

## Barnacle Goose

**1987** – Only one record of 11 birds which flew into Fly Flatts Reservoir from the north on 29<sup>th</sup> September; these could have been genuinely wild birds, but a feral flock is known to exist at Stocks Reservoir.

**1988** - A single at Thruscross Reservoir on 12<sup>th</sup> November. Its arrival coincided with two Whooper Swans there which might enhance its 'wild' credentials.

**1989** – A single at Thruscross Reservoir on 26<sup>th</sup> November.

**1990** – Easily our best year so far for this species with seven records involving nine birds. The first was a single at Otley Gravel Pits on 28<sup>th</sup> January while the same site held another from 20<sup>th</sup> February to 30<sup>th</sup> April with two there on 8<sup>th</sup> April and 1<sup>st</sup> May. Embsay Reservoir produced two on 18<sup>th</sup> March and Lindley Wood Reservoir one on 13<sup>th</sup> April. In autumn, singles visited Embsay Reservoir on 4<sup>th</sup> September, Chelker Reservoir on 7<sup>th</sup> October and Upper Barden Reservoir on the same day.

**1991** – The most reliable site was Otley Gravel Pits which held two on 22<sup>nd</sup> February and one on both 30<sup>th</sup> March and 2<sup>nd</sup> April while, in the second winter period, it produced a single on 23<sup>rd</sup> November, two on 25<sup>th</sup> December and five on 29<sup>th</sup> December. Other records included singles at Fly Flatts Reservoir from 5<sup>th</sup> to 11<sup>th</sup> September, Knotford Nook on 28<sup>th</sup> December and two at Fewston Reservoir on 31<sup>st</sup> December. Lindley Wood Reservoir also held two on 21<sup>st</sup> August and three on 8<sup>th</sup> September but such early records must relate to feral or escaped birds and likewise in the case of one seen at Elland Gravel Pits on the even stranger date of 8<sup>th</sup> June.

**1992** – All records restricted to Lower Wharfedale and the Washburn Valley where it was recorded in small numbers with a maximum of five at Otley Gravel Pits on 1<sup>st</sup> January. Most frequently recorded during the period from January to May; the only other sightings came from Lindley Wood Reservoir on 14<sup>th</sup> September and Otley Gravel Pits on 7<sup>th</sup> November. A bird at the latter site on 20<sup>th</sup> April had no legs.

**1993** – Never present in large numbers and usually associated with Canada Geese. Maximum count was five at Fewston Reservoir between 13<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> January. A single bird at Leeshaw Reservoir, first seen on 23<sup>rd</sup> March, stayed for six days. Up to three rested at Otley Gravel Pits on 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> May. No further sightings until 1<sup>st</sup> September when a single at Leeshaw Reservoir probably moved to Thornton Moor Reservoir the next day. Day birds (the same bird?) were subsequently recorded at Cold Edge Dams on 7<sup>th</sup> September, Leeshaw Reservoir on 25<sup>th</sup> September, Thornton Moor Reservoir on 4<sup>th</sup>, 13<sup>th</sup> and 22<sup>nd</sup> October and Hewenden Reservoir on 14<sup>th</sup> November. Finally three birds flew in to Chelker Reservoir from the east on 30<sup>th</sup> November.

**1994** – Records of singles at Hewenden Reservoir on 1<sup>st</sup> January, Oxenhope on 27<sup>th</sup> January, Leeshaw Reservoir on 11<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup> September, Thornton Moor Reservoir on 16<sup>th</sup> September and Leeming Reservoir on 11<sup>th</sup> November probably all related to the same bird. Elsewhere two overflew Knotford and Gallows Hill on 18<sup>th</sup> March while probably the same birds were at Denton Hall two days later and Otley Gravel Pits on 23<sup>rd</sup> April. Two birds flew west at Elland Gravel Pits on 8<sup>th</sup> May and singles were at Upper Barden Reservoir on 25<sup>th</sup> May and Otley Gravel Pits on 11<sup>th</sup> June. Up to four birds in the company of more exotic geese were reported from Addingham in August and September and were probably the same four seen at Chelker Reservoir on 16<sup>th</sup> October. Up to two were at Lindley Wood Reservoir from 21<sup>st</sup> September to 10<sup>th</sup> October and two were also recorded at March Gap on 20<sup>th</sup> November.

**1995** – The year began with three at Chelker Reservoir on 7<sup>th</sup> January and one at Leeshaw Reservoir the following day. The most regular site was Otley Gravel Pits with up to three between 12<sup>th</sup> February and 2<sup>nd</sup> July. Elsewhere there was one at Nessfield on 18<sup>th</sup> March, a single at Silsden Reservoir from 27<sup>th</sup> April to 13<sup>th</sup> May, two at Lindley Wood Reservoir on 20<sup>th</sup> May, one at Fewston Reservoir on 20<sup>th</sup> June, a single at Embsay Reservoir on 29<sup>th</sup> October, one at Lower Laither Reservoir on 3<sup>rd</sup> November and up to two at Leeshaw on dates between 31<sup>st</sup> August and 3<sup>rd</sup> November.

**1996** – At least three birds were reported to be wandering between various sites around the area, usually associating with the Canada Goose flocks. Records came from every month except January and October. Among the sites, these came from Otley Gravel Pits, Knotford Nook and Copgrove Lake, as well as from the reservoirs at Silsden, March Ghyll, Fewston, Swinsty, Thruscross, Embsay, Upper Barden, Leeshaw, Thornton Moor and Leeming. Most records were of just one or two birds, although three birds were seen together at Leeming Reservoir on 8<sup>th</sup> November.

