

# Birds and Newbiggin-by-the-Sea

## The Species List

Birding at Newbiggin-by-the-Sea actually started a very long time ago. The well-known naturalist, Hancock, visited fairly often in the 1860s and 1870s and his own finds included Dotterel and Little Stint. But then there was a gap of over a century before the area was again watched regularly. A small number of birders started to give the area more consistent coverage in the very early 1990s. Almost all of the records listed below have been since October 1989. The number of species recorded has reached over 280 and has the potential to increase further. The list includes some remarkable species.

The birds that are seen are a fraction of what is there, but are still significant. There can be good numbers of migrants or even a rarity around the weekends, but there can be lots of birds and few birders. The really exceptional migration is rare, but there is always something; the pools for example are usually interesting, the beach is strong and a northerly wind is productive.

### Area

The area for which records are described lies between the perimeter fence for what was Alcan Power Station in the north, and the north end of Sandy Bay Caravan Park to the south (a bit under 3km along the coast). Behind the village, the edge of the caravan running up to the A189 roundabout is the rim at the south end, and it follows the A189 as loops behind the town. Where A189 turns left, the unclassified (but major) road is the fringe and runs to the the Power Station. The area is roughly rectangular (about 3km of coastal stretch and the 2km inland), including the whole of Newbiggin town, Church (Newbiggin) Point and the whole foreshore, the golf course and moor, the Ash Lagoons, Woodhorn Churchyard and significantly, the three pools on the west side.

## The bird records: How do I use this?

Each species is listed. The species is given a score (**1,2,3** or **4**, see below).

### Subspecies

If for a species there is **more than one subspecies** that can easily be identified and clearly occur then they are both/all listed. It is not many. If they are both common/regular they are covered together (for example Herring Gull). If one is distinctive and rare it has been covered separately, but there are only a few species in that category.

### Species information

The next row gives the one code, either **1, 2, 3** or **4**:

**1 – vagrant**

These are very rare and less than 10 records.

**2 – rare visitor (rare resident)**

These are also rare but with more than 10 records, but not occurring annually. Three birds (all owls) are coded 2 but coded "rare resident" as their position is unclear, they breed in the area, but they are rarely seen.

**3 – breeding/BREEDING : winter/WINTER : migration/MIGRATION : summer/SUMMER**

Code 3 are generally uncommon species and so are usually small letters but there maybe exceptions. It may be one time of year, or up to all four, for example it may just migration, or it may be all year where it breeds and stays in winter. The code should be clear.

**4 – As above (same codes as 3)**

Code 4 are common species, all are observable at the appropriate time of year. The large and small letters are used as appropriate but large letters will be used for at least one.

Finally each case is given some brief information.

**For category 1** if there are 5 or less records, all are listed including date. If there are 6 to 10 records the number of records is given, and the most recent record or two reported to illustrate timings.

**For codes 2, 3 and 4** there are generally 2 sentences to explain the size of the population, the variation through the year and the sites and habitat involved.

## **SPECIES LIST**

### **Red-throated Diver**

4 : MIGRANT : WINTER : summer

Hundreds pass through autumn in many small groups over the sea. In winter generally a dozen or so would be visible offshore on the sea if calm weather.

### **Black-throated Diver**

3 : migrant : winter

Uncommon, just about annual, most September – November, but winter and spring have a few. All seen offshore.

### **Great Northern Diver**

3 : MIGRANT : winter

Generally double figures per year and September to November for migrants, but occasional birds are possible for rest of year. Usually in flight but occasionally on sea and some large divers pass out too far for firm identification and are usually reported as this species by default.

### **White-billed Diver**

1 : vagrant (four)

- May 12<sup>th</sup> 1996, adult moulting, spent evening in bay.

- April 28<sup>th</sup> 2004, Winter non-breeding plumage, flight north past Church point.

- October 31<sup>st</sup> 2008, 2 different birds were recorded heading north on

There have been other birds seen reliably as fly-by records but not officially claimed.

**Little Grebe**

3 : breeder : summer

Usually around 3-5 pairs in recent years, once seen on the sea. Counts in August and September can peak at over 20.

**Great Crested Grebe**

3 : migrant

Small numbers offshore or the pools, July to October but with odd birds at other times, very unpredictable. Usually less than 5 records a year season.

**Red-necked Grebe**

3 : migrant : winter

Rare fly past, but more or less annual 1-5 in most years. Records are July to November, but several winter records and occasionally stay to feed.

**Black-necked Grebe**

1 : vagrant

- April 14<sup>th</sup> 2003, 2 birds in breeding plumage on the Church pond
- May 21<sup>st</sup> 2006, 1 adult bird
- July 28<sup>th</sup> 2007, 1 several days
- October 2008, 1 juvenile
- August 1<sup>st</sup> 2012, adult

**Slavonian Grebe**

2 : scarce migrant

Not quite annual and on the sea or fly past, one or two on the church pool. A difficult species to predict and about 20 records in total.

**Fulmar**

4 : breeder : MIGRANT : WINTER : SUMMER

May breed in south, but passage in big numbers, over 150 per hour if northern conditions. Present all year and "Blue" birds occasionally recorded but not quite annual.

**Great Shearwater**

2 : scarce migrant

A rare bird and usually single birds passing going north, August/September and about one year in four. Occasionally more than one recorded in a year, and in 2007 twenties were recorded.

**Cory's Shearwater**

2 : scarce migrant

A rare bird, singles pass offshore north or south, June to November. Over a dozen records and all appeared to be likely Atlantic race *P.d.borealis*, but one in late September 2003 showed some features of the nominate Mediterranean form *P.d.diomedea* or "Scopoli's" Shearwater.

### **Sooty Shearwater**

3 : MIGRANT

Recorded annually in small numbers but variable and some big years if strong northerlies. Recorded August to October [July to November] and all at sea, but can be close in.

### **Manx Shearwater**

4 : MIGRANT : SUMMER

Recorded late April to October [February to November], sparse early and late but often some in summer, occasionally hundreds in a day. All at sea and some come close in.

### **Balearic Shearwater**

2 : Scarce migrant

This is almost an annual species, and up to maybe 5 per year. Most records are in July to September [June to November].

### **Fea's/Zino's Petrel**

1 : vagrant

- September 13<sup>th</sup> 1996, north, Church Point
- August 24<sup>th</sup> 1998, north, Church Point
- July 22<sup>nd</sup> 2013, north, Church Point
- September 21<sup>st</sup> 2014, north, Church Point

The 1996 bird was seen directly with Manx and Sooty Shearwaters and was almost certainly Fea's Petrel (*Pterodroma feae*) but the class is complicated.

### **Storm Petrel**

2 : Scarce migrant

Probably not quite annual, but occasionally several more in a year and there have been dozens. Usually recorded in July to October [May] and out to sea.

### **Leach's Petrel**

1 : Vagrant

Seven dates, some with several records, and most recent in 2004, but there maybe several others not noted here. All autumn records (1989, 1992, 1993, 1997, 2003 and 2004) bar one (spring 2004).

### **Gannet**

4 : SUMMER : MIGRANT : winter

The classic seabird to see from Church Point. Common March to October, sometimes large movements (800+/ hour) but recorded in all other months.

### **Cormorant**

(*P. carbo carbo*)

(*P. c. sinensis*)

4 : SUMMER : MIGRATION : WINTER

Present all year and often recorded in tens early in autumn mornings moving south. Some in pools and both races occur, though most are *P c carbo*.

### **Shag**

3 : summer : winter : migrant

A bird recorded all year in numbers but unpredictable. All records are on the sea.

### **Grey Heron**

3 : summer : winter : migrant

There is a permanent presence of 1-3 birds, sometimes a few more. A few records of birds occur coming in off the sea in autumn.

### **Night Heron**

1 : vagrant

- A juvenile in the seabait complex just south of the Lynemouth Power Station in October 1999. It was picked up and released at Cresswell Pond where it lingered for a couple of weeks.

### **Great White Egret**

1 : vagrant

- May 5th 2013 a bird in morning flew through and did not land, about 20 minutes later it flew over East Chevington and stopped at Hauxley.  
- March 26<sup>th</sup> 2017 one went from north of Newcastle up to Druridge Bay and went right through the pools at Newbiggin.

### **Little Egret**

2 : scarce migrant

Recent arrival in around 2010, but now annual so should probably increase to 3. Despite very close breeding it is scarce at Newbiggin, most around the pools but also recorded on the beach.

