

Cley Breeding Records 2008

Introduction

Once more we have attempted to document the breeding species on Cley Marshes. This report is based on sightings made during our visits to the NWT reserve and areas between E Bank and Iron Road during Spring and Summer 2008. It also includes sightings that have been passed to us by other local observers.

It was not a scientific survey, we did not visit all areas regularly, but merely took records of nesting birds and youngsters seen, and tried to follow the progress of each family. All sightings were from the hides and public footpaths around the reserve and eastern area. The following species notes give our interpretation of these sightings together with our best guesses of the total numbers breeding and young that fledged.

Summary

This first table lists birds which bred, or tried to, in our area this year with counts where known.

Species	Pairs breeding	No. young fledged	Earliest chicks seen
Mute Swan	2	6	3 rd June
Greylag Goose	c.70		18 th April
Egyptian Goose	2	4	28 th May
Shelduck	3	29	6 th June
Gadwall	14	At least 17	31 st May
Mallard	21	49-54	1 st May
Garganey	0		
Shoveler	5	9	15 th June
Pochard	1	2	23 rd May
Tufted Duck	2	3	21 st June
Ruddy Duck	0		
Little Grebe	3	6	3 rd July
Bittern	1	?	
Grey Heron	1+	4	26 th April
Marsh Harrier	7	21	24 th June
Sparrowhawk	1?		
Water Rail	?		
Moorhen	6	4	29 th June
Coot	11	16	
Oystercatcher	10+	0	
Avocet	60	10	19 th May
Little Ringed Plover	0		
Ringed Plover	5	0	
Lapwing	12+	6+	26 th April
Common Snipe	?		
Redshank	10+	14	28 th May
Black-headed Gull	80+	0	29 th May
Common Tern	3	0	

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The following species also bred, or are thought to have, but numbers are unknown:

Pied Wagtail	Reed Bunting
Meadow Pipit	Skylark
Cetti's Warbler	Bearded Tit
Sedge Warbler	Linnet
Reed Warbler	Swallow

We are beginning to realise that every year is different in the breeding cycle at Cley. The weather has a different pattern each year and whether the rain holds off during May, June and July has a major effect on the success of all birds but especially the waders. The floods of last November appeared to have caused a lack of invertebrates on the scrapes and meadows in the Spring with fewer birds than usual feeding there. The cold weather in March caused a delay in breeding commencing with the first nests seen 1 - 2 weeks later than last year. Despite a cool wet summer we were lucky this year in that water levels didn't get high enough to flood out nests during the main breeding period.

This year's successes were Bittern with a pair breeding for the first time for several years and Marsh Harriers who did superbly with 7 nests producing 21 young. The number of pairs breeding for most waders, Coots and Moorhens was down on 2007 but the ducks did well. Following on from a blank year in 2007, 5 pairs of Shoveler bred this year raising at least 9 young. Avocets had another poor year with fewer pairs and only 10 young surviving to fledge. Oystercatchers, Ringed Plovers and Common Terns all nested but failed to raise any young.

The following table shows comparisons with previous years for all species.

Species	Pairs breeding					Young fledged				
	2008	2007	2006	2005	2004	2008	2007	2006	2005	2004
Mute Swan	2	3	2	1	0	6	7	2	2	
Greylag	c.70	c.120	100+	?	?		100+	134+	134+	56
Egyptian Goose	2	4	0	1	0	4	11	0	3	0
Shelduck	3	5	8	13	6	29	26-36	50	59	26
Gadwall	14	5	11	12	6	17+	6+	28	17	18-26
Mallard	21	15+	23	22	17	52	42+	32	52	55
Pintail	0	0	1	0	0			0-6		
Garganey	0	0	0?	1	0			0??	4	
Shoveler	5	0	7	10	7	9	0	17	26	20-25
Pochard	1	1-2	1	1	0	2	2+	3	?	
Tufted Duck	2	1	1	2	10	3	0-4	3?	9	16
Ruddy Duck	0	0	0	2	2				4+	3
Little Grebe	3	2	2	3		6	3+	3+	4-5	5
Bittern	1	0	0	0	0					
Grey Heron	1+	1+	1+	1		4+	2+	3+		
Marsh Harrier	7	4	5	4	4	21	8	14	10	10
Sparrowhawk	?	?	1?							
Water Rail	1+?	1+	1+	1?			?	1+	1+	
Moorhen	6	10	8	12	10	4	15+	10+	15	5
Coot	11	17	12	30	7	16	32	15+	24	15
Oystercatcher	10+	7+	10?	4	8	0	1	0	3-4	2
Avocet	60	85	98?	86	102	10	25	5	18	40
Little Ringed Plover	0	1-2	0	0	0	0	0			
Ringed Plover	5	9	4	0	1	0	5	8	0	2
Lapwing	12+	22	33	26	11	6+	4	13	4	3
Common Snipe		?	?							
Redshank	10+	15+	25	8	10?	14	12	24+	10	6+
Black-headed Gull	80+	c.100	144+	Many		0	22?	54?	16	
Common Tern	3	3	2	3	0	0	0	4	0	

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Species Details

Mute Swan

2 pairs, 6 young fledged

No nests were seen this year but 2 pairs were seen with young. All grey cygnets this year, no 'Polish Swans', does this mean that pair didn't breed or do the 'white' birds only appear occasionally?

