



Long Preston Bird Report 2019

Compiled by Ian Court

The Long Preston Floodplain Project is a partnership between the RSPB, Natural England, the Environment Agency, the Yorkshire Dales Millennium Trust, North Yorkshire County Council, the Ribble Rivers Trust, the Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority, local landowners and farmers

Introduction

Long Preston Deep is in the area of the upper Ribble valley between Long Preston and Settle, lying between the Forest of Bowland and Yorkshire Dales National Park. This unique area of lowland wet grassland stretches from Settle south to Cow Bridge, where the Wigglesworth to Long Preston Road crosses the river and is bordered on the east by Long Preston and the A65 and the Wigglesworth to Rathmell road on the west.

Long Preston Recording Area

The recording area combines the Long Preston Wetland Grassland Project area and the adjacent area to the south, including Hellifield Flash. A map of the recording area that includes details of access points can be found on the following page.

The conservation management that has been implemented by the project has only been possible because of the close cooperation with the local farmers, other land users and local residents. We would ask that visitors are considerate when parking and do not block any access. Visitors should also be aware that fishermen are regularly present along the river and wildfowling takes place between 1st September and 31st January.

In order to maintain these positive relationships, the project would like to remind visitors that the Long Preston floodplain is in private ownership and should only be accessed using the public rights of way shown on the project trail map. There are good but limited opportunities for watching the area from the surrounding roads, with a series of viewpoints also shown on the trail map, but please be aware that the birds can be distant and a telescope is strongly recommended.

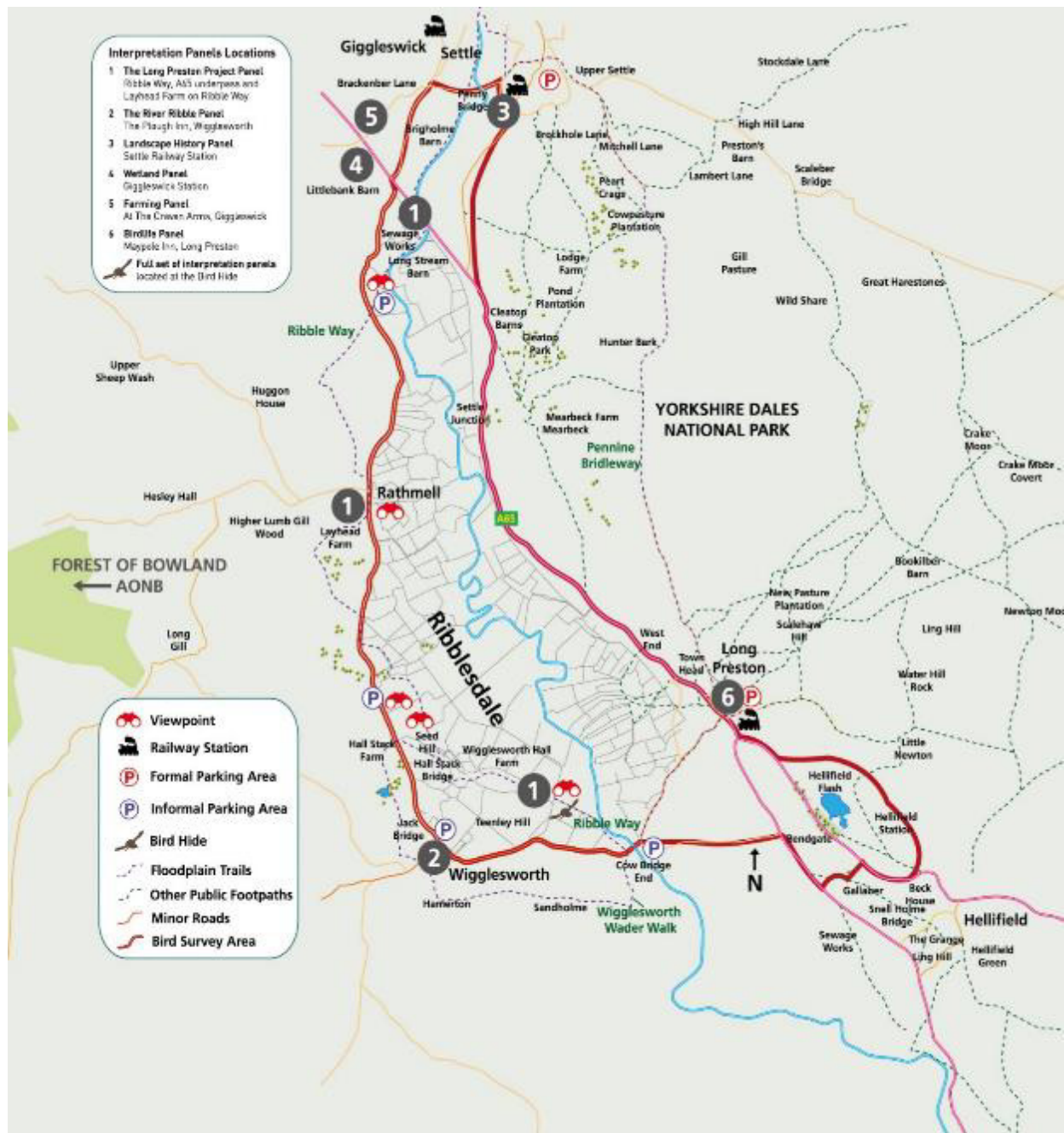
The bird hide can be access along the Ribble Way, north from Cow Bridge. Car parking is very limited so please ensure that you do not block any roads or access tracks. Park carefully by the bridge at SD 82799 57022.

Development is being undertaken at and around Hellifield Flash that will have a significant detrimental impact on the site. It should be noted that Waterside Lane is reported to be a private road, but the Flash can also be viewed from public footpaths.

Bird Records

If visiting the area, we hope that you will take the time to submit your records. We would encourage all observers to enter their records on BirdTrack <https://www.bto.org/volunteer-surveys/birdtrack/about> as this will help in the production of both the local and county bird report, the latter published by the Yorkshire Naturalists' Union. Records can also be entered into the log book in the bird hide, entered on the East Lancashire Ornithologists' Club website <http://www.eastlancsornithologists.org.uk/Rep-Birdlist.aspx> or sent to the YNU North Yorkshire Bird Recorder Ian Court ian.court@mypostoffice.co.uk

A Map of the Long Preston Recording Area and Access Information



For more information on the Long Preston Floodplain Project visit

<http://longprestonfloodplainproject.org/>

2019 Highlights

In late 2019 the worst fears of many were confirmed when development work started at Hellifield Flash, following a protracted process that has been very contentious. In summary, a planning application for a large holiday park, which did include mitigation to protect the Flash and provide significant off-site habitat creation and management, was rejected by Craven District Council following widespread objections. Work then began to implement planning permission granted in the early 2000s to build a hotel and environmental centre. The development work was halted in 2020 to allow an independent legal review of proceedings to be undertaken. Although it is not clear what will happen it is inevitable that one of the most important local sites for birds, and for people to be able to enjoy watching birds, will be lost.

A total of 128 species were recorded in the Long Preston area during the year, just one more than in 2018. In the early part of the year one of the highlights was the record number of wigeon that were present, with cumulative counts at Hellifield Flash and the Long Preston floodplain just exceeding 2000 on both the January and February WeBS counts, with the 2400 on Hellifield Flash on 27th January a new record individual count. Other notable records included a scaup at Hellifield Flash on 25th January that proved to be the only record of the year, and elsewhere on the floodplain at least two green sandpipers were present in the first winter period.

At the start of February cold weather resulted in local waterbodies being frozen and was undoubtedly responsible for the record count of 23 cormorants on 3rd, when 19 were inadvertently flushed off the Ribble and a further four flew south. This count was exceptional, with low single figure counts the norm for most of the year. There were also two Mediterranean gulls seen during the month: the first near Settle SW during a cold snap when weather conditions were anything but Mediterranean, and a different bird near Mearbeck on 17th. There were also 19 herring gulls present near Settle SW on 10th February that is likely to represent the record count for the area. Flooding along the valley in the middle of the month provided ideal conditions for passage curlews to feed with numbers building up from mid-month onwards, with a colour-ringed bird from South Wales present on 17th. Similarly, numbers of oystercatchers also increased as birds began to move through the area, with 112 near Settle SW on 17th February the third highest count in the recording area. The other highlight was a group of six crossbills that flew over the CP at Rathmell calling repeatedly on 27th February as they headed towards Cleatop Wood.

The number of curlews peaked at 110 on 13th March but once again it was the number of black-tailed godwits which was most impressive. These were the first three-figure counts for the recording area with 101 on 25th, 124 on 27th, and 116 on 30th March. It was also very pleasing to see 'our' Icelandic-ringed bird returning for its fifth spring. Flooding at the end of month proved to be beneficial for ducks, with a record count of 20 gadwall from Sour Dale Lane on the last day of the month doubling the previous highest count; a surprise given how scarce they had been in the early winter period. The floods also attracted a pair of garganey on the same day.

The April highlight was an adult winter-plumaged little gull that spent most of the day at Hellifield Flash on 17th April, allowing a number of observers chance to catch up with only the fifth record in the recording area. A single whimbrel on floodplain on 21st April was also a good local record.

