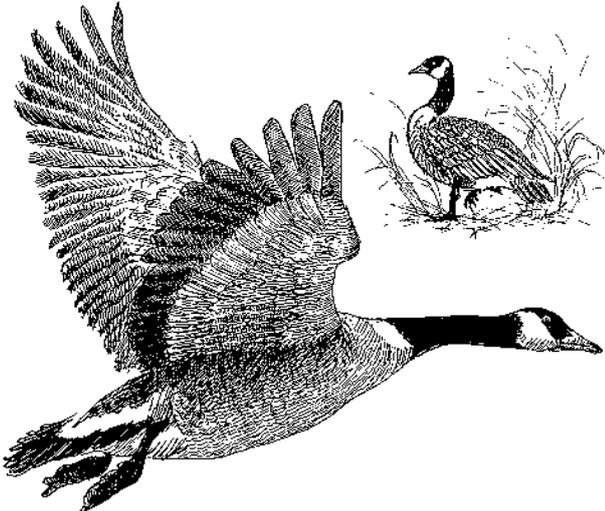
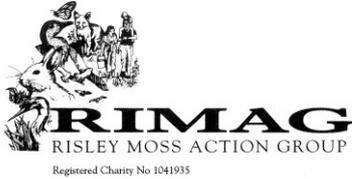


**RISLEY MOSS BIRD REPORT  
2007**



**Compiled by Rob Smith**



## SYSTEMATIC LIST

**LITTLE GREBE** *Tachybaptus ruficollis*

Birds first appeared on 11/3 with 2 there on 25/3, last seen on 23/8. 1 pair bred raised 2 young

**GREAT CORMORANT** *Phalacrocorax carbo*

Numbers greatly reduced due to culling. Peaks included 5 on 29/9, 3 on 11/11 and 5 flying west on 11/12

**GREY HERON** *Ardea cinerea*

Birds are seen most months. Peak counts included 6 on 1/11 and 7 on 2/11.

**MUTE SWAN** *Cygnus olor*

Over flying birds included 2 flying low over mossland on 19/1, 2 on 25/1 and 8 heading south on 10/12.

**PINK-FOOTED GOOSE** *Anser brachyrhynchus*

Seven noted on 17/9 followed by peak counts of 130 flying NW on 30/1, 590 in 3 skeins heading SE on 14/10 and 170 doing the same on 23/11.

**GREYLAG GOOSE** *Anser anser*

1 flew NW with Pink-Feet on 30/1 and NE on 3/11.

**CANADA GOOSE** *Branta canadensis*

Peak counts: 28 on 22/2 - 101 on 13/8 - 104 flew over 24/9 - 78 on 19/10. 3prs attempted to breed, only 1 gosling noted.

**BARNACLE GOOSE** *Branta leucopsis*

Eight flew in at dusk with the Canada Geese on 15/2.

**GADWALL** *Anas strepera*

A pair with two young noted on 11/6

**TEAL** *Anas crecca*

Flock sizes down on previous years, breeding unconfirmed for the first time in several years. Peak counts included 44 on 7/9, 25 on 1/10, 50 on 11/11 and 30 on 5/12.

**MALLARD** *Anas platyrhynchos*

Moderate year, with peaks of 25 on 22/2, 13 on 13/8, 50 up on 25/11. Four pair bred with a female noted sitting bravely on eggs in front of a busy Observation Tower in May.

**SHOVELER** *Anas clypeata*

Two males on pools on 17/11 with 1 pair noted flying NW, 3/12

**TUFTED DUCK** *Aythya fuligula*

Usual numbers visible but again no confirmed breeding records. Three pair were present on 7/5, 16/5, 18/5 with 7(5m/2f) there on 12/5.

**GREATER SCAUP** *Aythya marila*

A male flew low over the mossland with Pochard on 25/1

**GOOSANDER** *Mergus merganser*

Three flew W, 13/2. One pair flew low over mossland, 22/12

**RED KITE** *Milvus milvus*

A bird flew West on 18/4 whilst another circled high above mossland on 26/4 and drifted E, 8/6

**MARSH HARRIER**      *Circus aeruginosus*

A female was present on on 7/1, 29/4, 14/5(hunting over mossland), 2/6, 5/6 and 17/12. A female /immature flew NE, 21/4 and 16/7. A transitional male flew S on 19/6 and a male briefly hunted over mossland on 10/8

**HEN HARRIER**      *Circus cyaneus*

Ringtail birds were recorded on 20/1, 19/2, 22/11, 27/11, 28/11 and a small ringtail seen on 25/11, 26/11, 27/11, 1/12, 2/12, 3/12, 4/12 with a large female present on 7/12, 12/12, 13/12, 15/12, 16/12, 18/12, 19/12, 22/12, 24/12. A male was seen on 24/5 and 10/11.

