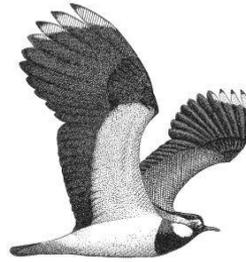


September Newsletter 2017

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**Fylde
Bird Club**
LANCASHIRE

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The end of another summer. Our garden has hosted so many young birds, more than I can remember. Sparrows lining up to be fed by over worked parents, broken snail shells left by the Song Thrushes nesting in the ivy and a legion of Blackbirds with no tails trying to muscle into the chickens feed. It had been a quiet summer for butterflies till the last days of July when Commas joined a long staying Hummingbird Hawkmoth.

July saw 6 Whimbrels passing Cocker's Dyke with their 7 note call and summer plumaged Knot and Curlew Sandpiper heralding the start of Autumn migration. The joy of birding is never knowing what awaits us.

In this issue Stephen Dunstan reports on the last 3 months of birds on the Fylde. He also has 2 articles on birding firsts, an Albatross in Belgian waters and a new bird for Cape Verde.

The Confusion Species looks at the Goldcrest and the Firecrest.

Finally Glen Jackson extols the virtues of Norfolk birding and Geoff Gradwell introduces us to the 1898 bird survey of Birds of the Fylde. Fascinating.

P.S. I don't know if anyone else has the same experience. After a slow start butterflies have appeared in very good numbers from the middle of August. Fewer species but Red Admirals, Painted Ladies, Speckled Wood, Peacock, Tortoiseshells and Whites all over.

Peter Rhind

Photograph – Hummingbird Hawkmoth

RECENT SIGHTINGS JUNE-AUGUST

Summary

This was a period which would have been expected to begin very quietly and build to a better finish. In the event comfortably the best sighting (a Sooty Shearwater) was in the first week, and the only other county description birds were in July. That isn't to say that August wasn't without interest, but with Gull-billed Tern and Ferruginous Duck just to our south, a Caspian Tern in East Lancs then Leighton Moss and a long staying Purple Heron at the latter site during the period under review we certainly lacked something of this quality lingering to be enjoyed.

Sooty Sweeps Past

On 6 June an unexpectedly strong north westerly winds hit the Fylde. Even though north west isn't the best direction for Fylde seawatching the early news of Storm Petrels in the Mersey gave hope of some from off our shores. In the event none were seen but a rather more unexpected seabird was recorded in the form of a Sooty Shearwater.

The bird was first picked up by Chris Batty? early morning going west close inshore past Knott End. Other observers in Fleetwood were alerted and the bird was picked up heading west from there, again close in. Unfortunately for other would be observers further south the trail went cold there, and maybe the bird eventually headed out of Morecambe Bay north past Walney.

Whilst Sooty Shearwater is undoubtedly a rare bird off the Fylde it is probably not unfair to say that the historical record of accepted and rejected records is something of a mess. There are quite a few accepted records of Sooties in the 1960s and 1970s, before the advent of modern scopes. The Lancashire avifauna suggests that the relative dearth of claims since optics improved reflects the fact many of these birds may have been skuas. On the other hand the rejection rate for more recent claims is very high, and presumably some bona fide records have been thrown out.

Beside being a good bird full stop in Fylde terms this record was notable for the time of year. Spring records are fairly unusual in the country as a whole.

Roseate Returns?

Following the Roseate Tern mentioned in the last quarterly summary, there were a further two records both from Starr Gate on 23 and 26 July. It is presumably the case that these sightings were not the same as the June bird, but both July records could relate to the same individual.

Beyond this there is perhaps not a lot to add to what was said in the last newsletter. As with the earlier records these two sightings were not available to anybody not already present, so it remains the case that many newer Fylde birders haven't had opportunity to see one in the recording area. Given that they are basically annual at Seaforth, the

incentive is there for regular summer seawatching or careful scrutiny of the Preston Dock colony for a brief visitation.

