

**CHORLEY & DISTRICT
NATURAL HISTORY SOCIETY**

Chorley & District Natural History Society

is a Registered Charity

Registration Number 513466

ANNUAL REPORT

2010

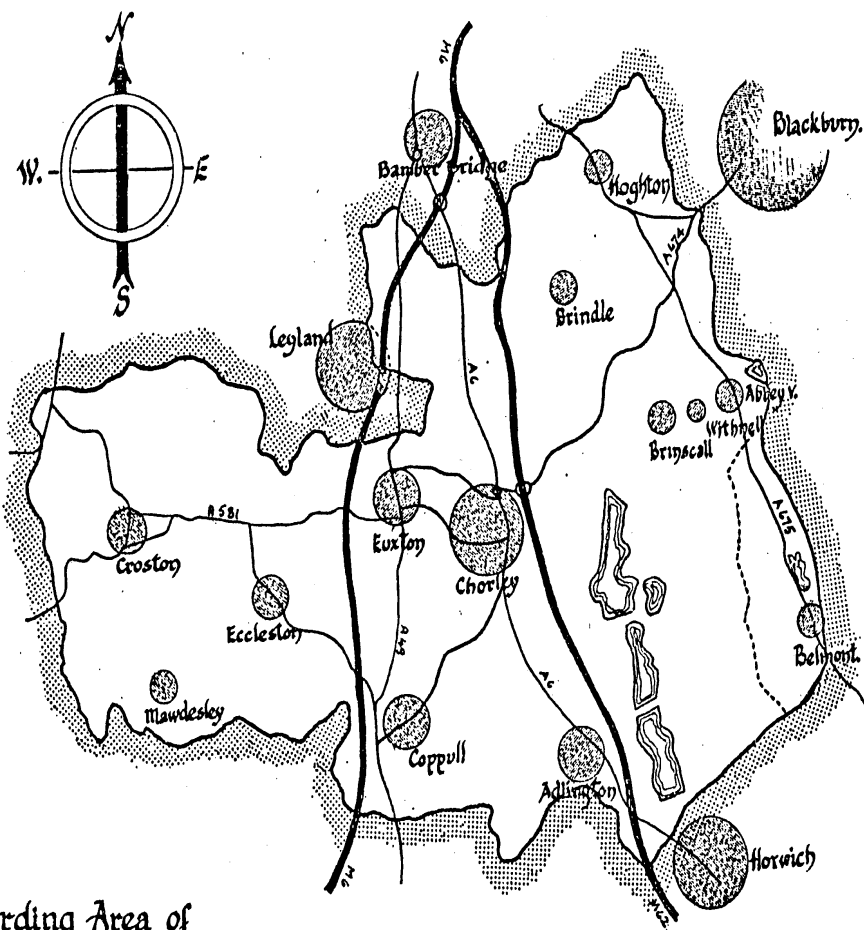
Editor

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Recording Area of Chorley & District Natural History Society

The Society's recording area follows the boundary of the Chorley Borough in the north, west and south but extends beyond the boundary in the east to include Belmont reservoir plus the whole of the Roddlesworth reservoir system and Tockholes Plantations.

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RECORDERS

Flora	David Beattie
Fungi	Joyce Riley
Insects	Phil Kirk
Birds	Neil Southworth
Mammals and Amphibia	Joyce Riley

REVIEW OF THE YEAR

The freezing weather from the end of 2009 continued into **January**. In fact the severe cold lasted until the 10th with a lowest minimum temperature of minus 10°C on the 7th and 8th, and the daytime maximum remaining below freezing on three days. 100 mm of snow fell on the 5th. The next two weeks saw milder conditions and heavy rain on the 16th cleared most of the snow. The 22nd saw the highest daytime maximum of 9°C. Frosty, sunny weather returned on the 28th with a minimum temperature of minus 3°C and overnight snow on the 30th. The hard weather brought Fieldfare and Redwing into gardens. However, the proposed field trip to Mere Sands Wood was cancelled. The evening talk was given by our secretary Phil Kirk and was an excellent presentation of his "Swiss Souvenirs".

The cold weather continued for the first three days of **February** with a minimum of minus 3°C. 20 mm of snow fell on the 3rd, followed by milder conditions for a couple of days before dry, sunny weather with overnight frosts returned with a lowest minimum of minus 4°C on the 11th and 17th and snow on 3 or 4 days. A band of snow on 23rd was followed by milder, damp weather with no frost to the end of the month. January's postponed field trip to Mere Sands Wood took place on the 6th. The evening talk was an RSPB appeal by John Loder entitled "Save our Birds of Prey". Pairs of Peregrine and Raven were seen frequently around St George's church, often in aerial combat.

The first two weeks of **March** were dominated by high pressure with mainly dry, sunny days and overnight frosts. Daytime maximum temperatures averaged 9°C. The following two weeks were unsettled with outbreaks of rain on most days. Temperatures, however, crept into double figures with a high of 14°C on the 18th. It turned colder for the last few days of the month with snow, strong winds and a maximum of only 5°C on 31st. The evening meeting was a talk on European Orchids given by Irene Ridge. Our field trip was a circular walk in the Withnell Fold area. A Red Kite was seen at Eccleston on the 13th. Mediterranean Gulls started to appear in the Black-headed Gull flocks. The early migrants appeared to be a few days later than normal.

The unsettled weather persisted during the first week of **April**, but temperatures, at least, climbed back into double figures. High pressure then reasserted itself and the weather became generally dry, warm and sunny until the 25th, with a high of 18°C on the 24th, and slight frosts on just two days. Cool north to north-easterly occasionally took the edge off temperatures. The month ended with a few days of inclement weather, but temperatures held up and reached 19°C on the 27th. The final indoor meeting of the season moved slightly away from natural history with a talk by Dr Keith Robinson entitled "Images of the Night Sky". The Bird Race took place on the weekend of 17th and 18th April, when four teams of two took part and a total of 93 species was seen.

The first couple of weeks of **May** were dominated by the north and north-easterly winds, which kept the weather mainly dry with just a few showers and with good sunny spells, but generally cool. Highest temperature in the period was 15°C on the 9th. From mid-month onwards, the weather became warm and sunny and even hot by the 22nd and 23rd when a high of 27°C was achieved. The last seven days, however, saw cooler unsettled conditions with a maximum of only 12°C on 26th and 29th, the latter of which was a very wet day. The first evening walk of the summer was from White Coppice to Anglezarke and back. Hobbies were seen on a couple of occasions at Eccleston and Stronstrey Bank, and the wandering Red Kite was again seen over Eccleston.



After a wet morning on the 1st, the first week of **June** was very warm and sunny, with a maximum of 26°C on the 4th. The second week was unsettled with rain, a strong breeze most days and a maximum of 17°C on the 12th. The final two weeks of the month were generally dry, warm and sunny with a high of 26°C on 27th and temperatures in the 20's throughout. The evening walk was around Croston Moss. A Hummingbird Hawk Moth was in a garden at Rivington on the 29th.

The fine weather continued for the first two weeks of **July** with a maximum of 27°C on the 10th, but the fine spell was brought to an end by a thunderstorm on the 14th when a total of 34 mm of rain was recorded. The second half of the month was thoroughly miserable with rain every day except for one dry, sunny day on the 23rd. Highest temperature was 24°C on the 19th, but 18°C was more typical for the period. Our evening walk took us to the Denham Quarry area of Whittle-le-Woods, but this was curtailed by the arrival of a thunderstorm, which did however provide spectacular views from our elevated vantage point. A flock of 30 Crossbills was noted in Lead Mines Clough and another of 10 was in Cuerden Valley Park towards the end of the month. White Letter Hairstreak butterflies were recorded at 4 sites

August was a very disappointing month, which was cool and unsettled for the most part. The very wet days, which occurred on the 13th, 17th and 23rd, saw a maximum temperature of only 14°C. Three fine days occurred between 14th and 16th with the month's highest temperature of 22°C achieved on the 15th. Amazingly, the month ended with three fine days for the Bank Holiday! Final evening walk of the season was around Yarrow Valley Park concluding with a bit of bat detection on Big Lodge. The Society also took part in the Bioblitz at Cuerden Valley Park on 7th August, when we had stand in the 'tented village.' Hobby and Crossbill were apparently seen by Bill Oddie during the day!

The first few days of **September** were warm and sunny with a maximum of 21°C. The wind then strengthened and brought in heavy rain, which was followed by unsettled weather for the rest of the month. The 19th, in particular, saw torrential rain for the whole day with a maximum temperature of only 12°C, and the month as a whole was wet with just a few dry days. The first indoor meeting saw the AGM followed by a visit to Islay with Gordon Yates as our guide. An Osprey was seen over Eccleston on the 7th and a Lapland Bunting was on Winter Hill at the end of the month.



prove the largest invasion for many years.

The unsettled theme continued into **October** but high pressure soon took over giving good spells of dry, sunny weather for a couple of weeks. Highest temperature reached was 19°C on the 9th and 10th, but then temperatures fell with a maximum of only 10° on the 14th and 15th. Rain arrived on the 18th and 19th, followed by a glorious sunny day on the 20th. However, it was bitterly cold with a sharp frost, maximum temperature being 7°C and minimum minus 3°C. The 24th saw another sharp frost as did the 25th. From then until the end of the month, unsettled conditions returned with a maximum of 15°C on the 27th. Our evening talk was by Colin Smith showing us the "Faces of Nature". A Fungal Foray at White Coppice on the 3rd was unfortunately in wet conditions. A visit to Hesketh Outmarsh RSPB reserve was made on the 23rd. A Rough-legged Buzzard was seen on Winter Hill, arriving from the direction of Belmont. A party of 6 Waxwings arrived in Adlington on the 28th as the vanguard of what was to

The first week of **November** was unsettled with rain most days but relatively mild with a maximum of 16°C on the 4th. A fine sunny day followed by a frost on the 7th was only a temporary blip before unsettled weather returned with lower temperatures and gale / storm force winds in the early hours of the 12th. The unsettled weather continued to the 18th with a particularly wet and windy day on the 17th, when the maximum temperature was 6°C. High press ure took control from the 19th, which was a glorious sunny day with a maximum of 10°C. The rest of the month was sunny with just the occasional shower, but with increasingly severe overnight frosts with a minimum temperature of minus 7°C on the 28th, when the daytime maximum temperature was only 0°C. A slight covering of snow followed a sho wer on the 30th. An excellent talk on the "Magic of Mushrooms and Other Fungi" was given by David Winnard on the 18th. A Great Grey Shrike was seen at Heath Charnock on the 1st. The Waxwing invasion continued with up to 60 in Park Street for most of the month.

The cold weather continued into **December** with a covering of 25 mm of snow on the 1st. Snow showers occurred on the 2nd and 3rd but a wet day on the 4th washed away the lying snow. The temperatures fell again and whilst days were fine, it was unbelievably cold with a minimum of minus 9°C and a maximum of minus 3°C on the 8th. This continued until the 16th when heavy overnight rain was followed by snow. 100 mm of snow fell on the 17th. The snow covering then increased to 225 mm during the night of 17th / 18th. The lying snow remained until the 27th when a slow thaw started. Although in this period the days were sunny, temperatures never rose above zero between the 17th and 25th, with the lowest being minus 11°C on one or two days and, on the 20th, the daytime maximum temperature achieved was only minus 5°C. The last five days of the year were overcast, but at least temperatures climbed above freezing with no overnight frost. December's talk was "Aren't Birds Brilliant?" given by Stuart Meredith. Waxwings continued to be seen around the town, and a Little Egret was seen flying north over Lower Rivington Reservoir.

Many thanks to all those who have contributed records, most of which come via the website Forum nowadays, although it must be stressed that all records are welcome in whatever format members care to use. Thanks are also due to Richard Kirk for all his work maintaining the website and ironing out any problems that occur. Thanks to all who have contributed articles for the Newsletters throughout the year and to Colin Smith for the photographic images used in them and in this report. Finally, thanks to all recorders for compiling their contributions to the report.

Neil Southworth (Editor)

SECRETARY'S REPORT

I ask myself: Will I get this report past the Editor without him deleting it due to modesty?

On behalf of the whole membership of the Society I would like to thank Neil Southworth for his excellent work in publishing this report. His first Annual Report was 1991, therefore the 2010 report is his 20th. A truly outstanding achievement. Additionally he has produced 4 newsletters per year; suggesting that he has reached the milestone of 100 completed reports.

Not only does he edit and compile the reports, but he spends time badgering members for contributions. Even then he has to chase us up to meet the publication deadlines. My writing this report about two days after such a deadline is an example of what he has to put up with!

He also has responsibility for monitoring Website Forum contributions to make sure no sensitive, inaccurate or offensive material is entered. He then has to scan through all these Forum items in his role as Bird Recorder, in order to produce the Bird Report.

Added to this he is to a large part responsible for the arrangement of society field trips.

In all he must spend a fair proportion of his valuable spare time on these onerous tasks. We all owe him a great debt of gratitude. We also look forward to many more of his excellent publications in years to come.

The committee at the end of 2010 comprised:

Chairman Keith Woan

Secretary	Phil Kirk	secretary AT chorleynats.org.uk Substituting “@” for “AT”
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Treasurer Carol Thistlethwaite

Committee: David Beattie
Tony Dunn
Chris Rae
Joyce Riley
Colin Smith
Neil Southworth
Nora West

Phil Kirk (Secretary)

FLORA REPORT

This year was quite a change from previous years with snow affecting the early months. Most spring flowers were late. Gorse and snowdrop did not appear until late January and although we had a primrose on time, this was in a sheltered area. Once spring did arrive things were still a little later. We did have more records of Moschatel but I am not sure if this was because of more flowers or the welcome increase in folk reporting sightings. Two new records for the year were Lesser Twayblade and Bog Asphodel. Both these had been noticed on Anglezarke Moor. We also had sneezewort and pyramidal orchid. Other interesting sightings were Black Nightshade on Cuerden and a Broad-Leaved Helleborine in Astley Village.

The Lancashire Bioblitz contributed several hundred extra records for Cuerden, which kept me busy for months. David Earle the vc59 recorder has a fondness for brambles and he recorded two new ones for Cuerden. *Rubus duxburiensis* and *rubus cuerden valley*. are plants that seem to occur only in the Chorley area.

Flowerburst for Cuerden Valley park:-

Species	Cuerden 2007	Cuerden 2008	Cuerden 2009	Cuerden 2010
Bistort	May 7	May 5	May 9	
Bluebell	April 12	April 4	April 1	April 8
Butterbur	Feb 28	March 3	March 6	
Coltsfoot	March 3	Feb 26	March 6	March 5
Creeping buttercup	April 21	April 27	Aril 12	April 18
Dog's Mercury	Feb 17	Feb 17	Feb 13	Feb 20
Lesser Celandine	Jan 19	Jan 25	Feb 14	Feb 20
Snowdrop			Jan 19	Jan 24
Wood Anemone	March 17	March 18	March 30	March 27
Wood Sorrel	April 6	April 4	April 11	April 1

Thanks to Diana Downing, David Earl, John Haddon, Jack Hewitt, John Lamb, Gary Lilley, Jim Longbottom, Joyce Riley, Peter Ross, Andy Rowett, Colin Smith and Neil Southworth. Special thanks to Nora West and Carol Winder who contribute 75% of records submitted.

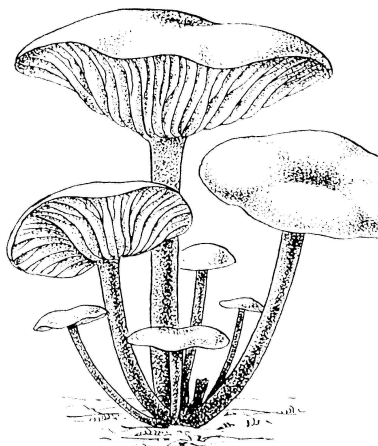
David Beattie

FUNGI REPORT

Unfortunately, what was reported by the British Mycological Society as being the best autumn foray season in the South of England for over 20 years wasn't reflected in our area. Nevertheless it was a relatively good year, especially in the late summer and early autumn period.

Velvet Shank (*Flammulina velutipes*), one of the few 'mushroom-type' species that can survive the frost was found growing on a dead stump at Bank Hall on a visit for 'Snowdrop Sunday' on 14th February. This site was also a new one for Scarlet Elf cups (*Sarcoscypha austriaca*), which seem to be spreading throughout the area judging from the increase in reported sightings with dates ranging from 10th February to 24th March.

The beautiful spring and subsequent drought meant a lull in records, although when 10 experts from the North West Fungus Group (NWFG) had a foray at Rivington on 11th July, in spite of the dry conditions, they recorded over 60 mainly smaller species including a good number of Myxomycetes which were more conspicuous than usual as they easily wash off when it rains! Also noted was a very fresh Stinkhorn (*Phallus impudicus*), from which flies stripped off all the spores within an hour. A lovely photo of a Stinkhorn in Brinscall Woods was posted on the forum on 8th August. It had been discovered as an 'egg' the previous day and grown overnight!



