

Lytchett Bay Birds and wildlife 2018

Shaun Robson and Nick Hull

Welcome to the 27th consecutive Lytchett Bay annual report. The data that we have gathered and published over the period constitutes a comprehensive log of the site's ornithological importance since 1992. Since 2014 thanks to work led by Nick Hull we have widened the report to cover a much wider taxa and interest in this section is growing year on year (see page 44).



The weather had a big influence in 2018. The “beast from the east” heralded a very cold start to the spring and whilst Britain warmed up in April and May, Iberia remained largely wet, untypically cold and very unsettled. As a consequence, many migrants were significantly delayed. To the north west of Britain snow in the arctic persisted well into June and it was suggested that many waders did not breed. Come the autumn, low pressure dominated and there were very few days with any suggestion of drifting easterly winds for the continent. All in all, this probably suppressed the number of birds and diversity of species recorded at the Bay.

Whilst SR was absent for almost 5 months of the year in total, Ian Ballam’s efforts, and those of a wider group of regular visitors, meant that coverage was high and that there were still many notable records.

Ortolan Bunting became the first addition to the Lytchett Bay list that was not seen or heard by a human! The first Black Brant was perhaps more satisfying but of course it is not currently recognised as full species. Our third first attracted the most attention and many visitors but again did not add to the sites bird list – the Southern Migrant Hawklers at Lytchett Way were the first ever to be seen in Dorset. The Lytchett Bay Bird list is now 227.



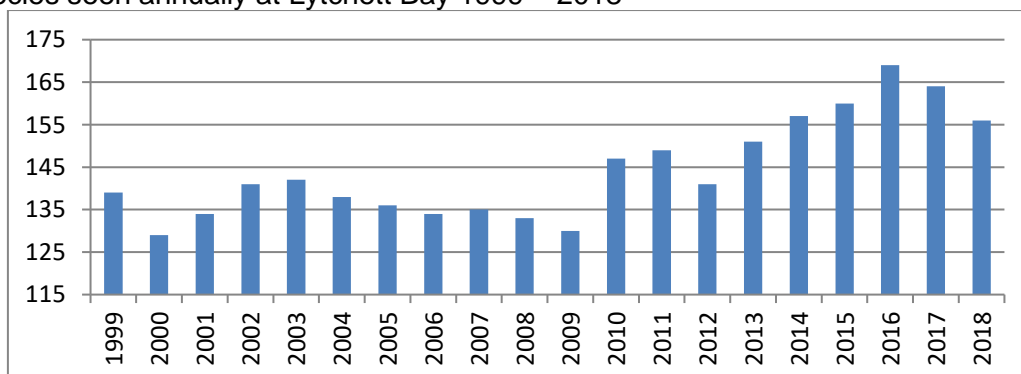
“Old Blue Eyes” Southern Migrant Hawker was for many the star of the year. This picture by John Wall is as remarkable as it is beautiful.

Additional bird highlights included a flock of 7 Great White Egrets & 6 (more?) a few days later, 1st Pale-bellied Brent Geese, 3rd Glossy Ibis, 3rd & 4th records of Hawfinch, 3rd – 5th Arctic Terns, 4th Whooper Swans.

The following species occurred in either greater numbers or greater frequency than ever before.

Canada Goose, Dark-bellied Brent Goose, Teal, Little Egret, Osprey, Ringed Plover, Green Sandpiper, Tree Pipit, Meadow Pipit, Pied Wagtail, Blackcap and Garden Warbler.

No of bird species seen annually at Lytchett Bay 1999 – 2018



Lytchett Bay – people and wildlife

Readers of recent reports and regular visitors will be aware of the progress that has been achieved around the whole of the Lytchett Bay area over recent years. All of the land owners and tenants have made major contributions to these improvements in terms of habitat quality, access and maintenance.

Since 2015 an ambition had existed to form a partnership involving the key owners and tenants to enhance and promote Lytchett Bay nature. At the end of 2018 this ambition became a reality when 6 organisations, who between them either own, lease or manage almost the entire shoreline and immediate hinterland of Lytchett Bay came together to form The Lytchett Bay Nature Partnership.

The core members are the Birds of Poole Harbour, Borough of Poole, Dorset Wildlife Trust, The Lees Family, Lytchett Minster & Upton Town Council and RSPB. Amphibian Reptile Conservation and Livability (Holton Lee) are represented via delegations to core members.

It is hoped that this initiative will become a significant force for good in the years ahead in taking forward a shared vision for the area which will be of benefit to both wildlife, local residents and visitors. We look forward to working with many stakeholders both formal and informal.

4 Volunteer work parties were held during the year and included reed cutting at Turlin Moor (BoP), heathland management at Lytchett Bay Nature Reserve (DWT), gorse removal at Lytchett Fields (RSPB) and shore line litter picking at Turlin shore (Poole Harbour Canoe Club / DWT).



Thanks to help from friends at Collaborate and Borough of Poole Heathland volunteers good progress was made in maintaining areas around the Bay.



Poole Paddlers helped gather a disappointingly large amount of litter during their Nov litter pick. People are always fascinated by seeing birds close up no matter what species. On this occasion a Cetti's Warbler proved rather special. (Photos S.Robson, top two, J.Sharp bottom left and xx bottom right)

Engagement events included 2 bird ringing demonstrations and 3 guided walks. 2 wader identification events were run at RSPB Lytchett Fields.

The Guide to Birding Lytchett Bay was updated and remains the “go to” document for someone wishing to visit the site for the first time.

<https://www.birdsofpooleharbour.co.uk/sites/default/files//011217%20A%20Guide%20to%20Birding%20Lytchett%20Bay-2.pdf>

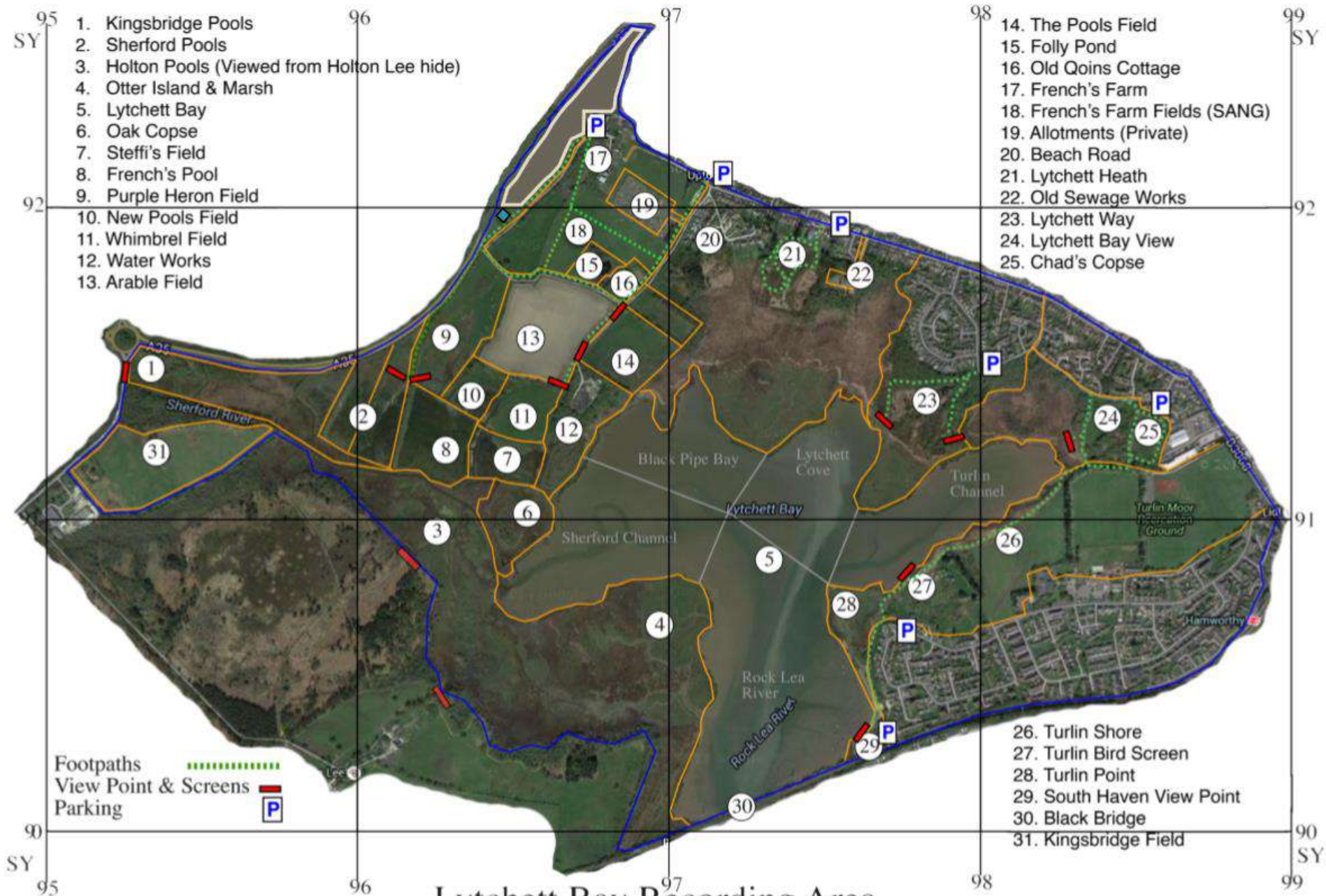


At high tide the Lytchett Bay mud disappears increasing the importance of saltmarsh roosts and the feeding opportunities on RSPB Lytchett Fields (J.Sharp)

Nick Hull’s map gives a complete overview of the recording area. Whilst we have named as many sites as we can, please remember that some areas remain private and we would be grateful if visitors stick to the extensive network of public and permissive pathways that are available. There is a wide selection of viewpoints that provide visibility of the area.



No matter where you are, the sight of flying breeding plumaged Black-tailed Godwits will ensure that it is a good day (I.Ballam)



- 1. Kingsbridge Pools
- 2. Sherford Pools
- 3. Holton Pools (Viewed from Holton Lee hide)
- 4. Otter Island & Marsh
- 5. Lytchett Bay
- 6. Oak Copse
- 7. Steffi's Field
- 8. French's Pool
- 9. Purple Heron Field
- 10. New Pools Field
- 11. Whimbrel Field
- 12. Water Works
- 13. Arable Field

- 14. The Pools Field
- 15. Folly Pond
- 16. Old Quins Cottage
- 17. French's Farm
- 18. French's Farm Fields (SANG)
- 19. Allotments (Private)
- 20. Beach Road
- 21. Lytchett Heath
- 22. Old Sewage Works
- 23. Lytchett Way
- 24. Lytchett Bay View
- 25. Chad's Copse

- 26. Turlin Shore
- 27. Turlin Bird Screen
- 28. Turlin Point
- 29. South Haven View Point
- 30. Black Bridge
- 31. Kingsbridge Field

Lytchett Bay Recording Area

Bird Ringing 2018

1875 birds of 42 species were ringed at Lytchett Bay. Efforts were spread around 3 ringing sites. The banks of the River Sherford at Lytchett Fields (3 dates), Sandy Close Pond (5 dates) and at Lytchett Heath and reed bed (35 dates). More than 100 birds were ringed on 5 dates in August and September.

Our main target remained the “red listed” Aquatic Warbler but once again weather systems in the key period were very unhelpful, consequently there was very limited ringing at the traditional site at Lytchett Fields.

Highlights included our best-ever autumn for Blackcaps, an excellent selection of recoveries of this species and other warblers. It was another good year for Bearded Tits and the associated recoveries and re-trap data. 26,298 birds of 84 species have been ringed since 1983.

Colour ring reading again proved fruitful with interesting returns from an ever-increasing variety of species including our first Curlew and Dunlin.

The full details of controls, recoveries and interesting re-traps are in the systematic list. Appendix 2 details the individual species totals at the end of the systematic list.

Acknowledgements

Stour Ringing Group would like to thank Wessex Water, The RSPB and the landowner, the Lees Estate, for their kind permission to ring at Lytchett Bay.

The Dorset Wildlife Trust and ARC for their permission to ring on land around Lytchett Heath, we are very grateful for this, the site continues to prove its value to migrant and breeding birds.

Thanks are due to the RSPB, DWT, ARC, Lytchett & Upton Town Council, The Birds of Poole Harbour Charity and The Borough of Poole for their support in relation to various matters associated with their sites.

The Birds of Poole Harbour host this and our previous annual reports on their website which is hugely appreciated.

I'd like to add additional thanks to Ian Ballam for his continued commitment to birding and bird recording at Lytchett Bay and for his support with various volunteer activity at Lytchett Fields. To friends at Stour Ringing Group for companionship and hard work. Nick & Jacqui Hull who put considerable effort in to collating a checklist of other wildlife.

To both Birds of Poole Harbour and Nick Hull for operating our “listening stations”.

To all the observers who supplied records and comments via Bird Track, e-Bird, Twitter and other information sources. Finally, to everyone who has allowed us to use their excellent images which brighten and decorate this report. We look forward to seeing you all again in 2019.



The Turlin Moor spit is an important high tide roost and the saltmarsh that lies behind it offers a quiet area for roosting and potentially breeding birds. Sadly sights like this are unusual as birds are often subject to recreational disturbance (S.Robson)

Systematic List 2018

4007 specific records were collated during the year and all of these have been submitted to the **BTO's @BirdTrack database**. These include records from the **@Team_eBird** website. This was checked and interesting records were noted and added to BirdTrack.

BirdTrack functionality has been used to generate graphs showing the weekly maxima throughout the year for some regularly occurring species. The interpretation of these requires some caution as not all "graphed" species are counted every week; this can lead to gaps in the data. Where necessary this is clarified in the text.

All observers are encouraged to use one these two applications to submit their records. Both have advantages and SR is currently exploring these by using a mix of the two! Whilst @Team_eBird no doubt has the edge in terms of look, feel and ease of access to detailed data from a Birders perspective, @BirdTrack still seems to offer better data manipulation from the perspective of a local bird report writer?

Bird records were received from the Bay on all but 12 days as set out below.

JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
31	26	31	28	31	28	30	31	30	31	27	29

Species names are followed by 2 or 3 numbers. The first is the record known count recorded at the Bay. This now includes historical counts by observers going back to 1975. The middle figure is the maximum day count in the period since 1992 (if less than the first). The final figure is the number of years in which the species has been recorded since 1992, 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 – 27) ↔

Uncommon resident. Bred between 2002-2007 and in 2015.

Monthly max:

JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
14	2	n.c.	2	0	0	2	2	4	11	18	25

Whooper Swan:

4th record. 2 adults flew west calling at dusk on 19th Oct (SR).

All 4 records have fallen between 5th Oct and 13th Nov.

Greylag Goose: (32 – 19) ↔

Uncommon feral wanderer. Recorded throughout the year on at least 22 dates. Max 26 on 3rd Dec.

Canada Goose: (602 – 27) ↗

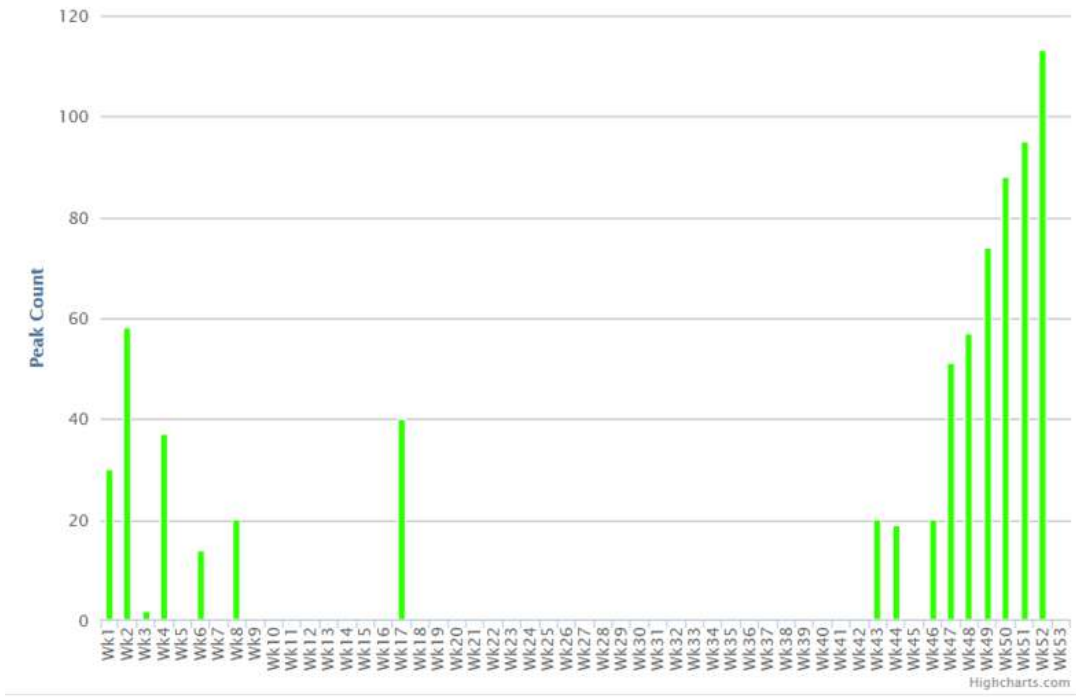
Increasingly frequent visitor. Bred in 2017. In autumn large numbers visited Lytchett Fields and the Bay at either end of the day. The birds seemed to be commuting on a NW-SE axis. 602 on 20th Oct was almost double the previous record count. Previously 258 on 16th Oct 2017. After the end of Oct this pattern ceased, and birds were infrequently seen during the last 2 months.

Monthly max:

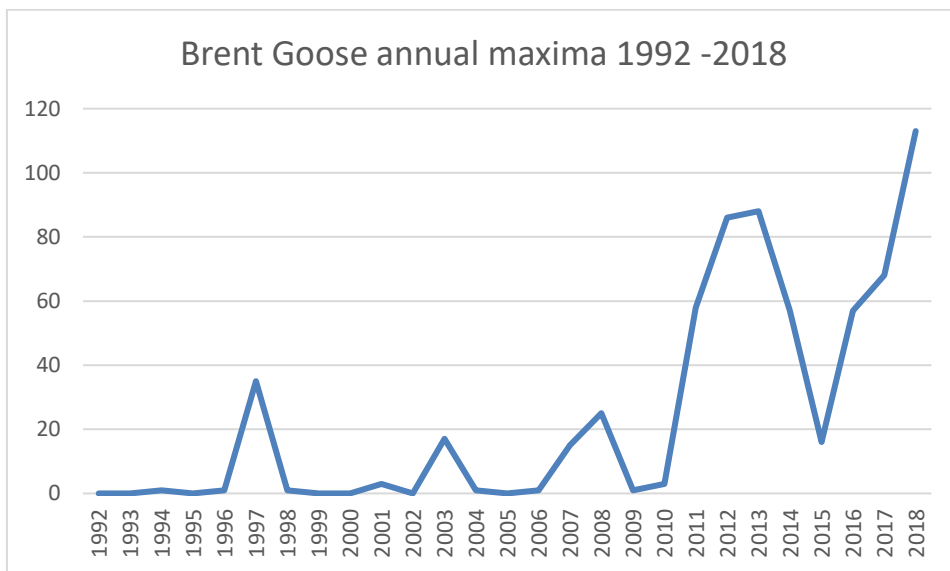
JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
21	5	11	2	5	5	61	n.c.	217	602	20	23

Dark-bellied Brent Goose: (113 – 19) ↗

Uncommon winter visitor. Another excellent year with a flock in both winter periods, no doubt encouraged by the algal mat. Present until 21st Feb and from 20th Oct after which birds were present almost daily until the year end. Max 113 on 30th Dec was a record count. Previously 88 on 23rd Mar 2013. The birds in week 17 were Pale-bellied (see below).



