Lytchett Bay - birds and wildlife 2021

Welcome to the 30th consecutive Lytchett Bay annual report. The data that we have gathered & published over the period constitutes a comprehensive log of the site's ornithological importance since 1992. Since 2014, thanks to work led by **Nick Hull**, we have widened the report to cover a much wider taxa, interest in this section is growing year on year (page 49). This year we welcome **Joe Parker** to the editorial team. Joe has taken over the preparation of the bird ringing report (page 7) and ringing data. Thanks also **Stephen F Smith** an update on the botanical interest of the arable plants at Lytchett Fields (page 75).

As alluded to in the introduction last year's report, 2021 began much in the same way as 2020 had progressed…in Covid 19 lockdown. However the restrictions were not quite so tight and all of our regular observers were able to visit on a regular basis, perhaps more regularly due to the lack of other options! As the year moved on these restrictions eased but interest in biological recording was maintained and excellent coverage was achieved throughout the whole year.

Weather, in terms of birds and birdwatching, could be best described as unhelpful. There wasn't any severely cold weather at either end of the year. An extended dry spell in March continued into April but was not accompanied by high temperatures, in fact April was very cold, well below average with frequent frosts.

Not quite what we expected to wake up to on 5th May. No wonder our summer migrants and breeding resident birds struggled. © Shaun Robson

As we moved into May, the coldest since 1996, we received double our usual rainfall and many breeding species consequently struggled due to the shortage of food. June and July enjoyed some spells of very hot weather but also spells of very heavy rain and local flooding. Like May, July had double the average rainfall in Dorset. August was once again dominated by persistent westerly cyclonic conditions and migration was slow to get underway. By and large this weather pattern continued during autumn. Winds from an easterly direction were rare, northerlies likewise. These are the directions that we long for. November wasn't unkind and persistence allowed us to conduct our pipit studies with some success.

Given the weather it might be reasonable to presume that it was a poor year for birding. In fact the opposite was true. 167 species were recorded, the second most ever. 3 new species were added to the Lytchett Bay list moving it on to 232. A number of new record counts and early and late date records were established and more birds were ringed than ever before. No doubt all of this mainly due to the ever-increasing obsessions of the local ringers and birders.

The highlights of year included our first Guillemot, White-tailed Eagle and White Stork, all of whose stay was short, a few hours to a few seconds. The 3rd Pectoral Sandpiper was a little more obliging, but only a little! The 5th Wryneck showed itself only to its finder. However a drumming Lesser Spotted Woodpecker granted us several first-class performances. The star of the show in terms of visitor attraction and photographic opportunity was a lingering Hoopoe (our 6th) in October.

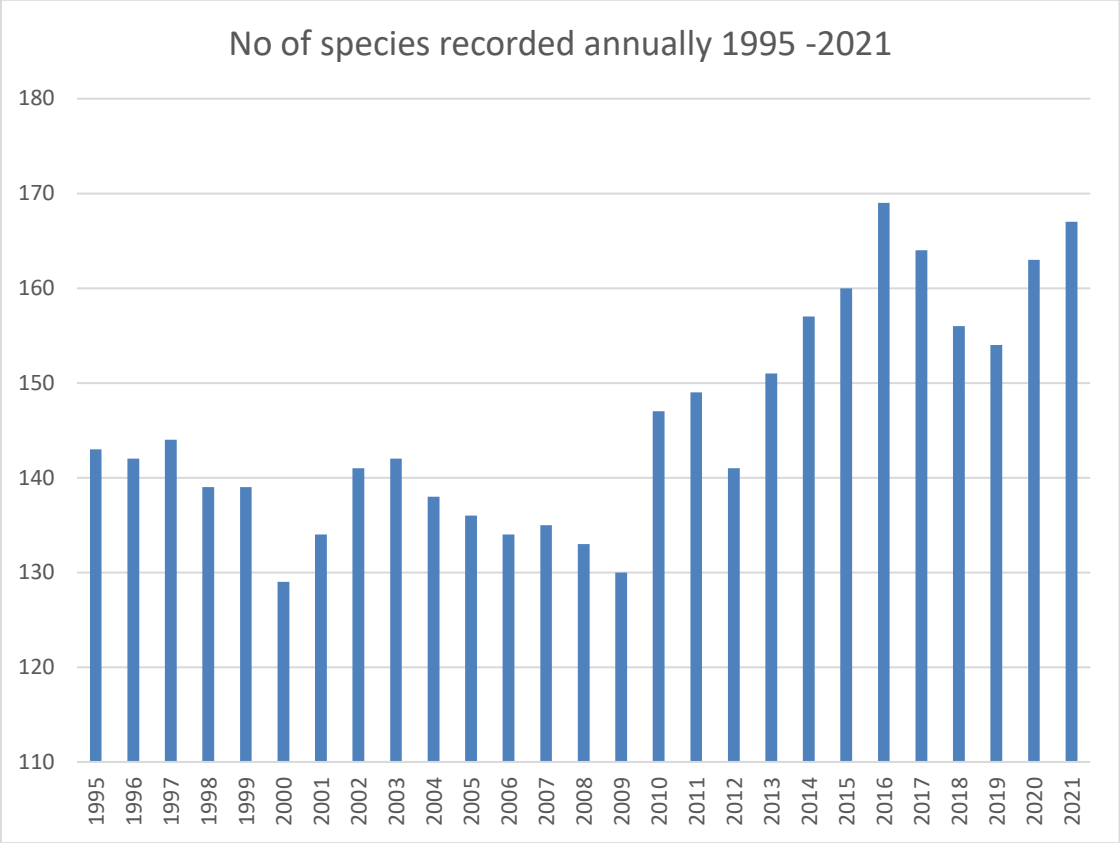
The discovery of the 9th Aquatic Warbler in the ongoing westerlies was perhaps the biggest surprise of the year. Ringing also produced more than 100 Grasshopper Warblers, 30 colour-ringed, presumed, Scandinavian Rock Pipits and returning Water Pipits and Jack Snipe from previous winters.

Nocturnal sound recording picked up our second Ortolan and a couple of surprise Hawfinches.

Barnacle Goose, Goosander, Knot, Common & Sandwich Tern and Jay occurred in greater numbers than ever before along with Firecrest which also bred for the first time.

Shaun Robson, Feb 2022.

Cover photos: Hoopoe (Mark Wright) Water Pipit (Ian Ballam)



Lytchett Bay – people and wildlife

Considerable progress was made during the year with our major projects. Though this work has yet to deliver visible action on the ground, exciting access projects are moving closer and it is hoped that 2022 will produce results which will both aid visitors and assist in reducing disturbance to our local wildlife.

Despite the on-going pandemic so many people have been working to improve Lytchett Bay and much has been achieved

The RSPB created new **"Dragonfly Pools"** in the field on the Bay side of Slough Lane. These will remain private but it is hoped to lead short dragonfly watching tours once they are established.

Pools after construction and starting to fill with rainwater © Shaun Robson

Thanks to support by the RSPB and volunteer donations we established a **winter bird feeding station** at the Pool viewpoint at Lytchett Fields and this was kindly managed and maintained by Ian Ballam.

Birds of Poole Harbour are ready to deliver their **House Martin nest tower** at the SANG car park. This will be installed in April 2022. This ground-breaking installation seeks to enhance the local population based around Frenches Farm.

During the autumn, in partnership with Stour Ringing Group, Birds of Poole Harbour delivered an exciting opportunity to attend **Bearded Tit ringing demonstrations at Lytchett Bay**. Guests were offered a unique insight into the bird ringing scheme and monitoring of this elusive reedbed-specialist, as well as a chance to familiarise themselves with other common autumn migrants such as Reed Bunting, Reed, Sedge and Cetti's Warblers.

The weather was kind and 3 (out or 4) planned highly successful sessions showcased a stunning array of Species. A total of 139 new birds were ringed and these featured 10 new Bearded Tit and 8 more that had been ringed previously. Other species highlights from the demos included Firecrest, Redwing, Water Rail and Treecreeper! The sold-out sessions welcomed 85 attendees and raised £1,271.54 for conservation.

© Alex King

Not surprisingly there was some great feedback.

“I enjoyed every minute of it - one of the nicest wildlife events I’ve attended. Loved the anticipation of what bird would come out of the canvas bag, the privilege to see the bird up close and the “finale” with the male bearded tit! I learned a lot about bird migration and the ringing process too.”

“One highlight after another. Brilliant event!!!”

“Bloomin’ brilliant!

We are very grateful Dorset Wildlife Trust (DWT) and Amphibian & Reptile Conservation (ARC) for access Permissions and hope to repeat these events in 2022.

The Bird and Recreation Initiative has been created with the aim of raising awareness about recreational disturbance to over wintering birds in Poole Harbour and has been widely welcomed by conservation organisations around the harbour.

This We are very grateful for their visits and engagement events at Lytchett Bay and we look forward to working closely with them in 2022.

Volunteer events were undertaken at RSPB Lytchett Fields to maintain the new hedge and clear gorse from around the viewpoints.

Monthly litter community picks organised by Oceans to Earth and Reconnect at Turlin Moor are making a huge difference to the local shoreline. In addition 20 abandoned boats were removed from the shoreline by the Environment Agency.

Upton Hedgehog Community Group continue to do great work in raising awareness of our health but vulnerable population of this rapidly declining but much-loved mammal (see page 51 for their update)

The best way to stay connected with all that is going on at Lytchett Bay is to follow one of our **social media** channels where we share news of sightings, discoveries and events. Twitter (@LytchettP) now has 718 followers and Facebook (Friends of Lytchett Bay) 353 friends. Please help us bring these to life by posting your news and photographs on a regular basis.

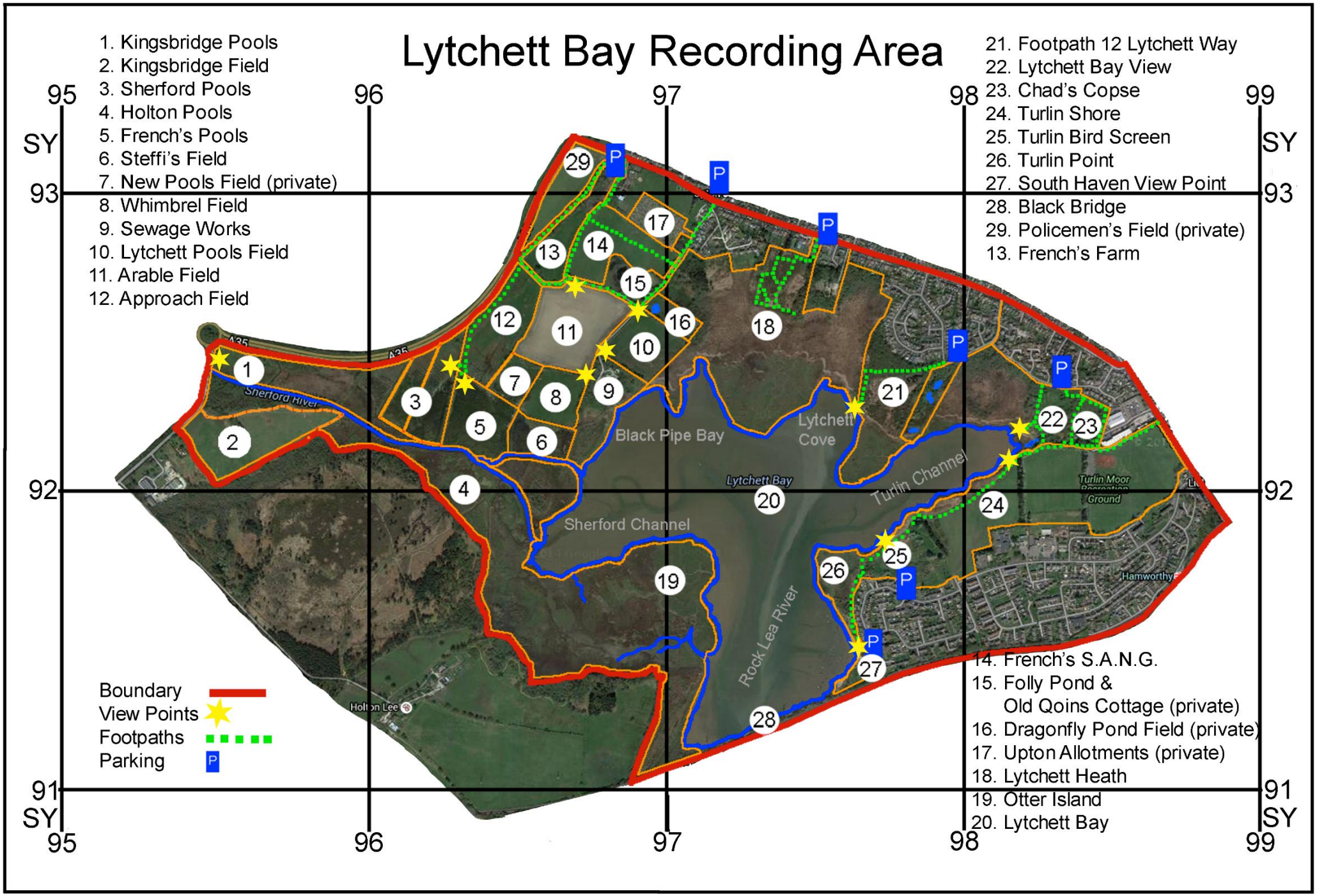
Nick Hull's map below gives a complete overview of the recording area. Whilst we have named as many sites as we can, please remember that some areas remain private and we would be grateful if visitors stick to the extensive network of public and permissive pathways that are available. There is a wide selection of viewpoints that provide visibility of the area.

The Guide to Birding Lytchett Bay remains the "go to" document for someone wishing to visit the site for the first time.

https://www.birdsofpooleharbour.co.uk/pdf/guide_birding_lytchett_bay_2.pdf

Sunset from South Haven, Turlin Moor © Andrew Francis

Lytchett Bay Recording Area



Bird Ringing 2021 – Joe Parker

For a second consecutive year the site reported a record-breaking season with 2,793 birds of 57 species ringed. Efforts were spread between three sites: Lytchett Fields (31 visits), Lytchett Heath/Reedbeds (61 visits) and Sandy Close Pond (13 visits). Collectively, ringing activities took place on 101 dates. More than 100 birds were ringed on 4 sessions.

As usual, early autumn was largely devoted to Aquatic Warbler migration. Despite unfavourable wind directions for much of late-July and August, efforts were rewarded with one juvenile ringed! A huge record-breaking Grasshopper Warbler total was also notable.

Our 100th Grasshopper Warbler of the season © Shaun Robson

Ongoing efforts to ring Bearded Tit, coupled with a new series of Bearded Tit ringing demonstrations delivered by Birds of Poole Harbour, continued to prove valuable. Increased nocturnal efforts confirmed winter site fidelity in Jack Snipe for the site.

Continued participation in the national Water Pipit colour-ringing project delivered repeat success and inspired the launch of a site-specific Rock Pipit colour-ringing project.

Presumed Scandinavian Rock Pipit "AD" 30th Oct 2021 © Shaun Robson

Water Pipit "0K" 7th Nov 2020 © Shaun Robson

A selection of notable recoveries notified to Stour RG are shown on the maps below.

Lytchett Bay 2021 international ringing recoveries and controls map

Lytchett Bay 2021 international colour-ring sightings map

Appendix 2 summarises species ringing totals. Details of recoveries and controls are detailed under species accounts. Since 1983, at least 32,304 birds of 87 species have been ringed at Lytchett Bay. We continue to research historical data and add new data & discoveries as we find them. Our ringing data is published regularly at [Trektellen.org] - Migration counts & captures

Acknowledgements:

The Birds of Poole Harbour & Dorset Bird Club host this and our previous annual reports on their websites which is hugely appreciated.

SR would like to add particular thanks to Ian Ballam for his continued commitment to birding and bird recording at Lytchett Bay and for his support with various volunteer activity at Lytchett Fields. To friends at Stour Ringing Group for companionship and hard work. Many thanks his fellow editors Nick Hull, Joe Parker and Stephen Smith for their survey work and assistance in researching and writing this report.

Stour Ringing Group would like to thank the RSPB, Post Green Estate, DWT & ARC for their kind permission to ring at Lytchett Bay.

Many thanks to all the observers who supplied records and comments via BirdTrack, e-Bird, Twitter and other information sources. Finally, to everyone who has allowed us to use their excellent images which brighten and decorate this report. Please keep them coming.

A fabulous capture of one of our favourite waders. Juvenile Black-tailed Godwit, Lytchett Fields.

<u>Systematic List 2021</u> - Shaun Robson, with ringing data by Joe Parker

4692 specific records were collated during the year via the **@BirdTrack** and **@Team_eBird** databases covering 167 species. In addition, many more records of common species were submitted via "complete lists" to both databases. Each of the main sites at Lytchett Bay have been set up as e-Bird "Hotspots", users of e-Bird are encouraged to log their sightings against these. If anyone would like advice on the use of e-Bird then SR is very happy to try and support. BirdTrack's site mechanism is based around 1km squares, again records logged against the actual square are most helpful.

BTO Wetland Bird Surveys (WeBS) are conducted monthly from September to March. RSPB Lytchett Fields is surveyed completely bi-weekly on the high tide. This data is incorporated within the species accounts.

BirdTrack functionality has been used to generate graphs showing the weekly maxima throughout the year for some regularly occurring species. The interpretation of these requires some caution as not all "graphed" species are counted every week; this can lead to gaps in the data. Where necessary this is clarified in the text.

Bird records were received from the recording area on all but 4 days as set out below.

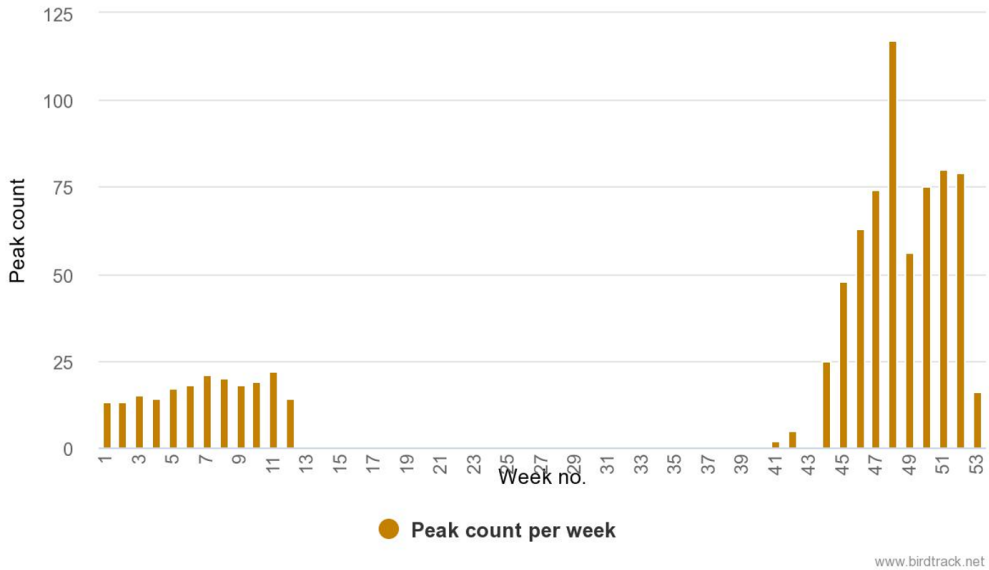
JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
31	28	31	30	31	27	31	31	30	31	30	30

The systematic list follows the latest IOC list as followed by the Dorset Bird Club.

Species names are followed by 2 or 3 numbers. The first is the record known count recorded at the Bay. This now includes historical counts by observers going back to 1975. The middle figure is the maximum day count in the period since 1992 (if less than the first). The final figure is the number of years in which the species has been recorded since 1992 (max 30), the year in which the current spell of comprehensive coverage began.

The symbol which follows each species name shows the direction of travel of the species status at Lytchett Bay over the last 5 years. We think these are quite intuitive; strongly increasing, increasing, stable, declining and strongly declining. Hopefully this feature will enable others to compare the data from this site with experiences at their own site and engender some debate and understanding.

<u>Dark-bellied Brent Goose:</u> (144 – 22) ↗
Uncommon winter visitor. The change in status that occurred in 2011 shows no sign of reversing. Present until 28th Mar and from 14th Oct after which birds were present almost daily until the year end. Max 117 on 13th Nov.



Red-breasted Goose:
Escape from captivity. One sitting on the water in the Bay on the morning of 17th Aug was quite a surprise (SR et al). Photographs suggested that it was carrying a blue darvic ring. Pulses might have been racing a little faster had it been found among the Brents on 17th Nov!

Canada Goose: (602 – 30) ↗
Increasingly frequent visitor. 1 pair bred again raising 4 young. In autumn large numbers passed over the site as they commuted between feeding and roosting sites on a NW-SE axis. Max 506 on 23rd Oct.

Monthly max:

JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
13	41	9	n.c.	92	32	31	n.c.	33	506	225	n.c.

Barnacle Goose: (50 – 11)
Scare migrant, some records refer to feral residents. At least 50, circled Lytchett Bay for more than 15 minutes on 10th Jan. These were very vocal and were presumably a wild winter flock. A record count for the Bay (previously 42 on 12th Dec 2010).

All other records referred to a summering bird that associated with the Canada Geese. Seen on 3rd Jun and frequently between 7th Oct & 9th Nov.

Greylag Goose: (40 – 22) ⇔
Uncommon feral wanderer. Recorded in 9 months on at least 31 dates. Max 26 on 25th Aug.

White-fronted Goose: (23 – 6)
Rare migrant. 5w early on 31st Jan included 3 adults (IB). The first record since one on 2nd Dec 2010.

Mute Swan: (58 – 30) ⇔
Uncommon resident, increases in winter. Bred between 2002-2007 and in 2015.

Monthly max:

JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
5	3	5	2	2	0	0	0	5	11	16	11

Egyptian Goose: (8 – 8) ↗
Scarce feral visitor, records continue to increase year on year. The first record was in 2011. Recorded on 23 dates, the most ever. 2 lingered during Jan & Feb and increased to 5 on some dates. There were further records of 2 in both Apr and Nov.

Shelduck: (645 – 548 – 30) ↘
Occasional breeder and winter visitor. A family party inc 6 chicks were seen on 30th Jun. Max 122 on 30th Nov. Overall a small improvement on 2020.

Monthly max:

JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
79	86	57	29	27	13	2	5	3	4	122	105

Shoveler: (28 – 29) ⇔
Scarce visitor, which can occur at any time. A good year with 39 bird-days on 17 dates. Records in both winter periods. Max 8 on 2nd Jan.

Gadwall: (73 – 25) ↗
Increasingly frequent visitor. Bred in 2016, 2020 & possibly this year. 4 well grown young were seen in early Jul. Most birds in late spring and early summer are presumed to be non-breeding individuals.

Monthly max:

JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
11	2	6	16	10	13	7	0	2	1	12	14

Wigeon: (732 – 30) ⇔
Common winter visitor. Absent from 12th Apr until 23rd Aug. Max 490 on 8th Nov. Birds regularly visited Lytchett Fields in the second winter period, max 240 on 28th Oct.

Bay monthly max:

JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
244	250	176	1	0	0	0	12	165	466	490	450

Mallard: (123 – 30) ⇔
Breeds at several sites around the recording area. Very regular on Sandy Close Pond. Fewer in winter.

Monthly max:

JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
9	2	20	12	12	52	25	79	78	8	27	22

Northern Pintail: (21 - 22) ⇔
Scare visitor. A typical year with 45 bird-days on 11 dates until 26th Feb and from 9th Sep, when one was sound recorded at night. Max 11 on 29th Dec.

Teal: (1345 – 30) ↗
Winter visitor and passage migrant. Max 472 on 21st Sep. Unlike the previous two years birds did not abandon Lytchett Fields in December.

Monthly max:

JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
200	213	156	106	6	8	23	90	472	468	355	358

Pochard: (24 – 16) ⇔
Rare visitor. 2 records. 2 females on 6th Feb and 2 males on 20th Dec.

Tufted Duck: (20 – 17) ⇔
Rare visitor. 2 records. A male on 6th Feb and 2 males on 18th Dec.

Goosander: (4 – 10)
Rare visitor. A good year, seen on 3 dates including a record count. One on 3rd Nov, 4 flew over Lytchett Bay View on 22nd Nov (a record, previously 3 on 3 dates). Finally and perhaps most surprisingly a redhead on a very flooded Lytchett Fields on 4th Dec.

This flock brightened an uneventful vis-mig watch
© Shaun Robson

Red-breasted Merganser: (73 – 30) ⇔
Winter visitor. Recorded on at least 65 dates until 23rd Mar and from 1st Dec. The period of occurrence seems to be contracting year on year. April departures and October arrivals were once the norm.

Monthly max:

JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
13	12	8	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	7

Red-legged Partridge: (4 - 7)
Rare visitor emanating from local releases. 1 on 5th Apr was the only record.

Pheasant: ⇔
Common resident.

Nightjar: (3 – 21) ⇔
Irregular breeder. A very poor year with sadly no indication of breeding within the recording area for the first time in many years. The first record was interesting, a churring bird from Turlin Moor on 25th Jun. Only 4 further records until 27th Aug. *1 ringed.*

Swift: (113 – 30) ⇔
Passage migrant and occasional local breeder. Recorded between 24th Apr - 18th Aug. Max count 15 on 22nd Jun.

Cuckoo: (2 – 29) ⇔
Scarce visitor in spring. The 3rd good year in a row. Recorded on 20 dates between 20th Apr – 2nd Jun. 2 present on 30th Apr. All autumn records are unusual. Singles seen on 25th Aug at Turlin Moor & 6th Sep at Lytchett Fields.

