

Cley Breeding Birds 2007

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 2007. 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. 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	Total young fledged	Earliest chicks seen
Little Grebe	2	3+	
Grey Heron	1+	2+?	
Bittern	0		
Mute Swan	3	7	8 th May
Greylag	c.120	c.100	12 th April
Egyptian Goose	4	11	23 rd April
Shelduck	5	26-36	4 th June
Gadwall	5	6+	21 st May
Mallard	15+	42+	1 st May
Pintail	0		
Garganey	0		
Shoveler	0	0	
Pochard	1-2	2+	7 th May
Tufted Duck	1	0-4	
Ruddy Duck	0		
Marsh Harrier	4	8	
Sparrowhawk	?		
Water Rail	1+	?	
Moorhen	10	15+	29 th May
Coot	17	32	16 th May
Oystercatcher	7+	1	20 th May
Avocet	85	25	4 th May
Lapwing	22	4	1 st May
Ringed Plover	9	5	21 st May
Little Ringed Plover	1-2	0	
Common Snipe	?		
Redshank	15+	12	13 th May
Black-headed Gull	c.100	22?	12 th June
Common Tern	3	0	

The following species also bred but numbers are unknown:

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

This was a strange year for breeding birds. Warm weather in early March got the breeding season off to a good start with both Lapwing and Greylags on nests by the end of the month. A further warm, dry spell throughout April made it look as if this could be a very good breeding season. Then the cool wet weather, that was to be with us most of the rest

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of the summer, set in, causing flooding. This also resulted in heavy growth of vegetation and this meant that it was very difficult to see and keep track of the chicks that did survive. Many broods were seen when newly hatched but not again, whether these had been moved into long grass, succumbed to the weather or were predated we will never know, but if no further sign was seen of them we have had to assume the worst.

In the end, some species did better this year than last and some much worse. The Avocets, despite the attentions of the Heron, managed to fledge 25 young, a definite improvement on the 5 last year but the Marsh Harriers only managed to raise 8 young and most of these fledged late. A highlight was that at least one pair of Pochards bred on the reserve again. Dabbling ducks seemed less successful this year with no Shoveler broods being seen. 9 pairs of Ringed Plover nested but only two were successful, raising a total of 5 chicks. Little Ringed Plovers also attempted to breed on the scrapes but failed due to the bad weather and being continuously harassed by Ringed Plovers and Avocets. Three pairs of Common Tern nested but were beaten by the weather and raised no young this year.

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

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

Species Details

Little Grebe

2 pairs attempted to breed, 1 pr had 2 broods on Snipe's Marsh, at least 3 fledged.

1. A nest seen in Catchwater Drain near the Visitor Centre on 7th April was flooded out and there was no further sign of breeding there.
2. A pair of adults were seen with 1 medium chick on Snipe's Marsh on 24th May, then again with 3 large chicks on 18th and 24th June and again with a single on 27th June. Probably the same pair were seen with a 2nd brood of 5 tiny chicks on 16th July with 3 still present on 3rd August. Assume 3 fledged

Grey Heron

At least 1 pair bred in North Foreland woods, number of young unknown.

- 1 juvenile was seen on 2nd April on Sea Pool and another on N Scrape.
- An adult + 2 juveniles were on Simmond's on 20th June.

Bittern

No breeding this year

A male was booming regularly from mid April but we don't think he attracted a mate and there was no sign of breeding again this year.

Mute Swan

At least 3 pairs nested. 1 pair raised 4 young on the reserve and another pair raised 3 young on Pope's, the third probably failed.

1. There was a nest by the track behind Carter Scrape on 5th May and the female was still on the nest on 11th June, but outcome unknown.
2. A pair with 4 small cygnets, 3 grey & 1 whitish were in the Catchwater Drain by Watcher's Cottage on 30th May. They were on Keepers Marsh on 31st and 1st June. They may have nested in the ditch here as swans heads had been seen here for a while. From 16th June to mid August they were regularly seen in front of Bishop's Hide and on Richardson's Scrape. Family still present with cygnets fledged at the end of October. 4 fledged
3. A pair with 7 tiny cygnets were in the drain along the east side of E Bank on 8th & 9th May. A brood of 5+ cygnets in meadows by the road on 21st May were probably the same as were a pair with 5 medium cygnets in the drain opposite Snipes Marsh on the 31st. These 5 continued to be seen until 4th June in meadows around Pope's Marsh. Only 4 were seen on the 12th and only 3 from 16-19th. These 3 were then seen with the 2 adults in the drains and meadows around Pope's Marsh until at least the end of October. 3 fledged

Greylag

Up to 120 pairs bred. Numbers of young fledged is unknown but c.100 goslings were present in late May.

