

Notes on birds in the Severn and Avon Vales (the “Severn Hams”), Gloucestershire and south Worcestershire April – June 2018

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Overview of bird records

Records in April were strongly influenced by the heavy flooding in most of the floodplain area: on one hand the extensive areas of water attracted aquatic species which would not normally not have found suitable habitat like Common Scoter, Black-necked Grebe or White Stork (while Great Crested Grebes thought about nesting there) and also induced passing migrants like Little Gull or Sandwich Tern to drop in; on the other hand the floods severely disrupted the nesting patterns of ground-nesting species, and especially waders, which in many sites had to wait for the waters to recede before they could start nesting. Another consideration was that much of the area was inaccessible to all but the most intrepid birdwatchers for the first half of April, so the number of observations was limited.

The number of breeding waders recorded was frighteningly low, and the fledging rate of those that attempted to breed was even lower. Oystercatcher (the most recent wader species to colonise the area, and apparently the most successful!) nested at Clifton, Longdon Marsh Worcs WT reserve, Ripple, Throckmorton, Lower Moor, John Bennett, Kemerton and Coombe Hill, and probably at Bredon’s Hardwick; they definitely raised chicks at Clifton, Ripple, Lower Moor, Kemerton and Coombe Hill. No breeding records of Avocet in the Vales proper this year. Little Ringed Plover nested at Ripple and Coombe Hill and perhaps Ryall, but did not appear to produce any young. Lapwing nested at Grimley, Ripple, Longdon Marsh, Woodnorton, Lower Moor, John Bennett, Bredon’s Hardwick, Ashleworth, Coombe Hill and Walmore, but appeared to have produced young only at Grimley, Longdon Marsh, Lower Moor, Bredon’s Hardwick and Coombe Hill. No sign whatever of breeding Snipe anywhere, nor indeed has there been for fifteen years. The number and sites of nesting Curlew remained stable at about 14 pairs in Worcestershire and 17 pairs in Gloucestershire, but they had a particularly bad summer because of the weather conditions and appear to have produced no young at all, anywhere in the Vales. Redshank nested at Grimley, perhaps at Upton Ham, at Ripple, Coombe Hill and John Bennett, but not at Upham Meadow or Asham Meadow; they were successful at only Grimley and Coombe Hill.

The wader breeding season was late at floodplain sites because of the flooding (though at Ripple and Lower Moor Leisure Park, which were not affected by floods, dates of first nests were normal). Lapwings were not nesting at Coombe Hill until early May (first chicks not till 31 May); Redshanks were late too (first chicks on 29 May). Much attention was paid to breeding Curlews, with a repeat of the intensive surveys carried out since 2015, but the early flooding delayed breeding and some pairs may have given up early on; 14-day old chicks on 26 June probably did not survive hay-making, and widespread hay-making in favourable conditions in late June probably destroyed any chicks left after the flooding and predation. A separate more detailed report on breeding Curlews is in preparation.

Summer visitors, notably Swallows and House Martins (and Spotted Flycatcher according to BirdTrack) were also late; not so Lesser Whitethroat, which comes by a different route through the eastern Mediterranean.

Wader passage was not very striking until the third week of May, probably because the fine weather allowed many migrants to pass straight over without stopping, though a record of three Wood Sandpipers in early May (the ‘normal’ week for passage of this species) represented an unusually high number. A single Dotterel made its appearance on Bredon Hill. After warm weather in the

middle of the month, two days of drizzle and easterly winds on 24 and 25 May produced a short flush of waders, no doubt birds heading for Arctic breeding grounds via the Severn-Wash overland route, birds being brought down by the change in weather conditions at Coombe Hill and at the Worcestershire wetlands; the species involved included Sanderling, Little Stint and Turnstone: but it lasted only a couple of days. Some records of migrants from Upton Warren (not strictly in the Severn Hams) are included as an illustration of passage.

Among other unusual species, there were records of Glossy Ibis, Great White Egret, White Stork and Red-necked Phalarope.

Constant Effort Site ringing continued at Ashleworth: there were still no juveniles at all on 28 May; the first juveniles (Robin, Blackbird, Blue Tit, Chaffinch) appeared on 7 June; juveniles of summer migrants (Redstart, Whitethroat and Lesser Whitethroat, Blackcap, but not Sedge Warbler) were caught on 22 June.

General introduction

See [Smart Mike--Notes on birds in the Severn and Avon Vales October to December 2017](#)

Weather

Nationally, April started off cold and wet with snow for some, mainly on high ground, and notably low daytime maxima, continuing the theme that was dominant through March. The first half of the month continued unsettled and generally cloudy, although it was generally less cold after 5 April. There was a brief but very marked hot spell from the 18 to 21 April which produced the highest temperatures in April since 1949. Progressively cooler, unsettled weather returned from 22 April; it was predominantly bright and showery in Scotland and Northern Ireland but with more general rain at times over England and Wales; 30 April was unseasonably cool, wet and windy in East Anglia and the south-east. The UK mean temperature was 8.4°C, one degree above the 1981-2010 long-term average. Mean maximum temperatures were more than two degrees above average in East Anglia, central southern and south-east England and parts of the Midlands. Rainfall was 119% of average, and most places had near or rather above average rainfall, but it was drier than average in northern Scotland. Heavy rain caused flooding in Derbyshire and Yorkshire on 1 and 2 April (with some snow too) and around 10 April in Devon; there was heavy flooding along the Severn in Gloucestershire from 3 to 14 April. Sunshine was 90% of average, but it was generally dull in the south-west. In the Severn and Avon Vales, the weather was mainly dull and grey in the first two weeks of April, with occasional light drizzle; no frost, maximum temperature of 15°C on 6 April, which was unusually bright and sunny; winds north-easterly from 8-12 April, going south-westerly on 13 April, bright and spring-like on 14 April (top temperature 18°C), duller again from 15-17 April with cool southerly winds. The warmest days of the year so far occurred from 18-21 April (though there was mist early on 20 April), temperatures reaching 28°C on 19 April; much cooler, temperatures barely reaching 15°C from 23-27 April, with winds in the southwest bringing drizzle; even cooler from 27-30 April as winds went north-easterly, giving top temperatures of 10°C or less. The Severntales website (based in Gloucester) gave a monthly rainfall figure of 33 mm, Gloucestershire Weather (based between Cirencester and Stroud) gave a monthly rainfall figure of 61.4 mm.

At the start of May, the UK as a whole was in an unsettled westerly regime, but after a frontal system had brought rain south-eastwards on 1 and 2 May, it soon turned much warmer and, for most places, sunnier, giving the warmest early-May Bank Holiday since the holiday was introduced in 1978. The second week was cooler but still with a fair amount of dry sunny weather for many parts. The second half of the month was generally warm with high pressure dominating and easterly winds bringing further warm sunshine, but it was often cooler and cloudier near the east coast. During the last

week showers, thunderstorms and longer spells of rain broke out increasingly widely, especially in central and southern areas. The UK mean temperature was 12.1°C, nearly two degrees above the 1981-2010 long-term average, making it the equal second warmest May in a series from 1910, with the mean maximum temperature for the UK the highest in this series. Rainfall was 69% of average, and most places had a dry month, but rainfall was generally close to normal across central and southern England (though heavy showers and thunderstorms caused impacts in the last week of May, notably in the Midlands where the Birmingham Street Iftar was cancelled on 27 May and 81mm of rain fell in 24 hours at Winterbourne). Sunshine was 132% of average, and was above average almost nationwide, especially in northern England, and it was the sunniest May in a series from 1929. In the Severn and Avon Vales, May began as April had finished: dull and rather cool on southwesterly winds for the first four days, with grass frost in the countryside on 1 and 3 May, and daily maximum temperatures not reaching 15°C; but a ridge of high pressure set in from 4 May on mainly south-easterly winds, bringing much higher temperatures (29°C on 7 May, Bank Holiday Monday!); winds then went south-westerly but the fine weather continued, though not quite as warm, until 10 May. A long dry spell (allowing northward bound bird migrants to pass over at height without stopping) was finally interrupted by rain on 24 and 25 May, which brought some Arctic wader migrants back down to ground level, with heavy rain on 30 and 31 May. The Severntales website (based in Gloucester) gave a monthly rainfall figure of 55mm, Gloucestershire Weather (based between Cirencester and Stroud) gave a monthly rainfall figure of 87.6 mm, with 57 mm in the last two days of the month.

Over the UK as a whole, the first week of June became increasingly settled, with temperatures rising well above average especially by day in northern and western areas. Eastern coasts were much cooler on some days due to onshore winds. It became less settled from 9 June onwards, and from 13 and 14 June there were large rainfall totals in upland areas of western/southern Scotland and north-west England. The middle part of the month saw generally larger cloud amounts, with spells of rain mainly for Scotland, but from 21 June onwards most areas were sunny and increasingly warm, with numerous locations exceeding 30°C from 25 June. Some southern areas saw very little rain throughout this month, with less than 2 mm at numerous stations. The UK mean temperature, at 14.8°C, was 1.8°C above the 1981-2010 average, making it the third warmest June in a series from 1910. Rainfall was 48% of average, and well below average over most of England and Wales with less than 10% of average in some southern counties: for England it was the third driest June in a series from 1910. Sunshine was 142% of average, and with the exception of a few eastern and southern coastal locations sunshine was well above average nationwide, especially in northern and western areas. A maximum temperature of 33.0°C was recorded at Porthmadog (Gwynedd) on 28 June. The Severn and Avon Vales experienced a heatwave throughout the month, with top temperatures on most days above 20°C, just exceeding 30°C on 25 June; minimum temperatures rarely went below 10 degrees. The Severntales website (based in Gloucester) gave a monthly rainfall figure of 3.6mm, Gloucestershire Weather (based between Cirencester and Stroud) gave a monthly rainfall figure of 5.2mm.

