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# **Tyttenhanger Gravel Pits Bird Report for 2011**



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## Introduction

This report, for the year 2011, is the eighth consecutive report for the site known as Tyttenhanger Gravel Pits. The format follows that used previously and through maintaining a similar layout and content we hope that comparisons can readily be made with previous years reports and to further aid comparison we have included data from previous years and/or further historical data where appropriate.

In addition to the detailed systematic list of bird observations we also provide details of the recording area and access, and a short review of the year – which includes the ornithological highlights and summarizes the physical and structural changes that have occurred over the course of the year. As the size of the report grows (due primarily to the amount of data included) it is possible that in some years some of these items may not be reproduced. We'd certainly value any feedback you have on which sections of the report and which elements of the data you find most useful and interesting.

As in previous years we hope that you enjoy reading this report and if you do, then we encourage you to let us know either *via* the email addresses below or through the Hertsbirding Yahoo! Group (see: <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/hertsbirding/>). Likewise, if you did not enjoy reading it, or can think of ways to improve your enjoyment, then please do not hesitate in letting us know. We leave you with the hope that this report may encourage you to venture on-site and to submit your records for inclusion in future reports.

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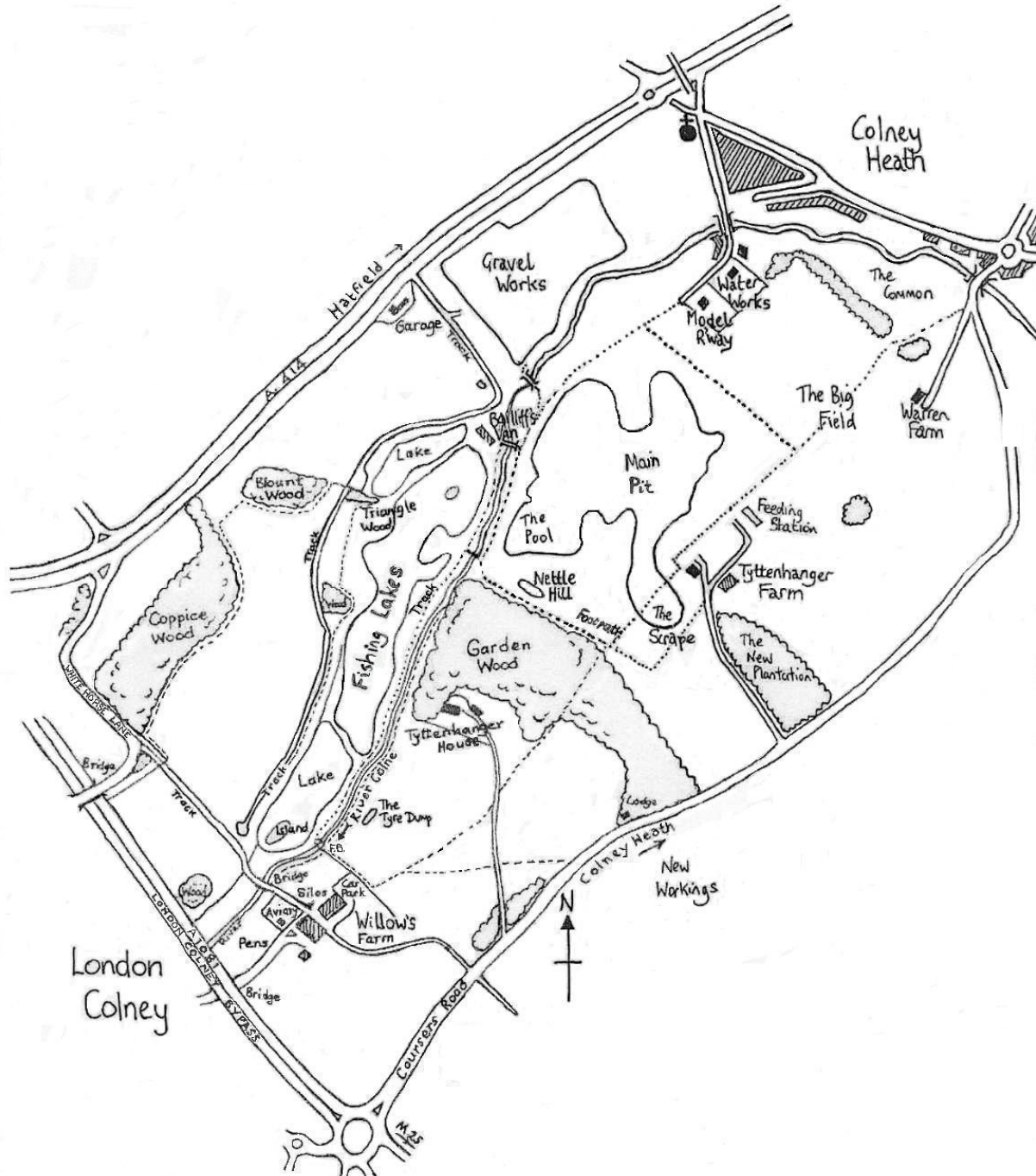
## August 2013

### Recording Area and Access

The area covered by the current report is shown in Figure 1. As indicated previously, this is an attempt to update the excellent map produced in the 1996 report and to show the current status of the area. While there are undoubtedly inaccuracies in this map it shows the general boundaries of the area considered in the report, namely, that bounded by the A414 to the west, White Horse Lane and the London Colney by-pass to the south, Coursers Road to the east and Colney Heath High Street to the north. Access can be gained from a number of public footpaths that lead onto the site (see OS Explorer Map No. 182). For those arriving by car a number of access options are available. One option is to enter *via* Church Lane in Colney Heath – parking around the entrance to the Water Works. The model railway club usually meets on Sunday mornings and space can be restricted at this time. Alternatively, park at St Peter's Church in London Colney and walk along the Colne, under the London Colney by-pass and on past the Fishing Lakes and Willows Farm. The third option is to enter on the access road for the Gravel Quarry just before the Garage on the A414 (coming from the Hatfield direction) and park at the end of this road before the entrance to the fishing lakes. The car park next to the Bailiff's van and parking elsewhere around the fishing lakes is subject to a charge of £2.00 for those not holding fishing permits. The tickets can be obtained from the machine on the toilet block wall next to the "Lakeside Snackz". The access tracks that run each side of the fishing lakes are now gated, but not locked, and providing birders obtain a parking ticket, they can go through these gates and park sensibly anywhere along the tracks.

Once on-site there is an extensive network of footpaths and tracks which cover the majority of the recording area.

Observers are requested to keep to the marked footpaths marked to minimise disturbance to the birds, the land-owners and the quarrying operations. This is particularly so around the Main Pit and it should be noted that the workings access track is not a public right of way. The current OS map (OS Explorer Map No. 182) should be consulted for some of the older paths that may not be shown on the map presented in Figure 1. However, please bear in mind that due to the active mineral extraction operations on and around the site there are frequent changes to the footpaths – even though these may not be changes approved by Hertfordshire County Council. Indeed, the twists and turns of the footpaths of Tyttenhanger – all the way to the Court of Appeal - could merit a publication in their own right!



**Figure 1.** Map of the recording area covered in the current report. This map is a revised version of that shown in Brew (1997) and is the best representation of the situation in 2011. A previous version of the map with a superimposed grid is available in earlier reports. Scale approximately 1.5cm = 250 metres.

## Review of the Year 2011

Most of the main physical features on-site remained much the same as they were in 2010 with the sand-spit in the Main Pit continuing to be a major feature. The only other major addition to the landscape at Tyttenhanger was the planting of a large number of trees between Willows farm and Tyttenhanger House. In time this will cut-off the view of the house from the farm (as illustrated at the foot of the page from a photograph taken in 2007)– but is unlikely to have a significant impact on the birds of Tyttenhanger.

Rainfall was very low for the year and the annual rainfall for 2011 was close to the 30 year minimum of 403.1 mm (1996). Despite this low rainfall, the water levels in the Pits remained similar to those in the recent past. While 2010 proved to be one of the coldest years of the recent past – as can be seen from the data below - 2011 was much milder with only 102.5 hours Airfrost<sup>1</sup> and only 19 Air Frosts (66 in 2010), 49 Ground Frosts (116 in 2010) and only 2 days of snow (39 in 2010). Rainfall was very low for the year and the annual rainfall for 2011 was close to the 30 year minimum of 403.1 mm (1996). All in all, 2011 was climatically, a very ordinary year.

	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
<b>Annual Rainfall (mm)</b>	753.2	682.8	501.3	630.2	499.2	638.1	662.1	648.3	624.8	574.1	409.9
<b>Airfrost Duration (hrs)</b>	456.6	111.0	432.4	255.1	317.2	359.1	182.3	243.6	437.3	897.9	102.5

Coverage of the site for the year came to a total of 289 days (79.2%) – with fairly even coverage through the whole March-November period. Coverage (days per month) and totals for the last five years are shown below.

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Total
<b>2011</b>	23	19	28	27	24	25	27	27	24	24	25	16	<b>289</b>
<b>2010</b>	23	21	30	29	24	23	23	29	26	24	15	22	<b>289</b>
<b>2009</b>	22	19	22	28	21	13	23	28	27	26	21	21	<b>271</b>
<b>2008</b>	25	21	31	26	19	13	27	28	24	24	16	18	<b>272</b>
<b>2007</b>	18	18	23	28	27	22	27	26	23	16	25	22	<b>275</b>

## Birding Highlights of 2011

The country had just experienced the coldest December for over 100 years with most areas having some snowfall. The weather in **January** was generally mild at the start of the month and temperatures toward the middle of the month exceeded 12<sup>o</sup>C. However, wind speeds and pressure increased as the month progressed leading to a return to colder conditions and rain at the month's end. Despite this unsettled weather, the year list started well with an over-wintering **Green Sandpiper** on the 1<sup>st</sup>. There was a **Goosander** on the 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> then three feral species made an appearance – **Ruddy Shelduck** and **Bar-headed Goose** on the 12<sup>th</sup>, followed by a **Barnacle Goose** on 14<sup>th</sup>. Also on this day, the first of many records of **Shelduck** and **Red Kite** for the year – the latter now becoming a common sight at Tyttenhanger. The first of only five records this year of **Great Black-backed Gull** was on the 16<sup>th</sup>. 2 **Woodcock** were flushed in Garden Wood on the 22<sup>nd</sup> and also on this day, a female **Ruddy Duck** appeared and stayed for the rest of the month. The 24<sup>th</sup> produced a **Goldeneye** and 30+ **Golden Plover** on the Main Pit, along with an excellent find for one lucky observer - a **Black Redstart** sitting on a fence near Tyttenhanger House. January ended with a **Peregrine**, seen on the 25<sup>th</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup>.

The forecast was for **February** to be a mild unsettled month and anticipation was high for some bird movement and perhaps some early summer visitors. It began with 2 **Wigeon** that were present for two days from the 4<sup>th</sup> followed by two **Grey Partridge** on 5<sup>th</sup> (probably survivors from the winter shoot)! Two **Ringed Plover** on the 8<sup>th</sup> were the first of the regular summer waders to arrive and a **Little Egret** on the 11<sup>th</sup> represented the first of what would be 29 records for the year - including a record roost count of 9 individuals on the 13<sup>th</sup> July. There were 43 **Golden Plover** seen on 18<sup>th</sup> of this month and then on the 22<sup>nd</sup>, 9 **Dunlin** and a **Redshank** arrived. A female **Goosander** on the 27<sup>th</sup> was followed by a



<sup>1</sup> Airfrost duration is the total number of hours in the year in which there was an air-frost. Generally airfrosts are restricted to the winter months of January, February, March, October, November and December. All data are from the Icen weather station in Royston and taken to be indicative of the prevailing conditions at Tyttenhanger in the same time-periods.

**Yellow-legged Gull** on the 28<sup>th</sup> along with an **Oystercatcher** and a flock of 12 **Golden Plover** - plus an unusual record of an **Indian Peafowl** within the grounds of Tyttenhanger House.

**March** 1<sup>st</sup> saw a second **Oystercatcher** appear, hoped to be the 'other half' of the pair that successfully fledged 2 chicks last year! A **Goosander**, probably the same female that arrived on 27<sup>th</sup> February was still to be seen almost every day up until 12<sup>th</sup>. On the 5<sup>th</sup> a flock of 24 **Waxwings** flew over Tyttenhanger Farm, and a female **Stonechat** was seen around the car park of Willows Farm. On the Main Pit a **Dunlin** was busily feeding on the sand spit and the pair of **Oystercatcher** appeared to be wasting no time getting on with this year's breeding! On the 6<sup>th</sup> a good count of 57 **Waxwing** were seen feeding on berries in front of the hide, and a large flock of **Golden Plover** (c100) were seen flying over. So it is no surprise that with all this prey around, a **Peregrine Falcon** was sitting high on its favoured pylon surveying the dinner table below. Eighteen **Waxwings** were still feeding near the hide on 7<sup>th</sup>, but the surprise of the day was 8 **Avocets** wading in the shallow waters around the sand spit. The **Avocets** as well as the **Waxwings** unsurprisingly attracted many local birders to the site and the **Waxwings** (c20) were still giving good views on the 8<sup>th</sup>, as was a 2<sup>nd</sup> winter **Yellow-legged Gull**. A **Peregrine** appeared again on the 10<sup>th</sup> and the first **Chiffchaffs** arrived on site on the 13<sup>th</sup>. There were 50+ **Waxwing** on the 18<sup>th</sup>, which was to be the last sighting of these delightful birds – but another good site record, a **Mealy Redpoll**, was notched up on 20<sup>th</sup>. Then, the passage of summer migrants began to increase with four passing **Sand Martins** on 23<sup>rd</sup>, a **Wheatear** on 25<sup>th</sup>, a **Willow Warbler**, **Swallow** and 3<sup>rd</sup> winter **Yellow-legged Gull** on 26<sup>th</sup>, followed by a different individual on 28<sup>th</sup>. **Little Ringed Plover** were first noted on the 29<sup>th</sup> a **Blackcap** on the 30<sup>th</sup>. And finally, a very exciting month was topped off with a fine **Lesser Spotted Woodpecker** on 31<sup>st</sup>.

**April**, although anticipation was high, nobody could have predicted the quality of species to arrive or pass through this month. It started quite normally on the 2<sup>nd</sup> when two **Little Ringed Plover** were noted on the sand spit. On the 4<sup>th</sup> a **Sandwich Tern** circled the main pit but decided not to stay! The first **Yellow Wagtail** was noted, feeding with **Meadow Pipits** on 5<sup>th</sup> and then 2 **Hawfinch** were photographed, high in the trees adjacent to Tyttenhanger House on the 6<sup>th</sup> – another new species for the site (see report on p33). **Common Tern**, **Sedge Warbler** and **Whitethroat** appeared on the 8<sup>th</sup> followed by a **Pink-footed Goose** on the 9<sup>th</sup> - that was also photographed by the lucky Hawfinch-observer. Another first arrival was a **Reed Warbler** on the 10<sup>th</sup> along with a second flyover **Sandwich Tern** and a **Tawny Owl** heard calling from Garden Wood. A **Cuckoo** on 12<sup>th</sup>, the first of 18 individuals recorded this summer preceded 2 **Raven** on the 16<sup>th</sup>. A pair of **Garganey** arrived on the 17<sup>th</sup> and stayed for at least 7 days with the first **Garden Warbler** of the year also appeared on the 17<sup>th</sup> while a single **Ruff** stood on the sand spit of the main pit on the 19<sup>th</sup>. Further quality came when one lucky observer witnessed a late afternoon flyover **Montague's Harrier** on the 20<sup>th</sup> – another new bird for the site if accepted. A single **Lesser Whitethroat** arrived on the 21<sup>st</sup>, as did a **Greenshank** - the first of 9 records this year, with a best tally of 9 seen on 30<sup>th</sup> of this month. The wader passage continued with a **Black-tailed Godwit** on the 22<sup>nd</sup> and a **Common Sandpiper** on the 23<sup>rd</sup>. The month came to a fantastic ending on 30<sup>th</sup> with the arrival of 13 **Whimbrel**, 3 **Ruff**, and the first migrant **Swift** of the year!

**May** 1<sup>st</sup> and there were now 4 **Little Ringed Plover** on site and hopes were high that they would stay and breed! Also of note on this day were 2 **Bar-tailed Godwit** and 2 **Greenshank**. Another 2 **Bar-tailed Godwit** increased the tally to 4 on 2<sup>nd</sup> with 2 **Common Sandpiper** making up the wader numbers. Also of note were 2 **Yellow Wagtail** and a **Wheatear** seen in the sheep field. It was no surprise at this stage that passage started to slow, but there were still two species that made a very welcome visit - a **Black Tern** on the 3<sup>rd</sup> and a female **Marsh Harrier** on 14<sup>th</sup>.

Midsummer, **June**, and as expected, spring passage had slowed, but breeding birds were very much in evidence with plenty of action continuing to make a visit to Tyttenhanger worthwhile. The following notable species were recorded over the month – **Greenshank** – **Ringed Plover** – **Little Ringed Plover** - **Cuckoo** – **Dunlin** – **Hobby** – **Red Kite** – **Lesser Whitethroat** – **Peregrine** – **Little Egret** – **Redshank** – **Common Sandpiper**. And to top the month off, the **Oystercatcher** pair proudly presented a Juvenile on the 27<sup>th</sup>. It was always suspected that they had nested somewhere on site, but could not, up until then, be confirmed! The month ended with an unconfirmed report of a **Wood Warbler** on the 29<sup>th</sup>.

**July** A good start to an otherwise very quiet month - a **Lesser Spotted Woodpecker** on the 3<sup>rd</sup>. Some more welcome breeding evidence with **Tree Sparrows** seen on 9<sup>th</sup>, carrying food to a known nest hole. A single **Dunlin** and 4 **Black-tailed Godwit** on the 13<sup>th</sup>, was only bettered by a single **Curlew** as well as 2 lingering **Black-tailed Godwit** on the 27<sup>th</sup>.

**August** signalled the beginning of some return migration. On the 1<sup>st</sup>, a **Common Sandpiper** appeared and then lingered for most of the month and a late returning Juvenile **Cuckoo** was still a long way from its wintering home. A **Wheatear** was seen on 6<sup>th</sup> and 2 juvenile **Shelduck** dropped into the fishing lake on 8<sup>th</sup>. Waders continued to feature with 2 **Greenshank** on 13<sup>th</sup>, then a juvenile **Peregrine** and 2 **Mediterranean Gull**, (the first of four different individuals recorded this month) on the 14<sup>th</sup> followed by 2 **Hobby** observed "hawking" dragonflies on the 15<sup>th</sup>. A distressing discovery was made on the 16<sup>th</sup> was a **Tawny Owl** trapped in some netting near Tyttenhanger Farm, and although rescued, nothing is known of its eventual fate. A **Spotted Flycatcher** on the 24<sup>th</sup> and then a female **Whinchat** plus 3 **Yellow Wagtail** on the 25<sup>th</sup> were followed by the third **Mediterranean Gull** (juv) on the 28<sup>th</sup> and a different juvenile on 31<sup>st</sup> - along with another **Whinchat** recorded in the top fields on this day.

As in most years **September** was expected to be low-key. However, it started well with yet another juvenile **Mediterranean Gull** on the 1<sup>st</sup>. and then another 2 **Black-tailed Godwit** on 5<sup>th</sup>. This good start petered out in the middle of the month only for it to end with some quality provided by a **Black Tern** that arrived on 23<sup>rd</sup> and stayed for two days.

