

This document is based on our sightings, together with a few from other local birders, over the main 2004 breeding period from mid April to late July with a few extra observations up to September. We visit the reserve early morning most days, but do not cover all parts each day. During the period, we were away 16-24th May and also 6th-16th July.

By mid July most ducklings were quite large and it became difficult to distinguish them from the groups of eclipse adults that were congregating on the reserve. Also by this time many of the juvenile waders were dispersing and young that had probably been raised elsewhere were also being seen on the reserve so any counts became less meaningful. Therefore, apart from the late breeders, the majority of information detailed below ends on 5th July when we went away.

Little Grebe (*Tachybaptus ruficollis*)

- pair building nest outside Daukes Hide from 22nd April - not present late May.
- A single large chick on Snipe's Marsh from 25th June till at least 5th July
- brood of 2 sm chicks on Snipe's Marsh on 25th June till at least 5th July
- 1 small chick on Snipe's Marsh on 8th August, still present on 3rd September.
- Fully grown juvenile in front of Daukes on 10th August, on Richardson's on the 20th & outside Bishop's on 25th.

Great Bittern (*Botaurus stellaris*)

- Booming most of May. 3 birds seen together in flight on 31st May, 3 birds flew towards Blakeney on 1st June (1 smaller than other 2, so presumed 2 males & 1 female) plus another male heard. 1 or 2 seen daily in flight from 3rd June until early July. No evidence of possible breeding other than booming males.

Ruddy Duck (*Oxyura jamaicensis*)

- chicks reported to Visitor Centre on 24th June but not seen by any known observers.
- Brood of 2 on Snipe's marsh from 11th August
- Single outside Bishop's Hide on 15th August still present on 24th. A fully grown immature bird was seen in this area in early October.

Mute Swan (*Cygnus olor*)

Very few sightings and none of large cygnets

1. Pair with 6 cygnets outside Bishop's on 15th May and again in pool nr bridge to Bishop's on 28th May (but not sure of no. of cygnets).
2. An adult with 3 smallish juveniles in drain by Coast Rd (nr Beach Rd) on 7th June looked too small to be above brood.
3. Pr with 2 small cygnets on Carter scrape on 19th June.
4. 2 small cygnets in drain by E bank car pk on 28th & 29th June, probably same as seen later on Snipe's Marsh from 1st to 5th July.

Greylag Goose (*Anser anser*)

- First goslings from 19th April
- 56+ goslings on E Bank
- Goslings on fields beside Beach Rd.

Egyptian Goose (*Alopochen aegyptiacus*)

- Pair with 1 gosling on Pat's Pool on 5th & 6th April but not seen again
- No other young seen

Common Shelduck (*Tadorna tadorna*)

6 broods, at least 26 fledged.

1. 1 brood of 10 on North from 26th May. Brood reduced to 9 on 10th June. Another duckling was missing on the 18th. 8 becoming quite large still present on 17th July but reduced to 6 on 18th and 4 on 19th, 4 still present with 2 adults on 25th July. Others dispersed? *8 fledged*
2. 1 brood of 9 small on Simmond's on 9th June moved to North on 11th. Brood reduced to 8 from 27th June and was still present 5th July. *Assume 8 fledged*
3. 1 brood of 4 small ducklings seen on Simmond's from 10th June and still present 5th July.
4. 1 brood of 5 small on Pat's from 24th June until 5th July. These were still present on 19th July

5. 1 brood of 4 small in main drain S of Arnold's from 25th June was still present on 28th, 3 there on 19th - 23rd July
6. Pair with 2 medium ducklings on North from 17th - 25th July

Juveniles without adults were present on Arnold's and Pat's from 18th July. A total of 26 juveniles were on reserve on 28th July.