So that was basically it for true headline birds. Given this new sightings round-up format deliberately doesn't go into minutiae of all reports what follows is a subjective selection of other records that I personally thought were interesting and therefore thought you might also. If you had a particular sighting that mattered to you in the period and it isn't here I can only apologise.

Skua selection

With the sustained levels of seawatching it was perhaps not surprising that a few Arctic Skuas would be seen, but there were some good totals including no fewer than eight off Starr Gate on 11th August. Great Skuas were harder to come by, with just a handful of singles. The highlight of the skua autumn so far however was the very early Pomarine seen from Starr Gate on 23 July.

Breeding LEOs

Perhaps the most interesting breeding record in the period was proof of Long-eared Owl success, with two juveniles seen at Ballam. It isn't beyond the realms of possibility that this species nests every year in the Fylde, but we don't know and confirmed breeding remains notable. It has occurred at Clifton in the past, and at least some years at Marton Mere.

Early Or Lingering Bittern

A Bittern was seen at Marton Mere on the unusual date of 16 June, and was then reported on and off throughout the rest of the period under review. It is tempting to conclude that this was a failed breeder and had returned very early, though some observers considered it may have been present throughout the summer. If the latter were to be the case it might be a positive sign in terms of any potential future breeding attempt at the site.

Ravens Roam

Whilst the Raven is now an established breeder in small numbers the period under review saw some unusual records in terms of flocks sizes and locations. The largest total was seven, six followed by a single, over Blackpool Old Road, Poulton on 20th August. Four south east over Blackpool town centre on 16th August was also notable, with other records including four at Glasson on 25th and three at Freckleton Naze on 16th.

A typical Quail 'Showing'

'Showing' in quotation marks because as is usual they didn't show as such, and were picked up on call. There was at least one in the favoured area of Eagland Hill, another at the fairly dependable location of Lytham Moss and a further singing individual at St Michaels. How many Fylde birders have actually seen one on the Fylde, the only photo on the club's species gallery is of an individual in flight!

Scarce waders

Overall the period flattered to deceive for these. There were some very sizeable Dunlin flocks seen, giving hope that there would be a White-rumped Sandpiper out there. And

perhaps there was, but the confirmed highlights were restricted to a moulting adult Curlew Sandpiper at Pilling Lane at the end of July and at least one adult Little Stint at Skippool / Ramper Pot at the end of July / early August.

Bank End Wagtail Banker

Whilst grounded Yellow Wagtails can be seen regularly on the golf course at Rossall Point in spring, in autumn it is Bank End that comes into its own as they are regularly picked out among larger numbers of Pied (and presumably some White) Wags. What will presumably prove to be the largest count of the year involved six juveniles on 27 August, whilst there were five at the site on the 22nd. Given some of the juveniles were seen begging for food perhaps they were born on the Fylde?

Great Whites

Although fast entering the 'taken for granted' category Great White Egret remain very scarce in the recording area. An early returning bird was seen off Lytham Jetty on a couple of dates at the end of August. It will be interesting to see if there is any repetition during the autumn of last year's migrating flock, and how many will choose to settle in the north and south of our recording area to winter.

Also...

A juvenile Cetti's Warbler stuck in one of the hides at Marton Mere on 16th July was an interesting way for successful breeding to be confirmed, though clearly breeding presumably occurs every year here and at other sites including Fleetwood Marsh.

As would be expected Marsh Harriers began to appear in August during post-breeding dispersal. The pattern of occurrence was typical, with most on the Ribble marshes and Over Wyre.

An early drake Scaup was seen on Conder Pool from 7th to 10th August.

Stephen Dunstan

STERLING STARLING IN SAL

I had wanted to go to the Cape Verdes for a few years. The plan had been to island hop, picking up rare seabirds on Branco and Raso Lark which only occurs, appropriately enough, on the uninhabited islet of Raso. When I eventually got the chance to go earlier this year it was for ten days on the relatively birdless island of Sal in a tourist resort (Santa Maria). So in theory it wasn't looking too promising, but fortunately it didn't work out quite like that.

