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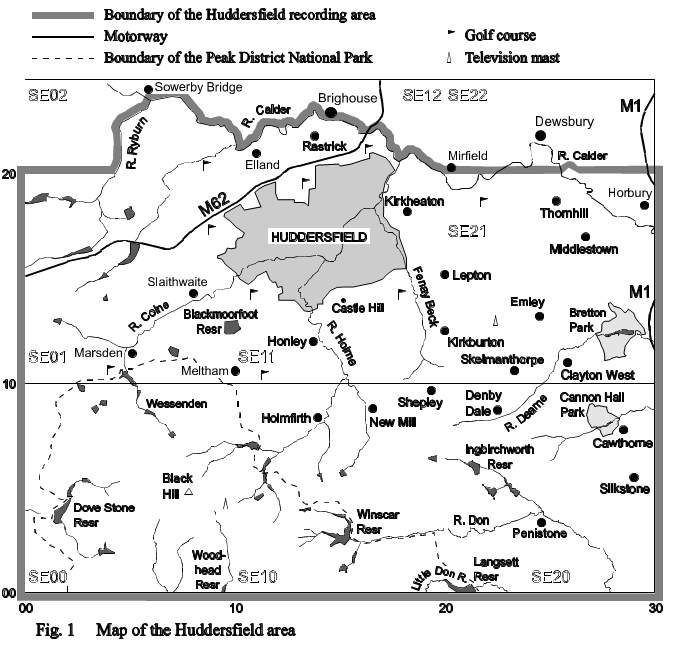
#### Birds in Huddersfield

**2020**



**HUDDERSFIELD RECORDING AREA**

The bird recording area covered by the Club comprises Ordnance Survey ten-kilometre squares SE 00, 01, 10, 11, 20 and 21, together with those parts of SE 02 and SE12 south of the Rivers Ryburn and Calder, plus Elland Gravel Pits and Dewsbury Sewage Works.

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#### Birds in Huddersfield

**2020**

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**Huddersfield Birdwatchers’ Club**

**Registered charity no 1098296**

***Birds in Huddersfield 2020*** is a publication of Huddersfield Birdwatchers’ Club and the latest in an unbroken series of annual reports produced by the Club since our formation in 1966. It is based upon records of bird sightings submitted and surveys undertaken over the year by Club members and other volunteer birdwatchers.

Cover artwork: **Magpie** **(Stuart Brocklehurst)**.

Stuart Brocklehurst is a wildlife artist and printmaker and been providing the artwork for our covers for over 30 years.You can see more of his work on his social media sites:

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Rear cover photograph: **Bearded Vulture (Trevor Doherty)**

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ISSN 0962-5925

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**PRESIDENT’S REPORT**

2020 was progressing very well and we were all looking forward to the returning summer migrants then, in late March, the world changed, as did the lives of everybody. Covid-19 was (and still is) rampaging around the world and the earliest attempts to stem the flow involved ‘Lockdown’. This not only meant that we were limited in our movements, but communications with friends and family were also restricted, as were indoor assemblages. The pandemic had a terrible effect on the lives of everybody: losing loved ones, not seeing family, not getting out for months, etc. The Club, due to restrictions imposed to overcome the pandemic, had to cancel patch outings and also the remaining indoor meetings for the 2019/2020 season. As a consequence, the Committee decided to waive subscriptions for the 2020/21 season.

The Club would not ‘lie down and die’ however and, thanks to investigations by Alf King, Chris Abell and Trevor Doherty, we decided on a programme of Zoom meetings. The first was our AGM in November which attracted some 24 members. As we always discuss recent sightings at indoor meetings, it was thought that a Zoom meeting to cover this topic, and any other bird related topic for that matter, would be an advantage to members – again 24 members attended (not the same 24). The next meeting, organized by Trevor Doherty, was a Christmas Quiz. Some 19 members were educated and entertained by Trevor’s efforts and the meeting was well received by those present. It was becoming obvious that, under the present circumstances, virtual meetings via Zoom were the only way forward.

One of the main objectives of the Club has always been to study and record the wild birds of the area and to publish an annual report. Since the Club’s inception in 1966 this has been achieved, but the situation during 2020 meant that we could not fully meet this objective. However, even though breeding season data was limited because of the Covid-19 restrictions in place at the time, it turned out that some members had managed to find new local patches and supplied valuable records from previously unrecorded areas. I personally found a site within 200 metres of my home which held several warbler species and, more importantly, an unknown House Martin colony. From the records gathered it appears that the only areas which received the usual extensive coverage were Wards End Farm and Blackmoorfoot Reservoir.

I remember well being invited to become a committee member when, in 1967, Mr. Bisiker said “We need some young blood on the committee – Denton will do”. I have now been a committee member, in various guises, to the present day. I feel, however, that my ‘time has run’, and I will be standing down from official duties at the AGM in 2021. One of the main reasons for this decision is the blasé attitude from a few regarding records for the annual report. As you are all aware, for a good number of years I, and others, have commented, both verbally and in reports, on the number of under recorded species and records which simply state ‘ubiquitous, so not counted’ – the 2020 report is littered with many similar comments. This is not the only problem as several members are ‘cherry picking’ and only sending in records of the scarcer species. As you can appreciate, this is very frustrating for anyone writing the report and means that justice to the species account cannot be fulfilled as the available records do not allow for a correct assessment of the species’ status to be made.

One of the main aims of the Club, as set out in the Constitution, is “To study and record the wild birds of the area and to publish an annual report”. I feel that, although I have always taken great delight in writing the report, that the present circumstances mean that my enjoyment has been greatly diminished and, as I have said on previous occasions ‘Without records it is impossible to do justice to the report’. These annual reports are not only for the benefit of members but are also a vital archival record which will allow future generations to understand the status of birds in the Club area during our watch. These are long standing problems and something that cannot be blamed on the Covid-19 pandemic. Consequently, I feel that I can no longer do justice to the annual report and the 2020 report will, therefore, be my last.

I would like to thank everybody who has assisted with the running of the Club, along with all members who have played their part in the Club’s success. This has been an extremely difficult year for the Club but, with your continued support, the Club can prosper – albeit in a totally different environment.

Mike Denton.

**ABOUT HUDDERSFIELD BIRDWATCHERS’ CLUB**

Huddersfield Birdwatchers’ Club was formed in 1966 and registered as a charity in July of 2003, with the aims of:

1. **Studying and recording the wild birds of the area and publishing an annual report:**

Members and other bird watching supporters are out and about throughout the year observing birds across the area and submitting records for analysis by our Recorder. We now have a wealth of data covering some 54 years, an invaluable source for studying the trends in local bird populations. The Club is the only organization in the area undertaking and publishing this kind of ornithological recording and ***Birds in Huddersfield 2020***is the latest in an unbroken series of annual reports since the Club was formed.

From time to time we also publish more specific, one-off works, including in 2001 an ***Atlas of the Breeding Birds of the Huddersfield Area***, in 2004 ***Birds of Blackmoorfoot Reservoir 1985-2003*** and in 2008 a major work ***The Birds of the Huddersfield Area***, which reviewed the complete history of every species recorded in the area since records began, right up to modern times. In January 2017 we published another major work ***A Natural History of Blackmoorfoot Reservoir, Huddersfield*** by Mike Denton to commemorate our half-centenary in 2016/17. In 2018 we republished as an on-line digital ‘e-book’ ***An Account of the Birds of the Huddersfield District***, first issued by S. L. Mosley in 1915 – this was a landmark book in both local and national ornithology and that we were able to bring it to a wider audience to appreciate its importance. In 2021 we published ***The Birds of Marsden*** by local author and ornithologist Mike Pinder, which features his own excellent illustrations.

We also publish on-line and in our annual report the ***Huddersfield List***, a checklist of all the species of wild birds and additional races that have officially been accepted as having been recorded in the area. This is now updated annually as a ‘tick list’ to enable birders to record their own yearly and lifetime sightings around Huddersfield.

Our publications are to be found in the Huddersfield Library and go to many regional and national ornithological and wildlife conservation bodies.

The majority of the Club archive, including all of our reports since 1966, is available in digital format on our web site for viewing by the public. This is an invaluable source for everyone interested in the history of the birds of the area.

1. **Promoting education of the public about wild birds and their habitats:**

Our lecture and meeting programme runs between September and May each year, at which visiting experts present on a wide range of birding topics, from local to overseas, with some stunning still and video photography. We also have a wealth of birding and photographic expertise within the Club and enjoy presentations from members equally as knowledgeable and fascinating as our visitors.

Each year, we hold a number of local ‘patch outings’ or bird watching walks on which members pass on their knowledge of local sites of particular birding interest.

Our web site [**www.huddersfieldbirdwatchersclub.co.uk**](http://www.huddersfieldbirdwatchersclub.co.uk) contains information about birding in the area, as well as about the Club and our activities. The forum is open to public view and shows the latest local bird sightings posted by members, often with photos, and is a great way of finding out what is around. There is also a Twitter feed **@Hudds\_BWC** through which members and supporters share their birding sightings and experiences.

1. **Supporting research into conservation of wild birds and their habitats:**

Readers will be only too well aware of the threat to many of our wild birds, but if conservation is to be effective, it needs to be based upon hard evidence and research. This is where the Club comes in. We have members with substantial experience in bird observation and surveying and there is also a role for less experienced volunteers.

The Club has played a major role in many bird life surveys of local, regional and national importance, including over 50 for the British Trust for Ornithology (BTO), RSPB, National Trust, Natural England, Peak District National Park, Kirklees Metropolitan Council and The Friends of Beaumont Park. We also advise Kirklees Council on bird life issues and provide data in connection with planning applications.

We aim to undertake a survey programme of some type every year of a part of the Club area or of a particular species.

In 2014/15 we launched a nest box scheme, working with another local charity the Bridgewood Trust that provides support for adults with learning difficulties and which built the boxes at their centre in Edgerton, providing occupational work for people in their care. Boxes were provided free of charge to several local woodlands, targeting threatened species such as Pied and Spotted Flycatchers, as well as more common species.

# Our work is undertaken entirely by un-paid volunteers and we rely entirely upon the generosity of members and upon voluntary donations to continue our work.

Members of the public are welcome to all of our meetings and patch outings, free of charge (voluntary donation), and we try to provide something for birdwatchers of all tastes and experience. It is a great way to learn about birds and to meet fellow birders. So, whether old hand or beginner, why not come along and join us? Members receive a free copy of our Birds in Huddersfield annual report. Simply contact any member of the Committee - see page 154 or visit our website for more information.

[**www.huddersfieldbirdwatchersclub.co.uk**](http://www.huddersfieldbirdwatchersclub.co.uk)



**@Hudds\_BWC**

**2020: THE BIRDING YEAR**

The year could be considered a success considering the difficulties encountered, particularly in covering our area as diligently as we might do in more normal circumstances. In view of this, as can be seen below, many sightings are skewed towards the places that have been easiest to cover. Add to that the fact that water levels were not as low as we would like at most locations so wader species were low. We still managed to record 164 species with the possibility of a ‘special one’ being added later. Some other unexpected ones turned up too and thanks must go to all our observers for sticking at it against the odds. We are constantly warned by our Meteorologists that we must expect Windier, Warmer and Wetter and this year was a perfect example of that. Another contributory factor now is the nocturnal recording which is turning up some nice surprises and confirming what we thought we may have been missing previously. Here’s to the future.

**JANUARY**

Mild conditions on brisk SW winds opened the New Year with the 1st seeing plenty of wildfowl, with **Wigeon** at six locations, two **Shovelers** at Ingbirchworth, a **Pochard** at Blackmoorfoot, just a scattering of **Goldeneye** and 14 **Shelduck** at Blackmoorfoot. Langsettheld the month’s maximum of 4,100 **Black-headed Gulls**, up to six **Little Grebe** were on Ingbirchworthon several dates during the month and single **Woodcocks** visited Deer Hill and Carlecotes Ponds. A **Chiffchaff**, the only one of the month, visited Silkstone SWand ten **Lesser Redpoll** at Carlecotes Pondswas the highest count of the month. Another maximum was 12 **Linnets** at Rastrick on 3rd the same day as a **Yellowhammer** was feeding with **Fieldfares** at Wards End, where a **Merlin** was also seen, the first of four during the month and the **Water Pipit** from the previous year was still around. Two **White-fronted Geese** put in an appearance atBroadstone Reson 5th with high counts of 300+ **Lapwing** and 63 **Golden Plover** at Whitley Common on 6th. Blackmoorfoot hosted a **Caspian Gull** on five dates and one or two **Peregrines** were noted at locations along the Colne Valleywith the first **Hen Harrier** seen too and Broadstone Res held the highest counts of the month of both **Chaffinch** and **Bullfinch**, with 40 and eight respectively. Then with freezing temperatures there was nothing of note other than on the River Calder at Mirfield where 20+ **Goosander** were present throughout. Milder conditions on 11th only led to ‘Storm Brendon’ on 13th with deluges and continuing gales to 16th. This date, however, did bring two **Green Sandpipers** to Bretton Park and counts of 19 and 23 **Cormorants** at Saville Town and Scout Dyke Res respectively. Up to 15 **Common Crossbills** were regulars at Holme Styesand 20 each of **Goldfinch** and **Siskin** were present at Meal Hill Estatewith yet more maxima being the 40 **Reed Bunting** at Wards End,where 28 **Twite** put in a brief appearance too,and 15 **Long-tailed Tits** visited Ingbirchworth. There was then a period of calmer weather when four **Shovelers** visited Blackmoorfooton 20th with 35+ **Blue Tits** at Ingbirchworththe day after, and on 22nd over 1,000 **Pink-footed Geese** passed over as did a few **Whooper Swans**. Gunthwaite Dam held 17 **Teal** on 25th and 320 **Lapwing** were feeding at Ringstone Edge. The first snowfalls, though brief, came on 28th and the final three days again saw SW gales and heavy rain bringing just 150 **Fieldfares** to Whitley Commonon 29th a low maximum of 50 **Redwings** to Ingbirchworth on the following day with 20+ **Brambling** at Wards Endon 30th. On the final day of a rather average month a male and female **Shoveler** visited Deer Hill.

**FEBRUARY**

The monthstarted with the same weather conditions over the first six days and brought the first **Skylark** of the year and a **Yellow-legged Gull** to Blackmoorfoot on 1st with another at Whitley Common on 3rd. The same day a **Hen Harrier** was at Wards End and others were also seen at Winscarand Whitley Common. Temperatures began to fall on the 6th as a **Mediterranean Gull** visited Blackmoorfoot andthe first **Curlew** appeared at Broadstonewhere 1,000 **Fieldfare** were seen feeding. The following day, with conditions just above freezing, the first **Oystercatcher** were reported from Broadstone and two single **Merlin** were seen around Marsden. We were then hit by ‘Storm Chiara’ bringing extensive flooding countrywide. The effects of this lasted until 12th with low temperatures and snow showers and the only **Red Kite** of the month showed at Bretton and in a winter of low numbers, 60 **Redwings** were at Broadstone.This same location saw 18 **Skylarks** on 18th and a **Redshank** flew N at Wards End, but this was after more gales and flooding caused by ‘Storm Dennis’ when hardly surprising, not much was seen. Back to Whitley Commonon 23rd with 2,500 **Starling** present and 40+ **Reed Bunting** were feeding in the garden at Wards End.Snow and more wintery temperatures broke the monotony of the last few days and brought a flurry of records, 40 **Wigeon** at Meal Hill Lake, 10 **Pochard** to Bretton and then on 27th more wildfowl with seven **Goldeneye** on the River Calder at Saville Townand 18 **Shovelers** and 42 **Teal** at nearby Dewsbury SWwhere 32 **Pied Wagtails** were also seen.Then to another location but the same date and the first **Little Egret** of the year at Bretton Park, 115 **Golden Plover** at Snape Res, 250 **Fieldfare** at Broadstone and the long staying **Water Pipit** finally left Wards End. Then as rain and SW gales arrived to see out a very wet month some 32 **Whooper Swans** were at Scout Dykeand again Broadstone saw a **Mediterranean Gull** with **Curlew** and **Oystercatcher** numbers up to 35 and 14 respectively.

**MARCH**

The heavy rain continued and it was quiet until 3rd when temperatures, just above zero, and snow showers brought the first of the month’s tem **Red Kite** records and a **Woodcock** was seen at Blackmoorfoot. The following day no less than 150 **Curlews** were in the Millhouse Greenarea and single **Redshanks** visited Redbrook Resand Blackmoorfoot Res. The first arriving **Chiffchaff** was at Dewsbury SWon 6th and the first of four **Hen Harrier** sightings came from the Marsden Moor area. There were quite a few records of six **Buzzards** together over this period which was probably a good indication of passage. Then back once again to a period of heavy rain on strong SW winds and 24 **Teal** sheltered on Gunthwaite Damon 7th with a shortage of sightings until 45 **Wigeon** were doing the same onBroadstone Reson 13th. The following day saw 300 **Fieldfare** on Ingbirchworth Moor, 12 **Gadwall** at Dewsbury SWand another good count from Whitley Common, this time 40 **Stock Doves**. Welcome thoughts of things to come came on 15th with the first **Wheatear**, again at Whitley Common and another first, a **Blackcap** at Dean House Valleythe day after when ten **Skylarks** were at Crosland Heathand a nice female **Greater Scaup** was on Bretton Lake. A **Marsh Harrier** flew W over Marsden Mooron 18th. A spell of high pressure from the Continent then began and there was nothing of note until the 21st when 100 **Whooper Swans** flew NW over Fixbyand 60 went N past Wards End with the first **Sand Martin** of the ear at Winscar Res. Then as the cold NE wind persisted to the month end the only things of note were a **Black Redstart** at Hardenon 23rd, the first **Ring Ouzels** of the year at Wards Endand the first **Short-eared Owl** for years at Blackmoorfoot the following day. On 25th a total of 20 singing **Chiffchaffs** were at Thurstonland Bank, two **Green Sandpipers** at Horbury Strands/Wykeand a **White Wagtail** at Deer Hill Res. As things ground to a halt some 60 **Meadow Pipits** were counted at Langsettand on 28th a flock of 100 **Golden Plover** were in the Melthamarea.

**APRIL**

The first day ofthe monthbrought milder weather and two late **Pink-footed Geese** moving N, a nice **Water Rail** at Gunthwaite Dam and interestingly both **Wigeon** and **Common Scoter** were recorded passing over Thongsbridge during the night. A good number of **Wheatear** put in an appearance, including the odd Greenland race. There was nothing then until 4th when the first **Osprey** of the year passed over Ringstone Edge and a **Peregrine** was spotted as it flew W over Cowcliffe. More new arrivals occurred on 5th with **Willow Warbler** at Thurstonland Bank and **Swallows** from three locations. On this same date **Redwings** were recorded, in small numbers, from three places and were the last of what had been a poor year for them. The 7th saw 24 **Teal** still at Gunthwaite Damand at Thurstonland Bank, apart from ten **Chiffchaff**,the first **Tree Pipit** of the year flew N. Much higher temperatures had set in for the moment with up to 17o C and mainly SW winds but nine **Whooper Swans** were still on Ingbirchworth Reson 9th, two **Shelduck** were at Dewsbury SW and a **Green Sandpiper** was at Horbury Strands/Wyke.The first **House Martins** arrived on 11th, but it was to be a further 11 days before the next.There was very little then until 14th with much cooler Easterly winds and the first **Whitethroat** at Horbury Strands/Wyke,a **Red kite** flew N over Rastrick on the following day and the 16th then brought more new arrivals in the form of **Common Sandpiper** to Boshaw Whamsand **Whinchats** to Wards End and Thurstonland. There were also four welcome **Merlin** sightings at four different locations over the next few days. It had been a poor start for **Swallows** but 50 were counted at Meltham Mills SWon 17th and 29 **Twite** made a brief appearance at Wards Endon 18th. High pressure persisted, the first **Yellow Wagtail** visited Dewsbury SW where two more quickly followed, the first **Little Ringed Plover** was at Horbury Strands/Wykeand the year’s only **Arctic Terns**, three flying high to the E over Cheesegate Nab all came on the 20th, a busy day, as then the first **Grasshopper Warbler** was recorded at Broadstone Heath, an **Osprey** flew N over Ladywood Lakes,and a **Little Egret** was present at Horbury Strands/Wyke. New arrivals kept coming with a **Hobby** S at Thurstonland Bankon 21st, then on 22nd a **Lesser Whitethroat** at Wards End**, Garden Warbler** at Almondbury and **Swift** at Dewsbury SW. The following day West Nabsaw the first **Cuckoo** and more quickly followed at other locations and a **Whimbrel** flew NE over Healey Mills/Kerry’s NR.Another ‘flyover’ on 24th was a **Marsh Harrier** which flew SE at Ingbirchworth Res and to a no doubt very happy observer a **Red Kite** mobbed a **White-tailed Eagle** at Ramsden Clough, though not quite so impressive a **White Wagtail** visited the Wards End area, and 25 **Wheatears** were in the Digley Valley. Mainly wet SW winds then continued for the remainder of the month, but the first **Reed Warbler** was at Dewsbury SW on 25th and the last **Fieldfares** of the yearflew NE over Skelmanthorpeon 28th. The last two days brought a **Hen Harrier** over Crosland Hill the first **Sedge Warblers** to Healey Mills/Kerry’s NR, as well as another **Reed Warbler** with yet another at Horbury Bridgeand 25 **Wheatears** at Marsden.

**MAY**

The first ten days were calm and mild ending with temperatures in the low 20s with no rain. The first day saw 200 **House Martins** at Dewsbury SW another **Dunlin** at Deer Hill Res and two raptors in the form of a **Marsh Harrier** at Scout Dyke Resand another **Red Kite** over Penistone. A **Sedge Warbler** was singing at Broadstone Reson 3rd where two **Whimbrel** remained until 8th and 20 **Blackcap** were heard at Royd Moor at which location the one and only **Quail** of the year was singing on the following day. On 5th an **Osprey** was seen over Well House, Penistoneand the following day saw the first **Spotted Flycatcher** of the year at Wards End and first the **Redstarts** were at both Cliff Woodand Royd Moor Resand a **Yellow Wagtail** was seen passing over Shepley.Another **Osprey**, this time flying N over Ingbirchworth Res on 7th when two **Tree Pipits** were at Holme Styes. Quite a few **Lesser Whitethroat** were heard singing at this time whilst a passing **Whimbrel** was recorded overnight at Thongsbridge on 9th. At least ten **Common Sandpiper** were around Langsett Res on 10th when there was a very welcome visitor to Ingbirchworth Res, a **Kittiwake**. There then was a spell of cold Northerly winds, even a touch of frost. Four **Dunlin** were at Wessenden Head Res, a **Yellow Wagtail** visited Horbury Strands/Wyke on 12th and there was a good number of **Cuckoo** sightings too. Dewsbury SW held a **Green Sandpiper**, two **Little Ringed Plover** showed at Deanhead Res and two **Reed Warblers** were at Healey Mills/Kerry’s NR, all on 13th. The ‘last’ firsts, were two very welcome singing **Pied Flycatchers** in Cliff Wood on 14th and the following day a **Yellow Wagtail** was at Wards End. By the 17th the wind had returned to SW and temperatures started to increase. Marsden provided 18 singing **Blackcaps**, a **Redshank** visited Whitley Common on 19th and with temperatures reaching 23o C by 20th a **Red Kite** was seen at Bullcliff Wood and two **Ringed Plovers** stayed at Winscar Res until 22nd. Two **Little Egret** were found at Horbury Strands/Wyke on 21st but with gales over the next two days little was found until 25th when a **Ringed Plover** wasat Ringstone Edge. At this time at least eight male **Nightjars** were found to be holding territories and with the final five days of calm, with temperatures up to 26o C, a rush of sightings ensued. First a **Hen Harrier** at Carlecotes on 27th and two **Woodcock** at Ramsden Res the following day with the 29th seeing a **Merlin**,a fine **Mediterranean Gull** at Ingbirchworth, and two **Little Ringed Plovers** at Blackmoorfoot. Another **Merlin** appeared, this time at West Nab and another **Little Egret** flew up the River Calder at Earlsheaton, both on 30th. The final day brought more **Red Kites**,with singlesover Honley Wood and Wards End.

**JUNE**

On 4th a party of four **Dunlin** were feeding at Wessenden Head Res and 450 **Swift** were hawking insects over Dewsbury SW the following day. Another **Red Kite** put in an appearance at Wards End on 10th and there were a further seven scattered records during the month. How long before it makes our list of breeders? A single **Common Scoter** was on Broadstone Res on 14th. Things are normally pretty quiet at this time of year and though circumstances this time around didn’t perhaps make accuracy as precise as it normally would be our thoughts always turn to our rarer breeders. It was not a good year for **Lesser Spotted Woodpecker**, not a single record, nor **Wood Warbler**, just one August record, with all **Tree Pipit** sightings, plenty though they were, being of overflying individuals. **Twite** is a species that hasn’t appeared on these pages before but as everyone knows, numbers in our area are dwindling at a rate of knots with no concrete evidence of breeding. Not much change for **Sedge** and **Reed** **Warblers**, still holding on, though our area is not blessed with a lot of ideal habitat. **Garden Warbler** faired a bit better, with records from 22 locations, and confirmed breeding proved at two of these. Of the other warblers, there was a marked decrease in **Grasshopper Warbler** numbers, only seven pairs of **Whitethroat** were confirmed breeding, but **Lesser Whitethroat** wasseen at nine locations, with breeding possible at two. **Spotted Flycatcher** was a little down on previous years but **Pied Flycatcher** was holding its own with two breeding pairs. Both **Whinchat** and **Redstart** had only one confirmed breeding record as opposed to two last year and, as last year, **Ring Ouzel** bred at one location, but at a different location this time. **Little Ringed Plover** was only suspected of breeding at one site, but they were seen at a further nine, though they were open to a lot of disturbance and can move around a lot. Finally, **Yellowhammer** seem not to be holding as many territories as of late, and only six pairs were thought to have bred, we will have to see what next year brings. On a brighter note, **House Sparrows**,after some lean years, look to be increasing slightly but are probably being under recorded. **Tree Sparrows**, if the records are to be believed, arenot doing quite so well. The month ended on a high when an adult **Rose-coloured Starling** was photographed in a Hoylandswaine garden between 26th and 28th, the second record in the Club area following the first more than 160 years ago.

**JULY**

The first two weeks were generally warm and showery with moderate wind from the Westerly quarter. The 2nd brought a **Little Egret** which departed E from Ringstone Edge and two reeling **Grasshopper Warblers** in Meltham with, on 4th, no less than two **Yellow-legged Gulls** at Lower Maythorn and the following day a **Hobby** was seen at Outlane. There was nothing much of note until 7th when a **Whimbrel** flew W over Blackmoorfoot and 13 **Crossbill** flew over Harden. On 8th the first returning **Wheatears** began to appear and a **Ringed Plover** visited Horbury Strands/Wyke. Another **Hobby**, this time W over Crosland Moor was noted on 9th and there was a rush of sightings the following day. **Common Scoters** appeared, with a single at Boshaw Whams, two at Winscar and no less than 28 at Blackmoorfoot where 50+ **Sand Martin** were also counted and a **Red Kite**, the first of five records this month, flew W over Marsden Moor as did a **Hobby** on 12th. From this date until 15th an adult **Mediterranean Gull** stayed at Ringstone Edge and up to 32 **House Sparrows** were counted at Netherthong. There was nothing much then until 17th when 30 **Mistle Thrush** were at Wards End and the following day produced a total of 621 **Black-headed Gulls** moving W past the same location and a single **Merlin** was seen at both Holmfirth and Hepworth. Then came a short spell of cooler conditions as another **Little Egret** passed through, this time at Blackmoorfoot on 20th. Then yet another **Red Kite**, this timeflying S over Broadstone Heath and at Ingbirchworth on 23rd two **Whimbrel** appeared along with 60+ **House Martin**, a good count this year. Another good count concerned the 100 **Swift** over Shepley on 24th, the same day that a **Hobby** flew W, and the last **Cuckoo** visited the garden at Wards End Farm. Then, as more rain and the occasional storm arrived, a **Greenshank** departed E from Ingbirchworth and as temperatures reached 30o C a **Marsh Harrier** flew W over Buckstones Edge, another **Little Egret** flew W at Blackmoorfoot and we said goodbye to the last **Little Ringed Plover** of the year at the same location.

**AUGUST**

The first week was dominated by SW winds with some rain. On 2nd Langsett saw the July **Yellow-legged Gull** in the roost again and the day after an **Osprey** passed W at Wards End Farm where later in the day a juvenile **Black Redstart** showed well. The 6th brought a few records, namely a **Garden Warbler** at Blackmoorfoot, a **Grasshopper Warbler** at Deanhead Res, 16 **Mistle Thrushes** at Brow Grains, a **Hobby** at Holme Styes and another at Shepley, with yet another there on 7th. This date saw temperatures up into the 20s and brought 40+ **Swift** high over Thongsbridge and a **Red Kite** at Ramsden Clough. Two **Red Kite** very seen at Blackmoorfoot on 8th, the same day that a single flew over Shepley. A total of eight locations held **Redstart** over this period as a period of high pressure and high temperatures set in. A **Green Sandpiper** visitedLangsett,and four **Spotted Flycatchers** were at Wards Endon 10th as was a **Lesser Whitethroat** and **Garden Warbler** the following day and Blackmoorfoot produced a **Common Scoter**. Then after an overnight storm along with temperatures in the mid-20s a **Whimbrel** flew over Deanhead Res, the one and only **Wood Warbler** of the year was found at Scammonden Water along with four **Spotted Flycatchers**, whilst seven **Teal** were on Blackmoorfoot. It was then quiet until an **Osprey** passed over Fixby on 15th and seven **Whinchat** were around Wards End Farm on 18th. A total of 12 **Kestrels** were at Harden Quarries on 19th with 15 the following day. The 19th also produced an impressive total of 23 **Tree Pipits** migrating over Harden Quarries on 19th, with others recorded at another seven other locations during the month and even nocturnally at Isle of Skye Quarries. Another **Lesser Whitethroat** was at Denby Delph on 22nd, a charm of 180 **Goldfinch** were at Thurstonland and in a poor year for **House Martin** a flock of 50 wereat Ingbirchworth the following day. Two **Little Egrets** departed from Ringstone Edge, and another was present at Horbury Strand/Wyke on 24th. After storm ‘Francis’ had passed through on 25th, two **Hobby** were seen at Cheesegate Nab and two **Common Sandpipers** at Boshaw Whams the following day, then on 27th only the second **Kittiwake** of the year was seen at Broadstone Res. Single **Yellow Wagtails** flew over Ingbirchworth on 26th and 27th with two over Harden Quarries on the latter mentioned date, with yet another two at Deanhead Res on 30th. Welcome sightings of **Willow Tits** at Langsett Banks and Windleden Edge ended an eventful month.

**SEPTEMBER**

With some showers and mild conditions on mainly light SW winds, which lasted the best part of two weeks, the month got off to a good start. The last **Grasshopper Warbler** of the year was seen at Deanhead Res on 1st with the following day bringing 11 **Wigeon** to Blackmoorfoot and a **Great White Egret** to Ingbirchworth with a good count of 100 **Linnet** there also. A few **Merlin** were now being noticed and a good build-up of **Pied Wagtails**, with up to 100, started at Meltham SW and Marsden Cricket Field also saw regular numbers with 41 on 4th the same day as the last **Sedge Warbler** was at Deanhead Res. A **Yellow-legged Gull** roosted again on Langsett, **Lapwing** numbers had grown to 100 and three **Ringed Plovers** flew W at Blackmoorfoot with the last **House Martins** passing S over Harden Quarries, all on 5th. Two raptors were noted the following day, an **Osprey** Sover Harden and a **Hen Harrier** at Snailsden. On 7th the first **Pink-footed Geese** arrived, with 100 flying NE over Meltham and 120 E over Skelmanthorpe. Also on this date, two **Shoveler** andfour **Gadwall** were at Bretton Park,a **Yellow-legged Gull** was found feeding close to Ingbirchworth Res and **Teal** were becoming more widely distributed. The following day saw more **Common Scoter** at Blackmoorfoot as eight departed E and on 9th we said goodbye to two more summer visitors with **Whitethroat** and **Tree Pipit** at Broadstone Res and two waders in the shape of a **Green Sandpiper** at Dewsbury SW and **Redshank** at Winscar Res the day after. The last **Hobby** of the year flew over Wards End on 18th and six **Goosanders** were on March Haigh. The weather then changed and we found ourselves in a period of high pressure drifting from the Continent and the first two days saw temperatures reaching 25o C. Three **Whimbrel** flew SW over Marsden Moor and a lone **Curlew** visited Winscar Res on 14th with the following day producing a **Black Redstart** and the last **Willow Warbler** of the year atWards End,whilst the final **Swifts** were seen flying S at Isle of Skye Quarries. A **Redstart** at Ingbirchworth Res on 16th was the latest record for the year, as was a **Sand Martin** whichpassed Wards End and a **Whinchat** at Deer Hill Res. A single **Redwing** which overflewHarden Quarries on 17th was rather early. On this date a series of passing **Coal Tit** records from our visible migration sites began, resulting in over 1,000 being counted. Nice records continued the following day with especially two **Spoonbills** flying N at Featherbed Moss and in a poor wader year a welcome **Ruff** at Ringstone Edge whilst 12 **Kestrels** were feeding in the head of the Colne Valley. Apart from 50 **Twite** in the Wards End area there was little of note until 21st when a **Little Egret** visited Blackmoorfoot and two more ‘lasts’, a **Garden Warbler** and two **Spotted Flycatchers** at Wards End. No less than four **Yellow Wagtails** were found at Boshaw Whams and 320 **Lapwings** appearedat Ringstone Edge on 23rd. The following day brought a nice ‘cream-crown’ **Marsh Harrier** which flew W over Meltham Cop and up to 14 **Stonechat** werecounted above Marsden. The final **Common Sandpiper** of the year was at Ringstone Edge on 25th and the following day a **Hen Harrier** was around Wessenden Head whilst another **Red Kite** flew over Golcar and a **Yellow Wagtail** over Wards End the day after that. The mild conditions continued despite some heavy showers, 18 **Twite** at Marsden on 28th were the last recorded as was an **Osprey** W over Blackmoorfoot on 29th. A **Merlin** over Marsden Moor on the last day brought an eventful month to an end.

**OCTOBER**

Conditions continued in a similar vein for two weeks with the wind and some heavy rain from the northerly quarter. As to be expected there was much action and on 1st three **Pintail** flew W at Pule Hill, up to seven **Little Grebe** were still on Ingbirchworth Res and a **White Wagtail** visited Wards End Farm. At Ringstone Edge two **Greenshank** appeared on 3rd and a **Rock Pipit** whicharrived at Ingbirchworth on the 4th and stayed for four days. The last **House Martins** of the year, eleven, were recorded moving S at Harden Quarries on 5th. The 5th was also a good day for **Pink-footed Geese** movement as at least 2,300 passed over our area, as did 21 **Whooper Swans** at Pule Hill, with a **Hen Harrier** at Ramsden Clough and the only **Red Kite** of the month at Lower Maythorn. A very rare visitor for the area came in the form of a **Marsh Tit** at Scammonden Water on 6th, by which time a fall in **Meadow Pipit** numbers was very noticeable. The following day saw a **Hawfinch** over Harden Quarries, small numbers of **Whooper Swans** were seen moving over the area and up to 15 **Swallows** were still feeding at Blackmoorfoot. The first **Bramblings** arrived at Ingbirchworth Res on 8th where a **Yellow-legged Gull** was also spotted and at Pule Hill the following day 220 **Golden Plover** arrived, and a **Merlin** flew W. There was nothing of note until 11th when a **Little Egret** was present on the River Calder at Ladywood Lakes, with the same date providing some good numbers of **Fieldfares** and **Redwings** from the visible migration watchpoints, with one of these, Harden Quarries seeing 22 **Common Crossbills** over the following day. At Ringstone Edge on 14th a flock of 14 **Barnacle Geese** was present and the last **Willow Warbler** of the year was seen in the garden at Wards End on 15th. Yet another **Little Egret** was found, this time again at Blackmoorfoot on 17th and by 18th **Lapwing** numbers at Broadstone had reached 400. On this same date a distant **Hen Harrier** flew W and a **Hawfinch** SE at Harden Quarries, and a **Merlin** was in the Brow Grains area, whilst the following day saw another moving quickly low S over Saddleworth Moor. What may have been an overwintering **Blackcap** was taking a bath in a Thongsbridge garden on 20th. The wind swung SW for the remainder of the month, sometimes approaching gale force, with rain in various quantities, at times torrential. It is not surprising then that the last **Wheatear** was seen at Chew Valley and the final **Ring Ouzel** at Wards End on 21st. This date also saw another **Hawfinch** over, this time flying SW at Pule Hill. Also on this date, the first of two **Merlin** were seen at Blackmoorfoot with one at Pule Hill and the following day another visited Ingbirchworth Res. By this time there was less activity though in Meltham there was a roost of 50 **House Sparrows** and the Sewage Works held up to 100 **Pied Wagtails**. However, a **Rock Pipit** flew low W, calling at Ringstone Edge on 28th, 51 **Wigeon** were on Blackmoorfoot on 30th and the final day saw little but a gale force wind and more rain.

**NOVEMBER**

Much of the same weather conditions prevailed into the start of the month. The first day saw what was probably the first wintering **Chiffchaff** in an Almondbury garden, **Pink-footed Geese** were counted over on a further seven dates and for a change, two **Ring-necked Parakeets** were discovered at Highburton on 3rd as over 1,000 **Chaffinch** were counted passing at two of our visible migration watch points. There was a good count of **Fieldfares** over Marsden on 4th the day on which the maximum count of the now common, **Buzzard**, nine no less, was obtained from over Ramsden Clough whilst the Broadstone area held 450 **Lapwing** and 150 **Golden Plover**. Another of the ever-increasing **Little Egret** flew SW at Ingbirchworth on 5th and the following day a **Lapland Bunting** was sound recorded as it flew SW over Harden Quarries during the morning, five **Raven** were seen over Harden Quarries on 7th with the next day brought the highest count of **Bullfinch** (30) in the area for many years. Warm SW winds dominated the following ten days, though the period was not without some showers. The 9th saw four **Gadwall** on Ingbirchworth Res and two **Goldeneye** on Blackmoorfoot in another, now to be expected, year of low numbers. Another good count, again from Thurstonland Bank, this time of 100+ roosting **Magpies** on 10th whilst 25 **Whooper Swans** dropped onto Winscar Res, and another two **Hawfinch** flew SE over Harden quarries. Also, an adult **Caspian Gull** was both roosting on and feeding close to Blackmoorfoot Res during this period. Ten **Whooper Swans** flew E over Wards End on 12th and the only **Red Kite** of the month was in the Winscar area, and a small number of **Stonechats** were still being noted at some of our higher locations. A maximum of 30 **Wigeon** were on Meal Hill Lake on 15th and 117 **Fieldfare** were feeding in the Wards End area the following day as ten **Brambling** and 30 **Linnet** were taking advantage of the seed crop at Broadstone. Another good count on 18th, involving 157 **Carrion Crows** no less, came from Scout Dyke Res. After just one day of a cold N wind normal service was resumed with plenty of **Whooper Swans** putting in an appearance; seven were on Blackmoorfoot Res on 19th, ten were circling over Scout Dyke and a total of 26 flew over Deer Hill on 20th. Then on 23rd, a surprised observer watched an unusually late **Swallow** for some minutes at Horbury Strands/Wyke. There was little else then apart from a **Merlin** over Shepley Cricket Field on 26th and more wildfowl, all at Blackmoorfoot, in the form of two **Pintail** on 28th with 32 **Teal** and six **Pochard** on 30th. An unseasonably mild and wet month came to a close.

**DECEMBER**

A quick change in the weather almost overnight saw temperatures fall. On 2nd eight **Whooper Swans** were at Elland GP and 30 **Wigeon** at Horbury Strands/Wyke. The following day there was a covering of snow on Holme Moss with more to follow at lower altitudes over the next three days. A nice flock of 30 **Tree Sparrows** were counted at Denby Dale and the **Caspian Gull** continued to frequent the Blackmoorfoot area. Rain then took over on light SW winds and on 7th the only **Red Kites** of the month were seen, singles at Blackmoorfoot and Ingbirchworth. At this latter mentioned site an adult **Yellow-legged Gull** was again seen and during this period wintering **Woodcock** were found at a number of locations. Not surprisingly this is the month for wildfowl records and on 8th four **Pintail** and ten **Teal** were on Blackmoorfoot Res, a **Pochard** was at Bretton on 10th, and Blackmoorfoot also produced a **Common Scoter**, 11 **Goosander** and two **Shoveler** on 11th. Away from this area there was a maximum of 21 **Tufted Duck** at Royd Moor Res. Other interesting counts during this time concerned a flock of 43 **Goldfinch** which visitedLinthwaite on 9th then on 10th another good ‘un as a **Great Grey Shrike,** albeit much too briefly, was seen at Brow Grains, Meltham. We then had nine days of low pressure and fresh SW winds with higher temperatures and some quite heavy showers along with mist. There were a good number of **Peregrines** visible at various places and 14 **Collared Doves** were counted in a roost at Golcar on 14th with the following day bringing a straggler in the form of a late **Curlew** to Royd Moor Res. This last mentioned location also boasted the year’s maximum count of **Cormorant**, when 35 were present on 15th. The maximum number of roosting gulls at Blackmoorfoot this month were of 1,000 **Common**, 5,000 **Black-headed** and 14 **Lesser Black-backed.** Then on 19th the only **Waxwing** of the year was discovered in the car park at Winscar Res and on 20th, the last day of the milder conditions, a flock of 120 **Fieldfare** were feeding at Whitley Edge. With night-time temperatures falling to just below freezing on 25th a nice Christmas present in the shape of a **Yellow-browed Warbler** was found at Dewsbury SW and 40 **Great Black-backed Gull** flew W over Marsden Moor. ‘Storm Bella’ passed through that night and apart from one warmer day left snow and cold for the remainder of the month. There were three **Shelduck** at Ingbirchworth and an **Iceland Gull** at Blackmoorfoot on 27th with the following day bringing two **Shovelers** to Horbury Strands/Wyke, and two **Gadwall** and three **Goldeneye** were on the River Calder there too. The only **Great Crested Grebe** of the month was on Blackmoorfoot on 27th and 27 **Tree Sparrows** were at Broadstone on 29th and, apart from four wintering **Chiffchaffs** at Horbury SW on 30th, a good month and year closed with snow and freezing temperatures.

D. W. Sill

### NOTES ON THE CLASSIFIED LIST

The area covered by the Club comprises Ordnance Survey ten-kilometre squares SE00, 01, 10, 11, 20 and 21, together with those parts of SE02 and SE12 south of the Rivers Ryburn and Calder, plus Elland Gravel Pit and Dewsbury Sewage Farm. See also the map inside the rear cover.

Following a detailed review by the British Ornithologists’ Union Records Committee in 2017, the BOU announced that it would adopt, from 1st January 2018, the International Ornithological Union’s (IOU) IOC World Bird List for all its taxonomic needs, including the British List. In line with that decision, the taxonomic order of Club reports follows that recommendation.

The most recent IOC World Bird List (v. 10.1), although incorporating a new taxonomic order, which the Club has adopted, makes no scientific name changes.

The status of each species is indicated by the following classifications:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Resident breeder | Migrant breeder | Partial migrant |
| Winter visitor | Passage visitor | Rare visitor |
| Vagrant |  |  |

For breeding species, the number appearing in brackets following the statement of breeding status is an estimated level of breeding abundance, based upon the table below:

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 1. | 1-20 pairs per year | 4. | 510-2500 pairs per year |
| 2. | 21-100 pairs per year | 5. | 2501 or more pairs per year |
| 3. | 101-500 pairs per year |  |  |

These figures were derived from data gathered during the Club’s breeding atlas undertaken in the years 1987-92. Since this time a number of species have decreased alarmingly e.g. Whinchat but, due to a lack of detailed information, it would be an impossible task to judge the numbers now involved. In an effort to overcome this problem, although retaining the original estimate, any species which has shown a noticeable decline has now been indicated.

Species that are ‘Red listed’ in the British Trust for Ornithology’s (BTO) *The State of the UK’s Birds* 2020, i.e. those of high concern, are marked accordingly. Precise locations for records of Schedule 1 species (Protection of Birds Act 1981) and for some other sensitive species have been kept confidential where it is felt that publication might lead to harmful disturbance.

**Abbreviations:** the following have been used in order to keep the text concise:

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| *c.* | -approximately | GP | -Gravel Pit | CP | -Country Park |
| N | -North | NR | -Nature Reserve | Viz | -Visible |
| S | -South | SW | -Sewage Works | mig | migration |
| E | -East | SP | -Sludge Plant |  |  |
| W | -West | Res. | -Reservoir |  |  |

On page 141 is a complete list, ‘The Huddersfield List’, of the 277 species and 14 additional distinct races of wild birds that have been recorded in the Huddersfield Birdwatchers’ Club area since records began, up to the end of 2020. The List incorporates guidance on when a description is required to support sightings.

All reports of rare and unusual species and races that require a description have been assessed by the Club Records Committee, Yorkshire Naturalists’ Union (YNU) Adjudication Panel or the British Birds Rarities Committee (BBRC), as appropriate.

A comprehensive list of co-ordinates of sites within the Club area can be found on our web site:

[**www.huddersfieldbirdwatchersclub.co.uk**](http://www.huddersfieldbirdwatchersclub.co.uk)

**CLASSIFIED LIST 2020**

**RED GROUSE** *Lagopus lagopus*

**Resident breeder (3), 100-300 pairs.**

Records were only received from five locations (12 in both 2019 and 2018). Breeding, however, was confirmed at one of these, unlike 2019 when there was none, which was well down on the five of 2018. There were no sightings reported during the months of January, February, July, August or November and the highest counts were only of eight at **Isle of Skye Quarry** on 5th June and seven at **Wessenden Head** on 25th September.

**RED-LEGGED PARTRIDGE** *Alectoris rufa*

**Resident breeder (1), 5-20 pairs.**

As mentioned in the 2018 report, it is usually obvious that birds are being released annually by shooting syndicates at a number of locations in the Club area, though this may not have been the case this year as birds were only recorded from eight localities (21 in 2019, 23 in 2018, 17 in 2017 and 7 in 2016).