Velvet Shank
(*Flammulina velutipes*)

During the 'Bioblitz' held in Cuerden Valley Park on 7th August, members from the NWFG recorded 23 species, including the following that aren't often recorded locally:-

a bolete that is aptly named Slippery Jack (*Suillus luteus*) and is associated with conifers;
Weeping Widow (*Lacrymaria lacrymabunda*) that does seem to 'weep' when moist!

August also marked the start of a good spell of records posted on the society's forum, often accompanied by beautiful photographs of the more photogenic species. A single Giant Puffball (*Calvatia gigantea*) was a good find amongst the list of more common local species recorded on 15th August at Birkacre, a site where the Collared Earthstar (*Geastrum triplex*) seems to be extending its range. Also of note were over 50 of Blackening Brittlegill (*Russula nigricans*) in the graveyard at Rivington Chapel on 17th September and what was described on 12th September by the recorder 'as the largest group of Shaggy Inkcap (*Coprinus camatus*) ever seen' in a field near the fishery at Stoa's Hall, Bretherton. A normally locally uncommon species, White Saddle (*Helvella crispa*) that has a convoluted saddle-shaped cap and deeply furrowed hollow stem was found in Chorley Cemetery on 19th September, Birkacre on 26th September and Tockholes Plantation on 8th October.

Members of the North West Fungus Group had another foray in our area on 26th September, this time in Duxbury Woods. Disappointingly there were few of the larger fungi on the ground but noteworthy were two large Clouded Funnels (*Clitocybe nebularis*) and *Inocybe cookie*, one of the few Fibrecaps that can be identified in the field as it smells of honey.

The society's foray was held at White Coppice on 3rd October, an atrociously wet morning, when the four hardy souls resembling human mushrooms under their umbrellas set off along The Goit towards Brinscall more in hope than expectation but with diligent searching they did well. A total of 26 species were found and mostly identified, including the uncommon Peppery Bolete (*Chalciporus piperatus*) and Ghost Bolete (*Leccinum holopus*) as well as the more common Brown and Orange Birch Boletes (*L. scabrum* and *L. versipelle*). There were also a few Waxcaps on the Cricket Field. A list of species recorded was posted on the forum.

The highlight of the year must be the discovery of eight of the spectacular Golden Bootleg (*Phaeopholiota aurea*) by the entrance to Park Hall, Charnock Richard in September. This is a rare species on the Red Data List. It constituted a new record for the Chorley area and, as far as I am aware, is only the sixth record of this species in the North West of England.

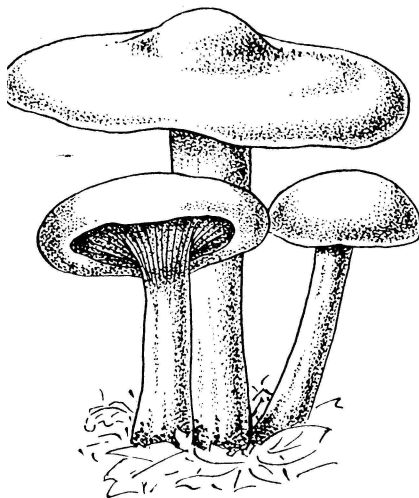
Throughout the report, I have used the officially recognised English names for fungi as recommended by the British Mycological Society.

Thanks to the following members, plus recorders on the forum, for their records, etc.
Dave Barker, Ian Cameron, John Catt, Gerald & Diana Downing, Tony Dunn, Eddie Hall, Chris and Tony Johnson, Phil Kirk, Leonard Poxon, Joyce Riley, Neil Southworth, Bryan Thomas and Nora West.

Apologies to anyone I may have missed.

Thank you also to NWFG for records from the Group's forays at Rivington and Duxbury.

Joyce Riley



Clouded Funnel
(*Clitocybe nebularis*)

INVERTEBRATE REPORT

LEPIDOPTERA

My thanks to the Lancashire Moth Group (www.lancashiremoths.co.uk) for providing information about moths trapped in the Chorley recording area in 2010. The table below lists the species recorded which were not already on our local list. This brings the local list to 568 lepidoptera species

Micropterix aruncella	
Incurvaria oehlmanniella	
Caloptilia betulicola	
Acrocercops brongniardella	
Phyllonorycter leucographella	Firethorn Leaf Miner
Argyresthia dilectella	
Argyresthia trifasciata	
Eidophasia messingiella	
Coleophora albicosta	
Borkhausenia fuscescens	
Agonopterix nervosa	
Metzneria lappella	
Recurvaria leucatella	
Aproaerema anthyllidella	
Mompha locupletella	
Mompha raschkiella	
Cochylis atricapitana	
Exapate congelatella	
Aleimma loeflingiana	
Acleris bergmanniana	
Hedya pruniana	Plum Tortrix
Pammene fasciana	
Grapholita janthinana	
Chilo phragmitella	
Crambus perlella	
Pyrausta aurata	
Udea ferrugalis	Rusty-dot Pearl
Orthopygia glaucinalis	
Cryptoblabes bistriga	
Euzophera pinguis	
Stenoptilia bipunctidactyla	
Deilephila porcellus	Small Elephant Hawk-moth
Nola confusalis	Least Black Arches
Lacanobia suasa	Dog's Tooth
Orthosia populeti	Lead-coloured Drab
Lithophane ornitopus	Grey Shoulder-knot
Mesoligia furuncula	Cloaked Minor

In the case of the Small Elephant Hawk Moth, I was aware of a record for this species some 10 or so years ago. A former member from Hoghton said he had caught some near Whittle. The record must have been lost. I apologise to him!

Butterfly Species:

Small Skipper (*Thymelicus sylvestris*)

The flight period for this species was much the same as last year. The first and last sightings were at Cuerden on 20th June and 16th August respectively. There were far fewer records than last year. Only 8 sites were represented and the highest count was only 5.

Large Skipper (*Ochlodes venata*)

Although only seen at a handful of sites, the high count of 50 at Belmont on 10th July was cheerful news. Elsewhere numbers were small. The flight time was 6th June until 10th July.

Brimstone (*Goepteryx rhamni*)

4 single insects were reported at different sites in the area. The first was at Rivington on 9th April and the last at Belmont on 22nd of May. The other two sites were Pilling Lane (in the centre of Chorley), and Birkacre. The town centre record illustrates the fact that the species can and does turn up anywhere – if less often than we would wish.

Large White (*Pieris brassica*)

Very common throughout the area. Unusually there were no high numbers reported. The first sighting was at Belmont on 9th May and the last at Euxton on 12th September.

Small White (*Pieris rapae*)

Oddly the numbers of Small White reported were greater than those of the Large White. The flight period was longer (10th April until 10th October), and the high count of about 10 at Croston on 14th August was greater than any count of its larger cousin. I expect this is due to recording apathy in the case of the Large White!

Green Veined White (*Peiris napi*)

Belmont – as it did in 2009 - produced the highest counts of this species. In 2009 the counts were highest in August, but in 2010 the maximum of 180 was achieved in May (22nd). There should be a break between broods in mid summer, but this was not very evident from the records received. There were lots seen in May and early June, then a bit of a lull until 7th July when they were frequent again. The last record for the year was 30th August.

Orange Tip (*Anthrocharis cardamines*)

As usual this species was widely reported in April and May. The first date was 10th April, which is about normal for the species, but the last date of 26th June was very late – the latest since the ridiculously late flier seen on 19th July 1997. There was a high count of 30 at Belmont on 23rd May but otherwise no exceptional numbers. It is found in all parts of our area.

Purple Hairstreak (*Quercusia quercus*)

Purple Hairstreak was seen on an Oak on Primrose Hill in Yarrow Valley Park on 11th July. This is a new site for the species. It was also seen at its known sites in Belmont, where the maximum count was 12. Although only three reports were received, they were spread between 11th July and 1st September.

Green Hairstreak (*Callophrys rubi*)

As with the Purple Hairstreak, the flight period for this species seems to be quite long. It was seen first at White Coppice on 22nd April and last at Belmont on 26th June. There were no high numbers reported.

White Letter Hairstreak (*Satyrrium w-album*)

I am thrilled to report the return of this species, after an absence of 20 years! Insects were seen at a total of 4 sites between 30th June and 16th July. These sites were Yarrow Bridge, Pincok, Armetriding and also near the Birkacre recycling site. Since writing last year's report, I have found out that the butterfly was located in 2009 at sites in Charnock Richard and Duxbury. Eggs were also located on a Wych Elm tree in Hoghton Bottoms in November 2009 (this is where the species was known to occur 20 years ago). They are not going to occur too far from Wych Elms – their larval foodplant – but seem to like feeding on brambles. Eyes peeled in future years!



Small Copper (*Lacaena phlaeas*)

It is pleasing to report another successful season for the species. It was reported at a total of 17 sites – which is way more than normal. There was a maximum count of 10 at Lead Mines Clough on 29th July. The overall flight period was from 19th May until 31st August.

Common Blue (*Polyommatus icarus*)

After a poor season in 2009, last year produced a total reversal of fortunes. The species was widespread (seen at 12 sites compared with 4 in 2009) and at times quite numerous (high counts of 24 at Ellerbeck on 8th June and 10 at Ridley Lane on 24th August). In all its first generation flew between 24th May and 17th June, then its second brood flew from 11th until 31st August.

Holly Blue (*Celastrina argiolus*)

As with the Common Blue, the Holly Blue has two generations. The first was in flight between 11th April and 5th June during which time it was reported at 3 sites. The summer generation flew between 14th August and 14th September. There were no large numbers – ones and twos only. A total of 11 sites were represented this year, including the doctor's surgery in Avondale Road – well it does look rather pale.

Red Admiral (*Vanessa atalanta*)

Last year I commented that it was some years since we had a March record for the Red Admiral – the species promptly turned up in my garden on 18th March 2010! That was the only spring record. It is frequent in summer. Its flight time was 26th June at Belmont until 7th November at Croston. No really large numbers were reported. The maximum was 8 in a Chorley garden on 12th October.

Painted Lady (*Cynthia cardui*)

After the spectacular records of 2009, we were back to normal in 2010. This migrant was seen between 12th June (Belmont) and 22nd September when 3 were seen in a garden at Great Knowley. Three were also counted near the Yarrow at Eccleston on 5th July.

Small Tortoiseshell (*Aglais urticae*)

Thankfully this species seems to have recovered well in the last two years. There were several records in the spring, presumably of insects which have hibernated successfully. They were around from 17th March until the end of May. The summer generation started on 20th June and went on until 16th October. As with the Red Admiral, numbers were never high – maximum being 10 at Belmont on 21st September.

The Peacock (*Inachis io*)

The Peacock regained its crown as the most often recorded butterfly, after being deposed recently by the Speckled Wood (see below). It was also our first butterfly of the year; being seen, presumably disturbed from hibernation, on 6th February. Unlike the other common Vanessids it was quite numerous at times. There was a count of 40 at Lower Burgh Meadows in August. Records were received more or less continuously throughout the year until the last one was seen at Winter Hill on 3rd October.



Comma (*Polygonia c-album*)

Only twice was this species seen in early spring – on 10th April at Rivington and at Whittle. It was frequent in the summer with records being received from all parts between 16th June and 17th October. The maximum count was of 6 insects at Armetriding on 1st August.

Speckled Wood (*Pararge aegeria tircis*)

Although recorded less often this year than last, this is still a very common species locally. 15 at Belmont on 30th June was the maximum, but they were also numerous at White Coppice (June 27th) and Euxton (1st August). The flight time was from 18th March until 12th October with no obvious break in continuity of the records received.

Wall Brown (*Lassiommatia megera*)

Records from a paltry two sites were received for this species in 2010. Once fairly common, its status locally is now cause for grave concern. The first was for a single at a Chorley garden on 1st May – where it also appeared in June. The other record was a single at Belmont on 20th June. Please send in any sightings of the Wall that you may have over the last few years.

Gatekeeper (*Pyronia tithonus*)

The flight time was 27th June until 29th August. There were several reports of decent numbers in July, notably River Yarrow at Eccleston on 5th and again on the 21st, Lower Burgh Meadows on the 10th, and Belmont on the 21st

Meadow Brown (*Maniola jurtina*)

Between 17th July and 4th September, this species was recorded abundantly. Anywhere where there is uncultivated grassland produced records.

Small Heath (*Coenonympha pamphilus*)

Records were received from Belmont (13th June), Healey Nab (8th August), and from White Coppice (27th June, 8th August and 14th August). Never more than 1 insect was seen on each occasion.

ODONATA

Species recorded this year were:

ZYGOPTERA (Damselflies)

Banded Demoiselle (*Calopteryx splendens*)

As usual Cuerden was the stronghold for the species, but it was seen more or less anywhere along the Yarrow from Birkacre to Croston, and also on the Canal near Adlington. At many of the locations where it occurred, it did so in large numbers. The flight time was 30th May (Cuerden) to 15th August (Birkacre).

Emerald Damselfly (*Lestes sponsa*)

Large numbers were again present at Belmont Reservoir, but the highest count this year was only 35. This did include 11 pairs ovipositing. It occurred also at Ellerbeck and at Healey Nab. Flight time 14th August to 4th September.

Large Red Damselfly (*Pyrrhosoma nymphula*)

Surprisingly few records for this species in 2010. 20 at Cuerden on 20th June was the maximum count, but it was only reported from one site away from Cuerden, which is unbelievable! I expect this is another case of recording apathy for a common species.

Blue Tailed Damselfly (*Ischnura elegans*)

Reported from only 6 locations between 4th June and 29th August. A maximum count of 11 was made at Cuerden on 20th June.

Azure Damselfly (*Coenagrion puella*)

As usual this was the most numerous of the three “blues”. A maximum of 50 was reported at Cuerden on 20th June. It was reported at only 2 sites outside Cuerden.

Common Blue Damselfly (*Enallagma cyathigerum*)

Although less numerous than the *C. puella*, this species was more frequently reported. In all it was seen at 12 sites, but only in large numbers at Healey Nab where “dozens” were seen on 14th August. The flight period was from 5th June until 29th August.

ANISOPTERA (Dragonflies)

Southern Hawker (*Aeshna cyanea*)

Seen at only 3 sites in 2010, making it the worst season for some time. It was seen at Armetriding on 31st July and 1st August, then at Yarrow Valley Park on 15th August and finally at Ellerbeck on 11th October.

Brown Hawker (*Aeshna grandis*)

The first date for the species was 21st June at Birkacre and the latest was 5th September at White Coppice. It was reported to be quite numerous near White Coppice during August. There were several records of females ovipositing.

Common Hawker (*Aeshna juncea*)

This species was seen at 6 sites in 2010. A maximum of 6 occurred at Healey Nab on 14th August. Its flight time was 16th June until 18th September.

Migrant Hawker (*Aeshna mixta*)

No record for this species in 2010

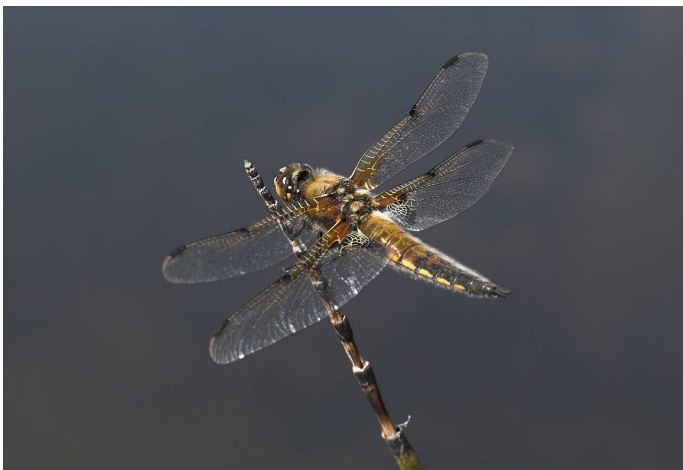
Emperor Dragonfly (*Anax imperator*)

2010 produced fewer records for the Emperor than most recent years. It was seen at only 4 sites and a maximum was of 2 insects only. It was seen on 17th June at two Cuerden sites, 26th June at Birkacre, and finally on 29th August at Healey Nab.

Four-spotted Chaser

(Libellula quadrimaculata)

Numbers of this species were slightly lower than has become the norm. It was seen at only 5 sites away from Cuerden, Its maximum was 20 (4th and 17th June at the Breeding Pond at Cuerden) and its flight period was 24th May until 31st August.



Broad-bodied Chaser *(Libellula depressa)*

Seen at 7 sites in total including a Chorley garden with no pond! The flight period was from 4th June (Yarrow Valley below Tesco) until 26th June (Pond near Burgh Hall).

Black Tailed Skimmer *(Orthetrum cancellatum)*

Disappointing that it was not seen in 2010. I had hoped that it would become established after its appearance in 2009.

Black Darter *(Sympetrum danae)*

In addition to its favoured moorland sites (Belmont, Great Hill, Withnell Moor and Healey Nab) it was spotted at Ellerbeck near Lower Adlington. Numbers this year were not special. 17 at Belmont on 30th August was the maximum. Its flight period was 6th to the 31st August.