Stock Dove: (72 – 30) ↗
Uncommon resident, increasing. At least 2 pairs bred in the vicinity of Lytchett Fields. The arable field proved attractive in both winter periods. Max 52 on 10th Feb and 48 on 29th Dec.

Woodpigeon: (17,785 – 30) ⇔
Common resident and autumn migrant. Autumn movements were few. Max 536w on 4th Nov. *2 ringed.*

Collared Dove: (18 – 30) ⇔
Resident. Recorded across the site on a daily basis.

Water Rail: (67 pairs – 30) ⇔
Common resident and winter visitor. No perceived change in status after 2013's complete breeding survey found 67 prs. *2 ringed.*

Moorhen: (18 – 30) ↗
Common resident. Breeds widely across the area, much more so than in the past. A pair bred at Sandy Close Pond for the third year in a row. First brood was predated in nest. Second brood hatched 7 and 6 believed to have fledged. One juv remaining on pond with parents until year end. Max full grown birds at any one site was 10 at Lytchett Fields in Dec.

Coot: (62 – 19)
Very scarce visitor, though night recording is proving that they are frequent overhead nocturnal migrants!

The first was sound recorded on 8th Feb at the Lytchett Way listening station and on a further 11 dates in spring. One was seen near the Waterworks from 11th - 15th Sep. Sound recorded on 5 dates in the autumn.

Photographic evidence that Coot does actually occur at Lytchett Bay. The first sighting since 9th – 12th May 2016! © Ian Ballam

Little Grebe: (12 - 30) ⇔
Winter visitor. Present in the Bay, and occasionally on Lytchett Fields, until 15th Mar and from 14th Jul. Max 7 on 18th Nov.

Great Crested Grebe; (7 - 27) ↗
Increasingly frequent visitor. A sharp return to normal after last year's excess. Seen on only 28 dates with none between 21st May - 28th Aug. Max 2 on several dates.

Oystercatcher: (400 – 30) ⇔
A common winter visitor and passage migrant. Turlin Fields and Turlin Shore at high tide remain the favored locations, with fewer birds remaining in the bay to feed at low tide. Increasingly birds are seen on Lytchett Fields, particularly in spring and summer.

Whilst birds were seen frequently at Lytchett Fields in spring there was no repeat of 2020's breeding attempt. The maximum count was on 21st Jan at Turlin Fields.

Monthly max:

JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
175	132	n.c.	4	5	4	2	13	29	53	34	122

Pied Avocet: (327 – 29) ↗
Increasingly regular winter visitor and passage migrant. Year on year occurrence seems less reliant on cold weather. Present daily until 7th Mar and from 23rd Oct. There were occasional records from Lytchett Fields (max 60 on 3rd Dec) and birds roosted on Turlin Point frequently during both winter periods.

Monthly max:

JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
162	131	11	2	0	0	0	0	0	7	163	152

W(A)+B(Y) (EW17769) *was present on 6th Jan 2021 and 27th Nov 2021.*

Incredibly, this bird was ringed as a pullus with a metal ring at Holland Haven, Essex, England on 11th Jun 2010 and then subsequently colour marked whilst sitting on a nest at Westkapelle, NETHERLANDS almost 10 yrs later on 6th May 2020.

In 2021, the bird was again recorded at Westkapelle, Netherlands before returning to Essex in Aug 2021 on its return journey to us.

© Shaun Robson

GB+BY (EY78234) *was present on 5th Jan 2021 and 14th Feb 2021.*

It was ringed as a pullus at Beaulieu River, Hampshire on 25th Jun 2014. A movement of 44km.

It has previously been recorded at Lytchett Bay on 8th Feb 2015, 2nd Jan 2019 and 19th Dec 2020. The bird was sexed as a male when it returned to breed at Normandy Marsh, Hants in 2019, fledging four chicks. Graham Giddens (ringer) has confirmed that the blue ring on left leg was lost in early 2020.

© Shaun Robson

RB+YB (EY04836) *was present on 2nd Jan 2021, 1st and 4th Feb 2021.*

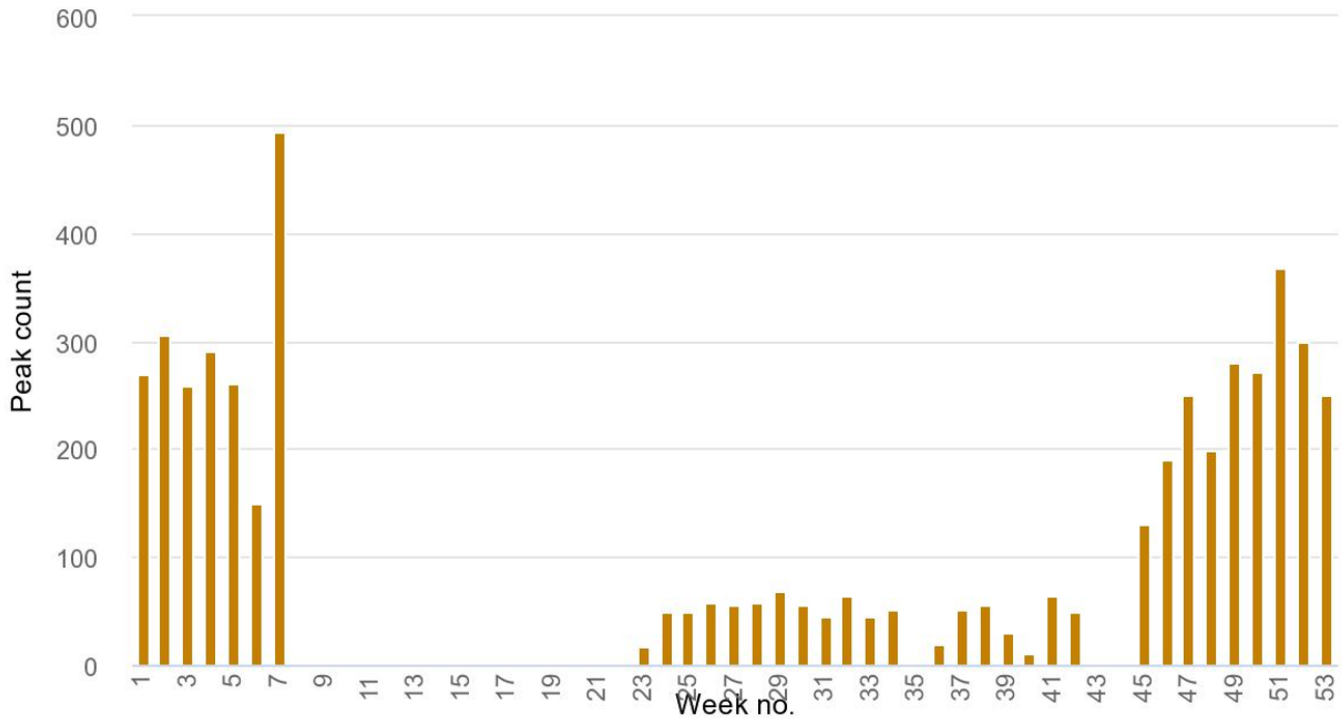
It was ringed as a pullus at Greenabella Marsh, Hartlepool, Cleveland on 24th Jun 2014. It has previously been encountered at Lytchett Bay on 11th Jan 2018. The bird has also been seen in Essex, west and north Yorkshire.

© Ian Ballam

Yfl(6X)/m+Y (ER93334) *was present on 25th Nov 2021.*

It was ringed as a pullus at Conder Green, Lancashire on 1st Jun 2021. A movement of 477 km. This bird has also been seen in Lincolnshire & Teeside.

Lapwing: (3000 – 30) ⇔
Formerly bred, now a non-breeding visitor in smaller numbers. Bred regularly during early 1990's. Last confirmed breeding 1999. 1 or 2 birds were present during Apr and May but there was no evidence of a breeding attempt. Birds were recorded in every month. The max count of 493 was on 15th Feb.



2 colour ringed Lapwing give some insight as to the origins of our winter flock. Not too far away based on these two birds.

Nfl//WN+N//Bm *was present on 14th, 16th and 24th Nov 2021.*

It was ringed as a pullus at Avon Tyrell South, Hampshire on 9th Jul 2021. A movement of 20 km.

© Ian Ballam

G//GN + Nfl//Bm *was present on 12th Oct and 10th Dec 2021.*

It was ringed as an adult female at Watton's Ford, Avon Valley, Hampshire on 16th Apr 2021. A movement of 24 km.

© Ian Ballam

Grey Plover: (18 – 24) ⇔
Scarce visitor. The poorest year for some-time. Single birds on on 6 dates. 10th Feb at Turlin Moor, 26th Mar in the Bay, 31st Aug & 3rd - 5th Sep at Lytchett Fields.

Ringed Plover; (50 – 26) ⇔
Passage migrant, previously scarce. 212 bird-days on 65 dates. Whilst presence was almost exactly the same as 2020, numbers were c33% down.

Spring migration 27th Mar – 2nd Jun. Max 23 on 8th May. Autumn migration 22nd Jun – 1st Oct. Max 10 on 18th Aug. The majority of records in both seasons coming from Lytchett Fields, though the first of the year was sound recorded at Lytchett Way. Frequently sound recorded at night during early May and Sep.

Little Ringed Plover: (15 – 19) ↗
Increasingly frequent summer visitor. After last year's successful breeding hopes were high of a repeat this year. Following the first two birds on the relatively late date of 28th Mar, hopes increased with the arrival of more birds. Spring passage was strong and separating migrants from potential breeders was not initially easy. Spring numbers peaked with a spring record 12 on 22nd Apr.

Copulation was first noted on 21st Apr and by the first week of May we were confident that 3 separate pairs were present. During May expectedly birds became more elusive and it was hoped that incubation was taking place. Unfortunately May was also exceptionally wet and many birds seemed to be struggling. Sadly as time went on it was clear that none of the pairs had been successful and only 1 pair remained by early Jun.

Return passage was surprisingly weak with a max of 6 on two July dates and the last birds of the year seen on 25th Jul. The number of bird-days was the best ever (obviously helped by the record breeding presence) – 334 (previous best being 214 in 2020). All records came from Lytchett Fields, except for 5 in flight over Lytchett Heath on 2nd Apr.

Whimbrel: (157 – 30) ⇔
Passage migrant, most numerous in Spring. The first on 12th Apr was followed by 296 bird-days up until 27th May, max 28 on 27th Apr. Autumn passage occurred between 4th Jul – 1st Sep involving 54 bird-days, max 4 on 31st Jul. Frequently sound recorded at night during early May and Sep.

Curlew: (116 – 30) ⇔
Common winter visitor and passage migrant. Frequently seen on Lytchett Fields in small numbers.

Monthly max:

JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
44	35	18	2	4	23	42	42	14	37	47	47

M//R+R//WR (*FP45756) was present during winter 2020-21 until at least 20th Feb 2021, arriving back on 31st Jul 2021 and is still present into 2022.*

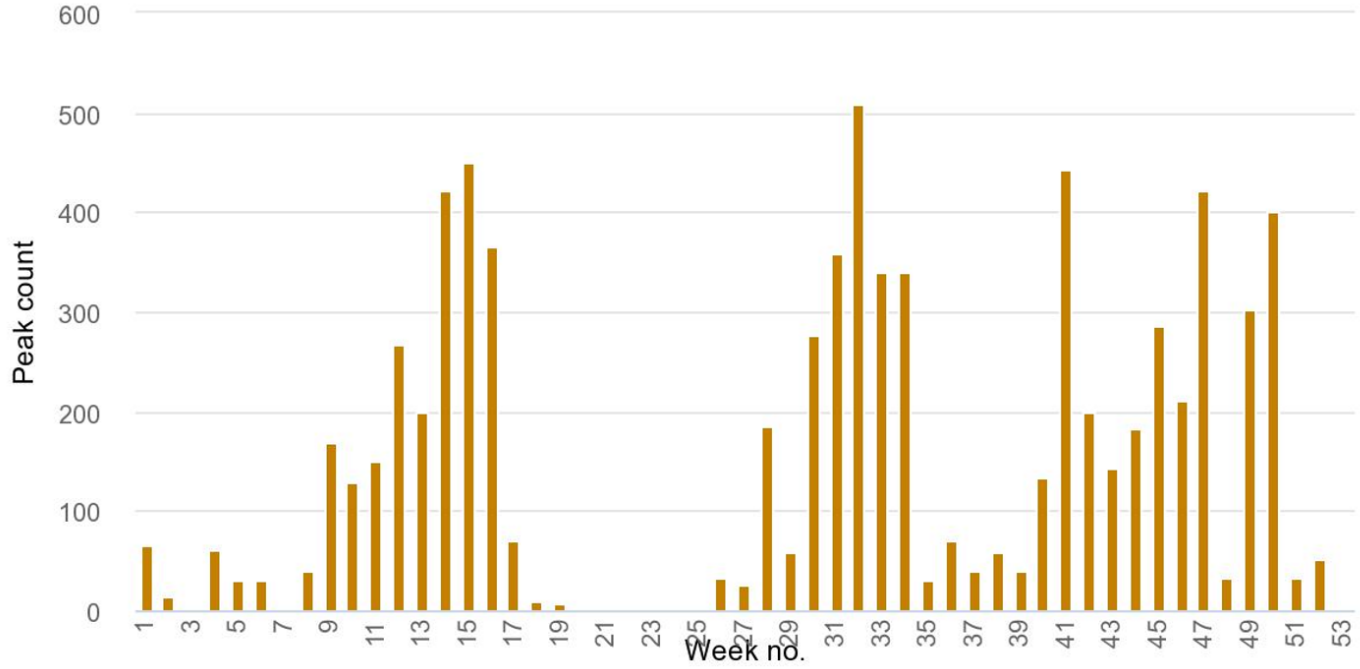
It was ringed as an adult female at Strodgemoor, Burley Street, New Forest, Hampshire on 25th May 2018. The bird was fitted with a GPS tag, but unfortunately this fell off 1 month after fitting. It was seen in the Avon Valley, Hants in Mar 2019, presumably on its way back to its breeding site. First encountered at Lytchett Bay on 16th Sep 2018, the bird has returned for the non-breeding seasons 2018-19, 2019-20, 2020-21.

Many thanks to Pete Potts for this information.

© Ian Ballam

Bar-tailed Godwit: (110 – 26) ⇔
Scarce visitor. 41 bird-days on 19 dates, was a little up on 2020 and above average. 2 on 6th & 1 on 24th Mar were unusual. Spring passage between 15th Apr - 10th May. Max 9 on 22nd. In autumn between 9th – 28th Sep. Max 2 on 3 dates.

Black-tailed Godwit: (1240 – 30) ⇔
Common passage migrant and winter visitor. A good year with strong presence during spring, autumn and winter. Birds began to gather and feed at high tide on Lytchett Fields regularly from early Apr onwards, peaking at 509 on 9th Aug, the same day as the first juv of the year. The highlight of the year however was the reappearance of LG+RO on 7th Mar (see below for more details).



Over the last 25 years colour ringed birds have proved that birds visiting Lytchett Bay breed in Iceland (*L.l.islandica*). Birds seen at Lytchett Bay also visit western France, Portugal, Ireland, Scotland, The Netherlands, Belgium, Germany, E England as well as many locations along the south coast.

Another disappointing year for the number of colour ringed sightings especially given the consistently high presence.

***LG+RO** was present on 7th & 8th Mar 2021 and 12th Apr 2021.*


© Ian Ballam

It was ringed as an adult female at Langhús, Fljót, ICELAND on 27th Jun 2002. This makes the bird at least 20 years old, most likely 21+!

Although this is the oldest to be recorded at Lytchett Bay (title previously held by this bird back in 2017), there's another 12 years to go until this bird breaks the longevity record for the species. It has previously visited Lytchett Bay in 2006, 2007, 2008, 2012, 2013, 2015 & 2017.

During its life this bird has also been seen in Portugal, western France, Humberside and Hampshire.

LNL+YRY *was present on 15th, 19th and 28th Nov 2021*

© Ian Ballam

It was ringed at Axe Estuary, Seaton, Devon on 10th Nov 2013. It has previously been encountered at Lytchett Bay in 2014, 2015, 2017 and 2018. All recent records are from Poole Harbour.

BOL+RNR *was present on 28th Feb, 6th Mar and 17th Dec 2021.*

© Ian Ballam

It was ringed as an adult female at Harty, The Swale, Kent on 28th Aug 2019. The bird has previously been encountered at Lytchett Bay in 2019 and 2020.

RGW+RNR *was present on 26th Nov 2021.*

© Ian Ballam

It was ringed at Harty, The Swale, Kent on 13th Sep 2013. It has previously been encountered at Lytchett Bay in 2017, 2018 and 2019. The bird was recorded in the Netherlands in 2014, otherwise all other records relate to Essex, Kent and Suffolk.

Left leg always given first, all rings above the tibia (unless preceded by the mark //). Recently some birds have been marked with leg flags rather than rings. Colours are:

O = Orange	L = Lime (this can look very washed out in the field, approaching white)
R = Red	G = Green
W = White	B = Blue
Y = Yellow	N = Niger

Many thanks to Pete Potts and the Farlington Ringing Group, Böðvar Þórisson and the Iceland Wader Group for supplying this information.

Turnstone: (9 – 11)
Surprisingly rare given that they are a common winter visitor within 100's of metres of the recording area boundary. Only 12 records prior to this year.

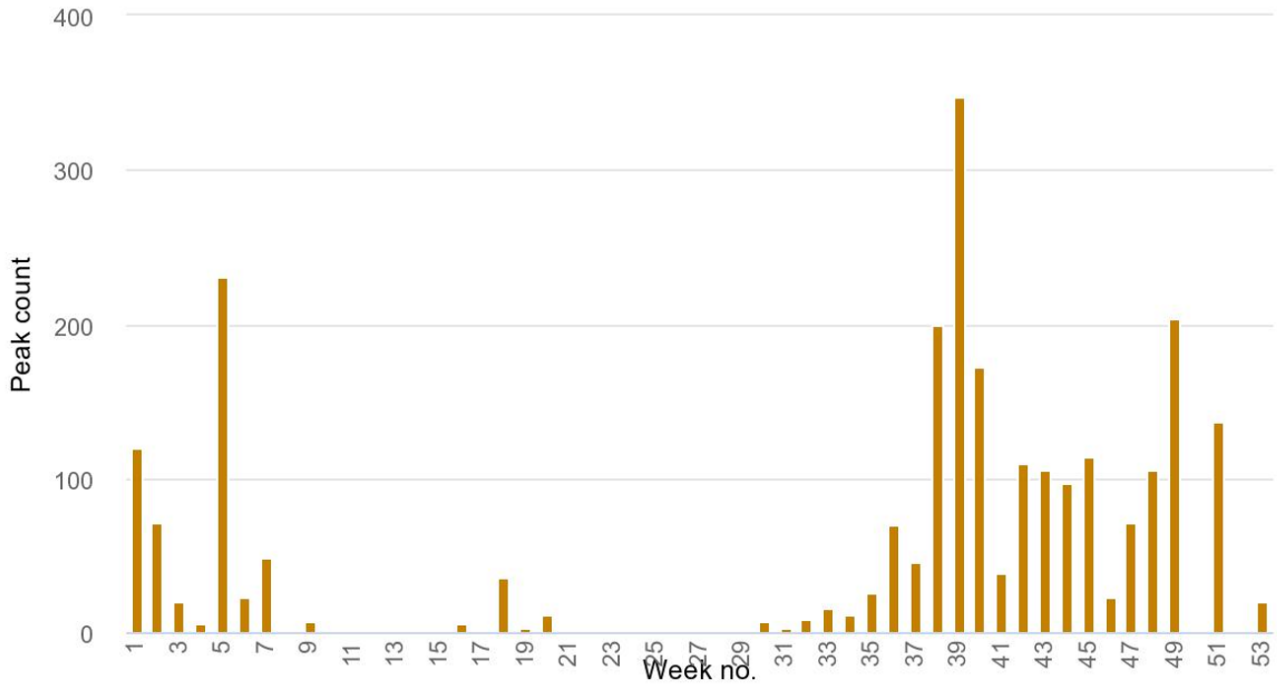
1 in the Bay on 8th May, 1 at Lytchett Fields on 11th May, 3 at South Haven on 24th Oct, followed by singles there on 12th & 25th Nov. A record year.

Red Knot: (48 – 21) ⇔
Scarce visitor. A very atypical and ultimately record year. 13 at South Haven on 13th Mar was an excellent unexpected spring record. Autumn was generally poor with only 9 bird days on 6 dates between 12th Aug and 12th Sep at Lytchett Fields. Then poor weather attracted 48 to Lytchett Fields on 24th Oct (SGL), a record count, surpassing 34 on 17th Sep 1995.

Ruff: (11 – 26) ⇔
Scarce visitor. Cold weather in Feb produced a rare winter record, 3 in the Bay with Lapwing on 13th. One spring record, a single on 1st Apr. 36 bird-days in autumn (not dissimilar to 2020 & 2019) from 23rd Jul to 6th Oct. Max 2 on many dates. All autumn records at Lytchett Fields.

Curlew Sandpiper: (9 – 15) ↗
Scarce autumn migrant. A fine adult still largely in breeding plumage was present from 5th – 13th Aug. This was followed by just two brief juveniles on 31st Aug & 6th Sep.

Dunlin: (1800 – 1200 – 30) ⇔
Regular winter visitor and passage migrant. Both winter periods were decent by recent standards. Spring migration peaked at 47 on 8th May and continued until the 20th. The first returning bird was on 10th Jul after which autumn migration was very good. Max 348 on 27th Sep. The huge majority of birds were seen at Lytchett Fields. *1 ringed.*



Little Stint: (7 – 15) ↗
Scarce autumn migrant. The best year since 2017. 2 on 18th Aug were followed by 1 on 12th - 13th Sep, increasing to 2 on 14th. These remained until 20th. All records from Lytchett Fields.

Pectoral Sandpiper:
3rd record. A typically elusive juvenile was at Lytchett Fields between 12th - 20th Oct (IB et al). Rarely coming close to the viewpoints it disappeared behind the islands for long periods.

The previous records are:

1 on the Pool Field on 11th Sep 1992
1 at Lytchett Fields 3rd – 6th Oct 2014

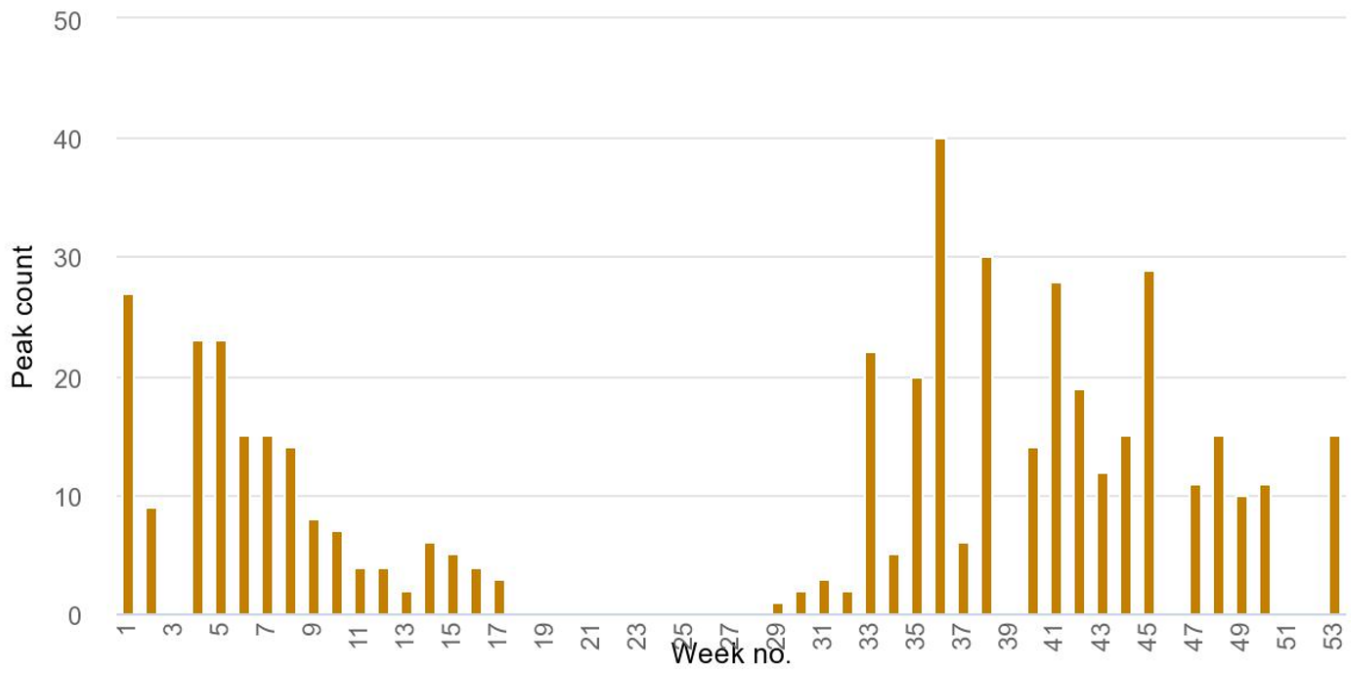
Woodcock: (5 – 20) ⇔
Scarce but under recorded winter visitor. The number of records of this species is largely a reflection of the effort made to see them. Nick Hopper studied Woodcock during early 2014 on behalf of The Birds of Poole Harbour. Following transects at Lytchett Bay the estimated winter population was predicted to be 8 birds (No more than 5 have ever been seen on one visit). Thanks to the use of a thermal image camera surveys were more productive this year. Birds were seen on each visit. Max 4 on 17th Feb. *2 ringed*.

