



Fylde Bird Club

LANCASHIRE

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December Newsletter

Peter and I would like to wish all members of Fylde Bird Club a very happy Christmas and an excellent New Year, finding new birds, or just enjoying getting out and about in our area. We are lucky in that we have both coastal and a rural landscape to watch.

The calendars are on sale again and can be purchased at the December meeting, price **£3.99**

We have a social night at the December meeting, Peter and John have set to music pictures from a selection of photos taken this last year. A quiz, which has been set by last year's winner, and also a buffet, good luck to all.

If you wish to submit an article for the March Newsletter please see me or Peter at the next monthly meeting or by email at the above address. Thank you to all the members who have supported us by sending news and articles. We have a quiz that has been set by Stuart Meredith on **name that bird**, many are from round the world and the answers are on the last page.

Please support the companies who advertise in our Bird Report, Out and About from Poulton will give a 10% discount with proof of membership.

Two otters have been seen during November at Marton Mere, last year two otters were also found. Maurice Jones found the earliest sighting in 1956 at the Mere, can anyone explain why there are such a large gap.

Three Months at Marton Mere Ellen Pemberton

Camargue Dave Wadsworth

Quarterly Round Up Stuart Piner

Lesser Yellowlegs Stuart Piner

Solitary Sandpiper Stuart Piner

Balearic Shearwater Paul Slade

Golden Eagles Mark Farar

Misspelt bird names Barry Dyson

A fisherman’s tale Mike Foy

Ribble Bird Tours Local Trips and late availability trips Stuart Meredith

Bird Quiz Stuart Meredith

New rules for photo competition Page 14

Answers for the Bird Quiz Stuart Meredith

Marton Mere working party

On Sunday 25th September members of the club gave up their time to cut back the vegetation that has shot up over the summer months. Larry Ryan from the ranger service and a volunteer together with Mick McGrath, Paul Ellis, Paul Slade, Ashley Baines, Ellen Pemberton, Chris Batty, Brian Gregory, Mike Sutcliffe, Les Ward, and Maurice Jones, you will see the amount of reeds that were cut back on the before and after pictures. Not only time was spent on the reeds in front of the Fylde Bird Club hide, but trees, brambles and weeds were trimmed. A small dingy supplied by Larry from the Ranger service caused some amusement, rowing skills were not one of our talents, we went round and round in circles, a good job they were not steering on one of our pelagic trips.



Before



After

Marton Mere sightings – July – September 2011

Although I'm typing this report on 1st October, the past few days have felt more like July! I've been able to go out in short sleeves and there have been plenty of insects making the most of the sunshine. Cetti's Warblers have remained throughout the past 3 months but there has been no evidence of breeding. However, some interesting developments have gone on at the Mere since the end of June, starting on a wet and windy 18th July. I saw a Fox near the west entrance but the big news of the day would be a new bird for the reserve's list. I was in the Bird Club Hide sitting out the storm and a Gannet flew east!

Also during the summer, Green Sandpipers have been present – a single bird on 19th July, 2 on 25th July and 1 again on 18th August. In the first instance, the bird was seen on the rocks in

front of the Bird Club Hide. On 26th July, there were 2 Little Ringed Plovers, an adult and a juvenile. Starting on 30th July until mid-August, up to 3 Common Terns were present, flying over the lake and using the perch in front of the Bird Club Hide. 2 of them were also seen courtship feeding.

On 1st August, a Lesser Black-backed Gull of the southern Scandinavian race *intermedius* was present, as was a Water Rail. The latter was also seen from the Bird Club Hide on 21st August. Mediterranean Gulls were present on 18th August and 27th September. There were also two noteworthy large flocks of songbirds in August : 50+ Goldfinches on the 14th and 30+ Linnets on the 21st.

A Stoat was at the Feeding Station on 4th September; ducks had also started returning, with 16 Tufted Ducks and 4 Gadwall present. On the 10th a Spotted Flycatcher was seen from the Bird Club Hide. Last but not least, the Bird Club had a work party at the reserve on the 25th. We cut down a lot of reeds, both in front of the Bird Club Hide and on the scrape, as well as pruning some of the Willows. Some of the group found evidence of Otters, in the form of footprints and spraints. Watch this space!

Ellen Pemberton

Camargue May 24 -31 2011

I planned for a birding holiday but family interests diluted this somewhat! We flew from Luton to Montpellier for £95 a head return, which I thought was good value and hired a car for £240 for 7 days (Opel Corsa) We stayed at the Mas Petit Fourchon, a farm on the outskirts of Arles which was delightful but not cheap and didn't have aircon! I depended on the Michelin map for the Bouche du Rhone which was quite adequate for the job.

