



TYNESIDE BIRD CLUB

K. G. DURES (Secretary)

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January 1981

Summary

A cold start to the month with winds predominantly from the N.W., snow falling on the 4th and 5th, but with a sudden and rapid thaw on the 8th as a warm front crossed the county.

Winter conditions returned mid month heavy snow falling on the 16th in particular. Generally much milder after the 19th with some very bright and Spring like days towards the end of the month.

The hard mid month weather initiated an interesting Skylark movement, and Thrush immigration was suggested later in the month.

At least six overwintering Chiffchaffs were noted along with the now more expected Blackcap sightings.

The Whittle Dene Smew and the Morpeth Great Grey Shrike were seen by many observers throughout the month, both remaining into February, second individuals of both species being noted elsewhere in the county.

Excellent coverage during the coastal wader count, on the whole coastline Budle Pt - St. Mary's being counted producing some high totals for several species.

Classified List

Red-throated Diver and Diver Sp.

1 - 4 regularly noted at localities between Berwick and Stag Rocks, and in the Seaton Sluice - St. Mary's area. The main concentration was in the area Hadston - Cresswell with at least 50 offshore in this area from about the 21st until the end of the month. (MH/AMB/BB et al).

Black-throated Diver

At least one individual present off Stag Rocks on the 11th and 18th (CB/IK et al). Birds noted close inshore off St. Mary's on the 22nd (DGW) and off Ross Links on the 25th (DRS).

Great Northern Diver

Noted in the harbour area of Holy Island where two on the 11th (DGB) and one on the 25th (BG).

Little Grebe

3 - 4 noted during the month at Whittle Dene, Morpeth, Holywell and Coquet Estuary. 1 - 2 at ten other usual localities, plus less usually two in Berwick harbour on the 8th (AH).

Great Crested Grebe

At Whittle Dene one present from the 10th joined by a second individual from about the 26th. Single birds also noted in Blyth Estuary, Tweed Estuary and off Hauxley. Two were at Hallington on the 25th.

Red-necked Grebe

2 - 5 noted from the 11th on off Ross, Holy Island and Bamburgh (BG/SC/BRS et al).
One N. off St. Mary's on the 12th (KIB).

Slavonian Grebe

Many reports off Stag Rocks and vicinity from the 11th on with as many as 11 thought to be present on the 18th (TBC trip et al). A maximum count off Ross Links of 12 on the 25th, when 1 off Holy Island. (BG et al).

Fulmar

As many as 65 settled on Tynemouth cliffs on the 23rd (DGW).

Gannet

Birds noted N. off St. Mary's and Seaton Sluice on the 10th with a total of 66 seen from the watchtower. 2 N. off Ross on the 25th (BG).

Cormorant

Many sightings of 2 - 6 along the River Tyne as far inland as Hexham throughout the month. A good indication of numbers regularly flying upstream from a series of seven observations off the Tyne bridge, made between around 7.50 and 8.20 am, with between 42 and 97 birds counted each morning. (O.F.) A maximum of 22 noted in the Coquet Estuary, with 1 - 2 getting as far upstream as Felton (LGM/ETN et al).

Shag

On the 11th concentrations noted of 30 off Ross, 100 off Guide Point and 20 off Stag Rocks (BRS).

Heron

1 - 2 noted at 20 widespread localities. 3 - 6 noted at St. Mary's, Coquet Estuary and Heddon-on-the-Wall.

Mute Swan

Maxima of 22 noted at Blyth on the 18th, of 12 at Bothal Pond on the 6th and of 25 at Coquet Estuary on the 1st (HG/AGI/KIB et al). 80 counted in Berwick harbour on the 29th (ETN/JRN).

Bewick Swan

4 adults and 3 immatures with the Alcan Whoopers on the 1st (AMB), and 2 adults on Bothal Pond on the 6th (AGI).

Whooper Swan

The Holywell/Backworth herd numbers dropped from around 160 during the first few days to around 40 by the months end. The largest counts elsewhere were of between 30 - 40 in the Alcan/Ellington area, Holy Island, Northumbrian Loughs and Preswick Carr. 40 flew S.W. over Morpeth Common on the 10th. Parties of between 2 and 10 were noted at scattered localities throughout the month. The blue neck collared bird sightings are producing some interesting information on movements of Whoopers around the County, and will be summarised in a latter bulletin.

Bean Goose

2 were present at Druridge Pool on the 24th (JCD/AMB).

Pink Footed Goose

A flock of 26 near Earsdon on the 3rd (MB) was easily the largest gathering seen. 4 flew over Holywell Pond on the 1st (MSH/WGS), and at least 1 associated with the Whoopers noted at Backworth on the 20th and East Holywell on the 27th. Perhaps the same bird was at St. Mary's on the 31st. (BB/MH).

White Fronted Goose

4 adults noted with a small flock of Grey Lag at Easington near Budle Bay on the 11th (CB).

Grey Lag Goose

At Whittle Dene numbers peaked on the 3rd/4th when around 300 - 350 were present in the area (RT/ME et al) only small numbers being noted there thereafter. Numbers increased at Grindon from around 60 at the beginning of the month up to 180 by the 31st (JSB/AMB et al). About 50 noted in the Earsdon area until the 10th, and the same number W. over Cramlington at nightfall on the 11th (LGM). The largest flock of 'Grey Geese' were of about 200 S.W. at Stocksfield on the 7th (BNR).

Canada Goose

37 flew over Barrington in the direction of Colt Crag on the 25th when 43 were counted at Colt Crag (LGM/JMM/AMB).

Barnacle Goose

Singles 1st - 3rd at Alcan and in Holywell/Earsdon area. On the 2nd 20 were with the Whittle Dene Grey Lags (per BG) and on the 18th, 16 were at Budle Bay (TBC Trip).

Brent Goose

Largest count from Holy Island was of 350 pale bellied birds on the 25th (BG).

Shelduck

About 200 present in Budle Bay throughout the month (BRS et al). 1 - 3 noted at Cresswell, Tynemouth, St. Mary's and Seaton Sluice. 2 were at Whittle Dene on the 31st (JSB/JCD/AMB).

Wigeon

On the 25th the largest gathering noted was of 2000 on the sea off Ross when 1000 at Holy Island (BG). Up to 600 were at Druridge - Cresswell about this time (AMB et al). Numbers fluctuated at the Northumbrian Loughs with a maximum count of 316 at Grindon on the 29th (MLL et al). Up to 150 frequented Whittle Dene and smaller numbers elsewhere.

Gadwall

A female on Gosforth Park on the 2nd (AMB) was only report.

Teal

The maximum count in the Cresswell area was of 380 on the 2nd (LGM) numbers declining thereafter. 150 on Holy Island on the 11th, 200 near Dalton on the 24th, a maximum of 117 at Holywell on the 17th, and 75 at Swinhoe Lakes on the 22nd were other large counts.

Mallard

Maxima of 320 at Holywell on the 21st (CED) and of as many as 1200 at Gosforth Park on the 17th (AMB). Cresswell attracted 100 - 150 all month and around 250 noted at Holy Island and Whittle Dene. Up to 50 regularly noted off St. Mary's Island.

Pintail

A drake at Capheaton on the 3rd (AMB) and a female at Cresswell Pond on the 4th (ME).

Shoveler

Over 40 at Hoselaw on the 2nd (SC) and 6 at Gosforth Park on the 2nd (AMB) were only reports.

Pochard

A large count of 268 from Whittle Dene on the 17th (JSB). Up to 126 were in the Cresswell - Druridge area during the month (AMB et al). Maxima at Holywell of 98 and at Gosforth Park of 110. 10 - 20 noted at Derwent Reservoir, Bakethin and Kielder Water.

Tufted Duck

Numbers at Whittle Dene dramatically increased for a time during the hard weather with about 520 present on the 17th/18th (JSB/BNR), up to 50 were regularly noted at this location. Maxima at Cresswell of 100, at Holywell of 51 and of 60 at Gosforth Park.

Scaup

Singles noted 8th - 25th at Holy Island, Seahouses, Berwick and Amble.

Eider

Largest gathering was of 460 - 500 off Guide Point on the 11th (BRS). A total of 138 were in the Wansbeck estuary area on the 30th (HG/MG).

Long-tailed Duck

Up to 40 noted off Stag Rocks during the month (BRS et al). 1 - 4 noted off Hadston on several dates (MH/AMB).

Common Scoter

50 - 80 noted off Bamburgh during the month. At least 200 gathered in Druridge Bay on several dates.

Velvet Scoter

Singles noted off Seaton Sluice, Hadston and Ross during the month.

Goldeneye

As usual largest gathering in Tweed Estuary where 100+ present on the 8th (AH). A maximum of 47 noted off Briardene during the month and up to 20 in Cullercoats harbour (JDM/ SPR et al). 16 were on Bakethin on the 5th and 42 on Kielderwater on the 22nd (SJP). Up to 40 noted at Whittle Dene and up to 20 at other usual haunts.

Smew

The Redhead at Whittle Dene remained until at least the end of the month being seen by a great number of observers. Another female was present on Bakethin 14th - 26th (SJP), and a drake was just over the border at Hoselaw on the 2nd (SC), two being noted there on the 25th (ESM).

Red-breasted Merganser

Up to 21 were in Berwick harbour during the month (SC/AH). 9 were in Alnmouth Bay on the 24th (ETN/JRW). 1 - 2 noted at Blyth, St. Mary's, Holy Island, Stag Rocks and Druridge Pool. More unusually, a female was on Colt Crag on the 25th (LGM).

Goosander

Many reports of singles and small parties of up to 10 at usual widespread localities. Larger gatherings included from the Tyne counts of 17 at Wylam, 20 at Bywell and 30 at Heddon. Whittle Dene attracted up to 26 on the 21st (RW). 18 were at Greenlee on the 24th, 11 at Hallington on the 25th and 16 at Berwick on the 8th.

Hen Harrier

Only coastal record was of 1 at Budle Bay on the 2nd (SM). 3 'Ringtails' were noted at Plashetts in Kielder on the 9th, 1 - 2 birds being noted in the area until the 14th (SJP). The Harriers were thought to be taking advantage of the voles ousted by the flooding of Kielder Water. Males were noted at Stamfordham on the 8th and at Bellingham on the 15th (BL/MLL). A ringtail was also seen near Bardon Mill on the 16th and 24th (PRW/LGM).

Sparrowhawk

Noted at 17 different localities.

Buzzard

A pale bird was present in the Riding Mill area from at least the 4th until the end of the month (BL et al). One also noted at Lady Kirk on the Tweed on the 24th (per BL).

Kestrel

Probably 85 individuals noted at 70 widely scattered localities.

Merlin

Noted on the coast at St. Mary's, Budle Bay, Holy Island and Tweedmouth. Singles also noted at Shiremoor on the 12th and Holywell on the 31st (BB/MH), and near Scots Gap on the 2nd (BG).

Peregrine

Sightings of one at Budle Bay on the 24th (BB/MH) and another watched hunting Starlings at Grindon Lough on the 11th (ESH).

Water Rail

Singles noted at Gosforth Park, Chevington Burn and Holywell Pond.

Moorhen

60 at Blaydon Pond on 11th (DRH). 25 at Backworth on 19th (JDM) and on the Coquet near Felton on the 24th (JCD/AMB).

Coot

Up to 190 at Gosforth Park, and 100 - 150 noted at Cresswell during the month. Numbers fluctuated at most waters with 90 - 120 being noted at Swallow Pond, Hartburn and the Northumbrian Loughs. A maximum in the Tweed estuary of 34 on the 8th.

Wader Count 18th January

Excellent coverage this month the whole coastline Budle Point - St. Mary's Island being counted: Budle Pt-Seahouses (DRH), Seahouses-Beadnell (JEL/MLL), Beadnell-Howick Burn (DLW), Hawick-Boulmer (IK), Boulmer-Alnmouth (RN), Alnmouth-Amble (ETN/JRN), Amble-Chevington (MH), Chevington-Cresswell (TAC), Cresswell-Newbiggin (MC), Newbiggin-Wansbeck (JR), Wansbeck-Blyth (SWA), Blyth-Seaton Sluice (LJM), St. Mary's (CAB/JPB).

Oystercatcher

A total of 892 noted on the 18th.

Ringed Plover

A total of 237 noted on the 18th. As many as 93 were gathered at Alnmouth on the 24th (ETN/JRN). Up to 33 noted in Blyth Estuary (HG et al) and 33 at Berwick on the 14th (JDL).

Golden Plover

Numbers dropped considerably in the Druridge-Hadston area during the month from a peak estimate of about 2000 on the 1st. Numbers appeared to fluctuate at Whittle Dene with a peak estimate of 1850 on the 25th. Up to 400 regularly noted in the St. Mary's area and a flock of 1000 noted at Hauxley on the 15th. Other flocks of 200 - 500 noted at Stannington, Grindon, Holy Island and New Moor.

Grey Plover

A total of 36 noted on the 18th. A flock of 8 at Cambois on the 29th (HG).

Lapwing

Flocks of 800 - 1000 noted at Whittle Dene, Seghill and Whitley Bay. 250 - 500 noted at Stannington, Grindon, Benton, New Moor and Holywell Dene. A pair were already back in a breeding area in Allendale at 1500 feet by the 25th (per BG).

Knot

A total of 830 noted on the 18th. 500 - 700 noted throughout the month at St. Mary's with as many as 1500 present on the driving range on the 10th (BG).

Sanderling

A total of 123 noted on the 18th. The largest St. Mary's count was of 100 there on the 2nd (MDA) 33 were at Berwick on the 14th (JDL). Numbers at Cullercoats were noted on 20 different days giving an interesting picture of change in numbers associated with the movement of sand after mid month gales. The peak concentration occurred on the 22nd when over 350 were noted (SPR).

Purple Sandpiper

A total of 498 noted on the 18th, including easily the largest concentration of the month noted at St. Mary's of 218.

Dunlin

A total of 1336 noted on the 18th. Up to 280 noted in Blyth Estuary during the month, and about 250 present at Newton on the 24th.

Ruff

3 - 5 birds regularly noted in the St. Mary's area throughout the month (JEF/DGW/et al). In addition 2 were at Backworth Pond on the 15th and 19th (CED).

Jack Snipe

3 at Derwenthaugh on the 5th (AHB) and a single bird in Holy Island harbour on the 11th (BRS).

Snipe

A maximum of about 60 noted at Cresswell Pond on the 13th (LJM) 28 at Derwenthaugh on the 5th (AHB). Up to 10 noted at Coquet Estuary, Chevington and St. Mary's.

Woodcock

Singles noted at Dalton, Bamburgh, Simonburn and Nunnykirk.

Bar-tailed Godwit

A total of only 27 noted on the 18th. 1700 counted on Holy Island on the 8th (JDL).

Curlew

Up to 200 noted on Holy Island and Warren Mill during the month (JDL/NE et al). A maximum of 69 counted at St. Mary's (JDM) and 44 at Hartley on the 9th (DGW).

Redshank

A total of 451 noted on the 18th. 160 noted at Bebside on the 3rd (HG) probably included the up to 100 regularly noted at low tide at Blyth estuary. 150 noted in the Yarrow Slake area on the 29th (ETN/JRN). Up to 100 noted on Holy Island and St. Mary's. 50 were at Sleekburn on the 17th and 80 at Hadston on the 24th (AMB). Singles noted inland at Whittle Dene on the 17th (JSB) and at Kielder Dam on the 25th (AMB).

Turnstone

A total of 779 noted on the 18th. The largest count made at St. Mary's was of 169 on the 2nd (DGW).

Little Gull

An adult noted at Tynemouth on the 6th (DGW) perhaps the same bird at St. Mary's on the 11th (DMT).

Black-headed Gull

A maximum concentration at Cullercoats of 800 on the 27th (SPR). Around 300 noted in Blyth estuary and Cresswell area.

Common Gull

A total of about 1000 near to the tip at Fourstones on the 15th (MLL). A Norwegian ringed bird found still alive at Bamburgh on the 13th (DGB/AAB).

Herring Gull

Largest reported concentration was of about 1000 at Fourstones rubbish tip on the 15th (MLL). A steady N. movement noted off Holy Island all day on the 25th (BG).

Iceland Gull

An adult and second year bird noted at Blyth harbour on the 19th and 29th (BB/MH/HG). An adult was also present in the Tyne estuary on the 19th and 20th (MC/JF/DF).

Glaucous Gull

First winter birds noted on several dates at Seahouses (IK et al), at Birling Carrs on the 24th (ETN/JRN) and at Amble harbour on the 1st (WAK). At least one first winter and one second winter bird in the North Shields - Seaton Sluice area throughout the month. An adult bird was seen on several dates 2nd - 25th (AMB/MCD/RH et al).

Guillemot

1 - 3 birds noted at various coastal localities but fortunately no oiled birds reported.

Little Auk

The nearly entire remains of one bird was found regurgitated as a pellet on a gull roost jetty in Blyth harbour on the 18th (BB/MH).

Stock Dove

An unusually large flock of 22 at Ryal on the 24th (KR) 1 - 2 noted at Jesmond Dene, Wylam, West Moor, Whittle Dene, Mitford and Druridge.

Woodpigeon

Several flocks moving about the county. At least 1000 were at Holywell on the 3rd (MB) with several flocks of 500 noted in this area during the following week. 300 - 500 also noted at Doxford and Seaton Burn.

Barn Owl

Singles noted at Cramlington, Howick and Rennington. 2 - 3 on the Belford-Wooler road on the 2nd (DGB).

Little Owl

Noted near Medburn and Ellington (RT/LJM).

Tawny Owl

Reported from Jesmond Dene and Denton Burn.

Long-eared Owl

One roosting in a wood near Tranwell on the 31st (AH).

Short-eared Owl

Noted at 16 coastal localities most observations referring to 1 - 2 birds, but at least 5 present Hauxley-Cresswell throughout the month. Observations well away from the coast included singles in the Bellasis Bridge and Newcastle Airport areas, and 1 - 2 on several dates hunting over the flooded Kielder Water area.

Kingfisher

One at Jesmond Dene on the 5th (per MPF) was only report.

Green Woodpecker

Noted at Milbourne, Harwood and in two areas of Kielder.

Great Spotted Woodpecker

1 - 2 noted at 12 localities including observation of birds coming to bird tables at Stocksfield, Bedlington and Dalton.

Skylark

A definite hard weather movement indicated 17th - 20th with many flocks noted on the coast during this period including 100 - 200 at Blyth, Seaton Sluice, Cresswell Pond, Chester House, Newton and Budle Bay. Up to 400 noted at Newbiggin and 700 at N. end of Druridge Bay.

Rock Pipit

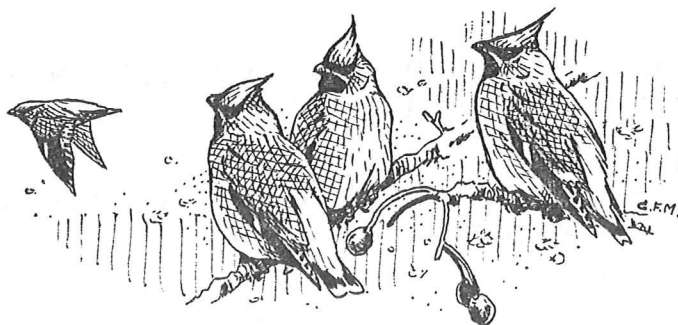
Noted at Cullercoats and Boulmer.

Grey Wagtail

1 - 4 noted at Jesmond Dene, Tynemouth, Holywell, Morpeth, Whittle Dene, Blyth and St. Mary's.

Waxwing

On the 6th 10 were in Tankerville Terrace, Jesmond and a single at Dilston (per BL).



Wren

Small numbers noted in many, mainly coastal areas.

Stonechat

Perhaps up to 5 in total between Druridge Links and Hadston during the month. 2 - 3 in Warkworth/Coquet Estuary area, and a pair noted displaying at Newton Pool on the 25th (WAK).

Fieldfare

Many more reports of small flocks throughout the county than last month. Flocks of around 100 noted during the month at Stagshaw, Halleypike, Newbiggin, Prestwick Carr and Middleton. Larger flocks of 200 - 300 were reported from Horton, Hartington and Widdrington. The large increase in birds suggests possible further immigration having occurred, and birds were noted moving W. in small parties over the A1 between Gosforth and Belford early on the 25th.

Redwing

Not as numerous as Fieldfare but many reports of small flocks of up to 50. Coastal records such as of 35 at Hauxley on the 24th and of small parties W. over A1 between Gosforth and Belford early on the 25th suggest further immigration. The only reports of more than 50 were of 100 with Fieldfares near Horton on the 24th (LJM) and of 100 at Belsay Roost on the 4th, numbers reducing there to only odd birds by the end of the month (NRG).

Mistle Thrush

10 at Hauxley on the 24th (HRS) may have been new arrivals.

Blackcap

A male and female noted on several occasions in a Wylam garden feeding on honeysuckle berries (per BG). A single male was at a fat basket in an East Jesmond garden on the 7th (per MPF), and a female fed on berries along the edge of Churchill playing fields at Whitley Bay on 11th (IC/BW).

Chiffchaff

A surprising number of reports of overwintering birds most being noted in gardens, feeding amongst rose bushes and on the ground. The first was at Westerhope on the 1st (BG), one the following day noted at Bamburgh Castle (SMP), on the 13th birds were noted in Gosforth and Wideopen (JAM/TT), on the 15th and 18th one was in a Jesmond Garden (JPD) and on the 29th one was in a Cullercoats garden (JDM).

Long-tailed Tit

Continuing to be apparently commoner than usual this winter. Parties of up to 11 being noted at Howick Hall, Wallington Hall, Holywell Dene, Wylam, Mitford, Blyth and Budle Bay. A total of 25 - 30 birds in the Allendale area on the 25th (BA), and at least 60 present in a wood near Tranwell on the 31st (AH).

Marsh Tit

1 - 4 noted at Bolam, Mitford, Stocksfield, Morpeth, Wallington, Warkworth and Howick Hall.

Willow Tit

Noted in the Morpeth area at High House Wood and Morpeth Common.

Coal Tit

Reported from usual localities in small numbers. Birds noted feeding on nut bags in Morpeth, Stocksfield and Felton.

Nuthatch

Up to 8 present at Wallington, and 1 - 2 noted at Bolam and close to Apperley Dene cross roads !

Treecreeper

Noted at Holywell, Wallington, Howick Hall, Bywell, Apperley Dene cross roads. Less usually one came into a garden in Kirkhill, Morpeth.

Great Grey Shrike

The Morpeth Common bird was seen by many observers, last being reported present on the 25th. A second individual was at Ancroft (Tweed) on the 10th (per BL).

Jay

Up to 7 together at Wallington, noted also at Gosforth Park and Swinhoe Lakes.

Magpie

Small numbers reported from 30 localities.

Hooded Crow

A single bird noted in the Berwick area on the 14th and 29th (RGW/ETN/JRN).

Starling

On the 17th a pale cream coloured individual was noted amongst a flock of 100 at St. Mary's, and at Blyth a bird seen with a white rump (JDM/MH). About 300 at Hauxley on the 24th may have been recent immigrants (HRS).

Tree Sparrow

The largest flock noted was of 30 at Seaton Delaval on the 31st (MLL).

Chaffinch

The only flocks noted of 50 - 100 were at Roddam, E. Sleekburn, Cresswell, Warkworth and Grindon (AMB). 150 at Heddon on the Wall on 31st (JSB).

Brambling

1 - 10 noted at several widespread localities. Flocks of 50 - 100 were at Holywell Dene and Seaton Delaval. Up to 200 were noted at Bolam and Wallington, and as many as 300 were near Mitford, Warkworth and Hexham.

Greenfinch

Up to 100 noted with other finches at Warkworth and Heddon.

Goldfinch

Up to 12 noted at Hartley, Wallsend, Stocksfield, Whitley Bay, Matfen and Walbottle. Less usually in winter, 2 - 7 noted at three localities in Kielder (SJP).

Siskin

About 20 at Hexham on 10th (MB). Small numbers noted at Morpeth, Stocksfield, Wallington, Bolam and Nunnykirk.

Linnet

The only large flocks noted were 300 at Cresswell on 11th (LGM) and up to 500 on Holy Island by the 25th (JDL).

Twite

A single bird at Budle Bay on 17th (KR). A large flock of 55 noted near Coquet Estuary on the 28th (JEF).

Crossbill

Scarce in Kielder Forest by the end of the month (SJP). Flocks of 35 and 16 noted at Harwood on the 31st (JCD/AMB) and a maximum of 40 noted in Slaley Forest (BL). A single bird was at Lordenshaw on 6th (FC).

Bullfinch

Again well reported with 1 - 6 noted at 14 localities.

Hawfinch

1 - 12 noted on many dates throughout the month at Wallington.

Lapland Bunting

Singles noted at Boulmer on the 24th (DPH) and on Holy Island on 11th (DGB). A flock of 39 were at Bondicarr/Hauxley on the 18th (MH).

Snow Bunting

Ross Links area attracted a maximum mid month of about 70 (ES/WIL/JI et al). 70 - 100 were noted between Hauxley and Chevington 15th - 25th, (HRS/DPH et al). 2 - 3 noted at St. Mary's and Bamburgh. Several were heard calling, during a blizzard, from Clennel St. near Alwinton on the 18th (AH).

Yellowhammer

A very large flock of 120 at Acomb on the 23rd (BL) 60 were near Mitford on the 10th (PRW). 20 - 40 noted at Newton, Knowesgate, E. Sleekburn, Old Monkseaton, Prudhoe and Red Row.

Reed Bunting

The only flocks reported were of 50 at E. Sleekburn on the 17th (AMB) and about 25 at Newton on the 24th (AH).

Corn Bunting

Only record was of a single bird at Red Row on the 28th (RW).

List of Contributors

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Pleas Note that all February records only should be sent to Mike Hodgson,
45 Elmtree Gardens, Whitley Bay, Tyne & Wear. No later than 8.3.81.

Indoor Meetings - Thursday 12th March 1981

Mike Bayldon will talk on "The Edge of the Desert", a lecture and slide show about North Africa. Medical School 7.00 pm prompt.

Overwhelming support was given at the last club meeting to trying a slightly earlier start to our club meetings. Please note that until further notice, meetings will commence at 7.00 pm prompt.

CONSTITUTION OF THE TYNESIDE BIRD CLUB

1. Name

This association shall be called the Tyneside Bird Club.

2. Aims

- a) To promote the interests of ornithology.
- b) To provide members with news of local ornithological interest through the medium of the monthly bulletin, an annual report and other publications to which members will be invited to contribute from their own observations.
- c) To encourage and instruct members in the various aspects of ornithology by means of organised field outings and indoor meetings.
- d) To engage in such scientific work, e.g. census or migration studies as may from time to time be approved by the committee.

3. Membership

- a) Membership shall be open to all who have an active and beneficial interest in ornithology, irrespective of age or ability, provided that the nomination shall be proposed and seconded by paid up Club members and approved by the committee.
- b) An annual subscription will be levied which will cover the membership fee, cost of the bulletins, annual report and incidental expenses. An additional charge will be made for any other publications which the committee may from time to time authorise and the purchase of which will be optional. The subscription shall become due on the 1st of October each year.
- c) Members whose subscription has not been paid up by the end of November for the coming year will cease to receive copies of the bulletin forthwith.
- d) Members whose subscription has not been paid up by the end of March for the current year (i.e. six months after the start of the Club's financial year on the 1st October) will normally forfeit their membership.
- e) Special subscription rates will exist as follows :-
 - 1) A reduced subscription will be charged to Junior Members (18 years or less).
 - 2) A special rate for family membership will exist, this to be less than twice the annual adult subscription and will entitle families to one copy of the bulletin each month and to one copy of the annual report. It will however confer the privileges of membership on each member of the family resident at the same address.

- 3) A rate of subscription based on a sliding scale will exist for those wishing to take up membership at any time other than the beginning of the Club's year. For the purpose of calculation the year will be divided into two-monthly intervals and the appropriate amounts decided upon by the committee. The subscription will never be less than the cost of the annual report and the bulletins to which the member is entitled.
- f) The Club reserves the right to expel any member whose behaviour is held to be irresponsible or detrimental to the interests of the Tyneside Bird Club. Any reported incident of such behaviour will be investigated by the committee. A simple majority decision of the committee shall then suffice to effect the expulsion. The member is to be notified of the date of the committee meeting at which his expulsion is to be discussed and have the right to put his case to that meeting.
- g) Honorary membership shall be available to any person whom the committee shall deem deserving of such an honour.

4. Committee Election

- a) The Annual General Meeting (AGM) for the election of the committee shall be held at the October meeting of the Club each year.
- b) The committee shall consist of nine Club members.
- c) All nominations for the committee, each proposed and seconded by Club members, to be in the hands of the secretary not later than 21 days prior to the AGM.
- d) Should only nine nominations be received, these members will automatically constitute the committee; should less than nine nominations be received those members nominated shall themselves nominate the necessary further members, before the election of officers; should more than nine nominations be received each member present at the AGM will exercise a maximum of nine votes and the committee will then be elected by a simple majority decision.
- e) Postal and proxy votes shall not be admissible.

5. Club Officers

- a) The committee shall elect from their number the following officers: Chairman, Secretary, Treasurer, Recorder, and Field Secretary, and in addition to any duties further authorised by the committee they shall be responsible for the following matters.
 - 1) Chairman: Presiding over all Club and committee meetings at which he is in attendance. Authorised to countersign cheques issued by the Treasurer.
 - 2) Secretary: Subject to direction by the committee to deal with all correspondence affecting the Club and relating to Club matters (with the exception of the responsibilities and duties of the Recorder relating to keeping of records and of the Field Secretary concerning the arrangement of field meetings) and to ensure that an adequate record is kept of such correspondence. To ensure that minutes are taken of all meetings of the committee at which he is in attendance.

To prepare a report on matters of interest and importance during the previous twelve months, to be presented to the Club members at the AGM.

Authorised to countersign cheques issued by the Treasurer.

- 3) Treasurer: To keep proper account of the Club's finances showing sources of revenue, authorised expenditure and balance in hand and to arrange for the independent audit of these accounts. To arrange for payment from Club funds of all accounts authorised by the committee.
To prepare not later than the committee meeting immediately prior to the AGM. and for consideration by the committee a report on the financial position of the Club and the expenditure during the previous twelve months and to present such a report to Club members at the AGM.
An audited copy of the accounts will be available for inspection by any member on request.
- 4) Recorder: Shall be responsible for the prompt preparation of the draft of the monthly bulletin and for correspondence relating to records. He shall have absolute discretion as to what records be published in the monthly bulletins. He ensures that an adequate record is kept of all records submitted. He shall accept the direction of the Records committee as regards the publication of records in the annual report.
- 5) Field Secretary: Shall be responsible for the preparation of a draft programme of field meetings to be approved by the committee and shall be responsible for their organisation.
- b) The committee shall elect two people, who need not be Club committee members, one of whom need not be a Club member, to join the Recorder to form a records committee, whose job is to consider all records for publication in the annual report.
- c) Further officers may be appointed by the committee to perform extra duties e.g. Distribution Officer, Indoor Meetings Secretary.

6. Committee Procedure

- a) Five members shall constitute a quorum and a simple majority decision will then suffice to carry a motion. The Chairman will have a casting vote only.
- b) The committee will normally meet once a month.
- c) Full minutes of the committee meeting will be kept, to be available for inspection on request to any Club member.
- d) Except in a case of ill health, if a committee member misses three consecutive meetings, he shall forfeit his membership of the committee. The remaining committee members shall co-opt a Club member to take his place.
- e) Proposed expenditures other than those stated in 3(b) must be presented to and approved by the committee. An amount in excess of £100 must be approved by a simple majority of members present at any monthly meeting.

- f) Specialists may be invited by the committee to attend committee meetings to offer their expert opinions.

7. Records

- a) Members are expected to notify the Club records committee of all records before submitting them elsewhere.
- b) A record shall only be accepted for publication in the annual report provided that the Records committee accepts it with a majority decision. The Records committee however has the option of consulting other observers before reaching a decision.
- c) The Recorder shall notify in writing to the observer concerned the acceptance or rejection of his/her record(s) where field notes have been scrutinised by the Records committee.

8. Constitutional Amendments

Any proposed amendment to the constitution shall be given to the Secretary two months before the AGM. (This to enable the proposed amendment to be circulated in the bulletin prior to the AGM). It shall have a proposer and seconder, both to be Club members. To be accepted the amendment must be approved by at least 2/3 of those members present at the AGM.

9. Dissolution or Amalgamation

The Tyneside Bird Club shall neither be dissolved, nor amalgamated with, nor subordinated to any other body unless it is so decided by at least 2/3 of club members present at a special meeting and provided that prior notice in writing of any such intention is given to all club members. Should such a majority decision be achieved then after the proper debts of the club have been satisfied the Treasurer shall dispose of the club's assets in such a way as that meeting shall decide.

OCTOBER 1980



TYNESIDE BIRD CLUB

K. G. DURES (Secretary)

T.B.C. 5 Bath Terrace Tynemouth Tyne & Wear. Tel: North Shields 75928

FEBRUARY 1981

SUMMARY

The first three weeks of the month were predominately mild with mainly W - SW wind. During the period 20th - 23rd a sudden change to a severe E - SE airstream produced a cold spell with snow falling inland and heavy seas running offshore.

Birds of prey were again in evidence this month with notable records of Hen Harrier, Buzzard and Golden Eagle. A series of gull observations produced good numbers of Glaucous and Iceland and an adult Mediterranean. A Bittern was found in Kielder on 23rd.

The Great Grey Shrike at Morpeth and Smew at Whittle Dene noted during January remained throughout the month.

Once again good coverage was obtained on the coastal wader count, almost all the coastline between Budle Point and St. Mary's Island being counted.

CLASSIFIED LIST

Red-throated Diver and Diver (Sp.)

A total of 78 S. and 13 N. at Seaton Sluice during the month (SSWT). The largest concentration was between Hadston and Chevington Burn on the 14th when at least 102 were counted (MH). Small numbers were noted off Stag Rocks, Cheswick and St. Mary's Island. Single birds were on Holywell Pond on 24th and Druridge Pool on 26th (CED/DRH).

Black-throated Diver

Single birds present in Druridge Bay on 1st, off Stag Rocks on 8th and on Druridge Pool on 26th (BG/DGB/NE).

Great Northern Diver

Single birds noted at Holy Island and Stag Rocks on 8th (DGB/BA), Beadnell on 21st (JPL) and Ross Links on 25th (DY/SY).

Little Grebe

One - three noted at 12 localities during the month. Two still in Berwick Harbour on 15th and 22nd (MSH/JDL).

Great-Crested Grebe

Two birds were at Whittle Dene all month. Single bird on the sea off Blyth on 9th (HG) and two were in Druridge Bay on 25th (CED). Another was on Holywell Pond on 21st (HG).

Red-necked Grebe

Two were off Stag Rocks on 1st (AMB) with three on 15th (NE). A single bird was at Cresswell on 5th and 25th (WAK/SWA) with it or another on Druridge Pool on 21st (SWA).

Slavonian Grebe

Singles were at Chevington on the 1st, Cresswell on 5th with two at Stag Rocks on 21st (MH/JEL/SWA). Six were between Budle Point and Seahouses on 22nd (DRH).

Fulmar

A total of 108 S. at Seaton Sluice on 22nd and 27th (SSWT). Eleven pairs and 18 singles on Tynemouth Cliffs on 24th (SPR) and 30 at Hartley on 27th (DGW).

Gannet

A total of 10 N. and 13 S. at Seaton Sluice during the month (SSWT). Eleven adults were in the Tyne Estuary on 6th (BA) and 11 N. and 6 S. at Beadnell on 21st (JEL).

Cormorant

The largest concentrations were 50 at Blyth on 13th (HG) and 49 at Amble on 19th (DRH). There were several records of birds well upstream on the River Tyne at Ovingham, Heddon and Newburn with a maximum of 30 at the last locality on 11th (RGW et al). One flew upstream on the Coquet at Felton on 1st (ETN/JRN). One - three birds were noted on Derwent Reservoir and Cresswell and Druridge Ponds.

Bittern

A single bird was in a patch of Juncus at Blakethin Reservoir on 23rd (SJP).

Heron

One - eight birds noted at 15 widespread localities.

Mute Swan

A maximum of 140 at Berwick on 14th (AH). One - seven noted at 17 widespread localities.

Bewick Swan

Two were at Whittle Dene on 1st (WAK), near Capheaton on 15th (BG) and near Woodhorn on 25th (ETN/JRN) when one was at Toft Hill (KIB).

Whooper Swan

During July 1980 a total of 46 birds were marked with a blue, numbered neck collar at Myvatn, Iceland. A summary of sightings in the county to date is as follows:-

1J04	Holy Island	14th Dec 1980	Found Dead
1J18	Holywell	18th Jan 1981	
	Linton	31st Jan 1981	
	Ellington	1st Feb 1981	
	Linton	4th Feb 1981	
	Woodhorn	5th Feb 1981	
	Ellington	8th Feb 1981	
1J28	Holywell	31st Dec 1980	
	Holywell	1st/2nd Feb 1981	
	Backworth	6th & 8th Feb 1981	
	Bradford, Nr. Capheaton	10th to 28th Feb 1981	
1J39	Fenham Flats	6th Dec 1980	

The Holywell/Backworth herd remained fairly stable at 40+ during the month (CED et al) whilst the herd in the Alcan/Ellington area fluctuated between 28 - 46. A bird in this latter party on the 8th was wearing a yellow colour ring and had been marked at Caerlaverock in February 1980 (BG). The annual gathering near Capheaton peaked at 47 birds between 11th - 28th. Parties of between 1 - 13 were noted at 10 other localities.

Pink-footed Goose

Nine near Budle Bay on 1st increased to 35 by 21st (DGB/JPL). At Chevington on the 1st 23 flew in off the sea and 16 were with Whooper Swans at Linton Colliery on 4th (MH/DRD). Single birds were noted at Seaton Sluice on 2nd and Angerton on 25th.

White-fronted Goose

A single bird was at Grindon Lough on 22nd (AJR).

Grey Lag Goose

The largest gathering reported was 1000+ at Bradford Kaims on 15th, no doubt the birds from the Budle Bay area where 450 were noted on 1st (BRS/AMB). Numbers in the Grindon Lough area reached a monthly peak of 254 on 14th (LGM et al.) whilst many reports were received from Whittle Dene where a maximum of 390+ on 7th with smaller numbers thereafter (RW et al). Parties of 1 - 15 were noted at Cresswell, Capheaton, Angerton and Fenwick Shields during the month. Reports of "Grey Geese" involved 12 S. near Hexham on 8th and 50 over Derwent Reservoir on 22nd (AGI/AHB).

Canada Goose

Five at Capheaton on 16th and one on Derwent Reservoir on 22nd were the only records (DRH/AHB).

Barnacle Goose

At Whittle Dene 3 were with Grey Lags on 7th and 9 on 9th (RW) whilst 4 - 5 were with the Grindon Grey Lags on 14th and 21st/22nd (LGM/AJR). A single bird was at Angerton on 15th and 3 there on 25th (MLL/NE).

Brent Goose

The largest count at Holy Island was 200 on 8th with 130 on 25th (DGB/PRW et al).

Shelduck

Budle Bay produced the highest concentration with 204 present on 1st (AMB). A maximum of 38 were on the Coquet Estuary on 18th (DRH et al) whilst 2 - 13 were noted on many dates at Blyth, Cresswell, Chevington, Hauxley and Low Newton. 21 were on Fenham Flats on 27th.

Wigeon

On the Northumbrian Loughs the largest counts were at Grindon Lough with 334 on 12th and 325 on 22nd (MLL/AJR et al). A maximum of 150 were at Whittle Dene on 28th (PWW) and 120 at Derwent Reservoir on 22nd (AHB). Birds in the Cresswell/Druridge area peaked at 260+ on 28th (AMB et al).

Gadwall

A pair were at Blaydon Pond on 1st and 14th (PWD) and a male was at Hinds Shield on 21st (LGM).

Teal

The largest counts were of 100 at Druridge Pool on 7th (AH/MLL) and Warkworth Lane on 25th (CED) and 150 on Holy Island Lough on 22nd (JDL). 70 were at Holywell on 15th and 63 at Grindon on 14th (CED/LGM) whilst gatherings of 2 - 32 were at 7 other localities.

Mallard

The largest counts made were of 125 at Cresswell on 7th (LGM), 250+ at Holywell on 11th (CED) 257 at Rayburn Lake and 180 at Angerton on 15th (JPL/MLL). The only flocks reported on the sea were 60+ at St. Mary's Island on 14th and 30+ in Berwick Harbour on 26th (MSH/AH).

Pintail

A male was on Cresswell Pond on 7th and 10th (AH et al) and a female at Angerton Lake on 15th (MLL), whilst another male flew N. at Seaton Sluice on 22nd (SSWT).

Shoveler

Pairs noted at Grindon Lough, Holywell Pond and Holy Island during the month.

Pochard

Maximum counts involved 95 at Holywell Pond on 1st, 63 in the Cresswell area on 7th and 49 at Grindon Lough on 21st (CED/MLL/LGM et al). Parties of 3 - 39 noted at 11 other localities.

Tufted Duck

Relatively small numbers reported during the month with maxima of 92 on the Northumbrian Loughs on 14th, 80 in the Cresswell area on 7th and 60+ at Angerton and Holywell on 15th (LGM/MLL/CED). The only count at Whittle Dene Reservoirs was 43 on 15th (JSB). More unusually two were in Berwick Harbour on 26th (AH).

Scaup

Two at Spittal on 3rd had increased to six by the 17th (DGB). A pair were in Berwick Harbour on 5th and 14th (AH).

Fider

The largest gatherings were 925 between Budle Point - Beadnell on 21st/22nd (DRH/JPL), 184 in Amble Harbour on 20th with 100+ off the Wansbeck Estuary the next day (DRH/SWA). Smaller numbers reported from six other localities.

Long-tailed Duck

Rather suprisingly the maximum at Stag Rocks was only five on 1st (AMB) although 15 were between Budle Point and Seahouses on 22nd (DRH). Single birds at Chevington on the 1st and 14th and one N. at Seaton Sluice on the 4th were the only other reports (MH/SSWT).

Common Scoter

A flock of about 150 - 200 off Stag Rocks area for most of the month (DGB). 50 were in Druridge Bay on 1st and 8th (BG) and 14 flew S. at Seaton Sluice on 22nd (SSWT).

Velvet Scoter

Two were off Warkworth dunes on 14th and one was at Cullercoats on 20th (JP/SPR).

Goldeneye

The maximum count at Berwick Harbour was 120+ on 15th (AH). On the River Tyne in the Heddon/Newburn area a maximum of 69 were counted on 11th (RGW et al). Other large counts included 46 on Northumbrian Loughs on 14th, 41 at Whittle Dene Reservoirs on 21st (LGM), 37 on the sea off Brierdene on 9th (JPL) and 30+ at Carham on 7th (AMB). Smaller numbers were reported from 18 other localities.

Smew

The 'redhead' at Whittle Dene Reservoirs was present from the 1st until at least the 24th. Another was on Blakethin Reservoir on 3rd (SJP) whilst a male was seen, just over the border, at Hoselaw on 15th (SJH et al).

Red-breasted Merganser

The most unusual record was that of a female or immature with the Goosanders at Whittle Dene on the 8th/9th (BG/RW). Groups of two - eleven were noted at Berwick, Spittal, Stag Rocks, Warkworth, Chevington and Tynemouth.

Goosander

The largest gatherings were 27 at Whittle Dene on 15th (JPL) and 23 on Greenlee Lough on 14th (LGM). In Berwick Harbour a male with a red wing-tag (No. 18) was present from 5th - 15th. This bird was in the same locality twelve months ago, then in immature plumage (AH). There were many reports of small numbers from 15 other localities.

Hen Harrier

A male flew N. over Grindon Lough on 8th (JMA). Single 'ring-tails' were noted at Kielder on 15th (BNR), near Haltwhistle on 21st (LGM), Derwent Reservoir on 22nd (AHB) and at Tower Tye on 27th (BNR).

Sparrowhawk

The large Starling roost at Matfen attracted up to four birds during the month (RW/BG). On the 19th a male was seen plucking a small bird on the lawn of a Gosforth garden ! (GSR). Single birds were noted at 18 different localities.

Buzzard

Single birds were noted at Brunton Dene on 1st (KR/VT/DW) and north of Broomhaugh on 8th (LT).

Golden Eagle

An immature bird was present near Elsdon on 10th (JP/WO).

Kestrel

The species was noted as being present in good numbers in Kielder Forest particularly in the area around the rising Kielder Water. A pair were displaying at Mounces on 27th (SJP). One - three birds were reported from 28 widely scattered localities.

Merlin

Single birds noted at Cresswell on 1st, Thorngrifton and Grindon on 8th/9th (SJH), near Otterburn on 11th (ADM), Yeavering on the 14th (CAB/IPB) and Holywell Pond on 25th (SJH).

Peregrine

A male was in attendance at the Starling roost at Matfen on the 15th (RW).

Red Grouse

Noted at Hunterlee Hill - Raylees Common area on 11th (ADM).

Black Grouse

Sixteen were on Ridley Common on 23rd (IPB) and one was in the Harwood Forest on 16th (DRH).

Partridge

The largest covey was 16 near St. Mary's Island on 13th (DGW).

Water Rail

One was found dead on the Coquet near Warkworth on 25th (per AH).

Moorhen

The largest counts were only 16 at Cresswell on 7th (MLL) and 20 at Wallsend Swallow Pond on 14th (LM).

Coot

The maximum counts were 150+ at Cresswell on 12th (MDA), 130+ at Wallsend Swallow Pond on 26th (CED) and 87 at Angerton on 15th (MLL). 40+ were in Berwick Harbour on 14th/15th (AH/MSH) whilst gatherings of up to 50 were noted at Grindon, Bolam, Caistron, Holywell, Rayburn and Rothley.

Wader count 22nd February

Once again very good coverage was achieved on this count: Budle Point - Seahouse (DRH), Seahouses - Beadnell (JFL), Beadnell - Howick (DW), Howick - Boulmer (IK), Alnmouth - Amble (ETN/JRN), Amble - Chevington (MH), Cresswell - Newbiggin (SPR), Newbiggin - Wansbeck (JR), Wansbeck - Blyth (SWA), Blyth - Seaton Sluice (LJM), St. Mary's Island (CAB/IPB).

Oystercatcher

A total of 1005 noted on coastal wader count on 22nd. Inland, birds noted at Caistron on 7th, Blakethin Reservoir on 13th and Grindon between 8th - 19th probably indicated an early return to some breeding haunts.

Ringed Plover

A total of 149 on the coastal wader count on 22nd. Largest numbers noted on other dates involved 20 at Low Newton on 4th (MDA) and 26 at Berwick on 26th (JDL).

Golden Plover

Largest counts involved 3000 between Amble and Chevington on 22nd (MH), 1000 at St. Mary's Island on 13th (DGW), 700 - 800 at Whittle Dene on 8th (BG) and flocks of 500+ at Budle Bay on 1st (AMB), Wallsend on 14th/15th (PRW) and Lindisfarne on 22nd (JDL). On the 1st at least 28 were on the fells at Haltwhistle and several pairs were back at Allenheads by the 8th (LGM).

Grey Plover

A total of 44 noted on coastal wader count on 22nd. Five were on Cresswell Pond on 4th (JP).

Lapwing

Flocks of 200 - 400 were noted at Monks House, Stannington, Heddon, Walbottle, Wallsend Seaton Sluice and Blyth during the month.

Knot

A total of 1165 noted on coastal wader count on 22nd although the flock in the St. Mary's Island area peaked at 2,500 on 17th (MC).

Sanderling

A total of only 114 noted on coastal wader count on 22nd. A maximum of 90 at St. Mary's Island on 24th (LM), whilst 84 were on Low Newton beach on 4th (MDA). Once again a series of observations at Cullercoats over 25 days of the month gave an indication of fluctuating numbers with a peak count of 189 on 11th when two colour-ringed and six yellow dyed birds were present (SPR/DGW). The yellow-dyed bird first seen on 4th January was still present at Druridge Bay on 8th (BG).

Purple Sandpiper

A total of 382 noted on coastal wader count on 22nd with, once again, the largest concentration of the month of 197. Other large counts included 76 at Stag Rocks on 4th (MDA) and 38 at Seahouses on 1st (AMB).

Dunlin

A total of 1269 noted on coastal wader count on 22nd, and additionally 500 near Holy Island causeway on that date. Up to 350 were noted in Blyth Estuary and the Coquet Estuary during the month (HG et al) and 200 were on Cresswell Pond on 1st (BG).

Ruff

Three at St. Mary's Island on 2nd (DGW) and five at Fenwick Pond on 19th (ME) almost certainly refer to the birds noted in these areas during January.

Jack Snipe

Single birds were noted at Derwenthaugh on 6th - 14th (AHB/PWD) and Haltwhistle on 21st (LGM).

Snipe

Numbers fluctuated at Cresswell during the month with a maximum count of 63 on 13th (AMB et al). At least 35 were at Derwenthaugh on 6th (AHB) and up to ten were present at St. Mary's Island during the month.

Woodcock

Singles were at Arcot Hall on 8th (LGM) and Woodhorn on 11th (AKM).

Bar-tailed Godwit

A total of only 34 noted on coastal wader count on 22nd. Maximum counts during the month involved 1000+ at Budle Bay on 1st (AMB) and 620 near Holy Island causeway (JDL). Away from these areas the only record was 16 at Beadnell on 27th (LM).

Curlew

A total of 154 noted on coastal wader count on 22nd. Large gatherings on other dates included 300 at Guide Point, 200 at Budle Bay and 125 at Monks House on 1st (DGB/AMB), 300 in the Lindisfarne area on 5th (JDL) and 100+ at Cheswick on 15th (BRS).

Redshank

A total of 514 noted on coastal wader count on 22nd. A maximum 100 in Blyth estuary on 3rd (HG) and 35 at Cullercoats on 12th (SPR) but only small numbers recorded elsewhere.

Green Sandpiper

A single bird was flushed near Kirkley Hall on 1st (AHB).

Turnstone

A total of 954 noted on coastal wader count on 22nd which included the largest concentrations for the month.

Mediterranean Gull

An adult was at North Shields Fish Quay on 20th (TIM).

Black-headed Gull

At North Shields Fish Quay 500 were present on 14th and 800 on 25th (MSH). On the 22nd large concentrations included 1500 between Newbiggin - Wansbeck (JR) and 800 at St. Mary's Island (IPB) with 200 - 700 at four other coastal localities.

Common Gull

200 were on ploughed land at Whittle Dene on 13th (JPL).

Herring Gull

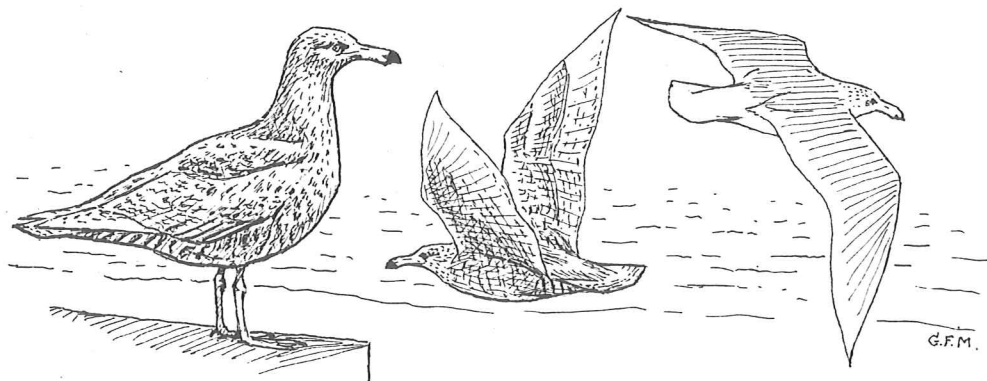
500, mainly adults, were at North Shields Fish Quay on 25th (MSH). An all creamy-white bird showing no black on the primary tips was at Spittal on 17th (DGB).

Iceland Gull

The adult and second year bird at Blyth Harbour first noted in January remained until at least the 22nd. An adult was at North Shields Fish Quay on the 10th (TIM) and more unusually a first year bird was on a school playing field at Whitley Bay on 27th (SY).

Glaucous Gull

North Shields Fish Quay produced records for many days and it seems likely that a minimum of five birds were involved including an adult, a second year and at least three first winter birds, (TIM/RH/MSH et al). At Blyth Harbour two first year birds were noted between 8th - 25th (RH/HG et al). First year birds were also noted at Bamburgh, Seahouses and Amble and a second year bird was at Druridge Pool on 27th (NE et al). An apparent hybrid Herring/Glaucous Gull at Coquet Estuary on 18th was thought to be a second year bird (DRH).



Auks (Sp.)

At Seaton Sluice 32 flew S. on 22nd and 19 S. and one N. on 28th (SSWT).

Guillemot

Only one oiled bird reported during the month.

Woodpigeon

Between Yetholm and Wooler on 15th five flocks of 500 - 600 were noted (BB/MH).

Barn Owl

Single birds noted at Arcot on 3rd (LGM) and Bedlington on 26th (LJM).

Little Owl

One near Woodhømm on 10th and 13th was the only record (AKM).

Tawny Owl

One was calling at Kingswood Burn on 5th (JFL) and two were heard most nights of the month at Matfen (RW).

Short-eared Owl

One - three birds were noted at 14 mainly coastal localities and four were together at Holywell Pond on 20th. Inland records involved single birds at Wingates and Bardon Mill and a pair at Kielder. Two "bird-strikes" at Newcastle Airport on 5th and 12th both involved owls, probably Short-eared (per AH).

Kingfisher

Single birds were at Caistron on 7th (MDA) and Derwenthaugh on 15th and 22nd (BB).

Green Woodpecker

Single birds noted at Bamburgh, Kirkley Hall and Kielder.

