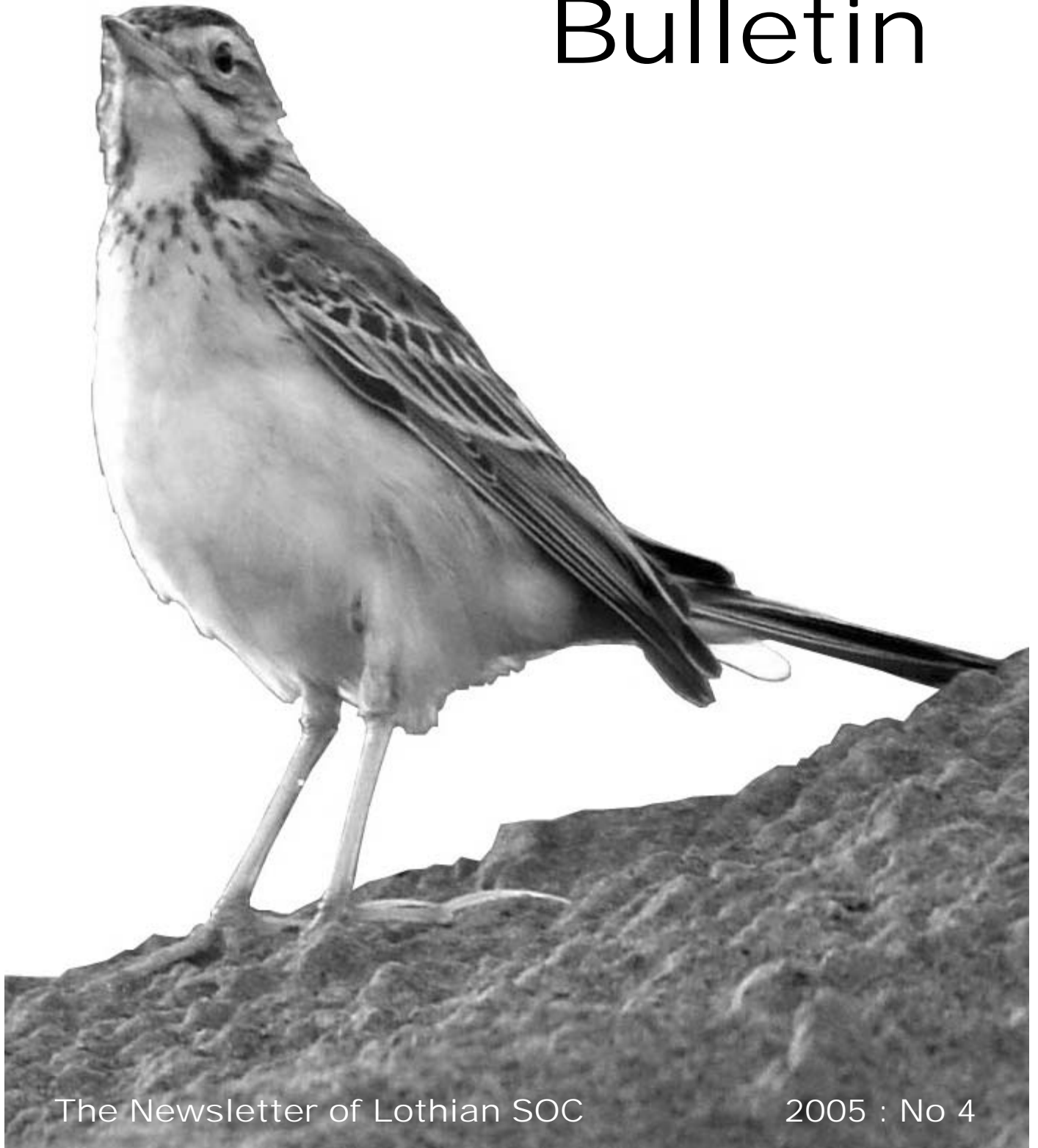




Lothian Bird Bulletin



The Newsletter of Lothian SOC

2005 : No 4

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**Published by Lothian SOC, 7th
December 2005.**

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Editorial

They say that you wait ages for a bus, and then 3 turn up at once....and it appears that a similar principle operates with articles arriving at LBB Towers. For the last issue of 2005 I have more than enough material to fill 12 pages; so many thanks to all the contributors. Mark Holling has supplied an account of his birdwatching trip to Poland, Liz Campbell has written about the recent LSOC weekend trip to Dumfries & Galloway, Tom Dougall has an appeal for sightings of ringed birds, and John P Pringle (bacon buttie expert and amateur lawyer) discusses insurance for LSOC outings. An added bonus is that you have been spared my Christmas Quiz....

