

Jan 2011

## Monday 31st

This was my first trip to Mary's garden. As soon as we arrived I was aware of the many tits that were frequenting their feeding stations. The team of six (three trainees and three ringers) set to erecting the nets and were quickly rewarded by several birds falling into them. Mary's sun-lounge was utilised as a Ringing Room and was luxurious as we were so close to the nets (a very short walk involved for Pete and Steve who spent the morning extracting the birds – not a painless task with high numbers of these species), warm and thanks to Mary, well-fed and watered with coffee and biscuits! The morning produced a constant flow of birds and as a trainee this was a wonderful opportunity to hone my skills distinguishing between adult and 1st year tits. I was especially pleased to handle a Marsh Tit, a first sighting experience for me! We captured 7 different species, **112 new birds** and **56 (retraps): 26 Great-tit (8), 79 Blue-tit (47), 2 Dunnock, 2 Goldfinch, 1 Robin, 1 Marsh-tit (1) and 1 Great-Spotted Woodpecker.**

Thanks must go to Debbie for scribing the whole session and I look forward to future visits.

## Friday 28th

Two nets went up in the Whitehouse around 9 o'clock this morning and our first push through the Heligoland resulted in a surprising **10 Reed Buntings** (including 3 new birds) that had been eating seed on the board walk. Further visits to the nets gave several species (mainly re-traps): more **Reed Buntings, Robins, Great-tits** and **Blue-tits**, a **Blackbird** and a stonking new adult male **Greenfinch**.

## Sunday 9th

A sharp frost was on the ground this morning as the nets went up, but it turned out to be a beautiful day. Various birds were handled (re-traps and new birds) including a **Song Thrush, Blackbird, Redwings, Greenfinches, Chaffinch, Reed Buntings, Great-tits, Blue-tits**, a new **House Sparrow** and **Brambling** (the sex of which sparked much discussion).



### Monday 3rd

Nets were up early this morning and ringing continued well into the afternoon. A successful session with 46 new birds ringed and 50 retraps/controls. Two particularly interesting birds were **Reed Buntings**, one was unusually dark in colour and was thought to be of Iberian race, the other a control from Belgium - we will eagerly await any further details from the BTO! A single **Redwing** and a small female **Sparrowhawk** were also captured.

### Sunday 2nd

After a break of almost three weeks (owing to the much publicised coldest December recorded for one hundred years) the nets went up again for the first time this year! The Ringers were kept busy with a steady stream of birds (re-traps and new birds) mainly: **Chaffinches**, **Reed Buntings**, **Robins**, **Great-tits**, **Blue-tits**, **Long-Tailed Tits**, a **Collared Dove** and on our last round two Thrushes a **Song Thrush** and a **Mistle Thrush!** Meanwhile, a Kestrel spent the morning on the apex of an outbuilding in the field adjacent to the Ringing Room and a variety of birds including several Goldfinches, Great Spotted Woodpecker, Jackdaw, Pheasant and Moorhen were seen at the feeders from the Ringing Room window.



## Saturday 1st

No mist netting took place today but we did replenish the feeders in the netting area and pushed the heligoland trap, resulting in four unringed **Reed Buntings** (three retraps) and two **Song Thrushes**.

**Feb 2011**

## **Sunday 27th**

As this month draws to a close and hopefully the end to the dreary days, a beautiful morning initially saw 5 nets go up which produced a slow stream of new (and re-trapped) species: 2 **Reed Buntings** (4), **Robin** (2), **Blue-tit** (1), 4 **Great-tit**, 1 **Blackbird** and 10 **Chaffinch** (1). One of the new birds, a trainee believed to be an adult bird, this was later confirmed by the trainer present who explained the bird was probably at least four years old or more, it had a fine black bridge above its beak and its middle pair of tail feathers (which can have a smudge of black) had a great thick border of black! Sadly a **House Sparrow** was taken out by a male re-trapped **Sparrowhawk**. The offending bird later escaped from the net, but not before leaving its mark on one of the ringers trying to extract it! Boy these males may be small, but their claws are lethal!

## **Friday 25th**

A lovely spring morning made net rounds a pleasure, we didn't even need to wear any mad hats! **Reed buntings** featured mainly in the nets though **Chaffinches** did well too, one retrap adult female was originally ringed in 2007 as a juvenile. A handful of stunning male **Greenfinches** were ringed all showing CPs (ready to mate if not already doing so). Also two male **Blackbirds** were retrapped - not much variety in species but enough birds to keep three of us occupied for the morning.

## **Tuesday 22nd**

Baiting up all the ringing areas first thing in the morning produced good results for this time of year. New birds ringed included; singles of **CHAFFINCH**, **REED BUNTING** and a **SONG THRUSH**, nine **GREENFINCHES** and from the Crow Trap we caught 17 **STARLINGS**. We also caught a few retraps, with the highlight being a lovely male **FIRECREST**, plus singles of **ROBIN**, **BLUE TIT** and **LONG-TAILED TIT**, two **GREAT TITS**, two **CHAFFINCHES** and three **REED BUNTINGS**. During the day the ringers even found enough time to repair the boardwalk into the Haven Heligoland Trap, which has made it a lot safer for the

ringers to walk on.

## **Sunday 20th**

The nets were up and down within a couple of hours this morning, thanks to the recurring drizzle! However, we managed to process 5 new birds including 2 **Chaffinches**, a female **Greenfinch**, and pushing the Heligoland again resulted in 17 re-trappings of **Reed Buntings** plus a **Collar Dove** and pleasingly a **Stock Dove** (a first close-encounter of this species for me!)

## **Sunday 13th**

The Ringers managed three net rounds this morning before rain threatened and the wind became too strong.

A variety of new and re-trap birds were processed including: **Reed Buntings, Chaffinches, Great, Blue and Long-Tailed Tits**, a **Blackbird, Robin and Dunnock**. The highlight of the morning was yet another large number of Reed Buntings trapped in the Heligoland - 15 birds were caught and a further 10 flew back over our heads. (We are now reaping the benefits of our Autumn pruning efforts of making the Heligoland more open). One of these birds was the Belgium controlled bird first caught early in the New Year. Good to see it is still in our locality!