- The first nests were seen in late March.
- 245 Greylags were present in the area on 19th March so there could be as many as 120 pairs breeding.
- A goose dropped an egg in front of Bishop's Hide on 26th March but it wasn't present the next day..
- There were five visible nests alongside E Bank during late March/early April. The first goslings (brood of 7) were seen from a nest by the small tree (also used in 2006) on 12th April. Two other nests produced 3 goslings each. No other nests were found.
- The highest count of goslings in the area was c.100 in late May.
- We had no definite breeding records from the west of the reserve this year although the goslings seen on Cricket Marsh and Billy's Wash probably originated from there.

Egyptian Goose

At least 3 pairs raised 6 young on the reserve and another pair raised 5 on Pope's Marsh.

1. A pair with 3 small goslings were first seen on Pat's Pool on 23rd April, then on Simmond's/Whitwell till 28th after which they became very elusive. A pair with 2 medium/large goslings on Whitwell on 15th June were probably the same brood, these appeared to roam in the drains west of Whitwell and were seen occasionally until mid July. 2 fledged
2. Another pair with 3 small goslings were first seen on Pat's Pool on 17th May. One was lost by 24th. They moved to Simmond's & Whitwell and eventually North by 10th June where they continued to grow being seen to be independent by mid August. 2 fledged

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3. Another pair with 4 tiny goslings were first seen on Pat's & Simmond's on 5th June. The brood reduced to 3 by the 10th and by the end of June only 2 remained. These appeared to grow very slowly compared to the other broods but were still being seen in mid August. 2 fledged
4. A pair were seen with 5 medium/large goslings on Popes Marsh on 4th June and were seen regularly here and in the fields to the South until at least early August. 2 medium/large goslings seen here on 29th May were probably part of this family. 5 fledged

Shelduck

3 pairs raised 20-25 young on the reserve and another 2 pairs raised 6-11 on Popes Meadow.

The ducklings take 45-50 days to fledge but can become independent in 15-20 days, however the earlier broods seem to stay in family groups much longer. By mid July ducklings that are almost fully grown become difficult to tell from the many eclipse adults on the reserve meaning they are only easily distinguished when in tight family groups. It is, therefore, difficult to be certain of numbers fledging.

1. A pair with 7 ducklings (6 tiny + 1 larger) were seen on the pool between Sea Pool & Arnold's on 4th June. By the 14th they had lost one of the smaller ones but the rest were still together until 1st July having moved to the Serpentine/Pope's Marsh area. The large one then left but the 5 smaller birds continued to be seen until the middle of July. Assume 6 fledged
2. A pair with 8 tiny ducklings were seen on Pat's Pool on 5th June. By the 11th there were only 7 ducklings but these continued to be seen on Pat's until early August when almost full size. 7 fledged
3. A pair with 5 small ducklings were first seen on N Scrape on 13th June. This family continued to be seen on North Scrape and the Brackish Pools and were last seen together on 8th July. 5 possibly fledged
4. A pair with 5 tiny ducklings were seen in the Main Drain between N hide & E Bank from the 5th-9th July. A family with 5 small ducklings seen on Pope's Marsh on 10th July were thought to be these and they were then seen there on and off until the end of July. 5 possibly fledged
5. A pair with 19 tiny ducklings were seen on Simmond's Scrape on the evening of 12th July. The next morning only 17 could be found. These 17 were present until the 17th but after that the numbers dropped until by the 26th only 13 were with the adults. These 13 were still present on Simmond's in mid August but by then were rarely in a family group and very difficult to keep track of. Assume 13 fledged

Gadwall

A maximum of 5 pairs raised 6+ young

1. A brood of 6 small ducklings were seen on Pat's Pool on 21st May. They were not seen again but 6 large seen there on 22nd June could have been them. Assume 6 fledged
2. A pair with 11 small ducklings were seen on Richardson's Scrape on 24th May but not again. Assume 0 fledged
3. A brood of 5 tiny ducklings were on Pat's Pool on 3-4th June and then in the drain in front of Bishop's on 13th. Only 4 remained on the 22nd and were seen until the 27th but not again. Assume 0 fledged
4. 1 small duckling on Pat's on 4th June was not seen again. Assume 0 fledged
5. A brood of 4 medium ducklings were in the parallel drains N of Walsey Hills on 2nd July but not seen again. Assume 0 fledged

Mallard

15+ pairs raised a minimum of 42 young, mainly on the reserve.