**October** started with a record of 11 **Ring-necked Parakeet** on the 4<sup>th</sup>, followed by 3 **Red-crested Pochard** on 15<sup>th</sup>, both these species uncommon at this site. This month also saw the first winter visitors to arrive on site – **Fieldfare** on 9<sup>th</sup>, **Redwing** on 13<sup>th</sup>, **Redpoll** on 14<sup>th</sup>, **Water Rail** on 15<sup>th</sup>, **Golden Plover** on 16<sup>th</sup>.

**November** provided much of the typical winter fare, with records of **Dunlin**, **Green Sandpiper**, **Golden Plover**, and **Snipe** representing the wader species and a **Lesser Spotted Woodpecker** on the 6<sup>th</sup> was the third recorded this year. The latter part of the month provided great excitement with the arrival of a **White-fronted Goose** on 16<sup>th</sup> which was then joined by a second on 21<sup>st</sup> with things getting better with the arrival of a female **Pintail** on 23<sup>rd</sup>. The two **White fronts** were still in attendance on 26<sup>th</sup> and then, to the great surprise of three very cold birders sitting in the hide, a **Bean Goose** flew in! It initially appeared to be unsettled and flew off a couple of times, but returned and eventually settled with the two **White fronts** (see page 33 for the full story).

**December** 1<sup>st</sup> was the last record received of the two **White-fronted Goose** and **Bean Goose**. But the year was still to provide another great find for one lucky observer, who was treated to the graceful hunting prowess of a **Short-eared Owl** on the evening of the 4<sup>th</sup>. Other records of note were 3 **Goosanders** on 9<sup>th</sup> and a single female on 17<sup>th</sup>. A **Peregrine** on the 27<sup>th</sup> - 28<sup>th</sup>.

In summary, Tyttenhanger produced a total of 142 species for 2011 - a total in keeping with most of the last 7 years where totals have generally ranged between 130 and 140. Additions to the Tyttenhanger list (see Appendix 2) this year were **Tundra Bean Goose**, **Hawfinch**, **Pink-footed Goose** and **Montague's Harrier** - the records of the latter two still pending consideration by the Herts RBP. In addition to these 4 species there were 12 other species seen this year that were not recorded in 2010 namely, **White-fronted Goose** (first record since 1993), **Garganey**, **Avocet**, **Jack Snipe**, **Bar-tailed Godwit**, **Mediterranean Gull**, **Yellow-legged Gull**, **Black Tern**, **Short-eared Owl**, **Raven**, **Wood Warbler** (first record since 1994) and **Mealy Redpoll**. Conversely, there were 14 species recorded in 2010 that did not make an appearance this year; **Whooper Swan**, **Bewick's Swan**, **Brent Goose**, **Egyptian Goose**, **Black-necked Grebe**, **Osprey**, **Sanderling**, **Kittiwake**, **Little Tern**, **Wryneck**, **Redstart**, **Pied Flycatcher**, **Ring Ouzel** and **Marsh Tit**. The Tyttenhanger List stands at 199 species at the end of 2011 -including those records still pending HBRP approval.

### Taxonomy and Nomenclature

As with previous reports the systematic order and nomenclature we have followed is close to that of the British Ornithologists Union (BOU - <http://www.bou.org.uk/thebritishlist/British-List.pdf>), with the nomenclature for common names following that used in the Hertfordshire Bird Report and as shown in the list to be found at [http://www.hnhs.org/uploads/file/Guidelines\(3\).pdf](http://www.hnhs.org/uploads/file/Guidelines(3).pdf).

### Corrections and Addendum to the 2010 Report

No updates have been obtained from the Hertfordshire Bird Report for 2010. The following species account was omitted from the 2010 report.

#### **Great Crested Grebe** *Podiceps cristatus*

*Present throughout the year with small numbers of pairs breeding.*

There were at least six pairs that bred this year with broods of 1-1-2-1-1-1 noted on the 18<sup>th</sup> June. The best count of the year was of 30 birds on the 20<sup>th</sup> November. A summary of monthly maxima for the last five years – which includes 2010 – is shown under this species on page 12.

The following errors were also detected in the 2010 report:

- Total days of coverage for the site was reported as 299 – this should have been 289. The table on page 13 has been corrected.
- The species total for 2010 was stated and shown in Appendix 2 as 139 rather than the correct figure of 140. This has been corrected.
- Some errors for 2008 data for Little Ringed Plover have now been corrected in the summary Table for that species.

### Submission of Records

Observers are encouraged to submit their records for the site (and for Hertfordshire generally) *via* the Herts Bird Club website (<http://www.hnhs.org/birds/>) and to report sightings of interest through the Hertsbirding Yahoo! Email Group. Such reporting will ensure that records are passed to the County Recorder and disseminated quickly to the local birding community. It should also be mentioned that records that are submitted to the BTO's Birdtrack system also flow through to the County Recorder and so are also captured for this report. Please note that all reports that are submitted –



including those from Birguides - are included in the report. However, for those species that require descriptions and consideration by the Herts RBP (see [http://www.hnhs.org/uploads/file/Guidelines\(3\).pdf](http://www.hnhs.org/uploads/file/Guidelines(3).pdf)) the records are removed at a later date if records are not submitted and/or are found to be not proven. We would therefore strongly encourage observers to submit descriptions where required.

### Data Collection, Analysis and Presentation

This report is the fourth year in which we have had access to the records from both the Herts Bird Club database and Birdtrack and, as with 2010, there were around 7,000 individual records available for the preparation of this report. While this appears to be a large number of records it is worth noting that in the last 4 years the number of records available through HNHS/Birdtrack has decreased i.e. see below.

	2008	2009	2010	2011
<b>Number of Records</b>	11,415	9,498	6,968	7,105

Again, we have made a decision to keep the total size of the report for this year to around 40 pages. To achieve this we have decided to limit monthly maxima tables to 5 years and other tables to as much data as can be held in their current format i.e. in most cases all 8 years data. In addition, where charts and tables are failing to show anything new, these have been either deleted or modified – as is the case with Ringed and Little Ringed Plover.

### References

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### Contributors and Acknowledgements

This report would not have been possible without the records that observers have made available to the broader birding community and so first thanks must go to them. A large debt of thanks is also due to Alan Gardiner who made the Tyttenhanger records from the Herts Bird Club database and Birdtrack available to us – without which there would have been many serious “gaps” in the current report. Thanks also to Marcus Brew for permission to use the vignette of the Sand Martins (previously the cover illustration for the 1996 and 2004 reports). The cover picture and other graphic images in this report were produced by Peter Christian; photographs are individually acknowledged.

The following is a list of all of those people who contributed records either directly or through the Herts Bird Club. Where records have been credited to specific observers these are shown in the text. Apologies if you submitted records for 2011 and your name doesn't appear on the list - but please let us know so that we can make sure it doesn't happen in the future.

Jeff Bailey	Anthony Dorman	Drew Lyness	C.J. Roy
Ian Bennell	Catherine Mackenzie-Davies	G & K Leckie	Alana Reynolds
Tony Blake	Derrick Davies	G Lapworth	Alan Siggins
Steve Blake	Lawrence Drummond	Ann Lee	Andrew Steele
David Booth	Peter Delaloye	S K Marshall	Ken Smith
Chris Bowden	Daphnie Dean	Steve Murray	Terry Smith
Phil Butler	L G R Evans	R V Mummery	Jim Terry
John Coleman	Steve Evans	Oliver Marshall	Joan Thompson
Kevin Cheadle	Rupert Evershed	Paul Moss	Paul Unwin
Linda Cassidy	David Edwards	Andrew Miller	A C Winn
Martin Cake	Jack Fearnside	Androulla Miller	Simon West
Paul Carter	Ricky Flesher	Andy Nichols	Terry Wood
Tommy Carter	Alan Gardiner	Thami Ndunge	Mark Waite
Tracie Carter	R Hicks	B Norcott	David Wheatcroft
Robert Calif	Phil Harrison	R J Pyrah	Tony Wileman
Peter Curruthers	Mark Housden	Steven Pearce	Stuart Warrington
Trevor Chapman	Wendy Hatton	Robin Pearson	Geoff Young
Jason Chapman	G Knight	Roger Payne	John Yates

## SYSTEMATIC LIST

### Mute Swan *Cygnus olor*

*Resident through much of the year. Breeds on site in small numbers (1-2 pairs); first recorded breeding in 1996.*

Two pairs nested again this year with only one pair hatching young with a brood of 5 first reported on the Main Pit on the 14<sup>th</sup> May. Young were not reported again until the 18<sup>th</sup> June when 3 were seen. The maximum count of the year was of 12 birds on 23<sup>rd</sup> May. Monthly maxima for the last 5 years are shown below.

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
<b>Monthly Max 2011</b>	11	6	4	9	12*	7*	5	10	10	10	7	9
<b>Monthly Max 2010</b>	6	5	5	4	8*	10*	10*	8	11	12	12	22
<b>Monthly Max 2009</b>	6	6	6	4	18*	7*	10*	14*	20*	21*	10	13
<b>Monthly Max 2008</b>	4	5	4	3	6*	9*	12*	6	7	11	8	6
<b>Monthly Max 2007</b>	13	14	8	4	10	8*	8*	6*	8*	13*	6	6

\* Includes young birds

### White-fronted Goose *Anser albifrons*

*Infrequent visitor.*

An excellent year for this species with the first record of 1 bird flying in with 4 Greylags on 16<sup>th</sup> November (Jason Chapman) and then also reported on the 17<sup>th</sup> November (Steve Blake). This was then followed by 2 birds (1 adult and 1 juvenile) on the 21<sup>st</sup> November (Steve Blake) which they were then reported for the rest of the month apart from the 23<sup>rd</sup> when only 1 bird was seen. The last record was on the 1<sup>st</sup> December. This is only the third record for the site with the other two records being of 3 birds on 28<sup>th</sup> February 1993 and 3 birds on the 6<sup>th</sup> March of the same year.

### Bean Goose (Tundra) *Anser fabalis rossicus*

*Rare visitor.*

A 1<sup>st</sup> winter bird flew in at 10.45am on the 26<sup>th</sup> November (Steve Blake/Ricky Flesher) and flew off at 12.40pm only to return an hour or so later whereupon it was present until the 1<sup>st</sup> December. This is the first record for the site and was seen by most of the Herts birder's interested enough to make the trip. A full report of the find can be found on page 33.



*Bean Goose, photographed by Simon West on 26<sup>th</sup> November.*

### Pink-footed Goose *Anser brachyrhynchus*

*Status uncertain*

One of the most enigmatic records of the year was of a single bird that flew in with a flock of Greylags on 9<sup>th</sup> April and landed on the main pit. The bird hung around for 15 minutes and then departed with a single Greylag. The date of this record suggests that this bird was of feral origin but its behaviour and that fact it wasn't bothered to prolong its relationship with the greylags suggests otherwise. This will be the first record for the site if accepted by the Herts RBP.

### Greylag Goose *Anser anser*

*Birds of presumed feral origin appear most years.*

A mediocre year for this species with only 55 records – compared to 87 in 2010 and 118 in 2009. Numbers were also down on 2010 with only seven records of 10 or more birds (43 in 2010); the maximum count was of 17 on 22<sup>nd</sup> January and 5<sup>th</sup> March.

### Canada Goose *Branta canadensis*

*Common throughout the year with large moulting flocks present in the autumn. Usually breeds on site.*

Records indicated that only 4 broods were raised this year with brood sizes of 6-3-9-4 counted on the 15<sup>th</sup> May. There was the usual peak in numbers in August and September with the arrival of large flocks of moulting birds. However, as in 2010 numbers were lower in this period when compared to previous years - suggesting that overall numbers are contracting and/or birds are moulting elsewhere. Monthly maxima for the last 5 years is shown below.



	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
<b>Monthly Max 2011</b>	19	16	15	12	40*	50*	70	162	118	74	40	38
<b>Monthly Max 2010</b>	66	36	40	10	41*	30	39	125	201	40	54	61
<b>Monthly Max 2009</b>	72	77	27	14	37*	39	65	163	125	83	79	37
<b>Monthly Max 2008</b>	65	39	50	24	43	46*	77	304	310	315	63	84
<b>Monthly Max 2007</b>	98	91	29	9	40	30	47	215	200	100	48	39

\* Includes young birds

### **Barnacle Goose** *Branta leucopsis*

*Infrequent visitor with birds probably coming from the Category C population in Bedfordshire.*

Only two records this year of single birds on the 14<sup>th</sup>, 19<sup>th</sup> January. This species continues to be sporadic in its appearance as the following table shows.

	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
<b>Number of Records</b>	0	0	3	1	7	0	11	2

### **Shelduck** *Tadorna tadorna*

*Regular visitor in small numbers. Has bred in the past and the presence of pairs during the breeding season indicates it may breed again.*

Recorded frequently in the first 5 months of the year with a single bird first reported on the 14<sup>th</sup> January and then subsequently reported 13 days in January, 11 in February, 13 in March, 4 in April and 6 in May. There were 2 birds reported on 5<sup>th</sup> February, 13<sup>th</sup> March, 1<sup>st</sup> May, and 3 birds on 27<sup>th</sup> March, 14<sup>th</sup> May. In the second half of the year there was 2 juveniles on 8<sup>th</sup> August, 2 birds on 13<sup>th</sup> November and the last record of the year was of a single bird on 14<sup>th</sup> November.



### **Wigeon** *Anas penelope*

*Occurs through the winter months in small numbers with the total number of records supplemented by a small number of presumed passage migrants.*

A total of 21 records for the year was 50% down on 2010 (42 records) – and is the lowest for the period 2004-2011. The highest count for the year was of 9 birds on 15<sup>th</sup> October. A summary of monthly maxima for the last 5 years is presented below.

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
<b>Monthly Max 2011</b>	3	2	0	2	0	0	0	3	5	9	7	4
<b>Monthly Max 2010</b>	6	0	3	0	0	6	0	3	10	8	12	33
<b>Monthly Max 2009</b>	5	7	2	0	0	0	0	0	6	4	2	7
<b>Monthly Max 2008</b>	3	2	2	0	3	3	6	0	16	2	3	6
<b>Monthly Max 2007</b>	5	0	2	2	0	0	0	0	5	6	3	6

### **Gadwall** *Anas strepera*

*Frequently recorded; breeding rarely recorded.*

No confirmed records of breeding this year and counts fairly stable throughout the year with the usual peak in June/July. The 34 seen on the 26<sup>th</sup> June is the highest count for the site of which we are aware – but if you know otherwise then please let us know! Monthly maxima for the last 5 years are shown below.

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
<b>Monthly Max 2011</b>	12	11	11	10	11	34	21	20	18	18	6	10
<b>Monthly Max 2010</b>	9	11	8	11	14	18	7	14	16	10	9	16
<b>Monthly Max 2009</b>	9	11	7	5	9	25	29	9	7	19	12	8
<b>Monthly Max 2008</b>	11	8	7	7	7	9	9	23	25	7	3	8
<b>Monthly Max 2007</b>	13	11	17	8	6	6	7	12	18	0	3	12

### **Mallard** *Anas platyrhynchos*

*Common resident present throughout the year. Birds are also released for wildfowling.*

A similar breeding year to 2010 with an estimated 9 broods being noted across the site (10 in 2010). The maximum count for the year was of 82 on 24<sup>th</sup> July. A summary of monthly maxima for the last 5 years is shown below.

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
<b>Monthly Max 2011</b>	56	54	32	18	59*	74*	82	30	72	52	20	50
<b>Monthly Max 2010</b>	75	55	37	37	58	57	20	58	40	80	43	152
<b>Monthly Max 2009</b>	168	94	25	81	74	120	21	72	67	50	100*	126
<b>Monthly Max 2008</b>	49	20	55	36	92	76	101	61	98	80	42	98
<b>Monthly Max 2007</b>	60	50	43	50	20	20	40	73	117	152	78	132

\* Includes young birds, † Figure from WeBs Counts.

**Pintail *Anas acuta***

*Infrequent visitor.*

A female on 23<sup>rd</sup> November (SB) was the only record for the year.

**Shoveler *Anas clypeata***

*Regular visitor.*

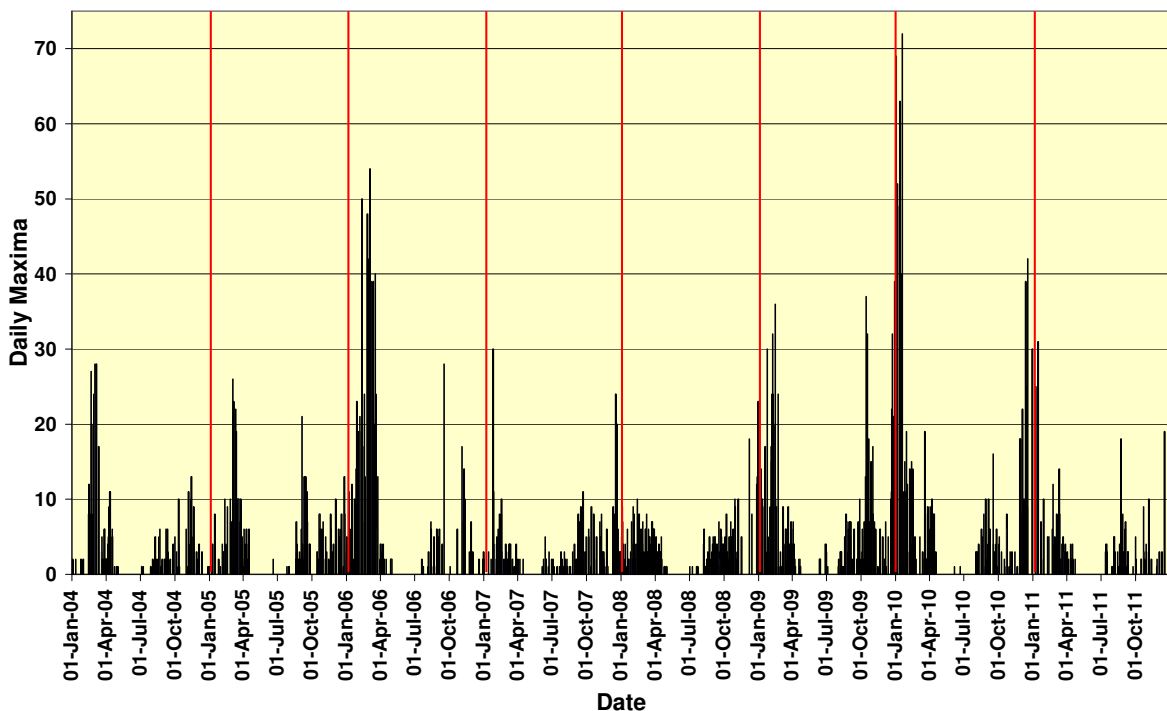
Overall numbers were 50% or more down on the period 2007-2010 and there were no counts of 10 or more birds this year the largest count was of only 6 birds on the 10<sup>th</sup> September. A summary of monthly bird days for the last 5 years is shown below.

