

# NORFOLK ORNITHOLOGISTS' ASSOCIATION

## WINTER NEWSLETTER 2025



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### Thank You Sophie!

After 25 years with the NOA, Sophie has had to hand over the reins at Holme Bird Observatory due to prolonged ill health. It would be remiss of the Association if we didn't take the opportunity to reflect on her time at the Observatory.

It was back in 2001 when Jed Andrews was Warden that a keen and eager young Sophie Barker jumped at the opportunity to become his Assistant Warden. A glimpse at the annual report for that year highlighted "the endless enthusiasm of... Sophie Barker, whose administrative and field skills have allowed [the Warden] to concentrate on other projects."

Sophie went from strength to strength, building her skills and experience such that when Jed decided to step down as Warden in 2011 the Council of Trustees had no hesitation in promoting her into the role. And in that role Sophie thrived until recent ill health unfortunately curtailed her activity.

During her time with the NOA over 61,000 birds have been ringed at the Observatory and as many birds again caught at other sites under the auspices of the NOA, with a yearly average of around 71 species. The biggest year was 2014 with 10,123 birds of 87 species being processed. This remains our best ringing year since the NOA was established in 1962 - what a legacy!

At the Observatory, 27 new species were added to the recording area's tally during the years Sophie was on watch.

Sophie also established, in conjunction with Prof. Fred Cooke, the programme of standardised, coordinated sea-watching at Holme Bird Observatory which, since its beginning in 2005, has delivered so much important data. Such was the interest generated by the project that within four years a collaboration was started with the BTO. By the time Sophie became Warden in 2011 there was sufficient sea-bird data for detailed analysis to permit the publication of BTO Research Report 629, 'Analysis of Sea-watching Data from Holme Bird Observatory.' The project again provided data to produce a paper in 2019 in the peer-review journal Ringing and Migration.

Perhaps the best-known publication which Sophie co-authored is 'The Birds of Holme Bird Observatory 1962-2020,' which has just been reprinted.

But it's not just the science in which Sophie has excelled, her fundraising exploits via the annual Christmas Eve NOA Sponsored Birdwatch has, since its origins back in 2006, raised £1000s for the Association.

Most of all, her warm, friendly and enthusiastic welcome to members and visitors alike will be remembered by so many. I have lost count of the number of people who, when I have been visiting the Observatory during the last year, have called in to enquire after Sophie's wellbeing, all offering kind words for her recovery.

Sophie has asked us to share the following message with all our members:

*"Dear All*

*It is with much sadness that I have to leave the NOA after 25 years as Assistant Warden and Warden. It has been such a privilege and I have had a fantastic time, enjoying some amazing wildlife experiences which I will never forget. But I value more than all of this the amazing qualities of the NOA membership. It is your loyalty, kindness and enthusiasm which make this organisation so special, and this was never clearer than when we made our recent land appeal, which ensures the future of the NOA at Holme.*

*I leave you in the capable hands of Shannon Clifford, who has been growing into the role of Warden since the onset of my illness two years ago, with much dedication. I very much hope to return to birding and ringing when I am feeling better, as a visitor and volunteer, and hope to see all of you when circumstances permit. Until then, I thank you from the bottom of my heart, and wish you every joy of the wonderful place that is Holme Bird Observatory and the NOA's other unique reserves.*

*Sophie"*

Finally, as a small thank you for all those years of hard work and commitment, the Trustees are going to bestow Honorary Life Membership upon Sophie so, when she's up and about once again, she'll have no excuse not to come and see us.

*Barrie Hunt, NOA Trustee*

## Welcome Shannon!

The Trustees would like to announce that Shannon Clifford will succeed Sophie as the new NOA Warden.

Shannon joined the Association as Assistant Warden two years ago. Initially based mainly between Walsey Hills and Hempton Marsh, for most of the past year Shannon has, during Sophie's illness, been a welcoming face for the NOA at the Observatory and has helped ensure activities continued in line with Bird Observatories Council guidelines.

She is well qualified to take on this important role having come to us with a first-class degree in Environmental Science and Sustainability and a distinction in her Masters in Ecology and Environmental Biology. She has considerable field ecology experience ranging from habitat and protected species surveying, including Black Grouse and Hen Harriers, to seabird monitoring with the RSPB.