Three pairs of Shelduck was the highest number that have bred at Hellifield Flash, with broods seen throughout May. Although there were no 'firsts' for the recording area there were a number of second records, including a reed warbler along Wigglesworth Beck on 5th May. The following day a male and two female garganey were enjoyed by many at Hellifield Flash, remaining until the 11th. There were some welcome records of passage waders for a change, with nine whimbrel that dropped into Hellifield Flash for a grand total of four minutes on 9th May, highlighting the luck

that is often required when birding locally. Ringed plover were much easier to catch up with as there was a steady passage during the month, peaking at 20 on 26th. South-westerly winds with squally showers are favoured conditions for passage waders, with a short spell of this weather at the end of the month resulting in single sanderlings at Hellifield Flash on 26th May and on 3rd June, the first records of this species since 2013. There was also the first record of a knot since 2012, when one was present at Hellifield Flash on 31st May.

June was very quiet and the only notable record in July were two ruff at Hellifield Flash on 7th July, proving to be the records of the year. Once again, marsh harriers graced the floodplain in late summer with the first of eight sightings during the year on 22nd August prior to the last on 31st October. Autumn wader passage was very disappointing compared to the spring, with a greenshank on the central floodplain on 4th August the only record of note. The number of lesser black-backed gulls has increased dramatically in recent years with the previous record count of 128 on 18th March 2018 exceeded on at least six dates during the year. Numbers peaked at 289 below Rathmell on 23rd August before the last one on 3rd November.

The autumn also provided the fourth and fifth records of great white egret with singles near Wigglesworth Hall on 28th September and another that flew from Mearbeck and dropped into the Middle Marsh area on 31st October. There were also four greenshank on Long Preston Deeps on 11th. Following a frustratingly brief sighting in the morning, perseverance paid off on 27th October when a large pale *Sylvia* warbler present in the hedgerow up from the bird hide was confirmed in the late afternoon to be a barred warbler. Surely the Long Preston area is the only inland site in Yorkshire to have two records of this species? Despite the damaging development work, a new record area count of 105 shoveler were present at Hellifield Flash on 29th October. On the last day of the month a colour-ringed first calendar-year grey heron seen along the main sluice just up from the bird hide was found to have ringed as a nestling at Besthorpe Nature Reserve, near Newark, Nottinghamshire on 28th.

The latter two months of the year were very quiet with a merlin over Middle Marsh on 10th November and just a single over-wintering green sandpiper virtually the only notable sightings. That was until 13th December, when one of the highlights of the year was the hoopoe that flew over the scrape and bird feeders right past the lone incredibly luck birder sat in the hide.

A Systematic List of the Birds of Hellifield Flash and Long Preston Deepes

There is considerable movement of birds between Hellifield Flash and the Long Preston Deepes area, even on a daily basis, and so for many species the peak monthly counts derived from casual observations are included along with a summary of the monthly WeBS counts.

The taxonomy follows the International Ornithological Congress (IOC) World Bird List adopted by the British Ornithologists Union from 1st January 2018.

CANADA GOOSE *Branta Canadensis* AC2E*

The population seems to be relatively stable although peak counts were slightly lower than the previous year. At least three pairs attempted to nest on the floodplain in the Middle Marsh area, with an additional pair near the hide scrape.

Monthly WeBS Counts for Hellifield Flash and Long Preston Deepes.

| Site/Month | Jan | Feb | Mar | Apr | May | Jun | Jul | Aug | Sep | Oct | Nov | Dec |
|------------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| Hellifield Flash | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 7 | 32 | 149 |
| Long Preston | 59 | 284 | 36 | 40 | 54 | 3 | 3 | 171 | 351 | 409 | 1 | 300 |

Maximum Monthly Counts for Hellifield Flash and Long Preston Deepes.

| Site/Month | Jan | Feb | Mar | Apr | May | Jun | Jul | Aug | Sep | Oct | Nov | Dec |
|------------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| Hellifield Flash | 39 | 1 | 10 | 8 | 20 | - | - | - | 1 | 64 | 80 | 110 |
| Long Preston | 285 | 395 | 103 | 36 | 45 | 52 | 3 | 295 | 351 | 409 | 362 | 12 |

BARNACLE GOOSE *Branta leucopsis* AC2E*

There were more records than in recent years. Other than one at Hellifield Flash on 24th March all the records were on the middle and southern area of Long Preston Deepes, where single birds were noted in with Canada geese. Following one on 17th and 24th February, there were records in March on 17th when one flew north up the valley, with presumably the same bird still present on 26th and 27th. Following a record on 21st April there was one on 10th May with four the following day and one later in the month on 19th. Further singles were present on 1st June, 4th and 7th August and 5th October.

GREYLAG GOOSE *Anser anser* AC2C4E*

There was a slight increase in records at Hellifield Flash with one on 9th March and two on 17th April. In May there were four on 6th, three on 9th, six on 11th, 13 on 26th and 14 on 31st. The only other was a single present on several dates in November. There were regular reports on the floodplain, with peak counts slightly below the record numbers seen in 2018.

Monthly WeBS Counts for Hellifield Flash and Long Preston Deepes.

| Site/Month | Jan | Feb | Mar | Apr | May | Jun | Jul | Aug | Sep | Oct | Nov | Dec |
|------------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| Hellifield Flash | 0 | 0 | 3 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Long Preston | 0 | 36 | 16 | 13 | 6 | 7 | 0 | 34 | 1 | 14 | 0 | 0 |

Maximum Monthly Counts for Hellifield Flash and Long Preston Deepes.

| Site/Month | Jan | Feb | Mar | Apr | May | Jun | Jul | Aug | Sep | Oct | Nov | Dec |
|------------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| Hellifield Flash | - | 1 | - | - | 15 | - | 16 | - | - | - | 1 | - |
| Long Preston | - | 2 | 24 | 15 | 26 | - | 3 | 20 | 1 | 90 | 6 | - |

PINK-FOOTED GOOSE *Anser brachyrhynchus* AE*

It was an average year for sightings that included just one present at Hellifield Flash on 17th April. The majority of other sightings were recorded heading over Long Preston Deeps with small numbers occasionally dropping in to feed. Following the only January record of 80 on 20th there was an increase in records in February, with a single present on 9th and 10th and a total of 410 on 24th, including 300 flying west in the morning followed by 120 that were heading west before dropping down onto the floodplain. In March there were 21 over on 27th, with 20 below Hollow Gill on 26th increasing to 22 on 28th and 24 still present on 31st. In April records on the floodplain included six on 2nd, seven on 11th, ten on 19th, with nine on 21st and 27th still present up until 6th May. In the autumn, October records included two on 13th, 100 on 12th and c.90 on 20th, with 150 on 17th November.

MUTE SWAN *Cygnus olor* AC2

The only records at Hellifield Flash were of two on both 21st April and 15th December. Elsewhere, one to three were present along the Ribble for most of the year but no breeding was attempted.

Monthly WeBS Counts for Long Preston Deeps.

| Site/Month | Jan | Feb | Mar | Apr | May | Jun | Jul | Aug | Sep | Oct | Nov | Dec |
|--------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| Long Preston | 0 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 0 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 |

Maximum Monthly Counts for Hellifield Flash and Long Preston Deeps.

| Site/Month | Jan | Feb | Mar | Apr | May | Jun | Jul | Aug | Sep | Oct | Nov | Dec |
|------------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| Hellifield Flash | - | - | - | 2 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 2 |
| Long Preston | - | 2 | 3 | 1 | 1 | 2 | - | 2 | 3 | - | 1 | 3 |

WHOOPEE SWAN *Cygnus cygnus* AE*

Adult Whooper Swan at Hellifield Flash on 30th March (IRC).

At Hellifield Flash there were 30 on 24th March which remained until dusk and appeared to roost. There was also a single present on 27th March, with another from 22nd April until 11th May. Only

low numbers of passage birds were noted on the floodplain with March records including 12 on 19th, three on 24th, and 42 on 26th and 27th. In April there were 14 on 2nd and 17 on 3rd.

In October seven flew south on 5th, with six present on 12th and 12 on 13th. On 3rd November two adults and three juveniles flew from Sour Dale and headed north-west before heading back south down the valley a short while later, and there were also four present later in the month on 10th.

SHELDUCK *Tadorna tadorna* A

The first of the year was a single at Hellifield Flash on 3rd January before numbers slowly increased throughout the first two months of the year to 18 on 24th February. In early spring, numbers were lower than in previous years, with predominantly single figure counts on a number of dates in March and April, and between eight and 14 present in early to mid-May. By the end of the May there were three pairs with young present on the Flash, with a single brood of eight and two broods of three well grown young on 8th June. This was the first time that more than two pairs had attempted to nest. Three juveniles still remained on 7th July. Later in the year there were six birds on 13th November.

On the middle and southern floodplain the first record was on 4th January, with numbers gradually increasing over the following months peaking at ten on 6th May. One, occasionally two birds then lingered around Long Preston Beck until 8th June but there was no evidence of breeding. A pair were also present on 19th May on north eastern floodplain. As normal, there were very few records in the latter months of the year with two on 15th September, two on 3rd and 10th with a single on 24th November. Four were also present on the 30th December.