**1997** – Records were received from all months except July, but all records probably referred to feral birds. Reports were usually of single birds, sometimes two, but never exceeded three. Sites were widely spread, and birds were nearly always seen in association with Canada Geese.

**1998** – During the first six months of the year there were many sightings of two particular single birds. The first of these frequented the Otley area, and was reported at Otley Gravel Pits and Lindley Wood Reservoir, the second bird moved around between the reservoirs at Doe Park, Hewenden, Leeming, Leeshaw and Lower Laithe. Other sites which held single birds during this period were Lower Barden Reservoir (27<sup>th</sup> April), Elland Gravel Pits (1<sup>st</sup> May) and Stockbridge Nature Reserve (4<sup>th</sup> May).

## Barnacle Goose

From 13<sup>th</sup> June until at least 26<sup>th</sup> July, two birds were seen together at Otley Gravel Pits, and coincidentally there were no records from any other sites during this period.

In fact, there were no further records until 25<sup>th</sup> November, when a single bird was seen at Otley Gravel Pits, where it remained until at least 13<sup>th</sup> December. Another single bird was reported from nearby Knotford Nook on 27<sup>th</sup> December, then one (or the same) bird was at Silsden Reservoir the following day; the year's final sighting was of another single bird, at Doe Park on 30<sup>th</sup> December.

**1999** – Virtually all sightings of Barnacle Geese were in the company of Canada Geese. The vast majority of records for this species came from Otley Gravel Pits, especially during the first winter period. However, Swinsty Reservoir had the year's first record (on 1<sup>st</sup> January), of a single bird which was joined by a second bird on 2<sup>nd</sup>. On the same day, another bird was seen at Otley Gravel Pits, while the aforementioned single bird at Swinsty Reservoir was last seen on 3<sup>rd</sup> January. On 29<sup>th</sup> January a single bird was observed in a field to the west of Stockbridge Nature Reserve. A single bird remained at Otley Gravel Pits throughout the month of February, to be joined by a second bird on 7<sup>th</sup>, 13<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup>. The only March sighting was of a bird at Denton Hall on 11<sup>th</sup>.

An unfortunate bird was killed by the power lines near Stockbridge Nature Reserve on 5<sup>th</sup> April. The year's highest count was at Yeadon Tarn, where three birds were present on 18<sup>th</sup> April. One day later a bird was observed in the field to the west of the Timble plantations. In May, a single bird was seen at Otley Gravel Pits (on 8<sup>th</sup>), while another was present at Weecher Reservoir from 11<sup>th</sup> to 24<sup>th</sup>. A single bird seen at Fewston Reservoir on 8<sup>th</sup> June was possibly the same one found at Lindley Wood Reservoir on 14<sup>th</sup>. The year's final sighting at Otley Gravel Pits occurred on 15<sup>th</sup> July.

Only two birds were observed in the second winter period; the first was at Elland Gravel Pits on 5<sup>th</sup> October, while the second was at Lindley Wood Reservoir on 15<sup>th</sup> November.

**2000** – This species is never present in large numbers, and is virtually always in the company of Canada Geese. The first record was of a single bird at Otley Gravel Pits on 2<sup>nd</sup> February, quickly followed by two at Fewston Reservoir on 11<sup>th</sup> and one at Embsay Reservoir on 13<sup>th</sup>.

Otley Gravel Pits held the year's maximum, of three birds, on 9<sup>th</sup> April, and a single bird was present there from 4<sup>th</sup> June until 25<sup>th</sup> September. It is quite possible that all these birds were of feral origin and that no more than three birds were involved.

**2001** – A bird at Otley Gravel Pits, associating with a hybrid Canada Goose from 14<sup>th</sup> to 23<sup>rd</sup> January, was presumed to be of feral origin. The only other record was a bird which stayed briefly at Swinsty Reservoir on 14<sup>th</sup> October.

**2002** – Leeshaw Reservoir had a bird in early March, and presumably the same bird a month later. In autumn, a bird flew over Otley Gravel Pits in September.

**2003** - The first sighting was of an individual, of unknown origin, flying up the Wharfe valley past Barden on 16<sup>th</sup> March. A presumed feral escapee was found on Ogden water on 25<sup>th</sup> November and stayed for the winter in the accompaniment of the local Canada Geese.

**2004** - Last year's wintering bird stayed at Ogden Water into 2004, and was seen at other sites between there and Oxenhope throughout spring. It visited the reservoirs at Doe Park, Thornton Moor and Leeshaw, before being last seen at Cold Edge Dams on 9<sup>th</sup> June. Another bird was seen in November at both Otley Wetland and Lindley Wood Reservoir.

**2005** - Single birds were seen at Thornton Moor Reservoir on 10<sup>th</sup> September, and flying east over Denholme Clough on 25<sup>th</sup>. Given the timing, this could have represented genuine migration, or it might have been the bird seen widely in this same general area in 2004.

**2006** - Individuals were seen at Otley Wetland in mid-February, and at Warley Moor Reservoir on 25<sup>th</sup> June. Whilst probably not of genuine wild origin, they are given the benefit of the doubt, but a bird at Manningham Park throughout the year is clearly an escape.

**2007** - What was probably the same individual, and almost certainly an escape, was seen in spring and autumn at the reservoirs at Ogden, Thornton Moor and Leeshaw.

**2008** - What was probably the same feral bird was seen with Canada Geese at several locations.