

April 2008[<< Back to Sightings](#) | [Printer friendly version](#)**30th**

April came to an end in a spiny S wind with heavy, squally showers. It isn't often that we get to use the phrase 'most interest was at sea', but it was and, for the Bay, it included some good birds. 2 Manx Shearwaters, 14 Fulmars and 70 Gannets, many close inshore, drifted S, while small flurries of terns headed N, amounting to 42 Sandwich, one Arctic and 16 Common.

29th

Before a calm and sunny start deteriorated amid some heavy showers a superb male Ring Ouzel was showing well on the field near the sailing club, though little else was moving over land or sea. After the showers moved through at least 16 Swifts flew in off the sea and over the marshes.

28th

Dry and bright, there was little fresh activity, although there had been a small arrival of Willow Warblers. Summer migrants seem to have consolidated breeding territories nicely after a couple of days of decent weather, but numbers of some species, Yellow Wagtails in particular, remain very low.

27th

On a cloudy but warm and dry morning, 2 Ring Ouzels were calling evocatively on the golf course early on, a Whinchat was seen close to the Ancient Highway near the Chequers and Chiffchaffs continued to pass through, with at least 14 in the area.

26th

On a second consecutive sunny and spring-like day a Common Buzzard flew NW, 38 Whimbrel rose from Worth marshes and headed N and just after mid day a Raven flew N over the golf course, not far from the Observatory.

25th

A calm and sunny morning produced a decent arrival that included 30 Common Whitethroats, 2 Ring Ouzels, 2 Turtle Doves, a Hobby and 6-7 each of Blackcap and Chiffchaff, while 33 Whimbrels dropped on to Worth marshes from the south and 3 more Hobbies were seen over New Downs in the afternoon.

24th

A calm and sunny start soon gave way to a cloudy morning with a frisky and quite chilly SW breeze. Warblers on the Estate included 16 Common and one Lesser Whitethroat and 8 Chiffchaffs, while a Turtle Dove flew N and 3 Kestrels flew S, as did a party of 7 Barnacle Geese offshore.

23rd

At last, some spring warmth preceded the onset of light rain late in the morning, bringing our first Turtle Dove and Garden Warbler of spring. On the Estate were 14 Common and

one Lesser Whitethroat, 13 Chiffchaffs, 7 Blackcaps and 4 Willow Warblers and the Firecrest was still in good voice at the edge of the Elms.

22nd

Calm with a slight haze, the morning brought our first Cuckoo, an adult male Hen Harrier heading N offshore, 2 Grey Herons flying E out to sea at considerable height, 39 Whimbrel, a Greenshank and a white wagtail flying N along the shore. A Firecrest was singing in the Elms, another Ring Ouzel was seen in the gullies and summer migrants continued to increase, with 12 Sedge Warblers on Worth and 11 Common Whitethroats on the Estate, with 13 more scattered around Worth and New Downs.

21st

A thorough search of the Estate and Worth marshes turned up a reasonable variety of summer migrants, though still in small numbers. Best of all was a male Ring Ouzel, with a few House Martins, Sedge Warblers, Lesser and Common Whitethroats and our first Reed Warbler of spring. 2 Bramblings and 30 Siskins were also noted flying over.

20th

Having had Ring Ouzel and our first Lesser Whitethroats yesterday afternoon, this morning had a good deal of promise, despite the misty conditions. The first of at least 14 Chiffchaffs were more or less all we encountered until reaching the beach, where a very tired-looking **PURPLE HERON** was standing rather forlornly, presumably having just arrived. It stayed for an hour and a half then flew off inland, to be re-discovered around mid day in the Haven Stream. Elsewhere, the ringers extracted a lovely first summer male Pied Flycatcher from the nets and 2 Lesser Whitethroats and 3 Common Whitethroats were on the Estate.

18th

Despite a brisk E wind and overcast conditions the sea was virtually dead and the day's only highlight was a Black Redstart hopping around the Observatory.

17th

The promised E wind arrived as forecast and despite plenty of sunshine it was decidedly chilly. However, it had stimulated a lovely pair of Garganey to visit Restharrow Scrape (photo, on right, by Ian Hodgson) and whilst enjoying them at close range 3 Green Sandpipers and 11 Bar-tailed Godwits flew N overhead and 10 Whimbrel dropped in to the adjacent field.