Resident specialities

Sal, like nearby Boavista, is more desert like in habitat than other Cape Verde islands. The situation is not dissimilar to the Canary Islands, where the eastern most island of Fuerteventura and Lanzarote are most dry and barren.



There are three species of lark which occur on Sal – Bar-tailed, Black-Crowned Sparrow and Greater Hoopoe. These were all picked up in a relatively straightforward fashion on walks from the hotel. My only previous African birding was in an area where Greater Hoopoe Lark did not occur (northern Tunisia) so I was particularly pleased to see this striking and at times very confiding species. In

terms of seabirds I didn't have high expectations as I didn't hold out much hope as I didn't plan to view the offshore islet of Rabo de Junco, which wasn't the most straightforward



place to get to. I did however try some seawatching from the hotel beach early mornings and on the second attempt was surprised to get three Red-billed Tropicbirds. Whilst there were undoubtedly prolonged periods of inactivity these seawatches were certainly worthwhile, as well as the tropicbirds there were sightings of Cape Verde Shearwaters, several pods of dolphin and a turtle species. Later in the trip I found tropicbirds prospecting nest sites only a few miles from Santa Maria and was able to get a few record shots.



I had a bit of difficulty finding and Cream Coloured Coursers around Santa Maria resort. About a week in I did finally see a couple embarrassingly close to the hotel given my previous failure. Subsequently I took a taxi ride to the cultivated part of the island (Terra Boa) and in parts of this area they were ridiculously easy to see with groups into double figures. Brown-necked Ravens were also evident in this area, the rufous tones being surprisingly evident even at longer range.

Lingering scarcities / rarities



A little over two months before my visit Fair Isle Bird Observatory warden David Parnaby had done some birding whilst in the same general area as me on a family holiday. He had made a couple of visits to the sewage farm on the outskirts of Santa Maria, and had had some joy there in terms of birds scarce or rare on the Cape Verdes. This included no fewer than three Red-throated Pipits, and it was presumably one of these that was the highlight of my first visit to the site.

David also had single Purple Heron and Night Heron on his visits. I also had at least one Purple Heron, and one juvenile Night Heron which on the basis of feather damage was clearly the same individual. The Purple Herons were of the normal European / African race, not the distinctive race *bournei* which occurs only on the Cape Verdes, and therefore a scarce migrant. The Night Heron meanwhile was a first for Sal.

Self-founds

On the second evening of the holiday I was looking at coastal pools adjacent to the hotel when a Collared Pratincole circled before departing. I had left my camera in the hotel and the bird flew strongly inland. As a species which is a rarity in the Cape Verdes this was a bit of a kick in the teeth.

It turned out I needn't have worried, as a couple of days later I got excellent views of one on the ground near the sewage farm. I proceeded to see presumably this individual most days, until the day before I was due to leave it was also joined by a second bird.

Whilst on a walk to Ponta Preta, a couple of kilometres up the road, trying to break my



Cream Coloured Courser duck I was pleasantly surprised to see a cracking male Yellow Wagtail in a small and rather grim roadside puddle. It has been accepted as the Scandinavia race *thunbergi*, though to be honest I don't think that's what it is and it may be an intergrade. Any which way it was just the sixth record for the Cape Verdes.

Finally on the afternoon of my last full day on the island I headed over to the sewage farm area for a final time. A pleasant hour or so birding produced the two pratincoles, a couple of Red-rumped Swallows and several Quail. As I had called time and was heading back to the hotel the unmistakable silhouette of a Starling in flight went over me. Knowing that Starlings are vagrants on the Cape Verdes, and seeing the bird pitch down in the distance, I retraced my steps for a better look and hopefully a picture.

After some searching without any joy the bird popped up on a branch and through my bins I was astonished to see a Rosy Starling, a species I thought had never occurred on the archipelago. There was then a frantic moment or two when my first attempt to take a picture failed because the flash tried to engage and hit the brim of the baseball cap I was wearing. When I reset the camera and pressed the shutter the bird had just left the branch, resulting in a slightly blurred image but one that clinched the record. This was fortunate, as the bird was never seen again.

