

# THORNE MOORS BIRD REPORT 2009

compiled by Bryan P. Wainwright

## THE SITE

The Humberhead Peatlands National Nature Reserve comprises the two close but separate areas, Thorne Moors and Hatfield Moors. Thorne Moors (which is often defined to mean Thorne and the smaller contiguous moors of Goole, Snaith & Cowick, Rawcliffe and Crowle together, as in this Report), at 1918 hectares is the largest surviving lowland raised mire in Britain. Parts of Thorne Moors lie in three counties, South Yorkshire, East Yorkshire and North Lincolnshire.

The recording area covered by the annual bird report includes all the Thorne Moors part of the Humberhead Peatlands NNR, and adjacent peripheral features such as Thorne Colliery, Jones' Cable, and farmland to an easily visible distance. Exceptional records beyond these limits may be included for completeness, but square bracketed, and clearly noted as such. These records form no part of the Thorne Moors bird list.

## INTRODUCTION TO THE SYSTEMATIC LIST

English and scientific names, and sequence of birds, follow the *British Birds* list of Western Palearctic birds, revised and e-published on their website (accessed January 2010). The status of all species on the Thorne Moors list is currently being reviewed, and will result in an annotated checklist to be published as a *THMCF Technical Report* ([www.thmcf.org](http://www.thmcf.org)).

During the year, 145 species were recorded (plus two category D species, for category definitions see the *British Birds* list). Counts and estimates of breeding pairs are casual unless otherwise stated and should be taken as such. For wetland species where no area is mentioned it can be taken that the area concerned was the flooded workings N of Fisons' Road. A 0 for a monthly maximum means no counts received.

## SYSTEMATIC LIST

### **Mute Swan** *Cygnus olor*

Six passed over the Shoulder o' Mutton on 5th January. Three headed W on 2nd April and one was down on 22nd April.

### **Whooper Swan** *Cygnus cygnus*

In March, 85 flew over Top House Farm on 21st, up to 25 were at the flooded workings on 22nd and 23rd, and 31 were near Creykes Gate on 27th. Four were present with many Greylags on 17th October at Will Pits Scrape. Seven, comprising two adults and five immatures, passed S on 22nd November.

### **Pink-footed Goose** *Anser brachyrhynchus*

Seen over and on the Moors with large flocks often found on Goole Fields, Will Pits Scrape and Natural England's areas. Last and first dates were 21st March and 16th September. High numbers were recorded in October on Will Pits Scrape with 2000 on 31st, but the largest group was 2500+ on 29th and this is the highest count ever (SH).

Monthly maxima were: January 0, February 160, March 1, April 0, May 0, June 0, July 0, August 0, September 73, October 2500+, November 112, December 650.

### **Greylag Goose** *Anser anser*

High counts came from Will Pits Scrape, and less often from the flooded workings, 300-550+ on several dates in September and October. The highest count ever was on 17th October, when they were present at Will Pits Scrape (JGH). Monthly maxima were: January 35, February 47, March 27, April 8, May 3, June 6, July 0, August 150, September 550, October 900-1000, November 183, December 0.

### **Greater Canada Goose** *Branta canadensis*

The highest count ever was on 27th October at Will Pits Scrape (SH).

Monthly maxima were: January 0, February 0, March 7, April 0, May 0, June 0, July 0, August 110, September

20, October 250, November 0, December 0.

**Ruddy Shelduck** *Tadorna ferruginea*

Three were seen at Will Pits Scrape on 31st October and 7th November. They were then seen again at the same place on 15th November (KH, RW). There were other undated reports between 8th-14th November. The second record for Thorne Moors and the only one since modern recording began. Published as escapees.

**Common Shelduck** *Tadorna tadorna*

Monthly maxima were: January 1, February 2, March 1, April 4, May 4, June 1, July 0, August 0, September 0, October 0, November 0, December 0.

**Eurasian Wigeon** *Anas penelope*

Maximum was on 11th November. Monthly maxima were: January 0, February 0, March 0, April 0, May 0, June 0, July 0, August 0, September 0, October 10, November 20+, December 0.

**Gadwall** *Anas strepera*

Monthly maxima were: January 0, February 30, March 19, April 0, May 3, June 2, July 9, August 3, September 2, October 2, November 0, December 0.

**Eurasian Teal** *Anas crecca*

Breeding was proven at Crowle Moor. Monthly maxima were: January 20+, February 33, March 27, April 10, May 6, June 10, July 0, August 230, September 200, October 184, November 60, December 24.

**Mallard** *Anas platyrhynchos*

At least two pairs bred at Will Pits Scrape and Goole Moor. During August 500 were recorded on 17th and 400 on 31st, building to the highest count ever on 20th September (JGH).