This species was once a rare visitor to the Bay. It was not recorded at all until 1994 and since then has only been recorded in 19 out of 26 years. The graph below illustrates the change in status. Interestingly the 1997 birds spent their entire time on the fields whereas all recent records refer to the bay. Presumably attracted by the algae. The low count in 2015 remains unexplained.



Pale-bellied Brent Goose

First record for the Bay. 40 flew through the Bay on 27th Apr (IB).

Black Brant

First record of this North American race for the Bay. An adult was found with the Dark-bellied birds on 11th Dec and lingered all day (SR et al). (See finders account IN Appendix 1)

Egyptian Goose: (8 – 5)

Scarce visitor, records continue to increase year on year. The first record was in 2011. 1 at Lytchett Fields on 11th Jan. 1 in Bay on 19th Feb. 1 at Lytchett Fields 31st Mar – 3rd Apr. 3 at same site on 6th May.

Shelduck: (645 – 548 – 27) ⇄

Occasional breeder and winter visitor. At least 1 pair bred raising 10 young. The largest congregations of the year again involved presumably non-breeding birds at Lytchett Fields in Apr and May, but maxima were 30% down on 2017. It has been suggested that whilst the algal mat has benefited Mute Swan, Brent Geese and Wigeon it might also be a contributor toward the decline in Shelduck at the Bay?

Monthly max:

JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
57	75	91	90	98	89	12	12	4	15	39	80

Wigeon: (671 – 27) ⇄

Common winter visitor. Absent from 2nd Apr until 2nd Sep. Max 550 on 4th Dec.

Bay monthly max:

JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
541	333	129	1	0	0	0	0	48	222	521	550

Gadwall: (73 – 22) ↗

Increasingly frequent visitor. Bred in 2016. Most birds in late spring and early summer are presumed to be non-breeding individuals.

Monthly max:

JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
11	7	10	7	19	18	5	5	2	0	9	8

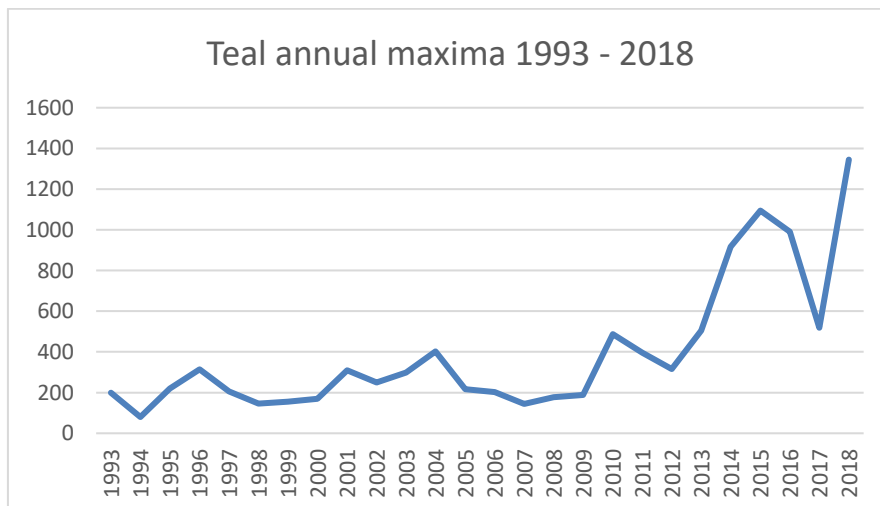
Teal: (1345 – 27) ↗

Winter visitor and passage migrant. 1345 in the Bay on 30th Nov was a new record for the site, comfortably passing the previous best of 1094 on 31st Oct 2015. Until mid-Nov most of the monthly maxima counts came from Lytchett Fields but after this date the numbers of Teal using the fields mysteriously dropped and the huge majority of birds remained in the Bay during the whole tidal cycle. This behavior continued until the end of the year.

Monthly max:

JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
274	387	297	141	5	34	29	438	540	733	1345	750

The numbers of Teal at Lytchett Bay grew very slowly for the first 20 years of the current study period. After 2012, coinciding with the creation of Lytchett Fields the species has increased significantly.



Mallard: (123 – 27) ⇔

Breeds at several sites around the recording area. Very regular on Sandy Close Pond.

Monthly max:

JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
9	2	Br	Br	45	33	44	n.c.	44	31	25	17

Northern Pintail: (21 - 19) ⇔

Scarce visitor. Seen on 17 dates, typical of recent years. Seen on 3 dates in Jan, max 3 on 14th. Then on 14 dates between 27th Aug and year end, max 6 on 21st Dec.

Garganey: (3 – 7)

Rare Visitor. 3, 2 drakes and duck, were found on Lytchett Fields 31st May (IB et al) equaling the previous best count of 3 on 22nd Jun 1993. 2 were still present the following day and remained until 5th Jun.

Shoveler: (28 – 26) ⇔

Scarce visitor, which can occur at any time. 45 bird days on 14 dates. Records spread throughout the year. Max 8 on 4th Mar, mainly from Lytchett Fields.

Tufted Duck: (20 – 17 – 15) ⇔

Scarce visitor. 4 records. 4 on 15th Mar, 1 on 14th Apr, 3 on 19th Nov and then 17 on 20th Nov.



Most of the largest flock seen at Lytchett Bay since 20 on 17th Jan 1987. (I.Ballam)

Goldeneye: (12 – 25) ↘

Declining winter visitor. 5 on 8th Jan (GO) was the first record since 1 on 24th Nov 2016.

Red-breasted Merganser: (73 – 27) ⇔

Winter visitor. Recorded on at least 71 dates. Present until 13th Apr and from 10th Nov.

Monthly max:

JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
12	14	8	8	0	0	0	0	0	0	5	19

Goosander: (3 – 8)

Rare visitor. 2 redheads on 2nd Nov (IB).

Pheasant: ↘

Common resident. Seen more frequently and more widely this year than of late.

Little Grebe: (12 - 27) ↔

Winter visitor. Recorded until 28th Feb and from 17th Sep. Max 7 on 15th Feb. One unseasonal record of a night migrant recorded at the Lytchett Way listening station on 19th Apr.

Great Crested Grebe: (4 - 24) ↗

Increasingly frequent visitor. Recorded on at least 43 dates. No records between 14th Apr and 28th Nov. Max 3 on two dates in Apr.

Cormorant: (370 – 27) ↗

Daily visitor. 300 on 28th Oct continued the pattern of large feeding flocks in autumn.

Cattle Egret: (4 – 5)

Rare visitor. The arrival of birds in UK reached even greater levels this year with hundreds recorded. We had our own small share. 1 on 6th Sep (IB) and 2 on 8th (IB). Presumably a different bird on 19th (IB, SR) and another on 20th (SR). The first 3 at Lytchett Fields and the last in the Bay.

Little Egret: (67 – 27) ↔

Common visitor, seen every day. The evening roost was utilised early in the year with 25 counted into roost on 11th Jan, and 40 leaving on 18th Jan. In the autumn birds were counted flying to roost in the direction of Holes Bay over Lytchett Bay View on several dates. Max 59 on 24th Sep.

However even this was not enough to establish the new record for the Bay. 67 were present around Lytchett Fields on 30th Aug (IB). The previous best being 43 seen in 2017.

Bay monthly max:

JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
40	18	n.c.	10	n.c.	9	39	67	59	20	11	9

Great White Egret: (7 – 6) ↗

Scarce visitor. 7 records, continuing the rapid recent increase. Seven (!) dropped in to Lytchett Fields on 14th Jul, this is the biggest single flock recorded to date in Dorset (IB). 6 on 20th Jul may have been different birds given the scale of the current influx into the UK (RS). The remaining 5 records were all singles; 16th Mar Lytchett Bay; 27th Mar Lytchett Fields; 8th Sep Lytchett Bay; 28th Sep Lytchett Bay View; 21st Oct Lytchett Fields.



I.Ballam

Grey Heron: (10 – 27) ↔

Daily visitor in small numbers. Max 5 on several dates.

Glossy Ibis:

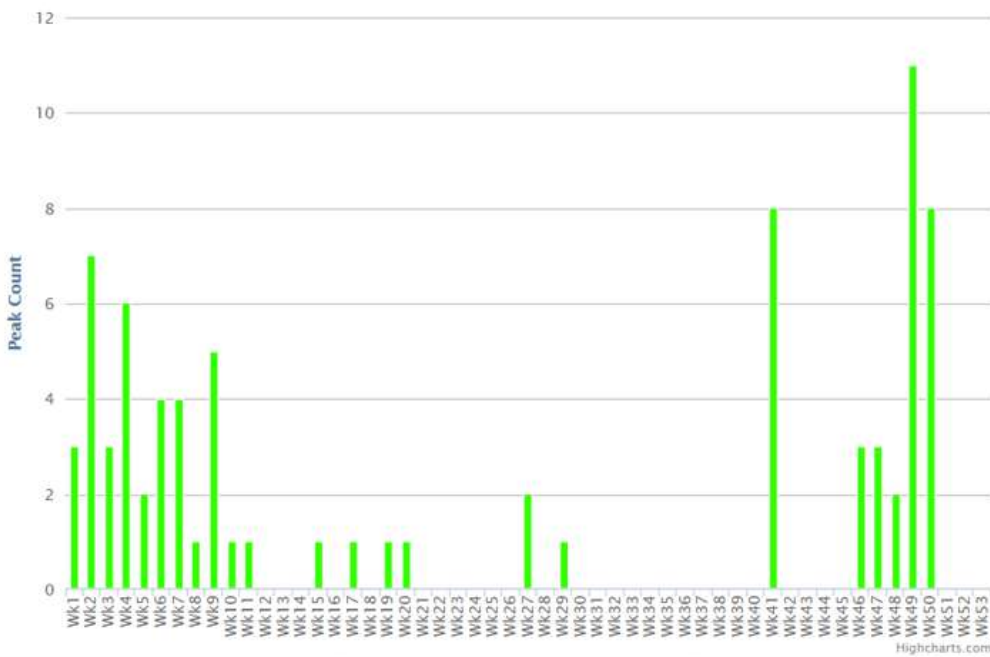


R.Howes

3rd record. 1 at Lytchett Fields on 1st May (RH). The changed status of this species in the UK in recent years means that sadly it does not get the pulse racing like it once did. Nonetheless only the second record at the Bay in living memory.

Spoonbill: (25 – 9) ↗

Increasingly frequent visitor. Seen on 74 dates, mainly in the early part of the year and often on Lytchett Fields. Sadly, the severe weather led to the demise of 1 bird which was found dead with broken legs, presumably having gotten trapped in ice (?). Birds visiting in the second part of the year were all in the Bay. Max 11 on 7th Dec.



B(AE) + W(AE) – was present on 8th Oct 2018



I.Ballam

It was ringed as a pullus at Schiermonnikoog, THE NETHERLANDS on 19th Jul 2006. It had previously been seen at Lytchett Bay in 2013, 2015 and 2017. Other than being seen in France once, the bird commutes back and forth between SW England and The Netherlands.

Many thanks to Bob Loos for this information.

Red Kite: (3 – 13) ↗

Scarce migrant, increasingly expected on spring migration. Recorded on 10 dates. 1 on 20th Feb, 1 on 18th Apr, 2 on 21st Apr, 1 on 30th Apr, 2 on 14th May, 1 on 15th May, 1 on 28th Jun, 1 on 17th Jul, 1 on 3rd Sep and 1 on 27th Oct.

Marsh Harrier: (6 – 26) ↗

Increasingly regular visitor. Noted on at least 99 dates, sustaining the dramatic increase first witnessed in 2015. The species did not breed in Poole Harbour and this was again reflected with most sightings being after 23rd Jul. None were seen between 2nd May and this date. Max 3 on 30th Oct.



These two individuals were regular visitors in the second half of the year. A juvenile (top left) and imm Male (both others). The Holton Lee scrape hide is a great location from which to watch the Bay's raptors and in Mark Wright's (left 2) and Richard Stephenson's (right) case, capture superb images.

Hen Harrier: (2 – 26) ↔

Irregular Visitor. Recorded on 17 dates. It is likely that only two birds were involved. An Ad female may have accounted for all the sighting bar one, on the assumption that the bird present in the first part of the year returned following the summer. A juv Male was seen on 18th Feb when the Ad female was also present. No records between 18th Mar and 13th Nov.

Sparrowhawk: (4 – 27) ↔

Uncommon visitor. Recorded on at least 72 dates throughout the year. Max 2 on several dates.



Patient observation often reveals a surprise. This Sparrowhawk had just caught a Noctule Bat (Nyctalus lasiopterus) upon which it is now sitting. (R.Stephenson)

EL78288 – A 1st W F was ringed on 10th Jan 2016 at Lytchett Bay and was found freshly dead nearby in Upton on 1st Apr 2018.

Osprey: (4 – 26) ↔

Annual passage migrant. An excellent year, the best-ever, surpassing 2004's 29 bird-days.

The first was the second earliest ever – 1 on 25th Mar. There was only 1 other spring record – on 27th May.

Autumn involved at least 42 bird-days between 15th Jul & 29th Sep. Max 4 on 30th Aug, equaling the record day on 7th Aug 2010.

To the best of our knowledge none of the released birds, which are part of the Poole Harbour reintroduction program, visited the Bay.

Common Buzzard: (15 – 27) ↔

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

Kestrel: (3 – 27) ↔

Resident. Under recorded but seen frequently and in every month around Lytchett Fields and the Arable Field. Breeding not confirmed.



Lytchett Bay provides good fishing and in 2018 birds did not fly far before perching to enjoy their meal (M.Wright).

Merlin: (2 – 23) ⇌

Scarce winter visitor. A better than average year with sightings on 10 dates (typically 3 – 8 dates). Seen on 7 dates up to 22nd Apr (our latest spring record, previously 6th Apr 2011). Then on 3 dates from 8th Oct.

Hobby: (3 – 25) ⇌

Irregular summer visitor. A reasonable year with records on 13 dates between 1st May and 21st Oct (IB), the latest date by 10 days. Previously 11th Oct 2013. Max 2 on 2 dates.

Peregrine: (3 – 26) ⇌

Uncommon visitor, rare in early summer. Recorded on record 38 dates (65% cp 2017 & 2016). No records between 11th May and 30th Jul. 3 on 26th Dec equaled the record day count for the Bay.

Water Rail: (67 pairs – 27) ⇌

Common resident and winter visitor. No change in status after 2013's complete breeding survey.

Moorhen: (18 – 27) ↗

Common resident. Breeds widely across the area, much more so than in the past. Many around Lytchett Fields in Aug, inc 16 in one area on 6th. A juv arrived at Sandy Close Pond on 24th Jun and stayed until the year end.

Coot: (62 – 16) ↗

Very scarce visitor, though night recording is proving that they are frequent overhead nocturnal migrants! All records refer to unseen nocturnal migrant's sound recorded flying over Nick Hull's listening station at Lytchett Way or The Birds of Poole Harbour station at Lytchett Heath. Recorded on 11 dates in spring and autumn. Max 5 on 5th May.

Oystercatcher: (400 – 27) ⇌

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. Increasingly birds are seen on Lytchett Fields, particularly in late spring, max 8 on 21st May. The maximum count was on 20th Jan.

Monthly max:

JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
225	100	70	2	8	6	12	n.c.	19	35	135	221

Pied Avocet: (327 – 26) ↗

Increasingly regular winter visitor and passage migrant. Year on year occurrence seems less reliant on cold weather. Present daily until 23rd Mar and from 6th Oct. There were no records between 11th Apr and 31st Aug. The max count was on 19th Dec.

Monthly max:

JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
156	123	174	4	0	0	0	4	2	34	165	277

RB+LL (EW28644) was present on 11th Jan, 5th Dec, 14th Dec 2018.

It had been ringed 2370 days earlier on 17th Jul 2011 as a pullus at Nosterfield NR, N. Yorkshire. A south movement of 389km.

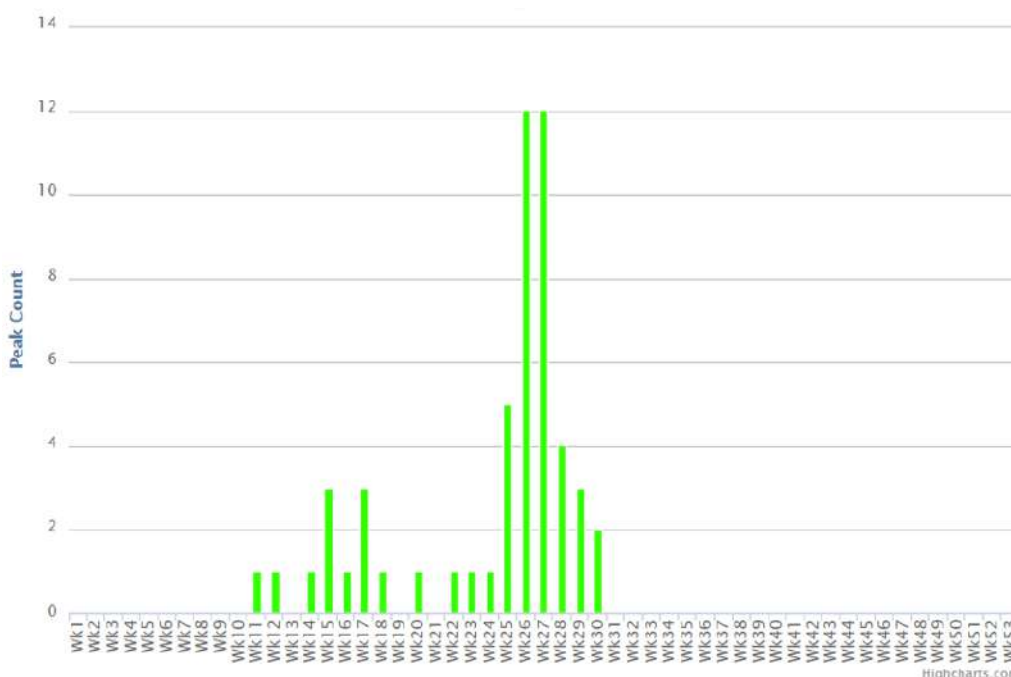


The use of RSPB Lytchett Fields at high tide has only just started to occur in the last 2 years. This year they visited on 38 dates, with a maximum of 112 on 12th Nov. (I.Ballam)

Little Ringed Plover: (12 – 16)

Increasingly frequent summer visitor. Birds were recorded on 48 dates (55 in 2017, 43 in 2016, 67 in 2015, 40 in 2014). The number of bird-days was good – 155. Peak passage was again concentrated in the first week of July, max 12 on 1st – 3rd. Mostly recorded at Lytchett Fields but also on occasions from Holton Pools. There were 4 nocturnal records from the Listening Station at Lytchett Heath.

The first record was on 14th Mar and the last was on the very early date of 26th Jul.