Water levels and flooding: general

Water levels were very high in the first few days of April, because of the falls of snow and rain in mid- and late March, producing a second extensive spring flood, following the one in mid-March. The Severn at Haw Bridge broke its banks in several places from 3-6 April, flooding riverside meadows deeply, peaking at 10.96m on 4 April, and then falling gradually for the rest of the month. Levels were much slower to drop on the meadows, since the water had to flow out through small culverts and ditches into outfalls to the main rivers; the minor roads at Wainlodes and between Ashleworth and Tirley were closed by flooding (for the first time in 2017/18) from 5-14 April. The Severn at Haw Bridge was back to normal levels (round 7.50m) from 21 April, and continued low, despite high tide

cycles in late April and early May. A slight rise in water levels followed rain in late May. In fact the Severn remained low until the end of the June, and with the hot weather and lack of rain, water in all scrapes and pools decreased rapidly until the end of June.

Conditions at the main sites

Sites along the Severn

Upton Ham: Heavy flooding in early April, mostly subsided by 15 April, but still waterlogged underfoot.

Ripple Lake: Was not affected by flooding, so breeding waders on islands in the north and south lakes, could proceed at the usual time.

Longdon Marsh: At The Worcs WT reserve at Hill Court the scrape still remained flooded on 25 April, but outlying areas were rapidly drying out. On 15 May the scrape was brim-full but in outlying areas receding pools were rapidly drying up, and the Reservoir had a shallow pool in the western area. By 22 May the scrape was starting to dry out with narrow dry margins around shallow water in the north-western corner. On 5 June the Reservoir still had a shallow pool in the western area after torrential storms in late May. From mid-June the scrape was rapidly drying out with wide dry margins around shallow water in north-western corner.

Severn Ham, Tewkesbury: Water rising dramatically on 1 April, deep flooding from 2-7 April, when the whole Ham was under water (for a second time, after March flood); the floodwater had cleared by 12 April, but there was still surface water from leaks in the water main under Ham, repaired in second half of month, so some parts of the area remained wet until 9 May.

Ashleworth/Hasfield Hams: Heavy floods in early April closed the Ashleworth-Tirley road from 5-14 April; the floods dropping in the second half of April; boards were removed from southern sluice to allow water on GWT reserve to drop in late April. Water levels decreased from the first half of May, with a brief rise in the first few days of June following local rainfall (which drowned out Lapwing nests); the whole area dried out rapidly in June; some neighbouring farmers' fields were cut for hay by 22 June, but not yet on the reserve.

Coombe Hill: Heavy flooding, extending right up to the Wharf in early April (much the deepest flooding all winter), made the site inaccessible (unless you had thigh waders, or were willing to take a soaking) until 14 April, whence the small number of records in this period, as at Ashleworth; water dropping gradually until the end of the month, but still much higher than in recent years, leading to late onset of breeding in most waders. In early May, the grass round the scrapes on the GWT reserve was slow to develop; but one neighbouring farmer's fields was cut for silage from 12 May. Scrapes and Long Pool decreasing gradually throughout May, with slight rise in early June following rainfall, then continuing to drop through June, little water left in scrapes by end of month. Hay cut on some reserve meadows by 20 June; by 30 June hay cut on all reserve fields except the scrape field, and on most neighbouring farmers' fields.

Leigh and Cobney Meadows: Heavy flooding in early April, Chelt breaking its banks, dropping by mid to late April. Even so, immediately north of the A38 one field had already been cut for silage on 5 May; many fields cut for zero grazing by mid-June.

Walmore Common: Extensive flooding on 7 April.

Sites along the Avon

Upham Meadow, Twyning: Deeply flooded from 2-7 April at least, only the flood-banks emerging, floods gone after mid-month, but surface remaining wet until May; still no hay cut on 21 June, but hay cutting under way by 28 June (entirely within permitted dates).

Species records

Swans

Mute Swan: Several of the usual nesting sites were not occupied, probably because nest sites had been affected by flooding.

Worcestershire: At Ripple two on 15 April, a flock of non-breeders with 56 on 22 April, 46 on 20 May, 65 in 17 June. Did not nest at Longdon Marsh, where there were occasional records throughout the spring with a maximum of eight on 8 June. At Bredon's Hardwick Pits three on 20 May.

At Severn Ham, Tewkesbury one from the usual colour-ringed pair on the Mill Avon on 16 April, a singleton on 20 April – no nest seen, but a female with cygnets seen much later in the season; a pair on the Avon proper on 18 June. At Ashleworth, no nesting either: nine on 17 April, eight non-breeders on 18 May, a pair on 7 June. At Coombe Hill an adult and six others (probably immatures) flew over on 21 April; the usual ringed nesting pair was present on 27 April and 5 May (when the female appeared to be nest-building), 11 May (nest building in a different place), actually mating on 21 May (a very late date), but they did not breed; pair still present until the end of June; five on 23 June, four on 30 June. At Cobney Meadows a pair and a non-breeding flock of ten on floodwater on 3 April. At Horsbere a pair with seven cygnets on 19 May. At Minsterworth Ham two on 7 April. At Walmore six on 8 April. At Upham Meadow, two on 1 May, a non-breeding pair and a singleton on 21 June. Along the Avon: At Mitton eight on 18 June, five on 26 June.

Black Swan: At Coombe Hill (following records of one in late March) one on floodwater on several dates from 3 to 19 April; then one on the Long Pool on 8 June.

Geese

Greylag Goose: Small numbers breeding at a few favoured sites.

Worcestershire: At Ripple 14 on 15 April, just three on 20 May, 20 (including a pair with goslings) on 17 June. At Longdon Marsh (Hill Court) two pairs on 1 May, one pair with young from 22 May to the end of June. At Pirton Pool, a brood on 19 May. Along the Avon: At Bredon's Hardwick Pits 63 on 15 April, 26 on 20 May, at least 75 on 18 June, creche of 50 goslings on 26 June.

At Severn Ham, Tewkesbury, five flew upriver on 18 June. At Ashleworth up to six on many dates between early April and late June, but none bred. At Coombe Hill up to four throughout the period, apparently two pairs, but no breeding; 12 on 9 May (mating seen), 13 on 5 June. At Barrow Ponds at least 18 on 7 April. At Alney Island a pair on 1 May. At Minsterworth Ham four on 7 April. At Upham Meadow, ten, mainly paired, probably nesting, on 1 May.

Canada Goose: As for Greylag, some breeding birds at favoured sites, also perhaps affected by the floods in early spring.

Worcestershire: At Ripple five on 15 April, 35 on 20 May, 63 (including a brood of young) on 17 June. At Longdon Marsh (Hill Court) die not nest, but up to 12 seen throughout the season. At Pirton Pool, six broods on 19 May. Along the Avon: At Fleet Lane near Bredon's Hardwick a flock of 11 with two goslings on 27 June. At Bredon's Hardwick Pits 59 on 15 April, 17 on 20 May, pair with five large goslings on 18 June, creche of at least 20 goslings on 26 June.

At Ashleworth 13 on 19 April, 15 on 27 April, three on 28 April, a pair (plus four coming in late to roost) on 2 May, non-breeding flock of 13 on 22 May; one female sitting, with male on guard, from 22 May. At Coombe Hill four on 2 April, non-breeding flock of 18 on 24 April, 32 on 9 May; pair with two goslings from 22 May. At Barrow Ponds 40 on 7 April. At Minsterworth Ham two on 7 April.

At Walmore 14 on 8 April, five on 9 May. At Upham Meadow 20 on 1 May, at least ten on 7 May.

Barnacle Goose: Worcestershire: At Ripple a singleton on 15 April, probably the one seen throughout the winter, probably mated to a Canada Goose.

Egyptian Goose: A pair and a singleton had been regularly seen at different sites in the first three months of the year. Several records in this period, quite probably the same individuals.

Worcestershire: At Holt two on 29 May. At Grimley one on 29 April, two on 11 May, one on 30 May. At Clifton one on 1 April, two on 9 May and 17 June. At Ryall Court two on 28 May. Along the Avon: At Avon Meadows NR Pershore one on 20 April.

At Ashleworth one on 15 and 17 April and 22 May.

Mandarin: Worcestershire: At Longdon Marsh (Hill Court) s male on 1 May, a female on 15 May. A female with six ducklings on 22 May, not observed later, ducklings probably predated.

Ducks

Shelduck: In this species which nests in holes (in the vales probably rabbit holes or holes in pollarded willows), the male normally guards territory where the female can come to feed when she is off duty. At many sites pairs often appeared to be holding territory and no doubt attempting to nest, but the nests are hard to find, and the ducklings often only survive for a very short period.

Worcestershire: At Upton Ham a small flock on dropping floodwater on 15 April. At Ryall five on 14 April; a pair with a brood of nine on 24 June. At Ripple eight on 15 April, four on 21 April and 2 and 6 May, but no sign of ducklings. At Worcs WT reserve Longdon Marsh a mobile pair from 1 to 22 May with three on 20 May.

At both Ashleworth and Coombe Hill birds behaved as though they were nesting (male guarding feeding territory for female to feed, female coming in to feed occasionally), but no ducklings were seen there, though ducklings were seen at Walmore. At Severn Ham, two flew over on 17 April. At Haw Bridge four on floodwater on 14 April. At Ashleworth four on 18 April, six on 27 April, a pair on 2 May and many later dates in May with four on 12 May, territorial pair on 30 May and 3 June, last record a singleton on 7 June. At Coombe Hill two on floodwater on 14 April, at least 12 on 18 April, 15 on 24 April, at least 20 on 27 April; up to eleven on many dates in May; two pairs on 4 June. At Cobney Meadows nine on floodwater on 3 April. At Minsterworth Ham six on 1 April, nine on 7 April. At Walmore eight on floodwater on 8 April, two on 14 April; one or two on several dates in early May, a pair with six ducklings (for the second year running) on 23 May.

Mandarin: Worcestershire: At Ripple nesting not proven this year: though a pair was present through April and May. At Worcs WT reserve Longdon Marsh, one male on 20 May.

At Severn Ham, Tewkesbury, one in flight on 17 and 24 April. At Ashleworth a drake on 24 April.

Surface-feeding ducks:

Wigeon: Some wintering birds stayed on during the April floods, and very small numbers, no doubt injured birds, stayed to summer.

Worcestershire: At Ripple 170 on 2 April, 150 on 14 April, 36 on 15 April, none after 21 April. Last record at Longdon Marsh on 10 April.

