

Dull as dishwasher part 1.

Intro:

Let's bring you up to speed. As I write it's 1.00pm on the afternoon of October 30th and I've decided to try and start getting something onto the page for the 2006 bird report. In past years this hasn't been too much of a problem as in the good old days when I was a far more enthusiastic person altogether, most of the report would be written down in rough by the end of June. I would just review it during the first last few weeks of the year – tart it up a bit and have it finished an hour after dark on the 31st of December quite often! The report hasn't really been all about the birds – in fact over the years it evolved into a bit of banter (as was obviously apparent to any who had the misfortune to read it!) so, many of the silly bits would be written late at night either in the early winter or the boring June/early July period when Pegwell is at its slowest bird wise. This year it's been completely different as I haven't written a damned word and have pondered whether or not to even bother with it at all? Personally my enthusiasm for birding has tailed off due to all the wear and tear of watching the area being taken over by the general public, and since I enjoy a bit of peace and quiet these days then Pegwell isn't the sort of place where you get this nowadays. I hate modern life and modern behaviour, as has been well documented if previous issues of this so-called bird report, and nowadays this has had an adverse affect on my efforts to get out in the field. I make mention of this partly because I like a whinge about things (again an obvious statement for a Thanet birder) and partly in excuse for the lack of bird-news for this years annual report. By the sounds of it I've picked a good year to tail off as it's been dire out there by all accounts. Dave Beadle summed it up best after a week or two of autumnal nothingness when we would have been expecting birds to be turning up. As we searched the Hoverpad on a bright sunny September day he came out with the statement "It's dull as dishwasher" – spot on Mister Beadle. A perfect description of the birding at that particular time. As I say personal coverage was extremely poor by my normal standards – long gone are the times when I would shoot off down to Pegwell on my bike most days – sometimes even 2 or 3 times in the same day such was my enthusiasm back then. When I did make an effort to get out there was very little going on with my little avian friends and often times the day would be ruined by an unruly dog, Kite-boarders, Hovercrafts and the like.

So what has happened this year? Pete Forrest finally got his dream job and departed sunny Thanet for the grime of the Brazilian rain forest. He's going to miss all the concrete and Cabbage fields sooner or later – surely?? Imagine going a whole year without catching a single Large Yellow Underwing in your moth trap?? He just didn't think it through properly did he?? Dave Beadle managed a short 6 month trip from his home in Toronto (In Canadia as it was called by a Thanet local) and jolly nice it was to have him back where he should be. It's good to have a kindred spirit who can empathise over the general awfulness of the birding and moth trapping we enjoy in the area for much of the year. Mind you the mothing was quiet good at times – not that you'd have noticed by Herr Hairy's attitude had you had the misfortune to bump into him on a day when he'd taken a decent selection of scarce migrant moths from his moth traps. A selection of a few Convolvulus Hawk's, Delicates, Pearly Underwings, Dark Sword-grass etc would be treated like an empty trap on most occasions. One good thing about having Dave over was he still emanated a little bit of misdirected optimism. (about the mothing especially) If he were to move back to Thanet I don't think even he could keep this attitude very long? Other big news on the moth front was that Slimothy Splodge finally tasted the delights of the MV moth trap after setting up a trap in his back garden at long last. I'm sure he's hooked already – thank goodness. The sport in 2006 was disappointing too. The World Cup started well but tailed off into a tale of cheating (endemic in today's Football and in my opinion tolerated by both the players and the powers

that be in the world game) awful officiating (linesmen not understanding the offside rule) and boring tactics. The Brazilians were particularly bad – mind you, and I’m not trying to be wise after the event but the manager they used for the 2006 event is the most negative Brazilian coach of all time. Always has been always will be. Ronaldo looked like the Michelin man after a pie eating contest, Ronaldinho was played out of position and players like Robinho and Juninho were vastly under used to accommodate the older, aging, superstar has-beens. Using Cafu as an attacking right full back had to be a mistake as his days of 90 minute lung busting box to box runs proved impossible to a man nearing his mid sixties. Adriano looked like Jan Molby did in the 1986 FA Cup final (only Jan could play football even if he was nearly 20 stone) and then in centre midfield - Emerson looked about the equivalent of playing Uncle Albert out of Only Fools and Horses in midfield – crickey he’s aged badly? Emerson not Uncle Albert!! Emerson looked like he was going to trip over his gut at one point so out of condition was he. I could go on and on – hang on I already have!! Mind you, age isn’t always so easy to put down to bad performance on the football field is it? Only this week Teddy Sheringham became the oldest man to score in the premiership. His goal for West Ham being the first goal scored by a man of over forty years of age – quite a feat in this day and age of the athletic footballer. Mind you he also broke another less prestigious record when he was substituted in a game because of alzaimhers!! Its all swings and roundabouts I suppose?? After about an hour of the game against Portsmouth, poor old Teddy relapsed into a state of confusion not seen on a football pitch since Tony Adams did his best to mark a scintillating Marco Van Basten during a game in the finals of the European Championship many years ago. Teddy forgot both which way he was trying to kick the ball and exactly what team he was meant to be playing for. In the motor racing - both the Formula 1 and the Moto GP titles went to the driver/rider who enjoyed the best run of luck with Schumacher and Valentino Rossi both having terrible seasons when pretty much everything that could have gone wrong did go wrong. How the hell Nicky Haydon won the Moto GP world title is beyond me. Along the lines of Tunisia winning the World Cup. I do at this point realise this is ‘meant’ to be a bird report but lets face it – it never was really was it? I just had a thought of one of you out there reading the above and saying to himself “Hang on – who on earth is Nicky flippin Haydon?” Or – “does this geezer really think he can sit in his house in Ramsgate and entertain the thought of picking the Brazilian nation football team??” ... “is He nuts?” Well I might answer to the above – ‘He’s a motorcycle rider, yes and yes!!” Hang on a minute - I will try and turn this back towards a more birdy type theme if you want?

