

# Lytchett Bay 2011

## Bird Report and Ringing Report

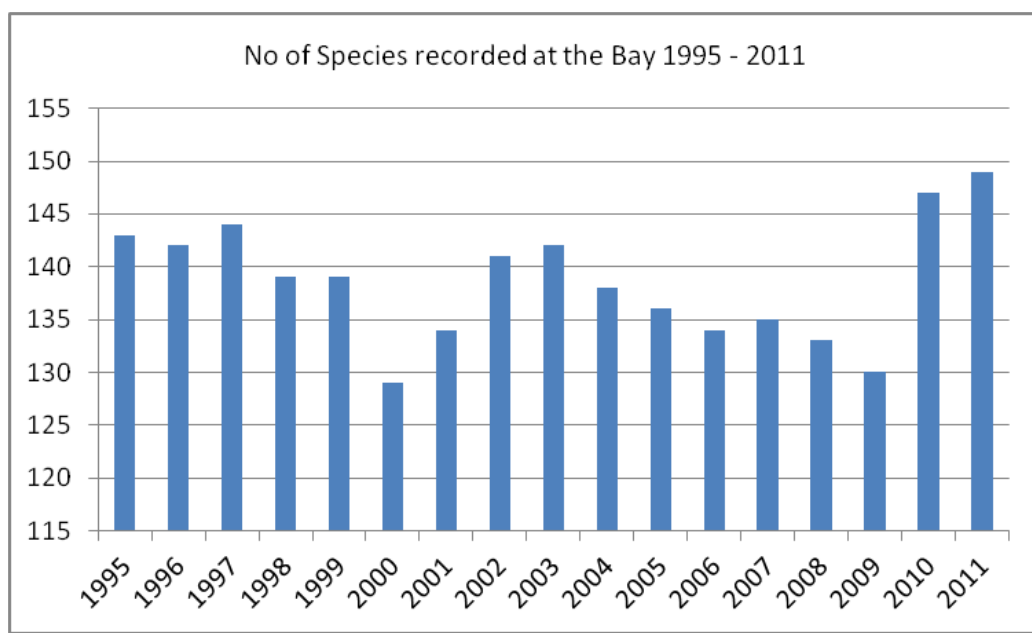
*Shaun Robson*



*The corn marigold headland in full bloom, July 2011.*

The Bay was visited on 256 days as set out below.

JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
16	13	21	28	18	8	28	27	23	30	27	17



Lytchett Bay is not a birding site that one might expect to leave one lost for words, but in 2011 it did. This was the 20<sup>th</sup> consecutive year of intensive observation. After the thrills of 2010 I was prepared for a return to the ordinary. It turned out to be anything but.....

4 Species were added to the Bay list, the most since 1996. Black Stork, perhaps "the" bird of the last 20 years; Woodchat Shrike, a confiding crowd pleaser; Arctic Skua, a true seabird; Egyptian Goose, they all count!

In addition to these 4 species a further species has been added to the list, a Bluethroat, reported in the 1971 Dorset Bird Report. The site list now stands at 216.

Even the supporting cast were "Oscar nominated". Aquatic Warbler (3<sup>rd</sup> record), a true rarity in British terms during the last 10 years; Honey Buzzard (4<sup>th</sup> record), and Waxwing (3<sup>rd</sup> – 5<sup>th</sup> records).

In some of the last 20 years, any of the following might have grabbed the headlines. Red-throated Diver (3<sup>rd</sup> record), Barnacle Goose (2<sup>nd</sup> record), Marsh Tit (2<sup>nd</sup> record), Turnstone (2<sup>nd</sup> record), Red Kite (8<sup>th</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup> record), Kittiwake (4<sup>th</sup> record), Mandarin (2<sup>nd</sup> record) and Short-eared Owls for only the 3<sup>rd</sup> year.

Many species continue to prosper at the Bay, the following all had their best year in the last 20. Dark-bellied Brent Goose, Canada Goose, Wigeon, Gadwall, Marsh Harrier, Hobby, Coot, Bar-tailed Godwit, Mediterranean Gull, Common Gull, Herring Gull, Yellow Wagtail, Sedge Warbler, Grasshopper Warbler, Chiffchaff, Carrion Crow and Bullfinch.

To round it all off, a record 149 species were recorded during the year (not including Barn Owl, see systematic list).

Of course there are some species not doing so well. Rather than highlight them here I'll leave you find out more about them in the systematic list. Being the 20<sup>th</sup> year I have done a little more analysis than usual of some of the Bay's key species.

### **Ringling 2011**

The good weather during early summer meant that many UK passerines had their best breeding season for some years. Consequently many migrants were unusually plentiful.

2,041 birds of 46 species were ringed. This is the biggest annual total since ringling began at Lytchett Bay, exceeding the previous best of 1,810 in 1984. Given that the Stour Ringling Group's focus was shared with a new project at Durlston CP NNR, this total was especially remarkable.

Tree Pipit was ringed at the Bay for the first time. The following species were ringed in greater numbers than any year since 1983. Kingfisher, Yellow Wagtail, Grasshopper Warbler, Sedge Warbler, Reed Warbler, Common Whitethroat, Chiffchaff, House Sparrow, Chaffinch and Reed Bunting.

The Groups efforts were again concentrated around the banks of the Sherford (1284 birds ringed). As the autumn progressed we took advantage of a weedy maize crop in the Stubble Field (356 birds ringed). Wagtails and Reed Buntings were again the late autumn focus at Lytchett Heath (283 birds ringed). There was relatively little activity at Sandy Close Pond (118 birds ringed).

16,464 birds of 80 species have been ringed since 1983.

The full details, controls, recoveries and interesting re-traps are in the systematic list. An appendix, detailing the individual species totals is included at the end of the report.

### **Acknowledgements**

Please remember that the major part of the site is private and that access is at the discretion of the farmer and the estate. Please respect this privilege.

Stour Ringing Group would like to thank Wessex Water and the landowner, the Lees Estate, for their kind permission to ring at Lytchett Bay and for access to Holton Lee. Savilles Land Agents gave permission to ring on land around Lytchett Heath on behalf of Lord Wimborne and we are very grateful for this.

Many thanks to Mark Singleton and his RSPB colleagues for the interest shown in the site this year.

### **Systematic List 2011**

Species names are followed by up to 3 numbers. The first is the maximum known count recorded at the Bay. This now includes historical counts by observers going back to 1975. The middle figure (when necessary) is the max count in the period since 1992. The final figure is the number of years in which the species has been recorded since 1992. This is the year in which the current spell of comprehensive coverage began.

The symbol which follows each species name shows the direction of travel of the species status at Lytchett Bay over the last 5 years. I think these are quite intuitive; strongly increasing, increasing, stable, declining and strongly declining. Hopefully this feature will enable others to compare the data from this site with experiences at their own site and engender some debate and understanding.

#### **Mute Swan: (58 – 20) ↔**

Common winter visitor, present in small numbers throughout the year. Bred between 2002 and 2007. After a significant increase in the early part of this century the numbers of this species visiting the Bay have stabilised.

JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
51	20	28	n.c.	n.c.	5	8	12	17	12	37	46

#### **Greylag Goose: (25 – 12) ↔**

Scarce feral wanderer. Persistent strong easterly winds during late autumn across Britain produced large numbers of this species and other grey geese across England. It is likely that some of the birds recorded this year were wild migrants of European origin. 4 records in the first half of the year. 1 on 1<sup>st</sup> Jan, singles on 3<sup>rd</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> Apr and 4 on 3<sup>rd</sup> May.

Recorded on 7 dates between 3<sup>rd</sup> Oct and 23<sup>rd</sup> Nov. All records listed.

3<sup>rd</sup> Oct – 8 east

14<sup>th</sup> Oct – 15 east

25<sup>th</sup> Oct – 13 east

1<sup>st</sup> Nov – 24 west

16<sup>th</sup> Nov – 2 west

19<sup>th</sup> Nov – 3 west

23<sup>rd</sup> Nov – 3 west

Grey Geese Sp:

2 unidentified flocks of grey geese seen flying west over the Bay. 15 on 16<sup>th</sup> Oct and 25 on 14<sup>th</sup> Nov. The first were heard to call and were seen well enough to rule out White-fronted Geese and Greylags. The second were flying high in heavily overcast conditions and were silent.

**Dark-bellied Brent Goose:** (58 – 12) ↗

Scarce visitor. A record year. A single on 6<sup>th</sup> Jan was as good a showing as could be expected given the history of this species at the Bay. 8 more on 10<sup>th</sup> Nov was therefore a bonus. However this flock was then present on virtually every day until the year's end. The flock grew, peaking at a record breaking 58 on 31<sup>st</sup> Dec. The previous best was 35 on 16<sup>th</sup> Feb 1997.

**Barnacle Goose:** (42 – 5)

Rare visitor. The presumed wild flock of 42 birds present during Dec 2010 remained until 14<sup>th</sup> Jan. What may have been 12 returning birds either from this flock, or the Fleet flock, circled the Bay several times on 17<sup>th</sup> Dec (SR) (2<sup>nd</sup> record). Sadly, they did not stop here.

**Canada Goose:** (145 – 20) ↗

Increasingly frequent visitor. A large flock regularly fed in the Stubble Field, Far Fields and Bay during the late autumn and winter. Max of 145 on 10<sup>th</sup> Nov, a record count (NG).

JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
5	2	2	2	2	0	12	45	40	59	145	70

**Egyptian Goose:**

First and second records. The possibility of this scarce feral resident occurring at the Bay had not really been on my radar. When 3 flew over north-west calling on the evening of 5<sup>th</sup> May (SR) I was quite gob smacked. The third addition to the Bay's list and spring was not over. Intriguingly, 3 birds also flew over heading north-east during a vis-mig watch at Border Road on 2<sup>nd</sup> Nov (SR). The same?



*Egyptian Geese, video grab of 2 (out of 3) over Border Road on 2<sup>nd</sup> Nov.*

**Shelduck:** (645 – 548 – 20) ⇄

Occasional breeder and winter visitor. None bred this year. In fact after the spring birds departed the remainder of the year was the worst on record. After 3 years of recovering numbers, the winter of 2011/12 might mark the resumption of a decline?