Jack Snipe: (5 - 21) ⇔
Scarce but under recorded winter visitor. Like Woodcock, records are to a degree a reflection of birder / survey effort as much as presence. 2021 was a record year, with birds seen on 26 dates until 18th Mar and from 7th Oct. The use of a thermal imaging scope is changing our awareness and knowledge of this secretive species. Most came from Lytchett Fields with two at Lytchett Heath. Max 3 on 6th Dec. A highlight of the year was the re-trap of a bird in Oct ringed in Mar. See below. *5 ringed.*

NW98055 *- A bird ringed at Lytchett Bay on 2nd Nov 2020 was re-trapped 399 days later on 6th Dec 2021.*

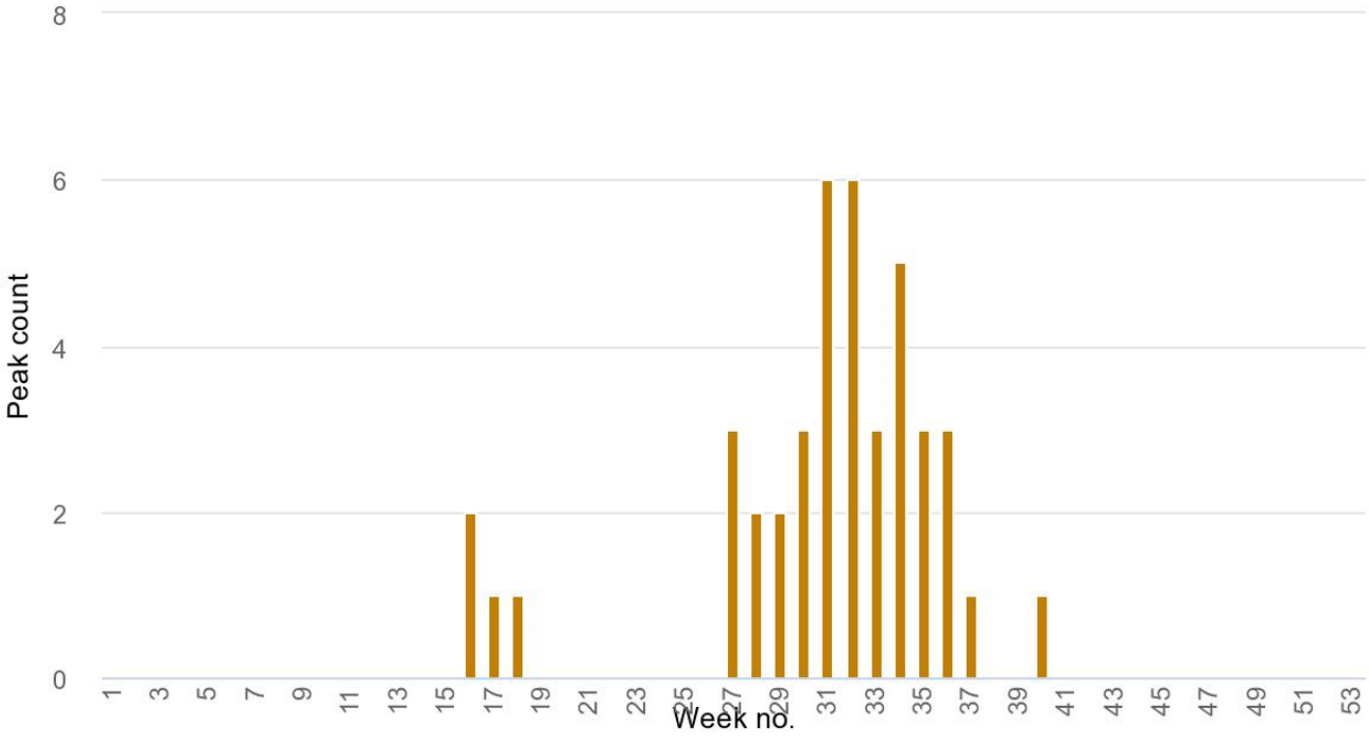
This is the first record to prove winter site fidelity at Lytchett Bay. With the exception of some marginally closer locations the core breeding range of this species is northern Sweden, Finland and Russia. This bird therefore made an astonishing journey between the two dates stated.

Snipe: (160 – 132 – 30) ↘
Winter visitor and passage migrant. Recorded until 29th Apr, returning on the 22nd Jul. Slightly more than the last couple of years. Max 40 on 6th Sep. *3 ringed.*



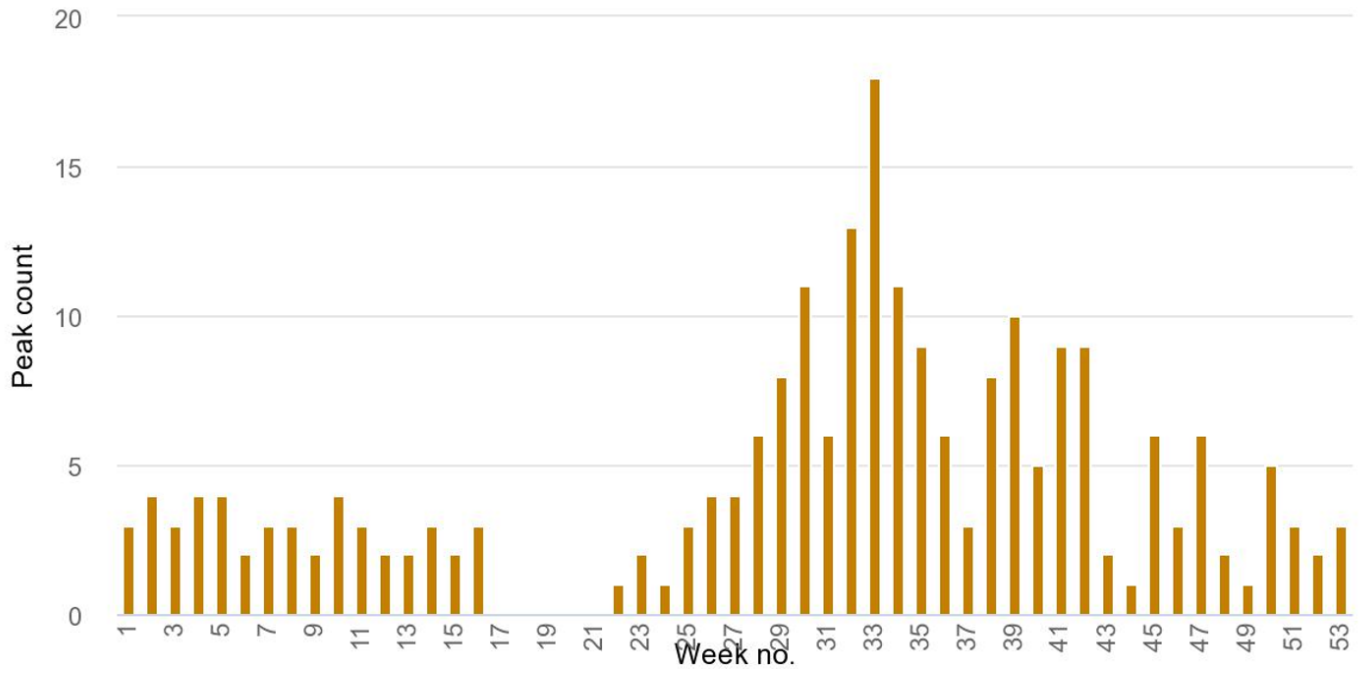
We know that some people complain that our waders are often too distant. But using very different equipment both Mark Wright (left) and Ian Ballam (right) show that patience produces results. Juvenile Little Stint, Wood Sandpiper, juvenile Redshank, and juvenile Pectoral Sandpiper All photographed at Lytchett Fields.

Common Sandpiper: (14 – 30) ⇔
Uncommon passage migrant. 6 bird-days in spring between 20th Apr - 3rd May. In addition sound recorded at night on 3 dates. Autumn passage 10th Jul - 7th Oct. Max, was a rather poor, 6 on 2 dates in Aug.



In total there were 116 bird-days in autumn, the least since 2014.

Green Sandpiper: (30 – 30) ↗
Common non-breeding visitor. Lytchett Fields and western most part of the Bay is the favored area. Present until 21st Apr and from 6th Jun. After which birds were seen on most visits until the year end. Max 18 on 21st Aug.



Redshank: (608 – 436 – 30) ↘
Common winter visitor with remanent breeding population on salt marsh. There were no confirmed breeding records again this year, late spring records were few. Many of the saltmarshes at Lytchett Bay are now either heavily grazed by Sika, frequently disturbed by dog walkers or patrolled by foxes. Max 196 on 24th Oct.

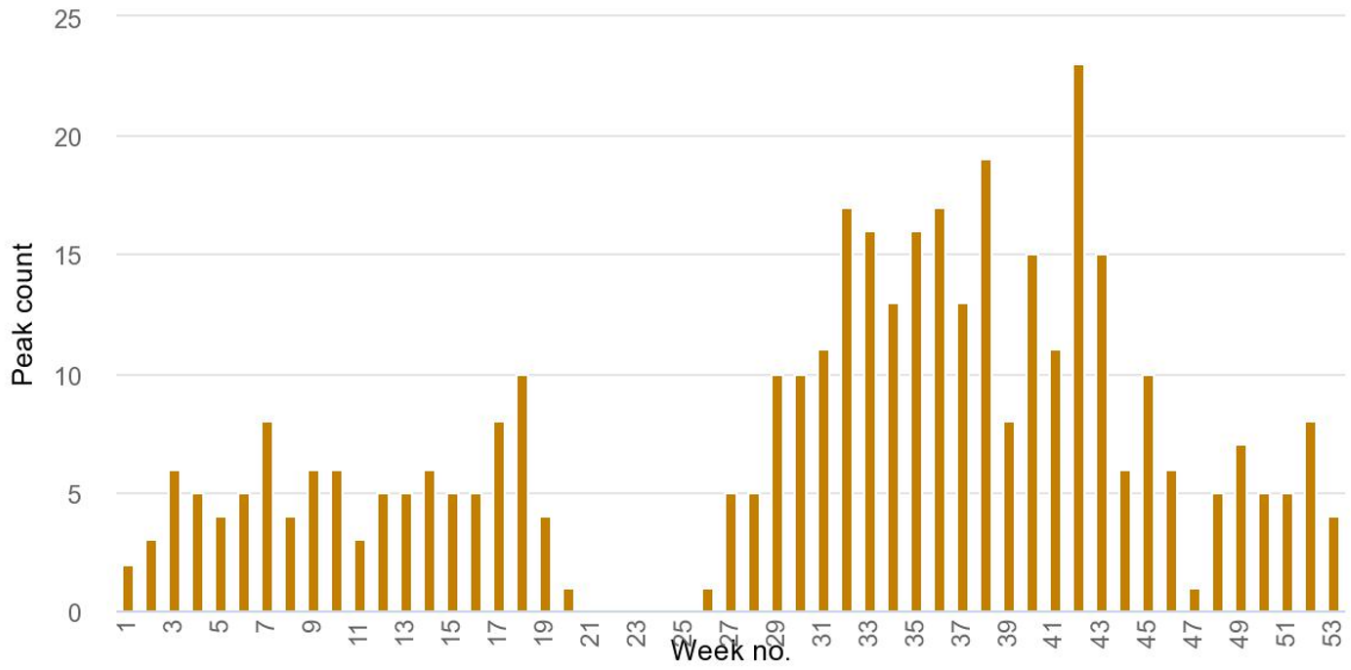
Monthly max:

JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
94	149	91	35	1	11	103	160	103	196	175	146

Wood Sandpiper: (5 – 18)
Scarce migrant. The poorest year since the last blank year in 2010. Only 1 record, a 2-day bird at Lytchett Fields on 27th – 28th Jul.

Spotted Redshank: (68 – 42 – 30) ↔
Scarce passage migrant and scarce winter visitor. A very poor year with presence on only 56 dates. As stated previously recent "good years" have largely been thanks to long staying birds and this did not happen this year. 1 or 2 recorded on 31 dates until 26th Apr and on 29 dates from 21st Aug till the year end.

Greenshank: (49 – 27 – 30) ↔
Common non-breeding visitor. In contrast to the previous species this was an excellent year. There were no records between 19th May and 3rd Jul but present almost daily outside that period. Max 23 on 18th Oct, the best count since 27 on 18th Aug 1997. Lytchett Fields was far and away the most used habitat.



RN+GB (DT00415) *was present from the beginning of the year until at least 9th Apr 2021.*

It returned for its 7th season on 9th Aug 2021 and was still present into 2022. Unfortunately, we have been unable to get any further updates from the ringer so we do not know if this bird has been recorded at other sites in recent years.

© Ian Ballam

It was ringed as a juvenile at Seabrook, Montrose Basin, Scotland on 29th Sep 2015. A seasoned visitor to Lytchett Bay, it was first encountered on 4th–12th Apr 2016, returning for the non-breeding seasons of 2016-17, 2017-18, 2018-19, 2019-20, 2020-21. It was recorded at Steart, Somerset in Dec 2015.

Kittiwake: (4 - 7)
Rare visitor. A 2cy bird flew over the Lytchett Fields viewpoints on 24th Feb, a lovely winter surprise (SR).

Black-headed Gull: (12000 – 10000 – 30) ⇔
A very common visitor. Max 3000 on 12th Feb. *1 ringed.*

***T58 (white ring)** was present on 15th and 20th Feb 2021 and 12th Dec 2021.*

It was ringed at Svanemøllebugten, København, DENMARK on 19th Mar 2011. A movement of 1120 km. It has previously been encountered at Lytchett Bay in Sep 2017, Dec 2018, Sep, Oct and Dec 2020.

Little Gull: (2 – 17)
Very scarce visitor. A good year with 2 records though neither lingered. A 2cy bird was at Lytchett Fields on 13th May (CW). A juv was in the Bay on 7th Sep (IB).

Mediterranean Gull: (140 – 29) ⇔
Spring and early summer visitor, occasional at other times. Assessing actual numbers in spring is very difficult due to the number of calling birds passing overhead. Max 98 on 25th Mar was the best estimate. Juveniles were seen in July.

Monthly max:

JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
2	30	98	60	6	5	9	1	1	1	1	4

***3395 (E946561)** was present on 15th Feb 2021.*

It was ringed on 20th May 2018 at Antwerp, Flanders, BELGIUM. A movement of 450 km. Many sightings in Dorset and 1 record from Holland in Jun 2020.

***PNT9** (red ring/white characters) was present on 24th Jul 2021.*

It was ringed as an adult at ZB nysa, Wojcicki, POLAND on 17th Jun 2012 . A movement of 1587 km. During this period, the bird has also been recorded in Ireland, France, Spain and Belgium.

Common Gull: (3000 – 30) ⇔
A common winter visitor and passage migrant, especially in spring. There were no significant counts but birds visited Lytchett Fields more frequently than in previous years. Not recorded between 28th Apr and 30th Jul.

Cattle Egret, once much sought after is now an expected annual visitor © Mark Wright. Teal is our commonest duck but its beauty can't be dismissed © Mark Wright

Mediterranean Gulls now often bask on Lytchett Fields during spring, these reflective breeding plum adults catching the sun © Ian Ballam. 2cy Kittiwake recorded in brief flyby © Shaun Robson

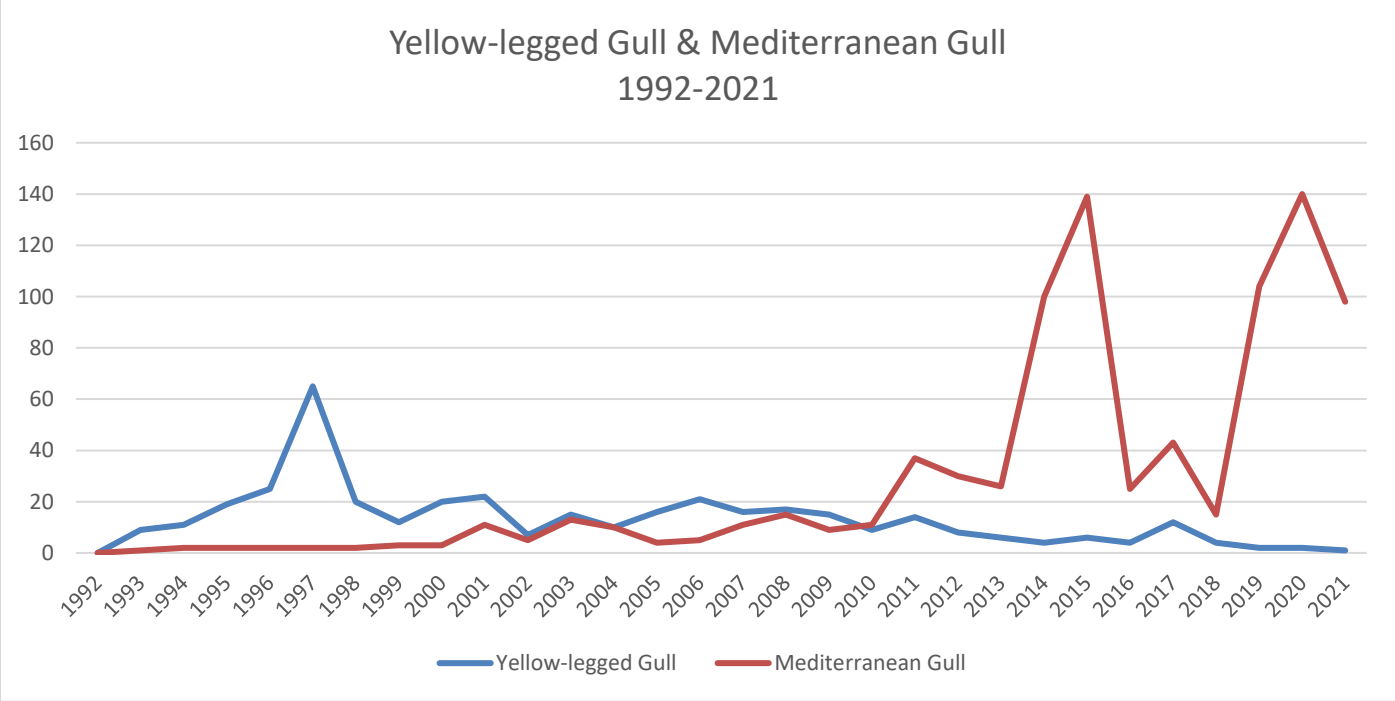
Great Black-backed Gull: (151 – 30) ⇔
Daily visitor throughout the year in small numbers. The max count for the site of 151 was way back in 2003 when Corfe Mullen Tip was in its hey-day. Max 22 on several dates in Mar.

Herring Gull: (2500 – 29) ⇔
Common winter visitor and passage migrant. Numbers much lower than 90's/early 00's when Corfe Mullen tip attracted large numbers of gulls to the wider area. Max 175 on 25th Mar. *1 ringed.*

Scandinavian Herring Gull L.a.argentatus

2020 correction: The published record of a bird of this race which occurred in Dec 2020 was erroneous. The bird remained throughout 2021, it was studied closely and photographed regularly. Consultation with experts in Europe led us to conclude that the bird is a Herring Gull x Lesser black-backed Gull hybrid. During 2021 it paired with an adult Lesser black-backed Gull. A good number of visitors quite understandably submitted records of this bird as a Yellow-legged Gull, which due to attaining adult plumage, it very closely resembled during the breeding season.

Yellow legged Gull: (65 – 30) ↓
Increasingly uncommon visitor. Recorded on only 13 dates, the lowest since 1992. A 3rd W was seen on three dates in Feb-Mar. Singles were seen between 21st Jun & 12th Nov.



An excellent history of Yellow-legged Gull in Dorset by Ian Stanley was published in the Dorset Bird Report 2020

Lesser Black backed Gull: (2128 – 30) ⇔
Common passage migrant and uncommon winter visitor. Numbers are much lower now than they were in the 90's/early 00's when up to 2000 would occur associated with Corfe Mullen Tip. This year the largest count was 57 on 12th Mar.

Sandwich Tern: (6 – 30) ⇔
Uncommon summer visitor. It took until 30th Jul for us to record our first of the year. After that we enjoyed a record number with 70 bird-days on 27 dates until 7th Oct. Max 14 on 2nd Sep (RGo), more than doubling our previous record count (6 in 2014 & 2020).

Little Tern: (10 – 6)
Rare visitor. 1 in Lytchett Bay on 22nd May (IB, SR) lifted spirits in what was a miserable month for spring weather and consequently bird migration. The first since 2016.

Common Tern: (26 – 30) ⇔
Uncommon summer visitor. Like Sandwich Tern, a record year. 98 bird-days recorded on 25 dates between 4th Jun - 9th Sep. Max 26 on a rainy morning at Lytchett Fields on 15th Aug was a record count (previously 25 on 9th Aug 2008). 16 in the Bay on 9th Sep was also notable. Records split between the Bay and Lytchett Fields.

Guillemot:
First record. One was found in the Bay on 22nd Dec (PVH et al). This bird showed very well but looked weak and was not present the next day (see Pauls' finders account on page 45)

Late 2021 saw an influx of Guillemots and Razorbills close inshore and into brackish water areas along the south and east coasts of the UK. The exact reasons for this are unknown at the is time, but starvation in young birds is suspected. Given this movement the chance of one entering the Bay was as high as any time since the dead shoreline corpse found in 1979.


© Ian Ballam

White Stork:
First record. One was seen flying over Lytchett Way on 14th Jul (JH). See page 45 for Jackie's account.

This was a long-awaited addition to the Bay list. In recent years a re-introduction scheme has begun at Knepp, West Sussex and this is probably responsible for most records in Dorset.

The first nesting attempt in Sussex was in 2019 and the first chicks hatched at Knepp in 2020 when two pairs were successful. 14 chicks fledged in 2021. Released young have migrated as far as Morocco and others have headed to Spain. The majority of the flock have taken to migrating west to Cornwall and 2021 saw several sightings across Dorset as they moved west. The project can be followed at White Stork Project

Cormorant: (370 – 30) ↗
Daily visitor. Large feeding flocks now occur frequently in autumn. Max 350 on 3rd Oct.

Spoonbill: (25 – 12) ⇔
Increasingly frequent visitor. 36 bird days on 18 dates, similar to 2020 but lower than the years immediately preceding that. These covered Jan, May, Jul, Nov and Dec. Max 6 on 5th Jan.

B(AE)+W(AE) *was present on 5th, 6th and 28th Jan and 27th Nov 2021.*

© Ian Ballam

It was ringed as a pullus at Schiermonnikoog, NETHERLANDS on 19th Jul 2006, and is now 15 years old! A familiar visitor to Lytchett Bay, it has previously been encountered in 2013, 2015, 2017, 2018 and 2020. The bird commutes back and forth between SW England and the Netherlands. In previous years, the bird has also been seen en route at Somme, FRANCE during late Sept and Oct.

Many thanks to Sven Prins for this information.

Cattle Egret: (5 – 8) ↗
Scarce visitor. Recorded on at least 10 dates. 1 on 5 dates 1st – 12th Jan, 16th & 28th Mar, 2 on 8th Aug, 1 on 27th Sep & 1 on 26th Oct.

Grey Heron: (13 – 30) ↔
Daily visitor in small numbers. Max 4 on 29th Sep.

Great White Egret: (7 – 9) ↗
Scare visitor. Recorded on 14 dates (11 in 2020, 12 in 2019). 1 on 2nd Feb, with the remainder after 23rd Jul. Max 3 on 5th Sep.

Little Egret: (67 – 29) ↔
Daily visitor. There were no records of birds using the occasional evening roost. The largest counts were made by observing birds at Lytchett Bay View flying to, or arriving from, Holes Bay. Max 30 on 27th Jul.

Bay monthly max:

JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
27	12	11	8	5	10	30	15	24	25	19	10

Osprey: (4 – 29) ↔
Annual passage migrant. We didn't quite match 2020 but still seen on 45 dates.

Welsh ringed bird "8C" looking majestic after a successful catch on 25th Aug in Lytchett Bay © Mark Wright

The first was over Turlin Moor and Sandy Close Pond on 30th Mar. Seen on 16 further spring dates to the 2nd Jun. Some of these referred to the returning CJ7, some did not. There were no further records until 11th Jul. 4 were present on 4 dates in Aug. Seeing 4 Ospreys fishing at the same time over the Bay is a wonderful thing to witness. Records continued until the relatively early date 11th Sep. As in previous years to the best of our knowledge none of this years released juveniles visited the recording area.

8C (blue ring/white characters) *- was photographed in Lytchett Bay on 24th & 25th Aug 2021.*

She was ringed as a chick in 2014 at Glaslyn, Porthmadog, Wales. In Oct 2017 and Nov 2018 she was photographed in SENEGAL. It is presumed that she is breeding somewhere in the UK but she has not been seen at a breeding site.

Honey-buzzard: (1 – 7)
9th & 10th records. Our good run of records continues. One was seen on 11th Jun (IML) and another was seen independently by 3 observers on 30th Jun as it flew NNW over the recording area (IB, JH, RG).

Sparrowhawk: (4 – 30) ⇔
Uncommon. Recorded on at least 102 dates throughout the year, the same as 2020 and considerably more than in recent years. This is probably due to a combination of now having an established breeding pair and greater observer effort during lockdown. *3 ringed.*

Marsh Harrier: (6 – 29) ↗
Increasingly regular visitor. Noted on at least 201 dates, the most ever. Perhaps not surprising as a pair bred in Poole Harbour and the Wareham Channel roost reached 20 birds in Dec. Recorded in every month of the year with several active migrants noted in spring. Max 3 on at least 4 dates. 1 roosted occasionally at both ends of the year.

Hen Harrier: (2 – 29) ⇔
Irregular Visitor. Recorded on 9 dates, typical of recent winters. A ringtail was seen on 3 dates between 15th Jan and 18th Feb and on 5 dates between 4th Nov and year end. A grey male was present on 16th Nov.