Common Darter *(Sympetrum striolatum)*

Reasonable numbers were present at the Cuerden Breeding Pond in mid-August, but all-in-all it was another disappointing season. It was recorded at only 6 sites between 16th August and 11th October.

This report was compiled with reference to records received from the following:

D.Beattie, D.Beevers, B.Derbyshire, J.Catterall, J.Cobham, D.Downing, T.Dunn, J.Edwards, R.Hoult, R.Hoyle, C.Johnson, P.Krischkiw, E.Langrish, G.Lilley, D.S.Martin, S.J.Martin, S.Palmer, S.Priestley, P.Pugh, C.Rae, R.W.Rhodes, J.Riley, C.Smith, N.Southworth, C.Thistlethwaite, B.Thomas, N.West, P.West, K.Woan, I.Woosey and to the members of the Lancashire Moth Group.

My apologies to anyone I may have missed.

Flight periods of Dragonfly species recorded in 2010

	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct
	1234	1234	1234	1234	1234	1234	1234	1234
<i>Calopteryx splendens</i>			x	xxx	xxxx	x		
<i>Lestes sponsa</i>				x		x x	x	
<i>Pyrrhosoma nymphula</i>			x	x x	x			
<i>Ischnura elegans</i>				x xx		xxx		
<i>Coenagrion puella</i>				x xx		x		
<i>Enallagma cyathigerum</i>				x xx	xx x			
<i>Aeschna cyanea</i>					x	x x		x
<i>Aeshna grandis</i>				x	xxx	xxxx	x	
<i>Aeshna juncea</i>				xx	x x	x		
<i>Anax imperator</i>				xx		x		
<i>Libellula depressa</i>				x xx				
<i>Libellula quadrimaculata</i>			x	x xx	x	x		
<i>Orthetrum cancellatum</i>				x				
<i>Sympetrum danae</i>						xx xx		
<i>Sympetrum striolatum</i>						xx	x	x

Flight periods of butterfly species recorded in 2010									
	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct
	1234	1234	1234	1234	1234	1234	1234	1234	1234
Small Skipper					xx	xx x	x		
Large Skipper					xxx	xx	x		
Brimstone			x	xx					
Large White				x	xx	xxx	xxxx	x	
Small White			xxx	x		xx	xxxx	xx x	x
Green Veined White				xxxx	xx x	xxxx	xxxx	x	
Orange Tip			xxx	x xx	x xx				
Green Hairstreak			x	x x	x				
Purple Hairstreak						xx	x		
White Letter Hairs/k					x	xxx			
Small Copper				xx		x xx	xxx		
Common Blue				x	xxx		xxx		
Holly Blue			xx		x		xxx	xx	
Red Admiral		x			x	x	xxxx	xxxx	xxxx
Painted Lady					x x	x	xxx	x	x
Small Tortoiseshell		x	xx	x	xx	xxx	xxxx	xxxx	xx
The Peacock	x	xx	xxxx	xxx	xxx	x x	xxxx	xx x	x
The Comma			x		x	xxxx	xxxx	xxx	
Speckled Wood		x	x	x xx	xxx	xx	xxxx	xxxx	xx
The Wall				x	x				
The Gatekeeper					x	xxx	xxxx		
Meadow Brown					xx	xxxx	xxx x	x	
Small Heath					x x		xx		

Phil Kirk

BIRD REPORT

Introduction

A total of 150 species, including escapes, was recorded this year, two less than last year, despite the fact that Lesser Spotted Woodpecker and Twite were recorded after a blank year in 2009. Rarities passing through were Bittern, Little Egret, Great Grey Shrike, Rough-legged Buzzard and Lapland Bunting. All but the latter were single observer sightings. The last two were firsts for the area.

There is this year a deliberate mistake in the report. No prizes for spotting it, but it will be interesting to see if anyone does!

Neil Southworth (Records Secretary)

Mute Swan (*Cygnus olor*)

Uncommon but increasing breeding bird

One was on Cuerden Valley Park lake and another was at Ulnes Walton brick pits in February. A single bird remained in Astley Park throughout the year.

The pair at Yarrow Valley Park had produced 5 cygnets by 11th May. Another pair had 6 recently hatched cygnets on the Leeds Liverpool canal at Adlington on 28th May. A pair at Lower Healey had four recently hatched young on 29th May. A further pair was noted at the E-shaped pond, Bretherton, but breeding success or otherwise is not known.

The adult male at Yarrow Valley Park sadly died on 11th July, leaving the female to raise the year's brood single handedly. The young at Lower Healey had reduced to three by 17th July.

Two adult and two juveniles were on the Mormon temple lake on 23rd November.



Whooper Swan (*Cygnus cygnus*)

Occasional winter visitor

Ten were on Belmont Reservoir on 28th January, and 4 were there on 6th February. A herd of 30 birds was on Croston Moss during February.

Two flew north east over Belmont on 20th October and 5 flew north west over the village on 31st October. One was down on Belmont Reservoir on 24th October. Ten flew west over Eccleston on 31st October. Seven were on Croston Moss on 7th November and 9 were there on the 21st. A flock of 19 birds flew over the River Yarrow near Croston and then over Eccleston on 22nd December.



Pink-Footed Goose (*Anser brachyrhynchus*)

Mainly recorded on passage during the winter months. Some feral birds occur usually with Canada Geese. Amber List.

Skins seen in January included 300 heading west on the 3rd, and one of 1000 or so heading south over Croston Moss on the 17th. Passage over Belmont in January included 45 west on 2nd, 40 very low west in a blizzard on 5th, 150 north west on 7th and 150 & 120 west on 17th. Three

down at Lower Healey lodges on the 27th were of unknown origin, although three down on Belmont Reservoir on 11th February were believed to be of 'wild' origin.

A skein of 30 birds flew over Cuerden Valley Park on 3rd February, one of 130 flew west over Belmont on 7th February, skeins of 120 and 75 west over Belmont on 1st of February and another of 250 birds was seen heading north-west over Chorley on 14th February, coinciding with a general return passage of birds from East Anglia. A further skein of 50 birds heading north over Chorley on 2nd March and one of 45 west over Belmont on 13th March may well have been the tail end of the return passage from East Anglia.

The first in Autumn was a small skein of 27 birds west over Belmont on 17th September, followed by two small skeins over Eccleston on 24th and 25th September, and a larger one of 67 birds over Hartwood on the 28th. In October, skeins heading east included 90 over Eccleston (6th), 90 over Croston (16th), 50 over Belmont (17th), 100 over Hartwood (21st), a massive movement of around 3000 birds over Eccleston (23rd) and finally skeins of 250 and 150 over Belmont on 31st.

Skeins were recorded regularly in November, including 150 over Belmont (1st), 300 over Clayton (3rd), 300 over Mawdesley (6th), 500 over Croston Moss (7th) and 49 over Hartwood (28th).

In December, small numbers were noted on the mosses, including 30 on the 29th. Seven were over Euxton on 31st.

Greylag Goose (Feral/escape) (*Anser anser*)

Scarce feral species

Three were at Belmont Reservoir on 2nd April with a pair there from 14th April to 15th May.

Several were on Upper Rivington Reservoir or in adjacent fields during April. A pair at Upper Rivington Reservoir was noted with 5 young in June.



Greater Canada Goose (*Branta canadensis*)

Common resident

Maximum number seen at Cuerden Valley Park was 26 in March. One pair bred at Kem Mill lodge and two other pairs raised young in the park.

A pair at the E-shaped pond at Bretherton had 5 young on 12th June.

Continuing control of this species in West Pennine Moors, particularly at the core site of Belmont Reservoir, has resulted in a strong downward trend in breeding numbers in recent years. Only 11 pairs bred at Belmont Reservoir, the lowest total since 1988 and a notable decline from the 54 nests in 2004. These 11 pairs raised only 3 young due to licensed control measures (36 eggs 'pricked' and 19 adults shot). The moulting flock in June contained just 45 birds – the lowest total since 1981. However, numbers at Belmont Reservoir from August to the year end were the highest since 2000 due to low water levels with the resultant vegetation growth ideal for grazing. Monthly maxima at Belmont Reservoir:-

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
2	16	43	38	26	41	45	85	79	38	41	29

58 eggs from 12 nests were 'pricked' around the reservoirs in the Rivington system on 30th April.

The moulting flock of 120 at Anglezarke reservoir on 30th June was not dissimilar to recent years, but again was well down on the 220 present as recently as 2005.

Shelduck (*Tadorna tadorna*)

Regular breeder in the west. Occasional visitor in the east. Amber List.

Four on Anglezarke reservoir on 26th January were unusual for the time of year. One was at Ulnes Walton on 14th February.

Records in April included 3 at Withnell Fold on 3rd, a pair at Eccleston on 5th, several by the River Douglas at Croston (17th) and 7 at Bretherton on 20th April.

Mandarin Duck (*Aix galericulata*)

Uncommon feral resident and escapee

A pair was noted at Arley nature reserve on 17th April.

5 males and 4 females were at Arley nature reserve on 15th November.

Wigeon (*Anas penelope*)

Scarce passage migrant and winter visitor. Amber List.

Six were on Anglezarke Reservoir on 17th October and a single bird was on Belmont Reservoir on the same day. One was again at Belmont Reservoir on 6th and 7th November.

Gadwall (*Anas strepera*)

Rare visitor. Amber List.

A pair was on Croston Moss on 18th April. A male was on Adlington Reservoir on 23rd April.



Teal (*Anas crecca*)

Fairly common passage migrant and winter visitor. Scarce breeder. Amber List.

Records in February included one at Ulnes Walton brick pits (14th), 10 on Anglezarke Reservoir (25th), 3 on the Syd Brook at Ecclestone (25th) and 25 at Withnell Fold Flash (28th). On 12th March, a pair was noted at Arley Nature Reserve.

22 were on Upper Rivington Reservoir on 2nd April. Pairs at Ecclestone (5th) and at Withnell Fold on 17th April were the latest records of wintering birds.

Pairs lingered at Belmont into late April and a pair bred near a moorland pool. Two pairs bred at Arley Nature Reserve.

In autumn a flock of 25 was noted on Lower Rivington Reservoir on 8th September. A pair was on a pond at Ecclestone on 15th September. 79 were on flooded fields near Belmont on 19th September. 120 were at Belmont Reservoir on 31st October – the highest site count since 1995.

26 were on Upper Rivington Reservoir on 7th November. And 76 were on Belmont Reservoir on 20th November..

A flock of around 30 birds was seen over Ecclestone on 2nd December.

Mallard (*Anas platyrhynchos*)

Common winter visitor and breeding resident. Amber List.

Very large numbers were attracted by artificial feeding to a large pond at Belmont during the hard weather in January and again in December. Sheer numbers of birds kept the pond largely open when all other local waters were frozen. 400 were roughly estimated on 5th January.

A female with 11 chicks was noted at a private site at Ulnes Walton on 5th March.

166 were at Belmont Reservoir on 24th October increasing to 174 by 20th November – a site record count (previous record 170 in February 1963).

The freezing conditions in December concentrated birds into small areas of open water, giving counts of 160 at Cuerden Valley Park (7th), 100 in Astley Park (12th), 200 at Yarrow Valley Park (12th), 61 at Heapey (12th) and 360 at the pond in Belmont on 24th.

Pintail (*Anas acuta*)

Rare visitor. Amber List.

One female was on Belmont Reservoir on 3rd September.

Pochard (*Aythya ferina*)

Increasingly scarce winter visitor and passage migrant. Amber List.

The species has become very much a scarce visitor in recent years with records in February being confined to 5 on Anglezarke Reservoir (11th and 21st).

A single male was on High Bullough Reservoir on 17th October. Two were on Anglezarke Reservoir (14th & 20th November).

Tufted Duck (*Aythya fuligula*)

Fairly common winter visitor and passage migrant. Scarce breeder. Amber List.

Seven were at Lower Healey on 27th February with at least one still there on 17th April.

Two pairs bred unsuccessfully at Belmont Reservoir.

Four returned to Yarrow Valley Park on 19th September.

In October, 6 were on Adlington Reservoir (2nd), 6 were at Lower Healey (24th) and 2 were at Yarrow Valley Park (30th). 18 were on Adlington Reservoir on 29th November.

Nine were at Yarrow Valley Park on 21st December.

Goldeneye (*Bucephala clangula*)

Declining winter visitor and passage migrant

Seven birds on Heapey Lodges on 27th February was the best count for the month. One was still at High Bullough Reservoir on 17th April.

First in Autumn was one on High Bullough Reservoir on 14th November, followed by two at Lower Healey on the 27th.

Two were on Upper Rivington Reservoir on 13th December and two were on Yarrow reservoir on 28th.

Goosander (*Mergus merganser*)

Winter visitor in increasing numbers

Yarrow reservoir was the most popular location for the species in January with 20 there on the 16th. 16 of the species were noted on Common Bank Lodge on the 21st, and 4 were on the River Douglas at Bretherton on the 16th. Three were regular in Cuerden Valley Park.

Birds were again noted on Common Bank Lodge in February, peaking at 25 on the 7th. Seven were noted on the lodge at Withnell Fold on the 28th.

At least four remained on Yarrow Reservoir until 17th April. A pair was on the River Douglas at Bretherton on 18th April.

Breeding in the area was confirmed when a female with seven young was seen at Hoghton on 4th May. A female / juvenile was on Lower Rivington Reservoir on 9th August.

In November, singles were on the River Yarrow at Eccleston (4th) and at Cuerden (23rd). Four were at Yarrow Valley Park on the 14th.

Three wandered around the rivers Lostock, Yarrow and Douglas in the Croston area during December. Six were on Yarrow Reservoir on 28th December.

Red Grouse (*Lagopus lagopus*)

Resident in small numbers on the moors. Red List.

Casual records included singles on Withnell Moor on 6th April and on Anglezarke Moor on 8th April.

RSPB survey work located 20 pairs in 12 km² around Belmont in the breeding season.

250 were driven over guns on Anglezarke Moor on 13th August with 40 shot. 32 were seen during a shoot on Belmont Moor on 18th September.

Red-legged Partridge (*Alectoris rufa*)

Scarce resident boosted by birds released for shooting

8 birds were noted on Croston Finney on 23rd January. Birds were also noted at Whittle on 2nd April and at Eccleston on the same date. Birds were recorded at Croston and Bretherton on 18th April.

Small numbers were seen regularly on Croston Moss throughout the summer months.

Four were in fields near the River Douglas at Bretherton on 28th November.

Releases were responsible for some 50 still present near Belmont in late December.

Grey Partridge (*Perdix perdix*)

Uncommon resident boosted by birds released for shooting. Red List.

Two were seen at Eccleston on 5th January, followed by 5 in the same area on the 11th. Coveys of 15 and 5 were at Belmont on 30th January.

One pair when flushed at Roddlesworth on 14th February flew for 1 km, high over Roddlesworth Plantations.

Gamekeepers estimated only two pairs around Belmont in the Spring – up from one pair in 2009, but well down from the 9 pairs in 2007.

Two were noted at Eccleston on 2nd April and at White Coppice on 24th April.

Three were near Belmont on 30th October.

Pheasant (*Phasianus colchicus*)

Common resident boosted by birds released for shooting

A widespread species in Cuerden Valley Park.

Good numbers were noted at Hoghton Bottoms on 18th April.

Up to 3 males have visited a Belmont garden on an almost daily basis over the last 11 years. However, a female has never been recorded despite the fact that the sexes are roughly equal in number in the adjacent countryside.

Cormorant (*Phalacrocorax carbo*)

Regular visitor

In the early winter period, 21 roosted at Upper Rivington Reservoir on 17th January.

Ten were on Higher Roddlesworth Reservoir on 27th February and 11 were at Belmont Reservoir on 23rd March..

12 were on wires at Great Hanging Bridge, Croston on 11th September.

28 roosted at Upper Rivington Reservoir on 7th November, but disappeared from the area with the arrival of freezing weather later in the month.

Bittern (*Botaurus stellaris*)

Rare winter visitor. Red List.

One was seen flying towards Yarrow Valley Park on 15th February, but could not be re-located despite a search.

Little Egret (*Egretta garzetta*)

Rare but increasing visitor

One was seen flying west over the M65 at Brindle on 3rd January.



Another was noted flying north over Lower Rivington Reservoir on 22nd December.

Grey Heron (*Ardea cinerea*)

Common visitor and scarce breeder

The Rivington heronry continues to increase with 10 occupied nests in 2010.

Three adult and four juveniles were at Upper Rivington Reservoir on 14th July.

A bird at Yarrow Valley Park entertained the public on a regular basis in November by demonstrating its fish catching expertise at the fish pass on the River Yarrow.

Despite the freezing conditions, birds were recorded in December at Eccleston, Euxton, White Coppice and Yarrow Valley Park.

Little Grebe (*Tachybaptus ruficollis*)

Uncommon breeding bird

Only a single record from Cuerden Valley Park, where there was no evidence of breeding.

