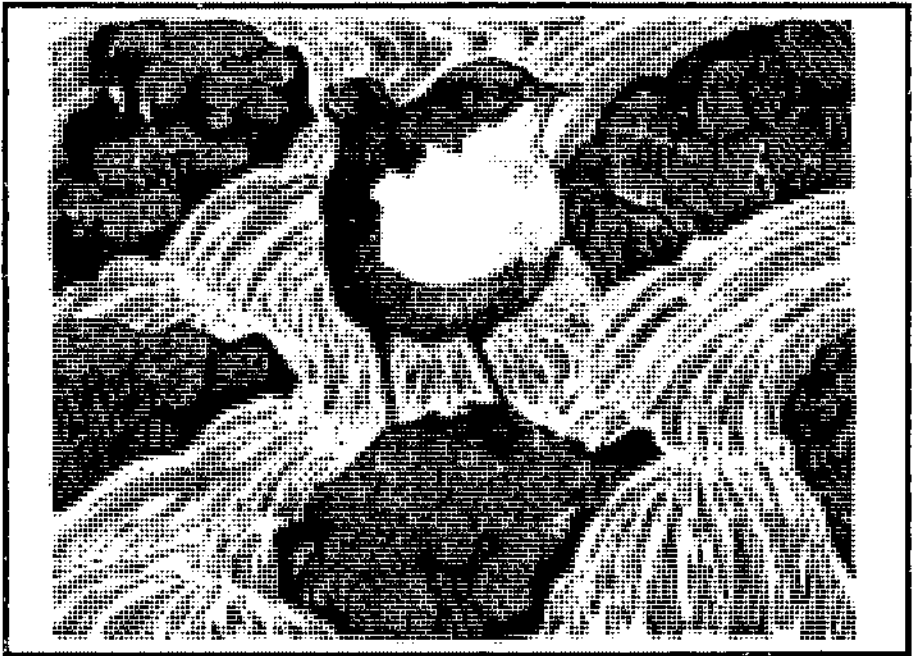


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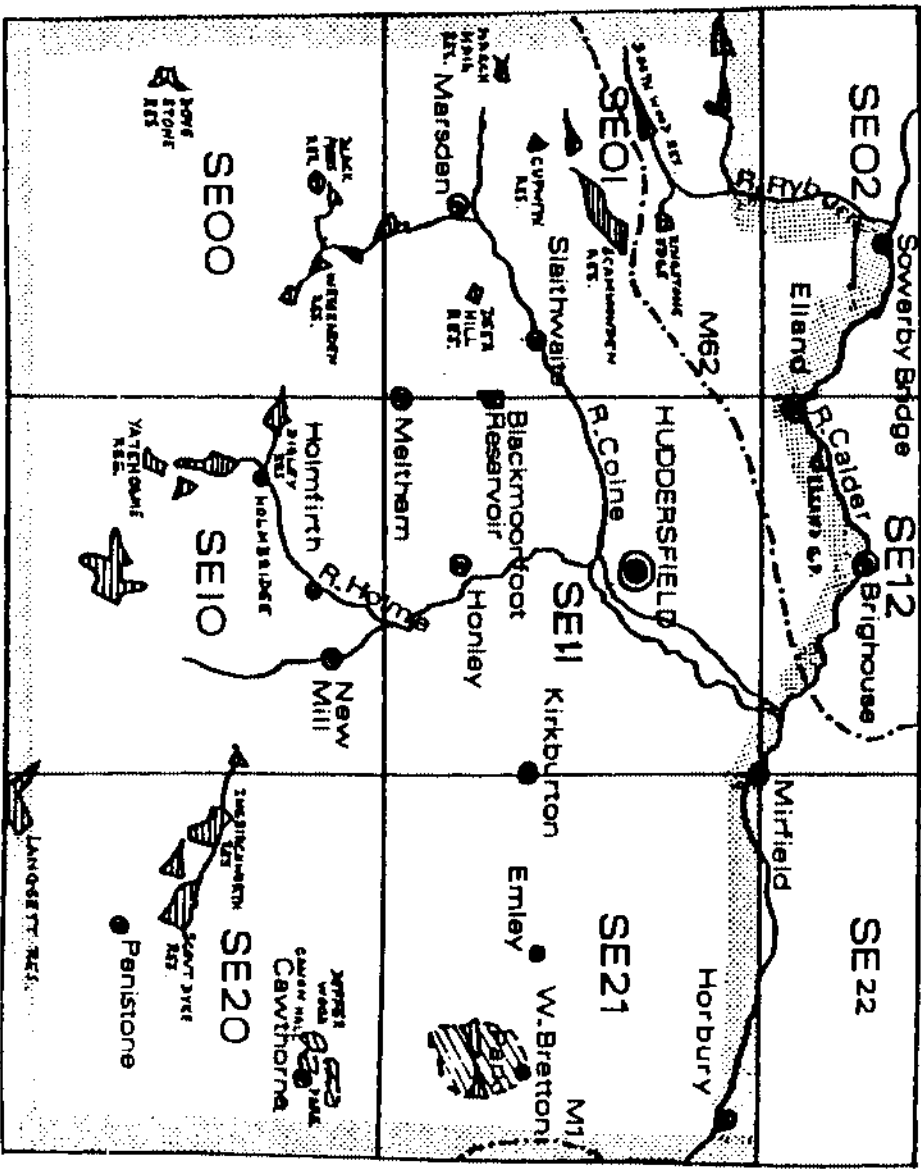
Birds in Huddersfield 1995



