

Idle Valley Nature Sightings

April 2026

Idle Valley NR – Reserve News from Alex Morley - NWT Reserves Manager (North).

The publication of *Grazing Ecology and Forest History* in 2000 by Dr Frans Vera lent renewed weight to the idea that large herbivores played a far greater role in shaping post-glacial European landscapes than had long been assumed. While the “wood-pasture hypothesis” was not new, Vera’s work forcefully challenged the deeply embedded image of Europe as once cloaked in continuous, unbroken primeval woodland. Large herbivores such as the now-extinct aurochs, alongside native deer species and wild boar, would have created a constantly shifting mosaic as they grazed, browsed, and trampled across the land. Predators including wolves, bears, and lynx would have kept herds mobile, preventing prolonged pressure in any single area. This dynamic allowed vegetation to cycle from floristically rich, nectar-laden plant communities supporting invertebrates, through scrub rich in nesting birds, and occasionally into areas of mature trees. This model now underpins conservation approaches in wilder, more naturalistic landscapes, though it is not suitable everywhere. In coppice woodlands such as Treswell, Gamston, and Eaton, cyclical cutting already provides age and structural diversity. Here, browsing and grazing deer—unchecked by predators—are actively damaging, with DEFRA estimating that around a third of England’s woodlands are negatively affected by deer impacts. The impact of deer in our woodlands not only threatens ground flora but impacts on suitable nesting habitat for the local dormouse population, both within and outside our managed coupes. For this reason, we actively work to reduce deer numbers. At the Idle Valley, former sand and gravel pits offer a useful analogue for habitats once shaped by a freer-flowing River Idle. Historically, the river would have wandered across the valley, creating wetlands, sand and gravel bars, and isolated pools. To maximise habitat diversity within a now more stable landscape, we actively prevent wholesale reversion to woodland, maintaining open shorelines, wet grassland, scrub, and scattered mature trees. Where possible, we use livestock to replicate the functions of extinct fauna. The Trust manages around 300 rare-breed sheep (Hebridean and Herdwick) and nearly 80 rare-breed cattle (English Longhorn and Lincoln Red). Their grazing creates vital micro-habitats: hoof-prints for insects and seedlings, dung supporting invertebrates that feed birds and bats, and browsed branches producing sap runs for butterflies. (Below left) - Bare soil created by hooved animals allows new plants to germinate and can be essential to invertebrates for hunting, basking and courtship. (Below right) - Branches snapped by cattle browse creates temporary sap runs for invertebrates and may encourage fresh growth like a pollard. ©A. Morley



What's On - Events at Idle Valley Nature Reserve

Every Tuesday each month – Wellbeing Walk (Bellmoor Lake area) from the Idle Valley Visitor Centre Cafe at 10:30am. Volunteer led walk sponsored by Co-op Lincolnshire.

Every Wednesday each month – Wellbeing Walk (Bellmoor Lake) from the Idle Valley Visitor Centre Cafe at the new time of 1:00pm. Volunteer led walk sponsored by Co-op Lincolnshire.

Additional **Thursday - Ramble Walks** (once a month) and new **Saturday - Wellbeing Walks** are planned – See NWT Website/Socials.



Wildlife Watch

Idle Valley Wildlife Watch Group from Ros Schwarz - Group Organiser.

We had a lovely visit to the Idle Valley lambing on Easter Tuesday. The lambs got lots of cuddles! The theme for the 11th April's Wildlife Watch group meeting was "Froggy Fun". We went out with dipping nets to the pond by the car park and found some interesting water creatures, including lesser water boatmen, leeches, dragonfly nymphs and a caddisfly larva in its case. Unfortunately, there are no tadpoles in the ponds around the centre this year, but Ros had some for us to see and Colin brought some male common newts. Then everyone made frogs from pebbles to take home.

Group Information & What's On

Seasonal wildlife activities for 7- to 12-year-olds, with a walk in the reserve. Meeting Point is the Idle Valley Visitor Centre at 10:30am until 12:30pm. **£2.00 per child.** Please contact Ros on idlewatch@nottswt.co.uk for more information.