Dull as dishwater part 2

You remember I mentioned earlier how disillusioned we all were with the birding this autumn? You know – prior to me sorting out all the world sports and the like?? Well to get back to that extremely interesting theme here’s an e-mail I received off that fellow enthusiast from North Foreland - Simon Mount, who was obviously in a similar frame of mind to myself this autumn. I don’t think he will mind me including it?? I’ve left my response for you to peruse, then so you can see just how Thanet birding affects the people like Simon and I who really care about such things. His e-mail was as follows:

30th October 2006 from SIMON MOUNT <simonzqmount@bratinternet.com> wrote:

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> Is there anyone out there?.....Are there
> any birds anywhere?.....Only 10 days to go before
> Autumn is finished.....We're doomed Captain,
> DOOMED...Wilson, take that mans name.
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Hi Simon,

I'm here...but my spirit is broken. I see a great vision and its not good my friend - all us lot in a few years - grey and broken men sitting around talking about the good old days when you could go out and look for newly arrived Sibe's amongst throngs of over flying common Finch's, Buntings and Pipits. Autumn should be a time of rejoicing spent amongst the wonders of creation - dappled skies filled with the calls of passerines heading for warmer climes and happy smiling birders filled with the joys of wonderment. Then a flash of bright light emerges from the gloom...its uncle Mick resplendent in broken sandals and worn out clothing with an eastern woman in tow - his eyes glisten with the memory of Asian gems, his bleached greying hair aglow in the Thanet sunshine. A 'shreeping' call in the distance - as a Richard's Pipit flies overhead followed by the screaming of the local maniac cycling along the road unaware as to the hilarity his high pitched birding war cry causes amongst the local bird hunters...and for a brief moment it's just like it used to be - 'the good times are back' a cry comes from the crowd but it's just an illusion. The 'uncle Mick' wasn't uncle Mick after all - just a passing tramp looking for shelter, the Richards Pipit a poor view of a Skylark and Kevin's apparent screaming the distant screech of a pager amongst a bunch of travelling twitchers, scavenging over the carcass of news to further their endless listing. Sad but true...it's all over mister Mount...alas it's all over. All were left with is the memory.

Your's Phil Milton AKA humbug.

Ed: Bleak wasn't it? I did try and warn you. Like a Radiohead lyric written by a bi-polar after a large handful of downers. Pretty much sums up the migration period though.

Dull as hippy dishwater part 3.

This brings me along to my 51 year old friend Dylan Wrathall - recovering alcoholic and part time trouble maker. You've got to admire the old chap - waddling around looking at Cormorants and Gulls with a boyish enthusiasm akin to a young lamb happily skipping around in spring sunshine. All he needs for a good birding session is a ringed 2nd year Herring Gull he saw last year in the harbour as a juvenile or a Pier on the wrong side of the island, out of the irritating N/easterly gale where he can scoff bacon sani's whilst dreaming of downing endless cans of Stella in an imaginary life in the lucrative position as a Robbie Savage look-alike. A good bloke is Dyl but he's getting a bit of a mishog in his latter years. My favourite Dylan 'happening' of last year was when an old bloke sporting a pony-tail was spotted by one of our younger Thaneteer's, in a local HMV store. At first the pony-tailed OAP was ignored as a general member of joe public but then it dawned on the lucky viewer that there was something familiar about the old bloke? It turned out to be Dylan Wrathall!!!! Oh how I laughed when I heard. Old Dyl will be saving up for a face lift next. C'mon Dyl - just accept aging flabbiness with grace like the rest of us will you. Gadgets not been up to much but we found out during a trip in the spring, that he's got a hidden talent - he's a fantastic singer - especially when he takes a months medication in about a week!! He's still confessing his undying love for the nation of the US of A (private joke - extremely apt with what we've planned recently) and I would like to add that propaganda, regarding he's still growing and is now as tall as the average 6 year old boy is absolutely preposterous!! I was going to say 'positively preposterous' but this would be an over-reaction. Anyone who falls for such tosh needs his head testing as its well known in Thanet that Gadgets only grown 4 inches since

birth - even though he has put on four feet around the gut. Then there are the codgers – Johnny W, Johnny H and lastly David G – the newest and worst telling joke teller of the terrible trio. I haven't laid eyes on Johnny H or Dave Giblet all year but word has it that both are still able to get around under their own steam with a little help from the zimmer and the home help of course. Coming up at the rear is Phil Charlton – he must be getting on a bit nowadays? C'mon Phil tell the world – exactly how old are you? Perhaps we could have a quiz – Planetthanet could sponsor us and we could have a massive monetary prize for the nearest guess for the 2007 Pegwell report? We know he's not in the Johnny 'Methuselah' Websper area of course but Johnny let it slip Phil worked with him back in the days of the steam engine at British Rail many moons ago – so he must be of a certain age? Also, kicking about on the local codger grapevine was the terrible Dave Gilbert situation at Sandwich Bay. The Ob's had to phone the police when a slightly confused 'Giblet' started hammering the Observatory door at 02.00am one morning wearing nothing except an 'I love Ian Dowie' T-shirt and a wristwatch!! His state of mind cant have been that good, as he swore blind he'd loaned Rab Morton a fiver last week and was intent on getting it back as soon as was possible. When informed the former warden Mr Morton had left many many years ago, Dave started getting aggressive and threatened to dowse himself in petrol if the massive loan wasn't repaid in full. He had no intention of setting alight to himself he just wanted to dowse himself in petrol for some reason?? It was then it finally came to him he was without trousers and left the Obs staff before driving off the wrong way in a cloud of dust, cobwebs and petrol fumes. The Thanet police are currently holding a 74 year old man who is helping them with their enquiries as we speak.

This brings me to the newest addition to the Pegwell Bay bird report – 'The Greatest Lie EVER told!!'

I have in my possession the greatest lie ever told – I'm sure it just can't be bettered? It was something I was told many years ago and even though it has naff all to do with birds or Pegwell for that matter as I'm stuck for something to write about I thought I'd use it as a bit of a fill in.

Before I was into birding I was a Carp Angler. If my eyes were open I would be thinking about how to catch a Carp – I was totally besotted with it – absolutely manic. I used to spend every spare minute I had fishing for them and when it became my job (which Carp fishing was for quite a few years) I used to spend more time out fishing than I did at home and unlike my early days of birding which took over from it – get paid for it as well. Excellent. Well anyway – one of my mates and business partner, was an ex butcher who used to work at a butchers shop in Cliftonville during the late 1980s. There was an old boy there that used to do a bit of cleaning up and make the lads tea etc and his name was Ted Wilkinson. I use his real name as the likelihood of him reading this is pretty low as (a) He doesn't read this rather excellent publication. (b) Has no interest in birds whatsoever. (c) He is now dead, so even I fancy my chances of getting away with not upsetting him. Anyway – Ted had lots of old war stories and the longer the lads would allow him to spout off about the old days the more outrageous his tales became. He had one tale about when he swam the English Channel armed only with a knife which he used to carve up a couple of German Infantrymen and Alsatian dog's he found on the beach in occupied France after his imaginary 25 mile plus swim. Even this tall tale pales into insignificance with his top lie which went like this. On one of his many escapades behind enemy lines, Ted managed to sneak up on a room where Hitler was spouting off to his generals. As he listened he reckoned he overheard Hitler say "The one person we have to watch out for is Ted Wilkinson"!!! Quite how were meant to believe he could get so close to Hitler let alone the chance of Hitler recognising him as the Nazi public

