

**Kemerton Conservation Trust**

Kemerton Court  
Kemerton  
Tewkesbury  
Gloucestershire  
GL20 7HY

Tel: 01386 725 254

[www.kemerton.org](http://www.kemerton.org)

Registered Charity No. 702488

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MATTHEW DARBY

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# KEMERTON LAKE NATURE RESERVE BIRD SPECIES LIST

By Rob Prudden

*The following report was produced by ornithologist Rob Prudden who has been recording birds continuously at Kemerton Lake Nature Reserve since the mid-1990s. The records listed have been collated from his own notebooks, along with records that appeared in the annual reports of West Midlands Bird Club for the period covered.*

Kemerton Lake Nature Reserve's (KLNK) conservation area is an 18.8hectare wetland complex created between 1989 & 1999 on the site of a former gravel working. At the centre of the site is a 6.5hectare (16acres) lake, surrounded by pools, seasonal wet scrapes, reed beds & land specially cultivated for arable plants. The reserve is surrounded by 45 hectares (111acres) of woodland (not part of the reserve but managed in partnership with it).

The following information covers the c25 year period from the mid-1990s through to May 2021. Constant coverage has been carried out during this time including monthly BTO Webs counts. Scrutiny of the content makes interesting reading and clearly shows the effect on the site of environmental changes, not only locally but also nationally & globally.

Newly created wetlands are always at their most productive for bird species during their first few years, this while the area is still relatively open and before becoming more heavily vegetated. During the proceeding years the site will then mature relatively slowly into a more constant single unchanging set of habitats, this then limits the number of different species that visit or make the site their home.

At Kemerton Lake during the period covered the area has changed considerably while evolving from an open working gravel pit to a relatively shallow lake with sandy shorelines & bare islands, then finally becoming the heavily vegetated site with reed fringed & wood surrounded lake that exists today.

As the site evolved, so did bird populations. In the early days, the sandy nature of the site proved a haven for passage waders, while seed eating passerines feasted on annual weeds which grew over the whole site. Many migrating birds also utilized the site as a staging post during passage periods.

As water levels rose and the remaining islands & surrounding areas became more vegetated many species became less common, although waterfowl became more prevalent. With the surrounding woodland maturing, wintering Siskins & Redpolls arrived, while common breeding woodland birds became more numerous.

Although the site has gone through many years of transformation it is now in a settled state, but still needs constant management to maintain the future of this important conservation area.

A more worrying scenario that is more difficult to come to terms with certainly cannot be ignored. During the period covered most species have suffered huge reductions in numbers, not only at a local level but also nationally & across most of Europe, with some suffering catastrophic declines. It was estimated that by (2019) there were c44 million fewer birds in the UK landscape than there were 50 years previously.

These downward population trends make grim reading, with some once locally common species including Turtle Dove, Tree Sparrow, Lesser Spotted Woodpecker, Willow Tit & Grey Partridge now all but extinct in the whole of Worcestershire. Other species that have shown significant losses in the county and are in serious decline include Corn Bunting, Yellow Wagtail, Spotted Flycatcher, Marsh Tit, Nightingale, Whinchat, Little Owl & Curlew. Whether any of the latter species will be part of the Worcestershire avifauna in another twenty years must be in serious doubt.

Local declines have in part been due to habitat loss, as the countryside has changed considerably, generally to the detriment of most species, but not all.

Changes in land usage have had an alarming detrimental effect on flora and fauna. Huge swathes of land have been utilised for housing and industry, while ever cleaner modern farming practises must also shoulder a large share of the blame both locally & globally. Other more complex factors in wintering areas or on migration routes have also had an impact on seasonal visitors.

Numbers of farmland birds visiting the KLNR recording area have dropped dramatically, this comes as no surprise as the site lies in an area dominated by agriculture. Shockingly farmland birds have suffered declines of up to 85% in the twenty-five years or so covered by these notes, with some species dropping by over 95%.

Although the above notes may have negative undertones, there are always positives and the importance of conservation areas like Kemerton Lake become ever more important in a less than ideal landscape.

# Systematic list of all (184) species known to have been seen in the Kemerton Lake Nature Reserve recording area from the mid-1990s through to 2021

## Key to colour marked text

Bird names in red represent rare species in the county.

Bird names in orange represent scarce species in the county.

Text in green denotes records of rare or scarce species which at the time of being noted were not submitted to the Worcestershire county recorder for verification & acceptance, hence they were not included in the West Midland Bird Club annual reports. This does not necessarily mean the record did not occur, only that no substantiating detail concerning the sighting is known to exist.

Text in mauve relates interesting associated side stories.

*Bird names in italics represent sub species, which do not form part of the British Ornithologists Union UK bird species list.*

All records relate to Kemerton Lake and its directly surrounding area unless otherwise stated, species deemed to be rare or scarce in the county are dated individually.

## MUTE SWAN.

Annual breeding resident.

### BEWICKS SWAN. (1 Record, 8 Birds).

\*3<sup>rd</sup> November 1998?

\* 8<sup>th</sup> November 2003 – A herd of (8) adults were present at first light at the east end of the lake, they left south shortly after as full daylight arrived, presumably the birds had arrived overnight during darkness hours while on passage to traditional wintering grounds around the Severn estuary (RAP).

### WHOOPER SWAN. (5 Records, 13 Birds).

\*27<sup>th</sup> November 1998?

\*3<sup>rd</sup> November 2001 – (4) adults briefly mid-morning while the lake was shrouded in thick fog. (B Harley).

\* 7<sup>th</sup> November 2002 – Adult + an immature circled the lake (F Peplow).

\* 7<sup>th</sup> November 2009 – Two adults circled the lake then headed off north (G+F Peplow).

\* 1<sup>st</sup> February 2010 – (3) adults stood on the frozen lake (A Darby).

\* 10<sup>th</sup> December 2018 – Mid -morning, two adults approached the area while calling loudly, they then landed & settled mid lake (RAP).

(One of the above birds on 10/12/18 was colour ringed (VJA). Investigations revealed the bird was aged as “In its 27<sup>th</sup> year” & had originally been ringed at Martin Mere WWT in 1993, where it was noted in most of the subsequent winters. Other sites visited by the bird during its life included Northern Ireland, Tیره, Cambridgeshire & Norfolk).

### TUNDRA BEAN GOOSE. (1 Record, 5 Birds).

\* 1<sup>st</sup> January 1999 – Five birds that had been at Bredons Hardwick from 24<sup>th</sup> – 31<sup>st</sup> December 1998 circled over the south side of the lake early morning before returning to their favoured Avon river side meadows (RAP).

### TAIGA BEAN GOOSE. (1 Record, 2 Birds).

\* 27<sup>th</sup> – 31<sup>st</sup> March 2014 – An adult pair were found feeding with Grey Lag Geese on cereal crops just north of the lake on 27<sup>th</sup> March, they were then very mobile, seen grazing or loafing in the area & roosting at the lake till mid-day on 31<sup>st</sup> (RAP). (Only the second county record for this species).

After leaving Kemerton the birds were relocated at the WWT Slimbridge Grounds, Gloucestershire early afternoon on the 31<sup>st</sup> March.



Pair of “Taiga” Bean Geese grazing on arable land adjacent to the lake on 31<sup>st</sup> March 2014 (Photo B Stretch).

**PINK FOOTED GOOSE. (4 Records, 6 Birds).**

- \* 15<sup>th</sup> October 2000 – Single bird with Canadas.
- \* 3<sup>rd</sup> September 2009 – (2) birds.
- \* 19<sup>th</sup> December 2009 – Single bird.
- \* 2<sup>nd</sup> – 9<sup>th</sup> April 2016 – (2) immatures that had previously been at Bredons Hardwick were loafing on the island in front of the west hide (RAP).

**RUSSIAN WHITE FRONTED GOOSE. (*Anser albifrons*) (4 Records, 21 Birds).**

Summers & breeds on tundra in northern Europe and across east into Siberia.

- \* 8<sup>th</sup> January 2000 – Flock of (17) birds including at least (4) juveniles circled the lake (G Peplow).
- \* 22<sup>nd</sup> December 2004 – Single bird (RAP).
- \* 8<sup>th</sup> – 11<sup>th</sup> April 2015 – Unusually a particularly late spring record of a single bird (RAP).
- \* 23<sup>rd</sup> February 2016 – Two immatures on the west island. Previously these two birds had been seen at nearby Bredons Hardwick from 4<sup>th</sup> February – 21<sup>st</sup> March (RAP).

**GREENLAND WHITE FRONTED GOOSE (*Anser flavirostris*).**

*Sub species breeding in Greenland then wintering birds seen in Ireland and south west Scotland, only occasionally straying much further south. (This bird was only the second accepted record for Worcestershire).*

28<sup>th</sup> October 2018, a lone bird fitted with a solar charging satellite tracking device arrived on meadows in the area around the Avon at Bredon on the Worcestershire/Gloucestershire border. It was not actually seen till Mike Smart came across it on Upham Meadow, Bredon on 17<sup>th</sup> November. Subsequently it was very mobile & visited numerous local sites, before last being seen on 31<sup>st</sup> December 2018.

\* On 20<sup>th</sup> November at last light the bird flew to Kemerton Lake between 17.08 & 17.23hrs, it then moved on to the largest central island shortly after to roost. Concerns were raised over its fate when the tracker ceased transmitting at the site at 02.08 on 21<sup>st</sup>. It was hoped that the solar powered tracker had ceased working due to a lack of sunlight to charge its batteries. Relief came when contact was restored with the bird on 24<sup>th</sup> as the tracker again came to life, presumably the bird had left Kemerton at first light on 21<sup>st</sup> with other geese that had roosted over night before heading over to the Avon river meadows near Bredon.

An interesting recent history of the bird became apparent as follows –

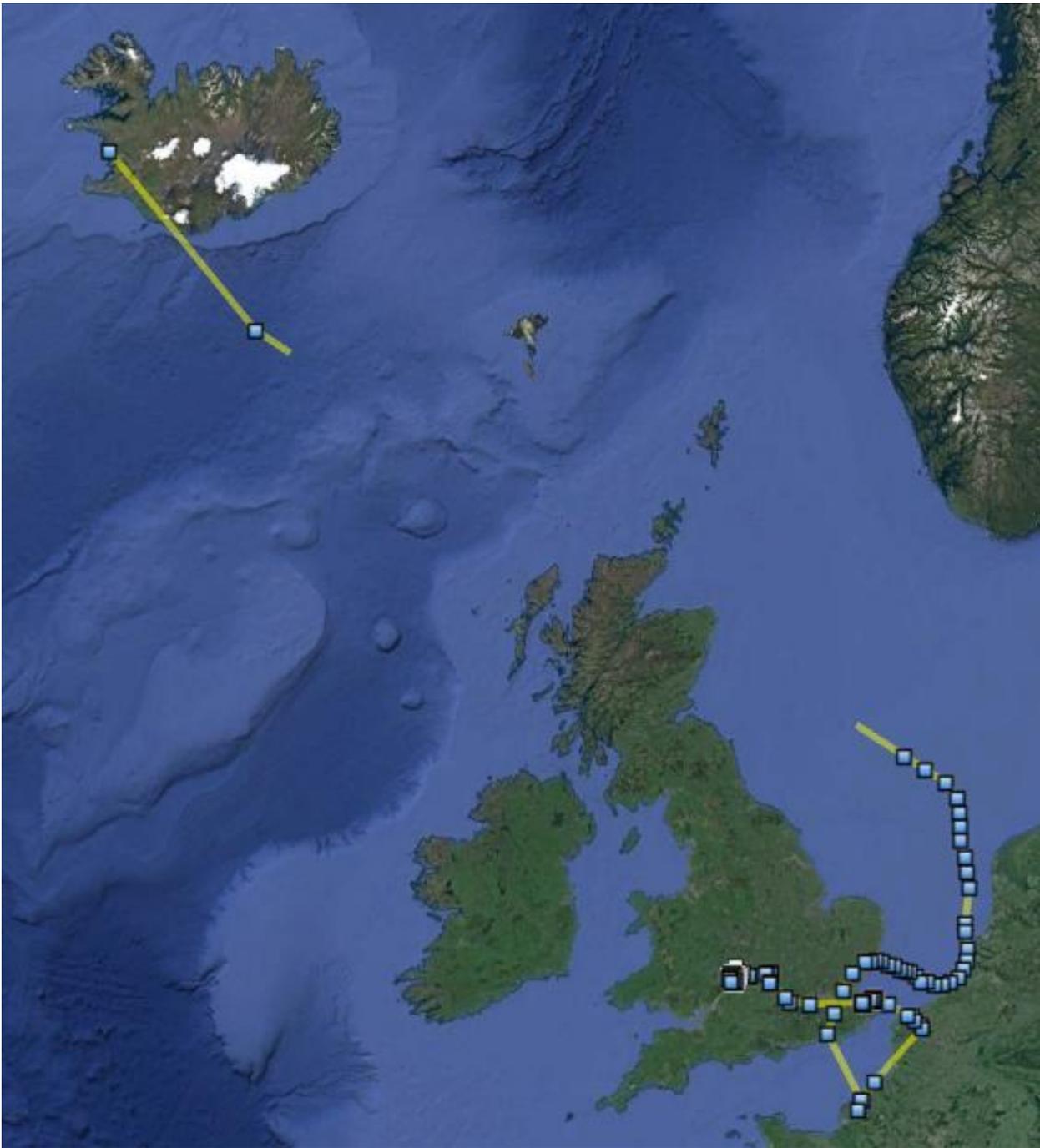
The bird had been tagged as an adult female in Hvanneyri, western Iceland on 23 September 2017, after several days at Hvanneyri, it moved westwards within Iceland to Myrar. After leaving here south towards Ireland it overshot Wexford flying directly over County Waterford, after hitting the Brittany coast it then looped back north west, crossing over Cornwall to finally arrive at Wexford where it then wintered.