1. A pair with 6 small ducklings were seen at the back of Pat's Pool on 1st May. They were seen again on the 11th, and a brood of 5 medium on the 17th are thought to be the same. A brood of 4 medium ducklings on the 23rd are again thought to be the same and these continued to be seen on Pat's until fully grown in early July. 4 fledged
2. A female was sitting on a nest under Avocet hide but the nest was empty on 4th May. They may have hatched but no ducklings were seen and a female was hanging around alone in this area for a few days so the nest was probably predated.
3. A brood of 10 tiny ducklings were seen on Pat's Pool from 9th May until the 17th but not again. A female with 7 small there on the 21st was assumed to be the same brood and all 7 continued to be seen till the middle of June when growing well. A brood of 7 fully grown seen on a few occasions in July and August were probably these. 7 fledged
4. Another female with 7 small ducklings was first seen on Pat's Pool on 21st May. A brood of 6 medium on the 1st June are thought to be the same and these continued to be seen on Pat's until mid July when fully grown. 6 fledged
5. A brood of 6 small ducklings first seen on Pat's Pool on 4th June were still present on 11th. The brood then reduced to 5 which continued to be seen until the 17th but were not seen again. Had they moved off into the reeds and inaccessible ponds or were they lost? Assume 0 fledged

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6. A brood of 6 newly hatched young were seen in front of Daukes Hide on 10th June but not again. A female with 5 medium/large ducklings seen here from 8th July could have been these or 5 above. 5 fledged
7. A brood of 12 small ducklings were seen on Pat's Pool 10-17th June but not again. Assume 0 fledged
8. A brood of 9 small ducklings were seen on Whitwell Scrape on 9th May. They were not seen again until a brood of 9 medium on Simmond's on 4th June which are thought to be the same. Groups of 7, 8 or 9 large ducklings seen around Daukes Hide in late June and throughout July were also probably these. 9 fledged
9. A brood of 8 small ducklings were seen on Simmond's Scrape on 20th May with 8 medium there on 4th June but they were not seen again. Assume 0 fledged
10. A female and 5+ small ducklings were seen on Billy's Wash on 21st May, but not there again. A brood of 6 medium ducklings on North Scrape on the 31st were probably them but they were not seen again. Assume 0 fledged
11. A brood of 10 small ducklings were in the pools between Arnold's and Sea Pool on 11th June and again on the 17th but not seen again. Assume 0 fledged
12. A brood of 6 tiny ducklings were on Arnold's Marsh on 16th June and 6 medium were seen there on 9th July. Assume 0 fledged

Single sightings which cannot be assigned to any of the above:

- Female with 1 small duckling in the Catchwater Drain opposite Watcher's Cottage on 4th May. Assume 0 fledged
- A single medium duckling alone on Pat's on 16th June. Assume 0 fledged
- A brood of 7 medium ducklings in the Main Drain between N Hide and E Bank on 18th June. Assume 0 fledged
- A group of 3 large ducklings on the Brackish Pool on 8th July. Assume 3 fledged
- 2 medium/large ducklings in front of Daukes Hide on 6th July. 2 possibly fledged
- 2 large ducklings between Arnold's & Sea Pool on 21st May. Assume 2 fledged
- A family of 8 large ducklings were seen at the south end of E Bank on 25th June. Assume 8 fledged

Pintail

No sign of breeding this year

1 drake was present all summer but no female and no sign of breeding.

Garganey

No sign of breeding this year

A pair were present on the reserve in late April but then only 1-2 males and an occasional female during May. There were no further sightings until August when juvenile birds were regularly seen, but these are thought to have bred elsewhere.

Shoveler

No breeding this year.

The number of birds on the reserve in the breeding season did not seem unusually low but no broods were seen.

Common Pochard

1-2 pairs bred. 1 pair hatched 10 young. A drake seen with 2 fledged juveniles on 4th June may also have bred locally. (Incubation 24-28 days, fledge 50-55 days)

1. 1 pair were seen regularly till 12th April then only the drake around Richardson's Scrape. We assumed the female was on a nest. A pair was seen with 10 small ducklings on Richardson's Scrape on the 7th May but not again. A pair was seen with NO ducklings on 10th May. Was this the same pair and the young were lost? Note: if these young survived they would be unlikely to fledge before 26th June.
2. Another male and female were seen in late March (the 2 females being last seen together on 27th March), and a male was seen during April. A male seen with 2 fledged young on 4th June and again with 1 fledged young on 5th could have been from this pair or from a pair that bred elsewhere. 2 fledged

Tufted Duck

1 brood seen.

Up to 8 pairs were seen regularly during April, but there was no sign of breeding on the reserve.

A female with 4 small ducklings was seen in the Catchwater Drain between Iron Rd & Pope's entrance on 27th June but not again, but the area was poorly watched.

Ruddy Duck

No breeding this year.

1-3 drakes were seen infrequently during the spring/summer with a pair together on 20th May but no sign of breeding.

Marsh Harrier

3 pairs nested raising 6 young on the reserve and a further pair raised 2 on Pope's Marsh.

On the reserve nest building was observed from late March. Three pairs nested, 2 in the reed bed to the east of the scrapes and one on Cricket Marsh. Two broods of 3 fledged young were reported on 14th June, these birds stayed around for a few days but did not look, or behave, like newly fledged young birds, could they have been young from elsewhere? The first definite newly fledged bird was seen over the reserve on 12th July and by the 22nd six were seen regularly on the reserve. We think these were from the 2 nests on the East side of the reserve. Two of the young had extensive white speckling, we assume these were from the same nest. Another youngster although normal colour otherwise had some white on the primary tips.