Our next group session is on **Saturday 9th May** and the theme will be '**Birds on the Wing**' with Gary Hobson as guest.

Nottinghamshire Environmental Association

Brief History

The Association was first formed in Nottinghamshire schools in 1939 as part of the need for home produced food at the start of the Second World War. Four branches were established with the Retford Branch being the sole remaining branch of the four.

Current Situation

The NEA is now based in Retford but has members as far away as Nottingham, Lincoln and Newark. We are not a campaigning group, just an Association of people with an interest in a wide range of environmental topics.

Programme of Meetings

Our programme comprises indoor General Meetings which run from January to April, inclusive, and from September to December, inclusive. The subject of each meeting is different but predominantly follows an environmental theme.

Programme of Outdoor Visits – Summer 2026

Visits to **Floral Media** at Caunton, Nottinghamshire on Friday 22nd May, to **Belvoir Castle & Grounds** on Thursday 18th June and to **Sherwood Planetarium & Observatory plus Newstead Abbey** on Friday 10th July.

Please contact the Association for details on membership (£10 per year), our meetings programme and the costs of each of the above visits. Contact email/mobile: paul@paulwillcock.com 07581531595

Footsteps into Nature

Local Birdwatching & Wildlife Walk Group



Review of the 'Birdwatching & Wildlife' walk from Friday 20th March 2026

"Today's walk began at Chainbridge Bridge with a sighting of a single Grey Wagtail feeding on and around the bridge and in the drain outfall nearby. A bunch of Wigeon were feeding on the Conservation Lake and a Chiffchaff sang in Chainbridge Wood. Setting off south along the western riverside path we quickly heard a single Blackcap, a Cetti's Warbler and we saw a Marsh Marigold plant at the river edge. Moving along the track we saw a couple of Chiffchaff and saw several patches of wild Primrose. Lots of tiny, winged insects were noted over the river which were eventually identified as some type of caddis fly, there are many. I explained how this part of the reserve, though now overgrown, still shows the 'ridge and furrow' method of sand and gravel extraction used for many years locally. Three Reed Bunting were noted feeding on Willow blossom and as we eventually reached the edge of the Sheep Field both Chaffinch, Goldfinch and Chiffchaff were noted but then as we passed the southern edge of Alan's Meadow we started to see and hear Fieldfare, with around 40 birds eventually flying away from the area, alongside at least half a dozen, maybe more, Redwing. As we approached where the Fieldfare had flown from, we saw a pair of Great Spotted Woodpeckers which also flew off. Looking North over Alan's Meadow, we saw a single Hare but little else other than a few mixed Canada and Greylag Geese and a pair of Oystercatcher in their pair bonding display flights. As we approached the Longhorn cattle in the field by Tiln Wood I could see up to 5 Cattle Egrets feeding amongst the cattle plus a pair of Egyptian Geese. The pair of woodpeckers were noted again overhead, and more Chiffchaff song was noted. Some of the group were busy identifying early flowering plants which I will list below. We hooked through the woodland belt to overlook the Lower Sheep Field where we saw two pairs of Shelduck, heard Skylark overhead, saw a single Grey Heron and up to 9 Egyptian Geese, although I counted up to 15 here a short time after the walk. I explained how these fields will soon be changed for good when the 'Hive' fly ash reclamation project starts, whenever that may be? Skirting alongside Alan's Meadow, we saw Chaffinch, Blackbird, Robin, several Great and Blue Tit and lots of singing Dunnock plus as we approached Chainbridge Lane I saw through the wooded ditch a party of around 10 Lesser Redpoll feeding on Silver Birch catkin. On the fence on the opposite site of the meadow a pair of adult Lesser Black-backed Gulls were loafing on the posts. We talked about the fenced off rich seed mix area which borders the meadow and its purpose to attract Turtle Dove to feed here and hopefully they will use it in 2026. We crossed Chainbridge Lane and walked along the hedgerow path, seeing Long-tailed Tit, Magpie and an extremely vocal Song Thrush with a large repertoire of mimics, including wading birds and Buzzard calls. We arrived at Chainbridge Scrape East viewpoint and after a short while we saw an adult female Marsh Harrier quartering the west side, a single male Pochard and lots of Gadwall, Tufted Duck plus a pair of Teal. The raised water levels still covering the island strips which sadly means very little chance of wading birds this spring. Moving on passing Chainbridge Wood, where I heard a Treecreeper, saw a couple of Stock Dove and more Chiffchaff were noted, with maybe as many as 8 or 9 heard on the walk so far. We overlooked Chainbridge Pit as the afternoon sun tried to push through and apart from around 6 Teal, two pairs of Goldeneye and the pair of Lesser Black-backed Gulls displaying little else was seen. A very enjoyable walk with 14 turning out today, including two newly to my walks. Thanks to everyone who shared their knowledge today, we can all learn from each other as we go. Surprisingly, no butterflies (or moths) were seen on the walk, but we did see plenty of White/Buff-tailed Bumblebees. Wildflowers and flowering shrub/trees seen today were: - Marsh Marigold, Primrose, Lesser Celandine (Below right) ©S. Hughes, Forget-me-not, Ground-ivy (Below left) ©S. Hughes, Daisy, Small Flowered Bittercress, Common Whitlow grass, White Dead Nettle, Blackthorn, Hawthorn and Broom"



