

Ely Beet Pits



Bird Ringing Report 2018

Ringling Activities 2018.

Bird ringing activities have been restricted to the annual CES, (Constant effort Study), during the breeding season. The main intention being, to monitor the breeding populations of Warblers & specialist reed bed species using EBP. A combination of very hot weather, holidays & a shortage of manpower meant that seven visits were made from the max twelve. Visits 3, 7, 9, 10 & 12 were missed. The summer heatwave meant that more help would be required to ensure the birds welfare, with temperatures reaching 40 degrees plus in the reed bed, unfortunately not enough help to ensure that birds could be extracted, processed & released within a safe timescale was available, therefore the decision to miss the visits was made.

A total of 330ft of net, comprising of 3x60ft,3x40ft &1x30ft, was used each visit. Nets were set from 05:30-12:00. A total of 312 birds were processed from the seven completed visits at an average of 44.57.

20 species were processed during the Summer, with House Sparrow & Jay being new species for the site!

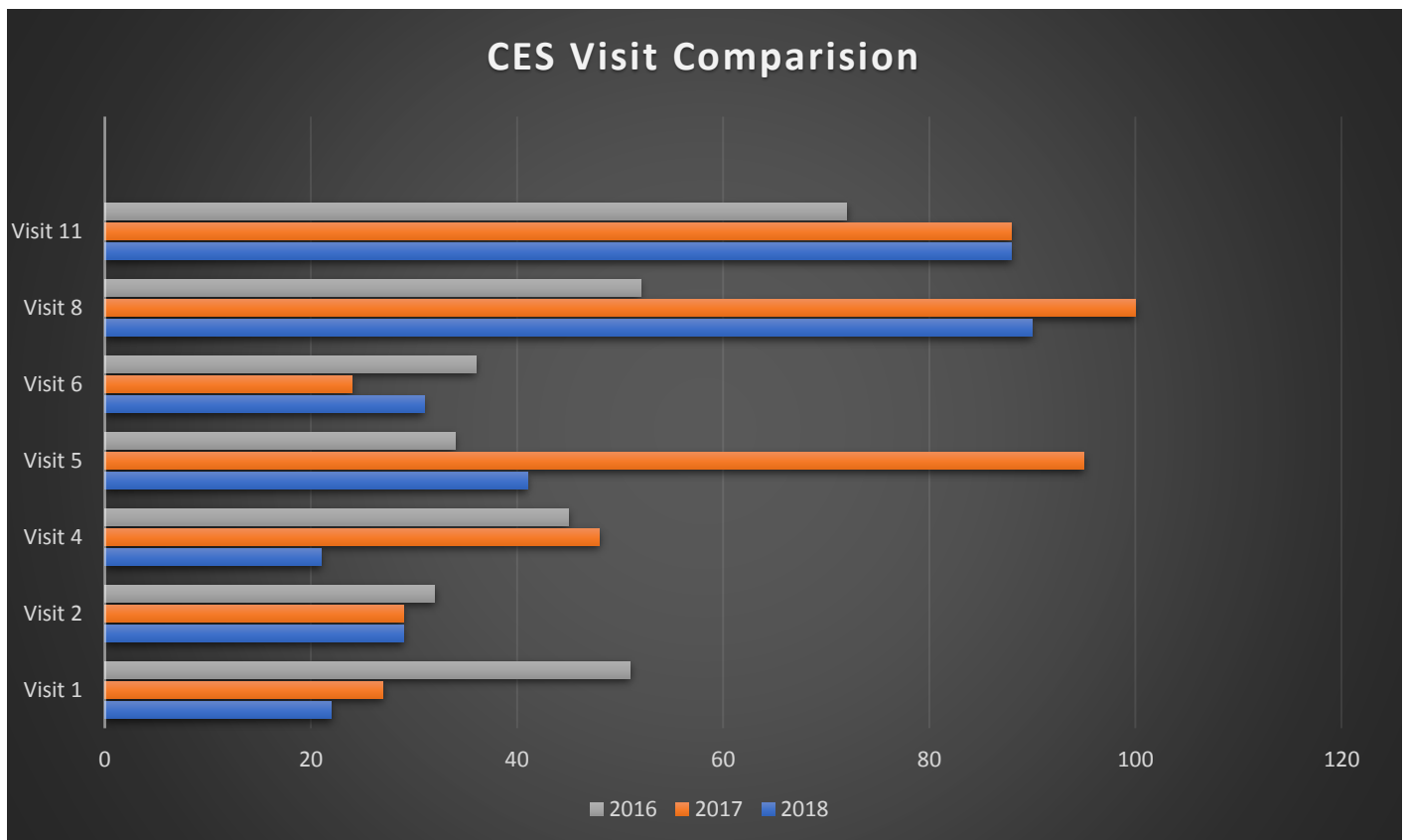
SPECIES	NEW	RETRAPS	TOTAL
REED WARBLER	101	23	124
DUNNOCK	6	3	9
WHITETHROAT	25	8	33
WREN	9	5	14
REED BUNTING	10	1	11
BLUE TIT	13	8	21
SONG THRUSH	1	3	4
BEARDED TIT	19	3	22
SEDGE WARBLER	19	5	24
JAY	1		1
BLACKCAP	10	2	12
GREENFINCH	1		1
LINNET	2		2
BLACKBIRD	4		4
GREAT TIT	3		3
GOLDFINCH	22		22
HOUSE SPARROW	1		1
ROBIN	2		2
CHIFFCHAFF		1	1
WILLOW WARBLER	1		1
TOTAL	250	62	312