Another pair nested on Popes Marsh, east of E bank. These raised 2 young first seen on 18th June.

Sparrowhawk

No evidence of breeding.

Single birds were seen throughout the spring/summer but no evidence that they bred.

Water Rail

At least 1 pair.

1 was calling off E Bank in early August which appeared to have a chick nearby but it was not seen. A chick was seen beside Pat's Pool on 15th August.

Moorhen

10 pairs raised at least 15 young

1. There was a nest with 6 eggs beside the boardwalk behind Daukes on 29th April, the adult left the nest every time someone passed. By the 1st May it had got used to people and was staying on the nest. It was still sitting on the 10th but now had only 1 egg. On the 11th there was still 1 egg in nest but no sign of adult. By the 20th there were no eggs & no adult. *Assume none hatched*
2. An adult with 1 medium chick was on Pat's on 16th June. A pair with 3 medium chicks in front of Bishop's on 17th were thought to be the same brood. 1 chick was seen on the 20th and 3 again on the 21st. A single large chick seen on several occasions during July & August on Pat's & Richardson's was assumed to be one of these. 2 were seen together on 27th August so at least 2 survived. *2+ fledged*
3. A pair with 3 small chicks were in the Catchwater Drain by the bridge to Bishop's on 19th June, with 4 there on the 20th. Only 1 was seen on the 21st and 1st July but they were difficult to see in the reedy drain so there may have been more. They were not seen again. Two large young seen there on 28th July may have been these or come from elsewhere. *2 fledged*
4. 1 small chick was in the Catchwater drain by the bridge opposite Watcher's Cottage on 22nd June. A medium/large chick was there on 14th & 16th July. 1 to 3 large young were seen between there and Beach Road on several occasions during August with 2 together in early September. *Assume 2-3 fledged*
5. A adult with 2 small chicks was in front of Daukes Hide on 11 & 12th July. On the 13th a pair were there with 3 chicks and again on the 18th. 2 medium chicks seen on Simmond's on 23rd were thought to be these. 1 or 2 large chicks seen in front of Daukes or on Simmond's in late July and August were probably these. *Assume 2 fledged*
6. A pair with 5 tiny chicks were in front of Bishop's hide on 27-29th July. They then moved to the back of Pat's Pool and where they were occasionally seen in the reed edge until 4 August. After that only 2 were seen with the last sighting being 1 chick with a single adult on 21st August. *Maybe 1-2 survived*
7. 1 very large brown bird was in the Catchwater Drain W of E Bank on 24th June. We don't know where it came from but can assume it fledged. *Assume 1 fledged*
8. A single large youngster was on North Scrape on 23rd July but not seen again. We don't know where it came from but can assume it fledged. *Assume 1 fledged*
9. 2 large young were in the drain along the west side of E Bank on 30th July. *Assume 2 fledged*
10. A pair with 4 tiny chicks were on Snipes Marsh on 3rd August but not seen again. Outcome unknown. *Assume 0 fledged*
11. 2+ small chicks were in the drain along the west side of E Bank on 4th August but not seen again. *Assume 0 fledged*

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East

12. A pair with 3 small chicks were on the grassy area at the north end of Serpentine on 29th May. 3 medium chicks were beside E Bank on 17 & 19th June with 1 or more at the South end of E Bank on the 25th. 2 large young beside E Bank on 7th July may have been these. *Assume 2 fledged*
13. 1 large youngster was on the Serpentine on 18th June and 2 large young were on the pool between the Serpentine and Main Drain on 6th July, with 3 there on the 7th and 1 on the 10th. *1 - 3 fledged*
14. 1 medium chick was on the Serpentine on 25th June. *Assume 0 fledged*
15. 1 small chick was on the field beside E Bank on 14th August. *Assume 0 fledged*

Coot

c.14 pairs raised 24 young on the reserve (including Snipes) and another 3 pairs raised 8 young on Pope's.

