

Brookie's Diary

Monday, January 1, 2007 - First Day 2007

A trip out to Ingbirchworth today one of the Huddersfield Club Area reservoirs to see what wildfowl could be seen. Weather was good when I set off. On arrival it had started raining and continued for the 2 hours I was there. Birds on the water were **Goldeneye, Tufted Duck 20+, Mallard 20+, Pochard and Teal**. Gulls included **Black Headed, Herring, Common and Lesser Black Backed**. There wasn't a lot of small birds about due to the wind and rain I did manage to get glimpses of **Long Tail Tit and Chaffinch**. I then had a ride around the local fields seeing, **Grey heron** and a flock of about **50 Fieldfares, Pied Wagtails (7)** and a couple of **Meadow Pipits**. There were also the usual corvid species flying about **Crows, Rooks and Jackdaws**. That was the start to 2007 hope there's more to come

Friday, January 5, 2007 - Blackmoorfoot Res

Today was a day to Blackmoorfoot Reservoir to try and find the reported **Black Necked Grebe**. On arrival at the reservoir I did a quick scan of the place it was last reported only to find Mallards, a male **Goldeneye, Common** and **Black Headed Gulls**. I had a walk down towards the dam wall and saw **Blue** and **Great Tits** in the trees along with **Robins, Blackbirds** and **Chaffinch**. Near the dam wall I had found nothing different except a few hundred **Lapwings** making their way over the water. I looked back towards the hide and had another scan thru the ducks and there it was one **Black necked Grebe** in winter plumage. I made my way back towards the hide and enjoyed the bird for an hour before making my way back home

Friday, January 12, 2007 - Its Friday again!!

Walk home from work today along my usual route. A mixed flock **Fieldfare and Redwing** of about 20 birds, **Blackbird, Jays, Crows and Magpie** all within 1 minute of coming out of work Good start but the wind was picking up as I made my way up thru Lepton seeing more Crows and a **Mistle Thrush**. I was beginning to see more shopping bags than birds at the moment. I stopped again at Jumble Wood hoping to see the Nuthatch again. Whilst waiting I saw a mixed flock of **Blue, Great and Long Tailed Tits** there was also a **Goldcrest** with them. Then I saw a bird out of the corner of my eye Male **Blackcap** and then the **Nuthatch**. On to Thurgory Lane were I saw more floating shopping bags than birds I did see more **Fieldfare and Redwings** when I got into the sheltered areas away from the gale force winds, it wasn't raining thou which was a bonus. The final stretch home and I all I saw really was more **Fieldfare and Redwing**, we seem to have gone from little to almost everywhere, male **Kestrel** with **Woodpigeon** and **Stock Dove**. Kirkheaton cemetery gave me my first **Coal Tit** of the year with more Blue, Great and Long Tailed. I also saw **Chaffinch, Greenfinch, Robin, Wren, Black Headed Gulls, House Sparrows, Grey Herons (2) and Black Headed Gulls** (up to 46 for the year).

Friday, January 26, 2007 - Ingbirchworth and Broadstones

Friday afternoon and another stroll around a couple of the club areas reservoirs namely Ingbirchworth and Broadstones, birds today included **Black Headed Gulls** (lots of these), a few **Common Gulls, Wigeon** 21-off, 9 of these were males, and 1 **Little Grebe, Coot**. Off the water I saw **Green Woodpecker**, great views of this, **Chaffinch, Robin, Blackbird, Mistle Thrush, Brambling** 3 birds, **Fieldfares, Blue Tits, Great Tits, Magpies, Rooks and Crows**. That was all for today, but it's good to get out