We have booked another fortnight in the same area next April. Fingers crossed for another couple of local rarities.

Stephen Dunstan

JUST LIKE BUSES

Many birders dream of finding a national first. I was delighted to discover a Rosy Starling on the Cape Verdes in April, a first for the archipelago. I could never have imagined that within less than three months I would repeat the trick, this time with a first for Belgium.

For several years I have been a seabird and cetacean surveyor for Marinelife on freight



Stephen Dunstan
@StephenDunstan2



Somewhat abstract pic of tonight's conveyance. Hull-Zeebrugge not Biscay but who knows what might turn up on the high seas...



8:26 AM - 15 Jul 2017



and passenger ferries. One of the less productive routes I have covered over the years is Hull-Zeebrugge. The fact that much of each leg of the journey is under cover of darkness doesn't help. Nevertheless it is a chance to spend a day in the fabulous city of Bruges, so in the past I have gone with my wife and eldest daughter and this month I did the survey with my youngest daughter Bryony.

We boarded the Pride of Bruges in Hull on Saturday evening, and were able to enjoy a meal in the restaurant whilst the ferry cleared the lock. We then surveyed as the ship left the Humber Estuary, seeing a few gulls and a handful of seabirds. Paul Slade sent me a WhatsApp message with some news from Skippool, I replied saying I was on a ferry passing Spurn so he had won the day in terms of the low key Skippool – Little Singleton rivalry we engage in. His reply was 'until you see the Fea's from your boat',

which proved to be fairly close to the truth.

Sunday morning 16th July I was back on the bridge to survey on the approach to Zeebrugge. There were just a smattering of Gannets and Guillemots when one of the two crew present exclaimed that he had just seen a whale. He went on to describe a tail protruding, and said that he had never seen anything like it in all his time on the route. It sounded plausible enough even before the other officer present also shouted out that there was a whale tail showing again close to the ship. It is tempting to think that it was a Humpback, maybe a couple, that they had seen but it is purely a guess as I didn't get a sniff of a sighting of anything.

I was still smarting a bit about this when with the naked eye I saw a large seabird cutting across the front of the boat. It wasn't close but it wasn't that distant either, and I raised my bins expecting to see another Gannet to add to the survey tally. I was more than a little taken aback by the fact I was in fact looking at what could only be an adult Black-browed Albatross.

In these circumstances it would be nice to savour the moment and watch the bird's majestic flight until lost to view, but in reality the first thought was to get some record shots. It was slightly fraught as I turned the camera on, with the bird still going away from me, but I was able to take about half a dozen shots before I lost track of where the bird was and I didn't pick it up again. I then scribbled down the co-ordinates of where the ship was so that, assuming my identification was correct, it could be established if the bird had been seen in Belgian waters.

After I left the bridge to prepare for leaving the boat for the day I reviewed the images on the back of the camera. I am a bit embarrassed to admit that I didn't know how to zoom in and move the image centre on my newish camera, so I zoomed the pics up so far and then the bird would disappear off the screen. Nevertheless one shot in particular clearly showed a Black-browed Albatross.

There was no data connection at sea so it wasn't until we reached Zeebrugge that I was able to put the news out. I first contacted RBA, and sent a reply to Paul's Fea's text from the day before. Other than responding to some direct questions relating to social media posts I had made I left it there at that point, as Bryony and I spent an enjoyable day in Bruges visiting the Dali museum and taking a tour of the town on an open top bus.

When I returned to the boat I finally sussed out how to zoom in and keep the bird in the centre of the screen. I was therefore able to take some half decent phone pics of the back of camera images and get these to the Birding Belgium Facebook group. Gradually as information came back to me it became clear that the sighting was in Belgian waters, and was (subject to acceptance) the first record for the country. I haven't even stayed overnight in Belgium, so this was a bit more than I deserved but nevertheless it was a great feeling to find such a charismatic species and it to be the first for the country.

