



Observations of Steart Marshes

Wildlife Update

It's that time of year that the wintering birds are leaving rapidly: 3500 Lapwing on 21st Feb, 2 on 5th March. Golden Plover, Teal, Curlew, Dunlin all greatly reduced. However Shelduck are still in good numbers, we had 574 on site (5th March)

2 Barn Owl seen most evenings and occasional Short-eared Owls.

Great White Egret (picture on right) has been spotted on Stockland Marshes, usually only seen on the intertidal area.



We're now lucky enough to hear 2 singing Cetti's warbler (picture on right) on a daily basis, a species which wasn't present on site last year. This is the only warbler to remain within the UK for the entire year and has a beautiful melodic song.



We have also been getting regular sightings of a Water Rail (picture on left) under our bird feeding station just as you go over the first bridge within the Wetland Walkway. This bird is extremely shy and you more often hear it than see it, so to get such a close up encounter is a fantastic opportunity. Another species that wasn't seen or heard on site until this year, illustrating how as the site develops the more species it's starting to attract.

We've had a ringed Greenshank frequenting the reserve, our Assistant Warden Joe Cockram, sent the information to the relevant monitoring body and discovered that it was ringed as a passage juvenile in NE Scotland, and over wintered at Steart Marshes. Many of our ringed birds over winter in Ireland, southern England or France, Spain and even Africa. Recently a few have started to over winter with us in NE Scotland due to the milder winters.



Reserve Updates

Easter weekend

Over the Easter holidays, particularly the bank holiday weekend, we'll be running a few events – children's craft activities in one of the hides and guided walks. They will run depending on good weather and availability of volunteers, so please check the notices in the car park for times, we will also tweet when they are happening. There will be other guided walks during the year, and we'll let you know when they are happening.

Visitor survey

Starting at Easter we will be carrying out a visitor survey. If you are stopped on one of your regular walks through the reserve, please do take a few minutes to talk to us. We want to hear from people who live locally and regularly use the reserve just as much as those who have travelled from further afield. Please look out for us and tell us how you use the site and what's important to you. Alternatively, you can pop into the office and fill one in.

Volunteers Needed

We are currently looking for volunteers who can help with events away from the reserve, Community Engagers. This is for people who are interested in WWT Steart Marshes and are happy to talk to people about it, encouraging them to visit. We attend events like local fairs and at the end of May we will be going to Barrington Court Nature Week. If you'd like to find out more, please contact Lucy Bartlett at lucy.bartlett@wwt.org.uk or ring the reserve office on 01278 651090. We regularly have other volunteering opportunities as well, so please get in touch if you're interested.

For any enquiries or concerns about anything on the reserve please don't hesitate to contact **Alys Laver** - Site Manager

WWT Steart Marshes

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