Great Spotted Woodpecker

Noted in many areas of mature Scots Pine in Kielder Forest where they have been feeding on pine seed (SJP). Others noted at Belford, Morpeth (drumming), Kirkley Hall, Gosforth Park and Holystone.

Skylark

The largest gathering was 100 in the Druridge area on 7th (AH/MLL) whilst display and singing noted at St. Mary's Island, Horton and Newsham by 13th - 15th (DGW/LJM).

Rock Pipit

Four at Seaton Sluice on 22nd was the only record (LJM).

Grey Wagtail

A single bird noted at Haltwhistle on 21st (LGM).

Dipper

Noted at Threestoneburn, Devil's Water, Allenbanks, Weldon Bridge and the Kielder Forest where three partially completed nests found on 27th.

Robin

A pair were displaying at Horton on 28th (LJM).

Stonechat

At least one pair in the Chevington/Druridge Bay area and others near Hauxley and Annstead. Single birds also noted at Warkworth and Alnmouth.

Blackbird

Large influxes were noted in the Kielder Forest area on the 12th and 24th with males predominating on the first date (SJP).

Fieldfare

The largest flock noted was 800 at Morpeth on 1st (RW) whilst 200 - 400 were reported from Kirkley on 8th, Rothbury on 14th, near Belsay on 15th and near Shaftoe Crag on the 25th. Parties of 150 were at the Wansbeck Estuary on 10th, Horton on 14th - 21st, and Rock on 27th. Smaller groups of 7 - 60 were noted at six widespread localities.

Song Thrush

A bird was singing at midnight on the 1st near the Tyne Tunnel entrance ! (DRH).

Redwing

Parties of 2 - 40 noted at 13 widespread localities with 60 at Felton on 14th and 50 at Heddon and Stocksfield on 11th and 17th easily being the largest gatherings reported.

Mistle Thrush

A leucistic bird was seen at Whitley Bay on 8th (FWD).

Blackcap

Only two birds noted, a female in a Whitley Bay garden all month and a male in a larch plantation near Riding Mill on 27th (per IK/DWN).

Goldcrest

Noted at Gosforth Park, Bolam, and Horton.

Long-tailed Tit

Once again well reported with parties of 2 - 18 noted at Howick Hall, Kingswood Burn, Stocksfield, Gosforth Park, Bolam, Holystone, Bywell and Dipton Woods.

Marsh Tit

One - two noted at Stocksfield, Bolam, Wallington, Holystone, Mitford, Felton, near Capheaton, Rothley and Morpeth.

Willow Tit

One - three noted at Fontburn, Gosforth Park, Bolam, Holywell Dene, and Bywell Bridge. More unusually two were with a mixed party of titmice at Kielder on 1st (SJP).

Coal Tit

One - six noted at Rothley, Wallington, Bolam, Harwood, Holystone, Mitford, Jesmond Dene and Dipton Woods.

Nuthatch

A maximum of 12 were seen at Wallington on 8th and one - three noted at Bolam. Away from these strongholds two were at Allenbanks and one - two at Capheaton on 8th whilst three were at Angerton (WAK/KIB/AH).

Treecreeper

Noted at Morpeth, Howick Hall, Bolam and Felton.

Great Grey Shrike

The bird on Morpeth Common was still present at the end of the month.

Jay

Noted at Throckley, Wallington, near Rothley, Stocksfield, Gosforth Park and Mitford whilst as many as 8 were near Slaley on 17th.

Magpie

Well reported with flocks of 28 at Derwent Reservoir on 7th (AHB), 12 near Grindon on 27th (DWN) and 10 at Haydon Bridge on 12th (MLL) being the largest gatherings. One - nine were noted at 12 other localities.

Hooded Crow

One at Budle Bay and two at New Hartley on the 1st (DGB/AGI) and one at Chevington Burn on 25th (CED).

Raven

An occupied site was found in Central Northumberland on 15th.

Starling

Since early January a roost at Matfen has steadily increased in numbers with probably 200,000 present this month. (RW).

Tree Sparrow

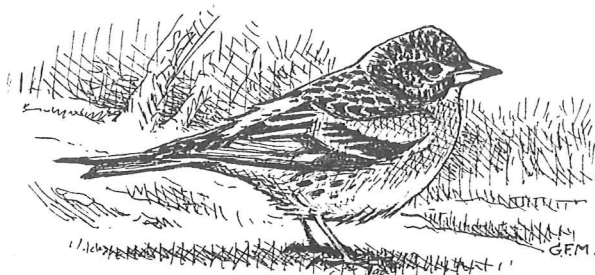
The largest flocks reported were 75+ in Whittle Dene area on 8th (ES/WTL/JI), 40+ at Druridge Bay on 7th (MLL) and 40-50 near Dalton on 22nd (NVC).

Chaffinch

The only flocks reported were 60+ at Rothbury on 14th (ES/WTL/JI) 120 at Fourstones on 19th (MLL) and 100 near Rothley Cross roads on 25th (KIB/WAK).

Brambling

Some large flocks were still present this month with 100 at Wallington on 10th (JP/WO), 100 near Knowsgate on 25th (KIB/WAK) and 200+ feeding on fallen beech mast near Gosforth High Street (JED).



Goldfinch

One at Marden Park on 9th was the only record (JPL).

Siskin

A flock of 15 - 20 at Matfen on 13th had increased to 40 by the 25th (RW). Six and two were noted feeding on nut-bags at Hexham and Stocksfield (AJR/LT). Small numbers noted at three other localities.

Linnet

The largest flock was 200 at Togston Hall between 21st - 28th (DRH) with parties of 30 - 80 noted at Cresswell, Horton and Lindisfarne.

Twite

A single bird was at Holy Island causeway on 5th (JDL) and 25 were in Warkworth dunes on 8th (BA).

Crossbill

In the Harwood Forest 27 were present on 10th and 16 on the 14th (JP/ES et al). Two flew over Plashetts Burn on the 24th (SJP). "A good number" were present in a larch plantation near Riding Mill on the 27th (DWN).

Bullfinch

One - three were noted at five localities.

Hawfinch

A maximum of eight at Wallington during the month (ES/WTL/JI et al).

Lapland Bunting

A single bird was at Stag Rocks on the 9th and at least 38 were on Hauxley open site on 21st (MH).

Snow Bunting

A flock of 29 were still on Ross Back Sands on 1st (DGB). 50 were at Hauxley on 14th (JSB) and 19 at Cresswell Pond on 17th (SJH) and smaller numbers noted at Druridge and St. Mary's Island.

Yellowhammer

Up to 80 were roosting in the reed-beds at Newton Pool during the month (DW). Parties of 10 - 30 were noted at three other localities.

Reed Bunting

A gathering of 25 - 30 near Holy Island causeway on 5th was the largest number noted (JDL).

Corn Bunting

At least 17 in Cresswell dunes on the 10th (CED).

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(with apologies for any omissions)

PLEASE NOTE

All March records should be sent to Alan Heavisides, 8 Leland Place, Morpeth by not later than 8th April 1981

Indoor Meetings - Thursday 9th April 1981

Members night with our own home grown talent. Please remember that the meeting will commence at 7.00 pm prompt.

Birds of Lindisfarne

Birds of Lindisfarne is selling well and at some time in the future an updated version may be needed. In readiness for this Ian Kerr is anxious to have breeding records for the Holy Island, Ross and Budle Bay areas, particularly of the very common species which most visitors to the locations usually ignore. In this exercise breeding records of such normally mundane species as Dunnock, Wren, Linnet etc., would be as valuable as records of twitched Bluethroat, Wryneck and rare warblers. It is really surprising how few records of the very common species have been put down on paper ! Ian will be delighted to receive any such records during the coming season. The best idea is to enter them up on record cards and pass them on to him at any club meeting.

Copies of Birds of Lindisfarne are available at club meetings, price 75p. to members, from our sales officer, Peter West.



TYNESIDE BIRD CLUB

K. G. DURES (Secretary)

T.B.C. 5 Bath Terrace Tynemouth Tyne & Wear. Tel: North Shields 75928

MARCH 1981

SUMMARY

As usual the first of the summer visitors were seen in the County before the month's end including Sandwich Tern, Sand Martin, House Martin, Yellow Wagtail, Wheatear, Ring Ousel and Chiffchaff.

Single individuals of Black Redstart and White Wagtail were passage migrants recorded on the last day of the month.

Most members must now have seen the Whittle Dene Snew and the Morpeth Great Grey Shrike still with us towards the end of the month. A nice gathering of up to 60 Crossbills at a Riding Mill Larch Plantation were also seen by many observers.

Tawny Owl and Kestrels look set for a good breeding season in Kielder due largely to a high population of short tailed voles.

Several Slavonian Grebes were noted in usual localities during the month, but the oddest report was of one happily residing on Killingworth Lake until at least early April.

CLASSIFIED LIST

Red-throated Diver and Diver (Sp)

Totals from Seaton Sluice of 19 S and 10 N and at Hauxley of 14 N and 6 S during the month (SSWT/HRS).

Small numbers noted on the sea at several localities, with larger gatherings of up to 25 off Ross during the first fortnight (IK et al); 15 off Holy Island on the 8th (BG), and about 22 off Chevington on the 15th (MH). Single oiled birds noted at Blyth and Birling Carrs, and a bird was on Cresswell Pond on the 12th (RGW et al).

Black-throated Diver

3 were off Holy Island on the 8th (BG) and a single off Cresswell on the 9th (JP/WO).

Great Northern Diver

One of Ross Links on the 4th (JP/WO) and singles N off Hauxley on the 14th and 19th (HRS).

Little Grebe

1-2 pairs at usual breeding haunts, with 3 pairs present at Capheaton. On estuaries 3 were on the Aln and 10 on the Coquet on the 1st., and 2 near Tweed Dock on the 30th (BG/JDL).

Great Crested Grebe

Birds returned to inland waters during the month, 1-4 being noted at Whittle Dene, Gosforth Park, near Arcot Hall, Seaton Burn, Catcleugh and Bakethin Reservoir. Up to 7 were present at Holywell by 22nd (DRS et al)

Coastal records included singles off Seaton Sluice, Chevington and on Druridge Pool. At Hauxley one on the 15th and three on the 24th. (HRS).

Red-Necked Grebe

A maximum noted off Holy Island of 5 on the 7th (JDL et al), 3-4 noted in the Stag Rocks area during the first half of the month (BRS et al). Singles also noted off Hauxley and Cresswell (HRS/JP/WO). One inland record of a single at Grindon Lough on the 19th (MLL)

Slavonian Grebe

Quite conspicuous during the first fortnight with maximum counts of 14 off Holy Island on the 8th, 12 off Ross on the 4th and up to 4 in Stag Rocks area on the 8th. Later in the month 7 were noted at Druridge on the 29th (ES/JI).

The oddest record of the month was of one definitely present from the 27th, and possible from as early as the 15th on Killingworth Lake. This bird was still present well into April.

Fulmar

About 30/hour N off Hauxley on the 14th (HRS).

Gannet

Small numbers were noted mostly N from various localities during the month, with steady N passage apparent off Holy Island on the 15th (IC/BW) and off Newton on the 29th (BG).

Cormorant

Many reports from the Tyne from as far up stream as Corbridge, 33 being counted at Newburn on the 3rd (RGW et al).

The Coquet estuary area attracted up to 40 during the early part of the month (BG et al) while a maximum of 26 were noted at Blyth. 2 were on Derwent Reservoir on the 7th (AHB) and up to 3 noted at Felton (ETN/JRN). Several pale headed birds suggestive of the continental race were reported.

Shag

63 were counted at the mouth of the Tweed on the 25th (JDL). A single bird was on Cresswell Pond on the 7th (KIB)

Heron

Fewer reports than of late. Largest gathering was of 8 on Druridge Pool on the 5th (PW). Emmigration noted off Holy Island when one high overhead flying E during late afternoon of the 8th (BG).

Mute Swan

Pairs holding territory on usual waters.

Whooper Swan

The herd near Capheaton gathered daily at a farm pool, a maximum of 52 being noted. The whole herd including 1J28, left on the morning of the 21st. (Per PWW).

The Holywell/Backworth herd continued to number around 40 throughout the month (MC/DRS/CED et al). 34 were counted near Woodhorn Pond on the 7th (MH/BB). Small numbers were noted elsewhere.

Pink-footed Goose

Singles noted at Backworth on the 8th (AGI) and near Budle Bay on the 15th (DGB).

Grey Lag Goose

A total of 1700 noted in the Spindlestone/Budle Bay area on the 15th (BG). Between 15th - 31st about 280 were present at Whittle Dene. A maximum of 78 counted at Grindon on the 13th (IPB et al).

Canada Goose

70 noted at Colt Crag on the 1st (IK). Up to 9 seen at Capheaton during the month.

Barnacle Goose

11 were with the Budle Bay Grey Lag on the 15th (DGB). 4 noted at Grindon 5th-13th (IPB/MLL).

Brent Goose

19 still on Holy Island on the 8th (BG)

Shelduck

160 counted in Budle Bay on the 15th (IC/BW). A maximum total of 30 noted between Cresswell and Hauxley on the 29th (PW et al). In usual breeding areas up to 10 pairs noted in Coquet estuary, 5 pairs Aln estuary, 4 pairs Newton and a pair in Blyth estuary. 16 were gathered on rocks near Boulmer on the 12th (ETN/JRN). 2 were noted inland at Prestwick Carr on the 11th and at Bakethin on the 20th (BDG/SJP) while 3 were at Ryal Pond on the 31st (RW).

Wigeon

A peak count of 294 at Grindon on the 19th (MLL). 100-30 at Druridge throughout the month. (SWA et al) At least 200 on Derwent Reservoir on the 7th (AHB) A maximum count of 35 at Whittle Dene on the 8th. Smaller numbers at other usual haunts.

Gadwall

Single drakes noted near Boulmer on the 12th and at Gosforth Park on the 28th (ETN/JPN/BB).

Teal

Numbers fluctuated at Gosforth Park peaking at about 200 on the 21st (DRS et al). 50 maximum at Holywell on the 15th (CED). 25-30 noted at Druridge and Backworth.

Mallard

250 at Holywell Pond on the 1st (CED) was the only large concentration noted.

Pintail

A single drake on Druridge Pond on the 4th and three drakes and two ducks on the 25th (JEF). Two pairs reported from Radcliffe (BG) and Hauxley (HRS) on the 22nd were presumably the same birds.

Shoveler

Up to 17 on the 29th was a maximum for Gosforth Park (DRS/ES et al). Up to 6 were present at Holywell and Grindon, and 2-4 noted at Backworth Blyth, Holy Island and Capheaton.

Pochard

Fluctuating numbers at Holywell and Gosforth with peak counts of respectively 70 (on 5th) and 34 (on 2nd). A flock of 63 was on Kelder water on the 6th (SJP). Small numbers noted on other usual waters.

Tufted Duck

Maximum of 75 at Holywell on the 15th and of 82 at Gosforth on the 21st. (CED/DRS). 86 counted at Capheaton on the 31st (RW) and a maximum of 40 at Whittle Dene on the 29th (RWC).

Scaup

A single bird in Berwick harbour on the 19th (JDL).

Eider

Only large gatherings noted was of 77 at Seaton Sluice on the 27th (KIB).

Long tailed Duck

1 - 4 regularly noted off Ross, Stag Rocks, Seahouses, Newton and Druridge.

Common Scoter

150 off Ross on the 4th (IK) and 40 off Hauxley on the 24th (HRS)

Velvet Scoter

9 off Hauxley on the 18th (HRS).

Goldeneye

Small numbers noted at usual widespread localities. 30-50 noted at Capheaton, Heddon, North Seaton, Whittle Dene, Holywell, Berwick and off Whitley Bay.

Smew

The Whittle Dene bird was seen on many dates until at least the 29th. Another red-head was at Bakethin on the 4th (SJP).

Red-breasted Merganser

Only concentration was of 19 between Amble and Alnmouth on the 22nd (ETN/IRN). 2-6 at Blyth, Seaton Sluice, Druridge Bay and Fenham. A female was on Cresswell Pond on the 7th (KIB).

Goosander

Easily the largest concentration was of 30 at Whittle Dene on the 8th (BNR) with 12 being still present there on the 28th (DRS). Small numbers noted in breeding territories on the Tyne and Coquet. The wingtagged drake was still present in Berwick harbour on the 19th (JDL)

Hen Harrier

A male seen hunting at Kirkheaton on the 21st and 24th (RW).

Sparrowhawk

Noted at 21 localities including Newcastle R.V.I., perched on a Dalton bird table, and feeding off a Lapwing kill at Holywell.

Kestrel

Noted from about 40 localities, up to 6 being regularly noted along the 'Spine Road'. A good breeding season looks likely at Kielder where at least nine pairs were present in traditional sites by mid-month (SJP).

Merlin

Noted on the coast at Holy Island, Ross and Druridge. Inland singles noted over a clear felled area of Kielder on the 9th (SJP)., and at Catcleugh on the 22nd (ES et al).

Water Rail

2 were at Hauxley on the 14th (HRS).

Moorhen

Largest counts were of 31 on the Wansbeck at North Seaton on the 9th (ESM) and of 17 on Holy Island Lough on the 15th (IC/BW).

Coot

Numbers at Gosforth Park decreased from 115 on the 1st to 34 by the 21st (DRS), 40-60 noted at Cresswell, Hartburn, Grindon and Wallsend Swallow. 15 were on Coquet estuary on the 1st. (BG)

Wader count 22nd March

The following stretches were covered: Budle Pt - Seahouses (DRH), Beadnell - Seahouses (MLI), Howick - Boulmer (IK), Boulmer - Alnmouth (RN), Alnmouth - Amble (ETN/JRN), Cresswell - Newbiggin (MC), Blyth - Seaton Sluice.

Oystercatcher

A total of 267 noted in the coastal wader count of 22nd. About 700 roosted at Black Law, Ross on the 4th (IK). Several pairs noted in breeding areas by mid-month.

Ringed Plover

Only 36 noted during coastal wader count of 22nd. A maximum count from Blyth estuary of 27 on the 5th and at Berwick of 18 on the 19th (BB/JDL).

Golden Plover

Numbers increased at Berwick Hill from 220 on the 14th to 700 by the 29th (AHB). Flocks of 120-300 noted during the month at Dilston, Seghill, St. Marys, Backworth and Chevington. 500 were still at Boulmer on the 1st (BG). 1-2 pairs noted towards the end of the month at Elsdon and Muggleswick Common. (JSB).

Grey Plover

Of only 44 noted on the wader count of the 22nd., 37 between Howick and Boulmer was a record count for that stretch. Up to 7 frequented Blyth estuary.

Lapwing

Flocks on the move during the month the largest noted being of 500 at Boulmer and Amble on the 1st and Seghill on the 8th. Small parties coasted N during the 8th off Budle Pt. totalling several hundred birds. (BRS).

Knot

49 in St. Marys area were the only birds noted during the wader count of the 22nd. As many as 400 were noted at Hartley on the 9th and 250 at Tynemouth on the 11th (JPD/EML/DGW). A maximum of 150 noted at St. Marys on the 18th (IPB).

Sanderling

Of 141 noted on the 22nd wader count, 128 were in the St. Marys area. Elsewhere 110 were at Holy Island on the 8th (BG), 34 at Chevington on the 15th (MH) and 63 at Berwick on the 19th (JDL).

Purple Sandpiper

220 were between Beadnell and Budle Pt. on the 22nd. A large gathering of 230 were at St. Marys on 4th (DGW) with 40-50 being noted at Hartley on the 9th (JPD/EML), and at Newton on the 29th (BG).

Dunlin

370 were noted on the 22nd wader count. Between 1st - 6th, 200-250 were at St. Marys, Boulmer and Blyth. 500 in total were on flooded fields Hauxley - Chevington on the 1st (BG).

Ruff

2-5 regularly seen at Backworth throughout the month (JDM/MSH et al). 2 were on Whitley Bay Links on the 7th (DY/SY) and 1 at Newton on the 29th (BG/IK)

Snipe

At least 20 on Hillhead Pond, Dalton on the 22nd (RT). Small numbers noted elsewhere, several heard 'drumming'.

Woodcock

1-2 noted at Dalton, Muggleswick Common, Holystone, Seaton Burn and Jesmond Dene during the last week of the month. Coastal records of singles at Marden Park on the 27th and at Tynemouth on 31st (JDM/MB)

Black-tailed Godwit

An early migrant was on a pool close to West Moor on the 28th (KIB)

Bar-tailed Godwit

About 1,000 noted roosting on Black Law, Lindisfarne on 4th and 8th. (BG/IK).

Curlew

Up to 120 noted in the Lindisfarne area during the first week (JDL et al). About 40 noted at Holywell, Hartley and Boulmer. Concentrations inland included 78 at Grindon on 13th and up to 196 at Holystone on the 27th (IPB). Small numbers noted back in breeding areas, several singing and displaying.

Redshank

339 noted during the 22nd coastal wader count. About 500 were scattered among the many flooded fields between Hauxley and Chevington on the 1st. (BG). 170 noted from Holy Island causeway on the 5th (JDL). Up to 122 counted in Blyth estuary during the month (BB et al). 20-60 at Cullercoats, Cresswell and St. Marys. Inland records included a maximum of 36 at Backworth, and singles at Sweethope, Prestwick Carr and Whittle Dene. 5 were at Grindon on 13th (IPB).

Common Sandpiper

An early report of 2 at Stag Rocks on 28th (Sla).

Turnstone

1,058 noted during the 22nd coastal wader count, a large total considering the incomplete coverage. Away from the counted stretches 100 were noted on Holy Island on the 8th (BG)., and as many as 430 at Berwick on the 30th (JDL).

Great Skua

A single report 1N off Seaton Sluice harrying kittiwakes on the 3rd (SSWT).

Mediterranean Gull

An adult in summer plumage was noted in Blyth harbour on the 7th. (RH).

Black-headed Gull

A maximum concentration of about 1,000 at Prestwick Carr on the 4th (BDG). 250-350 noted at Blyth, Whittle Dene and Grindon. 700 noted at North Shields on 22nd (MSH). At breeding sites, 7-800 were at Capheaton and 5-600 at Ryal Pond by the 31st (RW).

Common Gull

Flocks of 150-300 noted during the month at Belsay, Grindon and Prestwick Carr.

Lesser Black-headed Gull

Noted at Holy Island on the 8th, when 2N and on the 15th 3N (BG). 2N at Cresswell on 19th (SWA) and 1 at Hauxley on 22nd (HRS). A few N at Newton on 29th (BG).

Iceland Gull

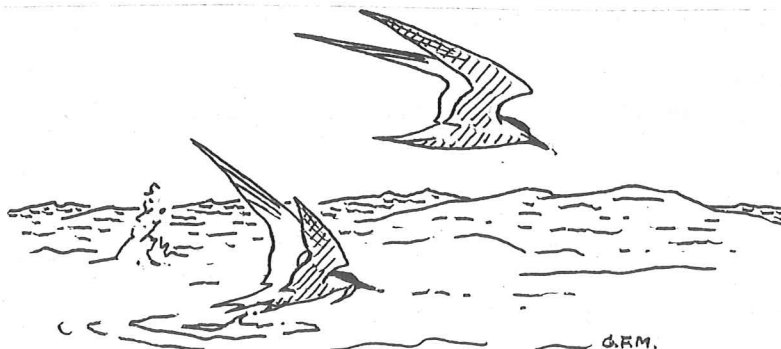
Reports suggest a first year bird present at North Shields until at least the 8th (RH et al). Blyth harbour attracted a second year and an adult or near adult bird 1st-8th (RH/MH/ME). An adult was noted off Seaton Sluice on 31st (JP/WO)

Glaucous Gull

At least one possibly two immatures at North Shields during first week (MSH/ES et al). First winter birds noted at Amble, Blyth and off Seaton Sluice during the month. Immatures also noted at Alnmouth, Holy Island and Bamburgh. An adult N off Seaton Sluice on 29th (SSWT).

Sandwich Tern

The first noted off Hauxley on 18th (HRS). No more seen until 28th-31st when several individuals reported along the coast, and 10 noted at Seaton Sluice and Stag Rocks.



Guillemot

Live oiled birds noted at Cresswell and St. Marys. A total of 15 corpses on Fynemouth, Whitley Bay and Blyth beaches on 6th (GFM) Very few of these birds were oiled however.

Little Auk

1S of Seaton Sluice on the 1st (SSWT). An oiled corpse was found on Whitley Bay beach and an unoled fresh corpse on Blyth beach on 6th (GFM)

Woodpigeon

A flock of 200 at Stocksfield on 15th (BNR). A pair noted sitting on eggs at Whitley Bay by the end of the month.

Barn Owl

Birds seen at Cramlington and Eachwick. A bird was found to be sitting on three eggs at Kielder as early as the 21st (SJP).

Little Owl

Noted only at Woodhorn.

Tawny Owl

Noted at Gosforth Park, Horton and Cramlington. In Kielder an exceptionally good start to the breeding season on two counts:

- (1) Early laying - 12 clutches found by 25th March (mean date for the 1st eggs laid for the last two years was 11th April).
- (2) Large clutch sizes. Out of 12 clutches, 7 were of 4 eggs. In the previous two years, only one clutch of 4 eggs was found in 29 clutches.

It is anticipated that many more clutches may be found, undoubtedly a result of a high short-tailed vole population and the mild winter. (SJP).



Short Eared Owl

Fewer reports, 1-2 being noted at Holywell, Tyne Tunnel approach road, Hauxley, Druridge and Lindisfarne. At Kielder 3 noted hunting over newly planted area and 2 displaying. (SJP).

Kingfisher

One at Gosforth Park on 28th (BB) was only report.

Green Woodpecker

Noted at Prestwick Carr, Hartburn and Blackhall Mill.

Great Spotted Woodpecker

Noted at eight woodland localities. One bird seen several times in a garden in Morpeth (AS).

Skylark

Small flocks noted moving around the country throughout the month. Flocks of 50-120 noted on several dates at Cressell, Holy Island, Radcliffe, Bamburgh, Prestwick Carr and Whittle Dene.

Sand Martin

Earliest reported sighting was of one at Wylam on the 25th (RW). No more reports until 28th when 2-3 at Gosforth and Bamburgh and 8 over Seaton Burn.

House Martin

An early report of 2 over Killingworth late 30th and 31st. (JAL/DIJ).

Meadow Pipit

Small flocks inland towards months end, with many flocks noted moving up the North Tyne at Kielder on 21st (SJP et al).

Rock Pipit

11 counted between Beadnell and Seahouses on 21st (MLL). 2 at North Shields fish quay on 4th (MSH)

Yellow Wagtail

Singles noted at Hadston (PW) and Hauxley (HRS) on the 29th.

Grey Wagtail

Noted at usual riverine localities.

Pied Wagtail

Some small flocks still around, easily the largest reported was of 60 W over Shankhouse on 31st (LJM).

White Wagtail

One was at Hauxley on 28th (HRS).

Robin

Light passage noted at the coast at Tynemouth on 1st (MC) at Holy Island on 8th (BG) and at Hauxley on 14th (HRS).

A partially leucistic bird was in a Stocksfield garden 28th-30th (BNR)

Black Redstart

A single bird was seen at Hartley on 31st (JP/WO/JEF)

Stonechat

Pairs were noted at Hauxley and Druridge Links. Singles seen at Hartley and Coquet estuary, and up to 3 noted in the vicinity of Alnmouth and Embleton.

Wheatear

A total of 3 were as far inland as Wark Forest by the 4th (DPH), and the first coastal bird was noted at Druridge the following day (PW). No more reports until the 22nd when one at Earsdon. (AMW). Many more sightings from 27th including inland reports from Grindon and Housesteads.

Ring Ousel

2 were at Muggleswick Common by the 28th (JSB)

Blackbird

Coastal passage most apparent at Hauxley where 15-30 noted on seven dates 8th-28th (HRS). About 50 were on Holy Island on the 8th, several seen arriving from the east (BG). A large influx occurred at Kielder during the night of the 16th (SJP).

Fieldfare

Several flocks noted on the move. 50-120 noted at Holystone, Billsmoor, Holy Island, Horton and Blackhall Mill. About 400 were near Cambo on 16th (LJM) and a large gathering of about 2,000 near Grindon on 28th (PWW).

Song Thrush

About 50 were on Holy Island on the 8th, a few noted arriving low over the sea from the E. (BG). A large influx was noted at Kielder during the night of the 16th (SJP).

Redwing

Small flocks noted at many localities during the month. About 200 were on Holy Island on the 8th (JDL/BG) and at Stocksfield on 22nd (BNR). Birds were heard calling from Tynemouth (MC) and Westerhope (BG) as they flew after dusk on 24th and 25th.

Mistle Thrush

On Holy Island on the 8th about 10 were in the lonnens, and 55-60 flew S over the car park (BG/JDL). The remains of presumably an emigrant, were found on Tynemouth Sands on 6th (GFM).

Blackcap

One male on a bird feeder in a Whitley Bay garden on 8th (DRH).

Chiffchaff

At Morden Park 1 on the 1st, 2 on the 8th and 1 on 27th (JDM). Birds were heard singing at Prudhoe on 7th (MLL) and at Corbridge on 30th (MR). Migrants on the coast 28th-29th with 1-2 noted at Hauxley, Seahouses, Lemmington Hall and Tynemouth (HRS/JMA/MC).

Goldcrest

Up to 10 were at Hauxley on 21st, with smaller numbers being noted at Tynemouth, Whitley Bay and Embleton during the month. 20-24 noted on Holy Island on 28th (SM)

Long-tailed Tit

2-4 noted at Riding Mill, Bolam and near Dalton. About 12 were at Holystone burn on 26th (IPB).

Marsh Tit

Noted at Riding Mill, Bolam and Felton.

Willow Tit

Noted at Riding Mill and Kirkley Hall.

Nuthatch

Noted at Bolam, Hexham, Little Harle, Close House - Heddon, Dipton and near Mitford church.

Treecreeper

1-2 noted at 7 usual localities.

Great Grey Shrike

The Morpeth bird was seen again on the 29th (IK).

Jay

1-3 noted near Hexham, Dalton, Melton Park, Gosforth Park and Bolam.

Magpie

Several flocks of up to 6, but an especially large flock was of 29 on 10th at Blackhall Mill (EC).

Rook

A leucistic individual was noted on W outskirts of Riding Mill on 16th and 25th (KIB).

Carrion Crow

A gathering of 69 noted at Prestwick Carr on the 4th. (BDG).

Hooded Crow

2 were in the Druridge-Chevington area 14th-15th. (JP/KR/PWD).

Starling

Still about 250,000 at the Matfen roost at the months end., (RW). About 1,200 in the Red Row area on 15th (IC/BW). 500 with fieldfares near Cambo on 16th (LJM).

Chaffinch

A mixed finch flock at Prestwick Carr on 11th probably contained about 180 Chaffinch (BDG). Over 100 at Eshott on 7th (MSH). Flocks of 30-80 at Blackhall Mill, Bolam and Otterburn.

Brambling

Many reports of 1-6 from widespread localities. About 50 were in beech trees in Gosforth High Street on 2nd (NJC). A flock of about 200 at Capheaton on 21st (JSB).

Greenfinch

About 70 with Chaffinches at Prestwick Carr on 11th (BDG). Over 100 at North Seaton on 9th (ESM).

Goldfinch

20 were on Newton Links on 29th (BG). 2-7 noted at Stocksfield, Holywell Riding Mill and Hauxley.

Siskin.

Many reports from the Riding Mill area with a maximum count of 100 there, with Crossbills on 24th (RW/JPD/EML et al). 12-30 also reported from Stocksfield, Chopwell woods, Matfen and Dipton.

Linnet

70 at Boulmer on 8th (IK).

Twite

2 in Stag Rocks area on 14th (BRS).

Redpoll

Only report was of 5 at Riding Mill on 29th (ES/JI).

Crossbill

The larch plantation at W end of Riding Mill was well watched between 9th-31st., numbers varied considerably but 40 were noted on the 9th and 60 on 31st with usually smaller numbers between these dates (DP/RW/KIB et al). 15 were noted at Stocksfield on 28th (JSB). Small numbers also noted at Harwood and Dipton.

Bullfinch

2-6 noted in Swallowship Hill area, Riding Mill, Close House, Jesmond Dene, Morpeth, Holywell Dene and Felton.

Hawfinch

3 were at Wallington on 1st (IK) and 4 at Jesmond Dene on 28th (MPF).

Snow Bunting

A flock of 80 at Radcliffe on 1st., and a maximum of 9 noted on Holy Island on 15th (BG). 1-2 also noted at St. Marys, Bamburgh and Chevington.

Yellowhammer

A large flock of 150 feeding on spilt grain at Blackhall Mill 16th-22nd (EC).

Corn Bunting

Up to 5 noted in Chevington - Druridge area during the month (BB/WAK et al).

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NATIONAL WILDFOWL COUNTS

Any outstanding returns should be sent to me as soon as possible please.
Geoff Macfarlane, 31 Wreay Walk, Cramlington, Northumberland, NE23 6LJ.

Indoor Meeting - Thursday 14th May, 1981

David Woodfall talks to us on "Sand dune ecology".
7.00 p.m. prompt in the Medical School.

B.T.O. NIGHTJAR SURVEY 1981

The Club is to participate in the B.T.O.'s survey of Nightjar during this summer and as usual with such projects a considerable amount of help will be needed from members if it is to be a success.

Very little is known about the Nightjar in Northumberland; its numbers tend to fluctuate from year to year but it has undoubtedly disappeared from many of its ancient haunts as part of a general decrease affecting much of the country over at least the last half century. Examination of the distribution map for the species in "The Atlas of Breeding Birds in Britain and Ireland" shows, however, that it occurs in several places considerably further north than Northumberland. It also nests regularly in moorland areas and young forestry plantations and there is no shortage of these habitats in the county although no concerted effort has ever been made to ascertain the numbers of Nightjars which may be present. In the past breeding has been confirmed at Allenheads, Chillingham, Craggside (Rothbury), Dipton wood, Felton Park, Ford, Harbottle, Hulme Park (Alnwick), Kielder Forest, Kyloe Woods and Slaley. Birds have also been seen during the breeding season or heard "churring" at Blagdon Hall, Breamish Valley, Colt Crag, Fenwick, Fenton (Nr. Wooler), Gosforth Park, Jesmond Dene, Northumberland Park (North Shields) and Plessey Woods.

This list of localities is ample evidence that the bird is potentially very widespread in the area and can occupy a wide range of habitats. Bolam, in his "Birds of Northumberland and the Eastern Borders" said it was most common in the upland glens and about the fringes of moors and moorland woods; it was also fairly numerous in (Hulme) Park, Alnwick and at Chillingham - both areas worthy of a close look this year. Young forestry plantations have already been referred to but the sites of felled woodlands, scrubby open ground amongst heather, gorse, or young trees (Longhorsley Moor on the A697 has always appeared to be potentially suitable ground and the bracken and gorse clad slopes in the Breamish Valley could be promising), or open woodlands have all provided past breeding habitats in the North East. Commons, sand-dunes, shingle and industrial tips have also been used in other areas. Even a relatively short travel in the area will take one to sites which appear to offer potentially suitable breeding habitat or to places where birds have occurred in the past; the 1981 survey is therefore one which is open to virtually all members of the Club.

Nightjar's are crepuscular and nocturnal, feeding on moths and other large insects and night visits are usually required to locate them. Their churring song is unmistakable even to those hearing it for the first time and can be heard from the birds' arrival in late May until early August; it is also far carrying and may be heard up to 2km. away on a calm night, so that visits to suitable localities can often quickly establish presence. The churring song is well described as " a sustained, vibrant, churring trill, like an excessively rapid but slightly muffled tapping, continuing for occasionally as much as 5 minutes on end without variation except for a rythmical rise and fall, "(Popular Handbook)"; it cannot be confused with the reeling of the Grasshopper Warbler. In this area singing will probably not begin before 11.00 p.m. and warm, calm evenings are best.

Any members - or small groups of members - wishing to take part in the project and visit specific sites or cover larger areas should contact me to obtain the necessary record cards, as soon as possible please; negative records are also required. The project will also present a unique opportunity for collecting information on owls, another group of birds where records on distribution tend to be very incomplete and spasmodic.

Geoff Macfarlane
31 Wreay Walk,
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TYNESIDE BIRD CLUB

K. G. DURES (Secretary)

T.B.C. 5 Bath Terrace Tynemouth Tyne & Wear. Tel: North Shields 75928

APRIL, 1981

SUMMARY

A very variable month of weather including several fine and warm days as well as periods of cold and wet conditions. The heavy snow arriving unexpectedly on the 23rd., some remaining until around the 28th., must have caused several early nesting species problems.

The conditions were never very favourable for coastal migrant watchers, but most summer visitors made an appearance around mid month, including an early swift on the 13th. Several White Wagtails, two Water Pipits and a Black Redstart were amongst the commoner migrants located.

A male Marsh Harrier and an immature Golden Eagle were the most interesting raptor observations. The Killingworth Slavonian Grebe, now in breeding plumage, afforded many observers excellent views. More information on this year's very large population of Kielder Tawny Owls was received.

Unprecedented numbers of Fieldfares moved through the county during the month, most leaving during the severe weather of the last week.

CLASSIFIED LIST

Red-throated Diver/Diver(Sp)

30 were gathered in Druridge Bay on the 7th (DRH) and 5 off Budle Pt. on the 17th (BRS). A total of 31 were noted off Seaton Sluice during the month (SSWT) and 25N off Hauxley on the 17th (HRS).

Black-throated Diver

5 were off Holy Island Heugh on the 5th (BRS), and one noted in the harbour on the 19th (MB/DH). A single recorded off Seaton Sluice on the 20th (SSWT).

Little Grebe

Maxima of 10 at Warkworth Land Pond, 8 at Swallow Pond, 6 on Capheaton, and 5 at Backworth during the month. 1-4 noted at five other usual localities.

Great Crested Grebe

1-2 noted off Seaton Sluice during the month. Druridge Pool attracted 1 on the 7th increasing to a maximum of 5 later in the month. (DRH et al). At Holywell 3 pairs were present on the 4th but appeared to decrease to 1 pair by the end of the month (CED et al), 5 noted at Colt Crag on 22nd (BE/ME). A pair noted resting at Langley Dam, and 1-2 noted at Whittle Dene, Gosforth Park, Seaton Burn, Arcot Hall and Hoselaw.

Red-necked Grebe

Two were noted off Holy Island on the 5th (JDL) and off Budle Pt. on the 17th (BRS). One well inland at Grindon seen on several dates, 2nd - 20th (LGM/JMM et al).

Slavonian Grebe

The bird noted at Killingworth late last month was present until at least early May then being in full summer plumage. In more usual localities 5 were off Holy Island on the 5th., singles off Cresswell on the 5th (DRH) and off Seaton Sluice on the 17th. (BRS). and 2 off Budle Pt on the 17th (BRS).

Fulmar

Several noted in usual localities of Cullercoats and Holy Island. A Pair were noted prospecting crags as far inland as the Simonsides on 12th (BG).

Manx Shearwater

A total of 8N, 6S between 12th-26th off Seaton Sluice (SSWT).

Gannet

Light offshore passage noted on several dates, mostly off Seaton Sluice where 109N in one hour on the 19th and 235N on the 20th.

Cormorant

Singles on inland waters at Capheaton on the 15th and at Seaton Burn on 16th.

Heron

1-4 noted at 11 usual localities. Any records of breeding birds would be appreciated as an ongoing national census of Herons is continuing. A summary of the breeding status of the species is given in the annual report. Early records suggest that the late snowfall may have led to some nestling mortality.

Mute Swan

Birds noted sitting on nests at Jesmond Dene and Swallow Pond. The birds at Swallow were not sitting later in the month so it is probable that the eggs have again been taken.

Whooper Swan

9 were at Holywell on 2nd but none thereafter (CED et al). Single at Grindon on 3rd (MLL).

Pink-footed Goose

A single with Grey Lag at Outchester near Belford on 5th. (DRH).

White-fronted Goose

A single with Grey Lag at Outchester on 5th (DRH).

Grey Lag Goose

800 were at Outchester on 5th (DRH). A maximum of 62 at Grindon on 12th (LGH et al). Flocks of 40SW over Sewing Shields on 3rd and of 20W over Stocksfield on 8th. (BNR). Up to 4 in Cresswell area during the month.

Canada Goose

12 at Sweethope on 2nd (MLL) and 4 at Derwent Reservoir on 4th (PRW), 10 were on Colt Crag on 22nd including one sitting on a nest (BE/ME). 1-2 were in Druridge/Cresswell area all month, and 2 were on the Tyne near Blaydon on 10th (BNR). A single in Coquet Estuary on 28th (DRH).

Barnacle Goose.

5W over Stocksfield on 3rd (BNR). Two ringed birds at Cresswell Pond on 12th (AMB et al).

Shelduck

Cresswell attracted up to 19 by the 10th (LGH/JMM) et al). Pairs noted at Bradford, Backworth, Fenwick (Belford), Druridge Pool, Warkworth Lane Pond and Ellington Pond. A colour ringed bird was at Lesbury on 13th (MSH).

Wigeon

100 were at Druridge Pool on 6th with smaller numbers thereafter (SWA et al). A maximum of 70 at Grindon on 2nd (MLL et al). 4 pairs were present at the Northumberland breeding site late in the month.

Gadwall

A pair on Hemscott Hill farm pond on 22nd (SJH).

Teal

Maxima during the first half of the month of 80 at Druridge, 150 at Gosforth, 60 at Grindon and 40 on Holy Island. 2-3 pairs at Threestone Burn with smaller numbers noted elsewhere.

Mallard

An early brood of 12 at Holywell on 2nd (CED). Nests found at New Hartley and Cramlington. 20-30 at Grindon and Druridge Pool.

Pintail

Pairs N off Seaton Sluice on 19th and on Druridge Pool on 8th (SSWT/SWA). A single female on Seaton Burn on 16th (DB).

Garganey

A pair were on Arcot Ponds, Cramlington on 18th (LJM).

Shoveler

Maxima of 6 at Backworth and 5 at Grindon during the month (JDM/MLL) 1-4 at Gosforth, Druridge, Holy Island, Brenkley, Arcot Pond and Seaton Burn.

Pochard

8 at Arcot on 1st., 5 still being present on 30th (LJM) about 12 at Gosforth Park on 18th and 10 at Holywell also on 18th (ES/JI).

Tufted Duck

About 50 were still at Holywell on 9th (CED) and at Capheaton on 29th (RW). 59 counted on Northumbrian Loughs on 12th (LGM). About 20 noted at Backworth, Morden Park, Whittle Dene, Arcot Hall and Cresswell.

Scaup

6N off Seaton Sluice on 25th (SSWT).

Eider

Small numbers, up to 13, still present in Seaton Sluice - Cullercoats area until end of the month (SPR et al).

Long-tailed Duck

A single bird was present off Holy Island Causeway on several dates 6th-23rd (LM et al).

Common Scoter

About 220 counted off Holy Island on 26th (JDL). A total of 51 mostly N off Seaton Sluice 5th-25th (SSWT).

Velvet Scoter

A total of 7 off Seaton Sluice 5th-25th (SSWT). 2 off Druridge on 7th (DRH).

Goldeneye

35 still on Northumbrian Loughs on 12th (LGM). 34 at Whittle Dene on 11th (RNS). 12 ducks on Capheaton on 15th (RW). Up to 20 on the Tyne at Heddon during the month (BNR et al).

Red-breasted Merganser

A flock of 9 in Druridge Bay on 7th (DRH) with 5 at Creswell on 25th (LGH).
Up to 3 at Holy Island and off Seaton Sluice. A single female was at Hoselaw on 28th (AH).

Goosander

As noted in previous springs a large gathering of mostly drakes at Hoselaw with 110 present on the 28th (AH). A few records of singles and pairs from usual riverine localities.

Marsh Harrier

An adult male watched for about 45 minutes at Swallow Pond before flying off NE on 16th (ME).

Hen Harrier

A ringtail at Knowsegate on 25th (Per AMB)

Sparrowhawk

Noted at 17 localities. Of 10 sites checked so far in SE of the county 9 showed signs of occupation (AH).

Golden Eagle

An immature bird seen soaring near Elsdon on 4th (BNR).

Kestrel

Reported from 22 localities. A very large clutch of 7 eggs found near Alnwick on 20th (Per AH).

Merlin

1-2 noted on the coast at Druridge, Hauxley and Holy Island.

Black Grouse

A male and a female noted in Threestone Burn area.

Red Legged Partridge

1 on a wall at Walwick on 10th (BNR).

Water Rail

Singles at Hauxley on 3rd and 29th (HRS). One seen and heard at Holywell on 21st (SJH).

Moorhen

A pair had young at Eshott by 29th (MSH).

Coot

35-40 noted at Capheaton, several on nests by end of month (RW et al). Up to 60 present at Swallow Pond many with nests which were mainly washed out by end of month (ES/JI et al). A maximum of 47 counted at Grindon on 2nd (MLL).



Oystercatcher

106 were between Seahouses and Beadnell on 14th (MLL). Numbers decreased rapidly at St. Mary's from 80 present on the 1st (BB/MH et al). 35 were at Cresswell Pond on 3rd (BB/MH). Small numbers noted in breeding areas from mid month.

Little Ringed Plover

A single bird noted at Backworth on 23rd (WAK).

Ringed Plover

157 counted off Holy Island Causeway on 26th (JDL). 19 were between Boulmer and Alnmouth on 19th (RN)., and up to 8 noted in Blyth estuary (HG/MG et al). 8 were at Backworth on 20th (JPL).

Golden Plover

Many flocks, most now showing 'northern' breeding plumage still present and moving through during the month. The largest flock reported was at Backworth where 600 on the 3rd reduced gradually to about 60 by the months end. 500 were at Berwick Hill on the 12th reducing to 150 by the 18th. Flocks of 300-400 noted at Longhoughton, Druridge and Whittle Dene with several other flocks of less than 100 being reported.

Grey Plover

Only reports were of singles on Holy Island on 26th and between Boulmer and Alnmouth on 19th (JDL/RN).

Lapwing

Well established in breeding areas.

Sanderling

68 were at Berwick on 2nd reducing to 27 by the 28th (HDL). 48 were counted at St. Marys on 1st and 20 still at Cullercoats on 14th (MC/SPR). At Hauxley 56 present on 17th with 21-27 remaining in the vicinity until later in the month. Several colour ringed and dyed birds were reported. (HRS et al).

Curlew Sandpiper A single bird was at Cresswell on 10th (RN).

Purple Sandpiper

153 were counted between Seahouses and Beadnell on the 14th (MLL). At least 57 at Hauxley on 13th (ETN/JRN). Numbers fluctuated at Cullercoats during the month with a maximum of 33 there on 15th (SPR). 12 at Berwick on the 2nd (JDL) and 2-3 at St. Marys and Coquet Estuary.

Dunlin

48 were counted between Boulmer and Alnmouth on 19th (RN), and 30 at Blyth Estuary on the 18th (HG/MG) with small numbers elsewhere on the coast. 8 were at Backworth 16th-18th (ES/JI).

Ruff

Up to 5 noted at Backworth on many dates throughout the month, three males coming into summer plumage and 'lekking' recorded on the 1st (CED/MSH et al). 2 males were on Holy Island Lough on 26th (JDL).

Jack Snipe

Singles reported from Holy Island on 8th (KIB), Holywell Pond on 23rd (SJH) and Backworth on 28th-29th (ES/JI).

Snipe

30 were at Druridge Pool on 10th (RN). 8-10 at Backworth and Seghill with odd birds elsewhere.

Woodcock

Singles noted at Gosforth Park, Carey Burn and Simonside.

Black-tailed Godwit

A single bird at Backworth on 14th (JEF).

Bar-tailed Godwit

Still 200-300 on Holy Island on 6th (JPL) but only 1 noted there at dates thereafter.

Whimbrel

Singles noted at Hemscott Hill farm on 15th and 22nd (SJH) and at Holywell on 29th (MH). At Hauxley 1 on the 4th and 3 on the 18th (HRS).

Curlew

Well established in breeding areas. 27 on Holy Island on 5th (JDL) and 30 at Cresswell on 25th (WAK).

Redshank

Small flocks still at several localities along the coast until at least mid month with 40-70 noted at Blyth, Druridge Pool, Boulmer, Seahouses and St. Marys. Small numbers noted in breeding areas.

Greenshank

Singles noted at Cresswell on the 12th (BG) and on the River Irthing on 18th (LGM). 5 on Fenham Flats on the 23rd (LM)

Common Sandpiper

Singles noted on the coast at Cresswell Pond on 15th, Seahouses on 17th and Marden Park on 30th. 1-2 noted at 6 inland localities 17th - 29th.

Turnstone

Easily the largest gatherings were at Berwick where 266 on the 2nd increased to 475 by the 8th (JDL). 195 were between Seahouses and Beadnell on 14th and 47 Boulmer-Alnmouth on the 19th (MLL/RN). 50 were at Cresswell on the 10th (RN). Small numbers noted at Blyth, Amble and Cullercoats.

Arctic Skua

Singles N off Seaton Sluice on 20th and 25th (SSWT).

Great Skua

1S and 2N off Seaton Sluice on 26th (SSWT).

Little Gull

Single adults at Seaton Sluice 6th and 13th (SSWT), at Backworth 14th and 18th (JDM/MB et al), and at Holywell on 8th (JEF).

Common Gull

500 were gathered on the old airfield at Bockenfield on 10th (ETN/JRN).

Lesser Black-backed Gull

120 adults were at the Northumberland moorland colony on 20th (LGM). 15 were at Calder on 17th (AH), and 2-6 noted at Grindon, Swallow Pool, Gosforth Park and Backworth.

Iceland Gull

An adult bird seen at Seaton Sluice 5th - 7th and again on 10th was probably the bird seen at Holywell on 8th (SSWT/KIB/SJH). The near adult bird remained at Blyth harbour until at least the 8th and a different adult S off Blyth on the 4th (RH). A second year bird was at North Shields on 4th (RH).

Glaucous Gull

1-2 first year birds were present at North Shields 4th-8th, a first year bird at Blyth on the 4th was noted to have one injured right foot as did one of the North Shields birds suggesting this was the same bird (RH). At Seaton Sluice second year birds noted on 5th and 23rd and an adult on 25th (SSWT). Birds were also seen at Amble on 12th, Holy Island 11th and Annstead Beach on 17th (BB/AMB/MB et al).

Sandwich Tern

Small numbers noted off Seaton Sluice, Holy Island and Berwick during the month.

Commic Tern

Singles S off Seaton Sluice on 12th and at Hauxley on 17th (SSWT/HRS).

Auk (Sp)

A heavy N movement noted off Hauxley on 18th (HRS).

Stock Dove

Noted at Hedgley, Lilburn., Roddam, Armstrong Park, Jesmond Dene and Berwick Hill.

Cuckoo

Singles near Haltwhistle on 20th and at Hadston on 25th (LGM).

Barn Owl

Singles noted at Woolsington, Cramlington and Stocksfield.

Little Owl

One near Bamburgh on 18th (BRS) was only report.

Tawny Owl

Noted at 8 localities, including Jesmond Dene where as many as 6 thought to be present between Heaton Park and Haddricks Mill (ES). At Kielder 43 clutches had so far been located including 3 relays. The severe snow conditions 23rd-27th caused much brood deflation with the adults turning more to bird prey. The early broods had fledged by the end of the month (SJP).

Long-eared Owl

One at Bamburgh on 18th (BRS).

Short-eared Owl

Singles noted at Holy Island, Hauxley, Holywell, New Hartley, Whitfield Moor and Ridley Common. 3 were present at Threestoneburn on 17th but only 1 remained on 19th (AMB).

Swift

An early record on one over Bedlington on 13th (JR).

Green Woodpecker

1-2 noted at Prestwick Carr, Warren Mill and Dipton Wood.

Great Spotted Woodpecker

1-2 noted at Gosforth Park, Stocksfield, Nunnkirk, Heddon and Simonburn.

Sand Martin

12 at Derwent Reservoir on 4th (PRW) with small numbers noted thereafter on the coast and in breeding areas.

Swallow

First noted on the 12th when 2 at Arcot Hall (RNC) and 1 at Chollerford (LGM). Sightings of small numbers from widespread localities from the 13th on.

House Martin

No reports until 12th when one seen being chased by a Sparrowhawk at Druridge (AMB). 10 were at Lesbury on the 13th (MSH). Numbers increased with over 30 at Holywell by the 22nd (CED).

Tree Pipit

An early report of one singing at Stocksfield on 1st (BNR). 2 were at Colt Crag on the 22nd (SJH). Unusually one was present in a Morpeth garden feeding on upturned earth on 25th (AH).

Meadow Pipit

Flocks of 43 at Ilderton and 20 at Calder on the 12th (AMB). On the 17th a steady trickle N at Bamburgh and numerous in the Carey Burn area as they moved through the valley (BRS/MSH). About 120 were present during the hard weather on the 25th at Stocksfield cricket field (BNR). A flock of 25 on Holy Island on 26th (JDL).

Water Pipit

Singles reported from Holy Island on 6th (JPC) and Hauxley on 17th (HRS).

Rock Pipit

18 counted between Seahouses and Beadnell. Noted also at Berwick and Holy Island.

Yellow Wagtail

Single at Holywell on 13th and up to 17 between Cresswell Pond and Druridge Pool on the 15th (SJH). 1-4 at Backworth 14th-25th and 1 at Arcot Ponds on 28th (ME/LJM et al).

Grey Wagtail

A single coastal record of 1 at Hauxley on 12th (HRS).

White Wagtail

A conspicuous influx from the 10th when singles at Seaton Sluice and Old Hartley (MH). Between 15th-26th, 1-2 present at Cresswell Pond, Hemscott Hill Pond, Backworth, Holywell and Holy Island.

Dipper

Many birds now nesting, a pair on 4 eggs in the Lilburn Burn on the 18th (AMB).

Wren

Appear to be reasonably plentiful in many areas.

Dunnoek

6 at Hauxley on 5th (HRS).

