100 on 10th November and 27th December.

NORTHERN PINTAIL *Anas acuta* UK

Breeds occasionally. Fairly common passage migrant and winter visitor.

At Old Hall Marshes two pairs were found in early breeding-season surveys and, after a few sightings of a pair or a single ♂ in May/June, a ♀ with two almost full-grown young was seen on 23rd July, the adult and one of the young being seen again three days later. This was the first record of confirmed breeding in the County since 2005, when the last of a series of breeding records came from Langenhoe Marsh. The only other report in May/July was of one at Rainham Marshes on 30th July.

Principal monthly Wetland Bird Survey counts were:

GB 200 INT 600	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
WeBS total	**1682**	**1222**	**51**	**6**	**89**	**240**	**610**	**778**	**672**
Stour Estuary	**416**	**340**	2	0	88	40	174	146	150
Hamford Water	68	4	1	nc	nc	1	17	12	42
Colne Estuary	0	0	0	0	nc	0	0	0	0
Blackwater Estuary	**684**	**514**	10	4	0	5	119	124	184
Dengie	0	100	0	0	0	0	0	**350**	50
Crouch/Roach/Wallasea	**368**	**211**	9	0	0	6	112	123	126
Foulness/Thames	7	10	0	0	0	0	0	0	4
Abberton Reservoir	87	31	2	2	1	172	115	4	73
Hanningfield Reservoir	0	0	0	0	0	16	59	0	2
Lee Valley	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
Other	52	12	27	0	0	0	14	18	41

Other counts at Abberton Reservoir included 126 on 12th January and 131 on 5th October. The highest non-Wetland Bird Survey count was of 320 at Abbotts Hall Farm on 21st November, with three-figure non-Wetland Bird Survey counts elsewhere coming from (site maximum in each case): Old Hall Marshes, 191 on 25th January; Heybridge Gravel Pit, about 120 on 7th January; Blue House Farm, 100 on 25th January; Wallasea Island, 127 on 16th February.

EURASIAN TEAL *Anas crecca*

UK REX

Breeds occasionally. Common passage migrant and winter visitor.

At Rainham Marshes a pair summered but did not breed. There were no reports elsewhere suggestive of breeding, although the species was seen at 14 additional sites in May and June. The usual flurry of non-breeders/early returning birds in the second half of June included up to seven at Old Hall Marshes, ten at Tollesbury Wick, up to 12 at Vange Marsh and seven at Tilbury.

Principal monthly Wetland Bird Survey counts were:

GB 4,300 INT 5,000	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
WeBS total	**24242**	**11942**	**5285**	**2055**	**1700**	**8572**	**11450**	**15081**	**21966**
Stour Estuary	2928	912	590	312	340	426	910	850	3006
Hamford Water	2851	723	258	nc	nc	1119	800	1931	3521
Colne Estuary	528	367	147	33	nc	26	91	303	372
Blackwater Estuary	4027	2974	1900	261	10	496	2000	2967	2746
Dengie	21	0	22	1	0	0	0	0	8
Crouch/Roach/Wallasea	1992	792	722	359	62	667	1453	3024	1597
Foulness/Thames	2383	1361	203	229	4	767	156	1076	167
Abberton Reservoir	**7995**	2934	842	779	1066	4124	**4613**	3278	**8795**
Hanningfield Reservoir	391	586	256	14	211	775	892	884	453
Lee Valley	214	62	112	51	0	127	71	166	64
Other	912	1231	233	16	7	45	464	602	1237

Numbers at Abberton Reservoir in January and December, while well down on the exceptional levels of October-December 2018, were still much the highest of the year. Elsewhere the following sites reported non-Wetland Bird Survey counts of 500+ (site maximum in each case): Cattawade Marsh: 560 on 15th December; The Hythe Colchester, 700+ on 22nd December; Old Hall Marshes, 1,850 on 3rd January; Heybridge Gravel Pit, about 700 on 11th January; Hanningfield Reservoir, about 500 on 10th February and 20th September; Stow Marsh South Woodham Ferrers, 1,600 on 31st January; Wallasea Island, 2,000 on Lytag Marsh alone on 18th December; Tilbury, 779 on 28th February; Rainham Marshes, 1,000 on 15th December.

GREEN-WINGED TEAL *Anas carolinensis*

Rare passage migrant and winter visitor.

EBSIP (18, 12, 30)

Abberton Reservoir	♂	20th-21st January	AGo *et al.*
Abberton Reservoir	♂ same as above	3rd February	RHe
Abberton Reservoir	♂ same as above	24th April	RSh
Ingrebourne Valley	♂	29th January	PHa

The first records since 2015. The first record for the Ingrebourne Valley and the eighth for Abberton Reservoir.

RED-CRESTED POCHARD *Netta rufina*

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

Breeding was much reduced with no confirmed pairs (three broods in 2018, 16 pairs from six sites in 2017). It remains unclear if this is due to under-reporting or a true change in status as numbers reported from the stronghold at Hanningfield Reservoir increased during the summer to peaks of 30 on 15th July, 28 on 3rd August and 29 on 3rd September.

Sightings otherwise conformed to the expected pattern, with a build up at Hanningfield Reservoir from the late winter into summer followed by autumn dispersal.

Estimated monthly totals, with peak counts at the two main reservoirs, were:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Abberton Reservoir	0	2	0	0	0	0	4	14	12	4	2	0
Hanningfield Reservoir	0	2	10	18	16	20	30	28	29	6	13	2
Totals	3	7	16	21	20	24	34	42	41	11	18	2
Locations	3	5	4	3	4	4	2	2	2	3	3	1

Birds were reported from a further 15 sites, with a concentration within the Lee Valley, but the only count of greater than two was four at Walthamstow Wetlands on 26th March.

COMMON POCHARD *Aythya ferina*

UK REX

Uncommon breeder. Common winter visitor and passage migrant.

Confirmed breeding pairs/broods totalled 43 at 17 sites (40 from 11 in 2018, 50 from 17 in 2017). Sites with two or more broods were: Old Hall Marshes, two; Paglesham Lagoon, 11; Rainham Marshes, ten; Hanningfield Reservoir, five; Walthamstow Wetlands, five. In addition, about 120 possible breeding pairs were noted at seven sites and those with five or more were: Old Hall Marshes, 55; Wallasea Island, 24; Foulness Island, seven; Bowers Marsh, 24; Vange Wick, eight.

Whilst increased observer coverage is clearly a factor there is an obvious upward trend in the breeding population.

Principal monthly Wetland Bird Survey counts were:

GB 230 INT 2,000	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
WeBS total	**1303**	**1148**	**602**	**273**	**1456**	**1420**	**580**	**1632**	**1419**
Stour Estuary	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	20
Hamford Water	0	0	8	nc	nc	0	0	0	0
Colne Estuary	0	0	7	3	nc	0	0	0	0
Blackwater Estuary	0	132	92	79	4	15	22	16	4
Dengie	0	0	0	14	0	0	0	0	0
Crouch/Roach/Wallasea	2	46	12	4	0	0	0	24	0
Foulness/Thames	23	150	18	62	2	10	3	3	4
Abberton Reservoir	**866**	**586**	**290**	31	**1270**	**1299**	**477**	**1383**	**1248**
Hanningfield Reservoir	152	68	44	32	161	20	10	32	35
Lee Valley	207	100	57	4	19	74	43	157	70
Other	53	66	74	44	0	2	25	17	38

The increase in reporting was maintained with 20 counts of 200 or more (38 in 2018, six in 2017). These came from: Abberton Reservoir, monthly peaks of 540 on 25th January, 200 on 8th February, 400 on 20th July, 713 on 8th August, 470 on 4th September, 600 on 19th October, 470 on 18th November, 420 on 28th December, Hanningfield Reservoir, 200 on 18th July; Paglesham Lagoon, 256 on 18th January.

FERRUGINOUS DUCK *Aythya nyroca*

Rare passage migrant and winter visitor. **BBRC (37, 10, 47)**

Fishers Green/Holyfield Lake area	♂	5th-9th February	SHa HLa

RING-NECKED DUCK *Aythya collaris*

Vagrant. **EBSIP (8, 4, 12)**

It was hinted at in the 2018 Report that two Ring-necked Duck were possibly present in the Abberton/Old Hall/Abbotts Hall area at the end of the year. As it turned out, further sightings at all these locations as well as Tollesbury Wick pointed to the presence of two and perhaps three ♂♂ in the area at times during the first half of the year, one of which was ringed on 29th January at Abberton Reservoir. The difficulty in confirming just how many were involved was increased by the fact that not on any day was more than one bird seen (until October), presumably due to the large area over which the birds were mobile. That said, on 29th January, it does seem incredible that the ringed bird should then fly rapidly to Old Hall Marshes to be seen by an observer.

At Abberton Reservoir there were sightings on and off from 1st January to 17th February, with reports of one at Old Hall Marshes on 14th and 29th January and 13th February.

There was then a gap of ten weeks without any reports from anywhere before one 'reappeared' at Abberton Reservoir (had it been there all the while or moved somewhere else?) on 16th April where it was noted until 26th April. On 29th April, what is presumed to be the ringed Abberton bird (it did indeed sport a ring) appeared at Bowers Marsh on 29th April and stayed until 18th May. During its stay an almost certainly unringed individual was seen at Old Hall Marshes on 7th May.

On 19th May one or other of these two birds then reappeared at Abberton Reservoir, being last seen on 21st May.

On 2nd June one of the above, or another bird entirely, appeared at Seventy Acres Lake Holyfield staying until 15th June whilst one was again observed at Abberton Reservoir from 12th-19th June, confirming the presence of two birds in the County during that period.

Thereafter all sightings came from Abberton Reservoir, although it was not until 8th August that the next sighting occurred with observations of singles on and off until the end of the year but with two birds present on 3rd October, when singles were seen off Layer-de-la-Haye causeway and Abberton Church, some 3km apart.

In conclusion, at least two birds occurred at Abberton Reservoir, with a possible third bird also present, one or more of which wandered to Bowers Marsh and Seventy Acres Lake.

For the statistics, it is assumed two birds were involved, one being the bird first recorded in December 2016, the other a new bird, although it may have been first recorded at the end of 2018.

Summer records of Ring-necked Duck in the UK are not unprecedented.

TUFTED DUCK *Aythya fuligula*

Common resident, passage migrant and winter visitor.

Confirmed breeding pairs/broods total 58 at 20 sites. Sites with two or more broods were: Chigborough Lakes, five; Lofts Farm Gravel Pit Heybridge, two; Paglesham Lagoon, six; Bowers Marsh, two; Hanningfield Reservoir, two. In addition, 72 probable breeding pairs were noted at eight sites and those with five or more were: Old Hall Marshes, 19; Vange Marsh, six; Bowers Marsh, 25; Rainham Marshes, 12.

Principal monthly Wetland Bird Survey counts are shown on the next page.

Peak counts reported showed a continued improvement with 50 non-Wetland Bird Survey reports in excess of 200 from five sites (29 from four in 2018), with monthly peaks as follows: Abberton Reservoir, 500 on 19th January, 202 on 8th February, 250 on 20th July, 672 on 8th August, 750 on 19th October, 3,421 on 18th November, 1,750 on 28th December; Hanningfield Reservoir, 320 on 30th January, 500 on 16th February, 300 on 16th March, 280 on 18th July, 800 on 21st September; Holyfield Lake, 250 on 15th February; King George V Reservoir, 250 on various dates in January, 200

on 3rd February; Walthamstow Wetlands, 271 on 4th January, 493 on 9th July increasing to a peak of 2,246 on 5th August, 251 on 17th December. The traditional late summer peak compares well with the 2,113 in 2017 (no count in 2018).

GB 1,300 INT 8,900	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
WeBS total	**2222**	**2224**	**2746**	**1423**	**1716**	**5038**	**5565**	**5104**	**4546**
Stour Estuary	0	0	8	4	0	0	0	0	0
Hamford Water	23	50	107	nc	nc	12	4	0	26
Colne Estuary	19	10	13	0	nc	2	0	0	0
Blackwater Estuary	4	68	111	68	9	6	2	44	39
Dengie	0	0	0	16	0	0	0	0	0
Crouch/Roach/Wallasea	0	32	22	55	13	7	0	0	0
Foulness/Thames	49	97	7	19	4	8	8	0	5
Abberton Reservoir	379	615	955	780	701	1111	**3346**	**3296**	**3295**
Hanningfield Reservoir	270	431	275	119	924	928	1132	380	420
Lee Valley	1269	587	1026	215	54	**2944**	1061	**1347**	714
Other	209	334	222	147	11	20	12	37	47

GREATER SCAUP *Aythya marila* UK

Uncommon winter visitor and passage migrant; occasional in summer.

The early part of the year saw wintering birds at five sites, many remaining from 2018: Abberton Reservoir, up to five in January increasing to eight from 6th February and nine from 27th March-2nd April with the last on 19th April; Heybridge Gravel Pit, ♂ from 11th-20th January; Paglesham Lagoon, 1st year ♂ from 2018 to 6th February; King George V Reservoir, three from 2018 increasing to four on 3rd February, then slowly reducing to two in late February and a single from 9th-24th March; Walthamstow Wetlands, ♂ from 2018 to 23rd April.

Autumn passage commenced in early October with coastal passage observed at Frinton-on-Sea, Fingringhoe Wick and Deal Hall Dengie, whilst a single was at King George V Reservoir on 23rd October.

Elsewhere wintering birds returned to Abberton Reservoir (eight on 16th October, peaking at 12 on 18th November and up to ten to the end of the year); Hanningfield Reservoir, up to three noted from 13th November to 2020; Walthamstow Wetlands, one from 21st November to 6th December, with possibly the same also being seen at King George V Reservoir on the latter date.

A further small influx was apparent in mid-December with seven at Mistley Quay from 11th-14th, and three south past Frinton-on-Sea on 17th.

Estimated monthly totals were:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Totals	11	14	12	10	2	0	0	0	0	13	16	25
Locations	4	4	3	2	1	0	0	0	0	5	3	6

COMMON EIDER *Somateria mollissima mollissima* UK

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

A total of 121 records was received in 21 sites in the year with eight double-figure counts from a strong late autumn passage (six from 2018, seven in 2017, six in 2016).

Early winter records were focused on the Thames between Gunners Park Shoebury and Canvey Point, with a peak count of 16 off Southend Pier on 25th January reducing to eight on 19th February. Elsewhere three were off Burnham-on-Crouch on 25th January and up to three were around the

Blackwater Estuary, being reported from Bradwell Bird Observatory, Old Hall Marshes and Tollesbury Wick, with two at Brightlingsea and two singles at Holland Haven.

Spring passage birds comprised, in April, four at Cattawade on 5th, one at The Naze on 17th, two north at Frinton-on-Sea on 24th, one at Holland Haven on 30th. In May two were at Gunners Park Shoebury on 4th, before up to three were noted at Colne Point from 11th to 1st June. Four heading south at Frinton-on-Sea on 24th May and one at Holland Haven on 30th were presumed additional.

Summer records comprised two in Hamford Water on 28th June and one at Canvey Point on 28th July, joined by a second from 14th September into October. A group of ten off Wakering Stairs on 18th August, reducing to seven on 1st September, were also presumably over-summering.

Autumn passage appears to have commenced in mid-October being noted principally from the north-east coast. At Frinton-on-Sea a total of 104 were noted passing on 14 dates with peaks in late November of 32 on 24th (20 of which were also noted at Holland Haven) and 22 on 30th. A further ten were noted at Holland Haven on 1st December with numbers tailing off significantly into early winter with just two singles noted in late December, at The Naze and West Mersea respectively.

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

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
2019	26	11	8	0	10	3	1	11	11	33	96	24
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

VELVET SCOTER *Melanitta fusca* UK

Scarce passage migrant and winter visitor, rare in summer.

Numbers remained very low with just nine reports received during 2019 relating to an estimated total of 18 birds (21 in 2018, 21 in 2017, 34 in 2016).

A ♂ at Tollesbury Wick on 7th January was the only early winter record, with spring passage comprising two heading south at Frinton-on-Sea on 3rd May.

Autumn passage was almost exclusively noted from Frinton-on-Sea with singles on 18th October, 29th October, 26th November, two on 1st December (also seen at Holland Haven), and two on 18th December. However, the largest count of the year was at the other end of the County with seven on 13th October off Wakering Stairs. The only other record comprised a single at East Tilbury on 30th November.

COMMON SCOTER *Melanitta nigra* UK

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

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

Inland records came from five sites (singles unless otherwise stated): Abberton Reservoir, four on 27th March, 20 on 23rd September, two on 3rd October, one on 23rd October; Hanningfield Reservoir, one on 28th March, seven on 9th April; King George V Reservoir, one on 30th March, eight on 9th April reducing to seven the next day. In addition, nocturnal migration was noted over Chafford Hundred Grays on 24th and 25th March and 4th July.

Inner Thames records came from East Tilbury /Thurrock Thameside Mucking: noted on nine dates, peaks of 61 and 35 on 29th and 30th October respectively, 59 on 30th November; Rainham Marshes, seven dates, peak of 22 on 9th April; these birds were also seen further upstream at Beckton where a single occurred on 8th 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
2019	123	17	62	190	122	0	135	93	157	1,329	1,501	284
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

Autumn passage past Frinton-on-Sea noted 3,286 between July and December (1,115 in 2018, 2,118 in 2017, 2,582 in 2016). Typically passage peaked between late October and late November with daily maxima being: 323 on 28th and 672 on 29th October, 509 on 5th and 711 on 30th November (all in light to moderate winds from the north-east quarter). Coastal passage was noted from other watchpoints, but the only other three-figure counts coincided with the Frinton peaks with 250 at Canvey Island on 29th October and 100+ passing Holland Haven on 30th November.

The highest winter counts from the Blackwater Estuary were 11 on 21st February at Goldhanger, and ten on 19th December at West Mersea.

LONG-TAILED DUCK *Clangula hyemalis* UK

Declining, scarce, passage migrant and winter visitor.

A good year with some long staying birds and a strong autumn passage.

The only records in the early months came from Abberton Reservoir, where the two birds from 2018 remained until 24th April, with a third noted on 4th April. A single was then present from 21st September, joined by a second on 7th November, both remaining into 2020. Another long staying bird arrived at Hanningfield Reservoir on 17th November and similarly remained to the year end.

Autumn passage was heavily focused at the end October, with approximately 20 birds noted as follows: Frinton-on-Sea, five north on 23rd October, two south on 28th October, one south on 29th October, three north on 30th November (also seen at Holland Haven), two north on 1st December; Canvey Point, two different doubles on 29th and 30th October; Tilbury, 30th October (different to the Canvey Point birds); Southend Pier, two on 31st October. The only other record concerned a single at Rainham Marshes on 18th December.

Estimated annual totals over the last ten winters have been:

Winter	2019/18	2018/17	2017/16	2016/15	2015/14	2014/13	2013/12	2012/11	2011/10	2010/09	Average
Totals	5	12	62	4	10	15	14	8	12	2	14.4

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	**556**	**422**	**317**	**38**	**2**	**14**	**15**	**366**	**609**
Stour Estuary	166	58	14	0	0	10	0	110	170
Hamford Water	0	0	0	nc	nc	0	0	0	0
Colne Estuary	0	0	0	0	nc	0	0	0	0
Blackwater Estuary	53	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	1
Dengie	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Crouch/Roach/Wallasea	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Foulness/Thames	4	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Abberton Reservoir	**200**	**305**	**273**	38	2	4	15	**201**	**390**
Hanningfield Reservoir	89	49	14	0	0	0	0	36	42
Lee Valley	44	8	16	0	0	0	0	16	5
Other	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

The last reported birds of the spring were two at Walthamstow Wetlands on 7th May and Abberton Reservoir on 19th May with the first returning birds at the latter site from 14th July.

There were only 13 non-Wetland Bird Survey counts in excess of 50, all bar three from Abberton Reservoir. Elsewhere: Hanningfield Reservoir, 56 on 20th January; King George V Reservoir, 55 on 3rd March, 64 on 23rd March.

A poor autumn coastal passage was noted between 21st October and 15th November. The peak movement was on 29th October with five noted at Frinton-on-Sea and East Tilbury and four at Beckton.

SMEW *Mergellus albellus* UK

Uncommon winter visitor occurring in variable numbers.

Another poor year with low numbers in both winter periods.

In the early part of the year birds were present at three sites: Manningtree, ♂ from 2018 to 30th March; Abberton Reservoir, up to eight in January, nine in February, five in March; Lee Valley (Friday Lake, Seventy Acres Lake, King George V Reservoir,), up to two from January into March with a ♂remaining at the latter site to 15th April.

As with 2018, a redhead, of unknown origin, was present in the Lee Valley during the late spring, being reported from Buckhurst Hill on 24th May and Highams Park on 3rd June.

The first returning birds arrived in early November with singles in the Lee Valley on 2nd and Abberton Reservoir on 9th, with up to three at the former during December. A single redhead at Old Hall Marshes in December followed no records in the 2018-19 winter, the first absence in ten years.

Estimated monthly totals were:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Totals	11	11	8	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	2	5
Locations	7	6	4	1	2	1	0	0	0	0	2	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 2,100	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
WeBS total	**234**	**181**	**41**	**2**	**0**	**0**	**5**	**84**	**74**
Stour Estuary	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Hamford Water	0	0	0	nc	nc	0	0	0	0
Colne Estuary	0	0	1	0	nc	0	0	0	0
Blackwater Estuary	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Dengie	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Crouch/Roach/Wallasea	1	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Foulness/Thames	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Abberton Reservoir	148	119	11	2	0	0	5	80	52
Hanningfield Reservoir	38	22	1	0	0	0	0	0	18
Lee Valley	32	18	13	0	0	0	0	4	4
Other	15	20	15	0	0	0	0	0	0

Sites holding 20 or more birds, not included in the Wetland Bird Survey, were as follows: Ardleigh Reservoir, 27 on 7th February and 5th March; Rivenhall End, 29 on 24th February; Holyfield Lake, 27 on 9th February; King George V Reservoir, 24 on 25th February.

The last reported bird of the spring was a ♂ at Abberton Reservoir on 12th April, with the first returning bird at the same site on 8th October.

Coastal passage was limited to a single north at Holland Haven and Frinton-on-Sea on 23rd March, following two on 29th October and one on 30th November at the latter site.

Red-breasted Merganser (RICHARD ALLEN)

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 860	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
WeBS total	**352**	**289**	**198**	**34**	**0**	**22**	**53**	**202**	**225**
Stour Estuary	**230**	**192**	**144**	34	0	22	50	96	38
Hamford Water	4	8	6	nc	nc	0	0	0	3
Colne Estuary	16	3	0	0	nc	0	0	16	11
Blackwater Estuary	98	85	48	0	0	0	1	90	**170**
Dengie	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Crouch/Roach/Wallasea	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0
Foulness/Thames	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3
Abberton Reservoir	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Hanningfield Reservoir	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Lee Valley	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Other	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

The last of the spring was a single at Rainham Marshes on 28th April, with the first returning bird passing south at Frinton-on-Sea on 22nd September. There were no summer records received.

Inland records came from: Abberton Reservoir, singles on 1st January, 16th and 21st February, 1st March, 4th April, four on both 18th October and 8th November; King George V Reservoir, two on 10th April.

Autumn passage was light with 67 noted passing Frinton-on-Sea and 34 at Canvey Point, with a clear peak on 29th October when 36 and 16 were noted respectively.

Sites with the highest non-Wetland Bird Survey counts were: Stour Estuary (Wrabness to Mistley), 45 on 3rd January, 30 on 12th December; Goldhanger, 115 on 21st February.

RUDDY DUCK *Oxyura jamaicensis*

Now rare, naturalised, non-breeding visitor.

The ongoing DEFRA initiative to cull Ruddy Duck has completed the dramatic change in status of this species in the County. A ♀ at Hanningfield Reservoir on 7th-8th June was the sole record for the year.

COMMON SWIFT *Apus apus apus* UK

Common summer resident and passage migrant.

As ever evidence of breeding proved elusive. From reports received, at best 60 pairs bred at 18 locations (66 from 22 in 2018). The highest location count was 15 pairs in Braintree and Bocking (15 in 2018). Otherwise there were single-figure counts widely distributed across the County.

The first confirmed sightings for the year were five over Langdon Hills Plotlands on 17th April and one over Wanstead Flats the same day, although a swift had been heard a week earlier in Wivenhoe but not seen. There were two October records, with the last report being one at Abberton Reservoir on 3rd. Departure dates usually tail off in September and early October although the latest remains one over Bradwell-on-Sea on December 4th 2004.

Four-figure counts were received from: Abberton Reservoir, 1,000 on 4th May; Hanningfield Reservoir, 1,000 on 8th June. The regular large gatherings of the past are now scarce. Mid-summer saw movements included 1,327 south in two hours on 12th June at Frinton-on-Sea whilst passage included three counts over 1,000, the largest being 5,195 moving through on 28th July over a period of six hours and 3,978 moving the same direction on 31st July, in all the week commencing 26th July saw 11,166 moving south.

Five over Chafford Hundred Grays on 9th September is unexceptional, but this is the first time this species has been mentioned in this report as being identified from nocturnal migration recordings, an increasingly popular additional string to the bow of birders.

COMMON CUCKOO *Cuculus canorus canorus* UK

Declining summer resident and passage migrant.

The number of territories/singing ♂♂/pairs totalled 123 from 90 locations (134 from 89 in 2018). There is a distinct bias in the geographical distribution of breeding records with the eastern half of the County supplying 75% of the records. A total of 17 singing ♂♂ were present on Foulness Island whilst five were noted at Rainham Marshes. Juveniles were recorded later in the year at 14 locations with Rainham Marshes and Wallasea Island providing two each with singles reported elsewhere. In total 871 reports were received.

The first sightings of the year were on 31st March, with singles at Chigborough Lakes and Great Burstead. The final sighting was one heading north-west over Stanway on the relatively late date of 5th October.

Four hepatic birds (three in 2018) were recorded at: Abbotts Hall Farm on 17th May; Heybridge Gravel Pit on 21st May; Abberton Reservoir on 30th May; Thurrock Thameside Mucking on 15th June.

ROCK DOVE/FERAL PIGEON *Columba livia livia*

Common resident.

Some 1,300 reports were received. At least 30+ pairs were reported as probably breeding around Braintree and Bocking, otherwise there were no breeding records of particular note.

A total of 12 three-figure counts was received: about 100 at Wrabness on 8th January; 100 at Leyton Flats on 11th February and 106 on 30th September; 100 at Valentines Park Ilford on 13th March; 150+ at Fishers Green Holyfield on 16th March; 100 at King George V Reservoir on 10th April and again on 13th December; 100 at Wanstead Flats on 17th April and 200 on 4th September; Westcliff-on-Sea, 125 on 25th November, 138 on 11th December and 210 on 12th December. In addition, counts across Foulness Island produced totals of 128 in January and 104 in September.

For the colloquial 'town pigeon' the urban bias in the records is not surprising.

STOCK DOVE *Columba oenas oenas* UK

Fairly common resident and passage migrant.

The year yielded just over 1,600 reports. Probable or confirmed breeding records totalled 139 from 54 locations (118 from 56 in 2018). Five locations held five territories or more: Foulness Island, 20; Braintree, ten; Wormingford, eight; Stour Wood, seven; five each at Twinstead, Great Henny and Abberton Reservoir. The split between the north and the south of the County is slightly weighted to

the south (60 to 72) but the overall picture is heavily influenced by exceptional single observer coverage of the area from Colchester towards Sudbury which contributed approximately one third of all the breeding reports for the year.

Some impressive three-figure counts were received: 750 at Stow Marsh South Woodham Ferrers on 15th February, plus 650 there on 31st January and 450 on 11th January, after snow cover. Totals of 100-150 were also reported at: Holland Haven, 100+ on 18th January, 21st January and 16th February; St Lawrence, 105 on 17th February; Rainham Marshes, 120 on 12th September and 140 on 19th October; Stifford Hall, 120 on 3rd October.

COMMON WOOD PIGEON *Columba palumbus palumbus*

Abundant resident, passage migrant and winter visitor.

Unsurprisingly for this ubiquitous species almost 5,500 reports were received.

The highest breeding totals for 2019 were at Braintree and Bocking with 50 pairs, Foulness Island with 30+ pairs and Rainham Marshes with 21 territories.

Nine counts of 500+ were reported between January and March : about 800 at Hazeleigh Wood on 1st January; 500 at Blue House Farm on 8th January; 500 at Hanningfield Reservoir on 16th January; 850 at St Lawrence on 17th February and 540 on 24th March; 500 at Codham Hall Farm Great Warley on 18th February; 500 at Wallasea Island on 18th February; 5,000+ at Marks Hall Coggeshall on 8th March; 500 at Boreham on 19th March, typically gorging on oilseed rape. In addition, across the whole of Foulness Island 823 were counted on 20th January and 871 on 17th February.

Many of the counts of 500+ on autumn passage were concentrated in the south of the County with totals of 17 in October and two in November, The highest were: 16,000 passing over Chafford Gorges Grays on 20th and 11,000 on 29th October; 3,667 at Brook Farm Upminster on 19th October; 3,100 at Heybridge Gravel Pit on 28th October; 2,250 at Rainham Marshes on 17th October.

EUROPEAN TURTLE DOVE *Streptopelia turtur turtur*

UK REX

Rapidly declining summer resident and passage migrant.

The 2019 records do nothing to change the pessimistic tone of previous reports. At 205 reports from 60 locations the overall numbers are a little down from 2018 (233 from 66). In terms of breeding 41 territories/singing ♂♂ from 27 locations represents a decline from 2018 (47 from 25). Slightly more encouraging is a few reports of juveniles (none recorded in 2018): two at Old Hall Marshes, one at Russell Green Gravel Pits Boreham and two, possibly three at Lower Raypits Canewdon.

Foulness Island with nine purring ♂♂ (12 in 2018) remains the species' stronghold accounting for over 20% of the remaining population whilst Wrabness, with at least four purring ♂♂, provided 10% of all the records for the year. Other favoured sites were Wakering Stairs, Fingringhoe Wick, Old Hall Marshes and Russell Green Gravel Pits Boreham. One observer in Canewdon also provided ten records of visits to his garden between 11th May and 20th June, including a brief spell of purring on the first day.

The first sighting of the year involved two at Hanningfield Reservoir on 10th April with the last at Holland Haven on 23rd September.

This species has experienced a widely reported massive decline in numbers. Its fate is under close scrutiny internationally, nationally and locally. Observers are encouraged to report all encounters and to be as explicit as possible as to breeding status.

EURASIAN COLLARED DOVE *Streptopelia decaocto decaocto*

Common resident.

Some 2,700 reports were received. The only notable breeding report came from Braintree and Bocking with a minimum total of 60 pairs.

Eight reports were received of 25+ birds: 25 at Heybridge Basin on 15th January; 50 in Southend-on-Sea on 24th January; 62+ near Coalhouse Fort East Tilbury on 11th September; 30+ at Rainham Marshes on 12th October; 50 at Wormingford on 15th October; 41 at Rainham Marshes on 17th

October; 30 at Abberton Reservoir on 31st December; 48 on Foulness Island on 20th January (one of several counts of over 25 across the island during the year). There were five 25+ counts in 2018, none of them at any of the locations named above, demonstrating the random and opportunistic pattern to winter gatherings and indeed observer coverage.

The species is widespread in Essex, but the distribution is significantly skewed towards suburban locations which support both breeding and feeding. Interestingly recent reports are emerging via BTO's Garden Birdwatch of a noticeable decline in reported numbers.

WATER RAIL *Rallus aquaticus aquaticus* REX

Scarce resident, passage migrant and winter visitor.

Sightings were recorded from 71 sites across the County. Breeding was confirmed at Rainham Marshes (four territories), Bowers Marsh and East Tilbury.

Counts of two/three birds came from 22 sites while counts of four or more came from: Belhus Woods Aveley, four on 3rd February; Ingrebourne Valley, four on 10th March; Rainham Marshes, four on 1st and 20th January, 24th March, 13th October, 23rd November and 23rd December, nine on 15th December and 12 on 17th November; Seventy Acres Lake Holyfield, four on 21st February; Wanstead Park, four on 6th November.

Estimated monthly totals were:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Totals	105	70	59	45	21	11	7	21	53	17	48	5

SPOTTED CRAKE *Porzana porzana* UK

Rare passage migrant. EBSIP (76, 10, 86)

Bowers Marsh	One	15th-25th September	TBo

COMMON MOORHEN *Gallinula chloropus chloropus*

Very common resident, passage migrant and winter visitor.

At least 121 pairs/territories were reported from 70 sites (117 from 81 in 2018, 110 from 60 in 2017, 120 from 60 in 2016). Breeding was confirmed at 52 sites. Summering was reported from a further 71 Locations.

Principal monthly Wetland Bird Survey counts were:

GB 3,000 INT 20,000	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
WeBS total	**546**	**446**	**339**	**170**	**165**	**310**	**350**	**341**	**311**
Stour Estuary	28	32	22	8	2	16	38	14	48
Hamford Water	24	15	13	nc	nc	24	22	19	23
Colne Estuary	53	20	20	3	nc	3	12	16	30
Blackwater Estuary	31	28	30	10	6	29	35	33	20
Dengie	1	1	2	0	0	0	1	0	0
Crouch/Roach/Wallasea	10	12	5	23	16	27	17	18	1
Foulness/Thames	36	53	37	23	28	21	38	25	17
Abberton Reservoir	2	13	0	31	18	21	11	14	3
Hanningfield Reservoir	0	6	1	2	7	19	5	4	2
Lee Valley	168	101	71	34	54	80	77	115	101
Other	193	165	138	36	34	70	94	83	66

Non-Wetland Bird Survey counts of 40 or more were reported from: Ingrebourne Valley, 40 on 16th

Greater Scaup, Abberton Reservoir, February (SEAN NIXON)

Long-tailed Duck, Abberton Reservoir, March (SEAN NIXON)

Black-necked Grebe, South Essex, June (PAUL CHAMBERLAIN)

Bar-tailed Godwit, St. Osyth, December (SIMON COX)

February; Mardyke Valley Stifford-Aveley, 41 on 19th February; Rainham Marshes, 67 on 13th October, 59 on 17th November and 47 on 15th December; Seventy Acres Lake Holyfield, 158 on 25th August.

EURASIAN COOT *Fulica atra atra*

Common resident, passage migrant and winter visitor.

At least 180 pairs were reported from 69 sites (200 from 79 in 2018, 200 from 78 in 2017, 149 from 67 in 2016). Reports of more than ten pairs came from just Rainham Marshes with 48. Summering birds were reported from a further 33 locations.

Principal monthly Wetland Bird Survey counts were:

GB 2,000 INT 15,500	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
WeBS total	**3393**	**2694**	**2457**	**1413**	**5815**	**9055**	**8035**	**11471**	**6318**
Stour Estuary	42	22	0	4	2	38	30	20	0
Hamford Water	1	21	19	nc	nc	11	11	0	0
Colne Estuary	41	21	15	2	nc	6	5	7	8
Blackwater Estuary	32	118	138	102	22	14	15	15	11
Dengie	0	1	4	2	5	3	0	0	0
Crouch/Roach/Wallasea	8	25	57	65	20	7	2	9	0
Foulness/Thames	200	138	47	68	27	35	42	45	13
Abberton Reservoir	836	1000	871	681	**3489**	**4830**	**2748**	**6262**	**3707**
Hanningfield Reservoir	367	315	290	159	**2018**	**2397**	**2350**	**3017**	1306
Lee Valley	1462	678	627	173	178	1643	**2761**	**2031**	1220
Other	404	355	389	157	54	71	71	65	53

Non-Wetland Bird Survey counts of 150 or more were reported from: Abberton Reservoir (selected totals from 22 reports), 400 on 18th February, 1,000 on 21st July, 1,310 on 3rd August, 250 on 10th October, 735 on 18th November, 580 on 11th December; Hanningfield Reservoir (selected totals from nine reports), 500 on 27th June, 1,000 on 31st August, 400 on 25 September, 1,000 on 19th November, 1,000 on 9th December; Holyfield Lake, 400 on 29th December; King George V Reservoir, 200 on 5th and 12th January, 250 on 27th January, 200 on 3rd February; Seventy Acres Lake Holyfield, 158 on 25th August, 200 on 10th November, 150 on 27th December; Thurrock Thameside Mucking (selected totals from reports), 184 on 18th August, 185 on 1st September, 182 on 6th October; Walthamstow Wetlands, 293 on 31st July.

COMMON CRANE *Grus grus*

UK

Scarce, less than annual, mainly autumn passage migrant.

EBSIP (125, 53, 178)

Coombe Wood Thundersley	One	1st January	JSa
Rayne	Four	19th April	CTu
Witham	Two	22nd April	PTh
East Mersea	One	22nd October	DUr

Four reports with the second and third presumed to relate to the same birds. An average year. Annual totals over the last decade have been:

	2019	2018	2017	2016	2015	2014	2013	2012	2011	2010	Average
Totals	6	3	12	5	1	0	2	3	6	8	4.6

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 115 pairs were located indicating a stable population. Prime site, as usual, was Rainham Marshes with 27 territories (28 in 2018, 29 in 2017).
Principal Monthly Wetland Bid Survey counts were:

GB 150 INT 4,700	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
WeBS total	**548**	**296**	**133**	**102**	**85**	**287**	**260**	**423**	**216**
Stour Estuary	92	48	10	2	4	40	36	104	18
Hamford Water	88	47	18	nc	nc	41	21	55	67
Colne Estuary	16	11	10	3	nc	16	18	10	19
Blackwater Estuary	90	17	8	15	16	52	54	43	42
Dengie	2	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0
Crouch/Roach/Wallasea	37	17	15	29	13	14	9	44	3
Foulness/Thames	114	71	15	24	4	47	37	86	19
Abberton Reservoir	5	16	6	6	19	9	14	4	4
Hanningfield Reservoir	31	30	15	12	21	32	42	41	17
Lee Valley	49	17	14	7	7	33	19	31	23
Other	24	22	22	4	1	2	10	5	4

The largest non-Wetland Bird Survey gathering was at Paglesham Lagoon, 74 on 23rd August. Counts of 67 at Stow Marsh South Woodham Ferrers on 15th February, 36 at Tilbury on 30th January, 30 at Walthamstow Wetlands on 20th March and 30 in Hamford Water on 16th November were also noteworthy.

RED-NECKED GREBE *Podiceps grisegena grisegena* UK

Uncommon passage migrant and winter visitor.

Single birds were seen as follows: East Tilbury on 9th January; Mistley on 23rd January (assumed same as bird seen on Stour at end of 2018); Frinton-on-Sea on 24th January; Blue House Farm on 25th January; Holland Haven on 26th January (assumed same as Frinton-on-Sea individual); Abberton Reservoir on 7th May, in full summer plumage; Old Hall Marshes, an immature on 28th October; Blackwater Estuary on 15th-16th December.
Annual totals over the last decade have been:

Winter	2019/18	2018/17	2017/16	2016/15	2015/14	2014/13	2013/12	2012/11	2011/10	2010/09	Average
Totals	6	4	6	5	4	8	5	10	4	6	5.8

GREAT CRESTED GREBE *Podiceps cristatus cristatus*

Fairly common resident, passage migrant and winter visitor.

Records received indicate that approximately 50 pairs at 41 sites at least built a nest with most hatching young. Additionally, approximately 22 pairs were recorded in potential nesting habitat, some of which were deemed by observers to be probably breeding.

Principal monthly Wetland Bird Survey counts were:

GB 170 INT 6,300	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
WeBS total	**685**	**554**	**487**	**422**	**513**	**1273**	**1754**	**2426**	**930**
Stour Estuary	56	38	32	48	50	42	53	105	18
Hamford Water	1	4	3	nc	nc	0	1	3	26
Colne Estuary	3	28	50	4	nc	2	2	2	10

Blackwater Estuary	10	29	109	26	45	62	73	52	152
Dengie	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	1	0
Crouch/Roach/Wallasea	2	8	24	40	0	0	3	18	14
Foulness/Thames	154	99	48	8	4	5	2	62	46
Abberton Reservoir	296	252	47	206	257	745	1356	2034	571
Hanningfield Reservoir	25	26	23	37	114	156	46	16	17
Lee Valley	132	57	111	32	33	255	206	130	73
Other	6	13	38	21	10	6	12	3	3

Non-Wetland Bird Survey counts on tidal waters were higher than in recent years with 250 off East Mersea on 18th January and 227 off Canvey Point on 11th January the largest.

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

Scarce passage migrant and winter visitor.

Estimated monthly totals were:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Abberton Reservoir	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Hanningfield Reservoir	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0
Wrabness	1	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Hamford Water	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0
Colne/Blackwater complex	12	8	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	4	5
Crouch/Roach Estuary	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3
Totals	**14**	**10**	**0**	**1**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**1**	**0**	**1**	**4**	**8**

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 the Colne/Blackwater complex where reports came from a number of vantage points. The highest single count came from East Mersea where 12 were seen on 18th January. The last of the first winter was at West Mersea on 13th March with the first returning bird at Hanningfield Reservoir on 31st August.

BLACK-NECKED GREBE *Podiceps nigricollis nigricollis* UK

Scarce passage migrant and winter visitor; occasionally nests.

Breeding was recorded at a site in the south of the County where generally three adults were observed between 24th April and 13th July and possibly a second site where an adult and juvenile were recorded on 23rd July and the juvenile observed between 21st July and 12th September.

Estimated monthly totals were:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Abberton Reservoir	6	7	4	3	1	0	0	0	1	1	2	1
King George V Reservoir	0	2	7	1	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0
William Girling Reservoir	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Walthamstow Wetlands	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Colne/Blackwater complex	1	1	1	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Coalhouse Fort East Tilbury	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0
Thurrock Thamesside Mucking	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	0
Canvey Point	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0
Paglesham Lagoon	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Totals	**8**	**10**	**12**	**11**	**8**	**4**	**8**	**0**	**5**	**5**	**3**	**2**

In the above table the highest single monthly count at each location is shown but this may not fully reflect the true numbers involved. The total also includes birds at breeding sites, not named in the table.

The highest single counts received this year were seven on both Abberton Reservoir on 24th February and King George V Reservoir on 2nd and 18th March.

EURASIAN STONE-CURLEW *Burhinus oedicnemus oedicnemus* UK EX EBSIP

Very scarce passage migrant. Last bred in 1999.

Bowers Marsh	One	24th June	GOa
King George V Reservoir	One	28th-29th June	HLa SHa

No long stayer this year and it is tempting to think that the Bowers Marsh bird next stopped off at King George V Reservoir.

EURASIAN OYSTERCATCHER *Haematopus ostralegus ostralegus* UK

Resident, passage migrant and winter visitor.

A total of 242 probable/confirmed breeding pairs was reported from 30 sites (111 from 22 in 2018, 58 from 16 in 2017), again helped by surveying by the Essex Little Tern project team. The primary increase from recent years relates to a full count received from Old Hall Marshes with 49 pairs (five reported in EBR 2018 but a full count of 44, not reflected in the figures above). The only other sites with more than five pairs were (2018 figures in brackets): Cattawade, nine with young seen; Hamford Water/Horsey Island, nine (four); Colne Point, 5-7; Cobmarsh Island West Mersea 19 (16); Great Cob Island Tollesbury, ten; Tollesbury Wick, eight with young seen (five); Two Tree Island, six; Wallasea Island, 27 (16); Foulness, 40 but only two young; Bowers Marsh, 14 (nine); Rainham Marshes, seven (seven).

Inland birds showing evidence of breeding comprised pairs at Broomhouse Flash Langham, The Hythe Colchester, Russell Green Gravel Pits Boreham, Hanningfield Reservoir (two) and possibly Holyfield Lake.

The number of inland records away from tidal waters remained steady with 183 (190 in 2018) although the only count of more than four birds away from breeding areas was six at Abberton Reservoir on 18th July.

Autumn diurnal passage past Frinton-on-Sea was very heavy with monthly totals of 253 and 690 in July and August respectively with peaks of 118 on 28th July, and in August, 128 on 7th, 131 on 9th and 225 on 21st. This species was also noted on nocturnal migration over Chafford Hundred Grays on 15 occasions between March and November.

Principal monthly Wetland Bird Survey counts were:

GB 2,900 INT 8,200	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
WeBS total	**22314**	**8253**	**6018**	**2400**	**8534**	**16121**	**26327**	**20599**	**14972**
Stour Estuary	1364	1100	744	464	662	1636	816	188	722
Hamford Water	363	377	560	nc	nc	45	232	555	286
Colne Estuary	429	423	258	75	nc	120	118	406	438
Blackwater Estuary	1000	616	669	383	572	586	538	1248	351
Dengie	1066	600	1016	204	553	2050	840	827	**4834**
Crouch/Roach/Wallasea	242	246	261	137	15	15	11	120	191
Foulness/Thames	**17850**	**4889**	2494	1127	**6728**	**11669**	**23772**	**17255**	**8150**
Abberton Reservoir	0	0	2	4	4	0	0	0	0
Hanningfield Reservoir	0	0	2	2	0	0	0	0	0
Lee Valley	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Other	0	2	12	4	0	0	0	0	0

The October count, almost entirely from the Foulness/Thames area, is the highest total recorded since December 2012.

Despite these high numbers, just six non-Wetland Bird Survey four-figure counts were received from three areas: Bradwell Bird Observatory, 2,200 on 18th September; Gunners Park/Shoebury/Wakering Stairs, 1,211 on 10th January, 1,000 on 21st August and 1st September, 1,150 on 16th November; Canvey Seafront, 1,300 on 22nd November.

BLACK-WINGED STILT *Himantopus himantopus*

Rare passage migrant. EBSIP (22, 40, 62)

Vange Marsh	Two	12th-13th April	mo

The south-east of the County again attracted a pair, albeit for a shorter stay this year. Birds have been noted in this area in each of the last six springs.

Addendum 2018.
At West Canvey Marsh a nest was built after 10th May and eggs laid but these were lost on 20th May. Also the total of 2018 records in the table should have stated 5 and an average of 3.1 whilst the statistics should have read (22, 39, 61).

PIED AVOCET *Recurvirostra avosetta* UK REX

Increasing summer visitor, passage migrant and winter visitor.

Confirmed/likely breeding records were estimated as 325 pairs from 16 sites (127 from 12 in 2018, 195 from 14 in 2017), although reporting remains inconsistent. Estimated numbers from sites holding double-figures were (2018 totals in brackets): Cattawade, 14 nests; Holland Haven, 11; Old Hall Marshes, 30 (28); Wallasea Island, 146 (88); Blue House Farm, 13; Bowers Marsh, 75 (47).

A significant increase in the breeding population again helped by numbers colonising the rapidly developing habitat on Wallasea Island.

Inland reports away from tidal waters were as follows (singles unless stated): Abberton Reservoir, 17th February, 22nd March, 5th May, six on 24th June, two on 29th June, 12 on 9th July, three on 21st August, four on 28th August; Hanningfield Reservoir, 13th March, two on 30th March, 20th June, two on 21st September; Ingrebourne Valley, 4th April; King George V Reservoir, 9th April, two on 22nd April; Walthamstow Wetlands, 25th February, 9th April, 29th October. Additionally, nocturnal migration was noted over Chafford Hundred Grays in April and September.

Principal monthly Wetland Bird Survey counts were:

GB 87 INT 940	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
WeBS total	**2719**	**1802**	**655**	**186**	**115**	**359**	**1511**	**2354**	**1870**
Stour Estuary	**256**	**164**	56	32	0	0	**202**	**332**	**400**
Hamford Water	**953**	**552**	**133**	nc	nc	**280**	**640**	**798**	**498**
Colne Estuary	**137**	10	0	0	nc	3	55	86	**122**
Blackwater Estuary	**800**	**405**	43	60	85	3	**277**	**734**	**274**
Dengie	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Crouch/Roach/Wallasea	**374**	**446**	**359**	39	3	12	**149**	**261**	**528**
Foulness/Thames	**164**	**193**	43	45	12	58	**165**	**111**	13
Abberton Reservoir	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Hanningfield Reservoir	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Lee Valley	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Other	35	32	21	10	15	3	23	32	35

As usual the largest non-Wetland Bird Survey counts came from the East Tilbury area, where there were peaks of 1,975 on 13th August and 1,804 on 8th September.

NORTHERN LAPWING *Vanellus vanellus*

UK REX

Uncommon resident. Common passage migrant and winter visitor.

Probable/confirmed breeding records were received from just 26 sites, totaling 289 pairs, (85 from 16 in 2018). Sites recording more than five pairs, with last year's figures in brackets if available, were: Cattawade, 31 (27); Moverons Brightlingsea, seven; Old Hall Marshes, 54 (46); Blue House Farm, ten; Wallasea Island, 27 (12); West Canvey Marsh, eight; Rainham Marshes, 82 (78).

Principal monthly Wetland Bird Survey counts were:

GB 6,200 INT 20,000	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
WeBS total	**17309**	**17151**	**793**	**327**	**811**	**1973**	**5099**	**12867**	**16088**
Stour Estuary	1414	944	138	118	266	328	886	1052	2546
Hamford Water	1826	691	19	nc	nc	112	365	1847	2108
Colne Estuary	516	446	12	4	nc	140	165	1226	521
Blackwater Estuary	3708	4374	315	114	258	339	1061	2883	5019
Dengie	70	63	0	0	0	0	5	117	485
Crouch/Roach/Wallasea	4483	4660	76	49	75	274	1458	2954	2775
Foulness/Thames	2028	2628	24	21	49	334	466	1310	642
Abberton Reservoir	564	505	2	0	48	263	281	547	368
Hanningfield Reservoir	95	0	0	3	7	63	105	105	33
Lee Valley	90	71	2	12	0	0	2	0	31
Other	2515	2769	205	6	108	120	305	826	1560

Non-Wetland Bird Survey counts of 2,000+ came from just two sites: Wallasea Island and Rainham Marshes, with a peak of 3,050 at the former on 25th December.

Inland, counts of 250+ came from three sites: Abberton Reservoir, peaks of 700 on 9th January, 500 on 7th November and 4th December; Tillingham, 300 on 10th January; Hockley Woods, 1,000 on 13th January.

EUROPEAN GOLDEN PLOVER *Pluvialis apricaria*

Common passage migrant and winter visitor.

Spring passage was largely over by May with a single at Colne Point on five dates to 28th the last. Other May sightings came from Blue House Farm on 3rd, two at The Naze on 4th, and Frinton-on-Sea on 11th. A single at The Naze on 29th June was the first of autumn with a gradual build up including five at Old Hall Marshes on 6th July and 22 at Colne Point on 21st July.

Principal monthly Wetland Bird Survey counts were:

GB 4,000 INT 9,300	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
WeBS total	**14510**	**27929**	**1217**	**128**	**168**	**1908**	**6206**	**21028**	**20371**
Stour Estuary	26	**7091**	0	0	10	92	762	6	0
Hamford Water	622	537	148	nc	nc	220	831	**4088**	1815
Colne Estuary	92	590	188	0	nc	115	660	252	121
Blackwater Estuary	1536	**7310**	211	20	119	1063	2016	**9815**	**7096**
Dengie	305	3500	120	0	0	20	0	1420	**4850**
Crouch/Roach/Wallasea	2575	**4833**	57	103	12	155	1060	3699	**6305**
Foulness/Thames	**9354**	**4027**	271	5	27	243	875	1682	170
Abberton Reservoir	0	0	220	0	0	0	1	38	0
Hanningfield Reservoir	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Lee Valley	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Other	0	41	2	0	0	0	1	28	14

The peak non-Wetland Bird Survey counts came from Old Hall Marshes (5,300 on 14th January) and Wallasea Island (6,300 on 13th December).

The highest inland counts (50+) were: Abberton Reservoir, 450 on 12th January, 250 on 17th November; Blackley Lane Gravel Pit Willows Green, in November, 54 on 10th increased to 170 on 21st; Felsted, 116 on 15th April; Great Tey, 60 on 19th January; Hockley Woods, 150 on 14th January.

GREY PLOVER *Pluvialis squatarola squatarola* UK

Common passage migrant and winter visitor.

June and July records comprised a total of 23 from ten sites, of which eight related to double-figure counts. The peak count in June was seven at East Tilbury on 6th and 23rd June, with up to 13 here and at nearby Thurrock Thameside Mucking on 24th July. A late July return was also demonstrated by counts of ten at Old Hall Marshes on 28th and Wallasea Island on 29th respectively, and 17 south past Frinton-on-Sea on 31st.

Diurnal autumn migration was otherwise light with Frinton-on-Sea recording a total of 98 between 26th July and 18th October (86 in 2018, 60 in 2017) with a peak of 24 on 9th August. Elsewhere a notable influx was reported from various sites around 22nd-23rd August.

The only records away from tidal waters came from Abberton Reservoir (singles unless stated) on 5th January, two on 10th May, 3rd and 12th October.

Principal monthly Wetland Bird Survey counts were:

GB 330 INT 2,000	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
WeBS total	**7024**	**12790**	**1989**	**421**	**723**	**4629**	**5947**	**6491**	**6001**
Stour Estuary	**1960**	**851**	294	154	312	**2496**	**1746**	**1470**	**978**
Hamford Water	**550**	**415**	**624**	nc	nc	**465**	**535**	**1204**	**1021**
Colne Estuary	**347**	183	45	0	nc	13	234	281	245
Blackwater Estuary	**1997**	**2257**	199	0	180	**1183**	**1398**	**1307**	**1178**
Dengie	**665**	**7820**	**605**	202	67	50	**750**	71	114
Crouch/Roach/Wallasea	**929**	**720**	159	33	8	94	**542**	**1265**	**1855**
Foulness/Thames	**576**	**544**	63	32	156	328	**742**	**893**	**609**
Abberton Reservoir	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Hanningfield Reservoir	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Lee Valley	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Other	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1

The increase in numbers on the Crouch/Roach/Wallasea area is highlighted as the habitat at the latter has continued to develop: the peak count in 2019 being ten times that in 2015.

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.**

An excellent 38 probable/confirmed breeding pairs were reported from 15 sites (ten from six in 2018, 12 from five in 2017) primarily due to surveying by the Essex Little Tern project team. (2018 figures in brackets): Horsey Island, seven with at least one nest; Pewit Island Hamford Water, one with three chicks seen; The Naze, one nest; Colne Point, six (two) with two nests and chicks seen; St Osyth Stone/Beach, two with one nest and chicks seen; Cindery Island Brightlingsea, one; Great Cob Island, one; Cobmarsh Island, one (1); Old Hall Marshes, four (one) with chicks seen; Tollesbury Wick, five (two); Pewet Island Bradwell-on-Sea, two; Bradwell Cockle Spit, two; Wallasea Island, one; Foulness, one and probably bred; Bowers Marsh, two; Tilbury, one.

Inland records came from four sites during the year (singles unless stated): Abberton Reservoir, 12th January, 1st February, 4th-17th May, then monthly peaks of 17 on 20th July, two on 16th

August, two on 9th September, 108 on 12th October and four on 2nd November; Hanningfield Reservoir, 5th March, 27th July, 14th August, then peaks of 13 on 27th September and 24 on both 27th October and 13th November; King George V Reservoir, two on 11th August, 19th August; Walthamstow Wetlands, two on 8th April, 8th May. In addition, nocturnal migration was recorded over Chafford Hundred Grays on five occasions between May and August.

Principal monthly Wetland Bird Survey counts were:

GB 420 INT 540	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
WeBS total	**657**	**274**	**102**	**30**	**184**	**835**	**1574**	**758**	**489**
Stour Estuary	162	30	4	0	48	198	94	96	240
Hamford Water	46	42	20	nc	nc	55	86	71	34
Colne Estuary	17	76	25	5	nc	17	61	93	22
Blackwater Estuary	80	86	16	9	40	248	346	91	33
Dengie	61	0	3	0	30	4	239	59	0
Crouch/Roach/Wallasea	51	6	0	0	46	169	**528**	37	146
Foulness/Thames	239	34	30	16	16	132	211	306	14
Abberton Reservoir	1	0	0	0	3	0	6	0	0
Hanningfield Reservoir	0	0	0	0	1	12	0	2	0
Lee Valley	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Other	0	0	4	0	0	0	3	3	0

There were two non-Wetland Bird Survey counts of 250+ as follows: Wallasea Island, 350 on 28th October; East Tilbury, 310 on 1st September.

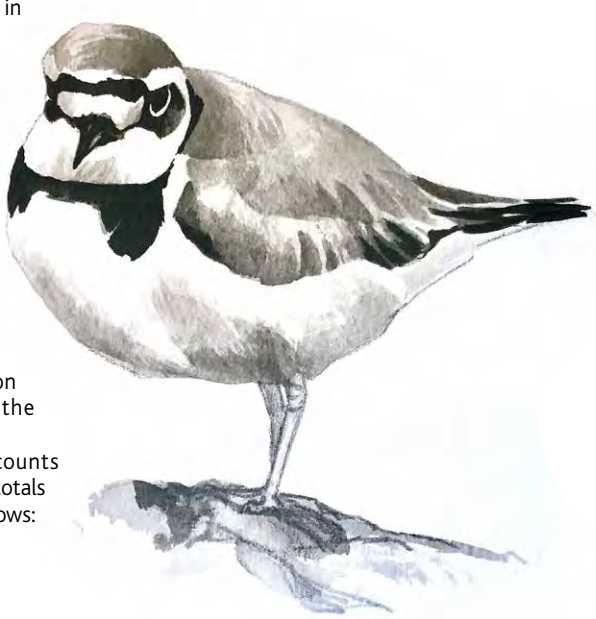
LITTLE RINGED PLOVER *Charadrius dubius curonicus* REX

Uncommon summer resident and passage migrant.

Breeding was confirmed at ten sites with 18 pairs reported (12 pairs from eight sites in 2018).

Spring arrival was exceptionally early with the earliest Essex record to date with two birds at East Tilbury on 2nd March; the previous earliest date was one at Stansted Airport Lagoons Takeley on 7th March 1993. A more typical build up occurred from the 19th with a maximum site count of four (at Blue House Farm) noted to the end of the month. Numbers built slowly during April with five at Abberton Reservoir on 13th, Rainham Marshes on 23rd and at Vange Marsh on 25th the maxima.

Autumn passage was heavy with counts building from late June. Double-figure totals came from three sites with peaks as follows:



Little Ringed Plover (SIMON PATIENT)

The Hythe Colchester, 17 on 26th June, 11 on 2nd July; Abberton Reservoir, 14 on 9th July, 26 on 20th July; Bowers Marsh, 13 on 23rd June, ten on 9th-11th July. Numbers reduced rapidly in August, with the last birds seen at Hanningfield Reservoir on 25th September.

Nocturnal migration was noted over Chafford Hundred Grays on seven dates.

Estimated monthly totals were:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Totals	0	0	27	50	39	78	113	32	19	0	0	0
Locations	0	0	14	20	19	17	19	11	6	0	0	0

EURASIAN DOTTEREL *Charadrius morinellus* UK

Scarce passage migrant. EBSIP (294, 49, 343)

Bradwell Bird Observatory	♂	1st-6th May	JSu *et al.*
Deal Hall Dengie	Four adults	24th-27th August	DWa
Colne Point	Juvenile	25th August	CBa

A return to form after a blank year in 2018, with the pea fields of the Dengie peninsula again proving attractive.

WHIMBREL *Numenius phaeopus phaeopus* UK

Common passage migrant; occasional in winter.

The three wintering birds remained from 2018 at Fobbing Marsh, Burnham-on-Crouch, and Old Hall Marshes.

The first spring bird passed over Bowers Marsh on 29th March with small numbers then reported until mid-April, when 14 passed Frinton-on-Sea on 13th and 31 were at Wakering Common on 15th.

Passage peaked in late April and early May with five sites holding 20+ birds and maxima as follows: Frinton-on-Sea/Holland Haven, 43 on 3rd May; West Mersea, 20 on 26th April; Old Hall Marshes, 38 on 19th and 26th April; Blue House Farm, 20 on 18th April; Canvey Wick, 21 on 7th May. Offshore passage at Frinton-on-Sea was light with 120 in April and 116 in May (202 and 228 respectively in 2018) with a clear peak of 87 on 11th May.

Return passage was noted from 20th June and involved 20 double-figure counts between 23rd July and 28th August. The only day counts in excess of 20 related to southbound movements at Frinton-on-Sea where 247 were noted in total, with a peak of 71 on 28th July.

The final passage birds departed in mid-October leaving wintering birds at Old Hall Marshes and South Woodham Ferrers, whilst late singles were noted at Heybridge Gravel Pit to 3rd November and Berechurch Colchester where one flew up from watermeadows on 23rd November.

Inland reports came from 13 sites, primarily singles, with the more notable records being: Abberton Reservoir, 16th April to 11th May, peak of 12 on 3rd May, one on 17th August, seven on 8th September; Halstead, 15th July; Hanningfield Reservoir, 23rd and 28th April, 28th July; Walthamstow Wetlands, 23rd-25th April, three on 7th May. In addition, nocturnal migration was noted over Chafford Hundred Grays on four dates across April, May and July.

EURASIAN CURLEW *Numenius arquata arquata* UK

Common passage migrant and winter visitor.

Inland counts away from tidal waters came from (singles unless otherwise stated): Ardleigh Reservoir, 30th October; Abberton Reservoir, reported throughout January and February, peak 26 on 8th February, singles on 14th July, 19th-20th October, two on 15th December; Ardleigh Green, 22nd August; Walthamstow Marshes, nine on 9th September.

Principal monthly Wetland Bird Survey counts were:

GB 1,200 INT 7,600	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
WeBS total	**5388**	**6626**	**5794**	**2072**	**3983**	**6351**	**5202**	**5406**	**4802**
Stour Estuary	**1390**	**2150**	**2260**	**1404**	**1710**	**2532**	**1484**	1028	**1842**
Hamford Water	521	332	246	nc	nc	580	499	572	463
Colne Estuary	223	268	295	23	nc	173	179	273	252
Blackwater Estuary	921	914	1077	240	451	582	1054	948	943
Dengie	170	198	110	5	48	3	205	272	113
Crouch/Roach/Wallasea	196	453	347	136	84	51	250	278	90
Foulness/Thames	**1927**	**2285**	**1443**	264	**1685**	**2408**	**1524**	**2015**	1058
Abberton Reservoir	22	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	27
Hanningfield Reservoir	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Lee Valley	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Other	18	26	16	0	5	22	7	20	14

Coastal passage was strong in mid-April with northbound peaks of 113, 177 and 377 on 13th, 14th and 16th April respectively past Frinton-on-Sea. In contrast, autumn passage was light with a total of 60 noted during June.

There were no reported non-Wetland Bird Survey counts in excess of 300.

BAR-TAILED GODWIT *Limosa lapponica lapponica* UK

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

Recorded in every month of the year, but with just two records of singles in June: East Tilbury on 6th and The Naze on 29th.

Inland records away from tidal water came from four sites and all comprised single birds: Abberton Reservoir, 2nd February, 2nd September, 1st October; Hanningfield Reservoir, 23rd April, 5th-6th May, 17th, 23rd and 28th September; King George V Reservoir, 7th May; Walthamstow Wetlands, 30th April.

Inner Thames records came from Rainham Marshes where birds were noted intermittently from 12th April to 12th May, with a peak of 16 on 8th May. Singles were then noted on 15th and 17th November and 30th December. Elsewhere, one was at Beckton on 19th October.

Spring passage was a quiet affair, the peak count being 74 north past Frinton-on-Sea on 23rd April, with 43 at Colne Point on 19th May. Away from the Wetland Bird Survey counts the only three-figure site counts prior to late October were 100 at West Mersea on 5th August and 300 at The Naze on 25th August.

Principal monthly Wetland Bird Survey counts were:

GB 500 INT 1,500	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
WeBS total	**1816**	**2369**	**506**	**88**	**817**	**2206**	**1386**	**3760**	**2598**
Stour Estuary	112	**840**	16	0	34	96	136	394	346
Hamford Water	**567**	364	216	nc	nc	396	285	**740**	412
Colne Estuary	2	0	3	0	nc	3	4	4	2
Blackwater Estuary	114	160	6	0	45	1	41	143	81
Dengie	32	296	0	60	0	0	61	223	**862**
Crouch/Roach/Wallasea	0	1	0	0	0	2	1	15	406
Foulness/Thames	**989**	**708**	265	28	**738**	**1708**	**858**	**2240**	489
Abberton Reservoir	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Hanningfield Reservoir	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Lee Valley	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Other	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0

A count of 406 at Wallasea Island on 13th December was another record site count in line with the recent habitat improvement.