Group Information & What's On

All these Birdwatching & Wildlife walks are free, with no need to book, so just turn up to the designated start point and join in. There are usually between 10-20 people attending of all ages and interests and we can often all learn from each other about the wildlife we observe on the walks. It is always just a leisurely stroll stopping often to observe all wildlife on the way. The walks are 2-3 hours duration, but you can leave at will at any point. The walks generally cover circular loops around various parts of the reserve and can include other adjoining areas of interest.

My next walks will be on: -

Friday 15th May – 'Footsteps into Nature' – 'Birdwatching & Wildlife Walk' at Idle Valley NR. Meet along Chainbridge Lane by Hawthorn Lane gate at 3:00pm. A steady 2-3 hour circular walk via Hawthorn Lane to Neatholme Fen returning back passing Neatholme Scrape and Chainbridge Scrape (West). Looking for summer visitors and migrants and other wildlife. Weather permitting, there may also be a '**moth trapping**' session beginning at dusk after the walk at Chainbridge Lane 'Beaver Tour' parking area. Let me know if you would like pop back during the session and see another side to wildlife recording here at Idle Valley Nature Reserve. Leader is Gary Hobson.

Friday 29th May – 'Footsteps into Nature' – 'Birdwatching & Wildlife Walk' at Idle Valley NR. Meet along Chainbridge Lane by Hawthorn Lane gate at 9:00pm. This will be a steady shorter distance walk taking in Alan's Meadow, Chainbridge Pit and returning via Chainbridge Scrape (East) where we will spend some time observing 360° from this vantage point. One for those who do not like or struggle with my longer walks. Looking for summer visitors and migrants and other wildlife. Leader is Gary Hobson.

Wednesday 17th June – 'Footsteps into Nature' – 'Birdwatching & Wildlife Walk' at Idle Valley NR. Meet along Walters Lane at the junction of Lound Low Road at 9:00am. Steady 3 hour circular around the large raised former Ash Lagoon walking past Sutton Trout Lake (Doughty's Pit), Bunker Wood returning back along the river, past Tiln Pool and the Lower Sheep Field. Looking for summer visitors, breeding birds and other wildlife. Leader is Gary Hobson.

If you would like more information about the group and be added to the group WhatsApp page, please contact Gary Hobson (Walk Leader) via email/mobile: ghlbc@hotmail.co.uk 07464964879

Lound Bird Club

Notes from Stuart Davenport - LBC Chairman.

