

# SANDY POINT HAYLING ISLAND



## 2021 BIRD REPORT

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### Introduction

This is the 17<sup>th</sup> report summarising observations at Sandy Point. The total of 174 species recorded during the year is just below average, with a good number of local scarcities recorded during the year. What the total fails to hint at is the change in fortunes of so many species. After the extraordinary events of 2020, with national lockdowns and their subsequent easing producing an astronomical rise in visitor pressure on Sandy Point and Chichester Harbour (as well as every other beauty spot), 2021 saw things settle down to perhaps a 'new normal'. Unfortunately, the new level of background disturbance is so much higher than pre-2020 that it seems it is unsustainable, and it has been quite distressing to watch so many birds being displaced from Chichester Harbour by the sheer numbers of people.

'Expected' species (or subspecies) which went unrecorded in 2021 included black brant *Branta bernicla nigricans* (for the fourth year running), long-tailed duck *Clangula hyemalis*, purple sandpiper *Calidris maritima*, little stint *C. minuta*, wood sandpiper *Tringa glareola* and pied flycatcher *Ficedula hypoleuca*.

The recording area includes the whole of the Eastoke peninsula, bounded by Fishery Creek to the north, as far west as Eastoke Corner on the seafront (an area of little more than 1km<sup>2</sup>). Most of the peninsula is residential development/caravan parks, so the bulk of observations come from Sandy Point Local Nature Reserve north to Hayling Island Sailing Club and Black Point (see map, page 32). The number of days on which coverage was achieved in each month in 2021 is shown below.

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Days:	26	22	28	24	19	10	29	23	27	27	25	23

### Summary of 2021 (with the most notable species highlighted in bold)

A relatively cold start to the year saw good numbers of great northern diver and jack snipe, plus an overwintering black redstart, but it was a poor winter for Slavonian grebe, black-throated diver and auks. Two velvet scoters lingered in February, and there was an unexpected brief visit from a barn owl on 8<sup>th</sup>.

A very early sand martin (and three chiffchaffs) on 4<sup>th</sup> March heralded the onset of spring, quickly followed by yellowhammer and red-necked grebe. Several unexpected feral species in the early spring included red-legged partridge, **ruddy shelduck**, two Egyptian geese and four red kites.

April's highlights included black-necked grebe, **Iceland gull**, **cattle egret** and osprey, whilst an arrival on 7<sup>th</sup> May included three whinchats, spotted flycatcher, tree pipit, garden and reed warbler. Both whimbrel and hobby

occurred in good numbers during the spring, but sea-watching was very poor (see table 1) due to unfavourable winds. The highlight of the spring occurred on 28<sup>th</sup> May when a breeding plumage female **grey phalarope** spent ten minutes in the harbour entrance.

	March		April		May			Total	
	19-25	26-1	2-8	9-15	16-22	23-29	30-6	7-13	19/3 – 13/5
Brent goose	<b>428</b>	19	51	14	29	144	22	81	788
Bar-tailed godwit	-	-	-	-	<b>389</b>	264	-	-	653
Whimbrel	-	-	-	18	94	<b>471</b>	12	19	614
Common tern	-	-	-	-	125	<b>239</b>	-	61	425
Common scoter	4	29	-	-	5	<b>58</b>	6	32	134
Common gull	7	-	4	-	36	<b>38</b>	2	-	87
Little tern	-	-	-	-	18	<b>26</b>	-	3	47
Arctic skua	-	-	-	-	5	3	4	<b>6</b>	18

**Table 1:** Spring sea-watching – easterly totals for selected regular species for weeks 12-19, listed in the order their peaks occurred (shown in bold).

Whilst the moth trap had a low-key year, a number of white-letter hairstreaks *S. w-album* were seen in Earnley Triangle during July, having been discovered in 2020, and a wandering male chalkhill blue *L. coridon* was present on 26<sup>th</sup> August. Amongst the dragonfly records there were **red-veined darters** *S. fonscolombi* on 15<sup>th</sup> July and 11<sup>th</sup> September, but the stand-out record was a male **southern emerald damselfly** *L. barbarus* on 25<sup>th</sup> August – a recent arrival in the UK, this believed to be the second record for Hampshire (see back cover).

The female muntjac *M. reevesi* remained extremely elusive in the reserve, seen on just half a dozen occasions during the year. Likewise, there were a couple of hedgehog *E. europaeus* sightings, and three bottle-nosed dolphins *T. truncatus* were offshore on 4<sup>th</sup> May. A buck roe deer *C. capreolus* was watched swimming across Chichester Harbour on 18<sup>th</sup> May and, remarkably, a doe did the same the next day.



Muntjac, Sandy Point, 6<sup>th</sup> May 2021; roe buck, Chichester Harbour, 18<sup>th</sup> May 2021

Summer bird highlights included post-breeding coal tit, rock pipit and treecreeper, with an early grasshopper warbler and a roseate tern before the end of July. However, the high tide roost at Black Point never got the chance to gather, due to high levels of human activity, and very few terns visited Chichester Harbour all autumn with, for example, just one black tern recorded. A nightjar was present on 24<sup>th</sup> August, followed by a **wryneck** in the reserve for four days in September. A **Balearic shearwater** was distantly offshore on 26<sup>th</sup> September, with a Leach's petrel on 1<sup>st</sup> October frustratingly glimpsed all too briefly. Subsequent migrants included a second **wryneck** on 7<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> October, two woodlarks, an eastern lesser whitethroat, ring ouzel, hen harrier and **great egret**.

Visible migration saw an excellent spell of jackdaw passage, but sadly a pretty much disastrous season for every other species. 'Vis mig' totals for selected species are shown in table 2.

	September				October				November	
	3-9	10-16	17-23	24-30	1-7	8-14	15-21	22-28	29-4	5-11
Swallow	<b>770</b>	260	390	108	65	34	7	9	2	-
House martin	68	<b>1102</b>	2	116	88	5	-	-	-	-
Meadow pipit	-	47	47	133	<b>184</b>	172	-	31	-	-
Jackdaw	1	5	7	6	21	<b>1640</b>	14	41	37	25
Goldfinch	34	-	6	1	60	<b>1307</b>	862	657	198	183
Alba' wagtail	-	-	9	-	14	<b>127</b>	2	4	4	-
Siskin	-	-	-	-	18	<b>71</b>	17	33	7	15
Linnet	-	-	-	-	23	<b>50</b>	-	45	-	-
Skylark	-	-	-	-	-	<b>60</b>	7	44	46	13
Chaffinch	-	-	-	-	2	14	4	<b>21</b>	6	8
Woodpigeon	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	280	<b>4200</b>	250
Redpoll	-	-	-	-	-	2	1	14	6	<b>26</b>

**Table 2:** Autumn visible migration – weekly totals of selected species for weeks 36-45, listed in the order their peak counts occur (shown in bold).

The second winter period continued the generally dry trend for the year, and was the best winter for many years for divers and auks, but it was very poor for black redstart and firecrest. Highlights included a fly-over white-fronted goose and unusually large flocks of 40 avocets and 200 gannets at the end of the year.

### Acknowledgements

Many thanks to Jim Hobson, Martin Jewell *et al* at Hampshire County Council for their support throughout the year. Thanks also to Henry Message at Hayling Island Sailing Club, for allowing access to Sailing Club land. Finally, thanks to all other observers who passed on their records.

**Front cover:** Wryneck, Sandy Point, 17<sup>th</sup> September 2021.

**Back cover:** Southern emerald damselfly, Sandy Point, 25<sup>th</sup> August 2021.

All photographs by A. Johnson.

