



ANNUAL REPORT
1970

HUDDERSFIELD BIRDWATCHERS'
CLUB



The President's Report for 1970

Unfortunately the year 1970 was overshadowed by the tragic accident at Spurn in which three of our members lost their lives. Gordon Kilvington was a very cheerful and helpful member of the Club and Nigel Briggs and Martin Humphrey were two grand youngsters. We mourned their loss.

Much of the future of the Club depends on the juniors and we have a strong junior section with some very keen young birdwatchers. Indeed the Club has now been in existence long enough for some of the original juniors to develop into competent ornithologists.

The Club meetings have been very well attended and the Club outings well supported.

We are, of course, once again indebted to our Secretary, Brian Cocking for a full programme of talks and meetings, and for Club outings efficiently, and how patiently, organised.

Once again our Recorder, John Dale, has produced an admirable and comprehensive report.

We also record our thanks to the Treasurer, Malcolm Palmer, and the committee members for the work they have done during the year.

I think we should also place on record the good fortune of two of our members, John Ireland and Jeremy Roberts, who have been members of an extended expedition crossing Europe and the Balkans through to the foothills of the Himalayas. I hope other of our younger members have the same good fortune.

C. Disbrey,
Club President.

Recorder's Report for 1970

A year of considerable interest in which 137 species were recorded. Since the formation of the club five years ago 166 species have been observed.

Amongst the year's highlights was the discovery of the presence of first Iceland and then Glaucous Gulls in the roost of 3,000+ Gulls at Blackmoorfoot reservoir. This was the first indication of the advantages of having a hide to protect the watchers from the weather, and encourage them to spend a few hours on cold winter afternoons at what at first sight might seem the unprofitable occupation of gull watching. Later in the year under more pleasant conditions it enabled members to observe the tern and wader passage. That of the former appeared very exceptional, but it will need a few years watching to fully assess this. Elsewhere Malcolm Palmer has kindly summarised the observations made at Blackmoorfoot.

Another feature of the year was the Waxwing invasion which commenced in our district at the end of October. A number of records were sent in by members of the general public in response to an appeal published in the Examiner. This tame and distinctive species had attracted considerable attention from non-bird watchers and lends itself to such an inquiry.

New species continue to be recorded for the area, the latest addition being Sandwich Tern, one of which was seen at Bretton Park in August. Also 'rare' birds for the area were Black-throated Diver, Smew, Buzzard, Little Stint, Sanderling, Ruff and Stonechat. The draining of the top lake at Bretton Park, which left much exposed mud between August and the year end, did not prove to be as interesting as was at first hoped, but unusual numbers of Heron and Teal did take advantage of this temporary condition.

For the purposes of brevity reservoirs that are visited regularly have not been referred to as reservoirs, but merely by their name e.g. Blackmoorfoot, Digley, Ingbirchworth. Members initials have been recorded against observations only in cases of rare occurrence or difficult identification.

The recorder wishes to thank the sub-committee of Messrs. M.L.Denton, N. Leece and D. Sykes for their assistance in preparing the report, and thank all members who have sent in records. Please remember that some records passed on verbally may be forgotten, and that some records may be omitted because checking has been impossible.

Notes on species which are causing difficulty in identification

The question of Marsh and Willow Tits causes some trouble. Unless observers are thoroughly familiar with the calls, and can distinguish them without doubt then records may be rejected. The head appearance may depend on light conditions and the condition of the bird, so cannot be taken as diagnostic. Birds with a broad light patch on the secondaries in the closed wing are Willows (almost invariably), but birds without this may be of either species. Willow Tits are much the

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commoner in our area, and we have no recent breeding record for Marsh Tit.

Please beware of Common and Jack Snipe. The Jack Snipe is a much smaller bird with a different crown pattern and shorter bill. A detailed description of behaviour as well as plumage will be useful when the rarer species is suspected.

Finally I would like to request members to give as full a description as possible, of any rare or semi-rare species, or one with which they themselves are unfamiliar, when sending records in for the report.

J. E. Dale,
Recorder.

Observations at Blackmoorfoot Reservoir
 during 1970 - a Synopsis.

It is doubtful if any stretch of water in Yorkshire was more extensively watched during 1970 than was Blackmoorfoot, especially following the construction of the new hide.

January

The year began mild, with light westerly winds. 8 Tufted Ducks and up to 5 Goldeneye were present until the onset of cold weather around the 5th. Then the reservoir froze over, driving off all but c.40 Mallard and a few gulls. A return to warmer conditions about the middle of the month brought a spectacular increase in the numbers of roosting gulls, with "thousands" at dusk on 22nd. 6 Tufted Duck also returned, small numbers of Snipe were seen and up to 7 Wigeon were recorded before the end of the month.