**Wards End Farm**, **Marsden** – birds were seen in all months on a total of 52 occasions. Two were present on four dates in January but February only produced a single record of four on 23rd. Apart from four on 11th March, one or two were seen on a further six March dates and two were seen on six dates in April, five in May and seven in June. One or two were seen on four dates in July with four being present on 8th and five, including juveniles on 27th. Juveniles were seen again on 9th August with up to six the following day. September provided five records with maxima of five on 3rd, six on 12th and four on 22nd. In October up to four were present on eight dates, then November saw an increase with four on 3rd, a maximum of eight on 6th and six on 18th. December only produced two records of four birds. It is possible that this small increase towards the year end is more than likely due to successful breeding rather than released birds this year.

**Deer Hill –** five on 5th February and singles on 5th and 12th March.

**Blackmoorfoot** – following last years’ amazing showing, considered to have been from releases in the Meltham area, this year was rather meagre and only amounted to one or two on single dates in February and March, two dates in May, a single date in September, and four birds were present on 3rd and 6th November and 22nd December. All records were from Meltham Cop or the fields to the west.

**Whitley Common** – two on 23rd February.

**Deanhead Res –** two on 19th March.

**Dean Brook Road –** a single on 1st April.

**Bradshaw Moor –** one on 16th April.

**Spicer Hill**, **Ingbirchworth** – a single on 10th June.

**GREY PARTRIDGE** *Perdix perdix*

**Resident breeder (2), 50-100 pairs. Red listed.**

Records were received from just nine locations (13 in 2019, 16 in 2018 and 19 in 2017). Apart from **Blackmoorfoot Res**. (see below) all records bar one involved no more than four birds (usually only 1 or 2) and were from **Snape** on 19th February, **Whitley Common** on 22nd February and 14th March, **Horbury** on 14th March, **Whitley Airfield** on19th March, **Gunthwaite** on 21st April, **Horbury Strands/Wyke** on 27th April and 21st May, and **Broadstone Res**. on 24th October. The only exception was from **Whitley Edge** which had an above average covey of 14 on 23rd October.

Recordsfrom **Blackmoorfoot Res**.werewell belowaverage, but whetherthis was dueto a limited number of observerscaused by the Covid-19 pandemic or a decrease in birds is unknown. The only records involved two on 13th March and 8th April, a single on 19th April and four on 4th September.

**QUAIL** *Coturnix coturnix*

**Scarce to rare summer visitor and occasional breeder.**

A single singing male was present at **Royd Moor** on 4th May (MJW).

**PHEASANT** *Phasianus colchicus*

**Resident breeder (3), 200-500 pairs.**

Records were received from 24 localities (34 in 2019, 28 in 2018, and 41 in 2017) and once again, perhaps unsurprisingly this year, birds were under recorded and subsequently the only localities which held birds throughout the year were **Blackmoorfoot** **Res**. (never more than 4) and **Wards End Farm**, **Marsden**. The only double figure count was of 12 at **Wards End Farm** on 6th November where a melanic individual was first seen on 16th November. Although proof of breeding was noted at just two locations, **Scammonden Water** and **Wards End Farm,** territory holding males were present at **Gunthwaite Dam** (1), **Broadstone Res**.(2), **Bretton Park** (1) and **Ingbirchworth Res**. (6).

**CANADA GOOSE** *Branta canadensis*

**Resident breeder, increased to (2-3), 50-150 pairs.**

Monthly maxima at regularly occupied sites were as follows:

|  | Jan | Feb | Mar | Apr | May | Jun | Jul | Aug | Sep | Oct | Nov | Dec |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Blackmoorfoot Res | 0 | 2 | 18 | 6 | 7 | 16 | 5 | 30 | 23 | 0 | 36 | 13 |
| Bretton Park | nc | 46 | nc | nc | nc | nc | nc | nc | nc | nc | nc | nc |
| Ingbirchworth Res | 403 | 277 | 215 | nc | 8 | 22 | 13 | 186 | 312 | 1 | 13 | 135 |
| Scout Dike Res | 100 | nc | 33 | nc | 3 | nc | nc | 160 | nc | nc | 300 | nc |
| Broadstone Res | 300 | 176 | 2 | nc | nc | nc | 24 | 33 | 12 | nc | nc | nc |
| Deanhead Res | nc | nc | 8 | nc | 16 | 18 | 18 | 178 | 42 | nc | nc | nc |
| March Haigh Res | 1 | 4 | 7 | 14 | 18 | 25 | 15 | 0 | 5 | 12 | 7 | 0 |

At **Blackmoorfoot Res**., birds were present on a near daily basis between late February and early April, but occurrences during other months were very sporadic.

There were records from 31 sites (42 in 2019) but only the following (as well as those in the table above) had counts in excess of 25+ on at least one occasion (maxima shown).

**Windy Bank Res** – up to 26 were present throughout most of the year but there was a noticeable absence July and September.

**Royd Moor Res** – *c.*120 on 5th January and *c.*50 on 14th October.

**Horbury Junction** – 132 on the River Calder on 14th March with 34 there on 25th March.

**Langsett Res** – 46 on 19th March and 62 on 10th August.

**Ringstone Edge Res** – 26 on 22nd March, 140 on 23rd September and, in October, 220 on 8th, 260 on 25th and 320 on 28th.

**Cannon Hall** – 46 on 14th August.

Breeding was only reported from four sites (7 in 2019 and 12 in 2019):

**Bretton Park** – only one pair reported but, as this was in late February, more may have bred later in the year.

**Isle of Skye Quarry** – a pair raised four young. This is the first time the species has bred at this locality.

**March Haigh** – five sitting birds were present by mid-May.

**Deanhead Res** – 11 goslings in mid-May.

**BARNACLE GOOSE** *Branta leucopsis*

**Rare visitor and occasional feral breeder (1), 0-1 pairs.**

A single at **Horbury Strands/Wyke** on 4th June (MC) was obviously of a dubious origin, but the 14 at **Ringstone Edge Res**. for a short period during the morning of 14th October (DT) were far more likely to be genuine migrants.

**GREYLAG GOOSE** *Anser anser*

**Uncommon, decreased to rare/scarce passage visitor, increasing feral visitor.**

Most records, as usual, stemmed from the Ingbirchworth area.

Monthly maxima at regularly occupied sites were as follows:

|  | Jan | Feb | Mar | Apr | May | Jun | Jul | Aug | Sep | Oct | Nov | Dec |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Ingbirchworth Res | 113 | 25 | 58 | nc | 54 | 72 | 9 | 625 | 648 | 253 | 118 | 214 |
| Broadstone Res | 152 | 100 | nc | nc | 39 | nc | 14 | nc | 108 | 44 | nc | 40 |
| Royd Moor Res | nc | nc | nc | nc | nc | nc | nc | 360 | nc | 371 | nc | nc |
| Scout Dike Res | nc | nc | 1 | nc | 5 | nc | nc | 100 | 1 | nc | nc | 20 |

Records were received from a further 13 locations (16 in 2019) and, as in 2019, no breeding attempts were reported.

There were only eight records from **Blackmoorfoot Res**. (11 in 2019 and 17 in 2018). A flock of 18 flew S on 7th January, but the other records were only of one or two individuals: a single on 6th February, two on 27th April, a single flew E on 28th May, two arrived from the E on 17th October, two on 22nd November, and singles on 25th November and 31st December.

All other records involved seven individuals or less for no more than a day’s duration, with the following exceptions: 22 at **Bretton Park** on 26th February (this was the only record from this site), a skein of 20 flew N over **Almondbury** on 4th June, 164 at **Langsett Res**. on 10th August, and a skein of 175 flew ENE at **Wards End Farm**, **Marsden** on 5th October.

**PINK-FOOTED GOOSE** *Anser brachyrhynchus*

**Common to numerous passage and winter visitor.**

The good passage during the first winter period of 2019 was not repeated and, with only 5,100 birds in 57 skeins, it was a reflection of the meagre showing of 2018. There were impressive movements on 22nd January and 6th February, although there was presumably some duplication, especially between **Blackmoorfoot** and **Deer Hill**.

Although the number of skeins was up on the 47 of 2019, this obviously meant that they were smaller in size, and the only three-figure counts were as follows:

**21st January** – 108 WNW at 10.15hrs. over **Blackmoorfoot**.

**22nd January** – 390 (150 W at 10.30hrs. + 140 W at 11.35hrs. + 100 NW at 12.05hrs.) over **Blackmoorfoot**, 130 W at 10.35hrs. over **Deer Hill**, 250 NW (130 at 10.40hrs. + 120 at 11.45hrs.) at **Wards End Farm**, **Marsden**, 100 SW at 11.45hrs. over the **Wessenden Valley**.

**30th January** – 200 NW at 10.35hrs. over **Wards End Farm**, 706 NW in five skiens between 10.20hrs. and 12.00hrs. over **Blackmoorfoot**, 100 E. at 11.45hrs. over **Langsett Res**.

**5th February** – 130 W at 17.05hrs. over **Blackmoorfoot**.

**6th February** – 180 NNW at 10.05hrs. over **Whitley Common**, 400+ W between 10.15hrs. and 12.30hrs. at **Deer Hill**,290 (skeins of 110 + 70 NW at 10.55hrs. + 110 W at 11.55hrs.) over **Blackmoorfoot**, 110 N at 11.10hrs. over **Riding Wood Res**.

**14th February** – 294 NW (150 at 10.00hrs. + 90 at 10.10hrs. + 54 at 10.15hrs.) over **Blackmoorfoot**.

**2nd March** – 180 W (2 at 10.35hrs. + 88 at 10.45hrs. + 90 at 11.50hrs.) over **Blackmoorfoot**.

**4th March** – 120 NW at 11.45hrs. over **Wards End Farm**.

**14th March** – 120 NW at 10.25hrs. over **Wards End Farm**, 130 W at 09.30hrs. over **Salendine Nook**.

Unlike the previous two years, skeins continued to be seen throughout March, with two flying E over **Wards End Farm**, **Marsden** on 1st April being the last.

In 2019 the total of 13,800 birds in 112 skeins which overflew the area during the second winter period was described as ‘remarkable’. This year there was an amazing total of 24,300 birds in at least 184 skeins, which, even allowing for some duplication, is unprecedented. The first returning birds were reported on 7th September when 100 flew NE at 10.35hrs. over **Meltham** and 120 flew E at 10.20hrs. over **Skelmanthorpe**. A skein of 20 flew SE at 06.20hrs. over **Harden Quarries** on 10th September and the following day 34 flew NNW at 08.05hrs. over **Pule Hill**, **Marsden** and49 flew W at 11.00hrs. over **Wards End Farm**. With the exception of a single which flew E at 10.15hrs. over **Wards End Farm** on 19th September, there were then no records until 40 flew E at 13.48hrs. over **Ringstone Edge Res**. on 24th September. The following day a further 150 flew ESE at 08.23hrs. at this locality and the only other September records were from **Harden Quarries** which saw 103 flying E (33 at 08.40hrs. + 70 at 08.44hrs.) on 28th and 222 flying E in several skeins between 08.35hrs. and 08.52hrs. on 29th.

The following months produced some very impressive counts, especially on 5th October and 3rd, 6th and 30th November. The following list contains all movements in excess of 200 birds.

**5th October** – 1,843 ENE in eight skeins between 08.23hrs. and 09.36hrs. over **Wards End Farm**, 1,900 E in several skeins between 08.25hrs. and 09.30hrs. over **Harden Quarries**, 340 E (200 + 40 at 09.10hrs. + 100 at 09.25hrs.) over **Blackmoorfoot**.

**7th October** – 255 NE (100 at 08.15hrs. + 55 at 08.48hrs. + 100 at 08.54hrs.) over **Wards End Farm**.

**9th October** – 250 SE at 09.05hrs. over **Fixby**.

**10th October** – 300 E at 12.35hrs. over **Wards End Farm**.

**25th October** – 327 E (261 at 09.01hrs. + 66 at 09.02hrs) over **Pule Hill**, 300 NE at 15.00hrs. over **Marsden**, and 300+ NE at 16.20hrs. over **Crosland Edge**.

**28th October** – 310 NE (skeins of 80 + 230 at 08.17hrs.) over **Fixby**, 475 E (175 at 08.56hrs. + 300 at 09.26hrs.) over **Pule Hill**, 450 E in four skeins between 09.00hrs. and 09.20hrs. over **Harden Quarries**, 350 NE between 09.15hrs. and 09.30hrs. over **Meltham**.

**1st November** – 500 E at 11.00hrs. over **Wards End Farm**.

**3rd November** – 973 E in six skeins between 07.35hrs. and 09.55hrs. over **Pule Hill**, 2,500 E in several skeins between 08.30hrs. and 09.30hrs. over **Harden Quarries**, 622 (442 E + 180 SW) in six skeins between 08.45hrs. and 09.43hrs. over **Wards End Farm**, 250 (130 W at 09.15hrs. + 120 E at 11.30hrs.) over **Blackmoorfoot**.

**4th November** – 625 E (277 at 08.22hrs. + 348 at 08.25hrs.) over **Pule Hill**, 610 (240 NE + 370 NW) in six skeins between 09.02hrs. and 09,37hrs. over **Wards End Farm**, 515 E in several skeins during the morning over **Harden Quarries**.

**5th November** – 310 SE (210 at 09.08hrs. + 100 at 09.53hrs.) over **Wards End Farm**, 787 E in six skeins during the morning over **Harden Quarries**.

**6th November** – 1,269 W in 11 skeins before 10.30hrs. over **Harden Quarries**.

**27th November** – 300 NW at 10.30hrs. over **Honley**.

**28th November** – 200 W at 10.15hrs. over **Blackmoorfoot**.

**2nd December** – 333 W (200 at 11.20hrs. + 36 at 11.25hrs. + 97 at 15.45hrs.) over **Blackmoorfoot**, 350 NW (250 at 11.45hrs. + 100 at 12.00hrs.) over **Marsden**.

**10th December** – 250 (150 W at 11.30hrs. + 100 W at 11.45hrs.) over **Blackmoorfoot**.

**30th December** – 241 NW (41 at 15.15hrs. + 200 at 15.25hrs.) over **Blackmoorfoot**.

The only ground birds involved a flock of 82 with Canada and Greylag Geese at **Broadstone** on 25th January, with singles there on 6th and 18th February and 14th December; and singles at **Ingbirchworth Res**. on 10th/11th March and 1st October, and **Blackmoorfoot Res**. on 19th March and 31st December.

**WHITE-FRONTED GOOSE** *Anser albifrons*

**Rare visitor.**

Two adults of an undetermined race were in a field with Greylag Geese near **Broadstone Res**. on 5th January (II).

**MUTE SWAN** *Cygnus olor*

**Resident, occasional breeder (1), 0-3 pairs.**

There were very few records of this locally scarce species and the ‘resident’ birds at Ladywood Lakes were only counted on a single occasion. Two pairs bred in the area, however, one of which was incestuous (see below). The birds at Windy Bank Res. constitute the first recorded there for 61 years (MW).

Birds were recorded as follows:

**Windy Bank Res** – two of the juveniles (now in adult plumage), from the family party of four (adult + 3 juveniles) which had arrived in November 2018, remained throughout the year. Even though these birds were siblings, they bred: from the six eggs laid five had hatched by mid-May, but only four survived. The family party of six then remained until the year end. Incest has previously been recorded in this species, as indicated by an interesting paper in Ringing & Migration (1994) **15**, 127-128 – Incestuous breeding in the Mute Swan *Cygnus olor*.

**Elland GP** – records suggest that two adults were present on the Calder/Hebble Canal throughout the year. By mid-July the pair had four cygnets, but no further details are available.

**Greenhead Park** – two adults on the park pond 18th January.

**Bretton Park** – there were only two records: two adults and three immatures on 26th February and four on 19th August.

**Dewsbury** – four on the River Calder at Savile Town on 25th April.

**Ladywood Lakes** – 35 were nearby on the River Calder on 17th May.

**Shepley** – a herd of seven flew low to the W at 20.45hrs. on 26th May. The observer commented that this was a very rare sight in the area.

**Ingbirchworth Res** – an adult and an immature on 5th December.

**WHOOPER SWAN** *Cygnus cygnus*

**Scarce passage and winter visitor.**

The number of records during both winter periods was similar to last year. Unlike last year, however, no September arrivals were reported, the earliest being on 7th October.

Birds were seen during the first winter period as follows:

**Wards End Farm**, **Marsden** – seven flew W on 22nd January, 60 flew N at 08.25hrs. on 21st March, and a single flew W on 27th March.

**Blackmoorfoot Res** – a total of 24 adults on 22nd January involved a herd of 15 which had departed unseen by 09.15hrs. and a herd of nine which arrived from the E at 10.00hrs. and departed W at 11.15hrs. In March, an adult flew W at 11.00hrs. on 5th, an adult was present on 21st, and five adults arrived from the E at 15.55hrs. on 26th.

**RSPB Dove Stone** – three adults on 5th February.

**Scout Dike Res** – 32 on 28th/29th February.

**Baitings Res** – four departed W on 29th February.

**Broadstone Res** – four adults and a juvenile on 7th/8th March.

**Ringstone Edge Res** – a single on 16th March.

**Fixby** – an impressive herd of 100 flew NW at 18.41hrs. on 21st March.

**Elland GP** – a single on 23rd March.

**Ingbirchworth Res** – nine on 9th April.

Birds were seen during the second winter period as follows:

**Wards End Farm** – three flew E on 7th October and ten flew E on 12th November.

**Broadstone Res** – six flew E on 14th October and eight were present in a field off Dearne Dike Lane on 11th November.

**Harden Quarries** – seven flew E at 10.10hrs. on 18th October, two adults and a juvenile flew SE at 08.20hrs. and four adults did likewise at 08.45hrs. on 5th November, an adult flew NW at 10.10hrs. the following day, and 25 (20 adults + 5 juveniles) flying E at 09.50hrs. on 10th November dropped onto Winscar Res.

**Winscar** – nine flew S at 10.45hrs. on 18th October. Two adults and two juveniles were present during the morning on 7th November. The herd of 25 (20 adults + 5 juveniles), originally seen in flight at Harden Quarries on 10th November (see above), were found to consist of 20 adults and five juveniles.

**Pule Hill**, **Marsden** – two flew E at 08.24hrs. and six flew S at 08.58hrs. on 23rd October and 21 flew E at 08.24hrs. on 5th November.

**Ringstone Edge Res** – ten on 4th November and a single on 19th November.

**Royd Moor Res** – three flew NW on 6th November.

**RSPB Dove Stone** – a single on 11th November.

**Blackmoorfoot Res** – six adults which arrived at 10.45hrs. on 19th November had been joined by a juvenile latter in the day and four adults flew W at 09.45hrs. on 28th November.

**Ingbirchworth Res** – an adult was in a field of Annat Royd Lane from 16th – 20th November.

**Scout Dike Res** – ten were circling overhead at 08.15hrs. on 20th November.

**Deer Hill** – 16 flew SE at 09.50hrs. and ten flew NW at 09.55hrs. on 20th November.

**Cowcliffe** – four flew W at 10.00hrs. on 29th November.

**Elland GP** – of the eight on the Ski-lake on 2nd December, three departed W and the other five departed E.

**SHELDUCK** *Tadorna tadorna*

**Uncommon passage visitor.**

The number of records of this species in the Club area continues to fall. There were records from four localities (5 in 2019 and 7 in 2018) with most being in the first half of the year.

**Blackmoorfoot Res** – a total of 14 on 1st January involved a flock of eight which departed W at 11.10hrs. and a further six which were present during the late afternoon. January also produced a single on 18th and two on 28th. There were then no occurrences until two were present on 14th September, but the only records thereafter involved five on 21st September and two on 30th November.

**Dewsbury SW** – two on 9th April.

**Horbury Strands/Wyke** – a single on 11th/12th April and two on 8th May.

**Ingbirchworth Res** – seven on 1st September and three on 27th December.

**MANDARIN DUCK** *Aix galericulata*

**Rare to scarce visitor. Has bred.**

There were records from three locations but, as with the previous five years there were no long-stay individuals. Indeed, all three records related to single day visits, although it is possible that the Mirfield bird may have been present since 30th December 2019.

**Mirfield** – a male on the River Calder on 6th January (DHP).

**Horbury Strands/Wyke** – a female on 27th August (DH).

**Elland GP** – a male on 1st October (HBC).

**SHOVELER** *Spatula clypeata*

**Scarce to uncommon passage and winter visitor.**

The number of records was on a par with last year but, although birds were reported from a similar number of locations, there were a limited number of records from Bretton Park, where there had been a winter flock between January and mid-March in 2019.

**Ingbirchworth Res** – a male and female on 1st January.

**Blackmoorfoot Res** – birds were recorded on 11 dates, a far better showing than the two last year. The only records during the first half of the year involved four (3 males) on 20th January and a male and female on 5th and from 9th – 11th April. There were then no records until a single appeared on 2nd September and three the following day. In November, three (2 males) were present on 9th, a male on 19th and four (2 males) on 30th. The only other record involved a male and female on 11th December.

**Deer Hill Res** – a male and female on 31st January.

**Horbury Strands/Wyke** – four on 14th February, three on 5th April, four on 8th April, and a male and female on 28th December.

**Dewsbury SW** – 18 on 27th February and a single on 8th October.

**Bretton Park** – two on 7th September.

**Scout Dike Res** – two on 16th September.

**Ringstone Edge Res** – a single on 19th September.

**Winscar Res** – a single on 7th November.

**GADWALL** *Mareca strepera*

**Uncommon passage and winter visitor. Has bred.**

From the number of records received this species would appear to be in serious decline in the Club area. There were records from six localities (7 in 2019) but none of these involved long-stayers and for the second consecutive year no breeding was reported.

Birds were recorded as follows:

**Bretton Park** – four (2 males) on 27th February and four on 7th September.

**Dewsbury SW** – 12 on 14th March.

**Blackmoorfoot Res** – a male was seen on 23rd and 26th April and two days later a male and female were present. The only other record involved a male and female-type on 14th September.

**Ossett Spa SW** – a male on 17th May.

**Ingbirchworth Res** – a male on 7th October and four unsexed birds on 9th November.

**Horbury Strands/Wyke** – a male and female on the River Calder on 28th December.

**WIGEON** *Mareca penelope*

**Common passage and winter visitor.**

Records were received from 14 waters (11 in 2019 and 14 in 2018).

As in the two previous years, there were very few occurrences during the first winter period, with records only stemming from nine locations. As is now usual, **Meal Hill Lake** held birds until late March, with a maximum of *c.*40 on 25th February. All other records during this period were limited to no more than a couple of days occupancy: singles were on **Windy Bank Res**. and near **Silkstone SW** on 1st January; up to seven were present on four January dates at **Blackmoorfoot Res**.; three were at **Royd Moor Res**. on 5th January; a single was at **Ingbirchworth Res**. on 8th January; three were at **Dewsbury SW** on 27th February, with eight there on 6th March; a flock of *c.*45 were on **Broadstone Res**. on 13th March; and calls were recorded from a migrating flock as they flew over **Thongsbridge** at 21.03hrs. on 1st April (DHP).

There were then no records until four appeared at **Blackmoorfoot Res**. on 1st September, but the only other September occurrences involved 11 at **Blackmoorfoot Res**. on 2nd and five at **Ingbirchworth Res**. on 30th. In October, although more sites were involved, records only amounted to 14 at **Ringstone Edge Res**. on 1st; two at **Blackmoorfoot Res**. on 1st, with ten there on 2nd, and three on 3rd; five at **Ingbirchworth Res**. on 4th; and the **Meal Hill Lake** wintering flock which commenced with nine on 13th and peaked at 25 on 16th. Records during the following two months were limited to seven locations. The flock at **Meal Hill Lake** peaked at *c.*30 on 15th November; 12 were on **March Haigh Res**. on 10th November; **Blackmoorfoot Res**. attracted birds on 12 dates but, with the exceptions of ten on 29th October and 51 the following day, these never amounted to more than five birds; a male remained on **Windy Bank Res**. from 10th – 12th November; ten were on **Horbury Strands/Wyke** on 23rd November, with *c.*30 there on 2nd December; a male and female took up residence on **Boshaw Whams** between 23rd November and 29th December; two were at **Broadstone Res**. on 4th December, and two were at **Bretton Park** on 10th December.

**MALLARD** *Anas platyrhynchos*

**Resident breeder (3), 100-250 pairs. Common, but decreasing, winter visitor.**

Records were received from 41 locations, a welcome increase on the 32 of last year. Despite this, the species continues to be under-recorded, and there were only a handful of records from some locations where the species is known to be present throughout the year. In addition, there were still a number of records which simply stated ‘Present, not counted’.

Maximum numbers at regularly counted sites were as follows:

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Jan | Feb | Mar | Apr | May | Jun | Jul | Aug | Sep | Oct | Nov | Dec |
| Blackmoorfoot Res | 19 | 19 | 17 | 9 | 11 | 16 | 42 | 40 | 38 | 29 | 62 | 42 |
| Ingbirchworth Res | 50 | 29 | 33 | 18 | 29 | 35 | 42 | 62 | 48 | 52 | 58 | 35 |
| Broadstone Res | 8 | 1 | 8 | nc | 12 | 6 | 2 | 18 | 9 | 4 | 23 | 5 |
| Scout Dike Res | 10 | nc | 21 | nc | 21 | 36 | 28 | nc | nc | nc | nc | nc |

Elsewhere notable counts (30+) were received from the following locations:

**Lockwood Brewery Dam** – there were double figure counts in all months, the highest counts being of 24 in August, 38 in October, and 33 in November. The observers commented that ‘during October to December when the largest numbers were present the birds were on the dam early morning and they would line up near the wall and fly off and disperse down the river to feed’.

**Gunthwaite Dam** – 32 on 8th January.

**Thongsbridge** – 36 on the campsite pond on 12th January.

**Sands Recreation Ground**, **Holmfirth** – *c.*50 on 15th January.

**Holmfirth** – 42 on the River Holme on 5th February.

**Cupwith Res** – 100 on 4th August and 70 on 22nd September.

**Langsett Res** – 42 on 10th August.

**Cannon Hall CP** – *c.*40 on 12th August.

**Winscar Res** – 80+ on 17th August and 50+ on 7th September.

**Whitley Common** – 45 on 30th October.

**Greenhead Park** – *c.*50 on the park pond on 27th December.

Breeding (ducklings present) was recorded from several locations: **Dewsbury SW** – a total of 72 ducklings on the River Calder; **Blackmoorfoot Res** – no meaningful figures due to Covid-19 restrictions; **Langsett Res** – 27 ducklings; **Winscar Res** – 31 ducklings; **Scout Dike Res** – four broods; and single broods were reported from **Royd Moor Res**., **Ingbirchworth Res**., **Booth Wood Res**., **Deer Hill Res**., **Thongsbridge**, **Lockwood Brewery Dam**, and **Windy Bank Res**.

**PINTAIL** *Anas acuta*

**Scarce to uncommon passage and winter visitor.**

There were only three records, all during the second winter period.

Three flew W at **Pule Hill**, **Marsden** on 1st October and **Blackmoorfoot Res**. held a male and female on 28th November and four (2 males) on 8th December.

**TEAL** *Anas crecca*

**Resident breeder (1), 1-20 pairs. Common passage and winter visitor.**

Records were only received from 14 waters (22 in 2019) and there was no proof of breeding. In the past this species has normally warranted a month-by-month break-down of records. With so few records this year, however, they have simply been documented under locality.

**Blackmoorfoot Res** – during the first winter period up to six (but usually 3 or less) were seen on five dates between 2nd January and 2nd March. There were far more records later in the year. After a flock of seven on 13th August, up to ten were then seen on a further 14 dates between 2nd September and 26th December, and 32 were present on 30th November.

**Royd Moor Res** – six on 5th January.

**Gunthwaite Dam** – during the first winter period six were present on 8th January, 17 on 25th January, 14 on 5th February, and 24 on 7th March. The only records later in the year involved 12 on 19th November and ten on 15th December.

**Rastrick** – five males were present on a small pond on 10th January with five male + four females on 24th January.

**Ingbirchworth Res** – two on 23rd January, three on 3rd August and 23rd September, 12 on 9th November, and five on 30th November.

**Bretton Park** – two on 26th February and four the following day.

**Dewsbury SW** – this is usually the wintering stronghold for the species, as it may well have been, but the only records involved 42 on 27th February, ten on 9th April, and 41 on 8th October.

**Scout Dike Res** – six on 4th March, two on 24th June, and a single male on 18th November.

**March Haigh Res** – a male and female on 31st March and a female on 10th May.

**Thongsbridge** – calls were recorded from migrating flocks as they flew over at 21.22hrs. on 1st April and 21.17hrs. on 7th April (DHP).

**Isle of Skye Quarry** – although a pair bred last year, the only records this year involved a male on 8th April, two on 16th July, and three on 26th/27th August.

**Ringstone Edge Res** – a male and female on 23rd April, two on 24th and 26th September, eight on 8th October, and two on 14th October.

**Wards End Farm**, **Marsden** – two flew E on 11th December.

**Horbury SW** – seven on 30th December.

**POCHARD** *Aythya ferina*

**Uncommon passage and winter visitor. Has bred.**

As in 2019, this nationally declining species was only recorded from three localities which, rather curiously, were the same.

**Blackmoorfoot Res** – the increase in records during the previous two years was short-lived, and the only records amounted to a male on 1st January, three males on 3rd October, two males on 9th November, and six (3 males) on 30th November.

**Bretton Park** – ten (8 males) on 26th February and an unsexed single on 10th December.

**Ingbirchworth Res** – single males on 30th September and 9th and 11th November.

**TUFTED DUCK** *Aythya fuligula*

**Resident breeder (1), 5-20 pairs. Common passage and winter visitor.**

There were records from only 19 locations, a drop of five on last year, but proof of breeding come from one of these. The species continues to be under-recorded, however, and there were only a handful of records from some locations where the species is known to be present throughout the year. In addition, there were still a number of records which simply stated ‘Present, not counted’.

Maximum numbers at regularly counted sites were as follows:

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Jan | Feb | Mar | Apr | May | Jun | Jul | Aug | Sep | Oct | Nov | Dec |
| Blackmoorfoot Res | 1 | 2 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 4 | 2 | 13 | 14 | 6 | 2 |
| Ingbirchworth Res | 5 | 4 | 4 | nc | nc | nc | 2 | 4 | 2 | 9 | 2 | 3 |
| Royd Moor Res | nc | nc | nc | nc | nc | nc | nc | nc | nc | 2 | 9 | 21 |
| Scout Dike Res | 17 | 17 | 14 | nc | 3 | 8 | nc | nc | 6 | nc | nc | 15 |
| Bretton Park | nc | 12 | 13 | nc | nc | nc | nc | nc | nc | nc | nc | 5 |
| Windy Bank Res | 8 | nc | 7 | 6 | 2 | 2 | 10 | 9 | 5 | 10 | 6 | 8 |

Once again, the numbers in the table above give a false impression of occupancy at **Blackmoorfoot Res**. During the first half of the year birds were only recorded on 36 days (46 in 2019 and 35 in 2018) and no birds remained for more than four consecutive days. As is usual, the second half of the year produced larger assemblages and, although numbers fluctuated daily, birds were present on most dates between 31st August and 10th November. Thereafter, birds reverted to sporadic visits, with never more than six on five November dates and the only December occurrence involved two on 12th.

The other records involved no more than five birds (usually only 1 or 2) for short periods only with the exceptions of **Meal Hill Lake** whichheld up to 12 throughout both winter periods, seven at **Brun Clough Res**. on 21st June and six at **Broadstone Res**. on 2nd July.

A male and female were present at **March Haigh Res**., a potential breeding site, throughout April/May, but there was no evidence of breeding. Two pairs bred at **Scout Dike Res**. but, although hatching at least eight young, only one remained by late June.

**GREATER SCAUP** *Aythya marila*

**Rare to scarce passage and winter visitor.**

A female was present at **Bretton Park** on 2nd March (TM) and 16th March (DWB).

**COMMON SCOTER** *Melanitta nigra*

**Scarce passage and winter visitor. Red listed.**

There were records from five waters (same as last year) and nocturnal calls were recorded from two migrating flocks as they flew over a further location. Blackmoorfoot Res., as is usual, had the lion’s share, and the largest flock (28) was also recorded at this locality.

**Thongsbridge** – calls were recorded from migrating flocks at 21.48hrs. on 1st April and 00.37hrs. on 11th April (DHP).

**Boshaw Whams** – two males were present from 11th to 14th June (DHP *et al.*) and a female/immature on 10th July (NWM, DHP).

**Broadstone Res** – a male during the afternoon on 14th June (II).

**Blackmoorfoot Res** –there were 11 records (6 in 2019 and 5 in 2018). There were no occurrences until eight (7 males) were present on 30th June (MH, RS *et al.*). In July, a flock of 28 (23 males) were seen on 10th (GK, NWM, DM), a male on 14th (GBS *et al.*), three males on 15th, two males on 16th, and a male on 17th (all GK, DM). In August, single males were present on 11th (DM, GBS) and 24th (DM). A flock of eight (4 males) departed W at 09.55hrs. on 8th September (MLD, GBS, DM), a male was present on 14th October (GBS, DW) and an immature on 10th December (MLD, GBS *et al.*).

**Winscar** – a male and female/immature on 10th July (II) and two males on 17th September (IM, DHP).

**Ringstone Edge Res** – eight unsexed birds on 15th July (HBC).

**GOLDENEYE** *Bucephala clangula*

**Uncommon winter visitor.**

Records were received from nine locations (same as last year) but it appears that only Blackmoorfoot Res. held birds for more than a day’s duration.

The only records during the first winter period from **Blackmoorfoot Res**. involved a male on 18th and 20th January, an immature on 26th/27th January, and an adult female on 12th – 15th March. Although there were more records during the second winter period these only amounted to an eclipse male which remained between 19th September and 14th October (a lengthy stay these days), in November, two female-types on 9th, a male and female-type on 24th, and a male on 25th which remained until 2nd December. The only other December records involved a female-type on 24th and a male the following day.

The situation at other sites was a complete reversal to that experienced at Blackmoorfoot Res., there being more records earlier in the year than later. A male was on **March Haigh Res**. on 12th January and three (1 male) were present on 19th March; seven unsexed birds were on the River Calder at **Savile Town** on 27th February; **Ingbirchworth Res**. held two (1 male) from 2nd – 8th March, three (2 males) on 9th March, and two (1 male) on 19th March; two (1 male) were on **Broadstone Res**. on 13th March; and a male was present on **Ringstone Edge Res**. on 17th and 19th March.

With the exception of the Blackmoorfoot records mentioned above, the only other records during the second winter period involved a female-type at **Meal Hill Lake** on 1st December, three (2 males) on the River Calder at **Horbury Strands/Wyke** on 28th December, and two (1 male) on the River Calder at **Horbury SW** on 30th December.

**GOOSANDER** *Mergus merganser*

**Common passage and winter visitor. Has bred in small numbers since 2007.**

There were records from 22 localities (1 more than last year). Although records during the summer months were very limited, a female with ten newly hatched ducklings was on the River Calder at **Dewsbury SW** on 23rd May.

Records from **Bretton Park**, a previous stronghold for the species, only amounted to three (2 males) on the River Dearne on 15th November and a female there on 8th December. Indeed, the observers on 26th February reported that ‘no birds were in evidence’.

As has become the norm, **Blackmoorfoot Res**. has become the species’ stronghold, and the table below shows the monthly maxima.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Jan | Feb | Mar | Apr | May | Jun | Jul | Aug | Sep | Oct | Nov | Dec |
| Blackmoorfoot Res | 9 | 6 | 5 | 8 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 6 | 11 |

At **Blackmoorfoot Res**. up to nine (but usually less than 6) were present on a daily basis between 1st January and 31st March, with April producing up to eight (but usually less than 5) on a further 17 dates to 24th (383 bird/days). The only records during the summer months involved a female on 5th May and a redhead on 14th June. Thereafter, up to 11 (but usually less than 6) were present on a further 48 dates between 15th October and the year end (147 bird/days). The annual number of bird/days totalled 532 (463 in 2019).

The first half of the year produced records from a further 11 localities but, with the exception of the Blackmoorfoot Res. records mentioned above, these were generally short-lived with most referring to four birds or less, the following being the exceptions: at least ten were by the weir on the River Calder at **Mirfield** on 6th January, with 20+ there on 30th January; eight were at **Butterley Res**. on 8th January; six departed in a easterly direction from the roost at **Ringstone Edge Res**. at 05.40hrs. on 22nd March; and two or three were present on **March Haigh Res**. on seven dates between 23rd March and 4th April with nine (3 males) on 1st April and five (2 males) the following day.

In the second half of the year birds were noted at 12 localities, most of which had held birds earlier in the year, but the only locality which reached double figures was Blackmoorfoot Res. (see above). With the exception of up to five which were seen at **Windy Bank Res**. on several December dates, all other records involved short-stay individuals. The only records in excess of three were as follows: six overflying birds near **Broadstone Res**. on 26th August; six males on **March Haigh Res**. on 12th September; six flew S at **Harden Quarries** on 7th October; and four flew W at **Wards End Farm**, **Marsden** on 10th October.

A party of six which flew S at **Harden Quarries** on 5th October, although most likely this species, were too distant for specific identification and were described as *Mergus* sp.

**NIGHTJAR** *Caprimulgus europaeus*

**Rare visitor. Former migrant breeder, which appears to be making a come back. Red listed.**

In the general area of the locality which has attracted birds for the previous six years it was considered that at least eight singing males or pairs were present between late May and mid-July.

**SWIFT** *Apus apus*

**Migrant breeder (3), 100-300 pairs.**

Birds were present between 22nd April and 15th September, but there was a continued decline in numbers, with only two treble-figure counts (excluding counts of passage birds). It must be remembered that the spring weather had been particularly good and, as a consequence, the species’ invertebrate food would have ascended to a great height, thereby taking the birds above our observational limit. The same weather conditions did not prevail during the autumn months, however, and the lack of large assemblages over the usual waterbodies and sewage works at this time is worrying.

The first records involved a single at **Dewsbury SW** on 22nd April, three at **Holme** on 26th April, and singles at **Blackmoorfoot Res**. on 29th and 30th April.

Following the records from **Blackmoorfoot Res**. on 29th and 30th April birds continued to be seen on a near daily basis until the last, a single, on 29th August. As in the previous five years, however, numbers remained very low. Indeed, it wasn’t until early June that double figure assemblages occurred, and even then counts rarely reached 20, with the only assemblages in excess involving, in June, 90+ on 3rd, 30 on 4th and 40 on 30th, while July produced 30 on 2nd/3rd and 50 on 7th.

As is usual, birds became more widely distributed by mid-May, but numbers remained abysmally low, and the only assemblages in excess of 15 involved *c.*50 at **Broadstone** on 11th May; 38 at **Dewsbury SW** on 13th May, with 85 on 27th May and *c.*420 on 5th June; 22+ at **Ingbirchworth Res**. on 9th June; *c.*20 at **Meltham** on 24th July; *c.*100 at **Shepley** on 27th July, with *c.*30 there two days later; 20 at **Fixby** on 30th July; 20 at **Golcar** on 31st July; 24 at **Oldfield** on 4th August; and 40+ at a great height over **Thongsbridge** on 7th August. At the two sites which attracted birds on a regular basis, **Lockwood** and **Crosland Moor**, never more than 12 were recorded, and then only on two occasions at **Crosland Moor**. Six seen flying at a height of three metres over a garden in **Almondbury** on 11th July were described as a notable occurrence as the species is very rarely seen in the vicinity.

Evidence of breeding only came from **Slaithwaite**, where 14 nest-boxes on theviaduct were occupied (10 in the previous 2 years) and **Millhouse Green**, where a pair bred. In addition, although birds were present around the Clock Tower throughout the summer months in **Lindley** there was no evidence of breeding and about six birds were seen leaving ledges (prospecting potential nest sites?) on **Denby Dale** viaduct in late July.

By late August, although still widely distributed, numbers never exceeded the eight at **Shepley** on 23rd and the ten which flew S over **Fixby** on 27th. Birds lingered into September, being recorded from six localities: 14 flew W at **Wards End Farm**, **Marsden** on 1st; two flew S at **Harden Quarries** on 1st, with six S there on 4th, and two NW on 9th; three were over **Helme**, one flew W over **Fixby** and two flew W over **Isle of Skye Quarry** on 4th; and one flew S over **Isle of Skye Quarry** on 15th.

Visible migration (probably best described as weather related movements) were reported as follows:

**Wards End Farm, Marsden** – a total of 622 flew over, mainly in a westerly direction, on 57 dates between 4th May and 1st September, with a maximum of 110 W on 2nd August.

**Dewsbury SW** – *c.*620 flew W between 07.45hrs. and 09.45hrs. on 23rd May.

**Fixby** – a total of 1811 flew over, mainly in a southerly direction, on 14 dates between 27th June and 4th September, with a maximum of 65 SE on the first mentioned date.

**Harden Quarries** – a total of 53 flew over, mainly in a southerly direction, on six dates between 27th June and 9th August, with a maximum of 37 S on 27th June.

**Lascelles Hall** – a flock of 24 flew S on 2nd August.

Note that the peak of movements at both **Fixby** and **Harden Quarries** were on 27th June.

**CUCKOO** *Cuculus canorus*

**Migrant breeder, decreased to (1), 5-20 pairs. Red listed.**

There were records from 27 localities (23 in 2019 and 47 in 2018). At the two sites which showed a welcome increase in records last year – Wards End Farm, Marsden and the Brow Grains area of Meltham – only at Wards End Farm was this repeated. Indeed, in the Brow Grains area, despite almost daily visits, sightings were very limited.

The earliest birds, all in late April and all singles unless otherwise stated, were recorded as follows: **West Nab** (23rd); **Yateholme** (2 on 24th); **Meltham Mills**, **Royd Edge Clough** and **Deer Hill** (27th), and **Wards End Farm**, **Holme Styes**, **Skelmanthorpe** and **Winscar Res**. (28th). As this species is still showing fluctuating fortunes, all records are listed.

Other birds, all singles unless otherwise stated, were reported as follows:

**Cheesegate Nab** – late April to mid-May, but no specific dates indicated.

**Yateholme** – following the two on 24th April (see above) singles were present on 26th April and 6th and 28th May, with two on 17th May.

**Royd Edge Clough** – following the first on 27th April (see above) singles were then seen or heard on several dates to 28th May.

**Deer Hill Res** – following the first on 27th April (see above) singles were then present on several dates to 28th May.

**Meltham Mills** – following the first on 27th April (see above) singles were then seen or heard on several dates until early June.

**Wards End Farm** – following the first on 28th April (see above) singles were then present on a further 17 dates until the last, a juvenile, on 24th July, with two on four dates in May. Of the two present on 10th May one was a hepatic female (rufous morph).

**Winscar** – following the first on 28th April (see above) singles were then present on four dates in May.

**Honley** **Wood** – one or two were seen or heard on several dates in May.

**Crossley’s Plantation** – two on 3rd May and a single on 5th May.

**Shepley** – 4th May.

**Broadstone Res** – 4th/5th May.

**Red Lane**, **Meltham** – 5th May.

**Butterley Res** – 5th May.

**Isle of Skye Quarry** – 9th and 14th May.

**Digley Res** – 9th, 10th, 29th and 31st May.

**Langsett Res** – 15th May.

**Bradshaw Moor** – 19th May.

**Shelley** – 19th May.

**Wessenden Valley** – two on 20th May.

**Dunford Bridge** – 21st and 25th May.

**Scammonden Water** – 25th May.

**Dove Stone Res** – 25th and 29th May.

**Blackmoorfoot Res** – 25th and 27th May.

**FERAL PIGEON** *Columba livia*

**Resident breeder (3), 300-500 pairs.**

This grossly under-recorded species, although present in small numbers in several gardens, was totally neglected in the town centre and other areas where they are known to be present throughout the year. There were also a number of records which simply stated ‘Not counted’ and those reported as ‘overflying flocks’ are not necessary Feral Pigeons as the possibility of them being pigeon fanciers’ birds cannot be ruled out.

The only large assemblages were as follows:

**Rastrick** – 20+ were present throughout the year.

**Elland** – 60+ were present throughout the year.

**Lindley** – *c.*50 were present throughout the year.

**Holmfirth** – about ten on 15th April.

**Turnbridge** – *c.*30 on 10th June and *c.*50 on 2nd September.

**Royd Moor Res –** *c.*20 on 14th October.

**STOCK DOVE** *Columba oenas*

**Resident breeder (3), 200-300 pairs.**

Records were received from 32 locations, a welcome increase from the 21 of last year, but at only eight of these were birds recorded throughout the year: **Wards End Farm**, **Marsden**; **Blackmoorfoot Res**.; **Whitley Common**; **Thongsbridge**; and gardens in **New Mill**, **Fixby**, **Netherthong** and **Holmfirth**. Birds were also present for extended periods in a further **Holmfirth** garden (mid-March to late September) and a garden in **Almondbury** (mid-April to early August). All garden records were of less than five birds (usually 1 – 3, only rarely 4 or 5) with the exception of **Wards End Farm** which had seven on 4th July and six on 16th July.

There was more evidence of breeding than last year: two pairs bred at **Whitley Common** and **Langsett**, a pair bred in a tree hole in Orange Wood at **Blackmoorfoot Res**., and single pairs bred at **Thongsbridge**, **Wards End Farm** and **Windy Bank Wood**. In addition, singing males were noted at **Fixby** (3), **Cheesegate Nab** (3), **Brockholes** (1), and **Honley** (1), and birds were seen entering a possible nest site at Skelmanthorpe.

The vast majority of records, as last year, only related to a handful of birds and the only double figure counts were limited to the following:

**Whitley Common** – 23 on 17th January, 40 on 14th February, and 19 on 2nd March.

**Wards End Farm** – 22 on 8th April.

**Horbury Strands/Wyke** – 30+ on 17th September.

**Blackmoorfoot Res** – 11 on 26th December.

Birds considered to have been on migration were recorded as follows:

**Wards End Farm** – four flew W on 2nd February and five flew N on 20th October.

**Pule Hill, Marsden** – a total of 17 flew SW or W on eight days between 24th August and 23rd November, with a maximum of three SW on 27th August.

**Harden Quarries** – a total of 33 flew in various directions on 15 dates between 7th August and 10th November, with a maximum of seven S on 3rd November.