The SOC's impressive new HQ in Aberlay was officially opened in October, and since then there has been a steady stream of visitors to the building. If you haven't already seen it for yourself, I can strongly recommend dropping in. Encouragingly, the 'Waterston House effect' resulted in more than 40 new Lothian SOC members between Jul and Oct. Welcome to the club if you're one of them! With the new HQ on our doorstep, we hope that Lothian branch can supply plenty of volunteers to help with the running of the building. Volunteers with 'retail skills' are particularly sought-after at the moment.

Stephen

News

Bird Records for 2005

Please remember to send your bird records for 2005 to local recorder David Kelly. For more information see the 2003-4 issue of the Lothian Bird Bulletin, or go to the *Bird Recording* page of the Lothian SOC website.

Lothian Bird Report

The 2004 LBR is nearing completion, and should be in the shops early in 2006. Sadly this will be Ian Andrew's last issue as editor (for the time being at least), as he is stepping down to concentrate on the 'Birds of Scotland 3' project. Many thanks to Ian for all the hard work he's put into this and the previous 3 issues. We'll shortly be looking for Ian's successor. Any budding editors out there? Details will be posted soon on the Lothian SOC website. (Incidentally, at the time of going to press the 2003 LBR had nearly sold out. Charles Frank of Rose Street, Edinburgh, might still have a couple of copies, but no promises.)

Branch Meetings

Forthcoming talks at the LSOC branch meetings are **Fragile Scotland** by Charles Everitt (10 Jan), **Lapland Summer** by Angus Hogg (14 Feb), and **The Tay Reedbeds** by Derek Robertson (14 Mar). The **Members' Night** and **Branch AGM** is on 11 Apr. All 7.30pm at Meadowbank Stadium. (**NOTE:** The Discussion Group recently relocated to Waterston House, Aberlady, where it meets on the first Wednesday of each month at 7.30pm.)

The LSOC committee recently discussed holding some branch meetings in West and East Lothian. Please contact the LBB if you think this would be a good idea.

Poland 14th-21st May 2005

The forests and marshes of northeast Poland are renowned for their diverse avifauna and pristine landscapes which make them a special destination to birdwatchers from Western Europe. May is the favoured time to visit as many of the specialties are summer visitors, so are absent earlier in the year, but some resident birds like woodpeckers have young in the nest so are still relatively easy to find at this time, before the foliage obscures the views.

A group of 12 Scottish birders travelled with Eleanor and Clive Hurley from Edinburgh airport early on 14th May. Eleanor had organised all our travel and arranged accommodation and guides through Birds Poland, so all we had to do was to turn up, binoculars at the ready. Anticipation was high, and we were not to be disappointed.

Our first day was largely taken up with travelling, with a brief stopover in Prague. At Warsaw airport we were met by our guide for the week from Birds Poland, Henryk, who led us to our minibus driven by Christoph. Our driver turned out to be quite keen on birds himself. Not only was he most helpful loading luggage and happily taking us over often bumpy roads and tracks, but he watched over our belongings on the bus and used his binoculars to look at birds close to the bus. Henryk turned out to be very knowledgeable about all birds and sites, especially picking up species by calls. He worked tirelessly to find us target species and no one on the trip could fault the organisation and service by Birds Poland.

So, to the birding. In Warsaw we were surprised to see brightly plumaged Fieldfares, apparently a common breeder in Poland, but always a treat. Our first night was spent at Nowogrod, over three hours drive north from Warsaw. An evening walk just a few hundred metres alongside the River Narew produced a number of singing Thrush Nightingales, Cuckoo and Grasshopper Warbler, but the highlight was two Beavers seen very well on the opposite bank of the river and a third swimming. Apparently they have become much more common and less nocturnal than just a decade ago, though we only saw one other. An early highlight for me though, as I had missed this species when I first came to Poland in 1990.

At the same site in the morning, despite an overnight downpour, the range of species seen or heard included Golden Oriole, Black Redstart, Icterine Warbler, Red-backed Shrike, Willow Tit (at a nest) and flyover Ruff, Black Tern and White-winged Black Tern. Later in the morning close to a farmstead we had our first Woodlarks, Wood Warblers, Hawfinch and Serin – all of these species were to become more familiar through the week. White Storks are common breeders in this part of Poland, using specially constructed platforms on top of roofs and poles, and this walk gave us an opportunity to watch a pair close up. Further treats here were a flyover Hobby, a party of Crossbills, and a Turtle Dove.