I used the invaluable information given by Chris Batty on this website to get a flavour of the area and fauna – paca, the local French birding website gives day to day findings. This seems to have taken over from Oiseaux de Provence. I have found the Faune sites useful when travelling around Europe, there is a Faune Aquitaine for the Bordeaux area, Faune Chartente for the Ile de Re area and similar sites for the region around Geneva which also includes the whole of Switzerland and local areas of France and Germany. I have also found Faune sites in Italy to be useful. The only problem is a lack of knowledge of the French vernacular names but the Latin names are always listed and a bit of research yields all the information required.

I went with high hopes for spring migration but sadly I missed most of it and even on the website there was little going through that I missed. I will follow Chris's list for continuity's sake and not go into detail of where to find the sites as he has listed this accurately. The temperatures were unusually hot - 35c in the shade. I have only mentioned birds which I thought would be of interest to English (Fylde) birders. I have not mentioned Flamingos and Black Kites which are everywhere!

Alpilles

Les Baux – 3 Alpine Swifts, 6 Crag Martins, 3 Blue Rock Thrush, Serin and Black Redstart. The Crag Martins and Rock Thrush were easily found on the road out of the village above the car park and the Alpine Swifts were high above the village at 1030. (There were none in a later visit in the pm) Parking is 4€ flat rate unless you go past the village for about a mile and a visit to the Chateau, 7.50€ which was expensive and not necessary for the spring birds.

La Caume

An afternoon visit revealed little. 2/3 spectacled warblers heard. No Bonelli's eagles or anything else.

Le Deste, Tour des Opies and Montagne des Cordes not visited

Camargue

La Capeliere – A nice reserve (I was let in as a student!) Purple Heron 1 (doing circuits and bumps) which gave good and repeated views, excellent views of a Moustached warbler and the universal Cetti's, Zitting Cisticola's and Nightingales plus two Night herons. 4 Black necked grebes in summer plumage with about 40 Great Crested Grebes on the Etang de Vaccares just N of the reserve.

Salin de Badon

Avocets and Black winged stilts. Little else though a Danish birder reported about a hundred "small" stints on Le Fangassier

Mas Neuf nothing though a river crossing a few Kms earlier yielded a nesting site for Bee eaters, a kingfisher, Red Kite

Marais du Vigueirat

I didn't go into the reserve but the fields on the way in had Purple Heron and 3 Rollers. On the way back to Arles I saw a pair of Montague's hunting and displaying over the corn fields.

Saint Maries de La Mer – Don't go anywhere near if there is a thought of a gypsy festival! 1 Mediterranean Gull. 8 Blue headed wagtails around the etang on the outskirts of the town going towards Arles.

Parc Ornithologique a visit made in desperation on the last afternoon. A colony of Little Terns but not the expected Gull billed

Peau de Meau 2 visits 3 Tawny Pipits, 6 Crested Larks, 2 Hoopoes, 1 Great Egret, 1 Southern Grey Shrike.

Le Ventillon 2 hoopoes

Mas Petit Fourchon a private site where we stayed. 2 Stone Curlews on field for a week giving good and repeated views. – the owner said they were common everywhere but I only saw this pair! 1 Red Backed Shrike, 2 Rollers.

I missed out on the Pratincoles (none reported on the website when I was there) Little Bustards (small numbers but not sought at dawn / dusk) Pin Tailed Sandgrouse (similarly) No marsh / gull billed terns, No slender billed gulls or waders of any significance and no eagles. I searched in vain for a site where Lesser Kestrels were supposed to breed and had been associating with Red Footed Falcons two days before I arrived. The weather was very hot and I think I was probably 3 /4 weeks too late to miss the best time for the spring passage.

David Wadsworth

Quarterly Round Up by Stuart Piner

August 2011

August's highlight arrived on the evening of 25th when a Balearic Shearwater was observed flying north from a pelagic 3.6 miles west of Rossall Point. This was only the second time that Balearic Shearwater had been recorded on the Fylde, following the bird logged off Starr Gate on 8th August 2010.

August also produced Ospreys over Cockersand and Rossall Point, Redstarts at Cockersand and Singleton, Avocet at Glasson, Hobby over Nateby, Great Skua off Knott End and up to two Yellow-legged Gulls on the Lune Estuary at Glasson. Towards the end of the month Curlew Sandpipers began to arrive on the Fylde, with records of juveniles at Knott End (2) and Glasson (2), whilst both an adult and juvenile were logged at Cockersand.

September 2011

Ian Gardner discovered an Ortolan Bunting on Fleetwood Golf Course on 2nd, but unfortunately the bird was only present during the early morning. Ian's bird represented the sixth Fylde record of Ortolan Bunting.

A Lesser Yellowlegs at Glasson, found by Stuart Piner on 24th September and present until the end of the month, constituted the fifth Fylde record of this Nearctic wader, the first since 2002.