Autumn/Winter 2018/19

In autumn 2018 the bird left Iceland on 24<sup>th</sup> October sometime after 14:37 UTC/GMT and was mid-way across the sea at 02:00 on 25 October but was clearly drifting off east into and over the North Sea, finally making landfall around Texel Netherlands at 17.00. She then followed the coast south, clipping Goeree south west of Rotterdam at 20:00, and a little later left the Belgian coast off Zeebrugge, heading west reaching the English coast at 00:30 on 26 October at the mouth of the Deben. She then looped SW and departed the southern English coast between Newhaven and Seaford, then heading for & reaching the French coast at about 07:00 on the same day just north of Le Havre. Clearly not satisfied with its landfall she then headed NE and just inland of Calais at around 12:00, then swung NW and crossed the Channel again arriving into north east Kent mid-afternoon on 26 October. She then headed north and rested on the sea from 19:00 – 21:00 between Birchington-on-Sea & Herne Bay, this appeared to be its first break since leaving Iceland. The bird then appeared to land in a field just inland from Herne Bay, but at midnight set off again, flying west over London just south of Heathrow at 15:00 on 27 October. She stopped briefly from 19:00 – 21:00 in fields near Aynho, at the southern end of Northamptonshire, by 17:50 on 28 October she was near Great Comberton, Worcs, (possibly in flight over the area) before finally settling around the Gloucestershire/Worcestershire border where she appeared to roost in on 28<sup>th</sup>. She was last seen at Coombe Hill Meadow Gloucestershire pre-roost on 31<sup>st</sup> December 2018 (65 day stay in the area). On 1<sup>st</sup> January 2019 she left England arriving back in Wexford Ireland on 2<sup>nd</sup>, where she remained till 27<sup>th</sup> March. On 27<sup>th</sup> March 2019 at 23.30 she left Wexford making heavy going north, flying over Islay then Mull, continuing up the west coast of Scotland being off Orkney at 11.30 on 28<sup>th</sup> then the Faroes by 16.00 & finally roosting on the island of Sandoy that night. She then left next morning 29<sup>th</sup> at 06.30 again making slow going in windy conditions eventually making landfall in the SE corner of Iceland at 21.10 on 29<sup>th</sup>, wending her way along the south coast she arrived in Landeyjar by 09.00 on 30<sup>th</sup>. She remained in this area till 06.00 on 4<sup>th</sup> April when she moved to Mymar, western Iceland still being present here on 24<sup>th</sup>.

Unfortunately, the bird did not survive to make its next southerly migration in the autumn/winter period of 2019, succumbing on its summer grounds.

See below, map showing the roundabout route taken from Iceland in October 2018, before arriving at the Avon meadows around the Gloucestershire/Worcestershire county border (per Tony Fox).



#### GREY LAG GOOSE.

\* 2001 – The first proven breeding record in the county occurred at Kemerton Lake. Breeding now occurs at most reasonable sized lakes & pools in the county with well over c100 pairs annually.

\* Large numbers of post breeding moulting birds now build up in the late summer period, highest count (519) on 4<sup>th</sup> September 2020.

\* 9<sup>th</sup> May 2018 – A ringed bird (5136545) was found dead on the bund between the lake & marsh. Records showed it had been rung at Bredons Hardwick on 3<sup>rd</sup> February 2008, being at least two years old. At the time of its demise the bird had moved just 2kms east after c3748 days and was c12 years 3 months old.

#### CANADA GOOSE.

Common breeding species, although with the huge rise in numbers of Grey Lag Geese, numbers of breeding Canada Geese at most formerly utilised sites have much reduced, this includes KLNLR.

#### BARNACLE GOOSE.

One or two birds presumed to be of feral origin regularly associate with other geese at the site.

Larger counts noted as follows –

\* 9<sup>th</sup> September 2000 – A group of (10) birds together at the lake had previously been seen at Bredons Hardwick (RAP).

\* 2002 – A mobile flock were resident around the Avon valley at the end of the year, during this period regular visits were made to the lake. (Monthly maxima at the lake at this time – (5) in August, (15) in September, (5) in October & (4) in November).

\* 2<sup>nd</sup> April 2007 – Flock of 10 ringed birds at the lake.

Seven of the above birds were colour ringed and traced to a feral breeding population from around the St Neots, Roxton, Bedfordshire area, surprisingly the birds were back in Bedfordshire the following week (RAP).

\* 2<sup>nd</sup> September 2008 – Flock of (12).

\* 1<sup>st</sup> + 2<sup>nd</sup> September 2011 – Flock of (14).

#### HYBRID GEESE.

\* Geese hybridize easily & freely, hence it can be difficult to decipher exact parentage of some individuals.

\* Obvious hybrid crosses that have been identified at the lake include Grey Lag/Canada, Grey Lag/Barnacle, Grey Lag/ Bar Head, Canada/Bar Head, Canada/Barnacle + numerous farmyard/Lag or Canada types.

#### EGYPTIAN GOOSE. (6 Records, 9 Birds).

\* 3<sup>rd</sup> April 2002 – Pair (RAP et al).

\* 1<sup>st</sup> December 2002 – Single bird (RAP et al).

\* 10<sup>th</sup> October 2004 – Single bird. (RAP et el).

\* 22<sup>nd</sup> August 2005 – Single bird (RAP).

\* 10<sup>th</sup> October 2012 – Pair (RAP).

\* 10<sup>th</sup> November 2020 – Pair on one of the central islands (RAP).

#### COMMON SHELDUCK.

Bred annually in the early years when sand banks were suitable for nest burrow excavation.

Good numbers visited in the spring period up until the mid-2000s (10 together in April 2003). Now only a very infrequent spring visitor.

#### MANDARIN DUCK.

\* One or two pairs bred annually at the lake in the 1990s.

\* (13) birds together on 28<sup>th</sup> February.

\* By 2006 the once thriving wintering population at small waters around Bredon Hill appeared to of disappeared. Breeding had also been regular at many sites, but now rarely occurs.

Interestingly numbers in the north of the county have grown during the same period.

\* From the late 1990s through to the early 2000s double figures regularly visited the Lake in the spring dispersal period, now only a very infrequent visitor & much less than annual.

#### EURASIAN WIGEON.

\* Good numbers winter at the lake, normally up to c100.

\* Larger numbers tend to be seen at the beginning of the week during the shooting season, this presumably after weekend wildfowling activities have disturbed birds from nearby wintering sites.

\* 2020 – Unusually high numbers (c550) remained at the lake from 3<sup>rd</sup> February – 10<sup>th</sup> March.

\* 2021 – (c480) on 17<sup>th</sup> January then rising to and peaking at (c565) on 12<sup>th</sup> February followed by (c535) on 19<sup>th</sup> & (c538) on 27<sup>th</sup>.

#### GADWALL.

Mainly an annual spring passage visitor, when up to c25 have been recorded.

\* First proven breeding record came in 2018 when a female was seen with (8) fledged juveniles on 16<sup>th</sup> June.

\* A pair bred again in 2019, with a female present with (7) two-day old ducklings on 17<sup>th</sup> June, amazingly the brood was still intact & fledged on 21<sup>st</sup> July.

#### EURASIAN TEAL.

\* Regular autumn/winter visitor in varying numbers, normally no more than c100 birds are present, although wildfowling activities at nearby sites can swell numbers at times.

\* In January 2019, unusually high numbers were present at the lake with c350 on 11<sup>th</sup>, rising to c650 on 23<sup>rd</sup>, the latter after an exceptionally cold night had frozen most local wetland areas, (c495) were still present stood on ice cover on 25<sup>th</sup> & 31<sup>st</sup>.

#### MALLARD.

Small numbers resident throughout the year, with an annual influx of (c100+) post breeding birds arriving in August & September most years.

#### PINTAIL.

\* Annual visitor in small numbers during the autumn & winter months.

\* Highest count of (7) in January 2013.

#### GARGANEY. (9 Records, 12 Birds).

\* 20<sup>th</sup> – 28<sup>th</sup> March 1996 – Male.

\* 28<sup>th</sup> August – 29<sup>th</sup> September 1997 – Eclipse male (RAP), with possibly the same bird on 7<sup>th</sup> October.

\* 8<sup>th</sup> – 10<sup>th</sup> May 1999 – Male (RAP).

\* 30<sup>th</sup> April 2000 – Female (RAP).

\* 2<sup>nd</sup> September 2001 – Juvenile

\* 15<sup>th</sup> – 18<sup>th</sup> May 2002 – Male (RAP).

\* 18<sup>th</sup> – 21<sup>st</sup> September 2002 – (3) Juveniles (RAP).

\* 19<sup>th</sup> April 2008 – (2) males (G Peplow).

\* 1<sup>st</sup> October 2013 – Juvenile.

#### SHOVELER.

\* Winter visitor in small numbers (up to c20).

#### RED CRESTED POCHARD. (12 Records, c22 Birds).

\* 6<sup>th</sup> + 18<sup>th</sup> June 1995 – Pair (WFP/SMW).

\* 11<sup>th</sup> September 1997 – Female (WFP).

\* 20<sup>th</sup> December 1997 – Female (GHP).

\* 28<sup>th</sup> August 1999 – Female (RAP).

\* 22<sup>nd</sup> March – 1<sup>st</sup> April 2007 – Pair (RAP).

\* 2<sup>nd</sup> January 2008 – Male (RAP).

\* 8<sup>th</sup> + 15<sup>th</sup> February 2008 – Pair (RAP).

\* 2<sup>nd</sup> September 2008 – Pair (RAP).

\* 18<sup>th</sup> October 2010 – Immature female (RAP).

\* 8<sup>th</sup> May 2011 – (2 males + 3 females) (RAP).

\* 10<sup>th</sup> + 11<sup>th</sup> October 2012 – (1 pair), then (2) pairs from 22<sup>nd</sup> October – 4<sup>th</sup> November (RAP).

\* 8<sup>th</sup> October 2014 – Male (RAP).

#### COMMON POCHARD.

Variable numbers winter at the lake. Highest count (85) in December 2015.

\* Up to 6 pairs have bred annually at the lake since the mid-1990s, this being the only breeding site in the county for this species.

\* Surprisingly after (10+) continuous years with between (4 & 6) pairs breeding annually, in 2019 only a single pair remained to nest.

\* In 2020 & 2021 breeding pairs were again back to pre-2019 status.

#### COMMON POCHARD/FERRUGINOUS DUCK Hybrid.

\* 2<sup>nd</sup> March 2013 – Single bird.

#### RING NECKED DUCK.

A very scarce duck in the UK from across the Atlantic. Breeds in south & central Canada & northernmost USA, wintering chiefly in western & eastern USA down to Central America.

\* 12<sup>th</sup> February (GHP) & 26<sup>th</sup> March (RAP) 2005 – A male that had been resident at nearby Bredons Hardwick from 31<sup>st</sup> January – 24<sup>th</sup> March visited the lake on these two dates.