enemy number one while he was just the other side of the door is just amazing. When he told the lads at tea time in the Butcher shop one of them piped up "Oh – you can understand German then?" a point Ted had overlooked whilst planning the lie of the century. Though knocked off balance by this huge oversight, Ted stood his ground about his presumed German language skills - but had obviously been rumbled good and proper. A week or two later my mate was serving a line of customers in the Butcher shop when a lady asked for her order in a broken foreign accent. It transpired she was German and as by luck old Ted was out the back of the shop at the time, cleaning up – my mate called him out into the shop and made him try and translate the Ladies order when she was asked to order her meat in German!! Old Ted didn't understand a word of it of course. Let's think ourselves lucky old Ted wasn't a birder as it would be a hoot hearing what he had or hadn't seen eh??

It's awards time!

All votes are in and have been counted and re-counted for the Best birder in the world award (Thanet division) for the year of our Lord 2006. An impressive number of votes were polled from all around the globe some from as far away as Dumpton!! The result was yet another landslide and the votes were as follows:

1st Phil Milton – 1089 votes.

2nd Dylan Wrathall (51) – 2 votes. Presumably voted for as a fashion icon after the 'pony-tail' incident??

=3rd Francis Solly – 1 vote. (once again - a poor sighted voter ticking the wrong box?)

=3rd A half blind dog-walker with walking difficulties.

I hereby accept the award as Thanet's top birder and will with great pride - conscientiously carry the banner forward into the European heats. Thank you.

To end this rather sideways look at the year just past – I would like to add a serious bit. Serious and the Pegwell Bay Bird Report don't often go hand in hand – bear with me. I've had quite a lot of help off some of the lads this year and I think some thanks are in order. Without the help of Gadget, Francis Solly and Craig Sammels my trip in the spring would have been just impossible. I loved the whole thing – well most of it, cheers lads. Gadget spends his entire life helping others and now, since he had the misfortune of running into me a few years back - helps me constantly with both technical difficulties with computers and other types of faulty software in my brain. Especially this needs mention as there is so my bad press about the Thanet lads and even though some of the criticism has been warranted in the past perhaps – this most certainly isn't the case now. Of course much of the bad press is down to Dylan's immense gob but that another story. Nowadays we have a really good thing going – and I am constantly amazed by the help and generosity of the local lads. Not Thanet people, but I really appreciate the correspondence I have with Iris and Barry Child and John Hollyer. Good eggs all of them. Other thanks go to Dave and Katy Beadle (from Canadia) plus John Websper who always provides me with good honest advice/help whenever I ask. I know I refer to the 'Old Codger' brigade in age old derogatory fashion but they are all a great bunch. Dylan Wrathall (the yob with the gob) although a constant pain in the backside to all those who get on the wrong side of his tongue – wouldn't actually hurt a fly y'know. As I've said before in these silly bird reports when you get to know Dyl, he is a pussycat – and is a constant source of support to me whenever I have the good fortune to run into him. As someone who lacks confidence, this support proves invaluable to me. Ignore all his outspoken nonsense – there's a genuinely nice and caring bloke underneath all that hair (whether in a pony-tail or hanging loose) and attitude. It's true y'know.

The Pegwell Bay (etc) Bird Report for 2006

Red-throated Diver/Diver Species

In January: 207 south on 13th, 43 south on 14th, 52 south on 20th, 211 north on 21st and 84 north on 22nd. In February: seen on 5 dates with 119 south and 11 north the only significant movement. Seemingly scarce in the late winter (autumn) period with not one single half decent movement reported. The occasional bird was reported from the harbour in October and 1 – 3+ birds were regularly present offshore during November.

	JAN	FEB	MAR		OCT	NOV	DEC
South	332	120	4		nc	nc	nc
North	324	13	1		nc	nc	nc

Black-Throated Diver

Exceptional numbers amongst one of the winter Diver movements in January when 5 flew south on the 13th. (PM) Also: 1 south on 14th (PM, CS) and 1 south on the 16th. (DW)

Great Northern Diver

1 flew south and 1 was present offshore on January 15th. (PM)

Great Crested Grebe

Regular offshore, especially during January when up to 20 birds were present. Otherwise seen offshore all year through.

Little Grebe

Up to 3 birds were present during January – with 1 - 2 birds regular on the garage pools during the January to April period then October till the end of the year.

Fulmar

Common – no proper counts taken. c.10 pairs breed around the cliffs between Pegwell and Ramsgate Harbour.

Gannet

Ignored. Regular offshore...probably?

Cormorant Peak month counts:

JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JLY	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
12	15	19	10				25	25	?	25+	27

Shag

1 flew south past the Harbour on January 13th and 3 south there on November 4th.

Spoonbill

1 on May 14th (Pft) then on May 22nd a flock of 9 were seen from Ramsgate Harbour flying n/west. (SM) Later on that evening 11 were seen out on the mudflat. (Pft) The following evening the 11 were seen in the same area once again, (Gadget) before Dylan spotted a single there on the 23rd.

Cattle Egret

Just outside the area one flew west over Newington (seen from my back garden) on May 22nd. (PM)

Little Egret

Monthly peak day counts were as follows:

JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JLY	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
1	3	2	2	4	2	32	47+	35	30	11	6

Grey Heron Peak month counts:

JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JLY	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
3	2	2	3	2	2	4	4	7	3	4	3

Mute Swan

The only records I have are: 5 n/west on January 20th, 1 south on February 11th, 2 on April 5th and 1 on May 11th. There may well have been others? Who cares eh?

Berwick's Swan

A group of 7 were seen on November 2nd. (DB)

Brent Goose

Scarce in January with birds starting to turn up from early February. There were 120 present on February 7th, 80 flew south on the 8th and 386 were present on the 13th. Present most days in March with 106 on 23rd and 189 on 24th. Occasional birds were seen into April with a single bird present on May 15th.

Autumn peaks counts included: 258 on October 12th, 108 on October 13th, 110 on October ?? and 600 on November 2nd.

Monthly peak counts of birds present were as follows:

JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JLY	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
13	386	189	4	1	0	0	0	52	258	600	24

Barnacle Goose

8 flew over on February 11th with a flock of c130 White-fronts. (PM) 5 feral birds were seen on May 3rd by Pete Forrest.