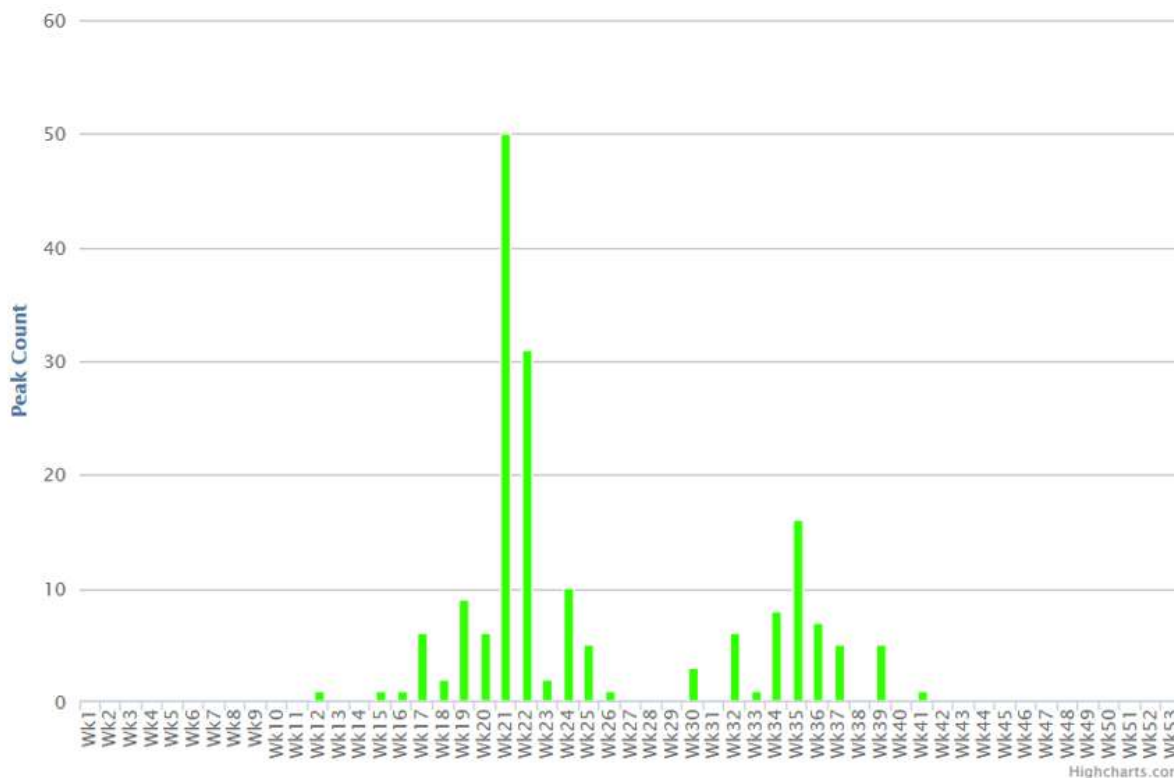


Ringed Plover: (50 – 23) ↑

Passage migrant, previously scarce. Did not quite match 2017 this year but not far behind. 495 bird-days over 62 dates. 50 on 27th May was a record (previously 49 on 8th Sep 2017).

An unusually early record on 19th Mar. Spring migration was exceptionally prolonged with many birds held up by the poor and enduring spring weather, 15th Apr to 25th Jun. Autumn migration started early with presumed failed breeders giving up and returning from 26th Jul. The last record was on 12th Oct.

The huge majority of records came from Lytchett Fields, but nocturnal migrants were recorded at the Lytchett Heath Listening Station on 3 dates.



Golden Plover: (160 – 16)

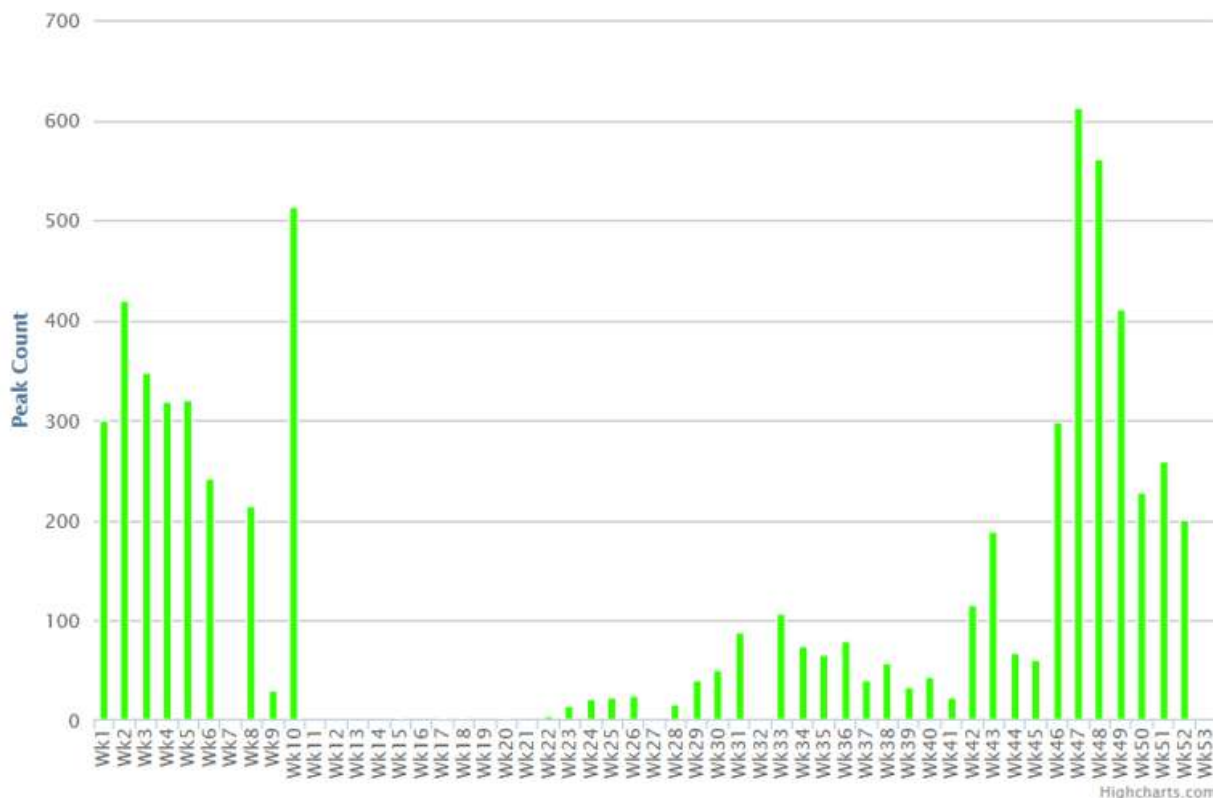
Scarce visitor, surprisingly so given that more than 1000 winter a little over 20 miles away! Recorded on 6 dates which is good by recent standards. 3 during very cold weather in Mar – 1 on 3rd, 3 on 5th and 4 on 19th. 3 Sound recorded nocturnal migrants 1 on 27th Sep & 1st Oct at Lytchett Way and 1 on 16th Nov at Lytchett Heath.

Grey Plover: (18 – 21)

Scarce visitor. A good year with 48 bird days on 36 dates, largely helped by some long staying individuals! Recorded Mar to Jul and in Nov. Max 8 on 26th May at Lytchett Fields. 2 nocturnal migrants 18th Apr and 16th Nov.

Lapwing: (3000 – 27) ↔

Formerly bred, now a non-breeding visitor in smaller numbers. Bred regularly during early 1990's. Last confirmed breeding 1999. 2 birds were present at Lytchett Fields in Apr and May but there was no evidence of a breeding attempt. Birds were recorded in every month of the year and on most visits. The max count of 612 was on 23rd Nov and was the biggest since 2015.



Red Knot: (34 – 18)

Scarce visitor. In spring, 1 on 26th May and 5 late migrants on 4th June. 23 bird-days in autumn between 5th Sep – 18th Oct. Max 8 on 9th Sep. Mostly at Lytchett Fields.

Sanderling:

6th – 8th records. Having waited 23 years for its debut this species has now appeared in the last 4 annual reports! Singles on Lytchett Fields on 24th and 27th May (IB). 1 in the Bay with Dunlin on 13th Sep (SR).

Little Stint: (7 – 12) ↗

Scarce autumn migrant. Like Curlew Sandpiper (see below) this species occurrence is weather related. It was not a surprise that we only had 2 records. Both early returning adults on Lytchett Fields, 23rd and 29th Jul.

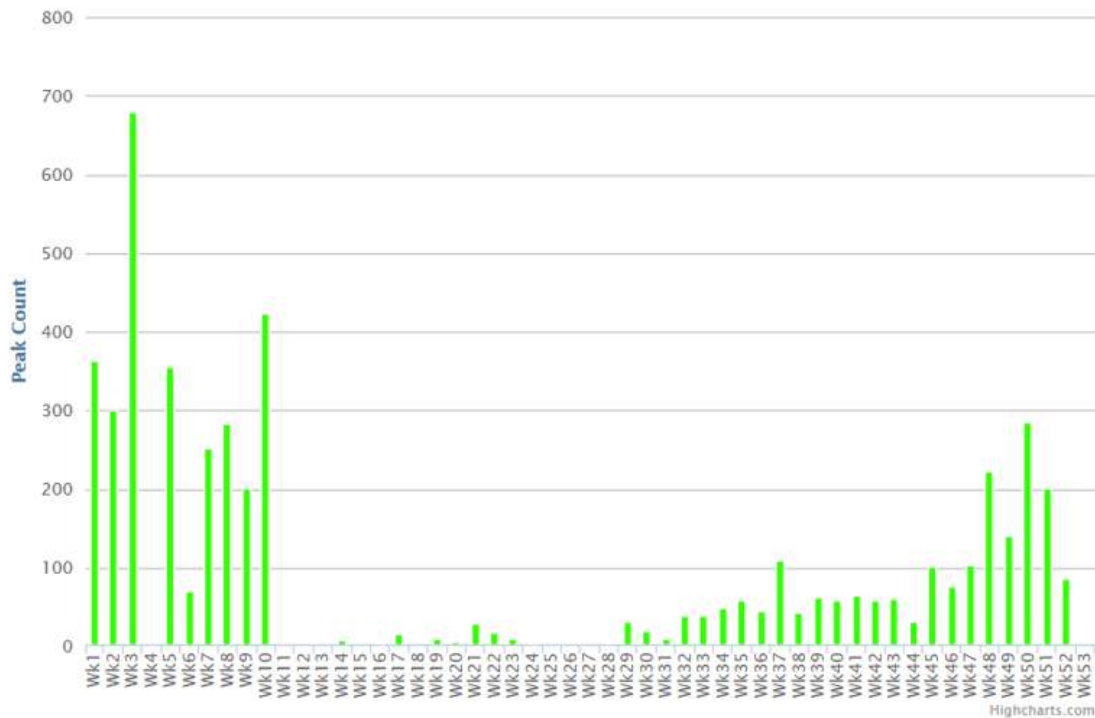
Curlew Sandpiper: (9 – 12) ↗

Scarce autumn migrant. Since the creation of Lytchett Fields we had become accustomed to a good showing by this charismatic very long-distance migrant. However, their occurrence is not just governed by habitat availability, weather plays a more fundamental role. After 100 bird-days in 2017 & 158 in 2016, this year, thanks to a westerly dominated autumn, we returned to a far more typical set of records. Yet, in most of the last 27 years we would still have considered 2018 remarkable, in a positive way.

There were 11 bird-days between 17th Jul & 27th Aug involving probably 6 individuals. All adults except a single juv on the last date.

Dunlin: (1800 – 1200 – 27) ↔

Regular winter visitor and passage migrant. Numbers wintering in Poole Harbour, and Britain as a whole, have been declining since the mid 90's. Large numbers of birds used Lytchett Fields in the first two months, max 677 on 20th Feb. Spring passage was poor, max 15 on 24th Apr, but protracted lasting well into Jun. Autumn was unremarkable, max 108 on 12th Sep. The year ended with a reasonable flock feeding on Lytchett Fields. The only gaps in occurrence was between early Mar - early Apr & 22nd Jun - 9th Jul.



YN(044) – was present on 31st May 2018.



I. Ballam

It was ringed on 1st Oct 2016 at Ynyslas, Borth, Ceredigion, Wales as a 1st W. We are unaware of whether the bird has been seen at any other locations.

This our first colour ringed sighting of this species.

Ruff: (11 – 23)

Scarce visitor. After last year’s bonanza this year was the poorest for some years. Weather conditions in both spring and autumn were unhelpful. All records listed. 1 on 7th May and 2 on 23rd of the same month. One, presumably the same bird was present from 9th – 23rd Aug. 1 on 7th - 8th Sep. 1 on 24th Oct.

Jack Snipe: (5 - 19) ↔

Scarce but under recorded winter visitor. Despite considerable efforts to find this skulker this year it was only recorded on 2 dates! 1 on 22nd Jan and another on 2nd Feb. Both at Lytchett Fields. This is first time since the turn of the century that no birds have been recorded in the second winter period.

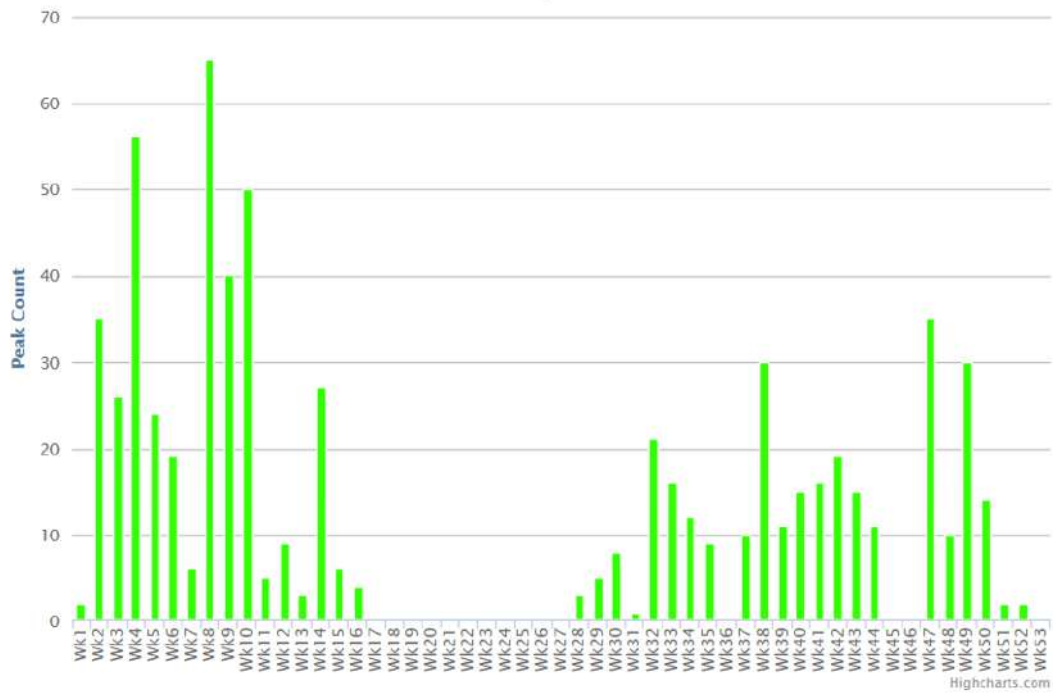
Snipe: (160 – 132 – 27) ↔

Winter visitor and passage migrant. Recorded until 19th Apr, returning on the 11th Jul. Numbers of birds’ present are likely to be significantly under recorded due to the inaccessibility of the site. Numbers in graph below are based on scans of the site with a telescope and are therefore only an indication of actual presence. Max 65 on 19th Feb.



Much of our time at Lytchett Bay is enjoyably consumed watching waders. Thankfully we have plenty of them and a several gifted photographers to capture images that linger with us after the individual birds have migrated. Redshanks visited Lytchett Fields in greater numbers than ever before (M.Wright). Greenshanks are always a favourite especially when they show as well as this (I.Ballam). Green Sandpipers reached an all-time high and were present for 11 months of the year (M.Wright). Little Ringed Plovers are early migrants in both seasons and now an "expect to see" bird during July (I.Ballam)





Woodcock: (5 – 17) ↔

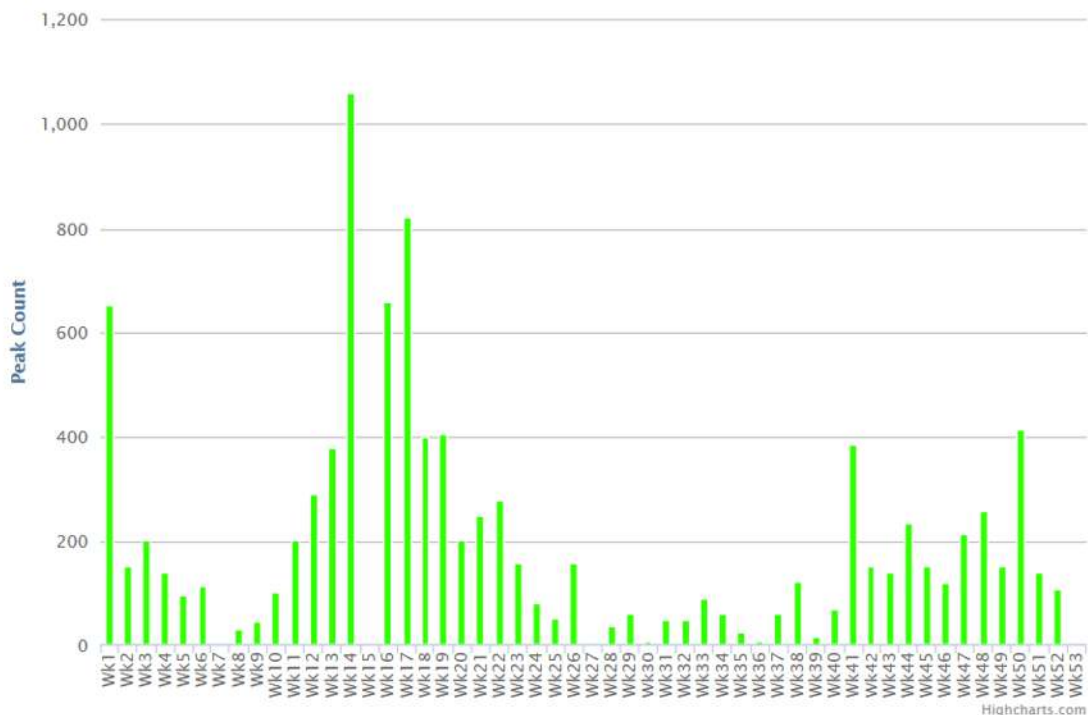
Scarce but under recorded winter visitor. The number of records of this species is largely a reflection of the effort made to see them. Nick Hopper studied Woodcock during early 2014 on behalf of The Birds of Poole Harbour. Following transects at Lytchett Bay the estimated winter population was predicted to be 8 birds (No more than 5 have ever been seen on one visit).

3 were seen after dark on 23rd Jan. 3 were present during exceptionally cold weather on 3rd Mar. 1 was seen in daytime on 20th Nov. All records from Lytchett Fields. 2 ringed.

Black-tailed Godwit: (1240 – 27) ↔

Common passage migrant and winter visitor. The species was present throughout the year.

Birds began to gather and feed at high tide on Lytchett Fields from Apr onwards, peaking at 1057 on 3rd, the biggest count of the year. Numbers remained strong throughout the summer, peaking again in the autumn.