A pair had returned to Astley Park lake by 12th March and two pairs were noted at a site at Whittle-le-Woods by 24th March. A pair on Top Lodge at Yarrow Valley Park appeared to be making a breeding attempt, but then disappeared. In contrast the pair in Astley Park had three chicks by 20th May.

One of the pairs at Whittle had four newly hatched chicks on 3rd July. The other pair had a single chick on 5th August. The pair in Astley Park hatched a second brood of three around 25th August.

A pair also bred at Arley nature reserve.

Great Crested Grebe (*Podiceps cristatus*)

Common breeding bird, less common in winter

Eight were on Lower Rivington Reservoir on 6th March.

For the third year in succession, the pair at Yarrow Valley Park failed to breed despite several attempts, with the usual suspects – mink and terrapin – being cited as the main culprits for the failure. A pair at Belmont Reservoir was also unsuccessful due to fluctuating water levels.

A pair at the E-shaped pond at Bretherton, however, was noted with two young on 12th June. A pair at Heapey Lodges was noted with three young on 8th August. A juvenile was on the canal spur at Whittle from 12th August.

A pair was at Cuerden Valley Park from 27th January to 23rd November, but again failed to breed.

Red Kite (*Milvus milvus*)

Rare passage migrant / visitor from reintroduction schemes.

A farmer reported that that one had wintered on Mawdesley Moss until at least 10th May. Reported sightings included one over Eccleston on 13th and 22nd March. Possibly the same bird was over Cuerden Valley Park on 6th April, and Bretherton on 16th May. Records were also received from Mawdesley on 6th June and Eccleston on 21st June.

Marsh Harrier (*Circus aeruginosus*)

Scarce passage migrant. Amber List.

A female was at Belmont Reservoir on 2nd September.

Hen Harrier (*Circus cyaneus*)

Scarce passage migrant. Occasionally lingers in winter. Red List.

A male was seen infrequently around Belmont throughout January and February. A male was also seen over Bretherton Eyes in April.

A ring-tail was over Winter Hill on 16th September, and another was on Mawdesley Moss on 25th November. Both a male and a female / immature were around Belmont in mid-November.

Sparrowhawk (*Accipiter nisus*)

Increasingly common resident

Sparrowhawk records in March usually relate to birds causing mayhem among small birds, including one taking a House Sparrow at Great Knowley (5th), another causing widespread panic in Duxbury Woods (13th) and one in a garden at Euxton (29th). Another was followed along Back Lane, Eccleston by a member in his van as it skimmed along a hedgerow searching for prey (4th).

In April, a pair was displaying over Burgh Wood on the 10th.

A pair bred successfully in Cuerden Valley Park.

Birds were recorded regularly in July in the Eccleston area.

In September, birds were again seen regularly in Eccleston, and at White Coppice (5th), Buckshaw (6th) and Whittle (18th).

One was seen with prey in Bradley Lane, Eccleston on 11th November, and another was seen eating a Blackbird in a Chorley garden on 28th December.

Rough-legged Buzzard (*Buteo lagopus*)

Rare vagrant

One was seen flying from the direction of Belmont on 25th October, before dropping down on the Lancs side of Winter Hill.

Buzzard (*Buteo buteo*)

Fairly common resident

Buzzards were seen at many locations during March, including 5 at Eccleston (5th), one at Yarrow Valley Park (4th), 3 at Whittle 94th), singles at Withnell Fold (7th), Coppull (10th), Duxbury (13th) and 4 over Yarrow Valley Way (27th). Three were seen at Hoghton Bottoms on 17th April.

A pair was noted at a nest site at Ulmes Walton on 18th April. A pair bred at Croston in private woodland. Two pairs bred in the Belmont area, successfully fledging a total of 4 young. One pair bred at Roddlesworth.

Nine birds together made for an impressive sight as they were seen riding the thermals over Euxton on 22nd May.

In July, an adult and juvenile were noted at Eccleston, and other sightings came from Healey Nab, Mawdesley and Withnell Fold.

Multiple sightings in August included 2 at White Coppice (1st), 4 at Eccleston (8th), 2 at Yarrow Valley Park (8th), 3 at Croston Moss (14th), 4 at White Coppice (22nd), 12 at Belmont (20th) and 10 at Eccleston (25th).

Two adult and two juveniles were seen over Eccleston on 1st September, and 8 birds were seen together over the village on the 8th. Two were disturbed by a farmer on a quad bike at Withnell Fold on 11th September.

Nine birds were seen circling together over Cuerden Valley Park in October.

Osprey (*Pandion haliaetus*)

Regular passage migrant

Birds passing through in Spring included individuals over Arley Nature reserve (10th April), Eccleston (12th April), Charnock Richard (18th April), White Coppice (24th April) and what may have been the same bird fishing the River Darwen at Hoghton Bottoms on 24th and 25th April..



Return passage was noted with a bird at Upper Rivington Reservoir on 2nd August, followed by one at Belmont reservoir on 24th August, then one over Eccleston on 7th September and one high over Clayton on 9th September. Another was at Upper Rivington Reservoir on 15th October.

Kestrel (*Falco tinnunculus*)

Fairly common resident. Amber List.



Although generally regarded as being in decline, the species is still well distributed throughout the area. By way of illustration, birds recorded in March included 2 at Eccleston (3rd), 2 at Heskin (4th), one along Yarrow Valley Way (13th) and 2 at Bretherton (15th). Records in April came from Hoghton Bottoms, Ulmes Walton, Withnell Moor and White Coppice.

July records included birds at Anglezarke, Eccleston, Heath Charnock, Mawdesley, White Coppice, Whittle and Withnell Fold. These included family parties of three birds at Eccleston (24th), White Coppice (25th) and Withnell Fold (15th). A pair also bred in Cuerden Valley Park.

A family party of three birds was on Croston Moss on 14th August.

Birds were well recorded in September with 2 at White Coppice (2nd), singles at Lower Burgh Meadow (4th) and Coppull (5th), 3 at Eccleston (9th), and singles at Withnell Fold (11th), Wheelton Plantation (12th), Bretherton (18th) and Healey Nab (26th).

Merlin (*Falco columbarius*)

Scarce resident and passage migrant. Amber List.

A pair was on territory in the east of the recording area.

A male was on Croston Moss on 16th October, one was in Cuerden Valley Park on 20th November and one was in the Mawdesley area on 25th November.

Hobby (*Falco subbuteo*)

Rare summer visitor

One was noted at White Coppice on 26th April. In May birds were noted at Eccleston on the 9th and over Stronstrey Bank on Anglezarke Moor on the 31st. One was again noted at Eccleston on 8th June.

Birds were recorded at both Eccleston and Mawdesley on 16th July, and at Cuerden Valley Park on 7th August and again at Eccleston on 9th August. One was found dead at Charnock Richard on 7th August, believed to have been the victim of a road traffic accident.

One was near Belmont between 2nd and 5th September.

Peregrine (*Falco peregrinus*)

Scarce resident and winter visitor. Has bred

One was seen regularly around St George's church and the former mill chimney at Morrison's supermarket in the centre of Chorley in January, being eventually joined by a second bird in early February. The pair was then resident throughout March and into April, but disappeared during the breeding season. One was seen again, however, on Morrison's chimney on 4th August.

At least three pairs bred in the area, but at one site the four young are believed to have been stolen, and at another the three fledglings were shot dead. Both crimes were notified to the police.

Prey items noted near Belmont included Mediterranean Gull and Golden Plover along with the more expected Black-headed Gull, Woodpigeon Feral Pigeon and Lapwing.

August sightings included birds at White Coppice (1st and 22nd) and at Eccleston (31st). In September, birds were at Eccleston (5th) and Croston (14th). The town centre pair was seen regularly throughout the month either at St George's church or on Morrison's chimney, and from then on to the end of the year. Other sightings in October included birds on Withnell Moor and at Whittle.

Birds were seen in December at Whittle (9th) and on Healey Nab (10th).

Water Rail (*Rallus aquaticus*)

Scarce winter visitor and passage migrant

One was at Rivington Water Treatment Works on 16th February.

One was on the River Yarrow at Croston on 7th October. Others were seen at Cuerden Valley Park on 7th and 19th December.

Moorhen (*Gallinula chloropus*)

Common resident

One was present in a Belmont village garden from 6th to 10th January in hard weather.

Breeds on all available stretches of water in Cuerden Valley Park. Only 6 pairs bred at Belmont Reservoir due to the low water levels. Two or three pairs bred in both Astley Park and Yarrow Valley Park.

A pair with three chicks was noted at Eccleston on 7th September, and another late brood was at Belmont Reservoir on 4th September.

Six were taken by a female Sparrowhawk at a large pond at Belmont during the hard weather in late December – the frozen pond preventing the Moorhens from using their usual diving method of escape.

Coot (*Fulica atra*)

Common resident

A pair in Astley Park had two young by 20th May. A pair at the E-shaped Pond at Bretherton had two young by 12th June. Two pairs bred in Cuerden Valley Park.

A pair at Whittle was noted to be incubating four eggs on 3rd July. Two pairs in Astley Park had 4 and 2 young respectively on 5th August. Three or four pairs bred in Yarrow Valley Park.

Oystercatcher (*Haematopus ostralegus*)

Increasing passage migrant and summer visitor. Scarce breeder.

The first returning birds were 2 at Belmont Reservoir on 16th February, increasing to 17 on 28th February. Two were back at Anglezarke Reservoir on 21st February. In March, 2 were on one of the mothballed development sites at Buckshaw Village (7th), 2 were at Alance Bridge, Rivington (12th) and 4 were at Anglezarke Reservoir (14th).

A pair had returned to Withnell Fold by 5th April. Birds were noted at Ulnes Walton on 18th April. Six pairs bred at Belmont Reservoir with three pairs fledging 6 young. Juveniles were noted at Anglezarke Reservoir in late June.

An adult and juvenile were noted at Eccleston on 22nd July. Four were at Upper Rivington Reservoir on 28th July, and three were at Lower Rivington Reservoir on 5th August. The last at Belmont were 4 on 7th August.

Little Ringed Plover (*Charadrius dubius*)

Uncommon summer visitor

First returning birds were 2 at Buckshaw Village on 24th March. Pairs were also recorded at Anglezarke reservoir on 9th April and on a building site at Pilling Lane, Chorley on 10th April. First back at Belmont was a single on 12th April.

Five pairs bred at Belmont Reservoir with 3 broods seen – the best year at the site since 2000.

Two pairs were noted on Anglezarke Reservoir with juveniles seen in late June.

One was on Upper Rivington Reservoir on 14th July with the last two at Belmont on 21st July.

Golden Plover (*Pluvialis apricaria*)

Uncommon passage migrant and winter visitor. Has bred

A record year around Belmont with 8 pairs located on territory. One was predated by a Peregrine above Belmont on 12th June.

Lapwing (*Vanellus vanellus*)

Common resident and winter visitor

In January, flocks of 70 at Buckshaw, 24 on Croston Moss and 24 in Eyes Lane, Bretherton were recorded on the 3rd. At Eccleston on the 5th separate flocks of 30 and 100 were seen.



Several good sized flocks were noted in February, including 80 at Ulnes Walton (8th), 120 on Croston Moss (14th), 30 at Buckshaw (18th) and 80 at Withnell Fold (28th).

Flocks in March included 43 at Withnell Fold (7th), 50+ at Belmont Reservoir, 50 at Coppull (11th) and 23 on Gale Moss (17th).

By 2nd April, at least four pairs were nesting in the Eccleston area. On the 5th, 12 were on territory at Withnell Fold Flash, and by 1st May four pairs at the site had at least 13 chicks between them. Good numbers of juveniles were noted in a post-breeding flock of around 60 birds near Croston Reed Bed on 22nd May.

21 pairs bred at Belmont Reservoir with at least 7 broods noted later. RSPB survey work located 12 moorland pairs around Belmont in the breeding season, and in mid-May 11 pairs were on an area of burnt moorland above Belmont, less than a month after the fire.

In June, pairs with young were noted at Mawdesley (6th), Heskin (13th), White Coppice (27th) and Rivington (28th).

A post-breeding flock of 24 birds was at Eccleston on 5th July, and one of 160 birds was at Withnell Fold Flash on 8th August. A flock of 80+ was at Belmont Reservoir on 18th August. A flock of around 150 was still at Withnell Fold Flash on 11th September, but had reduced to 50 by 17th October. A flock of 40 was on Croston Moss on 16th October.

November sightings included a flock of 65 at Belmont Reservoir (4th), 50 in fields off Lock Lane, Bretherton on 28th November. December records included 20 at Eccleston (6th), 12 at Whittle (8th), 30 at Eccleston (10th), 3 at Hic Bibi (11th) and 100+ on Croston Moss (12th).

Dunlin (*Calidris alpina*)

Scarce breeder and passage migrant

Three flew north over Horrobin embankment at Rivington on 9th January.

One was displaying at Belmont Reservoir in late May, and two were on territory at a regular breeding site above Belmont.

Jack Snipe (*Lymnocryptes minimus*)

Rare winter visitor

Singles were recorded at Belmont on 19th and 27th January and again on 4th March. Two were there on 23rd January and 24th February. One was flushed with Common Snipe at Buckshaw on 7th March. One was still at Belmont on the late date of 17th April.

One returned early to Belmont on 24th September. Two were noted at Eccleston on 23rd October. Singles were recorded at Eccleston on 6th and 12th November. In December, birds were noted at Kem Mill, Whittle (8th) and Withnell (19th).

Snipe (*Gallinago gallinago*)

Fairly common passage / winter visitor; scarce breeder

January sightings included 10 at Eccleston on the 5th, a singleton at the Street, Rivington on the 10th and 2 on Croston Moss also on the 10th.

Several were flushed at Buckshaw on 7th March.

A good breeding population is still present around Belmont, with 7 'pairs' on territory around the reservoir, with a minimum of a further 14 'drummers' recorded on in-by fields elsewhere in the Belmont area, plus another 6 'pairs' recorded on surrounding moorland during survey work by the RSPB.

One was at Withnell Fold Flash on 31st July. Four were at Eccleston on 27th August, followed by counts in the same area of 7 on 10th September, 10 on 19th and 12 on the 25th.

October counts in the Eccleston area included 3 on the 2nd, 21 on the 16th, 6 on the 21st and 17 on the 31st. Other October sightings included singles at Heskin (3rd) and Yarrow Valley Park (18th), 3 at Croston Moss (10th), 20+ at Belmont Reservoir (14th) and 3 at Buckshaw (15th). 40+ were on fields at Belmont (30th).

November sightings included 28 at Eccleston (3rd), 20+ Belmont (6th & 13th), 6 in Yarrow Valley Park (14th) and a single on the River Douglas at Red Bridge (28th).

Snipe were then recorded in December at Eccleston on several dates including 5 on the 1st, at Whittle (6th), 2 on Croston Moss (12th) and 5 at Coppull (21st)

Woodcock (*Scolopax rusticola*)

Fairly common resident and winter visitor

Records in January included 2 at Eccleston on the 5th, 2 at the Street, Rivington on the 10th, one at Cuerden Valley Park (24th) and 12 flushed by 'pheasant beaters' at Belmont (30th)..

A minimum of 4 'roding' males were recorded around Belmont with at least two in the White Coppice / Anglezarke area and two or three at Roddlesworth. At least one pair bred in Duxbury Woods.

First presumed migrant back at Belmont was on 23rd September. In October, birds were seen at Eccleston (23rd) at Mawdesley (24th) and Belmont (30th), where at least 8 were flushed by pheasant beaters. November sightings included birds at Yarrow Valley Park (12th), Cuerden Valley Park (15th) and Eccleston (27th). Numbers at Belmont reduced noticeably after the onset of hard weather in December. This coincided with an increase in records at lower levels in December with birds noted at Eccleston (3rd & 4th), Heskin (5th), 4 at Hic Bibi (11th) and singles at Heath Charnock (26th), Astley Park and Yarrow Valley Park (27th).

Black-tailed Godwit (*Limosa limosa*)

Rare passage migrant and summer visitor

One was on Upper Rivington reservoir on 27th July.

Whimbrel (*Numenius phaeopus*)

Regular passage migrant

The annual Spring passage of Whimbrel was well noted. The first was over Rivington Moor on 12th April, followed by 43 at Ulles Walton (18th), one at Eccleston on 19th April, 2 at Belmont Reservoir (21st), 12 at Heskin (25th), 24 at Withnell Fold (25th), 20 near Croston (27th) and 60 at Eccleston (28th). 41 were noted at Eccleston on 3rd May, reducing to 24 on the next day. Last record was one at Belmont Reservoir on 16th May.