**SYSTEMATIC LIST**

Species are listed according to the British Ornithologists' Union 9<sup>th</sup> Checklist (2018). Status given is for the recording area only, whilst bullet points highlight the most notable records (usually in at least a county context). Abbreviations used in the text, in addition to compass points (indicating direction of flight) are:

B/d: Bird-days                      BP: Black Point (BPC: Black Point Creek)  
CH: Chichester Harbour          SP: Sandy Point nature reserve

**Dark-bellied brent** *Branta bernicla bernicla*                      *Common winter visitor*  
A total of 131 moved east in January and February. Easterly spring passage totalled 849 between 10<sup>th</sup> March – 12<sup>th</sup> May, with the peak movements of 330 on 22<sup>nd</sup> March and 78 on 24<sup>th</sup> April. Summering birds between 28<sup>th</sup> June – 27<sup>th</sup> July peaked at five on 20<sup>th</sup>-21<sup>st</sup> July. An early returning bird arrived on 26<sup>th</sup> August (a day earlier than in 2020), but there were no others until a mass arrival of 500 birds on 20<sup>th</sup> September, after which numbers were much higher than usual, although this was not a result of large numbers of juveniles (and was perhaps a result of disturbance elsewhere in Chichester Harbour).

**Pale-bellied brent** *Branta bernicla hrota*                      *Scarce winter visitor and migrant*  
5<sup>th</sup> February – 4<sup>th</sup> March: one with dark-bellied brents in Chichester Harbour.  
19<sup>th</sup> April: one flew east with 15 dark-bellied brents.  
15<sup>th</sup> October – 24<sup>th</sup> December: two birds regularly in Chichester Harbour (though not associating with each other).

**Canada goose** *Branta canadensis*                      *Occasional feral migrant*

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Max:	-	2	3	5	6	14	23	40	247	240	20	33

There were 11 records between 16<sup>th</sup> February – 7<sup>th</sup> June. Then regularly recorded from 28<sup>th</sup> July – 18<sup>th</sup> November. A substantial increase in numbers and frequency.

**Barnacle goose** *Branta leucopsis*                      *Rare winter visitor and migrant*  
27<sup>th</sup> May: six flew west over the reserve.  
21<sup>st</sup> October: a flock of 77 flew north into Chichester Harbour before leaving westwards.  
16<sup>th</sup> December: 18 flew over at dusk, part of a substantial influx at the time.  
All records presumably relate to feral birds.

**Greylag goose** *Anser anser*                      *Uncommon feral visitor*  
Singles were recorded on 22<sup>nd</sup> January and 30<sup>th</sup> March. In April there were three on 4<sup>th</sup>, one on 5<sup>th</sup> and two on 26<sup>th</sup>, followed by one on 21<sup>st</sup> May. A good year.

**White-fronted goose** *Anser albifrons*                      *Rare winter visitor*  
21<sup>st</sup> December: an adult flew high north over Black Point.  
The 9<sup>th</sup> record, follows three records in 2020.

**Mute swan** *Cygnus olor*                      *Resident in the area*  
A pair was in or over the reserve on five dates between 6<sup>th</sup> February – 18<sup>th</sup> March, followed in May by five NE on 2<sup>nd</sup> and four west on 6<sup>th</sup>.  
Unusually large numbers began to gather in Fishery Creek in September, peaking at 40 on 21<sup>st</sup> October, before declining during November (cf. brent goose). The reason for this unusually large gathering is unknown, but could be due to disturbance elsewhere.

**Egyptian goose** *Alopochen aegyptiaca*                      *Rare feral visitor*  
22<sup>nd</sup> April: two flew west at 06:28.  
The 8<sup>th</sup> record at Sandy Point.

**Ruddy shelduck** *Tadorna ferruginea*                      *Rare feral visitor*  
• 8<sup>th</sup> April: one flew west past Black Point at 07:15.  
The second record, following one sporadically over the winter of 2010-11.

**Shelduck** *Tadorna tadorna*                      *Resident and winter visitor*

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
E/N:	4	13	2	44	5	-	-	-	-	-	22	-

20<sup>th</sup> February – 6<sup>th</sup> June: one or a pair regularly in the reserve, but did not nest. The spring peak was 11 east on 21<sup>st</sup> April. The peak count in Chichester Harbour was 52 on 22<sup>nd</sup> January.

**Shoveler** *Spatula clypeata*                      *Winter visitor and migrant*

	Max	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Marsh:	5	7	6	6	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	4

Eight flew east on 1<sup>st</sup> January, two flew east on 21<sup>st</sup> April and one the next day. Four flew SW on 10<sup>th</sup> August, and 15 flew north on 22<sup>nd</sup> November. In Chichester Harbour there were eight on 1<sup>st</sup> January, one on 4<sup>th</sup> February and three on 11<sup>th</sup> February. An average year.

**Gadwall** *Mareca strepera*                      *Uncommon migrant*  
There were two in the harbour entrance on 1<sup>st</sup> March, one flew east on 16<sup>th</sup> April and one west on 3<sup>rd</sup> May. In November two were in the harbour entrance on both 6<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup>.  
A poor year, the spring average is nine bird-days, and the autumn 14.

**Wigeon** *Mareca penelope*                      *Regular migrant and winter visitor*  
Extreme dates were 17<sup>th</sup> April (one east) and 25<sup>th</sup> August (one north) with the autumn gathering in Chichester Harbour peaking at around 1000. 140 flew north during the cold weather movement on 22<sup>nd</sup> November, with one on the marsh in the reserve the same day (a rare occurrence).



Wigeon (left, with teal), Sandy Point marsh, 22<sup>nd</sup> November 2021.

**Mallard** *Anas platyrhynchos* Regular visitor, and breeds

Max	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
SP:	2	6	5	11	3	5	3	-	2	2	4	7

Two small ducklings were seen on 19<sup>th</sup> April, but not subsequently. Two flew east on 9<sup>th</sup> May, and four north on 22<sup>nd</sup> November. The peak count in Fishery Creek was 21 on 22<sup>nd</sup> December.

**Pintail** *Anas acuta* Uncommon winter visitor

B/d:	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
	11	5	34	-	-	-	-	-	4	4	39	5

Extreme dates: 4<sup>th</sup> March and 3<sup>rd</sup> September; 33 in Chichester Harbour on 1<sup>st</sup> March and 25 on 11<sup>th</sup> November the only double figure counts. A good year.

**Teal** *Anas crecca* Regular winter visitor

Max	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
SP:	21	18	24	8	-	-	-	-	2	8	185	80

Extreme dates: 25<sup>th</sup> April (three east) and 23<sup>rd</sup> August (24 in Chichester Harbour, where the peaks were 75 in January and 100 in September). Record-breaking numbers were on the marsh in the reserve between 22<sup>nd</sup>-25<sup>th</sup> November, associated with the cold weather.

**Pochard** *Aythya ferina* Rare migrant

30<sup>th</sup> March: one flew east with ten common scoter at 09:21. Most of the previous 14 records have occurred during cold weather movements, the only previous spring records being 4<sup>th</sup> April 2013 and 8<sup>th</sup> May 2016.

**Tufted Duck** *Aythya fuligula* Uncommon migrant

Two past Black Point on 2<sup>nd</sup> July was the only record. The worst year since 2005, although a typical date.

**Eider** *Somateria mollissima* Winter visitor and migrant  
4<sup>th</sup> January – 12<sup>th</sup> March: up to seven sporadically recorded, followed by 13 on 26<sup>th</sup> March, one on 28<sup>th</sup> May; four on 26<sup>th</sup> and one on 28<sup>th</sup> September. 25<sup>th</sup> November – 28<sup>th</sup> December: up to seven on five dates. A low-key year.

**Velvet scoter** *Melanitta fusca* Uncommon winter visitor and migrant  
Two females in Chichester Harbour from 4<sup>th</sup> – 9<sup>th</sup> February increased to three on 10<sup>th</sup>, then just one on 19<sup>th</sup> and 23<sup>rd</sup>.

2<sup>nd</sup> – 19<sup>th</sup> November: two females in Chichester Harbour, followed by two offshore on 16<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> December.

Conceivably the same two birds were responsible for the bulk of the records.



Velvet scoters, Chichester Harbour, 10<sup>th</sup> February; common scoters, 14<sup>th</sup> May 2021.

