

## Aug 2011

### 31st

Despite some early breaks in the cloud, the dullest August since Frodo returned the Ring to Mordor ended in appropriately gloomy fashion. Still, 4 Little Stints remained on Restharrow and one of the Curlew Sandpipers was still on Backsand. Otherwise, Chiffchaff passage is gaining momentum, 2 Hobbies flew over early on and 5 Whinchats were present at the south end of the Estate.

### 30th

On the Estate, Chiffchaffs were around in more or less the same numbers as Willows, though only 10-11 of each were apparent, but most interest centred on the scrapes, with 4 Little Stints on Restharrow and 2 Curlew Sandpipers on Backsand. Otherwise, it was again quiet.

### 29th

It was a good deal quieter than yesterday, although Hobby and Marsh Harrier were seen again, there were 4 Little Stints and the Spotted Redshank on Restharrow Scrape, 2 Ravens flew N over the Observatory at 11.40 and 7-8 each of Whinchat and Wheatear were arranged along the shore.

### 28th

On the first of our Bank Holiday Open Days the Spotted Redshank and a different Little Stint were on Restharrow Scrape, along with 10 Dunlins, which may be a world record for the scrape. Blackcaps were more

numerous, the total of around 50 including a flock of 23 that exited from a couple of elders on the Estate, along with 3 Lesser Whitethroats and a marauding flock of over 40 Blue and Great Tits. At least 5 Great Spotted Woodpeckers were flitting about, but the real highlight came when 2 Hobbies were trapped ahead of some frisky afternoon showers - in nearly 60 years since a ringing station was established here we have ringed only seven of these elegant falcons, so much joy and cake was had by all.



### **27th**

A Spotted Redshank and a Little Stint were on Restharrow Scrape, but apart from 9 Whinchats and a Redstart the Estate continues to be quiet.

### **26th**

Although overnight rain had more or less cleared, early morning was still overcast and blustery and the bushes well and truly blown out, so we diverted to the safety of the hide at Pegwell. In truth, it was pretty quiet, although a Ruff was fiddling about in the scrape in front of the hide, 3 Greenshanks and a Common Sandpiper were spooked from the river and the tern flock included 2 Littles and one adult Arctic. A flock of 25 Knot flew through at one point, but there were otherwise very few small waders.

### **25th**

The promised rain failed to arrive and the day contented itself with being bright and blustery. It was quiet

around the bushes, with only a Redstart in the Oasis, but 17 Whinchats had arrived, mostly along the shore to the south, 16 Wheatears were scattered about, a Little Stint was on Restharrow, a Ruff was on Backsand and 2 Hobbies and an adult male Marsh Harrier added a bit of spice to proceedings.

## **24th**

In continuing gloom, at least 16 Wheatears had arrived along the coast, while 3 Whinchats were clustered around the scrape, where a visit by a juvenile Peregrine put paid to any thoughts of hanging around that most of the waders there might have harboured. Among a decent selection of warblers in the bushes was an *acredula* Willow Warbler, but the most obvious change was the ticking calls of Robins, which were audible in numbers around the Estate for the first time this autumn.

## **23rd**

A day of unremitting gloom, even when mid-morning rain cleared through, was enlivened by the presence of 6 Whinchats and a Hobby, but there were few birds in the bushes.

## **22nd**

Everything seems to have settled into a period somewhere in between 'not very much going on' and 'pretty quiet' and highlights this morning consisted mainly of good views of the local female Sparrowhawk and a scattering of warblers, including 20 Blackcaps and 30 Willow Warblers, while 7 Wheatears were hopping about on Princes.

## **19th**

Yesterday's wind and rain had the good grace to clear away overnight, leaving a bright, calm morning. Warblers on the Estate included 50 Willows, 3 Garden Warblers, 9 Blackcaps, 25 Whitethroats and 3 Lesser Whitethroats, there were 3 Whinchats at Dickson's Corner and a Redstart and a Spotted Flycatcher in the Oasis and the 3 Wood Sandpipers were still on the scrape.