BLACK-TAILED GODWIT *Limosa limosa* UK

Icelandic Black-tailed Godwit *Limosa limosa islandica*

Much increased passage migrant and winter visitor.

Typically, the first winter period saw low numbers reported with only a single four-figure non-Wetland Bird Survey count: 1,100 at East Tilbury on 26th February. Spring passage was also lower with peaks of 1,129 at Thurrock Thameside Mucking on 13th April, and 1,000 at both Brightlingsea and Heybridge Gravel Pit on 7th April and 26th March respectively.

Birds returned earlier than in 2018 with 22 four-figure counts between 14th July and 31st October with all four-figure counts between Two Tree Island and East Tilbury and a stand-out peak of 4,133 at Thurrock Thameside Mucking on 10th August.

A total of 269 records was received from seven inland locations summarised as follows: Broomhouse Flash Langham, eight on 8th January, two on 28th March, then from 15th July to 23rd September with a peak of 52 on 20th July; Abberton Reservoir, reported in all months bar April, double-figure peaks of ten on 18th January, 94 on 11th June, 133 on 20th July, 95 on 19th August, 90 on 11th September, 17 on 3rd October, 20 on 17th November; Boreham, one on 9th April; Hanningfield Reservoir, up to two in early January then from 4th July to 15th December with a peak of 45 on 30th September; Wanstead Flats, 150 on 19th August; King George V Reservoir, one on 31st March; Walthamstow Wetlands, 14th-15th February, 31st March, 6th April, 30th June, 17th July.

Principal monthly Wetland Bird Survey counts were:

GB 390 INT 1,100	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
WeBS total	**3271**	**5083**	**6220**	**3010**	**3178**	**4873**	**4267**	**5135**	**4943**
Stour Estuary	**876**	**2818**	**2358**	**2130**	**1484**	**2012**	**906**	**1928**	**2460**
Hamford Water	**724**	191	169	nc	nc	**793**	244	**856**	321
Colne Estuary	30	139	101	7	nc	112	58	106	79
Blackwater Estuary	**576**	**1055**	**2836**	**479**	**904**	**1616**	**1993**	**919**	**497**
Dengie	0	**400**	0	0	0	0	0	0	8
Crouch/Roach/Wallasea	**451**	290	219	340	43	112	**410**	**797**	**1036**
Foulness/Thames	**427**	131	**462**	36	**722**	142	195	21	79
Abberton Reservoir	19	20	0	0	17	73	14	0	0
Hanningfield Reservoir	0	0	0	0	0	1	32	15	1
Lee Valley	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Other	168	38	75	18	8	12	**415**	**493**	**462**

Continental Black-tailed Godwit *Limosa limosa limosa*

Vagrant. EBSIP (0, 7, 7)

Addendum 2018.

Old Hall Marshes	One	17th August

Addendum 2017.

Old Hall Marshes	One	20th -21st July
Old Hall Marshes	One	20th -21st July

These three individuals were all incubated and reared in captivity and released on fledging ('headstarting') in the UK. Each was colour-ringed. The 2018 individual, a juvenile, has not been

recorded since the Old Hall sighting whilst of the 2017 birds, one continues to be reported, having been noted wintering in Portugal during early 2018 and last seen at Welney Norfolk on 7th June 2020, and the other was last seen at Welney Norfolk in May 2019. It is surprising that just three colour-ringed individuals have been sighted in Essex since the inception of colour-ringing in 1998. Possible explanations are the lack of big freshwater wetlands near the coast and secondly, the fact that any bird moving away from breeding areas in the Fens is unlikely to stop off so quickly after leaving there but simply continue on to the Continent. We are grateful to Dr Jennifer Smart at the RSPB for the above information.

See page 212 for identification criteria for this sub-species which remains a very rare visitor to the County.

RUDDY TURNSTONE *Arenaria interpres interpres* UK

Fairly common passage migrant and winter visitor.

Recorded throughout the year, with six June records as follows: The Naze, one on 1st and six on 5th; Colne Point, one on 3rd, two on 7th, one on 11th; Alresford, nine on 21st.

Inland records came from three sites (singles unless stated): Abberton Reservoir, five on 10th May, two on 16th May, two on 11th August, four on 26th August; Hanningfield Reservoir, single on 20th July and from 10th August to 15th September, with a peak of seven on 11th September; King George V Reservoir, two on 15th May, one on 4th August.

Principal monthly Wetland Bird Survey counts were:

GB 400 INT 1,400	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
WeBS total	**1673**	**1744**	**594**	**626**	**371**	**1158**	**2063**	**1171**	**1379**
Stour Estuary	310	**968**	96	**500**	248	**528**	**926**	296	**440**
Hamford Water	86	72	33	nc	nc	78	76	76	67
Colne Estuary	65	79	39	4	nc	95	211	233	129
Blackwater Estuary	361	**416**	393	61	67	395	**657**	235	**474**
Dengie	85	28	8	0	0	2	107	105	110
Crouch/Roach/Wallasea	17	6	5	13	4	0	3	22	23
Foulness/Thames	**749**	175	20	48	50	59	83	204	136
Abberton Reservoir	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0
Hanningfield Reservoir	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0
Lee Valley	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Other	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

The only non-Wetland Bird Survey counts of 350 or more came from: Heybridge Gravel Pit, 430 on 19th August, 550 on 2nd September (record site counts); Southend-on-Sea, 300 on 12th January, 450 on 26th October, 500 on 1st November.

RED KNOT *Calidris canutus islandica* UK

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

Inland records came from (singles unless stated): Abberton Reservoir on 10th January, 28th July, three on 26th August; Hanningfield Reservoir on 3rd, 20th, 26th September and 1st October.

The only June record was two at The Naze on 29th. In addition to the Abberton Reservoir record mentioned above, there were July records at (singles unless stated):

The Naze on 13th, two on 20th; Frinton-on-Sea, two on 26th, 41 on 31st; Old Hall Marshes on 27th-28th.

There were no five-figure counts besides those given in the Wetland Bird Survey table, the highest being 7,000 at Bradwell Bird Observatory on 20th January.

Principal monthly Wetland Bird Survey counts were:

GB 2,600 INT 5,300	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
WeBS total	**78245**	**56851**	**1438**	**100**	**328**	**2899**	**2895**	**54790**	**37534**
Stour Estuary	**26088**	**22030**	380	100	28	206	118	**24433**	**10830**
Hamford Water	617	313	0	nc	nc	94	741	**5850**	3419
Colne Estuary	70	757	4	0	nc	15	1	1561	801
Blackwater Estuary	**13770**	**15496**	8	0	0	21	585	**13656**	**12333**
Dengie	**7500**	**13200**	1000	0	0	0	700	2280	1700
Crouch/Roach/Wallasea	19	3	0	0	0	17	0	203	**3431**
Foulness/Thames	**30181**	**5052**	46	0	300	2546	750	**6807**	**5020**
Abberton Reservoir	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Hanningfield Reservoir	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Lee Valley	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Other	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

RUFF *Calidris pugnax* UK

Common passage migrant and winter visitor.

In the first winter period, the only double-figure counts were: Hamford Water, 40 on 3rd January; Abberton Reservoir, 11 on 6th and ten on 11th January.

Double-figure counts in spring came from: Blue House Farm, ten on 5th and 8th April; Vange Marsh, 11 on 13th April; Rainham Marshes, 13 on 17th May.

In autumn and the second winter period, apart from 14 on 21st August at Old Hall Marshes, all double-figure counts were from Abberton Reservoir with maximum monthly counts of 21 on 17th September, 18 on 1st October and 20 on 3rd November.

Principal monthly Wetland Bird Survey counts were:

GB 9 INT 20,000	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
WeBS total	**5**	**27**	**6**	**4**	**14**	**27**	**23**	**9**	**12**
Stour Estuary	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Hamford Water	0	0	0	nc	nc	3	0	0	0
Colne Estuary	0	0	0	0	nc	0	0	0	0
Blackwater Estuary	0	**17**	0	0	**10**	0	6	0	**10**
Dengie	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Crouch/Roach/Wallasea	0	4	3	4	2	0	0	0	0
Foulness/Thames	0	0	1	0	2	2	0	0	0
Abberton Reservoir	3	5	0	0	0	**21**	**10**	4	0
Hanningfield Reservoir	1	0	0	0	0	1	5	4	0
Lee Valley	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Other	1	1	2	0	0	0	2	1	2

CURLEW SANDPIPER *Calidris ferruginea* UK

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

There were no winter records at either end of the year.

The only spring record was a single at Blue House Farm on 21st May.

Autumn passage was poor with fewer than 100 individuals and no double-figure counts (three in 2018). The only counts of five or more were: Old Hall Marshes, five on 26th July, six on 29th August; Wallasea Island, seven on 19th October.

The only inland records were singles at Hanningfield Reservoir on 11th September and 27th October.

The last record of the year was a single at Wallasea Island on 1st November.

Estimated monthly totals were:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Totals	0	0	0	0	1	0	12	20	37	19	1	0
Locations	0	0	0	0	1	0	3	8	13	10	1	0

TEMMINCK'S STINT *Calidris temminckii*

Scarce, almost annual passage migrant. **EBSIP (193, 54, 247)**

Blue House Farm	One	2nd May	DWa
Blue House Farm	One	7th May	DWa
Rainham Marshes	Two	12th May	NSm HLa HVa
Hamford Water	One	21st July	MLo

An above average year.

Estimated totals over the last decade have been:

	2019	2018	2017	2016	2015	2014	2013	2012	2011	2010	Average
Totals	5	0	3	2	5	1	0	9	4	1	3.0

SANDERLING *Calidris alba alba* UK

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

June records were received from: The Naze, ten on 5th; Colne Point from 2nd to 16th, with a maximum of 80 on 9th; Rainham Marshes, two on 1st.

Inland records were (singles unless stated): Hanningfield Reservoir, 25th-27th October; King George V Reservoir on 28th July and 29th October.

The only counts of 500 or more came from Gunners Park Shoebury in March-April and September-October, with a maximum of 800 on 13th September.

Principal monthly Wetland Bird Survey counts were:

GB 200 INT 2,000	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
WeBS total	**536**	**81**	**119**	**56**	**73**	**74**	**70**	**591**	**156**
Stour Estuary	36	0	0	0	36	0	0	0	0
Hamford Water	36	40	29	nc	nc	4	26	12	19
Colne Estuary	35	36	45	4	nc	7	4	18	20
Blackwater Estuary	0	2	0	0	0	0	6	0	25
Dengie	23	3	14	52	0	0	0	10	30
Crouch/Roach/Wallasea	8	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Foulness/Thames	**398**	0	31	0	37	63	34	**551**	62
Abberton Reservoir	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Hanningfield Reservoir	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Lee Valley	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Other	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

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.**

Estimated monthly totals from the main reservoirs were (maximum monthly counts):

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Abberton Reservoir	45	40	1	0	2	0	2	1	6	7	20	4
Hanningfield Reservoir	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	2	3	2	19	10
King George V Reservoir	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0

There were no records in June.

Principal monthly Wetland Bird Survey counts were:

GB 3,400 INT 13,300	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
WeBS total	**58242**	**45708**	**4205**	**1416**	**600**	**1918**	**21459**	**50743**	**44919**
Stour Estuary	**15698**	**13374**	446	520	226	1002	**5996**	**7668**	**12166**
Hamford Water	**4211**	1506	479	nc	nc	39	862	**5398**	2900
Colne Estuary	2756	3533	186	0	nc	8	1295	3427	2331
Blackwater Estuary	**14171**	**10289**	474	25	3	98	**8324**	**16095**	**10727**
Dengie	**5400**	**5100**	2225	800	86	24	1290	3730	**4050**
Crouch/Roach/Wallasea	**3416**	**3478**	84	45	74	84	798	**8042**	**5650**
Foulness/Thames	**12462**	**8236**	311	26	206	661	2892	**5612**	**6195**
Abberton Reservoir	7	0	0	0	4	0	1	32	0
Hanningfield Reservoir	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	8	0
Lee Valley	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Other	121	192	0	0	1	2	1	731	900

Except for those given in the Wetland Bird Survey table, there were no five-figure counts, the largest being 4,300 at Bradwell Bird Observatory on 20th January.

PURPLE SANDPIPER *Calidris maritima* UK

Uncommon, and declining, passage migrant and winter visitor.

In the first winter period all records were from Holland Haven (singles unless stated): 4th-6th January with two on 5th, 18th January, 24th-25th January, two on 11th-12th February, two on 2nd March, 5th March.

Second winter records were more widespread with records from (singles unless stated): Mistley Walls on 13th October; Harwich on 9th November; Holland Haven on 1st October, two on 2nd October, 18th October, two on 24th-26th October, 1-3 on 1st-8th November, 14th November, two on 24th November, 28th November, 11th December, 14th December, 2-4 on 24th-29th December; Point Clear St Osyth on 13th October; Stone Point Mersea Island on 14th and 25th October; Gunners Park Shoebury on 30th September; Canvey Point on 29th October and 16th November.

LITTLE STINT *Calidris minuta*

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

The only first winter record was a single at Tollesbury Wick on 7th January.

Spring passage was very light, the only records being in May as follows: The Naze, single on 6th, two on 13th and 16th; East Tilbury, two on 17th.

Autumn passage was also very light with singles recorded at: Frinton-on-Sea on 21st August; Old Hall Marshes on 29th August and 15th October; Stow Marsh South Woodham Ferrers on 6th September; Wallasea Island on 19th-20th October; Canvey Point on 29th October; East Tilbury on 5th September; King George V Reservoir on 8th September; Walthamstow Marshes on 8th September.

There were no second winter records.
Estimated monthly totals were:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Totals	1	0	0	0	7	0	0	2	4	3	0	0
Locations	1	0	0	0	2	0	0	2	4	3	0	0

The annual total of just 17 was exceptionally low.
Annual totals over the last decade have been:

	2019	2018	2017	2016	2015	2014	2013	2012	2011	2010	Average
Totals	17	59	210	128	62	67	79	72	130	120	94.4

PECTORAL SANDPIPER *Calidris melanotos*

Very scarce passage migrant, mainly in autumn. **EBSIP (65, 51, 116)**

Hanningfield Reservoir	Adult, possibly ♀	28th July	DAc
Old Hall Marshes	Adult ♂	29th July-2nd August	CJM-G

A second below average year in a row.
Annual totals over the last decade have been:

	2019	2018	2017	2016	2015	2014	2013	2012	2011	2010	Average
Totals	2	2	6	3	2	3	3	6	4	6	3.7

Addendum 2017.
The bird at Rainham Marshes on 29th-30th July was an adult not a juvenile as stated.

EURASIAN WOODCOCK *Scolopax rusticola* UK

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

There were 21 records of two or more (23 in 2018) as follows (two unless stated): Beckton on 1st December; Bungate Wood Braintree, three on 3rd February; Canvey Wick, four on 2nd February, six on 14th December, 30th December; Cely Woods Aveley on 22nd February; Frinton-on-Sea on 27th October; Gunpowder Park Waltham Abbey on 21st November; Hadleigh Downs on 19th January; Hanningfield Reservoir on 24th November; Hazeleigh Wood on 1st January; Holyfield Lake on 28th January; Ingrebourne Valley, three on 9th January, three on 20th January, seven on 10th December; Lofts Farm Gravel Pits Heybridge on 31st January; Mardyke Valley Stifford-Aveley on 22nd December; Thundersley on 20th March; Wanstead Flats on 16th November; Wat Tyler, four on 8th December, 31st December.
Estimated monthly totals were:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Totals	28	30	15	2	0	0	0	0	0	8	17	33

JACK SNIPE *Lymnocryptes minimus*

Scarce passage migrant and winter visitor.

There was an estimated total of 63 individuals from 17 sites (72 from 31 in 2018). Estimated monthly totals were:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Totals	18	10	15	13	0	0	0	0	0	3	2	2
Locations	6	5	4	6	0	0	0	0	0	3	2	2

All multiple counts were in the first half of the year as follows (two unless stated): Cattawade on 12th April; Woodham Fen South Woodham Ferrers on 5th January; Vange Marsh, 2-3 on 5th-6th January, 12th January, 5th February, 15th March, four on 9th March; Coalhouse Fort East Tilbury, four on 16th February; Rainham Marshes on 8th January, 4th-7th April.

The last of the spring involved two at Cattawade on 12th April with the first returning bird on Wanstead Flats on 5th October.

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 records indicative of 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	**136**	**81**	**122**	**31**	**9**	**11**	**26**	**54**	**41**
Stour Estuary	10	18	26	20	4	2	6	10	2
Hamford Water	8	3	0	nc	nc	1	2	1	2
Colne Estuary	0	0	0	0	nc	0	0	0	0
Blackwater Estuary	9	4	6	1	0	2	5	1	0
Dengie	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Crouch/Roach/Wallasea	8	4	3	2	4	0	3	2	0
Foulness/Thames	20	13	3	7	1	2	1	0	4
Abberton Reservoir	0	2	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
Hanningfield Reservoir	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0
Lee Valley	0	0	1	0	0	2	0	6	0
Other	81	37	82	1	0	2	8	34	33

The only site recording counts of 50 or more was Rainham Marshes (five in 2018) with a maximum of 87 on 3rd February.

COMMON SANDPIPER *Actitis hypoleucos*

UK

Common passage migrant and scarce winter visitor.

Estimated monthly totals were:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Totals	8	5	3	45	74	7	206	250	99	23	13	13
Locations	7	4	3	22	26	5	46	61	40	16	12	7

The only double-figure count in the first half of the year was 13 at Rainham Marshes on 17th May.

In autumn, double-figure counts were received from seven sites (nine in 2018). Maximum site counts were: Abberton Reservoir, 11 on 8th August; Beckton Sewage Works, 14 on 3rd August; Gallions Reach Beckton, 12 on 21st July; Hanningfield Reservoir, 20 on 11th August; Old Hall Marshes, 13 on 26th July; Rainham Marshes, 40 on 30th July; Walthamstow Marshes, 18 on 27th July.

GREEN SANDPIPER *Tringa ochropus* UK

Common passage migrant and much increased winter visitor.

Estimated monthly totals were:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Totals	30	32	41	60	4	51	122	129	76	36	23	21
Locations	18	22	22	34	4	18	33	39	32	19	17	14

In the first winter period the highest counts were both of five at Walthamstow Marshes on 2nd January and William Girling Reservoir Chingford on 26th February.

Spring passage was lighter than last year with an estimated 156 records in March-June (172 in 2018). The only sites recording five or more were (maximum counts): Hornchurch Park, five on 1st April; Ingrebourne Valley, seven on 29th March and 9th April.

Autumn passage was also lighter with 363 records in July-October (476 in 2018). Double-figure counts came from (maximum site counts): Blue House Farm, 12 on 26th July; Bowers Marsh, 11 on 25th July; Old Hall Marshes, 17 on 27th July; The Hythe Colchester, 12 on 30th June-1st July; William Girling Reservoir Chingford, 11 on 9th August.

In the second winter period the highest count was four at Abberton Reservoir on 18th December.

COMMON REDSHANK *Tringa totanus 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/probable at 13 sites (11 in 2018) with possible breeding at a further five locations. Number of pairs (with numbers of chicks shown in brackets where available) are given where known: Broomhouse Flash Langham, two; Cattawade, 24; Walton Hall Marshes, four; Holland Haven, one (three); Alresford, one (one); Old Hall Marshes, 97; Tollesbury Wick, three; Foulness Island, 24; Clementsgreen Creek South Woodham Ferrers, one; Lower Raypits Canewdon, one (two); River Roach, two (two); Wallasea Island, 18; Bowers Marsh, ten (two); Rainham Marshes, 87.

There were no four-figure counts except for those listed in the Wetland Bird Survey table, the highest non-Wetland Bird Survey count being 700 at Stow Marsh South Woodham Ferrers on 15th October.

Principal monthly Wetland Bird Survey counts were:

GB 940 INT 2,400	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
WeBS total	**9150**	**7706**	**6690**	**1946**	**2839**	**9389**	**8409**	**8537**	**7459**
Stour Estuary	**2056**	**2016**	**2016**	**1320**	**1264**	**2446**	**2206**	**1570**	**2296**
Hamford Water	881	654	592	nc	nc	2202	**1167**	823	**1034**
Colne Estuary	**1083**	976	922	9	nc	1121	199	1152	849
Blackwater Estuary	**3134**	**1504**	**1971**	176	**966**	**1683**	**3100**	**2638**	**1861**
Dengie	340	666	134	64	25	6	220	114	88
Crouch/Roach/Wallasea	614	659	285	127	144	809	706	856	492
Foulness/Thames	843	**1004**	567	244	437	**1122**	690	**1304**	765
Abberton Reservoir	3	1	0	0	3	0	1	3	6
Hanningfield Reservoir	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
Lee Valley	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0
Other	196	226	202	4	0	0	120	77	68

MARSH SANDPIPER *Tringa stagnatilis*

Vagrant. BBRC (9, 5, 14)

Vange Marsh	One	25th-26th April	PBa JWr
Blue House Farm	One	26th April	DWa

Both records are assumed to refer to the same bird.

The second consecutive year the species has turned up after a decade's absence and one can but wonder if it is a returning bird? Vange Marsh has now recorded the species more than any other site in the County with records in 2000, 2018 and 2019.

WOOD SANDPIPER *Tringa glareola* UK

Scarce passage migrant.

Estimated monthly totals were:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Totals	0	0	0	2	5	1	13	25	2	2	0	0
Locations	0	0	0	2	4	1	7	11	2	1	0	0

In spring, the first bird appeared at Rainham Marshes on 19th April, with all subsequent records being singles except for two at Holland Haven on 21st-22nd May.

In autumn, records of two or more came from six sites. Maximum counts were (two unless stated): Holland Haven, three on 31st July; Old Hall Marshes, five on 23rd August; Fleet Head Great Wakering on 4th August; West Canvey Marsh on 13th August; Rainham Marshes on 6th October; Hanningfield Reservoir on 28th July. The last of the year was at Rainham Marshes on 7th October.

SPOTTED REDSHANK *Tringa erythropus* UK

Fairly common passage migrant and scarce winter visitor.

Estimated monthly totals were:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Totals	20	16	11	20	4	33	95	91	49	16	8	9
Locations	5	7	7	9	3	5	6	9	4	6	3	2

The only double-figure counts in spring came from Old Hall Marshes, with a maximum of 26 on 25th June.

In autumn, double-figure counts were received from four sites (two in 2018). Maximum counts were: Abbotts Hall Farm, 14 on 16th August; Old Hall Marshes, 52 on 23rd August; Vange Marsh, ten on 26th July; Wat Tyler, ten on 13th September.

The highest inland counts were seven at Abberton Reservoir on 19th and 26th August.

COMMON GREENSHANK *Tringa nebularia* UK

Common passage migrant and scarce winter visitor.

Estimated monthly totals were:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Coastal	5	8	4	22	9	4	114	78	39	53	4	12
Inland	2	0	0	5	3	1	18	20	13	1	1	0
Totals	7	8	4	27	12	5	132	98	52	54	5	12
Locations	14	11	11	29	17	11	33	52	35	19	13	5

In spring, double-figure counts came from (maximum counts): Fingringhoe Wick, ten on 23rd April; The Hythe Colchester, 12 on 27th April; Vange Marsh, 22 on 24th April.

In autumn, counts of 20 or more came from (maximum counts): Frinton-on-Sea, 114 south in six hours on 28th July; Fingringhoe Wick, 78 on 4th August; Old Hall Marshes, 23 on 12th August; Heybridge Gravel Pit, 53 on 2nd October; Wallasea Island, 20 on 15th September; Two Tree Island, 36 on 14th September.

Principal monthly Wetland Bird Survey counts were:

GB 8 INT 3,300	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
WeBS total	**15**	**10**	**6**	**25**	**174**	**114**	**125**	**11**	**6**
Stour Estuary	**10**	6	2	4	**104**	**30**	**52**	6	4
Hamford Water	0	0	0	nc	nc	**31**	**8**	2	0
Colne Estuary	1	0	0	1	nc	1	0	2	0
Blackwater Estuary	0	2	2	4	**44**	**24**	**33**	1	2
Dengie	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Crouch/Roach/Wallasea	0	0	0	2	**11**	**8**	**20**	0	0
Foulness/Thames	4	2	2	**11**	5	**12**	**12**	0	0
Abberton Reservoir	0	0	0	3	**10**	5	0	0	0
Hanningfield Reservoir	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Lee Valley	0	0	0	0	0	3	0	0	0
Other	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

BLACK-LEGGED KITTIWAKE *Rissa tridactyla tridactyla* UK

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

Numbers of wintering birds were low in January and February, with double-figure counts coming from: Frinton-on-Sea, ten on 15th, 23 on 16th, 28 on 19th and 21 on 20th January, all heading south offshore; Canvey Point, 20 on 2nd, 12 on 4th, 15 on 5th and 12 on 11th February, mostly following ships upriver.

Spring passage was very light with the only double-figure count being a single flock of 16 adults heading upriver at East Tilbury on the late date of 25th May.

The only mid-summer records were six heading south offshore from Frinton-on-Sea on 8th June and, what was presumably the same adult, seen heading upriver at East Tilbury and later at Beckton on 9th June.

Autumn passage was also very light with only three double-figure counts: Bradwell Bird Observatory, 12 on 13th October; Canvey Point, 12 on 29th October and East Tilbury, 12 on 29th October.

Numbers remained very low into the winter and there was just one significant count of 48 south past Frinton-on-Sea on 21st December.

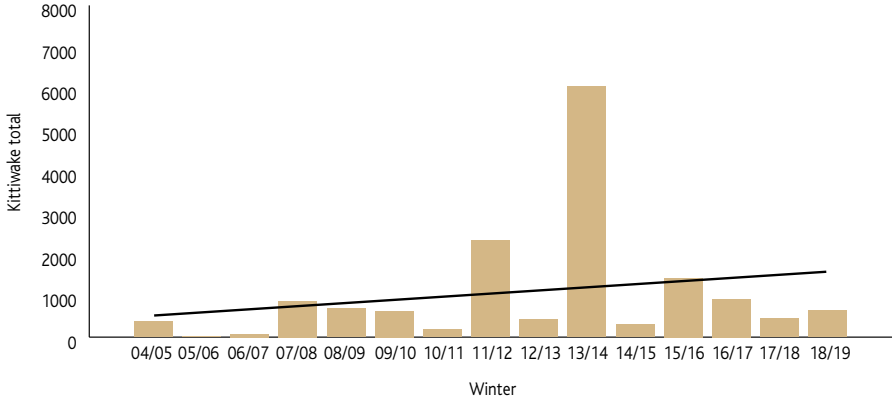
There was just one inland record at Abberton Reservoir on 3rd August.

Estimated monthly totals were:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Totals	125	78	7	10	27	8	0	3	2	51	4	64

The most recent winter influx into the County was during December 2013 (an estimated 1,830 birds) into January 2014 (3,875).

Annual winter totals during the last 15 years have been:



Although the trend is generally positive, numbers were heavily influenced by the substantial influx in 2013/14.

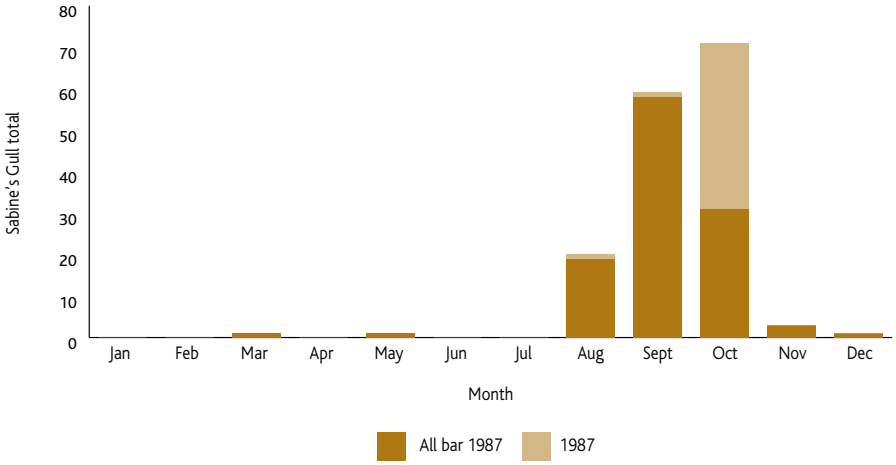
SABINE'S GULL *Xema sabini*

Uncommon, almost annual visitor, mainly in autumn. **EBSIP (113, 39, 152)**

After a blank year in 2018 there were two autumn juveniles:

Canvey Point	Juvenile	9th August	JSa
Canvey Point	Juvenile	18th September	NCh

The vast majority of records in Essex are during the autumn (just single records in March 1956 and May 1977 outside of the autumn period), with the extreme dates being 6th August (Maplin Sands in 1982) and 9th December (Southend Pier in 1985). Monthly distribution of all records:



The impact of the "Great Storm" influx between 16th-24th October 1987 (40 birds, which still accounts for more than one-quarter of all records in the County) is shown. Excluding this one-off event, September is the peak month for Sabine's Gull in Essex.

Annual totals over the last decade have been:

	2019	2018	2017	2016	2015	2014	2013	2012	2011	2010	Average
Totals	2	0	1	2	0	2	4	5	2	2	2.0

BONAPARTE'S GULL *Chroicocephalus philadelphia*

Vagrant. **BBRC (1, 7, 8)**

Rainham Marshes	Adult	21st and 24th January	ATw *et al.*
Abberton Reservoir	Second calendar-year	2nd-10th May	SNi *et al.*

The Rainham Marshes bird was present at Erith on the south side of the River Thames from 20th January to 3rd February and visited Rainham Marshes on the dates shown.

Previous records in May 2012 (two), April/May 2017 (two) and June/July 2018, were all of second calendar-year birds, so the Rainham Marshes bird is the first adult in Essex since the first County record on 27th August 1994 at Hadleigh Marshes. It is likely that increased observer awareness of the identification criteria is at least partly responsible for the recent surge in records and quite possible that the adult bird was a returning bird from 2018.

BLACK-HEADED-GULL *Chroicocephalus ridibundus* UK

Abundant resident, passage migrant and winter visitor.

Records from the main breeding colonies (with 2018 data) were:

Hamford Water	1,500 adults in colonies on Honey and Hedge End Islands (404+ Pairs)
Stone Point The Naze	No details (no details)
Rat Island River Colne	No details (no details)
Old Hall Marshes	252 nests, 62+ young (60 nests)
Abberton Reservoir	No details (25+ pairs)
Cob Marsh Island etc. Mersea	43 nests (16 nests)
Cindery Island Brightlingsea Creek	No details (a few pairs)
Heybridge Gravel Pit	Large colony (300-400 pairs)
Wallasea Island	1,928 nests (1,095 nests)
Foulness Island	104 pairs, 30 young (no details)
Blue House Farm	No details (13 nests)
Paglesham Lagoon	52 nests (60 pairs)
Bowers Marsh	75 nests (16 nests)
Russell Green Gravel Pits Boreham	150+ pairs (150+ pairs)
Seventy Acres Lake Holyfield	At least 20 young (43 chicks and fledged young)
Fishers Green Holyfield	100+ pairs (no details)
Wat Tyler	60+ young (no details)

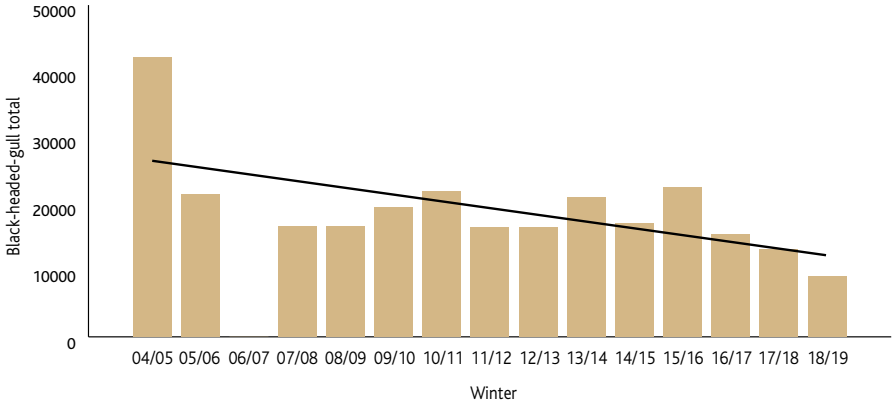
The County Recorder would welcome more breeding records from observers.

Non-Wetland Bird Survey counts in excess of 1,500 were as follows: Frinton-on-Sea, 1,648 flew south in two hours on 23rd August; West Mersea, 2,000 on 17th January; Old Hall Marshes, 2,200 on 14th January; Abberton Reservoir, 2,000 on 23rd March and 5,000 on 3rd April; King George V Reservoir, 2,000 on 27th January; Roding Valley Meadows Chigwell, 2,200 on 24th December.

Principal monthly Wetland Bird Counts were:

GB 22,000 INT 20,000	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
WeBS total	**8959**	**10783**	**10441**	**7511**	**8412**	**7684**	**7021**	**6987**	**6444**
Stour Estuary	1140	5930	1006	684	3890	1276	1674	970	1770
Hamford Water	984	1352	1355	nc	nc	1099	1671	1009	1306
Colne Estuary	32	91	51	163	nc	399	39	97	95
Blackwater Estuary	404	486	1429	1352	1082	602	1044	829	775
Dengie	41	40	212	76	455	712	520	36	20
Crouch/Roach/Wallasea	101	285	1182	257	195	232	315	154	15
Foulness/Thames	1144	329	1185	779	1552	1593	589	1005	574
Abberton Reservoir	1462	717	1917	3120	628	500	566	1042	573
Hanningfield Reservoir	101	78	1168	612	283	179	180	382	190
Lee Valley	1981	257	492	212	279	970	141	1128	330
Other	1569	1218	444	256	48	122	282	335	796

The following chart illustrates the peak monthly Wetland Bird Survey count over the last decade:



As with all the commoner gull species the overall trend is downwards.

LITTLE GULL *Hydrocoloeus minutus*

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

Numbers were very low in January and February: Frinton-on-Sea, two on 16th January; Holland Haven, one on 16th January; Canvey Point, one on 29th January; Rainham Marshes, two on 1st February; Abberton Reservoir, one on 4th January.

Spring passage commenced on 27th March, with a single at Abberton Reservoir. Thereafter double-figure counts were recorded as follows: Rainham Marshes, 14 on 8th and 43 on 9th April; King George V Reservoir, 51 on 8th and ten on 11th April; Walthamstow Marshes, 27 on 8th and 11 on 9th April.

There was just one mid-summer record: Beckton, one on 13th July.

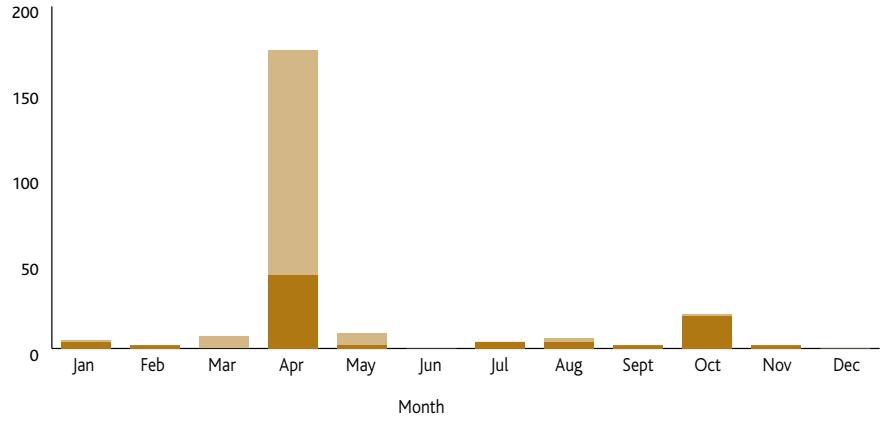
Autumn passage commenced on 9th August, with one south past Frinton-on-Sea. Passage was very light with no double-figure counts, the maximum counts being: St Osyth, five on 14th October; Rainham Marshes, five on 21st October. The final birds of the year were two south past Frinton-on-Sea on 8th November.

Estimated monthly totals were:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Totals	5	2	7	174	9	0	1	6	2	20	2	0
Locations	4	1	3	11	3	0	1	3	2	5	1	0

The majority of spring passage is recorded on inland waters, and principally the major reservoirs, with the Lee Valley waters being particularly favoured. Outside this period the majority are seen on tidal waters.

The following chart illustrates the number and distribution of Little Gull recorded at inland and coastal sites during the year.



Numbers do fluctuate from year to year and seasonally and estimated annual totals and the month in which the maximum numbers occur are:

	2019	2018	2017	2016	2015	2014	2013	2012	2011	2010
Annual Total	231	265	100	441	201	307	383	430	278	335
Peak Month	Apr	Mar	Apr	Jan	Apr	Oct	Oct	Oct	Nov	Apr
Peak Monthly Totals	174	108	23	325	91	170	120	154	92	130

Spring passage accounts for five of the peaks in the last decade with autumn passage four and a winter influx one. This suggests that prevailing weather conditions have an influence on the seasonality and numbers seen in Essex each year.

MEDITERRANEAN GULL *Ichthyaetus melanocephalus* UK

Increasing resident, passage migrant and winter visitor.

Breeding records came from (2018 numbers in brackets where known):

Hamford Water	17 pairs, probably 30+ chicks fledged (4-5 pairs)
Wallasea Island	Six pairs, success unknown (31 pairs)

There was an extraordinary influx onto Wallasea Island on 19th June when an estimated 420 birds were recorded on the Grass Farm Lagoons. The observer estimated that the flock was approximately 75% adults, 10% third calendar-year and 15% second calendar-year birds. Counts at the site before

and after this date were of 40 on 16th June and just five on 22nd June. This is the highest number ever recorded in Essex, with the previous highest counts being 415 on the Roach Estuary on 8th August 2016 and 281 at Paglesham Lagoon on 9th September 2015.

The only other three-figure count was 194 on the Roach Estuary on 15th August. Double-figure counts came from 22 sites as follows (peak seasonal counts): Hamford Water, 37 on 25th May; Frinton-on-Sea, 35 on 2nd March, 34 on 22nd April, 27 on 18th September, 46 on 2nd October; Colne Point, ten on 13th September; Cudmore Grove East Mersea, 14 on 29th September; West Mersea, 12 on 18th February, 40+ on 3rd August; Althorne, 70 on 22nd March; Blue House Farm, 23 on 18th April; Wallasea Island, 38 on 1st March, ten on 12th July; South Fambridge, 50 on 8th August; Wakering Stairs, ten on 20th and 21st August; Gunners Park Shoebury, 20 on 19th March, 22 on 2nd August; Southend Pier, 40 on 6th January, 12 on 5th and 11th June, 20 on 21st July, 19 on 8th November; Southend-on-Sea, 32 on 12th January, 12 on 4th July, 19 on 20th December; Two Tree Island, ten on 22nd April; Leigh-on-Sea, 12 on 25th July; Canvey Point, 20 on 27th April, 50 on 18th September; Eastwood, 30 on 5th July; Rochford, 50 on 24th June; East Tilbury, ten on both 10th March and 22nd April, 34 on 27th June, 12 on 11th July; Rainham Marshes, 87 on 10th April; Barking Bay, 19 on 10th April; Abberton Reservoir, ten on 5th September.

Although the majority of the sites listed are in the south and south-east of the County, particularly around the Thames Estuary, it is notable that more sites from the north-east of the County have produced double-figure counts (five in 2019 compared to three in 2018).

MEW GULL *Larus canus* (Common Gull) UK

Mew Gull *Larus canus canus*

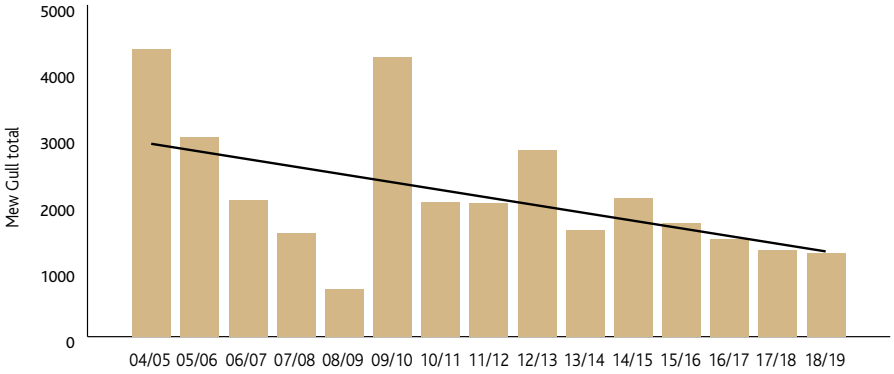
Common passage migrant and winter visitor.

Counts of more than 200 outside of the regular Wetland Bird Survey counts were received from: Frinton-on-Sea, 378 flew south in 3.5 hours on 16th January; Bradwell Bird Observatory, 600 on 13th January; Dengie Flats, 700 on 11th August; Abberton Reservoir, 250 on 5th January; Wormingford, 250 on 2nd March; Hanningfield Reservoir, 750 on 5th January, 350 on 7th and 9th and 220 on 16th March; Walthamstow Wetlands, 250 on 11th January; Wanstead Flats, 500 on 2nd and 23rd February, 400 on 1st March, 300 on 28th November, 450 on 6th and 251 on 15th December; Roding Valley Meadows Chigwell, 300 on 13th, 290 on 15th, 320 on 22nd, 850 on 24th and 400 on 28th December.

Principal monthly Wetland Bird Survey counts were:

GB 7,000 INT 16,400	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
WeBS total	**1372**	**2844**	**843**	**151**	**978**	**1648**	**472**	**740**	**1198**
Stour Estuary	94	2206	60	20	44	84	44	164	114
Hamford Water	16	8	4	nc	nc	28	33	24	33
Colne Estuary	1	0	0	2	nc	0	0	4	0
Blackwater Estuary	144	193	102	0	26	16	26	104	62
Dengie	272	19	0	0	120	320	75	96	543
Crouch/Roach/Wallasea	28	33	7	0	5	0	10	12	2
Foulness/Thames	180	242	298	126	770	1159	236	159	107
Abberton Reservoir	352	78	289	0	5	18	16	88	23
Hanningfield Reservoir	1	18	10	0	0	1	2	32	7
Lee Valley	91	5	68	0	0	10	7	15	17
Other	193	42	5	3	8	12	23	42	290

The following chart illustrates the peak monthly Wetland Bird Survey counts over the last 15 years.



The trend in the peak counts appears to be downwards, although the reasons for this apparent decline are unknown.

GREAT BLACK-BACKED GULL *Larus marinus* UK

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

Three-figure counts came from: Frinton-on-Sea, 300 flew north on 15th November; Colne Point, 122 on 17th, 163 on 20th and 134 on 26th November; Roach Estuary, 150 on 3rd January; Mucking, 120 on 30th October; Rainham Marshes, 221 on 6th and 140 on 8th January, 120 on 24th October, 145 on 1st November; Abberton Reservoir, 150 on 5th January.

There were widespread reports of immatures over-summering, including: Colne Point, ten on 11th May; Rainham Marshes, 21 on 28th, 13 on 30th and 22 on 31st July; Abberton Reservoir, 11 on 15th May.

Principal monthly Wetland Bird Survey counts were:

GB 760 INT 3,600	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
WeBS total	**225**	**144**	**89**	**19**	**32**	**283**	**372**	**1087**	**219**
Stour Estuary	20	6	16	6	4	20	36	76	22
Hamford Water	11	21	54	nc	nc	2	62	467	34
Colne Estuary	4	5	4	7	nc	9	17	98	4
Blackwater Estuary	17	6	3	1	5	6	12	9	5
Dengie	2	0	1	0	2	4	5	2	11
Crouch/Roach/Wallasea	2	2	0	0	0	9	12	2	3
Foulness/Thames	40	23	2	1	4	25	84	357	10
Abberton Reservoir	115	66	4	0	4	177	94	61	113
Hanningfield Reservoir	12	14	5	4	13	31	49	2	17
Lee Valley	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Other	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	13	0

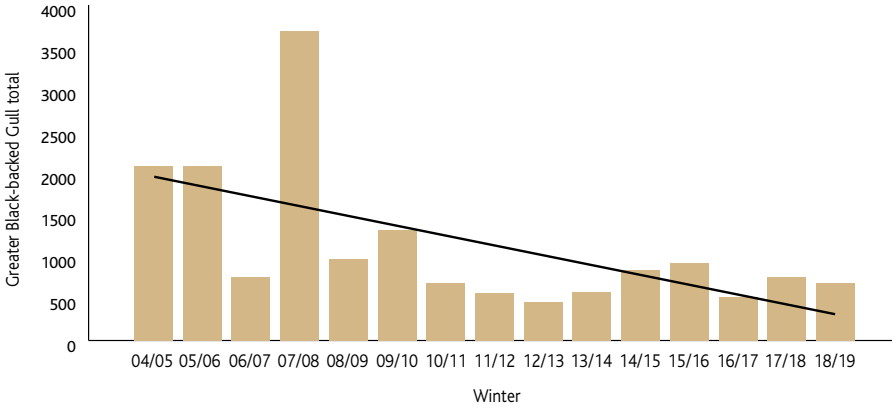
Sanderling, Colne Point, June (SIMON WOOD)

Bonaparte's Gull, Abberton Reservoir, May (SEAN NIXON)

Glaucous Gull, Rainham Marshes, February (SEAN NIXON)

White-winged Tern, Abberton Reservoir, May (SIMON PATIENT)

The following table illustrates the peak monthly Wetland Bird Survey counts over the last 15 years:



Whilst the peak counts each winter are prone to fluctuation, the trend is one of declining numbers.

GLAUCOUS GULL *Larus hyperboreus hyperboreus*

UK

Uncommon passage migrant and winter visitor.

EBSIP

Two records from what is now the premier location for "white-winged" gulls in the County.

Rainham Marshes	Juvenile	16th January-9th March	DSh, ATw, SHg *et al*
Rainham Marshes	Third calendar-year	12th-22nd February	DSh, ATw *et al*

Annual winter totals over the last decade have been:

Winter	2019/18	2018/17	2017/16	2016/15	2015/14	2014/13	2013/12	2012/11	2011/10	2010/09	Average
Totals	2	2	7	2	3	4	5	0	2	3	3.0

ICELAND GULL *Larus glaucoides*

EBSIP (99, 63, 162)

Iceland Gull *Larus glaucoides glaucoides*

UK

Scarce passage migrant and winter visitor.

EBSIP (99, 62, 161)

Just two records this year:

Rainham Marshes	Juvenile	13th-14th February	DAn *et al*
Creekmouth Barking	Juvenile	27th and 30th December	JPa

Annual winter totals over the last decade have been:

Winter	2019/18	2018/17	2017/16	2016/15	2015/14	2014/13	2013/12	2012/11	2011/10	2010/09	Average
Totals	1	4	3	2	6	3	3	18	3	5	4.8

EUROPEAN HERRING GULL *Larus argentatus argenteus/argentatus* UK

***L.a. agenteus* 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.**
Records from breeding sites (with 2018 data) were:

Hamford Water	Large colony still active (no details)
Frinton-on-Sea/Holland-on-Sea/Clacton/Jaywick	A few scattered pairs on rooftops
Point Clear St Osyth	One pair (one pair)
Cindery Island Brightlingsea Creek	About 60 pairs bred, a few large chicks seen (40+ pairs)
Wivenhoe	One pair (one pair)
Cob Island etc. Mersea	96 nests (78 nests)
Lofts Farm Gravel Pit Heybridge	One pair
Maldon/Heybridge – industrial areas	10+ pairs (10+ pairs)
Pewet Island Bradwell on Sea	Nine nests
Foulness Island	24 pairs, 50 young (no details)
Braintree	Eight pairs (four pairs)
Chelmsford	No details (23 pairs)
Walthamstow Wetlands	Five pairs (one pair)
Beckton	No details (57 pairs)

The Maldon/Heybridge colony has been present for some years but it is exceptionally difficult to observe as it is up on the roofs of industrial buildings. The figure of 10+ pairs should be considered an absolute minimum and has been estimated from the number of juvenile birds being attended by adults on the nearby estuary and gravel pits.

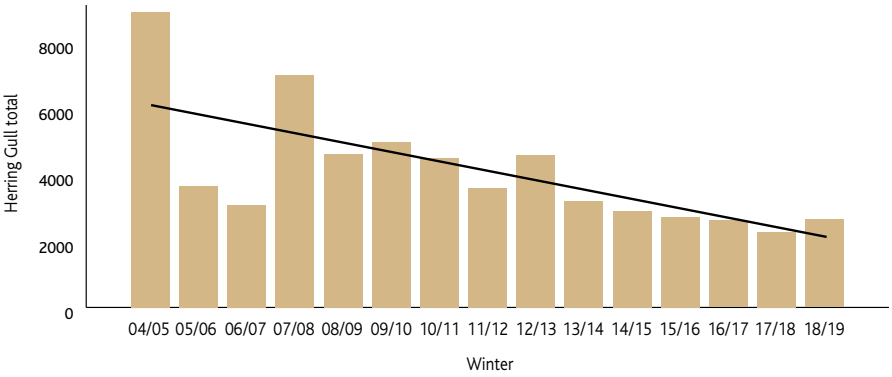
The County Recorder would welcome more breeding records from observers.

The highest non-Wetland Bird Survey counts were: Colne Point, 500 on 2nd, 450 on 3rd and 273 on 31st May, 300 on 1st-2nd June; Wallasea Island, 300 on 10th-11th April; Roach Estuary, 300 on 2nd August; Southend-on-Sea, 200 on 23rd January; Rainham Marshes, 2,480 on 11th July, 290 on 7th and 300 on 31st October; Abberton Reservoir, 200 on 5th January; Hanningfield Reservoir, 1,000 on 5th January; Stifford Hall, 200 on 8th, 450 on 21st and 225 on 23rd May, 275 on 3rd and 250 on 5th September, 200 on 2nd October; Walthamstow Wetlands, 210 on 17th December.

Principal monthly Wetland Bird Survey counts were:

GB 7,300 INT 10,200	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
WeBS total	**2061**	**1593**	**1075**	**1327**	**1163**	**2643**	**1783**	**2529**	**1027**
Stour Estuary	206	536	184	164	306	354	378	284	114
Hamford Water	133	132	141	nc	nc	116	241	229	145
Colne Estuary	44	47	71	93	nc	88	13	39	53
Blackwater Estuary	135	80	158	364	223	99	164	268	195
Dengie	185	90	42	98	78	380	269	92	60
Crouch/Roach/Wallasea	47	47	193	35	18	19	60	41	33
Foulness/Thames	923	401	164	484	491	1373	440	1059	148
Abberton Reservoir	157	185	10	0	13	128	27	158	101
Hanningfield Reservoir	3	8	2	4	4	7	72	80	43
Lee Valley	149	2	49	1	0	42	5	139	3
Other	79	65	61	84	30	37	114	140	132

The following chart illustrates the peak monthly Wetland Bird Survey counts over the last 15 years:



The general trend in peak count numbers appears to be downwards.

CASPIAN GULL *Larus cachinnans* UK

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

The Thames and adjacent areas again produced the majority of the records in the County and the only records away from Thames area sites were: Holland Haven, probable fifth calendar-year, 8th March; South Ockendon Landfill Site, four on 16th February; Fairlop Waters Barkingside, a third calendar-year on 9th and 14th January; Wanstead Flats, second calendar-year on 27th January and another second calendar-year on 7th December; Leyton Flats, fifth calendar-year, 3rd-29th January and again 18th November to at least 23rd December, with a second calendar-year on 16th-17th December.

The estimated number of birds at Rainham Marshes and other sites on the Thames were:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Rainham Marshes	6	5	0	1	0	0	2	3	1	3	3	7
Other Sites	2	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
Totals	8	6	0	1	0	0	2	3	1	3	4	7

As the majority of reports came from nearby sites along the Thames and adjacent inland areas, it is difficult to determine accurately the total number of birds involved. Estimated annual totals over the last decade have been:

	2019	2018	2017	2016	2015	2014	2013	2012	2011	2010	Average
Totals	45	40	25	25	15	20	15	15	20	20	24.0

Observers are reminded that this remains an EBSIP species and is very rare away from the Thames area and so photographs and/or a description are required for all records.

YELLOW-LEGGED GULL *Larus michahellis michahellis* UK

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

Estimated monthly totals were:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Rainham Marshes	7	3	2	0	0	1	180	90	15	9	5	15
East Tilbury / Thurrock Thameside	0	0	0	0	0	12	21	37	21	4	0	0
Other Sites	12	7	3	2	2	2	9	15	16	10	5	10
Totals	19	10	5	2	2	15	210	142	52	23	10	25

The Thames and nearby sites continue to account for the majority of records, with peak counts in the July to September period coming from: East Tilbury/Thurrock Thameside Mucking, 21 on 7th July, 37 on 11th August and 20 on 26th September; Rainham Marshes, an estimated 180 on 30th July and 80 on 3rd August.

Away from the Thames the only sites to record more than two were: Hanningfield Reservoir, regularly from 22nd July to 1st October, with a peak of five on 10th August and four on several dates; Wanstead Flats, four on 14th August; King George V Reservoir, three on 2nd January.

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

***L. f. graellsii* 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.**

Records from the main breeding sites (with 2018 data) were:

Hogmarsh Island Manningtree	No details (one pair)
Hamford Water	Colony still active, no count (no details)
Colne Point	Two pairs
Clacton-on-Sea	One pair (one pair)
Cindery Island Brightlingsea Creek	About 15 pairs bred (nine pairs)
Cobmarsh Island West Mersea	Two nests
Maldon/Heybridge Industrial areas	3+ pairs (3+ pairs)
Foulness Island	Three pairs, six young (no details)
Wat Tyler	One pair
Beckton	No details (65 pairs)
Walthamstow Wetlands	13 pairs
Braintree	12+ pairs

The Maldon/Heybridge colony has been present for some years, in amongst the Herring Gull colony, but it is exceptionally difficult to observe as it is up on the roofs of industrial buildings. The figure of 3+ pairs should be considered an absolute minimum and has been estimated from the number of juvenile birds being attended by adults on the nearby estuary and gravel pits.

The County Recorder would welcome more breeding records from observers.

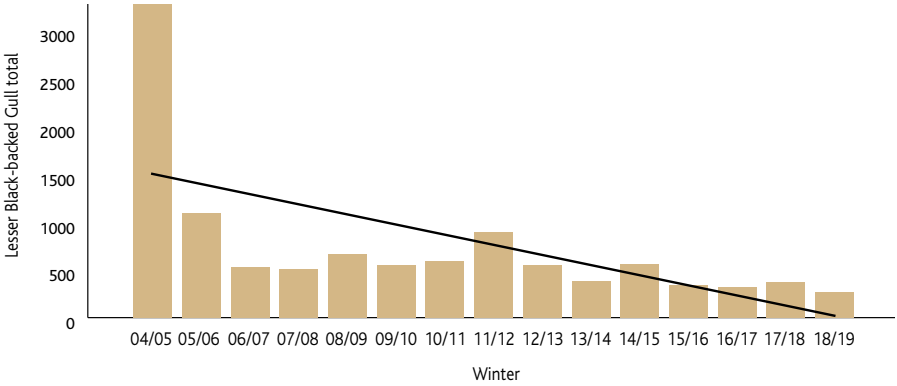
Non-Wetland Bird Survey counts of 50 or more came from: Hamford Water, 60+ on 25th May; Heybridge Basin, 50 on 7th April; Thurrock Thameside Mucking, 50 on 18th July; Abberton Reservoir, 52 on 28th August; Hanningfield Reservoir, 250 on 5th January, 50 on 31st August; William Girling Reservoir Chingford, 60 on 2nd January; Walthamstow Wetlands, 62 on 7th April, 100 on 10th July; Stifford Hall, 85 on 17th January, 175 on 3rd and 160 on 5th September; Wanstead Flats, 50+ on 8th September, 52 on 18th October; Loughton, 60 on 16th October.

Principal monthly Wetland Bird Survey counts were:

GB 1,200 INT 5,500	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
WeBS total	**241**	**144**	**271**	**197**	**314**	**359**	**320**	**219**	**114**
Stour Estuary	16	40	50	54	107	72	88	12	10
Hamford Water	13	15	48	nc	nc	14	18	46	14
Colne Estuary	0	1	2	11	nc	6	8	1	0
Blackwater Estuary	58	21	86	71	100	38	54	33	7
Dengie	3	0	0	2	0	0	2	0	1
Crouch/Roach/Wallasea	2	2	15	2	1	5	10	2	0
Foulness/Thames	12	11	14	16	58	28	85	34	39

GB 1,200 INT 5,500	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Abberton Reservoir	45	35	0	1	28	35	7	7	19
Hanningfield Reservoir	6	11	1	2	14	19	38	6	3
Lee Valley	61	6	35	15	5	131	7	76	10
Other	25	2	20	23	1	11	3	2	11

The following chart illustrates the peak monthly Wetland Bird Survey counts over the last 15 years:



Even allowing for the very high numbers present in 2004/5 (numbers were generally high in the early 2000s), the trend is generally downwards.

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
Totals	0	0	3	242	266	40	31	592	690	23	2	0

There were no records in either winter period with the first of the spring being one north past Frinton-on-Sea on 2nd March, followed by two off Gunners Park Shoebury on 31st March.

All but one of the spring double-figure counts were from Frinton-on-Sea: 146 on 9th and 14 on 30th April, 48 on 1st, 79 on 2nd, 12 on 3rd, 12 on 5th, 18 on 11th, ten on 29th and 11 on 31st May. The exception was 12 at Holland Haven on 9th April (presumably some of the birds seen off Frinton-on-Sea on the same date).

There were widespread records during the summer months, including ten at The Naze on 8th July.

Double-figure counts during autumn passage were as follows: The Naze, 52 on 20th and 25 on 22nd August, 22 on 3rd, 50 on 12th and 43 on 26th September; Frinton-on-Sea, 14 on 1st, 14 on 10th, 15 on 12th, 82 on 20th, 114 on 21st, 21 on 22nd and 15 on 23rd August, 21 on 1st, 42 on 4th, 44 on 7th, 26 on 8th, 12 on 9th, 12 on 10th, 16 on 14th, 11 on 15th, ten on 17th, 25 on 18th and 31 on 29th September; Holland Haven, ten on 10th August, 13 on 1st and 25 on 29th September; Canvey Point, 30 on 24th August, 20 on 14th, 34 on 18th, 12 on 19th, ten on 20th, 30 on 21st, 12 on 26th and 25 on 27th September; Rainham Marshes, 13 on 24th August; Beckton, 25 on 26th August. Passage continued into October, with five at Canvey Point on 6th the highest count.

Inland records came from: Abberton Reservoir, one on 5th April; Hanningfield Reservoir, singles on 4th June and 4th September; Walthamstow Wetlands, three on 5th April and one on 28th July.

The last of the year was off Frinton-on-Sea on 5th November.

LITTLE TERN *Sternula albifrons*

UK REX

Declining summer visitor and passage migrant.

A total of 32 Apparently Occupied Nests (AON) and 11 young fledged. Breeding records are detailed below with 2018 data in brackets:

Hamford Water	Maximum 32 AON with 11 young fledged. Highest count 170 birds. (15 pairs fledged five young on Horsey Island)
Colne Point	Present on many dates during May with a maximum of five on 5th (one nest, no young fledged)
Old Hall Marshes	Possibly three pairs attempted to nest, but the breeding area was deserted after disturbance from sailing boats landing on the spit. Highest count, ten birds. (seven nests, five fledged young – corrected data)
Tollesbury Wick	Present with highest count three birds. (One nest, one fledged young)

The Essex Beach-nesting Birds Group is working to improve the status of Little Tern and other beach-nesting birds. In addition to the above sites, they are looking at improving the cockle-spit at Bradwell-on-Sea with work commencing in 2019, although more sand is required here, but disturbance appears to be less of a problem than expected (Davis, P. 2019).

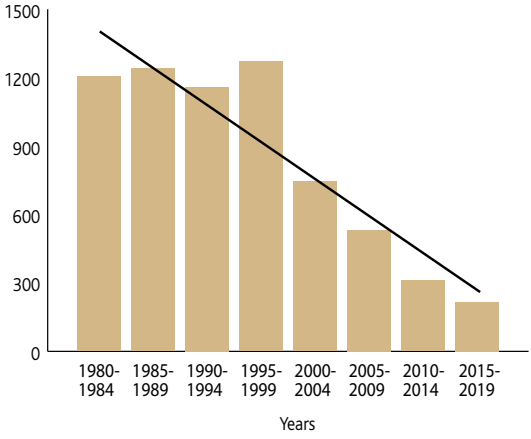
The first of the spring was a single north past Frinton-on-Sea on 20th April. The only double-figure counts came from: Frinton-on-Sea, 14 north on 22nd April; Bradwell-on-Sea, ten on 6th May; Gunners Park Shoebury, 14 on 30th April.

Double-figure post-breeding and passage counts came from: Irlam's Beach Dovercourt, 16 on 10th August; The Naze, 25 on 8th July; Deal Hall Dengie, 30 on 23rd August; Wakering Stairs, 17 on 21st August; Shoebury East Beach, 16 on 18th and 38 on 21st August; Gunners Park Shoebury, 11 on 31st July, ten on 13th August; Canvey Point, 13 on 9th August; East Tilbury, 14 on 24th August; Tilbury, 76 on 26th August; Rainham Marshes, 14 on 24th August.

There were just two inland records: King George V Reservoir, one on 24th April and Hanningfield Reservoir, one on 25th April.

The last birds of the year were eight off West Mersea on 23rd September.

Post-breeding gatherings on the coast have been a feature in the County for many years and although the peak counts do vary from year to year, there has been a steady and worrying decline since 2000. This can be seen by comparing the summed peak post-breeding totals reported for five-year periods from 1980-1984 through to 2015-19:



COMMON TERN *Sterna hirundo hirundo* UK

Common summer resident and passage migrant.

Records from the main breeding sites (with 2018 data) were:

Cindery Island Brightlingsea	Two pairs incubating
Sunnymead Farm Wivenhoe	Six pairs
Old Hall Marshes	48 nests, 32+ young (68 nests, 25+ pairs)
Tollesbury Wick	One pair
Abberton Reservoir	One pair (several young on tern rafts)
Heybridge Gravel Pit	17+ nests (20 pairs)
Braintree	Two pairs
Wallasea Island	56 pairs, at least six young fledged (43 pairs)
Paglesham Lagoon	Seven pairs (six pairs)
Blue House Farm	Three pairs (one pair)
Bowers Marsh	18 nests (five nests)
Wat Tyler	Four young fledged (five pairs)
Thurrock Thameside Mucking	One pair
Hanningfield Reservoir	Three pairs (three pairs)
Belhus Woods Aveley	One pair
Dagenham Chase	One pair
Fishers Green Holyfield	Three pairs (two pairs)
Seventy Acres Lake Holyfield	Three pairs (two pairs)
Walthamstow Wetlands	None (one pair)

The County Recorder would welcome more breeding records from observers.

The first of the spring were two at Beckton on 23rd March. There were no further reports until one at Abberton Reservoir on 2nd April and thereafter reports became widespread. The highest counts during spring passage were: Frinton-on-Sea, 38 on 13th April and 28 on 1st May; Fingringhoe Wick, 37 on 15th May; Old Hall Marshes, 35 on 19th April and 28 on 7th May; Canvey Point, 40 on 4th May; Rainham Marshes, 86 on 22nd and 100 on 23rd April and 28 on 17th May; Beckton, 28 on 14th April and 30 on 11th May; Creekmouth Barking, 40 on 17th May; Abberton Reservoir, 100 on 23rd April and 50 on 4th May; King George V Reservoir, 60 on 9th May.

Three-figure counts during autumn passage came from: Frinton-on-Sea, 124 on 18th August; Canvey Point, 150 on 28th July, 405 on 9th and 150 on 16th August; East Tilbury, 176 on 24th and 124 on 27th August and 429 on 5th September; Tilbury, 187 on 21st, 125 on 24th and 498 on 28th August; Abberton Reservoir, 100 on 20th July.

The last bird of the year was at Rainham Marshes on 18th 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	57	139	0	23	86	260	8	2	0
Inland	0	0	0	23	37	0	0	1	0	0	0	0
Totals	0	0	0	80	176	0	23	87	260	8	2	0

The first of the spring were two at Abberton Reservoir on 4th April.