Monthly maxima were: January 130, February 200, March 100, April 40, May 4, June 20+, July 1, August 500, September 1000, October 255+, November 200, December 100.

**Pintail** *Anas acuta*

During March a male frequented Will Pits Scrape from 6th-23rd (joined by a female on 14th). There was then a male on 15th November and a pair on 13th December.

**Shoveler** *Anas clypeata*

Monthly maxima were: January 17, February 20, March 30, April 3, May 6, June 1, July 0, August 29, September 50, October 15, November 20, December 0.

**Tufted Duck** *Aythya fuligula*

Bred at the E end of the flooded workings, with six young seen accompanying parents on 8th August. Monthly maxima were: January 2, February 5, March 13, April 2, May 10, June 7, July 0, August 2, September 0, October 8, November 0, December 3.

**Goosander** *Mergus merganser*

Two were seen on several dates in January and February and six were at Will Pits Scrape on 25th February, with a new all-time maximum of 12 on 28th (RJS). Up to nine were present at Will Pits Scrape in March, though the high (equalling the new maximum) was 12 on two dates: 27th (PH) and 31st (RB). After two on 1st April other sightings during the month were for single birds. There were no further records until a female/immature on 12th October which landed at W end Shoulder o' Mutton Tram.

**Grey Partridge** *Perdix perdix*

Seen in fields particularly around northern parts.

Monthly maxima were: January 0, February 0, March 2, April 0, May 4, June 0, July 0, August 0, September 0, October 14, November 1, December 0.

**Common Quail** *Coturnix coturnix*

A flushed individual along Goole Moor Tram was seen on 15th August, the latest ever (PH, PA, BS).

**Common Pheasant** *Phasianus colchicus*

There were 20 in late October and on 27th December and 10 on several other dates, breeding proven.

**Great Cormorant** *Phalacrocorax carbo*

Singles recorded on 1st January, 1st March (S over colliery area), 15th March (one N) and 31st March (one at Will Pits Scrape). Later in the year, reported on 2nd August (going S), 20th October (going W), 21st November (over Will Pits), on 22nd November (one N) and 4th December (W over colliery area). Two were noted only on 3rd October.

**[Little Egret** *Egretta garzetta*

One in a roadside ditch along Johnny Moor Long Lane on 9th January (JH)].

**Grey Heron** *Ardea cinerea*

Singles frequently observed on the Moors edge or flying over.

Monthly maxima were: January 0, February 2, March 2, April 1, May 1, June 1, July 1, August 2, September 2, October 1, November 2, December 1.

**Eurasian Spoonbill** *Platalea leucorodia*

One was circling over the Black-headed Gull colony at the flooded workings on 24th June, the latest date ever, before gaining height and heading E over Will Pits (RW). The third record for Thorne Moors.

**Little Grebe** *Tachybaptus ruficollis*

Returned on 15th March to Will Pits Scrape with at least one observed into July, when a juvenile was seen here. The maximum on the flooded workings N of Fisons' Road was three on 25th May. The last record was from Will Pits Scrape on 18th September.

**Great Crested Grebe** *Podiceps cristatus*

At Will Pits Scrape on 25th April, a single was present.

**Black-necked Grebe** *Podiceps nigricollis*

At the flooded workings, only recorded between 25th May (two pairs) and 27th May (three). A solo was present at Will Pits Scrape on 26th May and 13th August.

**Honey-buzzard** *Pernis apivorus*

An adult male came from the NW over Will Pits on 8th August (RJS). Subject to acceptance by the Yorkshire Naturalists' Union Birds Section.

**Red Kite** *Milvus milvus*

On 11th June a solo bird was observed over Bank Top (RB). One was seen over fields towards the railway on 25th July (RJS). One headed NW circling over Crowle and Goole Moor on 27th July, seen independently by observers in two areas (RW, PCR, JH).

**Marsh Harrier** *Circus aeruginosus*

Now so common all year all records are not given. Well over 120 records from every month, but no more than two birds present in winter. Records of three or more were uncommon, with six the maximum on 23rd August, consisting of a adult male and female, three creamcrown immatures and an all dark immature (RJS). Display was noted at Will Pits Scrape on 14th April, by a calling male, whilst a female mobbed a Common Buzzard nearby.

**Hen Harrier** *Circus cyaneus*

11th January	1 ringtail flooded workings
28th January	1
24th February	1 over Will Pits

28th February	2 or 3, 1 male Goole Fields, 1 male near Will Pits with female
25th April	1 ringtail flooded workings
07th November	1 male 'Middle Moor'
22nd November	1 male Southern Canals
24th November	1 female flooded workings
21st November	1 male distant over Goole Moor
09th December	1 male Collis's Tram

### **Eurasian Sparrowhawk** *Accipiter nisus*

A pair was seen displaying over Green Belt on 15th and 21st March and 8th June. Display was also noted on the former date at Will Pits. Breeding was proven on the W edge; a sitting bird was seen on a nest in a birch *Betula* on 29th May and on 8th July the young had flown.