**Common scoter** *Melanitta nigra* Regular winter visitor and migrant

Max:	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
	17	3	22	60	60	1	10	8	5	5	4	4

Spring passage totalled just 155 east between 22<sup>nd</sup> March and 25<sup>th</sup> May, with 35 on 24<sup>th</sup> April the highest of only four double figure counts. A poor year.

**Goldeneye** *Bucephala clangula* Uncommon winter visitor

Singles recorded in Chichester Harbour on 23<sup>rd</sup> February, 5<sup>th</sup>, 22<sup>nd</sup> November and 11<sup>th</sup> December. The most records since 2013.

**Goosander** *Mergus merganser* Uncommon winter visitor

2<sup>nd</sup> January: one in Chichester Harbour.  
21<sup>st</sup> and 23<sup>rd</sup> December: four red-heads present on both dates.  
An average year.

**Red-breasted merganser** *Mergus serrator* Common winter visitor

The winter peaks in Chichester Harbour were 23 on 8<sup>th</sup> March and 60 on 21<sup>st</sup> December – the highest count since 2013. 11 flew east between 21<sup>st</sup> March – 27<sup>th</sup> April, with three west on 7<sup>th</sup> May the last of the spring. First back were nine on 23<sup>rd</sup> October.

**Red-legged partridge** *Alectoris rufa*  
Rare feral visitor

21<sup>st</sup> March: bizarrely one drifted past the lifeboat station and out to sea, where it sadly drowned.

This unfortunate bird was presumably forced into the water by a predator. It is only the third record at Sandy Point, following singles in 2006 and 2014.

**Pheasant** *Phasianus colchicus*

Formerly resident

18<sup>th</sup> March – 17<sup>th</sup> April: a male in the reserve, with two in early April.

30<sup>th</sup> December: another male in the reserve.

Continues the low profile of recent years, perhaps a result of reduced local releases. *Red-legged partridge, 21<sup>st</sup> March 2021.*

**Nightjar** *Caprimulgus europaeus*

Rare migrant

24<sup>th</sup> August: one flying around the reserve after dark.

A typical record; in addition, one was possibly heard during the day on 15<sup>th</sup> June.

**Swift** *Apus apus*

Common summer visitor

Recorded between 23<sup>rd</sup> April – 13<sup>th</sup> August. There were only 11 double figure counts, with peaks of 26 on 17<sup>th</sup> May, 36 on 18<sup>th</sup> June and 31 on 15<sup>th</sup> July.

A very poor year.

**Cuckoo** *Cuculus canorus*

Scarce migrant

17<sup>th</sup> July: a juvenile in the reserve.

A poor year.

**Feral pigeon** *Columba livia*

Common

Ever present around buildings, with 36 on 7<sup>th</sup> November a typical count.

**Stock dove** *Columba oenas*

Frequent migrant

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
B/d:	-	1	4	-	2	-	-	-	2	20	32	4

14 on 12<sup>th</sup> October and 17 west on 3<sup>rd</sup> November were the only counts over six. A poor year, the spring average is 13 bird-days and the autumn 159.

**Woodpigeon** *Columba palumbus*

Common resident and migrant

Very common in the reserve throughout the year. 4730 were noted flying west between 22<sup>nd</sup> October and 5<sup>th</sup> November, including 3100 on 3<sup>rd</sup>.



Woodpigeon overseeing the new noticeboard, Sandy Point, 1<sup>st</sup> August 2021.

**Collared dove** *Streptopelia decaocto*

Common resident

Present throughout the year, with flocks of 10-15 recorded in July – September.

**Water rail** *Rallus aquaticus*

Regular winter visitor

Recorded singly in the reserve until 12<sup>th</sup> April and up to two from 18<sup>th</sup> October.

**Moorhen** *Gallinula chloropus*

Resident

Ever present in the reserve, with at least two broods noted.

**Little grebe** *Tachybaptus ruficollis*

Regular winter visitor

Lower numbers than usual in Fishery Creek, with up to three until 31<sup>st</sup> March and up to two from 24<sup>th</sup> November. A particularly poor second winter period.

**Red-necked grebe** *Podiceps grisegena*

Scarce winter visitor and migrant

10<sup>th</sup> March: one drifted into Chichester Harbour.

11<sup>th</sup> – 13<sup>th</sup> November: one on the sea (and presumably the same on 19<sup>th</sup> from Beachlands).

**Great crested grebe** *Podiceps cristatus*

Regular, mainly in winter

Peak counts were 16 on 4<sup>th</sup> April and 6<sup>th</sup> May and 29 on 3<sup>rd</sup> December.

**Slavonian grebe** *Podiceps auritus* Regular winter visitor  
After two on 21<sup>st</sup> January, singles recorded on ten dates between 9<sup>th</sup> February and 17<sup>th</sup> March, then from 3<sup>rd</sup> – 31<sup>st</sup> December, with two on 8<sup>th</sup> and three on 30<sup>th</sup>. A poor year.

**Black-necked grebe** *Podiceps nigricollis* Rare winter visitor and migrant  
3<sup>rd</sup> April: one in the harbour entrance. The third April record.

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Oystercatcher:	146	104	46	1	2	-	3	2	6	31	113	128
Grey plover:	55	60	57	-	-	-	1	-	8	35	60	52
Ringed plover:	40	11	10	-	2	-	9	64	98	164	154	69
Curlew:	1	1	1	2	1	-	2	1	2	1	2	2
Bar-tailed godwit:	3	1	2	-	-	-	-	-	3	1	1	1
Turnstone:	11	15	24	-	12	-	21	50	-	35	21	31
Knot:	200	485	400	-	-	-	-	1	1	2	200	200
Sanderling:	43	140	7	20	5	-	15	-	-	50	330	52
Dunlin:	3000	2500	500	-	2	-	1	5	12	200	2000	3000
Redshank:	3	3	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	4

Table 3. Black Point high tide wader roost: monthly maxima.

**Oystercatcher** *Haematopus ostralegus* Common winter visitor; some summer  
In spring 68 flew east or north between 17<sup>th</sup> March and 2<sup>nd</sup> May.  
See Table 3 (above) for maxima at the Black Point high tide roost where the steep downward trend continued due to relentless disturbance, especially in the autumn.

**Avocet** *Recurvirostra avosetta* Scarce migrant and winter visitor  
After one in Chichester Harbour on 22<sup>nd</sup> January, there were four on 18<sup>th</sup> March, two on 21<sup>st</sup> March, four east on 23<sup>rd</sup> April, one on 30<sup>th</sup> April and two east on 14<sup>th</sup> May. There were four in the harbour on 21<sup>st</sup> September, three on 22<sup>nd</sup> December and a flock of 40 in the harbour entrance on 30<sup>th</sup>.  
A record year; the flock of 40 eclipses the previous highest of ten.

**Lapwing** *Vanellus vanellus* Occasional winter visitor and migrant  
13 flew northwest on 12<sup>th</sup> February. Post-breeding records included three on 23<sup>rd</sup> July, 21 on 24<sup>th</sup> August and 12 two days later. Nine flew north on 22<sup>nd</sup> November, with one on the beach on 11<sup>th</sup> December.  
Regularly noted more distantly in and around Chichester Harbour.

**Golden plover** *Pluvialis apricaria* Occasional winter visitor and migrant  
Three flew east on 23<sup>rd</sup> August. In November one was in the high tide roost on 3<sup>rd</sup>, one flew west on 10<sup>th</sup> and 19 NW on 13<sup>th</sup>. Up to 600 were in Chichester Harbour during the first winter period, but only 200 in the second.

**Grey plover** *Pluvialis squatarola* Common winter visitor and migrant  
Seven flew east between 22<sup>nd</sup> – 25<sup>th</sup> April, and there were still 20 in Chichester Harbour on 5<sup>th</sup> May. See Table 3 (page 10) for Black Point high tide roost maxima, where it was a disastrous autumn due to the relentless disturbance.

**Ringed plover** *Charadrius hiaticula* Common winter visitor, sometimes breeds  
See Table 3 (page 10) for Black Point high tide roost maxima, where it was a poor year due to disturbance. Also poorly recorded from the high tide roost on the seafront, where the peak count was 105 on 22<sup>nd</sup> October.