Black Redstart

A single at Hauxley on 5th (HRS).

Redstart

A single at Dipton on the 10th (DP) and in a Monkseaton garden on 12th (JPL/FJHL). Singles on the coast on the 25th at Whitley Bay, Hauxley and Druridge.

Whinchat

Only report was of 1 at Holywell Pond on 17th (TLC)

Stonechat

Only reports were of single females at Holywell Pond 10th and 18th (CED et al) and at Budle Pt. on 17th (BRS).

Wheatear

Many more reports of 1-5 in coasted localities from the 10th and conspicuous inland breeding areas from the 17th.

Ring Ousel

Single males were on the coast at Tynemouth on 7th (MC), Holy Island on 12th (WAK), Bamburgh on 19th (BRS) and Hauxley on 26th (HRS). A pair was in breeding territory in Allendale by 9th, and a single bird was in a field with Fieldfare at Dipton Foot on 26th (DP).

Blackbird

Passage noted at Hauxley on 3rd-4th with a total of 31 ringed (HRS).

Fieldfare

Exceptionally heavy inland passage was noted throughout the country during the month. Flocks of up to 400 were reported from widespread localities during the first half of the month. The largest flocks of about 2000 were recorded 11th-26th near Nine Banks, Wark on Tweed, Simonside, Reaveley, Shawdon Hill, Kirkheaton and Arcot. Many more flocks of 100-1000 moved around the county during the hard weather 23rd-27th with a definite E movement apparent over Stocksfield and Morpeth on the 25th and 26th. Many small flocks were still present at the month's end.

Redwing

Surprisingly few were associated with the Fieldfare flocks, the largest count being of only 41 at Calder on the 12th (AMB). Flocks of 10-30 were noted at Bradford Kaims, Heaton, Morpeth and Reaveley.

Grasshopper Warbler

The first 'reeling' bird noted at Earsdon churchyard on 14th (JEF). Between 18th-20th 2 were at Hauxley and 1 at Bamburgh (HRS/BRS). Singles between 23rd-30th at Morpeth, East Holywell, New Hartley, Close House and Hauxley.

Whitethroat

Only report was of 1 at Holywell Pond on 21st (SJH).

Blackcap

Presumably a wintering female was at a Corbridge bird table on 1st (DWN). In Jesmond Dene one singing on 9th and 5 males present by the 18th (MFP). Singles noted at Holywell from 17th, and Wallington Hall on 19th (TLC/SJH et al). Two pairs were at Riding Mill on 18th (KIB)

Chiffchaff

Only coastal records were of 2 at Hauxley on 4th (HRS), and at Holy Island on 5th (JDL), and 1 at Marden Park on 8th (JDM). About 10 were near Haltwhistle on the 2nd (JDM). 1-3 noted at 15 inland localities by month's end.

Willow Warbler

The first record of one singing at Swallow Pond on 9th (MPF), was followed by sightings the following day at Holywell, Earsdon and Hauxley (5 ringed). Many more inland reports plus a few coastal from the 12th onwards.

Goldcrest

Light coastal passage on the 5th when 15 at Hauxley and a few on Holy Island (HRS/JPL et al). Over 40 were present at Hauxley on 10th with odd birds elsewhere on the coast during the month.

Pied Flycatcher

No reports from main breeding areas but a single males at Carey Burn on 17th and in Lilburn Burn on 18th (MSH/AMB).

Long-tailed Tit

1-2 noted at Riding Mill, Stocksfield, Wylam., Bywell and Close House.

Marsh Tit

6 were at Guyzance Mill on 19th (LJM).

Willow Tit

A single bird reported at Dipton Woods on 18th (PRW).

Nuthatch

3 pairs noted at Bolam and a single at Close House, Heddon. (RW/JSB).

Treecreeper

2 in the Lilburn Burn (AMB).

Jay

Up to 15 present at Gosforth Park, noted also at Eshott, Birsley Wood and Heddon Common.

Hooded Crow

One N over the sea at Seaton Sluice on 29th (KIB).

Starling

The huge starling roost at Matfen was still present on 7th and 8th but only a few local birds were apparent on the 9th (RW).

Tree Sparrow

About 30 at Seaton Deleval on the 3rd was largest flock reported (MLL). Up to 15 noted at Holywell during the month.

Chaffinch

About 60 at Eshott on 26th was only flock reported (MSH/WGS).

Brambling

Between 4th-18th, 1-5 at Jesmond Dene, Hauxley, Bamburgh and Seaton Deleval. At least 6 with Chaffinches at Colt Crag on 22nd (SJH).

Goldfinch

A flock of 12 at Stocksfield on 1st (BNR). 1-2 noted at 8 other localities.

Siskin

Coastal records of 3 ringed at Hauxley 16th-22nd and 1 at Marden Park on 25th (HRS/JDM). Up to 6 noted at Hexham, Dipton Woods, Ninebanks, Harbottle Crag, Stocksfield, Riding Mill and Carey Burn.

Linnet

A flock of 30 was on Holy Island on 7th (JPL), and during the hard weather on 25th, 200 were at Stocksfield (BNR). Small numbers coasted N at Bamburgh on 17th (BRS).

Redpoll

About 9 at Hauxley on 18th (HRS) and a single at Threestoneburn 11th & 18th.

Crossbill

6 were at Debdon on 14th (AMB). Two pairs at Dipton Wood on 17th and Harbottle Craggs on 20th (RJ), one pair at Lewis Burn on 9th (SJP) and singles at Riding Mill and Kielder Forest. (KIB/SJP)

Bullfinch

1-2 noted at Threestone Burn, Jesmond Dene, Holywell and Horton.

Hawfinch

At least 4 were in Jesmond Dene during the month (MPF).

Corn Bunting

4 singing at Druridge on 5th (WAK) and pairs noted at Horton on 25th and Blyth cemetery on 18th (LJW/HG).

Fulmar Enquiry

Although the Nightjar is the subject of the Clubs/BTO breeding survey this summer the Committee feel that it would be useful to try to assess the number of breeding Fulmars in the county. As many Club Members as possible are asked to check possible and confirmed breeding sites and any locality, particularly inland which Fulmars might colonise.

Eggs are usually laid during May and June and the incubation lasts about 53 days. The young are at the nest site for about 7 weeks so the breeding season is a long one with the last young leaving in early September

Confirmed breeding can be difficult to prove because of the inaccessibility of some sites and large numbers of non-breeding birds often visit breeding sites. A number of counts at sites therefore would be particularly interesting.

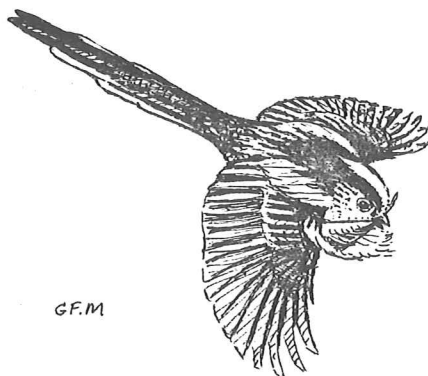
Record Forms are available from Mr. M. Hodgeson, 45 Elm Tree Gardens, Whitley Bay. Tel 520511.

All May records to Alan Heavisesdes, 8 Leland Place, Kirkhill, Morpeth, NE61 2AN
Voous order and by 8th June at the latest please. SAE for supply of record cards.

List of Contributors

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T. Templer
R. Walton
R.G. Waugh
P.R. Weighill
B. Williams
Bamburgh Ringing Station
Hauxley " "
Seaton Sluice Watch Tower



G.F.M.

A RIVERSIDE WALK

Newburn lies approximately 5 miles west of Newcastle on the banks of the river Tyne. From Newburn a riverside path can be followed upstream to the village of Wylam, a walk of approximately 3 miles. This walk, during any season of the year can be rewarding to the birdwatcher. Gulls are always present with Black-headed Gulls in the majority along with common, and also the odd Herring, great Black back and Lesser black back.

During the winter months this stretch of river nearly always, unless the Tyne Rowing Club are practising, contains a party of Goldeneye, Cormorants and several Goosanders. I have seen as many as 70 Goldeneye present and often as many as 15 Cormorants. This year on February 11th I counted 30 Cormorants present and have seen them during every month of the year.

Between February and March 1978 a Great Crested Grebe was on the river and little Grebes are quite often seen. Tufted Duck are sometimes present during the winter months, although I saw a pair on the river below Heddon On The Wall on May 5th, 1979. Mallard may also be seen, often with their broods after nesting. This species nests regularly in a partly-swamped deciduous wood not far from the riverside path, below Heddon On The Wall. This wood, incidentally, is private.

One or two Mute Swans may turn up on the river at any time of the year and the Heron is a regular visitor. I have observed it, either on the course of the river or nearby, during every month of the year. On January 17th, 1978 I saw 10 birds gathered in a field a few hundred yards from the river side path. A favourite haunt of this bird is the wood where the Mallard nest referred to above.

While walking the path a Kestrel or Sparrowhawk may sometimes be seen and Partridge are often flushed from sides of the path. Moorhens are frequently seen at a spot known locally as "Sandy Bay" and during the summer months a colony of Sand Martins nest in the sandy banks of the river here.

During the winter months several Redshank may often be seen along the river banks and during the summer months Common Sandpipers are present and breeding. Over the last few years I have observed one or two Oyster Catchers present in the area. Lapwings are sometimes seen on the exposed river-bed at low-tide and during hard weather I have seen Woodcock and Snipe. On August 3rd, 1978 I saw a Dunlin looking for food at the side of the river not far from Newburn.

If one is lucky, as I have been fortunate to have been several times, one may catch a glimpse of a Kingfisher speeding up or down river.

Also during the walk most of the commoner species may be seen such as Carrion Crow, Magpie, Collared Dove, Yellowhammer, Meadow Pipit, Skylark, Pied Wagtail, Grey Wagtail (not so often), Warblers, Tits, Tree Sparrows, Finchers etc.

During October to November 1978 I was lucky enough to see Stonechats on a part of the riverside where there were a good few gorse bushes near to Newburn. I have also seen Wheatears and Whinchats (Whinchats nest nearby) in this area. This area, which provided good nesting for Linnets, is now, unhappily, being landscaped and will eventually be turned into some sort of Park and recreational area. Hence, all the gorse is gone. When the Project is finished will it be more or less beneficial to Wildlife?

Another recent attraction of the stretch of river is a Grey Seal which is quite often reported.

The walk mentioned is a pleasant and often rewarding one, although the river Tyne can be a little 'smelly' at times and during bad weather stout boots or wellingtons are advised. At either end of the walk there are host to provide refreshment in hot weather and children are generally catered for. Other walks, by way of public footpaths, are also available in the area and can be equally rewarding.

R.E. Waugh

B.T.O. NIGHTJAR SURVEY 1981

Although an encouraging response has been received from people wishing to take part in the Nightjar Survey more help is certainly required if satisfactory coverage is to be achieved. Members have volunteered to visit the Breamish Valley, Coquetdale, The Border Forests, Harwood and the Simonsides, Hexhamshire and the South West, Cheviot Valleys, the Kyle Hills, the Rothbury and Thrunton areas, Redesdale and the Tweed Valley but they are all large areas and some are remote; the Border Forests are huge and this is one of the areas we expect the bird to be discovered but unless more visitors can be recruited, potentially many may be overlooked.

If you are unable to commit yourself to taking part in the field work it would be helpful if any encounters with local county people - gamekeepers, farmers, policemen etc - who frequently are out at night, could be turned to good advantage by quizzing them about churring birds in their neighbourhood; the call is so unmistakable any birds resident are likely to have been heard if near human habitation.

Record cards, offers of assistance, can be obtained from me.

Geoff Macfarlane
31 Wreay Walk
Cramlington
Northumberland
NE23 6LJ.

TYNESIDE BIRD CLUB
ACCOUNTS FOR YEAR ENDED 30TH SEPTEMBER, 1980

INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT

	£	£	£
<u>INCOME</u>			
Members Subscriptions (267 members at 30.9.80)		1,063.75	
Donations		18.57	
Sales - Birds in Northumbria 1979 - to NHS	412.50		
- Birds in Northumbria 1978 & prior years	424.30		
- Birds of Lindisfarne	263.00		
- Other publications & prints (£52.50 -£17.75)	34.75		
- Badges and Keys	10.10	1,144.65	
Bank Interest		15.79	2,242.76

EXPENDITURE

Subscriptions (BTO, RSPB, BB)		20.50	
Printing Record Cards		97.35	
Field Trips (Expenditure £267.40 Income £253.40)		14.00	
"21st" Dinner (" £153.40 " £147.00)		6.40	
Indoor Meetings		100.00	
Monthly Bulletin		349.80	
Survey Expenses/Sparrowhawk Report		60.78	
Officers Expenses		65.13	
Birds in Northumbria 1979 - Printer	1,285.00		
less Surplus copies for sale inc. in stock at cost price	432.00	853.00	
Birds of Lindisfarne (Printing, Artist, Advertising)		439.00	
Miscellaneous		51.68	2,057.64

SURPLUS FOR YEAR
185.12
=====

BALANCE SHEET AS AT 30TH SEPTEMBER 1980

ACCUMULATED FUND

Balance as at 1st October 1979		1,234.84
Surplus per Income and Expenditure Account		185.12
		1,419.96
		=====

Represented By:-

ASSETS

Stocks - Birds in Northumbria, etc. (at cost)		839.63
Debtors - (N.H.S. - Birds in Northumbria 1979)		412.50
Cash - Deposit Account	93.23	
- Current Account	1,950.35	
- In Hand	102.25	2,145.83
		3,397.96

Less LIABILITIES

Creditors - Birds in Northumbria 1979 - Printer	1,285.00	
- Birds of Lindisfarne - Printer, Advertising	411.00	
- Subscriptions for 1980/81 prepaid	282.00	1,978.00
		1,419.96
		=====

HONORARY AUDITOR'S REPORT

I have prepared the above Balance Sheet and Income and Expenditure Account on the basis of the books, vouchers and other information supplied to me, and they are hereby certified to be in accordance therewith.

.....
BRIAN ARMSTRONG, I.P.F.A.

26th March 1981

1980 SURVEY OF ROOKERIES

IN NORTHUMBERLAND *

During 1975 the British Trust for Ornithology conducted a national census of rookeries and almost total coverage of Northumberland was achieved. 1980 saw a sample survey of selected 10 Kilometre Grid Squares of the National Grid proposed by the B.T.O. but it was thought another attempt at a full census would, if successful, produce more meaningful results capable of direct comparison with those of the original project.

Coverage was rather better during 1980 than had been the case five years previously; the 10 Km Grid Squares of NU 00 (Rothbury) and NT 92 (Wooler) which had only been partially censused in 1975 were fully covered but NT 83 (Cornhill), which lies partly in Scotland, remained partly uncovered again. Organising observer cover for some of these outlying parts of the county has always been a problem and the continuing increases in transport costs compound the difficulty. So far as is known only a handful of colonies recorded in 1975 and scattered over the remainder of the county were not visited in 1980 and none were believed to be of any great size.

Reproduced as an appendix to this report are the 1975 Rookery Census results, updated to include records too late for inclusion in the originally published summary, to enable readers to more easily contrast the results of the latest census. In presenting the 1980 results the same basis of dividing the county into four sectors has been adopted, namely by the 00/00 Ordnance Survey National Grid lines whereby all those 10 Km Grid Squares prefixed by the letter NT comprise the north west sector (the Cheviot Hills, most of Redesdale and the Tweed/Till lowlands), those prefixed NU the north-eastern sector (the Kyloe Hills and part of the Rothbury Edge and lowlands of the R. Till and coastal plain), by NY the south-western (much of the Border Forests, North and South Tynedales and the Allendales) and NZ the south-east (the coalfield and coastal lowlands rising inland generally to about 500', valley of the R. Tyne and the urban area of Tyneside). Figure 1 shows these demarcations more clearly.

Number and Distribution of Nests

In all, 33,600 nests were counted, 6091 more than in 1975 and an increase of 22%. The improvement was without doubt a "real" one and in fact many areas were revisited by the same observers who had first censused them in 1975 and they reported considerable gains at established colonies as well as the discovery of many new rookeries. Whether the overall size of the rookery population has grown in the last few years (and despite the exceptionally severe winter of 1978/1979) or there are now just more rooks nesting than five years ago is not known (see Fig. 2). There were, however, interesting regional differences in how the overall increase was made up (see Fig. 3).

In the north-western sector there was in fact a decline of 14% despite the better observer cover attained in 1980 with only 2,367 nests counted compared with 2,756 in 1975. This was confined to the areas around the R. Till and Tweed Valley where, for example, in the Ford/Etal 10 Km Grid Square (NT 93) the number of nests had fallen by 57% since 1975. There is evidence of a recent decrease in the Tweed area of another farmland bird, the Kestrel, apparently due to changes in agricultural

* As in previous reports the expression "Northumberland" includes that part of Tyne & Wear to the north of the River Tyne and references to "county" should be construed accordingly.

practice* and there was a suggestion that rookeries may be more heavily persecuted in this part of the county than elsewhere but for the moment the reason for the change in the rook's fortunes must remain a mystery.

In the north-eastern sector a 7% increase (10,885 nests from 10,171 in 1975) is partly explained by the full coverage of the Rothbury square NU 00 in 1980. However those 10 Km Grid Squares which included the predominantly grain growing districts in the very north of the county associated with the Tweed and its tributary, the Till, showed decreases ranging from 10-14% in parallel with the results from the north-western sector whilst increases of up to 32% were noted elsewhere. There would certainly seem to be cause for believing factors operating in and around the Tweed Valley are responsible for this local decline in rook numbers and perhaps also in the Kestrel; being almost exclusively agricultural with an emphasis on grain production changes in agricultural practice may well be responsible. A small reduction in numbers was also reported from the Warkworth area. .

The most striking increases came from the south-western sector where rooks are concentrated mainly along the valleys of the rivers South Tyne and North Tyne below Bellingham; much of the remainder is upland, unsuitable for the species. Numbers had risen by a remarkable 88% since 1975 (7,379 nests from 3,931) and as the area was covered equally thoroughly in both surveys there is no cause to doubt that the figures reflect a real improvement. Unfortunately there is no immediately obvious explanation for this. A small local reduction in numbers was, however, recorded in the vicinity of Allendale.

Similarly in the south-eastern sector numbers showed considerable gains on those of five years previously with an overall increase of 22%, from 10,651 nests to 12,969. This was despite decreases ranging from 6% to 50% in the 10 Km Grid Squares covering the Tyneside conurbation; everywhere else numbers increased by up to 82%.

TABLE showing number of Rook nests counted in each sector of the county in 1975 and 1980 with changes.

	1980	1975	%Change
NW	2367	2756	-14 %
NE	10885	10171	+ 7 %
SW	7379	3931	+88 %
SE	12969	10651	+22 %
TOTAL	33600	27509	+22 %

71% of all nests were found in the two eastern sectors (75.7% in 1975) and 61% in the two southern sectors (60% in 1975).

* CHURCH, H.F. (1975) "Status of the Kestrel on the Eastern Borders" Bird Study Vol. 22 page 92.

Number and Size of Rookeries

A total of 567 rookeries (including 20 single nests) was recorded in 1980; this compares with 521 (6 single nests) in 1975, an overall gain of 43 colonies and partly explained by the better coverage achieved in the 10 Km Grid Squares not fully covered in the former year. 107 new rookeries were found (15 single nests) in 1980 and at least 67 colonies (1 single nest) had ceased to exist at the time of the second census.

Of the 6 single nests located in 1975, one had disappeared by 1980, another was still only one nest but the remainder had increased to 4, 7, 15 and 40 nests respectively.

The average size of rookeries was 59.3 nest (52.9 in 1975)*. The north-western sector shared a substantial decline in colony size whereas the south-west showed a significant increase; these are the areas where overall numbers of nesting rooks had respectively fallen and risen most.

TABLE showing changes in the average size of rookeries in the four sectors of the county between 1975 and 1980. Numbers of rookeries shown in brackets.

	1980	1975
NW	54 (44)	76.5 (36)
NE	65 (167)	60 (169)
SW	59 (125)	38 (103)
SE	56 (231)	50 (213)

The largest colonies reported were at Stannington Children's Hospital (557 nests; 209 in 1975), Cross Plantation, near Humshaugh (435 nests; 62 in 1975), Broomhill Farm, near Amble (406 nests; 350 in 1975), Garrett Lee, near Wingates (398 nests; 180 in 1975), Breckon Hill, Hexham (374 nests; 220 in 1975), Woodhill near Otterburn (330 nests; 200 in 1975), and Middle Ord near Berwick-on-Tweed (316 nests; 210 in 1975). Of the largest rookeries recorded in 1975 only that at Broomhill Farm still contained over 300 nests, the five colonies in the vicinity of Woolsington Hall totalling 754 nests in 1975 had reduced to three with only 321 nests in 1980 and the three rookeries around Seaton Deleval Hall had increased from 341 nests to 418. Only three rookeries comprised over 300 nests during the first survey but seven were reported in 1980.

Many other colonies, in addition to those mentioned above, showed considerable changes in size since 1975 and this fact, coupled with the abandoning of other sites and the founding of so many new rookeries seems to suggest considerable mobility of birds within the population.

Although there were more large rookeries in 1980 than five years earlier, 81.8% of all colonies contained less than 101 nest and 63.3% less than 51, results almost identical as those of 1975 (see Appendix). The following table shows the sizes of rookeries in each sector.

* These are among the highest average sizes of rookeries in England (Sage, B.L. & Vernon, J.D.R. (1978) "The 1975 National Survey of Rookeries" Bird Study Vol. 25 pp. 64-86).

TABLE showing number of rookeries with:

	1-50 nests	51-100 nests	101-200 nests	201-300 nests	over 300 nests	Total number
NW	27(61.4%)	7(15.9%)	9(20.5%)	-	1(2.2%)	44
NE	95(56.9%)	41(24.6%)	21(12.6%)	9(5.4%)	1(0.5%)	167
SW	82(65.6%)	21(16.8%)	15(12.0%)	4(3.2%)	3(2.4%)	125
SE	155(67.1%)	36(15.6%)	28(12.1%)	10(4.3%)	2(0.9%)	231
TOTAL	359(63.3%)	105(18.5%)	73(12.9%)	23(4.1%)	7(1.2%)	567

Altitude of Nests

Two rookeries were found above 1000' above sea level. That at Farney Shields in West Allendale (1375') was previously known and comprised 37 nests (22 in 1975). A new colony discovered at Bygate Hall, upper Coquetdale (1130') with 16 nests.

The majority of nests were between sea level and 500' with percentages very similar to those determined by the 1975 survey (see Appendix and Table below).

TABLE showing the altitude of nests
in each sector.

	1 - 100'	101 - 250'	251 - 500'	501 - 1000'	Over 1000'
NW	82 *	1770 *	434 *	65 *	16
NE	2277	4609	3641	358 *	-
SW	177	817	2775	3673	37
SE	923 *	2930	5479	3637	-
TOTAL	3359 * (10.0%)	10126 (30.1%)	12329 (36.7%)	7733 (23.0%)	53 (0.2%)
Changes since 1975	-126	+1365	+3269	+1552	+31

Those counts in the table marked with an asterisk were less than 1975 figures and reflect the declines in the northern and Tyneside areas mentioned above.

Heron nesting amongst Rooks

Although known in other parts of the country there do not appear to be any recent records of herons nesting in rookeries in Northumberland. It therefore came as a surprise to have reported three herons nests near Great Whittington and two near Belsay in established rookeries in Scots Pine Plantations. Perhaps this habit has been overlooked in the past and rookeries may be worth more careful scrutiny in the future, especially where these are in conifers - the usual site of heronries in the county.

Tree Species Used for Nests

16,675 nests were reported to be built in deciduous trees (excluding larch) and 10,357 nests in coniferous species. Of these 20,639 were assigned to a definite tree species or family, a rather larger number than that reported in 1975. The figures were as follows:-

	<u>Number and of nests</u>	
Scots Pine	9006	(43.6%) = 47.1%
Pine spp.	726	(3.5%)
Sycamore	3260	(15.8%)
Beech	3727	(18.1%)
Elm	1682	(8.2%)
Ash	696	(3.4%)
Oak	758	(3.6%)
Larch	140	(0.7%)
Horse Chestnut	246	(1.2%)
Others:-		
Alder (17), Birch (124), Chile Pine (5),		
Corsican Pine (88), Fir spp (35), Holly (4),		
Lime (75), Norway Spruce (8), Rowan (1),	398	(1.9%)
Spruce spp (39), Willow (2).		
	<hr/> 20,639	

The value of the above statistics is dependent on the ability of observers to correctly identify the tree species being used. This is, however, more likely to be correct in the commoner and, therefore, familiar types of tree (in which most nests were) and as few persons covered more than one 10 Km Grid Square it is unlikely any single observer could have markedly influenced the general picture by mis-identification. The number of returns with nests being in either "deciduous" or "coniferous" trees suggest those observers who were uncertain about their tree identification did not take any chances; having said this however, it was a little disconcerting to receive one observer's counts for a particular square which he covered in 1980 to find when he visited the area in 1975 the majority of rook nests were in beeches but at the same sites five years later these had all become sycamores! But by and large the tree species described for particular colonies visited in both years seemed to tally quite well.

As in 1975 it is thought many of the trees referred to as "Pine spp" were Scots Pines and the proportion of nests reported in these tree types was noticeably higher in 1980; on the other hand nests in sycamores were well down on 1975 figures (despite the incident described in the last paragraph!). The percentages of nests found in the other common tree species were broadly similar in both surveys. (see Appendix).

There were some regional differences and the following table shows the proportion of nests in each of the four sectors for the commoner species of tree with percentage changes since 1975:-

	NW (1100 nests)	NE (4911 nests)	SW (5978 nests)	SE (8650 nests)
Scots Pine	31.3%	41.3%	38.6%	50.0%
Pine spp	29.2% } -9.2%	1.3% } +3.8%	5.7% } +2.1%	- } +17%
Sycamore	1.5% (-11%)	14.6% (-10.5%)	23.9% (+2.6%)	12.7% (-14.6%)
Beech	1.4% (-6.9%)	28.2% (+8.5%)	12.8% (-8%)	18.1% (-8.5%)
Elm	34.6% (+25.7%)	4.8% (-5.6%)	8.6% (+6.8%)	6.4% (+2.2%)
Ash	1.9% (+1.3%)	3.2% (+0.3%)	2.0% (-1.6%)	4.6% (+3.3%)
Oak	-	0.9% (-0.4%)	3.9% (-0.4%)	5.7% (+3.2%)

Over half of the nests in Scotland and more than a tenth in England and Wales were found to be in Scots Pines in 1975 with Beech the second most important species containing nearly a fifth of all nest in those two countries (Sage & Vernon (1978) supra.). With less than 10 of Northumbrian nests being in Elms the incidence of Dutch Elm disease is probably of little importance to the local rook population.

List of Contributors

Adamson, C.M.	Hind, D.
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Henry, M.	Shannon, D.
Hills, W.	West, P.W.
Colley F.	Woodfall, D.

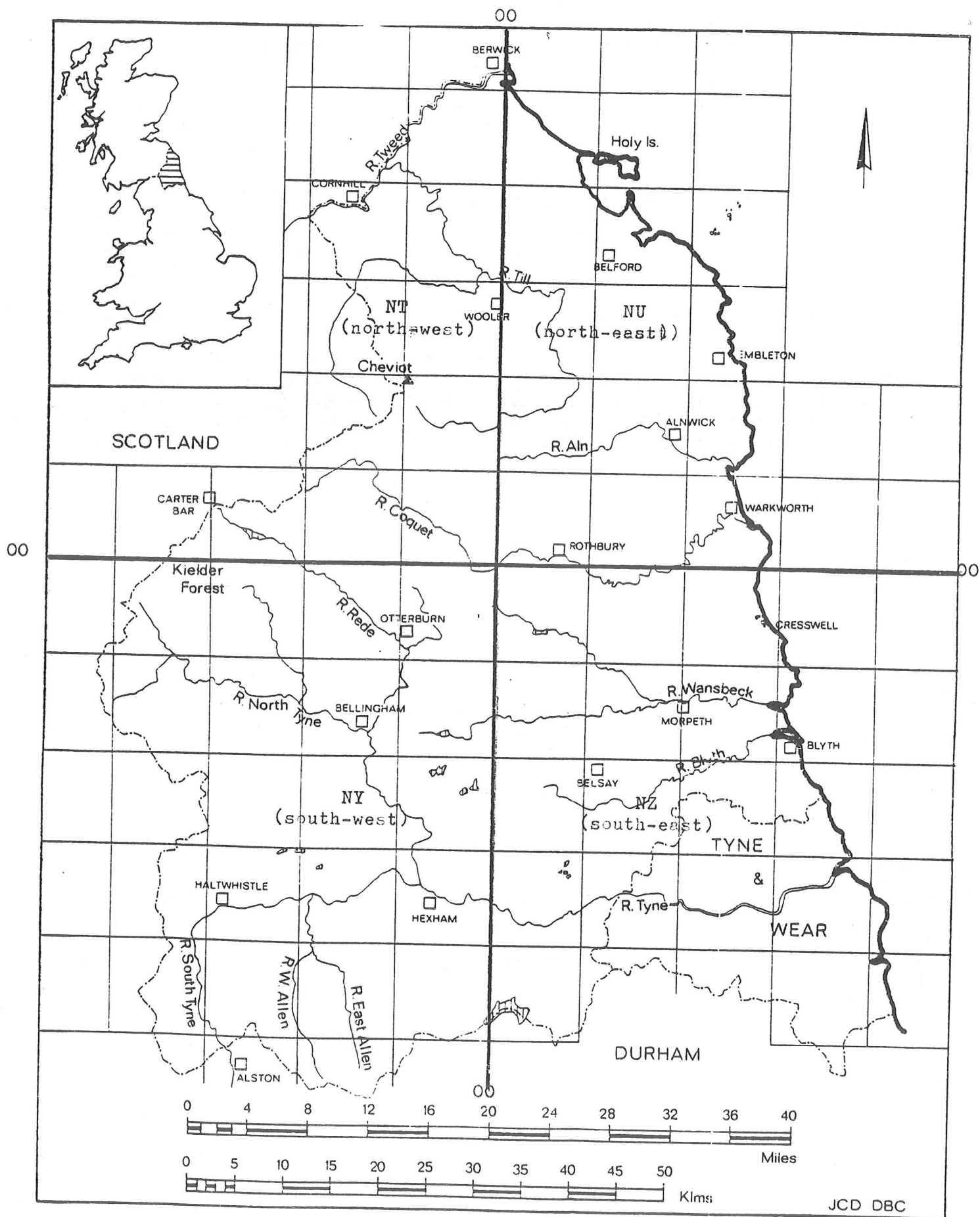


FIG.1 Showing divisions of county into four sectors for the purpose of analysing the 1975 and 1980 rookery survey results.

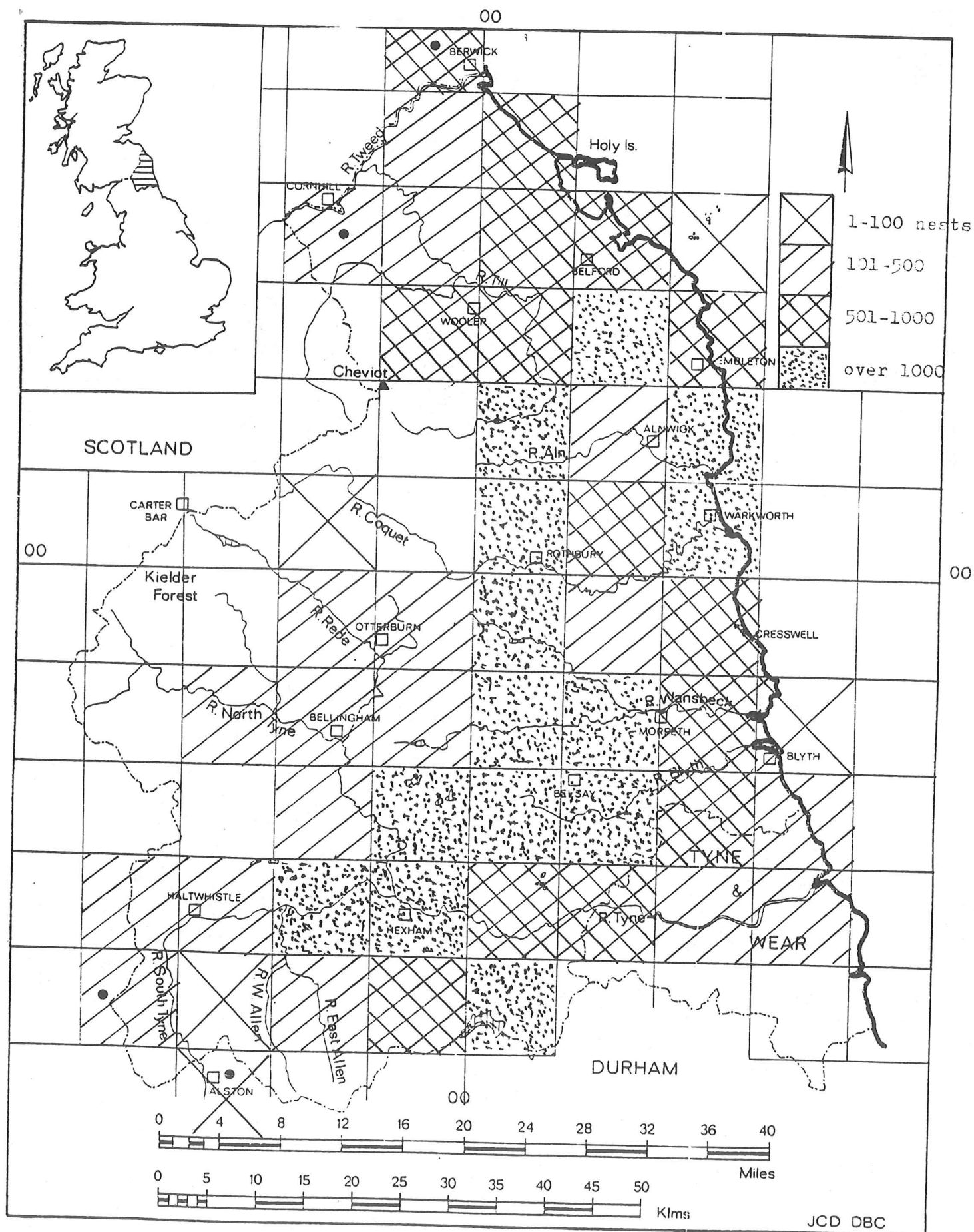


FIG.2 Showing number of rook nests in each 10 Km. National Grid Square, 1930.

● Based only on the number of nests counted on Northumberland side of border.

APPENDIX

B.T.O. NATIONAL ROOKERY CENSUS 1975 (Amended to include late records)

NORTHUMBERLAND RESULTS

1. Virtually the whole of northumberland (unless otherwise stated this is the administrative county prior to April 1974 together with Tynemouth and Newcastle County Boroughs) was covered by a small army of observers. Only the 10Km. Squares NU 00 (Rothbury), NT 92 (Wooler) and NT 83 (Cornhill) which lies partly in Roxburghshire and Berwickshire were not visited in the spring. Nests there were counted in the following winter and undoubtedly some nests will not have been found and others will have disappeared.
2. The county can be conveniently divided into four principal sectors by the 00/00 Ordnance Survey Grid Lines. The NW sector (10Km. squares prefixed NT) includes the Cheviot highlands and the Tweed valley; the NE sector (all 10Km. squares prefixed NU) includes the Kyles Hills and the coastal strip between Amble and Berwick; the SW sector (all 10Km. squares prefixed NY) includes the Border Forest, North and South Tynedales and the Allendales and the SE sector (all 10Km. squares prefixed NZ) the generally low lying coastal plain and Tyne Valley with the 'foothills' of the upper Rivers Blyth and Wansbeck.

3. Distribution of Nests

In all, 27,509 nests were counted in Northumberland and their distribution is shown on the accompanying map. In the case of border squares the map is based on the number of nests found in the whole of the 10Km. Square. The bulk of the Rook population is found in the NE and SE sectors (20,822 nests or 75.7%) although the bird is by no means common over the whole of this region, as can be seen from the map. Doubtless this distribution pattern reflects the more rugged and higher nature of the NW and SW, and the generally low lying, mixed farming country of the NE and SE, but in the NW particularly there appear to be areas which are suitable and where in previous years rookeries existed but which were found to hold few or no Rooks in 1975 (e.g. parts of Redesdale and Tweeddale).

4. Size of Rookeries

A total of 521 rookeries (including 6 single nests) were located in Northumberland as follows: NW 36 rookeries, average size 76.5 nests; NE 169 rookeries, average size 60 nests; SW 103 rookeries, average size 38 nests; SE 213 rookeries, average size 50 nests. Rookeries tended to be larger in the two northern sectors than in the southern. The eastern sectors, which accounted for 75.7% of the overall population contained 73% of all rookeries. The average size of rookeries was only 52.9 nests.

The largest rookeries recorded were at Shotley Fell Plantation (512 nests), Broomhill Farm nr. Amble (350 nests), Woolsington Hall (304 nests) and at the Great Wood nr. Eglington (300 plus nests) although 341 nests at Seaton Delaval Hall were described as 3 separate colonies and 5 rookeries in the immediate vicinity of Woolsington Hall totalled 754 nests. Only 14 rookeries (2.7%) had 201-300 nests and 67 (12.9%) with 101-200 nests. 83.9% (437) of all colonies visited had less than 101 nests and 64.5% (336) less than 51 nests. The following table shows rookery sizes in each sector.

	Number of rookeries with					Total number
	1-50 nests	51-100 nests	101-200 nests	201-300 nests	over 300 nests	
NW	14(38.9%)	12(33.3%)	8(22.2%)	2(5.6%)	-	36
NE	98(58%)	37(21.9%)	26(15.4%)	7(4.1%)	1(0.6%)	169
SW	84(81.6%)	12(11.7%)	6(5.8%)	1(0.9%)	-	103
SE	140(65.7%)	40(18.8%)	27(12.7%)	4(1.9%)	2(0.9%)	213
						<hr/> 521 <hr/>

The small size of most rookeries was one of the most interesting features to emerge from the survey.

5. Altitude of nests

Only one rookery was recorded above 1000' above sea level, at Farney Shield in West Allendale (22 nests at 1375'). Most nests were found between 1-500' a.s.l. (77.4%); a complete breakdown is set out below:

Altitude - Number of Nests

	<u>1-100'</u>	<u>101-250'</u>	<u>251-500'</u>	<u>501-1000'</u>	<u>over 1000'</u>
NW	246	1841	517	152	-
NE	2148	3941	3434	648	-
SW	81	353	1282	2193	22
SE	1010	2626	3827	3188	-
	<hr/> 3485 (12.7%)	<hr/> 8761 (31.8%)	<hr/> 9060 (32.9%)	<hr/> 6181 (22.5%)	<hr/> 22 (0.1%)

6. Tree Species used for nests

A total of 16,352 nests were stated to be in particular types of tree in Northumberland:

	Number of nests	
Scots Pine	4345	(26.88%)
Pine (spp)	2216	(13.55%)
Sycamore	3926	(24.01%)
Beech	3427	(20.96%)
Elm	1158	(7.08%)
Ash	369	(2.26%)
Oak	326	(1.99%)
Larch	154	(0.94%)
Horse Chestnut	132	(0.81%)

Number of nests (cont/d)

Others:

Alder (10), Birch (11),)
 Cedar (4), Chilean P. (8),)
 Gean (1), Holly (4),)
 Hawthorn (1), Hornbeam (56),) - 249 (1.52%)
 Lime (47), Lodgepole P. (2),)
 Norway Sp. (10), Poplar (43))
 Plane (5), Spruce pp. (24),)
 Willow (15), Yew (8),)
)

It is thought, and in at least some cases almost certainly known, that many of the nests described as being in 'pines' refer to Scots Pines and this would make this species by far the most popular nest site in the county. Sycamore and Beech are the next favoured types.

There were some regional differences and the following table shows the proportion of nests in each of the four county divisions in the commoner species of tree.

	NW	NE	SW	SE
Scots Pine	-	26.62%	42.22%	28.91%
Pine (spp)	69.71%	12.15%	-	4.04%
Sycamore	12.48%	25.05%	21.33%	27.28%
Beech	8.32%	19.73%	20.84%	26.61%
Elm	8.87%	10.41%	1.77%	4.19%
Ash	0.62%	2.88%	3.55%	1.34%
Oak	-	1.34%	4.30%	2.53%

7. Population Changes in the Rook

Although George Bolam implies in his 'Birds of Northumberland and the Eastern Borders' that the Rook was to be found commonly over the whole county in rookeries great and small there have been few censuses made over specific areas which would enable the 1975 data to be compared with earlier results.

The histories of individual rookeries where available, whilst perhaps sometimes indicative of population trends, are invariably suspect due to the effects of unreported influences at them, namely shooting and other disturbances, tree felling and the removal of the colony by the birds on their own volition to another or new colony. There has never before been such a comprehensive survey carried out in the area (the BTO's earlier 1945 Survey appears to have left very large areas unsurveyed and if has not been possible to obtain the local results of that survey for comparison) and it will take a repeat performance in future years before much of the 1975 data can be used to full effect.

Whilst the general impression of most observers familiar with the species is that numbers have declined, in some cases dramatically, it is also true that there are fewer large colonies in the area than formerly but perhaps more smaller colonies. The small average size of rookeries in 1975 has already been mentioned. Two areas where surveys have been carried out in the past where the results are capable of comparison with the 1975 figures are in the vicinity of Berwick-on-Tweed and Newcastle upon Tyne. These are set out below.

Berwick area: (information from F. Brady)

1945 within an area of 87 sq. miles	c.7000 nests
1950 within an area of 97 sq. miles	c.7850 nests
1974 within an area of 97 sq. miles	4429 nests
1975 within an area of 97 sq. miles	1882 nests

Newcastle area: (1932 information from Ornithological Report)

1932 within radius of 10 miles	3101 nests at 30 rookeries
1975 within radius of 10 miles	2715 nests at 50 rookeries

As can be seen the results make an interesting contrast, one suggesting a dramatic decline in overall numbers since 1950 in a predominantly agricultural area (a decrease which appears to have accelerated at an alarming rate in the last two years) and the other illustrating a large increase in the number of colonies and relatively little overall reduction in population size since 1932 in an area largely urban or suburban in character where several old colonies are known to have become extinct with the expansion of Tyneside and its dormitory towns.

A survey made of Northumbrian rookeries in 1877 showed colonies in Redesdale as far out as Catcleugh and Cottonshopeburnfoot whereas today rookeries do not appear beyond Otterburn and Woodhill although it is questionable in this case whether there has been any overall change in the number of rooks in this area. The same survey revealed 34 rookeries within a radius of 8 miles of Stamfordham although in fact the area covered was rather greater than this; in 1975 over 140 colonies were found, most small. It is not possible to determine whether the overall number of rooks changed over this period and it is possible many sites occupied in 1877 were unreported. Clearly it is not possible to reach any decision on whether the overall Northumberland rook population has changed one way or the other over the last 100 years in response to any particular factor(s) and it will require a further survey or sample surveys to produce data capable of direct comparison with the 1975 information. It is possible that rook numbers have changed and still are changing, in different ways in different parts of the county perhaps in response to different influences.

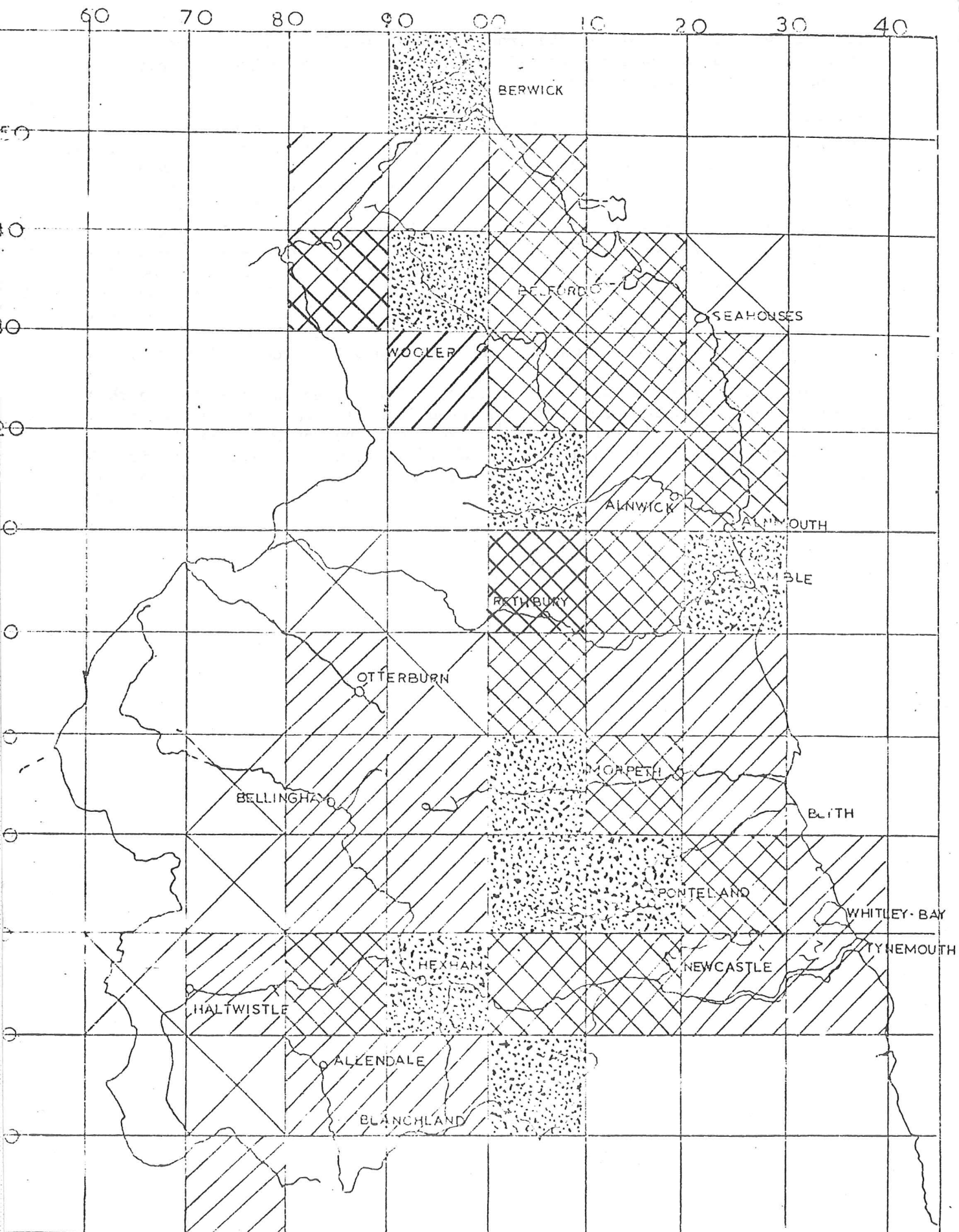
8. Old rookeries





In 1877 a James Smail sent out circulars to many correspondents in the county seeking details of rooks and rookeries and the results of his enquiries he published in the 'History of the Berwickshire Naturalists Club' (Vol.X 1882-4) in a particularly interesting article entitled 'Rooks and Rookeries'. He gave a long list of rookeries that existed at the time and it came as something of a surprise to find that many of the sites supporting colonies in 1877 were still occupied in 1975 although often the size of these had changed in the meantime and it is not possible to say with any degree of certainty if they had been in continuous occupation to the present day.

The following details of selected rookeries are based on the information collected by James Smail and by the 1975 survey and are included purely for the sake of local interest.

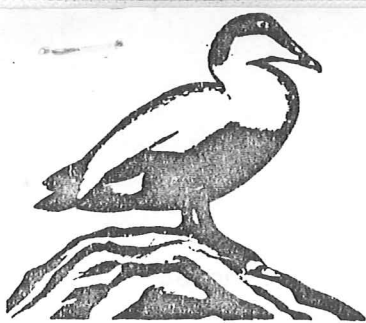
Rookeries which were described as being 'old' in 1877 at Aydon Castle (nr. Corbridge), Beadnell Hall, Belford Hall, Higham Dykes (nr. Ponteland), Matfen, Milbourne Grange (nr. Belsay) and Ponteland are still present today and colonies at Nunwick (nr. Simonburn) and Walwick (nr. Chollerford) were described as being about 80 years old at that time placing their probable dates of origin in the late 18th Century. The rookery at Killingworth Village was established in about 1867 and those at Rudchester (nr. Heddon-on-the-Wall) and Hallington in about 1877. Perhaps the most frequently reported rookery in recent years is that at Barras Bridge in the heart of Newcastle upon Tyne, the present colony being established in 1961; it is therefore interesting to note that James Smail reported a previous colony on this site had become extinct because of 'the extension of Newcastle and the trees dying out'.

9. Space does not permit a full list of contributors to be incorporated in this report so many were the people who assisted in making this survey such a resounding success. In particular, however, must be acknowledged the tremendous amount of time and energy, not to mention expense, freely given by those who covered entire 10km. Squares and in some cases, more than one and those who searched old notebooks and extracted information on the number of nests in previous years, often pre-war, at rookeries in the area - it is unfortunate that more use could not have been made of this data in the present report. Perhaps the most rewarding aspect of the enquiry was the number of people who wrote expressing their satisfaction at having taken part and it is hoped that this will encourage them and others to participate in future projects of this nature.



 1-100
  101-500
  501-1000
  over 1000

Nb. of nests per 10 Km Square.



TYNESIDE BIRD CLUB

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MAY 1981

SUMMARY

Although it was not a month in which any large scale fall of migrants occurred, a good variety of the less usual vagrants were recorded. A period of strong northerlies, and some associated sea bird movements, was followed by a period of predominantly southerly airflow between the 8th and 15th and again around the 23rd-26th. Species reported typical of those often occurring during prolonged southerlies at this time of year included Black Tern, Avocet, Spoonbill, Marsh Harrier, Hobby, Turtle Dove, Red-backed Shrike, Bluethroat and Firecrest.

Dotterel passage was again recorded, probably four Temminck's Stints moved through Backworth and both Quail and Corncrake were reported.

Small numbers of the summer visitor species were present on the coast as they became established in usual inland breeding areas, and as the last of the winter visitors moved out.

CLASSIFIED LIST.,

Red-throated Diver/Diver (Sp)

A total of 29 noted off Seaton Sluice during the month, and 1-3 off Hauxley, Holy Island and Druridge.

Black-throated Diver

At Seaton Sluice singles N on 4th and 10th plus another bird on the sea on the 4th. (SSWT).

Great Northern Diver

A single N off Seaton Sluice on 3rd. (SSWT).

Little Grebe

Confirmed breeding at Grindon, Capheaton and Gosforth Park with birds present at 10 other suitable waters.

Great Crested Grebe

Five present at Druridge Pool early in the month reduced to two by the 10th (ES/JSB et al). Up to four at Whittle Dene by 25th (MR et al), and at Holywell during the month. A single off Holy Island on 22nd (RN). Pairs breeding at Langley Dam and Broomlee. Singles noted at Arcot, Derwent Reservoir and Bothal.

Slavonian Grebe

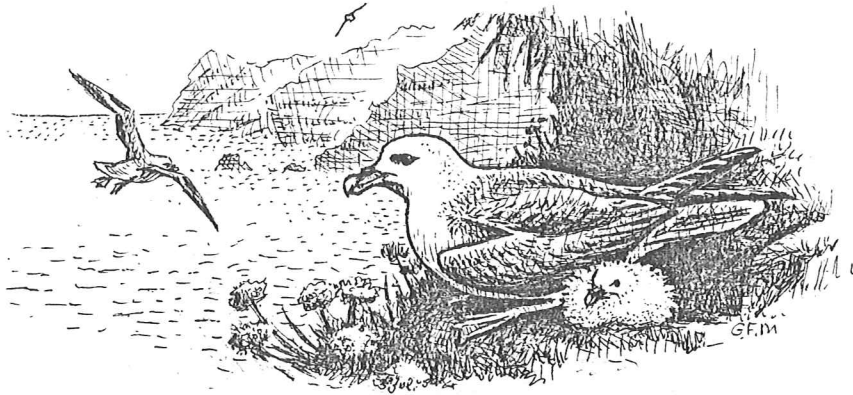
The Killingworth Lake bird remained until at least the 27th.

Black-necked Grebe

A single bird was at Holywell on 13th-14th (C/D/JEF). Four or five pairs were present at a breeding site but no young were observed at the months end.

Fulmar

About 120N in one and a half hours off Hauxley on 10th. Birds were noted occupying ledges at Brada Quarry, Berry Hill Farm Crag and Howick Haven. Two were seen flying around Harbottle Crag on 25th.



Manx Shearwater

A total of 14N between 2nd and 16th off Seaton Sluice. (SSWT).

Gannet

Off Seaton Sluice a total of 370N between 2nd and 4th and a further 20N on 16th (SSWT). A total of 460N in only half an hour off Hauxley on the 10th.

Cormorant

A single bird was at Seaton Burn on 25th (RJ).

Shag

60 were gathered off Holy Island Heugh on 30th (AH).

Heron

Reports from breeding sites suggest that several young perished during the snow in late April. 11 were on Beal Sands on 31st (JDL), and a bird flew in off the sea at Bamburgh on the 3rd. 1-4 noted at 8 other localities.

Spoonbill

A bird was briefly at Newton Pool on the 28th (per DW) and perhaps the same bird was at Black Law, Lindisfarne on 31st (JDL).

Mute Swan

The Swallow pond pair were noted as still nesting during the month. Up to 13 were noted in Blyth estuary on the 17th. Two cygnets noted on Holywell on 14th (CED).

Whooper Swan

1-2 were noted at Queen Elizabeth Park throughout the month (PW/LGM). A single bird still at Grindon on 14th (MLL).

