

BRENT BIRD REPORT 2017 & 2018



Pied Flycatcher. Female on eggs in Glaze Valley #5 nest-box, 19 May 2018 (DS)

The Birds of South Brent Parish before during and after the 2014–16 survey (Brent Birders 2018) provides a comprehensive account of the parish birds at least up to the end of 2017. The full survey now only takes place in January and May, but birds continue to be recorded in other months and a Garden Bird Survey was launched in October 2018. It thus seems appropriate to continue to report the more interesting and important records in the parish.

This report covers both 2017 and 2018, but it is planned to produce an annual report from 2019 on. Not every species seen is included, as the emphasis is on new and rare species, new records for squares or months, new breeding records, unusual counts or dates and interesting behaviour. Under the name of each species an indication is given of the type of records required and likely to be used, in addition to any new records for squares and months, which apply to all species. Please submit records (other than those that have already been notified as part of the January, May and Garden Bird surveys) as and when they occur or at the end of the year, either through brentbirdsurvey@gmail.com or peter.p.j.reay@btinternet.com. Essential information required is species, date, location, number and, for rarities, how identified or a photo.

In addition to those included in the account below, the following also occurred in 2017 and 2018, but not in any new squares or months from those recorded during the 2014–16 survey (in alphabetical order): Blackbird, Blue Tit, Bullfinch, Buzzard, Carrion Crow, Chaffinch, Coal Tit, Collared Dove, Goldcrest, Goldfinch, Greenfinch, Great Black-backed Gull, Great Tit, Greenfinch, Green Woodpecker, Grey Heron, Grey Wagtail, Herring Gull, House Sparrow, Kestrel, Long-tailed Tit, Meadow Pipit, Mistle Thrush, Moorhen, Nuthatch, Peregrine, Raven, Robin, Siskin, Song Thrush, Sparrowhawk, Stock Dove, Swallow, Tawny Owl, Treecreeper, Willow Warbler and Wren.

Abbreviations and codes

New for parish (since at least before 2014) in red

New for square or month (since at least before 2014) in blue

New breeding record (since at least before 2014) in green

Brent = South Brent Parish Bird Survey area

= square

ADR = Avon Dam Reservoir; STW = Sewage (Wastewater) Treatment Works; WTW = Water Treatment Works

DB = Devon Birds blog

OBERVERS & INITIALS

MA – Margaret & Philip Andrade
PA – Paul Albrechtson
LA – Lesley Austin
JB – James Blake
EB – Eileen Blockly
JoB – Jo Brooks
SC – Sylvia & John Caddick
JC – Julia & Michael Cady
PD – Phil & Sue Dean
AF – Andrew Ferguson
TF – Tim Ferry
RF – Richard Finnemore
HG – Hayden Gabriel

SG – Simon Geary
MG – Mike & Jan Goss
PoH – Poppet Hall
NH – Nick Hawkins
AH – Alan Hayes
PH – Paul & Barbara Heatley
SyH – Sylvia & Peter Hamilton
GH – Gill Honey
SH – Steve Hopper
RH – Robert Hurrell
MI – Mike Ingram
ML – Mick Jones
DK – Doug King-Smith

JL – John Luscombe
DM – Dave MacDiarmid
KM – Keith Male
DP – Dave & Kate Pakes
PR – Peter Reay
DS – Dave Scott
AS – Andy Smith
JT – Jasmine Tanner
DW – David West
BW – Barrie Whitehall
JW – John Widdicombe
MW – Mike Wilson

MUTE SWAN

All records other than the resident single bird at South Brent Lakes

2018. Three flying E low over village #25/32 on 3 Sep (SH,PR).

CANADA GOOSE

Breeding records, counts >20, new squares and records outside breeding season

2018. Flock of about 40 over Hillside #32 on 14 Oct (SH).

SHELDUCK

All records

2017. **Four in flight over the Lincombe area #48 on 5 May** (SG) were the first ever recorded for Brent.