#### TUFTED DUCK.

\* Good numbers winter at the site, with several pairs remaining to breed annually.

\* Ducks are on occasion guilty of “egg dumping” when rogue females will lay eggs in the nest of another unsuspecting brooding female. A blatant example of this was seen on 29<sup>th</sup> June 2010 when a duck was flushed off a nest while attempting to brood (27) eggs, presumably the work of several females. The cold eggs from the extremities of the nest were removed to give her a chance, two weeks later she was seen with (8) fit & healthy ducklings.

#### GREATER SCAUP. (1 Record/Bird).

Female Scaup like Tufted Ducks with white blazes are fairly common & can lead to misidentification by the unwary. Scaup in the UK winter at sea off our coasts during the winter months & rarely visit inland waters. No detail was submitted to the County Recorder for the following three records.

\* 30<sup>th</sup> December 1998?

\* 17<sup>th</sup> August 2003?

\* 19<sup>th</sup> January 2006?

\* 2006 – An adult drake from 1<sup>st</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup> February, then again on 19<sup>th</sup> + 25<sup>th</sup> – 28<sup>th</sup> March (T Hinett).

#### COMMON SCOTER.

\* 20<sup>th</sup> April 2008 – 2 males + 2 females (A Warr).

\* 18<sup>th</sup> November 2013 – 2 males + 3 males (RAP).

#### GOLDENEYE.

\* Annual winter visitor in the 1990s with (3) together on 13<sup>th</sup> December 1998, (4) on 4<sup>th</sup> February 1999 & (3) from 12<sup>th</sup> – 29<sup>th</sup> November 1999.

\* Continues to be seen almost annually during winter periods but has become much scarcer in recent years with most records involving only one or two birds.

#### SMEW. (3 Records, 5 Birds).

Winter visitor to the UK in small numbers from breeding areas in the northern taiga regions of Europe & Asia.

\* 25<sup>th</sup> January 2003 – 2 Redheads (SMW).

\* 2<sup>nd</sup> January 2008 – Full breeding plumaged male (G Peplow).

\* 31<sup>st</sup> December 2018 – (2) males (D Peats). Both birds were then present from 1<sup>st</sup> – 3<sup>rd</sup> January 2019, with one back alone from 12<sup>th</sup> – 22<sup>nd</sup> January & again from 24<sup>th</sup> January – 18<sup>th</sup> February.

The above two 2018/19 birds were well documented during their time in the county, firstly arriving at Clifton Gravel Pits as “red head”, first winter males on 13<sup>th</sup> November 2018, they then remained at this site till 21<sup>st</sup>. On 24<sup>th</sup> November they were relocated at Holt Fishing Pools, Grimley, staying at this site till 30<sup>th</sup> December.

They were then present at Kemerton Lake from 31<sup>st</sup> December 2018 – 3<sup>rd</sup> January 2019, before again returning to Holt from 4<sup>th</sup> January. From 5<sup>th</sup> – 11<sup>th</sup> January only one of the birds was present, it then left Holt & surprisingly was again at Kemerton from 12<sup>th</sup> – 22<sup>nd</sup> January then back at Grimley/Holt on 23<sup>rd</sup> before again returning to Kemerton Lake, being present here from 24<sup>th</sup> January – 19<sup>th</sup> February. (Although arriving in the county as “red head” first winter males, during their prolonged stay they moulted surprisingly quickly into stunning full breeding plumaged males).



Male Smew 24/01/2019.

#### GOOSANDER.

Occasional visitor to the site in small numbers during the winter months, this tends to be when flood conditions have forced birds out of their normal domains.

- \* Highest count – (12) on 3<sup>rd</sup> February 2001.
- \* 16<sup>th</sup> July 2006 – An unexpected summer record of (3) juveniles after a particularly wet & windy period.

#### RUDDY DUCK.

Resident, and a regularly successful feral breeding species before the government backed eradication scheme came into force in 2000. Due to the cull the species was effectively extinct in the county by c2012. The cull was deemed necessary after birds presumed to be from the British population had started to turn up in Spain, here they were hybridising with rare White-Headed Ducks whose numbers were in strong decline in Iberia.

- \* Highest counts – (9) on 16<sup>th</sup> March 1999, (8) on 13<sup>th</sup> March 2000, (9) in June 2004, (7) in April 2005, (8) in May & July 2006.
- \* 2<sup>nd</sup> April 2000 – A bird present on this date resembled the Columbian race “Andina” and was presumably a more recent escape from the general population.
- \* The last (5) resident birds were culled between 1<sup>st</sup> & 10<sup>th</sup> November 2008.
- \* Unexpectedly a pair were present from 31<sup>st</sup> August – 16<sup>th</sup> September 2010, these were the last birds recorded at the lake.

### RED LEGGED PARTRIDGE.

Large numbers are introduced annually on to adjacent land by a large local shoot, many then stray across to areas around the lake once the shooting season begins.

### GREY PARTRIDGE.

Resident annual breeding species in the early days of the gravel pit, now only occasionally seen. Up until the beginning of the 2000s large numbers of Grey Partridge were still being released on adjacent arable areas for sporting purposes. Red Legged Partridge are now favoured as they present fewer problems while being raised and are much easier to control once released.

- \* 10<sup>th</sup> October 1998 – Covey of (12) birds of unknown origin were alongside the road at the east end of the site, this was followed by another (c60) birds later in the month (RAP). (In each case these were assumed to be recently released birds from the nearby shoot).
- \* 6<sup>th</sup> November 1999 – (8) on the arable area in the north east corner of the lake site.
- \* 2000 – At least one pair bred in the lake area.
- \* 2001 – Good numbers of released birds seen regularly throughout November & December.
- \* 16<sup>th</sup> October 2002 – Single bird.
- \* 12<sup>th</sup> October 2003 – Single bird.
- \* 23<sup>rd</sup> May 2004 – (2) on arable area (RAP).
- \* 5<sup>th</sup> March 2006 – (Pair) on arable area.
- \* 28<sup>th</sup> May + 14<sup>th</sup> June 2011 – (1) flushed from marsh area (RAP).
- \* 17<sup>th</sup> May 2018 – (Pair) on the arable area (RAP).

### COMMON PHEASANT.

Resident throughout the year, large numbers are introduced annually on to surrounding arable land by local farmland shoots.

- \* One or two pairs attempt to breed around the lake area annually.

### GREAT NORTHERN DIVER. (1 Record/Bird).

\* An exhausted juvenile was picked up at Longley Green in north Worcestershire on 19<sup>th</sup> November 2011. It was then taken into care at the Vale Rescue Centre at Beckford. On 22<sup>nd</sup> November after feeding well and appearing fit it was released on to the lake, unfortunately it was subsequently found freshly dead amongst thick Juncas on the north shoreline on 27<sup>th</sup> (RAP). As the bird could not be located from early morning on the 23<sup>rd</sup> it seems likely that it had hauled itself up into lakeside vegetation around that time, where it met its demise.

### NORTHERN GANNET. (3 Records/Birds).

- \* 2<sup>nd</sup> January 1995 – An adult found dead at the lake had been ringed as a nestling on Great Saltee, County Wexford, Ireland on 1<sup>st</sup> July 1988. (Damien Offer).
- \* 4<sup>th</sup> July 2004 – A sub adult (third winter) was found shortly after a series of very heavy thunderstorm (G Peplow).
- \* 2<sup>nd</sup> July 2012 – An adult at the west end of the lake (RAP). Although the bird appeared fit, taking to the air briefly on several occasions it was found dead early next morning 3<sup>rd</sup>.

A Gannet had been seen and photographed on a landing stage alongside the River Avon at Bredon Sailing Club the previous week (25<sup>th</sup> June 2012), this may have been the same bird?



Adult Gannet at the lake on 2/07/2012.

#### EUROPEAN STORM PETREL.

\* 21<sup>st</sup> August 2003 – A fresh corpse was found in the grounds of Kemerton Court (A Darby). This was only the fourth Worcestershire record & the first in the county since 1968.

#### LITTLE EGRET.

Although a very scarce bird in the county up until the 1990s, this has changed dramatically. Now a regular visitor to the site in small numbers (highest count (5) on 4<sup>th</sup> August 2020), many of these being dispersing juveniles from breeding sites further to the south during the late summer period.

#### GREAT WHITE EGRET. (3 Records, 4 birds).

Although in 2019 this is still a scarce bird in Worcestershire things are changing with small numbers now breeding in southern parts of the UK. It seems likely that this species will mirror the success and spread of its close relative the Little Egret over the past twenty years.

\* 28<sup>th</sup> October 2017 – Single bird around the lake (A Darby).

\* 12<sup>th</sup> November 2018 – A single bird dropped on to the north east side of the lake where it fished for several minutes before taking flight and heading off south west. Presumably, the bird was heading back to Bredons Hardwick where one had been seen on several occasions during the previous week (RAP).

\* 10<sup>th</sup> & 11<sup>th</sup> June 2020 – Two birds loafing on the shoreline of the west island (G Day), one of these birds was still present from the 12<sup>th</sup> – 14<sup>th</sup>.

#### GREY HERON.

Regular visitor.

#### LITTLE GREBE.

Resident, several pairs breed annually.

#### GREAT CRESTED GREBE.

Summer resident, one or two pairs breed most years.

### BLACK NECKED GREBE. (2 Records/Birds).

This species is only occasionally seen at inland waters, this when migrant birds drop in after travelling overland to spend the winter months at sea off the English coast.

- \* 11<sup>th</sup> – 15<sup>th</sup> September 1999 – Juvenile/first winter (RAP).
- \* 31<sup>st</sup> July 2014 – Juvenile (G+F Peplow).

### RED KITE.

Since the first recorded sighting at the lake in 2002 singles, or occasionally two birds together are now regularly seen drifting over the reserve or adjacent arable land. The rise in records is directly attributable to several successful reintroduction schemes around the country.

- \* At least one pair has bred successfully on nearby Bredon Hill on several occasions in the last few years.
- \* 30<sup>th</sup> May 2002 – First proven site record was a bird over the arable area in the north east corner of the site, the bird landed but was quickly attacked then escorted off site towards Bredon Hill by mobbing corvids (RAP).
- \* 2<sup>nd</sup> March 2020 – A pair displaying low over the marsh and grazing meadow were then joined by two more. The four birds then associated closely with each other low down over the area, also landing on several occasions. This is the first record of more than two birds together at the site.

### MARSH HARRIER. (11 Records/Birds).

- \* 1995 – A first year female appeared to of summered in the area, being seen on several dates from mid-May through till 31<sup>st</sup> July & was seen at nearby Aston Mill on 23<sup>rd</sup>, 24<sup>th</sup> & 31<sup>st</sup> May (S.J Huggins).
- \* 4<sup>th</sup> August 1995 – 1<sup>st</sup> Summer at the lake (G Peplow) (Presumably this was the above bird that had summered in the area).
- \* 17<sup>th</sup> May 1998 – Female early morning (RAP).
- \* 27<sup>th</sup> August 1998 – Female/first winter.
- \* 6<sup>th</sup> – 9<sup>th</sup> May 2006 – Female (A Warr).
- \* 20<sup>th</sup> May 2006 – Female (G Peplow).
- \* 12<sup>th</sup> May 2015 – 1<sup>st</sup> Summer (RAP).
- \* 12<sup>th</sup> September 2016 – Juvenile/Immature (D Keen).
- \* 4<sup>th</sup> August 2017 – Immature (D Keen).
- \* 8<sup>th</sup> August 2018 – Female/juvenile.
- \* 25<sup>th</sup> April 2020 – Female hunting over the wader lagoon from 07.00 – 07.20, it then circled low around the whole edge of the lake and over the marsh area before drifting off north east (RAP).

### HEN HARRIER. (1 Record/Bird).

- \* 30<sup>th</sup> October 1996 – Ring Tail?
- \* 25<sup>th</sup> December 1996 – Ring Tail?
- \* 31<sup>st</sup> December 2012 – A female drifted east at low level down the hedge line on the north side of the marsh area at last light (RAP).

Subsequently the above bird was relocated at a night-time reedbed roost site on private land just east of the lake. It was also seen hunting & showing well over nearby game crops during the daylight hours on several occasions from 1<sup>st</sup> January through till mid-January 2013.

### GOSHAWK.

- \* 10<sup>th</sup> March 1996 – (1) (A Warr).
- \* 6<sup>th</sup> February 1998?

