

## Reay's Riveting Round-up: 31 October – 6 November 2016

The few recent records of the hitherto ubiquitous **Greater Wandering Whitehall** have noted behaviour indicative of an imminent migration – may be just a short distance, an altitudinal migration perhaps, but likely to be well beyond the parish boundary. (Thanks Barrie for a year of wise and informative WWWs and two years of contributions to the BBS.)

In terms of numbers of birds, the last week belonged to **Fieldfare**, with over 1,000 reported along the Avon above Shipley Bridge on 4 November, several hundred at Dockwell and Newland's Brakes and smaller flocks elsewhere. Good numbers of **Redwing** were noted too, and **Starlings** popped up all over the place, the highest counts (up to 150) coming from south of the A38 and possibly involving feeding parties from the reed-bed roosts at Slapton. A few local birds are roosting in bamboos in the village, but the bamboos at Aish, which have held thousands of birds in the past, appear to be unoccupied – so far. **Pied Wagtails** are still roosting in bushes on the railway embankment, and although hard to count, today's estimate was of about 100. They gather on the Village Hall and other buildings from around 16:30 and depart in the morning at about **07:00**.

Flocks of **Woodpigeons** have been moving across the area in the last week or so, the most being 900 on 4 November, **when 100 were also seen feeding in a stubble field**. Larger numbers are perhaps still to come, and they can be an impressive sight. Other notable counts have included 28 **Skylarks** in a stubble field near Marley, 17 **Teal** on a private pond and 14 **Blackbirds** in the same hawthorn bush by the Avon Dam.

With no reports of **Chiffchaffs** during the week, and just one **Ring Ouzel** above Shipley on 1 November, we've probably seen the last of the summer migrants. In their place come the winter visitors, even though some may be still on their way further south. In addition to those already mentioned, reports include a **Merlin** across Portford Lane, seven **Golden Plover** on Aish Ridge, a **Woodcock** at Dockwell and **Snipe** in several moorland squares. **Goldcrests** have become more numerous and/or conspicuous, and must also include migrants from the north. They can turn up in gardens, though not on the feeders where some people are noting increased activity as temperatures drop. Meanwhile, **Tawny Owls** hoot, **Dippers** dip and the odd **Red Admiral** still flutters.

This time last year we were about to enjoy sightings of **Black Redstarts** around the village. At least two were present 10–21 November. Worth looking out for.

*Bird records included are as submitted; this does not necessarily mean that they have been accepted.*