WIGEON

All records

2017. A chance photo of the flock at South Brent Lakes #18/25 in flight on 1 Dec resulted in a count of 119 (PR), exceptional for an inland site in Devon.

2018. Three females at ADR #17 on 29 **Oct** (PR) was only the second record for the site, after one in Nov 2016, and the first Oct record for Brent. Otherwise, again recorded at South Brent Lakes in Jan, Feb, Nov and Dec, with a max count of 28 on 11 Dec (PR).

TEAL

Counts >20, May–Aug records from ADR and all records elsewhere

2017. A count of 61 at ADR #17 on 14 Jan (PR) was possibly the largest ever recorded in Brent. Also records from ADR of five on 2 May and two on 12 Aug (PR).

2018. Singles at ADR #17 on 22 **Jun** and 12 Jul (PR) were the only summer records there.

MALLARD

Breeding records, counts >50 and new squares

2018. **A female with ducklings at ADR #17 on 15 May** (PR) was the first confirmed breeding record there since 2012.

PINTAIL

All records

2017. Six, three pairs, were present at ADR #17 on 14 Jan, and two drakes on 10 Feb and 4 **Mar**, the latter being the first Mar record after a winter presence at the site since Oct 2015. None subsequently.

RED-CRESTED POCHARD

All records

2017. A male at ADR #17 on 10 Feb (PR) was the first ever record for Brent.

GOOSANDER

All river records, all May–Aug records and max ADR roost counts

2017. Five on the R Avon nr Brent Mill on 5 Nov (PR). Nine on ADR #17 on 21 Jul and five on 22nd (PR) were the first Jul records of birds on the water (*cf.* six in flight on 12 Jul 2016). Max count was 19 on 16 Nov.
2018. Frequent dawn visits to ADR #17 throughout the year revealed regular use by roosting birds in the winter months, with a max count of 27 on 20 & 27 Dec (PR); as well as several zero counts from May to Sep, there were five on 10 May and 9 Jun, one on 24 Jul and two on 24 Aug.

RED-LEGGED PARTRIDGE

All records

2017. One seen near the track to WTW #14 on 30 May (PR).
2018. No records.

PHEASANT

Breeding records, counts >20 and new squares

2018. One in the Corringdon area #5 on 7 May (PR) was, apparently, new for the square.

LADY AMHERST'S PHEASANT

All records

2017. The resident male on Brent Hill #33 was seen on 3 May and 1 Aug (PR) and heard on other dates.
2018. On Brent Hill #33, last heard on 2 May and last seen on 29 Apr (DM,PR), but then appeared in a Hillside #32 garden on 16 May (perSH). The lack of further records may indicate death or departure.

CORMORANT

All records

2017. At ADR #17, one on 22 May and four on 9 Oct (PR).
2018. No ADR records, but singles seen in flight in Jan over #35 (MG) and #51 (PH) and in Dec over #31 and #24 (SH) and perched in a dead tree at Stidston Fishing Lake #39 (PR).

[BITTERN]

2018. One was reported from Hillyfield #44? In early 2018, but not confirmed and no date given. Not impossible - occurrences away from reed-beds can occur in hard weather.

[BLACK STORK]

2018. A juvenile spotted and photographed by John Hoare on 19 Jul, sometimes described as being at the Avon Dam, was actually above the Clapper Bridge according to the finder, so outside Brent parish, although it is quite possible that it flew over or even landed there. Even if it had, it would not have been the first for Brent!

LITTLE GREBE

All records away from known breeding sites in summer

2017. One at ADR #17 on 13 Jul (PR) was only the third site record after those in Oct 2011 and 2016.
2018. Breeding confirmed in a newly constructed pond at Higher Beara #39, which becomes the third breeding site in parish, first seen in May (DW,MJ). According to the owners, three pairs bred at South Brent Lakes #18/25, and birds were again present at Lincombe Farm #48 pond.