1. A pair with 6 small cygnets were seen in the Catchwater Drain opposite Snipe's Marsh on 3rd June. One cygnet had been lost when they were next seen off East Bank on 22nd June, and by the 24th there were only four left. They weren't seen often, probably feeding in the drains on Popes Marsh, but a few sightings up to the end of July indicated there were still four cygnets. On 18th August a pair (presumably these) were sat beside the Catchwater Drain by E Bank with only 3 cygnets, these continued to be seen well into September.
2. A pair with 3 small cygnets were in front of Daukes Hide on 5th June. These were seen regularly around the Central Scrapes and drains often sleeping on the grass in front of Bishop's Hide. They were still present as a family in mid September.
3. A pair with 4 young seen in the Catchwater Drain by Iron Rd on 28th June and then again there on a few days in July were thought to be a third family, but probably came from Salthouse.

Greylag Goose

Bred

We are not sure how many pairs bred in the area but the WeBS counts of March and May showed over 200 birds present with only 191 on the April count when some would be sitting on nests out of view. It is therefore guessed that, accounting for non-breeders, around 70 pairs bred or attempted to breed. Early breeders, birds were sitting on nests visible from East Bank by late March. The first goslings, 2 on Snipe's Marsh, were seen on 18th April and by the end of the month there were at least 40 small goslings in the area. Although difficult to keep track of it is thought that at least 155 goslings were seen between Beach Rd Cley and the Iron Rd and probably a lot more, from at least 63 broods. No counts were made later on so we don't know how many fledged.

Canada Goose

No breeding

Although there is regularly a small flock (30+) in the area outside of the breeding season, these disappear in April and May and there has been no evidence of breeding.

Egyptian Goose

2 pairs, 4 fledged

We don't know where these nested but pairs with young were seen on the reserve.

This year only 2 broods were seen in our area:

1. A pair with 4 small goslings was first seen on 28th May on Billy's Wash. They continued to be seen on and off on North and the Central Scrapes until mid July when they were almost fully grown.
2. Another pair with 4 small goslings were first seen on Pat's Pool on 15th June. A pair with 3 small on North Scrape on 18th were thought to be the same. They were not seen again.

Shelduck

3 pairs, 29 fledged

- | | |
|--|---------|
| | fledged |
| 1. A pair with 10 small ducklings were first seen on 6 th June in the Main Drain east of East Bank. By the 8 th the brood had reduced to 9. They then moved to North Scrape and continued to be seen there until the end of July when fully grown and fledged. | 9 |
| 2. A pair with 14 small ducklings were first seen on Simmond's Scrape on 12 th June. The brood had reduced to 13 by the 15 th and 12 by the 25 th . They also then moved to North Scrape and the ducklings were often seen mixing with the brood from 1 above. They continued to be seen until late July when fledged. | 12 |
| 3. A pair were seen with 3 tiny ducklings on Arnold's Marsh on 16 th June, then with 10 small on the 18 th . These continued to be seen either on Arnold's or in the Main Drain south of Arnold's, but by the 29 th the brood had reduced to 8. They continued to be seen here, sometimes roaming to the Serpentine, until early August when fledged and they had been joined by other young birds. | 8 |

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Gadwall

14 pairs bred, between 17 and 36 fledged

All dabbling ducks seemed to do well this year with many broods seen. Many small ducklings were seen but once they get to three-quarter size they become difficult to tell from the groups of eclipse ducks on the scrapes so can get lost.