Friday, February 2, 2007 - Langsett and Ingbirchworth

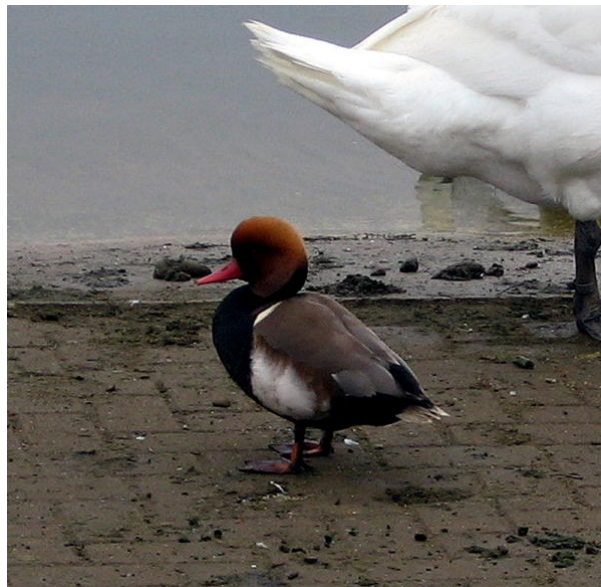
Thought I'd try the Langsett area again, see if I could find anymore Crossbills. I did find that there wasn't much birdlife on the moors today it was like a spring day even up on there. I did get great views of **Red Grouse** to within a few feet.

In the wooded areas there were a lot of **Coal Tits** and **Blue Tits** making themselves busy, along with **Chaffinch** and **Goldcrest**. **Blackbirds**, **Robins** and **Greenfinch** were seen on my way back to the car park. As I neared the car park I heard that distinctive call of the **Bulfinch**, sure enough as I turned there they were flying over the road 3 birds in all a nice ending to a short walk. I then made my way down to Ingbirchworth Res again to see if I could the Brambling again. No brambling this time all I found was **Black Headed Gull**, **Common Gulls**, **Little Grebe** and **Great Crested Grebe**, **Mallards**, **Tufted Ducks** **Blue Tits**, **Woodpigeon** and **Moorhens**.

Friday, February 9, 2007 - Pugneys Country Park

Thought I'd try and catch up with the reported **Red Crested Pochard** at Pugneys, it had been there a few weeks. As i got out of the car it was one of the first birds that I had a look at. It was very close in shore along with the other wildfowl which were mainly **Mallards** and **Mute Swans** of course After having 15 minutes or so with the bird a decided to move round the reserve finding **Tufted Duck**, **Ruddy Duck**, **Shoveler**, **Pochard**, **Shelduck**, **Cormorants**, **Common Gulls**, **Black Headed Gulls**, **Coots** and **Moorhens**.

I spent a while in the hide to try and find the **Bitterns** that had been reported as well, not today. I did see **Great Crested Grebes, Goldeneyes, Lapwing** and hundreds of **Golden Plover**. I also found a **Redshank** and a **Great Spotted Woodpecker** in the small wooded area next to the hide. That was the end of my day finding **Pied Wagtails** in the car park, which gave me a thought " how many good birds do you find in car parks??"



RED CRESTED POCHARD

Saturday, February 17, 2007 - Thurgory Lane

Thurgory Lane again for one or two hours to see what was about. On arriving at the lane, about 07:15am I found a large movement of large Gulls going through mainly **Lesser Black Backed Gulls**, 3 groups of about 30 birds, along with smaller groups of **Black Headed Gulls** on the lane to find **Yellowhammers, Chaffinch and House Sparrows**. There was also a good number of **Skylarks** marking out there patches with their high flying songs. I was also surprised with the large amount of **Dunnock** in the area, I can't recall seeing and hearing so many along this lane. There were the usual **Magpies, Jackdaws and Woodpigeons** in the fields.

Saturday, February 24, 2007 - Its Friday

Brambling for me this year seems to be the bird I am seeing a lot of. So off I went again to a local sight to see once again these winter birds. Sure enough it wasn't long before I connected with these birds along with **Fieldfare and Redwings. Great Spotted woodpecker and Stock Doves** as supporting cast. As time was on my hands I made a quick detour to Ingbirchworth Res again, to find very few birds this time but I did see another **Great Spotted Woodpecker** along with **Little and Great Crested Grebes, Common and Black Headed Gulls.**