Clearly it seems probable that this is the same individual that has been summering in Germany in recent years, and making occasional appearances on Britain's east coast. Nevertheless it was still wholly unexpected for it to gracefully swoop past the ferry I was on, and adding such a charismatic species to the list of a country as well covered as Belgium was one of my all time birding highlights.

[Update – since the sighting a couple of sightings of immature Black-browed Albatrosses have been seen from fishing vessels off the coast of Brittany, France. It therefore seems likely with hindsight that the Belgium bird was not the long-staying Sylt-Bempton individual after all!).



Stephen Dunstan

Confusion Species

The Tiny Jewels – Goldcrest and Firecrest

Goldcrest – aka Golden Crested Wren or Woodcock Pilot

I remember early in my bird watching days seeing a Goldcrest. I must have startled it as it turned and the golden crest turned to a flame red/orange. I mistakenly thought it was a Firecrest. I now know it was a male Goldcrest whose crest has an orange centre. The first and not the last of my mistaken identifications!!



The Goldcrest is Europe's smallest bird weighing in at around 6 gm, a real titch. It is insectivorous so spends much of its time flitting frantically feeding. The number of insects harboured by coniferous trees plus the yearlong cover and shelter offered means they are the tree of choice for Goldcrest. It has an ability to hover as it flits from branch to branch, blurred wings, black legs and bright orange feet are probably all you need to see to identify a Goldcrest. It is quite a confiding bird so

when seen well you can appreciate its beauty. The trademark golden crest is bordered by black lines, the peppercorn eye and a fine black gape line give it a drooping moustache and a permanently surprised or vacant expression. The pale moss green back and pale underside, prominent white wing bar and small black box on the wings complete its livery. The call is a thin tiny high pitched sound and the song is a fine tinkle. It has been described as a useful hearing test as it is one of the first to vanish as old age strikes.

The nest is a tiny cuplet lined by moss and fine feathers and is one of birdland's finest. Into this the Goldcrest lays up to a dozen tiny eggs and it can raise 2 broods a year. Bad winters do decimate the population but it does have the ability to bounce back as long as suitable habitat is available.

It is mainly sedentary but despite its size and fragility bad weather on the continent can lead it to undertake the journey across the North Sea in hundreds in the company of others driven to make the same crossing. The accompanying Woodcock gives the Goldcrest one of its old names of Woodcock pilot. A few years ago I stood in the pub carpark on Spurn surrounded by hundreds of frantically feeding Goldcrests who had just completed this journey. This time they had a Yellow-browed Warbler and 2 Great Grey Shrikes for company.

Photograph – Peter Rhind

The Firecrest

This really is a tiny jewel of a bird. With the trademark golden/orange stripe of the Crest family it adds the busy facial marking that immediately mark it out as a Firecrest. It has a prominent white supercilium and a black eye stripe giving it a crowded face unlike the open face of a Goldcrest. It cannot really be confused with any other British bird. The body

is the same colouring as the Goldcrest with the addition of a bronzed shoulder patch. It really is hard to see well as not only is it an uncommon bird but it is also a frantic never still feeder, forever flitting and just as you focus on it it has gone. Its call is very similar to that of the Goldcrest but a touch lower.

It is a rare breeder in this country only coming onto the British list in 1962 when I was “nobbut” a bairn. Famously it liked Wendover woods in Buckinghamshire and numbers rose to a peak of 46 singing males in 1975 though numbers fell in subsequent years. The “Office Pub” in Wendover was renamed “The Firecrest” in honour of this and it remains the Firecrest although the bird itself has declined in numbers. It is a passage migrant and autumn offers the best chance of encountering this minute jewel on the Fylde. It can be found in winter in big Tit flocks as they roam through the woods. Safety in numbers and food finding are the main reasons given for the flocking.



