

## Friends Of Lavell's Lake Newsletter 2015/16

### Notice of Annual General Meeting

Merry Christmas and Happy New year to all our members and partners, notice is hereby given that the Annual General Meeting of Friends of Lavell's Lake will be held 17<sup>th</sup> January 2017 at 19:30, the Emmbrook Room, Dinton Pastures (WBC car park charges may apply)

### Agenda for A.G.M.

- 1) Apologies for absence
- 2) **Minutes** - Approval of minutes of the last AGM held January 19<sup>th</sup> 2016
- 3) **2016 Reports** :
  - a) Treasurer – Peter Scudamore
    - i) Year ending 31<sup>st</sup> December 2016, Auditing, Gift Aid & Donations
  - b) Membership – Les Blundell
  - c) Countryside Service – Simon Bartlam
  - d) Chairman - Fraser Cottington
    - i) Grant Applications & Future Projects
    - ii) Website members area, Facebook, WhatsApp & my blog
    - iii) Lea Farm G.P. & Lavell's future
      - a) Fund raising
      - b) Marketing & Social Media
      - c) Families & Engagement Officer
    - iv) Our future approach to project planning
- 4) Election of Officers & Committee
  - a) Officers standing down/re-election
  - b) New position – Conservation Partners & Events Officer
- 5) AOB

### Notes

#### *1. The present officers and committee are;*

Chairman – Fraser Cottington, Secretary – Jane Campbell, Treasurer – Peter Scudamore.  
Committee – Les Blundell, Phil Kinch, Ron Bryant, Bob Bennett, Renton Righelato.

#### *2. Nominations for new officers or committee should be sent by Friday 13<sup>th</sup> January to:*

**The Secretary, Friends Of Lavell's Lake, c/o Dinton Pastures Country Park, Davis Street, Hurst, RG10 0TH  
OR simply email [info@foll.org.uk](mailto:info@foll.org.uk)**

#### *3. If subscriptions are in arrears, members are not entitled to vote at the AGM*

#### *4. The AGM will be followed by tea/coffee, etc., then a talk by Ray Reedman: Of Cockatoos and Kakadu – a dry-season visit to the Top End of Australia*

### Overview of 2016 by Chairman, Fraser Cottington

#### Friends Passed & Remembered Forever

We sadly lost Les Seward on 3<sup>rd</sup> August, a regular and friendly face at Bittern hide, Les is missed by all of us.

#### Thanks

As always we are grateful for the amazing commitment and efforts of our committee and volunteers, we continue our exciting plans for new conservation projects and totally rely on all of you for financial support. My heartfelt thanks goes out to you all, your money goes towards fundamental projects and work, continuing to keep Dinton Pastures, Lavell's and Lea Farm GP one of the best bird sites in Berkshire.

So much of what we do comes through cooperation with Dinton Pastures Countryside Service, in particular Simon Bartlam, who always Simon helps us, but we also thank the whole team for their support. Our private landlord –

## Friends Of Lavell's Lake Newsletter 2015/16

Summerleaze Gravel Company is a crucial partner for FOLL and we are eternally grateful to them for allowing us to continue developing and improve Lea Farm G.P.

Thanks to Tim Alexander and company for the ringing and Tim Ball for tracking ringed gulls, to Ray Reedman for keeping the membership forms in ready supply and to Richard Marsh for keeping the website fresh with latest bird news and photographs, which as they say keeps your audience coming back to see what's new.

Last but not least, thanks to all of you for your support and donations, we couldn't do any of it without you!

### Overview of 2016 Bitterns

A good first winter period, 1/1st January near path to Bittern hide (MFW & BTB), 1/15th WSL (FJC), 1/16th (TAG, R Sta, ABT), 1/17th WSL (MFW et al), **2/21st**, 1 Lavell's (PSc & P Kinch), 1 WSL 16:45 (Roger Stansfield & FJC), **3/23rd**, with 2 at Lavell's, 1 WSL. Last sighting was at WSL 26<sup>th</sup> February (FJC). The first wintering birds were seen 17<sup>th</sup> at Teal scrape (SPD) and 20<sup>th</sup> at WSL, photographs taken by SPD indicate they were different individuals, so let's hope we all see multiple birds again this winter on into 2017.

