

# The Birds of Oakhill and Goole Brick Ponds 2012

Compiled, collated and written by Paul Adams

Welcome to this report detailing the species of bird recorded at the site in 2012. Before going into the list I must make a personal comment. The Oakhill and Goole Brick Ponds area has for many many years been a much loved place to visit. Whether to see the abundance of wildlife. Or to simply take a pleasant ramble and enjoy. Situated on the western outskirts of the town of Goole, this extensive area has a diverse range of habitats. From large freshwater ponds to wetland reedbed. Open meadow to woodland. It is only in recent years, that the area has been given the much needed attention that it richly deserves. The Friends of Oakhill. A group of enthusiastic, hard working and dedicated volunteers have over several years transformed what was a place that had sadly fallen into neglect, into a place that the people Goole and beyond can enjoy and be proud of. No easy task considering the large size of the area. I highly commend their efforts. Conservation work is not easy and is always on going. Volunteers are the unsung heroes.

To my knowledge no year report has been written before, hence this. But it is worth mentioning some species that have been seen in years gone by. Such as, 5 species of Owl. (those being Little. Tawny. Barn. Short-eared and Long-eared). Others include Hawfinch. Snow Bunting, and even a rarity in the form of Melodious Warbler! Some readers may know more? I would be more than interested to hear.

2012 has seen the recording of species that are in serious decline and under real threat on a nationwide scale. These are Grey Partridge. Turtle Dove. Willow Tit. Song Thrush and Yellowhammer. No proof of breeding has been found of any of these. However they have been regularly recorded. Particularly during the breeding season. Our summer visiting Turtle Dove is a delightful sight, as is its pleasant purring song. Given the large size of the area it is possible that there could be 3 pairs of Willow Tit. Three separate areas showed this species present on a regular basis. The female Willow Tit excavates her nest hole in old split or decaying willow. Oakhill and the Brick Ponds have ideal nesting habitat for Willow Tit. Song Thrush and Yellowhammer used to be "two a penny". Today they are uncommon and increasingly becoming scarce.

I am most grateful to the following who have contributed and informed me of their sightings during 2012. Daniel Challenger. Patricia Challenger. Shealagh Cynfal-Wells. Jamie Evans. Barry Greenacre. Peter Hinks. Peter Kendall. Mike Pilsworth. Brian Smith. Lorainne Smith. Glen Widdowson. I hope you find it an interesting read.

## Systematic List

**Mute Swan**                      *Cygnus olor*

A pair present at the Brick Ponds in most months. Has bred at Oakhill in the small stretch of reeds.

**Greylag Goose**                *Anser anser*

Skeins of up to 70 passing over during the winter months. Up to 6 occasionally at Oakhill.

**Canada Goose**                *Branta canadensis*

1 to 2 on occasions at Oakhill. C50 noted coming into roost on 4<sup>th</sup> November (DC)

**Shelduck**                        *Tadorna tadorna*

2 flying over on 28<sup>th</sup> March. (DC. BS. LS)

**Wigeon** *Anas penelope*  
A calling individual on 4<sup>th</sup> November (DC)

**Teal** *Anas crecca*  
Noted in the wetland area with 12 on 4<sup>th</sup> February and 4 on 19<sup>th</sup> February (DC)

**Mallard** *Anas platyrhynchos*  
2 pairs at the Brick Ponds.

**Tufted Duck** *Aythya fuligula*  
Recorded on many dates at Oakhill. A maximum of 32 on 1<sup>st</sup> March (PH)

**Goosander** *Mergus merganser*  
2 noted on 17<sup>th</sup> March (JE). 3 flew over east on 18<sup>th</sup> March.

**Red-legged Partridge** *Alectoris rufa*  
2 at the car park on 10<sup>th</sup> June.

**Grey Partridge** *Perdix perdix*  
A pair were regularly seen near the Brick Ponds during the summer months (DC, PH)

**Pheasant** *Phasianus colchicus*  
Present throughout the year.

**Cormorant** *Phalacrocorax carbo*  
1 to 2 occasionally fishing at Oakhill.

**Grey Heron** *Ardea cinerea*  
Singles noted at various site locations throughout the year.

**Little Grebe** *Tachybaptus ruficollis*  
A single was heard at Oakhill on 23<sup>rd</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup> March (PH. BS), and seen on 9<sup>th</sup> April (PA)