**WOODPIGEON** *Columba palumbus*

**Resident breeder (4), 2,000-2,500 pairs. Numerous but irregular winter visitor.**

For the fifth consecutive year, although the species remained widely distributed and common, there were no large gatherings. The number of birds involved in the assemblages which warranted such comments as ‘too many – not counted’ and ‘encountered frequently, noticeable E-W movement through, stopped counting after a while’ is obviously open to conjecture. The largest gatherings only involved up to 40 at **Wards End Farm**, **Marsden** throughout January, with 25 there on 15th December; 16 at **Scout Dike Res**. on 4th March, with 21 there on 18th November; 16 at **Broadstone Res**. on 30th September, with 130 there on 4th November; and 80 at **Almondbury** on 10th October.

A number of gardens held birds throughout the year but number rarely exceeded a handful. The only breeding evidence came from **Crosland Moor** where a pair fledged two young from a nest in a Leylandii.

Visible migration was witnessed at six sites, but the autumn numbers were greatly reduced on last year at Wards End Farm, and the observer commented that it had been ‘a lousy year with much, much fog’:

**Wards End Farm** – a total of 215 (157 W + 38 E + 20 NE) on 12 dates between 1st February and 4th May, with a maximum of 23 E on 3rd February. Later in the year a total of 13,049 flew in a W or SW direction on 14 dates between 11th October and 23rd November, with a maximum of 3,100 on 4th November.

**Pule Hill, Marsden** – a total of 33,495 flew between S and W on 35 dates between 14th August and 26th November, with peaks of 8,295 SW on 4th November and 11,277 S or SW the following day.

**Harden Quarries** – A total of 34,202 flew in directions between S and W on 12 dates between 13th October and 11th November, with a maximum of 12,500 on 5th November.

**Holme Moss** – huge numbers were moving S down the Holme Valley then circling over Ramsden and Yateholme Reservoirs before leaving past the mast at Holme Moss between 08.45hrs. and 12.00hrs on 4th November. It was estimate that the total must have been in the order of 15,000 birds, with an unknown number passing before the observer arrived.

**Cowcliffe** – *c.*500 flew W between 08.00hrs. and 08.35hrs. on 4th November.

**Broadstone Res** – *c.*120 S on 4th November.

Note the large number of birds moving over all locations on 4th/5th November.

**COLLARED DOVE** *Streptopelia decaocto*

**Resident breeder (3), 300-400 pairs.**

This species, as usual, was mainly confined to urban environments with birds being present in several gardens, mostly throughout the year. Interestingly, in two **Holmfirth** gardens the picture was totally different, however: at one birds were present throughout but at the other birds were only present between mid-March and late September. The infrequent visits to a garden in **Lockwood** mentioned in the previous two reports continued. Assemblages of less than a handful of birds were the norm, and an observer in an **Almondbury** garden commented that the eight present between 16th and 22nd August and nine between 30th August and 5th September were an ‘exceptional number’. The observer who saw a single in flight over fields near **Broadstone Res**. on 9th August commented ‘This species is unusual here in my experience’.

The only breeding records involved two pairs at both **Skelmanthorpe** and **Crosland Moor**.

Birds at **Harden Quarries**, as is usual, were present around the SE corner of Holme Styes plantation on most early autumn dates, but there were only two records of singles after the end of September (13th October and 7th November). With the exception of eight at **Harden Quarries** on 2nd September, and 14, which were probably roosting in a tree at **Fieldhead Surgery**, **Golcar** during the late afternoon on 14th December, all other records referring to no more than half a dozen birds.

Passage birds were noted as follows:

**Wards End Farm, Marsden** – two flew N on 19th April, two W on 11th August, and three NW on 12th October.

**Isle of Skye Quarry** – three which flew W on 8th August were the first record for the site.

**Pule Hill, Marsden** – a total of 15 (9 flew SW and 6 W) on eight dates between 27th August and 23rd November, with no more than three on any one day.

**Harden Quarries** – eight flew fairly high to the NW on 10th September.

**WATER RAIL** *Rallus aquaticus*

**Resident/migrant breeder (1). Mainly a scarce winter visitor.**

The only records involved a single at **Gunthwaite Dam** on 1st April (BBSG) and recorded calls from a bird which flew over **Thongsbridge** at 01.05hrs. on 11th April (DHP).

**MOORHEN** *Gallinula chloropus*

**Resident breeder (3), 200-400 pairs.**

There were records from 21 locations, one less than the previous two years, but 13 fewer than 2017. Although present at most sites throughout the year, numbers never reached more than a handful, even at the favoured site at Bretton Park (although there were few records).

Evidence of breeding, all single pairs, was forthcoming from **Cannon Hall**, **Turnbridge**, **Ingbirchworth Res**., **Windy Bank Res**., **Ringstone Edge Res**., **Shelley**, and **Skelmanthorpe**.In addition, a pair at **Lockwood Brewery Dam**, **Rastrick** had two broods of five young but only one fledged (from the first brood), blame on their demise being directed at the ever present Grey Heron.

Nocturnal flight calls were recorded on 17 nights (sometimes several separate series per night) as birds passed over **Thongsbridge** between 8th April and 27th May and on a further three nights in mid-July (DHP).

**COOT** *Fulica atra*

**Resident breeder (2), 30-50 pairs. Uncommon to common winter visitor.**

This grossly under-recorded species was only reported from 12 waters, the same as the previous two years. There was a total lack of records from the favoured site at Ingbirchworth Res. but, as there were records of other water birds from this location one is left wondering whether the species was present and not recorded or was the absence real? Birds were present at most sites throughout the year, but numbers never reached more than a handful.

Breeding was reported from four locations: **Gunthwaite Dam** (a pair with 5 well grown young in late May), **Greenhead Park** (a pair nested on the park pond), **Scout Dike** (3 pairs nested), and **Windy Bank Res**. (a pair nested).

Nocturnal flight calls were recorded on seven nights as birds passed over **Thongsbridge** between 9th April and 27th May (including three separate series on 15th/16th May). In addition, nocturnal flight calls were recorded on 17th/18th August (DHP).

At **Blackmoorfoot Res**., where the species has shown a decline in occurrence for well over a decade, the only records involved singles on 17th, 20th, 22nd and 24th July and 19th October.

**LITTLE GREBE** *Tachybaptus ruficollis*

**Partial migrant breeder (1), 5-15 pairs.**

Records were only received from 21 locations, the same as last year but four down on 2018, but breeding evidence was only obtained from three of these.

**Ingbirchworth Res** – present throughout the year with six on several January dates, seven on 9th June, and up to seven in late September/early October. Although birds were ‘whinnying’ in two areas during June and July there was no evidence of breeding.

**Meal Hill Lake** – a single was present throughout both winter periods with three on 1st December.

**Cannon Hall** – a single on 21st January.

**Bretton Park** – the only records involved three on 26th February and two on 8th December.

**Scout Dike Res** – up to four birds were present between early March and late September and two pairs fledged four young.

**March Haigh Res** – up to three (usually 1 or 2) were present on several dates between 31st March and 12th July. A single seen in flight towards the reservoir on 18th June must have presented an unusual sight.

**Tunnel End Res** – a single on 5th April.

**Carlecotes Ponds** – two on 6th April.

**Royd Moor Res** – a pair bred on Flight Pond, with three young being present in late May. The only record thereafter involved a single on the reservoir on 14th October.

**Gunthwaite Dam** – singles on 30th May and 15th December.

**Ringstone Edge Res** – singles on 4th August, 11th/12th and 30th October.

**Broadstone Res –** up to four, but usually one or two, were present between early June and the year end and a pair fledged two young.

**Redbrook Res** – a single on 1st June.

**Brun Clough Res** – singles on 21st June and 1st September.

**Digley Res** – two on 26th June.

**Windy Bank Res** – a single on 7th July.

**Boshaw Whams** – a single on 6th August.

**Deanhead Res** – singles were present between 6th and 29th August and on 17th September.

**Blackmoorfoot Res** – the alarming decline in occurrences, first noted in 2012, continued: a single on 6th November was the only record.

**Winscar Res** – a single on 4th and 7th September.

**Langsett** – one from 10th-13th November.

**GREAT CRESTED GREBE** *Podiceps cristatus*

**Partial migrant breeder (1), 5-20 pairs.**

There were records from 11 waters (13 in 2019), but some of these were very short-lived. Breeding occurred at three locations, all in the Ingbirchworth area, and involved a total of eight pairs.

During the first winter period **Blackmoorfoot Res**. held no more than two on six dates until birds became ‘resident’ between 20th February and 12th August. As can be seen from the table below, although numbers fluctuated, the highest assemblages were all in spring but never exceeded the single day visit by six on 6th March. A falling water level precluded any breeding attempt in the west bank willows. Following the departure of the ‘resident’ birds on 12th August, with the exception of three on 31st August, never more than two were present on 51 dates between 21st August and 18th November. The only December record involved a single on 29th.

The monthly maxima are shown below:

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Jan | Feb | Mar | Apr | May | Jun | Jul | Aug | Sep | Oct | Nov | Dec |
| 2 | 2 | 6 | 5 | 3 | 4 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 1 |

**Scout Dike Res** – there were sporadic appearances during the first winter period which never amounted to more than five individuals. Three pairs then took up ‘residency’ and managed to rear eight young. The family parties then remained until mid-August, but the only other records involved a single on 30th August, two on 16th September, and five on 18th November.

**Bretton Park** – up to six were present on several visits made throughout the year.

**Ingbirchworth Res** – present throughout the year with four pairs breeding. Although most nesting attempts failed due to a falling water level, a pair managed to fledge a single young at the third attempt.

**Ringstone Edge –** there were sporadic appearances of up to three birds on 11 dates between 17th March and 28th October. In addition, two adults and three juveniles, obviously not bred on site, were present on 28th August.

**Royd Moor Res** – a pair bred but the outcome was unknown.

**March Haigh Res –** a single on 25th May and one departed W from the reservoir on 19th December.

**Scammonden Water** – a single on 25th May.

**Broadstone Res –** one or two were present on most visits between 4th March and late July and a pair with two young of unknown provenance were seen in late June.

**Deer Hill** – a single on 18th March.

**Boshaw Whams** – a single was present on several dates between 13th April and 11th May.

**OYSTERCATCHER** *Haematopus ostralegus*

**Migrant breeder since 1999 (2 pairs) with a recent marked increase in breeding numbers. Uncommon passage visitor, increasing.**

There were records from 28 locations, an increase of three on last year, with breeding occurring at three of these (five during the last couple of years).

As is usual, the first returning birds were noted during February: a single was at **Broadstone Res**. on 7th, with eight there on 23rd, two on 26th and 14 (along with 35 Curlew) on 29th; two were at **Winscar Res**. on 17th, with five there on 20th; two were at **Ingbirchworth Res**. on 19th and 21st; and two were at **Ringstone Edge Res**. on 29th.

Birds became more widely distributed during the following months and by late June all the above mentioned sites, along with a further 20, had seen visitations, some for extended periods. Most records involved no more than two birds, only occasionally up to six, but March and May produced some larger assemblages in the **Broadstone** area: a flock of 13 were in a field off **Bird’s Nest Lane** on 3rd March, with 15 there on 7th March; 12 were at **Broadstone Res**. on 13th March, with nine there on 15th March, eight on 2nd May, and 15 on 5th May; and 11 were off **Hey Slack Lane** on 18th March.

Although a number of locations, including the reservoirs at **Broadstone** and **Blackmoorfoot**, held birds throughout the summer months, confirmation of breeding was only forthcoming from the following:

**Wessenden Lodge** – a pair chose an unusual nest site as the eggs were laid on the top of a broken wall of a ruined cottage, at least 4 metres above ground level.

**Winscar Res** – a pair had hatched three young by late May but only two remained on 11th June.

**Isle of Skye Quarry** – a pair bred at the usual site on the cliff face but, beyond there being three eggs on 31st May, no further details were available.

The months July and August only produced records from seven locations: **Blackmoorfoot Res**. continued to hold birds on a regular basis throughout July, but the number of birds, although present on 16 dates, never exceeded three; three were present at **Holme Styes** on 7th July; ten at **Boshaw Whams** on 21st July; eight at **Langsett Res**. on 23rd July; three at **Winscar Res**. on 31st July, with a single there on 3rd August; three flew N at **Harden Quarries** on 7th August, and a single was heard calling there on 24th August; and one flew W over **Fixby** at 06.30hrs. on 28th August. The only record thereafter involved a flock of seven at **Blackmoorfoot Res**. on 8th September.

In addition, nocturnal flight calls were recorded over **Thongsbridge** on 10th/11th April, 1st/2nd May, 14th/15th July, 20th/21st July, and 21st/22nd July (DHP).

**LAPWING** *Vanellus vanellus*

**Partial migrant breeder, decreased to (3), 100-500 pairs. Numerous passage/winter visitor. Red listed.**

As with the previous two years, January assemblages were very restricted and only amounted to *c.*100 at **Broadstone Res**. (no date specified), 300+ at **Whitley Common** on 6th, a maximum of 21 at **Blackmoorfoot Res**. on 23rd, and 320 at **Ringstone Edge Res**. on 27th. It would appear that birds were in very short supply during February as the only records involved an uncounted party of birds seen in flight near **Broadstone Res**. on 5th; two at **Blackmoorfoot Res**. on 5th, with three there on 7th; ten at **Whitley Common** on 6th; 185 at **Snape Res**. on 22nd; and 200 at **Ringstone Edge Res**. on 29th. A total of 12 localities held birds in March, but these never exceeded the *c.*50 at **Broadstone Res**. (no date specified); 40 at **Boshaw Whams** on 5th; 21 at **Blackmoorfoot Res**. on 5th; and 40 at **Snape Res**. on 11th, with 30 there on 18th. A flock of 40+ birds were present in fields near the **Huntsman Inn**, **Holmfirth** on 19th April and, although a former breeding site, no other details were forthcoming.

Although displaying birds and even scape building was widely recorded, the only direct evidence of breeding, in the form of nests or chicks, came from the following sites: **Windleden** (4 pairs fledged 6 chicks), **Broadstone Res**. (4 pairs were all unsuccessful), **Royd Moor Res**. (1 pair fledged chicks), **Isle of Skye Quarry** (1 pair bred), **Cheesegate Nab** (although 3 pairs attempted to breed, two failed and the other succeeded in fledging 4 chicks), **Snape Res**. (‘several young present’), **Cartworth Moor** (2 pairs bred), **Bradshaw Moor** (1 pair bred), and **Wards End Farm**, **Marsden** (1 pair were unsuccessful).

The post-breeding assemblages commenced earlier than usual in some areas, with 21 at **Ingbirchworth Res**. on 9th June, *c.*30 at **Digley Res**. on 23rd June, and a similar number at **Scout Dike Res**. the following day. At **Blackmoorfoot Res**., where the autumn build-up normally commences in mid-June, it was somewhat later than normal, with the first birds (30) not being noted until 6th July. As is usual, numbers then fluctuated daily, but 100+ were present by mid-July. Other post-breeding assemblages had started to develop by early July, but numbers remained low, never approaching the large flocks of last year: a group of 82 were in a field at **Netherthong** on 19th; 60 were at **Boshaw Whams** on 21st; and 45 at **Broadstone Heath** on 22nd.

Although there were very few August records, **Blackmoorfoot Res**. had 80 on 8th, 11th and 14th, and a flock in the **Broadstone** area peaked at *c.*300 during the last week. As is usual during September/October, flocks become more widely distributed with some localities holding favourable number. Although numbers fluctuated widely at **Blackmoorfoot Res**., 100 were present on 5th September and 1st October; 120 were at **Dewsbury SW** on 10th September; the 65 at **Ringstone Edge Res**. on 23rd September had increased to 320 by 11th October; and the **Broadstone** area flock peaked at 400 on 18th October.

Most records during November/December were from favoured locations, with some continuing to hold good numbers: the fluctuating numbers at **Blackmoorfoot Res**. continued, reaching treble figures on several occasions, with highs of 170 on 4th November, 350 on 19th November, 150+ on 23rd November, and 150 on 2nd December; it was a similar picture in the **Broadstone** area where the flock peaked at 450 on 4th November (note that 170 were also present at Blackmoorfoot on this date) but had dropped to 150 by early December. Away from these areas, the only other notable flocks were of 50 at **Digley Res**. on 9th December and 200+ at **Fullshaw** on 21st December.

Overflying birds, presumably on passage, were recorded as follows:

**Wards End Farm, Marsden** – 69 flew W on five dates between 2nd March and 6th April, with a maximum of 26 on 8th March.

**Harden Quarries** – a total of 242 flew in various directions on ten dates between 24th August and 21st October, with a maximum of 110 on 2nd September.

**Pule Hill**, **Marsden** – four flew high to the W on 3rd November.

**Langsett Res** – *c.*80 flew SW on 11th November.

**Rastrick** – 60 flew E on 6th December.

Note that an observer at **Harden Quarries** commented that it became apparent in autumn 2019 that most of the Lapwings they saw were simply moving from Boshaw Whams to feed in local fields, and hence it seems likely that counts there relate mainly to wandering locals rather than true migrants.

**GOLDEN PLOVER** *Pluvialis apricaria*

**Migrant breeder (2-3), 50-200 pairs. Common passage and winter visitor, decreasing.**

Records were received from 18 locations, but birds were in short supply during the first winter period and no breeding was reported.

In January, there were occasional sightings, but no numbers were supplied, from the **Hepworth** area, where the observer commented that ‘They are much less frequent than in the recent past. The fields are now like snooker tables and are of little use to them’. The only other January records involved 63 at **Whitley Common** on 6th and nine at **Ringstone Edge Res**. on 29th. Although records in February were more widespread these only amounted to a single at **Snape Res**. on 22nd, with 35 there on 25th and 115 on 27th; 50 on **Whitley Common** and 60 in the **Broadstone** area on 26th; and 50 at **Ringstone Edge Res**. on 29th.

The months of March and April, which normally see an increase in numbers, were equally as impoverished and, apart from passage birds over **Wards End Farm**, **Marsden** (see below), the only records involved a flock of 11 at **Blackmoorfoot Res**. on 6th March, with up to 18 there on four dates in late April; a flock of 14 off **Red Lane**, **Meltham** on 8th March had increased to *c.*100 by 28th March; 70 were at **Harden Moss** on 3rd April; five at **Broadstone Res**. on 21st March; 44 at **Wards End Farm** on 15th April; 139 at **Maythorn Slack** on 18th April; and a single at **Ramsden Clough** on 25th April.

In May, with the exception of **Blackmoorfoot Res**., which held up to six on 13 dates, the only other records involved two at **Broadstone Res**. on 10th and two at **Hartcliff Hill** on 14th. The occupancy at **Blackmoorfoot Res**. was short lived, however, with June only producing one or two birds on three dates and the only other record during this month concerned four at **Snailsden Res**. on 15th. It was a similar situation during July, with the only records involving 40 at **Blackmoorfoot Res**. on 6th and a single at the **Isle of Skye Quarry** on 19th. As stated in the introductory sentence, there were no breeding attempts reported.

The usual build-up following the breeding season began later than normal and, although birds were reported from four localities in August, they were all for very short periods and were all of singles except for six at **Broadstone Res**. on 26th. It was a similar picture in September, with records of up to five birds at four sites but, once again, there were no long-staying individuals. It wasn’t until October/November that birds became more widespread, but this only amounted to relatively small numbers at eight locations. Apart from **Ringstone Edge Res**., which held up to 49 throughout most of October, all other records were for a single day only, and numbers remained low, rarely exceeding 60, the following being the only exceptions: *c.*220 arrived from the NE at **Pule Hill**, **Marsden** on 9th October, with 80 there on 21st October, and 129 on 3rd November; *c.*100 over the **Wessenden Valley** on 21st October; 80 at **Whitley Edge** on 23rd October; and 200 at **Broadstone Res**. on 28th October, with 150 there on 4th November.

Rather surprisingly, the only December records were from **Ingbirchworth Res**. where nine flew W on 3rd, 42 W on 14th and a single W on 29th, and **Blackmoorfoot Res**., which held singles on 5th, 27 on 30th, and 50 on 31st.

Birds were recorded moving over at five locations and, like last year, the movements over Wards End Farm were particularly impressive:

**Wards End Farm** – a total of 579 flew over, mainly in a northerly direction, on nine dates between 11th March and 9th April, with peaks of 100 N on 8th April and 120 N the following day. Later in the year a total of 760 flew over, in variable directions, on nine dates between 9th September and 19th November, with peaks of 200 SW on 9th October and 290 E on 3rd November.

**Harden Quarries** – a single flew W on 9th September and three S on 3rd November.

**Pule Hill**, **Marsden** – at least one flew W on 1st October and *c.*100 did likewise on 10th November.

**Blackmoorfoot Res** – 35 flew E on 16th October.

**Ingbirchworth Res** – in December, nine flew W on 3rd, 42 W on 14th and a single W on 29th.

**RINGED PLOVER** *Charadrius hiaticula*

**Uncommon passage visitor. Has bred.**

There were records from four locations, the same as last year.

**Winscar Res** – a single on 20th/21st May (NWM, DHP) and two on 22nd May (TM).

**Ringstone Edge Res** – there were three records: a single on 25th May (TM), a juvenile on 18th September (AC) and an unaged bird on 25th September (DHP, DT).

**Blackmoorfoot Res** – three were present along the west bank shoreline on 3rd June (DM, DHP) and three flew W at 09.50hrs. on 5th September (MLD, GBS).

**Horbury Strands/Wyke** – a single unaged bird on 8th July (DH).

**LITTLE RINGED PLOVER** *Charadrius dubius*

**Migrant breeder (1), 0-8 pairs. Scarce passage visitor.**

There were records from ten locations, with possible breeding occurring at one of these. At another site the observers commented that ‘a pair looked set to breed but, due to disturbance from people and dogs, they were doomed to failure’. The first record involved a single at **Horbury Strands/Wyke** on 20th April and the last, a single, at **Winscar Res**. on 31st July.

Birds were reported as follows:

**Horbury Strands/Wyke** – a single on 20th April.

**Winscar Res** – a single on 27th April and 11th and 13th May. Two were then present between 18th

May and mid-June with single adults on 24th and 27th June and 17th July and a single unaged bird on 31st July.

**Ingbirchworth Res** – two on 29th April.

**Blackmoorfoot Res** – there were sporadic appearances of one or two on 14 dates between 8th May and 29th June. Birds were only present on single dates with the exception of two which remained between 29th May and 4th June.

**Deanhead Res** – two on 13th May and at least one on 19th May.

**Deer Hill Res** – two remained between 20th May and 28th June.

**Cupwith Res** – singles on 21st and 27th May.

**Wessenden Head Res** – a single on 4th June.

**Snailsden Res** – a single on 15th June.

**Fixby** – a single was heard as it flew SW at 06.15hrs. on 20th July.

**WHIMBREL** *Numenius phaeopus*

**Scarce passage visitor. Red listed.**

Although reported from nine locations (7 in 2019) there were far fewer birds this year. There was a similar number of records during both passage periods.

**Healey Mills/Kerry’s NR** – one flew E on 23rd April (PD).

**Broadstone** – two were in a field at Potter’s Gate from 3rd to 8th May (TM *et al.*) and a single was at Broadstone Res. on 13th May (DBu).

**Thongsbridge** – nocturnal flight calls were recorded as one passed over at 23.35hrs. on 9th May (DHP).

**Ramsden Clough** – a single flew N on 17th May (II).

**Blackmoorfoot Res** – a single flew W at 10.00hrs. on 7th July (GK, DM).

**Ingbirchworth Res** – two were in a field at Fox Hill on 23rd July (NWM, TM).

**Deanhead Res** – a single flew WSW at 09.10hrs. on 12th August (DHP, DT).

**Isle of Skye Quarry** – nocturnal flight calls were recorded as one passed over at 03.53hrs. on 27th August (DHP).

**Wards End Farm, Marsden** – three flew SW on 14th September and a single W on 22nd September (DWS).

**CURLEW** *Numenius arquata*

**Migrant breeder (3), 100-250 pairs. Common passage visitor. Red listed.**

The first returning birds (2) were in a field off Brown’s Edge Road at **Broadstone** on 6th February. There were then no records until 12 flew W at **Broadstone Res**. on 23rd February and a single was present there on 26th February, 15 were on **Thick Hollins Moor** on 27th February, a flock of 35 (along with 14 Oystercatchers) were at **Broadstone Res**. on 29th February, the same date that 46 were in a field off **Hey Slack Lane**, two were at **Ringstone Edge Res**. and four flew W at **Blackmoorfoot Res**. Interestingly, the two birds at **Broadstone** on 6th February were seen interacting in display flight, this being very early behaviour from returning birds.

During the following four months, March-June, birds were recorded from a total of 28 locations (39 in 2019). Although numbers mainly consisted of no more than a handful of birds, as in 2019, there were some impressive assemblages, especially in March: 49 were on **Thick Hollins Moor** on 2nd March, with March also producing 57 there on 6th, 30 on 17th, and 19 on 22nd; *c.*150 were at **Millhouse Green** on 4th March, with *c.*20 there on 7th April; 30 were at **Boshaw Whams** on 5th March; 12 were at **Blackmoorfoot Res**. on 5th March, with 16 there on 8th April; 28 were in a field off **Hey Slack Lane** on 12th March; 43 were in a field off Slaithwaite Road at **Meltham** on 14th March; a flock of 20 were seen at **Carlecotes Pond** on 16th March; and a flock of 22 were at **Wilshaw** on 29th June.

Breeding evidence was obtained from seven localities (14 in 2019 and 18 in 2018): two pairs at **Windleden Edge** hatched about six chicks, two pairs at **Ingbirchworth Res**. hatched at least one chick, two pairs at **Royd Moor Res**. with at least one pair fledging young, two pairs fledged young at **Scout Dike Res**., four pairs held territories at **Maythorn Slack**, and two pairs held territories at **Wards End Farm**, **Marsden**, **Whitley Common** and **Cheesegate Nab**. Although ‘bubbling’ was heard at a further five locations, there was no evidence of breeding.

Records following the breeding season were restricted to nine locations, none of which held birds for extended periods. The only records from **Wards End Farm** involved up to four on six July dates and a single which flew W on 7th August: a flock of 18 in a field at **Lower Maythorn** on 5th July and had increased to 36 two days later; **Blackmoorfoot Res**. could only muster singles on 7th and 23rd July and two which flew W on 14th August; nocturnal flight calls were recorded as one passed over **Thongsbridge** at 00.20hrs. on 18th July (DHP); eight were at **Broadstone Res**. on 22nd July; a single flew SW at **Boshaw Whams** on 26th August; nocturnal flight calls were recorded as singles passed over the **Isle of Skye Quarry** at 05.11hrs. and 07.06hrs. on 27th August and 10.54hrs. on 14th September; two flew NW at **Harden Quarries** on 1st September and at least one was heard on 10th September; and a single was at **Winscar Res**. on 14th September.

The only record after mid-September involved an unusually late individual at **Royd Moor Res**. on 15th December.

**RUFF** *Calidris pugnax*

**Rare to scarce visitor.**

A single was present at **Ringstone Edge Res**. on 18th September (AC).

Numbers of Ruff in the Huddersfield area in the last ten years:

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **2011** | **2012** | **2013** | **2014** | **2015** | **2016** | **2017** | **2018** | **2019** | **2020** |
| 2 | 0 | 2 | 0 | 3 | 2 | 9 | 1 | 3 | 1 |

**DUNLIN** *Calidris alpina*

**Migrant breeder, decreased to (1-2), 10-40 pairs. Uncommon passage visitor. Red listed.**

Records were only received from four locations (10 in 2019) and no breeding attempts were reported.

**Deer Hill Res** – a single on 1st May.

**Wessenden Head Res** – four on 12th May and a single on 4th June.

**Blackmoorfoot Res** – there were only two records: a single along the west bank shoreline on 3rd June and two flew W on 26th September.

**Cupwith Res** – up to three were present on five dates between 16th and 29th May.

**WOODCOCK** *Scolopax rusticola*

**Resident breeder (2), 25-75 pairs. Uncommon winter visitor.**

There were only five records prior to the breeding season, all of singles: **Deer Hill** on 1st January, **Carlecotes Ponds** on 1st and 16th January, **Blackmoorfoot Res**. on 3rd March, and **Becker Wood**, **Skelmanthorpe** on 16th April.

During the summer months roding birds were recorded as follows: up to three at **Holme Styes** between late May and late June, with four there on 12th July; two at **Ramsden Res**. on 28th May; and singles at **Digley Res**. and **Holme** on 25th June.

Records after the breeding season were received from eight locations (4 in 2019). A single was flushed along the Trans-Pennine Trail at **Dunford Bridge** on 18th October; singles were present at **Blackmoorfoot Res**. on 8th, 23rd and 25th November and 6th December; a single was at **Langsett Res**. on 11th November; one flew SW over **Snailsden Res**. on 25th November; a single flew high to the W over **Wards End Farm**, **Marsden** on 2nd December; one was seen at **Skelmanthorpe** on 5th December; a single was present at **Carlecotes Ponds** on 7th December; and one was on **Thurstonland Bank** on 10th December.

**JACK SNIPE** *Lymnocryptes minimus*

**Scarce passage and winter visitor.**

A single was photographed in flight on the moor just to the south of **Crossley’s Plantation** on 4th March (TM).

**SNIPE** *Gallinago gallinago*

**Resident breeder, decreased to (2), 50-100 pairs. Common passage and winter visitor.**

The apparent severe decline in this species noted in previous reports appears to be continuing and birds were only recorded from five locations before the first Covid-19 lockdown on 23rd March. **Blackmoorfoot Res**. had a single on 1st and 5th January and two on 11th January; **Wards End Farm**, **Marsden** had no more than two on four dates between 6th and 23rd March; singles were present in the **Isle of Skye Quarry** on 13th and 16th March; a single was chippering on **Bradshaw Moor** on 16th March; and two were at **Snape Res**. on 23rd March.

The majority of records during the breeding season, from nine locations, related to drumming and chippering birds, most of which only involved a single bird: **Isle of Skye Quarry**, **Wards End Farm**, **Hade Edge**, **Deer Hill Res**., **Digley Res**., **Maythorn Slack** (3 pairs held territories), **Snape Res**. (chippering and drumming from ‘uncounted’ birds on 29th April), **Bradshaw Moor** (‘several’ chippering in late April), **Holme** (2 chippering in late June),and **Crossley’s Plantation** (4 chippering on 4th July).

Reports after the breeding season were limited to 13 localities and, as in 2019, these were generally of no more than two birds for very short periods. The only locality with extended occupancy was **Ringstone Edge Res**. which held up to five birds on a regular basis between 23rd September and 14th October, with peaks of 11 on 26th September, seven on 5th October, and 16 the following day. At the other locations the only counts in excess of two involved at least five in a field near **Yateholme** on 2nd July, seven at **Cupwith Res**. on 5th October, seven at **Dewsbury SW** on 8th October, and four at **Carlecotes Ponds** on 23rd November.

Visible migration, which is not often witnessed in this species, was recorded from the following locations:

**Wards End Farm** – a single flew N on 7th July, two NW on 28th July, one N on 23rd September, and four W on 20th November.

**Blackmoorfoot Res** – a single flew NW on 14th August.

**Harden Quarries** – an impressive total of 58 flew over, mainly in a SW direction, on 17 dates between 1st September and 7th November, with peaks of 19 (15 W + 4 S) on 11th September and 11 (mostly SW) on 17th September.

**Pule Hill, Marsden** – two flew W on 11th September.

**Ingbirchworth Res** – a single flew W on 5th October.

**COMMON SANDPIPER** *Actitis hypoleucos*

**Migrant breeder (2), around 50 pairs.**

Records were received from 25 localities (same as last year and 2 more than 2018) but breeding was only proven at two of these.

A belated record involved a single which remained at **Ringstone Edge Res**. between 1st October 2019 and 4th April 2020 (HBC). Overwintering in Britain is not an uncommon feature of the species, especially in the south, but it is decidedly rare in the Club area, this being only the second recorded instance.

The first true migrants appeared in mid-April, and by the month end records had been received from 12 locations: singles were present at **Boshaw Whams** on 16th, with one there on 25th; **Digley Res**. on 19th; **Scout Dike Res**. on 20th and 21st; two were at **Ringstone Edge Res**. on 23rd; two were at **Winscar Res**. on 23rd, with five there on 25th and six on 27th; singles were seen at **Yateholme** on 24th; **Ingbirchworth Res**. and **Blackmoorfoot Res**. on 26th; on the River Calder at **Horbury Strands/Wyke** on 27th; four were present at **Wessenden Head Res**. on 29th; and a single at **March Haigh Res**. on 30th.

The following three months saw birds present at 19 sites, with nearly all the above mentioned localities holding onto birds. Numbers remained low, never exceeding two, with the exceptions of at least ten at **Langsett Res**. on 10th May and up to six throughout May and June at **Winscar Res**.

The only proof of breeding came from **Blackmoorfoot Res**. where a small chick was seen along the west bank in mid-June and **Cliff Wood** where a pair hatched at least two chicks. In addition, although there was no direct proof of breeding, two pairs held territories at **Langsett Res**., three pairs held territories at **Winscar Res**. and a pair may have held a territory at **Holme Styes Res**.

Although **Blackmoorfoot Res**. continued to attract up to two birds on a near daily basis throughout July and August, all other records, from eight sites, related to short stay singles with the exception of two in a water-logged field at **Boshaw Whams** on 26th August. The only locations which yielded September records were **Blackmoorfoot Res**. which had a single on 1st and two on 4th, **Ingbirchworth Res**. which had a single on 11th and 14th, and **Ringstone Edge Res**. which had a single on 18th, 21st and 25th.

In addition, nocturnal flight calls were recorded over **Thongsbridge** at 03.52hrs. on 6th May, 23.06hrs. on 7th May, 01.32hrs and 03.56hrs. on 9th May, and 01.50hrs. on 14th July (DHP)

**GREEN SANDPIPER** *Tringa ochropus*

**Scarce to uncommon passage and winter visitor.**

There were records from seven locations (8 in 2019 and 9 in 2018). At Dewsbury SW, which normally has the lion’s share, observations during the second half of the year were very limited.

**Bretton Park** – two on 16th January (TM).

**Horbury Strands/Wyke** – two on 25th and 30th March and a single on 6th/7th and 9th April (MC).

**Gunthwaite Dam** – a single on 21st April (BBSG).

**Scout Dike Res** – two on 21st April (DHP).

**Healey Mills/Kerry’s NR** – a single on the River Calder on 23rd April (JH).

**Dewsbury SW** – all records were from the banks of the River Calder: one from 23rd – 25th April (JH) and singles on 13th May (JH) and 10th September (PD).

**Langsett Res** – one on 10th August (BBSG).

**REDSHANK** *Tringa totanus*

**Migrant breeder, decreased to (1), 0-5 pairs. Uncommon passage visitor.**

Birds were recorded from six locations, all of singles for one day only. For the fifth consecutive year, however, there were no records from the River Calder catchment.

**Wards End Farm**, **Marsden** – a single flew NE at 10.30hrs. on 19th February.

**Blackmoorfoot Res** – the only record involved a single on 5th March.

**Redbrook Res** – a single on 15th March.

**Deer Hill Res** – one on 11th April.

**Whitley Common** – a single on 19th May.

**Winscar Res** – one on 10th September.

**GREENSHANK** *Tringa nebularia*

**Scarce to uncommon passage visitor.**

The only records involved a single which departed E from **Ingbirchworth Res**. on 30th July (BBSG) and two at **Ringstone Edge Res**. on 3rd October (DF).

**KITTIWAKE** *Rissa tridactyla*

**Rare to scarce passage visitor. Red listed.**

There were two records: a second-summer at **Ingbirchworth Res**. on 10th May (NWM, TM, DHP) and an adult, which was oiled and appeared ill, was present at **Broadstone Res**. on 27th August (NWM, TM, DHP).

**BLACK-HEADED GULL** *Chroicocephalus ridibundus*

**Resident breeder, decreased to (1), 0-5 pairs. Numerous passage and winter visitor.**

**Blackmoorfoot Res**.roost counts produced the following monthly maxima:

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Jan | Feb | Mar | Apr | May | Jun | Jul | Aug | Sept | Oct | Nov | Dec |
| 5500 | 5400 | nc | nc | nc | nc | 27 | 32 | 282 | nc | nc | 5000 |

Counts from the **Ingbirchworth/Scout Dike/Royd Moor/Broadstone** area produced the following monthly maxima:

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Jan | Feb | Mar | Apr | May | Jun | Jul | Aug | Sept | Oct | Nov | Dec |
| 800 | 280 | 600 | 18 | 20 | 12 | 23 | 60 | 225 | 300 | 300 | 120 |

As is usual, small parties were seen at a number of widely scattered localities throughout the year, but the only treble figure counts involved the following:

**Langsett Res** – birds were present in the roost as follows: *c.*4,100 on 1st January, *c.*4,500 on 26th January and 10th February, *c.*740 on 17th August, 1,270 on 26th September, and 2,350 on 15th November.

**Whitley Common** – 600 in fields on 5th January, 900+ on 31st January, 800+ on 3rd February and ‘Large numbers in fields and in flight, not counted’ on 6th February. This last record, along with that from Broadstone below, leaves one wandering exactly how many birds were involved.

**Upper Maythorn** – 2,000 feeding in fields on 11th January.

**Dewsbury SW** – 182 on 30th January and 350 on 14th March.

**Broadstone** – ‘Large numbers down in fields and in flight’ on 6th February.

**Bretton Park** – 250 on 26th February.

**Fixby** – 150 aerial feeding with 20 Lesser Black-backed Gulls and ten Common Gulls on 11th August.

**Ringstone Edge Res** – 200 on 28th August.

Visible migration was noted at two localities:

**Wards End Farm, Marsden** – in the first half of the year a total of 101 flew W on 18 days. Numbers rarely reached double figures, the exceptions being 13 on 4th February, 11 on 10th February, 12 on 2nd March, and 19 on 9th March. The second half of the year, as is usual, saw a total of 3,087 fly W on 68 days. The heaviest passage, as last year, was in July (2,249 on 22 days with peaks of 376 on 10th, 425 on 17th, and 621 on 18th). All other counts rarely reached high double figures, but 133 flew W on 1st August and 163 did likewise the following day.

**Pule Hill, Marsden** – a total of 587 flew SW or W on 17 dates between 14th September and 26th November, with a maximum of 84 SW on 23rd November.

A leucistic adult roosted at **Blackmoorfoot Res**. on 30th December (DMP, SP).

**MEDITERRANEAN GULL***Ichthyaetus melanocephalus*

**Rare to scarce visitor.**

There were five records from four locations.

**Blackmoorfoot** **Res** – there were only two records: a first-winter flew W at 10.35hrs. on 6th February (MLD, GBS) and a near summer-plumaged adult was present on 8th March (GK).

**Broadstone** – an adult was in a field with Black-headed Gulls off Bird’s Nest Lane on 29th February (DMP, SP).

**Ingbirchworth Res** – a summer-plumaged adult on 29th May (DMW *et al.*).

**Ringstone Edge Res** – an adult between 12th and 15th July (DF).

**COMMON GULL** *Larus canus*

**Common passage and winter visitor.**

Records were very limited and, apart from Blackmoorfoot Res., it has not been possible to do the usual critical appraisal because of the few recorded occurrences.

**Blackmoorfoot** roost counts produced the following monthly maxima:

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Jan | Feb | Mar | Apr | May | Jun | Jul | Aug | Sept | Oct | Nov | Dec |
| 1200 | 1200 | nc | nc | 0 | 0 | 4 | 3 | 7 | 11 | nc | 1000 |

With the exception of the Blackmoorfoot counts noted above, records during the first winter period were limited to six other locations:

**Broadstone Res** – 235 on 1st January, *c.*150 on 3rd January, 20 on 8th January, 13 on 7th February, and 16 on 4th March.

**Langsett Res** – *c.*20 roosted and three flew E on 1st January and *c.*150 roosted on 26th January.

**Greenhead Park** – three on 18th January.

**Rastrick** – 50+ feeding in a field with Black-headed Gulls on 24th January.

**Whitley Common** – 31 on 31st January, 33 on 3rd February, 11 flew W on 27th February, and 54 on 10th March.

**Ingbirchworth Res** – 33 on 19th January, 20 on 5th February, 22 on 7th February, 40+ flew W on 2nd March, and 23 on 17th March.

There were no May records and the only record in June involved a single at **Booth Wood Res**. on 21st. Apart from **Blackmoorfoot Res**. which, unusually, held no birds during May or June, up to 11 (but usually less than 4) were seen on 46 dates between early July and late October, but the only other records during this time involved a roosting adult at **Langsett Res**. on 23rd July, with two flying W there on 2nd August and 15 roosted on 5th September, ten aerial feeding over **Fixby** with 20 Lesser Black-backed Gulls and 150 Black-headed Gulls on 11th August and a single near **Cheesegate Nab** on 2nd September. Records in November/December were similarly poor and, with the exception of those from **Blackmoorfoot Res**. noted above, only stemmed from four locations and rarely exceeded single figures. The following being the exceptions: 21 at **Langsett Res**. on 15th November with *c.*30 there on 24th December, 70 at **Broadstone Res**. on 17th November with 30 there on 2nd December, 37 at **Ingbirchworth Res**. on 23rd November, and 50 at **Oldfield** on 5th December and 150 there the following day.

Visible migration was noted at two localities:

**Wards End Farm** – passage during the first winter period only amounted to 14 which flew W on five dates between 16th January and 10th February, with a maximum of seven on 30th January. The second half of the year produced a total of 149 (148 W + 1 E) on 29 dates between early July and late December, with peaks of 14 W on 20th July, 16 W on 2nd August and 14 W on 13th November.

**Pule Hill, Marsden** – a total of 93 flew over (86 SW or W + 7 E) on 15 dates between 24th August and 22nd November, with a maximum of 30 W on 22nd November.

**GREAT BLACK-BACKED GULL** *Larus marinus*

**Uncommon winter visitor.**

The number of birds at **Blackmoorfoot Res**. continued to fall, despite numerous visits to record roosting gulls throughout the year being made. There were four occurrences in January, none of which involved roosting birds: two adults flew W on 1st, a first-winter was present on 10th, a second-winter on 25th, and an adult on 31st. There were then no records until single adults were seen on 20th July and 14th August. The species was again absent until December, which produced five records: two adults roosted on 2nd, an adult was present on 14th and 25th, three (2 adults and a third-winter) roosted on 28th, and three (an adult and 2 first-winters) roosted on 30th.

The only other records were as follows:

**Wards End Farm, Marsden** – a total of 70 flew W on 29 dates between early January and late April, with a maximum of nine on 2nd March. Two flew W on 3rd May and a single did likewise on 25th May. Thereafter, a total of 83 flew over (78 W + 3 SW + 2 NE) on 17 dates between 12th July and 26th December. Numbers involved were usually in very low single figures, but 12 flew W on 24th December and 40 (including a flock of 30) flew W the following day.

**Ingbirchworth Res** – adults on 5th January and 5th February, a juvenile on 16th September, a third-winter on 25th October, a second-winter on 2nd November, and an adult on 7th December.

**Mirfield (Biffa waste disposal centre)** – seven on 6th January and three on 15th January.

**Whitley Common** – an adult on 29th January and an adult flew W on 5th February.

**Broadstone** – two in a field on 3rd February.

**Pule Hill, Marsden** – an adult flew W on 14th September, two adults flew W on 22nd November, and two flew SW the following day.

**Fixby** – a single flew N on 22nd September.

**Langsett Res** – one on 21st October.

**ICELAND GULL** *Larus glaucoides*

**Rare to scarce winter visitor.**

A juvenile which roosted at **Blackmoorfoot Res**. on 27th December (JB) was the first record there since a second-winter roosted on 2nd December 2017.

**HERRING GULL** *Larus argentatus*

**Common passage and winter visitor. Red listed.**

The higher than normal numbers roosting at **Blackmoorfoot Res**. during the second winter period of last year was not continued. In January, the highest roost count only amounted to 33 on 17th and February produced a maximum of and 75 on 26th. By March numbers had reduced somewhat and never attained double figures. Later in the year, although the roost was slow to build, 75 were present on 19th November, 68 on 12th December and 100 on 27th December. The number of overflying birds was greatly reduced on last year and only amounted to 13 which flew W on 1st March.

There were records from a further 18 locations (1 more than the previous two years). Although the number of passage birds reported from Wards End Farm, Marsden was impressive, they were somewhat subdued on last years’ figures, but Dewsbury SW continued to attract large gatherings between mid-April and late May.

**Wards End Farm** – a total of 248 flew over (245 W + 3 E) on 35 dates up to the end of March. Numbers were usually in single figures, but in February 22 flew W on 3rd, 25 W on 8th, 27 W on 14th, and 35 W on 29th. Movements between early April and late October were restricted to a total of 36 birds, most of which flew in a westerly direction, on 16 dates, with a maximum of six W on 3rd May. The following two months of the year saw 248 fly W on 24 dates, with peaks of 26 on 20th November and 33 on 24th December.

**Oldfield** – 12 were in nearby fields on 3rd January with 20 there on 5th January. Later in the year, eight were present on 4th November and 28 on 29th November.

**Mirfield** – 60 were present around the Biffa waste disposal centre and the weir on the River Calder on 6th January with 25 in the same area on 30th January.

**Ingbirchworth Res** – a single on 8th January, 23 on 19th January, two on 5th February, 12 on 19th February, three on 29th February, singles on 2nd March, 2nd June and 25th October, four on 23rd November, and three on 3rd and 7th December.

**Langsett Res** – six on 26th January did not roost but the two on 24th December roosted.

**Whitley Common** – five on 29th January, nine on 3rd February and eight on 24th December.

**South Crosland** – 14 in a field on 15th March.

**Lockwood Brewery Dam** – two on 16th April, six on 24th April, and nine on 10th May.

**Dewsbury SW** – the 34 present on 14th April had increased to 58 by the month end. Double figures were then present throughout May and the largest gatherings involved 58 on 13th and 75 on 28th and 30th.

**Shore Head**, **Huddersfield** – three flew E on 28th April.

**Winscar Res** – a single on 16th May.

**Ladywood Lakes –** ten were nearby on the River Calder on 17th May.

**Brockholes** – six flew over on 7th June.

**Broadstone Res** – adults on 17th June and 29th August and five on 19th November.

**Lower Maythorn** – a single in a field with *c.*50 Lesser Black-backed Gulls, a Yellow-legged Gull and 18 Curlew on 5th July.