### A brief overview of the birds of 2016 – Visit [www.foll.org.uk](http://www.foll.org.uk) & <https://www.facebook.com/foll.org.uk>

What a good year 2016 has turned out to be, finishing on 139 species, lots of star birds and more than one mega; our **5<sup>th</sup> Great White Egret 20<sup>th</sup> January**, the **Ferruginous Duck stayed til 21<sup>st</sup> February**, our 3<sup>rd</sup> ever **Ring Ouzel 13<sup>th</sup> April** (BTB et al), **Spotted Redshank August 22<sup>nd</sup>** (GSE et al), an amazing record of a **Nightjar** all day along the Loddon **30<sup>th</sup> August** (A Rymer, Ron Bryant et al), then **Little Stint September 8<sup>th</sup>** (FJC) a very late **Osprey October 14<sup>th</sup>** (FJC & A Rymer) and not 1, but 2 Jack Snipe wintering.

**January** - Was full of all the birds present in December, Bittern, Ferruginous Duck, Red Crested Pochard, Pintail, Golden Plover over, a couple of Woodcock reports and like 2015 Barn Owl, Little Owls, Peregrine and Raven, all seen more than once. We had 1 Goosander 16<sup>th</sup> (LGL), 1 Green Sandpiper same day (GSE), Stonechat 19<sup>th</sup> (R Righelato), then our 4<sup>th</sup> Great White Egret over Sandford late dusk 20<sup>th</sup> (FJC), but even Chiffchaff and Grey Wagtail were easier than many January's.

**February** – 2 Mandarin 6<sup>th</sup>, Oystercatcher from 9<sup>th</sup>, Mediterranean Gull 21<sup>st</sup> & 22<sup>nd</sup>

**March** – Curlew over 11<sup>th</sup> (BTB), Dunlin 15<sup>th</sup> at BSL sailing club (RNM et al), Stonechat 16<sup>th</sup> on the golf course (FJC), Redshank arrived 18<sup>th</sup>, **Yellow-legged Gull** same day (FJC & BTB), another Mediterranean Gull 21<sup>st</sup> (GSE), Jack Snipe 23<sup>rd</sup> (D White), Swallow 24<sup>th</sup>, Blackcap 25<sup>th</sup>, Sand Martin 26<sup>th</sup> and Willow Warbler 27<sup>th</sup>.



Dunlin – FJC



Yellow-legged Gull - FJC

**April** – Most migrants arrived around average dates, Wheatear 3<sup>rd</sup> (MFW), Yellow Wagtail 5<sup>th</sup>, early Reed Warbler and Whitethroat 8<sup>th</sup>, 30-40 late Golden Plover 10<sup>th</sup> (FJC), a nice adult **Little Gull** 13<sup>th</sup> (MFW et al), but bird of the month was a male **Ring Ouzel** in the car park field 13<sup>th</sup> (BTB et al), Lesser Whitethroat 13<sup>th</sup> too, male Redstart in the BSL/WSL hedgerow (J C Morgan) and there was 1 Arctic Tern WSL 16<sup>th</sup> (TAG) and BSL 24<sup>th</sup> (FJC & BTB).

## Friends Of Lavell's Lake Newsletter 2015/16



Ring Ouzel – Marek Walford



Little Gull – Marek Walford



Black Tern – Marek Walford



Jack Snipe – Marek Walford

**May** – Singing Water Rail 3<sup>rd</sup>, another Wheatear 3<sup>rd</sup> (BTB), 2 Greenshank 5<sup>th</sup> (RNM), an exceptionally late **Jack Snipe** 5<sup>th</sup> LFGP (Roger Stansfield et al), a Ringed Plover 6<sup>th</sup> (GSE et al), a **Sandwich Tern** on Sandford briefly 10<sup>th</sup> (P Scudamore), **Black Tern** 11<sup>th</sup> LFGP (MFW et al), passing Teal 20<sup>th</sup> (S Day), Pochard 23<sup>rd</sup> (P Scudamore).

**June** – Typically quiet, but some interesting records, a spike of Little Egret number, with 8/7<sup>th</sup> (GSE), 6/9<sup>th</sup> (RNM), Teal early in the month, and the same for Pochard, Water Rail kept singing and possibly 2 pairs of Oystercatcher attempted breeding, but again we could not prove they succeeded. By the 11<sup>th</sup> Green Sandpiper began returning and Common Sandpiper appeared 17<sup>th</sup> (L Blundell).