After that we drove into the main area of the Biebrza Marshes where we spent the next three days. During this time we stopped off at a number of sites around the edges of the marshes. The scale of the Biebrza marshes is such that few from the west can quite appreciate the vastness. It takes about two hours to drive from one end to the other, and although it is (just) possible to see from one side to the other in places there are large stretches of open water, or boggy ground with sedges, reeds and willow scrub. The edges of the marshes are often fringed with damp alder and willow carr, so there are relatively few places where views can be had over a large area. This helps ensure the preservation

of the habitat and reduces disturbance. Biebrza Marshes has been a national park since 1993 and some access into the marshes with marked tracks and boardwalks, plus tower hides, has been made available, improving views. To visit requires a permit, and, for larger groups, the services of a National Park Guide: ours was Artur from Goniadz who was also very helpful and had an excellent command of English.

So what did we see? Well, by the end of our first four days we had amassed 117 species on the list. The most memorable was probably White-winged Black Tern purely because of the huge numbers involved. At simply every stop there were flocks of feeding terns, mostly of this species but also Black Terns and a few Whiskered, Common and even Little Terns and a Little Gull. At one stop I estimated 500 terns in view, and there must have been over 10,000 marsh terns in the area during the week of our visit.

It is difficult to condense the three day's birding in the marshes as there was so much to see at each of our stops, and most of us were up at dawn for a pre-breakfast walk, and still out at nightfall. Of the nine species of raptor, we saw numerous Montagu's Harriers, including three pairs at one site displaying and doing food passes, Marsh Harriers, adult and immature White-tailed Eagles, and a few Lesser Spotted Eagles and Honey Buzzards. There was some wader passage: we found two Temminck's Stints and both Wood and Green Sandpiper, though some of the latter breed here along with the Lapwing, Ruff, Common Snipe, Black-tailed Godwit and Redshank. In the evening we had roding Woodcock, especially on our way to the famous Great Snipe lek at Barwik – here we were treated to 4-5 jumping out of the rank sedge at dusk, displaying the white in the wings and tail even in the gloom of dusk. This was a magical place, despite the presence of 30+ birders gathered on the viewing platform. Although a different experience to 15 years earlier when two of us crouched on the causeway, completely alone, walking a short distance away from the platform opened up the sounds of the marsh at night: booming Bittern, Grasshopper Warblers, Corncrake, a Bluethroat and especially the ever-present (and loud) Thrush Nightingales.

Another evening was taken up with a visit to an Aquatic Warbler site, at Honezarowka Dyke, again with a tower hide to aid visibility over this featureless piece of marsh and to see Elk – 14 were grazing when we arrived. Our best view of the target species was actually just along from the hide, low in vegetation by the causeway. Other notable passerines from Biebrza were Barred Warbler, Savi's Warbler, Red-breasted Flycatcher, Penduline Tit, Common Rosefinch and Ortolan Bunting. Henryk found the first Ortolan as we drove along a quiet road – he heard the song, called a halt, and there were two males singing. For me though, finally catching up with a singing Bluethroat, surprisingly elusive in willow scrub, was superb. This was a "no-spot" variety although others were white-spotted. The larger birds such as White Stork, Black Stork, Great White Egret and especially the Common Cranes, with their evocative bugling cries, cannot be forgotten. As well as birds, seeing Beavers and Elk, and hearing the echoing din of the Fire-bellied Toads at Zajki all added to the experience.

Whilst at Biebrza, we stayed at the modern, all-wood Kuwasy hotel at Woznawies, on the north-western side of the marshes, close to Czwerno Bagno, also known as the Red Marsh. Kuwasy provided welcome warmth, copious amounts of food and good beer, as well as being right next to superb marshes and woods for those early morning walks. On 18th May we transferred to the Bialowieza Forest, staying at the Hotel Unikat in the village within the forest. We didn't waste the opportunity whilst moving though, stopping at Lake Czechowizaa for at least six White-tailed Eagles, a Hobby and Marsh Harrier, two Ravens and both Yellow-legged (or was it Caspian?) and Lesser Black-backed Gull. A sandpit en

route allowed us to see two pairs of Bee-eater (a rare breeding bird in this part of Poland) and a very obliging Great Grey Shrike, plus about 200 Sand Martins nesting here. Our final stop was at the Dojildy Fishponds on the edge of Bialystock town, noted for their grebes: we saw Red-necked, Black-necked and Great Crested, supported by booming Bitterns (one seen in flight), Savi's and noisy Great Reed Warblers, plus a pair of Penduline Tits at a nest. It rained heavily as we left, so it was indoors that night, ready to see the huge forests of Bialowieza the next morning.