### EURASIAN SPARROWHAWK.

Annual breeding resident in lakeside woodlands.

- \* Large numbers of Starlings gather at the site each evening during the winter months before roosting in the surrounding phragmites reedbeds. Several Sparrowhawks (up to 5) hunt the flocks at both ends of the day.
- \* In February 2017 while walking through the marsh area, Common Snipe were flushing in every direction, (2) Sparrowhawks had spotted what appeared to be an easy feeding opportunity and flew low over the

marsh all around me at low level. With (c70+) potential prey items zig zagging off at high speed, the hunting raptors became confused and appeared to fail in catching a single bird.

#### **HONEY BUZZARD. (1 record, 3 bids).**

\* 28<sup>th</sup> September 2000 – (3) juveniles soaring over the area early afternoon. Viewed from near Westmancote Cricket Club they firstly circled over the upper slopes of Bredon Hill, then over Kemerton Village and “The Court” Parkland before finally drifting off east along the south side of the Hill (G Peplow). Honey Buzzards are normally very scarce in the UK, especially in central areas.

The above record came on the back of an unprecedented influx of Scandinavian juveniles after continuous easterlies during the previous week had brought exceptional numbers across the North Sea.

Two of the birds were first seen together high up just south of Atch Lench, amazingly they were then followed by car as they soared slowly south over the Avon river meadows near Fladbury then next over the north escarpment of Bredon Hill from Nafford. A quick dash around the hill followed and the birds were then relocated high up above Westmancote where they had been joined by a third bird. Amazingly at this point several other keen birders had managed to get to the area to admire these impressive soaring raptors as they continued their southerly migration to wintering areas far away in equatorial Africa.

\* 2<sup>nd</sup> June 2002?

#### **OSPREY. (3 Records/Birds).**

\* 23<sup>rd</sup> May 1995 – (1) attempting to fish over the lake (S Whitehouse).

\* 14<sup>th</sup> October 1996?

\* 28<sup>th</sup> April 2002?

\* 20<sup>th</sup> May 2011 – Early afternoon a bird arrived and caused panic amongst birds on the lake, while hovering to fish. The resident two pairs of breeding Oystercatchers noisily mobbed it away off site to the north. It then returned an hour later receiving a similar reception. (I Lavall).

\* 31<sup>st</sup> March 2016 – (1) hovered and attempted to fish but was quickly mobbed away off site by large gulls, the bird flew away north into the distance around the west end of Bredon Hill, still being trailed by two aggressive Herring Gulls (RAP).

#### **WATER RAIL.**

As the site has become more vegetated it is much more difficult to monitor this secretive species, but it is quite feasible that birds are present throughout the year. Proof of breeding has become apparent on several occasions. Without doubt numbers are higher during the winter months as birds from further north or from Europe arrive to swell the local population in the lakes surrounding reedbeds.

\* A female was seen with 3+ half grown juveniles near the west hide in July 2008.

#### **MOORHEN.**

Resident, several pairs breed annually.

#### **COOT.**

Common breeding resident, large numbers (up to c200) during the winter months

#### **COMMON CRANE. (2 Records, 3 Birds).**

\* 20<sup>th</sup> March 1999 – Late morning a single bird dropped on to the marsh area briefly (R Price). It was then relocated on arable land just east of the site shortly after, it then remained here till late afternoon on 21<sup>st</sup>.

\* 4<sup>th</sup> May 2015 – (2) colour ringed birds were briefly on the central bund between the lake & the marsh (F Peplow). (These were birds from the Slimbridge/Somerset Levels captive breeding & reintroduction scheme being co-ordinated from WWT Slimbridge Gloucestershire).

#### **WADING BIRDS.**

The following notes clearly show the value of sandy gravel pit like habitats favoured by this group of birds. During excavation and for several years after these conditions were prevalent at the lake and both passage and summer breeding waders were seen in good numbers. As the area became more vegetated it became

much less attractive for this group of birds, this clearly shown by the Little Ringed Plover & Redshank tables.

\* 5<sup>th</sup> May 2000 proved to be an amazing day for spring wader passage at the site, with an impressive (15) different species recorded as follows –

A smoky grey summer plumaged Spotted Redshank, summer plumaged Curlew Sandpiper, summer plumaged Grey Plover, Turnstone, 3 Whimbrel, Black Tailed Godwit, Greenshank, 5 Redshank, Ringed Plover, 5 Little Ringed Plovers, Common Sandpiper, 2 Dunlin, Snipe, Lapwing & Oystercatcher.

#### OYSTERCATCHER.

\* Has bred at the site annually since 2000 with two pairs on central islands in recent times. \*

Passage birds also occasionally drop in but are always made most unwelcome by the resident birds, very noisy altercations occur at these times until the intruders are ousted away off site.

#### GREY PLOVER. (2 Records/Birds).

\* 5<sup>th</sup> May 2000 – Single summer plumaged bird (RAP).

\* 31<sup>st</sup> October 2002 – Single bird.

#### EUROPEAN GOLDEN PLOVER.

Large numbers (up to c1000) regularly overflow the area in the early days with smaller numbers dropping in with Lapwing flocks to wash & brush up.

Several hundred still visit nearby arable land & are on occasion seen overflying the area during the winter months.

#### RINGED PLOVER.

Regular passage visitor in small numbers in the early days, now only a very occasional & less than annual passage visitor.

#### LITTLE RINGED PLOVER.

\* The following table clearly shows the dependence of this species on open sand and gravel habitats, as the site became more vegetated it was no longer suitable either for feeding or nesting.

\* Pairs bred successfully (up to 3) from 1995 – 2003.

Now a very infrequent visitor, recent records as follows –

\* Single birds in May & July 2011.

\* Single bird on 4<sup>th</sup> May 2020.

Monthly maxima –

|      | MARCH | APRIL | MAY | JUNE | JULY | AUG | SEPT |
|------|-------|-------|-----|------|------|-----|------|
| 1993 | –     | -     | 2   | -    | 1    | -   | -    |
| 1994 | –     | -     | 2   | 2    | -    | -   | -    |
| 1995 | –     | 1     | 3   | 5    | 2    | 4   | -    |
| 1996 | –     | 4     | 6   | 5    | 4    | 5   | -    |
| 1997 | –     | -     | 2   | 6    | 6    | 4   | -    |
| 1998 | –     | 2     | 9   | 15   | 5    | 3   | 3    |
| 1999 | –     | 5     | 5   | 8    | 4    | 2   | 3    |
| 2000 | –     | 3     | 4   | 4    | 6    | 2   | 2    |
| 2001 | –     | 2     | 3   | 1    | 1    | 4   | 1    |
| 2002 | –     | 2     | 4   | 2    | 3    | -   | -    |
| 2003 | –     | 2     | 2   | 3    | 2    | 1   | 1    |
| 2004 | –     | 2     | 1   | -    | -    | 1   | 1    |
| 2006 | –     | -     | -   | -    | -    | 2   | -    |
| 2007 | –     | -     | -   | 1    | -    | -   | -    |
| 2009 | –     | -     | -   | 1    | -    | -   | -    |
| 2011 | –     | -     | -   | 1    | -    | 1   | -    |
| 2020 | –     | -     | -   | 1    | -    | -   | -    |

#### NORTHERN LAPWING.

Several hundred visit in the autumn/early winter period.

Small numbers have always bred annually.

\* 14<sup>th</sup> September 2002 – An all creamy white “leucistic” individual was at the lake, the bird had also been noted at the Gwen Finch wetland site on the north side of Bredon Hill on several occasions.

#### WHIMBREL. (Irregular spring visitor). (10+ Records, c28+ Birds)

\* 1995 – (1) on 12<sup>th</sup> May.

\* 1996 – (4) flew over the site on 16<sup>th</sup> April, (1) on 25<sup>th</sup> May.

\* 1997 – (1) on 29<sup>th</sup> April.

\* 1998 – (1) from 4<sup>th</sup> – 7<sup>th</sup> May, (2) on 28<sup>th</sup> May.

\* 1999 – (1) from 21<sup>st</sup> – 25<sup>th</sup> April, small numbers (up to 5) daily from 5<sup>th</sup> – 22<sup>nd</sup> May.

\* 2000 – (3) from 5<sup>th</sup> – 7<sup>th</sup> May.

\* 2002 – (3) on 1<sup>st</sup> May, (1) on 7<sup>th</sup> May.

\* 2004 – (1) on 23<sup>rd</sup> May.

\* 2007 – (2) from 16<sup>th</sup> – 18<sup>th</sup> May.

\* 2008 – (2) on 20<sup>th</sup> + 21<sup>st</sup> April.

#### EURASIAN CURLEW.

\* By far the highest count was (40) on 27<sup>th</sup> February 1999.

\* Now an occasional visitor when migrating birds drop into roost on the islands overnight during February & March.

\* One or two arrive from the Avon river meadows around Bredons Hardwick during April & May for a wash & brush up or to spend downtime before returning to their breeding sites shortly afterwards.

#### BLACK TAILED GODWIT. (c26 Records, c58+ Birds).

\* 1996 – (2) on 22<sup>nd</sup> September.

\* 1997 – (1) on 29<sup>th</sup> August.

\* 1998 – Single birds in April, June & July.

\* 1999 – (1) on 9<sup>th</sup> May, (3) on 16<sup>th</sup> May, (1) on 25<sup>th</sup> September.

\* 2000 – (1) from 5<sup>th</sup> – 9<sup>th</sup> May, (4) on 13<sup>th</sup> May, (1) on 18<sup>th</sup> June, (1) on 27<sup>th</sup> July.

\* 2001 – (1) from 30<sup>th</sup> March – 8<sup>th</sup> April.

\* 2002 – (1) on 3<sup>rd</sup> March, (1) on 23<sup>rd</sup> + 24<sup>th</sup> March, (1) on 22<sup>nd</sup> July.

\* 2003 – (1) on 7<sup>th</sup> May, highest count of (18) circled the lake area before heading off south west on 25<sup>th</sup> July, (2) on 16<sup>th</sup> August, (1) on 9<sup>th</sup> September.

\* 2006 – (1) on 25<sup>th</sup> March, (1) on 27<sup>th</sup> July, (5) on 2<sup>nd</sup> August, (3) on 3<sup>rd</sup> + 4<sup>th</sup> August.

\* 2011 – (1) on 19<sup>th</sup> + 20<sup>th</sup> August.

\* 2015 – (1) on 23<sup>rd</sup> August.

#### BAR TAILED GODWIT. (7 Records/Birds).

\* 25<sup>th</sup> October 1998 – Single bird.

\* 25<sup>th</sup> – 28<sup>th</sup> April 1999 – Single bird (RAP).

\* 8<sup>th</sup> May 1999 – Single bird.

\* 23<sup>rd</sup> + 24<sup>th</sup> April 2002 – Single bird.

\* 20<sup>th</sup> – 29<sup>th</sup> May 2002 – Single bird (RAP).

\* 14<sup>th</sup> September 2003 – Juvenile briefly closely accompanied by a Black Tailed Godwit, both birds were then relocated at Bredons Hardwick shortly after (RAP).

\* 18<sup>th</sup> May 2004 – Single bird (RAP).

#### TURNSTONE. (6 Records, 8 Birds).

\* 3<sup>rd</sup> May 1997 – Single bird.

\* 13<sup>th</sup> – 16<sup>th</sup> May 1999 – Single bird remained. A second bird was also present on 15<sup>th</sup>.

\* 5<sup>th</sup> May 2000 – Single bird (RAP).

- \* 8<sup>th</sup> May 2002 – (2) birds (RAP).
- \* 18<sup>th</sup> May 2004 – Single bird.
- \* 23<sup>rd</sup> May 2007 – Single first summer bird (RAP).

#### RED KNOT. (3 Records/Birds).

- \* 12<sup>th</sup> December 1996 – Single bird.
- \* 27<sup>th</sup> April – 2<sup>nd</sup> May 1997 – Single bird.
- \* 21<sup>st</sup> – 23<sup>rd</sup> August 1998 Juvenile (RAP).
- \* 16<sup>th</sup> January 2003?

#### RUFF. (21 Records, 39+ birds)

Annual passage migrant in small numbers in the early days.