What is your favourite bird? A simple enough question, and one we as birdwatchers will have been asked many times. Unfortunately, it is one I really struggle to answer. Do I actually have a favourite bird? There are many different birds I enjoy seeing for different reasons, but I am not sure any of them are my favourite. I challenge anyone not to be impressed by the stunning beauty and colours of the Kingfisher or Bee-eater. The speed and stealth of some of our birds of prey like the Peregrine or Sparrowhawk can only be admired. Could it be a common bird like the Long-tailed Tit or the Robin? Cute and friendly, guaranteed to cheer you up at any time of the year. The soaring Buzzard or Red Kite or even the graceful Hen Harrier as it drifts over the moorland are in with a shout. Could it be the mysterious Nightjar, easier to hear than see and bird I have been talking a particular interest in over the last few years. But no, I cannot actually claim to one particular bird as my favourite. I do however have a thing for monochrome birds, all things predominantly black and white. Avocet, Lapwing, Oystercatcher, Goldeneye, and the comical Pied Wagtail.



There are so many. Eider, Ring Ouzel, Smew, Great Spotted Woodpecker and even the Magpie. In my eyes, they all have a beauty to which I am drawn. So next time I am asked that simple question, maybe I should say I cannot give a simple answer, but it is definitely here in Black & White.

Club Information & What's On

If you would like to join the **Lound Bird Club**, please send your Name, e-mail address, and a contact number to Gary Hobson (Membership Secretary) to **ghlbc@hotmail.co.uk** Membership of the club is free. We have been an established local bird watching group since 1990, recording the birds and wildlife at the Idle Valley Nature Reserve (formerly known as Sutton & Lound Gravel Pits SSSI), and support the work of Nottinghamshire Wildlife Trust. We offer a program of free walks throughout the year and a series of monthly indoor meetings with guest speakers giving talks on birds and occasional alternative wildlife subjects. Meetings are held on the fourth Wednesday each month from September through to April, at Sutton-cum-Lound Village Hall, with a £3 entry fee to cover refreshments and hire costs.

Saturday 9th May – Lound Bird Club – ‘Big Bird Day’ event and ‘Guided Bird Walk’ at Idle Valley NR. A whole day event looking for as many bird species within the 12 hours from midnight to midnight within the Lound Bird Club recording area. All participants are invited to submit their sightings throughout the day, and a sightings log will be kept at the Chainbridge Scrape (East) viewpoint, our Base Station for the event. The LBC recording area encompasses the whole of the Idle Valley NR plus the wider farmland, woodland & water bodies adjoining the reserve. As part of this event, we will also be leading a ‘Guided Bird Walk’ starting from Chainbridge Scrape (East) viewpoint from 9:00am lasting 2-3 hours. Last year, on the 18th May 2025, we saw a combined day list total of 102 species. All are welcome to join us for this amazing days birdwatching. Contact email/mobile number: stuart.daven@btinternet.com 07763895265

Saturday 16th May – Dawn Chorus with Lound Bird Club. Meet at Chainbridge Lane by the ‘Beaver Car Park’ What3words **///wedding.chatters.occupy** at 5.00am. This is a quickly arranged event replacing the ‘Dawn Chorus’ event that NWT had previously planned with sadly very little uptake. It is free and open to all but no toilets or breakfast sandwich on this one. No plan on the walk but it will be a steady stroll taking in the song and sounds of the birds we observe and will last around 3 hours. Hopefully see you all there. Contact email/mobile number: stuart.daven@btinternet.com 07763895265

Sunday 17th May – Wetland Bird Survey (WeBS) Organised by **Lound Bird Club** in conjunction with the BTO Wetland Bird Survey (WeBS). If you can help, please contact Victor Giles on email: victor.giles@talktalk.net

Bird Sightings for March 2026 compiled by Gary Hobson.

