

SUMMER 2019
NEWSLETTER



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SUMMER ROUND-UP

It only seems like yesterday that we were waving goodbye to the last of our wintering birds as they headed back to their breeding grounds after spending the winter months with us! We have certainly packed a lot into a short space of time over the summer.

Ranger Julie headed off in April to work as a wildlife guide around the many islands of Scotland, but don't worry, she will be coming back to us next month, more about that on page 4.

Ranger Mel has stayed with us on a part-time basis to help Hayley cover the many events that take place outside when the weather is warmer. We made the most of the lighter evenings by visiting some of our busier sites to give people the opportunity to view birds through our scope and share information about them and how to be Bird Wise.

Our 2018/19 Annual Report was published in July, you can download a copy of this on our website [here](#)

It's been a bumper year for butterflies, with many different species seen around the north Kent coast through summer, like this Painted Lady pictured at Oare Marshes in August.

Not all waders and waterfowl leave the north Kent coast for the summer. This year has been a successful breeding season for Lapwing, Redshank and Oystercatcher and other ground nesting birds at Elmley Reserve on Sheppey. 336 pairs of Lapwing managed to fledge 429 chicks, a fantastic result! Pictured below is one of the Oystercatcher chicks with a very protective parent taken at Elmley in June.

We spotted rafts of young Shelduck feeding on the coast at Queenborough in August.

Little Terns and Sandwich Terns both had breeding success on the islands in the Medway Estuary.





OUT AND ABOUT

The summer season means lots of outdoor events and we try to get to as many as possible. We started with the Medway River Festival in June where our new gazebo provided visitors with a welcome opportunity to shelter from the rain showers!

We were delighted to be invited to speak at the Shellness Hamlet AGM in July and to meet people that are so enthusiastic about protecting the thousands of birds that visit them every winter.

In August we took part in the Higham Community Day sharing lots of information and participating in bird themed arts and crafts. Some very talented artists were enjoying drawing our coastal birds.

The busiest event we attended was Whitstable Harbour Day on 3 August, with approximately 20,000 people visiting on the day. Lots of Turnstones were present on the harbour that day so we didn't have to go far to show people the birds.

We took part in the Sheppey Shorelines Festival in August, with ranger Mel leading a boat trip around the island. Participants were treated to great views and plenty of Oystercatcher, Redshank, Gulls and Terns feeding and resting around the coast. Thanks to Medway Swale Estuary Partnership for organising.



COASTAL CANINES CLUB

Our Coastal Canines Club was launched at the Focus on Hoo event on 21 September. This is an initiative that promotes responsible dog ownership.

Dogs and their humans love spending time on the coast but we know that dog walking, in particular off-lead, is a major cause of disturbance to birds that are trying to feed and rest on our shoreline.

By following the Canine Coastal Code we can avoid disturbance and ensure that dogs, birds and people have enough room.

You can find out more about the club and register to join on our website, the link to our Coastal Canines page is [here](#)

WELCOME BACK

As the mornings start to feel a little cooler and the evenings start to draw in, we start to get excited that we will soon be welcoming back our wintering waders and waterfowl. Some of these birds have already started to return, with large, noisy assemblages being seen and heard at Oare Marshes recently.

Our winter season starts again on 30 September and we will be back to 3 full time staff with rangers Mel and Julie back out on sites across north Kent. Our ranger-lead walks were popular last year so we will be organising more of these this season, along with exhibits and talks at local libraries. Details of these will be published on our website as soon as they are booked.

If you know of an event or community activity that would like a visit from the Bird Wise team please do get in touch with us, our contact details are below.



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