

Sorby-Breck Ringing Group

May Newsletter 2006

"To provide data from ringing activities to support the conservation and knowledge of bird species in Derbyshire and South Yorkshire."

Siskins, Garden Feeding

It is interesting reading county and local bird reports noting how some species are underestimated by sample counts. In the April 2006 edition of the Derbyshire Ornithological Society the entry for Siskin reads, 'small numbers visiting gardens with more members achieving success by using nyger seed'. Equally Sorby History Society reported, 'small numbers at garden feeders'. Counts in my own Dronfield garden would tell a similar story, but ringing paints a different picture. A single 40ft net has caught over 600 new Siskins from January to April 2006. Daily numbers ringed were often over 50 Siskins. As a tool ringing shows Siskins moving through suitable gardens where feed is offered. Some Siskins are almost 'residents' attracting 'new' birds to the food provided throughout each day.

The early months of 2006 have proved to be a 'good' Siskin year in my garden with high numbers involved. In addition there were birds previously ringed in 2003 and 2004, six controls, but no birds from Norway as there was in 2004.

Ringing Refund for 2005

A total of £363.30 refund has been received from BTO. Sending in our records electronically resulted in £46.50 (Thanks David), Williamthorpe's CES £65.12 and our species, £251.68.

The species refund for 2006 is there to encourage ringers to target certain species. A list of these species is listed below for ringers in the Group to consider targeting this year.

4p Sparrowhawk (M), Merlin (M), Swallow (pulli), Snipe, Woodcock, Blackheaded Gull (pulli), Ring Ouzel, Mistle Thrush, Willow Warbler (pulli) and Starling

7p	Tree Pipit, Meadow Pipit, Yellow Wagtail, Grey Wagtail, Dunnock, Redstart, Grasshopper Warbler, Spotted Flycatcher, Marsh Tit, Willow Tit, Tree Sparrow (adult), Linnet, Lesser Redpoll, Bullfinch, Yellow Hammer and Reed Bunting.
10p	House Sparrow, Dunnock (pullus)
11p	Swallow at Roost
12p	Grey Heron, Sparrowhawk (F), Merlin (F), Hobby and Little Owl
13p	Hen harrier, Tree Sparrow (pullus)
14p	Kingfisher
*58p	Buzzard, Peregrine, Barn Owl, Tawny Owl, Long-eared Owl and Short-eared Owl
66p	Goshawk

Another Trip to Cyprus.

Landing on the 5th of April at Pathos airport Geoff, Steve and myself look out on a familiar scene. Geoff has been here over 20 times, this will be Steve's 9th and my 6th trip. At this moment we are full of expectation how many birds, what species and how many 'ticks' will we get? What we do know is every site and every net round could produce a star bird. It is this that keeps us returning year after year.

First morning the 6th we go to Ayios Menas our local site. Eleven nets only produce 20 birds, nothing outstanding, just a couple of Bonelli's Warblers, 4 Sardinian Warblers, a Northern Wheatear, a Cyprus Wheatear, a Nightingale and the best of the morning, two Orphean Warblers. A 'poor' morning we hope it improves.

The 7th we spent at Polis reed bed the stream has dried up through lack of rain, but we put up 12 nets and wait to see what will happen. The mornings catch is 50 birds but nothing spectacular six Sardinian Warblers, a Nightingale, 14 Cetti's Warblers, a Zitting Cisticola, and seven Savi's Warblers the best, but numbers a little better.

The 8th is along drive to Achelia where a stream runs into the sea, but again we have no running water just a few very small standing water pools with reeds. Only room for a few nets and only a few birds caught, about 25 in all, but as I said, anything can happen here. I get 2 ticks a Subalpine Warbler and a Penduline Tit, I am all smiles. Other birds include a Nightingale, 7 Cetti's Warblers and another Savi's Warbler. On our drive back we check another site Evretou Dam. Here we ring a stream which runs in to the dam. Our first sight of running water but we don't see many birds but decide to try next morning.