A single report of just two **Pink-footed Goose** on Bellmoor Lake on the 28th. A good count of 72 **Mute Swan** at Clayworth Common was notable in being the highest count across the whole winter locally. A single report of the now extremely rare **Bewick’s Swan**, with two birds noted accompanying 8 Whooper Swan moving NE from Chainbridge Scrape and over The Willows (Clayworth Copse) on the 21st. There was plenty of **Whooper Swan** movement during the month which is indicated in the following table: -

Location	4th	5th	8th	9th	11th	15th	18th	21st	22nd	24th	27th	31st
Clayworth Copse	20N											
Clayworth Common			5	7			23		2	2	2	2
Clayworth Village	25N											
Chainbridge Pit	7	6				4N						
Hallcroft	80N											
Neatholme Scrape					27		52	10				
Tiln North								7				
Chainbridge Scrape (E)								8				
Totals	132	6	5	7	27	4	75	25	2	2	2	2

A good number of **Egyptian Goose** were present, but they were widespread across the recording area. Apart from singles at Clayworth Common on the 4th and at Bellmoor Lake on the 8th there were six birds on Chainbridge Pit on the 15th and a total of 17 from Doughty’s Pit (Sutton Trout Lake), the Lower Sheep Fields and Clayworth Common on the 29th. A count of 7 **Shelduck** on Neatholme Fen on the 5th was followed by smaller counts of two at Neatholme Fen on the 15th, two at Bellmoor Lake on the 17th and a single at Bellmoor Lake and three birds on the Lower Sheep Fields on the 29th. The only notable count of **Wigeon** was 200 birds at Tiln North on the 5th. Neatholme Fen continues to be the

magnet location to see **Pintail** within the recording area and between two and seven birds were noted on eight dates throughout, with the seven birds present on the 15th. A single count of 30 **Teal** on Bellmoor Lake on the 21st. Just two reports of **Red-crested Pochard**, including two ♂♂ at Neatholme Pit on the 24th and a pair on the Conservation Lake on the 29th. Three reports of **Common Scoter**, including a ♂ on Bellmoor Lake on the 30th and two different birds, a ♀ on Neatholme Fen and a ♀ on Neatholme Scrape on the 31st. A total of 52 **Goldeneye** were counted on Neatholme Pit & Neatholme Scrape on the 15th. This single ♂ **Smew** was found resting on Chainbridge Scrape (East) on the 5th but did not remain there very long (Below) ©. Davenport.



Numbers of **Goosander** had dropped significantly with a pair at Bellmoor Pits on the 4th, four at Bellmoor Lake on the 8th, 11 on the Water Ski Pit on the 15th and just two at Bellmoor Lake on the 21st. Two reports of **Grey Partridge**, both from Clayworth Common, including four there on the 2nd and two there on the 4th. Two reports of **Red-legged Partridge**, both from Clayworth Common, including two there on the 8th and four on the 27th. Just a single report of a single **Water Rail** heard calling at Chainbridge Scrape (West) on the evening of the 18th. A single **Black-necked Grebe** was observed briefly on Neatholme Scrape on the 9th. Plenty of sightings of between 1-3 **Oystercatcher** across the recording area throughout, but possibly more than two pairs were involved in these sightings. An excellent passage of **Avocet** was reported, with a single at Neatholme Fen on the 14th, two birds were seen flying from Chainbridge Pit to Tiln North and another pair were also seen at Neatholme Fen on the 20th, six birds were present on Neatholme Fen on the 22nd (Below) ©S. Davenport, with five there again on the 26th and just two on the 28th.



Just two reports of **Golden Plover** from Clayworth Common, including 19 over on the 2nd and c250 birds noted over here on the 8th. A single **Ringed Plover** was noted at Neatholme Fen on the 28th. A single **Knot** was noted on Chainbridge Pit on the morning of the 28th. The wintering **Woodcock** at Bunker Wood was seen again on the 8th. Three reports of **Snipe**, including a single at Tilm North on the 20th, three at Neatholme Fen on the 25th with a further single there on the 27th. Four reports of single **Green Sandpiper**, including at Clayworth Common on the 20th, 24th and 31st and presumably the same bird at Chainbridge Pit on the 28th. A single **Redshank** was noted at Chainbridge Pit on the 28th. Just a single report of a single **Great Black-backed Gull** at Bellmor Lake on the 8th. Two reports of **Herring Gull** from Bellmor Lake with five birds there on the 8th and a single there on the 26th. A single first-winter (2CY) **Caspian Gull** was at Bellmor Lake on the 28th. Two reports of **Yellow-legged Gull**, including up to five immature birds at Bellmor Lake on the 21st with three birds noted there again on the 28th (Below left) a (3CY) bird & (Below right) a (2CY) bird, both from Bellmor Lake on the 21st ©P. Hobson.