Red Kite: (29 – 16) ↗
Scarce migrant, increasingly expected on spring migration. This year was very much a reset after the brilliant 2020. Records on 11 dates with a max of 3 on 7th Feb. All in spring except for singles on 25th Nov & 20th Dec.

White-tailed Eagle:
Scarce wanderer from Isle of Wight reintroduction scheme. This scheme started in 2019 and 25 birds have been released by the summer of 2021, though at the moment they are still too young to begin breeding. These birds have satellite tags and are tracked. Many have made prolonged explorations away from the release area before returning to the island, one as far as Germany. Wild European birds are also possible vagrants. The European population is doing well and expanding towards the North Sea coast. In 2020, 2 untagged birds were recorded in Dorset.

Up until March 2021 several eagles had been tracked over Poole Harbour but none had been seen. On 16th "eagle eyed" Liz Woodford had the pleasure of finding Poole Harbour's first over Lytchett Bay. Bird number G405 lingered long enough for two more locals to catch up with it as it passed over your editor's house (LW, JH, NH)! Of course he was out enjoying a wedding anniversary picnic near Wimborne at the time! (See Liz's finders account on page 45)

On the 2nd Nov bird number G461, a young male, was tracked over Lytchett Bay but no one was there to see it. He had wandered as far as the Wash and Northamptonshire. Sadly in Feb 2022 we heard that this bird was found dead in Dorset in late Jan. At the time of writing the cause of death has not been confirmed but Dorset Police are investigating.

The future looks bright and hopefully this magnificent creature will be a regular feature in these reports. The project can be followed at White-tailed Eagle Reintroduction on the Isle of Wight - Roy Dennis Wildlife Foundation

Common Buzzard: (15 – 30) ⇔
The commonest raptor of the area. Breeds widely in the vicinity.

Barn Owl: (2 – 20)
Bred at French's Farm until 2009. Shortly after this the nest box was removed. Since then the species has been very hard to see. 1 was found dead on the A35 adjacent to the Lytchett Fields on 28th Feb, the casualty of a traffic collision. 1 was heard and sound recorded nr Lytchett Heath on 12th Aug (SH-I). In addition there were 2 nocturnal sound recordings made at Lytchett Way listening station on 1st Apr and 16th Sep.

Tawny Owl: (2 territories – 30) ⇔
Uncommon resident. Heard throughout the year along the northern shore. Max 3 on 31st Aug at Lytchett Heath. Successful breeding thought likely but not proven.

Kingfisher: (5 – 30) ⇔
Passage migrant and uncommon, but frequently seen, winter visitor. Bred in 2000, 2020 and possibly in other years.

Breeding probably occurred on the Sherford, in or on the edge of the recording area consequently there were regular records in Mar - May. Recorded from all round the Bay in the second half of the year. Max 3 on several dates. One at Sandy Close Pond on 7th Dec was notable. *8 ringed.*

SE90739 - *An adult female ringed at Lytchett Bay on 6th Mar 2021 was re-trapped 259 days later on 20th Nov 2021. Is this bird a local breeder to the River Sherford or a migrant showing winter site fidelity?*

SA27400 - *A juvenile male ringed at Lytchett Bay on 14th Sep 2020 was re-trapped 324 days later on 4th & 11th Aug 2021. Again asking the question about local breeding or winter site fidelity?*

Hoopoe: (1 – 4)
Probably 6th record. One was reported by allotment tenants at Slough Lane on 22nd Oct & confirmed the following day (SI-H et al) and remained loyal to the general allotment area until 30th Oct. It was seen high in flight over Upton on 27th Oct from Lytchett Bay View and occasionally strayed to Upton recreation ground.

The bird proved to be the most popular of the year attracting birders and general wildlife enthusiasts from afar, hardly surprising, © Jeremy McClements shows us why in this beautiful picture.

Previous records:
Turlin Moor & surrounding areas – 15th Jan - 19th Mar 2013

Turlin Moor LNR – 16th Apr 2003
Lytchett Fields – heard on 6th May 1994
With 2 further records coming from member of the public reports in 1980's.

Wryneck: (1 – 4)
5th record. One was seen briefly at Frenches Farm SANG on 27th Apr (JO).

Lesser Spotted Woodpecker: (1 – 11)
Rare visitor. First records since 2016. Another highlight in a year of highlights! A male was heard drumming in Slough Lane during an RSPB work party on 31st Mar (AS et al).

The bird was eventually observed song flighting and was present for more than 30 minutes. Suggestions that a female was present remained unconfirmed. It reappeared broadly in the same area drumming on 16th & 19th Apr and was then drumming again and seen well at Kings Bridge on 6th May.

Further records of a drumming male also came from Holton Lee on 5 dates between 15th Apr - 19th May. It seems reasonable to conclude that all records refer to one roving bird in search of a female. Despite searching a female was not seen and no nest found.

© Ian Ballam

A sound recording was made by SR on the first date **https://macaulaylibrary.org/asset/323480131**

Great Spotted Woodpecker: ↗
Breeding Resident. Seen regularly in most parts of the Bay. Drumming heard in most areas during spring and recommenced at Sandy Close Pond on 11th Nov!

LE75973 *- An adult male ringed on 11th Feb 2017 was re-trapped 1,428 days later on 9th Jan 2021.*

Green Woodpecker: ↓
Breeding resident but uncommon. This species has gone from being a frequently encountered resident to very rare in the space of 12 months. During 2021 it became apparent that our two core observers were not recording it. This prompted some deeper investigation into a species that we had previously taken for granted.

© Nick Hull

IB recorded the bird on 19 dates in 2019, 10 in 2020 (when lockdown limited his number of visits) but only 3 in 2021 and none after 16th Jun.

SR recorded the bird on 31 dates in 2020 but only 7 in 2021, and none after 20th Aug. Given that SR records more in the east of the recording area, the species previous strong hold, these higher numbers were expected.

The only record that we are aware of in the last 4 months of the year is a bird visiting a garden in late Dec.

With birds still being reported regularly at Upton CP and Holton Lee we hope that this recent local decline is temporary and not the start of a long-term pattern.

Kestrel: (3 – 30) ⇔
Uncommon resident. Recorded on at least 93 dates in every month except Jul. The nest box was not used and there was no evidence of local breeding.

Merlin: (2 – 26) ⇔
Scarce winter visitor. A record year, seen on 27 dates (previously 22 in 20217). A male appeared to roost frequently during Jan and records continued until 29th Mar. A female/imm seen on 8th Mar.

One on 13th Sep was quite early and then birds were seen frequently from 2nd Nov, including what might have been the returning male?

Male Merlin at Lytchett fields © Ian Ballam

Hobby; (4 – 28) ⇔
Irregular summer visitor. Another decent year though someway short of last year's record. 29 bird-days on 23 dates between 20th Apr - 3rd Oct. Max 2 on several dates.

Peregrine: (3 – 29) ⇔
Frequent visitor, rare in early summer. Recorded on record at least 50 dates. Noted in every month except Jun.

Jay: (20 – 30) ⇔
Resident. Regularly seen throughout the year but most often in autumn. Like many places this year there was an impression of visible migration. 20 were seen on 8th Oct, a record day count. *1 ringed.*

Magpie: ⇔
Common Resident.

Jackdaw: (610 – 30) ⇔
Resident. Recorded throughout the year. 100 at were at Lytchett Fields on 20th Feb and 147 flew west at Lytchett Heath on 2nd Nov.

Rook: (185 – 30) ↗
Breeds on edge of recording area. Only 11 nests were found at the Watery Lane colony (16 – 25 nests 2010 – 2020). 52 flew to roost over Lytchett Bay View on 22nd Oct.

Carrion Crow: (100 – 30) ⇔
Common Resident. Breeds widely across the area. 60 were counted at Lytchett Fields on 2nd Apr.

Raven: (13 – 27) ↗
Uncommon but increasing. Recorded in every month except Jun. Max 8 on several dates.

Coal Tit: ↗
Uncommon resident, increasing. Recorded from most sites across the calendar. *2 ringed.*

Marsh Tit: (1 – 6)
Rare visitor. In an almost exact repeat of 2019, one appeared at the Sandy Close feeders on the afternoon of 20th Jul (SR). It stayed on and off all afternoon but did not return the following day.

Blue Tit: ⇔
Common resident. *53 ringed*

D461329 *- A juvenile ringed on 16th Jun 2014 was re-trapped 2,538 days (6 yrs 11mnths) later on 28th May 2021. The oldest ever recorded is 9yrs 8mnths.*

D461338 *- A juvenile ringed on 24th Jun 2014 was re-trapped 2,397 days later on 15th Jan 2021. 2014 must have been a good vintage!*

Great Tit: ⇔
Common resident. *25 ringed.*

Bearded Tit: (40 – 30) ↗

Scarce breeder and uncommon passage migrant. The survey in 2019 found at least 4, and possibly 8, pairs east of the Sherford. The first young this year were seen in July.

Frequently encountered autumn, primarily at Lytchett Heath. Max 15 in Nov. In partnership with the Birds of Poole Harbour three ringing demonstrations focused on this exquisite species were delivered. See page 4 for more information. *38 ringed.*

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ABE8383 *- A male ringed at Lytchett Bay on 8th Oct 2019 was photographed in the field 104 days later at Radipole Lake, Weymouth on 20th Jan 2020. A WSW movement of 33 km.*

Woodlark: (15 – 20) ⇔
Irregular visitor. The poor run for this species continues. Without severe winter weather our records now seem to rely on the odd dispersing summer bird. Not sure what has happened to autumn migrants? A juvenile at Lytchett Fields on 17th Jul was the only record.

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Skylark: (781 - 30) ⇔
Scarce breeder and passage migrant. Singing males were recorded in Mar and Apr but breeding success is unknown, the very dry spring and limited vegetation growth in the arable field probably didn't help. Up to 11 were in the arable field throughout Jan and Feb. Autumn passage began on 15th Sep but was again light. 29 on 11th Oct was the only reasonable count. Up to 3 used the arable field toward the end of Dec. *1 ringed.*

Sand Martin: (5000 – 30) ↘
Common passage migrant. Recorded from 21st Mar until 8th Oct (the latest ever, previously 7th Oct 1996). Spring passage was decent peaking at 70 on 20th Apr. Autumn was the worst ever recorded with no double figure counts submitted. It's hard to believe that 1000's used to roost on July evenings in the 1990's.

Swallow: (1000 – 800 – 30) ⇔
Common passage migrant, breeds at French's Farm. Recorded from 25th Mar until 28th Nov (the latest ever, previously 22nd Nov 2015). This Nov record was not a one off, there were 3 records that month. Spring migration peaked with 139 on 1st May. Early autumn migration was very poor with birds absent on many dates. However things improved in mid-Sep with a very respectable 500 roosting on 23rd Sep. *105 ringed.*

House Martin: (1800 – 30) ⇔
Common passage migrant, breeding colony on edge of recording area at Watery Lane. Present from 2nd Apr to 26th Oct (completing the set for our hirundines this year, the latest ever, previously 20th Oct 1997). Max 80 on 26th Sep.

The colony at Watery Lane continues spread into Seaview Road and has extended into Slough Lane and Policeman's Lane. However the very cold spring did not help and overall numbers of nests observed was poor, the lowest since 2016.

No of House Martin nests at the Watery Lane colony 2007 – 2021. No of nest collapsed or destroyed in brackets.

2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
14 (5)	13 (8)	15 (5)	8 (7)	13 (4)	2 (0)	4 (1)	?	7 (3)	10 (4)	18 (?)	17 (?)	12 (4)	18 (-)	11 (-)

Cetti's Warbler: (11 males – 29) ⇔
Breeding resident. At least 5 singing males in an almost complete survey (one less than 2020). Only 2 records at Sandy Close Pond.

A much poorer year than 2020, productivity appeared to be low judging by the numbers ringed during the summer. Despite relatively mild winters this species seems to be struggling to recover its population back to where it was prior to the "Beast from the East" in 2018. Severe damage to the understory and scrub by browsing Sika Deer might be a contributing factor? *13 ringed.*

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***ANJ0474** - A male ringed at Haseley Manor, Arreton, Isle of Wight on 23rd Jul 2020 was re-trapped on 5 occasions at Lytchett Bay between 2nd May - 6th Oct 2021. A W movement of 58 km.*

Long tailed Tit: ↗
Common resident. Regularly recorded from most sites at the Bay. *37 ringed.*

Willow Warbler: (60 – 30) ⇔
Passage migrant. This species has been lost as a regular breeder.

The first record was on 31st Mar. Spring migration, like recent years remains poor but continued until 27th Apr. Autumn migration was steady between 20th Jul and 9th Oct. Max 18 on 1st Aug. *153 ringed*, just 1 short of last year's record number.

Daily max and bird days are given in the following table.

JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
		1	6			4	18	10	1		
		1	34			11	173	25	1		

Chiffchaff: (142 – 30) ↗
Breeding summer visitor and passage migrant. No breeding survey was undertaken but the population seemed stable at 7 – 10 territories east of the Sherford found in 2019.

Singles were seen at Lytchett Bay View, Lytchett Fields, Sandy Close Pond occasionally in Jan & Feb. There were frequent records at Lytchett Fields from 1st Mar, probably the first spring migrants. Migration was poor with no recognisable peaks. Autumn migration was decent with peaks of 31 on 10th Oct and 29 on 13th Sep. Small numbers continued until the end of the year with 3 still at Kings Bridge on 17th Dec. *268 ringed,* the most ever.

HLN756 *- A juvenile ringed on 1st Jul 2017 was re-trapped 1,473 days later on 13th Jul 2021.*

Siberian Chiffchaff: (1 - 9)
Very scarce migrant. 10th – 13th records. 2 were trapped and ringed at Lytchett Heath on 13th Nov (SR et al), with one re-trapped on 23rd Nov. This bird may have been missed had it not called upon release on the second date! Singles were seen at Lytchett Bay View on 22nd Nov & 14th Dec.

Aquatic Warbler: (2 – 7)
8th record (involving 9 individuals).

Perhaps the biggest surprise of the year. A juvenile was trapped and ringed during a fixed westerly weather system on 17th Aug (SR, JSP). There were really no favourable weather conditions during the whole of August and to the best of our knowledge this was the only UK record this year!

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All previous records:

1983 – 1 on 22nd Aug trapped and ringed.
2005 – 1 heard singing on 16th Aug. This bird was never seen, it went silent and could not be located.
2011 – 1cy on 20th Aug trapped and ringed.
2012 – 2 x 1cy on 18th Aug trapped and ringed. Amazingly these birds were in the net next to each other and were presumably migrating together?
2014 – 2cy + on 25th Jul trapped and ringed. The earliest ever Dorset record. Adults migrate earlier than juveniles.
2016 – 1cy on 31st Aug – 1st Sep found in the field where it stayed until the following day, singing for a period on its second day. A 2-day stay is most unusual and the bird obviously found the wet rushy habitat to its liking.
2020 – 2cy+ on 12th Aug trapped and ringed. This bird was subsequently re-trapped in Spain on its migration south.

Sedge Warbler: (219 – 30) ⇔
Passage migrant. Spring passage is in danger of disappearing completely. Recorded between 30th Apr and 14th May. Autumn passage was good and revealed largely due to our increased ringing coverage. Commencing on 13th Jul and continuing to 8th Oct. Max 94 on 2nd Aug. *714 ringed.*

Daily max and bird days are given in the following table.

JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
			1	2		5	94	10	1		
			1	5		24	648	44	4		

Two records of birds re-trapped on subsequent migrations.

8753361 *- An adult ringed at PK 21, Sandouville, Seine-Maritime, FRANCE on 5th Aug 2019 was re-trapped 730 days later at Lytchett Bay on 4th Aug 2021. A NW movement of 219 km.*

AJF5628 *- A juvenile ringed at Lytchett Heath on 11th Aug 2020 was re-trapped 341 days later at Shannon Airport Lagoon, Clare, IRELAND on 18th Jul 2021. A WNW movement of 522 km.*

Three records of typical southbound migration movements.

AXL7945 *- A juvenile ringed at Lytchett Heath on 10th Aug 2021 was re-trapped 5 days later at Tour aux Moutons, Donges, Loire-Atlantique, FRANCE on 15th Aug 2021. A S movement of 378 km.*

AXL7805 *- A juvenile ringed at Lytchett Heath on 2nd Aug 2021 was re-trapped 12 days later at Pontorson, Manche, FRANCE on 14th Aug 2021. A S movement of 242 km.*

ATD9030 *- An adult ringed at Squire's Down, Dorset on 5th Aug 2021 was re-trapped 4 days later at Lytchett Heath on 9th Aug 2021. A SE movement of 36 km.*

One record of a bird "coasting" east before heading south to wintering grounds.

AJF5517 *- A juvenile ringed at Lytchett Heath on 8th Aug 2020 was re-trapped 11 days later at Pepingen, Brabant, BELGIUM on 19th Aug 2020. A E movement of 436 km.*

Reed Warbler: (107 males – 30) ⇔
Common summer visitor. Present between 16th Apr and 10th Oct. 107 singing males were recorded in a full survey in 2019. *332 ringed*, a record annual total, 12 up on 2020!

Five records of birds re-trapped on subsequent migrations.

A420368 *- An adult ringed at Herdade dos Forninhos, Beja, PORTUGAL on 17th Aug 2017 was re-trapped 1366 days later at Lytchett Heath on 14th May 2021. A NNE movement of 1539 km.*

8891247 *- An adult ringed at Terres d'Oiseaux, Braud-et-Saint-Louis, Gironde, FRANCE on 11th Aug 2020 was re-trapped 346 days later at Lytchett Heath on 23rd Jul 2021. A N movement of 614 km.*

S914026 *- An adult ringed at Squire's Down, Dorset on 6th Aug 2018 was re-trapped 1015 days later at Lytchett Heath on 17th May 2021. A SE movement of 36 km.*

S391682 *- A juvenile ringed at Lytchett Bay on 27th Jul 2018 was re-trapped on 3 occasions at Ibsley Water, Blashford Lakes, Hampshire between 3rd Jun 2021 and 9th Jul 2021 and was presumably breeding there. A NE movement of 26 km.*

ATD6655 *- A juvenile ringed at Squire's Down, Dorset on 12th Aug 2020 was re-trapped 278 days later at Lytchett Heath on 17th May 2021. A SE movement of 36 km.*

© Ian Ballam

One record of typical southbound migration movements.

ABE8673 *- A juvenile ringed at Lytchett Heath on 2nd Sep 2020 was re-trapped 9 days later at Chenal, Chenac-Saint-Seurin-d'Uzet, Charente-Maritime, FRANCE on 11th Sep 2020. A S movement of 587 km.*

Grasshopper Warbler: (33 – 23) ⇔
Passage migrant, predominantly in autumn. Under recorded. Bred in 1986.

No spring records. A record year by a large margin. 107 bird-days between 17th Jul - 15th Sep (previously 58 in 2019). Not surprisingly the majority of this total were ringed. Double figure counts were as follows 14 on 29th Aug, 12 on 2nd Aug & 10 on 16th Aug. *101 ringed, a record annual total (previously 54 in 2019).*

Blackcap: (75 – 30) ↗
Passage migrant, summer visitor and scarce winter visitor. No breeding survey undertaken but population felt stable at 14 -18 territories found in 2019.

Seen regularly at Sandy Close Pond feeders up to mid-Mar. At least 3 individuals. A male with pollen on the face was seen at Lytchett Way on 10th Feb.

The first presumed migrants were on 29th Mar. 10 at one location on 14th Apr was the best day of spring. Autumn was decent with 45 on 13th Sep and 24 on 15th Sep.

Scarce in Nov & Dec though birds visited Sandy Close Pond and 3 were seen at Lytchett Bay View on 16th Dec. *149 ringed.*

Garden Warbler: (7 – 28) ⇔
Scarce passage migrant. 1 in spring on 24th Apr at Lytchett Bay View. 13 bird-days in autumn between 2nd Aug – 8th Sep. Max 3 on 2nd Aug. *8 ringed.*

Lesser Whitethroat: (3 – 25) ⇔
Scarce passage migrant, which occasionally breeds or holds territory.

Disappointingly none in spring but a very good autumn. 15 bird-days between 24th Aug – 12th Sep, max 3 on 30th Aug (equaling the previous max day count on 16th Aug 2001). Records shared between Lytchett Fields, Turlin Moor LNR and Lytchett Heath. *1 ringed.*

Whitethroat: (18 – 28) ⇔
Uncommon passage migrant. Bred in 2013. A very good autumn. 16 bird-days in spring between 18th Apr - 14th May. In autumn, 49 bird days between 10th Aug – 9th Oct (latest ever record, previously 29th Sep 1998). Max 7 on 25th Aug. *25 ringed.*

© Ian Ballam

Dartford Warbler: (2 pairs – 27)
1 pair bred at Lytchett Heath. A male ringed in Jul 2020, paired with a new female. They appeared to have at least 1 brood of 4. Another un-ringed young bird was trapped on a later date, though this could have been a dispersing migrant. *6 ringed.*

Firecrest: (6 – 18) ⇔

Scarce visitor. A great year with some good counts and breeding recorded for the first time. A singing bird was witnessed on several dates in Jun and then a family party of 6 were photographed on 25th Jul (SGL). Early in the year regular sightings came from the Cottage area, Frenches Farm and Sandy Close Pond until 3rd Mar. The first of autumn was at Lytchett Fields on 8th Sep. Whilst seen on relatively few dates, 5 were ringed on 15th Oct. Scarce at the year-end but still present at Lytchett Heath. *9 ringed.*

Juvenile Firecrest, the first ever recorded at Lytchett Bay @ Sam Levy

Goldcrest: (27 – 30) ⇔
Passage migrant, which occasionally breeds. Present during the breeding season at Turlin Moor, Lytchett Heath and Lytchett Fields. Very poor migration, max day count at any one site was only 6 on 19th Oct. Widespread but only in small numbers during both winter periods. *19 ringed.*

Wren: ⇔
Common resident. *27 ringed.*

Nuthatch: ⇔
Uncommon. Seen occasionally throughout the year from sites stretching from Lytchett Fields to Sandy Close Pond, seen frequently in the summer and autumn. *2 ringed.*

Treecreeper: ⇔
Scarce resident. Recorded on only 13 dates across the year from Lytchett Way to Kingsbridge. Probably present throughout but the population is obviously small. *1 ringed.*

Starling: (35000 – 5600 – 30) ⇔
Common resident**.** No counts of more than 200 submitted this year. *20 ringed.*

Ring Ouzel: (3 – 12)
Scarce migrant. 1 flew N past Lytchett Bay View on 16th Apr (SR, IB).

Blackbird: (45 – 30) ⇔
Common Resident. No significant records submitted. *29 ringed.*

LL20951 *- A male ringed at Lytchett Heath on 1st May 2021 was re-trapped 40 days later at the ringers' garden in Parkstone, Poole on 10th Jun 2021. A E movement of 6 km.*

LL58809 – *An adult female ringed at Lytchett Heath on 6th Mar 2021 was found dead 71 days later in Wareham, Dorset on 23rd May 2021. A SW movement of 8km.*

LL07897 *– An adult male ringed at Lytchett Heath on 1st Jun 2020 was found dead 436 days later in Upton on 11th Aug 2021. A result of a road casualty.*

Fieldfare: (559 – 30) ⇔
Uncommon winter visitor. Another very poor year. Logged on 12 dates! 8 on 13th Feb was the only record in the first part of the year. There were no more until 6th Nov. Max 24n on 22nd Nov and 13n on 28th Nov, both at Lytchett Bay View.

Redwing: (1000 – 514 – 30) ⇔
Winter visitor and passage migrant. Typically a much better showing than the above species. Recorded until 24th Mar and from 14th Oct.

A regular flock around Lytchett Fields in the first two months peaked at 73 on 13th Feb. Diurnal migration included 204n on 4th Nov and 95n on 22nd Nov, both at Lytchett Bay View. 100 were at Kings Bridge on 15th Dec. *36 ringed.*

197 calls of nocturnal migrants were recorded on the night of 17th / 18th Mar & 272 on 20th / 21st . Many hundreds were sound recorded from the second half of Oct, max 256 calls on 27th/28th and 589 calls on 5th /6th Nov.

Song Thrush: (1256 – 30) ⇔
Breeding resident and passage migrant. No survey this year but no change noticed on last year's 11 singing males recorded during incomplete survey. No diurnal migration witnessed. Noc-mig recordings were frequent in autumn, max 75 calls on 5th/6th Nov. *16 ringed.*

Mistle Thrush: (60 - 20 – 30) ⇔
Uncommon resident. 1 pr present throughout the spring at Lytchett Fields, probably bred. There were records throughout the year but no flocks were recorded.

Spotted Flycatcher: (8 – 6 – 30) ↘
Passage migrant, previously bred. One on 13th May was the only spring record. 19 bird-days in autumn was a notable improvement on last year's 7. Between 23rd Aug and 15th Sep, max 3 on 2 dates.

Robin: ⇔
Common resident. *41 ringed.*

Common Redstart: (2 – 24) ⇔
Scarce autumn migrant. A rare spring record - a fine male on 16th Apr at Lytchett Fields (DF). 7 in autumn was an excellent return between 16th Aug - 13th Sep. *4 ringed.*

Whinchat: (11 – 28) ⇔

Scarce passage migrant. 1 on 7th May was a good spring record. 33 bird-days in autumn between 21st Aug - 5th Oct was the best showing since the record year of 2015. Max 5 on 9th Sep. Then one lingered in the arable field from 20th Oct – 3rd Nov. Our second latest (22nd Nov 2002). Most records from Lytchett Fields with 2 from Turlin Moor.