On the 9th we arrive at Evretou early and put up 10 nets in the reeds and scrub. We catch 50 birds nothing too exciting, a Snipe and 2 Olivaceous Warblers the pick of the bunch but while we are there Geoff spots a Baillon's Crake and hears at least 2 Little Crakes. We try our best to catch them but to no avail.

The 10th finds us back at Ayios Menas hoping things have improved. We start with a couple of Scops Owls but little else of note till Geoff returns from the nets with a Greater spotted Cuckoo, a tick for Steve, now guess who is smiling. We later catch 2 Pied Flycatchers and a Wryneck. Are things moving in, but we only catch 20 birds.

We try Polis again on the 11th and catch 50 birds similar to our first visit except for 3 Great Reed Warblers. A little disappointing as in the past this has been one of our best sights for producing the unexpected.

The 12th we are off to Evretou hoping to catch a crake. The morning produces over 40 birds with some interesting species, a Jack Snipe, the first seen on Cyprus this year and may well be the only one. Three more Great Reed Warblers and a Corn Bunting however the best of the day is a Red Rumped Swallow the first Geoff has caught on Cyprus and another tick for Steve.

On the 13th we try a different site at Ayios Menas. Up to this point we have only ringed 21 Blackcaps a bird we normally would expect to ring at least 100 while we are there. Different theories are proposed for the lack of numbers on the Island, lack of food due to lack of vegetation, no water to be reflected by the moon to attract as the birds flying over causing the birds to carry on their migration. We nearly double our catch of Blackcaps with 19, which helps us to our biggest total at Ayios Menas, 43, with another Scops Owl and an interesting retrapped Olivaceous Warbler ringed in 2005.

We finish early so we can go bird watching at Phassouri Reed beds a one and half to two hour drive near Limassol. Alongside the docks at Limassol on a small pool we see a Pied Kingfisher perch on the wires, Squacco Herons, Black Winged Stilts, Glossy Ibis a little further, on the salt pans are Kentish Plover chicks, but we were asked to leave the rings back at the villa! A nice lunch then on to the reed beds, Marsh Harriers flying around, a Little Crake only yards away, Cattle Egrets among the cattle, Marsh and Wood Sandpipers side by side, 7 Glossy Ibis, Spur-Winged Plover, Ferruginous Ducks, Pintail, Gadwall and more. One of my best days bird watching.

The 14th we head off again to Evretou to try for the elusive crakes. On the way we pick up a Geordie who now lives in Dorset, name of Shaun. The morning proves to be very interesting. Shaun gets several ticks including Great Reed Warbler, Sardinian Warbler, Savi's Warbler, Spanish Sparrow and a stunning Cyprus Warbler. A Squacco Heron lands between the nets and Steve tries to flush it into the net wading knee deep up the stream only to see it fly inches over the net. We had not seen or heard the crakes all morning but while flushing the heron Steve spots 2 crakes. The next net round he sees another near a net. This raises our hopes but we fail to catch them. Just before we

drop the nets Geoff extracts a superb Black Headed Bunting another tick for me, my third of the week. While here this morning we see Glossy Ibis, Roller, Green Sandpiper and a Marsh Harrier. As we leave I ask Shaun if he will be out again. Don't think so, I don't think my partner will approve. We don't realize how lucky we are to have such long-suffering understandings wives. Many thanks to Gill, Carol and Pam.

Our last day, the 15th up again same time as every morning 4.45. Off to Ayios Menas we put up 2 nets for Scop's Owls and then another two but the wind picks up quickly and we decide to take down. We have caught an owl and as Geoff approaches a net he spots a Quail in but it escapes before he gets to it that would have been my fourth tick, but that's how it goes.