Monthly maxima were: January 2, February 2, March 4, April 1, May 1, June 2, July 0, August 1, September 2, October 1, November 2, December 1.

### **Common Buzzard** *Buteo buteo*

Becoming ever commoner, but unlike at Hatfield Moors no certain signs of breeding yet.

13th February	1 Goole Fields
24th February	1 over Goole Moor
25th February	2-3, 1 over Will Pits, 2 over Limberlost
28th February	1 over Will Pits then SW
11th March	2
12th March	1
18th March	1 over Crowle Moor
27th March	1
31st March	1 Will Pits
02nd April	1
14th April	1 mobbed by a Marsh Harrier Will Pits Scrape
23rd April	2 Goole Moor
02nd May	1 Green Belt
06th May	1 flooded workings
08th May	1 Will Pits
14th June	5 in total. Highest count ever (RJS)
29th June	2 colliery area and 'Middle Moor'
02nd August	1 Goole Moor
04th August	2, 1 immature calling Limberlost Wood and adult flying off
08th August	1 Will Pits
31st August	1 W edge
10th September	1 Will Pits
12th September	1 white-headed bird Goole Moor
17th September	2 flooded workings
22nd September	1 pale bird Paraffin area
24th September	2 flooded workings
25th September	1 over Will Pits
04th October	1 Mill Drain Marsh
07th October	1 'Middle Moor'
08th October	1 flooded workings
10th October	1 'Middle Moor'
29th October	1 Green Belt
07th November	1 Limberlost

### **Osprey** *Pandion haliaetus*

An immature was observed coming from the N over the flooded workings on 23rd August. It dropped very low over 'Middle Moor' as it continued S (RJS).

**Common Kestrel** *Falco tinnunculus*

Monthly maxima were: January 2, February 2, March 2, April 4, May 2, June 2, July 3, August 3, September 3, October 3, November 4, December 0.

**Red-footed Falcon** *Falco vespertinus*

A first-summer male was seen on 14th June from the Viewing Platform (LJD, RJS). It was reported the following two days as well on the bird information lines, but no details (*Yorkshire Birding*). It was not the individual seen on Hatfield Moors on 24th May. Subject to accepted by the YNU BS.

**Merlin** *Falco columbarius*

28th February 1 near Shoulder o' Mutton  
07th March 1 female over Will Pits Scrape  
15th September 1 Will Pits  
04th October 1 Mill Drain Marsh  
21st November 1 chased a Redwing near Green Belt

**Hobby** *Falco subbuteo*

Commonly recorded in spring and summer, with the first over the flooded workings on 24th April. The last two were seen on 17th September at Snaith & Cowick Moor. Maximum was five on 2nd August; two were adults the rest were immatures.

**Peregrine Falcon** *Falco peregrinus*

Not seen in June, but one to three seen every other month, with fewer records in summer. Often seen in open areas such as the flooded workings N of Fisons' Road. On 14th July, a juvenile was eating something on peat, where earlier in the day a juvenile Little Ringed Plover was watched! Aggression sometimes recorded between males and females as on 24th September, when a male attacked a female. Aggression also to other species, for instance a female attacked three Marsh Harriers on 7th November.

**Water Rail** *Rallus aquaticus*

Significant early records were three heard on 24th February and one on 28th. More frequent in spring, records included one running across Fisons' Road near the Paraffin area on 30th April. Three were noted during the European Nightjar survey in the Mill Drain Marsh area and Southern Canals. Singles frequently heard, particularly in autumn.

**Moorhen** *Gallinula chloropus*

Monthly maxima were: January 0, February 2, March 2, April 1, May 1, June 0, July 1, August 1, September 0, October 1, November 1, December 4.

**Common Coot** *Fulica atra*

Monthly maxima were: January 0, February 0, March 0, April 1, May 1, June 0, July 0, August 0, September 0, October 0, November 0, December 0.

**Common Crane** *Grus grus*

The first occurred in April, with one present at the flooded workings on 23rd and on 25th one over the same area. There were five May records all of a pair, and three June records all of a solo bird. From the start of August all subsequent records until mid-September were of a pair, with eight August records, and four in September to the 16th. There were then singles on 23rd, 26th and 27th September.

**Oystercatcher** *Haematopus ostralegus*

A couple was down at the W end of the flooded workings on 1st March, plus one on 30th April.

**Avocet** *Recurvirostra avosetta*

A pair at Creyke's flooded workings on 2nd May (RW).

**Little Ringed Plover** *Charadrius dubius*

An adult and a fledged young were present on 30th June, at the W end of Goole Moor near Fisons' Road. A juvenile was watched in this area on 14th July, and may have been predated by a Peregrine Falcon..

