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## **Fylingdales Moor e-Newsletter No 9. August 2008.**

### **Bird Surveys: highlights of the 2008 season.**

At the end of July the Fylingdales Moor Bird Surveys for 2008 were completed, and all data from our fantastic band of survey volunteers was received in the Yorkshire Office. This year, surveyors covered 20 one-kilometre squares across the Moor (this is more than 72% of the total area of the Moor!). So, a tremendous vote of thanks to Bill Ashton-Wickett, Richard Atterby, Kevin Benton, Chris Blakeley, John Cavana, Rona Charles, Brian Cockerill, Tom Denney, Gareth Dixon, Stephen Duncan, Geoff Edmund, John Knight, John McEachen, Wilf Norman, Rachel Pickering, Tony Summerson and Brian Walker

During this year's FMBS surveys, a total of 72 different species were recorded, bringing the overall total of birds recorded on the Moor during FMBS surveys to 82 since surveys began in 2005. In 2008, new species were **Chiffchaff, Spotted Flycatcher, Green Woodpecker, Buzzard, Peregrine Falcon, Common Gull, Great Black-Backed Gull, Lesser Black-Backed Gull, Tree Sparrow, Garden Warbler, Grey Partridge, Moorhen, Collared Dove and Rock Dove**. Preliminary calculations give evidence for probable population increases in 10 species - Blackbird, Canada Goose, Chaffinch, Linnet, Meadow Pipit, Skylark, Starling, Swallow, Swift and Wren. There was evidence for a possible decline in Herring Gull populations. For all you "Twitchers" out there, here is the full list of birds recorded during FMBS Surveys since 2005:

**Blackbird, Blackcap, Black-headed Gull, Blue Tit, Bullfinch, Buzzard, Canada Goose, Carrion Crow, Chaffinch, Chiffchaff, Coal Tit, Collared Dove, Common Gull, Crossbill, Cuckoo, Curlew, Dipper, Dunnock, Garden Warbler, Greater Spotted Woodpecker, Goldcrest, Golden Plover, Goldfinch, Great Tit, Greater Black-Backed Gull, Greenfinch, Green Woodpecker, Grey Heron, Grey Partridge, Grey Wagtail, Greylag Goose, Hen Harrier, Herring Gull, Hobby, House Martin, Jackdaw, Jay, Kestrel, Lapwing, Lesser Black-Backed Gull, Linnet, Long tailed tit, Magpie, Mallard, Marsh Tit, Meadow Pipit, Merlin, Mistle Thrush, Montagu's Harrier, Moorhen, Peregrine Falcon, Pheasant, Pied Wagtail, Red Grouse, Redpoll, Redstart, Reed Bunting, Robin, Rock Dove, Rook, Siskin, Skylark, Snipe, Song Thrush, Sparrowhawk, Spotted Flycatcher, Starling, Stonechat, Swallow, Swift, Treecreeper, Tree Sparrow, Twite, Wheatear, Whinchat, Whitethroat, Willow Tit, Willow Warbler, Wood Pigeon, Wood Warbler, Wren and Yellowhammer.**

Outside of the formal surveys, notable species recorded on the Moor in 2008 include: **Osprey, Marsh Harrier, Red Kite, Hen Harrier, Quail, Black Redstart, Ring Ouzel, Sand Martin and Red Backed Shrike**. Many thanks also to Nick Addey, Mick Francis and Craig Shaw for sending bird records from their trips to the Moor.



**Male Red Backed Shrike on Fylingdales Moor – a very special visitor in 2008, the Red backed shrike is now extinct as a breeding bird in Britain (Photo: Mick Francis).**

Next year will mark five consecutive years of formal FMBS surveys, at the end of which I hope to produce a booklet about the birds of Fylingdales Moor. I shall be looking for good quality photographs and/or black and white line drawings/engravings to illustrate the book. So **photographers** and **artists** among you please bear this in mind. Good photographs or line drawings of any of the species listed above will be required.