That was it for a couple of weeks no more British birding Gambia here we come

Thursday, March 15, 2007 - Gambia 2007 > 26th Feb to 12th March <

It was once again that we ventured back into Africa and once again to the Gambia. Highlights of this trip were **African Finfoot, Blue Flycatcher, Sudan Golden Sparrow, Spotted Thick-Knee, Painted Snipe** and for me **African Golden Oriole**, what a beautiful bird. Note we did venture up river to Tendaba.. Yes it was more than worth it for the birds and for the people we met, but a word of warning nothing and I mean nothing will prepare you for the South road adventure it was awful; it is being repaired in and amongst. Make sure you have a 4x4 our vehicle that will not shake to bits. We stopped at the Senegambia Beach Hotel, the grounds are fantastic and you can get really close to the birds Yellow Crowned Gonolek below, Cattle Egrets walking around the eating areas

Guide: We had a guy called Junkung Jadama or 'JJ', check out his website @ www.gambiabirdguide.com, or click on the link 'JJ' One word that will described this guy 'Brilliant'

For our two weeks holiday a total of 230 bird species resulting in 62 lifers this time.

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YELLOW CROWNED GONOLEK

Saturday, March 17, 2007 - Potteric Carr

Further a field today at Yorkshires hot spot for Bitterns. It's been a few years since I've been at Potteric Carr and things have changed a lot. There's a visitor centre and cafe. The reserve it's self has expanded, new paths and new parts bought for the good of nature. I must say it is a great reserve and a brill place for a day out website at www.potteric-carr.org.uk. Well it was for Bittern, Willow Tit and Lesser Spotted Woodpecker that we went. We made our way around to the cafe first for dinner and a cuppa finding on our way **Blue, Great and Long Tailed Tits** with **Robins, Dunnock and Blackbirds**. After dinner we went across to the bird feeding hide at Willow Marsh. We saw more Great and Blue Tits on the feeders with **Chaffinch and Greenfinch**, the hoped for **Willow Tit** we had to wait for but one bird did put in brief appearance. Off we then went around to Piper Marsh one of the Bittern hot spots making our way thru Black Carr Wood. We didn't see the Lesser Spotted Woodpecker but on our arrival at the hide we did get good views of **Kingfisher** in on of the islands.

A few **Chiffchaffs** were also making themselves known by their distinctive calls. **Gadwall, Shoveler, Teal and Mallards** could all been seen at Piper Marsh along with **Great Crested and Little Grebes**. It was here that we got reports of Bittern seen at Decoy Marsh so off we went making our way slowly round seeing **Bullfinch, Grey Wagtail** on our way. We finally arrived at Decoy Marsh hide with nobody there. So we started scanning the reed fringes to no avail. We sat awhile scanning and scanning with more people arriving, more eyes looking but not finding. It was then after about 20 minutes that my wife said there's something moving over there in the reed edge, there it was one **Bittern** moving slowly in the reeds. It was with that that we made our way back to the car, we didn't look at the newly bought part at Huxter Well Marsh but if you want a great day out this is a place to go. There's also Lakeside near by which always turns up good birds on passage. Look at the website for bird news

Friday, March 30, 2007 - Deer Hill

Up to Deer Hill Res. today to try and find Raven. **Greenfinch, Chaffinch, Pied Wagtail** were all seen around the farm on arrival. Walking up the lane corvids were seen in the fields **Crow, Jackdaw and Rooks** along with **Woodpigeon and Stock Doves**. There was also a good number of displaying **Lapwings** in the fields. I made my way around to the Res eventually. After about ten minutes a small flock of finch were found, **Twite** about 23 birds in all flitting from telephone wire to field **Stonechat**, one male bird seen on one of the walls, **Skylarks** in the air and **Linnets** flitting by, but no Ravens for me today. It was a bit misty on top so I made my way back down towards the car, just thinking now that would be a good place for a Wheatear to be, I raised my bins to find one male **Wheatear** flitting amongst the boulders, don't you just love it when it comes together. This bird was the first Huddersfield spring migrant I had seen this year, I had seen a bird in the Gambia a few weeks earlier but this one counted it was on home ground.

Saturday, March 31, 2007 - Pugneys Country Park

A couple of hours to spare so quick stroll around Pugneys Park with a stop at the bird hide, **Ruddy Duck, Tufted Duck, Mallards, Shelduck, Coot, Moorhen, Greylag goose, Canada goose, Cormorants, Teal, Black Headed Gulls, one Common Gull, and a Female Goldeneye**. It was whilst we were in the hide that we heard and saw a **Bittern**, difficult to see in amongst the reeds but we saw him, and heard him boom a couple of times. Walking back passed the small wood **Chiffchaff** was heard, **Blackbird, Chaffinch, Wren and Crows** also. No Sand Martin as yet but a great bonus in seeing the Bittern.