Double-figure counts on spring passage were all in May: Colne Point, 17 on 2nd; Canvey Point, 16 on 17th; Tilbury, 32 on 16th; Rainham Marshes, 24 on 8th, 38 on 16th and 28 on 17th; Abberton Reservoir, 27 on 3rd and 15 on 4th.

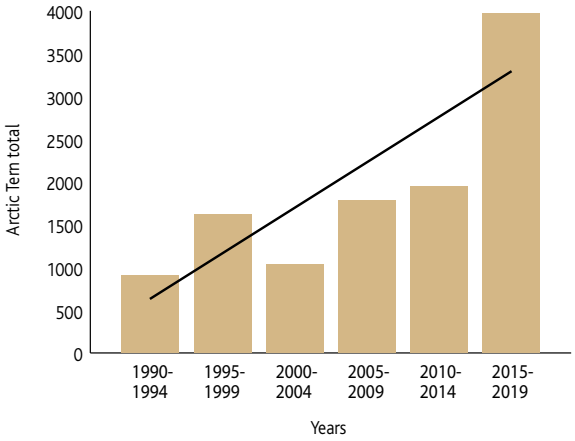
The first birds of the autumn were five at Blue House Farm on 18th July. Thereafter, double-figure counts came from: Canvey Point, 23 on 9th August and 33 on 7th September; Thurrock Thameside Mucking, 20 on 22nd and 20 on 23rd September; East Tilbury, ten on 26th September; Rainham Marshes, 16 on 26th August, 140 on 5th and 18 on 9th September; Beckton, 16 on 21st July and 21 on 25th August.

Numbers fell rapidly after the end of September with the only record of more than one bird being two off Rainham Marshes on 7th October. There were two November records, both of singles: Holland Haven on 7th; Frinton-on-Sea and then at Holland Haven on 30th, the latest County record by eight days (previous latest was seen from both Canvey Point and Southend Pier on 22nd November 2014).

Estimated annual totals over the last decade have been:

	2019	2018	2017	2016	2015	2014	2013	2012	2011	2010	Average
Totals	636	1,075	1,140	699	432	444	308	438	359	398	592.9

The general trend in annual totals appears to be upwards, with the three of the highest annual totals since 1990 in the last four years. This can be seen by comparing the summed totals for the five-year periods from 1990-1994 through to 2015-19:



The reasons for this are unclear but may be due to greater observer awareness of the separation of Arctic and Common Tern; very few records of 'Commic' Tern are now received by the County Recorder.

WHITE-WINGED TERN *Chlidonias leucopterus*

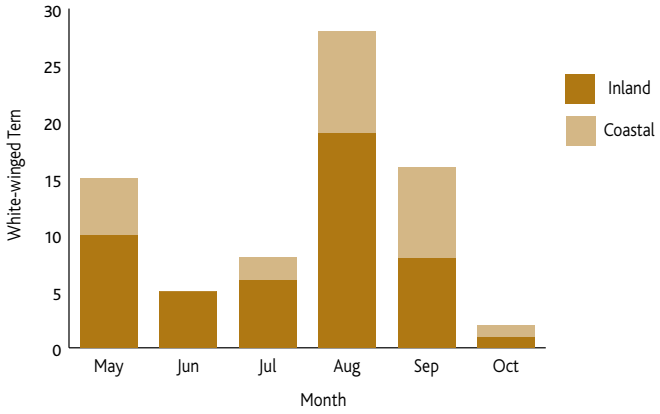
Very scarce passage migrant. **EBSIP (51, 25, 76)**

Abberton Reservoir	Five adults	3rd-5th May	SPa

An unprecedented occurrence of five adults in breeding plumage together was appreciated by many observers during their three day stay. Five is the highest number seen together in Essex; the previous highest being four more than a century ago at Burnham-on-Crouch on 28th May 1912.

A total of 28 has now been recorded at Abberton Reservoir, which is more than one-third of the County total.

Seasonal, inland water and tidal water distribution of all Essex records is as follows:



Despite seven of the most recent birds occurring in spring, the autumn, particularly August and September, on inland waters, still accounts for the majority of the records in Essex.

Annual totals over the last decade have been:

	2019	2018	2017	2016	2015	2014	2013	2012	2011	2010	Average
Totals	5	3	1	1	1	1	1	0	1	1	1.5

Addendum 2014.
The statistics given were incorrect meaning the number of records has been under-counted by one between 2014 and 2018. This has been corrected above.

White-winged Tern (RICHARD ALLEN)

BLACK TERN *Chlidonias niger niger*

Fairly common passage migrant.

The first of the spring was a single at Vange Marsh on the early date of 8th April (the only earlier date for the County being two at Abberton Reservoir on 5th April 2014).

The next were two at Abberton Reservoir on 18th April and counts of five or more during April were: Abberton Reservoir, ten on 22nd; Hanningfield Reservoir, nine on 23rd; King George V Reservoir, five on 19th. During May counts of five or more came from: Frinton-on-Sea, 23 on 8th and five on 17th; Colne Point, seven on 16th; Canvey Point, six on 4th; Rainham Marshes, eight on 8th; Abberton Reservoir, 19 on 7th, 12 on 9th and six on 15th; Hanningfield Reservoir, 12 on 8th.

In mid-summer one was at Hanningfield Reservoir on 7th July.

Autumn passage commenced with one south past Frinton-on-Sea on 27th July and four at Canvey Point on 28th July. Passage was very light thereafter, with the only counts of five or more being: Canvey Point; 12 on 9th August and 11 on 7th September; Thurrock Thameside Mucking, 13 on 24th and 24 on 27th August; East Tilbury, seven on 27th August.

Numbers declined rapidly after the end of September with just four October records, all of singles: Wallasea Island, on 1st; Canvey Seafront on 6th; Beckton on 13th; Rainham Marshes on 21st.

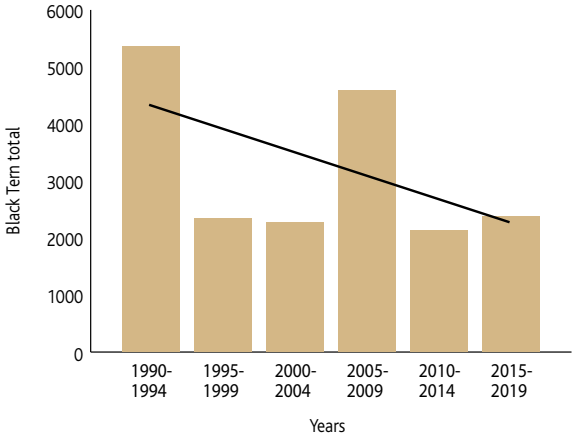
Estimated monthly totals were:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Coastal	0	0	0	1	54	0	6	62	17	4	0	0
Inland	0	0	0	38	63	0	1	7	7	0	0	0
Totals	0	0	0	39	117	0	7	69	24	4	0	0

Annual totals over the last decade have been:

	2019	2018	2017	2016	2015	2014	2013	2012	2011	2010	Average
Totals	260	1,014	293	423	388	135	638	99	403	740	439.3

Although annual totals do fluctuate significantly (presumably due to weather conditions during passage periods in spring and autumn) the general trend points to a decline, as shown by comparing the summed totals for the five-year periods from 1990-1994 through to 2015-19:



The total for 1990-94 is heavily influenced by an estimated 2,531 in 1992 and 1,377 in 1994 and similarly for 2005-09 by an estimated 1,786 in 2008 and 1,127 in 2009.

GREAT SKUA *Stercorarius skua* UK

Uncommon, principally late autumn, passage migrant.

Estimated monthly totals were:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Totals	1	1	10	2	1	0	0	3	8	23	12	8

During the first winter period the only records were: one south past Frinton-on-Sea and then Holland Haven on 16th January; Hamford Water, one on 24th February.

Spring passage commenced on 22nd March, with one north past Frinton-on-Sea. Subsequent records were: The Naze, one on 25th March; Frinton-on-Sea, three on 23rd and three on 27th March, one on 1st April; Holland Haven, three on 23rd March; Gunners Park Shoebury, one on 31st March; Canvey Point, one on 9th April; Thurrock Thameside Mucking, one on 31st March; East Tilbury, one on 31st March; Abberton Reservoir, one on 5th May, an unusual date for the species to be found in the County.

The first two birds of the autumn were off Canvey Point on 9th August, with one south past Frinton-on-Sea on 16th August. Passage remained extremely light in September (singles unless otherwise stated): Frinton-on-Sea, 8th, 9th and 20th; Holland Haven, 8th, 9th, 13th and 20th; Canvey Point, two on both 7th and 22nd.

Numbers picked up a little in October and November: Frinton-on-Sea, three on 2nd and singles on 7th and 29th October, three on 15th, two on 18th, two on 19th and singles on 20th, 24th and 30th November; Holland Haven, singles on 5th and 6th October and 10th and 24th November; Canvey Point, one on 5th, 12 on 21st and three on 29th October; Two Tree Island, two on 29th October; East Tilbury and Tilbury, one on 5th November.

As has often been the case in recent years, passage continued into December, although by this time perhaps these birds are simply winter visitors: Frinton-on-Sea, three on 1st and singles on 7th, 10th, 18th and 19th; Holland Haven, one on 10th; Southend Pier, one on 26th.

Annual totals over the last decade have been:

	2019	2018	2017	2016	2015	2014	2013	2012	2011	2010	Average
Totals	69	201	196	205	182	205	120	222	234	153	178.7

2019 saw the lowest annual total since 2006, when there were just 34 recorded in the County.

POMARINE JAEGER *Stercorarius pomarinus* (Pomarine Skua)

Uncommon, principally late autumn, passage migrant.

After an impressive 87 in 2018, numbers were much lower this year, with an estimated 28 birds reported (allowing for duplication).

Estimated monthly totals were:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Totals	0	0	0	0	12	0	0	1	2	5	7	1

Spring passage is usually very light, or not detected at all in Essex and the 12 recorded this year is the highest spring total for the County. All were seen passing north off Frinton-on-Sea in May, with seven on 11th and five on 17th. The previous highest spring passage total was eight, moving north off Frinton-on-Sea, in May 2011 (seven on 1st and one on 3rd).

Spring passage totals over the last decade have been:

	2019	2018	2017	2016	2015	2014	2013	2012	2011	2010	Average
Totals	12	5	1	1	0	0	1	5	8	0	3.3

In contrast, autumn passage was very light (all singles): Frinton-on-Sea, 8th and 28th September, 5th and 11th October; Holland Haven, 8th September, 6th October; Canvey Point, 9th August, 29th and 30th October.

The status of birds recorded from mid-November onwards is less clear, and may relate to wintering individuals: The Naze, 16th November; Frinton-on-Sea, two on 15th, one on 16th and two on 30th November and one on 25th December; Holland Haven, singles on 15th and 16th with two on 2nd and 30th November.

Annual totals over the last decade have been:

	2019	2018	2017	2016	2015	2014	2013	2012	2011	2010	Average
Totals	28	87	29	16	19	45	16	79	100	18	43.7

PARASITIC JAEGER *Stercorarius parasiticus* (Arctic Skua) UK

Fairly common, principally autumn, passage migrant.

The first of the spring flew north past Frinton-on-Sea on 6th April. This was followed by: Frinton-on-Sea, singles north on 15th April, 1st, 5th and 16th May; Rainham Marshes, two on 9th April.

The first birds of the autumn were four at Thurrock Thameside Mucking on 10th August. Passage remained light and the only double-figure counts were: Frinton-on-Sea, 12 on 20th September; Holland Haven, ten on 20th September; Canvey Point, 15 on 7th and 13 on 18th September.

Passage continued into October with: Frinton-on-Sea, two on 4th, two on 5th, one on 9th, two on 18th and one on 29th; Holland Haven, singles on 5th and 6th; Colne Point, one on 13th; Gunners Park Shoebury, two on 12th; Canvey Point, four on 5th and one on 31st.

The final record for the year was one off Frinton-on-Sea on 30th November.

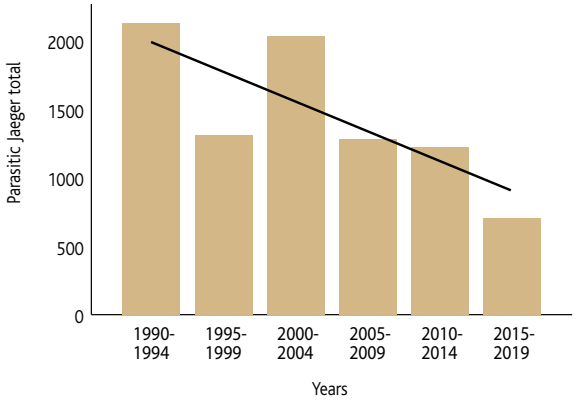
Estimated monthly totals were:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Totals	0	0	0	4	3	0	0	11	99	18	1	0

Annual totals over the last decade have been:

	2019	2018	2017	2016	2015	2014	2013	2012	2011	2010	Average
Totals	136	230	160	89	87	203	128	253	369	271	192.6

After a significant increase in records in the 1990s (in part, at least, due to more observer coverage), the general trend in annual totals appears to be downwards. This can be seen by comparing the totals taking five-year periods from 1990-1994 through to 2015-19:



Arctic Skua (RICHARD ALLEN)

Whether this is due to declines in breeding numbers in Europe or a lack of suitable weather conditions to bring the birds within sight of land during autumn migration or a combination of the two is unclear.

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

Very scarce autumn passage migrant. **EBSIP (147, 51, 198)**

A typical autumn juvenile:

Canvey Point	Juvenile	9th September	PGr, JSa

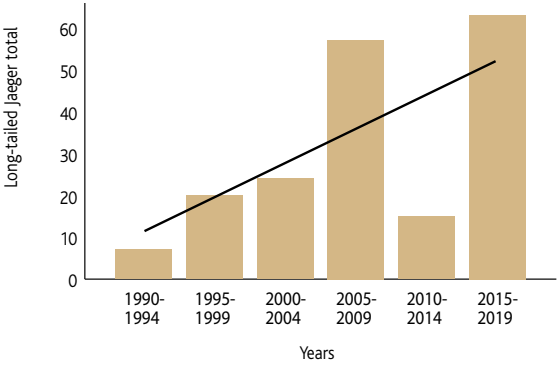
Annual totals over the last decade have been:

	2019	2018	2017	2016	2015	2014	2013	2012	2011	2010	Average
Totals	1	1	3	0	1	5	1	3	8	3	2.6

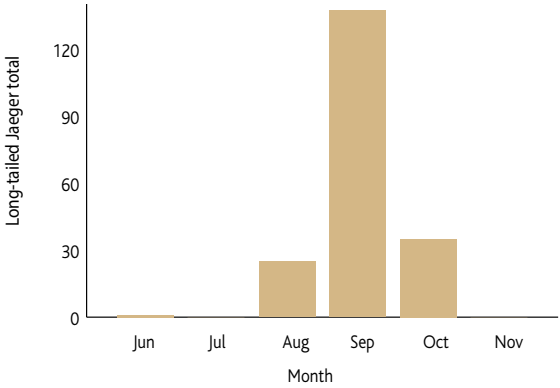
There has not been a double-figure total in one year in the County since 2007, when 12 were recorded (six in September and six in October). The vast majority of Essex records are on the coast, with only four recorded inland (the last being a juvenile at Abberton Reservoir from 12th-17th September 1996).

As with Arctic Skua, the general trend in annual numbers is downwards. This can be seen by comparing the totals taking five-year periods from 1990-1994 through to 2015-19:

Monthly distribution of all records from 1973-2019:



With the exception of one off Bradwell Bird Observatory on 22nd June 2003, all modern records have been in the autumn passage period, with September accounting for almost 70% of the total County records.



LITTLE AUK *Alle alle alle*

Scarce winter visitor, but subject to periodic influxes.

Another year without a significant late autumn influx, with just eight birds seen.

Dovercourt	One	10th November
The Naze	One	23rd November
Frinton-on-Sea/Holland Haven	One	15th November
Frinton-on-Sea	One	20th November
Colne Point	One	31st October
East Mersea	One	22nd October
Bradwell Bird Observatory	One	14th November
Abberton Reservoir	One	14th-19th November

The long-staying bird at Abberton Reservoir was widely appreciated during its six day stay, with many observers enjoying a long-awaited Essex tick. The Dovercourt bird was found stranded on a garden patio and later died in care.

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:

	2019	2018	2017	2016	2015	2014	2013	2012	2011	2010	Average
Totals	8	5	15	16	21	4	11	3	17	5	10.5

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

Both races are passage migrants and winter visitors.

There were no significant influxes into the County in 2019.
Estimated monthly totals were:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Totals	39	4	0	1	0	0	0	0	6	20	8	13

The only counts of more than two in the early part of the year were all in January: Frinton-on-Sea, eight on 16th, four on 20th, five on 26th and six on 29th; Southend Pier, three on 4th and four on 6th.

The only spring record was a single north past Frinton-on-Sea on 13th April.

The first of the autumn was a single drifting downriver past Grays on 6th September, with further singles in September recorded from Canvey Point on 20th and 27th; Tilbury on 21st; Rainham Marshes, on 9th and 22nd.

Numbers remained very low in the final three months of the year, the only counts of more than two being: Frinton-on-Sea, four on 23rd October; Southend Pier, four on 26th December; Canvey Point, 11 on 21st October and three on 27th December.

Estimated annual totals over the last decade have been:

	2019	2018	2017	2016	2015	2014	2013	2012	2011	2010	Average
Totals	91	108	202	359	87	329	159	192	240	41	180.8

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.

Estimated monthly totals were:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Totals	12	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	2	0	1

The January records came from (singles unless otherwise stated): Frinton-on-Sea, 19th and 26th; Holland Haven, 18th and 26th (same as Frinton bird); Gunners Park Shoebury, 20th; Southend Pier, 19th and 25th; Southend-on-Sea, 12th; Canvey Point, 5th, three on 6th, 10th.

The only spring records were (singles) in May: Frinton-on-Sea/Holland Haven on 11th and Canvey Point on 17th.

In the closing months of the year the only records were (again all singles): East Tilbury, 29th October; Canvey Point, 30th October; Frinton-on-Sea, 18th December.

Razorbill has always been an uncommon bird in Essex (Wood, 2007), although subject to occasional influxes.

Estimated annual totals over the last decade have been:

	2019	2018	2017	2016	2015	2014	2013	2012	2011	2010	Average
Totals	18	30	52	78	13	8	14	37	20	6	27.6

ATLANTIC PUFFIN *Fratercula arctica* UK

Very scarce passage migrant and winter visitor. EBSIP (97, 27, 124)

Canvey Point	One	20th September	JSa

Just one record again this year of what is becoming an increasingly rare bird in Essex.

Annual totals over the last decade have been:

	2019	2018	2017	2016	2015	2014	2013	2012	2011	2010	Average
Totals	1	1	0	0	1	0	3	3	2	2	1.3

All but one of the records in the last decade have come from the Thames; the one exception being from Frinton-on-Sea in 2013.

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

Common passage migrant and winter visitor.

Inland and Inner Thames: Hanningfield Reservoir, 22nd October.

Coasts and estuaries: records were received from Manningtree on the River Stour to Thurrock Thameside Mucking with the largest numbers, and all three-figure counts, from regular observations at Frinton-on-Sea or nearby Holland Haven. Peak counts at the former site in the first winter period followed the now expected pattern, with January peaks of 220 on 18th (when 100 at Holland Haven), 507 on 20th, 424 on 24th, 313 on 26th and 720 on 26th; low numbers in February and then an influx in March peaks of 454 on 23rd (when 100+ at Holland Haven) and 426 on 27th. Numbers reduced markedly in April with 16 on 12th and 11 on 13th the last notable counts although there were two singles on 3rd and 29th May.

Autumn passage commenced early with a single past Frinton-on-Sea on 2nd September, one of four noted there that month. Numbers remained low in October, with a peak of seven on 29th but after 220 on 30th November, the arrival of wintering birds occurred in December with peaks of 204 on 18th, 241 on 19th and 330 on 23rd, all at Frinton-on-Sea. Away from the north-east, the only other notable counts were in December: 80 at Bradwell Bird Observatory on 15th and 38 at Canvey Point on 27th.

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

Uncommon passage migrant and winter visitor.

Inland, a single was present at Abberton Reservoir on 29th December.

Early year reports came from three areas: Holland Haven, one on 5th and 19th January; Brightlingsea / Mersea Island, one from 4th-18th January; Southend Pier / Canvey Point, up to two 5th January to 4th February.

The first returning bird was noted flying south past Frinton-on-Sea and Holland Haven on 21st September, with further singles on coastal passage noted from these sites on 5th and 16th October and 24th November. Movement then appeared to peak in late November with Frinton-on-Sea recording a further single on 28th and five on 30th. Elsewhere singles were observed at The Naze on 9th November, Canvey Point 5th and 30th October.

December sightings (singles unless stated) came from: Frinton-on-Sea, southbound movement of two on 16th, 21st; Holland Haven, 10th, 13th, 19th; Old Hall Marshes and West Mersea between 2nd and 15th; Canvey Island on 28th.

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

Scarce passage migrant and winter visitor.

A good year for this species with strong spring and autumn passages. All records are listed: Frinton-on-Sea/Holland Haven, offshore movement noted on four dates in January and one in February, all singles bar six north on 20th January and two on 24th January (both associated with large

movements of Red-throated Loon). Some evidence of northward spring passage was apparent in March with sightings on seven dates including three on 1st, three on 20th and eight on 27th; Blackwater/Colne Estuaries (primarily Mersea Island and Old Hall Marshes), reported throughout the early months with peaks of four on 18th-19th January, six on 20th February, an apparent reduction in March with very few sightings before six again on 6th April; Gunners Park Shoebury, 18th-19th January. The last spring record was a tardy individual flying south at Bradwell Bird Observatory on 6th May.

In autumn and winter singles (unless stated) were noted as follows: Mistley, 28th-30th December; The Naze/Hamford Water, north on 30th October, 3rd December; Frinton-on-Sea/Holland Haven, north on 5th, 21st and 29th October, 16th and 24th November; south on 30th November (three), 2nd, 18th and 21st (two) December; Tollesbury Fleet, 5th October; Bradwell Bird Observatory, 10th, 13th and 15th November, assumed same West Mersea on the latter date; then reported from 18th-30th December with a peak of three; Canvey Point, two on 29th and one on 30th October.

Estimated minimum monthly totals were:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Frinton/Holland	6	1	8	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	4	3
Blackwater/Colne	4	6	2	6	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	3
Elsewhere	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	2
Totals	11	7	10	6	1	0	0	0	0	4	5	8

The monthly total, particularly in the first winter suggests a regular movement along the coast and within the Blackwater/Colne complex.

LEACH'S STORM PETREL *Oceanodroma leucorhoa leucorhoa* UK

Scarce, principally autumn, passage migrant. **EBSIP (201, 43, 244)**

A good year, primarily due to a notable influx into the Outer Thames in late October:

Holland Haven	One	21st September	PLo
Frinton-on-Sea	One, same as above	21st September	PBr
Canvey Point	Five, at least	30th October	JSa, NCh, CSh

Possibly as many as seven were at Canvey Point with birds heading east out of the estuary into a moderate north-easterly wind.

Annual totals over the last decade have been:

	2019	2018	2017	2016	2015	2014	2013	2012	2011	2010	Average
Totals	6	3	5	2	0	0	7	6	1	0	3.0

NORTHERN FULMAR *Fulmarus glacialis glacialis* UK

Uncommon passage migrant and non-breeding visitor.

There were no strictly inland records but a single was noted flying across The Strood Mersea Island on 26th April.

Estimated monthly totals from the coastal sites showed an earlier than usual spring peak:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Totals	1	1	56	59	31	16	2	9	5	0	0	0

Sightings from a single location on different days are summated though quite possibly in some cases the same individuals are involved.

All bar four sightings came from the north-east coast between The Naze and Jaywick, with the majority from Frinton-on-Sea, including peaks in April of 14 on 13th, 12 on 26th, and eight on 27th, and 13 on 2nd May. Elsewhere singles were at: Gunners Park Shoebury, 29th July; Canvey Point on 27th April, 21st and 22nd September.

SOOTY SHEARWATER *Ardenna grisea*

Uncommon, principally autumn, passage migrant. **EBSIP (152, 88, 240)**

Frinton-on-Sea/Holland Haven	Three	21st September	PBr *et al.*
Frinton-on-Sea	One	5th November	PBr

A typical year. Annual totals over the last decade have been:

	2019	2018	2017	2016	2015	2014	2013	2012	2011	2010	Average
Totals	4	3	8	9	6	1	1	1	6	12	5.1

MANX SHEARWATER *Puffinus puffinus* UK

Uncommon, principally autumn, passage migrant.

All records were of single birds as follows: Holland Haven, 6th October; Jaywick, 19th April; Gunners Park Shoebury, 10th May; Canvey Point, 7th September, 5th October. In addition, a single inland at Abberton Reservoir on 11th-12th September was the first for this location and was widely appreciated.

Annual totals over the last decade have been:

	2019	2018	2017	2016	2015	2014	2013	2012	2011	2010	Average
Totals	6	19	11	7	3	0	3	9	48	9	11.5

WHITE STORK *Ciconia ciconia ciconia*

Rare passage migrant and summer visitor. **EBSIP (30, 16, 46)**

Rainham Marshes	One	12th-20th April	mo

It has been assumed that intermittent sightings of single birds over Rainham all referred to the same individual although it is possible more than one bird was involved.

With the Knepp (West Sussex) estate birds now breeding successfully, wanderers into the County are likely to increase.

NORTHERN GANNET *Morus bassanus* UK

Common passage migrant and non-breeding summer visitor.

There were no inland records in 2019.

Estimated monthly totals from coastal sites were:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Row A	9	9	685	697	193	25	28	17	141	237	119	0
Row B	156	0	4	3	72	0	3	7	27	654	7	31

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.

The early winter period saw a good influx into the Thames in early January with a peak of 60 on 2nd. There then followed an unusually strong spring passage of adults along the north-east coast,

with peaks of 106 on 23rd March, 239 on 31st March, 104 on 4th April, 100 on 10th April, 111 on 12th April, 127 on 13th April, and 143 on 3rd May, all at Frinton-on-Sea. The peak count from the Outer Thames was 57 at Canvey Point on 17th May.

In contrast, autumn was a much quieter affair bar a huge movement of 628 past Canvey Point on 21st October, 73 also being noted at Thurrock Thameside Mucking the same day. The reorientation from this movement the following day produced the second largest count of the season with 76 north past Frinton-on-Sea.

EUROPEAN SHAG *Phalacrocorax aristotelis aristotelis* UK

Fairly common passage migrant and winter visitor.

Inland: Woodford Green, 13th March.

Estimated monthly totals from coastal and estuarine sites were:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Totals	3	2	16	1	0	0	0	0	0	2	3	9

Sightings came from Hamford Water in the north to Rainham Marshes in the south. All records related to 1-2 birds apart from an impressive 12 north past Frinton-on-Sea on 20th March coinciding with a huge early spring movement of Great Cormorant.

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.**

Confirmed breeding/nest counts were received from four sites:

	2019	2018	2017	2016	2015	2014	2013	2012	2011	2010
Abberton Reservoir	202	nc	179	195	150	137	145	184	144	160
Lofts Farm/Chigborough	21	10	12	6	13	0	2	10	3	2
Walthamstow Wetlands	65	168	133	129	159+	113	178+	226	142	nc
Holyfield Lake	54	34	38	35	32	45	31	27	28	nc
County Totals	342	?	363	365	354+	299	356+	447	318	?

It will be interesting to observe if the apparent significant increase at Abberton Reservoir and decrease at Walthamstow Wetlands are reflected in 2020.

Principal monthly Wetland Bird Survey counts were:

GB 620 INT 1,200	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
WeBS total	**2392**	**870**	**690**	**520**	**1245**	**2292**	**3103**	**2395**	**927**
Stour Estuary	28	34	26	26	80	204	104	52	88
Hamford Water	19	24	24	nc	nc	107	115	72	96
Colne Estuary	73	19	87	4	nc	66	69	27	229
Blackwater Estuary	597	100	55	16	37	152	89	238	106
Dengie	500	5	4	3	5	5	5	0	12
Crouch/Roach/Wallasea	22	27	26	9	13	36	76	38	33
Foulness/Thames	111	94	40	40	39	102	77	47	39
Abberton Reservoir	**709**	184	160	366	**943**	**953**	**1714**	**1619**	52
Hanningfield Reservoir	92	205	67	20	100	393	590	26	38
Lee Valley	219	142	165	22	16	231	206	259	176
Other	22	36	36	14	12	43	58	17	58

Non-Wetland Bird Survey counts of significance came from the coasts and estuaries as follows: Frinton-on-Sea, 478 north on 31st January, 252 on 3rd February, 460 on 13th February, and a strong passage in March with a total of 2,476 (albeit that some birds would be involved on feeding movements on several different days), peaks of 351 on 2nd March, 332 on 17th March, 872 on 20th March; Colne Point, 400 on 21st November; West Mersea, 500 on 12th January, 400 on 19th January; Bradwell Bird Observatory, 500 on 20th January, 366 on 15th November.

Notable inland peaks were: Abberton Reservoir, 1,500 on 20th September, 1,000 on 19th October; Walthamstow Wetlands, 205 on 11th August.

GLOSSY IBIS *Plegadis falcinellus*

Rare, but increasing, and now almost annual, visitor. **EBSIP (14, 36, 50)**

Walton Hall Marshes	One	28th February	HAl

Estimated annual totals (new birds only) over the last decade have been:

	2019	2018	2017	2016	2015	2014	2013	2012	2011	2010	Average
Totals	1	4	7	5	2	2	3	3	3	0	3.0

Note. A reassessment of the number of birds involved in previous occurrences means that the totals above do not quite follow on from the 2018 Report.

EURASIAN SPOONBILL *Platalea leucorodia leucorodia* UK

Uncommon passage migrant and rare winter visitor.

A total of 154 reports was received relating to an estimated total of 36 birds. Estimated monthly totals were:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Totals	1	0	4	3	7	2	2	9	12	7	0	0
Locations	2	0	3	5	10	2	2	4	5	7	0	0

In the early winter an immature that had been present since the end of 2018 commuted between Abberton Reservoir and the Blackwater estuary until 25th January.

Spring passage saw singles in March at Hamford Water (1st), Rainham Marshes (two on 20th) and Blue House Farm (23rd); then in April at Fobbing/Bowers Marsh/Vange Marsh (5th-8th), Old Hall Marshes (12th-14th) and Holland Haven (16th). A single was then reported widely between The Naze and Colne Point between 1st and 7th May, with other sightings in that month coming from Ingrebourne Valley on 5th, Rainham Marshes, on 6th and 22nd, Southend-on-Sea on 10th, Benfleet on 27th, and Abberton Reservoir on 29th.

Wandering summer birds were then noted at: Russell Green Gravel Pits Boreham, on 11th June; Rainham Marshes, on 7th-8th June and 14th-20th July.

In autumn: Frinton-on-Sea, one north on 2nd September, one south on 28th; the latter also seen at Holland Haven where also two from 23rd-26th August and 30th September; Fingringhoe Wick, from 31st July-2nd August; Old Hall Marshes, one on 21st August joined by a second on 29th and peaking at three on 2nd September. These birds moved to Abberton Reservoir, where at least two, but a peak of four were noted from 8th-28th September, before dispersing to the Colne and Blackwater estuaries until 20th October; Hanningfield Reservoir, two on 17th October; Rainham Marshes, four on 14th August, in September, a single intermittently from 1st-8th, two on 26th, three on 30th; up to two in early October.

EURASIAN BITTERN *Botaurus stellaris stellaris* UK EX REX

Uncommon passage migrant and winter visitor.

In the first part of the year reports came from (singles unless stated): Abberton Reservoir on 20th January; Chafford Gorges Grays, four sightings between 22nd January and 5th March; Ingrebourne Valley, in February, two on 5th and one on 10th; Seventy Acres Lake Holyfield, on 13th February; Thurrock Thameside Mucking, from 16th February to 2nd March.

Later in the year records came from four sites, all singles: Hamford Water, on 16th November; Ardleigh (Green Lane) on 29th December; Chafford Gorges Grays, three sightings between 29th October and 3rd December; Seventy Acres Lake Holyfield, three sightings between 15th October and 24th December.

BLACK-CROWNED NIGHT-HERON *Nycticorax nycticorax nycticorax*

Very rare migrant. EBSIP (14, 6, 20)

Chigborough Lakes	First year	23rd-24th June	RNe, SDW, JBu, CDa

Seen whilst observing the nesting Cattle Egret (see below) the individual sat out in the open for about half an hour before vanishing when the observers were looking another way. It was seen briefly, some distance to the south, in flight the following evening.

Monthly occurrence of all records has been:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Up to 1980	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	4	4	1
1981 on	0	0	0	2	4	1	1	0	0	1	0	1

Note how the pattern of occurrence has changed from predominantly late autumn/early winter to a spring/summer visitor.

WESTERN CATTLE EGRET *Bubulcus ibis*

Scarce passage migrant and summer visitor. Bred 2019. EBSIP (2, 69, 71)

An incredible 317 individual reports were received, considered likely to relate to an unprecedented minimum of 39 individuals. The increase in records of this species, for which there had only been two County records prior to 2006, is mirroring that of Little Egret.

Following a single on 4th March and three on 22nd May, a pair fledged four young (although one of these disappeared soon after the family relocated to Abberton) within the heronry at Chigborough Lakes (see page 206). The family were present until mid-July, the adults regularly being seen at Old Hall Marshes and Abberton Reservoir on feeding trips before the family dispersed to these areas. This was the first recorded breeding in the County.

Approximate monthly totals, with peak counts from the key sites, were:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Abberton Reservoir / Old Hall Marshes	0	0	0	0	3	4	11	7	1	5	5	5
Wat Tyler to East Tilbury	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	8	7	8	0	0
Rainham Marshes	0	0	0	1	1	1	1	1	1	0	0	1
Lee Valley	0	0	4	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	2
Other	1	0	1	4	1	1	1	3	0	0	0	0
Totals	1	0	7	6	5	6	13	19	9	13	7	8

Other site records came from (singles unless stated): Hamford Water, on 24th and 26th August; Kirby Cross, on 6th June; Frinton-on-Sea, south on 6th May; Tiptree, on 24th January; Steeple, two on 21st April; Blue House Farm, on 11th July; Hanningfield Reservoir, on 11th April; Corbets Tey, on 19th April; Romford, on 24th March; Dagenham Chase, two on 20th August.

Annual totals over the last decade have been:

	2019	2018	2017	2016	2015	2014	2013	2012	2011	2010	Average
Totals	39	4	6	4	0	0	1	2	2	4	6.2

GREY HERON *Ardea cinerea cinerea*

Common resident, passage migrant and winter visitor.

Reports of occupied nests were on a par with 2018 with all reports summarised in the table below:

	2019	2018	2017	2016	2015	2014	2013	2012	2011	2010
St Osyth	4	8	10	9	17+	18	9+	11	10	9
Beazley End	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	7	18	18	19	18
Langham Treatment Works	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	3	nc
Abberton Reservoir	14	16	25	19	20	14	6	1	nc	Nc
Chigborough Lakes	11	13	13	10	10	5	6	7	8	10
Danbury Park	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	4	nc	nc	nc
North Fambridge Hall	16	29	18	14	8	6	7	6	4	5
Barrow Wood Highwood	3	5	4	nc	5	nc	nc	5	6	7
Foulness	3	3	2	5	5	4	4	4	6	2
Paglesham Eastend	0	1+	3	3	0	0	0	0	0	2
Waltham Abbey	9	4	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
Warren Gorge Chafford Hundred	16	10	10	7	7	7	7	8	5	5
Fairlop Waters Barkingside	nc	3	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	0	1	0
Mayesbrook Park Dagenham	1	1	nc	nc	nc	3	nc	1	3	nc
Valentine's Park Ilford	0	0	1	nc	2	1	1	1	1	0
Childerditch Pond	1	3	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	3	2	2
Ingrebourne Valley	6	7	nc	nc	nc	4	6	12	3+	7
Holyfield Lake	4	4	8	4	nc	nc	nc	nc	4	9
Netherhall Gravel Pit Nazeing	27	31	39	32	38	35	38	32	28	33
Connaught Water Epping Forest	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Walthamstow Wetlands	44	43	5+	nc	33	30	15	nc	71	66
County Totals	**160+**	**172+**	**136+**	**100**	**144**	**134**	**117+**	**111+**	**174**	**176**

It is likely that the 'nc' entries are a mixture of active sites for which no figures were submitted and sites that are inactive, but this has not been confirmed.

Principal monthly Wetland Bird Survey counts were:

Manx Shearwater, Abberton Reservoir, September (SEAN NIXON)

Eurasian Spoonbill, Abberton Reservoir, September (STEVE GRIMWADE)

Western Cattle Egret, Abberton Reservoir, March (GLEN MOORE)

Eurasian Wryneck, Holland Haven, August (PAUL CHAMBERLAIN)

GB 450 INT 5,000	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
WeBS total	**146**	**125**	**111**	**125**	**86**	**193**	**193**	**216**	**147**
Stour Estuary	18	6	0	6	12	18	28	30	16
Hamford Water	11	5	1	nc	nc	12	9	19	5
Colne Estuary	3	3	2	5	nc	8	7	7	4
Blackwater Estuary	14	11	8	3	11	21	16	36	8
Dengie	1	0	0	0	0	0	3	0	1
Crouch/Roach/Wallasea	18	18	4	15	16	44	23	29	29
Foulness/Thames	18	12	7	11	5	24	16	18	16
Abberton Reservoir	6	23	24	55	17	18	22	16	17
Hanningfield Reservoir	2	0	4	1	13	12	22	3	2
Lee Valley	32	28	39	19	8	27	26	44	31
Other	23	19	22	10	4	9	21	14	18

Nocturnal migration was noted over Chafford Hundred Grays on eight dates in April and August to October; whilst coastal passage included seven past Frinton-on-Sea on 22nd September.

PURPLE HERON *Ardea purpurea purpurea*

Rare passage migrant. **EBSIP (25, 6, 31)**

Chafford Hundred Grays	One	20th April	DDL

Recorded on overnight nocturnal migration, the call was confirmed by Magnus Robb. The call can be heard at https://www.xeno-canto.org/503425

GREAT EGRET *Ardea alba alba*

Scarce passage migrant and visitor at all seasons.

A total of 558 records was received from 43 sites in all months of the year with over 70% of reports from Abberton Reservoir. Birds were widely reported including inland from sites such as Great Horkesley, Great Waltham, Cely Woods Aveley, and in the Lee Valley.

Monthly peaks from key sites were:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Abberton Reservoir	12	10	2	2	2	0	2	4	10	12	11	11
Hanningfield Reservoir	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	6	1	0	0
Wallasea Island / Paglesham Lagoon	1	4	2	3	0	0	0	0	1	3	3	3
Rainham Marshes	1	4	0	0	1	1	2	2	2	1	0	0

Elsewhere, the only count greater than two related to three at Bradwell Bird Observatory on 3rd April. Evidence of wider movement past the County was provided by the regular observations at Frinton-on-Sea where eight birds were noted passing offshore during spring and autumn (site average 2006-2016 of 0.5 birds per year, six in 2017).

LITTLE EGRET *Egretta garzetta garzetta*

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

Reports of occupied nests were on a par with 2018 with all reports summarised in the table below:

	2019	2018	2017	2016	2015	2014	2013	2012	2011	2010
St Osyth	22	12	15	20	12+	17	9+	12	5-6	9
Chigborough Lakes	10	10	10	10	12-15	10	10	8	12	9
North Fambridge Hall	29	24	12	7	28	24	26	19	18	13
Paglesham	nc	22	7	20	10	12	15	10	6	15
Foulness Island	2	4	12	11	12	17	8	24	29	10
Walthamstow Wetlands	37	28	17	17	17	19	11	17	15	5-10
Warren Gorge Chafford Hundred	18	16	12	10	6	6	6	9	4	0
Netherhall Gravel Pits	4	7	7	5	5	7	7	7	0	0
Abberton Reservoir	8	6+	27	nc	2+	1	0	0	0	0
Mayesbrook Park Dagenham	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0
Benfleet Downs	0	8	5	3	3+	0	0	0	0	0
Wakering Stairs	2	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Clay Tye Wood Upminster	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Puddledock Fishery Upminster	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Totals	**135**	**138**	**124**	**103**	**107**	**114**	**92**	**106**	**89**	**61**

Outside the breeding season numbers conformed to the expected pattern with highest counts in September and October as reflected in the Wetland Bird Survey counts.

Principal monthly Wetland Bird Survey counts were:

GB 110 INT 1,100	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
WeBS total	**255**	**181**	**274**	**201**	**466**	**1243**	**1177**	**569**	**257**
Stour Estuary	12	26	22	22	**152**	270	250	77	10
Hamford Water	25	12	18	nc	nc	**166**	**130**	83	20
Colne Estuary	27	13	27	13	nc	111	119	81	32
Blackwater Estuary	41	37	78	19	118	**229**	**185**	68	52
Dengie	16	2	13	5	40	**118**	**127**	84	35
Crouch/Roach/Wallasea	28	20	41	30	62	**168**	107	70	29
Foulness/Thames	90	63	59	68	47	**145**	**214**	94	60
Abberton Reservoir	4	0	0	42	44	19	23	4	0
Hanningfield Reservoir	0	0	0	1	1	2	3	0	2
Lee Valley	4	2	9	1	0	10	10	5	15
Other	8	6	7	0	2	5	9	3	2

Non-Wetland Bird Survey counts of more than 100 came from: Two Tree Island, 114 on 14th September and 134 on 1st November.

WESTERN OSPREY *Pandion haliaetus haliaetus* UK

Uncommon, but increasing, passage migrant.

There were ten spring records between the first, a very early bird, on 19th March over Wivenhoe and the last that flew north-west over Gunners Park Shoebury with a fish on 12th May. Although there have now been 21 March records and the species has been annual in that month since 2010, this is the third earliest County record after singles at Manningtree on 15th in 1981 and Boreham on 17th in 2014.

One heading north-west over Jaywick on 30th June could have been either a late spring arrival or early autumn returning bird or perhaps a wandering non-breeder.

The first returning birds were reported on 18th August at Frinton-on-Sea, Abberton Reservoir and Rainham Marshes but perhaps only one bird was involved.

The autumn saw an estimated 21 individuals, all records involving single birds, most of which did not linger, the exception being one that took up residence in the Colne estuary for a few days in early September. The last record of the year was one at Hanningfield Reservoir on 1st October.

Estimated monthly totals were:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Totals	0	0	1	4	5	1	0	6	14	1	0	0

EUROPEAN HONEY BUZZARD *Pernis apivorus*

UK

Uncommon passage migrant.

EBSIP (312, 61, 373)

Friday Wood Colchester	One	6th July	AGy

Annual totals over the last decade have been:

	2019	2018	2017	2016	2015	2014	2013	2012	2011	2010	Average
Totals	1	3	2	3	2	1	1	2	1	4	2.0

EURASIAN SPARROWHAWK *Accipiter nisus nisus*

Common resident, passage migrant and winter visitor.

Almost 1,870 individual records, some of more than one individual were received (1,700 in 2018 and 1,800 in 2018), confirming the species' widespread distribution across the County in all habitats.

A total of 15 pairs was confirmed to have bred with a further 15 records indicative of breeding.

Evidence of migration into/through the County is rare, but one off the sea at Frinton-on-Sea on 7th September and five thermalling over the escarpment at The Naze early morning on 30th November may fall into that category.

NORTHERN GOSHAWK *Accipiter gentilis gentilis*

Probable very rare breeder. Very scarce passage migrant. EBSIP

A total of 14 reports was received from the west of the County, generally in areas where breeding probably took place in 2018. The secretive nature of the species means that no further comment can be made.

Addendum 2018.

At least two pairs of Goshawk were resident in the western half of the County and breeding probably took place.

WESTERN MARSH HARRIER *Circus aeruginosus aeruginosus*

UK REX

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

Over 2,260 records were received in 2019, some 20% more than Sparrowhawk and thus highlighting just how widespread and common the species has become at all times of year.

Some 12 potential breeding pairs were reported, a slight decrease on the last few years. At Old Hall Marshes, two pairs fledged five young whilst a pair hatched three young on Foulness Island and two pairs fledged three young at Rainham Marshes.

Annual breeding pairs over the last decade have been:

	2019	2018	2017	2016	2015	2014	2013	2012	2011	2010	Average
Confirmed/probable	12	18	20	20	25	13	23	23	16	23	19.3

At the main roosts, peak numbers were as follows: Hamford Water, 18 on 12th January, 14 on 24th March, 15th on 27th October, 15 on 10th November and 21 on 15th December; Langenhoe Marsh, 12 on 11th February and 16 on 1st November; Old Hall Marshes, 27 on 20th January, 34 on 17th

February, 35 on 18th March, 18 on 20th October, 18 on 17th November and 26 on 15th December (with a minimum of 30 birds using the roost over November-December). In addition, the second winter period saw several double-figure counts of birds on Wallasea Island, with 15 on 1st December the highest.

There was another increase in the number of sites that the species was recorded from, rising to around 125 in 2019 (116 in 2018). Separating migrating from locally dispersing individuals is not easy, although an analysis of bird-days totalled by month suggests that the largest numbers are present in the winter, perhaps not surprising considering the size of the winter roosts.

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Bird days	500	307	302	319	235	193	174	196	242	280	347	347

Inland records remain relatively scarce but are increasing. At Abberton and Hanningfield Reservoirs visits are regular. Elsewhere single records, unless stated otherwise, came from: Weeley; Great Tey; Copford; Great Braxted (two); Russell Green Gravel Pits Boreham; Boreham; Great Baddow; Asheldham; Hockley; Hornchurch Park and Ingrebourne Valley; King George V Reservoir; Chingford; Larks Wood Epping Forest; Chingford Plain Epping Forest; Wanstead Flats.

HEN HARRIER *Circus cyaneus*

UK REX

Uncommon passage migrant and winter visitor.

Numbers declined from 13 birds present during December 2018 to a maximum of just five in the first two months of the year and perhaps no more than 12 individuals in the first half of the year with the last, a second calendar year bird, a juvenile at Fleet Head Great Wakering on 18th May.

The first autumn arrival was over Stones Green Beaumont on 4th August with the next, one over Romford on 22nd October. Numbers were lower than in the corresponding period last year albeit building towards the end of the year, with Wallasea Island the most favoured location with one in October, three in November and four in December (single adult ♂ and ♀ and single first calendar year ♂ and ♀) whilst at the other end of the County, Hamford Water held up to three (two adult ♂♂ and a ring-tail in December).

Inland, an adult ♀was at Abberton Reservoir on 3rd April and from 19th November through to the end of the year a ringtail was present with two on 30th December. Elsewhere, in addition to the Stones Green individual above one was a short distance inland over Weeley on 18th November. A ringtail lingered at Copped Hall Epping Forest from 25th-26th March, one was over Romford on 22nd October and singles were at Rainham Marshes on 11th and Beckton Sewage Works on 31st December.

Estimated monthly totals were:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Totals	5	5	8	3	1	0	0	1	0	5	11	16

MONTAGU'S HARRIER *Circus pygargus*

UK

Has bred on four occasions; otherwise scarce passage migrant.

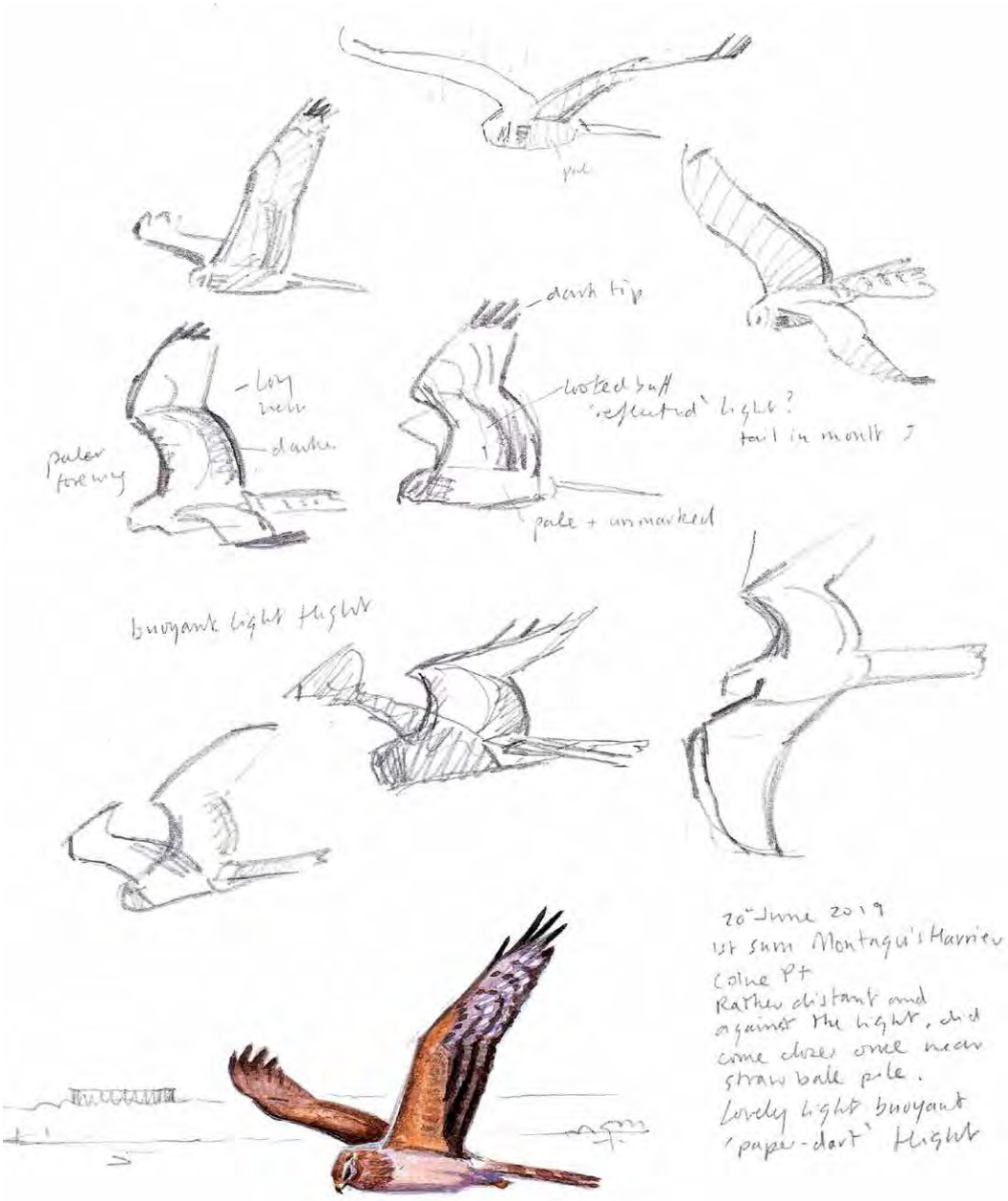
EBSIP

Colne Point	One	20th June	RAl, SCo CAt

Annual totals over the last decade have been:

	2019	2018	2017	2016	2015	2014	2013	2012	2011	2010	Average
Totals	1	2	0	2	0	1	2	3	2	1	1.4

The decline over the last few years mirrors the decline of the British breeding population which is now teetering on the edge of extinction.



Montagu's Harrier (RICHARD ALLEN)

RED KITE *Milvus milvus milvus*

Increasing passage migrant. Recent (re)colonist.

Once again there was no confirmation of breeding, but a pair was present in the area that breeding has taken place previously. In addition, there were five other locations, one in the north-west, two in the west/south-west and two in northern Essex, where display was noted, and breeding may have occurred. Clearly confirming that raptors are breeding can be very difficult to prove but, taken at face value, the data suggest that slow (re) colonisation of the County is underway.

Number of locations where recorded in each month were:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Locations	21	40	80	65	54	45	24	23	25	18	10	21

Red Kite occurred throughout the year, but as is usual, numbers were lower in the winter months. The spring once again produced clear passage through the County. Compared to 2018 numbers were broadly similar although during the breeding season numbers were lower than in 2018.

The majority of records involved 1-2 birds, but there were 32 of three with the largest counts being at Copped Hall Epping Forest where there were 12 on 25th and 15 on 26th March with eight at Clavering on 27th May and the same number at Ardleigh Green on 23rd March.

BLACK KITE *Milvus migrans migrans*

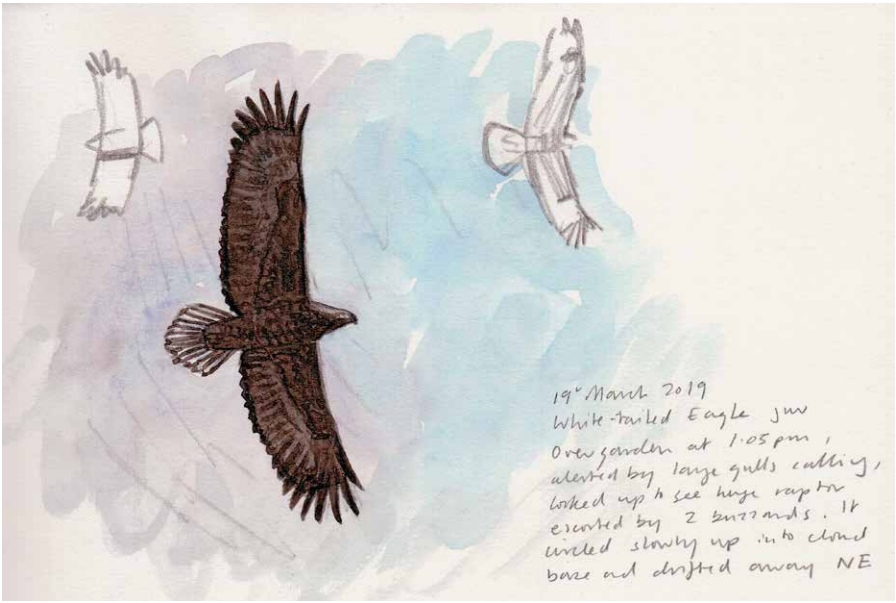
Rare passage migrant. **EBSIP (18, 15, 33)**

West Mersea/Holland Haven	One	20th May	DUr, SEn, CAt

A typical record.

WHITE-TAILED EAGLE *Haliaeetus albicilla albicilla* UK

Vagrant. **EBSIP (15, 4, 19)**



White-tailed Eagle (RICHARD ALLEN)

Wivenhoe	One	19th March	RAl
Essex	One	31st August	Satellite-tagged

The first bird is presumed to be a Continental bird whilst the second Satellite-tagged individual, G322 aka 'Culver', from the Isle of Wight introduction scheme, was tracked across Essex but never seen by ground-based observers.

ROUGH-LEGGED BUZZARD *Buteo lagopus lagopus*

Scarce passage migrant and winter visitor. **EBSIP**

Old Hall Marshes	One	2nd January	SGr CJM-G
King George V Reservoir	One	17th March	HLa NSm SHa

Annual total for the last ten winters have been:

Winter	2019/18	2018/17	2017/16	2016/15	2015/14	2014/13	2013/12	2012/11	2011/10	2010/09	Average
Totals	2	0	1	4	2	2	0	6	4	0	2.1

COMMON BUZZARD *Buteo buteo buteo*

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

Over 3,600 individual records, often of more than one bird, were received for 2019, a further increase on the record 3,300 in 2018.

Reports were received of some 87 pairs on territory or in suitable habitat during the breeding season (107 in 2018, 92 in 2017 and 73 in 2016). Breeding was confirmed for 33 pairs with at least 43 young being fledged.

Area	Confirmed Breeding Pairs
North-east	12
North-west	4
South-east	4
South-west	13
Total	**33**

In the first three months of the year, double-figure counts came from six locations: The Strood West Mersea, 16 on 19th March; Thorndon Park South, ten on 17th February; Brook Farm Upminster, 11 on 17th February (different to Thorndon birds); Long Green Epping Forest, 11 on 24th February; Rainham Marshes, 12 on 24th and 16 on 26th March.

Fewer were evident on migration in the spring with just one double-figure count, 17 over Brook Farm Upminster on 5th April. There was also a count of 11 over Navestock on 3rd June, outside the typical migration period.

The autumn passage was stronger than the spring, with double-figure counts coming from seven locations: Holland Haven, ten on 13th and 18 on 14th September; Salcott, 29 on 14th September; Abberton Reservoir, 12 on 19th and 23rd September; Brook Farm Upminster, 11 on 8th and 30th September and 14 on 10th September; Downham, 15 on 3rd September; Rainham Marshes, 13 on 13th September and 16 on 23rd August; Woodford Green, ten on 13th September.

WESTERN BARN OWL *Tyto alba* REX

Barn Owl *Tyto alba alba*

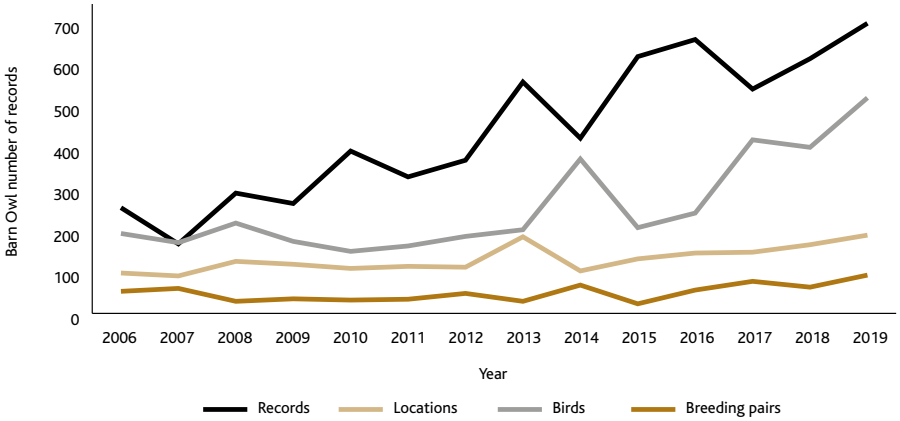
Local resident, primarily in low lying coastal areas.

In total 697 records involving at least 518 individuals were received from 188 sites (612 records of at least 399 in 2018, 539 records of at least 417 individuals in 2017, 658 records of 243 individuals in 2016). The Society received reports of 92 breeding pairs which produced at least 293 chicks, of which two were known to have died. There were also three suspected breeders, (63 plus ten suspected in 2018 producing 161 young, 77 plus three suspected in 2017 producing 173 young).

Though seemingly an exceptional year, this is due to increased quality of data received and it should not be compared with previous years.

Outside the breeding season, records peaked in February, when 44 were reported (39 in March 2018, 33 in January 2017). Only 23 birds were seen in December, though December counts are historically often low.

A summary of Barn Owl records for the period 2006-2019:



Other than chicks there were at least four dead birds reported, one of which was found in Harlow having been ringed 124km away in Leicestershire. Injured birds were found at Tolleshunt Major, Great Bardfield and Birch, all of which were 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 northeast, with far fewer records coming from the western part of the County.

All sightings will be welcomed by the Recorders.

TAWNY OWL *Strix aluco sylvatica* UK

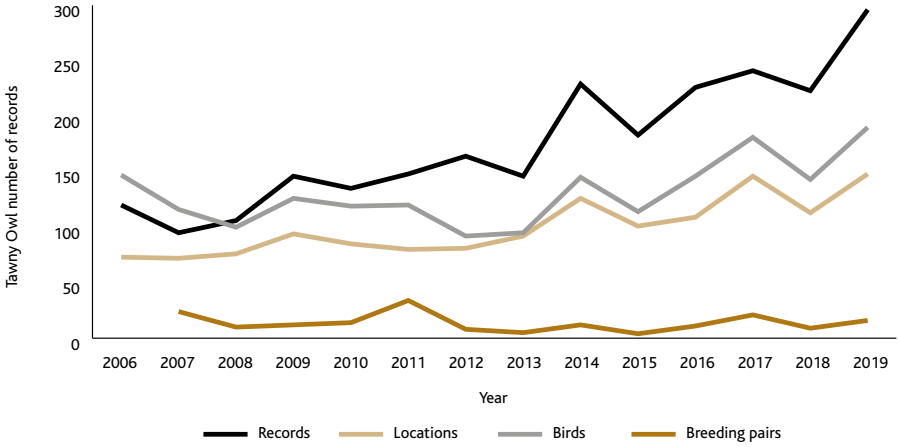
Common resident.

In total, 296 records were received concerning 190 individuals from 148 locations (223 records of 143 individuals from 113 locations in 2018, 241 records of 181 individuals from 146 locations in 2017). In general the species has a wide distribution across the County.

Breeding was proven for 16 pairs, eight juveniles being noted, plus a further nine where breeding was suspected (nine pairs plus eight suspected in 2018, 21 pairs in 2017 plus seven 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 low, although it is acknowledged that it is not easy to confirm. These figures are, without doubt, a significant underestimate of the County population and illustrate how little data is received for some species. In addition, there were 21 potential territories that had birds present during both halves of the year but showed no evidence of breeding and a further 54 locations that were only occupied for one half of the year.

In summary 2019 was a better year for this species, with a significant increase in both numbers and locations where observed. This may be due the extra coverage due to the British Trust for Ornithology Tawny Owl survey which concluded in 2019.

A summary of Tawny Owl records for the period 2006-2019:



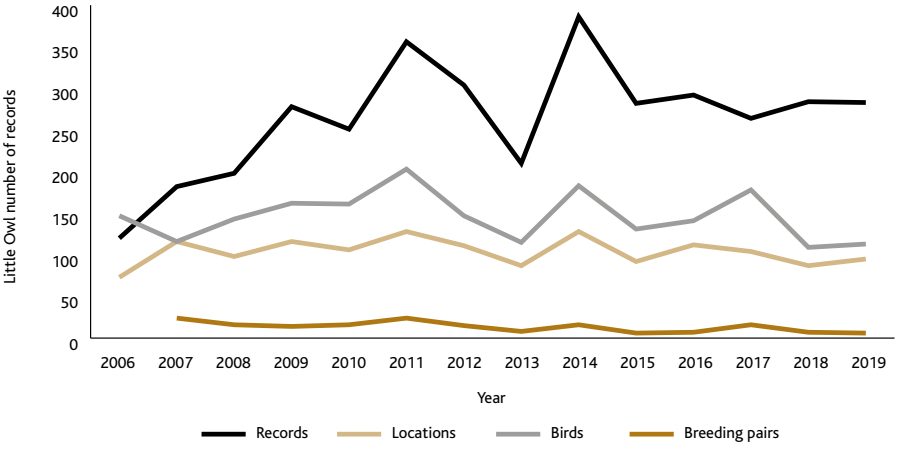
Nine birds were taken into care; four of them were juveniles, all of which were successfully rehabilitated. Three dead birds were reported, two of which were road kills. Daylight calling was noted at one location.

All records are welcomed and hopefully this will clarify the status of this species. Tawny Owl 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.

LITTLE OWL *Athene noctua vidalii*

Fairly common resident.

There were 283 records involving 113 individuals from 95 localities (284 records of 109 individuals from 87 locations in 2018, 264 records of 178 individuals from 104 locations in 2017).



A disappointing six breeding records were submitted with a further six suspected (seven plus four suspected in 2018, 16 plus four suspected in 2017). Breeding reports came predominantly from the north-east of the County, although breeding was again confirmed in the south-east.

Overall, this was not a good year for this species with the second lowest number recorded for over ten years, the lowest being just last year. A total of 113 individuals is well below the ten-year average of 148.

A summary of Little Owl records for the period 2006-2019 is shown on previous page.

One bird was taken into care at West Bergholt and released after rehabilitation. No dead birds were reported this year.

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, although it appears the species is in decline.

LONG-EARED OWL *Asio otus otus* REX

Rare breeder, scarce passage migrant and winter visitor.

There were 59 records concerning 28 birds, from 12 locations (28 records of eight birds from five sites in 2018, 45 records of 16 birds from five sites in 2017).

There was evidence of breeding at four locations with at least eight youngsters seen. (None in 2018, three in 2017). In addition, birds were noted at three other sites between May and July.

A small winter roost was noted at one site with up to seven in the first winter period and eight in the second, with just two single birds noted at two sites during the first winter away from the known roost area. In addition, there were three migrants recorded: The Naze on 25th April; Ray Island West Mersea on 19th October; Abberton Reservoir on 23rd November.

Estimated monthly totals were:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Totals	3	10	0	3	2	13	6	0	2	1	8	8
Locations	2	3	0	3	2	3	2	0	2	1	2	1

SHORT-EARED OWL *Asio flammeus flammeus* UK REX

Rare breeder, regular passage migrant and winter visitor.