At Ashleworth 42 on 1 April, two on 17 April. At Coombe Hill 200 on 2 April, 25 on 10 April, six in high flood on 14 April, ten on 18 April, four on 21 April, a single female from 27 April to 11 May; a

summering male on 8 and 23 June. Along the Avon at Upham Meadow, 30 on floodwater on 2 April.

Gadwall: Recorded in single figures at several sites throughout the period, but no proof of breeding this year.

Worcestershire: At Clifton seven on 27 May. At Ripple the April maximum was nine on 14 April, May maximum seven on 6 May, June maximum six on 2 and 17 June. At Longdon Marsh (Hill Court) a pair on 1 May. Along the Avon: At Bredon's Hardwick Pits two on 2 April.

At Ashleworth present throughout April with six (four males) on 17 April, five (all males - where were the females!) on 28 April; three pairs plus two extra males on 2 May; a male on 4 May, two on 14 May; three on 2 June. At Coombe Hill present through April with three (two males) on 2 April, 15 (nearly all males) on 27 April, 13 on 29 April; up to eight through May (seven males on 9 May); up to three though June. At Sandhurst two on 5 April. At Minsterworth Ham eight on 1 April, six (five males) on 7 April. At Walmore five (three males) on 7 April, a male on 14 and 28 April. Along the Avon at Upham Meadow, one on floodwater on 2 April.

Teal: Some remaining during the early April floods; no indication of breeding; as usual, a few returning birds in June.

Worcestershire: At Ripple present through April, with 40 on 1 April, 170 on 7 April, 16 on 21 April, one on 28 April; a pair on 25 May. Last record at Longdon Marsh on 17 April. Along the Avon: At Bredon's Hardwick eleven on 15 April.

At Severn Ham, Tewkesbury, six (on a flooded field at Lower Lode) on 15 April. At Ashleworth 67 on 1 April, 34 on 18 April, 46 on 19 April, nine on 24 April; last record three pairs on 2 May. At Coombe Hill 65 on 2 April, still 95 on 18 April, 74 on 21 April, 50 on 24 April; single drake on 9 May, four on 31 May; a pair on 4 and 24 June, increase to nine on 30 June. At Cobney Meadows at least 20 on floodwater on 3 April; six, probably returning migrants on flight pond on 13 June. At Alney Island 27 on floodwater on 3 April, 10 on 15 April. At Walmore 56 on 7 April, 80 on 8 April, 60 on 14 April, none afterwards.

Mallard: Plenty of breeding records, none of them very early, the first ones in May. It looks as though the floods may have destroyed early clutches and broods.

Worcestershire: At Ripple Pits at least ten pairs had broods: 14 birds on 15 April, 13 on 20 May, 19 on 17 June. At Longdon Marsh (Hill Court) nested - juveniles seen. Along the Avon: At Bredon's Hardwick Pits 38 on 15 April, 14 on 20 May.

At Severn Ham, Tewkesbury, two females with large ducklings on 25 June. At Ashleworth 21 on 1 April, two females with broods of ducklings (first of year) on 2 May; several broods with 18 ducklings in all on 18 May; 20 and two females with duckling broods on 22 May; 17 on 24 May, female with eight ducklings on 30 May; eight on 2 June, female with three new small ducklings on 3 June; female with about six small ducklings on 7 June. At Coombe Hill 15 on 21 April; female with eight ducklings on 5 May, four females with ducklings on 9 May, one along the canal with four ducklings on 21 May, two with ducklings on 26 May, 20 June, one with five ducklings on 23 June; about 20 on 24 June. At Leigh Meadows a female with six ducklings on the wildfowlers' scrape on 29 June. Along the Avon: At Upham Meadow a female with seven ducklings on 7 May; at Mitton still at least six females with ducklings on 18 June, still several families on 26 June.

Pintail: Worcestershire: last record at Longdon Marsh on 10 April.

At Ashleworth eight on 1 April, last record of nine on 17 April. At Coombe Hill 20 on 2 April, four in high flood on 14 April, two on 21 April, a pair on 27 and 29 April and 1 May.

Garganey: Worcestershire: At Holt two drakes on 1 June, one on 4, 5 and 8 June. At Grimley a drake on many dates from 29 May to 28 June. At Clifton two drakes on 24 May. At Ripple a drake on 6 May.

At Coombe Hill two drakes and a duck on 21 April, a drake on 22, 23 and 26 April; then a pair on 29, 30 April, 1 May; then, much later, two eclipse males and a female, from 6 to 8 June. At Walmore a male on 7 and 8 April.

Shoveler: Very small numbers summering, no sign of breeding.

Worcestershire: At Clifton a pair on 27 May. At Ripple many records through April, with a maximum of 12 on 2 April, nine on 14 April and two on 21 April; then one on 2 June. Last record at Longdon Marsh on 17 April. Along the Avon: At Bredon's Hardwick Pits a male on 27 May.

At Ashleworth present through April, with 35 on 1 April, 15 on 18 April, nine on 24 April, latest record a female on 2 May. At Coombe Hill good numbers through April with 72 on 2 April, 53 on 21 April, 30 on 24 April; just four drakes on 27 April; a pair on 5 May, a drake on 9 May, two drakes on 22 May, one drake on 26 and 30 May; a male on 5 June, two males on 8 June, pair and a female on 24 June. At Alney Island five on floodwater on 3 April, Castlemeads two on 15 and 16 April. At Minsterworth Ham nine on 7 April. At Walmore eight on 7 April, nine on 8 April.

Diving ducks:

Pochard: Worcestershire: At Clifton a male on 27 May. At Ripple five on 1 April, six on 2 April, two on 22 April.

At Ashleworth one on floodwater on 17 April, a drake on 18 April. At Coombe Hill during the flood three on 2 April, two on 10 and 15 April, two (probably not a pair) on 21 and 23 April.

Tufted Duck: Worcestershire: At Ripple at least eight pairs had broods: 76 birds on 7 April, 88 on 15 April, 43 on 2 May, 47 on 20 May, 43 on 17 June. At Longdon Marsh (Hill Court) a male on several dates between 1 and 22 May. At Bredon's Hardwick Pits four on 20 May, ten on 27 May.

Good numbers on floodwater early on in Gloucestershire, but little or no sign of any breeding pairs this year. At Ashleworth 16 on 10 April, 19 on 17 April, nine on 22 April; a pair on 3 June, first pair this spring. At Coombe Hill 18 on 2 April, pair on floodwater near Wharf on 7 April, enormous count of 90 on 10 April, pair Apperley side on 14 April, 21 on 15 April, at least 16 on 18 April, 11 on 21 April, 15 on 23 April, five on 24 April; six on 5 May; one on 31 May, a pair on 4 June, a male on 5 June.

Common Scoter: Worcestershire: At Upton Warren a drake on 8 April. At Clifton four (two drakes) on 26 May.

At Coombe Hill a male on floodwater from 15 to 18 April appears to be the first record at this site.

Red-breasted Merganser: On the Severn in Worcester a female on 2 May, an unusual time for a rarely recorded species.

Grebes

Little Grebe: Worcestershire: At Clifton two on 27 May. At Longdon Marsh (Hill Court) two pairs present from 3 April to mid-May; breeding suspected but not proven.

At Ashleworth four on 1 April, one on 17 April, one on 2 May. At Coombe Hill one trilling on 2 April, one on 10 April, two on 15 April, one on 17 April, three (one whinnying) on 21 April, one whinnying on 23 April; but no proof of breeding. At Hartpurpy

Orchard Centre one on 15 April. At Horsbere one on 22 May, three adults on 24 May.

Black-necked Grebe: At Coombe Hill one in summer plumage in heavy flooding on 15 and 16 April, first record here.

Great Crested Grebe: Worcestershire: At Ripple one pair raised two young: six on 15 April, 15 on 20 May, first brood on 7 June, ten on 17 June. Along the Avon: At Bredon's Hardwick Pits four on 15 April, ten on 27 May, five on 18 June, seven on 26 June.

At Severn Ham, Tewkesbury, two swimming on floodwater on the surface of the Ham on 2 and 3 April. At Ashleworth one in floodwater from 18 to 24 April. At Coombe Hill, where the species occurs only at time of high flood, good numbers, and even indications of intended nesting, were recorded during the April flood: five on 10 and 15 April including a pair in courtship, two on 17 April, six (including two doing nuptial dance on floodwater) on 18 April, two pairs (still displaying) on 21 April, still a pair and a singleton on 23 and 27 April.

Cormorant

Cormorant: Worcestershire: At Ripple two on 15 April, five on 22 April; three on 2 May, two on 20 May, one on 17 June.

At Severn Ham, one flying up the Avon on 29 May. At Ashleworth one on 1 and 19 April and on 24 May. At Coombe Hill one on 17 April, four over on 18 April, as many as forty flew north on 29 April. At Barrow Ponds one in summer plumage perched on trees on 7 April. At Walmore one on 7 April. At Upham Meadow one flew over on 1 May.

Hérons, Egrets, Ibis and Stork

Little Egret: Worcestershire: At Ripple frequently recorded but none known to have nested in the vicinity: present throughout: monthly maxima four on 21 April, ten on 9 May, three on 29 June. At Longdon Marsh (Hill Court) up to two recorded from 1 May to 12 June. Along the Avon: At Bredon's Hardwick Pits singletons on 20 May and on 18 and 26 June.

At Severn Ham, Tewkesbury, one flew over floodwater on 3 April. At Ashleworth present throughout April (maximum four on 19 April) and May (maximum eight on 3 May). At Coombe Hill also present throughout the period, with numbers highest in the last ten days of April (15 on 22 April, 13 on 23 April, 12 on 26 April); May maximum eight on 5 May, up to three in June. At Barrow Ponds four on 7 April. At Leigh Meadows one on 29 June. At Horsbere singles on several dates in May and June. At Alney Island four on 14 May. At Walmore ones and twos in each of the three months.

Cattle Egret: After records of several birds earlier in the year in the Frampton/Slimbridge area, at Coombe Hill one in summer plumage in heavy flooding on 15 and 22 April

Great White Egret: Records of this formerly scarce species, which now breeds in Somerset, are becoming much more frequent. One individual was seen in Worcestershire, and in the Frampton/Slimbridge area on several occasions earlier in the year and between 30 April and 16 June. The same individuals may well have been moving up and down the Severn.

