

**REDSTART *Phoenicurus phoenicurus***  
Migrant breeder/passage visitor.

**2003** - Although this species is reported from many sites throughout the recording area there seems to be a certain number of sites where this species is particularly abundant. These include Strid Woods, Beaverdyke Reservoir and the stretch of river between Lindley Wood and Swinsty Reservoirs encompassing Folly Hall Wood and Dob Park Wood.

The first bird recorded was on 12th April at Lindley Wood whilst the last was at Denholme Clough on 31st August. Between these dates records came from many locations both on territory and on passage such as Timble Ings, Doe Park Reservoir and Paul Clough.

**2004** - The first returning bird was a male at Caldene Fields on 18th April, closely followed by a single at Strid Woods on 20th. This latter site is one of the strongholds, and a copious amount of records came from this general area. Many pairs are likely to have bred here but only evidence for two pairs was forthcoming, including a pair with young at Drebley.

The Washburn Valley is another stronghold, and successful breeding at various locations, including three pairs at Timble Ings, two pairs at Lindley Wood Reservoir and four newly fledged youngsters at Beaverdyke Reservoir reflected this.

Autumn passage was light, with small numbers scattered throughout the area. The last of the year was at Denholme Clough on 19th September.

**2005** - For a widespread and relatively common species, there were only 36 records, probably representing no more than around 30 different birds, and little evidence of breeding activity.

The first record, a male at Dob Park, was on the quite early date of 8th April, with most of the year's remaining reports being from that month and May. There were many records of singing males, but the highest site total was only three, at Strid Wood, regarded as one of the main breeding locations. Most sightings came from Wharfedale and the Washburn Valley, but a notable exception was a bird in a Low Moor garden in April. Birds seen in September at Otley Wetland and Paul Clough were no doubt on migration, but there were no other examples.

The only definite evidence of breeding was seven young ringed from a nest at Folly Hall Wood, but a bird carrying food was seen at Bolton Abbey, and family parties were noted at John o' Gaunt's Reservoir, Roils Head and Ogden Clough.

**2006** - This is another species where the number of reports and birds are significantly up on 2005, and where a reasonable amount of breeding data was received. The 58 reports represent an improvement of more than 50% on last year, and it is likely 50 adult birds were seen, more in line with expectations for a relatively common summer visitor.

The first bird, a singing male at Weston Park, Otley, on 31st March, was exceptionally early, and only one day later than the earliest on record. No further birds were seen until 16th April, and a relatively small number were then recorded in the middle of May, exclusively in the northern sector of the Group area, and included several other singing males.

There were also relatively few sightings in the following two months, but the first breeding records were established: pairs clearly with nest-bound young near Strid Wood and Timble Ings, and three juveniles with their parents at John o' Gaunt's Reservoir. Another party of adults and young at John o' Gaunt's in August were clearly different, and elsewhere, breeding was proved at Norwood Bottom and Dob Park. The summer months also had the year's highest day count, of ten birds in

the area around John o' Gaunt's and Beaverdyke Reservoirs, clearly a local stronghold for this species.

Post-breeding dispersal, and subsequent migration, became evident from mid-July, and, with the exception of a few late stragglers, went on for about six weeks. About 23 different birds were seen, but, for once, the usual watchpoints in the south didn't predominate, as the best seasonal total of nine birds (and day count of five, on 25th August) came from Draughton Heights. This seems to be a fairly recently-discovered migration spot, which has turned up some good records in 2006, and will presumably do so in future years. The year's final sighting was at Thornton Moor Reservoir on the notably late date of 29th September.

**2007** - After the upturn in records of all types last year, 2007 was fairly mediocre. The 39 records were in line with the probable number of birds, and reports were largely confined to the well-wooded areas in the Washburn Valley and around Strid Wood. The first returning birds were, however, three at Ben Rhydding Gravel Pits on 17th April, and the last one at Denholme Clough on 9th September, probably part of a small movement there at the time. Surprisingly, the other regular migration watchpoints didn't produce anything. Several woodlands held up to five singing males, but the highest count was eight such birds in the Lindley Wood area in late April.

Successful breeding was reported only from Timble Ings, but it probably also took place in Strid Wood, where a juvenile was seen.

**2008** - Though up to six birds were seen on a few dates, mainly in mid-Wharfedale and the Washburn Valley, the one confirmed breeding record originated elsewhere, from White Crag Plantation.