**COMMON BUZZARD**      *Buteo buteo*

Seen almost daily and quite often in good numbers on, over or around reserve. Peak counts included 10 on 12/3, 19/7, 28/8. Eleven noted on 6/9, 18/9 and 20/9 with 12 present on 30/8 and 25/9. Sixteen on 24/9 and a magnificent 18 on 22/9

**KESTREL**      *Falco tinnunculus*

Singles and pairs noted regularly with up to 5 noted on two dates, 4 on four dates and 3 on seven dates.

**MERLIN**      *Falco columbarius*

Last seen on 16/4, returning on 5/9. Birds are seen on frequent occasions throughout winter including 2 on 14/10, 17/11. A female was present on 13/1, 6/10, 10/10, 18/10 and 15/12 with a female / immature on 10/10, 11/10, 18/10, 8/11, 31/12. A male appeared on 28/1, 1/2, 13/2, 12/3, 7/9, 4/10, 12/11, 13/11, 15/11, 17/11, 7/12, 10/12, 13/12, 19/12 and 30/12.

**HOBBY**      *Falco subbuteo*

An adult perched in front of SW wood on 23/4 was the first spring record of the year with the last being seen on 6/10. Birds hunting over the mossland were recorded frequently and included adults / sub-adults & juveniles. Peak counts include 2 hawking over mossland on 4/5, 21/5, 1/5, 2/6, 23/6, 7/7, 16/7, 25/7, 3/9, 5/9, 22/9, 1/8, 18/9, 19/9 with 3 there on 15/5 and 4/9.

**PEREGRINE FALCON**      *Falco peregrinus*

With the exception of the male seen on 17th May being the only bird that month, singles (females, males and immature) were noted throughout the year and on several dates each month crossing the reserve / stooping at prey. The only exception was a pair noted on 22/7 and a male perched out on the mossland on 15/11.

**WATER RAIL**      *Rallus aquatica*

One pair bred. Otherwise singles were heard on occasions with 2 calling from edge of Observation Tower (OT) scrape at dusk on 19/10.

**OYSTERCATCHER**      *Haematopus ostralegus*

Four appeared on the OT scrape on 23/5 with five there on 3/6.

**LITTLE PLOVER**      *Charadrius dubius*

First arrivals were 3 on 2/4, last seen on 24/7. 1 pair present on several dates throughout May, June and July but poor year with nest eventually being washed out with July rains.

**RINGED PLOVER**      *Charadrius hiaticula*

Three landed on OT scrape on 5/5 and again 10/7.

**LAPWING**      *Vanellus vanellus*

Attempted to breed but nests washed out by heavy rains. Birds roosting on OT scrape included 50 on 14/3, 90 there on 19/6 and an impressive 150 on 5/7

**DUNLIN**      *Calidris alpina*

Five on OT scrape on 23/8 with one there on 7/7, 3/8 and 4/9.

**RUFF**      *Philomachus pugnax*

Birds over flying included two on 18/6, 6 on 21/7, 8 on 25/8 and 5 flying W on 19/9

**JACK SNIPE** *Lymnocyptes minimus*

A poor year with only four birds recorded on 24/1, 3 on 26/9 and 2 on 6/11, 11/11 and 20/11.

**COMMON SNIPE** *Gallinago gallinago*

As the mossland continues to change so conditions become more favourable for this species, resulting in three pairs breeding in 2007 compared with 2 pairs in 2006. The mossland is also an important roosting area during winter where regular transect census reveals peaks of 54 in January; 93 in February; 64 on 21/9 - 44 on 19/10 - 79 on 19/11 - 55 on 31/12

**WOODCOCK** *Scolopax rusticola*

A difficult species to monitor but single birds were noted most months in various parts of the reserve, but the 6 recorded whilst surveying on 17/2 was an exceptional count. Other records include 3 in front of Tower on 11/11 and 2 on 11/12

**REDSHANK** *Tringa totanus*

A second successful year for this species with two pairs having bred in 2007 compared to one in 2006.

