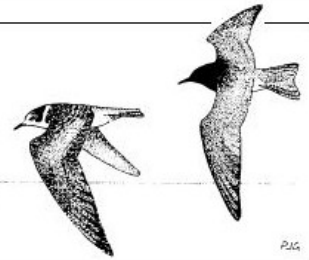


# ***Stanford Ringing Group***



## **STANFORD RINGING GROUP ANNUAL REPORT 2017**

### **Summary**



**Stanford Reservoir in Summer 2017; Muddy and Beautiful**

- In 2017 the Stanford Ringing Group (SRG) ringed 7,385 new birds
- The group also processed 2,103 re-trapped birds
- The total number of birds processed was therefore 9,513.
- The SRG ringed a total of 57 species
- Thirty one birds from other sites were re-trapped or observed at Stanford. Of these, the outstanding bird was a Black Tailed Godwit originally ringed in Northern Iceland. Three other birds were ringed abroad; two thrushes were ringed in autumn in the Low Countries, illustrating the influx of winter birds to the UK. A Reed Warbler was ringed in western France, on the Loire in July.
- Eight migratory warblers ringed at Stanford were re-trapped abroad. The distribution confirms that the west coast of continental Europe is an important migratory route in autumn. Two Blackcaps were ringed south of Paris, suggesting that a wider dispersion is also possible. A Redwing was controlled in Northern Italy, illustrating the wide distribution of migratory thrushes in winter.

- Environmental management work continued as usual from January through March. Many thanks to all who took part.
- Many thanks to all those who helped during the year and to Severn Trent Water and Park Farms for allowing access to their land.
- We would also like to thank Severn Trent Water for financing the feeding station in Blower's Lodge Bay and continuing to support our activities.

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## Introduction

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Birds have been ringed at Stanford Reservoir since 1976. The full story of the ringing and associated wildlife activities can be found on the group's website at [www.stanfordrg.org.uk](http://www.stanfordrg.org.uk). A Blog is maintained which gives an account of our activities, throughout the year. It can be found at: <http://stanfordrg.blogspot.com/>

Birds are ringed as a group activity, weather permitting, from April to the end of December. From January to March, the group, augmented by helpers, undertake conservation work to enhance the area for birds. The main activities include cutting back broad leaf saplings to encourage the scrub which warblers and other breeding birds require, and clearing out the rides which are used to mist net birds. A feeding station is supplied and maintained on a weekly basis in Blower's Lodge Bay with seed, nuts and fat balls.

Unusually at Stanford in the summer the reservoir water levels were lowered to allow work on the overflow and slipway, allowing Little Ringed Plover and Lapwing to breed and be ringed. This also allowed local birdwatchers excellent opportunities to see unusual species (see appendix 1 for a full account).

Most birds were trapped using mist nets, with occasional use of traps for specialist species such as Meadow Pipit. The main site used was centred around Blower's Lodge Bay, with supplementary use of the Leicestershire Paddock in summer.

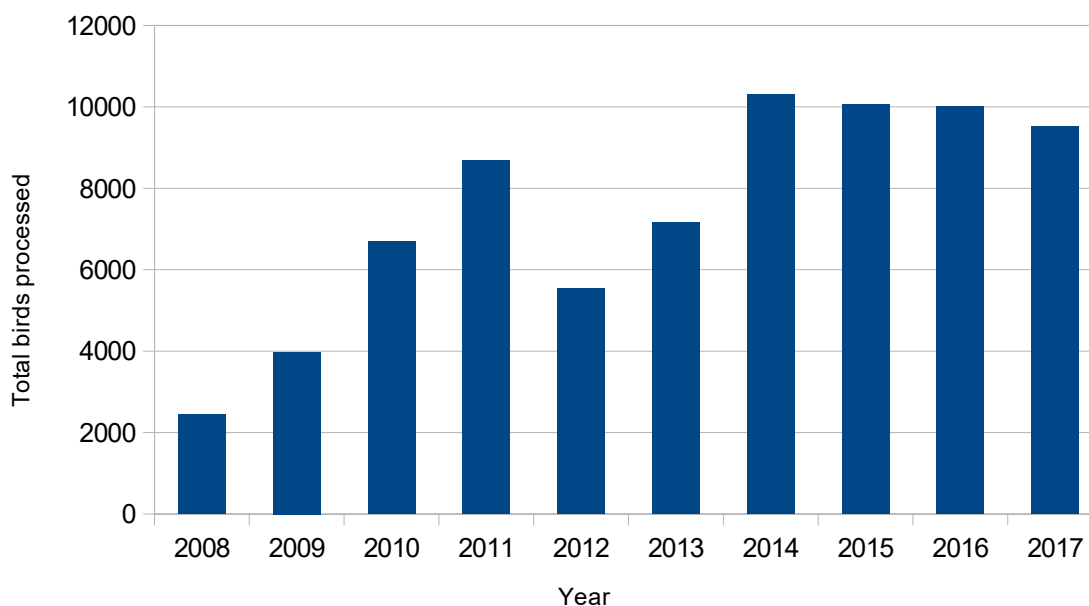
By law, wild bird ringing in the UK is licensed by the British Trust for Ornithology (BTO). The procedures of BTO's *Ringers' Manual* (2001) were followed throughout to secure the welfare of the birds. All sessions were conducted from dawn until approximately midday.