February

Another cold spell in the first few days failed to freeze the water, and 3 Teal were present on 1st. A drake Shoveler was a new arrival on the 5th. Most regular watchers were preoccupied with the construction of the hide during the ensuing fortnight, but the reservoir was frozen for a very short period to the 19th, when strong westerly winds brought a good deal of precipitation. The resultant high water-level appeared not to be to the liking of most of the wildfowl, as although Mallard numbers remained constant at around 30, few others were seen, and Goldeneye were particularly sparse, with a maximum of 6 on 24th.

The gull-roost, however, continued to increase, with around 2,500 counted on 26th. During the course of counting the gulls on the 22nd the first of a remarkable series of Iceland Gulls was identified, probably the 4th winter bird still present on the 25th.

Small parties of Lapwing were observed during this period, with a maximum of 48 flying west on the 22nd. A great many Magpies were also seen around the banks, and a Little Owl was seen on 27th. The wind changed to North East on that day, and remained in the quarter to the north-end.

March

With the return of Westerly weather on the 1st, 4 Shelduck paid a brief call before flying off to the west later the same day. Winds became light and variable by the 5th, gull numbers rose to an estimated peak of 3,000 on the 4th, and the Iceland Gull continued to come in to roost, until it was joined by a 1st winter Glaucous Gull on the 6th. In the colder weather the water once again became partially frozen, but Goldeneye built up to 9 on the 8th, when 2 more Shelduck were present.

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On the 10th the gulls were joined by a further (1st winter) Iceland Gull and a different Glaucous Gull was seen on the 12th, when the first Redshank of the year was recorded. A Great Crested Grebe was on the reservoir on the 15th, and 3 Curlew passed over on the 18th. Later on that day, no less than 3 Iceland Gulls were present with the roosting gulls (see systematic list). By now the wind had become westerley, and 7 Golden Plover were on the banks on the 21st, when a Glaucous Gull was also seen. Mild weather the following day brought 4 Snipe, 4 Redshank and 5 Curlew, and a Moorhen was a new bird for the year. Calm conditions about the 25th probably accounted for the departure of the Iceland and Glaucous Gulls, which were not seen after that date. The next day saw 2 Tufted Duck, 1 Pochard and another Great Crested Grebe. Westerlies set in again (with a vengeance) on the 29th, bringing a female Smew, and a Dunlin the next day. A quite remarkable month drew to a close with ten each of Mallard and Goldeneye present and a flock of 27 Golden Plover on the 31st.

April

Roosting gulls were still estimated at more than 2,500 early in the month, but Mallard numbers were by now down to between 4 and 12. South-westerly winds were probably holding up spring migration, but 3 Shelduck called on the 4th, and another 2 on the 6th, and a pair of Teal were with the Mallard on the 15th. A female Smew was seen again on the 16th. A further two Shelduck were seen on the 17th, when the first true summer visitors were recorded, in the shape of 3 Wheatears and 2 Swallows. On the 22nd, in what was described as "appalling" weather a Great Spotted Woodpecker flew across the water (somewhat involuntarily). The conditions improved towards the month's end, and 2 Twite were seen on 23rd, whilst 2 Gadwall were on the water.

May

The good weather continued into May, and Willow Warblers were taking up territory around the hide. 2 Wigeon arrived on the 3rd, and a female Goldeneye stayed until at least the 12th. Common Sandpiper was a new species for the spring on the 3rd, a Cuckoo was calling on the 13th and the first Swift was recorded on the 18th. Westerlies returned on the 24th, but a Spotted Flycatcher was on the banks, as was a Sanderling, in full summer plumage. The Moorhen had been joined by another by the 26th and yet another by the end of the month.

June

Nothing of interest was seen during the early part of the month, but fine weather had the effect of significantly reducing the water-level, which was to prove useful later in the year. 2 White ducks were with a single Mallard on 18th, and 8 Mallard ducklings were seen by the 20th. The autumn wader passage began with a Green Sandpiper on the 21st, when a pair of Tufted Duck were also recorded. A pair of Yellow Wagtail on the mud on the 28th were the only other birds of note as the weather deteriorated to the end of the month.

July

A Redshank was present in dull weather on the 4th, and a Goldeneye on that date was a most unusual record, although it should perhaps be borne in mind that the species has recently been found to be summering increasingly in Scotland. Lapwings had built up to 200+, by 16th, and small numbers of Dunlin, Common Sandpiper, Redshank, Snipe and Curlew became regular. A Bar-tailed Godwit visited the mud (now extensive) on 22nd and 23rd, a Little Stint, a Turnstone and 2 Greenshank on the 25th, when the wind changed to south-east bringing also 8 'Comic' terns, and, the following day, 21 Curlew, an Oystercatcher and 2 Common Scoter. Golden Plover peaked at 200+ on the 31st, when 2 Ringed Plover were also present.