**Young volunteers help Conservation on Fylingdales Moor.**

During the year, in two separate projects, young people from the area have carried out volunteer conservation projects on Fylingdales Moor. In the first of these, schoolchildren from **Fyling Hall School** planted juniper seedlings in an area of the moor close to the existing “lone juniper” discovered last year. Under the watchful supervision of tree expert Peter Woods, and Wildlife Ranger **John Cavana**, Year 9 students planted juniper saplings on the Moor. Juniper trees are very rare on the North York Moors, and it is hoped that these new trees, together with the existing ancient Juniper, will provide seeds and cuttings for other replanting schemes throughout the National Park.

In the second project, local teenagers **Jim Goodliffe** and **Liam Watt Pattison** built, installed and monitored 10 nest boxes in a wooded area bordering Jugger Howe beck. The boxes, designed to attract **Pied Flycatchers** to the area, were expertly constructed, carefully erected and closely monitored by Jim and Liam as part of their Duke of Edinburgh’s Silver Award programme, and they should be congratulated for their hard work, diligence and enthusiasm for conservation. Unfortunately, the boys’ efforts were not rewarded with breeding Pied Flycatchers, but they did succeed in attracting a pair of **Coal Tits** (which successfully raised 5 young). The boys are determined to keep an eye on the boxes in future years to see if their efforts are eventually rewarded.

Continuing our efforts to encourage student projects on the Moor, **Andrea Hudspeth**, an undergraduate student from **Bishop Burton College**, is carrying out a project to compare bird abundance on Fylingdales Moor with that on an “equivalent” piece of moorland on Spaunton Moor. Andrea’s research will form part of her Degree studies, and I hope to bring you her findings in the next e-newsletter.

**Surveys of other Wildlife on the Moor.**

A new survey of Flies (Diptera) began in 2008, and is being carried out by the renowned entomologist **Roy Crossley**, F.R.E.S. Notable records so far include the tiny crane-fly *Dicranomyia distendens* (Nb); the hover-fly *Platycheirus sticticus* (Nb) (a scarce species although probably overlooked), the whopping great horse-fly *Tabanus sudeticus* (a speciality of the North York Moors), and the snipe-fly *Ibisia marginata*, a scarce streamside western species, this being probably the first record for Yorkshire and eastern Britain!

Last year, the **Court Leet** of the Manor of Fyling dug several new ponds on the Moor. These ponds aimed to provide new habitats for wildlife, and provide a valuable source of water in case of wildfires. At the large pond near Derwent Heads, we have already seen the fruits of these initiatives – the pond has attracted a small colony of **Palmate Newts**.

## **Forthcoming activities and events in 2008.**

### **ANCIENT FYLINGDALES! The Heritage Trail on Brow Moor.**

Last year, the Strickland estate in association with **Whitby Museum** devised a self-guided **heritage archaeology trail** on Stoup Brow Moor, starting at the small car park at the Ravenscar mast (Approx. NZ969/014). The trail has again been open to the public during 2008. The trail allows visitors to see some of the remarkable history of this part of the Moor – from prehistoric burial mounds and mysterious rock art, right up to the “foxholes” used for military training during the Second World War. It also gives stunning views of Robin Hood’s Bay. Choose a fine day and allow between 1 and 1.5 hours. A booklet with map and description of the Heritage Trail is soon to be available as a PDF download from the Hawk and Owl Trust **Website** ([www.hawkandowl.org](http://www.hawkandowl.org)). The trail is also an excellent way to view some of the **wildlife** on Fylingdales Moor. Whilst in the area, why not visit the **Whitby Museum** and see the amazing **carved prehistoric stone** found on Fylingdales Moor – thought to be about 4,000 years old!



**Ancient carved stone from Fylingdales Moor (archaeologists are not sure what the carving represents – I think it’s the first picture of a Hen Harrier flying over the Moor! Photo North York Moors National Park Authority.**

### **COMING SOON! Hawk and Owl Trust’s Family Day. Blacksmith’s Arms, Lastingham YO62 6TL, Sunday August 31<sup>st</sup> 2008, 2.30 pm.**