Over the last 20 years colour ringed birds have proved that birds visiting Lytchett Bay breed in Iceland (*L.l.islandica*). Birds seen at Lytchett Bay also visit western France, Portugal, Ireland, Scotland, The Netherlands, Belgium, Germany, E England as well as many locations along the south coast.

Colour ringed birds were recorded as follows.

NW+OfL was present on 9th-10th Apr, 13th Oct and 12th Dec 2018.



I.Ballam

It had been ringed on 29th Jul 2014 at Moeze, Charente Maritime, FRANCE as an Ad male. In Jul – Aug 2018 it was seen in Falkirk, Scotland, presumably on its return from ICELAND. It had previously been seen at the Bay in Feb, Mar, Aug and Dec 2015, Jul & Aug 2016, 10th Jan, 26th Aug, 18th Sep & 26th Sep 2017.

RNW+YRY was present in 12th Oct 2018.



S.Robson

It had been ringed on 18th Jan 2015 as a 1stW female at Axe Estuary, Devon. It was also seen at La Manche, Normandy, FRANCE on 29th Apr 2015. It had previously visited the Bay in Nov - Dec 2015, frequently in 2016 and Feb, Mar, Aug, Sep, Oct and Nov 2017.

YG+OR(Z) was present on 18th Apr 2018.



S.Robson

It had been ringed on 8th May 2016 at Gunnersholt, S. Iceland. It had previously been seen at the Bay between 17th – 26th Aug 2016 and 20th Mar, 25th Mar and 12th Nov 2017.

LNL+YRY was present on 8th and 12th Oct 2018.



I.Ballam

It had been ringed on 10th Nov 2013 at Axe Estuary, Seaton, Devon. It had previously been seen at the Bay on 28th May, 9th Jun and 22nd Jun 2014, 3rd Mar 2015, 19th and 26th Oct 2017. All recent records are from Poole Harbour.

GO+RO(Z) was present on 10th Apr and 12th Oct 2018.



S.Robson

It had been ringed as an Ad F on 20th Jun 2013 at Flói, Árnessýsla, S ICELAND and was back there in May 2016 and Jun 2018. It had previously been seen at the Bay on 30th Jul 2014, between 22nd Dec 2014 and the 3rd Mar 2015, 10th Jan and 15th Dec 2017. It has spent a winter in the Avon Valley on the Hants/Dorset border. In Mar 2016 and Mar 2017 it was at Landje van Geijssel in THE NETHERLANDS suggesting that this is a regular migratory stop. In Aug 2018 it was at Seaforth, Lancs.

WNY+YRY was present on 13th Apr 2018.



It had been ringed as an Ad male on 18th Jan 2015 at Axe Estuary, Devon. It has also been at Titchfield Haven, Hants. It had previously been seen at the Bay on 5 dates between 14th May and 29th Aug 2015 and presumably spent the summer here. And again on 23rd Mar 2017.

RGW+RNR was present on 30th Dec 2018.



I.Ballam

It was ringed on 13th Sep 2013 at Harty, The Swale, Kent, SE England. It has also been seen in Essex and Suffolk. It had previously been seen at the Bay on 10th Jan and 5th Feb 2017.

YON+YRY was present on 10th – 11th Apr 2018.



I.Ballam

It was ringed on 10th Nov 2013 at Axe Estuary, Seaton, Devon as an Ad M. It has been seen in Lincolnshire in Aug 2014 and back in Devon since. In spring 2016 it was seen at Middlebere in Poole Harbour.

RNL+YRY was present on 3rd Apr 2018.



I.Ballam

It was ringed at Axe Estuary, Seaton, Devon on 18th Jan 2015. It was seen in Anglesey, Wales in spring 2016.

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 | G = Green |
| W = White | B = Blue |
| Y = Yellow | N = Niger |

Many thanks to Pete Potts and the Farlington Ringing Group, Böðvar and the Iceland Wader Group and Vincent Lelong for supplying this information.

Bar-tailed Godwit: (110 – 23) ↔

Scarce visitor. A very average year with 15 bird-days on 11 dates. 1 on 28th Jan was an unusual winter record. The last was on 6th Oct. Max 2 on 2 dates.

Whimbrel: (157 – 27) ↔

Passage migrant, most numerous in Spring, when passage was long lasting, from 31st Mar until 11th Jun. 143 bird-days was up on 2017 (91 bird-days). Max 28 on 26th Apr. Autumn passage occurred between 3rd Jul and 1st Sep but involved only 25 bird-days.

Curlew: (116 – 27) ↔

Common winter visitor and passage migrant. Present throughout the year, most common in early autumn and winter. Max 55 on 30th Nov. Frequently seen on The Pool and in the stubble field during high tide in winter.

Monthly max:

JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
38	26	22	7	2	4	39	22	40	37	55	54

M//R+R//WR was present from 16th Sep 2018 into 2019.

It was ringed at Strodgemoor, Burley Street, New Forest, Hampshire on 25th May 2018 as an Ad F. The bird was fitted with a GPS tag, unfortunately this fell off 1 month after fitting.

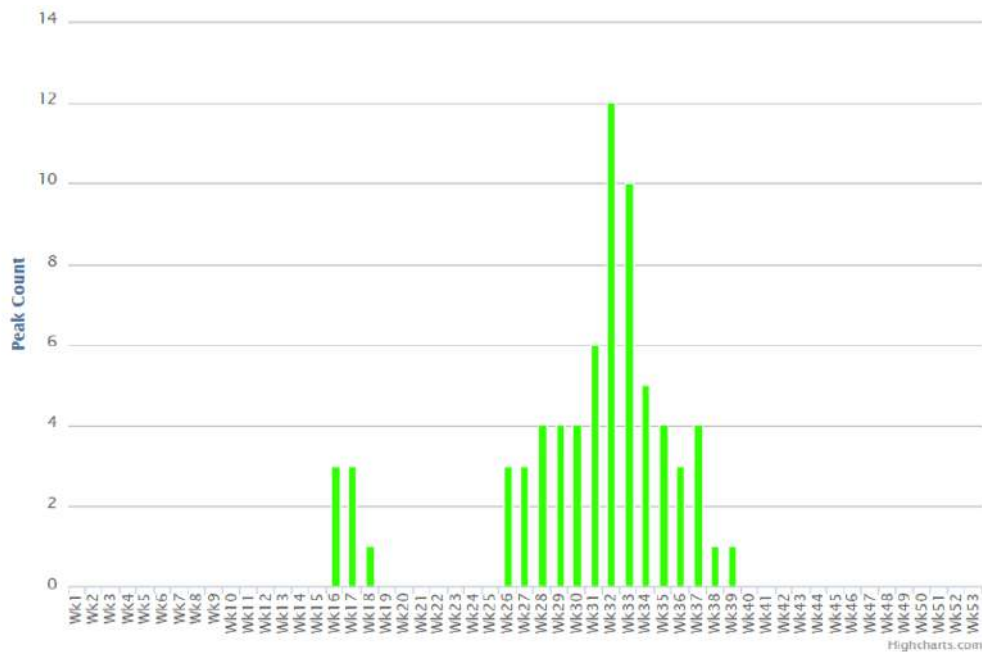
Thanks to Pete Potts for this information.

Common Sandpiper: (14 – 27) ↔

Uncommon passage migrant. 12 bird days in spring between 16th Apr and 2nd May. Max 3 on 2 dates. Autumn passage was between on 28th Jun to 29th Sep. Max 12 on 6th Aug.



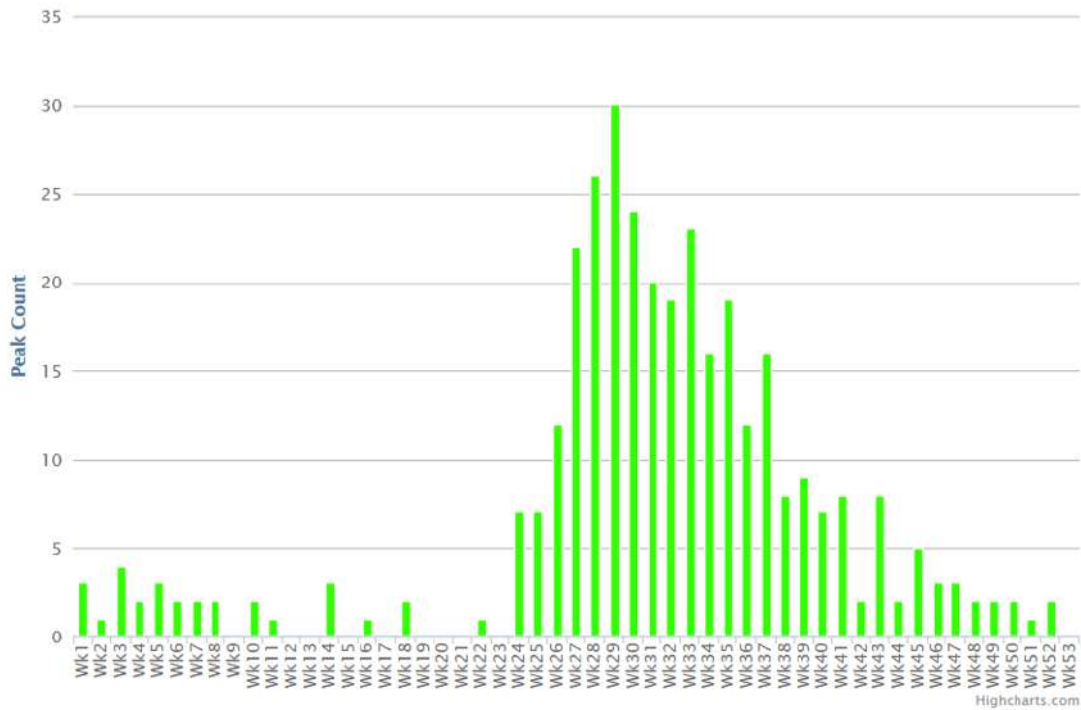
M. Wright



In total there were 205 bird days in autumn identical to 2017.

Green Sandpiper: (30 – 27) ↗

Common non-breeding visitor. Lytchett Fields and western most part of the Bay is the favoured area. Present until 1st May and from 1st Jun (earliest return date, previously 13th Jun 2011). After which birds were seen on most visits until the year end. A record 30 birds were present on 18th Jul (previous best 24 in Jul-Aug 2017). Numbers remained high until mid-Sep.



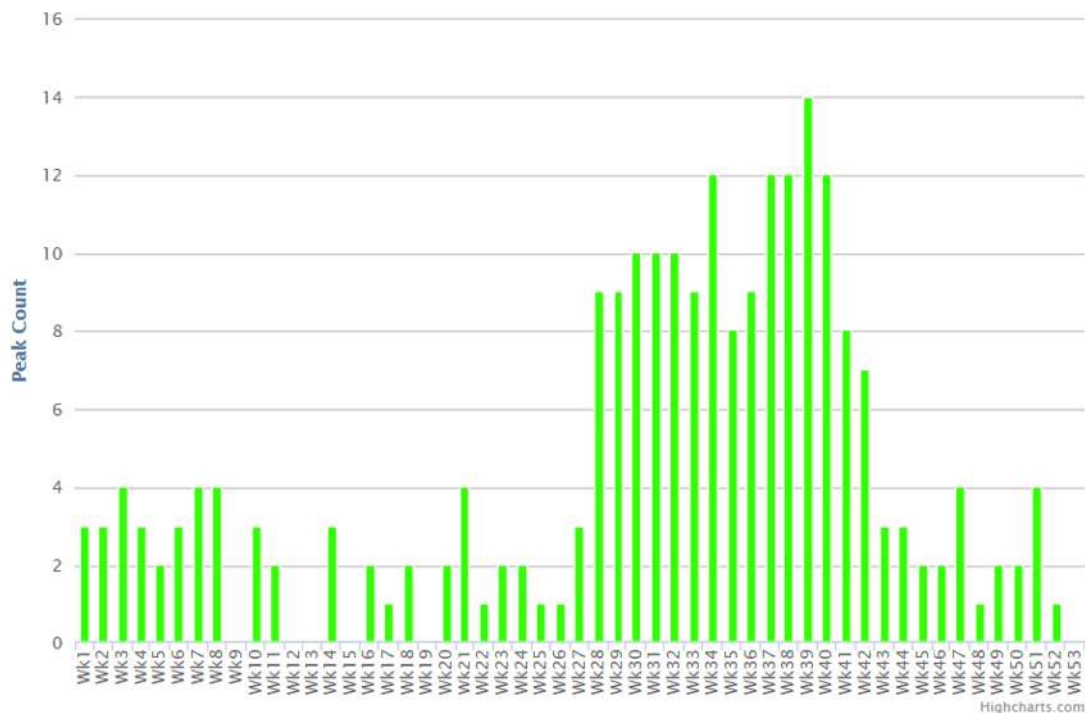
Graham Appleton has written a splendid blog which reveals the private lives of Green Sandpipers in the UK and no doubt applies to the birds visiting the Bay. <https://wadertales.wordpress.com/2019/01/18/winter-territories-of-green-sandpipers/>

Spotted Redshank: (68 – 42 – 27) ⇄

Rare passage migrant and scarce winter visitor. Recorded on 67 dates, much more than recent years. However, like 2017 & 2016, had it not been for long staying single birds the totals would have been very poor. All records, singles unless otherwise stated. 11th Jan to 9th Feb, 4th - 5th Mar (2 on 2nd date), 18th – 19th Mar, 27th Jun, 10th Jul (2), 17th Jul, 26th Jul (2), 16th Aug – 21st Oct, 27th Oct, 6th Nov.

Greenshank: (49 – 27 – 27) ⇄

Common non-breeding visitor. This species is almost a daily ever present. There was no discernable boundary between birds leaving to breed and arriving from the breeding grounds. Numbers were on the low side. Max 14 on 27th Sep. Lytchett Fields was far and away the most used habitat.



GB+RN - was present from the beginning of the year until 5th Apr. It returned for its 4th season on 22nd Jun and was still present into 2019, though it was seen infrequently in the closing months of the year



I. Ballam

It had been ringed on 29th Sep 2015 as a juv at Seabrook, Montrose Basin, Scotland. It was seen at Steart, Somerset in Dec 2015. It had previously visited the Bay on at least 4th – 12th Apr 2016. Returning for the non-breeding seasons of 2016-17 and 2017-18.

Thanks to Raymond Duncan for this information.

Wood Sandpiper: (5 – 15)

Scarce migrant. Perhaps our expectations have become unrealistic with regard to this species following a series of good years. We don't have to go back too far to a time when 10 bird-days would have been celebrated. Nonetheless with none in spring and a limited showing in autumn we felt short changed. The first was found at Holton Pools on 30th Jul. A bird then lingered from 6th - 14th Aug at Lytchett Fields whilst another occurred at Holton Pools on 8th.

Redshank: (608 – 436 – 26) ↔

Common winter visitor with small breeding population on salt marsh. A pair were present occasionally during the breeding season on the saltmarsh adjacent to Lytchett Fields and 1 fledged young was seen in early Jun.

Lytchett Fields was used extensively at high tide particularly between Jun and Dec. 309 on 28th Sep is a record for the fields and the best count at the Bay since Jan 1998.

Monthly max:

JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
241	116	92	10	4	57	150	180	229	309	216	120

Turnstone: (9 – 8)

9th & 10th records, all of which have occurred since 1995, 9 since 2011.

2 on 29th May, with 1 lingering until 31st. 1 on 29th Jul. All at Lytchett Fields.

Black-headed Gull: (12000 – 7000 – 27) ↔

A very common visitor. The first juvenile was noted on 6th Jun.

There were 2 ringing recoveries this year.

T58 (White ring) was present on 25th Dec. It had previously been seen at the Bay 30th Sep 2017.

It had been ringed on 19th Mar 2011 at Svanemøllebugten, København, DENMARK. A movement of 1120km.

EL53141 was found freshly dead on 4th Jul 2018.

It had been ringed 13 years earlier on 7th May 2005 at Wareham Channel, Poole Harbour, Dorset.

Mediterranean Gull: (139 – 26) ↔

Spring and early summer visitor, occasional at other times. The recent rapid increase has stabilised and sightings were few after the end of March. Juveniles were seen on 4 dates in July.

Monthly max:

JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
7	12	15	7	1	5	3	0	2	1	0	1

E927187 was found sick on 18th Oct 2017 and sadly it was dead the following day.

It had been ringed at Antwerp, BELGIUM on 15th May 2011.

Common Gull: (3000 – 27) ↔

A common winter visitor and passage migrant, especially in spring. 1200 on 1st Dec was the biggest count of the year.

Lesser Black backed Gull: (2128 – 27) ↔

Abundant autumn and common spring passage migrant and uncommon winter visitor. Rarely counted.

Herring Gull: (2500 – 27) ↗

Common winter visitor and passage migrant. Rarely counted.

Yellow legged Gull: (65 – 26) ↘

Increasingly uncommon visitor. Peaking in summer. Most sightings probably refer to a long staying adult. The hay-days of the late 90's is a fading memory.

Monthly max:

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

Great Black backed Gull: (151 – 27) ↔

Daily visitor throughout the year in small numbers. The max count for the site of 151 was way back in 2003. With closure of the local landfill this species occurs daily but only in single figures.

Sandwich Tern: (6 – 27) ↔

Uncommon summer visitor. Recorded on 14 dates. A rare winter record, the 5th, with 1 on 2nd Jan. The next more typically was on 10th Apr. The last was on 23rd Sep. Max 5 on last date. All records came from the Bay.

Common Tern: (25 – 27) ↔

Uncommon summer visitor. After last year's surge, we experienced a deep lull this year, perhaps partially explained by the reduced coverage of the Bay during the mid-summer? Only recorded on 11 dates between 23rd May and 23rd Jul. All singles, with 5 records involving birds over Lytchett Fields.

Arctic Tern: (1 – 3)

Rare visitor. 3rd - 5th records since 1992. Almost the highlight of what was overall a quiet year. 1 was in the Bay on 26th May (IB) and another was over Lytchett Fields on 29th (PM). A juv was over Lytchett Fields on 20th Sep (SR).

Auk Sp:

A dead bird was seen floating in the Rock Lea Channel on 24th Jan. It could not be identified to species and it is unknown if it was dead when it drifted in on the tide. Our only other alcid was also severely limited in its ability to fly, a dead shoreline corpse of a Guillemot was found in 1979.

Stock Dove: (72 – 27) ↔

Uncommon Resident. Frequently seen and widely scattered records. Max 6 on 12th Sep.

Woodpigeon: (17,785 – 27) ↑

Common resident and autumn migrant. No flights witnessed this year and no large autumn flocks around the fields.

Collared Dove: (15 – 27) ↔

Uncommon resident. Recorded across the site. Max 13 at Lytchett Bay View on 4th Oct.

Cuckoo: (2 – 26) ↘

Scarce visitor in spring. Recorded on 7 dates between 18th and 29th May, a slight improvement on recent years. Most records came from Lytchett Fields but also at Lytchett Way / Turlin Moor 27th – 29th May.

Barn Owl: (2 – 18)

Bred at French's Farm until 2009. Shortly after this the nest box was removed. Since then the species has been very scarce. One was around French's Farm in Jan. There were no further sightings until Jun – early Jul when one was seen hunting on 5 dates in the same area. In autumn there were sightings around Lytchett Heath on 3 dates and 1 was sound recorded at Lytchett Way on 2 dates. All in Sep - Oct.