	Fledged
1. A pair with 4 tiny ducklings were at the back of N Scrape on 31 st May. A fem with 4 medium ducklings, which may have been the same, was seen there again on 11 th June but not again.	0
2. 2 small/medium ducklings were on Pat's Pool on 6 th to 20 th June but they weren't seen again.	0
3. A brood of 10 small ducklings were first reported on North Scrape on 8 th June. By the 17 th only 9 remained and these continued to be seen until 1 st July when medium sized, they weren't seen again.	0-9
4. Another brood of 9 small ducklings were on Pat's Pool for 3 days from the 22 nd June but not seen again.	0
5. A brood of 8 small ducklings were seen on Pat's Pool on 20 th June. By 26 th there were only 7 but these continued to be seen till the end of July when they had probably fledged.	7
6. A brood of 4 tiny ducklings were on Pat's Pool on 24 th June with 3 there on the 26 th . 3 small/medium on Whitwell on 6 th July were thought to be the same brood and these continued to be seen on Simmond's and in front of Daukes Hide until late July when quite large.	3
7. 5 small ducklings, first seen by Daukes Hide on 15 th July continued to be seen there until the end of the month but not again.	0
8. 3 tiny ducklings were in front of Daukes Hide from the 15 th to 21 st July but were not seen again.	0
9. A brood of 6 medium sized ducklings were on North Scrape on 27 th June. They continued to be seen until 14 th July when they were in the Main Drain just east of North Scrape, they weren't seen again.	6?
10. A brood of 6+ small/medium ducklings were in the Main Drain east of N Scrape on 28 th June. 7 medium on N Scrape on 29 th /30 th were thought to be the same. They were not seen again until 21 st July when 7 large which could have been them were in the Main Drain.	7
11. A female with 5 medium ducklings were on North Scrape on 12 th & 13 th July. 4 seen on 20 th -27 th July were likely to have been the same brood.	4?
12. 1 tiny duckling was seen on Whitwell on 10 th -15 th July but not seen again.	0
13. A brood of 8 tiny ducklings were seen in front of Daukes Hide on 6 th July with 7 there on the 8 th , but they weren't seen again.	0
14. A brood of 3 tiny ducklings were seen in the Catchwater Drain west of E Bank on 21 st July and again on the 29 th but not after that.	0

Single sightings

- 1 tiny on Pat's Pool on 5th June.
- 6 on the Serpentine on 15th June
- 2 small in the reedy pool at the N end of East Bank on 20th June.
- 15 small in the Catchwater Drain near Iron Rd on 30th June
- 10 small in the Catchwater Drain near Iron Rd on 5th July
- 8 small in Catchwater Drain west of East Bank on 13th July
- 2 tiny near Bishop's Hide on 10th July

Teal

No breeding

About 15 birds were present throughout the summer but no sign of breeding.

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Mallard

21 broods were seen, at least 49 fledged

Mallard take at least 50 days to fledge but can become independent before this. This means that broods can break up before fledged and hence become difficult to follow.

	fledged
1. A family of 6+ ducklings was seen crossing the Coast Rd from the reserve to the village nr Beach Rd on 1 st May. Where did they go?	0
2. A female with 9 small ducklings was in the drain in front of Daukes Hide then walked up the grass bank between Simmond's & Whitwell on 8 th May. A brood of 8 on Simmond's on 18 th May was thought to be the same and were seen again in front of Daukes on 25 th . Only 7 were present on the 26 th but these 7 continued to be seen regularly until the end of July when fledged.	7
3. A brood of 10 on Pat's Pool on 16 th May were seen regularly there until the 23 rd . A brood of 10 small/medium on North Scrape on 1 st June may well have been these as may a group of 10 medium/large with no parent seen on Simmond's Scrape on 10 th June.	10
4. A brood of 11 on Billy's Wash on 16 th May was then seen on Pat's Pool on the 17 th & 18 th and in front of Daukes Hide on the 24 th , but not again.	0
5. A brood of 4 was first seen on Pat's Pool on 28 th May and then again on 5 th & 6 th June but not after that.	0
6. A brood of 6 small in front of Daukes Hide on 29 th May was seen on and off on Pat's Pool & Simmond's Scrape until 19 th June.	0
7. A brood of 8 on Billy's Wash on 29 th May was seen on North Scrape on the 31 st but not again.	0
8. A brood of 8 tiny ducklings, first seen on North Scrape on 10 th June reduced to 7 by 24 th and then to 6 on 4 th July. They weren't seen after the 5 th July.	0
9. A brood of 5 small ducklings were seen by Daukes Hide early morning on 8 th June and later that day on North Scrape. What appeared to be the same were on Richardson's on the 9 th . A brood of 4 small/medium ducklings seen near Daukes Hide on 20 th June was thought to be the same brood. These continued to be seen until 21 st July when fully grown.	4
10. A brood of 6 small on North Scrape on 20 th June continued to be seen there until 25 th July when fully grown.	6
11. A brood of 5 was in the Catchwater Drain on 19 th and 23 rd May (previously reported by Bernard). 3 large remained on 9 th June.	3
12. A brood of 5 on the Serpentine on 29 th May was seen again on 12 th June. 4 were seen on and off till late July.	4
13. A brood of 6 was seen on Billy's Wash on 12 th May with 5 still there on the 24 th . 2+ seen there on 2 nd June were probably also these.	0
14. A brood of 8 tiny ducklings was in the Catchwater Drain opposite Snipe's Marsh on 5 th June and again on 22 nd .	0
15. 4 medium/large ducklings were on North Scrape on 1 st & 2 nd June and again on the 14 th & 15 th .	4
16. 6 medium/large ducklings were on Pat's Pool on 19 th & 24 th June and again on 2 nd July.	6
17. 1 medium duckling on Pat's Pool on 9 th & 15 th June and then on Richardson's Scrape on 26 th .	1
18. 5 medium/large ducklings were on Simmond's Scrape on 17 th & 19 th June.	5?
19. 3 small/medium ducklings were on Whitwell on 2 nd July and again on the 12 th & 13 th .	0
20. 4 small ducklings were on North Scrape from 3 rd to 7 th of July then again on the 26 th .	0
21. 4 medium/large ducklings were in the Catchwater Drain by Iron Rd on the 15 th & 22 nd July.	4

