

Assembling at dusk
disembarking at dawn

from heronries, colonies, rookeries and gulleries

Goblits,

Lopwings,

Ringlets and Snarlings,

Blackwits, Barwits, Peewits and Puttocks, Foulness Pheasants, Windsuckers and Willocks

Gatherings and scatterings of migrants and residents,

refuellers, overshooters, passages and accidents

Sprogs, Sprews, Egberts and Oiks

Sprat Borers, Coot Teasers, Throstles and Haggisters

a Pied Fly, Ox-eye and Sea Pie

Raptors at Canvey and vagrants on tangents,

to outposts and inlets, terminals and tenements

Avocet Egg Watch Pipits on pit-stops

Godwits on slipway and ducks flushed from ditches

Peregrines on pylons Sandpipers in puddles

Redshank on mudflats and Fieldfare in paddocks

Geese at Grain Gulls at Mucking

Grebe at Uplees and Cranes over Sheppey

Whitethroat at Blackwater Woodcock at Hawkwell

Jack Snipe on east side and Mute Swan on West Flood

Bats in pillboxes Dunlin in runnel

parties of Martins and Buntings on saltings

Blackbirds in bird bath Swallows at sea sluice

Warblers in brambles and waders on scrape

Redstart in car park Blackcap at golf club
Tawny Owl by bungalow and Hobby over boot fair

Phalarope on shingle spit Passerines in sycamores
Turnstone in excavations and Buzzard circling airport

Wheatear on sea wall Whimbrel on fly tip
Pied Wagtails at silt piles and Mistle Thrush by cliff lift

Skylark at Vange Marsh Turtle Dove at Gunners Park
Hen Harrier over Harty Hill and Oystercatchers at Wakering Stair

Foraging flocks of Long-tailed Tits and Goldfinches working the teasels

Nests on jetties
ringing recoveries
and repeated routes of rodings

A sleepy Wigeon
a cheesed off Little Egret
a Shoveler in the mist
and a wisp of Snipe
on the Wat Tyler webcam

Dabblers on duck ramps
and spotters by rubbish dumps

The odd Waxwing, Crossbill, Wryneck and Canvasback

A 'baggy-trouserer' Caspian and some bearded goon in a kayak

A single Pintail
a brood of Gadwall

a Black Brant amongst the Brents
Yellow Wagtails in double figures

but how did they count four thousand, five-hundred and eighty-eight Dunlin??

Twitchers in raptures at the Long-billed Dowitcher
and Sandpiper sightings of Sharp-tailed, Broad-billed, Buff-breasted, White-rumped, Semi-palmated or Pectoral
Daytrippers in windcheaters at telescopes on pierheads and on boardwalks through reedbeds
Listings of lookings with highlightings of findings
in red for rare or amber for scarce

No sign of the Shrike or report of the Crake
but a Swanscombe tick in the shape of two Shags
Some after-work owling
and a count of thousands, flocking to spot a Pallid Harrier at Elmley

Wildfowlers on the 'western front'
Golden Plovers in between shots
Ruffs at dusk
Linnets in the copse
Rooks to their roosts
and a chinook from the barracks

Puntgunning and moon-shooting
with double-barrelled 4-bores, double-coated gundogs, decked punts and sneak boats
Stipulating voluntary restraint and non-toxic shot
And recommending recipes for Drunken Pinkfoot, Roast Pintail, and Woodcock en Cocotte

An 'eagle – golden' in child's handwriting
toy aircraft warnings on Two Tree Island
Butterflies and dragonflies with names to delight in:
Common Blues, Wall Browns and late Clouded Yellows
Migrant Hawkers, Ruddy Darters, Essex Skippers, and a mention of Emperors
Aristocrats on scrubby tracks
and a Painted Lady on Valium

Lingering adults arriving juveniles

Storm stragglers and gale strays

Bee-eaters expected

seen from Seasalter

with wintering Stint arrived from Siberia

Auks from the Arctic Gulls from the Baltic

Godwits from the Continent and Lapwings from Africa

'Hawfinch in orchard

Skylarks over lightship

Chiff-chaffs at Chattenden

Redwings at refuse bins

and Corncrake, crushed by car'

Disembarking at dawn
assembling at dusk

Chattering masses in scatterings and gatherings

Sandpipers, Stonechats, Wagtails and Lapwings

Plovers, Shovelers, Whimbrels and Wigeons

Yelpers, Screechers, Crockers and Scoopers

Whoopers and Ouzels in swoopings and groupings

and spookings of Sparrowhawks, with Starlings in swirlings

Sightings, soundings, flightings and groundings.