**2009** - Recorded only in Wharfedale and the Washburn Valley. Six birds on probable breeding territory near John o' Gaunt's Reservoir was the highest count, but breeding reports came only from Laund House (Strid) and Redshaw Gill.

**2010** - Apart from what were fairly clearly passage birds at St. Ives, Sconce, Thornton Moor and Rombalds Moor, all the records came from 33

Wharfedale and the Washburn Valley. Up to six birds were noted in Strid Wood in May, but the only confirmed breeding data came from John o' Gaunt's Reservoir, Ellers Wood, and Low Snowden.

**2011** - A good tally of about 70 records came, as usual, mainly from Wharfedale and the Washburn Valley, but obvious passage birds were noted, mainly in and around Airedale. The first two areas had respectively six and nine of the breeding records, with the remaining three around Airedale; at least 20 young were raised. The highest count comprised 13 birds in April in a two mile stretch of the Washburn above Lindley Wood Reservoir, and the overall picture is clearly better than for several years.

**2012** - There was far less evidence of successful breeding this year, and this was noted only at Denton, Storiths, Farnley and Dob Park, where 11 out of the 16 juveniles were raised. Wharfedale and the Washburn had all but seven of the records, with a maximum count of six adults there in late April, well down on the corresponding 2011 figure.

**2013** - Three birds were seen at Strid Woods on the 4th April, the earliest recorded since 2006. Indications throughout the spring suggested that numbers were holding up well, particularly in the Washburn. This was confirmed with five breeding pairs around John O'Gaunt's and other pairs

actively involved in breeding at seven other sites. A total of 45 young birds and a couple of adults were ringed, mostly from nest boxes, at these locations. A much improved picture over 2012.

**2014** - Reports, particularly from the Washburn and Strid Wood, suggested that this species was doing well and seven singing birds at Norwood Bottom on 23rd April appeared to confirm this view. In May at Denton, 14 young were ringed at two nests and another box at Norwood Bottom produced six juveniles (PRo). In June, adults feeding young were reported in Strid Wood and at John O'Gaunt's Reservoir whilst the watchers at Barden Scale were entertained by a male bird feeding up to four young near the car park. Once birds began to disperse in August, they were seen more frequently outside these areas. A male and two juveniles found their way onto Soil Hill and others were noted in Denholme Clough and at Glovershaw and nearby Pennythorn Plantation, where three birds were briefly feeding.

**2015** - The first sighting was a male at Norwood Bottom on 14th April and throughout the rest of that month numbers increased at the traditional sites in the Washburn and Strid Wood. Four males sang at John O'Gaunt's, three at Storiths and up to ten birds were identified between Norwood Bottom and Swinsty Reservoir on the 27th. Three days later, eight birds were identified in Strid Wood and along the back road to Cavendish Pavilion. Breeding was observed at these locations and at Folly Hall Wood, where one pair raised six young (CoH). Four young were ringed from three nests at Denton Moor, and four nests in the Dob Park Wood/Low Snowden areas produced 12 juveniles (PRo). Birds dispersing were reported at Glovershaw, Harden Moor, Denholme Clough and on Roper Lane, Queensbury. The final record was a male and two females at Ogden Reservoir on 8th September.

**2016** - The first returning bird was reported from Barden on 10th April and three days later birds turned up at Storiths Road, John o'Gaunt's Reservoir, Snowden Moor and Lindley Wood Reservoir. From then reports increased with the greatest number of sightings from Bolton Abbey/Strid Wood although birds were widespread throughout the whole of our area. The final sighting came from Harden Moor on 14th September.

Though several singing males were heard only six reports of breeding were submitted with two failed attempts where nests were found without eggs. Norwood Bottom produced 11 young all of which were ringed. Several, once common, Redstart sites have been lost over the years but birds showing up in new locations means this species keeps a good stronghold around our area in the summer months.

**2017** - Essentially a bird of Wharfedale and the Washburn Valley, and is reported to be doing well in both, with up to 10 birds around Strid Wood the best count. This is mirrored in better breeding successes, as at least 28 young were raised near Thruscross, and at Denton, Low Snowden and Otley.

**2018** - Wharfedale and the Washburn continue to monopolise the records though there were several from Airedale and Baildon Moor, but Strid Wood again had the maximum count of eight birds in May. Breeding again took place in the Barden area, and on Baildon Moor and at Norwood Bottom, Farnley and Thruscross.