Shannon is also an experienced ringer and has recently qualified for her A-permit. Within weeks of starting work at Walsey Hills she had ringed Firecrests, Yellow-browed Warbler and Siberian Chiffchaff. Shortly after that she ringed a Woodcock at Hempton Marsh, the first to be caught by the NOA at night with the aid of a thermal camera.

Clearly, she approached her Assistant Warden role at the NOA with energy and a willingness to learn and will no doubt continue to grow and develop in her new role as Warden.

A new Assistant Warden will be recruited in due course.

*Barrie Hunt*

Trustee

## NOA Sponsored Birdwatch

This winter's Sponsored Birdwatch will take place on **Friday 2<sup>nd</sup> January 2026**, when Shannon Clifford and the NOA team will be trying to see as many species as possible in the local area.

If you wish to support us, you can either sponsor the team by number of species or donate a fixed sum.

You can donate by clicking on the yellow **Donate** button in <https://noa.org.uk/donate-leave-legacy/>, or you can pledge support by emailing [info@noa.org.uk](mailto:info@noa.org.uk). If you can Gift Aid your donation, so much the better.

## Reminder - Increase in Membership Subscriptions

As announced in the previous Newsletter, membership subscription rates will be increased from 1<sup>st</sup> January 2026. If you pay by Standing Order, but have yet to increase the instruction to your bank, now would be a good time to do so!

## NOTICEBOARD

### NOA 200 Club: October 2025 Draw

Drawn on 21<sup>st</sup> October, total shares in draw: 119.

**1st Prize**, £178.50: share 52, P Graper ,

**2nd Prize**, £89.25, share 280, F Schumann ,

**3rd Prize**, £35.70, share 81, T Smith ,

**4th Prizes**, 3 prizes of £17.85 each:-

share 6, J Bracey,

share 64, L H Smith, and

share 125, J Hatton.

Congratulations to the winners and many thanks to everyone who has purchased shares. The next draw will be made in January 2026.

*Kath Trinder*

200 Club Promoter

### MOBILITY SCOOTERS

If you are planning to visit Holme Bird Observatory using a mobility scooter, then we would strongly advise parking your car in the small car park just inside the Observatory entrance gate where disabled parking spaces are available. There is loose gravel on either side of the gate in which a mobility scooter could get bogged down. There is firm ground inside the car park, from which the ramp can be accessed safely.

## Bird News, September - November 2025

### September 2025

At **Holme Bird Observatory**, a Raven came in off the sea at Gore Point on the 2<sup>nd</sup>, and there were two first-winter Caspian Gulls in amongst a big flock of Herring Gulls. Twelve Swifts went over on the 3<sup>rd</sup>, and a single Spotted Redshank was on the reserve. On the 4<sup>th</sup>, two Whimbrels flew across the grazing marshes calling noisily late afternoon, and there was a good count of 11 Little Grebes on Broad Water. There were two Wheatears on the 5<sup>th</sup> (one in the dunes and one from one of the NWT hides), along with five Lesser Whitethroats and two Willow Warblers. A Spotted Flycatcher turned up in The Pines mid-morning, and was then showing well on East Bank for most of the afternoon. A sea-watch in the morning of the 5<sup>th</sup> was productive, with 160 Teal, seven Wigeon, 43 Shoveler, 2 Pintail, two Long-tailed Skuas, six Arctic Skuas, a Fulmar, 38 Gannets, two Great Crested Grebes, four Little Terns, 51 Sandwich Terns, four Common Terns and three Arctic Terns. On the 6<sup>th</sup>, a Pied Flycatcher, two Ravens, a Spotted Redshank and a Wheatear were rec-