**Ringed Plover** *Charadrius hiaticula*

Four records of up to four birds in August. The only other record was three over on 7th October.

**European Golden Plover** *Pluvialis apricaria*

Larger groups may be found in surrounding fields, for example 250 were on Goole Fields on 31st March and 120 there on 6th April. In autumn generally small numbers overfly the Moors.

**Grey Plover** *Pluvialis squatarola*

Seven passed over in a group on 30th August (RJS).

**Northern Lapwing** *Vanellus vanellus*

Maximum was on 25th September. Bred with a chick seen at Creyke's on 21st and 22nd May, elsewhere other pairs held territory but the outcome is unknown.

Monthly maxima were: January 0, February 35, March 14, April 4, May 10, June 10, July 125, August 400+, September 700, October 170, November 65, December 0.

**Sanderling** *Calidris alba*

One over on 11th January, and five passed W on 31st August over Goole Moor (both RJS).

**Dunlin** *Calidris alpina*

Usually single figures in winter months, with only a single in January, then none till five were seen in August, followed by eight in September and five in October.

**Ruff** *Philomachus pugnax*

In August on 14th, three immatures were present at the W end of the flooded workings with two there on 16th and 23rd. Two were at the flooded workings on 17th September and a single on 8th October.

**Jack Snipe** *Lymnocyptes minimus*

One was in a drain on 8th January and one was put up near Blue Bridge on 7th April. Another was along Fisons' Road E of Blue Bridge on 15th September.

**Common Snipe** *Gallinago gallinago*

Small numbers in spring, few breed, however in autumn larger influxes may occur. Maximum was on 11th September. Monthly maxima were: January 1, February 10, March 5, April 2, May 2, June 1, July 0, August 3, September 21, October 5, November 0, December 1.

**Woodcock** *Scolopax rusticola*

One or two were seen in February, March and October. A sitting (four eggs) bird was seen in Will Pits and was later successful (RB). On the night of 15th May, one was flying over Will Pits, and a roding individual was seen on Crowle Moor on 13th June. Four roding birds were noted in the annual European Nightjar survey.

**Eurasian Curlew** *Numenius arquata*

One NW on 28th February and one on Goole Moor on 31st March were the only early records. One or two flew over in summer, involving one on 28th June, one over Green Belt on 30th June, one NE on 7th July and two NW on 20th July.

**Common Sandpiper** *Actitis hypoleucos*

The only record was of one on 16th August.

**Green Sandpiper** *Tringa ochropus*

In the winter months a single was recorded from Thorne Waste Drain on 28th February. The only spring record was of one in the same place on 25th April. One to three were recorded in August, with records of singles on 12th September and 27th October, both from Thorne Waste Drain.

**Spotted Redshank** *Tringa erythropus*

Two were seen amongst the Black-headed Gulls N of Fisons' Road on 24th June. A summer-plumaged individual was down and calling at the W end of the flooded workings on 10th August, and later in the month, on 16th two were seen there.

**Greenshank** *Tringa nebularia*

At the flooded workings, one or small groups seen on passage. No unusual dates.

**Wood Sandpiper** *Tringa glareola*

The only record was of one on 24th May (RJS).

**Common Redshank** *Tringa totanus*

Few records, singles on 14th and 20th July and one on 4th August.

**Turnstone** *Arenaria interpres*

Two were present on 30th August.

**Common Gull** *Larus canus*

More often seen in fields towards the colliery than flying over or down on the peat moor. Recorded from September when up to 100 were present on fields to the N of the Moors. In October 14 were in fields to the S, and in November 16 flew over E.

**Lesser Black-backed Gull** *Larus fuscus*

Larger numbers were found on the flooded workings in August and on ploughed fields to the N of the Moors in September. Monthly maxima were: March 1, April 2, May 2, June 60, July 4, August 200, September 300, October 13.

**Yellow-legged Gull** *Larus michahellis*

An adult accompanied Lesser Black-backed Gulls, from a roost on Goole Moor W of Shoulder o' Mutton, on 30th June (BPW). The earliest date ever.

**Herring Gull** *Larus argentatus*

The maxima recorded in November came in to roost on Goole Moor. Monthly maxima were: January 2, February 100, March 2, April 3, May 0, June 5, July 0, August 0, September 2, October 42, November 232, December 5.

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

Monthly maxima were: January 0, February 10, March 8, April 0, May 0, June 2, July 0, August 65, September 3, October 20+, November 44, December 12.

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

Young were noted by 24th May (two), summer counts were of breeding birds mainly found on flooded workings N of Fisons' Road (around 225 birds maximum), with a few at 'Middle Moor' and Will Pits Scrape.

Monthly maxima were: January 0, February 6, March 110, April 265, May 400, June 300, July 1, August 0, September 100, October 60, November 139, December 32.