**Ringstone Edge Res** – two on 30th October.

**Pule Hill, Marsden** – 52 flew over (43 SW or W + 9 E) on seven dates between 3rd and 23rd November, with a maximum of 23 SW on 23rd November.

**Honley** – 24 were present in a field off Meltham Road on 16th November.

**CASPIAN GULL** *Larus cachinnans*

**Rare visitor.**

This species was recorded in the Club area for the ninth consecutive year.

The adult which roosted at **Blackmoorfoot Res**. in December 2018 was seen again on five January dates: it frequented the roost on 3rd (NWM), was present on the reservoir during the morning on 9th (MLD, GBS) and again roosted on 15th (NWM, DHP), 17th (DMP) and 18th (DMP, SP). What is now considered to be the same returning adult was seen in the roost between 12th November and 28th December (DMP *et al.*). During this stay the bird developed an interesting pattern of occupancy. In November, it spent the daylight hours feeding in the fields to the east and entered the roost in late afternoon but, although this pattern continued into December, it spent much less time in the fields to the east. The feeding areas of the bird during December, although past favoured sites were frequently visited, remained elusive and it was not relocated during this time.

**YELLOW-LEGGED GULL** *Larus michahellis*

**Scarce passage visitor.**

There were records from six locations.

**Blackmoorfoot Res** – there were seven records which, from the age composition, may have involved no more than three individuals: in February, an adult departed S at 10.35hrs. on 1st (MLD, SP *et al*.) and an adult was present during the morning on both 17th and 20th (MLD, GBS); in March, an adult departed E at 10.55hrs. on 5th (MLD, GK, GBS) and the same second-summer was present during the morning on 19th and departed S at 11.00hrs. on 21st (MLD *et al*.). The other records were both in September and involved an adult which departed W at 11.15hrs. on 11th (MLD, DM, GBS) and an adult that was present during the morning on 21st (GK, GBS).

**Whitley Common** – an adult on 3rd February (BBSG).

**Boshaw Whams** – a second-winter was photographed on 7th February (DHP).

**Lower Maythorn** – a second-summer and a probable fourth-summer were present on 4th July (DMP, SP) but only one, no age supplied, remained the following day (NWM).

**Langsett Res** – what was presumably the same adult roosted on 2nd, 17th and 26th August and 5th September (RJB).

**Ingbirchworth** – an adult in a field off Horn Lane on 7th September and adults on the reservoir on 8th October and 7th December (BBSG).

**LESSER BLACK-BACKED GULL** *Larus fuscus*

**Common passage visitor, uncommon winter visitor.**

The only site with regular counts was **Blackmoorfoot Res**., where the following monthly maxima occurred:

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Jan | Feb | Mar | Apr | May | Jun | Jul | Aug | Sep | Oct | Nov | Dec |
| 18 | 17 | 2 | 2 | 16 | 4 | 16 | 7 | 8 | 11 | 28 | 14 |

With the exception of the Blackmoorfoot Res. records noted above, the only other records during the first winter period were as follows:

**Wards End Farm, Marsden** – a total of 135 flew over, mainly in a westerly direction, on 31 dates between early January and mid-April. Numbers were generally low, and the only double figure counts involved 10 W on 15th March, 12 W on 3rd April, and 38 W on 11th April.

**Broadstone Res** – singles on unrecorded dates in January and February and three on 4th March.

**Ingbirchworth Res** – singles on 17th January, 5th February and 24th March.

**Fixby GC** – a single flew N on 5th April and three did likewise on 12th April.

**Ringstone Edge Res** – four on 23rd April.

**Fixby** – three flew NE on 30th April.

As is usual, from early May until late October birds were reported from a number of widely scattered localities but numbers at most locations rarely reached double figures, the only exceptions being as follows:

**Ladywood Lakes** – 30 were nearby on the River Calder on 17th May.

**Lower Maythorn** – *c.*50 were in a field with a Herring Gull, a Yellow-legged Gull and 18 Curlew on 5th July.

**Fixby** – 20 were aerial feeding with 150 Black-headed Gulls and ten Common Gulls on 11th August.

**Ingbirchworth Res** – 25 on 26th August, 38 on 28th August, 67 on 14th September, 104 on 7th September and 130, most of which were adults, on 21st October.

**Langsett Res** – roosting birds were counted as follows: 370+ on 26th August and 390+ on 26th September. The observer commented that numbers were poor for the second consecutive year, being down nearly 50% on a ‘normal’ year.

**Broadstone Res** – 173 on 29th August, 42 on 2nd September and 102 on 30th September.

Movements over the area, other than the few mentioned above, were noted from the following localities between early May and late December.

**Wards End Farm** – a total of 420 flew over, mainly in a westerly direction, on 86 dates between early May and late December, with a maximum of 44 W on 19th May. Interestingly, as has been commented upon in previous reports, although birds tend to fly in a westerly direction this is simply due to the prevailing wind being from that direction, when it changes to easterly, as it did on several dates in May, the birds also change their line of flight.

**Shore Head**, **Huddersfield** – two flew NE on 5th May.

**Skelmanthorpe** – singles flew W on 13th, 15th and 29th July and 77 (in small parties) flew WSW on 1st September.

**Fixby** – 15 flew over (2 W + 5 SW + 7 SE + 1 N) on five dates between 31st July and 19th December.

**Scammonden Water** – eight flew SE on 8th August.

**Pule Hill, Marsden** – 49 flew over (41 SW or W and 8 E) on nine dates between 2nd September and 4th November, with a maximum of 27 W on 14th September.

**Deanhead Res** – six flew S on 16th September.

**Blackmoorfoot Res** – 11 flew W on 8th October.

With the exceptions of birds at Wards End Farm and Blackmoorfoot Res. in November/December (see above) the only other records at this time involved four at **Ingbirchworth Res**. on 2nd November, with singles there on 25th November and 3rd and 7th December;two at **Broadstone Res**. on 4th November and 2nd December; and six roosting at **Langsett Res**. on 13th November and two roosting on 15th November.

**ARCTIC TERN** *Sterna paradisaea*

**Rare to scarce passage visitor.**

The only record was of three photographed as they flew high to the E at **Cheesegate Nab** at 11.10hrs. on 20th April (DHP). This record coincided with a widespread inland passage of the species on this date.

**CORMORANT** *Phalacrocorax carbo*

**Common passage and winter visitor, increasing.**

Records were received from 29 locations, which is just two less than the previous year although nine down on 2017. However, 226 dated records were well up on the 132 of last year (117 in 2018 and 187 in 2017). This year there were barely any records of birds just being ‘present’ so giving us a much clearer picture of the increase in the species locally which is a truer reflection of the national expanding population. This is encouraging and comes despite all the difficulties encountered this year and the continuing problems with obtaining more regular counts from **Bretton Park**. With flyover birds, however, the direction of flight would be appreciated. Again, birds were recorded regularly from all parts of our area including **Huddersfield**, **Crosland Moor**, **Cowcliffe**, **Deighton**, **Fartown**, **Fixby, Lockwood** and **Rastrick**. As usual most of these sightings were of one or two individuals but this year there were more instances of three and one of four individuals. Again, the roof of the **Huddersfield University** building on Manchester Road regularly held birds.

**Scout Dike Res –** birds were seen on 17 dates either side of the summer months. Single figure counts were the norm, but 14 were present on 5th January (not the same birds as present on nearby Royd Edge Res) with 23 on 16th January, 22 on 29th January, and ten on 18th August.

**Royd Moor Res** – 15 on 5th January, a single on 5th August, three on 14th/15th October, eight on 24th November and an impressive high count for our area of 35 on 15th December.

**Gunthwaite Dam** – two flew over on 5th January.

**Blackmoorfoot Res** – birds were recorded on a total of 121 dates (140 in 2019 and 130 in 2018) with records spanning all months. The months with the highest number of records were January (17 days), February (15), March (25), May (12) and October (11) with all other months holding birds on no more than six days. Numbers present were lower than usual and, with the exception of five adults on 16th March, all the other records involved no more than three. Overflying birds, which are usually a frequent feature, were also less numerous and only amounted to an immature which flew W at 09.55hrs. on 1st September, an immature E at 11.20hrs. on 19th September and, in October, an immature N at 11.25hrs. on 8th, an adult S at 10.50hrs. on 10th, and three adults (2 W at 10.25hrs. + 1 S at 10.45hrs.) on 17th. The total number of bird/days only reached 152 (266 in 2019 and 245 in 2018).

**Savile Town** – counts of birds on the River Calder included 19 on 16th January, 15 on 27th February and eight on 25th April.

**Bretton Park** – the only records involved eight on 26th February and 14 on 8th December.

**Broadstone Res** – eight on 26th February, four on 22nd July,singles on 19th August and 28th October then three on 4th November and 14 on 8th December.

**Holme Styes** – three on 20th March.

**Windy Bank Res** – singles on 9th and 31st March. There were then no records until November, when singles were seen on six dates and two were present on 26th, and December saw singles on four dates.

**Ingbirchworth Res** – there were 14 records, all of low single figures apart from six on 25th January, four on 26th August, six on 28th/29th August, and seven on 11th November.

**Cannon Hall CP** – singles on 12th and 14th August.

**Harden Quarries –** a total of 72 flew in various directions on 19 dates between 19th August and 11th November, with peaks of 14 on 1st September and 13 the following day.

**Pule Hill**, **Marsden** – two flew W and a single U-turned from the NE on 12th September.

**Scammonden Water –** a single flew W on 15th September.

**Ringstone Edge Res –** a single on 10th October.

**Boshaw Whams** – seven on 31st October and ten on several dates in December, with 14 on 20th.

**Horbury SW** – 12 on 30th December.

**Wards End Farm**, **Marsden** – numbers were much down this year with just ten records of singles flying W and one of two doing likewise on 13th November.

**Shelley** – two flew over on 22nd December.

**SPOONBILL** *Platalea leucorodia*

**Rare visitor.**

Two which flew N over **Featherbed Moss** on 18th September (GMC) were the sixth record for the Club area and the first since two flew SE over Linthwaite on 5th October 2011.

**GREY HERON** *Ardea cinerea*

**Resident breeder, increased to (2), 20-70 pairs.**

Records were received from 41 locations, two less than last year and a similar figure to the previous three. Once again, with this highly visible species, birds were seen in all corners of the Club area, covering every month but most involved overflying singles, the only exceptions being three which flew W at **Wards End Farm**, **Marsden** on 7th April and two which flew NW at **Harden Quarries** on 17th September.

It was a very similar picture at **Blackmoorfoot Res**. to last year, with records spanning the whole year but birds being in short supply during both winter periods, especially the second. Birds were seen on a total of 171 days (182 in 2019 and 207 in 2018) but, with the exception of three on two dates in June, three dates in August, and 1st September, occurrences were limited to one or two individuals.

Away from Blackmoorfoot Res. and the breeding areas the only gatherings in excess of two involved four at **Windy Bank Res**.on 1st April; up to five at **Ingbirchworth Res**.between 30th May and 20th June; three at **Cannon Hall CP** on 14th August; four at **Scout Dike Res**.on 13th August, with three there on 18th November. There were records of birds frequenting seven gardens, sometimes on a regular basis.

Breeding was confirmed from the same four localities as last year: three pairs bred at **Scammonden Water** (same as last year but 2 less than the previous 4 years), nine pairs bred at **Cromwell Bottom** (1 more than last year), 14 pairs bred at **Healey House** (4 more than last year), and 14 pairs bred at **Bretton Park** (49 less than last year). The Bretton total is based on a single record in mid-February and may therefore be an underestimate.

**GREAT WHITE EGRET** *Ardea alba*

**Rare visitor.**

**Ingbirchworth Res** – one perched high in a tree on the west bank on 2nd September was the first record for the location and the twelfth for the Club area (GMC).

**LITTLE EGRET** *Egretta garzetta*

**Formerly a rare visitor, but now elevated to scarce visitor.**

The species was recorded from eight locations, the same as the previous two years and there were 14 dated records rather than 15 last year with the number of individuals involved not reaching the same heights. Interestingly only three locations this year had harboured birds last year.

**Bretton Park** – a single on 27th February (NWM).

**Horbury Strands/Wyke** – two were present on 20th April (MC) and singles on 21st May (MC) and 24th August (DH).

**Earlsheaton** – a single flew up the River Calder on 30th May (JH).

**Ringstone Edge Res** – a single departed W on 2nd July (PD) and two together did likewise on 24th August (DJS).

**Rastrick** – one flew W on 3rd July (JKP).

**Blackmoorfoot Res** – following last years’ absence, there were four records: a single was on the N bank during the morning on 20th July (GK, DM); one flew W during the morning on 31st July (GS); a single remained along the S and W banks during the morning (at least) on 21st September (TD, GBS, SP *et al.*); and one flew E at 10.05hrs. on 17th October (SP *et al.*).

**Ladywood Lakes** – a single on the River Calder on 11th October (PD).

**Ingbirchworth Res** – one flew SW on 5th November (BBSG).

**OSPREY** *Pandion haliaetus*

**Rare passage visitor, increasing.**

There were ten records, four in spring and six in autumn. This was one more than last year and maintains the increase in numbers of late.

**Ringstone Edge Res** – one flew over on 4th April (JB).

**Ladywood Lakes** – one flew N at 16.20hrs. on 20th April (PD).

**Well House**, **Penistone** – a single flew N on 5th May (BBSG).

**Ingbirchworth Res** – one flew N on 7th May (MGO).

**Wards End Farm**, **Marsden** – a single flew W at 06.50hrs. on 2nd August (DWS).

**Rastrick** – one flew W at 19.00hrs. on 8th August (JKP).

**Fixby** – a juvenile, initially seen moving SE at 17.24hrs. on 15th August, circled before moving S (DT).

**Harden** – one flew low W towards Digley Valley on 24th August (JMcL, NWM, DHP) and one flew S and over Harden Res. at 10.00hrs. on 6th September (DHP).

**Blackmoorfoot Res** – one flew W at 11.25hrs. on 29th September (MLD, DM, GBS).

Number of Osprey records in the Huddersfield area in the last ten years:

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **2011** | **2012** | **2013** | **2014** | **2015** | **2016** | **2017** | **2018** | **2019** | **2020** |
| 2 | 5 | 5 | 8 | 2 | 10 | 5 | 5 | 9 | 10 |

**SPARROWHAWK** *Accipiter nisus*

**Resident breeder (2), 50-100 pairs.**

Birds were recorded from 42 locations, just three down on last year, which under the circumstances may be considered very acceptable. This is still way down however on the 53 of 2018. Though the number of locations was similar to last year the number of dated records at 184, was well down on last years’ 250 and the 211 of 2018. Unfortunately, yet again many records were sent in as birds simply being ‘present’ or ‘regular’ so making it impossible to reach a fully accurate comparison. As is to be expected, the vast majority of sightings were of singles, rarely two, with three males at **Yateholme** on 20th October being the only exception. Whilst there was no proof of actual breeding, display was seen at two locations and after the breeding season juveniles were seen at several locations.

As usual, there were a good number of birds hunting prey in gardens with one even surviving a collision with a window at **New Mill**. A good variety of prey species were confirmed this year and ranged from Collared Dove and Woodpigeon to House Sparrow, Pied Wagtail, Goldfinch, Blackbird, Starling and Chaffinch.

With the exception of May, birds were recorded during all months at **Blackmoorfoot Res.**, but occurrences during the first half of the year were sporadic and never exceeded four records per month. Although a similar pattern continued throughout the rest of the year birds were seen on 12 days in September and eight in October. With two birds present on a number of occasions in the second half of the year, the total number of bird/days only amounted to 49 (87 in 2019 and 64 in 2018). (Although this drop in records appears alarming, it may have been caused by the reduction of observers brought about by the Covid-19 pandemic).

Dated records were distributed throughout the year as follows:

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Jan | Feb | Mar | Apr | May | Jun | Jul | Aug | Sep | Oct | Nov | Dec |
| 25 | 10 | 19 | 25 | 9 | 12 | 8 | 15 | 35 | 26 | 12 | 11 |

**GOSHAWK** *Accipiter gentilis*

**Sporadic breeder (1), 0-1 pairs. Scarce visitor.**

There were four records of singles from three areas and a pair bred in the Club area (Peak Park Raptor Monitoring Group).

**MARSH HARRIER** *Circus aeruginosus*

**Rare passage visitor.**

Compared to last years’ showing of 15 records, the five this year were a very poor reflection.

**Wards End Farm**, **Marsden** – a ‘cream-crown’ flew low to the W on 18th March and a ‘cream-crown’ first seen circling near Buckstones Edge dropped and continued low to the W on 31st July (DWS).

**Ingbirchworth Res** – a ‘cream-crown’ flew SE on 24th April (BBSG).

**Scout Dike Res** – a ‘cream-crown’ on 1st May (BBSG).

**Blackmoorfoot Res** – a ‘cream-crown’ flew W over Meltham Cop at 11.45hrs. on 24th September (TD).

Number of Marsh Harrier records in the Huddersfield area in the last ten years:

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **2011** | **2012** | **2013** | **2014** | **2015** | **2016** | **2017** | **2018** | **2019** | **2020** |
| 4 | 10 | 10 | 7 | 2 | 16 | 9 | 7 | 15 | 5 |

**HEN HARRIER** *Circus cyaneus*

**Rare to scarce passage and winter visitor. Red listed.**

There were 21 records, four more than last year, which was described as exceptional.

**Wards End Farm**, **Marsden** – there were ten records from this daily watched moorland site though how many individuals were involved is impossible to say. All birds were ‘ringtails’. In January, one flew E on 9th, one was hunting between here and March Flatts on 10th and one flew towards Cupwith Moor on 17th. A bird flew E at 09.05hrs. on 3rd February and one was watched for five minutes hunting on Great Edge on 5th February. In March, one appeared from the W and flew high over the valley towards Deer Hill on 6th, flew E on 11th, one flew low to the W on 18th, and one flew NE the following day. Later in the year a single appeared from N then moved E over Garside Hey (all DWS).

**Langsett Banks** – a ‘ringtail’ on 4th February (BBSG).

**Whitley Common** – single ‘ringtails’ flew SW on 7th February and N on 8th December (BBSG).

**Winscar Res –** a ‘ringtail’ flew towards Harden and then disappeared over Windleden on 29th February (CB).

**Crosland Hill** – a ‘ringtail’ flew NW at 11.50hrs. on 29th April (GK).

**Carlecotes** – a ‘ringtail’ on 27th May (GMC).

**Snailsden Res** – a ‘ringtail’ on 6th September (SF).

**Digley** – a ‘ringtail’ flew across the moor towards Wessenden Head on 25th September (GBS).

**Ramsden Clough** – a close enough view of a ‘ringtail’ on 5th October led the observer to consider it an immature male (TM).

**West Nab** – a ‘ringtail’ flew into Royd Edge Clough on 11th October (DMP, SP).

**Harden Quarries** – a distant ‘ringtail’ flew W at 08.50hrs. on 18th October and what was thought to be the same bird returned E an hour later (NWM, DHP).

Number of Hen Harrier records in the Huddersfield area in the last ten years.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **2011** | **2012** | **2013** | **2014** | **2015** | **2016** | **2017** | **2018** | **2019** | **2020** |
| 5 | 3 | 8 | 7 | 9 | 8 | 9 | 8 | 17 | 21 |

**RED KITE** *Milvus milvus*

**Formerly a rare to scarce visitor, but now elevated to frequent visitor.**

There were 56 records, a marked increase on the 27 of last year. As is usual the majority of these were of fly-over singles with just three records related to two individuals together.

**Bretton** – a single near the roundabout on 12th February (DBu).

**Blackmoorfoot Res** – although there were eight records, an increase of one on last year, it is possible that the March/April records refer to the same individual. In March, a single flew W at 11.30hrs. on 16th (DMP, SP), one flew W over Orange Wood at 10.35hrs. on 17th (MLD, GG. GBS), a single flew SW over Orange Wood at 11.05hrs. on 19th (MLD, GBS, DM), and one was circling over Orange Wood at 10.40hrs. on 21st (MLD *et al.*); a single was circling over Orange Wood at 13.00hrs. on 9th April (TD). There were then no records until two were circling over Meltham Cop at 11.00hrs. on 8th August (TD); two flew S along the E bank at 11.30hrs. on 5th November; and a single circling over the E bank departed E at 10.45hrs. on 7th December (MLD *et al.*).

**Wards End Farm**, **Marsden** – one flew SW at 12.30hrs. on 18th March, a wing-tagged bird flew NE on 25th March, one flew low to the N at 17.00hrs. on 31st May, a single flew S on 10th June, and one flew high to the W at 10.30hrs. on 24th July (all DWS).

**Shepley –** a single on 3rd March (NWM) and one flew N over the Sovereign Quarries on 8th August (DHP).

**Hade Edge** – a single flew S at 15.00hrs. on 23rd March (PMcG).

**Whitley Heights –** a single flew high to the SW on 23rd March (DBu).

**Cartworth Moor –** a fly-over on 28th March (DHP).

**Deer Hill Res –** a single drifted SE on 31st March (DMP), drifting between West Nab and Deer Hill on 13th April (DMP), two were photographed on 21st June (MH), and two were presenton 25th June (DMP, SP).

**Thurstonland Bank –** one on 31st March (DHP).

**Cheesegate Nab –** a single on 8th April (HQ).

**Cowcliffe –** one flew W at 13.15hrs. on 8th April (GBS).

**Rastrick –** a single flew N on 15th April (JKP).

**Ramsden Clough** – one was observed mobbing a juvenile White-tailed Eagle for 30 minutes on 24th April (II, DHP) and a single was present on 7th August (II).

**Penistone** – a single on 1st May and one flew WSW on 13th May (BBSG).

**Broadstone Heath –** a single on 4th May (TM), one flew towards Birds Edge on 23rd June (NWM), and a single flew far to the S on 22nd July (DBu, AK, RM).

**Scout Dike Res** – one flew W on 9th May (DMW).

**Langsett** – singles over the reservoir on 14th and 17th May (BBSG) one over Hartcliff Hill on 17th September (CB).

**Bullcliff Wood –** one flew over the old colliery site on 20th May (NWM, DHP).

**Honley Wood –** a single on 31st May (TD).

**Low Common Road –** one on 23rd June (TM).

**Holme Moss –** two were circling between here and Holme on 26th June (II).

**Fixby –** one flying SW at 17.40hrs. on 26th June was the first record here since the observer moved to this house 29 years ago (DT).

**Crossley’s Plantation –** one flew E towards Hade Edge on 2nd July (II).

**Meltham –** one on 21st July (DWB).

**Chew Res –** singles on 31st July (MC) and 8th August (DBr).

**Royd Moor Hill** – one on 15th August (BBSG).

**Golcar –** a single flying SW then turned and flew N on 26th September (JP).

**Lower Maythorn –** a single on 5th October (HQ).

**Winscar –** one flew towards Winscar Res. at 13.00hrs. on 12th November (CB).

**Ingbirchworth Res –** one flew towards Broadstone Res. at 10.00hrs. on 7th December (NWM).

Number of Red Kite reported in the Huddersfield area during the last five years:

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **2016** | **2017** | **2018** | **2019** | **2020** |
| 23 | 31 | 54 | 27 | 56 |

**WHITE-TAILED EAGLE** *Haliaeetus albicilla*

**Rare visitor.**

A radio-tagged (G393) juvenile male from the re-introduction programme on the Isle of Wight was tracked as it briefly passed over **Holme** on 12th April on its way south from the North York Moors to East Anglia. By 19th April, having been in Suffolk in the interim, it returned to the **Holme** area, where it stayed until moving back to the North York Moors by the month end (Roy Dennis Wildlife Foundation).

Whilst in the Club area it was seen over **Brockholes** on 19th/20th (DD), it roosted at **Bilberry Res**. on the night of 19th/20th (RDWF), it was photographed over the **Yateholme** area on 20th (TM), it was present in the **Ramsden Clough/Yateholme** area on 24th (II, DHP), and it was photographed at **Yateholme** on 29th (AL, NM).

A fascinating account of this bird’s movements can be found on the Roy Dennis Wildlife Foundation website [www.roydennis.org](http://www.roydennis.org). This is only the third record for the Club area – the others being from Langsett on 27th February 2015 and Wards End Farm, Marsden on 7th December 2018.

**BUZZARD** *Buteo buteo*

**The most widely distributed raptor of the area, resident breeder since 2004 (1 pair), now increasing**.

Records were received from 49 locations, well down on the 60 of last year but above the 41 of 2018. Dated records were correspondingly down to 506 against the 616 of last year, though just up on the 503 of 2018. However, as in previous years many records came in as ‘present’ or ‘seen regularly’ or ‘throughout the year’ so still making an accurate figure impossible to achieve. Five pairs were proven to have bred and at least another six are likely to have done so, similar to last year, though as stated previously such a highly visible species can be surprisingly secretive at breeding sites.

As is usual now, due to the numbers of records received it is impractical to list all and the following locations are where four or more were reported.

**Wards End Farm**, **Marsden –** birds were seen on an almost daily basis with many ‘twos’ and ‘threes’ but five were seen on 4th March and four on 11th April.

**Blackmoorfoot** – birds were recorded on 36 dates (73 in 2019 and 71 in 2018) with records spanning all months with the exception of June. The majority of records, as is normal, involved one or two individuals, but four were circling over Orange Wood on 9th May and three flew W up the Colne Valley on 7th October. (Although this drop in records appears alarming, it may have been caused by the reduction of observers brought about by the Covid-19 pandemic).

**Fixby –** there were no less than 34 records, with a maximum of six on 26th March and in April there were five on 1st, 2nd and 19th with four on 8th.

**Windy Bank Wood –** 27 records were received, all singles apart from four on 4th April and 11th September.

**Harden Quarries –** during visible migration watches singles were seen on 14 dates, two on nine dates with five on 24th August and 9th September and four on 5th and 11th October.

**Rastrick –** a number of singles were seen but six flew N on 13th March and four were circling together on 27th April.

**Hade Edge** – five on 26th February.

**Carlecotes Ponds –** six were present on 16th March.

**Thornhill –** four over on 21st March.

**Shepley** – there were just two records, four on 25th March and seven the following day.

**Cheesegate Nab –** four were seen on both 27th March and 12th September.

**Thurstonland Bank –** four on 31st March and five on 10th April.

**Brockholes –** of the seven records a maximum of four were present on 3rd April.

**Bullcliff Wood –** five were circling at the same time as a Red Kite flew through on 20th May.

**Holme Moss –** four on 7th August.

**Isle of Skye Quarry –** four on 8th August.

**Crosland Heath –** six were circling over the airfield on 20th August.

**Windleden Edge –** four on 31st August.

**Lower Hagg Wood –** four on 12th September.

**Ainley Top –** four circling together on 11th October.

**Ramsden Clough –** despite only three records from here the maximum count was of nine on 4th November.

Dated records were distributed throughout the year as follows:

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Jan | Feb | Mar | Apr | May | Jun | Jul | Aug | Sep | Oct | Nov | Dec |
| 38 | 21 | 65 | 73 | 39 | 34 | 48 | 38 | 44 | 46 | 38 | 22 |

**BARN OWL** *Tyto alba*

**Rare visitor. Occasional breeder.**

A pair fledged three young at a site in the north of the area and breeding occurred at three sites in the SE of the area, two of which fledged three young each and the other, although hatching young, the outcome was unknown. In addition, two other pairs were suspected of breeding.

One or two birds were recorded from a further 19 locations, a welcome increase on the 12 of last year. Although most of these records were for short durations, and presumably dispersing birds, two took up residence throughout most of the year at a site at 1,000 feet asl. (A nest box was positioned at this site in 2021).

**TAWNY OWL** *Strix aluco*

**Resident breeder (2), near 100 pairs.**

There were records from 23 locations, a similar number to last year, but a considerable decrease on the 33 of 2016. Although birds were present throughout the year at **Netherthong**, **Brockholes**, **Fixby** and **Thurstonland Bank**, the only evidence of breeding involved juveniles at **Brockholes** and **Thongsbridge**. In the SE of the area, pairs bred at **Broadstone Res**., **Ingbirchworth Res**. and **Langsett Banks** and a pair held a breeding territory in **Cliff Wood**.As is usual for this species, most records involved no more than two individuals. An observer in Butterley Lane, **New Mill** on the nightof 24th January, however, heard single hooting birds from the directions of **Meal Hill**, **Cheesegate Nab**, **New Mill**,and near the **Sovereign** public house.

A single was calling from the south plantation at **Blackmoorfoot Res**. on three dates in April and what may have been the same individual was doing likewise from Jubilee Quarry on 30th April and 3rd May.

**LITTLE OWL** *Athene noctua*

**Resident breeder (2), 50-80 pairs.**

There were records from 26 locations but, as in 2019, most of these were generally very short-lived. The comments of observers offered mixed-fortunes of the species’ wellbeing in the area. An observer at **Cheesegate Nab** suspects that there ‘may be two territories in the area’ and an observer at **Skelmanthorpe** commented that the species ‘seems to be doing well, with five territory sightings’. On the other hand, an observer from **Hepworth** stated that ‘I have to record the disappearance of a bird that I have always expected to see in at least four sites locally’. The only sites which harboured birds throughout the year were **South Crosland**, **Helme**, and **Red Lane**, **Meltham**.

At **Blackmoorfoot Res**., although the number of records was much lower than last year, one or two were recorded from the fields to west of the reservoir on several dates between mid-January and late July, although there were no sightings in February.

The only evidence of breeding came from **Scout Dike Res**. (a pair fledged 2 young), **Helme** (a pair fledged at least 1 young) and **Red Lane** (2 young fledged). In addition, breeding pairs, without further comment, were said to be present at **Cartworth Moor** and **Wards Place**, **Holmfirth**.

**LONG-EARED OWL** *Asio otus*

**Resident breeder (1), 5-10 pairs.**

All records this year were from breeding/former breeding sites or locations nearby. A pair fledged at least three young at a traditional site in the SE of the area. Breeding pairs were also reported from two new locations, both in the west of the area: a pair reared three young at one site and at a nearby location a pair fledged four young. At the traditional site in the SW a pair fledged two young, the fourth successive year that breeding has been successful at this location.

At one of the new sites in the SW of the area, where young fledged in 2017 but not in 2018, a single was present in late April and up to two were occasionally seen throughout June. Unfortunately, however, there was no evidence of breeding.

There were no records from the breeding location in the NW of the area.

**SHORT-EARED OWL** *Asio flammeus*

**Partial migrant breeder (1), 0-13 pairs. Scarce passage and winter visitor.**

There were records from nine localities and, although there was no direct evidence of breeding, most were potential breeding sites.

A single over Meltham Cop at **Blackmoorfoot** on 27th March was the first record there since a single on 21st May 2014.

**KINGFISHER** *Alcedo atthis*

**Resident breeder (2), near 30 pairs.**

There were records from 21 locations, a welcome increase on the 16 of last year, but still below the 27 on 2017. No sites attracted birds throughout the year, but the number of undated records makes a correct assessment of the species’ true status impossible to gauge. Breeding was confirmed at four sites (5 in 2019), three along the River Calder and one along the River Holme, with four young fledging at the latter mentioned location.

Once again, the species’ presence at **Blackmoorfoot Res**. was abysmal. There were no records until a single was seen on 22nd July, and the only records thereafter involved one on four dates in September and single dates in October, November and December.

**GREAT SPOTTED WOODPECKER** *Dendrocopos major*

**Resident breeder (2), 70-100 pairs.**

There were records from 35 locations, a drop of four on last year, and substantially lower than the 52 in 2018. The normal increase in late summer as adults bring their recently fledged young to feeding stations was only noted in **Meltham** and **Almondbury**. Indeed, a number of garden observers reported negative occupancy: at a **Hepworth** garden, where it had been a ‘daily visitor for years’, the species has ‘suddenly stopped coming to my garden feeders’ and at the gardens in **New Mill** and **Thongsbridge**, where visits in 2019 were described as being ‘less frequent than previous years’, this year there was little change.

Drumming was only reported from **Thongsbridge** (1 bird), **Magazine Wood**, **Fixby** (3), and **Thurstonland Bank** (3), but the only proof of breeding involved single pairs in **Helme Wood**, **Windy Bank Wood**, **Fixby GC**, and **Brockholes**.

Despite the usual almost daily coverage at **Blackmoorfoot Res**., birds were only recorded on nine dates between early April and late September. All records involved singles with the exception of two on 14th September.

Movements over the area were reported as follows: a single flew SW over **Pule Hill**, **Marsden** on 4th September; one flew E over **Harden Quarries** on 17th September and a single flew S there on 9th November; a single flew W over **Deanhead Res**. on 22nd September; and two flew W and one NW (with Fieldfares) over **Wards End Farm**, **Marsden** on 13th October.

**GREEN WOODPECKER** *Picus viridis*

**Resident breeder (2), 20-40 pairs.**

Records were received from 22 widely scattered localities, two less than last year, but the only locality which held birds throughout the year was **Thurstonland Bank**. An observer in the **Meltham** area commented that the species ‘seems very scarce these days in Meltham, and one at Brow Grains on 10th November was my only one for the year’.

Although up to two were heard ‘yaffling’ at a number of sites during the breeding season, there was no direct evidence of breeding, the juveniles seen at **Thongsbridge** on 25th July, **Wards End Farm**, **Marsden** on 6th and 19th August, and **Cheesegate Nab** on 30th August, may simply have been dispersing individuals from outside the area.

The fluctuating fortunes of this species at **Blackmoorfoot Res**. continued. As is usual, all records related to singles, but the only occurrences were on single dates in March, June and July, two dates in August, one date in October, and three dates in November.

A single which flew S over **Harden Quarries** on 9th November, U-turned back to Holme Styes Plantation.

**KESTREL** *Falco tinnunculus*

**Resident breeder (2), 70-100 pairs.**

There were records from 45 localities, just two down on the previous year but seven below the 2018 figure. Dated records were also down, to 300 as opposed to the 320 of last year, and a long way down on the 373 of 2018. Once again many ‘block’ records were received making it impossible to ascertain an exact count. Breeding was confirmed at four sites though ‘pairs’ were seen throughout the breeding season at four others and a number of juveniles were seen later in the season.

Most records involved singles, occasionally two and very rarely three or four, with the only exceptions being from **Harden Quarries** where 12 were present on 19th August and 15 the following day, and **Wards End Farm**, **Marsden** (see below).

At **Wards End Farm**,where daily counts are carried out, birds were recorded on 203 dates which is well up on the poor 153 of last year and in excess of the 189 of 2018. The number of bird/days was up massively from the 191 of last year to 321 but well down on the excellent 492 in 2018. Birds were seen in every month and in varying numbers with the highest counts being in August when between four and eight occurred on seven days and, in September, five on 1st, four on 14th and 12 on 18th.

One or two were present throughout the year at **Blackmoorfoot Res**. with three on 22nd July and four on 31st July. For the eighth consecutive year, however, no interest was shown in the nest-box secured to the tower by YW in 2012. (The occupancy of this box by Jackdaws has now made it totally unsuitable for the species it was originally intended).

**MERLIN** *Falco columbarius*

**Partial migrant breeder (1), 0-4 pairs. Scarce visitor.**

There were 43 records which is a slight increase on the previous two years but still way down on the 78 in 2017. Birds were reported in every month with the exception of August and the number of locations also rose from the 11 of last year to 19. There were very few records during the breeding season though happily two pairs were confirmed to have bred, with five young (3 + 2) fledging. As in previous years a good number of the records, approximately 45%, occurred during the main autumn passerine passage, a strong indicator that many birds were just moving through the area.

**Wards End Farm, Marsden –** with only 15 records this represents a large drop from the 24 of last year. The majority of these (11) were, rather unusually, during the first four months of the year with a maximum of four in January and this number was one more than the total for September and October together, which are usually the best months. None were seen between April and late September or in November and these figures are an indication of the indifferent visible migration season this year caused by an unusually high number of poor or no visibility days over the main period. All records bar one were of singles as follows: in January, one low W on 1st, the same female was probably seen twice before it left low N on 13th and a female flew low N on 21st, then a male flew low over the garden causing panic amongst the feeding Reed Buntings on 27th. A male flew S then returned low N on 4th February and on the following day one was seen high over Garside Hey chasing a Reed Bunting. In March, one flew low W on 16th and a male was over Great Edge on 31st. April brought a female-type dashing through the yard and then a male passing low E on 7th and singles passed over quickly on both 11th and 15th. There were then no records until late September when a male flew past the house onto March Flatts on 30th and October saw just singles over on 3rd and 9th with the final record of the year involving a male which flew swiftly through the yard on 19th.

**Ingbirchworth Res** – singles on 29th May and 22nd October.

**Blackmoorfoot Res** – birds were present on five dates, a welcome increase on last years’ single: an adult female was hunting over the fields to the west on 22nd July; in September, a single was doing likewise on 1st, two flew S over Meltham Cop on 19th, and an adult male was hunting over the fields to the west on 21st; and a single flew W over the reservoir on 26th October.

**Thurstonland Bank –** a male flew low N on 16th February.

**Carlecotes Ponds** – a male flew SW on 15th April.

**Yateholme** – a male flew low over moorland on 26th April.

**West Nab** – a male seen in flight on 30th May.

**Ramsden Clough** – a female flew W on 2nd July and a male N on 4th November.

**Holmfirth** – a single seen on 18th July.

**Hepworth Lark’s House** – a single also seen here on 18th July.

**Redbrook Res** – a female-type on 1st September.

**Harden Quarries** – a single flew SW on 4th September and one was chasing a passerine on 1st October.

**Royd Edge Clough** – a male was seen sitting on a fence post on 11th September.

**Isle of Skye Quarry** – one seen pursuing a passerine on 12th September.

**Upper Maythorn** – a single on 14th September.

**Deer Hill** – a male was watched chasing Goldfinches on 18th September.

**Digley Res** – a single on 20th September.

**Pule Hill**, **Marsden** – a female-type flew W on 9th October and a male did likewise on 21st October.

**Brow Grains**, **Meltham** – a female-type was watched pursuing a Meadow Pipit on 18th October.

**Saddleworth Moor –** one flew low S over Holmfirth Road on 19th October.

**Shepley** – one flew NE over the Cricket Field on 26th November.

**HOBBY** *Falco subbuteo*

**Rare to scarce visitor, increasing. Has bred.**

As can be seen from the table below records were again down but, given that five pairs bred in the area (Peak Park Raptor Monitoring Group) and were not witnessed by Club members, this underlines how secretive the species can be when breeding.

**Thurstonland Bank** – the first sighting of the year was one which flew S on 21st April (II).

**Wards End Farm, Marsden** – records were three less than last year with the first seen carrying prey on 21st June. The next was seen chasing Swallows through the yard before continuing W on 12th July and another flew W on 24th July. Another adult was seen briefly on 20th August and September brought one W on 5th, a juvenile low W on 8th and a single W on 18th (all DWS).

**Blackmoorfoot Res** – there were two records (4 in 2019 and 3 in 2018): a single over Meltham Cop at 11.30hrs. on 17th June (SP) and one flew W along the S bank at 10.25hrs. on 12th September (MLD).

**Outlane** – a single on 5th July (JS).

**Crosland Moor** – one flew over in a westerly direction on 9th July (MLD).

**Holme Styes** – a single on 6th August (TM).

**Shepley** – singles were present on 6th and 7th August (TM).

**Windleden Edge** – a single on 19th August (BBSG).

**Cheesegate Nab** – two were seen together on 26th August (TM).

**Horbury Wyke** – a single on 29th August (DH).

**Scout Dike Res** – one flew E over the dam wall on 2nd September (NWM).

**Red Lane**, **Meltham** – one flew towards Deer Hill on 4th September (SP).

**Langsett** – a single on 11th September (SSe).

Records of Hobby in the Huddersfield area during the last 10 years:

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **2010** | **2011** | **2012** | **2013** | **2014** | **2015** | **2016** | **2017** | **2018** | **2019** |
| 12 | 16 | 28 | 18 | 34 | 29 | 25 | 21 | 29 | 21 |

**PEREGRINE** *Falco peregrinus*

**Resident breeder, increased to (1), 1-6 pairs.**

Records were received from 38 locations, an increase of nine on last year, and therefore continuing the trend of recent years. Breeding was confirmed at four sites, with two of these in urban areas, well away from the high moorland and both proved to be successful. As is usual, records from past or potential breeding areas have been omitted.

**Ingbirchworth Res** – two birds were chasing Lapwings and Woodpigeons over the reservoir on 8th January.

**Wessenden Valley** – two birds were seen on 8th January and 5th September.

**Wards End Farm**, **Marsden** – birds were seen on just 21 dates, well down on the exceptional 35 of the previous year. Most birds were seen flying in a westerly direction and records spanned all months apart from May and August. Most records involved singles with the exception of two mobbing a Buzzard on 13th January, one doing likewise whilst another flew W on 16th January and three different individuals flew low W within the space of an hour on 13th November.

**Dewsbury** – one hawking overhead on 16th January.

**Blackmoorfoot Res** – there were 13 records (same as last year) distributed throughout the year as follows: January (2), March and July (3 each), September (1), October (2), and November and December (1 each). Ten of the records involved singles flying over the reservoir, mainly in a westerly or southerly direction, but a male and female performed two display stoops as they circled over the Colne Valley at 11.30hrs. on 24th January and singles were chasing gulls over the reservoir on 21st December (immature male) and 30th December (age and sex undetermined).

**Whitley Common** – singles on 8th February, 14th March, 26th October, and 2nd November.

**Marsden** – one over the village centre caused havoc amongst the resident Jackdaws on 17th February.

**Silkstone SW** – one flew NW on 8th March.

**Carlecotes Ponds** – a single in a thermal with six Buzzards on 16th March.

**Thurlstone Bank** – a single over on 25th March, one chasing hirundines on 23rd August and one flew S on 9th December.

**Cowcliffe** – a single W on 4th April.

**Deer Hill** – a single was involved in a skirmish with another bird of prey on 10th April and a juvenile was seen attacking a Woodpigeon on 1st August.

**Winscar Res** – singles were observed overhead on 15th May and 22nd and 31st July.

**Hullock Bank** – a juvenile flew over on 19th May.

**Scout Dike Res** – an immature passing S on 20th May.

**Crosland Moor** – an adult male flew E on 12th July and another did likewise on 18th September.

**Mag Dale** – two were in a skirmish on 18th July.

**Boshaw Whams** – a juvenile was chasing Lapwings and an Oystercatcher on 21st July.

**Golcar** – one at high altitude on 31st July.

**Fixby** – a single flew SE on 31st July.

**Holme Moss** – one near the mast on 3rd August and a juvenile on 18th September.

**Windleden Edge** – one on 31st August.

**Pule Hill**, **Marsden** – singles flew NE on 31st August and W on 4th September and 25th October.

**Harden Res** – an adult on 1st September.

**Harden Quarries** – a single on 2nd September, probably two on 6th September, and a single on 5th October.

**Deanhead Res** – one narrowly missed taking a juvenile Kestrel on 5th September and one was chased by Swallows on 9th September.

**Crosland Edge** – a juvenile on 7th September was thought likely to be the same one that was grounded by Carrion Crows on 16th September.

**Shepley** – one carrying prey on 13th October.

**Broadstone Res –** an adult caused pandemonium as it flew SW through a mixed flock of Golden Plover, Lapwing and Starlings on4th November.

**Ringstone Edge Res** – three were seen together on 13th November.

**Meltham Mills SW** – a single on 29th November.

**Brighouse** – a single on 8th December.

**Linthwaite** – one flew N on 22nd December.

**Skelmanthorpe** – a single on 23rd December.

**RING-NECKED PARAKEET** *Psittacula krameri*

**Introduced.**

The **Rectory Park**, **Thornhill** populationof up to six birds mentioned in the report last year,although occasionally seen within the Park, has moved to the nearby Calder & Hebble Navigation, where they were present throughout the year (Tim Dukes, Friends of Rectory Park).

The only other records involved a single at **Dewsbury SW** on 9th April (PD) and a single at **Brockholes** (DD) and two at **Highburton** on 3rd November (JKP).

**GREAT GREY SHRIKE** *Lanius excubitor*

**Rare passage and winter visitor.**

A single on overhead wires at **Brow Grains**, **Meltham** on 10th December briefly perched on a fence post, but was spooked by a passing balloon and flew off low towards Wessenden Head Road (DMP).

This is the first record since a single was photographed at Deanhead Res. on 9th April 2015.

**JAY** *Garrulus glandarius*

**Resident breeder (3), 200-350 pairs.**

Although there were numerous records of this common and widely distributed species, as last year, there was no appreciable increase in numbers during the autumn period. Also on a negative note, the heavy migration noted over Marsden last year was not repeated. Indeed, no birds were recorded passing over any of the migration watch points. As is usual, birds were present throughout the year at numerous localities, including several gardens, but numbers never exceeded four except for the following:

**Blackmoorfoot Res** – present throughout the year with six on three October dates and up to five throughout November.

**Windy Bank Wood** – up to six were present throughout most of the year.

**Magazine Wood**, **Fixby** – ten on 4th April.

**Fixby GC** – five on 12th April.

**Royd Moor Res** – six on 14th October.

**Ingbirchworth Res** – five on 21st October and 10th November.

The only breeding evidence came for **Ingbirchworth Res**. where a pair fledged three young and **Head Clough**, **Marsden** where a pair bred successfully.

**MAGPIE** *Pica pica*

**Resident breeder (4), 1,500-2,000 pairs.**

As is now normal for this widely distributed and common species, large aggregations are a thing of the past, but an impressive roost appears to be developing at **Thurstonland**. On a negative note, a 90 minute walk from **Bottom’s Mill**, **Holmfirth** on 12th January only produced a single, as did a walk from **Deighton** to the confluence of the River Calder along the Huddersfield Canal the following day.

The only counts in excess of ten were as follows:

**Cowlersley** – ten on 24th January.

**Millhouse Green** – 11 on 2nd March.

**Blackmoorfoot Res** – 11 on 3rd March and 17th December and 12 on 29th December.

**Golcar** – 11 on 31st March and ten on 4th April.

**Fixby GC** – 13 on 11th April.

**Almondbury** – 15 were gathered in a tree on 17th April and ten were present between 4th and 10th October.

**Wards End Farm**, **Marsden** – 11 on 20th October.

**Broadstone Res** – ten on 4th November.

**Kirkheaton** – 20 on 12th November.

**Thurstonland Bank** – 100+ roosted on 10th November and 68 were counted entering the roost on 28th December.

Although well over 250 records were supplied, confirmation of breeding was very limited.