### **Mute Swan**

4 : BREEDER ; summer ; winter

One or two pairs now, perhaps a third possibly. Sometimes larger groups in winter.

### **Whooper Swan**

3 : MIGRATION ; winter

Scarce but regular fly past October/November and again in March and April. Some records in winter appear where odd individuals feed around pools.

### **Bewick's Swan**

1 : vagrant

- October 25th 2001 on the Church pond at Woodhorn with a small number of Whooper Swans.  
- November 28<sup>th</sup> 2010 an adult flew low north over the golf course during freezing weather.

### **Pink-footed Goose**

4 : MIGRATION : WINTER

Common migrant, September to early May, and usually a few days in the year when hundreds pass. Feeding now common in fields through winter and population increase significant.

### **Taiga Bean Goose**

1 : vagrant

- September 29<sup>th</sup> 2007, four flew low north over the Moor and followed the coast north, for the central Scotland flock. It was very strong northerly conditions and so slight deflections on their North Sea crossing occurred (on tracked birds it seems common).

### **Tundra Bean Goose**

1 : vagrant

- December 3<sup>rd</sup> 2011 extending to January 2012, with Greylag Geese  
- February 2013, one with a large flock of Pink-footed Geese in, one day.  
- December 18<sup>th</sup> 2016 then for several weeks up to two were recorded in again dropping in with local groups.

### **Greylag Goose**

4 : BREEDING : WINTER : summer

Now several pairs breed in the pools. In winter a total of around 200 is normal and includes migrants.

### **White-fronted Goose**

(*A. albifrons albifrons*)

2 : Scarce migrant

Few records originally, but an increase recently and small flocks in December to March, one juvenile was there into summer.

(*A. a. flavirostris*)

2 : scarce winter

A few older records, but a family group of 4 young birds appeared in January 2010, and have subsequently been connected to the site until at least 2017 with up to 7 birds, and young birds arriving in early 2017.

### **Snow Goose**

(*A. caerulescens atlanticus*)

(*A. c. caerulescens*)

1 : vagrancy [photo]

- October 17<sup>th</sup> 2009, a wild (*A.c.atlanticus*) occurred with a flock of Pink-footed Geese and it was photographed over Newbiggin, but had been in Lothian with Pink-footed Geese, and was transferring that day to Norfolk.  
- A blue morph individual flew north with a small flock of Canada Geese on 1<sup>st</sup> June 2003. Given the date this latter bird almost certain to have been feral.  
- 17<sup>th</sup> May 2017, a white morph (*A c caerulescens*) on in the fields, probably a feral bird.

### **Ross's Goose**

1 : vagrant

- Church Pond on 5<sup>th</sup> October 2007, previously in surrounding fields and further north near Hauxley in the few days before this.

### **Canada Goose**

(*B. canadensis canadensis*)

4 : breeding : WINTER : MIGRATION

A few nest and some more in winter in the pools area, but variable. In summer migration (north in June, return in August) is often seen for summer moults going to Beaully Firth in NE Scotland.

(*B. c. interior*)

1 : vagrant

In October 2016 one quite distinctive bird (*B c interior* group) flew up the coast with a flock of 40 or so Barnacle Geese as they arrived from the Arctic, a wild American vagrant and distinctive. It was followed up to Lindisfarne area on the day where it was for a week or two.

### **Cackling Goose**

1 : vagrant

- November 22<sup>nd</sup> to 24<sup>th</sup> 2006, a very small pale bird was present in a stubble field with a migrant Barnacle Goose initially. It eventually found some big Canada Geese in the Bothal area when it found them, and disappeared the following March. It is important to note this is very clearly a *B. hutchinsii hutchinsii* and almost certain a wild bird.

### **Barnacle Goose**

3 : MIGRANT

It is difficult to predict their fly through, but late September/October and April/May flocks of birds arriving for the large Solway population. Mostly a few flocks in there tens, and odd birds occur at other times.

### **Brent Goose**

(*B. bernicla bernicla*)

(*B. b. hrota*)

3 : MIGRANT

Both races are recorded, but the pale *B b hrota* a bit more common, and overall in tens or hundreds overall. Most just migrating north over the sea but some stop to feed, very late August through winter to spring at any time.

### **Egyptian Goose**

1 : vagrant

- late September 2015, one flew south over Church Point.

### **Shelduck**

3 : breeding : summer : migration

Formerly common breeder but recently it seems it is not and is declining. A few are in general area though and seen regularly in pools or flying past over the sea.

**Mandarin**

1 : vagrant

- May 20<sup>th</sup> 1998, a male on a tiny pool close to Woodhorn village.

- April 21<sup>st</sup> 2011, a male was reluctant to leave the Beacon Point area during thick fog.

**Wigeon**

4 : MIGRATION : WINTER

Big numbers on migration days (hundreds) through autumn, smaller in spring, September to November [August to May]. A winter group of around 50 now use the pools and possible in any month

**Gadwall**

4 : BREEDING : WINTER : migration

Formerly very rare but around 2000 and the formation of the pools they became permanent birds in small numbers (10 to 30), and some breed. A few migrants.

**Garganey**

2 : Very scarce migrant

Rare spring/summer migrant and not every year with most records in pools but a few flying over sea in migration, and even landing with Common Scoter. April\May mostly but some August and September.

**Teal**

4 : MIGRATION : WINTER

Large numbers in migration on coast in July to November, but some possible at any time. Winter numbers on pools, formerly up to 300, but now 20 to 50 is normal.

**Green-winged Teal**

1 : vagrant

- December 6<sup>th</sup> 2003, a male was found at Church Pond on and stayed for winter, then returned October to March/April every year till 2007

**Mallard**

4 : BREEDING : WINTER : migration

A few breeders in pools, winter birds in reasonable numbers (20 – 50 typical, though formerly hundreds recorded). Sea active migration sometimes recorded in good numbers in late October/November.

**Pintail**

3 : MIGRATION : winter

Annual records occur of migrants working their way up the coast, September/October. A few recorded in spring and occasional records from the pools in winter.

**Shoveler**

3 : breeding : winter : migration

Probably attempts breeding some years in road pool. Small numbers (singles or very few) occur in winter and also a few sea migrants.

**Pochard**

3 : winter : migration

Occasionally larger winter numbers if very cold but usually one or two, a few migrants offshore. A pair by the back pool in late spring (2017) suggests breeding is possible and they may have bred in 2005.

**Tufted Duck**

4 : BREEDING : WINTER : migration

Present all year. Around 5 or more pairs breeding, 20 to 40 typical in winter, a few migrants over sea in any season.

**Scaup**

2 : very scarce migrant

Formerly more common but now not even annual. There are records of migrants over the sea or occasionally the ponds.

**Eider**

4 : WINTER : MIGRATION : summer

Resident but non-breeder, formally large flocks in winter (500), still about 50, sometimes more. Occasionally big migration of a few hundreds October/November.

**King Eider**

1 : vagrant

- September 10th 1997, a male in eclipse, stayed between Church Point and the Alcan Power Station for a few days.

- October 22<sup>nd</sup> 2016, a second year male was tracked up the coast, passing very close to the point. It was seen as far north as Holy Island.

**Long-tailed Duck**

3 : MIGRATION : winter

Annually small numbers migrating north in September/October (10 to 50), and records in most other months. Often a few wintering birds present (one to five).

**Common Scoter**

4 : MIGRATION : winter

Present all year, mostly flying past on migration, June to November mostly but occurs in all season. Formerly large winter flocks, and usually some still on the sea in winter.

**Velvet Scoter**

3 : MIGRATION : winter

Almost all birds migrating north and numbers variable, August to November and a total of 20 to 200 overall. Odd records in any season and occasional wintering.

**Surf Scoter**

1 : vagrant

- November 5<sup>th</sup> 1995, a male which flew close in north past Church Point
- October 14<sup>th</sup> 2000, a female with 6 Velvet Scoters past.

**Goldeneye**

3 : MIGRATION : winter

Small numbers, October to December mostly but any month possible.  
Wintering birds in pools, but not predictable.

**Ruddy Duck**

1 : formerly breeding

Formerly bred in mid 2000s. Now locally removed.

**Red-breasted Merganser**

3 : wintering : migration

Odd birds in any season and a few wintering birds. Main migrants in October and April/May then again in late June/July (post breeders), but with no more than 10 or so on any day.

**Goosander**

3 : summer : migration

One or two now summer June to September on Beacon Point. Migration on the coast but difficult to predict, a few each year.