*Bay monthly max:*

JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
169	73	85	62	23	9	0	1	3	19	24	9

**Mandarin:** (2 – 2)

2<sup>nd</sup> record of this feral resident. A male was present on the Very Far Fields 17<sup>th</sup> – 19<sup>th</sup> Mar. The last record was a pair on the Sherford River in Nov 2003.



Male Mandarin, 17<sup>th</sup> Mar. 2<sup>nd</sup> record for the Bay (SR).

**Wigeon:** (671 – 20) ↑

Increasingly common winter visitor. Absent from 29<sup>th</sup> Apr (latest departure date) until 17<sup>th</sup> Sep. Another record year. 671 on 2<sup>nd</sup> Jan surpassed the previous best of 588 on 9<sup>th</sup> Jan 2010.

*Bay monthly max:*

JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
671	200	98	2	0	0	0	0	4	110	433	528

**Gadwall:** (73 – 15) ↔

Occasional visitor. The large numbers that arrived due to the cold weather at the end of 2010 remained into 2011 and peaked at a record 73 on 2<sup>nd</sup> Jan. 25 were still present at the end of Jan. Birds slowly departed during the late winter, with a peak of 11 in March and the last record being a single on 23<sup>rd</sup> Apr. The late winter period was more typical. Birds noted on 5 dates, peaking at 5 on 31<sup>st</sup> Dec.

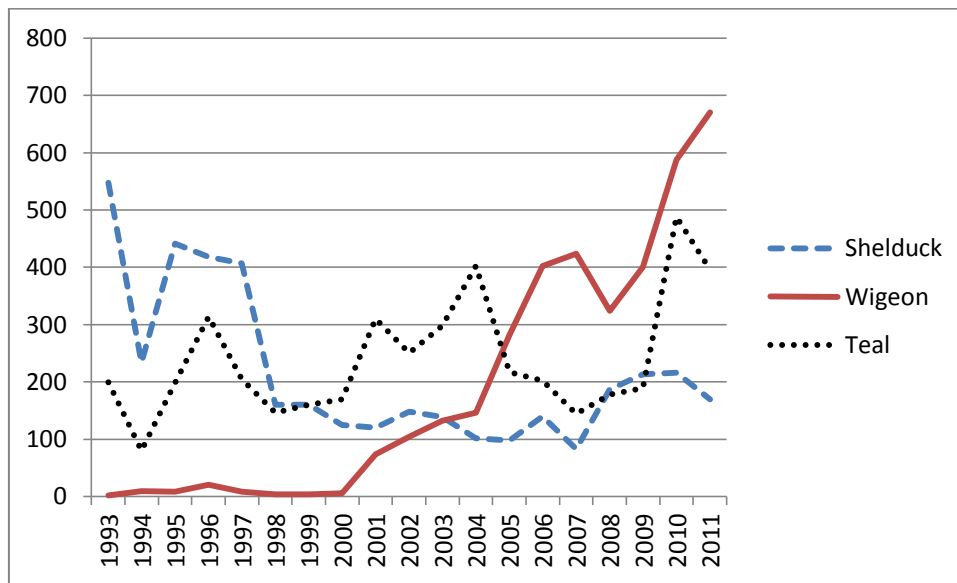
**Teal:** (488 – 20) ↗

Winter visitor and passage migrant. No records between 16<sup>th</sup> May and 1<sup>st</sup> Aug. The max count was on 4<sup>th</sup> Dec.

*Bay monthly max:*

JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
319	n.c.	110	95	4	0	0	12	4	140	200	396

Maximum annual counts of Shelduck, Wigeon and Teal 1993 - 2011



**Mallard:** (100 – 56 – 20) ↔

Breeds at several sites around the recording area. For the 5<sup>th</sup> year in a row a pair arrived on Sandy Close Pond in mid Feb, stayed for the spring, but did not breed.

Bay monthly max:

JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
29	n.c	Br	Br	Br	Br	37	22	42	38	14	28

**Northern Pintail:** (21 - 12) ↔

Scarce visitor. Seen on 5 dates, between 2<sup>nd</sup> Nov and 9<sup>th</sup> Dec. Max 7 on 3<sup>rd</sup> Dec.

**Shoveler:** (7 – 19) ↔

Scarce visitor, which can occur at any time. Only seen on 2 dates. 1 on 17<sup>th</sup> Nov and 3 on 13<sup>th</sup> Dec.

**Tufted Duck:** (20 – 7 – 10) ↔

Rare visitor. 4 records. 5 on 1<sup>st</sup> Jan, 1 on 18<sup>th</sup> Feb, a surprising summer record of a pair on 11<sup>th</sup> June and then 1 on 21<sup>st</sup> Nov.

**[Goldeneye:** (12 – 19) ↓]

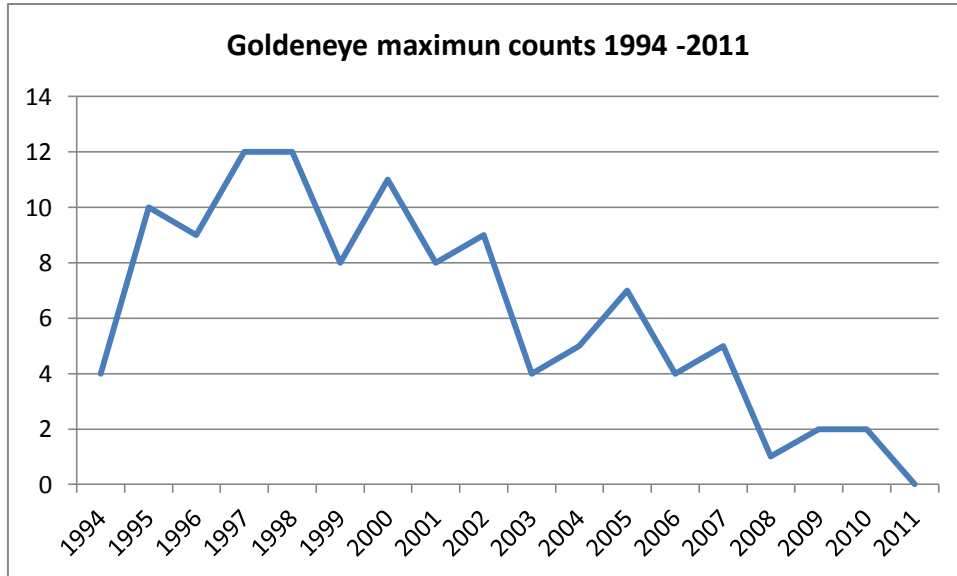
Declining winter visitor. For the first time there were no records of this species in 2011.

The graph below shows the steady decline which has occurred since 1998. The graph masks the true extent of the change in status as not only has the annual maximum decreased but the number of bird days has reduced massively over recent winters .

This pattern is not specific to this particular site. The Poole Harbour population is in general decline. After a sustained period of increase which began in the 1960's, a maximum of 405 was counted in Feb 1998. By 2009 the peak count had dropped to 126. In 2010 it was 110. Following a sustained spell of severe weather at the end of 2010 the Big Bird Day on 8<sup>th</sup> Jan 2011 only recorded 209.

Nationally the species has also been in decline since 1998. Numbers at the key site in Northern Ireland peaked at 13,500 in the early 90's but had reduced to 3,000 by Jan 2010.

Most Goldeneye arriving in Britain for the winter are of Scandinavian origin. Like other breeding birds from this area it is believed that their wintering areas are shifting east with the general trend toward milder winters.<sup>1</sup>



Data pre 1995 needs to treat with caution as record keeping was less robust. For instance there were no records submitted in 1992 even though the species was present on most visits that winter.

**Red-breasted Merganser:** (73 – 20) ↘

Declining winter visitor. Recorded on 22 dates (17 in 2010). Present until 19<sup>th</sup> Mar and from 5<sup>th</sup> Nov.

Bay monthly max:

JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
2	9	14	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	5	5

**Pheasant:** ↑

Increasingly common resident. Established in all parts of the recording area.

**Red-throated Diver:**

3<sup>rd</sup> record. One of the biggest surprises of the year. A juv was in the Bay on 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> Nov (IML et al). The first was in 1985 and the 2<sup>nd</sup> in 1998.

<sup>1</sup> Waterbirds in the UK 2009/10 BTO *et al*



*Red-throated Diver, juvenile, 5<sup>th</sup> Nov 2011. SR's 5<sup>th</sup> patch tick of the year. (SR)*

**Little Grebe:** (12 - 20) ↔

Winter visitor. Recorded until 14<sup>th</sup> Mar and from 18<sup>th</sup> Oct. Max 12 on 9<sup>th</sup> Jan was a record count for the Bay.

**Great Crested Grebe:** (4 - 17) ↔

Occasional visitor. A good year, well above average. Recorded on 20 dates between 7<sup>th</sup> Sep and the year end. Max 3 on 17<sup>th</sup> Nov.

**Cormorant:** (203 – 20) ↑

Regular visitor. Max count 120 on 28<sup>th</sup> Oct.

**Little Egret:** (29 – 19) ↗

Common visitor. Numbers have stabilised in recent years. Very scarce during the cold weather at the beginning of the year. 29 on 29<sup>th</sup> Aug equaled the site record in 2010.

*Bay monthly max:*

JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
1	2	3	4	5	5	14	29	24	17	n.c.	6

**Grey Heron:** (10 – 20) ↔

Recorded frequently throughout the year. Max 9 on 16<sup>th</sup> Oct.

**Black Stork:**

First record. The highlight of many highlights during 2011. One soared over the Very Far Fields in the early afternoon of 1<sup>st</sup> May (SR). The 9<sup>th</sup> record for Dorset. See full account on page 33.

**Honey Buzzard:** (1 – 4)

4<sup>th</sup> record. A pale adult male was present on the 14<sup>th</sup> & 15<sup>th</sup> Aug (SR, IML, TE, SWS). Previous records were in 1992, 1999 and 2002.