White-fronted Goose

47 flew over on January 15th, (Pft) 4 west on January 18th, (PM) 16 north on February 5th. (PM) The 120+ birds present at Sandwich in early February were seen from Pegwell (at some distance) on February 8th. A grand total of 241 (or thereabouts?) were seen from the Country Park on February 11th. (PM, DC etc)

7 flew west over Ramsgate harbour and into Pegwell on December 2nd. (DW)

Pink-footed Goose

An unseasonable bird was seen on May 1st (PM) and a flock of 14 flew n/east out to sea on September 25th. (PM)

Bean Goose

3 flew north on February 8th (PM) and a group of 10 flew east out to sea on March 1st. (PM)

Greylag Goose

5 flew north on February 8th. Up to 7 birds were seen upriver in April and May. 4 birds with 6 young chicks were seen on May 1st then lastly - 6 on July 31st.

Canada Goose

Always scarce at Pegwell - 3 on August 3rd was the only record.

Shelduck

Peak monthly counts:

JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JLY	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
33	54	36	61	66	56	?	30	77	31	200	49

Mallard Peak month counts:

JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JLY	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
143	110	110	8	-	-	-	30	120	150	130	100

Gadwall Peak month counts:

JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JLY	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
11	6	0	0	-	-	-	-	2	13	2	-

Pintail Peak month counts:

JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JLY	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
14	2	0	0	-	-	-	-	-	8	5	2

Shoveler Peak month counts:

JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JLY	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
3	14	6	4	-	-	-	-	4	?	?	?

Wigeon Peak month counts:

JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JLY	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
870	350	63	0	-	-	-	1	500	200	400	240

Teal Peak month counts:

JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JLY	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
47	19	18	2	-	-	-	3	300	30	5	22

Garganey

A group of 4 were seen on September 16th. (DB, FS)

Tufted Duck

Singles on November 6th and 9th.

Eider

Very scarce in 2006 and I could only find records of a single bird present offshore between November 6th and 12th. Obviously others must have been overlooked.

Common Scoter

Too few to warrant any further mention. I've done you a favour.

Velvet Scoter

1 flew past the harbour on November 2nd. (DB)

Goldeneye

3 flew north past the Harbour on February 21st. (Nick Lever)

Red-breasted Merganser

1 was in harbour on January 4th, 1 flew south on February 16th, 1 on May 17th etc etc. Odd 1's and 2's were seen from October until the end of the year I just cannot find enough enthusiasm to write them all down here.

Osprey

1 s/west over Pegwell on April 3rd (PM) and 1 over at Ramsgate Town on May 9th. (SM)

Red Kite

1 seen flying east-n/east on March 1st (SM) was later seen from my house and later flying west near the raptor watching spot at the top of the road which is in the actual recording area !! (PM) Another was seen flying into the Pegwell on March 31st, after flying south over Dumpton (Gadget) and the estate where I live. This second bird had yellow wing tags in each wing and was presumably the same bird seen by Terry Preston (double-yellow wing-tagged – the Kite not Terrance) at Elvington on May 11th. A third bird was seen to fly well out to sea on September 18th. (PM) I realise this rather paltry annual total of Red Kites wouldn't even constitute a good day tally for our Timothy these days.

Marsh Harrier

1 on January 29th. Spring migrants were: March - 1 west on 28th, April – 1 north on 4th, 1 north on 7th and 1 west on 12th.

In the autumn - August: 1 west on 21st, 1 present on 30th. October: 1 on 13th. November: 1 on 13th.

Hen Harrier

A Male over-wintered and was seen from January into April. Also in April a male flew west on the 5th and a ring-tail was seen the following day in the 100 acre field – both were presumably migrant birds. Almost a rarity in this age of the warm winter.

Montagu's Harrier

1 (a ring-tail) flew west on August 21st. (PM)

Common Buzzard

Only a very light spring passage this year. 1 was seen on March 1st. (flying south) Migrant birds in March: 1 west on 2nd, 1 south on 4th then 2 west and 6 s/west on 29th. Separate singles flew south and west on April 3rd. 1 flew west over Newington on September 12th then another 6 were seen (1 north and 5 south) on the move from the raptor watching spot on the mound just off the Haine Road on September 18th.

Honey Buzzard

1 flew west over Newington – eventually off to the n/west on June 22nd. (PM) Once again outside of the area 1 flew west over Dumpton on August 27th (DS) was later seen flying around Newington (PM) eventually off to the n/east. I realise these birds were not seen at Pegwell – but like the Common Buzzard (above) and my Cattle Egret, they wont get recorded if I don't put them in here. Bear with me will ya?

Sparrowhawk

Although seen with great regularity during both migration periods no big movements were seen. Nowadays quite a few pairs breed within the general area (2 pairs within the recording area proper) with 6 – 8+ birds seen on some occasions.

Kestrel

Common resident.

Hobby

Regular in small numbers (1 – 4 birds) between April 21st and September 18th.

Peregrine Falcon

The normal pair were seen most days all throughout the year. Odd other singletons showed up from time to time.

Merlin

A bird that seems to be getting quite scarce in our area these days. Odd singles showed up between January and April 7th. 2 were spotted on February 6th. (Spotted Merlin?? Isn't that a new specie??) Returning birds were seen from September 25th.

Grey Partridge

Ever present. 17 on January 20th. Up to 30 birds were in the top fields in September.

Pheasant

Franny's dog flushed 17 birds on the 3rd February plus there were a few kicking about in the salt marsh during that period so it's safe to say there were 20+ birds present during that period.

Water Rail

Regularly heard and sometimes seen between the months of September and April.

Moorhen

Up to 3 seen regularly on the reservoir of Little Cliffsend Farm, plus a pair took up residence (all spring/summer) on the Garage pools.

White Stork

A grounded bird was spotted on September 6th eventually flying off south. (Frank)

Oystercatcher Peak month counts: (date below)

JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JLY	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
460	440	270	109	64	37	190	430	630	870	780	820
21 st	10 th	23 rd	6 th	15 th	6 th	31 st	31 st	16 th	13 th	13 th	11 th

Avocet

1 on March 14th, 1 on May 10th, 2 on April 15th, 1 on June 1st, 2 on June 3rd, 5 on June 5th, 2 on August 5th and 5 on September 2nd. Rubbish eh?

Little-Ringed Plover

1 flew west on March 28th and another was present on April 13th. Other singles on July 16th and August 19th.