ANNUAL REPORT

Huddersfield BWC: boundaries of Club area:

● gmy B2



BIRDS IN HUDDERSFIELD

Report of the Huddersfield Birdwatchers' Club

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President's Report

This is my second and last report on the activities of the Club. On reflection, the main item to report occurred during March, the Library Authorities told us that our Kodak Carousel Projector had been stolen. This came as a great shock to us, because this was something that we could not readily replace. A new machine would cost about £500. The projector itself was left to the Club by the late David Small. One of our members very kindly presented us with another projector, of a different type, for which we are trying to obtain a second slide tray.

Turning to other, more pleasurable matters, we have had a very full year of lectures, 12 in all plus two A.G.M's. The first A.G.M. was in February to present the 1994 accounts and extend the officials terms of office for a further 6 months. The second A.G.M. was in October to receive the 6 month accounts and elect the officials for the following 12 months. This is to bring the financial year July to June and the meetings from September to March or April. Future A.G.M's will be held the first meeting in October.

We have had a few new speakers this year, Paul Rogers from Anglesey on Zimbabwe, Paul Willoughby from Leeds on Siberia and Roger Wood from Wigan on India. Other speakers have included, Bill Underwood on ringing, David Cottridge on Nepal, Mike Wilkes on wildlife, John McLoughlin, Mark Hamblin, Steve Knell and not forgetting Gordon Langsbury who returned for his eighth visit. I must not forget a talk by Mike Denton on "Birds and Beetles", which proved to be quite fascinating. The quality of slides we have seen continues to get better, if that is at all possible, and one runs out of superlatives when trying to propose the vote of thanks. Attendances at the evening meetings is very encouraging and has shown a slight improvement.

This is more than can be said for the field meetings, which seem to be on the decline, with the exception of Spurn Point in September and Leighton Moss in April. I wish I could persuade more members to give the outings a try; they are certainly value for money. What about making 1996/7 the year that once again we manage to make 30 members the normal complement on outings (incidentally, the trips would be cheaper as well). A report on the trips will be found later in this report.

I cannot end without a very special thank you to all the committee members, for their continued support and help over the last 12 months. Also to the membership for your attendance at the indoor and outdoor meetings, without you the Club would not exist.

Donald Haigh
April 1996

Introduction

One aspect of this, the 20th annual report, which will be very evident to the reader, is that we do have a number of well-watched sites in our area whereby the majority of our records are obtained. However, there are also some lesser known sites that are obviously watched on a regular basis by a small number of contributors. To these people who submit records I am particularly grateful and, whilst I was initially bewildered by some of the names of sites and thus their location, I am now much more confident, having found them on the relevant O.S. Sheets. For this purpose, later in the report, I have listed grid references for many of these sites, which may encourage others to pay them a visit occasionally and thus intensify coverage of our area.

May I take this opportunity to make a plea for records, I was still receiving them well into May this year and, whilst I am always grateful for them, the work on this report was well under way by this time. Sometimes I feel that it is essential to have a deadline for performing a task, my own is that this report must be completed and ready for distribution by the A.G.M., could contributors set their deadline to have records in to me by the end of February at the latest please? By submitting records, even of the commoner species, a better understanding of that species' distribution and abundance will materialise. Even though individual records may not always appear in the Annual Report, they will be kept on file and will therefore add to our knowledge of the species.

Some readers are not "turned on" by gulls. With this in mind, I hope that the article by Mike Denton relating to gulls with yellow legs may encourage observers to have a closer look at these birds.

Within the Systematic List, the seasonal fluctuations of some birds, particularly geese and ducks, lend themselves to data presented in tabular form. I have included these tables anticipating that they would be of interest to most readers and would also be of some encouragement to members to count birds and submit their findings. Not only will the results be of interest to Club Members, but could also be of National importance at some time in the future.

David Barrans August 1996

NOTES ON THE CLASSIFIED LIST

The area covered by the Club comprises Ordnance Survey ten-kilometre squares SE 00, 01, 10, 11, 20 and 21, along with the parts of SE 02 and 12 which lie south of the rivers Ryburn and Calder.

The status of each species occurring within the area has been noted beneath the species name

For the breeding species an estimate of breeding abundance has been made as follows :-

Breeding abundance	1	1 - 20	pairs per year
"	"	2	" " "
"	"	3	21 - 100 " " "
"	"	4	101 - 500 " " "
"	"	5	501 - 2500 " " "
			2501 or more pairs per year

In attempting to establish breeding numbers and the number of passage and winter visitors, particularly in the case of the more common species, it must be realised that the figures are essentially estimates.