Grey Lag Goose

Three were present at Grindon until at least the 26th (LGM/MRS). Two were at Druridge Pool 2nd-3rd and are at Cresswell Pond on 9th (NE et al). Two were noted at Capheaton on the 4th and at Hallington on the 26th (DRH/PW). A pair with six young on Nelly's Moss Lake Crag side during the month are presumably feral birds (RN/LJM).

Canada Goose

24 were noted at Hallington on 16th (RGW). At Brenkley 5 on the 8th increased to 13 by the 31st (LJM/LGM). 12W over Stocksfield on 29th (BNR). 1-3 were in the Druridge Pool/Cresswell Pond area during the month (NE et al), and a single bird associated with the Whooper Swans at Queen Elizabeth Park all month. (PW et al). Two were seen at each of Derwent Reservoir and Capheaton (MR/DRH et al).

Barnacle Goose

A single bird at Brenkley 26th-31st (LGM).

Shelduck

Many reports from Cresswell - Hauxley with a maximum of 41 noted in this area during the month. 49 were counted in Budle Bay on the 25th. Young were seen at Newton Pool and Druridge Pool.

Wigeon

14 at Grindon on 2nd reducing to a pair by 24th (MLL/LGM et al). Pairs were noted at Druridge and Butterwell on 1st (CMA). 8S off Boulmer on 24th (IK), and a single male at Gosforth Park on 4th (LJM).

Gadwall

Pairs noted 9th-12th of Alnmouth, Newton Pool and Holy Island Lough (PWD/DW et al). A single drake on Druridge Pool on 9th (NE).

Teal

Pairs noted at Grindon, Bradford, Brenkley and Simonsides. A female was incubating 8 eggs on Simonside only 12 inches away from a Meadow Pipits nest containing 4 eggs. (BG).

Mallard

Up to 30 were in Grindon during the month. Broods noted at Backworth, Swallow and Arcot.

Pintail

A single drake at Alnmouth on 22nd (DW).

Garganey

Pair on Holy Island Lough 9th-10th (GEM et al). Single drakes noted on Swallow Pond on 14th and at Newton Pool on 24th (LM/DW).

Shoveler

Up to 6 at Gosforth Park, 5 at Holywell and 4 in Druridge area during the month. One - three at Grindon, Brenkley, Newton, Backworth and Holy Island.

Pochard

A maximum of six drakes at Arcot Ponds on 23rd. (LJM). 1-2 at Cresswell and Backworth during the month (AMB et al). Two broods at Holywell by months end. (CED et al).

Ferruginous Duck

A drake was present at Holywell Pond from 27th until well into June (JEF/CED et al).

Tufted Duck

53 counted on Capheaton on 4th (DRH) 14-20 at Cresswell, Bothal and Arcot, smaller numbers at other usual waters.

Eider

30 at Blyth on 4th. Young noted at usual localities from 22nd.

Long-tailed Duck

One present near Holy Island causeway 8th-16th (RN et al).

Common Scoter

Noted only at Seaton Sluice where 7 on 2nd, 46 on 4th and 14 on 16th (SSWT).

Goldeneye

Reports of up to 5 during first half of the month from Berwick, Whittle Dene, Derwent Reservoir, Druridge and Woodhorn. 8 were at Grindon on 11th. Later in the month, a single was still at Whittle Dene on 25th, and at Alnmouth and Newton Pool on 28th (MR/LGM).

Red-breasted Merganser

Up to 5 in the Lindisfarne area all month. (GEM et al). Off Seaton Sluice 5N on 2nd, 1N on 3rd. Single W off St. Marys, and one off Hartley Pt. on the 10th (PW).

Goosander

Up to 90 mostly adult or immature drakes at Hoselaw during the month, eleven of which were trapped (ten drakes) and wing tagged. Broods of 12 on the Breamish on 23rd and 10 on the North Tyne on 24th were noted. (ES/WJL/BL).

Marsh Harrier

Single females were seen at Holy Island on 15th (GEM), at West Monkseaton on 13th and Holywell on 14th (PRW/JEF), and at Newton Pool on 18th and 22nd (MF/DW).

Hen Harrier

Single ringtails noted at Hadston - Chevington Burn on 16th (LG/JSB), and at Alwinton on 17th (BG/IK).

Sparrowhawk

Noted at 19 localities.

Kestrel

Reported from 20 localities, including four at Bamburgh on 17th.

Hobby

A bird seen hunting at Holystone on 24th as many hirundines were passing N through the area (BG).

Peregrine

Singles over Hartburn on 8th (per AH) and on Holy Island on 9th (LGM).

Black Grouse

A single female at Threestoneburn (AMB).

Red-legged Partridge

Two near Bridge of Aln on 17th (NE).

Quail

Singles reported calling at Hauxley on 17th (HRS) and at Thrunton on 29th-30th (KR/JP)

Corncrake

A bird flew W over fields towards Wylam at Close House, Heddon after being disturbed by Golfers on 22nd (BG).

Coot

40-50 noted at Grindon, Cresswell and Swallow Pond. Broods noted by mid month at Gosforth Park, Holywell, Arcot Ponds and Backworth.

Oystercatcher

Well reported from usual inland breeding areas. 112 were between Beadnell and Seahouses on 16th and 35 at Cresswell Pond on 24

Avocet

A bird was present at Hauxley Pool 24th-25th (JEF/PW/HRS et al).

Little Ringed Plover

Singles reported from Hauxley on 7th (HRS) and from Whittle Dene on 17th (MR)

Ringed Plover

Passage evident during the month with up to 26 noted at Backworth on 17th numbers decreasing thereafter. Over 180 were on Holy Island on 26th (MSH), and small parties of up to 20 moved N at Boulmer on 24th (IK). 16 were in Blyth estuary on 5th (HG).

Datterel

Following the locating of six near Queen Elizabeth Park on 4th (DY/SY) passage was apparent there until the 13th. Reports of 11 on the 6th, 15 on the 9th, and 5 on the 12th and 13th were received.

Golden Plover

At least 600 were at Berwick Hill on the 2nd (AH/B) only 24 remaining on the 8th (AMB). Small flocks of up to 20 were noted in several localities until the 10th.

Grey Plover

The maximum count from Lindisfarne area was of 150 on 9th (LGM) A single bird was at Backworth on 8th (MN/JDM).

Lapwing

Several broods noted from the 4th

Knot

Eight were at St. Marys on 10th (PW)

Sanderling

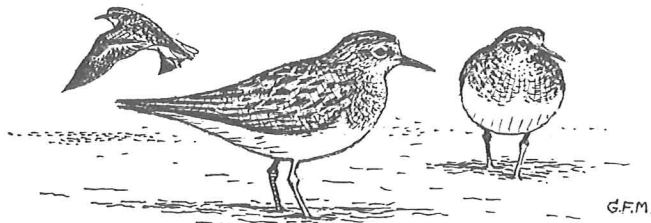
On the 10th 11 at Holy Island and 9 between Boulmer and Alnmouth (LGM/RN). 14 were between Beadnell and Seahouses on 16th.

Little Stint

Only record was of one at Holy Island on 15th (GEM).

Temmincks Stint

Backworth has become a regular locality for this rare wader to be recorded. One was present between the 14th and 19th, two arrived on 22nd and were joined by a third on the 24th, only one was seen 25th-29th. Probably as many as four individuals being involved (MN/CED/MB et al).



Curlew Sandpiper

A single bird at Emblestones on 18th (MF) and two at Berwick on 20th (JDL).

Purple Sandpiper

Up to 40 were at Seaton Sluice until the 5th (SSWT et al). 21 were on Holy Island on the 9th, 22 between Alnmouth and Amble on the 10th and 57 between Beadnell and Seahouses on the 16th.

Dunlin

Up to 10 were at Backworth (MN) and 12 in Blyth estuary (HG) during the first week. 70 were at Amble on the 7th, and 121 at Boulmer on the 10th (RN).

Ruff

Up to five were at Backworth during the first week, one remaining until at least the 19th. Five were also at Druridge Pool on 6th (PRW/WAK). One-two were on Holy Island 2nd-13th (GEN/ES et al).

Woodcock

Many birds reported roding from woodland localities.

Black-tailed Godwit

Birds heard calling overhead late in the evening as they flew up to the Tyne valley on 1st and 8th (BL). Singles were at Holy Island on the 9th and Backworth on the 25th (LGM/RN). Five were together at Amble on the 7th (RN).

Bar-tailed Godwit

Four at Boulmer on the 10th (RN), one at St. Marys on the 9th (TLC) and two at Amble on the 24th (LGM).

Whimbrel

A total of 15N, 2nd-3rd off Seaton Sluice (SSWT). 1-3 during first half of the month at Holy Island, Hauxley and Holywell. 4 NW over Ottercaps on the 6th (BG).

Curlew

About 55 on Beal Sands on 31st (JDL). Several reports of up to 4 in usual inland areas.

Spotted Redshank

A single on Holy Island on the 10th (GEM/BNR).

Redshank

At Blyth 30N on the 1st, 52N on the 4th and 14 in estuary on the 5th (HG/MG). A maximum of 14 at Backworth on the 23rd (MLL). Up to 3 at other inland localities.

Greenshank

Singles at Hauxley on three dates, at Cresswell on 7th, at Budle Bay on 8th and at Backworth 22nd-23rd.

Wood Sandpiper

Singles at Backworth on 12th and 19th (KIB/MN et al) and at Whittle Dene on 17th (MR).

Common Sandpiper

Many reports from breeding areas including 12 pairs in territory in the Alwin valley (TAC). 4 were at Queen Elizabeth Park on the 8th (ETN/JRW) and 5 at Hauxley on the 10th (HRS). 1-2 noted at Backworth, St. Marys, Gosforth Park, Bamburgh and Holywell.

Turnstone

Considerable numbers still present during the first half of the month. On the 10th, 167 were between Boulmer and Alnmouth (RN) and about 300 between St. Marys and Seaton Sluice (PW). 148 were counted between Beadnell and Seahouses on the 16th (HLL). 30-40 were at Berwick and Newton during the first week.

Artic Skua

Only recorded at Seaton Sluice where 3N on the 2nd and singles N on the 4th and 16th (SSWT).

Great Skua

One N off Seaton Sluice on 3rd was only report.

Little Gull

A single N off Seaton Sluice on the 3rd (SSWT) was followed by passage through the area from the 16th on. At least 3 birds were present at Newton, 4 at Hauxley and 2 at Chevington. As many as 6 were at Hadston Lake on the 28th (LGM).

Lesser Black-backed Gull

19 sitting birds were at the Northumberland moorland colony on the 26th (LGM). Two were on Newcastle City Centre roof tops on the 4th (KR). Singles also noted at Newcastle quayside, Holywell and Swallow (TLC).

Iceland Gull

Singles N off Seaton Sluice on 2nd and 10th (SSWT). A first year bird was at Boulmer on the 24th (IK).

Glaucous Gull

Single immatures were at Amble on the 10th and 28th (MSH/PWD), near Shiremoor on the 22nd (MSH) and at Boulmer on the 24th (IK).

Kittiwake

Passage N noted off Hauxley on the 1st when 80/hour and on the 10th when 220 in 1½ hours. 70 pairs breeding on the Baltic Flour Mill (BL).

Sandwich Tern

Up to 120 were present off Holy Island on the 11th and passage S of 300 in one hour noted on the 15th (GEM). 43 were on the beach at Chevington on the 16th (JSB) when 30 at Newton (ADM/SH). A total of five were seen well inland at Caistron Pond on the 16th (JEF).

Little Tern

Up to 10 noted at Lindisfarne, 8 at Newton and 5 at Chevington Burn. One S off Hauxley on 19th.

Black Tern

Singles noted at Bells Pond on the 21st (JPL/DRH) and at Holy Island on the 12th (GEM).

Auk Sp / Guillemot

Heavy N movement on the 4th and S movement on the 16th off Seaton Sluice (SSWT). About 300N in 1½ hours off Hauxley on the 10th (HRS).

Stock Dove

Noted at Corbridge, Healey, Meldon, Canada, Backwork and Halton Castle (breeding).

Turtle Dove

Singles reported from Holy Island on the 14th (GEM), Cresswell on the 16th (NE/JSB) and Priors Park on the 28th (MC).

Cuckoo

Many inland reports from the 4th on. 1-5 present throughout the month at Bamburgh (BRS), with 1-2 at other coastal localities including a 'brown' bird at Hauxley on the 17th (HRS).

Little Owl

Noted during the month at Newton, Rennington, North Sunderland, Dipton and Grindon, where an adult and a juvenile seen on 26th (LGM).

Tawny Owl

Reported from 12 localities, young on nests being seen at 5 of these.

Long-eared Owl

A nest located near Ponteland with one young which later died (AH).

Short-eared Owl

More than usual in territory in SW of the country reflecting a good vole year (LGM et al). Singles noted in Breamish valley, Threestoneburn, Lilswood Moor and Swallow Pond.

Swift

The main arrival back in breeding areas occurred 6th-9th with coastal passage also particularly evident over this period. As many as 200 were feeding ahead of an on coming thunderstorm at Dinnington on the 8th.

Kingfisher

The only report concerned a single bird at Wark on the 12th (MLH).

Green Woodpecker

1-2 noted at nine localities, including one in the sand dunes at Bamburgh on 23rd (BRS).

Great Spotted Woodpecker

Reported from seven localities.

Swallow

Becoming far more conspicuous from the 8th on.

House Martin

Many back in breeding territories from about the 10th.

Tree Pipit

Birds established in breeding areas by mid month.

Meadow Pipit

A distinct shortage of birds noted in the Kielder area is attributed to the late April snow. Several corpses of this and woodland species were found at the time.(BL).

Yellow Wagtail

Small parties of up to 4 were reported from mainly coastal localities throughout the month. A flock of 11 were at Whittle Dene on the 3rd (JSB).

Grey Wagtail

Well reported from breeding areas.

White Wagtail

Singles on the 3rd at Backworth (JDM) and near West Moor (WAK), on the 7th at Chevington Burn (RN) and at Boulmer on the 24th (IK).

Pied Wagtail

Several nesting reports, including a pair feeding young in a nest located in a lorry at Westerhope.

Dipper

Several fledged young and others sitting on eggs reported.

Bluethroat

Several migrants seen 10th-16th. Singles on Holy Island on the 10th and 16th (LGM/MN et al), a female in a garden at Seaton Sluice on the 12th (CMA), two at Hauxley on the 13th (HRS) and on the 14th a single male at Priors Park (MC) and two males at Foxton (DM).

Black Redstart

A single male at Hauxley 24th-25th (HRS).

Redstart

Several reports of birds in breeding territories from early in the month. Few coastal records, consisting of two at each of Hauxley and Bamburgh and one at Priors Park between the 3rd and 17th.

Whinchat

Singles on the 4th at Cresswell, Newcastle Airport and Seaton Burn (DY/SY). Small numbers apparent at usual coastal localities from the 8th on, inland reports becoming commoner by mid month.

Stonechat

A pair in the Newton area mid month (MW et al) and a single male at Druridge on the 28th (LGM/JCD) were the only records.

Wheatear

Only a few recorded until the 9th, passage conspicuous during the next ten days with a maximum of 40 noted at Holy Island on the 12th where several 'Greenland' birds were recorded (GEM et al). The corpse of a Greenland bird was found on Blyth beach on the 14th (GFM). Up to 15 were at Swallow Pond, 17 at Hauxley and 12 at Blyth during this period.

Ring Ousel

One was on Holy Island on the 9th (LGM). One-three noted at Threestoneburn, Windybough and Upper Holystone Burn.

Fieldfare

Many flocks still present during the first week including 500 at Cambo, 300 at Roddam, 1000 at Alnwick and 100-200 at Wallington, Lowgate, Eslington Hall, Redesmouth, Chipchase, Ford Castle and Bamburgh. Only a few small parties thereafter but a few were still using a roost at Great Wanney on the 12th which had been attracting 3,000 during April.

Redwing

Only a few singles and parties of up to four recorded until the 10th when nine together on Holy Island (BNR). A bird first trapped at Bamburgh on 14th March was retrapped at Bamburgh on the 15th March, this being the last record for the month (BRS).

Grasshopper Warbler

Reported reeling at 13 localities, small numbers being observed at the coast throughout the month.

Sedge Warbler

The first record was of a bird trapped at Hauxley on the 3rd (HRS). After two heard singing at Gosforth Park on the 8th., the species was widely reported from localities near to the coast throughout the rest of the month with a peak around the 16th-17th when up to 30 were at Bamburgh and 20 at Hauxley.

Lesser Whitethroat

First recorded on the 5th at Preston Grange Estate, North Shields (SY). An influx on the 9th-10th when up to 6 at Holy Island, 4 at Hauxley and 3 at Bamburgh. The remains of a migrant found on Blyth beach on the 14th (GFM). A few birds recorded at the above localities later in the month and singles noted at Sharperton and Ingram.

Whitethroat

A single bird trapped at Bamburgh on the 3rd, and a steady influx with 2-8 recorded there on several dates thereafter (BRS). A maximum of 5 noted at Holy Island on the 10th (GEM) with widespread inland reports from the 10th on.

Garden Warbler

1-2 recorded at Holy Island, Hauxley, Banburgh, Blyth, Swallow Pond, Armstrong Park, Choppington and Wallington from the 8th on.

Blackcap

A male singing at Ford Castle on the 2nd (TJ/RJ). Six trapped at Bamburgh and two at Hauxley on the 3rd (BRS/HRS), one-two recorded at eight localities thereafter.

Wood Warbler

First recorded on the 2nd when singles at Allenbanks (WAK) and Cupola Bridge (WAK/JPL/MLL). Six-seven were singing at Nunnykirk by the 7th and one-four recorded thereafter at Holystone, Corbridge, Riding Mill and Allenbanks. Infrequently recorded at the coast, so an interesting record of one at Marden Park 9th-12th (JDM).

Chiffchaff

Surprisingly few records, singles only at the coast at Bamburgh and Hauxley and two at Holywell Dene on the 25th. Several heard inland during the last week.

Willow Warbler

Up to 60 were present at Bamburgh on the 3rd, yet only 7 at Hauxley the same day. A maximum of about 30 recorded at Holy Island on the 9th (RN et al). Coastal passage was noted on many dates thereafter especially at Bamburgh where 4-14 recorded on 8 other days. Odd birds were recorded inland after the first week, and an influx occurred at Threestoneburn on the night of the 8th/9th with 7 trapped there the following day (AMB).

Goldcrest

The only coastal record was of one at Bamburgh on the 9th (BRS). A nest which later contained eight eggs was found suspended from a branch two feet above an incubating Sparrowhawk near Morpeth ! (AH).

Firecrest

A single male was at Priors Park, Tynemouth on the 8th (MC).

Spotted Flycatcher

First recorded on the 9th when two at each of Holy Island (KR) and Marden Park, Whitley Bay (JDM) and a single bird at Bamburgh (BRS). Odd birds noted on the coast thereafter, as many as nine were at Bamburgh on the 21st (BRS). The first inland record was of one at Derwent Reservoir on the 12th (ME), several were seen thereafter and birds were seen investigating possible nest sites by the last week.

Pied Flycatcher

Birds were seen in nesting areas from the 2nd on, and by the end of the month 15 pairs were in boxes in the Wansbeck valley area and 59 pairs confirmed at Dipton the first egg being laid on the 12th (TAC/BL et al). Few were recorded on the coast consisting of singles on three days at Bamburgh and Holy Island, one at Priors Park and a Swedish ringed bird retrapped at Hauxley on the 16th (GEM/BRS/MC/HRS).

Long-tailed Tit

A nest with chicks found at Gosforth Park on the 26th (TJ), two were nest building on the outskirts of Dipton on the 30th (TLC) and a single seen at Wheelbirks Farm on the 7th (KIB).

Marsh Tit

Noted at High House Woods Morpeth, March Burn, Apperley Dene Cross Roads and Bolam Lake.

Willow Tit

Reported feeding fledged young at Mitford on 9th (CB/ME), singles at Bolam (PW) and West Chevington (DRH), a pair at Plessey Woods (CED).

Nuthatch

Two noted at Bolam, Allen Banks and Nunnykirk.

Red-backed Shrike

A female was at Annstead Burn on the 28th (BRS).

Carrion Crow

A very warm and well lit nesting site from which young were reared was on top of a battery of lights at Stella Power Station ! (BL).

Hooded Crow

A single bird at Cresswell on the 7th (RN).

Brambling

A female was among a flock of linnets at Slaley on the 1st (BL). Two were at Hauxley on the 3rd (HRS).

Goldfinch

One-six noted at ten localities, small numbers regularly at Bamburgh where 13 present on the 18th.

Siskin

One-two on Holy Island 10th-13th (GEM). Birds still feeding on nut bags until about the 12th at Hexham and Stocksfield. Ten were in the Larch plantation near Riding Mill on the 4th (BNR) and one at Corbridge on 28th (MR).

Linnet

Several small flocks of up to 15 noted during the month. 30 were in Holy Island 10th-17th (GEM).

Redpoll

Ten in the Riding Mill plantation on the 4th (BNR). Up to 6 seen at Swallow Pond and one-two at Holystone, Threestoneburn and Earsden. Eight were on Holy Island on the 13th (GEM) and four trapped at Bamburgh on the 17th, three being present on the 30th (BRS).

Crossbill

Several reports from Dipton, a maximum of 18 noted thereon the 7th (MR). 20 were feeding on elder flowers at Juniper, Slaley on the 1st. (BL). Up to three at Riding Mill during the month, a few on Simonsides and a pair at Harbottle (BNR/BG et al)

Bullfinch

Two-three at Mitford, Morpeth, Felton and Craster.

Hawfinch

A pair seen carrying twigs at Heddon-on-the-Wall on the 8th (DGM).

Yellowhammer

Very common in hedgerows in the Wansbeck valley area (AH).

Corn Bunting

Singing birds noted at twelve localities.

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Field Outings

Sunday, 20th September, 1981.

COASTAL WALK BOULMER/CRASTER/DUNSTANBURGH AREA

Coach departs - Hancock Museum, Newcastle 8 a.m. & Baxters Cafe, Tynemouth 8.15 a.m.

LEADER T.B.A.

Cost £2.60.

Please Note In line with the recommendations discussed during our April meeting, we are now asking for full payment to be made at the time and in confirmation of each booking. Cheques to be made payable to Tyneside Bird Club.

Please make all reservations for the above prior to 31st August, 1981, by contacting Ron Cook, 42, Shaws Park, Hexham NE46 3BJ. Tel. Hexham (0434) 605916.

Sunday, 18th October, 1981.

HOLY ISLAND (crossing times 11 a.m. - 5.18 p.m.)

Coach departs - Hancock Museum, Newcastle 8 a.m. & Baxters Cafe, Tynemouth 8.15 a.m.

LEADER T.B.A.

Cost £2.90.

Please make all reservations via Ron Cook, prior to 30th September, 1981.

Lindisfarne Bird Watching Week - September 5th - September, 12th

Mr. G.E. Manser, 7 Rectory Meadow, Chinnor, Oxford OX9 4PJ is organising a weeks birdwatching based at the Castle View, Holy Island from the above date. Mr. Manser is a regular visitor to the island and he contributes a summary of his observations to the club for use in our annual report.

Cost is £72.00 all in, i.e. full board. School pupils and students under 21 - cost £68.

If you are interested please contact Mr. Manser direct.

June records to Alan Heavisides, 8 Leyland Place, Kirkhill, Morpeth, NE61 2AW in Voous order and by 8th July, 1981 at latest please.

COASTAL WADERS COUNTS

During the winter 1980/81 several members participated in regular monthly counts of waders present on the coast between Budle Pt. and the Tyne. The results of these counts are very interesting giving us a good indication of wader populations away from the important Lindisfarne NNR area (counted regularly by the wardens).

The exercise does however require participants to commit themselves to a regular monthly outing throughout the winter, most of our counters enjoy this birdwatching with a purpose and often find other birds of interest as well as the waders. The results are used in two ways, firstly by the club, being summarised in bulletins and later in the annual report, and also nationally as part of the continuing "Birds of Estuaries" survey conducted by the B.T.O.

The coastline is divided up as outlined below and it is hoped that volunteers will again come forward to achieve full coverage, although a study of the results has shown that the stretches between Cresswell and Seaton Sluice are not as important as the others (excepting the estuary of Wansbeck or Blyth) for waders. The months November - February are the most important ones but coverage is attempted between September - May. It would be appreciated if present counters would inform me as to whether they wish to continue with their particular stretches of coastline, and if any new volunteers - individuals or small groups would let me know which areas they would be interested in taking on if available.

I suggest that counters liaise with those doing adjoining stretches so that boundary areas are not double counted, and I will include a list of areas and counters in a later bulletin to facilitate this.

The actual count dates have not as yet been received but I will publish these as soon as possible. If participants are unable to complete a count on a particular date the nearest alternative would be acceptable if a substitute counter cannot be persuaded to volunteer !

Division of the coastline is as follows :-

Budle Pt - Seahouses, Seahouses - Beadnell, Beadnell - Howick Burn, Howick Burn - Boulmer, Boulmer - Alnmouth, Alnmouth - Amble, Amble - Chevington Burn, Chevington Burn - Cresswell (including ponds), Cresswell - Newbiggin - Newbiggin - Wansbeck Estuary (Including Estuary), Wansbeck Estuary - Blyth Estuary (Including Blyth Estuary), Blyth Estuary - Seaton Sluice, Seaton Sluice - St. Marys (Including Island) St. Marys - Tynemouth.

Alan Heavisides



TYNESIDE BIRD CLUB

K. G. DURES (Secretary)

T.B.C. 5 Bath Terrace Tynemouth Tyne & Wear. Tel: North Shields 75928

JUNE 1981

SUMMARY

Sea-bird passage was well recorded during the period of predominantly N winds during the last week of the month. In particular large numbers of Manx Shearwaters, Gannets, Common Scoter and Kittiwakes were recorded many N. Both Arctic and Great Skuas were off the coast between the 17th and 28th, and a Sabine's Gull was seen off Seaton Sluice on the 13th.

The first returning passage waders put in an appearance towards the end of the month and included Ruff, Green Sandpiper, Spotted Redshank and Whimbrel.

A month of variable weather is unlikely to have adversely affected many species but several passerine species were low in numbers in the Coquetdale study areas presumably as a result of the late spring snow.

A Honey Buzzard over West Monkseaton was an unexpected visitor, as was a Lesser Grey Shrike found near Black Law, Lindisfarne NNR on the 4th which remained in the area until the 10th this being only the fifth Northumberland Record.

CLASSIFIED LIST

Red-throated Diver/Diver sp.

Only recorded at Seaton Sluice where a total of 17 mostly N. between 17th and 28th (SSWT).

Little Grebe

Breeding confirmed at Holywell (2 broods) and Backworth, two-six recorded at Swallow, Arcot, Ryal, Howlett Hill Quarry and Capheaton.

Great Crested Grebe

Broods of four and one noted at Colt Crag, up to three at Whittle Dene and one-two at Capheaton, Cresswell Pond, Catcleugh, Caistron, Arcot and Langley Dam. A single N. off Seaton Sluice on 26th (SSWT).

Black-necked Grebe

Probably three pairs present at the breeding site, one young about two weeks old being present mid-month.

Fulmar

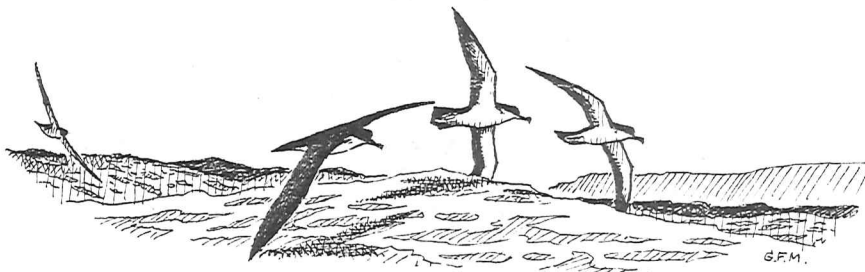
Noted at Snableazes Quarry, Ratheugh Crag, Howlett Hill, Longhoughton Quarries, Little Mill Quarry, and Hipps Heugh near Cullernose (CED et al). A single E. over Seaton Burn on 20th (MSH).

Sooty Shearwater

Two N. on 26th and a single N. on the 27th off Seaton Sluice (SSWT et al).

Manx Shearwater

Passage N. recorded off Seaton Sluice on 13 dates between the 1st and 29th. A monthly total of 3,197 were recorded with 400-600 on the 17th, 21st, 26th, 27th and 28th. Smaller numbers were recorded elsewhere.



Gannet

Again most were recorded N off Seaton Sluice with a total of 2,680 noted there between 12th and 29th, including 874 on the 21st and 670 on the 26th (SSWT et al).

Cormorant

A single bird inland at Seaton Burn on the 10th (RGW).

Heron

Up to 11 noted at Lindisfarne during the month with one-four recorded at usual localities. Two Heronries were discovered near Netherwitton containing 16 nests in total.

Mute Swan

Cygnets noted at Jesmond Dene, Caistron, Hartburn and Capheaton. Maxima of 145 were at Berwick on the 3rd (AH), 36 in Coquet Estuary on the 18th (DRH) and 15 in Blyth estuary on the 1st (MLL). A pair on the sea off Hadston on the 24th (AMB).

Whooper Swan

The Grindon bird was present throughout the month (MLL).

Canada Goose

Up to 95 noted at Colt Crag where two pairs each noted with three young (RW). N. passage apparent with 19 over Hauxley on the 3rd (DRH) and 20-24 N. over Cowpen on the morning of the 13th and perhaps the same birds at Cresswell Pond in the afternoon (CMA/WAK). Singles on the Tyne at Blaydon on the 2nd, at Grindon on the 28th and on the sea at Seaton Sluice on the 23rd.

Shelduck

Up to 13 adults in Coquet Estuary with one brood of young. Broods also noted at Hauxley and Cresswell (2). A total of 9 S. and 4 N. off Seaton Sluice between 17th and 24th (SSWT).

Wigeon

Three broods totalling at least eight young noted at the now regular breeding site (LGM). Three at Newton Pool on 4th (JG), a single drake at Linnshiels on 14th (AH) and a pair at Warkworth Lane Pond on the 27th (PWD). Five at Grindon on 21st and 28th (LGM).

Gadwall

A pair at Cresswell Pond on the 9th (DRH).

Teal

Small numbers at usual inland areas breeding confirmed at Linnshiels and Threestoneburn. Seven at Cresswell Pond on the 17th (AMB) and at Grindon on the 28th (IGM).

Mallard

Widespread breeding reports from usual locations including Beal Sands where a total of 95 young counted. Flocks of up to 50 at Gosforth Park, 42 at Grindon and 25 at Whittle Dene noted.

Garganey

A pair briefly present at West Holywell on the 3rd (JEF).

Shoveler

One-three noted at Cresswell Pond, Brenkley, Grindon and Lindisfarne. 3 N. off Seaton Sluice on the 24th.

Pochard

Probably five broods at Holywell by mid month (CED). Up to four drakes at Cresswell and Swallow Ponds during the month, and a single drake at Grindon on 11th and 25th (AMB/RJ/MLL et al).

Ferruginous Duck

The Hollywell drake was still present on the 1st (KIB/WAK).

Tufted Duck

Six broods at Holywell, single broods at six other localities. 58 present at Whittle Dene by the end of the month, up to 30 at Capheaton, and 10-15 at Grindon, Arcot and Cresswell.

Eider Duck

Up to 650 gathered off Longhoughton Steel on the 9th were mostly drakes (PRW). Up to 25 recorded in the Seaton Sluice-St. Marys area were mainly immature drakes.

Long-tailed Duck

One recorded N. off Seaton Sluice on the 20th (SSWT).

Common Scoter

Heavy passage noted off Seaton Sluice between the 13th and 28th when a total of 1560 N. with a maximum of 224 N. on the 20th. (SSWT).

Velvet Scoter

A single N. off Seaton Sluice on the 26th (SSWT).

Goldeneye

Single drakes during the month off Seaton Sluice, at Seaton Burn, Berwick and Blyth. Ducks noted at Newton Pool and Howlett Hill Quarry Pond.

Red-breasted Merganser

Singles N. off Seaton Sluice on the 25th and 26th and one S. on the 27th (SSWT/KIB).

Gosander

At least two broods on the Wansbeck, a creche of 21 young at Caistron on the 9th, and a single young with a female at Beltingham on the 14th. A drake at Bywell on the 1st, a moulting drake at Warkworth on the 19th, and a drake at Beal on the 18th. Flocks of 7 flying upstream at Stocksfield on the 26th and 11 at Derwent Reservoir on the 28th.

Honey Buzzard

Report received of one arriving from the N. over West Monkseaton allotments on the 7th mobbed by Herring Gulls and Lapwings it departed towards the SE over Marden Estate (SY).

Hen Harrier

A male and a female reported to have been seen regularly in the vicinity of Greenlea Lough during the month (per SJH).

Sparrowhawk

Reported from several breeding areas. A female plucked a young sparrow in a small garden at Cochrane Park Estate on the 12th.

Kestrel

A good breeding year in many parts of the county, details later.

Black Grouse

A lek of 13 cocks at Harwood Forest on the 12th (MH). A single cock at Threestoneburn on the 14th (AMB).

Quail

A bird heard singing for over an hour at Holywell Pond on the 2nd (DRH).

Coot

Over 100 at Capheaton, 60 at Cresswell, 87 at Grindon and 40 at Swallow Pond during the month.

Oystercatcher

Small numbers noted at usual inland haunts. On the coast 19 at Blyth on the 17th and up to 32 at Beal during the month.

Little Ringed Plover

Reports of a single at Gosforth Park on the 17th (MRS/DG) and two at Whittle Dene on the 20th one being present there on the 27th (JSB).

Ringed Plover

On the coast 23 at Beal on the 18th, 14 at Berwick on the 4th, and 16 at Blyth estuary on the 15th. Up to 12 adults at Backworth and at least three young by mid month. Breeding also confirmed near Bardon Mill and Caistron.

Golden Plover

38 at Lindisfarne on the 28th (JDL).

Grey Plover

As many as 150 at Fenham Flats on the 9th (JG).

Lapwing

Early breeders appear to have been hit badly by the late April snow. Flocking apparent from the 24th when 350 at Widdrington, 100 at Grindon on the 25th and 150 at Ilderton Dod on the 28th.

Sanderling

Eight at Ross on the 9th (JG).

Little Stint

A late bird at Backwrth on the 22nd (JDM).

Dunlin

Still 6 at Beal on the 18th (JDL). One-two at Backworth until the 14th (GFM) and a single at Cresswell Pond on 24th (AMB).

Ruff

A single male at Backworth on the 25th increased to six by the 29th most still in partial breeding plumage (RJ/JDM et al).

Snipe

Well reported from suitable breeding areas.

Woodcock

Noted Roding at many usual woodland localities.

Whimbrel

The first was recorded at Beal Sands on the 7th (JDL), seven were on the Farne Islands on the 13th (MW) and a single N. over Seaton Sluice on the 25th (KIB).

Curlew

Up to 40 at Lindisfarne during the month.

Spotted Redshank

Five birds in full or partial summer plumage at Backworth on the 29th (GM).

Redshank

Up to 50 were at Backworth by the end of the month where two broods noted. (RJ et al).
Up to 50 noted at Holy Island and 18 in Blyth estuary.

Greenshank

Three near Holy Island causeway on the 4th (JDL).

Green Sandpiper

A single bird at Backworth on the 29th (GM).

Common Sandpiper

Well reported from usual inland haunts. At least three were at Backworth by the 29th (GM).

Arctic Skua

A single was off Seaton Sluice on the 1st, and then a total of 35 noted there between 17th and 28th (SSWT). Singles also seen at Blyth and Hadston between these dates (AMB).

Great Skua

A total of 29 N. off Seaton Sluice between 17th and 28th (SSWT).

Little Gull

Off Seaton Sluice singles N. on the 1st and S. on the 4th (SSWT). Immatures were noted at Hauxley on the 3rd (DRH), Backworth on the 26th (RJ) and Druridge Pool on the 29th (JEF).

Sabines Gull

An adult bird was reported flying N. off Seaton Sluice on the 13th (KIB).

Black-headed Gull

1000-1200 pairs at Holborn Moss on the 10th (JG). 40 pairs on Dryburn Moor during the month (MSH).

Common Gull

Only report was of one at Backworth on the 14th (GFM). Two pairs nested at the usual site in NW Durham.

Lesser Black-backed Gull

35-36 pairs were sitting on eggs in the usual Northumberland breeding site, in addition a pair bred at Allendale and near Plennmeller.

Herring Gull

A bird reported as an albino of this species noted in the Tyne estuary 20th-21st (RH).

Glaucous Gull

One year old birds noted at Amble harbour 16th-26th (CED/DRH) and in the Tyne estuary 20th-21st (RH).

Kittiwake

Heavy passage was apparent on several dates. 285 N. off Blyth in one hour on the 17th. Between the 24th and 28th up to 2000/hour N. were recorded at Seaton Sluice in particular.

Roseate Tern

A single bird was seen to visit Hauxley pond in company with other terns on the 13th and 21st (WAK).

Common Tern

Two visited Swallow Pond on the 22nd (RJ).

Little Tern

Up to three noted off Holy Island causeway (ES et al).

Auk (sp)

111 N. in an hour on the evening of the 17th off Blyth (AMB). Off Seaton Sluice 984N. on the 21st and 1175 N. on the 26th (SSWT).

Guillemot

About 200 gathered on the sea near Dunstanburgh on the 17th (KIB).

Razorbill

Three amongst the Guillemots at Dunstanburgh on the 17th (KIB).

Stock Dove

Noted at Felton, Roddam, Lilburn Burn and Canada.

Turtle Dove

One was on the wires at Ross farm on the 9th (JG).

Cuckoo

Probably 20 individuals recorded.

Barn Owl

Broods located near Whitley Bay and Mitford and two pairs reported sitting on eggs in Allenbanks area during the month. One over Gosforth Park racecourse on the 26th.

Little Owl

Pair reared young near Housteads, and a pair which reared young near Vindolanda were reported as being on a second clutch of eggs early in the month (SJH). Singles at Barcombe, Alnwick and Dalton.

Tawny Owl

A few scattered sightings, present in many of the woods in the south-central Sparrowhawk study area.

Long-eared Owl

Heard at Dipton Mill, Dipton Wood and near Ponteland. At least three young fledged at Harwood Forest. (TJ).

Short-eared Owl

Breeding probably successful at Harwood (IK/MH) and a single at Threestoneburn.

Swift

200-250 noted gathering around Backworth and Swallow Ponds on several dates.

Kingfisher

Singles noted at Hesleyside and Bywell (HWR/RGW), and reported breeding on the South Tyne mid month (SJH).

Green Woodpecker

Noted at Langleeford and Linhope.

Great Spotted Woodpecker

Noted at Stocksfield, Devils Water, Ridley Hall and Gosforth Park.

House Martin

16 nests on Colt Crag boat house (RW) and 18 nests on Burnstones viaduct (LGM).

Tree Pipit

Widespread reports from usual breeding areas.

Meadow Pipit

Numbers slightly down since last year in Upper Coquetdale and drastically reduced in Sinderhope area (MSH/WGS).

Yellow Wagtail

Widespread reports from breeding areas.

Grey Wagtail

Well reported, several fledged young seen.

Pied Wagtail

The Coquetdale population appears to be down on last year (MSH/WGS). A pair hatched young in a nest located in front of the engine of a drilling rig at West Chevington despite frequent moving of the machine and attendance by the drillers (DRH). A similar situation at Caistron where a pair nesting in a dumper truck in daily use (LJM).

Redstart

Numbers reported as well down at Allenbanks with four nests found compared with 15 last year (SJH). Many pairs reported from elsewhere, being particularly numerous in the Wansbeck Valley area this year (AH et al).

Whinchat

Many reported feeding young in usual localities by last week of the month.

Stonechat

None reported!

Wheatear

In the two Coquetdale study areas breeding populations reduced by as much as 50% since last year, details to follow. (MSH et al).

Reed Warbler

Two reported singing at Gosforth Park on the 23rd (RJ).

Lesser Whitethroat

Only reported from Armstrong Park, Heaton Park and Jesmond Dene, the latter duetting with a road drill!

Whitethroat

Reasonably well reported from widespread localities.

Wood Warbler

Many heard singing in usual localities. At Allenbanks 17 singing males compared with 11 last year (SJH).

Willow Warbler

Widespread reports, but seemingly very many fewer than last year in the Allenbanks area (SJH).

Goldcrest

The pair nesting two feet above an incubating Sparrowhawk near Ponteland successfully fledged all eight young!

Spotted Flycatcher

Reasonably numerous, several pairs breeding in Jesmond Dene.

Pied Flycatcher

Details from breeding areas later but numbers appear to be high. A female at Newton Pool on the 7th (JG).

Long-tailed Tit

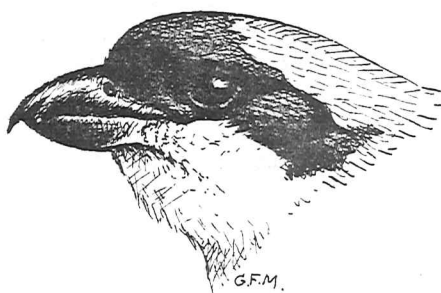
Family parties noted at Tarsset, Hartburn and Hulne Park.

Marsh Tit

Fledged young noted at Devils Water and near Ponteland.

Lesser Grey Shrike

A superb bird, thought to be a male, located on the boundary fence of the Lindisfarne Reserve at Black Low on the 4th was last seen in that area on the 10th, this being only the fourth Northumberland record. (JDL et al).



Tree Sparrow

Two pairs used nest boxes at Kirkley Hall.

Goldfinch

Seemingly numerous this year pairs with young and small flocks being noted at 18 locations.

Siskin

Several reports from Kielder area and Langleeford. About 25 at Debdon on the 3rd (AMB).

Redpoll

Two-six noted at Debdon, Threestoneburn, Bolam, Holywell, Holystone, Hulne Park and Jesmond.

Crossbill

A flock of 25 at Dipton Wood on the 17th and 12 at Kiln Pit Hill on the 28th (BNR). A pair at Broomlee on the 7th (IGM), and a dead male with a badly damaged beak found near a school window at North Shields on the 17th (IC).

Bullfinch

One-two noted at Riding Mill, Jesmond Dene, Tarsset, Holystone and Hartburn.

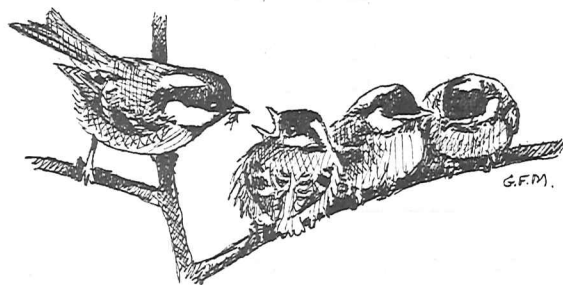
Hawfinch

A family party feeding in cherry trees in Jesmond Dene at the end of the month (MPF).

Corn Bunting

Singing birds at Druridge, Swallow Pond, Longbenton, East Benton Farm, Shiremoor and Backworth Pond.

July records to Alan Heavisides, 8 Leland Place, Kirkhill, Morpeth NE61 2AN
in Vooos order and by 8th August at latest please.



List of Contributors

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C.E. Douglas	M.S. Hodgson	G.F. Miller	Seaton Sluice Watch Tower

Indoor Meetings

The following indoor meetings have now been arranged:-

September 10	Waders by Mike Pienkowski af the Wader Study Group.
October 8	AGM and lecture to be arranged.
November 12	"The Whooper Swans Year" by Marc Brazil who colour ringed the Icelandic birds seen in Northumberland last winter.
December 10	Lapland by Val McFarland.

Field Outings

Sunday, 20th September, 1981

COASTAL WALK BOULMER/CRASTER/DUNSTANBURGH AREA

Coach departs - Hancock Museum, Newcastle 8 a.m. & Baxters Cafe, Tynemouth 8.15 a.m.

LEADER T.B.A.

Cost £2.60.

Please Note In line with the recommendations discussed during our April meeting, we are now asking for full payment to be made at the time and in confirmation of each booking. Cheques to be made payable to Tyneside Bird Club.

Please make all reservations for the above prior to 31st August, 1981, by contacting Ron Cook, 42, Shaws Park, Hexham NE46 3BJ. Tel. Hexham (0434) 605916.

Sunday, 18th October, 1981

HOLY ISLAND (crossing times 11 a.m. - 5.18 p.m.)

Coach departs - Hancock Museum, Newcastle 8 a.m. & Baxters Cafe, Tynemouth 8.15 a.m.

LEADER T.B.A.

Cost £2.90

Please make all reservations via Ron Cook, prior to 30th September, 1981.

Lindisfarne Bird Watching Week - September 5th - September, 12th

Mr. G.E. Manser, 7 Rectory Meadow, Chinnor, Oxford OX9 4PJ is organising a weeks birdwatching based at the Castle View, Holy Island from the above date. Mr. Manser is a regular visitor to the island and he contributes a summary of his observations to the club for use in our annual report.

Cost is £72.00 all in, i.e. full board. School pupils and students under 21 - cost £68.00.

If you are interested please contact Mr. Manser direct.

Fulmar Enquiry

Would club members please let the recorder know of any records of fulmar breeding sites or inland colonies as announced in the April bulletin.

Committee Nominations

We require nominations for committee by 17th September 1981 addressed to the club secretary Keith Dures, 5 Bath Tce., Tynemouth, Tyne & Wear.

Nominations must be proposed and seconded by club members and the nominee must be willing to stand. The committee will be elected at the AGM on Thursday 8th October 1981. Postal and proxy votes are not admissable.

The following members are not standing for re-election - Peter West and Ron Cook.

Coastal Wader Counts

It is hoped that counts will be made on the following dates: September 13th, October 18th, November 15th, December 13th, January 10th, February 7th, March 14th, April 25th, May 23rd. Priority counts are the December, January and February dates.

Few people have come forward as yet to volunteer as counters (see last months bulletin), don't be shy, if you can walk, count and identify the common shore waders we need your help!

A. Heavisides

National Wildfowl Counts - September 1981 - March 1982

The regular once monthly counts of winter wildfowl commence in September and it would be helpful if any observers unable or unwilling to again count the waters they visited last winter could let me know as soon as possible.

At the time of writing I do not have counters for the following waters:-

Holburn Moss, Belford
Catcleugh Reservoir, Redesdale
Hallington Reservoir
Colt Crag Reservoir
Little Swinburne Reservoir
Rayburn Lake
Rothley Lakes

Anyone interested in covering any of the above waters would they please let me know.

Geoff Macfarlane
31, Wreay Walk
Cramlington
Northumberland
NE23 6LJ.

B.T.O. Nightjar Survey

Could completed record cards please be sent to me as soon as possible. Nil returns are also important. I would also be interested in learning of any unconfirmed reports of Nightjars as it may be possible to establish from local inhabitants whether birds remained for any length of time.

Geoff Macfarlane

Northumbria Books:

Natural and local history books, bought and sold. List available (stamp please). Lists of books required welcome. New books supplied on request. Tel: Cramlington 712508 or write, Northumbria Books, 31 Herdlaw, Cramlington, Northumberland NE23 6AH.



TYNESIDE BIRD CLUB

K. G. DURES (Secretary)

T.B.C. 5 Bath Terrace Tynemouth Tyne & Wear. Tel: North Shields 75928

JULY, 1981

SUMMARY.

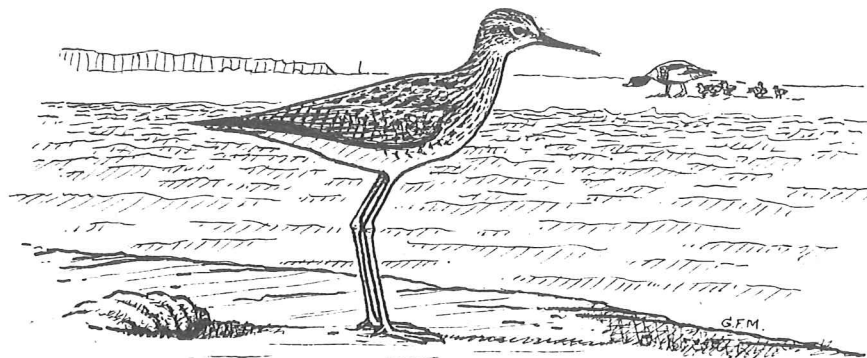
A rather dull but quite dry month excepting during the period 22nd-24th when fresh northerly winds were accompanied by heavy rain, the weather becoming more settled and sunny during the last week.

Wader passage continued with several Greenshank, Ruff, Green Sandpiper and Whimbrel being recorded. Less expected waders were two Temmincks Stints at Backworth, and the rarest bird of the month a Lesser Yellowlegs found at Budle Bay on the 12th.

Manx Shearwaters moved N throughout the month, a few Sooty Shearwaters were recorded and both Artic and Great Skuas were seen in reasonable numbers. An adult Mediterranean Gull was present for a period, and an out of season record was that of an Iceland Gull at Seaton Sluice on the 26th.

Other less usual species reported included Bittern, Quail, Hobby and Reed Warbler.

Breeding study summaries were received on Tawny Owl, Kestrel, Wheatear and Sparrowhawk giving an interesting insight into the fortunes of these species in particular areas; several other reports are outstanding.



CLASSIFIED LIST

Red-throated Diver

A total of four between 18th and 25th off Seaton Sluice (SSWT).

Little Grebe

Broods noted at Backworth, Swallow Pond, Warkworth Lane, Arcot Ponds and Holy Island Lough.

Great Crested Grebe

At least four pairs attempted to breed at Kielder water but most failed due to the ever rising water level. One pair eventually reared one chick. (SJP) At Seaton Burn on the 21st. an adult was carrying two young and a third well grown juvenile also present (RJ). 1-2 noted at Catcleugh, Whittle Dene and Arcot Ponds.

Black-necked Grebe

By the end of the month at the breeding site four young present (probably broods of one and three). (RW etal)

Fulmar

At least one well grown chick at Ratchaugh quarry crag on the 9th (CMA). 13 birds present at Roughinglinn (near Ford) on the 15th (CMA).

Sooty Shearwater

A total of 10 N recorded off Seaton Sluice between 12th and 25th (SSWT).

Manx Shearwater

A monthly total of 2436N off Seaton Sluice being noted there on 15 different days. The largest daily count was of 924N on the 18th. Small numbers noted elsewhere along the coast.

Gannet

Small parties noted off-shore at usual locations including Seaton Sluice where largest N movement of 619 on 18th and 404 on the 25th recorded.

Bittern

Not recorded at Gosforth Park since last winter, a single bird was seen there on the 13th, 17th and 29th (AHB/DRS etal).

Heron

Noted at 14 localities. Up to 13 roosted at Warkworth and 9-10 in the Druridge and Lindisfarne area by mid month.

Mute Swan

315 counted at Berwick on the 25th (AWB). Up to 14 noted in Coquet estuary. Broods noted at Seaton Burn and Warkworth Butts. The Cob of the Jesmond Dene pair died of gout (vet's autopsy) on 7th July, the hen continues to look after the cygnet (MPF).

Canada Goose

12 at Colt Crag on 12th (LGM) was the only report.

Shelduck

Broods noted at Coquet estuary, near Bondicarr, Cresswell (2), Druridge Pool and Warkworth Lane Pond. A single N off Seaton Sluice on the 22nd.

Wigeon

Three at Grindon on the 12th and one on the 25th (LGM). A single female at Newton on the 14th (ES etal) and one N off Seaton Sluice on the 22nd (SSWT).

Teal

Noted as unusually common in Coquetdale breeding areas this year (BG/IK). Two pairs bred at Threestoneburn (AMB). 11 were noted at Brenkley on the 25th (LGM). A total of 6N off Seaton Sluice during the month (SSWT).

Mallard

Many broods noted including seven at Swallow Ponds. A maximum of 96 birds at Gosforth Park on 11th (DRS). A total of 24N off Seaton Sluice, 18th-29th.

Shoveler

Numbers fluctuated at Gosforth Park with a maximum of 17 counted there on the 11th (DRS etal). 10-11 at Newton Pool during the month (KR etal). Four at Brenkley on 27th, and 3 at Arcot Ponds on 31st. (MSH/LJM). A brood at Grindon on 25th (LGM).

Pochard

Four at Cresswell Pond on 22nd (DRH) and a single at Swallow Pond on the 3rd (LJM).

Tufted Duck

Broods noted at Seaton Burn, Byerhope reservoir, Whittle Dene, Ryal and Capheaton. Up to 150 moulting birds at Whittle Dene by end of the month (MR et al). 35 at Colt Crag and 21 at Broomlee on the 12th and 25 at Sweethope on 18th (LGM).

Scaup

Five moulting drakes on Cresswell Pond on 22nd at least three remaining on 26th. (DRH/BG/IK).

Eider

Up to 300 gathered in Hauxley sound mid month, and several broods noted in Coquet estuary. A maximum of 34 counted off St. Marys during the month.

Common Scoter

Northerly passage noted mainly off Seaton Sluice on eleven dates between 5th and 29th. Seaton Sluice totalled 726 for the month with a peak count of 279 on the 19th.

Velvet Scoter

Noted N off Seaton Sluice between 18th and 24th, a total of 17 being recorded.

Goldeneye

Only records were of one at Allenheads on the 5th and two at Hadston Lake on the 26th (LGM).

Red-breasted Merganser

A flock of 10 was at Bondicarr on the 10th while 16 were off Bamburgh on the 11th (DRH/DGB). Three N off St. Marys on the 18th (MW). A total of 15N off Seaton Sluice between 18th and 26th (SSWT).

Goosander

Probably five broods reared on the Wansbeck and its tributaries (AH et al). Two broods totalling 9 young in the Holystone area on the Coquet (BG/IK). Two broods at Bordon Mill, one at Staward Pele, one at Featherstone and one at Bellingham (LGM).