Ringed Plover

Peak Month counts: (date below)

JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JLY	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
0	23	21	13	18	38	2	160	30	-	7	-
-	10 th	24 th	6 th	10 th	6 th	22 nd	21 st	1 st	-	5 th	-

Kentish Plover

Single males were present on April 21st (PM), May 1st (PM) and May 2nd. (FS)

Grey Plover Peak month counts: (date below)

JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JLY	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
240	230	210	27	8	7	10	20	56	80	152	180+
19 th	4 th	7 th	13 th	10 th	6 th	31 st	30 th	25 th	12 th	13 th	11 th

Golden Plover Peak month counts: (date below)

JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JLY	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
4000	4370	1000	0	-	-	2	11	50	780	2430	2000
21 st	7 th	1 st	-	-	-	30 th	21 st	28 th	13 th	29 th	11 th

Lapwing Peak month counts: (date below)

JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JLY	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
7000	9500	50	3	-	-	1	?	200	1000+	5000+	4600
19 th	8 th	1 st	3 rd	-	-	17 th	?	23 rd	12 th	6 th	28 th

Knot Peak month counts: (date below)

JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JLY	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
410	410	290	11	12	1	6	9	37	15	160	c.150
19 th	19 th	3 rd	15 th	11 th	5 th	22 nd	21 st	25 th	12 th	13 th	

Sanderling Peak month counts: (date below)

JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JLY	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
71	64	105	47	17	76	-	27	-	-	82	40+
21 st	14 th	27 th	6 th	11 th	6 th	-	21 st	-	-	13 th	-

Purple Sandpiper

Singletons on the western under cliff (January and February) and 3 flew south past the Harbour on January 13th. Others were seen on: November: singles on 5th and 16th.

Turnstone

High tide roost: January = 90. February = 100. March = 183. April = dunno?
Sept = 140. I lost the will to live after September hence the lack of counts.

Dunlin Peak month counts: (date below)

JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JLY	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
1130	1060	780	33	60	20	80	310	180	300	930	1850
21 st	4 th	3 rd	15 th	10 th	5 th	22 nd	21 st	25 th	12 th	29 th	28 th

Curlew Sandpiper

A very poor year. There were no spring records, which is nothing out of the ordinary but the autumn numbers seemed very low. So low that I'm not even going to write them in here.

Little Stint

A bird was present on February 1st and 2nd – the first winter record in many years. The only other birds recorded were singles on June 6th, July 22nd, Sept 25th and October 12th. There were obviously quite a few birds that went un-recorded...surely?

Green Sandpiper

Singles on April 12th, April 24th, August 4th, 5th and 21st.

Common Sandpiper

Spring: a few in April/May with a peak of 5 on May 15th. Regular throughout July and August until the last record on September 2nd.

Redshank Peak month counts: (date below)

JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JLY	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
90	120	160	100	8	12	220		300	100+	100+	100+
19 th	13 th	4 th	22 nd	15 th	6 th	21 st		25 th	-	-	-

Spotted Redshank

1 – 2 were seen on and off during both winter periods. 4 birds were seen on one date in early October.

Greenshank

Another very poor year with very low numbers recorded once again. A late bird showed up on November 13th.

Peak monthly counts were:

JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JLY	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
-	-	-	1	1	-	12	c.10	17	4	1	-

Black-tailed Godwit

6 flew south on March 29th. Otherwise scarcer than the past few years.

Peak monthly counts were:

JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JLY	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
1	4	6	0	0	1	-		2		3	1

Bar-tailed Godwit Peak month counts: (date below)

JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JLY	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
147	236	223	10	30	1	12	-	22	28	109	130
22 nd	11 th	3 rd	21 st	10 th	6 th	30 th	-	25 th	12 th	27 th	11 th

Curlew Peak month counts: (date below)

JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JLY	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
360	380	230	140	100+	31	280	-	420	385	320	210
21 st	7 th	23 rd	3 rd	10 th	6 th	20 th	-	1 st	13 th	6 th	11 th

Whimbrel

Peak monthly counts were:

JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JLY	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
-	-	-	10	13	1	12		3	-	-	-

Woodcock

Singles on January 20th, 29th then March 29th and 30th. Also: 1 on October 9th, 1 on October 14th and 5 were seen during the cold weather snap on November 2nd. (DB)

Snipe Peak month counts: (date below)

JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JLY	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
100+	40	32	5	-	-	-		8	200	140	80
19 th	13 th	26 th	13 th	-	-	-		25 th	?	29 th	11 th

Jack Snipe

3 were flushed from the salt marsh on January 20th. Others were seen in the same area on March 29th plus a late one on April 20th. We couldn't find any in the autumn or late winter which is very unusual.

Ruff

Scarce. In February: 12 on 7th, 1 on 8th, 1 on 13th and 2 on 15th. 1 on September 25th,

Arctic Skua

1 – 3 birds were regularly seen offshore from late July until September.

Pomarine Skua

1 flew west overland on September 16th. (DB, FS)

Black-headed Gull

 peak counts were:

JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JLY	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
2600	3000	1800	80	50	9	1370	10,000	11350	-	-	1000

Common Gull

 peak counts were:

JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JLY	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
720	2000	400	19	1	2	16	70	70	-	-	1300

Mediterranean Gull

Med Gulls are quite regular nowadays though we very rarely get any decent numbers. Birds were seen virtually throughout the year (though sporadically) and of note, Francis came across 13 on August 19th. (10 juveniles and 3 adults) Other peaks included 4 on March 9th and 3 on June 18th. Good numbers of juveniles were noted this year.

Herring Gull

 peak counts were:

JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JLY	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
1040	2500	670	300	100	350	180	2000	1600	-	-	1400

*A 1st winter bird showing many plumage features of the American sub-species 'Smithsonianus' was present on February 16th. (PM) An 'Omissus' type adult (Argentatus with yellow legs) was present on February 4th.

Yellow-legged Gull

 {Larus Michahellis}

January: 2 singles plus 2 on the 20th. February: 1 – 3 birds on 5 dates. April: singles on 4th and 7th.

October: 1 on 12th. November: 1 on 5th, 1 on 12th, 2 on 22nd, 3+ on 26th and 6+ on 27th.

Caspian Gull

 {Larus Cachinnans}

In January there were two 1st winters on the 19th, an adult on the 20th and 2 adults on the 21st. In February – a 3rd winter and an adult were present on the 1st, a 1st winter on 2nd, an adult on 3rd then single adult birds present on 16th and 17th. In November there was an adult bird present on the 23rd.