All extraction, ringing and recording was carried out by group members who are either ringers licensed by the BTO, or are trainees under their direct supervision. All data were entered into the BTO's data manager IPMR and were submitted electronically.

## The Ringing Year

During 2017 there were 36 group ringing sessions at weekends, augmented by midweek individual or small group sessions. Slightly fewer birds were processed in 2017 in comparison to the previous year's total of 8,207. However, this year's total is consistent with the previous four years and illustrates the group commitment to both ringing and providing suitable habitat management for breeding birds to flourish.

**Total birds ringed per year 2008-17**



**Birds ringed per month in 2017**

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
0	35	50	117	499	453	722	1724	2540	720	318	207

The group normally does not convene for bird ringing until April, when the first migrants return, the completion of conservation work at weekends being prioritised. The small totals in this period illustrate occasional midweek individual ringing sessions, weather permitting.

The fifth year of the BTO's Constant Effort Scheme was completed successfully. The CES runs largely from May until August, with migration making up the bulk of birds from mid August until (approximately) mid October.

The numbers in November and December are then boosted by numbers of migratory thrushes, mainly Redwing and Fieldfare, but also including Blackbird and Song Thrush, and of finches including Greenfinch and Lesser Redpoll.

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## Annual Species Accounts 2017

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### Non- Passerines

The work on the dam and spillway allowed some unusual species to breed at the reservoir. Thus two Little Ringed Plover and two Lapwing were ringed, both species as pulli. This was an excellent year for Stock Doves, with the efforts of Adam and the nest box team much in evidence. This was also a record year for Barn Owls, again largely due to the good numbers of pulli ringed. Collared Dove is an unusual species for us, and pulli were ringed from one nest in a barn, courtesy of Park Farm.

#### **Sparrowhawk**

Three birds ringed 30 Apr, 23 Sep, 25 Oct

#### **Little Ringed Plover**

Two birds ringed as pulli 30 May

#### **Lapwing**

Two birds ringed as pulli 17 Jun

#### **Stock Dove**

Fifty birds ringed, includes forty five pulli

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
0	0	0	2	6	1	10	15	7	9	0	0

#### **Woodpigeon**

One bird ringed 07 Jul

#### **Collared Dove**

Three birds ringed as pulli 10 Jun and 15 Jul

#### **Barn Owl**

Eleven birds ringed, includes nine pulli

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
0	0	0	2	0	0	0	7	2	0	0	0

#### **Tawny Owl**

Two birds ringed as pulli on 15 and 20 May

#### **Kingfisher**

Six birds ringed

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
0	0	0	0	1	1	1	0	3	0	0	0

**Green Woodpecker**

One bird ringed 03 Oct

**Great Spotted Woodpecker**

Seven birds ringed

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
0	0	0	0	0	1	2	1	0	2	1	0

**Hirundines**

Swallow pulli were ringed at Park Farms in early summer, and 49 birds ringed during their migration. It was the second best ever year for Sand Martin, however, it would be necessary to go back to 1976, to get the best ever total of 41. Similarly, all the House Martins were ringed on migration.

**Sand Martin**

Twenty one birds ringed

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
0	0	0	0	0	0	5	3	13	0	0	0

**Swallow**

Eighty two birds ringed, including 33 pulli.

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
0	0	0	0	0	25	5	26	26	0	0	0

**House Martin**

Forty two birds ringed on 02/06/16 and 02/09/16

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	42	0	0	0

**Larks, Pipits and Wagtails**

An excellent year for Meadow Pipits, all in late summer and autumn, on migration. This was the third best yearly total.

**Meadow Pipit**

Eighty five birds ringed

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	82	1	2	0

**Yellow wagtail**

One bird ringed 07 Aug

**Pied Wagtail**

Four birds ringed as pulli 15 Jul

**Wren, Dunnock, Robins and Chats**

An excellent year for Wrens, this being the third best yearly total, but this was bettered by the second best ever year for Robins, with good breeding success boosted by migratory numbers in September and October. This was also the second best year for Redstart, a purely migratory species at Stanford.

**Wren**

One hundred and seventy nine birds ringed, including four pulli.

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
0	0	0	8	2	11	35	44	22	23	29	5

**Dunnock**

Eighty two birds ringed

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
0	1	3	6	6	9	7	13	29	8	0	0

**Robin**

One hundred and thirty seven birds ringed, includes 10 pulli.

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
0	0	0	1	3	20	24	40	37	8	1	3

**Redstart**

Fifteen birds ringed

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
0	0	0	0	0	0	1	7	7	0	0	0

**Thrushes**

This was an unremarkable year for Thrushes. Of the resident species, Blackbird appeared to have some limited degree of success, but Song Thrush to have had a poor season. Numbers of both were boosted by autumnal migratory birds. Fieldfare and Redwing came as winter birds.

**Blackbird**

Fifty eight birds ringed

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
0	0	0	1	4	4	14	25	8	20	28	14

**Fieldfare**

Twenty birds ringed.

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	9	11

**Song Thrush**

Forty birds ringed

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
0	0	0	0	3	1	1	7	4	17	10	5

**Redwing**

Two hundred and fifty four birds ringed.

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	65	99	90

**Warblers**

All ten species of our usual resident warblers were present, with record years for Blackcap, Willow Warbler and Chiffchaff, although Grasshopper Warbler numbers were poor, with limited evidence of successful breeding.

