

Lytchett Bay 2008

Shaun Robson

2008 was a good year for the birder at Lytchett Bay. Whilst the total number of species was rather average there was quality throughout. The highlight being the first record of Rosy Starling. The Lytchett Bay recording area list now stands at 210. Added to this were the 2nd and 3rd records of Cattle Egret, 3rd record of Black Tern, 5th record of Iceland Gull and 8th record of Ring-billed Gull. In addition both Little Tern and Black Redstart occurred for only the 3rd occasion since 1992. Cormorant, Gadwall, Peregrine, Mediterranean Gull, Sandwich Tern, House Martin and Grasshopper Warbler occurred in record numbers.

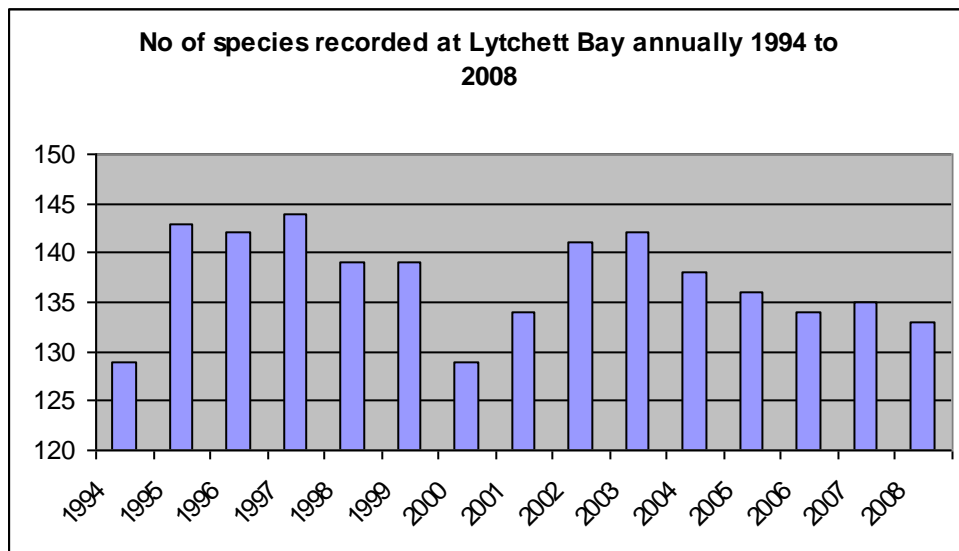
Changes in climate and farming practice continue to impact on the birds of Lytchett Bay. Dunlin, Snipe, Lapwing and Goldeneye are all declining year on year. Hen Harrier failed to put in an appearance for the first time in 17 years. Little Owl, Water Pipit, Yellowhammer and Lesser Spotted Woodpecker, once considered "write ins" on the annual list have either gone completely or are, at best, relegated to rare visitors.

The future of the core area is looking promising thanks to the intervention of the RSPB. Mark Singleton reports...."The new sluice on a ditch to the south of the sewerage works was put into operation for the first time this year but unfortunately it is not operating to its full potential, work in 2009 will seek to address this. Permission is currently being sought to install a second sluice which will allow water to be taken off of an adjoining ditch to give a constant supply of water to this unit. This will allow the grips in one of these fields to be kept constantly full of water when required. Some of these grips were cleaned and re-profiled this year, this will continue in 2009. In the summer a considerable number of fields were topped to reduce the amount of soft rush on the site. This also included cutting the spartina that was starting to encroach into The Pool. As well as topping, the foot drains in this field were cleared with the hope of creating more wet edge habitat, effectively extending the area that waders and wildfowl could feed in. The conservation strip was observed in the Stubble Field and a great mix of arable species was present, the corn marigolds were particularly good this year. Unfortunately the resident grazier topped this area early effectively reducing its importance as a winter-feeding area for finches and buntings. A 400m section of stock fencing was also installed in the fields to the East of Slough Lane, which will allow the fields there to be grazed."

The disturbance of the Bay itself is increasing. Recent years have seen illegal shellfish collection increase considerably due to the value of shellfish for export. Legal wildfowling also seems to be on the increase. It is difficult to know what impact these activities are having on the Bay's attractiveness to birds but one has to conclude that it is not positive.

The Bay was visited on 215 days as set out below.

JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
14	9	22	25	23	11	21	25	27	21	9	8



Ringling 2008

907 birds of 41 species were ringed. Nuthatch and Nightjar were ringed for the first time at the Bay. 15 recoveries are reported in this report and include evidence of one of our Rock Pipits found in a Barn Owl pellet and a Grasshopper Warbler taken by a cat in Kent in mid October.

Ringling during the summer again formed part of the RSPB Aquatic Warbler project but the weather was again unsuitable for drifting migrants of this species across the Channel. In fact the early summer was dreadfully wet, yet the passage of *acrocephalus* warblers was very good. Sedge Warblers were ringed in greater numbers than ever before. Ringling took place on 40 dates. The full details, controls, recoveries and interesting re-traps are in the systematic list. An appendix, detailing the individual species totals is included at the end of the report.

Acknowledgements

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

Wessex Water and the landowner, the Lees Estate, for their kind permission to ring at Lytchett Bay and for access to Holton Lee.

Many thanks to Mark Singleton, Dante Munns and their RSPB colleagues for the interest they have shown in the site this year.

