

## Country Notes for November 2019

The eagle eyed among you may have noticed, if you have wandered through the Meadows Trust over the last few months, a carrion crow with light grey on its wings. It tends to use the meadows referred to as Hasteds Meadow and Windmill Meadow. It has an equal amount of white on each wing and clearly annoys the other crows, who frequently chase it, causing it to dive into a tree for safety!

At first I thought it might be a cross between a carrion crow and a hooded crow. The hooded crow is a sub-species of the carrion crow and tends to be found in the north west of Britain, where in some places it is the only type of crow to be seen. Hooded crows are half black and half pale grey - and are really rather elegant. However, although crosses do occur between the two crows, the one place that a hooded crow does not have any light grey is on its wings. So that theory goes out of the window!

I checked in *The Birds of the Western Palearctic*, which is the definitive book on the subject and there are surprisingly few other crow species in the area of Europe and North Africa covered by the book. The most likely hope was the pied crow, but that doesn't have any pale grey on its wings either! It would also have been very rare indeed!

The next question is could it be a partial albino? Against that theory is that I believe it would have to have pink eyes. I have not got close enough to check! The most likely explanation therefore is it is simply a carrion crow with some pale markings on its wings!

It was worth trying! If you go to have a look, I wish you luck!

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