- \* 10<sup>th</sup> September 1993 – Single bird flew over the site.
- \* 4<sup>th</sup> August 1995 – (1).
- \* 21<sup>st</sup> March 1996 – (2).
- \* 8<sup>th</sup> March 1997 – (1).
- \* 8<sup>th</sup> April 1997 – (1).
- \* 1998 – Specific dates not recorded, (1) in August, (1) in September.
- \* 1998 – October, – Highest count, (9) birds circled the lake before landing on the marsh (R Harbird).
- \* 16<sup>th</sup> May 1999 – (1).
- \* 1<sup>st</sup> – 6<sup>th</sup> August 1999 – Adult.
- \* 22<sup>nd</sup> August 1999 – (1).
- \* 9<sup>th</sup> September 1999 – (1).
- \* 15<sup>th</sup> September 2000 – (1) in the Wader Lagoon.
- \* 14<sup>th</sup> + 20<sup>th</sup> May 2001 (1).
- \* 22<sup>nd</sup> August 2001 – (1).
- \* 13<sup>th</sup> + 14<sup>th</sup> September 2002 – (1).
- \* 12<sup>th</sup> August 2003 – (1).
- \* 18<sup>th</sup> May 2004 – (4).
- \* 4<sup>th</sup> – 6<sup>th</sup> September 2005 – (2), one of these still present on 7<sup>th</sup>.
- \* 24<sup>th</sup> September 2007 – (5).
- \* 16<sup>th</sup> October 2013 – (1) juvenile.
- \* 23<sup>rd</sup> August 2015 (1).

#### CURLEW SANDPIPER. (3 Records, 6 Birds).

- \* 14<sup>th</sup> May 1998 – (2) adults.
- \* 2<sup>nd</sup> + 3<sup>rd</sup> September 1998 – (3) smart juveniles present, one of these birds then remained from 4<sup>th</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> September.
- \* 5<sup>th</sup>+ 6<sup>th</sup> May 2000 – Single full summer plumaged bird (RAP).

#### TEMMINCKS STINT. (1 Record/Bird).

- \* 5<sup>th</sup> – 9<sup>th</sup> September 2005 – Very scarce as an autumn migrant, hence a juvenile in the wader lagoon in the north east corner of the site was most unexpected (RAP).  
(This was only the second autumn record of this species in the county).

#### SANDERLING. (6 Records, 9+ Birds).

- \* 3<sup>rd</sup> May 1997 – Single bird.
- \* 27<sup>th</sup> May 1997 – (2) birds.
- \* 16<sup>th</sup>, 22<sup>nd</sup>, 25<sup>th</sup>, & 27<sup>th</sup> May 1998 – Single birds? (RAP).
- \* 13<sup>th</sup> May 1999 – (2) birds, rising to (3) birds on 14<sup>th</sup> (RAP).
- \* 13<sup>th</sup> May 2002 – Single bird (RAP).
- \* 14<sup>th</sup> May 2009 – Single bird (RAP).

## DUNLIN.

Common passage visitor in the early days now much less than annual.

\* Highest counts – (15) in April 1998 & (16) on 9<sup>th</sup> May 1999.

## LITTLE STINT. (4+Records, c20+Birds).

\* 28<sup>th</sup> September 1997 – Single bird.

\* 25<sup>th</sup> May 1992?

\* September 1998 witnessed a large influx of juveniles into the UK, Kemerton Lake shared in the action with (2) on 2<sup>nd</sup>+3<sup>rd</sup>, (4) on 19<sup>th</sup>+20<sup>th</sup>, (7) on 23<sup>rd</sup>+24<sup>th</sup> & (5) on 26<sup>th</sup>+27<sup>th</sup>.

\* 26<sup>th</sup> May 2003 – Full summer breeding plumaged bird on central island (C Davies/RAP).

\* 14<sup>th</sup> December 2017 – A very unexpected winter record of a single bird avidly feeding around the central islands after a prolonged period of extensive flooding and bitter cold conditions over much of the UK (RAP).

## PECTORAL SANDPIPER. (1 Record/Bird).

Rare passage migrant from the North American and Russian arctic tundra regions.

\* 5<sup>th</sup> + 6<sup>th</sup> September 2006 – A juvenile fed on an exposed sand bank in the north east corner of the main lake during a period of particularly low water (RAP).

## GREY PHALAROPE. (1 Record/Bird).

\* 9<sup>th</sup> October 2001 – Single bird seen around small balancing pools at west side of the site?

\* 24<sup>th</sup> September 2018 – First winter bird found freshly dead in the wader lagoon in the NE corner of the site (RAP).

The above record came after very-strong persistent westerly winds on 21<sup>st</sup> September had forced birds well inland, with some reaching as far as the Midlands.

This unusual wader breeds on coastal wet tundra in the Arctic regions and Iceland. Post breeding birds migrate south off our coasts in small numbers while on passage to wintering areas off south & west Africa. Normally this movement occurs well out in the north Atlantic although gales can push single or small groups close inshore to coastal pools or other sheltered areas to sit out the worst of the weather before heading back out to sea. If the strong winds persist then small numbers can turn up at water bodies well inland, most of these birds are inexperienced juveniles and may not survive their ordeal. Grey Phalaropes tend to be exceptionally tame and approachable as they swim around in small circles picking insects from the surface or taking tiny morsels from shorelines.



Deceased juvenile Grey Phalarope on 24/09/2018.

### COMMON SANDPIPER.

\*

Regular spring & autumn passage visitor.

- \* Highest count (7) in April 1998.

### GREEN SANDPIPER.

Regular autumn passage visitor in small numbers, mostly to the small wader lagoon in the NE corner of the site when water levels are low.

### SPOTTED REDSHANK. (10 Records, 12 Birds).

- \* 15<sup>th</sup> August 1993 – Single bird.
- \* 23<sup>rd</sup> August 1995 – Single juvenile.
- \* 1<sup>st</sup> May 1997 – (2) adults.
- \* 23<sup>rd</sup> April 1998 – Single bird.
- \* 4<sup>th</sup> May 1998 – (2) birds flew over together.
- \* 16<sup>th</sup> September 1999 – Juvenile.
- \* 5<sup>th</sup> May 2000 – Smokey grey partial summer plumaged bird (RAP).
- \* 9<sup>th</sup> September 2001 – Single bird.
- \* 28<sup>th</sup> April 2004 – Single winter plumaged bird.
- \* 18<sup>th</sup> August 2005 – Single bird in the Wader Lagoon briefly, after circling the main lake it left high to the south east (RAP).

### GREENSHANK. (66+ Birds)

Regular passage migrant in the early days. Now an irregular, less than annual visitor, mainly during the late summer period.

- \* 1993 – (1) in August.
- \* 1995 – (1) on 18<sup>th</sup> August.
- \* 1997 – (1) on 4<sup>th</sup> May, (1) on 1<sup>st</sup> September.
- \* 1998 – (1) in May, (1) in July, (3) in August, (7) in September, (1) in October.
- \* 1999 – (1) on 9<sup>th</sup> September.
- \* 2000 – (2) in May, (2) in June, (2) in August, (1) in September.
- \* 2001 – (1) on 7<sup>th</sup> May, (2) on 17<sup>th</sup>+18<sup>th</sup> September, (1) from 22<sup>nd</sup> – 27<sup>th</sup> September, (5) on 4<sup>th</sup> October.
- \* 2002 – April (1), July (1), August (2), September (1), October (1).
- \* 2003 – (1) on 14<sup>th</sup> April, (3) on 6<sup>th</sup> August, (1) on 12<sup>th</sup> August, (1) on 29<sup>th</sup> August, (2) on 9<sup>th</sup> September.
- \* 2004 – (1) on 29<sup>th</sup> April.
- \* 2005 – (1) from 18<sup>th</sup> – 21<sup>st</sup> August, (2) from 22<sup>nd</sup> – 27<sup>th</sup> August, (1) from 28<sup>th</sup> August – 6<sup>th</sup> September.
- \* 2006 – (2) on 6<sup>th</sup> May., (1) on 13<sup>th</sup> August.
- \* 2008 – (1) on 20<sup>th</sup> April.
- \* 2010 – (1) in August, (2) in September.
- \* 2011 – (1) from 14<sup>th</sup> – 19<sup>th</sup> August, then (2) from 20<sup>th</sup> – 23<sup>rd</sup> August, (1) from 24<sup>th</sup> – 28<sup>th</sup> August, (3) on 29<sup>th</sup> August & finally back down to a single bird from 30<sup>th</sup> August – 13<sup>th</sup> September.
- \* 2015 – (1) on 9<sup>th</sup> September.
- \* 2016 – (2) in August, (1) in October.
- \* 2020 – (1) on one of the central island early morning 29<sup>th</sup> April.

### WOOD SANDPIPER. (6 Records/Birds).

- \* 3<sup>rd</sup> August 1995 – Single bird.
- \* 14<sup>th</sup> – 18<sup>th</sup> August 1995 – Single bird.
- \* 1<sup>st</sup> September 1998 – Single bird.
- \* 17<sup>th</sup> + 18<sup>th</sup> September 1998 – Single bird.
- \* 7<sup>th</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup> May 1999 – Single bird (RAP).
- \* 18<sup>th</sup> – 21<sup>st</sup> May 2003 – Single bird (RAP).
- \* 21<sup>st</sup> May 2005?

### COMMON REDSHANK.

Common summer visitor in the early days when the site still had sand & gravel areas, 4 pairs bred in 2004 fledging (12) young + annually at this time, now a much less than annual passage visitor.

|          | FEB | MAR | APR | MAY | JUN | JLY | AUG | SEPT | OCT |
|----------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|------|-----|
| * 1998 – | 6   | 10  | 9   | 7   | 3   | 3   | 1   | -    | -   |
| * 1999 – | 6   | 22  | 4   | 6   | 13  | -   | -   | -    | -   |
| * 2000 – | 1   | 14  | 12  | 6   | 20  | 2   | -   | -    | -   |
| * 2001 – | -   | 2   | 12  | 8   | 9   | -   | -   | -    | -   |
| * 2002 – | 1   | 14  | 10  | 8   | 10  | 2   | -   | -    | -   |
| * 2003 – | -   | 2   | 8   | 9   | 13  | 1   | -   | -    | 1   |
| * 2004 – | -   | 4   | 7   | 9   | 21  | 2   | -   | -    | -   |
| * 2005 – | -   | 1   | 4   | 2   | 8   | -   | 1   | -    | -   |
| * 2006 – | -   | 3   | 4   | 7   | 7   | 4   | -   | 1    | -   |
| * 2007 – | 1   | 2   | 1   | 1   | 1   | -   | -   | -    | -   |
| * 2008 – | -   | -   | -   | -   | 3   | -   | -   | -    | -   |
| * 2010 – | -   | -   | 1   | 1   | -   | -   | -   | -    | -   |
| * 2013 – | -   | -   | 1   | -   | -   | -   | -   | -    | -   |
| * 2015 – | -   | -   | 1   | -   | -   | -   | -   | -    | -   |
| * 2019 – | -   | -   | -   | 1   | -   | -   | -   | -    | -   |

### JACK SNIPE.

Most birds tend to arrive from October onwards from their summer haunts on tundra & taiga bogs in Scandinavia. Due to their secretive nature, they are difficult to see but are present in the marsh area alongside their larger Common Snipe cousins throughout the winter months till mid-April in variable numbers. High water levels and freezing conditions can lead to birds vacating the site for shallow open marshy areas elsewhere, but they soon return when conditions return to normality.