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	TOTAL
<b>Bird Days 2011</b>	3	6	24	14	0	1	8	27	25	7	10	9	<b>134</b>
<b>Bird Days 2010</b>	13	23	61	75	6	0	3	11	28	9	19	6	<b>254</b>
<b>Bird Days 2009</b>	33	31	19	24	2	8	5	22	11	30	8	21	<b>214</b>
<b>Bird Days 2008</b>	8	9	36	107	29	6	3	13	22	30	10	42	<b>315</b>
<b>Bird Days 2007</b>	6	1	10	111	32	19	8	23	8	28	30	13	<b>288</b>

**Teal *Anas crecca***

*Frequent visitor and probably passage migrant. Highest numbers usually observed in the first winter period/early spring.*

The number of records (79) was down on 2010 (101) and 2009 (135) but unlike last year this was not compensated for by generally higher numbers throughout the year and there was only one count of 30 birds or more – compared to 11 in 2010. The highest count of the year was of 31 birds on 15<sup>th</sup> January. Daily maxima for the period 2004-2011 are shown in Figure 2.



**Figure 2.** Summary of daily maxima for Teal *Anas crecca* during the period 2004-2011. The red lines show the divisions between years.

**Garganey *Anas querquedula****Infrequent visitor.*

A pair on 17<sup>th</sup> April stayed until 23<sup>rd</sup> April; they were reported on all days between these dates.

**Red-crested Pochard *Netta rufina****Irregular visitor*

This is the third year in a row this species has been reported with a record of 3 females on 15<sup>th</sup> October. This is only the sixth record for the site.

**Pochard *Aythya farina****Reasonably common winter visitor.*

Spring departure/autumn return dates were confused again by another unusual record in May. This year there were 5 birds seen on the 21<sup>st</sup> May – compared to the single bird seen on 29<sup>th</sup> May 2010. Again this record was not used for early and late dates. Overall numbers were much like last year and the maximum count for the year was of 27 birds on 12<sup>th</sup> November. A summary of data from the last 5 years is shown below.

	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
<b>Days Recorded</b>	12	84	161	112	94	84
<b>Maximum Count</b>	10	20	31	20 <sup>†</sup>	20	27
<b>Spring Late date</b>	12 <sup>th</sup> Feb*	21 <sup>st</sup> Apr	20 <sup>th</sup> Apr	5 <sup>th</sup> April	10 <sup>th</sup> April	20 <sup>th</sup> Apr
<b>Autumn Early date</b>	16 <sup>th</sup> Sep	3 <sup>rd</sup> Aug	27 <sup>th</sup> Jun	14 <sup>th</sup> June	5 <sup>th</sup> June	11 <sup>th</sup> Jun

\* only record in 1<sup>st</sup> winter period. † WeBS count record.

**Tufted Duck *Aythya fuligula****Relatively common species that breeds in some years.*

As this species failed to breed last year it was very good news to have them breeding again with two broods reported on 17<sup>th</sup> July and one on 30<sup>th</sup> July. Numbers were much the same as last year with a maximum of 59 birds on 22<sup>nd</sup> January. A summary of monthly maxima for the last 5 years is shown below.

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
<b>Monthly Max 2011</b>	59	53	54	30	29	6	21*	20	15	16	40	35
<b>Monthly Max 2010</b>	40	74	35	47	18	41	16	18	10	19	12	24
<b>Monthly Max 2009</b>	48	50	45	35	30	30*	28*	30*	20	17	42	30
<b>Monthly Max 2008</b>	46	59	49	36	12	18	37*	38*	34	16	26	40
<b>Monthly Max 2007</b>	18	54	10	18	25	20	29*	22*	28	14	22	34

\*Includes young birds. The main part of the breeding season is highlighted in yellow.

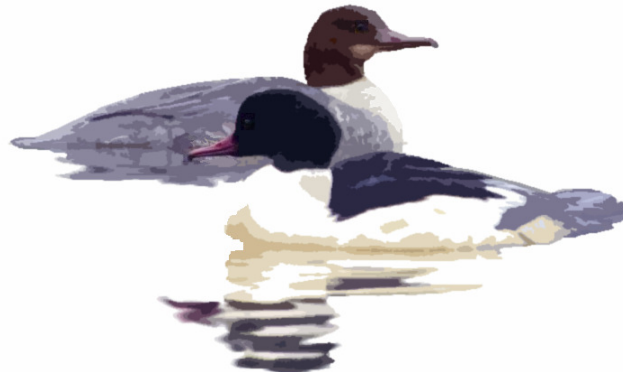
**Goldeneye *Bucephala clangula****Sporadic visitor.*

Only two records for the year were of a female on 24<sup>th</sup> January and a male on 22<sup>nd</sup> November. A summary of records from the last eight years is shown below.

	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	Total
<b>Days Recorded</b>	1	6	1	0	2	25	8	2	<b>45</b>
<b>Bird Days</b>	1	7	1	0	2	31	8	2	<b>52</b>

**Goosander *Mergus merganser****Irregular visitor with one or two records in most winters.*

The best year for this species in the period 2004-2011 with a total of 12 records. The first winter period provided 10 records – all of single females - with 2 records in January, 2 in February and 6 in March. In the second winter period there was a male and two females on 9<sup>th</sup> December and another single female on the 17<sup>th</sup> December.



**Ruddy Duck** *Oxyura jamaicensis**Irregular visitor has bred in the past.*

The control policy for this introduced species seems to have had an impact on the number of records, with only 10 records this year compared to 29 in 2010 and 60 in 2009. Seven of the records were of single birds and three of the records were of two birds.

**Red-legged Partridge** *Alectoris rufa**Common resident with the local population supplemented by released birds from Tyttenhanger Farm.*

There were no confirmed records of breeding for the year and although recorded in most months of the year the maximum count was of only 71 birds on 19<sup>th</sup> January. Larger numbers of released birds were again released during the year – but no counts were noted. At the time of writing (mid-2012) we have been informed that shooting will no longer take place at Tyttenhanger Gravel Pits we will wait and see if this eventuates.

**Grey Partridge** *Perdix perdix**Uncommon visitor.*

A real upturn for this species with 7 records this year - all from the period February-May - with five records of 2 birds and two of single birds. A summary of records from the last 8 years is shown below.

	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
<b>Days Recorded</b>	0	7	13	7	11	1	1	7
<b>Maximum Count</b>	0	8	17	6	2	1	3	2

Interestingly, the pattern of this year's records is reflected in all of the records for the period 2004-2011 (46 in all) which show the distribution presented in the table below - indicating that March/April is a peak period for this difficult species. Note, 4 of the six records for November are of one large covey seen on 4 occasions in 2006.

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
<b>No. Records</b>	1	5	8	9	4	2	2	3	2	2	6	2

**Pheasant** *Phasianus colchicus**Common resident with the local population supplemented by released birds from Tyttenhanger Farm.*

There were no confirmed breeding records for the year and surprisingly there was only one count of 20 or more birds - which was made on 30<sup>th</sup> July. Maybe observers are reluctant to count this species because of the large numbers of released birds present at certain times of the year; it will be interesting to see what happens when birds are no longer being released for shooting (see comment re. shooting under Red-legged Partridge above). Finally, with respect to the released birds, there were several records of an all white bird in the early part of the year.

**Little Grebe** *Tachybaptus ruficollis**Previously bred but now an irregular visitor.*

Overall, records were very much down on 2010 and the total number of bird days (72) was the lowest since 2006 (9). Nevertheless, it was still a breeding year for this species with 2 chicks reported on 31<sup>st</sup> July. The two chicks were not subsequently reported but a juvenile seen on 10<sup>th</sup> August indicates that breeding was successful. The maximum count for the year was of 4 birds on 25<sup>th</sup> October. A summary of bird days per month for the last 5 years is shown below.

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	TOTAL
<b>Bird Days 2011</b>	0	0	13	5	8	3	9*	9	5	14	2	4	<b>72</b>
<b>Bird Days 2010</b>	12	3	25	31	11	7	10	22	16	11	0	0	<b>148</b>
<b>Bird Days 2009</b>	0	4	14	24	6	9	8	49*	55*	53*	37	37	<b>296</b>
<b>Bird Days 2008</b>	0	1	6	6	0	4	24	62*	26	8	3	0	<b>140</b>
<b>Bird Days 2007</b>	0	0	15	40	10	11	10	17	3	0	0	0	<b>106</b>

\*Including young

**Great Crested Grebe** *Podiceps cristatus**Present throughout the year with small numbers of pairs breeding.*

Six pairs bred this year between April and August. The best count for the year was of 35 birds (including young) on 3<sup>rd</sup> May and 28<sup>th</sup> May. It is worth noting that 35 is also the largest count in the period 2004-2011 and that there were 4 counts this year greater than the previous record count (30 on 30<sup>th</sup> November 2010). A summary of monthly maxima for the last 5 years is shown below.

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
<b>Monthly Max 2011</b>	5	28	31	19	35*	19*	32*	18	23	25	6	7
<b>Monthly Max 2010</b>	3	14	16	24	22	27	12	20	16	19	30	1
<b>Monthly Max 2009</b>	4	9	10	10	15	19*	13*	29*	14	13	21	24
<b>Monthly Max 2008</b>	12	8	19	20	22	24*	25*	14	22	19	6	6
<b>Monthly Max 2007</b>	3	5	11	17	9	9*	15*	19*	14	21	22	24

\* Includes young birds

### **Cormorant** *Phalacrocorax carbo*

*A common winter visitor with birds present through much of the year.*

Present throughout the year but with a maximum count of only 18 birds on 10<sup>th</sup> December, this was probably the worst year on site for this species since 2006. Monthly maxima for the last 5 years are shown below.

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
<b>Monthly Max 2011</b>	16	17	13	9	7	2	6	8	9	8	6	18
<b>Monthly Max 2010</b>	10	14	13	6	3	1	3	10	7	16	53	24
<b>Monthly Max 2009</b>	24	9	11	12	4	3	8	6	5	8	28	21
<b>Monthly Max 2008</b>	23	15	22	25	6	4	11	11	10	7	59	91
<b>Monthly Max 2007</b>	27	16	14	12	5	7	3	7	5	8	19	36

### **Little Egret** *Egretta garzetta*

*Becoming more regular as this species continues to spread throughout the UK.*

Another increase in days recorded this year with a total of 29 compared to 21 in 2010 which makes this the second best year for records after 2008 – although there were slightly more bird days this year. The first record for the year was of a single bird on 11<sup>th</sup> February which was followed by a further 23 records of single birds, 2 records of 2 birds 1 record of 3 birds 1 record of 7 birds and 1 record of 9 birds – the latter record relating to birds roosting at dusk in the west corner of the Main Pit on 13<sup>th</sup> July. A summary of the distribution of bird days and number of records per year for the period 2004–2011 are presented below.

	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
<b>Days Recorded</b>	16	7	5	2	31	12	21	29
<b>Bird Days</b>	17	8	7	2	42	12	34	49

### **Grey Heron** *Ardea cinerea*

*Present throughout the year with numbers rarely reaching double figures. Has bred in recent years.*

The third year that this species has bred on site with 2 nests reported and 3 fledged birds on 23<sup>rd</sup> May. Maximum count for the year was of just 8 birds on 2<sup>nd</sup> September. A summary of monthly maxima for the last 5 years is presented below.

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
<b>Monthly Max 2011</b>	3	5	3	3	7*	7*	6	6	8	6	3	3
<b>Monthly Max 2010</b>	9	3	6	8*	14*	11*	12*	8	8	3	8	3
<b>Monthly Max 2009</b>	3	6	5	6	4	9	6	10	9	6	5	11
<b>Monthly Max 2008</b>	5	7	3	4	5	6	8	10	9	5	4	7
<b>Monthly Max 2007</b>	11	9	8	6	5	8	5	5	10	4	6	7

### **Red Kite** *Milvus milvus*

*Local Resident.*

The number of records has continued to increase for this species whichever way you look at the numbers i.e the number of records, the number of bird days or the sightings of multiple birds for the year all show an increase. Recorded in 11 months of the year – all months apart from February - with a maximum of 3 birds seen on 3 dates in the year, the reporting frequency for this year has climbed to 31.7% (recorded on 26 dates from a total of 82 visits for one regular recorder) – an increase of 17% on 2010. A summary of the recording frequency during the period 2003 – 2011 for this and the three other common birds of prey recorded on-site are shown in Figure 3.

### **Marsh Harrier** *Circus aeruginosus*

*Rare visitor.*

A female passed through on 14<sup>th</sup> May (Terry Smith, Steve Blake and Ricky Flesher) which was the 12<sup>th</sup> record for the site since 1991 – and the first since the beginning of 2009. The distribution, by month, of records for this species is shown in the table below.

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
<b>Number of Records</b>	0	0	0	1	5	0	1	4	1	0	0	0

**Montagu's Harrier *Circus pygargus***

*Rare visitor.*

A bird flying through on 20<sup>th</sup> April (Steve Murray) will be the first record for the site if accepted by the Herts Rare Birds Panel.

**Sparrowhawk *Accipiter nisus***

*Present throughout the year. Undoubtedly breeds locally but usually not confirmed.*

Present throughout the year with a reporting frequency of around 31% (recorded on 25 dates from a total of 82 visits for one regular recorder). No breeding records and a maximum count of 2 birds on 5 dates throughout the year. A summary of the recording frequency during the period 2003 – 2011 for this and the other three common birds of prey recorded on-site are shown in Figure 3.

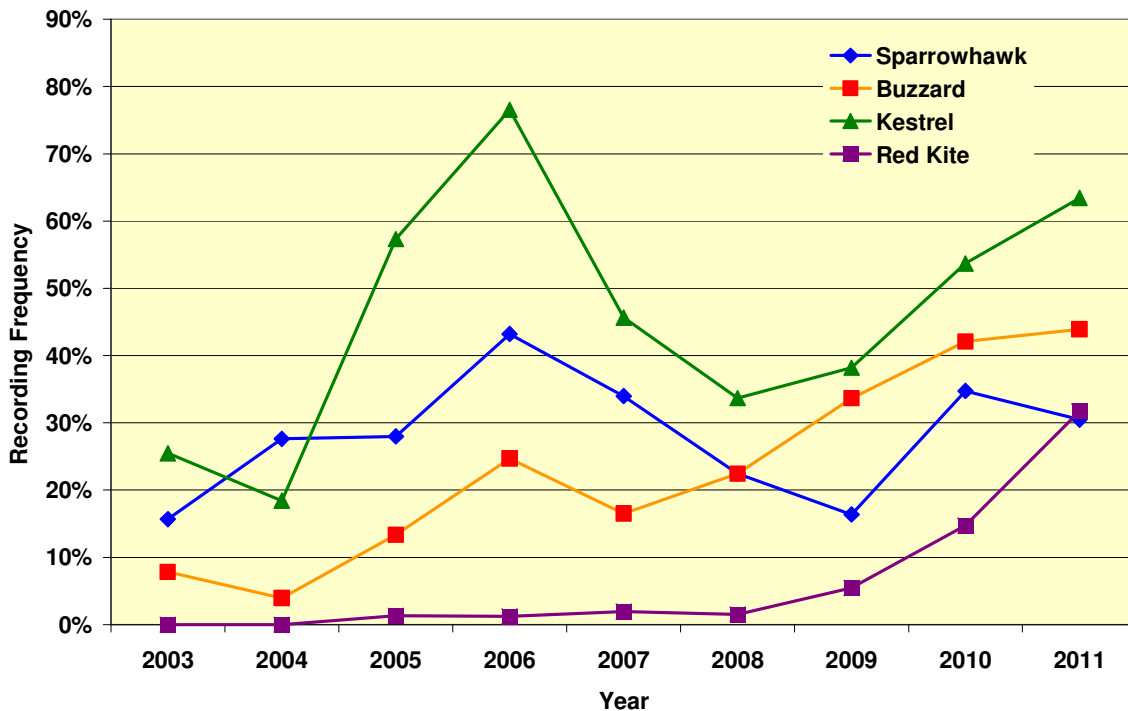


**Buzzard *Buteo buteo***

*Local resident becoming increasingly more common in Hertfordshire and more frequently observed at Tyttenhanger.*

This species may have reached a peak in 2009 and has shown a slight decrease in the last couple of years. The numbers of records (78) were lower when compared to 2010 (88 records) and 2009 (94 records), but interestingly, while birds days (180) were down on 2010 (203) they were slightly higher than 2009 (160). The reporting frequency of 44% (recorded on 36 dates from a total of 82 visits by one regular recorder) was about the same as last year. The highest count for the year was of 8 birds on 12<sup>th</sup> March again the same as last year. A summary of the recording frequency during the period 2003 – 2011 for this and the three other common birds of prey recorded on-site are shown in Figure 3. A summary of the records for the last 5 years is shown below.

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Total
<b>No. Days 2011</b>	0	4	11	8	6	6	7	11	7	9	2	3	<b>74</b>
<b>No. Days 2010</b>	5	3	11	13	9	4	5	16	13	5	1	3	<b>88</b>
<b>No. Days 2009</b>	3	7	12	15	11	2	4	13	10	8	3	6	<b>94</b>
<b>No. Days 2008</b>	5	5	14	11	8	2	3	5	8	8	2	1	<b>72</b>
<b>No. Days 2007</b>	5	6	2	10	2	5	2	2	8	3	4	3	<b>52</b>



**Figure 3.** Summary of recording frequency for the more common birds of prey found at Tyttenhanger during the period 2003-2011. Recording frequency is calculated from data from a single observer for each species-year combination and is based on the number of records for the year as a percentage of the number of visits. Note only single observer records have been used where the observer is known to record all sightings of the species involved.



**Kestrel *Falco tinnunculus***

*Birds of both sexes present throughout the year. Undoubtedly breeds locally but usually not confirmed.*

Present throughout the year with a recording frequency of 63% (recorded on 52 dates from a total of 82 visits for one regular recorder) – the highest since 2006. Breeding was confirmed this year with 2 recently fledged young reported on 5<sup>th</sup> July and a maximum count of 4 birds including young being made on the same date. A summary of the recording frequency during the period 2003-2010 for this species and other birds of prey is shown in Figure 3.

**Hobby *Falco subbuteo***

*Passage migrant and summer visitor.*

Another year showing a downward trend for this species after the apparent peak of 2008/09. With only 24 records and 32 bird days for the year and a maximum of only 2 birds seen on eight dates throughout the year this is the worst year since 2007. There was no breeding reported this year. Interestingly this is the second year in a row that the latest date was in October and overall there seems to be a trend over the last 8 years for slightly later last records – as can be seen in the summary of records for the period 2004 – 2011 that is shown below.

	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
<b>Bird Days</b>	24	34	37	31	72	74	46	32
<b>Days Recorded</b>	18	23	35	25	46	44	30	24
<b>Earliest Date</b>	1 <sup>st</sup> Apr	26 <sup>th</sup> Apr	28 <sup>th</sup> Apr	5 <sup>th</sup> May	30 <sup>th</sup> Apr	28 <sup>th</sup> Apr	6 <sup>th</sup> May	24 <sup>th</sup> Apr
<b>Latest Date</b>	11 <sup>th</sup> Sep	11 <sup>th</sup> Sep	17 <sup>th</sup> Sep	24 <sup>th</sup> Sep	23 <sup>rd</sup> Sep	29 <sup>th</sup> Sep	7 <sup>th</sup> Oct	2 <sup>nd</sup> Oct

**Peregrine *Falco peregrinus***

*Infrequent visitor most often recorded in the winter months.*

Twenty-four records for the year is a 100% increase on the number of records from 2010 (12). All the records were of single birds apart from a record of 2 birds on 20<sup>th</sup> June. This is the first year that this species has been reported in all months of the year. A summary of monthly bird days for 2011 and the cumulative monthly bird days for the period 2004 – 2011 is shown below.