Systematic List 2008

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

Little Grebe: (11 - 17)

Winter visitor. Recorded until 6th Mar and from 18th Jul. The earliest return date. Max 10 on 26th Oct.

Great Crested Grebe: (4 - 14)

Occasional visitor. Recorded on 6 dates. Singles on 27th Jan, 10th Feb, 8th-9th Apr and 8th Nov. 2 on 25th May.

Cormorant: (150 – 17)

Regular visitor. Another record year. 150 were present on 28th Oct. The previous record was 107 on 10th Mar 2007.

Cattle Egret: (4 – 2)

Second and third records for the Bay. As predicted after the record influx of 2007 we did not have to wait long for our second record. One was found with sheep on Folly Pond on 19th Apr (SR et al). It was seen in the area daily until 1st June, even though it was seen to leave the Bay to roost elsewhere each evening. Folly Pond, The Pool and to a lesser extent The Far Fields were its favored haunts. Another was found in the Bay at low tide on the afternoon of 25th Oct (SR, MS).



Cattle Egret, Lytchett Bay April 2008 (Aiden Brown)

Little Egret: (22 – 16)

Common visitor. Numbers have stabilised in recent years. The max count of 22 was on 3rd Sep 2005.

Bay monthly max:

JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
16	n.c.	6	n.c.	6	7	18	10	19	n.c.	12	n.c.

Grey Heron: (10 – 17)

Recorded throughout the year. Considerably scarcer than the previous species. An unremarkable year with no count greater than 3.

Mute Swan: (51 – 17)

Recently established breeder and common winter visitor. No breeding attempt was made this year.

JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
5	9	16	16	16	16	6	6	5	8	21	41

Orange L4N was present on 13th Apr 2008. It was ringed as a first year male in the large moulting flock at Christchurch 22nd Jul 2007. Following moult birds from this site disperse widely along the coast to the east and west, or inland following the Stour or Avon. This sighting is the only one since the bird was ringed.

Yellow ZBV was also present on 13th Apr 2008 at the same time. It was ringed near Bovington Camp, Dorset as a 1st yr on 10th Jul 2005. It was then controlled at Christchurch Harbour in 2006 when the original damaged ring (Yellow YYT) was replaced with current ring.

Thanks to David Stone and Chris Perrins for supplying this information.

Greylag Goose: (25 – 9)

Scarce feral wanderer. Recorded on 4 dates. 1 on 23rd Feb, 2 on 20th Apr, 1 on 26th Apr and 23 over on 13th Nov.

Dark-bellied Brent Goose: (35 – 9)

Scarce visitor. Another good year for this increasingly occurring species. Present on at least 7 dates up to 20th Mar. Max 25 on 5th Mar.

Canada Goose: (137 – 17)

Increasingly frequent visitor. Still no indication that lingering spring birds are attempting to breed. Max 63 on 6th Oct.

JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
0	0	5	5	4	0	2	20	40	63	0	0

Shelduck: (645 – 548 – 17)

Declining winter visitor and former breeder. Nice to see an upturn in fortunes for this attractive species. The count of 187 on 8th Dec is the biggest since 200 in Dec 1997.

Bay monthly max:

JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
77	42	74	35	13	13	8	6	7	35	86	187

Wigeon: (424 – 17)

Increasingly common winter visitor. Absent from 8th Apr (latest departure date) until 12th Sep.

Bay monthly max:

JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
324	126	80	2	0	0	0	0	33	17	196	420

Gadwall: (6 – 12)

Occasional visitor. 25 bird days on 9 dates, a good showing. Max 6 on 31st Dec was a record count.

Teal: (402 – 17)

Winter visitor and passage migrant. No records between 23rd Apr and 13th Jul.

Bay monthly max:

JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
156	n.c.	159	178	0	0	6	1	56	143	30	100

Mallard: (100 – 52 – 17)

Breeds at several sites around the recording area. For the second year running a pair spent the spring on Sandy Close Pond but did not breed.

Bay monthly max:

JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
35	n.c.	n.c.	br	br	16	10	33	32	14	n.c.	n.c.

Shoveler: (7 – 16)

Scarce visitor, which can occur at any time. 1 on 9th Oct was the only record of the year.

Goldeneye: (12 – 17)

Declining winter visitor. An early departure and late arrival, present until 26th Feb and from 7th Dec. Never more than a single bird observed on any one day. This mirrors experience elsewhere in Dorset which has seen a 50% decline in wintering numbers since the 1990's. It is believed that like many wildfowl, this species is finding that conditions further east are more hospitable than in previous decades and are consequently choosing to remain there for the winter.

Red-breasted Merganser: (73 – 17)

Common winter visitor. Present until 17th Apr and from 7th Dec.

Bay monthly max:

JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
11	10	18	6	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	5

Osprey: (3 – 16)

Annual passage migrant. 1 in spring on 26th Mar. A relatively poor autumn with no records until 10th Sep, After which singles were recorded on a further 6 dates until 29th Sep.

Marsh Harrier: (2 – 16)

Irregular visitor. A poor showing for the 2nd year in a row. Recorded on 3 dates in autumn. 10th Oct, 9th Nov and 31st Dec.

[Hen Harrier: (2 – 16)]

Irregular Visitor. For the first time in 17 years none were seen at the Bay. Perhaps a sign of the continuing decline of this species as a wintering bird in Poole Harbour?

