

# Filey Bird Observatory and Group



## ***Newsletter – Autumn 2019***

### **Chairmans Review.**

The end of this year is looming and FILEY bird observatory is continuing to flourish with new members signing up and tasks being completed. In fact the new FBOG team has been working hard on your behalf, which has resulted in the completion of the new hide at the dams, the 2017 report being published and the 2018 now at the designers. Bills are continuing to be paid and we are in credit at the bank so the future looks good.

The work party volunteers have continued heroically with monthly tasks at the Dams and East Lea, we hope to expand this to the Tip in the future. If you are interested in joining our intrepid group of volunteers please contact our secretary. Help in recording all wildlife is always sought and our recorder George would be happy to receive your records for 2019, to prepare for writing the 2019 report - and any offers of help especially photos or sketches would be welcome.

The ringing team led by Dan, in his first year in charge, has battled on with bad weather, poor migration but came up trumps during the ringing and migration week with a mega Red-flanked Bluetail - much to my dismay as I had to miss the week for the first time in 33 years. All credit to him and his team of ringers and organisers, with Chris Blakeley continuing his role as 'quartermaster'. The feedback has been good and we hope this will continue into 2020 and the future.

Finally I must thank firstly, Janet Robinson for continuing to keep our head afloat with the finance although she would like to hand these reigns over, so if there is anyone who can take on this role and maybe work alongside Janet for a few months, please, please get in touch. Thanks also to the reports team led by George and assisted by Ian and a multitude of writers, artists & photographers for getting the report back on track and all members who have rejoined this year and offered any help (whatever possible), it is your support that keeps the Observatory going.

**Peter J Dunn (FBOG Chairman).**

## Seawatching Hide Refurbishment – Ian Robinson

Work is underway to refurbish our seawatching hide situated at the end of Carr Naze. The hide was completed in 1992 and replaced the old hut which had been swept off its foundations in a fierce north-easterly storm in December 1990 and smashed to pieces on the rocks. The hut had previously been converted into a hide in 1977 from a wooden structure that once served cups of tea to visitors.



*Seawatching Hide Filey Brigg*

Back in 1992 the RAF Leconfield based rescue helicopter had carried the building materials out to the hide site on Filey Brigg, this time it was left to a small team of FBOG members to stagger along Carr Naze and down the end carrying their heavy load.

The stone-built hide over the last 27 years has served us well, but a major refurbishment was well overdue. Finding the money for these projects is always an issue and we were extremely pleased when we had an offer of funding from the Michael Clegg Memorial Yorkshire Bird Race team. Many thanks go to them and to our builders, John Beaumont and Jake McAdam who are carrying out the refurbishment work.

FBOG members can purchase keys for the seawatching hide, and visiting birders are also very welcome to use the hide when it is open.

## Volunteers reports Autumn 2019 – Mark Moore (Dams Volunteer)



*Strimming's hard work*

Well it's been a while now since you heard from the volunteers, not that we haven't been busy because we have. As usual there are the regular jobs of cleaning the hides and clearing the paths and generally tidying things up as well as keeping the wildness of the reserves in check. It would seem to have been a particularly good growing season this year with the Brambles, Willow's and reeds being particularly active. Strimming has been a must this year as well as having to go round with shears and secateurs to keep the vegetation from overwhelming the paths and boardwalk as well as ensuring that we still have a good view from the ports in the hides. After all who would want to miss a good view of a Black-winged Stilt for the sake of some reeds?

The hides were beginning to look a bit shabby and somewhat green on the outside so it was decided to give them a spruce up. In the past contractors have been employed for this job but with our good supply of volunteers and somewhat depleted coffers at the moment it was decided to do it ourselves.



Additions to the reserve are several perching posts for the likes of Kingfishers. This has been very successful this autumn with many pics taken of Kingfishers using them. Another addition is a Tern rail outside the new central hide. You may have seen on the Filey Dams Facebook site that we had a disaster when an overnight squall brought down our west owl box. We managed to rescue an owl chick from this mess and many thanks to Jean Thorpe's rescue centre in Malton who have brought it back from the brink. The chick has now been placed in a nest box at Thixendale with a late brood of Barn Owl chick's and the foster Owls have taken him on and are feeding him. We are also very pleased that we have been donated a telegraph pole by a member of Filey Sailing Club to replace our broken owl box pole. Metcalf's Window's very kindly delivered the pole to the Dams and our sturdy group of volunteers have installed the pole ready for the refurbished box. John Barret, one of our volunteers, has kindly refurbished the box and it is ready to re-install. All round this has been an excellent community effort.



*Rescued Barn Owl Chick*



*New Sand Martin box*

Another addition to the Dams is our new Sand Martin box. Installed by the contractor but without any sand! Quite a job to get all the sand round to the far side of the Dams and load it with sand, just waiting for the Sand Martins to find it now, well maybe when they get back from Africa. It been a busy year so far so with all the improvements, so we hope you enjoy your next visit to the Dams.

### **Ringling and Migration Week 2019 - Dan Lombard (FBOG Ringing Officer)**

In keeping with previous years Top Scrub held ringing demonstrations in association with Ringing and Migration Week. This year's event once again proved to be highly successful in terms of data collection, public engagement, education and bird recording. Despite only a tiny window of easterlies limited to one evening, and the best part of three days cancelled due to heavy rain and strong winds, over 500 new birds were ringed. If only a small portion of these birds are re-sighted, they will offer invaluable information which may help bird conservation. A total of 31 species were ringed with highlights including Firecrest, Yellow-browed Warbler, Ring Ouzel, Siberian Chiffchaff and the real star of the show a Red-flanked Bluetail!



The Red-flanked Bluetail, a long awaited first for Filey, attracted a lot of attention, with most of the regular birders managing to connect with it. It was released in the shelter and safety of Arndale away from ringing activities, where it was relocated the following afternoon allowing a second opportunity for people to see it. This species has seen a steady range expansion west over recent decades and now breeds into Finland. The origin of our bird is unknown, however a supporting cast of birds like Pallas's Warbler and Raddes Warbler on the same afternoon perhaps suggest its origins are from further east. Red-flanked Bluetails predominantly winter in southern China and surrounding parts of south-east Asia.

Thanks a lot, to all of the ringing team for their hard work, time and energy throughout the week and thank you to group members as well as visiting birders and the general public for their interest in the event and coming along and supporting us.

### **FBOG Merchandise**

New design Baseball Caps are now available in two colours, dark grey / dark green, both featuring an embroidered FBOG logo. Price £12.00 each + £2 p&p. Please contact Janet Robinson, email: [janetrobinson@yorkshire.net](mailto:janetrobinson@yorkshire.net) for further details.



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