**Hooded Merganser**

1 : vagrant

- March 9<sup>th</sup> 2002, a first winter female appeared on the old road pool and stayed for only a couple of weeks commuting between here and the Church Pool. It has been accepted by BBRC as Britain's second record of this species.

**Smew**

1 : vagrant

- April 15<sup>th</sup> 2009, a female was on the sea with a Red-breasted Merganser before flying off north.
- November 8<sup>th</sup> 2016, a female/imm with a group of Eider migrating north.

**White-tailed Eagle**

1 : vagrant

- early September 2011, tagged white Fife bird in the main bay

**Marsh Harrier**

2 : rare visitor

A bird probably not seen annually, and rare in spring and autumn. Can be anywhere, including coming in off the sea, following the fields and feeding around the pools.

### **Hen Harrier**

1 : vagrant

- November 1984, a male was reported at Woodhorn
- October 4<sup>th</sup> 2011, staying into late October a juvenile (probably a male) hunting over the grass in the ash lagoons on
- April 12<sup>th</sup> 2014, coming in off the sea.

Hen x Pallid Harrier hybrid

1 : vagrant

- November 12<sup>th</sup> 2011, a remarkable juvenile bird was confirmed as a hybrid by global expertise. It was photographed on the ash lagoons.

### **Red Kite**

1 : vagrant [photo]

- October 20<sup>th</sup> 2005, an untagged bird arrived off the sea on and headed off west.
- April 27<sup>th</sup> 2008, an untagged bird seen over the ponds.
- April 10<sup>th</sup> 2017, passed through.
- May 28<sup>th</sup> 2017, two separate birds over the point on a day of many birds on the east coast.

### **Sparrowhawk**

3 : breeding : WINTER : migration

Small numbers but regular. A pair usually breed in mound area.

### **Honey Buzzard**

1 : vagrant

- May 27<sup>th</sup> 2002, one leaving Ash Lagoon bank in the morning presumably having roosted overnight.
- September 13<sup>th</sup> 2008, one adult female was seen very well during a major arrival of this species.

### **Buzzard**

3 : winter : summer

Transformed over 20 years. One was first seen in October 1994, but now breed just outside and fairly regularly come into the area.

### **Rough-legged Buzzard**

1 : vagrant

- October 23<sup>rd</sup> 1994, juvenile arriving off the sea in a big year, it showed well.

### **Osprey**

1 : vagrant

Total of at least 9 but may be others which were not recorded.

### **Kestrel**

3 : breeding : winter

One or two breeding pairs. Maybe some wandering birds in winter.

### **Merlin**

3 : winter

Annual but only a few singles per year and usually on the golf course or the beach. Winter, starting recorded from August to April

### **Hobby**

1 : vagrant

- Mid May 1990, over the moor and ash lagoon banks area
- May 1997, over the moor area.
- September 17<sup>th</sup> 2006, a juvenile went south
- June 17<sup>th</sup> 2016, an adult went south over the golf course.

### **Peregrine**

3 : winter : migration

Occurs regularly through winter but unpredictable, commonest out on waders roosts but can be anywhere. Generally recorded in August to March but possible any month and breed near by.

### **Grey Partridge**

3 : breeding : resident

Several pairs involved, but numbers vary. Estimate around 10 pairs, flock of over 50 recorded.

### **Red-legged Partridge**

2 : breeding : resident

Birds come and go and are probably all introduced. Not present in all years but several years together have occurred.

### **Quail**

1 : vagrant

- July 2006, one flew across the A189
  - Summer 2009 one sang from a cereal field just west of the village.
- Many more must surely have occurred undetected in recent years

### **Pheasant**

3 : breeding : resident

Formally rare but now several pairs. Records in all fields and woods.

### **Common Crane**

1 : vagrant

- May 1<sup>st</sup> 2002, two flew over the village and around Woodhorn
- late April 2014, one heard in fog
- May 3<sup>rd</sup> 2014, one flew through.

### **Sandhill Crane**

1 : vagrant

- September 29<sup>th</sup> 2011, a bird spent over a week in Aberdeenshire then migrated south and was first picked up in England at Newbiggin before being tracked right down the coast to Suffolk. This was the first English and the 4<sup>th</sup> British record.

**Water Rail**

3 : breeding : winter : migration

Now regular winter visitor (pools) and with a confirmed breeding record, which probably represents annual breeding. Records of additional migrants occur but are probably not annual.

**Moorhen**

4 : BREEDING ; RESIDENT

Breeds on Woodhorn pools (5-10 pairs in total) and 20 to 40 generally.

**Coot**

4 : BREEDING : WINTER

Breeds on or around the pools behind the village, perhaps with as many as 10 pairs, but added winter count in excess of 100 though variable. Other wandering records.

**Corncrake**

1 : vagrant

- September 30<sup>th</sup> 2010, a single confirmed record, it was flushed from the top of the Ash Lagoon Bank.

**Oystercatcher**

4 : WINTER : MIGRATION : summer

Common and present all year, though non-breeding, and active migration visible. Feeds on shore and golf course and maximum counts in autumn birds are generally around 100.

**Avocet**

1 : vagrant

- May 4<sup>th</sup> 2015, two birds in the Road Pool for a few moments.

- April 2<sup>nd</sup> 2017, two were on the lagoon and then flew off south.

**Little Ringed Plover**

2 : scarce migrant

Formerly bred when suitable site was temporarily present. Now occasional visits, very occasionally on beach or pools.

**Ringed Plover**

4 : breeding : WINTER : MIGRATION

A pair or two breed at the north end. Dozens of birds winter and some migration flocks in spring and autumn on the point and beach, occasionally on pools.

**Golden Plover**

4 : WINTER : migration

A large flock builds up from August, peaking between October and December. 2-3000 birds at maximum but variable, roost on lagoon and feed from sea rocks.

### **Pacific Golden Plover**

1 : vagrant

- June 25<sup>th</sup> 2005 and then relocated the next day and stayed to 27<sup>th</sup> an adult/1<sup>st</sup> summer mostly in breeding plumage with a small group of European Golden Plovers.

### **American Golden Plover**

1 : vagrant

- November 25<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup> 2006, a juvenile with large numbers of Golden Plovers on the Ash lagoons and Beacon Point area.  
- May 4<sup>th</sup> 2008, an adult bird moulting into breeding plumage was on Beacon Point, it was not submitted but was photographed and it is this species.  
- October 12<sup>th</sup> 2011, a juvenile arrived with Knot on the Beacon Point

### **Grey Plover**

3 : winter : migration

Wintering flocks of up to fifteen individuals occur (October to March), feeding on the shoreline and roosting on Beacon Point and ash lagoons. Migrants are seen going through autumn, often looking good.

### **Dotterel**

1 : vagrant

- September 16<sup>th</sup> - 18<sup>th</sup> 1995, a juvenile on golf course  
- September 17<sup>th</sup> to 19<sup>th</sup> 1999 a juvenile on golf course  
- September 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> 2008, a juvenile which was very obliging at Church (Newbiggin) Point and then the golf course.  
Hancock recorded two on the moor in 1871, but the month is not reported.

### **Lapwing**

4 : BREEDING : WINTER : migration

A few breeding, big flocks with Golden Plovers in Autumn. Present all year.

### **Knot**

4 : WINTER : migration

Wintering flocks of up to a couple hundred around the Point. Returning adults from late July, sometimes in hundreds flying past point. Can be seen on all months.

### **Sanderling**

4 : WINTER : MIGRATION

Wintering flocks of 30+ are on the beach. Numbers peak in late May/June just before they head north (100 or so) and first returning birds in July a few weeks later.

### **Little Stint**

2 : scare migrant

An irregular autumn migrant mostly on the beach area, August to October and not every year, but sometimes several. They are rare in spring with only a few records.

### **Temminck's Stint**

1: vagrant

- May 23rd 2010, one record of a single bird at the Church Pond which flew off north calling loudly.

### **Curlew Sandpiper**

2: scarce migrant

An irregular autumn migrant August and September, but less than annual. Mostly singles on beach and golf course but a very few larger records (up to 10).

### **Purple Sandpiper**

3 : winter

Present July to May, peaks in early spring, up to in early April. Only usually seen on rocky shores or seaweed deposits.

### **Dunlin**

4: WINTER : MIGRATION

Wintering flocks of up to 200 on Beacon Point, but spring and autumn passage birds in reasonable numbers. Mostly seen on beach but odd record in pools.

### **Buff-breasted Sandpiper**

1: vagrant

- August 30<sup>th</sup> 1994, staying to 5<sup>th</sup> September, a single autumn record of a juvenile which was on the golf course.