On 4th September 2011 Dave Satterthwaite located a Marbled Duck on Freckleton Naze Pool. Marbled Duck is relatively commonly kept in captivity in the UK, but whilst the species undoubtedly escapes from time to time, there is still a strong case for treating Marbled Duck as a genuine vagrant to Britain. Vinicombe (1996) stated the case for vagrancy to northwest Europe based on the history of erratic northerly dispersal of Spanish and Moroccan populations of Marbled Ducks, citing several examples of birds presumed to be of Iberian or north west African origin reaching northern France. The peak time for records in the Carmargue, southern France is in late August and September, which correlates with the peak period for records of Marbled Duck in Britain - the Fylde sightings fits neatly into this time period.

A Marbled Duck near Doornenburg and Pannerden, Gelderland, in August 2004 was accepted as the first for the Netherlands by the Commissie Dwaalgasten Nederlandse Avifauna (CDNA). An analysis of 61 reports of Marbled Duck in European countries revealed a strong peak in August-October, which coincides with the peak occurrence of the species in north-eastern Spain. Backed by the evidence of a Spanish ringed bird shot north-east of Lyon, France, in September 1992 the CDNA concluded that vagrancy to western and central Europe is likely, but only with low frequency due to the small size of the Spanish population, the likely source of vagrants.

However, despite there being a strong argument for Marbled Duck reaching the British Isles, the species remains on Category D of the British List. Through the analysis of stable-hydrogen isotope content of feathers taken from a first-winter Marbled Duck shot in Essex in September 2007, Fox et al. (2010) concluded that the bird originated from outside of the normal breeding range of the species and was most likely of captive origin. Given the uncertainty surrounding the origins of Marbled Ducks in Britain, for the time being the species will not be added to the Fylde List.

Strong southwesterly and westerly winds during September produced some excellent seawatching off the Fylde coast. Between 7th-8th and 12th-14th a Balearic Shearwater was record off Rossall School, then Rossall Point and later Chatsworth Avenue, Long-tailed Skuas were off Rossall Point and Blackpool North Shore, Pomarine Skuas off Bispham, Cleveleys and Rossall School, multiple Sabine's Gulls (including a count of four off Bispham and a lone bird briefly on Fairhaven Lake), several Leach's Petrels (including a count of 19 off Blackpool North Shore), two Sooty Shearwaters, two Roseate Terns and Grey Phalaropes were on Fairhaven Lake and on the River Ribble in Preston. Inland Black Terns were at Stanley Park and Fairhaven Lake, whilst four were off Rossall Point, four on Pilling Marsh, three off Cleveleys and a single off Starr Gate. A Little Tern was logged off Starr Gate and Shag records included four past Rossall Point.

An influx of juvenile Curlew Sandpipers produced records from Knott End (16+), Cocker's Dyke (13), Glasson (9), Lytham (2), Skippool Creek (2), Cockerham Moss Edge, Cockerham Sands, Cockersand, Conder Estuary, Fleetwood, Fluke Hall and Freckleton Naze. Little Stints were located at Cockerham, Cocker's Dyke, Glasson, Knott End and Cockersand.

The best of the rest included an Osprey and Scaup off Starr Gate, Redstart at Herons' Reach, Yellow-legged Gulls at Fleetwood, Glasson and Skippool, Bittern at Marton Mere, Hobbies at Newton Marsh and Pilling Marsh, Barnacle Goose on Pilling Marsh and Garganey at Eagland Hill, Mythop and Newton Marsh.

References

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Vinicombe, K., Cotteridge, D. 1996. *Rare Birds in Britain and Ireland: A Photographic Record*. Harper Collins, London.

Winters, R. 2007. *Marmereend bij Doornenburg en Pannerden in augustus 2004*. Dutch Birding 29 (147-152)

October 2011

The highlight of the autumn arrived on 2nd when Stuart Piner located the Fylde's first Solitary Sandpiper at Humblescough Farm (see below for more information on this remarkable record).

October highlights also included Yellow-browed Warblers found by Paul Ellis and Paul Slade at Thurnham Hall and at Mount Park, Fleetwood by Len Blacow, Todd's Canada Goose discovered with Pink-footed Geese on the Wyre Estuary by Ian Gardner, before it moved to Pilling Marsh and Great White Egrets on Cockerham Marsh on 15th (Mark Farrar), Pilling Marsh on 30th (Stephen Dunstan) and two on Warton Marsh on 30th (Andrew and Tony Myerscough). The Lesser Yellowlegs discovered in September was last seen at Glasson on 4th October.