GREAT CRESTED GREBE

All records

2017. One at ADR #17 on 19 Apr (PR).

2018. Two at ADR #17 on 15 May (PR). Not seen on other dates in spite of frequent visits.

RED KITE

All records

2017. At least two birds involved in sightings at Hillyfield #44, Hillside #32 and Brent Hill #33 on 25 May (AF,SH,DK). One on 11 Jun near Overbrent #26 was hunting over fields (AH).

2018. One over Owley #50 (seen from Western Beacon) on 5 Apr (DS) must have passed over several other squares and was followed by other singles over Huntingdon Cross #11 on 20 Apr (per SH), Avonwick #36 on 15 May (PH) and Shipley to Avon Dam on 11 Jun (Devon Birds). There was a record of 10 in a turf field at Nursdon on 14 May (SH), just outside the parish, but perhaps these were the source of those recorded from the Thynacombe/Harbourneford area #35/40 (DP).

HEN HARRIER

All records

2017. No records.

2018. A ring-tail at Shipley #22 on 19 Oct (SH), also seen in the area on 24 Oct (Devon Birds), was the first in Brent since Dec 2016.

Unidentified Harrier

All records

2017. On 8 May two unidentified Harriers were reported, perhaps the same bird, but the one at Zeal Plains #9 was thought to be a Marsh Harrier whereas that at Dockwell #28 was thought to be a Hen Harrier!

OSPREY

All records

2018. One flew over the Avon Dam on 13 Sep (SH).

GOLDEN PLOVER

All records

2017. Probably under-reported. The only records were of 23 near Peathy's Path #23 on 23 Jan (PR), and 30 over the village #25 on 4 Dec (MI).

2018. Probably under-reported. The only records were: 25 at Eastern White Barrow #10 on 10 Jan, four on Dockwell Ridge #22 on 17 Jan, 20 flying over Huntingdon Cross #11 on 26 Jan (all PR) and at least 20 near Western White Barrow #4 on 4 Feb (TF). A flock of about 70 circled over Peathy's Path #23 on 14 Dec (PR).

LAPWING

All records

2017. **Two over Overbrent #27 on 27 Jan** (JL) was the first record in Brent since 2010.

WOODCOCK

All records

2017. Singles recorded in Jan in #s 13 (PR), 23 (SH) and 35 (DP), and in Dec in #22 (PR).

2018. Singles recorded in Jan in #s 8 (PR), 20 (JoB) and 35 (DP), in Feb in #8 (PR), in Nov in #22 (MI) and in Dec in #s 13 (PR), 26 and 28 (MI).

SNIPE

All records

2017. Recorded from eight squares in Jan, all on the moor except for three in #51 (JW) and one in #27 (DP). In May, possible breeding records came from #s 6 and 9 (PR).

2018. Recorded from six squares in Jan, all on the moor, and from #1 in May, with possible breeding (PR). Otherwise the only records were from Didworthy #21 on 3 Mar (J&MC), Avon Dam #17 on 25 Sep (PR) and Shipley Bridge #22 on 30 Nov (MI).

COMMON SANDPIPER

All records

2017. One at ADR #17 on 22 May (PR) was first record for the month since 1962.

2018. An unusual run of records at ADR #17, comprised two on 3 May, one on 22 Jun and two on 12 Jul (PR), but there was no evidence of breeding, which last occurred in 1962. The Jun record is the first since 1962, and the Jul record the first since 2013.

BLACK-HEADED GULL

All records

2017. At least three in a field with Herring Gulls near Larcombe #52 during cold weather on 5 Jan (PR).

2018. No records.

LESSER BLACK-BACKED GULL

Counts ≥ 10 and new squares

2017. One flying over Pennaton #18 with Herring Gulls on 22 Jun (PR).

2018. Ten flying east through Stidston #38 on 1 Mar (PR).

WOODPIGEON

Counts ≥ 100 and new squares

2017. Passage occurred over Hillside #32 in the last week of Oct with max total count of 6,000, and a max flock size of 700, occurring between 07:00 and 08:00 hrs on 31 Oct (SH). Surprisingly, two in flight near Zeal Gulley #16 on 28 Oct (PR) were new for square.