## **Tuesday 8th**

Following very strong winds, it was great to be putting the nets up on beautiful, sunny, calm morning! Today produced a steady stream of birds NB (Re-traps): **10 Reed Bunting (5), 3 Redwing, 2 Starling, 7 Chaffinch (4)** (including one Continental bird), **1 Dunnock, 1 Goldfinch, 1 Great-tit, 4 Greenfinch, 1 Blackbird, Robin (1), Blue-tit (2)**.

Signs of spring were also noted as **five 7-spot ladybirds** were seen in the Oasis and a **Red Admiral butterfly** between the White House and Oasis.

Mar 2011

## Sunday 27th

**Chiffchaffs** are beginning to arrive in the area and the male caught in the White House turned out to be a very interesting bird as it was a **sub-species *abietinus***, (Fenno-Scandia, NE Poland, Russia) identified by its long wing of 67mm and a more greyish green plumage with yellow streaks on the breast.

A total of 29 birds, NB (Re-traps) were trapped in the mist nets, of which 22 were new birds: **1 Chiffchaff** (as above), **1 Starling**, **1 Greenfinch**, **9 Chaffinch**, **(2) Great-Tit**, **(1) Great Spotted Woodpecker**, **6 Goldcrest**, **1 Blue-tit**, **1 Blackbird**, **2 Reed Bunting (2)** and a **Dunnock** that has managed to survive the past three harsh winters (first ringed as a juvenile in 2006)!

## Wednesday 23rd

Another good day ringing, although we did get a big surprise from the crow trap.



The majority of birds were again dominated by **32 Chaffinches** ( *which are still passing through the*

*bay in good numbers*), **two Great Tits + one re-trap, three Greenfinches and three Reed Buntings and singles of Redwing, Starling, a young male Brambling**, but the strangest capture has to go to a new species caught in the Crow Trap and that is an adult **Herring Gull !!!**

Anyone who has seen the crow trap knows that the main entrance (for birds) into the trap is by a small ladder entrance at the top of the trap, the gaps are approximately two inches apart and this large bird managed to squeeze through them to get to the bread inside, but once inside the only way out was by a ringer catching it. It was then taken back to the Observatory, ringed and processed and then released back into the wild (last seen heading back towards the Crow Trap).

## **Monday 21st**

A lovely sunny day with light winds for the ringers today, although this is not the best conditions for ringing.

The majority of birds caught were **24 Chaffinches + one retrap** (most of these birds were females), **one Reed Bunting + two retraps, singles of a 'continental' Great Tit, Greenfinch, Blue Tit, one retrap House Sparrow**, and best birds of the day were a single female **Brambling** and a male **Siskin**.

## **Sunday 20th**

Clear skies overnight produced frost early morning and as this burnt off birds were caught steadily throughout the morning. Visitors in the Ringing Room were treated to a variety of species 14 in all. Apart from the usual species already featured this month we processed Great Spotted Woodpecker, House Sparrow, Chiffchaff, Firecrest, Goldcrest, Blackcap, Redwing, Stock Dove, Robin and suprisingly not a single Long tailed tit or Blue tit made an appearance, obviously too busy sourcing nest sites.

## Friday 18th

Despite a later start this morning because the promised rain didn't arrive until after lunch, we captured a good number of birds. Mainly Chaffinches, Reed Buntings and a single Goldcrest but the highlight of the session was a Blue Tit originally ringed in Arnhem!

## Monday 14th

A large flock of Starlings prompted the ringers to bait up the Crow Trap this morning and were rewarded with 11 **Starlings** including an adult male **Russian sub-species**, identified by its longer wing length of 142mm, (compared to 134mm) a 3rd primary of 104mm, a short, very abraded tail, long undertail coverts and bill.

This was followed by a rare trapping in the Whitehouse of a young Male **Yellowhammer** in beautiful plumage. This was only the second bird trapped at the Obs since 2003 (one last year), looking at the records Yellowhammers were more numerous then!

Other birds caught were: **Chaffinch** 6, **Great-tit** 3 (1), **Blue-tit** 1, **Redwing** 1, **Reed Bunting** 1 (1) and 1 male **Sparrowhawk**.



## Saturday 5th

An overcast day with light winds produced another decent ringing day at the Observatory.

Most of the birds caught were **24 Chaffinches** (coming in from the continent), **five Reed Buntings** were also trapped along with singles of **Long-tailed Tit**, **Great Tit**, **Greenfinch** and a **Jackdaw**. There were a few retraps consisting of **three Reed Buntings**, **two Goldfinches** and **two Blue Tits**. One of the retrapped Blue Tits was originally ringed as pulli in one of the many nest boxes around the Estate back in 2008.

During the day we had several visitors coming in to watch the birds being ringed and processed and then watched as the birds were released back into the wild.



**April 2011**

SUMMARY OF THE MONTH

Two **Reed Buntings** on the 3rd and a single on the 4th were the only remaining birds caught, the rest have dispersed to breed on the marshes and other areas.

Two **Coal Tits** trapped in the White House area on the 3rd were a nice surprise for the ringers.

Two **Long-tailed Tits** were ringed on the 4th.

The first **Willow Warblers** of the year were captured on the 7th when five were ringed, then two on the 11th, two on the 15th and singles on the 16th and 17th.

The first **Whitethroat** for the year was also caught on the 7th, with further singles on the 11th, 16th and two on the 22nd.

A very placid **Jay** was caught on the 11th, causing no pain to the trainee ringer (who got savaged by one last year).

As things begin to quieten down (due to birds starting to breed) ringing also slows right down to just a few birds a day (if that). So out came the 'Spring Traps' which were used to good effect, the ringers managed to catch four **Wheatears** along the beach on the 13th, a single was caught the same way in the Oasis field on the 16th, a further five were trapped on the 18th, with three on the 19th and a single on the 22nd. Going by wing length and tail length out of the fourteen birds caught, 13 were the 'Greenland' sub species and only one being a Northern Wheatear *Oenanthe oenanthe* which was the bird caught on the 22nd, this was a female which was showing signs of breeding locally as it had a good brood patch on it.