Monthly WeBS Counts for Hellifield Flash and Long Preston Deepes.

| Site/Month | Jan | Feb | Mar | Apr | May | Jun | Jul | Aug | Sep | Oct | Nov | Dec |
|------------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| Hellifield Flash | 0 | 7 | 11 | 7 | 1 | 22 | 5 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Long Preston | 1 | 5 | 6 | 4 | 4 | 4 | 3 | 0 | 2 | 1 | 0 | 0 |

Maximum Monthly Counts for Hellifield Flash and Long Preston Deepes.

| Site/Month | Jan | Feb | Mar | Apr | May | Jun | Jul | Aug | Sep | Oct | Nov | Dec |
|------------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| Hellifield Flash | 1 | 21 | 8 | 10 | 28* | 20* | 5 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 6 | 0 |
| Long Preston | 2 | 8 | 9 | 6 | 10 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 4 |

*includes young

GARGANEY *Spatula querquedula* A

A pair were present on floods below Sour Dale Lane on 31st March (IRC). Later in the year a male and two females were present at Hellifield Flash on 6th May (IRC: MH), with all three still present on at least 9th and 11th.



Garganey, Sour Dale Lane floods on 31st March (IRC).

SHOVELER *Spatula clypeata* A

The recent run of good years continued with numbers comparable to recent years. There was a remarkable count of 105 at Hellifield Flash on 29th October, the first three-figure count for the area and easily in excess of the previous highest count of 74 on 3rd January 2016. At Hellifield Flash a pair lingered until late April with only a male present until 10th May. The first of the autumn were five on 15th September.

Numbers were quite disappointing on Long Preston Deeps in the early part of the year. Two pairs and a single male did linger into mid-April, but despite three males and at least one female present in May and June, there were no confirmed breeding attempts.

Monthly WeBS Counts for Hellifield Flash and Long Preston Deeps.

| Site/Month | Jan | Feb | Mar | Apr | May | Jun | Jul | Aug | Sep | Oct | Nov | Dec |
|------------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| Hellifield Flash | 25 | 29 | 46 | 6 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 5 | 7 | 46 | 40 |
| Long Preston | 1 | 5 | 6 | 4 | 4 | 4 | 0 | 0 | 4 | 19 | 2 | 9 |

Maximum Monthly Counts for Hellifield Flash and Long Preston Deeps.

| Site/Month | Jan | Feb | Mar | Apr | May | Jun | Jul | Aug | Sep | Oct | Nov | Dec |
|------------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| Hellifield Flash | 54 | 47 | 39 | 32 | 1 | - | - | - | 5 | 105 | 96 | 15 |
| Long Preston | - | 2 | 20 | 8 | 3 | - | - | - | 1 | 66 | 4 | - |

GADWALL *Mareca strepera* AC2E*

The numbers at Hellifield Flash were lower than in previous years, with only a pair present until mid-April and, somewhat surprisingly, a pair present in May on 27th, a male on 31st and two males on 1st June. Numbers were similarly low on Long Preston Deeps in the early months and so 20 on floods along Sour Dale Lane on 31st March was unexpected, particularly as it was double the previous highest count from the same area in November and December 2016. A pair remained in the Middle Marsh area from mid-April until mid-May, with another pair present on 10th May, but there was no confirmed breeding.

Monthly WeBS Counts for Hellifield Flash and Long Preston Deeps.

| Site/Month | Jan | Feb | Mar | Apr | May | Jun | Jul | Aug | Sep | Oct | Nov | Dec |
|------------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| Hellifield Flash | 0 | 4 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Long Preston | 0 | 2 | 12 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 3 | 0 | 2 |

Maximum Monthly Counts for Hellifield Flash and Long Preston Deeps.

| Site/Month | Jan | Feb | Mar | Apr | May | Jun | Jul | Aug | Sep | Oct | Nov | Dec |
|------------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| Hellifield Flash | 1 | - | 2 | 4 | 2 | - | - | - | - | - | 5 | 3 |
| Long Preston | - | - | 20 | 9 | 4 | - | - | - | 1 | 3 | - | - |

WIGEON *Mareca Penelope* AE*

A record number of birds were present in the area in the early part of the year. The WeBS counts of 1789 at Hellifield Flash on the January survey and 1707 on Long Preston Deeps in the February survey were just short of the single highest individual site count of 1828 on Long Preston Deeps on 4th February 2017. However, the cumulative totals for both sites exceeded this number in both months. Confirmation of the record numbers present was achieved in late January when a remarkable total of at least 2400 on Hellifield Flash on 27th established a new peak count. Numbers in the latter months of the year returned to more expected levels.

Monthly WeBS Counts for Hellifield Flash and Long Preston Deeps.

| Site/Month | Jan | Feb | Mar | Apr | May | Jun | Jul | Aug | Sep | Oct | Nov | Dec |
|------------------|------|------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|------|
| Hellifield Flash | 1789 | 388 | 124 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 27 | 216 | 115 |
| Long Preston | 255 | 1707 | 312 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 28 | 657 | 681 | 1140 |

Maximum Monthly Counts for Hellifield Flash and Long Preston Deeps.

| Site/Month | Jan | Feb | Mar | Apr | May | Jun | Jul | Aug | Sep | Oct | Nov | Dec |
|------------------|------|------|------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| Hellifield Flash | 2400 | 1128 | 390 | 72 | - | - | - | - | - | 70 | 360 | 10 |
| Long Preston | 110 | 210 | 2500 | - | - | - | - | - | 4 | 750 | 50 | 400 |

MALLARD *Anas platyrhynchos* AC2C4E*

There was no noticeable change in status during the year. No breeding records were received.

Monthly WeBS Counts for Hellifield Flash and Long Preston Deeps.

| Site/Month | Jan | Feb | Mar | Apr | May | Jun | Jul | Aug | Sep | Oct | Nov | Dec |
|------------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| Hellifield Flash | 163 | 20 | 8 | 19 | 7 | 0 | 0 | 8 | 2 | 29 | 45 | 187 |
| Long Preston | 50 | 34 | 46 | 36 | 46 | 30 | 13 | 67 | 45 | 104 | 43 | 340 |

Maximum Monthly Counts for Hellifield Flash and Long Preston Deeps.

| Site/Month | Jan | Feb | Mar | Apr | May | Jun | Jul | Aug | Sep | Oct | Nov | Dec |
|------------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| Hellifield Flash | 173 | 76 | 7 | 25 | 7 | 10 | 1 | - | 2 | 29 | 128 | 60 |
| Long Preston | 21 | 17 | - | - | - | - | - | 25 | 58 | - | - | - |

PINTAIL *Anas acuta* AE

An average year with numbers slightly down on those recorded in the previous year.

Monthly WeBS Counts for Hellifield Flash and Long Preston Deep.

| Site/Month | Jan | Feb | Mar | Apr | May | Jun | Jul | Aug | Sep | Oct | Nov | Dec |
|------------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| Hellifield Flash | 11 | 8 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 21 | 2 |
| Long Preston | 4 | 46 | 15 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 8 | 36 | 33 |

Maximum Monthly Counts for Hellifield Flash and Long Preston Deeps.

| Site/Month | Jan | Feb | Mar | Apr | May | Jun | Jul | Aug | Sep | Oct | Nov | Dec |
|------------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| Hellifield Flash | 58 | 61 | - | 2 | - | - | - | - | - | 3 | 42 | 1 |
| Long Preston | 4 | 10 | 12 | 5 | - | - | - | - | - | 21 | 15 | - |

TEAL *Anas crecca* A

Average numbers were present across the recording area in both winter periods. A pair lingered at Hellifield Flash until 27th April, whilst on Long Preston Deeps five were still present on 6th May with a pair remaining until 10th and still present on the WeBS count on 6th June.

Monthly WeBS Counts for Hellifield Flash and Long Preston Deep.

| Site/Month | Jan | Feb | Mar | Apr | May | Jun | Jul | Aug | Sep | Oct | Nov | Dec |
|------------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| Hellifield Flash | 33 | 7 | 13 | 22 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 45 | 9 | 12 | 61 |
| Long Preston | 82 | 289 | 195 | 30 | 0 | 2 | 23 | 20 | 100 | 400 | 407 | 301 |

Maximum Monthly Counts for Hellifield Flash and Long Preston Deeps.

| Site/Month | Jan | Feb | Mar | Apr | May | Jun | Jul | Aug | Sep | Oct | Nov | Dec |
|------------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| Hellifield Flash | 24 | 89 | 35 | 59 | - | - | - | - | 45 | 12 | 13 | 5 |
| Long Preston | 52 | 80 | 343 | 202 | 5 | - | - | 3 | 100 | 150 | 322 | 70 |

POCHARD *Aythya farina* AE*

There were records at Hellifield Flash in the first two months of the year. In late January there were six males and two females on 25th with nine males and three females on the 31st. They were still present the following day when they were joined by an additional male. Later in February there were four males and two females on 9th and a single male on 24th.

TUFTED DUCK *Aythya fuligula* A

There were regular sightings at Hellifield Flash during the first three months of the year. Following nine on 1st January there were only low single-figure counts on a number of dates during the remainder of the month. Numbers varied between nine and 13 in February and between two and eight up until mid-March, with an increase later in the month from two on 18th to 26 the following day, but only two were present at the end of the month. The only records in April were of two on 2nd and five on 9th.

Records on the floodplain were restricted to periods of flooding, with all records in the Sour Dale Lane area. There were seven on 18th March with six remaining the following day and 19 were also present on 19th May. In the latter part of the year there were seven on 13th October.

Monthly WeBS Counts for Hellifield Flash.