Our Cetti's Warblers appear to be maintaining a small breeding population at Stanford, from a start circa 2014, although its numbers are down from a high last year of 19.

The only true rarity of the year was a single Dusky Warbler ringed in October by the group leader, a probable once in a lifetime event for him and a definite first for the site!

**Cetti's Warbler**

Seven birds ringed.

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	3	2	0	0

**Grasshopper Warbler**

Two birds ringed on 01 Jul and 23 Sep

**Sedge Warbler**

Two hundred and eleven birds ringed.

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
0	0	0	4	27	9	20	115	36	0	0	0



**Reed Warbler**

Three hundred and twenty nine birds ringed, includes 53 pulli,

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
0	0	0	0	32	44	86	120	47	0	0	0

**Lesser Whitethroat**

Sixty four birds ringed

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
0	0	0	0	3	3	10	28	20	0	0	0

**Whitethroat**

Five hundred and seventy five birds ringed

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
0	0	0	7	22	21	112	364	49	0	0	0

**Garden Warbler**

Fifty seven birds ringed

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
0	0	0	0	0	5	23	22	7	0	0	0

**Blackcap**

One thousand, eight hundred and eighty five birds ringed

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
0	0	0	16	11	32	116	417	1255	38	0	0

**Dusky warbler**

One bird ringed 19 October

**Chiffchaff**

Eight hundred and forty eight birds ringed, including six pulli

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
0	0	1	11	9	20	52	149	519	84	3	0

**Willow Warbler**

Two hundred and sixty one birds ringed

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
0	0	0	14	2	30	25	144	46	0	0	0

### Crests, Tits, Treecreeper

This was the second best ever year for Goldcrest, consisting as usual of a flush of birds during late summer and autumn. Sadly, our semi-regular single Firecrest did not appear, but we did ring two Nuthatches- an occasional bird for us.

Great and Blue Tit numbers, although not exceptional for Stanford remain robust, augmented by the efforts of our nest box team. Marsh and Willow Tit numbers remain low, and can perhaps their status can best be described as '*hanging on*'.

#### **Goldcrest**

One hundred and seventy five birds ringed

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
0	0	0	0	0	0	10	33	56	54	18	4

#### **Spotted Flycatcher**

Three birds ringed, 27 May, 25 Aug, 19 Sep

#### **Long-tailed Tit**

Sixty five birds ringed

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
0	0	0	2	2	4	6	10	2	17	15	7

#### **Marsh Tit**

Three birds ringed, on 13 and 17 June and 08 Jul

#### **Coal Tit**

Ten birds ringed

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	3	4	1	0

#### **Blue Tit**

Four hundred and fifty seven birds ringed, including 155 pulli

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
0	3	8	2	150	47	28	30	84	78	12	15

#### **Great Tit**

Three hundred and thirty eight birds ringed, including 170 pulli

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
0	3	5	3	148	73	9	7	24	58	5	3

#### **Nuthatch**

Two birds ringed on 03 Jun and 17 Jul

**Treecreeper**

Eighteen birds ringed

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
0	0	0	0	0	10	2	4	0	1	0	1

**Corvids**

Seventeen Jackdaw pulli was a record for Stanford, again thanks to the activities of the nest box team.

**Jackdaw**

Twelve birds ringed as pulli, on 15 and 20 May

**Sparrows and Finches**

House Sparrows are an unusual species at Stanford, and four was a record for the site; two were ringed as pulli at Park Farms and two were juveniles, dispersing from their parental nests.

The Tree Sparrow colony remains strong, although numbers were reduced from 2014's high of 660. Other finches had an unremarkable year, with the exception of Lesser Redpoll, who did rather well.

**House Sparrow**

Four birds ringed on 09 and 15 Jul

**Tree Sparrow**

Three hundred and sixty three birds ringed, includes 32 pulli

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
0	24	30	10	21	46	79	65	38	24	11	15

**Chaffinch**

Fifty six birds ringed

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
0	3	3	4	0	5	2	7	10	2	12	8

**Greenfinch**

Seventy six birds ringed

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	5	63	1	3

**Goldfinch**

Ninety two birds ringed

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
0	0	0	0	2	0	7	19	32	20	8	4

**Linnet**

Thirty five birds ringed

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
0	0	0	6	7	13	5	1	0	2	1	0

**Lesser Redpoll**

One hundred and twenty two birds ringed

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	100	19	1

**Bullfinch**

Forty five birds ringed

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
0	0	0	7	4	0	4	11	6	6	7	0

**Buntings**

Both resident species of Bunting were present, Reed Bunting appeared to have a good breeding year, with Juveniles present across the summer, Yellowhammer as usual were caught during the late autumn/ early winter.

**Yellowhammer**

Thirty nine birds ringed

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	17	3	17

**Reed Bunting**

Eighty seven birds ringed, includes five pulli.