Scarce goose records included 16 Barnacle Geese on Pilling Marsh, five at St Michael's and five over Cockersand, Dark-bellied Brent Geese at Pilling Marsh, Ridge Farm and Cleveleys (2) and White-fronted Geese at Bone Hill Lane and Pilling Marsh. At least eight Crossbills flew over Knott End, seven over Rawcliffe Moss, two over Fairhaven Lake and a lone bird over Marton Mere. Two Lapland Buntings flew over Rossall Point, a Hooded Crow lingered in Singleton and two Garganey lingered at Newton Marsh. A Marsh Tit was seen at Warton Bank, Curlew Sandpipers were at Arm Hill (2), Skippool Creek, Glasson and Knott End and Hen Harriers flew over Eagland Hill, Pilling Moss and Marton Mere. A Slavonian Grebe visited Fairhaven Lake from 5th-14th before potentially the same bird was relocated at Ream Hills from 16th-23rd. Three Snow Buntings were recorded at Fairhaven and two were at Fleetwood. A Water Pipit was at Warton Bank.

Seabird records comprised a Sabine's Gull at Skippool Creek, before presumably the same bird was watched off Rossall Point the following day, a Pomarine Skua landed on Fleetwood Golf Course before relocating to Cleveleys Beach (another Pomarine Skua flew past Knott End), Leach's Petrels were logged off Rossall Point (2) and Starr Gate, and Starr Gate also produced two Velvet Scoters and two Scaup

Lesser Yellowlegs at Glasson

Saturday 24th September began with a 'discussion' that resulted in me throwing a childish strop. American waders had flooded into Ireland in recent days and I was convinced that they would be seeping eastwards into Britain. I was desperate to search the Lune Estuary for a transatlantic wanderer, but my partner, Josephine, had alternative plans for my day. I was told that I would be spending the day with her and waders weren't on the itinerary.

After my childish stop had subsided, I formulated a plan to ensure that I stood a slim chance of seeing some birds on 24th September. With waders off the menu I suggested a session of blackberry picking on the coast – my 'cunning plan' involved Josephine being distracted by autumn fruits, whilst I searched for bush-inhabiting migrants. The plan came together, and whilst Josephine destroyed my chances of finding a Barred Warbler (by stripping the bushes of all the migrant-fuel) I poked around for a mega. But

the brisk westerly wind, overcast skies and crucially, empty bushes quickly diverted my attention to blackberries, and before you could say 'Wryneck', I'd joined the harvesting. Several over-spilling containers later and it was time for home, but Josephine kindly agreed to a quick peek at the Lune Estuary from Glasson. On arrival, I idly scanned through several waders near the River Conder mouth. A flapping bird caught my attention; it was clearly a *Tringa* species, but it wasn't a Redshank. At a range of around 700 metres I could see the bird had plain dark upperwings and a squared-off white rump. Wood Sandpiper was never a consideration – this was a yellowlegs! I yelled at Josephine to fetch the camera from the car, whilst I ran along the cycle track to cut the distance between me and the bird. The wader couldn't have been in a worse place on the estuary in terms of allowing close views, but I managed to reduce the viewing distance by a couple of hundred metres. Having initially been alone, the bird had now joined a flock Redshank, which dwarfed the yellowlegs. The small size coupled with the bill to head length ratio (the bill being just slightly longer than the head) eliminated Greater Yellowlegs from the equation; the bird was a Lesser Yellowlegs. The fresh, neat looking upperparts with obvious pale spotting aged the bird as a juvenile.

On 24th September 2011 I learned a valuable lesson; sometimes the days spent not birding turn out to be the best days. I vow never to moan at Josephine again. Until next time.

The Lesser Yellowlegs was present until dusk on 24th September and it showed most days until 4th October 2011, when it was last seen on the adjacent Conder Estuary. This is the fifth Fylde record of Lesser Yellowlegs; the previous records are:-

2002 juvenile New Lane, Eagland Hill 12th-19th September.

Stuart Piner

Solitary Sandpiper

They say that everyone carries around their own demons, and that they can take many forms; my demons are sandpiper-shaped. In July 2003 I joined my friends Andy and Vicky on my first trip to the Isles of Scilly. On our final evening on the archipelago, whilst sat in one of the hides overlooking Porth Hellick Pool on St Mary's, we simultaneously heard a 'Green Sandpiper' whilst catching a glimpse of the tail end of a 'Common Sandpiper' disappearing into the distance. Following a half-hearted search for the unidentified wader, we soon forgot about the encounter, until later the same week Scilly birder Bob Flood found a Solitary Sandpiper in the very spot we'd glimpsed the mystery wader just a few days earlier. Almost certainly our bird, it was clear that we'd blundered a mega.

Fast forward eight years, with the Scilly Solitary long gone but still not forgotten, my alarm clock rang out at 0530 on the dark, rainy morning of October 2nd. It was one of those mornings when your duvet feels a tog or two heavier, it was cold and wet outside and I'd been working late into the night before. I was barely a moment away from turning off the alarm and snuggling back to sleep. But my conscience got the better of my laziness – I'd promised to conduct a Pink-footed Goose count at a flood in Nateby, so I made my way out into the miserable morning.