**Common Tern** *Sterna hirundo*

In May, a single bird on 6th and two on 24th.

**Rock Dove** *Columba livia*

Small numbers generally in peripheral areas.

**Stock Dove** *Columba oenas*

Seen widely around the Moors edge generally in low numbers, 13 along Jones' Cable on 7th March being a high count. Bred for example at Bank Top.

**Wood Pigeon** *Columba palumbus*

Recorded every month, higher monthly counts were February 100, March 250, September 300+, October 500+, November 1600, December 50+.

**Collared Dove** *Streptopelia decaocto*

Regular at Red House Farm, with up to 30 there in February.

**Turtle Dove** *Streptopelia turtur*

Up to three were seen together in Natural England's field in the colliery area. Area maxima were: Will Pits (1), colliery area (including SW edge) (3), Green Belt (3), Alder Woods (2). No unusual dates.

**Common Cuckoo** *Cuculus canorus*

First and last dates were 21st April and 27th June, with a maximum of five in May.

**Barn Owl** *Tyto alba*

One was seen at Snaith & Cowick Moor on 30th March. A pair was in the Limberlost area on 7th November. An individual was hunting near Creyke's before landing on a post at W end of Blackwater Dyke on 18th December. Other records came from peripheral farmland, particularly Priory Farm and Top House Farm. Bred, raising two young at Moorfield Farm, Goole Fields (JJ).

**Little Owl** *Athene noctua*

An undated January record, of a single, came from Priory Farm.

**Tawny Owl** *Strix aluco*

One heard in Will Pits on 15th May. Four pairs recorded on the annual European Nightjar survey.

**Long-eared Owl** *Asio otus*

A nest containing four eggs was found on 23rd March but by 27th April the nest had been destroyed (RA). On the evening of 29th April, a hunting bird seen at Crowle Moor. One flushed by contractors in 'Middle Moor' area on 16th July. Only one pair recorded on the annual European Nightjar survey.

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

One was seen S of Red House Farm on 20th May (PA).

**European Nightjar** *Caprimulgus europaeus*

The annual survey, conducted by Middleton Eco Consultancy, mapped 52 territories, with an estimated population of between 45-57 breeding pairs (Middleton 2009), 56 pairs in 2006 is the previous maximum. First and last dates were 10th May (the earliest ever, JGH) and 22nd August.

**Common Swift** *Apus apus*

Monthly maxima were: April 27, May 300, June 20+, July 50+, August 30. First date was 27th April.

**Common Kingfisher** *Alcedo atthis*

Three records all of single birds, from colliery area or Thorne Waste Drain, dates were 15th March, 7th October and 13th December.

**Green Woodpecker** *Picus viridis*

One to three commonly recorded. Four were seen on 11th and 14th October. Records in mid-June at Will Pits proved breeding with a juvenile seen on 13th.

**Great Spotted Woodpecker** *Dendrocopos major*

As with Green Woodpecker, small numbers regularly seen, with more in autumn. Five were seen on 11th September. Bred in willow *Salix* near Natural England's shed where a female was observed feeding young on 29th May, and on the same date a second nest was located in a birch on Crowle Moor where a male was feeding young. There was strong evidence of possibly a third pair in Will Pits.

**Lesser Spotted Woodpecker** *Dendrocopos minor*

There was only one record, of a drumming and calling bird which was eventually seen at Will Pits on 31st March.

**Great Grey Shrike** *Lanus excubitor*

Found by SH on 30th September (earliest return date ever), near the Viewing Platform and observed on several occasions until 26th November. On 5th October the bird was between the Viewing Platform and moving gradually along to the canal towpath, where it killed and ate a Blue Tit and put the remains in the fork of a birch. It targeted any small bird in the area such as Reed Buntings, and was observed to catch a small rodent, and also fed on beetles Coleoptera.

**Magpie** *Pica pica*

There is a large roost behind the colliery spoil mounds towards the allotment gardens. Higher monthly maxima were: February 10, March 8, September 26, October 10.

**Eurasian Jay** *Garrulus glandarius*

Monthly maxima were: January 1, February 1, March 2, April 0, May 2, June 5, July 0, August 3, September 4, October 7, November 1, December 0.

**Western Jackdaw** *Corvus monedula*

Two flew from Woodpecker Wood to Jones' Cable on 24th May.

**Rook** *Corvus frugilegus*

Some 55 birds flew from Goole Fields over E edge of the Moors on 16th August and 71 flew over Will Pits Scrape on 23rd September.

**Carrion Crow** *Corvus corone*

Under-recorded, higher counts relate to roosts numbers. Higher monthly maxima were: March (60), August (30), September (21) and October (100).

**Goldcrest** *Regulus regulus*

Two along Jones' Cable on 28th February was the only record.