16th

On a cloudless day with a developing and rather chilly S breeze it continued to be quiet, with 10 Yellow Wagtails, a Wheatear, 7 House Martins and 2 Common Whitethroats on the Estate, plus 2 Sparrowhawks flying N.

15th

On a bright but chilly morning it was again quiet for summer migrants, though 9 Yellow Wagtails were located during the course of the day and a Common Whitethroat was singing on Worth marshes. Otherwise, 140 Linnets flew N, the ringers were treated to a Brambling and a male Marsh Harrier was seen beyond the railway.

14th

The morning was cold and gloomy, with a NW breeze. Consequently, it was once again very quiet, although 2 Common Terns were squawking about offshore and 94 Linnets flew N.

13th

A sunny day with heavy showers circling about brought a significant influx of migrants, including at least 40 Swallows, 11 Yellow Wagtails, a House Martin, 5 Sand Martins and our first Common Whitethroat of spring. A Red Kite was seen over Worth at about 09.30, 2 continental Coal Tits were fidgeting about the Estate and a steady passage of 27 Meadow Pipits and 77 Linnets continued through the morning. The arrival of an Egyptian Goose on Restharrow Scrape emptied the building of birdwatchers, eager to add a species that is actually quite scarce at the Bay, even if it probably hadn't just arrived from Cairo.

11th

Another quiet day, even in the calm before a frisky SW wind set in just before mid day. Summer migrants included only a few Swallows and it seems certain that poor weather further south is holding things back.

10th

Another calm day, but with high cloud, produced little in the way of migrants, although a Redpoll flew S, a few Swallows flew N and a Whimbrel, our first of the year, appeared on Restharrow Scrape. However, at 10.05 a **BLACK KITE** drifted over the scrape and the Elms before setting off inland. Although it apparently disappeared it was still present at 11.05, but was not seen subsequently.

9th

Despite a clear sky, or perhaps because of it, little new had arrived overnight, though 3 Bramblings were scattered about the Estate.

8th

A lovely, calm and eventually warm morning with a remarkably low tide that exposed assorted wrecks, normally submerged from view, along the shore. Whilst it was not exactly a case of the floodgates being opened, 7 Blackcaps were freshly arrived, a Little Ringed Plover was on Restharrow Scrape, 5 Willow Warblers and 10 Chiffchaffs were present on the Estate and 6 Swallows and 3 Sparrowhawks flew N.

7th

The cold weather seems to have stopped migration in its tracks, although a Greenshank was our first of the year. Otherwise, Merlin, Marsh Harrier and Peregrine were seen

around the Estate and 6 singing Cetti's Warblers were audible on Worth marshes.

6th

Apart from 12 Chiffchaffs and 6 Willow Warblers, birds seemed to have got wind of the rather noxious weather forecast and things were otherwise very quiet. However, as the sleet showers were getting themselves organised at around 10am 2 **COMMON CRANES** were seen soaring high over Worth marshes and Cottington, to appear not very long after over Stodmarsh.

4th

Things were quiet, despite a light wind and increasing warmth, though 5-6 each of Sand Martin and Swallow flew N, as did 16 Siskins, and 2 Yellow Wagtails were flying about over Restharrow Scrape in the afternoon.

3rd

An azure sky meant that overhead movement was difficult to detect, to say the least, although 157 Chaffinches and 18 Siskins flew over, 4 Swallows and a Sand Martin flew N and on the Estate were 2 continental Coal Tits, a Black Redstart and 3 Firecrests.

2nd

Mostly sunny with a light westerly breeze, overhead movement was very much lighter, but it proved to be very good for summer migrants. Top of the list were 2 remarkably early Common Swifts that spent ten minutes or so tearing about the Estate, about an hour ahead of the discovery of our first Little Ringed Plover of the year! A Blackcap was mumbling to itself in the Elms, 2 Yellow Wagtails flew N, a Sedge Warbler was singing sporadically on Worth marshes and 2 Firecrests, 4 Sand Martins and a Swallow were also seen around the Estate.

1st

A gloomy morning with occasional light rain and an enthusiastic S breeze precipitated a notable movement of 181 Siskins, accompanied by 782 Chaffinches and at least 26 Bramblings. How many of the latter do we miss? Among mixed flocks that were low enough to pick out Bramblings among the Chaffinches, more than 5% were Bramblings. Our bird-day total for visibly migrating Chaffinches this spring exceeds 8,500