August

August started with a calm spell and little of note, except that Lapwing and Golden Plover numbers were maintained. 6 Tufted Duck were seen on the 1st, and a Reeve stayed from the 3rd to the 5th. Drizzle on the evening of the 7th brought 5 Black Terns and 3 more Common Scoter. About the 8th, light south-westerlies took over, and the autumn migration got well under way, with a Great Crested Grebe, a Heron and a "Comic" Tern on the 9th, 4 Sanderling on the 10th, another Reeve and 9 Canada Geese on the 11th, 2 Spotted Flycatchers on the 12th and a Whimbrel on the 13th. An Oystercatcher and probably the same Reeve were about on the 14th, 2 Whimbrel flew south the next day and "Comic" Terns became an almost daily occurrence, with possibly as many as 19 on the 21st. No less than 11 Oystercatchers were on the mud on the 17th, 7 Shoveler visited the reservoir on the 19th, and Ringed Plover became regular. Calm conditions on the 20th brought 4 Greenshank and the second single Black Tern of the week. An improvement in the weather in the last week of the month saw migrational activity diminish in converse ratio, but Snipe had increased to 20 by the end of the month, and a Scaup was around for several days. As many as 22 Teal were present and, although waders became scarce, 2 Bar-tailed Godwits called in on the 30th.

September

Fresh westerlies set in on the 1st, and obviously held up any would-be visitors until heavy rain on the 8th brought a visible movement of Meadow Pipits, 9 Shelduck, presumably on moult-migration to the Heligoland Bight, a Ruff and a Little Stint, as well as another in a most interesting series of "Comic" Terns. Later in the day, 5 Pintail and 3 Pochard visited the reservoir. Collared Dove was a "first" on the 10th, but the next few days saw little of interest, save another Little Stint and 2 more Ringed Plover. The last Wheatear and Sand Martin were both recorded on the 17th, with Yellow Wagtail two days later, and House Martin on the 21st. 22 Curlew flew over on the 19th, and clear weather on the next day saw c.1,200 Lapwing, 7 Ringed Plover and 31 Snipe. Wildfowl were increasing, and 25 Wigeon were seen on the 22nd, 15 Tufted Duck and 8 Pochard on 24th when 2 drake Scaup also put in an appearance. 2 Heron called in on the next day and 10 Black Terns were

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feeding on the 27th. No less than 56 Snipe were on the mud by the 29th.

October

Unpleasant westerly conditions early in the month discouraged all the remaining summer visitors, and the last 3 Swallows were recorded on the 6th. A Goldfinch was an unusual visitor on the 10th, and 3 Little Stints on the 12th were the only unusual waders during this period. Winter visitors started with a dozen Fieldfare and "a few" Redwing on the 16th, and a Coal Tit was interesting, in a year when many observatories have recorded unusual movements of tits, probably following a fine breeding season. A Goldeneye appeared on the 15th and was joined by 5 more in fine weather on the 21st. By 29th, many more thrushes were about, and between 200 and 300 Fieldfare were going to the roost at Deer Hill on that day.

November

The month began with howling westerlies, which abruptly veered to the north on the 2nd, bringing a party of 8 Siskin, and more Fieldfare and Redwing. 2 Reed Buntings were seen on the 6th, and a drake Goosander on the 8th, when 25 Mallard, 9 Wigeon and 5 Pochard were counted. Later in the day, a female Goosander also paid a brief visit. Mallard had increased to 55 by the 18th, when a Short-eared Owl was in the area. The gull-roost had by now increased to around 2,500, and November ended with a spell of fine clear weather which does not seem to be ornithologically helpful at Blackmoorfoot, although another Goosander was seen on the 27th.

December

The still weather continued into December, and little was noted until the 5th, when 6 Bewick's Swans put in an appearance. Good counts of Snipe were still being recorded with c.60 on the 1st and 52 on the 7th. 2 Pochard and 5 Mute Swans were new arrivals on the 12th whilst the next day saw an increase to 60 Mallard. Winds remained light, between north and north-west during the middle of the month, and it is perhaps surprising that no more "northern" migrants were recorded, although 2 Wigeon were seen on the 21st. The remaining days of the year were occupied by a cold easterly airstream, bringing considerable falls of snow and absolutely nothing in the way of birds, though it is most encouraging to record that the hide was visited almost daily despite the appalling conditions.

Generally

During the year, the hide has really proved its worth, and has shown the immense value of regularly watching at one good place. The low water-level has contributed to a good variety of waders and the months of March (for gulls) and July and August (for waders and terns) were particularly rewarding. In all, some 92 species were recorded

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by 62 observers, who occupied the hide for 600 hours on 210 days, although it must be stated that this synopsis concerns largely unchecked reports, and reference should be made to the systematic list for authenticated records. The standard of observations was, in general, very high and some of the younger members have visibly improved in the course of the year. In particular, Messrs. D. W. Sill, S. & D. Pogson, C. Home, T. Duckworth, N. Leece and our recorder, Mr. Dale have made valuable contributions, and they and the many others have ensured that little has passed unseen at Blackmoorfoot. Our grateful thanks also go to Mr. Jollans for his continued tolerance of our activities around the banks.

M. J. Palmer.

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List of Contributors to the 1970 Report

Apologies for any omissions.