[illegible]

Maximum Monthly Counts for Hellifield Flash.

| Site/Month | Jan | Feb | Mar | Apr | May | Jun | Jul | Aug | Sep | Oct | Nov | Dec |
|------------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| Hellifield Flash | 10 | 13 | 26 | - | - | - | - | - | - | 3 | 13 | 13 |

SCAUP *Aythya marila* A

The only record was one was at Hellifield Flash on 25th January (MH).

GOLDENEYE *Bucephala clangula* AE*

It was a much better year, particularly at Hellifield Flash, despite only two on 1st January and one on 8th February. In March, two were present on 9th, four on 11th, seven on 12th, five on 17th, six on 18th but only one on 27th. The only records in the latter half of the year were one on 10th, 17th and 18th November and nine on 24th December.

It is suspected that birds winter on the Ribble but, with only short sections of the river visible from public watch points, they are rarely seen. However, there were three males and a female seen to fly south off the Ribble opposite the bird hide on 3rd February. In October, a female flew south on 13th and two also flew south on 31st.

GOOSANDER *Mergus merganser* A

The only records at Hellifield Flash were a male on 19th March and a pair on 25th April. On the Ribble up to seven were reported in the first half of the year but other than nine in August there was only one or two in the latter months. A female with five small chicks was just above Cow Bridge on 8th June.

Monthly WeBS Counts for Long Preston Deep.

| Site/Month | Jan | Feb | Mar | Apr | May | Jun | Jul | Aug | Sep | Oct | Nov | Dec |
|--------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| Long Preston | 1 | 3 | 6 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 0 | 9 | 1 | 0 | 2 | 0 |

Maximum Monthly Counts for Long Preston Deep.

| Site/Month | Jan | Feb | Mar | Apr | May | Jun | Jul | Aug | Sep | Oct | Nov | Dec |
|--------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| Long Preston | - | 3 | 3 | 2 | 1 | - | - | 1 | - | 2 | 2 | 1 |

RED-LEGGED PARTRIDGE *Alectoris rufa* C1E*

Two were at Hellifield Flash on 27th February and 24th March. Elsewhere on the floodplain five were to the north of Hollow Gill on 27th January whilst in April, two were near Wigglesworth Hall on 18th and along Sour Dale Lane on 21st. There were also two were near Cow Bridge on 22nd August, with three there on 12th October.

GREY PARTRIDGE *Perdix perdix* AC2E*

The only record was, once again, in the north eastern area of the floodplain, where one was reported on 24th March.

PHEASANT *Phasianus colchicus* C1E*

There were regular records across the floodplain throughout the year, presumably all relating to locally released birds.

LITTLE GREBE *Tachybaptus ruficollis* A

The favoured area was along the Ribble just upriver from Cow Bridge, potentially because this is one of the few stretches of river that is viewable from a public right of way. There were regular reports of one or two birds in that area in January, February, March, August, October, November and December. Four were present on 4th January with three on 20th January, 3rd and 24th March and 10th November. Presumably the high river levels pushed these birds onto flooded ground along Sour Dale Lane, where two were present on 31st March with one on 13th October. At Hollow Dene Flash there were two on 23rd August, with one on 8th and two on 15th September.

GREY HERON *Ardea cinerea* A

At Hellifield Flash two were present on 2nd February with one on 9th and 22nd April. In May there was a single on 3rd, three on 5th, singles on 9th and 10th May, with two on 19th. The only records in the latter half of the year were two on 15th September and one on 6th October.

There were numerous records of between one and three on the floodplain in all months of the year, with four on 11th April, five on 29th December and six 15th September. A first calendar-year bird that was colour-ringed with a blue Darvic TN was present along the main sluice just up from the bird hide on 31st October. It had been ringed as a nestling by North Notts Ringing Group on 28th April at Besthorpe Nature Reserve, near Newark, Nottinghamshire. It had travelled 136 km from the ringing site.



Colour-ringed grey heron, October 2020. (IRC).

Monthly WeBS Counts for Long Preston Deep.

| Site/Month | Jan | Feb | Mar | Apr | May | Jun | Jul | Aug | Sep | Oct | Nov | Dec |
|--------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| Long Preston | 4 | 5 | 3 | 4 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 4 | 2 | 3 | 3 |

GREAT WHITE EGRET *Ardea alba* A

One was present on the central floodplain near Wigglesworth Hall on 28th September (BB) with another which flew low from Mearbeck and dropped into the Middle Marsh area on 31st October (IRC). These are the fourth and fifth sightings in the recording area and the fourth consecutive year that this species has been recorded.

LITTLE EGRET *Egretta garzetta* A

A breeding plumaged adult that dropped into Hellifield Flash during a rain shower on 26th April, rested for several minutes and then continued to fly south, was the only site record. Three birds wintered on the floodplain with one or two regularly reported on the southern floodplain in between 7th February and 13th May with one seen on 16th June WeBS count. Up to three were also seen on many dates from 27th October until the end of the year.

Maximum Monthly Counts for Hellifield Flash and Long Preston Deepes.

| Site/Month | Jan | Feb | Mar | Apr | May | Jun | Jul | Aug | Sep | Oct | Nov | Dec |
|--------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| Long Preston | 0 | 2 | 2 | 3 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 3 | 2 | 2 |

CORMORANT *Phalacrocorax carbo* A

There were only two records at Hellifield Flash with singles on 30th March and 24th November, the latter showing characteristics of the subspecies *sinensis*. Most other records referred to one or two birds either along the Ribble or flying through the valley, with some also seen to fly into roost in riverside trees. Higher counts included three on 10th, 21st and 24th November and also 29th December with five on 17th November. On 7th August one was present on the Ribble and six flew south through the valley, with seven also present on 31st October.

On 3rd February, 19 were inadvertently flushed off the Ribble by a farmer and later in the day four additional birds were seen flying south. This unprecedented influx occurred during a particularly cold spell of weather when all other waterbodies and slow-moving streams, and possibly some sections of River, would have been frozen. Only singles were recorded during the remainder of the month.

Monthly WeBS Counts for Long Preston Deepes.

| Site/Month | Jan | Feb | Mar | Apr | May | Jun | Jul | Aug | Sep | Oct | Nov | Dec |
|--------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| Long Preston | 1 | 1 | 0 | 3 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 2 | 2 |

Maximum Monthly Counts for Long Preston Deepes.

| Site/Month | Jan | Feb | Mar | Apr | May | Jun | Jul | Aug | Sep | Oct | Nov | Dec |
|--------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| Long Preston | 2 | 23 | - | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 4 | 1 | 7 | 5 | 3 |

SPARROWHAWK *Accipiter nisus*

There were records at Hellifield Flash with singles on 27th January, on two dates in April, and 25th May and 1st June. On Long Preston Deepes there were records on three dates in January, one in February, three in March, one in April and two in May. In the latter half of the year there were records on just single dates in August and September, two in October, three in November and one in December.

MARSH HARRIER *Circus aeruginosus* A

The only records were in the latter half of the year and included a juvenile(s) on 22nd and 26th August and 15th and 28th September. It was assumed that sightings of a juvenile on 13th, 27th, 30th and 31st October all related to the same bird.

HEN HARRIER *Circus cyaneus* A

In January a ringtail flew over the road near Rathmell on 4th with a juvenile male on 6th. An adult male was a spectacular, albeit brief, sight as it flew through the floodplain on 2nd, 7th and 9th February. An adult female also passed through the area on 10th March. In autumn an adult male was present briefly on 27th October. Three different birds (first calendar-year and adult females and a first calendar-year male) were seen sporadically between the 9th November and the year end, presumably moving between roosting and feeding areas in the Dales and Bowland.

BUZZARD *Buteo buteo* AE*

There were sightings at Hellifield Flash on 2nd February, 27th March, 19th and 21st April and 6th May. The only record in the latter half of the year was a single on 24th November. One or two were regularly seen on or over the floodplain throughout the year, with four birds on 28th March, 5th and 20th October.

WATER RAIL *Rallus aquaticus* A

The only records were of a single that flew from Wigglesworth Beck into the willow spiralling at the collapsed bank just below the hide on 24th February, and what is likely to have been the same bird calling from *juncus* around the hide scrape on 1st March.

MOORHEN *Gallinula chloropus* A

The majority of records were from the Cow Bridge area where there were two on 4th January, singles on 17th March; 31st October, two on 3rd November and one on 24th November. There was also one on 31st March and two on 6th April adjacent to Sour Dale Lane, with a juvenile there on 20th October. Two adults were below Hollow Gill on 19th March and three adults were at Hollow Dene Flash on 15th September. There were also two in the north eastern area of the floodplain on 21st April, 15th September and 17th November WeBS counts. One or two were present at the roadside flash near Settle SW between February and April until the area dried out.

Monthly WeBS Counts for Long Preston Deep.

| Site/Month | Jan | Feb | Mar | Apr | May | Jun | Jul | Aug | Sep | Oct | Nov | Dec |
|--------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| Long Preston | 2 | 1 | 0 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 0 | 2 | 1 |

COOT *Fulica atra* A

There were sightings at Hellifield Flash from 14th January onwards, with numbers slowly building up over the following months, but peak counts lower than in previous years. It appeared that there were three pairs present in late April and May with two pairs attempting to nest. Both pairs failed when the Flash dried out in mid-May. Floodwater attracted a small number in spring, primarily recorded on the monthly WeBS counts.