Lesser Black-backed Gull

 Peak counts were:

JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JLY	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
120	100	65	24	10	2	2	100	120	-	223	60

Great Black-backed Gull

 Peak counts were:

JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JLY	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
400	530	155	48	30	34	-	54	260	c.1000	275	310

Little Gull

Only two - a juvenile on August 4th and an adult bird on November 5th.

Kittiwake

Seen on a few dates in January with 170 south on the 13th the only significant count. Regular in small numbers around the harbour during winter.

Glaucous Gull

A 1st winter bird was present on February 22nd. (FS)

Sandwich Tern

Even though coverage was awful by normal standards the spring passage of Sani's was one of the poorest in many years with extremely low numbers being reported. This year's migration started on March 25th when 9 birds showed up, and the rather lowly spring peak counts included: 60 on April 8th, 60 on April 11th, 120 on April 21st and 110 on May 31st.

Autumn peaks included: July: 520 on 17th, 1100 on 22nd, 1000 on 23rd, 690 on 31st, August: 500 on 3rd, 600 on 20th and September: 220 on 1st. With the rather mild autumn birds were seen quite regularly during October even into November when 8 showed up on the 6th which is very late. At least 1 bird over-wintered.

Little Tern

No proper counts were taken but they seemed to be a bit harder to find this year and there were most certainly no decent movements. I don't even have a count into double figures which is odd for this species.

Common Tern

Although regular in spring, numbers are very low and too boring to write out in any detail. Much better in the autumn with birds seen regularly between July and September – the peak counts being: August – 60 on 5th, 200+ on 18th, 330 on 19th, 740 on 19th, 720 on 20th, September: 370 on 1st, 300 on 2nd, 100 on 3rd,

Arctic Tern

2 on May 20th, 2 on June 4th, 1 on August 4th, 6 on August 9th and 1 on October 18th.

Roseate Tern

The only 2 records I have are of an adult on July 21st (PM) and a 1st summer bird on July 22nd. (FS, DB, PM etc.) I remember Francis did see another bird in mid July but I don't have the date.

Black Tern

1 on July 12th, 1 on August 3rd, 19th, then in September - 2 on 2nd and singles on the 3rd and 13th.

Auk species:

The only movements were as follows: 524 south on January 13th and 137 on January 14th. Otherwise – regular in small numbers between January/February and November/December.

Guillemot

See Auk species – c.99% of them are Guillemots.

Razorbill

A few were noticed amongst the winter Auk movements with 10+ on January 13th the best day.

Puffin

1 flew south past the Harbour on January 13th. (PM)

Little Auk

A few were seen during early November. 10+ were seen between Ramsgate Harbour and the west cliff on November 2nd (DB) with other singles seen in Pegwell on the 5th (PM) and another off the harbour on November 6th. (CS)

Stock Dove

Almost totally ignored, though I did see 50 of them on February 1st.

Wood Pigeon

Largely ignored but I did take note of 750 on February 1st, 1780 mainly s/west on March 28th and 630 mainly s/west on March the 29th. In April – 400 flew s/west on 14th with 480 over on the 20th. I must have been bored?

Turtle Dove

No effort was made to take any counts though they did seem to be a bit scarcer this year just past. A few pairs bred as is usual these days.

Collared Dove

Once again little effort was made to take any counts. 200+ were drawn to the wheat stubble on the north fields in September. Numbers do appear to be increasing around the Country Park? So what eh?

Cuckoo

Regular in small numbers between late April and June. A late bird flew s/west over the cliff top on September 6th.

Barn Owl

One showed on the Hoverpad on January 4th, (Frank) then it or another was seen hunting on the Country Park and Stonelees on February 6th and 10th. (FS) These were the first Barn Owl sightings since January 2003. It or another was seen on May 8th. (Pft) Another was seen hunting over the salt marsh behind the garage on November 26th. (DB, PM)

Long-Eared Owl

One was seen on the cycle path on February 6th. (FS)

Short-eared Owl

Up to 3 birds were seen during the early winter period – with birds hanging on in the area until April 22nd. A group of 3 flew in off the sea on November 2nd. (DB) Otherwise scarce during the Autumn/late winter with only the occasional single reported from the Country Park.

Swift

Like many of the birds in this years rag – Swifts were grossly under-recorded during the spring – one of the few records I have is 200 north on May 11th. A few September records this year with 8 present on the 13th, 1 south on 18th, 1 s/west on 23rd. That's your lot I'm afraid!

Kingfisher

1 -2 birds were seen regularly around the harbour and the hover port away from the breeding season. Otherwise just the occasional single seen on or around the reserve or across in the river mouth.

Ring-necked Parakeet

30+ were seen at Cliffsend on February 8th. A rather recent phenomenon is that whilst these green things are seen daily at Cliffsend they always used to be quite scarce if you looked for them around the Country Park – in fact you would do well to find any at all. The past few years has seen them venturing further south with birds showing both at Sandwich and inland at Grove. 2006 saw an explosion of records away from Cliffsend, peaking with 82 flying north over the Country Park to roost in Ramsgate on the evening of September 13th.

Green Woodpecker

1 – 2+ birds regularly seen.

Great-spotted Woodpecker

Regular. That's it!!

Hoopoe

Singles were seen in Stonelees on April 20th and the Cliff top on May 6th. (Eileen Randall)

Skylark

The peak counts were in October: 30 on 11th and 40 on 13th.

Shore Lark

A bird that had obviously over wintered near the west pier/Ferry Terminal was rediscovered on February 17th (DW) and seen again on the 27th. Pete Forrest found another bird on the old Hover Pad on April 19th.

Sand Martin

A light spring passage was noted from March 28th. Slightly better in the autumn with in July: 20 on 17th, 34 south on 16th and 6 south on 31st. Well I did say 'slightly better' hm? There was a half decent movement one day in July but I didn't write it down.

Swallow

Spring: Regular from March 28th in small numbers.

Autumn: passage started early this year with quite a few seen on the move from mid-July.

August: 500 north on 21st. September: 400+ on 25th and 9000 west on 28th.

Red-rumped Swallow

1 flew west along the cliff top on April 26th. (FS)

House Martin

Migrants from April 3rd.

August: 150 south on 19th. September: many 1000's flew north on the 18th. 500 north on 28th.

Rock Pipit

Up to 15 birds were present during the early winter period with signs of breeding taking place at the harbour once again.

Meadow Pipit

The spring migration was awful!! The peak was only 40 south on March 16th, which is absolutely appalling.

Autumn peaks: September - 100+ on 28th. October: 70+ on 13th.

Tree Pipit

April: 1 north on 12th and 1 west on 24th. September: 2 over on 2nd, 1 west on 13th, 1 on 28th.