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Black-throated Diver

An adult in full summer plumage was present for at least 8 hours at Digley on July 17th. Observed by N.L. at midday and also by J.M.L.; J.E.D. and J.M.D. from 19-00 to 20-00 hours.

Great Crested Grebe

Bretton. 2 pairs successfully reared a total of 3 young birds. Recorded from February 28th - November 15th. Maximum of 10 on April 12th.

Ingbirchworth. An adult seen with a juvenile on August 12th.

Blackmoorfoot. Singles recorded on 14 dates from March 8th - Sept. 26th and a late record of one on December 5th.

Little Grebe

Present at Bretton, Ingbirchworth and Scout Dyke, mainly March and August - year end, usually singles but 7 at Ingbirchworth in August and at Scout Dyke in September. One at Kirkheaton on May 2nd.

Heron

Recorded on 11 dates at Bretton with maxima of 9 on August 7th and 8 on August 23rd. Isolated records from Blackmoorfoot, Ingbirchworth area and Middlestown.

Mallard

Bretton. Breeding noted but no details available. Present throughout the year with a maximum of 258 on November 15th.

Blackmoorfoot. Regular with maximum of about 60 on December 13th. Breeds in many other suitable localities.

Teal

Bretton. Present up to April 12th and from August 30th with unusual numbers in the autumn after the top lake had been drained. From November 1st - December 13th numbers varied from 37 - 49.

Blackmoorfoot. Maximum of 22 on September 23rd. Mainly recorded from August 15th - December 25th with a few spring and summer records. Observed on several moorland reservoirs in the breeding season.

Gadwall

One pair present at Blackmoorfoot on April 23rd (J.M.L., N.L.)

Wigeon

Blackmoorfoot. Recorded on 13 dates January, May, September (25 on 22nd) - December.

Bretton. Records in February, September (14 on 23rd) and December. Also seen at Digley and Ringstone Edge.

Pintail

Blackmoorfoot. All records in September. 5 on the 8th, 3 on the 22nd and 1 on the 28th.

Bretton. 1 male seen on 5 dates between November 20th and December 20th.

Shoveler

Blackmoorfoot. One on February 5th, 7 on August 19th, 1 on the 29th and 1 on September 7th.

Scaup

Blackmoorfoot. Records of males as follows - 1 August 26th-28th, 2 September 24th - 27th and 1 on the 28th.

Tufted Puck

Regular at Blackmoorfoot and Bretton, again except for the summer months. Maximum of 38 at Blackmoorfoot on September 20th and good numbers at Bretton from November 15th (40) to the year end, with a maximum of 58 on December 20th. Seen also at Dean Head, Deer Hill, Digley, Ringstone Edge and Royd Moor reservoirs.

Pochard

Blackmoorfoot. Regular from September - December (maximum 17 on September 20th) with 3 earlier records.

Bretton. Only small numbers recorded on 11 dates with maximum of 10 on December 13th and 27th. Also seen at Bilberry and Deer Hill reservoirs.

Goldeneye

Blackmoorfoot. Regular from January - May 12th and October 15th - December 31st. Maximum of 12 on April 12th. One immature male on July 14th. Also seen at Digley, March Haigh and Ringstone Edge reservoir.

Common Scoter

Blackmoorfoot. July 26th. One male and immature or female (D.W.S.) and 3 imm./females on August 7th (J.M.L., N.L.)

Goosander

Blackmoorfoot. November 8th. One male (M.J.P.) and 1 hour later (c.16-00 hours) one female (B.W.W. et al.), and November 27th. 1 male (J.M.)

Bretton. One female on November 7th (P.S.)

Digley. One female on January 9th and 19th (N.L.)

Smew

Blackmoorfoot. Single females on March 29th (M.J.P., K.E.P.) and April 16th (K.A.N.) Only the 2nd and 3rd on record for the district, the previous one being in 1959.

Shelduck

A notable increase in the number of birds being observed.

Blackmoorfoot. Recorded on the following dates - March 1st-4 ,
8th -2, April 4th - 3, 5th - 2, 17th - 4, September 8th - 9 and 9th - 2.

Ingbirchworth. One on August 8th.

Grey Geese Sp.

Skeins flying over as follows:-

January 21st	Yateholme	30 - 40	
March 6th	Yateholme	c.80	→ E.
October 17th	Lindley Moor	90	→ W.
November 6th	Yateholme	c.60	→ N.W.
November 25th	Yateholme	c.60	→ N.W.
December 1st	Yateholme	c.60	→ S.E.
December 18th	Holmbridge	c.50	

Pink-footed Goose

Digley on January 27th one flew calling and landed in an adjacent field (N.L.)

Canada Goose

Bretton. Present all the year. 20 juveniles noted from 5 broods on July 5th. Maximum of 178 on November 1st is the highest on record here.

Mute Swan

Occurred at Blackmoorfoot, Bretton, Ingbirchworth and New Mill as well as pairs breeding at Denby Dale and by the River Colne.