Monthly WeBS Counts for Hellifield Flash and Long Preston Deepes.

| Site/Month | Jan | Feb | Mar | Apr | May | Jun | Jul | Aug | Sep | Oct | Nov | Dec |
|------------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| Hellifield Flash | 1 | 2 | 10 | 7 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Long Preston | 0 | 0 | 10 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |

Maximum Monthly Counts for Hellifield Flash.

| Site/Month | Jan | Feb | Mar | Apr | May | Jun | Jul | Aug | Sep | Oct | Nov | Dec |
|------------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| Hellifield Flash | 1 | 7 | 12 | 11 | 6 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |

OYSTERCATCHER *Haematopus ostralegus* A

The first records of the year were four at Hellifield Flash on 27th January. As usual, numbers slowly built up in subsequent months, although it is difficult to know what, if any, the turnover of passage birds was. There were also low single-figure counts below Hollow Gill in February before increasing in March with 15 on 19th, four present in May and six in June. On the north east flood plain there were six in mid-February increasing to 19 on 21st April. The fields near Settle SW regularly attract birds in spring with 112 on 17th February the third highest count in the recording area, with 81 on 24th, 66 on 27th February, 39 on 31st March and 14 on 6th April.

Monthly WeBS Counts for Hellifield Flash and Long Preston Deepes.

| Site/Month | Jan | Feb | Mar | Apr | May | Jun | Jul | Aug | Sep | Oct | Nov | Dec |
|------------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| Hellifield Flash | 0 | 27 | 0 | 22 | 10 | 30 | 4 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Long Preston | 1 | 112 | 49 | 19 | 14 | 9 | 11 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |

Maximum Monthly Counts for Hellifield Flash and Long Preston Deepes.

| Site/Month | Jan | Feb | Mar | Apr | May | Jun | Jul | Aug | Sep | Oct | Nov | Dec |
|------------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| Hellifield Flash | 4 | 26 | 26 | 30 | 29 | 11 | 4 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Long Preston | 0 | 6 | 9 | 19 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |

LAPWING *Vanellus vanellus* A

Two pairs nested at Hellifield Flash, with a pair and two chicks seen on 31st May, and 1st, 2nd and 3rd June but no sign of any adults or young on 6th June. A third pair was also present with a female nest scraping on 2nd June. There were 13 including a recently fledged young on 7th July, the latter thought to have been from a nesting site just outside the area. At least one pair nested near Wigglesworth Hall. Outside the breeding season, numbers were lower than in previous years.

Monthly WeBS Counts for Hellifield Flash and Long Preston Deepes.

| Site/Month | Jan | Feb | Mar | Apr | May | Jun | Jul | Aug | Sep | Oct | Nov | Dec |
|------------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|------|------|-----|
| Hellifield Flash | 15 | 130 | 10 | 4 | 6 | 3 | 12 | 0 | 206 | 0 | 410 | 0 |
| Long Preston | 80 | 376 | 20 | 13 | 13 | 2 | 15 | 707 | 90 | 1035 | 1110 | 96 |

Maximum Monthly Counts for Hellifield Flash and Long Preston Deepes.

| Site/Month | Jan | Feb | Mar | Apr | May | Jun | Jul | Aug | Sep | Oct | Nov | Dec |
|------------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|------|------|------|
| Hellifield Flash | 260 | 240 | 0 | 5 | 7 | 8 | 41 | 0 | 206 | 0 | 300 | 80 |
| Long Preston | 250 | 530 | 170 | 2 | 0 | 199 | 20 | 140 | 90 | 1040 | 1200 | 1000 |

GOLDEN PLOVER *Pluvialis apricaria* A

This species was again scarce, with all records on Long Preston Deeps, primarily below Hollow Gill. There were singles on 20th January and 3rd February, with 32 on 11 March. In autumn a single was present on 15th September with October records comprising five on 12th, two on 13th, 21 on 20th and 15 on 27th.

RINGED PLOVER *Charadrius hiaticula* A

It was a much better year, with a good number of passage birds at Hellifield Flash, some lingering for several days. The only record in April was one on 17th April. There were multiple sightings in May with five on 3rd, singles on 5th, 6th, 8th, 9th, 20th, and an impressive total of 20 on 26th. There were also 12 on 27th, two on 29th, three on 30th and six on 31st. The only other records were in June, with two on both 1st and 3rd.

LITTLE RINGED PLOVER *Charadrius dubius* A

At Hellifield Flash the first of the year arrived on 2nd April with further records of singles up until 11th April. There were three on 25th and 26th April with two present through until the end of May, with four on 3rd and three on 5th. Mating was observed on 19th May and although an incubating bird was present from at least 2nd June, no young were seen. Two adults remained during June with four on 7th July. A presumed migrant was present on the north east floodplain on 21st April, with one present on the central floodplain, recorded on the April, May and June and July WeBS counts.

WHIMBREL *Numenius phaeopus* A

One flew past the bird hide before dropping onto the floodplain on 17th April (JW) and nine dropped onto Hellifield Flash on 9th May at 1658 hrs, then flew north at 1702 hrs (IRC).

CURLEW *Numenius arquata* A

The first of the year were two at Hellifield Flash on 24th February, with one or two present in subsequent months. Numbers built up on Long Preston Deeps particularly in late February and early March, when flooding created the ideal habitat. Counts in February included 45 on 17th, 76 on 24th, and 25 on 27th February. In March there were 54 on 1st, 70 on 10th, 70 on 17th including a colour-ringed bird. This had been ringed in South Wales, but unfortunately the lettering could not be read and so it is not possible to confirm any further details. Later in March there were 110 on 13th and 20 on 28th. During April and May up to three were present in the central floodplain, with three also in the fields between the Ribble Way and the road that were alarm-calling on several dates. There were also up to four below Hollow Gill and two on the north east floodplain.

Monthly WeBS Counts for Hellifield Flash and Long Preston Deeps.

| Site/Month | Jan | Feb | Mar | Apr | May | Jun | Jul | Aug | Sep | Oct | Nov | Dec |
|------------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| Hellifield Flash | 0 | 1 | 0 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Long Preston | 0 | 45 | 10 | 4 | 4 | 7 | 0 | 15 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |

Maximum Monthly Counts for Hellifield Flash and Long Preston Deeps.

| Site/Month | Jan | Feb | Mar | Apr | May | Jun | Jul | Aug | Sep | Oct | Nov | Dec |
|------------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| Hellifield Flash | 0 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Long Preston | 0 | 76 | 70 | 6 | 6 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |

BLACK-TAILED GODWIT *Limosa limosa* A

Once again Hellifield Flash was a favoured site for this species. One was reported on 1st January with no further records until two on 14th. Numbers started to increase during February with 45 on 2nd, 36 on 17th, 70 on 22nd, 41 on 25th and 37 on 27th. Numbers fluctuated during March with 54 on 9th, 53 on 11th, 58 on 12th, 76 on 17th, with 80 on 18th and 19th and 117 on 24th. The first three-figure count for the area was 101 on 25th, with 124 on 27th and 116 on 30th March all record counts for the area. Good numbers remained during April with 90 on 2nd, 100 on 6th, 66 on 7th, one on 10th and 11th, two on 19th and one on both 21st and 22nd.

Local birders were not disappointed as 'our' bird - colour-ringed as a chick in Iceland in 2009 - returned for its fifth spring. It was definitely present on 9th, 12th, 17th, 18th and 27th March and was presumably present but just not visible in the tightly packed groups of resting birds on the dates in between. Some of these birds were also present below Hollow Gill in March with 81, including the colour-ringed bird from Hellifield Flash, on 19th and 113 on 31st March. There were 44 in the same area on 11th, when 23 were also feeding in a flood pool off Sour Dale Lane. Three were also present below Hollow Gill on 10th May.



Black-tailed Godwit. Hellifield Flash (IRC).

KNOT *Calidris canutus* A

One present at Hellifield Flash on 31st May (IRC) was the first record since 2012.

RUFF *Calidris pugnax* A

This species is getting less frequent, with two at Hellifield Flash on 7th July the only records of the year.

SANDERLING *Calidris alba* A

One at Hellifield Flash on 26th May (IRC: MH) with a different bird on 3rd June (MH). These were the first records since 2013.



Sanderling at Hellifield Flash (IRC)

DUNLIN *Calidris alpina* A

It was a better year than 2018 with all records at Hellifield Flash. Following one on 18th April there was a good run in May, with three on 8th and 9th, one on 26th, 27th and 30th with five on 31st. One was still present on 1st June. The only autumn record was one on 15th September.

JACK SNIPE *Limnocryptes minimus* A

One was reported on the north east floodplain on 17th February (BB).

SNIPE *Gallinago gallinago* A

It is a matter of conjecture how many snipe were actually present on the floodplain. Some indication came courtesy of a marsh harrier that flushed 39 from Middle Marsh as it quartered the area on 22nd August, and from a buzzard that flushed at least 98 as it flew over the same area on 31st August. The only breeding records were up to four birds drumming over Snipe Ground (where else?) from early May into June.