Curlew (*Numenius arquata*)

Fairly common passage migrant and summer visitor

First back at Belmont was a single on 24th February with three there on 28th. Sixteen had returned to Withnell Fold by 28th February, and increased to 32 by 7th March, reducing to 7 on 5th April as they dispersed to their breeding territories in the surrounding farmland. A flock of 50 birds was at Eccleston on 23rd March, and 30 were there on 2nd April. Birds were also seen along Jolly Tar Lane at Coppull on 11th March. March roost counts at Belmont Reservoir were as follows:-

- 8 (1st)
- 32 (7th)
- 49 (9th)
- 91 (12th)
- 105 (15th)
- 82 (17th)
- 66 (21st)

RSPB survey work located 22 pairs in 12 km² around Belmont during the breeding season. Two pairs with 5 young were at Belmont Reservoir on 12th June. 12 (presumed failed or non-breeders) roosted at the site on 4th May with 54 there on 24th June.

Five were seen circling high over White Coppice, calling repeatedly, on 1st August, possibly preparing to leave the moors for the coast. The last at Belmont was on 7th August, although one flew west on 7th September.

Six were on fields near Eccleston on 29th November and again on 3rd December, followed by 33 on the 13th. A single bird was on the mosslands on 2nd December.

Common Sandpiper (*Actitis hypoleucos*)

Fairly common passage migrant and summer visitor; has wintered.



First returning bird in Spring were two very early birds at Ward's Reservoir on 24th March. Then there was one along the Leeds Liverpool canal at Whittle on 17th April. 15 were in the Belmont area on 30th April. A pair was observed in a courtship display at Lower Rivington Reservoir on 18th May.

One pair bred at Ward's Reservoir with one young seen, and only three pairs bred at Belmont Reservoir (probably due to low water levels) with only one brood seen.

One on return passage was at Yarrow Valley Park on 17th July. Birds were also noted at both Upper and Lower Rivington Reservoirs on 19th July. The last (2) at Belmont Reservoir were seen on 5th September and one was also on Lower Rivington Reservoir on 9th September.

Greenshank (*Tringa nebularia*)

Scarce passage migrant

One was at Belmont Reservoir on 14th September.



Redshank (*Tringa totanus*)

Scarce passage migrant and summer visitor

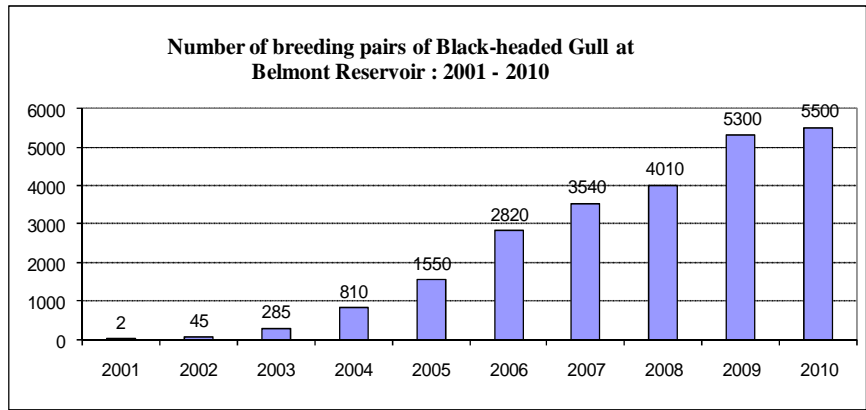
First back at Belmont Reservoir was on 19th March. One was at Withnell Fold Flash on 5th April, but the dry Spring meant that once again it was unlikely that there would be a breeding attempt.

Only two pairs bred around Belmont Reservoir (probably due to low water levels) with a further two pairs on in-by fields elsewhere in the Belmont area.. The last at Belmont was a single bird on 17th July.

Black-headed Gull (*Larus ridibundus*)

Present in good numbers throughout the year. Now breeds in large numbers

200 were at Withnell Fold Flash on 7th March, and 150 were in fields off Jolly Tar Lane, Coppull on 11th March. 6000 were in the Lower Rivington gull roost on 6th March.



Despite Belmont Reservoir being largely drained for engineering works, the first birds returned to the gullery there on 6th february, with 2000 present on 6th March, 8000 on 19th March, increasing to over 12,000 on 4th April.

Initial counts indicated some 6000 breeding pairs, but due to its accessible position, the colony was subjected to heavy Fox predation/disturbance in late April which deeply unsettled the gullery resulting in large numbers of incubating birds deserting. Following subsequent Fox control coupled with the erection of an electric fence in early May, the colony re-settled such that when the gullery was censused over the 15 & 16th May, some 5500 breeding pairs were estimated. The Belmont colony is the largest inland Black-headed Gull colony in Britain (per M Parsons – JNCC seabird colony team).

In the end, productivity was yet again good with an estimated 4000 juveniles fledging. The first young were seen on 15th May, the first fledged juveniles seen on 12th June with most adults/juveniles having vacated the colony by late-July.

Up to 40 birds were regularly on Cuerden Valley Park lake in the winter months, when in excess of 100 birds also often spend the day at Yarrow Valley Park.

Mediterranean Gull (*Larus melanocephalus*)

Rare visitor now also breeding

2009: The Belmont colony appears to be the largest inland Mediterranean Gull colony in Britain & Ireland (per M Parsons – JNCC seabird colony team).

2010: The first two birds were back in the Black-headed Gull colony at Belmont Reservoir on 5th March rising to 9 on 21st March despite the reservoir being largely drained for engineering works.



At least 11 pairs were on territory on 24th April with up to 8 birds incubating. However the gullery was subjected to a period of heavy Fox disturbance/predation in late April resulting in the majority of Mediterranean Gulls deserting the site. Following Fox control & the erection of an electric fence in early May, the Black-headed Gulls largely re-settled, but not the Mediterranean Gulls. Only 4 pairs were subsequently confirmed as breeding although a further 3 pairs prospected in late May.

A decision was made not to further disturb the colony, so no Mediterranean Gull nests were monitored or young ringed in 2010, although it is known that one pair fledged two juveniles in early July.

An adult was taken by a Peregrine near the colony on 24/4/10.

Away from Belmont, a first winter bird was in fields off Jolly Tar Lane, Coppull on 11th March. Birds were seen regularly in the gull roost on Lower Rivington Reservoir including 3 adults and a first winter on 22nd March.

Common Gull (*Larus canus*)

Common winter visitor

Two or three birds were seen regularly in Cuerden Valley Park during the winter months.

An exceptional count of around 1000 were in the gull roost at Lower Rivington Reservoir on 19th February, reducing to 300 on 6th March and 80 on 22nd March.

Lesser Black-Backed Gull (*Larus fuscus*)

Common in most months; has bred

35 were in the gull roost at Lower Rivington Reservoir on 6th March.

Two nests were located in the gully at Belmont Reservoir in June. One nest was possibly successful as a large juvenile with an adult in attendance was present on 1st August.

A flock of around 200 birds were at a small quarry at Whittle on 24th June, presumably attracted by a hatch of insects.

Herring Gull (*Larus argentatus*)

Common winter visitor and on passage

120 flew west over Belmont on 7th February. 15 were in the gull roost at Lower Rivington Reservoir on 22nd March.

Great Black-backed Gull (*Larus marinus*)

Scarce winter visitor

A single bird was in the Lower Rivington gull roost on 19th February in what seems to have been a poor year for the species in the area.

Gull Roost (*Laridae spp.*)

Numbers in the roost on Lower Rivington Reservoir during the winter months varied between 6000 and 7000 birds, of which 80% were usually Black-headed.

Black Tern (*Chlidonias niger*)

Rare passage migrant

A juvenile was at Adlington Reservoir on 6th October.

Common Tern (*Sterna hirundo*)

Scarce passage migrant; uncommon breeding bird

First returning bird was one at Eccleston on 30th April. The first back at Yarow Valley Park was on May 1st, and by the 4th, 3 birds were present with one of them eventually being chased off by what was presumably last year's breeding pair, which took up residence once again. Three chicks hatched by 13th June, and were being encouraged to fly by their parents on 4th July. All three chicks were ringed.

Two adult and at least two juvenile birds were present on Upper and Lower Rivington Reservoir throughout August – possibly the family from Yarrow Valley Park.

Feral Pigeon (*Columba livia*)

Common resident

Still large numbers around the town centre despite the presence of marauding Peregrines.

Stock Dove (*Columba oenas*)

Uncommon breeding bird; Amber List.

14 were at Belmont Reservoir on 7th and 14th March.

Six were noted on Croston Moss on 9th September and two or three were at Withnell Fold on 11th September.

Woodpigeon (*Columba palumbus*)

Abundant resident and passage migrant

Very common resident throughout Cuerden Valley Park.

A flock of 500 was at Withnell Fold Flash on 31st July, and at least 200 were still there on 11th September.

Over 1,000 birds were on Mawdesley Moss on 2nd December.

Collared Dove (*Streptopelia decaocto*)

Common resident

A pair was seen mating at Whittle-le Woods on 14th January.

One pair bred in thick ivy climbing vertically up the Primary School wall in Belmont.

Cuckoo (*Cuculus canorus*)

Uncommon summer visitor and passage migrant; Red List

The first back was one at White Coppice on the relatively late date of 28th April. They were then disappointingly elusive but were nevertheless recorded between Anglezarke and Brinscall on several dates in May. Three males were recorded around Belmont between 11th and 19th May, possibly on passage, as only one 'territorial' calling male was recorded thereafter. One other sighting was recorded from Cuerden Valley Park on 26th May.

In June, most sightings came from the Healey Nab / White Coppice area, the last being on the 17th. The only other record was from Hoghton Bottoms on the 3rd.

Barn Owl (*Tyto alba*)

Uncommon resident – increasing; Amber List

Day flying birds in January were noted on Croston Moss (3rd & 10th), Euxton (11th), Clayton (14th) and Belmont, late morning, in hard weather (16th)..

In February, the species was again noted on Croston Moss (14th) and at Eccleston (24th). One was again noted on Croston Moss on 18th April.

A pair bred at Croston raising three young. The regular pair at Ulmes Walton was again successful. 7 pairs bred in the Belmont / Roddleworth area, although success was very low.

In July, birds at Bretherton (20th) and Eccleston (28th) were presumably from breeding pairs.

One was at Mawdesley on 24th October, and another was at Belmont on 12th November. In December, birds were noted at Coppull (10th), Croston (14th) and again in hard weather, mid morning, in Belmont Village (19th).

Little Owl (*Athene noctua*)

Fairly common resident

One was seen at Eccleston on 10th January. Another was by the roadside between Croston and Mawdesley on the 8th March. A pair was noted at Hoghton Bottoms on 28th March.

In April, birds were recorded at (7th), Heapey (13th), White Coppice and Hoghton Bottoms (17th).

One was again recorded at White on 29th May.

A pair near Croston had at least young on 12th June, and another young was noted at Euxton on the Three pairs were noted at sites in Belmont area in the breeding



Croston
(17th)

Coppice

one
pair with
20th.
the
season.

Records in July were received from White Coppice (6th), Billinge Wood (13th) and Eccleston (14th). One was at Croston on 2nd September, and another was at Heskin on 15th October. In November, birds were noted near Croston (9th) and at Cuerden (20th). One was seen at Eccleston on 22nd December.

Tawny Owl (*Strix aluco*)

Common resident

A pair at Clayton had young in January but failed to keep them alive.

In February, the species was recorded at Yarrow Valley Park (2nd), and at Clayton and Ulnes Walton (both 25th).

A pair with young was noted at Eccleston on 25th April. At least one pair bred in Cuerden Valley Park, and another at White Coppice.

In July, birds were noted at Billinge Wood (13th) and Eccleston (28th).

As usual, birds were vocal in September with 4 calling together at Eccleston (20th), and singles at Hartwood (2nd) and Clayton (26th). Records in October came from Eccleston (5th), Chorley (14th), Heath Charnock (17th) and Anglezarke (25th).

Two were in favoured roosting sites throughout November. A day-flying bird was seen along Heapey Road, Great Knowley on 14th November. In December, birds were recorded at Eccleston throughout, and in a member's garden at Clayton.

Long-eared Owl (*Asio otus*)

Scarce breeding resident; rare winter visitor

One was noted near Belmont on 13th November. Two were noted at a site near Coppull in early December.

Short-eared Owl (*Asio flammeus*)

Scarce summer visitor

One was seen hunting on Anglezarke Moor on 17th April.

One pair bred near Belmont, fledging 4 young with the possibility of a second pair nearby.

An unseasonal single bird was near Belmont on 24th December. One was hunting fields between Croston and Bretherton on 29th December.

Swift (*Apus apus*)

Common summer visitor and passage migrant; Amber List

First back was surprisingly one at Belmont on 18th April, followed by one over Eccleston on 19th April.

Seven pairs bred in the old school house at St Bedes, Clayton Green. A pair was noted feeding young at Coppull on 24th July.

A flock of 110+ descended from high altitude to feed near Belmont at dusk on 22nd July. The last seen at Belmont was on 1st August.

A flock of 15 was noted over Eccleston on 8th August with a single over Chorley on the 26th. A late, presumably passage bird, was noted over Eccleston on 11th September.

Kingfisher (*Alcedo atthis*)

Fairly common resident; Amber List

Birds were seen on Croston Moss and at Yarrow Valley Park on 17th January.

Reassuringly after the hard winter, birds were recorded in February at Common Bank Lodge (7th) and on Croston Moss and at Yarrow Valley Park (both 14th), although fewer records than usual were received from Cuerden Valley Park.

One was noted at Arley Nature Reserve on 17th April.

Up to three were seen regularly at seven sites in the Belmont area throughout the year.

One was seen on Syd Brook at Eccleston on 23rd October.

Green Woodpecker (*Picus viridis*)

Uncommon resident; Amber List

In February, birds were recorded at 2 or 3 locations in Cuerden Valley Park (27th and 28th). One was seen at Abbey Village on 6th March.

One pair was on territory near Belmont during the breeding season and at least one other was in the White Coppice area..

Birds were again noted in Cuerden Valley Park in November.

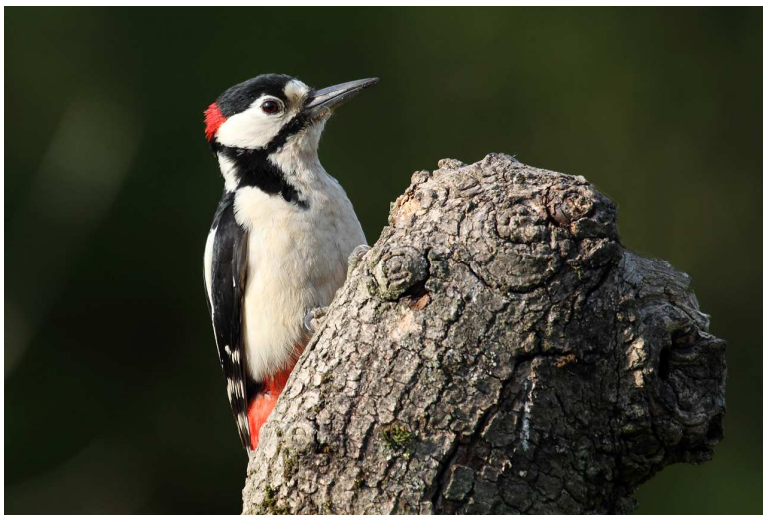
Great Spotted Woodpecker (*Dendrocopus major*)

Common resident

First drumming in Cuerden Valley Park was noted on 9th January. Four territories were noted at Roddlesworth on 6th March. A pair was in a Croston garden on the same date.

Birds were noted at Hoghton Bottoms and at Anglezarke on 17th April.

A pair with young was noted at Heskin on 13th June. A juvenile was noted at Eccleston on 12th July. Four pairs bred in Cuerden Valley Park.



Lesser Spotted Woodpecker (*Dendrocopus minor*)

Uncommon resident; Red List

Two records this year after a blank year last year:-

- A pair was noted at Dean Wood, Rivington on 7th April.
- One was reported in a tit flock in Grey Heights Wood, Anglezarke on 26th November.

Great Grey Shrike (*Lanius excubitor*)

Rare winter visitor and passage migrant

One was seen near Kay's farm on the west side of Anglezarke Reservoir on 1st November. Unfortunately it wasn't seen again despite several searches of the area so presumably it was just passing through.

Magpie (*Pica pica*)

Common resident

Common breeding bird in Cuerden Valley Park.

Jay (*Garrulus glandarius*)

Common resident

Common breeding bird throughout Cuerden Valley Park.

6 'migrants' flew high south over Belmont on 4th October.

Jackdaw (*Corvus monedula*)

Common resident; increasing

120 birds were around nesting sites at Withnell quarry on 27th March, with similarly high numbers at a Whittle Quarry.

A flock of 200 was on Croston Moss on 7th November.

300 were in the Upper Rivington roost on 7th November. 800 were counted going to roost in Cuerden Valley Park in December.

Rook (*Corvus frugilegus*)

Common resident

Details of the annual rookery census are tabulated at the end of this report.

200 were in the Upper Rivington roost on 7th November.

Carrion Crow (*Corvus corone*)

Common resident

150 were in the Roddlesworth plantations roost on 14th February.

Gamekeepers at Belmont reported shooting / trapping 174 during the year. The species here is noticeably declining in the breeding season – perhaps as a result of the culling – with trees and cloughs which once always held nesting pairs now perennially vacant. It is, however, as numerous as ever in the winter.