Tawny Owl: (2 – 27) ↘

Uncommon resident. Probably 2 pairs. One pair at Lytchett Heath bred successfully with juv's sound recorded in Jun. The other pair is in the far west of the recording area.

Short Eared Owl: (1 – 7)

Rare visitor. 1 was seen over Lytchett Bay on 7th Nov (JH, NH).

Nightjar: (3 – 18) ↔

Irregular breeder. Present at Lytchett Heath during the breeding season from 21st May intermittently until 11th Aug. The only other record came from Lytchett Fields on 27th Jul.

Swift: (113 – 27) ↔

Passage migrant and occasional local breeder. A dreadful year with few records between 6th May and 30th Jul. Max 20 on last date.

Kingfisher: (4 – 27) ↔

Passage migrant and uncommon, but frequently seen, winter visitor. Bred in 2000 and possibly in other years since. No records between 17th Feb and 5th Jul. Max 3 on 1st Dec. Only 1 ringed, reflecting the shift in activity from the Sherford to Lytchett Heath.

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. 5 ringed.

LE75666 – ringed at Holton Lee, Lytchett Bay on 8th Feb 2018 was found dead in Upton on 12th July 2018

Woodlark: (15 – 17) ↔

Irregular visitor. 2 flew over Holton Pools toward Lytchett Fields on 22nd Jan (JS). 2 over Lytchett Heath on 19th Oct (SR).

Skylark: (781 - 27) ↔

Scarce breeder and passage migrant. Just 1 territory established and held throughout the spring. Up to 6 were in the arable field throughout Jan and Feb. Autumn passage began on 8th Oct and birds regularly stopped over in the arable field. Best days were 64 on 18th Oct, 21 the following day and 20 on 10th Nov. Up

to 4 used the arable field daily during Dec. Nocturnal migrants were recorded on 2 dates at Lytchett Way in the autumn.

Sand Martin: (5000 – 27) ↘

Common passage migrant. Recorded from 28th Mar until 24th Sep. Max 40 on 4th May. 2 ringed.

Swallow: (1000 – 800 – 27) ↔

Common passage migrant, breeds at French's Farm. Recorded from 2nd Apr until 15th Oct. Max 200 on 1st Jul. 132 ringed.

House Martin: (1800 – 27) ↔

Common passage migrant, breeding colony on edge of recording area at Watery Lane. Present from 13th Apr to 6th Oct. Max 217 on 21st Sep. 3 ringed.

The colony at Watery Lane has spread into Seaview Road.

No of House Martin nests at the Watery Lane colony 2005 – 2018. No of nest collapsed or destroyed in brackets.

2005	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
15	15	16	14	13	15	8	13	2	4	?	7	10	18	17
(4)	(5)	(6)	(5)	(8)	(5)	(7)	(4)	(0)	(1)		(3)	(4)	(?)	(?)

Tree Pipit: (18 – 23) ↔

Scarce passage migrant. 26 bird days between 1st and 27th Aug. 18 of these occurring at Lytchett Heath on 22nd, a record count. Records spread between Lytchett Heath and Lytchett Fields, where several birds were grounded. 1 ringed.

Meadow Pipit: (460 – 27) ↔

Occasional breeder and common passage migrant. No records between end of Mar and 12th Sep. Spring migration peaked with 60 on 18th Mar. Autumn passage was exceptional, with a record 460 on 24th Sep (previously 300 on 25th Sep 1984). Small flocks remained until the year end. 38 ringed.

Rock Pipit: (*Scandinavian Rock Pipit*) (50 – 27) ↔

Common winter visitor. Recorded until 18th Mar and from 10th Oct. Surprisingly few on saltmarshes, particularly in second winter period. Max 9 on 10th Jan and 10 on 20th Oct.

Water Pipit: (20 – 21)

Scarce winter visitor. Records have returned to the previous levels since the creation of Lytchett Fields. A reasonable year with records on 44 dates. Present until 19th Mar, max 3 in late Feb and from 20th Oct, max 3 on 25th Nov.

Yellow Wagtail: (150 – 27) ↔

Uncommon passage migrant. 5 bird-days between 15th – 29th Apr in spring. One on 9th Jul was unusual. Autumn migration started on 1st Aug and lasted until 3rd Oct. 174 bird-days, max 20 on 6th Sep.

Grey Wagtail: (15 – 27) ↔

Winter visitor, passage migrant and occasional breeder. Frequently recorded in small numbers throughout the year.

Pied Wagtail: (650 – 27) ↔

Recorded throughout the year, common in autumn. Bred successfully. Birds roost at various points around the Bay during peak migration in October. Very large numbers roosted at Lytchett Heath and the Sherford reedbeds in early Oct. 650 on 3rd Oct was a record for the site, previously 500 on 10th Oct 2012. 73 ringed.

White Wagtail: Scarce migrant. Few reported this year. 2 on 10th Apr.

Wren: ↔

Common resident. 25 ringed.

Duncock: ↔

Common resident. 8 ringed.

Robin: ↔

Common resident. 29 ringed.

Common Redstart: (2 – 20) ↔

Scarce autumn migrant. Another unremarkable year, though slightly better than 2017. One in spring on 29th Apr at Lytchett Fields. 4 in autumn. Singles on 24th Aug and 1st Sep at Lytchett Fields, 1 at Lytchett heath on 2nd Sep with 1 ringed there on 22nd Aug.

Whinchat: (11 – 25) ↔

Scarce passage migrant. A much better year than 2017. One in spring on 29th Apr. 20 bird-days in autumn between 9th Aug and 25th Sep. Max 4 on 14th Sep. Most often recorded Lytchett Fields.

Stonechat: (23 – 27) ↔

Previously common breeding resident (7 pairs in 2002). Bred for the first time since 2005.

Present from start of the year, max 5 in Jan. A pair fledged 3 young in Jun at Lytchett Heath. These birds left on 23rd Jun and there were no further records until 9th Aug, after which daily sightings followed until the year end, max 4 on several dates.

Northern Wheatear: (39 – 27) ↔

Uncommon passage migrant. Almost every record of this species occurs in the north west of the recording area. A poor year. Occurrence seems to be reducing as the area of short grass is much less than it once was.

2 at Holton Pools on 2nd Apr were the first of the year and contributed to 10 bird-days in spring until 2nd May.

Autumn migrants are always scarcer than in spring. Only 4 bird-days between 2nd Sep and 10th Oct is nonetheless a very poor showing.

Blackbird: (45 – 27) ↔

Common Resident. No significant records submitted. 26 ringed.

Fieldfare: (559 – 27) ↗

Uncommon winter visitor. Typically scarce in the first winter period, until the arrival of the “Beast from the East”. This produced 159 on 3rd Mar and 300 on 18th Mar. There were no further records after 19th. First returning birds were seen on 27th Oct. There were a few flights and most records came from Lytchett Bay View. Max 56n on 28th Oct and 57n on 20th Nov. 23 at Lytchett Fields on 10th Dec was notable. 1 ringed.

Song Thrush: (1256 – 27) ↔

Breeding resident and passage migrant. No perceived change from 12 territories identified in 2016.

In autumn the Listening Station at Lytchett Heath recorded 117 calls on 16th Nov. There were no significant diurnal flights. 9 ringed.

Redwing: (1000 – 514 – 27) ↔

Winter visitor and passage migrant. Recorded until 25th Mar. 190 were present in the severe weather on 18th Mar.

First of the autumn was on 30th Sep. Diurnal migration included 64 on 28th Oct and 235 on 20th Nov. 716 calls were recorded at the Lytchett Heath Listening Station on 16th Nov. 19 ringed.



It's getting harder to remember the days before digital photography. These pictures nicely bring to life the resident bird life around the Bay. Great Spotted Woodpecker (I.Ballam), Kingfisher (M.Wright), Blue Tit, Robin, Stonechat and Reed Bunting (all I.Ballam)

Mistle Thrush: (60 - 20 – 27) ↔

Uncommon resident. Recorded frequently but no records between 25th Apr and 22nd Aug suggests that none bred in the area this year. 20 on latter date was the peak count equaled the record day count in the period since 1992.

Cetti's Warbler: (11 males – 26) ↔

Breeding resident. A full survey was not conducted but random records suggested that the number of pairs declined to 6 – 8 following the cold weather in Mar. However, a record number, 18, were ringed at Lytchett Heath suggested that there was good breeding success locally or strong post breeding dispersal. Present at Sandy Close Pond occasionally in both winter periods.

Grasshopper Warbler: (18 – 20) ↔

Passage migrant, predominantly in autumn. Under recorded. Bred in 1986.

Just one in spring. A reeling bird on 3rd May at Lytchett Fields.

25 bird-days between 18th Jul and 5th Oct, the latest record at the Bay (previously 2nd Oct 2010). Max 4 on 5th Aug. 24 ringed, all one-day birds.

Sedge Warbler: (219 – 27) ↔

Passage migrant. Perhaps under recorded but only 1 was noted in the entire spring, on 26th Apr. Remarkable even in the context of a poor run. Autumn passage commenced on 17th Jul and continued to 26th Sep. Max 131 on 5th Aug. 460 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			44	131	12			
			1			95	375	41			

Our second recovery from Senegal is the standout from an otherwise expected set.

AFD0716 – A pullus ringed at Dolydd Hafren, Powys, S. Wales on 17th Jun 2018 was controlled 59 days later on 15th Aug 2018 at Lytchett Bay. A SSE movement of 222km.

S391658 – A 1st W ringed at Lytchett Bay on 27th Jul 2018 was re-trapped 10 days later on 6th Aug at Marais de Pompas, Herbignac, Loire-Atlantique, FRANCE. A S movement of 369km.

S391664 – A 1st W ringed at Lytchett Bay on 27th Jul was re-trapped 10 days later on 6th Aug at La Claire Mere, L Eree, Guernsey, CHANNEL ISLANDS. A S movement of 147km.

Z807283 - A 1st W ringed at Lytchett Bay on 18th Aug 2016 was re-trapped 596 days later on 6th Apr 2018 at Gouraf, Boutoute, Ziguinchor, SENEGAL. A S movement of 4435km.

S391582 – A 1st W ringed at Lytchett Bay on 25th Jul 2018 was re-trapped 21 days later on 15th Aug 2018 at Tour aux Moutons, Donges, Loire-Atlantique, FRANCE. A S movement of 380km.

AJB2138 – A 1st W ringed at Lytchett Bay on 11th Aug 2018 was re-trapped 9 days later on 20th Aug 2018 at Chenal, Chenac-Saint-Seurin-d'Uzet, Charente-Maritime, FRANCE. A S movement of 589km.

S391930 – A 1st W ringed at Lytchett Bay on 5th Aug 2018 was re-trapped 10 days later on 15th Aug 2018 at Terres d'Oiseaux, Braud-et-Saint-Louis, Gironde, FRANCE. A S movement of 614km.

Reed Warbler: (84 males – 27) ↔

Common summer visitor. Present between 13th Apr and 29th Sep. No survey undertaken but status considered to be unchanged at c80 singing males. 184 ringed.

A good year for recoveries and controls. The belated reporting of a movement to Portugal is surprisingly our first to that country for this species. The bird originally ringed in Kent has now made 5 sub-Saharan return journeys.

AYC6855 – A 1st W ringed at Chew Valley Lake, Bath on 15th Jul 2018 was controlled 21 days later on 5th Aug 2018 at Lytchett Bay. A SSE movement of 79km.

L466747 – A 1st W ringed at Sandwich Bay Bird Obs, Kent on 26th Aug 2013 was controlled 1800 days later on 31st Jul 2018 at Lytchett Bay. A W movement of 246km.

Z408966 – An Ad ringed at Lytchett Bay on 21st Jul 2016 was controlled 25 days later on 15th Aug 2016 at Herdade dos Forninhos, Beja, PORTUGAL

AAC9010 – An Ad F ringed at Kilpaison Marsh, Rhoscrowther, Pembrokeshire, Wales on 25th Jul 2018 was controlled 34 days later on 28th Aug 2018 at Lytchett Bay. A ESE movement of 235km.

Blackcap: (75 – 27) ♂

Passage migrant, summer visitor and scarce winter visitor. No survey undertaken but no change perceived since 13 territories were located in 2016. A record autumn passage.

A male was around Sandy Close Pond in the first winter period. 1 at Turlin Moor on 14th Mar.



I.Ballam

Identifying the first summer arriving migrant is made more difficult due to the risk of counting south-east bound continental winterers as north bound summer migrants!

There were no more records until 5th Apr but spring migration was poor.

In contrast Autumn migration was the best ever. 75 on 13th Sep was 3 times the previous high count on 30th Apr 2016. 166 ringed, more than 4 times the previous best annual total.

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	1	7	b	b	b	4	75	13	0	2
w	w	1	22	b	b	b	23	225	53	0	2

Given the number ringed it was not surprising that we had some recoveries. The movement of the bird to Northamptonshire is particularly intriguing given the direction of the movement and the season involved.

AAD0832 - An Ad female ringed at Offwell, Devon on 5th Apr 2018 was controlled 161 days later on 13th Sep 2018 at Lytchett Bay. An E movement of 79km.

S923091 – A 1st W male ringed at Wilstone Res, Tring, Hertfordshire on 2nd Sep 2018 was controlled 13 days later on 15th Sep 2018 at Lytchett Bay. A SW movement of 152km.

AJB2439 – A 1st W male ringed at Lytchett Bay on 13th Sep 2018 was controlled 2 days later on 15th Sep 2018 at Stanford Res, Northamptonshire. A NNE movement of 198km!!

Garden Warbler: (7 – 25) ↔

Scarce passage migrant. 2 in spring, singles on 29th Apr at Lytchett Bay View and on 30th at Lytchett Fields. 18 bird-days in autumn between 18th Jul – 1st Sep. Max 7 on 5th Aug at Lytchett Heath. A record count, previously 5 on 9th Aug 2004.

A bird ringed on 5th Aug was recaptured on 15th Aug and another ringed on the same day was recaptured on 18th Aug, unusually long stop overs at this site. 11 ringed.

Lesser Whitethroat: (3 – 22) ↔

Scarce passage migrant, which occasionally breeds or holds territory. Another poor year but very slightly better than 2017.

In spring singles on 24th Apr and 4th May. 1 ringed on 1st Aug was the only autumn record.

Whitethroat: (18 – 25) ↔

Uncommon passage migrant. Bred in 2013. 1 held territory at Lytchett Heath between 30th May & 25th Jun. 23 bird-days in spring between 18th Apr & 12th May was a good showing. Max 11 on 29th. In autumn, 27 bird days between 5th Aug & 13th Sep. Max 4 on 22nd Aug & 13th Sep. 18 ringed.

Dartford Warbler: (2 pairs – 25) ↔

Breeding resident. A puzzling year at Lytchett Heath where the species was only recorded on 7 dates. Seen on 2 dates in Jan and probably not looked for again until after the cold weather. It would have not been a surprise if this had seen them off but one was still present on 18th Apr and 12th May. However apart from 1 juv ringed on 5th Aug, presumably dispersed from elsewhere (?) and 1 on 24th Sep, there were no further records.

Chiffchaff: (142 – 27) ↗

Breeding summer visitor and passage migrant. Not surveyed this year but previously 9 – 11 territories across recording area.

The cold spring certainly delayed arrivals and Mar was the poorest ever. Autumn migration was good, max 43 on 24th Sep. 193 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	1	15	b	b	b	6	43	24	2	1
6	2	3	b	b	b	b	14	249	132	9	3

LAE255 – A 1st W ringed at Portland Bird Obs, Dorset on 4th Oct 2018 was controlled the following day on 5th Oct 2018 at Lytchett Bay. A NE movement of 38km.

KVR422 – A 1st W ringed at Forest Croft Deer Park, Highland, Scotland on 25th Aug 2018 was controlled 44 days later on 8th Oct at Lytchett Bay. A S movement of 774km.

KRE115 – A 1st W ringed at Middleton NR, Lancashire on 6th Oct 2018 was controlled 4 days later on 10th Oct 2018 at Lytchett Bay. A S movement of 372km.

Willow Warbler: (60 – 27) ↔

Passage migrant. This species has been lost as a regular breeder.

The first record was on 3rd Apr. Spring migration was probably the worst on record. Autumn migration started on 25th Jul and lasted until 26th Sep. Max 25 on 1st Aug. 98 ringed.

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

JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
			2			8	25	10			
			7			21	94	31			

Goldcrest: (27 – 27) ↔

Passage migrant, which occasionally breeds. Bred at Lytchett Heath where 2 young were seen in Jun. Autumn migration was very poor. 14 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	1	1	b	b	b		1		7	2	2
17	7	4	b	b	b		1		27	9	8

ELR476 – A1st W F was ringed at Canford Heath on 20th Oct 2018. It was controlled 27 days later on 16th Nov 2018 at Lytchett Bay. A SW movement of 6km.

Firecrest: (4 – 15) ↔

Scarce visitor. A rather poor year. 1 was around Sandy Close Pond in Jan and Feb. Recorded at Lytchett Heath on 2 dates in Sept, 4 dates in Oct, 1 in Nov and 1 in Dec. Max 2 on any one date. The only other record was single at the Water Works on 15th Oct. 4 ringed.

Spotted Flycatcher: (8 – 6 – 27) ↘

Passage migrant, previously bred. An average year. 4 spring records was good in the context of other species. Singles on 29th (Earliest date, previously 3rd May 2006) & 30th Apr and 12th Jun. A nocturnal migrant was recorded at the Lytchett Heath Listening Station on 31st May.

Only 8 bird-days in autumn between 21st Aug an 27th Sep, max 2 on 2 dates.

Pied Flycatcher: (1 – 12)

Rare visitor. For the 2nd year in a row one was sound recorded. This time at the Lytchett Heath Listening Station at 00:50 on 9th Aug.

Bearded Tit: (40 – 27) ↔

Scarce breeder and scarce passage migrant. At least 2 pairs bred and at least 16 juveniles were seen in the breeding season. 8 were present in Jan. Typically birds were more active and visible in autumn, with at least 23 on 10th Oct. 41 ringed.

Ringling included some interesting controls/re-traps.

Z408777 - was ringed at Lytchett Bay as a male on 17th Oct 2015 and was recaptured on 9th Oct 2017. It had not been recorded between these two dates. It was recaptured again on 4th Dec 2018 which does not help us in answering the question posed last year..... is it a returning migrant rather than a local bird?

Z772198 - was ringed as a nestling at Farlington Marshes, Hampshire on 2nd Apr 2017. 597 days later on 4th Dec 2018 it was controlled at Lytchett Bay. A W movement of 73km. It had previously been controlled here on 15th Nov 2017. The migration atlas confirms that most one-year old birds return to their natal marsh to breed so this bird might now be commuting between its breeding reedbed and its wintering one?

Z408231 – was ringed at Lytchett Bay as an Ad M on 15th Aug 2015. It was recaptured on 5th Aug 2018 and had not been recorded between these two dates. Given that both are in the breeding season it seems likely that this bird is breeding in our reed beds.

S391268 – was ringed in juv plumage on the rather later date of 8th Oct 2017. It was recaptured and sexed as a F on 10th Oct 2018.

Long tailed Tit: ↗

Common resident. Regularly recorded from most sites at the Bay. 32 ringed.

Blue Tit: ↔

Common resident. 124 ringed.

Great Tit: ↔

Common resident. 27 ringed.