Returning migrants:

As we already know, Reed Warblers are, in general, site faithful as are Whitethroats & Sedge Warblers to a lesser extent. 2018 was no different with 9 Reed Warbler, 2 Whitethroat & a single Sedge Warbler returning to EBP to breed from previous years. One interesting fact is that all the returning birds were ringed as adults, no birds ringed as juveniles/1st year were retrapped from previous years.

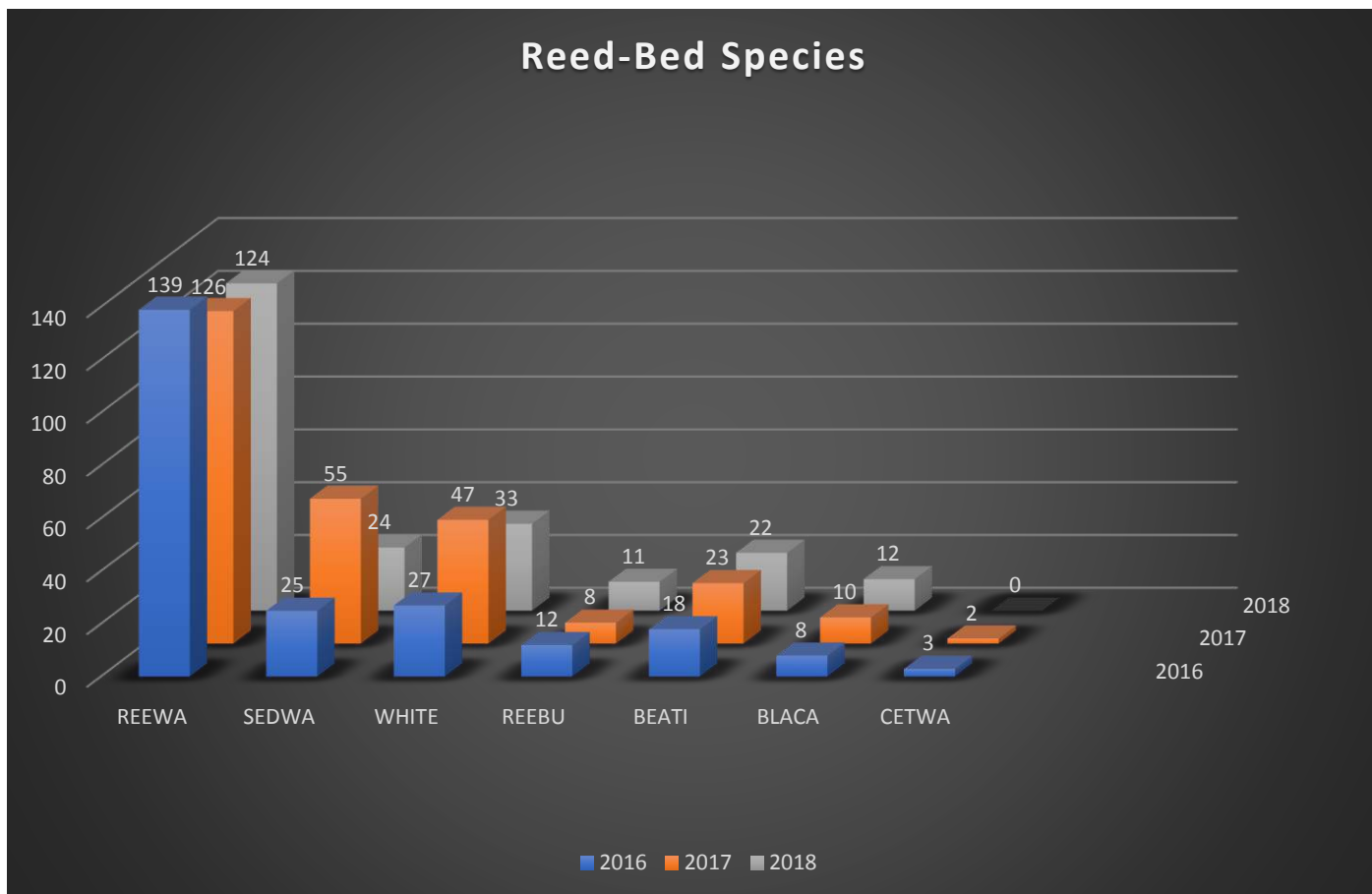
Ring No.	Species	Age/sex	Ringed	Retrapped
S868048	Reed Warbler	Ad M	17/07/17	07/05/18, 20/05/18
Z720021	Whitethroat	Ad M	20/08/15	07/05/18, 23/06/18
S868211	Whitethroat	Ad	22/08/17	07/05/18
Z992868	Reed Warbler	Ad	30/04/17	20/05/18, 21/07/18
Z586811	Reed Warbler	Ad	09/07/16	20/05/18, 23/06/18
Z992867	Sedge Warbler	Ad	30/04/17	09/06/18
Z436373	Reed Warbler	Ad M	20/06/15	09/06/18
Z586740	Reed Warbler	Ad M	27/05/16	09/06/18
Z586805	Reed Warbler	Ad M	09/07/16	23/06/18
Z992889	Reed Warbler	Ad F	25/05/17	23/06/18
Z992878	Reed Warbler	Ad M	11/05/17	04/07/18
Z992956	Reed Warbler	Ad M	20/06/17	21/07/18