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
<b>Bird Days 2011</b>	2	1	2	1	1	4	1	2	4	2	3	2
<b>Bird Days 2004-11</b>	9	3	5	2	2	4	4	7	12	7	5	7

**Water Rail *Rallus aquaticus***

*Regular visitor in the recent past.*

A species that may have reached its peak in 2008/09 continues to decline in terms of the number of records and are now similar to pre-2008 numbers. The 11 records from this year were split 2 in the first winter period and 9 in the second winter period. A summary of data from the last 8 years is shown.

	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
<b>Days Recorded</b>	4	12	5	8	54	46	29	11
<b>Maximum Count</b>	2	1	1	1	4	4	2	1
<b>Winter Late Date</b>	NF	1 <sup>st</sup> Apr	4 <sup>th</sup> Mar	3 <sup>rd</sup> Mar	21 <sup>st</sup> Apr	6 <sup>th</sup> Apr	6 <sup>th</sup> Mar	15 <sup>th</sup> Mar
<b>Autumn Early Date</b>	19 <sup>th</sup> Nov	18 <sup>th</sup> Nov	23 <sup>rd</sup> Dec	NS	31 <sup>st</sup> Oct	11 <sup>th</sup> Nov	1 <sup>st</sup> Nov	15 <sup>th</sup> Oct

NF = no records in first winter period; NS = no records in second winter period

**Moorhen *Gallinula chloropus***

*Common resident with a few pairs presumed to breed most years.*

A better year for breeding for this species than 2010, with an estimated 5 to 8 broods reported between May and July. Numbers were slightly up on last year with a maximum of 50 birds on 2<sup>nd</sup> September – which is the highest count for the period 2004-2011. A summary of the monthly maxima for the last 5 years is shown below.

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
<b>Monthly Max 2011</b>	5	37	12	8	22*	19*	27*	12	50	47	6	11
<b>Monthly Max 2010</b>	32	8	15	29	14	12*	4	9	8	16	49	6
<b>Monthly Max 2009</b>	6	8	5	12	8	20*	10*	28*	11	27	28	32
<b>Monthly Max 2008</b>	8	6	15	8	7	4	15*	10	8	10	5	11
<b>Monthly Max 2007</b>	2	8	8	8	4	2	12*	12*	8	15	8	10

\* Includes young birds

**Coot *Fulica atra***

*Has seen large fluctuations in status over the years; currently a common breeding resident and winter visitor.*

Numbers were generally about the same as 2010 although the number of breeding pairs was down to 14 pairs this year

compared to 21 last; broods were reported between May and June. The maximum count for the year was of 214 birds on the 2<sup>nd</sup> September – which is the highest count that we have on record. A summary of the monthly maxima for the last 5 years is shown below.

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
<b>Monthly Max 2011</b>	80	138	54	56	107*	108*	207*	140	214	178	80	100
<b>Monthly Max 2010</b>	143	92	84	74	80*	133*	100*	80	105	116	178	170
<b>Monthly Max 2009</b>	105	90	95	60	80*	171*	102	150	157*	85	97	128
<b>Monthly Max 2008</b>	80	75	52	64	52	52	112	100	108	100	84	94
<b>Monthly Max 2007</b>	14	42	44	55	30	45	57	106*	55	40	48	83

\* Includes young birds.

### Oystercatcher *Haematopus ostralegus*

*Regular summer visitor, has attempted to breed in the recent past.*

The first bird of the year arrived on 28<sup>th</sup> February quickly followed by a second bird on 1<sup>st</sup> March; this pair were then reported until the 15<sup>th</sup> July. The pair was seen displaying and mating on the 5<sup>th</sup> March and breeding was believed to have occurred just off site on the Gravel Workings on Coursers Road. Two adults and 1 juvenile was seen on site on 27<sup>th</sup> June the juvenile was last reported on the 13<sup>th</sup> July. Other than the pair and their single youngster (6 records between 26<sup>th</sup> June and 13<sup>th</sup> July) other records of multiple birds involved two records of three birds in March, one record of four birds on March 7<sup>th</sup> and five birds on 8<sup>th</sup>, 10<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> April.

	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
<b>Days Recorded</b>	5	2	30	50	76	67	84	60
<b>Early Date</b>	14 <sup>th</sup> May	26 <sup>th</sup> Feb	6 <sup>th</sup> May	28 <sup>th</sup> Mar	6 <sup>th</sup> Mar	6 <sup>th</sup> Mar	27 <sup>th</sup> Feb	28 <sup>th</sup> Feb
<b>Late Date</b>	16 <sup>th</sup> June	23 <sup>rd</sup> July	20 <sup>th</sup> July	20 <sup>th</sup> July	23 <sup>rd</sup> July	18 <sup>th</sup> July	22 <sup>nd</sup> Jul	15 <sup>th</sup> Jul

### Avocet *Recurvirostra avosetta*

*Infrequent visitor.*

Eight birds were seen on the Main Pit from 12.00pm until 5.00pm on 7<sup>th</sup> March. The birds were seen feeding between 3.00pm – 3.30pm and by 4.00pm they were roosting among the Gulls until last seen at 5.00 pm. This is the largest flock for the site of which we are aware.



*Avocets photographed on the Main Pit by Steve Blake on the 7<sup>th</sup> March*

### Ringed Plover *Charadrius hiaticula*

*Passage migrant with a number of birds staying to breed in previous years.*

The first record for the year was of two birds on 8<sup>th</sup> February and with a total of only 29 records throughout the year this was not a good year for this species. No confirmed records of breeding this year although the maximum count of three birds – 2 adults and 1 juvenile – on the 5<sup>th</sup> July indicates that this species may have bred nearby. This is now the 5<sup>th</sup> year in a row with no breeding records from on-site. A summary of early / late dates for the period 2004 - 2011 are shown in the table below along with data on the number of days recorded, bird days and maximum counts.

	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
<b>Earliest Date</b>	24 <sup>th</sup> Jan	16 <sup>th</sup> Jan	7 <sup>th</sup> Feb	24 <sup>th</sup> Feb	23 <sup>rd</sup> Feb	23 <sup>rd</sup> Feb	5 <sup>th</sup> Mar	8 <sup>th</sup> Feb
<b>Latest Date</b>	1 <sup>st</sup> Oct	18 <sup>th</sup> Sep	17 <sup>th</sup> Sep	6 <sup>th</sup> Oct	8 <sup>th</sup> Oct	29 <sup>th</sup> Aug	5 <sup>th</sup> Aug	30 <sup>th</sup> Jul
<b>Days Recorded</b>	91	111	93	101	94	67	51	29
<b>Bird Days</b>	360	361	287	199	167	105	65	42
<b>Maximum Count</b>	12	11	10	5	5	3	2	3

### Little Ringed Plover *Charadrius dubius*

*Passage migrant.*

The first record for the year was of a single bird on 29<sup>th</sup> March and in terms of the number of bird days and days recorded this was the best year since 2006. There was breeding activity this year, with a occupied nest reported on 16<sup>th</sup> May and

distraction display seen on 22<sup>nd</sup> May and with four adults and a juvenile seen on 5<sup>th</sup> July it is possible that breeding took place on site – which would be the first time since 2006. A summary of early / late dates and other data for the period 2004 – 2011 are shown in the table below.

	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
<b>Earliest Date</b>	16 <sup>th</sup> Mar	19 <sup>th</sup> Mar	21 <sup>st</sup> Mar	30 <sup>th</sup> Mar	3 <sup>rd</sup> Apr	20 <sup>th</sup> Mar	30 <sup>th</sup> Mar	29 <sup>th</sup> Mar
<b>Latest Date</b>	1 <sup>st</sup> Oct	1 <sup>st</sup> Aug	28 <sup>th</sup> Aug	1 <sup>st</sup> Aug	8 <sup>th</sup> Jul	4 <sup>th</sup> Sep	24 <sup>th</sup> July	10 <sup>th</sup> Aug
<b>Days Recorded</b>	83	80	75	41	31	43	50	76
<b>Bird Days</b>	392	326	277	65	50	63	191	179
<b>Maximum Count</b>	12	13	15	4	3	3	3	6

### Golden Plover *Pluvialis apricaria*

Common winter visitor to the area with large flocks sometimes alighting in the recording area.

A better year for this species with 100+ birds reported in both winter periods and 24 records for the year. Ten of the records are from the first winter period and fourteen from the second winter period. The last bird of the first winter period was observed on the 30<sup>th</sup> March while the first returning birds in the autumn were on the 16<sup>th</sup> October. A summary of monthly maxima for the last 5 years is shown below.

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
<b>Monthly Max. 2011</b>	30+	47	100+	0	0	0	0	0	0	29	29	100+
<b>Monthly Max. 2010</b>	1	0	30	0	0	0	0	0	0	4	20	10
<b>Monthly Max. 2009</b>	6	40	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	400+	60+	0
<b>Monthly Max. 2008</b>	32	45	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	60	40	16
<b>Monthly Max. 2007</b>	500	716	500	120	0	0	0	0	0	311	1200	700

### Lapwing *Vanellus vanellus*

Present through much of the year with large winter flocks using the Main Pit and surrounding fields. Several pairs nest on site most years but success is limited due to disturbance.

Breeding was confirmed again this year with 3 or 4 broods in total reported between 30<sup>th</sup> April and 15<sup>th</sup> May. The maximum count for the year was of 495 in February. A summary of the monthly maxima for the last 5 years is shown below.

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
<b>Monthly Max. 2011</b>	285	495	202	23*	15*	44	79	149	78	251	254	300
<b>Monthly Max. 2010</b>	339	238	43	21	17*	121	117	250	138	250	176	351
<b>Monthly Max. 2009</b>	610	250	70	49	14	137	307	246	93	146	400	427
<b>Monthly Max. 2008</b>	300	420	126	28	50	59	303	1000	313	150	210	500
<b>Monthly Max. 2007</b>	360	526	59	14	16	12	159	142	116	210	276	220

\* Includes young birds.

### Dunlin *Calidris alpina*

Regular passage migrant and occasional visitor likely to turn up at most times of the year.

A better year for this species than last year, both in terms of days recorded (19) and also the maximum count for the year - with 9 birds present on 22<sup>nd</sup> and 23<sup>rd</sup> February. A summary of records from the last 8 years is shown below.

	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
<b>Days Recorded</b>	34	31	17	23	17	33	9	19
<b>Maximum Count</b>	8	4	6	7	2	4	1	9

### Ruff *Philomachus pugnax*

Irregular visitor.

One bird was reported on Birdguides on 19<sup>th</sup> April and then three birds flew in at 7.00am on 30<sup>th</sup> April, stayed for 10 minutes on the Sand Spit in the main pit and then departed (Steve Blake, Ricky Flesher, Terry Smith).

### Woodcock *Scolopax rusticola*

Infrequent visitor.

Two records this year both involving multiple birds in Garden Wood - 2 birds on 22<sup>nd</sup> January and 3 birds on 23<sup>rd</sup> February.



**Jack Snipe** *Lymnocyptes minimus*

*A regular winter visitor whose cryptic habits probably belie its true status.*

A species that is becoming very hard to find on site now with only one record for the year of one bird on 11<sup>th</sup> March that flew out of the Willow's behind the sand spit. A summary of the number of records and maximum counts for the last 8 years is shown in the table below.

	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
<b>Days Recorded</b>	5	14	8	2	2	3	0	1
<b>Maximum Count</b>	4	4	6	2	1	2	0	1

**Snipe** *Gallinago gallinago*

*Winter visitor and passage migrant. Probably much commoner than indicated from the available records.*

Numbers continue to decline after the peak of 2008 and 2009 with only 85 bird days recorded from a total of 49 days. This is the lowest total of bird days for any year in the period 2004-11 – the previous lowest being 2004 with 88 bird days. The maximum count for the year was of only 5 birds on 11<sup>th</sup> April and 10<sup>th</sup> December. A summary of the bird days per month and other data for this species are provided in the tables below.

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Total
<b>Bird Days 2011</b>	0	1	9	31	5	0	0	2	2	15	4	16	<b>85</b>
<b>Bird Days 2010</b>	25	27	24	22	1	0	0	7	5	21	9	14	<b>155</b>
<b>Bird Days 2009</b>	44	155	208	75	1	0	0	5	8	36	9	56	<b>597</b>
<b>Bird Days 2008</b>	5	26	121	100	0	0	0	2	15	54	82	124	<b>529</b>
<b>Bird Days 2007</b>	0	13	16	7	0	0	1	0	27	26	7	8	<b>105</b>

	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
<b>Late date (1<sup>st</sup> winter p'd)</b>	16 <sup>th</sup> Apr	15 <sup>th</sup> Apr	13 <sup>th</sup> Apr	28 <sup>th</sup> Apr	4 <sup>th</sup> May	5 <sup>th</sup> May	4 <sup>th</sup> May
<b>Early Date (2<sup>nd</sup> winter p'd)</b>	6 <sup>th</sup> Aug	19 <sup>th</sup> Aug	30 <sup>th</sup> Jul	8 <sup>th</sup> Aug	10 <sup>th</sup> Aug	7 <sup>th</sup> Aug	10 <sup>th</sup> Aug
<b>Maximum Count</b>	7	8	8	27	34	7	5

**Black-tailed Godwit** *Limosa limosa*

*Irregular passage migrant.*

Birds recorded on 5 days this year makes it a good year for this species – with the most number of days recorded since the long staying individual in January/February 2006. Records for the years were of a single on the 22<sup>nd</sup> April, four birds on 13<sup>th</sup> July – ascribed as being of the Icelandic race by the observer, another single on 17<sup>th</sup> July, two birds on 27<sup>th</sup> July and finally, two birds on 5<sup>th</sup> September.

**Bar-tailed Godwit** *Limosa lapponica*

*Scarce migrant.*

This year produced two records and a total 6 bird days. The first record was of two birds on 1<sup>st</sup> May. Then on the 2<sup>nd</sup> May three birds were found at 05.30am which were then joined by a 4<sup>th</sup> bird at 07.30am; all four birds stayed until 8.30am before flying off. We have only found four other records for the site- all of single birds on 24<sup>th</sup> October 1987, 3<sup>rd</sup> February 1996, 2<sup>nd</sup> May 2004 and 1<sup>st</sup> May 2006. This demonstrates what an outstanding year this was for this species – and sets a precedent that will hopefully continue!

**Whimbrel** *Numenius phaeopus*

*Passage migrant.*

Like last year there was only one record– but again it involved multiple birds. This year, 13 birds were seen on 30<sup>th</sup> April (Laurence Drummond) – which comprises the third double figure count for the site with previous records of 10 birds on 6<sup>th</sup> May 2002 and 31 birds on 8<sup>th</sup> May 2010.

**Curlew** *Numenius arquata*

*Infrequent winter visitor and passage migrant.*

A single bird on the 27<sup>th</sup> July was the only record for the year.

**Greenshank *Tringa nebularia***

*Spring and autumn migrants in small numbers.*

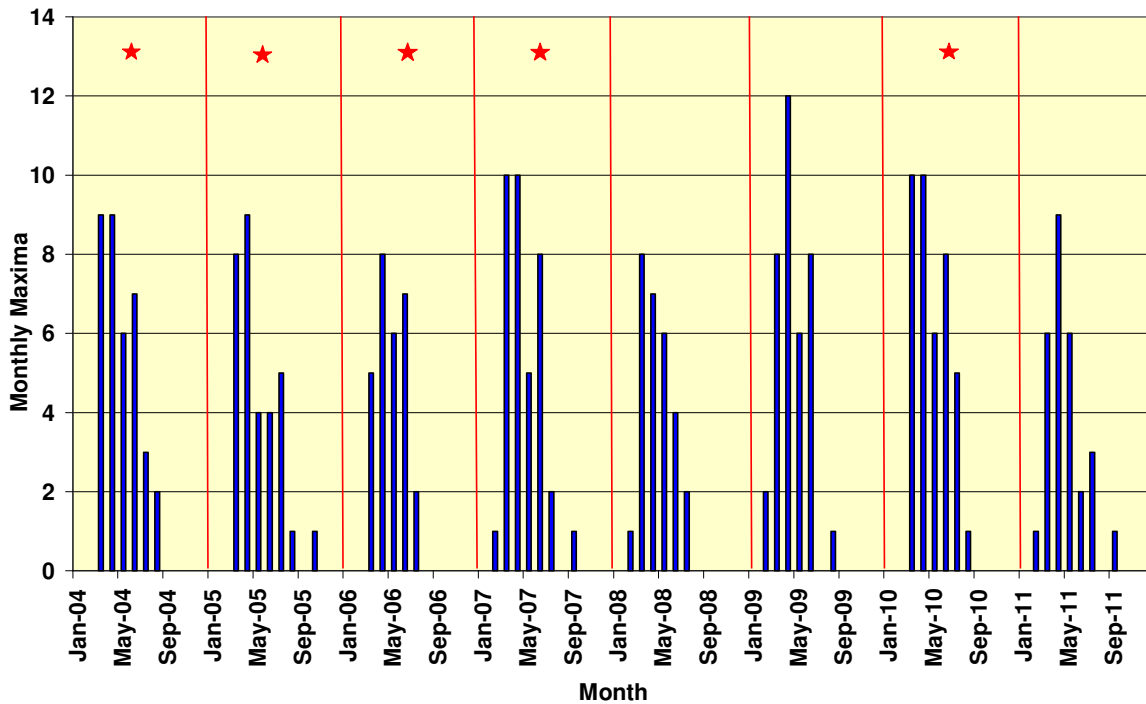
Nine records for the year is another small but welcome increase for the second year in a row. The first record of the year was of a single bird on 21<sup>st</sup> April which was followed by 9 on 30<sup>th</sup> April, 2 on 1<sup>st</sup> May, a single bird on 2<sup>nd</sup> May, 2 on 3<sup>rd</sup> June, single on the 20<sup>th</sup>, 27<sup>th</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup> June and finally 2 birds on 13<sup>th</sup> August. All in all a good year for this species.



**Redshank *Tringa totanus***

*Summer visitor with 2-3 pairs breeding in most years.*

The first returning bird of the year was heard on 22<sup>nd</sup> February and as usual numbers increased through March and April to peak at 9 birds on 17<sup>th</sup> April with the last bird of the year being seen on 24<sup>th</sup> September. There were no breeding records this year. Monthly maxima for the years 2004 – 2011 are shown below in Figure 4.



