
NORTH KENT MARSHES: LNHS FIELD TRIPS WITH KEN PALMER, 1976 TO 2002

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A summary is printed in LBR 76: 229-232

A spreadsheet of the data from the North Kent Marshes field trips is at:

<http://www.lnhs.org.uk/Publications.htm#LBR2011>

Introduction

These field trips were not intended to be systematic surveys of the North Kent marshes, especially as different parts of the area were visited in different years depending largely on the results of Ken's carefully researched reconnaissance visits. Nevertheless there are a few points worth mentioning.

The Little Egret, for example, now almost ubiquitous on Thames-side marshes and many other areas, was not recorded on these trips until 7 March 1993 and then seen on all but one subsequent visit. There had been previous Kent records along the Thames estuary, the Stour valley in east Kent and Dungeness, but the species was classed as rare by the Kent Ornithological Society until downgraded to scarce in 1993. The first breeding record for the county was, appropriately, in the heronry at Northward Hill where four young fledged in 2000 (Allison 2006). The Grey Partridge has moved in the opposite direction, regrettably, with a complete absence of records after 1995.

Apart from a couple of Little Owl records and a Barn Owl on 27 September 1981, all the owls were recorded in the winter period between 15 October and 17 March, which, especially with Barn, Tawny and Long-eared, will reflect the fact that winter trips continued until dusk, or even later, whereas in August and September they ended well before that.

Field trips are not planned to find rarities, but a Buff-breasted Sandpiper at Cliff Pools on 25 September 1977 was a bonus. It was part of a large influx into Britain and was present from 10 September to 9 October, along with another briefly at Dungeness during the same period, while the only previous Kent record was 1947 (Kent Bird Report No: 26).

A summary of the data from these trips, together with a contemporary report and a map of the sites visited, is published in the *London Bird Report* (Trier 2011).

Bibliography

ALLISON, G., 2006. The Little Egret in Kent: a success story. *Kent Bird Report* 52: 163-166.
TRIER, M., 2011. North Kent Marshes field trips with Ken Palmer, 1976 to 2002 - a summary. *Lond. Bird Rep.* 76: 229-232

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