A single **Lesser Whitethroat** was caught on the 22nd.

A **Song Thrush** was caught in the Haven Heligoland trap on the 25th.

The first pulli of the year, two **Stock Doves** were ringed on the 26th.

25 **Chiffchaffs** and 29 **Blackcaps** were caught all through the month. Both these species have been caught in earlier months this year but those birds were over wintering birds and were not the migrating birds just returning to Britain to breed as in this month.

Ringling was so quiet over the Easter weekend, that the ringers went out bird watching all over the place, New Downs, Worth, the Estate, Sandwich Beach and various other areas were also covered.

May 2011

## Sunday 22nd

An early start gave the ringers a variety of birds this morning, including new and re-trap birds: **Dunnock** 1 (1), **Blackcap** 1, **Whitethroat** 1, Great-tit (5) several exhibiting a brood patch, a beautiful adult male Greenfinch, Blue-tit and Chaffinch. The nets came down early as the wind increased and a heavy shower of rain began to fall. The ringers busied themselves the rest of the morning, again surveying and ringing pulli (chicks yet to have fledged) on the Estate.

## Friday 13th

Nets were up before 6am on a calm, bright morning. Ringing continues to be quiet with a total of 8 new and re-trapped birds, including: new Whitethroat, Chiffchaff and Willow Warbler. Re-traps: Chaffinch, Great-tit and Greenfinch.

## Sunday 8th

A still, humid start to the day with a hint of rain in the air, although as the morning progressed the breeze increased resulting in several nets to be removed. However, following a very quiet spell the Ringers were pleased to process twelve birds of eight species: **Great-tit**, **Blackbird**, **Whitethroat**, **Lesser Whitethroat**, **Willow Warbler**, **Chiffchaff**, **Blackcap** and a **House Sparrow!** Strong winds continue to batter our area and the nesting season is in full swing.

## Friday 6th

At last a drop in the wind and the nets were able to go up today, but little was expected as the breeding

season is now in full swing. The Ringers were rewarded for their efforts by finding **two** new birds in the first net round: a **Robin** and a stonking **male Redstart!** However, nothing else appeared and the nets were taken down before the morning was out.



For those of you keeping an eye on our nest camera, please visit the "Green Room" at the observatory as four Starling chicks have hatched today (3rd May).



Strong winds continue to batter our area and the nesting season is in full swing.

## June 2011

This month most of the pulli have fledged and now we are busy catching lots of youngsters around the Estate.

*Totals to date for June are:*

	<b>Adults</b>	<b>Juveniles</b>	<b>Pulli</b>
Starlings	2	105	0
Magpies	1	2	0
Carrion Crows	0	3	0
Collared Doves	3	3	2
Jackdaws	17	1	0
Swallows	0	0	5
Blackcaps	1	4	0
Chiffchaffs	1	3	0
Lesser Whitethroats	0	1	0
Whitethroats	0	3	0
Great spotted Woodpeckers	0	2	0

Other species caught during the month include: Dunnocks, Great Tits, Blue Tits, Robins, Wrens and Long-tailed Tits.

The 'Crow Trap' and Obs. Trap are proving very useful, with the majority of Starlings, Jackdaws and Carrion Crows all being caught in these two traps. The remainder are being caught in mist nets as normal.

## July 2011

### Sunday 31st July, 2011

As summer finally returns along with the last day of July, the birds seem to be moving. The ringers had a steady stream of birds including: Robin, Chiffchaff, Willow Warbler, Garden Warbler, Sedge Warbler (the first for the year to be ringed at the Obs), Whitethroat, Reed Warblers, Blackcap, Swallow, Chaffinch, Greenfinch, Great-tit, Wren and unusually, a very young Bullfinch.

### Saturday 30th

A slow but steady trickle of birds passed through the ringing room, with the highlight being a Cetti's Warbler caught in the Haven Heligoland Trap in the early part of the day. A total of 36 new birds and 7 re-traps were caught.

Totals for the day were:

Blackbird 1, Blackcap 1 re-trap, Blue Tit 1 + 1 re-trap, Cetti's Warbler 1, Chaffinch 6, Collared Dove 1, Greenfinch 2, Green Woodpecker 2, Jackdaw 1 re-trap, Lesser Whitethroat 1 re-trap, Reed Warbler 2, Robin 1 +1 re-trap, Starling 2, Swallow 4, Whitethroat 3 + 1 re-trap, Willow Warbler 9 and Wren 1 +1 re-trap.

### Wednesday 27th

A cloudy morning brought two spectacular birds to our nets, there were others but nothing like the two adults photographed below -



**Icterine Warbler and Swift** (photographed by J Buckingham)

## Tuesday 26th

Seven ringers (including two trainees) met early at the Obs before setting off for Lynsore Bottom. It is six months since we last visited Mary and Adrian's and it was good to see their garden in mid-summer with all its beautiful flowers! Once again, as soon as the nets were up the birds were falling into the nets and ringing began with earnest! In total **122 new birds** and surprisingly only **10 retraps** were processed. Including 2 **Marsh-tit** (1 re-trap), 47 **Great-tit** (2), 58 **Blue-tit** (6) 1 **Coal-tit**, 9 **Chaffinch**, 3 **Dunnock** and 1 **Robin**. The trainees really appreciated the opportunity of handling so many birds, especially the rarely seen Marsh Tit, and to improve their knowledge of moult strategy.

## Sunday 24th

On the whole a quiet morning: 1 **Willow Warbler**, 2 **Whitethroat** and a **Blackcap** (1 retrap). However, the new **Obs Chat trap** is continuing to be successful: 1 **Collared Dove**, 4 **Jackdaws** (1) and 3 **Starling** (2). Many of the birds processed are in moult and the young starlings showed interesting plumage. The young brown feathers are being replaced by their adult feathers and beautiful iridescence



## Tuesday 5th

Still not that many birds being caught, although we did manage to get 28 new birds of 15 species and three re-traps of two species.