**JACKDAW** *Coloeus monedula*

**Resident breeder (4), 500-1,000 pairs.**

Remains widely distributed and common, but the only evidence of breeding come from **Blackmoorfoot** (in a nest box originally sited for Kestrels), **Fixby** (at least two young fledged), **Lockwood** (juveniles seen), **Lockwood Brewery Dam** (seen entering nesting holes) and **New Mill** (1 pair). Although the observer at **Fixby** commented that ‘the local population in general is definitely increasing’ a 90 minute walk from **Bottom’s Mill**, **Holmfirth** on 12th January only produced a single.

Records were only received from a small number of gardens, but the **Holmfirth** garden mentioned in previous reports continued to monopolise. Unlike last year, however, there were no records between early March and early November and the number of birds was also greatly reduced, only reaching peaks of 40 on 1st March and 22nd November.

Flocks of anything up to 20 were widely distributed, those in excess are outlined below:

**Deanhouse** – between 60 and 70 were regularly seen throughout the year.

**Whitley Common** – *c.*100 on 29th January and *c.*120 on 10th February and 10th March. Later in the year there was a maximum of 40+ on 21st October.

**Ingbirchworth Res** – 200+ on 9th January, 200+ on 10th August, 50 on 26th August, 40 on 28th August, and *c.*100 on 1st September.

**Brockholes** – 50 on 3rd March.

**Holt Head** – 90 on 17th May.

**Ronscliff Wood**, **Gunthwaite** – an impressive gathering of *c.*5,000 roosted between late May and early July.

**Wards End Farm**, **Marsden** – 30 on 7th August, 67 on 28th September and 50 on 13th and 17th October.

**Broadstone Res** – 35 on 9th September.

**Blackmoorfoot** – 150 on 4th November.

Visible migration was noted as follows:

**Wards End Farmn0th**  – a total of 123 flew W on eight dates between 27th February and 21st March, with a maximum of 14 on the latter mentioned date. Later in the year a total of 1,132 flew W on 16 dates between 1st October and 5th November, with peaks, in October, of 180 on 11th, 200 on 15th, and 340 on 19th. This figure is in sharp contrast to the 2,716 which flew W last year.

**Harden Quarries** – a total of 246 flew in various directions (NW being the most common) on 15 dates between 2nd September and 5th November, with a maximum of 53 NW on 6th October.

**Pule Hill, Marsden** – 532 flew SW or W (mainly W) on 19 dates between 10th September and 26th November, with a maximum of 106 W on 4th November.

**Deanhead Res** – five flew SE on 22nd September.

**Scammonden Water** – 26 flew W on 15th October.

Note that an observer from **Harden Quarries** commented that he wondered if most of these counts related to migrants or simply birds leaving roosts and moving to feed in local fields.

**ROOK** *Corvus frugilegus*

**Resident breeder (5), 3,000-4,500 pairs (2,450 during the Club survey in 2005).**

The number of records of this species was abysmally low and, although this grossly under recorded species was still widespread, there were far too many comments relating to the non-counting of birds. As there were more records this year for Carrion Crow, however, is it possible that the decrease in Rook numbers is real?

With so few records it is impossible to do justice to this species, and the largest assemblages reported, in sharp contrast to last year, only amounted to the following: up to 20 throughout the year at **Skelmanthorpe**; 70+ at **Langsett** on 25th January, with *c.*200 there on 24th September; 60 on Meltham Cop at **Blackmoorfoot** on 30th January; 30 at **Farnley Tyas** on 8th February; *c.*40 at **Whitley Common** on 13th May, with *c.*110 there on 23rd July;ten at **Holt Head** on 17th May; 15 at **Royd Moor Res**. on 27th May, with 14 there on 5th August; 11 at **Wards End Farm**, **Marsden** on 25th June; 100+ at **Ingbirchworth Res**. on 3rd August, with 60+ there on 6th September; 20 at **New Mill** on 6th November; and 100+ a **Fullshaw** on 7th December.

Information on breeding was only reported from three rookeries:

**New Mill** – seven nests (16 when last counted in 2018).

**Jackson Bridge** – five nests near the Red Lion public house (7 in 2019) and 13 along Scholes Road (9 in 2019). Both these rookeries were new in 2019.

The rookery at **Crosland Moor** would appear to be extinct as, for the third consecutive year, it was devoid of nesting birds.

Birds moving over the area were recorded as follows:

**Wards End Farmn0th**  – a total of 33 flew over, mainly in a northerly direction, on ten dates between 12th April and 20th June, with a maximum of ten S on the latter mentioned date.

**Pule Hill, Marsden** – 57 flew SW or W on nine dates between 31st August and 5th November, with a maximum of 29 SW on 10th September.

**CARRION CROW** *Corvus corone*

**Resident breeder (4), 800-1,600 pairs.**

There were far more records of this under recorded species than last year but, as with Rook, the species suffered from there being far too many records relating to the non-counting of birds.

Although very common and widely distributed, most records were of fewer than 12, but one is left wandering how many birds were seen when the observers simply comment ‘present – not counted’. Also on a negative note, a walk from **Deighton** to the confluence of the River Calder along the Huddersfield Canal on 13th January only produced a single.

The following are the only records of a dozen or more:

**Whitley Common** – *c.*30 on 17th January and 3rd and 5th February, 30+ on 13th and 28th May, and 80+ on 18th October and 24th December.

**Wards End Farm, Marsden** – 15 on 11th March and 17 on 7th October.

**Blackmoorfoot Res** – 56 on 16th March and, in May, 54 on 1st and 43 on 17th.

**Lockwood ­**– the Yews Hill Road playing fields held up to 40 throughout the year, but the April maximum was 61, May had up to 51, and June saw a maximum of 47.

**Bradshaw Moor** – 14 on 9th April and 17 on 5th June.

**Crosland Moor** – 16 on 27th April.

**Holt Head** – 15 on 17th May.

**Ingbirchworth Res** – *c.*40 on 13th May, 15+ on 9th June, 30+ on 3rd and 10th August, 74 on 24th September, and 14 on 7th October.

**Broadstone Res** – 11+ on 17th June.

**Kirkheaton** – 25+ on 12th November.

**Scout Dike Res** – the 157 present on 18th November consisted of a feeding flock and birds overflying the area.

Birds moving over the area were recorded as follows:

**Wards End Farm** – 23 (8 + 15) flew W on 16th March, 12 (6 + 6) W on 4th April, and 12 W on 12th April. Later in the year a total of 54 flew W on six dates between 5th October and 4th November, with a maximum of 24 on 11th October.

**RAVEN** *Corvus corax*

**Former rare visitor, now resident breeder (1), 1-2 pairs.**

There were records from 37 localities, exactly the same as last year, but at only three of these were birds present throughout the year. The majority of records related to groups of up to four birds, only very occasionally reaching high single figures. Unlike last year, when a pair bred, this year there was no suggestion of breeding.

There were 12 records from **Blackmoorfoot Res**. (13 in 2019 and 10 in 2018) which, like last year, fell into two distinct periods: four records between 27th January and 16th March and eight between 8th August and 19th December. With the exception of three circling over the fields to the west on 14th September, all other records involved no more than two individuals.

Records away from the potential breeding areas in the west and south involved a single which flew E over **Silkstone** on 1st January; singles at **Carlecotes Ponds** on 1st and 23rd January; a single at **Broadstone Res**. on 6th February, with two there on 21st March, a single on 4th May and two on 13th May; two at **Whitley Common** on 10th February; two at **Whitley Edge** on 19th March, with four there on 15th April and two on 23rd April; two over **Thongsbridge** on 31st March; two over **Thurstonland** on 1st May; a single at **Scout Dike Res**. on 8th May; two flew high to the NW at **Crosland Moor** on 14th May; three flew over **Brockholes** on 4th September; four were over **Thurstonland Bank** on 24th November; and singles were at **Elland GP** on 2nd December and **Royd Moor Res**. on 15th December.

One of the two which flew W over **Wards End Farm**, **Marsden** on 17th December had a badly damaged right wing which was strongly suggestive of being fired at with a shotgun. Even though all the secondaries were missing, and there were holes in the primaries, it managed to keep pace with the other bird.

As stated in the 2019 report, with birds being present throughout the year at **Wards End Farm** it can be difficult to be certain whether overflying birds are actually on migration. With birds tending to fly in a westerly direction, however, it is possible that some of these may be true migrants. A total of 39 flew over, mainly in a westerly direction, on 18 dates between 6th January and 19th May, with a maximum of five W on 19th February and 15th March. Later in the year a total of 41 flew over, mainly in a westerly direction, on 15 dates between 7th July and 14th December, with a maximum of six (5 N + 1 W) on 1st September and six E on 28th September.

At **Harden Quarries**, another site where it is difficult to be certain whether birds are true migrants, one to three flew in various directions on several dates between 19th August and 11th November, with a maximum of five on 17th September and 7th November.

**WAXWING** *Bombycilla garrulus*

**Rare to uncommon irruptive winter visitor.**

The only record involved two in a tree next to the car park at **Winscar Res**. on 19th December (PMcG).

**COAL TIT** *Periparus ater*

**Resident breeder (3), 400-500 pairs.**

There were records from 25 locations, a drop of two on last year and eight less than 2018. The usual number of gardens held birds throughout the year, but the numbers present never exceeded five with the exception of 12 in a **Holmfirth** garden in early June. It was a similar picture in the wider countryside and, despite the unprecedented numbers passing over the migration watch points (see below), there were no corresponding increases away from these areas. Although most sites held birds throughout the year, the only records of more than four were as follows: five at **Scout Dike Res**. on 20th May; five at **Wards End Farm**, **Marsden** on 10th June and 11th October, with six there on 9th and 16th October; and five at **Bretton Park** on 8th December. The only proof of breeding came from **Blackmoorfoot Res**. (a pair bred in Orange Wood), **Green Owlers**¸ **Marsden** (a pair fledged 2 broods) and **Carlecotes Ponds** where a pair bred successfully in a nest box intended for Willow Tits. The box was filled with wood shavings and had been partially excavated (probably by the intended species).

The movements noted below are extraordinary and involved an amazing total of 1,029 birds. Smaller-scale movements were also noted at other Yorkshire sites during this period, along with unusually high counts from migration watch points in Finland and Estonia (source - [www.trektellen.nl](http://www.trektellen.nl)).

**Harden Quarries** – a total of 627 flew over, mostly in a SE direction (only occasionlly E), on ten dates between 17th September and 11th October, with peaks of 184 SE on 21st September (the previous day had only seen one fly SE) and 173 SE on 5th October.

**Pule Hill, Marsden** – a total of 321 flew S or SW on seven dates between 21st September and 21st October, with peaks of 83 on 1st October and 97 on 5th October.

**Wards End Farm** – seven flew W on 12th October, 61 (with a flock of 25) W on 15th October, 11 W on 16th October and two SW on 10th November.

**MARSH TIT** *Poecile palustris*

**Formerly scarce visitor, now rare.**

A single at **Scammonden Water** on 6th October (JB) was the first record in the Club area since two were seen in Bretton Park on 5th March 2010. The rarity of this species can be gauged from the fact that the Bretton Park record was the first since 1989.

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Pintails, Blackmoorfoot Res., 28th November 2020, Nick Mallinson



Tufted Duck, Bretton Lakes, 3rd February 2020, Tim Melling

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Scaup, Bretton Lakes, 2nd March 2020. Tim Melling



Goldeneye, Ingbirchworth Res., 19th March 2020, Nick Mallison

****

White-tailed Eagle, Holmfirth, 20th April 2020, Tim Melling

****

Bearded Vulture, Heyden Valley, 26th August 2020, Trevor Doherty



Whimbrel, Potters Gate, 3rd May 2020, Nick Mallison



Jack Snipe, near Crossley’s Plantation, 4th March 2020, Tim Melling



Stock Dove, Dalton Bank, 3rd February 2020, Tim Melling



Nightjar, location withheld, 13th June 2020, Tim Melling

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Kingfisher, Magdale, 20th January 2020, Reg Senior



Peregrine, Huddersfield, 14th June 2020, Reg Senior



Jackdaw, Honley, 5th April 2020, Reg Senior



Yellow-browed Warbler, Horbury Wyke, 30th December 2020, David Pennington

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Fieldfare, Wards End Farm, 21st October 2020, David Sill



Redwing, Holmfirth, 13th January 2020, Reg Senior



Spotted Flycatcher, Holme Valley, 19th June 2020, Reg Senior



Stonechat, Wards End Farm, 27th Novmber 2020, David Sill

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Rock Pipit, Ingbirchworth, 20th October 2020, David Pennington



Yellowhammer, Wards End Farm, 11th October 2020, David Sill

**WILLOW TIT** *Poecile montana*

**Resident breeder (1), about 20 pairs (but greatly reduced since the 1987-92 Atlas). Red listed.**

There were records from nine locations, an increase of three on 2019, but proof of breeding was only forthcoming from two of these.

**Carlecotes Ponds** – up to three seen and heard regularly in January and February, with one in song on 26th February. Later a pair bred in a nest box (the same one in which a breeding attempt had failed at the fledging stage in 2019, the box having been refilled with wood shavings during the winter), with both adults seen repeatedly entering with food from mid- to late May and the young apparently all fledging by 1st June. At the end of the year, one was present on 8th November and two on 23rd November and, in December, singles were seen on 2nd and 7th, and up to three on several dates from 20th to the year end.

**Ingbirchworth Res** – at least two were present throughout the year with at least one pair breeding.

**Broadstone Res** – two were probably present throughout the year and a pair fledged at least four young.

**Scout Dike Res** – one, only occasionally two, were present throughout most of the year, but there was no evidence of breeding.

**Royd Moor Res** – although an adult and two juveniles were seen on 15th June, there were no earlier records to suggest that breeding had occurred on site. The only other records involved two on 25th October, 26th November and 15th December.

**Winscar Res** – two on 30th June and a single on 6th August.

**Langsett Banks** – two on 31st August.

**Windleden Edge** – a single on 31st August.

**Dunford Bridge** – at least one, possibly two, were present at Wogden Foot NR on 22nd December.

**BLUE TIT** *Cyanistes caeruleus*

**Resident breeder (5), 3,000-6,000 pairs. One of the commonest species.**

Remains as widely distributed as usual but, as is now the norm, large assemblages seem to be a thing of the past. Indeed, a 90 minute walk from **Bottom’s Mill**, **Holmfirth** on 12th January only produced a single, as did a walk from **Deighton** to the confluence of the River Calder along the Huddersfield Canal the following day. Breeding was widely reported, especially from the environs of gardens, and 11 pairs bred in nest-boxes in **Cliff Wood**.

Most records, even from gardens, rarely reached double figures, the following being the exceptions:

**Wards End Farm, Marsden** – 12 on 11th January, at least 12 on 1st July and a maximum of ten in August.

**Ingbirchworth Res** – 35+ on 21st January and 7th February, *c.*20 on 3rd October, 19 on 8th October and 21 on 25th November.

**Gunthwaite Dam** – 11 on 5th February.

**Bretton Park** – a minimum of 11 on 26th February.

**Scout Dike Res** – ten on 4th March.

**Lockwood Brewery Dam** – up to 11 were present in April/May and a maximum of 14 in November.

**Royd Moor Res** – *c.*20 on 15th June.

**Almondbury** – ten in a garden on 22nd August.

**Kirkheaton** – 13 on 12th November.

Overflying birds were reported as follows:

**Pule Hill**, **Marsden** – three flew SW on 10th September and a single did likewise with a group of Coal Tits on 1st October.

**GREAT TIT** *Parus major*

**Resident breeder (4-5), 1,500-3,000 pairs.**

As is usual, this species was recorded from a similar number of locations as its near relative, the Blue Tit. Although breeding was widely reported, these were mainly from nest-boxes in gardens. The only record from **Bretton Park**, on 26th February, simply states that the species was ‘encountered frequently, not counted’ and several records on the database are annotated with the comment ‘present – not counted’. As a consequence, the relatively low numbers documented below may not be a true representation.

Even at the well watched gardens, numbers rarely exceeded six. Away from the garden environment the following were the highest assemblages encountered: *c.*15 were present at **Ingbirchworth Res**. on 31st January, with ten there on 17th July and 12 the following week and also on 9th December; up to 11 were present at **Lockwood Brewery Dam** in May; eight were at **Scout Dike Res**. on 1st August; and the observer at **Wards End Farm**, **Marsden** commented that it had been an ‘excellent year, better than Blue Tit with at the very least 20 birds around the garden in autumn’.

**SKYLARK** *Alauda arvensis*

**Partial migrant breeder, decreased to (4), 500-2,500 pairs. Red listed.**

There were very few records submitted for this species, with only 18 localities being represented. Breeding, which usually takes the form of singing males, was reported from **Wards End Farm**, **Marsden** (10 singing males), **Blackmoorfoot Res**. (6 singing males), **Deer Hill Res**. (1 singing male), **Broadstone Res**. (2 singing males), **Ingbirchworth Res**. (2 singing males), **Upper Windleden Res**. (2 pairs hatched young), **Marsden** (adults carrying food at Intake Lane), **Snape Res**. (2 juveniles in mid-May), and **Cheesegate Nab** (5 singing males). Following the comment last year about the fields in the **Cheesegate Nab** area being ‘improved and now have little more interest than a billiard table’, the five singing males noted above were described as ‘encouraging’.

As is usual, there were no January records, and the only February records involved a single at **Blackmoorfoot Res**. on 1st, with six there on 5th/6th and then up to six daily to the month end; singles at **Wards End Farm** on 18th, 27th and 29th; and a loose flock of *c.*30 at **Snape Res**. on 19th.

Between mid-March and mid-September, although birds were more widely distributed, numbers remained low and, with the exception of the ten singing males mentioned above at **Wards End Farm**, the only figures in excess of a handful involved ten at **Crosland Heath Airfield** on 16th March.

The only records after mid-September, with the exception of those overflying the area (see below), involved two at **Broadstone Res**. on 28th October and six there on 4th November, two at **Royd Moor Res**. on 6th November, and 15 in the fields to the E of **Blackmoorfoot Res**. on 19th November.

Visible migration was recorded as follows:

**Broadstone Res** – a flock of 18 flew W on 27th February.

**Wards End Farm** – in March, ten flew W on 11th, four NW on 13th, and six NW on 16th. The only other records involved two which flew SW on 12th October and two NE on 14th October.

**Isle of Skye Quarry** – up to five were seen (mostly flying SW) or sound-recorded on several dates between 26th August and 10th October (see below).

**Pule Hill, Marsden** – a total of 19 flew over, mainly in a W or SW direction, on five dates between 31st August and 5th November. No more than three were usually involved, but a flock of 12 which flew W on 7th October was described as ‘exceptional’. In addition, the passage was described as ‘Not many, but our best ever year’.

**Harden Quarries** – a total of 74 flew S or SW on 11 dates between 1st September and 7th November, with a maximum of 32 on 11th October.

**Blackmoorfoot Res** – two flew W on 12th September and six did likewise on 5th October.

**Scammonden Water** – three flew S on 14th September.

**Boshaw Whams** – a flock of five flew SW on 24th September.

**Fixby** – one flew N on 7th October.

The observer at the Isle of Skye Quarrycommented that‘Interestingly, calls were picked up well before dawn on several dates in September. This contrasts with our experience at Harden Quarries, where the species tends to be a late riser during visible migration watches’.

**SAND MARTIN** *Riparia riparia*

**Migrant breeder, increased to (2), 20-100 pairs. Uncommon passage visitor.**

Singles at **Winscar Res**. on 21st March and **Ingbirchworth Res**. on 24th March were the earliest. There were then no records until April, when four were on the River Calder near **Dewsbury SW** on 4th, with four there on a further 11 dates and six on 25th; a single was at **Blackmoorfoot Res**. on 4th and 15th (see below); a single flew W at **Wards End Farm**, **Marsden** on 5th, and one flew NE there on 22nd; three were over the River Holme at **Lockwood** on 5th (see below); a single flew N at **Whitley Edge** on 15th; two were at **Scout Dike Res**. on 20th; and one flew W over **Crosland Moor** on 27th.

The visits made along the Rivers Holme and Colne between **Lockwood** and **Kings Bridge** (along King’s Mill Lane), brought about by the Covid-19 restrictions, resulted in regular sightings of up to five birds with nine on 8th May and eight on 9th June. About 25 were present near the river on **Colne Road**, most resting on wires in a small industrial yard on 17th June, many of which were juveniles that were considered to have been locally bred (in 2013 two birds were seen entering holes below pipes in a large retaining wall next to Kirklees College, near the canal where they had been seen in previous years). It seems possible that a small colony may still exist in this area. Up to four were then present on a near daily basis until the last (3) on 2nd August.

The following months only resulted in records from 13 localities, the same as last year, but an alarming drop from the 24 in 2017. As with the two previous years, large assemblages were very limited, and birds were only present for short periods. With the exceptions of 40+ at **Dewsbury SW** on 1st May, nine at **Bretton Park** on 28th May, and 50+ at **Blackmoorfoot Res**. on 10th July, all other occurrences were in low single figures.

The only direct evidence of breeding came from **Horbury Wyke** where the usual nesting site on the River Calder, although apparently destroyed by winter storms, held a single active nest in early June.

The number of birds at **Blackmoorfoot Res**., as in the previous two years, was abysmal. A single on 4th April and two on 15th April were the only records during that month. Thereafter birds were only seen on 26 dates between 4th May and 29th August. Numbers remained very low and only achieved double figures on a single occasion when 50+ were present on 10th July. Since the demise of the breeding colony at **Crosland Hill Quarries** in 2017, the number of birds at Blackmoorfoot has been greatly reduced and it appears that speculation that the colony was the source of these occurrences was founded.

By late August most birds had departed the area and the only September records involved a single which flew S at **Deanhead Res**. on 1st, those migrating over **Harden Quarries** between 1st and 9th (see below), and one at **Wards End Farm** on 16th.

Visible migration was recorded as follows:

**Harden Quarries** – 17 flew over, mainly in a southerly direction, on five dates between 1st and 9th September, with a maximum of eight S on 4th.

**SWALLOW** *Hirundo rustica*

**Migrant breeder (4), 500-600 pairs. Numerous passage visitor.**

The first returning birds were all in early April: singles were at **New Mill** and **Blackmoorfoot Res**. and three flew W at **Wards End Farm**, **Marsden** on 5th, and singles were seen at **Oldfield** on 6th, **Fixby GC** on 7th, **Honley** on 8th, and **Skelmanthorpe** and **Thurstonland Bank** on 9th.

Although birds became more widely distributed at the usual locations shortly afterwards, for the fifth consecutive year numbers remained very low, and the only counts in excess of single figures were as follows:

**Meltham Mills SW** – *c.*50 on 17th April. The observers commented that ‘it was otherwise a poor year for the species’.

**Holmfirth** – ten near the Huntsman Inn on 19th April.

**Dewsbury SW** – in April, 25 on 14th, 18 on 25th, and 42 on 29th, and 100+ on 1st May. (This is the only treble figure count this year).

**Blackmoorfoot Res** – ten on 29th April, 12 on 11th May, and up to 16 daily in June.

**Ingbirchworth Res** – 20+ on 30th April, ten on 12th May, 60+ in the general area on 5th June, and 20+ on 17th August.

**Shore Head**, **Huddersfield** – 16 feeding over the River Calder on 5th May.

**Scout Dike Res** – 15+ on 24th June.

Confirmation of breeding was only forthcoming from the following sites: **Heath Lane**, **Linthwaite** (2 pairs in a barn), **Blackmoorfoot Res**. (2 pairs in a barn), **Cheesegate Nab** (2+ pairs), **Wards End Farm** (5 pairs), **Upper Windleden Res**. (4 pairs at Windleden Farm), **Whitley Common** (a pair fledged 4 young), and **Crosland Heath Airfield** (10 pairs in the stables).

For the fourth consecutive year no large autumn assemblages were reported. Indeed, the largest gathering only involved *c.*80 birds. This abysmal state of affairs becomes apparent when you consider that the following are the only occurrences in excess of single figures:

**Blackmoorfoot Res** – up to 20 daily in July with 30 on 7th and 50 the following day, never more than 14 throughout August, and, in September, 30 on 15th and 20 on 16th.

**Wards End Farm** – 17 on 1st July and 50 on 31st July. Then up to 50 on three dates in August and up to 60 on eight September dates.

**Scout Dike Res** – 25+ on 6th July.

**Kirkheaton** – ten on 15th July.

**Ingbirchworth Res** – 14 on 16th July and 20+ on 17th August.

**Royd Moor Res** – 20 on 5th August.

**Broadstone Res** – 20 on 19th August.

**Deanhead Res** – ten on 20th August.

**Elland GP** – ten on 28th August.

**Ringstone Edge Res** – 12 on 28th August and 4th September and 50 on 15th September.

**Dunford Bridge** – *c.*80 on 6th September.

**Windy Bank Res** – 30+ on 16th September.

Visible migration was recorded as follows:

**Harden Quarries** – a total of 2,466 flew over, mainly in a southerly direction, on 27 dates between 17th July and 20th October, with a maximum of 333 on 2nd September.

**Pule Hill, Marsden** – 249 flew SW or W on seven dates between 14th August and 10th September, with a maximum of 79 W on 31st August.

**Windleden Edge** – at least 45 flew W on 19th August.

**Wards End Farm** – a total of 351 flew W on five dates between 6th and 21st September, with a maximum of 120 on 6th September. In addition, 250 flew SE on 16th September.

**Blackmoorfoot Res** – 30 S on 11th September, 40 S the following day, and three S on 5th October.

**Isle of Skye Quarry** – 730 flew S or SE in two and a half hours during the late morning/early afternoon on 15th September.

Birds had virtually vacated the area by late September and the only October records (other than those mentioned above under migration) involved up to 15+ (but usually less than 6) at **Blackmoorfoot Res**. on five dates until the last, a single, on 12th; singles at **Stainland Dean** on 8th, **Pule Hill** on 11th, and **Meltham** on 23rd. A single which flew S over **Oldfield** on 4th November (DHP) was later than usual, but one at **Horbury Strands/Wyke** for at least 45 minutes on 23rd November (TM) was exceptional. The latest ever in the Club area, however, was at **Elland GP** on 5th December 1995.

**HOUSE MARTIN** *Delichon urbicum*

**Migrant breeder (3), 400-500 pairs (but greatly reduced since the 1987-92 Atlas). Common passage visitor.**

The national decline of this species, which is also reflected locally, continues to cause concern. Records were only received from 26 localities (31 in 2019) and breeding was reported from seven of these. As in 2019, numbers remained abysmally low, only reaching treble figures on two occasions (both in spring at the same locality). Indeed, even at well-watched reservoirs, the assemblages rarely reached as high as 40.

The first returning birds were seen at **Skelmanthorpe** (4) and **Thurstonland Bank** (2) on 11th April. There were then no records until five were seen at **Brockholes** on 22nd April and three appeared at **Broadstone Res**. two days later. The only other April records involved a single at **Scholes**, two at **Harden Res**. and six at **Lockwood** on 25th; a single which flew N at **Wards End Farm**, **Marsden** on 28th; and a single at **Blackmoorfoot Res**. and six at **Dewsbury SW** on 29th.

All assemblages during May and June, with the exception of 200+ at **Dewsbury SW** on 1st May and 128 there on 13th May, were restricted to very low figures, and the only groups of more than 20 strong involved 25 at **Blackmoorfoot Res**. on 11th May, with 20 there on 24th May; *c.*20 over the River Holme at **Lockwood** on 12th and 16th May; 28 at **Dewsbury SW** on 23rd and 27th May; 30+ at **Ingbirchworth Res**. on 27th May and 10th June; and *c.*20 feeding over **Rastrick** throughout most of June.

**In order to understand the fluctuating fortunes of this species it is essential that members continue to submit all records of breeding locations including negative records from past breeding locations.**

The following were the only breeding sites with data:

**Crosland Moor (Blackmoorfoot Road)** – no nests (1 in 2019). This was a long-standing colony which appears to have become extinct.

**Crosland Moor (Greenfield Road)** – four nests (only found because of the Covid-19 lockdown).

**Thongsbridge (Stoney Bank Road)** – two nests, but neither were successful (1 in 2019).

**Oldfield** – two nests (same as 2019).

**Brockholes** **(Oakes Avenue)** – three nests (it appears that this is a new colony).

**Rastrick (Slade Lane)** – four nests (same as 2019).

**Ingbirchworth** – pairs were suspected of breeding on the newly built houses in Wellthorne Lane.

**Cannon Hall** – although there was no confirmed breeding there was evidence that nests had been removed from under the eaves of the Hall by mid-August.

Although assemblages in autumn were slightly higher, the usual build-up never materialised and numbers rarely reach more than 30, the following being the only exceptions: 30 at **Blackmoorfoot Res**. on 7th July and 2nd August with 40 there on 22nd August, 60+ at **Ingbirchworth Res**. on 23rd July, with 50+ there on 23rd August; 35+ at **Royd Moor Res**. on 5th August; 30+ at **Cannon Hall** on 14th August; *c.*40 over **Thongsbridge** on 29th August; and 30 at **Crosland Heath Airfield** on 7th September.

Most birds had vacated the area by late August and, with the exceptions of a those at the migration watch points (see below), the only September records involved *c.*40 at **Ingbirchworth Res**. on 1st and 3rd, three at **Holme Styes** on 5th, 30 at **Crosland Heath Airfield** on 7th, a single at **Meltham Mills** on 16th, an up to 20 (but usually less than 6) at **Blackmoorfoot Res**. on 14 dates until the last (2) on 25th. The only October records involved 19 which flew SW at **Pule Hill**, **Marsden** on 1st with 18 flying SW there on 5th, and 11 which flew S at **Harden Quarries** on 5th.

Visible migration was recorded as follows:

**Fixby** – six flew SE on 31st July and *c.*50 flew NW on 27th August.

**Harden Quarries** – a total of 624 flew over, mainly in a southerly direction, on 16 dates between 7th August and 5th October, with a maximum of 126 on 4th September.

**Wards End Farm** – 120 flew W on four dates between 30th August and 14th September, with a maximum of 90 on 6th September. In addition, 20 flew SE on 16th September. The observer commented that ‘like last year, it was a very poor year’.

**Deanhead Res** – 20 flew S on 1st September and 500+ flew SE between 08.30hrs. and 08.55hrs. on 15th September.

**Blackmoorfoot** – 20 flew S on 12th September.

**Pule Hill** – 19 flew SW on 1st October and 18 did likewise on 5th October.

**LONG-TAILED TIT** *Aegithalos caudatus*

**Resident breeder (3), 100-250 pairs.**

There were numerous records from all habitat types with the exception of open moorland, although birds were seen overflying at two moorland watchpoints. A number of feeding stations attracted small numbers of birds, mostly throughout the year, and an observer at **Thongsbridge** commented ‘more numerous than ever in my garden with 10-15 present most days’.

As usual most groups were in single figures, the exceptions being outlined below:

**Lockwood** – present throughout the year with a maximum of ten on 7th January and up to 17 in July.

**Blackmoorfoot Res** – although birds were present throughout most of the year there were no occurrences in April or June and there was no evidence of breeding. The only double figure counts involved 13 on 30th January, 16 on 12th – 14th September, 12 on both 16th October and 29th November, and 11 on 30th November.

**Silkstone SW** – 30 on 9th January.

**Ingbirchworth Res** – 15+ on feeders on 13th/14th January, 13 on 14th February, 14 on 9th June, 20+ on 2nd September, 12 on 7th/8th October, 23 on 26th October, and 12 on 25th November.

**Wards End Farm**, **Marsden** – 12 on 23rd January. Then, on 14th June, a most unusual occurrence was witnessed when ‘from nowhere, over my head, 40+ (probably 42) descended on the garden for just a couple of minutes. Any I managed to get my binoculars or camera on were juveniles. After three minutes they just disappeared, probably going down to Lower Green Owlers’. Later in the year, ten were present on 14th September, then, in October, 12 on 3rd, 14 on 17th, and 26 on 18th. There were no further records until a party of ten were seen on 8th November.

**Scout Dike Res** – 12 on 24th June.

**Scammonden Water** – 14 on 5th October.

**Deanhead Res** – 16 on 15th October.

**Windy Bank Wood** – ten on 16th October.

**Kirkheaton** – 11 on 12th November.

**Brockholes** – ten on 24th December.

**Golcar** – ten on 30th December.

Breeding was reported from **Thongsbridge** (2 pairs, but only 1 was successful); **Spa Wood**, **Lockwood** (1 pair); **Ingbirchworth Res**. (1 pair); **Fixby GC** (1 pair); **Barton**, **Crosland Moor** (1 pair fledged young); and **New Mill** (1 pair).

This species is not renowned for undertaking migrational movements, but the following were reported:

**Harden Quarries** – a flock of 20 flew S on 13th September but soon returned to the copse and a flock of seven flew SE on 6th October but were thought to have come down on the moor.

**Pule Hill**, **Marsden** – flocks of 19 flew SW on 1st October and 18 did likewise on 5th October. Interestingly, the yearly maximum for Coal Tit was also witnessed on the last mentioned date.

**WOOD WARBLER** *Phylloscopus sibilatrix*

**Rare to scarce passage visitor and irregular migrant breeder (1), 0-5 pairs.**

There were only two records and, despite extensive searching at a former breeding site on 17th May, for the second consecutive year no birds were located.

A singing male was present at **Yateholme** on 31st May and 1st June (TM) and one was seen at **Scammonden Water** on 12th August (DT).

**YELLOW-BROWED WARBLER** *Phylloscopus inornatus*

**Vagrant.**

A single was photographed in the vicinity of **Horbury SW** on 25th December (MH) and, although not located the following day, it was present on 27th (MH) and 28th (MC, DH). Although it could not be found on 29th, it was relocated in a tree near the River Calder on 30th (NWM, DHP, DT) and remained there the following day (TM).

The only previous records are from **Bretton Park** on 2nd November 1980, **Shaw Wood**, **Outlane** on 27th September 1985 and **Scammonden Water** on 11th October 2005.

**WILLOW WARBLER** *Phylloscopus trochilus*

**Migrant breeder (4), 1,000-2,500 pairs. The commonest warbler. Common passage visitor.**

Records were received from 41 locations, a similar number to the previous two years. Birds were present between 5th April and 15th September.

The first returning birds, mainly singing males, were a single at **Thurstonland Bank** on 5th April and two at **Carlecotes Ponds** and a single at **Oldfield** the following day. By the end of April, although birds were more widely distributed, records only stemmed from a further 21 localities. Most records involved no more than five birds, but one can only speculate at the number present at **Skelmanthorpe** on 11th April as the only details supplied was ‘double figures’ and by 17th April we were informed that there were ‘good numbers of singing males’. There were exceptional numbers between **Hullock Bank** and **Cheesegate Nab** during April: 14 singing males were present on 13th and this had increased to 29 by 17th and 32 by the 22nd. The only other double figure counts involved ten singing males in the **Isle of Skye Quarry** on 19th April and there was a minimum of 20 singing males at **Ingbirchworth Res**. on 26th April.

Birds continued to arrive during the following months, but numbers generally remained low. The area between **Hullock Bank** and **Cheesegate Nab** continued to hold good numbers throughout the summer months, and peaked at 27 singing males on 2nd May. The only other double figure counts, mainly concerning singing males, were a minimum of ten along the Kirklees Light Railway at **Skelmanthorpe** on 14th May, at least 18 at **Ingbirchworth Res**. on 9th June, at least 20 at **Broadstone Res**. on 17th June, 15+ at **Scout Dike Res**. on 20th June, and 32 at **Royd Moor Res**.

Although all the localities mentioned above held singing males throughout the summer months, and pairs presumably bred, the only direct proof of breeding came from **Barton**, **Crosland Moor** (2 pairs bred), **Ingbirchworth Res**. (adults carrying food), and **Scout Dike Res**. (adults carrying food). Comments regarding breeding numbers in the **Marsden** area make interesting reading: there were a total of 18 territories between **Hey Green** and **Netherwood** (down from 23 last year and well below the average of 35 between 2003 and 2019) and in the **Wessenden Valley** there were only 13 territorial males (down from 15 last year and well below the average of 20 between 2003 and 2019).

A singing male at **Blackmoorfoot Res**. on 7th April was the first. Three days later this had increased to six singing males and thereafter seven males took up territories and remained throughout the breeding season (8 in 2019). By early August numbers were beginning to dwindle and, although birds were seen on a daily basis, never more than three were encountered. The only September occurrences involved one or two on the first five days of the month.

August records were only received from ten widely scattered localities, most of which only held a handful of birds, the only exceptions being ten at **Deanhead Res**. on 7th and 12 at **Denby Delph** on 22nd. The only September records, with the exception of the one or two at **Blackmoorfoot Res**. on the first five days (see above) involved singles at **Broadstone Res**. on 9th and **Wards End Farm**, **Marsden** on 15th.

**CHIFFCHAFF** *Phylloscopus collybita*

**Migrant breeder, increased to (3), 100-200 pairs. Passage visitor and scarce winter visitor.**

Records were only received from 52 widely scattered localities, a drop of five on last year, and a marked decline on the 79 in 2015.

The only record during the first winter period involved a single at **Silkstone SW** on 1st January (RJB).

The earliest returning birds appeared during the first three weeks of March, with a single at **Dewsbury SW** on 6th, with two there on 14th; a single at **Scout Dike Res**. on 13th and 18th; singles at **Carlecotes Ponds** on 14th, **Ingbirchworth Res**. on 15th, **Blackmoorfoot Res**. on 16th, and **Windy Bank Wood** on 20th; and two at **Royd Moor Res**. on 21st.

By mid-April birds, mainly fewer than four, had been recorded from a further 18 sites and by late April birds had become far more widely distributed (a similar picture to the previous 2 years). Most records related to less than four individuals, the only exceptions being as follows:

**Thurstonland Bank** – 20 (12 singing males + 8 silent birds) on 25th March.

**Magazine Wood**, **Fixby** – six on 4th and 6th April.

**Hullock Bank** to **Cheesegate Nab** – ten on 7th April, most of which remained throughout the summer.

**Skelmanthorpe** – one can only speculate at the number present on 11th April as the only details supplied was ‘double figures’ and by 17th April we were informed that there were ‘good numbers of singing males’.

**Healey Mills/Kerry’s NR** – six on 25th and 29th April.

**Dewsbury SW** – six on 25th April.

**Lockwood** – seven singing males in the Spa Wood and Newsome Wood area on 28th April.

**Jackson Bridge** – six on 17th May.

**Royd Moor Res** – a minimum of nine on 27th May.

**Marsden** – ten territories were noted, but coverage was not as good as usual.

**Scout Dike Res** – nine on 3rd September.

**Scammonden Water** – 20+ on 19th September but only eight remained three days later.

Up to three remained at 14 sites throughout September and, in October, two were present at **Ingbirchworth Res**. on 1st. with singles at **Winscar Res**. on 1st; **Blackmoorfoot Res**. on 2nd, 4th and 5th; **Wards End Farm**, **Marsden** on 3rd; **Netherthong** on 4th; **Marsden** on 5th; **Ringstone Edge Res**. on 8th; and **Royd Moor Res**. on 14th.

Presumed wintering birds were reported as follows:

**Almondbury** – one in a garden on 1st November (AK).

**Blackmoorfoot Res** – singles on 25th November (DM) and 5th December (MLD, DM, GBS).

**Holme Styes Res** – one on 27th November (II).

**Meltham Mills SW** – four on 29th November (DHP) then up to three on all visits to the year end (DHP, DMP, SP).

**Horbury SW** – singles on 8th December (MC) and 28th December (NWM, DHP) and four on 30th December (DHP, DT).

**SEDGE WARBLER** *Acrocephalus schoenobaenus*

**Migrant breeder (1), 5-20 pairs.**

The decline of this species continues but, although records were only received from four locations (2 in 2019), a pair bred at one of these.

**Healey Mills/Kerry’s NR** – two were present on 29th April.

**Broadstone Res** – a singing male on 3rd/4th May.

**Gunthwaite** – a male held a breeding territory at Spa Bottom.

**Deanhead Res** – although this site was regularly visited there was no indication of the species being present until two adults were seen carrying food to a nest on 4th September.

**REED WARBLER** *Acrocephalus scirpaceus*

**Rare to scarce passage visitor and rare migrant breeder (1), 0-2 pairs.**

Records were only received from three locations, the same as last year but a marked drop on the six of 2018. The first bird was seen on 25th April but, like last year, there were no autumn sightings.

**Dewsbury SW** – a single on 25th April.

**Horbury Bridge** – one on 30th April.

**Healey Mills/Kerry’s NR** – singles on 29th April, 8th and 17th May, and two on 13th May.

**GRASSHOPPER WARBLER** *Locustella naevia*

**Passage visitor and occasional migrant breeder (1), 0-3 pairs. Red listed.**

There were records from four locations, a marked drop on the 11 of last year, although this may have been as a consequence of ‘lockdown’ restrictions rather than a real decrease in the population. Unlike last year there was no direct evidence of breeding. Birds were recorded between 20th April and 1st September.

**Broadstone Res/Heath** – one, occasionally two, reeling males were present between 20th April and 2nd July.

**Red Lane, Meltham** – a reeling male on 22nd April was the first. Up to four males then took up territories between here and Deer Hill and remained until 5th July. The only record thereafter involved two males reeling near the top of Red Lane on 29th July. Although there was no direct evidence of breeding, it was thought that at least one pair bred near Red Lane as birds showed agitated behaviour throughout May. In addition, at least two males had started reeling again by early July, suggesting the start of a second brood.

**Horbury Strands/Wyke** – a single on 21st May.

**Deanhead Res** – a single was present between 6th August and 1st September.

**BLACKCAP** *Sylvia atricapilla*

**Migrant breeder (3-4), 400-600 pairs, increasing. Scarce winter visitor.**

As in the previous two years, there were no records during the first winter period.

The first returning birds began to appear in mid-March with a single in the **Deanhouse Valley** on 16th and two there later in the month, two at **Holmfirth** on 22nd, a singing male at **Lockwood Brewery Dam** and two at **Thurstonland Bank** on 25th, and a single in **Hagg Wood** at the month end (no dates were given).

During the first two weeks of April birds arrived at a further 11 locations, but these never amounted to more than a handful of singing males. One can only speculate at the number present at **Skelmanthorpe** on 11th April, however, as the only details supplied was ‘double figures’ and by 17th April we were informed that there were ‘good numbers of singing males’. Thereafter, birds became far more widely distributed but numbers remained low, rarely exceeding four, the following being the exceptions:

**Lockwood** – six singing males in the Spa Wood and Newsome Wood area throughout the summer, with at least one pair breeding.

**Healey Mills/Kerry’s NR** – four singing males and two females on 22nd April and five on 13th May.

**Marsden** – 18 singing males were present between Hey Green and Netherwood in May (17 last year).

**Royd Moor/Scout Dike** – at least 20 singing males were in the area on 3rd May.

**Cheesegate Nab** – five on 7th May.

**Thurstonland Bank** – *c.*15 singing males on 9th May.

**Jackson Bridge** – five on 17th May.

The first for the year at **Blackmoorfoot Res**. involved a singing male on 14th/15th April. Birds continued to arrive, and by the following week four singing males were present. These birds quickly took up territories and remained until late July, each of which was thought to have attracted a female. Rather unusually, there were only two records following the departure of the breeding birds, singles on 6th and 10th August.

It appears that birds made an early departure as August records were limited to singles at **Royd Moor Res**. on 5th, **Blackmoorfoot Res**. on 6th and 10th, **Scammonden Water** on 10th and 27th, **Broadstone Res**. on 14th, and two at **Winscar Res**. on 17th. The only September records involved a single at **Ingbirchworth Res**. on five dates until the last on 28th, three at **Digley Res**. and a single at **Wards End Farm**, **Marsden** on 15th, and a single at **Scout Dike Res**. on 26th.

What was presumably a wintering male was bathing in a garden pond at **Thongsbridge** on 20th November.

**GARDEN WARBLER** *Sylvia borin*

**Migrant breeder (2), near 100 pairs.**

There were records from 22 localities (16 in 2019 and 17 in 2018) but breeding evidence was only forthcoming from two of these. Birds were recorded between 22nd April and 21st September.

The continued low number of localities from which the species was recorded warrants the inclusion of all records:

**Almondbury** – a single on 22nd April.

**Brockholes** – a singing male on 26th April.

**Lower Hey Green** – a singing male on 26th April.

**Skelmanthorpe** – singles on 26th April and 14th May.

**Thurstonland Bank** – two singing males on 26th April had increased to three singing males by early May but a single singing on 2nd June was the only record thereafter.

**Blackmoorfoot** – a male took up a territory from 27th April and attracted a female; the pair fledging at least one young. These birds were last seen on 8th July and the only record thereafter involved a single on 6th August.

**Scout Dike Res** – singing males on 30th April and 3rd May with two males then taking up breeding territories.

**Carlecotes Ponds** – a singing male on 2nd May.

**Fixby GC** – a singing male on 2nd May.

**Hullock Bank** – a single on 3rd May.

**Royd Moor Res** – three on 3rd May with six holding breeding territories throughout the summer months.

**Broadstone Res** – three singing males on 3rd/4th May with at least one holding a breeding territory throughout the summer months.

**Royd Edge Clough** – two singing males on 6th May.

**Hey Wood**, **Honley** – a single on 8th May.

**Horbury Strands/Wyke** – a single on 15th May and two on 21st May.

**Wards End Farm, Marsden** – singles were present on 20th and 29th/30th May, 17th June, 11th/12th August, and 21st September.

**Bullcliff Wood** – although occupancy data was limited, a pair were seen carrying food in late May.

**Dewsbury SW** – a singing male on 27th May.

**Healey Mills/Kerry’s NR** – a singing male on 27th May and three singing males on 30th May.

**Cheesegate Nab** – two on 29th May and 4th June.

**Gunthwaite Dam** – a single on 30th May.

**Ingbirchworth Res** – a male held a breeding territory.

**LESSER WHITETHROAT** *Curruca curruca*

**Migrant breeder (1), 5-20 pairs.**

There were records from nine localities (5 in 2019 and 13 in 2018) but most only referred to one birds’ presence on a single day, with most being in spring. Birds were recorded between 22nd April and 22nd August.

**Wards End Farm**, **Marsden** – singles on 22nd April and 11th August.

**Thurstonland Bank** – a singing male on 23rd April with two singing males the following day. Thereafter, a single was recorded on four occasions until 25th June. It is possible that this bird had taken up a territory and had remained on site throughout this period.