Single sightings which may have been of one of the above broods:

- Brood of 10 walked from Pat's to Simmond's/Whitwell on 18th May.
- Single duckling with no parent on 28th May in front of Daukes Hide
- 1 medium duckling in the Catchwater Drain on 3rd June
- 4 large ducklings in Catchwater Drain west of E Bank on 15th June.
- 2 small/medium in Catchwater Drain by Watcher's Cottage on 18th June.
- 9 medium in Catchwater Drain west of the Visitor's Centre on 9th June.
- 4 medium in field opposite Walsey Hills on 9th June.
- 2 small on the Serpentine on 2nd June.
- 3 medium in front of Daukes Hide on 15th June (*may have been part of brood 9 above*).
- 5 small on Whitwell on 17th June.
- 4 small on Pat's Pool on 20th June.
- 6 small on Simmond's on 22nd June.
- 6 medium in Main Drain behind Arnold's on 22nd June.

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- n) 2 small alone by Daukes on 23rd June.
- o) 8 small on Simmond's on 23rd June.
- p) 5 small/medium by Daukes on 24th June. *Could be l) above.*
- q) 4 large by Bishop's on 9th July.
- r) 2 large by Bishop's on 11th & 15th July.
- s) 5 medium by Daukes on 12th July with 5 large there on 22nd.
- t) Female with a small duckling in Catchwater Drain by Visitor Centre on 5th September

Garganey

No evidence of breeding this year.

Shoveler

5 pairs, 9 fledged

- | | fledged |
|---|---------|
| 1. A brood of 3 small to medium sized ducklings was first seen on Pat's Pool on 15 th June. By 2 nd July there were only 2 present but they were well grown. They continued to be seen until 13 th July when at least 1 had fledged. | 2 |
| 2. A brood of 7 medium ducklings was first seen on Pat's Pool on 23 rd June. The brood or parts of it continued to be seen regularly on Pat's Pool or by Daukes Hides until 22 nd July when fully grown. | 7 |
| 3. A brood of 8 small ducklings was seen in front of Daukes Hide on 3 rd July. A brood of 5 medium ducklings seen there on 16 th & 17 th July may have been the remains of this brood but they weren't seen again. | 0 |
| 4. A brood of 6 small ducklings was seen in front of Daukes Hide on 15 th & 16 th July. 6 medium on the 21 st were thought to be the same. They were not seen again. | 0 |
| 5. A female with 3 small ducklings was seen in front of Daukes Hide on 21 st July but not again.. | 0 |

Pochard

1 pair, 2 fledged

A pair was seen with 6 tiny ducklings in front of Bishop's Hide on 23rd & 24th May. They were not seen again until 13th June when 3, now medium sized, were with the female in the Catchwater Drain by East Bank. They continued to be seen on and off for the next few weeks but another was lost. On 10th July 1 was seen on Richardson's Scrape but flew off, it was later seen back in the Catchwater Drain where both young had fledged.

Tufted Duck

2 pairs, 3 fledged

- | | fledged |
|--|---------|
| 1. A female was seen with 4 tiny ducklings in the Catchwater Drain just west of Iron Rd on 21 st June and then just to the east on the 22 nd . They were still there on the 30 th . On 11 th July there were only 3 and these were still present on 21 st July when well grown. They were not seen again but this area is not regularly visited and they can easily be out of sight in the drain. | 3 |
| 2. On 5 th August a female was on Richardson's Scrape with a single small duckling. They were seen regularly there and near Daukes Hide until the 11 th but not again. | 0 |

Ruddy Duck

None bred.

A pair was seen regularly from 1st April till 14th May, mainly on Snipe's Marsh. After that only the drake was seen raising hopes that the female was on a nest. The drake disappeared at the end of May, the female was not seen again and there was no evidence of breeding.

Common Pheasant

2+ tiny chicks were seen on the path on East Bank.