**Whimbrel** *Numenius phaeopus* Regular migrant  
8<sup>th</sup> April – 28<sup>th</sup> May: 790 bird-days, including 626 east/north. 518 of these were between 21<sup>st</sup> – 26<sup>th</sup> April, with peaks of 168 on 23<sup>rd</sup> and 160 the next day.  
2<sup>nd</sup> July – 10<sup>th</sup> October: 68 bird-days, peaking at six on 16<sup>th</sup> July.  
The spring total is the highest yet recorded, and by some margin (previous highest 434 in 2020). The autumn was more modest, but still above average.



Whimbrel, 28<sup>th</sup> April 2021 and Curlew, 10<sup>th</sup> March 2021 at Sandy Point.

**Curlew** *Numenius arquata* Common winter visitor and migrant  
See Table 3 (page 10) for Black Point high tide roost maxima.  
Spring movements included 27 NE on 8<sup>th</sup> and 65 NE on 16<sup>th</sup> April, whilst returning birds were noted from 25<sup>th</sup> June.

**Bar-tailed godwit** *Limosa lapponica* Common winter visitor and migrant  
See Table 3 (page 10) for Black Point high tide roost maxima.

10<sup>th</sup> April – 14<sup>th</sup> May: 685 bird-days offshore, including 642 east between 21<sup>st</sup> – 26<sup>th</sup> April, with 340 on 22<sup>nd</sup> and 127 on 25<sup>th</sup>. 45 in Chichester Harbour on 4<sup>th</sup> June was a notable count, with returning birds noted from 1<sup>st</sup> August.

The spring passage was the highest yet recorded, the average being 171 bird-days.



Bar-tailed godwit, 20<sup>th</sup> October; black-tailed godwit, 3<sup>rd</sup> November, both Black Point.

**Black-tailed godwit** *Limosa limosa* Winter visitor and migrant

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Max:	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	15	9	30	16	4

One east on 4<sup>th</sup> and 15 north on 23<sup>rd</sup> August were the first back. Then very regular around Mengham Rithe from September to November.

**Turnstone** *Arenaria interpres* Common winter visitor and migrant

See Table 3 (page 10) for Black Point high tide roost maxima.

Up to 26 remained over the summer, often feeding on the rocks at Sandy Point, with only a handful doing so at other times of year.

**Knot** *Calidris canutus* Common winter visitor

See Table 3 (page 10) for Black Point high tide roost maxima, where it was a better winter, but a terrible autumn. Extreme dates were 5<sup>th</sup> May and 9<sup>th</sup> August.

**Sanderling** *Calidris alba* Common winter visitor and migrant

See Table 3 (page 10) for Black Point high tide roost maxima. High tide maxima at Sandy Point or along the seafront are shown below:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Max:	-	-	100	140	80	14	220	220	100	361	250	100

Last in spring were on 6<sup>th</sup> June, and the first returning were 11 on 15<sup>th</sup> July.



Turnstones, Sparkes Marina, 9<sup>th</sup> August 2021.

**Dunlin** *Calidris alpina* Common winter visitor and migrant

Spring passage comprised 96 bird-days between 22<sup>nd</sup> April – 25<sup>th</sup> May, including 50 on 6<sup>th</sup> May. First back was on 17<sup>th</sup> July. See Table 3 (page 10) for Black Point high tide roost maxima, where disturbance caused an almost complete autumn absence, and the winter wasn't much better.

**Woodcock** *Scolopax rusticola* Winter visitor

Singles regularly until 22<sup>nd</sup> March and from 15<sup>th</sup> November, with two seen on 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> March.

**Jack snipe** *Lymnocyptes minimus* Migrant and winter visitor

Up to four in January and February, and three in March and April, when diminishing water levels meant that birds could be watched foraging in the open. One lingered until 2<sup>nd</sup> May, by far the latest spring date recorded at Sandy Point. Similarly, one on 24<sup>th</sup> October is the earliest in autumn, and there were just three further records of one or two birds, due to very infrequent searching. Another excellent year.

**Snipe** *Gallinago gallinago* Winter visitor and migrant

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Max:	2	3	2	3	-	-	-	1	1	3	3	3

Ever present up to 16<sup>th</sup> April, and more sporadically from 23<sup>rd</sup> August.

**Grey phalarope** *Phalaropus lobatus* Rare migrant

- 28<sup>th</sup> May: a breeding plumage female was present in Chichester Harbour entrance for ten minutes before flying out to sea.

There are four previous records at Sandy Point, all in October/November. Breeding plumage birds are very rarely seen in the UK; this was only the second spring record for Hampshire, and probably the highlight of the year.



Grey phalarope, female, Chichester Harbour entrance, 28<sup>th</sup> May 2021

**Common sandpiper** *Actitis hypoleucos* Uncommon migrant

In spring, one on 29<sup>th</sup> April and two on 2<sup>nd</sup> May.

18<sup>th</sup> July – 15<sup>th</sup> September: 11 bird-days, including two on 21<sup>st</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup> July.

An average year.

**Green sandpiper** *Tringa ochropus* Scarce migrant

11<sup>th</sup> July – 7<sup>th</sup> August: ten bird-days, including two on 13<sup>th</sup> July and 2<sup>nd</sup> August.

7<sup>th</sup> October: one in the drain in the reserve.

A good autumn, including the first record for Sandy Point in October.

**Redshank** *Tringa totanus* Winter visitor and migrant

See Table 3 (page 10) for Black Point high tide roost maxima. Recorded in Fishery Creek up to 21<sup>st</sup> April and from 29<sup>th</sup> June, where the peak was 58 on 1<sup>st</sup> September. Rarely recorded in the reserve, so singles on the marsh from 10<sup>th</sup> – 21<sup>st</sup> August and 30<sup>th</sup> November – 15<sup>th</sup> December were notable. Three also flew east on 9<sup>th</sup> September.

**Greenshank** *Tringa nebularia* Uncommon migrant and winter visitor

7<sup>th</sup> January – 22<sup>nd</sup> March: recorded on nine dates, usually in Black Point Creek.

After one on 7<sup>th</sup> July, there were seven bird-days from 12<sup>th</sup> August – 5<sup>th</sup> October, including two on 26<sup>th</sup> August.

18<sup>th</sup> October – 30<sup>th</sup> November: one regularly, with two on 12<sup>th</sup> & 25<sup>th</sup> November.

**Kittiwake** *Rissa tridactyla* Increasingly scarce winter visitor and migrant

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
B/d:	1	-	1	1	15	-	-	5	-	1	-	10

15 west on 12<sup>th</sup> May was the only count over five. A fairly typical year.

**Black-headed gull** *Chroicocephalus ridibundus* Common throughout

Little of note recorded; the summer peak at the Black Point high tide roost was 90 on 17<sup>th</sup> July, and there were thousands offshore from 21<sup>st</sup>-26<sup>th</sup> September.

**Little gull** *Hydrocoloeus minutus* Occasional migrant and winter visitor

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Max:	1	-	-	8	-	-	-	-	1	-	1	3

Six east on 24<sup>th</sup> April was the only multiple sighting.

A return to normal after the record movement in April 2020.

**Mediterranean gull** *Larus melanocephalus* Regular and increasing visitor

Highest counts included: 40 on 26<sup>th</sup> March, 80 at Black Point on 19<sup>th</sup> July and 300 in the harbour entrance on 15<sup>th</sup> September. Much lower numbers than in 2020.

**Common gull** *Larus canus* Common non-breeding visitor

25<sup>th</sup> March – 1<sup>st</sup> May: 87 flew east. Last in spring was on 28<sup>th</sup> May, and first back on 9<sup>th</sup> July.

**Iceland gull** *Larus glaucooides* Rare winter visitor and migrant

- 14<sup>th</sup> April: an immature flew over the reserve, heading towards the beach. The 7<sup>th</sup> recent record. All previous records occurred between 6<sup>th</sup> December and 31<sup>st</sup> March, although an unidentified Iceland/glaucous gull flew west on 2<sup>nd</sup> May 2015.