It was an early start, though not quite as early as had been planned owing to the heavy rain the previous night. We needed to get into the strict reserve area of forest as early as possible. In the reserve here, there has been no felling and trees are just left to do their own thing, unless they block a path. This is very damp and quite dark woodland, and birding can be difficult, but with the help of our guide Henryk, plus Amek, a local forest guide, we were able to see most of the species we had hoped for. Woodpeckers are a feature of this forest, with all its dead wood, so finding Great Spotted, Middle Spotted and Black was not a surprise, but we needed our guides to show us the much rarer White-backed, visiting its nest hole to feed a single juvenile, almost ready to leave. Another highlight for me, as in my previous visit I had been too late to see this species – the young had fledged just a few days beforehand. Other goodies here were Collared Flycatcher and singing Firecrest. It was also just about the only place where we found Wrens!

The rest of our trip was spent at various forest or forest-edge sites close to Bialowieza town, clocking up new species such as Wryneck, Grey-headed and Lesser Spotted Woodpecker, River Warbler (with their chuffing steam-train song) and Greenish Warbler. In addition, we had better views of Honey Buzzard, Lesser Spotted Eagle, Icterine Warbler, Barred Warbler and Red-breasted Flycatcher. The Long-tailed Tits here were of the white-headed race. We even saw a few Waxwings around our hotel, part of the 2004/05 winter irruption, on their way north just like the birds still in Scotland when we had left. A few attempts to see Three-toed Woodpecker were finally rewarded one morning with a female at a nest hole in a small spruce tree. Some lucky members of the group also saw two Hazel Grouse fly across their path on the way back from this site.

On our last full day we drove north to the Siemianowka Lake, right on the border with Belarus (formerly part of USSR). This artificial lake was created in the communist era to be a playground for the rich elite, but that never happened and it is now one of the foremost birding spots in Poland, though the water levels are not controlled with wildlife in mind creating havoc with nesting birds and unpredictable conditions for passage birds. Normally a reliable site for Citrine Wagtail, this was one of the few species (along with Spotted Eagle and Nutcracker) that we dipped on, so we'll just have to go again! We did see White-tailed Eagle, Hobby, Wood Sandpiper, Red-backed Shrike, Garganey and Wryneck. On route we had distant views of two Rollers in flight and found a pair of Willow Tits feeding young in their nest less than a metre off the ground. Two days earlier, another British birder we met at Bialowieza had seen a Red-rumped Swallow here – a Polish rarity.

Perhaps the highlight of the time in the forest, and maybe of the whole trip, was a chance to see Pygmy Owl, deep in the forest, in the fading light of the day. Our local guide Amek directed our bus down a series of long forest tracks, eventually stopping at a site with tall pines and spruces where a male had been heard calling regularly at dusk. This tiny owl performed brilliantly, appearing at 20:15, allowing us to hear its Bullfinch-like whistling hoot and see it flying between branches high up in the trees. There was just enough light to see the streaked breast and pale spots on the back through the telescope. Quite an unexpected treat!

The whole week was a marvelous experience notable not only for the range and quality of the birds seen, but also the superb views of most of them. Our collective trip total was 157, with 90 being logged on our best day, at Biebrza. We are all indebted to Eleanor for her organisation back home and especially to Henryk and Birds Poland for making us feel so welcome, and helping find all those birds. Thank you.

Mark Holling, November 2005

(Mark will be showing video clips from the trip at the LSOC branch meeting on 11 Apr.)

Report That Ring...Please!

The BTO have known for some time that there have been long-term declines in the reporting rate of ringed birds found by non-ringers, and that these declines have been found in a wide range of species. Declining reporting rates are a problem for conservation scientists because most survival analyses (e.g. recently for seabirds, Song Thrush and Starling) depend on ring recovery data. The situation is particularly serious for declining species, which are often those whose survival researchers are most interested in, because numbers ringed generally decline as a consequence of reduced abundance, and the fewer ringed, the fewer recovered, and so on...

An initial examination of this topic by BTO scientists found that reporting rates had declined alarmingly for resident insectivorous passerines such as Dunnock, Robin and thrushes. Part of the reason for the decline is changes in reporting behaviour of the public ("reporting fatigue / apathy" – the BTO don't need details of ringed birds, they know everything now – WRONG!; individuals unwilling / unable to write letters nowadays) and an increase in ringing activities outwith populated areas.