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Little Grebe

3 pairs. 6+fledged

- | | | |
|----|--|----------------|
| 1. | A pair with 2 tiny chicks was first seen on 3 rd July on Snipes Marsh and with 4 chicks on the 5 th and again on the 8 th . On the 9 th only 2 could be seen being fed and what looked like a dead chick was floating in the water. These 2 continued to be seen till at least the 24 th . A single medium/large chick was with 2 adults on Snipes on 10 th August, by then the young could be independent so the other may have become separated. | fledged
1-2 |
| 2. | A single large chick was seen with an adult on Snipe's Marsh on 14 th July. From earlier observations of adults there were probably 2 pairs on Snipes. | 2 |
| 3. | 2 large chicks were on Richardson's Scrape on 23 rd July and 2 large young with an adult and in the Catchwater Drain on August 10 th were probably the same. | 2 |
| 4. | A pair with 2 chicks was first seen in the Catchwater Drain near the Visitor Centre on 28 th July and they were still present in mid August. These were probably a 2 nd brood from the pair in 3 above. | ? |

Bittern

1 pair bred, number of young unknown.

After some earlier sightings, a male was booming from 9th May until 10th June. One was seen regularly in flight from 9th June until the end of July. It appeared to be doing regular feeding flights being seen several times a day, returning to a similar spot in the reedbed. One observer who watched throughout a day in late July reported it flying about every 1½ hours. From the pattern of flights observed it is thought (and agreed by the RSPB researcher monitoring Bitterns) that a pair did breed, hatching young around the 13th June. The number of sightings reduced significantly at the end of July indicating that the young had fledged. No young have been seen but this is apparently quite normal, as they can disperse long distances within days of fledging. So we will never know how many fledged.

Little Egret

No breeding yet!

Grey Heron

1+ pairs, 4+ fledged.

Bred in North Foreland wood. The nest could not be seen from the road but the birds were heard. 2 young were seen in N Foreland on 26th April. In late May one or more adults were regularly seen taking Avocet chicks from the scrapes. 4 fully fledged juveniles were seen with 2 adults on Pat's Pool on 3rd July.

Marsh Harrier

5 pairs nested on the reserve raising 15 young with a further 2 pairs raising 6 young on Popes Marsh

At least two females remained from the winter roost cohort to nest alongside three others, both of these long-term residents making strong territorial claims from as early as January. The five Cley females were mated to four males, one a strikingly pale old male recognised from the 2006 & 2007 breeding seasons, with one nest situated in the northern reeds, one central and three east of Bishop's Hide. Nest building was seen from the last week in March and females began to go down on eggs during the second week of April. The first indication of hatching came on 18th May with fledged young seen from 24th June, the final juvenile appearing on 21st July to complete totals of 4, 4, 3, 2 and 2 from the five nests.

There were two additional females mated to a single male in the Popes Marsh reeds that both raised 3 young, the first appearing on 27th June.

Several passage birds were present for short periods during the breeding season but the only long-stayer was an immature male that frequented the marshes between Blakeney and Popes during late June and early July.

Sparrowhawk

Possibly bred

We are fairly certain breeding took place somewhere locally but don't know where. Prey was seen being taken south fairly regularly, though possibly to the woods further inland. A group of three at Cley on 16/8 was almost certainly a family party but where did they come from?

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Kestrel

Bred

A pair nested in North Foreland where young were heard regularly during July and food was seen to be taken in that direction several times. No young were seen so we don't know if they were successful.

Water Rail

Probably bred

A juvenile was reported in the Bishop's Hide area on 14th July. We have no further details so don't know the age of the bird. We therefore cannot be certain that it was not already fledged and had come from elsewhere.

Moorhen

6 pairs, 4 fledged

	fledged
1. 1 medium chick was seen in the Catchwater Drain near the Visitor Centre on 29 th June but not reported again.	0
2. A pair with 2 medium chicks was first seen on Whitwell Scrape on 30 th June and continued to be seen near the Central Hides until late July when fledged. A large youngster seen near Bishop's Hide on several occasions in mid to late July was probably one of these.	2
3. A pair with 2 small chicks was seen on the pool north of the Serpentine on 7 th July and again on the 13 th . 1 medium sized chick was there on the 16 th but wasn't seen again. A juvenile seen by Popes Meadow in early September may have been this.	1
4. 1 large or fledged youngster was on North Scrape from 10 th July.	1
5. 2 medium chicks were on North Scrape on 20 th July but not seen again.	0
6. 2 tiny chicks were seen in the Catchwater Drain west of the Visitor Centre on 26 th & 28 th August, still present 5 th September – very late	?