A migrant at Turlin shore © Shaun Robson

Stonechat: (23 – 30) ↗
Returning breeding resident (7 pairs in 2002). We never understood why this species disappeared as a breeding species in 2006 and now we don't understand why they are coming back so strongly. After a gap of 12 years, they bred again in 2018. Like last year there were 3 pairs, however the pair at the Approach Field seemed to succumb to the poor weather in Apr. The remaining pairs were successful at the SANG and Lytchett Heath.

Present in every month of the year and recorded at a wide range of sites around the bay. Max 9 on 5th Nov. *11 ringed.*

Northern Wheatear: (39 – 30) ⇔
Uncommon passage migrant. Almost every record of this species occurs in the north-west of the recording area. A decent spring but poor autumn. Short grass habitat preferred by this species has declined in recent years.

34 bird-days in spring following from 26th Mar - 11th May. Max 6 on 20th Apr.
9 bird-days between 16th Aug – 3rd Oct. Max 2 on 20th Sep.

House Sparrow: (101++ – 30) ⇔
Resident. Usually recorded around the urban fringe, seems to be doing well in many areas around the Bay. No additional effort was made to follow up on the 6 roosts identified at the end of 2017. No significant counts submitted.

Dunnock: ⇔
Common resident. *15 ringed.*

Yellow Wagtail: (150 – 30) ⇔
Uncommon passage migrant. 4 spring records between 19th Apr – 5th May inc 2 on 28th Apr. Autumn migration was very weak with only 77 bird-days between 17th Jul - 5th Oct. Max 12 on 30th Aug. Almost exclusively at Lytchett Fields.

Grey Wagtail: (15 – 30) ⇔
Winter visitor, passage migrant and occasional breeder. Records in every month except Jun, frequently recorded. Max 4 on 7th Sep. *1 ringed.*

Pied Wagtail: (650 – 30) ⇔
Recorded throughout the year, common in autumn. Bred successfully. Spring peak at Lytchett Fields, 66 on 21st Apr. Birds roost at various points around the Bay during peak migration in October. Max 370 on 9th Nov. *171 ringed.*

White Wagtail: Scarce migrant. Probably a record year with 11 bird-days. All between 1st Mar & 20th Apr. Max 2 on several dates. All at Lytchett Fields.

Meadow Pipit: (460 – 30) ⇔
Historic breeder, now common passage migrant and winter visitor. Spring passage was good, max 185n over Lytchett Fields on 17th Mar. No records between 20th Apr - 11th Jul. Max in autumn 202 on 20th Sep. *86 ringed.*

Tree Pipit: (18 – 26) ⇔
Scarce passage migrant. 1 on 29th Mar (RS), our earliest ever date (previously 1st Apr 2006). This was the only spring record. Autumn was unremarkable, 25 bird-days between 16th Aug - 30th Sep, max 8 on 19th Aug. The last was sound recorded at night on 30th Sep. *3 ringed.*

Water Pipit: (20 – 24)
Scarce winter visitor. Records have returned to the previous levels since the creation of Lytchett Fields. A reasonable year with records on 46 dates (Likely that birds were present throughout the winter). Present until 3rd Mar, max 2 on several dates. Spring migration was non-existent. The first returning bird was the welcome appearance of "1k" (see below) on 17th Oct. After which birds were encountered regularly until the year end. Max 7 on 7th Nov.

Participation in a nationwide project to colour ring this species continued. 7 new birds were colour marked meaning that 11 have now been marked in total since Nov 2020.

***0K (yellow ring)** – A 1cy ringed at Lytchett Bay on 7th Nov 2020 was seen at Lytchett Fields on 2nd Jan 2021.*

***1K (yellow ring)** - A 1cy ringed at Lytchett Bay on 7th Nov 2020 was observed at Lytchett Bay on 4 dates up to 27th Feb 2021. It was then photographed back at Lytchett Fields on 17th Oct 2021, this is the first confirmation of winter site fidelity for this species at the Bay. It remained in to 2022 and was still present on 4th Feb.*

Scandinavian Rock Pipit: (50 – 30) ⇔
Common winter visitor. All Rock Pipits at Lytchett Bay are considered to be from Scandinavia of the race *littoralis.* Recorded until 9th Mar and from 12th Oct. Max at any one location was 15 on 18th Nov. *31 ringed*

Inspired by the success of colour-ringing Water Pipits and our success in also catching Rock Pipits in 2020 we were granted permission to colour-ring Rock Pipits. The project hit the ground running with 30 birds' colour-ringed at Lytchett Bay between 23rd Oct - 16th Dec 2021. Fingers-crossed for some Scandinavian recoveries! Each white ring is marked with a unique two-character alphabetic code.

Our early experience of handling Rock Pipits in autumn is that Scandinavian birds very closely resemble British birds in autumn. There is perhaps some subtle difference in outer tail colouration, we will see? © Ian Ballam

*A bird with an **Orange colour-ring** was photographed in Lytchett Bay on 8th Nov 2021. Code not read but the scheme is Norwegian, giving further grounds to our belief that all Rock Pipits at Lytchett Bay are Scandinavian.*

***AA (white ring)** – A 1cy ringed at Lytchett Bay on 23rd Oct 2021 was still present on 30th Oct & 14th Dec 2021.*

***BJ (white ring)** – ringed at Lytchett Heath on 13th Nov 2021 was seen at Lytchett Fields on 19th & 20th Nov 2021.*

These were the only sightings of colour ringed Rock Pipits, suggesting that many of the birds ringed were still migrating when they were ringed at Lytchett Bay.

Chaffinch: (450 – 30) ⇔
Breeding resident and winter visitor. Toward the year end up to 25 joined other finches in the arable field. *5 ringed.*

Brambling: (10 – 25)
Scarce winter visitor. After a blank year in 2020 it was good to have 4 records this year. All were single overhead migrants. 10th Oct at Lytchett Heath (our earliest ever, previously 20th Oct 2007), 6th Nov at Lytchett Way, 16th Nov at Lytchett Fields and 16th Nov at Lytchett Heath.

Hawfinch: (2 – 4)
For the second year in a row we have recorded noc-mig Hawfinch. Not just one but two!

The first at 04:06 on 6th Nov at the Lytchett Way Listening station (NHu). Analysis of the sound recording suggested that two birds may have been involved. There is a group of four calls as the bird flies towards the mic and then another single call at 24 seconds. This may be too long a gap for a single bird flying over the recorder?

Hawfinch by Two Owls (soundcloud.com)

Another bird was sound recorded at 22:52 on 9th Nov at the same location.

Bullfinch: (20 – 30) ⇔
Uncommon, recent increases seem to be leveling off. Most records came from the eastern end of the recording area. Breeding proven near Lytchett Bay View where 3 juveniles seen in early Aug. *11 ringed.*

Greenfinch: (60 – 30) ⇔
Uncommon breeding resident, which has declined due to on-going Trichomoniasis disease in the population. This arrived in late summer 2006 and has had a severe impact on English Greenfinch populations. Bred widely in small numbers and the small signs of a recovery noted in 2020 continued. Up to 20 at Lytchett Fields in second half of the year, up to 16 on several dates at Turlin Moor and frequent at the Sandy Close feeders. *7 ringed.*

Linnet: (250 – 30) ⇔
Uncommon breeding resident. Probably bred at Lytchett Heath. The arable field proved very attractive in both winter periods. Up to 200 used the field into Mar, with 137 still present on 9th. Up to 90 were back in the field in the closing months. *15 ringed.*

Lesser Redpoll: (40 – 24) ⇔
Scarce passage migrant. Not quite as good as 2020 but out of nowhere a good number appeared late in the autumn. Singles visited Sandy Close feeders on 4th & 15th Jan. There were no more records until Oct when overhead migrants were recorded on 5 dates between 14th Oct - 17th Nov, max 4 on 22nd. However ringing attracted a surprise 20 at Lytchett Heath on 13th Nov. *21 ringed.*

Crossbill: (21 – 14)
Scarce passage migrant. Back to normal after last year's record influx. 2 at Lytchett Heath on 27th May and 3 at Frenches Farm on 8th Jun.

Goldfinch: (120 – 30) ⇔
Common breeding resident and passage migrant. Notable counts included 62 at Turlin Moor on 31st Jan, 45 at Lytchett Fields on 6th Aug, 35 at Sandy Close Pond on 7th Dec. *15 ringed.*

Siskin: (280 – 27) ↘
Another in a series of poor years. Recorded throughout the year in small numbers, no double figure counts. Became very scarce in last two months.

Yellowhammer: (13 – 19)
Extinct breeding species. Scarce passage migrant. A male flew over Lytchett Fields on 6th Nov (IB).

Ortolan:
2nd record. Like the first this was a nocturnal migrant picked up by a digital sound recorder. This time at the Lytchett Way listening station at 01:30 on 5th Sep.

Ortolan Bunting 05 - 09 - 2021 by Two Owls (soundcloud.com)

Reed Bunting: (110 – 30) ⇔
Breeding resident, c23 prs found in 2019 survey. Up to 3 at Sandy Close Pond in the first winter period. *126 ringed.*

ACR9076 *- A juvenile male ringed at Mockbeggar Lakes, Ringwood, Hampshire on 9th Jul 2021 was re-trapped 91 days later at Lytchett Heath on 8th Oct 2021. A SW movement of 26 km.*

Records received from: I.Ballam (IB), M.Constantine, Mo Constantine, A.Collyer, A.Copeland, T.Elborn, R.Fielding, D.Foster (DF), T.Furnell, R.Gifford (RG), R.Goad (RGo), S.Haggett, P.V.Harvey (PVH), G.Hayman, M&L Highfield, F.Hockey, J.Hull (JH) , N.Hull (NHu), S.Isherwood-Harris (SH-I), P.Kirby, L.Kirton, L.Lambert, S.Levy (SGL), I.M.Lewis (IML), B.Maxted, G.Moors, P.Morton, N.Mudge, G.Owen, J.Owen (JO), J.S.Parker, R.Pitts, S.Robson (SR), A.Smith (AS), R.Stephenson, P.Sutton, P.Swann, A.Taylor, C.Walker (CW), S.Walls, J.Walston, J. Westacott, L.Westacott, D.White, G.White, M.Wood, L.Woodford (LW), C.Wilcox, M.Wright. With additional information from Bird Track, e-Bird, Birds of Poole Harbour, Holton Lee log, Rare Bird Alert and the Dorset Bird Club. Apologies for any omissions.


Spotted Flycatcher © Ian Ballam


Wren © Mark Wright

Appendix 1 – Finders accounts

White-tailed Eagle, 16th March – Liz Woodford

It started as an ordinary birding day in March the sun was shining and a slight breeze blowing , I decided to wander the local patch so walked to Lytchett Fields and then round to the waterworks . After finding nothing of note I made my way back then just as I was about to turn up the road to home, I decided to take the advice of a local birder who told me he always saw Water Rail from Lytchett Bay View so I headed there instead. Well no bird to be found but as I was looking out over the bay the gulls behind me started to kick up a fuss so I turned to see what was going on and there in the sky was a Sea Eagle!! I was at a loss to know what to do first?

1. Just watch it
2. Phone a friend
3. Put it out on twitter/WhatsApp

Two problems arose, I didn't have glasses so couldn't see what I was typing and my hands were shaking so much couldn't actually type properly! Thankfully managed to get hold of near neighbours who managed to get onto it before it disappeared north over Upton. Sadly other birders who live nearby were not at home.

It was confirmed as G405 which had earlier been around Dorchester. I have been lucky enough to see these eagles abroad, and in this country but to see one within a few hundred metres from home is always going to be special. A magical birding moment never to be forgotten.

White Stork, 14th July – Jackie Hull

I stepped out into the back garden and just had a quick look skyward as I always do and very surprised to see a large bird flying away in a north easterly direction, obviously having come over Lytchett Bay. Giving it a better look it was the striking black and white wings that made me realise it was a White Stork and the rhythm of its wing in flight. I rushed in to get Nick but by the time we got back outside unfortunately it was not in sight. A very short but sweet experience and amazing garden and bay tick.

This bird was probably from the Knepp project. I had found 5 flying over Longham Lakes in April so to get one over the garden, was another lovely reminder of watching them on our many holidays in Normandy, France.

Guillemot, 23rd December – Paul Harvey

My very first notebook entry was on 30th December 1974. The day an interest turned into a passion (some would say obsession)! That day I went down Lytchett Bay with two close friends, Ian Alexander and Pete Christian, who were armed with binoculars to do some birdwatching. The highlight was a Hen Harrier. I was hooked - the next few months saw us cycling all around Poole Harbour, becoming familiar with its many sites and birds. Exciting times indeed.

Pete has since moved to Australia but Ian has become a prominent figure in the conservation of Poole Harbour and the Dorset Heaths. Lytchett Bay became our local patch for the remainder of our school years when we also introduced Ian Lewis "*Gryllo"* to the site. I always spent much time there during holidays while at University. I headed north to Shetland in 1984 but my parents have always lived close by so whenever I am down, I head for the Bay when time permits. There have been enormous changes over the 40 years and the birding is far more exciting now that Lytchett Fields are flooded. The Bay List has become very respectable too, largely down to the efforts of its two long-term regulars Shaun Robson and Ian Ballam.

It was this list, and Arsenal's recent better form, that Ian Ballam and I were discussing at the Lytchett Fields viewpoint on 22nd December. Ian eventually left and I decided that I would go back to the car via the Bay itself as the tide was now high. Once I got to the bank west of the out-fall I set the scope up and scanned

out towards to the Turlin shore. There was the usual assortment of ducks and geese and then what appeared to be an auk came into view. I quickly ramped the magnification up and sure enough it was a winter plumage Guillemot - with its essentially dark brown upperparts and upper wings, white underparts, longish pointed bill and pale face with the blackish of the crown just reaching the eye and a dark line running from the eye back towards the ear coverts. It was drooping its wings slightly - a sure fire sign that it was not in good condition. I was fairly sure I had never seen a Guillemot at the bay but imagined that the odd one had strayed in from time to time but just in case I phoned Ian Lewis. He excitedly pointed out that it was the first record of a live bird and he was on his way. I asked him if he could contact Ian Ballam which he did. The bird continued to drift inshore and unfortunately attracted the attention of a young Herring Gull. The gull clearly saw it as an opportunity for a meal and for a few minutes I expected the worst to happen before anyone else turned up. Fear not though, the bird had enough energy to dive every time the gull hovered over it or approached too close and it was not long before the gull gave up and both Ian's had it in their scopes. Shaun was less fortunate - he was already well on his way to Tyneside for a Xmas break so will have to wait until the next one!

The Approach Field at Lytchett Fields becomes ever more interesting to both birds and birders as the tidal inundation increases.


"The Blood Moon" rising over Lytchett Bay, Feb 2021 © Shaun Robson

Appendix 2 – Bird ringing at Lytchett Bay 2021

Species	**# ringed**	**# subsequent encounters** ***re-trap / controls***
Sparrowhawk	3	0
Water Rail	2	0
Dunlin	1	0
Woodcock	2	0
Jack Snipe	5	2
Common Snipe	3	0
Black-headed Gull	1	0
Herring Gull	1	0
Woodpigeon	2	0
Nightjar	1	0
Kingfisher	8	8
Great Spotted Woodpecker	0	3
Jay	1	0
Coal Tit	2	0
Blue Tit	53	36
Great Tit	25	5
Bearded Tit	38	26
Skylark	1	0
Swallow	105	0
Cetti's Warbler	13	26
Long-tailed Tit	37	16
Willow Warbler	153	1
collybita Chiffchaff *tristis* Chiffchaff	268 2	3 1
Aquatic Warbler	1	0
Sedge Warbler	714	5
Reed Warbler	332	69
Grasshopper Warbler	101	2
Blackcap	149	0
Garden Warbler	8	0
Lesser Whitethroat	1	0
Common Whitethroat	25	2

Dartford Warbler	6	5
Firecrest	9	0
Goldcrest	19	4
Wren	27	14
Nuthatch	2	0
Treecreeper	1	0
Starling	20	1
Blackbird	30	6
Redwing	36	0
Song Thrush	16	0
Robin	41	18
Redstart	4	0
Stonechat	11	0
Dunnock	15	6
Grey Wagtail	1	0
Pied Wagtail	171	1
Meadow Pipit	86	1
Tree Pipit	3	0
Water Pipit	7	0
littoralis Rock Pipit	31	1
Chaffinch	5	0
Bullfinch	11	3
Greenfinch	7	1
Linnet	15	1
Lesser Redpoll	21	0
Goldfinch	15	0
Reed Bunting	126	20
Total	2793	298

Lytchett Bay Non-Avian Wildlife Report

2021

Zebra Jumping Spider Mark Wright

Brown Argus Shaun Robson

Privet Hawkmoth Jackie Hull

Introduction

This year 2021 I set up a Lytchett Bay Recording area on to the Living Records Database, which provides information for Dorset Environmental Records Centre.

Dorset Environmental Records Centre was established in 1976 as an independent organisation to collate information on all of Dorset's wildlife. It provides an opportunity for local naturalists and conservation organisations to work together. Combining knowledge to create a better picture of Dorset's wildlife - both in the recent decline and loss of some of our more spectacular species (like the large tortoiseshell and the mouse-eared bat) and the arrival (or invasion?) and spread of others (like the Long-winged Conehead and Japanese knotweed). Data held by DERC is accessible to everyone from students and local residents to local authorities, conservation organisations and consultants. DERC do charge to help cover administration costs.

For Lytchett Bay it has several benefits as it enables the various conservation bodies that manage areas of the recording area to have access to all our records which can help them when it comes to planning and carrying out the various work that is require in forth coming years. It also helps us see which areas within the recording area are more important than others for different species and how the different species are distributed throughout the various habitats we have. The database also helps with keeping a historic list of all the species that has been seen and recorded which in turn helps me enormously when coming to write this annual report. Another advantage is I can see the first and last dates that species are being recorded and see the Lytchett Bay seasons for individual species. Also at the end of the year I can see a breakdown of all the species and observation recorded. In 2021, 1,266 records have been inputted involving 533 species 95 of which are species that haven't been recorded before in the Lytchett Bay area. Of all the species recorded 60 were designated species.

For the future if you haven't submitted your sightings but would like to, you can e-mail me Nick Hull at nickh4142@gmail.com or you can post sightings and photographs on the Lytchett Bay Facebook page https://www.facebook.com/groups/2469123376495268 or tweet to Lytchett Bay Nature @LytchettP . It's so easy to let us know what you're seeing. Whatever your wildlife interest, the more we know, no matter how small, the more knowledge we have to keep Lytchett Bay and its heathland, fields and green space for us all to enjoy

The problem with recording everything we can, the list grows each year and because of this it's becoming impossible to list every species recorded in a reasonable number of pages, so as with previous years, I will summaries each species group and list the important species and those that have been recorded for the first time only. I've placed the date and location where the species were first recorded under the species name.

As always I have to thank the following contributors for their contributions and records in no particular order: Shaun Robson, Ian Ballam, Jackie Hull, David Foster, Paul Morton, Liz Woodford, Martin Wood, Ian Lewis, Joe Parker, Ed Bennet, Chris Walker, Alison Copland, Stephen Smith, John Westacott, Mike Gibbons, Colin Lamont, Frazer Hockey, Paul Swann, Jem Bee, Rickie Fancy, Martin Howard, Mark Wright, Trevor Steele, Emma Clark, Michelle Irving, Rosie Bailey, Jo Mary, Lyn Lambert, Catherine Smith and the Upton Hedgehog Group. Hopefully I haven't left anyone out I apologise now if I have.

I also like to thank the following people for their help in verifying identification of various species groups. Tony Allen (Beetles); Jez Martin (Spiders); Paul Harris (Moths) and members from Diptera, Hoverfly and Various expert from BWARS (Bees Wasps & Ants) Face Book group and Britain Arachnid Society & Steven Falk and Gavin Broad via Twitter; whose help has been invaluable with identifying some of the more difficult and rare invertebrates.

A number of species listed in the tables may have 'agg' (aggregate) written next to their name, this means for a definitive identification the species requires to be dissected to determine the species. I do not 'gen-det' as we do not believe in killing something that has a purpose on this earth and it should be able to fulfill that purpose before it dies. If I find a dead specimen, I have no problem in carrying out any procedure to find a definitive identification. There may come a time where that one or two species may have to be collected to prove identification if work is required for their conservation we would need to know what species they are to provide the best habitat they require to help the species. A few species have asterix ** or *** these are important designated species in Dorset or Nationally.

Thank you
Nick Hull

Photograph Acknowledgements
Big thank you to all who have allowed me to use their photographs in this report. Unless stated otherwise all photographs are copyright of the individual photographer.

Species Account

Mammals

28 mammal species have been recorded in the Lytchett Bay area since 2012 some are common other scarce or even rare but there are a number which are relatively common which haven't been recorded. Like with any other group we are interested in any sightings you have when visiting the bay area.

As a general rule the mammals recorded changes little through the year but over the last year we have managed to add

Polecat Ferret *Mustela putorius* was added to our list though there is some doubt whether it was pure bred as its markings weren't strong enough and there was a little too much blond in its coat. Unfortunately it was a road casualty and found dead by Paul M, a very interesting species to find in the area.

Roe Deer *Capreolus capreolus* are still present but not often seen as they once were and it wasn't until October that they were recorded this year. This may be due to the number of Sika Deer *Cervus nippon* in the area, as they tend to displace the Roe to areas outside of the reserves.

Sika Deer *Cervus Nippon*
An introduced species, which has become very common around the bay and harbour, they seemed to have had a long rut this year. The Stags starting to make themselves known by their screechy bellows, which were first heard in late August and still being heard in early November.

Otter *Lutra lutra* and **Badger *Meles meles***
There have been no observations or signs of either of these species this year which is a little concerning but I feel both species are best described as irregular visitors and as they are mainly nocturnal it's very possible that they have been overlooked.

Fox *Vulpes vulpes*
Is a species that isn't mentioned often here as they are relatively common in the area and during my nocturnal sound recording in spring and autumn can be heard on most nights making there screaming barks from somewhere in the recording area.

Bats
We know we have several different species of Bat that use the Lytchett Bay area, as they are often seen but due to the lack of expertise in identification it is hard for us to know if the population is changing, increasing or indeed stable. We believe there has been little change in the species that have been using the area during summer, but we really need more information on all the species and to know where they roost so we can help in their protection.

Hedgehog *Erinaceus europaeus*
The Upton & Lytchett Minster Hedgehog group are doing sterling work monitoring this declining species in the town and it appears that they are doing reasonably well here but we shouldn't get complacent. For 2020 they produced the following article but due to an internet delivery error I didn't receive it in time for publishing in last year's report so I've included it here. Also I've added an update for 2021 which gives a good comparison of data and what is happened since 2020.

The map shows the sightings in 2020 throughout Upton and includes the Lytchett Bay recording area which is south of Sandy Lane.

Live Hedgehog sighting in Upton 2020

Hedgehogs in Upton and Lytchett Minster.
We started volunteering for the Dorset Mammal Group as hedgehog coordinators in summer 2019 as part a project called Hedgehog Friendly Towns. The Dorset Mammal Group's main focus is to reverse the decline in hedgehog numbers and this project is just one of the ways in which they wish to achieve this. Sadly hedgehogs are now vulnerable to extinction in the UK and we need to do all we can to save them.

The Dorset Hedgehog Friendly Towns project now has 33 towns signed up and 4 more have shown an interest.

The main goals we want to achieve in Upton and Lytchett Minster are:

- Encouraging people to create hedgehog friendly gardens and cut hedgehog highway holes in their fencing.
- Educating residents on what food is safe to feed to hogs (not mealworms, peanuts or sunflower hearts!).
- Explaining about the dangers of slug pellets, steep sided ponds, garden strimmers and rat poison.
- Work with the allotment association to promote organic growing and creating habitats on the site.
- Reducing hedgehog road casualties.
- To work with local schools and engage with young people.
- Fundraising for the Dorset Hedgehog Hospital

We quickly realised how popular hedgehogs were in our town, when over 80 people turned up to the first meeting! The second meeting was just as popular and we can't wait to have another one when guidance allows us. We have had an amazing 170 hedgehog sightings from residents during 2020, mostly from their gardens. Most of these are from Upton, and the majority are located around Moorland Way and Sandy Lane. We would like to get more residents on board this year to see if there are more hedgehogs across the whole town, or perhaps the hedgehogs are concentrated in that area. We are particularly keen to hear from people in Lytchett Minster, because we haven't had much data from there yet.

The project is very new and we only have 1 full year of hedgehog sightings, however it appears there is a good population within our town and they are certainly breeding within our gardens and having multiple broods. Our winters are very mild in Dorset and we know that not all hedgehogs will hibernate. We are encouraging people to continue to feed during the winter, because this helps the late broods to fatten up and keep going through the colder months, when there is less natural food around. There are over 100 residents registered to the project already, who have created a hedgehog friendly garden and want to help them. We hope to get more people onboard this coming year.

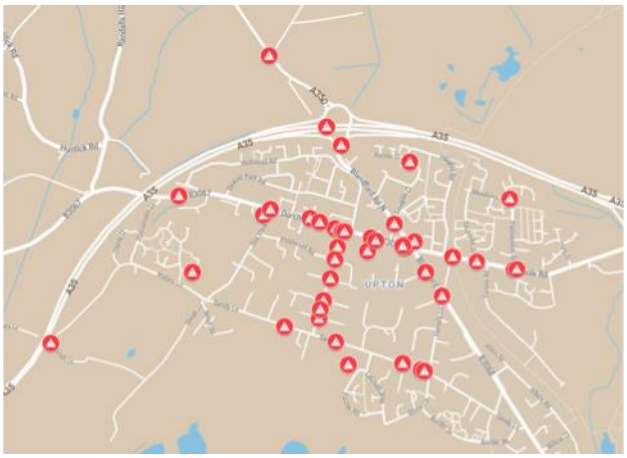
There were 43 hedgehog road casualties reported to us during 2020, we noticed a significant increase, when the initial lockdown was eased. This has given us the data to find the black spot locations, where we would like to install road signs to encourage motorists to slow down. We are hoping to have the signs installed this spring before they awake from hibernation.