**July** – Was kind of quiet, Green Sandpiper took up residence, 3 Common from the 5<sup>th</sup>, 4/12<sup>th</sup> & 4/31<sup>st</sup>, Redshank and Little-ringed Plover also stuck around without breeding, 3 Shoveler 24<sup>th</sup> (RNM), Dunlin 27<sup>th</sup> LFGP (BTB), the first Snipe of autumn passage 31<sup>st</sup> (RNM).

**August** – 1 Snipe 1<sup>st</sup> (RNM), by 6<sup>th</sup> there were 4 Green & 4 Common Sandpiper, the first few Teal began arriving, a Mandarin showed daily SW corner, a **Whinchat** 17<sup>th</sup> (FJC) was early for us, then **5-7 Greenshank** 19<sup>th</sup> (MFW), 2 then seen til 22<sup>nd</sup>, 4 Ringed Plover and a **Spotted Redshank** in the SW corner all day (GSE et al). Another Whinchat 26<sup>th</sup> (FJC) 18 Shoveler 28<sup>th</sup> (BTB), 29<sup>th</sup> produced a **Tree Pipit** (FJC & BTB) on the wires in the car park field, 4 Wheatear on the landfill and a **Spotted Flycatcher** by the benches (PMC), but this paled quickly on the 30<sup>th</sup> when Alan Rymer reported a **Nightjar** settled in a tree along the Loddon. It remained all day, seen hunting til dark.





Nightjar – Marek Walford



Spotted Redshank – FJC

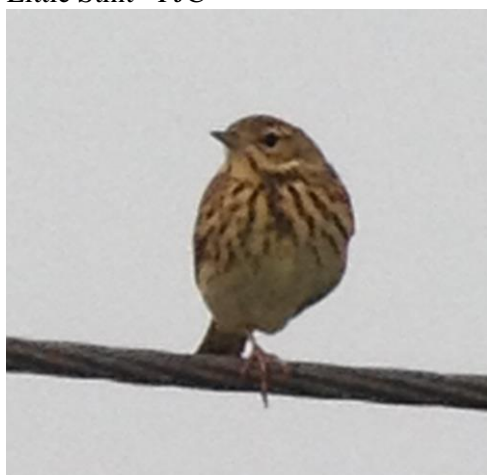
**September** – A nice count of 51 Shoveler on BSL 1<sup>st</sup> (MFW), another Spotted Flycatcher 2<sup>nd</sup> (RNM), Swift & 3 Wheatear (FJC), male **Redstart** 5<sup>th</sup> (B May et al), 7 Green Sandpiper, female Redstart (A Rymer), **2 Redstart** 7<sup>th</sup> (ADB), **Little Stint** on 8<sup>th</sup> stayed just moments after being found (FJC), another Whinchat 9<sup>th</sup> (FJC), 2 Hobby (Bob Bennett), 63 Shoveler 10<sup>th</sup>, another male Redstart 11<sup>th</sup> (bird walk), **2 Whinchat** 12<sup>th</sup> (GSE & Bob Bennett), 3 Yellow Wagtail, 4 Hobby 15<sup>th</sup> (FJC), 16<sup>th</sup> was fun - **7 Dunlin**, **2 Red-legged Partridge**, Whinchat & Wheatear (FJC), Spotted Flycatcher (SPD), 17<sup>th</sup> **2 Red-legged Partridge**, 1 Pintail, Spotted Flycatcher (P Stancliff), 18<sup>th</sup> male Stonechat (FJC), Spotted Flycatcher (RNM), **Garganey** (MFW & TAG). The Garganey then showed up each morning at BSL staying til at least 1<sup>st</sup> Oct. 7 Grey Wagtail 20<sup>th</sup> was the peak passage count at the sailing club, Siskin 21<sup>st</sup> (MFW), **10 Pintail** 22<sup>nd</sup> (FJC), was a new record count. Stonechat again 23<sup>rd</sup> (RNM), 2 Pintail, 3 Raven was one of several sightings, **5 Mandarin** – 4m, 1f 27<sup>th</sup> (FJC) - a new record count of adults



