



# Welcome to the FBOG Summer 2025 Newsletter

## **Chairmans Welcome (Andrew Cottrell)**

We hope these quarterly newsletters keep you up to date on what we have seen (wildlife reports) and what we have done (reserve updates). Please let us know if you have any ideas to improve them or, even better, feel like you could contribute to future editions.

On the subject of 'contributions', we could really do with a few more helpers across a range of tasks, so please take a look at the volunteer article at the end of this newsletter. A few hours here and there is all it might take to make a big difference.

You may have noticed the changes to our WhatsApp groups. I believe this is a positive change as you can now see all the FBOG Groups (and choose which ones to join) in one place - The FBOG Community. We now also have a dedicated group for Other Wildlife Sightings. This has already seen a step up in reports and this is really important to help us piece together the summaries for our annual "Filey Bird and Wildlife Report". So, please jump in and let us know what you are seeing in our recording area

## **Monthly Social - 2nd Wednesday of each month at 7pm in The Cobblers back room.**

This informal gathering has gained some good momentum in recent months, but more are always welcome. So, why not pop in one month and catch up over a relaxed drink with some of your fellow FBOGers - and partners are always welcome too.

## Update on Work at East Lea (Mike Cole)

Spring 2025 has allowed us to undertake several projects on the East Lea Reserve.

A tool store box has been purchased and is being stocked with a few items that get regular use, this will save our volunteers bringing their own equipment onto the reserve each time.

With two very productive work parties, we have constructed a new base for a feeding station near the hide and sited a bench there from which to view the birds. The current feeding station area will be removed and be redeveloped to attract butterflies and insects.



*Mark, Nick, Kev and Tony finishing the new feeding station base*

The access paths on the entire reserve have been maintained with 'relaxed mowing' to provide safe access for visitors without making it look like a garden and thus retaining a more natural look. There is also a mown path going up by the dead hedge before the wildflower meadow. This is now a safe path, the uneven and narrow track having been levelled and broadened.



*Paul filling in the new path*

The freshly scraped reedbed has already attracted several birds including a Lesser Yellowlegs, Snipe and wagtails as well as families of Greylags, Canada geese and Mallard. The phragmites on the fringes is now growing back nicely and is providing a thicker screen, helping to prevent disturbance. Consideration is now being given as to where to site new viewing screens at each end of the scrape. We envisage this work will be completed this Autumn at the end of the breeding season. We also need to develop a strategy for optimum reedbed management to maintain a view over the pond and maintain muddy edges for waders.



*Andrew and Steve erect a new bench at East Lea*

We hope that when you visit East Lea, you will appreciate the work done and enjoy your walk round. Any observations, comments and suggestions are most welcome, either directly or through the FBOG WhatsApp Community. Thank you to all those who have volunteered and helped.

## Cetti's Warbler breeds in Filey ( Kevin Denny)



*Cetti's warbler, Reighton Gap, 2<sup>nd</sup> May 2020, Nigel Webster*

Once the Cetti's Warblers continuing northward range expansion reached northern France it was inevitable the species would make the crossing into southern Britain. The first British record was in the early 1960's and the first recorded breeding in the early 1970's.

Filey Dams is ideal habitat for Cetti's Warblers, reedbeds and dense vegetation near water, and it was just a matter of time before they would colonise and breed here. On 10th June this year a fresh juvenile was photographed by Russ Reynolds along the boardwalk to the East Pool hide at Filey Dams and two days later three, possibly four, juveniles were seen in the same area.

The first record of the species in the FBOG recording area was a singing male found in clifftop scrub at Reighton Gap on 2nd May 2020. Not ideal breeding habitat and it was last reported there on 23rd June.

Nothing then until 11th September 2022 when a male was singing around the reedbed at the back of The Dams, by the path to East Lea. This bird remained to the end of the year and frequented the area from where it was located round to the back of East Pool Hide.

The FBOG area's third and fourth records quickly followed with one heard calling from Reighton Ravine on 20th October and another giving brief bursts of song at The Bay Holiday Village ponds on 12th November. Both were one day birds.



*Juvenile Cetti's Warbler, Filey Dams, 10<sup>th</sup> June, 2025, Russ Reynolds*

The Dams bird remained into 2023 and the species status in the area was updated to 'Fairly common non-breeding semi-resident'. It was seen or heard sporadically to 10th May and hopes were high that it would attract a mate. No sign of a female or any breeding activity though, but two singing males were present on at least 7th and 26th April and 1st, 2nd and 4th May. What was presumably the original single was seen or heard again on 10th September, 11th October and 23rd December.