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
0	1	0	9	18	6	13	5	16	6	12	1

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## Notable Birds Ringed at Stanford During 2017

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Little Ringed Plovers chicks



Green Woodpecker





Yellowhammer



Redstart, a perennial favourite



Lesser Whitethroat



Dusky Warbler- Mick's favourite bird

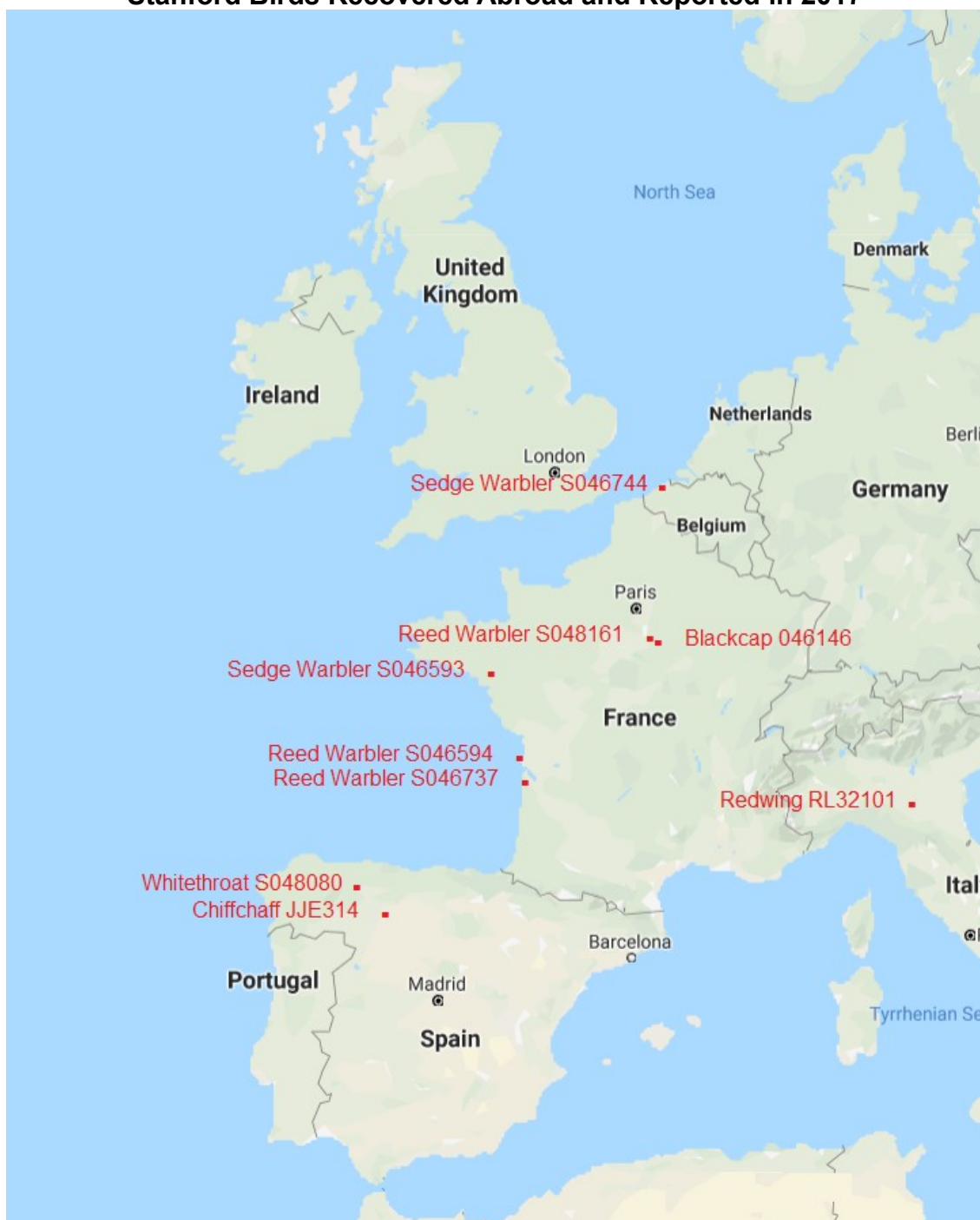
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## Stanford Birds Recovered at Other Sites and Reported in 2017

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This section details the birds which were ringed by the Stanford Ringing Group and were subsequently trapped and processed (*'controlled'*) by other sites, or found by members of the public, and were subsequently reported to the BTO. The map shows where birds were controlled abroad.