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ordered. On the 7<sup>th</sup>, there was a nice arrival of birds including 17 Pied Flycatchers, four Redstarts, six Whinchats, four Wheatears and 15 Chiffchaffs. There were just three Pied Flycatchers initially on the morning of the 7<sup>th</sup>, with the remainder arriving late afternoon. A Black Tern and seven Arctic Skuas were seen during a morning sea-watch, and 214 Teal flew west. We were tracking the large flock of Glossy Ibises west along the coast from Eccles, then to Weybourne and Cley, hoping they would arrive at Holme eventually. Then, at midday, 29 arrived over the grazing marsh/dunes before drifting west out of sight. Of the arriving migrants, only three Pied Flycatchers, three Redstarts, two Wheatears and a single Whinchat remained by the 8<sup>th</sup>. More migrants were moving on the 9<sup>th</sup>, with eight Chiffchaffs, two Willow Warblers, seven Reed Warblers, 12 Blackcaps, a Garden Warbler, a Redstart, a Whinchat, 55 Swallows and two Swifts recorded. A single Redstart was near the Obs on 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup>. There was a triple-Osprey day at Holme on the 12<sup>th</sup>: the first was seen coming in off the sea in the morning before flying towards Thornham, where it was joined by a second bird hunting around Thornham Channel. Then, around midday we had a third Osprey in off the sea which landed on a fence post on the grazing marshes near the sheep, before flying west past the car park hide. Other highlights from the 12<sup>th</sup> included a Manx Shearwater, a Black Tern, seven Pintail, 12 Great Crested Grebes, four Razorbills, three Red-throated Divers and two Arctic Skuas on a sea-watch, as well as two Spoonbills feeding on the beach. An Osprey was seen on a post on the far side of Thornham Channel on the 13<sup>th</sup>. The 14<sup>th</sup> was a good day for hirundines, with 267 House Martins feeding and moving past Holme, providing a lovely spectacle as they passed over The Pines and dunes. They were accompanied by 25 Swallows and six Swifts, and they attracted a couple of Hobbies. There were 10 Cattle Egrets over the grazing marshes, and nine Spoonbills were recorded.

A day of strong westerlies on the 16<sup>th</sup> meant a good day for sea-watching, and we recorded 38 Manx Shearwaters, two Eiders, 104 Gannets, 32 Cormorants, nine Great Crested Grebes, a Marsh Harrier (in off the sea), two Pink-footed Geese (the first of the year), five Grey Plovers, a Pomarine Skua which gave great views as it flew in and then sat on the sea before flying west, four Arctic Skuas, a Great Skua very close in, 34 Sandwich Terns and nine Common Terns. A Black Tern flew west offshore on the 17<sup>th</sup>, and a second was seen at Gore Point. Highlights on the 18<sup>th</sup> included two Pied Flycatchers, a Spotted Flycatcher and ten Cattle Egrets. Birds noted on a morning sea-watch on the 19<sup>th</sup> included a Red-throated Divers, five Great Crested Grebes, two Manx Shearwaters, 16 Gannets, 49 Sandwich Terns and 17 Pink-footed Geese. Single Whinchat and Redstart were in the dunes. On the 20<sup>th</sup>, a flock of 14 Spoonbills flew inland from Thornham Harbour, and a juvenile Spotted Redshank was on Broad Water. Sea-watching on the 21<sup>st</sup> yielded 65 Common Scoters, five Red-throated Divers, six Great Crested Grebes, 18 Manx Shearwaters, a Cory's Shearwater (only the 10<sup>th</sup> Holme record if accepted), 192 Gannets, 63 Cormorants, a Pomarine Skua, 16 Arctic Skuas, a Great Skua, 21 Sandwich Terns, two Black Terns, 13 Arctic Terns, two Razorbills, four Swallows, four Little Gulls, 100 Dunlin and 25 Pink-footed Geese. The following morning (22<sup>nd</sup>) was also suitable for sea-watching, and birds seen included a Balearic Shearwater (our first since 2021), five Great Skuas, seven Arctic Skuas, seven Guillemots, three Razorbills, nine Sandwich Terns, 21 Kittiwakes, 150 Gannets, six Red-throated Divers, 145 Pink-footed Goose, three Shoveler, five Pintail, 234 Teal and 49 Wigeon. A juvenile Long-tailed Skua flew west, and a single Sooty Shearwater was reported early afternoon. Sea-watching on the 23<sup>rd</sup> continued to record some wildfowl passage with 58 Brent Geese, two Pale-bellied Brent Geese, 88 Wigeon, 214 Teal and 82 Common Scoters noted during the day. Also recorded on the 23<sup>rd</sup> were five Red-throated Divers, eight Arctic Skuas and four Great Skuas. At lunchtime, a Leach's Petrel was picked up going east, it was then seen again going west before it dropped onto the sea. An adult pale morph Pomarine Skua went past west close in, while on land a Brambling and a Spotted Flycatcher were recorded. North-easterlies and some rain in the morning dropped a few migrants on the 24<sup>th</sup>, including three Redstarts, three Pied Flycatchers, a Brambling, a Ring Ouzel in the dunes, three Redwings, two Lesser Whitethroats, two Spotted Flycatchers, and three Crossbills in The Pines around the Obs. Our surprise bird of the day was a drake Mandarin Duck which dropped onto Broad Water with some Mallard. There was more duck movement, including 225 Wigeon, 470 Teal, an Eider and 297 Common Scoters, with Wigeon and Teal being seen on sea-watches and over the reserve. A Pomarine Skua passed east on a sea-watch. Highlights of the 25<sup>th</sup> were single Common Redstart, Spotted Flycatcher and Brambling, with four Redwings also recorded. A sea-watch on the 26<sup>th</sup> recorded 247 Common Scoters, three Red-breasted Mergansers, 22 Gannets and an Arctic Skua. On the 27<sup>th</sup>, a Pied and a Spotted Flycatcher were seen in the dunes with two Whinchats, a Wheatear and a Redstart. On the 28<sup>th</sup>, there was a mini arrival of Goldcrests with 17 ringed, and a single Common Redstart was on the reserve. A Peregrine came in off the beach and then flew over the grazing marshes flushing all the ducks and waders. A Red-breasted Merganser, three Eiders and three Red-throated Divers were on the sea. A Short-eared Owl was seen near the Golf Course and then flying east through the dunes on the 29<sup>th</sup>. A Spotted Flycatcher was around the NOA staff car park in the morning. Two Cattle Egrets were on one of the islands from the car park hide bizarrely sitting and balancing on a clump of reed. Late afternoon, four noisy Crossbills flew out from The Pines and headed west. On the 30<sup>th</sup>, a Pied Flycatcher was seen in the morning, and a Black-throated Diver was on the sea late afternoon to end a busy month.