For the second time this year a very large Herring Gull was trapped in the 'Crow Trap'

One trainee suffered pain today not only a Herring Gull gave him a nip on his arm, but five Magpies also joined in the melee and went for his fingers (*it was like a scene from the film 'The Birds'*).

Birds caught today were: Magpie 5 + 2 re-traps, Great Spotted Woodpecker 1 re-trap, Herring Gull 1, Swallow 1, Chiffchaff 1, Wren 1, Chaffinch 2, Starling 8, Collared Dove 1, Whitethroat 1, Blackcap 1, Great Tit 3, Greenfinch 1, Robin 1 and Blackbird 1.

*On the 7th July the annual total on I.P.M.R. so far for new birds ringed was*

## **Sunday 3rd**

Various birds were processed, including 12 new **Jackdaws** caught in the Obs Crow Trap!

In the mist nets:

2 **Chiffchaff**, 3 **Blackcap** (Retraps - 3), 3 **Whitethroat**, 1 **Chaffinch**, 1 **Great-tit** (3), 1 **Blue-tit**, 4 **Swallow** – in the Heligoland, 7 **Greenfinch** (1), 1 **Starling**, 1 **Great Spotted Woodpecker** (1) and 1 **Blackbird**.

Aug 2011

Sunday 28th

On the first day of our open weekend.....I'll let the photos do the talking!



Sunday 21st

The nets went up early and on a surprisingly quiet morning, a steady number of birds were processed including several Warblers: Willow, Reed, Garden and Sedge, re-trapped Long Tailed Tits, Robin, Dunnocks, Blackcaps, Blackbird, Whitethroat and Lesser Whitethroats and a Great-tit. However, the most exciting moment for the two trainees was seeing 60 House Martins (mainly Juveniles) in a mist net following sound-luring.

### **Saturday 13th**

Once the early morning rain dispersed a good day's ringing was had with 41 new birds and six re-traps. One **Blackcap** + two re-traps, four **Blue Tits**, a re-trapped **Collared Dove** and **Chaffinch**, four **Greenfinches**, a **Great Tit**, a re-trapped **Jackdaw**, eight **Reed Warblers**, three **Sedge Warblers**, four **Swallows**, three **Whitethroats** + one re-trap, eleven **Willow Warblers** and two **Wrens**.

### **Friday 12th**

A much improved day's ringing with 27 new birds and two re-traps all being caught. Three **Blackcaps**, two **Blue Tits** + one re-trap, two **Chaffinches**, singles of **Green Woodpecker**, **Whitethroat**, **House Sparrow** and **Lesser Whitethroat**, along with four **Reed Warblers**, three **Starlings** + one re-trap and nine **Willow Warblers**.

### **Wednesday 10th**

Very early in the morning two more **Dunlin** were caught on the scrape and during the day in the White House/Haven ringing areas a **Blackcap**, one **Blue Tit** + one re-trap, four re-trapped **Chaffinches**, one re-trapped **Dunnock**, two Greenfinches + two re-traps, two re-trapped **Great Tits**, a **Lesser Whitethroat** and a **Willow Warbler** + two re-traps were all caught.

## Tuesday 9th

A very relaxed day's ringing with three **Wheatears** caught in spring traps at the Prince's Practice Green and later in the evening singles of **Dunlin**, **Little Ringed Plover** and **Ringed Plover** were caught on the scrape.

## Monday 8th

A quiet ringing day with eight new birds caught; two **Reed Warblers**, a **Swallow** and five **Willow Warblers**.

## Saturday 6th

A slightly better day than yesterday with 44 new birds and nine re-traps being caught. Highlight of the day came at 11.40am when a young **Wood Warbler** was trapped in the White House. Other birds caught were: two **Blackcaps** + two re-traps, three **Blue Tits** + one re-trap, a re-trap **Chaffinch**, a **Chiffchaff**, two **Dunnocks** + one re-trap, a **Garden Warbler**, three **Greenfinches**, five **Lesser Whitethroats**, a young **Magpie**, three **Reed Warblers** + one re-trap, one **Robin** + two re-traps, four **Starlings**, six **Swallows**, two **Whitethroats** + one re-trap and nine **Willow Warblers**.



### Friday 5th

A reasonable days ringing with 36 new birds and one re-trap, produced singles of **Blackbird, Blackcap, Blue Tit, Sedge Warbler** and a re-trap **Great Spotted Woodpecker**, two **Garden Warblers**, Two **Great Tits**, two **Green Woodpeckers**, three **Greenfinches**, three **Robins**, five **Swallows** and five **Willow Warblers**.

### Thursday 4th

A bit like a cricket score today with 80 new birds and six re-traps being caught before the wind and rain stopped the day's catch. Singles of **Song Thrush, Great Tit, Garden Warbler** and re-traps of **Blackbird** and **Chaffinch**, three **Blackcaps** + one re-trap, seven **Blue Tits** + three re-traps, seven **Greenfinches**, two **House Sparrows**, 26 **Reed Warblers**, two **Robins**, six **Sedge Warblers**, six **Swallows**, four **Whitethroats** and 14 **Willow Warblers**. Once the rain took hold, ringers retired to the ringing room and

entered all the data onto computer.

### **Wednesday 3rd**

Into the early hours of the morning, ringing on Back Sand Scrape continued with three **Common Sandpipers**, a **Green Sandpiper**, a **Greenshank** and 13 **Redshanks**. Later that afternoon two re-trap **Magpies** were caught in the new Observatory Crow Trap.

### **Tuesday 2nd**

A relaxed day with very little happening on the ringing front, as the ringers were saving themselves for an all-night wader session on Backsand Scrape, although a **Meadow Pipit** was caught in the morning.

During the evening session we caught singles of **Canada Goose**, **Greylag Goose**, a female **Mallard**, also two **Redshank**, two **Green Sandpipers** and 11 **Common Sandpipers** + one re-trap (ringed last year at the same site).