Pied Wagtail

Although seen regularly at most times of the year, very little passage was noted in either spring or autumn as is usual nowadays. Some fantastic numbers were noted during both winter periods heading s/west through Pegwell to roost somewhere further south of the area – perhaps at Richborough?? Late afternoon counts were taken on February 6th, 7th and 16th when 208, 277 and 301 moved s/west respectively. In the late winter period 439 took the same route on November 13th then a record 615 on December 11th.

White Wagtail

Scarce in spring with only 1 – 3 birds seen on April 3rd, 4th, 14th and 15th. Any autumn birds were ignored.

Grey Wagtail

Spring: February - 2 s/west on 6th, 1 south on 8th, March – 1 s/west on 29th, 1 west on 31st, April – 1 west on 21st.

Autumn: September – 2 west on 13th, 3 over on 18th and 1 on 27th. October: 1 on 14th.

Yellow Wagtail

Spring: regular from April 3rd in small numbers. Unsure if any bred in the area this year but I would presume 1 – 2 pairs probably did?

Autumn: Rubbish...cack – poop in fact!! A peak count of 18 birds on September 2nd.

Wren

Common breeding bird.

Dunnock

Common breeding bird – no significant movements were noted this year.

Robin

Common breeding bird – no significant movements were noted this year.

Bluethroat

After a report earlier on in the day by an anonymous observer, 2 were seen on the sea wall of the Country Park on the afternoon of March 26th. (PM, TH, DS etc.)

Nightingale

1 - 2 singing males were heard during the spring, with 1 pair probably breeding.

Redstart

Singles on April: 7th, September 10th and 25th.

Black Redstart

In April: 2 on 3rd then singles on 4th and 6th. No autumn records this year.

Wheatear

A very poor spring migration for Wheatears locally. Birds were seen extremely infrequently and in very small numbers – the maximum being only 5 birds on April 20th and 21st. A late bird was seen on June 4th. (DW) Autumn birds were only seen in very low numbers – mainly only ones and twos.

Whinchat

1 on May 18th. (PB) A few late August records then in September: 1 on 3rd, 6th, 10th, 2 on 15th, 1 on 25th and 1 on 26th. Dreadful numbers.

Stonechat

Monthly peak counts were as follows:

JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY		AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
2	4	0				-	-	-	1	2

Redwing

March: 20 on 6th, 62 present on 26th and 80 on 31st. The last migrants were seen on April 15th. An awful autumn for Redwings with a very lowly peak of only 200 flyovers on November 2nd.

Song Thrush

50 west on October 11th with another 280 west on the 21st.

Mistle Thrush

Largely ignored.

Fieldfare

30 flew s/east on January 23rd. Spring: birds were seen very infrequently. Up to 14 birds were seen hanging around the horse paddocks on the cliff top in March on various dates. Very few were reported during the autumn – 61 over on November 2nd being the peak.

Ring Ouzel

April: singles on 8th, 15th and 24th. October: 3 on 12th.

Blackbird

Dave Beadle reported 1000's coming in off the sea on November 2nd. Otherwise numbers were ignored.

Garden Warbler

Scarce with only the occasional single reported – all in the autumn.

Blackcap

1 over wintered in the sunken garden area of the cliff top. In the spring: 14 singing males were counted on April 15th with another 15 on the 21st. An ever increasing breeding specie this past few years.

Lesser Whitethroat

Migrants from April 15th. Otherwise common and regular in small numbers through into mid October.

Whitethroat

Migrants from April 3rd with 40 singing males recorded on April 21st.

Dartford Warbler

1 was on the Country Park on February 22nd. (FS)

Sedge Warbler

A declining breeding specie this past few years. 5 singing males were heard on June 7th.

Grasshopper Warbler

Singles on August 16th and 18th. (both Pft)

Reed Warbler

Migrants from April 21st. 8 singing males were heard during a first light walk on June 7th.

Melodious Warbler

1 was heard singing from thick cover (showing only briefly) on the old Hover port on September 6th. (PM) Only the second ever area record.

Willow Warbler

Migrants from March 29th. In April 12 singing males were heard on the 6th with another 11 on the 15th.

Chiffchaff

Migrants started to show from March 21st. Maximum spring numbers were 15+ singing males recorded on April 15th.

Goldcrest

2006 must have been the most appalling year ever for the Goldcrest with birds seen in such low numbers that it proved a complete waste of time to record any either in the spring or the autumn. The odd bird over wintered.

Firecrest

Singles on April 5th, 12th, 21st then 1 on September 28th and November 2nd.

Penduline Tit

1 was seen in the Hoverport reed bed on April 15th. (Frank)

Bearded Tit

2 were in the large reed bed near the old Hover port on January 12th, (PFt) with another one there towards the end of the same month. (PFt) Another was heard there in April. (PC)

Great Tit

Common resident.

Blue Tit

Common resident. A little bit of Blue Tit vismig was noted this year on a couple of occasions. 30+ birds bush-hopping their way west along the cliff top on September 6th the best day.

Coal Tit

A little migration in April – 3 on 4th, 2 on 6th then singles on 15th and 20th.

Long-tailed Tit

Common resident with a few scattered pairs breeding.

Spotted Flycatcher

2 singletons were seen in late August then a single on the hover port on September 6th.

Pied Flycatcher

A late one on October 14th.

Maggie

1 – 15+ birds present daily.

Jay

1 – 2 breeding pairs.

Jackdaw

Little bits of vismig were noted during the spring and autumn. Otherwise 2 -4 generally kicking about the area.

Rook

See Jackdaw.

Carrion Crow

See Rook!

Starling

Movements and passage/lingering birds were ignored. I do take a little bit of notice of the winter birds passing through the area before going to roost as numbers can be spectacular. However, 2006 proved a very bad year for numbers with early winter peak numbers only 350 on March 4th then roughly 2000 birds passing over during the November/December period.

Golden Oriole

2 were seen in Stonelees on May 9th (CW) and a female showed on the Country Park briefly before flying north on May 17th. (PM)

House Sparrow

Regular around the Car park with 150+ birds seen in the area during August and September.

Tree Sparrow

6 were on the Country Park on February 4th. A few were seen in the autumn – very few if I'm honest. I did see 3 on October 14th if that helps?

Chaffinch

A few pairs breed and 15+ birds over wintered. 45 over on October 21st was the highest number seen on migration.

Brambling

1 south and 2 west on April 13th was the only report of the spring. Scarce in autumn with very few seen at all. 20 over on November 2nd the only half-decent number reported.