In the **Walsey Hills** and Cley area, four juvenile Curlew Sandpipers were on Pat's Pool on the 1<sup>st</sup>. Two were still on Pat's Pool on the 2<sup>nd</sup>, and three Wood Sandpipers were on Simmond's Scrape. A juvenile female Garganey was on Pat's Pool on the 3<sup>rd</sup>, along with seven Wood Sandpipers and a single Spotted Redshank. Two Garganey were on Pat's Pool on the 4<sup>th</sup>, and a Black Tern was offshore on the 5<sup>th</sup>. The following day (6<sup>th</sup>), Four Wood Sandpipers and six Curlew Sandpipers were present on the NWT reserve. On the 7<sup>th</sup>, 31 Glossy Ibises circled and flew over the Cley area, this flock being seen later passing over Holme, and both Wood Sandpiper and Curlew Sandpiper were regular between the 8<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup>. An Osprey was present on the 12<sup>th</sup>, with two Little Stints on the reserve. Two Pectoral Sandpipers frequented The Serpentine on the 13<sup>th</sup>, when two Little Stints were seen from Daukes Hide. A single Glossy Ibis was on Pat's Pool, moving to North Scrape on the 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup>. An Osprey flew east offshore on the 15<sup>th</sup>, and a Little Stint was on Pat's Pool on the 16<sup>th</sup>. Three Glossy Ibises were on North Scrape on the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup>, with two remaining through to the 25<sup>th</sup>. Some birds were moving at Walsey Hills on the 20<sup>th</sup>, with 12 Chiffchaffs, nine Blackcaps and four Goldcrests recorded along with 150 House Martins and 65 Swallows seen moving west. From the top of Walsey Hills, a Bittern was seen flying over the reedbed towards Bishop's Hide. A Ruddy Shelduck was on the Eye Field on the 22<sup>nd</sup>, and it was then seen again on most days for the rest of September. A White-fronted Goose was with Pink-footed Geese on Bull Marsh on the 24<sup>th</sup>, and a Pied Flycatcher was at Walsey Hills on the same day. At Walsey Hills on the 26<sup>th</sup> there was a late Reed Warbler, plus nine Chiffchaffs and nine Goldcrests; 16 Goldcrests, five Chiffchaff and six Blackcaps were there next day. Also on the 27<sup>th</sup>, a male Pallid Harrier flew south inland past Walsey Hills, before being lost to view, but it was relocated south of Walsey before flying over Snipe's Marsh; it was the first male Pallid Harrier for the Cley area. Three Glossy Ibises were back on North Scrape on the 28<sup>th</sup>, building to five individuals on the 30<sup>th</sup>.