We have all heard the ancient Greek story about the king of the birds. The competition to be won by the highest flying bird. Just as the Eagle claimed the prize a Wren flew out of his tail feathers and won. In some cultures the Gold/Firecrest was that bird and that is claimed as the reason for the families name. Regulus is the diminutive of king and so the bird was named, to cement the claim is the golden crown or stripe worn by the Kinglets.

P.S. One way of attracting the Gold or Firecrest closer and getting a better look is by “Pishing”. The ancient art of making a noise somewhat like kissing the back of your hand with gusto. Don’t ask me how it works but maybe some birds are very inquisitive and seek to investigate what or who is behaving so unusually!!

Peter Rhind

Photograph – Paul Slade

“ YOU SHOULD HAVE BEEN HERE YESTERDAY! ”

For my May birding trip this year, I declined the delights of strong winds and heavy rain in the Uists, spending hours hunkered down at Aird an Runair observing the Skua passage. Instead I headed for Norfolk intending to add to my British List – and was not disappointed.

Setting off by 0600 on Sunday 21st May it was an easy 2 hour drive to **Blacktoft Sands** where after mistaking a Marsh Harrier or two for my target bird, the female **Montague’s Harrier** appeared on queue after just 15 minutes in front of the eastern hide. I asked if the Black Winged Stilts were still on the reserve to be told “they were – until yesterday”!

Off then down the A15 to South Lincolnshire to the rapidly developing new reserve at **Frampton Marsh**. In a couple of years’ time this will be a real hotspot, and it already has a refreshingly enthusiastic and welcoming visitor centre – eager to help. I was after the

Temminck's Stint, and a couple of Black Winged Stints, but found that they had last been seen "yesterday"! After 2 hours searching just in case, and looking for the Turtle Dove buried deep in the hedgerow, I left to check in to the Premier Inn at King's Lynn (only £39 for the night if booked 4 weeks in advance).

In the evening spent 3 hours at dusk and early night around **Dersingham Bog** and **Roydon Common**. It is now futile looking for the Golden Pheasant around Wolferton, but Roydon did turn up two more "lifers" for me. Firstly a distant "Lulluling" call of a **Woodlark** and scope view set the pulse racing, but then for the real treat – the churring of three **Nightjars**.

It turns out I was not in the best spot to observe them in flight, as the NWT warden next morning indicated no less than 12 pairs were present last year, and that a road a mile to the north and Dersingham are better spots for observation. I will know for next time.

On Monday it was off along the coast. After a disappointing visit to **Snettisham** I arrived at the legendary **Titchwell RSPB** reserve for a 5 hour extravaganza. Yet again in the office I was told that the Temminck's and Black Wing birds had left the day before, and you should have been here yesterday for the Turtle Dove showing well in the car park. However I did add another to my list, **Red Crested Pochard** with young, (3 pairs on site now). In the evening I returned at dusk and for 2 hours I had the whole reserve to myself watching no less than 5 Marsh Harriers and all the other marvels of evensong on a top national reserve.

At 0600 next morning I had to share the reserve for 2 hours until breakfast with another birder, and we tracked down the elusive **Turtle Dove** (in the car park). Then it was off on what turned out to be a splendid day for me. No time to take in the tourist delights of Wells-next-the-Sea, and the NWT reserve at Cley would take all day – but I did locate the elusive **Iberian Chiff Chaff** at Wolsey Hills. Thanks to Ashley from FBC I took his advice and headed for **Kelling Heath** for a special treat to tick off my wish list – and quickly found a family of **Dartford Warblers** near the level crossing. Unfortunately in the railway embankment the 3 pairs of Woodlarks failed to appear – but the local volunteer told me that I should have been there yesterday when they were regularly showing. On the way to my night in Thetford I called in at the NWT site at **Weeting Heath** to observe another lifer – the virtually guaranteed **Stone Curlew**, bringing my total for the day to 4.

On Wednesday, my last day and on my way home, the Weeting warden opened up for me at 0600, to let me walk through the woods to the far heath a mile away for displaying Woodlarks, Lovely walk – but no Woodlarks displaying. Well they were yesterday!