Linnnet

In January/February 30 - 40 were present. Spring movements: March – 120 west on 28th, April 80 west on 4th and 100 north on 14th. In the autumn 80 over on October 21st was the best day.

Twite

In the early winter period 3 were present in the salt marsh just off the Country Park. Another group of 15 - 16 birds were seen on the odd occasion. A group of 9 birds took up residence in the salt marsh just off the sea wall and were seen most days from November 9th until the end of the year.

Redpoll

In line with the lack of coverage and lack of birds when there was some coverage very few Redpolls were seen. The highest count I have was only 5 birds over on October 21st. There were 1 - 4 birds seen quite regularly during October.

Siskin

In February: 1 on 4th then 14 s/east on the 6th. An awful autumn passage with a personal peak count of only 4 flyovers on October 11th and 13th.

Goldfinch

205 over on October 21st.

Greenfinch

57 flew over on October 21st.

Bullfinch

Regular only in Stonelees though I think Dave Beadle saw 2 on the cliff top in November which is unusual these days?

Crossbill

1 on April 13th. (CS)

Reed Bunting

Ever present in small numbers. A few pairs bred and a trickle of migrants were noted in late September/October. No effort was made to count the darn things though.

Lapland Bunting

2 were seen flying over the salt marsh on November 22nd with further singles on November 26th and 27th. (PM, DB and IH)

Snow Bunting

No early winter records then a flock of 8 turned up in November (DB) and were seen on and off throughout the rest of the month.

Yellowhammer

1 west on September 13th, 1 over on October 21st then 1 on November 2nd.

Corn Bunting

Most regular during January and February when up to 15 birds were seen on the Country Park. The next highest amount was only 6 on September 2nd with 2 – 4 birds seen regularly until the end of the year.

The End!! Thank goodness that's finished!! I know its rubbish but tough!!

.....

Contributers initials :

CS = Craig Sammels (Daisy)
DC = Dave Coppen
DW = Dylan Wrathall ... age 51.
Frank = Frank
FS = Francis Solly (AKA 'The Hair')
IH = Ian Harding
JV = John Veal
KBN = Kent Bird News c/o Ian Harding.
DB = Dave Beadle
AD = Anton Deck (Russian TV presenter)
PC = Phil Charlton
SM = Simon Mount (mentalist)
DS = Dennis Sawyer (AKA Gadget and my personal bodyguard)
PFt = Pete Forrest (or Forrestinho as he's known nowadays)
PM = Phil Milton (berk)
TH = Slim Splodge (Tim Hodge)

Other helpers/reporters of bird stuff included: Dave Gilshnan, Mick Schroepfer, Johnny Websper, Phil Bereat, Allan Sessions (from Deal), Joshua, Bridie and Oliver Milton plus others who I've probably forgotten to mention as usual... sorry. I have nicked some stuff off Planetthanet for use in this report. I didn't ask for permission and quite frankly don't give a stuff if Plannethanet isn't happy about this. Tell me why should I be afraid of upsetting an ageing overweight dwarf or his sidekick the mouthy aging hippy?? I couldn't care less what they think and if they want to take issue with me about this then I say "bring it on!" BRING IT ON!!! You long-haired twit!!

e-mail Pegwell news: To Phil at - MSCHUPJM@YAHOO.COM

PS: R.I.P. Ye olde Pegwell bird-hide. Which was torn apart this year by vandals. That's what you get if you encourage too many members of the general public into an area that should be set aside for the local and visiting wildlife and people who have respect for this sort of place. Be warned!!

.....

We used to have a hide...

In it I used to slide.

To beat the rain and wind – that would rescind –

To all that got inside.

In line with Dylan's research into being able to determine the age, sex and exact geographical breeding range of Carbo/Sisnesis Cormorants by the colour and texture of the birds faeces when deposited on a well known Harbour Wall and the passing of information thereof - I decided the time must be right for revealing my own research into the mating call of the Common Frog which should be audible within Thanet during the next mild damp spell in and around our back garden ponds in the very near future.

The past 43 years (from birth) have seen me taking detailed recordings of the local Thanet Common Frog population and after analysing them in great detail - I can now announce that if the following 'sounds' are heard then these 'sounds' are diagnostic of the local subspecies (Froggus Jumpicus Thanetites) which 'may' be split from the normal British Common Frog and 'may' be the latest new specie of British Amphibian found in over 100 years based on my own findings.

The mating call goes thus:

Rivit...rivit...rivit-rivit-rivit (7.8 second pause) Rivit...rivit...rivit-rivit-rivit.

Rivit...rivit...rivit-rivit-rivit (7.8 second pause) Rivit...rivit...rivit-rivit-rivit.

Rivit...rivit...rivit-rivit-rivit (7.8 second pause) Rivit...rivit...rivit-rivit-rivit.

Rivit...rivit...rivit-rivit-rivit (7.8 second pause) Rivit...rivit...rivit-rivit-rivit.

Rivit...rivit...rivit-rivit-rivit (7.8 second pause) Rivit...rivit...rivit-rivit-rivit.

Rivit...rivit...rivit-rivit-rivit (7.8 second pause) Rivit...rivit...rivit-rivit-rivit.

Rivit...rivit...rivit-rivit-rivit (7.8 second pause) Rivit...rivit...rivit-rivit-rivit.

Rivit...rivit...rivit-rivit-rivit (7.8 second pause) Rivit...rivit...rivit-rivit-rivit.

Rivit...rivit...rivit-rivit-rivit (7.8 second pause) Rivit...rivit...rivit-rivit-rivit.

Rivit...rivit...rivit-rivit-rivit (7.8 second pause) Rivit...rivit...rivit-rivit-rivit.

.....followed by - spring...Plop!

(this is the full extent of my findings to date)

Unfortunately funds have run extremely low and some technical equipment (42 year old cassette recorder) has become temperamental over the years. Any donations to extend my lifetimes work would be gratefully received.

Thank you for you're time.(apostrophe in the incorrect place this time)

Professor PJ Milton** (BSE OBE BAT EGG)

Lifetime member and co-organiser of **SAVE THAT FROG'** - an organisation dedicated to saving road crossing frogs by members risking life and limb by laying across the main crossing routes during the nights of main 'frog' activity. We are proud to announce that in 20 years of lying in the roads - I and other of my like have been able to save 14.7 frogs (1 frog just lost 2 legs so 0.7 of it was saved) from the wheels of passing motor vehicles at great cost to our own well being. Please note: We don't like Toads.

****SAVE THAT FROG'** is a registered charity.