CES Visits:



The 'Beast from the east' caused a very protracted arrival of migrants & delayed or ruined nesting attempts for many species. Numbers in general were lower in 2018 compared to previous years. The first juveniles appeared a month later than previous years, 23rd June in 2018, compared to 21st May in 2017 & 6th May in 2016. As the weather improved into the hot Summer birds caught up slightly, with some managing second broods before departing at the beginning of October, (in the case of the main species, Reed Warbler). Several species did not recover, Sedge Warbler, Whitethroat & Lesser Whitethroat all had poor breeding seasons on site.

Reed-bed Species, Comparison:



Totals for visits 1,2,4,5,6,8 & 11 only.

In general, the reed-bed breeding species appear to have been stable over the last 3 years. Sedge Warbler totals fluctuate from year to year, hopefully 2019 will be a good year!! After first appearing in 2016, the Bearded Tit population seems to have settled nicely, with the `Beast from the east` having little effect. I fear that is not the same story for the small Cettis Warbler population at EBP. No males were heard singing throughout 2018, fingers crossed that the nearby population expand again in the future.

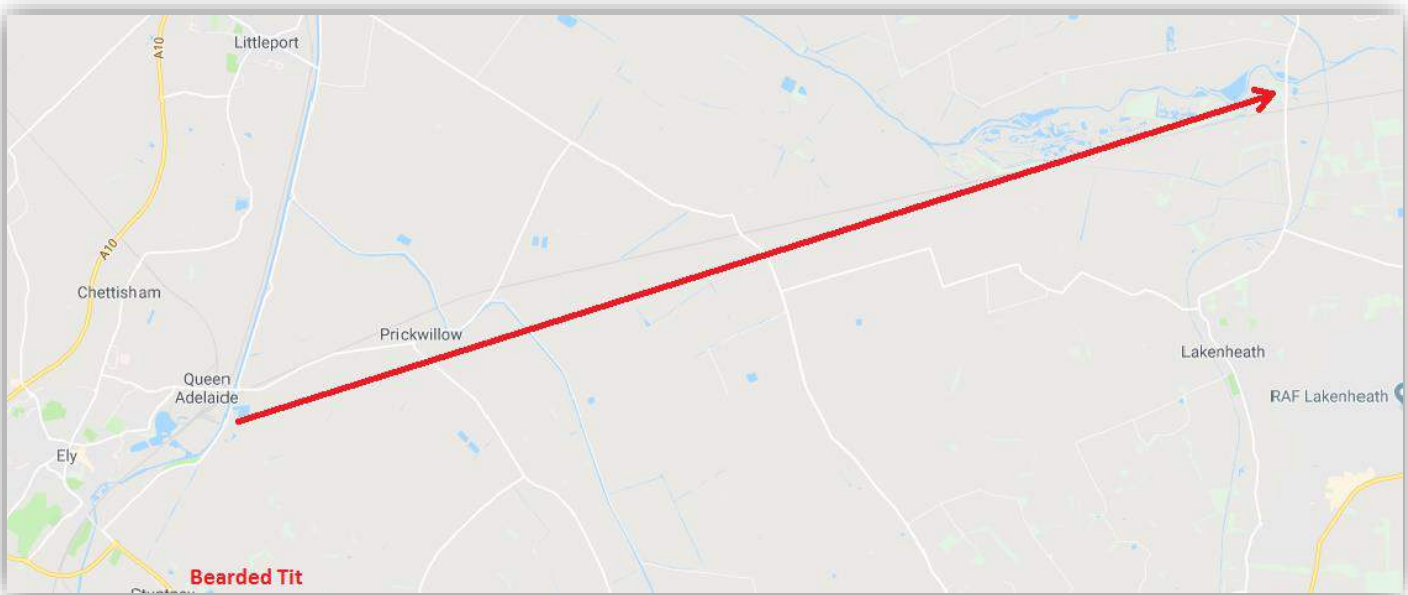


Adult male Reed Bunting, Autumn.

Recoveries & Controls:

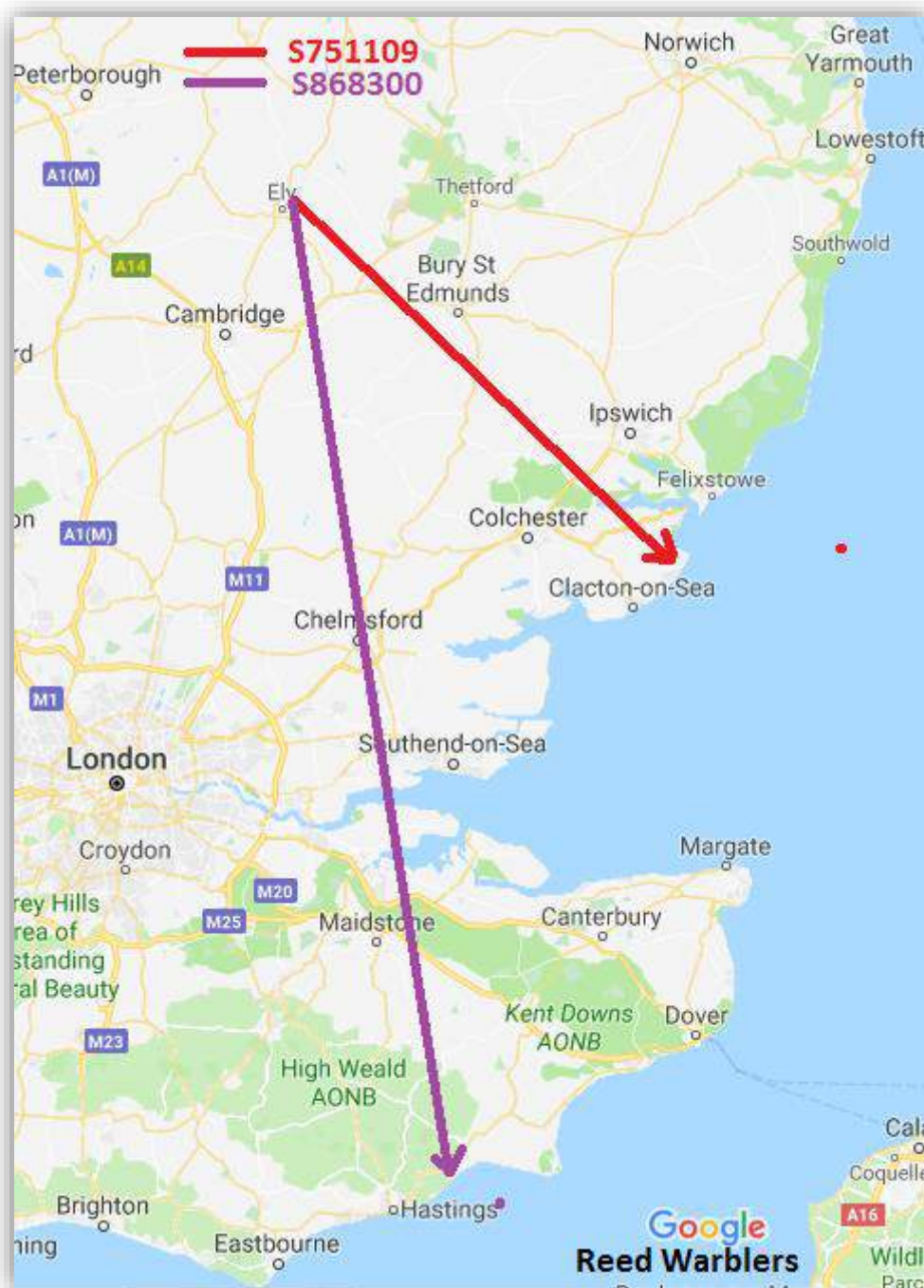
Recoveries: (birds ringed at EBP & found elsewhere)