Others were noted at Speeton Sands on 18th April and Filey Golf Course on 7th May.

Two were at Filey Dams on 24th January 2024. Spring arrivals were one singing in scrub along the clifftop at Muston Sands on 5th May and at Primrose Valley / The Bay coastal pond 28th June. The latter had been there a while.

Nothing then until one at Filey Dams on 16th September after which one was reported most days to 15th December with two, both males, on 26th, 27th, 30th and 31st October and 2nd, 6th and 7th November.

Cetti's Warbler males are very vocal and their song very loud but they are also very skulking and they sing from hidden perches. The female builds a well concealed nest entirely on her own in dense wet vegetation often near the waters' edge and lays a clutch of 3-5 chestnut-red coloured eggs and can produce 2 broods.

## Lesser Yellowlegs at Filey Dams (John Harwood)



*Lesser Yellowlegs, John Harwood 1*

A report of a drake Green-winged Teal at the Dams on the morning of 2nd May 2025 led me and Tony Housman there around noon where we bumped into Nick Robinson. The previous day a couple of Redshank and a Wood Sandpiper were the waders present from Central Hide and someone leaving as we arrived mentioned that the “Wood Sand” was still present. We located the Green-winged Teal then looked for the Wood Sand but couldn’t see one, although two “Redshank type” waders were feeding together nearby. After a quick glance we assumed they were those from the previous day and Nick mentioned if one could be a juvenile due to its well marked upperparts. It was far too early for juveniles, so we looked more closely and began checking its features with my scope.

Due to the distance and bright sunlight, the leg colour was a problem appearing very similar to the Redshanks bright orange, although in some instances did appear to have a yellowish tone. We were cautious, having in mind mistakes made before with this species. After a bit more musing over the exact leg colour I commented: The only way to be 100% sure and put news out was to wait until it lifts its wings, plain wing = Lesser Yellowlegs or presence of wingbar = Not Lesser Yellowlegs, simples!

It seemed to take ages until it gave the required wing stretch and revealed what we were after: a plain wing.

For the first three days it fed mainly in front of Central Hide at mid distance c60m, occasionally moving onto the middle spit from East Pool Hide where it regularly walked out of view. For its last few days, it spent a lot of time at the newly created East Lea Scrape at the back of the Dams. Due to recent excavations including the removal of willow/alder scrub and phragmites, the fresh exposed mud looked very attractive and proved much to its liking. Here it became very settled, so much so it gave views down to a few metres from the main footpath. If people were reasonably quiet, it was quite happy feeding up and down the muddy edge and passing you at very close range. It did occasionally fly back to the Dams spit if spooked but soon returned, each time giving a soft Greenshank like “Tew.Tew” call and revealing a squared off-white rump.



*Lesser Yellowlegs, John Harwood 2*

East Lea is owned and managed by FBOG and restricted to members only accessible via a lockable gate, however if rare or scarce birds appear attracting a bigger audience then access is made available to allcomers. It was no different with this bird, as the access gate was left open for the last few days. Being a relative long stayer compared to our previous ones it proved very popular and was seen by many members and visitors alike. Even some with mobility issues and needed a bit of help attempted the access path and commented how worthwhile the effort had been to get such good views. Our membership secretary Judith was also quite busy on Dams & East Lea duty doing a great job and gaining a few more FBOG members on the back of it. It is a shame that some FBOG members involved in the hard work of creating this new scrape were away at the time, even though it had the decency to stick around for seven days, longer than the previous three put together. You can't win em all!

By the time Paul Scanlan found our first in 1986 it was only the 4th Yorkshire record, the first being in 1973. Since then, its occurrence has seen a steady increase with 15 records by 2021 and another five since then making a total of 20 to date. Although not the rarity it once was it was still a very pleasing 4th record for the reserve made more so by some excellent close views.

#### Filey Dams records

1986 26th July, PMS et al (4th Yorkshire Record)

2000 17th Oct, KS, NPS et al

2005 28th Sept, BH et al

2025 2-8th May, JH, TH, NR et al

## Sighting Summary April - June 2025 (George Watola)



*Eastern Subalpine Warbler, Country Park, 20<sup>th</sup> April 2025, Ian Robinson*

An exciting spring, with our first Eastern Subalpine Warbler found on 20th April. It drew the crowds for three days. Our 4th Lesser Yellowlegs caused some confusion, initially thought to be the previous day's Wood Sandpiper until the local experts sorted it. Found on 2nd May at Filey Dams it stayed until 8th, latterly at East Lea Reedbed scrape. A Green-winged Teal was also found on 2nd, but this is likely to become "merely" a subspecies in the near future, in light of recent taxonomic decisions. If Ruddy Shelduck is ever decided upon, it will be a good substitute. One was seen on 9th and 25th May.