Great black-backed gull, Sandy Point  
24<sup>th</sup> March 2021.

**Herring gull** *Larus argentatus*

Common non-breeding visitor

Ever present in small numbers; peak gatherings included 650 on the winner on 12<sup>th</sup> March, and 300 on 1<sup>st</sup> June.

**Yellow-legged gull** *Larus michahellis*

Post-breeding migrant

25<sup>th</sup> June – 13<sup>th</sup> September: just eight bird-days.

**Great black-backed gull**

*Larus marinus* Common

Ever present in small numbers.

**Lesser black-backed gull** *Larus fuscus*

Frequent migrant

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun
B/d:1		8	8	19	13	-

	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
B/d:2	5	9	1	6	4	

Highest count six west on 3<sup>rd</sup> November.



**Sandwich tern** *Thalasseus sandvicensis* Common summer visitor; a few overwinter

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Max:	12	1	21	150	53	7	20	120	400	20	28	31

21 on 23<sup>rd</sup> March was a notable increase suggesting the arrival of migrants. Spring movements included 150 east on 21<sup>st</sup> April and 100 east the next day. With the loss of the high tide roost to human activity, autumn peaks occurred at low tide, peaking at 400 at dusk on 10<sup>th</sup> September. High numbers of wintering birds were recorded up to the end of the year.

**Little tern** *Sternula albifrons* Common summer visitor

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Max:	-	-	-	19	24	2	45	31	-	-	-	-

Recorded most days between 21<sup>st</sup> April – 26<sup>th</sup> August. A total of 44 flew east between 21<sup>st</sup> – 28<sup>th</sup> April. Double figure counts were recorded between 25<sup>th</sup> July and 13<sup>th</sup> August, including a peak of 17 juveniles on 31<sup>st</sup> July, but the high tide roost never got the chance to settle, due to human activity.

**Roseate tern** *Sterna dougallii* Scarce migrant

25<sup>th</sup> July: an adult on the offshore sandbank.  
The dearth of records was no doubt not helped by the loss of the high tide roost.

**Common tern** *Sterna hirundo* Common summer visitor

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Max:	-	-	-	72	98	10	37	200	103	4	-	-

Recorded between 17<sup>th</sup> April and 5<sup>th</sup> October. Easterly spring passage totalled just 447 between 21<sup>st</sup> April – 14<sup>th</sup> May. Once again, the low summer and autumn peaks were the result of the loss of the high tide roost to human disturbance.

**Arctic tern** *Sterna paradisaea* Decreasing migrant

In May, two on 5<sup>th</sup> and singles on 9<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup>.  
In autumn, singles on 19<sup>th</sup> & 23<sup>rd</sup> August and 13<sup>th</sup> September.  
A now expectedly poor year.

**Black tern** *Chlidonias niger* Migrant

10<sup>th</sup> September: a juvenile with a large gathering of sandwich terns on Dip Rithe muds at dusk.  
Numbers vary enormously from year to year, but the average is 39 bird-days, and just a single record surpasses the three in 2014 as the worst year on record.

**Great skua** *Stercorarius skua* Uncommon migrant

8<sup>th</sup> – 28<sup>th</sup> April: nine bird-days, including two on 24<sup>th</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup>.  
An average spring.

**Pomarine skua** *Stercorarius pomarinus* Scarce migrant

10<sup>th</sup> May: one flew east at 11:25.

**Arctic skua** *Stercorarius parasiticus* Frequent migrant

20<sup>th</sup> April – 21<sup>st</sup> May: 19 bird-days, including three on 4<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> May.  
Following singles on 24<sup>th</sup> June, 5<sup>th</sup> August and 26<sup>th</sup> September, there were six bird-days from 20<sup>th</sup>-29<sup>th</sup> October, including three on the last date.  
The spring average is 32 bird-days, and the autumn 11.

**Guillemot** *Uria aalge* Winter visitor and migrant

In spring, singles on 16<sup>th</sup> April and 8<sup>th</sup> May.  
Following one on 26<sup>th</sup> September, there were 11 bird-days from 22<sup>nd</sup> October – 16<sup>th</sup> November, then daily records of up to four from 5<sup>th</sup> – 31<sup>st</sup> December.  
A good second winter period, following a run of four poor winters.

**Razorbill** *Alca torda* Regular winter visitor

In the first winter period, singles on 18<sup>th</sup> January, 1<sup>st</sup> February and 10<sup>th</sup> March.  
20<sup>th</sup> October – 31<sup>st</sup> December: recorded most days, the peak count being 16 on 11<sup>th</sup> December.  
The second winter period saw the best numbers recorded in recent years.

**Auk sp.**

Eight unidentified guillemot/razorbill flew past on 29<sup>th</sup> January, followed by nine on 8<sup>th</sup> February, 22 between 21<sup>st</sup> April – 11<sup>th</sup> May and five between 20<sup>th</sup> – 29<sup>th</sup> October.

**Red-throated diver** *Gavia stellata* Winter visitor and migrant

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
B/d:	30	24	8	12	3	-	-	-	1	5	9	19

19<sup>th</sup> April – 9<sup>th</sup> May: 15 flew east, including four on 23<sup>rd</sup> April. The first back was on 26<sup>th</sup> September, and the peak was six east on 21<sup>st</sup> December.  
An above average year.

**Black-throated diver** *Gavia arctica* Uncommon winter visitor and migrant

15<sup>th</sup> – 20<sup>th</sup> (possibly 24<sup>th</sup>) January: one regularly flying out to sea in the evening.  
26<sup>th</sup> (possibly since 15<sup>th</sup>) November – 31<sup>st</sup> December: recorded very regularly in Chichester Harbour, often two present, and there were three on 9<sup>th</sup>-11<sup>th</sup> December. A very good second winter period.



Black-throated (left) and great northern divers, Chichester Harbour, 15<sup>th</sup> December

**Great northern diver** *Gavia immer* *Winter visitor and migrant*

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Max:	4	4	2	1	1	-	-	-	-	1	-	5

Recorded regularly until 6<sup>th</sup> April, with three further records from 8<sup>th</sup>-14<sup>th</sup> May.

A breeding plumage adult was present on 29<sup>th</sup> October (perhaps the same as in October 2020?), and then recorded most days from 5<sup>th</sup>-31<sup>st</sup> December. Another good year.

**Fulmar** *Fulmarus glacialis*

*Frequent migrant, especially in spring*

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun
B/d:	-	1	4	10	18	-
	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
B/d:	1	3	-	-	-	-

Peaks were three on 13<sup>th</sup> March, five on 3<sup>rd</sup> May and six on 21<sup>st</sup> May. A typical year.

**Manx shearwater** *Puffinus puffinus*

*Scarce migrant*

In May, one flew west on 3<sup>rd</sup>, two the next day and one on 20<sup>th</sup>.

A low-key year.



Fulmar, Sandy Point, 23<sup>rd</sup> April 2021

**Balearic shearwater** *Puffinus mauretanicus*

*Rare migrant*

- 26<sup>th</sup> September: one slowly made its way west very distantly.

The 11<sup>th</sup> record, of which nine were between 2006 and 2013.

**Gannet** *Morus bassanus*

*Regular offshore*

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
B/d:	12	-	5	134	118	8	34	66	152	49	7	319
Max:	10	-	2	20	20	4	15	20	72	15	3	200

The feeding flock of 200 in the harbour entrance on 28<sup>th</sup> December was highly notable, especially for the time of year.

**Shag** *Phalacrocorax aristotelis*

*Occasional visitor*

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
B/d:	5	1	-	4	-	-	-	1	-	1	2	5

All singles. Another low-key year.

**Cormorant** *Phalacrocorax carbo*  
*Common, especially in winter*

Cormorant (a French ringed bird),  
Sandy Point, 19<sup>th</sup> January 2021

One on the marsh in the reserve on 20<sup>th</sup> March was unusual. 30 flew east on four dates between 22<sup>nd</sup> March – 27<sup>th</sup> April. Six flew east on 18<sup>th</sup> July, followed by 44 west on five dates in September. The peak count in Chichester Harbour was 50 on 11<sup>th</sup> December.