Monthly maxima –

|          | JAN | FEB | MAR | APR |  | SEPT | OCT | NOV | DEC |
|----------|-----|-----|-----|-----|--|------|-----|-----|-----|
| * 1998 – | -   | -   | -   | -   |  | -    | 1   | -   | 1   |
| * 1999 – | 3   | 2   | 2   | -   |  | -    | 2   | 1   | -   |
| * 2001 – | -   | -   | -   | -   |  | -    | -   | 2   | -   |
| * 2002 – | -   | -   | -   | -   |  | -    | -   | 2   | 3   |
| * 2005 – | -   | 2   | -   | -   |  | -    | -   | -   | -   |
| * 2006 – | 2   | 8   | 3   | -   |  | -    | -   | 5   | 7   |
| * 2007 – | 5   | 2   | 6   | -   |  | -    | -   | 9   | 9   |
| * 2008 – | 16  | 4   | 11  | -   |  | 1    | 2   | 6   | 4   |
| * 2009 – | 3   | 2   | 1   | -   |  | -    | 1   | 1   | 1   |
| * 2010 – | 5   | -   | -   | -   |  | -    | -   | 16  | -   |
| * 2011 – | -   | -   | 2   | -   |  | -    | -   | -   | -   |
| * 2012 – | 6   | 3   | 3   | 4   |  | -    | 15  | 19  | 12  |
| * 2013 – | 9   | 8   | 7   | 2   |  | -    | 1   | 8   | 18  |
| * 2014 – | 12  | 8   | 15  | 3   |  | -    | 3   | 7   | 11  |
| * 2015 – | 10  | 15  | 8   | 4   |  | -    | 4   | 8   | 7   |
| * 2016 – | 15  | 14  | 14  | 14  |  | -    | -   | -   | 7   |
| * 2017 – | 9   | 9   | 7   | -   |  | 1    | -   | -   | -   |
| * 2018 – | 4   | 11  | 5   | 2   |  | -    | -   | -   | 1   |
| * 2019 – | 3   | 2   | 5   | 2   |  | -    | -   | 6   | 12  |
| * 2020 – | 28  | 10  | 14  | 2   |  | -    | 10  | 12  | 5   |
| * 2021 – | 9   | 8   | 11  | 5   |  |      |     |     |     |

### WOODCOCK.

\* Small numbers resident in lakeside woodlands during the winter months, although difficult to locate unless accidentally flushed.

\* Birds feed on surrounding arable land during the darkness hours and can be seen at dawn when returning to their daytime woodland hideaways.

#### COMMON SNIPE.

Winter resident, although occasionally one or two are seen during the summer months.

The following table shows that since regular monitoring began in 1998 this species has found the marsh area to their liking with numbers remaining near constant. Flooding or freezing conditions can leave the area unsuitable, when this occurs, birds tend to leave the site, sometimes moving many miles but quickly return when conditions improve.

Monthly maxima –

|      | JAN   | FEB | MAR | APR | MAY | JUN | JLY | AUG | SEPT | OCT | NOV | DEC |
|------|-------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|------|-----|-----|-----|
| 1998 | – 5   | 15  | 32  | 10  | -   | -   | 3   | 1   | 5    | 10  | 22  | 19  |
| 1999 | – -   | 35  | 25  | -   | -   | -   | -   | -   | -    | 54  | 20  | 10  |
| 2000 | – 20  | 45  | 4   | 17  | -   | 1   | -   | 1   | 12   | 23  | 12  | 14  |
| 2001 | – 15  | 18  | 21  | 4   | -   | -   | -   | 2   | 20   | 17  | 22  | 14  |
| 2002 | – 8   | 27  | 30  | 9   | 1   | -   | -   | 1   | 12   | 14  | 11  | 16  |
| 2003 | – 11  | 30  | 27  | 3   | -   | -   | -   | 1   | 5    | 1   | 1   | 1   |
| 2004 | – 7   | 20  | 13  | 10  | -   | -   | -   | -   | -    | 2   | 23  | 17  |
| 2005 | – 22  | 10  | 10  | 2   | -   | -   | -   | 3   | 1    | 3   | 4   | 1   |
| 2006 | – 3   | 10  | 17  | 12  | 2   | -   | 1   | 3   | -    | -   | 4   | 10  |
| 2007 | – 17  | 30  | 25  | 20  | 1   | 1   | 1   | 12  | 10   | 8   | 5   | 33  |
| 2008 | – 42  | 40  | 7   | 1   | -   | -   | -   | -   | 3    | 6   | 46  | 45  |
| 2009 | – 19  | 14  | 5   | 2   | -   | -   | -   | 1   | 2    | 5   | 9   | 17  |
| 2010 | – 3   | 2   | 4   | 2   | -   | -   | -   | 6   | 3    | 1   | 2   | -   |
| 2011 | – 2   | 2   | 31  | 2   | -   | -   | -   | -   | -    | 5   | 2   | 2   |
| 2012 | – 11  | 24  | 25  | 15  | 1   | -   | -   | 1   | 10   | 16  | 21  | 22  |
| 2013 | – 41  | 14  | 10  | 8   | 2   | -   | -   | 6   | 6    | 5   | 28  | 66  |
| 2014 | – 85  | 27  | 78  | 5   | -   | -   | -   | 4   | 13   | 18  | 34  | 74  |
| 2015 | – 45  | 33  | 19  | 7   | 1   | -   | -   | 1   | 1    | 10  | 5   | 25  |
| 2016 | – 74  | 67  | 98  | 32  | -   | -   | -   | -   | 3    | 3   | -   | 29  |
| 2017 | – 109 | 42  | 51  | 8   | -   | -   | -   | -   | 1    | 2   | 5   | 19  |
| 2018 | – 78  | 68  | 48  | 10  | -   | -   | -   | 5   | 8    | 1   | 5   | 24  |
| 2019 | – 16  | 23  | 7   | 10  | 3   | -   | 2   | -   | 7    | 42  | 54  | 57  |
| 2020 | – 153 | 62  | 92  | 17  | 1   | -   | -   | 1   | 2    | 37  | 44  | 87  |
| 2021 | – 82  | 61  | 42  | 23  | 6   |     |     |     |      |     |     |     |

#### LITTLE TERN. (3 Records, 4 Birds).

\* 13<sup>th</sup> May 2000 – Single bird (S Whitehouse).

\* 4<sup>th</sup> May 2009 – Single bird (RAP).

\* 6<sup>th</sup> May 2014 – (2) RAP.

#### BLACK TERN. (18 Records, 85+ Birds).

\* 26<sup>th</sup> August 1996 – (2).

\* 25<sup>th</sup> August 1997 – Juvenile.

\* 23<sup>rd</sup> April 1998 – (1).

\* 5<sup>th</sup> September 1998 – (3).

\* 8<sup>th</sup> September 1998 – (1).

\* 30<sup>th</sup> July 1999 – Adult.

\* 7<sup>th</sup> May 2000 – (24) birds mid-morning, appeared to leave then an hour later (20) birds arrived?

\* 16<sup>th</sup> June 2000 – (2).

\* 13<sup>th</sup> May 2001 – (5).

\* 1<sup>st</sup> October 2001 – Juvenile.

\* 12<sup>th</sup> April 2005 – (15).

\* 14<sup>th</sup> September 2006 – (10).

- \* 29<sup>th</sup> April 2008 – (2).
- \* 7<sup>th</sup> May 2008 – (7).
- \* 9<sup>th</sup> May 2008 – (1).
- \* 13<sup>th</sup> May 2009 – (9).
- \* 15<sup>th</sup> September 2009 – Juvenile.
- \* 15<sup>th</sup> September 2015 – Juvenile.

#### SANDWICH TERN. (2 Records, 3 Birds).

- \* 17<sup>th</sup> August 2003 – Two adults over the west end of the lake briefly at first light then left high to the north. (RAP).
- \* 12<sup>th</sup> September 2017 – A first winter bird circled the lake, staying for only a short while before leaving south west. (C.J Davies/RAP).



Above – First winter Sandwich Tern 12/09/17

#### COMMON TERN.

- \* Small numbers regularly visit the lake during both passage periods.
- \* Single pairs attempted to breed on the islands on several occasions during the early 2000s, but the eggs or small chicks tended to be predated by large Gulls.

#### ARCTIC TERN. (8 Records, 19 Birds).

Occasional visitor to the site in small numbers, mostly during poor weather conditions.

- \* 30<sup>th</sup> August 1997 – Juvenile.
- \* 19<sup>th</sup> September 1998 – Juvenile.
- \* 1<sup>st</sup> + 2<sup>nd</sup> October 1999 – (2).
- \* 19<sup>th</sup> May 2002 – (1).
- \* 28<sup>th</sup> April 2004 – (10) all morning in wet misty conditions, then leaving north as the sky brightened early afternoon. (RAP).
- \* 25<sup>th</sup> -27<sup>th</sup> April 2008 – (1).
- \* 6<sup>th</sup> May 2009 – (1).
- \* 12<sup>th</sup> September 2011 – (2).

#### GULLS.

From October 2017 refuse sites in the area ceased to accept general household waste. With no food items going to landfill Gull numbers in the county dropped dramatically (probably by c80%) within a week of these changes.

Up until 2017 several thousand gulls would commute early morning & back again in the evening from roost sites around the estuary to the landfill site at Hill & Moor. At the same time, other landfill sites existed at Gloucester & nearby Bishops Cleeve. Many of these commuting birds (sometimes up to 1,000+) dropped in at Kemerton Lake to bathe & loaf. Due to the changes at the landfill sites, since 2017 numbers of Gulls at the lake have dropped dramatically with rarely more than (c150) now present.

#### KITTIWAKE. (2 Records/Birds).

- \* 21<sup>st</sup> March 1999 – Adult loafing with large gathering of mixed Gull species.
- \* 9<sup>th</sup> December 2009 – Corpse of a first winter bird found dead on the arable area in the north east corner of the site (RAP).

#### BLACK HEADED GULL.

Regular visitor in variable numbers (Up to 250) during the winter months, only occasional visitor in small numbers at other times.

#### LITTLE GULL. (9) Records, 19 Birds).

Occasional visitor during passage periods.

- \* 6<sup>th</sup> May 2000 – Adult.
- \* 7<sup>th</sup> May 2000 – Three first summers.
- \* 26<sup>th</sup> – 28<sup>th</sup> September 2000 – Juvenile.
- \* 18<sup>th</sup> March 2002 – (2) adults + (2) first summers.
- \* 15<sup>th</sup> October 2002 – Adult.
- \* 31<sup>st</sup> October 2002 – Four adults + two 1<sup>st</sup> winters.
- \* 4<sup>th</sup> – 20<sup>th</sup> November 2012 – Immature/first winter (F Peplow).
- \* 29<sup>th</sup> March 2014 – Adult.
- \* 21<sup>st</sup> April 2019 – Adult (G Peplow).

#### MEDITERRANEAN GULL. (8 Records, 9 Birds).

Surprisingly scarce at the site, especially as successful breeding continues to rise at many sites on the south and west coasts of southern England and Wales.

- \* 9<sup>th</sup> August 1998 – Adult (RAP).
- \* 12<sup>th</sup> February 2000 – Adult.
- \* 7<sup>th</sup> March 2005 – (1).
- \* 22<sup>nd</sup> July 2006 – First summer.
- \* 4<sup>th</sup> April 2010 – First summer + Second summer with large Black Headed Gull flock
- \* 13<sup>th</sup> May 2010 – Adult.
- \* 17<sup>th</sup> March 2017 – Adult (RAP).
- \* 5<sup>th</sup> April 2019 – Adult.

#### COMMON GULL.

Winter visitor in small numbers, larger numbers (100+) of northerly bound passage birds are sometimes seen overflying the area during late March.

- \* On 5<sup>th</sup> March 1998 – (115) passage birds dropped in briefly to bathe before carrying on their journey to the north.

#### LESSER BLACK BACKED GULL.

- \* Regular visitor, large numbers loaf on the islands at times.
- \* Pairs have bred on the central islands on several occasions.

#### HERRING GULL.

Regular visitor, large numbers loaf on the islands at times.

#### YELLOW LEGGED GULL.

The Mediterranean version of our Herring Gull. Generally scarce in the UK although small numbers were regularly seen loafing & bathing at the lake with other large Gulls up until the late 2000s.

No records since 2008.

\* 12<sup>th</sup> April 1999 – Adult.

\* 24<sup>th</sup> April 1999 – (3) Second summers.

\* 2<sup>nd</sup> May 1999 – Second summer.

\* 9<sup>th</sup> – 14<sup>th</sup> September 1999 – Juvenile.

\* 10<sup>th</sup> February 2001 – Adult.

\* 2002 – January (1), March (1), May (1), June (1), October (3), November (2).

\* 10<sup>th</sup> July 2003 – Adult.

\* 13<sup>th</sup> + 20<sup>th</sup> December 2003 – Single bird.

\* 2004 - January (adult) on 6<sup>th</sup>, October (1) on 14<sup>th</sup>, November (1) on 10<sup>th</sup>, December single birds on 3<sup>rd</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup>.

\* 26<sup>th</sup> November 2005 (1).

\* 2007 – April (3), May (1), August (1), December (1).

\* 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2008 - Adult.

#### ICELAND GULL. (1 Record/Bird).

\* 21<sup>st</sup> April 2007 (G Peplow) then again on 17<sup>th</sup> May (F Peplow) – The same first summer bird was loafing & bathing with other large Gulls around and on the central islands at the lake.