Sparrowhawk: (2 – 17)

Uncommon visitor. Recorded on 23 dates, an average number of annual sightings (23.4 p.a. 1992-2008).

Common Buzzard: (15 – 17)

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

Kestrel: (2 – 17)

Frequently seen resident. Breeding not confirmed for the third year running.

Merlin: (2 – 13)

Scarce winter visitor. Just one, seen on the Far Fields on 16th Jan.

Hobby: (2 – 15)

Irregular visitor. Singles recorded on 5 dates between 8th June and 28th Aug.

Peregrine: (2 – 16)

Uncommon visitor. Recorded on 12 dates between Feb and Nov, the best showing in the period since 1992. The average number of dates is 6.7 p.a.



Peregrine drowning male Teal, Mar 2008 (S.Robson)

Red-legged Partridge: (4 – 3)

Occasional visitor. First recorded in 2005. Up to 2 were seen on 5 dates. No evidence of breeding.

Pheasant:

Increasingly common resident. Established in all parts of the recording area. 15 were seen together on 1st Jan.

Water Rail: (23 – 17)

Common resident and winter visitor. No specific records this year but no perceived change in status. The 2004 breeding survey established a population estimate of more than 60 pairs in the Bay.

Moorhen: (12 – 17)

An uncommon resident. At least 3 pairs scattered across recording area. A juvenile arrived at Sandy Close Pond on 26th Aug and remained until the year end.

Oystercatcher: (400 – 17)

A winter visitor and passage migrant. Turlin Fields and Turlin Shore at high tide remain the favored locations, though more birds now remain in the bay to feed at low tide than in previous years. The maximum count was on 8th Nov.

Bay monthly max:

JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
224	n.c.	n.c.	3	9	1	3	22	60	n.c.	261	n.c.

Avocet: (158 – 16)

Increasingly regular winter visitor and passage migrant. Absent from 7th Mar until 1st Nov.

Bay monthly max:

JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
8	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	140

Ringed Plover: (17 – 10 – 13)

Scarce visitor. A good year with 4 on 20th Apr and 9 on 17th Aug.

Lapwing: (3000 – 17)

Formerly bred, now a declining winter visitor. Bred regularly during early 1990's. Last confirmed breeding 1999. Recorded on 41 dates. The worst year on record, for the 2nd consecutive year. Recorded on only 19% of visits (41 out of 215). Very scarce in the early part of the year. Only two double figure counts in the first 6 months (only 12 in the whole year).

This species was found breeding at a site within 2km of the Bay in 2008 and a presumed wanderer from this colony was seen displaying over the Pool on 21st Apr. Perhaps there is still hope that Lapwing might once again breed at Lytchett Bay?

Bay monthly max:

JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
121	0	1	3	1	3	27	23	21	5	221	0

Dunlin: (1800 – 1200 – 17)

Declining winter visitor and passage migrant. The worst year on record. Previously the lowest recorded annual maximum was 81 in 2006.

Bay monthly max:

JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
7	0	0	18	1	0	0	4	5	13	21	30

Ruff: (9 – 14)

Scarce migrant, usually in autumn. 2 juveniles in Bay on 15th Sep were the only record.

Woodcock: (5 – 7)

Scarce but under recorded winter visitor. The number of records of this species is largely a reflection of the effort made to see them. They are probably present frequently throughout the winter. 2 arriving at dusk on 10th Feb was the only record.

Snipe: (160 – 70 – 17)

Declining winter visitor. Recorded until 13th Apr, returning on the 9th Aug. Very scarce at either end of the year. Numbers of Snipe at the Bay declined rapidly at the end of the 20th century. A slight improvement has been noted in the last 5 years but 2008 was an all time low. In the 1980's the species was so common that "The Pool" was known as the "The Snipe Field". Between 50 and 100 were regularly counted in that one field!

Bay monthly max:

JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
1	4	1	2	0	0	0	4	2	1	6	19

Black-tailed Godwit: (1240 – 17)

Common passage migrant and winter visitor. A very good early winter and spring (more than 400 were present on 11 dates). Max count on 18th Apr. Birds were occasionally attracted to The Pool with max of 41 in Apr.

Bay monthly max:

JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
125	174	299	800	200	1	4	17	33	21	54	150

Over the last 9 years colour ringed birds have proved that birds visiting Lytchett Bay breed in Iceland (*L.l.islandica*). Predominantly, birds seen at Lytchett Bay on migration, winter in Western France. However some have also been recorded in Portugal, SW Ireland, Holland, Belgium, NE England as well as many locations along the south coast.

Colour ringed birds were recorded as follows.

LG+RO – 6th & 8th Apr. Ringed at Langhús, Fljót, N Iceland as an adult female on 26th June 2002. This bird also visited the Bay in Apr 2006 & 2007 (It was mistakenly described as LG+OR in the 2007 report). It has also been seen on Humberside, the Avon Valley, and Western France and wintered in Tejo Estuary, Setúbal, W Portugal in Jan 2008.



RR+WL – 6th – 25th Apr. Ringed at Álftafjörður, E Iceland as a female on 3rd Apr 2000. It has been recorded at The Bay in both 2006 & 2007. It has spent the winters in Western France.



G//R+GN – 9th Apr. Ringed at Farlington, Hampshire as a juvenile male on 17th Sept, 2005. Also recorded in 2007. All subsequent sightings until this one were around south east Hampshire.