*Garganey, Filey Dams, 11<sup>th</sup> April, Ian Robinson*

Garganey appeared as usual on 8th April but did not stay. Rarer spring migrants included Ring Ouzel on 12th April, Pied Flycatcher on 19th May, and Osprey on 24th May. A late Fieldfare appeared on 10th May and stayed until 19th. Great White Egrets were seen on 13th April and 19th May. A Spoonbill dropped in on 14th May.



*Spoonbill, Filey Dams, 14<sup>th</sup> May 2025, Judith Henley*



*Golden Plover, Country Park, 25<sup>th</sup> May 2025, Ian Robinson*

On 23rd May a popular breeding-plumaged Golden Plover was at Country Park which stayed until 27th. Crossbills featured heavily in June, with good numbers flying through Hunmanby Gap.



*Red-veined darter, Filey Dams, 20<sup>th</sup> June, 2025, Judith Henley*

The warm June weather also brought out the butterflies and dragonflies. Red-veined Darters lingered at Filey Dams, and the inevitable Lesser Emperor also turned up at Primrose Valley Pond.

## Summer Grazing (Ian Robinson)



*Rocket Post Field*

It's good to see the cattle in both the Rocket Post Field and Tip this year. Access issues and a change of livestock by our local farmer have seen the Tip ungrazed for the last few years. It might however be short lived, as the recent spell of very hot weather has severely restricted the amount of water in our ponds ... with very little left now for the cows to drink.

The best way to conserve some habitats is by traditional grazing. Also known as conservation grazing. This type of grazing creates vegetation at different heights, and small areas of bare ground. This makes it suitable for a wide range of wildlife in different habitats. It allows wildflowers to grow, flower and set seed each year. This provides pollen and nectar for invertebrates and increases invertebrate food available for birds.

Cattle can be valuable for conservation grazing due to their ability to manage vegetation, maintain biodiversity, and promote habitat regeneration. Cattle graze on a variety of vegetation, including coarse grasses, shrubs, and even some trees, which can help to control the spread of unwanted species and create a more diverse habitat.

Different breeds of livestock have different diets and ways of feeding that create favourable conditions for wildlife. Cows feed by wrapping their tongues around the plants and pulling them up, leaving behind patches of vegetation of uneven heights. It is this variety that enables many different types of plants and insects to establish themselves. It also benefits ground-nesting birds, like Skylarks, that need this mix of conditions to raise their young.

## How to get involved as a volunteer

As mentioned in the Welcome at the start of this newsletter we are looking for more helpers. You may have an interest, a specific skill or enthusiasm that we are unaware of within the FBOG group and that we could really benefit from and expand the number of volunteers. If you would like to get involved and contribute towards some aspect of FBOG we would welcome it.

You can see from the volunteer table that we need help with a range of jobs, many of which do not require special skills or a lot of time commitment.

<b>Task</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Skills</b>	<b>Time Estimate</b>
Work Party - The Dams	Manual tasks such as picking litter, nest box maintenance, cutting back vegetation.	None. If anyone has landscaping, building or carpentry skills that would be a bonus and we'd love to hear from you	2-3 hours on the morning of the 1st Wednesday of each month
Work Parties - Other reserves	As above	As above	Ad hoc (via Volunteer WhatsApp group), typically a few hours each month
Wildlife monitoring	Recording species records with the FBOG area with a focus on "non-bird" wildlife	A measure of expertise on identifying a particular group e.g. plants, fungi, insects, mammals etc	For you to define
Bird & Wildlife Report preparation	Writing individual species reports	None. All guidance on required steps and output will be given	A "package" of 5 species will take around 2-3 hours with inspection of the species records on a spreadsheet (supplied) and writeup
Maintaining Website	Updating Sightings Monthly	None. All guidance on required steps and output will be given	1 - 2 hours a month, depending on season - summary of WhatsApp sightings
Maintaining Website	Reviewing and improving our online presence	Web design or maintenance experience	For you to define
FBOG "brochures"	Update "welcome pack" and prepare potential flyers to attract new members	Desktop design and publishing experience	A few days for initial work and then a few hours annually to maintain
FBOG newsletter	Gather updates and stories and put together a quarterly newsletter	Desktop publishing (or just proficient with Word or equivalent)	Half a day each quarter

A few extra pair of hands will make a big difference, so, if you think you may be able to contribute, just call or message me

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