#### GREAT BLACK BACKED GULL.

Regular visitor to the site in relatively small numbers loafing (up to 50) with other large Gulls up until c2017. Occasionally larger numbers (Up to 50) have been seen.

#### FERAL PIGEON.

Common visitor when the site was a working Gravel Pit, now only occasionally seen.

#### STOCK DOVE.

Common when the site was a working gravel pit, much less so now.

#### WOOD PIGEON.

Common breeding resident, large numbers (up to c1000) visit surrounding arable land to feed during the winter months & fly over to the lake woodlands when disturbed.

#### COLLARED DOVE.

Common visitor when site was a working gravel pit, much less so now.

#### TURTLE DOVE.

\* Not an uncommon summer breeding resident when the site was still being excavated with double figures not unusual. Numbers dropped dramatically in the early 2000s with only one or two were seen annually till 2005.

\* No records from 2006 – 2009, then unexpectedly the last recorded (3) birds were seen at the lake in 2010.

#### COMMON CUCKOO.

Always a regular summer visitor at the site during the spring & early summer period, but numbers are now much reduced.

#### BARN OWL.

Single birds seen hunting around the site fairly-regularly. A pair has bred on many occasions in a farm building on adjacent agricultural land.

\* In the winters of 2017 & 2018 – On several occasions a Barn Owl was seen dropping into Reedbeds at

dusk to catch unsuspecting Starlings as they jostled for position in the large winter roost that gathered each evening. Unfortunate birds were then taken to a favoured perch in a derelict agricultural building in the north east corner of the site to be disposed of. On the floor under the favoured perch were the remains of numerous discarded Starlings. With the bonanza of relatively easy targets, many of the unfortunate birds had only their breasts stripped, while others just heads & legs removed, both these areas are rich in blood, the brain is particularly nutritious.

\* Throughout June 2019 a bird was seen hunting early each morning in full daylight around the west end of the marsh. It then became apparent that prey items were being taken to a nest site in mature woodland in the north west corner of the site.

#### LITTLE OWL.

\* Up until the mid-2000s, c3+ pairs bred in the area.

\* A pair were resident at the lake and annually bred in a purpose-built box located in an ancient Ash tree in the north east hedge line from the late 1990s – 2009.

\* One or two pairs have always bred in the parkland, unfortunately this record came to an end in 2018 when no birds bred.

#### TAWNY OWL.

Breeding resident. Several birds are heard from surrounding woodland & parkland to the north of the lake during the winter period, especially during February when territories are being formed prior to the breeding season.

#### SHORT EARED OWL. (1 Record).

\* 3<sup>rd</sup> November 2015 – Single bird drifted south west high over the marsh area late morning while being mobbed by corvids, shortly after the bird returned briefly but was again escorted off site in the same direction (RAP).

#### COMMON SWIFT.

Common summer visitor.

#### KINGFISHER.

\* One or two birds regularly visit the lake to fish and can be seen in all months of the year.

\* A pair bred in a steep sand cliff on the north side of the small wader lagoon in the north east corner of the site in 2002, 2003, 2005 & 2008.

#### WRYNECK.

Although not strictly within the designated recording area, an autumn migrant was present in a Kemerton garden from 23<sup>rd</sup> – 25<sup>th</sup> August 1997.

#### GREEN WOODPECKER.

Breeding resident.

#### GREAT SPOTTED WOODPECKER.

Breeding resident.

#### LESSER SPOTTED WOODPECKER. (5 Records/Birds).

\* 1993 – Pair bred in Upstones Orchard alongside the main entrance gate.

\* 1998 – Single male in the parkland on several dates.

\* 21<sup>st</sup> September 2001 – Male in Upstones Orchard.

\* 7<sup>th</sup> February 2003 – Male in Upstones Orchard.

\* 30<sup>th</sup> January – 3<sup>rd</sup> February 2008 - Single bird coming to a garden feeding station adjacent to the Court Parkland.

#### COMMON KESTREL.

Regular visitor to hunt the grassy areas on the north side of the lake. A pair breeds in the parkland just north of the lake most years.

#### MERLIN. (9+ Records/birds).

Occasional winter visitor.

- \* 6<sup>th</sup> March 1997 – Male at the lake (D Offer).
- \* 3<sup>rd</sup> September 1998 – Immature male (SMW).
- \* 9<sup>th</sup> December 2012?
- \* 6<sup>th</sup> October 2001 – Female.
- \* 2<sup>nd</sup> November 2002 – Male (RAP).
- \* 31<sup>st</sup> January 2003 – (1).
- \* 18<sup>th</sup> March 2003 – (1).
- \* 12<sup>th</sup> December 2004 – Female (RAP).
- \* 30<sup>th</sup> November 2014 – Male.
- \* 12<sup>th</sup> January 2015 – An unusual record of a female hunting loose birds from the edge of a large winter Starling roost (GHP).

#### HOBBY.

Occasional early summer visitor. Regular late summer visitor to the lake to feed on Dragonflies & other large insects.

#### PEREGRINE FALCON.

Fairly regular visitor to the site, most often during the winter months to hunt mostly a variety of prey items but these often include Wood Pigeons & Teal.

#### MAGPIE.

Common resident.

#### EURASIAN JAY.

Common breeding woodland resident.

#### JACKDAW.

Common throughout the year. Large numbers (several hundred) arrive annually to feast on woodland cherries during June and into July.

#### ROOK.

no nearby rookeries hence birds are only occasionally seen overflying the area.

N

#### CARRION CROW.

\* Large numbers feed on local arable land at times, hence a common & regular sight over & around the site.

\* Birds are regularly seen wading along the north shoreline to catch large Swan Mussels. Once caught they are then carried to lakeside surrounds to crack open & devour, large piles of empty shells build up in favoured areas.

#### RAVEN.

Small numbers regularly overfly the area.

#### GOLDCREST.

Breeding resident in surrounding woodlands.

#### BLUE TIT.

Common breeding resident.

#### GREAT TIT.

Common breeding resident.

#### COAL TIT.

Fairly common breeding resident.

#### MARSH TIT.

\* Breeding resident in surrounding woodlands in the late 1990s.

\* A pair were seen feeding juveniles in a nest in the Pine Copse behind the original west hide in May 1998. This was the last site record for this species.

#### WILLOW TIT.

\* No specific date but recorded as present at the lake in 1998?

Willow Tits have always been very scarce or even rare in the south of the county, while Marsh Tits were reasonably common at the time of this record & were known to breed in woodlands around the lake. Willow & Marsh Tits are notoriously difficult to separate in the field, it seems more likely this bird was a Marsh Tit.

#### SKYLARK.

Good numbers bred at the site in the 1990s & early 2000s. One or two pairs still breed in grassland on the north side of the marsh in 2019.

#### SAND MARTIN.

\* Common spring visitor, sometimes in large numbers during periods of inclement weather.

\* Small numbers bred at the site when suitable sandy banks were available during excavations in the early days.

#### BARN SWALLOW.

Common summer visitor, particularly during inclement weather at passage times.

#### HOUSE MARTIN.

Common summer visitor, particularly during inclement weather at passage times.

#### CETTI'S WARBLER. (10 records, c13+ birds).

\* Male singing at nearby Aston Mill throughout April & May 2007 and again in the same area in 2008.

\* 2012 – First record at the lake – A Male singing around the lake perimeter from 26<sup>th</sup> March – 13<sup>th</sup> July then again from 23<sup>rd</sup> October – till the end of the year.

\* 2013 – Male singing from 1<sup>st</sup> – 15<sup>th</sup> April.

\* 2014 – Male singing from 27<sup>th</sup> March – 21<sup>st</sup> May then 2 juveniles seen with an adult from 31<sup>st</sup> July – 30<sup>th</sup> September. During October, a male was singing on 8<sup>th</sup> and a female was churring on 13<sup>th</sup> & 20<sup>th</sup>.

\* 2015 – Single bird chipping & trilling on 3<sup>rd</sup> November & 23<sup>rd</sup> December.

\* 2018 – Single bird heard near the boardwalk hide on 11<sup>th</sup> November 2018 (G Peplow).

\* 2019 – Single bird calling alongside the east hide on 13<sup>th</sup> January (G Peplow).

\* 2019 – Single bird chirred quietly then spikked once before being seen very briefly in the reedbed on the south side of the wader lagoon on 19<sup>th</sup> November, the bird was heard again in the same area on 28<sup>th</sup> November & 18<sup>th</sup> December (RAP).

\* 2020 – Single bird chipped once from the reedbed alongside the bund between the Wader Lagoon and the Lake on 10<sup>th</sup> February (RAP).

\* 2020 – Single bird churring in the reedbeds between the main lake and the Wader Lagoon on 19<sup>th</sup> October, then (2) birds in the same area on 10<sup>th</sup> November and 4<sup>th</sup> December.

\* 2021 – (1) in the reedbed around the wader lagoon on 17<sup>th</sup> January (GHP).

#### LONG TAILED TIT.

Breeding resident, large mobile flocks seen during the autumn/winter months.

#### COMMON CHIFF CHAFF.

Common summer visitor.

#### WILLOW WARBLER.

Small numbers sing on the edge of woodlands in the early spring period.

#### BLACKCAP.

Common breeding summer resident.

#### GARDEN WARBLER.

- \* Fairly common summer visitor to the newly planted woodlands around the lake in the early days.
- \* By the late 2000s less than annual.
- \* Last record was of a passage bird on 27<sup>th</sup> August 2006.

#### LESSER WHITETHROAT.

Several males heard singing from hedges on the north side of the lake in the early summer period.

#### COMMON WHITETHROAT.

Fairly common breeding summer visitor.

#### GRASSHOPPER WARBLER.

Scarce summer visitor.

- \* 21<sup>st</sup> May – 5<sup>th</sup> June 2002 – Reeling male alongside the north east entrance track, then (2) juveniles were seen in the same area on 20<sup>th</sup> August
- \* 2008 – Reeling male in the marsh area in April.
- \* 2011 – Reeling male heard during the breeding period.

#### SEDGE WARBLER.

Summer visitor in small numbers, two or three pairs breed around the marsh site annually.

- \* The earliest ever spring migrant for the whole of the West Midlands area occurred at the lake on 25<sup>th</sup> March 2020, this beating the previous earliest record by four days (P Clarke).

#### REED WARBLER.

Common summer visitor, (c20 pairs) breed annually.

#### EURASIAN NUTHATCH.

Breeding resident in nearby parkland, very occasional visitor to the lake area.

#### EURASIAN TREE CREEPER.

Common breeding resident in surrounding woodland, but elusive.

#### WREN.

Common breeding resident in surrounding woodlands.

#### COMMON STARLING.

Although Starlings appear in huge numbers at favoured winter roost sites, numbers of UK resident birds dropped by 87% between 1967 & 2015. This is believed to be due to the loss of permanent pasture, increased use of farm chemicals & shortage of food & nesting sites in many parts of the UK. Fifty years ago, most large cities held large Starling roosts, but they are now more likely to be seen in rural areas.

Numbers in the UK are swelled in the late autumn/early winter periods by millions of birds which arrive from northern Europe and the Baltics.

Starlings are fickle birds which may utilise a roost site for several consecutive years, then for no apparent reason ignore the site in subsequent years. Winter roosting birds at KLNR tend not to arrive in larger numbers till November, often turning up in huge numbers totally unannounced, then remaining for several weeks before deserting the site as quickly as they arrived. Reasons for these sudden movements may be complex but the following certainly have an influence

- a). Destruction of the reedbed roost site due to the sheer weight of birds flattening the area.
- b). Fouling of the roost area, this can build to a very pungent ammonia like stench.
- c). Predators move in to hunt the flocks & may build to numbers large enough to cause the flocks to move on. Predators of pre roost flocks typically include Sparrowhawks (Up to 6) & occasionally Peregrine, Merlin & even Owls. Mammals are not slow to join in the easily harvested bounty where the reedbeds are accessible & may include Fox, Badger, Weasel, Stoat & Rats.