### **Monday 1st**

A quiet, early morning effort produced singles of **Chiffchaff** and **Dunnock**, two **Reed Warblers**, **Whitethroats**, **Wrens** and eight **Willow Warblers** from the Whitehouse/Haven ringing areas. Whilst on the beach three **Wheatears** were trapped using spring traps.



Sept 2011

## Thursday 29th

The early morning mist was around for the third day running, but cleared a lot quicker today, leaving a lovely sunny, warm autumn day (*not ideal conditions for ringing*).

52 **Blackcaps**

proved to be the best of the days catch, this was followed (*some way behind*) with 24 **Lesser Redpolls** plus a control (*This was a bird that has been ringed by another ringing group somewhere in the country*),

we

caught twice as many **Chiffchaffs** as yesterday with 12 being ringed, then the other species were all in single figures with singles of **Meadow Pipit**, **Blue Tit**, **Whitethroat** and a **Reed Warbler**, two **Robins**, two **Greenfinches** and two **Blackbirds** and three **Chaffinches**. The final days count was 101 birds ringed, plus the control of 11 species

## Wednesday 28th

After the exploits of yesterday's ringing effort, expectations were running high for today, similar weather conditions, five ringers turned up ready for action, but unfortunately no one told the birds. Singles of **Song Thrush**, **Robin**, **Lesser Redpoll**, **Lesser Whitethroat** and a re-trapped **Great Tit**, two **Goldcrests**, three **Chaffinches**, a miserly six **Chiffchaffs** and a much lower than expected 42 **Blackcaps**. So we managed to get only 57 new birds of eight species, plus the re-trap. The early morning mist did not completely disperse today which may have been a factor. Let's hope tomorrow things pick up and get back on track.

## Tuesday 27th

The early morning mist lifted and 197 new birds were ringed, with just two re-traps, which amounted to a

long day for the three musketeers, plus their trusty squire (or should that be scribe). Singles of **Reed Warbler, Blackbird, Lesser Whitethroat, Robin, Great Spotted Woodpecker, Green Woodpecker**, a lovely young female **Goldcrest** and a re-trap **Dunnock**, a **Chaffinch** + one re-trap, two **Sedge Warblers**, two **Willow Warblers**, two **Blue Tits** and three **Lesser Redpolls**. But once again the big counts came with 55 **Chiffchaffs** and a mighty 125 **Blackcaps**.

## **Saturday 24th**

An early start for the three musketeers (later joined by a fourth, who arrived just in time), as numbers of birds increased dramatically. Singles of **Dunnock, Reed Warbler, Garden Warbler** and a re-trapped **Long-tailed Tit**, along with two **Wrens**, Two **Blue Tits** and two **Lesser Redpolls** (the first of the autumn rush, hopefully) and six **Meadow Pipits**. Then the big guns come into their own with 70 **Chiffchaffs** and 90 **Blackcaps**. Hopefully this is the beginning of better things now that the weather is settling down again. A magnificent 175 birds of 10 species were caught, more would have been caught during the day had smoke from a local bonfire not engulfed the catching area.

## **Wednesday 21st**

A very quiet day for this time of year with only four species caught. A single **Great Spotted Woodpecker**, two **Robins**, three **Blackcaps** and a small catch of 30 **Chiffchaffs**, this is despite the large counts being made around the Estate.

## **Wednesday 14th**

After the strong winds of the last few days had abated, the ringers were out in force. A very early morning start produced a great days ringing although only 12 species were trapped, we managed to catch singles of **Great Tit, Goldfinch, Great Spotted Woodpecker, Blackbird, Dunnock** and a young female **Firecrest**,

along with two **Reed Warblers**, two **Sedge Warblers**, three **Greenfinches**, six **Chaffinches**, 38 **Chiffchaffs** and a nice haul of 82 **Blackcaps**, which made a grand total of 139 birds ringed for the day. Numbers of migrants are slowly building up on their journey south.

Oct 2011

### Monday 31st October

A windier day today, plus a local bonfire did not help matters, but we still managed to catch 59 new birds and just three retraps. A female **Bullfinch** was the best bird of the day, other species caught were singles of **Chiffchaff**, **Blackbird**, a male **Goldcrest** and a **Dunnock**, plus retraps of single **Chaffinch** and **Blue Tit**, two **Greenfinches**, three **Robins** plus a retrap and 49 **Lesser Redpolls**.

### Sunday 30th

Another good day of ringing, with a total of 98 birds of nine species being caught. 73 **Lesser Redpolls** were the main species caught along with a single **Dunnock**, two each of **Blackbirds**, **Robins**, **Great Spotted Woodpeckers** and **Magpies**, three **Goldcrests**, four **Goldfinches** and nine **Chaffinches**

The above three dates did have retraps caught, but due to us having problems with the ringing room computer these have not been included with the reports. Hopefully normal service will resume soon.

### Saturday 29th

A combined total from two ringing areas today, with both the Estate and Lynsore Bottom being ringed. Singles of **Chiffchaff**, **Blackcap**, **Goldcrest**, **Song Thrush**, **Firecrest**, **Great Spotted Woodpecker**, **Dunnock**, **Marsh Tit** and **Coal Tit**, two each of **Blackbird**, **Robin** and **Greenfinch**, three **Goldfinches** and three **Siskins**, seven each of **Chaffinches** and **Great Tits**, 11 **Long-tailed Tits**, 22 **Blue Tits** and 62 **Lesser Redpolls** completed the days catch., amounting to 130 new birds being ringed of 19 species.

## Friday 28th

58 birds of six species were caught today, although nothing out of the ordinary was caught. A single **Song Thrush**, two **Chiffchaffs**, three **Robins**, five **Greenfinches**, 14 **Chaffinches** and 33 **Lesser Redpolls** were the birds caught today.

## Tuesday 25th

A cloudy, still start to the day and ringing proceeded until lunchtime. A fairly quiet day but we still managed to catch 49 new birds of nine species. Highlights being a male and female **Bullfinch** caught in the Whitehouse, singles of **Firecrest**, **Goldcrest**, **Robin** plus one retrap and **Greenfinch**, two **Blackcaps**, three **Chaffinches** and three **Chiffchaffs** and 35 **Lesser Redpolls** plus one control. With the winds picking up ringing was curtailed and with the forecast of heavy rain and possible storms in the area tomorrow there will not be any ringing done for a couple of days.