1. A pair with 4 chicks was first seen on North Scrape on 16th May and again on the 21st. 3 were seen on the 24th and 2 on 27th. They were not seen again but a single large chick seen on 18th June and again in July & August may have been from this brood. *1 fledged*
2. A brood of 3 small chicks first seen on Simmond's on 25th May continued to be seen there until late July. *3 fledged*
3. 1 small chick seen on Whitwell on 5th June was not seen again.
4. An adult was first seen sitting on a nest in front of Daukes Hide on 27th June after reeds had been cut and remained there until the 3rd July, but the nest was then abandoned.
5. On 4th July 3 medium/large chicks were seen roosting on the above nest and continued to do so for several days, initially being chased off by the adult. These 3 continued to be seen in the area well into August. They may have been an earlier brood of the adult who had been sitting on the nest. *3 fledged*
6. A pair of large chicks were first seen on Whitwell on 2nd July and then again on the 6th. A single was there on the 11th at the same time as a single large chick appeared in front of Daukes Hide. This single continued to be seen there until the end of the month. *1 fledged*
7. A pair with 2 small chicks were seen on Whitwell on 6th July but not again. These may have moved off to Cricket Marsh. *Assume 0 fledged*
8. A brood of 3 medium chicks were seen on Simmond's on 8th – 10th August, with 2 there on 14th. *Assume 2 fledged*
9. An adult with 3 small chicks on Richardson's/Pat's on 21st June. 2 were seen on 28th but only 1 on 1st July and this wasn't seen again. *Assume 0 fledged*
10. Up to 5 large chicks seen on Pat's and/or Richardson's from 24th June till mid August. These were additional to other broods mentioned above. *5 fledged*
11. A pair with 2 small chicks were on Richardson's on 18th July. These weren't seen again. *Assume 0 fledged*
12. An adult with 1 tiny chick was first seen on Richardson's on 6th August was still present at end of month. *1 fledged*
13. A pair with 3 small chicks were in front of Bishop's Hide from 4th August until mid September at least. *3 fledged*
14. A pair with 3 medium chicks on Keeper's Marsh on 16th July were not seen again, but not looked for. *Possibly 3 fledged*
15. Brood of 3 on Snipes 21st May. At least 1 of these fledged. *1+ fledged*
16. Brood of 1 on Snipes 21st May also fledged. *Possibly 1 fledged*
17. 1 sitting on nest beside drain ¾ way up E Bank from 5th to 20th May, no young seen.

Pope's

1. A pair with 5 tiny chicks were first seen in the Catchwater Drain opposite Snipe's Marsh on 24th May. They were reduced to 3 by the 29th, but these 3 continued to be seen until the end of June. *3 fledged*
2. A brood of 3 reducing to 2 large young were seen in the area of Pope's Meadow (E Bank, Parallel Drains & Pope's Marsh) from 19th June to late July. *2 fledged*
3. A single large youngster was alone in the reedy pool W of the sluice on E Bank on 19th June, then on the pool N of the Serpentine till 27th. *1 fledged*
4. 2 medium young were in the drain alongside E Bank on 23rd July but not seen again. *Possibly 2 fledged*

Oystercatcher

At least 7 pairs attempted to breed but only successfully raised 1 youngster

1. A pair were seen building a scrape on the field beside E Bank on 22nd April. They were still sitting on 26th May but were not seen after that and no young were seen.
2. A bird was sitting on a nest with 3 eggs on the beach behind Arnold's from 20th May – 13th June. 3 tiny chicks were seen with both parents on the beach on 15th June. There was no sign of them on the 16th. We don't know where they could have taken them as the shingle bank was high and steep there so they could only have walked along the beach, but it seems unlikely that they got to cover, so we must assume they were predated.

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3. 1 bird was sitting on North Scrape on 21st May – 3rd June but then the nest was abandoned.
4. 1 bird, sitting on an island on North Scrape from 19th June at least may have been from the same pair as 3 above trying again. 1 tiny chick was seen there on 8th July. It was still present on the 12th when it was sheltering under 1 parent (Mum?) while the other flew out to pool behind the hide and regularly brought back small red worms, calling as it flew in. The chick then came out from under Mum's wing to collect the food. It continued to be seen regularly with parents feeding it and it grew fast, fledging by 9th August. It continued to be seen still being fed by the parents until early September. *I fledged*
5. 1 was sitting on the shingle behind the Brackish Pools from 22nd May – 12th June when it was due to hatch. 2 adults were near the nest on the 13th with a Kestrel watching, there was no sign of any young and later no sign of any birds.
6. 1 bird (with a metal ring) was sitting on the shingle behind the east end Arnold's Marsh from 23rd May – 11th June, after which the nest was abandoned.
7. 1 was sitting on the beach by the east end Sea Pool on 23rd May but not seen again
8. 1 was sitting on the edge of Simmond's Scrape on 24th- 29th May.

Avocet

85 pairs raised 25 young.

A total of 85 pairs were nesting on the Marshes in early May, 78 pairs on the main reserve with a further 7 pairs in the area between E Bank and Iron Road. Later nesters were thought to be those relaying after their first attempts failed. The total number of chicks hatched is not known but the maximum count was 47 on May 20th. Only 25 are thought to have fledged, 10 from the central scrapes, 9 from the Serpentine and 6 from further east.