In total, 229 records concerning 69 individuals from 48 locations were received (232 records of 64 individuals from 40 locations in 2018, 270 records of 85 individuals from 47 locations in 2017). As would be expected the majority of records came from coastal or estuarine areas.

Having bred in the County in 2012 and 2013, this was the sixth year running without a breeding record and no birds were seen between 18th May (Fingringhoe Wick) and 21st August (Beckton Sewage Works).

Estimated monthly totals were:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
2019	21	19	12	13	5	0	0	1	0	12	22	23
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

The year started with the same number of birds in the County as in December 2018 with a typical steady decline thereafter. In the second winter period the arrival was late with, apart from the August record, no birds recorded before October when a migrant was at The Naze on 9th. Away from coastal and estuary sites single birds were seen at: Walthamstow Marshes, 3rd and 23rd

April; Walthamstow Wetlands on 14th October; Wanstead Flats on 16th April and 23rd October.

In the first winter period the largest gathering was at least six on Wallasea Island on 3rd February whilst the second winter saw seven birds at the same location on 10th November and 1st December.

EURASIAN HOOPOE *Upupa epops epops*

Scarce passage migrant. **EBSIP (194, 30, 224)**

Holland Haven	One	18th April	IMi

Annual totals over the last decade have been:

	2019	2018	2017	2016	2015	2014	2013	2012	2011	2010	Average
Totals	1	1	0	1	1	1	0	1	5	5	1.6

COMMON KINGFISHER *Alcedo atthis ispida* UK

Fairly common resident and passage migrant.

Reported from 62 sites during the breeding season (April-July). Confirmed or probable breeding totalled 14 from 12 locations (13 from ten in 2018). Two other reports cited possible breeding. Breeding numbers appear to be stable at the present time, but the success rate of confirmed breeding pairs is difficult to assess. Adults feeding juveniles were reported from the Mardyke Valley Stifford-Aveley, Belhus Woods Aveley, Chafford Gorges Grays, and Rainham Marshes.

In the first winter period (January-March) there were 190 reports from 67 locations (262 from 91 in 2018) but about 21% of these came from just three locations. In the second winter period there were 147 reports from 59 locations (118 from 51 in 2017). Again, three locations dominated by providing some 17-18% of the total reports.

The highest location count was six on 17th-18th June at Warren Gorge Chafford Hundred when three juveniles were observed.

EURASIAN WRYNECK *Jynx torquilla torquilla*

Scarce passage migrant, mainly in autumn. **EBSIP**

Old Hall Marshes	One	29th April	MGr
Ingrebourne Valley	One	24th August	AGd
Bonnetts Wood Corbets Tey	One	27th August	RBa
Holland Haven	Two	26th August-3rd September	mo
Holland Haven	One, assumed as above	7th September	mo
Brightlingsea	One	17th September	DSt

The best showing since 2014, including a welcome spring record. In late August high pressure developed over Europe and brought increasingly warm air up from the south or south-east, culminating in the hottest August Bank Holiday on record, a temperature of 33.4°C being recorded at Heathrow on 27th. There was a widespread arrival of Scandinavian drift migrants along the east coast at this time and it was pleasing to have a small share of these.

Annual totals over the last decade have been:

	2019	2018	2017	2016	2015	2014	2013	2012	2011	2010	Average
Totals	6	4	0	3	4	8	13	4	5	10	5.7

Addendum 2018.

Wrabness	One	1st September	mo
The Naze	One	7th September	SPa

This increases the number recorded in 2018 to four.

LESSER SPOTTED WOODPECKER *Dryobates minor comminutus* UK

Scarce resident.

There were no reports of confirmed breeding and, alarmingly, there were only seven reports from just three locations in April/May, with no further sightings until August. Drumming birds were heard from only two further sites at other seasons.

Overall, there were 73 reports from 25 locations (64 from 25 in 2018). Four reports noted the presence of two birds at the same time. One location dominated the numbers, Shut Heath Wood Great Totham with 18 reports, whilst eight came from Halstead and five from Langdon Hills Plotlands area (15 in 2018).

Estimated monthly totals were:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Totals	13	7	9	4	2	0	0	1	3	0	2	4
Locations	10	6	7	3	2	0	0	1	3	0	2	4

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.**

The total number of records received, 2,103, was lower than in 2018 (2,200), but reports of possible, probable, or confirmed breeding increased to approximately 164 territories or drumming ♂♂ from 104 locations (110 from 82 in 2018). However, the shortage of reports from known strongholds and the observation of multiple birds not supplemented by breeding information still point to under-reporting of breeding numbers of a species that, nationally, has increased by 300% since the 1970s. In Friday Wood Colchester a total of 12 nest sites were identified with a further four others likely.

The highest location counts all occurred in June: Cely Woods Aveley, 14 on 2nd; Mardyke Valley Stifford-Aveley, 15 on 7th; Belhus Woods Aveley, 16, also on 2nd, these totals including eight, nine and ten juveniles respectively.

EUROPEAN GREEN WOODPECKER *Picus viridis viridis*

Common resident.

The number of records received was 2,281 (2,600 in 2018). Reports of ♂♂ 'yaffling' came from 65 locations, with probable breeding records from a further 19, and confirmed breeding from 17, around 180 territorial ♂♂ or pairs in total. The largest numbers reported were nine in the Mardyke Valley Stifford-Aveley on 1st July and Belhus Woods Aveley on 3rd September.

The species is plainly widely distributed in the County and observed on virtually every day in the year. Nationally, numbers are thought to have doubled since the 1970s.

COMMON KESTREL *Falco tinnunculus tinnunculus* UK

Fairly common resident, passage migrant and winter visitor.

Breeding was confirmed for 21 pairs at 18 sites (29 pairs at 22 sites in 2018). However at Foulness Island, where three pairs were confirmed to have bred in 2018, there was no confirmation of breeding in 2019 (so no figures from that site included in the above total) but five pairs were present in the breeding season and are included in the total of pairs present but not confirmed as breeding, reported below. All records of confirmed breeding were of single pairs apart from two each at Fingringhoe Wick, Fordham and King George V Reservoir. At every site except the last-named (where occupied nests were seen), breeding was confirmed by the presence of fledglings or recently fledged young. The largest brood reported was of four at a nest box at South Fambridge.

Reports of a further 29 pairs, present in the breeding season (here taken as April to July) but not confirmed to have bred, came from 19 additional sites (14 from 11 in 2018). Apart from the Foulness pairs mentioned above, these included three pairs each at Rainham Marshes and Lamarsh, all other

reports being of 1-2 pairs. Thus, the total number of pairs reported in the breeding season, with or without confirmation of breeding, was 50, as against 43 in 2018 and 55 in 2017, the fluctuation being probably as much a reflection of observer effort in proving breeding as of any other factors.

The total number of records of Kestrel received (from all times of year) was 2,932 (3,100 in 2018, 2,857 in 2017). As previously these included multiple reports of the same few birds at well-watched sites and seem to indicate that overall observer coverage of this species across all seasons is currently remarkably constant.

As in 2018, much the most impressive counts came during Wetland Bird Surveys on Foulness Island, where there were nine on both 20th January and 17th February, 14 on 24th March, 16 on 21st April, 15 on 12th August, 20 on 15th September, 14 on 13th October, 12 on 17th November and 14 on 15th December. Elsewhere, the only other double-figure counts were both in December, 12 on Wallasea Island on 1st and ten at Abberton Reservoir on 18th. Other sites reporting more than six birds were Fingringhoe Wick, eight on 16th July, and Rainham Marshes, up to seven on several dates in late August and early September.

RED-FOOTED FALCON *Falco vespertinus*

Rare passage migrant and summer visitor. **EBSIP (28, 7, 35)**

Billericay	♀	1st May	KPr

The second year in succession that this species has been seen in the County on 1st May.

Annual totals over the last decade have been:

	2019	2018	2017	2016	2015	2014	2013	2012	2011	2010	Average
Totals	1	1	0	1	0	0	0	1	1	0	0.5

MERLIN *Falco columbarius aesalon*

UK REX

Increasing passage migrant and winter visitor.

The total number of reports received was 199. This compares with 210 in 2018 and 208 in 2017, perhaps suggesting that there is at least a temporary lull in the increase, referred to in the heading, of this species in the County. This is borne out by the estimated total numbers present in the County (see further below), which seem to have been lower in the winters 2017/18 and 2018/19 than they were in the previous two winters.

There were no records of three or more being seen at a single site in a day. The only records of two were from Bradwell Bird Observatory (where records are drawn from a large area) on 6th February, 13th October and 13th November, Foulness Island (likewise) on 17th February, Wallasea Island on 1st December and Stow Marsh South Woodham Ferrers on 30th December.

The last bird of the spring was at Tiptree on 22nd April. There was an interesting high-summer record from Fleet Head Great Wakering on 27th July of a ♀ or immature which was watched for some time chasing Starlings and perching on fence posts. The first more obvious autumn returnee was at Stow Marsh South Woodham Ferrers on 6th September.

In addition to the Tiptree bird mentioned above, there were inland records in January from Chelmsford on 17th, Great Tey on 19th and, on 26th, Abberton Reservoir (where singles were also seen on 3rd February, 15th April and 18th December); in March from Copped Hall Epping Forest on 25th and the Chelmer Valley Park and Ride at Chelmsford on 28th; in October from Walthamstow Wetlands on 17th; in November from Thornwood Common Epping on 17th and Writtle on 27th; and in December from King George V Reservoir on 6th.

Estimated monthly totals are given below, using the same assumptions as in the *Essex Bird Reports* for 2013 to 2018. In particular they therefore assume that birds seen on opposite sides of outer estuaries involved different individuals but that there was movement between adjacent or close sites. They also assume that, at any given site, only one bird was involved in all the month's sightings unless proved otherwise.

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Totals	14	10	9	8	0	0	1	0	3	13	11	13
Locations	17	11	11	9	0	0	1	0	3	15	15	16

Accuracy in estimating numbers can be improved if observers would please note and report details of the age and sex of individual birds. It is recognized that this will often not be possible, particularly with brief or distant sightings. In 2019 some 33% of records contained some or all of this information.

EURASIAN HOBBY *Falco subbuteo subbuteo* REX

Uncommon breeder, fairly common passage migrant.

Numbers proved breeding remained at a very low level, with only three pairs confirmed as definitely having bred. A fourth brood (Pair 29 below) at a new site was seen fully fledged but without the adults (for which the young were constantly calling) and must surely have been reared very close to where the brood was seen. At another newly reported site, a pair was present all summer and breeding was suspected, the observer adding that a pair had been in the same area for a number of years previously. As indicated in the table below, the species was seen during the summer months at a further nine sites where it has previously bred. The table gives details for 2019 from sites which have previously held confirmed or probable breeding pairs, plus the new sites referred to above. It uses the same pair numberings as in EBRs 2012-2018 and shows the status in 2019 of the pairs listed for the previous year(s). Sites where no birds were seen in the last two years (2018 and 2019) are omitted:

Pair one	Established	One in late June and a family party of four in late August.
Pair two	Established	Three fledglings in nest on 10th July.
Pair three	Re-established	Two juveniles on 3rd September.
Pair six	Established	A pair present all summer to mid-September and may have bred but no young seen.
Pair seven	Established	1-2 in early June, singles on several dates in July and up to three in August.
Pair ten	Re-established in 2012	No reports received.
Pair 13	First reported in 2012	1-2 on a few dates in June/July and up to four on many dates in August.
Pair 17	First reported in 2013	No reports received.
Pair 18	First reported in 2013	One young fledged.
Pairs 21-22	First reported in 2014	One pair bred. One young hatched but died after about a week.
Pair 23	First reported in 2014	Two on 30th June.
Pair 24	First reported in 2014	1-2 in early June and singles on a few dates in July/August.
Pair 26	First reported in 2016	1-2 on a few dates in July/August.
Pair 28	First reported in 2018	Single adults seen in July/August including one perched and calling.
Pair 29	First reported in 2019	Three calling juveniles seen in late August and early September.
Pair 30	First reported in 2019 but present for about ten years previously.	Adults seen throughout the summer. Possible nesting area identified.

The species was reported in July at a total of 46 sites and at a further 11 in the second half of June. The July figure was a 50% increase on 2018 and the highest figure in that month since monthly

totals were first reported in 2009. Thus, at the very least, it can be said that non-breeders were present in 2019 in some numbers and it must be likely that some of the sightings were in fact of breeding birds, albeit with proof of breeding remaining undetected.

The first bird of spring was reported at Sewardstone Marsh on 30th March. This species does seem to be arriving earlier: this was the fourth year since 2009 in which it has been seen in March, whereas Wood 2007 included no records prior to 1st April. There was then one at Rainham Marshes on 7th April but no more in April until 13th, when one flew north past Frinton-on-Sea. Arrivals only became a little more widespread from 19th, with records on that date from four sites in the south of the County and a trickle to the end of the month. As usual May saw the main arrival, but passage was on a more modest scale than 2018, with an estimated 114 at 53 sites as compared to 150 at 70 the previous year. Again, Rainham Marshes held the biggest numbers, with a rapid build-up to a peak of 12 on 7th, reducing to nine on 10th and 12th, five on 15th and four on 21st. Four singles flew north past Frinton-on-Sea on 11th. All other May records were of 1-3.

Autumn passage brought slightly higher estimated totals than 2018, with 107 in August (89 in 2018) and 124 in September (113 in 2018). Other than sites referred to in the breeding table above, the only August records involving more than three birds came from Rainham Marshes, where numbers peaked at five on 26th. In September there was an interesting movement on 7th, when four singles flew south past Frinton-on-Sea and five more flew north from Kent at Canvey Point, singles also being noted on that day at five other sites on or near the coast. Otherwise, apart from family parties at two of the breeding/former breeding sites in the first week of the month, the only September count of more than three was of four at Chigborough Lakes on the last day of the month. October saw a flurry of records of 1-2 at eight sites on the first two days of the month, then late singles at Thorndon Park South on 5th, Walthamstow Wetlands on 8th, South Woodham Ferrers on 11th and Colne Point on 14th.

The total number of records received, at 706 from 141 sites, was substantially down on the 799 from 177 in 2018 (and very close to the 691 from 144 in 2016), the reduction being primarily a reflection of the modest spring passage. As in 2014-2018, 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, during passage periods, the pattern of peaks and troughs strongly suggested otherwise.

Estimated monthly totals were:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Totals	0	0	1	25	114	52	50	107	124	13	0	0
Locations	0	0	1	19	53	44	46	60	58	10	0	0

PEREGRINE FALCON *Falco peregrinus peregrinus*

Uncommon resident, passage migrant and winter visitor.

Pairs were observed in the breeding season at 12 sites (13 in 2018). At two further sites where pairs had been present in 2018 there were isolated breeding-season reports of single birds. In total 24 young fledged from nine nests (15 from seven in 2018). At the other three sites where pairs were present in the breeding season there was no evidence of confirmed breeding.

The total number of records received during the year was 1,043 (1,073 in 2018). As usual many of these records refer to the same few birds being seen on multiple occasions – see further below.

Away from the vicinity of breeding sites the only report of more than three birds in a day came from Rainham Marshes, where there were four on 8th January.

Inland observations came from 71 sites (68 in 2018) out of a total of 146 (153 in 2018). Many of the "inland" sites were close to the coast or estuaries and reports from the north-west came only from Birchanger, Saffron Walden and Widdington.

The minimum numbers of birds estimated to be present in the County in each month are shown in the following table. The figures have been prepared using the same assumptions as in 2014-2018,

in particular that the same individual is responsible for all sightings of a single bird at a given location during the month unless ageing and/or sexing shows more than one bird to have been involved. As in the previous five 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. Inland, the wide scatter of sites makes estimates even more difficult. For the Lee Valley assumptions have been made on similar lines to the estuaries but dividing the valley, again loosely, into a northern section and a southern 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 (during those months) confirmed breeders or their young (the figures for which are already given above).

Estimated monthly totals were:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Totals	35	29	31	24	20	12	19	23	29	27	29	29
Locations	55	46	42	35	26	12	21	32	35	38	30	39

The accuracy of the table would be increased if more observers could give the age and sex of birds they are reporting. In 2019 the proportion of records giving this information remained almost unchanged from recent years, with 199 reports (out of a total of 1,043) giving either age or sex and just 75 giving both. The latter came almost entirely from the same handful of observers and it would be helpful if others could follow their excellent example!

ROSE-RINGED PARAKEET *Psittacula krameri borealis/manillensis*

Scarce but increasing, naturalised, resident and visitor. First bred in 2004.

The number of records received increased again, to 951 (912 in 2018 and 687 in 2017). The great majority of reports came, as usual, from the south-west of the County, with only 11 sightings north of Brentwood. These ranged from Clavering in the west to Bradwell-on-Sea in the east and Shut Heath Wood Great Totham to the north, but none remained in these areas for more than a few days.

The only record of confirmed breeding came from Bonnetts Wood Corbets Tey, where three birds, including a juvenile, were seen on 1st August.

In contrast to 2018, three-figure counts were received from six sites, the maximum count at each being as follows: Cely Woods Aveley, 131 on 1st September; Belhus Woods Aveley, 131 on 3rd September; Rainham Marshes, 168 on 17th October; Hale End Walthamstow, 170 on 19th September; Walthamstow Filter Beds, 400 on 21st October; Walthamstow Wetlands, 495 on 20th October; Wanstead Flats, 787 on 29th October; Dagenham Chase, 400 on 19th December. In addition, 97 were seen at Chingford Plain Epping Forest on 22nd October and 70 at Eagle Pond Leyton on 13th February. There were no other sites reporting counts of more than 56 birds.

Many of these birds were counted north-east over the respective sites early in the morning, presumably dispersing from roosts.

RED-BACKED SHRIKE *Lanius collurio*

UK

Very scarce passage migrant, mainly in autumn.

EBSIP

Wigboro Wick Farm, St Osyth	♂	15th June	CAt, SCo, CBa
Holland Haven	Juvenile	8th-15th September	mo

Annual totals over the last decade have been:

	2019	2018	2017	2016	2015	2014	2013	2012	2011	2010	Average
Totals	2	4	1	0	4	0	0	4	3	1	1.9

EURASIAN GOLDEN ORIOLE *Oriolus oriolus* UK

Very scarce passage migrant and summer visitor. Bred 1978, 1989 and 1991. EBSIP

Abberton Reservoir	One	6th May	mo

Annual totals over the last decade have been:

	2019	2018	2017	2016	2015	2014	2013	2012	2011	2010	Average
Totals	1	0	0	1	2	0	1	0	3	1	0.9

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 1,597 records were received (1,729 in 2018) 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. Reported from 114 sites during the breeding season (April-July) but evidence of possible breeding came from only three sites, probable breeding from 13, and successful breeding from five. The only population estimate came from Braintree and Bocking, where it is stable at around five pairs. The species may well have bred on Foulness Island, a seemingly unsuitable area for the species.

Evidence of autumn migration was confined to October: Frinton-on-Sea, southerly movements of 14 on 2nd, 21 on 7th, six on 17th, and three on 27th; Wivenhoe, three flying high to the north on 3rd; Chigborough Lakes, ten birds, including five flying high to the north-west, also on 3rd.

EURASIAN MAGPIE *Pica pica pica*

Common resident.

One of our most widely reported species with 4,524 individual records in 2019 (4,478 in 2018). Reported from over 300 sites during the breeding season (April-July) with seven sites reporting possible breeding, 24 probable breeding and 20 sites confirmed breeding involving about 26 pairs. The only population estimates received were 40 pairs in the Braintree and Bocking area and eight pairs on Foulness Island.

Counts of 25 or more birds were received from nine sites, often relating to birds going to/coming from roosts. The highest count was a peak of 80 in Chafford Gorges Grays on 22nd January, followed by a peak of 41 at Langdon Hills Plotlands on 17th January, and 30 in Roding Valley Meadows Chigwell on 27th August.

WESTERN JACKDAW *Coloeus monedula*

Jackdaw *Coloeus monedula spermologus*

Common resident, passage migrant and winter visitor.

Another well-reported species, with 2,614 records received in 2019 (2,859 in 2018). Recorded from over 200 sites in the breeding season (April-July) with possible breeding coming from five sites, probable breeding from another 21 and confirmed breeding coming from a further eight sites and involving 46+ pairs, including 27 nests with young in the Mardyke Valley Stifford-Aveley. The only other population estimate came from Braintree and Bocking area where 60 pairs were noted.

Counts of 200 or more came from ten sites as follows: Abberton Reservoir, 200 on 8th September and 15th December; South Woodham Ferrers, 200 on 4th May; Brook Farm Upminster, 1,000 on 8th September; Codham Hall Farm Great Warley, 200 on 21st March; Bowers Marsh, 500 on 27th November; Wat Tyler, 450 on 29th November; Rainham Marshes, 733 on 19th October; Wanstead Flats, 250 on 23rd October; Walthamstow Wetlands, 830 on 20th October; Fishers Green Holyfield, 200 on 6th January.

Possible migration was observed at Frinton-on-Sea during March, where 253 flew north with a peak of 132 on 6th and Chafford Gorges Grays, where 150 flew north on 20th October.

'Nordic Jackdaw' *Coloeus monedula monedula*

Status uncertain. **EBSIP (0, 8, 8)**

Colne Point	One	On and off all year.	CBr
University of Essex Colchester	One	19th March	SNi

Just the two records of birds showing characteristics of Nordic Jackdaw. See page 212 for how the EBSIP Committee will consider records in future.

ROOK *Corvus frugilegus frugilegus*

Common resident, passage migrant and winter visitor.

In total 1,155 records were received (1,437in 2017). Possible breeding records were received from just four sites, probable breeding from a further 16 sites and confirmed breeding from a further 25 sites. In all, approximately 580 nests were counted, including 101 at Thurrock Thameside Mucking and around 90 in St Osyth Priory Estate. This was a marked overall increase on 2018, when a total of 200 were reported. This species has undoubtedly declined in recent decades so counts from all rookeries would be welcome.

Counts of 300 or more came from three sites, all involving birds moving to/from roosts. The largest roost was in Clay Tye Wood Upminster where 600 were counted in both January and February.

CARRION CROW *Corvus corone corone*

Common resident and passage migrant.

In total 4,817 records were received (6,000 in 2018, 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 11 sites, probable breeding at a further 24 and confirmed breeding at a further 14. The only population estimate came from Braintree and Bocking area where there were 15 pairs.

Three-figure counts were received from 11 sites during the year, all but two of them in the south or south-west of the County. The highest counts were 400 feeding on the tip at Orsett Fen on 6th August, 250 at Holyfield Hall Farm on 2nd March, 200 on Wanstead Flats on 17th April, and 150 at Lofts Farm Gravel Pit Heybridge on 28th March

A total of 96 were noted passing Frinton-on-Sea in spring (February to April), with a peak of 41 on 29th March.

NORTHERN RAVEN *Corvus corax corax*

Scarce resident and visitor.

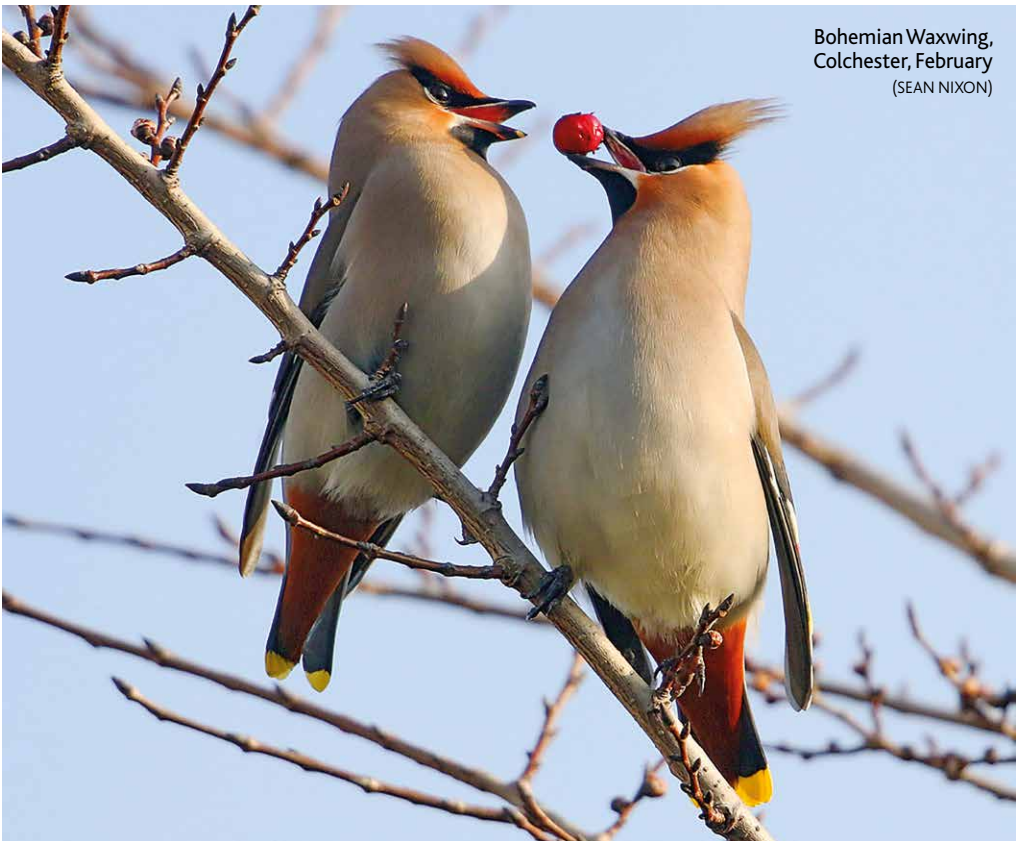
In total 272 reports were received throughout the year (134 in 2018, 119 in 2017), a doubling of records. The increase was most evident in spring, autumn, and winter whilst midsummer figures were similar to those in 2018. It is easy to read too much into one year's figures, but these could indicate the spread into the County is accelerating. Breeding was confirmed at two sites, four young being reared at one and a single youngster at the other.

Estimated monthly totals, including young birds, were:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Totals	19	18	25	27	18	6	2	15	16	27	15	14

Geographically, the species is likely to be recorded in any part of the County. Although remaining commonest in the south-west, breeding has occurred in the south and central parts of Essex as well. The Raven remains rare in coastal districts away from the Thames: ironically it was the coastal regions that were the refuge for the last surviving Ravens during the 19th century prior to their extinction.

Eurasian Hobby, Abberton Reservoir, May (SEAN NIXON)



Bohemian Waxwing, Colchester, February (SEAN NIXON)

Red-backed Shrike, Holland Haven, September (SIMON PATIENT)

Western Jackdaw, Hatfield Forest, February (SIMON WOOD)

BOHEMIAN WAXWING *Bombycilla garrulus garrulus*

Almost annual winter visitor and passage migrant in highly variable numbers.

Colchester	three	1st-3rd February
Little Clacton	one	3rd February
Holland Haven	one	10th November

It was another poor year for this species with four seen in the first winter and just a single bird in the second winter. The last significant invasion occurred in 2012/13.

COAL TIT *Periparus ater*
Coal Tit *Periparus ater britannicus*

Common resident.

Breeding records were received from 35 locations involving some 52 pairs/singing ♂♂/territories (56 from 33 locations in 2018); the number of sites at which the species was recorded in the breeding season was 95 (82 in 2018, 97 in 2017). The differences may relate to changes in recording rather than real changes and the BTO/JNCC/RSPB Breeding Bird Survey shows no significant changes in the East of England region between 2017 and 2018 or 2018 and 2019.

The main breeding counts came from: Friday Wood Colchester, seven singing ♂♂; Boxted, similar number of territories to last year (ten); Gosfield, eight territories; Braintree and Bocking area, at least four territories; Pebmarsh and Brookes Wood Greenstead Green, three singing ♂♂ each.

Peak counts were again down with just one double-figure count (four in 2018), at Boxted, ten on 19th February. Two counts of nine were received: Epping Forest Burial Park, 6th June; Mardyke Valley Stifford-Aveley, 10th July.

No records were received suggesting notable movement/dispersal.

Continental Coal Tit *Periparus ater ater*

Rare migrant but subject to periodic influxes. **EBSIP**

A number of claims of this subspecies were received this year and will be considered in the light of the methodology agreed by the EBSIP panel and set out on page 212.

MARSH TIT *Poecile palustris dresseri* **UK REX**

Scarce, sedentary resident.

Records were received from an encouraging 33 sites this year (27 in 2018, 32 in 2017), although there was a reduction in sites confirming breeding to just one (five in 2018).

A pair was observed feeding young at Rowney Wood Debden on 27th May. Elsewhere, two pairs were recorded at both Pebmarsh and Brookes Wood Greenstead Green, with two birds seen near Gestingthorpe and also Gosfield in March and single birds were observed at least once during the period March to June at 13 further sites: Parkhill Wood Alphamstone; Twinstead; Foxearth fishing lake; Loshes Meadows Great Henny; Great Henny; Marks Hall Coggeshall; Scotch Pasture Grove Castle Hedingham; Broak's Wood Gosfield; Gosfield Wood; High Garrett; Lyonshall Wood Fuller Street; West Wood Great Sampford; Hatfield Forest.

Outside the breeding season, records were received from a further 15 sites, including Belchamp Walter where they bred in 2018, with other notable records at The Naze, one from 6th to 22th August; Terling, one on 8th January; Connaught Water Epping Forest, one on 4th January; Valentine's Park Ilford, one on 26th January.

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.**

Possible breeding was reported from 16 sites, probable breeding at a further 35 sites and confirmed breeding at 45 sites.

The minimum number of breeding pairs reported was 241. However, the vast majority of breeding reports do not include full counts of the number of pairs. Counts of 20 or more pairs/singing ♂♂ were received from (2018 figures in brackets): Friday Wood Colchester, 77 (90); Braintree and Bocking area, approximately 40 (40); Mardyke Valley Stifford-Aveley, 26 (26); Belhus Woods Aveley, 24 (31).

Counts of 40 or more were made from 14 sites (16 in 2018), with the peak counts being: Wrabness, 50+ on 2nd July; Sunnymead Farm Wivenhoe, 55 on 3rd January and 30th December; Borley, 60 on 17th June; Pebmarsh, 50 on 9th July; Marks Hall Coggeshall, 60 on 5th February; Galleywood, 40 on 20th April; Langdon Hills Plotlands, 59 on 12th June; Chafford Gorges Grays, 69 on 17th June; Cely Woods Aveley, 47 on 2nd June; Mardyke Valley Stifford-Aveley, 65 on 7th June; Belhus Woods Aveley, 87 on 2nd June; Rainham Marshes, 55 on 19th September; Barn Hoppett Chingford, 50 on 29th January; Walthamstow Wetlands, 69 on 5th October.

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.**

Possible breeding was reported from 32 sites, probable breeding at a further 36 sites and confirmed breeding at 35 sites. The minimum number of breeding pairs reported was 243. However, the vast majority of breeding reports do not include full counts of the number of pairs.

Counts of ten or more pairs/singing ♂♂ were received from (2018 figures in brackets): Friday Wood Colchester, 48 (44); Braintree and Bocking area, approximately 30 (30); Mardyke Valley Stifford-Aveley, 21 (31); Belhus Woods Aveley, 22 (22).

Counts of 30 or more were made from 14 sites (16 in 2018), with the peak counts being: Stour Wood, 30 on 29th March; Frinton-on-Sea, 46 moving south in three hours on 8th October; Sunnymead Farm Wivenhoe, 30 on 30th December; Colchester, 30 on 28th April; Marks Hall Coggeshall, 30 on 5th February; Hanningfield Reservoir, 30+ on 8th September; Norsey Wood Billericay, 34 on 7th January; Langdon Hills Plotlands, 43 on 12th June; Chafford Gorges Grays, 76 on 1st June; Mardyke Valley Stifford-Aveley, 66 on 7th June; Cely Woods Aveley, 32 on 2nd June; Belhus Woods Aveley, 69 on 2nd June; Fishers Green Holyfield and Hall Marsh, 30+ on 16th March; Walthamstow Wetlands, 52 on 5th October.

EURASIAN PENDULINE TIT *Remiz pendulinus pendulinus*

Vagrant. **EBSIP (5, 12, 17)**

Rainham Marshes	♂	17th November	JHu, JEl

The first record since 2016. All but three of the previous records have been at Rainham Marshes, where the species was recorded annually between 2004 and 2011 regularly overwintering during this period.

BEARDED REEDLING *Panurus biarmicus biarmicus* (Bearded Tit) REX

Variable breeding population. Scarce passage migrant and winter visitor.

Breeding records came from six sites (four in 2018): Holland Haven, one or possibly two pairs present and two broods seen; Old Hall Marshes, no count but at least three broods seen on 24th June; Hanningfield Reservoir, at least one brood seen on 18th May; Wat Tyler, brood seen on 13th June; Vange Marsh, ♂ carrying food and at least one young seen on 15th June; Rainham Marshes, five pairs. In addition, breeding may also have occurred at Bowers Marsh, where there were maximum counts of six in April and 12 in both May and June. Away from the breeding sites, spring records were also received from Fobbing, two on 6th April; Blue House Farm, three on 14th and 18th April; and Judas Gap Flatford, one on 30th April.

During the autumn, up to 20 were observed at Rainham Marshes (on 19th September), whilst birds were seen at seven sites away from breeding areas. Two were seen at Mardyke Valley Stifford-

Aveley on 7th August, with all other records occurring in October: Gunners Park Shoebury, four on 13th; Thurrock Thameside Mucking, one on 16th; Frinton-on-Sea, four on 17th and singles on 19th and 26th; Coalhouse Fort East Tilbury, two on 20th; The Hythe Colchester, three on 20th with at least two remaining to 23rd; Hamford Water, present on 28th.

Winter records came from ten sites during the first winter (12 in 2018) and ten sites during the second winter (seven in 2018), with double-figure counts received from two sites in each winter: Bowers Marsh, 20 on 20th January and 16 on 29th November; Rainham Marshes, ten on 27th January; Hanningfield Reservoir, ten on 6th November. Away from traditional sites, birds were seen in Hamford Water, where there were two on 10th November.

WOODLARK *Lullula arborea arborea*

Scarce passage migrant. Very rare breeder – last nested 1990. **EBSIP**

A good year for what has become a very scarce bird in the County. Unfortunately, this scarcity is exacerbated by the reluctance of some observers to submit descriptions with their records, which appears to be a growing trend these days. It must be noted that as the Woodlark is a County description bird all observers are reminded, and encouraged, to submit their sightings with a description to the County Recorder.

This year there were 11 birds reported (none in 2018, and one each in 2017 and 2016).

All records are shown below:

Brook Farm Upminster	One	Flew south-east	30th March	RBa
Frinton-on-Sea	One	Flew south	8th October	PBr
Frinton-on-Sea	Five	Flew south	15th October	PBr
Frinton-on-Sea	One	Flew south	18th October	PBr
Alresford	One	Flew overhead	20th October	SNi
Frinton-on-Sea	One	Flew south	22nd October	PBr
Frinton-on-Sea	One	Flew south	27th October	PBr

The total seen passing Frinton-on-Sea on 15th October was the largest substantiated number recorded in the County at a single site on a single day since the species was a regular breeder in the middle of the last century. It coincided with a passage of 11 at Landguard Point, Suffolk.

Annual totals over the last decade have been:

	2019	2018	2017	2016	2015	2014	2013	2012	2011	2010	Average
Totals	11	0	1	1	3	4	5	9	0	0	3.4

EURASIAN SKYLARK *Alauda arvensis arvensis* **UK EX REX**

Common resident, passage migrant and winter visitor.

There was a general increase in breeding numbers over recent years with 1,218 territories recorded from 115 sites (895 from 107 in 2018, 905 from 2017). A further 20 sites were reported to have singing or territorial birds but only recorded as "present" without any supporting numbers.

There were 27 locations reporting ten or more singing/territorial birds (21 in 2018): Cattawade, 13 (12); The Naze, 15; Tollesbury Wick, 34 (35); Bradwell Bird Observatory to Weymarks Dengie, ten (12); Lawling Creek Maylandsea, 14; Wallasea Island, 231 (131); Foulness Island, 77 (81); West Canvey Marsh, 35 (29); Vange Wick, ten (seven); Bowers Marsh, 34 (18); Borley, 28 (30); Bulmer/Belchamp Walter, 27 (21); Great Henny/Henny Street, 13 (12); Great Yeldham, 15; Langham, 15 (15); Boxted, 19; Great Horkesley, ten; Wormingford, 65 (63); Bures/Mount Bures, ten; Lamarsh/Alphamstone, 15; Abberton Reservoir, 20 (30); Ingatestone, 15; Thurrock, 12; Dunnings Lane Orsett, ten; Orsett Fen, 22 (21); Upminster, ten; Chigwell, 17 (11); Rainham Marshes, 43 (47).

On Wallasea Island habitat improvement is undoubtedly the principal reason for the recent increase

in numbers, but it should be borne in mind that survey work in previous years focussed on the newly created wetland habitat and the population of species particularly associated with the then remaining arable areas would have been under reported. That said, it is interesting to note that today's populations of arable species across the island are comparable with the full island survey findings (carried out in 2008) despite the current extent of wetland, demonstrating that rough grassland and old crops support much higher population densities than under the previous arable regime despite crop rotation and agricultural grant schemes with 5m headlands.

Of interest, there were 45 birds reported from North Fambridge to Althorne on 17th April and 57 birds reported from St Lawrence to Marshhouse Dengie on 16th June but unfortunately neither mentioned whether the birds in question were singing or otherwise territorial.

During January and February 19 reports of 25 or more birds were received (21 in 2018). Of these there were just five reports of 50 or more (seven in 2018): Jaywick, 60+ on 10th January: Fairlop Waters Barkingside, 50 on 20th January; Old Hall Marshes, 70 on 27th January; Mersea Island, 50 on 12th February; Wallasea Island, 100 on 20th February.

The second autumn/winter period produced 41 reports of 25 or more birds (49 in 2019). Of these reports 17 were of 50 or more, including five three-figure counts (nine in 2018): Wormingford, 170 on 15th October, 100+ on 11th December; Frinton-on-Sea, 134 south in five hours on 19th October; Blue House Farm, 100 on 22nd October; St Lawrence to Marshhouse Dengie, 110 on 17th November.

HORNED LARK *Eremophila alpestris flava* (Shorelark) UK

Scarce but annual passage migrant and winter visitor.

There were just three birds reported this year with multiple sightings of the bird seen during the early days of the first winter period and a single sighting of two in the second winter period.

All records are shown below:

Stone Point Mersea Island	One	From December 2018-4th January
The Naze	Two	16th November

Winter totals over the last decade have been:

Winter	2019/18	2018/17	2017/16	2016/15	2015/14	2014/13	2013/12	2012/11	2011/10	2010/09	Average
Totals	1	15	3	1	2	3	1	5	13	5	4.9

SAND MARTIN *Riparia riparia riparia* REX

Locally common summer visitor and passage migrant.

The reports this year from the main breeding site at Bradwell-juxta-Coggeshall Gravel Pit make disappointing reading: May 27th, 110 new nest holes in a new site, just round the corner from last year's site (146 in 2018), which Blackwater Aggregates covered with netting; June 9th, 47 holes remaining after partial collapse of the bank; 23rd June, the colony appeared deserted.

Breeding/possible breeding reports from other sites were as follows: Wrabness, 25 birds feeding young at the nests in August; The Naze, up to 35 birds present in April with possible eight nests occupied in June; Fingringhoe Gravel Pits, about 50 birds present in April with lots of holes being excavated but just five birds visiting nest holes in May; Ardleigh Reservoir, six birds in June despite destruction of nesting cliff by contractors in March; Abberton Reservoir, four birds in nesting habitat in May; King George V Reservoir, 26 birds visiting probable nest sites in May; Belhus Woods Aveley, eight pairs raised 20 young; William Girling Reservoir Chingford, 24 birds visiting nest holes in April and May; Walthamstow Wetlands, pair entering drainage hole in June; Walthamstow Marshes, two pairs in May; Olympic Park Stratford, one pair late March. All breeding records should be submitted to the County Recorder.

As usual 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.

This year saw a marked increase of numbers being reported, which hopefully will continue in future years. The first bird of the year was recorded at King George V Reservoir on March 1st. Single figures were then reported from the 4th to the end of the month with seven reports of double-figures in the last week, most notable being: King George V Reservoir, 50 on 31st; Rainham Marshes, 40 on 31st.

Throughout April good numbers of birds were recorded around the County, with 24 reports of 50 or more (15 in 2018). Of these there were nine three-figure reports (four in 2018): Abberton Reservoir, 100 on 3rd, 150 on 12th; Boreham, 125 on 9th; Ingrebourne Valley, 150 on 9th; Walthamstow Wetlands, 100 on 12th; Walthamstow Marshes, 100 on 12th; Rainham Marshes, 152 on 13th, 120 on 14th, 100 on 24th.

Good numbers were still being reported in May with six records received of 50 or more birds (nil in 2018): Abberton Reservoir, 300 on 3rd, 200+ on 4th; King George V Reservoir, 150+ on 4th; Thurrock Thameside Mucking, 85 on 5th; Rainham Marshes, 50 on 5th, 50 on 10th.

There were also four reports of 50 or more in June (nil in 2018): Rainham Marshes, 50+ on 8th; Abberton Reservoir, 50+ on 15th; Walthamstow Marshes, 140 on 18th; West Mersea, 50 on 30th.

Late summer into autumn saw good numbers being reported with six three-figure counts in July (nil in 2018): Wrabness, 100+ on 4th; Thurrock Thameside Mucking, 180 on 7th; Rainham Marshes, 100 on 19th; Frinton-on-Sea, 265 south on 28th; Walthamstow Marshes, 200 on 28th, 150 on 31st.

During August there were nine three-figure counts (three in 2018): Frinton-on-Sea, 179 south on 1st, 148 south on 5th, 102 south on 12th; Abberton Reservoir, 350 on 8th; Lofts Farm Gravel Pits Heybridge, 100 on 15th; Paglesham Lagoon, 240 on 15th; Hanningfield Reservoir, 100+ on 16th; Gunners Park Shoebury, 100 south-west on 20th; Wat Tyler, 100 south-west on 23rd.

In September of the nine reports received of 50 or more birds four were three-figure counts (five in 2018): Abberton Reservoir, 100 on 8th; Rainham Marshes, 100 on 9th; Frinton-on-Sea, 137 moving south on 12th; Canvey Point, 100 south-west on 27th.

As would be expected numbers tailed off in October, with single figures reported from nine sites during the first week, then no more until the last birds of the year were reported on 13th from: Hanningfield Reservoir, two; Rainham Marshes, one.

BARN SWALLOW *Hirundo rustica rustica*

Common summer visitor and passage migrant.

Reports of Barn Swallow were numerous around the County during the spring and summer, as they are every year, however, reports of confirmed breeding pairs or territories continue to decline. There were 148 reports from 38 sites (144 from 29 in 2018, 191 from 44 in 2017). A further 16 sites where possible/probable breeding was suspected were reported but without any confirming details (25 in 2018, 22 in 2017).

There were just two sites reporting ten or more territories (three in 2018, four in 2017): Foulness Island, 19; Braintree and Bocking, ten (ten in 2018). Stapleford Tawney, ten. There was a late record of two adults feeding two begging juveniles at the nest site at Bradwell Bird Observatory on 22nd September. All breeding records should be submitted to the County Recorder.

The first birds of the year were reported from Abberton Reservoir and Boreham on 20th March. Then, with just a few sightings around the County to the end of the month, a small arrival occurred on the 31st with double figures reported from: Gunpowder Park Waltham Abbey, 40; and King George V Reservoir, 15.

During April sightings increased throughout the County with 56 reports received of double-figures or more. Of these there were nine reports of 50 birds or more: Hanningfield Reservoir, 50 on 2nd, 100+ on 7th, 150+ on 24th, 50 on 27th; Abberton Reservoir, 100 on 3rd, 90 on 6th; Chigborough Lakes, 70 on 14th; Frinton-on-Sea, 73 north on 22nd; Lofts Farm Gravel Pits Heybridge, 50 on 24th.

Although there were many reports from around the County during the first three weeks of May there were just 12 reports of 50 or more birds including six three-figure counts: Frinton-on-Sea, 271 in off the sea on 2nd, 256 north on 11th; Abberton Reservoir, 500 on 3rd, 1,000+ on 4th, 200 on 5th; King George V Reservoir, 100+ on 4th.

There were few reports of double-figure counts during June, mostly breeding birds, and only one exceeding 50: St Lawrence Bay, 54 on 16th. However, as July came and went there were many more reports of birds, a lot of them double-figure counts, some being reported as feeding groups, including three of 50 or more birds: Cattawade Marshes, 50 on 13th; Bradwell Bird Observatory, 80 on 14th; Bowers Marsh, 200 on 26th.

During late summer and autumn many three-figure counts were reported, plus three counts of four-figures in September (nil in 2018). Peak movement past Frinton-on-Sea is summarised in the table below. There were 12 counts in August (17 in 2018) with one report of 500 going to roost in the reed bed at Bowers Marsh on 24th. There were 23 counts in September (27 in 2018), six of which were 500 or more (three in 2018) including: Colne Point, 1,000 moving south on 12th; East Tilbury, 500 west-south-west on 26th; Canvey Point, 1,000 south-west on 27th.

The reports received during the first three weeks of October indicated that birds were still migrating in good numbers, many of which were in double-figures but also five three-figure counts were received including: The Strood West Mersea, 150 on 1st; Colne Point, 145 on 15th. The numbers then dwindled to the month's end with 11 reports of 1-6 birds.

Frinton-on -Sea three/four-figure counts recorded late summer (all moving south):

	Aug		Sep					Oct		
Date	20th	21st	7th	10th	11th	12th	27th	1st	15th	17th
Totals	141	115	596	306	124	2,373	743	152	217	104

Birds were still being reported in November with ten reports during the first nine days: Mersea Strood, one on 1st; Abberton Reservoir, "present" on 2nd; The Naze, ten over reserve on 3rd; Frinton-on-Sea, 14 south on 3rd, 13 south on 4th, six south on 5th, one south on 9th; Colne Point, one on 3rd; Holland Haven, seven on 4th, one south on 9th. However, these were not the last birds to be reported for the year as a very late, or possibly wintering bird, was seen in December at The Hythe Colchester on 4th and 5th.

COMMON HOUSE MARTIN *Delichon urbicum urbicum*

UK REX

Common summer visitor and passage migrant.

Confirmed reports of occupied nests were down this year with 193 from 22 sites (214 from 33 in 2018, 205 from 21 in 2017), and one site reported second broods. However, reports from a further 11 sites would indicate that possible breeding occurred but with no confirming details. As in previous years some observers reported that numbers are once again lower this year with several sites no longer used. Reports of double-figure breeding sites were (last year figures in brackets): Tollesbury, 28; Braintree and Bocking, 60+ (60+); Orsett Fen, 13 (ten); Grays, 12; Warren Gorge Chafford Hundred, 20. All breeding records should be submitted to the County Recorder.

The first birds of the year were two reported from Wanstead Flats on 23rd March. Eight days followed before the next reports with ten at King George V Reservoir on 31st. Throughout the first three weeks of April small numbers were recorded daily around the County with numbers rarely getting into double-figures. The last week of April saw a small influx with eight counts into double-figures being reported, maximum being 50 at Lofts Farm Gravel Pits Heybridge on 24th.

The main arrival into the County came during the first week of May, with Abberton Reservoir recording the lion's share: 200 on 3rd, rising to 1,000+ on 4th, and tailing off to 100 on 5th. A further two reports of three-figures were received: Frinton-on-Sea, 135 on 2nd; King George V Reservoir, 150+ on 4th. The rest of May and into June lacked the three-figure records but there were widespread reports of summering birds which, had they been confirmed as breeding, would probably have brought breeding numbers above those of 2018.

Gradually, towards the end of July and into August, reports increased, some with accompanying juveniles. There were seven reports of 50 or more received during July (four in 2018) including three of three-figures: Frinton-on-Sea, 335 moving south on 28th; Walthamstow Marshes, 150 on 28th, 150 on 31st. In August there were ten reports of 50 or more (19 in 2018) including two of three-figures: Lofts Farm Gravel Pits Heybridge, 150+ on 15th; Abberton Manor, 100 on 18th.

As is the norm the highest movements and concentrations of birds occurred during September, and apart from the very many double-figure records, there were 22 of three/four-figures received (24 in 2018). Of these nine came from Walthamstow Marshes, see table below. The others were: Frinton-on-Sea, 566 south on 7th, 637 south on 27th; Abberton Reservoir, 100 on 8th, 120 on 23rd; Colne Point, 100 on 12th; Bradwell Power Station, 200 on 15th; Hanningfield Reservoir, 1,500 on 25th, 2,000+ on 27th; East Tilbury, 400 west-south-west on 26th; Canvey Point, 1,000 south-west on 27th; Wanstead Flats, 140 on 27th, 109 on 30th; Sewardstone, 300 on 30th.

Walthamstow Marshes three-figure counts during September:

	Sep								
Date	5th	6th	7th	9th	11th	16th	23rd	24th	29th
Totals	400	200	100	250	300	100	100	150	100

Reports continued to be received in the first three weeks of October with 30 double-figure counts. Eight of these were 50 or more: Frinton-on-Sea, 190 moving south; The Strood West Mersea, 50+; Gunners Park Shoebury, 60 south; Brook Farm Upminster, 161; Dagenham Chase, 50; Wanstead Flats, 60, all on the 1st; Brentwood 50+ on 7th; Hanningfield Reservoir, 300+ on 13th. The last birds in October were six at Gunners Park on 23rd. There were no more reports until a single bird was seen at Holland Haven on November 10th being the last of the year.

RED-RUMPED SWALLOW *Cecropis daurica rufula*

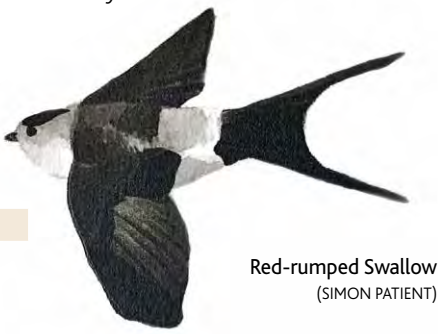
Rare passage migrant. **EBSIP (19, 12, 31)**

After last year's high of five birds just the one bird was reported this year, which is in keeping with the Essex average.

Fingringhoe Wick	One	19th March	SPa

The earliest County record, the previous earliest being one at The Naze on 2nd April in 1999.

Annual totals over the last decade have been:



Red-rumped Swallow
(SIMON PATIENT)

	2019	2018	2017	2016	2015	2014	2013	2012	2011	2010	Average
Totals	1	5	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	2	1.0

CETTI'S WARBLER *Cettia cetti cetti*

Locally common and increasing breeding resident.

This species continued to bounce back from the 2018 'Beast from the East' with 321singing ♂♂/ apparently occupied territories reported from 97 sites (201 from 81 in 2018). Records are mainly from the coast, Lee and Ingrebourne valleys, and the Thames marshes which are a particular stronghold. Counts of six or more (2018 figures in brackets): The Naze, seven (six); Heybridge Gravel Pit, 12 (ten); Canvey Wick, six (two); West Canvey Marsh, six (seven); Bowers Marsh, eight (five); Vange Wick, five (one); Vange Marsh, nine (four); Aveley Marshes, six; Rainham Marshes, 74(62); Mardyke Valley Stifford-Aveley, six (seven); Belhus Woods Aveley, eight; Ingrebourne Valley, nine (six); Netherhall Gravel Pit Nazeing, seven.

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 35 sites (30 in 2018) but the species was common and widespread throughout the County during the summer months. A total of 38 pairs fledged young in Friday Wood Colchester with many sites reporting more than 1-2 pairs but many more must go unreported.

Counts of 30+ were recorded from several sites: Beeleigh, 30 on 10th January; Belhus Woods Aveley, 51 on 5th January and 58 on 1st October; Chafford Gorges Grays, 37 on 6th January and 34 on 18th December; Chigborough Lakes, 40 on 28th January and 40 on 28th October; Harwich, 100 on 3rd November; Mardyke Valley Stifford-Aveley, 50 on 21st May and 33 on 22nd December; Orsett Fen, 32 on 2nd January; Rainham Marshes, 46 on 16th November; The Naze, 30 on 8th November; Walthamstow Wetlands, 30 on 4th December.

WOOD WARBLER *Phylloscopus sibilatrix* UK REX

Scarce passage migrant. Bred until 1991.

Wanstead Flats	One	29th April
Romford	One	10th May
South Woodford	One	26th May
The Naze	One	2nd August
Wanstead Flats	One	7th August
The Naze	One	19th August
Mardyke Valley Stifford-Aveley	One	5th September
Wanstead Flats	One	7th September

An above average showing.

Annual totals over the last decade have been:

	2019	2018	2017	2016	2015	2014	2013	2012	2011	2010	Average
Totals	8	5	2	4	5	10	6	6	7	10	6.3

YELLOW-BROWED WARBLER *Phylloscopus inornatus*

Uncommon passage migrant.

Snaresbrook	One	5th April
The Naze	One	20th September
Frinton-on-Sea	One	21st September
The Naze	Two	6th October
The Naze	One	7th-15th October
The Naze	Two	12th October
The Naze	Two	24th October
Leytonstone	One	10th October
South Woodham Ferrers	One	12th October
Gunners Park Shoebury	One ringed	22nd October

Just how many actually passed through The Naze is not known, but the above figures should be considered minima.

By recent standards an average year.

Annual totals over the last decade have been:

	2019	2018	2017	2016	2015	2014	2013	2012	2011	2010	Average
Totals	13	30	12	37	10	5	6	3	3	2	12.1

PALLAS'S LEAF WARBLER *Phylloscopus proregulus*

Rare passage migrant. **EBSIP (39, 18, 57)**

The Naze	One	29th-30th October	DSt

An almost average year by recent standards.

Annual totals over the last decade have been:

	2019	2018	2017	2016	2015	2014	2013	2012	2011	2010	Average
Totals	1	2	1	4	3	0	0	1	3	0	1.5

Of the 57 records, a total of 64% (36) have been recorded from the coast of the Tendring district in the north-east. The Dengie peninsula, in Maldon district, has recorded a further 14 (23%) with just four (7%) from the outer Thames area.

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.**

This species continues its decline in the County, highlighted by one observer who noted just one singing ♂at Friday Wood Colchester whilst in the 1980s he would record over 100. Between late April-June, around 77 pairs/singing ♂♂ were reported from 48 sites (85 from 68 sites in 2018) supporting potential breeding habitat. Counts of four of more came from: Rowney Wood Debden, four; Cely Woods Aveley, five; Tiptree Heath, nine (four).

The first spring record was from Belhus Woods Aveley on 8th March, with the main spring arrival 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 from 20th August to 7th September. Main double-figure counts were: August: Frinton-on-Sea, 23 on 12th, 15 on 16th and 14 on 21st; Holland Haven, 25 on 20th, 11 on 24th; Rainham Marshes, 14 on 26th; The Naze, 26 on 20th; September: Bradwell Bird Observatory 12 on 1st; Gunners Park Shoebury, 12 on 1st; Belhus Woods Aveley, 18 on 3rd; Chigborough Lakes, ten on 3rd; Frinton-on-Sea, 14 on 3rd; Holland Haven, 25 on 7th.

The last of the year was one at The Naze on 29th 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 sub-species, occur in winter.**

Between mid-April and June, around 808 pairs/singing ♂♂ were reported from 216 sites (626 from 252 sites in 2018). Double-figure counts of singing ♂♂ or pairs came from (2018 figures in brackets): Belhus Woods Aveley, 22 (20); Braintree and Bocking, 20 (20); Bures, ten; Cely Woods Aveley, 11; Danbury Common, ten; Fingringhoe Wick, ten; Fordham, 22 (17) ; Friday Wood Colchester, 30 (25); Heybridge Gravel Pit, ten; High Woods Colchester, ten; Ingrebourne Valley, ten; Lamarsh, 16 (ten); Langdon Hills Plotlands, 14; Mardyke Valley Stifford-Aveley, 18 (14); Netherhall Gravel Pit Nazeing, ten; Twinstead, 12; Rainham Marshes, 13.

Spring passage was typical with large numbers reported from mid-March onwards.

During January and February birds were reported from 50 sites (33 in 2018), all 1-3 except for: Creekside Beckton, four; Beckton Sewage Works, nine; King George V Reservoir, four.

In autumn there were many double-figure counts of 20 or more, the notable highlights being as follows: September: Chigborough Lakes, 25 on 3rd; Hanningfield Reservoir, 21 on 8th; Holland Haven, 20 on 19th; Rainham Marshes, 34 on 10th; The Naze, 28 on 28th; Walthamstow Marshes, 41 on 10th; Wanstead Flats, 26 on 16th; West Mersea, 20 on 6th. October: Bradwell Bird Observatory, 20 on 2nd; Frinton-on-Sea, 32 on 2nd; Holland Haven, 55 on 2nd; Ingrebourne Valley, 20 on 13th; Rainham Marshes, 22 on 15th; The Naze, 23 on 12th; Walthamstow Wetlands, 30 on 12th.

In November and December reports were received from 38 sites (25 in 2018), all records involving 1-4 birds apart from: Beckton Sewage Works/ Creekmouth Barking, 11; Walthamstow Wetlands, six.

Siberian Chiffchaff *Phylloscopus collybita tristis*

Rare passage migrant. **EBSIP (15, 14, 29)**

South Fambridge	One	19th January	PBa

Just one record considered to show characteristics of this race. For further information on how the Identification Panel will consider records in future please see page 212.

SEDGE WARBLER *Acrocephalus schoenobaenus*

Common, but declining, summer resident and passage migrant.

Some 360 territories from around 70 sites (336 from 77 in 2018) were reported, localities with six or more singing ♂♂ being (2018 figures in brackets): Cattawade to Judas Gap Flatford, 12 (12); Bowers Marsh, 16 (four); Bradwell Bird Observatory, 13 (ten); Cornmill Meadows Waltham Abbey, six; Chelmsford, six; Heybridge Gravel Pit, 16 (11); King George V Reservoir, eight; Moverons Brightlingsea, 12; Netherhall Gravel Pits Nazeing, eight; Old Hall Marshes, 20 (seven); Rainham Marshes, 114 (122); South House Farm Maldon, 12; The Naze, seven (six); West Canvey Marsh, six (seven). This species appears to remain well distributed across the County but in ever smaller numbers.

The earliest individual was reported from Rainham Marshes on 23rd March, with the main arrival from 10th April.

The last reported bird was at Holland Haven on 3rd October.

EURASIAN REED WARBLER *Acrocephalus scirpaceus scirpaceus*

Locally common summer resident and passage migrant.

Some 868 singing ♂♂/territories were reported from some 109 sites (913 from 123 in 2018), with ten or more (2018 figures in brackets) from: Cattawade, 52 (33); Old Hall Marshes, 12 (16); Chigborough Lakes, 13; Heybridge Gravel Pit, 26 (40); South House Farm Maldon ten; Bradwell Bird Observatory, 26 (16); Marsh Road Burnham-on-Crouch, 17 (20); Marsh Farm South Woodham Ferrers, 12 (97); Canvey Wick, 15 (three); West Canvey Marsh, 32 (three); Vange Marsh, 25 (ten); Bowers Marsh, 59 (36); Rainham Marshes, 217 (238).

The first report of the spring was one at South Woodham Ferrers, on 7th April, with the main arrival from 18th April.

In autumn, there were very few large counts: Rainham Marshes, 18 on 12th decreasing to 12 on 25th August and 32 on 20th September; Langham, 12 on 6th August.

The last of the year was at Holland Haven on 17th October.

COMMON GRASSHOPPER WARBLER *Locustella naevia naevia* **UK REX**

Uncommon summer resident and passage migrant.

Only 11 reeling ♂♂ were considered to have established territories and were reported from nine sites, although several more were reported singing on spring passage. Counts of two (2018 figures in brackets) came from East Tilbury and Rainham Marshes (four).

The earliest report was from Rainham Marshes on 13th April.

Unusually there were six autumn records, singles unless stated otherwise: Beckton 11th August; Ingrebourne Valley, two 24th August; The Naze, 25th August; Bradwell, 1st September; Rainham Marshes, 12th September; Holland Haven, 23rd September.

In total, 52 records were received from some 13 sites (57 from 15 in 2018).

EURASIAN BLACKCAP *Sylvia atricapilla atricapilla*

Common summer visitor and passage migrant. Small numbers winter.

Some 1,684 singing ♂♂/territories from 284 sites were reported (1,148 from 315 in 2018). Sites reporting 15 or more were (2018 figures in brackets): Belhus Woods Aveley, 38 (29); Braintree and Bocking, 15 (15); Bures, 18; Cely Woods Aveley, 18; Chafford Gorges Grays, 20 (22); Chigborough Lakes, 15; Crowsheath Wood Downham, 21; Fingringhoe Wick, 18 (21); Fordham, 19; Friday Wood Colchester, 107 (87); Gosfield, 16; Ingatestone, 50: Hanningfield Reservoir, 20; Lamarsh, 21; Langdon Hills Plotlands, 32 (18); Mardyke Valley Stifford-Aveley, 30 (15); Netherhall Gravel Pit Nazeing, 20; Orsett Fen, 17; Rainham Marshes, 28; Roding Valley Meadows Chigwell, 17; Walthamstow Wetlands, 15; West Canvey Marsh, 20 (12).

There were 167 reports of some 114 individuals from 81 sites (48 individuals in 2018) in the period from January to the first week in March, with two or more reported from many Metropolitan areas of Essex but also: Brentwood, three; Colchester, three; Lower Sheering, two; South Benfleet, two; Warley, two; West Mersea, two; Wickford, two.

Numbers of obvious migrants reported in spring were again pretty 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, 26 on 23rd August; Bonnetts Wood Corbets Tey, 22 on 27th August; Chafford Gorge Grays, 15 on 10th September; Dagenham Chase, 15 on 22nd September; Dagnam Park Harold Hill, 12 on 25th August: Friday Wood Colchester, 12 on 17th September; Ingrebourne Valley, 25 on 26th August; Mardyke Valley Stifford-Aveley, 24 on 22nd August; Wanstead Flats, 15 on 12th September. Counts from coastal watch-points were about average, the September maxima being: Gunners Park Shoebury, 30 on 22nd; Rainham Marshes, 38 on 10th; The Naze, 22 on 17th and 11 on 28th. In October there were still 21 on 2nd and 15 on 12th at The Naze.

In the last two months, there were 44 records of 26 individuals from 20 sites (24 individuals in 2018) with two or more reported from: Gidea Park, two; Leigh-on-Sea, two; Ilford, three; Rainham Marshes, three; Witham, two.

GARDEN WARBLER *Sylvia borin borin*

Declining summer resident and passage migrant.

Reports of some 95 singing ♂♂/territories were received from 39 sites (102 from 75 in 2018). Sites with four or more (2018 figures in brackets): Friday Wood Colchester, nine; Abberton Reservoir, four; Bures, four; Crowsheath Wood Downham, four; Fingringhoe Wick, six (four); Fishers Green Holyfield, four (four); Hanningfield Reservoir, six (five); Pebmarsh, four (four); Cely Woods Aveley, four; Wrabness, four. The earliest spring records were all noted on 13th April at Fingringhoe Wick, Chalkney Wood, Hanningfield Reservoir and Connaught Water Epping Forest, with the main arrival during the last week of April.

In autumn, 13 sites reported two birds or more during August and there were 15 reports during September.

The last record was from Dagnam Park Harold Hill on 28th September.

BARRED WARBLER *Sylvia nisoria nisoria*

Rare passage migrant. **EBSIP (54, 6, 60)**

The Naze	First winter	9th October	DSt NAl

The first since 2016 and the first at The Naze since 2004. A total of 24 have been found at The Naze, 40% of the total, with the next most favoured site being Holland Haven with nine (22.5%) and Bradwell Bird Observatory with five (8.3%). Of the remaining records, all have been coastal apart from five from four inland sites with Sewardstone the only location to record the species on more than one occasion (October 2003 and 9th October 2006).

There appears to have been a marked decline in occurrence since the turn of the century.

Ten-year totals of Barred Warbler from 1970-2019 have been:

Decade	1960s	1970s	1980s	1990s	2000s	2010s
Totals	3	10	10	20	13	4

The latest Report on Scarce Migrants birds in Britain (*British Birds* 112: November 2019 639-660), whilst suggesting a moderate variability in annual numbers, points to a clear increasing trend for the period 1990-2017, contrary to the pattern in Essex.