To address (excuse the pun) the public problem, the BTO introduced a web reporting form a few years ago (www.bto.org) and this has proved very successful – it can also be accessed from the SOC website (www.the-soc.org.uk). More recently, the BTO are participating in a European trial using a web address (www.ring.ac) on larger rings in addition to the ring number. The address will lead to the EURING website and a multilingual recovery reporting form. So, don't be shy – report ALL those ringed birds you find, dead or alive.

Here are a few pointers to help you:-

- If the ringed bird is dead, write down the ring number, don't try and remember it. Even better, remove the ring (breaking a dead bird's leg causes no harm) and post it to BTO, but still include the ring number on a piece of paper just in case the ring falls out of the envelope.
- If the ringed bird is alive, and only part of the ring number has been 'scoped, still report the incomplete sequence, since the bird might still be identifiable.
- If the bird is colour-ringed, note which leg has which colours (sometimes it's difficult to tell which leg is which – wait until it moves), and note any inscription on a ring.
- Note which colours are above and which below the intertarsal joint (the "knee").
- Report the colours as accurately as possible – differentiate between lime green and dark green, light blue and navy blue etc

- Again, please report incomplete sequences – with colour-ringing, the bird will probably be identifiable to a site, if not as an individual. A list of current (December 2005) colour-ringing co-ordinators is provided below.

Good luck.

COLOUR-RING COORDINATORS

All Europe

Waders	Wader Study Group	wsg@bto.org
Large Gulls	Peter Rock	pete.rock@blueyonder.co.uk
Small Gulls	Kjeld Pederson	ktpedersen@zmuc.ku.dk

Britain & Ireland only

Wildfowl	WWT	colourmarkedwildfowl@wwt.org.uk
Cormorants	Stuart Newson	stuart.newson@bto.org
Other species	BTO	kate.risely@bto.org

Additional information can be found at www.cr-birding.be.

Tom Dougall, December 2005

Lothian SOC Outings

East Coast Migrants, 9th October

As is fast becoming a tradition with LSOC outings, we held this trip on the weekend before all the best migrants turned up in Lothian. Our day started at Thorntonloch, with a walk up the coast to Torness. Star bird was a Black Redstart at the north end of the Torness walkway, where a number of Wheatears also seen. After lunch we moved on to Barns Ness, but a search of the bushes around the wire dump failed to turn up anything of note. Our final stop was Belhaven Bay and Seafeld Pond, but again we were out of luck. I'm sure next year will be much better...

Hundreds of Buzzards (Dumfries & Galloway weekend, 18th-20th Nov)

Having recently joined the SOC Lothians Branch, I was delighted to be able to join David Atkins and Jacky Robinson's group trip to Dumfries and Galloway from 18 – 20 November 2005. There were 14 of us in all booked into the Douglas Arms Hotel in Castle Douglas – a very comfortable base. We made our way there in a total of 5 cars, the plan being to meet up before dinner on the Friday evening. Naturally we all put in some birding before arriving in Castle Douglas, each careful deciding on its own destination. Friday dawned a brilliantly sunny, dry day though very cold with a heavy frost (windscreen scraping weather!). My passengers, Rosemary Davidson and Molly Woolgar and I had our first thrill with huge flocks of Fieldfare and Redwing in fields beside the road north of Lochmaben. We made our first birding stop at Castle Loch, south of Lochmaben where we briefly met David, Sid Morgan and their passengers who had also met up co-incidentally. My party stayed at the hide and around the castle longer than initially intended but we did manage to tick off a kingfisher which the others had seen along with a good mixture of waterfowl and woodland birds – mute swan, mallard, goosander, goldeneye, wigeon, tufted duck, great crested grebe, grey heron and cormorant with the highlight of passerines being treecreeper and long-tailed tit and for Molly and Rosemary a brief glimpse of willow tit. Alongside the road verges there were cock pheasants everywhere – some quite suicidal! We finally drove on to Glencaple where we had a late lunch and saw a few waders – redshank, oystercatcher, curlew and lapwing and with several shelduck. Whilst scanning

the river, we all noticed huge numbers of gulls flying in waves downstream. There were several hundreds and it was spectacular to watch. As light was fading, we moved on towards the hotel and the rest of the group.

The next morning at breakfast, we noticed that we were one person short at table – Betty Smith - and after investigating found that she had been locked in her room and had been trying to attract someone's attention for some time. Her door lock had jammed and the hotel staff had to use brute force to release her! Because the staff were serving us breakfast, nobody was at reception to pick up her frantic phone call!