## **17th**

While numbers of migrants on the Estate were well down, 7 Whinchats and 23 Wheatears were scattered about, mostly near the Chequers and near the entrance to Prince's, and 3 Wood Sandpipers were still twiddling about on the scrape.

## **16th**

It was pretty quiet in a freshening SW breeze with high, broken cloud; totals on the Estate included 30 Willow Warblers and a Common Redstart, while 3 Wood Sandpipers remained on the scrape along with 6 Little Ringed Plovers.

## **15th**

At least 70 Willow Warblers were present this morning, together with a Wood Warbler in the Haven and Oasis, a Common Redstart and a Spotted Flycatcher.

## **14th**

The roll-call of passerines began to take on an autumnal flavour with the appearance of a Pied Flycatcher in the Oasis on the 13th, followed by an arrival of 15 Garden Warblers, 85 Willow Warblers, 3 Common Redstarts, 3 Spotted Flycatchers, 7 Lesser Whitethroats and 3 Whinchats today.

## **11th**

About 23 Gannets, 210 Sandwich and 180 Common Terns piled into Pegwell as the SW wind freshened and as they began to trickle back again at least 8 Arctic Skuas arrived from the NE. Most flew directly downchannel, but at least 3 remained in the bay, harrying terns and settling on the sea over a 30-minute period, often close inshore, while occasional flurries of Sand Martins sped N over the sea. On land, 2 Wood Sandpipers remained on the scrape.

## **10th**

The first thing that was obvious this morning was an influx of 35 or so Meadow Pipits around the Oasis, while

Kestrels were also much more numerous than recently, with at least ten in the area. 35 Willow Warblers and 5 Lesser Whitethroats were in the bushes, a Hobby and a Marsh Harrier flew over and 2 Wood Sandpipers, 6 Little Ringed Plovers and a Dunlin were on the scrape. To add strength to the suspicion that some of the Kestrels may have been migrants, a Honey Buzzard flew N over the golf course and Stonar just after mid day.

## **9th**

3 Wood Sandpipers, 6 Little Ringed Plovers and 6 Dunlin were on Restharrow Scrape and at least 250 Sandwich Terns, 40 or so Common Terns, 40 Gannets and a Black Tern were busy offshore. Otherwise, a frisky NW breeze made the bushes very quiet.

## **8th**

Over the weekend, a Wood Warbler and a Common Treecreeper were trapped on the 6th. The current disturbed weather, with some heavy overnight rain, seems to be creating some good wader passage, with Wood Sandpipers in particularly good numbers - there were 4 on Backsand Scrape and 3 on Restharrow today, plus a Temminck's Stint on Backsand. On the Estate, 3 Crossbills flew N and there were at least 50 Willow Warblers and 7 Lesser Whitethroats in the bushes.

## **5th**

One Wood Sandpiper and 4 Little Ringed Plovers remained on Restharrow and migrants on the Estate included 40 Willow Warblers, 11 Lesser Whitethroats and 2 Garden Warblers.

## **4th**

There were 4 Wood Sandpipers today - 2 on each of the scrapes - and a round of the Estate before the wind got up and rain arrived produced about 30 Willow Warblers.

## **3rd**

Warm and humid from early on, the morning was like birding somewhere abroad. A circuit of the Estate turned up 28 Willow Warblers, 5 Wheatears and, on Restharrow Scrape, a Wood Sandpiper, 5 Little Ringed

Plovers and a Little Egret. It had become hot by mid afternoon, despite a welcome breeze from the south, and Worth was quiet, although a Hobby was dashing about after the few dragonflies that were showing themselves.

## **2nd**

Wood Sandpipers were on both scrapes (2 on Backsand), while New Downs held 23 Greenshanks and a flock of 26 Golden Plover, resplendent in their summer plumage.

## **1st**

The new month crept in unobtrusively, though a Wood Sandpiper was on the scrape and 7 Wheatears were seen on the shore.