Coal Tit: ↗

Uncommon resident, increasing. Recorded from most sites across the calendar. 4 ringed.

Nuthatch: ↔

Uncommon. Seen occasionally throughout the year from sites stretching from Kings Bridge to Turlin Moor including frequently at Sandy Close Pond. 1 ringed.

Treecreeper: ↔



C.Slade

Uncommon. Recorded only occasionally throughout the year, mainly in the area around Lytchett Fields. 4 on 27th Feb was particularly notable.

Jay: (12 – 27) ↔

Resident. Regularly seen throughout the year but most often in autumn. 4 fledged birds seen at Lytchett Fields in late Jun.

Magpie: ↔

Common Resident.

Jackdaw: (610 – 27) ↔

Resident. Recorded throughout the year. 300 flew over to roost on 1st Dec.

Rook: (185 – 27) ↗

Breeds on edge of recording area. Due to SR's absence during spring no survey was conducted of the Watery Lane colony. 16 – 25 nests 2010 – 2017.

Carrion Crow: (100 – 27) ↔

Common Resident. Breeds widely across the area. 60 feeding in the Bay at low tide on 16th Oct was the biggest count of the year.

Raven: (7 – 24) ↗

Increasingly regular visitor. Now recorded on an almost a daily basis throughout the year. 7 on 23rd Sep equaled the record count on 22nd Sep 2002.

Starling: (35000 – 5600 – 27) ↔

Common resident. No significant counts submitted.



Both (Scandinavian) Rock and Water Pipits are shy winter visitors. The differences between the two are well illustrated in Ian's photos. As spring progresses the Rock Pipits plumage starts to resemble that of Water requiring that spring identifications are treated with greater care. (I.Ballam)



Bathing Goldcrest (C.Slade) and spring male Wheatear (I.Ballam)

House Sparrow: (101++ – 27) ↔

Resident. Usually recorded around the urban fringe, seems to be doing well in many areas around the Bay. No additional effort was made to follow up on the 6 roosts identified at the end of 2017, though the bamboo roost at Sandy Close Pond was abandoned in the second winter period. At least 30 roosted at Turlin Moor on 19th Nov.

Chaffinch: (450 – 27) ↔

Breeding resident and winter visitor. Max 30 at French's Farm Fields on 23rd Dec. Regular at Sandy Close feeders in both periods, max 18 on 13th Dec. 4 ringed.

Brambling: (10 – 23)

Scarce winter visitor, which is having a lean spell at the Bay. The female from 2017 continued at Sandy Close Pond until 27th Jan. A male was present on 12th Jan. There were 3 records in the second half of the year. Singles at Lytchett Heath on 25th Oct, LBV on 13th Nov and Lytchett Fields on 11th Dec.

Greenfinch: (60 – 27) ↔

Common breeding resident, which has declined due to on-going Trichomonosis disease in the population. This arrived in late summer 2006 and has had a severe impact on English Greenfinch populations. 15 at Lytchett Fields on 6th Dec, 10 at Turlin Moor on 13th Nov and 6 at Sandy Close Pond on 13th Dec were the best counts of the year. 9 ringed.

Goldfinch: (120 – 27) ↔

Common breeding resident and passage migrant. A very ordinary year with no flocks bigger than 30. Though 26 at Sandy Close Pond on 4th Jan was notable. 20 ringed.

Siskin: (280 – 24) ↔

Passage migrant and occasional winter visitor. Yet another very poor year. Recorded very occasionally throughout the year – 25 bird days on 14 dates. Max 5 on 9th Oct.

Linnet: (250 – 27) ↔

Uncommon breeding resident. Only noted at one location during the breeding season. No sign of the historical winter roost at Lytchett Way at either end of the year. Up to 20 were around French's Farm and Lytchett Fields in Jan and Feb. Autumn migration was mainly recorded at Lytchett Heath in Oct with peaks of 45n on 8th, 46n on 10th and 32n on 19th. 3 ringed.

Lesser Redpoll: (40 – 22) ↔

Scarce passage migrant. 5 records involving 6 birds in Jan. Only recorded on 4 dates in Autumn. Three records from Lytchett Fields. 1 on 19th Oct, 2 there on 21st, an impressive 31 on 1st Nov and then a single at Lytchett Heath on 2nd Nov.

Red Crossbill: (21 – 12)

Scarce passage migrant. 11 over Holton Lee Scrape on 18th Oct was the only record of the year (RS).

Bullfinch: (20 – 27) ↗

Uncommon but increasing. In keeping with recent years, widely recorded across the area throughout the year, noted in every month, including a fresh juv in Jun at Sandy Close Pond. Max on any one date was 9. 4 ringed.

Hawfinch: (2 – 2)

The influx which started in Oct 2017 continued with remarkable numbers of birds across Dorset and many parts of England. We had 2 more records. A heart stopping moment when 1 visited feeders at Sandy Close Pond on 18th Feb (SR, MS) and 1 at French's Farm Fields on 23rd Feb (IB). How many years will we wait for our next record?

Ortolan Bunting:

First record. Inevitable, amazing and frustrating all in equal measure. 1 was sound recorded as it flew over Lytchett Heath on 27th Aug at 22.58 (See "finders" account by Paul Morton in Appendix 1).

Reed Bunting: (110 – 27) ↔

Breeding resident. No breeding survey but no reason to suspect any change from 2011 when 23 singing males were present. A full survey is planned for 2019. Birds used the arable field throughout the year. Max 40 on 9th Oct. 45 ringed.

Z807141 – A juvenile was ringed at Lytchett Bay on 13th Aug 2016. 516 days later on 11th Jan 2018 it was found dead having flown into a glass window at Upton, Poole, Dorset.

S391325 – A 1st W F was ringed at Lytchett Bay on 12th Oct 2017. 145 days later on 6th Mar 2018 it was found dead in the snow at Wimborne, Dorset. A NE movement of 10km. A casualty of the “beast from the east”.

Escapes

Wood Duck:

One was photographed flying over Holton Lee Scrape on 8th Apr (RS)

Records received from: I.H.Alexander, I.Ballam (IB), D.Bandfield, A.Blinston, N.Bailey, C.Chapleo, M.Constantine, Mo Constantine, S.Crowley, N.Duckworth, T.Elborn, R.Gifford, P.Harvey, N.Hoare, N.Hopper, R.Howes (RH) J.Hull (JH), N.Hull (NH), L.Lambert, K.E.Lane, S.Levy, I.M.Lewis (IML), P.Morton (PM), H.Murray, G.Owen (GO), S.Robson (SR), K.Rylands, R.Stephenson (RS); M.Smith (MS), J.Stockwell (JS), A.Taylor, S.Walls, M.Wood, L.Woodford, C.Wilcox, M.Wright. With additional information from Bird Track, e-Bird, Birds of Poole Harbour, Holton Lee log, Rare Bird Alert and the Dorset Bird Club. Apologies for any omissions.

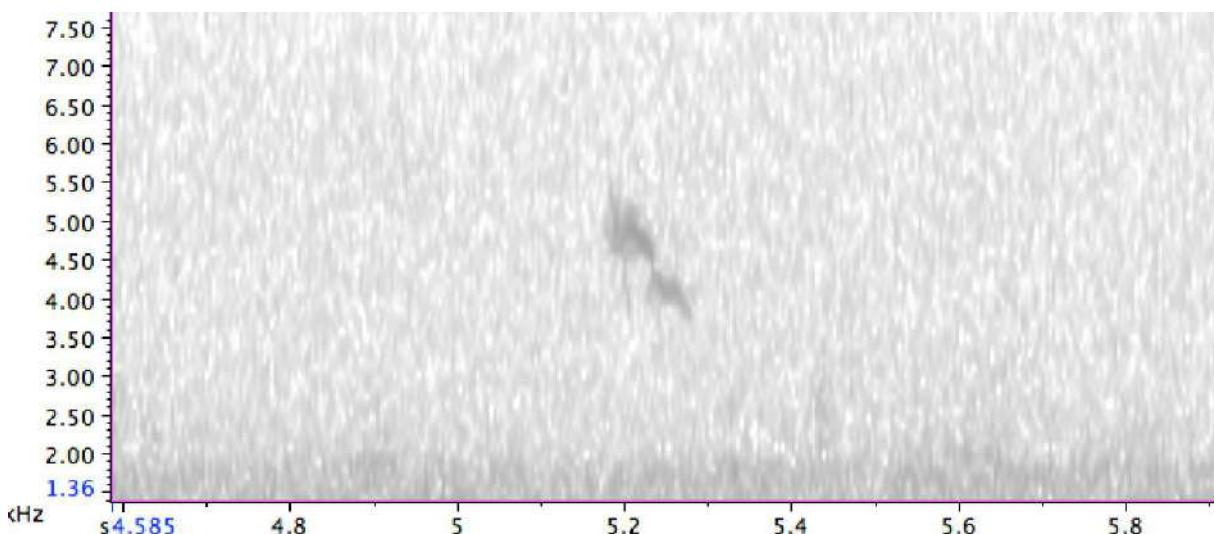
Appendix 1 – Finders accounts

Ortolan Bunting, 27th August 2018 – the first record for Lytchett Bay – Paul Morton

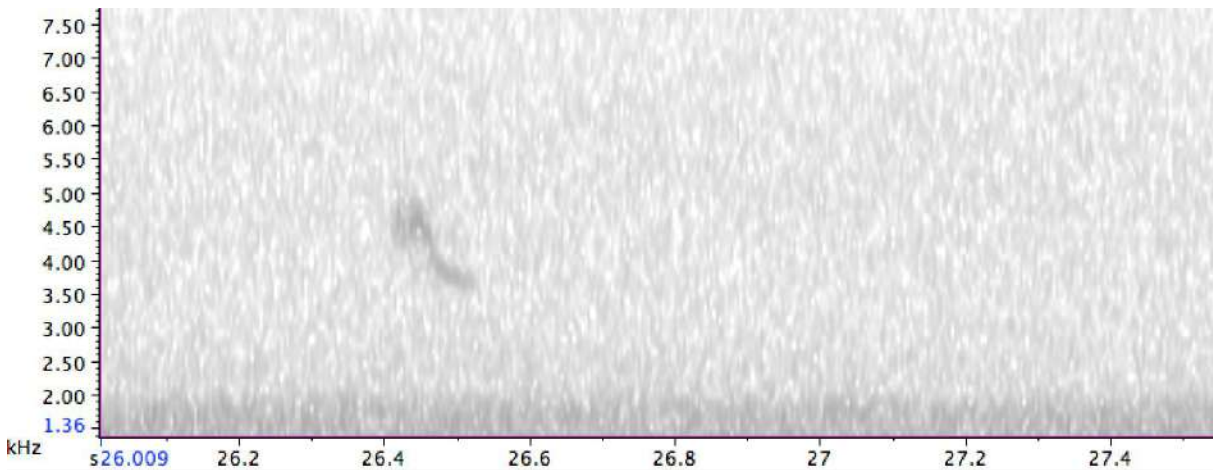
During 2016 I operated a nocturnal “Listening Station” using a digital sound recorder in Poole Old Town. Incredibly between 22nd Aug and 11th Sep I recorded 13 Ortolan Buntings. This species is considered to be a scarce migrant in Dorset and this number of birds over an urban area were widely considered to be astonishing by most of the birding community. The details of these birds and others nocturnally recorded in other parts of Dorset and elsewhere were written up in an article on the Sound Approach website - <https://soundapproach.co.uk/things-go-plik-night-part-two/>

This year I decided to deploy the equipment at Lytchett Bay. August was dominated by westerly winds and my recordings were underwhelming until I downloaded the recordings from the night of the 27th Aug.

Two calls at 22:58 immediately caught my attention. Studying the sonograms (repeated below) I was confident that based on our earlier work they were the calls of a migrating Ortolan. The first being the diagnostic call type for Ortolan which shows a descending note with a defined 'kink' half way down.



The second call is a classic 'tew' call.



I texted Shaun Robson suggesting that he owed me a beer and knowing that he would be delighted to add the first (of many) bird(s) to the Lytchett Bay list that had not been seen or heard by any human.

The recording is available via the link below. The two calls occur at 5 seconds and 26 seconds.”

<https://soundcloud.com/birds-of-poole-harbour/ortolan-bunting-call-of-a>

Black Brant (*B.b.nigricans*), 11th December 2018 – the first record for Lytchett Bay – Shaun Robson

At around 09:50 I was just finishing leading a guided walk around Lytchett Bay with DWT. We were at Lytchett Bay View standing at the viewpoint and I said that we should have one more scan of the Bay. In doing so I saw a single Brent swimming at a distance of c1km that was distinctively black and white – it had both a striking white flank patch and a large white neck collar. The head, breast and upperparts were very black. I immediately said to the group that I thought the bird was an American race of Brent Goose known as Black Brant.

The bird swam to join a flock of c 40 Dark-bellied Brents on the Turlin Shore. I rang Ian Ballam and Paul Morton to let them know before leaving to complete the walk.

As soon as the guided walk ended, I drove to Turlin Moor and walked to the shore at South Haven arriving at about 10:30. The Brent flock was opposite along the shore of Otter Island. The bird immediately stood out and with my scope at distances varying between 3-400m I could see the following.

A very striking bird which stood out from the flock. It's white flank, strongest along the upper edge and scalloped by some black vertical lines from below, was striking. Surrounded by a very black breast and only slightly paler fore-flanks, very dark upper parts and a thin black line separating the flanks from the startling white undertail.

The white neck collar was bright white and broad. Much much more so than on all of the other birds present. When seen from behind it almost met on the back of the neck only failing to do by a very slim black line. On the other birds the collar even on the brightest was barely visible on from behind. At the front it formed a full crescent around the throat in a continuous collar. The collar had some sharp neat black almost vertical lines cutting into it from the top edge.

The upperparts were much darker than the other Brents but they were not black. There was a slight contrast between the mantle + scapulars and the very black primaries and the neck.

These features can all be seen in the attached record shots taken via my scope using a Canon powershot camera. I had no doubt that the bird was a Brant and circulated the news via Twitter and OAD. This is the first for Lytchett Bay and c10th for Poole Harbour.



The light on a dull day accentuated just how stand out this race can be (S.Robson)

Appendix 2 – Bird ringing at Lytchett Bay 2018

	Full grown	Pulli	Recoveries	Total
Woodcock	2	0	0	2
Kingfisher	1	0	0	1
Great Spotted Woodpecker	2	0	2	5
Sand Martin	2	0	0	2
Swallow	132	0	0	132
House Martin	3	0	0	3
Tree Pipit	1	0	0	1
Meadow Pipit	38	0	0	38
Pied Wagtail	73	0	0	73
Wren	25	0	8	33
Dunnock	8	0	1	9
Robin	29	0	15	44
Redstart	1	0	0	1
Blackbird	26	0	7	33
Fieldfare	1	0	0	1
Song Thrush	9	0	1	10
Redwing	19	0	0	19
Cetti's Warbler	18	0	6	24
Grasshopper Warbler	24	0	0	24
Sedge Warbler	460	0	2	462
Reed Warbler	184	0	24	208
Dartford Warbler	1	0	0	1
Whitethroat	18	0	4	22
Lesser Whitethroat	1	0	0	1
Garden Warbler	11	0	3	14
Blackcap	166	0	2	168
Chiffchaff	193	0	3	196
Willow Warbler	98	0	0	98
Goldcrest	14	0	2	16
Firecrest	4	0	1	5
Bearded Tit	41	0	15	56
Long-tailed Tit	32	0	10	42
Coal Tit	4	0	0	4
Blue Tit	124	0	43	167
Great Tit	27	0	3	30
Nuthatch	1	0	0	1
Chaffinch	4	0	0	4
Greenfinch	9	0	0	9
Goldfinch	20	0	2	22
Linnet	3	0	0	3
Bullfinch	4	0	0	4
Reed Bunting	45	0	7	52
Annual Total:	1875	0	161	2036

**Lytchett Bay
Non-Avian Wildlife Report
2018**



Southern Migrant Hawker,
Ivy Bee and Jewel Wasp

Introduction

As always with being responsible for writing any report it requires records and we are always in need of all types of reports especially of non-avian species. All we require is a simple e-mail with what you've seen with where on the patch you've seen them. Send it to me Nick Hull at nickh4142@gmail.com The more we know about the patch and it's wildlife no matter how small is valuable to keep Lytchett Bay and its heathland, fields and green space for us all to enjoy whatever your interest.

This year Jackie and I have continued to identify various species that we can, the learning curve is still pretty vertical but we have managed to add 49 new species and confirm most of the species previously recorded. We have recorded a total 707 non-avian species since we started trying to record as much of the Lytchett Bay wildlife as we can identify. It's a slow process as we are learning as we go along and really in need of good keen amateur naturalist to help us out, as I'm sure we have only touched on the total number of wildlife using the area. Though the 'Beast from the East' in March and the following hot dry summer has had an effect on many of the insect species some appear to have had a good season, others appear not to have done so well and it will be interesting to see how it effects the 2019 season.

This brings me as always to thank the following patch watchers and visitors for their contributions to this list: Shaun Robson, Ian Ballam, Jackie Hull, Ian Lewis, Liz Woodford. Also, the following people for their help in verifying and help with identification of various insect groups. Richard Webb (Mammals); Tony Allen (Beetles); Stewart Roberts BWARS (Bees & Wasps); Jez Martin (Spiders); Paul Harris and Sean Foote (Moths) and members from the Diptera and Hoverfly Facebook page's whose help has been invaluable.

The problem with recording everything we can, the list grows each year and because of this it's becoming impossible to list every species recorded in a reasonable number of pages, so as with last year, I will summaries each species group and list the important species and those that have been recorded for the first time only. I've reduced the number of tables and placed the date the species were first recorded next to the species name with the exception on moths.

A number of species listed in the tables may have 'agg' written next to the name, this means for a definitive identification the species requires to be dissected to determine the species. I do not 'gen-det' as I do not believe in killing something that has a purpose on this earth and it should be able to fulfill that purpose before it dies. If I find a dead specimen, I have no problem in carrying out any procedure to find a definitive identification.