YG+WR(flag) – 18th Apr. Ringed at Midjanes, Reykholar, NW Iceland as a chick on 9th July 2007. It spent Sep of that year at Radipole and Lodmoor.

G//R+YR – 6th to 9th Apr. Details awaited but the sequence suggests that it was ringed at Farlington, Hants.

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

O = Orange

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

R = Red

W = White

Y = Yellow

G = Green

B = Blue

N = Niger

Many thanks to Sigga Betta and Jose Alves for supplying this information.

Bar-tailed Godwit: (20 – 13)

Scare visitor. After last years record it was back to normal with just 3 records, each involving single birds. 6th Apr, 23rd Apr and 30th Aug.

Whimbrel: (157 – 17)

Passage migrant, most numerous in spring. Following the first on 17th Apr there were 198 bird days to the 16th May. Max 34 on 2nd May. Autumn passage was also average commencing on 13th July. There were 37 bird days until 15th Sep. No day count greater than five.

Curlew: (104 – 17)

Common winter visitor and passage migrant.

Bay monthly max:

JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
56	n.c.	24	11	3	4	22	18	32	46	n.c.	46

Spotted Redshank: (68 – 42 – 17)

Declining passage migrant and scarce winter visitor. Recorded on 76 dates. Max 8 on 16th Sep. Absent between 26th Apr and 25th July.

Pool monthly max:

JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
3	0	6	5	0	0	0	4	7	1	0	7

Bay monthly max

JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
2	1	4	3	0	0	1	5	8	6	1	0

Redshank: (608 – 436 – 17)

Common winter visitor. Small breeding population on salt marsh. Generally a poor year with few significant concentrations.

Pool monthly max:

JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
0	0	1	10	0	0	0	0	0	15	13	70

Bay monthly max:

JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
119	183	n.c.	76	4	n.c.	1	1	164	n.c.	n.c.	n.c.

Greenshank: (49 – 27 – 17)

Common passage migrant and increasing winter visitor. Recorded until 8th May. The first

returning bird was noted on 7th July. Max 13 on 16th Oct.

Pool monthly max;

JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
3	1	3	4	1	0	0	0	4	13	2	1

Bay monthly max:

JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
3	4	3	3	1	0	8	7	9	9	2	0

Green Sandpiper: (10 – 17)

Common autumn migrant and winter visitor, occasional in spring. The Far Fields and western most part of the Bay are the favoured sites. Very scarce in the early part of the year with only 3 records of singles to the 19th Apr. Returning on 18th July. Frequently recorded until the years end. Max 6 on 29th Aug.

Monthly max:

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

Common Sandpiper: (10 – 17)

Uncommon passage migrant. Two in spring, on 13th and 25th Apr. Return passage started on 4th Jul and totaled 19 bird days until 20th Sep. Max 3 on 22nd Aug.

Mediterranean Gull: (15 – 16)

Uncommon visitor, increasing. Another record year - 105 bird days between 13th Jan and 28th Jul. Max 15 on 20th Apr was a new record day count for the Bay. No juveniles were seen. It is interesting to note that the period that this species disappears from the Bay co-incides with newly occurring large gatherings (of presumed continental migrants) that occur at the coastal parts of Poole Harbour and Weymouth. Whether the Poole Harbour breeders join this group or move further west is unknown.

Monthly max:

JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
1	1	5	15	4	3	1	0	0	0	0	0

Black-headed Gull: (12000 – 7000 – 17)

A very common visitor. 1000's regularly frequent the bay en route to the Wareham Channel roost. Max 4000 on 20th Mar. The first juveniles were noted on 14th Jun. 3 ringed.

Ring-billed Gull: (2 – 7)

The eighth record. An adult in breeding plumage was in the pre roost on 20th Mar (SR).

Common Gull: (1700 – 17)

A common winter visitor and passage migrant, especially in spring. No count made which exceeded 200. The departure date for this species was not noted. The first returning bird was on 3rd Jul (the earliest return since at least 1992).

Lesser Black backed Gull: (2128 – 17)

Abundant autumn and common spring passage migrant and uncommon winter visitor. Rarely counted, especially in autumn when they are abundant. Max 150 on 20th Mar.

Herring Gull: (2000 – 17)

Common winter visitor and passage migrant. A particularly strong spring passage this year. Many hundreds present in late Mar. Max 800 on 20th. Autumn max was 500 on 3rd Oct.

Yellow legged Gull: (65 – 16)

Frequent visitor throughout the year, peaking in summer. Probably under recorded. Max was on 26th Jul.

Bay monthly max:

JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
0	0	2	1	3	1	17	10	10	5	3	0

Iceland Gull: (2 – 4)

The fifth record. A juv/1st W visited the pre roost most evenings between 16th and 29th Mar (SR et al).



Iceland Gull, record shot, Mar 2008 (S.Robson)

Great Black backed Gull: (151 – 17)

Regular visitor throughout the year in small numbers. Max 19 on 8th Nov.

Little Tern: (10 – 7 – 3)

3rd and 4th records in period since 1992. 2 in the Bay on the 15th May (SR). 3 adults in the Bay on 25th Jul (SR).

Sandwich Tern: (5 – 17)

Uncommon summer visitor. 33 bird days on 18 dates made this a record year, surpassing the previous bests of 1995 and 1996. Recorded between 6th Apr and 1st Oct. Max 5 on 9th Aug equaled the previous best count.