### **Pectoral Sandpiper**

1: vagrant

- July 22<sup>nd</sup> 2003, an adult male was with Dunlin on the beach at Beacon Point briefly, before flying off south, to be relocated on the Wansbeck at Castle Island soon afterwards.

### **Ruff**

3: MIGRATION

Autumn migrant on beach, golf course, ash lagoons and flood pools behind town, July to October, very rare at other times. Maximum counts of over 10 together, but numbers highly variable in a year, from one or two to a couple of tens.

### **Jack Snipe**

3: winter : migration

Uncommon and irregular autumn migrant and winter visitor with records from September to April (May), usually singles, no more than a handful in any year but annual. Most around pools but migrants around golf course.

**Snipe**

4 : WINTER : MIGRATION

Regular autumn and winter in pools and damp areas and sometimes the golf course. Typically around 10 if you search in winter, returning from breeder as early July, departing April.

**Woodcock**

3 : migration : winter

Regular late autumn migrant (October/November), but very dependant on easterly weather, and can be anywhere but usually coastal trees and bushes. Maximum counts of up to 20 birds in October/ November but usually just one or two. Rare in spring (March) and some hard weather related arrivals in winter (December to February),

**Black-tailed Godwit**

2 : Rare migrant

An uncommon spring and autumn visitor, April/May and July to October, over sea on rocks or at pools, and less than annual, but some multiple records. All are believed to be of the race *L.limosa islandica* except a single on the Church Pond in early June 2013 which resembled the nominate race.

**Bar-tailed Godwit**

3 : wintering : migration

A regular spring, autumn and occasional winter visitor to the beach and golf course. Rarely more than 5 in a day.

**Whimbrel**

3 : MIGRATION

Regular in spring and autumn, sometimes in good numbers, April to early June, July to Mid September (October). Generally around coast and golf course.

**Curlew**

4: WINTER : migration

Small numbers occur almost all year, feeding on golf course, fields and intertidal rocks and up to 20 in the fields in winter. Numbers may be gradually reducing.

**Spotted Redshank**

1 : vagrant

Nine records some with some several day records. Pools and golf course.

**Redshank**

4 : WINTER : migration

Common more or less all year, except midsummer, feeding on shore, golf course and the pools behind the village. Up to 50 would be typical in winter, sometimes seen on active migration in late summer.

**Greenshank**

3 : migration

Rather uncommon in autumn and occasionally in spring. Normally no more than five together, but barely annual and most just single birds, in April/May and August/October.

**Green Sandpiper**

2 : rare visitor

Not annual, but several records in some years and none in others. About 40 or 50 records overall.

**Wood Sandpiper**

2 : rare visitor

Not annual by any means now and habitat on pools declined, about 20 records.

**Common Sandpiper**

3 : migrant

Regular in April/May and autumn July – September (October) and most seen on the beach or Woodhorn Church Pond and the Road Pool. Usually singles or twos, with no more than 10 records in most years, sometimes bigger numbers.

**Turnstone**

4 : WINTER : summer

Present all year feeding on intertidal rocks, obviously most in autumn and winter. Maximum count of over 100, most Beacon Point or the breakwater.

**Red-necked Phalarope**

1 : vagrant

- September 4<sup>th</sup> 1997, a juvenile on a tiny flooded ditch pool on the edge of the golf course

- October 16<sup>th</sup>-19<sup>th</sup> 2003 (and then again on 22<sup>nd</sup>-23<sup>rd</sup>), a juvenile in Church Pool, it showed down to a few feet and was very popular.

**Grey Phalarope**

2 : rare visitor

Usually in very stormy conditions. All on sea or fly past, about 15 records but in 2007 a couple of small groups, September to December.

**Pomarine Skua**

3 : migration

Uncommon but annual in variable numbers, almost all in the period July to December but a few May/June. Numbers vary tremendously from year to year, almost all birds heading north, often very close to Church Point, between 5 and 300!

### **Arctic Skua**

4 : MIGRATION

Annual and regular migration from late June to October, with odd records to November, and some spring records (April/May). Birds often hang around but definitely reduced considerably, and overall high tens or hundreds are normal across the season.

### **Long-tailed Skua**

2 : Rare migrant

Rare, but recorded in most years on autumn seawatches (August to October) and occasionally in spring (May\June). Over 100 bird days in 1991 but sea year with no records are common. Northumberland's first record was of a juvenile "obtained" at Newbiggin in the 19th century.

### **Great Skua**

4 : MIGRATION : winter : summer

Most seen in ones and twos together offshore and can be seen in any month, but they result in numbers through the autumn in particular. Autumn birds can occur from as early as late June to November when there is suitable weather, with a maximum day count of over 200.

### **Mediterranean Gull**

4 : WINTER : MIGRATION : summer

From a position as a sub-rarity in the early 1990s with just a few single records up until 1996, this species has become regular with records in all months and of all ages and is now the best site for this species in Northumberland. Maximum numbers in a count just short of 100 and the best area is undoubtedly around the main bay in front of the village but they can be seen almost anywhere and use the freshwater ponds behind the village to wash and drink.

### **Little Gull**

3 : MIGRATION : winter

Annually recorded in all seasons, maximum day counts of around 10 but sometimes more, but usually just on a few dates in a year. August to October best, but has been seen in all months, mostly at sea but a few in ponds.

### **Sabine's Gull**

2 : rare visitor

Rare autumn vagrant (August to October) on seawatches, but also three records of adults roosting with the Kittiwakes on Beacon Point and odd birds hanging around. Not every year but some with several, particularly into double figures in 2007.

### **Black-headed Gull**

4 : WINTER : SUMMER

A very common bird, with winter roosts of thousands off the beach. Many use the pools and the fields.

### **Bonaparte's Gull**

1 : vagrant

- September 8<sup>th</sup> to October 29<sup>th</sup> 2006, a moulting adult was present in village mostly just south of Church Point.

- June 24<sup>th</sup> 2016, first summer bird at Wansbeck River came round to Newbiggin during that summer period.

### **Common Gull**

4 : WINTER : MIGRATION : summer

Very common all year, particularly in winter and early spring. Over a thousand may be seen offshore in a regular active northward passage, particularly in April in suitable conditions.

### **Franklin's Gull**

1 : vagrant

- April 2<sup>nd</sup> 2005, a second summer spent a couple of hours on the Church Pond at Woodhorn, and was enjoyed by many observers. It was seen north of the area in fields the next day.

### **Lesser Black-backed Gull**

(*L. fuscus graelsii*)

4 : SUMMER : migration

Common and regular from March to October, though in rather small numbers. Regular in the road pool and the beach.

(*L. f. intermedius*)

1 : vagrant

A couple identified but probably annual.

### **Herring Gull**

[*L. argentatus argenteus*]

[*L. a. argentatus*]

4 : WINTER : SUMMER : MIGRATION

A common bird and numbers well into hundreds, particular around the beach. Local *L. argentatus argenteus* much more common but visiting *L. a. argentatus* occurs through the winter in good numbers.

### **Yellow-legged Gull**

1 : vagrant

- 3<sup>rd</sup> August 2011, one juvenile photographed and identified with large numbers of large gulls in the south beach.

- 4<sup>th</sup> August 2011, a distinctly different bird was photographed the next day.

### **Caspian Gull**

1 : vagrant

- January 17<sup>th</sup> 2016, a 1<sup>st</sup> winter was photographed on the new Summerhouse flash.

**Iceland Gull**

2 : rare visitor

Less than annual, but variable with multiple records in some years. Usually along beach, all November to May, in fact April/May are probably best but also birds in pools and ash lagoons.

**Glaucous Gull**

2 : rare visitor

Uncommon and less than annual. One, remarkably, was of a full adult off Church Point in August 1992 but otherwise November to May on the beach.

**Great Black-backed Gull**

4 : WINTER : SUMMER

Present all year, formerly up to 1300 birds in autumn. Most on ash lagoons and feeding offshore or on rocks.

**Kittiwake**

4 : SUMMER : MIGRATION : winter

Recorded in all months, sometimes in thousands during seawatches.

Occasionally big flocks of thousands birds feeding offshore occasionally and roosting in huge flocks on Church and Beacon Points, probably associated with a run of small fish.

**Lesser Crested Tern**

1 : vagrant

- July 22<sup>nd</sup> 1992, one on Beacon Point refers to the famous Farne Island bird. It is accepted by BBRC.