Monthly WeBS Counts for Hellifield Flash and Long Preston Deepes.

| Site/Month | Jan | Feb | Mar | Apr | May | Jun | Jul | Aug | Sep | Oct | Nov | Dec |
|------------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| Hellifield Flash | 4 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 7 | 0 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 27 |
| Long Preston | 21 | 35 | 14 | 14 | 5 | 3 | 31 | 18 | 10 | 1 | 14 | 6 |

Maximum Monthly Counts for Hellifield Flash and Long Preston Deepes.

| Site/Month | Jan | Feb | Mar | Apr | May | Jun | Jul | Aug | Sep | Oct | Nov | Dec |
|------------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| Hellifield Flash | 0 | 3 | 7 | 3 | 0 | 0 | 7 | 0 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Long Preston | 0 | 0 | 15 | 1 | 1 | 7 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 30 | 25 | 6 |

COMMON SANDPIPER *Actitis hypoleucos* A

There was a single at Hellifield Flash on 9th April with one and occasionally two during the remainder of the month and throughout May. Three were present on 1st June, with one or two

later in the month and remaining until 7th July but there was no evidence of breeding. There was also a number sightings at Cow Bridge on the April to August WeBS counts.

Monthly WeBS Counts for Long Preston Deeps.

| Site/Month | Jan | Feb | Mar | Apr | May | Jun | Jul | Aug | Sep | Oct | Nov | Dec |
|--------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| Long Preston | 0 | 0 | 0 | 6 | 3 | 4 | 8 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |

GREEN SANDPIPER *Tringa ochropus* A

At least two were present in the first winter period, with most records from the Cow Bridge area and along Wigglesworth Beck. Singles were seen on 4th, 20th and 24th January, with two on the February WeBS survey on 17th and one later in the month on 24th. In March there were singles on 1st, 27th and 31st, with two on 24th March WeBS survey. What were likely to be passage migrants were present on the central floodplain on 7th July and 4th August WeBS surveys. At least one bird was present in the second winter period, with sightings on 20th and 27th October and in November on 10th, 17th and 24th. It was also seen on 15th and 29th December. There were also sightings on the north east floodplain on 17th February, 24th March and 15th December.

REDSHANK *Tringa tetanus* A

At Hellifield Flash, following four on 24th February, there were two birds present throughout April and May, with four from late May into June. Three adults and a juvenile were present on 7th July but were not thought to have bred on site. There were also regular sightings in the Cow Bridge and Sour Dale area, where there were five from 17th March until 6th April but only a single up until 26th April. Below Hollow Gill there were nine on the main pool on 19th March, with two pairs present until mid-May at least. Elsewhere there were five on the north east floodplain on 24th March and one or two at Settle SW area in late March until mid-April.

Monthly WeBS Counts for Hellifield Flash and Long Preston Deeps.

| Site/Month | Jan | Feb | Mar | Apr | May | Jun | Jul | Aug | Sep | Oct | Nov | Dec |
|------------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| Hellifield Flash | 0 | 0 | 5 | 2 | 1 | 5 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Long Preston | 0 | 2 | 14 | 6 | 3 | 4 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |

GREENSHANK *Tringa nebularia* A

One was present on the central floodplain on 4th August (AS) and four were present on Long Preston Deeps on 11th October (RC).

BLACK-HEADED GULL *Chroicocephalus ridibundus* A

No change in status was noted.

Monthly WeBS Counts for Hellifield Flash and Long Preston Deeps.

| Site/Month | Jan | Feb | Mar | Apr | May | Jun | Jul | Aug | Sep | Oct | Nov | Dec |
|------------------|-----|------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| Hellifield Flash | 12 | 14 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 5 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 |
| Long Preston | 10 | 1304 | 298 | 11 | 18 | 4 | 33 | 100 | 19 | 20 | 12 | 40 |

Maximum Monthly Counts for Hellifield Flash and Long Preston Deeps.

| Site/Month | Jan | Feb | Mar | Apr | May | Jun | Jul | Aug | Sep | Oct | Nov | Dec |
|------------------|-----|-----|------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| Hellifield Flash | 20 | 25 | 2 | 12 | 5 | 2 | 8 | 0 | 0 | 3 | 40 | 0 |
| Long Preston | 211 | 521 | 2000 | 300 | 20 | 50 | 25 | 10 | 5 | 250 | 50 | 150 |

LITTLE GULL *Hydrocoloeus minutus* A

An adult in winter plumage was at Hellifield Flash on 17th April (*per* BirdGuides) was only the fifth record in the recording area and the first since 2009, when an immature was at Hellifield Flash on 10th August.



Little Gull at Hellifield Flash: (Roy Clarke)

MEDITERRANEAN GULL *Ichthyaetus melanocephalus* A

There were two different birds in February with a green colour-ringed adult near Settle SW on 3rd February and a different, un-ringed bird seen on floods at Mearbeck on 17th.



Mediterranean Gull with Common Gull near Settle SW. IRC.



Mediterranean Gull at Mearbeck. IRC

COMMON GULL *Larus canus* A

No change in status was noted. Seven second-calendar year birds at Hellifield Flash on 7th June were unusual.

Monthly WeBS Counts for Hellifield Flash and Long Preston Deeps.

| Site/Month | Jan | Feb | Mar | Apr | May | Jun | Jul | Aug | Sep | Oct | Nov | Dec |
|------------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| Hellifield Flash | 90 | 45 | 0 | 9 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 3 |
| Long Preston | 35 | 62 | 83 | 0 | 5 | 0 | 0 | 20 | 120 | 5 | 4 | 38 |

Maximum Monthly Counts for Hellifield Flash and Long Preston Deeps.

| Site/Month | Jan | Feb | Mar | Apr | May | Jun | Jul | Aug | Sep | Oct | Nov | Dec |
|------------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| Hellifield Flash | 50 | 180 | 10 | 31 | 1 | 7 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 11 | 0 |
| Long Preston | 130 | 200 | 500 | 175 | 15 | 3 | 0 | 0 | 120 | 600 | 200 | 70 |

GREAT BLACK-BACKED GULL *Larus marinus* A

There was an increase in records compared to previous years. At Hellifield Flash there were two on 17th February, singles on 17th and 28th March, with two on 7th, one on 18th and 19th and two on 25th April. There were also further singles present on 3rd, 6th and 22nd May. In October, singles were noted on 6th, 10th, 13th, 20th, 27th and 29th; 4th and 25th November and 24th December.

On Long Preston Deeps there were three on 4th January, with February records including two on 3rd, three on 9th and nine that flew north-west on 10th. In March there were also two on 11th, one on 17th and two on 31st, with six on 2nd and one on 21st April. Mid-summer records are unusual and so one on 21st July was notable. Later in the year there was a single on 20th, two on 27th and one on 31st October, one on 3rd November and three on 7th December.

HERRING GULL *Larus argentatus* A

Once again, the number of records increased compared to the previous years. At Hellifield Flash there were singles on 31st January, 24th and 27th February with two on 12th March. In April, one was present on 21st with two on 27th. The only other records in the latter half of the year were singles on 24th and 25th November.

On Long Preston Deeps the only record in January was one on 7th, with one on 2nd, four on 17th and two on 24th February. Two were also present on 10th, 17th and 31st March, 3rd April and 2nd May. The only other records were singles on 3rd November and 7th December. The fields adjacent to Settle SW seem to attract this species with eight present on 27th January, one on 3rd, 17 on 9th and 19 on 10th February with further singles on 27th March and 11th April. There are no previous high counts documented and so, given how scarce this species used to be, the 19 present on 10th February are highly likely to represent the record count for the area.

LESSER BLACK-BACKED GULL *Larus fuscus* A

Another gull species that is increasing in the recording area. At Hellifield Flash one was present on 31st January with no further records until three on 24th February. Numbers increased during March with some notable counts of 59 on 19th, 63 on 21st, 92 on 25th, 110 on 26th and 53 on 27th April.

It was similar on the Long Preston floodplain where one near Settle SW on 7th February was the first of the year. Large numbers were present from late March with 170 below Hollow Gill on 31st, 95 on 2nd, 110 on 6th, 250 on 11th and 130 on 27th April, with 197 on 6th May. There were up to 25 from late May until early June with 37 on 1st, 63 on 2nd at least 150 on 29th, with numbers remaining high into September. A total of 289 were present below Rathmell on 23rd August with numbers quickly declining until the last one on 3rd November. The previous highest documented count in the recording area was 128 on 18th March 2018, a total that was exceeded on at least six dates during the year.

ROCK DOVE *Columba livia* AC4E*

There were three records of feral pigeons during the year.

STOCK DOVE *Columba oenas* A

All records were on Long Preston Deeps with up to three regularly in the Cow Bridge and Sour Dale Lane area throughout the year. There were slightly higher counts of eight on 10th and four on 17th March, with five on six May. There were six on the north eastern floodplain on 24th March with singles seen on only three other WeBS counts.

WOODPIGEON *Columba palumbus* A

There were low single figure counts on the Long Preston floodplain throughout the year, with 60 on 15th December the highest count of the year.

COLLARED DOVE *Streptopelia decaocto* A

There was an increase in sightings across the recording area with one to three present at Hellifield Flash on a number of dates, including a peak count of five on 27th February. There were regular reports of singles reported between Hollow Gill and Cow Bridge with five present near Wigglesworth Hall on 8th September.

BARN OWL *Tyto alba* AE*

There were sightings in the Hellifield Flash and Gallaber area on 28th January, 3rd and 24th February, and on 15th and 17th March. On the southern area of the floodplain up to two birds were seen on 1st and 4th January and again on 7th, 9th, 10th and 17th February. There were no other records after 18th March.