**Cattle egret** *Bubulcus ibis* *Rare migrant*

- 26<sup>th</sup> April: one flew in off the sea at 09:22, briefly landing on the beach.
- 5<sup>th</sup> August: at least three in saltmarsh in Chichester Harbour at high tide.
- 24<sup>th</sup> September: eight seen in flight over Mill Rithe from Black Point.

An expected increase in sightings, with this species now resident in the area.

**Grey heron** *Ardea cinerea*

*Resident in the area*

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
B/d:	-	-	8	10	2	3	2	10	5	2	-	-

There were no significant counts.

**Great egret** *Egretta alba*

*Rare migrant*

- 16<sup>th</sup> November: one flew west.

A typical record, the tenth for Sandy Point, follows five records in 2020.

**Little egret** *Egretta garzetta*

*Resident*

Generally recorded singly in the reserve throughout the year, with two on 20<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup> July the only higher counts. No significant movements were noted.

**Osprey** *Pandion haliaetus*

*Scarce migrant*

30<sup>th</sup> April: one flew north.

10<sup>th</sup> August – 11<sup>th</sup> September: recorded on eight dates in Chichester Harbour, with two on the last date.

Spring records were relatively numerous from 2005-12, but this is only the 4<sup>th</sup> since. The autumn average is 13 bird-days.

<b>Sparrowhawk</b> <i>Accipiter nisus</i>	<i>Breeding resident and migrant</i>											
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
B/d:	7	3	14	15	12	6	18	13	17	30	19	9

**Marsh harrier** *Circus aeruginosus* *Scarce migrant*  
Singles were seen on 23<sup>rd</sup> February, 7<sup>th</sup> August, 6<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> November.  
A typical showing.

**Hen harrier** *Circus cyaneus* *Rare migrant*  
14<sup>th</sup> November: a ringtail flew NW across Chichester Harbour.  
Only the sixth record, and the third in November.

**Red kite** *Milvus milvus* *Rare migrant of introduced origin*  
25<sup>th</sup> March – 1<sup>st</sup> April: singles on 25<sup>th</sup> and 29<sup>th</sup>, followed by two NE on 1<sup>st</sup>.  
A significant passage, there being only three previous records – two in March and one in July.

<b>Buzzard</b> <i>Buteo buteo</i>	<i>Migrant, and resident on the island</i>											
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
B/d:	2	1	3	2	1	1	2	2	-	19	2	-

Seven together on 11<sup>th</sup> October was the highest number recorded.  
Another poor spring, but a reasonable autumn.



Buzzard, mobbed by a carrion crow, Sandy Point 29<sup>th</sup> November 2021

**Barn owl** *Tyto alba* *Rare visitor*  
8<sup>th</sup> February: one in the reserve after dark.  
Only the 6<sup>th</sup> record, and the first since 2009. In addition, one was watched hunting over Thorney Island from Black Point on 14<sup>th</sup> November.

**Little owl** *Athene noctua* *Rare visitor*  
7<sup>th</sup> September, 12<sup>th</sup> October and 8<sup>th</sup> November: after being heard briefly twice, it was very vocal in the early hours of the last date, but possibly present throughout. The 6<sup>th</sup> record, but the first since 2014.

**Short-eared owl** *Asio flammeus* *Scarce migrant*  
None was recorded at Sandy Point, although birds were seen from Black Point hunting on Thorney Island on 12<sup>th</sup> January, 15<sup>th</sup> March, 16<sup>th</sup> & 29<sup>th</sup> (two) November.

**Kingfisher** *Alcedo atthis* *Winter visitor*  
One recorded until 25<sup>th</sup> March (with two on 27<sup>th</sup> January) and then on 8<sup>th</sup> April.  
One from 16<sup>th</sup> September until the end of the year.  
A very late spring departure, and a very late autumn return.

**Wryneck** *Jynx torquilla* *Rare autumn migrant*

- 15<sup>th</sup> – 18<sup>th</sup> September: one frequenting the lichen heath in the reserve.
- 7<sup>th</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> October: one in ornamental planting adjacent to the HISC building.

The 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> records at Sandy Point since 2005, but the first since 2013. All are autumn records; the October record is the first for that month, although there is one November record.



Wryneck, Sandy Point, 15<sup>th</sup> September 2021

**Great spotted woodpecker** *Dendrocopos major* Regular non-breeding visitor

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
B/d:	2	1	4	1	5	7	26	15	14	11	10	3

**Green woodpecker** *Picus viridis* Resident  
Present throughout the year, including three together on 15<sup>th</sup> July.

**Kestrel** *Falco tinnunculus* Regular visitor

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
B/d:	5	6	2	8	6	3	4	1	20	12	9	7

**Merlin** *Falco columbarius* Scarce migrant  
Singles recorded on 12<sup>th</sup> October, 6<sup>th</sup> November and 17<sup>th</sup> December.  
A typical year.

**Hobby** *Falco subbuteo* Uncommon migrant  
23<sup>rd</sup> April – 22<sup>nd</sup> May: 14 bird-days, including two on 26<sup>th</sup> April and 21<sup>st</sup> May.  
In autumn, singles on 28<sup>th</sup> August, 1<sup>st</sup> September and 4<sup>th</sup> October.  
An excellent spring, and an average autumn.

**Peregrine** *Falco peregrinus* Occasional visitor

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
B/d:	5	4	7	1	2	-	3	5	2	5	6	4

**Jay** *Garrulus glandarius* Resident

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
B/d:	12	5	18	30	8	6	14	19	14	36	13	3

Unusually, a juvenile was seen on 15<sup>th</sup> June. High counts in October were ten on 8<sup>th</sup>, seven on 14<sup>th</sup> and five on 24<sup>th</sup>.

**Magpie** *Pica pica* Resident and winter visitor  
The spring peak was 14 on 26<sup>th</sup> May, whilst 20 were recorded on 6<sup>th</sup> September, 9<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> October and 15<sup>th</sup> December.

**Jackdaw** *Corvus monedula* Regular migrant

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
B/d:	4	9	34	25	17	13	27	1	24	1728	70	15

The majority of October's birds moved west between 10<sup>th</sup>-13<sup>th</sup>, with daily totals of 123, 900, 95 and 500. This is the largest movement seen since 2010.

**Rook** *Corvus frugilegus* Common resident in the area

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Passage:-		2	26	26	5	1	-	2	17	59	6	-

For the first time, all birds flying over the reserve were recorded, showing clear spring and autumn movements (in addition to the usual dusk movement past Black Point, of birds heading to roost).

**Carrion crow** *Corvus corone* Resident  
No significant counts were made.



Carrion crow: this one-legged individual, first noted on 22<sup>nd</sup> July, survived in the Fishery Creek/Earnley Triangle area into 2022.

**Raven** *Corvus corax* Scarce migrant  
Singles or pairs were recorded on seven dates between 1<sup>st</sup> January – 19<sup>th</sup> March and on 7<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> September. A reasonable early year, but a poor autumn.

**Coal tit** *Periparus ater* Scarce migrant  
15<sup>th</sup> June: a typically mobile juvenile in the reserve.  
A typical post-breeding dispersal record.

**Blue tit** *Cyanistes caeruleus* Resident  
Present throughout, with no records of note.

**Great tit** *Parus major* Resident  
Present throughout and bred.

**Woodlark** *Lullula arborea* Scarce migrant  
13<sup>th</sup> October and 11<sup>th</sup> November: singles on each date.  
Two typical autumn records.

**Skylark** *Alauda arvensis* Regular migrant

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
B/d:	-	2	7	1	-	-	-	-	-	111	65	-

Peak movements were 28 west on 22<sup>nd</sup> October and 38 west on 3<sup>rd</sup> November.  
Another very poor autumn – the average is 363 bird-days.