Sparrowhawk

Noted at 15 localities, including Rothbury's main street where one was watched hunting swallows.

Kestrel

Noted at about 20 localities several reports of three-four together suggesting family parties. A nest contained three week old young in the North Cheviots as late as the 25th (AMB/AH). Near Killingworth a brood of five young ringed from six eggs on 19th June. A male fledged on 10th July and came down a chimney 150 yards away. It was kept for two days and then returned to the nest which still contained the other young, beware of a 'sooty' falcon in this area !

Merlin

A single bird was at Chevington Burn on 31st (LGM).

Hobby

One seen briefly near Ponteland on the 14th (AH/JR).

Red Grouse

It is reported that many birds lost their clutches during the late April snow, most of these relaid however and numbers are reasonably high on most Grouse moors in the county.

Blackcock

A female with three young, and probably a second with one young as well as at least one cock seen at Threestoneburn during the month (AMB).

Partridge

Pairs with young noted at Threestoneburn, Calder, Hartburn and Netherwitton (AMB/AH) from the 12th on.

Quail

A bird both heard and seen well on the evening of the 4th near Thropton (ESM).

Water Rail

Two immature birds seen at Gosforth Park on the 8th (JEF).

Moorhen

Pairs bred successfully well into the Cheviots at Threestoneburn and High Bleakhope (AMB/AH). Three broods on Arcot Ponds (LJH).

Coot

Broods noted at Arcot, Brenkley and Swallow Ponds where 90 present by the end of the month. Numbers increased at Cresswell to 60 and at Seaton Burn to 310 by the months end.

Oystercatcher

Small numbers noted in breeding areas and 25 had gathered at Holystone by the 21st. (BG/IK). Between 40 and 65 noted on several dates during the month at St. Marys, Blyth estuary, Fenham flats and Coquet estuary. A maximum of 85 were at Hauxley Pool on the 3rd (DRH). The exposed mud at Gosforth Park attracted two on the 9th, an unusual locality for this species. (DRS)

Little Ringed Plover

A pair present at Backworth since May certainly attempted to breed and may have been successful as a full grown juvenile associated with these birds was seen on 29th June. Two additional adults joined the others about the 7th July and two juveniles were noted present on the 10th. Five (unaged) birds were seen together in flight on the 8th. A single bird at Druridge on the 29th (MN).

Ringed Plover

At least three broods hatched at Backworth over the summer, by the 30th 20 birds including 7 immatures were present there. Three-four pairs bred in Holystone area (BG/IK). 36 noted in Blyth estuary by the 31st (HG).

Golden Plover

Up to 35 noted on Hexhamshire Common on the 12th (BNR). Conspicuous on the coast from the 14th when up to 250 in Newton area, and a similar number in Budle Bay increasing there to 400 by the 25th. 450 noted at Fenham on the 16th, 500 noted at Bondicarr on the 26th were of the southern race (LGM). Much smaller flocks noted elsewhere.

Lapwing

Many post breeding flocks noted including up to 500 at Cresswell, 300-400 at Backworth and Bondicarr and 100-200 at Hauxley, Holy Island and Whittle Dene.

Knot

Eight noted off Seaton Sluice on the 12th (SSWT). Singles in breeding plumage at St. Marys on 20th (DGW) and Druridge on 26th (BG). Two in Coquet Estuary on the 24th (AH).

Sanderling

A single juvenile at St. Marys on 20th (DGW). 30 in breeding plumage at Holy Island on the 24th and 21 at Chevington Burn on the 26th (IK/BG).

Temmincks Stint

Two adult birds in breeding plumage first located at Backworth on the 5th still present on the 7th, one remaining until at least the 11th (KR/PWD/DRS/JDM etal).

Curlew Sandpiper

One still in partial summer plumage was at Boulmer on the 29th (MSH/WGS).

Purple Sandpiper

12-16 present at St. Marys from the 9th on (DGW/MW etal). A single noted on the Farne Islands on the 15th (DY/SY). Four at Holy Island on the 26th (IK).

Dunlin

Passage apparent during the month. Numbers fluctuated at Backworth a maximum count of 17 there on the 24th (KIB etal). Up to 100 were at Budle Bay and Boulmer towards the end of the month with 54 counted on Holy Island. 20-40 were noted in Coquet estuary, Blyth estuary and Cresswell pond during the last week with smaller numbers elsewhere.

Ruff

Numbers fluctuated at Backworth from three on the 2nd up to 16 on the 31st (JDM/MN etal). Elsewhere four were on Holy Island on the 29th, three at Cresswell Pond on 28th and two at Boulmer on 29th (MR/DRS/MSH etal). Singles noted at Chevington Burn, Coquet estuary and Hauxley lake.

Snipe

Up to five noted at usual ponds, 20 at Backworth on the 14th decreased to 10 by 30th (AMB).

Woodcock

Noted at six woodland localities.

Black-tailed Godwit

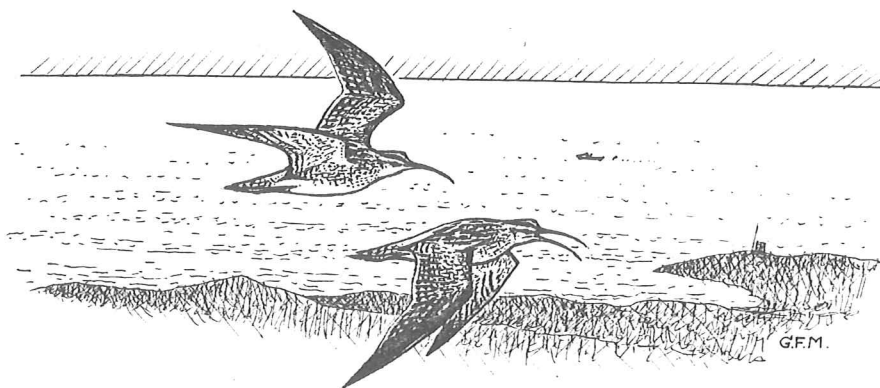
At Hauxley Pool a single on the 7th increased to two on the 9th/10th (DRH). A single at Backworth on 29th-30th (JH/AMB/MN).

Bar-tailed Godwit;

Four were at Hauxley Pond on the 3rd (DRH), one-four seen thereafter at Newton, St. Marys and Coquet Estuary. Up to 60 were at Lindisfarne by the 26th (JDL/IK). A total of 44N off Seaton Sluice between the 12th and 29th (SSWT).

Whimbrel

Well reported with singles and small flocks noted at 12 localities during the month. A loose flock of as many as 93 were counted between Bondicarr and Hauxley on the 27th (DRH).



Curlew

About 500 present at Lindisfarne from early in the month on (JDL etal). Small flocks up to 12 noted moving offshore and arriving off the sea from midmonth at St. Marys, Seaton Sluice (monthly total of 116N), Chevington and Hauxley. A post breeding gathering of about 130 at Holystone Haugh on the 12th (IK/BG).

Redshank

Numbers increased during the month at Fenham flats to 350 by the 26th (JDL). 110 noted in Coquet estuary on the 24th (AH). Up to 75 in Blyth estuary during the month. Up to 65 at St. Marys and 25 at Backworth.

Greenshank

Up to 12 noted at Fenham flats and 3 at Budle Bay during the month (JDL/DBG etal). Two at Gosforth Park 9th-15th, at Backworth 10th-31st (DRS/MN etal) and calling as they flew SW over Dipton Woods on the 30th (MR). A single bird at Hadston Lake on the 26th (LGM).

Lesser Yellowlegs

A single bird found in Budle Bay near Warren Mill by J Ginnever on the 12th, was seen again in that vicinity on the 14th (ES/DRS/JI). This is only the third Northumberland record.

Green Sandpiper

One-two present at Backworth between 15th and 30th (ME/KR etal). Two were on the Wansbeck near Angerton on the 18th (AH/MN) and singles on the 23rd at Gosforth Park (KG/TT) and Chevington Burn (HRS).

Common Sandpiper

Small numbers noted inland until end of the month, a flock of 25 gathered at Alwinton on the 2nd (BG). One-four on or near the coast at several localities from the 4th on.

Turnstone

Eight were on Seaton Sluice rocks on the 17th and at least 70 near St. Marys by the 27th (KIB). About 30 were at Boulmer on the 25th (MSH), and 20 at Tynemouth (RJ/TJ) and Coquet estuary (AH) by the 27th.

Artic Skua

Noted on many dates off Seaton Sluice where a monthly total of 153 recorded. Odd birds noted off Hauxley, St. Marys and Tynemouth.

Great Skua

Two-seven noted off Hauxley, Alnmouth and Tynemouth. Seaton Sluice recorded a monthly total of 99.

Mediterranean Gull

An adult in summer plumage noted on several dates 20th-30th between Seaton Sluice and St. Marys (DRS/DGW/JPD).

Little Gull

One-three present at Hadston Lake on dates between 25th-30th (LGM/DRH etal). A single immature at Backworth on the 6th (DRH). The offshore passage which has occurred during this period in recent years was again a high total of 141N being recorded at Seaton Sluice with smaller numbers noted elsewhere.

Black-headed Gull

An amazing record from Swallow Pond on the 5th of a bird presumably attempting to predate a Coots nest being attacked by two Coots who attempted to push the gull under water. The gull tried to take off but had a foot bitten off by one of the Coots. It then drifted to another nest where it attempted to rest but was again attacked, this time by about 18 Coots, who eventually managed to drown it !(per KD/MC).

Common Gull

Seven amongst a roost of other species at Seaton Sluice on the 6th (CMA). One-two noted at several localities thereafter. The first large flock was of 130 adults at Calder on the 24th (AMB), 30 being noted at Lucker the following day (BRS).

Lesser Black-backed Gull

Two present on Newcastle City Centre roof tops all month but breeding not proven (KR).

Iceland Gull

A first summer bird settled on the Seaton Sluice sewer outflow on the 26th (CB/ME/DRS).

Kittiwake

Light N movement off Hauxley on the 23rd (HRS) and off Holy Island on the 24th (IK).

Sandwich Tern

About 40 on Cresswell Pond on the 29th (MSH/WGS).

Roseate Tern

1-2 regularly visited Hauxley Pond (DRH etal). An adult noted feeding a juvenile on a jetty at Berwick on the 28th (DGB).

Commic Tern

About 100 on Cresswell Pond on the 29th (MSH/WGS etal).

Common Tern

Up to seven recorded at Swallow Pond, five at Gosforth Park and two at Backworth.

Little Tern

One-three at Bamburgh, Newton, Dunstonburgh, Beadnell and Holy Island.

Black Tern

A single bird with other tern species at Hauxley on the 10th (JEF).

Guillemot

About 60 on the sea and cliffs at Dunstonburgh on the 7th (RJ). A total of about 660 counted in the first 40 miles out from Tynemouth from the Denmark boat, many young birds being seen (MPF). A minimum of 55 dead and dying birds floating on the Tyne opposite the fish quay on the morning of the 23rd. Several of these birds had no wings and it is thought that they had been trapped in fishing nets of boats fishing out of North Shields (WER).

Razorbill

Twelve on the sea below Dunstanburgh castle on the 7th (RJ). At least 20 well out from Tynemouth (about 30 miles) on the 17th included several young (MPF).

Stock Dove

Reported only from Backworth and Reaveley Green.

Turtle Dove

A single near Newbiggin on the 25th (MSH).

Cuckoo

One at Calder on the 11th (AMB), two at Holy Island on the 29th (MR) and a juvenile at Bamburgh on the 30th (DGB).

Barn Owl

Singles noted at Acklington and Corbridge (KD/MPF/DKH).

Little Owl

Singles noted at Tronwell, Matfen and Chollerton (AH/RW). A pair bred successfully at Burradon (BG).

Tawny Owl

Noted at nine localities including a juvenile at Bamburgh on the 29th.

Long-eared Owl

A fledged brood of two-three young at Kellas plantation on the 3rd., and probably a different brood of two on the 10th (BNR). An adult seen and heard at Dipton Wood on the 15th (BNR).

Short-eared Owl

Of two pairs present at Threestoneburn one pair definitely bred (AMB). Singles noted at Hexhamshire common, near Kielder reservoir and Raylees common (BNR).

Swift

Easily the largest gathering was of 250 at Swallow Pond on the 17th (LJM). A pair noted nesting in a wall at Wooler (AMB).

Kingfisher

A single bird seen at Hulne Park on the 11th and 15th (JEF/KIB/GSR). One seen on three dates on the Coquet near Holystone suggests breeding (IK/BG).

Green Woodpecker

One pair successfully bred and a second possibly so at Kielder forest (SJP). One at Bamburgh on 24th July (DGB).

Great Spotted Woodpecker

At least six pairs bred at Kielder forest (SJP). The only other report was of one at Chevington Burn on the 15th (GM).

Sand Martin

Small parties at localities away from breeding areas from mid month and a steady S movement over the sea and dunes at Druridge Bay on the 26th (BG/IK).

Swallow

Exceptionally plentiful throughout Coquetdale, three nests in a recently erected bus shelter in Harbottle (BG/IK). Many young apparent on Holy Island during the month (IK). A steady S movement of mainly juveniles noted at Druridge Bay on the 26th (BG/IK), at about the time second broods were hatching at Brenkley (MSH). Up to 600 roosting at Chevington Burn on the 31st (LGM).

Yellow Wagtail

Numbers steadily increased at St. Marys until the 30th when 23 counted perched on a wire fence, surrounding a kestrel perched on a fence post (JPD). Up to five pairs at Whittle Dene plus several juveniles (JSB et al). Young also noted at Warkworth Lane and Backworth.

Grey Wagtail

Adults and juveniles noted at 10 usual riverine localities.

Pied Wagtail

Many young birds in widely scattered localities.

White Wagtail

An adult bird by the Briardene Burn on the 27th (MW).

Dipper

Many immatures on usual rivers.

Redstart;

Pairs with fledged young noted at Milbourne and Stagshaw, others seen at Reaveley Green, Threestoneburn, Ellington, Whitfield and Kielder. A juvenile was trapped at Bamburgh on the 29th when a female type on Holy Island (BRS/MR). A juvenile was at Priors Park on the 31st (MC).

Whinchat

Family parties common in the Cheviots (AH/AMB). and about 30 birds present in the Druridge Bay area mid month (GM).

Stonechat

A pleasing number of records after last months nil report. A pair have been present all summer at Bamburgh golf course (DGB). A pair with one young at Embleton on the 25th (KIB) and a pair at Newton Pool (ES/KIB etal). Singles also at Alnmouth and Cresswell (ES/DRS/JI etal).

Wheatear

Breeding confirmed in three areas of Holy Island (IK) and several newly fledged young in the St. Marys Island area late in the month. One-three noted during the last week at Hauxley, Chevington, Boulmer and Cresswell.

Ring Ousel

Up to two males noted in the College Valley on the 13th (GC etal).

Mistle Thrush

12-13 noted at Threestoneburn, Matfen and Bamburgh golf course mid month.

Grasshopper Warbler

Noted as very scarce in Kielder this year only three singing birds located (SJP). Birds noted reeling throughout the month at Berwick Hill, Chevington Burn, and Druridge Pool.

Sedge Warbler

Still singing mid month in usual areas. On the coast 10 were at Hauxley on the 11th-12th, and a similar number at Bamburgh on the 25th and 29th (HRS/BRS).

Reed Warbler

Up to three reported as seen and heard at Gosforth Park during the month (ES/RJ/TJ). Two noted at Chevington Burn on the 15th. (GM).

Lesser Whitethroat;

Singles noted at Jesmond Dene, Holywell Pond, and on Holy Island on the 29th (MR/MPF/WAK)

Whitethroat;

Up to three noted at 10 scattered localities including Bamburgh where three present on the 25th and 29th.

Blackcap

1-2 present in Priors Park on the 14th and 26th-29th (MC).

Wood Warbler

Seven singing birds located at Kielder this year, the highest number for seven years (SJP).

Chiffchaff

Noted singing at ten localities on dates up to 15th. Unusually a bird was singing on Holy Island on the 3rd and 9th (IK/JDL).

Willow Warbler

Noted moving through suburban gardens from the 20th on. One-two were at Priors Park 6th-22nd, increasing to six 23rd-27th. (MC). Five were at Bamburgh on the 25th and about 24 there on the 29th (BRS).

Spotted Flycatcher

Abundant in Kielder area and breeding confirmed at Seaton Sluice, Morden Park, and Matfen. Seven were at Bamburgh on the 29th (BRS).

Long-tailed Tit

Family party of about 10 at Gosforth Park on the 28th (RJ/TJ). Three at Hulne Park on 11th (KIB).

Marsh Tit

Noted at Howick Dene, Riding Mill and Chillingham.

Willow Tit

Noted at Brenkley and Barrasford.

Coal Tit

Several young apparent in breeding areas.

Blue Tit;

<u>Nest boxes -</u>	<u>Place</u>	<u>Pairs</u>	<u>No. of young fledged</u>
1981	Eshott	5	40
	Angerton	4	31
	Mitford	11	78
	Hartburn	7	52
	Nunykirk	6	60

One Blue Tit successfully fledged from a nest containing seven Great Tits at Nunykirk.

Great Tit

<u>Nest Boxes</u>	<u>Place</u>	<u>Pairs</u>	<u>No. of young fledged</u>
	Eshott	9	47
	Angerton	7	36
	Mitford	14	102
	Hartburn	12	94
	Nunykirk	11	87

Nuthatch

Only report was of one at Matfen on 26th (RW).

Treecreeper

Noted at eight localities including two on the coast at Priors Park on the 19th and at Bamburgh on the 29th when a juvenile trapped (MC/BRS).

Jay

Two family parties noted at Gosforth Park.

Raven

Two in the South Cheviots on the 11th (AMB).

Starling

About 10,000 roosting at Laverock Hall Farm, Blyth throughout the month were thought to be mainly juveniles.

Tree sparrow

Five at Milborne was only report.

Chaffinch

A newly fledged bird was seen being fed in the straight lonnen on Holy Island on the 3rd. No breeding records had been found when compiling Birds of Lindisfarne (IK).

Goldfinch

Seemingly quite numerous pairs, small flocks and fledged young being reported from 15 localities. The largest flock was of 26 at Matfen on the 12th (RW).

Siskin

Family parties noted at Kielder, Threestoneburn and the Wanneys.

Linnet

16 nests were found at Priors Park compared with 4 last year (MC). Noted as plentiful on Holy Island during the first week (IK) and small numbers through the Bamburgh area on the 25th (BRS).

Redpoll

Small group and family parties noted at Kielder, Chillingham, Swallow Pond, Hexhamshire Common, Threestoneburn, Choppington, Bradford Kaims and Bamburgh.

Crossbill

At the West end of Hexham a single on the 12th and 11 on the 20th., while at Eastburn, Hexham one on the 24th (KD).

Bullfinch

Two fledged broods noted at Matfen. One-two at Riding Mill and Seaton Sluice.

Hawfinch

Odd birds seen in Jesmond Dene, and a family party of five seen at Beaumont School, Hexham on the 7th (KD).

Corn Bunting

Noted singing at Red Row, Low Hauxley, Druridge, Cresswell Pond, Chevington Burn and Warkworth Lane.

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1981 Breeding Study Summaries

Tawny Owl - Kielder Forest Study area

A total of 50 clutches were located (including 8 re-lays), 32 were successful producing 86 fledged young. 41 of the clutches were laid in nestboxes, 2 in artificial platforms and the rest in natural sites.

S.J. Petty

Kestrel - Coquetdale and Central North'd study area

A year of mixed success 6 eggs were laid in 3 nests with 6, 5 and 1 young reared. Another nest with only 1 young from an unknown number of eggs. A further 12 young reared from nests of 5, 5 and 3 eggs. Another 2 nests fledged an unknown number of young whilst a third lost its eggs.

B. Galloway

Wheatear

a) Study area near Alwinton.

11 first brood nests reared 57 young to the ringing stage.

b) Study area in Upper Coquetdale

8 first brood nests reared 36 young to the ringing stage.

Both study areas had a disastrous season probably because of the adverse weather conditions early in the season. Hatching was up to 10 days later than usual and although clutch sizes were not particularly reduced there were more instances of infertile eggs e.g. one clutch of six had three infertile eggs.

M.S. Hodgson

A. Belshaw

W.G. Savage.

Sparrowhawk - South Central Northumberland

A total of 34 sites were checked, 25 of these were definitely occupied and nests built in 23, eggs were definitely laid in only 12 of them and young hatched in 8. One site failed to rear any young (from five hatched eggs) and the nest of another was not found until the young (at least two) had fledged. A total of only 17 young were ringed from the remaining 6 nests. An exceptionally poor year with nearly half of the nests found never having eggs laid in them; of the 11 clutches seen four of these were of only two eggs and only one of these small clutches hatched. It is difficult to suggest why the species had such a poor year in this area. The late snow lay in the area between 23rd and the 26th April, patches lingering a day or two after; this may have affected the prey species and perhaps the Sparrowhawks breeding condition. Tawny Owls were prolific in this area this year and in at least one site the male was probably killed by this species; in many others, Tawny Owls or their feathers were found and they may have contributed to other failures.

A. Heavisides.

THE BTO/IWC WINTER ATLAS PROJECT

This autumn the British Trust for Ornithology and Irish Wildbird Conservancy are launching a major project - the Winter Atlas. Fieldwork will start in mid November and continue until the end of February in each of the next three winters 1981/82 to 1983/84.

The object is to produce, for each species, a map of its distribution in Britain and Ireland during the winter. The unit of distribution is the 10-km square of the respective National Grids, and observers are asked to record not only the presence of species in a square but also to provide counts. These will enable the maps to show, in addition to the whole distribution, where each species is commoner and where it is scarcer.

For most species, especially the landbirds, detailed information on winter distribution is simply not available at present. Therefore the maps will become an essential reference for everyone wanting information on birds in winter, just as 'The Atlas of Breeding Birds in Britain and Ireland' now is for breeding season studies. There is already information on the main concentrations of some of the waterbirds - in Britain for the wildfowl from the Wildfowl Counts, and for waders and others from the Birds of Estuaries Enquiry; and in Ireland from the Irish Wetlands Enquiry. Yet even for these species we do not know the complete distributions, knowledge which is very necessary for properly evaluating more detailed and specific work, whether this is for the conservation, scientific or other purposes.

The results of ALL your birdwatching during the Atlas period - in the coming winter 14th November, 1981 to 28th February, 1982 inclusive - can and will be incorporated, although special timed visits of at least one hour will be especially valuable. Full details of how you can take part will be available from your local organiser for the Winter Atlas, who is :-

Geoff Macfarlane, 31 Wreay Walk,
Cramlington, Northumberland, NE23 6LJ.

Details will have been sent to all members of the BTO with the September BTO News.

It is hoped that as many members as possible will take an active part in this exciting new project. Its' success depends on you.

- - -

COASTAL WADER COUNTS

As yet the only members who have replied positively to the recent appeals for wader counters (see May and June bulletins) are the following:- I. Kerr, D. Hind, E. Norris, M. Carruthers and L. McDougall. This still leaves many miles of beautiful Northumberland coastline unclaimed! If the stretches seem rather long why not share a stretch with a friend! E. Norris will only be doing the northern half of the Boulmer-Alnmouth section, anybody interested in the southern half?



TYNESIDE BIRD CLUB

K. G. DURES (Secretary)

T.B.C. 5 Bath Terrace Tynemouth Tyne & Wear. Tel: North Shields 75928

AUGUST, 1981

SUMMARY

A month of anticyclonic weather very dry and warm, with winds light and variable in direction but only briefly from the east, mid month.

The high pressure centered for much of this period over Scandinavia, without any accompanying adverse conditions over the North Sea, must have allowed most migrants to travel without being inadvertently diverted in this direction. Only a few of the common August migrants were found on the coast, but one unexpected visitor was a Thrush Nightingale which found its way to the vicinity of Wallsend. Swallow only to be killed by traffic on the 28th.

Sea passage was quite interesting and several Black Terns were seen. Passage waders were present in good numbers wherever the conditions were attractive, and Hobby, Marsh Harrier and Icterine Warbler were recorded.

CLASSIFIED LIST

Red-throated Diver

A total of 63 Divers recorded at Seaton Sluice of which 15 specifically identified as Red-throated (SSWT). Up to three noted in Druridge Bay during the last week (ES/RJ et al). Singles noted at Hauxley and Holy Island.

Little Grebe

Young reported from several waters where not noted in July including Newton Pool, Capheaton, Corbridge, Crag Lough, Marden Park, Seaton Burn and Shield-on-the-Hill.

Great Crested Grebe

A pair with two young at Havannah Pond (AHB). One-two noted at Whittle Dene and Seaton Burn during the month and a single N off Seaton Sluice on 21st.

Red-necked Grebe

A single bird was off Holy Island Heugh on the 29th (KR/PWD).

Slavonian Grebe

A bird in winter plumage in Holy Island harbour on the 22nd (NE).

Black-necked Grebe

One additional small young at the breeding site on the 7th, i.e. at least five young present. (RW et al).

Fulmar

A 'blue phase' bird noted from a ship well out at sea off Tynemouth on 21st (MPF)
A 'pure white' bird N off Hauxley on 31st. (HRS).

Sooty Shearwater

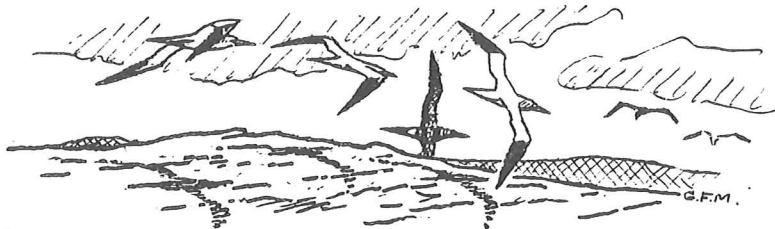
A monthly total of 48N off Seaton Sluice included 20N on the 21st. (SSWT)

Manx Shearwater

Small numbers recorded mainly N off Seaton Sluice, and elsewhere on many dates. At Seaton Sluice a monthly total of 450N and 16S included 293N and 5S on the 1st (SSWT).

Gannet

Heavy N passage was noted on many dates throughout the month. The largest daily count off Seaton Sluice was of 891 on the 1st where a very high monthly total of 4,091 recorded.



Cormorant

Four well up the river at Corbridge on the 27th (MR).

Heron

Up to 20 regularly roosted at Warkworth (WAK et al) and 14 on Fenham Flats (JDL et al). One-four noted at fifteen localities many of them coastal, singles also noted flying out at sea off Holy Island on the 12th and coming ashore off Chevington on the 15th. (PW/LGM).

Mute Swan

A maximum of 482 noted at Berwick mid month (JDL). Up to 12 in the Coquet estuary (CMA et al). Two were on the sea off Hauxley on the 14th and nine S there on the 30th (HRS).

Whooper Swan

A single bird still on Grindon at end of the month (BNR).

Grey Lag Goose

A flock of 21 in a field N of Sweethope Lough on the 14th (ETN/JRN).

Canada Goose

37 were at Hallington on the 9th (RW). Passage apparent from mid-month with 65S over Heaton on the 16th (per BL), 22S near Earsdon on the 22nd (DRS) and 20 at Bothal Pond on the 17th (JEF). A single bird was at Gosforth Park on the 15th and in the Backworth area 16th-26th (DRS/GFM et al).

Shelduck

A total of 13N off Seaton Sluice during the month (SSWT). Eight immature birds S off Howick Haven on 15th (KIB). Single immatures were at Gosforth Park and Whittle Dene and three at Hadston Lake.

Wigeon

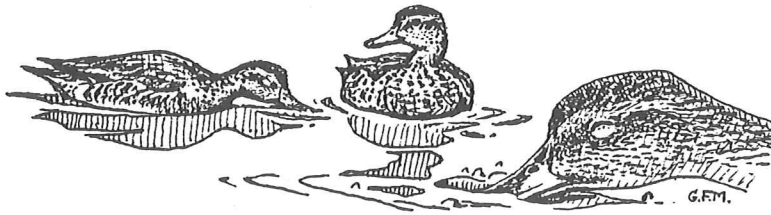
A total of 592N off Seaton Sluice during the month, including 303 on the 30th (SSWT) smaller numbers noted elsewhere on the coast. Three-eight at Whittle Dene, Gosforth Park, Swallow Pond and Grindon Lough during last week. Nine-ten fledged young were at the breeding site on the 2nd (LGM).

Gadwall

Four on Holy Island Lough on the 16th (JDL).

Teal

Passage N recorded most days off Seaton Sluice with a monthly total of 1,189, and a peak of 303 on the 30th (SSWT). About 200 present near Lucker during the last week (TRP). Up to 150 at Gosforth Park, and 30-50 at Warkworth Lane Pond, Grindon and Druridge. Recently hatched young noted at Whitfield Lough on the 2nd. (LGM).



Mallard

A total of 87N off Seaton Sluice during the month (SSWT). Largest reported concentrations of about 250 at Shield-on-the-Wall / Grindon on the 29th (LGM) and at Budle Bay on the 26th (AH). 40-50 at Holywell and Druridge Ponds.

Pintail

A total of 4N off Seaton Sluice 8th-30th (SSWT) and a female near Lucker during the last week (TRP).

Garganey

A pair were on the sea off Chevington Burn on the 1st (HRS), and a pair on the River White Adder on the 13th (PW). Five were noted at Brenkley on the 28th (LJM).

Shoveler

A total of 17N off Seaton Sluice during the month including 9 on the 30th (SSWT). Numbers fluctuated at Gosforth Park with a maximum count of 40 on the 10th and 22nd (DRS et al). 18 were at Seaton Burn on the 5th (AMB) and up to 14 in the Cresswell/Druridge area during the month (LGM et al). One-three noted at Grindon, Wallsend Swallow and Warkworth Lane.

Red Crested Pochard

An immature drake noted at Gosforth Park on the 19th and 21st (DRS).

Pochard

A female with two juveniles on Havannah Pond on the 10th (AHB). 21 gathered at Whittle Dene on the 2nd (MR), seven at Shield-on-the-Wall on 16th (LGM) and four at Grindon on the 31st (BNR). Six N off Hauxley on the 23rd (HRS).

Tufted Duck

A brood of nine at Newton Hall on the 1st (per BL). Up to 184 noted at Whittle Dene during the month (MR et al). 24 on Druridge Pool on the 22nd (AMB).

Eider

A concentration of 1,100 at Boulmer on the 27th (ETN/JRN).

Common Scoter

Passage N noted on most days at several localities, including Seaton Sluice where a monthly total of 1725 and a peak count on the 1st of 341. Up to 200 noted off Hadston during the month (AMB et al) and 30 off Dunstanburgh on the 8th (BNR).

Velvet Scoter

35-40 off Amble on the 8th (DHWB), three N off Seaton Sluice on the 9th (SSWT) and two N off Hauxley on the 31st. (HRS).

Goldeneye

Only reports were of singles N off Seaton Sluice on the 8th and 16th (SSWT).

Red-breasted Merganser

6N off Holy Island on the 2nd (PW) and a total of 8N off Seaton Sluice during the month (SSWT).

Goosander

A brood noted on the Scaup Burn, Kielder on the 1st (per BL). A flock of 10 flew up-stream at Stocksfield on 31st (BNR). Three 'redheads' N off Hauxley on 31st (HRS).

Marsh Harrier

A female seen at Warkworth Lane on the 22nd was seen later the same day at East Chevington (MN/AMB/MB et al).

Harrier Sp

A Harrier, not specifically identifiable, flew NW near Rothbury on the 13th (KIB).

Sparrowhawk

Noted at fifteen localities mainly coastal including up to three at Bamburgh and Hauxley.

Buzzard

Up to four seen together in the SW of the county suggests possible breeding (per BL). Singles at Eaſs on the 2nd (LGM) and at Gosforth Park on the 21st. (KDS).

Kestrel

One-two noted at 18 localities.

Merlin

Two present on Holy Island from at least the 15th (BL et al). Singles in the Hauxley area from the 15th (HRS) and at Backworth on the 14th (MB).

Hobby

A single bird present in the Hauxley area 28th/29th (HRS).

Peregrine

An adult noted on Holy Island on the 2nd (JDL), and an immature there on the 10th (BL), and over Budle Bay on the 23rd (JA). A bird thought to have fledged this year noted at Ratcliffe on the 1st (BL), and a bird seen to strike at a Lapwing flock at Cawfields on 15th (BNR).

Red Grouse

Press reports indicate that many broods were lost during the late April snow. Relays have apparently been successful, and shooting has been delayed on many estates due to the small size of young birds.

Black Grouse

A male at Threestoneburn on the 1st (AMB).

Grey Partridge

Coveys of up to 15 noted at a few locations.

Moorhen

A chick only a few days old at Warkworth Lane on 22nd (AMB).

Coot

126 counted at Holy Island Lough on the 30th and at least 100 on Cresswell Pond by the months end.

Oystercatcher

A maximum of 150 at Hauxley on 18th (HRS), 80 at Boulmer on 16th (MSH), a maximum of 164 counted at St. Marys during the month (DGW et al), and 50 at Cresswell Pond on 1st (KIB).

Little Ringed Plover

At Whittle Dene a single from the 13th joined by a second on the 22nd (MR/JSB). Juveniles present at Warkworth Lane Pond on the 23rd and Backworth on the 20th. (KR/PWD/MN).

Ringed Plover

Small parties noted at several coastal localities the largest concentrations occurring in Blyth Estuary where 40 on the 22nd (HG) and at Hauxley where 30 on the 16th (HRS). Up to 25 were noted at Backworth and a pair with two week old young there on the 13th (MSH et al). Up to four at Whittle Dene by months end (MR).

Golden Plover

Large flocks noted from early in the month included up to 1,300 in Hadston area, 600 at Lindisfarne NNR, 500 at Whittle Dene, 300 at Seghill and 100 at Backworth and Wallsend Swallow.

Grey Plover

Up to five in Budle Bay and Holy Island areas from the first week. Singles at Hauxley and St. Marys 30th/31st., and a total of 7N off Seaton Sluice 8th-30th.

Lapwing

A flock of 1,500 at Cawfields on the 15th (BNR), about 150 on Holy Island by mid month (CMA et al).

Knot

Up to 80 at Hauxley by the 29th (HRS), 30 at Cresswell Pond on 26th (WAK), 12 at Boulmer on 27th (ETN/JRN) and 10 at St. Marys by 26th. A single bird was at Backworth Pond 19th-22nd (GFM et al).

Sanderling;

25-30 noted at Holy Island, Chevington and Hauxley with odd birds seen elsewhere.

Little Stint

One-two at Warkworth Lane Pond 9th-23rd (AH et al). Singles at Backworth on 10th and 26th., at Chevington on 18th and near Lucker on 30th (AMB/WAK/TRP).

Curlew Sandpiper

Singles seen on several dates at Holy Island and Budle Bay 9th-30th with four noted at latter locality on 31st. (WAK et al). Two at Coldrife on 26th (WAK), and singles at Warkworth Lane Pond 9th-12th (NE/MSH et al), Backworth on 26th (JA) and well inland at Whittle Dene on 27th (MR).

Purple Sandpiper

40 at St. Marys on 26th (JH), singles on Inner Farne on the 12th and Hauxley on 31st.

Dunlin

Only small numbers noted on the shore, but about 150 were in Blyth estuary on the 24th (LJM). Warkworth Lane Pond regularly attracted small numbers with up to 50 present there on the 9th (LGM et al) when 40 at Backworth small numbers being recorded there on other dates. (MSH et al). A single was at Grindon on the 2nd (CGM) and up to five at Whittle Dene during the month (MR et al).

Ruff

Considerable passage apparent with numbers fluctuating at many localities. A maximum of 33 noted at Backworth on the 22nd (MN et al) and 30 were near Lucker on the 30th (TRP). Up to 20 were noted during the first week at Warkworth Lane Pond (TAC et al). 10 were at Whittle Dene on the 20th (MR) and at Cresswell on the 9th (LGM). 9 at Hadston Lake on the 11th and one-five at five other localities.

Snipe

Small numbers noted at many localities near to the coast, three being seen coming in off the sea at Hauxley on the 14th (HRS). About 20 were seen at Backworth, and Cresswell and 45 were near Lucker on the 30th.

Woodcock

Only record was of one at Gosforth Park on 22nd (JPD/EML).

Black-tailed Godwit

Five were near Lucker on the 30th (TRP), six having been seen in Budle Bay on the 22nd (JA). Two visited Gosforth Park on the 8th (DRS) and a single was at Cresswell on the 23rd (PWD/KR).

Bar-tailed Godwit;

Over 250 noted at Fenham on the 2nd (JDL), and up to 50 in Budle Bay during the month. 27S over Druridge Pool on the 28th (RJ/TJ) and a total of 77N off Seaton Sluice during the month. One-seven noted at St. Marys, Boulmer and Hauxley and a single inland at Brenkley on the 28th (LJM).

Whimbrel

Passage was very heavy, particulalry on the 8th when 466S off Seaton Sluice (monthly total 734S, 13N), three flocks totalling about 180 passed over East Ord near Berwick, and 186 at Hauxley included a single flock S of 102. Passage was reported as heavy at Holy Island during early August (per BL). Small flocks of up to 14 were reported after this date from scattered localities.

Curlew

A monthly total of 79N 7S off Seaton Sluice during the month. Up to 20 were noted at Hauxley, Lindisfarne and Boulmer. A maximum of 40 were at St. Marys on the 21st (DGW), and several small flocks moved W over Threestoneburn on the 16th. (AMB).

Spotted Redshank

One-three were regularly noted at Wallsend Swallow, Gosforth Park and Backworth. One-two at Warkworth Lane Pond 15th-22nd and Lindisfarne Reserve 13th-26th. Two near Lucker on the 30th (TRP) and singles at Hadston Lake on 26th (WAK) and at Whittle Dene on the 9th (MR).

Redshank

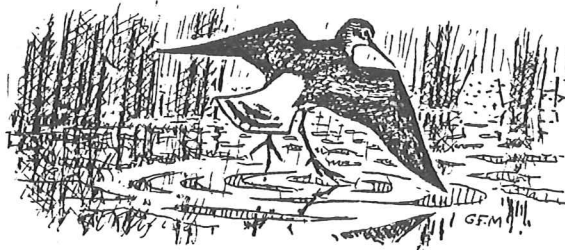
A total of 1257 counted on the Lindisfarne NNR on the 17th (JDL). A maximum of 138 noted in Blyth estuary on the 22nd (HG) and up to 40 at St. Marys (DGW).

Greenshank

Widespread reports of mostly one-six at 22 localities. Larger gatherings included up to 10 at Gosforth Park, 13 at Hauxley and up to 27 on Fenham Flats.

Green Sandpiper

Well recorded throughout the month. The exposed mud at Gosforth Park attracted birds on many dates with a maximum very high count of 20 present there on the 8th (DRS et al). Up to four were present at Hauxley and Backworth and one-three at Arcot, Marden Park, Lucker, Swallow Pond, Warkworth Lane, Chevington, Holy Island and Whittle Dene.



Wood Sandpiper

One-two noted at Warkworth Lane Pond 15th-26th, two at St. Marys on the 13th (DGW) and singles on several dates at Backworth, Cresswell and Hauxley.

Common Sandpiper

One-four noted at usual coastal localities, up to four at Backworth, and about 40 roosted at Gosforth Park on the evening of the 7th.

Turnstone

Numbers increased mid month with up to 92 noted at St. Marys, 60 at Boulmer, 50 at Hauxley, 40 at Berwick and 30 at Annstead beach.

Pomarine Skua

Singles identified at Seaton Sluice on the 8th (JPD/EML), from a ship well out at sea off Tynemouth (MPF) and at Hauxley on 31st (HRS).

Arctic Skua

A monthly total off Seaton Sluice of 657N and 418S. Small numbers were noted on most dates at usual coastal localities.

Great Skua

A total of 183N and 10S off Seaton Sluice included 102N and 7S on the 1st. Odd birds noted elsewhere on the coast.

Mediterranean Gull

An adult moulting out of summer plumage seen on many occasions between Seaton Sluice and Tynemouth (RH/KDS et al).

Little Gull

A total of 11 noted during the month off Seaton Sluice (SSWT). Three still at Hadston Lake on the 1st, one present on the 15th (LGM) Single juveniles at Cresswell Pond on the 23rd. (KR/PWD) at Hauxley on the 11th and 30th (DRH/HRS) and two at Druridge Pool on the 27th (ETN/JRN).

Common Gull

100 at Cramlington on the 6th (LGM). Between 22nd and 29th flocks of 2500 at Felton, 500 at Budle Bay and South Middleton and 250 at Calder.

Iceland Gull

Presumably the bird seen in July noted near Seaton Sluice on the 3rd. (KDS).

Glaucous Gull

A first summer bird in Amble harbour on the 16th/17th (KDS).

Great Black-backed Gull

About 400 mainly adults roosting near Druridge Pool (PWD/KR).

Kittiwake

Heavy N passage noted at Hauxley and Boulmer on 23rd., 27th., and 29th. Up to 2,500 roosted at St. Marys and 3,500 on Coquet Island during the month.

Sandwich Tern

As many as 260 gathered off Chevington Burn on the 12th (DRH).

Roseate Tern

Single at St. Marys on 8th and 13th (JSB/DGW).

Commic Tern

About 80 gathered in Blyth estuary on 29th (LGM)

Little Tern

A juvenile at St. Marys on the 13th (DGW) and five there on the 31st (JDM).

Black Tern

Passage noted off Seaton Sluice on 15th 29N and on 16th 71N, with a monthly total of 108N (SSWT). Away from this area a total of 29N noted off Hauxley 10th-16th, one at Boulmer on 18th (WAK) and a single at Seaton Burn on the 5th (AMB).

Guillemot

About 250 gathered off Hadston on 9th (AMB). The first indication of an oiling incident occurred on the 31st. when 20 oiled birds in the Hauxley area (HRS).

Stock Dove

Two at each of Capheaton, Backworth and East Benton Farm (RJ/TJ)

Woodpigeon

A flock of 450 at Fenham on the 13th (JDL).

Collared Dove

80 birds in a ploughed field near Earsdon on the 6th (MW).

Cuckoo

Juveniles noted at Holywell on the 5th (JEF) and Wdrk Foreston the 16th (LGM).

Singles on the coast at Priors Park on the 21st (MC) and on Holy Island 23rd-31st. PWD/TRP

Barn Owl

Noted at Prestwick and near Seghill

Little Owl

A pair reared two young at Togston Hall (DRH). At least two near Bamburgh on the 28th (BRS).

Tawny Owl

Noted in residence at Tynemouth (MC) and one at Bamburgh on the 2nd (BRS).

Long-eared Owl

Two at Bamburgh on the 2nd., one remaining on the 9th (BRS).

Short-eared Owl

Singles noted at Threestoneburn, Scremerston, near Earsdon, and Coalcleugh Moor. Seven together at Swallow Pond on the evening of the 28th (WAK).

Swift

A few moved S at Hauxley on the 8th (HRS). Up to 30 at Backworth and 50 at Seaton Sluice on the 3rd were largest concentrations noted.

Kingfisher

One on the Aln near Foxton on the 8th (JEF) was only report.

Great Spotted Woodpecker

Singles noted at Holywell Dene, Allenbanks and near Dinnington.

Sand Martin

About 50 at Annstead Burn on the 1st., several still feeding young in nest holes (BRS).

Swallow

The Seaton Burn roost was beginning to form on the 23rd when 250 there (JAM). A roost of 1,500 near Seghill on the 24th rapidly declined over the next two days to only about 30 (MSH et al). Gatherings of about 200 noted during last week at Capheaton (KIB) and Backworth (GM). Birds noted moving S through Hauxley on 22nd and 30th (HRS).

House Martin

Several gatherings of 50-100 noted throughout the month, up to 200 noted at Stocksfield by the 29th (BNR). Birds moved S through Hauxley all day on the 8th (HRS).

Meadow Pipit

A small S movement noted early on the 29th at Bamburgh (BRS) when flocks inland of 50 at Ilderton Dod and several flocks of about 20 in the Threestoneburn area (AMB).

Rock Pipit

Six on Annstead beach on the 1st (BRS).

Yellow Wagtail

Many reports of one-six near to the coast throughout the month. As many as 28 noted at Whitley Bay on the 1st (JDM) and at Hauxley 42 on the 14th & 20 on the 16th (HRS).

Grey Wagtail

Up to 10 in Allenbanks area on the 25th (NE) and four at Felton on the 18th (KIB). On the coast three at Marden Park during last week and a single at Hauxley 29th/30th (JDM/HRS).

Pied Wagtail

As usual about 30 birds roosted at Bamburgh during the month (BRS). Numbers fluctuated at Hauxley with a maximum of 25 present. 10-20 noted at Warkworth Lane, Berwick and Backworth.

White Wagtail

Singles noted at Bamburgh on the 22nd (KIB) and at Hauxley on the 29th.

Dunnock

Six at Hauxley on the 10th (HRS).

Robin

A small movement through the Bamburgh area on 30th/31st (BRS).

Thrush Nightingale

An astonishing find by George Miller on the A191 near to Wallsend Swallow on the 28th was the fresh corpse of a first year male. The bird had been killed by traffic only hours before, its stomach was empty but it was very fat suggesting an easy passage over the North Sea and a recent arrival. This is only the fourth county record.

Redstart

Only a few noted, one-two being seen at Berwick, Holy Island, Hauxley, Warkworth Lane and Horton during the month.

Whinchat

Family parties noted as common in the Breamish Valley on the 9th (AMB). Only one-two seen at usual coastal localities excepting six at Hauxley on the 15th and at Chevington on the 26th.

Wheatear

Small numbers noted on or near the coast throughout the month, nine at Hauxley on the 15th being easily the largest gathering.

Blackbird

About 10 migrants at Hauxley on the 28th (HRS).

Fieldfare

Two very early immigrants at Whitley Bay cemetery on the 19th (PW/GM).

Song Thrush

35-40 noted in Marden Park on the 17th (JDM).

Missel Thrush

Flocks of about 15 noted at Roddam and Stocksfield during first week.

Grasshopper Warbler

Three reeling at Chevington Burn on the 1st (LGM) when one trapped at Bamburgh (BRS). Singles also at Warkworth on the 7th (JEF) and Hauxley on the 23rd (HRS).

Sedge Warbler

A maximum of 15 at Bamburgh on the 1st, a pair with newly fledged young there on the 9th (BRS). An influx apparent at Hauxley on the 13th when 15 present (HRS). A family party at Newton on the 30th (ES et al).

Reed Warbler

Two at Gosforth Park on the 11th (AMB).

Icterine Warbler

An adult bird seen briefly at Boulmer on the 15th (KIB).

Lesser Whitethroat

A pair calling and carrying food at Bradford Kaims on the 1st (BRS) and an adult seen feeding two juveniles at Backworth on the 7th (MN). A single bird at Hauxley on the 16th (HRS).

Whitethroat

A few inland sightings until the 10th including a family party at Stocksfield on that date (BNR). Up to six on Holy Island on the 2nd (JDL). Singles only at Bamburgh on three days, and a maximum of four at Hauxley on the 28th (BRS/HRS). Singles also at Seaton Sluice, Cresswell and Warkworth Lane.

Garden Warbler

Singles at Bamburgh on 1st, Marden Park on 8th, and Hauxley on 22nd.
At least two at Priors Park on 25th/26th (MC).

Blackcap

Thought to have had a very poor breeding season in Jesmond Dene (MPF).
One-three noted at Bamburgh, Hauxley and Marden Park during the month.

Chiffchaff

A single bird at Hauxley on the 29th (HRS).

Willow Warbler

About ten present most days at Hauxley but an influx apparent 13th-15th when a total of 48 ringed and probably a similar number not trapped, one landed on a boat about 10 miles offshore on the 15th. At Bamburgh birds present 1st-9th with a maximum of 23 there on the 2nd (BRS). Birds moved through Priors Park all month (MC) and up to 30 present at Marden Park on the 8th (JDM). A bird singing near Capheaton on the 29th (KIB).

Goldcrest

Up to six at Hauxley, Bamburgh and Holy Island during the last week of the month.

Spotted Flycatcher

Thought to have had a good breeding season in Jesmond Dene (MPF). At least three pairs reared young in the grounds of Togston Hall (DRH) about eight were at Bradford Kaims on the 1st, and seven at Bamburgh on the 2nd otherwise only one-two at Hauxley, Marden Park, Priors Park and Bamburgh during the month.

Pied Flycatcher

Singles noted on Holy Island on the 12th, 16th and 22nd (MA et al) and at Bamburgh 29th-30th (BRS).

Long-tailed Tit

About 15 amongst a large tit flock at Ninebanks on the 30th (RJ).

Marsh Tit

Noted at Ninebanks.

Willow Tit

Noted at Thrunton Wood and Holystone Burn.

Nuthatch

One-two regularly visited a Maiffen garden (RW).

Treecreeper

Singles on the coast at Bamburgh on the 2nd and Hauxley on the 13th.

Jackdaw

At least 600 together with a similar number of rooks near Holy Island causeway on the 18th (KIB).

Starling

The roost at Maiffen contained about 500 on the 7th increasing to 5,000 - 6,000 by the 30th (RW). About 500 roosting at Seghill by the 25th (MSH et al).

House Sparrow

An albino bird noted in Hauxley village on the 9th (HRS).

Tree Sparrow

Up to 60 roosting at Whittle Dene on the 24th (MR) and 30 at Hauxley on the 10th (HRS). Flocks of about 15 noted at Warkworth Lane and Holy Island.

Greenfinch

About 100 at Seaton Delaval on the 28th (MLL) was only large flock noted.

Goldfinch

About 40 were at Marden Park on the 7th (JDM). Small 'charms' of up to six at ten localities.

Siskin

A flock of 37 noted at Dipton Wood on the 28th (BNR). Four at Nunnykirk on 26th and about eight at Matfen on the 29th (RW). A single bird was at Priors Park on the 8th (JA)

Linnet

Large flocks of about 150 at Hadston on the 21st and 200 at Seaton Delaval on the 29th (AMB/MLL). Several flocks of up to 50 from scattered localities.

Redpoll

Two at Backworth on the 17th (AMB) was the only report.

Bullfinch

Noted only at Capheaton and Mindrum House.

Corn Bunting

Birds singing at Cresswell, and near Beehive.

September records to Alan Heavisides, 8 Leyland Place, Kirkhill, Morpeth, NE61 2AN in Vooous order and by 8th October at latest please.

Contributions by members - a reminder

Contributions in the form of short reports, observations, breeding studies etc. are welcomed for possible inclusion in the bulletin and annual report. If you feel that you may be able to contribute but have queries or would like a second opinion on an idea you may have please contact Alan Heavisides.

Coastal Wader Counts

Complete coverage, at least for the priority dates, has now been arranged as outlined below :

Budle Pt.	Seahouses	David Hind
Seahouses	Beadnell	Muriel Lovett
Beadnell	Howick Burn	David Woodfall
Howick Burn	Boulmer	Ian Kerr
Boulmer	Alnmouth	Eddie Slack
Alnmouth	Birling Carrs	Eric Norris
Birling Carrs	Coquet Estuary	Peter West
Amble	Chevington Burn	Niel Richardson
Chevington Burn	Cresswell	Tom Callwallender
Cresswell	Newbiggin	Steve Anderson
Newbiggin	Wansbeck Estuary	John Richardson
Wansbeck Estuary	Blyth Estuary	John Darling
Blyth Estuary (Inc Estuary)	Seaton Sluice	Lindsay McDougall
Seaton Sluice	St. Marys	Jayne Lindsay
St. Marys	Tynemouth	Mary Carruthers

Would 'counters' please liaise with those doing adjoining stretches to agree upon demarcation lines in order to prevent double counting as far as possible.

The suggested dates for counts are as follows :-

October 18th, November 15th, December 13th, January 10th, February 7th, March 14th, April 25th, May 23rd. Priority dates are underlined. Should you be unable to do the count on the suggested date please try to do it on a near date, or arrange for somebody else to complete it if possible.

BTO record cards will be available at club meetings or send SAE to Alan Heavisides.

LIST OF CONTRIBUTORS

J. Adams	R. Henson	G.F. Miller
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H & M Garrod	J.D. McElwee	P.R. Weighill
A. Heavisides.	L.G. & J.M. McFarlane	Bamburgh Ringing Stn.
		Hauxley " "
		Seaton Sluice Watch Tower.

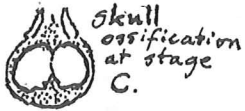
Club Library

The list of publications shown below are now available for loan to members of the club. Anyone wishing to avail themselves of this facility should contact Mike Hodgson, 45 Elmtree Gardens, Whitley Bay. (Tel. 520511).

1. Birds in Northumbria 1970 - 1979 inclusive.
2. British Birds Vol. 70, Vol. 71, Vol. 72, Vol. 73, Vol. 74 (Nos. 1 - 7)
3. Bird Study Vol. 13 - 27 (1966 - 1980)
4. County of Cleveland Bird Report 1974 - 1978
5. Birds of Estuaries Enquiry 1971 - 1972, 1972 - 1973, 1973 - 1974, 1974 - 1975.
6. Scottish Birds Vol. 5 No. 5, Vol. 5 No. 7, Vol. 6-9 complete, Vol. 10 Nos 1-5, Vol. 11 Nos. 4-6.
7. Scottish Bird Report 1978, 1979.
8. Fair Isle Bird Observatory Report 1971 - 1974, 1976 - 1980
9. Norfolk Bird Report 1961, 1971, 1973.
10. West Midland Bird Club Report 1972.
11. Cheshire Bird Report 1969, 1973.
12. Shetland Bird Report 1973.
13. Spurn Bird Observatory Report 1966.
14. Sandwich Bay Bird Observatory Report 1967 - 1970 inclusive.
15. Cape Clear Bird Observatory Bulletin 1974, 1975.
16. Calf of Man Bird Observatory Report 1964, 1976.
17. Birds of the Farne Islands 1971.
18. Farne Island Grey Seals and Bryophyte Flora of Castle Eden Dene.
19. N.H.S. Ornithological Report and Other Papers 1968 - 1969.
20. Seals of the Farne Islands, 1969 - 1971 and Other Papers
21. A Bibliography of the Literature of the Farne Islands.
22. Birds of the Kielder Forest.
23. Guide to the Reserves of Durham County Conservation Trust.
24. Guide to Ravenglass Reserve.
25. The Scottish Wildlife Trust Handbook.
26. The Natural History of Upper Teasdale.
27. The Birds of the Isle of Man.
28. Orkney Birds; Status Guide.
29. B.T.O. News Nos. 84-97 inclusive.
30. Wildfowl News Nos. 66-79
31. Birds January 1970 - Summer 1979
32. A catalogue of the Birds of Northumberland and Durham (Selby 1831) (Photocopy).
33. The Natural History and Antiquities of Northumberland (J. Wallis) (Photocopy).
34. An Annotated Checklist of the Birds of Northumberland (Compiled by C. Robson).
35. Nature Conservation and Agriculture (Appraisal and Proposals by N.C.C.).
36. Fleas, Flukes and Cuckoos (Study of Bird Parasites) New Naturalist Series).