Common Tern: (25 – 17)

Uncommon summer visitor. Seen on 21 dates between 9th May and 18th Sept (latest record at the Bay). Max 25 on 9th Aug. This flock flew quickly south and is the largest day count at the Bay.

Black Tern: (1 – 3)

4th record for the Bay. A single bird was seen on 4 evenings between 10th and 16th Sep (MaCo, MoCo, SR). Given the identical behavior of the bird on each occasion it is presumed that the sightings involved a single individual.

Stock Dove: (29 – 17)

Uncommon Resident. Max 5 on several dates.

Wood Pigeon: (1368 – 17)

Common resident. 200 over Turlin on the morning of 29th Oct was the only movement noted.

Collared Dove: (11 – 17)

Uncommon resident. Rarely seen in the rural parts of the Bay, but regular on the urban fringe, particularly Sandy Close, Beach Road, Lytchett Way and Border Drive. 9 together on the Pool on 29th Sep was the only noteworthy record. No change in status noted.

Cuckoo: (2 – 17)

Uncommon summer visitor. 10 records of a single male(s) from various areas in the recording area between 9th and 22nd May.

Barn Owl: (2 – 10)

Occasional visitor, bred in 2007. Disappointingly breeding did not occur at French's Farm. Sightings occurred on only 4 dates. Singles on 3rd Mar, 14th Jun, 20th Jul and 13th Sep.

GF15792, ringed at Lytchett Bay on 19th Jun 2007 as a 1st yr female was found 224 days later, freshly dead,, at Bestwall Park, Wareham Dorset on 29th Jan 2008. A movement of 6km.

Tawny Owl: (2 – 17)

Uncommon resident. Seems to be declining at the Bay. All records came from Sandy Close Pond where the species was heard occasionally in Feb, Oct, Nov and Dec.

Nightjar: (3 – 8)

Irregular breeder. A good year with 3 males holding territory in early June. Singles were recorded on the Far Fields on 4 dates in autumn between 22nd Aug and 13th Sep. 2 migrants ringed in Sep.



Nightjar, 13th Sep 2008

Swift: (113 – 17)

Passage migrant and possible local breeder. Recorded between 6th May and 20th Jul. Max 70 on 14th Jul.

Kingfisher: (3 – 17)

Passage migrant and uncommon winter visitor. Bred in 2000 and must breed just outside the

recording area most years. Recorded in both winter periods. Absent between 26th Apr and 4th Jul. 10 ringed of which 2 were adults.

None of the birds ringed in previous years were re-trapped. Of the 10 new birds ringed in 2008, 3 were re-trapped.

SB72050 – 1st yr ringed on 25th Jul, still present on 15th Aug (22 days)

SA27381 – 1st yr ringed on 30th Aug; still present on 19th Sep (21 days)

SA96777 – 1st yr ringed on 22nd Aug; still present on 20th Sep (29 days)

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. 2 ringed.

Woodlark: (15 – 10)

Recently established winter visitor. Favoured habitat remained largely unmanaged and consequently unattractive. The only record of the year was juvenile on 1st Jun. Breeds at Holton Lee.

Skylark: (250 – 20 – 17)

Scarce breeder and passage migrant. Up to 2 territories established and held throughout the spring. Numbers in autumn again poor, max 5 on 19th Oct. Up to 5 birds wintering in stubble or saltings.

Sand Martin: (5000 – 17)

Common passage migrant. First record was 15th Mar. The last record of the year was on 23rd Sept. Numbers were again very poor through both migration seasons. 1 ringed.

Swallow: (1000 – 540 – 17)

Common passage migrant, breeds at French's Farm. First record of spring was on 10th Apr. Autumn migration was very poor with a max count of only 40 on 9th Oct. The last date on which the species was recorded. 12 ringed.

House Martin: (1800 – 17)

Common passage migrant, breeding colonies on edge of recording area at Watery Lane and Turlin Moor. The first of the year was on 20th Apr. The size of the breeding colony at Watery Lane was 13 nests, 1 down on 2007 (plus 8 failed or destroyed). The colony at Turlin Moor was not surveyed. Autumn migration was the best ever with a series of big movements. Early morning of the 24th Sep produced an amazing 1800 east over the Far Fields in little more than an hour. Other large concentrations included 250 on 12th Sep and 300 on 25th Sep. The last record was on 5th Oct.

Meadow Pipit: (130 – 17)

Breeding resident and common passage migrant. 3 singing birds on territory at Turlin Saltings, Lytchett Way Saltings and Far Fields during the breeding season. Small flocks frequented Turlin fields, the Stubble Field and the Cottage Area throughout both migration and winter periods. Max 70 on 5th Oct. 37 ringed.

Rock Pipit: (50 – 17)

Common winter visitor. Recorded until early Mar and from 3rd Sep (the earliest return date since 1992). Common on saltings throughout the winter. Max counts were 10 at Lytchett Way on 23rd Feb and 15 at Lytchett Heath on 7th Dec. 1 ringed.

2499306 was ringed a 1st yr at Lytchett Bay on 20th Oct 2007. The ring was found in a Barn Owl pellet at East Holton Farm, Holton Lee 152 days later on 20th Mar 2008. It is surprising that feeding Barn owls are only rarely seen feeding over the saltings and reed beds of the Bay (See Barn Owl above).