Friday, April 6, 2007 - Bempton Cliffs

Day at the seaside to day to catch up with the common seabirds at RSPB Bempton Cliffs We were not to be disappointed with numerous **Gannets, Razorbills and Guillemots**. It wasn't a surprise to hear everybody pointing out their favourite bird at this site this has to go to the **Puffin**. Quite a funny character with wings flapping away like mad as it tries to keep airborne. Other birds of note were **Tree Sparrow** near the reception site along with **Meadow Pipit, Goldfinch, Greenfinch, Chaffinch and Linnet**. Numerous Gull species were seen **Great Black Backed Gull, Herring Gull Common Gull and Kittiwake** and not forgetting **Fulmar**.

We moved up the coast then on to Filey seeing **Corn Bunting** on route. At Filey **Rock Pipit, Eider, Purple Sandpiper and Turnstone** were added to the list quite quickly as we made our way along the Brigg.

Tuesday, April 10, 2007 - Thurgory Lane

Enjoyed a cycle ride to work this morning, first in about 5 months, it was good to go at a slow pace and SEE the wildlife. I had a Stoat running along the side of the cycle at one point; you wouldn't have seen that in the car with **Little Owl** and **Chiffchaff** calling as I made my way thro the farmland onto Thurgory Lane. Once there I heard 2 more Chiffchaff calling **Yellowhammers** playing out there little bit of bread and no cheese, 2 **skylarks** overhead with a couple of **Lapwings** in the fields. **Chaffinch** and **Dunnock** calling from the hedgerows what a great start to a day

Monday, April 16, 2007 – Pugneys

Well back to Pugneys for a quick evening visit to try and catch the arriving Sand Martins. As I made my way round the park, the common birds were all seen **Mute Swan, Canada goose, Tufted Duck, Coot, Heron, Black Headed Gulls, Cormorant. Willow Warbler and Chiffchaffs** were not only heard but tracked down and seen. On the reserve **Ruddy Duck, Teal, Lapwings** and **Goldeneye** as I made my way around the main lake I saw **Long Tailed Tit, Blue Tit, Great Tit and Willow Tit** and then the bird I went there for **Sand Martin**. One and then two at first and then they seemed to be everywhere. I made my way back to the car park slowly watching them hawking over the lake as I went.

Friday, May 4, 2007 - Local Woods

I had a local afternoon out today to try and catch the reported Wood Warblers at a local wood, and then maybe Ring Ouzel and Redstart. The first quarry wasn't so hard to find exactly where they had been reported two **Wood Warblers** battling it out side by side, other birds were **Great Spotted Woodpecker, Willow Warbler, Chiffchaff, Jay and Swallow**. Good start to the afternoon onward to try and find the elusive one on the local moors. More **Willow Warblers, Red Grouse** and **Linnets** but no sign of the reported Ring Ouzels though time had beaten me along with Redstarts as well

Wednesday, May 30, 2007 - Blacktoft Sands / Potteric Carr

Blacktoft Sands and visit number 93, this has to be one of my favourite sites. I stopped off at the local farm areas to see if I could pick up some Dotterels, but to no avail **Corn Bunting, Skylark, Pied Wagtail** were about the only birds seen so I made my way on to Blacktoft.

The first birds you seem to see as you enter Blacktoft Sands now is the **Tree Sparrows**, in the car park taking advantage of the nest boxes that have been put up. **Avocets** seemed to be everywhere **Marsh Harriers** kept filling in as the day went on. Warblers now seemed to be everywhere **Sedge Warblers** difficult to see but if you waited good views were had as they made their display flights. **Reed Warbler** took a bit more work but was seen too.

Whitethroats seemed to be in every bush here. Overhead **Swallow, Swift, Sand Martin and House Martins**. Other waders on site were **Redshank, Oystercatcher, Curlews and Black Tailed Godwits**. Whilst watching the waders up at the Ousefleet hide **Bearded Tits** could be seen in and amongst the reeds. Ducks included **Shelduck, Mallard, Teal**, and **Pochard** on the adjacent farm land **Yellow Wagtail**.