I'd timed my arrival to beat the sunrise but I needn't have rushed, the sunshine wasn't arriving anytime soon in this weather. The flood was distant from the nearest public footpath, but even at 370 metres range and through the bleak darkness, it was clear that nothing resembling a goose had roosted overnight. Given the scarcity of geese, my thoughts were again waylaid by the prospect of counting sheep, but the presence of what appeared to be hundreds of duck diverted my attention back from the lure of a return to bed. I decided to wait for the light to improve to check the duck, mainly Teal, for the Fylde's long-awaited first Blue-winged Teal. With my first scan using the telescope, I noticed a lone wader wandering around on the muddy perimeter of the flood. I could barely make out the outline of the bird, never mind any plumage details, so in the pre-dawn light I considered Pectoral Sandpiper – there was something unusual about the way it walked. The darkness seemed to be taking an eternity to dissolve into dawn, but as the light began to slowly improve, the wader's broken breast band made Common Sandpiper flash through my mind, but the bird's shape looked all wrong. Still unable to use

anything other than minimum zoom on my telescope I struggled to make out any sort of detail on the bird and I repeatedly cursed the poor viewing conditions. Suddenly the bird flapped, revealing a dark line down its rump. On that occasion I hadn't paid attention to the wings, but it soon flapped again, and then flew a short distance. In such instances, thought processes that are over in a millisecond create memories that will last a lifetime. The distant flight views produced a quiz question where the clues included Green Sandpiper-like wings and a dark line down the rump. The answer was easy; this had to be a Solitary Sandpiper.

I continued to watch for a few minutes, my heart rate increasing by the second as the improving light transformed the bird into a slender, dainty wader, with an attenuated rear end. Increasingly convinced that my eyes weren't playing tricks on me, I called Chris Batty and announced that I thought I was watching a Solitary Sandpiper at Humblescough Farm flood. I knew Chris would be quick off the mark for this one, so I made my way back across the muddy fields to the car. Leaving a first for Lancashire unattended and un-photographed, just one flush away from causing eternal misery, made me feel sick to the stomach. But it was needs must; I had emergency babysitting duty to attend to. Whilst Chris made his way out into the rain, I climbed into the back of his car and began to read the Collins Bird Guide to Chris's young son, Alex. As Alex became transfixed by the owl pages, I kept flicking back to the plate illustrating the rarer Tringas. There was something truly bizarre about repeating the words 'owl', 'car', 'tractor' and 'cow' over and over at such a crucial moment, but at least trying to teach Alex how to say 'Cretzschmar's Bunting' distracted me from the agonising wait for Chris to call to say he'd seen the bird.

Finally the call came and despite the unrelenting poor viewing conditions, like me, Chris was convinced that the bird was indeed a Solitary Sandpiper, but he hadn't seen the tell-tale rump and tail. I insisted that he waited for the bird to fly before we released the news; I was all too aware that to string in the half-light at nearly 400 metres range would be unforgivably foolish. Following another agonising wait, another round of 'owl', 'car', 'tractor' and 'cow' and a short walk to say hello to some tractors, Chris called again – the rump pattern was immortalised on his video camera – the twitch was on!

A hasty introduction to Humblescough Farm owner Robert Cornthwaite followed and as the Mega-Alert blasted out he agreed to accommodate the imminently arriving birders. With the help of his family, Robert kindly allowed hundreds of birders to park in a field and view the Solitary Sandpiper from his land, which eventually halved the original viewing distance.

After the initial madness had subsided, closer views of the bird revealed a number of subtler identification features. In addition to the dark line down the rump and barred tail-sides, other features included paler upperparts than Green Sandpiper and a more attenuated shape with longer wings and longer primary projection beyond the tertials, a more obvious eye-ring, dark barring on the vent and rear flank sides, barred outer tail feathers and barred underside of the tail. The brown tones and neat, subtle spotting on the upperparts aged the bird as a juvenile.

After I'd stopped shaking, I spent the remainder of Sunday with the widest of smiles plastered to my face. As I watched the Solitary Sandpiper go about its business, thrilled that an eight year old ghost had been put to rest, my mind wandered off to dream of what other delights this superb habitat might produce in the years to come.

Did I ever mention the time I should have found a Stilt Sandpiper...?

By the end of 2010 there had been 34 British records of Solitary Sandpiper, but 20 of these had been sightings on offshore islands (17 - 12 on Isles of Scilly, 3 on Western Isles and 2 on Shetland Isles) or in the Republic of Ireland (3). In Mainland Britain, it remains a true Mega-rarity, and this record constitutes the first for the North West region.

The money raised during the bird's five day stay will go towards on-going conservation projects at the farm and to enhance the already superb habitat which hosted the Solitary Sandpiper. **Stuart Piner**



Solitary Sandpiper

Balearic Shearwater from the 'Blue Mink'

On 25th August 2011 the fourth and final Fylde pelagic of the year departed from Fleetwood Lifeboat Station aboard the 'Blue Mink'.