**Sand martin** *Riparia riparia* Regular migrant

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
B/d:	-	-	14	20	-	10	38	88	89	-	-	-

One on 4<sup>th</sup> March was the earliest ever recorded. Then recorded between 25<sup>th</sup> March – 21<sup>st</sup> April and 30<sup>th</sup> June – 28<sup>th</sup> September. The largest movement was 55 east on 4<sup>th</sup> September.

A much-improved year; the spring average is 23 bird-days, and the autumn 196.

**Swallow** *Hirundo rustica* Common migrant and summer visitor

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
B/d:	-	-	9	63	105	4	36	189	1533	117	-	-

Recorded between 25<sup>th</sup> March – 8<sup>th</sup> June and 9<sup>th</sup> July – 31<sup>st</sup> October. There were no spring counts over 14, and only four three-figure movements in the autumn between 4<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> September.

Another poor year; the spring average is 353 bird-days, and the autumn 3390.

**House martin** *Delichon urbicum* Common migrant

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
B/d:	-	-	-	2	53	1	-	17	1288	93	-	-

Recorded between 21<sup>st</sup> April – 4<sup>th</sup> June and 1<sup>st</sup> August – 12<sup>th</sup> October. The spring peak was 45 on 21<sup>st</sup> May, and there were only three three-figure counts between 12<sup>th</sup> – 30<sup>th</sup> September. A very poor year, especially October.

**Cetti's warbler** *Cettia cetti* Rare visitor, has bred

Singles recorded on 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> January, 1<sup>st</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> March and 13<sup>th</sup> April. Regular from 4<sup>th</sup> August – 10<sup>th</sup> December, with two present in late October/early November. Another good year.

**Long-tailed tit** *Aegithalos caudatus* Resident

Present in low numbers, the autumn peak was 12 on 9<sup>th</sup> November.

**Willow warbler** *Phylloscopus trochilus* Regular migrant

1<sup>st</sup> April – 20<sup>th</sup> May: 105 bird-days, peaks of 17 on 19<sup>th</sup> April and 18 on 7<sup>th</sup> May. 21<sup>st</sup> July – 21<sup>st</sup> September: 75 bird-days, with 11 on 11<sup>th</sup> August the only double figure count. A good spring, but a poor autumn (the reverse of 2020).

**Chiffchaff** *Phylloscopus collybita* Regular breeder & migrant; rare in winter

Present between 4<sup>th</sup> March – 10<sup>th</sup> November, with no significant arrivals noted.

**Sedge warbler** *Acrocephalus schoenobaenus* Uncommon migrant

5<sup>th</sup>, 6<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> May: three spring singles. 29<sup>th</sup> July – 11<sup>th</sup> September: 11 bird-days, including four on 4<sup>th</sup> August and two on 3<sup>rd</sup> September. The spring average is two bird-days, and the autumn seven.

**Reed warbler** *Acrocephalus scirpaceus* Migrant (has bred)

7<sup>th</sup> May and 15<sup>th</sup> June: two spring singles. 22<sup>nd</sup> July – 7<sup>th</sup> September: eight bird-days, including two on 3<sup>rd</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> August. The spring average is 4.5 bird-days, and the autumn 14.

**Grasshopper warbler** *Locustella naevia* Scarce migrant

28<sup>th</sup> July: one flushed amongst gorse was the only record. This is the earliest of the 13 autumn records by one day.

**Blackcap** *Sylvia atricapilla* Regular breeder and migrant, rare in winter

A winter bird was reported on 6<sup>th</sup> January, then recorded between 30<sup>th</sup> March – 18<sup>th</sup> November, with a notable arrival of seven on 31<sup>st</sup> March.

**Garden warbler** *Sylvia borin* Uncommon migrant

29<sup>th</sup> April and 7<sup>th</sup> May: two spring singles. 10<sup>th</sup> – 17<sup>th</sup> August: four bird-days, including two on 11<sup>th</sup>. An average year.

**Lesser whitethroat** *Sylvia curruca* Summer visitor and migrant

29<sup>th</sup> April – 6<sup>th</sup> September: one male held territory and may have bred successfully. A very late bird on 25<sup>th</sup> October was most likely of one of the eastern races.



Lesser whitethroat, probably of an eastern race, Sandy Point, 25<sup>th</sup> October 2021

**Whitethroat** *Sylvia communis* Common summer visitor and migrant  
6<sup>th</sup> April – 23<sup>rd</sup> September: three or four males held territory.

**Dartford warbler** *Sylvia undata*  
Resident and migrant

Present throughout the year, with two males holding territory, and at least two broods of young being produced, first seen on 28<sup>th</sup> May and 21<sup>st</sup> July. The largest single group was six on 9<sup>th</sup> July. The promise shown by 2020 certainly yielded results, 2021 being the first time since 2009 that two males have held territory.



Dartford warbler with food, Sandy Point,  
28<sup>th</sup> May 2021

**Firecrest** *Regulus ignicapilla*  
Regular migrant and winterer  
One or two recorded until 13<sup>th</sup> March.  
Singles on 12<sup>th</sup> September, 7<sup>th</sup>-10<sup>th</sup> October  
and 29<sup>th</sup>-30<sup>th</sup> November, with two on 9<sup>th</sup> November.  
A very poor autumn and second winter period.

**Goldcrest** *Regulus regulus* Resident & regular migrant  
One or two recorded throughout the year. Another low-key year.

**Wren** *Troglodytes troglodytes* Resident  
Present in small numbers throughout.

**Treecreeper** *Certhia familiaris* Rare visitor  
23<sup>rd</sup> July: one moved rapidly through the reserve.  
A classic post-breeding dispersal, but only the fourth recent record at Sandy Point.

**Starling** *Sturnus vulgaris* Common resident and migrant  
Flocks included 100 on 28<sup>th</sup> May and up to 500 in August. In another poor autumn, only 500 were noted flying west between 22<sup>nd</sup> October and 22<sup>nd</sup> November.

**Ring ouzel** *Turdus torquatus* Scarce migrant  
24<sup>th</sup> – 25<sup>th</sup> October: an adult male in the reserve was the only record.  
The autumn average is 3.25 bird-days.

**Blackbird** *Turdus merula* Resident and migrant  
Ever present and bred.

**Fieldfare** *Turdus pilaris* Uncommon migrant  
Singles were present on 3<sup>rd</sup> March and 29<sup>th</sup> November.  
An extremely poor year; the spring average is 1.5 bird-days, and the autumn 22.5.

**Redwing** *Turdus iliacus* Regular migrant, especially in autumn  
Poorly recorded in the first quarter of the year.  
9<sup>th</sup> October – 10<sup>th</sup> December: only 22 diurnal bird-days, although there was a huge nocturnal movement on 13<sup>th</sup> October.

**Song thrush** *Turdus philomelos* Resident and migrant  
Present all year and bred, with low-key evidence of migrants during October, peaking at eight on 16<sup>th</sup>.

**Mistle thrush** *Turdus viscivorus* Uncommon migrant  
7<sup>th</sup> October – 30<sup>th</sup> November: 12 bird-days, including two on 9<sup>th</sup> October and 15<sup>th</sup> November.  
The spring average is two bird-days, and the autumn average nine.

**Spotted flycatcher** *Muscicapa striata*  
Uncommon migrant

7<sup>th</sup> – 25<sup>th</sup> May: nine bird-days, including two on 19<sup>th</sup>-20<sup>th</sup> May.  
24<sup>th</sup> August – 21<sup>st</sup> September: six bird-days, including two on 4<sup>th</sup> September.  
An above average spring, but below average autumn.

**Robin** *Erithacus rubecula* Resident  
Ever present.

**Black redstart** *Phoenicurus ochruros* Scarce migrant and winterer  
The overwintering bird was recorded until 17<sup>th</sup> March, with additional migrants on 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> March and 1<sup>st</sup> April.  
Only two autumn migrants were recorded, on 16<sup>th</sup> October and 14<sup>th</sup>-16<sup>th</sup> November.  
The worst autumn since 2007 (when there was just one bird).

**Redstart** *Phoenicurus phoenicurus* Migrant  
29<sup>th</sup> March and 21<sup>st</sup> April: just two spring singles.  
16<sup>th</sup> September: at least two present.  
A terrible year; the spring average is six bird-days, and the autumn 14.