At Coombe Hill one from 6 to 9 May. At Alney Island two on 16 May. At Walmore one on 9 and 11 May, (a first record for this site).

Grey Heron: Worcestershire: At Ripple one on 15 April. At Longdon Marsh (Hill Court) up to two recorded from 1 May to 12 June. Along the Avon: At Fleet Lane near Bredon's Hardwick one on a cut hayfield on 27 June.

At Severn Ham, Tewkesbury, one on 28 April. At Ashleworth present throughout with five on 19 April, four on 12 May, three on 3 June. At Coombe Hill two on many dates in late April, up to four on many dates in May, up to three in June. At Cobney Meadows two on 13 June. At Barrow Ponds 20 occupied nests, at least one with sizeable young already, on 7 April. Staverton Court heronry was not occupied this year. At Leigh Meadows one on 29 June. At Alney Island one on 14 May.

Glossy Ibis: A single bird was present at Upton Warren from 10 to 22 April, and was probably different from the Gloucestershire bird.

At Coombe Hill an immature from 3 to 6 May (presumably the bird recorded on the estuary at Lydney in early April, then at Slimbridge from 19 to 26 April.

White Stork: Worcestershire: At Cookley (north of Kidderminster), one circling on 6 April, a probable over Burlish near Kidderminster on 14 April.

At Coombe Hill one briefly on 22 April, later found in South Gloucestershire.

Raptors

Red Kite: Records of this once scarce species continued to increase.

Worcestershire: At Upton Ham one soaring on 21 April. At Ripple one on 2 April.

Over Severn Ham and Tewkesbury singles on 9 and 30 May and on 11 June. At Ashleworth / Hasfield one on 19 April and 1 May. At Coombe Hill one on 9 May (the Severn Ham bird?). Over Cobney Meadows one on 12 June. Over Longlevens one on 14 and 18 June. Over the Gloucester Landfill Site two on 18 May, three on 24 June. Over Netheridge one on 21 June. Over Minsterworth Ham one on 21 April. Along the Avon: At Twyning one on 20 May.

Marsh Harrier: At Coombe Hill a male on 25 May. At Walmore a female or immature on 19 June.

Sparrowhawk: At Severn Ham, Tewkesbury, one (at a flooded field near Lower Lode) on 15 April, one on 9 May. At Ashleworth one on 2 June. At Coombe Hill one on 3 April. At Hartpury Orchard Centre one on 15 April. Along the Avon: At Cowfield one on 19 April.

Buzzard: Worcestershire: At Upton Ham three soaring on 21 April. At Avon Meadows one on 21 June, two soaring on 25 June.

At Severn Ham, Tewkesbury, one hunting on 25 June. At Ashleworth seven on 1 April, one on 5 April; six on 2 May, one being mobbed by crows on 4 May, one on 22 May. At Mitton one on 18 June.

Osprey: As usual a few records of birds moving north in early April; what to make of the June records?

Worcestershire: Over the Lickey Hills one on 10 April. At Kidderminster, Bittell and Wilden Marsh singles on 13 April; one over Redditch on 19 April. At Upton Warren one on 3 June was perhaps already on its way back south, but why was one at Clent (near the north Worcestershire border) on 11 June flying north??

At Ashleworth one reported flying north at midday on 1 April.

Kestrel: Worcestershire: At Avon Meadows (Fleet Lane) a female hunting on 18 June.

At Ashleworth one on 5 and 19 April. At Severn Ham, Tewkesbury, a male hunting on 9 May. At Hartpury Orchard Centre one on 15 April.

Hobby: Worcestershire: At Ryall one on 19 May. At Ripple one on 2 June.

At Ashleworth singles on 2 and 12 May. At Coombe Hill single birds on 2 and 6 May, two on 27 June, one on 29 June. At Minsterworth one on 29 May. At Walmore one on 13 May and 2 June.

Peregrine: Over Severn Ham, Tewkesbury, the nesting pair from the abbey were displaying on 16 April; one adult on 26 April; pair mating on the Abbey on 5 May. At Ashleworth Ham one on 17 and 24 April; a male on 2 May. At Coombe Hill one on 3 May. At Longford one carrying prey on 23 May. At Upham Meadow an immature perched on the meadow on 1 May.

Rails and Crakes

Common Crane: All birds almost certainly from the Great Crane Restoration Project. Worcestershire, based the Somerset Levels and Slimbridge: At Stone (west of Kidderminster) one in flight on 31 May. At Ripple two circled high, then drifted off to southeast on 2 May

At Coombe Hill two reported in flight towards Severn on 26 April; one high overhead on 13 June.

Water Rail: Worcestershire: At Longdon Marsh (Hill Court) heard on 1 May and 5 June; may have nested but not proven.

Moorhen: Worcestershire: At Ripple five on 7 April, two, on 15 April. At Longdon Marsh (Hill Court) nested – juveniles seen.

At Severn Ham, Tewkesbury, two chicks on Mill Avon on 25 June.

Coot: Worcestershire: At Ripple at least five pairs raised young: 15 birds on 15 April, 32 on 20 May, 36 on 17 June. At Longdon Marsh (Hill Court) nested – juveniles seen. At Bredon's Hardwick Pits seven on 15 April, six on 20 May.

At Severn Ham, Tewkesbury, one on the Severn on 17 April. At Ashleworth and Coombe Hill fair numbers on floodwater in early April, dropping as water levels lowered. At Ashleworth 43 on 1 April, 40 on floodwater on 17 April, seven on 28 April, 32 on 2 May; six on 14 May, then just in May and June. At Coombe Hill 22 on 2 April; an early nest just emerging from floodwater on the canal on 7 April survived and had hatched on 23 April; 25 on floodwater on 23 April, 30 on 27 April, 25 on 5 May, five on 9 May, just two on 20 June. At Castlemeads 12 on 15 April. At Walmore 20 on 7 April.

Waders

Oystercatcher: Recorded at a wide range of sites; some pairs, perhaps nesting on arable, may have been overlooked.

Worcestershire: At Grimley two on 3 June. At Upton Ham one on 21 April. At Clifton a pair nested and two young fledged. At Ryall two on 11 May, one on 24 June. At Worcs WT Longdon Marsh reserve a pair were displaying strongly on 20 April, but no information available on whether they were successful. At Ripple three pairs attempted to nest, successfully fledging three, two and one young; a pair with a nest on 7 April, six birds 8 April, eight on 15 April, two on nests on 26 April and 2 May; 12 birds and a brood of three on the island on 4 May; 14, with two broods of four and three on the island from 6 to 12 May; five adults with two broods of three and at least one on 24 May; six with five fledged chicks on 10 June, nine on 17 June, one on 29 June. Along the Avon: At Throckmorton Outer Lagoon a pair was on eggs on 25 April – no information as to whether the pair was successful. At Lower Moor Leisure Park (not affected by flooding) a pair produced three fledged juveniles, seen daily from 25 to 31 May. At Kemerton Lake two pairs nested and were present from 20 February to 23 May; one pair had two fledged young by 18 June, the other pair lost its eggs to predation by large

gulls. At Fleet Lane near Bredon's Hardwick a non-breeding bird on 18, 26 and 27 June; at Bredon's Hardwick Pits two on 2 April, four on 14 April, two 20 May, a pair on 18 and 26 June, not clear if they bred.

At Mythe Hook one on a cut hayfield on 21 June. At Severn Ham, Tewkesbury, two (on a flooded field at Lower Lode on 15 April), one over on 16 April, two on 9 May. At Ashleworth one on 17 April, three including a pair from 18 April, with mating seen on 2 May, still present on 8 May, two on 14 May, but no nest recorded. At Coombe Hill two on 2 April, four on 10 and 15 April, three on 23 April; pair incubating nest from 4 May, pair with three chicks from 31 May to 20 June (when they were nearly flying), two chicks left on 23 and 24 June, just one on 30 June. Along the Avon one at Upham Meadow on 28 June.

Avocet: Nests at Upton Warren. No records of birds attempting to nest anywhere else in the Vales.

Worcestershire: At Grimley two on 30 May.

At Coombe Hill two on 29 May.

Little Ringed Plover: In recent years the breeding stronghold for this species has been the gravel pits in Worcestershire, with very fewer Gloucestershire breeding records; in Gloucestershire most records have been considered to relate to birds passing through, though the species nested at Horsbere in its first years (but not this year), and a pair raised young at Coombe Hill in 2017.

Worcestershire: At Ryall present throughout the season and may have bred, but nesting not confirmed: two on 14 April, four on 22 April, six on 26 April, one on 11 May, four on 24 June. At Ripple two pairs on the south lake, one pair on the north lake, but no fledged chicks seen: two on 1 April, four on 7 and 15 April; one on nest on south lake island on 2 May; five, one on nest, on 6 May, four on 20 May, six on 24 May; a gap, then one on 29 June. Along the Avon: At Bredon's Hardwick Pits two on 27 May; an adult chasing a Green Sandpiper on 27 June was probably an incoming migrant.

At Ashleworth one on 22 May. At Coombe Hill, where passage is normally noted in late March and early April, no records until one on 25 April, probably because of the extensive flooding; then two on 27 April, one on 29 April, singles from 3 to 6 May, pair on 7 May, pair doing tail-up display on 9 May; two with some aerial display on 11 May, three on 19 and 20 May, two with some courtship chasing on 21 May, mating on 22 May; two agitated birds chasing migrant waders, especially Ringed Plovers, on 25 May; nest with sitting bird on the island in north scrape seen on 26 and 28 May; two birds still present on 30 May, but nest not occupied after this date. One on 23 June was an immature arriving from outside, no more in late June.

Ringed Plover: Two distinct waves of passage, the first in the last week of April, the second, presumably of birds migrating late because they were going to nest so far to the north, in the last week of May.

Worcestershire: At Ripple Lake three on 26 April, two on 27 April; six on 25 May, one on 26 May.

