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### Rare wading bird with one leg spotted at Northumberland nature reserve

Story by Daniel Hall • 8mo • 2 min read

A rare bird with just one leg has been spotted at a Northumberland nature reserve.

Gareth Evans, 62, was on a weekly visit to Northumberland Wildlife Trust's Hauxley Nature Reserve from his home in Walker when he spotted a one-legged black-tailed godwit feeding in a lake on Friday (August 18). It is not known if the bird was born with one leg or may have lost it due to injury, but it appears to be flying and feeding without any issues.



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Gareth told ChronicleLive: "Well I sort of had an idea what it was but at first it might have just had its leg tucked under. But after I watched it for a couple of minutes, I realised it only had one leg and it was hopping.

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"I was obviously a bit sad because it was hopping and it only had one leg, but it seemed to be feeding alright and it seemed healthy, so it must be managing, obviously."

Black tailed godwits are rare wading birds which live for around 18 years and are classified as red on the red list for birds and are among hundreds of species which can be spotted at the reserve near Druridge Bay.



A one-legged black-tailed godwit at Hauxley Nature Reserve in Northumberland © Gareth Evans

The birds stop in Northumberland as they move south from their breeding grounds in Iceland to wintering areas in Britain, Ireland, France and Portugal. However, this is the first time that a bird with one leg has made an appearance.

Duncan Hutt, director of conservation at Northumberland Wildlife Trust, said: "The fact that the bird is able to feed and fly without any signs of distress shows just how resilient it is and is no surprise to us as conservationists. It's not just humans that adapt to changes, wildlife across the board is able cope with change - from plants adapting to new environments to birds adapting their breeding climate patterns because of climate change."

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