A single **Glossy Ibis** was noted again on Neatholme Scrape on the 9th, and presumably the same bird was seen again at Neatholme Fen on seven dates from the 17th until the 28th. Just four reports of **Cattle Egret**, including 7 in the Chainbridge Pit area on the 4th, 6 at Tilm North on the 5th, 8 there again on the 20th and a single there on the 26th. Pairs of **Grey Heron** were at Bellmor Pits on the 8th and at Neatholme Fen on the 11th. Just two reports of **Great White Egret**, including a total of 7 birds at Neatholme Fen on the 5th and a single there again on the 11th. Three reports of **Little Egret**, including a pair on Neatholme Fen on the 11th, 14 were counted over the fields and ditches on Clayworth Common on the 14th and a single was at Neatholme Fen on the 27th. A single report of a ♂ **Sparrowhawk** noted flying through Chainbridge Meadows at dusk on the 18th. Five reports of **Marsh Harrier**, including a single over Neatholme Lane on the 9th, a first-winter 'cream crowned' bird interacting with a Buzzard on the 14th, a 'dark bird', presumably an adult female was over Tilm North on the 20th, two birds were at Neatholme Fen on the 22nd and finally a single was again at Neatholme Fen on the 27th. A single **Red Kite** was noted over Neatholme Fen on the 22nd. Up to six **Buzzard** were noted over Clayworth Common and Bellmor Lake on the 8th and four were again at Bellmor Lake on the 26th. A single **Barn Owl** was noted along the Chesterfield Canal at Clayworth village on the 4th. Calling **Tawny Owl** were noted at dusk in the Chainbridge area on the 18th & 19th. A pair of **Great Spotted Woodpecker** were at Bunker Wood on the 8th. Neatholme Lane held two **Green Woodpecker** on the 21st and a single there again on the 24th. Single **Kestrel** were noted at Bellmor Lake on the 8th and Bellmor Pits on the 26th. Just a single report of a pair of **Jay** in The Willows (Clayworth Copse) on the 4th. A single report of a single **Raven** noted over Chainbridge Scrape on the 4th. Two **Coal Tit** were at Bunker Wood on the 8th. The first **Sand Martin** to return this spring was a single bird that arrived on Neatholme Fen on the 13th, this was followed by two over Chainbridge Pit on the 15th and 20+ over Neatholme Fen on the 25th. Two **Chiffchaff** at Bellmor Lake with another single noted on Neatholme Lane on the 4th could well have been wintering birds with the main arrival of migrants occurring from the 8th with up to 8 at Bellmor Pits and a single on Clayworth Common. Neatholme Lane recorded 3+ birds on the 9th with 3+ at Bellmor Pits again on the 17th and 'several' noted at Bellmor Pits on the 26th (Below left) ©G. Hobson. The first reports of **Swallow** to return this spring were a single bird that arrived on Neatholme Fen on the 27th with a single then noted at Bellmor Lake on the 28th. Singing ♂ **Blackcap**, presumed migrants arriving from the continent were noted as follows: - Singles in Linghurst Wood on the 13th, at Bellmor Pits on the 17th, at Chainbridge Meadows and Neatholme Lane on the 21st, at Neatholme Lane/Fen again on the 24th, 27th and 28th with two at Bellmor Pits on the 26th. I do not think any females were noted

in March. A single **Firecrest** was only reported to BirdGuides as being present at Neatholme Scrape on the 14th. Still a rare winter visitor and passage migrant locally and would have been a nice bird to have seen. Single **Treecreeper** were noted singing at Chainbridge Wood on the 5th, and another was photographed at Bellmoor Pits on the 17th (Below right) ©G. Hobson.