At Coombe Hill six on 22 April, three on 24 April, two on 26 April, seven on 27 April, eight on 28 April, ten on 29 April, with singles on 1, 3, 7 and 11 May (aggressive display to Little Ringed Plovers on latter date); then larger numbers in late May, with little groups staying only a short time: 19 on 25 May, departing in two groups soon after midday; a group of 23 seen later the same day were probably new birds but may have been the first group coming back; only two, circling, on 26 May; five on 27 May, none on 28 May, four on 30 May. At Walmore one heard on 14 April.

Golden Plover: A late record at Coombe Hill at least 25 over on 17 April. Most birds pass through in March.

Grey Plover: A high Arctic breeder, recorded only at Upton Warren with two on 27 May, one on 28 and 29 May

Dotterel: The almost annual May Bredon Hill record: a female near Conderton on 12 May.

Lapwing: Some breeding records, remarkably few in wetland sites, and not many on arable either. As usual, incoming flocks of migrants were in evidence by mid-June.

Worcestershire: At Grimley several pairs nested and some chicks fledged. At Upton Ham a pair displaying on arable alongside the Ham on 31 May, six birds (no young) on 5 June. At Longdon Marsh (north of Marsh Lane) eight birds sitting on arable on 20 April, and at the Worcs WT reserve at Longdon Marsh a pair with two large nearly fledged juveniles on 18 June. At Ripple a dozen pairs on the south lake island and some chicks seen, but none thought to have fledged; a pair with a nest on 7 April, 15 on 15 April, three on nests on 26 April; a brood of at least two chicks on 2 and 4 May, and two chicks from 6 to 11 May; 17 birds on 20 May, 12 on 17 June. Along the Avon: At Woodnorton a pair holding territory very strongly early in the season, but no sign of successful nesting. At Lower Moor a single pair bred and had one fledged chick on 22 June. At John Bennett NR two pairs were present and holding territory from March to mid-April, but then vacated the territory with no sign of successful breeding. In fields alongside Bredon's Hardwick Pits, three pairs apparently with young on 18 June.

At Severn Ham, Tewkesbury, one on the ground by a pool on 17 April. At Ashleworth two pairs nested late in the season but both nests were flooded out following heavy rain and a rise in water levels by 2 June; eight on 1 April, then two or three during high flooding in April, with one displaying on 22 April; a single male with no sign of a female on 2 and 8 May, two on 12 May, in aerial display on 18 May; two pairs, apparently preparing to breed, on 22 May; four adults, with two nests being incubated in heavy showers, on 30 May; bird still on nest in very wet area and adults chasing corvids on 2 June, but nests flooded out by 3 June; only two males, still displaying, on 7 June. At Coombe Hill the April floods delayed the onset of nesting: two on the barley field on 18 and 24 April; on the reserve 12 on 2 April, ten on 18 April, 12 on 23 April, nine (possibly one on nest) on 27 April; four sitting birds on 4 May, ten (with at least two nests) on 5 May; four sitting birds on 9 May, ten adults with at least three (perhaps five) occupied nests on 21 May; five or six with at least two occupied nests and some birds still mating on 25 May; at least two occupied nests on 26 and 28 May; 17 birds on 28 May; three females with chicks on 31 May; three females brooding small chicks on 4 June; a Carrion Crow predated a nest on 6 June; eleven adults on 8 June; at least 15 on 13 June; some adults behaving as though they had young on 23 and 24 June, a large chick on Short Pool on 24 June, still behaving round Short Pool as though chicks were present on 30 June. At Cobney Meadows none on 13 June – not breeding there this year. At Walmore two on 25 April; three on 7 May and (two displaying) on 9 May, pair still chasing crows on 29 May, so probably attempted to breed. At Mitton along the Avon, no sign of breeding birds on 26 June.

Migrants: at Coombe Hill a flock of 42, some already in wing moult, on 20 June; 77 on 23 June, 180 on 30 June. Along the Avon: at Upham Meadow 110 on 28 June; at Mitton 11 on 26 June.

Sanderling: Worcestershire: At Grimley two on 27 May.

At Coombe Hill three on 25 May.

Dunlin: Worcestershire: At Ripple Lake singles on 1, 8 and 24 April, two on 26 April, six on 27 and 28 April and 1 May; two on 2 and 4 May, one on 18 May, two on 25 May.

At Coombe Hill three on 24 April, one on 25 April, five on 27 and 28 April, six on 29 April. Two on 25 May.

Little Stint: Worcestershire: At Holt two on 27 May.

Ruff: Worcestershire: At Grimley two on 15 April. At Ripple two from 14 to 18 April; a male on 27 May.

At Coombe Hill one on 2 April (no doubt the bird seen in the last few days of March); a female on 19 May; then no more until an adult male in full plumage was noted on 29 and 30 June.

Snipe: Worcestershire: At Grimley one on 3 June. At Ryall four on 14 April. At Ripple 20 on 7 April, one on 28 April.

At Severn Ham, Tewkesbury two late birds flushed on 24 April. At Ashleworth two on 1 April, 28 together on one favourite former maize field near the river on 5 April. At Coombe Hill one on 21 April, a very late bird on 11 May, another even later one on 21 May. At Walmore in flooded conditions as many as 38 together on 7 April, 21 on 14 April.

Black-tailed Godwit: In previous years peak passage of Black-tailed Godwit en route to Iceland has generally been registered in mid to late March; this year the bigger numbers were rather later, well into April, as the big floods were dropping.

Worcestershire: At Grimley one on 28 April. At Clifton one on 13 April. At Ripple one on 14 April, a flock of 49 recorded soon after their departure from Coombe Hill on 24 April and including the colour-ringed bird; 32 still present (including the colour-ringed bird) on 26 April, 33 on 27 April, 25 on 28 April; two on 2 May.

At Coombe Hill nine on 2 April, one on 17 April, a lively flock of 57 on 19 April, 46 on 18 April having difficulty in finding a place to pitch in floodwater; same flock on 20 April including a colour-ringed bird; 44 on 21 April, 46 on 23 April, 48 on 24 April, seen departing to northwest at 11.00 a.m. and seen later that day at Ripple, but they must have come back as 41 were recorded on 25 April and 20 on 27 April, 19 on 28 April. First returning bird a singleton on 30 June.

The colour-ringed female had been ringed on the Axe estuary in 2011 and seen most winters since then on the Axe or Exe estuary; on the Axe again in February 2018, at Slimbridge from 9 to 14 April, at Coombe Hill from 20 to 24 April.

Bar-tailed Godwit: Three in flight with migrant Whimbrels at Coombe Hill on 28 April. This species is rare inland.

Whimbrel: As usual, passage of birds en route to Iceland was concentrated in late April and early May

Worcestershire: At Grimley one on 27 and 28 April. At Ripple Lake two on 21 and 22 April, seven on 24 April, nine on 26 April, seven on 27 April, six on 28 April; three on 2 May, singles on 4, 7 and 27 May.

At Ashleworth four on 17 April, ten being chased off by a resident pair of Curlews on the Hasfield side on 18 April, six on 19 April, one on 26 April. At Coombe Hill one on 19 April, one over to north on 21 April, four on 22 April, five on 23 April, ten on 24 April, two on 25 April, five on 26 April, one on 27, 29 April; one on 1 and 4 May, three on 5 May, one on 6 May. At Walmore seven in flight with Bar-tailed Godwits on 28 April.

Curlew: Once again, as in every year since 2015, an intensive survey of breeding Curlews was carried out in the Severn and Avon Vales in Gloucestershire and Worcestershire. This year greater attention was paid to other sites in Worcestershire, on higher, generally arable, ground between the two rivers, where perhaps five pairs still nest. The numbers of pairs attempting to breed in the Vales remained similar to that of previous years at 17 pairs in Gloucestershire, 14 pairs in Worcestershire; sadly, although small numbers of half grown chicks were seen at a couple of sites, no Curlew chicks seem

to have fledged in the Vales this year. A flock of 12 birds near Bredon's Hardwick on 18 June was undoubtedly made up of failed breeders or non-breeding birds. Two colour-ringed birds that had been seen on their traditional breeding fields were recorded back on the Severn estuary below Lydney very early: the female from Upham Meadow as early as 14 June, the Ashleworth male on 12 July, suggesting that both had failed and left the breeding areas early.

Worcestershire: At Upton Ham two pairs held territory: two flying and bubbling in heavy flood on 3 April, three (one pair bubbling) on 15 April, calling in early morning mist on 20 April, four (two pairs) on 21 April; two on 25 April, pair in courtship chasing on 3 and 9 May; two flew from Ryall Pits to Upton Ham on 11 May; two or three bubbling on 12 May; a male at Ryall, probably from Upton, on 26 May; one or two pairs on 31 May, 5 and 14 June, may possible have had young; last date 15 June, so they could not have produced chicks. At Uckinghall Meadow a pair feeding on 1 and 7 April, but did not stay. At Longdon Marsh, a pair was present, held territory and appeared to have a nest from 20 April but were not seen after 21 May, so were clearly not successful. At Queenhill Rough one in display flight on 19 May, then flew south – possibly a bird from Mythe Hook. At Ripple Lake most records probably refer to birds from Mythe Hook: three heading north on 2 April, three on 7 April flew south, probably to Mythe Hook, four on 8 April also flew south, one feeding on 22 April, two bathing on 24 April, then flew south; two bathing on 11 May, one went south, one north; one washing on 20 May, one on 2 June was the last record. Along the Avon: The pair noted at Craycombe in March appeared to be nesting, but disappeared after 1 May. At Lower Moor too, after sightings in March, it seems that the birds abandoned the area and did not breed. At Asham Meadow the pair noted in March was present through April and May, last seen on 12 June, hay cut between 18 and 22 June. At Eckington Meadows where returning birds had been recorded in February and March, at least two pairs active in April and May and may have had young in mid-June, but no sign of fledging. At Bredon's Field Farm, opposite Rectory Farm, a pair feeding on 28 April; at Rectory Farm two on 19 June. At Avon Meadows (Fleet Lane) at least one pair present on 20 May; three pairs apparently with young on 18 and 21 June; three agitated adults, one chick aged 10-14 days seen on 25 June; one pair with two two-week old chicks after hay cutting on 26 June, when a second pair was also present, possibly with young; pair present but young not seen on 27 June, second pair appeared to have lost young. Behind Bredon's Hardwick Pits, where up to three pairs had been recorded in March. Two pairs on 20 May, a pair apparently with young from 18 to 27 June, but no sign of young in early July.