Little Stint - FJC



Osprey – Alan Rymer



Tree Pipit - FJC



Garganey - FJC

## Friends Of Lavell's Lake Newsletter 2015/16

**October** – 1<sup>st</sup> brought 14 Snipe, 13 Teal, 61 Wigeon & 57 Shoveler (MFW), Garganey BSL (FJC). 2<sup>nd</sup> **2 Red-legged Partridge & 2 Whinchat** (MFW), 1 Wheatear (FJC), Hobby (R Jinks), Redwing 3<sup>rd</sup> (FJC), Hobby (P Scudamore), 4<sup>th</sup> Hobby, Linnet, Siskin (FJC), 3 Little Grebes 5<sup>th</sup> (LGL), 6<sup>th</sup> **Jack Snipe** (Jim Reid et al) LFGP, Dunlin 7<sup>th</sup>, 100+ Redwing 8<sup>th</sup>, Pintail & Stonechat 9<sup>th</sup> (BTB), Pintail 10<sup>th</sup>, Common Sandpiper (M Vogel), Stonechat, **104 Shoveler** & 13 Fieldfare 11<sup>th</sup> (FJC, R Bryant A Rymer), Pintail, 123 Greylag roosted 12<sup>th</sup> LFGP, Pintail, 2 Stonechat 13<sup>th</sup> (GSE), 2 Swallow 14<sup>th</sup>, **Osprey** over quite low **14<sup>th</sup>** (FJC & A Rymer), Pintail, 2 Stonechat 14<sup>th</sup> (FJC), Jack Snipe 16<sup>th</sup> (FJC et al), but a **Marsh Tit** heard only 16<sup>th</sup> (Renton Righelato) was the first believable record in 30 years. Adam Bassett heard an unidentified call near the same spot 21<sup>st</sup>, so we cannot be 100% sure. A Stonechat & Pintail last date 18<sup>th</sup>, **Golden Plover 120+/20<sup>th</sup>** 4 miles N of Lavell's, **300+** Fieldfare West 20<sup>th</sup>, (FJC, TAG & JMcG), Jack Snipe (GSE), 4 Lesser Redpoll 21<sup>st</sup> ringed (TOA), 2 Raven BTB), Jack Snipe (Bob Bennett), then daily to 28<sup>th</sup>, when **2/29<sup>th</sup>** (A Rymer et al). A rare October **Shelduck 26<sup>th</sup>** (JMcG), stayed til 31<sup>st</sup>. **Curlew 29<sup>th</sup>** circled 3 times before dropping in the NE corner of LFGP for a few hours (FJC, JMcG et al), 32 Snipe and Pintail at Tern scrape (FJC).

**November** – A Brambling called near the car park 1<sup>st</sup> (FJC), 2 Jack Snipe remained LFGP (RNM), 38 Snipe at Tern scrape 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3 Pintail same day (FJC), male Goldeneye 3<sup>rd</sup> (RNM), pair 4<sup>th</sup> (SPD), 400+ Wood Pigeon South 6<sup>th</sup>, 1 Jack Snipe LFGP 9<sup>th</sup>, Raven 11<sup>th</sup> (RNM), 2 Jack Snipe 13<sup>th</sup>, 1 Tern scrape and 1 LFGP, 1 Green Sandpiper, 3 Goldeneye Sandford. Also 13<sup>th</sup> what was almost certainly a **Great White Egret** flew over the car park before we had our wits about us and was never seen again. On 17<sup>th</sup> 4 **Golden Plover** were seen 4 miles North, followed by **350-400/19<sup>th</sup>**, same day 128 Shoveler, which grew to **160+/24<sup>th</sup> & 25<sup>th</sup>**, a new park record. 26<sup>th</sup> was an interesting day our **Ferruginous Duck** was found on Middle Marsh again (SPD) and another new park record, with an amazing **80-100 Pintail** flying over LFGP (J & J Jones). The Pochard numbers reached 108/28<sup>th</sup>.

**December** – Has begun with some sharp frosts, 2 Jack Snipe wintering and our first Scaup since 2009. Now is the time to lookout for Goosander which are very frequently seen in the last week of the year. Keep checking all the ducks, swans and geese for rarities.

I continue to track species counts for each month and this year was a very good one for breaking new records: January – 90 a new high, beating 2011 by 3. February – 88 =2<sup>nd</sup> place with 2008, March – 99 a new high, beating 2011 by an amazing 4, April – 108 a new 3<sup>rd</sup> place, beating 2015 by 2, May 96 =1<sup>st</sup> with 2012, June – 90 a new high, beating 2010 and 2012 by 3, August – 101 a new 2<sup>nd</sup> place, beating 2013 by 2, September – 102 a new 2<sup>nd</sup>, beating 2010 by an amazing 5, October – 99 a new high, beating 2015 by 3, November – 86, a new 2<sup>nd</sup> place, beating 2015 by 1, December – And counting is on 85, a new 2<sup>nd</sup> place, beating 2011 by 1.