### Stanford Birds Recovered Abroad and Reported in 2017





### Total List

Species	Ring number	Date ringed	Site Recovered	Date retrapped	Time taken	Distance to Stanford (km)
<b>Grey Wagtail</b>	Z370887	11/09/2016	Sulby, Northants	19/12/2017	1y 99d	5
<b>Wren</b>	JJD180	15/08/2016	Oundle	07/08/2017	357d	44
<b>Redwing</b>	RL31721	26/11/2015	Dunstall Park Racecourse, W Midlands	17/11/2017	1y 356d	73
	RL32102	02/11/2016	Sovere, Bergamo, Italy	14/10/2017	346d	1088
<b>Sedge Warbler</b>	ACA1885	25/07/2017	Dorman's Pool, Stockton	12/08/2017	241d	18
	AFA1079	13/08/2017	Pepper Arden, North Yorkshire	23/08/2017	10d	224
	S046593	07/08/2017	Mars Ouest, Loire-Atlantique, France	22/08/2017	5d	1172
	S046744	12/08/2017	Watervliet, Oost-Vlaanderen, Belgium, Oost-Vlaanderen, Belgium,	28/08/2017	16d	349
	S047498	02/09/2017	Lytchett Bay, Poole Harbour: Dorset	09/09/2017	7d	198
	Z369624	18/07/2016	Brandon Marsh, Warks	07/05/2017	293d	22
			Brandon Marsh, Warks	11/06/2017	328d	22
<b>Reed Warbler</b>	S043223	15/09/2016	Titchfield Haven Fareham, Hampshire	05/08/2017	324d	178
	S046594	07/08/2017	Marais d'Yves, Charente-Maritime, France,	19/09/2017	43	740
	S046737	12/08/2017	Plaisance, Saint Froult, Charente-Maritime	26/08/2017	14d	717
	S048161	09/09/2017	Les Boulins, St-Julien-du Sault, Yonne	27/09/2017	18d	580
	Z369219	18/06/2016	Balscote Quarry, Oxfordshire	02/05/2017	318	44
	Z369943	26/07/2016	Icklesham, East Sussex	05/08/2017	1y 10d	209
<b>Whitethroat</b>	S048080	07/09/2017	Laguna De Negrillos, Leon, Spain	24/09/2017	17d	1182
<b>Garden Warbler</b>	Z370507	17/08/2016	Hebes Wood, Rutland	07/05/2017	263d	33
<b>Blackcap</b>	S043536	20/09/2016	West Langton, Leics	18/06/2017	271d	16
	S043760	24/09/2016	Billinge Hill, Merseyside	23/04/2017	161	211
	S045180	17/07/2017	Sandwich Bay Estate: Kent	07/09/2017	52d	214
	S045681	11/04/2017	Winterset Reservoir, Wakefield, W Yorks	25/07/2017	105	135

<b>Blackcap cont.</b>	S046106	12/08/2017	Les Boulins, St-Julien- du Sault, Yonne	15/09/2017	34	580
	S047559	26/08/2017	Sandwich Bay Estate: Kent	03/09/2017	8d	214
	S047815	23/09/2017	Holland, North Ronaldsay, Orkney	8/10/2017	25d	776
	S048505	10/09/2017	Haxton Down: Wilts	17/09/2017	7d	136
	Z369316	03/07/2016	Tadmarton, Oxfordshire	09/09/2017	1y 68d	49
	Z370469	15/08/2016	Brixworth, Northants	12/05/17	312d	18
	Z371821	08/09/2016	Westdown Plantation: Wilts	18/05/2017	143	252
	Z756988	16/08/2017	Broadwater Gravel Pit, London	23/09/2017	38d	102
<b>Chiffchaff</b>	JJD448	08/09/2016	Upper Broughton, Notts	10/04/2017	214d	47
	JJE314	01/10/2016	Embalse de San Jose, Castronuno, Valladolid, Spain	07/11/2017	1y 37d	1265
	JJE492 4	05/10/2016	Acocks Green, Birmingham	11/08/2017	310d	48
	JYP150	10/08/2017	Daventry Country Park, Northants	02/09/2017	23d	17
<b>Tree Sparrow</b>	TX80500	15/07/2017	Pitsford Reservoir, Northants	02/12/2017	140d	19
<b>Chaffinch</b>	S045612	09/02/2017	Sulby Gardens, Northants	17/03/2017	36d	6
<b>Lesser Redpoll</b>	S044309	14/10/2016	Jackson's Brickworks, Middlewood, Cheshire	11/11/2017	1y 28d	122
	S044982	27/10/2016	Putley, Herts	10/04/2017	165d	104
	Z368342	08/10/2015	Blaeberryhill Wood, West Lothian	10/10/2017	2y 2d	416
	Z371992	24/10/2016	Cockleycley Heath, Norfolk	07/04/2017	165d	121

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## Birds From Other Sites Recovered at Stanford in 2017

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This section details the birds which were ringed at other sites and were subsequently controlled by the Stanford Ringing Group. All details were reported to the BTO, who then contacted the original ringing sites, both in the UK and abroad.

The maps shows where birds, from other countries, controlled at Stanford were originally ringed.

**Black Tailed Godwit, ringed in Iceland, spotted by our birdwatchers at Stanford!**



### The other foreign birds, controlled at Stanford



### Full List

Species	Ring number	Date ringed	Site of Origin	Date controlled at Stanford	Time taken	Distance to Stanford (km)
Mute Swan	W36246	18/07/2013	Wendover, Bucks	24/09/2017	4y 8d	76
				18/08/2018	5y 31d	76
				02/11/2019	6y 107d	76
Black-tailed Godwit	EW64264	13/10/2012	Harty, Kent	02/08/2017	4y 293d	182
	629300	12/06/2005	Akureyri, Iceland	25/06/2017	13d	2792
Black-headed Gull	ES46211	09/06/1994	Hamford Water, Essex	13/04/2017	22y 308d	170
Robin	S641340	20/08/2017	North Luffenham Airfield, Rutland	26/08/2017	6d	40
Blackbird	L449173	19/10/2015	Castricum, Noord-Holland, Netherlands	26/10/16	1y 8d	388
Redwing	RZ22533	23/10/2016	Silt Fen Farm, Norfolk	16/10/2017	358d	101
	9X04691	18/10/2013	Viersel, Antwerpen, Belgium	09/12/2016	3y 53d	418
Sedge Warbler	ACA1885	25/07/2017	Dorman's Pool, Saltholme, Stockton	12/08/2017	18d	241
	AFA1079	13/08/2017	Pepper Arden, North	23/08/2017	10d	224