Whooper Swan

Two at Ringstone Edge on December 20th (J.E.D.)

Bewick's Swan

One at Digley on February 11th (N.L., J.M.L.) and at Blackmoorfoot on December 5th 2 adults and 3 immatures (S.P., D.P.)

Buzzard

One seen flying over the Scissett area for about 5 minutes before flying off northwards on June 18th (A.S.)

Sparrow Hawk

Breeding in one area and observed in two other areas.

Kestrel

Recorded throughout the district with breeding of 5 pairs confirmed although a great many more are evidently breeding.

Red Grouse

Resident and fairly common in moorland areas.

Partridge

Reported from 7 localities with breeding evidence from 2 of these. Coveys of 12 at Bretton (November 29th) and 10 at Grimescar (Sept. 28th).

Pheasant

Breeding in suitable localities.

Water Rail

Bretton. Singles on January 4th and March 1st.

Moorhen

Breeding in suitable places throughout the district.

Coot

Records from Bretton Park only, where several pairs bred as usual. A noticeable build up in the autumn with a maximum of 68 on December 13th.

Oystercatcher

Blackmoorfoot. Two singles flying west during July 26th. 1 present on August 14th, and 11 on August 17th included one ringed bird. Two at Bilberry reservoir on April 17th and calls heard overhead after dark at Lindley on September 4th.

Lapwing.

Breeding in the area. Autumn flocks at Ingbirchworth and Blackmoorfoot with 5,000 - 6,000 between the latter place and South Crosland on August 19th.

Ringed Plover

Blackmoorfoot. July 31st - 2, August 10th - 3, 13th-14th - 1, 15th - 2, 16th - 4, 17th - 6, 20th - 4, September 4th - 1, 15th - 2, 20th - 7, 22nd - 3 and 24th-27th - 1.

Ingbirchworth. Two on August 8th and 1 on the 13th.

Scout Dyke. One on September 20th.

Golden Plover

Breeding in small numbers in moorland areas. Blackmoorfoot maxima were 100-150 on April 5th and 200+ on July 31st. Records for every month except December.

Turnstone

One present at Blackmoorfoot July 25th-26th.

Snipe

Breeding on the moors. Present at Blackmoorfoot throughout the year (except mid April - late June) with a maximum of 56 on September 29th.

Jack Snipe

One at Harrow Clough on March 8th (J.E.D.)

Woodcock

Only 4 records sent in of single birds at Bretton, Grimescar, New Mill and Yateholme. All in the winter months.

Curlew

Breeding in moorland areas. First record from Blackmoorfoot on February 28th where they were last seen on October 17th.

Whimbrel

Blackmoorfoot. August 13th - 1, 15th - 2 (D.W.S.) and 20th - 1 (J.M.L.)

Ingbirchworth. July 30th - 2 (A.R.)

Bar-tailed Godwit

Blackmoorfoot. July 22nd - 23rd. One in summer plumage (T.D., D.P., S.P.). Two birds present on August 30th (J.E.D., N.L., D.W.S.)

Green Sandpiper

One at Blackmoorfoot on June 21st (T.C.) and one at Ingbirchworth on August 23rd (J.M.)

Common Sandpiper

Reported from 9 waters in the area with the first from Digley on April 19th. Maximum of 6 at Deer Hill on June 28th. Bred in moorland localities. A very unusual late record of 2 birds at Blackmoorfoot on November 8th. The observers A.S.G. and D.M. had good views down to about 20 yards.

Redshank

Blackmoorfoot. Present on 4 dates in March from 12th with 4 on the 22nd and from July 4th to August 29th. 1 - 4 birds were observed on 20 days.

Also from Ingbirchworth (late record on October 15th), Deer Hill, Dean Head, Bretton, March Haigh and Cupwith. At the latter place a pair were holding territory on June 7th.

Greenshank

Blackmoorfoot. July 25th - 2, August 20th-4 and 29th - 1.

Ingbirchworth. August 12th - 1, 15th - 1, 19th - 2, 23rd - 4, 26th - 5, 30th - 5 and 31st-6, September 13th - 2 and 20th-5.

Deer Hill. One on August 8th.

Little Stint

Blackmoorfoot. An unusual number of records. None having been recorded here from the earlier hide and the last record for the district being in 1960. July 25th - 1, (T.D., D.P., S.P.), September 8th - 1 (S.N.A., N.L., D.W.S., J.M., T.C.), 12th - 1 (T.C.) and October 12th - 3 (N.L., A.S.G.)

Dunlin

Blackmoorfoot. First record of one on March 30th, later seen regularly between July 4th and October 12th with one on November 2nd. Maximum 15 on September 8th. Recorded also from Deer Hill (10 on June 23rd), Cupwith (16 on May 17th and 10 on 24th - 1 with ring) and Ingbirchworth. Breeding in moorland localities.

Sanderling

Only three had been recorded prior to this year so that the records of one in summer plumage at Cupwith on May 24th 9-30 hrs. (J.E.D.) and a similar bird at Blackmoorfoot 4 hours later (M.L.D.) where there were 4 on August 10th (N.L.) are of interest.

