

GREATER SCAUP *Aythya marila*

1987 – A juvenile male was seen at Lindley Wood Reservoir on 13th August. A record of four female-types flying west at Knotford Nook on 4th November coincides with a small influx at other Yorkshire sites.,

1988 – Three, two females and an immature drake at Chelker Reservoir on 1st and 2nd January were joined by a fourth bird on 3rd-4th. An immature drake was also at Thornton Moor Reservoir on 7th-10th April. There was a female at Lindley Wood Reservoir on 29th August and in October, a drake at Otley Gravel Pits on 19th and Lindley Wood Reservoir on 24th.

1989 – A pair at Chelker Reservoir on 6th January, a male at Knotford Nook on 25th March and another male at Fly Flatts Reservoir on 22nd September. There was a bird at Chelker Reservoir on 29th September and at Beaver Dyke Reservoir next day, while closely resembling a female Scaup, it showed traces of hybridisation.

1990 – There were two records, both from Fly Flatts Reservoir. The first concerned an unusually large party of 19 birds (seven males and 12 females) on 16th September while the other referred to a first-winter male from 29th December to the year end.

1991 – The first-winter male found at Fly Flatts Reservoir late last year was still present on 1st January. A male was at Elland Gravel Pits on 2nd February while a female frequented this site from 6th to 10th March and a party of three, two males and a female was seen there on 7th May. The only other record concerned a female at Knotford Nook on 3rd March.

1992 – A first-winter male at Knotford Nook from 18th to 20th January and an adult male there on 23rd were the only records from the first winter period. A female at Beaver Dyke Reservoir was present from 31st May to 10th June. Finally a male graced Chelker Reservoir from 10th to 13th October.

1993 – A female at High Royd Sewage Works on 20th November was probably the same bird which subsequently spent 26th and 27th November at Elland Gravel Pits.

1994 – Three records: an adult male at Fly Flatts Reservoir on 12th June, a female at Lindley Wood Reservoir on 21st September and a female at High Royd Sewage Works from 13th to 20th November which was thought to be the same bird found here early last winter.

1995 – Despite no records in the first half, it was a good year. With the exception of the last, all records refer to females or 'female types'. The first were singles at Otley Gravel Pits between 17th and 20th July, Reva Reservoir on 29th and 30th July, and Thornton Moor Reservoir on 14th August. One at Lindley Wood Reservoir on 10th September increased to two between 15th and 17th. On the latter date there was a single on Swinsty Reservoir. A long-staying bird frequented Fly Flatts Reservoir between 10th and 28th October, often in the company of Tufted Ducks, providing useful comparisons. Elland Gravel Pits held a single on 9th November. The final record referred to a pair, both juveniles, at Kex Gill Quarries on 23rd November.

1996 – Another good year, with one spring record and seven records from autumn onwards. The spring record concerned an adult female found on the River Aire at Marley Sewage Works on 9th March, which remained there for two weeks.

The autumn records began with a female-type bird at Lindley Wood Reservoir between 24th and 30th August. A juvenile first-winter bird spent three days at Otley Gravel Pits from 14th September, being joined by a second bird on 15th. A female type was sighted on Chelker Reservoir on 19th September. Thornton Moor Reservoir had two records – the first of two female types present from 21st to 23rd September, the second of a female-type on 27th October. A juvenile bird was at Otley Gravel Pits on 9th November, and possibly the same bird reappeared there on 19th. The year's final record was of a female bird at Fewston Reservoir on 27th and 28th December.

1997 – The next series of records began on 23rd August, when two birds were seen at Otley Gravel Pits. These were followed by two female/immature birds found at Lindley Wood Reservoir on 6th September, which remained there until at least 10th. A female and a first-winter male were seen at Denton Hall Lake on 7th September, providing an exciting find for a team competing in the Group's Bird Race. Finally, a female/immature bird was seen at Thornton Moor Reservoir on 12th September.

1998 – The first was a report of a first-winter male bird seen at Otley Gravel Pits on 7th and 8th November. The following week, on 14th, a female type bird reported at the same site was described as a 'different' bird to the one previously reported. The second record came from Silsden Reservoir, where a first-year male bird, first seen on 28th December, stayed well into 1999.

1999 – The first-winter male originally noted in December 1998 stayed at Silsden Reservoir through until 14th March; this was the only sighting of the species during the first half of the year.

GREATER SCAUP *Aythya marila*

In September, a female-type bird paid a brief visit to Thornton Moor Reservoir on 8th. An eclipse male, first found at Otley Gravel Pits on 15th November, remained there until the year-end, by which time its plumage was more like a breeding adult male, with just traces of brown. A male just like it appeared at Knotford Nook on 26th December, and stayed there until the year-end. On 29th December, a further bird was located at High Royd Sewage Works.