			Yorkshire			
Sedge Warbler cont.	S704763	18/05/2017	Brandon Marsh, Warks	27/05/2017	9d	22
	Z804544	23/06/2016	Lax Hill, Rutland	01/07/2017	1y 8d	38
Reed Warbler	7542520	16/08/2015	Noyant, Soulaire-et-Bourg, Maine-et-Loire	01/07/2017	350d	544
	S175683	10/07/2016	Brandon Marsh, Warks	03/08/2016	24d	22
	Z180729	16/08/2014	Brandon Marsh	08/08/2015	357d	22
	Z180729	16/08/2014	Brandon Marsh	24/05/2017	2y 281d	22
Blackcap	S333385	08/07/2017	Lax Hill, Rutland	02/09/2017	56d	38
	S397935	09/07/2017	Holme Pierrepont, Notts	10/09/2017	59d	63
	S583296	16/07/2017	Holme Pierrepont, Notts	16/09/2017	62d	59
	S763468	01/07/2017	Clayworth, Retford, Notts	26/08/2017	56d	106
	S892179	18/07/2017	Rutland Water	02/09/2017	46d	40
	Z756988	16/08/2017	Broadwater Gravel Pit London	23/09/2017	38d	102
Chiffchaff	JRP051	01/07/2017	Donington-on-Bain, Lincs	16/09/2017	77d	121
	JYE906	24/08/2017	Deer Park Forest Croft, Highland,	08/10/2017	45d	604
	KHN204	01/09/2017	Rainton Meadows, Tyne & Wear	18/09/2017	17d	268
	KHY917	27/08/2017	Winterset Reservoir, Wakefield, W Yorks	09/09/2017	13d	135
Goldcrest	KCK029	09/09/2017	Halstead, Leics	16/09/17	7d	30
Blue Tit	Z310685	18/02/2015	Scotland Wood, Kelmarsh Estate, Northants	15/11/2017	2y 267d	13
Tree Sparrow	TH46958	11/05/2017	Anglers CP, Wakefield, West Yorks	30/10/2017	172d	137

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## Group Members in 2017

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- Mick Townsend      Co-founder, A ringer, Trainer & Group Leader
- Adam G Homer      Group Secretary A ringer, Trainer and Nest Recorder
- David Neal      Group treasurer, A Ringer
- Peter Robinson      A ringer, Trainer
- Dawn Sheffield      A ringer
- Peter Norrie      C ringer
- Stuart Heath      C ringer
- Jo Underwood      Trainee
- Kate Moore      Trainee
- Chris Hubbard      Sightings Officer
- Pete Bateup      Group Assistant

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## Appendix *'My Patch Listing Year at Stanford Reservoir in 2017'*

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Stanford Reservoir is slightly unusual in that it sits in two counties – Northants and Leicestershire, with the county border following the old river course through the reservoir. The birds included here are not exclusively Leicestershire as I have taken the view of looking at Stanford Reservoir as a site and not getting hung up about “which county” when patch listing. At the start of 2017 I made the conscious decision that I would invest more time in Stanford Reservoir with the expected low water levels (due to essential work at the dam) likely to deliver a healthy supply of waders on passage. It's convenient location for me (only a mile away) also meant that I could cram in a number of visits at peak migration. I have been watching the site on and off for many years, previously notching up such goodies as Pectoral Sandpiper, Wilson's Phalarope, Lesser Yellowlegs and Hoopoe. What would 2017 deliver??

A few short visits got the patch list off to a good start with the red-head Smew and a bonus Iceland Gull in the roost on 23 February, a patch tick and little did I know the first of many in 2017!

The first Dunlin of the year appeared on the 14<sup>th</sup> March followed swiftly by a Redshank on the 17<sup>th</sup>, 4 Little Ringed Plover on the same day and the first Black-tailed Godwit on the 18<sup>th</sup>. This little spurt of waders got me thinking what else we would get as we moved full into spring.

April fool's day came, as did the arrival of our first Oystercatcher of 2017 taking the year list at that stage to a healthy 100 species.

Some time away in Norfolk in early April proved to be costly with a 2 Common Crane arriving on the 9<sup>th</sup> April, staying for around an hour before disappearing. Plans were

already being hatched to do an early morning return from Norfolk the following day if the birds had stayed but unfortunately they didn't. Whilst disappointed, they were still a great addition to the Stanford Reservoir list. A Red-necked Grebe also paid a brief visit whilst I was away. I was back on patch again on the 13<sup>th</sup> April with Little Ringed Plover numbers increasing, along with a Green Sandpiper.

The Long-tailed Duck continued to perform (present since 27<sup>th</sup> December 2016) and the first Swallows began to arrive. On the 19<sup>th</sup> April a small group of Black-tailed Godwits went through, leaving one bird behind. This turned out to be my first Bar-tailed Godwit at the reservoir (and the first of at least 25 birds to arrive during the spring).

The next day I was up early to have some physio in Stoneygate. I decided to go straight there rather than doing a quick 6.30am check of the inflow end. I arrived at the physio at 7.25am and was back in the car 10 minutes later having received a message that 3 BLACK-WINGED STILTS HAD BEEN REPORTED AT THE INFLOW END. I was home and on the patch enjoying this first for the site at 8.15am.