TAWNY OWL *Strix aluco* A

One was seen at dusk in hawthorns at Cow Bridge on 3rd November.

LITTLE OWL *Athene noctua* C1E*

A territorial pair in the Sour Dale Lane area presumably accounted for occasional sightings elsewhere around Cow Bridge.

SWIFT *Apus apus* A

The first records of the year were at Hellifield Flash and near Runley Bridge on 9th May. Very few records were received, with the highest count at Hellifield Flash only seven on 1st June. Three or four were occasionally reported during May and June, with the last report on 27th July.

KINGFISHER *Alcedo atthis* A

There were 13 records, all in the latter half of the year, primarily of singles above Cow Bridge and along Wigglesworth Beck, with two on 8th September and 3rd November. The only other records were singles seen along the Ribble in the north eastern floodplain on 17th November and 15th December.

HOOPOE *Upupa epops* AE

There was a remarkable record of one on 13th December that flew over the scrape and then over the bird feeders and right past one lucky observer sat in the hide, before disappearing through the hedge, never to be seen again (RC). Despite extensive searching the following day there was no further sign. This was the second record following one at Rathmell on 10th May 1967.

GREAT SPOTTED WOODPECKER *Dendrocopos major* A

Singles were seen along the hedge up from Cow Bridge on 23rd January, 19th April and 31st October. All the other records were at Hollow Gill Wood, with a number of sightings between January and June and again in October and November.

KESTREL *Falco tinnunculus* A

The only sightings at Hellifield Flash were of singles on 5th February and 13th November. There were regular sightings of an adult male and female over the floodplain during the year, primarily in the southern area. An adult female and juvenile were seen on 8th September, a juvenile on 12th and 20th October, and a juvenile and adult male on 27th October, but it is not clear if these bred in the recording area.

MERLIN *Falco columbarius* A

There were two records, both over the Middle Marsh area, with singles on 1st January and 10th November.

PEREGRINE *Falco peregrinus* AE

There were 26 records during the year including nine between 9th February and 19th May and a further 17 between 15th September and the year end.

MAGPIE *Pica pica* A

Other than seven at Hellifield Flash on 25th April, no other notable records were received.

JACKDAW *Coloeus monedula* A

A widespread and common species, doubtlessly under-recorded. The highest count was 150 near Cow Bridge on 10th November.

ROOK *Corvus frugilegus* A

Resident in the recording area. There were at least 20 occupied nests at Wigglesworth Hall on 31st March.

CARRION CROW *Corvus corone* A

This species was present at all the regularly visited sites within the recording area, but no notable records were received.

RAVEN *Corvus corax* A

Singles flew over Hellifield Flash on 3rd January and 24th November. Most of the other records were on, or more accurately flying over, the southern floodplain, with singles noted on a number of dates up until 4th April. One to five were also seen regularly passing in November and December with six on 10th November the highest count

COAL TIT *Periparus ater* A

This species was regular at Hollow Gill throughout the year, with one near bird hide on 27th October.

BLUE TIT *Cyanistes caeruleus* A

This species was present at all the regularly visited sites within the recording area but no notable records were received.

GREAT TIT *Parus major* A

This species was present at all the regularly visited sites within the recording area but no notable records were received.

SKYLARK *Alauda arvensis* A

On the southern floodplain four which flew north on 24th February were clearly migrants. One or two were regularly present from early March up until mid-June, with three singing males between Cow Bridge and Wigglesworth Hall on 27th March and two on 6th April. Elsewhere there was a singing male below Hollow Gill between early April and late June, one at Hollow Dene Flash on 19th April and four on the north eastern floodplain on 24th March and 21st April. There was some evidence of passage in autumn with five over on 8th and one on 15th September, three flew east on 27th October and two on 11th November.

Monthly WeBS Counts for Long Preston Deep.

| Site/Month | Jan | Feb | Mar | Apr | May | Jun | Jul | Aug | Sep | Oct | Nov | Dec |
|--------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| Long Preston | 0 | 0 | 4 | 6 | 4 | 6 | 6 | 6 | 1 | 2 | 0 | 0 |

SAND MARTIN *Riparia riparia* A

There were five at Hellifield Flash on 27th March, increasing to 30 on 30th March, and low single figure counts throughout April with 30 on 9th and 40 on 17th. At least 170 were present during

poor weather on 25th April with 80 the following day. It was similar in May, with peak counts of 100 on 9th and 70 on 8th June.

There were regular reports from the Cow Bridge area and southern part of the floodplain from 2nd May, with 40 on 21st April and 30 the following day, 35 on 26th and 60 on 27th April. There were at least 100 recorded on the April and May WeBS counts and these give an indication of the population along the Ribble. Elsewhere there were low numbers around Settle SW from 6th April peaking at 80 on 21st. The last record of the year was of 30 on the 4th August WeBS survey.

SWALLOW *Hirundo rustica* AE

At Hellifield Flash one was present on 6th April, with only one or two on a number of additional dates up until 2nd June when four were present. One was in the Cow Bridge area the following day, with up to five present there on many dates up until late August, with 12 on 31st. There were some reasonable counts below Hollow Gill with 20 on 31st August and 50 on 8th September. The last record was one that flew south east on 5th October.

HOUSE MARTIN *Delichon urbicum* A

Following the first record at Hellifield Flash on 17th April, apart from 22 on 2nd June, only low single figure counts were recorded. It was similar elsewhere across the rest of the recording area with 100 below Hollow Gill on 8th September the only notable count. The last record of the year was of two over the southern floodplain on 15th September.

LONG-TAILED TIT *Aegithalos caudatus* A

There were three to four regularly reported from the well-watched areas of the floodplain. Unsurprisingly numbers increased during the latter months with up to ten regularly along Wigglesworth Beck in November and December.

WILLOW WARBLER *Phylloscopus trochilus* A

Following the first at Hellifield Flash on 18th April, there were two singing males up until mid-May at least. There were also single singing males near the bird hide from 19th April into June; at Hollow Gill from 19th April, on the north eastern floodplain and near Settle SW. Post-breeding there were four in the hedge near the bird hide on 22nd August, with two remaining until 8th September.

CHIFFCHAFF *Phylloscopus collybita* A

The first of the year was along Sour Dale Lane on 24th March. The other records were all along Wigglesworth Beck between Cow Bridge and the bird hide with singles on 6th, 5th and 10th April with one on 12th October.

SEDGE WARBLER *Acrocephalus schoenobaenus* A

The majority of records were on Snipe Ground where the first of the year was on 26th April. At least four singing males were then present throughout May and into June and intermittently until the last record of the year on 8th August. There were also singles on the northern floodplain on 5th May and 1st June, with five on 19th May.

REED WARBLER *Acrocephalus scirpaceus* A

One was along Wigglesworth Beck on 5th May (BB). This was the only the second record in the recording area following one on near the bird hide on 7th May 2016.

GRASSHOPPER WARBLER *Locustella naevia* A

There was a single 'reeling' male that remained out of sight in the middle of Snipe Ground on a number of dates from at least 21st April until 29th June.

BLACKCAP *Sylvia atricapilla* A

There was a singing male at Hellifield Flash on multiple dates between 6th May and 14th July. Elsewhere, a female was present near the bird hide on 19th April, with two present further up the Ribble Way on 7th July and one on 8th August. There was also one near Mearbeck on 7th July, while a singing male was present in Hollow Gill Wood between 27th April and 7th July, with another near Settle SW on 2nd June.

GARDEN WARBLER *Sylvia borin* A

A singing male was present at Hellifield Flash between 13th May and on 29th May at least, with three singing males present on the latter date along the railway embankment on the north eastern floodplain.

BARRED WARBLER *Sylvia nisoria* A

On the morning of 27th October a large pale *Sylvia* warbler was seen very briefly by IRC as it flew between hawthorn bushes just up from the bird hide. The first initial sub-conscious identification was immediately discarded as, after all, this was inland Yorkshire and not Spurn. The bird had flown into bushes facing directly into the sun and was not seen to land, being temporarily lost to view. After extensive searching for over an hour there was no further sign and so it was consigned to the 'if only.....' category. On returning later in the afternoon, the bird was seen again in the same place but thankfully this time it flew the opposite way along the hedgerow. Although very skulking, it was seen several times in flight as it moved further upstream before flying into a lone hawthorn, where it started to feed in the typical stationary barred warbler manner. The bird was watched for around half an hour but was lost to view and was not seen again. It was seen by one local birder who fortuitously arrived just after it has been found, along with two other birdwatchers visiting the site for the first time.



Barred Warbler. Wigglesworth Beck. (IRC)

This is remarkably the second record for the area following a first calendar-year that was trapped and ringed near Runley Bridge and present between 8th and 10th October, 1966.

WHITETHROAT *Sylvia communis* A

Singles were noted in the hedge alongside Wigglesworth Beck upstream from the bird hide on 6th and 9th May, with one in the same area on 25th August. There were also two along the railway line on the north eastern floodplain on 19th May.

GOLDCREST *Regulus regulus* A

Two were near the bird hide on 28th October with one in the same area on 10th November. The only other record was one in Hollow Gill Wood on 24th.

WREN *Troglodytes troglodytes* A

There were numerous sightings throughout the recording area but no notable records were received.

NUTHATCH *Sitta europaea* A

One or two were at Hollow Gill throughout the year.