## October 2025

Crossbills were regular in The Pines around **Holme Bird Observatory** throughout October, being recorded in varying numbers on 24 days across the month. There was a count of 52 on the 9<sup>th</sup>, and then an Observatory record of 64 on the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup>. It was a very wet and windy day on the 3<sup>rd</sup>, and the most notable sighting was a soggy Wheatear on the beach in the morning. The reserve was shut on the 4<sup>th</sup> due to high winds. During an early morning sea-watch on the 5<sup>th</sup>, we had a Sooty Shearwater, a Manx Shearwater, five Kittiwakes, a flock of five Red-breasted Mergansers and an Arctic Skua which flew right along the beach after giving up chasing some terns. A Merlin also flew along the beach on two occasions. Highlights on the 7<sup>th</sup> included a Puffin, a Whooper Swan, eight Cattle Egrets, three Grey Wagtails and a Woodcock, while nine Blackcaps were recorded on the 8<sup>th</sup>. A Whinchat was just off the coastal public footpath towards Thornham on the 10<sup>th</sup>, with a Woodlark and two Rock Pipits flying over. A Scaup flew past on a morning sea-watch with some Brent Geese, a Whooper Swan was showing well from the first NWT Hide, and a Short-eared Owl was in the dunes in the morning. On the 12<sup>th</sup>, five Pintail and 19 Shoveler were on Broad Water. On the 13<sup>th</sup>, a Yellow-browed Warbler was trapped and ringed, and there was an excellent count of Pink-footed Geese, with 9,250 heading high west early morning. It was also a good day for "vis mig" with 654 Chaffinches, 60 Bramblings, 12 Greenfinches, six Siskins, a Redpoll, eight Crossbills, 13 Fieldfares, a Mistle Thrush, a Swallow, 16 Blackbirds and 13 Redwings all recorded. A Redpoll and four Bramblings flew over on the 14<sup>th</sup>, and a Black-throated Diver was reported on the sea in the afternoon. A Purple Sandpiper was on the beach on the 15<sup>th</sup>, while a Goosander and two Eiders were seen on a sea-watch. Eight Rock Pipits were noted on the 16<sup>th</sup>, while we recorded 38 Siskins, nine Redpolls, 35 Chaffinches and 16 Bramblings on the 17<sup>th</sup>. As noted above, it was a fantastic day for Crossbills on the reserve, showing well in The Pines and coming down to drink at our little ponds. The second Yellow-browed Warbler of the autumn was trapped and ringed on the 18<sup>th</sup>, and in addition to the Crossbills, we recorded a Ring Ouzel, 140 Chaffinches, 40 Greenfinches, 11 Siskins, a Woodlark, seven Bramblings, five Woodcock and three Jack Snipe. A single Hawfinch went over on the 19<sup>th</sup>. A Purple Sandpiper was on the beach first thing before unfortunately being disturbed. Two Jack Snipe were seen from the NWT hides on the 19<sup>th</sup> followed by a single bird on the 20<sup>th</sup>. A Peregrine was on the beach on the 21<sup>st</sup>, with a Merlin hunting over the grazing marsh, and many thrushes were present, including about 25 Blackbirds, 30 Redwings and two Fieldfares. A Woodlark was the highlight on the 22<sup>nd</sup>, and there was a small influx of Goldcrests on the 23<sup>rd</sup> with at least 40 individuals recorded. A sea-watch on the 24<sup>th</sup> recorded six Shelducks, 34 Wigeon, a Pintail, two Eiders, ten Red-breasted Mergansers, two Velvet Scoters, 47 Grey Plovers, 35 Bar-tailed Godwits, ten Gannets, a Grey Heron, a Grey Wagtail and two Red-necked Grebes. A count of 131 Great Crested Grebes, mostly flying west, was a new Observatory record by a big margin. Also on the 24<sup>th</sup>, there were three Goldeneye on Broad Water, five Whooper Swans at Thornham Channel, and a Firecrest in the Sea Buckthorn along the coastal footpath through The Pines. The 25<sup>th</sup> was another good day for sea-watching with ten Eiders, 13 Common Scoters, a Goldeneye, ten Red-breasted Mergansers, seven Red-throated Divers, 16 Great Crested Grebes, a Manx Shearwater, 45 Gannets, 59 Cormorants, a Pomarine Skua, an Arctic Skua, four Great Skuas, 21 Common Gulls, eight Great Black-backed Gulls, 140 Pink-footed Geese, three