At Mythe Hook (very close to Ripple, which this pair visit frequently) a pair on 14 April, two on flooded field on 27 April, last Ripple record on 2 June, none at Mythe Hook on 21 June, when hay had been cut. At Severn Ham, Tewkesbury, where two pairs had been recorded in March, one on the small amount of unflooded grassland at the edge of the floodwater on 2 and 3 April, then four on 7 April, and five when the floodwater had cleared on 12 April, two pairs on 16 April, at least five including one mating pair on 17 April; four to six on 20 April, females perhaps on eggs; four anxiously chasing crows and Raven on 24 April, at least three on 25 April, four on 26 April, at least one pair on 28 April, probably two pairs on 1 and 9 May; one or two chasing Buzzard on 29 May; only a singleton remaining on 18 June, probably failed, but two flew up in evening of 23 June; none on 25 June. Between Chaceley and Haw Bridge a regular site where a pair had been recorded in March, calling on 1 April, a pair on 3 April, heard calling on 3 May, one chasing crows on 12 May, bubbling on 14 and 15 May, but none found on 26 May; hay had been cut by mid-June. At Haw Bridge East a pair by floodwater on 3 and 5 April, not found there later in April or in May, but two feeding on cut hayfield on 13 and 16 June.

At Ashleworth / Hasfield where at least one pair had been present in March, two pairs on 5 April; two (including the colour-ringed bird from the Severn estuary which has been seen here every spring since

2011) on 17 April; two chasing Whimbrel on Hasfield side on 18 April, flew into reserve in evening; up to five birds (two pairs) in the fields by day, often coming in to the pool on the GWT reserve in the evening, in late April, May and early June; no nest or young found, despite extensive searches; on 4 May a recently predated male (probably killed by a Peregrine) found on a breeding field; two pairs including the colour-ringed bird came to roost in the evening of 30 May; four still present on Hasfield side on 7 June, three on 16 June, not behaving as though they had young; roosting on reserve on morning of 22 June and still calling from Hasfield side until 06h30 – the last sighting of the year.

At Coombe Hill eight in high flood on the Tump field on 10 April (perhaps migrants, perhaps local breeders avoiding flood), two pairs on grass at edge of floodwater on 14 April; then probably one pair present north of the canal, one south of the canal, through April and in early May, coming in to the pool on the GWT reserve in the evening; three excited birds came in to roost on the evening of 9 May; none on Northern Meadows when silage cutting began on 12 May; ones and twos seen through late May and June but no sign of breeding behaviour; at least six, very agitated, came in to roost on evening of 20 June; no sign of breeding, neither nest nor young found, nor any behaviour suggested breeding was under way. At Cobney Meadows a pair by floodwater on 3 April, but none later; at Leigh Meadows two, but no sign of breeding, on 29 June. At Minsterworth Ham a bubbling pair from 7 to 21 April. At Walmore none on 7 April, but a pair bubbling on 14 April, a singleton on 29 May.

Along the Avon at Upham Meadow (the major site), six in flooded conditions on 2 April; ten on 1 May, at least five on 7 May, probably still not with nests, at most three pairs, perhaps with young, on 21 and 28 June, and farmers reported seeing some chicks, not fully grown, during hay making operations; but none of these chicks reached the fledging stage.

Spotted Redshank: Worcestershire: At Grimley one on 27 April and 3 May.

Redshank: Worcestershire: At Grimley a pair reared two chicks on Camp Lane Pits. At Upton Ham a pair was present throughout the season, but it is not clear if they nested successfully, as they did in the last two years; two flying and calling in high flood on 3 April, heard on 15 April. At Ryall two on 11 May, one on 24 June. At Ripple where good numbers had been present in March, seven or eight pairs present, two nests seen; a one-day old chick was seen, but no chicks are thought to have fledged: 20 on 8 April, 16 on 21 April two on nests on 26 April, at least one still sitting on 2 May; seven to eight pairs on 6 May; 12 on 20 and 24 May, ten on 10 June, 13 on 17 June, none on 29 June. Along the Avon: at John Bennett a pair was present from 19 March to 9 April and mating was seen on several occasions but there was no proof of nesting; at Bredon's Hardwick Pits one heard on 2 April.

At Coombe Hill, where potential nesters had also been present from March onwards, three pairs all produced fledged chicks despite the flooding in April, which delayed nesting. Up to six birds, often trilling excitedly, throughout April, mating seen by two pairs on 9 and 11 May, adult with four chicks on 29 May, four birds with at least four chicks on 6 June; one full grown chick and another pair, probably with smaller chicks on 23 June, at least two adults with two chicks of different age on 30 June. Along the Avon: At Upham Meadow none seen though farmers reported they were still present.

Greenshank: Most records in the rush of Arctic waders around 25 May.

Worcestershire: At Clifton one on 26 May. At Ripple two on 18 April, one on 22 April.

At Coombe Hill one on 5 May; seven (an unusually high number here) occurred briefly on 25 May then departed to northeast; two on 27 May.

Green Sandpiper: This species winters in the area, especially along fast running streams, and departs early, with little sign of passage in May. It is usually the first wader to reappear after the breeding season, generally in June, presumably immatures or failed breeders. This year was typical.

Late winter / early spring records: Worcestershire: At Clifton four on 2 April, one on 14 April. At Ripple one on 7, 15 April. Gloucestershire: Near Barrow Ponds one along the Chelt on 7 April. At Minsterworth Ham one on same date.

First returning birds: Worcestershire: At Grimley one on 6 June. At Ryall one on 24 June. At Ripple one on 29 June. At Longdon Marsh (Hill Court) two being chased by resident Lapwing on 12 June, two on 19 June, one being chased by Lapwing on 26 June. Along the Avon: At Bredon's Hardwick Pits two on 27 June. Gloucestershire: At Coombe Hill singles on 8, 11 and 30 June. At Cobney Meadows singles on 13 and 30 June.

Wood Sandpiper: Worcestershire: At Holt one on 30 May. At Grimley one on 27 April. At Ripple one circled on 11 May, then flew off to the north.

At Coombe Hill three (a record for this site? - though this is the standard week for them to appear) on 5 May, two on 6 May, one on 7 May; one on 16, 18 and 24 May.

Common Sandpiper: Distinct signs of strong passage in late April.

Worcestershire: At Ripple where one or two individuals had wintered, one on 7 April, two on several dates from 8 to 22 April, then five on 26 April, six on 27 April, three on 28 April; five on 2 May, four on 4 May, singles on several dates from 9 to 24 May, two on 25 May; a gap, then one, no doubt a post-breeding migrant, on 17 June.

At Severn Ham, Tewkesbury one along Mill Avon on 25 April, then six on 28 April. At Ashleworth two on 17 April, one on 24 April, one calling along the Severn on 4 May. At Coombe Hill two on 23 April, three on 24 April, two on 25 April, one on 26 April, four on 28 April. At Netheridge Farm, one on 19 April.

Turnstone: A high Arctic breeder, usually recorded in small numbers late in spring, as this year.

Worcestershire: At Upton Warren one on 25 May and a different bird on 26 May. At Grimley one on 3 and 4 June.

At Coombe Hill one on 25 May.

Red-necked Phalarope: Worcestershire: An unusual record of a rarely seen species at Clifton a male and a female on 17 June.

Gulls and Terns

Mediterranean Gull: Worcestershire: At Ripple a first summer bird through on 14 April.

At Coombe Hill a second summer bird on 15 April, a first summer bird on 21 April.

Little Gull: Worcestershire: At Upton Warren one on 22 May; a second summer bird from 3 to 16 June was probably a summering immature rather than a migrant.

At Coombe Hill in high flood an adult or second summer bird from 15 to 17 April.

Black-headed Gull: At Severn Ham, Tewkesbury, five on floodwater on 2 April. At Coombe Hill 200 on floodwater on 14, 21 April, only two on 24 April, 14 in evening of 27 April.

Common Gull: At Severn Ham, Tewkesbury, a loose flock of about 150 drifted north, calling, on 16 April; a similar flock of 120, with many immatures, on 17 April; northward migrants?

Lesser Black-backed Gull: Worcestershire: At Bredon's Hardwick Pits nesting; 13 on 20 May; medium-sized chicks seen on 18 June, at least two broods on 26 June.

At Coombe Hill 150 on floodwater on 14 April, just five on 24 April. Along the Avon: At Upham Meadow 40 on floodwater on 2 April.

Herring Gull: At Coombe Hill 50 on floodwater on 14 April. Along the Avon: At Upham Meadow 20 on floodwater on 2 April.

Yellow-legged Gull: Worcestershire: At Holt one from 18 to 23 June. At Ripple an adult on 26 May.

Kittiwake: Worcestershire: At Upton Warren a first winter bird on 1 April, two adults on 8 and 11 April. At Holt an adult on 8 April.

Common Tern: This species has occasionally nested at suitable sites in the Vales.

Worcestershire: At Grimley old workings one on a nesting raft on 3 June. At Ripple two on 7 April, one on 28 April, 12 May.

At Coombe Hill one on 19 April.

Arctic Tern: Some individuals of this tern species, which nest much further to the north, as its name implies, pass through on the Severn-Wash route in spring, usually moving rapidly to the north without stopping. All records this year from Worcestershire.

Worcestershire: At Upton Warren two on 25 April, at least five through on 2 May, two through on 10 May, two through on 25 May; then one on 21 June. At Holt one flew south on 8 June. At Grimley one through on 12 May; three (two adults and a second summer bird) on 18 June. At Clifton a first summer bird on 17 June. At Ripple one on 27 April. Along the Avon one at Throckmorton on 26 May.

Black Tern: Worcestershire: At Upton Warren one on 21 May, four on 26 May. At Clifton three on 24 May. At Ripple one on 24 May.

At Coombe Hill one flew through on 24 May.

Sandwich Tern: Worcestershire: At Upton Warren two on 7 April, one on 20 April, five on 8 May.