Larger roosts noted in the reedbeds at the lake as follows –

- \* 2004 – Large numbers at both ends of the year with an estimate of c20,000 in the first winter period.
- \* 2006 – (c7,000) on 17<sup>th</sup> December.
- \* 2007 – (c2,000) on 3<sup>rd</sup> November.
- \* 2012 - (c5,000) on 5<sup>th</sup> November rising to (c10,000) on 29<sup>th</sup> then (c18,000) by 10<sup>th</sup> December.
- \* 2013 – (c8000) on 4<sup>th</sup> November.
- \* 2017 – (c15,000) daily from 1<sup>st</sup> January – 20<sup>th</sup> February.
- \* 2018 – (c16,500) on 24<sup>th</sup> November rising nightly to (c25,000) from mid-December till the end of the year.
- \* 2019 – (c25,000) from 1<sup>st</sup> – 10<sup>th</sup> January. / (c10,000) on 27<sup>th</sup> October.
- \* 2020 – On 20<sup>th</sup> September – (c750) birds were seen to leave the Wader Lagoon reedbeds just after first light (06.50).

Re above 20/09/2020 – It has always been presumed that Starling roosts at the lake are solely a winter phenomenon, but perhaps they occur as soon as the breeding season comes to an end (July/August) when post breeding juveniles build up into large mobile feeding flocks during daylight hours?).

#### BLACKBIRD.

Breeding resident.

#### FIELDFARE.

- \* Regular at the site during the winter months.
- \* Large numbers (several hundred) visit the parkland to the north of the site to feed on worms & invertebrates.

#### SONG THRUSH.

Breeding resident.

#### REDWING.

Common winter visitor to nearby parkland, sometimes flocks of several hundred.

#### MISTLE THRUSH.

- \* Resident, several pairs breed in the nearby parkland.
- \* Post breeding flocks of up to twenty are seen most autumns. Good numbers gather to feed on Mistletoe berries in the parkland during the winter months.

#### SPOTTED FLYCATCHER.

- \* Once a common breeding summer visitor in many gardens along the south side of Bredon Hill with estimates of c40 pairs in 2002, c30 in 2003, c36 in 2004, c22 in 2005, & (23) in 2006.
- \* Up until c2006 post breeding family parties from nearby villages would visit areas around the lake prior to southerly migration, double figures were often seen at this time.

- \* By 2007 it was apparent numbers had dropped markedly.
- \* 2019 – Two or three pairs still breed in Kemerton Village adjacent to the parkland.

#### ROBIN.

Breeding resident.

#### COMMON REDSTART.

Surprisingly scarce at the site, especially as good numbers breed on nearby Bredon Hill.

- \* 1995 – Juvenile autumn migrant feeding in the hedge alongside the west hide for several days in mid-august.
- \* May 1999 – Male singing near the original west hide.
- \* 27<sup>th</sup> – 29<sup>th</sup> July 2002 – Post breeding male.

#### WHINCHAT.

Annual double passage visitor in the early days, has now become scarce & certainly less than annual.

#### EUROPEAN STONECHAT.

Early autumn migrant in small numbers (up to 6). Single pairs often winter around the marsh area.

#### NORTHERN WHEATEAR.

Regular spring and autumn passage migrant in small numbers when the site was more open & less vegetated.

- \* Small numbers (up to 3) still utilise the arable area as a staging post during passage periods when conditions are right.
- \* A particularly early passage migrant was present on 18<sup>th</sup> March 2011.

#### DUNNOCK.

Breeding resident.

#### HOUSE SPARROW.

Reasonably common in the past when the site was more open, no records for some years now, although birds still frequent the parkland area, especially when cattle are present.

#### TREE SPARROW.

Common resident in good numbers (up to 40), mostly during the winter months when the site was still being excavated & annual weeds were widespread. No records for many years.

- \* 2004 – Unexpectedly, (6) turned up at supplementary winter feeding on the arable area during the first winter period, this was the first record for ten years.

\* 6<sup>th</sup> February 2006?

By 2017 Tree Sparrows were no longer to be found anywhere in the county.

#### YELLOW WAGTAIL.

Common double passage migrant in good numbers in the early days.

- \* Several pairs bred around the site in the early years, now only seen as an occasional fly over passage visitor.

\* 2011 – A Surprisingly large count of (15), mostly juveniles were noted in late July.

#### GREY WAGTAIL.

\* Breeds regularly around the Squitter Brook near the Mill in Kemerton Village, post breeding birds then visit the lake in the autumn & early winter period.

#### PIED WAGTAIL.

Common in the past when the site was still being excavated.

### WHITE WAGTAIL

Probably an overlooked passage sub species. Most records tend to be in the spring period as autumn birds are difficult to differentiate from resident Pied Wagtails.

- \* 6<sup>th</sup> – 10<sup>th</sup> May 1995 – Single bird.
- \* 14<sup>th</sup>, 16<sup>th</sup> & 21<sup>st</sup> April 1996 – Male, presumably the same bird on these dates.
- \* 13<sup>th</sup>, 22<sup>nd</sup> & 27<sup>th</sup> 1998 – Single bird.
- \* 10<sup>th</sup> – 27<sup>th</sup> April 1999 – (2) birds seen most days between these dates.
- \* 15<sup>th</sup> April 2002 – Single male.
- \* 1<sup>st</sup>, 13<sup>th</sup> & 18<sup>th</sup> April 2003 – Male. \*
- 28<sup>th</sup> April 2010 – Pair.

### MEADOW PIPIT.

Common passage migrant in variable numbers.

### ROCK PIPIT. (4 Records, 8 Birds).

- \* 30<sup>th</sup> October 2002 – Unusual record of (5) birds together, (1) of these was still present the following morning.
- \* 29<sup>th</sup> October 2010 – Single bird feeding on the north shoreline before moving onto one of the central islands. (RAP).
- \* 9<sup>th</sup> November 2011 – Single bird.
- \* 8<sup>th</sup> October 2014 – Single bird.

### WATER PIPIT. (3 Records, 4 Birds).

- \* 10<sup>th</sup> October 1995 – Single bird?
- \* 21<sup>st</sup>+22<sup>nd</sup> March 1996 – (2) birds together (D Offer, WFP, SMW).
- \* 28<sup>th</sup> October 2000 – Single bird (SMW).
- \* 2<sup>nd</sup> November 2002 – Single bird (SMW/RAP).

### TREE PIPIT. (1 Record).

- \* 26<sup>th</sup> September 1994 – Single bird?
- \* 8<sup>th</sup> September 2005 – Single passage bird flew over the lake calling continuously.

### BRAMBLING.

Passage birds are occasionally heard as they overfly the site (usually to the west) on passage in the autumn/early winter period.

Up until 2003 small numbers joined winter finch flocks to feed around the arable area most years.

- \* 21<sup>st</sup> October 1995 – (6) birds feeding on the arable area with other winter finches.
- \* In late March 2010, a full summer plumaged male was in tall trees on the edge of the woodland alongside the western balancing pools.
- \* 4<sup>th</sup> February 2012 – (5) flew over west in a small flock.
- \* 24<sup>th</sup> October – Single male feeding with Chaffinches around a Pheasant feeder alongside Kemerton Lane.

### CHAFFINCH.

Small numbers resident throughout the year, much more common when the site was less vegetated.

### HAWFINCH. (4 Records, 11+ Birds).

- \* 24<sup>th</sup> October 1996 – (1) showed well in a copse near Bredon, it then flew off towards Kemerton Parkland.
- \* 21<sup>st</sup> January – 9<sup>th</sup> April 2006 – Pair seen regularly around the Court parkland, also coming to a nearby garden feeding station.
- \* 14<sup>th</sup> December 2017 – Single bird on top of tall Oak tree in Kemerton Court Parkland, then two birds together feeding in Yews alongside the Court on 18<sup>th</sup>+19<sup>th</sup>.
- \* 2018 was an irruption year for this species with unprecedented numbers arriving in the UK from Europe. Birds were seen in many areas of the country, including well inland in the Midlands.
- \* From 1<sup>st</sup> January – 24<sup>th</sup> March 2018 – Small numbers were seen around Kemerton Court Parkland. Birds

were often seen Feeding in Yew trees around the Church & the Court & also spent long periods at the top of tall Oaks in the parkland, where they could be very elusive. Numbers appeared to vary from day to day with the highest counts of (7) on 12<sup>th</sup> January, (5) on 19<sup>th</sup> February & (8) on 12<sup>th</sup> March, the last (2) birds were seen on 24<sup>th</sup> March.

#### BULLFINCH.

Small numbers resident throughout the year. Several pairs breed in surrounding scrubby copse like habitats.

#### GREENFINCH.

Small numbers, mostly around the parkland during the winter months.

#### SISKIN.

Annual winter visitor to surrounding woodlands in varying numbers (up to c100+ at times), although numbers do appear to have dropped in recent years.

#### LINNET

Numbers now much reduced, although flocks of up to (c60) are still seen during the winter months. Several pairs still breed in Bramble scrub around the arable area.

Larger flocks recorded in the early days as follows –

- \* 29<sup>th</sup> August 1993 – (120).
- \* 22<sup>nd</sup> October 1995 – (140).
- \* 28<sup>th</sup> December 1996 – (120).
- \* 27<sup>th</sup> February 1998 – (150), then (110) on 6<sup>th</sup> November.
- \* February 2010 – (120).

#### TWITE. (1 Record/Bird).

\* 15<sup>th</sup> December 1996 – 2<sup>nd</sup> February 1997 – Single immature female with wintering Linnet flock feeding around the arable area in the north east corner of the site (G Peplow).

#### LESSER REDPOLL.

Annual winter visitor in varying numbers. Flocks of c100+ have been noted on several occasions although only smaller numbers have been noted in recent years.

#### COMMON CROSSBILL. (3 Records, 7 Birds).

- \* 29<sup>th</sup> May 1994 – Pair in woodland on the north side of the lake adjacent to the parkland.
- \* 3<sup>rd</sup> August 2000 – Four flew north over the north east corner of the site (GHP, SMW, RAP).
- \* 25<sup>th</sup> September 2002 – Single bird flew south west over the lake.
- \* 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2003?
- \* 4<sup>th</sup> June 2004 – (2) immatures at the west end of the site?

#### GOLDFINCH.

Fairly common autumn visitor, feeding on Thistle seeds around the arable area in the north east corner of the site.

#### CORN BUNTING.

- \* Reasonably common in the area up until the end of the 1990s with several pairs regularly breeding. At the same time birds regularly sang from overhead wires along the north boundary of the site.
- \* No recent records.

#### YELLOW HAMMER.

Common in the area when the site was still being excavated, flocks of (50+) were not unusual at this time. Now only a very scarce winter visitor.

#### REED BUNTING.

Breeding resident, good numbers roost in the reed beds during the winter months.

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#### APPENDIX (1).

Species on the UK list but which have only ever been recorded in the County as known or suspected escapes.

#### SNOW GOOSE.

\* Several verified but undated records + the following.

\* 26<sup>th</sup> April 1994?

\* 31<sup>st</sup> July 1996?

#### ROSS'S GOOSE.

\* Several verified but undated records.

#### RUDDY SHELDUCK.

\* Several undated records of single birds from unknown origin.

\* 4<sup>th</sup> November 2001 – Single bird.

\* 13<sup>th</sup> January 2002 – Adult.

\* 9<sup>th</sup> March 2002 – Adult.

\* 12<sup>th</sup> August 2007 – (6) juveniles at the lake had previously been seen at Minsmere RSPB NR, Suffolk on 10<sup>th</sup> August then at Paxton GPs, St Neots, Cambridgeshire on 11<sup>th</sup>.

*Ruddy Shelduck/Common Shelduck hybrid.*

\* 2<sup>nd</sup> + 9<sup>th</sup> November 2011 – Single bird from an escaped pair that had been traced to a wildfowl collection at Lenchwick near Evesham (RAP).

*Ruddy Shelduck/Egyptian Goose hybrid.*

\* 7<sup>th</sup> – 20<sup>th</sup> July 2016 – Single bird at the lake (RAP).

#### APPENDIX (2).

Species which are introductions, transportees or escapes from captivity and any breeding populations are not thought to be self-sustaining, hence they are not included on the UKs bird list.

#### BLACK SWAN.

\* 1<sup>st</sup> January 2005 – (1).

#### BAR HEADED GOOSE.

\* 15<sup>th</sup> March 1996 – (3) flew over the site.

\* 7<sup>th</sup> – 10<sup>th</sup> August 1996 – Single bird remained at the lake.

\* 20<sup>th</sup> August 2001 – Single bird.

#### MUSCOVY DUCK.

\* A very dark almost all black bird was present on 14<sup>th</sup> + 28<sup>th</sup> November 2012.