As a temporary measure we installed "ghost" hedgehog signs in prominent locations across the town to show people the amount of hedgehog road casualties. This was done across Dorset and promoted by Hugh Warwick hedgehog extraordinaire.

The following are the worst roads, which happen to be the main roads through the Town.

- Sandy Lane
- Moorland Way
- Blandford Rd North
- Blandford Rd
- Dorchester Road

We have been working closely with Tracy and Jim at Hamworthy Hedgehog Rescue who do an amazing job dedicating all of their time to rescuing hedgehogs. Last year they rescued 698 and released an amazing 523 back to the wild. They still currently have 148 in the care! They explained to us recently that they get most of their intakes from Upton.



Hedgehog road casualties 2020

Hedgehog © Nick Hull

Without the kind work they are doing, we wouldn't be able to help as many hedgehogs as we have.

Sadly it would appear there is a growing trend to paint hedgehogs! We are hoping this is due to residents who wish to identify their hedgehogs. However using emulsion paint on a wild animal is cruel and can make them stand out to foxes and other predators. Tracy has had many entries into their rescue which are covered in multiple colours of paint.

We have also both had painted hedgehogs within our own gardens. There is no reason to paint or mark a wild animal, we should just enjoy watching them from a safe distance and learning the individuals by their behavior and subtle differences.

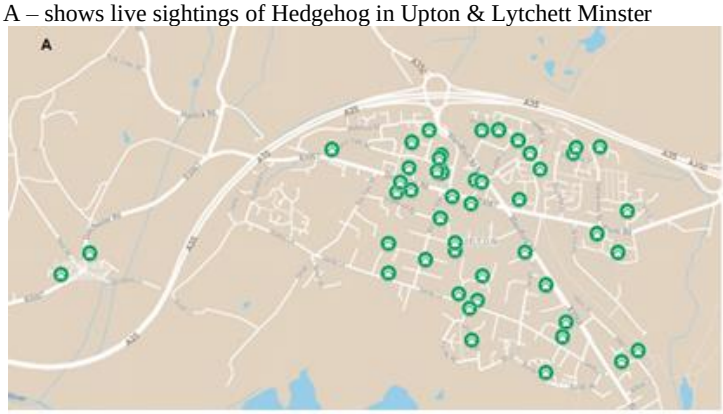
One of the Dorset Mammal Group's other projects is to fundraise to create a hedgehog hospital in Dorset. This will help hedgehog rescuers and carers across the county, by offering veterinary care 24/7.
https://www.justgiving.com/crowdfunding/dmghedgehoghospital

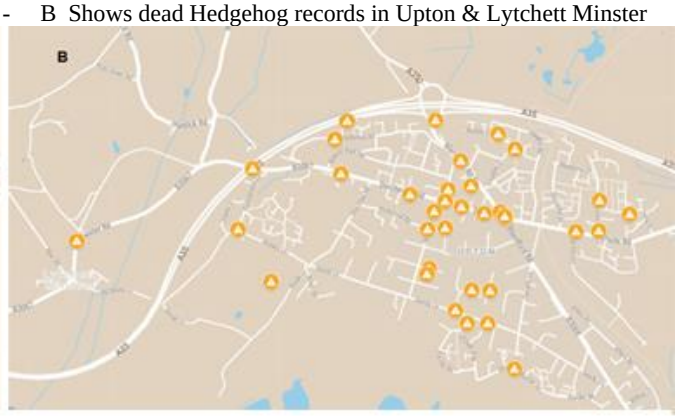
Hedgehog Group 2021 Update

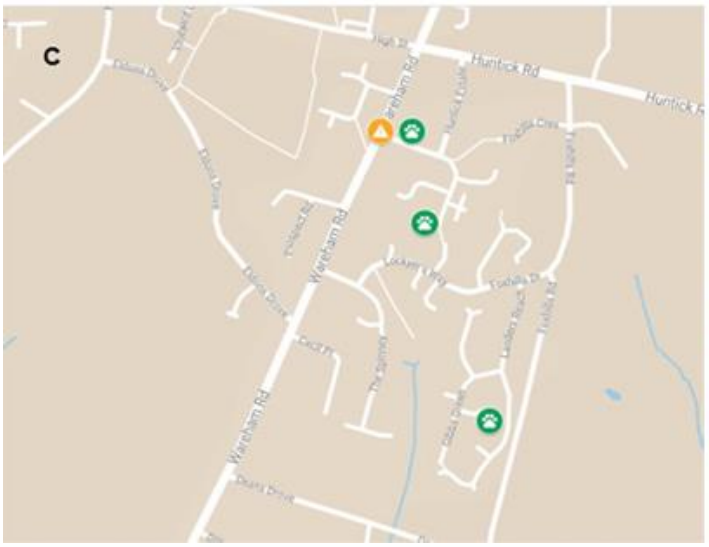
The Hedgehog Group has done some simple number crunching and here are the results for 2021.

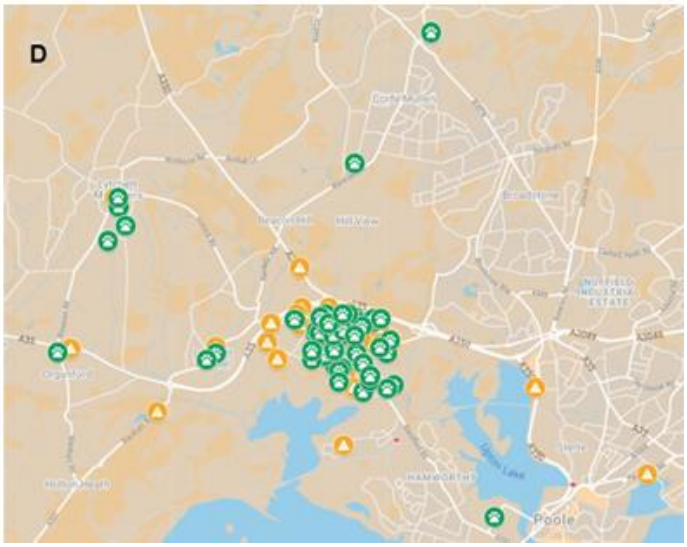
57 Hedgehog sightings in total
49 Upton and Lytchett Minster
4 Lytchett Matravers
2 Corfe Mullen
1 Hamworthy
1 Organford

A – shows live sightings of Hedgehog in Upton & Lytchett Minster - B Shows dead Hedgehog records in Upton & Lytchett Minster









C – Shows live and dead Hedgehog sightings for Lytchett Minster - D - Shows Hedgehog sighting across the wider area

This is a lot lower than last year, in 2020 we had 170 sightings! We need to know if hedgehog numbers are starting to drop in our town or just that residents haven't sent in sightings. Please can you let us know if hedgehogs are still visiting your garden this coming year even if you have let us know before. We'll send out a reminder in Spring, but I

know some hedgehogs haven't hibernated this year due to the mild winter. So please let us know if you have still got hogs in the garden!

42 Hedgehog casualties
1 road casualties in Lytchett Minster
24 road casualties in Upton
1 road casualty in Turlin Moor
3 road casualties on A35
3 road casualties on A350
1 road casualty A351
1 road casualty Poole park
8 garden/driveway unknown deaths in Upton

The hog road casualties in Upton have gone down dramatically since 2020 (41 to 24). We are hoping this is due to our wheelie bin stickers and slow down signs, which have been up in the town since last spring/summer. However due to the lower number of live sightings in the town, it could be due to less hedgehogs being around. We need more data this year to be able to look into this more.

We now have 118 houses providing a hedgehog friendly garden and sightings within Lytchett Bay.

We also received some great news from Upton in Bloom, they are no longer using slug pellets in any of their displays after we discussed the issues with hedgehogs and other wildlife. This is fantastic news for hedgehogs who we know like to roam in the flower beds around the clock tower, also the beds still look great and won gold in Britain in Bloom last year!

Sarah and Sarah-Jane, Upton and Lytchett Minster Hedgehog Friendly Community Coordinators, would like to thank you for all your sightings over the past year.

Reptiles and Amphibians

Monthly survey didn't take place this year on the Lytchett Bay conservation area as it's important not to continually disturb the reptiles so only casual observation and reports have been recorded. We managed to record all species that have previously been recorded in past years. In general it appeared from the reports received that most have done well in 2021. Due to the various lockdowns there has been considerable disturbance from people lifting refugia (survey tins) also to allowing dogs run off the lead over the heath. There is two main points to be made here they are:-

1. By interfering with an ongoing survey and by lifting the tin and checking you will be distorting the result and this affects conservation of the reptiles and the site. Also if you disturb a scheduled one species you will also be breaking the law if you haven't a license and permission of the landowner which you are require for you to lift a refugia (tin or felt).

If you are interested in reptiles and want to see reptiles up close you are always welcome to join an ARC reptile walks or go to one of their events, which can be found online. To get involved go to the ARC website https://www.arc-trust.org and you can learn to do things properly get a license and help reptile conservation.

2. Allowing your dog to run off the lead over the heath disturbs the reptiles and other animals and birds, also puts your dog at risk of being bitten by an adder. If possible, keep your dog on the lead in areas where adders occur. When off the lead, discourage it from exploring areas that adders may take refuge in. These areas are typically sheltered and receive plenty of sunlight, and include patches of long grass, deep heather, and the edges of bramble, gorse patches or stone walls. If you see your dog examining something you suspect may be an adder, call it off immediately. Bites to dogs are rare but tend to occur when dogs sniff or paw at an adder. Though most dogs will survive an adder bite it may require veterinary intervention, which could be costly so please read the signs and if they say keep your dog on a lead please do so for the health of your dog. If you wish to run your dog free there are two SANG one at French's Farm and another at Upton CP where your dog will be safe.

For the best advice on what to do if you or your pet are bitten by an Adder follow this link to the ARC website https://www.arc-trust.org/facts-and-advice-on-adder-bites

Sand Lizard *Lacerta agilis*
This is a schedule 1 species which we are lucky to have whose population have had another good season, though the weather may have been responsible for more sightings as animals come out trying to warm up so they can operate and go hunting and have been more obvious.

Slow Worm *Anguis fragilis*
This legless lizard is the commonest of all the reptiles found in the Lytchett Bay recording area and I've received reports from all around the bay area and it appears we have a pretty healthy population.

Grass Snake *Natrix Helvetica*
Our largest snake and it seem to be doing very well and being found in a number of the local garden compost heaps and in local garden ponds throughout the Lytchett Bay area.


Grass Snake © Nick Hull

Adder *Vipera berus*
Adder appear to have declined with very few records in the usual areas, this is probably due to the extra footfall and disturbance due to the lockdowns with more people using the small area that are available in the area. Though there does seem to be a westward movement in the area, which may be because there is a lack of females and males are moving out in search of a mate or it could be that they traditional areas are overpopulated and this is a natural expansion of the population time will tell.

Amphibians
It seems to have had a strange year certainly in my own pond the Newts were present much as usual, though the Frogs were present throughout the year no spawn was observed. Though later in the summer small frogs were found in various areas of the garden. Also whilst recording bird sounds on night migration flying over the bungalow, I recorded Frogs croaking during the late autumn right up until mid-November when I stopped recording, this is usually a sign of the start of the breeding season when the males return to the pond waiting for the females to arrive. At the time of writing there isn't any spawn but in a typical year you wouldn't expect spawn until after February's cold weather has finished. Though I know that people have already found spawn in their ponds already in 2022 because of the mild winter that we have been having perhaps a sign of climate change happening on our doorstep.

Odonata - Dragonflies and Damselflies
Twenty-three species of Damselfly and Dragonfly have been recorded in 2021 two of which were new additions to our list bringing our total to 28 species since we started in 2014.

Large Red-eyed Damselfly *Erythromma najas*
Recorded – 14th June Private Pond
Length 33-36mm
Found by myself on a private pond in the area was the first time they have been recorded. I found at least six male and a single female on my first visit and similar numbers were recorded on subsequent visits. Hopefully this population will grow and spread to other ponds in the area.


Large Red-eyed Damselfly © Nick Hull

Downy Emerald *Cordulia aenea*
Recorded – 17th June FP12
Length 47-55mm
Found by Ian Ballam around the pond off Footpath 12 was an excellent find adding another species to are odonata list and I was able to catch up seeing it a few days later. Unlike the next species, this only appeared to be a single male present so this individual must have been exploring from somewhere else and came across the pond and stuck around.

Red-veined Darter *Sympetrum fonscolombii*
Recorded – 7th September Approach Field
Length 33-40mm
This is the second record for this species again found by Ian Ballam this time on the Approach Field. The previous record was on 16th September 2019.


Red-veined Darter © Ian Ballam

Orthoptera & Allied Insects - Grasshoppers, Crickets, Earwigs, Cockroaches, Stick insects & Mantids.

Since 2014 when we set up the Lytchett Bay Recording area we have recorded 15 species within this group this year. Of these we have only recorded five species reported in 2021 and there has been no addition to the list.

Hemiptera - Bugs

This is a group that probably doesn't grab the interest of many people these Insects are in the order Hemiptera are commonly called Bugs. There are about 1700 species in Britain. The range of forms is huge but they all have in common a piercing beak, used like a hypodermic needle to suck juices from plants or other animals. The name 'hemiptera' means half (hemi) wing (ptera) and refers to the feature that many bugs have the front half of the wing hardened (like in beetles) but the rear part is membranous. The bug order is divided into two sub-orders: Heteroptera and Homoptera. Generally the Heteroptera have wings flattened over the body whilst the Homopterans hold their wings in a tent-like position. Most bugs can be identified from photographs but some very similar species need examination of the actual specimens.

In 2021 we have recorded seven additions to our bug list bringing the total to 44 species. I'm confident that this is a list which will slowly become larger as we investigate new areas around the bay.

Mirid Bug - *Dryophilocoris flavoquadrimaculatus*
Recorded - 26th May Approach Field

This is one of several species within the group that is black with yellow marking. Though this species is distinctive it is similar to other so care in its identification should be taken.

Crucifer Sheildbug *Eurydema oleracea*
Recorded – 13th July Approach Field
Length 6-7mm

This shieldbug is often called the Brassica Sheildbug which indicates its larvae food plant which also includes Garlic Mustard and Horseradish. Larvae emerge from May to July and the adults over winter and emerge in the Spring.

Spiked Sheildbug *Picromerus bidens*
Recorded – 5th October Black Pipe
Length 12-13.5 mm.

A large and distinctive predatory shieldbug, which has unmistakable thorn-like projections on the front of the pronotum. Often found in flower-rich woodland edge habitats and also frequent on heathland. Adult: July-November. This species usually overwinters as eggs and less frequently as larvae, becoming adult by July/August. The nymphs are greyish-black with pale banded legs and yellow banded antennae. Like the adults, they are predatory, feeding on the larvae of other insects, particularly caterpillars but will also suck sap from plants. Widespread across Britain and Ireland but scarcer further north and have recently been recorded in Scotland.

Meadow Plant Bug - *Leptopterna dolabrata*
Recorded - 6th July Approach Field
Length 8-8.5 mm

This is a relatively common species in damper habitats and feeds on various grasses and adults can be found from June to September.

Plant Bug - *Plagiognathus arbustorum*
Recorded - 5th August Watery Lane
Length - 4mm

This is an extremely common bug is found throughout the UK on a range of different plants particularly nettles. Adults can be found between July and October.

Mirid Bug - *Rhabdomiris striatellus*
Recorded – 18th May Approach Field
Length 7-8mm
This is a striking looking bug and is frequently found on or near Oak across most of Britain but particularly in the South. Adults are found usually between May and July.

Plant Bug - *Stenodema calcarata*
Recorded - 17th May Approach Field
Length 7-8mm
This is another common grass bug the adults of which can be found all year. The adults over winter and emerge in April. Both the larvae and adults feed on the unripe grains of a number of different grasses and are usually found in drier habitats.

Rhombic Leatherbug – *Syromastus rhombeus*
Recorded - 27th March Lytchett Heath
Length 9.5-10.5mm
This is the only squash bug with such a broad and distinctly diamond-shaped abdomen. The adults and nymphs are usually found in open drier habitats and feed on campions, sandworts, spurreys, and other plants in the Caryophyllacea family. They are found locally in Southern England and South Wales. Adults can be found all year.

Neuroptera - Lacewings & Ant-lions
Common Wax-fly *Conwentzia psociformis* agg.
Length 5mm
One of several similar species. Detailed examination is always needed to determine species and this is often only possible with males, hence it is aggregated here. The wings are clothed with a mealy off-white powder. They are a widespread species in the southern half of Britain, less frequently recorded further north. They are found in various habitats and sometimes attracted to light traps. Often associated with deciduous trees and bushes you can look out for them between April until well into the autumn.

Coleoptera – Beetles
As with the bugs a number of beetle species have been added in 2021 bring us to a total of 87 species found in the area. There are many more out there and we are only touching the surface with the few we have found.

Click Beetle - *Agriotes pallidulus*
Recorded – 30th May Black Pipe
Length 3.5-5mm
A species found most in open grassland that can be found all year whose larvae live on the roots of grass. They are a fairly widespread species in England and Wales and with a few records from Scotland.

Click Beetle - *Ampedus elongatulus* ***
Recorded – 13th July Approach Field
Length 7-8.5mm
This was an excellent find by Ian Ballam with very few Dorset records This is a species found in old woodland on Beech, Oaks and Pines. This species is listed as Near Threatened and of conservation concern. This is a very local species found in the South and South-east of England in May and July.


Ampedus elongatulus © Ian Balllam

Click Beetle - *Athous haemorrhoidalis*
Recorded – 26th May Lytchett Heath
Length 15mm
This species is usually found in hedgerows and meadows, from May to August, the larvae feed on roots and can become a pest on root crops. They are common throughout Britain.

Click Beetle - *Melanotus castanipes/villosus agg.*
Recorded – 19th July Moth Trap
Length 13-19mm
This species is agg as it requires to be examined with a microscope so only could be identified from my photograph as either M. castanipes or M. villosus. The status of this species has been revised since 2004, splitting this species from M. villosus, so its precise status is unclear, but it would seem that M. castanipes is much the commoner of the two species. They can be found in Spring and Summer and are found where pine logs and stumps are present.

Ground Beetle *Bradycellus harpalinus*
Recorded – Date 13th August Moth Trap
Length 4-5mm
This is a small beetle that is widely distributed in Britain with a peak season from May to September and can be found in a wide range of habitats from gardens, grassland, and woodland.

Marsh Beetle Contacyphon variabilis
Recorded* – Date *Date 13th August Moth Trap
Length 3-4mm
This small 4mm beetle was found dead in my moth trap, which was fortunate in one way as I was able to get our expert to give me a definitive identification. This species is mainly found exclusively in woodland or in marshes and at pool margin which we have lots of all these habitats. They can be found from March through to November and are fairly widespread species in Britain.


Contacyphon variabilis © Nick Hull

Reed Beetle - *Donacia vulgaris*
Recorded – 8th June Approach Field
Length up to 12mm
Found around water plants such as bulrush and bur-reed and often near to the water this metallic coppery coloured beetle can be seen between May and August its larvae are aquatic. It is a fairly widespread species in Britain.

Pine Ladybird - *Exochomus quadripustulatus*
Recorded - 22nd March Lytchett Heath
Length 3-4mm
This is a fairly common small black and red spotted ladybird species coming in around 4mm that is mainly found in areas of Pine, but it does live on other trees. They can be seen from April to October and like other ladybirds feed on aphids and other pest insects such as scale insects. They overwinter in leaf litter, foliage or in the crevices of bark of evergreen trees.

Common Grammoptera Longhorn Beetle - *Grammoptera ruficornis*
Recorded – 9th June Approach Field
Length 3-7mm
A widespread and common species this longhorn beetle can be found often on flowers especially those of Hawthorn and Hogweed and sometimes found in well wooded areas. You can look for them in early summer and the larvae feed on wood of dead twigs and the adults on nectar and pollen of various flowers.

Darkling Beetle - *Lagria hirta*
Recorded - 8th July Approach Field
Length 7-9mm
This is a relatively common species that was first recorded in 2020 but I omitted to enter in the report. They are found mostly in areas with light sandy soils between May and August. The adults feed on nectar and pollen on flowers such as Daisies or members of the carrot family. The larvae eat decaying plant materials in leaf litter and turf.

Cereal Leaf Beetle - *Oulema melanopus / rufocyanea agg.*
Recorded - 20th July Black Pipe
Length 6mm
These two species *Oulema melanopus* and *Oulema* rufocyanea are almost impossible to separate without detailed examination. They are small beetle which the adults' feeds on grasses and cereal crops as do its larvae and are found from late Spring through to early Autumn. They are a common species in the Southern half of Britain in late spring to early autumn.


Oulema melanopus / rufocyanea agg. © Ian Ballam

Rove Beetle – *Paederus fuscipes*
Recorded – 28th May Black Pipe
Length 6-7mm
This is third species in this family of Rove beetles that we have identified on the patch, a species that is considered to be locally common across the south of England and Wales and it also occurs in the Lake District but not further north. It can be found in wetlands including saltmarsh and marshy heathland and fens and well vegetated ponds and bogs. Adults occur year-round and are active from February to late autumn and are mostly diurnal.

Weevil sp*. - Perapion marchicum*
Recorded – 8th June Watery Lane
Length approx 2mm
This is the ninth species of weevil that we have found on the patch. This species diminutive 2mm species feeds on Docks and Sorrels and is found mainly in England and Wales. A species of pine forest and sandy and stony habitats.

Fairy-ring Longhorn Beetle *Pseudovadonia livida*
Recorded - 29th June Watery Lane
Length 5-9mm
A small longhorn beetle at around 5-9mm which can be found in pine and deciduous woodland from May to September. They are often found on flowers particularly Apiaceae species where they feed on nectar and pollen. The larvae develop in humus infested fungus and feeds on mycelium.

Ground Beetle *Poecilus versicolor*
Recorded – 11th June Lytchett Heath
Length 11-13mm
This species usually requires to go under a microscope for specific identification but Ian's photographs show the feature to identify to species level. Poecilis cupreus is distinguished from the similar P. versicolor by having fine punctuations on its head between its eyes. In P. versicolor, the head is completely smooth and unpunctured. P. versicolor also prefers wetter habitats. Unfortunately we have habitats which both preferred so care with the identification was needed.

Ground Beetle - *Pterostichus anthracinus*
Recorded – 2nd July Watery Lane
Length 10-13mm
In the UK it is widespread though local across the south of England and South Wales, and more scarce and sporadic further north to southern Scotland and through northern and Western Ireland. Adults are present year-round and active over a long season from early spring until the autumn, they occur in wetlands generally and especially well-vegetated clay or peaty soils besides standing water or on permanently damp floodplains etc, they are mainly nocturnal but are often active on hot summer days.

Pine Shoot Beetle - Tomicus piniperda
Recorded - 30th June Lytchett Way Moth Trap
Length3.5-5mm
This small bark beetle I found in the moth trap and had identified by our beetle expert. It is found in, on Scots Pine and is reported to be one of the most destructive shoot feeding species in Northern Europe.

Caddis Flies

Land Caddis Fly *Sericostoma personatum*
Recorded 25th April Lytchett Way moth trap
Length 9-16mm
This is a reddish-brown caddis. Which is fairly common and widespread in Britain and found on the wing from May to September around rivers, streams and stony lakes.

Lepidoptera – Butterflies & Moths

Twenty-four species of butterfly were recorded in 2021 one of which was a first ever recorded in the area, Brown Argus this is a slightly odd and unexpected record in that we do not have ideal habitat or the main food plant for the species so it can only be assumed that it has come from somewhere else. Purple Hairstreak was recorded again this year, last recorded in 2017 so it seems they are perhaps being overlooked or just missed in the mature Oaks during the summer. We have recorded a total of 30 species of butterfly in the recording area since 2014.

Butterflies

Brown Argus *Aricia agestis*
Recorded – 13th July Approach Field
Wingspan 25-31mm
This was somewhat a surprise found by Shaun on the Approach Field, this species of Blue unlike other "blue" butterflies differ in that they have no blue scales and both sexes are brown in colour as the name suggests. Both sexes have orange spots on the upperside on both sets of wings. They are quite a widespread species, you can find colonies in east and west Cornwall, Devon Dorset, Derbyshire and South-west Yorkshire. This is a species that isn't a great wanderer and only travels a couple of hundred metres at most from where they emerge hence a surprise record for the patch. The future will tell if this was just a one off event or whether it is the start of a colony.

Moths

The continuation of moth trapping on the Lytchett Bay patch recorded 251 species of both macro and micro moths in 2021. Which brings the total number of species recorded to 562 species with the addition of twenty new species trapped this year. Trapping only took place in my garden this year with a handful of casual records of species found by others during their visits.

Micro Moths

Stigmella trimaculella
Recorded – 28 August
Wingspan 5-6mm
Distributed throughout England, where it is fairly common except in the west; there are records from Scotland and Wales, but very few. Though in Dorset they are considered to be a very rare resident. The larvae mine the leaves of Poplar trees with variable characteristics, but usually beginning with a narrow black central line of frass. The mines are found in late June and July and from September to October. The adults are rather attractive, with brownish grey forewings each with three creamy patches. They fly in May and again in August.


Stigmella trimaculella © Nick Hull

Coptotriche marginea
Recorded – 11 September
Wingspan 7-8 mm.
A common species throughout Britain having two generations with the moths flying in May/June and again in August. In Dorset their status is considered to be uncommon and thinly distributed resident. The larvae mine the leaves of bramble, creating a funnel-shaped blotch, the second generation feeding through the winter. The moths are small, indistinct brownish insects with a slight metallic sheen.