Gadwall (*Anas strepera*)

At least 6 broods with between 18 & 26 fledging

1. Brood of 7 small ducklings on Pat's Pool from 28th May. Reduced to 6 from 4th June which were still present early July. *Assume 6 fledged.*
2. Brood of 8 in main drain between N Hide & E Bank on June 9th, reduced to 6 by the 16th which were still present early July. *Assume 6 fledged.*
3. Brood of 6 tiny ducklings on Richardson's Scrape on 15th June were still present early July. *Possible 6 fledged*
4. Brood of 5 small ducklings on 24th June on Richardson's were seen on Pat's till end of June. Not seen in July.
5. Brood of 4 small ducklings on Pat's from 29th June not seen after 2nd July.
6. Brood of 8 on Whitwell on 4th June with 7 there on 9th. Not seen again

Mallard (*Anas platyrhynchos*)

At least 17 broods with c. 55 fledged

1. Brood of 6 small ducklings on Pat's Pool on 19th April were last seen fully grown at the end of June. *6 fledged.*
2. Brood of 10 on Pat's Pool on 10th May reduced to 8 by 15th. This brood which included 1 dark duckling was still present in early July. *All 8 fledged.*
3. Brood of 5 on 10th May decreased to 4 by 10th June which were still present in early July. *4 fledged.*
4. A pair nested outside the Visitors Centre with 6 eggs, young left nest between 15th & 18th May, but not seen again.
5. Brood of 3 on Pat's from 26th May were last seen fully grown in late June. *3 fledged.*
6. Brood of 2 on Pat's from 28th May were last seen fully grown in late June. *2 fledged*
7. Another brood of 2 on Pat's from 3rd June were last seen in late June, medium sized. *Assume 2 fledged.*
8. Brood of 5 small ducklings on North reduced to 4 on 20th June, to 3 on the 26th and 2 on the 30th. Still present, fully grown, on North on 2nd July. *2 fledged.*
9. Brood of 8 in drain S of Arnold's on 7th June were last seen fully grown on 1st July. *Assume 8 fledged*
10. Brood of 6 on Pat's on 9th June were last seen on 2nd July, medium sized. *Assume 6 fledged.*
11. Brood of 6 small ducklings were on the Central scrapes from 20th June to early July but not seen again.
12. Brood of 7 large ducklings on the Central scrapes from 10th June till early July. *7 fledged.*
13. Another Brood of 7 medium/large ducklings on the Central scrapes from 11th - 17th June. *Assume 7 fledged*
14. Brood of 2 tiny ducklings on Pat's from 29th June, reduced to 1 on 4th July but not seen again.
15. Brood of 4 tiny ducklings were seen on North scrape on the 1st & 4th July but not again.
16. Brood of 9 small ducklings on Pat's on 10th June reduced to 8 on 14th but were not seen after the 18th.
17. Brood of 2 small ducklings on Pat's from 10th to 24th June but not seen again.

Northern Shoveler (*Anas clypeata*)

At least 7 broods fledged 20 - 25 young.

1. Brood of 2 tiny ducklings on Pat's on 13th June were still present there, fully grown, on 2nd July. *2 fledged*
2. Brood of 4 medium ducklings on 14th June were seen until early July on Pat's. *2 fledged.*
3. Brood of 10 medium ducklings on 14th June were seen until early July on Pat's. *10 fledged.*
4. Brood of 7 medium ducklings were first seen on Pat's on 17th June, reduced to 6 by 25th and 5 on 27th. *Assume 5 fledged*
5. Brood of 7 tiny ducklings on Pat's on 18th June, reduced to 6 on 24th and were not seen again.
6. Brood of 3 large ducklings were first seen on Pat's on 23rd June and remained there until early July. *3 fledged.*
7. An adult with a single medium sized duckling was seen on Pat's from 25th June to 3rd July. *Assume 1 fledged.*

Tufted Duck (*Aythya fuligula*)

10 broods seen with at least 16 young thought to have fledged.

- 1 brood of 4 tiny ducklings in drain outside Daukes on 20th to 24th June.
- 1 brood of 9 sm ducklings in drain by rd from 28th June, reduced to 7 by 2nd July. 5 seen in this drain on 22nd July were still present on 2nd August. *Assume 5 fledged*
- A single small duckling on Snipe's Marsh on 4th & 5th July.
- Brood of 6 lge ducklings in main drain between N hide & E Bank on 4th July but never seen again.
- Brood of 3 in drain by road on 22nd July, still present on 2nd August.
- Brood of 2 lge ducklings in drain opp Snipe's Marsh on 27th July & 1 seen there on 28th.
Assume 2 fledged
- Brood of 5 medium ducklings in main drain between N hide & E Bank from 2nd August. Still present on 9th. Reduced to 4 on 11th still present on the 28th.
Assume 4 fledged
- Brood of 4 small ducklings in a pool off Beach Rd on 2nd August. *Unknown*
- Brood of 5 lge ducklings in drain in front of Bishop's Hide on 12th August *Assume 5 fledged*
- Brood of 4 medium ducklings in drain by rd to W of E Bank on 14th & 15th August with 5 there on 16th but just 2 on 22nd.