Ring No.	Species	Age	Ringed	Location	Found	dur	dist	dir
S751109	Reed Warbler	1 st year	25/08/18	Holland Haven Country Park, Essex	06/09/18	12 days	91 km	SE
S868300	Reed Warbler	1 st Year	29/08/17	Icklesham, East Sussex	31/08/18	367 days	169 km	S
Z992954	Blue Tit	1 st Year	20/06/17	Ely Wild Space, Ely, Cambridgeshire	21/05/18	335 days	2 km	W
S868472	Bearded Tit	1 st Year Male	21/07/18	Brandon Fen, Lakenheath, Suffolk	10/12/18	142 days	18 km	
S868473	Bearded Tit	1 st Year Female	21/07/18	Brandon Fen, Lakenheath, Suffolk	10/12/18	142 days	18 km	



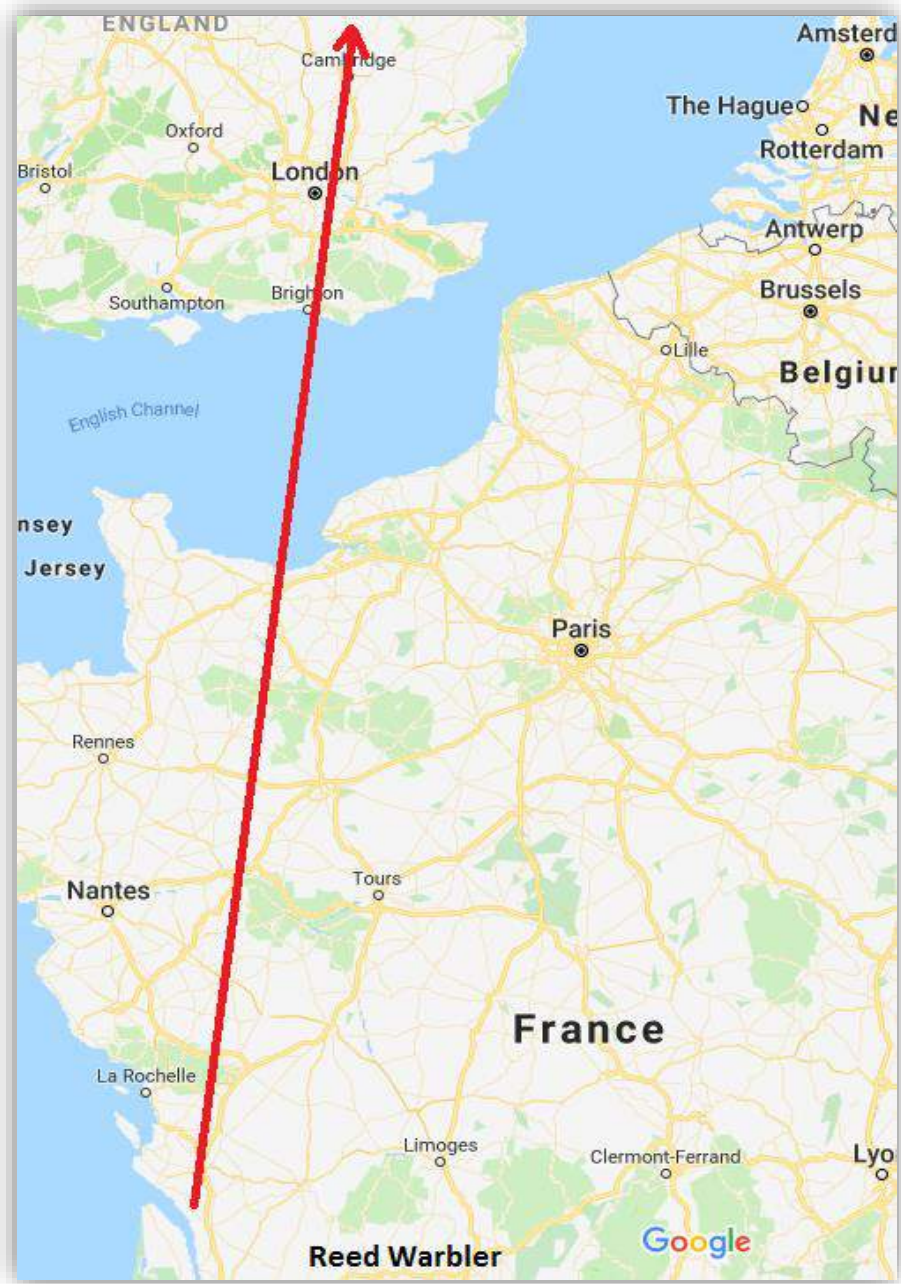
Both Bearded Tit recoveries were ringed together at the same time & found together at Lakenheath, Suffolk. Both ringed as juveniles it seems they decided to stay together when they moved on from Ely. They are probably from different broods at Ely, (family parties gather together, safety in numbers). Pairing up & setting up a new territory at the far larger reed-bed at Lakenheath.

The 2 Reed Warbler recoveries are interesting. Firstly, a young bird starting its Autumn migration, travelling 91 km to the Essex coast in just 12 days. While the other involved a young bird ringed at EBP during the Autumn of 2017, migrating to Africa for the winter, returning to the UK to breed before being trapped by another ringer at Icklesham, East Sussex some year & 2 days later as it began the return journey to Africa for the winter again.