What a fantastic addition to the Stanford Reservoir list and a county tick for many birders from both Northants and Leicestershire. The birds lingered all day along with Bar-tailed and Black-tailed Godwit and the Long-tailed Duck still performing further up the reservoir – a pretty good day in Stanford terms!

I soon discovered in a patch listing year that the arrival of a rare bird on your local patch was fantastic but it also meant that more birders showed an interest in the site (certainly more than normal), with Severn Trent reported a surge in permit sales. I started to see more new faces at the reservoir than I have in the last 10 years. Psychologically I also convinced myself that I needed to “up the ante” in terms of “time in the field” to avoid any big misses - not all birds were going to be as obliging at the “the Stilts” especially on spring passage.

A 5.45am visit the following day confirmed that the Stilts had departed, the Barwit was still present along with at least 20 White Wagtails.

I had just put kit in the car on the afternoon of the 23<sup>rd</sup> April when Mike Alibone messaged to say that 2 Black-winged Stilts had been reported again. As per the other day, the stilts were showing very well at the inflow end and were enjoyed by many visiting birders that afternoon. A Whimbrel was a new addition that day, with the Long-tailed Duck still hanging around.

The first Greenshank of 2017 arrived on the 25<sup>th</sup> April in the same area as the stilts, along with 7 Ringed Plover, 5 Dunlin and the first Hobby and Whitethroat. We reached a total of 10 Greenshanks as the next few weeks unfolded.

I had my first Wheatear on the 26<sup>th</sup> April – 1 of only a very small number this year at the reservoir. A message from Pete Asher on the 27<sup>th</sup> April that he had at least 50 Arctic Terns that afternoon got myself and Steve Nichols heading down to the patch. After a couple of hours of carefully checking the terns, we reached a conservative total of c110 birds (but probably more). The largest single group ever recorded at Stanford and enjoyed by myself,

Pete and Steve – amazing! April ended with the first Little and Black Tern of the year along with another 8 Bar-tailed Godwits.

The 1<sup>st</sup> May proved to be a fantastic day – 3 Black Terns, Little Tern, 5 Greenshanks and then the arrival of some mid-morning rain delivered a very showy Wood Sandpiper and Grey Plover (these two waders taking the patch list to 124 species).

4 Ruff arrived on the 3<sup>rd</sup> only staying for a very short time. I received a message from Mark Piper on the 5<sup>th</sup> saying that he had found the first Turnstone for 2017. By the time I had reached the Turnstone Mark had also found 2 cracking summer plumage Spotted Redshanks and a Grey Plover. The waders were now arriving thick and fast. On the morning of the 6<sup>th</sup> I found the first 2 Sanderling of the year, taking my list to 130 species. An unseasonal Jack Snipe and Whooper Swan were found in May, with the Jack Snipe sticking around to the month end, often showing very well on the Leicestershire bank.

More rain on the 17<sup>th</sup> May meant new arrivals – 27 Ringed Plover, 18 Dunlin and 13 Sanderling all together in one flock was an amazing sight at Stanford Reservoir. The first Osprey arrived on the 29<sup>th</sup> May along with Spotted Flycatcher.

An early morning visit on the 1<sup>st</sup> June made sure the Jack Snipe set another record – not only the latest ever spring record in Leicestershire (previous best was May 2<sup>nd</sup> 1962 at Eyebrook Reservoir) but now the first to be seen in June. June continued to deliver waders including more Grey Plovers, over 30 Black-tailed Godwits (including a single flock of 27 birds) and an Avocet on the 27<sup>th</sup> – a pretty rare bird at Stanford and a patch tick for me. The end of the month finished with Grasshopper Warbler and 2 more Little Terns.

My general view was that July is normally a fairly quiet month. However, waders continued to arrive in really good numbers – c25 Black-tailed Godwits, a group of 12 Common Sandpipers, 12 Little Ringed Plover, several Greenshank, 2 Turnstone, Green Sandpiper, 3 more Ruff and a Sanderling towards the end of the month.

1<sup>st</sup> August was very windy and having done a quick check earlier in the day things looked pretty quiet. However, I decided to return and walk along the Leicestershire side after work and this turned out to be a very good decision indeed. On arriving at the area known as “the islands”, I started to check through the Little Ringed Plover that had been present for several weeks. However, my attention was immediately drawn to a very delicate, long winged wader looking uncomfortable on the end of one of the stoney spits, as it was buffeted by the strong wind. My initial reaction was Baird's. As it didn't look particularly settled I concentrated on getting some phone-scoped images, video and some brief field notes. This was a good decision as less than 10 minutes later, it flew towards Blowers Lodge Bay and was not seen again. The bird was a BAIRD'S SANDPIPER – a first for Stanford and a third for both Northants and Leicestershire (last recorded back in the 90's). The only disappointing part of this was the fact that other birders didn't connect, with two Stanford regulars missing the bird by minutes. From a patch listing perspective it proved to me that you never know what is around the next corner and the frequency of visits does pay off. This took the patch list to 139 species for the year.



Patch ticks for the year were now becoming scarcer, however with Autumn just around the corner there surely had to be a chance to increase this further and maybe get close to the all time record of 151 species in a year at the reservoir.