## Saturday 22nd

A bright, cool day with a touch of frost began the day and allowed ringing for a few hours before once again the winds increased and halted proceedings. Best bird of the day was a fantastic male Firecrest caught in the Haven net. Numbers were quite low until a flock of Lesser Redpolls jumped into the Whitehouse net. 52 new birds and seven retraps/controls were caught including; three **Blackcaps** plus a control from Belgium, two **Goldcrests**, singles of **Robin**, **Firecrest** and **Great Spotted Woodpecker**, two **Blue Tits**, four retraps of **Long tailed Tits** and a retrap **Great Tit** and finally 42 **Lesser Redpolls** plus one British control.

## October 21st



A busy morning ringing session continued into the afternoon with a total of 132 birds processed of which 27 were retraps. The bulk of captures were Lesser Redpolls (84) but other interesting species were; a female Sparrowhawk, 2 Goldcrest and less commonly caught at SBBOT a single Siskin and a female Bullfinch. As the nets came down I was observed by a peckish fox who thought better of it and sought out a nearby workman's sandwiches instead!

## October 18th

A couple of hours of fairly still weather gave the ringers a bit of time to catch some birds, but only 22 Lesser Redpolls, five Chiffchaffs and two Greenfinches were caught before the winds increased and the nets had to be taken down.

## October 17th

The predicted strong winds held off until lunch time allowing a few hours of ringing. Only a few birds were trapped in the Whitehouse whilst the majority of the birds caught were in the Oasis nets. A catch of 73 Lesser Redpolls were once again the main species trapped, three Chiffchaffs and three Siskins, two Greenfinches and singles of Robin, Blackcap, Chaffinch and a Great Spotted Woodpecker completed the mornings ringing. Giving a total of 85 new birds ringed.

## October 16th

Good numbers of birds being caught but a quieter day than yesterday. 65 Lesser Redpolls plus a control and 26 Chiffchaffs plus a control were the only birds to reach double figures. Singles of Goldcrest, Greenfinch, Siskin, Chaffinch, Song Thrush, Great Spotted Woodpecker and a Sparrowhawk, along with one Blue Tit plus two retraps, eight Blackbirds, six Blackcaps, three Robins plus a retrap and one great Tit plus a retrap kept the ringers happy for the day. A total of 119 new birds and six retraps/controls of 15 species were trapped.

## Saturday 15th

A very busy day had by the ringers today, not only with loads of visitors coming in to see ringing for the first time, but also the numbers of birds being caught. We ended the day with 221 new birds ringed and six retraps/controls. As for the ringers they were ringing non-stop all day and hardly had time to have a drink or lunch and had to make do having a bite to eat and drink whilst walking to the nets.

Birds caught during the session were: a mighty 140 **Lesser Redpolls**, 25 **Chiffchaffs** plus one control, 13 **Blackcaps**, 10 **Siskins** (*the majority of these were males*), six **Blackbirds** plus two retraps, three **Song Thrushes**, four **Greenfinches**, five each of **Blue Tits** plus one retrap and **Chaffinches** and singles of **Goldfinch**, **Great Tit**, **Wren**, **Goldcrest** and a lovely male **Firecrest**, a control **Great Spotted**

**Woodpecker** and a **Yellow Browed Warbler** which was caught the previous day. Both of the controls were British ringed birds.

## Friday 14th

A notable increase in Robins over the last couple of days including a few continental visitors, also Greenfinches, Chaffinches and Blackbirds. Amongst the juvenile Lesser Redpolls were three adults, 2 males and a female. Capture numbers increased as the morning continued and amongst one good catch a **Yellow-browed Warbler** entertained ringers and visitors alike.

## Thursday 13th



A slightly better day weather-wise. Although numbers of birds were slightly down. Six **Chiffchaffs**, eight **Blackcaps**, a **Goldcrest**, 10 **Robins** (including a few 'continental' birds), two **Chaffinches**, one **Greenfinch**, a **Song Thrush**, 11 **Lesser Redpolls** and star bird of the day was a fantastic male **Ring Ouzel**. Bringing the day's total, to 41 new birds.



## Wednesday 12th

The wind abated enough to get out a mornings ringing session in, for the first time in over a week. **Lesser Redpolls** were the best of the day with 37 trapped along with one re-trap, a lovely female **Sparrowhawk** was captured in the Haven Heligoland Trap which later savaged a trainee ringer, other birds also ringed were four **Chiffchaffs**, a re-trap **Wren**, seven **Chaffinches** plus a re-trap, two **Blue Tits**, two **Greenfinches**, four **Blackcaps** and a **Robin**. A total of 58 new birds were ringed and three retraps were processed.

## Tuesday 4th

A much later start for the ringers today, Five Chiffchaffs and five Blackcaps were the best of the day, close behind were four Lesser Redpolls, two Goldcrests plus one re-trap, A Blackbird and a re-trap Great Tit. We packed up very early and decided to do a bit of maintenance around the Observatory pond.