Leaving Blacktoft at 11:45am I made my way down to Potteric Carr for the afternoon to see if I could find the reported Little Ringed Plovers. Potteric Carr gave me a host of warblers with **Whitethroat, Chiffchaff, Willow Warbler, Garden Warbler, Blackcap, Sedge Warbler** and **Lesser Whitethroat**. Warders few a far between but I did see **Redshank, Oystercatcher, Lapwing, Greenshank** and the **Little Ringed Plover** a good day out

Friday, June 1, 2007 - Local Day Out

Finished work and off out to play, in wall to wall sunshine. Off to the local ponds to seek out the reported tree Pipit.

On arrival **Reed Bunting, Lapwing and Curlew** were id by there calls. Soon **Tree Pipit** was located, on sitting watching this bird going to and fro from it's nest, I wondered if this could have been one I saw in the Gambia only a couple of months ago on migration. Not much else about on this hot day **Swallow** were hawking overhead with **Willow Warbler** singing away with **Blue Tit and Chaffinch** in the wooded area.

I moved on then to one of the local reservoirs, Winscar. Here I caught up with **Common Sandpiper, Linnet** and **Skylark**. Not much to be had but a relaxing day out in the sun

Sunday, August 19, 2007 - Rutland 2007

Once again we went off to the Bird Fair. A quick look around was the order this year as we were moving down to Dorset for the week. Chattered with Yaya Barry the bird guide from the Gambia then we marveled at the various paintings and once again wondered how these people do it. The optics again are always good to have a look.

The birds in the area once again were good. We caught up with **Red Kite, and Buzzards**. We also saw in the area **Swallow, Grey Wagtail House Martins** and some **Sand Martins**. We once again stopped in Bridge Cottage, excellent place to stop. Food good and a great welcome, check out the website.

Wednesday, August 22, 2007 - Lodmoor RSPB

A week's holiday in Dorset mainly on a family visit but we did manage to squeeze a day out at Lodmoor RSPB reserve always been to the Radipole Lake reserve nr Weymouth and thought a day at Lodmoor would make a change. We walked from the car park area seeing **Kingfishers** along one of the canals. We then went around the top end of the reserve first, nr the main road to catch views of **Little Egret, Wheatears, Black Tailed Godwits, Redshank and Common Terns**. A quick chat with one of the locals put us onto a few more waders' nr the bottom end of the reserve so off we went. It was here that we saw **Spoonbill (3) Common Sandpiper, Little Stint, Wood Sandpiper and Dunlin**. Overhead **Swallows and House Martins** getting ready for their long journey south. If you are in the area well worth a look round anytime of year along with Radipole will make a good day out. Check the Dorset Bird Club home page if you are in the area

Friday, October 12, 2007 - Anglers Country Park

Afternoon around Anglers no surprises here today, went for the reported **Slavonian Grebes** (2) these were soon spotted about half way out on the main lake, managed to digiscope them even if it was very poorly done, too far away by far There was a lot of **Great Crested Grebes** numbering a few dozen. The lake also held the usual duck species, **Mallard, Tufted, Gadwall, Ruddy, Shoveler** along with the geese **Canada and Greylag**. The pool area had numerous **Lapwings, Pied Wagtails, Cormorants, Coots and Moorhens**. It was here that I saw the **Arctic Tern** (juv) flying around at the far side of the lake I decided to see if I could get closer. On the way round I caught up with some of the smaller birds **Goldfinch, Redpoll, Great : Blue and Long Tailed Tits**, . Eventually I had good views of the Tern from the lake edge as it was flying up and down. A few Gulls were on the water but not in the number that there will be in a few months time **Lesser Black Backed, Common and Black Headed** were the ones noted. Back at the car park I had a few moments at the bird table seeing **Chaffinch, Greenfinch, Tree Sparrows and Linnets** and then home

Friday, October 26, 2007 - Local Reservoirs

Firstly to Ingbirchworth Res here a few Gulls on the water mainly, **Black Headed and Common Gulls** ducks seen were **Mallard and Teal** along with the usual **Coot and Moorhens**. A walk around the res. produced good numbers of **Fieldfares** a good flock of 50+ with a few **Mistle Thrush and Blackbirds** thrown in. **Blue, Long Tailed and Great Tits** were about in small numbers along with **Chaffinch, Greenfinch**.