2018. Autumn migrants included 100+ over Brent Hill #33 on 30 Oct (PR).

CUCKOO

Breeding records, extreme dates and new squares

2018. Singles over Aish Ridge #19 on 2 May and upper Middle Brook #2 on 8 May (PR) were new for those squares.

BARN OWL

All records

2017. Successfully bred at Elwell #46 (perAH), first confirmed breeding record in Brent since 1992. One continued (from Nov 2016) to roost in a barn at Owley #50 (RH) and was probably responsible for records in Jan from Bullhornstone #12 (perPD). Birds were heard and/or seen in the Hillside area #32 in Apr, May and Dec (SH) and one was seen in the light of a moth-trap in Clobells #24 in May (AH).

2018. Apparently bred at Elwell #46 again (perAH). Otherwise, the only report from early in the year was one on 22 Jan in #25 (NH). The next was at Marley Head #43 on 21 Sep (perSH), then the surprise of two in the vicinity of the ADR #17 from 24 Sep to 5 Oct (PR,SH,MI), the first for the square and indeed for open moorland in Brent. They roosted in isolated rowan and holly trees near the reservoir, and examination of pellets revealed a diet dominated by Common Shrew and Field Vole, but also including Pygmy Shrew and Bank Vole. On 9 Dec one was seen near Zempson #40 (MG).

LITTLE OWL

All records

2017. Heard in the Hillside area #32, where probably resident, in Apr (SH), and a corpse was found near the Marley roundabout #43 on 28 Apr (SH).

2018. Continue to be heard in the Hillside/Brent Hill area #32/33 (RF) but no sightings or firm dates until two on 11 Dec (SH).

SHORT-EARED OWL

All records

2017. One flushed near Knattabarrow #3 on 23 Jan (BW) and another on Dockwell Ridge #28 on 17 May (MI), were both new squares and months for Brent.

2018. One near Glaze Head #6 on 14 Jan (PR), also seen there in Nov 2016 (MI).

SWIFT

Breeding records, extreme dates, counts ≥ 20 and new squares

2017. Strong passage of 60 through Lincombe area #48 on 5 May (SG)

2018. Pair bred in a Hillside roof #32, but nestlings found dead below on 25 Jun (GH). At least 20 over village centre #25 in Jul. Steady passage over Hillside #32 on 5 Aug, including one party of 30 (SH).

KINGFISHER

All records

2017. Recorded at Thynacombe Woods in both Jan and May (JL,DP) and at Lincombe Quarry #49 in Jan (PH).

2018. Undated reports from Hillyfield #44 (perDK) and Higher Beara (DW), and one on the R Avon at Didworthy #20 in Dec (JoB).

NIGHTJAR

All records

2018. Churring heard above Shipley #22 on 24 Jun and 12 Jul (PR,DM), the first ever in the square and indeed in the Avon Valley, and the first in Brent since 1963, although there are unconfirmed reports of churring in the same area in the early 2000s.

GREAT SPOTTED WOODPECKER

Breeding records and new squares

2017. One by Red Brook #7 on 19 Jun (PR) was new for square.

MERLIN

All records

2017. One by the Bala Brook #8 on 12 Apr (PR) was new for square, and later than the recorded last date of 4 Apr 2014 (apart from a Jun 1955 record, also from Bala Brook).

2018. Female near the WTW at Shipley #22 on 19 Oct (SH).

HOBBY

All records

2017. One was seen over Hillside #32 on 25 Jun, and the rehabilitated bird, released as a juvenile in Sep 2014 from Hillside returned to the release site from 18 Aug to 15 Sep (SH).