## Monday 3rd

Despite there being no wind early on, it was a very quiet day at the bay (ringing-wise). Highlight of the day was a female Sparrowhawk. No species reached double figures out of the ten species caught despite the efforts of the ringers, although we did catch a few good birds. Singles of **Sparrowhawk**, **Song Thrush**, **Meadow Pipit** and **Green Woodpecker**, two each of **Robin** and **Great Tit**, two **Blue Tits** (plus one re-trap), four **Lesser Redpolls**, seven **Chiffchaffs** and eight **Blackcaps**. The main factor is the hot, sunny weather, the birds not wanting to move around in these conditions. Some migrants have already gone, whilst others are making the most of the warm weather, whilst the autumn migrants are not moving much as it is too warm for them, well that's what we think. So we finished early today, catching only 29 new birds and one re-trap

Nov 2011

## Monday 28th November

A day trip out for the ringers as Pete Findley and his merry men and women went cannon netting for the first time this year on Deal Beach. It was a frosty, cool day which made the birds hungry for the bread that was used to tempt them down onto the beach. After baiting up and a very short wait, the cannons were fired and a small catch of gulls were caught, which included; 16 **Black-headed Gulls** plus a retrap and five **Herring Gulls** plus a controlled bird with a yellow darvic on its leg.



photographs by Sue Smith

Later when we had packed up and made our way back to the Observatory for a warm up and a welcome cup of coffee, we checked our records for the retrapped Black-headed Gull (we had to trawl through the paper records as the computer has been taken away for a good clean and upgrade). We found out that this bird was an adult bird (hatched three or more years previously) when it was originally ringed back in 1997, making the bird at least 17 years old. Paul Brown was the person who ringed it back on the 10th January 1997 and those of you that are interested about where it was ringed; well surprisingly it was Deal Beach.

## Saturday 26th November

A grey overcast day with a cool wind which increased in strength as the day went on. 46 new birds were caught, along with 15 retraps.

Birds of the day were three **Bramblings** plus one retrap (which was caught the previous weekend). At long last a single **Common Redpoll** was trapped in the Whitehouse along with nine **Lesser Redpolls**. Other birds ringed were 20 **Chaffinches** plus two retraps, four **Reed Buntings** plus four retraps, three **House Sparrows** plus one retrap, five **Greenfinches** plus one retrap and a **Song Thrush**. Retraps included two **Great Tits** and singles of **Blue Tit**, a male **Goldcrest**, **Chiffchaff** and a **Long-tailed Tit**.

## **Tuesday 22nd November**

Even thicker fog today, but it was a lot warmer and so the whoosh net got an airing on the beach and caught a Skylark and a Meadow Pipit, but again the fog moved in and we gave up. A bit later we baited the Whitehouse up and then pushed the Haven Heligoland which produced a small flock of tits which had been ringed or retrapped over the weekend.

## **Monday 21st November**

Fog almost stopped ringing, but a single Skylark was caught in a box trap on the beach, before it turned very cold and the ringers gave up for the day.

## **Sunday 20th November**

More birds were caught today than yesterday but the majority of these were retraps. New birds included 11 Chaffinches plus four retraps, two Greenfinches plus two retraps, and a single House Sparrow plus four retraps. Other retraps included five Long-tailed Tits, three Robins, two Dunnocks, two Blue Tits and single retraps of Blackbird, Reed Bunting, Brambling, Great Tit and a Wren

### **Saturday 19th November**

Highlight of the day was a young male Brambling, three Reed Buntings plus two retraps, five Chaffinches plus one retrap, three Greenfinches plus two retraps and singles of Lesser Redpoll, a Great Spotted Woodpecker and a Blackcap and a retrap Dunnock.

The retrap Chaffinch was an interesting bird yes it was one of our old birds which had been ringed at the bay. On checking how long ago the bird had been caught it was discovered it was originally ringed in 2004 as an adult female, making this bird at least nine years old and more amazingly was that this was the first time it had been caught since it was ringed.

### **Friday 18th November**

24 new birds and 10 retraps were caught today. A typical late autumn ringing day with nothing out of the ordinary being caught, with 12 Lesser Redpolls being the best of the days catch along with six Chaffinches plus five retraps, three Greenfinches plus two retraps and singles of Blackbird, Chiffchaff and a Goldcrest. Retraps also included singles of Robin, Dunnock and a Reed Bunting

## Wednesday 16th

An overcast cool day with light winds. Another good haul of 69 **Lesser Redpolls** plus a control were caught *(sometime during the morning we passed the magical number of 1000 Lesser Redpolls caught this year)*.

Other birds caught were Seven **Chaffinches**, two **Greenfinches** and singles of **Reed Bunting**, **Blackcap** and a retrapped **Firecrest** *(which was first caught on Saturday 12th November this year)*.

## Tuesday 15th

A trip to one of our out-stations produced 31 new birds of 11 species, including 10 **Blue Tits**, seven **Long-tailed Tits**, three each of **Goldcrests** and **Great Tits**, two **Chaffinches** and singles of **Blackbird**, **Chiffchaff**, **Lesser Redpoll**, **Robin**, a **Yellowhammer** and a **Fieldfare**.

Whilst in the Observatory 'Crow Trap' a **Blackbird** and a **Starling** were caught during the morning.

## Monday 14th

A foggy day and the birds decided not to move around the ringing area a lot today. But we did manage to get 25 new birds and three retraps before we gave up for the day. Eight **House Sparrows** (*were trapped by the feeding station next to the ringing room*), four **Chaffinches**, two each of **Lesser Redpolls**, **Reed Buntings** and **Magpies** plus two retraps and singles of **Dunnock**, **Goldcrest**, **Long-tailed Tit**, **Chiffchaff**, **Greenfinch**, **Song Thrush**, **Collared Dove** and a retrapped **Blue Tit**.

### **Sunday 13th**

67 new birds of six species and six retraps of five species were caught during the days ringing session. Another good **Lesser Redpoll** day with 55 plus a control being caught, along with four each of **Goldcrests** and **Chaffinches**, two each of **Robins** and **Wrens**, two retrap **Reed Buntings** and single retraps of **Chaffinch**, **Long-tailed Tit** and a **Great Tit**.

### **Saturday 12th**

A fairly quiet day all round which produced 29 new birds of 13 species and 14 retraps of seven species. 12 **Chaffinches** plus a retrap, four **Song Thrushes**, two **Goldcrests** plus one retrap, two **Robins**, and singles of **Magpie**, **Blackcap**, **Great Tit** plus two retraps, a **Firecrest**, a **Greenfinch** plus two retraps, a **Lesser Redpoll**, **Dunnock** plus one retrap, a **Blackbird** and a **Chiffchaff** and retraps of five **Blue Tits** and two **House Sparrows**.