After a couple of records of this species on the estuary the same morning, one at midday at Coombe Hill in heavy flooding on 17 April, and one at Ashleworth in similar conditions at Ashleworth on 18 April

Cuckoo

Worcestershire: At Upton Ham one singing on 20 April. At Ryall a male on 14 April, 19 May, 24 June. At Ripple one on 15 April, a male on 4 and 20 May; a male and a female on many dates in June, last on 29 June. At Bredon's Hardwick Pits one still singing on the evening of 27 June.

At Severn Ham, Tewkesbury, one singing on 24 and 25 April, and on 9 May; one still singing on 18 and 29 June. Near Tewkesbury Nature Reserve one singing on 22 April. North of Haw Bridge one singing on 22 April, 12 and 14 May. At Ashleworth one on 19 April, ones and twos seen and heard singing through April, May and June.

At Coombe Hill one singing on 17 April; then ones and twos seen and heard until 30 June. At Hartpury Orchard Centre two on 6 May. At Alney Island one on 23 April and from 1 to 8 May. At Netheridge one on 4 May. At Walmore one on 13 and 29 May. Along the Avon: At Twynning one singing on 17 April.

Owls

Barn Owl: Worcestershire: At Bredon's Hardwick one, not nesting, on 26 June.

At Tirley one on 9 April. At Netheridge one on 13 May.

Little Owl: At Coombe Hill, the three nest boxes erected last year were not occupied, at least not by Little Owls: one of them attracted the hornets that usually nest in the Long Pool hide. At Cobney Meadows one in a willow pollard on 3 April. At Elmore one on 27 May. At Minsterworth Ham two on 21 April

Short-eared Owl: Worcestershire: On Bredon Hill one from 14 to 19 April.

Swift

Worcestershire: At Ripple 18 on 26 April, 20 on 27 April; 60 on 11 May.

Over Severn Ham, Tewkesbury, six on 9 May, several on 18 June, ten on 25 June. At Coombe Hill two on 22, ten on 23 April, eight on 26 April; five hawking insects on 20 and 23 June. At Longlevens 15 on 28 May.

Kingfisher

Worcestershire: At Ripple one on 7 April.

Along the Severn one at Severn Ham, Tewkesbury, on 17 April and 9 May. Along the Severn near Haw Bridge one on 5 April. At Leigh Meadows one along Chelt on 29 June. At Horsbere one on 7 April and 19 May. Along the Severn at Lower Rea, two chasing one another on 21 April. Along the Severn near Elmore Back one on 19 May.

Woodpeckers

Great Spotted Woodpecker: At Severn Ham, Tewkesbury, one drumming on 17 April. Near Haw Bridge one drumming on 3 April and 12 May.

Lesser Spotted Woodpecker: At Dymock, just above the Leadon, one calling on 19 April.

Passerines

Skylark: Worcestershire: At Avon Meadows (Fleet Lane), some song on 25 June

At Severn Ham, Tewkesbury, one singing over floodwater on 2 April, at least five (two singing) on 17 April; at least five on 26 April, several singing on 9, 29 May, some singing and perching on docks to avoid landing in long grass on 18 June; some song on 25 June. Near Haw Bridge one singing on 3 April. At Ashleworth three singing on 5 April, two singing on 3 May, at least five singing on 29 May, still song on 7 and 22 June. At Coombe Hill song on 11 May and 23 June. At Cobney Meadows one singing on 3 April, some song on 13 June. At Walmore one singing over floodwater on 7 April. At Upham Meadow still some singing on 21 and 28 June.

Sand Martin: Some records already from mid-March. Worcestershire: At Ripple ten on 7 April, 12 on 8 April, 150 on 24 April, 200 on 28 April.

At Severn Ham, Tewkesbury, three hawking over floodwater on 3 April, one flew up Severn on 16 April; one on 26 April, about 20 on evening of 27 April. At the Malthouse Farm colony about six on 12 May, only about five on 19 June. South of Haw Bridge six round Deerhurst Parish Drain outlet on 12 May. At Ashleworth one on 27 April. At Coombe Hill two on 2 April, 20 on 10 April, five on 26 April. At Walmore 15 on 7 April.

Swallow: Worcestershire: At Ripple one on 8 April, 100 on 27 April.

At Severn Ham, Tewkesbury, three over Ham on 17 and 24 April, ten on 26 April. At Staunton one on 7 April. At Ashleworth five on 27 April, 25 moving north early on 28 April, two on 14 May. South of Haw Bridge two with Sand Martins round Deerhurst Parish Drain outlet on 12 May. At Coombe Hill two on 2 April, 20 on 15 April, 25 on 17 April, five on 23 April, ten in evening of 27 April, four on 23 May. At Hartpury two on 7 and 15 April. At Walmore 38 on 28 April.

House Martin: Worcestershire: At Upton Ham, large numbers hawking insects over floodwater on 3 April. At Ripple one on 14 April, 80 on 27 April, 200 on 28 April.

At Severn Ham, Tewkesbury, two on 25 and 26 April, 12 on 9 May; some hawking insects over the Ham in late May and June. At Haw Bridge two on 21 April; ten collecting mud on river's edge on 19 June. At Ashleworth one on 27 April. At Coombe Hill three on 15 April, four on 17 April.

Meadow Pipit: Worcestershire: At Ripple 80 on 2 April.

At Walmore 25 flew north on 7 April, probably migrants.

Yellow Wagtail: Worcestershire: At Clifton two on 14 April and 26 May. At Ryall two on 14 April. At Ripple a pair raised two young on arable fields alongside the lakes: two on 15 April, ones and twos in late April; two on 29 June.

At Severn Ham, Tewkesbury, one perching on dock on 9 May. At Coombe Hill two on 19 and 23 April, one perching on latter date; one on 26 and 28 April, two on 29 April; one on 1 May, two on 8 May, two on 19 and 22 May. At Cobney Meadows, an adult male behaving as though it might have young on 13 June, not found on 30 June. At Minsterworth one flew into a wheat field on 19 May. At Walmore at least five on 12 April. No proof of breeding in Gloucestershire.

White/Pied Wagtail: Worcestershire: At Ripple a White on 20 May.

At Coombe Hill one White Wagtail on 7 May. At Cobney Meadows a Pied on 30 June.

Wren: At Ashleworth one retrapped on 18 May, two caught (one new, one retrap) on 7 June; one caught on 22 June.

Dunnoek: At Ashleworth one adult caught on 28 May, two caught on 22 June.

Robin: Ashleworth the first juvenile of the year caught on 7 June; three caught including juveniles on 22 June.

Redstart: A regular breeder in some numbers, mainly in holes in the boles of pollarded willows.

At Ashleworth one on 17 and 24 April, one singing on 28 April; a female on 1 May, two or three singing and three caught on 3 May, several singing on 18 May, one singing on 24 May; some song on 28 May when one new adult was caught; at least two singing on the Hasfield side on 29 May; still singing strongly on 7 June, when two adults were caught (one new, one retrap); three caught including newly fledged young on 22 June. South of Haw Bridge three singing on 12 May. At Coombe Hill one singing on 6 and 7 May, two

singing on 19 May, two singing by southern meadows on 21 May, one singing along canal on 26 May. At Cobney Meadows at least two singing and some alarm calls on 13 June. At Netheridge one on 12 April. At Minsterworth Ham one singing on 19 May.

Whinchat: Worcestershire: Along the Avon: at Avon Meadows, Pershore, one on 3 May.

At Walmore two on 6 May, one on 7 May.

Wheatear: Does not breed in the area. Migrants moving through in May are very likely to be birds of the Greenland subspecies.

At Shothunger one on 13 April. North of Haw Bridge a male on 12 May was probably a Greenland bird. At Ashleworth one on 4 May. At Coombe Hill one on 28 April. At Walmore one (probably Greenland race) on 6 May, two (one probably Greenland race) on 7 May.

Blackbird: At Ashleworth two caught on 18 May, one adult retrap on 28 May; the first juvenile caught on 7 June; four (including juveniles) caught on 22 June.

Fieldfare: Late records: At Lower Lode, Tewkesbury, three on a flooded field on 15 April; and at Minsterworth ten on 7 April.

Song Thrush: At Haw Bridge still several singing on 19 June. At Ashleworth six caught on 18 May, six (four retraps) caught on 7 June; one caught on 22 June – the best year ever for catching this species.

Cetti's Warbler: Worcestershire: At Ripple a male on many dates from 8 April to 17 June.

At Hartpury Orchard Centre one on 15 April, two in dawn chorus on 6 May. At Cowfield one on 23 April, 7 May (rarely recorded here).

Grasshopper Warbler: Worcestershire: At Coney Meadow near Droitwich at least one, sometimes two reeling from 18 April to 28 May. At Castlemorton Common at least two singing on 20 April. Along the Avon: Near Evesham one singing on 20 May. At Wood Norton one singing on 18 and 19 April. At Lenchwick near Lower Moor two singing on 3 May.

At Ashleworth none at all heard reeling, despite much time spent in observing early morning or late evening, but a female in egg and with a brood patch caught on 7 June, so the species clearly attempted to breed; but no further records. At Walmore two reeling on 28 April, one reeling in late afternoon on 6 May.

Sedge Warbler: Worcestershire: At Ripple Pits one on 14 April.

At Severn Ham, Tewkesbury, just one singing on 20 April, five on 25 April, seven on 28 April, nine singing on 9 May, only one or two singing on 18 June; very little song, just churring on 25 June. Along the Severn north of Haw Bridge one singing on 14 May. At Ashleworth five singing on 28 April, four caught on 3 May; some singing, nine caught (five retraps) on 18 May; at least ten on 23 May; some singing, seven (all retraps, so no sign of new arrivals) caught on 28 May; some song, five adults (three retraps) caught on 7 June; some song on 16 June; only four caught, all adults (including an incubating female) on 22 June. At Coombe Hill two singing on 15 April, nine on 23 April, ten on 26 April; at least eight singing on 5 May, at least eleven on 9 May, many singing on 21 May, a few on 23 and 30 June. At Hartpury Orchard Centre some in dawn chorus on 6 May. At Alney Island one on 1 May, one singing from 6 to 16 May. At Walmore three singing on 28 April, seven on 13 May. Along the Avon: At Upham Meadow only one singing on 1 May. At Cowfield Marsh some song on 8 June.