Thrush Nightingale *Luscinia luscinia*

First year ♂ small testes oo.



Inside of upper mandible pale yellow

Underwing coverts buff.

Wing 85 mm

Broken right leg. Pelvis smashed causing internal bleeding. Flank and rump feathers missing on right side.

Late on the morning of the 28th August 1981 I came upon the corpse of a thrush nightingale lying in the gutter at the side of the A191. Judging from the birds condition it had evidently been killed by traffic a few hours before.

Upperparts olive-brown. Edges of wings, uppertail-coverts and tail dull rufous.

Gulmea 13 mm.

Grey-pink base lower mandible

Pale-buff eye-ring and short monostachial stripe. Small buff spots on ear-coverts.

Third primary emarginated

2nd prim. = 4th

Grey-pink legs

Sparse barring on undertail-coverts.

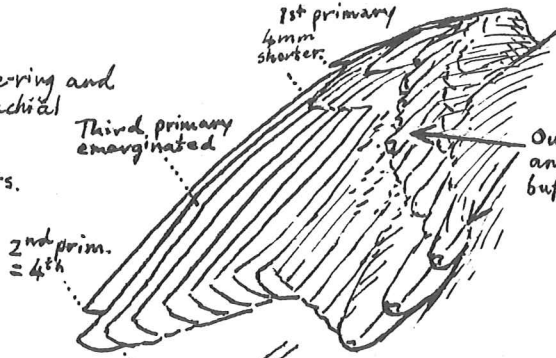
Notch on inner web of 2nd prim. 12 mm short of tip.

Bird very fat. Stomach empty.

Only two outer tail present on left side.

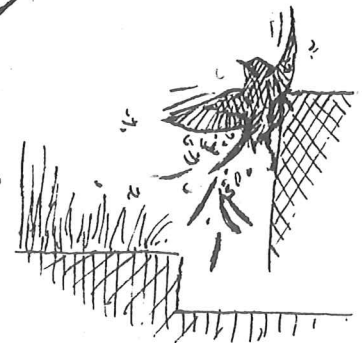
Length 165 mm to tip of 2nd outer tail feather.

Breast and flanks grey-olive with dull spots and streaks on lower breast and flanks. Pale-buff throat, lower breast and undertail coverts.

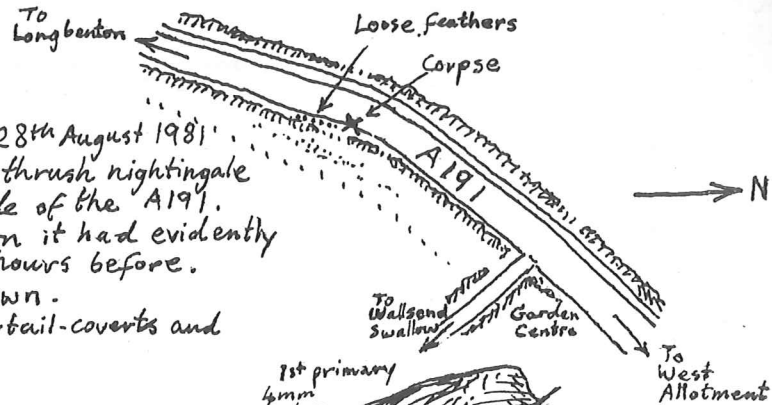


1st primary 4 mm shorter.

Outer greater coverts and tailfeathers with buff spots at tips.



G.F. Miller



FIELD OUTINGS

In confirmation of the announcement made by Ron Cook, at our Club Meeting dated 10th September, 1981, it has been decided to suspend all Field Outings, in the form of a formal programme, for the period of one full year, commencing October, 1981.

This regrettable decision was taken by our committee, at a meeting dated 27th August, 1981, on learning that only 13 members had expressed an interest in the Coastal Walk - advertised in our May and June Bulletins, for Sunday 20th September. A further 4 names were submitted between then and the closing date of August 31st.

Only 8 names had been entered for the proposed outing to Holy Island on Sunday, 18th October, 1981. (No improvement had been made up to the preparation of this statement, on Wednesday, 9th September).

N.B. All cheques received, for either or both outings, will be returned to the sender.

Rather than have our "hard core" Coastal Walkers completely disappointed, however, because of the cancellation of that outing, by coach, every effort would be made to re-organise it, via private transport. With this in mind, Ian Kerr kindly offered his services, as Leader.

In a similar spirit, Bryan Galloway has volunteered to act in that capacity, for 3 separate outings, details of which he will announce, at random, at some future meetings.

1981 BREEDING STUDY SUMMARIES

Sparrowhawk - Slaley study area

45 sites were checked and 32 found to be occupied and 30 nests found. 20 of the nests found, fledged young. Only four of the nests containing young were climbed to, and the young ringed (total of nine ringed), but most of the others were seen to have good sized broods and it is thought that the total number of young fledged was similar to last year.

Yet again the success rate of birds in this area is considerably higher than in the other county study areas.

Summarising the results from this area over the last 12 years: 254 nests have been found in 57 different sites, 62 have failed to rear ~~any~~ young and 191 are known to have fledged young.

B. Little.

Swallow - Riding Mill study area

Breeding census 1967 - 1981:

<u>Year</u>	<u>First Brood</u>	<u>Second Brood</u>	<u>Third Brood</u>
67	35	25	0
68	29	15	0
69	15	12	0
70	23	16	0
71	16	14	1
72	21	17	0
73	17	13	0
74	27	15	0
75	27	22	1
76	31	22	0
77	38	25	0
78	30	21	0
79	36	30	0
80	43	26	0
81	43	24	0

Note that this years total of first broods equals last years record number.



TYNESIDE BIRD CLUB

K. G. DURES (Secretary)

T.B.C. 5 Bath Terrace Tynemouth Tyne & Wear. Tel: North Shields 75928

SEPTEMBER, 1981

SUMMARY

The anticyclonic weather enjoyed during August continued throughout the first half of the month as the high pressure centered over Scandinavia moved only slowly east. The first heavy rain for some time fell on the evening of the 11th as a front associated with a deepening Atlantic Low off the NW coast, tracked across the country, a light fall of the commoner migrants was noted on the coast the following day. The weather was unsettled throughout the rest of the month with winds of varying strength and direction, heavy rain fell again on the evening of the 25th and a strong SE wind and rough seas caused some quite interesting sea passage the following day.

The rarest bird of the autumn so far, a Paddyfield Warbler, was discovered in a mist net at Priors Park on the 27th., this being only the sixth British record. A White-rumped Sandpiper was found at Hauxley Pool on the 12th being seen later in the month at Druridge and Cresswell Ponds and Hauxley Ringing Station trapped an Arctic Warbler on the 4th.

Several interesting raptors were seen including Buzzard, Marsh Harrier, Hen Harrier, Peregrine, Hobby and two Ospreys including a bird at Holywell Pond first noted on the 25th and remaining until well into October. At least five Red-backed Shrikes were located on the coast.

CLASSIFIED LIST

Red-throated Diver/Diver Sp.

A total of 44 noted off Seaton Sluice 11th-27th (SSWT). Odd birds noted during this period at usual coastal localities, including up to four off Holy Island on 11th (GEM et al)

Little Grebe

Numbers steadily increased at Cresswell Pond from five on the 1st to 21 by the 26th (AMB et al), up to eight noted at Druridge Pool during this period. Seven pairs noted at Swallow Pond plus a total of five young. Nine were on the Northumbrian Loughs on the 12th. Three-four noted at Holywell, Newton and Hartburn.

Great Crested Grebe

Two were on the sea off Chevington on the 2nd (DRH). Singles noted at Whittle Dene, Holywell, Colt Crag and at Berwick 19th-25th, and two adults plus a juvenile at Seaton Burn on the 16th (ES et al).

Red-necked Grebe

A single bird noted off Holy Island Heugh 6th-12th (JDL/PWD et al). One S off Hauxley on the 12th and off Seaton Sluice on the 27th, and on the sea off Seaton Sluice on the 25th. (HRS/SSWT et al).

Slavonian Grebe

Two noted at Holy Island Lough and in Sandon Bay 5th - 13th (GEM/BNR/JDL).

Black-necked Grebe

A single bird off Holy Island on the 12th (CB/ME).

Fulmar

Up to 20 around Holy Island breeding areas 5th-12th (GEM) and a single at Cullercoats harbour on 7th (SPR).

Sooty Shearwater

Single off Holy Island on the 12th (BNR) and off Seaton Sluice on the 16th (SSWT). Odd birds N off Seaton Sluice, Cresswell and Hauxley (total of 7) on the 26th.

Manx Shearwater

Single N off Seaton Sluice on 13th (ADM/SH) and S on 25th (SSWT). A few S off Cresswell on the 26th (IK) when two S off Seaton Sluice (SSWT).

Shearwater Sp.

Three large brown Shearwaters flew N off Seaton Sluice on the 27th and were considered to be either Great or Corys (MW).

Gannet

Heavy S passage noted off Cresswell and Hauxley on 26th (IK/HRS).

Cormorant

A maximum of 24 in Cullercoats harbour area on the 7th (SPR). Up to 200 noted on Black Law, Lindisfarne most days 5th-12th (GEM).

Heron

A flock of 21 noted flying up the Wansbeck at Stakeford bridge on the 8th (RJ). Up to 20 noted at the Warkworth roost (JSB et al) and up to 8 on Fenham flats during the month. One-four noted at 13 other localities.

Mute Swan

313 noted in Berwick harbour on the 11th (JDL). An influx apparent at Cresswell Pond where 12 on the 22nd increased to 37 by the 29th (DRH et al).

Whooper Swan

The Grindon Lough bird was noted throughout the month (MLL et al).

Grey Lag Goose

29N between Holy Island and the mainland on the 22nd (KIB/WAK).

Canada Goose

84 noted at Sweethope on the 19th and 50 at Hallington on the 20th (DRH/LGM).

Shelduck

Three immatures on Cresswell Pond on the 1st (AMB). A single bird in Blyth estuary on the 27th (LJM). Nine at Holy Island on the 6th (GEM).

Wigeon

Small numbers mostly flying N off Seaton Sluice on eight days, where a monthly total of 121 recorded. (SSWT). Numbers increased in the Druridge/Cresswell area to about 125 at the month's end. (LGM/AMB et al). 140 were on the Northumbrian Loughs on the 12th but 170 noted on Grindon alone on the 17th (LGM/MLL et al). 25-30 were noted at Newton and Gosforth Park during the month.

Gadwall

At Gosforth Park one on the 2nd increased to four by the 26th (DRS et al). A single female at Warkworth Lane on the 6th (AH) and three at Holy Island Lough on the 27th (JDL).

Teal

A total of 324 noted off Seaton Sluice during the month, most flew N but 103S on the 27th (SSWT). Numbers fluctuated at Gosforth Park where a maximum count of 234 on the 19th (DRS). Up to 90 were at Grindon by the last week of the month (MLL et al) and 50-70 noted at Colt Crag, Druridge Pool, Backworth and Whittle Dene during the month. c400 were in Budle Bay on the 20th (BB/MH).

Mallard

Largest count was of 320 at Broomlee on the 20th (AJR), 190 being noted at Grindon on the 27th (BNR). About 270 were at Sweethope and Capheaton on the 19th (DRH). 185 noted at Whittle Dene on the 20th (LGM) and 300 at Holywell on the 28th (PRW).

Pintail

A single female was at Cresswell Pond 19th-29th (CB etal). Two males in eclipse on 19th/20th at Gosforth Park (DRS etal). Three S off Seaton Sluice on the 26th (SSWT).

Shoveler

Numbers increased at Gosforth Park during the month with a maximum of 44 noted there on the 13th (DRS etal). 11 were on Holy Island Lough on the 13th and up to 15 in Druridge area mid month (JDL/LGM etal). Two-seven were noted at Hallington, Grindon, Holywell and Whittle Dene.

Red Crested Pochard

A moulting drake was at Grindon Lough on the 27th (BNR/BL).

Pochard

Very few records, ten at Killingworth Lake on the 14th (LJM) being maximum count. Three were on the sea at Stag Rocks on the 12th (BRS), and two noted at Whittle Dene and Holy Island.

Tufted Duck

155 were at Capheaton on the 19th when 71 on Sweethope (DRH). 78 noted at Colt Crag on the 20th (LGM) and 25-50 at Whittle Dene and Cresswell/Druridge Ponds during the month.

Scaup

At Cresswell Pond a drake on the 2nd and a female 19th-21st (DRH/LGM). One N off Seaton Sluice on the 20th (SSWT). A female well inland at Whittle Dene on the 4th (AJR).

Eider

The largest counts were off Bamburgh where about 1,100 on the 19th (AMB), and off Holy Island where an estimated 2,000 birds off shore 5th-12th (GEM).

Long-tailed Duck

A single bird on the sea off Seaton Sluice on the 20th (PWD/KR), and one off Holy Island on the 11th (GEM).

Common Scoter

Only small numbers noted at usual localities during the month, 35 at Bamburgh on the 19th (AMB) being easily the largest gathering.

Velvet Scoter

Two S off Seaton Sluice on the 11th (SSWT) and three N off Holy Island on the 12th (ME/CB).

Goldeneye

A very interesting report of six birds judged to be juveniles on the Tyne at Heddon on the 2nd (BNR). One at Druridge on the 13th (LGM/JMM), and one off Holy Island on 11th (GEM).

Red-breasted Merganser

A maximum of 26 off Holy Island on the 19th (GEM) and two off Berwick on the 25th (ETN/JRN).

Goosander

A drake with four redheads on Grindon Lough on the 20th (SJH) was the only report.

Marsh Harrier

A female/immature was noted flying W over Dunston on the 22nd (LGM).

Hen Harrier

A male noted hunting near Colt Crag on the 12th (RW). A ringtail noted at Backworth on the 6th was presumably the bird seen near the Kitty Brewster Spine Road roundabout on the 8th and near Holywell Dene on the 9th (SJH/JEF/MLL etal). A ringtail was also noted at Slaley on the 14th (per BL).

Sparrowhawk

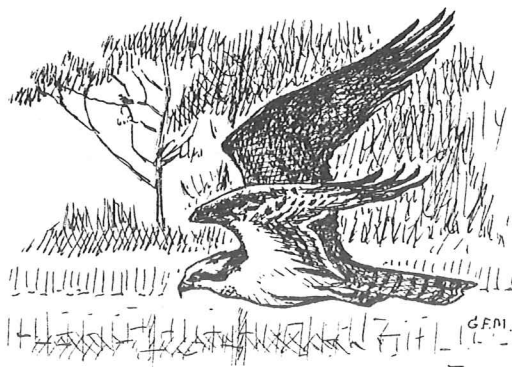
At least 22 individuals noted, many of which were on or near to the coast including Holy Island.

Buzzard

A bird noted on the 20th firstly at St. Marys and shortly after at Seaton Sluice where it turned inland, (MLC/IC/BW/DRH etal). One picked up dead at Spittal Shield on the 4th (per BL), two together at Cawfields on the 13th (MRS) and a bird present at Bywell 18th-29th (per BL). A single flew over Holy Island on the 27th before flying inland (KDS/JS).

Osprey

A bird present at Holywell Pond from at least the 25th was still there well into October (PMW/GFM etal). One was at Craggside on the 28th (per BL).



Kestrel

One-two were reported from 26 localities. At least six were present in the Bamburgh area all month with eight there on the 13th (BRS).

Merlin

Singles noted during the month at Holy Island, Fenham-le-Moor, Boulmer and in the Backworth area. An adult male noted well inland at Plenmeller Common on the 24th (SJH).

Hobby

A single bird noted chasing Swallows at the Seaton Burn roost on the 17th (BG/TAC/IK).

Peregrine

A juvenile noted on Holy Island on the 12th (BNR), when an adult S off Bamburgh (PWW), and another killed a Teal at Warkworth Lane on the 27th (per BL). Two birds seen soaring well out to sea at Druridge Bay on the 23rd were thought to have probably been this species (IK).

Black Grouse

A single male at Threestoneburn on the 5th (AMB) was the only report.

Red-legged Partridge

A covey of eight near Netherwitton on the 19th (DRH).

Grey Partridge

Several broods in Threestoneburn area on the 5th (AMB). Coveys of 12 at Hauxley (HRS), 14 at Swallow Pond (ADM) and seven on Holy Island (GEM) mid month.

Quail

A single bird recorded at Backworth on the 5th (WAK/JA)

Water Rail

A single noted at Gosforth Park on the 20th (DRS).

Moorhen

A maximum of 32 at Backworth on the 22nd (JDM). 20-25 noted at Cresswell and Swallow Ponds mid month. A juvenile only about two weeks old on Holy Island Lough on the 3rd (MSH).

Coot

150-200 at Cresswell Pond throughout the month. A maximum of 86 noted at Swallow Pond and 50-60 at Holy Island Lough and Whittle Dene.

Wader Count - 13th September.

The following stretches of coastline were actually covered: Budle Point - Seahouses (DRH/PWW), Seahouses - Beadnell (MLL), Howick Burn - Boulmer (IK), Amble - Chevington Burn (NWR), Wansbeck - Blyth (JBD), Blyth - Seaton Sluice.

N.B. - Next count 18th October, 1981

Oystercatcher

505 were counted during the coastal wader count on the 13th, 30-50 were regularly noted at Hauxley and about 60 at St. Marys, Cresswell and Annstead Beach during the month.

Little Ringed Plover

Singles noted at Backworth on the 7th (AMB/LJM) and at Hauxley on the 26th (HRS).

Ringed Plover

122 counted during the coastal wader count on the 13th. 30-50 regularly noted at Hauxley. Maxima of 70 at Blyth on the 10th (HG) and 60 at Berwick on the 25th (JDL). Numbers increased steadily at Whittle Dene to 16 by the 28th (AJR et al). Three at Hallington on the 20th. (LGM).

Golden Plover

Largest concentration in the Newton area where 3,000+ on the 15th (DLW et al). Up to 900 on Holy Island and 700 in Budle Bay during the month (JDL/BRS et al). 220 at Ryal on 22nd (LGM/JMM) and a maximum at Backworth on the 12th when 150 (IC/BW et al).

Grey Plover

About 20 regularly noted on Fenham Flats during the month (MSH/IDL et al). One-five noted at Hauxley, Cresswell, Newton, Hadston and St. Marys. A single was at Backworth on the 15th (MN) and two at Whittle Dene 23rd and 27th (RW).

Lapwing

500-600 at Alnwick, Blyth, Seghill and Cramlington. 200-300 at Backworth, West Denton and Heddton-on-the-Wall.

Knot

169 counted during the coastal wader count on the 13th. Up to 60 at Hauxley and Seaton Sluice by the months end when 25 at Cresswell Pond.

Sanderling

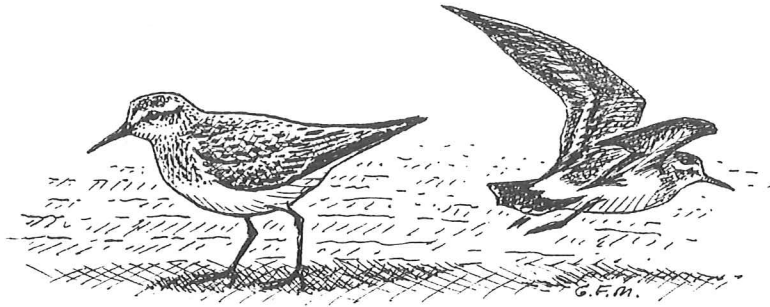
Only odd birds noted away from the area Amble-Chevington Burn where up to 45 present throughout the month (HRS/NWR et al).

Little Stint

At Cresswell Pond a single on the 20th increased to four-five by the months end. (DY/SY/GFM et al). Two at Berwick on the 25th (JDL) and a single at Budle Bay 22nd-26th (WAK/BL). Inland singles were at Backworth on the 10th (JDM), at Hallington on the 12th (RW), at Seaton Burn on the 16th (JEF et al) and at Swallow Pond on the 29th (JDM). Two were at Whittle Dene on the 28th (AJR) and three there the next day (RW).

White-rumped Sandpiper

A bird briefly present at Hauxley Pool on the 12th (HRS) was seen again at Druridge Pool on the 19th (LGM/JCD) and at Cresswell Pond on the 24th (GFM). This is only the third county record.



Curlew Sandpiper

Up to seven in the Hauxley/Hadston area mid month and a maximum of eight at Cresswell during the last week. Elsewhere, five at Budle Bay on the 5th (DRH), two in Coquet estuary on the 19th (KR), singles at Berwick on the 25th (JDL) and at Whittle Dene on the 28th (AJR).

Purple Sandpiper

Up to 32 between Budle Pt. and Beadnell from the 12th (MLL/DRH et al), 25 at St. Marys on the 6th (ES et al) and five - ten at Craster, Seaton Sluice and Berwick during the month.

Dunlin

247 counted during the coastal wader count on the 13th. 300 at Fenham-le-Moor on the 4th (MSH) and 50 at Berwick on the 25th (JDL). 20-30 noted regularly at Cresswell, Hauxley and Blyth. At Whittle Dene two on the 23rd increased to 37 by the 29th (RW et al).

Ruff

Very well reported particularly from Backworth where 20 on the 2nd increased to 50 mid month, 18 remaining on the 27th. 30-40 were noted in Budle Bay on the 9th (BRS). At Whittle Dene three on the 20th increased to 11 by the 27th (LGM/RW et al). 11 were at Hadston Lake on the 5th (JSB). One-three noted at Cresswell, Hauxley, Holy Island and in Coquet estuary. A single bird was at Grindon on the 12th (LGM/JMM).

Jack Snipe

Three on Holy Island on the 3rd (JDL) and a single at Bradford Kaims on the 12th (BRS).

Snipe

Up to 15 noted at usual localities near to the coast, six being seen arriving off the sea at Hauxley on the 4th (HRS) and one at Seaton Sluice on the 25th (SSWT). Up to 20 at Backworth during the month.

Black-tailed Godwit

A bird in summer plumage at Backworth on the 5th was probably the bird seen at Gosforth Park 18th-19th returning to Backworth 20th - early October (ES/DRS/WAK et al). A single was on Holy Island 12th-13th (PWD/BNR et al) and two near Howick Burn on the 19th (GSR).

Bar-tailed Godwit

112 noted during the coastal wader count on the 13th., 290 counted at Holy Island on the 12th (BNR). 15-20 noted at Boulmer, St. Marys and Hauxley.

Whimbrel

Small numbers noted moving S on the 6th between Seaton Sluice (total 16) and Tynemouth (SSWT/MC et al). One still at St. Marys on the 11th (KIB).

Curlew

Up to 80 at Lindisfarne N.N.R. during the month (JDL etal). 30 at St. Marys on the 6th when 29 at Seaton Sluice and 14N at Hauxley. 20 at Cresswell Pond on the 1st (AMB).

Spotted Redshank

Singles noted during the first week at Gosforth Park, Backworth and Fenham-le-Moor, at Coquet estuary on the 19th (KR) and at Hauxley on the 29th (HRS).

Redshank

487 noted during the coastal wader count on the 13th. Up to 450 on Fenham Flats during the month and up to 150 in Blyth estuary. A maximum of 70 at Hauxley on the 26th.

Greenshank

As many as 37 counted on the Lindisfarne N.N.R. on the 1st, 22 still being present on the 24th (JDL). Eight were at Seaton Burn on the 12th (BB/MH) and up to six at Gosforth Park during the first two weeks (DRS etal). A maximum of four at Hauxley on the 6th when three at Cresswell (HRS/IK). One-two noted at eight other localities, including a single at Colt Crag on the 20th (LGM).

Green Sandpiper

One-three at Gosforth Park until the 13th. Singles noted during the first two weeks at Backworth, Warkworth Lane and Grindon (on the 12th) (JDM/JSB/LGM). One was at Colt Crag 12th, 15th and 20th (RW/LGM).

Wood Sandpiper

One-two at Backworth 1st-11th (WAK/GEM/BB etal). Singles on Holy Island on the 3rd (MSH) and at Cresswell Pond on the 13th (SJH/KR). Two were at Grindon Lough on the 9th (SJH).

Common Sandpiper

Eight at Budle Bay on the 15th (ETN/JRN) and six at Hadston Lake on the 19th were the only concentrations, singles being noted elsewhere on the coast. Singles were also at Hallington on the 20th (LGM) and on the Tyne at Newburn on the 28th (RGW).

Turnstone

495 counted during the coastal wader count on the 13th included 324 between Beadnell and Seahouses. 250 were at Berwick on the 25th (JDL) and up to 50 at Hauxley by the months end (HRS).

Pomarine Skua

One S off Seaton Sluice on the 20th (SSWT) and another N over Hauxley village on the 26th (HRS).

Artic Skua

A monthly total of 242S and 18N off Seaton Sluice included 220S and 12N on the 26th when passage was predominantly N off Hauxley during the morning with a peak of 70 per hour noted (SSWT/HRS).

Great Skua

All records referred to the 26th when 25N off Hauxley (HRS) and 4N off Seaton Sluice (SSWT), six with Artic Skuas off Holy Island.

Little Gull

An immature noted at Newburn on the River Tyne on the evening of the 28th (RGW).

Common Gull

A total of 1520W up River Tyne at Stocksfield between 6.30 and 7.30 pm on the 11th (BNR). Flocks of up to 700 at Ovington on the 19th (BNR) and 300 at Shoreston Hall on the 11th (BRS). Large number S at Styford on the evening of the 28th (BNR).

Lesser Black-backed Gull

18 adults amongst Great Black-backed Gulls at Long Nanny on the 18th were the dark mantled Scandinavian form (ETN/JRN). Single adults noted at Seaton Burn on the 6th and 21st. and a family party of six present there on the 14th (JAM). Three of the five birds in a mixed gull flock at Swinhoe on the 12th were judged to be Scandinavian birds (KR/PWD). A single N off Hauxley on the 26th (HRS).

Herring Gull

Numbers increased at the high tide roost at Cullercoats to about 1000 on the 9th (SPR).

Great Black-backed Gull

360 mainly adults roosting at Long Nanny on the 18th (ETN/JRW).

Kittiwake

Some large gatherings noted including about 5000 on Coquet Island on the 6th, 4000 at Cresswell village on the 26th and 3000 at St. Marys on the 9th. Heavy passage N of 800-900/hour off Hauxley on the 26th (HRS).

Sandwich Tern

About 400 including many juveniles gathered at high tide at Boulmer on the 13th (IK). Up to 10 in the Seaton Sluice/St. Marys area during the month. Three were at Hallington on the 20th (LGM).

'Commic' Tern

Up to 50 were at Seaton Sluice on the 13th and off Cresswell on the 26th. Over 1000 "Tern sp" gathered off Chevington on the 30th (RW).

Little Tern

A flock of seven N over Holy Island on the 12th (BNR) and a single at Cresswell Pond on the 1st (AMB).

Black Tern

A single bird at Druridge Pond on the 6th (JEF). Eight N off Hauxley on the 13th and five S on the 18th (HRS). Two noted feeding with other Terns at Seaton Sluice on the 13th (MW/PW) and a single S at Birling Carrs on the 27th (KD).

Guillemot

Many oiled birds came ashore between Bamburgh and the Tyne during the first week and again during the last week of the month. The RSPCA oiled bird unit at Gateshead (Tel 608899) arranged collection
A heavy S movement of Auks, mainly guillemots noted off Cresswell on the 26th (IK).

Stock Dove

One-two noted at Alnwick, Backworth and Swallow Pond.

Collared Dove

A flock of 80 in a field near Earsdon on the 6th (MW).

Barn Owl

The pair near Earsdon were incubating a second clutch on the 9th at least one young having hatched by the months end. (MSH/WGS). One at Horton on the 28th (LJM).

Little Owl

Pair with one young noted regularly near Vindolanda throughout the month (SJH). Two together near Mitford on 17th (AH) and one at South Newsham on 21st (MH).

Tawny Owl

Six birds were attracted to a tape recording of call at Plankey Mill on the 23rd (SJH). Singles noted, mostly calling, at Jesmond Dene. South Gosforth, Guide Post, Morpeth, and Seaton Delaval. One mobbed by thrushes at Whitley Bay Cemetery at 1.00 pm on 27th (MLL).

Short Eared Owl

A small influx apparent from the 12th on with four then at Bamburgh, and two-three at Hauxley, Whitley Bay, Holywell Pond, Earsdon during the following two weeks. Five-six present in the Newsham-Hartley area on the 21st. Singles also noted well inland at Threestoneburn and Staward Hall.

Swift

Five over Gosforth Park on the 2nd (BB/MH). One-two noted at mainly coastal localities on several dates thereafter until about the 20th. The last record for the month was of one S at Cullenose Point on the 27th (MSH).

Kingfisher

Singles noted on several dates at Jesmond Dene and at Newburn on the Tyne on the 28th (MPF/RGW).

Green Woodpecker.

One noted flying out of the dunes at Bamburgh on the 13th (BRS).

Great Spotted Woodpecker

Singles noted at Gosforth Park and Ovingham, and on the coast at Hauxley on the 9th (HRS).

Sand Martin

A peak count of 50 at the Seaton Burn Swallow roost on the 12th with two-three still present on the 19th (BG). 20 were at Gosforth Park on the 6th and 25 at Mitford on the 20th (ES/WTC/JI). The last record of the month was of three S at Chevington Burn on the 30th.

Swallow

The Seaton Burn roost peaked at about 8,000 on 12th, 2,000 still being present on 19th (BG/IK et al). Steady S passage was noted on many days during the month at localities near to the coast, and at Westerhope on the 13th. Gatherings of 200-300 reported from Holy Island, Bamburgh and Gosforth Park. A few birds on Holy Island on the 13th noted as having pure white underparts (JDL).

House Martin

A leucistic bird was among 200 gathered at Stocksfield on the 5th., 80 being noted there on the 26th (BNR). 150 were with Swallows at Seaton Delaval on the 4th (MLL). Small numbers were associated with the S movements of Swallows during the month.

Tree Pipit

About ten were in the Crooked Lonnen on Holy Island on the 3rd (JDL). One-two at Hauxley, Priors Park and Holy Island 5th-12th.

Meadow Pipit

Southerly movement and concentrations of birds noted on many dates especially at Bamburgh and Hauxley. Passage particularly heavy on 12th-13th, 18th-19th and 26th. Flocks of up to 30 common in the Threestoneburn area on the 5th (AMB).

Rock Pipit

Up to six at Bamburgh and St. Marys.

Yellow Wagtail

Many reports of one-three at coastal localities until the 7th when two at Whitley Bay and at Hartley.

Grey Wagtail

Noted at usual riverine localities, plus one-three at Whitley Bay, Bamburgh, Lynemouth and Hauxley during the month.

Pied Wagtail

Parties of 10-20 at Hauxley, Berwick, Whitley Bay and Newton. About 30 on wires at dusk near Morpeth on 11th and at Wallington Hall on 25th (MSH/AM) 40-50 roosted at Bamburgh on the 2nd (BRS).

White Wagtail

Singles at Holy Island on 3rd (MSH) and Bamburgh on 19th (AMB), less usually one reported from a garden at Bellingham on 12th (HWR).

Wren

A small influx noted at Hauxley on 19th when eight present.

Dunnoek

Small numbers noted on passage during the month at Hauxley, Priors Park and Bamburgh.

Robin

Only small numbers noted on the coast on various dates, Bamburgh R.S. ringing a total of 19 during the month.

Black Redstart

A single bird near Beal on the 17th (JDL).

Redstart

One-two noted at usual coastal localities during first half of month, four-five being present at Bamburgh and Hauxley 12th-13th. A single bird was in a Chapel House garden on the 19th (IK)

Whinchat

12 were at Bamburgh on the 12th only one-two being noted at usual coastal localities thereafter until up to six at Hadston on the 30th. A single male was inland at Stocksfield on the 19th (BNR).

Stonechat

One-two noted at Newton and Bamburgh throughout the month (BRS/WAK et al).

Wheatear

Several small parties on the coast until mid month odd birds being seen at usual localities throughout the rest of the month. Singles inland at Whittle Dene on 20th (BG) and at Berwick Hill on 27th (AHB).

Ring Ousel

A single bird at Hauxley on the 8th (HRS).

Blackbird

Influx apparent at Whitley Bay cemetery on the 7th when 30 (KIB) on 11th when 100 (GM/PW) and on 27th when 50 (MLL). Influx also noted at Jesmond Dene 22nd-23rd and 30th - 1st October when large numbers present (MPF).

Fieldfare

Three at Hauxley on the 6th when one at Holy Island. Singles at Bamburgh and Whitley Bay on the 7th, three at Byker on the 11th and a party of 15 at Humshaugh on the 13th. Small numbers noted thereafter.

Song Thrush

Immigration suggested by 20 at Whitley Bay cemetery on the 7th (ICK), 10 at Bamburgh on 26th (BRS), and a conspicuous influx at Jesmond Dene 22nd/23rd and 30th - 1st October (MPF)

Mistle Thrush

Small flocks moving through Bamburgh during end of second week were thought likely to be post-breeding birds rather than immigrants (BRS). Numbers increased at Priors Park from the 12th on with 17 present on 19th (MC) five seen arriving from the east on the 28th when many present at Whitley Bay cemetery (GFM).

Grasshopper Warbler

An immature trapped at Bamburgh on 3rd (BRS).

Sedge Warbler

Two trapped at Bamburgh during first week, last bird present on the 12th (BRS). A single at Hauxley on the 6th (HRS). One at Seaton Burn on the 19th (BG), two at Newton Pool on the 20th (BB/MH).

Paddyfield Warbler

A bird trapped at Priors Park on the 27th (KD/AB/MC) is only the sixth British record. The last being trapped at Hauxley on 12/10/74.

Reed Warbler

An immature trapped at Bamburgh on the 13th (BRS).

Barred Warbler

One at Hauxley on the 12th (HRS).

Lesser Whitethroat

Singles at Whitley Bay cemetery on the 6th (ME/CB) and at Hauxley on the 27th (HRS).

Whitethroat

Singles at Bamburgh on 2nd and 5th and two on 12th-13th (BRS). Four at Budle Bay on the 5th (BRS). One at Hauxley on the 2nd and four on the 6th (HRS). Singles at Whitley Bay on the 12th (JPD/EML) and at Marden Park on the 27th (JDM).

Garden Warbler

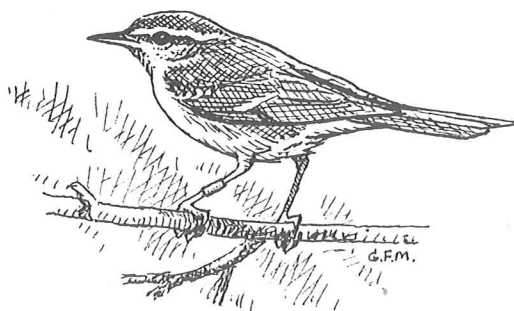
Singles ringed at Hauxley on the 2nd and 6th, six present there on the 12th and five ringed on the 27th (HRS). Singles at Bamburgh on the 19th, 20th and 27th (BRS). One at Marden Park on the 1st (JDM).

Blackcap

A total of eight ringed at Hauxley 2nd-27th and one-two present at Bamburgh 11th-27th (BRS).

Artic Warbler

A bird was trapped and ringed at Hauxley on the 4th being retrapped the following day (HRS).



Chiffchaff

Birds heard singing at Felton on the 1st (ETN/JRN), at Craster on the 12th (PWD), and at Ovingham (two) on the 14th (BNR). Four were at Matfen on the 12th (RW), two at Blaydon on the 19th (BL) and one at Bamburgh on the 20th (BRS).

Willow Warbler

One-three at Priors Park and Bamburgh throughout the month, including one in song at the latter locality on the 27th. About four at Hauxley on the 2nd and 12 on the 6th (HRS). A single bird on Holy Island, 12th/13th (JDL/BNR).

Goldcrest

Up to three at usual coastal localities throughout the month. Up to nine present at Bamburgh on the 13th (BRS). Two were at Threestoneburn on the 5th (AMB) and exceptionally conspicuous at Thrunton Wood on the 27th (AH).

Spotted Flycatcher

One-four at Holy Island, Bamburgh, Tynemouth, Hauxley and Whitley Bay 12th-30th. Singles inland at Chapel House on the 16th (IK) and at Wallington Hall on the 25th (AH).

Pied Flycatcher

One-three at usual coastal localities throughout the month, a small influx apparent 11th-12th when up to six at Priors Park, Holy Island and Blyth estuary, ten at Hauxley and three at Bamburgh and Whitley Bay.

Long-tailed Tit

Only reports were of two at Holywell Dene on 6th (ES et al) and about seven at Bolam Lake on the 13th (MLL).

Coal Tit

Coastal records of one at Bamburgh on 19th when two at Bradford Kaimes (BRS) and singles trapped at Hauxley on 29th and 30th (HRS).

Blue Tit

Flocks of about 20 at Bamburgh on the 19th and at Hauxley on the 29th.

Nuthatch

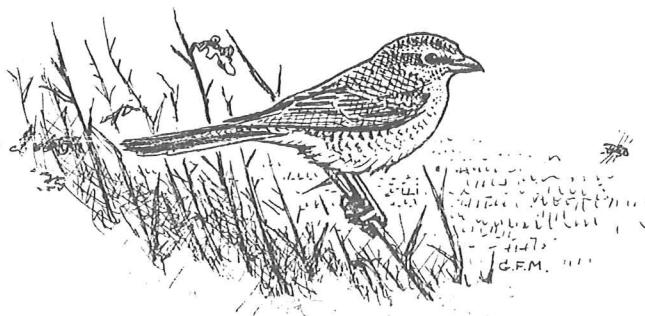
One-two at Matfen, Allan Banks and Rowlands Gill during the month.

Treecreeper

Singles at Bamburgh on 8th and 12th (BRS).

Red-backed Shrike

An immature was at Bamburgh on 12th-13th (BRS). Immatures also noted at Newton 17th-20th (WAK/ES et al), at Whitley Bay on 27th-28th (KR/GFM et al) and at Hadston 29th-30th (CB et al). An adult male was near Chevington Burn on the 29th (CB).



Tree Sparrow

Flock of 25 at Holywell on 28th (JDD/EML). Up to ten at Backworth, Druridge and Whitley Bay.

Goldfinch

Largest flock noted was of about 25 at Mitford on the 20th (ES et al). 16 at Prudhoe on the 14th (BNR) and up to nine in Bamburgh area including a pair feeding juveniles on the 19th (BRS). Several small flocks of about six noted.

Siskin

A flock of about 30 at Stamfordham on 14th (RW). One-two at Holywell, Craster and Whitley Bay during second half of the month. About 30 arrived at Bamburgh at dusk on the 26th and 10S at Hauxley the following day (BRS/HRS).

Linnet

About 80 were in the Hauxley/Hadston area on the 6th where a total of about 350 on the 29th. In the Cresswell/Druridge Pool area 150 on the 1st increased to over 500 on the 17th (LJM/KIB et al).

Redpoll

Nine at Newton Pool on the 25th (PRW) was only report.

Yellowhammer

Flocks of 25 noted at Horton and Warkworth Lane.

Corn Bunting

Up to three in Cresswell area.

Red Bishop

A popular cage bird, presumably a local escapee toured the Northumberland coast being reported at St. Marys on the 5th., Druridge on the 14th and at Holy Island 27th - at least October 10th !

October records to Alan Heavisides, 8 Leyland Place, Kirkhill, Morpeth, NE61 2AN in Vooous order and by 8th November at latest please.

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			Seaton Sluice Watch Tower

Wader Counts

Next count date-15th November, 1981

1981 BREEDING STUDY SUMMARIES

Pied Flycatchers - nest box studies

	<u>Pairs</u>	<u>Failed</u>	<u>Fledged young</u>
Dipton, Marchburn, Linnels	60	7	316
Apperley Dene and Junifer.			

A total of 64 adults were trapped and found to be carrying rings from previous years, 22 others were newly ringed this year.

	<u>Pairs</u>	<u>Fledged young</u>
Mitford, Angerton and Hartburn.	10	44

A poor fledging rate from 84 eggs laid, 10 were addled and 12 young were predated in the nest box.

Nunnykirk

Six pairs raised 26 young from 41 eggs laid compared with last year when seven pairs raised 47 young from 47 eggs laid.

Northumbria Ringing Group & R. Walton.

Blue Tit and Great Tit - nest box studies

Dipton, Marchburn, Linnels, Apperley Dene, Junifer

Year	Boxes available	<u>Great Tit</u>			Pairs	<u>Blue Tit</u>	
		<u>Pairs</u>	<u>Failed</u>	<u>Fledged young</u>		<u>Failed</u>	<u>Fledged young</u>
1977	271	68	26	296	74	15	477
78	271	62	14	361	56	12	412
79	256	51	4	369	46	5	378
80	247	70	1	521	66	3	569
81	247	95	14	748	73	5	569

In total 230 boxes out of 247 occupied by Blue Tits, Great Tits, Pied Flycatchers, Coal Tit (1) and Redstart (1)

Northumbria Ringing Group.

STRANGE MOORHEN BEHAVIOUR

During the dry September weather all that remained of the Brier Burn at Backworth was a strip of enclosed water about 15 metres by 2 metres and no more than 40 cm deep. On the 8th September when I approached this a flurry of activity attracted my attention which I took to be the resident water vole swimming away from me. However what eventually surfaced was not a vole but a bird which immediately dived again before I could identify it.

I went to the other end of the pool and the same thing happened except that the bird did not surface, it swam away under water. I walked along one bank looking closely under the other and in the middle of the pool I eventually found an adult moorhen completely submerged with only head and neck protruding from a patch of weed.

We looked at each other eye to eye from less than a metre then I decided it must be trapped and went to help it out but it emerged without my assistance and swam upstream still under water.

It eventually came out onto the bankside in what appeared to be a half-drowned state where it lay on its belly with legs, neck and wings stretched out. I made to pick it up but this only agitated the bird so I left it to recover. It must have been submerged for 6 or 7 mins.

Its swimming action under water was to use its wings as in slow motion flying and to kick back with each leg alternately. Why it did not fly when first disturbed, obviously not injured and could swim so strongly is a mystery.

Jim McElwee.

Indoor Meetings

Thursday 12th November - Whooper Swans in Iceland

Thursday 10th December - Val McFarland on Lapland.

Medical School - 7.00pm prompt please.

B.T.O. WINTER ATLAS PROJECT

From mid November to the end of February during the next three winters work will be carried out on the collection of records for the Winter Atlas Project. Very little, infact, is known of the winter distribution of birds on a national basis or of the numbers present. It is hoped the project will be as successful as the earlier Atlas of Breeding Birds and it should prove to be at least as exciting.

Virtually anyone can take part as the method of collecting information is remarkably simple; it basically involves counting the numbers of each species of bird seen in a given area (based on the 10 Km Ordnance Survey Grid Squares), over periods of at least one hour. You can infact put in as much or as little time as you like - certainly all records are going to be helpful.

Coverage is required throughout the area, including the built up parts so members with transport difficulties can still make a full contribution to the project. Obviously the remote areas will present problems but they need not be insuperable as many members pay at least single visits to outlying areas during the course of a week. Observers engaged on counting wildfowl or birds of estuaries can combine atlas work with their censusing quite easily.

Full instructions and record cards can be obtained from me upon request or at a club meeting. As much assistance as possible is required.

Geoff Macfarlane
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Tel: Cramlington 733654

Northumbria Books:

Natural and local history books, bought and sold. List available (Stamp please). Lists of books required welcome. New books supplied on request. Tel: Cramlington 712508 or write, Northumbria Books, 31 Herdlaw, Cramlington, Northumberland NE23 6AH

Membership Fees: Subscriptions are now due for the year October, 81 to September, 82

Herewith my subscription to TBC, Oct 81 to Sept. 82

Name.....	Family Sub. £6.00
Address.....	Ordinary Sub. £5.00
.....	Union Sub. £4.00 (18 years or under)
	Tick as appropriate.

To: Hon Treasurer
J.C. Day Esq., 2 Station House, Stannington, Morpeth, Northumberland.



TYNESIDE BIRD CLUB

K. G. DURES (Secretary)

T.B.C. 5 Bath Terrace Tynemouth Tyne & Wear. Tel: North Shields 75928

OCTOBER, 1981

SUMMARY

October is often the most exciting month of the year as the remaining summer visitors depart, the winter visitors arrive and passage migration can provide us with the opportunity of seeing several interesting species of Scandanavian and more eastern origins. This year the month lived up to its expectations particularly in respect of the rarer migrants.

The month commenced with a large area of High pressure far to the NE of us and a large Low centered over Northern Scotland, an associated strong NE wind on the 2nd veered into the SE during the day accompanied by intermittent heavy rain. Being a Friday few people were able to observe the fall of migrants which began on that day but this was remedied the following day when a cold dry front moved across the country, the wind being only a light SW. Many birds arrived on the coast during these two days and several others were located during the following two. Amongst the commoner species involved were Blackbirds (on the 2nd only), a great number of Blackcaps, several Redstarts, Garden Warblers, Lesser Whitethroats and Spotted Flycatchers. About 10 Red-breasted Flycatchers, four Red-backed Shrikes, two Reed Warblers, between 13 and 16 Yellow-browed Warblers and a Scarlet Rosefinch were recorded. The most unexpected bird of the fall was however a Raddes Warbler trapped at Hauxley on the 4th, this being only the second county record.

Some of these birds presumably lingered or coasted during the following week and were probably joined by new arrivals during the period of strong NE winds on the 7th, additional individuals of many of the same species being located around the following weekend.

The winds were predominantly W during the period 10th-16th, light NE on the 17th and almost calm on the 18th when good numbers of Thrushes arrived during the afternoon along with a Bluethroat at Hauxley.

The weather maps of the regions well to the north and east of us indicated an exceptionally prolonged spell of High pressure and associated easterly winds presumably accounting for the arrival of the more eastern species which continued to turn up along the east coast later in the month when winds were very light and few of the commoner migrants were apparent. Pallas's Warblers were unexpected finds at both Bamburgh and Priors Park on the 23rd, and a 'Siberian' Stonechat was at Hauxley the following day. A late Red-backed Shrike showing characteristics of one of the eastern races was at Priors Park between the 23rd and 25th. In addition notes have now been received on what could be the bird of the autumn, a possible Brown Flycatcher seen on Holy Island on the 26th. Yet another rarity may later be added to the list as a Red flanked Bluetail was reported to have been seen on the Farne Islands during the month.

Interesting reports were not however restricted to passerine species; Whooper Swans and Geese numbers increased rapidly and raptors seen included Marsh and Hen Harriers, Buzzard, Peregrine and the Holywell Osprey lingered until the 10th. Wildfowl and wader counters provided interesting data as numbers built up of the winter visitors.

CLASSIFIED LIST

Red-throated Diver

Passage noted off Seaton Sluice on the 2nd when 28N and 7S and 6N on the 18th (SSWT). Up to 14 off Holy Island, 10 off Ross and 12 off Stag Rocks during the month. A maximum of six noted in Druridge Bay and one-two at other usual coastal localities.

Black-throated Diver

A total of six recorded at Seaton Sluice during the month (SSWT). A single bird in Druridge Bay on the 24th (GSR/KIB).

Great Northern Diver

A single bird close in shore off Seaton Sluice on the 28th & 29th (JEF/CED) and one off Holy Island on the 22nd (BG/IK).

Little Grebe

A sharp decrease noted at Cresswell when a maximum of only six noted on the 18th (LGM etal). Six-eight noted at Holywell, Broomlee and Grindon. One-three noted at ten usual localities.

Great Crested Grebe

One-two present at Holywell during the month (CED etal). Singles off Hauxley on the 7th and 31st (HRS).

Red-necked Grebe

One-two in the Holy Island harbour area throughout the period 3rd - 20th (BA/JET etal).

Slavonian Grebe

Singles noted near Hauxley on the 11th (NWR) and off Bamburgh on the 31st (BRS).

Black-necked Grebe

A very unusual report was of 10-12 together on the sea in Druridge Bay on the 24th (ES/WTL).

Fulmar

Six had returned to the Coves cliffs on Holy Island by the 23rd (IK).

Sooty Shearwater

Three N off Seaton Sluice on the 2nd (SSWT) and two N off Holy Island on the 11th (NRG).

Manx Shearwater

Six N on the 2nd and one N on the 10th off Seaton Sluice (SSWT/ES).

Gannet

About 1000 N off Seaton Sluice on the 2nd (SSWT).

Cormorant

Several small parties noted on the Tyne, including two at Hexham on the 28th (MR), and 21 flying downstream at Howdon on the 21st (JAM).

Heron

Up to 12 noted at the Warkworth roost during the month (WAK etal). One-three at 12 localities, including Seaton Sluice where one noted arriving off the sea on the 31st (MGW/PAW). Five were on Holy Island on the 9th (LGM). 14 were reported to have been shot at Bellingham on the 2nd (per BL).

Mute Swan

Numbers continued to increase at Cresswell Pond with a maximum of 63 there on the 14th declining to 20 by the end of the month (PRW/AMB etal). Ten were at Bothal Pond on the 18th (LGM) and up to six at Ovingham mid month (BNR) and in Coquet estuary on the 25th, smaller numbers noted elsewhere.

Bewick Swan

Two near the 'Beehive' on the 31st (KW).

Whooper Swan

The first four were noted at Holywell on the 7th (ES/WTL), the rapid influx which followed and the subsequent local movements of birds makes it difficult to accurately assess the numbers of birds actually involved. Numbers steadily increased in the Holywell/Earsdon/Backworth area from about 50 on the 16th to 113 (including 20 juveniles) on the 26th. Eight were at Cresswell Pond on the 11th increasing to a maximum of 34 on the 18th (KR/IC/BW et al). A single bird was at Holy Island on the 10th and a herd of 40 (including only three juveniles) was present there on the 11th (NRG). 32 (including six juveniles) were at Rayburn Lake on the 19th (JPL), 17 arrived from the east at Bamburgh on the 23rd and 24 were at Bradford Pool on the 31st (JPL/BRS). Small numbers noted elsewhere including three-seven at Grindon, Greenlaw, Hinds Shield and Halleypike.

Goose (sp)

Several flocks of unidentified geese were reported including 38 off the sea at Embleton on the 4th (ICD), nine over Tynemouth on the 5th (DMT), eight at Prestwick Carr on the 11th (JAM) and 30 N off Seaton Sluice on the 23rd. A very large flock of about 300 S off Hauxley on the 4th (HRS).

Bean Goose

A single bird was with two Grey Lag at Cresswell Pond on the 14th (PRW), a flock of seven at Holywell on the 15th and 16th (CED) and two at Newton on the 28th (JEF).

Pink-footed Goose

Interestingly several large flocks were noted flying S off Aberlady on the 4th totalling about 1600, it is possible that the 300 Goose sp off Hauxley on that date may have been of this species. In the country, a single was at Holywell on the 7th, three at Backworth on the 10th, five at Budle Bay on the 11th and singles at Druridge and Whittle Dene on the 18th and at Ellington on the 19th.

White-fronted Goose

A single N off Bamburgh on the 10th (BRS).

Grey Lag Goose

Largest concentrations as usual in the north, over 3000 coming into roost at Hoselaw on the 18th (KW et al), and 1200 at Holburn on the 25th (LGM). 90N off Hauxley on the 2nd, 53N off Priors Park on the 4th and about 200 at Hoppen Kiln Pool on the 19th (HRS/MC/BRS). Maximum of 67 at Whittle Dene and 45 at Grindon noted on the 18th (MR/BNR). Many smaller skeins noted passing over during the month.

Canada Goose

79 at Capheaton on the 19th (JPL).

Barnacle Goose

200 were on Holy Island on the 4th (DOC) when a total of 63N off Hauxley, seven N there the following day. (HRS). Ten were at Holy Island on the 11th, one at Bondicarr on the 7th and a total of 52S off Seaton Sluice on the 18th.

Brent Goose

Over 100 were on Fenham Flats on the 4th (GEC) although only smaller numbers were recorded there thereafter. At Hauxley three N on the 2nd and ten N on the 5th. 15 N off Seaton Sluice on the 27th (KIB).

Shelduck

21 N off Seaton Sluice on the 2nd and six N on the 18th. On the 24th eight N off Holy Island and two N off Hauxley (IK/HRS). Three inland at Rayburn Lake on the 19th (JPL).

Wigeon

Several thousands were on the Lindisfarne reserve by midmonth. Northerly passage was recorded on several dates being especially heavy off Seaton Sluice on the 2nd when 1696 N. Numbers fluctuated at Grindon with a maximum there on the 3rd of 387. (LGM/MLL). Up to 80 in the Cresswell/Druridge area during the month and small flocks at usual waters.

Gadwall

The only record was of a drake at Grindon on the 17th (LGM).