Birds were confirmed to be sitting on eggs from April 15th when there were 3 pairs on Pat's Pool. On the morning of April 17th there were 7 birds sitting on Pat's but a male Marsh Harrier was then seen chasing Avocets off nests and proceeding to eat the eggs. He must have taken a liking to them as by the 19th only 1 nest remained. At this point he appeared to find breakfast elsewhere and sitting birds rapidly increased. The first chicks were seen on May 4th, a brood of 4 on Pat's Pool. On 6th May there were 21 pairs sitting on Pat's Pool but by 20th there were no nests left and only 3 small chicks, many having been predated. Meanwhile the numbers on Simmond's increased with 27 sitting and 10 chicks on the 20th. However these numbers soon reduced and by 1st June only 8 nests remained and there were no young on either Pat's or Simmond's. A few late nesters (probably birds relaying after losing their eggs or young) did have more success and managed to raise c.10 young to fledging on Pat's/Simmond's.

On North scrape 28 pairs were sitting on May 8th and there were 41 young on the 24th but that evening and the next morning a Grey Heron was present and after that only 8 chicks were left. A few more hatched but none survived to fledging.

A few birds were sitting on Whitwell Scrape in early May but no chicks hatched.

The newly flooded Billy's Wash looked promising with up to 10 birds sitting in early May. A newly hatched brood of 5 were seen on 22nd but only 1 remained on the 25th and none were seen after that. By the end of May there were no chicks and no birds sitting.

On the Eastern side of the area in early May a further 7 pairs were sitting on eggs, 2 on the Serpentine, 1 on Arnold's Marsh, 1 on Sea Pool and a further 2 between there and Iron Road. From these only 3 chicks hatched near Iron Rd. More birds nested on the Serpentine during June (probably birds whose first attempts had failed) and these succeeded in raising 9 young to fledging.

A further 2 young fledged from Sea Pool and 4 large young seen near the Iron Road in July probably fledged.

Lapwing

22 pairs raised at least 4 young to fledging.

The breeding progress of Lapwings was very difficult to follow this year. It appeared that many nests were abandoned and young lost to the bad weather.

The first sitting birds were seen in late March. Only 22 birds were seen on eggs but by late April as the grass grew longer it became difficult to see these. The first chicks were seen on May 1st, a brood of 3 at the south end of the Serpentine.

A total of 27 chicks were seen at various times but few of these appeared to survive more than a few days and only 4 are thought to have fledged.

Cley Breeding 2007

Nests seen

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| 1. 4 E Bank/Serpentine | 7. 2 field W of track into Pope's |
| 2. 2 Cut reeds west of E Bank | 8. 1 field E of track into Pope's |
| 3. 1-2 Cricket Marsh (from boardwalk) | 9. 1 on bank btw Simmond's & Whitwell |
| 4. 2 between Arnold's & Sea Pool | 10. 2 North Scrape |
| 5. 1 Bull Marsh (from Beach Rd) | 11. 3 Simmond's Scrape |
| 6. 1 Cricket Marsh (from Beach Rd) | 12. 1 Billy's Wash |

Ringed Plover

9 pairs attempted to breed. 2 of these, both east of East Bank were successful raising 2 & 3 young to fledging.

1. Simmond's Scrape. A pair were present, possibly sitting, from 16th till the end of April. They were not seen at the beginning of May, but were definitely on a nest on the island at the north of the scrape on 5-23rd May. They had left the nest on the 24th but there was no sign of any young. The pair were not seen on the 25th but a pair (assume the same) were present again on the 27-31st and seen mating on 30th but not seen again. 0 chicks
2. Sea Pool. One pair had a nest with 4 eggs on the inland side of the shingle bank, seen on the 2nd & 7th May. They were seen again on the 21st, but we could not find the nest on the 23rd though an adult was on the pool. A pair (possibly the same) were nest building on the shingle island on 4th June but were not there after that. A bird was disturbed from the shingle bank on 11th June but we couldn't find the nest. A nest with an adult sitting on the seaward side of the shingle bank near here on 27th was probably this nest, but there was no sign of it on our next visit. Was this a 2nd failed attempt? 0 chicks
3. Sea Pool. A male was present on 2nd May with a pair there on the 7th but no nest. The pair were present again on 23rd May but not nesting. A pair (probably the same) were displaying on 4th June and were there again on the 11th. (Sea Pool was not visited on other dates). 0 chicks
4. Sea Pool. A third pair were nest building near the fence at the west end of Sea Pool on June 4th but were not seen again. 0 chicks
5. Sea Pool. 2 medium sized chicks were first seen here on 27th July. They, plus a third, continued to be seen until 6th August after which they probably fledged. Obviously 1 of the above pairs eventually succeeded. 3 Fledged
6. Serpentine. A pair were first seen there on 8th May and 2 tiny chicks were seen on 21st May. They survived the atrocious weather of late May and continued to be seen until mid June. 1 was seen in flight on 15th then only 1 with an adult on 16-17th. A pair with a fledged juvenile on Half-moon Pit on 18th June may have been these. 2 Fledged
7. Serpentine. A single adult was loitering from 23rd May with a pair there on June 3rd and a single 12th and 15th. 0 chicks
8. Serpentine. A pair were building a late scrape at the NW corner of the Serpentine on 9th July but not seen again.
9. Arnold's. A pair were nesting on the shingle (path) behind on Arnold's 4-12th June. The nest was gone on the 15th. A pair (possibly these) was in the Arnold's / Serpentine area till 24th June. 0 chicks
10. North Scrape. A pair were on a nest on 22nd May but only 1 adult was there on the 24th and not on a nest. After that 1 or 2 pairs were seen regularly occasionally displaying or nest building until 18th June. 0 chicks
11. Pool behind N hide. A pair were present on 21st June with a single there on 24th. This may have been one of the pairs from North Scrape. 0 chicks