**Red Kite:** (1 – 6) ↗

8<sup>th</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup> records. The best year to date for this increasingly frequent visitor. 3 spring migrants. Singles on 1<sup>st</sup> Apr (AB), 24<sup>th</sup> Apr (per HL Log) and 2<sup>nd</sup> May (SR, IML). One in autumn on 2<sup>nd</sup> Oct (RG, SR)

**Marsh Harrier:** (6 – 19) ↗

Irregular visitor. Another superb year, with all records broken. Noted on 65 dates. After a good start to the year and regular sightings in late summer, it is likely that the species was present in the Bay on every date from Oct 1<sup>st</sup> until the year end.



Singles frequently until 18<sup>th</sup> Mar, with 2 on 6<sup>th</sup> Mar. One in spring on 1<sup>st</sup> May. The first of autumn was on 16<sup>th</sup> Aug, soon followed by 3 on 20<sup>th</sup>. Regular sightings in Sep led to at least 3 birds noted roosting in Oct. A dawn watch on 19<sup>th</sup> Dec found 6 birds in the roost. Magical.

**Hen Harrier:** (2 – 19) ↘

Irregular Visitor. 5 records, by recent standards a reasonable showing. One on 1<sup>st</sup> Jan and another on 15<sup>th</sup> Mar. Then ringtails in 2<sup>nd</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> Nov and an imm Male on 19<sup>th</sup> Dec.

**Sparrowhawk:** (3 – 20) ↔

Uncommon visitor. Recorded on 46 dates and in every month, well above the average number of annual sightings (23.8 p.a. 1992-2010). 3 together on the 31<sup>st</sup> Dec matched the record day count at the Bay.

**Common Buzzard:** (15 – 20) ↗

The commonest raptor of the area. Breeds widely in the vicinity.

**Osprey:** (4 – 19) ↗

Annual passage migrant. A good Spring with 3 individuals. 1 on 24<sup>th</sup> Apr then 2 on 1<sup>st</sup> May. Singles recorded on 10 dates between 18<sup>th</sup> Aug and 8<sup>th</sup> Sep. Followed by a late bird on 29<sup>th</sup> Oct.

**Kestrel:** (3 – 20) ↘

Frequently seen resident. A juvenile was seen on 13<sup>th</sup> Jun suggesting that breeding may have occurred locally. More sightings than in recent years.

**Merlin:** (2 – 16) ↔

Scarce winter visitor. A good year with records on 8 dates. 6<sup>th</sup> Jan, 6<sup>th</sup> Apr, 22<sup>nd</sup> Oct, 30<sup>th</sup> Oct, 6<sup>th</sup> Nov, 19<sup>th</sup> Nov, 18<sup>th</sup> and 31<sup>st</sup> Dec. All singles.

**Hobby:** (3 – 18) ↔

Irregular visitor. A record year with 12 bird days. After the first on 22<sup>nd</sup> Apr (earliest record), birds were seen on 28<sup>th</sup>, 1<sup>st</sup> May, 3 on 2<sup>nd</sup> May (record count) and 3<sup>rd</sup> May. In autumn, seen on 4 dates between 31<sup>st</sup> Aug and 4<sup>th</sup> Oct (latest record).

**Peregrine:** (2 – 19) ↗

Uncommon visitor. Another good year, recorded on 21 dates, the 2<sup>nd</sup> best showing after 2010. The average number of dates was 8.5 p.a. (1992 – 2010). None between 26<sup>th</sup> Apr and 21<sup>st</sup> Jul.

**Water Rail:** (23 – 20) ↔

Common resident and winter visitor. Juveniles seen all around the Bay in summer. The 2004 breeding survey established a population estimate of more than 60 pairs in the Bay.

**Moorhen:** (12 – 20) ↔

An uncommon resident. Scattered sightings from across the recording area, including pairs at Folly Pond, Kings Bridge and Turlin Stream. No birds at Sandy Close Pond following the big freeze in January.

**Coot:** (62 – 10)

A record year. Following the cold weather influx of 59 birds on 31<sup>st</sup> Dec 2010, numbers peaked at 62 on 3<sup>rd</sup> Jan. 57 were still present on 1<sup>st</sup> Feb and the last record of the winter was of 14 on 12<sup>th</sup> Mar. After which normality resumed and there were

no further records.

**Oystercatcher:** (400 – 20) ↔

A common winter visitor and passage migrant. Turlin Fields and Turlin Shore at high tide remain the favored locations, though more birds now remain in the bay to feed at low tide than in previous years. The maximum count was on 3<sup>rd</sup> Nov.

*Bay monthly max:*

JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
190	n.c.	n.c.	16	17	15	26	60	n.c.	20	245	75

**Pied Avocet:** (327 – 19) ↑

Increasingly regular winter visitor and passage migrant. By recent standards, an ordinary year. The second winter period lacked any cold weather spells, a weather pattern closely associated with this species occurrence.

*Bay monthly max:*

JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
67	100	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	10	93	75

A bird bearing a red colour ring on each tibia was seen in the Bay on 18<sup>th</sup> Dec. Investigations revealed that had been ringed at Dunkirk, Cambridgeshire. Unfortunately the white characters on the rings could not be read therefore the specific details to identify the individual bird could not be confirmed.



*Colour ringed Avocet 18<sup>th</sup> Dec. The first colour ringed recovery for this species at the Bay. (SR)*

**Ringed Plover:** (17 – 10 – 16) ↔

Scarce visitor. A very good year reflecting the strong wader passage associated with easterlies in May. 3 on 2<sup>nd</sup> May, 6 on 19<sup>th</sup> and 1 on 20<sup>th</sup>. Return passage produced 4 on 15<sup>th</sup> Aug and 1 on 27<sup>th</sup>.

**Little Ringed Plover:** (5 – 9)

Scarce visitor. 1 on the Pool on 22<sup>nd</sup> Mar was the first since 2007.

**Golden Plover:** (160 – 11)

Scarce visitor. 7 with Lapwings on 4<sup>th</sup> Dec and 1 on 22<sup>nd</sup> Dec.

**Grey Plover:** (14 - 15) ↔

Scarce visitor. Following on from the end of 2010 this species was recorded regularly until 25<sup>th</sup> Mar. Max 6 on 16<sup>th</sup> Feb. In spring, just 1 on 3<sup>rd</sup> May. 2 singles in Oct.

**Lapwing:** (3000 – 20) ↘

Formerly bred, now a declining winter visitor. Bred regularly during early 1990's. Last confirmed breeding 1999. A much better year. Recorded on at least 120 dates (at least 79 in 2010, only 30 in 2009). 830 on 22<sup>nd</sup> Dec was the biggest number since 1000 on 7<sup>th</sup> Feb 2004.

*Bay monthly max:*

JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
605	200	26	2	3	0	20	31	29	50	300	830

276 were on the Pool on 18<sup>th</sup> Dec, the best count there for many years. Birds fed in the stubble field on several evenings during Dec.

**Red Knot:** (34 - 12) ↔

Scarce migrant. Singles on 2<sup>nd</sup> Oct and 30<sup>th</sup> Oct. The latter was on the Pool.

**Curlew Sandpiper:** (3 – 7)

Rare visitor. 1 juv was present on 16<sup>th</sup> Oct (SR).

**Dunlin:** (1800 – 1200 – 20) ↘

Declining winter visitor and passage migrant. A decent year by recent standards though well down on 2010. The highlight was a strong passage in May, with 73 bird days. Peaking at 43 on 20<sup>th</sup>. The best on record.

*Bay monthly max:*

JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
360	200	5	0	43	0	0	3	9	22	147	285

**Ruff:** (9 – 17) ↔

Scarce migrant, usually in autumn. 2 juvs in the Bay on 17<sup>th</sup> Sep.

**Jack Snipe:** (5 - 12) ↔

Scarce but under recorded winter visitor. Recorded on 6 dates. Singles on 9<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> Mar. 2 on 22<sup>nd</sup> Oct with 1 on 25<sup>th</sup>. 1 trapped at Lytchett Heath on 28<sup>th</sup> Oct. 1 at Lytchett Way on 18<sup>th</sup> Dec. 1 ringed.

**Snipe:** (160 – 109 – 20) ↘

Declining winter visitor. Recorded until 3<sup>rd</sup> May, returning on the 27<sup>th</sup> Jul. Numbers of Snipe at the Bay declined rapidly at the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The beginning of the year was very poor. However the autumn was very good with the Oct count of 62 on 25<sup>th</sup>, particularly notable. 1 ringed.

*Bay monthly max:*

JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
5	10	5	1	1	0	3	7	8	62	20	50

**Woodcock:** (5 – 10) ↔

Scarce but under recorded winter visitor. The number of records of this species is largely a reflection of the effort made to see them. They are probably present frequently throughout each winter.

A good series of records. 2 on 8<sup>th</sup> Jan, 1 on 28<sup>th</sup> Feb, 3 on 2<sup>nd</sup> Mar, 1 on 12<sup>th</sup> Nov, 3 on 18<sup>th</sup>, 2 on 20<sup>th</sup>, and finally one flushed in day light at Border Road on 2<sup>nd</sup> Dec.

**Black-tailed Godwit:** (1240 – 20) ↔

Common passage migrant and winter visitor. Birds were occasionally attracted to The Pool during the autumn. Max 425 on the relatively late date of 5<sup>th</sup> May. Decent numbers were often seen feeding on Turlin fields at high tide and smaller numbers used the Pool.

*Bay monthly max:*

JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
370	100	400	184	425	0	2	12	23	110	189	206

Over the last 15 years colour ringed birds have proved that birds visiting Lytchett Bay breed in Iceland (*L.l.islandica*). Predominantly, birds seen at Lytchett Bay on migration, winter in Western France. However some have also been recorded in Portugal, SW Ireland, Holland, Belgium, NE England as well as many locations along the south coast.

Colour ringed birds were recorded as follows.

OLR+GYG was present on 3<sup>rd</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> Dec 2011.

It had been ringed as an Ad at Iken, Suffolk on 12<sup>th</sup> Sep 2008. It has also been seen at the Somerset Levels in Dec 2009 and had been present previously at Lytchett Bay on 19<sup>th</sup> & 20<sup>th</sup> Mar and again on 8<sup>th</sup> Nov & 15<sup>th</sup> Nov 2010.