Coot

9-11 pairs, 16 fledged

	fledged
1. An adult with 3 young was seen on Snipes Marsh on 26 th April and again on 9 th & 10 th May with a single there on the 14 th & 23 rd . 2 now medium/large chicks were seen on 24 th & 28 th and continued to be seen until early July.	2
2. An adult with 2 tiny chicks was first seen on Snipes Marsh on 23 rd May. They continued to be seen until early July.	2
3. A pair with 2 small chicks was first seen on 16 th May on Billy's Wash. On 17 th they had moved to Simmond's Scrape where they continued to be seen until the 31 st when only 1 was present. This one continued to be seen until early August when fledged.	1
4. A pair with 2 small chicks was on Pat's Pool on 9 th June. By the 16 th these had also moved to Simmond's where at least 1 continued to be seen until early August.	1
5. A single large chick was seen in front of Bishop's Hide on 22 nd June with 2 there on 24 th . These continued to be seen on and off until the end of July.	2
6. An adult with a single medium chick was first seen on Richardson's Scrape on 24 th June and was then seen on and off until late July.	1
7. A pair with 3 medium chicks was also first seen on Richardson's on 24 th June and then on and off until late July when fully grown and independent.	3
8. An adult with 1 small chick was seen on Richardson's on 27 th July, then on and off until mid August (probably a successful 2 nd brood).	1
9. A pair with 3 medium/large chicks was first seen on North Scrape on 25 th June and continued to be seen there until late July.	3
10. A tiny chick was on North Scrape on 8 th July but not seen again.	0
11. A medium chick in front of Daukes Hide on 8 th August was not seen again (another 2 nd brood).	0

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Oystercatcher

10 pairs, no young

Up to 26 birds were regularly seen in the area during the breeding period, with at least 10 pairs attempting to breed, but there was no evidence of any success.

1. E of Arnolds: (2 pairs)
 - a) 1 first seen sitting in a field beside the A149 W of Pope's entrance on 2nd May was seen regularly until 23rd May, but was not present on 3rd June. The chicks had probably hatched but there was no sign of the adults and no young were seen.
 - b) 1 was sitting on the beach east of Sea Pool on 23rd May but not seen again. This could have been 1 of the pairs from Arnold's (see below).
2. Arnold's: (at least 4 pairs involved)
 - a) 1 was sitting on the beach behind Arnold's from 12th May – 4th June. It was not present on the 5th. Chicks may have hatched but again they were never seen.
 - b) 1 was sitting on a sandy island at the west end of Arnold's from 12-18th May. The water level rose on 18th and the nest was flooded out on 19th.
 - c) 1 was sitting on the shingle bank at east end of Arnold's opposite the 3rd gap from 13th –20th May but was easily disturbed and the nest failed.
 - d) Another was sitting on the shingle bank at east end of Arnold's from 19th –20th May
 - e) 1 was sitting on the gravel by 2nd gap inside the fence on Arnold's on 30th May.
 - f) 1 was sitting on the grassy island at the east end of Arnold's on 1st-6th July.
 - g) 1 was sitting on the shingle spit at the west end of Arnold's on 2nd-7th July.
 - h) 1 was sitting on the beach behind Arnold's on 3rd-7th July.
3. West (1 pair)

1 was sitting on Eye Pool on 14th May only
4. Brackish Pools between N Hide & E Bank: (1 to 3 pairs)
 - a) 1 was sitting on 2 eggs on the shingle bank by the W end of the Brackish Pools close to the path from 31st May to 3rd June, but was regularly disturbed and was gone on 4th.
 - b) 1 was sitting on one of the (gull) hummocks at the east end of the Brackish from 11th- 14th June but not after.
 - c) Possibly the same pair as a) then nested nearby but on the Beach side of the bank from 23rd June to 15th July by which time the eggs may have hatched but no young were seen.
5. North Scrape: (2 pairs)
 - a) 1 was sitting on the bank at NE corner of the scrape on 19-20th May but not later.
 - b) 1 was sitting on one of the back islands on 18th-21st May.
 - c) A pair were nesting on an island at the SW side of the scrape from 18th June till 17th July when they left the nest but no chicks were seen (this was longer than the normal incubation period so the eggs probably failed to hatch).
 - d) Another pair were nesting on an island at the NE side of the scrape from 22nd June till 17th July when they left the nest but no chicks were seen.

Cley Breeding Records 2008

Avocet

Once again the Avocets had a bad year. 60 pairs were thought to have attempted to breed but only 10 young fledged.

Central Scrapes

They appeared to have learnt that Pat's Pool was not a good place to nest with only 5 pairs attempting to nest there. These nests all failed and by the end of May no nests remained. 21 pairs chose to nest on Simmond's Scrape. These fared a little better with at least 7 broods hatching, but no young survived, that Heron was around again taking chicks in bulk. By 6th June no nests and no chicks were left on the Central scrapes.