It seems that the **Song Thrush** is now making a comeback here at the Idle Valley Nature Reserve. Maybe they are now adapting to breeding in the increasing mature woodlands that are now establishing across the recording area. The past habitat destroying quarrying activities and Ash Lagoon operations, now a distant memory, seemed to push the species into Retford in the late 1990's and early 2000's. Three birds were seen at Bunker Wood/Bellmoor Pits on the 8th, two birds were singing at Chainbridge Meadows on the 18th and two pairs were noted in the Bellmoor Pits area on the 26th. There is certainly an abundance of food for this extremely vocal species so their future looks bright. Just three reports of **Redwing**, including a single on Clayworth Common on the 2nd, 5 at Bunker Wood on the 8th and a single at Bellmoor Pits on the 17th. At least four reports of **Fieldfare** including 25 at The Willows (Clayworth Copse) on the 4th, 300+ were in stubble on Clayworth Common on the 15th, with 40+ there again on the 27th and finally 40+ flew south over Bellmoor Lake on the 29th. Just a single report of a pair of **Stonechat** on Clayworth Common on the 2nd. The first **Wheatear** to return through the recording area this spring was a single ♂ on a Potato field on Clayworth Common on the 26th. An incredibly rare bird in the recording area these days, a single **Tree Sparrow** was found calling in a Hedge along Chainbridge Lane near to the Horse Paddocks on the 13th. The following list of ringed Tree Sparrow in the data from the North Notts Ringing Group below shows the rapid decline in numbers ringed over the previous 10 year period. This data has been provided courtesy of Adrian Blackburn.

2015	51	2021	0
2016	127	2022	0
2017	137	2023	1
2018	19	2024	0
2020	35	2025	0

Two single **Grey Wagtail** reported from Chainbridge Bridge on the 20th and at the Water Ski Pit on the 21st. A single report of a single **Meadow Pipit** that flew south over the car park at the Rural Learning Centre on the 8th. Single ♂ **Bullfinch** were noted along Neatholme Lane on the 11th and 25th. Two counts of **Linnet** both from Clayworth Common, including 30 on the 2nd and 100+ on the 8th. Two reports of **Lesser Redpoll**, including 15+ along Neatholme Lane on the 9th and two in a Lound Village garden on the 13th. Three reports of **Siskin**, including 10+ at Bunker Wood on the 8th, 20+ in a Lound village garden on the 13th and a pair on the feeders at Lound village crossroads on the 20th. Four reports of **Yellowhammer**, all from Clayworth Common, including a single on the 2nd, a pair on the 4th, five birds noted on the 8th and a pair again on the 27th.

Feral/Escapes

A single **Black Swan** was observed on Clayworth Common with the Mute Swan herd on the 8th and 9th. Apparently, a pair of Black Swan have been frequenting a private pool behind the former Doughty's Farm site, now a complex of private residential dwellings.

R. Schwarz, L. Noar, A. Legget, S. Atkinson, M. Goodman, K. Smith, P. Cox, K. Roberts, M. Wallhead, A. Blackburn, A. Goodall, M. Fitzsimmons, A. Seastron, J. Bradley, P. Kibble, P. Ramsey, P. Burrell, N. Powell, S. Hughes, A. Champion, G. Shepherd, I. Cowgill, M. McCallum, J. Coe, K. Price, K. Driver, W. Fiuk, A. Pickles, D. Richardson, P. Cooper, P. Cottam, K. Fisher, P. J. Freeman, C & C Parker, B. Merrick, V. Bell, T. Carter, G. Hobson, D. Housman, M. B. Vickers, S. Davenport, V. Giles, P. Cadman, P & E Hobson, I. Hunt, RBA, BirdGuides, Lound Bird Club (Website), Footsteps into Nature (What's App), Nottinghamshire Birdwatchers (Website), Idle Valley Bird Sightings (Facebook), Lound & Idle Valley Bird News (What's App), Notts Bird News (What's App), Notts Rare & Scarce (What's App). Please submit bird sightings to the above groups/pages or email them to ghlbc@hotmail.co.uk

Nature Sightings for March 2026 compiled by Gary Hobson.