LESSER WHITETHROAT *Sylvia curruca*

Lesser Whitethroat *Sylvia curruca curruca*

Declining summer resident and passage migrant.

Reports of some 224 territories were received from 122 sites (196 from 111 in 2018). Sites with four or more (2018 figures in brackets) were: The Naze, four (four); Mersea Island, four; The Hythe Colchester, six; Abberton Reservoir, four; Chigborough Lakes, eight; Heybridge Gravel Pit, eight (eight); Foulness Island, four (nine); Canvey Wick, five; West Canvey Marsh, nine (six). Bowers Marsh, eight (three); Rainham Marshes, six (five); Braintree and Bocking, five (five).

A wintering individual was seen at West Mersea on 4th January.

In spring, the first record was from Chigborough Lakes on 6th April, with the main arrival commencing on 13th April. Passage was fairly steady, with a high count of 12 from Canvey Wick on 6th May.

In autumn, the highest counts received were: August: Canvey Wick, 14 on 26th; Old Hall Marshes, 21 on 23rd; The Naze, 18 on 26th. In September, the highest numbers were: Wakering Stairs, 15 on 1st; Chigborough Lakes, 15 on 5th; Old Hall Marshes, 14 on 10th, The Naze, 15 on 17th. The last report was a bird at Abberton Reservoir on 28th October.

COMMON WHITETHROAT *Sylvia communis communis*

Summer visitor and passage migrant.

Some 1,345 singing ♂♂/territories from 243 sites (1,152 from 216 in 2018) were reported. Sites with 15 or more singing ♂♂ were (2018 figures in brackets): The Naze, 20 (15); Fingringhoe Wick, 16; Friday Wood Colchester, 42; Fordham, 25 (16); Braintree and Bocking, 25 (25); The Hythe Colchester, 47 (16); Heybridge Gravel Pits, 18 (15); St Lawrence Bay, 15 (23); Wallasea Island, 20 (14); Foulness Island, 92 (179); Two Tree Island, 19 (30); Canvey Wick, 20; West Canvey Marsh, 46 (17); Bowers Marsh, 21 (16); Mardyke Valley Stifford-Aveley, 22 (18); Orsett Fen, 31 (15); Belhus Woods Aveley, 17; Rainham Marshes, 107 (118).

In spring, the first record was on 25th March from Chigborough Lakes with the main arrival commencing around 14th April. Passage was good and peaked between 19th and 30th April, with double-figure counts coming from several widely scattered sites.

Autumn passage was again strong, as in recent years. The highest counts in August were at; Dagenham Chase, 28 on 23rd; Old Hall Marshes, 33 on 23rd; Rainham Marshes, 53 on 26th; The Naze, 35 on 21st; Wanstead Flats, 30 on 21st. September: Old Hall Marshes, 21 on 2nd; The Naze, ten on 17th; Wakering Stairs, ten on 1st. The last record was from Wanstead Flats on 30th September.

DARTFORD WARBLER *Sylvia undata dartfordiensis* UK

Scarce, mainly winter, visitor. EBSIP (46, 69, 115)

Hadleigh Downs	♂	1st-14th January	CLe
Colne Point	1st winter	22nd October-10th November	CBa
Rainham Marshes	One	31st October-1st November	mo
Bradwell Bird Observatory	♀	6th November-11th December	JSu

A fairly typical set of records by recent standards.

Winter totals over the last decade have been:

Winter	2019/18	2018/17	2017/16	2016/15	2015/14	2014/13	2013/12	2012/11	2011/10	2010/09	Average
Totals	2	5	2	8	2	1	1	0	0	7	2.8

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 six sites across the County (three in 2018, four in 2017, 11 in 2016) between 16th February and 12th May whilst the species was present at one site in June.

Records were received from eight sites in January and eight in February (nine in January and 12 in February 2018, seven in both months in 2017, 15 in January 2016 and 11 in February 2016). Long staying birds were at Rainham Marshes and The Naze.

Records of up to 11 birds were recorded at four coastal sites in March, six at four coastal sites in April and one at one coastal site in May. Maxima of three birds were noted at seven inland sites during April, whilst 1-2 birds were noted at six inland sites in March and two in May.

The first autumn record was a single at The Naze on 20th and 21st September, with a single at Holland Haven on 28th September. No records were received from inland sites during September. Passage movement in October was heavier than recent years with up to 63 birds recorded at six coastal sites although only singles were recorded at five inland sites. Highest counts at each coastal site were: Frinton-on-Sea, 11 on 24th October; Great Holland, two on 24th October; Holland Haven, nine on 24th October; The Naze, nine on 24th October; North Shoebury St Mary's Churchyard, two on 26th and 27th October; Bradwell Bird Observatory, two on 27th October.

In November and December, records came from 13 coastal and ten inland sites. Counts of three or more came from five sites: West Mersea, four on 5th November; Frinton-on-Sea, 17 on 1st November, three on 2nd and 3rd November; The Naze, three on 9th November and 28th December; Rainham Marshes, three on 5th November, four on 13th November and three on 14th November; North Shoebury St Mary's Churchyard, three on 29th December. Long stayers were at Chafford Gorges Grays, Rainham Marshes, The Naze, Walthamstow Wetlands and West Mersea.

In all a quieter first six months than 2018 but a stronger showing in the latter part of the year.

Estimated monthly totals were:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Totals	8	7	28	12	4	1	0	0	2	60	52	16
Locations	7	7	10	8	3	1	0	0	2	14	14	10

A hybrid with Goldcrest was caught and ringed on 5th October at Walthamstow Wetlands.

GOLDCREST *Regulus regulus regulus*

Common resident, passage migrant and winter visitor.

A minimum of 75 singing ♂♂/territories was reported from 59 sites (65 from 43 in 2018, 75 from 66 in 2017, 75 from 55 in 2016, 42 from 28 in 2015), but the species was observed during the period April – July at a further 40 sites.

In January and February, a minimum of 720 birds were reported from 124 sites (730 from 152 in 2018, 970 from 164 in 2017, 1,390 from 194 in 2016). Counts of ten or more were received from Belhus Woods Aveley, 11 on 5th January; Colchester Barracks, ten on 5th January; Copford, 14 on 1st January; Grays Gorge, ten on 6th and 22nd January, 11 on 1st February; Great Braxted, ten on 20th January; Hockley Woods, 11 on 5th January.

Spring passage was very light, the highest counts being, Epping Forest Burial Park, seven on 2nd May; Holland Haven, eight on 28th March; The Naze, eight on 16th March, nine on 6th April.

Autumn passage was lighter than in recent years, six coastal sites reported double-figure counts through October and November: Colne Point, 11 on 24th October, 15 on 31st October; Frinton-on-Sea, 22, 12, 40, 28, 102, 14, 15 and 19 respectively on 5th, 12th, 21st, 23rd, 24th, 25th, 26th and 27th October, 232 and 28 respectively on 1st and 2nd November; Great Holland, 15 on 24th October; Harwich, 60 on 3rd November; Holland Haven, 15 on 15th and 24th October; The Naze, 12 on 14th September, 13, 12, 32, 20, 21, 10, 30, 39, 15, 25 and 20 respectively on 5th, 6th, 7th, 9th, 12th, 14th, 17th, 25th, 28th, 29th and 30th October, 12 and 19 respectively on 8th and 9th November. Double-figure counts of between 11 and 32 were received from a further eight inland sites during October and November.

A minimum of 280 birds was reported in December from 62 sites. Counts of ten or more were received from Belhus Woods Aveley, 19 on 2nd December; Chafford Gorges Grays, 14 on 3rd December and 120 on 18th December; Grays New Cemetery, ten on 1st December; Walthamstow Filter Beds, 13 on 3rd December.

EURASIAN WREN *Troglodytes troglodytes indigenus/troglodytes*

***T. t. indigenus* is and 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 reported from 146 sites, a significant increase over previous years. Pairs/territories were reported from 46 sites including 69 singing ♂♂ in Friday Wood Colchester, 30+ pairs in the Braintree and Bocking area and 80 territories at Rainham Marshes, whilst possible/probable breeding was reported from 23 sites. Breeding was confirmed at Great Henny, Colne Point, Middlewick Ranges Colchester, Chalkney Wood, Tillingham, Belhus Woods Aveley, Bonnetts Wood Corbets Tey, Brook Farm Upminster, Chafford Gorges Grays, Roding Valley Meadows Chigwell, Crowsheath Wood Downham, Grays New Cemetery, Mardyke Valley Stifford-Aveley, Orsett Fen and Cely Woods Aveley.

EURASIAN NUTHATCH *Sitta europaea caesia*

Sedentary resident, currently stable.

A total of 43 pairs/singing ♂♂ was reported from 28 sites, with possible/probable breeding reported from 11 sites. Breeding was confirmed at Belhus Woods Aveley, Epping Forest, Friday Wood Colchester and Westley Heights Langdon Hills. Breeding is almost certainly under-recorded for this species which was seen at a further 42 sites between April and July, and at 70 more sites during the rest of the year.

Counts of between three and ten birds were reported from 37 sites, with the highest counts received from: Weald Park, 10+ on 11th January; Ongar Park Wood Epping Forest, 15 on 23rd March.

EURASIAN TREECREEPER *Certhia familiaris britannica*

Common resident.

49 pairs/singing ♂♂ were reported from 31 sites, with possible/probable breeding reported from 11 sites. Confirmed breeding records were received from nine sites: Bedfords Park Havering-Atte-Bower, Castle Hedingham, Chigborough Lakes, Friday Wood Colchester, Gosfield, Headley Common Great Warley, Mardyke Valley Stifford-Aveley, Pebmarsh and Westley Heights Langdon Hills.

Breeding is almost certainly under-recorded, albeit the species was seen at a further 38 locations between April and July, and at 71 more sites during the rest of the year.

Counts of between three and six birds were reported from 31 sites, with the highest count received from Mardyke Valley Stifford-Aveley, eight on 1st July.

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 39 sites.

The largest post breeding flocks containing juvenile birds reported were from Abberton Reservoir, 158 on 11th June; Hangman's Wood Little Thurrock, 109 on 11th June; Orsett Fen, 420 on 19th June and 270 on 8th July. Flocks of between 20 and 100 birds containing juveniles were reported from a further 11 sites.

Notable first-winter counts: Rainham Marshes, 1,000 on 3rd January and 500+ on 11th January; Holland Haven, 500+ on 12th February; Maldon, 800 on 16th March. Counts of between 50 and 500 birds were reported from a further 41 sites.

The highest counts in the autumn were from: Colne Point, 3,000 on 25th September, 2,000 on 27th, 29th and 30th September, 2,500 on 28th September; Frinton-on-Sea, 1,073 on 15th October, 2,782 on 29th October; Stow Marsh South Woodham Ferrers, 1,150 on 11th September. Counts of between 50 and 1,000 birds were reported from a further 43 sites.

During the second winter, the highest counts were reported from: Colne Point, 1,600 on 2nd November, 1,800 on 20th December; Wallasea Island, 1,500 on 5th December. Counts of between 50 and 1,000 birds were reported from a further 32 sites.

RING OUZEL *Turdus torquatus torquatus* UK

Passage migrant.

The first spring record of the year was a single ♂ at Olympic Park Stratford on 23rd March. Reports during the spring migration were down on the last couple of years with 16 individuals at 11 sites (25 at 13 in 2018, 23 at 12 in 2017). Only one location reported more than one individual, The Naze with two on 7th April. The last of the spring was one at Rainham Marshes on 25th April.

Autumn passage, which began with two at Holland Haven on 5th October, was much stronger than the last couple of years with 67 individuals reported from 23 sites (13 at eight in 2018 and 25 at 17 in 2017), all in October. Gunners Park Shoebury provided the highest count with a maximum of ten on 8th October, whilst there were five at Rainham Marshes on 16th October and four at both Wigboro Wick Farm St Osyth and Bowers Marsh on 13th and 19th October respectively. The last record of the year was picked up on a nocturnal migration recording and related to a single bird over Chafford Hundred Grays on 29th October.

Estimated monthly totals were:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Totals	0	0	1	15	0	0	0	0	0	67	0	0
Locations	0	0	1	11	0	0	0	0	0	23	0	0

Annual totals over the last decade have been:

	2019	2018	2017	2016	2015	2014	2013	2012	2011	2010	Average
Spring	16	27	23	16	42	24	18	41	25	26	25.8
Autumn	67	12	22	80	25	85	65	24	14	52	44.6
Totals	83	39	45	96	67	109	83	65	39	78	70.4

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 only reported from four sites (eight in 2018): Friday Wood Colchester, 26; Foulness Island, 16 (32); Braintree and Bocking 75+ pairs and stable; Rainham Marshes, 34 (31).

Overall the number of high counts was down on recent years.

In the first winter period highest counts were down on 2017 and 2018 with only two counts of 30+ both in January: 41+ (max count) at Chigborough Lakes on 22nd; 30, Beeleigh and Langford on 10th.

Counts of visible migration at Frinton-on-Sea were minimal during the early part of the year but produced 1,006 in October (641 in 2018) and 255 in November, although clearly observer coverage and weather conditions are two factors that make such totals variable year on year.

Nocturnal migration recordings over a Chafford Hundred Grays garden during October identified a total of 609 birds, including a peak of 175 over on 29th.

Away from Frinton and the Chafford Hundred garden, counts of more than 30 came from: Wormingford, 40 on 11th December; The Naze, 37 on 7th October, 30 on 28th October, 40 on 29th October and 37 on 30th November; Chafford Gorges Grays, 33 on 29th October, 30 on 19th October and 31 on 18th December; Rainham Marshes, 43 on 14th November and 35 on 22nd November.

FIELDFARE *Turdus pilaris* UK

Common passage migrant and winter visitor. Has summered.

There was a noticeable decrease in reported three-figure flocks in the first winter period this year with records coming from 16 sites (42 in 2018 and 23 in 2017). The largest reported flock was 280 at Horsley Cross on 16th February with 250 at Lawford on 16th February the next largest and only other count of 250+.

The last report of the period was a late bird at Holland Haven on 5th May.

The first record of the autumn was at Colne Point on 25th August.

As in the last few years there were again no four-figure flocks during the second winter period and, as with the first period, three-figure flocks were down with only ten sites reporting them (26 in 2018 and 14 in 2017). The largest flock was 426 at Wanstead Flats on 29th October with just two other flocks of 250+, both in October, being 268 past Frinton-on-Sea and 270 at Walthamstow Wetlands both on 29th.

REDWING *Turdus iliacus*

Redwing *Turdus iliacus iliacus* UK

Common passage migrant and winter visitor.

As is typical reports were widespread in the first period but generally in small numbers with just five three-figure flocks, slightly down on last year (seven in 2018 and five in 2017). Most were reported in January with the largest being 406 at Bowers Marsh on 31st, whilst '100s' were reported at West Canvey and Hockley Woods on 26th and 29th respectively. In April, 150 were counted at Gunners Park Shoebury on 9th.

Frinton-on-Sea saw visible migration numbers with 587 birds logged over 15.5 hours during March which is slightly up on the 452 reported in 2018.

The last reported bird of the first winter was one at Walthamstow Marshes on 1st May.

The first report of the second winter was picked up on nocturnal migration recording over Chafford Hundred Grays on 9th September, the same date as the first record in 2018.

Visible passage over Frinton-on-Sea produced a monthly total for October of 1,873 in 42.25 hours, twice that of 2018, whilst nocturnal migration recordings over Chafford Hundred Grays during the month picked up an impressive 5,612.

Outside of these two locations 11 three-figure flocks were reported (17 in 2018 and 19 in 2017), all in October: 300 at Ardleigh Green on 22nd; 285 at Collier Row on 16th; 247 at Chafford Gorges Grays on 29th; 187 at Rainham Marshes on 16th; 170 at Chigborough Lakes and Lofts Farm Heybridge on 15th; 169 at Benfleet on 16th; 110 at Wanstead Flats on 15th; 107 at Wivenhoe on 15th; '100s' at King George V Reservoir and Chingford Plain on 16th and 25th respectively.

Icelandic Redwing *Turdus iliacus coburni*

Probably a very scarce passage migrant and winter visitor. **EBSIP (5, 2, 7)**

Bradwell Bird Observatory	One	6th January	JSu

Accepted as a bird showing characteristics of this subspecies, this is the second year that a record of this subspecies has been noted following the photographed bird in Colchester in 2018. One or two older records are still to be reviewed.

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.**

As with previous years, the total of possible, probable and confirmed breeders (using BTO criteria) was at least 464 at 195 sites (567 at 211 in 2018). 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. These data aside double-figure counts of breeding birds came from two sites: 15 at Mardkye Valley Stifford-Aveley and 11 at Rainham Marshes

In the first winter double-figure counts came from six sites the highest being 20 at Mardyke Valley Stifford-Aveley on both 5th and 19th February.

Autumn passage at Frinton-on-Sea was much lighter this year with an October total of 229 in 46.25 hours (539 in 9.75 hours in 2018). However, nocturnal migration recording identified 1,785 over a Chafford Hundred Grays garden in the month.

Elsewhere in October, double-figure reports were as follows: 41 at Wivenhoe on 15th; 36 at The Naze on 7th; 20 at Mardyke Valley Stifford-Aveley on 15th; 17 at Chafford Gorges Grays on 29th; 16 at Bonnetts Wood Corbets Tey on 8th; 15 at Rainham Marshes on 24th; 12 at Holland Haven on 2nd; 11 at Ingrebourne Valley on 7th.

November and December produced only a couple of additional double-figure counts: 11 at Cely Woods Aveley on 29th November; 15 at Holyfield Hall Farm on 15th December.

MISTLE THRUSH *Turdus viscivorus viscivorus* UK

Locally common resident and partial migrant.

Once again, the total of possible, probable and confirmed breeders (using BTO criteria) was at least 122 at 97 sites (153 at 89 in 2018). As with Song Thrush, the majority of these breeding records have been drawn from Bird Track submissions for which the same comments are relevant here, although

in the case of Mistle Thrush most of the records were of 1-2 birds, so the degree of understating is probably lower. As with Song Thrush, the number of breeders reported bears little relation to the actual population in the County of this widespread species.
Nine sites recorded two territories, slightly up on the seven recorded in 2018 and a further four sites recorded three territories: Boxted; Great Henny; Dagnam Park Harold Hill; Wormingford.

Post-breeding double-figure counts were recorded on and off in the Walthamstow Marshes/ Wetlands area from late July to September with a maximum of 24 on 26th September whilst several double-figure counts on Wanstead Flats in September and early October included a peak of 17 on 7th September. The only other site to hold more than ten was Hockley Woods where there were 11 on 11th July.

A simple analysis of the number of sites recording post-breeding flocks of more than 20 birds over the last two decades hints at the decline that has meant that this is now a UK Red List species:

Year	19	18	17	16	15	14	13	12	11	10	09	08	07	06	05	04	03	02	01	00
Counts	1	1	4	1	0	2	2	3	2	7	3	3	5	4	5	5	7	4	4	8

Passage birds are reported less frequently than before but the following sites recorded birds that may relate to migrants: Bradwell Bird Observatory, one on 20th October; Holland Haven, two on 12th and one on 14th September, one on 13th and two on 30th October; The Naze, two south on 14th September and singles on four dates in October. During September and October, many sites, both inland and coastal, recorded greater numbers than typical, suggesting some movement through them, although it is difficult to say whether this is simply movements of locally fledged juveniles or birds moving from further afield.

SPOTTED FLYCATCHER *Muscicapa striata striata* UK RED

Declining summer resident and passage migrant.

Five pairs were proved to have bred (four in 2018, seven in 2017, eight in 2016). Of these, two pairs were found in the Chelmsford area alone by a vigilant observer so it maybe that this species is under recorded.

There were pairs or singing ♂♂ present at a further seven sites and single birds at 12 more sites in the breeding season, 19 in total (18 in 2018, 20 in 2017, 16 in 2016).

The first bird of the year was recorded at Frinton-on-Sea on 3rd May. Spring passage was negligible with birds appearing in very small numbers at inland sites and few at coastal sites.

Autumn passage started in mid-August and continued through to 2nd October.

Reports in August came from 37 sites (excluding sites holding confirmed or probable breeders) and were mainly of one or two birds. Counts of three or more were made at ten sites with four at Tiptree on 21st, four at Wanstead Flats on 24th and five on 27th.

September reports came from 35 sites and again were mainly of one or two birds. Counts of three or more were made at six sites with four counted at Belhus Woods Aveley on 3rd, four at Rainham Marshes on 5th, five at Wanstead Flats on 7th, four at Wanstead Park on 12th and four at Ingrebourne Valley on 13th. The last bird of the year was reported from Holland Haven on 12th October.

Estimated monthly totals, using maximum count per site per month, were:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Totals	0	0	0	0	26	9	18	67	58	8	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.**

Regular counts were made at a number of woodlands and country parks giving a stability to the numbers this year. Numbers in the early part of the year remained at a steady level right through to

the end of May suggesting that if wintering birds remained from 2018 when they left, they were replaced by local breeding birds returning. Numbers dropped in June and July with some of the regular counts dropping into single figures for the first time. Numbers rose again in August and September.

There were several high counts during the early part of the year (site maximum in each case). January: Chafford Gorges Grays, 32 on 22nd. February: Chafford Gorges Grays, 27 on 1st; Mardyke Valley Stifford-Aveley, 26 on 5th. March: Belhus Woods Aveley, 34 on 8th; Epping Forest, 32 on 27th.

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: Friday Wood Colchester, 78; Belhus Woods Aveley, 23 territories; Chafford Hundred Grays, 11 territories; Chigborough Lakes, 13 singing; Heybridge Gravel Pit, 14 singing; Mardyke Valley Stifford-Aveley, 14 territories; Orsett Fen, 13 territories; Rainham Marshes, 29. Breeding was confirmed by observing fledglings or adults carrying faecal sac or food at 26 sites.

Late summer, post-breeding, counts of 20+ came from four well-watched sites in the south-west from mid-August. The first autumn birds were noted at Frinton-on-Sea on 21st August (four), whilst there were 28 there on 30th August with the only other double-figure count from there during September being 18 on 20th.

Early October saw a noticeable increase in numbers recorded from coastal and inland locations. At Frinton-on-Sea, there were influxes around 7th/8th and 21st/22nd October, with 76 and 20 respectively on the former dates and 62 and 40 on the latter. In between, there were 42 on 15th. A further influx was noted on 1st November when 51 arrived on south-easterlies during rain. Just to the north at The Naze, during October, there were 60 on 7th, 50 on 12th and 28th and 40 on 19th.

Elsewhere increased counts were noted at Bradwell Bird Observatory where there were 20 on 3rd November, with all other counts of 20+ coming from inland locations (peak monthly counts): Cely Woods Aveley, 27th on 1st October; Mardyke Valley Stifford-Aveley, 26 on 15th October and 33 on 5th November; Chafford Gorges Grays, 23 on 6th November; Belhus Woods, 30 on 1st November; Bonnetts Wood Corbets Tey, 21 on 8th October; Rainham Marshes, 28 on 17th October.

The only counts of 20+ during December came from: Belhus Park, 20 on 2nd; Chafford Gorges Grays, 31 on 3rd and 42 on 18th.

COMMON NIGHTINGALE *Luscinia megarhynchos megarhynchos* UK REX

Summer resident and passage migrant.

The first record of the year came from Canvey Wick on 11th April.

In total 169 singing ♂♂ were reported from 39 sites (2018: 109 at 31; 2017:103 at 33; 2016: 119 at 47). The increase is probably due to more diligent recording of this species that is declining nationally. Essex has become an important County for the species.

One recorder noted that a loss in habitat at Twinstead, due to trees being felled, had reduced the number of Nightingale but had found birds in an adjacent site.

Friday Wood held a total of 38 singing ♂♂, up from 26 in 2018 whilst Fingringhoe Wick held a maximum of 15 birds on territories which is down on 2018 (20 singing ♂♂ in 2018, 25 in 2017, 15 in 2016). Middlewick Ranges Colchester which held 21 singing ♂♂, appears to be an important but, until very recently, overlooked site for the species. Other counts of more than five singing ♂♂ were: Wrabness, seven; Abberton Reservoir, six; Danbury Common, six; Hazeleigh Wood, 14; Foulness, eight.

There was little evidence of definite breeding, but the croaking of young birds was regularly heard in Hazeleigh Wood.

Not many Nightingale are noted on migration, but odd birds turn up from time to time in unexpected locations, like the last bird of the year which was noted feeding on Elder *Sambucus nigra* with Eurasian Blackcap at Bonnetts Wood Corbets Tey on 26th and 27th August.

EUROPEAN PIED FLYCATCHER *Ficedula hypoleuca hypoleuca* UK

Rare spring, but fairly common autumn, passage migrant.

There were no spring records this year.

The first records for the year were on 9th August with singles at The Naze and Frinton-on-Sea and two at Holland Haven.

The majority of records came in August with an influx between 9th and 16th and from 21st to the end of the month. The highest counts were all at The Naze in August: ten on 22nd; six on 25th; nine on 29th; eight on 31st.

Passage appeared to tail off rapidly at the end of August with just a few birds being seen in September mostly at inland locations: The last bird of the year was seen at Holland Haven on 2nd October.

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.

	Aug				Sep				
Week commencing	4th	11th	18th	25th	1st	8th	15th	22nd	29th
Totals	4	4	26	34	11	2	2	2	1
Locations	3	4	9	19	10	1	2	2	1

BLACK REDSTART *Phoenicurus ochruros gibraltariensis* UK REX

Small breeding and wintering population. Passage migrant in small numbers.

There were three sightings during January and February, all at sewage treatment works taking advantage of the warmer microclimate and the insects available: one at Beckton Sewage Works on 27th January with two on 9th February; a ♀ at Harold Wood Sewage Works on 30th January.

The earliest bird of the season at a coastal site was one singing on the undercliff at Frinton-on-Sea on 22nd February, followed by one at Rainham Marshes on 16th March.

Spring passage started at the end of March with multiple sightings at coastal sites and at Rainham Marshes on 23rd and then regular sightings along the coast, at or near reservoirs and marshes until mid-April. Reports of birds on spring passage were received from 19 sites (17 in 2018, 11 in 2017, 18 in 2016).

No breeding was confirmed but two singing ♂♂ were noted: Olympic Park Stratford on 30th March; on the roof of a house in the centre of Brentwood from 2nd-4th April. There were no records between 26th April (Great Baddow) and 2nd October (Beckton Sewage Works) apart from singles at Frinton-on-Sea on 15th June and at Forest Lodge Epping Forest on 14th September.

Autumn passage occurred only through October, an estimated 16 birds were recorded at 12 different sites, all coastal or wetland areas. All records were of 1-2 birds apart from three at West Mersea on 27th October.

Just two sites held single birds during December: Thurrock Thameside Mucking, on 3rd; Creekmouth Barking, on 9th 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
Totals	2	3	18	14	0	1	0	0	1	16	2	2

COMMON REDSTART *Phoenicurus phoenicurus phoenicurus* UK

Regular passage migrant in small numbers. Bred until 1993.

Spring migration was light and mostly in the first ten days of April. The first bird was seen at Wanstead Flats on 2nd April and the last bird was seen at The Naze on 21st May. Other reports came from ten locations (eight in 2018, nine in 2017, 20 in 2016) all involving single birds except at Wanstead Flats where three were present on 10th April.

No reports were received during June and July.

The first bird of the autumn was at The Naze on 16th August. Autumn passage was light, with a minimum total of around 35 birds at 27 sites (21 at 14 in 2018, 31 at 19 in 2017, 75 at 33 in 2016).

Birds were confined to the coast and south of the County. The only location recording more than two birds was Wanstead Flats where the last week of August and first in September saw 2-3 birds most days but seven on 29th August with six on 31st August and 1st September and four on 30th August. The last bird of the year was seen on 25th October at Walthamstow Marshes.

Estimated monthly totals, using maximum count per site per month, were:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Totals	0	0	0	13	2	0	0	25	23	3	0	0

WHINCHAT *Saxicola rubetra* UK

Regular passage migrant. Formerly bred.

The first spring record was one at Wanstead Flats on 21st April. Passage was light with a minimum of 25 birds seen at 18 sites (23 from 17 in 2018, 19 from nine in 2017, 40 from 22 in 2016). All records were either coastal or in the south of the County and most were of single birds. However, there were three on Wanstead Flats on 7th May and two at: Walthamstow Marshes on 24th April; Upminster on 2nd May; Waterworks Leyton on 7th May; Rainham Marshes on 7th May; Beckton on 12th May. The last spring sighting was one at The Naze on 28th May.

No breeding behaviour was observed.

No birds were seen in June but four were recorded in July: one at Abberton Reservoir on 9th and two on 13th; one at Stow Marsh South Woodham Ferrers on 21st. More than two weeks passed before the next record. Autumn passage began in earnest with one at West Mersea on 6th August and peaked in the last week of August and first two weeks in September, similar to 2018. Most sightings were coastal/estuarine, or at reservoirs or 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.

Estimated weekly totals during peak passage, with totals of the highest counts at each site, were:

	Aug				Sep				
Week commencing	4th	11th	18th	25th	1st	8th	15th	22nd	29th
Totals	1	14	46	127	54	65	40	18	13
Locations	1	6	18	34	21	20	23	10	7

Counts of eight or more in autumn were as follows: August: Wanstead Flats, ten on 27th; Blue House Farm, nine on 28th; Old Hall Marshes, 19 on 29th. September: Rainham Marshes, eight on 1st, ten on 4th and eight on 13th; Wanstead Flats, eight on 4th; Bowers Marsh, eight on 8th; Holland Haven eight on 10th and 13th; The Hythe Colchester, nine on 14th.

Passage petered out by 6th October with just two sightings at two sites after this date with the last bird of the year at Holland Haven on 15th October.

EUROPEAN STONECHAT *Saxicola rubicola hibernans* REX

Small breeding population. Regular passage migrant and winter visitor.

A better year with six pairs reported from four locations during the breeding season. Breeding was confirmed at three sites with one pair raising two broods: Blue House Farm (pair present); Holland Haven (one pair bred); Rainham Marshes (one pair, two broods); Thurrock Thameside Mucking area, at least three pairs bred. In addition, a lone juvenile at Colne Point in early June suggests an undetected pair nearby.

A displaying ♂ was seen at Heybridge Gravel Pit on 12th April but no ♀ seen.

Breeding records over the last decade have been:

	2019	2018	2017	2016	2015	2014	2013	2012	2011	2010
Pairs/Territories	6	3	11	10	5	5	5	3	2	6
Locations	4	2	7	7	2	5	3	2	2	5

The highest counts of the first winter period were: January: Rainham Marshes, six on 1st, 9th and 11th; St Lawrence to Marshhouse Dengie, six on 20th. February: Thurrock Thameside Mucking, ten on 12th.

The highest counts in the autumn were: August: Colne Point seven on 21st. September: Coalhouse Fort East Tilbury, seven on 1st; Holland Haven, 11 on 18th, 19th and 30th; Bowers Marsh, seven on 21st; The Hythe Colchester, seven on 27th and 30th; Rainham Marshes, seven on 30th.

The highest counts of the second winter period were: November: Holland Haven, seven on 4th; Rainham Marshes, seven on 17th and ten on 30th. December: Old Hall Marshes, eight on 2nd; Wallasea Island, eight on 23rd.

Estimated monthly totals were:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Totals	96	69	20	16	8	7	6	22	117	189	126	108
Locations	46	29	8	10	5	6	4	7	35	49	37	35

NORTHERN WHEATEAR *Oenanthe oenanthe*

Northern Wheatear *Oeananthe oenanthe oenanthe*

Occasionally breeds. Common passage migrant.

After the first spring migrant at Rainham Marshes on 16th March, birds were noted at many locations from 20th March. This was followed by a second peak in mid-April although overall the passage was very light compared to late April 2018 when weekly total numbers rose to over 200.

Estimated weekly totals were:

	March				Apr				May		
Week commencing	10th	17th	24th	31st	7th	14th	21st	28th	5th	12th	19th
Totals	1	51	10	20	29	49	24	28	26	3	1
Locations	1	13	8	9	13	23	15	16	12	3	1

The only double-figure counts came in the first peak on 20th March: 11 at Frinton-on-Sea; ten at The Naze. One other large count of eight came after the second peak at The Naze on 7th May. The last of the spring was seen at Bocking on 22nd May.

Two birds were reported on 12th June, both coastal, at Frinton-on-Sea and The Naze.

Autumn migration commenced at the very end of July with single birds on an allotment in Loughton and on a lawn in South Fambridge on 28th July with numbers peaking at the end of August/early September. Double-figure counts came from five locations, four on the coast and one inland: The Naze, 15 on 20th August and ten on1st September; Frinton-on-Sea, 12 on 20th August and 16 on 1st September; Holland Haven, peaks of 15 on 20th August and 18 on 1st September; Dengie, 15 on 14th September; Wanstead Flats, 12 on 29th August.

Estimated weekly totals were:

	Aug				Sep			
Week commencing	4th	11th	18th	25th	1st	8th	15th	22nd
Totals	24	42	69	72	78	60	46	15
Locations	12	14	18	19	20	18	19	12

Four were noted at Holland Haven on 2nd October with two on The Dengie on 5th but after that all records were of singles, with the species recorded on most days until the final sightings of the year on 20th October involving single birds at Old Hall Marshes and West Mersea.

Greenland Wheatear *Oenanthe oenanthe leucorrhoa*

Passage migrant.

An estimated seven birds showing characteristics of this race were reported (six in 2018, four in 2017, five in 2016), all ♂♂ and all in the spring: Colne Point, one on 29th April; Frinton-on-Sea, four on 2nd, six on 3rd and one on 5th May.

HOUSE SPARROW *Passer domesticus domesticus* UK

Abundant resident.

A widely-reported and locally-abundant bird throughout Essex with 2,762 records received throughout the year. Breeding records are chronically under-reported in Essex with just 15 reports of confirmed breeding and probable/possible breeding from 49 sites across the County.

Peak counts in the first half of the year were at Rainham Marshes with a high of 112 on 29th January and a peak of 95 between St Lawrence and Marshhouse Dengie on 24th March. Later in the year there were large counts of about 250 birds by The Strood West Mersea on 6th August and 250 on 15th December at Rainham Marshes. Counts of 50+ birds were received from 18 sites.

TREE SPARROW *Passer montanus montanus* UK REX

Declining passage migrant. Bred until 1999.

A total of 21 records from eight mostly coastal sites were received in eight months of the year. In the first half of 2019 the only records were up to ten visiting feeders in Little Clacton from January to March and one that remained around the feeders at Bradwell Bird Observatory from 13th-16th January.

Autumn passage commenced with singles at Holland Haven on 24th and 25th August and 10th and 18th September. Five were noted at the same site on 28th September and 2nd October. Frinton-on-Sea saw a small passage between 13th September and 14th October with birds seen on four dates: three on 13th September; nine on 1st October; seven on the 2nd October and three on 12th October. Otherwise a single was at Abberton Reservoir on 10th September, three were at Rainham Marshes on 12th September, with another there on 17th November, and 4+ at Wigboro Wick Farm St Osyth on 20th September with six on 21st and 22nd at least, whilst a single came to feeders in a garden at Heybridge on 28th and 29th October.

Estimated monthly totals, highlighting the small autumn passage, were:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Totals	11	10	10	1	0	0	0	1	20	20	1	0
Locations	2	1	1	1	0	0	0	1	5	3	1	0

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.**

A widely reported and abundant bird throughout Essex with 2,679 records (similar to 2018) received throughout the year, although breeding is significantly under-recorded with just four records of juveniles from three sites. In total 76 records of probable/possible breeding from at least 98 sites during the breeding season were received. By far the largest count was around 25 pairs in Braintree and Bocking area (25 in 2018 and 2017). It is clear that the actual figures are far higher with breeding occurring across the County in a wide variety of habitats.

A very small autumn passage was evident, principally along the north-east coast with several counts of 15+ coming from Frinton-on-Sea in October including 42 on the undercliff on 7th, 38 and 33 respectively on 15th and 21st. A count of 20+ over Two Tree Island on 3rd October is more difficult to assign to passage but may simply refer to resident birds.

WESTERN YELLOW WAGTAIL *Motacilla flava*

Yellow Wagtail *Motacilla flava flavissima* UK REX

Declining summer visitor.

A better breeding season, although numbers were boosted by a significant count on Wallasea Island. A total of at least 117 probable/breeding records involving pairs/territorial ♂♂ was recorded from just 15 sites (79 from 15 in 2018). Counts of more than five pairs/territories came from Wallasea Island, 67 (18) and Foulness Island, 21, which together account for 75% of the total.

For comment on the notable increase on Wallasea Island, please see the comment under Skylark on page 137.

There were two March records, singles at King George V Reservoir on 24th and Rainham Marshes on 30th, before the first significant influx around 1st/2nd April including seven at Lofts Farm Gravel Pit Heybridge on the 2nd. Abberton Reservoir, as usual, accounted for most of the double-figure counts during April (with six counts of 10-20, 26 on 15th and 20th, 30 on 22nd, 43 on 16th and 18th, 40+ on 23rd, 50 on 17th and at least 70 flushed by a Barn Owl on 22nd). Elsewhere, double-figure counts came from a further six sites: Frinton-on-Sea, 23 north in three hours on 22nd; Colne Point, 14 on 28th; Lower Raypits Canewdon, 12 on 23rd; Wallasea Island, 12 on 16th, 15 on 19th, 16 on 25th and 20 on 20th; Fleet Head Great Wakering, 17 on 21st; Walthamstow Marshes, 19 on 8th. May saw double-figure counts from seven sites: Frinton-on-Sea, 23 north in three hours on 2nd; Lee Wick Farm St Osyth, 15 on 5th; Colne Point, up to 20 present between 3rd and 10th; Abberton, four counts of 10-20 between 4th and 6th with 40+ on 4th; Dengie Marshes, 15 on 25th and 20 on 12th; Lower Raypits Canewdon, 20 on 5th; Wallasea Island, ten on 12th and 12 on 13th. There were three double-figure counts in June: ten at Abberton Reservoir on 1st; ten between St Lawrence and Marshhouse Dengie on 16th; 20 on Wallasea Island on 14th.

Double-figure counts during July probably refer mostly to local breeders so the following peak July counts give an indicator of breeding numbers: Abberton, 12 on 21st; The Strood West Mersea, ten on 24th; Bowers Marsh, ten on 25th and 26th; Wallasea Island, 50 on 21st.

Autumn migration was typically widespread with counts of 30 or more coming from: Abberton Reservoir, 30 on 8th September, 40 on 4th September, 45 on 23rd August and 60 on 8th August; Blue House Farm, 30 on 28th August; Bradwell Bird Observatory, 30 on 8th and 9th September; Bradwell Marshes, 35 on 1st September; South Fambridge, 50 on 12th September; Stow Marsh South Woodham Ferrers, 46 on 23rd August; Wallasea Island, 30 on 24th August, 40 on 31st August, 50 on 3rd and 24th August and 100 on 13th August (also including the Roach estuary); East Tilbury, 31 on 7th September.

Numbers declined rapidly after the end of September, the only double-figure count being ten at Holland Haven on 1st October, the same day that nine flew south past Frinton-on-Sea in four hours, after which most records involved single birds with the last three individuals being at Bradwell Bird Observatory on 27th and Rainham Marshes on 19th and 29th (different birds).

Blue-headed Wagtail *Motacilla flava flava*

Scarce summer visitor.

Separating pure Blue-headed Wagtail from the 'hybrid' *flavissima* x *flava*, or 'Channel Wagtail' can be surprisingly difficult, especially in strong sunlight. A classic Channel Wagtail in good light resembles a washed-out Blue-headed, with a somewhat paler powder-blue head and sometimes more extensive white in the throat, supercilium and ear-coverts but assessing these colours can prove problematic, albeit their general appearance is fairly consistent. In future, all Channel Wagtail records will be considered with Blue-headed, in part because observers are often unclear about whether their record involves a *flava* or a *flavissima* x *flava*.

Northern Raven, Hanningfield Reservoir, May (DAVID ACFIELD)

Common Firecrest, The Naze, October (SEAN NIXON)

Channel Wagtail, Abberton Reservoir, April (SEAN NIXON)

Ortolan Bunting, Abberton Reservoir, April (PAUL CHAMBERLAIN)

In all, records involving perhaps seven or eight '*flava*' wagtail were received, of which 3-4 were considered Blue-headed. Most records were from Abberton Reservoir where 1-3 were present from 2nd April to 5th May, either pure Blue-headed or Channel. A single ♂ Channel Wagtail was present at Colne Point on 28th April with a different bird present from 3rd-9th May whilst a Blue-headed was noted at Walthamstow Marshes on 8th April. A ♀ Blue-headed was noted in the Ingrebourne Valley on 19th June, whilst a 'classic' Channel Wagtail summered on Wallasea Island.

Estimated totals over the last decade have been:

	2019	2018	2017	2016	2015	2014	2013	2012	2011	2010	Average
Totals	3	3	4	5	0	2	3	3	4	1	2.8

GREY WAGTAIL *Motacilla cinerea cinerea* UK

Increasing resident breeder and passage migrant.

Breeding took place at 11 sites with 16 pairs confirmed (11 and 15 in 2018) with a further six pairs probably/possibly breeding at five sites, similar figures overall to last year. Not surprisingly, all sites were within the urban environment.

As is normal, during the first three months of the year all records were of 1-2 birds except for the following: three at Copford Sewage Works on 1st January and The Hythe Colchester on 21st February; four at King George V Reservoir on 3rd February, William Girling Reservoir Chingford on 26th February and Beckton Sewage Works on 9th March; five at Cody Dock Newham on 27th January; six at Beckton Sewage Works on 3rd March; seven at Beckton Sewage Works on 27th January and Rainham Marshes on 16th March.

Apart from six around Beckton Sewage Works on 11th May and three in Chalkney Woods on 9th May, all other spring records were of 1-2 birds.

Spring passage past Frinton-on-Sea involved a total of six birds on five dates between 19th February and 13th April; a mid-summer bird heading north on 30th June was presumably a failed breeder.

Autumn passage saw small numbers (a total of 62 between 14th August and 27th October) moving south past Frinton-on-Sea with totals of five in August, 19 in September and 38 in October. Most day counts were of 1-2 birds but there were four on each of 1st, 2nd, 23rd and 27th October, five on each of 9th and 12th September and nine on 19th October. Just down the coast at Holland Haven, a total of 23 birds was reported between 21st August and 28th October with a peak of four on 1st October; five were also reported from The Naze in October. Elsewhere, counts of four or more, attributable to local as well as migrant birds came from: Rainham Marshes, four on 27th October; Walthamstow Filter Beds, four on 10th October; Walthamstow Wetlands, five on 22nd September, six on 19th, 28th and 29th October and nine on 22nd September; Walthamstow Marshes, seven on 15th September; William Girling Reservoir Chingford, four on 29th October; Beckton Sewage Works, six on 3rd August, seven on 11th August, and in October, eight on 27th, nine on 2nd and 11 on 12th. All in all, a stronger passage than 2018.

In the second winter period totals of three or more came from five locations: The Hythe Colchester, three on 1st December; Rainham Marshes, three on 5th November; Hanningfield Reservoir, three on 14th December; King George V Reservoir, seven on 1st November; Beckton Sewage Works, seven on 7th December and 12 on 10th November.

Estimated monthly totals were:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Totals	67	39	70	35	45	50	20	45	106	136	60	47
Locations	46	31	42	28	27	24	14	21	50	46	37	33

WHITE WAGTAIL *Motacilla alba*

Pied Wagtail *Motacilla alba yarrellii*

Common resident and passage migrant.

It is unclear whether the decline in breeding records of this under-recorded species is genuine or not. 36 pairs were confirmed/probably/possibly bred at 19 sites (40 confirmed pairs in 2018).

Principal roosts during the first winter period (peak counts): Bowers Marsh, 100+ on 12th January; Copford Sewage Works, 60 on 1st January; Epping High Street, 152 on 13th February; Romford High Street, 200+ on 12th February; Upminster Town Centre, 72 on 3rd January.

Spring passage was noticeable both inland and on the coast. At several inland sites observers logged an increase in numbers from the last week of February through to the second week in March whilst on the coast, at Frinton-on-Sea, very small numbers (17) were noted on just four days, three in March and one in April.

Autumn passage at Frinton-on-Sea was stronger than in 2018, commencing on 14th September and ending on 5th November with monthly totals of: September (70), October (364) and November (15) with four days returning counts of 30 or more: 32 south in six hours on 28th September; 30 south in two hours on 30th September; 76 south in five hours on 15th October; 74 south in five hours on 17th October. Totals of 35 at The Naze on 5th October and 40 at Vange Marsh on 17th October were presumably also migrants. Inland migration was far less discernible, although 55 in a horse paddock in Hazeleigh on the same date as the above Naze birds soon moved on and 40 were also just outside Maldon on 16th September. Counts of 50 at both Abberton Reservoir on 4th September and Hanningfield Reservoir on 9th October may have involved migrants but both sites see gatherings of juveniles this time of year of presumed local provenance. Further counts of 20 or more came from three sites in September and two in October.

In the last two months of the year, counts of 50 or more came from: The Naze, 50+ on 8th December; The Hythe Colchester, 50+ on 14th November; West Mersea, 70 on 10th December; Wallasea Island, a feeding flock of 120 in a cultivated field on 29th December; Bowers Marsh, 50 on 23rd December.

White Wagtail *Motacilla alba alba*

Fairly common passage migrant.

The difficulties referred to in the 2018 Report regarding the recording of this species continue. A total 302 reports purportedly referring to this sub-species were received when clearly the vast majority of these refer to ***yarrellii*** but it is quite impossible assessing genuine records. Further investigations into this matter have revealed that whilst some observers need to be careful when inputting their data, a notable issue has been identified that is not easy to resolve, namely that downloads from eBird attributed to Pied Wagtail by the observer, get reassigned in an eBird download to the nominate race, i.e. White Wagtail. Until we can resolve this issue, can I suggest that observers using eBird (and it would not hurt if users of other platforms did the same) make a statement in the comments section of the input screen confirming whether the record refers to either Pied or White Wagtail.

Careful analysis of all records referred to as *Motacilla alba*, cross referencing to observer sightings and a lot of time, energy and enquiries with individual observers has reduced the number considered to relate to White Wagtail records to 62. The first of the year involved a ♂ and a ♀ at Fingringhoe Mill on 17th February which may have lingered into the following month.

A juvenile showing features of White Wagtail was present at Colne Point during June.

The last was at Bowers Marsh on 22nd October. All records were of 1-2 birds apart from three at Abberton Reservoir on 14th April, and both Jaywick and The Naze on 19th April.

Estimated monthly totals were:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Totals	0	3	8	36	7	0	0	1	4	3	0	0
Locations	0	2	6	18	6	0	0	1	4	3	0	0

MEADOW PIPIT *Anthus pratensis* UK

Common resident and passage migrant.

It is not clear if the upturn in breeding numbers reported is down to increased observer coverage or a genuine resurgence. The majority of the 95 or so pairs (39 from 19 in 2018), which were reported from 16, mostly coastal sites, were mostly found at just five sites: Cattawade, ten pairs; Walton Hall Marshes, ten singing ♂♂; Tollesbury Wick, 18 territories; Wallasea Island, 15; Rainham Marshes, 30 territories.

During January to February, counts of 30 or more came from seven sites (12 in 2018): Fingringhoe, 30 on 11th February; Old Hall Marshes, 30 on 27th January; Bowers Marsh, 35 on 31st January; Rainham Marshes, 40 on 2nd and 3rd January; Hanningfield Reservoir, 50+ on 20th January; Great Baddow, 100 on 5th January; Wanstead Park, 42 on 20th January. Counts of 20 or more came from just four further sites (17 in 2018). It would appear numbers present in the first winter period were down on those in 2018.

On the coast, spring migration past Frinton-on-Sea began in late February and continued in to April with totals reported over the three months being: February, six; March, 92; April, 20 (53 in total on 2018). Peak counts during this period were: 24 on 12th March; 20 on 17th March; 15 on 26th March. Inland, Wanstead Park held 30 on 18th March and 41 on 26th March, presumably migrants.

Autumn passage past Frinton-on-Sea began in early September and lasted through until the end of November. A total of 4,623 included 2,602 in September, 1,685 in October and 336 in November, was a stronger passage than 2018. There were three counts over 300: 330 moving south in three hours on 27th September, 420 moving south on 30th September and 606 on 28th September whilst there were a further ten three-figure counts, five in each of September and October. The high counts in late September were also picked up at Holland Haven where 503 were noted on 28th September and 450 on 30th September, as well as five further three-figure counts in September and three in October. Elsewhere, there were three-figure counts from: Colne Point, two counts including 300 on 27th September; Great Baddow, 100 on 13th October; Wanstead, two counts including 110 on 18th September; Wormingford, 170 on 17th September.

The last two months of the year produced reports from just 56 sites (87 in 2018 and 97 in 2017) suggesting a notable decline. Counts of 40 or more came from eight sites (including Frinton, figures above): St Lawrence to Marshhouse Dengie, 115 on 17th November with 43 still on 15th December; Wallasea Island, 60 on 29th December; Wormingford, 120 on 11th December; Boreham Gravel Pit, 48 on 21st December; Hanningfield Reservoir, 44 on the 6th and 50 on 5th November; Rainham Marshes, 40 on 24th November; King George V Reservoir, 40 on 11th November.

Observers are requested to send in all records of this species so as to ascertain its status as there are signs of a decline in breeding and wintering numbers.

TREE PIPIT *Anthus trivialis trivialis* UK REX

A rare and decreasing summer visitor and passage migrant.

There were no indications of breeding from anywhere across the County.

Estimated monthly totals were:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Totals	0	0	1	1	3	0	0	82	24	2	0	0

The first bird was an early one, at Blue House Farm, on 29th March.

Autumn saw very heavy passage, one of the largest in recent decades. Many of the records were inland, particularly from Wanstead Flats.

Estimated weekly totals, during the peak migration period, were:

	August				September	
Week commencing	5th	12th	19th	26th	2nd	9th
Week no.	32	33	34	35	36	37
Wanstead	0	13	21	8	1	1
Elsewhere inland	0	2	12**	1	7**	9**
Elsewhere coast	0	6	19	1	2	0
Totals	0	21	54	10	10	10

** Includes nocturnal migration records

Largest counts (excluding nocturnal migration recordings, see below) were: four past Frinton-on-Sea on 24th August and Wanstead Flats on 17th August; five over Wanstead Flats on 14th August; six over Wanstead Flats on 21st August.

Nocturnal migration recordings from a Chafford Hundred Grays garden produced impressive results: four on 19th and seven on 20th August; six on 6th, one on 7th, six on 9th and one on 17th September; one on 7th October.

The last bird of the year flew south at Holland Haven on 10th October.

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
Holland Haven	0	0	7	2	0	0	0	0	0	1	2	1
Fingringhoe Mill	0	9	8	4	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1
Vange Marsh	2	0	10	4	0	0	0	0	0	1	2	3
Rainham Marshes	9	5	3	2	0	0	0	0	0	4	4	5
Other sites	9	6	11	4	0	0	0	0	1	24	26	26
Totals	20	20	32	14	0	0	0	0	1	30	32	35
Locations	10	7	8	6	0	0	0	0	1	22	19	20

A significant increase in numbers and locations over previous years with, particularly in the second winter, records coming from widely scattered localities principally around the coast where saltings, tidelines and rank/flooded grassland appear to be the favoured habitat. It will be interesting to see if this increase is maintained. Numbers in the table above are calculated by taking the highest monthly count from each location that the species is recorded at; this may mean that at times of migration numbers passing through the sites are significantly under-recorded.

The principal site in the County remains Rainham Marshes, around the concrete barges where numbers peaked at nine on 10th January. However, a new site was found at Fingringhoe Mill, where numbers peaked at nine on 6th and 16th February whilst at Vange Marsh, a regularly location normally holding just 1-2 birds, the peak there was ten on 28th March. In addition, Holland Haven recorded seven on 31st March. Counts of four or more also came from: The Hythe Colchester, four on 6th December; Belhus Woods Aveley, four on 1st November.

The last bird of the spring was at Rainham Marshes on 20th April with the first returning bird at East Tilbury on 22nd September.

Do the birds from Rainham Marshes disperse in late winter to the east along the Thames, so explaining the increase at Vange? The zero return in January at Fingringhoe Mill is probably due to lack of observer coverage as once the species was discovered there in early February, observer coverage increased significantly. The pattern of occurrence at Holland Haven is strongly suggestive of passage through the site in early spring; how many birds involved is clearly impossible to say.

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 63 sites (75 in 2018) spread widely around the coast and estuaries. Counts of five or more (site maxima in each case) came from seven sites: The Naze, seven on 23rd January; Colne Point, 18 on 20th January; St Osyth Stone, five on 28th January; Wivenhoe, ten on 23rd January; Fingringhoe Mill, seven on 6th February; Old Hall Marshes, ten on 9th January; Coalhouse Fort East Tilbury, six on 26th February; Rainham Marshes, 16 on 10th January.

The only April records were four at Langham on 5th and one at Rainham Marshes on 12th, the former was the only inland record of the period, apart from one at King George V Reservoir on 30th March.

The first arrival of the autumn was one at Colne Point on 19th September with two at Hanningfield Reservoir on 21st (and another on 13th October); 14 presumed passage birds were noted passing Frinton-on-Sea during the autumn period, the peak count being five south in five hours on 19th October. Aside from Hanningfield, inland records came from; King George V Reservoir, one on 24th October; Wanstead Flats, one on 23rd October and three on 15th December.

Records during the second winter period came from a total of 50 sites with counts of five or more (site maxima in each case) coming from eight sites: Hamford Water, 14 on 3rd December; The Naze, six on 13th October; Colne Point, nine on 1st November; Old Hall Marshes, eight on 8th December; Bradwell Bird Observatory, five on 19th November, including one colour-ringed bird; Burnham-on-Crouch, seven on 6th November; Fleet Head Great Wakering, five on 27th December; Rainham Marshes, eight on 29th and 31st October.

COMMON CHAFFINCH *Fringilla coelebs gengleri/coelebs*

***F. c. gengleri* is an abundant but apparently declining resident whilst *F. c. coelebs* is a common passage migrant and winter visitor.**

Records came from around 250 locations in the breeding season of which 80 included some evidence of breeding and 19 included counts of five or more birds. Sites where there were at least five territories were: Great Holland Pits, 15 birds counted in a BBS square; Friday Wood Colchester, seven singing ♂♂; Ingatestone, 13 birds; Braintree and Bocking area (30 pairs, numbers reported to be stable); Foulness Island, 14 pairs; Bowers Marsh, 13 pairs; Vange Wick, six pairs; West Canvey Marsh, 13 pairs; Orsett Fen, nine birds; Belhus Woods Aveley, 11 ♂♂ on territory; Mardyke Valley Stifford-Aveley, 18 birds counted including at least eight territories. Chaffinch numbers are declining nationally and the BTO is running a survey to try to determine the cause. Evidence of breeding in future years will be valuable.

The first winter period saw 14 (11 in 2018) sites recording counts in excess of 50, eight of these being recorded as single flocks feeding in game cover, on Beech *Fagus sylvatica* mast or in Holly *Ilex aquifolium*. Six of these (three in 2018) involved three-figure counts: Hamford Water, 100 on 24th February; Paglesham Lagoon, 150 on 1st January and 150 again on 18th January; Mundon, 140+ on 29th January; Warren Pond Epping Forest, 100 on 12th February; Connaught Water Epping Forest, approximately 120 on 13th March.

Spring passage along the coast was strongest in March. At Frinton-on-Sea the highest count, on 23rd March, was of 1,761 in seven hours (1,379 during March 2018); also 172 were counted in half an hour on 18th March and three-figure counts were recorded on four other days, the latest being 141 on 9th April. At Holland Haven 121+ were noted on 21st March. At Bradwell Bird Observatory the highest count was 40 on 20th March (50 on 4th February in 2018).

The only late summer gathering of more than ten birds was 15 at Bradwell Bird Observatory on 18th September and again on 22nd September.

Autumn passage at Frinton-on-Sea was considerably lower than 2018 and 2017. Cumulative totals for the months were: September, 142 in 45.5 hours (30 in 15.5 hours in 2018); October, 813 in 94 hours (4,496 in 91 hours in 2018); November, 94 in 21.5 hours (267 in 33 hours in 2018). The total for the three months was 1,049 (4,793 in 2018 and 3,627 in 2017).

The largest day movement count was 159 in five hours at Frinton-on-Sea, significantly lower than the 1,948 in 5.75 hours on 6th October in 2018.

In October, away from Frinton-on-Sea, there were six sites (three in 2018) where three-figure counts were recorded: St Lawrence Bay, 100 on 13th October; Gunners Park Shoebury, 120 on 10th October; Ingrebourne Valley, 400 on 13th October; Dagenham Chase 100 on 15th October; Ardleigh Green, 250 on 22nd October; Wanstead Flats on five dates with the highest being 300 on 20th October.

November was very quiet with no three-figure counts. The only notable records were: Bradwell Bird Observatory, 50 on 17th November; St Lawrence area, 58 on the same day. In December, three sites recorded 50 or more (three in 2018): Fingringhoe Wick, on three occasions, 60 being the highest count on 21st December; Wakering Common, 60 on 2nd December; Holyfield Hall Farm 125 on 15th December and 200 on 28th December.

BRAMBLING *Fringilla montifringilla*

Uncommon passage migrant and winter visitor in variable numbers.

An above-average spring passage with numbers of 86 and 94 in March and April respectively, more than doubling those in 2018 (37 and 43). Autumn records were slightly below average with 135 recorded in the last quarter (298 in 2018) with the main concentration in October. Numbers were again typically low in winter.

Estimated monthly totals were:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Frinton-on-Sea	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	28	1	0
Elsewhere	11	3	86	94	0	0	0	0	0	87	8	11
Totals	11	3	86	94	0	0	0	0	0	115	9	11
Locations	7	3	22	18	0	0	0	0	0	24	7	6

The total count at Frinton of 29 was accumulated in 33 hours of observation over ten days with the highest count being just seven on 23rd October.

Of the 329 birds recorded in total for the year, 128 records were of three birds or less. Double-figure counts came from just four locations: Hanningfield Reservoir, 20 on 8th April; Connaught Water Epping Forest, separate records of 15 and 12 by different observers both on 6th April may have related to the same birds; Ongar Park Wood Epping Forest, 15 feeding under Hornbeam *Carpinus betulus* with Chaffinch on 23rd March; Hooks Marsh Waltham Abbey, 30 on 22nd March. The highest autumn count away from Frinton-on-Sea came from Gunners Park Shoebury, six on 10th October which comprised birds amongst flocks of European Goldfinch and Common Chaffinch.

The last bird of the spring was at Hazeleigh Wood on 21st April with the first returning bird at Walthamstow Wetlands on 5th October.

HAWFINCH *Coccothraustes coccothraustes coccothraustes* UK REX

Extremely rare, perhaps extinct, resident; rare passage migrant and winter visitor. Major influx autumn/winter 2017/18.

Walthamstow Marshes	Two	6th January
Whitehall Plain Epping Forest	One	1st February
Wanstead Park	One	2nd February
Warren Wood Epping Forest	One	13th February
Frinton-on-Sea	One	23rd March
The Naze	One	22nd April
Woodford Green	One	28th October
Chafford Hundred Grays	One	30th October
Chafford Gorges Grays	One	6th November

As expected, there was no repeat of the remarkable influx of the 2017/18 winter.

The Epping Forest and Buckhurst Hill sites are close by so just one bird may have been involved in the two sightings.

The complete lack of records in suitable habitat in the breeding season suggests that the species could now been lost as a breeding species, a poignant moment to point out that Hawfinch was first confirmed to be breeding in Britain in Essex in Epping Forest during the 1830s.

EURASIAN BULLFINCH *Pyrrula pyrrula*

Bullfinch *Pyrrula pyrrula pileata*

UK REX

Declining resident.

Records came from around 98 locations (110 in 2018) during the breeding season. These were distributed throughout the County although there were no confirmed breeding records for this elusive species. Two or more birds were counted at 75 locations, with pairs noted at 22. Four pairs were reported in the Braintree and Bocking area (numbers stable) where family parties were seen whilst three pairs were reported at Chigborough Lakes. Sites at which at least two pairs/territories were recorded were: Kelvedon (including Braxted Park); Bures; Fingringhoe Wick; Wrabness; Wanstead Park; Thorndon Park North; Ingatestone; Crowsheath Wood Downham.

The only late-summer count of note was seven at Fingringhoe Wick in mid-July. Distribution continues to be centred on mid and northern Essex with a few reliable sites in the south but there was a notable lack of records around Writtle and Danbury despite these areas having extensive woodland.

In the first winter, records came from 107 locations with almost half of these reports being of single birds. Counts of five or more came from 11 locations (13 locations in 2018). The most notable was nine at Wrabness on 3rd February.

In the second winter, 105 records came from 58 locations although only 46 were of more than one bird. Counts of five or more came from three sites (two in 2018): Mole Hall Widdington, six on 17th November; Leez Reservoir Hartford End, six on 1st December; Chigborough Lakes, where five or more were recorded on five dates in October, the highest count being ten (six in 2018) on 22nd October.

Evidence of possible inward autumn migration on the coast was limited to: The Naze, one, 28th October and a very confiding individual on 30th October; a calling, high-flying, ♀ at Gunners Park Shoebury on 16th November.

COMMON ROSEFINCH *Carpodacus erythrinus erythrinus*

Vagrant.

EBSIP (16, 3, 19)

The Naze	1st summer ♂	31st May	DSt

Still surprisingly scarce in Essex, this is the first since 2016 and only the sixth since 2000. The Naze has recorded far more than any other site accounting for eight (42%) of the 19 records, although the last one there was as long ago as 27th October 2001 (an immature). Foulness Island and Bradwell Bird Observatory, with two apiece, are the only other sites to have recorded more than one bird.

Monthly distribution of all records has been:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Totals	0	0	0	0	2	2	1	2	9	2	1	0

EUROPEAN GREENFINCH *Chloris chloris chloris*

Common but recently declined resident and passage migrant.

Between April and June 521 records (709 in 2018) were received from around 174 sites (180 in 2018). Counts of five or more ♂♂ holding territory were: ten at West Canvey Marsh; ten at Lamarsh, where the species' population was reported to be steady in recent years; Bures, five; Belchamp

Water, five. As with many finches, this bird has a long breeding season and there were also records of ♂♂ holding territory on 1st March at Pebmarsh, six; Twinstead, seven; Great Henny, seven. There was an interesting record of a juvenile bird at Benfleet on 16th February.
Post breeding season, there were double-figure counts at seven locations (eight in 2018). The highest count was 50 at Wanstead Flats on 3rd September. Other counts of more than 12 were: 20 at Bradwell Bird Observatory on 22nd September; 18 at Brook Farm Upminster on 8th September; 18 at Bonnetts Wood Corbets Tey on 12th September.

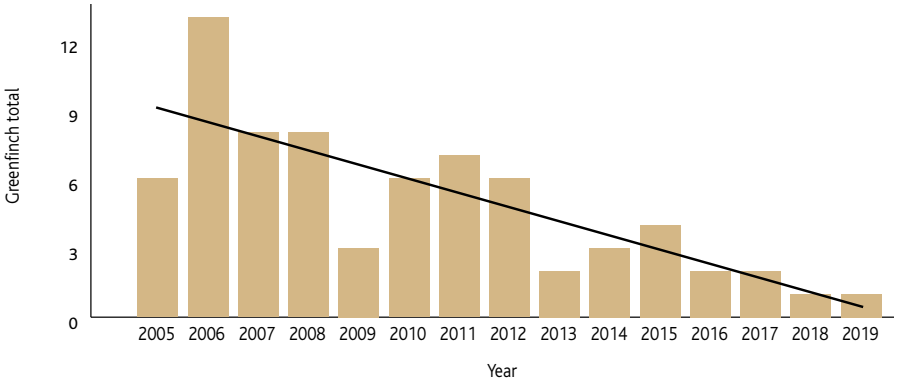
During the first winter period, records were widespread (198 locations), but most observations were of small numbers. There was only one count of more than 50 birds which was a pre-roost gathering of 70 at Southend Airport on 18th January, (significantly less than the highest count of 120 at Priory Park Southend-on-Sea, in January 2018). Other counts of 20 or more came from: West Mersea, 30 on 28th January; St Lawrence area, 20 on 20th January; Hadleigh Downs, 20 on 14th January.