150 were in the Upper Rivington roost on 7th November.

Raven (*Corvus corax*)

Scarce but increasing resident

A pair returned to the nest site at St George's Church in Chorley in February, which resulted in frequent aerial confrontations with the Peregrines, and eventually they disappeared from the site without making a breeding attempt.

Birds were also noted at Cuerden Valley Park and at Whittle-le-Woods on 27th February.

A dead bird was noted at a site at Whittle on 3rd April, but happily a pair was present at the same site on the following day.

Pairs bred in the Belmont, Hoghton and Whittle areas, and were seen regularly over Anglezarke Moor.

17 were feeding on two dead sheep at Belmont Reservoir on 3rd November

Goldcrest (*Regulus regulus*)

Scarce breeding bird. Common passage migrant and winter visitor in variable numbers

The only records in Cuerden Valley Park were singles in March and October.

One was singing in Yarrow Valley Park on 18th April.

Despite the hard weather in December, birds were recorded at Euxton(5th), Whittle (8th), Chorley (12th), Yarrow Valley Park (12th), Adlington (15th), Eccleston (17th) and Chorley (28th).



Blue Tit (*Cyanistes caeruleus*)

Abundant resident

Seems to have survived the harsh winter well, and also had a second successive good breeding season.

Great Tit (*Parus major*)

Very common resident

As with Blue Tit, appears to have had another good breeding season.

Coal Tit (*Periparus ater*)

Common resident and winter visitor

Two were feeding on Heath Rush seed heads protruding through 18" of snow at Belmont on 9th January.

At least one pair was recorded breeding in Cuerden Valley Park.

Willow Tit (*Poecile montana*)

Scarce resident



One was at Lower Healey on 27th February, and again on 29th May. Two or three were in the same area on 18th September.

Birds were noted at Arley Nature Reserve and at Hic Bibi on 17th April. A pair bred at Arley Nature Reserve, fledging 6 young.

December records included birds at Hic Bibi (11th) and Great Knowley (28th).

Skylark (*Alauda arvensis*)

Common resident and summer visitor

One was in sub-song at Belmont on 2nd January in hard weather. A flock of over 100 birds was on Croston Moss on 17th January, and at least 50 were at the same site on 14th February.

First in full song at Belmont was on 7th March. One or two present in the breeding season by the quarry in Cuerden Valley Park. The mosslands and moors again held good numbers of singing birds during the breeding season. It will be interesting to see how long the population at Buckshaw survives in view of all the development work.

A flock of 20 was at Belmont on 21st August.

A flock of 100 was on Croston Moss on 7th November, and at least 50 were still there on 12th December.

Sand Martin (*Riparia riparia*)

Fairly common summer visitor and passage migrant; Amber List

First record was one at Lower Rivington Reservoir on 23rd March, followed by one at Hoghton Bottoms on 27th March.

Up to 6 birds were seen feeding over the lake in Cuerden Valley Park between 17th April and the end of June, possibly from small colonies in local quarries.

One was at Withnell on 3rd August. Last was a single over Belmont on 22nd September.

Swallow (*Hirundo rustica*)

Common summer visitor and passage migrant; Amber List

First back was one at Whittle and 4 at Clayton, both on the 28th March. First back at Belmont was on 1st April. The first recorded in Cuerden Valley Park was on 3rd April.

Breeding occurred at two locations in Cuerden Valley Park. All farms in the Brindle area each held several breeding pairs.

The start of Autumn migration was noted on 15th August when large numbers were lined up on telephone lines around the area including 67 at Euxton. At the same time a pair was still feeding young in a nest at the Bowling Green Inn at Charnock Richard. On 21st and 22nd August, large numbers were hawking low over Withnell Moor, presumably on migration. In late August and early September, over 800 roosted at Croston Marsh.

A flock of around 35 birds was at Eccleston on 7th September, 100 plus were at Withnell Fold on 11th September and 60+ were at Belmont on 16th September. Several were feeding over Lower Healey lodges on 18th September. 560 flew south over Belmont in 1½ hours on 22nd September including 112 in 4 minutes.

October records included birds at Heapey and Anglezarke (3rd), Lower Healey (9th), 2 at Eccleston (10th) and finally one at Belmont (16th).

House Martin (*Delichon urbicum*)

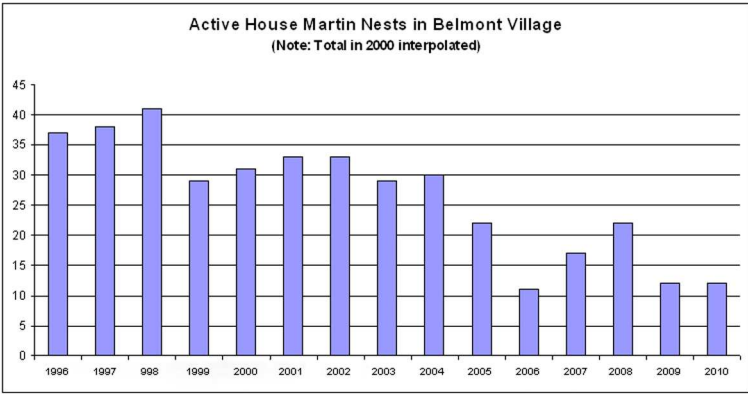
Common summer visitor and passage migrant; Amber List

First back was one at Eccleston on the early date of 7th April. The first back at Belmont in contrast were not until 30th April.

At a site in Chorley only 2 out of 6 nests were occupied this year. Four chicks were noted being fed at one of the nests, but subsequently a dead adult was found below the nest and a week later a chick was also found below the nest.

Breeding occurred at two locations near Cuerden Valley Park.

A full survey of Belmont Village located just 12 active nests, which made it along with 2009 the second worst year on record



A post breeding flock of 30 birds was noted at Eccleston on 8th July. A pair was noted feeding young at Coppull on 24th July.

30+ were over Belmont on 2nd August. A flock of over 200 birds was hawking around in the lea of the quarry at White Coppice on a windy 5th September. 15 were at Eccleston on 7th September, and a few were amongst a large movement of Swallows at Withnell Fold on 11th September. Several were feeding over Lower Healey lodges on 18th September. Last were 10 south over Belmont on 22nd September.

Long-tailed Tit (*Aegithalos caudatus*)

Common resident; increasing

At least two pairs bred in Cuerden Valley Park, where flocks were seen regularly in both winter periods.

A family party of 14 birds was noted at Eccleston on 17th June.

A flock of over 30 was near Belmont on 16th October.

Wood Warbler (*Phylloscopus sibilatrix*)

Scarce summer visitor and passage migrant

The first back was one in song at Roddlesworth on 1st May. Birds were also singing in Heather Lea Woods (7th) and at Black Coppice (16th May).

One was recorded at Rivington on 15th August.

Chiffchaff (*Phylloscopus collybita*)

Common summer visitor and occasional winter visitor

First back was one at Eccleston on 21st March, perhaps a week later than a typical first arrival date. The first at Belmont was not till 1st April.

Six territories were recorded in Cuerden Valley Park.

Singing birds in August were noted at Yarrow Valley Park (27th) and Whittle Quarry (30th), and continued to be recorded at several sites throughout the area during September. Only two records were received in October – one from Belmont on the 2nd and another from Eccleston on the 6th.

Willow Warbler (*Phylloscopus trochilus*)

Common summer visitor

First back was one at Whittle Springs on 7th April. The first in Cuerden Valley Park was on 10th April, when three arrived at Belmont.

Five territories were recorded in Cuerden Valley Park, the same as in 2009.

One was still at Eccleston on 7th September.

Blackcap (*Sylvia atricapilla*)

Summer and winter visitor

A pair was in a Chorley garden on 1st January and a male was in a Whittle garden on the 2nd. A male was in a Chorley garden on 25th February, and was seen regularly until at least 3rd March. A male was seen in the same garden on 1st April. Only it knows if it was the same over-wintering bird or a newly arrived summer visitor.

There appeared to be an arrival of definite summer visitors on 5th April with singing birds at Euxton and Cuerden Valley Park, where three territories were recorded.

Last at Belmont was on 2nd October, but the one at Common Bank on 24th October could well have been a winter visitor.

Definite winter visitors included December garden visitors in Chorley (7th), Eccleston (19th & 21st) and Euxton (27th).

Garden Warbler (*Sylvia borin*)

Uncommon summer visitor and passage migrant

First back was one on Lower Burgh Meadow on 24th April.

The first recorded in Cuerden Valley Park was on 12th May. Two pairs bred in the park.

Lesser Whitethroat (*Sylvia curruca*)

Scarce summer visitor and passage migrant

The first Spring record was at Jack Green, Brindle on 1st May, and birds were also recorded at Eccleston on several dates in May and at Whittle on 24th May.

A pair bred at Hic Bibi Nature reserve.

Whitethroat (*Sylvia communis*)



Common summer visitor

The first back was one singing at Eccleston on 21th April.

Three territories were recorded in Cuerden Valley Park. A male was on territory throughout June and July at Belmont.

One was at Clayton on 7th September and another at Eccleston on 9th September.

Grasshopper Warbler (*Locustella naevia*)

Scarce passage migrant and summer visitor

The first back were birds reeling on Lower Burgh Meadow and at Belmont on 18th April, followed in May by birds at Euxton (1st), Roddlesworth (2nd) and Black Coppice (19th).

A well represented breeder in juncus-beds around Belmont with 17 'reelers' recorded.

One pair bred at Hic Bibi Nature Reserve.

One was still reeling near Great Hill on 24th July, and another was reeling at Belmont on 1st August.

Sedge Warbler (*Acrocephalus schoenobaenus*)

Fairly common summer visitor to the limited suitable habitat

The first back was one in Yarrow Valley Park on 27th April, followed by birds at Withnell Fold (1st May), and at the E-shaped pond, Bretherton (3rd May).

Seven pairs bred at Croston Marsh.

One was at Belmont on 12th July. One was singing from the marshy area at Withnell Fold Flash on 18th July.

One was still at Yarrow Valley Park on 4th September.

Reed Warbler (*Acrocephalus scirpaceus*)

Scarce summer visitor

The first back was in Yarrow Valley Park on 1st May.

Nine pairs bred at Croston Marsh and 11 pairs bred at Ulnes Walton Brick Pits.

Up to three were singing in the reed bed at Yarrow Valley Park in July and early August, and at least one pair is known to have bred.

Waxwing (*Bombycilla garrulous*)

Irregular winter visitor

No record was received for the first winter period.

In Autumn, the largest Waxwing invasion for some years started early in the Chorley area with 6 in Park Road, Adlington on 28th October, increasing to 15 by 31st. The invasion continued in November with 6 at Euxton (6th-8th), 7 in the Collingwood Road area (27th & 28th), up to 60 in Park Street between 9th and 28th, up to 40 at Whittle between 9th and 25th, and 25 at Rivington arboretum on the 19th. Birds were also noted at Croston Moss, Pall Mall and Anglezarke reservoir.

Smaller numbers were recorded in December with up to 20 at Whittle to the 6th, 12 at the junction of Eaves and Harpers Lane between 7th and 12th, 6 in a garden at Euxton (19th), a single in a Belmont garden (21st) and up to 10 in Eccleston between 18th and 29th.



Nuthatch (*Sitta europaea*)

Fairly common resident; increasing

Many pairs bred in the Duxbury Woods, Yarrow Valley Park, Astley Park woodlands. At least two pairs bred in Cuerden Valley Park. Four pairs successfully fledged young in nest boxes in Roddlesworth plantations. Pairs were present at two sites in the Belmont area with visits to gardens becoming more frequent.

The species is now also becoming more common in the west of the recording area with records from Bretherton, Ecclestone and Heskin.

Treecreeper (*Certhia familiaris*)

Fairly common resident in the area's woodlands

At least two pairs bred in Cuerden Valley Park. Pairs were also noted at Lower Healey, Withnell Fold Nature Reserve and Yarrow Valley Park during the breeding season.

Wren (*Troglodytes troglodytes*)

Abundant resident

Fears that the population might have crashed during the hard winter weather were generally dispelled once birds began to sing again in Spring. Good numbers were recorded throughout the recording area.

Four fledged from a nest in an outhouse at Whittle in early July.

Starling (*Sturnus vulgaris*)

Abundant resident and winter visitor

A flock of 200 was in a Belmont garden on 2nd January.

The annual mass fledging took place around 20th May, slightly later than normal.

Breeding took place at two locations in Cuerden Valley Park, where numbers breeding seem to be in steady decline.

A flock of 120 was at Belmont Reservoir on 6th June.

400 were near Belmont on 26th September. A flock of 250 was on Croston Moss on 7th November.

Dipper (*Cinclus cinclus*)

Fairly common resident on the faster flowing rivers of the area

A pair was noted in a courtship display on the River Yarrow at Birkacre as early as the 1st January.

A pair was noted at the beginning of the year in Cuerden Valley Park, but there was no evidence of breeding success. The pair in Yarrow Valley Park bred successfully in an old drain outlet above the river. Two pairs bred at Belmont. A single pair bred at White Coppice and another pair bred at Hoghton Bottoms.

Juveniles were noted on the River Yarrow at Euxton on 10th July and at Yarrow Valley Park on 17th July.

Ring Ouzel (*Turdus torquatus*)

Scarce passage migrant; Red List

First on passage was a male at White Coppice on 27th April. A female was then seen on 2nd and 9th May, also at White Coppice.

Three males were at Belmont on 18th September, and another was there on 14th October.

Sadly, to demonstrate the perils of migration, one was taken by a Sparrowhawk at Belmont Reservoir on 2nd November. Another was found dead near the TV mast on Winter Hill on 3rd October.

Blackbird (*Turdus merula*)

Abundant resident, passage migrant and winter visitor

Up to 17 were seen in a Belmont garden through hard weather in January. Up to 13 were seen regularly in a Clayton garden.

Over 30 roosted in rhododendrons at Belmont on 31st October.

Fieldfare (*Turdus pilaris*)

Winter visitor, often in large numbers

As with Redwing, the species was often seen in gardens during the harsh weather of January. Elsewhere a flock of 40 was noted at Eccleston on the 5th. A flock of 100 was at Belmont on 30th January.

A flock of 30 was on Croston Moss on 14th February. 18 were at Lead Mines Clough on 12th March, 60 were at Belmont on 20th March and 40 were at Eccleston on 21st March. Maximum

count in Cuerden Valley Park in March was 26. 18 were still at Eccleston on the 20th April with the last sighting there on the 23rd.

The first back in Autumn was a single at Belmont on 13th October, followed by 10 at Eccleston on 16th October, 72 at Belmont on 16th October, 100+ at Heapey lodges on 17th and a massive 600 at Eccleston on 23rd. An even larger flock of 800 birds was on the west side of Anglezarke reservoir on 5th November. Smaller flocks were seen at Croston Moss (100 on 7th) and 150 at Eccleston (25th).

December records included 100+ on Croston Moss (2nd), 50 at Hic Bibi (11th) 100 at Euxton (11th) and in a mixed flock of 100+ Fieldfare and Redwing on Croston Moss on 12th.

Song Thrush (*Turdus philomelos*)

Fairly common resident; Red List

As usual, difficult to find in winter, but good numbers around once singing starts in February.

At least two birds bred in Cuerden Valley Park.

Redwing (*Turdus iliacus*)

Winter visitor, often in large numbers.

In the hard weather of January, the species was regularly seen in gardens, usually in ones or twos. Away from gardens the largest flock in January was one of 24 at Lower Healey.

The species was well recorded in February including flocks of 50 at Whittle-le-Woods (5th), 50 at Eccleston (12th) and 100 also at Eccleston (26th).

8 were at Belmont on 8th March. Last record for the first winter period was from Eccleston on 4th April.

The first in Autumn were flocks of 12 and 4 at Belmont on 26th September, then 10 over Clayton on 2nd October, followed by 5 at Eccleston (6th), 7 at Bretherton (11th), 30 at Eccleston (14th), 55 at Belmont (16th) and 30 at Heapey Lodges (17th).

Flocks of 50 at Eccleston (7th) and over 100 at Whittle (9th) were recorded in November. In December, flocks included 30 at Euxton (4th), 23 at Hic Bibi (8th), 100 at Euxton (11th), 20 in Cuerden Valley Park (17th) and 20 at Heath Charnock (26th).

Mistle Thrush (*Turdus viscivorus*)

Common resident; some autumn dispersal

Ten were in a Belmont garden on 21st January.

A party of 10 birds were in fields off Burgh Lane, Chorley, on 11th August, and a party of 6 was in Cuerden Valley Park in September. 25 were at Belmont on 11th September.

Spotted Flycatcher (*Muscicapa striata*)

Scarce summer visitor and passage migrant

First back was one at Anglezarke on 7th May. At least three pairs were noted between White Coppice and Anglezarke on 16th May.