Teal

Passage noted at Seaton Sluice on the 2nd when 264N and 34S. (SSWT). A total of about 200N off Hauxley between the 5th and 18th (HRS). The largest gathering recorded was of 300 at Hoppen Kiln Pool on the 11th. The maximum count from Grindon was of 83 on the 17th (LGM). About 60 noted at Holywell, Whittle Dene and Holy Island and about 30 at Druridge, Brenkley and Seaton Burn.

Mallard

Large concentrations included up to 390 on the Northumbrian Loughs on the 17th (LGM), 400 at Rayburn on the 19th when 430 at Sweethope (JPL), 270 at Holywell on the 24th (CED) and 180 at Whittle Dene on the 18th (MR). Several smaller flocks of up to 50 noted at usual localities.

Pintail

Three were at Gosforth Park on the 7th (AHB) and at Bradford Kaims on the 11th (BRS) when four at Fenham-le-Moor (BG). Singles at Cresswell Pond on the 4th, Druridge on the 18th and Ross and Holywell on the 25th.

Shoveler

14 were at Grindon on the 3rd (LGM), seven at Druridge on the 18th (LGM) and eight at Capheaton on the 19th (JPL). A single bird at Hinds Shield on the 24th and three N off Seaton Sluice on the 18th.

Pochard

Conspicuous passage on the 2nd off Seaton Sluice when a total of 178N. 50 on the Northumbrian Loughs on the 3rd decreased to 12 by the 17th (LGM). 30-50 at Whittle Dene, Seaton Burn, Sweethope and Rayburn (LGM/JPL et al). A maximum at Holywell on the 24th when 130 present (CED).

Tufted Duck

No very large concentrations recorded, 30-50 being noted at Holywell, Cresswell/Druridge, Bolam and Rayburn. 81 were on Sweethope on the 19th (JPL).

Scaup

The largest flock was 17 off Hauxley on the 17th (HRS). Seven were present on Holy Island Lough between 19th-26th (IK). Two-three noted at Druridge and Seaton Sluice on several dates.

Eider

Largest gathering noted was of 250 off Stag Rocks on the 20th (BRS).

Long-tailed Duck

At least 12 off Holy Island by the 11th and 20 off Ross on the 24th (JDL/LGM et al). Between 11th-31st one-two regularly noted off Bamburgh, Chevington Burn, Hauxley and on Cresswell and Newton Ponds. Less usually, a male was observed catching small fish on Killingworth Lake on the 11th and 12th (TJ/RJ).

Common Scoter

A monthly total off Seaton Sluice of 93N and 1S, and of 150N off Hauxley. About 50 were on the sea off Hadston on the 18th (LGM).

Velvet Scoter

Three noted off Holy Island on the 11th (NRG), singles off Hauxley on the 18th and off Bondicarr on the 20th (HRS/WAK) and a total of 12N off Seaton Sluice between the 22nd and 31st (SSWT).

Goldeneye

Conspicuous in small numbers at coastal localities from the 11th on. Seaton Sluice recorded 204N and 4S during the month including 166N on the 18th when 14 on the sea at Hauxley and 33 on the sea at Hadston. 11 were on Whittle Dene on the 18th and on the 19th, 16 at Capheaton and 17 at Sweethope.

Red-breasted Merganser

A total of 14N off Hauxley between 17th-25th (HRS). 27N off Seaton Sluice on the 2nd and 13N between 22nd-24th (SSWT). Up to six off Holy Island and off Berwick during the month.

Goosander

The largest concentrations were of eight on Greenlee on the 17th (LGM), 18 near Hexham on the 28th (MR), and ten on the Aln at Alnwick on the 31st (BL). On the coast a total of 12N off Hauxley between 17th-25th (HRS) and singles on Druridge Pool on the 10th (BNR) and off Holy Island on the 11th (JDL).

Marsh Harrier

A female/immature flew low over Holywell Pond on the 1st (MH).

Hen Harrier

Inland records were of 'ringtails' at Greenlee on the 3rd (LGM), near Wallington on the 17th (MS), Bakethin reservoir on the 23rd (PRW) and at Allerhope Burn on the 25th (WAK). On the coast singles were in the Hauxley area 3rd-17th (HRS), on Holy Island on the 4th (DOC) and in Holywell/Seaton Sluice area 21st-31st (JEF etal).

Sparrowhawk

One-two noted at 24 localities including several on the coast, three-four being present on Holy Island 19th-26th.

Buzzard

Singles noted at Benfield (coast road junction) on the 4th (GM) and at Boulmer on the 18th (GEC).

Osprey

The bird noted last month in the Holywell area remained in the near vicinity until the 10th when it was seen to leave towards the east.

Kestrel

Conspicuous throughout the month one-two being noted at 50 localities.

Merlin

All sightings were made on or near to the coast with up to three being present on Holy Island and singles at Tynemouth, Seaton Sluice, Backworth, St. Marys and Blyth.

Peregrine

At least one was on Holy Island throughout the month (IK etal). Singles noted near Wooler on the 11th (JN) at Backworth on the 28th (BNR) and at St. Marys on the 31st (KW). Two were watched talon grappling over Jesmond on the 15th (BL).

Black Grouse

The only report was of a single male at Threestoneburn on the 25th (AMB).

Partridge

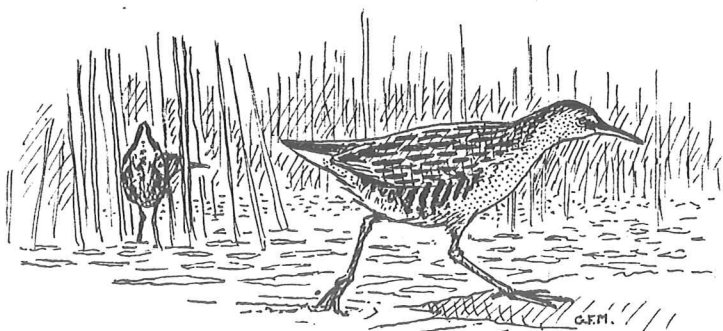
Up to three coveys were on Holy Island during the month. The largest covey reported was of 16 at Stocksfield on the 14th (BNR).

Pheasant

Unusual sightings included a female sheltering under the South Shields lifeboat before flying across the river and perching on piles under the North Shields fish quay on the 12th (WLR), and a male at Marden Park, Whitley Bay on the 24th (JDM).

Water Rail

At Hauxley between 3rd-5th two were found dead and two trapped and ringed, another was at nearby Chevington (HRS). Singles also noted at Hollywell Pond on the 3rd (JPD/EML) and at Bamburgh on the 21st and 24th (BRS).



Moorhen

22 at Wallsend Swallow on the 18th (FM) was largest count.

Coot

The largest concentration reported was of 388 at Broomlee on the 17th (LGM). Numbers increased at Cresswell from about 110 on the 10th to 220 by the months end (BNR/ICD et al). As many as 141 were on Swallow Pond on the 18th (FM).

Wader Count - 18th October

The following stretches of coastline were actually covered :-

Seahouses - Beadnell (MLL), Beadnell - Howick Burn (DLW/MAF), Howick Burn - Boulmer (IK), Boulmer - Alnmouth (ES/WTL), Alnmouth - Birling Carrs (ETN/JRN), Birling Carrs - Coquet estuary (PWW), Amble - Chevington Burn (NWR), Wansbeck - Blyth estuary (JBD), Blyth - Seaton Sluice (LJM), Seaton Sluice - Briardene (JPL), St. Marys Island - Tynemouth (MC).

Oystercatcher

Birds were present on all of the counted stretches of coastline on the 18th, a total of 980 birds being noted. 450 were at the Black Law roost on the 25th (LGM).

Ringed Plover

135 counted during the coastal wader count on the 13th. Concentrations of 30-50 were noted at Guile Point, Blyth estuary, St. Marys Island and Hauxley during the month.

Golden Plover

Up to 1000 in the Hadston/Hauxley area by the end of the month (HRS). Up to 450 near East Benton Farm on the 11th (TJ) and 500 at Corbridge on the 28th (MR). A maximum of 300 at St. Marys during the month. 550 were between Beadnell and Howick Burn on the 19th (DLW/MAF).

Grey Plover

Only 34 noted during the coastal wader count on the 13th. 300-400 were at Fenham-le-Moor on the 11th (BG).

Lapwing

Flocks of 150-300 at Heddon, West Denton and Seaton Delaval.

Knot

3-4,000 were at Fenham-le-Moor on the 11th (BG) 103 were between Seaton Sluice and Briardene on the 23rd (JPL) and 57 between Amble and Chevington Burn on the 18th (NWR). About 150 sheltered at Tynemouth on the 2nd (MC).

Sanderling

74 counted during the wader count, 58 of which were in the Seaton Sluice - Briardene area. Up to 50 were in the Hauxley area during the month (HRS) and 115 at Guile Point on the 25th (LGM).

Little Stint

A single bird at Cresswell on the 24th (ES/WTL) was the only record.

Purple Sandpiper

149 were noted on the 13th wader count. Up to 40 noted at Stag Rocks and 60 on St. Marys Island.

Dunlin

A total of 527 birds noted on the 13th wader count, most occurring north of Amble. 7-8,000 estimated at Fenham-le-Moor on the 11th (BG).

Ruff

Singles noted 3rd-4th at Stannington, Holy Island and Hauxley. Six were at St. Marys on the 6th (KR) and two in Budle Bay on the 19th (BRS). At Backworth one on the 13th, two on the 15th and ten on the 21st. (JDM/BNR/AMB).

Jack Snipe

A single at Hauxley on the 6th (HRS) and two at Derwenthaugh on the 16th (AHB).

Snipe

Only odd birds noted on the coast and up to 12 on Holy Island. 49 at Derwenthaugh by the 23rd (AHB).

Woodcock

One-two on the coast at North Shields, Hauxley, Bamburgh and Holy Island 18th-25th. A single W over Threestoneburn on the 24th (AMB).

Black-tailed Godwit

Singles at Holywell and St. Marys Island on the 1st (MH) and at Beal on the 15th (JDL) and Budle Bay on the 19th (BRS).

Bar-tailed Godwit

55 were noted on the 13th wader count. Up to 200 noted on Holy Island.

Whimbrel

A flock of 12 on Holy Island on the 1st (JDL).

Curlew

166 noted during the 13th wader count. Up to 40 roosted at St. Marys and 200 + on Holy Island.

Spotted Redshank

The only report was of one at Fenham-le-Moor on the 11th (BG).

Redshank

815 noted during the 13th wader count. Up to 180 concentrated in Blyth estuary mid month.

Greenshank

Singles at Hadston on the 4th (HRS) and Backworth on the 9th (MN). Up to six on Fenham Flats on the 15th (JDL).

Green Sandpiper

A single bird was at Whittle Dene on the 18th (MR).

Common Sandpiper

A single bird was at Hauxley on the 5th (HRS) and an exceptionally late bird at Warkworth on the 25th (BNR).

Turnstone

Conspicuous during the coastal wader count on the 13th a total of 926 being recorded. Up to 100 noted at Boulmer, Stag Rocks and St. Marys during the month.

Pomarine Skua

Singles N off Seaton Sluice on the 17th and 18th (SSWT).

Arctic Skua

Passage N noted on the 2nd when 132 off Seaton Sluice (SSWT). Only odd birds noted at Coastal localities thereafter, but a light S movement noted off Holy Island on the 21st (IK).

Great Skua

36N and 2S off Seaton Sluice on the 2nd (SSWT). One-two noted 17th-26th at Seaton Sluice, Tynemouth and Holy Island.

Little Gull

An adult was in Blyth harbour on the 3rd (RH) and two N off Seaton Sluice on the 17th (SSWT).

Black-headed Gull

About 1500 were attracted by a sandfly hatch at Boulmer on the 12th (IK).

Common Gull

200 at Capheaton on the 19th was largest gathering reported.

Lesser Black-backed Gull

One was at Backworth on the 21st (AMB) and a 'Scandinavian' bird was in Amble harbour on the 24th (HRS).

Glaucous Gull

Immatures were noted at Boulmer on the 17th (ES/WTL) at Seaton Sluice on the 18th (SSWT) and at Hauxley on the 22nd (HRS).

Kittiwake

Heavy N passage was noted off Holy Island on 20th, 21st and 23rd (IK).

Sandwich Tern

One-five noted at many localities until the 25th, the last record being of a single N off Seaton Sluice on the 31st (KW).

Common Tern

One-six noted at several localities until mid month, a single bird being noted at St. Marys on the 21st and 23rd (JPL).

Arctic Tern

Three off Seaton Sluice on the 17th were specifically identified as Arctic(KW) and one at St. Marys Island on the 26th (DGW).

Black Tern

One was watched fishing offshore near Embleton Burn on the 14th (MF).

Guillemot

Large numbers were noted close inshore off Holy Island during the periods 9th-11th and 19th-26th (NRG/IK et al). Auk (sp) were noted moving N off St. Marys at a rate of over 100/hour throughout the 14th (ICD).

Stock Dove

Singles were noted at Hauxley on the 6th (HRS) and offshore off Holy Island on the 10th (NRG).

Collared Dove

140 were gathered on wires at Longhirst on the 17th (AH). At least 110 birds were at Brunton on the 3rd. (AHB).

Barn Owl

Singles noted during the month at Chevington, East Hartford, Moor Farm Cramlington, Horton Grange, Acklington and near Charlton Mires.

Little Owl

The only report was of one at East Holywell on the 5th (CED).

Tawny Owl

Singles noted at Mohope, Horton and on the coast at Whitley Bay cemetery 3rd-4th (HG/IC et al) and at Hauxley 16th and 24th (HRS).

Long-eared Owl

One flew in from the sea at Seaton Sluice on the morning of the 18th (WAK).

Short-eared Owl

Conspicuous throughout the month especially in coastal localities. Mostly one-two noted from 22 localities but four-five recorded in the Whitley Bay, Hauxley and Bamburgh areas. One-two noted well inland at Threestoneburn, Thockrington, Staward Station, Stannington, Dinnington and Chesterwood.

Kingfisher

A single bird at Gosforth Park on the 4th (ADM) and one-two present in Jesmond Dene throughout the month (MPF).

Green Woodpecker

One at Threestoneburn on the 18th (AMB) was the only report.

Great Spotted Woodpecker

Possible immigrants on the coast at Craster on the 5th (AH) and at Bamburgh on the 18th (BRS). Singles noted during the month at Bedlington (regularly visiting a bird table), Stocksfield, Backworth, Felton, Bellingham and Halleypike.

Skylark

Small numbers were noted moving mainly N and arriving from the east almost daily between 18th-25th at Bamburgh (BRS).

Shore Lark

One noted at Cresswell on the 10th (per BL).

Sand Martin

Two late birds at Hauxley on the 7th (HRS).

Swallow

Small numbers were noted at several localities during the first week and on the 7th at least 100 arrived at Hauxley. Odd birds thereafter until about the 20th, including three recently fledged young at Juniper being fed by adults on the 16th. (BL). Two late birds were at Embleton on the 31st (JEF).

House Martin

Similar pattern to Swallow records, with small numbers noted before the 7th when about 50 at Hauxley and a pair noted feeding young in a nest at Alnwick. (AH). None were recorded from the 11th until one seen at Holywell on the 31st. (MGW/PAW).

Tree Pipit

Two were at Hauxley on the 3rd, one of which was trapped and ringed (HRS).

Meadow Pipit

Small numbers noted coasting S on the 3rd and 4th at Hauxley (HRS) and moving W at Bamburgh on the 19th (BRS). About 50 were on Hartley Cliffs on the 23rd (JPL). A few birds were still present inland at Rayburn and Mohope late in the month but none were seen in the Threestoneburn area between 17th-25th (JPL/AMB).

Rock Pipit

Small numbers in the St. Marys and Seaton Sluice areas during the month.

Grey Wagtail

One-two were noted in usual coastal localities throughout the month, at least five being present at Bamburgh on the 4th, and inland at Whittle Dene, Ovingham, Warkworth and Fourstones.

Pied Wagtail

Several were at Hauxley on the 7th (HRS).

Dipper

Noted in usual riverine localities including a bird singing at Bywell on the 18th (BNR). One was at Warren Mill on the 11th (MGW).

Wren

Small numbers present in coastal localities throughout the month. Bamburgh recorded the most with 25 ringed during the month and over 20 present on the 18th, Hauxley ringed 10 with 12 present there on the 24th (BRS/HRS).

Duncock

A small influx apparent between 3rd-5th with Bamburgh trapping 24, Hauxley eight and up to eight at Seaton Sluice and Ridley Park.

Robin

A similar influx to Duncock apparent 3rd-5th noted at the same localities. A second small influx occurred on the 23rd-24th being noted only at Holy Island and Bamburgh.

Bluethroat

An adult male noted on the beach at Hauxley on the 18th (HRS).

Black Redstart

At least two on Holy Island on the 3rd (ES/WTL et al) when one at Hauxley (HRS). Three on Holy Island between 10th-11th when one at North Shields (NRG/MNC). A single bird at Whitley Bay on the 19th (MB/DHH).

Redstart

An influx apparent 2nd/3rd with several still present up to the 5th. The largest count of about 20 was at Holy Island (BA), up to 10 were at Hauxley eight at Blyth and two-four at Bamburgh, Tynemouth and Whitley Bay. Singles were at Gosforth Park on the 11th and at Priors Park on 23rd/24th (TJ/MC et al). Four juveniles were noted at Kidlandlee as late as the 25th (WAK).

Whinchat

Conspicuous on the coast 2nd-4th with up to 15 present on Holy Island (ADM/SH et al) eight at Chevington (BG/MH), about six at Bamburgh and Hauxley and singles at Priors Park, Hartley and Holywell. Three were in the Cresswell area on the 11th (PWD/KR) and a single bird at Bamburgh on the 18th (BRS).

Stonechat

Two-three noted at Bamburgh throughout the month (BRS et al). Two at Alnmouth and Warkworth Gut and one at St. Marys. Less usually two at Holywell on the 4th (BB/MH). A bird showing the characteristics of one of the eastern races known as the Siberian Stonechat was at Hauxley on the 24th/25th (HRS).

Wheatear

Three-six at Hauxley, Chevington, Bamburgh and Holy Island between the 3rd and 4th. Odd birds on the coast thereafter until about the 17th. No more records after that date until one at New Hartley on the 31st (TLC).

Ring Ousel

One-two between 3rd-6th at Holy Island, Hauxley and Priors Park. Two arrived at Seaton Sluice with other Thrushes on the 18th (KW).

Blackbird

A large arrival of up to 1000 birds in the Hauxley area on the 2nd (HRS) very few remaining the following day, was unrecorded elsewhere. Small arrivals were recorded at Bamburgh on the 10th and Whitley Bay on the 12th, passage being recorded at several coastal localities almost daily between 19th-31st.

Fieldfare

Little immigration was noted on the coast until the 18th on when small parties were recorded arriving at usual locations whenever conditions were favourable. Small flocks were recorded moving inland during the first half of the month, reports increasing from the 15th when several hundred seen in the Slaley/Stocksfield area. 4-500 passed over Whittle Dene on the 18th and flocks of 50-150 regularly seen thereafter. Largest single flock was of about 500 near Nine Banks on the 30th.

Song Thrush

Noteable influx on the 2nd at Priors Park and Hauxley where about 200 present. Smaller numbers arrived on the 3rd and 4th at Bamburgh and Hauxley including a Danish ringed bird at the latter locality on the 3rd. Birds arrived at Hauxley throughout the afternoon of the 18th and light passage was noted on Holy Island between 19th-26th (IK).

Redwing

No very large arrivals were noted on the coast but several hundred were noted during the period 2nd-6th between Tynemouth and Holy Island. Birds were noted arriving at Hauxley and Bamburgh on the afternoon of the 18th with small numbers arriving throughout the following day at the latter locality. Light passage was apparent on Holy Island between the 19th-26th (IK) Small parties were noted inland from the 6th on, but several hundred arrived at Slaley on the 15th and 18th and mixed Thrush flocks totalling about 400 W over Threestoneburn between 17th-18th.

Mistle Thrush

Immigration was apparent on eight days at Bamburgh between 3rd-31st with a maximum of about 20 there on the 10th (BRS). A total of 55 arrived at Hauxley on the 3rd with small parties on three other dates (HRS). 50 were at Whitley Bay cemetery on the 4th and 20 there on the 6th (KR). A flock of 20 were near Ross on the 11th (AMB).

Sedge Warbler

Singles were found at Hadston on the 3rd and Chevington on the 4th (HRS).

Reed Warbler

Two were trapped at Hauxley on the 3rd, one remaining until at least the 6th (HRS).

Barred Warbler

An immature was at Seaton Sluice on the 2nd (WAK). At least two were on Holy Island on the 3rd when one trapped at Bamburgh (MC/CB/BKS et al). A bird trapped at Hauxley on the 4th was retrapped on the 9th (HRS). Singles were also ringed at Howick on the 5th (AH) and at Bamburgh on the 10th (BRS).

Lesser Whitethroat

Passage apparent 2nd-5th with five ringed at Hauxley, two ringed at Bamburgh and two noted on Holy Island. Three were on Holy Island on the 8th and singles noted there on the 9th, 10th and 15th. A late bird was at Seaton Sluice on the 28th (CED).

Whitethroat

A few present between 2nd-5th with about four at Holy Island and Hauxley and singles at Priors Park and Bamburgh.

Garden Warbler

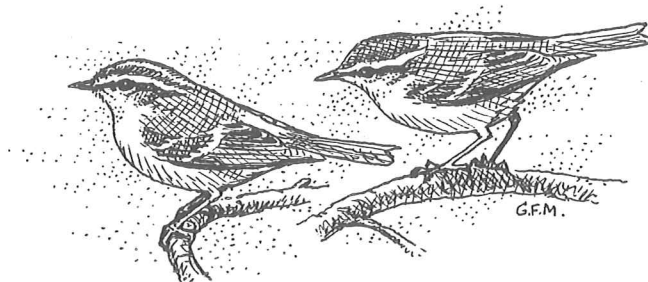
Passage apparent from the 2nd numbers increasing the following day, several remaining until at least the 5th. At Bamburgh ten on the 2nd increased to about 50 on the 3rd (BRS). Hauxley trapped 17 between the 2nd-4th with six-eight others present. Up to seven were counted on Holy Island on the 3rd (ES/WTC et al) and one-three noted at Tynemouth, Monks House garden and Blyth cemetery. Three of the Hauxley ringed birds were retrapped on the 8th when two-three others present and one on Holy Island (HRS/LGM). A late bird was at Priors Park on the 30th and 31st (MC et al).

Blackcap

The start of a considerable fall occurred on the 2nd with additional birds arriving during the following two days. Strangely only small numbers were noted at localities S of Hauxley. On the 2nd 29 were ringed at Hauxley and at least 40 were at Bamburgh. Many observers were on Holy Island the following day and estimates were made of 100 + present, while Bamburgh estimated "several hundreds" in the area with no decrease the following day and at least 40 were at Hauxley. About 25 were at Hauxley on the 8th and at least 11 at Bamburgh on the 10th. One-two were at Tynemouth until at least the end of the month, and one was at Seaton Sluice on the 28th.

Pallas's Warbler

Two of this superb species on the same day, individuals being trapped at Priors Park and Bamburgh on the 23rd. These are only the seventh and eighth county records.



Yellow-browed Warbler

The first of what proved to be a considerable number was trapped at Hauxley on the 2nd. During the following two days four-five were on Holy Island (BA et al), probably two more were at Hauxley (HRS), one trapped at Bamburgh (BRS), two were at Whitley Bay cemetery (KR et al) and one at Priors Park (DMT). Singles were at Craster on the 5th (AH) and at Whitley Bay quarry on the 6th (KW) when another trapped at Hauxley and a different bird present (HRS). Perhaps a new arrival was at Holy Island on the 8th and 9th (LGM), and singles noted there in different localities on the 18th (MS), 19th (IK) and 23rd (IK). One was at Hadston on the 18th (HRS) when one trapped at Bamburgh. Bamburgh trapped its third bird on the 24th (BRS).

Raddes Warbler

A bird trapped at Hauxley on the 4th remained until at least the 6th, this being only the second county record (HRS).

Wood Warbler

A single bird at Hauxley on the 3rd (HRS) was the only record of this uncommon passage migrant.

Chiffchaff

During the fall period 2nd-4th ten were trapped at Hauxley and 12 trapped at Bamburgh. Separating Willow Warbler and Chiffchaff at this time of year, when many of the former have dark legs, can be difficult in the field and both species were involved in small numbers in this fall, up to 12 'Phylloscopus Warblers' were also present at Bamburgh on the 4th. At least four located on Holy Island on the 3rd (KR et al). Odd birds were noted at usual coastal localities until the last two of the month at Marden Park on the 25th. A Danish ringed bird was trapped at Hauxley on the 23rd (HRS). The only inland record concerned one in a Darras Hall garden on the 17th (LSG/TPG).

Willow Warbler

Between the 2nd-4th four were trapped at each of Hauxley and Bamburgh. Up to eight estimated on Holy Island on the 3rd (KR) and one-two were at Tynemouth, St. Marys and Marden Park.

Goldcrest

Only small parties of up to ten were located at the usual coastal localities during the early fall, but Bamburgh's numbers increased to over 30 by the 4th. 20 - 25 were on Holy Island between 8th-11th and a light influx there between the 19th-26th. A marked increase noted at Hauxley on the 8th when about 90 in the area. About ten were at Priors Park on the 22nd. Small parties noted at usual inland localities and common in the Threestoneburn new forestry area during the second half of the month.

Firecrest

A bird brought ashore by a Holy Island Fishing boat on the 9th later died (per BL).

Brown Flycatcher

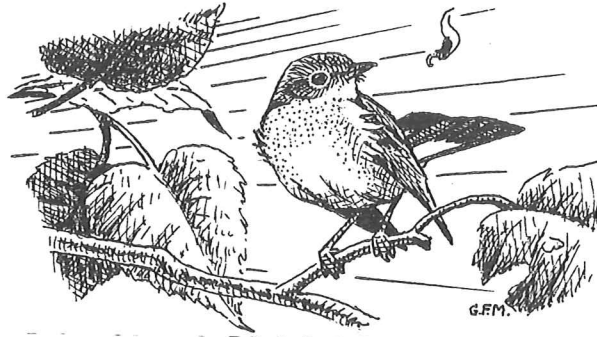
Notes are presently being considered concerning a bird thought to be this species, which was seen well on Holy Island on the morning of the 26th October by T. Hopkins and B Potter. This species has been claimed in Britain before but as yet none have been accepted.

Spotted Flycatcher

About ten at each of Holy Island and Hauxley during the period 2nd-5th when five-six at Priors Park, at least four at Bamburgh and one-two at Whitley Bay and Blyth cemeteries, Ridley Park and Hadston. One at Priors Park on the 7th was watched eating a worm on the grass ! (MC). The last record concerned one at Holy Island on the 10th (NRG).

Red-breasted Flycatcher

A good number located during the early fall, at least six being located on Holy Island on the 3rd (ADM/SH etal), singles at Hauxley, Bamburgh, Seaton Sluice and Tynemouth between the 2nd-5th (HRS/BRS/WAK/KW etal). One was still present 8th-10th on Holy Island (JDL/NRG etal) and two near Hadston on the 9th (WAK). A late bird reported from the old railway track at Holywell on 24th (JRT/KWY).



Pied Flycatcher

A few involved in the fall between the 2nd-5th about six at each of Priors Park and Hauxley, four on Holy Island, three at Ridley Park and one at Bamburgh. One was on Holy Island on the 10th (NRG).

Long-tailed Tit

Several small flocks noted on or near to the coast including 15 at Howick on the 9th (MLL) and 20 there on the 12th mobbing a Red-backed Shrike (IK), ten at Bamburgh on the 18th (BRS) when six in Warkworth Lane (IC/BW). Elsewhere 20 at Fourstones on the 3rd (LGM) and three-four at Close House and Holywell Dene.

Marsh Tit

Noted at Wallington, Stocksfield and Ovingham. A Marsh/Willow Tit at Howick on the 9th (MLL).

Coal Tit

Coastal passage was evident throughout the month. Bamburgh trapped a total of 12 during the month with up to seven there during the first week, and a party of ten seen to arrive from the N on the 19th (BRS). At Hauxley one-four present throughout the month (HRS). Two-three were on Holy Island 9th-11th and 19th-26th (LGM/IK etal). Singles noted at Priors Park on the 10th and 21st and on the 15th at Monkseaton and Marden Park (MC/JPL/JDM). Small numbers noted inland at Stocksfield, Whittle Dene and Wallington.

Blue Tit

Flocks moved regularly through the well watched areas of Priors Park, Hauxley and Bamburgh, 57 being trapped at the latter locality during the month.

Great Tit

Only odd birds at Hauxley but in unusually high numbers at Priors Park throughout the month. Bamburgh trapped 15 during the month most being present on the 18th and 19th.

Nuthatch

Noted at Wallington and Stocksfield.

Treecreeper

Presumably migrants at Budle Bay on the 11th (MGW)., Bamburgh on the 18th (BRS) and on Holy Island on the 17th (per IK). Noted also at Bolam, Mitford, Stocksfield and Close House.

Red-backed Shrike

At least three were on Holy Island on the 3rd/4th (ES/WTL etal) when one was trapped at Bamburgh (BRS). Between the 9th-12th, three were noted at Craster (ETN/JRN) and singles at Howick (IK) and Holy Island (LGM etal). A late bird at Priors Park between 23rd-25th was both unusually shy and noisy, and showed plumage characteristics of one of the Eastern races (KD/DT/MC etal).

Jay

Four noted at Dinnington, Wallington and Bywell, one-two at ten other localities.

Magpie

The largest of several small flocks noted was of eight at Warkworth Lane Pond on the 18th (IC/BW).

Hooded Crow

A single present on Holy Island 19th-26th (IK).

Raven

A single bird W over Rothley Lake on the 23rd (BB).

Starling

Several large flocks noted arriving at Bamburgh on the 18th, 24th and 25th (BRS) during which period influx noted on Holy Island (IK). A flock of about 1000 was at St. Marys on the 23rd (JPL). A roost of over 10,000 noted at Cambois Power Station on the 18th (LJM).

Tree Sparrow

20-30 at Hauxley between 5th and 6th (HRS). About 20 were at Holywell on the 3rd and Priors Park on the 12th (JPD/EML/MC).

Chaffinch

Small flocks noted on the coast during the month but 10-30 present at Bamburgh on five dates.

Brambling

Far fewer than is normal for this species in October. Only one-two noted at Priors Park, Hauxley and Bamburgh on several dates from the 3rd on. Several were on Holy Island on the 4th (BA). Up to ten in the Jesmond Dene area by the end of the month (MPF) and a single bird with Chaffinches on a bird table at Threestoneburn on the 17th (AMB).

Greenfinch

30 noted at Howick on the 12th (IK). About 20 were at Bamburgh on the 23rd and a total of 80N there on the 31st (BRS).

Goldfinch

Several small parties noted on the coast, 10-12 being noted in the Hauxley area, Whitley Bay and Holywell. As many as 40 were at Priors Park on the 8th and 9th (MC). Six-twelve noted during the month at Housesteads., Grindon Hill, Slaley and Byker.

Siskin

About seven were in the Hauxley area on the 3rd/4th when two at Bamburgh where another on the 10th (HRS/BRS). A flock of 35 were noted moving through Slaley forest on the 3rd (BNR). 15 were at Featherstone on the 24th (LGM) and up to ten in the Jesmond Dene area from about the 20th (MPF).

Linnet

Numbers increased on Holy Island to about 300 during the last week (IK etal). Up to 350 were in the Hauxley area 3rd-4th (HRS) and 150 at Monks House on the 3rd (BRS).

Twite

One noted on Holy Island on the 10th (NRG) and two at St. Marys on the 23rd (JPL).

Redpoll

Hauxley trapped two on the 3rd, six on the 10th and 14 on the 24th (HRS). One-two noted during the month at North Shields and Holy Island. 14 were at Holywell on the 4th (BB) and 20 at Fourstones on the 3rd (LGM).

Crossbill

One-two noted at Slaley, Dipton and near Haydon Bridge (BNR/LGM). Four NW near Hexham on the 4th (KD).

Scarlet Rosefinch

An immature was noted on Holy Island on the 3rd remaining until at least the sixth (CB/ME/BA et al). Another was seen at Bamburgh on the 23rd (BRS).



Bullfinch

Two individuals were at Hauxley during the last week (HRS). A total of seven at Threestoneburn on the 24th (AMB) and one-two at Dalton, Bolam, Morpeth and Dipton.

Lapland Bunting

Two were in the Druridge Bay area 9th-17th (WAK/KIB)

Snow Bunting

Seven arrived at Hauxley on the 7th and about 20 in that area by the 24th (HRS). Six were on Holy Island on the 10th-11th (NRG) when two at Druridge Bay (per BL). One-two noted at Seaton Sluice, St. Marys and Marden Park between 17th-23rd.

Yellowhammer

A flock of about 30 at Horton all month (LJM).

Reed Bunting

Common in the Hauxley area on the 3rd and 4th and up to 60 in that area on the 25th (HRS). A few noted moving S at Cresswell on the 18th. (LGM)

Corn Bunting

About 20 noted at Bamburgh roost on the 24th (BRS).

November records to Alan Heavisides 8 Leland Place, Kirkhill, Morpeth, NE61 2AN in Voous order and by 8th December at the latest please.

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			Seaton Sluice Watch Tower

Coastal Wader Count - December 12th and 13th

In the absence of current field trips, Jane Lindsay would welcome any members accompanying her on her wader count on 12th December, covering Seaton Sluice to St. Marys Island. (ring Whitley Bay 527749).
 Ian Kerr, covering Boulmer village to Howick Haven on 13th December also invited members to participate (ring Newcastle 676974).

Indoor Meetings

Dec 10th, 1981	Val McFarland on Lapland
Jan 14th, 1982	Ian Armstrong on the United States
Feb 11th, 1982	Alan Potts, 'Wildlife in Canada'

Medical School 7.00pm prompt please.

B.T.O. Winter Atlas Project

Almost 50 observers have now volunteered to help with this important project in the Northumberland area - 16 recruited at the November Club Meeting which was a very encouraging response indeed. Impressive though this may be the size of the task is such that double this number of people would not be too many. As has been emphasised before the collection of information is very simple and you can put as much or as little time and effort into it as you like. The counting period continues until the end of February and I would be pleased to hear from as many more observers who feel they would like to take part as possible.

Further supplies of record cards can be obtained from me on request:
 Geoff Macfarlane, 31 Wreay Walk, Cramlington, Northumberland, NE23 6LJ. TEL: 733654

Membership Fees: Subscriptions are now overdue for the year October, 1981 to September, 1982

 Herewith my subscription to TBC, Oct 81 to Sept. 82

Name.....	Family Sub.	£6.00
Address.....	Ordinary Sub.	£5.00
.....	Junior Sub.	£4.00
	(18 years or under)	

To: Hon Treasurer
 J.C. Day Esq., 2 Station House, Stannington, Morpeth, Northumberland.

Breeding Summary - Kestrels Kielder area 1981

73 sites were checked
26 laid eggs
22 fledged young
74 young fledged, plus three broods of unknown size.

<u>Known</u> clutch/brood size	6	5	4	3	2	1
Eggs	2	10	7	0	0	0
Young	0	9	4	3	1	2

One nest failed at the young stage, and two nests failed at egg stage.

Brian Little
Northumbria Ringing Group

- - - - -

Seaton Burn - Big Waters

A wardening scheme is to be launched by the Northumberland Wildlife Trust for next breeding season at their Big Waters reserve at Seaton Burn and volunteers are needed.

The idea is to have a couple of people present during the evenings and at weekends from April through into July to keep an eye on things and, of course, to get in some good birdwatching which should yield plenty of useful records for our Bulletins.

The trust has just acquired a splendid hide near the water's edge and this will be used by the wardens. The lake has breeding Great Crested Grebe, Mute Swan and various other waterfowl so there will always be plenty to see while species like Black Tern are fairly regular on spring passage. The reedbeds and surrounding rough areas hold good numbers of Sedge Warblers, Reed Bunting, Whinchat and other passerines.

Ian Bainbridge, the trust's Conservation Officer, wants anyone who can help even if they can manage just a couple of visits during the four month season to contact him through the Hancock Museum, Newcastle. He will be arranging a get-together for everyone involved next March where final arrangements for a rota will be made.

Ian Kerr



TYNESIDE BIRD CLUB

K. G. DURES (Secretary)

T.B.C. 5 Bath Terrace Tynemouth Tyne & Wear. Tel: North Shields 75928

NOVEMBER, 1981

SUMMARY

Excepting for a few showery days the weather was mild and dry with occasional overnight frosts until the 20th when a depression to the south moved north easterly occasioning heavy rain and a strong south westerly wind. The following few days were wet and intermittently windy. Gales hit the region over the 23rd-24th causing severe problems in the north sea, but sea watching did not suggest any large seabird movements. The weather improved on the 25th becoming unsettled during the rest of the month.

As usual the 'wader counts' gave us a good indication of coastal wader species populations, and coverage was almost complete this month.

Fieldfares continued to arrive and good numbers were reported inland but Redwing flocks were considerably smaller and fewer. Late Garden Warbler and Lesser Whitethroat were recorded, as were late or wintering Blackcaps and Chiffchaffs.

Snow Bunting numbers increased especially in the Ross area, up to 60 Twite were found near Warkworth, and a few Lapland Buntings were also noted. A small number of Waxwings were located during the month but as yet there is no indication of any sizeable invasion.

The least expected bird of the month was a White-billed Diver present in Holy Island harbour on the 25th, where it was presumably sheltering from the very rough seas.

CLASSIFIED LIST

Red-throated Diver

Up to 12 noted in Druridge Bay and off Stag Rocks during the first half of the month. Two-three also noted off Holy Island and St. Marys on several dates. Six N off Seaton Sluice on the 29th.

Black-throated Diver

Four were noted in Druridge Bay on the 1st (ME/CB) and two off Holy Island Heugh on the 27th (BB/MH). A single N off Seaton Sluice on the 21st.

Great Northern Diver

One was noted off Budle sand bar on the 14th (MH). Two were present in pools off Holy Island causeway on the 27th (BB/MH) and one off the Heugh on the 28th (BNR/TAC).

White-billed Diver

An unexpected find in Holy Island harbour on the 25th was a bird in winter plumage diving amongst the fishing boats, presumably sheltering from the very rough seas, and seen as close to as 20 yards (AH).

Little Grebe

Singles noted at ten usual localities, also four present at Horncliffe on the 8th (LGM/JMM) when three in Wansbeck estuary (JR). Two were off Holy Island causeway on the 28th (BL)

Great Crested Grebe

Singles at Holywell 2nd-4th (CED), at Whittle Dene 1st-15th (BNR/MR) and at Hauxley on the 7th (HRS). Two were at Hallington on the 22nd (RW).

Red-necked Grebe

Single bird noted off Holy Island on the 27th/28th (BB/MH/TAC).

Slavonian Grebe

Two off Holy Island on the 1st and one there on the 29th (JDL).

Fulmar

Odd birds noted sitting on Holy Island castle cliffs during the month, 20 at Dunstanburgh Castle on the 8th and 92 noted between Budle Pt. and Seahouses on the 14th (DH).

Gannet

Only reports were of 5N off Holy Island on the 5th, 2N off Ross on the 14th (JDL/MH) and 2N at Druridge Bay on the 29th (IK).

Cormorant

Roosting concentrations included 60 at Berwick on the 8th (LGM/JMM) and 30-35 at Blyth, Coquet estuary and on the Tyne at Walker. Two-four noted at localities along the Tyne as far as Corbridge.

Heron

Up to eight noted roosting at Warkworth, and on Holy Island during the month. Three-four noted at Hauxley and St. Marys and one-two at 14 other localities.

Mute Swan

Numbers fluctuated at Cresswell Pond throughout the month where between 22 and 40 noted. 22 were in the Coquet estuary from the 10th on. 30-35 were in the Berwick area during the month and six-eight in the Alnmouth and Wansbeck estuaries, small numbers being noted in other usual localities.

Bewick Swan

The usual small November influx was apparent. Nine on Cresswell Pond on the 8th included two juveniles (IK/PW). A pair with four juveniles were in the Coquet estuary on the 10th (AH), and on Seaton Burn on the 11th (DY) where five noted on the 14th (JPD/EML). Singles were at Holy Island on the 25th (AH) and at Backworth on the 27th.

Whooper Swan

Several observers commented on the combined effects of disturbance to the Holywell flock following the Seaton Delaval fireworks display on the 5th, and the early ploughing of many stubble fields due to the mild dry spell. Only 33 were noted in this area prior to the 5th and few were reported in this vicinity until the 23rd, 26 increasing to about 110 being reported between Holywell and Backworth by the month's end. Seaton Burn regularly attracted 30-40 during the month, and several small flocks were noted flying over the area in that direction on several dates. 70 were discovered near Longhirst on the 12th increasing to 115 (including 15 juveniles by the 16th). Up to 20 were noted at Holy Island and 15 on the Northumbrian Loughs. Flocks flying W included 15 over Ponteland on the 1st., 62 over Morpeth on the 21st. and 28 over Stocksfield on the 29th. Small parties of up to ten were noted at ten other localities.

Pink-footed Goose

13 were at Hoselaw Loch on the 8th (IC/BW). A single bird was at Holywell Pond on several dates between the 4th and 21st (CED/MH). Three noted with Grey Lag at Colt Crag on the 15th (AJR).

Grey Lag Goose

About 1,200 came into roost at Hoselaw on the 8th (LGM/JMM). Many reports from the Budle Bay area suggest about 600 during the first week increased to about, 1,100 by the 27th (BB/MH etal). Up to 45 regularly noted at Whittle Dene, but 142W over there early on the 16th (DGW). Small flocks regularly noted around the Northumbria Loughs, and 280 came into roost at Colt Crag on the 15th (AJR). Up to 60 were noted in the Capheaton area (TPG/RW). 42 grey geese flew W over Morpeth on the 21st (AH). On the 22nd 50 Grey Lag W over Bebside (LJM), 81 goose sp. SW over Seaton Burn and 120 goose sp. S over Cramlington (BB).

Barnacle Goose

A single bird at Whittle Dene on the 14th and 15th (LGM/MR etal).

Brent Goose

The only report from Lindisfarne reserve was of 610 including a leucistic bird at Elwick on the 28th (BL). 20 flew N off Seaton Sluice on the 8th (SSWT).

Shelduck

Maxima of about 190 in Budle Bay and 100 on Fenham flats by the end of the month. 14 were on the sea at Hauxley on the 7th when 2S, and 5S and 10N off Seaton Sluice on the 8th (HRS/SSWT).

Wigeon

The largest count was from Budle Bay where 850 present on the 28th (TAC). Several counts made at Grindon with a maximum of 236 present on the 12th (MLL), a total of 391 on the Northumbrian Loughs on the 14th (LGM). About 150 were regularly noted in the Druridge/Cresswell area. 120N off Hauxley on the 7th when 21 off Seaton Sluice and 30N off Hauxley on the 8th when 4N off Seaton Sluice. Small numbers noted at other usual localities.

Gadwall

A single drake was on Holywell Pond on the 4th (CED), and a pair on Blaydon Pond on the 29th (BL).

Teal

Numbers increased to maxima of 133 at Gosforth Park on the 14th (DRS), 90 at Holywell on the 15th (CED) and 156 in the Druridge/Cresswell area on the 28th (AMB etal). Maxima of 140 noted on Holy Island Lough on the 8th (JDL) and 80 at Arcot Ponds on the 22nd (LJM). Seaton Sluice recorded 85N and 3S between 10th-29th

Mallard

Numbers fluctuated at most waters with 200-250 recorded at Holy Island Lough, Rayburn Lake and Whittle Dene. A maximum of 375 noted at Holywell Pond on the 15th (CED). 134 were on the Northumbrian Loughs on the 14th but 180 were on Colt Crag the following day (LGM/AJR). Up to 100 were recorded in the Druridge area and at Hartburn, and several small flocks were noted on the sea at St. Marys - Seaton Sluice and on other usual waters.

Pintail

Singles were noted at Capheaton on the 7th at Holywell on the 15th and Cresswell on the 29th. (MH/ES etal). Two were on Holy Island Lough on the 12th (MR).

Shoveler

110 at Hoselaw on the 8th (LGM/JMM) reduced to 80 by the 25th (AH). One-two were on Holy Island Lough throughout the month and two at Cresswell on the 28th (MR/AMB etal). 16 noted on Blaydon Pond on the 29th (BL).

Pochard

Easily the largest counts came from Seaton Burn where a maximum of about 350 noted on the 21st (JPD/JAM et al). 35-60 were regularly counted on Cresswell Pond, Whittle Dene and Holywell Pond. Numbers were much smaller at other usual waters.

Tufted Duck

Numbers increased in the Cresswell/Druridge area to a maximum of about 200 there by the 29th (IK et al). A maximum of 115 were noted at Holywell Pond mid month (CED et al). 45-65 were regularly noted on the Northumbrian Loughs and Whittle Dene, smaller numbers being recorded elsewhere.

Scaup

Singles only recorded at Whittle Dene on the 1st (BNR), at Holy Island Lough on the 5th and 29th (JDL) and on Druridge Pool on the 29th (IK).

Eider

The only concentrations noted were of up to 650 between Bamburgh and Seahouses, and 30 in the Coquet estuary.

Long-tailed Duck

By mid month at least 40 on Skate Road and 30 off Holy Island (MH/MR et al). Two-three noted on Cresswell Pond throughout the month (AMB/SWA et al). Single females were on Newton Pool on the 7th and 14th and off St. Marys on the 9th (KIB/DGW et al).

Common Scoter

Recorded off Seaton Sluice on six dates with up to 30 on the sea and a total of 108N and 8S (SSWT). Over 200 were in Druridge Bay on the 9th (DRS), smaller numbers being regularly recorded there on other dates. 100 were off Amble north pier on the 10th (AH). Several small flocks of up to 60 were noted flying offshore during the month at Ross, Boulmer, Holy Island and Hauxley.

Velvet Scoter

Seaton Sluice recorded singles S and N on the 7th and three on the sea there on the 14th (SSWT). Three N off Boulmer on the 15th (ES/WTL).

Goldeneye

Seaton Sluice recorded 54N and 21S plus up to 25 on the sea during the month (SSWT). The largest concentration was in Berwick harbour where a maximum of 53 noted on the 8th when 30 at Hoselaw (LGM). Up to 30 were regularly seen in Druridge Bay (TAC/DRS et al). 26 were on Colt Crag on the 15th (AJR), and up to 17 at Whittle Dene (MR et al). Smaller parties up to 12 noted at usual localities throughout the month.

Red-breasted Merganser

Numbers rather low with maxima of eight being recorded during the first half of the month in the Tweed estuary and off Holy Island. A total of 3N off Seaton Sluice and a single female on Druridge Pool on the 15th.

Goosander

A total of 27 noted on the Northumbrian Loughs on the 14th (LGM) 22 noted on the Tweed between Berwick and Carham on the 8th (LGM), but Hoselaw is no longer being used as a night roost. One-three regularly noted at localities downstream of Stocksfield. Single drakes were noted on the rivers from the 13th, and three were on Whittle Dene by the 28th (ETN/JRN). Redheads were on Gosforth Park lake on the 6th, and on both Cresswell and Druridge Pools on the 16th (DRS/SWA).

Hen Harrier

A ring tail was noted hunting in a field at Monkseaton every day from early in the month until at least 5th December (per MSH). Perhaps the same bird was noted at Holywell on five occasions between the 5th and 21st. (CED/MH et al).

Sparrowhawk

Widespread reports of one-three noted at 26 localities. Several were seen in or near to Newcastle, including one reported hunting amongst the Grey Street Starling roost at 7.30 pm on the 6th (BDG/EMG). Birds were found dead at Stannington, having hit a window, and in a Cresswell garage. An adult male trapped in a Slaley stable, having been there for three days, was found to be carrying a ring not from this area (BL).

Kestrel

One-two noted at 51 localities. One flew in from the sea at Seaton Sluice at 0915 on the 7th spending the rest of the morning perched in front of the watch tower (MGW). A female seen carrying prey at Newsham on the 29th, dropped the remains of a Stock Dove after being chased by a Magpie. (MH).

Merlin

Only four individuals noted on the coast at Craster, Warkworth, Newton and St. Marys. Several seen however in the SE of the area, singles being noted at Cramlington, High Pit, Holywell, Backworth, Longbenton, Prestwick Carr and Jesmond Dene. One inland at Whittington Fell on the 13th.

Peregrine

Singles were seen at Cresswell on the 8th (IK/PW), Budle Bay on the 7th (BB/MH) and at Crag Lough on the 14th (LGM).

Black Grouse

A single at Threestoneburn and two at Steng Moss were only reports. (AMB/WAK).

Partridge

Several coveys of up to 20 noted, but 29 were at Whittle Dene on the 15th (MR).

Pheasant

A melanistic bird noted at Blagdon estate on the 21st (RJ).

Moorhen

As many as 41 in the Wansbeck estuary on the 8th only four remaining a week later (JR). 10-15 noted at Arcot, Wallsend Swallow, Cresswell Pond and between Bywell and Ovingham.

Coot

309 were counted on Broomlee on the 14th (LGM). At Cresswell 250 on the 15th reduced to 150 by the 28th (TAC/AMB et al). 158 were at Wallsend Swallow on the 15th when 94 at Hartburn (FM/MLL). 15 were in the Tweed estuary by the 11th (AH).

Wader Count - 14th/15th November

The following stretches of coastline were covered :- Budle Pt - Seahouses (DH), Seahouses - Beadnell (MLL), Beadnell - Howick Burn (DLW/MAF), Howick-Boulmer (IK), Boulmer - Alnmouth (ES/WTL), Alnmouth-Birling Carrs (ETN/JRN), Birling Carrs - Coquet estuary (PWW), Amble - Chevington Burn (NWR), Newbiggin - Wansbeck estuary (JR), Wansbeck estuary - Blyth (JBD), Blyth - Seaton Sluice (LJM), Seaton Sluice - St. Marys (JPL), St. Marys - Tynemouth (MC).

Oystercatcher

Birds were present on all of the counted stretches of coastline on the 14th/15th a total of 779 birds being noted. 130 roosted at St. Marys on the 25th (KIB).

Ringed Plover

270 counted during the coastal wader count on the 14th/15th. Up to 30 roosted at St. Marys, and a maxima of 25 noted in Blyth estuary, 15 in the Wansbeck estuary and 35 at Berwick.

Golden Plover

About 1,000 were in the Hadston, Beadnell, Boulmer and Whittle Dene areas mid month. 700 noted at Bradford on the 28th and at Newton on the 7th. A maximum at Grindon on the 5th when 500 present, and of about 370 at St. Marys on the 6th. About 300 were near Chapel House Estate on the 22nd and 29th and 200 on Holy Island during the month. Flocks of 80 noted at Tughall and Catton.

Grey Plover

Only 28 noted during the count on the 14th/15th. 12 were at Berwick on the 7th (JDL).

Lapwing

Largest concentrations was at Whittle Dene where 1500 present on the 12th (MLL). Flocks of about 1000 noted at Seaton Burn and Cramlington. 700 were near Chapel House Estate by the end of the month when 600 near Monkseaton. 300-500 also noted at Heddon, Grindon, Warkworth, St. Marys, Holywell and Scots Gap.

Knot

During the wader count on the 14th 200 were in the St. Marys area and 220 between Budle Pt. and Seahouses, only four others were seen elsewhere.

Sanderling

110 were noted during the wader count on the 14th/15th, 72 of which were between Amble and Chevington Burn. On other dates however up to 20 were noted at Newbiggin, Druridge and Blyth at least 45 were at Berwick on the 7th.

Purple Sandpiper

292 were noted during the wader count on the 14th/15th, including 140 between Budle Pt. and Seahouses, 125 were at St. Marys on the 22nd (AH).

Dunlin

As many as 1153 noted during the wader count on the 14th/15th. Cresswell was not counted and up to 140 were noted in that area mid month (AMB etal). A single bird was at Grindon Lough on the 8th (BNR).

Ruff

A party of eight were at Newton Pond on the 9th (NWR) and four were at Backworth on the 21st (MSH).

Jack Snipe

Singles noted at Hauxley on the 3rd (HRS) and at Cresswell on the 19th (SWA). Two at Yarrow Slake on the 8th (LGM/JMM).

Snipe

Up to 50 flushed from the Coquet estuary salt marsh on the 29th (ES/WTL). 30-50 noted at Derwenthaugh and Cresswell and much smaller numbers at other suitable localities.

Woodcock

Singles on the coast during the first fortnight at Holy Island, near Howick gardens, Boulmer and Hauxley. Singles also noted at Benton, Gosforth Park and Holywell Dene. Three at Prestwick Carr on the 29th.

Bar-tailed Godwit

68 noted during the wader count on the 14th/15th, most of which were in the northern areas. Up to 600 noted on the Lindisfarne N.N.R.

Curlew

Only 102 noted during the wader count on the 14th/15th. About 200 were gathered near Holy Island castle on the 19th (JDL). 40 at St. Marys on the 9th (MN). Two inland at Powburn on the 15th (AMB).

Redshank

Noted in all of the counted stretches on the 14th/15th, a total of 1064 being counted. Up to 150 noted during the month at St. Marys and Blyth estuary and a maximum of 93 in the Wansbeck estuary on the 15th.

Greenshank

A single bird noted at Fenham Flats on the 8th and 28th (JDL/BL).

Turnstone

A total of 1031 noted on the coast on the 14th/15th. Up to 140 roosted on the St. Marys Island golf course.

Arctic Skua

Single birds recorded N off Tynemouth on the 9th (MC) and off Seaton Sluice on the 29th (SSWT).

Great Skua

A single N off Seaton Sluice on the 29th (SSWT).

Black-headed Gull

About 1000 were feeding on the shore at Boulmer on the 15th (ES/WTL). Between 250 and 300 noted in the Wansbeck, Blyth and Coquet estuaries and up to 200 in Cullercoats harbour.