After a virtually birdless hour and a half heading out of Fleetwood, moaning about the lack of interest this year and telling Chris Batty I wouldn't be booking any more trips for next year unless we saw something good, which I had a sneaky suspicion we might, I noticed a shearwater flying ahead of the boat. My first thought on seeing only the upperparts were of a sooty shearwater. Alerted by my shout, Stuart Piner quickly located the bird and immediately identified it as a Balearic Shearwater before launching into one of the liveliest celebrations I had ever seen from a birder, adding a few choice words, none of which I could print here!

Only the second to be recorded on the Fylde, the Balearic Shearwater continued north, but not before all aboard had connected with it and Paul Ellis and Stuart Piner had obtained a series of record photographs.



Photos by Paul Ellis and Stuart Piner

Despite this being only the second Fylde record, Balearic Shearwater wasn't a Fylde tick for me as I was with Stephen Dunstan when he found the first for the Fylde on 8th August 2010 off Blackpool South Promenade.

Amazingly on 13th September I was seawatching at Rossall Hospital when another Balearic Shearwater found me by passing very slowly close inshore, still only the third Fylde record! Presumably the same bird was seen about an hour later by Ian Gardner off Rossall Point and then another hour later by Tony Myerscough heading south past Cleveleys.

Balearic Shearwater is currently listed as critically endangered, with the total (declining) world population estimated at just 10,000-30,000 individuals (Seawatch Southwest, 2010), but in mid-summer the majority leave their Balearic Islands breeding grounds to feed in the Atlantic (Parkin & Knox, 2010). The species regularly visits British waters; at least 1,000 individuals occur off southern and south-west coasts from mid-summer into the autumn, but it remains rare in the eastern Irish Sea (White et al., 2008). Balearic Shearwaters occur relatively frequently off North Wales, but there were only four accepted records from Lancashire before 2011.

Paul Slade

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<http://www.seawatch-sw.org/>

Golden Eagles

This is an extract from one of Alfred Wainwrights pictorial guide books, 'The Far Eastern Lake District Fells' with reference to the Golden Eagles in Haweswater.

The Haweswater valley is the only place in England where Golden Eagles nest.[2] There is an RSPB observation post in the valley of Riggindale, where the pair have their eyrie. A pair of eagles first nested in the valley in 1969 and the male and female of the pairing have changed several times over the years, during which sixteen chicks have been produced. The female bird disappeared in April 2004, leaving the male on its own. However, the RSPB are hoping a replacement female will be drawn to the area.

Contrary to this statement I have done a bit of research on this, making visits to the RSPB view point, asking the wardens questions and reading in books and birdwatching publications magazines about the eagles. The pair of Golden Eagles in the Lake District both died within about 2 years of one another with the male dying first, they died of old age. It's believed the male was 30years and the female was 32 years. The female in her later years became infertile, so when a young male with no ring, The RSPB didn't know where he had come from, when he appeared on the scene, there was great optimism.³ Golden Eagles, 2 males and 1 female. There was hope that the old female would produce young to the then young male Golden Eagle, the one with no ring. Sadly the female was too old and infertile.

Today, the young Golden Eagle is about 9 -10 years of age and is in his prime. He has been seen in Northumbria, Scotland, Galloway and Dumfries, Yorkshire Dales (Shap). He is looking for a female and he does return to Haweswater in the Lake District. Unfortunately when you visit the RSPB view point you are not guaranteed to see the eagle. I have made many a visit, one

in particular while walking the Coast to Coast and didn't see the eagle. Same year, while walking in the Shap area I saw the Golden Eagle.

This is the last remaining Golden Eagle in England and Wales. I personally think, it would be tragically sad if the Golden Eagle becomes extinct in England and Wales.

I did a walk on Sunday 24th April 2011 **Patterdale via Kirkstone Pass** Distance 11.5 miles/18.5 km Ascent (totals) 810m/2657 ft Time 6.5 Hours

Map Explorer OL5 & OL7 The English Lakes - North Eastern & South Eastern Areas

Mark Farar

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A tale from a fisherman

How Can One Refuse?

When a charming young lady asks "Will you write an article for me?" the moment takes you over and the reply is "Yes of course I will" Some time later it dawns on me, what could I possibly write that would be of interest to such learned members? I am a relatively new member and although have always had an interest in birdlife I had not studied them seriously. Yes I always kept a bird feeding table stocked up with appropriate food at an appropriate time of the year. Binoculars and numerous bird reference books to hand and yet I was being asked for an article.

Having joined the Club I had already met such dignitaries as Maurice Jones, Chris Batty, Barry Dyson, Frank Bird, Mick McGough, Len Blacow, Stuart Piner, Paul Slade, and Paul Ellis to name but a few. Now their knowledge and expertise is VAST and as such my birding journey is just beginning and so the safe option is to record how it all began! (nobody can dispute that).