Moving on then towards Broadstones Res. where I caught up with the **Male Pintail** that had been there a while along with 3 **Goosander, Mallard, Canada Goose Common and Black Headed Gulls** in the field, two **Pied Wagtails** on the dam wall. Arriving back at the car I noticed a small bird fly up to the overhead wires, **Stonechat** not one but two. A nice round off to a good couple of hours

Friday, November 2, 2007 - Pugneys Country Park

Afternoon at Pugneys Country Park I soon made my way around to the hide on the nature lake. Settling in I soon saw **Teal, Ruddy Duck, Wigeon, Pochard, Shoveler, Mallard, Moorhen and Coots**.

Gulls species at the time were **Black Headed, Common** and a few **Lesser Black Backed**. There had been a report of Bittern early in the day, but not seen whilst I was there as usual.

Good numbers of **Lapwing** flying in and around with good numbers of **Great Crested Grebe** on the water. Then a **Kingfisher** made an appearance giving delight to the gathered crowd. The bird stuck around for about 15 minutes giving excellent views of this more often than not fly by bird. It fished and preened in close view before disappearing again a great end to a wonderful afternoon.

Friday, November 9, 2007 - Deffer Wood

A day in the woods on approach it was all too quiet now that the summer migrants have left. However there were good sightings of **Nuthatch, and Great Spotted Woodpecker.**

Further in to the wood I caught up with a flock of **Siskin** doing the rounds with **Redpoll, Blue, Great and Long Tailed Tits.** It took me a while to find a **Goldcrest** but I did. It seemed I had the woods too myself with hardly anybody about it was a pleasant moment listening to the common birds again going about their daily routines, with time for me to relax away from the day to day rush of our modern day life's. Other birds enjoyed that day were **Goldfinch, Blackbird, Jay, Heron, Chaffinch and Robins**



DEFFER WOOD

Saturday, November 17, 2007 - Potteric Carr

A day out away at Potteric Carr to try for the elusive Bittern arrival at the Carr was at about 9am just in time for the centre to be opening. £2.50 saw us on our way in and around to the first hide. Decoy hide was our first stop.

Scanning the water we soon caught **Teal, Gadwall, Mallard, Shoveler and Black Headed Gull** for our day list. Settling down we scanned the reeds for the elusive bird and there it was at the reed edge looking for food one Bittern. Two minutes and it had a fish in it's mouth then it was lost to sight. More people came into the hide, five minutes past so I had another look and it had started too walk up the reeds it to full view I had the rest of the hide soon onto it and we were all able to enjoy great views of the elusive bird, a great start to our day.

We moved and walked up towards Lower Ellers Marsh seeing **Bullfinch** on our way. At Lower Ellers hide we saw **Pintail and Lesser Black Backed Gull** and **Pochard**. It was a long walk around to our next hide at Piper Marsh. The woods were quiet but the few Tit flocks made up for it, these held mainly **Blue, Great and Long Tailed Tits**. We got good views of a male **Kestrel** in the open area of the wood. We made it to the bridge area at Huxter Wells Marsh. Here we rested and scoped the marsh seeing more gulls but we did manage to catch **Common Gull** before they were put up by a **Peregrine** hunting the marsh, and leaving without a meal.

At the centre we entered the willow hide were the bird table is and here we were able to enjoy great views of **Chaffinch, Reed Bunting, Willow Tit, Coal Tit and Great Spotted Woodpecker**.

We had a great day out at one of Yorkshire's Nature Reserves all for £2.50, what value. 43 species for the Day



GREAT SPOTTED WOODPECKER

Friday, November 30, 2007 - Langsett Moor

Two hour walk around the Langsett area this afternoon produced **Wren and Robin** in the car park. Entering the path ways bird life was very quiet as we made our way along the side of the reservoir. With only **Canada Goose** and **Little Grebe** on the water we made our way into the wooded area

We saw a group of **Crossbill** and **Siskin** flying through. It wasn't till we got back near the car park that we started to pick up the birds. One tit flock came thru holding **Blue, Coal** and **Long Tailed Tits**. **Kestrel** was seen sitting on the field wall but soon took to flight when we got near the bird. A male **Pheasant** headed off in the opposite direction as soon as we rounded the corner of the field. Overhead **Peregrine Falcon** came and soon went. On approach to the car park **Great Spotted Woodpecker** was heard before being picked up high in a tree. On inspection of the bird it was seen clearly that this was a female bird.