**GREENSHANK** *Tringa nebularia*

Casual records included one calling as it took off from the mossland on 15/7 with birds also being seen on the 12/8, 16/8. Of note three flew west on 13/8 whilst 4 landed briefly on east scrapes on 15/8

**GREEN SANDPIPER** *Tringa ochropus*

Not as commonplace as previous years but one was on the mossland on 13/1, 27/1, 5/8, 5/9, 1/11 and 11/11 with 2 there on 12/11

**WOOD SANDPIPER** *Tringa glareola*

Singles present on 29/4, 30/6, 20/8 with 2 there on 23/8

**WOODPIGEON** *Columba palumbus*

Impressive counts included 1000 over mossland on 29/9 - 1100 into roost, 14/12 - 2600 there on 27/12

**CUCKOO** *Cuculus canorus*

A bird was calling from mossland on 21/4 and 13/5 with 2 (male calling /female bubbling nearby) circling mossland, 7/5. A juvenile flew over on 20/8

**BARN OWL** *Tyto alba*

Seen at dusk or after dark on 24/1, 1/2, 13/8, 2/10, 19/10, 6/11, 11/11, 26/11 and 19/12

**LITTLE OWL** *Athene noctua*

Occasional visitor seen or heard calling on 1/2, 22/2, 6/11, 20/11, 9/12 and 15/12

**TAWNY OWL** *Strix loco*

Frequently heard, occasional seen. Two pairs bred.

**LONG-EARED OWL** *Asio otus*

Seen or heard at dusk or after dark on 24/1, 17/2, 1/2, 15/2, 11/11, 20/11, 26/11, 19/12 and 31/12.

**SHORT-EARED OWL** *Asio flammeus*

Two birds alighted on mud on scrape at dusk on 13/8. Other birds seen at or around dusk included 12/1, 24/1, 13/2, 24/2, 25/2, 19/10, 8/11 and 16/12.

**SWIFT** *Apus apus*

First noted on 22/4, last seen on 30/8. Peaks included 100+ on 18/5 and 29/6.

**KINGFISHER** *Alcedo atthis*

Singles noted along fire ditches or over mossland pools on 25/2, 18/7, 8/9, 15/9, 22/9, 15/11, 17/11, 22/11, 24/11, 3/12. Birds also noted flying down ditch nr Lagoon pond on 10/8 and diving into pool near visitor centre on 19/11.

**GREEN WOODPECKER** *Picus viridis*

One perched in trees on north side of mossland on 9/1, 26/1, 17/2 and 1<sup>st</sup> April.

**GREAT-SPOTTED WOODPECKER** *Dendrocopos major*

Three pairs bred. Birds were seen in all parts of reserve and in particular at Woodland Hide in winter.

**LESSER-SPOTTED WOODPECKER** *Dendrocopos minor*

A male was heard drumming and calling near Jay wood on 5/2 and again near Lagoon Pond on 18/2. A juvenile bird noted perched on dead birch on mossland on 30/6.

**SKYLARK** *Alauda arvensis*

Over flying movements included 132 on 14/1, 101 on 1/11 and on migration with counts of 139 in 3 hours on 27/9.

**SAND MARTIN** *Riparia riparia*

Last seen were three heading south on 8/9.

**SWALLOW** *Hirundo rustica*

First birds noted on 1/5, last seen on 23/10. Peak numbers over mossland included 200 on 7/8 and 319 flying south in 4 hours on 22/9.

**HOUSE MARTIN** *Delichon urbica*

First seen on 31/3, last seen on 4/10. Peak numbers included 150 on 15/8.

**MEADOW PIPIT** *Anthus pratensis*

Breeds and roosts on the mossland. 3 pairs bred roost peaks included 65 on 5/1 and 60 on 1<sup>st</sup> February.

**YELLOW WAGTAIL** *Motacilla flava*

Singles flew over on 7/6, 9/7, 2/8 and 4/9.

**WHINCHAT** *Saxicola rubetra*

Three males were on the mossland, on 12/5 with a female immature there on 3/9.