2018. One over Avonwick #36 on 22 May and one flying out of Aishridge Plantation #12 on 7 Sep (both PR) were new for squares. The returning Hillside bird continued its remarkable series of autumn visits, this year being present from 5 Aug to 13 Oct (SH).

[RING-NECKED PARAKEET]

2017. A parakeet, apparently of this species was seen at Aish #25 in Oct, but identification not confirmed (perSH), Perhaps increasingly likely to occur now that there is a thriving population in Plymouth.

RED-BACKED SHRIKE

All records

2017. An adult female in a garden shrubbery at Lower Beara #33 on 6 Jun (MJ) was the first ever, and still only, record for Brent.

JAY

Breeding records and new squares

2017. One by Red Brook #7 on 19 Jun (PR) was new for square.

MAGPIE

Breeding records, counts ≥ 10 and new squares

2018. Pair observed perching on and pecking at live sheep around Long-a-Traw #23 on 17 May and 25 Oct (PR) was presumably an example of cleaning symbiosis. At least 14 gathered in a hedge near Gribblesdown #19 at 16:30 on 5 Nov and flew off to some taller trees, presumably to roost (PR), and there were 18 together at Hillside #32 on 19 Dec (SH).

JACKDAW

Counts >100 and new squares

2018. Three at the Avon Dam #17 on 15 May (PR) were new for square.

ROOK

Rookeries, counts >50 and new squares

2017. A rookery in Railway Wood #32 with at least six nests (PR) appears to be a new site, though not a new square.

FIRECREST

All records

2017. Records were from: Clobells #32 on 26 Jan (MI); near Gingaford #34 on 2 Sep (PR); Long-a-Traw #23 on 17 Oct (SH); Hillside #32 on 23-27 Oct with three on 27th (SH); Moorland Park #25 on 28 Oct (LA) and 12 Nov (PR); Clobells #24 on 19 Nov (MI); and Hillside #32 on 19 Dec (DM).

2018. Records were from: Moorland Park #25 on 13 Feb (MW); Aish #25, 31 Jan – 26 Feb (HG); and STW #24 on 27 Feb (PR).

MARSH TIT

All records (but just monthly occurrence or maxima from regular sites)

2017. Recorded from a Pennaton garden #18 in all months (PD), and from White Oxen Manor #44 (MA) and Dockwell #35 in Jan; from Harbournford #40, where a pair nested in a box, (perPR); Penstave #26 in May (PR); and #12 in Nov (MI).

2018. Recorded from a Pennaton garden #18 in all months (PD) and a pair nested in a box at Pennaton Meadow #18 (RH). Also recorded from White Oxen Manor #44 in Jan (MA), Brent Island #25 in Mar (MI), Didworthy #21 (JC) in May and Lutton #26 in Dec (MI). Recorded in #s 18, 21, 25, 32 and 44 during Oct–Dec (Garden Bird Survey).

SKYLARK

Breeding records, winter records, counts >20 and new squares

2018. At least 50 in stubble at New Cross #37 on 2 Jan (PR).

HOUSE MARTIN

Breeding records, counts >50 and new squares

2018. Usual gathering at Aish #25 with 60 on 31 Aug (PR). Also, two pairs bred at Aish, with one nest still active on 7 Sep (PR,PH) and at least one pair in the village, Church Street, #25 (MG).

CHIFFCHAFF

Confirmed breeding, winter records and new squares

2017. Recorded in Jan from STW #24, with four on 9 Jan (PR), a hedgerow at Bloody Pool #34 on 8 Jan (PR) and a Hillside garden #32 (SH). Also one at STW #24 on 1 Dec (PR).

2018. Two were at STW #24 on 8 Jan (PR).

BLACKCAP

Confirmed breeding, winter records and new squares

2017. One in a village garden #25 in Jan (PoH).

2018. One on 14 May by East Glaze #6 (PR) was new for square. Village garden records in Jan–Mar were from #31 from 19 Jan to 6 Feb, with max of three on 25 Jan (KM) and from #24 on 1 Mar (DP). In Nov–Dec there were records from six gardens in #s 25, 31 and 32 (Garden Bird Survey).