The only evidence of spring migration was at Frinton-on-Sea: six heading north in one hour on 17th February and 26 heading the same direction on 23rd March in seven hours. Autumn passage was light with the only records of 20 or more being at: Colne Point, 20 on 15th October; 32 flying south past Frinton-on-Sea on 17th October; 24 in six groups heading west from Colne Point also on 17th October; 20 flying south west from Gunners Park Shoebury on 27th October.

Double-figure counts during the autumn/ second winter came from just 11 other sites, the most notable being 30 around feeders in a Billericay garden on 28th December and 22 at Rainham Marshes on 17th October.

The decline of this once abundant species, as a breeding bird, resident and winter visitor, continues.

Number of sites recording winter flocks of 50+ Greenfinch:



TWITE *Linaria flavirostris pipilans/flavirostris* UK

Both sub-species are very rare passage migrants and winter visitors.

A welcome return of small numbers of wintering birds after only one bird was recorded in 2018.
In the first winter one was in a flock of Linnet at Fingringhoe Wick on 5th-6th January. From the East Tilbury area, including Coalhouse Fort, 15 records were received of up to four birds from 16th February to 24th March whilst there was one at Holland Haven on 11th January.
The first record of the autumn was one at Blue House Farm on 10th October. Three were seen at Frinton-on-Sea in five hours of observation going south-west on 19th October.

In the second winter, a flock of up to 28 birds was seen at Bradwell Bird Observatory on 18th December, followed by 18 on 26th December and 26 on 29th December. This is the largest flock since 30 were noted in Hamford Water on 25th December 2014. From East Tilbury area, including Coalhouse Fort, five records were received of 1-3 birds from 24th November to 29th December.

Estimated monthly totals were:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Totals	1	5	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	4	2	31
Locations	1	2	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	1	2

COMMON LINNET *Linaria cannabina cannabina*

UK REX

Common but declined resident and passage migrant.

In the breeding season records came from 182 locations (about 186 in 2018, similar to 2017). Counts of five or more pairs on breeding territories came from: Cattawade Marshes/The Splodge, five; Tollesbury Wick, five; Wallasea Island, eight; Foulness Island, 21; Rainham Marshes, 56 (58 in 2018); Henny Street, five; Great Yeldham, seven; Wormingford, where four families and four pairs were counted on 18th July; Braintree and Bocking area, five (where numbers were reported to be stable); Epping, five (reported as an increase in recent years).

With the species having a long breeding season and being mobile in small flocks or family parties before and after breeding, it can be difficult to record breeding trends. Annual surveys such as that carried out at Rainham Marshes and on Breeding Bird Survey plots are important in monitoring whether numbers of this declining species numbers have now stabilised.

Other significant counts in the latter part of the breeding season, May-July, came from St Lawrence Bay area, 28 on 19th May and 47 on 16th June; Mountnessing area, 26 on 13th June.

During the first winter, three-figure counts came from nine sites (five in 2018): Fingringhoe Wick, 100 on 2nd January; Holland Haven 150 on 17th March and 140 in adjoining fields on the same date by a different observer; Bulmer, 100 on 13th February; Pebmarsh 150 on 5th March; Belchamp Walter, 100 on 13th February; Boxted, 100 on 19th February; Broomhouse Flash Langham, 150 on 6th January; Great Tey, 130 on 19th January; East Hanningfield, 100 on 11th January. Interestingly, these are all different sites to those where three-figure counts were reported in 2018.

At Frinton-on-Sea, late winter/early spring counts were: March, 61 in 14.5 hours; April, 327 in 20 hours; May, 56 in 8.5 hours (much lighter than in 2018 when the counts were 63, 661 and 296 respectively). The peak count was 99 moving north in three hours on 22nd April. The only other counts of 50 or more in April were: Blue House Farm, 65 on 14th April; St Lawrence area, 59 on 21st April.

Post-breeding flocks built up from 31st July when 250 were counted at The Strood West Mersea. This was one of six sites (three in 2018) where there were three-figures counts, all coastal or tidal river areas. The highest counts at the other sites were: Wivenhoe, 150 on 25th September; Frinton-on-Sea, 125 in two hours on 30th September; Colne Point, 200 on 10th September; Wallasea Island, 150 on 31st August and 27th September; Rainham Marshes 150 on 30th August.

Passage at Frinton-on-Sea was notable only during mid-October with a peak of 1,243 on 17th and 981 on 19th. The total for the three months September-November was 3,705, much higher than in recent years (720 in 2018, 1,653 in 2017 and 1,121 in 2016).

Numbers of Common Linnet at Frinton-on-Sea during late summer/ autumn:

	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov
Number of hours of observation	8	23.5	69.5	15
Highest day count (date)	14 (21st)	125 (30th)	1,243 (17th)	35 (3rd)
Total	35	216	3,413	76

During the autumn/ second winter period three-figure counts came from nine other sites (three in 2018).

Passage was also noted in October at Holland Haven, where the principal counts were: 129 on 3rd; 100 on 10th; 1,000+ on 17th; 400+ on 19th. The latter two dates coincided with the highest counts at Frinton-on-Sea.

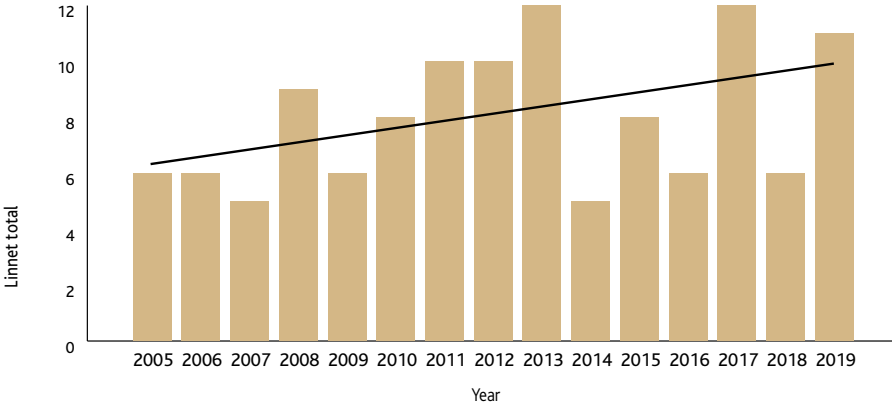
Passage was also observed at Colne Point.

Numbers of Common Linnet at Colne Point during late summer/ autumn:

	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov
No. of days of observations	14	21	17	6
Highest count	115	200	192	30
Average daily count	38	52	52	11

Other sites reporting three-figure counts were: St Lawrence area, 100 on 17th November; Wallasea Island 200 on 15th October; Gunners Park Shoebury, 160 on 8th October moving south and 180 on 10th October moving south-west; Broomhouse Flash Langham 120 on 23rd December; Wormingford Airfield, 200 on 15th October; Abberton Reservoir, 100 on 4th December; Good Easter, 195 on 6th October.

Number of sites recording three-figure wintering flocks of Linnet were:



The generally upward trend in wintering numbers continues.

COMMON REDPOLL *Acanthis flammea flammea*

UK

Scarce passage migrant and winter visitor in variable numbers.

EBSIP

Fishers Green Holyfield	One	16th March	ASt

The only record of the year, this one was photographed in a flock of Lesser Redpoll.

LESSER REDPOLL *Acanthis cabaret*

UK REX

Formerly resident, now a scarce and decreasing passage migrant and winter visitor.

A poor year: totals were far lower than in 2018 (itself a relatively poor year) in both winters. In the first winter (January- March), 258 were counted in total (612 in 2018) comprising 57 records from 41 locations. Double-figure counts came from just seven locations (seven in 2018): Wivenhoe, 20 on 16th February; Fingringhoe Wick, 12 on 13th February feeding in birch trees; Ardleigh Reservoir, 13 on 13th February; Gosfield, 32 on 10th March; Little Burstead, 17 on 18th February; Ingrebourne Valley, 11 on 31st January and 12 on 6th February; Sewardstone Marsh, 14 on 11th January.

Apart from five redpoll north at Frinton-onSea 24th March, none of the records received indicated any discernible spring passage along the coast.

The first birds of autumn were three at Hangman's Wood Little Thurrock on 6th September. In the autumn/second winter, 123 birds were counted (433 in 2018) comprising 24 records from 19 locations. The only double-figure counts came from four sites (four in 2018): Frinton-on-Sea, a very poor autumn passage with a total of 43 redpoll sp. south between 15th October and 17th November

with peaks of 18 on 17th October and 16 on 17th November; Fingringhoe Wick 13 on 23rd November; Rochford Golf Course, a single flock of 25 on 20th October; Brentwood, 30 or more flying around birch trees in the town centre on 21st November; Twinstead, 15 on 19th November, again in birch trees.

Estimated monthly totals, including redpoll sp., were:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Totals	72	129	80	16	1	0	0	0	5	72	91	4

RED CROSSBILL *Loxia curvirostra curvirostra*

Has bred. Irregular visitor in very variable numbers.

Ardleigh Green	Three	24th May
Colchester	One	29th June
Frinton-on-Sea	Three in six hours	28th July
Burnham-on-Crouch	One	13th September
Thorndon Park South	One	14th September
Bonnetts Wood Corbets Tey	Two	28th October
Romford	Six	30th December

Another quiet year, with just seven records totaling 17 birds.

EUROPEAN GOLDFINCH *Carduelis carduelis britannica*

Common but declined resident and passage migrant.

Records in the breeding season came from 282 sites (270 in 2018). Breeding was confirmed at 13 sites and was probable or possible at a further 67. The long breeding season was evident from records: the first nest record was at Colne Point on 16th April and the latest record of recently fledged birds was at Warren Gorge Chafford Hundred on 25th July, and a grounded fledged youngster was rescued from under the feet of shoppers in Basildon Town Centre on 24th July. In the Braintree and Bocking area, where the species is reported to be increasing, 20 pairs were recorded with several family parties seen in the summer. In total 38 territories were noted at Rainham Marshes and 17 at West Canvey Marsh. A total of 25 birds was counted in the St Lawrence area on 16th June and a flock of 20 on 13th June near Buttsbury Wash Ingatestone included some juvenile birds.

During the first winter, records came from 285 locations. There were counts of 50 or more birds from six locations (three in 2018): Gunners Park Shoebury, 50 on 23rd March; Thurrock Thameside Mucking, 50 on 5th January; Great Braxted, 65 on 5th February; Langdon Hills Plotlands, 50 on 5th January; Wanstead Flats, 60 on 16th February; King George V Reservoir, 100 on 6th January. There was an interesting garden record of 36 from South Benfleet on 10th February.

Spring passage at Frinton-on-Sea was less evident than last year: five going north in seven hours on 23rd March; 66 going north in ten hours over four dates (135 on five dates in 2018) in April; 11 over two dates in early May. Small flocks lingered into early spring with counts of 20 or more in May coming from: Ingatestone, 25 on 4th May; Orsett Fen, 23 feeding on spilt grain on 7th May; High Beach Epping Forest, 21 on 19th May.

Post breeding, the first flock of 50 or more was at Alresford on 24th July. In August, 11 locations produced counts of 50 or more, five of which were three-figures: Alresford, a flock of 150 around farmland on 8th August and 100 on 17th August; Wivenhoe to Alresford, 200 on 16th August; Ingrebourne Valley, 100 on 21st August; Wrabness, 100 on 24th August. In September counts of 50 or more came from ten locations, including three in three-figures: Frinton-on-Sea, 100 flying south in two hours on 30th September (see further below); Abberton Reservoir, 120 on 8th September; Rainham Marshes, 200 on 12th September.

During the autumn three-figure movements were recorded at nine locations (11 in 2018). Movement past Frinton-on-Sea were comparable with the record passage year of 2017 after the subdued passage of 2018. Four-figure counts occurred on five dates in October (none in 2018, six in 2017).

Numbers of European Goldfinch counted at Frinton-on-Sea during late summer/ autumn:

	September	October	November
No. of hours observations	8	97	33.5
Highest day count	100 (30th)	4,475(17th)	100(2nd)
Month total	172	15,457	785
Month total 2018	16	2,512	606
Month total 2017	978	17,269	925

Numbers were regularly recorded at Colne Point throughout the late summer and autumn. The highest (and only four-figure) daily count was 1,019 on 15th October, comprising 54 flocks passing over in a period of just 2.5 hours. Three-figure counts were: 317 on 8th October comprising several small flocks heading west; 128 on 16th October and 653 on 17th October in 30 small flocks.

Numbers of European Goldfinch counted at Colne Point, late summer/ autumn

	September	October	November	December
No. of days of counts	26	28	15	9
Highest day count	c40 (17th)	1,019 (15th)	c35 (16th)	15 (21st)
Average count per day	8	93	6	4
Month total	217	2,600	86	35

Other three-figure counts of passage birds at coastal locations, all in October, were: The Naze, 180 on 7th and 120 on 19th; Holland Haven, 112 on 3rd, 150 on 10th, 500+ on 17th and 1,500+ on 19th; Gunners Park Shoebury, a conservative estimate of 1,800 flying south-west on 10th and 150 on 27th, also seen flying south-west; Shoebury East Beach, 150 on 20th October. Three-figure counts were also noted, again all in October, at: Rainham Marshes, 120 on 20th; Abberton Reservoir, 200+ in two flocks on 15th; King George V Reservoir, 150 on 21st.

Aside from Frinton-on-Sea, there were no three-figure counts during November with the highest being 76 at Thurrock Thameside Mucking on 26th and 68 at Gunpowder Park Waltham Abbey on 21st.

Of 186 records submitted during December only 32 counts were in double-figures, the highest being: Tilbury, 50 on 5th December; West Thurrock Marshes, 40 on 31st December; Sewardstone Marsh, 41 on 23rd December (two sites recorded 60 in 2018). This is in line with a continued trend of declining wintering totals.

EUROPEAN SERIN *Serinus serinus*

Rare passage migrant. **EBSIP (14, 23, 37)**

Bradwell Bird Observatory	Singing ♂	27th March	mo
Clacton-on-Sea	One	5th April	LRo, PRo

Surprisingly, the first record for Bradwell Bird Observatory. Aside from the remarkable run of records at Rainham from 2008-2010, Gunners Park Shoebury has recorded five, Frinton-on-Sea, three and The Naze two with all other sites recording single birds, including five inland sites.

Annual totals over the last decade have been:

	2019	2018	2017	2016	2015	2014	2013	2012	2011	2010	Average
Totals	2	4	1	2	2	0	0	0	1	0	1.20

EURASIAN SISKIN *Spinus spinus*

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

For the third consecutive year, there were no records of breeding.

In the first winter, 127 records were received from 71 locations, 31 being double-figure counts. The only two flocks of more than 50 were noted in early January: a mobile flock of 60 around Beeleigh and Langford, 10th January; 70+ in Norsey Wood Billericay on 7th January.

Late winter/ early spring passage at Frinton-on-Sea was recorded on 11 days from 22nd February to 12th April and was very light. All counts were in single-figures except 46 going north in seven hours on 23rd March and ten in 3.5 hours on 27th March. The last bird of the spring was at The Naze on 19th April.

Post breeding, the species was slow to arrive, with two south past Frinton-on-Sea on 22nd June and a single bird at Old Hall Marshes on 6th July. August records were: one at Beckton on 1st; three at Frinton-on-Sea on 2nd; three at Thorpe-le-Soken on 4th. In September just eight were seen at coastal sites: Frinton-on-Sea (five on three dates); The Naze (one on 17th); Holland Haven (two on 30th). Additionally, five were inland, at Brook Farm Upminster, on 30th.

Autumn passage at Frinton-on-Sea was light. In October a total of 308 (688 in 2018) was counted in 35 hours, most of these (204 in five hours) being seen on 15th. In November passage dropped off with just 12 (55 in 2018) counted, 11 of these on 3rd. At Bradwell Bird Observatory, 80, in two flocks of 60 and 20, were noted on 20th October.

Elsewhere in autumn/ early winter records were received from 36 locations. Only six of these reports were in double-figures: Fingringhoe Wick, ten on 13th November, Wigboro Wick Farm St Osyth, 24 on 13th October; Thorndon Park North and Thorndon Park South, ten each on 7th December; Hall Marsh Scrape Waltham Abbey, ten on 10th December; Cornmill Meadows Waltham Abbey, ten on 14th December. Overall, second winter numbers were very low as shown by the estimated monthly totals:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Coast*	1	20	111	8	0	2	0	3	8	473	44	0
Inland	433	199	105	4	0	0	1	4	7	34	23	21
Totals	434	219	216	12	0	2	1	7	15	507	77	21

*Includes all records within 1km of the coast or estuaries.

LAPLAND LONGSPUR *Calcarius lapponicus lapponicus* (Lapland Bunting) UK

Increasingly scarce passage migrant and winter visitor.

The Naze	One	20th September
Wigboro Wick Farm St Osyth	One	21st September
Holland Haven	One	28th September
Frinton-on-Sea	One south	2nd October

Always prone to fluctuations, this was a better year than 2018 (one record), but still a poor one.

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.**

Apart from one at The Naze on 23rd January, the only site to record the species in the first winter was the traditional Jaywick/Seawick/Colne Point length of coast which held a maximum of ten on 11th January, compared to a peak of 14 in 2017/18. Seven were present still on 6th February with the last record being of two on 11th February.

The first bird of the second winter was one at Stone Point The Naze on 10th October, with the next being singles at both Jaywick and East Mersea on 27th October with the only other October record a single at St Osyth Beach on 30th. Thereafter, birds were reported from six locations during November and December, with by far the largest numbers being found at The Naze and up to Stone Point which also commuted across to Horsey Island. The first birds were found on 16th November when there were 13, with 16 being noted on 30th November and 3rd December but declining thereafter, with 10-11 present in the last few days of the year. The only other site to hold more than two was Colne Point, where the first bird was noted on 17th and 18th November before the next record of five on 7th December with two still present on 30th. Elsewhere singles, unless stated otherwise, were present at: Frinton-on-Sea, two on 29th November, assumed same as Holland birds; Holland Haven on 4th and 28th November with two on 1st and one on 4th December; Bradwell Bird Observatory on 6th November; Rainham Marshes on 1st and 19th-20th November.

Estimated monthly totals were:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Totals	11	7	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	22	23
Locations	2	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	5	3

CORN BUNTING *Emberiza calandra calandra*

UK REX

Declining resident.

Reports of 233 singing ♂♂ or pairs (164+ in 2018) likely to have been involved in breeding came from 30 sites. Distribution remains concentrated in the south-east of the County with smaller numbers in the north-east and also in the north of Essex towards the Suffolk border. All counts are given, with last year's counts, if available, in brackets: Wormingford, 11 (11); The Naze, one; Kirby Cross, two (three); Great Holland area, five; Colne Point, two (3+); West Mersea, one; Abberton Reservoir, eight (ten); Old Hall Marshes, one; Tolleshunt d'Arcy, one (one); Hazeleigh/Purleigh, one (two); Mayland Creek, five; Bradwell Bird Observatory, five (nine); Burnham-on-Crouch area, 14; Blue House Farm/Althorne, seven; Barleylands Billericay, one; Stow Marshes South Woodham Ferrers, five (two); Great Stambridge, one (two); Lower Raypits Canewdon, two; Paglesham East End, two (two); Wallasea Island, 124 (48); Foulness Island, 12 (17); Wakering Stairs, one (four); West Canvey, eight (one); Bowers Marsh, two (10+); Vange Wick, one; Thurrock Thameside Mucking, two (one); Cely Woods Aveley, one; Rainham Marshes, two (two).

For comment on the notable increase on Wallasea Island, please see the comment under Skylark on page 137.

Double-figure counts came from a total of 21 sites in the first winter with counts of 50+ coming from six, where the maxima were: Colne Point, 82 on 19th January; Abberton Reservoir, 60 on 13th February; Burnham-on-Crouch, 82 on 12th February; Wallasea Island, 100 on 5th January; Foulness Island, 149 on 20th January; Coalhouse Fort East Tilbury, 60 on 13th February.

Late summer flocks were fewer this year with the largest being 57 on 4th August at Fleet Head Great Wakering.

In the autumn and second winter period double-figure counts came from 16 localities with counts of 50+ from three where the maxima were: Copt Hall Marshes, 60 on 1st October; Stow Marshes South Woodham Ferrers, 100 to roost on 23rd December; Wallasea Island, 150 in wild bird cover on 23rd and 25th December.

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 probable/possible/confirmed breeding were received from 65 sites involving around 198 singing ♂♂/territories/pairs (189 at 58 sites in 2018). Sites with more than two singing ♂♂/territories/pairs, with last year's figures, if available, in brackets were: Ridgewell, 11 (13); Hickford Hill Clare, four; Belchamp Otten, four; Belchamp Walter, 15; Henny Street, seven (six); Liston, four; Borley, three; Twinstead, four; Lamarsh, eight (six); Mount Bures, eight (four); Wormingford, 21 (23); Boxted, four; Langham, three; Fordham, 14 (11); The Hythe Colchester, three; Tumbler's Green Stisted, three; Braintree and Bocking area, three (five); Great Notley, three; Stebbing, three; Tye Hall Farm Roxwell, four (six); part Mountnessing parish, five; Orsett Fen, seven (ten).

During the first winter period double-figure counts were reported from 22 sites with more than 20 birds at seven sites where the maxima were: Thaxted, 50 on 12th January; Bulmer, 28 on 13th February; Pebmarsh, 25 on 5th March; Scrip's Lane Coggeshall, 30 on 10th March; Docura's Farm Little Horkesley, 30 on 5th February; Ridgnalls Great Horkesley, 40 on 19th February; Leez Reservoir/Priory Hartford End, 60 on 1st February.

Small double-figure flocks continued to be recorded into April, with only counts of 28 on 5th and 25 on 19th April at Sunnymead Farm Wivenhoe being more than 20.

Likely migrants are rarely recorded but one north at Frinton-on-Sea on 27th March possibly falls in this category.

Birds began to flock again by mid-August with 20 noted at Wormingford on 22nd August. In total, double-figure counts were reported from 17 sites during the autumn and second winter period with counts of more than 20 birds coming from six where the maxima were: Holyfield Hall Farm, 26 on 15th December; Mole Hall Farm Widdington, 34 on 17th October; Alphamstone/Lamarsh, 60 on 19th November; Wormingford, 30 on 15th October; Kelvedon/Braxted Park, 30 on 15th December; Leez Priory Hartford End, 40 on 10th December.

ORTOLAN BUNTING *Emberiza hortulana*

Rare passage migrant. EBSIP (24, 7, 31)

Abberton Reservoir	Adult ♂	22nd-25th April	SHu
Chafford Hundred Grays	One	9th September	DDL

The Abberton bird was seen by many observers and was the first spring bird since one at Bradwell Bird Observatory on 14th May 1997, and hence a rare opportunity for Essex birders to see the species in fresh spring plumage. It was also the first record for the Reservoir.

The second bird was logged overnight during nocturnal migration recording.

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 71 sites involving around 388 singing ♂♂/territories/pairs (76 sites and 323 in 2018). Sites with more than four singing ♂♂/territories/pairs with last year's figures, if available, in brackets, were: Cattawade, 14 (seven); The Naze, six; Broomhouse Flash Langham, seven (six); Great Notley, five; Old Hall Marshes, 20+ (ten); Tollesbury Wick, 18; Mayland Creek, five; Blue House Farm, five; Wallasea Island, 79 (61); Foulness Island, 21 (23); West Canvey/Canvey Wick, 12; Bowers Marsh, 20 (12); Orsett Fen, five (six); Rainham Marshes, 50 (54); Theydon Bois area, six. Not included in the above figures is a count of 36 birds along the reed-filled borrowdyke system between St Lawrence and Marshhouse Dengie on 16th June, as it is uncertain how many represented ♂♂/breeding pairs, but it emphasizes the importance of this breeding habitat to the species.

For comment on the steady increase on Wallasea Island, please see the comment under Skylark on page 137.

During the first winter period, double-figure counts were reported from 30 sites with counts of more than 20 from ten where the maxima were: Docura's Farm Little Horkesley, 40 on 5th February; Broomhouse Flash Langham, 26 on 6th January; Ridgnalls Great Horkesley, 36 on 19th February; Fingringhoe Wick, 30 on 2nd January; Old Hall Marshes, 40 on 2nd January; St Lawrence to Marshhouse Dengie, 30 on 20th January; Wallasea Island, 25 on 20th February; Foulness Island, 36 on 20th January; Paglesham Lagoon, 40 on 18th January; Coalhouse Fort East Tilbury, 22 on 26th February.

Spring passage, during March and into April is often noted at inland sites with ♂♂ usually passing through. On the coast, this small movement was noted at Frinton-on-Sea where nine flew north in three hours on 26th March and six the same direction in 3.5 hours three days later. Double-figure counts at Old Hall Marshes, Heybridge, Rainham Marshes, Bowers Marsh during April may have comprised both individuals at breeding sites and on passage.

Double-figure counts were noted at several locations during August and September and are assumed to have involved local birds, although some movement may well be occurring through the County by this time.

Autumn saw a small movement passing Frinton-on-Sea involving 102 birds between 2nd October and 2nd November, with double-figure counts noted on four days in October, all south:17 in four hours on 1st; 13 in three hours on 12th; 22 in five hours on 17th; 21 in five hours on 19th. At the adjacent Holland Haven, 30 were noted on 17th October and ten on 16th October whilst further south at Gunners Park Shoebury, 45 flew south-west on 10th October. October double-figure counts from the Ingrebourne Valley, where the peak count was 30 on 7th, and Rainham Marshes where the peak count was 28 on 17th and increased numbers at several other coastal and inland locations also point to ongoing movements through the County.

During the second winter period double-figure counts came from ten locations with more than 20 reported from three sites where the maxima where: Abbotts Hall Farm, 80 on 21st November; St Lawrence to Marshhouse Dengie, 61 on 15th December; Ingrebourne Valley, 35 on 24th November.

APPENDIX I: Category D Species

RUDDY SHELDUCK *Tadorna ferruginea*

South-east Europe, central and south-east Asia.

The Naze	Three	20th July
Frinton-on-Sea	Six flew north in three hours	26th July
Horsey Island Hamford Water	Three	4th August
Abberton Reservoir	One	2nd July-2nd October
Abberton Reservoir	Two	12th July and 11th August
High Garrett	One	17th April
Hanningfield Reservoir	One	9th and 16th June
Boreham Gravel Pit	One	21st December

It is assumed that five of the six past Frinton-on-Sea on 26th July were subsequently seen heading west off Sheringham and then at Spurn over the following days. The arrival in July suggest an influx of the feral population that moults in The Netherlands in late summer. Perhaps 15 birds involved across the year.

See also hybrid ducks and geese below.

WOOD DUCK *Aix sponsa*

North America.

Hanningfield Reservoir	One	16th May

BUFFLEHEAD *Bucephala albeola*

North America.

Hanningfield Reservoir	♀	21st April	SSa, WSw

A first for the County, accepted by the British Birds Rarities Committee as a Category D record, for now....

APPENDIX II: Category E Species

BLACK SWAN *Cygnus atratus*

Australia and New Zealand.

There were again no reports of breeding.

A total of 123 reports was received throughout the year, mainly from the Stour Estuary area from Cattawade, east to Mistley where the maximum count was four. The maximum count at Abberton Reservoir, was three on 19th June. 1-2 were reported from the Lee Valley between 16th September and 17th November. Elsewhere, singles were reported from Audley End, West Mersea, Old Hall Marshes and the Colne Estuary. It is difficult to ascertain a population size but perhaps no more than 9-10 individuals

Annual totals over the last decade have been:

	2019	2018	2017	2016	2015	2014	2013	2012	2011	2010
Totals	9+	10+	8+	10+	12	3-4	11	11	9+	16+
Location	11	13	11	12	9	3	5	7	11	13

SWAN GOOSE *Anser cygnoides*

Northern China, Mongolia, and South-east Russia.

Abberton Reservoir	One	12th June
Abberton Reservoir	One	8th September
Hanningfield Reservoir	One	24th March-5th November

BAR-HEADED GOOSE *Anser indicus*

Central Asia.

Bowers Marsh	One	18th April
Rainham Marshes	One	8th and 30th December

MUSCOVY DUCK *Cairina moschata*

Central and South America.

Distillery Pond Colchester	2-3	16th January-17th April
Fishers Green Holyfield	One	10th May
Hainault Forest	One	14th June
Writtle	One	13th November
Thurrock Thameside Mucking	One	24th January

WHITE-CHEEKED PINTAIL *Anas bahamensis*

Caribbean and mainly central South America.

Cudmore Grove East Mersea	One	20th November
Bowers Marsh	One	3rd June

CINNAMON TEAL *Anas cyanoptera*

Western North America, Central America, and mainly western and southern South America.

Heybridge Gravel Pit	♂	7th-21st January

Presumably a straggler from the late 2018 'influx'!

GREATER SCAUP *Aythya marila*

Northern Hemisphere.

Beth Chatto Garden Elmstead Market	Two	24th May

HOODED MERGANSER *Laphodytes cucullatus*

North and Central America.

King George V Reservoir	Presumed escaped ♀	15th September-1st November
King George V Reservoir	Presumed escaped ♀	19th October

The long-staying female was apparently a returning individual. The second female had a deformed bill.

HYBRID DUCKS AND GEESE

Paglesham Lagoon	Tufted x Pochard	2nd January-2nd February
Bowers/Vange Marsh	Shoveler hybrid	13th April and 5th June
Rainham Marshes	Ruddy x Common Shelduck	21st June
Sewardstone Marsh	Tufted x Pochard	17th April
Thurrock Thameside Mucking	Tufted x Pochard	All year
Sewardstone Marsh	Shoveler x Gadwall	25th October and 23rd November

HARRIS'S HAWK *Parabuteo unicinctus*

South, Central and North America.

Witham	One	29th November

LANNER FALCON *Falco biarmicus*

Africa, Asia Minor and Southeast Europe.

Hanningfield Reservoir	One	20th January

HELMETED GUINEAFOWL *Numida Meleagris*

Southern Africa.

Galleywood Common	Up to 25	19th January-21st September

INDIAN PEAFOWL *Pavo cristatus*

South Asia.

Marks Hall Coggeshall	Singles	15th February-15th October
Epping Forest Burial Park	Two	11th April

The former location has a known, small, domesticated flock.

LAUGHING KOOKABURRA *Dacelo novaeguineae*

Australia.

Creekside Beckton	One	7th January

One of the more bizarre escapees to have occurred in Essex.

PIED CROW *Corvus albus*

Africa, south of the Sahara.

Holland Haven	One	24th March

This individual first arrived in the UK, at Beacon Ponds East Yorkshire on 13th June 2018 before spending a few weeks in Norfolk, then turning up in at Clevedon Bristol, then hopping to Pembrokeshire before returning to East Yorkshire at the end of July 2018 where it took up residence around Flamborough, before heading off again in March 2019, popping in to Essex then to East Sussex where it stayed until early April, turning up next in Cornwall before wandering back east along the South Coast, last being seen at Foreness Point Kent on 20th May 2019. It subsequently took up residence at Leeuwarden Friesland Netherlands where it was last reported on 20th March 2020. It just goes to show how far an individual bird can wander...

BUDGERIGAR *Melopsittacus undulatus*
Australia.

Wanstead Park	One	1st September

ATLANTIC CANARY *Serinus canaria*
Macaronesian Islands.

Rainham Marshes	One	8th-9th August
Waltham Abbey	One	7th June

Escaped individuals of the domesticated form.

Unsubstantiated records

Black-tailed Godwit *limosa*	Rainham Marshes (up to eight)	23rd-28th June
Corncrake	Saffron Walden	31st July
Common Crane	Tollesbury Wick	28th April
Red Phalarope	Bradwell Bird Observatory	15th September
Roseate Tern	Rainham Marshes (two)	5th May
Iceland Gull	West Mersea	15th November
Iceland Gull	Beckton	5th October
Iceland Gull	Holland Haven	15th November
Iceland Gull	Creekmouth Barking	30th December
Long-tailed Skua	Canvey Point	22nd September
Sooty Shearwater	Purfleet	11th August
Black Stork	Rushes Lock Ulting	29th June
European Honey Buzzard	Bedfords Park, Havering-atte-Bower	18th May
Montagu's Harrier	Old Hall Marshes	26th August
Eurasian Hoopoe	Gallions Reach Beckton	24th March
Eurasian Wryneck	Bowers Marsh	18th May
Eurasian Wryneck	Walthamstow Marshes	28th August
Woodlark	Leyton Flats	13th February
Woodlark	Gallions Reach Beckton	21st September
Woodlark	Chingford Plain	30th September
Woodlark	Wanstead Flats	23rd October
Great Grey Shrike	Basildon	24th January
Siberian Chiffchaff	Mollands Lane Pits South Ockendon	11th February
Siberian Chiffchaff	Sewardstone Marsh	6th November
Siberian Chiffchaff	Rainham Marshes	30th November
Siberian Chiffchaff	Creekmouth Barking	9th December
Richard's Pipit	Rainham Marshes	3rd-4th November

List of Observers

mo = many observers

Acfield, D (DAc)
Adams, I
Agar, J
Aguera, S
Albanese, C
Allen, A
Allen, C
Allen, D
Allen, H (HAl)
Allen, R (RAl)
Anderson, S
Andersson, M
Andrews, D (DAn)
Andrews, J
Andrews, S
Antolik, E
Antram, F
Archer, J
Arinto, L
Arlow, S
Armand, T
Armstrong, A
Arnold, J
Arrowsmith, W
Astley, J
Atkins, C (CAt)
Attiwell, J
Auld, D
Austin, D
Austin, M
Austin, T
Avery, J
Avery, M
Avis, B
Avis, D
Aylward, J
Aylward, P
Aylward, S
Bacon, G
Bacon, M
Bacon, S
Baer, A
Baggott, R
Bagwill, A
Bailey, A
Bailey, S
Baines, C
Baker, G
Baker, P (PBa)
Baker, R
Balchin, C (CBa)
Baldock, A
Baldwin, C
Ball, P
Balmer, D
Balstone, N
Banks, S
Bannister, H
Barber, L
Barbour, J
Barclay, A
Barker, A
Barker, J
Barlow, E
Barnes, C
Barnes, R (RBa)
Barrett, B
Barrett, D
Barry, L
Barry, S
Bartram, C
Bater, S
Bates, K
Bates, T
Batho, G
BBO
Beale, J
Beard, P
Beardmore, M
Beckett, S
Beischer, B
Belfield, S
Bell, A
Bell, T
Benson, S
Bentinck, P
Bertuzzo, M
Beswick, L
Betti, L
Bhatia, Z
Bibbings, E
Biggs, D
Birch, M
Bird, M
Birkett, J
Bishop, B
Bishop, Ben
Bissett, D
Blackman, R
Blackmore, K
Blade, J
Blake, T
Bleach, R
Blows, T
Bloys, I
Bloys, R
Blurton, D R
Bodini, L
Boersch-Supan, P
Boldick, T
Boldini, L (LBo)
Bollen, C
Bolton, Bri
Bongard, J
Bonsor, R
Bordoloi, J
Bournat, M
Bournat, O
Bourne, T (TBo)
Bowley , J
Bowley, J
Boxall, N
Boyes, G
Boyle, G
Bracey, E
Braddock, R
Bradfield, S
Bradhum, D
Bradley, S
Bradnum, B
Bradshaw, B
Bradshaw, D
Bradshaw, I
Bramble, C
Brannan, K
Braun, A
Bray, T
Brayshaw, P
Breaks, M
Bridges, M
Brierley, S
Bright, J
Bright, Jan
Brittain, P
Broadbent, I
Broadhead, J
Bromiley, D
Brooke, K
Brookes, C
Brookes, Chr
Brown, A
Brown, B
Brown, C
Brown, G
Brown, L
Brown, R
Brown, S
Brown, Ste
Brown, T
Brown, Ton
Brown, Tra
Bruce Barrett, B
Bruty, M
Buchanan, J (JBu)
Buck, S
Bufton, T
Bunting, B
Burfield, J
Burgess, R
Burgum, N
Burkett, D
Burnell, K
Burns Zaragoza, M
Burton, O
Busby, M
Butler, J
Butson, P
Cadera, J & J
Callahan, D
Calvert, I
Camp Colorado Big Year 2019
Camp, J
Camp, Jam
Campbell, J
Campbell, M
Campbell, T
Canham, T J
Canny, G
Carlos Albero, J
Carman, S
Carter, N
Cassell, J
Catchesides, M
Cattanach, I
Cattini, F
Chamberlain, P
Chambers, D
Chambers, N (NCh)
Chanter, B
Chapman, A
Chapman, B
Charles, P
Chippendale, S
Choudhry, S
Churches, B
Clark, F
Clark, J
Clarke, M
Clarke, T
Coates, P
Cockerell, W
Cockshutt, S
Coleman, M
Coleman, Mic
Colling, K
Collins, M
Collins, P
Collins, Phi
Colmans, J

Colson, R
Combes, B
Commons, A
Connor, S
Cook, C
Cook, K
Cook, R
Cooke, B
Cooke, J
Cooper, A
Cooper, B
Cooper, Ben
Cooper, G
Cooper, M
Cooper, S
Cope, R
Copleston, K
Copp, J
Coppard, G
Corbett, M
Cornwell, L
Corrigan, C
Cotten, G
Courtney, A
Cousins, R
Cowan, D
Cox, A
Cox, S (SCo)
Cracknell, M
Cresswell, M
Cripps, R
Croasdale, K
Croft, N
Cross, J
Cox, S (SCo)
Cracknell, M
Cresswell, M
Cripps, R
Croasdale, K
Croft, N
Cross, J
Cross, M
Cross, S
Crossley, M
Crozier, D
Crozier, R
Cullum, H
Cullum, S
Cumming, L
Cummins, T
Cunningham, M
Curle, D
Curson, L
Cyr, G
Dagley, J
Daniels, S
D'aranjo, L
Darnell, A
Darrell-Lambert, D (DDL)
Davidson, J
Davies, J W
Davies, L
Davies, M
Davis, C (CDa)
Davis, J & J
Davis, M
Davis, R
Davis, T
Davison, M
Dawson, D
Dawton, B
de Silva, J
Deane, G
Dear, L
Deegan, M
Delve, J
Dennis, R
Dent, A
Dent, D
Dent, J
Dent, M
DeSilva, J
Devereau, S
Dewsnap, I
Dhutta , A
Dickens, J
Dickinson, S
Dillon-Hooper, E
Dives, D
Dobbie, J
Dobson, A
Dodd, B
Dodd, N
Doe, B
Doe, J
Donovan, T
Drew, M
Drewitt, C
Ducat, A
Dudley, M
Duncan, K
Dunning, J
Dunstan, S
Dutton, S
Duxbury, A
Dwyer, P
Ebbs, L
Edge, C
Edney, A
Edwards, L
Edwards, Lee
Edwards, N
Ekins, G
ELBF
Ellam, C
Elmes, J-P
Elwell, S
Ely, J (JEl)
Emerson, C
Emery, B
Emmens, R
English, C
Enright, S
Entwistle, S (SEn)
Evans, C
Evans, D
Evans, I
Evans, L R G
Evans, M
Evans, R
Everingham, D
Everitt, J
Fadzrun, A
Fair, G
Fairley, M
Farrar, A
Farrell, C
Farrell-Morris, C
Farthing, C
Faulkner, T
Fell, J
Fellows, P
Fenton, J
Ferguson, J
Field, A
Field, J
Finch, P
Finn, P
Firmin, R
Fisher, H
Fisher, M
Fisher, R
Fisher, S (SFi)
Fisher, T
Fitzgerald, M
Fletcher, D
Fletcher, P
Flinn, G
Forbes, D
Ford, A
Forgham, J
Forster, T
Fox, S
Fradd, , T
Frampton, P
Francis, G J
Francis, P
Franks, S
Frost, T
Gales, A
Galton, J
Gannaway, C
Garrido, M
Gasquet Orradre, A
Gates, S J
Gatward, N M
Gibbons, M
Gibson, C
Gilbert Hanson, A
Gilbert, J
Gilbert, M
Gilbert, T
Gilson, V
Girdlestone, L
Given, Q
Glasgow, S
Goldsmith, N
Gomer, D
Goodey, A (AGy)
Goodey, B
Gooding, A (AGo)
Gooding, J
Gordon, T
Gorst, T
Goss, S
Gotts, D
Gough, B
Gouldstone, A (AGd)
Goultone, A
Gram, G
Graves, B
Gray, L
Gray, P
Gray, R
Grealy, M (MGr)
Green, I
Greenland, S
Greenway, S
Gregory, M
Gregory, S
Griggs, P (PGr)
Grimwade, S (SGr)
Grimwood, S
Gross, J
Gurr, P
Gymer, P
Hagge, A
Haines, B
Hale, D
Hale, M
Hall, R
Hall, Rob
Hallam, S
Halley-Frame, V
Halls, J
Halstead, H
Hamilton, S (SHa)
Hammatt, N
Hanfman, J
Hannam, J
Hansen, I

Harbott, A
Hardie, A
Harding, G
Hardwick, M
Hardy, K
Hare, M
Hargreaves, P
Harringay Birder
Harrington, J
Harrington, M
Harris, A
Harris, M
Harris, N
Harris, S
Harrison, D
Harrison, H
Harrison, L
Harrison, R
Hart, J
Hart, P
Hart, R
Hart, S
Hartwell, C
Harvey, S
Hashmi, A
Hassell, J
Hawes, C
Hawkins, P (PHa)
Haydon, R
Haynes, A
Hayward, T
Headley, J
Heal, J
Healey, S
Hearn, R. (RHe)
Heath, D
Heath, P
Heaton, R
Hedden, B
Hellicar, M
Henry, I
Henry, M
Henson, P (PHe)
Hewes, K
Hewitson, D
Hewstone, I
Heywood, J
Heywood, M
Hibbard, A
Hicks, R
Higginson, N
Hilliard, D
Hills, D
Hilton, A
Hoare, J
Hobson, R
Hodgson, J
Hodkinson, D
Hoit, M
Holden, D
Holden, M
Holding, A
Hollinshead, R
Hollocks, A
Holmes, A
Holt, M
Hooper, R
Hopgood, C
Hopkins, P
Houston, T
Howey, S
Howie, G
Hudgell, K
Huggins, S (SHg)
Huggins, V
Hughes, M
Hughes, S
Humble, J (JHu)
Hunting, S (SHu)
Hurley, J
Hurrell, J
Husband, B
Hutchings, E
Hutley, D
Huxley, L
Hyland, P
Iddon, M
Imber, E
Imbush, K
Inward, D
Jackson, A
Jackson, D
Jackson, F
Jackson, M
James, D
James, G (GJa)
James, G A
James, K
Jaques, L
Jefferey, A
Jeffree, D
Jeffries, P
Jeffs, P
Jellett, S
Jenner, B
Jennings, S
Jewels, A
Jobbins, D
Johnson, G
Johnson, M
Johnston, D
Jones, B
Jones, C
Jones, Chr
Jones, E
Jones, J
Jones, J F
Jones, M
Jones, P
Jones, R
Jones, S
Jordan, M
Jordan, T
Jupp, C
Kaestner, P
Kalli, G
Kallionaki, M
Karunanayake, K
Keane, D
Keeper, T
Keil, C
Keith, R
Kelly, R
Kelly, S
Kempa, M
Kennelly, A D
Kennelly, T
Kennerley, P
Keogh, N
Kerrigan, S
Keslake, I
Kiddier, N
Kim Chye, L
Kindon, S
King, G
King, P
Kingston, P
Kinnerman, J
Kinsler, V
Kirby, M
Kirkland, M
Knight, A
Knight, D
knight, M
Knightbridge, J
Kohler, M
Kortlandt, D
Laban, K
Lacey, H (HLa)
Laffling, M
Lamb, G
Lamb, J
Lambert, P
Lamsdell, C
Lane, C
Lane, M
Lanfear, J
Langwald, N
Large, C
Larkin, P
Last, A J
Law, A
Lawrence, B
Lawrence, L
Lay, N
Layfield, A
Leach, D
Lead, M
Leavett, R
Ledgerton, R J W
Lee, D C
Lee, S
Leeder, E
Lees, A
Leighton, R
Leonard, C
Leonard, Chr
Leonard, H
Leport, B
Lethbridge, J
Levy, S
Lewis, A
Lewis, C (CLe)
Lewis, J
Lewis, P
Lickfold, C
Lidington, A
Lilley, R
Limehouse, M
Lindsell, S
Lingard, R
Lister, P
Litchfield, A
Littlechild, B
Litvinoff, A
London Birder
Lonsdale, M (MLa)
Lopez, E
Lott, T
Loud, P (PLo)
Loveless, T
Lowe, T
Lucas , B
Lucas , N
Lune, A
LVRP
Lycett, I
Mackay, C
Mackenzie, A
Mackenzie-Grieve, C (CJM-G)
Madgwick, T
Maintz, M
Makwana, P
Malby, T
Manias, F
Mann, D
Marchant, J
Marsala, T
Marsay, K
Martin Lindsay, M
Martin, J

Martin, Jeff
Martin, R
Marylebone Birdwatching Society
Mason, J
Mason, T
Massey, A
Matthews, D
Maxwell, A
May, N
Mayes, S
McAvoy, S
McBridges, J
McCafferty, A
McCarthy, J
Mccarthy, M
McCartney, L
McCombe, J
McCracken, J
McCulloch, J
McDonald, H
McGilvray, K
McGough, D
McKay, P
Mckellar, C
McKenzie, D
McKerrell, R
McLaughlin, J
McManus, K
Meadows, A
Meadows, L
Meadows, M
Mee, G
Merchant, P (PMe)
Merryweather, A
Messenger, M
Micallef, T
Mickelsen, P
Middleton, A
Middleton, J
Miller, B
Mills, A
Minto, I (IMi)
Mitchell, D
Mitchell, M
Moll, N
Monckton, A
Monkhouse, J
Montgomerie, H
Moore, G
Moorhead, R
Moran, N
Morris, G
Morris, L
Morrison, D
Mortimer, J
Mortimer, N
Mortimer, W
Moss, B
Moss, C
Moss, L
Moulton, T
Moura, N
Mulholland, D
Mullins, A (AMu)
Mulqueen, S
Murphy, N
Murphy, R
Murray, K (KMu)
Mylett, T
Neave, R (RNe)
Nichols, S
Nick Webb, N
Nixon, S (SNi)
Noble, D
Noble, J
Norman, N
Norris, R
North, J
Nowers, M
Nunn, D
Nussbaumer, R
NW London Local Group
Oakes, G (GOa)
Oakman, R
O'Brian, T
O'Connor, F
O'Donoghue, R
O'Hanlon, J
Oliver, C
Orchard, M
Osborn, P
O'Sullivan, W
Outten, M
Owen, D
Owens, C
Packer, J
Padmore, M
Pallash, D
Palmer, J
Palmer, M
Pap, S
Parez , J
Park, N
Parkes, G
Parkinson, D
Parkinson, J
Parry-Davies, D
Partridge, J (JPa)
Partridge, T
Patel, S
Patient, S (SPa)
Patrick, C
Paul Jones, R
Peacock, S
Pearce, G
Pearson, A
Pease, R
Peck, M
Peck, T
Peers, M
Pell, E
Peppiatt, R
Perry, A
Perryman, H
Petrie, N
Petts, D
Philip Espin, P
Phillips, J
Phillips, M
Phillips, P
Piccolo, A
Piccolo, T
Pinch, J
Ping, D
Pinkham, R
Piotrowski, S
Platt, A
Platt, J
Plume, I
Pont, S
Poole, C
Popescu, A
Porter, S
Potter, J
Prewer, S
Price, G
Price, K (KPr)
Prideaux, R
Priestnall, S
Pritchard , M
Puttock, B
Pyrah, R
Radcliffe, S
Radford, P
Radford, Pet
Rae, A
Rafinski, A
Rafinski, T
Rankin, J
Raper, S
Rawlings, N
Rawlins, T
Rayner, I
Reed, B
Reed, S
Reeves, J
Reid, A
Retter, M
Reynolds, A
Richards, M
Richardson, D
Richardson, J
Richardson, R
Riddler, M
Ridley, M
Riffel, T
Rigby, P
Rimmell, M
Rios, R
Rivoire, J
Roberts, E
Roberts, J
Robertson, B
Robins, S
Robinson, E
Robinson-Ruffle, D
Robinson-Ruffle, J
Robson, C
Robson, I
Robson, Ire
Roker, L & R (LRo, PRo)
Rolf, J
Roman, E
Roper, P
Roscoe, A
Rose, I
Rose, P
RSPB
Rtveliashvili, O
Ruis, C
Rumsby, B
Rumsby, M
Rush, M
Russell, L
Rutherford, H
Rutt, P
Rutter, C
Ryland, G
Sabiniak, G
Salvidge, M
Sanford, S
Sapatsch, E
Satchell, SSa
Saul, C
Saville, D
Saward, J (JSa)
Saward, P
Saxton, S
Scammell, B
Scheibel, S
Schulze, C H
Scott , P
Scott, J
Scott, L
Seaton , C
Self, A
Shaw, A
Shayler, D
Shearring, A
Sheldon, R (RSh)
Shelley, S
Shepherd, D (DSh)
Shepherd, M (MSh)

Shepherd-Wells, M
Sheppard, A
Sherriff, R
Shields, C (CSh)
Shilland, E
Shippey, S
Shortis, J
Shutt, J
Shuttleworth, P
Simmonds, W
Simms, O
Simon, T
Simpson, D
Simpson, F (FSi)
Slee, J
Small, N (NSm)
Smart, Joh
Smethurst, A
Smith, D
Smith, D L
Smith, G
Smith, Gra (GSm)
Smith, J
Smith, K
Smith, M
Smith, Mar
Smith, N
Smith, Nev (NSm)
Smith, P
Smith, R
Smith, S
Smith, Stu
Snell, J
Soor, S
Speller, T
Spence, C
Spencer, J
Spensley, D
Spicer, N
Sproule, J
Stachnicki, T
Stallard, B
Standbridge, K
Standing, R
Steele, A (ASt)
Stephens, D
Stephens, R
Stephens, Ron
Stephens, W
Stewart, A
Stewart, G
Stewart, I
Stewart, N
Stiles, D (DSt)
Stone, B
Stratton, D
Street, F
Street, P
Stroud, A
Stuttle, C
Stylianou, J
Sumner, N
Sutherby, J (JSu)
Sutton, G
Swaby, S
Swann White, J
Swanson, I
Swift, W (WSw)
Swinglehurst , B
Swinney, E
Swinney, S
Szimuly, G
Talbot, N
Tanczuk, T
Tanner, A
Tanner, N
Tansey, R
Tarbin, I
Tarrant, M
Taylor, B
Taylor, C
Taylor, G
Taylor, J
Taylor, R
Taylor, S
Theobald, R
Thomas, A
Thomas, E
Thomas, G
Thomas, T
Thompson, L
Thompson, S
Thorneycroft, T
Thornton , B
Thornton , J
Thornton, P
Thorogood, D
Thorogood, J
Thorpe, S
Thrandon, B
Threadgold, D
Threadgold, P (PTh)
Tickle, S
Tietjen, A
Tiller, A
Toal, G
Todd, A
Tomey, S
Tordoff, A
Torrice, D
Tracey, M
Trektellen.org
Trevorrow, J
Tuba , A
Tuck, D
Tungate, C
Tunnicliffe, K
Turner, C (CTu)
Turner, N
Turner, P
Turton, M
Tweed, A (ATw)
Twells, G
Twinn, M
Tyas, C J
Tyler, D
Tyler, P
Underwood, D
Undrill, C
Upton, G
Urquhart, D (DUr)
Valdimarsson, S
Vale, M
Van Orsouw, A
Vaughan, B
Vaughan, H (HVa)
Vaughan, L
Vaughan, P
Venables, L
Verstraelen, H
Vinnell, E
Vyas, J
Wade, L
Wagstaff, D. (DWa)
Wakeford, P
Wakerling, V
Wallis, G
Walsh , A
Walsh, D
Walsh, J
Walsh, S
Walthamstow Birders
Walther , C
Wanstead Birders (WBi)
Ward, P
Warden, P
Wardman, M
Wasse, J
Watkins, J
Watling, Y
Watson, C
Watson, I
Watson, S
Webb, M
Webb, R
Welford, M
Wells, A
West, S
Westcott, E
Westcott, S
Weston, N
Wheeler, D
Wheeler, M
White, A-M
White, G
White, J
White, L
Whitelegg, D
Whiteley, D
Whiteman, A
Whiteman, P
Whitfield, D
Whitfield, J
Whitfield, M
Wild, P
Wilkins, P
Wilkinson, A
Wilkinson, D
Willett, J
Williams, M
Williamson, E
Williaon, E
Wilson, A
Wilson, And
Wilson, C
Wilson, J
Wilson, T
Winkworth, M
Winn, A
Winstanley, A
Wise, J
Wohlmuth, H
Womack, G
Wood, P
Wood, Pau
Wood, S D (SDW)
Woodcock, A
Woodhouse, A
Woodruff, M
Woodward, I
Woodward, L
Woodward, R
Woollard, S
Worsell, P
Worsfold, S
Worthington, T
Wright, C
Wright, J (JWr)
Wrycraft, D
Yankov, T
Young, B
Younger, A

Earliest and latest dates for Summer Visitors 2019

Species	Arrival Date	Location	Departure Date	Location
Garganey	24-Mar	Bowers Marsh	20-Oct	Old Hall Marshes
Common Swift	17-Apr	Langdon Hills Plotlands/ Wanstead Flats	03-Oct	Abberton Reservoir
Common Cuckoo	31-Mar	Great Burstead/Chigborough Lakes	05-Oct	Colchester
Turtle Dove	10-Apr	Hanningfield Reservoir	23-Sep	Holland Haven
Little Ringed Plover	02-Mar	East Tilbury	25-Sep	Hanningfield Reservoir
Whimbrel***	29-Mar	Bowers Marsh	23-Nov	Berechurch Colchester
Temminck's Stint	02-May	Blue House Farm	21-Jul	Hamford Water
Wood Sandpiper	19-Apr	Rainham Marshes	07-Oct	Rainham Marshes
Sandwich Tern	02-Mar	Frinton-on-Sea	05-Nov	Frinton-on-Sea
Little Tern	20-Apr	Frinton-on-Sea	23-Sep	West Mersea
Common Tern	23-Mar	Gallions Reach Beckton	18-Oct	Rainham Marshes
Arctic Tern	04-Apr	Abberton Reservoir	30-Nov	Holland Haven
Black Tern	08-Apr	Vange Marsh	21-Oct	Rainham Marshes
Eurasian Hobby	30-Mar	Sewardstone Marsh	14-Oct	Colne Point
Sand Martin	01-Mar	King George V Reservoir	13-Oct	Hanningfield Reservoir/ Rainham Marshes
Barn Swallow	20-Mar	Abberton Reservoir/Boreham	05-Dec	The Hythe Colchester
Common House Martin	23-Mar	Wanstead Flats	10-Nov	Holland Haven
Wood Warbler	29-Apr	Wanstead Flats	07-Sep	Wanstead Flats
Willow Warbler	08-Mar	Belhus Woods Aveley	29-Oct	The Naze
Sedge Warbler	23-Mar	Rainham Marshes	03-Oct	Holland Haven
Eurasian Reed Warbler	07-Apr	South Woodham Ferrers	17-Oct	Holland Haven
Common Grasshopper Warbler	13-Apr	Rainham Marshes	23-Sep	Holland Haven
Garden Warbler	13-Apr	Four widespread sites	28-Sep	Dagnam Park Harold Hill
Lesser Whitethroat***	06-Apr	Chigborough Lakes	28-Oct	Abberton Reservoir
Common Whitethroat	25-Mar	Chigborough Lakes	30-Sep	Wanstead Flats
Ring Ouzel	23-Mar	Olympic Park Stratford	29-Oct	Chafford Hundred Grays
Spotted Flycatcher	03-May	Frinton-on-Sea	12-Oct	Holland Haven
Common Nightingale	11-Apr	Canvey Wick	27-Aug	Bonnett's Wood Corbets Tey
Eurasian Pied Flycatcher	09-Aug	The Naze/Holland Haven	02-Oct	Holland Haven
Common Redstart	02-Apr	Wanstead Flats	25-Oct	Walthamstow Marsh
Whinchat	21-Apr	Wanstead Flats	15-Oct	Holland Haven
Northern Wheatear	16-Mar	Rainham Marshes	20-Oct	Old Hall Marshes/West Mersea
Western Yellow Wagtail	24-Mar	King George V Reservoir	29-Oct	Rainham Marshes
Tree Pipit	29-Mar	Blue House Farm	10-Oct	Holland Haven

*** See Systematic List for overwintering individuals

Latest and earliest dates for Winter Visitors 2019

Species	Departure Date	Location	Arrival Date	Location
Pink-footed Goose	22-Feb	Goldhanger	03-Oct	Frinton-on-Sea
Greater White-fronted Goose	14-Apr	Bowers Marsh	24-Nov	Holland Haven
Tundra Swan (Bewick's)	18-Jan	Abberton Reservoir	01-Nov	Abberton Reservoir
Whooper Swan	01-May	Bowers Marsh	27-Nov	Paglesham Lagoon
Velvet Scoter	03-May	Frinton-on-Sea	18-Oct	Frinton-on-Sea
Long-tailed Duck	24-Apr	Abberton Reservoir	21-Sep	Abberton Reservoir
Smew	15-Apr	King George V Reservoir	02-Nov	Fishers Green Holyfield
Common Merganser (Goosander)	12-Apr	Abberton Reservoir	08-Oct	Abberton Reservoir
Red-breasted Merganser	28-Apr	Rainham Marshes	22-Sep	Frinton-on-Sea
Red-necked Grebe	07-May	Abberton Reservoir	16-Dec	Blackwater Estuary
Horned Grebe (Slavonian)	13-Mar	West Mersea	31-Aug	Hanningfield Reservoir
Purple Sandpiper	05-Mar	Holland Haven	30-Sep	Gunners Park Shoebury
Jack Snipe	12-Apr	Cattawade Marsh	05-Oct	Wanstead Flats
Common Murre (Guillemot)	13-Apr	Frinton-on-Sea	06-Sep	Grays
Red-throated Loon	29-May	Frinton-on-Sea	02-Sep	Frinton-on-Sea
Black-throated Loon	04-Feb	Canvey Point	21-Sep	Frinton-on-Sea
Common Loon (Great Northern Diver)	06-May	Bradwell-on-Sea	05-Oct	Tollesbury Fleet/ Frinton-on-Sea
Eurasian Bittern	05-Mar	Chafford Gorges Grays	15-Oct	Seventy Acres Lake
Hen Harrier	18-May	Fleet Head Little Wakering	04-Aug	Stones Green Beaumont
Merlin	22-Apr	Tiptree	27-Jul	Fleet Head Little Wakering
Bohemian Waxwing	03-Feb	Colchester	10-Nov	Holland Haven
Horned Lark (Shore)	04-Jan	East Mersea	16-Nov	The Naze
Fieldfare	05-May	Holland Haven/ Burnham-on-Crouch	25-Aug	Colne Point
Redwing	01-May	Walthamstow Marsh	09-Sep	Chafford Hundred Grays
Water Pipit	20-Apr	Rainham Marshes	22-Sep	East Tilbury
Eurasian Rock Pipit	12-Apr	Rainham Marshes	19-Sep	Colne Point
Brambling	21-Apr	Hazeleigh Wood	05-Oct	Walthamstow Wetlands
Twite	24-Mar	East Tilbury	10-Oct	Blue House Farm
Eurasian Siskin	19-Apr	The Naze	22-Jun	Frinton-on-Sea
Lapland Longspur (Bunting)	~	~	20-Sep	The Naze
Snow Bunting	11-Feb	Jaywick	10-Oct	The Naze

Wetland Bird Survey (WeBS) Totals for Essex 2019

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
Brant Goose (Dark-bellied)	36083	31912	13414	4284	224	305	34889	30798	33991
Canada Goose	3787	2621	1943	1338	2044	4076	3600	4131	2184
Greylag Goose	2207	1706	1019	585	1292	2256	3235	2582	2720
Mute Swan	719	731	680	596	1001	583	836	880	628
Common Shelduck	9161	5018	3733	1604	526	1207	3872	7679	8601
Northern Shoveler	1078	1371	1425	716	409	2209	1270	1755	894
Gadwall	1071	1353	573	426	839	682	612	599	665
Eurasian Wigeon	18708	13617	4748	262	649	1803	9673	12580	16298
Mallard	4428	2359	1948	1671	2483	4216	3550	3180	3008
Northern Pintail	1682	1222	51	6	89	240	610	778	672
Eurasian Teal	24242	11942	5285	2055	1700	8572	11450	15081	21966
Common Pochard	1303	1148	602	273	1456	1420	580	1632	1419
Tufted Duck	2222	2224	2746	1423	1716	5038	5565	5104	4546
Common Goldeneye	556	422	317	38	2	14	15	366	609
Common Merganser (Goosander)	234	181	41	2	0	0	5	84	74
Red-breasted Merganser	352	289	198	34	0	22	53	202	225
Water Rail	12	12	12	1	1	6	7	21	14
Common Moorhen	546	446	339	170	165	310	350	341	311
Eurasian Coot	3393	2694	2457	1413	5815	9055	8035	11471	6318
Little Grebe	548	296	133	102	85	287	260	423	216
Great Crested Grebe	685	554	487	422	513	1273	1754	2426	930
Eurasian Oystercatcher	22314	8253	6018	2400	8534	16121	26327	20599	14972
Pied Avocet	2719	1802	655	186	115	359	1511	2354	1870
Northern Lapwing	17309	17151	793	327	811	1973	5099	12867	16088
European Golden Plover	14510	27929	1217	128	168	1908	6206	21028	20371
Grey Plover	7024	12790	1989	421	723	4629	5947	6491	6001
Common Ringed Plover	657	274	102	30	184	835	1574	758	489
Eurasian Curlew	5388	6626	5794	2072	3983	6351	5202	5406	4802
Bar-tailed Godwit	1816	2369	506	88	817	2206	1386	3760	2598
Black-tailed Godwit	3271	5083	6220	3010	3178	4873	4267	5135	4943
Ruddy Turnstone	1673	1744	594	626	371	1158	2063	1171	1379
Red Knot	78245	56851	1438	100	328	2899	2895	54790	37534
Ruff	5	27	6	4	14	27	23	9	12
Sanderling	536	81	119	56	73	74	70	591	156
Dunlin	58242	45708	4205	1416	600	1918	21459	50743	44919
Common Snipe	136	81	122	31	9	11	26	54	41
Common Redshank	9150	7706	6690	1946	2839	9389	8409	8537	7459
Common Greenshank	15	10	6	25	174	114	125	11	6
Black-headed Gull	8959	10783	10441	7511	8412	7684	7021	6987	6444
Mew Gull (Common Gull)	1372	2844	843	151	978	1648	472	740	1198
Great Black-backed Gull	225	144	89	19	32	283	372	1087	219
Herring Gull	2061	1593	1075	1327	1163	2643	1783	2529	1027
Lesser Black-backed Gull	241	144	271	197	314	359	320	219	114
Great Cormorant	2392	870	690	520	1245	2292	3103	2395	927
Grey Heron	146	125	111	125	86	193	193	216	147
Little Egret	255	181	274	201	466	1243	1177	569	257
Total	**351678**	**293287**	**92419**	**40338**	**56626**	**114764**	**197251**	**311159**	**280262**

Gazetteer of place names used in the 2019 report

Bold type identifies how the name appears in the Systematic List

Abbreviations :

ECC Essex County Council
EWT Essex Wildlife Trust
FE Forestry England
LWT London Wildlife Trust
LVRP Lee Valley Regional Park
MOD Ministry of Defence
NT National Trust
RHS Royal Horticultural Society
RSPB Royal Society for the Protection of Birds
WT Woodland Trust