**Sandwich Tern**

4 : SUMMER

Recorded mainly April to September (late-March to November). Up to 3000 recorded on the ash lagoons (being used as a nursery) in July 1990, but infinitely fewer in recent years, Beacon Point flock rarely over 200.

**Gull-billed Tern**

1 : vagrant

- May 9<sup>th</sup> 2006, two birds moved north about 400m offshore off Church Point. These had been seen in Teeside, St Mary's Island and then (five minutes later after Newbiggin Point) Snab Point. There is a full description from Newbiggin and despite the technicality, it was BBRC accepted.

**Roseate Tern**

3 : summer

Regular on Beacon Point in late summer (July-September) with odd adults often recorded from mid May but unpredictable. In summer there are often adults with juvenile birds and five to ten would be quite regular and very high (up to 40) have been seen.

**Common Tern**

4 : SUMMER : migration

Present from late April to October [November], late summer build up of adults and recently fledged juveniles in July and August. Numbering up to around 100 birds at the point.

**Arctic Tern**

4 : SUMMER : MIGRATION

Very end of April to September [October/November]. Post breeders gather on rocks, usually a few, but active autumn migration as well.

**Little Tern**

2 : rare visitor

Uncommon and irregular. Records in late April-September but less than 10 recorded in any year and now maybe not annual.

**Black Tern**

2 : rare visitor

An irregular bird and probably occur just less than annually, typically June to September. They are usually ones and twos seen on seawatches, but also on rocks with other terns and once on Church Pond.

**White-winged Tern**

1 : vagrant

- August 27<sup>th</sup> 2006 on road pool

- September 29<sup>th</sup> 2006 on church point (possibly the same )

**Guillemot**

4 : SUMMER : MIGRATION : winter

Present offshore all year but becomes uncommon and difficult to sea in late summer (flightless) but from September to November, and again in March to early July large passages can take place. Several thousand may pass in a few hours at peak periods.

**Razorbill**

4 : SUMMER : MIGRATION : winter

As for Guillemot but less abundant, maximum day counts in the hundreds.

**Black Guillemot**

1 : vagrant

- about 8 records but some may not be recorded and maybe code 2. Recent records in 2016 and 2017.

**Little Auk**

3 : MIGRATION

Huge variation, just about guaranteed a record every year, but once every few years there will be a thousands in a single day. Late October to January [very early March] and big movements are dependant on severe northerly storms.

**Puffin**

4 : SUMMER : winter

Annual in substantial numbers, April to early August (late March to early October) with only occasional birds outside this period usually being storm blown individuals. Hundreds per hour pass and sometimes feed offshore in suitable weather during the breeding season.

**Feral Pigeon**

4 : RESIDENT

Common resident and many racing pigeons, but others feed in surrounding fields in large numbers.

**Stock Dove**

3 : breeding : winter

Uncommon, but may breed at Woodhorn, and has been seen coming out of the cliffs south of the town. May be seen in any month, usually behind the town.

**Woodpigeon**

4 : BREEDING : WINTER : migration

Common and regular resident in fields and trees behind town. Numbers now are quite large (hundreds) and there are migrants in autumn/winter.

**Collared Dove**

4 : BREEDING : WINTER

Common resident and breeds in the town in small numbers and may be seen anywhere. Probably less than 20 pairs but small flocks in winter if feeding.

**Turtle Dove**

1 : vagrant

- May 29<sup>th</sup> 1992, on mound
- May 28<sup>th</sup> 1994, migrating along ridge
- May 20<sup>th</sup> 1998 migrating along ridge
- May 7<sup>th</sup> 2003, uncertain site.
- May 10<sup>th</sup> 2009 moved to Woodhorn by 12<sup>th</sup> May.

**Cuckoo**

2 : rare visitor

Uncommon and irregular in May - August. Recorded less than annually with never more than 2 or 3 in a year.

**Barn Owl**

2 : rare resident

Rarely seen but resident in area and has bred. Overlooked.

**Little Owl**

2 : rare resident

Recorded sporadically at Woodhorn (March/April and October/November) and also Spital, but a pair bred in the area of the Church at Woodhorn in 2006. Not seen annually.

### **Long-eared Owl**

2 : rare resident / rare visitor

Uncommon migrant in late autumn and occasionally in spring, less than annual as a migrant. Probably breeds nearby and includes the site as part of breeding territory.

### **Short-eared Owl**

3 : MIGRATION : winter

Annual autumn and winter is very variable numbers with migrants arriving over the sea (often double figures overall). Up to five or more in fields is possible behind the town in winter but normally just one or two or none at all, but may have also tried breeding.

### **Tawny Owl**

1 : vagrant

- September 7<sup>th</sup> 2008 on mound
- October 2<sup>nd</sup> 2011 near the mound

### **Swift**

4 : BREEDING : migration

Present May to August with odd birds to September. Spring and autumn movements are also recorded but numbers reducing.

### **Pallid Swift**

1 : vagrant

- November 6<sup>th</sup> 2005 a bird spent much of the day flying around over the village and moved up and down the coast.
- October 31<sup>st</sup> 2015 around Church Point

### **Alpine Swift**

1 : vagrant

- May 23<sup>rd</sup> 2008, one was over fields north of the village and then over the village itself for a few minutes.

### **Kingfisher**

1 : vagrant

About ten records, but maybe more not reported, and the most recent on the coast on January 4<sup>th</sup> 2016. Records on coastal rocks or in the running stream at Woodhorn.

### **Hoopoe**

1 : vagrant

- September 30<sup>th</sup> 1992, behind town.
- May 15<sup>th</sup> 1994 on the golf course area.
- August 18<sup>th</sup> 2006 briefly along the ash lagoon bank.

### **Wryneck**

2 : rare visitor

Very irregular but very good records, about 25 records over the years between August and October, and two May records.

### **Green Woodpecker**

1 : vagrant

- May 10th 1998, a bird in south allotments and heading south
- May 9<sup>th</sup> 1999 at church, and heading south
- late August and early September 2006, one juvenile by the railway line for several days.
- October 4<sup>th</sup> 2017, on the mound.

### **Great Spotted Woodpecker**

3 : winter : migration

Uncommon visitor September to November, in town and at Woodhorn. Some birds are probably continental migrants. Bred at Woodhorn in 2003.

### **Skylark**

4 : BREEDING : MIGRATION : winter

Common breeder, probably about 15-30 pairs or more in the whole area. Autumn passage can be substantial with birds arriving off the sea in hundreds in October or November but only occasionally, a few wintering movements, more in hard weather.

### **Shore (Horned) Lark**

2 : rare visitor

The species was fairly regular in the 1990s though never annual, no record then from early 2000s but one in 2015 and 2017. Records from October to May and on the golf course and beach.

### **Short-toed Lark**

1 : vagrant

- May 12<sup>th</sup> 2001 one spent the day on a large set-aside field between the north end of the Village and Woodhorn Church.

### **Sand Martin**

4 : BREEDING : migration

Small group breed along the beach wherever it is suitable (10 to 20 pairs). Migration in spring and autumn, earliest in mid March and latest on 31<sup>st</sup> October.

### **Swallow**

4 : BREEDING : MIGRATION

Breeds in the area, and present from April to October. Substantial movements occur in April/May and September [October] with hundreds per day involved.

### **House Martin**

4 : BREEDING : migration

Breeds in the town, present from April to September. Migrants moving through at times in spring and autumn.

### **Olive-backed Pipit**

1 : vagrant

- October 21<sup>st</sup> 1990, one was in Woodhorn churchyard.
- October 7<sup>th</sup> 2009, one on the Beacon Point area.

### **Tree Pipit**

2 : rare visitor

Less than annual with maybe records at 40 or 50 in total in April/May and September but it is classically a bird of early September falls. Records from several suitable areas and the biggest day count between 7 and 10 as part of a large fall.

### **Meadow Pipit**

4 : BREEDING : MIGRATION : winter

Common all year on all open areas and nests (about 15 pairs) on moor/golf course and ash lagoon, small numbers in winter. Visible migration is often evident with several hundred passing per day on occasions, usually in the morning moving south along the coastal area.

### **Red-throated Pipit**

1 : vagrant

- September 17<sup>th</sup> 1992 on Church Point. It was accepted by BBRC.
- An individual in the rough fields west of the village on 10th May 1999 and another on 18th September 1999 on the Church Point were not submitted for assessment, but were clearly strong candidates.