GARDEN WARBLER

Confirmed breeding records, extreme dates and new squares

2018. *Singing from 3 May to 18 Jun in the quarry below Avon Dam #23* (PR) was new for the square and a new probable breeding record; one seen there on 12 Jul was the first for Brent in Jul, when singing has ceased.

WHITETHROAT

Confirmed breeding records, extreme dates and new squares

2018. One in an elder bush at Overbrent Farm #27 on 3 Sep, with three Blackcaps (PR) was new for square.

GRASSHOPPER WARBLER

All records

2017. No records. Notable absence above ADR #11/10/17 where previously regular and probably bred (PA).

2018. Again none evident above ADR (PA), but a migrant reeled at Didworthy #21 on 1–3 May (J&MC); the only record for the year, the first since Sep 2016 and new for square.

SEDGE WARBLER

All records

2017. Single migrants were at Dockwell #29 on 5 Aug and Small Brook #23 on 12 Aug (PR).

2018. No records.

STARLING

Breeding records, roost locations and flights, counts >100 and new squares

2017. Up to 40 roosted in bamboos in garden in centre of village #25 from 25 Oct to end of year (PR) and up to 100 in bamboos at Clobells #32 (MG).

2018. A flock of 230 assembled on wires near Gribblesdown #19 on 5 Nov and flew towards village. A feeding flock of about 2,000 in pasture near Harbournford Cross #39 on 11 Nov (DM,PR) was the largest of the year. Up to 200 roosted in Clobells #24 bamboos in Nov (MG,DP).

DIPPER

Breeding records and new squares

2017. Singles in Bala Brook #14 on 5 and 21 May (PR) were new for square.

RING OUZEL

All records

2017. In spring there were birds near Gingaford Cross #34 on 15 Apr, and Glaze Valley #5 on 22 Apr (PR). Scarce in autumn, the first in the Avon Dam quarry #23 on 9 Oct (PR) a max of four between Shipley and Avon Dam on 5 Nov (DB), two at Dockwell #28 on 1 Nov (PR) and one by the Avon Dam #17 on 21 Nov (PR).
2018. None in spring, and all autumn records were from between Shipley and Avon Dam #14/16/22/23/ during 15–21 Oct with a max of 17 in Zeal Gulley #16 on 18 Oct (PR,SH *et al.*)

FIELDFARE

Counts >100, exceptional dates and new squares

2017. Small flock in the Glaze Valley #5 on 22 Apr was the latest since at least 2014.
2018. Cold spell resulted in several garden records, such as 50 in a Clobells garden #24 on 2 Mar (MG). One near Moorgate #50 on 1 Oct (AF) was the earliest since one in the same area on 30 Sep 2002.

REDWING

Counts >100, exceptional dates and new squares

2017. One at Badworthy on 19 Apr (PR) may have been the latest ever in Brent. Latest since 2014 was on 2 Apr 2015, and latest known was at Moorgate #50 on 12 Apr 1948.
2018. In the cold spell in early Mar, 150 were feeding on the filter beds of the STW #24 on 3 Mar (PR), and 108 were counted in pasture at Hillside #32 on 4 Mar (SH). A heavy passage in mid-Nov resulted in a max total count of 1,500, and a max flock of 500, past Hillside on 15 Nov (SH).

SPOTTED FLYCATCHER

All records

2017. **Confirmed breeding at Horsebrook #36 (JT)** and probable at Merrifield #13 (PR). The only migrant was at Underhill #25 on 27 Aug (PR).
2018. Probable breeding at Horsebrook #36 (JT) and possible at Thynacombe Woods #35 where present on 12 Jun (DP). Likely migrants comprised singles at Dockwell #35 on 16 Jul, Shipley #22 on 14 Aug, Brent Hill #33 on 15 Aug, Underhill #25 on 17 Aug and Penstave #26 on 31 Aug (all PR).