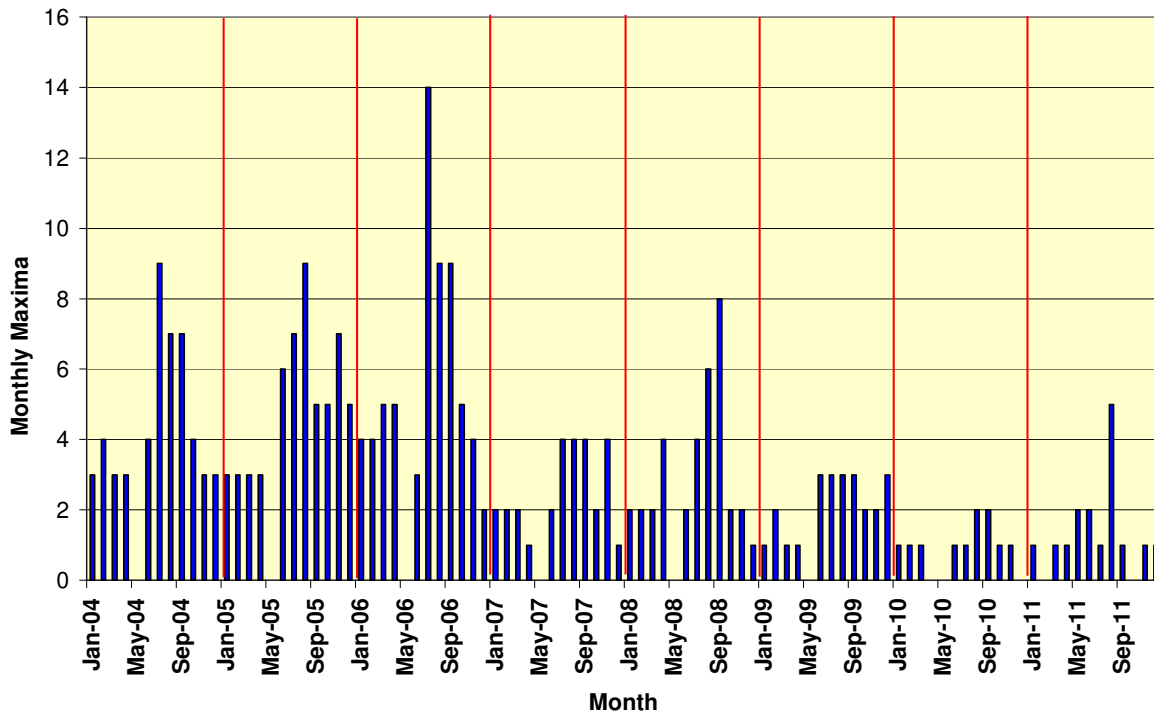
**Figure 4.** Monthly maxima for Redshank *Tringa totanus* shown over the period January 2004 –December 2011. Vertical red lines show the division between years and the stars indicate the years in which the species successfully bred on-site.

**Green Sandpiper *Tringa ochropus***

*Frequent winter visitor and passage migrant.*

Both days recorded and number of bird days showed an increase this year from the low of 2010, and with a maximum count for the year of 5 on 13<sup>th</sup> August, all of the figures are moving in the right direction. The pattern of records this year was slightly unusual inasmuch as there were records in late April/early May – while there were no records in February and October - usually stronger months for this species. A summary of early and late dates and monthly maxima for the last 7 years are shown in the Table below and in Figure 5.

	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
<b>Late Spring Date</b>	20 <sup>th</sup> Apr	27 <sup>th</sup> Apr	16 <sup>th</sup> Apr	7 <sup>th</sup> Apr	20 <sup>th</sup> Apr	18 <sup>th</sup> Apr	9 <sup>th</sup> Mar	4 <sup>th</sup> May
<b>Early Autumn Date</b>	19 <sup>th</sup> Jun	8 <sup>th</sup> Jun	18 <sup>th</sup> Jun	8 <sup>th</sup> Jun	14 <sup>th</sup> Jun	13 <sup>th</sup> Jun	29 <sup>th</sup> Jun	27 <sup>th</sup> Jun
<b>Days Recorded</b>	158	190	159	106	120	69	19	40
<b>Bird Days</b>	420	538	501	184	191	105	22	47
<b>Average Bird Days</b>	2.66	2.83	3.15	1.74	1.59	1.52	1.16	1.17
<b>Maximum Count</b>	9	9	14	4	8	3	2	5



**Figure 5.** Monthly maxima for Green Sandpiper *Tringa ochropus* in the period 2004-2011. Vertical red lines show the divisions between years.

**Common Sandpiper *Tringa hypoleucos***

*Regular passage migrant, more frequent in autumn.*

Another species that has shown a slight increase this year with both the number of records (40) and bird days (56) showing an improvement on the 28 and 36 of last year. The maximum count for the year was of 5 birds on 5<sup>th</sup> August – while the last record for the year was on the 8<sup>th</sup> November – which is the latest date for the site that we have. Interestingly, in the period 1980-2003 there are 14 birds recorded on dates later than this in the Herts Bird Report – with 1 or 2 birds in this period that have actually overwintered. A summary of early and late dates and bird days for the last 8 years is shown in the table below.

	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
<b>Bird Days</b>	155	153	144	62	111	70	36	56
<b>Earliest Date</b>	17 <sup>th</sup> Apr	10 <sup>th</sup> Apr	15 <sup>th</sup> Apr	28 <sup>th</sup> Mar	13 <sup>th</sup> Apr	14 <sup>th</sup> Apr	23 <sup>rd</sup> Apr	23 <sup>rd</sup> Apr
<b>Latest Date</b>	10 <sup>th</sup> Oct	29 <sup>th</sup> Sep	5 <sup>th</sup> Sep	16 <sup>th</sup> Sep	25 <sup>th</sup> Sep	9 <sup>th</sup> Sep	24 <sup>th</sup> Sep	8 <sup>th</sup> Nov

**Black-headed Gull *Chroicocephalus ridibundus***

*Common non-breeding species present virtually all year around.*

A fairly typical year for this species with a maximum count of 704 birds on 10<sup>th</sup> September and the usual peak in numbers August/September. During this period there was a leucistic adult amongst the gulls on 9<sup>th</sup> September (Steve Blake, Simon West) - see the photo to the right. A summary of the monthly maxima for the last 5 years is presented below.

*A leucistic Black-headed Gull photographed on 9th September by Steve Blake*



	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
<b>Monthly Max. 2011</b>	200	650	450	14	8	17	432	600	704	500	400	350
<b>Monthly Max. 2010</b>	500	84	158	20	2	34	256	900	550	442	350	166
<b>Monthly Max. 2009</b>	320	250	260	10	10	109	151	350	940	271	141	600
<b>Monthly Max. 2008</b>	376	300	300	4	3	11	400	550	354	350	270	201
<b>Monthly Max. 2007</b>	250	300	42	21	18	10	305	461	460	284	689	700



**Mediterranean Gull *Ichthyaeetus melanocephalus****Irregular visitor.*

A welcome return for this species after no records last year. Birds were recorded on 4 separate dates this year with the first of the year being 2 birds on 15<sup>th</sup> August (Birdguides) – with a juvenile bird being seen on the same day. Subsequently a single juvenile bird was seen on 28<sup>th</sup> August, 31<sup>st</sup> August and 1<sup>st</sup> September - presumably the same bird. This pattern is in line with previous records - as the following table shows. July, August and September remain the best time to see this species at Tyttenhanger.

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
<b>No. Days recorded 2004-2011</b>	1	0	0	0	0	0	5	7	4	0	0	2

**Common Gull *Larus canus****Regular winter visitor; absent during the summer months.*

A good year for this species being reported in most months of the year apart from June, and with a maximum of 218 birds on 12<sup>th</sup> March – which is a record count for the period 2004-2011. The latest spring bird was recorded on the relatively late date of 7<sup>th</sup> May and the first returning bird on 4<sup>th</sup> July. A summary of monthly maxima for the last 5 years and late/early dates for the last 8 years are presented in the tables below.

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
<b>Monthly Max. 2011</b>	93	147	218	3	3	0	4	2	3	17	120	80
<b>Monthly Max. 2010</b>	100	29	81	142	0	0	2	3	4	48	109	36
<b>Monthly Max. 2009</b>	79	66	140	5	2	2	1	11	3	25	44	108
<b>Monthly Max. 2008</b>	82	45	77	13	0	0	1	5	16	22	100	104
<b>Monthly Max. 2007</b>	66	43	26	1	0	0	4	28	3	12	69	119

	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
<b>Spring Late Date</b>	11 <sup>th</sup> April	10 <sup>th</sup> Apr	3 <sup>rd</sup> May	29 <sup>th</sup> Apr	6 <sup>th</sup> April	4 <sup>th</sup> April	28 <sup>th</sup> Apr	7 <sup>th</sup> May
<b>Autumn Early Date</b>	17 <sup>th</sup> Jul	9 <sup>th</sup> Jul	1 <sup>st</sup> Jul	14 <sup>th</sup> Jul	20 <sup>th</sup> Jul	17 <sup>th</sup> May	11 <sup>th</sup> Jul	4 <sup>th</sup> July

**Lesser Black-backed Gull *Larus fuscus****Present throughout the year. Possibly under recorded as many birds fly-through or stay for only a short time.*

Recorded in every month of the year with double figure counts in most months. The maximum count of the year was of 44 birds on 24<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup> June) and with a count of 42 birds on the 5<sup>th</sup> February this means that the 3 highest counts in the period 2004-2011 were all in this year. Interestingly, courtship and display for this species was reported on 18<sup>th</sup> April and there are strong indications that this species bred on the roof of the warehouses on the other side of the A1081 - just off-site! With record numbers and local breeding it will be interesting to see if this species can maintain its upwards trend in the forthcoming years.

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
<b>Monthly Max 2011</b>	26	42	11	7	8	44	11	11	20	15	20	13
<b>Monthly Max. 2010</b>	3	32	5	7	17	8	6	12	6	10	23	5
<b>Monthly Max. 2009</b>	13	5	12	5	12	3	5	12	10	4	4	8
<b>Monthly Max. 2008</b>	10	7	11	12	6	7	7	18	5	4	24	5
<b>Monthly Max. 2007</b>	15	4	7	7	9	5	13	12	27	5	20	7

**Herring Gull *Larus argentatus****An infrequent visitor most often encountered in the winter months.*

Like most of the other gulls this species showed a dramatic increase over 2010 numbers – with days recorded being greater (51) than any other year in the period 2004-2010. Part of the reason for this increase is that, like the previous species, they appear to be breeding on the warehouses on the other side of the A1081. This is the first year in the period 2004-2011 that birds have been recorded in every month of the year; the maximum count for the year was of 12 birds on 30<sup>th</sup> April. A summary of data from the last 8 years is shown below.

	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
<b>Bird Days</b>	20	55	75	44	37	37	34	116
<b>Days Recorded</b>	5	24	24	23	20	21	21	51

**Yellow-legged Gull *Larus michahellis****Irregular visitor.*

Four records for the year make this the best year on record. Records were of one bird on 28<sup>th</sup> February (no age given), a 2<sup>nd</sup> winter on 8<sup>th</sup> March, a 3<sup>rd</sup> winter on 26<sup>th</sup> March and finally a single bird on 28<sup>th</sup> March (no age given). There have now been 14 records since the beginning of 2004 and the monthly distribution of these records is shown in the table below.

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
<b>Number of Records</b>	0	4	4	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	3	1

**Great Black-backed Gull *Larus marinus***

*An infrequent visitor most often encountered in the winter months.*

Five records for the year made it a fairly typical year for this species. The first record for the year was of 1 on 16<sup>th</sup> January which was followed by 1 on 28<sup>th</sup> February, 1 on 15<sup>th</sup> March, 3 on 19<sup>th</sup> March and finally, 1 on 3<sup>rd</sup> August. A summary of records from the last 8 years is shown below.

	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
<b>Bird Days</b>	4	6	3	10	2	7	6	7
<b>Days Recorded</b>	4	5	3	6	2	5	5	5

**Sandwich Tern *Sterna sandvicensis***

*Irregular visitor.*

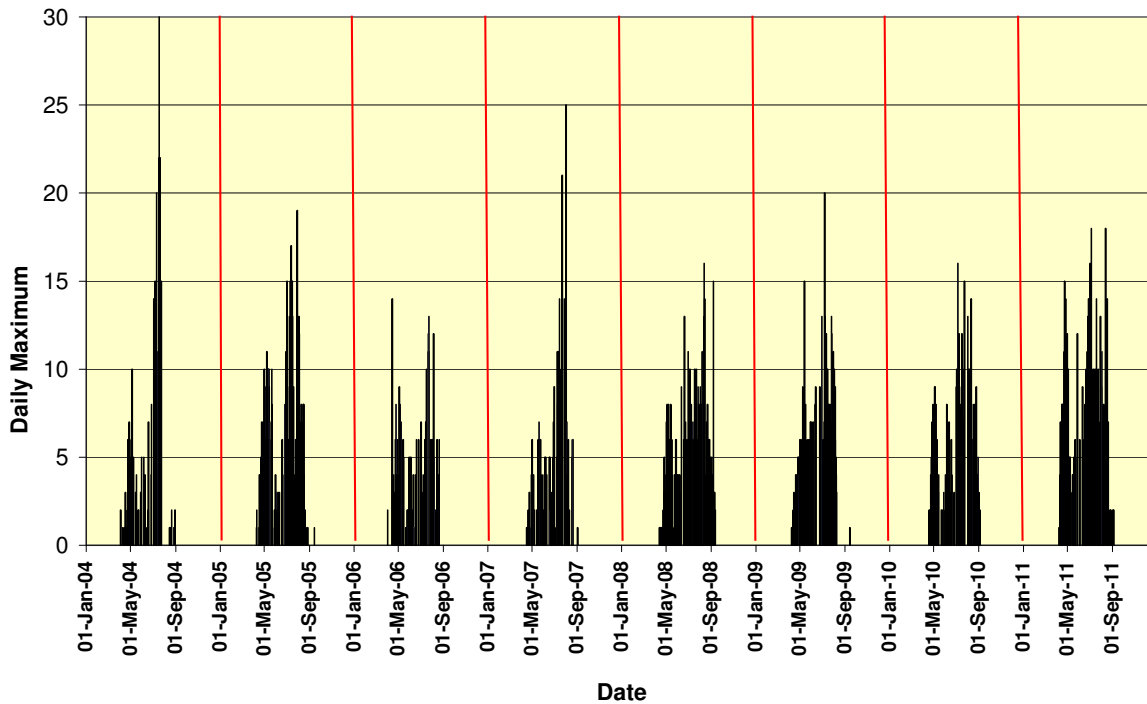
Two records of single birds - both from the same observer (David Booth) - are the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> records for the site in the period 2004-2011. The first bird flew over the main pit and the end of the fishing lakes, continuing north, on the 4<sup>th</sup> April and the second bird was found on the sand spit on the Main Pit at 8.45am on the 10<sup>th</sup> April.

**Common Tern *Sterna hirundo***

*Summer visitor. Regularly attempts to breed but not always successfully.*

The first bird of the year was on the 8<sup>th</sup> April and despite numbers increasing throughout the spring there were no breeding attempts reported. The maximum count for the year was of 18 birds on 5<sup>th</sup> July and 13<sup>th</sup> August. The earliest and latest dates along with the maximum counts for the last 8 years is shown below along with a graphical summary of the daily maxima for the same period (Figure X.).

	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
<b>Maximum Count</b>	30	19	14	25	16	20	16	18
<b>Earliest Date</b>	4 <sup>th</sup> Apr	9 <sup>th</sup> Apr	3 <sup>rd</sup> Apr	16 <sup>th</sup> Apr	13 <sup>th</sup> Apr	8 <sup>th</sup> Apr	19 <sup>th</sup> Apr	8 <sup>th</sup> Apr
<b>Latest Date</b>	30 <sup>th</sup> Aug	14 <sup>th</sup> Sep	21 <sup>st</sup> Aug	2 <sup>nd</sup> Sep	12 <sup>th</sup> Sep	14 <sup>th</sup> Sep	4 <sup>th</sup> Sep	4 <sup>th</sup> Sep



**Figure 6.** Daily maxima for Common Tern *Sterna hirundo* for the period 2004-2011. The vertical redlines show the divisions between the years.

**Black Tern *Chlidonias niger***

*Irregular visitor occurring in most spring/autumn passage periods.*

Two birds were recorded across three dates this year with one seen on 3<sup>rd</sup> May and then another on 23<sup>rd</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup> September.

**Feral Pigeon *Columba livia***

*Common Resident, particularly common around Willows Farm.*

Present all year with only two counts of 100+ that were in the first quarter of the year

**Stock Dove *Columba oenas***

*Common Resident present throughout the year.*

Present in small numbers throughout the year with a maximum of 10 birds on 3<sup>rd</sup> December. Again, there were no confirmed records of breeding and so another poor year for this species. Maximum annual counts for this species in the period 2004-11 are shown in the table below.

	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
<b>Stock Dove</b>	50	200	65	70	50	6	12	10
<b>Woodpigeon</b>	500	3000	400	2000	732	1000	500	800
<b>Collared Dove</b>	9	6	57	12	23	18	8	13

**Woodpigeon *Columba palumbus***

*Very common resident present throughout the year often in large flocks.*

Present all year with three counts of 500+ birds and a maximum of 800+ in December. No confirmed breeding records for the year. Maximum annual counts for this species in the period 2004-11 are shown in the table above.

**Collared Dove *Streptopelia decaocto***

*Patchily distributed resident favouring the residential area at the Colney Heath end of the recording area. Local movements supplement the resident birds.*

Recorded in all months of the year with a maximum of 13 on 5<sup>th</sup> November and once again no confirmed records of breeding. Maximum annual counts for this species in the period 2004-11 are shown in the table above.

**Ring-necked Parakeet *Psittacula krameri***

*Irregular visitor.*

A species that is very much hit or miss at Tyttenhanger with just twelve records between 2004 – 2011. There were three records this year, the first was of 11 birds on 4<sup>th</sup> October (a site record) then 3 birds on 14<sup>th</sup> October and 2 birds on 29<sup>th</sup> October.

**Cuckoo *Cuculus canorus***

*Summer visitor in small numbers.*

A slightly better year than last with 15 records compared to only 9 records last year. There were 3 records of 2 birds and 12 records of single birds for the year and a juvenile was reported on 1<sup>st</sup> August – possibly indicating breeding close-by. A summary of data from the last 8 years is shown below.

	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
<b>No. of Records</b>	22	14	22	7	12	12	9	15
<b>Earliest Date</b>	11 <sup>th</sup> Apr	9 <sup>th</sup> Apr	16 <sup>th</sup> Apr	22 <sup>nd</sup> Apr	17 <sup>th</sup> Apr	12 <sup>th</sup> April	24 <sup>th</sup> Apr	12 <sup>th</sup> Apr
<b>Latest Date</b>	28 <sup>th</sup> July	8 <sup>th</sup> June	28 <sup>th</sup> Aug	21 <sup>st</sup> Jul	4 <sup>th</sup> Aug	14 <sup>th</sup> Aug	15 <sup>th</sup> May	1 <sup>st</sup> Aug

**Little Owl *Athene noctua***

*Breeding resident; usually seen around the Model Railway Club and Willows Farm.*

A substantive increase in the number of records for the year with a total of 42 records from both the Model Railway/Water Works and Willows farm areas. There were 12 records involving multiple birds this year – with a maximum count of 4 birds made on 9<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> July Breeding was also confirmed this year with one juvenile reported on 13<sup>th</sup> and 22<sup>nd</sup> June then two adults with two juveniles on 9<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> July. This was probably the second best year for this species since 2004. A summary of records from the last 8 years is shown below.

	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
<b>Number of Records</b>	10	9	10	41	54	36	27	42
<b>Records of Multiple birds</b>	3	2	2	10	4	2	1	12

**Tawny Owl *Strix aluco***

*Resident. Undoubtedly under-recorded but present in most woodland areas on the site.*

There were mixed fortunes for this species in 2011. On the positive side there were the 9 records of birds heard in Garden Wood in January/April and September/October period – which may well indicate that they are on the increase. On the negative side however, there was an unfortunate report of a bird trapped in the netting covering the Partridge Pen on 16<sup>th</sup> August. The appropriate people were informed and while the bird was still alive when found, the outcome is unknown.