**STONECHAT** *Saxicola torquata*

Birds seen frequently. Which included 4(2m/2f) on 6/10 - 5(3m/2f) on 17/2 - 6(2m/4f) on 7/10. A pair noted on 11/10, 15/10, 18/10, 31/10 and 14/11. Male noted on 12/10, 27/11, 20/11, 25/11, 26/11, 27/11, 29/11, 1/12 and 10/12. Females on 25/9, 10/10 and 16/12

**FIELDFARE** *Turdus pilarus*

Last winter birds seen on 17/4, first returning birds appeared on 11/10. Peak numbers saw 70 flying SW, 7/1 - 120 on 14/2 and 180 coming in at dusk, 15/2

**REDWING** *Turdus iliacus*

Last winter birds were 2 near Main Gate on 5/4, first returning birds on 27/9. Peak numbers included 100 on 7/1 - 88 flying West on 2/11 - 50 roosting on mossland, 17/11

**GRASSHOPPER WARBLER** *Locustella naevia*

A bird was heard reeling softly on mossland on 21/4 and present again on 22/7.

**SEDGE WARBLER** *Acrocephalus schoenobaenus*

After the previous year's breeding success, the only record was of bird heard briefly on 27/4.

**REED WARBLER** *Acrocephalus scirpaceus*

A recent addition to the reserves bird list. One was seen and heard among the reeds on 8/7 and again on 19/7. The species increasing presence is probably influenced by the growing stand of Common Reed near the mossland hide.

**WHITETHROAT** *Sylvia communis*

First bird recorded on 26/4, last seen on 4/9. Two pairs bred but numbers down on previous year.

**GARDEN WARBLER** *Sylvia borin*

First noted singing near Observation Tower on 27/4. There again on 17/6 and 3/7.

**BLACKCAP** *Sylvia atricapilla*

First noted singing near Lagoon pond on 31/3, last heard calling on 20/9.

**CHIFFCHAFF** *Phylloscopus collybita*

First returning bird heard on 12/3, last heard calling briefly on 2/10. An over wintering bird in conifers on 14/12

**WILLOW WARBLER** *Phylloscopus trochilus*

First in on 11/4 and the last heard on 3/9.

**SPOTTED FLYCATCHER** *Muscicapa striata*

One noted near the OT on 2/8 and again on 23/8.

**PIED FLYCATCHER** *Ficedula hypoleuca*

A female immature was seen flitting along bracken line before heading south on 30/7.

**LONG TAILED TIT** *Aegithalos caudatus*

Peak flock counts include 30 in mixed flock near OT on 23/7 - 40 there (mostly juveniles) on 26/7 - 21 there on 2/8 - 29 on 29/11 and 25 on 2/12.

**MARSH TIT** *Parus palustris*

One heard on 5/2.

**WILLOW TIT** *Parus montanus*

Up to 2 seen on occasions throughout the year but particularly at the woodland hide in winter.

**COAL TIT** *Parus ater*

Up to four noted on occasions in various parts of the wooded areas and again at the woodland hide in winter.

**BLUE TIT** *Parus caeruleus*

The species suffered a poor year. A flock of 25 were noted in a mixed flock near the OT on 23/7 and again on 2/8.

**NUTHATCH** *Sitta europea*

Apart from birds noted on 30/6 and 23/7, most sightings restricted to a few occasions in winter with last heard on 1/4. Two returning birds noted on 9/9 at Woodland Hide.

**JACKDAW** *Corvus monedula*

Monthly over flying peaks included 300 over SE edge disturbed by peregrine on 12/1 - 99 flying SE in small mixed groups on 19/10 - 350 late pm on 27/11 and 278 on 30/12.

**ROOK** *Corvus frugilegus*

Monthly over flying peaks included 150 in mixed flock over SE edge flushed by peregrine, 12/1 - 100 over S, 5/2 - 138 in mixed flock towards dusk, 19/10.

**CARRION CROW** *Corvus corone corone*

This species is becoming a real problem around area as they congregate in increasing numbers on the mossland. These gatherings have produced peaks of 200+ along SE edge with up to 50 on mossland on 7/4 - 230 over mossland on 10/11 and 200 on 13/12.

**RAVEN** *Corvus corax*

Two were over the conifers on 18/9, otherwise occasional singles noted on 9/1, 4/6, 23/6, 1/7, 10/11, 12/11, 13/11, 7/12 and 16/12.

**STARLING** *Sturnus vulgaris*

A flock of 3000 in tight formation with a Merlin underneath them on 15/11 proved of interest.

**CHAFFINCH** *Fringilla coelebs*

Birds continue to roost in selective stands of rhododendrons around the reserve. Birds are also noted daily in sizeable numbers at the Woodland Hide, the 32 seen there on 8/1 is typical.