Yellow Wagtail: (42 – 17)

Uncommon passage migrant. 3 overhead on 20th Apr was the only spring record. The best autumn since 2001. 159 bird days between 28th Aug and 29th Sep. Max 37 on 16th Sep.

Grey Wagtail: (12 – 17)

Breeding resident and passage migrant. Present during the breeding season but breeding not confirmed. Max 5 on 18th Sep. 3 ringed.

Pied Wagtail: (400 – 17)

Recorded throughout the year, common in autumn. Bred successfully. Birds roost at various points around the Bay during peak migration in October. A poor year with no roost counts exceeding 70. 47 ringed.

Wren:

Common resident. 24 ringed.

Duncock:

Common resident. 14 ringed.

Robin:

Common resident. 20 ringed.

T494604, ringed at Lytchett Bay as a 1st yr on 22nd Jul 2006 was found freshly dead, 442 days later, at Christchurch, Dorset on 7th Oct 2007. A movement of 19km.

Common Redstart: (2 – 10)

Scarce autumn migrant. 1 on the edge of the stubble field on 20th Apr, was part of an excellent spring fall of migrants. 2 ringed on 26th Sep were the only autumn records of the year.

Black Redstart: (1 – 3)

Third record since 1992 and the first for 10 years. One was around Sandy Close Pond on 25th & 26th Oct.

Whinchat: (11 – 15)

Scarce passage migrant. A rare spring record. 1 on Far Fields on 20th Apr (the earliest record at the Bay). Another poor autumn with only 4 records. 1 on 22nd Aug (ringed), 2 on Far Fields on 30th Aug, 1 on 14th Sep (ringed) and one on the Pool on 19th Sep. 2 ringed.



1st yr Whinchat, 22nd Aug

Stonechat: (23 – 17)

Breeding resident. 1 pair bred on the Far Fields. Still generally much scarcer than in the past, recorded on only 35 visits (39 in 2007). Spring migration was noted and a male showing a distinct square white rump and other characters of the continental race *S.t.rubicola* was seen on the 15th Mar. Max 8 on 16th Sep. 4 ringed.

Northern Wheatear: (15 – 17)

Uncommon passage migrant. 15 bird days between 15th Mar (earliest arrival date at the Bay) and 15th May. Max 5 on 26th Apr. 21 in autumn between 23rd Aug and 1st Oct. Max 7 on 4th Sep. 1 ringed.

Blackbird: (45 – 17)

Common Resident. No significant influxes in autumn, though recorded commonly across the area. 10 ringed.

Fieldfare: (121 – 17)

Uncommon winter visitor. Very scarce for the 2nd year in a row. None were seen in the first part of the year. The only records related to Nov. Max 9 on 13th.

Song Thrush: (424 – 17)

Breeding resident. Estimated to be stable across the area, c11 singing males. No migration flights recorded this year. 6 ringed.

Redwing: (1000 – 268 – 17)

Winter visitor. As Fieldfare, a dreadful year. Recorded until 15th Mar and from 28th Oct. There were no significant counts and no migration flights.

Mistle Thrush: (16 – 17)

Breeding resident. Breeding not confirmed this year but no change in status perceived. Recorded throughout the year across the recording area. Max 17 was a post breeding flock on

11th Aug at Turlin Moor.

Cetti's Warbler: (11 – 16)

Breeding resident. A decrease this year to 8, may be 9, territories (11 in 2007). Outside the breeding season birds visited Sandy Close Pond on 3 dates in Mar and 1 in Nov. 3 ringed.

Grasshopper Warbler: (7 – 10)

Passage migrant, under recorded. A rare spring record of one reeling on the Far Fields on 23rd Apr. 27 were recorded in autumn between 30th Jul and 12th Sep. Max 7 on 22nd Aug (a new record day total). Field sightings included an adult on 30th Aug and 1st yr giving plastic song on 31st Aug. 24 ringed (a record annual total) including 3 adults. None were re-trapped.

N307686, ringed at Lytchett Bay as a 1st yr on 29th Aug 2007 was taken by a cat 47 days later on 15th Oct 2007 at Staplehurst, Kent. A movement of 189km. This is an extra ordinary recovery. Whilst passerines moving east and west along the south coast from Lytchett Bay in autumn are a frequent occurrence in advance of a channel crossing, it does not explain why a young Grasshopper Warbler was still in inland Kent in mid October.

Sedge Warbler: (57 – 17)

Passage migrant. Spring passage was between 25th Apr and 5th May. It was very weak and involved only 5 individuals! The autumn migration was the best since 1992. Whilst there is no doubt that our renewed efforts to ring this species have proven more effective, it was also felt that 2008 was genuinely a good year. In autumn, from 13th Jul to 20th Sep. Max 43 trapped on the 9th Aug. 306 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	3		8	43	17			
			1	4		21	248	49			

N307593 was ringed at Lytchett Bay as a 1st yr on 17th Aug 2007. It was re-trapped at Donges, Loire-Atlantique, France 8 days later on 25th Aug 2007. A movement of 378km.

V162807 was ringed at Llangorse Lake, Powys, Wales on 24th Aug 2007. It was controlled 11 days later at Lytchett Bay on 4th Sep 2007. A movement of 158km.

R587773 was ringed at Titchfield Haven, Hampshire as a 1st yr on 29th Jul 2006. It was controlled 380 days later at Lytchett Bay on 13th Aug 2007. A movement of 58km.