Wishing everyone a healthy, happy and wonderful bird filled 2017 - Fraser

### Habitat Management, Work Parties & Events

#### Achievements

- We completed most of the stock proof fencing project on the BSL/WSL hedgerow and Middle Marsh to protect the Nightingales. There a small sections to complete around Heron's Water and the South side of Sandford Lake along the old Emmbrook parallel to Black Swan Lake.
- CROW have done a great job already and will continue the hedge laying project along the LFGP section of the Loddon. We will be planting several hundred more berry bearing shrubs and installing more stock proof fencing to protect the site from off lead dogs and trespassing.
- We began removing taller Willows, etc. beyond the scrape and along the Emmbrook, this is to manage and maintain dense, low scrub, such as Cetti's and other warblers.
- The Tern rafts have supported Common Terns and Black-headed Gulls again this year, we will continue servicing them to keep them in optimal condition.
- We built 2 Shelduck nests and one was prospected in 2016, with a bit of luck a year's wear and tear will make it an attractive option in 2017.
- We cut a significant area of Phragmites reed in Tern scrape this autumn and it has paid dividends, with good numbers of Common Snipe, a wintering Jack Snipe, along with many Teal, Shoveler and Water Rail remaining in the area.
- Lea Farm G.P. (LFGP) North West corner Willow will be cleared between November and March.
- We attended the Dinton Activity Centre Family Fun Weekend 2016, 4<sup>th</sup> & 5<sup>th</sup> June and much as it was worth a try, it wasn't our audience.

## Friends Of Lavell's Lake Newsletter 2015/16

### Future Plans

- We hope to secure a grant to carry out significant Phragmites expansion beyond Tern scrape – 120 metres long by 15 metres deep. Work will include re-profiling and improving Tern scrape itself, repairing the bund and creating a sloped 'beach' on the edge facing the lake. Irrigating the scrape has always been an issue, so we plan to lower the scrape level by around 2" to 5" and digging deeper gullies, which will be fed by a small Solar powered pump. The scrape will be irrigated by the pump in dry periods and culverts the rest of the time. The final element of the project will making an area of wet grass meadow and ditches in Tern meadow, bringing another type of wetland habitat – attracting more Snipe, Water Rail, Egrets, dabbling ducks.
- As of the grant funded project, we plan to remove all remaining tall Willows and Poplars behind the scrape and along the Emmbrook. This will create large open flight lines between Lavell's and Lea Farm G.P. to attract even more waders and wildfowl.
- The grant project scrape re-profiling will allow us to rid ourselves of Crassula on Tern Scrape, but it is present in Teal scrape and LFGP, so tackling the problem will never cease.
- We do hope to begin a 2-3 year cyclic programme of felling at Lavell's along the Loddon and significant sections of the trees between the hides.
- We remain at the point where we need to address managing our now significant Phragmites reed beds. Cutting is a labour intensive and messy job, so we are looking into what equipment we can hire, or even buy and adapt for all our long term reed cutting needs. Another element might be that if we can cut it in the right lengths, we might be able to sell some of it as fencing products.
- We are stretched very thin at certain times of year, such as weeding all the islands on Sandford in February before waders and ducks get settled in March, DPCS does this most years in March.
- We plan to create a formal landfill observation area at the bottom of the car park field, this will mean a bench, or leaning post to make it more comfortable for people to stay longer and see more.
- If we are successful in our grant application, we expect to build a significant viewing screen overlooking Tern meadow, ditches and scrape boundary. This could not occur September 2017.
- The sluice door in the ditch adjacent to Teal scrape, needs some repairs and adapting so we can more easily open and close it. This will require some welding, please let us know if you can help.

### The Future of Lea Farm G.P.

Lea Farm G.P. is under our management for the next 5 years, but there may come a time when Summerlease Ltd might sell the lake, especially when the current chairman retires and as he owns the greatest stake in the company, we should be planning for that day. If it does happen they have a rough valuation of £174,000, which is currently out of our reach. But after discussion with Summerlease, they said they may be open to a long term purchase agreement and I believe FOLL can and should make plans to market ourselves better and organise events and activities to attract a great many more families.

