



**Scottish Ornithologists' Club**  
Scotland's Bird Club  
Established 1936

## Clyde branch outing to Newshot Island

22<sup>nd</sup> July 2023 (1000-1430)

Leader: **Allan Russell**

**Weather:** Overcast with some drizzle at times



© Billy McKellar

17 people assembled on a damp, grey Saturday morning at the riverside carpark at Kilpatrick Drive, Erskine for the SOC outing to Newshot Island. Most of the attendees were not part of the group at this walk last year, and a few had not been to this area before. For two people, it was their first Clyde SOC branch outing. After Allan and Zul gave an introduction, the group headed to the Clyde walkway at Park Quay.



Hooded Crow © Billy McKellar

The first birds of the day included a small flock of **Long-tailed Tits** which quickly moved through the carpark, seen only by the earliest group members! From Park Quay the group scanned the Clyde and picked up various birds, including a **Common Tern** plus **Lesser Black-backed**, **Common** and **Black-headed Gulls**, **Mallards**, **Oystercatchers**, **Common Sandpiper**, **Wood pigeons**, **Magpies** and **Carrion Crows**. A scan of the gulls at the Dalmuir sewage outfall failed to turn up a hoped-for Mediterranean Gull so the group then headed along the path to scan the mouth of the creek at Newshot Island.

A **Grey Wagtail** was flushed out from the riverbank here. The group then picked up a flock of up to 20 **Swifts** over the nearby housing estate.





*PS Waverley © Billy McKellar*

The tide was out at Newshot Island so the group did not pick up much more than more gulls. The group then made the short walk to the viewpoint at Newshot Island. On the way we had a look at some of the flora on site as well, which included plenty of **Broad-leaved Helleborines** and some faded **Common Spotted Orchids**.

From the viewpoint 3 **Goosanders** plus **Curlew**, **Lapwing** and **Redshank** were added to the day's sightings. A **Great Spotted Woodpecker** was also heard calling unseen from the nearby trees. While the group was watching the river, the Waverley paddle steamer went past which caused most of the birds on-site to take flight.



*Reed Bunting © Billy McKellar*

The plan next was to go through the neighbouring housing estate and cross over the gate at Hawthorn Avenue. On the way the group got sightings of 3 **Whitethroats** plus **Blackcap**, **Blue Tit**, **Goldfinch** and more of the **Swifts**.

While going through the housing estate we picked up a few **House Martins** feeding overhead, part of a small colony which breeds here.

After climbing over the gate into the field, the group checked the hedgerow and the edge of the reedbed. We heard a couple of **Water Rails** giving their squealing calls from inside the reeds. There were also sightings of **Reed Bunting**, **Greenfinch** and **Willow Warbler**, with at least five of the latter seen.

The group headed along the field to view the lagoon and the back of the creek. From here we quickly picked up some good sightings, including a surprise in the form of a **Hooded Crow**, 1 **Greenshank**, 3 **Redshanks**, 4 **Common Sandpipers**, 1 **Moorhen**, 23 **Teal**, another **Curlew** plus **Mallards**, **Starlings** and **House Martins**. A **Water Rail** was also seen briefly by a couple of group members.

After having lunch in the field, the group headed back to the LNR and Park Quay. A last check of the river turned up an increase to 4 **Common Terns** plus 1 **Great Black-backed Gull** and 3 **Common Sandpipers** among the other birds seen. From there the group made their way back to the carpark and said their goodbyes.

47 species were recorded including Common Tern which was new to the outings list (bringing it up to 155 species). Thank you to everyone who attended, it was very nice to show a group around my local patch and I'm hoping for more people to visit this under-watched but rewarding area!

**Allan Russell, July 2023**

**No of bird species recorded: 47**

Teal  
Mallard  
Goosander  
Cormorant  
Grey Heron  
Sparrowhawk  
Buzzard  
Water Rail  
Moorhen  
Oystercatcher  
Lapwing  
Curlew  
Common Sandpiper  
Greenshank  
Redshank  
Common Tern

Black-headed Gull  
Common Gull  
Lesser Black-backed Gull  
Herring Gull  
Great Black-backed Gull  
Feral Pigeon  
Woodpigeon  
Swift  
Great Spotted Woodpecker  
Magpie  
Jackdaw  
Carrion Crow  
Hooded Crow  
Blue Tit  
Great Tit  
House Martin

Long-tailed Tit  
Willow Warbler  
Blackcap  
Whitethroat  
Wren  
Starling  
Blackbird  
Robin  
House Sparrow  
Grey Wagtail  
Pied Wagtail (yarrellii)  
Bullfinch  
Greenfinch  
Goldfinch  
Reed Bunting

**Other species recorded**

Broad-leaved Helleborine  
Common Spotted Orchid