Site	Grid Ref
Abberton Manor	TL 9919
Abberton Reservoir (including EWT Visitor Centre)	TL 9817
Abbotts Hall Farm Great Wigborough EWT Reserve	TL 9614
Alphamstone	TL 8735
Alresford	TM 0621
Althorne	TQ 9099
Ardleigh Green	TQ 5389
Ardleigh Reservoir	TM 0328
Asheldham	TL 9701
Audley End	TL 5237
Barking Bay/Marsh	TQ 4581
Barking Riverside	TQ 4782
Barleylands Billericay	TQ 6991
Barn Hoppett Chingford	TQ 4094
Barrow Wood Highwood	TL 6302
Basildon	TQ 7088
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 Otten	TL 8041
Belchamp Walter	TL 8140
Belhus Woods Aveley Country Park ECC	TQ 5782
Benfleet	TQ 7786
Berechurch Colchester	TM 0022
Betho Chatto Garden Elmstead Market	TM 0623
Billericay	TQ 6794
Birch	TL 9320
Birchanger	TL 5023
Blackley Lane Gravel Pit Willows Green	TL 7219
Blackwater Estuary	TL 9707
Blue House Farm North Fambridge EWT Reserve	TQ 8097
Bocking	TL 7624
Bonnetts Wood Corbets Tey	TQ 5584
Boreham	TL 7509
Boreham Gravel Pit	TL 7410
Borley	TL 8442
Bowers Marsh Bowers Gifford RSPB Reserve	TQ 7586
Boxted	TM 0032
Bradwell Bird Observatory	TM 0308
Bradwell Cockle Spit	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
Brentwood	TQ 5993
Bridgewick Farm Dengie	TR 0199
Brightlingsea	TM 0817
Broak's Wood Gosfield FE	TL 7831
Brook Farm Upminster	TQ 5987
Brookes Wood Greenstead Green	TL 8126
Broomhouse Flash Langham	TM 0334
Buckhurst Hill	TQ 4194
Bulmer	TL 8440
Bungate Wood Braintree	TL 8324
Bures	TL 9034
Burnham-on-Crouch	TQ 9496
Buttsbury Wash Ingatestone	TQ 6699
Canewdon	TQ 9094
Canvey Island	TQ 8182
Canvey Point	TQ 8283
Canvey Seafront	TQ 8280
Canvey Wick RSPB Reserve	TQ 7683
Castle Hedingham	TL 7835
Cattawade	TM 1033
Cattawade Marshes/The Splodge RSPB Reserve	TM 0932

Site	Grid Ref
Cely Woods Aveley	TQ 5683
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
Chingford	TQ 3894
Chingford Plain Epping Forest	TQ 3995
Cindery Island Brightlingsea Creek	TM 0916
Clacton-on-Sea	TM 1715
Clavering	TL 4731
Clay Tye Wood Upminster	TQ 5986
Clementsgreen Creek South Woodham Ferrers	TQ 8296
Coalhouse Fort East Tilbury	TQ 6976
Cobmarsh Island West Mersea	TM 0012
Codham Hall Farm Great Warley	TQ 5988
Cody Dock Newham	TQ 3882
Colchester	TL 9925
Colchester Barracks	TL 9923
Collier Row	TQ 5090
Colne Estuary	TM 0617
Colne Point St Osyth EWT Reserve	TM 1012
Connaught Water Epping Forest	TQ 4095
Coombe Wood Thundersley	TQ 7882
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
Creekmouth Barking	TQ 4581
Creekside Beckton Nature Reserve	TQ 4582
Crowsheath Wood Downham EWT Reserve	TQ 7296
Cudmore Grove East Mersea Country Park ECC	TM 0614
Dagenham Chase Local Nature Reserve	TQ 5185
Dagnam Park Harold Hill	TQ 5593
Danbury	TL 7805
Danbury Common NT	TL 7804
Danbury Park County Park ECC	TL 7704
Daws Hall Lamarsh	TL 8836

Site	Grid Ref
Deal Hall Dengie	TR 0197
Dengie	TL 9801
Dengie Flats	TR 0399
Dengie Marshes	TM 0000
Distillery Pond Colchester	TM 0123
Docura's Farm Little Horkesley	TM 0233
Dovercourt	TM 2531
Dunning's Lane Orsett	TQ 6287
Eagle Pond Leyton	TQ 3989
East Hanningfield	TL 7600
East Mersea	TM 0474
East Tilbury	TQ 6878
Eastwood	TQ 8190
Epping Forest Burial Park	TL 3903
Epping High Street	TL 4502
Fairlop Waters Barkingside Country Park	TQ 4585
Felsted	TL 6720
Fingringhoe Gravel Pits	TM 0420
Fingringhoe Mill	TM 0320
Fingringhoe Wick EWT Reserve	TM 0919
Fishers Green Holyfield LVRP	TL 3703
Fleet Head Great Wakering	TQ 9489
Fobbing Marsh EWT Reserve	TQ 7184
Fordham	TL 9228
Foulness Island	TR 0092
Foxearth	TL 8344
Frest Lodge Epping Forest	TQ 4299
Friday Lake Waltham Abbey LVRP	TL 3703
Friday Wood Colchester	TL 9821
Frinton-on-Sea	TM 2319
Galleywood	TL 7002
Galleywood Common	TL 7002
Gallions Reach Beckton	TQ 4481
Gestingthorpe	TL 8038
Gidea Park	TQ 5289
Glen Faba Roydon LVRP	TL 3909
Goldhanger	TL 9808
Good Easter	TL 6212
Gosfield	TL 7829
Gosfield Wood	TL 7728
Grays	TQ 6177
Grays New Cemetery	TQ 6378
Great Baddow	TL 7205
Great Bardfield	Tl 6730
Great Braxted	TL 8614

Site	Grid Ref
Great Burstead	TQ 6892
Great Cob Island Tollesbury	TL 9810
Great Henny	TL 8637
Great Holland	TL 2119
Great Holland Pits EWT Reserve	TM 2019
Great Horkesley	TL 9729
Great Notley	TL 7421
Great Stambridge	TQ 8991
Great Tey	TL 8926
Great Yeldham	TL 7638
Greenstead Green	TL 8227
Gunners Park Shoebury EWT Reserve	TQ 9384
Gunpowder Park Waltham Abbey LVRP	TQ 3798
Hadleigh Downs	TQ 8086
Hadleigh Marshes	TQ 8185
Hainault Forest Country Park	TQ 4793
Hale End Walthamstow	TQ 3891
Halstead	TL 8130
Hamford Water	TM 2225
Hangman's Wood Little Thurrock	TQ 6379
Hanningfield Reservoir (including EWT Visitor Centre)	TQ 7397
Harlow	TQ 4509
Harold Wood Sewage Works	TQ 5691
Harwich	TM 2530
Hatfield Broad Oak	TL 5416
Hatfield Forest NT Reserve	TL 5419
Hazeleigh Wood	TL 8304
Headley Common Great Warley	TQ 5891
Henny Street	TL 8838
Heybridge	TL 8507
Heybridge Basin	TL 8707
Heybridge Gravel Pit	TL 8606
Hickford Hill Clare	TL 7844
High Beach Epping Forest	TQ 4097
High Garrett	TL 7726
High Woods Colchester Country Park	TM 0026
Highams Park	TQ 3891
Hill Hall Theydon Mount	TQ 4899
Hockley Woods Local Nature Reserve	TQ 8391
Hogmarsh Island Manningtree EWT Reserve	TM 1032
Holland Haven	TM 2117
Holyfield Hall Farm LVRP	TL 3803
Holyfield Lake LVRP	TL 3704
Hooks Marsh Waltham Abbey LVRP	TL 3701

Site	Grid Ref
Hornchurch Park	TQ 5384
Horsey Island Hamford Water	TM 2324
Horsley Cross	TM 1127
Ilford	TQ 4386
Ingatestone	TQ 6499
Ingrebourne Valley	TQ 5384
Jaywick	TM 1513
Judas Gap Flatford	TL 8410
Kelvedon	TL 8618
King George V Reservoir Chingford LVRP	TQ 3795
Kirby Cross	TM 2120
Knighton Wood Epping Forest	TQ 4093
Lamarsh	TL 8935
Langdon Hills Plotlands EWT Reserve	TQ 6587
Langenhoe Marsh/Fingringhoe Ranges MOD	TM 0417
Langford	TL 8309
Langham	TM 0333
Langham Treatment Works	TM 0134
Larks Wood Epping Forest	TQ 3892
Lawford	TM 0931
Lawling Creek Maylandsea	TL 9104
Layer-de-la-Haye	TL 9620
Leez Priory Hartford End	TL 7018
Leez Reservoir Hartford End	TL 7018
Leigh-on-Sea	TQ 8486
Leyton Flats	TL 3986
Leytonstone	TQ 3987
Liston	TL 8544
Little Burstead	TQ 6692
Little Clacton	TM 1618
Lofts Farm Gravel Pits Heybridge	TL 8608
Long Green Epping	TL 4205
Loshes Meadow Great Henny EWT Reserve	TL 8736
Loughton	TQ 4296
Lower Raypits Canewdon EWT Reserve	TQ 9294
Lower Sheering	TL 4914
Lyonshall Wood Fuller Street	TL 7314
Maldon	TL 8506
Maldon Promenade	TL 8606
Manningtree	TM 1031
Maplin Sands	TR 0188
Mardyke Valley Stifford-Aveley	TQ 5679
Marks Hall Coggeshall	TL 8426

Site	Grid Ref
Marsh Farm South Woodham Ferrers Country Park ECC	TQ 8196
Marsh Road Burnham-on-Crouch	TQ 9696
Marshhouse Dengie	TM 0103
Mayesbrook Park Dagenham Public Park	TQ 4684
Mayland Creek	TL 9103
Mersea Island	TM 0314
Middlewick Ranges Colchester	TM 0122
Mistley Walls	TM 1132
Mistley/Mistley Quay	TM1131
Mole Hall Widdington	TL 5431
Mount Bures	TL 9032
Mountnessing	TQ 6297
Moverons Brightlingsea	TM 0618
Mucking	TQ 6881
Mundon	TL 8702
Navestock	TQ 5497
Netherhall Gravel Pit Nazeing LVRP	TL 3908
Norsey Wood Billericay Local Nature Reserve	TQ 6895
North Fambridge	TQ 8697
North Fambridge Hall	TQ 8597
North Shoebury St Mary's Churchyard	TQ 9286
Old Hall Marshes Tolleshunt D'Arcy RSPB Reserve	TL 9811
Olympic Park Stratford LVRP	TQ 3784
Ongar Park Wood Epping Forest	TL 4902
Orsett Fen	TQ 6283
Osea Road Heybridge	TL 8907
Paglesham East End	TQ 9492
Paglesham Lagoon	TQ 9290
Parkhill Wood Alphamstone	TL 8835
Pebmarsh	TL 8533
Pewet Island Bradwell-on-Sea	TL 9908
Pewit Island Hamford Water	TM 2326
Point Clear St Osyth	TM 0914
Priory Park Southend-on-Sea	TQ 8787
Puddledock Fishery Upminster	TQ 5987
Purleigh	TL 8302
Rainham Marshes RSPB Reserve	TQ 5280
Raphael Park Romford	TQ 5190
Rat Island River Colne	TM 0517
Ray Island West Mersea	TM 0014
Rayne	TL 7323
Ridgewell	TL 7340
Ridgnall's Great Horkesley	TL 9832

Site	Grid Ref
Rivenhall End	TL 8316
Roach Estuary	TQ 9893
Rochford	TQ 8790
Rochford Golf Course	TQ 8690
Roding Valley Meadows Chigwell EWT Reserve	TQ 4395
Roman River Valley Colchester	TM 0120
Romford	TQ 5289
Ropers Farm/Barling Marsh	TQ 9390
Rowney Wood Debden	TL 5733
Russell Green Gravel Pits Boreham	TL 7512
Saffron Walden	TL 5423
Scotch Pature Grove Castle Hedingham	TL 7836
Scrip's Lane Coggeshall	TL 8421
Seawick St Osyth	TM 1212
Seventy Acres Lake Holyfield LVRP	TL 3703
Sewardstone	TQ 3898
Sewardstone Marsh LVRP	TQ 3798
Shoebury	TQ 9384
Shoebury East Beach	TQ 9484
Shoebury Park	TQ 9385
Shut Heath Wood Great Totham EWT Reserve	TL 8513
Snaresbrook	TQ 4089
South Benfleet	TQ 7886
South Fambridge	TQ 8595
South House Farm Maldon	TL 8605
South Ockendon Landfill	TQ 5882
South Weald	TQ 5793
South Woodford	TQ 4090
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 Priory	TM 1215
St Osyth Stone/Beach	TM 0815
Stanford Warren EWT Reserve	TQ 6881
Stansted Airport Lagoons Takeley	TL 5521
Stanway	TL 9523
Stapleford Tawney	TQ 5098
Stebbing	TL 6524
Steeple	TL 9303
Stifford Hall	TQ 6080

Site	Grid Ref
Stone Point Mersea Island	TM 0715
Stone Point The Naze Walton-on-the-Naze	TM 2425
Stones Green Beaumont	TM 1626
Stour Estuary	TM 1733
Stour Wood RSPB	TM 1831
Stow Marsh South Woodham Ferrers	TQ 8496
Strawberry Hill Pond Epping Forest	TQ 4297
Stubbers Adventure Centre Corbets Tey	TQ 5784
Sunnymead Farm Wivenhoe	TM 0522
Terling	TL 7715
Thaxted	TL 6131
The Hythe Colchester (and Lagoons)	TM 0124
The Naze Walton-on-the-Naze (inc EWT Visitor Centre)	TM 2624
The Strood Mersea Island	TM 0115
Theydon Bois	TQ 4498
Thorndon Park North/South Country Park (inc EWT Visitor Centre) ECC	TQ 6091
Thornwood Common Epping Forest	TL 4604
Thorpe-le-Soken	TM 1822
Thundersley	TQ 7988
Thurrock	TQ 5878
Thurrock Thameside Mucking Nature Park EWT Reserve	TQ 6980
Tilbury	TQ 6376
Tillingham	TL 9903
Tiptree	TL 8916
Tiptree Heath	TL 8814
Tollesbury	TL 9510
Tollesbury Fleet	TL 9711
Tollesbury Wick EWT Reserve	TM 0419
Tolleshunt d'Arcy	TL 9311
Tolleshunt Major	TL 8911
Tumbler's Green Stisted	TL 8025
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
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

Site	Grid Ref
Wallasea Island Canewdon RSPB Reserve	TQ 9693
Waltham Abbey	TL 3800
Walthamstow	TQ 3890
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
Wanstead Flats	TQ 4086
Wanstead Park	TQ 4187
Warley	TQ 5992
Warren Gorge Chafford Hundred	TQ 5979
Warren Pond Epping Forest	TQ 3994
Warren Wood Epping Forest	TQ 4195
Wat Tyler Country Park Pitsea	TQ 7386
Waterworks Leyton Nature Reserve LVRP	TQ 3686
Weald Park South Weald Country Park	TQ 5794
Weeley	TM 1422
West Bergholt	TL 9527
West Canvey Marsh RSPB Reserve	TQ 7784
West Hanningfield	TQ 7299
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
Wickford	TQ 7593
Widdington	TL 5331
Wigboro Wick Farm St Osyth	TM 1114
William Girling Reservoir Chingford LVRP	TQ 3694
Witham	TL 8215
Wivenhoe	TM 0321
Woodford Green	TQ 4192
Woodham Fen South Woodham Ferrers EWT Reserve	TQ 7997
Wormingford	TL 9331
Wormingford Airfield	TL 9130
Wrabness EWT Reserve	TM 1731
Writtle	TL 6706

Essex Ringing Report for 2019

David Wilkinson

The BTO database lists a total of 17,649 birds ringed in Essex during 2019, significantly up from the previous two years and indeed far above average for a year in the County. This number does include a small number of birds from Rye Meads Nature Reserve where the ringing site literally straddles the border with Hertfordshire and some nets are technically the other side of the frontier, but this is insignificant for these purposes. For some species, our County has contributed tremendously to the data collected, for example of only 28 Brant Geese were ringed in the UK and Ireland in 2019, 18 of were ringed here in Essex and of the 85 Mediterranean Gull ringed across the nation, over half (47) were marked by Essex ringers. In fact, there were six species caught in Essex in higher numbers than any other County or region in the whole of the UK and Ireland (Brant Goose, Canada Goose, Mediterranean Gull, Gadwall, Ring-necked Duck and Turtle Dove). There were some real turn ups too. The afore-mentioned Ring-necked Duck was the only one caught in Britain in 2019 and only the 6th ringed in the UK ever. Ring Ouzel are a much targeted species by the BTO for colour ringing and survival studies and 314 were marked in the UK, with Essex contributing one to that figure (ringed by yours truly) and singles of Spotted Flycatcher, Redstart and Yellow-browed Warbler were also ringed here on passage.

One of the major differences observed that can be put down to more than the changing activities of ringers is the drop in winter finches and thrushes due to such a mild winter in 2019/20 and the mixture of unfavourable southerly winds and abundant food further north which led to less birds making the trip as far south as Essex. There were only seven Fieldfare and Redwing in 2019 compared to 110 and 39 the year before whilst our County's ringers encountered just six Brambling compared to 22 in 2018. It was a similar story as captures of Siskin fell from 52 to five and Lesser Redpoll from 48 to 20. Early indications from 2020/21 are much more positive though with Lesser Redpoll especially seeing a return to good numbers and winter migrants in general back to normal levels.

Table 1 Totals of birds ringed in Essex 2019

Species	2019 Total
Brant Goose	18
Canada Goose	157
Greylag Goose	23
Mute Swan	64
Northern Shoveler	1
Gadwall	7
Mallard	121
Eurasian Teal	38
Ring-necked Duck	1
Tufted Duck	16
Grey Heron	11
Little Egret	12
Eurasian Sparrowhawk	18
Common Buzzard	8
Common Moorhen	18
Eurasian Coot	6
Eurasian Oystercatcher	2

Species	2019 Total
Pied Avocet	4
Northern Lapwing	1
Woodcock	1
Black-headed Gull	474
Mediterranean Gull	47
Great Black-backed Gull	3
Herring Gull	312
Common Tern	18
Stock Dove	33
Common Wood Pigeon	27
European Turtle Dove	2
Eurasian Collared Dove	6
Common Cuckoo	2
Western Barn Owl	231
Tawny Owl	13
Little Owl	9

Species	2019 Total
Common Kingfisher	14
Great Spotted Woodpecker	41
European Green Woodpecker	10
Common Kestrel	45
Eurasian Jay	25
Eurasian Magpie	17
Western Jackdaw	60
Rook	9
Carrion Crow	1
Coal Tit	154
Marsh Tit	36
Eurasian Blue Tit	5,222
Great Tit	1,718
Bearded Reedling	8
Eurasian Skylark	1

Species	2019 Total
Barn Swallow	280
Common House Martin	10
Cetti's Warbler	50
Long-tailed Tit	438
Willow Warbler	63
Common Chiffchaff	432
Yellow-browed Warbler	1
Sedge Warbler	99
Eurasian Reed Warbler	174
Common Grasshopper Warbler	3
Eurasian Blackcap	972
Garden Warbler	19
Lesser Whitethroat	81
Common Whitethroat	313
Common Firecrest	12
Goldcrest	283

Species	2019 Total
Eurasian Wren	305
Eurasian Nuthatch	19
Eurasian Treecreeper	37
Common Starling	560
Ring Ouzel	1
Common Blackbird	411
Fieldfare	7
Redwing	7
Song Thrush	86
Spotted Flycatcher	1
European Robin	473
European Pied Flycatcher	3
Whinchat	5
European Stonechat	8
House Sparrow	303
Dunnock	380

Species	2019 Total
Western Yellow Wagtail	19
Meadow Pipit	461
Common Chaffinch	196
Brambling	6
Eurasian Bullfinch	50
European Greenfinch	548
Common Linnet	38
Common Redpoll	2
Lesser Redpoll	20
European Goldfinch	968
Eurasian Siskin	5
Corn Bunting	3
Yellowhammer	66
Common Reed Bunting	356
Grand Total	**17,649**

PLEASE NOTE: Ringers are not allowed to ring Ruddy Duck, Feral Pigeon, Common Pheasant or Red-Legged Partridge so any captures of these are not included.

Table 2 Selected recoveries/recaptures in Essex during 2019

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. I have also included some longevity records for a handful of those species that move only very short distances but where ringing is still a useful method to build a picture of their populations and lifespans. It should be noted that, as above, the Rye Meads site that straddles the border is included. There are many, many recoveries each year but for means of interest I have only included the most unusual and well-travelled. Further recovery details can be found on the 2019 Ringing Report on the BTO website where you can search by County and by species.

Species/ring number	Age/ details	Date	Locations	kms
Brant Goose	Adult	27/01/18	Blue House Farm, North Fambridge (Essex)	
GV77530	Field record	13/03/18	Oosterend, Schorreweg, Texel, **The Netherlands**	329
	Field record	30/03/18	Lorenzwarft, Hallig Hooge, Schleswig-Holstein, **Germany**	617
	Field record	10/11/18	Leigh-on-Sea, Southend (Essex)	11
	Field record	28/01/19	Havre de Regneville, Manche, **France**	328
	Field record	01/04/19	Hollum-Ameland, Ijsselmeerpolders, **The Netherlands**	349
Mute Swan	First-year Female	15/04/13	Fishers Green (Essex)	
W32024	Field record	24/04/13	Fishers Green (Essex)	
	Field record	31/10/13	Fishers Green (Essex)	

Species/ring number	Age/ details	Date	Locations	kms
	Field record	04/03/14	Walthamstow Wetlands (Essex)	14
	Field record	04/05/14	Fishers Green (Essex)	
	Field record	31/12/14	Tottenham Hale/Copper Mill (Greater London)	13
	Field record	07/09/19	Little Durnford, Salisbury (Wiltshire)	142
Gadwall	Nestling Male	04/08/13	Rye Meads, Hoddesdon (Essex/Herts)	
FH40477	Freshly dead (Shot)	06/12/19	Calais, Pais-de-Calais, **France**	158
Eurasian Teal	First-year Female	27/03/08	Abberton Reservoir, Colchester (Essex)	
EL99952	Caught by ringer	18/01/19	River Derwent, Wheldrake (Yorkshire)	261
Eurasian Teal	Adult Female	18/09/18	Evoa, Lisboa, **Portugal**	
J20762	Caught by ringer	27/09/19	Abberton Reservoir, Colchester (Essex)	1,615
Little Egret	Nestling	23/05/18	Netherhall (Essex)	
GV55338	Field record	25/06/19	RSPB Titchwell (Norfolk)	141
Little Egret	Nestling	13/05/17	Netherhall (Essex)	
GV37297	Field record	01/09/17	Walthamstow (Essex)	21
	Field record	05/05/19	Snettisham (Norfolk)	126
Little Egret	Nestling	23/05/18	Netherhall (Essex)	
GV77595	Field record	24/03/19	Warblington (Hampshire)	123
Great Cormorant	Nestling	14/05/08	Abberton Reservoir, Colchester (Essex)	
5247926	Field record	09/12/10	Ynyslas, Borth (Ceredigion)	343
	Field record	19/03/19	Havergate Island (Suffolk)	54
Western Marsh Harrier	Nestling Female	28/06/19	Brandon Fen, Lakenheath Fen (Suffolk)	
GV35374	Field record	15/10/19	Holland-on-Sea (Essex)	85
Pied Avocet	Nestling	22/05/11	Orfordness (Suffolk)	
EW43199	Field record	14/04/12	Orfordness (Suffolk)	
	Field record	30/04/13	Boyton Marshes (Suffolk)	7
	Field record	21/01/14	Le Teich, Gironde, **France**	849
	Field record	24/03/14	Boyton Marshes (Suffolk)	7
	Field record	27/04/15	Hollesley Marshes (Suffolk)	9
	Field record	19/01/16	Le Teich, Gironde, **France**	849
	Field record	01/07/16	Hollesley Marshes (Suffolk)	9
	Field record	15/04/17	Boyton Marshes (Sufflolk)	7
	Field record	05/04/18	Hollesley Marshes (Suffolk)	9
	Field record	13/12/18	Le Teich, Gironde, **France**	849
	Field record	17/06/19	Holland Haven (Essex)	39
	Field record	19/06/19	Holland Haven (Essex)	39
Pied Avocet	Nestling	06/07/16	Long Drag Pools, Stockton-on-Tees (County Durham)	
EY98317	Field record	21/09/18	Tennyson Sands, Gibraltar Point NNR, Skegness (Lincolnshire)	195
	Field record	11/04/19	RSPB Saltholme, Port Clarence (County Durham)	2

Species/ring number	Age/ details	Date	Locations	kms
	Field record	10/12/19	Mucking, Thurrock (Essex)	362
Black-tailed Godwit	First-year Female	22/12/11	Harty (Kent)	
EW64314	Field record	28/12/11	Conyer Creek, Swale (Kent)	6
	Field record	27/05/12	Confidential Site (Norfolk)	148
	Field record	30/08/13	Oare (Kent)	1
	Field record	06/10/13	Walton-on-the-Naze (Essex)	62
	Field record	05/11/14	Oare (Kent)	1
	Field record	21/02/15	Motney Hill, Medway (Kent)	19
	Field record	31/03/15	Clementsgreen Creek, South Woodham Ferrers (Essex)	36
	Field record	29/07/15	Confidential Site (Essex)	67
	Field record	24/12/15	Oare (Kent)	1
	Field record	24/07/16	Confidential Site (Essex)	67
	Field record	10/10/16	Freston, Orwell (Suffolk)	76
	Field record	13/01/17	Conyer Creek, Swale (Kent)	6
	Field record	30/07/17	Confidential Site (Essex)	67
	Field record	20/07/18	Saudarkrokur, Skagafjadarsysla, **Iceland**	1,976
	Field record	25/07/18	Oare (Kent)	1
	Field record	29/09/18	Walton-on-the-Naze (Essex)	62
	Field record	10/12/18	Conyer Creek, Swale (Kent)	6
	Field record	20/03/19	Aldboro Point, Brightlingsea, (Essex)	54
	Field record	19/11/19	Oare (Kent)	1
	Field record	01/12/19	Stray Marshes, Isle of Sheppey (Kent)	10
Black-tailed Godwit	First-year	28/09/13	Ythan Estuary, Newburgh (Aberdeenshire)	
EX72162	Field record	22/02/16	Alresford Creek, Colne Estuary (Essex)	640
	Field record	14/03/17	Alresford Creek, Colne Estuary (Essex)	640
	Field record	05/03/18	Alresford Creek, Colne Estuary (Essex)	639
	Field record	23/03/19	Alresford Creek, Colne Estuary (Essex)	639
	Field record	02/04/19	Alresford Creek, Colne Estuary (Essex)	639
Black-tailed Godwit	First-year	06/11/18	Welwick Pond (East Yorkshire)	
EL69556	Field record	28/06/19	Confidential Site (Norfolk)	127
	Field record	30/08/19	Heybridge Basin (Essex)	218
Black-tailed Godwit	Adult Male	15/10/13	Farlington Marsh, Portsmouth (Hampshire)	
DD51185	Field record	12/08/18	Alresford Creek, Colne Estuary (Essex)	180
	Field record	20/07/19	Confidential Site (Essex)	193
Dunlin	First-year	11/09/18	Ynyslas, Borth (Ceredigion)	
BT93030	Field record	13/04/19	Alresford Creek, Colne Estuary (Essex)	352
Common Redshank	First-year	03/02/18	Welwick Pond (East Yorkshire)	
DD49305	Field record	18/03/19	Cattawade (Suffolk)	201
	Field record	20/04/19	Mistley (Essex)	203
Common Greenshank	First-year	02/08/19	Revtangen, Klepp, Rogaland, **Norway**	

Species/ring number	Age/ details	Date	Locations	kms
7218275	Field record	02/10/19	Fingringhoe Wick (Essex)	821
Black-headed Gull	Nestling	07/06/93	Hamford Water, Little Oakley (Essex)	
ES26415	Field record	31/07/19	Clacton-on-Sea (Essex)	10
Black-headed Gull	Adult	05/10/13	Pitsea Landfill Site (Essex)	
EY45267	Field record	03/02/17	Voltri, Genoa, **Italy**	1,000
	Field record	03/02/18	Genoa, **Italy**	1,009
	Field record	12/01/19	Riviera Ligure Di Ponente, Sanremo, **Italy**	1.018
Black-headed Gull	Nestling	28/05/09	Ostrava-Hermanice, Ostrav, **Czech Republic**	
ES14274	Field record	26/07/11	Hanningfield Reservoir (Essex)	1,268
	Field record	20/02/17	Hanningfield Reservoir (Essex)	1,268
	Field record	21/07/18	Hanningfield Reservoir (Essex)	1,268
	Field record	25/02/19	Hanningfield Reservoir (Essex)	1,267
	Field record	26/02/19	Hanningfield Reservoir (Essex)	1,267
Mediterranean Gull	Nestling	05/06/09	Middelharnis, Sommelsdijk, Zuid-Holland, **The Netherlands**	
3616057	Field record	04/01/19	Walton-on-the-Naze (Essex)	197
Mew Gull	Adult	06/04/06	Burg Auf Fehmarn, Schleswig-Holstein, **Germany**	
5347136	Field record	19/01/13	Brightlingsea (Essex)	738
	Field record	26/12/13	Brightlingsea (Essex)	738
	Field record	12/12/15	Stone Point, St Osyth (Essex)	738
	Field record	02/01/17	Brightlingsea (Essex)	738
	Field record	22/12/17	Stone Point, St Osyth (Essex)	738
	Field record	26/10/18	Stone Point, St Osyth (Essex)	738
	Field record	01/12/19	Brightlingsea (Essex)	737
Mew Gull	Nestling	29/05/08	Laanemaa, Kakrarahu, **Estonia**	
U275706	Field record	18/01/19	Rainham Tip (Essex)	1,673
Mew Gull	Nestling	31/05/08	Laanemaa, Kakrarahu, **Estonia**	
U275792	Field record	18/01/19	Rainham Marshes (Essex)	1,672
Great Black-backed Gull	Adult	09/01/10	Pitsea Landfill Site (Essex)	
MA26670	Field record	27/02/11	RSPB Minsmere (Suffolk)	109
	Field record	21/01/12	Holland Haven (Essex)	57
	Field record	18/01/14	Stanway Green (Essex)	44
	Field record	30/03/16	Grisvagoy, Aure, More og Romsdal, **Norway**	1,391
	Field record	27/04/19	Aukan, Lesund, Aure, More og Romsdal, **Norway**	1,390
Great Black-backed Gull	First-year	05/02/11	Pitsea Landfill Site (Essex)	
MA26871	Field record	27/08/11	Pitsea Landfill Site (Essex)	1
	Field record	04/11/16	Boulogne sur Mer, Pas-de-Calais, **France**	117

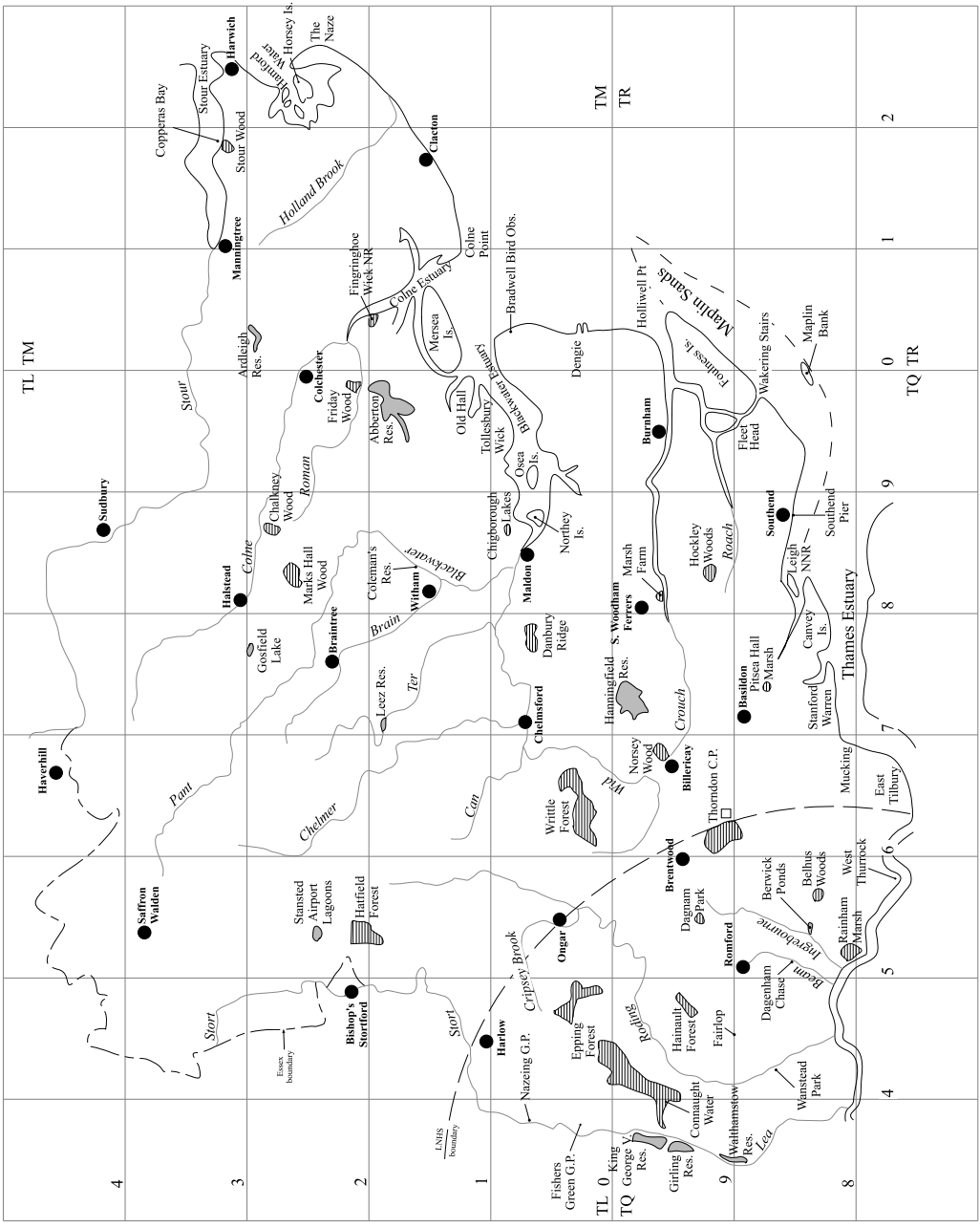
Species/ring number	Age/ details	Date	Locations	kms
	Field record	11/05/18	Herdlevaer Oygarden, Hordaland, **Norway**	1,038
	Field record	03/03/19	Herdlevaer Oygarden, Hordaland, **Norway**	1,038
	Field record	28/07/19	Skogsoy, Langholmsundet, Hordaland, **Norway**	1,039
European Herring Gull	Adult	03/12/16	Pitsea Landfill Site (Essex)	
GV47664	Field record	20/04/17	Hornoya Vardo, Finnmark, **Norway**	2,610
	Field record	04/07/17	Bexley Tip (Greater London)	24
	Field record	03/08/18	Vardo, Finnmark, **Norway**	2,605
	Field record	13/11/18	Little Marlow (Buckinghamshire)	87
	Field record	27/09/19	Greatham Creek (County Durham)	361
European Herring Gull	Nestling	30/06/18	Sprogo, Korsor, Vestsjaelland, **Denmark**	
4409839	Caught by ringer	16/02/19	Ockendon Landfill Site (Essex)	822
European Herring Gull	Nestling	04/07/16	Kvalsvik, Nerlandsoya, Heroy, More Og Romsdal, **Norway**	
FA42366	Caught by ringer	16/02/19	Ockendon Landfill Site (Essex)	1,244
Caspian Gull	Nestling	09/06/18	Rz. Wisazastow Karczmiski, Lubelskie, **Poland**	
DN35405	Field record	06/11/18	Island Barn Reservoir (Surrey)	1,537
	Field record	29/10/19	Rainham Tip (Essex)	1,498
Lesser Black-backed Gull	Adult	27/10/07	Rainham Tip (Essex)	
GG61248	Field record	17/07/19	St Peter-Ording, Schleswig-Holstein, **Germany**	645
Lesser Black-backed Gull	First-year	12/09/09	Rainham Tip (Essex)	
FR59752	Field record	11/04/11	Essauira, **Morocco**	2,364
	Field record	18/03/19	Tankerton, Whistable (Kent)	61
Lesser Black-backed Gull	Adult	15/10/11	Rainham Tip (Essex)	
FA39918	Field record	08/08/13	Nidingen, Halland, **Sweden**	994
	Field record	14/03/15	Pitsea Landfill Site (Essex)	23
	Field record	28/06/15	Nidingen, Halland, **Sweden**	995
	Field record	30/03/16	Nidingen, Halland, **Sweden**	994
	Field record	28/08/16	Nidingen, Halland, **Sweden**	994
	Field record	14/09/16	Shawell (Leicestershire)	141
	Field record	26/03/18	Nidingen, Halland, **Sweden**	995
	Field record	10/07/18	Nidingen, Halland, **Sweden**	995
	Field record	30/03/19	Nidingen, Halland, **Sweden**	995
	Field record	15/06/19	Nidingen, Halland, **Sweden**	995
Common Tern	Nestling	22/06/19	Seventy Acres Lake, Holyfield (Essex)	
SR89328	Field record	10/08/19	Dungeness (Kent)	112

Species/ring number	Age/ details	Date	Locations	kms
Western Barn Owl	Nestling	16/06/19	Fox Holes Spinneys, Hungarton (Leicestershire)	
GV11578	Freshly dead (hit by car)	06/12/19	Near Churchgate Street (Essex)	124
Common Kestrel	Nestling	02/06/14	Knollgate, Boxford (Suffolk)	
EX99593	Freshly dead (drowned)	01/09/19	Langham (Essex)	11
Peregrine Falcon	Nestling	29/05/14	Temple Wood, Bourne (Lincolnshire)	
GR97703	Field record	24/08/19	Saffron Walden (Essex)	101
Peregrine Falcon	Nestling Female	18/05/05	Gent, Oost-Vlaanderen, **Belgium**	
H89108	Long dead	29/10/19	Grays (Essex)	241
Western Jackdaw	Adult Female	30/04/15	Sunnymead Farm, Wivenhoe (Essex)	
EX75480	Caught by ringer	28/04/17	Sunnymead Farm, Wivenhoe (Essex)	0
	Caught by ringer	16/06/19	Sunnymead Farm, Wivenhoe (Essex)	0
Marsh Tit	Nestling	30/04/19	Rowney Wood (Essex)	
AEF6712	Caught by ringer	27/09/19	Scales Park, Nuthampstead (Hertfordshire)	15
	Caught by ringer	09/12/19	Scales Park, Nuthampstead (Hertfordshire)	15
Eurasian Blue Tit	Nestling	21/05/18	Rowney Wood (Essex)	
AHD3229	Caught by ringer	31/03/19	Calliburn Corner (Argyll and Bute)	549
Great Tit	First-year Male	08/11/13	Sunnymead Farm, Wivenhoe (Essex)	
D452249	Caught by ringer	17/11/13	Sunnymead Farm, Wivenhoe (Essex)	0
	Caught by ringer	01/03/14	Sunnymead Farm, Wivenhoe (Essex)	0
	Caught by ringer	16/01/15	Sunnymead Farm, Wivenhoe (Essex)	0
	Caught by ringer	09/08/19	Sunnymead Farm, Wivenhoe (Essex)	0
Barn Swallow	Juvenile	22/07/18	Ash Carr, Thornham (Norfolk)	
AHB4057	Caught by ringer	10/09/19	Old Hall Marshes, near Tollesbury (Essex)	133
Willow Warbler	First-year	08/08/19	Holland Haven Country Park (Essex)	
KPC587	Caught by ringer	25/08/19	Beachy Head (East Sussex)	137
Common Chiffchaff	Juvenile	27/08/19	Deer Park, Harlow (Essex)	
DAV411	Caught by ringer	19/09/19	Skokholm Island (Pembrokeshire)	369
Common Chiffchaff	First Year	30/07/19	Wicken Fen (Cambridgeshire)	
KXP247	Caught by ringer	02/09/19	Wenden Lofts (Essex)	33
Eurasian Reed Warbler	Adult	10/08/15	Herdade Dos Forninhos, Beja, **Portugal**	
A416653	Caught by ringer	20/05/17	Holland Haven Country Park (Essex)	1,747
	Caught by ringer	15/05/19	Holland Haven Country Park (Essex)	1,747
Eurasian Blackcap	Juvenile	04/08/19	Woodford, Poynton (Cheshire)	
AHH2714	Caught by ringer	01/10/19	Walton-on-the-Naze (Essex)	283
Eurasian Blackcap	First-year Female	17/09/18	Two Tree Island, Leigh-on-Sea (Essex)	
AHB2125	Caught by ringer	20/04/19	Dunes du Fort Vert, Marck, Pas-de-Calais, **France**	110

Species/ring number	Age/ details	Date	Locations	kms
Eurasian Blackcap	Adult Female	29/09/18	Quartier-Bas, Villefranque, Pyrenees-Atlantiques), **France**	
8131497	Caught by ringer	22/04/19	Haven Point, Great Wakering (Essex)	918
Eurasian Blackcap	Adult Male	29/09/18	Nuevo Baztan, Madrid, **Spain**	
5L36524	Caught by ringer	19/04/19	Sunnymead Farm, Wivenhoe, Essex	1,319
Common Whitethroat	Juvenile	09/07/19	Two Tree Island, Leigh-on-Sea (Essex)	
ANE7884	Caught by ringer	23/07/19	Two Tree Island, Leigh-on-Sea (Essex)	0
	Caught by ringer	19/08/19	Vaas, Sarthe, **France**	431
Goldcrest	First-year Male	05/10/19	Beachy Head (East Sussex)	
LJA366	Caught by ringer	14/10/19	Stocking Green (Essex)	142
Goldcrest	First-year Male	05/11/18	Castricum, Noord-Holland, **The Netherlands**	
AJB184	Caught by ringer	27/12/18	Walton-on-the-Naze (Essex)	237
	Caught by ringer	25/02/19	Walton-on-the-Naze (Essex)	
Goldcrest	First-year Male	24/10/19	Reddingbootpad, Vlieland, **The Netherlands**	
ARR316	Caught by ringer	05/11/19	Sunnymead Farm, Wivenhoe (Essex)	310
Eurasian Wren	Juvenile	20/08/15	Galleywood, Chelmsford (Essex)	
HBD913	Caught by ringer	09/05/16	Galleywood, Chelmsford (Essex)	0
	Caught by ringer	13/03/17	Galleywood, Chelmsford (Essex)	0
	Caught by ringer	06/03/18	Galleywood, Chelmsford (Essex)	0
	Caught by ringer	09/04/19	Galleywood, Chelmsford (Essex)	0
Common Blackbird	Juvenile Male	29/05/10	Little Clacton (Essex)	
LB20793	Caught by ringer	22/06/14	Little Clacton (Essex)	0
	Caught by ringer	30/05/15	Little Clacton (Essex)	0
	Caught by ringer	08/01/19	Little Clacton (Essex)	0
European Robin	First-year	01/03/12	Sunnymead Farm, Wivenhoe (Essex)	
Y458592	Caught by ringer	22/03/12	Sunnymead Farm, Wivenhoe (Essex)	0
	Caught by ringer	09/03/13	Sunnymead Farm, Wivenhoe (Essex)	0
	Caught by ringer	18/10/13	Sunnymead Farm, Wivenhoe (Essex)	0
	Freshly dead	09/06/19	Sunnymead Farm, Wivenhoe (Essex)	0
House Sparrow	Adult	22/09/19	Temple Mead, Roydon (Essex)	
TZ75842	Freshly dead (domestic animal)	31/10/19	Roydon (Hertfordhsire)	1
Dunnock	Adult	26/01/18	Blue House Farm, North Fambridge (Essex)	
VZ55881	Caught by ringer	07/04/19	Tal Goed Nursery (Conwy)	352
Eurasian Rock Pipit	Adult Male	30/03/17	Maletangen, Franea, More Og Romsdal, **Norway**	
ED09398	Field record	13/03/18	Holland Haven Country Park (Essex)	1,287
	Field record	03/01/19	Holland Haven Country Park (Essex)	1,291
	Field record	05/11/19	Holland Haven Country Park (Essex)	1,291

Species/ring number	Age/ details	Date	Locations	kms
Eurasian Rock Pipit	First-year	20/09/17	Maletangen, Franea, More Og Romsdal, **Norway**	
EL01285	Field record	24/01/19	Two Tree Island, Leigh-on-Sea (Essex)	1,,328
Common Chaffinch	Adult Male	25/03/18	Gedser Fuglestation, Syldfaster, Storstrom, **Denmark**	
BX64719	Caught by ringer	28/10/19	Gunners Park, Shoeburyness (Essex)	818
Eurasian Bullfinch	Juvenile	22/09/16	Wenden Lofts (Essex)	
S520592	Caught by ringer	11/09/19	Wenden Lofts (Essex)	0
	Caught by ringer	04/11/19	Wenden Lofts (Essex)	0
Lesser Redpoll	Adult Male	02/11/16	Sandwich Bay Estate (Kent)	
Z457578	Caught by ringer	20/03/19	Rowney Wood (Essex)	109
Lesser Redpoll	First-year	07/11/18	Brecht, Antwerpen, **Belgium**	
15627255	Caught by ringer	11/04/19	Rowney Wood (Essex)	309
European Goldfinch	First-year Female	09/01/18	Little Clacton (Essex)	
S929712	Caught by ringer	04/01/19	Meadow Croft Farm, Ugthorpe (North Yorkshire)	323
European Goldfinch	Adult Male	11/12/18	Stocking Green (Essex)	
ARE1962	Caught by ringer	30/05/19	Bolderwood, New Forest (Hampshire)	187
Common Reed Bunting	First-year	21/06/19	Ventes Ragas, Silutes, **Lithuania**	
ZH36903	Caught by ringer	24/11/19	Holland Haven Country Park (Essex)	1,369

Map of Essex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Sudbury
Suffron Walden
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Hatfield Forest
Bishop's Stortford
Harlow
Nazeing G.P.
Epping Forest
Roding
Hainault Forest
Fairlop
Romford
Dagenham Chase
Wanstead Park
Wanstead Park
Fishers Green G.P.
King George V Res.
Girling Res.
Walthamstow Res.
Connaught Water
Ongar
Brentwood
Dagnam Park
Berwick Ponds
Belhus Woods
Rainham Marsh
West Thurrock
East Tilbury
Mucking
Thames Estuary
Stanford Warren
Canvey Is.
Basildon
Pitsea Hall Marsh
Leigh NNR
Southend
Southend Pier
Wakering Stairs
Maplin Bank
Maplin Sands
Holliwell Pt
Fleet Head
Burnham
Tollesbury Fleet
Tollesbury Wick
Bradwell Bird Obs.
Dengie
Osea Is.
Northey Is.
Chigborough Lakes
Maldon
Old Hall Marshes
Mersea Is.
Colne Point
Colne Estuary
Fingringhoe Wick NR
Clacton
Harwich
Horsey Is.
The Naze
Copperas Bay
Stour Estuary
Stour Wood
Manningtree
Holland Brook
Ardleigh Res.
Colchester
Friday Wood
Abberton Res.
Halstead
Chalkney Wood
Marks Hall Wood
Braintree
Gosfield Lake
Coleman's Res.
Witham
Lees Res.
Danbury Ridge
Chelmsford
Hanningfield Res.
S. Woodham Ferrers
Marsh Farm
Hockley Woods
Billericay
Thorndon C.P.
Norsey Wood
Writtle Forest
Hylands Park
Holland Brook
Stour
Colne
Roman
Blackwater
Brain
Ter
Pant
Chelmer
Can
Crouch
Roach
Stort
Cripsey Brook
Beam
Ingrebourne
Essex boundary
LNHS boundary

Nightingale at Middlewick Ranges, Colchester

Andrew Neal

I always feel that hearing a Nightingale sing is the first sign of the year that, for wildlife, business is about to pick up. The lull of the winter is over, and spring is well underway. It is sometimes easy living in the part of Essex that I do, one of the Nightingale's UK strongholds, to get complacent about hearing them. The truth of the matter is that very few people actually get to hear this iconic species sing. Many areas in the UK that were once alive with their song have now fallen silent.

You only have to look at the figures to see that these Red Listed birds are in serious trouble. Between 1967 and 2007 their numbers have dropped by 91%. Even between 1995 and 2008 they have declined by 53%.

With figures that stark, it makes sense that any area used as breeding grounds by these birds should be seen as nationally significant and be protected accordingly. So, when I found out that there were plans to potentially build 1,000 homes on Middlewick Ranges, Colchester, I was shocked as this is a known local hotspot for them. In order to gain a better idea of just how important this area is for Nightingale I decided to log the amount of singing males I heard during my visits to the site during 2019 (I would have done the same in 2020 but unfortunately the Covid-19 situation prevented me from doing so). I logged each individual on a map using GPS in the field so I could get an exact location immediately rather than relying on guess work when I returned home. It only took a few visits to identify the favoured territories and on one visit alone I identified 21 individual singing males. I'm confident that there were no duplicate recordings either, as on that particular visit I cycled so was able to cover ground quickly. I moved from one bird to another with the previous bird still singing as I moved off, staying put and holding territory. With the birds still singing and me being a safe distance away as to not cause a disturbance, I'm confident my numbers were accurate.

With the species in such decline, I think 21 singing males puts Middlewick Ranges far beyond just a locally important Nightingale site but one that should be considered nationally significant. Unfortunately, none of the representatives at the public engagement consultation event could provide any physical evidence of actual wildlife surveys that had been conducted on the area, let

alone anything specific to Nightingale. In addition, they were not locals, so they had no hands-on knowledge about the area and were therefore not equipped to answer the specific questions addressed to them.

The Nightingale are only scratching the surface as to the extent of Middlewick's importance for wildlife. Skylark, another bird in dramatic decline, due to habitat loss, thrive on Middlewick and nest in the exact meadow on which the proposed homes would be built. In fact, 21 Red-Listed bird species have been recorded there, 17 of which are UKBAP priority species. As well as the birds, Middlewick also has records of seven GB Red Listed bees and wasps, 19 Nationally Notable other invertebrates, 18 Essex Red Data invertebrates, five European BAP beetles and reptiles. Not to mention the amount of rare flora that is present there.

I'm sure developers and people in favour of the project would argue that the area marked out for houses does not encroach on the majority of the Nightingale habitat but the fact of the matter is they are present as far up as the bushes and wooded area to the north of the shooting range, on the very cusp of the proposed housing. Also, the southern edge of the building work hits directly into the most northerly tip of the Birch Brook territory and the plot boundary itself intersects it completely. So, the chances of that section being left are very slim plus the disturbance caused to the area in general, during and after building will more than likely make the area too inhospitable for the Nightingale to return to. With alternative breeding grounds being at a premium, this is likely to impact on the other territories nearby such as Friday Wood and Fingringhoe Wick, causing unbalance and conflicts for space and territory disputes.

The biggest worry about Middlewick being purchased by these developers, is that the entire area, right up to Weir Lane, would be under their ownership. It's naive to think that they'll stop at 1,000 houses when they would have all this additional space not making any money for them. The very fact that they need to destroy an entire existing, rich biodiverse, ecosystem in order to create their "green corridor" and "green routes" whilst repeatedly maintaining the importance of promoting/ retaining ecological functionality and connectivity is laughable. It shows how little knowledge or consideration has actually gone into that side of the development planning. Talking about retaining the ecological functionality of the existing local wildlife site just after you've explained that you are going to build houses on half of it doesn't exactly fill you with hope about the other half remaining intact. I don't want the future of such an important site, that is home to so many rare and endangered species, to be in the hands of people whose only real concern is how the area can benefit them financially.

Despite all the great work that everyone has been doing to try and prevent the loss and destruction of Middlewick (most notably the team behind and involved with the 'Save The Middlewick Ranges' Facebook page) , it really does seem like it all falls on deaf ears. It feels as if it's only a matter of time before all this becomes a reality and Middlewick Ranges becomes no more than another statistic, contributing towards the demise of our most critically endangered wildlife.

First Essex Breeding Record of Cattle Egret, Chigborough Lakes Heybridge, Essex Wildlife Trust reserve

John Buchanan and Simon Wood

With various individuals seen around Essex in recent years it was not unexpected that in Spring 2019 there should have been Cattle Egret seen at Rainham Marshes and Abberton Reservoir. Around Maldon though there had been only one previous record, so it was still a good find when Simon Wood spotted one at Home Water fishing lake, part of the Chigborough Lakes complex, on 4th March, seemingly at the time a bird just passing through.

Roll on a few weeks and on 22nd May John Buchanan decided to check out the Little Egret nesting within the heronry at Chigborough Lakes. There in plain sight were two summer plumage Cattle Egret! John phoned a couple of the locals and while waiting for anyone to appear he realised the egrets seemed to be reacting to each other like rival males. On arriving Simon noted one of the birds disappear into thicker foliage with a short stick in its beak. It was apparent now that they could be breeding. Simon decided to follow the path round further to try and get a better angle and quickly spotted another egret upon a nest. After a short wait it moved to reveal a yellow bill and confirm that it was indeed a Cattle Egret on a nest in Essex! It appeared that three birds were initially present but the third soon disappeared.

Due to the rarity and potential accessibility of the nest, we decided to keep the record confidential during the initial weeks. At this time, we did not know if any other Cattle Egret were nesting in Essex and being kept confidential, but it subsequently became clear that this was to be the only nest found during 2019. Luckily the nest could be glimpsed from the footpath along the opposite side of the lake meaning that we could keep it under periodic observation without disturbance. During this period, we had a further surprise on the evening of 23rd June when a first summer Black-crowned Night Heron briefly appeared in one of the bushes close to the Cattle Egret nest before it vanished in front of our eyes and although briefly seen in flight the next evening it was not seen subsequently.

The key dates were:

- 22nd May- three adults seen, and nest located with an adult sat in it potentially brooding
- 13th June- first chick spotted
- 18th June- three healthy chicks seen
- 24th June- four chicks confirmed
- 11th July- four chicks all looking healthy, beginning to clamber about tree and exercising wings

Once it was clear that the chicks were getting mobile and we had concluded that it was safe to do so Simon released the news, initially via Twitter on 8th July, and many people were soon enjoying watching the family. The adults raised all four chicks to fledging. From 8th August, presumably the same family, was being seen at Abberton Reservoir although it seems that one youngster succumbed soon after. The family of five continued to be seen on and off around Abberton Reservoir into December.

Is this the start of colonisation of the County? Nationally, the species has colonised the Somerset Levels and in 2019 breeding was also recorded in Hampshire and Northamptonshire. Unlike the rapid colonisation by Little Egret, the Cattle Egret's has been a bit more of a stop-start affair. The species is one of the most widespread of all birds, its rapid expansion across the world in the last century or so to Europe, the Middle East and North America from Africa and Australasia from south-east Asia, no doubt helped by man's insatiable and environmentally damaging love of beef...

The Breeding Status of the Common Swift *Apus apus apus* in Essex

Past, Present and Future – and the Essex Swift Partnership

Simon Wood and John Smart

Introduction and historical context

The Swift family are masters of the air and it is perhaps no surprise that they are most closely related to Treeswifts and Hummingbirds, all consummate flyers. Swift were present in Europe during the Eocene with the earliest swift-like bird being *Primapus lacki*, found in early Eocene (56-33.9 million years old) deposits in Sussex. The Apodinae bird family is widespread around the world with around 113 extant species, including 20 in the genus *Apus* (BTO, 2019). *Apus apus* has an extensive distribution that encompasses much of Eurasia as far east as western China whilst wintering in central-southern Africa. The sub-species that breeds throughout much of the Western Palearctic as far east as Lake Baikal is *Apus apus apus*. The sub-species *A. a. pekinensis* breeds east of this range and could feasibly occur as a straggler to the west as it is even more of a long distant migrant than 'our' swift.

The name *Apus* comes from the Latin word for Swift, which derived from the Ancient Greek α *a* meaning 'without' and πούς *pous* meaning 'foot' as they believed that the species was a type of swallow without feet.

Man must have had a very long association with the species. From the moment that large high buildings began to be erected which provided an alternative to natural nesting sites such as cliff faces, caves, ledges and holes in trees, the species will have moved into areas of human habitation. In Britain, it was during the Roman invasion that the first large buildings were constructed and likely therefore when Swift took to these as nesting sites.

Their dark colours, screaming calls and rapid movements led to a general fear of the bird and a substantial folklore grew up around the species. Thus, Devil Bird, Devil Screamer, Screecher, Skir

Common Swift (RICHARD ALLEN)

Devil, Swing-devil, Devil's Bitch and Skreek Owl (this one from Broomfield (Christy 1890)) are but a few names for the species from all around the country.

Past range and status in the County

Essex was part of the hub of the Roman Empire in what would become the United Kingdom, tens of hundreds of years later, and large buildings suitable for Swift to nest in could have been found in the larger Roman towns such as Camulodunum (Colchester) and Caesaromagus (Chelmsford) and perhaps even on large fortress settlements such as Othona (Bradwell-on-Sea). Whether the departure of the Empire and ruin of much that was Roman saw a decline in Swift across the County we will never know but by the Saxon period, large chapels and churches, timber framed and probably with thatched roofs would have provided nesting sites.

These structures slowly became converted into the substantial masonry parish churches we have today, particularly from the Norman period onwards and these still provide excellent nesting sites under their eaves, provided the construction allows access to the top of the wide masonry walls.

With the spread of human habitation through the 12th-19th centuries, Swift would have found an increasing number of suitable buildings to nest upon. Whether the folklore connections to the Devil meant that the species was persecuted in anyway is not known, but the Swift must have become increasingly widespread during this period.

Written records suggest the species was generally widespread and common nationally throughout the 19th Century, although some writers noted a reduction in numbers in the first half, but it is difficult to know if this was real or not (Holloway 1996). Although it is interesting to note that other species such as Red-backed Shrike and Wryneck were showing evidence of some declines by the mid-19th century. Christy (1890) described the species as "A common summer visitor in all parts of the County, breeding wherever there are suitable nest holes in either ancient or modern buildings" and went on to note that around Broomfield "...they are decidedly common...Their abundance is due, partly at least, to the fact that a number of different houses and cottages built by the late Mr Thomas Christy...were all roofed in a manner which left open eaves, affording them excellent nesting sites". Nearly 40 years later, Glegg (1929) similarly noted "The Swift is a very common summer resident, probably increasing and more numerous than either the Martin or the Swallow."

Declines were noted in some heavy urban areas (including London) in the early 20th century when pollution levels were high, but these recovered after World War II so overall the distribution remained much as it had been described over the previous 150 years.

Breeding Swift are not easy to count and there has always been a lack of colony counts. The *Essex Bird Report* referred to breeding records for the period 1955-57 during which a survey located a total of 420 pairs across the County, including 180 pairs in Chelmsford Borough with the largest colony being 20 pairs. A total of 62 pairs were also located in ten parishes in Chelmsford Rural District. Otherwise, the survey noted 30+ pairs at Hutton (1955), 20 pairs at Emerson Park Hornchurch (1955), 20+ at Earls Colne and 25+ pairs in one colony at Laindon Church. Near to London, there were two pairs at Wanstead Park (1956) and a pair at Leytonstone (1956). These are important historical data. Hudson and Pyman referred to the Swift being a "Common summer-resident and passage migrant", whilst Cox (1984) dropped the 'Common' simply referring to it as a "Summer resident and passage migrant" although Wood (2007) reinstated it.

From 1958-1988, the *Essex Bird Reports* did not comment on the Swift's breeding status at all; in 1989 it was noted that "...a good breeding season was reported in SW Essex", and from 1992, when the species status was included in the text, the Swift was referred to as a "Common summer visitor". It was from 1996 that attempts were made to 'count' breeding Swift, with that year appearing to have been a poor one in comparison to previous years. There were few continuous years of data from specific sites but around the late 1990s there were reasonable numbers of pairs in Metropolitan south-west Essex in the Ilford-Dagenham-Collier Row area perhaps totalling up to 200 pairs whilst up in the north-west of the County during the early 2000s, 40-50 pairs were present in Newport. Other areas mentioned included Writtle and Grays whilst in 2009, 50 pairs were reported under the

eaves of High Ongar church. More recently up to 18 pairs have been recorded in Braintree and Bocking area, 17 pairs in Westliff-on-Sea and ten in the area of Friday Wood Colchester with other pairs dotted around the County. The Essex Breeding Atlas (Dennis 1996) which, based on survey work over the period 1988-1994 found the species in 77.8% of all tetrads with breeding in just 27.5%.

In Essex there was little change in distribution between the two national Breeding Atlases (1976 and 1993), but there were clear indications of a decline in the third National Atlas (2007-2011). The two London Tetrad Atlases (1977 and 2002) actually revealed an increase in breeding numbers in Metropolitan Essex from 28.5% to 49% of all tetrads holding breeding Swift, although this was perhaps due to increased observer coverage. From the early 1990s anecdotal evidence pointed to declines with the BTO's Breeding Bird Survey (BBS) confirming a decline of 29% between 1994 and 2003. RSPB data has since confirmed that 57% of all UK Swift have been lost since 1995. Consequently, the Swift is now Amber Listed in Birds of Conservation Concern IV.

The present (2017-2019)

Anecdotal evidence from most local observers backs up the national data suggesting continuing significant losses of Swift across the County. The causes are probably multiple but, in the UK, (and increasingly in other parts of it range) it is unfortunate that modern building standards show little thought or understanding of the needs of nesting Swift. Thus, most Swift are to be found in pre-World War II buildings where birds can get into the soffits at high level. To make matters far worse, the tide of refurbishment and renovation that continues to sweep across the UK and Essex, means that more and more traditional Swift breeding locations have been reduced in size or wiped out entirely as their access to traditional sites is blocked. A further issue is scaffolds and associated protective sheeting often block the Swift getting to nest sites even if the site itself is not being destroyed. Across Europe the decline in insects is perhaps another contributory factor, together with rapidly changing habitats in Africa.

It is thus not surprising that the 'strongholds' for breeding Swift are where old, un-refurbished, building stock remains, often protected by the planning system as buildings of historical importance. That includes the affluent zones, city areas and areas of pre-war social housing. Unfortunately, the last-mentioned type is a priority target for refurbishment by the government and the vast majority has no planning protection.

Appeals for people to report Swift have been advertised in the County birding media over the last few years. Reports of Swift 'screaming parties' are a very good indicator as to nesting in a locality where these groups fly low over rooftops and up and down nearby streets. The data collected shows that we have about 100 towns, villages and hamlets right across the County where Swift "screaming parties" have been recorded out of a possible 277 or so localities (36%). Swift are a "canyon nesting" species and mainly make for the built-up environment which closely echoes their natural habitat.

The following is a list of breeding locations during 2017-2019 that we have been made aware of, with those in bold font indicating a stronghold with good evidence for 'many' nesting pairs, with the remainder having pairs present:

Ashen (St Augustine's church and environs**)**; Barking (Ripple Road and Willingale Road); Basildon (Long Riding) and environs including Langdon Hills and plotlands; Belchamp St Paul (Paul's Hall); Billericay; Blackmore; Boxted; Boreham; **Braintree** (London Road, St Michael's Church) **and Bocking**; Brentwood (Kings Chase area) and Shenfield; **Brightlingsea**; Bulmer area; Bures Hamlet; Burnham-on-Crouch; Canewdon; Castle Hedingham; **Chelmsford and environs** (Galleywood (Cormorant Walk) and Great Baddow); Chipping Ongar; Clacton-on-Sea; Coggeshall (Stonham Street); **Colchester and environs** (Castle area, North Hill, Roman Road, St Albright's Church Stanway, Salisbury Road, Shrub End, Turner Road); Collier Row (Hainault Road and Collier Row Lane); Debden near Thaxted: Doddinghurst; Dovercourt: Earls Colne; **Epping**; Finchingfield; Fordham; Frinton-on-Sea (Connaught Avenue, Fourth Avenue and Queens Avenue); Galleywood; Gestingthorpe; Grays (Argents Street, Highview Avenue, Lodge Lane, London Road, Orsett Road, Town Centre, Whitehall

Lane); Great Bardfield; Great Chesterford; **Great Dunmow**; Great Totham South; Great Yeldham; Halstead (Harvey Street area); **Harlow**; Harwich; Henny Street; Hornchurch (Bruce Avenue) and Elm Park; Ingatestone; Kelvedon; Kirby Cross; Kirby-le-Soken; Latchingdon (Christ Church); Langham; Little Easton; Little Waltham; **Maldon** (Cross Road, St Peter's Hospital, Highland Drive) **and Heybridge** (Bentalls building, Goldhanger Road); Marks Tey; Moreton: Mount Bures; Nayland (Essex side of Stour); Noak Bridge; Orsett (St Giles Church and environs); Pebmarsh (St John's Church); Radwinter; Rayleigh (Victoria Road); Rochford; Rowhedge; **Saffron Walden;** St Osyth; Shalford; Sible Hedingham; **Southend-on-Sea conurbation ~ Thorpe Bay, Southchurch, Westcliff-on-Sea** (Anerley Road, Claremont Road, Cranley Avenue, Gainsborough Drive, Northview Drive, Stanita Road, Valkyrie Road and Wellington Avenue), **Chalkwell, Leigh-on-Sea** (Chalkwell Park Drive, Stonehill Road and Tennyson Close) **and South Benfleet** (Vicarage Hill area); South Woodham Ferrers; East Tilbury/Linford/Stanford-le-Hope area; Stansted and Stansted Mountfitchet (Bentfield Green); **Steeple Bumpstead**; Stifford Clays; Stisted; **Thaxted**; Thorpe-le-Soken; Tollesbury; Waltham Abbey; Walthamstow; Wethersfield; West Bergholt; West Mersea (High Street, Queen Anne Road and Upland Road); **Wickham Bishops**; **Witham**; Wickford including Shotgate; **Wivenhoe** (Old town including St Mary's Church); **Writtle** (Chequers Road, St John's Road and at least one other location).