A pair was seen feeding young at White Coppice on 21st June. An adult and juvenile were at Withnell Fold on 18th July. Another pair bred at Woodfold timber yard, Withnell. Two pairs bred near Belmont fledging 3 juveniles.

One was noted at Anglezarke on 15th August. The last at Belmont was on 18th September.

Robin (*Erithacus rubecula*)

Abundant resident

Twelve were caught and ringed in a Clayton garden between 26th November and 26th December.

Black Redstart (*Phoenicurus ochruros*)

Rare visitor; Amber List

A female was in Belmont Village from 23rd to 25th March. Birds were seen at Belmont Reservoir and on Winter Hill on 24th April.

Two, and on several dates three, birds were recorded around the TV mast buildings on Winter Hill between 30th August and 22nd November.

Redstart (*Phoenicurus phoenicurus*)

Fairly common summer visitor in the east of the area; Amber List

First back was one at White Coppice on 10th April. Birds were also recorded at Lead Mines Clough on 17th April, Roddlesworth on 1st May, Belmont 2nd May and again at White Coppice on 3rd May.

A single pair probably bred at Roddlesworth, and another pair was seen feeding young at Rivington.

One was at White Coppice on 8th August.



Whinchat (*Saxicola rubetra*)

Uncommon summer visitor and passage migrant; Amber List

First back was one on Bretherton Eyes on 24th April, followed by 2 at Belmont on 2nd and 3rd May, and by one at Cuerden Valley Park on 5th May. At least two birds were seen at White Coppice between 9th & 11th May, and one was again seen at Cuerden on 12th May.

A male was on territory near Belmont in early June.

Return passage at Belmont included 3 at Belmont on 29th and 30th August, followed by separate males on 4th and 5th September and a juvenile on 25th.

Stonechat (*Saxicola torquata*)

Scarce resident - increasing



Single birds were seen at White Coppice on the 1st January and on Croston Moss on 10th January.

Following the hard winter, numbers were reduced in the White Coppice / Belmont area, but 7 pairs were still located around Belmont, and three juveniles were at White Coppice on 6th July.

A female was on Mawdesley Moss on 2nd December.

Wheatear (*Oenanthe oenanthe*)

Fairly common passage migrant and scarce summer visitor

The first in Spring were two in fields off Eyes Lane, Bretherton on 26th March, again slightly later than usual. Three were the first at Belmont on 1st April with 15 there on 17th. There was a noticeable passage on the weekend of 17th and 18th April with birds also recorded at Anglezarke Reservoir, Eyes Lane Bretherton, White Coppice and Withnell Moor. Two were at Buckshaw on 1st May, three at White Coppice on 11th May and two on Withnell Moor on 13th May. 49 passed through Belmont during May.

At least 11 pairs were on territory around Belmont in the breeding season.

Return passage in August included 2 at Rivington (15th) and 3 on Withnell Moor (29th). 16 passed through Belmont in August, 14 in September and 4 in October. One was one on Rivington Moor on 5th October and the last record was a single at Belmont on 13th October.

Pied Flycatcher (*Ficedula hypoleuca*)

Scarce summer visitor and passage migrant

The first back was one at Anglezarke on 23rd April. Another was seen on passage at Whittle on 26th April.

Three males were back in song at a regular Belmont breeding site on 2nd May, where two pairs later bred successfully. There was no recorded breeding in the Anglezarke / Rivington area this year.

Dunnock (*Prunella modularis*)

Abundant resident

Still very common in gardens.

House Sparrow (*Passer domesticus*)

Abundant resident

Breeding occurred in two locations in Cuerden Valley Park.

Several pairs were noted breeding inside active stables near Belmont, building untidy straw nests above internal beams.

Numbers in gardens in Belmont Village were much reduced (only 10+) in the second winter period, possibly because of the removal of the mass of ivy on the school, where the species formerly roosted.

Tree Sparrow (*Passer montanus*)

Fairly common resident

One was noted by Heapey No.2 lodge on 27th February.

Several were seen at Crosse Hall on 9th March and also at Croston on 26th March.

Birds were recorded at Adlington, Bretherton and Croston on 18th April.

A small flock of a dozen or so birds were noted on Mawdesley Moss on 25th July.

At least 12 were feeding at a farm in Green Lane, Coppull in December.

Grey Wagtail (*Motacilla cinerea*)

Common resident by the rivers and reservoirs of the area

Pairs with young were recorded at Yarrow Valley Park on 16th June and at White Coppice on 27th June. Two pairs bred in Cuerden Valley Park.

A pair raised two broods in the wall of a public house in the town centre of Chorley.

Pied Wagtail (*Motacilla alba*)

Common resident

A pre-roost flock of at least 30 birds was noted at the Carrington shopping centre at Eccleston on 7th January.

Birds were seen regularly in the Kem Mill and Barn areas of Cuerden Valley Park.

There was an increase to 4 or 5 breeding pairs at Belmont Reservoir.

Tree Pipit (*Anthus trivialis*)

Uncommon summer visitor and passage migrant

First back was one at White Coppice on the late date of 24th April. Another was back in song at Roddlesworth on 4th May.

At least one pair bred near Heather Lea Woods.

Meadow Pipit (*Anthus pratensis*)

Common resident and passage migrant; scarcer in winter

Autumn flocks at Belmont Reservoir included 70+ on 1st and 30th August, increasing to 130 on 18th September, less than a third of the number recorded on the same date in 2009.

Chaffinch (*Fringilla coelebs*)

Common resident and winter visitor

Over 30 were in a Belmont garden on 5th January.

There was a noticeable lack of birds in the second winter period, indicating perhaps that there had been significant cold weather movement away from the area.

Brambling (*Fringilla montifringilla*)

Winter visitor in variable numbers

One was a regular visitor to a garden at Clayton between 4th and 9th January. Thre were in a Belmont garden on 5th January.

The only record in February was a single bird by Anglezarke Reservoir on 22nd. Two were in a Belmont garden on 25th March.

The last record for the first winter period was one in a garden at Great Knowley on 9th April.

The first in Autumn were 4 males in a Belmont garden on the early date of 25th September. One was at Cuerden Valley Park on 12th October. A flock of 50 was on Withnell moor in November, and a flock of 25 was at Belmont Reservoir on the 27th.

December records found birds in many gardens including Clayton (2nd), Eccleston (4th), Chorley (4th), Whittle (7th), Euxton (11th & 18th), Belmont (12th) and Great Knowley where a flock of 20 dropped in on the 18th.

The roost count in rhododendrons at Belmont was, however, a shadow of former years, with a maximum of 10 on 31st October.

Greenfinch (*Carduelis chloris*)

Common resident

The effects of trichomonosis continued to be reflected in the low numbers recorded.

Goldfinch (*Carduelis carduelis*)

Common resident

Over 40 roosted in rhododendrons at Belmont on 17th January. A flock of 30 was on Croston Moss on 14th February. A pre-roost flock of 67 was noted at Euxton on 21st February, and 30 were in a Belmont garden on the same date.

A pair with four chicks was noted in a nest at Whittle on 26th July.

Post-breeding flocks in August included 30 at White Coppice (1st), 50 at Eccleston (9th), 30 on Croston Moss (14th), 20 at Heskin (20th), 30 at Brinscall (21st) and 60 at Ulnes Walton (24th).

33 were caught and ringed in a Clayton garden between 26th November and 26th December.

120 roosted in rhododendrons at Belmont on 12th December. Up to 27 were in a Belmont garden during hard weather in late December.

Siskin (*Carduelis spinus*)

Common winter visitor and passage migrant; scarce resident

Flocks in January included one of 30 birds at Whittle-le-Woods on 29th January and a similar number at Ecclestone on 30th January.

Three were in a Belmont garden on 20th February.

One was in a garden at Great Knowley on 10th May, and again on 8th June. A canary yellow male was in Heather Lea Woods on 23rd May, perhaps suggesting local breeding. Two pairs were thought to have bred at Belmont with two broods seen in early June.

Three were caught and ringed in a Clayton garden between 26th November and 26th December.

A flock of 14 was seen in Cuerden Valley Park on 5th November. In December flocks of 30 (6th) and 40 (27th) were recorded in Ecclestone.

Linnet (*Carduelis cannabina*)



Fairly common resident

A flock of 30 birds was noted at Whittle-le-Woods on 31st January.

Birds were noted on territory at Croston, Anglezarke Moor, White Coppice and Whittle in April.

Three pairs held territories at Belmont Reservoir, with a similar number at White Coppice.

Post-breeding flocks in August included 15 at Whittle (8th) and 30 on Croston Moss (14th). 80 were at Belmont Reservoir on 22nd September.

A flock of 20+ was on Croston Moss on 12th December.

Twite (*Carduelis flavirostris*)

Very scarce resident

A party of 3 birds was noted on Rivington Moor on 20th April.

A single pair bred above Belmont at a site previously occupied in the 1980's.

Lesser Redpoll (*Carduelis cabaret*)

Common winter visitor; uncommon resident

Two were noted at a garden feeding station at Great Knowley on 19th January. These then increased to 12 by 16th February.

Birds were recorded in Lever Park and on Anglezarke Moor on 18th April.

A flock of 21 was in a Belmont garden on 28th April, with at least 15 there on 4th May. Two or three pairs bred in the White Coppice area.

Common Crossbill (*Loxia curvirostra*)

Scarce visitor

Flocks of 30 at Lead Mines Clough and 10 at Cuerden Valley Park were noted in July. The latter remained at the park until at least the 8th August. Three were at Belmont on 21st July with a single there on the 25th.

Bullfinch (*Pyrrhula pyrrhula*)

Fairly common resident

Up to 9 were in a Belmont garden in January.

Ten were caught and ringed in a Clayton garden between 26th November and 26th December. A party of 6 was noted near the Barn in Cuerden Valley Park on 6th December.

Lapland Bunting (*Calcarius lapponicus*)

Rare passage migrant

One was on the Lancashire side of Winter Hill from 17th to the end of September, and again on 16th October.

Yellowhammer (*Emberiza citrinella*)

Fairly common resident; declining

A flock of 10 was noted on Croston Moss on 14th February.

Singing birds were noted at several sites along the River Yarrow between Eccleston and Croston, as well as on Croston and Mawdesley Moss. A few were also noted singing on Coppull Moor.

A flock of 10 was on Mawdesley Moss on 25th July. Eight were at Bretherton on 27th October.

A female was a regular visitor to a Belmont garden from 1st December to the year end. It was joined by a male on the 27th. These are only the fourth and fifth birds recorded in the Belmont area since 1996. Maybe they'll make a come-back in the Anglezarke / White Coppice area!

Reed Bunting (*Emberiza schoeniclus*)

Fairly common resident

17 were in a Belmont garden in hard weather on 10th January. 6 pairs bred around Belmont Reservoir – a decline in numbers, possibly due to low water levels.

Territories were also noted at Croston Moss, Croston Marsh, E-shaped Pond, Bretherton, Lower Healey, White Coppice, Withnell Fold and Yarrow Valley Park.

Several were in a mixed bunting flock on Mawdesley Moss on 25th July.

80 were at Belmont Reservoir on 6th November, and up to 26 were in a Belmont garden during hard weather in late December.

Corn Bunting (*Emberiza calandra*)



Scarce resident; confined to the mosslands

A flock of 20 was noted on Croston Moss on 17th January.

A few were in song on Croston Moss on 18th April.

Several were in a mixed bunting flock on Mawdesley Moss on 25th July.

ESCAPES

Black Swan (*Cygnus atratus*)

Three birds appeared at Yarrow Valley Park on 10th March and stayed until 21st March.

Helmeted Guineafowl (*Numida meleagris*)

One was at large near Belmont throughout most of the year.

North American Turkey (*Meleagris gallipavo*)

Small numbers of birds (less than 10) are still present and breeding (four nests found by gamekeepers between April and June) in Belmont Plantations.

Harris's Hawk (*Parabuteo unicinctus*)

One was at Euxton on 7th October.

Ring-necked Parakeet (*Psittacula krameri*)

One was near Belmont on 22nd October.

LIST OF CONTRIBUTORS FOR BIRD REPORT

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Apologies to anyone I may have omitted.

ROOKERY CENSUS

<u>Site</u>	<u>2010</u>	<u>2009</u>	<u>2006</u>	<u>2004</u>	<u>1999</u>
A49 Euxton	50	45	42	40	56
Howard Arms, Whittle Springs	25	27	41	49	30
Rawlinson La, Heath Charnock	15	26	14	14	18
Railway Road, Adlington	30	22	22	24	24
Prospect House, Wheelton	32	31	50	81	101
Lower Wheelton	10	12	11	16	20
Red Cat, Wheelton	10	9	N/C	N/C	N/C
St Chad's Wheelton	6	N/C	N/C	N/C	N/C
Croston	80	78	130	135	130
Wild Bottoms Wood, Hoghton	N/C	N/C	N/C	N/C	N/C
Town House Farm, Brindle	40	34	23	22	18
Brindle Village	11	N/C	N/C	N/C	N/C
Buckshaw Village	21	26	30	N/C	N/C

WATERFOWL COUNTS

The mid-month waterfowl counts covered the Anglezarke/Rivington Reservoirs together with Heapey and Birkacre Lodges.

<u>Species</u>	<u>Jan</u>	<u>Feb</u>	<u>Mar</u>	<u>Sept</u>	<u>Oct</u>	<u>Nov</u>	<u>Dec</u>
Little Grebe							
Great Crested Grebe	1	4	11	2	1	1	1
Cormorant	1	6	14	10	7	9	
Mute Swan	4	4	4	8	8	9	3
Black Swan			3				
Canada Goose	34	44	43	2	1		
Hybrid Goose		3	2	3	6	2	
Greylag Goose		7	13				
Wigeon					6		
Teal	12		3		4		
Mallard	285	271	149	76	234	159	278
Pochard		5	1		1	2	
Tufted Duck	9	2		4	6		4
Goldeneye		9	10			1	2
Goosander	3	11	15			4	
Moorhen	6	8	8	6	9	18	9
Coot	16	14	13	5	5	9	12

RINGING REPORT

Introduction

This is the first ringing report to be penned by me for the annual report since 1999 (shame on you Mr Leach). Much has happened to me between then and now – some good, some bad and some downright ugly! But now I'm back, and hopefully, I shall be submitting an annual ringing report to the editor, and so (dis)gracing the annual report once again!

Brief summary of 2000 – 2009:-

2000 saw 24 ringing sessions taking place at 13 different sites and a total of 313 birds ringed for the year – highlights being Oystercatcher pulli at Adlington Park and Little Owl pullus at a farm in Whittle.

2001 saw just 3 ringing sessions taking place in January, February and December with nothing in between due to the ravages of foot and mouth disease. A very poor total of 74 birds were ringed for the year.

2002 saw 13 ringing sessions taking place at 8 sites throughout the year with a total of 203 birds being ringed. The highlight was good numbers of Redwing at a roost site in Cuerden, sadly no longer there due to the removal of rhododendron bushes in the Pinetum.

2003 saw just 6 ringing sessions taking place (working out of the country prevented any more), although a spell in Canada kept me focused on ringing. Just 75 birds were ringed for the year.

2004 saw 14 ringing sessions taking place at 5 different sites and a total of 186 birds ringed for the year. Highlights were male Sparrowhawk and 4 Nuthatch.

2005 saw a total of 22 ringing sessions taking place at 10 different sites and a total of 300 birds caught and ringed for the year. Highlights were 6 different species of warbler ringed and very good numbers of hirundines at Croston Marsh.

2006 saw my best ever total to date with 758 birds ringed for the year at only 6 different sites during 32 ringing sessions. This total was due to having access to a small private woodland containing good numbers of nestboxes (but unfortunately well outside our recording area).

2007 saw a total of 27 ringing sessions taking place at just 4 sites and a total of 310 birds ringed for the year. Highlights were good numbers of warblers caught and ringed and over 100 hirundines caught and ringed on Croston Marsh.

2008 saw a total of 17 ringing sessions taking place at just 3 sites and a total of just 193 birds ringed for the year. The bad weather and contract ecology surveys put paid to the middle of the year.

2009 saw a total of 17 ringing sessions taking place at just 2 sites and a poor total of just 104 birds ringed for the year. More paid ecology survey work took precedence over ringing.

2010 So to the present. This year saw 41 ringing sessions taking place at 7 different sites and a total of 545 birds ringed for the year:-

2010 Ringing; yearly summary

During the first quarter of the year only 3 ringing sessions took place, all of which were in my garden at Clayton Green. A total of 12 birds were ringed including single Nuthatch, Bullfinch and 6 Long-tailed Tits.

In the second quarter, 7 ringing sessions took place – 3 in my garden, catching 4 Bullfinch and 3 Magpie (21st May) and 34 mostly juvenile titmice (20th June) and 27 again mostly juvenile (28th June). The other sessions were at Croft Lodge catching Canada Geese (28th April) with two ringed, Lower Burgh Meadow (9th June) when 16 birds were ringed, and a trip out in the good ship HMS 'Birkacre Bathtub' on 29th June to ring the three Common Tern pullus.

