

## Red-breasted Merganser

**1987** – Chelker Reservoir produced an intriguing series of records and territorial behaviour was observed. A male and a female were present in April on 12<sup>th</sup>, 17<sup>th</sup> and from 22<sup>nd</sup> to 25<sup>th</sup>. On the 4<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> of May they were defending territory on the reservoir bank but no young were seen subsequently. Birds were then seen on a further eight dates until 22<sup>nd</sup> October with eclipse plumage being seen in the interim.

**1988** – Seems determined to breed at Chelker Reservoir one day. A male there 19<sup>th</sup> March to 28<sup>th</sup> April on which date it was joined by a female. Although display was seen, the birds were driven off by territorial Great Crested Grebes. There was also a single female/immature at Swinsty Reservoir on 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> December.

**1989** – The new year opened with a redhead at Knotford Nook on 1<sup>st</sup> January and either the same bird or another was at Lindley Wood Reservoir between 12<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> of that month. Chelker Reservoir saw a male on 12<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> March, this bird being the last of the spring. A party of nine flew east over Windhill on 25<sup>th</sup> September and a redhead was at Chelker Reservoir on 29<sup>th</sup> September and 13<sup>th</sup> October. Two redheads visited Knotford Nook on 29<sup>th</sup> October, while Lindley Wood Reservoir held another two days later.

**1990** – Yet another spring male at Chelker Reservoir, this time from 10<sup>th</sup> March to 1<sup>st</sup> April. The next bird was a female at Leeshaw Reservoir from 30<sup>th</sup> April to 2<sup>nd</sup> May while the third, and last, was a male at Otley Gravel Pits on the unusual date of 13<sup>th</sup> June.

**1991** – There was only one record, an adult male at Otley Gravel Pits on 25<sup>th</sup> December.

**1992** – This was the second poor year in a row with only three sightings. Singles were recorded at Thornton Moor Reservoir on 9<sup>th</sup> June and at Chelker Reservoir on 20<sup>th</sup> September. A 'redhead' was present on the Aire at Saltaire on 10<sup>th</sup> December, keeping company with a small party of Goosanders.

**1993** – In the spring a female was present at Mixenden Reservoir on 25<sup>th</sup> March and a pair was seen leaving Chelker Reservoir during the afternoon of 18<sup>th</sup> April. No further records until October when a redhead visited Mixenden Reservoir on 2<sup>nd</sup>. A redhead graced Thornton Moor Reservoir on 10<sup>th</sup> November and finally Lindley Wood Reservoir held single redheads on 28<sup>th</sup> November and 11<sup>th</sup> December.

**1995** – The welcome return started with a male at Chelker Reservoir between 17<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup> March and was followed by a pair at Lindley Wood Reservoir on 26<sup>th</sup> March. Exactly a month later a male was at Ogden Reservoir. There were two reports in the second winter-period the first being a pair at Swinsty Reservoir on 1<sup>st</sup> December. The fifth and final record was a female at Knotford Nook on 9<sup>th</sup> December.

**1996** – There were records from three different sites during the first winter period, but these may well have referred to the same bird. These records began with a female bird at Thruscross Reservoir on 13<sup>th</sup> January, followed by a female amongst the Goosanders at Knotford Nook from 14<sup>th</sup> to 19<sup>th</sup> February and lastly a female at Swinsty Reservoir from 15<sup>th</sup> March to 6<sup>th</sup> April.

An unusual mid-summer record was of a female at Thornton Moor Reservoir on 23<sup>rd</sup> June. The final record for the year was a female type at Lindley Wood Reservoir between 16<sup>th</sup> and 23<sup>rd</sup> November.

**1997** – All 1997 records for this species refer to single female/immature birds. The first winter period found birds at Otley Gravel Pits between 12<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> January and Knotford Nook on 15<sup>th</sup> February. One then flew north from Thornton Moor Reservoir on 31<sup>st</sup> March.

A single bird was at Thornton Moor Reservoir on 19<sup>th</sup> September, with another seen there on 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> October. Sightings of single birds were also recorded at Silsden Reservoir on 3<sup>rd</sup> October, Knotford Nook on 7<sup>th</sup> October and Elland Gravel Pits from 5<sup>th</sup> December until the year-end.

**1998** – The female bird which had been at Elland Gravel Pits since 5<sup>th</sup> December 1997 was seen on 4<sup>th</sup> January; a report on 24<sup>th</sup> January may have referred to the same bird. Other January sightings were of a male bird at Lindley Wood Reservoir on 12<sup>th</sup> and a female bird at Fewston Reservoir on 14<sup>th</sup>.

In December, a 'redhead' bird was seen at Elland Gravel Pits on 5<sup>th</sup>. At Thornton Moor Reservoir, a female bird which was first noted amongst the roosting Goosanders on 15<sup>th</sup> was also subsequently reported on three other dates before the year-end. The only other 1998 record was of a female bird at Otley Gravel Pits on 19<sup>th</sup>.

**1999** – Sightings from the first period alternated between Thornton Moor Reservoir and Elland Gravel Pits, and are believed to be of the same 'red-head' bird that had first been seen in December 1998. It was seen in company with Goosanders at Thornton Moor Reservoir on 1<sup>st</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> January, and on several dates up until 20<sup>th</sup> February at Elland Gravel Pits. Another female-type bird was present at Thornton Moor Reservoir on

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21<sup>st</sup> September, and one was seen in the Goosander roost at the same site on 14<sup>th</sup> November. Two birds were present at Lindley Wood Reservoir on 15<sup>th</sup> November. A female bird turning up on 23<sup>rd</sup> November stayed at Elland Gravel Pits until the year-end. Another bird was seen at Lindley Wood Reservoir on 23<sup>rd</sup> December.

**2000** - This was a below average year, with only four records. On 17<sup>th</sup> January, 'red-head' bird was at Elland Gravel Pits, and might have been the bird seen there up to the previous year-end. Next came an unusual record of a well-described male seen briefly on a tiny garden pond in Addingham on 4<sup>th</sup> March. A month later, a pair was on more familiar terrain at Thornton Moor Reservoir on 9<sup>th</sup> April, and the only report from the second winter period was a bird at Knotford Nook on 26<sup>th</sup> December.

**2001** – Another below-average year, with only four records, and possibly only two brds involved. All the records came from late January, when red-heads were at Knotford Nook on 26<sup>th</sup>, 28<sup>th</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup>, and at Fewston Reservoir on the former date.

**2002** – At the beginning of the year, a bird was on Lindley Reservoir on 15<sup>th</sup> January, and, after a long gap, a 'red-head' was found at Fewston Reservoir on 21<sup>st</sup> September. Chelker Reservoir had the other autumn record: a single on 10<sup>th</sup> November.

**2003** - Yet another below average year with only two sightings both in the first half of the year. A singleton was on Chelker Reservoir on 12<sup>th</sup> January (JLT). On 8<sup>th</sup> April a female was found at Lindley Wood Reservoir.

**2004** - A below-average showing, with only one record: a bird briefly at Thornton Moor Reservoir on 28<sup>th</sup> March.

**2005** - An increasingly uncommon species in the Group area, there was only one record: a female in the Goosander roost at Thornton Moor Reservoir on 6<sup>th</sup> November.

**2006** - As in 2005, just one record, and from the same location: a single at Thornton Moor Reservoir on 21<sup>st</sup> August.

**2007** - Two records in the year doubles some other recent tallies. On 30<sup>th</sup> April, a bird was seen at close range near Bolton Abbey (RHP), and a pair was present at Ogden Reservoir from 27<sup>th</sup> to 29<sup>th</sup> September.