PIED FLYCATCHER

All records

2017. A male in the quarry below Avon Dam #23 on 22 Apr (AS) may have been the first record of a spring migrant in Brent.
2018. **Pair first seen on 7 May in Newland's Brakes #5 (PR), and on 19 May there were two singing males, one with a female on eggs**, the other box empty apart from a few blades of grass (DS); seven pulli subsequently fledged and ringed in Jun. New for square and a new breeding record, although two pairs bred, probably here in 2012 and there are earlier records from Moorgate. The only autumn migrant was one in a field hedge near Gingaford #34 on 27 Aug (PR).

REDSTART

Breeding records, migrants, extreme dates and new squares

2017. A juvenile among burnt gorse on 2 Jul at Brent Fore Hill #6 (PR) was first for square
2018. Two juveniles at Dockwell #28 on 23 Jul (PR) were probably from a local breeding, but those on Brent Hill #33 on 25 Aug and Gingaford #34 on 27 Aug were more likely to be migrants.

BLACK REDSTART

All records

2017. One on the Avon Dam #17 on 21 Jul (PR) was new for month and first for square since 2012. One on the enclosure wall at Merrifield #13 on 27 Oct (PR) was new for square and first for Oct since 2012.

2018. One at Aish #25 on 5 Nov (PR) was new for the site, but not the square.

WHINCHAT

Breeding records, all records away from North Zone, extreme dates and new squares

2017. No records of migrants.

2018. Male singing near Shipley Tor #22 on 15 May (PR) was only second record for this square and first indication of breeding there. The only migrants were two with Stonechats below Brent Hill #33 on 9 Oct, the latest recorded in Brent.

STONECHAT

Breeding records, all records away from North Zone and new squares

2017. Off the moor there were more records than usual from Brent Hill #33 (in Jan, Mar, Jun, Jul, Aug, Oct and Nov) and the presence of juveniles may indicate breeding nearby. Another record away from the moor was of one in a field hedge near Harbournford Cross #39 on 15 Oct, as in Sep & Oct 2016 at the same site.

2018. *Records of a pair and juveniles in field hedges near Charford #41* May–Jul (PH,PR) indicated probable breeding, the first in the South Zone. One during cold the spell at STW #24 on 3 Mar (PR) was first for square. On Brent Hill records in Aug, Sep and Oct again included juveniles, and again in the Harbournford Cross area #39 there was one on 17 Oct and a pair on 25 Oct.

WHEATEAR

Breeding records, all records away from North Zone, extreme dates and new squares

2017. A migrant at Big Down, near Moorgate #50 on 8 Apr (PR) was new for square, at least since 2014. There was also records of single migrants on Brent Hill #33 on 2 Apr, 31 Aug and 2 Sep (PR).

2018. A migrant among Pied Wagtails at Whinfield #32 on 18 Apr (PR) was new for square. Another was on Brent Hill #33 on the same day, and in autumn, singles there on 25 Aug and 29 Sep and at Gingaford #34 on 27 Aug (all PR).

DUNNOCK

New squares

2017. One in gorse on lower slope of Three Barrows #1 on 3 Jan (PR) was new for square.

YELLOW WAGTAIL

All records

2017. Present among sheep and on a garden lawn near Underhill #32/25, 28–31 Aug, with a max of 17 on 28 Aug (PR,DM,SH). Recorded in the general area centred on Brent Hill in three of the last four years, these records represent only slight departures in site and date.

2018. One at Overbrent #27 on 27 Aug and three on 28th, when also five at Gingaford Cross #34 (PR) comprise the fourth year of Brent records, but one near Avonwick #30 on 31 Aug (JaB) was the first record for the South Zone.