I am drawing up ideas of what the charity could offer and am suggesting an ambitious target of increasing our membership to 1,000 family subscriptions by 2020. With 1,000 families subscribed we would have an income of £10,000 per annum and if we coupled this initiative with other fund raising initiatives and developed a 'leave us a legacy donation in your will' page on our website, we could have raised £20,000 and be able go to Summerlease with a business plan to buy the gravel pit and be signing paperwork to commence ownership rights to Lea Farm G.P. by 2021/22.

Ownership of land would change FOLL and our status with Charity Commission, all of which needs further investigation, but if we did own Lea Farm G.P., subject to EA and Natural England consents, we could replicate what we have done in the SW corner, over in the NE corner, which is 3-4 times the size of the SW corner. We could also take out the South spit and open up the whole South bay as one large set of islets and islands to attract waders to breed. It is easily possible our site could hold breeding Redshank, Oystercatcher, Little-ringed Plover, Shelduck and of course many more Common Tern.

The NE bay needs proper viewing arrangements, so would plan another substantial member's hide, ideally accessed from the Southern side of Lodge Wood Lake, which might in turn mean we get views into that lake too.

Any fixed plans would be announced in due course, but we badly need marketing and fund raising expertise in the committee and whilst we have a limit of 9 members on the committee, we have already agreed there is a great need for additional expertise, but on a project team basis only, so consider this an appeal for the above skills at the coming AGM. Please do contact us at [info@foll.org.uk](mailto:info@foll.org.uk) we need your help.

## Friends Of Lavell's Lake Newsletter 2015/16

### **Lea Farm Hide Security – Tough measures must be taken**

In 2016 we had numerous occasions where the locks were not secured and at least 2 times windows were left open, then in September we had a break in, locks missing, donated scope gone. Failure to secure the hide is not acceptable so we have little choice but to deploy covert cameras to capture every entry and exit from the hide. Guilty parties will get one warning, then will be barred from using the hide and whilst it may sound harsh, Ron's hide is not an investment we afford to lose.

It is the responsibility of every member to secure the hide on exit and we ask everyone to report security incidents to FOLL. The padlock codes are not to be revealed to passers by, or given to anyone, never assume someone who joins you in the hide is a member, ask them to tell you the code and if they cannot, then they have to leave when you do. Break in's are a different matter and we are speaking to the police about evidence gathering and prosecution.

### **Trespassers on Lea Farm Landfill**

We do not accept trespassing in any form, the only people allowed on the site are EA, Summerleaze staff, the sheep farmers, Simon Bartlam from DP and of course FOLL work party attendees. In 2016 we had 2-3 incidents of joggers, 1-2 dog walkers and even poachers fishing, we need ALL incidents reported to FOLL, so we can notify the relevant parties and take proportionate actions, or if required, call the police.

### **Dawn Chorus Bird Walk – 19<sup>th</sup> April 2016 04:45 to 08:30 (£2.00 per person)**

FOLL went ahead again in 2016, a good attendance and a very pleasant morning even if the Nightingales did not show. Next year's will be **Saturday 22<sup>nd</sup> April 2017** starting at 04:45.

### **F.O.L.L. Website, Facebook, Bird News on WhatsApp & Twitter**

The new members login area provides several bird related documents, along with the code of conduct and hide access details. Many people have invested a lot of hours into helping bring this new site together, so we hope you enjoy it and share your 'likes' on our Facebook page too. [www.foll.org.uk](http://www.foll.org.uk) & <https://www.facebook.com/foll.org.uk>

Everyone with an email address should have received this newsletter via our new automated service and we urge everyone to click on the links in our emails, run through a onetime registration process and tick the areas of interest to you, by doing this we will mean we can notify you about things specifically relevant to you and your personal interests, rather than send you everything.

WhatsApp is our default way of sending out news of rare and interesting birds, WhatsApp requires a smart phone and is excellent because anyone on the group can join in sharing news. It is also very easy to share a photo, so good for identification verification, or to ask for directions, or for help in finding something. The app also enables free messaging and phone calls, which are high quality. We ask a £2.00 annual donation which goes towards bird food/conservation projects.