My dear mother was always passionate about birdlife and this became part and parcel of my early years. It is nice to think of how these seeds sown are passed on, as is the case with my daughter who now points out to her young family the various species of birds that they encounter during their journeys. (Especially as they cross over Shard Bridge on a daily basis!) Her husband is amazed and asks how she knows, to which she replies that she just grew up to them. I bet many of our members have the same recollections. My main interest has always been angling a hobby which I have never saturated in nearly 60 years. There are amazing similarities between birdwatching/photography and angling but I will not bore you with the details but suffice to say that the love of the countryside, nature and wildlife are of paramount importance in both pursuits. It is at this point that I should introduce to Jim Wacey who besides having fished with me since childhood (we are 2nd cousins) had recently retired and had gained an interest in photography. Needing to focus his attention on a SUBJECT he accompanied me with his new camera at the ready on some of my bird spotting walks. His interest in birdlife grew as did mine in the photographic "capture" of the birds viewed during our treks. We are both at a very modest stage in both aspects of birdspotting/photography but is fair to say that the joining of the Fylde Bird Club has enhanced our enjoyment and knowledge considerably. Jim was delighted that his picture of "Turnstones in Flight" was featured in the clubs calendar for this year and it would appear that next years calendar will feature the "Baby Tawny Owls" that I photographed in my home village of Hambleton.

All holidays are now planned with a conscious consideration as to the birdlife likely to be experienced and photographed. Travelling with cameras, binoculars, scope, monopod, fishing rods and reels there is little space left for my dear wife Linda's luggage! Shame on you I hear you say but this BIRDING is serious business

Footnote----- I have very much enjoyed the guest speakers at our monthly meetings and the friendly atmosphere in which they are conducted. Although rather specialist I wonder if it would be possible to invite a guest speaker on the subject of Bird Photography in a future calendar of events?

Mike Foy

Fylde Bird Club Sightings

Under the old e-mail system strange named birds were relatively scarce but there were some good ones:

Pystercatcher -- A change of diet for this wader

Great Spotted Woodpecker -- Scottish race?

Great Black Baked Gulls -- very tasty

Common Scooter -- every child should have one

Dadwall -- obviously a male

Sisikin -- Aaah

Now the system has been automated they are coming thick and fast such as follows:

Grey Heron -- German race?

Reed Bunting -- female?

Willow warbler -- Lost its voice?

Mediterranean gull and its cousin Mediterranean gull

Manx Shearwater and closely related Manx Shearwater

Comorant or Cormorant or Cormerant or Cormorant even Cormorant

Ternstone -- make your mind up

Jackdow -- bird or beetle

Coat Tit -- expecting a cold winter

Great Phalarope -- film star

Sandwich tern -- greedy beggar

Wharrier -- wherever your going

Wharrier -- Bix?

Whopper Swan -- winter visitor to McDonald's

Goosander -- Goosander or Goosey Goosey gander?

Golfinch -- Watch out for eagles

With thanks to SD, LB, FB, MJ, PE, DJM, MF etc. Keep them coming.

Since writing this new birds are becoming rarer. People seem to be getting their act together I do hope this is just a blip.

B. Dyson

Just for fun Bird Quiz by Stuart Meredith

(Hint: not all are UK birds)

- (1) Lord above make a funny wader out of stone (7,6)
- (2) Fool who is in the news but not from the N, S or W (5)
- (3) Dialect or from the mountains (6,8)
- (4) Nil from the aerosol (6)
- (5) Mixed up cat calls (4)
- (6) William needs his to eat his soup ! (9)
- (7) Add wind and rain to vehicle fuel ? (5,6)
- (8) Add H₂O to an ex Geordie striker minus the queen then send it down the chimney (5,10)
- (9) Light coloured margarine (5,5)
- (10) What your dog might say (4)
- (11) Small dashing wizard who enjoys a lark (6)
- (12) Lover of grapes (4,6)
- (13) This lengthy metal spike is made where santa lives (7,8)
- (14) Hilda Ogden was never without 2 or 3 (6)
- (15) Check mate does he go angling ? (10)

Local Trips by Ribble Bird Tours

Wed December 14th The Fylde Coast Meet 8.30am

A full day on the Fylde with the birds and birding dependent on the latest up to the minute news. It's a good time for waders and wildfowl on the coast as well as birds of prey with a good chance of a scarcity or two as well.

Fri December 16th North Lancashire Meet 8am

If Hawfinch have been showing at the usual site to the north of Lancaster that's where we'll start the day. We're also likely to visit Leighton Moss where Bittern and Bearded Tit are possible along with an assortment of raptors, waders and wildfowl with time at Heysham also probable.