**Great Crested Grebe** *Podiceps cristatus*  
A pair successfully bred at Oakhill. An occupied nest was discovered on 16<sup>th</sup> June (DC). A brood of 4 young "stripeys" on 15<sup>th</sup> July (PA. DC)

**Marsh Harrier** *Circus aeruginosus*  
1 to 2 seen on many dates during the early and later months of the year.

**Sparrowhawk** *Accipiter nisus*  
Regularly recorded throughout the year. Probably breeds.

**Buzzard** *Buteo buteo*  
Noted on many dates by many observers at Oakhill. 3 on 5<sup>th</sup> September (PH)

**Kestrel** *Falco tinnunculus*  
Present throughout the year.

**Peregrine** *Falco peregrinus*  
1 hunting on 21<sup>st</sup> February.

**Water Rail**                    *Rallus aquaticus*  
Heard on many dates (DC. SCW) in the wetland area. Also heard to the east of the Brick Ponds.

**Moorhen**                    *Gallinula chloropus*  
Present throughout the year.

**Coot**                        *Fulica atra*  
Up to 8 at Oakhill throughout the year.

**Lapwing**                    *Vanellus vanellus*  
Flocks seen in fields near Oakhill. 27 flying over Oakhill Pond on 11<sup>th</sup> November.

**Snipe**                        *Gallinago gallinago*  
Singles flushed from the wetland areas on several dates.

**Woodcock**                    *Scolopax rusticola*  
1 on 15<sup>th</sup> January (DC)

**Common Gull**                *Larus canus*  
Occasional visitor to Oakhill in single figure numbers.

**Black-headed Gull**        *Larus ridibundus*  
Occasional visitor to Oakhill in single figure numbers.

**Wood Pigeon**                *Columba palumbus*  
Present throughout the year. Large numbers 200 + during the winter months.

**Collared Dove**                *Streptopelia decaocto*  
1 was in Potter Grange on 18<sup>th</sup> March.

**Turtle Dove**                *Streptopelia turtur*  
First noted on 15<sup>th</sup> May (DC. JE). Present throughout the breeding season near the Brick Ponds with 2 seen on several dates (many observers)

**Cuckoo**                        *Cuculus canorus*  
1 on 13<sup>th</sup> May (PH). 1 on 14<sup>th</sup> May (SCW)

**Tawny Owl**                    *Strix aluco*  
Many records. Noted at Potter Grange (DC) and a close flying one at Oakhill (LS)

**Long-eared Owl**                *Asio otus*  
The surveys conducted by Daniel Challenger and Glen Widdowson proved the presence of this highly nocturnal species. A female was heard near the level crossings area on 14<sup>th</sup> July with a pair being accidentally flushed the day after.

**Short-eared Owl**                *Asio flammeus*  
1 was seen on 4<sup>th</sup> November (DC)

**Swift**                         *Apus apus*  
A few sightings of spring passage birds. The first being 3 on 13<sup>th</sup> May. (PH)

**Kingfisher**            *Alcedo atthis*

Many records from the Brick and Oakhill Ponds. One was watched fetching and carrying food at the Brick Ponds.

**Green Woodpecker**   *Picus viridis*

Present throughout the year. Proven breeding by Peter Hinks.

**Great Spotted Woodpecker**   *Dendrocopos major*

Present throughout the year.

**Magpie**            *Pica pica*

Present throughout the year.

**Jay**                *Garrulus glandarius*

Singles on 28<sup>th</sup> January. 25<sup>th</sup> March. 13<sup>th</sup> August. 3 on 18<sup>th</sup> November. (PA. DC. PH)

**Jackdaw**            *Corvus monedula*

A few records during winter.

**Rook**                *Corvus frugilegus*

Seen on the eastern edge of the recording area in good numbers.

**Carrion Crow**   *Corvus corone*

Present throughout the year.

**Goldcrest**        *Regulus regulus*

Many records January to March. September to December.

**Blue Tit**            *Parus caeruleus*

Abundant all areas.

**Great Tit**         *Parus major*

Abundant all areas.

**Coal Tit**          *Parus ater*

Many records of individuals January to March. September to December.

**Willow Tit**        *Parus montanus*

Present throughout the year at three locations.

**Skylark**            *Alauda arvensis*

A regular singing bird March to June. Southerly autumn passage noted.