**Short-eared Owl *Asio flammeus***

*Very infrequent visitor.*

A single bird was reported on 4<sup>th</sup> December quartering the Sheep field to the East of the Main Pit between 16.00 and 16.10 (David Booth). It was looked for over the next two nights but was not found again. This is only the fourth known record for the site, the others being of 1 on 2<sup>nd</sup> October 1998 and then further singles on 28<sup>th</sup> February and 7<sup>th</sup> November 2004.

**Swift *Apus apus***

*Common summer visitor with feeding birds present throughout the summer months.*

Numbers were up this year on 2010 and there were 10 counts of 10 or more birds with a maximum count of 300+ on 20<sup>th</sup> July – which was also the highest count in the period 2004-2011. A summary of early and late dates for the period 2004-11 is presented below.

	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
<b>Earliest Date</b>	27 <sup>th</sup> Apr	23 <sup>rd</sup> Apr	27 <sup>th</sup> Apr	23 <sup>rd</sup> Apr	28 <sup>th</sup> Apr	28 <sup>th</sup> Apr	30 <sup>th</sup> Apr	30 <sup>th</sup> Apr
<b>Latest Date</b>	22 <sup>nd</sup> Aug	30 <sup>th</sup> Jul	13 <sup>th</sup> Aug	29 <sup>th</sup> Jul	13 <sup>th</sup> Aug	1 <sup>st</sup> Aug	20 <sup>th</sup> Aug	30 <sup>th</sup> Jul
<b>Max. Count</b>	150	100	50	200	50	30	100	300

**Kingfisher *Alcedo atthis***

*Resident, present through most of the year possibly breeding on-site or close by.*

Another year with less than 40 bird days (37) to follow on from last year (36). However, despite the low numbers a report of a bird carrying a faecal sac/food on the 10<sup>th</sup> April is encouraging evidence of local breeding activity. The maximum count for the year was of 2 birds on several dates. A summary of monthly bird days for the last 5 years is shown below.

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Total
<b>Bird Days 2011</b>	0	2	14	5	2	1	3	2	1	2	1	4	<b>37</b>
<b>Bird Days 2010</b>	1	0	1	1	4	0	1	12	2	5	2	7	<b>36</b>
<b>Bird Days 2009</b>	3	1	1	2	2	2	7	8	9	1	8	4	<b>48</b>
<b>Bird Days 2008</b>	7	3	4	2	2	1	5	26	24	21	5	3	<b>103</b>
<b>Bird Days 2007</b>	4	0	1	0	2	2	8	12	26	3	9	4	<b>71</b>

**Green Woodpecker *Picus viridis***

*Common resident.*

Present throughout the year with reports of 3 or more birds from most months and a maximum of five on 2<sup>nd</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> November, no confirmed records of breeding this year.

**Great Spotted Woodpecker *Dendrocopos major***

*Common Resident*

Reported in all months of the year with usual counts being of 1 or 2 birds. The maximum count for the year was of four on 17<sup>th</sup> July and 2<sup>nd</sup> October- the record on the 17<sup>th</sup> July included one juvenile amongst the 4.

**Lesser Spotted Woodpecker *Dendrocopos minor***

*Resident that almost certainly breeds in Garden Wood.*

Three records for the year, the first being a single bird flying over the back causeway into Garden Wood on the 31<sup>st</sup> March (Simon West). This was followed by a female in Garden Wood on the 3<sup>rd</sup> July and a single bird on the 6<sup>th</sup> November.

**Skylark *Alauda arvensis***

*Breeding resident also recorded as passage migrant and in winter flocks.*

There was no evidence of breeding this year and overall a poor year for this species with only one large flock reported of 55 birds on 19<sup>th</sup> January. Assessing the status of this species is difficult as it is probably subject to variations in reporting frequency. However, looking at the last 4 years of data we see the following:

	2008	2009	2010	2011
<b>No. Records</b>	116	105	66	66
<b>Counts &gt;=40</b>	0	5	4	1

Counts over 40 have been relatively uncommon in the period 2008-2011 – and the majority are in the 1<sup>st</sup> winter period of 2009 (4) and in the winter of 2009/2010 (3). This is clearly a species that needs closer monitoring in the future.

**Sand Martin *Riparia riparia***

*Summer visitor that previously bred. No recent breeding records.*

The first birds of the year were recorded on 23<sup>rd</sup> March and there were good numbers throughout spring and early summer with 22 records of 50 or more birds and a maximum count of 200 birds on 4 dates in May and June. There was no confirmed breeding on site – although this species undoubtedly breeds at the gravel pits on the other side of Coursers Road. The last bird recorded was on 20<sup>th</sup> September. Early and late dates for the last 8 years are shown below.

	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
<b>Earliest Date</b>	2 <sup>nd</sup> Apr	3 <sup>rd</sup> Apr	27 <sup>th</sup> Mar	30 <sup>th</sup> Mar	16 <sup>th</sup> Mar	15 <sup>th</sup> Mar	22 <sup>nd</sup> Mar	23 <sup>rd</sup> Mar
<b>Latest Date</b>	22 <sup>nd</sup> Sep	7 <sup>th</sup> Oct	3 <sup>rd</sup> Sep	8 <sup>th</sup> Sep	7 <sup>th</sup> Sep	12 <sup>th</sup> Sep	17 <sup>th</sup> Sep	20 <sup>th</sup> Sep

**Swallow *Hirundo rustica***

*Summer visitor with small breeding population centred on Willows Farm.*

Reported in small numbers through spring and early summer with increasing counts of 20 or more birds from the middle of July onwards. The maximum count for the year was of 300+ birds on the 3<sup>rd</sup> September. There was no confirmed breeding on site this year. Early and late dates for the last 8 years are shown below.

	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
<b>Earliest Date</b>	5 <sup>th</sup> Apr	3 <sup>rd</sup> Apr	25 <sup>th</sup> Mar	6 <sup>th</sup> Apr	3 <sup>rd</sup> Apr	25 <sup>th</sup> Mar	29 <sup>th</sup> Mar	26 <sup>th</sup> Mar
<b>Latest Date</b>	10 <sup>th</sup> Oct	14 <sup>th</sup> Oct	8 <sup>th</sup> Oct	2 <sup>nd</sup> Oct	11 <sup>th</sup> Oct	9 <sup>th</sup> Oct	11 <sup>th</sup> Oct	15 <sup>th</sup> Oct

**House Martin *Delichon urbicum***

*Passage migrant with small breeding population previously on the Colney Heath margins of the site.*

Reported in small numbers throughout the spring and summer months with a maximum of 150+ on 20<sup>th</sup> September. Again, no breeding records were received for the site and early and late dates for the last 8 years are shown below.

	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
<b>Earliest Date</b>	5 <sup>th</sup> Apr	16 <sup>th</sup> Apr	14 <sup>th</sup> Apr	13 <sup>th</sup> Apr	11 <sup>th</sup> Apr	31 <sup>st</sup> Mar	3 <sup>rd</sup> Apr	5 <sup>th</sup> Apr
<b>Latest Date</b>	3 <sup>rd</sup> Oct	5 <sup>th</sup> Nov	7 <sup>th</sup> Oct	23 <sup>rd</sup> Sep	6 <sup>th</sup> Oct	11 <sup>th</sup> Oct	6 <sup>th</sup> Oct	8 <sup>th</sup> Oct

**Meadow Pipit *Anthus pratensis***

*Winter visitor and passage migrant. Has bred in the past.*

A single bird on the 8<sup>th</sup> and three birds on 25<sup>th</sup> January were the only birds recorded in the first winter period. Things improved slightly in the second winter period with 4 birds on 17<sup>th</sup> August and four counts of 10 or more birds - 2 in September and 2 in October - including a maximum count of 25 birds on 24<sup>th</sup> September. A summary of monthly maxima along with median monthly maxima for the period 2004 – 2011 are shown below.

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
<b>Monthly Max 2011</b>	3	0	4	0	0	0	1	4	25	10	6	6
<b>Median 2004-11</b>	5	24	8.5	3	0	0	0	0	24.5	16.5	6.5	5

Like Skylarks, this species is much scarcer than in the past – particularly it seems in the first winter period. This may be the result of the last few winters – that have been particularly harsh – but again it is a species that may warrant closer monitoring in the future.

**Yellow Wagtail *Motacilla flava***

*Passage migrant.*

A poor year for this species with only 23 bird days spread over 10 days and with no confirmed breeding records again (last breeding was in 2004). The maximum count for the year was of 8 birds on the 9<sup>th</sup> September. A summary of data from the last 8 years is shown below.

	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
<b>Bird Days</b>	110	41	123	10	49	172	60	23
<b>Number Days Recorded</b>	38	22	42	7	12	17	24	10
<b>Maximum Count</b>	25	5	18	3	12	30	10	8
<b>Earliest Date</b>	4 <sup>th</sup> Apr	11 <sup>th</sup> Apr	6 <sup>th</sup> Apr	11 <sup>th</sup> Apr	24 <sup>th</sup> Apr	7 <sup>th</sup> Apr	30 <sup>th</sup> Mar	5 <sup>th</sup> Apr
<b>Latest Date</b>	2 <sup>nd</sup> Sep	19 <sup>th</sup> Aug	3 <sup>rd</sup> Sep	22 <sup>nd</sup> Sep	25 <sup>th</sup> Sep	24 <sup>th</sup> Sep	5 <sup>th</sup> Oct	27 <sup>th</sup> Sep

### Grey Wagtail *Motacilla cinerea*

*Local resident and winter visitor.*

A species that is clearly doing badly in the local area and is becoming very difficult to see at Tyttenhanger – with just two records for the year of single birds on 11<sup>th</sup> June and 19<sup>th</sup> October. A rather sobering summary of records from 2004-11 is shown in the table below.

	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
<b>Bird Days</b>	62	122	96	51	28	34	10	2
<b>Number Days Recorded</b>	47	78	71	41	27	25	7	2

### White/Pied Wagtail *Motacilla alba*

*Present through much of the year with evidence of passage in most years.*

Present throughout the year with a maximum count of 37 birds on 13<sup>th</sup> October.

This year, single birds of the nominate race (*M. a. alba*) **White Wagtail** were reported on the 25<sup>th</sup> March and 6<sup>th</sup> April.

### Waxwing *Bombicilla garrulus*

*Vagrant*

After the first record for the site at the end of 2010, there were plenty of chances for the regular birders to catch up with this species on-site. There were at least 17 separate records for this species from 6 separate dates in the year. Our best guess at what was present was as follows. A flock of up to 24 birds was present on the 5<sup>th</sup>, 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> March which was joined by a second flock of around 36 birds on the 6<sup>th</sup> March – with a maximum count of 57 being made on the latter date. Subsequently flocks of 35 and 50+ birds were seen on the 11<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> March respectively to conclude a truly remarkable period, not only for Tyttenhanger, but for much of the south of England at around the same time.



*Waxwings at Tyttenhanger photographed by Simon West.*

### Wren *Troglodytes troglodytes*

*Common Resident.*

Present in all months of the year with a maximum of 7 birds on 4<sup>th</sup> April; no confirmed records of breeding this year.

### Dunnock *Prunella modularis*

*Common Resident.*

Present in all months of the year with no confirmed records of breeding this year.

### Robin *Erithacus rubecula*

*Common Resident.*

Present in all months of the year with a maximum of 7 birds on 11<sup>th</sup> September; no confirmed records of breeding this year.

### Black Redstart *Phoenicurus ochruros*

*Infrequent passage migrant.*

One on 24<sup>th</sup> January at the far end of the field by the road to Tyttenhanger House at 11.10am disappeared after a few minutes and could not be relocated (David Booth). This is the fifth record in the period 2004-11 and is the first in January.



**Whinchat *Saxicola rubetra****Uncommon passage migrant.*

A good year for this species with 9 records - all of single birds. There was one record during the spring passage and eight in the autumn. Summary statistics for the last 8 years are presented below.

	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
<b>Bird Days</b>	1	6	5	4	6	16	9	9
<b>Earliest Date</b>	3 <sup>rd</sup> May	30 <sup>th</sup> Apr	NS	14 <sup>th</sup> Apr	1 <sup>st</sup> May	NS	24 <sup>th</sup> Apr	8 <sup>th</sup> May
<b>Latest Date</b>	NA	7 <sup>th</sup> Sep	10 <sup>th</sup> Sep	23 <sup>rd</sup> Sep	20 <sup>th</sup> Sep	18 <sup>th</sup> Sep	1 <sup>st</sup> Sep	9 <sup>th</sup> Sep

NS = no spring date; NA = no autumn date

**Stonechat *Saxicola torquata****Uncommon passage migrant and winter visitor.*

Another very poor year for this species with only one bird reported - a female by Willow's Farm on 5<sup>th</sup> March. A summary of bird days for the last 8 years is shown below.

	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
<b>Bird Days – First Winter Period</b>	0	36	0	0	35	0	0	1
<b>Bird Days – Second Winter Period</b>	58	12	15	23	21	5	1	0

**Wheatear *Oenanthe oenanthe****Regular passage migrant, more frequent in spring.*

A better year for this species with a total of 56 bird days split between the two migration periods 30:26 (spring : autumn). The maximum count for the year was of 6 birds on 11<sup>th</sup> September. A summary of data from the last 8 years is shown below.

	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
<b>Bird Days</b>	13	9	63	16	24	40	44	56
<b>Earliest Date</b>	20 <sup>th</sup> Mar	25 <sup>th</sup> Mar	25 <sup>th</sup> Mar	12 <sup>th</sup> Apr	15 <sup>th</sup> Mar	14 <sup>th</sup> Mar	20 <sup>th</sup> Mar	25 <sup>th</sup> Mar
<b>Latest Date</b>	NA	NA	3 <sup>rd</sup> Oct	7 <sup>th</sup> Sep	8 <sup>th</sup> Oct	1 <sup>st</sup> Oct	12 <sup>th</sup> Sep	8 <sup>th</sup> Oct

NA = no autumn date

**Blackbird *Turdus merula****Common resident and breeding species; also probably occurs as passage migrant.*

Present in all months of the year with a maximum of 7 birds reported and no confirmed breeding records for the year.

**Fieldfare *Turdus pilaris****Common winter visitor.*

There were 12 counts of 50 or more birds with a maximum count of 100(+) birds on 5 dates across both winter periods. The latest spring record was of one bird on the 8<sup>th</sup> April and the earliest autumn birds were a group of 11 on 9<sup>th</sup> October. A summary of monthly maxima for the last 5 years is shown below.

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
<b>Monthly Max 2011</b>	100	100	100	6	0	0	0	0	0	48	100	90
<b>Monthly Max 2010</b>	74	307	224	0	0	0	0	0	5	100	59	100
<b>Monthly Max 2009</b>	40	24	8	0	0	0	0	0	0	24	33	31
<b>Monthly Max 2008</b>	80	80	91	4	0	0	0	0	0	8	40	46
<b>Monthly Max 2007</b>	20	80	2	1	0	0	0	0	0	26	30	13

**Song Thrush *Turdus philomelos****Breeding resident.*

Present throughout the year with the usual 3-4 males appearing to establish territories but there was no breeding records.

**Redwing *Turdus iliacus****Common winter visitor.*

Seven records of 50 or more birds for the year with a maximum of 150+ on 7<sup>th</sup> February – which is a significant improvement on 2010 when maximum count for the year was of just 70 birds. The latest record in the first winter period was of a 20+ birds on 26<sup>th</sup> March and the first returning birds (5) were on 13<sup>th</sup> October. A summary of monthly maxima for the last 5 years is shown below.

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
<b>Monthly Max 2011</b>	50	150	100	0	0	0	0	0	0	30	6	16
<b>Monthly Max 2010</b>	20	49	70	0	0	0	0	0	0	24	30	10
<b>Monthly Max 2009</b>	80	27	102	0	0	0	0	0	0	27	40	60
<b>Monthly Max 2008</b>	6	16	43	4	0	0	0	0	0	35	40	12
<b>Monthly Max 2007</b>	50	60	20	50	0	0	0	0	0	4	50	26

### Mistle Thrush *Turdus viscivorus*

*Breeding resident and local migrant.*

Reported throughout the year with a maximum of 32 birds on 26<sup>th</sup> July at Willow's Farm. There were two other records of significance with 21 birds on 23<sup>rd</sup> July and 10 on 6<sup>th</sup> August. Peaks counts and dates for the last 8 years are summarized below.

	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
<b>Maximum Count</b>	54	30	21	34	30	17	29	32
<b>Date</b>	11 <sup>th</sup> Sep	21 <sup>st</sup> Aug	27 <sup>th</sup> Aug	30 <sup>th</sup> Jul	10 <sup>th</sup> Sep	15 <sup>th</sup> Aug	4 <sup>th</sup> Oct	26 <sup>th</sup> Jul

### Sedge Warbler *Acrocephalus schoenobaenus*

*Summer visitor and breeding species.*

Numbers slightly down on last year with a maximum of 4 birds on 18<sup>th</sup> April and 12<sup>th</sup> June. The only indication of breeding was of a pair visiting a probable nest on 18<sup>th</sup> May. Earliest and latest dates for the last 8 years are shown below.

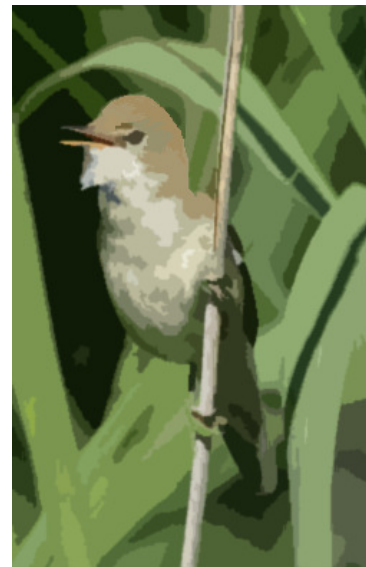
	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
<b>Earliest Date</b>	17 <sup>th</sup> Apr	16 <sup>th</sup> Apr	14 <sup>th</sup> Apr	16 <sup>th</sup> Apr	12 <sup>th</sup> April	11 <sup>th</sup> Apr	7 <sup>th</sup> Apr	8 <sup>th</sup> Apr
<b>Latest Date</b>	7 <sup>th</sup> Aug	10 <sup>th</sup> Sep	11 <sup>th</sup> Aug	11 <sup>th</sup> Aug	6 <sup>th</sup> Sep	12 <sup>th</sup> Sep	31 <sup>st</sup> Aug	29 <sup>th</sup> Aug

### Reed Warbler *Acrocephalus scirpaceus*

*Summer visitor and breeding species.*

A year in keeping with the recent past for this species with singing males scattered around the suitable reed-beds and a maximum count of 5 birds on 14<sup>th</sup> May. Earliest and latest dates for the last 8 years are shown below. The 10<sup>th</sup> April and the 19<sup>th</sup> September are the earliest and latest dates respectively that we have on record for the site.