Reed Warbler:

Common summer visitor. Breeds in all areas of the Bay. Present between 20th Apr and 4th Oct. 111 ringed.

T494055, ringed at Lytchett Bay as 1st yr on 10th Aug 2005. It was controlled 742 days later at Donges, Loire-Atlantic, France on 22nd Aug 2007. A movement of 378km.

N433657, ringed at the Bay as a juvenile on 16th Jul 2002 was re-trapped on 14th Aug 2008.

P901969, ringed at the Bay as an adult on 5th Jul 2004 was re-trapped at the Bay for its 4th consecutive year on several dates.

Dartford Warbler: (2 pairs – 16)

Breeding resident. Recorded at 2 sites between Jan and July. Breeding not confirmed, largely due to a lack of monitoring.

Lesser Whitethroat: (3 – 14)

Scarce passage migrant and occasional breeder. The first was at the Cottage on 20th Apr. A male then took up residence at Turlin Moor on 22nd Apr and held territory until at least 30th May. Another was at Sandy Close Pond from 6th – 10th May before moving to Lytchett Way from 15th until at least 25th May. In autumn the only records related to 2 ringed on 23rd Aug.

Whitethroat: (8 – 15)

Uncommon passage migrant. 9 in spring between 17th and 24th Apr was a strong showing. Max 4 on 20th Apr. 10 singles in autumn between 4th Aug and 18th Sep. 1 ringed.

Garden Warbler: (5 – 15)

Scarce passage migrant. None in spring. In autumn, 3 between 2nd and 7th Aug. Border Road was again the favoured site.

Blackcap: (10 – 17)

Passage migrant and summer visitor. Breeding population not surveyed but at least 6 territories. A male wintered at Sandy Close Pond, and remained until 24th Mar. The first presumed migrant was on 9th Apr. Max 8 on 20th Apr. Autumn migration was again poor, with the last record on the 29th Sep. 9 ringed.

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

JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
0	1	1	8	b	b	b	3	3			
	w	w	19	b	b	b	13	12			

T468487, ringed as an adult female at Lodmoor on 29th Aug 2006 was controlled 333 days later at Lytchett Bay on 28th Jul 2007. A movement of 31km.

Chiffchaff: (27 – 17)

Breeding summer visitor and passage migrant. The first wave of spring migrants arrived on 15th Mar when 7 were present. At least 9 territories were established. Autumn migration was average. Max 10 on 23rd Sep. One was at Sandy Close Pond on 31st Dec. 19 ringed.

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

JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
		7	8	b	b	b	3	10	7	1	1
		14	42	b	b	b	16	70	35	4	1

Willow Warbler: (19 – 17)

Breeding summer visitor and passage migrant. First recorded on 6th Apr at Sandy Close Pond. 2 territories established. Migration in both periods was very weak. The last bird was noted on 15th Sept. 12 ringed.

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

JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
			5	b	b	2	4	1			
			14	b	b	7	21	2			

Goldcrest: (14 – 17)

Passage migrant, which occasionally breeds. Recorded in the breeding season at Sandy Close Pond and Turlin Moor. Another poor year for migrants. 6 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	b	b		1	1	1	5	4	
		2	b	b		2	1	3	23	7	

ARE283, ringed at the Bay as a juvenile on 4th Nov 2006, was re-trapped on 4th Oct 2008.

Spotted Flycatcher: (8 – 6 – 17)

Passage migrant, previously bred. 1 in spring at Sandy Close Pond on 6th May. In autumn only 4 records of single birds between 4th Aug and 29th Sep.

Bearded Tit: (29 – 17)

Rare breeder. Seen in June, which suggests that breeding occurred. Recorded in autumn on 3 occasions. 4 over the stubble field on 19th Oct, 8 at Turlin Moor on 6th Nov and 6 at Lytchett Heath on 7th Dec.

Long tailed Tit:

Common resident. Regularly recorded from most sites at the Bay. 40 ringed, including 23 on 20th Jul.

ARE125, ringed at the Bay as an adult on 6th Mar 2005, was re-trapped on 20th Jul 2008.

Coal Tit:

Uncommon resident. Bred successfully in the vicinity of Sandy Close Pond. Also recorded at Kings Bridge during the breeding season. Migrants or dispersing birds recorded at the Cottage area and Turlin Moor during the autumn. 1 ringed.

Blue Tit:

Common resident. 46 ringed.

Great Tit:

Common resident. 22 ringed.

Nuthatch:

Uncommon. Recorded from Jun to Sep in the area of the Cottage and Water Works. The ringing of a juvenile there on 20th Jul suggests local breeding. Otherwise the only record came from Sandy Close Pond where one was present from 24th – 26th Oct. 1 ringed.

Treecreeper:

Uncommon. No specific records submitted but thought to still be in residence around the area of the cottage.

Jay: (6 – 17)

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

Magpie:

Common Resident.

Jackdaw: (205 – 17)

Resident. Recorded throughout the year. Max 101 on 20th Dec.

Rook: (185 – 17)

Breeds on edge of recording area. 14 nests in Apr (20 in 2007).

Carrion Crow:

Common Resident, increasing. Max 65 in stubble on 25th Apr.

Raven: (7 – 14)

Irregular visitor. Annual since the first record in 1995. 11 bird days on 6 dates throughout the year. Max 4 on 20th Dec.