**Blue Tit** *Cyanistes caeruleus*

Though recorded every month the only double figure was of 10 in November.

**Great Tit** *Parus major*

Though recorded every month the only double figure was of 16 in November.

**Coal Tit** *Periparus ater*

Most records were from Will Pits and Crowle Moor area. At the latter a nest was found on 18th March and on 20th May the young were watched being fed in some birches after having left the nest (RB). Also, singles on 24th February, 23rd September, 29th October and 21st November.

**Willow Tit** *Poecile montanus*

A nest-hole was found at Crowle Moor on 20th May when a bird was seen entering a dead birch. Monthly maxima were: January 2, February 1, March 2, April 1, May 2, June 2, July 2, August 2, September 4, October 2, November 2, December 2.

**Wood Lark** *Lullula arborea*

A single record of a lone singer at the SE corner of Shoulder o' Mutton Tram on 15th March (RJS).

**Sky Lark** *Alauda arvensis*

Highest numbers were of passage birds in autumn, with small groups that generally headed W or SW. Maximum was on 12th October. Monthly maxima were: January 0, February 3, March 2, April 0, May 1, June 0, July 0, August 6, September 25, October 68, November 0, December 7.

**Sand Martin** *Riparia riparia*

One on 25th April, and 300 on 30th August.

**Barn Swallow** *Hirundo rustica*

A pair bred at Bank Top. Monthly maxima were: April 30, May 30, June 6, July 30+, August 50+, September 10, October 1. First and last dates were 3rd April and 27th October.

**House Martin** *Delichon urbicum*

Monthly maxima were: May 2, June 6, July 0, August 50+, September 80, October 20. First and last dates were 27th May and 4th October.

**Long-tailed Tit** *Aegithalos caedatus*

Monthly maxima were: January 10, February 8, March 8, April 2, May 1, June 1, July 0, August 10, September 23, October 20, November 20, December 1.

**Common Chiffchaff** *Phylloscopus collybita*

A nest with young close to fledging was found on 18th May at Will Pits. There was a single at Bank Top on 21st December. Area maxima were: Will Pits (8), colliery area (1), Green Belt (1), Will Pits Scrape (2), Will Pits (6), colliery area (1), Green Belt (1), Goole Moor (2), 'Middle Moor' (2), Crowle Moor (1) and SW edge of the moors (4). First and last dates were 18th March and 25th September.

**Willow Warbler** *Phylloscopus trochilus*

A widespread species found wherever there are trees or bushes. Area maxima were: Will Pits (5), Southern Canals (1), SW edge of the moors (5), Pony Bridge Marsh (5), Collis's Tram (6), colliery area (1), 'Middle Moor' (2), Will Pits Scrape (2), Goole Moor (1), Green Belt (10) and Jones' Cable (1). First and last dates were 6th April and 11th September.

**Blackcap** *Sylvia atricapilla*

Breeding proven in Will Pits and on Crowle Moor, highest count was of 20 on 11th May. Area maxima were: colliery area (1), Will Pits (1), Green Belt (1) and Snaith & Cowick Moor (2). The first and last dates were 14th April and 11th September.

**Garden Warbler** *Sylvia borin*

A nest was found at Will Pits Scrape. Maximum of five on 15th May all in Will Pits. Area maxima were: Goole Moor (1) and Will Pits (5). First and last dates were 29th April and 2nd August.

**Lesser Whitethroat** *Sylvia curruca*

Two records, both of single birds: Chadwick Dyke on 20th April and Crowle Moor on 10th June.

**Common Whitethroat** *Sylvia communis*

Found in most areas, the maximum count being 12 on 11th May. Area maxima were: Jones' Cable (5), colliery area (1), Goole Moor (1), Will Pits Scrape (3), canal towpath (4), flooded workings (3), Creykes (1) and 'Middle Moor' (10). First and last dates were 21st April and 11th September.

**Grasshopper Warbler** *Locustella naevia*

Area maxima were: E end of Collis's Tram (1), colliery area (2), Mill Drain Marsh (1), Green Belt (1), flooded workings (2), Southern Canals (1), Crowle Moor (1), Will Pits Scrape (2), Bank Top (1) and 'Middle Moor' (1). First and last dates were 14th April and 4th August. 20 reeling males were noted on the annual European Nightjar survey.

**Sedge Warbler** *Acrocephalus schoenobaenus*

The maximum was eight on 30th June. Area maxima were: Fisons' Road (8), Mill Drain/Marsh (1), Mill Drain Marsh (1), Pony Bridge Marsh (2), flooded workings (8), Alder Woods (1), Green Belt (1), colliery area (1), Will Pits (5), Will Pits Scrape (5) and 'Middle Moor' (2). First and last dates were 14th April and 4th August.