R(8)+WY was present on 16<sup>th</sup> Nov 2011.

It had been ringed as an Ad F on 15<sup>th</sup> July 2010 at Siglufjordur, North Iceland. This bird had previously been seen at Lytchett Bay on 15<sup>th</sup> Nov 2010. In between the two Lytchett sightings it had been seen in Essex in Jul and Aug 2011.

O//R+WW was present on 18<sup>th</sup> Mar 2011.

It had been ringed as an Ad Male at Farlington marshes, Hampshire on 13<sup>th</sup> Oct 2009. It was seen in the Medway estuary on 5<sup>th</sup> Aug 2010.

LBL+OLO was present on 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> Nov 2011.



It had been ringed at Levington in the Orwell Estuary, Suffolk as an Ad on 17<sup>th</sup> Oct 2009. It had been seen in Holes Bay, Dorset on 10<sup>th</sup> Jan 2010 but was back in Suffolk on 9<sup>th</sup> Apr 2010.

Left leg always given first, all rings above the tibia (unless preceded by the mark //). Recently some birds have been marked with leg flags rather than rings. Colours are:

O = Orange

L = Lime (this can look very washed out in the field, approaching white)

R = Red

W = White

Y = Yellow

G = Green

B = Blue

N = Niger

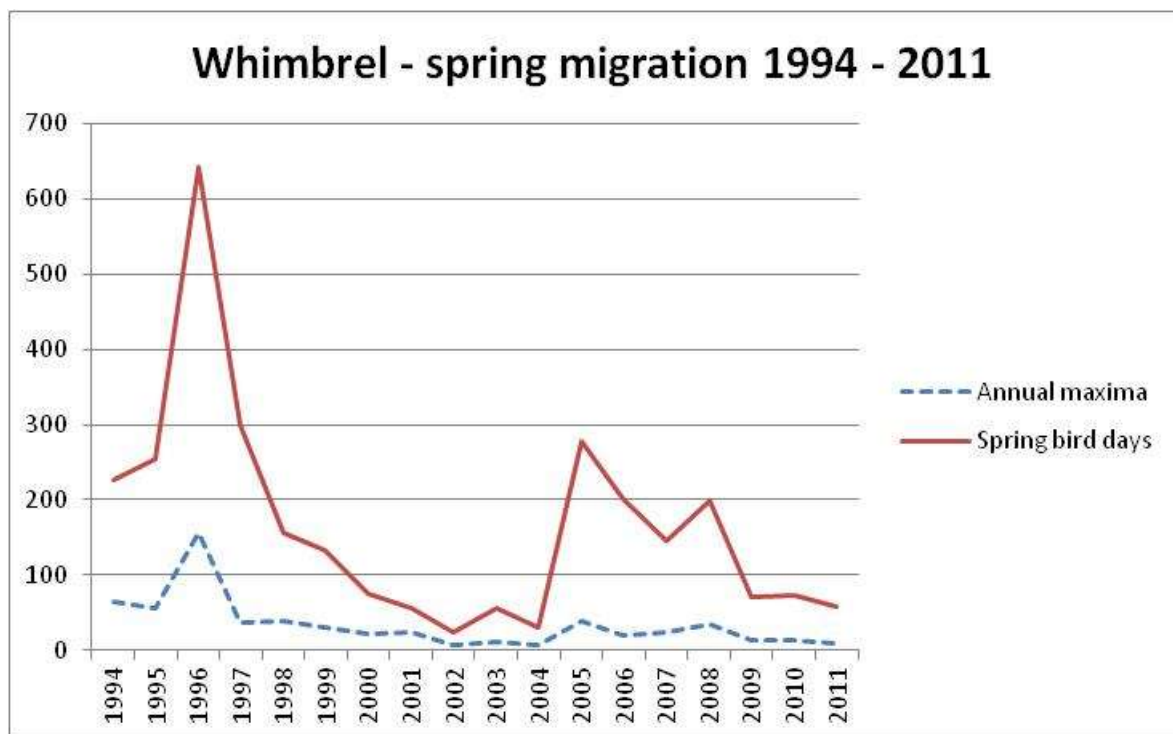
Many thanks to Pete Potts and the Farlington Ringing Group, Tomas Gretar Gunnarsson and Vigfus Eyjolfsson for supplying this information.

**Bar-tailed Godwit:** (110 – 16) ↔

Scare visitor. A record year, despite there only being three records. 2 on 15<sup>th</sup> Apr and 1 on 3<sup>rd</sup> May. In between times there was a huge movement through southern England. This included a flock of 110 through the Bay on the evening of 1<sup>st</sup> May. The previous record was 20 on 21<sup>st</sup> Sep 2007.

**Whimbrel:** (157 – 20) ↘

Passage migrant, most numerous in spring. In The first was not until 19<sup>th</sup> Apr there were only 59 bird days to the 20<sup>th</sup> May. Max 9 on 3<sup>rd</sup> May. Autumn passage involved 20 bird days between 16<sup>th</sup> Jul and 28<sup>th</sup> Aug. Max 4 on 30<sup>th</sup> Jul.



The chart shows that numbers of Whimbrel passing through the Bay in spring is highly variable. 1996 remains exceptional with a max count of 157 (all on the Pool) and a spring bird day total of 643. After a series of poor years numbers, recovered in

the middle of the “noughties” before declining again. Given the poor numbers in 2011, when other species were very prevalent, will we have to wait until 2015 for another good spring?

**Curlew:** (104 – 20) ↔

Common winter visitor and passage migrant.

*Bay monthly max:*

JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
38	15	39	8	5	1	21	17	45	45	23	73

**Common Sandpiper:** (10 – 20) ↔

Uncommon passage migrant. Three spring records. Singles on 13<sup>th</sup> Apr, 25<sup>th</sup> Apr and 2<sup>nd</sup> May. A strong return passage started on 3<sup>rd</sup> Jul. There was 43 bird days to 1<sup>st</sup> Oct. Max 3 on 4 dates. One on 12<sup>th</sup> Nov was only the 2<sup>nd</sup> winter record.

**Green Sandpiper:** (10 – 20) ↗

Common autumn migrant and winter visitor, occasional in spring. The Far Fields and western most part of the Bay are the favoured sites. Two birds present in Jan disappeared at the end of the month and there were no further winter records. Recorded on 4 dates in spring. The first returning bird was on 13<sup>th</sup> Jun, the earliest in the last 20 years. 18 days earlier than the previous record. After this, birds were seen on most visits until the year end. Max 8 on 27<sup>th</sup> Aug. 1 ringed.

*Monthly max:*

JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
2	0	0	1	2	1	4	8	3	4	2	2

**Spotted Redshank:** (68 – 42 – 20) ↓

Declining passage migrant and scarce winter visitor. Recorded only 18 dates, the poorest on record. As recently as 1998 the species was recorded on 148 dates.

Max 3 on 25<sup>th</sup> Aug. Absent between 23<sup>rd</sup> Mar and 18<sup>th</sup> Aug.

*Pool monthly max:*

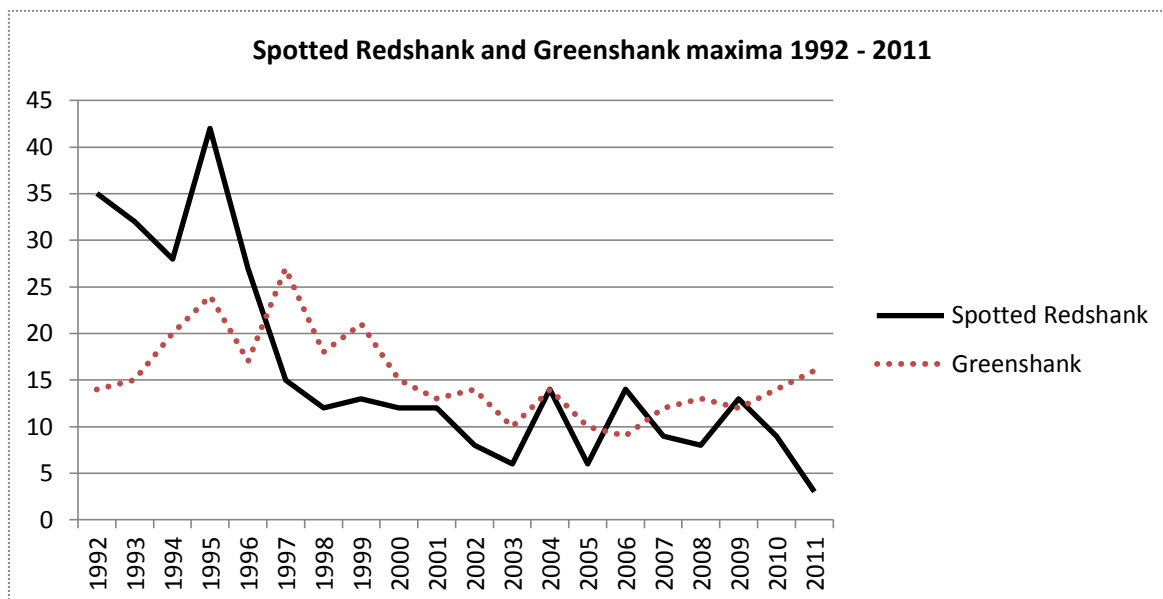
JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0

*Bay monthly max*

JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
2	0	2	0	0	0	0	3	1	2	1	0

The chart below compares the fortunes of the 2 large *Tringa* species. Whilst maximum Greenshank numbers have declined marginally since their peak in the mid 90’s, the number of bird days remains high, present in every month except June and probably on every day from July until the year end.

The decline in Spotted Redshank mirrors the pattern nationally and appears not to be related to any local factors. For example the peak count at the Swale Estuary in 2009 was 20 whereas in 1988 it was 150. This change is not explained by overall population size which appears to be stable.