### **Rock Pipit**

[*A. petrositis petrositis*]

[*A. p. littoralis*]

3 : WINTER : MIGRATION

Not very common but arrivals usually in October with birds present to March [April/May], maximum counts up to 10 birds. Individuals of the Scandinavian race "littoralis" are usually easily identified and common in spring from mid March, but wintering birds are subtle but many may be of this race.

### **Water Pipit**

1 : vagrant

- December 7th 2010, with Rock Pipits in freezing freshwater flood pools on the golf course to 11<sup>th</sup> December.
- October 7<sup>th</sup> 2016 - on the north end of the beach
- January 8<sup>th</sup> 2017 again one on beach, maybe the same.

### **Richard's Pipit**

1 : vagrant

- November 1994 on the golf course.
  - October 24<sup>th</sup> 1999, two together on the Ash Lagoons.
  - October 26<sup>th</sup> 2005, in field north west of town.
  - October 4<sup>th</sup> 2015, on golf course and it or another on a few days later.
- One was collected here in the early 19th century.

### **Yellow Wagtail**

(M. flava flavissima) Yellow Wagtail

3 : migration

Regularly bred in farmland behind the town until the late 1990s but decreased radically since then and they no longer breed. Small numbers still occur in April/early May and then late summer, but very few.

(M. f. flava) Blue-headed Wagtail

1 : vagrant, has bred

- May 1997, three different Blue headed were seen in and a pair may have bred in nearby fields.
- A pure pair successfully fledged young in 2003 from a nest between the pools in a set aside field.
- May 8<sup>th</sup> 2004, a male was seen at Church Pond.

(M. f. thunbergii) Grey-headed Wagtail

1 : vagrant

- September 6<sup>th</sup> - 7<sup>th</sup> 2008, a single, possibly a female, was with dozens of Scandinavian migrants on Church Point. Not accepted as thunbergii locally, but plumage and huge Scandinavian arrival put this as clear thunbergii.

### **Grey Wagtail**

3 : migration; winter

Uncommon in autumn and winter, but only single birds and usually flying over. Odd birds stay around feeding in suitable areas of dampness.

### **Pied Wagtail**

(M. a. yarrellii) Pied Wagtail

4 : BREEDING : WINTER : migration

A few pairs breed in the area, mostly around buildings, with birds present all. Common in spring and autumn, with groups of several tens of birds particularly in early spring.

(M.a. alba) White Wagtail:

3 : migration

The continental race (including Iceland) occurs regularly in April and early-May, around Church Point and along the beach with up to 10 together in some years. Certainly they also occur in autumn but are very difficult to identify then.

### **Waxwing**

2 : rare visitor

Uncommon and irregular, being recorded in irruption years and in Newbiggin most records are of singles or small groups in October and November. Records overhead or brief stoppage and maybe 40 records seen in the last 25 years or so.

### **Wren**

4 : BREEDING : WINTERING : migration

Common breeder in all suitable areas. Migrants appear to arrive in September to November in some years, odd birds feeding in areas of minimal cover right on the foreshore.

### **Dunnock**

4 : BREEDING : WINTER : migration

Common breeder in suitable areas, with perhaps 20 pairs or more. Numbers boosted by continental arrivals in September-November.

### **Siberian Accentor**

1 : Vagrant

- October 29<sup>th</sup> 2016, one was found and was present to 30<sup>th</sup>. It was the 11<sup>th</sup> British records, but had it been found just 4 weeks earlier it would have been the first.

### **Bluethroat**

(*L. svecica svecica*) Red-spotted Bluethroat

1 : vagrant [photo]

- 8 records in the 1990s and all in mid-May and all in the same area (beach and bushes behind golf course) but none since, the last in May 1998.

(*L. s. cyanecula*) White-spotted Bluethroat

1 : vagrant

- April 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> 2012, one, a male, on the on the shore of the Church Pond.

### **Black Redstart**

3 : migration

Uncommon but probably annual and sometimes a few seen in a fall. Generally seen late March to May (June) and October to November, and a couple of wintering birds.

### **Redstart**

3 : migration

Just about annual, but some years produce more if a fall occurs and usually in coastal trees and bushes. In autumn records from August-October, usually just very small numbers in spring from late April-early June, and not annual.

### **Red-flanked Bluetail**

1 : vagrant

- October 9<sup>th</sup> 2010, a first-winter on was on the Ash Lagoon Bank.

### **Robin**

4 : BREEDING : WINTER : MIGRATION

Breeds in the area, and birds winter (including overseas birds). Sometimes substantial arrivals can occur in easterly weather in both spring (usually April) and autumn (Late September to November) with big arrivals up to a hundred or so occasionally.

### **Whinchat**

3 : migration

Just about annual, spring (April-June) and autumn (July-October) but unpredictable. Maximum counts of up to a dozen birds in a day, but usually 1 or 2.

### **Stonechat**

3 : breeding : winter

About 4 pairs based on golf course area. Most records from the moor/golf course area. A few may add in winter.

### **Siberian Stonechat**

1 : vagrant

- October 21<sup>st</sup> 1990, on the golf course/moor.
- September 29<sup>th</sup> 2007, a first winter was on the edge of the dunes at the north end of the golf course.
- November 8<sup>th</sup> 2014, one south of Newbiggin in the horse fields.

### **Wheatear**

(*O. oenanthe oenanthe*)

(*O. o. leucorhoa*)

4 : MIGRATION

Common in spring (mid-March to early June) and autumn (August-October) but variable, overall to big groups of 30 plus together from time to time. Most are seen on golf course area.

### **Desert Wheatear**

1 : vagrant

- November 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> 2008, a well-marked male was present.
- December 5<sup>th</sup> 2011, another male, on Beacon Point, stayed for several weeks.

### **Pied Wheatear**

1 : vagrant

- October 20<sup>th</sup> to 23<sup>rd</sup> 2004, a first winter female on Church Point and the North Beach.

### **Ring Ouzel**

3 : migration

Irregular spring (March – May, one early June) and autumn (late September - November) migrants in small and variable numbers, just about annually. Mostly golf course or fields in spring, mound bushes in autumn.

**Blackbird**

4 : BREEDER : WINTER : MIGRATION

Common breeder around the town but very large numbers of migrants can occur in suitable conditions in autumn, from late September to November (December), up to 1000 a day have been recorded. Typically on the mound and ash lagoon bank, in the ditches on the moor and on Church Point.

**Fieldfare**

4 : MIGRATION : winter

Usually common as a migrant in autumn, October to December [August] with some birds in winter, particularly in hard weather, and odd spring records in many years. Many flying through but settle for food anywhere.

**Song Thrush**

4 : BREEDING : WINTER : MIGRATION

Breeds in small numbers in the area, but large numbers pass through in autumn (up to 100 or more on a big day) and less commonly in early spring. Autumn peak earlier than other thrushes, in late September and early October and in any suitable cover.

**Redwing**

4 : MIGRATION ; winter

Common, occasionally abundant in autumn (late September-November), but numbers vary from year to year and odd birds in winter and spring, with one summer record (July). Many overhead but also in trees and fields.

**Mistle Thrush**

3 : breeding : winter : migration

May breed at Woodhorn, present all year, but a few migrants probably occur in autumn. Few overall and usually in fields and trees inland.

**Grasshopper Warbler**

3 : breeding : migration

Uncommon, but fairly regular in spring and breeds in areas of rank vegetation, perhaps up to five pairs in good years. Rare in autumn (about 4 records to 2017).

**Pallas's Grasshopper Warbler**

1 : vagrant

- September 30<sup>th</sup> 2001, a typically skulking juvenile/1st winter bird on the ash lagoon bank.

**Sedge Warbler**

4 : BREEDING : migration

Good numbers breeding into double figures mostly around the pools. A handful of records of migrants per year in April-June and August/September, only one or two migrant birds in a day.

### **Marsh Warbler**

1 : vagrant

- June 8<sup>th</sup> 1992, one singing bird in on the ash lagoon bank.
- September 30<sup>th</sup> 1992, one along the beach
- September 20<sup>th</sup> 2000 on Beacon Point with a Reed Warbler.
- September 7<sup>th</sup> 2010. One photographed on beach clearly this species, but also Reed Warbler and several others, not submitted but probably sound.

### **Reed Warbler**

3 : BREEDING : migration

Recent arrival as a breeder and up to 6 singing birds in the phragmites pool. Rather uncommon migrant in autumn (August to October), less than annual but bigger years with a few multiple records, very scarce spring migrants.

### **Blyth's Reed Warbler**

1 : vagrant

- 29<sup>th</sup> September 2007, one was in Woodhorn hedge.
- There are a couple of earlier birds, particularly one in 2003, which was almost certainly this species.