Before leaving the hotel we were joined by Geoff Packard from the Stewartry branch of the SOC and with his local knowledge, he was able to take us to several venues we might otherwise have missed.

That day proved a repeat in terms of weather with bright sunshine and breathtaking frosty hedgerows as we headed alongside Loch Ken towards the RSPB reserve for the morning. From our cars, we all had good views of the Greenland white-fronted geese along with grey lags, pink foot, Canadas and a couple of barnacle geese. At one of our stops, Molly saw a great spotted woodpecker flying away which some of us were able to pick up. Here we also heard and saw ravens and on the loch itself we picked out pintail, shoveler and little grebe. On our walk to the first hide we quickly added linnet, reed bunting, meadow pipit, stonechat, song thrush and a lovely group of red-legged partridge alongside a pheasant. Here too we had excellent views of two red kites chasing a crow. They perched in trees close enough for us to see their identification tags and stayed around for some time allowing us to see them well. What wonderful birds – and to see them so easily was brilliant.

At the first hide, we were all delighted by the antics of at least two red squirrels foraging for peanuts from a box-shaped feeder – they pushed up the lid with their heads and more or less fell into the box leaving their brush and hind legs waving in the air behind them until they came back out with a peanut! At these feeders, we also had lovely views of nuthatch, coal, blue and great tits with some of the group also seeing another great spotted woodpecker.

Originally it had been David and Jacky's plan to call at the Bellymack Hill Farm near Laurieston to watch kites feeding but we all agreed this was unnecessary as we saw at least another seven birds flying around as we headed south. Geoff took us to Woodhall Loch as this was where he had had sightings of willow tit which we all were keen to see. No sooner were we out of the cars than we heard the distinctive call and we managed to track a willow tit and get good sightings of it. It was here that we also saw a sparrowhawk flying by. We finished off the day at a bridge on the River Dee near Tongland, north of Kirkcudbright where there was a brief sighting by some of a kingfisher and we heard the call of a water rail.

Unfortunately the lovely weather wasn't to be on the Sunday. We awoke to thick fog and it was disappointing on arriving at each successive birding location to find it didn't disperse. Our first stop was at Sandyhills Caravan Park and in the murk, Tom Gillies managed to find us a flock of twite to which we managed to get close enough to see their yellow bills. We headed on to Mersehead where we were met by Brian Smith from the Dumfries SOC Branch who kindly led us around for the rest of the day. Most of us managed to see at least one tree sparrow on the feeder at the visitor centre alongside greenfinches, one goldfinch, chaffinches and tits and we had good views of a flock of bullfinches and several

yellowhammers. We managed to see some barnacle geese through the fog and certainly heard them in the sky when they were spooked (*not by us, honest - Ed*). From the hides we saw shoveler, pintail and teal but it was hard work with misted up lenses and thick fog!

Undaunted, we drove on to Southernness Point where we added turnstone, purple sandpiper, bar tailed godwit to our list along with one female eider off shore. Our final stop was at Carsethorn where we had hoped to see scaup and perhaps some divers. Alas, the fog was just as thick so everyone decided to call it a day and head for home.

The group tally for the weekend was 91 with Sue Goode winning the sweepstake. I was happy with my total of 79 as it included willow tit, white-fronted geese, kingfisher, nuthatch, red kite and twite – all birds I see infrequently. One of the interesting “ticks” on the group list was a common sandpiper which David and Sid’s parties saw on the Friday afternoon near Powfoot, south west of Annan. Geoff informed us that it isn’t as uncommon as we had thought for migrants to linger in this area.

Oh – the title? Well that’s how many Buzzards Sid claimed he had seen! We all certainly saw plenty of them throughout the weekend along with a few kestrels.

Thanks to David and Jacky for organising and leading this holiday which I really enjoyed and thanks to everyone else for their company over the weekend.

Liz Campbell, November 2005

Coming Up...

29th Jan: The Inner Forth and the Slamannan Plateau

19th Feb: Musselburgh

Mar (date TBC): West Stirlingshire

Apr (date TBC): The Hirsell

21st May: The Angus Glens

28th May: Aberlady Dawn Chorus

Contact Gillian Herbert on 0131 337 0767 for details.