**Greenshank:** (49 – 27 – 20) ↔

Common passage migrant and winter visitor. Recorded on 128 dates. Spring passage was the best since 1995. Recorded until 20<sup>th</sup> May, max 6 on 26<sup>th</sup> Mar, but 5 present on several dates. The first returning bird was noted on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Jul. An average autumn, max 16 on 31<sup>st</sup> Jul. The Pool is used less frequently, no doubt due to the increased number of alternatives. Deer grazing on Otter Island and on the west side of the Sherford has opened up many small pools which Greenshanks use at high tide. In addition the new pools on the Far Fields were also favoured.

*Pool monthly max;*

JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
0	2	1	0	0	0	1	5	7	3	0	1

*Bay monthly max:*

JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
3	1	6	5	3	0	16	15	11	9	6	2

**Wood Sandpiper:** (2 – 8)

Very scarce migrant. An excellent year. The second spring record in the last 20 years occurred exactly 15 years after the first. 1 on 8<sup>th</sup> May. There were 3 autumn records. Singles on 3<sup>rd</sup>, 10<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> Aug.

**Redshank:** (608 – 436 – 20) ↔

Common winter visitor with small breeding population on salt marsh. The Pool was hardly used, see comments above for Greenshank. The max count of 292 was on 16<sup>th</sup> Oct. The monthly figures obscure the disappearance of this species from mid July to late Aug which occurs each year.

*Bay monthly max:*

JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
123	235	122	177	Br	Br	11	58	90	292	n.c.	90

A colour ringed bird, Y/R + B was seen on two dates in Nov but as yet has not been traced to a colour ringing scheme.

**Ruddy Turnstone:**

2<sup>nd</sup> record. 1 was with migrant waders on the evening of 19<sup>th</sup> May. The only previous record was 3 on 4<sup>th</sup> May 1995.

**Arctic Skua:**

First record. One flew over the Border Road watch point during an early morning vis mig session on 25<sup>th</sup> Oct (SR). Having briefly stopped to harass gulls it continued inland toward Upton Heath. Another observation that confirms the value of standing still and scanning!



*Video grabs of the Bay's first ever Skua. An Arctic on 25<sup>th</sup> Oct.(SR)*

**Kittiwake:** (4 – 4)

4<sup>th</sup> record since 1992. A juv was in the Bay on 2<sup>nd</sup> Nov (SR,IML).



*1<sup>st</sup> W Kittiwake, Lytchett Bay 2<sup>nd</sup> Nov (Ian Lewis)*

**Black-headed Gull:** (12000 – 7000 – 20) ↔

A very common visitor. 1000's regularly frequent the bay en route to the Wareham Channel roost. The first juveniles were noted on 1<sup>st</sup> Jul.



**Mediterranean Gull:** (37 – 19) ↑

Spring and early summer visitor, occasional at other times. The explosion in this species population in Britain continues. The max single site count in Dorset now exceeds 300, as recently as 2006 the record was 42.

The peak occurrence at the Bay is during the period when pairs are establishing territories at the breeding islands in the Wareham Channel. This is quite different to other parts of Poole Harbour where maxima occur after the breeding season. This year the scale of change in occurrence was massive. Counting bird days during Mar – Jun became pointless as birds were moving in and out of the Bay all day. A new record count of 37 was established during 30 minute watch on the 16<sup>th</sup> May, and included 12 1<sup>st</sup> summers. Juvs were noted on 2 dates in Jul.

*Monthly max:*

JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
1	1	12	20	37	13	10	0	0	1	1	2

An adult bearing a white ring was seen in the Turlin Arm on 15<sup>th</sup> Nov. Unfortunately the characters on the ring could not be fully read. Nonetheless the detail was sufficient to confirm that it was ringed at Antwerp, Belgium.

**Common Gull:** (3000 – 20) ↔

A common winter visitor and passage migrant, especially in spring. Max 3000 on 3<sup>rd</sup> Jan was a record for the Bay. The previous record being 1700 on 31<sup>st</sup> Jan 1996. Numbers of this species seem to increase during spells of cold weather. The last birds of winter were seen on 5<sup>th</sup> May. The first returning bird was on 16<sup>th</sup> Jul.

**Lesser Black backed Gull:** (2128 – 20) ↔

Abundant autumn and common spring passage migrant and uncommon winter visitor. Rarely counted. Max 500 on 18<sup>th</sup> Oct.

**Herring Gull:** (2500 – 20) ↗

Common winter visitor and passage migrant. A record year for this increasingly common visitor. On the 18<sup>th</sup> Oct 2500 passed over the Bay in 30 minutes between 18:00 and 18:30.

**Yellow legged Gull:** (65 – 19) ↔

Frequent visitor, peaking in summer. Under recorded.

*Bay monthly max:*

JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
0	2	0	0	0	0	3	14	4	6	1	1

**Great Black backed Gull:** (151 – 20) ↘

Daily visitor throughout the year in small numbers.

**Sandwich Tern:** (5 – 20) ↔

Uncommon summer visitor. Seen on 16 dates between 25<sup>th</sup> Apr and 10<sup>th</sup> Oct. Max 3 on 18<sup>th</sup> Sep.

**Common Tern:** (25 – 20) ↔

Uncommon summer visitor. Single birds seen on only 5 dates between 16<sup>th</sup> May and 18<sup>th</sup> Sep. A very poor year.

**Stock Dove:** (29 – 20) ↔  
Uncommon Resident. Max 10 on 3<sup>rd</sup> Nov.

**Wood Pigeon:** (10,246 – 20) ↑  
Common resident and autumn migrant. No major flights this year. Max 324 on 6<sup>th</sup> Nov.

**Collared Dove:** (14 – 20) ↗  
Uncommon resident. No specific records submitted but no change in status.

**[Cuckoo:** (2 – 19) ↘]  
*Uncommon summer visitor. For the first time in 20 years there were no records. This was particularly surprising as many parts of Poole Harbour reported a slight increase on recent years.*

**[Barn Owl:** (2 – 12) ↔]  
*Recent breeder. It seems that the nest box at French's Farm has been removed. There were no sightings of this species this year. The only evidence of occurrence was the finding of a fresh pellet at the water works on 30<sup>th</sup> May. Is this sufficient to include the species in the systematic list count for 2011?*

**Tawny Owl:** (2 – 20) ↘  
Uncommon resident. Seems to be declining at the Bay? Records came from Sandy Close, The Cottage, Lytchett Heath and French's Farm occasionally throughout the year.

**Short-eared Owl:** (1 – 3)  
Rare visitor. 4 records involving 3 birds. One was over Lytchett Heath reedbed on the evening of 28<sup>th</sup> Oct and presumably the same bird was seen to fly off south the next day. On the 30<sup>th</sup> another bird was at Holton Lee and this bird quartered Otter Island during the afternoon before heading south having been chased off by Carrion Crows. On 31<sup>st</sup> Dec one was over Sandy Close Pond and headed off south over Border Rd.

In the last 20 years the only other records were in 1993 and 2003.

**Nightjar:** (3 – 11) ↗  
Irregular breeder. At least 2 *churring* males held territory. Regularly heard and seen around the stubble and Far Fields during Aug.

**Swift:** (113 – 20) ↘  
Passage migrant and possible local breeder. First seen on 1<sup>st</sup> May. Then recorded regularly around Sandy Close until 16<sup>th</sup> Aug. Max 29 on 20<sup>th</sup> Jul over the Far Fields.

**Kingfisher:** (3 – 20) ↔  
Passage migrant and uncommon winter visitor. Bred in 2000. After 1 on 9<sup>th</sup> Jan there were no records until 2<sup>nd</sup> Jul. Reports that this species had been hit hard by two cold winters were not realised at the Bay. 13 birds were ringed, more than ever before.

SA27393 – A 1<sup>st</sup>W bird ringed at Lytchett Bay on 18<sup>th</sup> Sep 2010 was killed 313 days later on 28<sup>th</sup> Jul 2011 when it flew into a greenhouse at Totton, Hampshire. A movement of 33km.

*This is first recovery of a Lytchett Bay Kingfisher. 79 have been ringed.*

Of the 13 new birds ringed in 2011, 4 were subsequently re-trapped. All within 33 days of the date of ringing.

**Green Woodpecker:** ↔

Breeding resident. Bred successfully and recorded in all parts of the Bay. No change in status.

**Great Spotted Woodpecker:** ↗

Breeding Resident. Seen regularly in most parts of the Bay. Drumming heard in most areas during spring. 2 ringed.

**Skylark:** (781 - 20) ↗

Scarce breeder and passage migrant. 2 or 3 territories established and held throughout the spring. A good autumn passage with 171 bird days between 2<sup>nd</sup> Oct and 19<sup>th</sup> Nov. Max 26 on 14<sup>th</sup> Oct and 25 on 12<sup>th</sup> Nov.

**Sand Martin:** (5000 – 20) ↘

Common passage migrant. First record was 3<sup>rd</sup> Apr. The last record of the year was on 18<sup>th</sup> Sep. Max 70 on 10<sup>th</sup> Jul. 1 ringed.

**Swallow:** (1000 – 540 – 20) ↔

Common passage migrant, breeds at French's Farm. Recorded from 5<sup>th</sup> Apr until 23<sup>rd</sup> Oct. Max numbers occurred in autumn, peaking at a rather poor 120 on 2<sup>nd</sup> Oct. 23 ringed.

**House Martin:** (1800 – 20) ↔

Common passage migrant, breeding colonies on edge of recording area at Watery Lane and Turlin Moor. First noted on 26<sup>th</sup> Apr. The size of the breeding colony at Watery Lane was 13 nests (plus 4 failed or destroyed). A good recovery compared to 2010. The colony at Turlin Moor was not surveyed. Autumn passage peaked at 200 on 27<sup>th</sup> Aug and the last bird being seen on 8<sup>th</sup> Oct.

No of House Martin nests at the Watery Lane colony 2000 – 2011. No of nest collapsed or destroyed in brackets.

2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
10(?)	19(?)	13(6)	13(9)	15(4)	15(5)	16(6)	14(5)	13(8)	15(5)	8(7)	13(4)

**Tree Pipit:** (6 – 16) ↔

Scarce passage migrant. 6 bird days over 4 dates between 10<sup>th</sup> Aug and 2<sup>nd</sup> Sep. 1 ringed.