Western Marsh-harrier (*Circus aeruginosus*)

- 3 pairs nested on reserve and fledged at least 6 young. 7 young were seen over the reserve in mid July but 1 may have been from the nests below.
- 1 pair of immature birds between E Bank & the Iron Road fledged 2, possibly 4, young
- 1 pair on Blakeney Freshmarsh fledged 4 young

First juvenile seen flying on 1st July
pair seen mating on Billy's Clump on 7th June

Common Moorhen (*Gallinula chloropus*)

Few sightings early on, but at least 5 fledged in August.

- Adult with 7 chicks on field nr boardwalk on 10th May, not seen again.
- Brood of 4 tiny chicks on Pat's on 13th June not seen again.
- 1 med chick in drain by bridge to Bishop's on 18th & 20th June
- Brood of 2 sm chicks on Pat's on 21st June, not seen again
- Brood of 2 tiny chicks on North from 2nd to 5th July, not seen again
- Pair with 2 tiny chicks outside Bishop's hide from 2nd August with 3 there on 7th. Down to 2 again on 15th still present on 5th September when fledged. *2 fledged*
- 1 small chick on Snipe's Marsh on 5th July, still present fully grown on 20th August *1 fledged*
- 2 large juvs in drain by bridge to Bishop's on 17th August *2 fledged*
- Brood of 4 tiny chicks in drain by road E of Bishops on 22nd August, still there on 14th September.
- 1 med chick on E Bank on 5th September.
- Pr mating in drain opp. Snipes on 2nd September!

Eurasian Coot (*Fulica atra*)

The first chicks were seen on 6th May with 15 fledged birds seen in early July.

Reserve:

- At least 6 pairs produced young on the Central scrapes including a pair with 3 small chicks outside Daukes Hide on 6th May. *5 or 6 young fledged.*
- A single well grown chick was in drain by corner of Beach Rd on 13th June.
- Brood of 2 was on N Scrape from 26th May till 7th June when they moved to the drain between N Hide & E Bank. Still present there on 29th June. *2 fledged*
- Adults with one chick present on N scrape from 1st to 28th June. *1 fledged*
- Brood of 2 on Brackish pools beside E Bank from 23rd June, still present late July. *2 fledged*

Snipe's Marsh & drain opposite:

- 2 broods of 2 & 3 chicks first seen on 13th May were still present in early July. *5 fledged*

Eurasian Oystercatcher (*Haematopus ostralegus*)

At least 8 nesting attempts but only 1 brood of 2 known to have been successful.

1. 1 sitting off E Bank from 14th May (no chicks seen).
2. 1 sitting on Arnold's from 26th May until 14th June (no chicks seen)
3. 1 sitting on field between Arnold's & Sea Pool from 26th May but not seen since 6th June.
4. 1 sitting on 3 eggs on top of shingle bank between N Hide & Beach c-pk from 26th May till at least 7th June - nest deserted & eggs gone on 9th June
5. Ad with 2 chicks by Eye Pool from 30th May. Young fledged c. 20th June and were seen still with 2 parents until at least 25th June. *2 fledged*
6. 1 sitting by Brackish Pool on & off mid June (no chicks seen)
7. 2 sitting on nests in Beach Road fields in June/July

Common Snipe (*Gallinago gallinago*)

Male seen drumming over Cricket Marsh c.19th May, but no other evidence of breeding.

Pied Avocet (*Recurvirostra avosetta*)

Up to 102 pairs nested and c. 40 fledged.

- First birds sitting on nests from late April
- Maximum counted sitting on nests was 102 on 15th May
- First chicks hatched on 14th May
- Maximum chick count was 86 on 30th May
- First definite evidence of fledging was a juvenile on Arnold's on 30th June although many large, possibly fledged birds had been seen earlier.
- Fledged birds began to disperse late June
- A count of 41 juveniles on 1st July is probably representative of the number that fledged.
- A late brood of 2 small chicks, first seen on the Serpentine on 2nd July were still present on 2nd August. 1 fully grown (presumed same) there later in August.