**BRAMBLING** *Fringilla montifringilla*

The only record was of one seen in the Bottom Coppice on 17/2.

**GOLDFINCH** *Carduelis carduelis*

Small flocks are seen frequently in the Alders behind the Lagoon pond such as the 15 on 6/2 - 20 there on 30/11. A group of 40 were also noted swirling over S edge, 11/11 with 25 there on 10/12.

**LINNET** *Carduelis cannabina*

A pair bred on the mossland. A flock of 60 noted along the south boundary on 25/2 with 30 present on 29/11.

**LESSER REDPOLL** *Carduelis flammea*

Two pairs bred. Otherwise, up to 5 noted on rare occasions.

**BULLFINCH** *Pyrrhula pyrrhula*

Up to 3 pairs bred. Seen on occasions around the woodlands and at the Woodland Hide, in winter.

**YELLOWHAMMER** *Emberiza citrinella*

One pair bred on the mossland.

**REED BUNTING** *Emberiza schoeniculus*

Up to 6 pairs bred. Birds also roost on the mossland with 30 there on 5/1. As the winter progressed becomes a frequent visitor at the Woodland Hide with 13 (11m/2f) noted there on 7/2 and 11 on 7/3.

**CORN BUNTING** *Miliaria calandra*

Usually seen on or outside the boundaries of the reserve where 30 were noted on 21/12.

**Contributors:**

**R Smith; P Hilton; D Beetham; D Stewart; J Franklin; C Purvis; B. Riley**

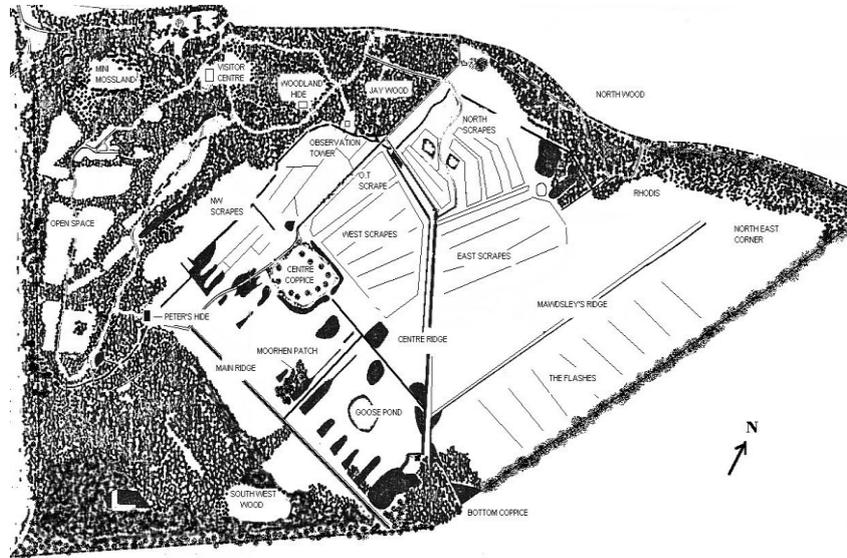
We are always interested in receiving records. The more we receive the better the report. To help us to work through the information, records should be written up in species order – as laid out in this report, along with date and site location (see map).

Alternatively, records can be put in alphabetical order and submitted on an excel spreadsheet to Rob via e mail: [root@rimag.org.uk](mailto:root@rimag.org.uk) or handed in to Rangers Mark and Gaynor

### Finally, ....

Bird reports are a useful way of keeping up to date with what's happening on the reserve. The first of these appeared in 1972, followed by similar reports written periodically over the years, with the last being written in 2002. The initial aim of this report is to re-establish this interest and bring bird watchers up to date with what's happening on the reserve. In time it is hoped to broaden the interest and include information about the wildlife in general.

Below is a map of the reserve complete with reference points, which for the purpose of continuity and past comparison contains many of the original names.



### **'The Birds of Risley Moss'**

This illustrated book will be the first comprehensive look at the bird life of the reserve since ornithologists began monitoring it in 1971. Since then over 216 species have been recorded with up to 160 noted in some years alone. This book lists the species, highlights the trends and provides details about those changes. It is not definitive statement on the bird life of the reserve, but an indication of what species have been recorded here and the trends which have made bird watching such an interesting and rewarding experience.

The book will be available later this year, contact Rob Smith for further details via the RIMAG e-mail:

[root@rimag.org.uk](mailto:root@rimag.org.uk)