TREECREEPER *Certhia familiaris* A

Two were in hawthorns along Wigglesworth Beck on 28th October. There was also singles on the north east floodplain on 17th November, in Hollow Gill on 24th November, and in the hedge near the bird hide on 7th December.

STARLING *Sturnus vulgaris* A

There were records from across the area throughout the year.

BLACKBIRD *Turdus merula* A

There were widespread records with ten at Hellifield Flash on 28th January the highest count of the year.

FIELDFARE *Turdus pilaris* A

As usual up to 200 lingered in the southern floodplain area up to mid-March, with 30 to 40 present in April until 19th. Similarly in the autumn, following 120 on 5th October, there were up to 300 present to the year end.

REDWING *Turdus iliacus* A

There were very few records in the early part of the year with 40 on 10th March the highest count. The last record of the spring was of three on 24th March. In autumn there were 20 on 30th October near the bird hide and ten along Sour Dale Lane on 31st October. There were very few additional records and apart from 120 on 1st November, there were only low double-figure counts until the year end.

SONG THRUSH *Turdus philomelos* A

There were regular sightings of one or two birds at Hellifield Flash, along Wigglesworth Beck and at Hollow Gill throughout the year.

MISTLE THRUSH *Turdus viscivorus* A

There were territorial pairs at Cow Bridge and Hollow Gill Wood, with sightings in these areas throughout the year.

SPOTTED FLYCATCHER *Muscicapa striata* A

The only record was one at Hollow Gill Wood on 8th August.

ROBIN *Erithacus rubecula* A

There were numerous sightings throughout the recording area but no notable records were received.

REDSTART *Phoenicurus phoenicurus* A

A passage migrant at Hellifield Flash on 9th April was very unusual. It was a good year in the Cow Bridge area with spring records on 18th April and a female on 9th May. A heavily speckled juvenile on 7th July must have come from a local breeding pair, with another juvenile present on 28th August and an adult male on 8th September.

STONECHAT *Saxicola rubicola* A

One was near the wet ground along Wigglesworth Beck on 24th February, with another in fields opposite on 17th March. One along Wigglesworth Beck on 2nd June was an unusual mid-summer record, but more expected was one in the same area on 5th October.

WHEATEAR *Oenanthe oenanthe* A

The fields just north of snipe Ground were, once again, the favoured area with two males and a female there on 6th April and a juvenile on 7th July.

DIPPER *Cinclus cinclus* A

There were records along Wigglesworth Beck on 4th January, 10th November and 30th December.

HOUSE SPARROW *Passer domesticus* A

Birds were reported at Hellifield Flash on 26th, 31st May and 7th July. There appear to be healthy populations at Cow Bridge and Rathmell but the majority of birds spend their time just outside the recording area.

TREE SPARROW *Passer montanus* A

There were one or two at Hellifield Flash between 24th March and end of May, with up to four in the first two weeks of June suggesting that a pair may have bred. Unusually for the area, a single was present at that site on 13th October with two on 24th November. At least one calling bird was present in the hedgerow along Flat Lane on 1st June with another pair present near Cow Bridge. It would appear that a small breeding population remains in, or just out the area, as there were 20 near Cow Bridge on 31st August, with eight present on 15th September and one on 12th October.



Tree Sparrow at Cow Bridge (IRC)

DUNNOCK *Prunella modularis* A

There were numerous sightings throughout the recording area but no notable records were received.

YELLOW WAGTAIL *Motacilla flava* A

One was reported on the north eastern floodplain on 21st April.

GREY WAGTAIL *Motacilla cinerea* A

There were only three records at Hellifield Flash with singles on 28th January, 15th September and 15th December. There was a number of other records, all of singles, primarily in the Cow Bridge area but also at the regularly watched areas on the floodplain. The only record of two birds was at Settle SW on 17th February. There was no evidence of breeding in the recording area.

PIED WAGTAIL *Motacilla alba* A

In the first winter period the only double-figure counts were 15 that roosted on Snipe Ground on 4th January, 20 present at Hollow Gill on 9th February and a peak count of 38 at Settle SW on 17th February. Some spring passage was recorded at Hellifield Flash with 28 on 30th March and some reasonable counts of 21 on 9th, 25 on 10th, 19 on 11th and 20 on 17th April. There were no other notable records in the remainder of the year.

Monthly WeBS Counts for Hellifield Flash and Long Preston Deepes.

| Site/Month | Jan | Feb | Mar | Apr | May | Jun | Jul | Aug | Sep | Oct | Nov | Dec |
|------------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| Hellifield Flash | 0 | 0 | 10 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Long Preston | 67 | 38 | 12 | 6 | 7 | 0 | 2 | 1 | 5 | 0 | 0 | 1 |

MEADOW PIPIT *Anthus pratensis* A

There were records in all months of the year on the floodplain with a peak count of 28 on 15th September. There were also records of up to five at Hellifield Flash on nine dates during the year, predominantly in March and April.

Monthly WeBS Counts for Long Preston Deep.

| Site/Month | Jan | Feb | Mar | Apr | May | Jun | Jul | Aug | Sep | Oct | Nov | Dec |
|--------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| Long Preston | 0 | 3 | 17 | 13 | 12 | 10 | 14 | 6 | 21 | 0 | 6 | 35 |

CHAFFINCH *Fringilla coelebs* AE

There were numerous sightings throughout the recording area but the only double-figure counts were all near the bird feeders at the hide where there were 20 on 4th January, 16 on 2nd February and ten on 7th and 8th December.

BRAMBLING *Fringilla montifringilla* A

Brambling at the bird hide (IRC)

There was a notable influx in the early part of the year with records at the bird feeders near the hide including one on 1st and six on 6th January, and in February when there was one on 10th with three on 11th. In March there were three on 17th, seven on 23rd, 20 on 24th and two on 27th. Small numbers lingered into April with one on 3rd, two on 6th, 15 on 7th, four on 14th, five on 18th and 11 on 19th April. Elsewhere there were 16 at Hollow Gill on 2nd with one on 19th February, and at Rathmell Community CP where there were 15 on 4th January and one on 2nd February. The only record in the second winter period was one at the bird hide on 3rd November.

BULLFINCH *Pyrrhula pyrrhula* A

This species remains scarce in the area with sightings at Hellifield Flash comprising two on 10th May and 14th July and three at Cow Bridge on both 2nd February and 6th April. There was also a male at Settle SW on 3rd February and 24th March, with a female on 31st March.

GREENFINCH *Chloris chloris* AE

At Hellifield Flash there were up to nine until mid-March, with a single record in April. There were also regular low single-figure counts near the bird hide from the start of the year until mid-April, and again from late October until the year end. The highest count was 24 on 4th January. The only other notable count was ten at Rathmell also on 4th January.

LINNET *Linaria cannabina* A

There were no records at Hellifield Flash during the year. There were, however, sporadic records in the Cow Bridge area with three on 19th, one on 26th and six on 27th April. There were three, including two singing males, near the gorse bushes on 6th May, with a pair present there on 1st and 2nd June. There was also one or two on five dates between 7th July and 27th October, with three on 10th October. The two birds along Sour Dale Lane on 21st April were probably the same birds. Elsewhere, there was one at Hollow Gill on 27th April and 10th May. A total of 20 across the whole floodplain on the 4th August WeBS date suggests that breeding may have occurred in the area. The only other records were two near Hollow Dene Flash on 19th April and ten on the north eastern floodplain on 15th September.

LESSER REDPOLL *Acanthis cabaret* A

Ten over Hellifield Flash on 19th April was the only record at this site. Elsewhere there were also occasional records near the bird hide with six on 17th March, two on 3rd and one on 7th April, one on 12th October and two on 3rd November. The only other records were at Hollow Gill where there were two on 30th March and singles on 27th April and 27th October, and on the north eastern floodplain, where there was single on 24th March and two on 15th December.

CROSSBILL *Loxia curvirostra* A

Six flew over the CP at Rathmell calling repeatedly on 27th February and were lost to view heading towards Cleatop Wood (IRC). These represent the 11th to 16th records in the recording area, with only two previous groups noted: four over Gildersleets on 28th October 1986 and six north-west over Cow Bridge on 27th October 2018.

GOLDFINCH *Carduelis carduelis* A

There were records throughout the year at all the regularly visited areas, with up to seven at Hellifield, 25 between Cow Bridge and the bird feeders and 25 at Hollow Gill. The peak count on the north eastern floodplain was 25, with 63 at Mearbeck the highest count of the year on 13th October.

SISKIN *Spinus spinus* A

There were singles seen near the bird hide on 11th and 22nd February and 'flyovers' in the Cow Bridge area including eight on 27th October and five on 1st and one on 27th November. At Hollow Gill there were 25 on 4th January, one on 9th February, four on 4th March and three, including a singing male, on 27th April. Further sightings included one on 6th and two on 10th May, with one on 27th October the only record in the latter part of the year.

REED BUNTING *Emberiza schoeniclus* A

The only record at Hellifield Flash was one on 27th May. On the floodplain the majority of records were from Snipe Ground and at the bird feeders, where there were low single figure counts in the

first three months of the year peaking at 14 on 17th March. During the spring and summer there were four or five singing males present in and around Snipe Ground. The feeders at the hide regularly attracted up to seven during the latter months of the year peaking at 20 on 5th October. There were also one or two in the Sour Dale Lane area throughout most of the year, with nine on the north eastern floodplain on 24th March and five there on 15th September.

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