## Friday 11th

31 birds of 10 species, plus 25 retraps of eight species were caught today and unusually there were no Lesser Redpolls caught! 18 **Chaffinches**, plus eight retraps were the best days total, along with three **Greenfinches**, two each of **Song Thrushes** and **House Sparrows** plus two retraps and singles of **Blackbird** plus a retrap, **Blackcap**, **Reed Bunting** plus three retraps, **Robin**, **Chiffchaff** and a **Magpie**. Retraps included five **Great Tits**, four **Blue Tits** and singles of **Dunnock** and a **Great Spotted Woodpecker**.

## Tuesday 8th

A much better day all round, light winds were present, but the predicted showers failed to appear until mid-late afternoon.

A busy day was had by the 'Famous Four' (*well the ringers at the bay*).

Singles of **Collared Dove**, **House Sparrow**, **Chiffchaff**, a young male **Bullfinch** and a retrapped **Blue Tit**, along with two **Dunnocks** and two **Great Tits** plus three retraps, three **Siskins**, six **Robins**, eight **Greenfinches** plus one control, 11 **Blackbirds**, 21 **Chaffinches**, an amazing 46 **Goldfinches** plus one control (*all except one goldfinch, were caught in a mist net at the feeding station next to the ringing room*)

and 54 **Lesser Redpolls** caught in the White House

ringing area. There were several 'continental' birds amongst the Robins, Great Tits, Chaffinches and Blackbirds caught today.

But the highlight came at the end of the day, all the nets had been taken down as light drizzle began to fall, a final push of the Haven Heligoland *(to try and catch just a few more birds)*.

As we turned the corner and looked into the catching box, we saw a **Long-eared Owl** staring back at us, this magnificent bird was quickly caught and put into a large bird bag, carried back to the Observatory, ringed and photographed *(and seen by the lucky few who were still at the bay)* and then released.



Photos by J. Buckingham

Totals for the day 158 new birds and six retraps/controls.

**Monday 7th**

A short and all too brief ringing session produced a young male **Brambling**, a **Robin**, four **Greenfinches**, five **Blackbirds** and eight **Chaffinches**, before the wind increased and the nets were taken down.

Thought I'd treat you to a couple of pictures - the first is an archive photograph taken by G. Crick of a Brambling's wing from above and the second, photographed by J. Buckingham today, showing brilliant colouration of the underwing of today's bird. You'd have to look hard to see this detail in the field.!



**Tuesday 1st**

**64 Lesser Redpolls** plus two controls were the highlight of the day, along with singles of **Chaffinch**, **Blackcap**, **Robin** and a **Blue Tit**.

*It is worthy to note that out of the 66 Lesser Redpolls caught, 17 were adult males and 10 were*

*adult females, normally we would expect three or four adults in a small catch like this. One pale individual was at first thought to be a common Redpoll, but on a closer examination it turned out to be an intermediate bird with characteristics of both Lesser and Common Redpoll.*

Dec 2011

## 20th

A breezy morning and the ringers decided to spend part of the morning on the beach (no not to sunbathe) but to try and catch a few birds. As we drove down towards the beach a magnificent **Barn Owl** flew in front of the car heading north along the seafront. Later we managed to catch two **Snow Buntings** (the last ones we caught were back in 2009). Whilst waiting for this catch, we felt we were being watched and as we looked out to sea, there was a **Common Seal** close to shore with its head held high out of the water looking straight at us.

Later that morning once we had decided it was getting too windy to catch any more birds we went back to the Observatory for a warm up and Andrew came back from Restharrow Scrape saying he had been able to read part of a ring number (but not the letters) on a first winter **Oystercatcher** through his telescope. We looked the number up and it was one of the three Oystercatchers that had hatched on Restharrow Scrape, which was ringed as pulli by one of our trainee ringers back on the 8th June 2011.

## 12th

The nets were up again but produced very little. One retrapped **Greenfinch**, four **Chaffinches**, two **Reed Buntings** plus five retraps, a **Chiffchaff** and single retraps of **Song Thrush** and a **Blue Tit**.

Very dodgy weather for the next few days resulted in no more ringing for a while.

## 11th

Only the Observatory Crow Trap was being used today and a new single **Collared Dove** and six **Starlings** four new and two retrapped birds.

## 9th

Only four new birds and 20 retraps were caught today including **Reed Buntings** one new and 10 retraps, a retrapped **Woodpigeon**, two retrapped **Blue Tits**, two retrapped **Great Tits**, and a retrapped **Dunnock**, two new **Chaffinches** and three retraps and finally one new **Greenfinch** and one retrap.

## 6th

Much the same as the day before; Singles of **Blackcap** and **Starling**, singles retraps of **Great Tit** and **Blue Tit**, three **Chaffinches** two new and one retrap and five new **Greenfinches**.

## 5th

New birds included singles of **Blackcap**, **Blackbird**, **House Sparrow** and a **Starling**, two **Chaffinches** and three **Greenfinches** and two retrapped **Reed Buntings**.

## 4th

31 birds were caught in total with 12 new birds and 19 retraps. The best of the day was a new **Chiffchaff** and a retrap **Goldcrest**. Otherwise it was a typical December day with two retrapped **Robins**, three retrapped **Reed Buntings**, four retrapped **Great Tits**, six **Chaffinches** four new and two retrapped birds, seven **Greenfinches** four new and three retrapped birds, four **Blue Tits** one new and three retrapped birds, a retrapped **Green Woodpecker** and finally two new **Collared Doves**.

After that things really quietened down (except for the weather).

## 2nd

66 birds were caught in total today, 21 new birds and 45 retraps. Highlight of the day was a **Pied Wagtail** which was caught in the Observatory Crow Trap. Other birds caught on the Estate were: **Reed Buntings** two new and 12 retraps, a retrapped **Dunnock**, a new **Lesser Redpoll**, **Greenfinches** seven new and 13 retraps, single retraps of **Robin**, **Great Tit**, **Song Thrush** and **Great Spotted Woodpecker**, singles of new birds **Collared Dove** and **Goldfinch**, two **House Sparrows** one new and one retrap, two new **Starlings**,

five retrapped **Blue Tits** and **Chaffinches** five new and 9 retraps.