



Marsh Matters

The Newsletter of RSPB Rainham Marshes

Issue 51
November 2011

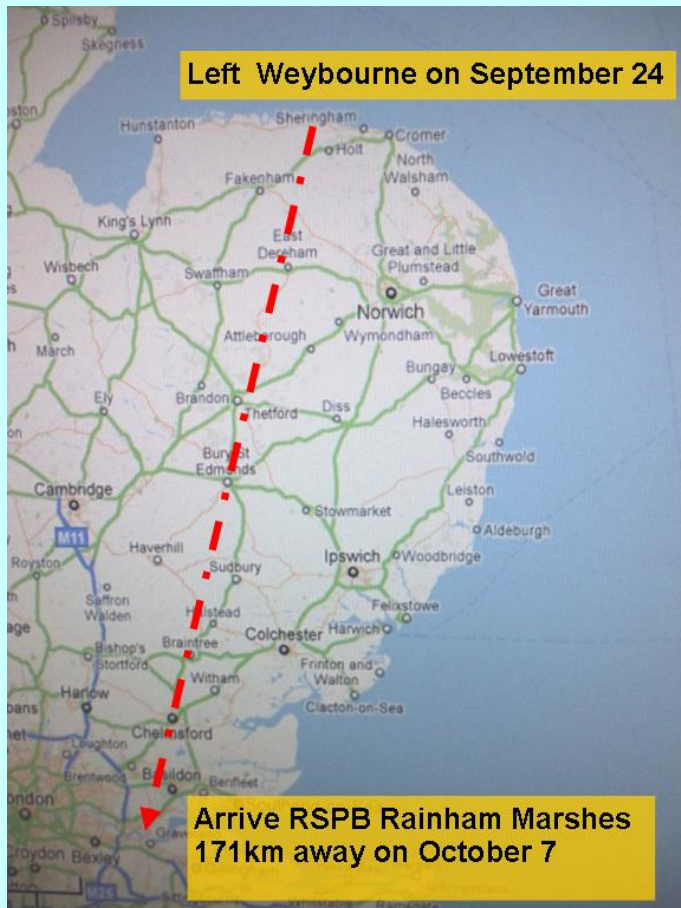


Blingchat on her hols

A pair of **Stonechats** were found along the riverwall this in early October and the female was found to be blinged up to the tops of her skinny little legs! She was sporting a green ring below a metal one on her right and a yellow above red on her left. This information was emailed to the to the [BTO](#) and they were able to trace the bird to a ringing scheme based at Weybourne in Norfolk who are trying to discover where British Stonechats spend their winter holidays.



Brenda Clayton



The project began in North Norfolk began in 2009 and has

already provided some fascinating information regarding how our birds disperse after they have flown the nest. Ringing has already shown that many Stonechats hatched in this country move south and spend their first winter overseas. She was one of five locally bred birds trapped on 2nd September 2011 and hung around until the 24th September before moving off. She had a man in tow and only stayed a day. Perhaps she is sipping Tequilas on a beach Loire Atlantic as we speak!

If any one either encounters our bird again at Rainham Marshes or elsewhere please contact either [Noel Elms](#) or the reserve.

Be interesting to see if she end up back in Norfolk next spring!

Lots to do in November & December

For more information and to book please see contact details overleaf

Gull ID Workshop: Sat 19 Nov & Sat 10 Dec Do all gulls look the same to you? Well, they won't after you been to one of these sessions! No need to book just turn up when ever you are passing and join in!

Military Walk: Sat 10 Nov

Meet Santa: Sat 17 & Sun 18 Dec With the help of the elves, follow the trail to Santa's woodland grotto. All children receive a gift. Pre-payment booking essential

If you wish to join our e-news group to receive future Marsh Matters please email and let us know.

All the images used in Marsh Matters are taken at RSPB Rainham Marshes by staff, volunteers and visitors.

Charity registered in England and Wales no 207076, in Scotland no SC037654

What's been about: October: Sixteen species of wader were seen on the reserve in October including a **spotted redshank** (from 20th), **curlew sandpiper**, **sanderling**, **knot**, **two jack snipe**, four **grey plover**, **little stint** and 323 **black-tailed godwit**. **Arctic skuas** were seen on five dates with a record five on the 13th. A **long-tailed skua** on the 7th was new to the list and a **Sabine's gull** was seen the same day. a few



Andy Tweed

Awake Spoonbill!

late **common** and **arctic terns** were noted and the first **Caspian gulls** were seen on the 10th and 22nd.

Marsh harriers were seen on several dates and the first **short-eared owl** was back on the 13th. **Peregrines** and **Kestrels** were seen daily and **merlin** and **hen harrier** (27th) were watched hunting.



Pete merchant

Kestrel on the lookout!

Small birds were on the move in all directions with **martins** and **swallows** heading south and the first **fieldfares**, **redwings** and many **finches** heading west including **lesser** and **mealy redpolls**, **bramblings** and a few **siskins**. A **bullfinch** was a good find on the 28th and a **tree sparrow** (16th) was the only autumn

record. **Yellowhammer** and **Lapland bunting** both flew through and other scarce migrants including a **Richard's pipit** (22nd), **ring ouzel** (23rd) and a **firecrest** on the 25th. **Chiffchaffs** and **Blackcaps** are now with us for the winter. Up to eight **bearded tits** were seen but none lingered. the end of the month saw a new **spoonbill**



Mark Hart

Little Egret with lunch!



Brenda Clayton

Chiffchaff!

drop in for a couple of hours (28th), a **black redstart** on the 29th and a **wheatear** that managed to stay into November. **Migrant hawkers** and **common darters** were still out hunting as the month drew to a close and **red admirals** were also still around in the warm weather.

Don't forget to check out www.rspb.org.uk/rainham and our Community Blog or www.elbf.co.uk for the latest reserve blog post, wildlife sightings and reserve news. Sign up at www.facebook.com and search for 'RSPB Rainham Marshes'.

What to look for next: Surely the weather must change and December should bring some cold winds and with them some exciting wildfowl and waxwings from the east! Bird feeders become all the more important and just about anything becomes possible on the reserve and even in your garden!

What's On? Regular Events:

Weekly: **Wednesday: Birdwatch** (9.30am start) **Friday: Beginners Birdwatch** (10am start)

Fortnightly: The Sunday Stroll at 1pm. Check website for all dates.

Monthly: Kids Birdwatching Club (10.00am-12.30pm): **November** Saturday 12 **December** Saturday 10

For more information about the events and the RSPB Phone : 01708 899 840