Climbing the steps of the plane which will take us home I think back over the last 10 days. Three hundred birds ringed, 75 retraps, 38 species, 3 ticks for me, 2 ticks for Steve, Geoff sees new birds for his Cyprus list. Plenty of good food and drink in the tavernas each evening; A barbecue on the patio of the villa; Steve and Pam swimming in the pool. We may not have had the numbers but plenty of species and some new birds. Time to leave, but never mind, only 50 weeks and we will be here again!



CYPRUS WARBLER



BLACK HEADED BUNTING

By Phil. Lawson.

		Ayios 6th	Polis 7th	Achelia 8th	Evretou 9th	Ayios 10th	Polis 11th	Evretou 12th	Ayios 13th	Evretou 14th	Ayios 15th	RINGED	RETRAPS		
1	Chiffchaff	4				1						5	0		
2	Bonelli's Warb.	2			1	2						5	0		
3	Great Tit	1	0/1		1	1		3	1/1	3		9	2		
4	Orphean Warb.	2							1			3	0		
5	Sardinian warb	4	3/3		7/2	1/1	2/4	3/4	5/3	6		27	19		
6	Cyprus Wheatear	1										1	0		
7	Northern Wheatear	1										1	0		
8	Lesser Whitethroat	2		1	1	1			1			6	0		
9	Blackcap	1	1	1	5	5	6	2	19	2		42	0		

10	Nightingale	1	1	1		1		1	3		7	0			
11	Savi's Warb.		6	1					1		8	0			
12	Reed Warb.		18/9	6/4	8		15/11			3	50	24			
13	Cetti's Warb.		6/8	7	5	1	2/9	1/3	1	4	27	20			
14	Goldfinch		1	3	1		1	4	4		14				
15	Zitting Cisticola		1								1				
16	Penduline Tit			1							1				
17	Subalpine Warb.			1							1				
18	Common Snipe				1						1				
19	Sedge Warb.				13		1	10/1		5	29	1			
20	Tree Pipit				3	3		2	2		10	1			
21	Olivaceous Warb.				2				0/1		2	1			
22	Barn Swallow				1			3		1	5	0			
23	Linnet				1					7	8	0			
24	Pied Flycatcher					2					2	0			
25	G.Spotted Cuckoo					1					1	0			
26	Wryneck					1					1	0			
27	Scop's Owl					1			2	1	4	0			
28	Great Reed Warb.						3	3		1	7	0			
29	Jack Snipe							1			1	0			
30	Greenfinch							1		1	2	0			
31	Corn Bunting							1			1	0			
32	Spanish Sparrow							1		5	6	0			
33	Red Rump Swallow							1			1	0			
34	Whitethroat							1		1	2	0			
35	Cyprus Warb.									1	1	0			
36	Moorhen									1	1	0			
37	House sparrow									1	1	0			
38	Black Head Bunting									1	1	0			
											Totals	295	76	GRAND TOTAL	375

Salvis Warbler in Cyprus - 2006

The reed bed at Polis has provided the Group with a variety of ringing conditions over the years. Our annual 'Easter' visit to Cyprus has seen the river bed complete with flowing water and pools also in full spate and impossible to access, and finally in 2006, almost completely dry.

We didn't really know what to expect on the 7th April when we put up nets on the edge of the phragmites. It was dry enough to make a run through the marsh in places along dried out channels.

Reed Warblers were singing and in good numbers. Retraps from previous years indicated resident breeders mixed with Reed Warblers on their way North to Eastern Europe. High fat scores and zeros coupled with widely ranging weight scores supported this. Great Reed Warblers were not ringed on the 7th April with only a brief song phrase from an individual indicating an early arrival.

Savis Warbler was the first bird caught on the 7th April with a second in the same net. The net through the marsh caught four more birds, caught together as 'pairs'. A seventh provided our best ever day for the species. In 2005 six for the whole trip was another high. The Birds of Cyprus (Flint and Stewart, 1992, p138) lists the species as,

'Scarce to fairly common passage migrant with 16 lined at Paralimni from 11th March to 16th April 1968'.