	2004	2005	2006	2007
<b>Earliest Date</b>	3 <sup>rd</sup> May	6 <sup>th</sup> May	19 <sup>th</sup> Apr	23 <sup>rd</sup> Apr
<b>Latest Date</b>	14 <sup>th</sup> Aug	19 <sup>th</sup> Aug	12 <sup>th</sup> Sep	9 <sup>th</sup> Sep
	2008	2009	2010	2011
<b>Earliest Date</b>	26 <sup>th</sup> Apr	29 <sup>th</sup> Apr	24 <sup>th</sup> Apr	10 <sup>th</sup> Apr
<b>Latest Date</b>	15 <sup>th</sup> Aug	5 <sup>th</sup> Sep	7 <sup>th</sup> Aug	19 <sup>th</sup> Sep



### Lesser Whitethroat *Sylvia curruca*

*Frequent spring migrant/summer visitor. Breeding status uncertain.*

Nine records for the year - all of single birds - is slightly less than last year (11 records). Earliest and latest dates for the last 8 years are shown below.

	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
<b>Earliest Date</b>	24 <sup>th</sup> Apr	29 <sup>th</sup> Apr	23 <sup>rd</sup> Apr	23 <sup>rd</sup> Apr	26 <sup>th</sup> April	15 <sup>th</sup> Apr	3 <sup>rd</sup> May	21 <sup>st</sup> Apr
<b>Latest Date</b>	3 <sup>rd</sup> Jun	14 <sup>th</sup> Aug	7 <sup>th</sup> July	14 <sup>th</sup> Sep	29 <sup>th</sup> Aug	22 <sup>nd</sup> Aug	1 <sup>st</sup> Sep	24 <sup>th</sup> July

### Whitethroat *Sylvia communis*

*Common summer visitor and breeding species.*

Remains the most common of the migrant warblers on site and produced counts of 10 or more birds on several dates between April and July – with a maximum of 19 birds on 17<sup>th</sup> April and 18 on two other dates in April. These are the largest counts on-site in the period 2004-11 by a long way. But, as usual there were no confirmed breeding records for the year, although family parties of adults and juveniles were seen in late June/early July. Earliest and latest dates for the last 8 years are shown below.

	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
<b>Earliest Date</b>	17 <sup>th</sup> Apr	10 <sup>th</sup> Apr	15 <sup>th</sup> Apr	15 <sup>th</sup> Apr	17 <sup>th</sup> Apr	4 <sup>th</sup> Apr	17 <sup>th</sup> Apr	8 <sup>th</sup> Apr
<b>Latest Date</b>	10 <sup>th</sup> Sep	3 <sup>rd</sup> Sep	8 <sup>th</sup> Sep	2 <sup>nd</sup> Oct	25 <sup>th</sup> Sep	18 <sup>th</sup> Sep	4 <sup>th</sup> Sep	4 <sup>th</sup> Sep

**Garden Warbler** *Sylvia borin**Frequent summer visitor and probably breeds.*

Twenty one records is a good year for this species with a notable maximum count of 5 birds on 1<sup>st</sup> May. Again, there were no confirmed records of breeding and the earliest and latest dates for the last 8 years are shown below. The 17<sup>th</sup> April is the earliest record that we have for this species on site.

	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
<b>Earliest Date</b>	15 <sup>th</sup> May	30 <sup>th</sup> Apr	5 <sup>th</sup> May	29 <sup>th</sup> Apr	26 <sup>th</sup> Apr	25 <sup>th</sup> Apr	25 <sup>th</sup> Apr	17 <sup>th</sup> Apr
<b>Latest Date</b>	13 <sup>th</sup> Aug	16 <sup>th</sup> Aug	22 <sup>nd</sup> Aug	20 <sup>th</sup> May	30 <sup>th</sup> May	2 <sup>nd</sup> Sep	17 <sup>th</sup> Sep	13 <sup>th</sup> Aug

**Blackcap** *Sylvia atricapilla**Common summer visitor and breeding species.*

Another warbler that appears to be faring better than in the past with a maximum count this year of 10 birds on 19<sup>th</sup> April – again the largest on-site count in the period 2004-11. No confirmed records of breeding for the year, but a family party seen on the 10<sup>th</sup> July indicates local success. Earliest and latest dates for the last 8 years are shown below.

	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
<b>Earliest Date</b>	11 <sup>th</sup> Apr	28 <sup>th</sup> Mar	28 <sup>th</sup> Mar	12 <sup>th</sup> Apr	10 <sup>th</sup> Apr	3 <sup>rd</sup> Apr	1 <sup>st</sup> Apr	30 <sup>th</sup> Mar
<b>Latest Date</b>	4 <sup>th</sup> Sep	3 <sup>rd</sup> Oct	17 <sup>th</sup> Sep	9 <sup>th</sup> Sep	6 <sup>th</sup> Oct	1 <sup>st</sup> Oct	30 <sup>th</sup> Sep	2 <sup>nd</sup> Oct

**Chiffchaff** *Phylloscopus collybita**Common summer visitor and breeding species.*

The first birds were recorded in mid-March with up to 6 singing males reported on 27<sup>th</sup> March – which was also the maximum count for the year. As with most years there were no confirmed records of breeding. Likewise, no winter records this year – although the bird on the 12<sup>th</sup> November was either a very late migrant or a very early over-wintering bird! A summary of the early and late dates for the last 8 years are shown below.

	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
<b>Earliest Date</b>	17 <sup>th</sup> Mar	19 <sup>th</sup> Mar	31 <sup>st</sup> Mar	17 <sup>th</sup> Mar	15 <sup>th</sup> Mar	15 <sup>th</sup> Mar	17 <sup>th</sup> Mar	13 <sup>th</sup> Mar
<b>Latest Date</b>	30 <sup>th</sup> Oct	14 <sup>th</sup> Oct	12 <sup>th</sup> Oct	7 <sup>th</sup> Oct	2 <sup>nd</sup> Nov	21 <sup>st</sup> Oct	6 <sup>th</sup> Oct	12 <sup>th</sup> Nov

**Willow Warbler** *Phylloscopus trochilus**Common summer visitor and breeding species.*

The first bird on 26<sup>th</sup> March was the earliest bird in the period 2004-11. The maximum count for the year was of 6 birds on 16<sup>th</sup> April; there were no confirmed records of breeding for the year. The last bird recorded was on the 5<sup>th</sup> September – ironically also the earliest late-date for this species in the period 2004-11. A summary of the early and late dates for the last 8 years are shown below.

	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
<b>Earliest Date</b>	9 <sup>th</sup> Apr	28 <sup>th</sup> Mar	2 <sup>nd</sup> Apr	6 <sup>th</sup> Apr	10 <sup>th</sup> Apr	3 <sup>rd</sup> Apr	30 <sup>th</sup> Mar	26 <sup>th</sup> Mar
<b>Latest Date</b>	29 <sup>th</sup> Sep	11 <sup>th</sup> Sep	25 <sup>th</sup> Sep	9 <sup>th</sup> Sep	21 <sup>st</sup> Sep	18 <sup>th</sup> Sep	7 <sup>th</sup> Oct	5 <sup>th</sup> Sep

**Wood Warbler** *Phylloscopus sibilatrix**Uncommon passage migrant*

A single bird was recorded on the 29<sup>th</sup> June (Birdguides); if accepted by the HRBP, this will be the first record for this species since 1994.

**Goldcrest** *Regulus regulus**Regular passage migrant and winter visitor; possible breeder.*

Recorded in only 9 months this year (absent in April, May and July) with a maximum count of 6 birds on 31<sup>st</sup> December. The number of months recorded and the maximum count were the same as last year. There were no confirmed records of breeding for the year.

**Spotted Flycatcher** *Muscicapa striata**Infrequent passage migrant; breeds some years.*

Another poor year for this species with only 2 records for the year 1 on 24<sup>th</sup> August and 2 birds on 9<sup>th</sup> September both records coming from the area along the River Colne between Willow's Farm and Tyttenhanger House.



**Long-tailed Tit *Aegithalos caudatus****Common resident and breeding species.*

Reported throughout the year with a maximum of 30 on 28<sup>th</sup> June. Family parties of 2 adults and 6 young were seen on 21<sup>st</sup> May and then 2 adults with groups of 16 and 6 young on 12<sup>th</sup> June.

**Coal Tit *Periparus ater****Resident and probable breeding species*

One or two reported in eight months of the year with a maximum count of 3 on 1<sup>st</sup> October. No breeding records for the year.

**Blue Tit *Cyanistes caeruleus****Common resident and breeding species*

Reported throughout the year with a maximum of 28 on 12<sup>th</sup> February. No breeding records for the year.

**Great Tit *Parus major****Common resident and breeding species*

Reported throughout the year with a maximum of 40 on 6<sup>th</sup> January. No breeding records for the year.

**Nuthatch *Sitta europaea****Common resident and probable breeding species*

Thirty records – mostly of single birds - from all months of the year except December. There were several records of 2 birds scattered across the year, but as usual there were no confirmed breeding records.

**Treecreeper *Certhia familiaris****Common resident and probable breeding species*

Only 12 records again this year although reports of a bird carrying nest material on 15<sup>th</sup> April and a report of an adult and apparent juvenile on 5<sup>th</sup> July are encouraging signs that they are still breeding on-site. As with last year, records were scattered through the year with a maximum of just 2 birds on several dates.

**Jay *Garrulus glandarius****Common resident*

Reported throughout the year with a maximum of 9 on 20<sup>th</sup> June. No breeding records for the year.

**Magpie *Pica pica****Common resident.*

Reported throughout the year with a maximum of 29 on 12<sup>th</sup> February. No breeding records for the year.

**Jackdaw *Corvus monedula****Local breeder and common visitor to the site.*

Reported throughout the year with a maximum of 50 on 7<sup>th</sup> September. No breeding records for the year. Maximum counts for the last 8 years are shown below for the 4 common corvids recorded on-site. It was suggested last year that the falling numbers may have been the result of under-recording – however, this year's data suggests otherwise for both Carrion Crow and Jackdaw. We would again encourage observers to make counts for all of these species.

	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
<b>Magpie</b>	19	26	24	22	16	21	28	29
<b>Carrion Crow</b>	50	150	250	150	107	50	40	74
<b>Rook</b>	41	108	68	67	30	74	21	40
<b>Jackdaw</b>	200	175	500	322	300	200	60	50

**Raven *Corvus corax****Uncommon visitor*

Two flying over on 16<sup>th</sup> April (Phil Harrison) and one on 1<sup>st</sup> May (Birdguides) are only the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> records for the period 1988-2011.

**Carrion Crow *Corvus corone****Common resident*

Reported throughout the year with a maximum of 74 on 9<sup>th</sup> September. No breeding records for the year.



**Rook** *Corvus frugilegus**Local breeder and relatively common visitor to the site.*

Reported throughout the year with a maximum of 40 on 5<sup>th</sup> March and no breeding records for the year.

**Starling** *Sturnus vulgaris**Common resident.*

Present throughout the year with 5 counts of 100+ birds and a maximum of 400+ on 17<sup>th</sup> September. There was also a record of 85 birds going to roost in a solitary evergreen by Tyttenhanger Farm on 23<sup>rd</sup> March. Again there were no records of breeding this year.

**House Sparrow** *Passer domesticus**Small resident population around Willow's Farm.*

Present throughout the year in small numbers around Willow's Farm with a maximum of 20 birds on 11<sup>th</sup> June. Again there were no records of breeding for the year.

**Tree Sparrow** *Passer montanus**Breeding resident and frequent visitor from other local breeding populations.*

A poor year for this species with monthly maxima generally down along with the number of records down and the number of counts of 10 or more birds. The only good news is that breeding was reported with 2 adults and 2 juveniles in the Horse Paddocks by Colney Heath Common on the 2<sup>nd</sup> June. A summary of records from the last 5 years is presented below.

	Monthly Maxima												No Records	Counts >10
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec		
2011	2	1	5	2	0	4	0	0	0	4	12	7	63	2
2010	4	6	10	10	2	2	2	2	4	4	3	4	98	3
2009	14	12	6	0	3	0	2	0	4	7	9	6	57	4
2008	18	12	7	2	2	1	2	2	0	5	12	10	76	9
2007	20	10	12	7	5	8	1	2	5	10	14	20	93	9

**Chaffinch** *Fringilla coelebs**Common resident and breeding species with winter flocks commonly noted.*

Eight counts this year of 20 or more birds with seven of the counts in the first winter period and one count in the second winter period. The maximum for the year was of 150+ birds on 1<sup>st</sup> March and there were no confirmed records of breeding.

**Brambling** *Fringilla montifringilla**Infrequent winter visitor.*

A poor year for this species with only two records; 3 on 19<sup>th</sup> January and 1 on 24<sup>th</sup> January. A summary of data from the last 7 years is shown below.

	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
<b>Birds Days</b>	9	8	46	9	1	29	4
<b>No Days Recorded</b>	8	7	13	5	1	16	2
<b>Latest Date (Spring)</b>	13 <sup>th</sup> Apr	NS	NS	3 <sup>rd</sup> Feb	2 <sup>nd</sup> Jan	8 <sup>th</sup> Feb	24 <sup>th</sup> Jan
<b>Earliest Date (Autumn)</b>	23 <sup>rd</sup> Oct	15 <sup>th</sup> Oct	9 <sup>th</sup> Nov	3 <sup>rd</sup> Nov	NA	10 <sup>th</sup> Nov	NA

NS = no spring date; NA = no autumn date

**Greenfinch** *Carduelis chloris**Resident and probable breeding species.*

There were 4 records of 50 or more birds this year – all in October and November - with a maximum count of 70+ on 2<sup>nd</sup> November. There were no confirmed records of breeding.

**Goldfinch** *Carduelis carduelis**Common resident and probable breeding species.*

Reported in all months of the year with a maximum of 32 on 11<sup>th</sup> March. There were no confirmed records of breeding.

**Linnet** *Carduelis cannabina**Common resident and breeding species and large winter flocks often present.*

Reported in eleven months of the year with, surprisingly, no records for December! The maximum count in the first winter period was 70+ birds on 1<sup>st</sup> March while the maximum count in the second half of the year was of 64 birds on the 13<sup>th</sup> August. A pair with one juvenile was reported on 14<sup>th</sup> July.

**Siskin** *Carduelis spinus*

Frequent winter visitor – usually along the River Colne on Colney heath.

A good year for this species with a maximum count of 60+ on 5<sup>th</sup> November and 31<sup>st</sup> December. A summary of records from the last 6 years is shown below.

	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
<b>1<sup>st</sup> Winter Period Days (Late Date)</b>	11 (10 <sup>th</sup> Apr)	1 (27 <sup>th</sup> Jan)	9 (7 <sup>th</sup> Mar)	7 (28 <sup>th</sup> Mar)	5 (6 <sup>th</sup> Mar)	9 (12 <sup>th</sup> Mar)
<b>2<sup>nd</sup> Winter Period Days (Early Date)</b>	2 (11 <sup>th</sup> Nov)	4 (4 <sup>th</sup> Oct)	11 (21 <sup>st</sup> Sep)	5 (18 <sup>th</sup> Oct)	5 (17 <sup>th</sup> Oct)	8 (1 <sup>st</sup> Oct)
<b>Maximum Count for the Year (Date)</b>	40 (7 <sup>th</sup> Jan)	11 (19 <sup>th</sup> Dec)	100 (30 <sup>th</sup> Sep)	120 (12 <sup>th</sup> Dec)	80 (11 <sup>th</sup> Dec)	60 (5 <sup>th</sup> Nov)

**Lesser Redpoll** *Carduelis cabaret*

Infrequent winter visitor.

A good year for this species with 15 records - eight from the first winter period and seven from the second. The maximum counts for the year were of 10 birds on 27<sup>th</sup> November in Garden Wood and 9 on 22<sup>nd</sup> November in the Model Railway/Water Works compound. The latest spring birds were seen on the 20<sup>th</sup> March and the earliest autumn birds on the 14<sup>th</sup> October – the latter is the earliest return date that we have on record.

**Mealy Redpoll** *Carduelis flammaea*

Infrequent winter visitor.

One along the edge of Garden Wood with five Lesser Redpoll on 20<sup>th</sup> March.

**Bullfinch** *Pyrrhula pyrrhula*

Resident and breeding species.

Reported in most months of the year in small numbers with a juvenile seen on 27<sup>th</sup> August being indicative of local breeding. Interestingly, recording frequency for this species (12 records from 82 visits by one regular observer), has shown a slight increase over the 2010 figure and is now at 14.6% - the highest since 2005. Hopefully this trend will continue.

	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
<b>Recording Rate</b>	22.4%	28.4%	13.6%	7.8%	6.1%	8.2%	11.6%	14.6%

**Hawfinch** *Coccothraustes*

*coccothraustes*

Rare visitor.

Two along the River Colne just upstream from Willow's Farm on 6<sup>th</sup> April (Simon West) were a first record for the site. A fuller story of this record is on page 33.

**Yellowhammer** *Emberiza*

*citrinella*

Regular winter visitor especially around Tyttenhanger Farm.

A species that appears to be declining on-site with just 6 records of 10 or more birds this year - all from the first winter period. The maximum for the year was of 44 on 19<sup>th</sup> January from the first winter period and 8 on 9<sup>th</sup>

December from the second winter period. A summary of monthly maxima for the last 5 years is shown below.

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
<b>Monthly Max 2011</b>	44	20	15	1	0	0	0	3	1	1	3	8
<b>Monthly Max 2010</b>	20	2	15	10	1	0	0	2	3	9	4	6
<b>Monthly Max 2009</b>	50	25	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	12	20	26
<b>Monthly Max 2008</b>	20	10	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	4	20	23
<b>Monthly Max 2007</b>	20	27	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	20	16	15



Two images of one of the Hawfinches found on 6<sup>th</sup> April near Tyttenhanger House. Photos courtesy of Simon West.



**Reed Bunting** *Emberiza schoeniclus*

*Resident with a small number of presumed breeding pairs.*

Reported in all months of the year with a maximum of 11 on 19<sup>th</sup> January. No confirmed records of breeding although a number of singing males established territories around the site.

## Escapes

**Domestic Goose** *Anser sp.*

The geese of domestic origin were noted again throughout the year with up to 39 adults reported on two dates and there were 2 to 3 broods reported in May/June and July.

**Bar-headed Goose** *Anser indicus*

One on the 12<sup>th</sup> January and one on 3<sup>rd</sup> September.

**Ruddy Shelduck** *Tadorna ferruginea*

The female that was reported last year was present again on 8 dates in January 9 dates in February, 3 dates in March and then on the 1<sup>st</sup>, and 2<sup>nd</sup> April.

**White-cheeked Pintail** *Anas bahamensis*

Ten records for the year in March/April/May/June/July and November.

**Indian Peafowl** *Pavo cristatus*

One seen on several occasions throughout the year around Tyttenhanger House / Garden Wood area.

### First Record of Hawfinch at Tyttenhanger – 6<sup>th</sup> April 2011

I was walking along the River Colne towards Willows Farm & while trying to photograph the White-cheeked Pintail that had been around for a while, I saw 2 birds fly into the line of trees along by the tyre dump. I fully expected them to be Chaffinches, but was amazed on checking to see a pair of HAWFINCHES. Very quickly I managed a few digi-scoped shots (see photographs on page 32). Literally after taking the pictures & checking they were good enough for record shots they flew off before any better shots could be taken. I would say they were on view for no more than 2-3 minutes.