PIED/WHITE WAGTAIL

Confirmed breeding, roosts, counts ≥ 20 and new squares

2017. No roosting in the rail-side scrub near the Village Hall #25 since Network Rail's 'vegetation management' earlier in the year (*cf.* 220 counted there in Nov 2016).

2018. Spring migrant roost at Whinfield #32 in Apr, with a max of 36 on 7 Apr (SH). At least 20 at Overbrent #27 on 28 Aug included at least some (continental) White Wagtails (PR).

TREE PIPIT

Confirmed breeding, extreme dates and new squares

2017. Records from Long-a-Traw #23 on 13 and 21 Jul (PR) were, surprisingly, new for square, but those above Thynacombe #35 in May also occurred there in 2016.

2018. Further records of singing males away from the moor were from above Thynacombe # 35 (as in 2016 and 2017) on 25 May and 13 Jun, and from Stippadon #40, a new square on 24 May (PR).

BRAMBLING

All records

2017. One at Pennaton #18, 18–20 Dec (PD) were new for square and month since at least 2012.

2018. Two were in a Hillside garden #32 in Jan (EB), followed by a good run of records from another Hillside garden from 19 Feb to 9 Apr, with a max of six on 18 Mar (SH). Also recorded from gardens at Clobells #24 on 2 Mar (DP) and at Didworthy #21 on 27 Mar (JC). The Jan and Apr records were the first in those months since 2013. Subsequent records comprise singles, all in Nov, from Penstave #26 on (MI), Didworthy #21 (JC), Aish #25 (GH) and Avonwick #36 (SC).

LINNET

Breeding records, counts >50, winter records and new squares

2017. A flock of at least 50 was present with other finches near Avonwick #30 on 26 Jan (PR).

LESSER REDPOLL

All records

2017. Small numbers recorded from the main site below the Avon Dam #17/23 between 10 Apr and 4 Jul (PR) and from Dockwell #29 on 9 May (29).

2018. Small numbers recorded from the main site below the Avon Dam #17/23 between 3 May and 27 Jun (PR).

HAWFINCH

All records

2018. One atop a hawthorn on Aish Ridge #19 on 14 Jan (PR) was the first ever for the parish. It was followed by one in a Hillside #32 garden on 3 Apr (SH). Both followed an national influx in autumn 2017.

YELLOWHAMMER

Breeding records, counts >10, winter records and new squares

2017. Up to five recorded from gardens at Aish #25, Gribblesdown #19 and Didworthy #21 in Jan, and also at Gribblesdown in Dec; eight, probably a pre-roost gathering, were below Aish #25 on 5 Feb (all PR).

2018. Again recorded from gardens at Aish #25, Gribblesdown #19 (PR) and Didworthy #21 (JoB) in Jan, with up to 25 at the latter site. In a Hillside #32 garden a female on 21–22 Mar was followed by a pair on 5 Apr (SH), and in autumn a male appeared in another Hillside garden on 25 Nov (DM).

REED BUNTING

Breeding records, counts >10, winter records and new squares

2017. One on Zeal Hill #15 on 20 Apr (PR), was surprisingly new for square. One in a Hillside #32 garden on 8 Jan (SyH), continued the tradition of garden visiting in that area, where in another garden both male and female singles appeared on several dates between 6 Feb and 3 Apr (SH).

2018. As usual, the garden records mostly came from Hillside #32: in one garden, birds were present from 6 Feb to 2 Apr, with a max of four on 18 Mar (SH). Away from Hillside, one was in a Didworthy garden #21 on 27 Mar (JC), and in autumn a female returned to Hillside #32 on 18 Nov and there was a male there on 17 Dec (SH).

Other species

A **STRIATED CARACARA**, a South American raptor, which had escaped from the Dartmoor Zoo at Sparkwell on 29 Mar 2017, was spotted near Bloody Pool Cross #34 on 6 Apr, recaptured and returned to its owners (DP,SH).



Barn Owl. One of the ADR birds on 9 Oct 2018 (SH)