Note

Diligent readers of the *Excursions & Tours* leaflet issued by Waterston House will have noted: "*Members are reminded that neither the Club, its branches nor individual leaders of outings can accept any responsibility for any injury suffered by individuals taking part in these outings, nor any loss or damage to their property.*"

Whilst the outings arranged by your branch are researched and lead by experienced members, ultimately it is the responsibility of each member to assess the suitability of each outing in the light of their own capabilities. Generally our outings involve transport by volunteer drivers and, provided no **charge** is made for this service to passengers, normal insurance cover for the driver's liability to passengers should apply. This does not preclude **passengers offering to share the petrol costs** of such trips - followed by grateful acceptance by the driver! It must be emphasised that these statements are a general opinion of the writer, without legal qualifications in these matters. If further information is sought this should be obtained from the inquirer's legal adviser or insurance company.

John P Pringle, October 2005

Lothian Bird Sightings

OCTOBER

At *Aberlady*, juv **Sabine's Gull** on 4th; **Manx Shearwater** on 4th; 3 **Red-necked Grebes** on 4th; 10 **Manx Shearwaters** on 4th; **Water Rail** on 4th, 2-3 on 6th, 3 on 11th; ring-tail **Hen Harrier** on 4th and 7th; **Jack Snipe** on 6th; **Merlins** on several dates; up to 340 **Little Gulls**; 46 **Lapland Buntings** on 25th and 1 on 26th; 3 **Crossbills** on 25th; **Great Northern Diver** on 30th; 6 **Snow Buntings** on 31st. At *Barns Ness*, 2 **Manx Shearwaters** on 9th; **Merlin** on 16th. At *Cramond/Silverknowes*, **Spotted Redshank** from 12th-25th; 2 **Greenshanks** on 12th and 1 on 17th; **Todd's Canada Goose** on 28th; **Greenland White-fronted Goose** on 28th. At *Hound Point*, **Little Tern** on 1st; 13 **Barnacle Geese** on 1st; a peak count of 200+ **Little Gulls**; juv **Long-tailed Skua** on 7th/14th; **Merlin** on 7th; 4 **Velvet Scoters** on 7th; 4 **Pomarine Skuas** (W) on 13th.

At *Musselburgh*, **Snow Bunting** on 2nd and 27th; up to 40 **Little Gulls**; **Ruff** present all month; male and ring-tail **Hen Harriers** on 1st; ad **Mediterranean Gull** on several dates; up to 5 **Red-necked Grebes**; fem **Merlin** on 14th; **Curlew Sandpiper** on 20th; **Little Stint** on 20th; **Waxwing** on 25th; 6 **Barnacle Geese** on 25th-26th; 70 **Bramblings** on 26th. In the *Pentlands*, **White-rumped Sandpiper** at *Bavelaw* from 3rd-6th; **Greenshank** at *Bavelaw* on 3rd/5th; **White-fronted Goose** at *Bavelaw* on 20th. At *Skateraw*, **Jack Snipe** on 9th; 2 **Bramblings** on 17th; **Hume's Warbler** from 25th-26th. At *Torness*, up to 3 **Yellow-browed Warblers** from 13th-17th; **Paddyfield Warbler** from 13th to month-end (a first for mainland Scotland); **White-fronted Goose** on 16th; 12 **Bramblings** on 16th and 5 on 17th; up to 3 **Black Redstarts**; **Corncrake** on 17th; **Jack Snipe** (Torness-Barns Ness) on 17th. At *Tynninghame/Belhaven*, juv **Pectoral Sandpiper** (on Biel Burn/Seafield Pond) on 2nd; up to 15 **Greenshanks**; 4 **Crossbills** on 8th; 2 **Ruff** on 8th; juv **Curlew Sandpiper** on 9th.

In *Edinburgh*, 3 **Jays** near to *Dalmeny House* on 23rd; **Pomarine Skua** at *South Queensferry* on 23rd. Around *East Lothian*, 21 **Crossbills** at *Yellowcraig* on 9th and 14 on 16th; 2 **Quail** near *Gifford* on 8th; **Purple Swamphen** (presumed escapee!) in a *Dunbar* garden on 11th; 9+ **Bramblings** at *Thorntonloch* on 17th and 2 on 26th; 9 **Yellow-browed Warblers** along the coast on 15th/16th, singles near *White Sands* on 15th and 22nd; **Long-eared Owl** near *White Sands* on 15th; **Water Rail** at *Balgone* (N Berwick); **Merlin** at *White Sands* on 22nd; 2 **Ravens** over *Auldham* on 24th; **Dusky Warbler** at *Scoughall* from 23rd-26th; **Corn Bunting**, *Dunglass-Bilsdean* on 26th; **Hobby** at *Scoughall* on 29th. Around *West Lothian*, possible **Black Tern** at *Bathgate Bog* on 4th; 1st winter **Mediterranean Gull** at *Winchburgh* on 15th.