**Reed Warbler** *Acrocephalus scirpaceus*

Area maxima were: Inkle Moor (1), Fisons' Road (1) 'Middle Moor' (2), Mill Drain (1), flooded workings (1), Shoulder o' Mutton Tram (1), Green Belt (5), Will Pits Scrape (1) and Will Pits (1). First and last dates were 20th April and 9th September.

**Eurasian Treecreeper** *Certhia familiaris*

Two together at Green Belt on 1st March, a single on 27th March (no locality) and one in Will Pits on 7th November.

**Wren** *Troglodytes troglodytes*

The only count of note was 25 on 26th October.

**Common Starling** *Sturnus vulgaris*

Maximum was on 30th September. Monthly maxima were: February 50, April 1, September 100+, October 12.

**Blackbird** *Turdus merula*

Maximum was on 14th October, breeding proven in several areas. Recorded every month, however the only monthly maxima in double figures were: January (14), September (15), October (70) and November (25).

**Fieldfare** *Turdus pilaris*

Maximum was on 27th October over Will Pits. Monthly maxima were: January 8, February 100, March 21, April 42, May 1, October 2000, November 150, December 6. Last and first dates were 4th May (Red House Farm) and 27th October.

**Song Thrush** *Turdus philomelos*

Certainly bred in Will Pits with five young seen on 13th June. Monthly maxima were: February 5, March 4, April 3, May 3, June 4, October 8, November 1, December 1.

**Redwing** *Turdus iliacus*

Maxima were on 14th February. Monthly maxima were: January 50, February 60, March 23, October 50, November 40, December 3. Last and first dates were 1st March and 20th October.

**Mistle Thrush** *Turdus viscivorus*

Monthly maxima were: February 1, April 2, May 2, October 1.

**Spotted Flycatcher** *Muscicapa striata*

One in Will Pits on 24th May.

**Robin** *Erithacus rubecula*

A nest containing young was found on 6th May. Maximum of 15 was on 1st March, the only month with a double figure count.

**Common Nightingale** *Luscinia megarhynchos*

From this NNR one of several southern Sahel migrants in trouble, along with Turtle Dove and Whinchat. A single was seen at Will Pits on 24th May (RJS). None recorded on several May and June night visits.

**Whinchat** *Saxicola rubetra*

Only passage birds recorded. The first was at Blue Bridge on 25th May, and the next was on the return date of 30th September, when two were present, with one on 1st October, again near Blue Bridge.

**Common Stonechat** *Saxicola torquata*

Widely recorded in more open areas throughout the year. At least three pairs bred at flooded workings (some were double-brooded). Monthly maxima were: January 6, February 4, March 3, April 2, May 2, June 3, July 1, August 1, September 6, October 6, November 3, December 3.

**Northern Wheatear** *Oenanthe oenanthe*

The first was at the Shoulder o' Mutton on 31st March, then a pair on Rawcliffe Moor on 27th April, followed by one at Snaith & Cowick Moor on 7th April, then a male on 2nd May and one on 4th May, then another at Shoulder o' Mutton on 7th May. Several records of one or two birds from 2nd August, with the last being a two at the flooded workings on 18th September.

**Duncock** *Prunella modularis*

No more than two recorded as in September.

**House Sparrow** *Passer domesticus*

Eight along Jones' Cable on 2nd August were followed by the only moorland record, of seven at Bank Top on 16th August (RJS).

**Tree Sparrow** *Passer montanus*

Up to two seen in May, June and July at Red House Farm and Top Moor Farm, at least one pair bred. Three nests on Goole Fields, and breeding undoubtedly helped by the provision of nest boxes at these farms.

**Yellow Wagtail** *Motacilla flava*

There were nine on the first date, 25th April, and the last on Goole Moor on 27th October was the latest ever (RA).

**Grey Wagtail** *Motacilla cinerea*

One at Thorne Waste Drain on 23rd September.

**Pied Wagtail** *Motacilla alba*

Only low numbers recorded, bred at the shed at Bank Top again. Monthly maxima were: January 1, February 8, March 3, April 1, May 7, June 6, July 4, August 5, September 4, October 3, November 0, December 1.

**Tree Pipit** *Anthus trivialis*

Up to five singing males noted on Crowle Moor. First date was 21st April.

**Meadow Pipit** *Anthus pratensis*

Numbers sometimes reached 50 or more in autumn, the maximum being 60 on 11th September. Monthly maxima were: January 1, February 4, March 16, April 2, May 3, June 6, July 1, August 12, September 60, October 50, November 4, December 4.

**Common Chaffinch** *Fringilla coelebs*

The highest counts were associated with a roost in the Green Belt/colliery area, the maximum there was on 10th November. Monthly maxima were: January 0, February 20, March 8, April 1, May 2, June 2, July 1, August 3, September 30, October 3, November 432, December 1.