**Brockholes** – a singing male on 26th April.

**Skelmanthorpe** – singing males on 27th April and 2nd May.

**Scout Dike Res** – a single on 3rd May.

**Royd Moor Res** – two on 3rd May with one holding a breeding territory throughout the summer months.

**Rastrick** – a singing male on 6th May.

**Hullock Bank** – a single on 19th May.

**Denby Delph** – a single on 22nd August.

**WHITETHROAT** *Curruca communis*

**Migrant breeder (2-3), 75-150 pairs.**

Records were received from 28 locations, a welcome increase on the 20 of last year, but still a massive reduction on the 42 of 2015. Birds were present between 14th April and 9th September.

The first returning birds involved singing males at **Horbury Strands/Wyke** on 14th, **Farnley Hey** on 16th, **Dewsbury** on 17th, **Honley** on 19th, and **Healey Mills/Kerry’s NR** and **Ladywood Lakes** on 20th. By the end of April birds had been reported from a further 12 locations, but the build-up in numbers was slow, amounting to no more than four at both **Dewsbury SW** on 25th and **Healey Mills/Kerry’s NR** on 29th.

Although birds continued to arrive at more locations during May and June, numbers remained low, usually less than four, the following being the only exceptions: seven singing male at **Broadstone Res**. throughout May, five at **Cheesegate Nab** on 2nd May, seven singing males at **Dewsbury SW** and five singing males at **Healey Mills/Kerry’s NR** on 13th May, six at **Royd Moor Res**. on 27th May, and five singing males at **Scout Dike Res**. on 24th and 26th June.

Territory-holding males were widely distributed but the only direct proof of breeding came from **Barton**, **Crosland Moor (**1 pair bred), **Broadstone Res**. (at least 1 pair bred), **Scout Dike Res**. (3 pairs feeding young), and **Ingbirchworth Res**. (2 pairs feeding young).

A singing male at **Blackmoorfoot Res**. on 24th April was the first. By early May three males held territories, all of which attracted females and bred. Although family parties were in evidence until late July, the only other record involved a single on 30th August.

As is usual, by late July very few birds remained, but there were more August records than normally experienced: singles, unless otherwise stated, were present at **Winscar Res**. on 3rd, **Deanhead Res**. on 7th, **Wards End Farm**, **Marsden** on eight dates between 7th and 30th with two on 12th and 24th, **Scammonden Water** on 12th with three there on 19th, **Broadstone Res**. and **Ladywood Lakes** on 14th, **Deanhead Res**. on 19th and 31st, and **Blackmoorfoot Res**. on 30th.

As in 2019, there were very few September records, with only three localities holding singles: **Ingbirchworth Res**. on 1st/2nd, **Wards End Farm** on 2nd and **Broadstone Res**. on 9th.

**GOLDCREST** *Regulus regulus*

**Resident breeder (3), 100-200 pairs. Common passage and winter visitor.**

Records were only received from 18 localities (23 in 2019 and 27 in 2018) and the only site which held birds throughout the year was a garden.

As in 2019, most records were concentrated into the first winter period, but this only amounted to one or two (usually only 1) for short periods only at nine localities. It was a similar picture during the second winter period, but records were restricted to six sites. With the exception of four at **Wards End Farm**, **Marsden** on 28th September all other records never exceeded two.

A garden in **Thongsbridge** held up to two throughout the year and a garden in **Lockwood** attracted a single between 14th January and 3rd March. Other garden records were restricted to the winter periods and involved the sporadic appearance of singles for short periods only (usually only the day).

The only records during the breeding season were of singing male: two were singing at **Magazine Wood**, **Fixby** on 4th April, one was singing at **Brockholes** on 22nd April, and the garden in **Thongsbridge** had two singing males during the summer months.

The number of records from **Blackmoorfoot Res**. was abysmally low, even by recent years’ standards. The only record in the first half of the year involved a single on 30th January. Although there were more records later in the year these only amounted to a single on 14th October, two on 30th October and 5th December, and one on 8th December.

A single which flew W with Coal Tits at **Wards End Farm** on 16th October was unusual.

**WREN** *Troglodytes troglodytes*

**Resident breeder (5), 6,000-12,000 pairs. One of the commonest species.**

There were numerous records from the usual wide variety of habitats. Although there were several records with comments such as ‘Frequent in the garden’ and ‘Seen/heard everywhere’ which give no indication of numbers, some observers reported fairly high numbers, suggesting that the species may be recovering from the 2019 decrease caused by ‘The Beast from the East’.

Although most records referred to no more than a handful, the following were the exceptions. ‘Good numbers’ were present at **Lockwood Brewery Dam** throughout the year and a maximum of 17 singing males were present on 3rd May; the number of singing males between **Hullock Bank** and **Cheesegate Nab** during late March to late May peaked at 19 on 17th April; at least 14 were at **Ingbirchworth Res**. on 13th June;and ten singing males were present at **Scout Dike Res**. on 24th June.

Breeding reports, usually in the form of territory holding males, came from a number of widely scattered localities.

A single roosted in a Christmas wreath hung on a door in **Rastrick** from 22nd December to the year end.

**NUTHATCH** *Sitta europaea*

**Resident breeder, increased to (2-3), 50-150 pairs.**

Although there were over 200 records, these only represented 38 localities, a drop of three on last year. As is usual, a number of gardens held birds throughout the year, but numbers never exceeded three. On the other hand, the observer at **Wards End Farm**, **Marsden** commented that ‘they are regular now in the garden, not long ago it was a rarity up here’.

All other reports were of less than three individuals with the exceptions of four at **Magazine Wood**, **Fixby** on 4th/5th April, seven at **Bretton Park** on 8th July with five there on 8th December, and four at **Cannon Hall CP** on 12th August. An observer at **Thurstonland Bank**, although giving no numbers, did comment that the species was ‘Particularly numerous on Thurstonland Bank and adjacent Sinking Wood – where they are frequently encountered in Hawthorn scrub away from mature trees’.

Although breeding was suspected at a number of locations the only direct proof of breeding came from **Blackmoorfoot Res**. where a pair fledged young from a new nest hole in Orange Wood; **Digley Bottom** where adults were feeding young in the nest in early June; two pairs bred in **Netherthong** and single pairs were reported as breeding at **Windy Bank Wood**, **Thongsbridge** and **Hall Ing**, **Honley** and in the Marsden area at **Hey Green** and **Head Clough**.

**TREECREEPER** *Certhia familiaris*

**Resident breeder (3), 100-200 pairs.**

Records were only received from 18 localities, one less than last year, and the only breeding records came from **Ingbirchworth Res**. (a pair fledged at least 6 young) and **Blackmoorfoot Res**. (see below) and a family party, presumably of local origin, at **Thongsbridge** on 9th June.

There were very few garden records, most of which only referred to singles during the winter periods, but four in a **New Mill** garden on 15th June were described as ‘remarkable’.

Although there were only occasional records of one or two individuals at **Blackmoorfoot Res**. during the first winter period, two pairs bred in Orange Wood. Following the dispersal of the family parties records became very sporadic and only amounted to singles on 10th July and 23rd and 27th November, two from 5th – 7th December and a single on 8th December.

With the exceptions of the four at New Mill and the two breeding pairs in Orange Wood, all other records were of singles, only very rarely two.

**ROSE-COLOURED STARLING** *Pastor roseus*

**Vagrant from south-east Europe.**

An adult which was present in a **Hoylandswaine** garden from 26th to 28th June was photographed on the latter mentioned date (Mr. & Mrs. Marsden). At the time a large invasion was experienced across the country.

The only previous record was from Edgerton as long ago as 1859.

**STARLING** *Sturnus vulgaris*

**Resident breeder (4-5), 2,000-6,000 pairs. Winter visitor. Red listed.**

Remains as widely distributed as usual but, with the exception of **Wards End Farm**, **Marsden** which held up to *c.*3,000 in early June (see below) large assemblages rarely reached 500. As is usual, there were very few recorded instances of breeding, but the number of juveniles present in the late summer/autumn flocks suggests a good breeding season.

The largest flocks were reported as follows:

**Red Lane, Meltham** – 500 on 6th January.

**Whitley Common** – good numbers were present throughout both winter periods with peaks of *c.*600 on 31st January, *c.*2,500 on 23rd February, 800+ on 26th October, and *c.*2,000 on 14th December.

**Wards End Farm, Marsden** – 100 on 18th February. There were ‘unprecedented numbers’ later in the year: in June, a flock of 120 on 1st had risen to *c.*500 by the following week and *c.*3,000 were present on 8th/9th, although numbers then reduced, *c.*1,500 remained on 19th and 23rd. The flock size then fluctuated widely and, although present until late November, never achieved more than the 200 on 16th July.

**Deer Hill** – 220 on 18th March.

**Blackmoorfoot** – 270+ on 30th May, up to 300+ throughout June, 500+ on 8th July, in August, 300 on 6th and 400 on 9th and, in November, 200 on 10th and 15th.

**Ingbirchworth Res** – *c.*200 on 13th June, *c.*600 on 23rd July, and 190 on 23rd September.

**Broadstone Res** – up to 350 were present in the latter half of August and up to 250+ throughout October.

**Langsett** – *c.*400 at Fullshaw Lane on 16th September with 300+ on 18th October.

Visible migration was reported as follows:

**Broadstone Res** – *c.*1,500 flew S on 25th January.

**Wards End Farm** – a total of 70 flew over (24 NE + 27 E + 19 N) on six dates between 23rd February and 3rd April, with a maximum of 24 NE on 23rd February. Later in the year a total of 3,299 flew W on 29 dates between 5th October and 29th November, with peaks of 670 on 14th October, 460 on 5th November and 360 on 20th November.

**Harden Quarries** – a total of 1,868 flew over, mainly in a NW direction, on 23 dates between 27th August and 10th November, with a maximum of 475 on 9th November.

**Pule Hill** – a total of 1,358 flew W on 20 dates between 31st August and 26th November, with a maximum of 485 on 23rd November.

**RING OUZEL** *Turdus torquatus*

**Migrant breeder, decreased to (1), 5-20 pairs (but greatly reduced since the 1987-92 Atlas). Scarce passage visitor. Red listed.**

Birds were only recorded from 15 locations, a drop of six on last year. Most records involved short-stay individuals but, following last years’ abysmal showing at the major stop-over site at **Wards End Farm**, **Marsden**, there was a return to normal. The only March record involved two males at **Wards End Farm** on 24th. The first few days of April produced singles at **Cheesegate Nab** on 1st and **Whitley Airfield** on 3rd, two at **Deanhead Clough** on 4th, and two at **Fixby GC** on 5th.

**Wards End Farm** continued to attract birds on a daily basis between 7th and 30th April. Unlike last year, there were several double figure counts: 15 on 3rd, 16 on 9th and 18th, 31 on 11th, ten on 15th and 22nd, and 13 on 19th. The total number of bird/days amounted to 205, a welcome return after last year to something like normal.

All other spring records, with the exception of a pair which fledged an unknown number of young in **Pule Quarries**, **Marsden**, were confined to April. Two males at **Skelmanthorpe** on 9th had no more precise data than ‘present for the last few days’; two were present at **Cheesegate Nab** on 13th/14th, with singles there (at least 2 individuals) on 20th, 22nd and 27th; a single male at **Deer Hill** on 13th then up to five daily until 22nd; at least four were at **Broadstone Res**. on 20th; a male was in **Royd Edge Clough** on 23rd; at least four were on **Bradshaw Moor** and in the **Digley Valley** on 24th; and a male was at **Harden Res**. on 25th.

With the exception of the breeding pair there were then no records until early September, and these only stemmed from four locations, a very poor showing on last year. Singles were sound recorded as they flew over the **Isle of Skye Quarry** on 2nd, 7th and 9th September and 12th October; a single was in **Ramsden Clough** on 9th September; and two were seen at **Pule Hill**, **Marsden** on 12th October with a single there on 21st October. At **Wards End Farm** a single dropped in from the NW on 17th September but there were then no records until October when one flew SW on 5th, eight flew S on 11th, two did likewise on 13th, a single dropped in on 16th, three flew SW on 18th and a single was present on 21st and 23rd. The total bird/days was 18, a marked decrease on the 47 of last year.

**BLACKBIRD** *Turdus merula*

**Resident breeder (5), 3,000-6,000 pairs. One of the commonest species.**

This widely distributed species was recorded from the usual locations, including many gardens, but numbers rarely reached double figures, even in the wider countryside. Breeding was reported from a good number of sites and, in general, breeding success was good, but a pair in a garden at **Rastrick** made four breeding attempts and only managed to fledge a single young.

Although most gardens attracted birds throughout the year, the majority of records were in low single figures, and the only assemblages in access involved and up to ten in a **Thongsbridge** garden during both winter periods and ten in an **Almondbury** garden on 30th January.

Away from the garden environment, the only double figure counts involved ten at **Ingbirchworth Res**. on 5th February, with 18 there on 25th November and 26 on 28th December; ten in the **Wards End Farm** area at Marsden on 11th March; 11 along the Kirklees Light Railway at **Skelmanthorpe** on 14th May included two pairs gathering food; a maximum of 17 in the **Spa Wood** area at Lockwood on 6th May; 12 at **Kirkheaton** on 12th November; and 12 at **Scout Dike Res**. on 18th November. Despite these relatively low figures, one is left to speculate on the numbers involved at **Scout Dike Res**. on 16th March as the observer simply indicated ‘present – not counted’ and in the **Cheesegate Nab** area on 27th March the only information supplied was ‘plenty seen (not counted) but no singing males’. On a negative note, a 90 minute walk from **Bottom’s Mill**, **Holmfirth** on 12th January only produced a single.

Overflying birds, presumably of Scandinavian origin as British birds are predominantly sedentary, were recorded as follows:

**Wards End Farm** – in October, three flew W on 14th, a single S on 17th and five SW on 18th. The only other record involved four W on 5th November.

**Harden Quarries** – a total of 33 flew over, mainly in a southerly direction, on four dates between 16th October and 10th November, with a maximum of 15 SE on the first mentioned date.

**Pule Hill**, **Marsden** – a single flew SW on 20th October.

**FIELDFARE** *Turdus pilaris*

**Numerous passage and winter visitor. Has bred. Red listed.**

Records were only received from 18 widely distributed locations during the first winter period, but at only one of these were birds present on a regular basis. The weather conditions in April presumably accounted for the species’ later than usual departure. Assemblages during the second winter period were abysmal, with treble figure counts being at a premium and records only being received from nine localities.

Birds were seen on a regular basis at **Wards End Farm**, **Marsden** during the first winter period until the last (2) on 24th April. The number present usually remained below 60, only occasionally reaching as high as 80, but a flock of 100 was present on 29th February. At most of the other locations numbers rarely exceeded 60 and were only present for short periods, the exceptions being as follows: 80+ at **Blackmoorfoot Res**. on 22nd/23rd January; *c.* 150 at **Whitley Common** on 29th January with *c.*130 there on 3rd February; 100 at **Red Lane**, **Meltham** on 18th February; a flock of 200 at **Broadstone** on 26th February had increased to 250 the following day; *c.*300 at **Ingbirchworth Moor** on 14th March;150 at **Skelmanthorpe** on 9th April, with 200 there on 26th April; and 100 in the **Digley Valley** on 24th April.

The first returning birds were not until 11th October when a flock of *c.*75 flew W at **Wards End Farm**. Good numbers of birds were then seen moving over the area (see below) and feeding flocks were present on a further nine October dates with the highest assemblages involving 100 on 12th, 80 on 25th, 130 the following day, and 150 on 29th. The only other October records concerned a flock of 200 at **Royd Moor Res**. on 14th; two at **Scammonden Water** on 15th, 17 at **Blackmoorfoot Res**. on 15th with up to 90 there on a further nine dates; 40 at **Ingbirchworth Res**. on 21st; but one can only speculate at the number involved at **Windy Bank Wood** on 23rd as the observer simply recorded ‘a flock – not counted’.

November/December, as last year, were equally uninspiring, with records from only nine locations. At only two of these, **Wards End Farm** and **Blackmoorfoot Res**., were birds present for more than a day. Birds were present at **Wards End Farm** on 32 dates with less than 30 usually being present, but flocks of 117 were seen on 16th November and 100 on 20th December; at **Blackmoorfoot Res**., where birds were present on only nine dates, there was a maximum of 50 on 10th November. The only other records during these months, other than those on visible migration (see below) involved 40 at **Broadstone Res**. and a single at **Cheesegate Nab** on 4th November, 20 at **Ingbirchworth Res**. on 11th November with a single there on 25th November and ten on 27th December, 120 at **Whitley Edge** on 20th December, 20 at **Dunford Bridge** on 22nd December, two at **Horbury SW** on 30th December, and six at **Fixby** on 31st December.

Visible migration was noted at nine localities:

**Rastrick** – 70+ flew S on 8th January.

**Wards End Farm** – despite good numbers throughout the first winter period (see above) the only movements consisted of 11 NE on 21st March, 22 E on 31st March, eight W on 5th April, and ten E on 7th April. Later in the year a total of 4,314 flew over, mainly in a westerly direction, on 27 dates between 11th October and 19th November, with peaks of 381 NW on 13th October, 530 (230 W + 300 NW) on 14th October, 378 (200 W + 178 NW) on 16th October, 503 W on 17th October, and 545 on 4th November.

**Shelley** – 80 flew E on 26th March.

**Skelmanthorpe** – 20 flew NE on 28th April.

**Pule Hill, Marsden** – a total of 1,846 flew over, mainly in a S or SW direction, on 15 dates between 11th October and 26th November, with a maximum of 849 S or SW on 4th November.

**Harden Quarries** – a total of 2,816 flew in various directions on 18 dates between 11th October and 11th November, with a maximum of 436 on 18th October.

**Fixby** – 26 flew SW on 13th October and 28 S on 28th October.

**Blackmoorfoot** – 83 flew W on 22nd October, 30 W on 17th November, 18 W the following day, and 16 W on 31st December.

**Cowcliffe** – 230 (flocks of 150 + 80) flew W on 4th November and 80 N on 19th December.

Note that migration over the three main watch points commenced on 11th October.

**REDWING** *Turdus iliacus*

**Numerous passage and winter visitor. Red listed.**

Records during the first winter period were limited to 17 locations, with most only holding birds for short periods. The second winter period was similarly poor, with only 16 sites producing records, mainly for short periods only. An observer in **Brockholes** commented that ‘birds were seen and heard flying over the house in small numbers early and late in the year, but no flocks were noted this year’.

The only localities which held birds on a regular basis during the first winter period were **Blackmoorfoot Res**. which held up to 50 (usually less than 20) on 20 dates to 5th April; **Wards End Farm**, **Marsden** which had no more than ten (usually less than 6) on 15 dates to 11th March; and **Thongsbridge** garden which attracted birds throughout January and February with a maximum of 21 on 11th February. All other records were for the days’ duration and, although these were mainly in double figures, the largest assemblages only amounted to 60 at **Broadstone** on 12th February, 44 at **Ossett** on 25th January, 50 at **Ingbirchworth Res**. and 28 at **Healey Mills/Kerry’s NR** on 30th January, 15 at **Royd Moor Res**. on 21st March, and 12 at **Fixby** on 27th March. The only April records involved 18 at **Fixby GC** on 4th with 12 there the following day, five at **Blackmoorfoot Res**. on 5th, but one is left to speculate on the number present at **Skelmanthorpe** on 9th as the observer simply states ‘a few in with Fieldfares’.

The first returning birds involved a single which overflew **Harden Quarries** on 17th September and a one sound-recorded as it flew over the **Isle of Skye Quarry** at 04.57hrs. on 21st September. There were then no records until 27th September when 37 flew W at **Blackmoorfoot Res**. and 219 flew over **Wards End Farm** and, on the night of 27th/28th, ‘several’ were sound-recorded as they flew over the **Isle of Skye Quarry**. The only other September record involved two at **Blackmoorfoot Res**. on 30th.

The following three months saw birds recorded from 16 locations but only at **Blackmoorfoot Res**. and **Wards End Farm** were birds seen with any regularity. At **Blackmoorfoot Res**. up to 80 (but usually less than 20) were present on 41 dates, whilst **Wards End Farm** attracted up to 20 (but usually less than 6) on 23 dates. At all the other locations flock size rarely reached double figures but 13 were present at **Crosland Moor** on 11th October, 15 were at **Ingbirchworth Res**. on 21st October, *c.*200 were at **Royd Moor Res**. on 27th October,a flock of 200 feeding on Hawthorn berries at **Thurstonland Bank** on 8th November had reduced to 50 two days later, 15 were at **Kirkheaton** on 12th November, and 22 were in **Greenhead Park** on 27th December.

Visible migration was recorded from the following sites:

**Rastrick** – one can only speculate at the numbers passing over on 12th February as the observer simply stated ‘birds flying south in small flocks for most of the day’.

**Harden Quarries** – a total of 1,627 flew in various directions on 22 dates between 17th September and 11th November, with peaks, mainly flying in a westerly direction, of 338 on 7th October, 511 on 11th October, and 337 the following day.

**Wards End Farm, Marsden** – 165 flew S and 54 W on 27th September. A further 1,199 flew over, mainly in a W or NW direction, on a further 14 dates between 7th October and 22nd November, with a maximum of 329 W on 11th October. The observer commented that ‘it was a poor year and numbers seem to be getting less each year’.

**Blackmoorfoot Res** – 37 flew E on 27th September, 23 W on 7th October, 80 W on 11th October, and 20 W on 17th November.

**Pule Hill, Marsden** – 536 flew over, mainly in a SW direction, on 13 dates between 7th October and 26th November, with a maximum of 233 SW or W on 11th October.

**Fixby** – 50 flew SW on 11th October.

**Ringstone Edge Res** – at least 2,000 flew SE between 08.30hrs. and 09.45hrs. on 14th October.

**SONG THRUSH** *Turdus philomelos*

**Partial migrant breeder (4), 800-1,600 pairs, but decreasing. Red listed.**

There were records from 41 locations, a similar number to last year, but well below the 48 in 2018. Up to three were present in several gardens, but only two attracted birds throughout the year, the others being mainly confined to the winter months.

As is usual, most records were of no more than three birds, the only exceptions being five in the **Cheesegate Nab** area on 17th April and four there on 7th May. Breeding evidence, mainly in the form of single singing males, was widely recorded, but there were nine territorial males in the **Marsden** area (the same as last year) and eight singing males in the **New Mill** area. Confirmed breeding came from **Cheesegate Nab** and **Barton**, **Crosland Moor** (food carrying), **Spa Wood**, **New Mill** and **Wards End Farm** (fledged juveniles), and **Blackmoorfoot Res**. (2 pairs fledged young).

Singles in the compound at **Holme Moss** on 4th and 14th October were presumably migrants of a Continental origin.

Visible migration was recorded from the following sites:

**Wards End Farm, Marsden** – four flew W with Redwings on 11th October and two NW on 14th October.

**Pule Hill, Marsden** – a single flew W on 5th October.

**Harden Quarries** – a total of 22 flew S on 12 dates between 1st September and 9th November, with a maximum of five on 28th September.

**MISTLE THRUSH** *Turdus viscivorus*

**Resident breeder (3), 300-400 pairs. Red listed.**

Records were only received from 36 localities, a drop of five on last year, and a marked reduction on the 51 of 2018.

As in 2018, gatherings of more than two prior to the autumn build-up were limited and only amounted to four at **Cheesegate Nab** in late March/early April with six there on 17th April and four at **Fixby GC** on 23rd April.

Breeding was only reported from a small number of localities but there were nine territorial males in the **Marsden** area (the same as last year) and two pairs at both **Blackmoorfoot Res**. and **Wards End Farm**, **Marsden**.As in 2018, however, the autumn build-up suggests that breeding went undetected at others.

The autumn build-up commenced rather early in late May, but this was restricted to **Wards End Farm**, all other assemblages not being apparent until July. A flock of ten at **Wards End Farm** on 30th May had increased to 13 by 9th June but, although records were then limited to singles on just two dates until mid-July, a flock of 20 were present 16th July and 30 the following day. At **Blackmoorfoot Res**., although flock size never exceeded nine in July or August, in September flocks of 12 were present on 8th, 18 on 11th, and 26 on 30th. The only other assemblages involved 16 at **Brow Grains**, **Meltham** on 6th August, 18 at **Old Mount Road**, **Marsden** on 14th August, and 36 at **Dunford Bridge** on 31st August.

Visible migration was noted at three localities:

**Pule Hill, Marsden** – a total of 56 flew over, mainly in a SW direction, on 12 dates between 14th August and 23rd November, with a maximum of 20 SW on 24th September.

**Harden Quarries** – a total of 42 flew S on 15 dates between 21st September and 11th November, with a maximum of seven on 29th September.

**Wards End Farm** – a total of 11 flew over (9 W + 2 NW) on five dates between 5th and 14th October.

An aberrant individual with a pale-cream head was on wires off **Wessenden Head Road** at **Meltham** on 10th August.

**SPOTTED FLYCATCHER** *Muscicapa striata*

**Migrant breeder, decreased to (1-2), 10-30 pairs. Scarce passage visitor. Red listed.**

Birds were only reported from 15 localities (21 in 2019 and 16 in 2018) with breeding occurring at three of these. Birds were present between 6th May and 15th September.

Records in May were restricted to a single at **Wards End Farm**, **Marsden** on 6th, with two there on 20th and one on 26th; two at **Potter’s Gate**, **Broadstone** on 7th; a single at **Blackmoorfoot Res**. on 7th/8th; and two at **Hartcliff Lodge** on 26th. There were more arrivals during June and pairs went on to breed at **Laund Farm**, **Meltham** (a pair nested but outcome unknown), **Hartcliff Lodge** (attending nest hole), **Cliff Wood** (a pair hatched young), and **Holme Styes** (a pair raised 4 young). Although the species was not considered to have bred at **Wards End Farm**, a juvenile being fed by adults there on 3rd August suggests a local provenance.

Autumn passage was far more productive with records from 14 locations, but most were of one or two individuals for short periods only with the following exceptions: the **Hartcliff Lodge** family party (2 adults and 4 juveniles) remained until early August, and singles were present there on 7th and 30th August; August records from **Wards End Farm** involved three on 6th, four on 10th, three on 11th/12th, and a single on 13th, 17th, and 31st and in September a single was present on 15th; four were present at **Scammonden Water** on 12th August and one or two were then seen on a further eight dates until the last (2) on 15th September.

The alarming decrease in autumn records from **Blackmoorfoot Res**. continued, with singles only being recorded on 12th, 24th, and 26th-29th August and 14th September.

With the exceptions of the three September records noted above: a single at **Blackmoorfoot Res**. on 14th and two at **Scammonden Water** and a single at **Wards End Farm** on 15th, the only other record during that month involved a single at **Marsden** on 14th.

**ROBIN** *Erithacus rubecula*

**Resident breeder (5), 5,000-6,000 pairs.**

There were numerous records from a wide variety of habitats, including many gardens, with breeding occurring at many locations, There were mixed comments, however; a 90 minute walk from **Bottom’s Mill**, **Holmfirth** on 12th January only produced a single, as did a walk from **Deighton** to the confluence of the River Calder along the Huddersfield Canal the following day, but the observer at **Wards End Farm**, **Marsden** stated that it had been ‘an excellent year, with two broods in the garden, two in Higher Green Owlers and two in Head Clough’.

The majority of records, as is to be expected for such a territorial species, only related to very low single figures. Larger assemblages were noted at four locations: up to 14 were present at **Ingbirchworth Res**. throughout the first winter period and, although a similar picture emerged there during the second winter period, numbers peaked at 17 on 9th November and 24 on 7th December; territorial birds between **Hullock Bank** and **Cheesegate Nab** were much in evidence between March and late May, holding a maximum of 20 on 7th April; and *c.*30, which presumably included many juveniles, were at **Royd Moor Res**. on 15th June.

Breeding was reported from a good number of widely scattered locations, the most profitable being **Ingbirchworth Res**. where 12 males held territories, 11 singing males were at **Lockwood Brewery Dam** throughout April, and at least nine territories were noted at both **Scout Dike** and **Royd Moor Reservoirs.**

A very distinctive bird, with white feathers on the head, was seen at **Lockwood Brewery Dam**, but no dates were indicated.

**PIED FLYCATCHER** *Ficedula hypoleuca*

**Migrant breeder, decreased to (1), 1-5 pairs. Scarce passage visitor. Red listed.**

There were records from six locations with breeding occurring at two of these.

**Cliff Wood** – following the first, two singing males on 14th May, three pairs eventually bred in nest-boxes, fledging eight (5 + 2 +1) young.

**Langsett Banks** – a singing male on 14th May.

**Digley** – a nest-box at a farm near the reservoir was occupied by this species. Although adults were seen feeding chicks there was no evidence of fledging.

**Almondbury** – a single was photographed feeding on flying ants in a garden along with Blackbirds, Dunnocks and Robins on 24th July.

**Holme Styes** – four (determined from photographs) on 31st July and a single on 1st and 7th August.

**Scammonden Water** – a single on 20th and 24th August.

**BLACK REDSTART** *Phoenicurus ochruros*

**Rare visitor.**

There were records from three location (same as last year but 1 less than 2018) all involving singles.

**Harden** – a female-type on 23rd March (TM).

**Holme Moss** – a female-type was in the compound on 20th June (TM). The bird was not seen on subsequent visits.

**Wards End Farm, Marsden** – a juvenile on 3rd and 5th August was presumably the same bird. The following month produced a female-type on 15th (DWS).

**REDSTART** *Phoenicurus phoenicurus*

**Migrant breeder, decreased to (1-2), 10-40 pairs.**

Records were only received from 13 locations (19 in 2019) and, as in that year, most related to autumn migrants. Breeding was only reported from one locality. Birds were present between 6th May and 16th September.

The first returning birds, both single males, were present at **Royd Moor Res**. and **Cliff Wood** on 6th May. There were then no records until birds were seen carrying food at **Holme Styes** in early June, after which, birds were present there until 7th August. Interestingly, the female of this pair was seen feeding the young on Red-necked Footman *Atolmis rubricollis* moths on 22nd June.

All the other sightings were during the autumn period: a single was seen along **Hassocks Road**, **Meltham** on 28th July, and three were present there throughout August; a single at **Scammonden Water** on 31st July was followed by two on 8th August, three on 31st August, two on 1st September, and singles on 6th (immature/female) and 14th September (male); singles at **Blackmoorfoot Res**. on 3rd and 7th August continued the abysmal showing at that site; singles were present in the plantation at **Harden Quarries** on 7th and 30th August and 1st and 7th September, **Wards End Farm**, **Marsden** on 13th and 24th August, **Winscar Res**. on 17th and 30th August and 14th September, **Deanhead Res**. on 20th August and **Ingbirchworth Res**. on 16th September.

**WHINCHAT** *Saxicola rubetra*

**Migrant breeder (2), about 50 pairs (but greatly reduced since the 1987-92 Atlas). Red listed.**

There were records from 17 locations, a welcome increase in the nine of last year, but evidence of breeding only came from one of these. As in 2018, there was a good flurry of autumn records from **Wards End Farm**, **Marsden**. Birds were present between 16th April and 21st September.

The first records of the year concerned males at **Wards End Farm** and **Thurstonland** on 16th April. Other April records involved another male at **Wards End Farm** on 21st, with three males there the following day and single males on 24th and 29th; a male at **Brow Grains**, **Meltham** on 22nd, a single unsexed bird at **Ramsden Clough** on 24th with two there on 26th; and males at **Blackmoorfoot Res**. on 27th and **Deer Hill Res**. and **Broadstone Res**. on 28th.

By the first week of May two pairs were in the **Brow Grains** area and, although carrying food and alarm calling by mid-June, no young were ever seen and the adults had vacated the area by late June. The only other May/June records involved males at **Blackmoorfoot Res**. on 3rd May and 15th June, a male at **Broadstone Res**. on 4th May, and an unsexed bird in the **Little Don Valley** on 14th May.

There were then no records until 12th July when a single appeared at **Wards End Farm**. Thereafter, this site produced birds on a further 36 days until the last (2) on 21st September, with an amassed total of 90 bird/days. The majority of records were of fewer than four individuals, only occasionally five, but seven were present on 18th August and six on 24th August.

There were also a good number of autumn records away from this hot-spot: a single at **Ingbirchworth Res**. on 3rd August; a single at **Deanhead Res**. on seven dates between 12th August and 17th September, with two on 23rd August and three on 9th September; singles at **Hartcliff Hill** on 15th and 30th August and **Thurstonland Bank** on 23rd August; two at **Bromley Farm Tip**, **Denby Dale** on 26th August; two at **Broadstone Res**. on 26th August, with one following day, two on 30th August, and a single on 5th September; singles at **Maythorn Slack** on 27th August, **Deanhead Clough** on 31st August, and **Whitley Common** on 7th September; two at **Blackmoorfoot Res**. on 14th September, and two at **Deer Hill Res**. on 17th September.

**STONECHAT** *Saxicola rubicola*

**Resident breeder, increased to (1), 5-20 pairs. Scarce/uncommon passage and winter visitor.**

With records from 34 widely distributed localities (28 in 2019) this for-ever increasing species no longer warrants site-by-site documentation. A severe winter, however, will probably change the species’ fortunes. A good number of sites only held one or two individuals for very short periods, but the following localities accommodated birds for much longer. Despite the increase in localities, breeding was restricted to four locations.

**Deer Hill** – birds were present throughout the year and four pairs bred between the reservoir and West Nab. Although no data was forthcoming regarding breeding success, the 12 in a field at Deer Hill on 8th October may give some indication.

**Wards End Farm, Marsden** – the first half of the year produced up to three birds on several occasions, but during the following four months (July – October) birds were particularly numerous, even around the garden, with plenty of juveniles of unknown provenance. Most records referred to less than five, only occasionally up to ten, but 12 were present on 13th August, 11 on 17th September, and 14 on 24th September (an all-time high for the site). This four month period produced an impressive total of 310 bird/days. The months of November/December reverted to a more moderate showing, with up to three being seen on 12 dates.

**Broadstone Res** – there were only a few records of up to three birds during the first winter period, but later in the year birds were seen on 33 dates between 19th September and 29th December. Although less than three were usually present, some of which remained for up to 15 days, there were ten on 24th September, six from 26th – 30th September, and four on 21st October.

**Blackmoorfoot** – there were far more records than last year, especially during the second winter period. The only records in the first winter period involved a male and female in the field to the west of the reservoir on 4th March and a female on Meltham Cop on 13th March. Birds were present on 17 dates between 1st October and 25th December. Most records involved one or two which were present in the SW corner overflow field, in the fields to the west, or on Meltham Cop, but three (2 males + a female) were on Meltham Cop on 17th October, a male was on the S bank on 26th November and three (a male + 2 females) were in the SW corner overflow field on 27th November.

**Deanhead Clough/Res** – birds were present between mid-March and early October and three pairs fledged young (2 in Deanhead Clough and 1 at Deanhead Res.).

**Wessenden Valley** – at least three pairs bred.

**Ramsden Clough** – a pair were feeding fledged young by mid-May and five were present on 9th September and 4th November.

**Harden Res** – a family party of five, presumably of local provenance, was present in late May.

**Pule Hill**, **Marsden** – up to four juveniles of unknown provenance, were present between 27th June and 10th August with singles then being seen on eight dates to 25th October.

**Winscar Res** – at least four, including two juveniles of unknown provenance, were present on 3rd August and on several dates in September.

**WHEATEAR** *Oenanthe oenanthe*

**Migrant breeder, decreased to (1-2), 10-50 pairs. Uncommon to common passage visitor.**

The first birds were recorded on 15th March and the last on 21st October. Despite being recorded from 41 locations there was no evidence of breeding.

The first returning birds, both males, were singles at **Whitley Common** on 15th March and **Harden Res**. the following day. There was a widespread arrival on 19th March when two were present on **Bradshaw Moor** and **Whitley Edge** and singles at **Deer Hill Res**. and **Wards End Farm**, **Marsden**. The only other March records involved a male at **Blackmoorfoot Res**. on 22nd/23rd and two at **Wards End Farm** on 24th.

The following two months saw birds recorded from 23 locations, with nearly all the above mentioned localities holding onto birds, but only at **Wards End Farm** and **Blackmoorfoot Res**. were birds seen with any regularity. At **Wards End Farm** birds were present on 31 dates between 5th April and 17th May with an amassed total of 238 bird/days (224 in 2019). Although low single figures were the norm, 14 were present on 9th April, 11 on 20th/21st April, at least 25 on 30th April, 24 on 2nd May, and 20 on 3rd May. Although it was a similar picture at **Blackmoorfoot Res**., birds were only seen on 23 dates between 6th April and 13th May, with a total of 186 bird/days being amassed (191 in 2019). As at Wards End Farm, single figures were the norm, but from 19th to 27th April, between 13 on 24 were seen daily. Note that, as in 2019, there was a marked similarity in peak counts at these two sites.

Away from these hot-spots, birds were only present for short periods with numbers never exceeding five, the only exceptions being at least 25 in the **Digley Valley** on 24th April, seven at **South** **Crosland** on 27th April, six at **Maythorn** on 2nd May, and six at **Deanhead Clough** on 13th May.

As is usual, June records were very limited, and only involved two males at **Dunford Bridge** on 17th.

The first returning birds were two juveniles at **Wards End Farm** on 8th July, with single juveniles on a further five July dates and two on 30th July; a single at **Blackmoorfoot Res**. on 21st July with two there the following day; and three at **Chew Valley** on 31st July.

August and September produced records from 24 localities (11 in 2019), including the three mentioned above, but occurrences were generally short-lived and the number of birds was lower than usual. Even at the hot-spots of **Wards End Farm** and **Blackmoorfoot** birds were limited. At **Wards End Farm**, although birds were seen on 24 dates during these months, numbers never exceeded the seven on 12th August and six the following day. The only records from **Blackmoorfoot Res**. involved singles on 22nd and 24th August, two on 9th September and singles on 14th and 21st September.

The number of birds recorded from the other 22 sites was limited to no more than three individuals for short-periods only, the following being the only exceptions: ten at **Deanhead Res**. on 12th August; five at **Harden Res**. on 15th August; *c.*17 at **Potter’s Gate**, **Broadstone**, four at **Ingbirchworth Res**. and five at **South Crosland** on 26th August; and 11 at **Broadstone Res**. on 27th August, with four there on 30th August. The only October records involved singles at **Blackmoorfoot Res**. on 1st and 8th, **Holme Moss** on 4th, **Pule Hill**, **Marsden** on 5th, and **Chew Valley** on 21st.

Although this species is not normally recorded migrating at the watch points, three flew SE at **Pule Hill** on 24th August and a single did likewise on 27th August.

**Greenland Wheatear** *Oenanthe oenanthe leucorhoa*

Birds showing characters of this race were reported as follows:

**Wards End Farm** – two on 18th and 20th April and a single the following day then, in May, three on 1st, four on 2nd, three on 3rd, and singles on 4th and 12th (all DWS).

**Cartworth Moor** – two males on 27th April (DHP).

**DIPPER** *Cinclus cinclus*

**Resident breeder (2), 40-60 pairs.**

Birds were only reported from 17 locations, a marked decrease from the 23 of last year, with breeding only occurring at three of these, although it was suspected at three others. Single pairs bred at **Swinden Plantation** and **Thongsbridge** and two pairs fledged young along the River Holme at **Lockwood**.

Although this species is highly sedentary, usually only making very short altitudinal movements along watercourses, the only site which held birds throughout the year was **Ramsden Clough**. One or two birds were present during both winter periods at **Windy Bank Res**. and along the catchment at **Deer Hill Res**. but all other records were only for short durations.

The low number of occurrences at **Blackmoorfoot Res**. continued, with single along the inflow on three dates in February, 5th March, three dates in September, 18th October, and 5th November being the only records.

**HOUSE SPARROW** *Passer domesticus*

**Resident breeder (5), 3,000-6,000 pairs (but greatly reduced since the 1987-92 Atlas). Red listed.**

The numerous detailed garden records mentioned last year continued and, although no quantitative data was forthcoming, positive comments from members included, ‘a definite increase in numbers’ at **Brockholes**, ‘a dramatic increase in my **Thongsbridge** garden following the installation of a sparrow terrace nest-box’, and in **Meltham** there were ‘good numbers breeding in three areas’. Although this is very encouraging it must be borne in mind that due to a 65% reduction in the British breeding population the species is still Red Listed or, to put it another way, BTO data shows that 10.7 million breeding pairs have been lost since 1968!

Breeding, as last year, was mainly confined to the known centres of population: **Lockwood**; **Fixby**; **Helme**; **Golcar**; **Crosland Moor**; **Rastrick**; **Netherthong** (2 areas); **New Mill**; **Almondbury** (2 areas); **Brockholes**; **Linthwaite**; **Meltham** (3 areas); **Cheesegate Nab**; and **Skelmanthorpe**.

The recent presence of a small colony in the village at **Blackmoorfoot** (mainly in the garden of 41 Blackmoorfoot Road) was not as apparent as previously and only amounted to flocks of up to nine on nine date between 7th February and 19th March and up to seven on a daily basis between 7th December and the year end. In addition, four were along Potato Lane on 21st July.

Birds were regularly seen in the following gardens:

**Golcar** – up to 14 were present throughout most of the year, but numbers in November/December dwindled to no more than three.

**Netherthong** – up to ten were present throughout the year with a marked increase of up to 32 in July/August.

**New Mill** – up to ten were seen on a regular basis with 20 on 30th August and 30 on 30th September.

**Lockwood** – present throughout the year with 30+ post-breeding.

**Almondbury** – up to 20 were seen on a regular basis.

**Linthwaite** – up to 17 were present on a daily basis.

Away from the garden environment numbers generally remained low, but an observer in the **Meltham** area commented that ‘this species continues to thrive, with *c.*50 birds roosting post-breeding in a hedge near the Riding School at Mill Moor Road’. In addition, the feeders at **Ingbirchworth Res**. regularly attracted a handful of birds, but at least 25 were present on 12th November and 30+ on 21st December; 13 were at **Wooldale** on 13th March; 30, which included many juveniles, were at **Rastrick** on 9th August; and 18 were at **Turnbridge** on 19th December.

**TREE SPARROW** *Passer montanus*

**Resident breeder, decreased to (1-2), 10-50 pairs. Red listed.**

There were records from nine locations (14 in 2019 and 16 in 2018) but breeding was only proven at two of these (4 in 2019).

Up to ten were present throughout the year in a garden at **New Mill** and at least two, probably three, pairs bred, with two pairs fledging young. At least three pairs bred at **Scout Dike Res**. but the outcome was unknown and in the **Broadstone** area four pairs held breeding territories (1 at the reservoir, 1 at Dearne House and 2 at Bird’s Nest). A single ‘using’ a nest-box at **Cheesegate Nab** on 27th March and near the farmhouse on 27th April may have been prospecting. There were no reports from the breeding colony at **Wilshaw**.

Elsewhere birds were reported from the following locations:

**Holmfirth (Cooper-Binns Lane)** – up to ten were present throughout the year with 14 on several dates in the second half of the year and 20 in early November.

**Skelmanthorpe** – a single near the football field on 25th April.

**Wards End Farm, Marsden** – a single in the garden on 14th – 17th October.

**Denby Dale** – a flock of *c.*30 were present in bushes between Gilthwaites Farm and Gilthwaites Lane on 3rd December.

**Broadstone** – one can only speculate at the numbers present when the observers simply state ‘seems to be at most buildings along Dick Edge Lane’ and ‘seen regularly in the Bird’s Nest and Windmill Lane/Dick Edge Lane’. Two were at Brown’s Edge Road on 18th August with a single there on 5th October and a flock of 27 were present at Slack Dike on 29th December.

**DUNNOCK** *Prunella modularis*

**Resident breeder (5), about 4,000 pairs. One of the commonest species.**

This widely distributed and common species was recorded from most habitat types. Breeding, usually in the form of fledged juveniles, was widely reported. As is usual, birds were present throughout the year in many gardens, even at high altitudes.

Most records were of fewer than a handful, but the observer at **Wards End Farm**, **Marden** described the year as ‘good, with birds being seen daily with ten on 28th July and at least ten on 4th August’. On the other hand, a 90 minute walk from **Bottom’s Mill**, **Holmfirth** on 12th January only produced a single and an observer in **Netherthong** stated that ‘birds were seen less in the garden this year’.

An unusual record involved two individuals which descended out of a flock of Coal Tits as they flew SE over **Harden Quarries** on 21st September.

**YELLOW WAGTAIL** *Motacilla flava*

**Migrant breeder, decreased to (1), 0-1 pairs. Scarce to uncommon passage visitor. Red listed.**

There were records from 11 localities (13 in 2019 and 8 in 2018) but, unlike last year, there were no long-stay individuals.

**Dewsbury SW** – singles on 20th, 22nd and 30th April.

**Hartcliff Hill** – a single flew over on 25th April.

**Shepley** – a single flew over on 6th May.

**Horbury Strands/Wyke** – one on 12th May.

**Wards End Farm, Marsden** – a single flew N on 14th May and a female was present the following day. Later in the year a juvenile was present on 12th/13th September and a single flew over on 27th September.

**Brow Grains**, **Meltham** – one flew over on 25th June.

**Ingbirchworth Res** – a single flew over on 26th August and one flew S the following day.

**Harden Quarries** – two flew NW on 27th August.

**Deanhead Res** – an adult and a juvenile on 30th August.

**Winscar Res** – a single flew E on 10th September.

**Boshaw Whams** – four feeding with Pied Wagtails and Meadow Pipits on 23rd September, but only one remained the following day.

**GREY WAGTAIL** *Motacilla cinerea*

**Resident breeder (2-3), about 100 pairs. Red listed.**

There were records from 32 locations (34 in 2019 and 43 in 2018) and, as stated last year, it appears to have joined the list of under-recorded species. The following comment from an observer in **Hepworth**, however, may suggest otherwise ‘Sadly there were only a few sightings of a species that I could be fairly sure of seeing. Alas, as with Dipper, it appears to be a victim of increased disturbance from dogs and children on the streams in the valley below the A616, and I am now unable to be confident of sightings in any of at least six formerly reliable spots’. Birds were very scarce during both winter periods, and only a limited number of sites held birds throughout the year, but confirmation of breeding was forthcoming from five of these.