Little Ringed Plover

1 or 2 pairs attempted to breed, no young

1 or 2 pairs were seen displaying on Simmond's Scrape on the 7th & 13th May.

A pair were mating on North Scrape on 22nd May and displaying on 27th & 29th. They were building a scrape on the 31st and were still present on June 1st but not seen after this.

A pair were on a nest on the middle island on Simmond's Scrape on 20th June, and still there on the 25th. They were regularly being hassled by Ring Plovers and Avocets and many ducks were also using this island. On the 26th, in bad weather, 1 bird was seen near but not on the nest. They were not at the nest site on 27th so we assume the nest had failed. On the 28th a pair (presumably the same) were seen mating but no nesting activity was seen.

From early July there was an influx of adults and juveniles presumably from other breeding sites. These confused the picture with the local birds.

Common Snipe

Several records of drumming, but no numbers known and no definite evidence of breeding.

Cley Breeding 2007

Single birds were heard drumming from mid April till early June.

On June 10th a pair came up to see off a Marsh Harrier by the boardwalk near Old Woman's Lane, which could have indicated breeding, but no young were seen.

Redshank

15+ pairs raised 12 young to fledging.

East

1. 1 bird was sitting on the meadow beside E Bank on 22nd April and 3 small chicks were seen there on May 13th.
3 medium chicks seen on Arnold's on 23rd are thought to be the same brood but they were not seen again. *0 Fledged*
2. 3 tiny chicks off E Bank on May 20th were still present on the 22nd. Only 2 were seen on the 23rd at the south end of the Serpentine. They were not seen on the 24th but 1 medium in the area from 25th May to the 1st June and the again on the 4th & 10th June was probably from this brood and probably survived to fledging. *1 Fledged*
3. A single large chick was on Arnold's on 21st May. This was not seen before or after but we must assume it was bred in the area and fledged. *1 Fledged*
4. Another brood of 2 small chicks was at the back of the Serpentine on 23-25th May, the 29th and again on 3rd & 4th June. A medium to large chick seen there on 23-27th June was probably from this brood. *Assume 1 Fledged*
5. A brood of 3 small at back of Serpentine on the 30th May to 1st June may have been the same as 4 above (with an extra chick showing) or a different brood. They were not seen again. *0 Fledged*
6. A brood of 4 tiny chicks on the grass by the Serpentine on 25th May were still present on the 4th June. Only 3 were present on June 11th and 2 on the 13th. These 2 remained and fledged by the 18th. *2 Fledged*
7. 1 large juvenile was seen on the Serpentine on 10th & 16th June. We don't know where it came from but assume that it survived to fledging. *1 Fledged*
8. 2 tiny chicks were on the Serpentine on 18th – 24th June, they were not seen again. *0 Fledged*
9. 2 small chicks were off East Bank on July 3rd but not seen again. *0 Fledged*
10. 1 chick was seen on Popes Meadow on July 7th, but not again. *0 Fledged*
11. On 23rd May a chick was taken by a Kestrel from the pool by the shingle bank just west of Iron Rd. *0 Fledged*

Central Scraps

21. There were 2 medium chicks on the marsh between Teal Hide & South Pool on 31st May. They continued to be seen regularly until June 9th. 1 was seen in flight on the 11th. Assume both fledged. *2 Fledged*
22. A brood of 3 tiny chicks were on Simmond's Scrape on 31st May to 5th June. Only 2 were present on 12th June and 1 on the 14th. This 1 continued to be seen and fledged around the end of June. *1 Fledged*
23. There was 1 large chick on Whitwell on June 1st and another on Simmond's. There were 2 on Simmond's on the 5th and then on Pat's Pool on the 11th & 13th. *2 Fledged*
24. A brood of 3 tiny chicks were first seen on Pat's Pool on June 3rd. They were not seen again until the 14th when 1 or 2 chicks were seen on and off till the 24th when 1 was quite large. They were not seen again but we will assume 1 survived. *1 Fledged*
25. 2 small/medium chicks were seen at the back of Simmond's Scrape on 12-13th June, and 2 medium were there on the 17th, but they weren't seen again. These may have been lost or just moved into the reed bed. *Assume 0 Fledged*
26. 1 small chick, seen on Simmond's Scrape on June 5th, was never seen again. *0 Fledged*
27. 2 small chicks, first seen on Simmond's Scrape on July 3rd and again on the 8th were not seen again. *0 Fledged*
28. A brood of 3 small chicks on Whitwell on June 4th were never seen again. *0 Fledged*
29. Another brood of 2 tiny chicks on Whitwell just in front of Avocet Hide on June 4th were not seen again. *0 Fledged*
30. 2 medium chicks were on North Scrape on June 12th with 4 medium/large there on the 13th. These were not seen any other days. *Assume 0 Fledged*