Seven caught on a single morning is clearly a record of note with passage becoming more frequent and regular than previously thought. The eleven day period produced three more Savis Warblers, but the 7th April with seven Savis remains a day to remember.

April 2006 Totals **Monthly Species Totals Report**

	Jan 2006	Feb 2006	Mar 2006	Apr 2006		Total 2006	Jan-Apr 2005
Mute Swan	4		1			5	36
Greylag Goose		1				1	1
Canada Goose	4					4	6
Wigeon		1				1	
Teal	1					1	2
Mallard		1		4		5	2

	Jan 2006	Feb 2006	Mar 2006	Apr 2006		Total 2006	Jan-Apr 2005
Sparrowhawk							3
Grey Partridge							1
Moorhen	1					1	4
Coot		2				2	1
Lapwing							4
Jack Snipe	1		1			2	5
Snipe	3	2				5	22
Woodpigeon		2	2	4		8	
Collared Dove			1	2		3	3
Tawny Owl							1
Great Spotted Woodpecker		1				1	6
Swallow				1		1	
Meadow Pipit		1				1	
Grey Wagtail	1	5	6			12	11
Pied Wagtail	6	13	3			22	5
Waxwing	38	1				39	204
Dipper		5	5			10	6
Wren	7	10	1	2		20	22
Dunnock	7	11	11	12		41	85
Robin	9	14	6	5		34	69
Stonechat				1		1	
Blackbird	23	11	12	12		58	126
Fieldfare							1
Song Thrush	2	6	3	2		13	31
Redwing	5	1				6	29
Mistle Thrush							10
Sedge Warbler				4		4	2
Lesser Whitethroat							1
Whitethroat				3		3	1
Garden Warbler							2
Blackcap	1			3		4	5
Chiffchaff		1		3		4	12
Willow Warbler				10		10	23
Goldcrest	13	13	4	2		32	25
Long-tailed Tit	26	11	4	4		45	118
Marsh Tit			2			2	2
Willow Tit	2		1			3	13
Coal Tit	9	7	17	10		43	23
Blue Tit	82	49	37	8		176	374
Great Tit	35	18	27	8		88	208
Nuthatch	2	2	1	1		6	9
Treecreeper	2	1				3	6
Jay							3
Magpie				1		1	1

T500497	09/07/2005	3J	Holdworth, Sheffield (SS)	
	04/12/2005	R	Rivelin Valley, S Yorks (SS)	6 km, 148 days
House Sparrow				
VV73099	10/10/1998	3F	Cowers Lane, Belper, Derbys (AP)	
	15/04/2006	R	Cowers Lane (AP)	0km, 7yrs 187 days
TB46866	03/10/2004	2F	Shire Brook, S Yorks	
	02/02/2006	X	Woodhouse, Sheffield, S Yorks	3km, 487 days <i>Found dying</i>
Tree Sparrow				
T070205	06/02/2005	4	Cottam Power Station, Notts	
	06/01/2006	R	Thrybergh CP, S Yorks (DW)	40 km, 334 days
Chaffinch				
T529216	10/12/2005	3F	Cowers Lane, Belper, Derbys (AP)	
	31/12/2005	XF	Cowers Lane, Belper, Derbys	0 km, 21 days <i>Poor condition</i>
Greenfinch				
TB46105	12/07/2003	3J	Uppertown, Derbys (GB)	
	19/11/2005	R	Wingerworth, Derbys (GB)	7 km, 861 days
VF15195	29/07/2004	3JM	Cowers Lane, Belper, Derbys (RAK)	
	06/01/2006	X	Swanwick, Alfreton, Derbys	12km, 526 days <i>Brought in by dog</i>
Goldfinch				
T209963	21/11/2004	3M	Dronfield, Derbys (GPM)	
	27/11/2005	R	Holdworth, Sheffield (SS)	15 km, 371 days

David Williams