Thank you

Nick Hull

Photograph Acknowledgements

Front page – Southern Migrant Hawker & Ivy bee – Ian Ballam, Jewel Wasp – Nick Hull

Pygmy Shrew, Silver-studded Blue – Shaun Robson

Common Emerald Damselfly, Small Copper, Hornets, 2nd Ivy Bee & *Stenodema laevigata* – Ian Ballam

Moths around rugby floodlights – Hazel West

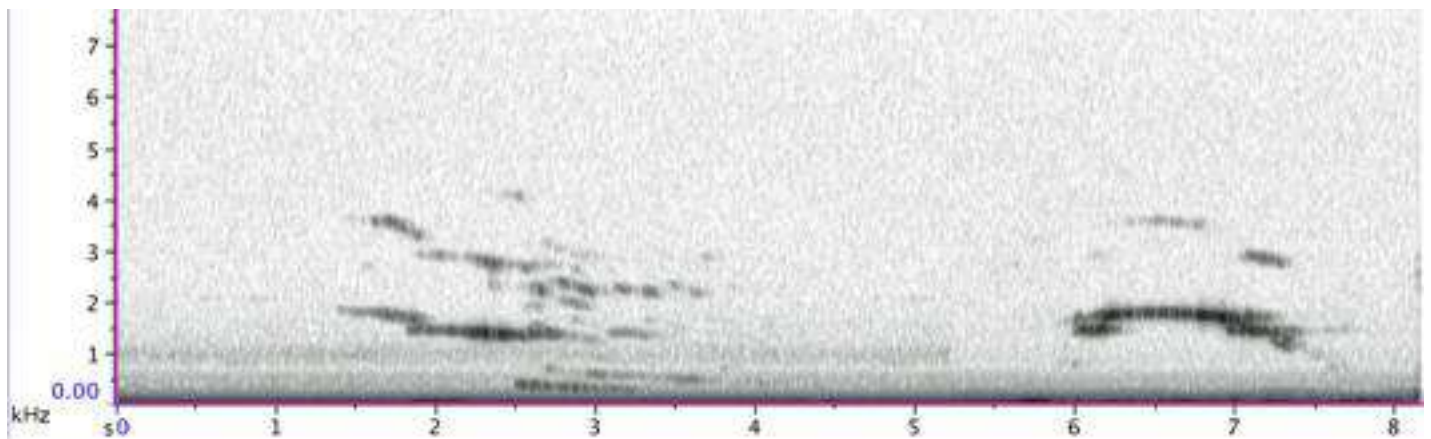
All other insect photograph – Nick Hull

The Species checklists

Mammals

The 2018 season has seen little change in the mammal species recorded though there has been a single addition to the list, see Pygmy Shrew below, Badger, Otter, Weasel and Bank Vole and Serotine Bat, haven't been recorded this year. Other than the Bank Vole the other four species being mainly nocturnal have I think just dropped through the net and missed being seen. Where by the vole is most probably just overlooked because of their habits and the fact it doesn't like being away from cover. The Roe Deer visit on occasions but are probably displaced by the growing Sika Deer population, which with no natural predator is growing year on year. As I'm sure many of you are aware this does have a knock-on effect on the re-growth of the woodland plants and saplings and many of the marshland plants. Though they do help a little on the heathland by grazing and slowing the growth of the gorse and birch etc.

As some of you may be aware, I try and do some NocMig (Nocturnal Migration) sound recording on the dryer nights mainly in spring and autumn and Sika Stags feature regularly in my recordings in the autumn when they are in rut. This season I managed to have a number of good recordings and to be able to compare the territorial calls in the form of a sonogram and found I could tell the difference between at least five individuals that regularly bellow on the Lytchett Bay patch.



Above are sonograms from two very different Stags, the one on the left starts high pitched and ends low, whereas you can see with the second it's more or less starts and finishes at the same frequency but pitching higher in the middle. It would be interesting to be able to find out if their voice changes as they mature or if they consistently have the same sound for their life or if it varies to find the right pitch to attract and impress the females.



Pygmy Shrew *Sorex minutus*

This is the smallest terrestrial mammal in Britain and Ireland and the first time being recorded in the Lytchett Bay recording area. Found dead by Shaun on Lytchett Heath. Though the identification isn't 100% features point to this species. Comment below from Richard Webb our mammal expert.

'The tail of a Common Shrew is normally 50% of the length of the body whereas this looks more like 60-70% which is more indicative of Pygmy. In addition although the fur is a bit blotchy it looks largely bicoloured, dark above and pale below. Common Shrew tends to have a third intermediate band between the dark and pale areas, which this doesn't appear to have in the photo but the colours are difficult to judge. I think it may actually be a Pygmy Shrew mainly based on the tail length but I'm not 100%'

Reptiles and Amphibians

There has been no change in this group other than the Common Toad that has dropped back into obscurity once more. I'm sure they are still present in the area but unlike last year when they were found under sheds that were being replaced, this year no reports have been received. The 'Beast from the East' in the early part of the year certainly had an effect on my own ponds productivity from the point of view of frogs. We had a lot of frog spawn but after the freeze very little seemed to produce tadpoles, but there are still lots of frogs being found around the garden so I'm sure next year will be better. I understand that frogs breeding cycle is over a three years period and in the third year is when the productivity is at its optimum as its then that most males return to the pond.

The most encouraging reports was that of the Sand Lizards are still present on our remnant piece of heathland, which is great news. Of the reptiles Adder seems to be having a downturn in the area on both areas of heath, though Ian managed to find one or two on the embankment that runs along the west end of the bay whilst doing survey work. I had another on the Lytchett Heath in the early season before the dry hot summer really started and that was the end of the sighting for the year. After making some enquiries from Amphibian and Reptile Conservation (ARC) who monitor the site, apparently it's not uncommon for Adder and other snakes to go back to ground in very hot summers and reemerge later in the season when things start to cool down.



This does seem to have been the case but unfortunately Ian whilst making a visit to Lytchett Heath in late summer came across an Adder, which had been clubbed and killed, a totally unnecessary act also illegal as **Adders are protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981. It is an offence to kill, harm or injure them, and to sell or trade them in any way.** I have over the last year been learning and working with the RSPB towards my license, which hopefully after joining ARC on one of their courses in 2019 I will be able to help monitor our reptiles, helping ARC with records from the Lytchett Bay patch.

Odonata - Dragonflies & Damselflies

With the addition of two new species in 2018 the Lytchett Bay odonata list is now at 23 species though three species haven't been recorded in the 2018 season, Blue-tailed Damselfly, Common Hawker and Black Darter. Blue-tailed Damselfly is usually found around my garden pond it may be, the Beast from the East may have effected the larva in some way and this coming season they will appear. The Common Hawker hasn't been recorded for four years and appears not to be breeding in the area any longer. The Black Darter has always been a sporadic visitor so may reappear on the patch at any time. Golden-ringed Dragonfly seemed to have had a good year and have been seen all around Lytchett Bay.



Southern Migrant Hawker *Aeshna affinis* (21st July)

Up until recent years this species has been considered a rare migrant to the UK, and it was predicted as a potential colonist. After only a single confirmed record during the twentieth century, four individuals were observed in southern England during 2006. During 2010 many individuals were then seen in south Essex and north Kent, with oviposition being noted at two sites. In July 2018 it has been reported that at the Wat Tyler County Park on Canvey Island in Kent circa fifty teneral Southern Migrants Hawkers emerged from the reed beds and

further sightings from Cliffe, Sandwich Bay and Oare Marshes is showing that they are becoming established in the Kent area. So perhaps it will not be long before we see them breeding in Dorset.

Finding Southern Migrant Hawker - Ian Ballam

"I was making a quick visit to the DWT/ARC reserve at Lytchett Way on Saturday 21st July before heading over to RSPB Lytchett Fields; the idea was to see what Odonata were about as it was a reasonably sunny day. As soon as I arrived at the main "dried-up" pool I noticed a bright blue small Hawker type. Immediately I thought Migrant Hawker a relatively common species or the extremely rare Southern Migrant Hawker that had been found in a couple of places across the south coast in recent days. At this point I noticed another exactly the same on an adjacent pool, occasionally they came together and were extremely aggressive, this pointed towards the Southern Migrant as they will not tolerate each other. Amazingly a 3rd appeared! At this point I was almost sure they were Southern Migrant but to have 3 was crazy!! I managed a couple of poor flight shots and then phoned Nick Hull who lives near the entrance to the reserve so he could bring his DSLR and get better shots. Nick was successful and we quickly went back to his house to check the ID. That was it; a major twitch was on with many keen "dragonflies" coming to see a 1st (and 2nd and 3rd and possibly 4th) for Dorset. I was elated to have found them and even more happy that I managed to identify this tricky species from just flight observations, although eventually after about 90 minutes it did come to rest on some reeds! This was probably the species of the year for Lytchett in 2018."

I would just like to add to Ian's account and thank him for his call, and to say they were well twitched and enjoyed by many dragonfly enthusiasts. They were present right up until the rains came when they all disappeared. This is definitely the best insect record for Lytchett Bay in 2018.

The second species added to our list was Common Emerald Damselfly found again by Ian Ballam off Footpath 12 whilst checking that the Southern Migrant Hawker were still present the next day and found this lovely metallic green damselfly. A species that we may have overlooked in the past and because of the conservation work carried out by DWT clearing an area of scrub from the small piece of dry heathland probably has helped.



Common Emerald Damselfly *Lestes sponsa* (22nd July)

This is a species we may have overlooked in the past as the habitat suits this species as they like brackish acidic ponds, pools and ditches. They are on the wing from June to September. Ian found the species off footpath 12 when checking if the Southern Migrant Hawker was still present, two excellent finds.

Lepidoptera – Butterflies and Moths

Butterflies

Lytchett Bay recording area has a range of habitats making it good for a large range of insects and we have knowingly recorded twenty-seven species of butterfly. In the 2018 season two species have been added Green Hairstreak and Silver-studded Blue both these species were found in small numbers so both are probably recent breeding additions rather than having been overlooked in the past and hopefully will continue to occupy and thrive on the patch. Only two species not recorded this season Purple Hairstreak and Clouded Yellow ssp. *helice*. The latter is not surprising as it is a much scarcer visitor but after a number of good years of recording Purple Hairstreak in various areas on the patch it's a bit worrying that none were observed this year.

On the other hand, Small Copper probably had the best year since we started recording with the second brood being recorded into double figures on Lytchett Heath on one sunny day and even had one or two visiting my garden. Ian Ballam found and photographed the small Copper illustrated and it appeared to have blue spots on the hind-wing this aberration is known as *L.p. caerulea-punctata* it is thought that these aberrations are environmentally triggered and are most frequently seen in the autumn generation after particularly hot summers. There are 140 named aberrations' known to occur in Britain in this species.



Moths

I managed to have the traps out on 12 occasions in 2018 from April to October and caught 187 species adding 14 new species to the list bringing the total number of different species recorded to 476. Of the 10 species of day flying moths that we have recorded only Hummingbird Hawkmoth hasn't been reported this year. There was only one species a possible Mother Shipton *Euclid mi* which would have been a new addition to the day flying moths. I saw it very briefly in my garden and as I moved closer to get a better view to confirm its identification it flew off over the hedge and disappeared out of sight. Also there wasn't any record of Emperor Moth this year and no caterpillars were found, hopefully in 2019 I will be able to purchase and use pheromones to try and attract some of the scarcely seen species like Clearwings and Emperor moth to see if they are on the Lytchett Patch.

As I do not have the space to list all 476 species in this report, if anyone is interested in a PDF copy of the complete Lytchett Bay list please e-mail me at nickh4142@gmail.com to request a copy.

Of the 187 species caught in 2018 I've listed below the species that have either been recorded for the first time (those printed in red) and those that have been recorded less than 5 times since starting recording in 2012 in black.

Designated species *, Dorset Rare **, Nationally Rare ***, Threatened ****

Species	Scientific Name	Date
Ghost Moth	<i>Hepialus humuli</i>	30/06/2018
	<i>Oegoconia quadripuncta</i>	06/08/2012 & 06/07/2018
White-shouldered House-moth	<i>Endrosis sarcitrella</i>	11/06/2014 & 18/05/2018
Juniper Webber	<i>Dichomeris marginella</i>	28/06/2015 & 30/06 & 06/07/2018
Green Oak Tortrix	<i>Tortrix viridana</i>	27/06/2012 & 23/06/2018
	<i>Acleris schalleriana</i>	16/07/2016 & 06/07/2018
	<i>Agapeta hamana</i>	06/07/2018
	<i>Epinotia ramella</i>	23/05/2017 & 23/06/2018
	<i>Notocelia cynosbatella</i>	28/05/2017 & 18/05/2018
Leopard Moth	<i>Zeuzera pyrina</i>	24/06/2016 & 23/06/2018
	<i>Oncocera semirubella</i>	23/06/2018
Gold Triangle	<i>Hypsopygia costalis</i>	01/07/17; 23/06 & 30/06/2018
	<i>Hypsopygia glaucinalis</i>	23/06/2018 & 30/06/2018
European Corn-borer	<i>Ostrinia nubilalis</i>	30/06/2018
Box-tree Moth	<i>Cydalima perspectalis</i>	06/07/2018
	<i>Cynaeda dentalis</i>	30/06/2018

	<i>Crambus perlella</i>	30/06/2018 & 06/07/2018
Oak Hook-tip	<i>Watsonalla binaria</i>	12/09/2018 & 15/09/2018
Mullein Wave	<i>Scopula marginepunctata</i>	27/07/2014 & 01/07/17 & 03/08/18
Pine Carpet	<i>Pennithera firmata</i>	22/09/2017 & 18/05/2018
Blue-bordered Carpet	<i>Plemyria rubiginata</i>	08/07/16; 23/06 & 30/06/2018
Dingy Shell	<i>Euchoeca nebulata</i>	23/06/2018
V-pug	<i>Chloroclystis v-ata</i>	22/07/2013;11/05/17;23/06 & 30/06/2018
Grass Emerald	<i>Pseudoterpna pruinata</i>	13/08/2012 & 06/07/2018
Large Emerald	<i>Geometra papilionaria</i>	23/06/2018
Round-winged Muslin	<i>Thumatha senex</i>	30/06/2013; 23/06 & 30/06/2018
Burnished Brass	<i>Diachrysia chrysitis</i>	06/07/18
Gold Spot	<i>Plusia festucae</i>	28/08/2013; 06/08/2017 & 03/08/2018
Mullein	<i>Cucullia verbasci</i>	31/05/2018
Marbled Beauty	<i>Bryophila domestica</i>	08/07/17; 23/06 & 03/08/18
Suspected	<i>Parastichtis suspecta</i>	01/07/17 & 30/06/2018
Twin-spotted Quaker	<i>Anorthoa munda</i>	09/03/17 & 22/04/2018
Obscure Wainscot	<i>Leucania obsoleta</i>	04/06/2016; 23/06 & 30/06/2018
Flame Wainscot ***	<i>Senta flammea</i>	25/05/2017; 28/05/2017 & 18/05/2018
Red Chestnut	<i>Cerastis rubricosa</i>	17/04/2014; 22/04/2017 & 22/04/2018
Kent Black Arches	<i>Meganola albula</i>	01/07/17; 30/06 & 06/07/2018
Short-cloaked Moth	<i>Nola cucullatella</i>	23/06/2018
Scarce Silver-lines	<i>Bena bicolorana</i>	30/06/2018
Agg.	<i>Acleris ferrugana/notana</i>	26/10/2017 & 23/06/2018
Agg.	<i>Caloptilia alchimiella/robustella</i>	23/08/2013; 23/05/2017 & 23/06/2018

To summaries the season from a Lytchett Bay perspective, overall it was quite a poor season the numbers of moths caught were lower than usual particularly in the spring so the 'Beast from the East' in the early part of the year seemed to have played its part in these low numbers of moths being caught. In fact, I didn't think I had done so well until I downloaded this year's records from the database and noted that I had caught 184 species of which fifteen were new. Surprisingly fairly evenly split between macro and micro species.



Ghost Moth *Hepialus humuli*

This was only the second ever Ghost Moth that I have caught in fifteen years of mothing. The odd thing is Hornets had killed my first in the trap at my previous house and a Great Diving Beetle had killed this one. Both were females hopefully this one will not be the last and the next will be alive.



Agapeta hamana

This is the first record of this delightful yellowish tortrix moth, which is fairly common throughout Britain. It inhabits waste ground and places where its food plant of thistle (carduus) grows. Its flight period is June through August mainly at dusk but can be disturbed during the day.



Oncocera semirubella

Is a beautifully coloured little moth, with pink and yellow forewings, sometimes exhibiting a whitish stripe along the leading edge of the forewing. The preferred habitat is chalk downland and limestone cliffs, and the species occurs in the southernmost counties of England. The larval food plants are bird's-foot trefoil (Lotus) and clover (Trifolium), the larvae forming strong silken tubes. The flight period is June and July, it can sometimes be seen in the afternoon sunshine, and later at night comes to light.



European Corn-borer *Ostrinia nubilalis*

In the 1930's this species was considered a rare migrant, then this species began to colonise the area around London and the southeast and has spread to several other areas since. The males are darker than the females, and usually slightly smaller. The single generation flies in June and July, and the main food plant in Britain is mugwort (*Artemisia vulgaris*), although abroad it is often a pest on maize crops.



Box-tree Moth *Cydalima perspectalis*

This Asian species was first recorded in Britain in Kent in 2007, then in Surrey in 2008. Since then its records have been increasing over a wider area. Though this is a very attractive moth it is a pest species of Box (Buxus) and almost certainly is how it has arrived in Britain. Though in 2018 in France they have had extreme hatching of this species which have been in their millions which will no doubt have an effect on many of the ornamental garden



and topiary as the caterpillars will strip them bare of all greenery. This also may account for so many records in southern Britain in autumn 2018. I've copied below an extract from e-mail from a friend on a visit to the Pyrenees last autumn. The photograph shows the moths around one of the floodlight posts which were all covered top to bottom next morning.

“The downside to the holiday was the depressing sight of tens of thousands of Box-tree moths in the area. Alongside the footpaths in the woods, the caterpillars had eaten & killed

numerous wild trees & the local gardens looked very sad. Friday night was training night at the Rugby ground & the moths arrived by the thousand to fly around the spotlights. They were everywhere & I'm sure the players must have swallowed a few. The next morning the roofs of all the buildings were covered in moths & a dozen wagtails were cheerily doing their best to combat them”.



Cynaeda dentalis

SEP I'm not sure what it is but there are some moths which when you look through your identification guide that grabs your attention for some reason. Most people I think this is the Hawk-moth group or the tiger moths all big and very attractive. For me one that I have always thought I'd like to find in the trap was this species of micro and I have to say I wasn't disappointed when I turned the egg carton and found one. It's a moth that is restricted in Britain to a few coastal localities in the South-east of England and prefers seaside habitats such as shingle beaches. It has a single generation flying in July and its food plant is Viper's Bugloss (*Echium vulgare*).



Crambus perlella

This is a relatively common species and I have most certainly overlooked it in the past. The larvae feed on grasses, in a silken gallery amongst the base of the stems. The flight period is July and August.



Oak Hook-tip *Watsonalla binaria*

This was the first and second record of this oak woodland species and just three nights apart. This is one of the smallest of the hook-tip group. They get their name from the hook like tip to the forewings. It is a reasonably common species in the southern half of Britain and is double brooded flying in May and June and again in August.



Dingy Shell *Euchoeca nebulata*

I would of thought as this is a species that occupies damp, fens and marshy areas I would have caught this species before now. None-the-less it's the first I've caught here. It has a flight period of June to July and is single brooded. The larvae feed in the leaves of Alder (*Alnus glutinosa*). It is also a species of moth that seems to prefer to hold its wings closed similar to butterflies.



Large Emerald *Geometra papilionaria*

This is the largest of the 'emeralds', and one, which is common throughout most of Britain. Yet this is another first to be caught here in my Upton garden. It is a species that prefers woods, heaths and moors whose flight period is June and July



Burnished Brass *Diachrysia chrysitis*

Another first for the garden and patch, a species which I caught regularly at my previous home at Fordingbridge but appears to be not so common here at Upton. It is a pretty spectacular moth with is gold/green metallic saddle on the forewings. It is a species that is double brooded and on the wing from June to September the larvae feed on such plants as nettle (*Urtica dioica*), and it can be found in gardens, waste ground and marshy areas.



Mullein *Cucullia verbasci*

The Mullein is a moth that mimics dead wood and can just disappear on the trunk or branch of a tree. It is another not uncommon species but yet has never been caught before here at Upton. Strangely Jackie planted two Greater Mullein in the garden in the hope of attracting this moth, as the larvae feeds on various mullein (*Verbascum*) species as well as *Buddleia*. Their flight period is April and May and they occupy a range of different habitats as well as gardens. It just goes to show if you provide, nature will make use of those provisions as both plants had their own Mullein caterpillars, so hopefully there will be more records to come.