Whooper Swans, three Velvet Scoters, 90 Sanderling, 200 Knot, 42 Kittiwakes and a Swallow, but the highlight of all was a juvenile Sabine's Gull flying west. A Firecrest was also seen on the 25<sup>th</sup>. A sea-watch on the 26<sup>th</sup> resulted in sightings of 11 Whooper Swans, a Pomarine Skua, three Great Skuas, two Razorbills, nine large Auk sp., three Little Gulls, 106 Kittiwakes, 48 Great Crested Grebes, two Red-throated Divers, a Fulmar, 42 Gannets, three Long-tailed Ducks, a Grey Phalarope, a Black-throated Diver and a Great Northern Diver. Another sea-watch on the 27<sup>th</sup> was also productive, with three Brent Geese, four Eiders, a Long-tailed Duck, 39 Common Scoters, two Red-breasted Mergansers, four Red-throated Divers, 28 Great Crested Grebes, 59 Gannets, 106 Cormorants, a Mediterranean Gull, a Guillemot, three Razorbill, eight Shelduck, ten Little Gulls, and a nice Kittiwake movement with 167 individuals recorded. Two Firecrests were present on the 27<sup>th</sup>. Conditions remained favourable for sea-watching at high tide on the 28<sup>th</sup> with sightings of 225 Pink-footed Geese, four Great Crested Grebes, a Red-throated Diver and two Goldeneye the highlights. A drake Goosander and a single Long-tailed Duck were reported over the sea towards Gore Point. Two Firecrests were recorded again on the 29<sup>th</sup>, while birds of note on the 30<sup>th</sup> included a Purple Sandpiper, a Waxwing in Poplars along Broadwater Road and two Woodlarks. The Waxwing was still present in the same place on the 31<sup>st</sup>, when two Firecrests were in The Pines and a Goldeneye was on Broad Water. A Black Redstart was around The Firs and later near the car park hide, and an estimated 10,000 Pink-footed Geese were seen.