North Scrape

This looked as if it could do better but of the 21 pairs that attempted to nest in April only 4 broods hatched and no chicks survived more than a few days. Some nests were lost to flooding when water levels got high but most were probably predated. Another 2 pairs (probably from earlier failed nests) started to nest in mid June and these hatched 2 young each but these did not survive.

East of East Bank and brackish lagoons

There were a few early nesting attempts on East Bank which came to nothing, but most birds nesting on the brackish lagoons east of East Bank did not start sitting until early June and were probably having second attempts after failed nests on the central scrapes. Only 6 broods hatched with a total of 14 chicks but of these 9 fledged. These late breeders seemed to have smaller broods with most nests only hatching 2 chicks, but the survival rate was better, possibly because the Heron's young had then fledged.

One pair nested on the shingle to the north of the new fence on the Brackish Pool between North Hide and East Bank, close to where walkers were making a path to avoid walking on the shingle. A diversion was put up to encourage people to walk along the bank and 1 chick eventually hatched. The parents very sensibly took this youngster to North Scrape but it only survived a couple of days.

Eye Field

A pair that nested on Eye Pool hatched 3 chicks on 2nd June. They had lost one by the 10th and then took the remaining chicks to a pool at the back of the Eye Field near the Main Drain for a few days. They were back on Eye Pool on the 19th but only 1 chick could be seen on the 20th. They remained on Eye Pool until the 29th with 1 fast growing chick and then moved it to North Scrape where it remained until fledging in mid July. Another pair nested here and hatched 3 young which were seen being moved across Eye Field, they were never seen again. A third nest was deserted after 2 weeks.

	First nest	Max nests at one time	Date max nests	No. Pairs involved	Broods hatched	No. chicks seen to hatch	Earliest chick	No. fledged
Pat's Pool	20 Apr	5	20 May	5	0	0		
Simmond's	20 Apr	20	18 May	21	7	18	21 May	0
Whitwell	24 Apr	5	18 May	5	1	4	19 May	0
Billy's Wash	25 Apr	9	11 May	9	0			
North Scrape	22 Apr	21	21 May	21	6	14	25 May	0
Eye Pool	10 May	2	2 June	3	2	6	2 June	1
Brackish Pool	25 June	1	25 June	1	1	1	16 July	0
Arnolds/E Bank	24 Apr	23	9 June	23	6	14	26 June	9
E of Arnold's	29 May	8	9 June	9	0	0		
Pope's	9 June	1	9 June	1	0	0		
Overall	20 Apr	57	18 May	60+	23+	57	19 May	10

Little Ringed Plover

No successful breeding.

Several were seen displaying and a pair were seen mating on North Scrape on 19th June but there was no other evidence of nesting and no chicks were seen.

Cley Breeding Records 2008

Ringed Plover

Up to 5 pairs attempted to breed but none were successful.

Eye Field/beach: A pair were holding territory around Eye Pool and the nearby beach area, in early May and then appeared to be sitting on eggs beside Eye Pool on 14th – 17th May but had deserted the nest on the 18th. They were later seen building a scrape on the muddy area behind the car park on the 28th. They were still in the area on the 31st but there was no further sign of nesting.

Sea Pool: 2 pairs were seen here on 23rd April and there was a pair along with a single male (was has mate on a nest?) on 14th May. There was no confirmed nesting until 16th June when a bird was seen returning to a nest on the shingle just north of the fence, within a few feet of where walkers were passing. It was not there a week later.

Arnold's Marsh: A pair were seen digging a scrape halfway up the shingle bank behind Arnold's on 22nd April. This looked like a very poor choice of sites as it was very close to where people walked. They were not seen the next day. A pair were seen together on the green island at the east end of Arnold's for a few days around the end of May but there was no sign of breeding.

North Scrape: A pair were seen displaying on 28th May with 3 there on 1st June when a pair were observed mating. There was no further evidence of breeding.

Lapwing

12+ pairs, 6+ fledged.

As usual Lapwings proved very difficult to keep track of. Only 7 sitting birds were seen this year but this may have been an underestimate as we were away in early April. 12 newly hatched broods were seen with a total of 22 chicks. Only 6 large young were seen that would have definitely fledged.

The first chick was seen on 26th April on E Bank

Common Snipe

Possibly bred

At least 1 bird was drumming regularly between 28th April and 1st July but there was no other evidence of breeding.

Redshank

10+ pairs, 14+ fledged.

As usual no nests were seen. This appeared to be a successful year for Redshank, there seemed to be a lot of young birds but the actual counts and observations doesn't back this up.