Ruff

An unusual number of records mainly from Blackmoorfoot singles being present on August 3rd - 5th (juvenile) (D.P., S.P., N.L., D.M.), 11th (juvenile) (J.E.D., N.L.), 14th (J.E.D., D.W.S.) and September 8th. (Reeve or juv.) (S.N.A., N.L., D.W.S., J.M., T.C.) Ingbirchworth. One present on August 12th (N.B.)

Great Black-backed Gull

Present throughout the year at Blackmoorfoot except late April - early August. Maximum counted 80+ on February 22nd. Also seen at Deer Hill, Ingbirchworth and Ringstone Edge.

Lesser Black-backed Gull

Recorded every month of the year at Blackmoorfoot with 400+ in January and August-September being largest numbers counted. Ringstone Edge had nearly 500 on August 25th, also seen regularly at Bretton.

Herring Gull

Recorded at Blackmoorfoot during every month (only one June record, 2 on the 21st) with at least 500 on February 22nd and on other reservoirs.

Common Gull

Previously considered as a summer rarity it was found from regular watching at Blackmoorfoot to be absent only between May 30th and July 6th. Over 100 were present in the roost during February.

Glaucous Gull

Blackmoorfoot. Single immatures recorded on the following dates during March-6th, 7th, 9th, 12th, 19th, 21st & 24th. Three different individual birds were probably present but there are obvious difficulties of being completely certain. Observers included J.E.D., J.C.G., J.G.I., F.J.R. and D.W.S., who were also responsible for some of the Iceland Gull records.

Iceland Gull

Great excitement was caused by the sighting of a bird of this species on February 22nd, by D.W.S. only 7 days after the hide had been opened. It led to unprecedented watching of Blackmoorfoot on cold winter evenings for the next month, during which time some 18 members saw this species and Glaucous Gull. Singles were observed on February 22nd-23rd, 25th-26th, March 1st-2nd, 6th-7th, 9th, and two on 10th-11th, one on 13th, three on 18th-19th, and singles again on 22nd-25th. Descriptions of immature birds in various states of plumage from 1st-4th winters were obtained and the bird on March 22nd-23rd was probably an adult. As with Glaucous Gull it was difficult to establish how many individual birds actually appeared at Blackmoorfoot, but from plumage descriptions at least 8 individuals could have been responsible for the 24 sightings. Other observers included C.H., R.W., S.P., D.P., N.L., J.M.L., S.N.A. & J.M.D.

Black-headed Gull

Up to 2,000 present in the Blackmoorfoot roost in February and March and a similar number as early as late August.

The roost at Ringstone Edge had at least 350 of this species on September 24th.

Gull Sp.

No accurate count of the Blackmoorfoot roost was actually made although members made many valiant attempts. Observers usually discovered that counts of 3,000 were fairly normal particularly February-April and August-September, but as on most occasions Gulls were still pouring in at dusk a higher total is undoubtedly reached.

Black Tern

Blackmoorfoot. August 7th - 5 (D.W.S., N.L., J.M.L., K.A.N.), 16th - 1 (J.E.D.), 20th - 1, 24th - 1 (D.W.S.) and September 27th - 10 (D.S.) Various plumages juvenile-adult, summer-winter.

Common Tern/Arctic Tern

Unprecedented numbers of these species were seen at Blackmoorfoot particularly during the second half of August. Because of obvious difficulties the two species have been grouped together, even though on some dates the species was identified without doubt. Also on certain dates the number observed varied during the course of the day in which case times and numbers have been quoted.

Common Tern/Arctic Tern - cont'd.

July 25th-8, August 16th - 10 (12.00 hrs.) 12 (15.00 hrs) 17th - 15 (10.00 hrs) 13 (14.00 hrs) 12 (15.00 hrs) 8 (17.00 hrs) 11 (19.00 hrs).

As the birds were arriving and departing as well as the observers, anything from 30 - 59 individuals may have passed through. 20th - 3 (14.00 hrs) 2 (17.00 hrs). 21st - 1 (13.00 hrs) 12 (14.00 hrs.) 7 (17.00 hrs). 27th - 2, 30th - 2. September 2nd - 2, 5th - 1 and 8th - 1.

At Bretton 2 on August 17th and singles on August 23rd, October 3rd, 11th and 13th.

Sandwich Tern

The first record for the area was at Bretton Park on August 17th, the long black bill with yellow tip being observed at 10 yards by J.M. who thought the bird appeared sickly as it was reluctant to fly.

Stock Dove

Reported from 6 localities and breeding in the area.

Wood Pigeon

Common breeding throughout the area. Over 500 at Bretton in December.

Turtle Dove

Singles at Middlestown on May 17th, July 17th and 26th and Bretton on June 5th and 12th and 2 at Digley on August 22nd.