Caloptilia robustella agg.
Recorded – 19th July
Wingspan 10-13 mm.
This species is considered to be an uncommon and local resident in Dorset. It's very similar to the related *C. alchimiella*, differing in several subtle ways including the yellow blotch on the forewing, which is shorter and less clearly defined in this species. However, to be certain of identification, dissection of genitalia is advised. The larva mines a leaf of oak, beech or sweet chestnut. The adult moths occur in a number of generations, any time between April and November.


Caloptilia robustella © Nick Hull

Pleurota bicostella
Recorded – 10th June
Wingspan c. 24mm.
Locally distributed over much of the British Isles and considered scarce and restricted resident in Dorset, this rather distinctive species flies in June and July, at dawn and just before dusk. The favoured habitat is heathland and damp moorland, where the larvae feed on heather, in a silken web on the shoots. The adults have extraordinarily large, tufted labial palps.

Teleiodes vulgella
Recorded – 30th June
Wingspan 5.5-6.5mm
Common nationally but scarce and thinly distributed resident in Dorset. They are a fairly distinctive moth in the adult stage, this species has small blackish patches bordered by raised whitish scale-tufts, giving it a noticeably 'rough' appearance. Quite a common species throughout most of Britain, the adults fly at night in June and July, and often visit the light-trap. The larvae feed on a number of shrubs and trees, including hawthorn (*Crataegus*) and blackthorn (*Prunus spinosa*).

Gelechia senticetella
Recorded – 9th July
Wingspan c.12 mm.
A species, which appears to be on the increase, is believed to have been introduced with the food plant and first appeared in Essex in 1988. Since then there have been quite a number of records, mostly from the southeast of England. The larva feeds on juniper and cypress and in common with a number of other species using the same food plants, is expanding its range due to their use in gardens. The adults fly in July and August and are most often found in garden light-traps.

Thiotricha subocellea*
Recorded – 19th July
Wingspan c. 10mm.
This species is a nationally scarce moth and has a scattered distribution across England and Wales, and into parts of Scotland. It flies during July and August. The larva feeds on wild marjoram (*Origanum vulgare*), occasionally on other herbs, feeding in autumn on the seeds from inside a case constructed from the calyxes of the foodplant. As it grows, the larva attaches further calyxes, resulting in a rather distinctive appearance. The adult moths are small and whitish, marked with grey and black.


Thiotricha subocellea ©Nick Hull

Carnation Tortrix *Cacoecimorpha pronubana*
Recorded – 30th June
Wingspan 14-24 mm.
This species was first recorded in Britain on the south coast in 1905. Since then it has spread widely over a large part of the British Isles, and is fairly common in some parts, though considered uncommon and thinly distributed resident in Dorset. It is a fairly distinctive moth with rounded forewings and bright orange hindwings. The larvae feed on a wide variety of different plants, and the adults can be found on the wing in May and June, and again in August and September.

Red-barred Tortrix *Ditula angustiorana*
Recorded – 17th July
Wingspan 12-18 mm.
With an average wingspan of around 15mm, this is quite a small species, though the females are usually slightly larger, and differ slightly in markings and colour. It is to be found and a common species throughout much of Britain, though less commonly further north, but are common and widespread resident in Dorset. The adults are on the wing in June and July. The males sometimes fly in sunshine, and both sexes fly at night, and come to light. Various trees and shrubs are used as food plants.

Moss Marble *Celypha aurofasciana**
Recorded 9th July
Wingspan 12-14 mm.
Nationally scarce and very rare Dorset resident, which occurs mostly in the southern counties of England but ranging locally to the Midlands. It is also found in western Ireland. It is quite distinctive, with two broad yellow fasciae, each with a narrow dark central line, against a dark greyish brown ground colour. The latin name *aurofasciana* describes this appearance, *auro* meaning 'gold'. Unusually for the family, the larvae feed in a silken gallery amongst mosses and liverworts on tree trunks. The adult moths fly during June and July, often in late afternoon and evening.


Celypha aurofasciana © Nick Hull

Endothenia gentianaeana agg.
Recorded – 7th September
Wingspan 15-19 mm.
This is one of several species of *Endothenia* in which the adults closely resemble each other and require dissection of the genitalia for accurate identification. Adults fly in June and July, usually in the vicinity of teasel. In England and Wales, it is commonest in the south and scarcer northwards, but is a scarce and thinly distributed species in Dorset. The larva always feeds singly on the pith in the cavity of a teasel seed heads.

Eucosma tripoliana**
Recorded – 30th June
Wingspan 13 - 17 mm
E. tripoliana flies in the late afternoon and night in July-August. It has been recorded in south and east England, South Wales, and from Flintshire to north Lancashire and is rare and very local resident in Dorset. Found on saltings where its food plant, sea-aster occurs. Occasionally a specimen of *E. tripoliana* has its markings, apart from the silvery strigulae and ocellus, obscured by a light yellowish suffusion. The larva feeds from late August to October in flowers of sea-aster, often betraying its presence with frass on the flower head. It overwinters on the ground as a larva in a silk hibernaculum coated with detritus and must be able to survive being covered by high tides.

Pseudococcyx posticana***
Recorded – 10th June
Wingspan c.12-15 mm.
This pine-loving species is nationally rare and not surprisingly is a very rare Dorset resident. Found on the wing during May and June when it becomes active towards evening, resting among the foliage by day. It is distributed widely over much of the British Isles and frequents heathland and coniferous woods. The larvae attack the shoots of Scots Pine causing the affected shoot to arrest its development.


Pseudococcyx posticana © Nick Hull

Pammene aurita**
Recorded – 18th July
Wingspan 14-15 mm.
This species was first discovered in Britain in 1943 in south-east Kent. Since then it has become widely established over much of England and Wales. In Dorset it is considered as a scarce local resident. The larvae feed inside the seeds of sycamore, and their presence is sometimes betrayed by small exit holes in the seeds themselves. The adult moths are on the wing in July and August, from late afternoon onwards, and are most often encountered at light.

Grapholita lobarzewskii***
Recorded – 10th June
Wingspan c.14mm.
Nationally scarce and a very rare local species in Dorset, with relatively few records. Most records are from southern counties, and rather scattered. The larvae feed in the fruits of plum and cherry, and on the continent is also known from apple. They have a flight period of May and June.


Grapholita lobarzewskii © Nick Hull

Macro Moths

December Moth *Poecilocampa populi*
Recorded – 13th November
Wingspan 30-45 mm.
It's the first time I've caught one in my trap and I've been mothing for over twenty years. This is a species that is relatively common nationally but considered uncommon and thinly distributed resident in Dorset. Though most abundant in deciduous woodland containing birch elm, hawthorn or blackthorn, and common amongst coastal blackthorn thickets, but are less frequent elsewhere. They have a flight time from October until mid or late December. The female is distinctly larger than the male, and the wings have a slightly translucent appearance, due to their thinly scaled surface. The larvae feed in spring on a variety of deciduous trees.


December Moth © Nick Hull

Common Lutestring *Ochropacha duplaris*
Recorded – 18th July
Wingspan 27-32 mm.
A fairly common species nationally and throughout Dorset but is the first time I've had one in one of my traps. They are a relatively poorly marked species, with a range of variants, some of which tend towards the melanic form *obscura*. Often it is still possible to see the remnants of a darker spot and pale band across the wing, however. The adults fly at night from June to August, and the species inhabits woodland where the larval food plant, In Dorset, the moth tends to be mostly common in oak and birch woodland.

Lilac Beauty *Apeira syringaria*
Recorded – 9th July
Wingspan 38-42 mm.

A member of the 'Thorn' family, this moth has an unusual aspect when at rest, with the front margins of the wings curiously folded. This, in combination with the colour and pattern give a crumpled leaf-like appearance which you can see in the photograph. In Dorset, the moth is widely distributed across the county, but at low density and seldom common. The habitats favoured by the moth include honeysuckle-rich woodland on acid soils, woods and scrub on chalky soil where ash and privet grow, and coastal scrub where salt-resistant privet thickets colonise chalky undercliffs. The national norm is a single brood in late June and July, but in Dorset there is a partial bivoltine cycle with second brood examples often appearing towards the end of warmer than average summers.

August Thorn *Ennomos quercinaria*
Recorded – 28th August
Wingspan 42-50 mm.

This is the second record for this species which was first recorded in 2020 from a trap on Lytchett Heath and this is the first for my garden. One of several similar 'Thorns', the adults of this species can be distinguished by the shape of the cross-lines on the forewing. The inner line is distinctly curved, and the outer line has a 'kink' where it meets the leading edge. Nationally they are single brooded between mid-August and mid-September, but in Dorset the moth is on the wing from late-July in most years. In Dorset, the moth is most often found in deciduous woods, preferring woodland containing Oak and Beech; elsewhere the moth is rarely encountered.

Diptera - Flies & Relatives

As we are far from being experts this group is not just large but needs experience to identify to species in many cases requiring genitalia determination. All species have been verified by experts through the County Recorder, iRecord system and the Diptera Facebook page.

This year we have identified fourteen more species of hoverflies bringing the number recorded in the Lytchett Bay recording area to 57 species. Time will tell going forward how common and how they are distributed around the recording area.

Buzzer Midge *Chironomus plumosus*
Recorded – 1st March Lytchett Heath
Length 12mm. Not the most welcome of species though this is the largest non-biting midge. It comes in a range of colour forms from green, ginger, brown and black. The male has a pair of prominent plumes. There is a dark band at the end of each abdominal segment. They are often found around water during periods of egg laying by the females and at the hatching of adults. Usually seen during spring and summer when males create mating swarms which people can find quite a nuisance even though adults do not bite or feed. The larvae of chironomid midges are called 'bloodworms' and they live at the bottom of lakes and rivers. The pupa floats to the surface where the adult then hatches out. They are very vulnerable to predation at this stage and rising trout and other fish are often feeding on this species. They are a very common species in Britain.

Black Deerfly *Chrysops sepulcralis*
Recorded – 18th July Lytchett Way
This is the third deerfly species we have now recorded. They abdomen is black, dorsally and ventrally, and without a conspicuous yellow pattern. The frons and face are almost entirely bare, shining brown.

They can be found usually near ponds and boggy areas on heaths and moors.

Band-eyed Brown Horsefly *Tabanus bromius*
Recorded – 29th June Lytchett Way

length of 13 to15 mm
Lytchett Bay recording area has now recorded seven species of horsefly and this species is a medium size horsefly. It is easier to identify live females which have a single strongly-formed coloured eye band. The abdomen is usually pale buff with dark grey markings, but the basal tergites can exhibit a reddish ground colour in some specimens. Found in a variety of habitats. Peaking in summer. The larvae appear to develop as predators in soil, seemingly in drier places than most other large horseflies. Our most frequent medium-sized horsefly with most records coming from the southern half of Britain.

Narrow-winged Horsefly *Tabanus maculicornis*
Recorded – 12th June Approach Field
Length: 12 mm.
This is a rather small dark species with very narrow alula (flap at base of the wing) and orange antennae. The female has a pattern of grey triangles on the abdomen. Both sexes have one eye band. Like most tabanids, it prefers woodland or woodland edge habitats, particularly those associated with streams or marshy grassland. It can be found from Mid-May to mid-July, peaking in late June. It is believed to breed in boggy soil and around moss. It is widespread in southern Britain but less common than it used to be.

Barred Snout (Soldierfly sp.) *Nemotelus uliginosus*
Recorded – 19th July Approach Field
This is the sixth species of soldierfly we have now recorded. This is a cream and black patterned soldier fly, the males have more of the creamy colour on the abdomen than the females. Females of the species can be distinguished from the similar Nemotelus notatus female by the shape of the white bars on the frons. In N. uliginosis they are parallel-sided bars and in N. notatus they are wedge shaped. Saltmarsh, waste ground and unimproved grassland. Found from June to early September, peaking in July. Fairly frequent and widespread in Britain but most records are coastal.

Dotted Bee-fly *- Bombylius discolor*
Recorded – 9th April Watery Lane

Body length 8 to 12 mm. ((not including the extended proboscis) This is a species that has been seen before but couldn't be confirmed because the views haven't been good enough but David Foster managed to get a nice photograph and prove they are definitely on the patch. They are identified by the dark spots at the junctions of wing veins. The body colour is a mix of chestnut and black; the female has a line of white spots on abdomen. They can be found in varied habitats including gardens, grasslands, woodland rides and clearings. Flight time: March to June, most frequent in April. Bee-flies in the genus Bombylius lay their eggs into the nests of solitary mining bees. Host species include Andrena flavipes and Andrena cineraria.

Dance fly *Empis tessellata*
Recorded – 20th May Lytchett Heath
Length 9-12mm.
This is the largest of the genus. It is a bristly fly with brown-tinged wings. It has black femora but the tibia and tarsi may be red/brown. It frequents hedges, woodland edges, gardens and shrubby habitats. Particularly common on Hogweed and other umbellifer flowers during April to August. Though it feeds on nectar it is also a predator and catches other insects using its long-pointed proboscis to pierce their bodies. Males of E.opaca and E. tessellata present a 'gift' to the female, in the form of a dead insect before mating takes place. Females will not mate with males who do not present a gift.

Hoverfly - *Anasimyia contracta*
Recorded - 17th June FP12
Wing Length 6.25-8.25m
This species is a widely distributed species but local in Britain they are usually seen on emergent vegetation at the margins of still water. They can be seen from April to September and usually peak in mid-summer. The larvae have been found living between leaf sheaths of rotting plants.

Hoverfly *Cheilosia albitarsis agg.*
Recorded – 17th May Lytchett Heath
Wing Length 7.0-9.5mm
Cheilosia albitarsis and Cheilosia ranunculi are very similar and can often only be safely determined by detailed examination. For this reason I have treated the two species as an aggregate. They are robust with a short broad abdomen. In sunlight the thorax may be seen as metallic dark blue/green. The abdomen is more of a duller grey/bronze colour. These species are often found in damp meadows, marshy areas, woodland clearings or well-shaded verges and are associated with buttercup. April to August Adult females may sometimes be found landing on a buttercup leaf, walking to the tip and then underneath in order to lay an egg.

Hoverfly *Chrysogaster solstitialis*
Recorded – 15th June & 6th July Watery lane
Wing Length 6-7.25mm
This species has particularly dark wings. Though the abdomen is black and unmarked, the thorax of the female has a purple sheen and the scutellum often has a blue-grey dusting. They are often found on umbellifers in damp places. They have a flight period from late May to October, peaking in July and August. The larvae live in the mud beside streams and ponds. Fairly frequent and widespread in most of Britain, though less so in the north.


Chrysogaster solstitialis © Ian Ballam

Hoverfly *Dasysyrphus albostriatus*
Recorded – 8th June Approach Field
Wing Length 6.25-9mm
The downward facing yellow bars help to identify this species, sometimes fused into inverted 'V's. Two grey stripes on the thorax are also a distinguishing feature. It is a woodland edge species and often found on warm spring days in April and May, though can be found until November. They are widespread and quite common throughout Britain.

Hoverfly *Eristalis horticola*
Recorded – 8th September Lytchett Heath
Wing length 8.5 to 11.5 mm.
A particularly bright species, it has a shorter and broader abdomen than E. pertinax or E. tenax and has a darkened area across the wing. It can usually be found in well vegetated areas with plenty of bushes or trees. They have a flight period from April to October peaking in July. They are widespread but never common and scarcer further north.


Eristalis horticola © Nick Hull

Hoverfly *Eristalis intricarius*
Recorded – 9th July Lytchett Heath & 21st July Arable Field
Wing Length 8.25-12mm
This large hoverfly is unlike the other UK Eristalis species in being a furry bumblebee mimic. The males are dark with a reddish-brown tail whilst the female has a white tail and is somewhat larger. This species always has a yellow scutellum. It is most commonly seen in marshy woodland between March and November peaking in July. Larvae have been found in farmyard drains and ponds with decaying vegetation. They are a widespread species in Britain but not usually numerous.

Hoverfly *Eupeodes latifasciatus*
Recorded – 15th August Arbale Field
Wing length 6.5- 8.5 mm.
This is a species that is fairly widespread in Britain, but more frequent in the south. It is scarce in some years but quite common in others. The marks on tergites 3 and 4 are usually fused into bands in this species. There is some variation, and males differ from females. The yellow marks on tergites 3 and 4 often fail to reach the lateral margins in males, and in the females this yellow band is often pinched at the lateral margin, so that only about a quarter of it remains yellow. They like open habitats, and with a preference for damp meadows and lush vegetation but can be found in gardens. They have a flight period from March to October peaking in August.

Hoverfly *Melanostoma mellinum*
Recorded – 6th July Watery Lane
Wing Length 4.75-7mm
This species is a widespread and abundant grassland species, which can be found from April to October with peaks in May/June and July/August. It's a species that need careful examination to identify to separate it from M. scalare. Females which have very narrow dust spots on the mostly black frons. Males have a relatively short abdomen in which segments T2 & T3 are no longer than they are wide.

Hoverfly *Melanogaster hirtella*
Recorded – 17th May Lytchett Heath
Wing Length 5-6mm
This hoverfly is common and abundant spring species. They are a fairly small and blackish in colour including the antennae. The wings are clear or only slightly shaded. The females often have a shining abdomen. You can find them in marshes and watersides with emergent vegetation from May to mid-August peaking in late May and June. The larvae are aquatic.

Hoverfly - *Neoascia meticulosa*
Recorded – 28th April Lytchett Heath
Wing length 4 to 5.5 mm.
This is another hoverfly species that needs care identification being similar to N.tenur but can be identified from good photographs which show the salient points. The marginal cross-veins are not darkened and the hind femora are narrowly yellow at the apex. The front tibia are mostly yellow, the front and mid femora half yellow, and the hind tibia only narrowly ringed. The third antennal segment is elongate. Lush marshes and around waterbodies with plants such as sweet grass and bulrush where the larvae develop. They are a local but widespread species with a flight period of April to October, peaking May-June.

Hoverfly *Neoascia podagrica*
Recorded – 13th May Lytchett Heath
Wing length 3.5 to 5 mm.
The wings of this species have a blackish tinge. The third segment of the antennae is at least twice as long as it is wide. They also have spots or bars on tergites two and three. Tergite two is deeply constricted in the female. Typically found in hedgerows, wood edges and gardens where there is lush vegetation, but also in wetter areas such as marshes and beside water. April to November and the larvae have been reported from wet decaying manure. They are common and widely distributed in Britain.

Hoverfly *Platycheirus fulviventris*
Recorded – 28th April FP12 & 28th May Black Pipe
The larva feeds on the aphid Hyalopterus pruni on monocotyledonous plants in wetlands. It is usually found in marshes, by ponds, ditches or slow flowing rivers, usually where lush vegetation such as Common Reed Phragmites australis or Reed Sweet Grass Glyceria maxima occurs. Adults fly amongst stands of reeds and sedges frequently settling on the stems and will visit flowers of sedges Carex sp., grasses and plantains Plantago sp. This species is very local, though often abundant where it occurs. Has shown a marked decline in the frequency with which it is recorded during the last few decades.

Hoverfly *Rhingia campestris*
Recorded – 11th July Arable Field
The genus is easily recognised by its long snout. With R. campestris the abdomen usually has a black line or stripe along the axis, but always along the lateral margins of the tergites. It has a largely orange abdomen and dark thorax.
There are just two Rhingia species in Britain and both are very similar. However R. rostrata lacks the black margins to the tergites and has a completely orange abdomen and legs. R. campestris has a black ring on at least the rear leg and often more). Near to hedgerows, woodland edges. April to October. Peaking late May/early June and late

August/early September. The larvae breed in cow dung where they are exceedingly well camouflaged in the surface layer. Very common throughout Britain except in the far north.

Hoverfly *Riponnensia splendens*
Recorded – 13th July Black Pipe
This is the only species of its genus in the UK. The thorax is a greenish copper with two grey stripes. There is a broad belt of whitish dusting across the face. It prefers marshes, fens and wet woodland, and particularly favours Meadowsweet and umbellifers, in sheltered places near to bushes or trees. Flies from May to October with a peak in July. Common in southern England, the Midlands and Wales, scarcer in Scotland.

Thick-headed Fly *Conops vesicularis*
Recorded – 8th June Approach Field
Length 12-14mm
This is the fifth species of Thick-headed Fly found on the patch, they are also the largest species in the family and are also known as the Hornet Grabber. The Conopidae have certain anatomical features which suggest that they are closely related to the hoverflies. Several species are excellent wasp mimics and the larvae of this parasitic family feed internally in bees and wasps.


Conops vesicularis © Ian Ballam

Ivy Waspgrabber *Leopoldius signatus*
Recorded – 6th October Lytchett Heath
Whilst superficially resembling Conops species, Leopoldius species can be immediately recognised by their soft proboscis, nothing like the long sclerotised mouthparts found in Conops. This is one of only two predominantly yellow British species. The males of this species can be separated by genitalia differences, a lack of black facial markings, and black-ringed hind femora. Females by three triangular projections from the hind margins of the black bands on tergites 2-4. They can be best found by searching around Ivy from august through to when they peak in September-October. It is thought they use Common Wasp (Vespula vulgaris) as a host. They are widespread across England and Wales.

Picture-wing Fly *Tephritis vespertina*
Recorded – 25th May Lytchett Heath
Wing Length 3.7 to 4.5 mm.
This is the fourth Picture-wing species we've identified on the Lytchett patch. This is a species which needs an expert to confirm its identity and thankfully Ian Ballam's photograph enabled us to have its id confirmed. The wing pattern is important in identification of this species. They are best searched for near the foodplant. Adults are found from June to August Eggs laid on the capitulum of Cat's Ear or sometimes other genera of the Cichorioideae. Common throughout the British Isles.

Phaonia subventa
Recorded – 24th May Lytchett Way
Length 6 to 8 mm.
This is one of several similar species with an orange body, stripy thorax, which is grey above and orange below. The bulge on the outer wing is characteristic of the Phaonia genus. Id features on this species are, they have just one pair of acrostichal bristles and 3 posteria bristles on the mid-tibia. They can be found in well vegetated areas, often in well wooded spots. March to November. They reproduce several times a year. Females lay their eggs in rotting leaves, rotting wood or in carrion, on which their larvae feed. The larvae overwinter there. Fairly common and widespread in England and Wales.

Eustalomyia hilaris*
Recorded – 15th June Watery Lane
Length 8mm
This is a nationally rare fly species, which is a cleptoparasite of Crabronidae solitary wasps. We have identified two species of Crabronidae, Ectemnius continuus and Ectemnius cavifrons which could be the host species of this fly though they have been found on Lytchett Heath though the Ectemnius species nest by burrowing into wood so could well be in the Watery Lane area hence the presents of this fly.


Eustalomyia hilaris © Ian Ballam

Noon Fly Mesembrina meridiana
Recorded – 13th September Whimbrel Field
Length 10mm
This large fly is easily identified by the jet black colour adorned with orange-gold on the base of its wings, on its feet and on its face. They are found in well wooded, and well vegetated areas where it likes to sun-bathe on plant leaves, fences, trees and even on the ground. They can be found in late summer and autumn. They breed in dung and are common and widespread in Britain.

Marsh Greenbottle *Lucilia silvarum*
Recorded – 17th March Lytchett Heath
Length 4.5-10mm
This species is also known as the Common Toad fly as this species is thought to be parasitic on frogs and other amphibians. This is one of a pair of Lucilia species with dark wing bases, blackish tergite 1+2 (the first apparent tergite), no setulae on the subcostal sclerite (beneath the wing at base) and especially long bristles.

Satellite Fly sp. (on Andrena bees) *Leucophora obtuse*
Recorded –7th February Lytchett Heath
Length 8mm
There seems to be little information available concerning this species other than to say they are parasitic on Andrena bee species.


Phania funesta © Ian Ballam

Parasitic Fly *Phania funesta*
Recorded – 25th May FP12
Length 3.5 to 5 mm.
This is a small, all black, very hairy fly that can be found on hedgerows and flower meadows. They have a flight period from summer to early autumn and it's believed to be a parasite of shieldbugs.

Woodlouse-fly *Rhinophora lepida*
Recorded – 10th July Lytchett Heath
Length 8mm
The Woodlouse Parasite Flies behave more or less like the Parasitic Flies, but they differ in the way they look and the venation in the wings differs. It is a small family, represented by some 6 species in Britain. The larvae are parasites to woodlouse but live inside snails or beetles as well. Except for differences in appearance there is also a big difference in behavior. Parasitic Flies lay their eggs on or even in the host. The Woodlouse Parasite Flies just lay their eggs in the vicinity of woodlouse colonies. After hatching, the larva has to find a host all by itself. Rhinophora lepida is very common in gardens and the larvae especially attack the Common Rough Woodlouse. Usually the species is double brooded. The larvae eat their host from the inside, until just the external skeleton of the victim remains. In it the larva overwinters.


Tachina grossa © Ian Ballam

Tachina grossa
Recorded – 20th August Lytchett Heath
Length – 15-19mm
Tachina grossa or giant tachinid fly is a very large tachinid fly found throughout most of Western Europe). It is one of the largest species of fly throughout much of its range and is the largest tachinid in Europe. It is very distinctive, being hairy and with a black thorax and abdomen, and a bright yellow head. Like most tachinid flies, the female lays her eggs on other living insect larva, the fly larvae then develop inside the living host, devouring it and eventually killing it. Its main hosts are the large hairy Lepidopteran caterpillars, particularly the Oak eggar moth Lasiocampa quercus and Macrothylacia rubi. In the UK there is usually only one generation per year, though in southern Europe there may be two generations per summer season, though this has not yet been verified. The adult flight period is from July to August. They are found is dry open meadows, peat land, and heathland Habitats.