Spotted flycatcher, Earnley  
Triangle, 8<sup>th</sup> May 2021

**Whinchat** *Saxicola rubetra*

Migrant

7<sup>th</sup> May: three males.14<sup>th</sup> August – 19<sup>th</sup> September: six bird-days, including two on 27<sup>th</sup> August.

The spring average is 2.5 bird-days, and the autumn ten.

**Stonechat** *Saxicola rubicola*

Migrant and winterer, occasionally breeds

A pair over-wintered, and four males were present on 4<sup>th</sup> March. Following the success of 2020 (when two pairs both produced two broods), one pair again nested, producing their first brood of three young on 5<sup>th</sup> May, and a second brood of three young on 3<sup>rd</sup> August. The autumn peak was five on 22<sup>nd</sup> September, and up to three birds remained to the end of the year.



Stonechat fledgling perched in sharp rush *Juncus acutus* (one of the more notable plant species in the reserve), 6<sup>th</sup> May 2021

**Wheatear** *Oenanthe oenanthe*

Regular migrant

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
B/d:	-	-	26	35	18	-	2	22	65	5	-	-
Max:	-	-	8	4	6	-	1	6	11	2	-	-

Recorded between 25<sup>th</sup> March – 27<sup>th</sup> May (79) and 29<sup>th</sup> July – 13<sup>th</sup> October (94). An average year, though late arriving and early to leave.

**Dunnock** *Prunella modularis*

Resident

Ever present in good numbers, with little evidence of migration noted.

**House sparrow** *Passer domesticus*

Common resident

Present in good numbers throughout, with small numbers of birds on visible migration in October.

**Yellow wagtail** *Motacilla flava*

Regular migrant, particularly in autumn

16<sup>th</sup> April – 7<sup>th</sup> May: 13 bird-days, including three on 23<sup>rd</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup> April.17<sup>th</sup> July: an early returning bird.23<sup>rd</sup> August – 11<sup>th</sup> October: 224 bird-days, with peaks from 3<sup>rd</sup>-5<sup>th</sup> September of 39, 44 and 29.

An average spring, but a good autumn, although rather later than usual.

**Grey wagtail** *Motacilla cinerea*

Frequent migrant, especially in autumn

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
B/d:	-	2	1	-	-	-	1	4	49	12	10	9

The autumn peak was eight on 5<sup>th</sup> September, and one remained over winter.

An average year.

**Pied wagtail** *Motacilla alba*

Resident and common migrant

Present all year, and one pair bred. Migrants included 13 between 1<sup>st</sup> March – 13<sup>th</sup> April (at least three of which were white wagtails *M. a. alba*) and from 17<sup>th</sup> September – 4<sup>th</sup> November, with 160 bird-days, but only three double figure counts of 11, 53 and 49 between 9<sup>th</sup>-11<sup>th</sup> October.

A very poor autumn; the average is 495 bird-days.

**Meadow pipit** *Anthus pratensis*

Resident and common migrant

Small numbers present during the winter months. One pair bred.

9<sup>th</sup> March – 12<sup>th</sup> April: 315 flew north, with a peak of 100 on 1<sup>st</sup> April.

11<sup>th</sup> September – 23<sup>rd</sup> October: 644 bird-days noted. The only three figure count was 104 on 3<sup>rd</sup> October. An average spring, but the worst autumn on record (the average being 2064 bird-days).

**Tree pipit** *Anthus trivialis*

Frequent migrant, particularly in autumn

7<sup>th</sup> May: one in the reserve.19<sup>th</sup> August – 26<sup>th</sup> September:14 bird-days, including three on 24<sup>th</sup> August and 4<sup>th</sup> September.

Spring records are sparse (see photo, right), but this is the worst autumn on record (the average being 28 bird-days).

**Rock pipit** *Anthus petrosus*

Migrant

In March, singles on 3<sup>rd</sup>, 17<sup>th</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup>. Two were on the beach on 22<sup>nd</sup> July.

26<sup>th</sup> September – 8<sup>th</sup> November: 21 bird-days, followed by one on 6<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> December. An average year, although July records are unusual.

**Chaffinch** *Fringilla coelebs* *Resident and common migrant*  
 28<sup>th</sup> February – 16<sup>th</sup> April: 20 migrants noted, including 13 NE on 21<sup>st</sup> March.  
 6<sup>th</sup> October – 30<sup>th</sup> November: just 71 bird-days, with 17 on 22<sup>nd</sup> October the only double figure count. A terrible autumn, the average is 472 bird-days.

**Brambling** *Fringilla montifringilla* *Migrant, particularly in the autumn*  
 10<sup>th</sup> October – 23<sup>rd</sup> November: 24 bird-days, with 12 on 22<sup>nd</sup> October the only count over three. An average autumn.

**Bullfinch** *Pyrrhula pyrrhula* *Scarce migrant*  
 A male was present on 16<sup>th</sup> April, one was heard on 15<sup>th</sup> July and a female was present from 3<sup>rd</sup> – 7<sup>th</sup> November.  
 A good showing; only 2005, 2011 and 2017 produced more records.



Bullfinch, female, Sandy Point, 7<sup>th</sup> November 2021

**Greenfinch** *Chloris chloris* *Common resident and migrant*  
 Present throughout the year, with a peak of 45 on 29<sup>th</sup> November.

**Linnet** *Linaria cannabina* *Common breeder and migrant, fewer in winter*  
 A hint of spring movement comprised eight NE on 21<sup>st</sup> March and 16 N on 1<sup>st</sup> April. The summer peak was just 30, and a paltry 118 migrants were noted during October. A very poor year; the average autumn bird-day total is 1577.

**Redpoll** *Acanthis flammea* *Migrant, mainly in the autumn*  
 One spring migrant was recorded on 1<sup>st</sup> April.  
 10<sup>th</sup> October – 9<sup>th</sup> December: 58 bird-days, with 12 on 5<sup>th</sup> November the only count over eight.  
 A poor autumn (following the record-breaking 2020), the average is 279 bird-days.

**Goldfinch** *Carduelis carduelis* *Resident and common migrant*

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
B/d:	240	198	147	38	21	4	55	55	41	2891	455	12
Max:	35	40	30	8	5	2	6	10	18	400	117	3

There were only six movements over 150, all between 10<sup>th</sup> – 22<sup>nd</sup> October.  
 Winter numbers were much higher than usual, but the autumn total of 3509 is well below the average of 9156.

**Siskin** *Spinus spinus* *Migrant, mainly in the autumn*

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
B/d:	-	1	6	7	-	-	-	-	-	139	38	3

28<sup>th</sup> February – 14<sup>th</sup> April: 14 bird-days, including four NE on 21<sup>st</sup> March and five on 1<sup>st</sup> April.  
 4<sup>th</sup> October – 11<sup>th</sup> December: 180 bird-days, with double figures on only six dates, and 33 on 10<sup>th</sup> October the only count over 13.  
 A poor autumn; the average is 1307 bird-days (although fluctuates wildly).

**Yellowhammer** *Emberiza citrinella* *Scarce migrant*  
 9<sup>th</sup>, 19<sup>th</sup>, 20<sup>th</sup> and 22<sup>nd</sup> March: four records (though possibly only two birds).  
 7<sup>th</sup> October and 2<sup>nd</sup> November: two autumn singles. A typical year.

**Reed bunting** *Emberiza schoeniclus* *Frequent migrant*  
 15<sup>th</sup> March – 13<sup>th</sup> April: seven bird-days.  
 22<sup>nd</sup> September – 2<sup>nd</sup> November: 13 bird-days.  
 The autumn average is 37 bird-days, and this is the third really poor year in a row.

## Escapes

**Black swan** *Cygnus atratus* *Escape (Australia)*  
 1<sup>st</sup> – 2<sup>nd</sup> January: two at Black Point (first recorded on 27<sup>th</sup> December 2020).



Black swan pair, Black Point, 27<sup>th</sup> December 2020.