Tues January 3rd Winter Waders Meet 8am

The day will be spent between the Fylde and Lancaster looking at wintering waders. Apart from all the typical species we have a chance of Greenshank and Spotted Redshank too as well as other good birds such as Kingfisher, Barn Owl, Peregrine and plenty of geese.

Fri January 20th Ribble Estuary & Marton Mere LNR Meet 8am

At the Mere our targets will include Bittern, Long eared Owl, Cetti's Warbler and Water Rail and on the coast we'll hope for Hen & Marsh Harriers, Egrets, Short eared Owl, Peregrine and Merlin along with wildfowl such as Whooper and perhaps Bewick's Swans.

Wed February 8th Pennington & Wigan Flashes Meet 8am

A highlight at Pennington will be great views of Willow Tit and Bullfinch with a good chance of Redpolls and Siskins as well as Goosander and Kingfisher. With luck there'll also be a scarcity such as a diver, grebe or a Smew as well. The Wigan Flashes hold good numbers of wildfowl in winter and are also a regular site for Bittern in the winter months.

Wed February 15th Conder & The Lune Meet 8am

There'll still be plenty of wildfowl and waders to enjoy and we'll visit sites that are good for an array of species. We have a chance of Spotted Redshanks and Greenshank along with Kingfisher, Twite, Whooper Swan and thousands of geese.

Wed February 29th Fylde Farmland & Coast Meet 8.30am

A day where featured species should include Tree Sparrow, Yellowhammer, Barn Owl, Little Owl, Little Egret, Peregrine, Merlin, Whooper Swan and Grey Partridge. There'll be numerous other species too and we'll make time for any unusual birds that are in the area at the time.

Fri March 9th Moore NR & Marbury CP Meet 7am

Our annual spring visit to these 2 sites that are close to Warrington. Our main quarry is the elusive Lesser spotted Woodpecker that is clinging on at both these sites. We've had great views on recent visits but they cannot be guaranteed ! Other good birds on our last couple of visits have included Hawfinch, Brambling, Green Sandpiper, Tawny Owl, Green Woodpecker, Bittern and Iceland Gull.

Fri March 23rd Dunsop Valley Meet 8am

Our main target bird here is the rare and difficult to see Goshawk. We need good weather to have a chance of success. Also in the area in recent times have been Eagle Owls. Other likely birds are Buzzard, Peregrine, Dipper and Grey Wagtail with a chance of Redpoll and Siskin. If time permits (and the sun is shining) we may have a look nearby for Adders and may also visit Stocks Reservoir where there'd be a chance of Little ringed Plover, Sand Martin, Mediterranean Gull and Green Woodpecker.

We have winter / spring visits to Dumfries (2 days) in February as well as Slimbridge WWT & Somerset (3 days) and Northumberland (3 days) in March.

We also have 5 day 'Lancashire Hotspots' tours in January and February and places left on our 'Wader ID Weekend' in February. See main tour list for details.

Also we have 2 places left for Florida January 4 – 18 2012 and 2 places left for Costa Rica January 24 – February 7 2012. Contact us for details 01253 312043 or 07954 584359

or smrbt@blueyonder.co.uk www.ribbonbirdtours.co.uk

Quiz Answers

- | | | |
|--------------------|---------------------|----------------------|
| 1) Alpine Accentor | 6) Sooty Shearwater | 11) Lapland Longspur |
| 2) Osprey | 7) White Stork | 12) Roller |
| 3) Smew | 8) Ruff | 13) Kingfisher |
| 4) Spoonbill | 9) Merlin | 14) Barn Swallow |
| 5) Storm Petrel | 10) Grey Plover | 15) Eastern Bluebird |

FYLDE BIRD CLUB ANNUAL PHOTOGRAPHIC COMPETITION (27th March 2012)

Each year the Fylde Bird Club holds a photographic competition. All members who paid their subscriptions for 2011 are invited to enter and may submit up to **TWO** photographs for each geographical category:

- Fylde
- British Isles (does **NOT** include photographs taken in Fylde)
- World (does **NOT** include photographs taken in Fylde and British Isles)

Digital photographs taken in the calendar year prior to the competition are acceptable. All entries to be submitted to Peter Rhind (by e-mail or by flash drive) preferably by the last day of February although it will still be possible to enter on the night. If you have any queries please contact Peter: Tel. 01253 812495; E-mail: rhind1003@btinternet.com

Competition rules

- Only **TWO** images per category per photographer
- All photographs must be taken during 2011
- No photographs taken at the nest
- No photographs of captive or trapped birds
- Please submit digital photographs only; slides/hard copies/prints will not be accepted (but may be submitted as scanned images).
- Only photographers who have taken the top five photographs in each class (as voted by members) will be asked to elaborate on their entries (e.g. where the photograph was taken, type of equipment used etc).

Winning entries will be available for viewing on the Fylde Bird Club photographic competition webpage:
<http://www.fyldebirdclub.org/photocomp.htm>