SEPTEMBER

At *Aberlady*, **Little Ringed Plover** on 1st-4th; peak of 15+ **Little Gulls**; **Greenshank** on 1st/22nd/30th; **Black Tern** offshore on 2nd; up to 7 **Manx Shearwaters**; up to 4 **Ruff**; up to 4 **Curlew Sandpipers**; **Great Grey Shrike** reported on 8th; **Spotted Redshank** at *Kilspindie* on 10th; **Merlin** on 11th and 30th; imm **Pomarine Skua** on 12th; peak of 227 **Shelducks**; 670 **Common Scoters** on 15th; 7 **Crossbills** on 20th; **Yellow Wagtail** at *Craigielaw* on 20th; **Water Rail** on 28th and 30th. At *Barns Ness*, 2 **Sooty Shearwaters** on 4th, 5 on 9th, and 1 on 10th; up to 40 **Manx Shearwaters**; **Little Stint** on 23rd; juv **Sabine's Gull** on 30th. At *Cramond*, peak of 14+ **Curlew Sandpipers**; ad **Mediterranean Gull** on 2nd/7th/9th and 1st winter on 23rd; up to 3 **Greenshanks**; **Ruff** on 6th and 7th; **Pintail** on 6th and 3 on 7th; **Little Stint** on 10th; **Pomarine Skua** on 10th, 4 adults on

23rd. At *Dunbar*, 3 adult **Pomarine Skuas** on 9th; 4-6 **Sooty Shearwaters** on 9th; **Great Shearwater** on 9th; 46 **Manx Shearwaters** on 9th; **Greenshank** on 9th. At *Hound Point*, peak of 49 **Arctic Skuas**; peak of 52 **Great Skuas**; **Greenshank** on 2nd and 10th; **Black Tern** on 2nd; adult **Mediterranean Gull** on 2nd; 2 imm **Little Gulls** on 2nd; 3 **Pomarine Skuas** on 8th and 34 (in groups of up to 8) on 22nd; **Black-throated Diver** on 8th; peak of 50+ **Manx Shearwaters**; probable **Long-tailed Skua** on 8th and juv on 10th; 3000+ **Kittiwakes** (W) on 15th.

At *Musselburgh*, up to 5 **Ruff**; up to 11 **Curlew Sandpipers**; 2 **Greenshanks** on 1st and 1 on 11th-12th; **Red-necked Grebe** on 2nd and 21st, and 3 on 26th; **Black-throated Diver** on 2nd and 11th; **Barred Warbler** from 4th-8th; 2 **Greenland White-fronted Geese** on 9th; 119 **Mergansers** on 11th; juv **Little Stint** on 12th-20th; 1-2 **Mediterranean Gulls** on several dates. In the *Pentlands*, **Greenshank** at *Bavelaw* on 3rd; m **Gadwall** at *Bavelaw* on 3rd; **Hen Harrier** at *Bavelaw* on 18th. At *Silverknowes*, 4 **Curlew Sandpipers** on 7th; **Red-necked Grebe** on 7th; 240+ **Manx Shearwaters** on 9th. At *Skateraw*, **Pied Flycatcher** on 1st; 4 **Manx Shearwaters** on 11th; **Yellow Wagtail** on 12th and 2 on 15th. At *Tynninghame/Belhaven*, "English-speaking" **Crimson Rosella** on 2nd; up to 5 **Curlew Sandpipers**; up to 17 **Greenshanks**; **Ruff** on 4th and 3 on 20th; juv **Little Stint** on 9th; juv **Buff-breasted Sandpiper** from 15th-18th; **Green Sandpiper** on 15th and 23rd.

Around *Edinburgh*, 29 **Arctic Skuas** at *Seafield* on 10th. Around *East Lothian*, 13 Dark-bellied **Brent Geese** at *Dunglass* on 9th; 5 **Manx Shearwaters** at *Longniddry* on 11th; 4+ **White Wagtails** at *Torness* on 11th; **Water Rail** at *Balgone* (N Berwick) on 24th; 5 **Crossbills** at *Balgone* on 24th; juv **Pectoral Sandpiper** at undisclosed site on 25th. Around *West Lothian*, **Green Sandpiper** on *Bathgate Bog* on 3rd; female **Ruddy Duck** on *Bathgate Bog* on 25th/30th.

Thanks to Eleanor Hurley and everyone who contributed to these records.

Mystery Bird



Identify the species pictured on the left. The answer will be published in the next issue and, if I remember, on the LBB page of the LSOC website.

The last mystery birds were a Buff-breasted Sandpiper and a Pectoral Sandpiper.