VIEW FROM INLET AREA AT LANGSETT RES

Friday, December 7, 2007 - High Hoyland

Within local club area patch this time around High Hoyland. The forecast was good but on arrival it looked as if rain showers and wind was the order of the day, and it was. I did manage a couple of hours around the sunflower beds seeing **Red Legged Partridge** in good numbers along with a charm of **Goldfinch** c50+, flocks of mixed thrushes' **Redwings, Fieldfares, and Mistle Thrush** in the hedgerows. **Kestrel** overhead and tit flocks making there way in the hedgerow **Blue, Great, Long Tailed**. With the odd **Chaffinch** thrown in In the fields I caught sight of **Pheasant, Woodpigeon and Collard Dove** and that was the couple of hours gone once again

Saturday, December 15, 2007 - Potteric Carr and Blacktoft Sands

Order of the day was to catch up with Water Rail and Hen Harrier. The early start saw me arriving at the Carr at 9am. On arrival I made my way around to the Willow Pool hide where the reported Rails were giving good views seeing **Bullfinch's' Redwing, Fieldfares** on the way. I stopped at the staff car park where seed had been put out for birds seeing **Blue, Great and Willow Tit, Chaffinch, Blackbird and Goldfinch** coming down to with in a few feet. Willow Pool hide gave me the great views of **Water Rail** I was wanting as soon as I opened the hatch. One bird had made its way around to the bird table and was beating a retreat on way arrival but great views were had before it disappeared. That was one target bird in the bag so I then made my way to the Piper Marsh hide. This is where the Bitterns have been seen regularly from, but not this morning. Back to the car park and on the way **Great Spotted and Green Woodpeckers** were seen.

Next was Hen Harrier but this would mean moving on to Blacktoft Sands **Stonechats** seen in the approach fields to Blacktoft with **Tree Sparrows** being the first birds seen on arrival. **Merlin** was the bird of the day giving me the best views I have ever had in 20+ of bird watching, perching happily at the bottom end of the pool in full view of the hide most of the afternoon, flying off occasionally to scare the feeding **Bearded Tits** near by. There were four wintering **Marsh Harriers** present (1 male) quartering the reed bed all afternoon giving excellent views of this come back bird.

As dusk fell **Barn Owl** gave a brief fly by Marsh Harriers were still present and settled for the night in a near by bush but no Hen Harrier never mind here's to the next day's birding.

Thursday, December 27, 2007 - Coastal Trip

I like to try and end the year on a high with a lifer. So it was off to the coast to Scarborough from the Desert Wheatear which had been around for a while. We arrived at the site at 9am after a 2 hour run. With nobody about off we set. We came across the odd **Blue Tit and Long Tailed Tit** as we made our way round to the sewage farm. **Rock Pipit, Pied Wagtail, Redshank and Canada goose** at the farm. By now more people were arriving, but the bird had not been seen at the last reported site. We spilt up, but to no avail, then with arm waving and running we descended upon our quarry. **Desert Wheatear** along with a **Northern Wheatear** in one of the ploughed fields we had passed, we enjoyed this bird for a while as it gave excellent views approaching to within a few feet as it feed.

We moved on then into Scarborough itself and found the **Black Throated Diver** in the harbour and then onto Scalby Mills, where we found mostly **Black Headed and Common Gulls**. Nice to see a **Kingfisher** here along with a few waders mainly **Redshank and Turnstone** a few ducks as well **Mallard, Teal and Wigeon**.

Moving onto Filey for the last leg here we picked up **Purple sandpiper, Knot, Dunlin, Redshank, Curlew and Oystercatcher**. Sea duck gave us **Eider and Common Scoter**. Well that's another year over and finishing on a lifer, a good day out.