Controls, (Birds ringed elsewhere then subsequently re-caught at EBP)

3 controls were caught during 2018. An adult female Chiffchaff breeding at EBP after moving through Wicken Fen 42 days earlier. The best of all was a Reed Warbler originally ringed in central France in the Autumn of 2014, (no doubt on its way to Africa for the Winter), then caught at EBP 4 years & a lot of miles later.



1st year Reed Warbler

Noteworthy Sightings:

Date	Sightings
10/04/18	4 Kingfisher, 2 Sedge Warbler, 2 Sand Martin
07/05/18	1 Common Tern, 3 Cuckoo, 17 Greylag Goose, 1 Lapwing, 20+ Linnet
20/05/18	4 Great Crested Grebe, 1 Jay
09/06/18	1 Common Tern, 4 Cuckoo, 1 Sparrowhawk
23/06/18	15+ Bearded Tit, 2 Buzzard, 5 Common Tern, 1 House Sparrow, 5 Marsh Harrier, 2 Oystercatcher, 50+ Reed Warbler
25/08/18	2 Hobby, 4 Little Grebe, 11 Teal, 14, Tufted Duck, 35+ Whitethroat, 50+ Swallow

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.

Many thanks to Potters Logistics & the sites general manager, Mr Darren Tofts for allowing continued access in support of our studies.



Bearded Tit

***** UPDATE *****

Finally, after more a than 2 years wait, I received the details of the Spanish ringed Swallow caught at EBP.

Ring No.	Species	Date Ringed	Age/ Sex	Ringling Location	Date Caught EBP	Duration	Distance	Direction
4L64101	Swallow	30/04/16	Ad M	Tancat de Milia, Sollana, Valencia, Spain	14/09/16	137 days	1457 km	N