Black-headed Gull

c.100 pairs nested raising up to 22 young.

Many attempted to nest on Arnold's Marsh with 13 birds sitting on the stony island on the 9th May. On the 20th the island flooded and all nests were gone but 11 birds were nesting on the green island at the north-east end of Arnold's. Further floods on 16th and 25th June put an end to all nests despite attempts by 2 birds to build 'skyscraper' nests on the stony island.

44 pairs were nesting on Billy's Wash in late May but on 3rd June all birds were gone.

The most successful area this year appeared to be the islands in Pope's Meadow, where many were nesting and on 16th June chicks were seen. They were difficult to count, at least 6 were seen on the 18th but there were probably more.

The colony on an island between Sea Pool and Iron Road did not appear to hold as many pairs as last year but a few are thought to have fledged from there.

22 recently fledged birds were seen around the reserve in early July but we can't be sure where these were raised.

Common Tern

3 pairs nested, no young

1. A pair were nest building on the stony island in Arnold's on 23rd May but the island was flooded on the 29th. The water level dropped by the 31st and 2 pairs were holding territory there on 1st June. There were 2 nests with sitting birds on the 10th but once again they were lost with the high water on the 15th. Both pairs were back on the island on the 18th & 19th as the water receded but no nests. 1 bird was sitting again on the 23rd but the island was swamped again on the 25th and the nests gone. 2 pairs were looking at the island again on July 1st but did not attempt to nest again.
2. A pair were on a nest on Pat's Pool in late July through to mid August. On 17th August there appeared to be 1 tiny chick in the nest but on the 19th after a day of rain there was no sign of chicks and the nest was abandoned.

Pied Wagtail

Breeding but numbers unknown

A family were feeding on the Serpentine from June 4th till at least the 10th.

The pair that had been at Coastguards all winter (attacking car wing mirrors) continued to be present all summer, so probably bred but no nest or young were seen.

Meadow Pipit

Breeding but numbers unknown.

Cetti's Warbler

No young or nests seen but breeding is likely.

Birds were singing all summer with 7 males counted along the road between West Bank & Snipe's Marsh on April 11th.

Sedge Warbler

Breeding but numbers unknown.

16 singing males were counted on 9th May (Daukes to Bishop's to E Bank).

On 19th June an adult was feeding 2+ newly fledged young by the Main Drain by East Bank. 1 youngster tried to fly across the drain and ditched mid way, it then swam across (type of butterfly stroke) and got to the reeds at the other side, we hope it managed to climb up and the parent found it!

Reed Warbler

Breeding but numbers unknown.

9 singing males were counted on 9th May (Daukes to Bishop's to E Bank).

A young bird was seen on East Bank on 4th July.

Reed Bunting

Breeding but numbers unknown.

3 singing males were counted on 9th May (Daukes to Bishop's to E Bank), 4 from E Bank on 17th June and 1 by Iron Rd on 5th July.

Skylark

Breeding but numbers unknown.

6 singing males were counted on a circuit from Daukes Hide to E Bank, Arnold's & Coastguards on 24th May and 6 were on Beach Rd and the shingle bank 18th June.

Bearded Tit

Breeding but numbers unknown.

A male was seen carrying food by the bridge to the old hide by E Bank on 22nd April.

A family party of at least 4 juveniles were feeding by Daukes Hide on 25th June.

A party of 2 adults and 3 juveniles were reported on 19th July.

In late October there were 3 or 4 groups of at least 6 birds flying around the reed-bed beside East Bank.

Linnet

Breeding but numbers unknown.

2 pairs were seen on 24th May.

A family party were seen on the shingle behind N hide

Swallow

3-4 pairs bred at Coastguards.

A pair nesting in Gents toilet at Beach Café raised at least 2 broods. There was also 1 pair in the Pillbox and 2 pairs in shelter in the Beach Car-park.

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. There are still many species for which we do not have good data which we would like to improve in future. We hope to repeat this exercise again next year so any observations be gratefully received.

We took part in the BTO Ringed Plover Breeding Survey this year, so the coverage of both Ringed and Little Ringed Plovers may have been higher than in previous years.

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