In the **Walsey Hills** area, the Glossy Ibis theme continued throughout October, with birds around on most days through the month, reaching a peak of six on the 8<sup>th</sup>. The Ruddy Shelduck, possibly last year's returning bird, was around Cley for the whole of October. On the 1<sup>st</sup>, a Black-throated Diver was offshore, and a juvenile Little Stint was present on the Cley reserve; this was joined by a second on the 8<sup>th</sup> and they were seen intermittently until the 23<sup>rd</sup>. On the 5<sup>th</sup>, a Curlew Sandpiper arrived and presumably the same bird was present until the 23<sup>rd</sup>, while a Russian White-fronted Goose also arrived with Pink-footed Geese and remained until the 22<sup>nd</sup>. On the 6<sup>th</sup> a Red-necked Grebe was on North Pool and a single Snow Bunting was on the beach. Three Lapland Buntings spent the afternoon around Arnold's Marsh on the 7<sup>th</sup>, when a late Turtle Dove was present near North Foreland Wood. A Black-throated Diver flew west offshore on the 8<sup>th</sup>, and a flyby Pale-bellied Brent Goose was the only notable sighting on the 9<sup>th</sup>. A Grey Wagtail visited the Walsey pond on the 11<sup>th</sup>, while another Lapland Bunting was present on the beach on the 12<sup>th</sup> but it didn't stay for long. The first two Yellow-browed Warblers at Walsey Hills were seen from the 13<sup>th</sup>, and three were present on the 14<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup>; individuals were ringed on the 15<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup>. Single Velvet Scoter and Red-necked Grebe were present on the sea on 13<sup>th</sup>, with more action on the sea on the 15<sup>th</sup> with two Velvet Scoters flying past and a Black-throated Diver lingering offshore for a while. One of the birds of the month at Walsey Hills was a long staying Dusky Warbler, which was first reported on the 14<sup>th</sup> and which was seen every day until the 21<sup>st</sup>. Two Lapland Buntings were present on the 15<sup>th</sup> and a juvenile Glaucous Gull appeared the following day, making brief appearances until the 28<sup>th</sup>. Some decent sea-watching conditions on the 17<sup>th</sup> saw four Velvet Scoters and a Pomarine Skua fly past, and a further nine Velvet Scoters were recorded the following day. Also on the 18<sup>th</sup>, a single Shore Lark arrived and spent two days on the shingle north of Arnold's Marsh. Four Bramblings with at least 90 Chaffinches, four Redpolls and a Siskin were recorded at Walsey Hills on the same day. On the 20<sup>th</sup>, a smart Great Grey Shrike was found behind the NWT visitor centre and it remained until the 22<sup>nd</sup>, moving to the fields behind Walsey Hills for the second half of its stay. There was some further passage over the sea with a single Scaup on the 21<sup>st</sup>, a Sooty Shearwater and 35 Little Gulls on the 23<sup>rd</sup>, and a Grey Phalarope on the 24<sup>th</sup>, which eventually moved onto the Serpentine and then onto Pope's Marsh where it stayed until the end of the month. A few Little Auks, usually singles, were noted passing from the 25<sup>th</sup> to the end of the month, and a Short-eared Owl flew past the Beach car park on the 26<sup>th</sup>.

## November 2025

At **Holme Bird Observatory**, "Vis mig" on the 1<sup>st</sup> yielded 7200 Starlings, 127 Redwings, 19 Fieldfares, four Bramblings, three Bullfinches and 183 Chaffinches. There were two Firecrests and three Crossbills in The Pines, with a Purple Sandpiper and a Jack Snipe also seen. Highlights on the 2<sup>nd</sup> were a Goldeneye, 15 Crossbills and a Brambling. A Ring Ouzel was seen on the 4<sup>th</sup>, with a Short-eared Owl, two Barn Owls, four Pintail on Broad Water and eight Crossbills noted the following day (5<sup>th</sup>). November 6<sup>th</sup> was a mega ringing day with 113 birds of 24 species caught, most notably a Pallas's Warbler, two Firecrests and a Water Pipit. Another big ringing day followed on the 7<sup>th</sup> with 128 birds caught in total, 66 of which were Blackbirds; a Yellow-browed Warbler also was caught and ringed. During the day, over 1,000 Blackbirds, 500 Redwings and 25 Song Thrushes were seen, while a second (unringed) Pallas's Warbler was photographed in Thornham. There were also a Short-eared Owl, two Woodcock, 29 Snipe, and eight Great White Egrets, in addition to two Great Northern Divers offshore. A sea-watch on the 8<sup>th</sup> recorded 15 Common Scoters, two Red-breasted Mergan-

sers, six Red-throated Divers, three Great Northern Divers, 11 Great Crested Grebes, a Fulmar, 46 Cormorants, a Sandwich Tern, two Razorbills and 70 Bar-tailed Godwits. Further sea-watching on the 9<sup>th</sup> resulted in sightings of four Slavonian Grebes, a Velvet Scoter, two Great Northern Divers, ten Red-throated Divers, 34 Great Crested Grebes, six Razorbills and a Guillemot. A Merlin, a Peregrine, four Rock Pipits, a Water Pipit, two Snow Buntings, a Shore Lark and three Crossbills were also recorded. A Shore Lark was still present on the 10<sup>th</sup>, along with single late Arctic and Common Terns, two Great Northern Divers, eight Red-throated Divers and a Purple Sandpiper.