On then to **Lakenheath Fen** reserve for another lifer, which took some work to see. Fortunately about 10 other birders were on hand and we eventually confirmed the **Marsh Warbler**. On a reserve acknowledged to be the best hotspot for Hobby's I saw only a distant high in the sky view of just one, but was told that I should have been there the previous afternoon when no less than 22 (does that mean a flock?) were seen.

So then it was time to head for home, but on the way planned a visit to **Paxton Pits**, just off the A1 in Cambridgeshire, for Nightingales. On arrival I met up with two expert birders who had spent hours looking around for them, to be told that a few years ago there were

around 30 pairs there, then down to 18 about 5 years ago, and this year there only just one heard singing – and that was yesterday. This target bird looks like being difficult to add to my list.

In summary I thoroughly enjoyed my quick sojourn into Norfolk and intend to return, perhaps for the autumn migration. I added no less than 9 to my life list, which is still below 300, and would have been more if only I had been there the day before.

Glen Jackson

Birds of Lancashire, 1892 – Book Review

While undertaking other online research I stumbled upon *Birds of Lancashire, 1892* by FS Mitchell – it makes interesting reading.

Some members may be conversant with the book but I thought it worthwhile drawing to the attention of all members (or at least readers of the FBC newsletter).

It is available online at <https://archive.org/stream/birdsoflancashir00mitc#page/22/mode/2up>

The Lancashire boundaries were obviously different as was political correctness over 120 years ago, so be warned of egg collecting, shooting of birds and the actions of the game-bird fraternity.

To whet your appetite here are a few snippets, but rather than spoil it for readers, reading the book yourself will hopefully provide interesting aspects. Hopefully you can draw your own conclusions from the following (remember 1892, 125 years ago)...

Chiffchaff

"A summer visitor, rarely seen except in one or two localities, and nowhere common."

Wood Warbler

"... not so common as the Willow Warbler, but much more plentiful than the Chiffchaff."

Red-backed shrike

"A summer visitor; still breeding regularly..."

Snow Bunting

"...a few at first, and then hundreds if the weather continues frosty".

Jay

"Resident, but every year decreasing in numbers ... mercilessly destroyed by the game-keeping fraternity"

Sky-Lark

"resident, and one of our commonest birds."

Buzzard

"As a breeding species the Common Buzzard has been exterminated in every part of Lancashire except those few peaks in the north..."

Dotterel

"It is now never seen on Pendle Hill..."

There has, clearly been change over the last 125 years, with some 'winners' and some 'losers' and while we sometimes dwell on threats and detrimental changes there have been some positive outcomes when you compare this book's contents with our knowledge today. The positive work of FBC should be acknowledged.

Reading *Birds of Lancashire, 1892*, I was struck by the many references to birds being shot and killed, until the penny dropped when reading the FBC Newsletter and I came across 'record shot'; the only way to record and identify birds during the Victorian era meant taking dead specimens. It is only in the last ten years or so with the development of digital photography and lens development that our 'record shots' are less invasive. It was these Victorian naturalists that set the foundations for today's naturalists so perhaps we should not be too judgmental...

'... for the times they are a-changin' (no prizes)

Geoff Gradwell

see the <http://geoffgradwellgalerie.zenfolio.com> ('recent work' for those who visit regularly or just mooch around). Mobile: **0751 635 2944**

Forthcoming Meetings

- | | |
|----------------------------|---|
| September 26 th | Indian Wildlife with Mike Watson. |
| October 24 th | The River Lune Trust with Sarah Littlefield and Mick Jackson. |
| November 28 th | Cooperative Breeding in Long Tailed Tits with Stuart Sharp. |

Gordon Marsden's Cleaner Greener Award Nomination

The Fylde Bird Club were nominated for an award under the Green Activists/ Community Group category. However we didn't win. Malcolm Evan and the Secretary attended the awards even at the Solarium on 8th September.