2000 – An excellent year for a species which seems generally to be appearing in larger numbers. A conservative estimate would be that some 16 individuals were recorded, the highest since the Group's inception.

The two males present at the end of 1999 continued their stay, and whilst both continued to winter separately, at Otley Gravel Pits and Knotford Nook, they both left within a few days of each other, in the second week of March. An adult male seen at Knotford Nook over a month later on 13th April, was presumably on passage.

The next bird seen, at Otley Gravel Pits on 1st September, was the forerunner of a number of autumn and winter records. Four days later, a first-winter female was on Ogden Reservoir, with two present there on 6th. September's sightings were completed by two males and two first-winter birds at Knotford Nook on 29th.

There then followed a series of reports from Otley Gravel Pits and Knotford Nook, probably involving the same birds. Three first-winter birds were at Otley Gravel Pits on 114th October, and this number had increased to four by 31st. Two of these birds stayed into early November, and one until the year-end, by which time moult had confirmed its credentials as a first-winter male. An additional bird in this plumage was at Knotford Nook on 2nd December, and joined the other one at Otley Gravel Pits on 10th. A female-type, present at Redcar Tarn on 19th November was fairly certainly not part of the Wharfedale congregation.

2001 – Whilst well down on the minimum of 16 individuals seen the previous year, a total of some eight birds represents a good showing.

The first-winter male present at Otley Gravel Pits at the end of 2000 remained until 15th January and there was another at Ogden Reservoir from 4th to 25th of that month. Another first-winter bird was found at Fewston Reservoir on 11th, and remained until at least 28th February.

After a gap of five months, two juveniles appeared at Chelker Reservoir on 17th July, and there were single birds the following month at Otley Gravel Pits on 19th to 21st and John o'Gaunt's Reservoir on 31st. Finally, a female found at Otley Gravel Pits on 6th November remained there until 24th.

2002 – Though well-recorded, numbers are down on last year, with probably five different birds involved.

A female described from Fewston Reservoir on 13th February had probably been present since 31st January, and may well have been the one which was there in the corresponding period during the previous year. It was last seen on 11th March. Another female was at Elland Gravel Pits on 19th February.

In the second winter period, a bird was found at Otley Gravel Pits on 24th November and an apparently different first-winter female was then present from 27th of the month to 5th December. What was probably a further bird was then seen at both Knotford Nook and Otley Gravel Pits between 6th and 20th December.

2003 - 2003 was a poor year for Scaup in the groups recording area. There were only three individuals found and only during the second winter period. The first, a male, was a one off at Fewston Reservoir on 11th September (JRW). A female found at Thornton Moor Reservoir on 21st October (KM) not only stayed in the area until 30th November, but also managed to do a tour of the reservoirs close to Oxenhope. It spent some time on Leeming reservoir and Fly Flatts where it was last seen. Another long staying female arrived at Otley Gravel pits on 21st November (KM) and stayed until the year-end, incorporating a visit to Knotford Nook on 14th December before returning to the gravel pits.

2004 - A female spent until 18th April at Otley Wetland, though she was first recorded at Knotford Nook on 10th January (KM) and may well have been the bird seen in the area at the end of 2003. A second female appeared on 7th March at the wetlands (KM). After a gap of three months, a female/immature was found on Lower Laithe Reservoir on 23rd July (BV). On 10th November, three first-winter birds spent a little time on Fewston Reservoir (AGG, PRI), and the last sighting of a very poor year for this species was of a male at Knotford Nook on 6th December.

2005 - A very poor year for the species, with no more than two birds seen, at either end of the year, and both at Otley Wetland. A female was present there from 2nd to 22nd January (KM *et al*), and another from 28th November to 28th December.

2006 - Another poor year for the species was not helped by three potential records being unsupported by the necessary description.

GREATER SCAUP *Aythya marila*

A female seen at Otley Wetland on 2nd and 5th January was clearly the bird which had been present there at the end of December, 2005 (RHP, D&BP, ES), and was probably the one which visited Knotford Nook briefly on the 4th (KM), so the only new record was a sub-adult seen at Knotford Nook on 2nd September.

2007 - This species' increasing scarcity in the recording area is confirmed by only one record: a 1st-winter male located on 9th December at Otley Wetland, and which was still present as the year closed.

2008 - The 1st-winter male found at Otley Wetland in December, 2007 remained there until 27th April.