Simon West

### First Record of Bean Goose at Tyttenhanger – 26<sup>th</sup> November 2011

The weather on the 26<sup>th</sup> November was not particularly unusual for the time of year, but recent nights had seen temperatures fall below zero, with fairly strong cold winds persisting through the daylight hours! Despite the cold - Tyttenhanger's intrepid duo, Ricky Flesher and myself, ventured forth – but wasted no time in getting to the hide on "Nettle Hill" in an attempt to shelter from the wind.

We had reasonable success in seeing some good bird species on and around the Main Pit, including the 2 White-fronted Geese that had arrived on the 21<sup>st</sup>. We were soon joined in the hide by another weekend regular, Steve Pearce. The usual conversations and banter ensued. Then suddenly I noticed another Goose land next to the two White Fronts -but it landed in the line of a tree and could not be clearly seen. I called that another Goose had landed and appeared to have a plain dark head and neck... Where? said Rick... Behind that bush... What bush? Where the White fronts are... are you sure? Positive!

Sure enough, after a short while it appeared, and it was obviously another "Grey Goose". But from our position, we were too far away to identify it, so there was no alternative but to retrace our steps and get a closer look from the viewing point on the eastern bank. It didn't take long for all of us to agree that it was indeed a Bean Goose – which would be a first record for the site – and so for all three of us. Several texts and phone calls were made and the news was soon on the News Service pagers. We continued watching it as it acquainted itself with the White fronts.

I was receiving several phone calls from birders asking if it was still there. Oh yes, I said! No sooner had I put my phone in my pocket, it took flight, over our heads calling loudly and disappeared from view in an easterly direction. More phone calls..."It's gone!" Then a short time later, a very familiar call and it was back, settled once again on the water..."It's back" went out the call and as it continued to stay the hardiest of the Hertfordshire listers began to turn up.

And that's where it stayed until the 1<sup>st</sup> December allowing many birders to connect with this rarely seen visitor to both Tyttenhanger and Hertfordshire.

Steve Blake

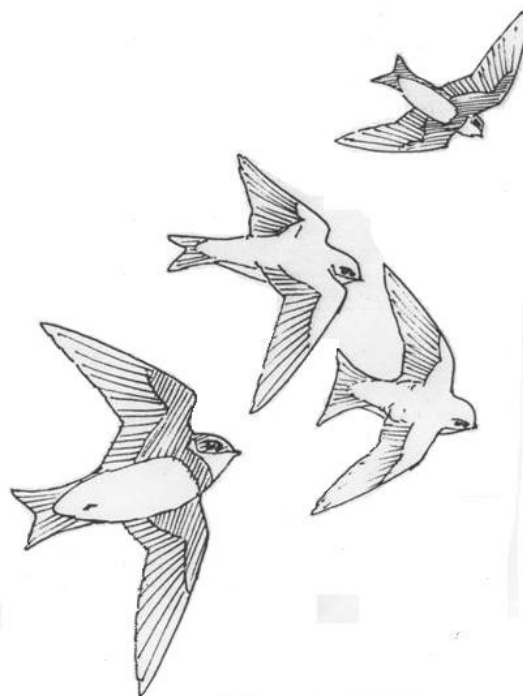
*Editor's Comment: The record for Bean Goose has been accepted by the Herts RBP – see <http://www.hnhs.org/birds/birdspanel.php>*

### Arrival and Departure Dates for Common Migrants

Arrival dates for 2011 are presented along with the earliest/latest dates for Tyttenhanger shown in brackets. This is very much a work-in-progress and if the reader has any earlier/later dates then we'd be grateful if they could contact the authors so that this table can be revised in future reports.

Species	Arrival Date	Departure Date
<b>Summer Migrants</b>		
Hobby	24 <sup>th</sup> Apr (1 <sup>st</sup> Apr)	2 <sup>nd</sup> Oct (7 <sup>th</sup> Oct)
Little Ringed Plover	29 <sup>th</sup> Mar (15 <sup>th</sup> Mar)	10 <sup>th</sup> Aug (1 <sup>st</sup> Oct)
Common Sandpiper	23 <sup>rd</sup> Apr (10 <sup>th</sup> Apr)	8 <sup>th</sup> Nov (8 <sup>th</sup> Nov)
Common Tern	8 <sup>th</sup> Apr (4 <sup>th</sup> Apr)	4 <sup>th</sup> Sep (30 <sup>th</sup> Sep)
Cuckoo	12 <sup>th</sup> Apr (9 <sup>th</sup> Apr)	1 <sup>st</sup> Aug (28 <sup>th</sup> Aug)
Sand Martin	23 <sup>rd</sup> Mar (15 <sup>th</sup> Mar)	20 <sup>th</sup> Sep (7 <sup>th</sup> Oct)
Swallow	26 <sup>th</sup> Mar (25 <sup>th</sup> Mar)	15 <sup>th</sup> Oct (15 <sup>th</sup> Oct)
House Martin	5 <sup>th</sup> Apr (31 <sup>st</sup> Mar)	8 <sup>th</sup> Oct (5 <sup>th</sup> Nov)
Yellow Wagtail	5 <sup>th</sup> Apr (30 <sup>th</sup> Mar)	27 <sup>th</sup> Sep (5 <sup>th</sup> Oct)
Whinchat	8 <sup>th</sup> May (14 <sup>th</sup> Apr)	9 <sup>th</sup> Sep (8 <sup>th</sup> Oct)
Wheatear	25 <sup>th</sup> Mar (14 <sup>th</sup> Mar)	8 <sup>th</sup> Oct (8 <sup>th</sup> Oct)
Sedge Warbler	8 <sup>th</sup> Apr (7 <sup>th</sup> Apr)	29 <sup>th</sup> Aug (14 <sup>th</sup> Sep)
Reed Warbler	10 <sup>th</sup> Apr (10 <sup>th</sup> Apr)	19 <sup>th</sup> Sep (14 <sup>th</sup> Sep)
Willow Warbler	26 <sup>th</sup> Mar (28 <sup>th</sup> Mar)	5 <sup>th</sup> Sep (12 <sup>th</sup> Oct)
Chiffchaff	13 <sup>th</sup> Mar (9 <sup>th</sup> Mar)	12 <sup>th</sup> Nov (6 <sup>th</sup> Dec) <sup>(1)</sup>
Blackcap	30 <sup>th</sup> Mar (28 <sup>th</sup> Mar)	2 <sup>nd</sup> Oct (6 <sup>th</sup> Oct)
Garden Warbler	17 <sup>th</sup> Apr (25 <sup>th</sup> Apr)	13 <sup>th</sup> Aug (17 <sup>th</sup> Sep)
Whitethroat	8 <sup>th</sup> Apr (4 <sup>th</sup> Apr)	4 <sup>th</sup> Sep (2 <sup>nd</sup> Oct)
Lesser Whitethroat	21 <sup>st</sup> Apr (15 <sup>th</sup> Apr)	24 <sup>th</sup> Jul (14 <sup>th</sup> Sep)
Spotted Flycatcher	NR (10 <sup>th</sup> May)	9 <sup>th</sup> Sep (25 <sup>th</sup> Sep)
<b>Winter Migrants</b>		
Golden Plover	16 <sup>th</sup> Oct (29 <sup>th</sup> Sep)	30 <sup>th</sup> Mar (15 <sup>th</sup> April)
Fieldfare	9 <sup>th</sup> Oct (18 <sup>th</sup> Sep)	8 <sup>th</sup> Apr (12 <sup>th</sup> Apr)
Redwing	13 <sup>th</sup> Oct (30 <sup>th</sup> Sep)	26 <sup>th</sup> Mar (14 <sup>th</sup> Apr)
Siskin	1 <sup>st</sup> Oct (21 <sup>st</sup> Sep)	12 <sup>th</sup> Mar (10 <sup>th</sup> Apr)
Lesser Redpoll	14 <sup>th</sup> Oct (14 <sup>th</sup> Oct)	20 <sup>th</sup> Mar (2 <sup>nd</sup> Apr)

\* ND = no date for this year



## APPENDIX 1

## WeBS Counts for selected species (1998-2010)

		Jan	Feb	Mar	April	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Wigeon	2010	0	0	3	0	4	5	0	18
	2009	0	0	0	0	1	3	0	2
	2008	0	0	2	0	7	2	1	0
	2007	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	2006	0	0	0	0	16	0	1	0
	2005	0	1	2	0	0	0	0	2
	2004	6	2	1	0	0	0	0	0
	2003	4	0	0	23	0	6	0	4
	2002	0	0	0	nc	15	2	2	15
	2001	10	6	nc	nc	1	0	0	0
	2000	1	1	4	nc	0	6	0	10
	1999	0	0	0	nc	0	0	3	2
	1998	0	0	0	nc	0	0	0	0
Gadwall	2010	9	2	4	3	3	8	4	0
	2009	0	2	1	0	5	4	0	11
	2008	3	5	2	0	3	0	4	0
	2007	0	14	0	4	0	0	0	0
	2006	11	13	13	8	0	1	4	0
	2005	0	9	12	6	0	0	4	10
	2004	23	8	15	0	0	nc	nc	6
	2003	16	30	5	8	0	2	14	10
	2002	3	4	12	nc	5	4	9	23
	2001	0	15	nc	nc	0	4	0	0
	2000	1	1	4	nc	0	0	0	0
	1999	0	2	0	nc	0	0	0	11
	1998	0	0	3	nc	1	0	0	0
Teal	2010	70	6	3	3	4	3	1	22
	2009	17	4	6	3	4	8	2	18
	2008	0	2	8	0	5	9	5	8
	2007	0	5	2	2	0	0	0	0
	2006	12	7	28	1	0	0	0	0
	2005	2	2	19	2	7	1	3	5
	2004	2	28	28	5	6	nc	nc	3
	2003	14	3	0	32	0	0	4	5
	2002	0	13	2	nc	7	9	0	8
	2001	14	2	nc	nc	0	2	0	0
	2000	0	0	0	nc	2	0	0	13
	1999	0	0	0	nc	0	0	0	0
	1998	0	0	0	nc	1	0	0	0

<b>Mallard</b>	<b>2010</b>	53	33	20	24	20	64	42	200
	<b>2009</b>	19	22	45	39	44	65	50	29
	<b>2008</b>	6	15	18	28	39	10	100	103
	<b>2007</b>	50	68	50	37	14	40	61	52
	<b>2006</b>	15	14	24	19	96	88	88	14
	<b>2005</b>	16	22	19	18	61	35	51	48
	<b>2004</b>	28	31	8	6	80	nc	nc	23
	<b>2003</b>	52	41	18	25	120	80	85	25
	<b>2002</b>	80	28	31	nc	210	50	30	20
	<b>2001</b>	60	65	nc	nc	60	200	180	60
	<b>2000</b>	54	25	60	nc	200	225	180	209
	<b>1999</b>	42	49	21	nc	18	70	62	152
<b>1998</b>	49	52	40	nc	102	30	80	107	
<b>Pochard</b>	<b>2010</b>	2	10	3	0	0	10	4	1
	<b>2009</b>	13	1	3	0	0	1	5	5
	<b>2008</b>	1	20	5	1	0	9	4	8
	<b>2007</b>	0	18	0	3	0	0	5	0
	<b>2006</b>	0	2	0	0	3	0	0	0
	<b>2005</b>	0	4	0	0	10	0	12	10
	<b>2004</b>	24	15	5	0	7	nc	nc	0
	<b>2003</b>	7	5	6	0	10	10	18	20
	<b>2002</b>	8	0	2	nc	2	4	20	9
	<b>2001</b>	17	35	nc	nc	5	3	10	15
	<b>2000</b>	0	25	6	nc	5	30	10	62
	<b>1999</b>	28	10	10	nc	8	12	3	1
<b>1998</b>	0	8	26	nc	0	0	0	39	
<b>Tufted Duck</b>	<b>2010</b>	0	69	26	26	6	8	7	0
	<b>2009</b>	31	17	41	19	12	10	5	19
	<b>2008</b>	27	33	20	14	10	11	42	8
	<b>2007</b>	8	40	11	6	5	15	19	4
	<b>2006</b>	0	0	14	7	6	25	0	6
	<b>2005</b>	0	17	21	0	4	0	12	10
	<b>2004</b>	50	47	41	4	17	nc	nc	0
	<b>2003</b>	75	95	22	8	14	20	21	63
	<b>2002</b>	6	51	40	nc	14	20	51	25
	<b>2001</b>	73	74	nc	nc	nc	0	10	20
	<b>2000</b>	41	74	50	nc	25	25	40	35
	<b>1999</b>	40	30	40	nc	7	12	3	1
<b>1998</b>	6	22	41	nc	13	11	24	71	
<b>Coot</b>	<b>2010</b>	148	91	72	44	90	171	173	120
	<b>2009</b>	87	61	68	41	106	99	97	119
	<b>2008</b>	71	43	40	44	157	74	95	87
	<b>2007</b>	5	32	43	54	34	36	19	39
	<b>2006</b>	0	2	6	8	3	3	1	1
	<b>2005</b>	0	4	2	5	6	0	0	0
	<b>2004</b>	80	78	10	7	6	nc	nc	0
	<b>2003</b>	76	40	38	22	55	62	70	101
	<b>2002</b>	50	52	60	nc	30	45	50	28
	<b>2001</b>	80	92	nc	nc	10	8	21	35
	<b>2000</b>	105	117	70	nc	120	60	50	39
	<b>1999</b>	102	60	50	nc	65	93	123	157
<b>1998</b>	47	55	65	nc	50	39	40	86	

## APPENDIX 2

## SPECIES YEARLISTS FOR TYTTENHANGER GRAVEL PITS 2004-2011

The following is a list of species that have occurred at Tyttenhanger Gravel Pits for which we have been able to locate records. The year lists and totals have been revised in accordance with the records accepted in the Hertfordshire Bird Report for the years up until 2010. Some records for 2011 may still be pending – but the list is indicative of the species reported for the year. Species shaded in yellow have not been seen in the period 2004-2011.

Species	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
Mute Swan	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Bewick's Swan	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0
Whooper Swan	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	0
Bean Goose (Tundra)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Pink-footed Goose	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
White-fronted Goose	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Greylag Goose	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Canada Goose	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Barnacle Goose	1	0	1	1	1	0	1	1
Brent Goose	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0
Egyptian Goose	1	1	0	1	1	1	1	0
Shelduck	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Mandarin	1	0	1	0	1	1	0	0
Wigeon	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Gadwall	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Teal	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Mallard	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Pintail	1	1	1	1	0	1	1	1
Garganey	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	1
Shoveler	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Red-crested Pochard	1	0	0	0	0	1	1	1
Pochard	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Tufted Duck	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Scaup	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0
Lesser Scaup	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Common Scoter	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Goldeneye	1	1	1	0	1	1	1	1
Smew	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Goosander	0	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Ruddy Duck	1	0	1	1	1	1	1	1
Red-legged Partridge	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Grey Partridge	0	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Pheasant	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Little Grebe	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Great Crested Grebe	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Black-necked Grebe	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
Cormorant	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Shag	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Bittern	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0
Little Egret	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Grey Heron	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Black Stork	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
White Stork	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
Glossy Ibis	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0
Honey-Buzzard	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
Red Kite	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Montague's Harrier	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Marsh-Harrier	1	0	0	1	0	1	1	1
Goshawk	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Sparrowhawk	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Buzzard	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1

Species	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
Osprey	0	1	1	1	1	1	1	0
Kestrel	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Merlin	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0
Hobby	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Peregrine	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Water Rail	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Moorhen	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Coot	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Oystercatcher	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
<b>Black-winged Stilt</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
Avocet	1	1	0	0	1	1	0	1
Stone Curlew	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0
Little Ringed Plover	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Ringed Plover	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Golden-Plover	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Grey Plover	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
Lapwing	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Knot	1	0	1	1	0	1	0	0
Sanderling	1	1	1	0	1	1	1	0
Little Stint	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0
<b>Temminck's Stint</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Curlew Sandpiper</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
Dunlin	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Ruff	0	1	1	1	0	0	1	1
Jack Snipe	1	1	1	1	1	1	0	1
Common Snipe	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Woodcock	0	1	0	0	1	1	1	1
Black-tailed Godwit	0	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Bar-tailed Godwit	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
Whimbrel	1	0	1	1	1	1	1	1
Curlew	1	1	1	1	1	0	1	1
Spotted Redshank	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0
Redshank	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Greenshank	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Green Sandpiper	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Wood Sandpiper	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	0
Common Sandpiper	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Turnstone	1	1	1	0	1	0	0	0
Mediterranean Gull	1	1	1	1	1	1	0	1
Little Gull	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0
Black-headed Gull	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Common Gull	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Lesser Black-b'd Gull	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Yellow-legged Gull	0	1	1	0	1	1	0	1
Caspian Gull	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
Herring Gull	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
<b>Iceland Gull</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
Great Black-backed Gull	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Kittiwake	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
Little Tern	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0
Black Tern	1	1	0	0	1	1	0	1
Sandwich Tern	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
Common Tern	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Arctic Tern	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
Feral Pigeon	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1



Species	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
Stock Dove	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Woodpigeon	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Collared Dove	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Turtle Dove	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Ring-necked Parakeet	0	1	1	0	1	0	1	1
Cuckoo	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Barn Owl	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	0
Little Owl	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Tawny Owl	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
<b>Long-eared Owl</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
Short-eared Owl	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Swift	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Kingfisher	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Green Woodpecker	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Great Spotted Woodp'er	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Lesser Spot'd Woodp'er	1	1	1	1	0	1	1	1
Wryneck	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
<b>Short-toed Lark</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
Skylark	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Sand Martin	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Swallow	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
House-Martin	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
<b>Tree Pipit</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
Meadow Pipit	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Rock Pipit	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0
Water Pipit	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
Yellow Wagtail	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Grey Wagtail	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Pied Wagtail	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Waxwing	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
Wren	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Dunnock	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Robin	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
<b>Nightingale</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
Black Redstart	1	0	0	0	1	0	1	1
Redstart	0	0	1	1	1	1	1	0
Whinchat	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Stonechat	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Wheatear	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Ring Ouzel	0	0	0	1	1	0	1	0
Blackbird	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Fieldfare	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Song Thrush	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Redwing	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Mistle Thrush	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Grasshopper Warbler	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
Sedge Warbler	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Reed-Warbler	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Blackcap	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Garden Warbler	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Lesser Whitethroat	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Whitethroat	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Dartford Warbler	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
Wood Warbler	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Common Chiffchaff	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1

Species	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
Willow Warbler	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Goldcrest	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
<b>Firecrest</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
Spotted Flycatcher	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Pied Flycatcher	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
Long-tailed Tit	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Blue Tit	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Great Tit	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Coal Tit	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
<b>Willow Tit</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
Marsh Tit	1	1	1	1	0	0	1	0
Nuthatch	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Treecreeper	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
<b>Red-backed Shrike</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
Jay	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Magpie	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Jackdaw	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Rook	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Carrion Crow	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Common Raven	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	1
Starling	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
House Sparrow	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Tree Sparrow	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Chaffinch	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Brambling	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Greenfinch	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Goldfinch	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Siskin	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Linnet	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Lesser Redpoll	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Mealy Redpoll	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	1
Red Crossbill	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
Bullfinch	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Hawfinch	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
<b>Snow Bunting</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
Yellowhammer	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Reed Bunting	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Corn Bunting	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>138</b>	<b>136</b>	<b>142</b>	<b>132</b>	<b>136</b>	<b>135</b>	<b>140</b>	<b>142</b>