

## Rostherne Mere Quarterly Review Jul-Sep 2019

A total of 89 species were recorded from Jul-Sep with the count for the year standing at 116 species. Once again, a big thank you to everyone who has contributed records and photos.

### July



*Kingfisher, photo by Sheelagh Halsey*

Canada Goose, Great Crested Grebe, Little Grebe, Mandarin Duck, Coot and Moorhen all bred and the young were evident during the month. Five Coot broods with a total of nine young and three Great Crested Grebe broods with a total of five young were seen on the 7<sup>th</sup>. Twenty-four young Mandarin Ducks were spotted on two dates. Two Black-necked Grebes visited the Mere on the 25<sup>th</sup>. Single Common Scoters were seen on three dates. Up to 168 Tufted Ducks visited the Reserve and a Little Egret was recorded. Interestingly, a very young Water Rail was seen on the 16<sup>th</sup> providing

strong breeding evidence. Waders included around 50 Lapwings over Gale Bog and two Oystercatchers on the Cricket Pitch. Three young noisy Kestrels kept the two adults busy bringing in voles which provided wonderful views in front of the Observatory. A Hobby was also seen during the month. Unfortunately, only a single Barn Owl chick was found to have survived in the Mere Field box after six were seen in Jun. Two juvenile Tawny Owls were heard calling in Wood Bongs. Two Kingfishers were seen near Rostherne Brook and a Grey Wagtail was sighted on Brook Meadow. A Yellowhammer was seen on the edge of the Reserve near Cherrytree Farm. Two additional young Cetti's Warblers were ringed bringing the total of ringed juveniles to three. The Spotted Flycatchers bred in Wood Bongs with three seen on two occasions. At least 35 Long-tailed Tits flew between trees near the Bittern Hide. Approximately 100 Swifts were seen feeding over the Mere and around 1000 Starlings roosted in the Shaw Green Willows reed bed. By the end of month Cheshire had received more than twice the average rainfall which led to water levels in the Mere rising which resulted in extensive flooding of the margins.

### August

The water level dropped slowly throughout August. A juvenile Common Scoter was seen on the 2<sup>nd</sup> and a Black-necked Grebe on the 5<sup>th</sup>. Pochard were recorded on two dates with two on the 13<sup>th</sup>. Teal and Shoveler returned to the Mere with a single Teal seen on the 23<sup>rd</sup> and



*House Martin, photo by Malcolm Calvert*

six Shoveler seen on the 26<sup>th</sup>. Three Little Grebes including a juvenile were spotted on the 27<sup>th</sup>. A Water Rail was heard by Blackburns Bridge on three dates and a Little Egret was recorded on one date. A Greenshank was recorded on the 25<sup>th</sup>. Several Curlews were heard calling near the Reserve on three dates. There were good views of a Hobby hunting over the Mere and of the family of Kestrels in front of the

Observatory. Two Green Woodpeckers were seen on the 5<sup>th</sup>. A House Martin was ringed by Malcolm, the first since 2001. An interesting Chiffchaff in post juvenile moult was seen in the Hawthorn in front of the Observatory. In addition, several young Willow Warblers were seen in the same location. A family group of Spotted Flycatchers feeding around Church Field provided excellent views. Malcolm had ringed a total of 145 Reed Warblers by the 26<sup>th</sup> August. A further two young Cetti's Warblers were ringed by the end of the month bringing the total of ringed juveniles to five. Finally, it was honour and a privilege to present Dave Clarke's Hide to Dave's Family on the 4<sup>th</sup> August.

## **September**

Canada Geese numbers started to increase with 500 recorded by the 23<sup>rd</sup>. At least five Egyptian Geese visited the Reserve at dusk on several dates. Shoveler numbers rose significantly with 90 recorded on the 7<sup>th</sup>. The first two Wigeon since April were recorded on the 20<sup>th</sup>. Forty-four Mandarin Ducks were seen in the evening of the 30<sup>th</sup>, the highest count since 54 were seen in January 2012 which is the Reserve high. A Great White Egret and single Little Egrets visited the Mere margins. Around 70 Lapwings were seen over Gale Bog and a Redshank visited on the 8<sup>th</sup>. Up to 12 Buzzards, three Kestrels, two Sparrowhawks and a Peregrine were seen over the Reserve. A female Marsh Harrier was seen on two dates. However, the highlight of the month was the almost daily sightings of a family party of up to four Hobbys hunting dragonflies over the Mere. Adults and juveniles provided stunning views from the Observatory. Three Barn Owls, two Little Owls and two Tawny Owls provided an 'Owl Bonanza' for Ian McCulloch on an evening in the middle of the month. Spotted Flycatchers continued to show well during the first week. A family party of six Bullfinches was seen in Shaw Green Willows. Nine Goldcrest, presumably on passage, were ringed by John Adshead on the 14<sup>th</sup>. Yet another juvenile Cetti's Warbler was ringed by Malcolm bringing the total for the year to six! The 100<sup>th</sup> Chiffchaff for year was ringed on the 18<sup>th</sup>! Finally, Steve Parker and the South Lancashire Bat Group surveyed Harpers Bank Wood

catching Whiskered, Natterer's and Daubenton's bats. Previous surveys indicate that the habitat along the margins of the Mere supports up to eight different species of bat!



*Juvenile Kestrels, photo by Rob Wang and Kingfisher, photo by Malcolm Calvert*



*Path to the Snipe Marsh on 29<sup>th</sup> July! photo by Malcolm Calvert and Dave's Hide, photo by Bill Bellamy*



*Hobby, photo by Steve Collins and Juvenile Chiffchaff, photo by Kaz Horrocks*



*Hobby, photo by Rob Wang and a Hobby eating a dragonfly on the wing, photo by Steve Collins*



*Kestrel covering and the culprit is revealed, photos by Rob Wang*



*The sixth juvenile Cetti's Warbler ringed (above) and the 100<sup>th</sup> Chiffchaff ringed, photos by Malcolm Calvert*



*Comma, photo by Sheelagh Halsey*



*Black-tailed Skimmer, photo by Sheelagh Halsey*



*Ruddy Darters copulating, photo by Sheelagh Halsey*



*Migrant Hawker, note the damaged wing, photo by Sheelagh Halsey*



*Whiskered Bat, note that the bat has its mouth open as it is echolocating and the hold method is from an experienced bat work and should not be attempted by anyone who finds a bat, all trapping is done under licence for a research project, photo by Sheelagh Halsey*



*Natterer's Bat, photo by Sheelagh Halsey*