### **Icterine Warbler**

1 : vagrant

About 7 records but a little messy, most are spring in late May early June, but one set in early September. Most recent in May 2008 and 2009.

### **Subalpine Warbler (sp)**

1 : vagrant

- 13<sup>th</sup> May 1992, one record in, a male on the ash lagoon bank, race not recorded, definitely western form.

### **Barred Warbler**

2 : rare visitor

Probably average on one every couple of years and sometimes 2 or 3. The Ash Lagoon is clearly the best.

### **Lesser Whitethroat**

3 : breeding : migration

Migrant, particularly in spring when it is regular in very small numbers from late April through May and singing birds often occur in spring, and it has bred in the area. A few autumn records and some showed characteristics of the eastern form *s.c. halimodendril/minula* but did not show well enough and did not call.

### **Whitethroat**

4 : BREEDING : migration

Well over 10 pairs in suitable areas. Odd migrants in April/May and August/September with no more than 3 migrants recorded on any day.

### **Garden Warbler**

3 : migration

Uncommon migrant in spring, with usually only odd individuals in May, more regular in autumn [August-October] with maximum day count of 10 or so but sometimes few. Has bred on a number of occasions.

### **Blackcap**

4 : BREEDING : MIGRATION : winter

Breeds widely where there are dense trees, probably around 10 pairs. Fairly regular in late autumn and less regular in spring, with records of birds well into the winter and sometimes double figures in the autumn.

### **Yellow-browed Warbler**

3 : migration

Recent years have seen this as annual and multiple, with 2 to 10 in recent years. Formerly a real rarity.

### **Hume's Warbler**

1 : vagrant

- November 18<sup>th</sup> 1989 one was on the mound, stayed for several days and was identified over the period.
  - January 20<sup>th</sup> 2002, one was found near Lynemouth power station and stayed into April.
- In November 1991, another was on mound but not confirmed, but seems very likely.

### **Pallas's Warbler**

1 : vagrant

Seven records of this Siberian vagrant, in November 2008 and 2010 the most recent.

### **Radde's Warbler**

1 : vagrant

- November 7<sup>th</sup> 1993, one on the mound for one day but many observers
- October 17<sup>th</sup> 1999, for several days at Church Point

### **Dusky Warbler**

1 : vagrant

- October 28<sup>th</sup> 1989 on the Golf Course, until 29<sup>th</sup>.
- November 13<sup>th</sup> 1994 on the mound
- November 19<sup>th</sup> 1997 on the mound
- October 22<sup>nd</sup> 2001 on the mound.

### **Wood Warbler**

1 : vagrant

- May 1992, one on the Ash Lagoon bank
- September 1995, one on the beach and then
- May 16<sup>th</sup>-17<sup>th</sup> 2009, one on the mound

### **Western Bonelli's Warbler**

1 : vagrant

- October 13<sup>th</sup>-14<sup>th</sup> 2002, one in the Woodhorn hedge area.

### **Eastern Bonelli's Warbler**

1 : vagrant

- May 3<sup>rd</sup> 2014, on the Ash lagoon bank and present for less than 2 hours. This challenging identification could only be clarified afterwards on the basis of sonograms of its song, but its appearance was typical of *orientalis*, and the song was definitive.

### **Greenish Warbler**

1 : vagrant

- September 10<sup>th</sup> 2005, one on ash lagoon bank overlooking the golf course
- September 7<sup>th</sup> 2008, one the mound after the huge fall
- September 10<sup>th</sup> 2010, again with a fall of other migrants.
- August 2011 23<sup>rd</sup> was in the grass around Beacon Point on and gave extraordinarily good views.
- May 28<sup>th</sup> 2014, one near the Mound one was singing and seen.

### **Chiffchaff**

(*P. collybita collybita*)

(*P. c. abietinus*)

4 : BREEDING : MIGRATION : winter

Nowadays a common breeder in woodland areas, maybe around 10 pairs, but this is a huge change since the early 1990s. Migration also common, March to May and September to December, and *P collybita abietinus* certainly occur.

(*P. c. tristis*) Siberian Chiffchaff

1 : vagrant

- November 10<sup>th</sup> 1990, call suggests clear *tristis*.
- Jan 20<sup>th</sup> 2002, one turned up with the Hume's Warbler and stayed to April.
- November 12<sup>th</sup> 2008, a clear bird with correct call was recorded in the mound.
- November 5<sup>th</sup> 2011, last seen on 28<sup>th</sup> December, called and high photograph quality.

Many other records are seen and could be almost annual but these 3 are clear and care should be taken.

### **Iberian Chiffchaff**

1 : vagrant

- April 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> 2004, one sang for two days in the garden next to Woodhorn Church and it was photographed and sound recorded. This was the fourth or fifth British record of this recently split species.

**Willow Warbler**

(*P. trochilus trochilus*)

4 : BREEDING : MIGRATION

Breeder on or around the mound and one or two behind town copse, with occurs on passage from July to October usually in appropriate easterly conditions and can be tens or more.

(*P. t. acredula*)

Birds showing characteristics of the very grey northern race *P.t.acredula* are occasionally seen.

**Goldcrest**

4 : MIGRATION : winter

Regular spring migrant in small numbers, occasionally in larger falls in early spring (March/April) whilst common and regular autumn migrant (late August - November). Sometimes in large numbers, occasionally around a hundred in a day, a few winter.

**Firecrest**

1 : vagrant

Nine records, some in spring, some in autumn and one wintering bird. Most recent was a female on the mound on 16<sup>th</sup>-17<sup>th</sup> May 2009 and then one or two were on the mound in late October 2009 and then one in October 2011 at Spittal.

**Spotted Flycatcher**

3 : migration

Uncommon spring migrant (mid-May to early June), but usually only single figures and irregular in autumn though up to 10 per day in falls of other species (August-October). Used to breed but much scarcer than it used to be in the early 1990s.

**Red-breasted Flycatcher**

1 : vagrant

About nine or more records to date in spring and autumn. Most recent records were an adult male were near the mound on 7<sup>th</sup> September 2008 and a first year spring bird photographed in 2014.

**Pied Flycatcher**

2 : rare visitor

A few spring records (Late April - early June) but probably recorded in about 30% of springs, irregular also in autumn (so code 2) but sometimes common with occasional falls involving several birds.

**Long-tailed Tit**

3 : breeding : winter

Very unpredictable, occasional flocks of up to 15 birds pass through, but not infrequent. Has bred in area but most common in September/October.

### **Willow Tit**

3 : breeding : winter

They now breed in or nearby and are regular but are rare. They tend to be on the bank in autumn or near the pools.

### **Coal Tit**

3 : breeding : winter

Uncommon, but fairly regular on the mound and at Woodhorn, mostly in late autumn, but sometimes winter. By 2003 there were signs of breeding activity at the mound on the mound and now breed.

### **Blue Tit**

4 : BREEDING : WINTER

Common resident and breeds around the town and trees. Small flocks of a dozen or so are common in late autumn around the mound and at Woodhorn.

### **Great Tit**

4 : BREEDING : WINTER

Resident breeder in small numbers around town and trees. More mobile in winter mixed flocks.

### **Nuthatch**

1 : vagrant

- June 25<sup>th</sup> 2005, a bird at Church Point landing on the intertidal rocks before heading off inland again.

### **Treecreeper**

2 : rare visitor

Rare visitor with most at Woodhorn in late autumn and winter, probably local birds, but Scandinavian migrants are possible. Probably not annual.

### **Golden Oriole**

1 : vagrant

- 17th May 17th 1997, a single female/immature arrived from high and spent a few minutes in the mound before heading off inland.

- May 6th 2003 in a hedge behind the top of village, stayed briefly.

### **Red-backed Shrike**

2 : rare visitor

Rare spring migrant [May-June] and autumn [August–October] migrant and only every couple of years. The golf course gorse is the best but there are also records from the Woodhorn Church area.

### **Great Grey Shrike**

1 : vagrant

- October 12<sup>th</sup> 1991, one at the mound and football pitch trees

- April 28<sup>th</sup> to 30<sup>th</sup> 2012, one at Woodhorn, in the hedge.

- October 15th 2016, one on the golf course and it appears to maybe be *L. e. homeyeri*, from far eastern Europe/Russia/Siberia (submitted BBRC, but a very difficult form).

There are certainly a few others that were not fully reported.

### **Woodchat Shrike**

1 : vagrant

- May 9<sup>th</sup> 1999, an adult bird flew off south from the south allotments, probably the one which ended in Teesside.