**Brambling** *Fringilla montifringilla*

Two males came to the Common Chaffinch roost in the Green Belt/colliery area on 28th February.

**Greenfinch** *Carduelis chloris*

Very low numbers compared to previous years, even at roosts. Monthly maxima were: February 40, March 1, April 10, August 1, September 6, October 30+, November 6, December 23.

**Goldfinch** *Carduelis carduelis*

Largest counts were not of roosting birds but of feeding birds in the set-aside field of Oil-seed Rape *Brassica napus oleifera* that Natural England has acquired in the colliery area, Goldfinches could often be seen here with Linnets, from along the colliery PRow. Maximum was on 10th November. Monthly maxima were: March 8, May 2, August 11, September 86, October 50, November 100.

**Siskin** *Carduelis spinus*

Six were seen at Will Pits Scrape on 14th April, then a few records of single figure counts in October.

**Linnet** *Carduelis cannabina*

This species has benefitted the most from the abandoned Oil-seed Rape crop, in the field which Natural England has purchased. Maximum here was on 20th October. Bred on Crowle Moor, where a fledged brood was noted in mid-July. Monthly maxima were: January 32, February 50, March 2, April 3, May 4, June 1, July 4, August 45, September 11, October 200, November 80, December 120.

**Lesser Redpoll** *Carduelis flammea*

Maximum was on 5th October. Monthly maxima were: January 3, February 2, March 2, September 1, October 28, November 22, December 12.

**Bullfinch** *Pyrrhula pyrrhula*

Maximum was on 14th October, with five in Will Pits and the rest along the northern Moors' edge. Monthly maxima were: January 0, February 7, March 7, April 2, May 2, June 2, July 3, August 2, September 10, October 11, November 3, December 6.

**Snow Bunting** *Plectrophenax nivalis*

One was reported on 18th October at NE side of Goole Moor, observer not known (*Yorkshire Birding*).

**Yellowhammer** *Emberiza citrinella*

Maximum was on 18th April near the old Swinefleet Peat Works. A nest containing four young was found on Crowle Moor on 8th July. Monthly maxima were: February 4, March 1, April 28, May 2, August 3, September 3, December 4.

**Reed Bunting** *Emberiza schoeniclus*

Maximum was on 25th September. Monthly maxima were: January 2, February 20, March 4, April 10, May 10, June 20, July 0, August 6, September 36, October 15, November 2, December 8.

**Corn Bunting** *Emberiza calandra*

One on 24th June near Red House Farm.

**Category D**

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

Seen with 47 Greylags over Will Pits and Goole Moor before landing on Goole Moor on 24th February (PH, PA).

**Red-tailed Hawk** *Buteo jamaicensis*

The second record of this species was seen over the W edge of the Moors then towards the colliery area on 2nd May (RJS).

### LIST OF OBSERVERS

Paul Adams, Robert Broch, Bob Croxton, Lance J. Degnan, M. Grassby, Keith Heywood, James Hinchliffe, Steve Hiner, John G. Hitchcock, Peter Hinks, Jim Johnson, Simone Maw, Ron Moat, Ian Morley, Martin Limbert, Peter C. Roworth, Kieran Sheehan, Brian Smith, Richard J. Sprakes, B. Thompson, Graham Todd, Bryan P. Wainwright, Colin Wall, Rob Watson.

Middleton Eco Consultancy (P. Middleton, D. Pearce, A. Cawthrow, C. Dixon).

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### REFERENCE

P. Middleton (2009) *Breeding Nightjar Survey, 2009, Humberhead Peatlands NNR, SAC, SSSI, SPA (Thorne, Goole and Crowle Moors)*. Unpublished Report to Natural England by Middleton Eco Consultancy

### SUPPLEMENT TO 2008 BIRD REPORT

**Honey-Buzzard.** Three on 19th September accepted by YNU BS.

**Golden Eagle.** The bird on 14th May, accepted by YNU BS only as an *Aquila* sp. Published with the escape proviso.

### RECORDS

Please send records to Thorne Moors bird recorder, Bryan P. Wainwright, Silverthorn, St Michael's Drive, Thorne, Doncaster, South Yorkshire, DN8 5QF. Tel. 01405 817107. Annual reports are online at [www.birdingsiteguide.com](http://www.birdingsiteguide.com) (1980 to 2003) and at [www.thmcf.org](http://www.thmcf.org) (2004 onwards). Records can be added immediately to 'Thorne Moors Birding Blog' at [www.birdingsiteguide.com](http://www.birdingsiteguide.com), with an email to Bryan via the website button 'Contact Us'. Please send all other records in as soon after the New Year as possible, preferably in the taxonomic order followed in this report. Use the area names as found on the map on [www.thmcf.org](http://www.thmcf.org) or issued with the 2005 report.

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