Most records, even after the breeding season, referred to only one or two individuals, but **Windy Bank Res**. held up to four (but usually 1 or 2) between mid-March and mid-October and six were present on 24th March and 8th August, up to six were seen throughout April at **Lockwood Brewery Dam**, and five were on the weir at **Mirfield** on 14th August.

Single pairs bred at **Blackmoorfoot Res**. (fledged young), **Carlecotes Ponds** (female carrying food in early June), **Langsett Res**. (fledged 3 young) and **Lindley** (pair feeding fledged young) and at least two pairs bred (1 fledged young) on the River Holme at **Lockwood**.

Visible migration was noted as follows:

**Wards End Farm, Marsden** – a single flew N on 18th March.

**Harden Quarries** – a total of 55 flew over, mainly in a southerly direction, on 20 dates between 19th August and 21st October, with a maximum of five on 24th August and 17th and 20th September.

**Pule Hill, Marsden** – a total of 37 flew SW on 12 dates between 31st August and 3rd November, with a maximum of 11 on 14th September.

The number at **Harden Quarries** exceeded the total recorded last year which was described as ‘unprecedented’ and the observer from **Pule Hill** stated that this was ‘the best year ever, the previous best being 31 in 2013’.

**PIED WAGTAIL** *Motacilla alba*

**Partial migrant breeder (3), 300-500 pairs. Common passage and winter visitor.**

As in the two previous years, the species was grossly under-recorded. Breeding was widely reported, however, usually in the form of juveniles being fed by adults.

Although birds were present throughout the year at a number of locations, only three gardens attracted birds. The observer at a **Thongsbridge** garden commented that they were a ‘less frequent visitor than in previous years’, a single remained in a **Lockwood** garden throughout December and a single on the driveway of a garden in **Rastrick** on 5th December was taken by a Sparrowhawk.

Numbers were usually low, only very rarely reaching as high as eight, the following being the exceptions: 32 at **Dewsbury SW** on 27th February, 12 at **Scout Dike Res**. on 25th March, 39 roosted at **Langsett Barn** on 8th August, ten at **Blackmoorfoot Res**. on 22nd August, ten at **Wards End Farm**, **Marsden** on 30th August and 4th September, at least 30 at **Broadstone Res**. on 5th September, 30 at **Boshaw Whams** and 17 at **Whitley Airfield** on 23rd September, and up to 100 at **Meltham Mills SW** during the second winter period. In addition, at **Marsden** cricket field, an area which attracted birds last autumn, a total of 220 bird/days were amassed between 14th August and 1st October, with a maximum of 41 on 4th September.

Visible migration was noted as follows:

**Wards End Farm** – a total of six flew over, mainly in a northerly direction, on four dates between 16th and 31st March. Later in the year, in October, two flew NW on 7th, a single W on 11th and three NW on 15th.

**Pule Hill, Marsden** – a total of 77 flew SW or W on 24 dates between 8th August and 5th November, with a maximum of 15 SW on 1st October.

**Harden Quarries** – a total of 196 flew over, mainly in a southerly direction, on 31 dates between 24th August and 10th November, with peaks of 21 on 22nd September, 20 on 6th October and 19 the following day.

**White Wagtail** *Motacilla alba alba*

**Rare to scarce passage visitor.**

There were three records: one was photographed in the overflow channel at **Deer Hill Res**. on 25th March (DMP, SP) and singles were present at **Wards End Farm** on 24th April and 1st October (DWS).

**MEADOW PIPIT** *Anthus pratensis*

**Partial migrant breeder (5), 2,500-4,000 pairs. The commonest bird of open country.**

As last year, birds were present throughout the year, but winter records were very restricted, especially during the second winter period. Large assemblages in both spring and autumn were wanting. Although more birds passed over **Harden Quarries** than last year, which was described as a ‘good season’, the observers at the two migration watch points at **Marsden** commented that they had experienced a ‘very poor year’.

Birds were present on a daily basis throughout the first two months of the year at **Blackmoorfoot Res**. with up to *c.*30 feeding from a large pile of stable refuse along Potato Lane. The only other records at this time involved 11 at **Carlecotes Ponds** on 1st January; three at **Wards End Farm**, **Marsden** on 1st and 19th January, with ten there on 22nd January, two on 25th January, and up to five on six dates in February; a single at **Broadstone Res**. on 8th January and 13th February; three at **Ingbirchworth Res**. on 11th January; a single at **Whitley Airfield** on 6th February; and five at **Whitley Common** on 8th February.

The usual increase in numbers from early March never materialised and, although birds were more widely distributed, double figure assemblages were limited to 12+ at **Whitley Common** on 24th March; 60+ on **Langsett Moor** on 27th March; 13 at **Deer Hill Res**. on 30th April, with 12 there on 5th May; 12 at **Broadstone Res**. on 5th May; up to 20 were present at **Wards End Farm** between early May and early July; and 14 were on **Bradshaw Moor** on 5th June. One is left to speculate at the number present at **Broadstone Res**. on 24th April, however, as the only details supplied was ‘many birds on the heath’ and on 5th May we were informed that birds were ‘present but not counted’.

Breeding records were limited to two pairs at both **Broadstone Res**. and **Cheesegate Nab**, eight pairs at **Windleden/Upper Windleden Res**., six pairs at both **Ingbirchworth Res**. and **Whitley Common**, and four pairs at **Blackmoorfoot Res**.

As last year, there were few large autumn assemblages, although both **Wards End Farm** and **Blackmoorfoot Res**. held good numbers of birds between late July and late September. The usual flock at **Wards End Farm** had increased to 50 by late July and, although double figures were maintained during the following two months, there were peaks of *c.*100 on 11th August and 80 on 15th September. It was a similar picture at **Blackmoorfoot Res**., which had up to 50 throughout August and up to 60 in September. The only other counts above 20 strong involved 20+ at **Ringstone Edge Res**. on 4th August; 45 at **Broadstone Res**. on 19th August, with 40 there on 9th September; 20+ at **Deanhead Res**. on 30th August, with 50 there on 14th September; and 100 at **Potter’s Gate**, **Broadstone** on 24th September.

By late October only small numbers of birds remained at a limited number of localities, but up to nine were present at **Blackmoorfoot Res**. until early December. Other November/December records were received from seven localities but numbers never surpassed the seven at **Wards End Farm** on 10th November and five at **Ingbirchworth Res**. the following day.

Visible migration was noted at four localities:

**Wards End Farm, Marsden** – a total of 358 flew NW or N on 17 dates between 2nd March and 27th April, with peaks of 54 on 16th March, 47 the following day, 42 on 21st March, and 35 on 15th April. Later in the year, a total of 1,048 flew SW on 30 dates between 1st September and 5th November, with peaks of 140 on 22nd September, 95 on 6th October, and 94 on 10th October.

**Blackmoorfoot Res** – 20+ flew N on 9th March.

**Harden Quarries** – a total of 7,221 flew over, mainly in a southerly direction, on 40 dates between 19th August and 11th November, with a maximum of 1,462 SW on 21st September.

**Pule Hill, Marsden** – a total of 1,468 flew over, mainly in a SW direction, on 28 dates between 26th August and 22nd November, with peaks of 227 SW on 14th September and 203 S or SW on 21st September.

**Isle of Skye Quarry** – 166 flew SW on 5th September and 214 did likewise on 12th September.

**Deanhead Res** – at least 30 flew S on 6th September and 80 flew S on 22nd September.

**TREE PIPIT** *Anthus trivialis*

**Migrant breeder, decreased to (1-2), 10-30 pairs (but greatly reduced since the 1987-92 Atlas). Scarce passage visitor. Red listed.**

With records from 13 locations, this was a welcome return to former times, exceeding the 2018 total by three and a major increase on the three of last year. For the second consecutive year, however, there were no records from the former stronghold at Carlecotes Ponds. Birds were present between 7th April and 6th October, but the majority were flyovers during the autumn months.

**Thurstonland Bank** – one flew NW calling on 7th April.

**Wards End Farm**, **Marsden** – a single flew N calling on 14th April.

**Holme Styes** – two on 7th May.

**Shepley** – two on 6th August and a single flew over on 19th August.

**Harden Quarries** – it was an exceptional year, with a total of 56 flying in a southerly direction on 12 dates between 7th August and 6th October, with a maximum of 23 on 19th August. Interestingly, most of these 23 flew over before 08.00hrs.

**Isle of Skye Quarry** – three flew S on 8th August and several calls were picked up by an unattended sound-recorder between 08.56hrs. and 09.17hrs. on 27th August. The observer commented that ‘It's impossible to know how many birds were involved, but it's perhaps of relevance that nine flew mostly SE on the same morning at Harden Quarries’.

**Langsett Res** – a single flew S on 10th August and one flew over on 31st August.

**Deanhead Res** – one flew S on 19th August.

**Windleden Res** – a single flew S on 19th August.

**Denby Delf** – one flew over on 22nd August.

**Scammonden Water** – two flew S on 24th August and a single was present on 6th September.

**Winscar Res** – one on 30th/31st August.

**Broadstone Res** – a single on 9th September.

**WATER PIPIT** *Anthus spinoletta*

**Rare passage and winter visitor.**

The single present at **Wards End Farm**, **Marsden** from 2nd December 2019 was seen intermittently until 27th February (DWS).

**ROCK PIPIT** *Anthus petrosus*

**Rare passage visitor.**

There were two records, including one which was present for five days.

A single at **Ingbirchworth Res**. remained from 4th – 8th October (TM *et al.*) and one flew low W at **Ringstone Edge Res**., calling as it did so, at 11.15hrs. on 28th October (DT).

**CHAFFINCH** *Fringilla coelebs*

**Resident breeder (5), 5,000-10,000 pairs. One of the commonest species.**

As in the previous two years, despite continuing to be widely distributed, assemblages remained abysmally low, with no flock in excess of 40 being reported, but one can only speculate at the number present at **Bretton Park** on 26th February as the only details supplied was ‘Frequent, not counted’.

Although the usual gardens held birds, some throughout the year, an observer in **Thongsbridge** commented that they were ‘less numerous’ and in a **Netherthong** garden it was stated that they are ‘now rare’. The numbers in gardens rarely exceeded a handful, with the only exception being **Wards End Farm**, **Marsden** which held up to 11 in late August, up to 20 in September, up to 12 in October, and up to 14 in November.

The only double figure assemblages away from the garden environment involved 40 at **Brown’s Edge Road**, **Broadstone** on 8th January; 30+ at **Ingbirchworth Res**. on 14th and 17th January, with 18+ on 8th October, 30+ on 9th and 19th November, and 15+ on 3rd December; up to 14 in the **Cheesegate Nab** area throughout April and May; and 30 feeding in the seed crop at **Windmill Lane**, **Broadstone** on 17th November.

Breeding was widely reported, usually in the form of adults feeding recently fledged juveniles, with at least eight pairs holding breeding territories in the **Ingbirchworth** area, seven singing males were present between **Hullock Bank** and **Cheesegate Nab** in mid-April, and five pairs held territories at both **Royd Moor Res**. and **Cliff Wood**.

Visible migration was reported from three sites:

**Pule Hill, Marsden** – a total of 3,912 flew over, mainly in a SW direction, on 30 dates between 8th August and 26th November, with peaks of 975 SW on 3rd November and 614 SW the following day.

**Harden Quarries** – a total of 1,431 flew over, mainly in a SE direction, on 40 dates between 27th August and 11th November, with a maximum of 187 on 3rd November.

**Wards End Farm** – a total of 472 flew over (407 W + 65 NE) on 20 dates between 1st October and 17th November, with a maximum of 111 on 15th October. Interestingly,the 65 which flew NE did so into a strong NE wind on 4th October.

The total for **Pule Hill** is far in excess of the 2,826 average and the peak in early November was a month later than usual. Note that nearby **Wards End Farm** had a poor year, with no corresponding November peak, although this was experienced at **Harden Quarries**.

**BRAMBLING** *Fringilla montifringilla*

**Uncommon to common passage and winter visitor.**

The number of birds reaching Britain from Scandinavia each winter fluctuates annually and, although the first winter period of last year could be described as very good, this year was very disappointing. The first four months of the year only produced records from eight locations (23 in 2019), only one of which was a garden (11 last year). Although there were fewer records during the second winter period, these were from nine localities, but only two gardens were represented. Visible migration, although about normal at **Harden Quarries**, the numbers from the two **Marsden** sites were below par, especially so at **Wards End Farm** where the observer described it as a ‘strange year’.

The bulk of the records during the first winter period came from **Wards End Farm** which, in January, had six on 3rd, a single on 10th and 13th, 40 on 19th and 15 which flew W on 22nd, the only February occurrence involved a flock of 12 on 21st, and March produced six on 2nd, eight on 14th, three on 20th and two on 25th. The only other records were of three at **Windmill Lane**, **Broadstone** on 5th February; two at **Brown’s Edge Road**, **Broadstone** on 10th February; a single at **Carlecotes Ponds** on 14th February; ten feeding in Beech trees at **Potter’s Gate**, **Broadstone** on 25th February; two at **Blackmoorfoot Res**. on 7th March; a single in a **Netherthong** garden on 11th March; and a single at **Fixby GC** on 11th April.

With the exception of migrating birds (see below) the only records during the second winter period involved one or two at **Ingbirchworth Res**. on 15 dates between 8th October and 28th December, 12 feeding in Birch trees along the **Trans-Pennine Trail** near Wogden Foot on 25th October, a single in a **Holmfirth** garden on 15th November, ten feeding in the seed crop at **Windmill Lane**, **Broadstone** on 17th November, and two in a **Thongsbridge** garden on 19th December.

Visible migration was noted as follows:

**Wards End Farm** – 15 flew W on 22nd January and four S on 19th October.

**Pule Hill** – a total of 77 flew over, mainly in a SW direction, on nine dates between 1st October and 5th November, with a maximum of 54 SW on 23rd October.

**Harden Quarries** – a total of 101 flew SE on 14 dates between 11th October and 10th November, with peaks of 21 on 23rd September and 19 on both 3rd and 4th November.

**Blackmoorfoot Res** – a flock of eight flew W on 19th October.

**HAWFINCH***Coccothraustes coccothraustes*

**Rare to scarce visitor. Former breeder.**

There were four records from two localities:

**Harden Quarries** – singles flew SE on 7th and 18th October and two flew SE on 10th November (NWM, DHP).

**Pule Hill**, **Marsden** – a single flew SW on 21st October (EDS). Interestingly, it was only when a photograph was examined that it was realised what had flown over.

**BULLFINCH** *Pyrrhula pyrrhula*

**Resident breeder (2-3), about 100 pairs.**

There were records from 36 locations, a drop of two on last year and well below the 55 of 2017. A total of 13 gardens attracted birds, a similar number to last year, but only at four of these were birds present throughout the year. The only evidence of breeding involved single pairs which fledged young at **Fixby**, **Brockholes**, **Netherthong** and **Barton**, **Crosland Moor**.

The only counts of more than three were as follows:

**Carlecotes Ponds** – six on 1st January and 23rd November.

**Almondbury** – a garden in Fenay Crescent attracted up to four throughout the year and five were present on 28th March and six on 11th April.

**Netherthong** – up to four were present throughout the year in a garden in St Mary’s Crescent.

**Holmfirth** – a garden in Cooper-Binns Lane attracted up to three throughout the year and four were present in mid-January and five in early March.

**Broadstone Res** – eight on 8th January.

**Scammonden Water** – four on 29th August.

**Thurstonland Bank** – an impressive count of 30 on 8th November consisted of several small groups.

**Ingbirchworth Res** – five on 11th November.

**Linthwaite** – five in a garden on 22nd December.

Visible migration was reported from two locations:

**Harden Quarries** – a total of 74 flew over, mainly in a SE direction, on 17 dates between 29th September and 10th November, with a maximum of 11 on 3rd November.

**Pule Hill, Marsden** – a total of 13 flew SW on five dates between 11th October and 26th November. All records involved two birds with the exception of five on 5th November.

**GREENFINCH** *Chloris chloris*

**Resident breeder (4), 1,000-1,600 pairs (but greatly reduced since the 1987-92 Atlas).**

There were records from 31 locations, the same as last year, but double figure assemblages were few and far between. As is usual, there were records from a number of garden feeding stations, but only three held birds throughout the year, and these rarely exceeded more than a handful.

With the exceptions of migrating birds (see below), the only double figure counts involved at least ten at **Ingbirchworth Res**. on 7th February, 29th October and 11th November, with 32+ there on 12th November and ten on 5th December; 14 at **Cannon Hall** on 12th August; up to 16 in a **Linthwaite** garden in late August; and up to 15 in a **Thongsbridge** garden during the second winter period.

As with the two previous years, it is worth documenting the comments of observers: at **Thongsbridge** it was a similar picture to last year in the garden, with birds being ‘regularly present and dominating the feeders in the later months’, in **Hepworth**, however, the observercommented that he had ‘no garden records, and infrequent local sightings’.

Breeding, in the form of recently fledged young, was reported from **Fixby**, **Linthwaite**, **Cannon Hall**, **New Mill** and **Almondbury**.

Visible migration was reported from four locations:

**Pule Hill, Marsden** – a total of 142 flew over, mainly in a SW direction, on 19 dates between 4th September and 23rd November, with a maximum of 25 SW on 7th October.

**Harden Quarries** – a total of 35 flew SE on five dates between 29th September and 4th November, with a maximum of 19 on 11th October.

**Hingcliff Common** – seven flew SW on 29th September.

**Wards End Farm, Marsden** – in October, six flew SW on 1st, 21 SW on 15th, and six SW on 18th.

**TWITE** *Linaria flavirostris*

**Partial migrant breeder, decreased to (2), 20-100 pairs (but greatly reduced since the 1987-92 Atlas). Red listed.**

Once again, the alarming decrease in the the Club area continues. The number of records from **Wards End Farm**, **Marsden** was on a par with last year when the observer commented ‘numbers were well down this year’. For the second consecutive year no birds were recorded at the **Deer Hill** feeding station. Indeed, the observer commented that ‘Not a single Twite was seen at the feeding station or indeed in the Deer Hill area this year’.

A flock of 28 which landed briefly at **Wards End Farm** before departing S on 18th January were an isolated occurrence as there were then no further records until two put in an appearance on 4th April. Thereafter, up to seven (but usually less than 3) were seen on further 20 dates in April/May. In addition, a flock of 29 landed briefly before departing N on 18th April. In June/July, with the exception of six which flew over on 17th July, no more than three were present on six dates. Numbers rallied somewhat in August/September, but birds were only present on 20 dates with an amassed total of 212 bird/days. Numbers were generally in single figures, only occasionally as high as 25, but a flock of 50 was present on 19th September. The last birds of the year concerned a flock of 18 which flew NW on 28th September.

The only other record involved four at the **Blue Lagoon**, **Royd Edge Clough** on 10th September.

**LINNET** *Linaria cannabina*

**Partial migrant breeder (3-4), 400-600 pairs (but greatly reduced since the 1987-92 Atlas). Red listed.**

From the records received, even from the migrations watch points, it appears that the alarming decrease continues.

The only records prior to mid-March involved 12 at **Rastrick** on 3rd January and a single at **Broadstone Res**. on 4th March. Although birds became more widespread between mid-March and late May, this only amounted to records from 15 locations, most of which, as last year, held low single figures. The only exceptions being at **Deer Hill Res**. where a group of four on 14th March had increased to a maximum of 35 by 2nd April; 16 at **Blackmoorfoot Res**. on 22nd April; eight at **Crosland Moor** on 27th April; at least 13 at **Cheesegate Nab** on 2nd May; and nine at **Broadstone Res**. on 5th May, with 18 there on 13th May.

It was a particularly poor year at **Wards End Farm**, **Marsden**, where birds were only recorded on 77 dates between early April and mid-October. The only times that double figures were achieved was when ten were present on 17th July and 12th August, 11 on 19th August, and a flock of 20 on 17th September. The observer commented that ‘Although males and females were seen regularly no juveniles were recorded’.

Records during the following two months, June/July, were limited to seven sites, most of which only held low single figures. The only exceptions being a flock of 15 at **Cheesegate Nab** on 30th June and a maximum of 30 at **Blackmoorfoot Res**. on 11th July, with 20 there on 21st July. The only proof of breeding came from **Thurstonland Bank** where it was noted that ‘The breeding season has been particularly successful’.

The usual autumn build-up was only witnessed at a handful of locations, most of which rarely reached double figures, the following being the exceptions: at least 150 were feeding on ragwort and thistles on **Thurstonland Bank** on 23rd August, at least 100 were at **Ingbirchworth Res**. on 2nd September, and a flock of *c.*40 were in the **Wessenden Valley** on 15th September.

Records in November/December, which are usually very limited, only amounted to a flock of 72 in the fields to the east of **Blackmoorfoot Res**. on 16th November, a flock of 30 feeding in the seed crop at **Windmill Lane**, **Broadstone** on 17th November, and a single at **Wards End Farm** on 6th December.

Visible migration was witnessed as follows:

**Harden Quarries** – a total of 143 flew S or SE on 22 dates between 19th August and 10th November and, although there were peaks of 56 on 22nd September and 23 on 5th October, the other counts never exceeded six.

**Pule Hill, Marsden** – a total of 32 flew over, mainly in a SW direction, on eight dates between 10th September and 23rd November, with a maximum of 11 S on 10th September.

**Wards End Farm** – four flew W on 13th October.

**LESSER REDPOLL** *Acanthis cabaret*

**Partial migrant breeder, decreased to (1-2), 10-50 pairs. Red listed.**

Records were only received from 15 locations (21 in 2019 and 19 in 2018) but, unlike the previous three years, garden records were limited to a single visit. The only evidence of breeding involved two territorial pairs at **Winscar Res**. There were mixed fortunes at the migration watch points, with far more than usual flying over **Harden Quarries** but a great reduction at **Pule Hill, Marsden**.

With so few records it is felt pertinent to tabulate them all:

**Carlecotes Ponds** – a flock of up to ten were present on several dates between 1st January and 15th April and up to five were seen on several dates between 20th December and the year end.

**Holme Styes** – three on 16th March.

**Holmfirth** – three in a garden on 20th May.

**Wards End Farm, Marsden** – apart from overflying birds (see below), singles were present on 11th and 29th August, two on 17th September, ten on 23rd September, three on 2nd October, and two on 22nd November.

**Deanhead Res** – a single on 27th August.

**Scammonden Water** – 15 on 9th September and five flew S on 22nd September.

**Digley Res** – a flock of at least 25 on 15th and 18th September.

**Ingbirchworth Res** – four on 30th October and a single on 7th and 9th November.

**Langsett Res** – two on 11th November.

**Blackmoorfoot Res** – this species has become extremely rare at this site, and the only record involved a single on 1st December.

Visible migration was reported from five sites:

**Harden Quarries** – a total of 459 flew SE on 35 dates between 1st September and 10th November, with a maximum of 71 on 21st October.

**Pule Hill** – a total of 28 flew SW on six dates between 10th September and 10th November, with a maximum of 11 on 3rd November.

**Isle of Skye Quarry** – 42 flew S during the morning on 15th September.

**Scammonden Water** – five flew S on 22nd September.

**Wards End Farm** – in October, seven flew W on 4th and two flew W on both 11th and 16th.

**CROSSBILL** *Loxia curvirostra*

**Irregular breeder (1), 0-5 pairs. Scarce to uncommon irruptive passage and winter visitor.**

There were records from 17 localities, an increase of five on last year. There were very few records from the species’ stronghold at **Yateholme**, but there was a good run of records from **Holme Styes**, including confirmed breeding. Passage at the three migration watch points was far better than last year.

**Holme Styes** – the plantation attracted birds from early January through to mid-October. Up to 15 were present throughout January but in February/March there were no more than eight seen, although recently fledged juveniles were in evidence from 20th March. The following months (April to mid-October) usually only attracted single figure assemblages, but up to 14 were present on several dates during the first two weeks of July. The last record of the year involved six on 15th October.

**Langsett Banks** – two on 25th January and 20 on 31st August.

**Langsett Res** – at least two on 5th February, two on 11th November, and two flew SW on 24th December.

**Wards End Farm, Marsden** – a flock of six flew N on 2nd June, a single was in the garden on 13th August, then, in October, 15 flew SW on 7th, a single ‘dropped in’ on 16th, and six flew W on 18th.

**Dove Stone Res** – 21 on 20th June and a single on 31st July.

**Winscar Res** – at least 22 on 27th June and up to eight on several dates in August/September.

**Yateholme** – at least two on 1st/2nd July.

**Harden** – 13 flew over on 7th July.

**Heyden Bridge** – ten on 3rd August.

**Ramsden Clough** – two on 3rd August and 12 on 4th November.

**Scammonden Water** – a single flew S on 11th August.

**Cupwith Res** – a single was heard calling on 12th August.

**Harden Quarries** – a total of 173 flew over, mainly in a SE direction, on 28 dates between 1st September and 9th November, with a maximum of 22 on 12th October.

**Pule Hill, Marsden** – a total of 39 flew SW on six dates between 22nd September and 26th November, with peaks of 16 on 22nd September and 17 on 11th October. In addition, two dropped into the plantation from the NE on 7th October.

**Isle of Skye Quarry** – a single was sound recorded as it flew over during the morning on 11th October.

**Castle Hill** – six flew NE on 15th October.

**Deer Hill** – a single flew NW on 16th October.

**GOLDFINCH** *Carduelis carduelis*

**Partial migrant breeder (3), 300-500 pairs (but probably greatly increased since the 1987-92 Atlas).**

This increasingly common and widely distributed species was recorded from numerous localities, including many gardens. As last year, however, large assemblages during the first half of the year were in short supply. Breeding was widely reported, including from several gardens, and the observer from **Thurstonland** commented that ‘The breeding season seems to have been particularly successful’ and 13 territory holding males were present in the **Ingbirchworth** group of reservoirs. The large assemblages noted at **Wards End Farm**, **Marsden** last year never materialised and the usual build-up at **Deer Hill** was also less in evidence.

Although most gardens attracted birds throughout the year, these were generally limited to no more than a handful, the only exceptions being up to 20 throughout the year in a **Thongsbridge** garden; ten in an **Almondbury** garden in mid-January, with 12 there on 29th August, 11 on 5th September, and up to 22 (but usually less than 16) regularly between late September and late November; and up to 12 in a **Holmfirth** garden in November.

Away from the garden environment the only double figure counts during the first half of the year involved *c*. 20 at **Ingbirchworth Res**. on 14th January, with 18 there on 12th February, and at least ten on 12th April; and 20 feeding in Alders at **Crosland Moor** on 7th February.

At **Wards End Farm**, although present throughout the year, numbers rarely attained low double figures until 20 were present on 30th June. Thereafter, a flock of 20 – 30 persisted throughout July and early August with 60 being present on four dates, but the only other double figure counts involved 30 on 17th, 19th and 21st September and 15th October.

The largest assemblages post-breeding season, other than those mentioned above at Wards End Farm, were as follows:

**Kirkheaton** – one can only speculate at the number present on 15th July as the only details supplied was ‘seen but not counted’.

**Broadstone Res** – up to 45 were present throughout August/September.

**Blackmoorfoot** – in August, 30 on 7th, 13th and 26th, and 50 on 27th. Up to 30 were then present throughout September with 60 on 27th.

**Thurstonland** – 180+ were feeding on ragwort and thistle seeds on 23rd August.

**Deer Hill Res** – the autumn build-up peaked at *c.*100 on 2nd September.

**Deanhead Res** – 40 on 14th September.

**Ingbirchworth Res** – at least 50 on 28th September, one can only speculate at the number present on 30th September as the only details supplied was ‘Not counted’, 66 on 21st October, 40+ from 22nd – 30th October, 50+ from 5th – 16th November, and *c.*30 on 3rd December.

**Rastrick** – at least 30 roosted in bushes on 29th November.

**Linthwaite** – 43 on 9th December.

Visible migration was recorded as follows:

**Wards End Farm** – 15 flew W on 11th January and 17 flew W on 19th October.

**Harden Quarries** – a total of 1,025 flew S or SE on 39 dates between 24th August and 11th November, with a maximum of 153 SE on 5th November.

**Pule Hill, Marsden** – a total of 260 flew over, mainly in a SW direction, on 22 dates between 27th August and 23rd November, with peaks of 44 SW on both 3rd and 5th November.

**Blackmoorfoot Res** – 25+ flew W on 17th December.

Note that the total for **Pule Hill** is less than half of last years’ and the number at nearby **Wards End Farm** is also abysmally low. By sharp contrast, **Harden Quarries** experienced a similar year to last.

**SISKIN** *Spinus spinus*

**Resident breeder (1), 5-20 pairs. Uncommon to common passage and winter visitor.**

There were records from 29 localities, a welcome increase on the 21 of last year. Nine gardens attracted birds (2 more than last year) but, unlike last year, visitations were spread throughout the year. Numbers in gardens never exceeded five (usually 3 or less) and none held birds on a regular basis. Breeding evidence was more widespread with two pairs breeding near **Wards End Farm**, **Marsden**; five males held territories in the **Little Don Valley**; and juveniles in a **Golcar** garden may have been locally bred. Although birds were present throughout the year in the **Yateholme** area there was no evidence of breeding and the observer simply commented ‘No large flocks recorded’.

The large assemblages noted at **Wards End Farm** last year never materialised and birds, never more than five and usually less than three, although seen daily in May, were then only seen on a handful of dates until the last (3) on 23rd October.

As in 2019, large assemblages were at a premium, and only amounted to 20 in the **Meal Hill Estate** in mid-January, 34 in larches at **Riding Wood Res**. on 8th February,30 at **Carlecotes Ponds** on 16th February, 20 at **Denby Dale** on 26th August, at least 100 at **Hartcliff Hill** on 30th August, and 20 at **Gunthwaite Dam** on 15th December.

At **Blackmoorfoot Res**., where the species remains an occasional visitor, the only records involved, in September, four on 4th, a single on 25th, and three on 30th. The only other occurrence concerned a flock of 11 which flew W on 17th October.

Visible migration was witnessed at the following sites:

**Wards End Farm** – a flock of 22 flew NW on 20th March and two flew W on 15th October.

**Harden Quarries** – a total of 2,325 flew SE on 43 dates between 19th August and 11th November, with a maximum of 240 on 2nd September.

**Pule Hill, Marsden** – a total of 58 flew over, mainly in a SW direction, on 13 dates between 24th August and 4th November, with a maximum of 14 SW on 4th November.

**Fixby** – one flew W on 3rd September.

**Isle of Skye Quarry** ­– 41 flew S or SE during the morning on 15th September.

**Blackmoorfoot Res** – a flock of 11 flew W on 17th October.

**Ingbirchworth Res** – 14 flew SE on 20th October and four did likewise the following day.

Note that visible migration over the two **Marsden** watch points was well below par, but the observers at **Harden Quarries** experienced their best year ever, with nearly three times more than the previous highest total of 797.

**YELLOWHAMMER** *Emberiza citrinella*

**Resident breeder (3), 300-450 pairs (but greatly reduced since the 1987-92 Atlas). Red listed.**

Records were only received from 15 localities (21 in both 2019 and 2018) but, as in 2019, birds were only present throughout the year at the **Ingbirchworth** group of reservoirs. An observer from this area, however, commented that there were ‘Less sightings than previous years in the **Royd Moor** and **Scout Dike** areas’. An observer from the **Hepworth** area, lamented ‘Alas another species I see less and less often, just occasional sightings of one or two locally’ and at **Cheesegate Nab** an observer commented that they are ‘usually present in four areas, but this year only one was occupied’.

All localities held no more than four individuals with the exceptions of up to nine which were present at **Ingbirchworth Res***.* during the first winter period and seven at **Kirkheaton** on 15th July.

Away from the favoured areas to the east of the area records were limited to **Wards End Farm**, **Marsden** where a single was seen feeding with a flock of Fieldfare on 3rd January and a single was present on nine dates between 8th October and 9th November with two there on 10th October.

Breeding evidence, all in the form of territory holding males, was obtained from the following locations: **Broadstone Res**. (2), **Scout Dike Res**. (1), **Ingbirchworth Res**. (2), **Royd Moor Res**. (3), **Cheesegate Nab** (3), and **Thurstonland Bank** (4).

A single flew S at **Harden Quarries** on 29th September and one flew SE there on 11th October, and a single flew W with a Hawfinch at **Pule Hill**, **Marsden** on 21st October was the first record for the site.

**REED BUNTING** *Emberiza schoeniclus*

**Resident or partial migrant breeder (2-3), 60-120 pairs.**

Although **Wards End Farm**, **Marsden** continued to be the stronghold for the species, with records on a near daily basis, the observer commented that ‘Numbers were way down on recent years’. Birds were present on a total of 81 dates during the first three months of the year with double figure counts on 39 of these, peaking at 40 in January, 40+ in February, and 25 in March. Numbers thereafter were greatly reduced, with no more than six being seen until eight were present on 29th September. The following three months rarely produced assemblages of more than ten on a total of 46 dates, the only exceptions being 20 on 8th October and 12 on 16th October (but see visible migrations counts below).

**Scout Dike Res**. and **Royd Moor Res**. were the only other localities which held birds throughout the year but the observer simply commented ‘Small numbers throughout the year – decreasing’. The only evidence of breeding involved territory holding males at **Broadstone Res**. (5), **Scout Dike Res**. (4), **Royd Moor Res**. (3), **Ingbirchworth Res**. (2), and **Wards End Farm** (2), and a pair probably bred at **Deanhead Res**.

The only localities which attracted birds for long periods were **Ingbirchworth Res**. which had sporadic visits by up to four birds, **Deanhead Res**. which held up to four between mid-March and mid-October, and **Broadstone Res**. which held up to four between early May and late September. There was no repeat of the last years’ roost at **Gilberts**, **Marsden**.

All other records, from 16 locations, were for a short-lived duration and never involved more than three individuals, with the exceptions of eight at **Carlecotes Ponds** on 1st January, eight at **Dewsbury SW** on 30th January, six at **Cupwith Res**. on 12th October, and a flock of 12 at **Brow Grains**, **Meltham** on 6th November.

All records from **Blackmoorfoot Res**. involved singles, but one of these was a long-staying male. The only record during the first winter period concerned a female on 2nd March. A male on 18th May was presumably the same individual which remained between 27th May and 23rd July, but the only record thereafter involved a single on 6th/7th August.

Visible migration was witnessed as follows:

**Pule Hill, Marsden** – a total of 149 flew SW on 24 dates between 27th August and 23rd November, with a maximum of 19 SW on 28th October,

**Harden Quarries –** a total of 53 flew over, mainly in a southerly direction, on 20 dates between 6th September and 10th November, with a maximum of six on both 18th October and 6th November.

**Wards End Farm** – 11 flew W on 11th October and 120 flew N on the five dates between 14th and 18th October, with a maximum of 60 on 15th.

The observers at Pule Hill commented that this was their ‘best year on record’.

**LAPLAND BUNTING** *Calcarius lapponicus*

**Rare passage and winter visitor.**

A single which flew SW at **Harden Quarries** at 09.42hrs. on 6th November was sound-recorded giving both the whistle and dry trill calls (NWM, DHP).

This record constitutes the eleventh for the Club area, and the first since singles at Pule Hill, Marsden on 2nd October 2010 and Wholestone Moor on 8th October 2010.

**ADDITION TO THE CLASSIFIED LIST**

**BEARDED VULTURE** *Gypaetus barbatus*

Although not yet admitted to the official British List by the British Ornithologists’ Union (and hence not yet to the Huddersfield List), an individual which remained in England for nearly four months was seen in the Club area on several occasions: distant views were obtained from **Hepworth** on 18th July (HQ *et al.*), it was seen over **Withens Moss** on 7th August (NWM) and, although the observer was not in the Club area, it was seen over **Hey Edge** on 12th August (DHP). Although it is difficult to be specific about actual dates, two of the bird’s roosting locations were actually in the Club area. At **Rakes Rocks**, in the Woodhead/Crowdenarea, it was seen and photographed by countless observers on several mornings. It was also reported and photographed regularly from late August until at least 17th September just to the north of Rakes Rocks at **Laddow Rocks**.

The bird in question, a second-calendar year individual, settled in the Peak District for several weeks during the summer, and it was during this time that it ventured into the Club area. From feathers collected at a preening site in the Peak District on 30th August, DNA analysis has revealed that the bird had fledged from a French territory in the Bargy Massif, in the Haute-Savoie region of the northwest Alps, on 6th July 2019. Its parents were a wild hatched male that fledged from the same area, and a female reared in La Garenne Zoo in Switzerland and released as a fledgling in Italy in 2006. (*British Birds* **114**: 33-37).

See also Tim Melling’s article on page 132 on the questions that will face the British Ornithologists' Union Records Committee (BOURC) in assessing this bird.

**ESCAPED/INTRODUCED SPECIES**

**BLACK SWAN** *Cygnus atratus*

**Escape.**

A single on **Magdale Dam** on 7th November (R. Charlesworth) remained for at least a fortnight.

**RUDDY SHELDUCK** *Tadorna ferruginea*

**Escape.**

An un-ringed male, which was approachable to 10 metres, was present on **New Mill Dike** at Thongsbridge from 27th April to at least 1st May (II, DHP).

**MALLARD** *Anas platyrhynchos*

**Escape.**

**Winscar Res**., as in previous years, produced several records of ‘plastic’ Mallard: a Cayuga Duck, present from 2014, remained throughout the year; an East Indian Duck and a Saxony Duck, along with two or three unrecognisable crosses were also present throughout the year.

In addition, a flock of seven Aylesbury Duck at **Ingbirchworth Res**. on 26th August had reduced to four by early October, where they remained until the year end (DBu, AK, RM).

**CORRECTION TO THE 2018 REPORT**

**HOBBY** *Falco subbuteo*

**Rare to scarce visitor, increasing. Has bred.**

The record of two chasing Swallows at Broadstone Res. on 13th April 2018 was given in error. The birds were actually present on 13th September.

| **EARLIEST AND LATEST DATES OF SUMMER MIGRANTS** | | | | | | | | |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **EARLIEST** | | | | **LATEST** | | | |
|  | **EVER** | | **2020** | | **EVER** | | **2020** | |
|  | **DATE** | **YEAR** | **DATE** | **LOCALITY** | **DATE** | **YEAR** | **DATE** | **LOCALITY** |
| Swift | 13/4 | 2013 | 22/4 | Dewsbury SW | 8/11 | 2001 | 15/9 | Isle of Skye Quarry |
| Cuckoo | 8/4 | 1976 | 23/4 | West Nab | 27/10 | 1977 | 24/7 | Marsden |
| Little Ringed Plover | 15/3 | 2000 | 20/4 | Horbury Strands | 29/9 | 1969 | 31/7 | Winscar Res |
| Common Sandpiper | 7/3 | 1964 | 16/4 | Boshaw Whams | 21/11 | 1959 | 25/9 | Ringstone Edge |
| Common Tern | 31/3 | 2010 |  | no records | 16/10 | 2001 |  | no records |
| Sand Martin | 7/3 | 2005 | 21/3 | Winscar Res | 23/10 | 1971 | 16/9 | Marsden |
| Swallow | 10/3 | 1959 | 5/5 | three sites | 5/12 | 1995 | 23/11 | Horbury Strands |
| House Martin | 20/3 | 2005 | 11/4 | Skelmanthorpe & Thurstonland Bank | 27/11 | 1959 | 5/10 | Harden Quarries |
| Wood Warbler | 21/4 | 1981 |  | no records | 4/9 | 1956 | 12/8 | Scammonden |
| Willow Warbler | 24/3 | 2003 | 5/4 | Thurstonland Bank | 27/10 | 1987 | 15/9 | Marsden |
| Sedge Warbler | 1/4 | 1999 | 29/4 | Healey Mills | 26/9 | 1999 | 4/9 | Deanhead Res |
| Reed Warbler | 20/4 | 2011 | 25/4 | Dewsbury SW | 29/9 | 2001 |  | no records |
| Grasshopper Warbler | 10/4 | 2005 | 20/4 | Broadstone | 29/8 | 2000 | 1/9 | Deanhead Res |
| Garden Warbler | 5/4 | 1958 | 22/4 | Almondbury | 24/11 | 1984 | 21/8 | Marsden |
| Lesser Whitethroat | 8/4 | 2000 | 22/4 | Marsden | 27/9 | 1973 | 22/9 | Denby Delph |
| Whitethroat | 1/4 | 2011 | 13/4 | Horbury Strands | 12/10 | 1999 | 9/9 | Broadstone Res |
| Ring Ouzel | 7/3 | 1956 | 24/4 | Marsden | 25/12 | 1855 | 23/10 | Marsden |
| Spotted Flycatcher | 8/4 | 1967 | 6/5 | Marsden | 16/10 | 1985 | 15/9 | Scammonden & Marsden |
| Pied Flycatcher | 10/4 | 2007 | 14/5 | Cliff Wood & Langsett Banks | 19/9 | 1969 | 24/8 | Scammonden |
| Redstart | 21/3 | 1942 | 6/5 | Cliff Wood & Royd Moor Res | 24/10 | 1976 | 16/9 | Ingbirchworth |
| Whinchat | 11/4 | 1949 | 16/4 | Marsden & Thurstonland | 9/11 | 1999 | 21/9 | Marsden |
| Wheatear | 1/3 | 1997 | 15/3 | Whitley Common | 4/12 | 1997 | 21/10 | Chew Valley |
| Yellow Wagtail | 7/4 | 1980 | 20/4 | Dewsbury SW | 24/10 | 1952 | 27/9 | Marsden |
| Tree Pipit | 3/4 | 1988 | 7/4 | Thurstonland Bank | 16/10 | 2016 | 6/10 | Harden Quarries |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | Denotes a new earliest/latest ever record. |

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **LATEST AND EARLIEST DATES OF WINTER MIGRANTS** | | | | | | | | |
|  | **LATEST** | | | | **EARLIEST** | | | |
|  | **EVER** | | **2020** | | **EVER** | | **2020** | |
|  | **DATE** | **YEAR** | **DATE** | **LOCALITY** | **DATE** | **YEAR** | **DATE** | **LOCALITY** |
| Pink-footed Goose | 12/4 | 2009 | 14/3 | Salendine Nook & Meltham | 11/9 | 2007 | 5/10 | Marsden, Harden Quarries & Blackmoorfoot |
| Whooper Swan | 3/5 | 2006 | 9/4 | Ingbirchworth Res | 12/9 | 2015 | 7/10 | Marsden |
| Redwing | 7/5 | 1975 | 9/4 | Skelmanthorpe | 27/8 | 1941 | 17/9 | Harden Quarries |
| Brambling | 13/5 | 1976 | 11/4 | Fixby GC | 13/9 | 1983 | 1/10 | Marsden |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | Denotes a new latest/earliest ever record. |

**Notes**:

Blackcap and Chiffchaff dates have been discontinued because of the difficulty in distinguishing between summer migrants and over-wintering birds.

In view of the fact that Fieldfare previously bred in the area and the possibility that they did so again in 2008, Fieldfare has also been removed from the table.

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| Caunce. J. | Parkinson. J. |
| Chippendale. S. & H. | Pearce. D. |
| Chorley. M. | Pennington. D. H. |
| Cockroft. A. | Pinder. J. M. |
| Cooke. S. | Pogson. D. M. |
| Cudworth. M. | Pogson. S. |
| Dawtrey. N. C. | Quarterman. H. |
| Dean. A. | Rose. L. |
| Deering. C. | Saxelby. M. |
| Deerman. A. | Saxelby. R.A. |
| Denton. M. L. | Scott. G. |
| Disken. P. | Sedgwick. S. |
| Doherty. T. A. | Senior. R. |
| Dryden. D. | Sharrock. P. |
| Duckworth. T. | Sheriden. S. |
| Dyson. P. | Shields. E. D. |
| Franz. D. | Sill. D. W. |
| Fraser. S. | Silver. G. B. |
| Frost. S. | Speight. G. |
| Garside. G. | Stables. N. |
| Grba. P. | Stephen. C. |
| Hamilton. J. | Sutcliffe. D. J. |
| Hemingway. M. | Sykes. J. |
| Hirst. M. | Tattersley. D. |
| Holloway. D. | Taylor. A. |
| Horne. K. | Waddington. D. M. |
| Hudson. D. | Wainman. M. J. |
| Ibbotson. I. | Walker. M. |
| Jones. M. | Wells. M. C. |
| Kaye. G. | Wheelwright. D. |
| King. A. | Whittaker. K. |
| Kolodziejczy. V. | Wimpenny. T. |
| Laycock. J. | Wright. O. |
| Lees. A. |  |
| Leffman. D. | Barnsley Bird Sightings |
| Lucas. M.J. | Barnsley Bird Study Group |
| Lunn. J. | Greater Manchester Bird Recording Group |
| Mail. M.J. | Halifax Birdwatchers’ Club (HBC) |
| McGenity. P. | Holmfirth Wildlife Group Facebook |

**PEAK DISTRICT BEARDED VULTURE**

**TO LIST OR NOT TO LIST?**

Some years ago I served on the British Ornithologists' Union Records Committee (BOURC) which assesses and maintains the official list of British birds. Category A of the British List is for any truly wild bird that arrived in Britain naturally. An immature Bearded Vulture ranged widely in Devon during May 2016 but this has not been added to the official list. BOURC will have a problem with Bearded Vulture because this year's Yorkshire bird and the 2016 Devon bird almost certainly emanated from the reintroduced population in the Alps. Now BOURC allow self-sustaining populations of introduced birds onto the British list on Category C. This category includes familiar introduced birds like Little Owl, White-tailed Eagle, Capercaillie and Pheasant.  There is even a subcategory C5 which allows birds from self-sustaining introduced populations abroad onto the British List if they wander here (Sacred Ibis might possibly qualify under this subcategory if it wandered to Britain from the feral population on the Continent). But the problem is that the reintroduced population of about 55 pairs of Bearded Vultures in the Alps might not yet be self-sustaining.

According to this website <https://www.4vultures.org/bearded-vulture-uk-parentage> this female Bearded Vulture that frequented the Peak District was "Flysch", fledged on 6 July 2019 from the Bargy BIS territory located in the Bargy Massif in the Haute-Savoie region, north-west Alps. Her father (GT0099) is a wild-hatched bird that fledged from the territory "Bargy". Her mother on the other hand (BG493, "Zufall") was reared in La Garenne Zoo in Switzerland, which is part of the VCF coordinated Bearded Vulture Captive Breeding Network, and released as a fledgling in 2006, in Martell, South Tyrol, Italy. So even though the Peak District bird was reared from a wild nest in the Alps, it might struggle to be admitted onto the British List. This is because its parents belong to an introduced population that might not yet be self-sustaining, and we know that her mother was a captive bred released bird. Some people are referring to the Yorkshire Bearded Vulture as Category E, which seems wrong as that is the category for undoubted escapes, like Budgies, Canaries and Cockatiels. This was a bird from a wild nest and it has never been in captivity so it is most definitely not Category E. But this bird's status is more complicated than most species considered for addition to the British List. In addition, it seems that it is not just this individual Bearded Vulture that will need to be assessed by BOURC, but the whole population whence it came.