FOLL email addresses for contacting us are [info@foll.org.uk](mailto:info@foll.org.uk) but you can also ask specific members of the committee questions, the addresses are at <http://foll.org.uk/about-foll/committee-minutes/>

If you haven't seen it, I have run a blog on birding at Dinton & Lea Farm for 4 years, I upload record shots, share sightings, historic information and offer the occasional useful anecdote. <http://fjcsdpbirding.blogspot.co.uk/>

### **Fundraising & Events**

As said earlier, we need to fund raise, currently we do not do any income apart from membership and if we want to be serious about facing up to considerable challenges in future, as well as funding some significant conservation projects aside from the Lea Farm G.P. question we need new committee members who can help:

- We should consider attending the Woodley Christmas Carnival costs £29.00 – Promoting membership and selling bird food. It would get us seen by many hundreds of people. If we do start attending events we will need to invest in a proper stand banner, information boards, sturdy table etc. Cost estimates are around £500 for these basic items. No committee decision has been made on this yet.
- We should take at least 2 annual slots at the Woodley precinct pagoda, giving out lots of leaflets, membership forms and other family related material, the last pet shop is closing, so we might benefit very well from selling bird food and ensuring a leaflet is given to everyone we sell to.



## Friends Of Lavell's Lake Newsletter 2015/16

- Most charities have ask for legacy donations leaving something behind in their Wills, FOLL should do this too. If you would like to leave us something in your Will, do contact us at [info@foll.org.uk](mailto:info@foll.org.uk)

### **Guided Bird Walks (£1.00 per person)**

As always, are held **every 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday** of each month, meet at 9.00am in Lavell's car park. The numbers attending are usually 5-7 people, which is fine, but I wonder if we need to promote the walk better, I'd like to start earlier perhaps around 07:00 and finish earlier? Thoughts are welcome I'd love to hear from folks on this.

### **Committee Meetings 2017**

**Jan 17<sup>th</sup> A.G.M, March 14<sup>th</sup>, May 16<sup>th</sup>, July 18<sup>th</sup>, September 19<sup>th</sup>, November 21<sup>st</sup>**, all held Bi-monthly on the **third Tuesday** of the month, at 8.00pm at Dinton Pastures, or other venue, where we discuss and agree all ongoing management issues, so if you have anything to add, just ask. The **January 16<sup>th</sup> A.G.M. 2018** will start 19:30.

### **Car Park Charges**

WBC enforce car park charges, £1.20 per hour (midweek winter), £4.80 max per day, and £1.50 per hour with a max of £6.00 4 hours + (winter weekends and every day in summer). A ticket is needed is 06:00 until 22:00.

### **Countryside Service Ranger Report 2016 – Simon Bartlam**

#### **Management Tasks**

- Hay cutting and after grazing of meadows, re-seeding the one West of Sandford
- Ride Management at the back of Lavell's and on islands, including Sandford
- Reed cutting to created open rides, Teal meadow cut and remove grass
- Hedge flailing at Sandford and various other sections
- Bittern Hide scrape cut scraped and herbicide treatment to remove Crassula

#### **General Rangering**

- General work including cutting back path vegetation, and clearing fly-tipping,
- Hide clearing/painting and security
- Boundary/ site inspection
- Make safe dangerous trees

#### **Volunteer involvement**

Other than the Friends of Lavell's group, School + college work experience, Duke of Edinburgh, Community Services, Probation services, Adult Training Groups have been involved in the site management.

Finally I would like to say a big thank you to all of the members of Friends of Lavell's for all the hard work you put into the site. Practical effort, vigilance and wildlife recording all go the making the site a very special place that is appreciated by visitors and wildlife alike. I would especially like to thank Fraser whose enthusiasm is never ending, Thank you all.

### **Ringing Report for Lavell's Lake 2016 – Tim Alexander**

Sadly due to various commitments very little ringing was done in 2016, with luck 2017 I will resume.

### **Highlights for Black-headed Gulls ringed at Lea Farm – Tim Ball**

In three recent breeding seasons Black-headed Gull chicks have been colour ringed on the rafts at Lea Farm and whilst sightings at Lea Farm haven't been excellent there have been some very good records which illustrate some of this species habits and movements.