**Meadow Pipit:** (167 – 20) ↔

Breeding resident and common passage migrant. 2 singing birds on territory during the breeding season. Autumn passage was poor and peaked at 40 on 7<sup>th</sup> Oct. 7 ringed.

**Rock Pipit:** (50 – 20) ↗

Common winter visitor. Recorded until 23<sup>rd</sup> Mar and from 14<sup>th</sup> Oct. Common on saltings throughout the winter. Max count was 25 during Dec.

**Yellow Wagtail:** (90 – 20) ↔

Uncommon passage migrant. 3 spring records. Singles on 25<sup>th</sup> Apr, 3<sup>rd</sup> May and 21<sup>st</sup> May. Autumn migration was the best in 20 years. 459 bird days (previous best 159 in

2008) between 20<sup>th</sup> Aug and 21<sup>st</sup> Sep. Max 90 on 1<sup>st</sup> Sep was a record count for the period. 18 ringed.

**Grey Wagtail:** (12 – 20) ⇔

Winter visitor, passage migrant and occasional breeder. 1 pair bred successfully. Autumn passage was obvious across the area but numbers were typically low. 1 ringed.

**Pied Wagtail:** (400 – 20) ⇔

Recorded throughout the year, common in autumn. Bred successfully. Birds roost at various points around the Bay during peak migration in October. Autumn roost peaked at 400, again equaling the best count at the site, in late Oct. The size of this roost is very consistent year on year. The roost declines quickly during Nov and only small roosts form during winter. 221 ringed.

V810913 – A 1<sup>st</sup>W ringed at Lytchett Bay on 8<sup>th</sup> Oct 2009 was re-trapped 685 days later on 24<sup>th</sup> Aug 2011 at Fairoak, Staffordshire. A movement of 240km.

**White Wagtail:**

2 males were on the Pool on the 22<sup>nd</sup> Mar.

**Waxwing:** (20 – 3)

3<sup>rd</sup> to 5<sup>th</sup> records. The massive influx into Britain during the autumn of 2010 led to more and more birds moving south. It was therefore no surprise that flocks found residential gardens around the Bay attractive. 20 were in gardens on Slough Lane on 11<sup>th</sup> Jan (MoP), 3 then lingered at Shore Lane between 23<sup>rd</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup> Jan (SR et al) and finally 8 were in Lytchett Way on 8<sup>th</sup> Feb (MoP).



*Waxwing, Shore Lane 25<sup>th</sup> Jan 2011(SR)*



*Waxwing, Upton, Jan 2011. Whilst not caught within the recording area it would be a shame not to include a record of this unforgettable event.*

**Wren:** ↔

Common resident. 25 ringed.

**Dunnock:** ↔

Common resident. 21 ringed.

**Robin:** ↔

Common resident. The Big Bird Count on 8<sup>th</sup> Jan produced a Bay total of 39. 29 ringed.

**Common Redstart:** (2 – 13) ↔

Scarce autumn migrant. Just 2 singles. 1 at Turlin Moor on 15<sup>th</sup> Aug and 1 around the Pool on 2<sup>nd</sup> Sep.

**Whinchat:** (11 – 18) ↘

Scarce passage migrant. A rare spring record. 1 at Lytchett Heath on 4<sup>th</sup> May. Another poor autumn. Seen on only 7 dates between 20<sup>th</sup> Aug and 8<sup>th</sup> Oct all on the Far Fields. Max 4 on 2<sup>nd</sup> Sep. 2 ringed.



*Whinchat is rare in spring. This one at Lytchett Heath was only the 5<sup>th</sup> spring record in 20 years. (SR)*

**Stonechat:** (23 – 20) ↓

Past common breeding resident (7 pairs in 2002), recently changed status to uncommon migrant. The worst year on record. Recorded on only 17 visits (34 in 2010, 19 in 2009, 35 in 2008). Only 1 in spring on 9<sup>th</sup> Mar. In autumn between 20<sup>th</sup> Aug and 12<sup>th</sup> Nov. No count greater than 2. 2 ringed.

**Northern Wheatear:** (15 – 20) ↔

Uncommon passage migrant. A good spring and reasonable autumn. 27 bird days in spring between 26<sup>th</sup> Mar and 1<sup>st</sup> May. Max 7 on 11<sup>th</sup> Apr. 18 in autumn between 27<sup>th</sup> Aug and 15<sup>th</sup> Sep. Max 4 on 1<sup>st</sup> date.

**Blackbird:** (45 – 20) ↔

Common Resident. 25 were counted during the Big Bird Day on 8<sup>th</sup> Jan. An influx of 30 shared between Border Drive and the Far Fields on 8<sup>th</sup> Nov. 21 ringed.

**Fieldfare:** (258 – 20) ↗

Uncommon winter visitor. Very scarce in the first part of the year. Only 2 records of single birds! The first record in autumn was of 7 on the 21<sup>st</sup> Oct (earliest return date). A very good series of vis-mig movements followed. 102n on 6<sup>th</sup> Nov, 78n on 7<sup>th</sup>, 244n on 14<sup>th</sup>, 54n on 15<sup>th</sup>, 143e on 16<sup>th</sup>. After which there were occasional records until the year end. 1 ringed.



*Fieldfare, only the 3<sup>rd</sup> to be ringed at Lytchett Bay (TE)*

**Song Thrush:** (473 – 20) ↔

Breeding resident. A complete breeding survey found 10 territories (at least 4 pairs raised young). 12 ringed.

There were no autumn flights due to a lack of suitable weather conditions. Mild weather in Dec led to birds starting to sing on territory by the end of the month.

**Redwing:** (1000 – 514 – 20) ↔

Winter visitor. Occasionally seen during the first winter period. Max 30 on 26<sup>th</sup> Feb. Last record was 8 on 26<sup>th</sup> Mar. First returning bird was a nocturnal migrant on 13<sup>th</sup> Oct. Small vis-mig flights in Nov. 40n on 6<sup>th</sup>, 155n on 7<sup>th</sup>, 30n on 14<sup>th</sup>. 2 ringed.

**Mistle Thrush:** (16 – 20) ↔

Uncommon resident. Outrageously scarce for the second year in a row. After 1 on 3<sup>rd</sup> Jan there were no further records until autumn. Only 7 bird days between 16<sup>th</sup> Oct and the end of the year.

**Cetti's Warbler:** (11 males – 19) ↗

Breeding resident. Only 5 territories (9 in 2010), presumably as a result of the very severe winter? Present at Sandy Close Pond outside the breeding season at both ends of the year. 7 ringed.

**Grasshopper Warbler:** (7 – 13) ↔

Passage migrant, under recorded. None in spring but a record autumn passage. 35 birds between 27<sup>th</sup> Jul and 28<sup>th</sup> Sep. All trapped except for 1 at Border Road on 15<sup>th</sup> Aug. Max 6 on 20<sup>th</sup> Aug and 5 on 17<sup>th</sup> Aug, 21<sup>st</sup> Aug and 1<sup>st</sup> Sep. 34 ringed.

**Aquatic Warbler:** (1 – 2)

3<sup>rd</sup> record for the Bay. A 1<sup>st</sup> W was trapped and ringed on the 20<sup>th</sup> Aug (TE,SR et al). August finally produced some gentle south easterlies and after 8 years of trying we finally caught our target species. Whilst hardly replicating the hey days of the 80's and 90's this small window of suitable weather produced up to 8 in SW England. At least we now know, when the wind blows from the right direction, there is still hope. 1 ringed.



*Aquatic Warbler, the first to be trapped at Lytchett Bay since 1983. (Terry Elborn)*



*1<sup>st</sup> W Aquatic Warbler, first Dorset*

*record since 2007. (SR)*

**Sedge Warbler:** (96 – 20) ↔

Passage migrant. Spring passage was again very poor with only 3 birds between 13<sup>th</sup> Apr and 1<sup>st</sup> May. Autumn by contrast was the best on record. 704 from 10<sup>th</sup> Jul to 28<sup>th</sup> Sep including a day record 96 on 6<sup>th</sup> Aug. 592 ringed.

Daily max and bird days are given in the following table.

JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
			1	1		33	96	20			
			2	1		106	528	70			

T494036 – A 1<sup>st</sup>W bird ringed on 6<sup>th</sup> Aug 2005 at Lytchett Bay, was re-trapped at Tour aux, Moutons, Loire Atlantique, France 1473 days later on 18<sup>th</sup> Aug 2009. A movement of 380km.

V221307 – A 1<sup>st</sup>W bird ringed on 31<sup>st</sup> Jul 2009 at Lytchett Bay was re-trapped at Donges, Loire Atlantique, France 8 days later on 8<sup>th</sup> Aug 2009. A movement of 380km.

V221485 – A 1<sup>st</sup>W bird ringed on 8<sup>th</sup> Aug 2009 at Lytchett Bay was re-trapped at Pommeroeul, Hainaut, Belgium 10 days later on 18<sup>th</sup> Aug 2009. A movement of 408km.

V810711 – A 1<sup>st</sup>W bird ringed on 22<sup>nd</sup> Aug 2009 at Lytchett Bay was re-trapped at Donges, Loire Atlantique, France 9 days later on 31<sup>st</sup> Aug 2009. A movement of 380km.

FRP5239927 – A 1<sup>st</sup>W bird ringed on 22<sup>nd</sup> Aug 2009 at Mindine, Bourguenais, Loire Atlantique, France was re-trapped at Lytchett Bay 714 days later on 6<sup>th</sup> Aug 2011. A movement of 398km.



X361209 – A 1<sup>st</sup>W bird ringed on 3<sup>rd</sup> Aug 2010 at Lytchett Bay was re-trapped at Noyant, Soulaire-et-Bourg, Maine-et-Loire, France 7 days later on 10<sup>th</sup> Aug 2010. A movement of 404km.

L321137 – A 1<sup>st</sup>W bird ringed on 18<sup>th</sup> Aug 2010 at Dyfi-Aber Leri NR, Borth, Ceredigion, Wales was re-trapped at Lytchett Bay 353 days later on 6<sup>th</sup> Aug 2011. A movement of 238km.

