

WARBLERS ON HOLT ISLAND 2019

Over the last six years we have been catching a variety of warblers through the summer months and some patterns are emerging in the way they use the Island. Eight different species of warbler have been caught on the Island. This year a total of 179 warblers were caught altogether.

The Reed Warblers bred as usual this year but not in as large numbers as the reed bed was clogged up with goose grass and convolvulus making it difficult for the birds to move within them. There seemed to be more nests on the north side of the Island by the Back Water. A total of 62 Reed Warblers were caught including 24 juveniles and 13 new adults. Four adults had originally been ringed in 2016.

Blackcaps were present all summer with 57 being caught including 22 juveniles and 17 new adults, some of these must have been passing through, particularly in the late summer. One male was first ringed in 2014 and has been caught each year since including this year.

Sedge Warblers bred again in small numbers on the Island, They have been absent for several years. Ten new birds were caught including 5 juveniles, but all left in mid-august.

Willow Warblers and Whitethroats did not breed on the Island but pass through on their way to their breeding areas and on the way back, a total of three Whitethroats were caught including 2 juveniles. Thirteen juvenile Willow Warblers were also ringed.

Chiffchaffs on the other hand seem to stay the summer on the Island and can be heard singing regularly. Six juveniles were caught out of twelve new birds

Finally Garden Warblers again seem to pass through, some years they have bred on the Island but not this year, being caught only in spring and late summer. A total of five were caught, one of which was a juvenile.

Ringed these birds over a number of years has shown that the Island is an important staging post for the migrant warblers travelling along the river to their breeding areas as well as being a good breeding site for Reed Warblers, Sedge Warblers and Blackcaps.

Julian & Sue Limentani



Juvenile Chiffchaff



Juvenile Whitethroat



Juvenile Willow Warbler



Juvenile Garden Warbler