Black-tailed Godwits, Greenshank and Dunlin continued to pass through the reservoir during August. The total number of Black-tailed Godwits moving through during 2017 finished up in excess of 130 birds (2 of which were colour ringed), an impressive total away from Rutland Water. Unfortunately, autumn wader passage looked like it was going to more challenging at the water levels started to rise and the mud began to disappear.

The autumn's first Whinchat gave itself up on the 20 August followed by a specific target bird of mine, Redstart, and the autumn passage didn't disappoint. The ringing group caught 15 individuals and I was fortunate to see at least 3 of these taking the patch total to 141.

Another patch tick was added on the 7<sup>th</sup> September in the form of a stunning Marsh Harrier, which stuck around for a couple of days (total 142). They are normally a fly-through at Stanford so the fact that this one stayed was a bonus.

Strong winds hit the county around the 12<sup>th</sup> September though the best I could muster was a juvenile Arctic Tern which I found on the 13<sup>th</sup>, staying until the 17<sup>th</sup>.

On the 17<sup>th</sup> I set my stall out to search for Stonechat in an extensive weedy field on the Northamptonshire side. Whilst scanning for Stonechat I found a ringtail Hen Harrier quartering the field. The bird lingered for most of the day and was seen on and off by a number of birders – a real bonus taking the 2017 patch list to 143. On the 20<sup>th</sup> I continued my search for Stonechat in the same place, finally finding one and moving the patch list to 144. The end of the month delivered another Stanford regular in the form of 2 Red-crested Pochards, patch list 145.

October arrived along with great expectations. Perhaps a Firecrest, Yellow-browed Warbler or something else? An Egyptian Goose paid a brief appearance early in the month taking the patch list to 146 with the Red-crested Pochard, a Greenshank and Black-tailed Godwit lingering on what was left of the islands area. An early morning check on the 19<sup>th</sup> produced very little and the same was evident on the ringing front having met with Mick Townsend whose return had been pretty poor for the time of year. I returned home and was working away when I received a text around 10.30 – the message was from Mick and it only said "Dusky Warbler". I raced from the house trying to call Mick but it was going to voicemail (not knowing at the time that his battery had died). I made it down there in double quick time to find Mick and witness a great Stanford birding experience, a Dusky Warbler in the hand! My first view photographs were shaky to say the least as I tried to contain my excitement - It was the last bird that Mick had taken from the nets that morning. It was decided to release the bird in the best place for visiting birders to have a chance of seeing it. It was seen twice after release by myself and a visiting Northants birder but not subsequently. The photographs circulated afterwards also created a lot of debate around whether it was a Dusky, Radde's or even something rarer. A feather dislodged in the processing of the bird was sent to Martin Collinson and DNA has confirmed Mick's original identification of Dusky Warbler – one of the rarest birds ever recorded at the site (patch list 147).

The 23th delivered patch tick number 148 in the form of a Ring Ouzel with a group of Fieldfare along the disused railway track on the Northants side. I moved my attention to vismigging during the end of October and whilst this delivered nothing unusual the experience itself was very rewarding with good numbers of commoner species on the move. The 29 October delivered 3 Great Egrets (patch tick 149). The ploughing of the fields adjacent to the Leicestershire bank on the 31<sup>st</sup> attracted good numbers of gulls moving between the field and the inflow end. Having managed to miss Med Gull on at least 3 occasions earlier in the year I decided to turn my attention to searching through the gulls. I drew a blank on the Med Gull but did find an adult Little Gull (a bird I had missed earlier in the year). My 150<sup>th</sup> species of 2017.

I have to say November proved to be hard work at the reservoir but I continued to persevere with regular visits. With the list at 150 I was really targeting specific species now such as Med Gull, Common Scoter, Scaup and Woodcock. I decided to check the dam end on the afternoon of the 24<sup>th</sup> November and was pleased I did. The first bird I got on to was a Great Northern Diver, showing extremely well in calm conditions just off the dam. This was a patch tick for me, which moved the 2017 list on to 151. The bird was still present the following morning but soon moved on. This was the third ever record at the reservoir.

I finally added Woodcock on the 12 December moving the list on to 152. The rest of December proved to be pretty quiet for me despite a number of visits. I rounded off the year with another Jack Snipe on the 31<sup>st</sup> December. So in summary, a fantastic year with a number of highlights (for me and the site):

- Number of individual patch visits made – c260
- Total number of species recorded at the site in 2017 – 160 (previous best 151)
- Total number of species recorded by me at the site in 2017 – 152
- New species for the site in 2017 – Common Crane, Baird's Sandpiper, Black-winged Stilt and Dusky Warbler
- New patch ticks for me in 2017 – 13 taking my overall site list to 183
- My top 3 birds – Black-winged Stilt, Baird's Sandpiper and Dusky Warbler
- Jack Snipe – latest ever spring record in Leicestershire on 1<sup>st</sup> June
- Arctic Tern – 110+ in one flock (one of the largest ever recorded in Northants)
- Wader species recorded at the site in 2017 - 26
- Black-tailed Godwits – over 130 recorded

So overall a cracking year with a really good return on the time invested. Thanks to all birders especially Steve Nichols, Mark Piper, Pete Asher and the Stanford Ringing Group for finding and sharing birds throughout the year.

**Chris Hubbard**

[www.stanfordrg.org.uk](http://www.stanfordrg.org.uk)

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Report complied by PMN

Posted by Mike Haigh

Thanks to Chris Hubbard and group members for photos.