Starling: (35000 – 5600 – 17)

Common resident. No roosting flocks recorded this year. On the 10th Sep at least 130 flew west during the morning. On the 13th at least 100 fed on sloes in the Far Fields. 11 ringed.

Rosy Starling:

First record. The highlight of a very good year. A juvenile was found early on the 10th Sep (SR). Despite lingering in top of an Oak for a little more than 20 minutes, this was not enough time for local birders to reach the site. The carrier flock of Eurasian Starlings flew towards Holton Lee and despite appearing to pitch into the reeds they were never seen again. All morning there was a marked westward movement of starlings, the Rosy was a passenger travelling with its close relatives. A record shot using a mobile phone camera and the finder's telescope was the only evidence of this very unexpected occurrence. There were 27 records in Dorset 1959 – 2006. This is only the second in Poole Harbour and Christchurch Harbour is yet to record it's first!



House Sparrow: (80 – 17)

Resident. Usually recorded around the urban fringe. Bred at Turlin Moor, Border Road and French's Farm. Biggest single count was 29 at French's Farm in Feb.

Chaffinch: (140 – 17)

Breeding resident and winter visitor. Max 125 in Stubble Field on 15th Mar. 10 ringed.

Brambling: (7 – 14)

Scarce Visitor. All records came from Sandy Close Pond. Max of 3 between 1st and 5th Jan. 1 on 20th Feb. 1 ringed.

Greenfinch: (60 – 17)

Common breeding resident. Border Drive, The Cottage and Turlin Moor remain the favored areas. Max 25 at Turlin Moor on 11th Aug. 9 ringed.

Goldfinch: (120 – 17)

Uncommon breeding resident and passage migrant. Flocks frequently recorded in the autumn but none bigger than 30 recorded. Regular visitor, in small numbers, to feeders at Sandy Close Pond. 1 ringed.

Siskin: (280 – 14)

Scarce passage migrant. Frequently seen at feeders at Sandy Close Pond between 1st Jan and 13th Apr. Max 11 on 15th Mar. Still present across the recording area in May suggesting local breeding. Recorded occasionally from 15th Sep to the year end in small numbers. Max 71 over the Far Fields on 24th Sep. 29 ringed.

JE07296, an adult female, ringed at Old Harlow, Essex on 7th Mar 2006 was controlled at Lytchett Bay 739 days later on 15th Mar 2008. A movement of 191km.

Linnet: (250 – 17)

Uncommon breeding resident, declining. Recorded at several sites during Apr/May and probably bred at Lytchett Way. Otherwise very scarce. There was not a single double figure count during the year.

Lesser Redpoll: (40 – 14)

Scarce passage migrant. 11 bird days between 8th Oct and 6th Nov. Max 5 on 10th Oct.

Bullfinch: (6 – 17)

Uncommon. Thinly recorded across the area throughout the year. Pairs recorded at 3 sites during the breeding season, though no records during June and July.

Crossbill: (8 – 5)

Rare migrant. 2 records in what was a very good year for Crossbill records in Dorset. 2 on 9th Aug (TE) and 5 on 10th Sep (MaCo). Both west.

Reed Bunting: (27 – 17)

Breeding resident. At least 8 territories, probably more, scattered across the whole recording area. Visited Sandy Close Pond on 5th Jan and 19th Sept. 42 ringed. Only 13 of which were recently fledged juveniles suggesting a poor breeding season.

P901380, ringed at the Bay as a 1st yr on 9th Nov 2003, was re-trapped on 3rd Aug 2008.

P901980, ringed at the Bay as a juvenile on 12th Jul 2004, was re-trapped on 27th Jul 2008.

Escapes

Black Swan:

1 on 8th Dec.

Appendix 1 Lytchett Bay Ringing Totals 2008

	Full grown	Pulli	Retraps/ Recoveries	Total
Black-headed Gull	3	0	0	3
Nightjar	2	0	0	2
Kingfisher	10	0	5	15
Great Spotted Woodpecker	2	0	0	2
Sand Martin	1	0	0	1
Swallow	12	0	0	12
Meadow Pipit	37	0	0	37
Rock Pipit	1	0	0	1
Grey Wagtail	3	0	0	3
Pied Wagtail	47	0	0	47
Wren	24	0	3	27
Duncock	14	0	2	16

Robin	20	0	4	24
Redstart	2	0	0	2
Whinchat	2	0	0	2
Stonechat	4	0	0	4
Wheatear	1	0	0	1
Blackbird	10	0	2	12
Song Thrush	6	0	0	6
Cetti's Warbler	3	0	0	3
Grasshopper Warbler	24	0	0	24
Sedge Warbler	306	0	2	308
Reed Warbler	111	0	15	126
Lesser Whitethroat	2	0	0	2
Whitethroat	1	0	0	1
Blackcap	9	0	0	9
Chiffchaff	19	0	0	19
Willow Warbler	12	0	0	12
Goldcrest	6	0	1	7
Long-tailed Tit	40	0	7	47
Coal Tit	1	0	0	1
Blue Tit	46	0	11	57
Great Tit	22	0	5	27
Nuthatch	1	0	0	1
Starling	11	0	0	11
Chaffinch	10	0	0	10
Brambling	1	0	0	1
Greenfinch	9	0	0	9
Goldfinch	1	0	0	1
Siskin	29	0	1	30
Reed Bunting	42	0	5	47
Total:	907	0	63	970

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