10 broods were seen with a total of 28 chicks of which 14 were thought to have fledged. The first chick was seen on the Serpentine on 28th May. The average number of adults seen around the reserve during April and May was 20-25 but this increased to 30+ in June once the young had hatched which could have been adults coming off nests or could have been failed breeders moving into the area. This would lead us to believe that there were probably more than 10 pairs around even if they didn't succeed in hatching young. Redshanks' habit of the parents generally disappearing into the reeds with their young once hatched doesn't help with counting even though it may improve their chance of survival!

Black-headed Gull

80+ pairs, none fledged

At least 80 pairs attempted to breed in the area but few chicks were seen, none of which survived more than a week. Recently fledged birds began to appear on the reserve from mid June but we think these must have been raised elsewhere.

At least 38 pairs were nesting on the islands in Pope's Meadow pool in late April but the site was suddenly deserted and all nests were gone by the beginning of May, no chicks were hatched.

A build up of nests began on North Scrape from 1st May (were these the birds from Pope's?) reaching a maximum of 60 nests on the 19th. On 29th May, 6 chicks were seen (3 broods) but on the 30th there were no sign of these chicks and only 6 nests remained, by the 31st these too were abandoned.

On the Shooters Pools on Pope's marshes there were at least 19 nests during May with 21 counted on 2nd June. No chicks were seen but viewing is not easy so there may have been a few.

On Arnold's Marsh 2 pairs were nesting on the Stony Island from 5th May. Despite the nests being almost flooded on occasions, 1 chick hatched on 14th June and was seen on the island for 6 days but not after that. The other pair continued to sit on their nest until 21st July when high water meant the island and nests totally disappeared. Single chicks also hatched from 2 other islands on Arnold's but none survived moiré than a few of days.

Cley Breeding Records 2008

Common Tern

3 pairs, no successful breeding

A single bird was frequenting Pat's Pool in early May and on the 14th a pair took up residence on the island where they had nested in 2007. They stayed till the end of the month but there was no sign of a nest this year.

3 birds with 1 possibly sitting were on North Scrape from 31st May. A pair appeared to be sitting on a nest 19th June to 6th July but then disappeared.

A pair were frequenting the stony island on Arnold's from early June and on 21st June they took over one of the gulls' nests after they had hatched their young. They were sitting on this nest from 1st to 21st July when the high water flooded them out. No chicks hatched.

Tawny Owl

unknown

These are regularly heard calling from North Foreland wood and other patches of woodland around the village but we don't know if and where they may have bred this year.

Skylark

Bred. Numbers unknown

Swallow

Bred

At least 1 pair nested in the pillbox at Beach car park and fledged a couple of broods. Another pair nested in the shelter.

House Martin

Many in the houses along the Coast Road.

Meadow Pipit

Bred but numbers unknown.

Pied Wagtail

Bred, numbers unknown

A pair were taking nest material in under the tiles on east side of shelter in Beach car-park in late May. Juveniles were seen on N Scrape and Eye Pool from mid June.

Cetti's Warbler

Probably bred

1 was singing by Snipes Marsh /Walsey all spring and another was singing at the east end of Walsey Hills 14th May. No evidence of breeding was reported but it is likely that at least 2 pairs bred.

Grasshopper Warbler

Possibly bred

One was singing at the village end of Beach Road in late April and was then reported on and off during the first half of May. It was reported again in the same place in mid June. No other evidence of breeding.

Sedge Warbler

Bred, numbers unknown

18 birds were singing on a loop of the reserve from Old Woman's Lane via Skirts, E Bank, shingle bank & Beach Rd on 7th May. A young bird was seen on E Bank on 7th June.

Cley Breeding Records 2008

Reed Warbler

Bred, numbers unknown

12 birds were singing on a loop of the reserve from Old Woman's Rd via Skirts, E Bank, shingle bank & Beach Rd on 7th May. A family party were behind Daukes Hide on 9th June.

Bearded Tit

Bred. Numbers unknown

A pair were seen taking food to a nest off East Bank on 15th June and a flock of 16 juveniles were seen there on 28th July. A male, carrying food, flew across the boardwalk to the central hides on 16th June.

Linnet

Probably bred

Reed Bunting

At least 1 pair bred successfully

At least 1 pair bred at north end of East Bank. Probably several more pairs but no evidence.

Notes:

Once more we would like to thank Bernard Bishop and all local birders who told us of their sightings of nests and young birds around the reserve thus helping to complete the picture. This year we have a much better knowledge of the breeding of the Marsh Harriers due to the efforts of Peter Hadrill and his daily dawn observations (and that is early in summer!) and we thank him for letting us include these results.

We hope to repeat this exercise again next year so any observations or other input will be gratefully received. There are still many species, especially the passerines, for which we never manage to collect enough data to give firm results and would like to improve on this in the future. So if you think it is worthwhile and would like to help we would love to hear from you.

Copies of this report are sent to interested local birders, to the County Recorder and the NWT.

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