Butterflies - The first **Orange-tip** were 2 ♂'s at the Water Ski Pit on the 31st. The first **Brimstone** seen were a single at the Water Ski Pit and two at Chainbridge Scrape (East) on the 31st. A single **Peacock** was seen at Tiln Pool on the 2nd, with a further four noted in the central section of the reserve on the 23rd and four at Neatholme Fen/Lane on the 31st. Just a single report of a single **Comma** in a Lound village garden on the 5th.

Moths - The following are just a small selection of moth species that were significant during the month. List compiled from data held by resident moth expert Philip Cadman, who is also the local 'Entomology Recorder' for the Idle Valley NR & Lound Bird Club recording area. Moth trapping sessions across the recording area were as follows: - Linghurst Wood on the 1st, Bellmoor Lake on the 2nd, Chainbridge Meadows on the 18th, at three locations across the site on the 22nd and finally at Bellmoor Ponds on the 31st.

We recorded earliest records of **70.103 *Lampropteryx suffumata* Water Carpet** (Below left) ©G. Hobson and **70.142 *chioroclystis v-ata* The V-Pug** from Linghurst Wood on the 1st (Below centre) ©P. Hobson and again at nearby Linghurst Lakes on the 22nd. We recorded **70.27 *Ectropis crepuscularia* The Engrailed** on the 1st and 22nd (Below right) ©G. Hobson



Other moths recorded in March, more notable for their colour/patterning rather than for their status, were **70.066 *Earophila badiata* Shoulder-stripe** x4 individuals (Below left) © G. Hobson, **65.016 *Achlya flavicornis* Yellow Horned** x3 individuals (Below centre) ©P. Hobson) and **70.067 *Anticlea derivata* The Streamer** with an early single on the 31st (Below right) ©P. Hobson.



Mammals - Several **Common Rabbit** have been noted feeding along the entrance road to the reserve car park, which from early signs, are doing well, have had small litters out feeding and appear well (Below images) G. Hobson. A single **Hare** was again on Alan's Meadow on the 20th. There were dusk sightings of the **European Beaver** in their Chainbridge

Scrape enclosure on the 21st and 22nd, and apparently, they can now be spotted regularly at dawn from Chainbridge viewpoint. (Bottom image) ©S. Davenport. A single **Stoat** was noted along Neatholme Lane on the 25th.



Insects - A single **Tree Bumblebee** was photographed on the reserve on the 2nd (Below left) ©P. Hobson. A couple of species of early Hoverfly have been noted with ***Syrphus torvus* (Hairy-eyed Flowerfly)** on the 14th (Below centre) ©V. Bell and ***Eristalis Pertinax* (Tapered Dronefly)** being noted across the reserve from the last week of March (Below right) ©G. Hobson. A good number of **Dark-edged Bee-fly** were noted in the sunny spots across the reserve in the final week of March (Bottom image) ©G. Hobson.





Flowers - Some nicely coloured Purple or White **Sweet Violets** were noted throughout the month, again in the sunny but slightly shaded path verges. (Below left) ©G. Hobson and (Below right) ©A. Champion.



A. Champion, K. Snow, R. Schwarz, S. Hughes, N. Powell, P. Kibble, C. Watkin, C & C. Parker, K. Driver, M. Vickers, T. Carter, V. Bell, P. Cadman, I. Hunt, M. N, G. Hobson, P & E. Hobson, S. Davenport and the 'Footsteps into Nature' (What's App).

Next month's - May 2026 issue

Nottinghamshire Wildlife Trust - What's On & Reserve News + Footsteps into Nature - What's On & Walk Review + Lound Bird Club - What's On & Bird News for April 2026 + Additional Nature Sightings for April 2026

Submissions for inclusion in this publication can be sent to **Gary Hobson** via ghlbc@hotmail.co.uk Please state (species/observer/location/date) for all images.

In the case of regular **bird and wildlife sightings**, please submit sightings via the relevant **Wellness, Birdwatching or Photography 'WhatsApp' & 'Facebook' groups** linked to Idle Valley NR.

Submit all **Lepidoptera (moths and butterflies)** plus any **Dragonfly & Damselfly** sightings to our recorder, **Philip Cadman**, via philip.cadman@sky.com