

Bar-tailed Godwit

1988 – In May a summer plumaged bird was at Otley Gravel Pits on 1st, with six settling in fields near Leeshaw Reservoir on 9th. Last for the month were two at Chelker Reservoir on 20th. There were three at the same site with Curlews on 8th October.

1989 – A summer-plumaged bird alighted in flooded fields beside the new Aire Valley trunk road at Utley, Keighley on 4th May.

1990 – A female at Thornton Moor Reservoir on 12th May eventually left to the north-west; a party of seven which touched down briefly at Fly Flatts Reservoir late in the evening of 20th July before moving on southwards; a summer-plumaged adult at Esholt Sewage Works on 30th July; a single feeding at Thornton Moor Reservoir on 17th August which had gone by next day and one at Otley Gravel Pits on 2nd August.

1992 – A single bird was present at Otley Gravel Pits on 14th May. Four adult birds in full breeding plumage were present during the late afternoon at Thornton Moor Reservoir on 12th July. These left high to the west. Again at Thornton Moor Reservoir five were seen on 1st August approaching from the north. They flew the length of the reservoir before departing west-south-west without alighting.

1993 – Just two records this year, the first being an unusual winter report of one flying north-west at Chelker Reservoir on 23rd January, a day of strong south-westerly winds. Next and more usual, an autumn passage bird left Thornton Moor Reservoir to the north-west on 23rd July.

1994 – There were three records this year starting with a single at Otley Gravel Pits on 13th May. One flew west over Fly Flatts Reservoir on 20th August and one also flew west, low over Midgley on 10th September.

1995 – Two were at Chelker Reservoir on 30th April before leaving to the north-west and a single remained throughout 6th May at Thornton Moor Reservoir.

1997 -There was only one record in 1997 – of a single bird, seen at Kex Gill Quarry on 9th April.

1998 – There were just two records of this species in 1998. A male bird in breeding plumage was seen at Otley Gravel Pits various observers between 23rd and 25th April. Three months later, on 28th July, four birds were seen flying in a westerly direction at Thornton Moor Reservoir.

1999 – There were two records of this species in 1999 – a bird in winter plumage was seen at Otley Gravel Pits on 19th April and 21st.

2000 – Four reports were received. The first was of a single bird flying over Wilsden on 24th March. Return passage then produced a single bird at Thornton Moor Reservoir on 6th August, and on 23rd September, four birds – undoubtedly the same ones – flew over that site and Doe Park Reservoir.

2001 – The only record was of a bird which migrated over Thornton Moor Reservoir on 29th August.

2002 – This was a very good year for this species, with three records, from three different sites, and six birds in all. A bird in non-breeding plumage was at Otley Gravel Pits on 7th May. Four months later, four birds were watched at Lanshaw Dam on Burley Moor on 10th September, before they left at 8.30am. Finally, a single bird was seen during a visible migration watch at Thornton Moor Reservoir on 3rd November.

2003 - Just scraped onto the year-list thanks to a single bird at Leeshaw Reservoir on the 18th April and ten days later another was at Cold Edge Dams.

2004 - The only sighting of the year involved four at Otley Wetland on 1st May, one of which was an adult male in full breeding plumage.

2005 - As with the previous species, there was just one record: a bird moving south-west over Denholme Clough on 17th September.

2006 - This year there were two more records than of the preceding species, although two of them are likely to refer to the same birds.

Otley Wetland produced all but one of the reports. On 22nd January one flew over, but all the remaining records were in May. A good total of eight birds were present on the 1st, and what were almost certainly the same birds were seen at Bolton Abbey later in the day. The following day there were two birds, and this productive period concluded with another on the 7th.