

## DUNE Project Newsletter

Hello and welcome to the May edition of the DUNE Project Newsletter with updates on recent project work, wildlife sightings and upcoming events.

Spring migration continues and the Swallows have returned! Summer breeding species are arriving from Africa whilst overwintering wading birds have already departed for the Arctic Circle. Read on to find out more.

### Coastal Ranger Updates

April sees the start of the [UK Butterfly Monitoring Scheme](#) transects. This scheme involves regular visits to the same site throughout the monitoring season to help build a picture of how well our butterflies are doing.

The dune grasslands at Cleethorpes Local Nature Reserve, habitat that stretches from Cleethorpes Leisure Centre towards the Greenwich Meridian, is particularly good for butterflies. As the weather begins to warm, these grasslands bloom with a succession of flowering plants that provide nectar sources for butterflies and day-flying moths.

It has been a slow start this year with [Peacock](#) (*Aglais io*) [ag-LAR-iss EYE-oh] being the most frequently seen species. That all changed when, accompanied by Dave Wright from Butterfly Conservation Lincolnshire branch, we found 21 [Green Hairstreak](#) (*Callophrys rubi*) [KA-loh-friss ROO-by]. These stunning insects are the only truly green butterfly that occurs in the UK and our coastline is a stronghold for them!

They can be seen between late April and early July, with a peak in May. They are small and very active, often seen chasing away other butterflies. Rival males can be seen in a spiralling flight close to favoured shrubs. In good light, they truly shine!

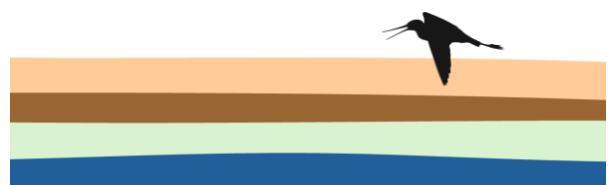
You can find out more about our local branch of Butterfly Conservation including recent sightings and upcoming events here: [Lincolnshire Branch | Butterfly Conservation](#)



Green Hairstreak by Josh Forrester



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## Cleethorpes Local Nature Reserve: April Sightings

I saw my first **Swallow** of the year over Buck Beck on April 1. The return of the Swallow, along with other summer breeding species, has become a way to mark time throughout each year for me.

Most of these birds arrive in a fairly regular order each year. The **Chiffchaff**, one of the first summer breeding species to return, arrives as early as March after spending the winter in northern Africa or southern Spain. Shortly after, the **Blackcap** and **Willow Warbler** return to our open spaces and woodlands. Their longer wings enable them to travel further distances.

Later still the **Common Whitethroat** arrives, followed by **Reed, Sedge** and **Grasshopper Warblers**. In my experience, the **Lesser Whitethroat** is usually the latest warbler to arrive. Most of these species can now be heard singing away across North East Lincolnshire, having travelled from southern Africa.

If you're keen to learn how to identify birds by their songs and calls, I would recommend the [Merlin Bird ID](#) app which is free to download.

Elsewhere, we have seen a small number of **Sand Martins** and **Wheatears** pass through Cleethorpes LNR. Neither of these species breed in North East Lincolnshire. The Sand Martin does breed elsewhere in the wider county. The Wheatear is known as a "passage migrant". They can be seen taking on food along coastal sites prior to heading for their upland breeding grounds.

The **Glossy Ibis** seems to be venturing further afield. After becoming the star attraction of our saltmarsh this winter, it has been seen further south at RSPB Tetney Marshes and towards Tetney Lock. After being seen there on April 13, what appears to be the same bird was seen at Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe NNR on April 18. It appeared to be heading back south along the coast until April 28 when it was seen again on the saltmarsh near Buck Beck!

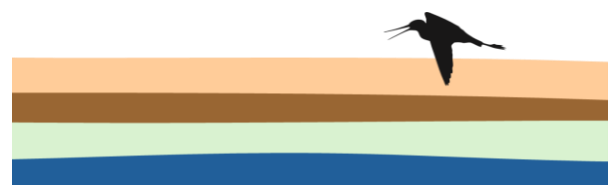
Cleethorpes LNR and Saltfleetby-Theddlethorpe NNR are part of the [Lincolnshire Coronation Coast NNR](#). It is fantastic that this interconnected coastal habitat is attractive to such a diversity of species, including rarities like the Glossy Ibis!

If you have any sightings or photos, we'd love to hear from you! Send us an email and we will share your photos in next month's newsletter: [DUNEproject@nelincs.gov.uk](mailto:DUNEproject@nelincs.gov.uk)

For further information about the DUNE Project, visit our webpage: [Cleethorpes DUNE project | NELC](#)



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## Get Involved!

Would you like to join us for an upcoming guided nature walk? Or do you fancy contributing towards recording local wildlife?

**Citizen Science:** There are plenty of projects to help record local wildlife sightings and data. We've compiled a list of [Citizen Science Projects](#) on our DUNE Project webpage covering areas such as birds, insects, wildflowers and marine life.

**Birds in Greenspaces:** The British Trust for Ornithology (BTO) is running a project from 1 April to 30 June 2026 to find out just how important our greenspaces are for UK birds. These open spaces provide resources and shelter for birds as well as exercise, cultural activities and spaces for well-being for people.

To find out more, check out the project website here: [Birds in Greenspaces | BTO](#)

**Upcoming Events:** All guided nature walks are free but booking is essential. Please visit our [EventBrite](#) page for more information.

Event	Date	Start	What3Words
International Dawn Chorus Day Walk	Sunday 3 <sup>rd</sup> May 04:30 – 06:30	Weelsby Woods (meet in main carpark)	<a href="#">herds.medium.fled</a>
Guided Nature Walk – World Migratory Bird Day	Monday 11 <sup>th</sup> May 10:00 – 12:00	Cleethorpes Country Park (meet near to building at carpark)	<a href="#">joke.fields.commented</a>
Guided Nature Walk – World Migratory Bird Day	Friday 15 <sup>th</sup> May 10:00 – 12:00	Cleethorpes Local Nature Reserve (meet in carpark at back of Cleethorpes Leisure Centre)	<a href="#">snake.spell.tune</a>
Guided Nature Walk – National Nature Reserve Week	Monday 18 <sup>th</sup> May 10:00 – 12:00	Cleethorpes Local Nature Reserve (meet in carpark at back of Cleethorpes Leisure Centre)	<a href="#">snake.spell.tune</a>
Guided Nature Walk – National Nature Reserve Week	Friday 22 <sup>nd</sup> May 10:00 – 12:00	Cleethorpes Local Nature Reserve (meet at Anthony's Bank car park)	<a href="#">penny.ducks.stress</a>



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