### **Magpie**

4 : BREEDING : WINTER

Common breeder and sometimes into double figures. Perhaps about 5 pairs in the area.

### **Jay**

2 : winter : migration

Recently several records, most around Woodhorn and just over 10 to date. Most recent was in May 2014, and some may breed very close.

### **Rook**

4 : BREEDING : WINTER

Common resident, with a substantial colony at Woodhorn of around 40 nests. Some big flocks in winter.

### **Carrion Crow**

4 : BREEDING : WINTER

Common resident and several pairs. Most areas have some birds.

### **Hooded Crow**

1: vagrant

- October 1990, Golf Course

- April 25<sup>th</sup> 1998 fed with Carrion Crows on the Golf Course and then flew off north.

- May 6<sup>th</sup> 2001 one flew north over the moor

- May 12<sup>th</sup> 2016, one arrived off the sea with two Carrion Crows

- March 13<sup>th</sup> 2017 one fed on the golf course.

### **Jackdaw**

4 : BREEDING : WINTER

Breeds with Rooks and around the Church at Woodhorn, and probably also in the town. A very clear cut "Nordic" bird was found in the village on 17<sup>th</sup> October 2009, but they may be fairly regular.

### **Starling**

4 : BREEDING : WINTER : MIGRATION

Breeds commonly, and occurs in very large numbers in the summer which breed locally and then autumn, with flocks of hundreds presumably containing many continental birds. Present in all areas.

### **Rosy Starling**

1 : vagrant

- September 3<sup>rd</sup> 1994, a juvenile fed with Starlings on the golf course only a few metres from a Buff-breasted Sandpiper
- September 1<sup>st</sup> 1997, a juvenile was with Starlings on the golf course.
- June 28<sup>th</sup> 2002, part of a large arrival in the UK, an adult was in the south allotments
- October 4<sup>th</sup> 2003, another juvenile was in the south allotments
- July 7<sup>th</sup>, 2012, adult on Church Point.

### **House Sparrow**

4 : BREEDING : WINTER

This is still a common breeder around the town and fringes. However, it may be decreasing slightly but no data.

### **Tree Sparrow**

3 : breeding : winter : MIGRATION

Formerly a very scarce species this is becoming a much more regular species, and breeds at Woodhorn. Autumn active migrants occur in late September and October flying south on coast.

### **Chaffinch**

4 : BREEDING : WINTER : MIGRATION

Breeds in a few areas around the town, also present in winter, although not recorded in large flocks. Autumn passage peaks in October/November, generally involving up to about 20-30 birds on the mound and at Woodhorn.

### **Brambling**

3 : MIGRATION

Scarce but annual in variable numbers in the autumn (September-November), and occasionally in small numbers in the spring (until April). Most birds fly straight through but not uncommon on the mound or on the Ash Lagoon Bank.

### **Greenfinch**

3 : breeding : winter

Present all year and probably breeds in the area but not many overall.

Specific areas are at the south end of town and the edge of the golf course.

### **Goldfinch**

4 : BREEDING : WINTER : MIGRATION

Rather common resident with small groups of up to 20 occurring almost anywhere in the area. Total numbers are quite large and autumn flocks on Golf Course are large (around 100) as migrants and many flocks fly through.

### **Linnet**

4 : BREEDING : WINTER : MIGRATION

A very common breeder on the golf course, with over 15 pairs breeding in the gorse and on the Ash Lagoon banks. Flocks on the golf course in the winter, and larger groups may be recorded in fields when conditions are correct.

### **Siskin**

3 : MIGRATION : winter

Annual in highly variable numbers but predictable in late September and October but occasionally seen through winter and into mid-April. British birds moving along the coast, but if eastern winds are active in autumn some will arrive from Scandinavia.

### **Twite**

2 : rare visitor

Not annual but usually a few, and a recent colour ringed bird had been ringed in Kintyre, almost due west. Usually feeding right out on the coast or with flocks of other species on the golf course

### **Redpoll**

(*C. flammea cabaret*)

(*C. f. flammea*)

3 : migration : winter

Both occur irregular autumn migrants in small numbers, *C f cabaret* (mostly British) August to early October, *C f flammea* (Scandinavia) in October to December and birds seen leaving in spring. Local birds annual (and might breed in Newbiggin), continental birds probably not quite annual.

### **Arctic Redpoll**

1 : vagrant

- December 8th and 9<sup>th</sup> 1996, 1 (or possibly 2) in a small Redpoll group, the bird was *C.h.exilipes*.

### **Crossbill**

2 : migration

Very unpredictable, with groups going through in numbers in some years but then many years without. Most fly through but some stop and feed and July to October.

### **Bullfinch**

(*P. pyrrhula pileata*)

3 : breeding : winter

Scarce but probably breeds and present in winter regularly. Maxima of 12-14 together at one site and mound and Woodhorn most often.

(*P. p. pyrrhula*)

- one big pale bird in early November 1997 on the mound was certainly this race.

- several in October 2004, including 3 on Church Point and others on the mound and flying in off the sea.

### **Hawfinch**

1 : vagrant

- April 4<sup>th</sup> 1992 two were feeding on a bird table in the town after a major fall

- October 20<sup>th</sup> 2007, one flew west calling at Church Pond.

### **Lapland Bunting**

2 : rare visitor

Rare in autumn and winter, but almost annual in recent year, typically one to three recorded in most years. September to November for migrants but have wintered and a late April record of an adult male in breeding plumage.

### **Snow Bunting**

3 : migration : winter

Numbers down on previous decades but still annual and now most are migrants. September to November but records to May and 5 or so per year typical.

### **Yellowhammer**

3 : breeding : winter : migration

One or two breed at north end in fields and small numbers in winter up to a dozen. One was found on Beacon Point with other migrants in early November 2002, and was surely a migrant.

### **Ortolan Bunting**

1 : vagrant

- May 19<sup>th</sup> 1996, a single female was around the mound and just inside the ash lagoon fence.

- May 21<sup>st</sup> 2013, one which appeared to be a male, was seen briefly and photographed on the cliff top south of the village.

### **Rustic Bunting**

1 : vagrant

- October 1990 a first was found on the mound.

### **Little Bunting**

1 : vagrant

- October 1<sup>st</sup> 1989, a single was on 1<sup>st</sup> on beach top

- October 1991, three were on Church Point

- November 1995, one was on the mound

### **Reed Bunting**

4 : BREEDING : WINTER : migration

Breeds on the golf course and in the fields behind the village, perhaps about 5 to 10 pairs. Autumn migrants from September to November on the coast, and reasonable number wintering (maybe 10 on average), usually by pools.

### **Black-faced Bunting**

1 : vagrant

- October 23<sup>rd</sup> 1999, one female or 1<sup>st</sup> year bird was by the hedge at Woodhorn Church. This was only the second British record of this extremely rare Siberian species.

## **Corn Bunting**

1 : vagrant

Formerly irregular, but now unlikely to be recorded again. Has been recorded in song in fields to about 1991/1992, unlikely to return.

## **Escapes**

### *Chilean Flamingo*

In the early 1990s these occurred from somewhere and was recorded about 5 times on the Ash Lagoons, which then passed a resemblance to the mountain alkaline lakes of south America. Records have were in spring or summer but none in 20 years

### *Emperor Goose*

A fantastically smart adult was with other geese (including a Greenland Whitefront) for about 10 days in October 2006.

### *Bar-headed Goose*

One flew through in May 1997.

### *Budgerigar*

A blue one the mound, November 21st 1997.

## **Additional “Probable” rarity records**

There are of course many records that are dropped because there is not enough detail, and there may be others that are rejected either locally or nationally. Local acceptance of a rarity which is rejected by BBRC is difficult, technically BBRC should dominate but they the data is presented.

However there are a few records that are of particularly relevance.

### **Wilson’s Petrel**

- August 31<sup>st</sup> 2004. A petrel moved north and had flight, wing and rump pattern typical of the species. It was seen only about 8 times between waves and whilst the tail was glimpsed edit, not well enough.

### **Parrot Crossbill**

- Late October 1990. There was a national arrival. At least one arrived in the pine trees on the mound at the very beginning of arrival, a very large headed and square billed bird but simply not enough experience. As the winter went on national birders got better!

There are many other birds which have occurred and just not been seen, many times, several herons and water birds must have gone through on many occasions (Spoonbill go from south north north) and that Black-browed Albatross went past on 29<sup>th</sup> June 2017, the birders just missed.