**2011 Cohort** - 25J3 was reported first of all from Hosehill in April, and June 2013, then in July it turned up in Buckinghamshire and 2 days later it was seen at Lea Farm. It was then reported from Lea Farm several times in each of the 2014 and 2015 breeding seasons. This year it was seen pretty frequently at Hosehill from 20 April until 27 June and almost certainly bred there. 27J1 has been seen in Devon several times now with records in August 2011, July 2014, September 2015 and July 2016. It was reported locally in most summers so appears to be regularly migrating between Berkshire and Devon.

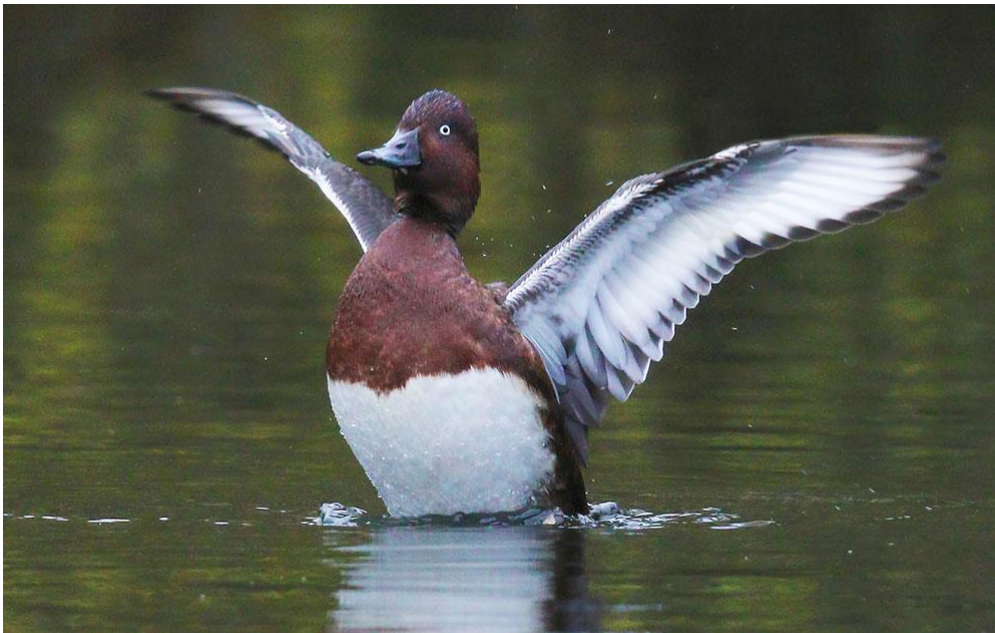
**2013 Cohort** - 26L1 seems to be a bit unusual! In August 2013 just shortly after it fledged it appeared in Devon. Then in May and October 2014 it was seen at Lea Farm and that December it was seen in Reading University grounds so it obviously returned to the area of its natal colony for a fair length of time. The only other two reports of it we've had were in July 2015 and on 1 August 2016 and both were in Devon so it has to be possible that it's



## Friends Of Lavell's Lake Newsletter 2015/16

moved its breeding site to the SW. 26L9 was reported from near Madrid in Spain (1262 km away) in December 2013 and February and March 2014 and the nicely re-appeared at Lea Farm in June 2016. 27L5 was also reported from near Madrid in February, March and December 2014 and January and February 2015 then this year it re-appeared at Lea Farm in February and was in Essex in May and July. 27L9 had never been reported from anywhere since it was ringed until 31 March this year when it was in France, but just 379 km away.

**2014 Cohort** - 20P2 was first reported from Southampton in May 2015 and then reports from that area suggested it was resident there until at least 12 March this year and it then turned up at Lea Farm on 6 April. 22P6 was first reported from Finistere in France in October 2015 and our second report of it was back at Lea Farm on 6 April this year. 22P7 has acted like some of the other highlights it was reported from Devon in December 2014, February 2015 and July 2015 but it returned to Lea Farm and was reported in May 2015 and March 2016. 23P3 had never been reported from anywhere before 16 May this year when it was seen to almost certainly be breeding in Zoetermeer, Zuid-Holland, Netherlands. It was only the fourth ever Black-Headed Gull ringed in Berkshire to be reported from the Netherlands and all the other 3 were adults ringed here during winter months and it is very unusual for a bird bred here to migrate in the opposite direction to the vast majority of that species.



**Ferruginous Duck – Jerry O'Brien**



**Bittern – Steve Day**

**The rarest birds in 2016**



**Nightjar – Marek Walford**



**Little Stint – Fraser Cottington**