Collared Dove

Records from Blackmoorfoot, Lockwood, Edgerton, Almondbury, Gawthorpe Green (6 in November), Hopton and Bretton.

Cuckoo

First at Longley on April 25th, last at Blackmoorfoot on August 24th otherwise noted from 11 localities with 4 at Digley on May 8th.

Barn Owl

Heard and seen on several dates during August at New Mill and one seen at Longwood on September 28th.

Little Owl

Well distributed throughout the area with evidence of breeding from Digley, Grimescar, Lindley Moor and Shepley.

Tawny Owl

Successful breeding in 3 localities and reported from 5 other districts.

Short-eared Owl

On November 18th one was seen over farmland at Blackmoorfoot being mobbed by Gulls (C.D.)

Swift

First at Bretton on May 6th, last at Blackmoorfoot on August 20th. Breeding on mills in several districts.

Kingfisher

One by R. Colne at Dalton on April 25th. Seen at Bretton on August 23rd, October 11th (2) and November 21st.

Green Woodpecker

Recorded from Bretton, Brockholes, Dean Wood, New Mill, Shepley and Spring Wood.

Great Spotted Woodpecker

Few records sent in. Reported in 7 localities only with breeding in 2 of these.

Skylark

Common resident. Southerly cold weather movement noted in early February.

Swallow

First at Waterloo and Blackmoorfoot on April 17th and last from Holme on October 10th. Breeding commonly throughout the district. About 150 at Grimescar on October 3rd. Partial albino near Meltham on September 10th.

House Martin

First on April 19th at Bretton and the last at Thongsbridge on November 13th. 100+ at Ingbirchworth on August 19th. Continuing to do well with many breeding records from built up areas.

Sand Martin

Two at Elland on April 17th to one at Blackmoorfoot on September 17th were the first and last records. Over 20 were at Ingbirchworth on August 15th. Breeding at Bretton.

Carrion Crow

Well distributed and breeding throughout the area.

Rook

Common resident.

Jackdaw

Common resident.

Magpie

Common resident. 80+ roosting at Blackmoorfoot in February.

Jay

Breeding in the area and reported from 7 localities with up to 10 at Bretton on May 10th.

Great Tit

Common resident.

Blue Tit

Common resident.

Coal Tit

Common resident in suitable habitats.

Marsh Tit

One at Bretton on March 1st.

Willow Tit

Breeding at Bretton and Lockwood also reported from Beaumont Park, Middlestown, New Mill, Royd Moor and Stockmoor Common.

Long-tailed Tit

Nest with young in Dean Wood, also reported from Beaumont Park, Bretton, Gunthwaite and Holmbridge.

Tree Creeper

Breeding in the area and reported from Beaumont Park, Bretton, Buttermb Wood, Dean Wood, Edgerton, Grimescar, Holmbridge, Holywell Brook and Riding Wood.

Wren

Common resident.

Dipper

Not as well reported as in 1969 but noted during the breeding season at Bilberry, Holywell Brook and Toby Wood (Denby Dale) with some winter records.

Mistle Thrush

Well distributed resident. Flock of about 30 at Digley June-July.

Fieldfare

In spring about 350 were at Lower Denby on March 31st and 300+ at Dean Wood on April 15th and the last record was at Colne Bridge on April 24th. The first autumn record was of 12 birds at Blackmoorfoot on October 16th. Large flocks were reported from 3 areas moving westwards between October 27th and November 5th when c.800 passed over Lindley Moor between 17-00 hrs. and 18-00 hrs., and c.300 passed S. over Bradley on November 8th.

Song Thrush

Common resident.

Redwing

Few spring records except from Bretton and Grimescar (50+ March 27th) where the last was seen on April 16th. The first autumn record was from the I.C.I. Leeds Road on October 6th (14) and birds were heard on nights following this in several localities. Numbers were seen moving west as Fieldfare but only in parties of 20-50. 70 were at Bretton on November 1st.

Ring Ouzel

Reported from breeding areas at Buckstones and Digley (1st on March 26th), where 2 pairs were present, and Wessenden.

Blackbird

Common resident.

Wheatear

First record from Digley on March 24th (1 male) last at Ingbirchworth on October 18th. Breeding in moorland areas.

Stonechat

One male on Lindley Moor on October 18th.

Whinchat

First record from Fartown on May 3rd, last record one immature near Royd Moor reservoir on September 20th. Breeding evidence from Buckstones, Crosland Hill, Dean Head and Digley.

Redstart

First at Grimescar on April 23rd and last from Digley on September 11th. Breeding proof from 3 localities. Well distributed but not common.

Robin

Common resident.

Grasshopper Warbler

Males heard in song at Bretton on 8 dates between May 3rd and July 6th with at least 2 on May 6th. Also heard several times at Gawthorpe Green up to August 14th.

Sedge Warbler

Singles at Bretton May 3rd, 10th, July 12th and at Slaithwaite August 9th and Fartown on August 28th.

Blackcap

First record one male at Bretton on April 26th, last an isolated

cont'd....