Note that some of the sub-locations under main place names could have records that refer to prior to 2016.

Thus, our main Essex Swift breeding 'strongholds' are the Southend urban area, the ancient towns of Saffron Walden, Thaxted and Great Dunmow in the north-west, Chelmsford and surrounding area in the more central parts and over in the north-east, Colchester, Wivenhoe and Maldon.

The following locations are where Swift have been noted breeding since 1991 but for which no information was forthcoming for 2017-2019. This may simply be due to lack of coverage or perhaps further declines. Surveys of these areas in 2021 would be ideal to confirm the full current breeding range of the species in Essex:

Audley End; Aveley; Birdbrook; Bures; Chigwell (Roding Lane); Chingford (Dale View Road, Frankland and Tufton Road, Mount View Road, Normanshire Drive and New Road and Ropers Avenue and Palace View Avenue); Corbet's Tye; Cressing/Tye Green; East Dagenham (Martins Corner and Leys Avenue); East Ham (Leigh Road); Gants Hill (St George's Church); Good Easter; Great Tey; Great Warley (Crescent Road); Hainault; Harold Park; Harold Wood; Havering Country Park area; Hempstead; High Ongar (St Mary's Church); Highwood; Ilford (Clayhall, Dawlish Drive, Redbridge Lane East, South Park and The Drive); Leytonstone; Newport (two colonies); Little Horkesley; Ovington; Pentlow (Bowers Hall); Rayne; Romford; Roxwell; Stratford/Forest Gate; Terling; Walton-on-the-Naze (High Street); Woodford Green.

Note that if you have up-to-date information on these or any other sites not mentioned in the above lists please forward details to the County recorder, including grid references and breeding numbers as well as a comment on any trends that you are aware of and details of nesting sites themselves.

It should be noted that in Metropolitan Essex in particular, a reduction in recording effort is partially responsible for the apparent lack of Swift, although extensive renovations of the housing stock in for example, Ilford and Dagenham areas, has undoubtedly had a negative effect on Swift numbers.

The Essex Swift Partnership

In recent times, Swift are being evicted from their traditional nesting niches under the eaves of the older style houses when refurbishments block their access with soffit and fascia boards.

The Partnership is a collaboration between the Society and the Essex Wildlife Trust, and its impact was accelerated with the idea by Dr Annie Gordon, the Trust's Conservation Planning Officer, to

identify and collate the Swift breeding locations throughout Essex. This was achieved by an appeal made over two years via various media outlets for people to send in the location of Swift "screaming parties" in their area where they fly repeatedly low over the rooftops, thus indicating that they are breeding nearby.

This data would provide vital 'ammunition' when liaising with Local Authorities when they were formulating their Local Plans. The evidence was used to recommend that Developers, via planning conditions, should provide and install integral Swift nest bricks in new build developments when they were nearby to known nesting Swift colonies. This is now the principal focus of the Partnership.

The Partnership has already had some success with this idea. For example, Maldon Phase 1 has professional ecologists involved and ready to recommend similar provision for the other five phases. The Dry Street development at Basildon is another. Here Redrow Homes have already installed 74 integral Swift nest bricks in the Nethermayne Phase III development site. In addition, Gerry Johnson and John Smart recently attended a Developer's Masterplan Workshop in Broomfield to put the case for integral Swift nest brick provision in a proposed 450 residential housing estate. This event has been followed up by attending further Masterplan Workshops that are now conducted by Zoom Webinar meetings.

"Essex Swifts" has participated in a British Standards Institute consultation for a new Code of Practice on "Biodiversity and the Built Environment: Specification for the Design and Specification of Bird Boxes". In our experience, it is surprising how some Developers and ecologists are unaware of what can be achieved.

The Partnership has also been liaising with the Chelmsford local RSPB group who are themselves responding to Local Plan Masterplan Workshop consultations and advising on a suite of biological enhancements. It has also responded to a consultation run by the "UK Green Building Council" who are to issue "The Retrofit Playbook" to Local Authorities that will advise builders about their wildlife mitigation responsibilities during refurbishment works. This is a positive step forward given that the Partnership believes that many birdlife evictions are down to a lack of awareness as opposed to a deliberate act.

And of course, individuals can help too by installing their own external Swift nest boxes (retrofit). As already referred to, Swift are colonial nesting and treat the built environment as if they are cliff faces. Thus, erecting two but preferably three boxes high up on a gable end, tucked under the eaves, on a North, West or East wall elevation is ideal. Boxes need to be placed five metres high or more above clear ground, as Swift drop out of their nesting location and swoop down to gain speed. The first flight of the young especially so. Thus, bungalows and garages are not suitable for a Swift box project. More information on this can be found at https://www.swift-conservation.org

The Swift is an iconic bird species that sleeps on the wing in flocks at night whilst at high altitude, forms faithful pairs, has a potential life span of more than 21 years and does not become sexually mature until 3-4 years old, winters over the African Congo and returns precisely to the same nesting location each year. The last behaviour has made it particularly vulnerable whilst the decline of aerial insects must also be contributing to their failing fortunes.

The future

Like so many conservation issues, education is the key. The wider the message is spread the more successful an outcome. Swift are clearly in trouble in this country, but they need not be. With very minimal (especially in terms of Developer's budgets) variations to the building specifications, significant numbers of integral Swift nest bricks could be installed in new buildings. Existing properties can be retrofitted with Swift boxes as well; imagine the impact if just half of the membership of the RSPB were to install Swift boxes on their properties. Climate change may well mean that the Swift has the potential to regain its numbers in the UK but in the meantime, it clearly needs all the help it can get from us.

Rare subspecies and their identification in Essex

Introduction

With the increasing interest in sub-species identification, and the current trend of splitting species along sub-species lines (although this trend could well reverse in future), the Society's Identification Panel (EBSIP) has been considering the identification criteria for five different sub-species, with each member of the panel producing a paper on their identification criteria, based on current knowledge. This current knowledge is undoubtedly a 'field of shifting quicksand' as information from both the field of DNA and in the hand and field identification continues to evolve.

The five species/sub-species involved are –
Continental Black-tailed Godwit – *Limosa limosa limosa*
Nordic Jackdaw – *Coloeus monedula spermologus*
Continental Coal Tit – *Periparus ater ater*
Siberian Chiffchaff – *Phylloscopus collybita tristis*
Icelandic Redwing – *Turdus iliacus coburni*

The sub-species

Continental Black-tailed Godwit *Limosa limosa limosa*

Range: Breeds in very small numbers in England (52-58 pairs breeding at two sites in Norfolk/Suffolk in 2016). Otherwise, western Europe across to western Asia.

A subtly less petite, and less strongly marked, race than the one we are familiar with in Essex, Icelandic Black-tailed Godwit *islandica*, Continental Black-tailed Godwit is an exceptionally rare bird in the County. Even with a huge number of returns of colour-ringed individuals from the Essex coast, only four of the Continental race have so far been found (at Old Hall in 2017 and 2018 and Walton Backwaters in 2018).

EBSIP concluded that only birds in juvenile plumage during July to mid-August could be unequivocally identified. 1st summer/second calendar year *limosa* are unlikely to be separable from *islandica* and adult birds are also problematic especially as sexual dimorphism means that some females can appear large.

A comprehensive description will be required, ideally with a set of photographs, and preferably with other Black-tailed Godwit in shot. Photos of colour-ringed *limosa* would also be welcomed for reference purposes.

Nordic Jackdaw *Coloeus monedula spermologus*

Range: Scandinavia and the western-most parts of Eastern Europe.

The 'classic' identification features of a whitish shoulder crescent and increasingly dark plumage are clinal, grading from *monedula* in the west to *spermologus* in Scandinavia and south-central Europe to *soemmerringii* from Finland to south-east Europe. Note that 'Russian Jackdaw' *soemmerringii* is not on the British list but has made it as close to us as Belgium and north-east France where some may winter. Any claims of this race would be considered by the BOURC/BBRC.

A good quality photograph or photographs is required or a full written description. Records will be accepted on the basis of 'showing characteristics of" but will become part of the official record. Note that birds present between November and January are likely to be the easiest to assess as plumage will be fresh.

Continental Coal Tit *Periparus ater ater*

Range: mainland Europe and Siberia but prone to periodic eruptions westward.

A classic Continental Coal Tit will have a pure slate grey back without any hint of olive or green tone to it. Supporting identification features are a largish black bib and pale underparts, as opposed to the buff wash seen on British Coal Tit *britannica*. A feature we have also seen mention of, but could not

be certain about, is the tendency for Continental Coal Tit to show a crest. Certainly, the further east one travels in Europe the more obvious this feature becomes...any observations on this feature would be appreciated.

Either photos from several angles (so changing lighting can be assessed) and/or a very good description detailing the above features are required.

As a final note, just because it is a Coal Tit on the coast in an unusual location, does not mean it is a Continental Coal Tit! The British race is a well-known wanderer and can and will turn up anywhere.

Siberian Chiffchaff *Phylloscopus collybita tristis*

Range: Siberia from the Urals eastward.

Perhaps more has been written on the identification of this sub-species than any other, so it won't be repeated here at this time.

To be brief, EBSIP will require photos and/or a very good description concentrating particularly on plumage tones and colours and description of its call and/or song. A recording of its call/song would be ideal – something that is much easier these days as most of us carry phones with a voice memo recording App.

The 'peep' call and song are distinctive. The song is usually heard from March onwards and would help confirm the identification of any wintering individuals suspected of being *tristis* if it has not been heard to call.

All accepted records will be on the basis of 'showing characteristics of' and the record will become part of the official record.

Any bird claimed prior to the middle of September is highly unlikely to be a Siberian Chiffchaff.

Icelandic Redwing *Turdus iliacus coburni*

Range: Breeds on Iceland and The Faroes, wintering in Britain, mostly in the north and west with birds, apparently mostly first year birds, moving down the west coast of France and Iberia.

A classic Icelandic Redwing will be extremely heavily marked on the breast and flanks to the point that the streaks merge into solid areas of brown, whilst the red on the wing is browny-red rather than the rich orange-red of the nominate race. The legs are also generally dark, unlike the pinkish legs of nominate race.

Good photos and/or description are required. Although breeding in geographically isolated areas, the plumage and structural characteristics appear to overlap at the extremes of each sub-species, so all records that are accepted will be on the basis that they show 'characteristics of' and will become part of the official record.

Past Records of these sub-species

There are a number of records for 2017-2019 that have been held back pending this review. These will now be assessed. Older records of the five sub-species will be reviewed with EBSIP taking a pragmatic approach to this review.

Other sub-species

A recent record of a Lesser Whitethroat on Foulness Island in December 2018 showing characteristics of the race *blythi* from Siberia, Siberian Lesser Whitethroat, has meant that EBSIP is having to brush up on the identification features of this race and a decision will be made on this in due course. Like most of the sub-species above a good set of photographs and/or description will be required.

Conclusion

We hope that by highlighting the identification requirements for these sub-species we will stimulate interest in trying to locate and identify and record them.

The Identification Panel

David Acfield, Sean Nixon, Bob Pease, Mick Tracey, Paul Wood, Simon Wood

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 2019.

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. Ebirder;
4. 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.
5. The good old-fashioned paper method, although this does make a lot of work for the County Recorder, so one of the above is preferable.

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** 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** 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 with 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 2019* 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) now stands at 394 species as of 31st December 2019, with 36 additional sub-species identified. Note that four of the "species" on the Essex list are actually difficult-to-separate species pairs – Isabelline/Red-tailed Shrike, Western/Eastern Bonelli's Warbler, Moltoni's/Subalpine 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 152 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	IOC World Bird List Name	English Name	Latin Name	Essex Records to 2019			
	R A E X				No.s	First	Last	Years since last record
1		RED-LEGGED PARTRIDGE		*Alectoris rufa rufa*		1777	2019	0
2	R E X	GREY PARTRIDGE		*Perdix perdix perdix*		1600s	2019	0
3	A	COMMON QUAIL	Quail	*Coturnix coturnix coturnix*		1777	2019	0
4		COMMON PHEASANT	Pheasant	*Phasianus colchicus**		1059	2019	0
5	A	BRANT GOOSE	Brent Goose	*Branta bernicla*		1730	2019	0
		Dark-bellied Brant		*Branta bernicla bernicla*		1730	2019	0
		Pale-bellied Brant		*Branta bernicla hrota*		1879	2019	0
		Black Brant §		*Branta bernicla nigricans*	60	1957	2019	0
6		RED-BREASTED GOOSE		*Branta ruficollis*	13	1871	2016	3
7		CANADA GOOSE		*Branta canadensis canadensis*		1836	2019	0
8	A	BARNACLE GOOSE		*Branta leucopsis*		1830	2019	0
9	A	GREYLAG GOOSE		*Anser anser anser*		1822	2019	0
10	A	TAIGA BEAN GOOSE		*Anser fabalis*	37	1838	2017	2
11	A	PINK-FOOTED GOOSE		*Anser brachyrhynchus*		1841	2019	0
12	A	TUNDRA BEAN GOOSE		*Anser serrirostris*	322	1838	2019	0
13	R	GREATER WHITE-FRONTED GOOSE	White-fronted Goose	*Anser albifrons*		1845	2019	0
		Russian White-fronted Goose		*Anser albifrons albifrons*		1845	2019	0
		Greenland White-fronted Goose		*Anser albifrons flavirostris*	8	1962	1996	23

	Cons. Status		IOC World Bird List Name	English Name	Latin Name	Essex Records to 2019			
	R	A E X				No.s	First	Last	Years since last record
14			LESSER WHITE-FRONTED GOOSE		*Anser erythropus*	4	1986	2017	2
15			MUTE SWAN		*Cygnus olor*		1247	2019	0
16			TUNDRA SWAN	Bewick's Swan	*Cygnus columbianus bewickii*		1837	2019	0
17			WHOOPER SWAN		*Cygnus cygnus*		1730	2019	0
18			EGYPTIAN GOOSE		*Alopochen aegyptiaca*		1868	2019	0
19			COMMON SHELDUCK	Shelduck	*Tadorna tadorna*		1730	2019	0
20		X	MANDARIN		*Aix galericulata*		1947	2019	0
21			BAIKAL TEAL§		*Sibirionetta formosa*	2	1906	2010	9
22			GARGANEY		*Spatula querquedula*		1835	2019	0
23			BLUE-WINGED TEAL		*Spatula discors*	6	1989	2006	13
24		X	NORTHERN SHOVELER	Shoveler	*Spatula clypeata*		1835	2019	0
25		X	GADWALL		*Mareca strepera strepara*		1837	2019	0
26			FALCATED DUCK		*Mareca falcata*	1	1998	1998	21
27			EURASIAN WIGEON	Wigeon	*Mareca penelope*		1714	2019	0
28			AMERICAN WIGEON		*Mareca americana*	2	1962	2004	15
29			MALLARD		*Anas platyrhynchos platyrhynchos*		1714	2019	0
30			NORTHERN PINTAIL	Pintail	*Anas acuta*		1714	2019	0
31		X	EURASIAN TEAL	Teal	*Anas crecca*		1714	2019	0
32			GREEN-WINGED TEAL		*Anas carolinensis*	30	1956	2019	0
33			RED-CRESTED POCHARD		*Netta rufina*		1844	2019	0
34			CANVASBACK		*Aythya valisineria*	1	1997	2001	18
35		X	COMMON POCHARD	Pochard	*Aythya ferina*		1730	2019	0
36			FERRUGINOUS DUCK		*Aythya nyroca*	47	1880	2019	0
37			RING-NECKED DUCK		*Aythya collaris*	12	1979	2019	0
38			TUFTED DUCK		*Aythya fuligula*		1821	2019	0
39			GREATER SCAUP	Scaup	*Aythya marila*		1830	2019	0
40			LESSER SCAUP		*Aythya affinis*	2	2003	2005	14
41			KING EIDER		*Somateria spectabilis*	1	1977	1977	42
42			COMMON EIDER	Eider	*Somateria mollissima mollissima*		1865	2019	0
43			SURF SCOTER		*Melanitta perspicillata*	2	1997	2018	1
44			VELVET SCOTER		*Melanitta fusca*		1829	2019	0
45			COMMON SCOTER		*Melanita nigra*		1730	2019	0
46			LONG-TAILED DUCK		*Clangula hyemalis*		1832	2019	0
47			COMMON GOLDENEYE	Goldeneye	*Bucephala clangula clangula*		1777	2019	0
48			SMEW		*Mergellus albellus*		1819	2019	0
49			COMMON MERGANSER	Goosander	*Mergus merganser merganser*		1830	2019	0
50			RED-BREASTED MERGANSER		*Mergus serrator*		1826	2019	0
51			RUDDY DUCK		*Oxyura jamaicensis jamaicensis*		1958	2019	0
52			EUROPEAN NIGHTJAR	Nightjar	*Caprimulgus europaeus europaeus*		1738	2014	5
53			WHITE-THROATED NEEDLETAIL §		*Hirundapus caudacutus caudacutus*	1	1846	1846	173
54			ALPINE SWIFT		*Tachymarptis melba melba*	26	1871	2018	1

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55		A	COMMON SWIFT	Swift	*Apus apus apus*		1818	2019	0
56			PALLID SWIFT		*Apus pallidus**	1	2001	2001	18
57			GREAT BUSTARD		*Otis tarda tarda*	2	1879	1890	129
58			LITTLE BUSTARD		*Tetrax tetrax*	12	1823	1969	50
59	R		COMMON CUCKOO	Cuckoo	*Cuculus canorus canorus*		1818	2019	0
60			PALLAS'S SANDGROUSE		*Syrrhaptes paradoxus*	90	1863	1908	111
61			ROCK DOVE/FERAL PIGEON		*Columba livia livia*		1886	2019	0
62		A	STOCK DOVE		*Columba oenas oenas*		1838	2019	0
63			COMMON WOOD PIGEON	Woodpigeon	*Columba palumbus palumbus*		1843	2019	0
64		X	EUROPEAN TURTLE DOVE	Turtle Dove	*Streptopelia turtur turtur*		1818	2019	0
65	R		EUROPEAN COLLARED DOVE	Collared Dove	*Streptopelia decaocto decaocto*		1957	2019	0
66		X	WATER RAIL		*Rallus aquaticus aquaticus*		1830	2019	0
67	R		CORN CRAKE	Corncrake	*Crex crex*		1822	2013	6
68			LITTLE CRAKE		*Porzana parva intermedia*	4	1873	1973	46
69			BAILLON'S CRAKE		*Porzana pusilla*	3	1874	2012	7
70		A	SPOTTED CRAKE		*Porzana porzana*	86	1838	2019	0
71			COMMON MOORHEN	Moorhen	*Gallinula chloropus chloropus*		1863	2019	0
72			EURASIAN COOT	Coot	*Fulica atra atra*		1819	2019	0
73		A	COMMON CRANE	Crane	*Grus grus*	178	1888	2019	0
74			LITTLE GREBE		*Tachybaptus ruficollis ruficollis*		1838	2019	0
75			RED-NECKED GREBE		*Podiceps grisegena grisegena*		1837	2019	0
76			GREAT CRESTED GREBE		*Podiceps cristatus cristatus*		1838	2019	0
77	R		HORNED GREBE	Slavonian Grebe	*Podiceps auritus auritus*		1838	2019	0
78		A	BLACK-NECKED GREBE		*Podiceps nigricollis nigricollis*		1821	2019	0
79		A E	EURASIAN STONE-CURLEW	Stone-curlew	*Burhinus oedicnemus oedicnemus*		1832	2019	0
80		A	EURASIAN OYSTERCATCHER	Oystercatcher	*Haematopus ostralegus ostralegus*		1730	2019	0
81			BLACK-WINGED STILT		*Himantopus himantopus*	63	1947	2019	0
82		X	PIED AVOCET	Avocet	*Recurvirostra avosetta*		1700	2019	0
83	R	X	NORTHERN LAPWING	Lapwing	*Vanellus vanellus*		1668	2019	0
84			SOCIABLE LAPWING	Sociable Plover	*Vanellus gregarious*	4	1976	2005	14
85			WHITE-TAILED LAPWING	White-tailed Plover	*Vanellus leucurus*	1	2010	2010	9
86			EUROPEAN GOLDEN PLOVER	Golden Plover	*Pluvialis apricaria*		1845	2019	0
87			PACIFIC GOLDEN PLOVER		*Pluvialis fulva*	2	1896	2000	19
88			AMERICAN GOLDEN PLOVER		*Pluvialis dominica*	4	2004	2018	1
89		A	GREY PLOVER		*Pluvialis squatarola squatarola*		1842	2019	0
90	R	X	COMMON RINGED PLOVER	Ringed Plover	*Charadrius hiaticula*		1838	2019	0
			Ringed Plover		*Charadrius hiaticula hiaticula*	~	~	2019	0
			Eurasian Ringed Plover		*Charadrius hiaticula tundrae*	~	~	2019	0
91		X	LITTLE RINGED PLOVER		*Charadrius dubius curonicus*		1947	2019	0

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92		KENTISH PLOVER		*Charadrius alexandrinus alexandrinus*	58	1876	2018	1
93		GREATER SAND PLOVER		*Charadrius leschenaultii**	1	1992	1992	27
94	R	EURASIAN DOTTEREL	Dotterel	*Charadrius morinellus*	343	1830	2019	0
95	R	WHIMBREL		*Numenius phaeopus phaeopus*		1819	2019	0
96	R	EURASIAN CURLEW	Curlew	*Numenius arquata arquata*		1826	2019	0
97	A	BAR-TAILED GODWIT		*Limosa lapponica lapponica*		1547	2019	0
98	R	BLACK-TAILED GODWIT		*Limosa limosa*		1834	2019	0
		Continental Black-tailed Godwit		*Limosa limosa limosa*	7	2007	2019	0
		Icelandic Black-tailed Godwit		*Limosa limosa islandica*		1834	2019	0
99	A	RUDDY TURNSTONE	Turnstone	*Arenaria interpres interpres*		1826	2019	0
100	A	RED KNOT	Knot	*Calidris canutus islandica*		1777	2019	0
101	R	RUFF		*Calidris pugnax*		1833	2019	0
102		BROAD-BILLED SANDPIPER		*Calidris falcinellus falcinellus*	7	1988	2010	9
103		STILT SANDPIPER		*Calidris himantopus*	1	1973	1973	46
104	A	CURLEW SANDPIPER		*Calidris ferruginea*		1826	2019	0
105		TEMMINCK'S STINT		*Calidris temminckii*	247	1835	2019	0
106	A	SANDERLING		*Calidris alba alba*		1828	2019	0
107	A	DUNLIN		*Calidris alpina*		1824	2019	0
		Scandinavian Dunlin		*Calidris alpina alpina*		~	2019	0
		Greenland Dunlin		*Calidris alpina arctica*		~	2019	0
		West European Dunlin		*Calidris alpina schinzii*		~	2019	0
108	A	PURPLE SANDPIPER		*Calidris maritima*		1833	2019	0
109		BAIRD'S SANDPIPER		*Calidris bairdii*	3	1972	2010	9
110		LITTLE STINT		*Calidris minuta*		1826	2019	0
111		WHITE-RUMPED SANDPIPER		*Calidris fuscicollis*	11	1964	2011	8
112		BUFF-BREASTED SANDPIPER		*Calidris subruficollis*	16	1975	2007	12
113		PECTORAL SANDPIPER		*Calidris melanotos*	116	1949	2019	0
114		SEMIPALMATED SANDPIPER		*Calidris pusilla*	2	2010	2011	8
115		WESTERN SANDPIPER		*Calidris mauri*	1	1973	1973	46
116		LONG-BILLED DOWITCHER		*Limnodromus scolopaceus*	9	1979	2011	8
117	R	EURASIAN WOODCOCK	Woodcock	*Scolopax rusticola*		1735	2019	0
118		JACK SNIPE		*Lymnocryptes minimus*		1838	2019	0
119		GREAT SNIPE		*Gallinago media*	21	1825	1989	30
120	A	X COMMON SNIPE		*Gallinago gallinago gallinago*		1735	2019	0
121		TEREK SANDPIPER		*Xenus cinereus*	3	1978	2002	17
122		WILSON'S PHALAROPE		*Phalaropus tricolor*	6	1977	2015	4
123	R	RED-NECKED PHALAROPE		*Phalaropus robatus*	92	1842	2018	1
124		RED PHALAROPE	Grey Phalarope	*Phalaropus fulicarius*	122	1838	2018	1
125	A	COMMON SANDPIPER		*Actitis hypoleucos*		1819	2019	0
126		SPOTTED SANDPIPER		*Actitis macularius*	7	1978	2011	8

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127		GREEN SANDPIPER		*Tringa ochropus*		1832	2019	0
128		SOLITARY SANDPIPER		*Tringa solitaria**	2	1967	1974	45
129		LESSER YELLOWLEGS		*Tringa flavipes*	15	1921	2016	3
130		COMMON REDSHANK	Redshank	*Tringa totanus*		1826	2019	0
	X	Common Redshank		*Tringa totanus totanus*		~	2019	0
		Icelandic Redshank		*Tringa totanus robusta*		~	2019	0
131		MARSH SANDPIPER		*Tringa stagnatilis*	14	1956	2019	0
132		WOOD SANDPIPER		*Tringa glareola*		1835	2019	0
133		SPOTTED REDSHANK		*Tringa erythropus*		1832	2019	0
134		COMMON GREENSHANK	Greenshank	*Tringa nebularia*		1738	2019	0
135		GREATER YELLOWLEGS		*Tringa melanoleuca*	2	1949	1995	24
136		CREAM-COLOURED COURSER		*Cursorius cursor cursor*	2	1858	1984	35
137		COLLARED PRATINCOLE		*Glareola pratincola pratincola*	3	1861	2005	14
138		ORIENTAL PRATINCOLE §		*Glareola maldivarum*	1	1981	1981	38
139		BLACK-WINGED PRATINCOLE		*Glareola nordmanni*	1	1960	1960	59
140		BLACK-LEGGED KITTIWAKE	Kittiwake	*Rissa tridactyla tridactyla*		1835	2019	0
141		SABINE'S GULL		*Xema sabini*	152	1862	2019	0
142		BONAPARTE'S GULL		*Chroicocephalus philadelphia*	8	1994	2019	0
143		BLACK-HEADED-GULL		*Chroicocephalus ridibundus*		1662	2019	0
144		LITTLE GULL		*Hydrocoloeus minutus*		1845	2019	0
145		LAUGHING GULL		*Leucophaeus atricilla**	3	1974	2017	2
146		FRANKLIN'S GULL		*Leucophaeus pipixcan*	3	2000	2016	3
147		MEDITERRANEAN GULL §		*Ichthyaetus melanocephalus*		1866	2019	0
148		MEW GULL	Common Gull	*Larus canus*		1835	2019	0
		Common Gull		*Larus canus canus*		1835	2019	0
		Russian Common Gull §		*Larus canus heinei*	1	1984	1984	35
149		RING-BILLED GULL		*Larus delawarensis*	31	1979	2018	1
150		GREAT BLACK-BACKED GULL		*Larus marinus*		1838	2019	0
151		GLAUCOUS GULL		*Larus hyperboreus hyperboreus*		1885	2019	0
152		ICELAND GULL		*Larus glaucoides*	162	1887	2019	0
		Iceland Gull		*Larus glaucoides glaucoides*	161	1887	2019	0
		Thayer's Gull		*Larus glaucoides thayeri*	1	2010	2010	9
153		EUROPEAN HERRING GULL	Herring Gull	*Larus argentatus*		1730	2019	0
		Scandinavian Herring Gull		*Larus argentatus argentatus*		~	2019	0
		West European Herring Gull		*Larus argentatus argenteus*		~	2019	0
154		CASPIAN GULL		*Larus cachinnans*		1995	2019	0
155		YELLOW-LEGGED GULL		*Larus michahellis michahellis*		1973	2019	0
156		SLATY-BACKED GULL §		*Larus schistisagus*	1	2011	2011	8
157		LESSER BLACK-BACKED GULL		*Larus fuscus*		1838	2019	0
		Common Lesser Black-backed Gull		*Larus fuscus graelsii*		~	2019	0

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		Intermediate Lesser Black-backed Gull		*Larus fuscus intermedius*		~	2019	0
158		GULL-BILLED TERN		*Gelochelidon nilotica nilotica*	6	1901	2003	16
159		CASPIAN TERN		*Hydroprogne caspia*	7	1959	2015	4
160	A	SANDWICH TERN		*Thalasseus sandvicensis*		1738	2019	0
161	A	X LITTLE TERN		*Sternula albifrons albifrons*		1820	2019	0
162		LEAST TERN §		*Sternula antillarum*	1	1991	1991	28
163		BRIDLED TERN		*Onychoprion anaethetus**	2	1991	2006	13
164	R	ROSEATE TERN		*Sterna dougallii dougallii*	47	1973	2016	3
165	A	COMMON TERN		*Sterna hirundo hirundo*		1821	2019	0
166	A	ARCTIC TERN		*Sterna paradisaea*		1867	2019	0
167		FORSTER'S TERN		*Sterna forsteri*	2	1999	2016	3
168		WHISKERED TERN		*Chlidonias hybrida hybrida*	5	1967	2009	10
169		WHITE-WINGED TERN	White-winged Black Tern	*Chlidonias leucopterus*	76	1912	2019	0
170		BLACK TERN		*Chlidonias niger niger*		1829	2019	0
171	A	GREAT SKUA		*Stercorarius skua*		1820	2019	0
172		POMARINE JAEGER	Pomarine Skua	*Stercorarius pomarinus*		1828	2019	0
173	R	PARASITIC JAEGER	Arctic Skua	*Stercorarius parasiticus*		1837	2019	0
174		LONG-TAILED JAEGER	Long-tailed Skua	*Stercorarius longicaudus*	198	1842	2019	0
175		LITTLE AUK		*Alle alle alle*		1832	2019	0
176	A	COMMON MURRE	Common Guillemot	*Uria aalge*		1861	2019	0
		Scandinavian Guillemot		*Uria aalge aalge*		~	2019	0
		West European Guillemot		*Uria aalge albionis*		~	2019	0
177	A	RAZORBILL		*Alca torda islandica*		1840	2019	0
178	A	BLACK GUILLEMOT		*Cepphus grille arcticus*	11	1869	2018	1
179	R	ATLANTIC PUFFIN	Puffin	*Fractecula arctica*	124	1842	2019	0
180		RED-THROATED LOON	Red-throated Diver	*Gavia stellata*		1777	2019	0
181	A	BLACK-THROATED LOON	Black-throated Diver	*Gavia arctica arctica*		1840	2019	0
182	A	COMMON LOON	Great Northern Diver	*Gavia immer*		1813	2019	0
183	A	EUROPEAN STORM PETREL	Storm Petrel	*Hydrobates pelagicus pelagicus*	72	1801	2017	2
184	A	LEACH'S STORM PETREL	Leach's Petrel	*Oceanodroma leucorhoa leucorhoa*	244	1823	2019	0
185	A	NORTHERN FULMAR	Fulmar	*Fulmarus glacialis glacialis*		1834	2019	0
186		CORY'S SHEARWATER		*Calonectris borealis*	11	1978	2017	2
187		SOOTY SHEARWATER		*Ardenna griseus*	240	1969	2019	0
188		GREAT SHEARWATER		*Ardenna gravis*	3	1990	2012	7
189	A	MANX SHEARWATER		*Puffinus puffinus*		1866	2019	0
190	R	BALEARIC SHEARWATER		*Puffinus mauretanicus*	19	1975	2016	3
191		BLACK STORK		*Ciconia nigra*	10	1881	2014	5
192		WHITE STORK		*Ciconia ciconia ciconia*	46	1842	2019	0
193	A	NORTHERN GANNET	Gannet	*Morus bassanus*		1830	2019	0

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194	R		EUROPEAN SHAG	Shag	*Phalacrocorax aristotelis aristotelis*		1820	2019	0
195			GREAT CORMORANT	Cormorant	*Phalacrocorax carbo*		1600s	2019	0
			Cormorant		*Phalacrocorax carbo carbo*		1600s	2019	0
			Continental Cormorant		*Phalacrocorax carbo sinensis*		?	2019	0
196			GLOSSY IBIS		*Plegadis falcinellus*	50	1872	2019	0
197	A		EURASIAN SPOONBILL	Spoonbill	*Platalea leucorodia leucorodia*		1815	2019	0
198	A	E X	EURASIAN BITTERN	Bittern	*Botaurus stellaris stellaris*		1820	2019	0
199			AMERICAN BITTERN		*Botaurus lentiginosus*	1	1826	1826	193
200			LITTLE BITTERN		*Ixobrychus minutus minutus*	13	1835	1970	49
201			BLACK-CROWNED NIGHT HERON	Night Heron	*Nycticorax nycticorax nycticorax*	20	1839	2019	0
202			SQUACCO HERON		*Ardeola ralloides*	1	2004	2004	15
203			WESTERN CATTLE EGRET	Cattle Egret	*Bubulcus ibis*	71	1995	2019	0
204			GREY HERON		*Ardea cinerea cinerea*		1594	2019	0
205			PURPLE HERON		*Ardea purpurea purpurea*	31	1839	2019	0
206			GREAT EGRET	Great White Egret	*Ardea alba alba*		2002	2019	0
207			LITTLE EGRET		*Egretta garzetta garzetta*		1950	2019	0
208	A		WESTERN OSPREY	Osprey	*Pandion haliaetus haliaetus*		1730	2019	0
209			EGYPTIAN VULTURE		*Neophron percnopterus percnopterus*	1	1868	1868	151
210	A		EUROPEAN HONEY BUZZARD	Honey-buzzard	*Pernis apivorus*	373	1837	2019	0
211			GREATER SPOTTED EAGLE	Spotted Eagle	*Clanga clanga*	3	1891	1908	111
212			EURASIAN SPARROWHAWK	Sparrowhawk	*Accipiter nisus nisus*		1835	2019	0
213			NORTHERN GOSHAWK	Goshawk	*Accipiter gentilis gentilis*	107	1100s	2018	1
214	A	X	WESTERN MARSH HARRIER	Marsh Harrier	*Circus aeruginosus aeruginosus*		1823	2019	0
215	R	X	HEN HARRIER		*Circus cyaneus*		1738	2019	0
216			PALLID HARRIER		*Circus macrourus*	2	1993	2011	8
217	A		MONTAGU'S HARRIER		*Circus pygargus*		1832	2019	0
218			RED KITE		*Milvus milvus milvus*		1768	2019	0
219			BLACK KITE		*Milvus migrans migrans*	33	1971	2019	0
220	R		WHITE-TAILED EAGLE		*Haliaeetus albicilla albicilla*	19	c991	2019	0
221			ROUGH-LEGGED BUZZARD		*Buteo lagopus lagopus*		1836	2019	0
222			COMMON BUZZARD		*Buteo buteo buteo*		1830	2019	0
223			WESTERN BARN OWL	Barn Owl	*Tyto alba*		~	2019	0
			Barn Owl		*Tyto alba alba*		1738	2019	0
			Dark-breasted Barn Owl		*Tyto alba guttata*	10	1843	2002	17
224			SCOPS OWL		*Otus scops scops*	3	1821	1888	131
225			SNOWY OWL		*Bubo scandiacus*	2	1963	2014	5
226	A		TAWNY OWL		*Strix aluco sylvatica*		1832	2019	0
227			LITTLE OWL		*Athene noctua vilada*		1865	2019	0
228			BOREAL OWL	Tengmalm's Owl	*Aegolius funereus funereus*	1	1877	1877	142
229		X	LONG-EARED OWL		*Asio otus otus*		1829	2019	0
230	A	X	SHORT-EARED OWL		*Asio flammeus flammeus*		1587	2019	0

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231		EURASIAN HOOPOE	Hoopoe	*Upupa epops epops*	224	1667	2019	0
232		EUROPEAN ROLLER	Roller	*Coracias garrulus garrulus*	4	1865	1976	43
233	A	COMMON KINGFISHER	Kingfisher	*Alcedo atthis ispida*		1838	2019	0
234		EUROPEAN BEE-EATER	Bee-eater	*Merops apiaster*	58	1854	2016	3
235		EURASIAN WRYNECK	Wryneck	*Jynx torquilla torquilla*		1818	2019	0
236	R	LESSER SPOTTED WOODPECKER		*Dryobates minor comminutus*		1830	2019	0
237		GREAT SPOTTED WOODPECKER		*Dendrocopos major anglicus*		1832	2019	0
238		EUROPEAN GREEN WOODPECKER	Green Woodpecker	*Picus viridis viridis*		1838	2019	0
239		LESSER KESTREL		*Falco naumanni*	1	1974	1974	45
240	A	COMMON KESTREL	Kestrel	*Falco tinnunculus tinnunculus*		1890	2019	0
241		RED-FOOTED FALCON		*Falco vespertinus*	35	1873	2019	0
242		ELEONORA'S FALCON		*Falco eleonorae*	1	2008	2008	11
243	R	X MERLIN		*Falco columbarius aesalon*		1829	2019	0
244		X EURASIAN HOBBY	Hobby	*Falco subbuteo subbuteo*		1818	2019	0
245		PEREGRINE FALCON	Peregrine	*Falco peregrinus peregrinus*		1823	2019	0
246		ROSE-RINGED PARAKEET	Ring-necked Parakeet	*Psittacula krameri*		1971	2019	0
		Asian Ring-necked Parakeet		*Psittacula krameri borealis*		~	2019	0
		Indian Ring-necked Parakeet		*Psittacula krameri manillensis*		~	2019	0
247	R	RED-BACKED SHRIKE		*Lanius collurio*		1818	2019	0
248		ISABELLINE/RED-TAILED SHRIKE	Daurian/ Turkestan Shrike	*Lanius isabellinus/phoenicuroides*	2	1988	2016	3
249		LESSER GREY SHRIKE		*Lanius minor*	3	1989	2008	11
250		GREAT GREY SHRIKE		*Lanius excubitor*				
		Great Grey Shrike		*Lanius excubitor excubitor*		1827	2017	2
		Steppe Grey Shrike		*Lanius excubitor pallidirostris*	2	1994	1996	23
251		WOODCHAT SHRIKE		*Lanius senator senator*	23	1872	2016	3
252	R	EURASIAN GOLDEN ORIOLE	Golden Oriole	*Oriolus oriolus*		1830	2019	0
253		EURASIAN JAY	Jay	*Garrulus glandarius rufitergum*		1878	2019	0
254		EURASIAN MAGPIE	Magpie	*Pica pica pica*		1838	2019	0
255		SPOTTED NUTCRACKER	Nutcracker	*Nucifraga caryocatactes macrorynchos*	26	1855	1968	51
256		RED-BILLED CHOUGH	Chough	*Pyrrhocorax pyrrhocorax pyrrhocorax*	2	1888	1888	131
257		WESTERN JACKDAW	Jackdaw	*Coloeus monedula*		1857	2019	0
		Jackdaw		*Coloeus monedula monedula*		1857	2019	0
		Nordic Jackdaw		*Coloeus monedula spermologus*	8	2006	2019	0
258		ROOK		*Corvus frugilegus frugilegus*		1838	2019	0
259		CARRION CROW		*Corvus corone corone*		1835	2019	0
260		HOODED CROW		*Corvus cornix cornix*		1835	2018	1
261		NORTHERN RAVEN	Raven	*Corvus corax corax*		c991	2019	0
262		BOHEMIAN WAXWING	Waxwing	*Bombycilla garrulus garrulus*		1835	2019	0
263		COAL TIT		*Periparus ater*		1890	2019	0

	Cons. Status		IOC World Bird List Name	English Name	Latin Name	Essex Records to 2019			
	R	A E X				No.s	First	Last	Years since last record
			Coal Tit		*Periparus ater britannicus*		1890	2019	0
			Continental Coal Tit		*Periparus ater ater*	?	1952	2018	1
264			EUROPEAN CRESTED TIT	Crested Tit	*Lophophanes cristatus**	4	1829	1844	175
265	R	X	MARSH TIT		*Poecile palustris dresseri*		1890	2019	0
266	R	X	WILLOW TIT		*Poecile montanus kleinschmidti*		1912	2005	14
267			EURASIAN BLUE TIT	Blue Tit	*Cyanistes caeruleus obscurus*		1884	2019	0
268			GREAT TIT		*Parus major*		1890	2019	0
			British Great Tit		*Parus major newtoni*		~	2019	0
			Eurasian Great Tit		*Parus major major*		~	2019	0
269			EURASIAN PENDULINE TIT	Penduline Tit	*Remiz pendulinus pendulinus*	17	1982	2019	0
270		X	BEARDED REEDLING	Bearded Tit	*Panurus biarmicus biarmicus*		1738	2019	0
271			WOODLARK		*Lullula arborea arborea*		1832	2019	0
272	R	E X	EURASIAN SKYLARK	Skylark	*Alauda arvensis arvensis*		1865	2019	0
273	A		HORNED LARK	ShoreLark	*Eremophila alpestris flava*		1862	2019	0
274			GREATER SHORT-TOED LARK	Short-toed Lark	*Calandrella brachydactyla**	3	1965	1999	20
275		X	SAND MARTIN		*Riparia riparia riparia*		1818	2019	0
276			BARN SWALLOW	Swallow	*Hirundo rustica rustica*		1818	2019	0
277	A	X	COMMON HOUSE MARTIN	House Martin	*Delichon urbicum urbicum*		1818	2019	0
278			RED-RUMPED SWALLOW		*Cecropis daurica rufula*	31	1969	2019	0
279			CETTI'S WARBLER		*Cettia cetti cetti*		1976	2019	0
280			LONG-TAILED TIT		*Aegithalos caudatus*		1854	2019	0
			British Long-tailed Tit		*Aegithalos caudatus rosaceus*		1854	2019	0
			Northern Long-tailed Tit		*Aegithalos caudatus caudatus*	6	1912	2004	15
281	R	X	WOOD WARBLER		*Phylloscopus sibilatrix*		1821	2019	0
282			WESTERN/EASTERN BONELLI'S WARBLER		*Phylloscopus bonelli/orientalis*	1	1988	1988	31
283			HUME'S LEAF WARBLER	Hume's Warbler	*Phylloscopus humei humei*	1	2004	2004	15
284			YELLOW-BROWED WARBLER		*Phylloscopus inornatus*		1957	2019	0
285			PALLAS'S LEAF WARBLER	Pallas's Warbler	*Phylloscopus proregulus*	57	1960	2019	0
286			RADDE'S WARBLER		*Phylloscopus schwarzi*	3	2000	2008	11
287			DUSKY WARBLER		*Phylloscopus fuscatus fuscatus*	8	1987	2018	1
288	A		WILLOW WARBLER		*Phylloscopus trochilus*		1818	2019	0
			European Willow Warbler		*Phylloscopus trochilus trochilus*		~	2019	0
			Eurasian Willow Warbler		*Phylloscopus trochilus acredula*		~	2019	0
289			COMMON CHIFFCHAFF	Chiffchaff	*Phylloscopus collybita*		1818	2019	0
			Common Chiffchaff		*Phylloscopus collybita collybita*		1818	2019	0
			Siberian Chiffchaff		*Phylloscopus collybita tristis*	28	1987	2019	0
290			GREENISH WARBLER		*Phylloscopus trochiloides viridanus*	4	1983	2017	2
291			ARCTIC WARBLER		*Phylloscopus borealis*	1	2004	2004	15
292			GREAT REED WARBLER		*Acrocephalus arundinaceus arundinaceus*	3	1965	2004	15
293	R		AQUATIC WARBLER		*Acrocephalus paludicola*	9	1957	2008	11
294			SEDGE WARBLER		*Acrocephalus schoenobaenus*		1818	2019	0

	Cons. Status		IOC World Bird List Name	English Name	Latin Name	Essex Records to 2019			
	R	A E X				No.s	First	Last	Years since last record
295			PADDYFIELD WARBLER		*Acrocephalus agricola**	2	1987	1999	20
296			BLYTH'S REED WARBLER		*Acrocephalus dumetorum*	3	2003	2014	5
297			EURASIAN REED WARBLER	Reed Warbler	*Acrocephalus scirpaceus scirpaceus*		1819	2019	0
298	R	X	MARSH WARBLER		*Acrocephalus palustris*	37	1983	2018	1
299			BOOTED WARBLER		*Iduna caligata*	1	2006	2006	13
300			MELODIOUS WARBLER		*Hippolais polyglotta*	10	1961	2012	7
301			ICTERINE WARBLER		*Hippolais icterina*	26	1962	2009	10
302	R	X	COMMON GRASSHOPPER WARBLER		*Locustella naevia naevia*		1819	2019	0
303	R		SAVI'S WARBLER		*Locustella luscinioides luscinioides*	5	1981	2011	8
304			EURASIAN BLACKCAP		*Sylvia atricapilla atricapilla*		1818	2019	0
305			GARDEN WARBLER		*Sylvia borin borin*		1819	2019	0
306			BARRED WARBLER		*Sylvia nisoria nisoria*	60	1961	2019	0
307			LESSER WHITETHROAT		*Sylvia curruca curruca*		1819	2019	0
308			ASIAN DESERT WARBLER		*Sylvia nana*	1	1975	1975	44
309			COMMON WHITETHROAT	Whitethroat	*Sylvia communis communis*		1818	2019	0
310	A		DARTFORD WARBLER		*Sylvia undata dartfordiensis*	115	1837	2019	0
311			MOLTONI'S/SUBALPINE WARBLER		*Sylvia subalpina/cantillans**	12	1971	2016	3
312		X	COMMON FIRECREST	Firecrest	*Regulus ignicapilla ignicapilla*		1878	2019	0
313			GOLDCREST		*Regulus regulus regulus*		1738	2019	0
314			EURASIAN WREN	Wren	*Troglodytes troglodytes indigenus*		1874	2019	0
315			EURASIAN NUTHATCH	Nuthatch	*Sitta europaea caesia*		1838	2019	0
316			EURASIAN TREECREEPER	Treecreeper	*Certhia familiaris britannica*		1835	2019	0
317			SHORT-TOED TREECREEPER		*Certhia brachydactyla**	2	1975	2005	14
318			NORTHERN MOCKINGBIRD		*Mimus polyglottos**	1	1988	1988	31
319			ROSY STARLING	Rose-coloured Starling	*Pastor roseus*	21	1856	2018	1
320	R		COMMON STARLING	Starling	*Sturnus vulgaris vulgaris*		1832	2019	0
321			WHITE'S THRUSH		*Zoothera aurea aurea*	1	1894	1894	125
322	R		RING OUZEL		*Turdus torquatus torquatus*		1831	2019	0
323			COMMON BLACKBIRD	Blackbird	*Turdus merula merula*		1735	2019	0
324			RED-THROATED THRUSH		*Turdus ruficollis*	1	1994	1994	25
325			NAUMANN'S THRUSH §		*Turdus naumanni*	2	1990	1997	22
326	R		FIELDFARE		*Turdus pilaris*		1834	2019	0
327	R		REDWING		*Turdus iliacus*		1831	2019	0
			Redwing		*Turdus iliacus iliacus*		1831	2019	0
			Icelandic Redwing		*Turdus iliacus coburni*	7	1940	2019	0
328	R	E X	SONG THRUSH		*Turdus philomelos*		1676	2019	0
			West European Song Thrush		*Turdus philomelos clarkei*		~	2019	0
			Continental Song Thrush		*Turdus philomelos philomelos*		~	2019	0
329	R		MISTLE THRUSH		*Turdus viscivorus viscivorus*		1890	2019	0
330	R	X	SPOTTED FLYCATCHER		*Muscicapa striata striata*		1818	2019	0
331			EUROPEAN ROBIN	Robin	*Erithacus rubecula*		1838	2019	0

	Cons. Status		IOC World Bird List Name	English Name	Latin Name	Essex Records to 2019			
	R	A E X				No.s	First	Last	Years since last record
			British Robin		*Erithacus rubecula melophilus*		~	2019	0
			European Robin		*Erithacus rubecula rubecula*		~	2019	0
332			BLUETHROAT		*Luscinia svecica*	52	1936	2018	1
			Red-spotted Bluethroat		*Luscinia svecica svecica*	6	1957	2002	17
			White-spotted Bluethroat		*Luscinia svecica cyanecula*	16	1958	2018	1
333	R	X	COMMON NIGHTINGALE	Nightingale	*Luscinia megarhynchos megarhynchos*		1768	2019	0
334	R		EUROPEAN PIED FLYCATCHER	Pied Flycatcher	*Ficedula hypoleuca hypoleuca*		1822	2019	0
335			COLLARED FLYCATCHER		*Ficedula albicollis*	1	1979	1979	40
336			RED-BREASTED FLYCATCHER		*Ficedula parva*	33	1959	2018	1
337	R	X	BLACK REDSTART		*Phoenicurus ochruros gibraltariensis*		1879	2019	0
338	A		COMMON REDSTART	Redstart	*Phoenicurus phoenicurus phoenicurus*		1818	2019	0
339	R		WHINCHAT		*Saxicola rubetra*		1819	2019	0
340		X	EUROPEAN STONECHAT	Stonechat	*Saxicola rubicola hibernans*		1831	2019	0
341			SIBERIAN/STEJNEGER'S STONECHAT		*Saxicola maurus*/stejnegeri*	4	1984	2012	7
342			NORTHERN WHEATEAR	Wheatear	*Oenanthe oenanthe*		1819	2019	0
			Northern Wheatear		*Oenanthe oenanthe oenanthe*		1819	2019	0
			Greenland Wheatear		*Oenanthe oenanthe leucorrhoa*		1952	2019	0
343			DESERT WHEATEAR		*Oenanthe deserti**	3	1958	2012	7
344			BLACK-EARED WHEATEAR		*Oenanthe hispanica**	2	1989	1997	22
345	A		WHITE-THROATED DIPPER	Dipper	*Cinclus cinclus*	15	1830	2013	6
			Black-bellied Dipper		*Cinclus cinclus cinclus*	3	1950	2013	6
346	R		HOUSE SPARROW		*Passer domesticus domesticus*		1808	2019	0
347	R	X	EURASIAN TREE SPARROW	Tree Sparrow	*Passer montanus montanus*		1833	2019	0
348			ALPINE ACCENTOR §		*Prunella collaris collaris*	1	1817	1817	202
349	A		DUNNOCK		*Prunella modularis modularis*		1890	2019	0
350	R	X	WESTERN YELLOW WAGTAIL	Yellow Wagtail	*Motacilla flava*		1820	2019	0
			Yellow Wagtail		*Motacilla flava flavissima*		1820	2019	0
			Blue-headed Wagtail §		*Motacilla flava flava*		1834	2019	0
			Grey-headed Wagtail		*Motacilla flava thunbergi*	17	1954	2012	7
			Channel Wagtail hybrid		*Motacilla flava flava x flavissima*		1999	2019	0
351			CITRINE WAGTAIL		*Motacilla citreola citreola*	3	1976	2006	13
352	R		GREY WAGTAIL		*Motacilla cinerea cinerea*		1831	2019	0
353			WHITE WAGTAIL	Pied Wagtail	*Motacilla alba*		1876	2019	0
			Pied Wagtail		*Motacilla alba yarrellii*		1876	2019	0
			White Wagtail		*Motacilla alba alba*		1836	2019	0
354			RICHARD'S PIPIT		*Anthus richardi*	30	1968	2016	3
355			TAWNY PIPIT		*Anthus campestris*	16	1951	2012	7
356	A		MEADOW PIPIT		*Anthus pratensis*		1838	2019	0
357	R	X	TREE PIPIT		*Anthus trivialis trivialis*		1818	2019	0
358			OLIVE-BACKED PIPIT		*Anthus hodgsoni yunnanensis*	4	1992	2013	6

	Cons. Status	IOC World Bird List Name	English Name	Latin Name	Essex Records to 2019			
	R A E X				No.s	First	Last	Years since last record
359		RED-THROATED PIPIT		*Anthus cervinus*	5	1982	1994	25
360		WATER PIPIT		*Anthus spinoletta spinoletta*		1923	2019	0
361		EURASIAN ROCK PIPIT	Rock Pipit	*Anthus petrosus littoralis*		1835	2019	0
362		COMMON CHAFFINCH	Chaffinch	*Fringilla coelebs*		1732	2019	0
		British Chaffinch		*Fringilla coelebs coelebs*		~	2019	0
		European Chaffinch		*Fringilla coelebs gengleri*		~	2019	0
363		BRAMBLING		*Fringilla montifringilla*		1835	2019	0
364	X	HAWFINCH		*Coccothraustes coccothraustes coccothraustes*		1600s	2019	0
365	X	EURASIAN BULLFINCH	Bullfinch	*Pyrrhula pyrrhula*		1838	2019	0
		Bullfinch		*Pyrrhula pyrrhula pileata*		1838	2019	0
		Northern Bullfinch		*Pyrrhula pyrrhula pyrrhula*	40	2004	2005	14
366		TRUMPETER FINCH		*Bucanetes githagineus**	1	1985	1985	34
367		COMMON ROSEFINCH		*Carpodacus erythrinus erythrinus*	19	1981	2019	0
368		EUROPEAN GREENFINCH	Greenfinch	*Chloris chloris chloris*		1871	2019	0
369		TWITE		*Linaria flavirostris*		1820	2019	0
		British Twite		*Linaria flavirostris flavirostris*		~	2019	0
		Scandinavian Twite		*Linaria flavirostris pipilans*		~	2019	0
370	X	COMMON LINNET	Linnet	*Linaria cannabina cannabina*		1832	2019	0
371		COMMON REDPOLL		*Acanthis flammea flammea*		1835	2019	0
372	X	LESSER REDPOLL		*Acanthis cabaret*		c1805	2019	0
373		ARCTIC REDPOLL		*Acanthis hornemanni exilipes*	11	1976	2008	11
374		PARROT CROSSBILL		*Loxia pytyopsittacus*	7	1861	2013	6
375		RED CROSSBILL	Crossbill	*Loxia curvirostra curvirostra*		1826	2019	0
376		TWO-BARRED CROSSBILL		*Loxia leucoptera bifasciata*	2	1846	1866	153
377		EUROPEAN GOLDFINCH	Goldfinch	*Carduelis carduelis britannica*		1838	2019	0
378		EUROPEAN SERIN	Serin	*Serinus serinus*	37	1976	2019	0
379		EURASIAN SISKIN	Siskin	*Spinus spinus*		1838	2019	0
380		LAPLAND LONGSPUR	Lapland Bunting	*Calcarius lapponicus lapponicus*		1872	2019	0
381		SNOW BUNTING		*Plectrophenax nivalis insulae*		1830	2019	0
382	X	CORN BUNTING		*Emberiza calandra calandra*		1838	2019	0
383	X	YELLOWHAMMER		*Emberiza citrinella caligonosa*		1877	2019	0
384		PINE BUNTING		*Emberiza leucocephalos leucocephalos*	1	1992	1992	27
385		ORTOLAN BUNTING		*Emberiza hortulana*	31	1908	2019	0
386		CIRL BUNTING		*Emberiza cirlus*	18	1854	1978	41
387		LITTLE BUNTING		*Emberiza pusilla*	7	1892	2018	1
388		RUSTIC BUNTING		*Emberiza rustica*	2	1966	2018	1
389		YELLOW-BREASTED BUNTING		*Emberiza aureola aureola*	1	2002	2002	17
390		BLACK-HEADED BUNTING		*Emberiza melanocephala*	3	1979	1998	21
391	X	COMMON REED BUNTING	Reed Bunting	*Emberiza schoeniclus schoeniclus*		1890	2019	0
392		DARK-EYED JUNCO		*Junco hyemalis hyemalis*	1	2016	2016	3
393		BALTIMORE ORIOLE		*Icterus galbula*	1	1992	1992	27
394		ROSE-BREASTED GROSBEAK		*Pheucticus ludovicianus*	1	1975	1976	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	3
ROSS'S GOOSE	*Anser rossii*	9	1996	2015	4
RUDDY SHELDUCK	*Tadorna ferruginea*	143	1885	2019	0
WOOD DUCK	*Aix sponsa*	74	1960	2019	0
BUFFLEHEAD	*Bucephala albeola*	1	2019	2019	0
MARBLED DUCK	*Marmaronetta angustirostris*	2	2006	2007	12
WHITE-HEADED DUCK	*Oxyura leucocephala*	3	1995	2003	16
GREATER FLAMINGO	*Phoenicopterus roseus*	8	1963	2011	8
GREAT WHITE PELICAN	*Pelecanus onocrotalus*	4	1975	2000	19
SAKER	*Falco cherrug*	12	1984	2014	5
RED-HEADED BUNTING	*Emberiza bruniceps*	5	1958	2002	17

Category E Species (not part of the Essex List)

Based on the chapter 'Appendix 2 Catergory E species" in Wood (2007) and updated to 2019 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	Brown Teal
Red-winged Tinamou	Pink-eared Duck	Rosy-billed Pochard
Magpie Goose	Muscovy Duck	New Zealand Scaup
White-faced Whistling Duck	Maned Duck	Greater Scaup
Black-bellied Whistling Duck	Ringed Teal	Barrow's Goldeneye
Fulvous-whistling Duck	Hottentot Teal	Hooded Merganser
White-backed Duck	Puna Teal	Helmeted Guineafowl
Red-breasted Goose	Silver Teal	Northern Bobwhite
Nene	Red Shoveler	California Quail
Cackling Goose	Cinnamon Teal	Red Grouse
Bar-headed Goose	Blue-winged Teal	Chukar Partridge
Emperor Goose	Australian Shoveler	Japanese Quail
Swan Goose	Falcated Duck	Silver Pheasant
Lesser White-fronted Goose	Chiloe Wigeon	Swinhoe's Pheasant
Black Swan	Cape Teal	Reeves' Pheasant
Black-necked Swan	White-cheeked Pintail	Indian Peafowl
Trumpeter Swan	Red-billed Teal	Chilean Flamingo
Ruddy-headed Goose	Yellow-billed Teal	Marabou Stork
South African Shelduck	Chestnut Teal	African Sacred Ibis

American White Ibis	Turquoise-fronted Amazon	Greater Blue-eared Starling
African Spoonbill	Burrowing Parrot	Pied Crow
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	RufousTreepie	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
Laughing Kookaburra	Spotted Laughingthrush	Shaft-tailed Whydah
Cockatiel	Red-tailed Laughingthrush	Chinese Grosbeak
Galah	Silver-eared Mesia	Japanese Grosbeak
Sulphur-crested Cockatoo	Red-billed Leiothrix	Pine Grosbeak
Grey Parrot	Rufous Sibia	Yellow-fronted Canary
Senegal Parrot	Vinous-throated Parrotbill	Atlantic Canary
Monk Parakeet	Hill Mynah sp.	Indigo Bunting
White-fronted Parakeet	Common Mynah	
Blue and Yellow Macaw	Chestnut-tailed Starling	**Total 152 species**

In addition, many varied hybrids mainly, but not exclusively, ducks have been recorded.

Essex Birdwatching Society Accounts

Receipts and Payments Account for the year ended 31st December 2019

Receipts	£
Subscriptions received	8,329.00
Donations	56.00
Sales of *Essex Bird Reports*	211.00
Sales of *Essex Birding*	20.00
Field Meetings	6,224.00
Lectures	1,006.00
Conference Tickets	400.00
Conference Raffle	0.00
BTO Subscriptions	860.00
BTO Donations	10.00
BTO Gift Aid receipt	0.00
Mugs	0.00
Victuals	127.00
RSPB Stand Conference	70.00
Swift boxes	0.00
Essex Field Club fees	6,847.00
Car Stickers	1.00
Advertising	0.00
Legacy	0.00
Gift Aid/Net Covenants received	0.00
Raffle	0.00
Pin Badges	142.00
Bank interest	305.00
	£24,608.00

Payments	£
Lecture fees	799.00
Room Hire Committee	114.00
Room Hire Meeting	334.00
Essex Bird Report costs	15,729.00
Essex Birding costs	6,180.00
Officer's expenses	224.00
Insurance	542.00
Field Trips	4,750.00
Bradwell Bird Observatory - Bird Seed	824.00
Bradwell Bird Observatory - Calor Gas	0.00
Swift Boxes	0.00
	29,496.00
Miscellaneous	
Website	0.00
Lanyards - Conference	0.00
Postage - Conference	0.00
Lecture Fees - Conference	0.00
Printing - Conference	0.00
Badges - Conference	0.00
Venue - Conference	0.00
Envelopes - Conference	0.00
Ticket Refund - Conference	0.00
Ringing Project	0.00
Bradwell Bird Observatory - Rates	166.00
Bradwell Bird Observatory - Gift Aid Transfer	0.00
Bradwell Bird Observatory - Signage	216.00
Bradwell Bird Observatory - Repairs	236.00
British Birds Records	304.00
Printing	814.00
Accountancy Fees	396.00
Victuals	36.00
Sound Equipment	1,140.00
Grants	795.00
First Essex Bird Report	1,598.00
Pin Badges	393.00
Conference Admin	110.00
Laptop	540.00
	6,744.00
Excess of Income over Expenditure	-£11,632.00
	£24,608.00

Cash Statement for the year ended 31st December 2019

1st January 2019	£
Balance of Current Account brought forward	7,595.00
Balance of Business Premium Account **7724 brought forward	19,138.00
Balance of Business Premium Account **0696 brought forward	202.00
Balance on Metro Bank Account brought forward	25,205.00
Balance on Metro Bank Instant Account brought forward	6.00
Balance on Field Meetings Cash Float brought forward	60.00
Balance on Bradwell Bird Observatory Account brought forward	1,648.00
	53,854.00
Excess of income over expenditure	-11,632.00
	£42,222.00

31st December 2019	£
Balance of Current Account carried forward	612.00
Balance of Business Premium Account **7724 Account carried forward	202.00
Balance of Business Premium Account **0696 Account carried forward	14,175.00
Balance on Metro Bank Account carried forward	25,477.00
Balance on Metro Bank Instant Account carried forward	2.00
Balance on Field Meetings Cash Float carried forward	60.00
Balance on Bradwell Bird Observatory Account carried forward	1,694.00
	£42,222.00

Connah Goldsworthy
Chartered Certified Accountants
12 Station Court
Station Approach
Wickford
Essex SS11 7AT

6th March 2020

Reservoir Permit Holders 2021/22

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

Permits were suspended during the extensive work on enlarging the reservoir that took place between 2010 and 2013. Subsequently, access beyond what is now provided to the public via viewing points was not considered necessary, but the Company remains open to further discussions around permits in future should circumstances change. Society members and the public are requested strictly to 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 two "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 normally 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. However, hours have been restricted during the Coronavirus C-19 pandemic, and, at times the centre may be closed. Members are advised to check the Essex Wildlife Trust web site www.essexwt.org.uk or social media for the latest information.

Each 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 & Suffolk Water Terms and Conditions are observed at all times by all parties.

The issuing of these permits by Essex & 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. Their use is monitored annually by the Essex Birdwatching Society and Essex & 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 holders of all types of permits to:

- Notice and observe the current Essex & Suffolk Water Terms and Conditions
- 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, J.Bright, G.R.Ekins, C. Hall, D.Jobbins, S.Satchell, C.Shields, G.Snowden, W.Swift.

Special access conditions have been negotiated with Essex & Suffolk Water and Essex Wildlife Trust if a rarity should be present on either Abberton or Hanningfield Reservoirs.

A continuation of the Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic will probably affect visiting arrangements for Essex Wildlife Trust sites. Please check with its web site www.essexwt.org.uk for further information and observe government regulations at all times.

The ESSEX BIRDWATCHING SOCIETY

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