Ferdinandea cuprea
Recorded – Pools Fields VP
Length 7.5-11mm
This species is relatively easy to identify with its often brassy looking abdomen, the grey stripes on its thorax and the two wing 'clouds' (dark marks). Found in woodland and well wooded hedgerows where it likes to sun itself on tree trunks from March to November, peaking in June. Larvae have been recorded from sap wounds on the trunks of Oak and Ash. It is said that trees infested by Goat Moth seem to be favoured though probably not around Lytchett Bay as they have not been recorded here. They are widespread in Britain but rarely common.

Graphomya maculata
14th August Whimbrel Field
Length 7mm
This is a common and widespread species in England and Wales. The males have an orangey-brown patterned abdomen but females have a grey/black pattern. Both have distinctive stripes on the thorax. Found in Meadows, hedgerows and roadside verges nectaring on various flowers, especially umbellifers from May to September/October. The larvae are predatory, feeding in muddy pools and damp leaf litter.

Hymenoptera - Bee, Wasps, Ants & Relatives

Bees, wasps and ants are all part of an insect order called Hymenoptera. It is a huge group with many species and a diverse range of forms. The name hymenoptera means 'membrane wings'. A typical hymenopteran has 2 pairs of wings though they are coupled together with tiny hooks so appear as 1 pair. This group in particular gets lots of attention mainly due to the importance that many are important pollinators. We have now recorded 138 species in this group within the Lytchett Bay recording area. This year some of these have been nationally scarce or rare species, which makes the area more important to look after and monitor.

Sawflies & Wood Wasps
Reed Stem Borer - *Calameuta filiformis*
Length 9-12mm
This is a long thin-bodied sawfly with wasp like black and yellow bands. They are found around reed beds, grassland and other well vegetated places from late spring to autumn. Larvae feed within the stems of various grasses and reeds.

Orange Sawfly Tenthredopsis sordida agg.
Recorded 2nd July Lytchett Heath
Length10-12 mm
I couldn't find much useful information on this species. It has quite a lot of yellow markings. In males the legs and antennae are darker than in females. Females have yellow legs and almost completely yellow antennae. In both sexes the edge of the forewing is black, interrupted by a very clear yellow dot, which actually is part of the pterostigma. The adult sawflies are seen from mid-April to the beginning of July, sometimes a little later. They hunt for other insects but are seen feeding on nectar regularly. It has been suggested the larvae live on among others hornbeam. Like all other sawfly larvae they are strict vegetarians.


Arge berberidis © David Foster

Ichneumonidae Darwin Wasps
All ichneumonids are parasitoids of other invertebrates – that is, their larvae infect and then kill a single host animal. In the UK we have approximately 2,500 species of ichneumonid. Making up almost 10% of all British insects, Ichneumonidae are an important insect group and one of the most diverse. The ichneumon group of wasp, other than a few very obvious species are difficult to identify, because so many look similar. Identifications are usually made using tiny features only visible under a microscope, which makes the challenge even harder.

Gasteruption jaculator
Recorded - 5th July Pools Viewpoint
Length 10 to 18 mm.
A fairly widespread species in England but less well recorded elsewhere in Britain. The head and thorax are black, the abdomen which is broader at the posterior end is black with a broad orange band. A striking feature of this species is the upright position of the abdomen in flight. In resting position, the abdomen is pulled in a slight downward or upward curve and the wings are then folded along its length. The femurs are thick at the end like clubs. You can find them in gardens and meadows where it can be seen visiting various flowers or hovering around the nests of solitary bees and wasps from May to September. The female will visit the nests of various solitary bees or wasps, and will push her long ovipositor into the nest, depositing her own eggs on or near to the eggs of the host, on hatching they will feed on the grubs of the host as well as on stored food.

Hedgerow Darwin Wasp Heteropelma amictum
Recorded – 25th September Pools Viewpoint
Length 15mm
One handsome and decidedly elongate species is Heteropelma amictum (17mm), which seems to use Geometridae and Tortricidae moth caterpillars as hosts. It is quite common and tends to be seen in flight much more than settled. ... This targets Holly Blue butterfly caterpillars, laying its egg in first instar larvae.

Stenichneumon culpator
Recorded – 27th September Lytchett Way
Length : 15mm
Can sometimes be seen visiting flowers.
This is a species that seems to be quite widespread in England, but little information is available on form adsentator. They are seen from spring and summer and they are a parasite of lepidoptera larvae.


Stenichneumon culpator © Nick Hull

Chrysididae Cuckoo Wasps
Cuckoo wasps are members of the largest subfamily, Chrysidinae, Generally regarded as the Chrysis ignita group are the most familiar; they are generally kleptoparasites, laying their eggs in host nests, where their larvae consume the host egg or larva while it is still young, then the food provided by the host for its own juvenile. The term "cuckoo wasp" refers to the cuckoo-like way in which wasps in the family lay eggs in the nests of unrelated host species.

Chrysis ignita agg.
Recorded – 10th July Lytchett Heath
Length approx 12 mm.
This wasp is a widespread and fairly common species in all areas where there is a suitable host, although most British records seem to come from England. This is a brightly coloured wasp with a metallic red abdomen and bright green head and thorax. Chrysis ignita cannot be separated from other Chrysis species without expert examination of the specimen. They are found usually on heathland and in gardens. These wasps are often noticed searching over hot sun-baked surfaces such as old walls or fence posts between April and September. The larvae eat the grubs of burrow-dwelling solitary bees, particularly Red Mason Bee. Adults feed on nectar and pollen.

Glowing Cuckoo Wasp Hedychridium ardens
Recorded – 10th July Lytchett Heath
Length 4-6mm
Not regarded as being scarce or threatened this species has been recorded from Cornwall to Kent and north to Cumberland and South-east Yorkshire with four records from Scotland also found in Ireland, Isle of Man, Isles of Scilly and the Channel Islands. Found in open sandy areas associated with the nesting habitat of its host, which is possibly Tachysphex pompiliformis in the Britain. They can be found in a wide variety of habitats from colliery spoil heaps, inland sandy areas including lowland heaths, and coastal sand dunes, sand and shingle beaches. They are probably univoltine; June, July and August, sometimes during May. Adult have been recorded visiting Hawk's-beard, mignonette, stonecrop and yarrow.


Hedychridium ardens © Ian Ballam

Social, Potter & Mason Wasps
Gymnomerus laevipes
Recorded – 25th May Lytchett Heath
Length: 8-11mm
One of many similar black and yellow striped wasps, which are found in a wide variety of open habitats, associated with its nesting and feeding sites and prey habitats. Recorded from May until September, with males mostly found from late May and June, and females during June and July. They prey on weevil larvae of the genera Hypera (Curculionidae). A tube-dweller forming a series of 4 to 12 linearly arranged cells separated by clay partitions in hollow plant stems, e.g. bramble, burdock, elder and thistles. An egg is laid in the cell before about 20 weevil larvae are added. They are distributed in Britain from Cornwall to Kent and north to Nottinghamshire and East Norfolk. There are signs that this species has recently undergone a significant decline, especially in the northern part of its range.

Little Mason Wasp Microdynerus exilis***
Recorded – 5th July Lytchett Heath
Length: 6-8mm

This is a scarce British species and adds to the Lytchett Heath important species list. They are a species that is found in a wide variety of open habitats such as woodland, parkland, gardens, heathland edge, chalk downland, gravel pits and in coastal sites. They are a univoltine, usually found during June and July, sometimes during August and rarely during September. Their main prey seems to be Weevil (Curculionidae) species larvae. They are a tube-dweller nesting in small beetle holes in dead wood, including old fence posts, and sometimes in bramble stems. The nests have been described as consisting of six linear cells with an outer plug of fine pith and fairly coarse sand grains. The outer four cells produced males and the inner two cells produced females. A female has been observed carrying a mud pellet in the mandibles, probably used to form the partitions between the cells. They visit flowers such as Hawk's-beard, hogweed and mayweed.

Digger Wasps

There are over 110 species of Digger wasp in Britain. As the name suggests female Digger wasps burrow into the ground when nesting. Digger wasps are a type of solitary wasp meaning that females make a nest for her own young. This nesting behaviour is different to social wasps, as female social wasps co-operate with their sisters and their mother in the maintenance of a colony that may well contain hundreds or even thousands of workers as well as a queen. Digger wasps resemble social wasps in appearance with their yellow and black patterns although they can be distinguished from a social wasp, as the wings are not folded lengthwise when at rest.

Crabro cribrarius
Recorded - 28th June Lytchett Heath
Length: 10-15mm
This wasp is associated with light, sandy soils, such as lowland heaths and coastal dunes and landslips. However, it is also encountered on heavier soils, being known, for example, from open woodland and chalk grassland. They are apparently single-brooded and can be found in late June to mid-September. They paralyse their Diptera prey and have been recorded taking flies from various diptera families. They nest in burrows excavated in the soil and extend for 15-20cm. Each main burrow ends in a cell, and later two or three cells are constructed at the end of short, lateral branches. The cells are provisioned with five to eight flies. This species mainly visits species of umbellifers including wild angelica, wild parsnip, hogweed, wild carrot, and creeping thistle.

Ectemnius continuus
Recorded – 8th June Lytchett Heath
Length: 8-14.5mm

This is one of the most common Ectemnius species, especially in the south. It can be encountered in a wide variety of habitats ranging from rides and clearings in woodlands through to intensive farmland, urban locations, wetlands and coastal habitats. Perhaps most frequent where abundant supplies of dead wood and umbellifer flowers are available.
They are univoltine species (having one generation ie one flight period per year) whose flight periods are early May to late September with records predominantly in June, July and August. In southern Britain, however, the species is almost certainly bivoltine (having two generations). Their prey consists of medium-sized flies. Nests are found in burrows within dead wood such as old tree stumps, fallen trunks and limbs, fence posts, even building timbers. Adults show a strong attraction to the flowers of umbellifers such as angelica, hogweed, wild carrot, wild parsnip, fennel, hedge-parsley and water-dropwort, which appear to act both as a source of prey and nectar. Other flower visiting records include thistles, ragworts, yarrow and spurges.

Tachysphex pompiliformis
Recorded – 6th June FP12
Length: 5-7mm
Found throughout England and Wales, with a few isolated records from Scotland. In Ireland it is apparently restricted to the east and south coasts. The species is present on the Isles of Scilly, the Isle of Man and the Channel Islands, being recorded from Jersey, Guernsey, Herm, Sark and Alderney. A common species over much of Europe they inhabit Sandy localities, both coastal and inland. They can be seen from May to September. Wasps can be found as freshly emerged adults throughout this period, and the species may well be multivoltine. The prey collected are
Nymphs of grasshoppers (Acrididae), including Chorthippus species and Stenobothrus lineatus. Nests are constructed in sloping sandy soil. They have been recorded visiting flowers of wild carrot, wild parsnip and bramble.

Bees

We have now recorded 56 species of bee using the Lytchett Bay recording area and some of them are of National importance and when you think we are recording many of these on a small remnant piece of heathland and my garden plus to a lesser extent Lytchett Fields is pretty good. Though I'm sure there are a few more out there that still hasn't been recorded yet of the 275 species on the British and Irish list, though we have added 26 species this years.

Sandpit Mining Bee *Andrena barbilabris*
Recorded – 18 April FP12 & 18th May Whimbrel Field
Length: 5 - 7mm
Found throughout the British Isles, although scarcer towards the north, also recorded from the Channel Islands and scattered localities in Ireland. They are strongly associated with light, sandy soils, but widespread on these. They have a flight period of March to June. Very widely polylectic using a wide range of spring-flowering shrubs as well as herbaceous species such as dandelion. Nests in the ground, forming small aggregations; usually in patches of loose sand although they also nest between the paving stones in my sandy garden. The females allow the burrow to collapse behind them as they enter and leave, possibly hiding the entrance. The actual nest is made in the firmer sand underneath, so excessive soil disturbance is damaging to the nests.

Large Gorse Mining Bee *Andrena bimaculata*
Recorded – 23rd March & 26th April Lytchett Heath
Length: 8.5 - 11mm
Widespread but very local in southern England north to East Anglia, south central England and south Wales. There are no records from northern Britain or Ireland. It is also reported from the Channel Islands, being known from Jersey.
They aren't regarded as being scarce or threatened. This species is associated almost entirely with light, sandy soils, such as heaths, commons and sandpits. It has been encountered at about 330 metres above sea level on Dartmoor, South Devon. They are Bivoltine and have a flight period from late March to the end of May, and again from early July to late August. They are a pollen collecting species and collect from Tiliaceae, Salicaceae, Brassicaceae, Rosaceae and Liliaceae. Nests are excavated in sandy soil and occur either singly or in very small aggregations of perhaps only two or three burrows.


Andrena bimaculata © Ian Ballam

Clark's Mining Bee *Andrena clarkella*
Recorded - 22nd March Lytchett Heath & 28th April FP12
Length: 8 – 11mm
Local but very widely distributed throughout the British Isles. In Britain the range extends north to East Inverness. In Ireland it is widespread across central areas. Also recorded from the Isle of Man and the Channel Islands. They are found in open woodland, heaths, moors and disused sand and gravel pits. They are a univoltine species with a fight period from mid-February to the end of May. The winter is passed as a freshly emerged adult in its sealed natal cell.
They are Oligolectic (collecting pollen from a limited range of flowers) in this species on sallows (Salix spp.). In Ireland they have been observed visiting gorse blossom. In addition to the above species this bee has been reported to visit colt's-foot and dandelion flowers, these two plants probably being only nectar sources. Nests, are excavated in the soil, occur either in small clusters (e.g. between the buttress roots of a large tree) or in extensive, dense aggregations on level and sloping ground. Nests have also been discovered in the soil attached to the root-plate of a fallen tree in woodland.

Grey-patched Mining Bee *Andrena nitida*
Recorded - 15th June Watery Lane & 5th July Lytchett Heath
Length: 8.5 – 12.5mm
This species is commonly found throughout southern Britain, becoming scarcer towards southern Yorkshire, its most northerly known county. They can be found in a variety of open grassland habitats. They are a univoltine species with a flight period of April to June. They are widely polylectic, they have no strong preferences in the flowers visited, both males and females can be found quite high up on blackthorn and down low on dandelions. This species nests among short to medium-length grassland; there is no obvious preference for areas of bare ground and nests are always well dispersed.

Hairy-footed Bee *Anthophora plumipes*
Recorded - 11th & 20th April Lytchett Way
Length: 10-11mm

This species I recorded for the first time in 2012 in my garden this is the first time since we started officially recording in 2014. It has probably been overlooked by me in the garden since as our wildlife garden has many of the flowering plant they prefer. The male is brown haired with extensive cream-coloured markings on the face and long hairs on its mid tarsi. The female is all black with orange hairs on its hind tibia. The hind tibia can appear to be differently coloured if the bee is carrying pollen. Almost ubiquitous, including gardens, open woodland, and coastal sites (especially in the vicinity of soft rock cliffs). They are univoltine, generally from March to late May, but there are a few records from February, June and early July. They are a polylectic species and forage on a varity of flowing plants but has a strong preference for Lungwort. Usually nests gregariously in vertical soil profiles, such as coastal cliffs and, inland, in sand pits, soft mortar joints and cob walls. Both sexes pass the winter newly emerged in their sealed cells.

Armadillidiidae – Woodlice

Common Pill Woodlouse *Armadillidium vulgare*
Recorded 5th July Lytchett Heath
Length: 18 mm.
This is a common and widespread in Britain, but with fewer records from Scotland. They get their name from its ability to roll into a tight ball when disturbed. This woodlouse is typically slate grey in colour, but red or patchy forms may arise. Occurs mainly on calcareous soils, except in coastal areas, and is able to withstand much drier conditions than most other woodlice. It shows a distinct preference for chalky or limestone sites with stony turf. They can be found in any month of the year. They feed on dead organic matter, which it detects by means of taste and smell. During the breeding season, reproductive females develop a 'brood pouch'. The fertilised eggs pass into this fluid-filled chamber and the young crawl out of the brood pouch when they are fully developed.

Arachnids - Spiders

This is a group which on the face of it looks easy to identify but once you make the step of looking to an identification you then find with some 670 species it isn't as easy as one thinks. In saying this Ian and myself have managed to add 5 species to our very small list of now 30 identified species recorded in the Lytchett Bay area.

Cupboard Spider *Steatoda grossa*
Recorded 13th May Lytchett Way
Length 4-10mm
Recorded altitude range1m to 188m

This species has a scattered distribution across southern Britain becoming scarcer further north. It is a species in the family often called False Widow Spiders though there has been a lot of hype in the media the bight of the female is no worse than a bee sting to most people. I've been living with this species and S.nobilis for years and never had a problem. Both species seems to be fairly common around the Lytchett Bay and Poole area. This spider is found most often in and around buildings but has also been taken in sheltered locations outdoors, e.g. in cracks in walls and on under-cliffs. The spider has been found in the sewer system in Leicester. It constructs the scaffold webs typical of the genus and has been observed feeding on pill-woodlice Armadillidium. Adults have been found at most times of the year. The species was commonest in coastal areas of south-west England but has increased in frequency in more recent years in the east and northwards.

Laceweb Weaver *Amaurobius similis*
Recorded – 31 July Lytchett Way
Length: 6-12mm
Recorded altitude range 0m to 600m
The species is widespread in most of England and Wales, becoming more scattered in Scotland. It is a Holarctic species that is widely distributed in north-western Europe. The spider probably occurs in almost every house and outhouse in the country. It makes its characteristic web of cribellate silk in cracks in the brickwork, under the eaves, under undisturbed rubble or debris and between cracks in wooden sheds and fences, also the channels carrying cords for sash windows are a favoured retreat inside houses. It is also occasionally found under bark in more natural habitats like woods especially where these are near habitation. It is possible that it replaces A. fenestralis in these

situations. Adults occur throughout the year but both sexes peak in the autumn, and females are recorded again in numbers during the spring and early summer.

Cheiracanthium erraticum
Recorded – 28th May Black Pipe
Length: 5-9mm
Recorded altitude range -4m to 700m
The species is widespread south of the Wash but is more scattered in the west and in the north as far as central Scotland. The spider occurs on low plants in rough vegetation and heather. It is most easily found in early summer by looking for the retreat constructed from two or three leaves, or grass heads, stitched together to make a retreat which will hold the female and egg-sac. Later in the year, immature specimens, which already show the reddish median stripe on the abdomen, can be found in small silk cells on plant stems such as dried docks. Adult males are found mainly in late spring and early summer, females from late spring to the autumn.

Floronia bucculenta
Recorded – 14th September Approach Field
Length:4-5mm
Recorded altitude range 0m to 589m
This species is widespread in much of England, but apparently scarce in the south-west, absent from central and eastern Wales and very scattered north of Yorkshire as far as Perthshire in Scotland. F. bucculenta occurs on bushes and low vegetation in damp places in a variety of habitats, including earthy banks, low vegetation in marshy areas, rough unmanaged grassland with scrub and tall herbaceous vegetation, open woodland with bracken and grass and tall heather. It has been observed that when females of this species are disturbed they drop to the ground and remain motionless. During this time the usual lightish colour of the abdomen changes to a much darker hue making the spider more difficult to spot. The former colour and patterning return after a few minutes adults may be found in late summer and autumn.

Crab Spider *Xysticus cristatus*
Recorded – 2nd July Lytchett Heath
Length: 3-8mm
This is probably the commonest of the *Xysticus* spiders. It is an abundant and widespread species in Britain. They occur on the ground or in low vegetation. Found mostly between March and August but mainly seen in spring and early summer. Spends much time sitting still, with its fore-legs spread wide, waiting for insects to blunder into them. Predatory on other invertebrates, including ants, which most other spiders avoid, and often taking prey much larger than themselves. Called 'crab spiders' because, as the name suggests, they sometimes move in a crab-like way, from side to side. The male has an unusual method of mating with the female. First, he grabs hold of one of her legs and waits until she stops struggling. He then ties her down to the ground with threads of silk. Finally he crawls underneath her to mate.


Xysticus cristatus © David Foster

Jumping Spider *Heliophanus cupreus*
Recorded - 11th June Lytchett Way
Length:3-6mm
This species is the third jumping spider now upgraded from an agg. thanks to British Arachnid Society (BAS) experts help, who managed to identify it from its close relative H.flavipes which is also found around my bungalow. The species is widely distributed as far north as central Scotland but it is absent or very scattered in many parts of the country. A species collected from a wide variety of habitats including woodlands, grasslands, raised bogs, coastal cliffs, shingle beaches and wastelands and other disturbed habitats such as quarries and in this case my dining room table. In these varied habitats, it is commonly found in the drier sunny parts, occasionally seen active on the surface but more commonly within litter. During a resting period, this spider may be found in a silken cell placed under stones or in litter. Adults of both sexes are found mainly in May, June and July, females persisting occasionally into the autumn.


Jumping Spider Heliophanus cupreus © Nick Hull

2021 Lytchett Bay arable field plant survey – Stephen F Smith

The field was visited on 23rd June and 18th July 2021.

Small-flowered Catchfly

This was very much in evidence in three corners of the field. It was interesting that the distribution of this species had changed noticeably over the three years, and that an overall increase in numbers had taken place.

- By far the largest numbers were found in the NE corner, where the flower-heads could only be estimated as several thousands, concentrated mainly along the northern boundary east of the telegraph pole. Strangely very few were found where they had been present in previous years along the eastern boundary north of the telegraph pole.

- A smaller concentration was found in the SW corner, where about 50 flower-heads were seen between the extreme corner and the slight kink in the hedge about 40 metres north of it.

- A new third concentration was found in the NW corner, where flower-heads numbered about 100.

One-metre squares

The second purpose of the visits was to re-visit the 1-metre squares along the southern boundary which had been surveyed in 2020. Comparative data was obtained in six of the eight squares, and the results are given in the tables below.

Square 00

3 metres in from edge of field, 25 metres east from SW corner of field

	2020 July 31st	2021 June 23rd
Bare earth %	0	0
Height of cover	80 cm	80 cm
Corn Marigold	50	90
Common Hemp-nettle	3	15
Creeping Thistle	4	-
Marsh Woundwort	1	-
Redshank	-	8
Tufted Vetch	-	2
Bugloss	-	1
Wild Radish	-	1
Grass, presumed couch	pres	pres

Square 01

3 metres in from edge of field, 20 metres east from Square 01

	2020 July 31st	2021
Bare earth %	5	
Height of cover	70 cm	

Corn Marigold	25	
Bugloss	4	
Marsh Woundwort	2	
Common Hemp-nettle	1	
Bindweed sp.	1	
Tufted Vetch	1	
Hedge Mustard	-	
Redshank	-	
Fat-hen	-	
Grass, presumed couch	pres	

Square 02

5 metres in from edge of field, at gap cut in hedge to allow view of New Pools

	2020 July 9th	2021 June 23rd
Bare earth %	5	0
Height of cover	65 cm	80 cm
Corn Marigold	105	70
Common Hemp-nettle	-	20
Corn Spurrey	pres but over	not seen [3]
Field Pansy	5	-
Bugloss	4	2
Fat-hen	4	1
Tufted Vetch	3	1
Redshank	3	1
Oat sp.	3	
Scarlet Pimpernel	1	
Hedge Mustard	-	1
Grass, presumed couch	pres	

Square 04

1 metre in from edge of field, at large partly dead oak in hedge

	2020 July 9th	2021 June 23rd
Bare earth %	5	0
Height of cover	80 cm	80 cm
Corn Marigold	45	45
Bindweed sp.	15	-
Common Ramping-fumitory	12	1
Hawkweed sp.	10	-
Common Nettle	6	-
Redshank	3	-
Bugloss	3	-
Hedge Mustard	2	30
Fat-hen	1	-
Lesser Stitchwort	1	-
Field Pansy	1	-
Sun Spurge	1	-
Field Woundwort	1	-
Wild Radish	-	1

Pale Persicaria	-	1

Square 06

3 metres in from edge of field, at stile just west of wooden gate

	2020 July 16th	2021 June 23rd
Bare earth %	5	0
Height of cover	65 cm	80 cm
Corn Marigold	95	50
Corn Spurrey	20	10
Common Hemp-nettle	15	15
Bugloss	4	25
Redshank	-	5
Fat-hen	3	-
Lesser Stitchwort	2	-
Hedge Mustard	1	1
Tufted Vetch	-	1
Common Ramping-fumitory	-	1
Small-flowered Catchfly	1	-

Square 08

3 metres in from edge of field, beside tall oak

	2020 July 16th	2021 June 23rd
Bare earth %	3	0
Height of cover	55 cm	80 cm
Corn Marigold	50	
Corn Spurrey	pres but over	
Lesser Burdock	3	
Lesser Stitchwort	1	
Redshank	1	
Hedge Mustard	1	
Scarlet Pimpernel	1	
Bindweed sp.	1	
Common Field Speedwell	1	

Square 10

3 metres in from edge of field, beside hawthorn and hole in hedge

	2020 July 16th	2021 June 23rd
Bare earth %	5	10
Height of cover	60 cm	30 cm
Corn Marigold	47	40
Corn Spurrey	pres but over	-
Redshank	-	20
Smooth Tare	-	10

Tufted Vetch	-	10
Common Hemp-nettle	9	-
Fat-hen	5	-

Square 12

Near NE corner of field

16th July 2020: bare earth 50%, height of cover 30 cm.

Small-flowered Catchfly	4
Corn Marigold	20
Scarlet Pimpernel	10
Redshank	3
Creeping Thistle	5
Marsh Cudweed	1
Mayweed sp.	5
Lesser Quaking-grass	2

Notes:
[1] Corn Marigold numbers were judged by counting the number of flower-heads and then dividing the total by 4 so as to give an estimated number of plants.

[3] Corn Spurrey flowers now over and plants hidden below Corn Marigold