The large mixed and Common and Black-headed Gull roost at Hoselaw increased from 4000 on the 8th to about 6000 at the end of the month, in each case about 75% of birds were Common Gulls. (LGM/JMM/AH).

Common Gull

About 600 roosted at Broomlee on the 14th (LGM/JMM). The largest flock noted was of 700 at South Middleton on the 15th (AMB) 100-250 were noted at ten scattered localities.

Lesser Black-backed Gull

Singles noted at Hauxley on the 8th (Scandinavian) (HRS), Whittle Dene on the 15th (MR) and Kirkley Hall on the 22nd (IK et al).

Herring Gull

Up to 2000 roosted in Coquet estuary mid month (AH/WWR).

Iceland Gull

A first year bird noted at North Shields fish quay on the 28th and 29th (RH/DMT).

Glaucous Gull

A single immature at the fish quay on the 15th (MH) increased to two by the 21st (MSH) and as many as four, including one adult, present there on the 29th (RH/DMT). Elsewhere immatures noted at St. Marys on the 8th (IGH), and Seahouses (MN) and Holy Island (TAC) on the 28th.

Great Black-backed Gull

Up to 300 roosted in the Coquet estuary during the month (AH/NWR/DRS). A mixed Herring Gull and Great Black-backed Gull roost at Holywell on the 19th numbered 2500-3000 (DRS). Up to 300 gathered at Chevington Burn on the 9th (DRS) and up to 150 at St. Marys during the month (DGW et al).

Little Auk

A single bird noted arriving from the east with ten Starlings at Seaton Sluice on the 7th headed inland (MGW).

Stock Dove

One-two noted at Whittle Dene, Cresswell and Ilderton.

Woodpigeon

About 400 at Belsay on the 22nd (TAC). Only other flock reported was of 150 at Whittle Dene on the 7th (ES/WTL).

Collared Dove

Flocks of 89 at Seaton Delaval on the 7th (MLL), 38 over Felton on the 20th (ETN/JRN) and 20 at Ponteland on the 15th (BDG/NJG).

Barn Owl

One surviving youngster was still being fed in the nest earlier reported near Whitley Bay at the end of the month (MSH/WGS). Singles noted at Woodhorn, near Acklington and Throckley.

Little Owl

Singles noted at Ponteland and near Millfield.

Tawny Owl

Two noted at Belsay and Prestwick Carr. A single at Craster on the 9th and roosting in a farm shed at Earsdon on the 29th. One noted hunting amongst the Grey St. Starling roost on the 6th (at the same time as Sparrowhawk !) (BDG/EMG).

Short-eared Owl

Again conspicuous throughout the month with one-two at 16 mostly coastal localities but also inland as far as Threestoneburn, Allenheads and Wark on Tweed. In addition three were at Chesterwood on the 14th (LGM), at Prestwick Carr on the 15th (BDG/NJG), three-four in the Holywell area throughout the month (BB/MH) and in the New Hartley area on the 29th (BB/MH).

Green Woodpecker

Singles noted at Delf Burn, Harwood Head, Kielder and Common burn.

Great Spotted Woodpecker

Singles noted at 14 localities including coastal sightings at Bamburgh on the 1st and over North Shields on the 14th.

Swallow

Late records of a juvenile at Slaley on the 1st (BL) and one at Low Newton on the 7th (BDG/NB).

House Martin

Late records of singles at Tynemouth on the 9th (DMT), at Holywell on the 20th (DRS) and at Cullercoats on the 22nd (JDM).

Meadow Pipit

A few on the coast, and inland sightings of eight at Grindon on the 8th (BNR) and singles at Threestoneburn (AMB) and Rayburn Lake (JPL) on the 15th.

Grey Wagtail

One-two at ten localities including St. Marys, Tynemouth and in Morpeth high street.

Waxwing

Single birds noted at Darras Hall on the 8th and 21st (BDG/LSG et al). Two were at Mickley on the 8th (per BL). Seven reported to be near Arcot Hall on the 22nd (per AH) may well have been the "small flock" noted near Cramlington on the 27th (per BL).

Dipper

Several seen in typical riverine localities including three singing on the Coquet near Felton on the 8th (ETN/JRN).

Wren

A small influx was apparent on Holy Island on the 8th when several in the Lonnens (JDL). Nine were in Holywell Dene and seven at Capheaton on the 25th.

Stonechat

Pairs noted at Druridge, Bamburgh and Warkworth during the month, and one at Seahouses. A pair as far inland as Kielder Reservoir information centre on the 16th (DGW).

Blackbird

A steady influx at Bamburgh on the 1st (BRS), when up to 40 in the Holy Island lonnens (JDL). About 300 arrived at Hauxley on the 7th (50 ringed) and 200 the following day (47 ringed) when about 30 on Holy Island (JDL). Small increases were noted in numbers present at Monkseaton over this period.

Fieldfare

Up to 400 immigrants on Holy Island on the 5th, small numbers being present there throughout the month (JDL et al). Mainly small flocks of less than a hundred were noted during the month at about 30 localities. Larger flocks included up to 400 at Belsay on the 29th, 350 at Mohope on the 11th and near Callerton on the 8th. 150-200 at Berwick Hill and Hartington. A large number of small flocks probably totalling 2000 plus were in the Tweed valley between Berwick and Kelso on the 25th (AH).

Redwing

Far fewer seen than Fieldfare. Small parties passed through Priors Park throughout the day on the 1st (MC). About 150 roosted at Belsay during the month (TAC et al). Flocks of 40-50 were noted at Stocksfield, Berwick Hill and Brandon and smaller flocks were noted at ten other localities.

Mistle Thrush

Six were at Bamburgh on the 1st (BRS) and 37 on Dunstanburgh Castle on the 9th (IK). The largest flocks reported away from the coast were of eleven at Old Middleton and ten at Ilderton on the 29th (AMB).

Lesser Whitethroat

One at Hauxley on the 8th showed characteristics of the eastern race Blythi (HRS).

Garden Warbler

The bird present at Priors Park on 30th October remained until at least the 2nd (MC/DMT).

Blackcap

One-two were at Hauxley, Priors Park, Holy Island and North Seaton between 1st - 11th. One-two frequented a Tynemouth garden between 1st and 22nd (MC) when one in North Shields (MN). A single female was in a Darras Hall garden on the 6th where a male on the 26th (BDG/NB). Single males also noted at New Hartley on the 18th (JEF) and Holywell Dene on the 20th (DRS).

Chiffchaff

Singles noted at Priors Park on the 8th (MC), Holywell Dene on the 25th (JEF), Marden Park on the 27th (JDM) and a "phyloscopus" warbler at Eshott on the 29th (MC et al).

Goldcrest

Singles and small flocks in usual woodland localities. A winter atlas count in Prestwick Carr produced a total of 60 on the 29th (AH et al). Two appeared to arrive off the sea at Stag Rocks on the 14th when one on Row Links (MH).

Long-tailed Tit

Parties of 5-13 noted at Belsay, Felton, Holywell Dene, Bolam, Riding Mill, Morpeth and Bywell. 20 were at the Hirsell on the Tweed on the 8th (IC/BW) and 28 at Dipton on the 26th (BNR).

Marsh Tit

Noted at Bolam, Wallington, Felton, Belsay and Rothley

Willow Tit

One-two noted at Kirkley Hall, Prestwick Carr and Walbottle.

Coal Tit

Small parties in usual woodland areas. Single birds visited bird tables at Monkseaton, Heddon-on-the-Wall and Ponteland.

Blue Tit

A total of 111 counted at Prestwick Carr on the 29th (AH et al). Small flocks noted in usual localities.

Nuthatch

One-three noted at Bolam, Wallington, Belsay, Matfen, Morpeth, Bywell, Close House and Hexham.

Treecreeper

One-two noted at Bywell, Holywell Dene, Bolam, Holystone and the Hirsell.

Jay

Small parties seen and heard at Bolam and Wallington, singles at six usual localities.

Magpie

Widespread reports of two-five and 13 together on the Harton-Bebside road on the 7th (LJM)

Jackdaw

A total of 350W over Seaton Burn on the afternoon of the 1st (JAM). 154 counted on a Ponteland playing field on the 15th (BDG/NJB).

Hooded Crow

Two-three present at Cresswell 8th-29th (AMB/IK et al). Singles at Backworth on the 11th and Budle Bay on the 12th (PRW/MR).

Starling

A massive roost of possible 200,000 in the same Matfen conifer plantation as previous year (RW).

Tree Sparrow

Up to 40 in the Druridge area and 25 at Horton, smaller flocks being noted elsewhere.

Chaffinch

About 100 roosted at Belsay during the month (TAC et al). Flocks of 100 noted at South Middleton and 120 at Ilderton (AMB).

Brambling

Three-four at Hauxley between the 1st and 8th (HRS). The only sizeable flocks noted were 30 at Halton Shields on the 14th (LGM/JMM), 40 at Capheaton on the 22nd (RW) and about 10 with Chaffinches on Elsdon Road near Monkridge Hall on the 14th (WAK). Odd birds noted elsewhere.

Greenfinch

A large flock of 350-400 on Holy Island on the 29th (JDL). About 100 were in a mixed finch flock at Wark on Tweed on the 8th (LGM/JMH). 40-50 at Ryal and Heddon, and smaller numbers at other usual localities.

Goldfinch

The Matfen Holly tree used as a roost in previous two years attracted 20 on the 11th increasing to 74 by the 24th (RW). Two-five at Horton, Ilderton, Cullercoats, Ovingham and Stublick.

Siskin

Six at Matfen on the 24th (RW). Five at Felton on the 21st (ETN/JRN). One-two at Holystone, Stocksfield, Prestwick Carr and Holywell Dene.

Linnet

Up to 200 in Cresswell/Druridge area by the end of the month (AMB etal). 150 on Ross Links on the 7th (IC/BW) and 50-70 at Cramlington, Ryal, Priors Park and Ilderton.

Twite

50-60 frequented the salt marsh area at Warkworth Gut from the 14th on (NWR/AH etal).

Redpoll

Only records were of three at Close House on the 14th (JAM) and two at Druridge Links on the 9th (DRS).

Crossbill

Four at Common Burn on the 29th (AMB) was the only record.

Bullfinch

One-four noted at 14 localities including a single female on the coast at Hauxley on the 1st. Six-eight were seen at Belsay, Threestoneburn and Matfen and 11 at Kirkley Hall on the 22nd.

Hawfinch

At least two calling from the tree tops at Bolam on the 15th (WGS/MSH).

Lapland Bunting

At least six were in Warkworth Gut on the 10th (AH), being seen there on the 20th and 29th (DRS/ES/WTL). Three were at St. Marys on the 6th (MN) one being seen there on the 10th (WAK). Two noted at Beal on the 28th (MN).

Snow Bunting

Up to six noted at Holy Island during the month (JDL/AH). Two on Ross Links on the 7th increased to a total of 65 there by the 28th (IC/BL etal). Two were at each of Hauxley and Druridge on the 1st. Up to six noted in the Budle Pt/Stag rocks area mid month (MH/MR). Inland one was at Threestoneburn on the 28th (AMB), and two just out of the county at Muggleswick Common on the 7th (PRW).

Yellowhammer

Small flocks of eight-eleven birds at Holywell Dene, Prestwick Carr and Great Whittington.

Reed Bunting

Only odd birds reported except for 14 in Holywell Dene on the 25th.

All December records to Alan Heavisides, 8 Leyland Place, Kirkhill, Morpeth NE6 12AN in Voous order please and by 8th January, 1982 at the latest. Send SAE for supply of record cards.

Please send any outstanding 1981 records/rarities descriptions to the Recorder as soon as possible so that an early start may be made on annual report compilation.

The 1980 annual report should be available early in the new year.

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M Carruthers	I Kerr	G S Rushbrooke
I Chadwick	E M Lindsay	D R Shannon
R N Coates	J P Lindsay	E Slack
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	M Natrass	D & S Younger
	D W Nicol	Bamburgh Ringing Station
		Hauxley Ringing Station
		Seaton Sluice Watchtower.

Wader counters - please remember the priority count dates December 13th January January 10th, February 7th when we hope to have complete coverage.

Tawny Owls in the Slaley Study area 1981 Breeding results.

A total of 46 sites were checked (33 nestboxes) of which 20 were found to be occupied.

Number	4	3	2	1
Eggs	1	7	11	1
Young Fledged	1	3	6	2

A total of 20 pairs laid eggs of which 12 pairs are known to have fledged young. The result at one site is unknown, the remaining seven are known to have failed. One nest was robbed by humans, four deserted clutches, two deserted small young. The deserted eggs contained developing young, and it is thought that all of the desertions were due to the late April snow and wet weather which followed giving the adults problems in finding enough food to be successful.

Despite this setback, more pairs reared three young than during any of the last three years, and the brood of four fledged is a first for this area.

B. Little
Northumbria Ringing Group

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Indoor Meetings

Apologies to Alan Potts whose talk will be Wildlife in Camera (not "in Canada" as reported in the last bulletin).

BTO Winter Atlas Project

Recruitment of volunteers wishing to take part in this project has continued at a steady pace but further offers of help would be most welcome. The remoter 10Km squares especially require greater coverage but further assistance with areas closer to Tyneside would be most useful. Would those members completing Winter Atlas records please continue sending to Alan Heavisides the normal monthly record cards.

Geoff Macfarlane.

Breeding Waders of Wet Meadows

In spring 1982 surveys of breeding waders will be taking place throughout the country. In England and Wales the BTO, RSPB and NCC are co-operating to promote the Survey of Breeding Waders of Wet Meadows. This survey will look primarily at waders breeding on damp lowland grassland. The target species will be Redshank, Snipe, Curlew, Lapwing and Oystercatcher although observers will be encouraged to record other wetland species.

Drainage, agricultural intensification and afforestation schemes present an increasing threat to our remaining important breeding wader areas. In much of lowland England (i.e. below 600' a.s.l.) wet grassland has been, and continues to be, destroyed by drainage schemes at an alarming rate. In most counties breeding waders such as Snipe and Redshank only remain in small pockets of damp habitat. To allow the conservation bodies to comment effectively and to oppose detrimental schemes it is vital that we obtain maximum coverage in 1982. Preliminary discussions have already taken place in Northumberland which indicate that upwards of 40 extensive sites need to be surveyed. However, with a limited number of observers, we may be forced to miss some of these key sites. You can help with this very important survey by volunteering to cover some of your local areas. For more information on the survey and for details of sites that require survey please contact the organiser for Northumberland. Geoff Macfarlane, 31 Wreay Walk, Cramlington, Northumberland, NE 23 6LJ.

Areas of particular interest in Northumberland include the many pastures badly affected by rising subsidence in the south-east, Prestwick Carr, the R. Coquet upstream from Rothbury and northwards to Netherton, the Elsdon Burn and Holy Island. There are also several other smaller areas where drainage proposals already exist because of periodic flooding and where special efforts must be made to cover them: Wooler area, Widdington/Pegswood areas, Amble, Nr. Ulgham and Nr. Stanfordham.

In lowland areas Waders can be expected to be in territory before the end of March with eggs being laid in April so I would be pleased to hear from anyone interested in taking part in this survey as soon as possible please. Large scale maps will be provided of the areas to be covered.



TYNESIDE BIRD CLUB

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DECEMBER, 1981

SUMMARY

The mild November weather gave way to a memorably wintery December. The month started cold but dry and fine, temperatures remained low during the first week and many waters began to freeze up. A biting N wind on the 8th heralded heavy overnight snow in the east of the county. There was little further snow during the next few days but temperatures as low as -10°C were recorded by the 12th. Up to a foot of snow fell overnight over the west of the county and as far east as the A1 during the early hours of the 14th, areas to the east of this line receiving mainly rain or sleet. A slow thaw followed during that day but temperatures again dropped, and the remaining snow lay thickly in the west and on the hills with occasional snow showers adding to the problems up until the 26th. Light drizzle on the 27th continued on and off during the next few days becoming intermittently quite heavy by the 31st., resulting in a partial thaw during this period. Most waters and many rivers were wholly or partially frozen during most of the period following the first week.

As the temperatures dropped wildfowl left frozen waters concentrating on the small areas of ice free water. Whittle Dene attracted as many as 400 each of Pochard and Tufted around the 12th-14th but numbers rapidly decreased as even these areas froze over. Small numbers of several duck species were subsequently noted in estuaries and as many as 462 Goldeneye were concentrated in the Tweedmouth area.

Despite the severe weather most of the coast was covered during the wader count weekend of the 13th/14th and high counts of several species especially Dunlin and Turnstone, were made. An influx of Woodcock was apparent after the 12th.

North Shields fish quay proved interesting for 'white gulls' and both Glaucous and Iceland were also noted elsewhere.

As usual Skylarks provided the most obvious example of cold weather movements. Fieldfare numbers remained surprisingly high and small numbers probably arrived during the month. Redwings were still widespread, but in smaller numbers, during the month.

Several vulnerable species such as Wren and Goldcrest appeared to be surviving quite well, Long-tailed Tits were particularly well recorded during the last fortnight and three Blackcaps were noted in gardens during the month.

CLASSIFIED LIST

Red-throated Diver/Diver sp

A total of 51N and 26S off Seaton Sluice between the 5th and 25th included 12N and 15S on the 24th (SSWT). Odd birds noted on the sea at usual localities, and 20 in Druridge Bay on the 16th (PRS) and 15N off Ross on the 6th (BRS).

Black-throated Diver

One was on the sea off Ross on the 6th when three N (BRS), two N off Seaton Sluice on the same day (SSWT). Two were between Budle Pt and Seahouses on the 15th (DRH).

Great Northern Diver

The only report was of a single bird in Blyth estuary on the 26th and 27th (HG/MG/LJM).

Little Grebe

Up to three at Warkworth and one-two at Holywell, Capheaton and near Caistron

Great Crested Grebe

A single bird on Hallington on the 6th (ETN/JRN).

Red-necked Grebe

A single bird was on Cresswell Pond between the 1st and 7th (DRS/BB etal). Singles also at Bamburgh on the 13th (PWW etal) when one in Amble harbour (DRH) and off Holy Island on the 27th (JDL).

Slavonian Grebe

Six were noted between Budle Pt and Seahouses on the 15th (DRH)

Fulmar

A total of 81 noted between Budle Pt. and Seahouses on the 15th (DRH), and three S off Seaton Sluice on the 29th (SSWT).

Cormorant

Estuary counts included up to 45 at Blyth, 40 at Amble, 31 in the Wansbeck estuary and 11 on the Aln. Usual reports on the Tyne with 29 flying downstream at Newburn on the 9th and 14 upstream of Stocksfield on the 13th. A single bird was on Derwent Reservoir on the 12th (AHB).

Shag

About 20 off Bamburgh on the 13th (PWW etal) was the only gathering of note.

Heron

Up to five roosted at Warkworth and one-three noted at 31 localities. Several noted on the coast including North Shields fish quay on the 18th, probably the same bird looking very distressed on the beach there the following day. A bird at Holystone on the 31st was seen to catch and kill a Moorhen (per BG).

Mute Swan

Numbers increased at Berwick to 288 by the 30th (JDL/AH). Numbers fluctuated at Blyth and Cresswell where maxima of respectively 52 on the 25th and 35 on the 28th (LJM/AMB etal) 35 noted on Holy Island on the 19th, 25 in Coquet estuary on the 23rd and 14 at Alnmouth on the 19th. Up to three were in the Tyne estuary 10th-12th and small parties of up to five seen at several localities along that river during the month. Seven were at Angerton Lake on the 11th.

Bewick Swan

A family party of two adults and three juveniles were at Queen Elizabeth Park Lake (Woodhorn) on the 2nd (KIB/WAK/PRW), and three adults and four juveniles there on the 7th (DRH). Three were on Cresswell Pond on the 10th (ME), and four arrived from the east at Sharperton in Coquetdale on the 31st, rested briefly and then headed off west over Harbottle (BG).

Whooper Swan

Far fewer than usual in the area. 29 were on Rayburn Lake on the 6th including three juveniles (ETN/JRN). 30 at Cornhill on the Tweed on the 12th (JR) and a total of 46 at Backworth on the 3rd (BNR) Eight at Grindon on the 10th was the next largest gathering noted, but one-six were noted at 17 other localities during the month.

Goose sp

Four W over Holywell on the 13th were thought to be Bean Geese. (MH).

Grey Lag Goose

A total of about 1300 were present in the Tweed Valley on the 12th (JR). The largest count at Budle Bay was of over 1000 on the 6th when 195 at nearby Bradford Pool (BRS). Numbers fluctuated at Whittle Dene mid month with a large maximum count of 750 there on the 12th (BNR et al). 124 were noted at Grindon on the 7th (DGW) and 160 on Colt Crag on the 13th (MGW/GKG). Several much smaller flocks were noted elsewhere.

Canada Goose

One at Queen Elizabeth Park Lake on the 2nd (PRW).

Brent Goose

About 750 noted from Holy Island on the 19th (AH). A single dark-bellied bird was near St. Marys Island causeway on the 23rd and 30th (DEW).

Shelduck

250 noted in Budle Bay on the 6th (BRS). Numbers increased in Coquet estuary to 15 by the 31st (NR). A total of five N and seven S between 6th-20th off Seaton Sluice. A single bird at Cresswell on the 24th (AMB).

Wigeon

Up to 288 in the Grindon area during the first two weeks (LGM/DGW/MLL). Numbers fluctuated at Whittle Dene and in the Cresswell/Druridge area with respective maxima of 100 on the 12th and 250 on the 30th (JSB/AMB et al). 100 were on Derwent Reservoir on the 12th (AHB). Only small flocks were noted elsewhere.

Teal

On the 6th 63 were at Gosforth and 54 at Grindon, as these waters froze most ducks left within a few days of these counts. (DRS/LGM) 60 at Backworth on the 3rd reduced to 36 by the 10th (BNR). 48 were on the frozen Holywell Pond on the 16th (DGW). About 50 were in the Cresswell/Druridge area throughout the month and smaller numbers at other usual waters.

Mallard

This species tended to remain at usual waters even after the surfaces froze. Numbers did however decline at Whittle Dene from 370 on the 5th to 57 on the 19th (BNR). Around 130 were in the Cresswell/Druridge area all month and a similar number were on the sea at St. Marys on the 12th (AMB/KIB et al). 174 were on the frozen Grindon Lough on the 10th (MLL) and 154 noted at Barrasford on the 29th (RW). About 100 were noted on the Tweed between Carham and Cornhill on the 12th (JR). Up to 50 gathered off Boulmer mid month (ES/WTL et al).

Pintail

Two drakes in Druridge Bay on the 2nd (PRW) were the only ones noted.

Pochard

The largest concentration was at Whittle Dene where a maximum of 400 gathered on ice free water on the 13th (BG et al), only 42 being noted there on the 19th however (BNR). Numbers fluctuated mid month at Cresswell but 60-65 were noted there on the 2nd and 30th (PRW/AMB et al). Over 200 were on Blaydon Pond on the 27th (ES/WTL). The estuaries also attracted small numbers as waters froze, maxima of 17 at Berwick on the 30th, 22 in the Wansbeck on the 14th, eight in the Coquet and two in Blyth estuaries being recorded.

Tufted Duck

Whittle Dene attracted the most on the 12th-13th when 400 were concentrated on a small area of ice free water (JSB/BG et al), 183 being noted there on the 27th (LGM). Numbers increased in the Cresswell/Druridge area from 75 on the 2nd to 140 by the 30th (PRW/AMB et al). In the estuaries, 109 were on the Wansbeck on the 14th, 14 on the Tweed on the 28th and eight on the Blyth on the 27th (JR/JDL/LJM). Seven birds were reported frozen into the ice on Colt Crag on the 13th (MGW/GKG).

Scaup

A single was on Druridge Pool on the 6th (BG). Seven were on the sea between Budle Pt. and Seahouses on the 15th (DRH). On the 24th 10N and 18 on the sea off Seaton Sluice (SSWT). During the last week six were in each of the Tweed and Coquet estuaries (JDL/NR et al).

Eider

The only large gathering noted was of 150 in Coquet estuary on the 19th (LGM).

Long-tailed Duck

Up to 20 noted off Ross and Bamburgh during the first fortnight. Two were on Cresswell Pond on the 6th (BG) and singles in Blyth harbour between the 6th and 26th (HG/BB/MH) and off Seaton Sluice on the 5th and 6th (SSWT).

Common Scoter

A total of 85 noted off Seaton Sluice between 6th-29th (SSWT) 20-25 were off Ross and Chevington Burn during the first two weeks and 100 in Druridge Bay on the 6th. 71N noted off St. Marys on the 17th.

Velvet Scoter

Two between Budle Pt - Seahouses on the 15th, six N off St. Marys on the 17th and singles off Seaton Sluice on the 6th and Seahouses on the 21st were the only reports.

Goldeneye

A very large concentration of 380-400 in the Tweed estuary on the 28th increasing to 462 by the 30th (JDL). Up to 20 noted on the lower stretches of the Tyne and a maximum of 30 off St. Marys by the 30th (JSB/BNR/DGW et al). In other estuaries maxima of 28 in the Blyth on the 25th, 15 in the Wansbeck on the 14th and 11 in the Coquet on the 26th (LJM/JR/AMB et al). 26 at Whittle Dene on the 5th increased to 53 by the 12th but none present there on the 19th (BNR). A total of 36 noted off Seaton Sluice during the month (SSWT).

Red-breasted Merganser

11 at Berwick on the 30th (JDL). One-four noted at Seaton Sluice, Blyth, Alnmouth and Bamburgh.

Goosander

A total of 64 (33 drakes, 31 redheads) noted between Bywell and Hedd on the 25th (BNR). A maximum of 16 noted at Whittle Dene on the 27th (10 drakes). Five-six noted at Warkworth, Carham and Derwent Reservoir. On the 13th four were as far inland as Calder and one in the Ingram valley (JR). Smaller numbers in other usual localities.

Hen Harrier

The only record was of a ringtail near Druridge Pool on the 19th (KIB).

Sparrowhawk

Noted in 25 localities, including several reports from suburban gardens.

Buzzard

Singles noted at Sweethope Lough on the 13th (GKG/MGW), at Barhaugh on the 27th (LGM) and S over Holywell pond on the 31st (AMB).

Kestrel

One-four noted at 38 scattered localities. A total of six noted at Harwood forest on the 6th (IK).

Merlin

Singles noted during the month at Cresswell, Chevington, Hauxley and Budle Bay. Inland a female noted near Haydon Bridge on the 7th (DGW).

Peregrine

Singles noted at Derwent Reservoir on the 12th (AHB) and in Budle Bay on the 13th (PWW etal).

Black Grouse

One at Threestoneburn on the 5th (AMB) and five near Harwood on the 7th (DRS).

Red-legged Partridge

A covey of 12 at Calder on the 13th (JR).

Partridge

A covey of 28 was at Chester House, Togston on the 21st (DRH) and 20 were at Whittle Dene on the 5th and Hauxley on the 30th. 12 smaller parties noted elsewhere. One picked up dying of starvation at Sharperton on the 29th (AMB).

Water Rail

One-two noted at Gosforth Park during the month (DRS etal). Singles at Chevington Burn on the 13th (CB) and in Priors Park between the 19th and 27th (MC).

Moorhen

32 were in the Wansbeck estuary on the 14th (JR). Small numbers at other usual localities.

Coot

About 150 at Cresswell throughout the month (PRW etal). A very large gathering of 469 in the Tweed estuary on the 28th (JDL). Maxima elsewhere of 70 at Holywell on the 5th, 83 at Whittle Dene on the 23rd, 94 at Angerton on the 11th and 45 in Coquet estuary on the 26th.

Wader Count 13th/14th December

The following stretches of coastline were covered :- Budle Pt - Seahouses (DRH), Seahouses - Beadnell (MLL), Beadnell - Howick Burn (DLW), Howick - Boulmer (IK), Boulmer - Alnmouth (ES/WTL), Alnmouth - Birling Carrs (ETN/JRN), Birling Carrs - Coquet estuary (PWW), Amble - Chevington Burn (NWR), Newbiggin - Wansbeck (JR), Wansbeck - Blyth (JBD), Blyth - Seaton Sluice (LJM), Seaton Sluice - Briardene (JPL), Briardene - Tynemouth (MC)

Oystercatcher

A total of 977 counted during the wader count on the 13th/14th. Up to 120 regularly noted roosting at St. Marys.

Ringed Plover

A total of 214 counted during the wader count on the 13th/14th, included 76 between Boulmer and Alnmouth. 60 were at Berwick on the 6th, 30 in Blyth estuary on the 7th and 11 in Coquet estuary on the 19th.

Golden Plover

About 350 were between Boulmer and Howick on the 13th (IK), 450 at Powburn on the 5th (AMB) and 188 at St. Marys on the 2nd (DGW). Surprisingly none were reported from the Druridge/Hadston areas. 12 were on Muckle Moss on the 6th and unusually two on the rocks at North Shields fish quay on the 20th (LGM).

Grey Plover

Only 40 noted during the count on the 13th/14th. A maximum of 12 at Berwick on the 30th (JDL) and 60 in Budle Bay on the 6th (BRS). Odd birds only noted along the coast south of Boulmer.

Lapwing

During the first week 600 were noted at Powburn (AMB). 500 at Whittle Dene (BNR), 370 at St. Marys (DGW) and 250 at Charlton Mires (MSH). Few were reported thereafter but a total of 369 noted during the wader count on the 13th/14th.

Knot

Out of a total of 1189 noted during the wader count on the 13th/14th 300 were between Budle Pt and Seahouses, 278 were between Newbiggin and the Wansbeck, 195 Blyth - Seaton Sluice and 400 Seaton Sluice - Briardene. A maximum count at St. Marys on the 21st when 850 present (DGW etal). Unusually, 134 were in the Coquet estuary on the 23rd (NWR).

Sanderling

A total of 103 noted during the wader count on the 13th/14th, Druridge Bay was not counted however, and over 30 regularly seen there during the month. Also up to 105 counted on the other dates at St. Marys, 47 on Blyth beach on the 5th (BM) and 60 in the Wansbeck estuary by the 31st (JR). 147 were gathered at Berwick on the 6th (JDL),

Purple Sandpiper

A total of 328 noted during the wader count of the 13th/14th including 182 between Budle Pt. and Seahouses.

Dunlin

As many as 1834 noted during the wader count of the 13th/14th. Numbers increased in the Coquet estuary to up to 500 by the end of the month (NWR/LGM etal). At Berwick 250 on the 6th increased to over 1000 by the 30th (JDL). Over 1500 were in Budle Bay on the 6th (BRS).

Ruff

Single birds noted at Seaton Sluice (MH) and North Shields sewage outlet (MC/DMT) on the 12th.

Jack Snipe

Singles noted at Alnmouth on the 13th (IK) and at Felton on the 30th (ETN/JRN).

Snipe

About 150 were flushed off the Coquet estuary salt marsh on the 1st (AH) but only 32 noted there by the 31st (NWR). 60 were counted at Cresswell on the 2nd (PRW) and up to 15 noted during the month at St. Marys (DGW etal). Small parties noted at other usual coastal localities, eight in the Ingram valley on the 13th and singles inland at Powburn, Commonburn, Wooler and Bardon Mill.

Woodcock

Well reported one-four being noted at 34 localities (15 coastal) mostly after the 12th, suggesting an influx around that time.

Bar-tailed Godwit

72 noted during the wader count on the 13th/14th. 1620 counted on Beal sands on the 6th (JDL) when over 600 in Budle Bay (BRS).

Curlew

119 noted during the wader count on the 13th/14th. 25-35 regularly noted in Coquet estuary and at St. Marys.

Redshank

854 noted during the wader count on the 13th/14th. As many as 260 in Blyth estuary on the 7th (HG), 150 being present there on the 30th (LJM). 200 noted in Budle Bay on the 6th (BRS).

Turnstone

1171 noted during the wader count on the 13th/14th, including 334 between Beadnell and Howick and 313 between Alnmouth and Boulmer. As many as 660 counted at Berwick on the 6th reducing to 250 by the 30th (JDL).

Little Gull

An adult was off North Shields fish quay on the 23rd. (DMT/RH)

Black-headed Gull

About 600 gathered on Blyth beach on the 6th and over 2000 at North Shields fish quay on the 9th (MSH). An unusually pale mantled adult was noted at North Shields on the 26th (DMT/RH).

Common Gull

Over 600 at the fish quay during the month. Several flocks of up to 200 in coastal localities, with much smaller flocks (less than 40) being noted inland particularly in the Wooler area.

Herring Gull

Over 1000 at North Shields on the 9th (MSH). A large white gull at North Shields between the 8th and 31st is thought to have been an albino of this species by some observers but a Glaucous /Herring Gull Hybrid has also been suggested by others. Notes on any further observations would be appreciated.

Iceland Gull

A first year bird was present at the fish quay throughout the month a second individual was seen with this bird on the 15th and 20th. (DMT/RH/ES/MGW etal). A first year bird was reported from Amble harbour on the 21st and an adult on the sea in Druridge Bay on the 23rd (DRH).

Glaucous Gull

Summarising the many reports from North Shields fish quay it would seem that one adult, two first years and a second year bird were present during the month (RH/DMT/MSH etal). A first year bird was seen on three dates off Seaton Sluice. (SSWT). First year birds were in Amble harbour 1st-13th (AH/IK/KDS), at Boulmer on the 13th (IK) and on Cresswell Pond on the 18th (PAW/MGW).

Auk Sp

A total of 10N and 4S off Seaton Sluice between the 5th and 20th (SSWT).

Stock Dove

One-two noted at ten localities. A flock of 14 was at Arcot on the 26th (LGM).

Woodpigeon

The largest flock reported was of 700 at the Bridge of Aln on the 19th (AHB). 300-450 noted in the Ingram valley, Holywell and Cramlington and 100-200 at Lilburn, Birling Carrs and Roddam. No hard weather movement was discernible.

Collared Dove

Easily the largest flock was of 25 at Marden Park on the 12th (JDM).

Barn Owl

Singles noted at Black Callerton, Longwitton and Seaton Burn (seen during the day). One was found dead on the A1 north of Alnwick on the 13th (PWW/MH/DPH).

Little Owl

Singles noted at Broomhill and near Holywell

Tawny Owl

Singles noted at Ponteland, Heddon, Wallington Hall and Lilburn Burn.

Long-eared Owl

The only record was of one which arrived from the east at Togston Hall on the 23rd (DRH).

Short-eared Owl

Conspicuous throughout the month one-three being noted at 18 localities, mainly at or near to the coast but also at Prestwick Carr, Rothley Lake, Threestoneburn and Ilderton Dod.

Kingfisher

One survived the freeze throughout the month at Jesmond Dene (MPF).

Green Woodpecker

Singles noted at Ryton, Riding Mill and Harwood Forest.

Great Spotted Woodpecker

Noted at seven usual localities

Skylark

The onset of cold weather initiated the usual hard weather movements. Between the 12th and 17th over 100 were at Chevington Burn and 50 at Whitley Bay and Cresswell. 150 were at Holywell on the 16th. Numbers increased from around the 25th to the months end. Up to 400 were in the Druridge Bay area on the 27th and up to 150 at Blyth and Hauxley during this period. Several smaller flocks up to 50 were noted at or near to the coast. 20 were as far inland as Calder on the 6th.

Meadow Pipit

Odd birds were noted at localities in the North Cheviots during the first fortnight and seven noted at Ilderton Dod on the 6th (AMB/JR). Few were recorded on the coast but 47 counted between Boulmer and Alnmouth on the 13th, and about 50 at Cresswell on the 24th (ES/AMB).

Rock Pipit

One-two noted at North Shields, Newbiggin and Berwick

Grey Wagtail

One-two noted at Whittle Dene, North Shields, Holywell Dene and Ingram valley.

Pied Wagtail

Four at Matfen on the 10th feeding on scraps and one-two at ten other scattered localities.

Waxwing

A single reported from Morpeth station on the 21st. (per BL) and three in Northumberland Park, North Shields on the 27th (KW).

Dipper

This species is likely to have suffered during the later part of the month when many stretches of river were frozen. As an example, none were seen between Haltwhistle and Lambley on the 27th when the river was virtually completely frozen, normally three-four pairs would have been seen (LGM). The only record for the last half of the month was of three between Morpeth and Mitford on the 28th (JR).

Wren

General impressions were of a reduction in numbers by the end of the month but the species was still present in lowland areas, suburban gardens and on the coast.

Dunnock

Few were reported during the month, but nine were in the Ingram valley on the 13th (JR).

Robin

Likely to have suffered badly during the severe weather, few being noted after the 13th.

Stonechat

Pairs noted during the month at Bamburgh and Warkworth Gut and Alnmouth, and a single bird at Hadston. A bird showing characteristics of the Siberian race was noted at Druridge Links on the 9th (ME).

Blackbird

Numbers increased at bird tables during the hard weather.

Fieldfare

Still present in small flocks, in the main of less than fifty, at localities throughout the county during the month. Larger flocks near the coast suggesting late immigrants included 200 at Ross on the 6th when 90 at Bradford Kaims, 250 at Beal Road ends on the 19th and 200 at Cresswell on the 25th. Inland 130 were at Langley on the 6th. Several were noted feeding in suburban gardens in Whitley Bay on the 12th, including one eating bacon rind.

Song Thrush

A few resorted to feeding amongst seaweed between Boulmer and Howick on the 13th, and eight tired individuals were in the Warkworth sand dunes on the 12th (IK/PWW). Odd birds noted in gardens throughout the month.

Redwing

Less conspicuous than Fieldfare the largest flock reported was of 100 at Cresswell on the 15th (AMB). Small flocks of up to 15 were at Tynemouth, and 50 noted there on the 31st and at Preston cemetery on the 25th (ML/MNC). 80 flew SW over Whittle Dene on the 5th (BNR), and small flocks of up to 20 noted at scattered inland localities up to the end of the month.

Mistle Thrush

Two-six noted at 14 scattered localities during the hard spell

Blackcap

Single males seen at Stocksfield on the 9th (BNR), feeding on hanging nuts in a Seaton Deleval garden on the 23rd and 24th (MLL), and visiting a bird table at Monkseaton every morning from the 20th until well into January (WGS).

Goldcrest

Still apparent in reduced numbers in deciduous woodland at the months end.

Long-tailed Tit

Seemingly coping quite well with the severe weather, flocks of six-sixteen being noted during the last fortnight at Hexham, Mitford, Close House, Holywell Dene, Gosforth Park, Wallington Hall, Allenbanks, Plessey Woods and Featherstone/Lambley

Marsh Tit

One-four noted at ten usual localities, ten were at Bolam Lake car park on the 27th (AH).

Willow Tit

Singles noted at Plessey Woods and Cramlington (LGM).

Coal Tit

Still quite common in deciduous woodland at the end of the month, up to 15 noted at Bolam Lake on the 27th (AMB).

Blue Tit

Several small flocks noted throughout the month in usual habitat.

Nuthatch

Maxima of 12 at Wallington and six at Bolam noted. One-three noted at Stocksfield, Close House, Capheaton, Matfen and Shotley Bridge. Birds were seen feeding at bird tables at the last two localities.

Tree Creeper

Well reported throughout the month one-two being noted at 16 localities, and up to four seen at Bolam Lake.

Jay.

Up to six at Gosforth Park, and one-two at eight usual localities.

Magpie

Seven at Choppington and six at Bothal were the largest flocks noted.

Jackdaw

Large flocks included about 500 at Coupland near Wooler on the 12th, 220 at Fourstones on the 7th and 80 near Warkworth on the 1st.

Rook

Well established at many Rookeries. The largest flock noted was of 500 at Coupland near Wooler on the 12th when 200 at Cornhill (JR).

Hooded Crow

Up to three were present between Hadston and Cresswell throughout the month (DRH/BB et al). Singles also noted in Coquet estuary on the 1st (AH) at Roddam on the 13th (JR) and at Berwick on the 30th (JDL).

Raven

A single bird seen near Alwington on the 31st (BG).

Starling

The massive Matfen roost continued throughout the month (RW). At least 10,000 were concentrated at Cresswell on the 28th (AMB).

House Sparrow

An unusually large flock of 200 was at Sturton Grange near Warkworth on the 30th (AMB).

Tree Sparrow

Numbers increased at Shankhouse to 64 by the 13th (LJM) and in the Druridge area to 40 by the 29th (BB/MH et al). 25 were at Hauxley on the 19th (LGM) and several small flocks were noted in mainly coastal localities.

Chaffinch

Many sizeable flocks reported throughout the month. The largest flock was of about 400 (with 500 Brambling) at Hauxley on the 30th (AMB). Up to 80 were with other finches at Cresswell by the end of the month. 250-300 were at Ryal and Matfen, 100-150 at Calder Chollerton and Riding Mill. Smaller flocks were noted at other scattered localities.

Brambling

The largest concentration occurred at Hauxley where 200 on the 19th (LGM) increased to 500 by the 30th (AMB). About 50 were with other finches at Cresswell, and a similar number at Druridge from the 27th on. (BB/AMB et al). 60 were feeding alongside the Shankhouse-Cramlington road on the 17th (LJM) and 20 at Brenkley on the 5th (LGM). One-ten were noted at ten other localities.

Greenfinch

Numbers increased rapidly during the last ten days at Cresswell and Druridge, a total of about 350 in the area by the 29th being recorded (BB/MH etal). About 40 were at Priors Park on the 27th.

Goldfinch

The Matfen roost had increased to 103 birds by the 5th, but the hard weather presumably accounted for there being none seen there from the 9th on. (RW). 26 were at Chevington Burn on the 13th (LGM) and about 20 at Druridge during the last week (BB/MH etal). Two-five were noted at eight other localities.

Siskin

Flocks of about 30 at Grindon Hill and 12 at Lilburn Burn noted on the 6th (LGM/AMB). Two flocks of 14 and 30 were noted in the Ingram valley on the 13th (JR). One-six were noted at Stocksfield, Matfen, Capheaton, Hexham, Holywell Dene and Holystone.

Linnet

Flocks of about 200 noted at Hauxley on the 1st and 19th (AH/LGM), and at Cresswell/Druridge during the last week (AMB/BB/MH). Other large flocks included 150 at Bridge of Aln on the 19th (AMB), 120 at Felton until the 10th (ETN/JRN) and 60 near Cramlington (LJM etal).

Twite

About 50 on the 1st increased to 105 by the 31st and Warkworth Gut (AH/NR etal). Four were at Beal on the 19th (AH) and two at Seaton Sluice on the 29th (SSWT).

Redpoll

An unusually large flock of about 300 reported from Calder near Wooler on the 13th (JR). 40 were amongst other finches at Priors Park on the 27th (MC). One-six also noted at Threestoneburn, Warkworth, Plessey Woods, Featherstone Castle, Hadston, Choppington, Mitford and Ingram valley.

Crossbill

Two at Holystone on the 31st (BG).

Bullfinch

Again quite numerous with reports of one-three at 15 localities and 12 together at Threestoneburn on the 5th (AMB).

Hawfinch

Two noted at Hexham on the 7th (KD) and at Wallington Hall on the 13th (GKG/MGW).

Lapland Bunting

About 10 were at Cresswell on the 24th, with one-two being noted between there and Chevington Burn on several other dates (AMB/CB etal). Five were in Warkworth Gut on the 1st (AH) and two at Hartley on the 6th (KW).

Snow Bunting

A maximum of 40 noted at Ross Back Sands on the 13th (MNC). 18 were at Bamburgh on the 13th (PWW etal), 12 at Seaton Sluice on the 31st (SSWT) and up to six in the Amble/Warkworth area (DRH etal). One-three were in the Cresswell-Hadston area during the month, and singles at St. Marys, Blyth and inland at Paise Dykes on the 23rd (JPB).

Yellowhammer

The largest flock was of about 100 at Chevington Burn on the 13th (LGM). About 40 were noted at both Matfen and Whittle Dene, and 20-35 at Shankhouse, Chollerton, Riding Mill, Holywell Dene, Ingram Valley and Bedlington.

Reed Bunting

Up to 50 were noted at Chevington Burn on the 13th (LGM/MH). About 20 noted during the month around Alnmouth and Holywell. Many small flocks of up to ten noted at scattered localities. Three birds were seen feeding on a bird table at Tynemouth on the 13th (MC).

Corn Bunting

As many as 35 at Chevington Burn on the 13th (LGM), and two-three in the Druridge-Cresswell area during the month.

All January records to Alan Heavisides, 8 Leland Place, Kirkhill, Morpeth NE61 2AN in Vocus order and by 8th February at the latest please. Send SAE for supply of record cards.

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Indoor Meetings

February 11th, Alan Potts, "Wildlife in Camera"

March 11th, An evening devoted to rare species from Siberia which turned up in Northumberland in the autumn.

April 8th, Members night - volunteers still needed.

Coastal Wader Count - February 7th

Ian Kerr will be doing the Boulmer to Howick Burn wader count on Feb 7th and would be happy to be joined by anyone wishing to participate. Contact Ian on Newcastle 676974.

Request

Should anybody be interested in running the bird club at Shiremoor Middle School (9-13 years of age), which is now without a leader please contact Sandra Moorhouse Whitley Bay 534368.

Fair Isle 1982

Alan Heavisides is organising a trip to Fair Isle for Workers Educational Association class members. Should any club members be interested in joining the party (last week in August) please contact him for further information. Telephone Morpeth 55770.

NOTE OF PARASITISM OF FLEDGLING BLACKBIRDS

On 10th May, 1981 built a nest in a roofed bird table 6 feet from my kitchen window, the clutch was completed and incubation started five days later. I could not see into the nest cup, so that the first indication of hatching was the appearance of a chicks head above the rim of the nest, this occurred on the 29th May, but it was a further 30 hours before other two heads showed up.

The first fledgling left the nest at dawn on 12th June, 1981, a normal strong well feathered youngster, the second left at noon, the third remained until the following day, teetering around on the edge of the bird table, until actually blown to the ground by the wind.

The first one developed normally and is still around (December, 1981), a healthy well grown female. The other two lived for a fortnight, when one disappeared, the other was found freshly dead, still warm, these two were only half the size of their sibling, and sparsely feathered. Examination of the last showed a very heavy infestation with both Endo- & ecto parasites, more lice than feathers, the gizzard contained up to twelve large nematodes, 1 to 1½ cm. long lying under the lining which was sloughing away as a result of their action, the duodenum contained many necrotic areas size of pin head, very small nematodes just visible to the naked eye.

The viscera was examined by the Veterinary Investigation Service and the following endoparasites identified :-

- | | |
|--------------|--|
| 1. Nematodes | Caprillaria exalis
Porrocaecum ensicaudatum |
| 2. Cestodes | Dilepis undula |

I wrote to the RSPB receiving a reply from Mr. C. Harbard, Information Officer, in which he says that these parasites are not uncommon amongst Thrushes, but that only the weakly succumb, that the intermediate host of the two nematodes is the earthworm, he thinks that the host of the cestode is also the earthworm but was unable to confirm this. There is a photograph of the Cestode Dilepis undula in 'Fleas, Flukes & Cuckoos' taken from a Thrush but no information in the text.

It would appear that these two were weakly from the time of hatching thirty hour behind their sibling before lifting their heads, this could possibly be blamed on the male present, his plumage had been very rough and unkept for the preceding twelve months, a sure sign that he was not really healthy in spite of being able to hold his territory.

C.M. Adamson

SPARROWHAWK BREEDING RESULTS 1981 KIELDER STUDY AREA

8 nests were found in the usual study area, 6 of these nests went on to rear young to fledging between 2-5 young. One male had 2 females 200 yds apart but only one nest reared young, the other failed at the egg stage.

One pair comprised a first year male and a first year female and they reared 2 young. This is the first time in this study area that a pairing involving any first year bird has been successful in rearing any young at all.

In addition 3 nests were found outside the study area 2 reared young and the third failed at the egg stage.

Steve Petty
Brian Little

NORTHUMBRIAN MERLIN BREEDING RESULTS 1981

34 pairs were located in the county and most of the nests were found, however, the results were very different from previous years.

The snow in late April caused great losses to resident meadow pipits, other moorland species and woodland edge species. This in turn caused several merlins to give up their breeding attempt either before or just after their eggs were laid.

9 nests failed at the egg stage

2 clutches were taken by humans

4 broods were stolen by falconers

1 nest was shot out during a traditional Carrion Crow shoot

1 tree site was cut down during a felling and replanting scheme

This left 17 successful nests which fledged at least 51 young into the wild.

This constitutes the best breeding season for 4 years but it should have been much better but for the human predation suffered which this species cannot stand if breeding numbers are to be maintained.

Northumbria Ringing Group

B.T.O. NIGHTJAR SURVEY 1981

NORTHUMBERLAND RESULTS

Of all the county's breeding species the Nightjar is perhaps the least known as well as being one of the scarcest. The B.T.O.'s 1981 survey of its national distribution presented a considerable challenge as only a handful of sites were known to have been occupied in Northumberland in recent years and its choice of environment covers a wide spectrum of different habitats. Fortunately more observers than had been expected volunteered to participate and, although off to a slow, cold start, the mid-summer weather afforded many opportunities to listen for churring birds. Consequently many more sites, both potential and actual, were visited than at first had been thought possible and coverage, if still a long way from being complete - an impossibility really for such a large and diverse county and involving such an elusive species - was certainly satisfactory.

At least 30 observers submitted records and observations from a list of places reminiscent of a gazetteer: Acomb Fell, Acklington, Allenbanks, Allendale, Allenheads, Alnwick (Hulne) Park, Belsay, Bilton, Blagdon, Blanchland, Breamish Valley, Bywell, Capheaton, the Colt Crag - Colwell - Thockrington area, Chollerford, the Cheviot valleys at Kilham, College and Langleeford, the Darden and Grasslees burns and Billsmoor Park near Elsdon, Dipton Wood, Doddington Moor, Fenton, Ford, Fourstones, the Hedley-on-the-Hill - Mickley - Whittonstall area, Harwood Forest and the Simonsides, Harbottle, Holystone, Haydon Bridge. Ingoe, the Kyloe Hills (from Holburn to Swinhoe), Langley, Lemmington, Longhorsley Moor, Rothbury (including Crag-side and Debdon), Ryal, Slaley Forest, Stagshaw, Threestoneburn, Thrunton Wood, Wark Forest, Whitfield and Whittingham. No Nightjars are known to have been present in the Kielder and Border Forests (per B. Little). A total of 8-9 birds were reported, from sites at Alnwick (2) Dipton Wood, Kyloe, Rothbury (1-2), near Langley (2) and Lemmington; all but the last and the penultimate localities have been reported in the past and are perhaps regularly occupied or at least hold a special attraction for nightjars. Two nests were found., In addition one regularly visited a garden in Ashington during the first week of August and may have been taking food for young nearby but the date more likely suggests birds on migration. Strangest of all, a young bird, presumably locally bred was found by a boy on his way to school one morning sitting on a windowsill at the Lord Crewe Arms, Blanchland.

Some observers suggested that where only one or two pairs are present (as is apparently the case at sites in Northumberland) the males may only sing until they have acquired a mate; the absence of any territorial pressures from other nightjars renders further churring unnecessary. If this is correct - and the reasoning is certainly plausible - without a tape recorder to stimulate a resident male into song it is possible some occupied sites may have gone undetected. However, considerable publicity of the project, including a request for information in the "Farmers Weekly", failed to produce any additional records from rural inhabitants who would be best placed to hear this species during even a brief period of song.

The habitats occupied in 1981 were perhaps typical and involved heathland and heather moorland with areas of bracken, invading birch and scots pines or other coniferous plantations (Alnwick, Lemmington, Langley, Rothbury), rhododendron and gorse cover in association with beech woodland (Alnwick), and coniferous woodland of mixed ages with clearings and invading birch (Dipton and Kyloe). Past writers have commented on its preference for moorland haunts in the county; George Bolam thought it "most common in the upland glens and about the fringes of moors and moorland woods...."

and Abel Chapman wrote "its favoured haunts by day are sometimes amid the most impenetrable spots in all the wild moorland - on some fell-edge where riven rocks and boulders lie piled in confusion, many half hidden amidst shaggy heather and 6-foot bracken". Some of the occupied sites found by the 1981 survey were similar to those described by these earlier authors.

At the beginning of the present century the Nightjar still occurred sparingly throughout the district according to Bolam and Chapman thought it commoner than it appeared to be; at this time it was also described as being plentiful in upper Coquetdale. Until well into the 1920's a pair is reported to have nested regularly at Prestwick Carr, near Ponteland; there were occasional records too, from upper Redesdale and breeding was regular at Netherwitton in the 1930's; there do not appear to have been any more recent records from these areas. Although Bolam, in his "Catalogue" of 1932 still described it as common in suitable places without being very numerous, the late G.W. Temperley later pointed out he had not lived in the county for some years and had not realised how steadily numbers had by then decreased. Evidence of decline in some parts of the country can be traced as far back as the early years of this century, it had become general by about 1930 and accelerated from about 1950. The reasons for its disappearance from so many haunts are not known. Northumberland appears to have followed this pattern although there is little documented information. It may, however, be relevant to note that the County Ornithological Reports contained only two records of nightjars heard during the breeding season in the county between 1934 and 1956 although it was described by E.G. Tyer as still being fairly well represented in upper Coquetdale in 1954 with 2-3 pairs occurring annually between Alwinton and Harbottle. The B.T.O. Enquiry of 1957-58 revealed in the former year five breeding pairs in the Fenham-Kyloe-Detchant district and two in the Fowberry area with churring males heard near Hexham (apparently Dipton Wood) and Wooler; there were no reports of breeding in 1958 and none at Kyloe or Fenwick during that year. There may well have been a temporary recovery during the 1960's as birds were heard (and in some instances nesting was proved) at no less than eleven different localities and probably more; at least one site held four pairs in 1963. Five years' field work for the Atlas of Breeding Birds during 1968-1972 produced records from eight 10-Km Grid squares and since then there has been on average only one or two records annually which may have been of birds in breeding territories. The 1981 survey results confirm the species continuing scarcity.

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