Bearded Vultures were hunted and poisoned to extinction in the Alps with the last one being shot in 1913. This was because of a mistaken belief that they were bloodthirsty hunters of livestock rather than benign eaters of bones from creatures that had already died.  After many decades of absence in the Alps it was decided to reintroduce Bearded Vultures, and offspring were taken from about 100 captive breeding Bearded Vultures in zoos and collections around Europe to supply the reintroduction.  The first reintroductions of captive-bred Bearded Vultures began in 1986 in Austria, and up to 2015, 204 young birds had been released into the Alps. The first wild-hatched chick was in 1997 and the success rate has increased since then.  By 2015 a total of 148 wild broods had occurred (they lay 1 or 2 eggs in a brood). By 2015 there were 220-250 free flying Bearded Vultures in the Alps. They were planning to continue releasing birds both to improve genetic diversity, and to plug a distribution gap in Switzerland. In 2019 a record 35 young were reared wild in the Alps, including the Peak District bird which wandered to Britain under its own steam.

So the question that BOURC will need to address is whether the Alps population is now self-sustaining. That is, if no more captive-bred birds were released, would this population be able to maintain itself, or maybe even increase?

Just for comparison White-tailed Eagles were introduced to the Isle of Rum in 1975. Over a hundred were released over the next 10 years but they did not fledge the first chick until 1985, ten years later. A further 60 were released 93-98 in Wester Ross. By 2006 36 pairs bred, 17 were successful, raising 29 young. This population was considered to be self-sustaining by 2010, and possibly earlier.

Tim Melling

See also Tim’s excellent Flickr site with his photos from the UK and his overseas trips.

https://www.flickr.com/photos/timmelling/

**CROSSBILL VOCAL TYPES IN 2020**

**INTRODUCTION**

Following the efforts of last year, Crossbill *Loxia curvirostra* sound-recording was continued in 2020. Once again, the aim was to identify and document the occurrence of various ‘vocal types’, as discussed in detail in an article in the 2019 Report. This year, recording took place in two distinct periods, roughly corresponding to the British breeding and migration seasons, and types were again identified by spectrogram, utilising the ‘avesrares’ system of classification.4 Notable results included a sudden abundance of the hitherto rare type N15 and the continued presence of small numbers of the even more unusual type N11. Mp3 versions of some of the recordings can be found online by adding the given six-digit code to the end of www.xeno-canto.org/

As an addendum to the 2019 article, the unassigned calls on 6th November have since been identified (by Ralph Martin) as belonging to type N15, which makes a barely credible revised total of six vocal types among just 11 sound-recorded migrants. By contrast, Crossbills sound-recorded in 2020 numbered well over 200, and it might be worth mentioning here that none of them gave flight calls bearing any resemblance to those of the two large-billed birds on 17th October 2019.

**BREEDING SEASON**

Between 10th January and 27th March, Crossbills were sound-recorded at Holme Styes (a.k.a. Hades) plantation on 16 dates (3 in January, 1 in February, and 12 in March). Apart from a flock of 15+ on 10th January, encounters involved singles, presumed pairs, and single figure groups, and on some dates occurred on multiple occasions in different parts of the plantation. Hence, no attempts were made to assess either the total number of birds or the proportional occurrence of each of the four vocal types found to be present. That said, a rough indication of the latter can perhaps be gained by comparing the numbers of dates on which each was recorded (Table 1).

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Vocal type | N06 | N04 | N11 | N15 |
| Number of dates (*n* =16) | 12 | 11 | 1 | 1 |
| *Table 1. Number of dates per recorded type, January to March, Holme Styes* | | | | |

Recordings included the flight calls of all four types and the excitement calls of three of them. Other Crossbill vocalisations recorded during March included song on three dates, and the flight calls of a juvenile on 20th. Two songs were identified as belonging to males of types N06 and N04 on the basis of subsequent flight calls given by the same birds. The juvenile calls were not fully developed, and were therefore unidentifiable to type.

Also during this period, but away from Holme Styes, flight calls of types N06 and N04 were recorded near Langsett Reservoir on 5th February.

**MIGRATION SEASON**

After a break of around 11 weeks, sound-recording was resumed between 15th June and 9th November, and the numbers of dates on which each type was recorded are shown in Table 2. Unlike in the early part of the year, type identification was based solely on the analysis of flight calls. The majority of recordings were made at Harden visible migration watch point, and these included not only birds passing overhead (a total of 173 on 28 dates between 1st September and 9th November), but also small numbers visible and audible on several dates in the adjacent SE corner of Holme Styes plantation (which is invariably the direction from which Crossbills arrive at Harden). For these reasons, results from the two sites have here been combined. Of the six other sites, three (Winscar, Langsett, and Yateholme) would have undoubtedly repaid further visits, whereas the remaining three appear only because of chance encounters with unexpected migrants (a single N06 at Cupwith on 12th August, a single N15 at the Isle of Skye Quarry on 11th October, and six N06 NE over Castle Hill on 15th October).

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | *n* = | N06 | N15 | N04 | N11 | N08 |
| Holme Styes/Harden | 40 | 37 | 15 | 7 | 3 | 1 |
| Winscar Res | 7 | 7 | 1 | 2 |  |  |
| Langsett Res | 3 | 3 | 2 | 1 |  |  |
| Yateholme | 1 | 1 |  |  |  |  |
| Cupwith Res | 1 | 1 |  |  |  |  |
| Isle of Skye Quarry | 1 |  | 1 |  |  |  |
| Castle Hill | 1 | 1 |  |  |  |  |
| Site/date total | 54 | 50 | 19 | 10 | 3 | 1 |
| Site/date percentage |  | 92.6 | 35.5 | 18.5 | 5.6 | 1.9 |
| *Table 2. Number of dates per recorded type, June to November* | | | | | | |

A simple tally of dates is a fairly blunt tool for assessing the relative prevalence of each vocal type, but further clues can be found by focussing on the birds which passed over Harden. There, occasional mixed flocks of N06 and N15 made separate counts difficult, but together they accounted for all but seven of the *c*.170 birds identified to type, with N06 alone estimated at 130-140. At the other end of the scale, type N04 was surprisingly scarce, with singles on just four dates, whilst N11 and N08 occurred as singles on two dates and one date respectively.

**MORE ON THESE FIVE TYPES**

The following information on type distribution is taken from Martin *et al*. (2020, supplementary material) and an updated post on their ‘avesrares’ website. 6

**Type N04**

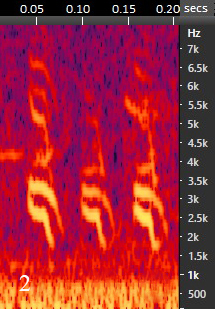
This type is common and extremely widespread, with a range extending from the Atlantic coasts of NW Europe to the Pacific coast of Asia. Locally it has in recent years been the second most commonly recorded type after N06. For comparison with types N11 and N15, three examples of N04 flight calls are shown in Spectrogram 4.

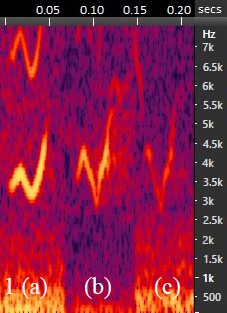
**Type N06**

N06 is usually restricted to Great Britain and Ireland, where it is the type most commonly encountered. Occasionally (as in the winter of 2020/21), its range is extended to neighbouring parts of continental Europe.

**Type N08**

Like N04, this type is very widely distributed across the Palearctic region. Locally, it was possibly overlooked before 2019, when two flew SE at Harden on 25th October and at least one was at the nearby corner of Holme Styes plantation on 17th December. By a strange coincidence, the sole record in 2020 involved a single which flew SE at Harden on 25th October.



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|  |
| --- |
| *Spectrogram 1. Flight calls of type N11. Three examples from (a) Holme Styes, 22/01/20 (522953); (b) Holme Styes, 26/06/20 (572178); (c) Harden, 06/10/20 (593280)*  *Spectrogram 2. Excitement calls of type N11. Three examples from one recording, Holme Styes, 22/01/20 (528693, which contains flight and excitement calls of both N11 and N06)* |

**Type N11**

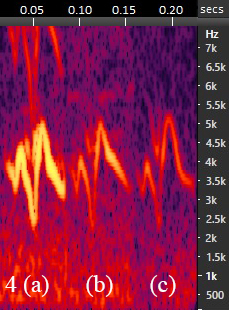
Following one over the Harden watch point on 18th September 2019, N11 was recorded on four dates in 2020. The first of these was 22nd January, when flight and excitement calls were given by two birds at Holme Styes. The flight calls (Spectrogram 1a) were slightly unusual for this type, but this might be explained by the phenomenon of call-matching, where newly-formed pairs of Crossbills (and other finch species) sometimes develop flight calls which are unique to themselves, perhaps as an aid to mutual recognition.2 In any case, their excitement calls (Spectrogram 2) were classic examples of the type, and left no doubts about the identification. The remaining three records involved at least two at Holme Styes on 26th June (Spectrogram 1b), and singles SE over Harden on 6th (Spectrogram 1c) and 11th October, and all of these gave flight calls which were entirely typical.

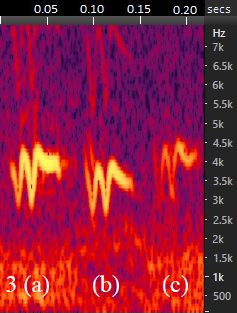
According to recent data, the core breeding area of type N11 is centred on Slovakia and parts of neighbouring countries. In years of cone-crop failure, it sometimes ranges (and presumably breeds) as far NW as Belgium and the Channel coast of France, but in Britain it seems to be genuinely rare.

**Type N15**

Prior to 2020, local records of this type were limited to single dates in each of the preceding four years, all in autumn. The first involved two at Harden on 23rd October 2016, followed by singles at the Isle of Skye Quarry on 6th November 2017, Harden on 27th September 2018, and Harden again on 6th November 2019. This year, flight calls were recorded at Holme Styes on 24th March, and then on many dates between June and November, when it replaced N04 as the second most common type. Spectrogram 3 depicts N15 flight calls from three different individuals.

Recent evidence suggests that N15 has a tiny core breeding area in Wales and the English border area, with a range extending on rare occasion to other parts of Britain and Ireland and the near continent. The winter of 2020/21 was one such time, when it was unusually numerous (along with N06) in parts of France (Julien Rochefort, pers. comm.).

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|  |
| --- |
| *Spectrogram 3. Flight calls of type N15. Three examples from (a) Langsett, 15/06/20 (568684);*  *(b) Harden, 21/09/20 (590232); (c) Harden, 07/10/20 (n/a on xeno-canto)*  *Spectrogram 4. Flight calls of type N04. Three examples from (a) Holme Styes, 25/01/20 (615693); (b) Holme Styes, 19/08/20 (n/a on xeno-canto); (c) Harden, 23/10/20 (n/a on xeno-canto)* |

**A WIDER VIEW**

Crossbills are known to be highly nomadic, with the search for cones sometimes prompting summer and autumn movements of several hundred kilometres or more. Upon finding a good supply of food, they will often stay to breed, before returning to their area of ancestral origin in a later year.7Although based on studies of boreal Scandinavian birds, this might shed light on the recent local occurrence and movements of small numbers of the Central European type N11.

In autumn 2020, Crossbill numbers reported on the British section of the Trektellen visible migration website were the highest on record. There, 18 of the 20 highest daily counts were from coastal North Yorkshire, with the remaining two (perhaps significantly – see N15, above) being from South Wales. Such an easterly bias might in some years reflect an origin in Scandinavia, but this year the few east coast sound-recordings which have come to light consist largely of type N06 flight calls, along with an occasional flock of type N04, and this, together with the subsequent arrival of types N06 and N15 in France, would seem to corroborate local evidence that the birds involved in the 2020 autumn passage were predominantly of British descent.

*D.H. Pennington, February 2021*

**ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

Ralph Martin and Julien Rochefort, for helpful comments on various recordings (type N15 in particular), and other information.

Nick Mallinson – fellow vismigger and Crossbill spotter.

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**OBITUARY: DAVID BARRANS**

It is with deep regret that I have to announce the death of David Barrans on 24th October 2020 at the age of 86. David met Betty, who become his wife in 1958, at the church youth club and they got engaged before he was posted to Malta to do his national service with the R.A.F. He also bought himself his first camera and photography, along with birdwatching, became another of his hobbies. Although he didn’t find Malta very good for bird watching, he became interested in the insects and other invertebrates and earned the nickname of ‘Bugsy’. He was not popular when a pet scorpion escaped in the billet and was eventually found in someone else’s boot!

After being made redundant as an engineer, David started a career as a schoolteacher, initially he taught maths and technical drawing at Bingley Secondary Modern and Technical School and soon had a bird watching group organised as an after-school club. During this time, David and Betty’s son, Simon, was born in 1964 and David started to look for promotion. He took the Head-of-Maths Department post at Skelmanthorpe Secondary Modern School. David’s family then moved to Shepley in 1966 and their other son, Steven, was born in 1967. David moved to Shelley High School when the school system went comprehensive, teaching his favourite subject, maths. He retired in 1992. With more time for bird watching he enrolled on a two year course run by Birmingham University and gained a certificate in Ornithology.

David had been interested in natural history, particularly birds, from an early age, and he often talked of watching a bird that he did not recognise and going into Keighley museum to identify it from their skin collection. David was a founder member of the Club and became our Recorder from 1994-96 which, in those days, meant keeping the records up to date and also writing the Annual Report. Always keen to interest everyone in bird watching and wildlife in general, David’s greatest natural history achievement was when he joined up with the artist Frederick J. Watson in 1980 and founded the Shepley Bird and Wildlife Group. The group is still very active to this day.

David joined the British Trust for Ornithology on 21st May 1982 and became an active member, assisting by supplying data for surveys such as the Winter Atlas (1981-84), two Breeding Atlases (1988-91 & 2007-11), the Rook Survey (1996), and the Woodcock survey (2013).

David was also a personal friend who I had known and admired for many decades. Indeed, we had known each other for so long that he took great delight in telling people that he met me when I was still in short trousers! Although David never made the grade to become a qualified ringer, he contributed enormously to the many autumn ringing sessions when he accompanied me and other ringers to Spurn Bird Observatory in the 1990s.

Although David first visited Africa on his National Service during the Suez crisis when he was temporarily moved to a base in Nigeria in 1956, it wasn’t until 1982 that he visited for the purpose of birdwatching, when a family holiday took him on a safari to Kenya. This started David’s love affair with Africa, and he accompanied me on a ringing expedition to The Gambia in January 1997 – he made at least three further visits to the country and also made a number of visits to South Africa, Botswana and Namibia. David also gained experience of Asian birds, as he visited Sri Lanka on two occasions.

It was The Gambia that became his favourite place, however, and, along with Betty, they revisited on several occasions. Here they stayed at Farakunku Lodges. Not only was the bird watching excellent, but there was time and opportunity to connect with the people, the schools and the church and become a supporter of education in The Gambia through the Farakunku Foundation. I remember very well trekking across the island of Jinak in the heat of the day to deliver a much needed array of school implements to the local school when we had a few hours off from ringing in 1997.

David was a great family-man, and was very proud of the achievements of Simon and Steven and also Steven’s wife Sharon. His four grandchildren; Joseph, Samuel, Sophie and Lucas were a joy to him and he saw great potential in all of them. He was husband and very best friend of Betty for 63 years. David’s life was fulfilled beyond his wildest dreams and it was a privilege to have been his friend.

Mike Denton

**THE HUDDERSFIELD LIST TO DECEMBER 2020**

The following is a list of the 277 species of wild birds that have been officially accepted as recorded in the Huddersfield Birdwatchers’ Club area since records began, up to the end of 2020. Fourteen additional distinct races or ‘sub-species’ have also been recorded. In such cases, the generic species name is shown, followed by unnumbered entries for, firstly, the more commonly encountered race of the relevant species and, secondly, the less common ‘additional’ race(s).

Following a detailed review by the British Ornithologists’ Union Records Committee in 2017, the BOU announced that it would adopt, from 1st January 2018, the International Ornithological Union’s (IOU) IOC World Bird List for all its taxonomic needs, including the British List. In line with that decision, the taxonomic order of Club reports has follows that recommendation.

The most recent IOC World Bird List (v. 10.1), although incorporating a new taxonomic order, which the Club has adopted, makes no scientific name changes.

The ‘Description required’ column indicates those species and races for which records of sightings must be accompanied by a description and, if possible, photographs, as required by the Club (HBC), the Yorkshire Naturalists’ Union Records Committee (YNU) or British Birds Rarities Committee (BBRC). Consult the YNU and BBRC websites for lists of other species and races for which these organisations require descriptions. Descriptions for the YNU and BBRC should also be copied to the Club. Descriptions must also be submitted to the Club for all species and races not on the list. All such descriptions should be submitted as soon as possible after the observation. Please send records of all your sightings, including both common and scarce species, to the Recorder (see page 158). Note that for some species distinguishing between races can be problematic at certain times of year and allocation to species only is advised – refer to a quality field guide.

| **THE HUDDERSFIELD LIST TO DECEMBER 2020** | | | |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **No** | **Common English name** | **Scientific name** | **Description** |
|  |  |  | **species** |
| 1 | Black Grouse | *Lyrurus tetrix* | HBC |
| 2 | Red Grouse | *Lagopus lagopus* |  |
| 3 | Red-legged Partridge | *Alectoris rufa* |  |
| 4 | Grey Partridge | *Perdix perdix* |  |
| 5 | Quail | *Coturnix coturnix* |  |
| 6 | Pheasant | *Phasianus colchicus* |  |
| 7 | Brent Goose | *Branta bernicla* | HBC |
|  | Dark-bellied Brent Goose | *Branta bernicla bernicula* | HBC |
|  | Pale-bellied Brent Goose | *Branta bernicla hrota* | HBC |
| 8 | Canada Goose | *Branta canadensis* |  |
| 9 | Barnacle Goose | *Branta leucopsis* |  |
| 10 | Greylag Goose | *Anser anser* |  |
| 11 | Taiga Bean Goose | *Anser fabalis* | YNU |
| 12 | Pink-footed Goose | *Anser brachyrhyncus* |  |
| 13 | Tundra Bean Goose | *Anser serrirostris* | HBC |
| 14 | White-fronted Goose | *Anser albifrons* | HBC |
|  | European White-fronted Goose | *Anser albifrons albifrons* | HBC |
|  | Greenland White-fronted Goose | *Anser albifrons flavirostris* | HBC |
| 15 | Mute Swan | *Cygnus olor* |  |
| 16 | Bewick's Swan | *Cygnus columbianus* |  |
| 17 | Whooper Swan | *Cygnus cygnus* |  |
| 18 | Shelduck | *Tadorna tadorna* |  |
| 19 | Mandarin Duck | *Aix galericulata* |  |
| 20 | Garganey | *Spatula querquedula* | HBC |
| 21 | Shoveler | *Spatula clypeata* |  |
| 22 | Gadwall | *Mareca strepera* |  |
| 23 | Wigeon | *Mareca penelope* |  |
| 24 | American Wigeon | *Mareca americana* | YNU |
| 25 | Mallard | *Anas platyrhynchos* |  |
| 26 | Pintail | *Anas acuta* |  |
| 27 | Teal | *Anas crecca* |  |
| 28 | Green-winged Teal | *Anas carolinensis* | HBC |
| 29 | Pochard | *Aythya ferina* |  |
| 30 | Ferruginous Duck | *Aythya nyroca* | BBRC |
| 31 | Ring-necked Duck | *Aythya collaris* | YNU |
| 32 | Tufted Duck | *Aythya fuligula* |  |
| 33 | Greater Scaup | *Aythya marila* |  |
| 34 | Lesser Scaup | *Aythya affinis* | YNU |
| 35 | Eider | *Somateria mollissima* |  |
| 36 | Velvet Scoter | *Melanitta fusca* | HBC |
| 37 | Common Scoter | *Melanitta nigra* |  |
| 38 | Long-tailed Duck | *Clangula hyemalis* | HBC |
| 39 | Goldeneye | *Bucephala clangula* |  |
| 40 | Smew | *Mergellus albellus* |  |
| 41 | Goosander | *Mergus merganser* |  |
| 42 | Red-breasted Merganser | *Mergus serrator* |  |
| 43 | Ruddy Duck | *Oxyura jamaicensis* |  |
| 44 | Nightjar | *Caprimulgus europaeus* |  |
| 45 | Alpine Swift | *Tachymarptis melba* | YNU |
| 46 | Swift | *Apus apus* |  |
| 47 | Cuckoo | *Cuculus canorus* |  |
| 48 | Pallas's Sandgrouse | *Syrrhaptes paradoxus* | BBRC |
| 49 | Feral Pigeon | *Columba livia (feral)* |  |
| 50 | Stock Dove | *Columba oenas* |  |
| 51 | Woodpigeon | *Columba palumbus* |  |
| 52 | Turtle Dove | *Streptopelia turtur* |  |
| 53 | Collared Dove | *Streptopelia decaocto* |  |
| 54 | Water Rail | *Rallus aquaticus* |  |
| 55 | Corncrake | *Crex crex* | HBC |
| 56 | Baillon's Crake | *Zapornia pusilla* | BBRC |
| 57 | Spotted Crake | *Porzana porzana* | HBC |
| 58 | Moorhen | *Gallinula chloropus* |  |
| 59 | Coot | *Fulica atra* |  |
| 60 | Crane | *Grus grus* | HBC |
| 61 | Little Grebe | *Tachybaptus ruficollis* |  |
| 62 | Red-necked Grebe | *Podiceps grisegena* | HBC |
| 63 | Great Crested Grebe | *Podiceps cristatus* |  |
| 64 | Slavonian Grebe | *Podiceps auritus* | HBC |
| 65 | Black-necked Grebe | *Podiceps nigricollis* | HBC |
| 66 | Stone-curlew | *Burhinus oedicnemus* | HBC |
| 67 | Oystercatcher | *Haematopus ostralegus* |  |
| 68 | Avocet | *Recurvirostra avosetta* | HBC |
| 69 | Lapwing | *Vanellus vanellus* |  |
| 70 | Golden Plover | *Pluvialis apricaria* |  |
| 71 | Grey Plover | *Pluvialis squatarola* |  |
| 72 | Ringed Plover | *Charadrius hiaticula* |  |
| 73 | Little Ringed Plover | *Charadrius dubius* |  |
| 74 | Dotterel | *Charadrius morinellus* | HBC |
| 75 | Whimbrel | *Numenius phaeopus* |  |
| 76 | Curlew | *Numenius arquata* |  |
| 77 | Bar-tailed Godwit | *Limosa lapponica* |  |
| 78 | Black-tailed Godwit | *Limosa limosa* |  |
|  | Black-tailed Godwit | *Limosa limosa limosa* | HBC |
|  | Black-tailed Godwit | *Limosa limosa islandica* | HBC |
| 79 | Turnstone | *Arenaria interpres* |  |
| 80 | Knot | *Calidris canutus* |  |
| 81 | Ruff | *Calidris pugnax* |  |
| 82 | Curlew Sandpiper | *Calidris ferruginea* | HBC |
| 83 | Temminck's Stint | *Calidris temminckii* | HBC |
| 84 | Sanderling | *Calidris alba* |  |
| 85 | Dunlin | *Calidris alpina* |  |
| 86 | Purple Sandpiper | *Calidris maritima* | HBC |
| 87 | Little Stint | *Calidris minuta* | HBC |
| 88 | White-rumped Sandpiper | *Calidris fuscicollis* | YNU |
| 89 | Buff-breasted Sandpiper | *Calidris subruficollis* | YNU |
| 90 | Pectoral Sandpiper | *Calidris melanatos* | YNU |
| 91 | Woodcock | *Scolopax rusticola* |  |
| 92 | Jack Snipe | *Lymnocryptes minimus* |  |
| 93 | Great Snipe | *Gallinago media* | BBRC |
| 94 | Snipe | *Gallinago gallinago* |  |
| 95 | Terek Sandpiper | *Xenus cinereus* | YNU |
| 96 | Wilson's Phalarope | *Phalaropus tricolor* | BBRC |
| 97 | Red-necked Phalarope | *Phalaropus lobatus* | HBC |
| 98 | Grey Phalarope | *Phalaropus fulicarius* | HBC |
| 99 | Common Sandpiper | *Actitis hypoleucos* |  |
| 100 | Spotted Sandpiper | *Actitis macularius* | BBRC |
| 101 | Green Sandpiper | *Tringa ochropus* |  |
| 102 | Redshank | *Tringa totanus* |  |
| 103 | Wood Sandpiper | *Tringa glareola* | HBC |
| 104 | Spotted Redshank | *Tringa erythropus* |  |
| 105 | Greenshank | *Tringa nebularia* |  |
| 106 | Kittiwake | *Rissa tridactyla* |  |
| 107 | Sabine's Gull | *Xema sabini* | HBC |
| 108 | Black-headed Gull | *Chroicocephalus ridibundus* |  |
| 109 | Little Gull | *Hydrocoloeus minutus* |  |
| 110 | Mediterranean Gull | *Ichthyaetus melanocephalus* | HBC |
| 111 | Common Gull | *Larus canus* |  |
| 112 | Ring-billed Gull | *Larus delawarensis* | YNU |
| 113 | Great Black-backed Gull | *Larus marinus* |  |
| 114 | Glaucous Gull | *Larus hyperboreus* | HBC |
| 115 | Iceland Gull | *Larus glaucoides* | HBC |
|  | Iceland Gull | *Larus glaucoides glaucoides* | HBC |
|  | Kumlien's Gull | *Larus glaucoides kumlieni* | YNU |
|  | Thayer’s Gull | *Larus glaucoides thayeri* | BBRC |
| 116 | Herring Gull | *Larus argentatus* |  |
|  | Herring Gull | *Larus argentatus argenteus* |  |
|  | Scandinavian Herring Gull | *Larus argentatus argentatus* | HBC |
| 117 | Caspian Gull | *Larus cachinnans* | YNU |
| 118 | Yellow-legged Gull | *Larus michahellis* | HBC |
| 119 | Lesser Black-backed Gull | *Larus fuscus* |  |
|  | Lesser Black-backed Gull | *Larus fuscus graellsii* |  |
|  | Scandinavian L. B-b. Gull | *Larus fuscus intermedius* | HBC |
| 120 | Sandwich Tern | *Thalasseus sandvicensis* | HBC |
| 121 | Little Tern | *Sternula albifrons* | HBC |
| 122 | Common Tern | *Sterna hirundo* |  |
| 123 | Arctic Tern | *Sterna paradisaea* | HBC |
| 124 | White-winged Black Tern | *Chlidonias leucopterus* | YNU |
| 125 | Black Tern | *Chlidonias niger* | HBC |
| 126 | Great Skua | *Stercorarius skua* | HBC |
| 127 | Pomarine Skua | *Stercorarius pomarinus* | HBC |
| 128 | Arctic Skua | *Stercorarius parasiticus* | HBC |
| 129 | Long-tailed Skua | *Stercorarius longicaudus* | HBC |
| 130 | Little Auk | *Alle alle* | HBC |
| 131 | Guillemot | *Uria aalge* | HBC |
| 132 | Razorbill | *Alca torda* | HBC |
| 133 | Puffin | *Fratercula arctica* | HBC |
| 134 | Red-throated Diver | *Gavia stellata* | HBC |
| 135 | Black-throated Diver | *Gavia arctica* | HBC |
| 136 | Great Northern Diver | *Gavia immer* | HBC |
| 137 | Storm Petrel | *Hydrobates pelagicus* | HBC |
| 138 | Leach's Petrel | *Oceanodroma leucorhoa* | HBC |
| 139 | Fulmar | *Fulmarus glacialis* | HBC |
| 140 | Manx Shearwater | *Puffinus puffinus* | HBC |
| 141 | Black Stork | *Ciconia nigra* | HBC |
| 142 | White Stork | *Ciconia ciconia* | HBC |
| 143 | Gannet | *Morus bassanus* | HBC |
| 144 | Shag | *Phalacrocorax aristotelis* | HBC |
| 145 | Cormorant | *Phalacrocorax carbo* |  |
| 146 | Glossy Ibis | *Plegadis falcinellus* | YNU |
| 147 | Spoonbill | *Platalea leucorodia* | HBC |
| 148 | Bittern | *Botaurus stellaris* | HBC |
| 149 | Night Heron | *Nycticorax nycticorax* | YNU |
| 150 | Grey Heron | *Ardea cinerea* |  |
| 151 | Purple Heron | *Ardea purpurea* | YNU |
| 152 | Great White Egret | *Ardea alba* | HBC |
| 153 | Little Egret | *Egretta garzetta* |  |
| 154 | Osprey | *Pandion haliaetus* | HBC |
| 155 | Honey-buzzard | *Pernis apivorus* | YNU |
| 156 | Golden Eagle | *Aquila chrysaetos* | YNU |
| 157 | Sparrowhawk | *Accipiter nisus* |  |
| 158 | Goshawk | *Accipiter gentilis* | HBC |
| 159 | Marsh Harrier | *Circus aeruginosus* | HBC |
| 160 | Hen Harrier | *Circus cyaneus* | HBC |
| 161 | Montagu's Harrier | *Circus pygargus* | YNU |
| 162 | Red Kite | *Milvus milvus* |  |
| 163 | Black Kite | *Milvus migrans* | YNU |
| 164 | White-tailed Eagle | *Haliaeetus albicilla* | YNU |
| 165 | Rough-legged Buzzard | *Buteo lagopus* | YNU |
| 166 | Buzzard | *Buteo buteo* |  |
| 167 | Barn Owl | *Tyto alba* | HBC |
| 168 | Tawny Owl | *Strix aluco* |  |
| 169 | Little Owl | *Athene noctua* |  |
| 170 | Long-eared Owl | *Asio otus* |  |
| 171 | Short-eared Owl | *Asio flammeus* |  |
| 172 | Hoopoe | *Upupa epops* | HBC |
| 173 | Roller | *Coracias garrulus* | BBRC |
| 174 | Kingfisher | *Alcedo atthis* |  |
| 175 | Wryneck | *Jynx torquilla* | HBC |
| 176 | Lesser Spotted Woodpecker | *Dryobates minor* |  |
| 177 | Great Spotted Woodpecker | *Dendrocopos major* |  |
| 178 | Green Woodpecker | *Picus viridis* |  |
| 179 | Kestrel | *Falco tinnunculus* |  |
| 180 | Red-footed Falcon | *Falco vespertinus* | YNU |
| 181 | Merlin | *Falco columbarius* |  |
| 182 | Hobby | *Falco subbuteo* |  |
| 183 | Peregrine | *Falco peregrinus* |  |
| 184 | Ring-necked Parakeet | *Psittacula krameri* |  |
| 185 | Red-backed Shrike | *Lanius collurio* | HBC |
| 186 | Great Grey Shrike | *Lanius excubitor* | HBC |
| 187 | Golden Oriole | *Oriolus oriolus* | HBC |
| 188 | Jay | *Garrulus glandarius* |  |
| 189 | Magpie | *Pica pica* |  |
| 190 | Jackdaw | *Coloeus monedula* |  |
| 191 | Rook | *Corvus frugilegus* |  |
| 192 | Carrion Crow | *Corvus corone* |  |
| 193 | Hooded Crow | *Corvus cornix* |  |
| 194 | Raven | *Corvus corax* |  |
| 195 | Waxwing | *Bombycilla garrulus* |  |
| 196 | Coal Tit | *Periparus ater* |  |
| 197 | Marsh Tit | *Poecile palustris* | HBC |
| 198 | Willow Tit | *Poecile montana* |  |
| 199 | Blue Tit | *Cyanistes caeruleus* |  |
| 200 | Great Tit | *Parus major* |  |
| 201 | Woodlark | *Lullula arborea* | HBC |
| 202 | Skylark | *Alauda arvensis* |  |
| 203 | Shore Lark | *Eremophila alpestris* | HBC |
| 204 | Sand Martin | *Riparia riparia* |  |
| 205 | Swallow | *Hirundo rustica* |  |
| 206 | House Martin | *Delichon urbicum* |  |
| 207 | Red-rumped Swallow | *Cecropis daurica* | YNU |
| 208 | Long-tailed Tit | *Aegithalos caudatus* |  |
| 209 | Wood Warbler | *Phylloscopus sibilatrix* | HBC |
| 210 | Yellow-browed Warbler | *Phylloscopus inornatus* | HBC |
| 211 | Pallas's Warbler | *Phylloscopus proregulus* | HBC |
| 212 | Willow Warbler | *Phylloscopus trochilus* |  |
| 213 | Chiffchaff | *Phylloscopus collybita* |  |
|  | Chiffchaff | *Phylloscopus collybita collybita* |  |
|  | Siberian Chiffchaff | *Phylloscopus collybita tristis* | YNU |
| 214 | Sedge Warbler | *Acrocephalus schoenobaenus* |  |
| 215 | Great Reed Warbler | *Acrocephalus arundinaceus* | BBRC |
| 216 | Reed Warbler | *Acrocephalus scirpaceus* |  |
| 217 | Grasshopper Warbler | *Locustella naevia* |  |
| 218 | Blackcap | *Sylvia atricapilla* |  |
| 219 | Garden Warbler | *Sylvia borin* |  |
| 220 | Lesser Whitethroat | *Curruca curruca* |  |
| 221 | Whitethroat | *Curruca communis* |  |
| 222 | Firecrest | *Regulus ignicapilla* | HBC |
| 223 | Goldcrest | *Regulus regulus* |  |
| 224 | Wren | *Troglodytes troglodytes* |  |
| 225 | Nuthatch | *Sitta europaea* |  |
| 226 | Treecreeper | *Certhia familiaris* |  |
| 227 | Rose-coloured Starling | *Pastor roseus* | YNU |
| 228 | Starling | *Sturnus vulgaris* |  |
| 229 | Ring Ouzel | *Turdus torquatus* |  |
| 230 | Blackbird | *Turdus merula* |  |
| 231 | Fieldfare | *Turdus pilaris* |  |
| 232 | Redwing | *Turdus iliacus* |  |
| 233 | Song Thrush | *Turdus philomelos* |  |
| 234 | Mistle Thrush | *Turdus viscivorus* |  |
| 235 | Spotted Flycatcher | *Muscicapa striata* |  |
| 236 | Robin | *Erithacus rubecula* |  |
| 237 | Nightingale | *Luscinia megarhynchos* | HBC |
| 238 | Pied Flycatcher | *Ficedula hypoleuca* |  |
| 239 | Black Redstart | *Phoenicurus ochruros* | HBC |
| 240 | Redstart | *Phoenicurus phoenicurus* |  |
| 241 | Whinchat | *Saxicola rubetra* |  |
| 242 | Stonechat | *Saxicola rubicola* |  |
| 243 | Wheatear | *Oenanthe oenanthe* |  |
|  | Northern Wheatear | *Oenanthe oenanthe oenanthe* |  |
|  | Greenland Wheatear | *Oenanthe oenanthe leucorhoa* | HBC |
| 244 | Dipper | *Cinclus cinclus* |  |
| 245 | House Sparrow | *Passer domesticus* |  |
| 246 | Tree Sparrow | *Passer montanus* |  |
| 247 | Dunnock | *Prunella modularis* |  |
| 248 | Yellow Wagtail | *Motacilla flava* |  |
|  | Yellow Wagtail | *Motacilla flava flavissima* |  |
|  | Blue-headed Wagtail | *Motacilla flava flava* | HBC |
|  | Grey-headed Wagtail | *Motacilla flava thunbergi* | HBC |
| 249 | Grey Wagtail | *Motacilla cinerea* |  |
| 250 | Pied Wagtail | *Motacilla alba* |  |
|  | Pied Wagtail | *Motacilla alba yarellii* |  |
|  | White Wagtail | *Motacilla alba alba* | HBC |
| 251 | Meadow Pipit | *Anthus pratensis* |  |
| 252 | Tree Pipit | *Anthus trivialis* |  |
| 253 | Olive-backed Pipit | *Anthus hodgsoni* | YNU |
| 254 | Water Pipit | *Anthus spinoletta* | HBC |
| 255 | Rock Pipit | *Anthus petrosus* | HBC |
|  | Eurasian Rock Pipit | *Anthus petrosus petrosus* | HBC |
|  | Scandinavian Rock Pipit | *Anthus petrosus littoralis* | HBC |
| 256 | Chaffinch | *Fringilla coelebs* |  |
| 257 | Brambling | *Fringilla montifringilla* |  |
| 258 | Hawfinch | *Coccothraustes coccothraustes* |  |
| 259 | Bullfinch | *Pyrrhula pyrrhula* |  |
| 260 | Greenfinch | *Chloris chloris* |  |
| 261 | Twite | *Linaria flavirostris* |  |
| 262 | Linnet | *Linaria cannabina* |  |
| 263 | Mealy Redpoll | *Acanthis flammea* | HBC |
| 264 | Lesser Redpoll | *Acanthis cabaret* |  |
| 265 | Parrot Crossbill | *Loxia pytyopsittacus* | BBRC |
| 266 | Crossbill | *Loxia curvirostra* |  |
| 267 | Two-barred Crossbill | *Loxia leucoptera* | BBRC |
| 268 | Goldfinch | *Carduelis carduelis* |  |
| 269 | Siskin | *Spinus spinus* |  |
| 270 | Lapland Bunting | *Calcarius lapponicus* | HBC |
| 271 | Snow Bunting | *Plectrophenax nivalis* | HBC |
| 272 | Corn Bunting | *Miliaria calandra* |  |
| 273 | Yellowhammer | *Emberiza citrinella* |  |
| 274 | Cirl Bunting | *Emberiza cirlus* | YNU |
| 275 | Little Bunting | *Emberiza pusilla* | YNU |
| 276 | Black-headed Bunting | *Emberiza melanocephala* | BBRC |
| 277 | Reed Bunting | *Emberiza schoeniclus* |  |

**REPORTING AND RECORDING SENSITIVE BIRD SPECIES**

It is imperative for all Club members and other birdwatchers to be fully committed to the understanding that the welfare of all birds is of paramount importance and must not be threatened or compromised by any of our activities. In particular this applies to all birds in the breeding season and especially to those birds whose populations are particularly vulnerable in Europe, the UK or just in the Club area. Schedule 1 of the 1981 Wildlife and Countryside Act itemises a number of rare breeding birds (see abbreviated list below) which require a special licence for any individual who may approach them whilst nesting. These licences, which are issued in order to keep disturbance to a minimum, are only issued to bona fide researchers, i.e. ringers, official nest recorders, photographers (occasionally) etc. Anyone disturbing any Schedule 1 species who is not in possession of a licence is breaking the law and liable to prosecution, as well as putting the breeding attempt at risk. If you accidentally find a nest, however, you are not breaking the law, as this was done without any foreknowledge. If however you return to that nest and this results in any form of disturbance, then that would be breaking the law.

It should be obvious that the purpose of the law is to protect these individual species from disturbance, thereby allowing them to breed without molestation and providing the greatest chance of success. It is important, therefore, to avoid circulating any information relating to the whereabouts of such breeding birds. The HBC committee therefore asks that no such information should be posted by anyone using the Club forum; to do so may encourage unlicensed individuals to visit these nest sites, for whatever reason, and could seriously compromise the well-being of the birds and their eggs or offspring. The information could also be used by those intent on persecuting species, stealing eggs or young.

Should you suspect that a Schedule 1 species is breeding within the Club area then do contact Mike Denton (01484 646990) who holds the necessary licence to monitor and document proceedings.

Where you see any Schedule 1 birds, and even though there may be no evidence of breeding at that time, it is advisable not to advertise the locality of such sightings on the forum, or even verbally to others. It is possible that the bird(s) may be prospecting in the area for potential breeding sites and such reports may compromise their opportunity for success. By not advertising the whereabouts of these species or their nests you can be content in the knowledge that you are positively contributing to their protection by not inviting disturbance by others.

Please do remember, however, to submit all of your detailed records to the Club Recorder for inclusion in the annual report, although the detail included in the report will be appropriately circumspect. Such information is vital for use by relevant bodies (e.g. the rare birds breeding panel, conservation bodies etc) your records are a key component of maintaining an accurate picture of population dynamics which aids plans to conserve and protect them.

In addition to the above, if you are aware of the presence of any Schedule 1 birds in an area and you suspect that illegal interference may have taken place, or be about to take place, then contact Mike Denton or the Recorder urgently. We have the contact details of the appropriate authorities that would allow us to alert them to these threats.

These comments, whilst directed primarily at Schedule 1 species, are pertinent for any nesting species and if you are uncertain about their status it is advisable to seek clarification from Mike Denton. There are also a number of species (see additional list) that may not be threatened within UK but that are scarce breeding, or potential breeding birds within the Club area. It is by leaving these birds undisturbed during a critical time in their life cycle that you can feel gratified that you have had no detrimental effect upon the outcome.

**Abbreviated list of Schedule 1 Species**

Black-necked Grebe

Bittern

Pintail

Garganey

Honey-buzzard

Red Kite

All harriers

Goshawk

Osprey

Merlin

Peregrine Falcon

Avocet

Stone-curlew

Little Ringed Plover

Dotterel

Red-necked Phalarope

Little Tern

Barn Owl

Kingfisher

Firecrest

**Additional List of Sensitive Birds in the Huddersfield Area**

Nightjar

Buzzard

Raven

Short-eared Owl

Long-eared Owl

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| Bunting | Lapland | 126 |
|  | Reed | 125 |
| Buzzard |  | 59 |
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| Chiffchaff |  | 91 |
| Coot |  | 35 |
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| Crossbill |  | 122 |
| Crow | Carrion | 70 |
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| Curlew |  | 42 |
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|  | Tufted | 26 |
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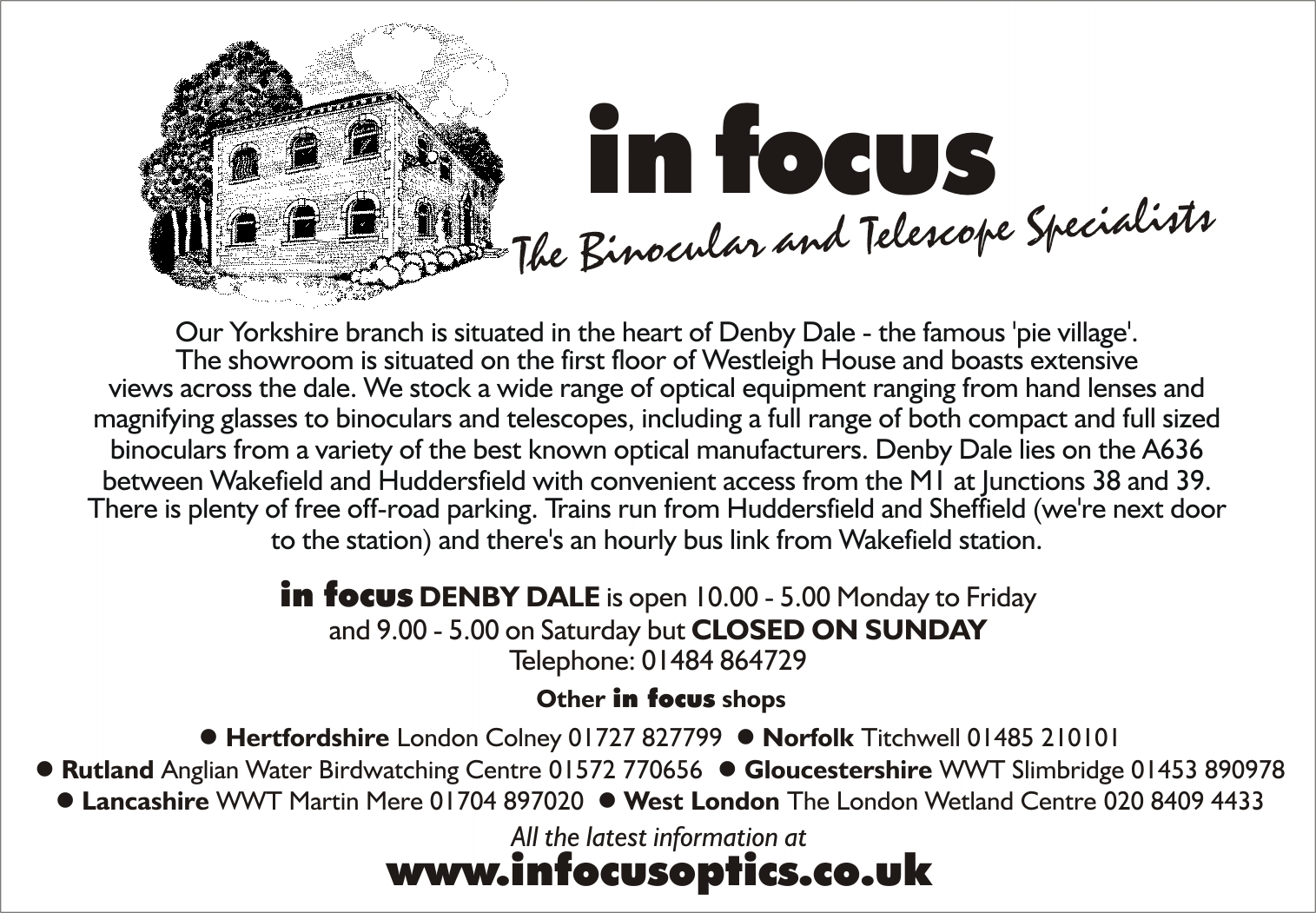
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| Curlew | Huddersfield Birdwatchers’ ClubRegistered charity no 1098296 |
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**A report of all the species of birds recorded**

**in the Huddersfield area in 2020.**



**This Bearded Vulture, an itinerant immature bird and offspring from a re-introduced population in the Alps, spent several weeks during the summer in the Dark Peak District making occasional forays into the Huddersfield recording area. Photo: Trevor Doherty.**



[**www.huddersfieldbirdwatchersclub.co.uk**](http://www.huddersfieldbirdwatchersclub.co.uk)

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**ISSN 0962-5925**