**Swallow**            *Hirundo rustica*

The first was noted on 18<sup>th</sup> April (DC). Few records for the summer. 10 on 16<sup>th</sup> June (DC)

**House Martin**        *Delichon urbica*

The first was seen on 18<sup>th</sup> May (PH). 20 on 16<sup>th</sup> June (DC)

**Long-tailed Tit**        *Aegithalos caudatus*

Present throughout the year in good numbers. Several parties numbering 10 to 20.

- Chiffchaff**                    *Phylloscopus collybita*  
The first was heard on 18<sup>th</sup> March. Thereafter numbers increased. Maximum of 16 on 9<sup>th</sup> April.
- Willow Warbler**            *Phylloscopus trochilus*  
The first was on 16<sup>th</sup> April (PH)
- Blackcap**                    *Sylvia atricapilla*  
The first heard on 9<sup>th</sup> April.
- Garden Warbler**            *Sylvia borin*  
The first on 9<sup>th</sup> April.
- Lesser Whitethroat**      *Sylvia curruca*  
The first records was on 5<sup>th</sup> May during the Dawn Chorus Walk. (PA, DC. MP). With 5 heard.
- Whitethroat**                *Sylvia communis*  
The first heard on 30<sup>th</sup> April (PH). 6 on 13<sup>th</sup> May.
- Cetti's Warbler**            *Cettia cetti*  
One gave a burst of song on 21<sup>st</sup> February near the wetland area. (PA)
- Grasshopper Warbler**    *Locustella naevia*  
A somewhat late arrival on 14<sup>th</sup> July with an individual “reeling” to the east of the car park, (PA, DC. JE. GW)
- Sedge Warbler**            *Acrocephalus schoenobaenus*  
First heard on 30<sup>th</sup> April (PH)
- Reed Warbler**            *Acrocephalus scirpaceus*  
First heard on 30<sup>th</sup> April (PH)
- Treecreeper**                *Certhia familiaris*  
Present throughout the year.
- Wren**                        *Troglodytes troglodytes*  
Present throughout the year.
- Starling**                    *Sturnus vulgaris*  
Occasional visitor to Potter Grange in small numbers.
- Blackbird**                 *Turdus merula*  
Present throughout the year. Larger numbers in November C100 +)
- Fieldfare**                 *Turdus pilaris*  
Flocks of up to 20 January to March. C50+ in November.
- Song Thrush**               *Turdus philomelos*  
Noted territorial at Potter Grange and the Brick Ponds. Occasionally heard at Oakhill.
- Redwing**                   *Turdus iliacus*  
A few single figure records from January to March. The autumn returnee influx more substantial C150+.

**Mistle Thrush**      *Turdus viscivorus*  
2 were noted on 28<sup>th</sup> January (DC. BS)

**Robin**              *Erithacus rubecula*  
Present throughout the year.

**Duncock**            *Prunella modularis*  
Present throughout the year.

**Grey Wagtail**      *Motacilla cinerea*  
1 flew north on 8<sup>th</sup> January (PA)

**Pied Wagtail**        *Motacilla alba*  
Singles on many dates mainly around the wetland area.

**Meadow Pipit**      *Anthus pratensis*  
A single to east of the car park throughout the year.

**Chaffinch**           *Fringilla coelebs*  
Present throughout the year in good numbers.

**Greenfinch**        *Carduelis chloris*  
Few and far between. Records mainly from Potter Grange.

**Goldfinch**         *Carduelis carduelis*  
Present throughout the year. Charms of up 30.

**Siskin**              *Carduelis spinus*  
1 at Potter Grange on 14<sup>th</sup> January (PA) and 7 at the level crossing on 5<sup>th</sup> November (PH)

**Linnet**              *Carduelis cannabina*  
A scattering of records throughout the year, individuals to west of the Brick Ponds.

**Lesser Redpoll**    *Carduelis cabaret*  
Several records in November. A maximum of 7 on 8<sup>th</sup> December (DC)

**Bullfinch**          *Pyrrhula pyrrhula*  
Present throughout the year and breeding at Oakhill.

**Yellowhammer**    *Emberiza citrinella*  
1 record only! A single on 11<sup>th</sup> November.

**Reed Bunting**      *Emberiza schoeniclus*  
Present throughout the year in the wetland area.