The third quarter had just 6 ringing sessions all in my own garden, due in part to the huge number of titmice coming to food, with a total of 86 birds ringed, 98% of which were juveniles.

In the fourth and final quarter, 25 ringing sessions took place at just 2 sites – my own garden and a baited site at Worthington Lakes. My own garden threw up some incredible surprises. Between 26th November and 26th December, the following birds were caught and ringed:- 5 Siskin, 13 Chaffinch, 8 Bullfinch, 10 Blackbird including a control (ringed by another ringer – full details not yet received), 21 Long-tailed Tits and an amazing 38 Goldfinch in a garden whose dimensions are 22' wide x 27' long. Away from the garden, 5 ringing sessions took place at Worthington Lakes during October and November, when a total of 77 birds were caught including Nuthatch (10th November), female Great Spotted Woodpecker (14th October) and male and female Siskin (26th November). But the best bird by far was the stunning juvenile male Brambling caught in my garden on 25th December. What a cracking yuletide present that was! That brought the year end total to 545 birds ringed, of which 442 were caught and ringed in my garden. Roll on the 2011 breeding season!

Many thanks to all landowners and farmers for permission to access their land, especially Ian Harper (United Utilities), all the education staff at Worthington Lakes, Senior Ranger John Bolton at Yarrow Valley Park and his assistant Steve Jolly. Finally the biggest thanks go to my wife Michelle (brew maker, bird bag carrier and scribe) and of course my trainer Dave Fletcher, without whose assistance in many ways, this report would not be possible.

Andy Leach

MAMMAL, REPTILE & AMPHIBIAN REPORT

MAMMALS

A good number of records were received thanks once again to the recorders who regularly 'post' their sightings on the forum on the society's website and the reports from the recorders at Belmont and Cuerden Valley Park.

Unfortunately, sightings of Mink have increased, Water Voles are still declining, Hedgehogs continue to be in trouble and Fallow Deer have been killed. However, I question if House Mouse is really absent from the area as the lack of records would appear to indicate! On a more positive note, bat workers have reported an increase in bats in Duxbury Woods following the erection of bat boxes there and the continued presence of Otters along the River Lostock in Cuerden Valley Park was confirmed.

Hedgehog (*Erinaceus europaeus*)

Of the twelve records received from within the Chorley Borough, sadly five relate to dead, injured or sick animals. The earliest record was one under leaf litter disturbed whilst gardening at Euxton on 14th March and the last was a sick one in Croston on 17th September. One discovered in the draperies behind the altar in St. Paul's Church at Adlington on 26th June was successfully released outside!

A member from Euxton reported a decline in his garden from being present throughout the year to just occasional sightings. One of these, in April, was of a badly injured animal, probably caused by a farmer who used a flail to cut back hedges and brambles in an adjacent field and in September, another sick one found in the garden and taken to the vets was put down as untreatable.

At Belmont, the first was seen on 8th April and the last on 15th September. One was observed to kill and partially eat a Frog at Belmont on 20th June.

Common Shrew (*Sorex araneus*)

One was found dead on the path in Blainscough Woods, Coppull on 11th June and one ran across Belmont Road on 28th July. This species was also recorded on the Bioblitz in Cuerden Valley Park on 7th August.

Mole (*Talpa europaea*)

Molehills were again a common sight in suitable habitats throughout the year. Dead mole carcasses were displayed on a fence at Withnell Fold on 7th March. A member took a short video on 15th July of one being eaten by a young Mink in Yarrow Valley Park (in the field between Top Lodge and Primrose Hill at Birkacre) and put it on her web album.

Daubenton's Bat (*Myotis daubentoni*)

One was 'hibernating' in an old mine adit at Belmont on 13th February and one was seen at Belmont on 5th June.

Recorded by bat detector on the society's evening walk at Birkacre on 11th August.

Three or four were over the lake at Cuerden Valley Park on 17th and 18th August.

Pipistrelle Bat Species (*Pipistrellus spp.*) includes **Common Pipistrelle** (*Pipistrellus pipistrellus*) and **Soprano or Pygmy Pipistrelle** (*Pipistrellus pygmaeus*)

Common Pipistrelles detected at 45 kHz were recorded at Birkacre on 11th August and also around The Barn in Cuerden Valley Park on 17th and 18th August. Both 45 kHz and 55 kHz Common Pipistrelles were confirmed at Cuerden Valley Park on the Bioblitz on 7th August.

The first individual seen was seen at Belmont on 24th April and the last on 31st October with maximum of 12+ on 7th September. One was discovered alive in a wood burning stove in a house in Belmont on 6th June and was released seemingly unharmed.

Small bats flying round members' homes in Adlington, Chorley, Coppull, Eccleston and Euxton between 3rd April and 28th October were likely to be Pipistrelle species. One member thought he was 'going batty' when on 15th September he was wakened at 5.15am by a bat flying round his bedroom. He opened his window but didn't see it leave and when it reappeared in the evening he was eventually able to catch it and release it at 1am!

Noctule Bat (*Nyctalus noctula*)

Recorded by bat detector at Birkacre on 11th August and Cuerden Valley Park on 17th August. Five were found 'hibernating' in the old shippon in Wheelton Plantation on 6th November along with four Common Pipistrelles.

Brown Long-eared Bat (*Plecotus auritus*)

Three were 'hibernating' in the old shippon in Wheelton Plantation on 13th February. Another was also 'hibernating' in an old mine adit at Belmont that day, with three there on 7th March.

One was recorded at the northern end of Cuerden Valley Park on 11th May and listed as a species found on the Bioblitz in Cuerden Valley Park on 7th August.

Whiskered/Brandt's Bat (*Myotis mystacinus* / *M. brandtii*)

Recorded by bat detector on the society's evening walk at Birkacre on 11th August.

One, identified by bat group workers as Whiskered Bat, was found 'hibernating' in an old mine adit at Belmont on 13th February.

Natterer's Bat (*Myotis nattereri*)

One was seen 'hibernating' in the old shippon in Wheelton Plantation on 13th February and again on 7th March.

Brown Hare (*Lepus europaeus*)

A total of forty sightings were reported from within the Chorley Borough and of these, over half were from the local stronghold, the Croston, Eccleston, Heskin area, where up to five were seen throughout the year. Likewise up to three were recorded at the other stronghold, Withnell Fold and up to four at Brindle. Other records included singles at Healey Nab on 28th March, Heapey on 17th May (reported as the first seen in this area for many years), Anglezarke on 15th June and Coppull on 29th October.

There were thirty six sightings in the Belmont area with a peak count of sixteen on 9th September. The maximum count from Roddlesworth was seven on 9th February.

Rabbit (*Oryctolagus cuniculus*)

Populations at Belmont remained at a low ebb following the myxomatosis outbreak in 2007. From only 10+ seen at the beginning of the year, the population around Belmont grew to an estimated 85+ in July. No further outbreaks of myxomatosis were reported in 2010 and the population was estimated at 40+ by the year end.

Several were seen around the warrens at Hoghton Bottoms on 28th March and at Wheelton on 3rd April. Frequent sightings were made in the west of the area, with a maximum of eight in the parkland near Heskin Hall on 14th July. Another regular site was 'The Rucks' at Birkacre where up to four were seen on 27th April. One lucky member saw a road-kill being eaten by a buzzard along the A581 in Euxton on 30th January and another member saw one being carried by a Fox in Euxton on 24th December.

Grey Squirrel (*Sciurus carolinensis*)



Continues to be very common and widespread throughout the area, including members' gardens.

Gamekeepers at Belmont reported shooting/trapping 85 during the year.

The cull undertaken in the Roddlesworth Plantations in 2008 & 2009 was repeated in February 2010 to reduce numbers of this species in those parts of the plantations where widespread bark-stripping to trees and severe damage to nestbox schemes (plus predation of eggs/young) has been rife in previous years. Shooting in conjunction with drey poking resulted in 50 Grey Squirrels killed (compared with 18 in 2009 and 137 in 2008) in an area of 36 hectares. Extrapolation of this density, 1.64 squirrels/hectare, (compared with 0.5 squirrels/hectare in 2009 and 4.7 in 2008) would give a total estimated population of 350 (compared with 107 in 2009 and 1000+ in 2008) throughout the whole of the Roddlesworth Plantations.

Bank Vole (*Clethrionomys glareolus*)

One at Birkacre on 4th September was the only record apart from listed as a species found on the Bioblitz in Cuerden Valley Park on 7th August.

Field Vole (*Microtus agrestis*)

This species was recorded on the Bioblitz in Cuerden Valley Park on 7th August.

Water Vole (*Arvicola amphibus*)

Cuerden Valley Park was the only site where this species was recorded this year. One was noted at the Kem Mill end on 21st February and one in the Park on 24th February was chased by a Stoat but appeared to escape when it dived into the River Lostock. However, there were no signs during the survey for this species on 2nd April and it wasn't listed as recorded during the Bioblitz on 7th August.

Brown Rat (*Rattus norvegicus*)

Just three records received from within the Chorley Borough; one was found dead by Jepson's farm at Anglezarke on 14th June, seen near The Barn at Cuerden Valley Park on the Bioblitz on 7th August, and one was by Heapey Lodges on 20th November.

The Belmont Report stated that 112 individuals were trapped by gamekeepers at Belmont during 2010. Whilst this figure would seem to represent a noticeable reduction in numbers, it fails to account for an additional substantial (but unknown) number that were poisoned in the area.

Long-tailed Field Mouse / Wood Mouse (*Apodemus sylvaticus*)

Up to three nested in a nestbox some five metres up an ivy covered tree in a Belmont garden. They were seen by/in the nestbox on six dates between 31st January and 16th May.

One had to be rescued from an unsatisfactorily designed metal bird feeder that unfortunately damaged the animal's leg in a garden at Adlington on 24th March. One was seen at Birkacre on 4th August but there were no other records apart from listed as a species found on the Bioblitz in Cuerden Valley Park on 7th August.



Stoat (*Mustela erminea*)

The thirteen reported sightings from within the Chorley Borough were of singles widespread and throughout the year, the first being one at Croston Finney on 17th January seen carrying prey and the last on 31st December in a garden at Whittle.

There were also fifteen sightings during the year from the Belmont area. Two in full ermine and one in part ermine were present around Belmont in January and February.

Weasel (*Mustela nivalis*)

There were seven sightings around Belmont during the year plus five other sightings, all of singles, these being:- Ice House Wood, Cuerden on 25th January, Hoghton Bottoms on 28th March, Brindle on 24th April, by The Goit near White Coppice on 1st November and Great Knowley on 29th December, which was the first recorded in that member's garden.

American Mink (*Mustela vison*)

Six were trapped at Belmont between 7th February and 23rd October.

Seven other reported sightings, all of singles, were the most ever of a species that now seems to be widespread in the area and is causing havoc for the native wildlife. There were two sightings in Cuerden Valley Park - Ice House Wood on 18th February and Kem Mill area on 8th December; two in the Yarrow Valley Park at Birkacre – a young one attacked the reorder's boots when she came too close whilst it was eating a mole on 15th July (ref Mole) and one was observed coming down the fish ladder on 1st August. The other sightings were Riley Green on 13th April; Lower Rivington Reservoir in July (photo of this appeared in Bolton Evening News on 21st July!); and one dead on the road in Grape Lane at Croston on 19th September.

Otter (*Lutra lutra*)

Continued presence of this species along the River Lostock in Cuerden Valley Park was confirmed when a fresh spraint was discovered by the Highways Agency ecologist who carried out a survey on 2nd February and also on the Bioblitz on 7th August. There was also a reported sighting of one by the weir pool on the River Yarrow by Croston Corn Mill at 7.15pm on 6th August.

Badger (*Meles meles*)

The only report was of singles dead by the A675 at Belmont in February and July.

Fox (*Vulpes vulpes*)

Widespread in the area throughout the year, including members' gardens at Great Knowley, near Astley Park and Whittle-le-Woods, the latter being noteworthy as this was the first time the observer had seen this species in Whittle. Three were seen suffering with mange in a garden by Astley Park at the beginning of the year but those seen later in that locality appeared to be free of the disease.

Due to low water levels, foxes were noted to be raiding the nationally important gullery at Belmont Reservoir on a nightly basis in late April. The heavy predation that ensued nearly resulted in the abandonment of the colony due to the mass killing of incubating birds and the disturbance factor. Urgent action to protect the colony resulted in three foxes being shot at the site on 3rd May, including two as they actually crossed the drawdown over to the island at dusk. Additionally, an extensive electric fence was erected. These actions proved ultimately successful as the gull colony re-settled and enjoyed a productive season.

Red Deer (*Cervus elaphus*)

A secondhand report was received of one seen in Wheelton Plantation on 7th November. This is the first reported sighting of this species in the recording area since 2001.

Fallow Deer (*Dama dama*)

Six were seen near Wymott Prison on 8th February where the herd first reported in 2008 had increased to at least twenty seven including three stags, according to local people. However, after it was reported on TV and in local newspapers later that month that a man from the Leyland area had been arrested after his 'fighting dog' had ripped apart one of the deer in the area, no further records of this species in the Ulne Walton area were received.

However, two males and a female were seen in Euxton on 19th June, followed by two in the same vicinity on 25th September and up to four (one dark and three almost white) were seen on four occasions in the Eccleston area from 26th October to 27th December.

Roe Deer (*Capreolus capreolus*)

With over fifty reported sightings, this was the most frequently recorded mammal after Grey Squirrel. It is commonly seen in the east of the area, including the gardens of members living at Great Knowley, the maximum being a group of six on Healey Nab on 10th January. Three was the maximum seen together in Cuerden Valley Park, where the species was recorded throughout the year and four including a young one, at Eccleston on 22nd April, was a good number.

Also seen commonly in the Belmont area throughout the year with maximum groups of eight on 11th April and nine on 30th October.

REPTILES

Adder (*Vipera berus*)

The pattern in recent years of this species being reported by members of the public at Wards Reservoir, Belmont, continued in 2010 with at least one unconfirmed sighting in late summer.

Common Lizard (*Lacerta vivipara*)

The sighting of one basking on the boardwalk near Ward's Reservoir on 11th July was the only record received.

AMPHIBIANS

Smooth Newt (*Triturus vulgaris*)

One was seen in Dean Black Brook at White Coppice on 21st March, whilst three were the first to arrive at a garden pond in Euxton on 27th March. Listed as a species found on the Bioblitz in Cuerden Valley Park on 7th August and two were seen in the Walled Garden there on 1st September. The only other record was of one seen in a garden at Great Knowley on 1st October.

Palmate Newt (*Triturus helveticus*)

Three in a garden pond at Belmont on 12th April, with fifteen there on 24th June, were the only records received.

Toad (*Bufo bufo*)

The first one seen was at Belmont on the early date of 22nd January. At night on 18th March, 20+ were crossing the road at Wards Reservoir and 50+ at Belmont. There were twenty five, some in pairs, on the road at Well Lane, Brinscall at 10 pm on 25th March but there were also ten squashed at the road junction at the bottom of the lane. Seventy two were visible in a pond at Belmont on 11th April.

1000+ 'toadlets' were at Belmont on 14th July and 'lots' were along the track between White Coppice and Anglezarke Reservoir on 25th July. Listed as a species found on the Bioblitz in Cuerden Valley Park on 7th August.

Common Frog (*Rana temporaria*)

After the very cold weather in January, more than fifty dead ones had to be removed from a pond in Euxton where the ice had been over two to three inches thick but there were still plenty around the pond at spawning time! The first arrived to breed at another garden pond in Euxton on 25th February but it wasn't until 12th March that the first were seen in a garden pond at Belmont. By mid March there was lots of activity at water bodies throughout the area with 'hundreds' in the Yarrow Valley Park at Birkacre, especially in the ditch by the 'stag' sculpture where the first spawn

was noted on 16th March. The maximum seen in a Belmont garden pond was 137 in late March. Young ones seen near Wards Reservoir, Belmont, on 11th July was the last sighting apart from being listed as a species found on the Bioblitz in Cuerden Valley Park on 7th August.

Thanks to the following members and forum users who submitted records this year:

David Allen, David Banks, Dave Barker, David Beattie, David Beevers, John Catterall, Peter Catterall, John Cobham, Mark Collins, Brian Derbyshire, Diana Downing, Tony Dunn, Dave Eyes, John Edwards, Derek Holding, Chris & Tony Johnson, Paul King, Peter Krischkiw, Phil Kirk, Eddie Langrish, Gary Lilley, Steve Martin, David North, Leonard Poxon, Steve Poxon, Chris Rae, Garry Rhodes, Joyce Riley, Pat Rimmer, Peter Ross, Andy Ryding, Neil Southworth, Tony & Connie Stones, Carol Thistlethwaite, Bryan Thomas, Mervyn Thornhill, Richard Todd, Nora West, Paul West, Paul Whittaker, Carol Winder and Keith Woan.

Apologies to anyone I may have missed.

Thanks also for the list of species recorded on the Bioblitz collated by the Lancashire Wildlife Trust and forwarded for the society's records.

Joyce Riley