Blackcap - cont'd.

record of one female at Grosland Moor on December 20th. Fairly well distributed with breeding proof from Beaumont Park, Bretton and Dungeon Wood.

Garden Warbler

Recorded at Bretton from May 10th - September 23rd where breeding again occurred and was also reported breeding along the railway cutting near Beaumont Park.

Whitethroat

First and last records from Bretton April 26th - August 30th where the presence of 5 males regularly in the area west of the upper lake suggests a partial recovery after the 1969 decline. Records sent in from 7 other localities indicate a considerable recovery, but this species still did not appear to be as common as in 1968.

Willow Warbler

Breeding commonly throughout the area. The first sighting being at Bradley on April 15th and the last at Digley on September 17th.

Chiffchaff

First record from Deffer Wood on April 5th and last record from Bretton on September 23rd where up to 3 males were heard regularly through the breeding season. Also present at Beaumont Park (May-July), New Mill and Honley.

Wood Warbler

Records from Grimescar May 11th and Digley June 22nd-28th of singing males.

Goldcrest

Records from 9 localities outside the breeding season and also one in song at Bretton on June 21st.

Spotted Flycatcher

First record from Bretton on May 23rd and the last 2 birds at Lockwood on September 23rd. Definite breeding records for 5 localities.

Pied Flycatcher

One female or juvenile at Grimescar Wood on August 23rd.

Dunnock

Common resident.

Meadow Pipit

Common resident. Pre season roost of over 100 in March at Lindley Moor and post season gathering of c.100 at Digley in September.

Tree Pipit

First record from Grimescar on April 23rd. Present in breeding season in 3 localities. Probably more in the area than records indicate.

Pied Wagtail

Common resident. Waterloo roost reached 183 on October 6th. Blackmoorfoot maximum 25-30 on September 17th. Continental sub species (*Motacilla a.alba*) at Bretton on May 25th.

Grey Wagtail

Breeding in the area. Recorded in 6 localities.

Yellow Wagtail

First record from Bretton on April 19th and the last from Dalton and Blackmoorfoot on September 19th. Breeds in the district.

Waxwing

During February singles were seen at Lindley Moor on the 1st and 28th, 3 were at Dalton on the 28th and 2 at Honley for 2 weeks. The first signs of the autumn invasion came from Crosland Moor, 6 being seen on October 30th and a few were seen in early November at Hanson Lane, Lockwood.

A brief summary of the records is as follows:-

November	7th	5	South Crosland
"	10th-19th	1-8	Beaumont Park
"	15th	c.20	Lindley Moor
"	17th-year end	up to 20	Fartown/Sheepridge/Bradford Road area.
"	21st	6	Kirkheaton
"	22nd	2	Fixby
"	28th	2	New Mill, 1 Beaumont Park
December	1st	4	Bradley, 3 Dalton, 3 Salendin ^e Nook
"	3rd	2	Skelmanthorpe
"	14th	15	Moldgreen, 3 Dalton
"	19th	6	Longley, 1 Moldgreen
"	20th	5-6	Brockholes, 14 Yateholme, 3 Longley
"	21st	9	Aspley
"	26th	6	Birkby
"	28th	1	Beaumont Park
"	30th	12	Almondbury

The birds were variously reported as feeding on Ash, Cotoneaster, Hawthorn, Mountain Ash, Whitebeam and the birds at Yateholme were preparing to roost in a Sycamore. Those at New Mill were flycatching.

Starling

Common resident.

Greenfinch

Common resident. Blackmoorfoot roost reached over 300 in February.

Goldfinch

Records throughout the year from many districts.

Siskin

Recorded as follows: Bretton, March 29th - 1, October 11th - 3, 18th - 4 and 25th - 4, December 13th - 12, 27th - 11; Beaumont Park, May 2nd - 1; New Mill, August 9th - 1 and Blackmoorfoot November 2nd-8.

Linnet

Common resident.

Twite

Breeding in the Cupwith/Buckstones, Holme/Digley and Deer Hill districts. Few records received.

Redpoll

Widely reported with flocks of about 30 at Emroyd Common (Middlestown) on February 18th and Lindley Moor on October 15th with records from 4 localities in the breeding season.

Bullfinch

Records from 10 localities with breeding proof in 4 of these.

Chaffinch

Common resident. Autumn build up reached at least 200 with Bramblings.

Brambling

Five widely separated records of single birds February/March. First autumn record at Bretton on October 25th with 60+ on November 1st and 30 still present on December 27th.

Yellowhammer

Breeding throughout the district.

Corn Bunting

Few records sent in although there is no reason to suppose any change of status. Known to be breeding near Outlane, Crosland Hill, Emley and Ingbirchworth.

Reed Bunting

Breeding records from Bilberry, Bradley, Bretton and Buckstones with probable breeding in other localities.

House Sparrow

Common resident.

Tree Sparrow

Resident and common in certain wooded areas. 100+ at Liley Wood, Hopton on April 26th.

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