Short-cloaked Moth *Nola cucullatella* ^[17]_[SEP]

This is one of the smaller macro moths that are moderately common and widely distributed in Britain inhabiting woodland and suburban gardens.

The larvae feed on Hawthorn (*Crataegus* spp), Blackthorn (*Prunus spinosa*), and various fruit tree species. They are single brooded and have a flight period of June - July.



Scarce Silver-lines *Bena bicolorana* ^[17]_[SEP]

This is a proper good-looking moth and another that has been overdue to find its way into my moth trap here in Upton. It's a woodland and parkland species whose caterpillar feed on the leave of Oak (*Quercus*). Its flight period is June to August.

Hymenoptera –Bees, Wasps, Ants & Sawflies

This year I made a particular effort to try and get identifications to a number of bee species that I had seen in 2017 but for various reasons was unable to get to species level. With the help of Stuart Roberts and other experts from BWARS I have managed to add or confirm identification on ten species of bee and two wasp species and a species of Sawfly. This brings the Lytchett Bay list to 23 bees and 29 various species of wasp and I know there are several other species of each out there to find unfortunately many are hard to identify without the use of a microscope and genitalia inspection.

Unfortunately a few of the above species were found dead in our conservatory either after being killed by a rather large female False Widow Spider up in the apex of the roof or due to not being noticed in time by us and expiring due to the heat during the hot weather this summer. On the positive side this did help in that I was able to get macro photographs that enabled the experts to confirm their identification. ^[17]_[SEP]



Hornet *Vespa crabro*As Hornet is a protected species I was pleased when Ian located the it in a crack in one of the oak trees near the water works only a few metres from last year's nest. This species has been persecuted over this last year because they have been misidentified as Asian Wasp and pest control companies have been employed to destroy the nests. If you come across a Hornet nest in 2019 take a photograph if you can,

then Please call the National Bee Unit (NBU) <http://www.nationalbeeunit.com/public/Contacts/contacts.cfm>
The Dorset Regional Bee Inspector is listed as **Peter Davies** Mobile
No:07900292160 peter.davies@apha.gsi.gov.uk he will give you the correct advice and he will know what to do.



Ivy Bee *Colletes hederae* (24th September)

This species was a very nice addition to the list. I noticed whilst volunteering at RSPB Arne that the Ivy Bees were emerging and were very active on the warm sunny days and put an e-mail out to Ian and Shaun to keep their eyes peeled whilst out and about. Amazingly the next day Ian e-mailed me the photograph as he found them on Lytchett Heath. This species is a relative new comer to the UK and was first found in 2001 on The Isle of Purbeck at Worth Matravers and since then they have spread rapidly and now can be found from Cornwall to Kent and this year have been confirmed in Lancashire.

The three species of mining bee were also found on the Lytchett patch in 2017 but their identification was unable to be confirmed due to the features required were not evident in my photographs. This year I made sure that error was corrected and with help from the BWARS Facebook group managed to confirm the identifications.



***Lasioglossum zonulum* (21st August)**

The species shows a preference for woodland rides and sometimes is coastal. A solitary mining bee nesting in areas exposed to the sun. The main burrow is almost vertical down to a depth of some 20 cm, where it is widened into a blind ending. Cells are constructed, each at the end of a short lateral burrow, starting at a depth of 10 cm below the ground level. Cells are pyriform with polished walls and are sealed after being provisioned and an egg laid. The pollen provisioned is frequently yellow. After copulation, the young females hibernate in the maternal nest, lengthening the burrow to 40-50 cm and constructing individual hibernaculae. It has been suggested that the foundress female may live up to two years.



***Andrena bicolor* (27th March)**

Nest burrows are rarely encountered and, in parts of Germany and Eastern Europe, the species nests solitarily. Brood cells have been located at the extreme depth of 101cm. They are a Bivoltine species, the first brood flying from early March to May or June, the second brood from June to late August. Specimens of the first brood are usually locally abundant. However, second brood specimens are far less common and, indeed, males of this brood tend to be extremely elusive.



***Andrena scotica* (20th April)**

This is one of the most frequent mining bees to find in gardens and intensively farmed landscapes. This species is typically univoltine flying from mid-March to July peaking with the blossoming of Blackthorn and Hawthorn. There is a partial second generation in the South, with males appearing as early as mid-June and females persisting into August. They nest singly or in loose aggregations in leaf litter on sunny banks.



Andrena nigroaenea (15th July)

This species occurs in a wide variety of habitats and has a flight period with males from mid-March and females lasting until late July and sometimes there is a second generation. Nesting occurs in bare ground on footpaths and cliff faces, short-cropped turf or in soft mortar of walls. They can form large dense aggregations sometimes in garden lawns and flowerbeds.

The next six species were all recorded for the first time and all from my garden or found in the conservatory. They all appear to be fairly common and multiple numbers of each species have been found around my garden. It just goes to show with a little bit of effort to provide native pollinating plants and allowing the lawn to go wild what can be done and I've definitely noticed a difference in the amount of insect generally now using the garden. All we have is two flower borders and three one-metre square beds with a variety of different pollinating plants.



Melitta haemorrhoidalis (30th June)

They are a relatively common species so there is no reason to suspect they are not regular on the patch. The orange tip to the abdomen is diagnostic. Their flight period is early July to September and can be found on heathland and acid grassland, chalk downland and some woodland. They nest in small aggregations in light soils.



Melitta leporina(25th June)

This is the second of the Blunthorn Bees so named because of the blunt end to their antenna, known as the Clover Melitta it has a flight season of late June to late August and can be found in a variety of habitats particularly those that are clover rich and unimproved. It nests in small aggregations in light soils. It is a localised species in Southern England.



Osmia caerulescens (18th April)

The Blue Mason Bee flight period is typically April to late July with a second generation peaking in August. It can be found in various habitats but found most frequently in urban areas and it obtains most of its pollen from legumes e.g. Bird's-foot-trefoil, White Clover etc. They nest in a variety of holes and cavities usually above ground such as soft mortar of walls, old timbers and fence posts also in hollow stems of plants such as bramble.



Coellixys elongata (15th July)

The Dull-vented Sharp-tailed Bee (pictured) is the first in this group that I have seen unfortunately this individual fell foul to the False Widow Spider but didn't get eaten. They are the only species other than Apis (Honey Bee) to have hairy eyes. They are cleptoparasites of Megachile and Anthophora bees so it was probably searching our bee hotels for a host before inadvertently flying in to the conservatory.



Cuckoo bumblebee *Bombus vestalis* (19th July)

I first found and identified the species at Holton Lee whilst taking part in the Chris Packham Bioblitz arranged by Birds of Poole Harbour. When I arrived home after the event, I noticed a white-tailed bumblebee in the garden and taking a closer look realised it was indeed the same species I'd seen at Holton so I took a few record shots to confirm finding one on the patch.

Wasps



Sawfly - *Phylloecus linearis* (3rd June)

This is the fifth species of Sawfly identified on the patch; Sawflies are closely related to bees, wasps and ants - all are in the Hymenoptera family. Sawflies can generally be distinguished from bees and wasps by the lack of a 'waist'. There are around 600 UK species, some large and colourful, others tiny and obscure. A number are known to gardeners as some sawfly larvae feed on common garden plants such as Berberis, Geranium and Solomon's Seal.

The ichneumon group of wasps, other than a few very obvious species is another specialist group and difficult to identify. Most of the group, I have been able to identify up until now have almost always been found in or close to my moth trap. Though Ian and I have been able to photograph one or two different species whilst out walking and birding in the area.



Ichneumon Wasp - *Pimpla rufipes* (28th September)

A mainly black species, but with bright orange legs, the hind pair of legs being only slightly larger than the other pairs. The ovipositor of the female is quite thick and short and the 'waist' between the thorax and abdomen is also quite short.

Quite common and widespread in England and Wales at least, but like many Ichneumonidae it is badly under recorded. Predates butterfly and moth larvae, laying an egg in each one. Adults can sometimes be seen visiting flowers. Though this one was found in the conservatory which seems to be my best catching vessel!



Cuckoo Wasp - *Hedychrum neimelai* / *H. nobile* agg. (28th June)

Whilst checking out the Digger Wasp *Cerceris arenaria* colony on Lytchett Heath I noticed just by chance a small red and green wasp. Unfortunately, my photographic skills let me down and after some research I was only able to identify it as a Jewel wasp of either *Hedychrum neimelai* or *Hedychrum nobile* both of which are parasitic on *Cerceris* Digger Wasp species. *H. neimelai* is a long-term resident of Britain while *H. nobile* is a recent arrival that has spread rapidly since its first record from Surrey in 1998.

Distributional data and field observations suggest that the preferred host of *H. nobile* is *Cerceris arenaria* which suggests this is the species photographed and that the hosts of *H. neimelai* are *C. quinquefasciata* and *C. ruficornis* which as yet have not been found in the Lytchett recording area.

All the *Cerceris* species nest in burrows in sandy places. The female Jewel Wasp will on detecting a host's nest will enter and lay an egg in a cell. On hatching the chrysidid larva acts as a parasitoid consuming either the mature larva or pre-pupa of the host.

Orthoptera & Allied Insects - Grasshoppers, Crickets, Earwigs, Cockroaches, Stick insects & Mantids

Eleven species have been identified in this group so far all grasshoppers or crickets only a single species has been added this year Meadow Grasshopper *Chorthippus parallelus* on the 28th June.



Meadow Grasshopper *Chorthippus parallelus* (28th June)

Ian first saw and photographed a grasshopper at the end of footpath 12 but unfortunately his shot didn't allow for all the points needed to identify it. So a few days later I managed to find a number of grasshoppers that I hadn't seen before and took the shot here. From Ian's and mine I managed to identify them as Meadow Grasshopper *Chorthippus parallelus*.

Arachnids- Spiders, Ticks & Scorpions

Two species of spider have been added to the growing Lytchett Bay list in 2018 **Four-spotted Orb Spider *Araneus quadratus*** and ***Amaurobius fenestralis*** on the 6th and 11th July respectively. This brings the recording area arachnid list to seventeen species this group are way under recorded as Ian, Shaun and myself have next to no experience so it's a case of, if we see something that catches our eye we will photograph it and try to get an identification.



Four-spotted Orb Spider *Araneus quadratus* (6th July)

Is widespread but patchily distributed throughout Britain and seems to be fairly common in the Lytchett area possibly we have confused it in the past with the more common Garden Spider. This spider is found on vegetation that has sufficient height and strength to support the large orb web, such as undisturbed grassland, heather and gorse. There may be a preference for damper situations. The web is usually found stretched across the gap between plants, with a large tent-like retreat at one side, where the spider can be found if not in the centre of the web. This very variably coloured spider holds the British weight record. Adults are found in late summer and autumn, with a male peak in August and female peak between August and October.



***Amaurobius fenestralis* (30th May)**

is another widespread species in most of Britain. This spider is found in woodlands under the bark of trees, logs and in leaf litter. It is also found under stones and on plants with stiff dense foliage e.g. conifer hedges (Roberts 1995). Webs are very common on tree trunks, in crevices and under loose bark, and are much more easily found than the spider. Although not usually associated with houses and gardens, it is sometimes found on fences. Adults occur throughout the year but mainly in the spring and autumn. What is strange this spider turned up in my moth trap in my garden so a little outside of its usual habitat though possibly came from our garden log pile, which is

under a pine tree.

Diptera- Flies & Relatives

Diptera is another massive group and very specialised but we continue to record what we can and with expert help from the Facebook page have continued to add another seven species. Bringing our total up to 65 species identified in total.



Cranefly - *Tipula rufina* (18th April)

This is a group which I think is commonly overlooked this is our sixth species of Crane fly recorded on the Lytchett patch of some three hundred in the UK. I think there are several more out there to be identified and added to the list.



Sericomyia silentis (24th September)

Is one of the larger species of hoverfly they are a scarcer species in southern England. The larvae are of the 'long-tailed', aquatic type and have been found amongst old, wet, rotting wood fragments in a sawmill and from a water-filled drainage ditch on a cut-over peat bog. It is associated with peaty pools in moorland and acid habitats, including bogs on heathlands in the south and east of Britain; poor-fen and wet woodland, including Salix and Alnus carr.



Syrirta pipiens (2nd June)

Another new hoverfly, this one found in my garden and is one of the easier species of hoverfly to identify as the apical third of the metafemur in both sexes is swollen with a row of spines along the ventral edge. Another good field mark is the pair of pale wedge-shaped spots on anterior margin of thorax behind the head.

The Larvae can be found in wet decaying organic matter manure, compost, silage reed beds Stages of *Syrirta pipiens* have been reported from cow and horse manure, from guinea pig manure and from human excrement. It has also been found in decayed and rotting tulip bulbs and in heaps of vegetable refuse.



***Cheilosia albitarsis* / *Cheilosia ranunculi* agg.** (30th May)

Are very similar hoverflies and can often only be safely determined by detailed examination. For this reason we have treated the two species as an aggregate. They are robust with a short broad abdomen. In sunlight the thorax may be seen as metallic dark blue/green. The abdomen is more of a duller grey/bronze colour. These species are often found in damp meadows, marshy areas, woodland clearings or well-shaded verges and are associated with buttercup April - August.



Yellow Dung Fly *Scathophaga-stercoraria* (31st May)

A common species around the Lytchett recording area but very hard to photograph hence I've just managed to identify it. The larvae found are in/on dung of domestic and wild animals, the adults can be found nearby which can be almost anywhere, pasture, meadows, woodland, near to running water, parks and gardens.



Robber Fly *Dysmachus trigonus* (18th August)

This is the third species of robberfly that we've managed to identify in the recording area, there are a further 24 species in the Asilidae group in the UK. They take a variety of prey, the one pictured is eating a fly sp. Its main flight time is between May and August and they have a preference to sandy habitats. Though this one was photographed in my garden.



Cluster Fly *Pollenia rudis* (27th July)

There are over 20 *Pollenia* species recorded in Britain, most of which can't be identified without microscopic examination to key out complex features. *Pollenia rudis* is generally the most common species. In autumn, it can be commonly found sunning on sheltered fences and tree trunks or shrubs as this was in my garden. They are a widespread and common species throughout the UK.

Coleoptera - Beetles, Ladybirds & Bugs

Another specialist group which I'm pleased to say we get help with identifying from local expert Tony Allen and so far we have recorded 63 species to date but there is certainly many more out there.

Bugs



Gorse Shieldbug *Piezodorus lituratus* (25th September)

This species has certainly been overlooked in the past and I managed to find both the 4th instar and an adult on Lytchett Heath this summer. It is a common and widespread species throughout the UK.

They have two colour forms, which are related to sexual maturity. Those that emerge in spring are predominantly green but the new generation, which appears in late summer look like the individual pictured. As with many other shieldbug species they frequently become darker before hibernation. Though they are often associated with gorse, larvae also feed on broom, dyer's greenwood and other plants in the Genisteae, and have also been found on Laburnum and clover.



This photograph is of the 4th instar of the Gorse Shieldbug the last development before becoming adult. They aren't at all similar to the final adult and almost looks like a different species and they are quite variable in colour this individual is quite dark I have seen greener but they all have the white silvery edge.



Western Conifer Seed Bug *Leptoglossus occidentalis* (25th September)

Both Ian, Shaun and I recorded this species in 2018. The bug feeds on what its name suggests on pines particularly Douglas Fir and is attracted to light and may enter buildings to hibernate in the autumn.

Originally a native of the USA and introduced into Europe in 1999. It was first detected in Britain in 2007, when a single adult was found in a classroom at Weymouth College. In the late summer of 2008 there were more than 45 reported sightings of this insect. Since July 2009, Fera and Forest Research

have received details of more than 100 sightings, predominantly from along the south coast, but also inland from across much of England (Bedfordshire, Berkshire, Cornwall, Cumbria, Derbyshire, Devon, Dorset, East and West Sussex, East Yorkshire, Essex, Gloucestershire, Hampshire, Isle of Wight, Kent, Leicestershire, London, Merseyside, Norfolk, Nottinghamshire, Suffolk, Surrey, Warwickshire, West Yorkshire, Worcestershire), in South Wales (Swansea) and the Channel Islands (Jersey, Guernsey). Nymphs have been found at one location, which suggests that a breeding population has established.



Corizus hyoscyami (4th Aug)

Around 9mm this general thought to be generally a coastal species in southern Britain but is increasingly being found further inland. Mainly found between May and September in grassland scrub woodlands and gardens.



Stenodema laevigata (2nd November)

This is a species of grass bug, which is common throughout Britain. Both adults and the larvae feed on the unripe grains of a number of grasses, but this species is often more common in damper habitats than its closer relatives.



Rhododendron Leafhopper *Graphocephala fennahi* (24th October)

This is another species that was introduced from the USA where it is called the scarlet and green leafhopper. It was introduced into Europe in the early 1900's and can be found widely in southern Britain. Both the adults and larvae feed on Rododendron sap. Usually seen between June and November.

Beetles



Silpha tristis (20th April)

Is the fourth member of the burying/sexton beetles we have managed to identify on the patch. I've found it hard to find very much information on this species on the internet other than the following.

The Silpha group are adapted to eat snails. They are generally a nocturnal hunting species and usually in the past I've found them in my moth trap but this individual was found in the garden.



Coelositona cambricus (20th February)

This is one of two weevil species added to the patch list in 2018 of the 612 species known in the UK. *Coelositona cambricus* food plant is Birdsfoot Trefoil which I have in abundance in my lawn.



Sitona lineatus (14th May)

This is the second of our additions of weevil found again in my garden moth trap. It is a common and widespread species in England and Wales. Its common name is Pea-leaf Weevil which it does indeed feed on both peas and beans in gardens but only in a very minor way and causes very little damage to the crop. As an adult, this small creature feeds on the leaves of many leguminous species including Red and White Clover although for some reason it avoids Lupins. The larvae feed on the roots of the same species under the

soil.



Cantharis pellucida (28th April)

This is a widespread species with modern records throughout England and Wales including the Isle of Wight and Anglesey, and widespread in Scotland. Generally an insect of lowland, broad leaved woodland, the adults are active in bright sunshine from late April or early May until July and may be observed on a variety of flowers. Locally we have recorded them from *Crataegus* (Hawthorn) blossom and various umbels along woodland borders and in parkland, sweeping suitable flowers is probably the easiest way to record them as they are easily disturbed and fly readily. They seem to be

locally common throughout our area but numbers vary widely from year to year. Care needs to be taken when recording this species as there are several similar sized cantharids with dark elytra eg *C.nigricans*, *C.rustica*, *C.lateralis*.



Oedemera lurida (28th April)

This species belongs to a complex of three species, the *Oedemera lurida* complex, which are quite difficult to distinguish one from the other, as the separation relies on subtle characters. These beetles usually need to be dissected and examined under the microscope. However, *Oedemera lurida* is the smallest species, *Oedemera virescens* is the biggest one, while *Oedemera monticola* is in between. Larvae develop in rotten wood or humus and feed on stems of herbaceous plants and on rotten wood, while adult beetles feed on

pollen and nectar of a wide variety of flowers, especially of umbels, *Taraxacum* and *Ranunculus* flowers and hawthorns. They can mostly be encountered from April through July.