Common Ringed Plover (*Charadrius hiaticula*)

- Adult with 2 tiny chicks on the Serpentine on 30th July and 3 there on 2nd August. Still present on 16th August despite heavy rain. 2 now well grown juvs with adult on Pope's Marsh on 25th & 26th. Not seen again. *Assume 2 fledged.*

Northern Lapwing (*Vanellus vanellus*)

at least 3 fledged

Reserve:

- At least 4 were sitting on nests in fields beside Beach Rd in late April. 2 broods of 1 & 3 were seen there on 7th June. Not seen again.
- Brood of 2 on North scrape on 28th May, present until 20th June when fledged *2 fledged*
- A single on North on 31st May present until 21st June when almost fledged then seen on Brackish Pool on 22nd June and near Arnold's from 23rd to 26th. *1 fledged*

Other

- 4 pairs nested on Pope's Meadow producing 11 chicks of which at least 7 fledged. First chicks seen on 2nd May. *at least 7 fledged*
- 1 brood of 4 on fields opposite Walsey Hills on 5th May, outcome unknown.

Common Redshank (*Tringa totanus*)

Many chicks were seen but as they spent a lot of time in the reeds and moved around a lot we did not manage to determine how many broods or the number fledged.

E Bank

- 3 broods on Serpentine and adjacent field in late May, with 4 young still present on 7th June.
- 1 small chick on Arnold's from 30th June till 4th July

Reserve

- Brood of 3 on North on 26th May with 2 still there on 29-30th May.
- Brood of 3 chicks on Simmond's on 30th May
- 1 chick on N on 6th & 7th June

- 2 chicks on Whitwell on 7th June.
- Brood of 4 tiny chicks on N from 8th June until 17th, only 2 seen on 20th June and none after that in higher water levels – possibly moved up the channel.
- 1 large chick on North on 10th June was still present on 18th and fledged on 30th.
- 1 chick on Whitwell on 17th June.
- 2 med chicks on North on 21st & 22nd June.
- 1 large chick on Brackish Pools on 22nd June.

An influx of adult Redshanks onto the reserve in late June included many juveniles.

Black-headed Gull (*Larus ridibundus*)

c. 10 nests on North Scrape and Brackish Pools only fledged 1 chick.

- 3 chicks on North on 28th May with 3+ broods (9+ chicks) there on 29th May, none present on 1st June
- 2 young chicks on Brackish pools on 4th June with 3 there on 6th & 7th June (probably different to above). 2 on brackish pools on 8th June (again different). None present on North or Brackish Pools on 9th or 10th June
- 1 chick on N from 13th June, was seen exercising its wings on 21st but not seen after 22nd

Cetti's Warbler (*Cettia cetti*)

- at least 4 singing throughout April
- pr nesting at E end of Walsey Hills near road in April/early May
- 1 near Snipe's Marsh heard regularly throughout May/June

Grasshopper Warbler (*Locustella naevia*)

- 2 birds reeling in reeds at either end of E Bank from 22nd-25th April
- 1 reeling beside the drain between Visitor Centre & Bishop's Hide on 26th April until early May. A ringed bird was reeling here again from 14th to 23rd June, it then appeared to move closer to E Bank car-park where it was reeling from 1st until at least the 5th July. Another bird was picked up dead from beside the road near the entrance to Bishop's Hide on the 1st July and a fledgling was seen calling close by on the 2nd.

Pied Wagtails

- 1 pair reared two broods (6+ young) in the beach car-park.
- Other pairs nested along the Coast Road houses

Swallows

- 6 pairs nested successfully (raising up to two broods each) in the Beach Car Park buildings and nearby pillbox. 1 brood died just before leaving the nest due to holidaymaker activity

Grey Partridge:

1 or more pairs were seen throughout the summer, seen in Eye Field on 3 occasions (March to July), on shingle near Arnold's Marsh a few times and twice in Coast Road fields near bottom of Beach Rd. No young were seen.

Skylark:

From singing birds it is assumed that 6 pairs nested in Eye Field

Other species

Both **Reed** and **Sedge Warbler** families were seen along E Bank during August and family parties of **Bearded Tits** were seen from mid June throughout the reed bed. A family of **Reed Buntings** was seen regularly at the N end of E Bank during August and lots of **Meadow Pipits** were present.