On the 11<sup>th</sup>, two Slavonian Grebes, a Red-necked Grebe, 17 Great Crested Grebes, 23 Red-Breasted Mergansers, a Velvet Scoter, 20 Common Scoters, two Red-Throated Divers, two Black-throated Divers, three Great Northern Divers and a Razorbill were on the sea. A Purple Sandpiper and 3 Snow Buntings were on the beach, while two Crossbills, a Firecrest and a Jack Snipe were seen around the reserves. Highlights of the 12<sup>th</sup> were a Bittern, two Rock Pipits, four Pintail, four Great Northern Divers, a Red-necked Grebe, a Long-tailed Duck, 11 Guillemots and a Razorbill. Further sea-watching on the 13<sup>th</sup> logged 12 Eiders, four Common Scoters, 27 Red-breasted Mergansers, nine Red-throated Divers, a Black-throated Diver, a Great Northern Diver, a Gannet, 26 Great Crested Grebes, a Red-necked Grebe, a Slavonian Grebe, an Arctic Skua, five Guillemots, a Razorbill, a Puffin and a Little Gull. Birds around the Obs included a Firecrest, two Crossbills, two Siskins, two Bramblings, three Pintails and five Tufted Ducks, with two Ravens, a Hen Harrier and a Water Pipit also noted. A Hume's Warbler found on the 16<sup>th</sup> was only the fourth record for Holme; it was also seen on the following two days, and then again on the 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup>. A Yellow-browed Warbler was also seen on the 18<sup>th</sup>, along with two Goldeneye, 11 Snow Buntings and a Great Northern Diver. Twenty-one Little Gulls and two Long-tailed Ducks were offshore on the 21<sup>st</sup>, and five Great Northern Divers were seen on a flat sea on the 24<sup>th</sup>. Another Yellow-browed Warbler was seen on the 26<sup>th</sup>, along with 23 Little Gulls, a Long-tailed Duck, five Red-throated Divers, three Great-Northern Divers, seven Fulmars and 6,000 Starlings. Three Snow Buntings, a Goldeneye, five Rock Pipits and a Great Northern Diver were recorded on the 28<sup>th</sup>, while a Greenshank was at Thornham Harbour the following day. The month ended with two Crossbills on the 30<sup>th</sup>.

In the **Walsey Hills** area, the month began with a female Ruddy Shelduck on Bull Marsh, a Little Stint on Pat's Pool, a Slavonian Grebe on the sea and a Shore Lark from Babcock Hide, all on the 1<sup>st</sup>. A Shore Lark was at Arnold's Marsh on the 2<sup>nd</sup>. The Grey Phalarope remained on Pope's Marsh until the 4<sup>th</sup> at least. Two Glossy Ibises were seen from Babcock Hide on the 4<sup>th</sup>, when a Long-tailed Duck was on the River Glaven and a Water Pipit was seen from Bishop's Hide. By the 6<sup>th</sup>, the Ruddy Shelduck had moved to Blakeney Freshmarsh and a Pallas's Warbler was at Gramborough Hill, while two Yellow-browed Warblers were at Walsey Hills with another by the River Glaven. A Pallas's Warbler was in the plantation at Blakeney Point on the 7<sup>th</sup>. Single Yellow-browed Warblers were at Muckleborough Hill and at Walsey Hills on the 8<sup>th</sup>. Three Glossy Ibises were east of East Bank on the 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup>, moving to the Cley reserve on the 13<sup>th</sup>. Also on the 13<sup>th</sup>, two Shore Larks flew over East Bank. A Pale-bellied Brent Goose was with its Dark-bellied cousins on the 19<sup>th</sup>, seen both on Blakeney Freshmarsh and from Iron Road. Attention switched to the sea on the 20<sup>th</sup>, with a Little Auk flying west and single Red-necked Grebe and Scaup also offshore. Twenty Snow Buntings were on the beach on the 21<sup>st</sup>, while 13 Twite were noted at West Bank. Five Velvet Scoters were found off Kelling Hard on the 22<sup>nd</sup>, remaining to the end of the month. At least seven Twite were at the north end of the East Bank path on the 25<sup>th</sup>, with two Water Pipit's seen from Bishop's Hide on the 27<sup>th</sup>. Two Glossy Ibises flew west over the NWT reserve on the 28<sup>th</sup>.

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