Thanks (again) to the generosity of Peter and Hillary Trafford of the **Blacksmith’s Arms, Lastingham**, we are holding another Family **Hawk and Owl Day** in the Pub and gardens on **Sunday August 31<sup>st</sup> 2008** from 2.30pm. The aim of the event is to introduce young persons (as well as a few “oldies”) to the conservation work of the Trust (especially on Fylingdales Moor in North Yorkshire), to enable visitors to see and get close to some magnificent **Live Birds of Prey**, to learn more about these wonderful creatures, and to have lots of fun! This year we hope to have Barn Owls, Falcons and Hawks plus a **Big Surprise** (and I do mean BIG!). There will be the usual range of **Art and Craft Stalls, Raffle Prizes**, and a **Special Barbecue** featuring the great food for which the pub is renowned (plus, of course, some fine **real ales!**). In addition, the renowned vocalist “**Gray**” has again agreed to perform in the evening – why not stay on for a real musical treat? So, bring the whole family along for a great afternoon and evening in support of the Trust – **Admission is Free!** If you would like to

contribute a raffle prize, or make a donation in support of the event, please contact me directly. (Please note that neither the Blacksmith's Arms, nor the Hawk and Owl Trust, can be held liable for any loss or damage to property, or accident or injury to persons attending this event).

## **GET OUT MORE!** Join the "HOOTS", or try the "new" Lyke Wake Walk?

In association with the North York Moors National Park's Volunteer Service, a group of volunteers (the "HOOTS") augment the survey work of our biodiversity monitoring volunteers by helping with many of the diverse tasks associated with moorland management (anything from litter collection to dry stone walling and heather burning). Every fortnight on Fridays, this group meet under the supervision of Bill Ashton-Wickett and John Cavana, and get stuck in to help us manage the moorland ecosystems. If you are local, and would like to get involved, please contact Bill at [B.AshtonWickett@northyorkmoors-npa.gov.uk](mailto:B.AshtonWickett@northyorkmoors-npa.gov.uk).

## **AND MORE!** Proposed Jugger Howe Nature Trail

The **North York Moors National Park Authority** have recently repaired and upgraded the part of the **Lyke Wake Walk** that runs either side of the valley of Jugger Howe Beck. Access to this part of the Lyke Wake Walk is from the Jugger Howe lay-by (on the A171 between Scarborough and Whitby). The area, which is part of Jugger Howe Moor, is well worth a visit for its scenery and wildlife, and we are most grateful to the National Park Authority for doing such a magnificent job on this section of the moor. During 2008 we have been working with the National park Authority to develop a new Fylingdales Moor **Nature Trail** on Jugger Howe Moor. This proposed circular trail (about 4km) will use part of the newly refurbished section of the Lyke Wake Walk, a pathway along Jugger Howe Beck, and back through the heather moorland of **Jugger Howe Moor**. A section of the Nature Trail will be accessible to disabled persons at certain times of the year, and we hope that the Trail will be open sometime during 2009.

## **THANK YOU!** The Trust receives continued support for the Fylingdales Moor Moorland Conservation Area.

This year we are extremely grateful for the financial support that we received from **the Court Leet of the Manor of Fyling**, the **Blacksmith's Arms**, **Lastingham** and **APAB Ltd**. A very big "Thank You" to all! We are also grateful for the scientific, technical and financial support that we receive from the **North York Moors National Park Authority** and **Natural England**. We also thank the Family and Estate of the late **Rosemary Lush** for their donation in memory of a Lady "who just loved Owls". Last, but certainly not least, we thank Sir Fred and the **Strickland Estate** for supporting this wonderful conservation initiative.

**BUT....**

## **We still need YOUR help!**

Conservation is very costly, and looking after such a vast area of fragile moorland involves a great deal of time and money, so we desperately need your support to help us with this and other conservation projects in the UK – **please do join the Hawk and Owl Trust** (you can do so through our website or by contacting myself or our main office on **0870 990 3889**) or **make a donation**, and help us to conserve, encourage and protect all wild Birds of Prey and their habitats. We would also like to hear from anybody who has contacts with Yorkshire-based Companies or other Organizations – we would like to try to involve the Corporate Sector as partners in our conservation activities. Please feel free to forward this email to anyone else that you feel may be interested, or might help us. **N.B.** If you haven't done so already, **PLEASE NOTE MY NEW email ADDRESS (SEE BELOW).**

Regards,

John.

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