L517581 – A 1<sup>st</sup>W bird ringed on 6<sup>th</sup> Aug 2011 at Lytchett Bay was re-trapped at Reserve de Briere Sud, Saint-Joachim, Loire Atlantique, France 4 days later on 10<sup>th</sup> Aug 2011. A movement of 373km.

Y251011 – A 1<sup>st</sup>W bird ringed on 17<sup>th</sup> Aug 2011 at Lytchett Bay was re-trapped at Chew Valley Lake, Somerset 2 days later on 19<sup>th</sup> Aug 2011. A movement of 77km.

*An unusual movement involving a sub Saharan migrant moving north in autumn.*

L929263 – A 1<sup>st</sup>W bird ringed on 18<sup>th</sup> Aug 2011 at South Walney, Cumbria was re-trapped at Lytchett Bay 6 days later on 24<sup>th</sup> Aug 2011. A movement of 375km.

**Reed Warbler:** (84 males – 20) ↗

Common summer visitor. Present between 9<sup>th</sup> Apr (earliest return date) and 24<sup>th</sup> Sep. A complete breeding survey covering the shore from Rockley Bridge anti-clockwise to the Sherford at Kings Bridge found 84 singing males. This is the first time that a complete survey has been undertaken in 20 years. A comparable survey covering the area from Lytchett Way to Kings Bridge in 1995 produced a total of 28 singing males, whilst this year the total for that area was 67! 251 ringed.

X361445 – A 1<sup>st</sup>W bird ringed at Lytchett Bay on 31<sup>st</sup> Aug 2010 was re-trapped at Rostherne Mere, Cheshire 261 days later on 19<sup>th</sup> May 2011. A movement of 292km.

L431493 – A nestling ringed at Stanford Reservoir, Northamptonshire on 23<sup>rd</sup> June 2011 was re-trapped at Lytchett Bay 55 days later on 17<sup>th</sup> Aug 2011. A movement of 198km.

**Dartford Warbler:** (2 pairs – 18) ↔

Breeding resident. Hit hard by the cold spell at the end of 2010. The only records of the year related to (a) presumed dispersing bird(s) at Lytchett Heath on 3 dates between 13<sup>th</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup> Oct.

**Lesser Whitethroat:** (3 – 16) ↔

Scarce passage migrant. Has bred. 1 at Border Road on 9<sup>th</sup> Aug. 1 at the Water Works on 20<sup>th</sup> Aug. 1 ringed.

**Whitethroat:** (8 – 18) ↔

Uncommon passage migrant. 10 bird days in spring, between 10<sup>th</sup> Apr and 3<sup>rd</sup> May constituted a very good showing. 44 bird days in autumn between 10<sup>th</sup> Jul and 13<sup>th</sup> Sep. Max 6 on 3<sup>rd</sup> Aug. The 2<sup>nd</sup> best autumn on record, 2002 with 58 bird days remains the best. 23 ringed.

L517457 – A juvenile ringed at Durlston CP on 10<sup>th</sup> Aug 2011 was re-trapped 7 days later on 17<sup>th</sup> Aug 2011 at Lytchett Bay. A movement of 19km.

*Another example of northward migration in autumn (See Sedge Warbler Y251011 above).*

**Garden Warbler:** (5 – 18) ↔

Scarce passage migrant. In autumn, 8 bird days between 2<sup>nd</sup> and 29<sup>th</sup> Aug. Max 2 on 9<sup>th</sup>. 2 ringed.

**Blackcap:** (13 – 20) ↗

Passage migrant, summer visitor and scarce winter visitor. An incomplete survey found 8 territories during the breeding season. Present at Sandy Close Pond from the New Year until 6<sup>th</sup> Mar. Actual numbers difficult to ascertain but max day count was 2 on 5<sup>th</sup> Mar. The first presumed migrant was on 4<sup>th</sup> Apr at Turlin Moor. Notable arrival on 6<sup>th</sup> Apr when 11 were present. Autumn migration was extraordinarily poor with the last record being on 3<sup>rd</sup> Oct. A single wintering bird back at Sandy Close Pond in Dec. 16 ringed.

Daily max and bird days are given in the following table.

JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
1	1	2	11	b	b	b	4	3	1	0	1
w		w	49	b	b	b	23	17	1	0	w

**Chiffchaff:** (42 – 20) ↗

Breeding summer visitor and passage migrant. Given the weather it was not surprising that none were seen in the first winter period. The first spring migrant was on 12<sup>th</sup> Mar. An estimated 15 territories were established, the best year on record. Autumn migration was excellent, the best yet with 246 bird days. Many birds were discovered to be feeding in the weedy maize crop during Sep. Max 42 on 19<sup>th</sup> Sep. 169 ringed.

Daily max and bird days are given in the following table.

JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
		4	5	b	b	b	6	42	7	2	1
		10	39	b	b	b	27	190	25	4	1

**Willow Warbler:** (23 – 20) ↘

Breeding summer visitor and passage migrant. The first record was on 4<sup>th</sup> Apr. For the 2<sup>nd</sup> year in a row, none bred. Autumn migration started on 20<sup>th</sup> Jul and lasted until 21<sup>st</sup> Sep. 44 ringed.

Daily max and bird days are given in the following table.

JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
			3			4	8	2			
			13			12	73	5			

**Goldcrest:** (14 – 20) ↘

Passage migrant, which occasionally breeds. Singing males were present at 5 locations during late Apr and May. These were presumably breeding but none were noted during Jun. The best year since 2005. 7 ringed.

Daily max and bird days are given in the following table.

JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
1		1	b	b			4	3	6	9	8
2		2	b	b			6	7	40	39	23

**Spotted Flycatcher:** (8 – 6 – 20) ↘

Passage migrant, previously bred. Like 2010 there was only 1 record. A single migrant on 22<sup>nd</sup> Aug. The best year in the last 20 was 2002 when there were 40 bird days in autumn.

**Bearded Tit:** (33 – 20) ↔

Rare breeder and scarce passage migrant. At least 1 pair raised young. The autumn was reasonable. Max 10 on 14<sup>th</sup> Oct. High flying migrants were notes on 2 dates. At least 4 were still present during Dec. 13 ringed.

L515078 – A male ringed at Lytchett Bay on 2<sup>nd</sup> Oct 2010 was re-trapped at Farlington Marsh, Hampshire 361 days later on 28<sup>th</sup> Sep 2011. A movement of 73km.

**Long tailed Tit:** ↗

Common resident. Regularly recorded from most sites at the Bay. 12 ringed.

**Coal Tit:** ↗

Uncommon resident, increasing. Recorded from most sites this year across the calendar. 2 ringed.

**Marsh Tit:**

2<sup>nd</sup> record in the last 20 years. 1 was around the Water Works on 7<sup>th</sup> Jan (RH). This species still breeds at Holton Lee, where it regularly visits feeders less than 1km from this sighting. The last record was at Kings Bridge on 8<sup>th</sup> Oct 1995.

**Blue Tit:** ↔

Common resident. 39 were counted during the Big Bird Day on 8<sup>th</sup> Jan. 77 ringed.

**Great Tit:** ↔

Common resident. 38 ringed.

**Nuthatch:** ↔

Uncommon. Only recorded on 5 dates. Singles across the whole area and across the whole year.

**Treecreeper:** ↔

Uncommon. Only record on 4 dates. All in autumn.

**Woodchat Shrike:**

1<sup>st</sup> record. 1 graced the Far Fields on the afternoon and evening of 10<sup>th</sup> Apr (DB et al). A quiet afternoon in the garden was turned upside down when I read an email from DB. In my panic, I completely failed to listen to the description of the birds location during the subsequent phone call and only recalled that it was with 2 Wheatear. I was running to where I wrongly imagined the bird to be when I tripped over two Wheatear. Stopping to look up, there was one of the most beautiful sights in 20 years of birding Lytchett. The 5<sup>th</sup> record for Poole Harbour.



*The first view. (SR)*



*The only Woodchat seen in Dorset in 2011 (Kevin Lane)*

**Jay:** (6 – 20) ↔

Resident. Regularly seen throughout the year but most often in autumn.

**Magpie:** ↗

Common Resident.

**Jackdaw:** (205 – 20) ↔

Resident. Recorded throughout the year. Very common in autumn around French's Farm. Max 170 on 31<sup>st</sup> Oct.

**Rook:** (185 – 20) ↗

Breeds on edge of recording area. 20 nests at the Watery Lane colony (16 nests in 2010).

**Carrion Crow:** (100 – 20) ↑

Common Resident, increasing. Large numbers were attracted to the harvested maize field throughout the autumn. Discarded corn on the cob could be found across the whole recording area! Max 100 on 8<sup>th</sup> Nov was an unwelcome record count for the Bay.

**Raven:** (7 – 17) ↗

Irregular visitor. Annual since the first record in 1995. 25 bird days on 15 dates throughout the year. Max 6 on 25<sup>th</sup> Oct.

**Starling:** (35000 – 5600 – 20) ↔

Common resident. The formation of a large roost in Poole meant that numbers passing through the Bay increased. 5100 were recorded en route to this roost on 1<sup>st</sup> Jan. Similar numbers were seen on several dates in Jan. In the second winter period the Poole roost was comparatively tiny (100's rather than c100,000). The biggest count at the Bay was 181. 15 ringed.

LB33036 – A juvenile ringed at Sandy Close Pond, Lytchett Bay on 16<sup>th</sup> Jun 2010 was killed by a cat 238 days later on 9<sup>th</sup> Feb 2011 in Upton, Poole.

LB33052 – A juvenile ringed at Sandy Close Pond, Lytchett Bay on 9<sup>th</sup> Jul 2010 was killed by a cat 303 days later on 9<sup>th</sup> May 2011 in Upton, Poole.

**House Sparrow:** (85 – 20) ↔

Resident. Usually recorded around the urban fringe. Bred at Turlin Moor, Border Road and French's Farm. More frequent than previously at Sandy Close Pond feeders during the summer. 7 ringed.

**Chaffinch:** (140 – 20) ↔

Breeding resident and winter visitor. Max 40 in the first winter period. A good flock around the Stubble Field in late autumn peaked at 100 on 17<sup>th</sup> Nov. 47 ringed.

