

Hi all,

I know this may be a little late to include in your newsletters, but I do have a wee update on the cranes...I didn't give you quite the full story in the newsletter (trying to save space!)

So the full story is that one pair of cranes did have two chicks but one had some sort of growth problem and was much smaller than the other. The adults kept looking after both chicks, and though small it seemed to be feeding okay and was fairly quick on its feet! The larger one fledged at 11 weeks old, but the little one wasn't near ready to fledge despite being fully feathered by that point. We saw the family of four quite regularly for a week or two after the big one fledged, but still the wee one didn't attempt to fly.

We were told by a crane expert that the adults would stay with it until it either flew or died, so when the adults and big chick started taking longer flights away from the reserve, and we didn't see anything of the wee one, we assumed we'd lost it. But the three did keep coming back to the reserve to roost, which is a bit unusual as usually once they're on the wing, they head off into the wider fens. Then last week a family party of four cranes (2 adults and 2 chicks), was seen on grazing marsh and a few days later were seen in flight over the reserve. We wondered whether it could possibly be our family, but decided it would be quite unlikely, given we hadn't seen the chick for so long. However, a few days later, Norman Sills went down and managed to confirm that yes indeed it was our family of four and the wee chick had finally fledged, eight weeks on from the big chick fledging! Hurray!

So two chicks fledged this year, bringing the total number of crane chicks fledged from here to 14!

So, apologies for not giving the full story before, we really were convinced that we'd lost the wee chick!! Once again, our cranes have surprised us!

Cheers,

Katherine