Reed Warbler: Worcestershire: At Ripple one on 7 and 24 May. On the Worcs bank opposite Severn Ham, one singing on 29 May.

At Ashleworth none singing and none caught throughout the period. First one heard on the Severn bank north of Haw Bridge on 12 May. At Coombe Hill one on 1 May, three singing on 28 May; one on 4 June, at least three singing on 24 June, two singing on 30 June. At Leigh Meadows one singing from a small new reed bed on 29 June. At Hartpury Orchard Centre some in dawn chorus on 6 May. At Horsbere one on 19 and 22 May, three singing on 24 May. At Alney Island one singing on 17 April, five on 16 May. At Walmore one singing on 28 April, four on 29 May, three on 2 June. Along the Avon: At Cowfield Marsh two on 19 April, some song on 8 June.

Lesser Whitethroat: Unusually, Lesser Whitethroats seemed to arrive earlier than Whitethroats this year, perhaps because conditions along their migration route round the eastern Mediterranean were better than those on the Whitethroat's route from West Africa along the Atlantic coast? Lesser Whitethroats often sing for a short period on arrival in April, then go quiet when breeding gets under way; this year several instances of song quite late in June were noted – perhaps males singing before attempting a second brood, or perhaps young birds practising.

Worcestershire: At Upton Ham one singing on 21 April. At Ripple one on 14 April. At Ryall one on 14 April; two singing on 24 June. Along the Avon: At Fleet Lane near Bredon's Hardwick a single burst of song on 25 June.

At Severn Ham, Tewkesbury, one singing on from 20 to 28 April. At Ashleworth two on 27 April, two caught, one already with brood patch, on 3 May; some song, one caught on 18 May; six caught (an adult female in egg – second brood? - and five newly fledged juveniles) on 22 June. At Coombe Hill one on 15 and 17 April, ones and twos singing from 18 April to 7 May. At Wainlodes one singing on the late date of 23 June. At Alney Island one singing on 1 May, three on 6 May, one on 16 May. At Netheridge Farm one on 19 April. At Elmore one singing on 19 May. At Minsterworth one singing on 19 May. At Walmore one singing on 14 April, 6 May, four on 7 May, three singing on 13, 29 May. Along the Avon, three at Cowfield on 19 April.

Whitethroat: Along the Severn north of Haw Bridge one singing on 14 May. At Ashleworth two singing on 27 April, six caught (two retraps) on 3 May; several singing in May, three caught on 18 May; some song on 28 May but only one adult retrap; some song on 7 June but only two adults caught; four (including juveniles) caught on 22 June. At Coombe Hill one singing on 15 April, four singing on 24 April, ten on 26 April. ten on 1 May, at least three singing on 11 May, and some song until the end of June. At Alney Island, one on 21 April, two on 6 May, five on 8 May. At Minsterworth Ham one on 21 April. At Walmore one on 21 and 28 April. At Cowfield Marsh some song on 8 June.

Garden Warbler: A rare bird in the depths of the Vales. No confirmed records.

Blackcap: At Severn Ham, Tewkesbury, one singing on several dates in late April, two on 11 May. At Ashleworth four on 19 April, three on 27 April, one singing on 4 May, some song on 18 May; some song, one caught on 7 June; six caught (including newly fledged juveniles) on 22 June. At Coombe Hill three singing on 14 April, one singing on 21 April; three on 1 May, one singing on 5 and 11 May, and song continuing until late June. At Alney Island one singing on 16 April. At Netheridge Farm seven on 8 April. Along the Avon: At Cowfield Marsh some song on 8 June.

Chiffchaff: Plenty of records already in March, of this species which now winters in numbers and begins to sing from March onwards.

Worcestershire: At Upton Ham one singing on 21 April.

At Severn Ham, Tewkesbury, one singing on 17 and 20 April. At Haw Bridge three singing on 3 April, still some song on 19 June. At

Tirley one singing on 1 and 4 April. At Ashleworth one singing on 1 April, three on 19 April, four on 27 April, one singing on 2 May; one caught on 3 May had a 'pollen horn' round its bill, characteristic of birds that have recently been feeding in Mediterranean orange groves; one singing on 4 May, one caught on 18 May; some song but none caught on 28 May; just one adult caught on 7 June. At Coombe Hill one singing on 7 and 14 April, two on 17 April, ones and twos singing late April and early May, some on 4 June and on 23 June. At Barrow Ponds one singing on 7 April. At Staverton Court one singing on 7 April. At Netheridge Farm four singing on 5 April, six on 8 April.

Willow Warbler: Worcestershire: At Ripple one on 8 April.

At Severn Ham, Tewkesbury, one singing on 17, 20 and 25 April. At Ashleworth one singing on 28 April, four caught (three of them retraps) on 3 May; one singing on 4 May; two adults caught (one retrap) on 28 May; three caught (two retraps) on 7 June; only one caught (an adult already in moult, hence finished with breeding) on 22 June. At Coombe Hill two singing on many dates from 14 April; at least three singing in early May, several on 21 May, some on 23 June. At Barrow Ponds one singing on 7 April. At Netheridge one singing on 8 April

Spotted Flycatcher: At Maisemore one on 15 May.

Long-tailed Tit: At Ashleworth two new adults caught on 28 May

Blue Tit: At Ashleworth two caught on 18 May; one retrap on 28 May; 14 (including seven juveniles) caught on 7 June; seven (including juveniles) caught on 22 June.

Great Tit: At Ashleworth one adult retrap on 18 May; five adults caught (four retraps) on 28 May; one adult caught on 7 June; nine (including juveniles) caught on 22 June.

Treecreeper: At Chaceley GWT reserve one singing on 23 May

Jay: At Coombe Hill one on 23 June.

Jackdaw: Worcestershire: At Bredon's Hardwick a roost of 300 noisy birds in trees round the pits on 27 June.

At Mitton along the Avon at least 200 feeding among grazing sheep on 26 June.

Rook: At Mythe Hook 75 gleaning on cut hayfield on 21 June. At Haw Bridge East, up to a hundred gleaning on cut hayfield on 13 and 16 June, still 20 on 19 June. At Sandhurst 45 nests at Abbot's Lodge on 5 April.

Carrion Crow: Worcestershire: At Upton Ham an active nest in one of the three willows in the centre of the Ham.

At Severn Ham, Tewkesbury, large numbers feeding on grassland before the grass grew too high – many of them probably non-breeding immatures; 50 on grass at edge of floodwater on 2 April, 93 on 3 April, 48 on 7 April, 50 on 12 April, 47 on 16 April, 30 on 20 April, 15 on 24 April, 12 on 25 April, only eight on 1 May; some present on 25 June. At Ashleworth 20 on 5 April, two active nests overlooking Curlew nesting fields on 3 May.

Raven: At Severn Ham, Tewkesbury, one over on 17 April, one on 24 April apparently taking Curlew egg, two over on 25 April. At Norton Woods overlooking Ashleworth Ham (where they perhaps nest) one on 5 and 28 April, then on 4 May and 7 June. At Coombe Hill one on 17 April, two on 5 May. At Alney Island one on 6 May. Along the Avon: At Cowfield one on 19 April.

Starling: Worcestershire: At Bredon's Hardwick Pits, where there was a large roost last winter, 150 coming in to roost on the evening of 27 June.

Hawfinch: The unusual numbers of winter 2017/18 continued into early April at many sites in both counties. At Avon Meadows NR Pershore one on 5 April. At Quedgeley at least five on 8 April, six on 12 and 13 April.

Chaffinch: At Ashleworth three caught including one juvenile on 7 June; one juvenile caught on 22 June.

Goldfinch: At Ashleworth one new adult caught on 28 May. At Coombe Hill one collecting nesting material on bulrushes on 23 April.

Greenfinch: At Ashleworth one new bird caught on 28 May

Linnet: Along the Severn north of Haw Bridge, some on 14 May. At Ashleworth six caught (two retraps) on 3 May, just one on 18 and 28 May, two on 7 and 22 June.

Bullfinch: At Ashleworth two adults caught on 7 June, one caught on 22 June.

Yellowhammer: At Coombe Hill a pair on 1 May, one singing by barley field on 7 May, 4 and 23 June. At Barrow Ponds one singing on 7 April.

Reed Bunting: Worcestershire: At Avon Meadows (Fleet Lane) some song on 25 June.

At Breakingstone Meadow, Tewkesbury, one singing on 18 June. At the Severn Ham, one or two singing round the edge of floodwater on 2 April, one on 16 April, two on 17 April, one singing on 20 and 24 April; still some song on 25 June. Along the Severn north of Haw Bridge two singing on 14 May, still some singing and some perching on docks in uncut hay meadow on 18 June. At Haw Bridge one singing on 3 April, still one or two singing on 19 June. At Ashleworth two on 5 and 19 April; three caught (one of them a retrap from October 2014) on 3 May; one or two singing on 4 and 8 May; eight on 12 May, several singing but none caught on 28 May; one or two singing on Hasfield side on 29 May; several singing but none caught on 7 June, some song on 16 June, none caught on 22 June; catches of this species, once a feature of ringing at Ashleworth seem lower this year. At Coombe Hill four on 17 April, calls but no song on 18 April, one singing on 23 April, four on 1 May, six on 28 May, several on 4 June; nine on 8 June; some song still on 20 June, at least six still singing on 23 June, some song on 30 June. At Cobney Meadows some song on 13 June. At Barrow Ponds one singing on 7 April. At Horsbere one singing on 14 May, one on 19 and 22 May. At Alney Island four on 8 May. At Walmore six on 7 May, two in song on 24 May; six on 2 June. Along the Avon: At Upham Meadow five (two singing) on 1 May, one or two singing on 7 May, still some song on 28 June. At Cowfield Marsh one on 19 April, some song on 8 June.

Corn Bunting: None recorded this year at the usual site of Severn Ham Tewkesbury, despite frequent visits. Near Tredington one reported singing on 12 May.

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