L516055 – A 1stW male was ringed at Lytchett Bay on 6<sup>th</sup> Nov 2010. 342 days later on 14<sup>th</sup> Oct 2011 it was killed by flying into a greenhouse at East Holton, Dorset. A movement of 2km.

**Brambling:** (7 – 17) ↔

Scarce Visitor. 1 visited Sandy Close Pond feeders regularly until 21<sup>st</sup> Mar with 2 on 6<sup>th</sup> Mar. The first record of autumn was a fly over on 21<sup>st</sup> Oct. Further singles occurred on 14<sup>th</sup> and 23<sup>rd</sup> Nov. All at Border Road.

**Greenfinch:** (60 – 20) ↔

Common breeding resident. Border Drive, Turlin Moor and Stubble Field were the favored areas. No significant flocks noted. 18 ringed.

**Goldfinch:** (120 – 20) ↗

Uncommon breeding resident and passage migrant. Flocks frequently recorded in the autumn, max 40 - 50 at Border Road and the Stubble Field. Regular visitor, in small numbers, to feeders at Sandy Close Pond. 105 ringed.

V810940 – A 1<sup>st</sup>W was ringed at Lytchett Bay on 10<sup>th</sup> Oct 2009. It was taken by a cat 576 days later on 9<sup>th</sup> May 2011 at Upton, Poole, Dorset.

X574509 – A 1<sup>st</sup>W ringed at Birchwood, Warrington, Cheshire on 28<sup>th</sup> Feb 2010 was re-trapped 265 days later at Sandy Close Pond, Lytchett Bay on 20<sup>th</sup> Nov 2010. A movement of 302km.

**Siskin:** (280 – 17) ↔

Passage migrant and occasional winter visitor. 9 were at the Water Works on 27<sup>th</sup> Jan. 1's and 2's noted visited Sandy Close Pond feeders on one date in Feb and several dates in Mar. A pair were there on the late date of 23<sup>rd</sup> Apr but there was no sign of breeding. 2 summer records over the Far Fields 20<sup>th</sup> Jul (earliest return date) and 8<sup>th</sup> Aug. Autumn migration from 2<sup>nd</sup> Oct to the 16<sup>th</sup> Nov. Max 20 at Border Road on 3<sup>rd</sup> Nov, 27 there on 7<sup>th</sup> and 21 at Kings Bridge on 16<sup>th</sup>. 1 ringed.

**Linnet:** (250 – 20) ↔

Uncommon breeding resident. The traditional roost at Lytchett Way was used in both winter periods. Max 50 on 20<sup>th</sup> Feb and 80 on 18<sup>th</sup> Dec (the best count since 2007). Probably bred at Lytchett Heath. Widespread in autumn. Peak of 50 in the Stubble Field on 24<sup>th</sup> Oct.



*Singing male Linnet, Lytchett Heath. May 2011. (SR)*

**Lesser Redpoll:** (40 – 16) ↔

Scarce passage migrant. Frequently recorded in autumn between 30<sup>th</sup> Aug and 21<sup>st</sup> Nov. 23 bird days. Max 5 on 29<sup>th</sup> Oct. One record at the year end. 9 Kings Bridge on 31<sup>st</sup> Dec.

**Crossbill:** (8 – 6)

Rare visitor. 1 over the Far Fields on 27<sup>th</sup> Jul (KEL).

**Bullfinch:** (11 – 20) ↗

Uncommon. The best year on record. Noted on more than 40 dates. In fact sightings became so frequent that I stopped recording them. Seen throughout the year with the exception of Jun. Very noticeable in autumn and the second winter period. 11 on 31<sup>st</sup> Dec was a record day count. 5 ringed.

**Reed Bunting:** (37 – 20) ↔

Breeding resident. Birds visited feeders at Sandy Close until early Jul. For the first time a full breeding survey was carried out from Rockley Bridge anticlockwise to the Sherford at Kings Bridge. This produced a total of 23 singing males more than double previous estimates. These breeding pairs were very successful with 41 juv birds ringed and a record total of 150 ringed in total during the year. A reed bed roost was discovered during the autumn and this held 37 birds on 19<sup>th</sup> Dec (A record single flock count).

L902336 – A juvenile ringed on 27<sup>th</sup> Jun at Longham Lakes, Dorset was re-trapped 109 days later on 14<sup>th</sup> Oct at Lytchett Bay. A movement of 11km.

L515153 – 1<sup>st</sup>W ringed at Lytchett Bay on 7<sup>th</sup> Oct 2010 was re-trapped 186 days later on 11<sup>th</sup> Apr at Abbotsbury, Dorset. A movement of 40km.



*More Reed Bunting's bred at Lytchett Bay than in any year in the last 20. (SR)*

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## Appendix 1

### Ringling Totals 2011

	Full grown	Pulli	Retraps/ Recoverie	Total
Jack Snipe	1	0	0	1
Snipe	1	0	0	1
Green Sandpiper	1	0	0	1
Nightjar	1	0	0	1
Kingfisher	13	0	5	18
Great Spotted Woodpecker	2	0	3	5
Sand Martin	1	0	0	1
Swallow	23	0	0	23
Tree Pipit	1	0	0	1
Meadow Pipit	7	0	2	9
Yellow Wagtail	18	0	0	18
Grey Wagtail	1	0	0	1
Pied/White Wagtail	221	0	0	221
Wren	25	0	1	26
Dunnock	21	0	15	36
Robin	29	0	21	50
Whinchat	2	0	0	2
Stonechat	2	0	0	2
Blackbird	21	0	11	32
Fieldfare	1	0	0	1
Song Thrush	12	0	0	12
Redwing	2	0	0	2
Cetti's Warbler	7	0	2	9
Grasshopper Warbler	34	0	0	34
Aquatic Warbler	1	0	0	1
Sedge Warbler	591	0	22	613
Reed Warbler	251	0	83	334
Lesser Whitethroat	1	0	0	1
Whitethroat	23	0	9	32
Garden Warbler	2	0	0	2
Blackcap	16	0	0	16
Chiffchaff	169	0	10	179
Willow Warbler	44	0	0	44
Goldcrest	7	0	3	10
Bearded Tit	13	0	3	16
Long-tailed Tit	11	0	10	21
Blue Tit	77	0	73	150
Great Tit	38	0	22	60
Coal Tit	2	0	0	2
Starling	15	0	4	19
House Sparrow	7	0	1	8
Chaffinch	47	0	2	49
Greenfinch	19	0	0	19
Goldfinch	104	0	1	105



Siskin	1	0	0	1
Bullfinch	5	0	0	5
Reed Bunting	150	0	31	181
<b>Total;</b>	<b>2041</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>333</b>	<b>2374</b>

## **Appendix 2**

### **Account of Black Stork, 1<sup>st</sup> May 2011 - *the 9<sup>th</sup> record for Dorset.***

On Thursday 28<sup>th</sup> April news reached the local birding community of a reported Black Stork thermalling over Arne RSPB in Poole Harbour. Over the next 24 hours the events unfolded as follows.

Thursday 28th 1pm - Stork seen by 2 people independently soaring over Arne. One reports it as a Black Stork the other as White Stork. Observers unknown.

Thursday 28th 7:30pm - Black Stork seen to fly over A351 mid way between Wareham and Bakers Arms nr Sandford. Observer: M.O.Bell. This information was posted on BirdForum.

Friday 29th April c11:30am - Black Stork seen to drop into Morden Bog, Wareham Forest. Observer: Richard Hastings (from Somerset?). This news was passed to a Dorset Birder who then circulated it to local birding community and a twitch ensued.

Friday 29th 12:30pm - I arrived at the site within 30 minutes and was joined by Mark Constantine. At 12:30pm a Stork Spp was seen to thermal from trees c3km south of Decoy Pond at Morden Bog and disappear into low cloud. No plumage discernible due to distance from bird and light conditions. MC did not get onto the bird.

There were no reported sightings for the remainder of that day despite good coverage of the area and none on Saturday. We had to accept that the bird had departed at 12:30 on the Friday.

On Sunday 1<sup>st</sup> May I had led a guided walk at Holton Lee on the western shore of Lytchett Bay and this had produced an Osprey and some Swifts. After the walk I visited my patch at Lytchett Bay with the intention of spring trapping some Wheatears. Alas none were present. Given the good conditions and the birds seen earlier I decided to watch the sky for a while and soon picked up a different Osprey fishing over the Bay. At 13:08 I was scanning the sky to the NW and picked up the unmistakable outline of a Stork in my bins some 2km or so away. Quickly transferring to scope I was able to identify it immediately as a Black Stork soaring in circles. Wow. Over the next few minutes I tried to follow its movements in the scope whilst alerting the locals to its presence. Very stressful. The bird was drifting east toward Lytchett Minster and Upton and gaining height. After about 5 minutes I lost it during another phone call.

At 13:29 it reappeared now much closer (800m) over the Lytchett Bay fields, it was lower (c100m) and looked like it was looking for somewhere to land. As it came down I lost it in trees.

Still trying to get now frantic local listers onto the bird from various different lookouts I informed them of the latest.

Finally at 13:37 the bird was back in the sky now flying back west toward Organford. This was the last I saw of it.

Sadly and frustratingly none of my friends had managed to see it. Either because they did not get there in time or those that had, had not chosen good (lucky) lookout points.

Description: A large bird, at least the size of Grey Heron. An obvious Stork with neck outstretched in flight with long straight bill. Legs and feet trailing horizontally and extending clearly beyond short tail. Very broad wings with strongly fingered primaries.

Upperparts entirely black. Underparts and wings black except for white belly, flanks, vent and auxiliary area. Head and neck black.

Bare part colour was not seen during the distant viewings and not noted during the closest sighting either due to the stress of multi-tasking or because it was not obvious.

Throughout the sighting the bird was in flight. Generally circling and gliding on still wings.

Postscript; As of the 3<sup>rd</sup> May there has been one further sighting. At c4pm on the 1<sup>st</sup> May a Black Stork was reported in flight by Nicky Hoare c13 miles west at Moreton Forest.

S. Robson, 3<sup>rd</sup> May 2011