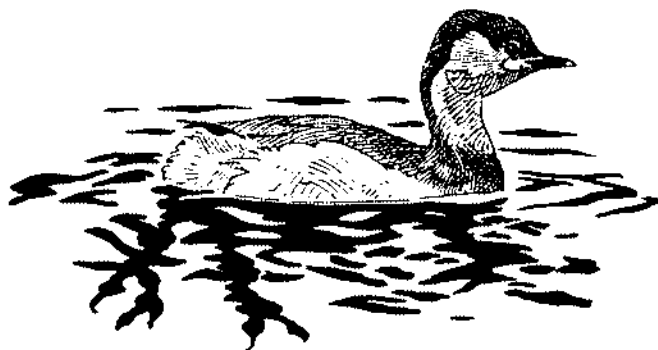
Precise locations for records of Schedule I species (Protection of Birds Act 1981) have been kept confidential where it is felt that publication may lead to harmful disturbance.

The Systematic List

This list mostly follows the sequence and scientific nomenclature of Prof Dr K.H Voous (1977, List of Recent Holarctic Bird Species) Some previously considered races have been given species status in the light of recent findings.

Little Grebe *Tachybaptus ruficollis*

Widespread resident breeder (1)



Present throughout the year on the most suitable waters.

There was breeding evidence from:

Ingbirchworth which also had a peak count of 11 in August (RD & SEH).

Gunthwaite with a maximum of six birds including a juvenile in September (JED).

Elland G.P. Three pairs bred and a maximum of 20 was present on the River Calder during November (HBWC).

Other waters recording the species were:

Rnyd Moor where a single was in song in April.

Blackmoorfoot with a single in April and May and again from September to the end of October when there were two present. (M.I.D).

Scout Dike with nine present in September, reducing to a single throughout October and November.

Bretton C.P. the only record received was of two during November.

Great Crested Grebe *Podiceps cristatus*

Resident breeder (1)

Whilst this species was recorded in the usual locations, the rapid drop in water levels gave some cause for concern as a number of nests were reported as being left high and dry or very easily accessible to predators.

Blackmoorfoot Recorded during all months with numbers varying from a single in January to a maximum of 28 in July then reducing to two in December

The first nesting attempt was aborted and a replacement nest containing four eggs was noted during the first week of June. This was predated and a further nest was built on Amphibious Bistort (*Polygonum amphibium*) by the end of the month, but this was again predated during the late stages of incubation.

Ingbirchworth From January until early March there was a single present, this was joined by another later in the month and after a number of futile attempts they succeeded in raising one youngster in June. By mid-July numbers had risen to five, then reduced to three, the last reported sighting being in October.

The species was also recorded at Elland G.P. with one to two present from February through to December, but no record of any breeding attempt; Scout Dike five were present during March and three during September; Ringstone Edge a single during April and May.

Red-necked Grebe *Podiceps grisegena*

Rare visitor

A single at Blackmoorfoot on 14th January remained until the 24th (MLO, JKP, TM). This is the 12th Huddersfield record since 1966 and the 6th for the site.

Cormorant *Phalacrocorax carbo*

Uncommon and passage winter visitor

Sightings of this species were reported as follows:

Elland G.P. had a single on each of 20th January, 4th February, 23rd April, two dates in September and on 29th December (HBWC).

Ingbirchworth three flew W on 19th March.

Cooper Bridge two flew W on 6th April.

Blackmoorfoot a single was present on 20th April with another on 5th September (M.I.D)

Denby Dale a single flew S over the village on 27th September (TM).

Grey Heron *Ardea cinerea*

Resident breeder (2)

The many reports of this species related to birds flying over and feeding very close to built up areas. At Holmfirth one was noted on several occasions feeding in the River Holme close to the supermarket and also in Huddersfield at Aspley Canal Basin. There were several reports of single birds over Thornton Lodge (mainly flying West but also on the River Colne).

One or two were regularly recorded at Ingbirchworth and similarly at Blackmoorfoot which had a maximum of five during July. Scammonden regularly had four present during April and Dewsbury S.F. had a maximum of three during September.

There were no reports of the breeding population at Bretton C.P., but at a site near Ryburn a bird was observed turning eggs on 15th April but the outcome was not determined.

Mute Swan *Cygnus olor*

Resident, occasional breeder (1)

As reported in 1994, two birds, one of which was a hybrid Whooper x Mute, were present at Brookfoot Lake from January until June - then again during December (HBWC).

At Horbury Wyke a pair successfully raised eight cygnets. Other reports were mainly of singles; at Inghirchworth on 19th February, Cooper Bridge during May and on the river at Mirfield from September through to November although it is possible that this bird may have been present throughout the year.

Bewick's Swan *Cygnus columbianus*

Scarce winter visitor

The only report was of a single adult that was present at Blackmoorfoot from 1330 hrs to 1345 hrs on 8th November (JKP, KW, JMW)

Whooper Swan *Cygnus cygnus*

Scarce winter visitor

The three sightings of this species were all during the second winter period:

Blackmoorfoot had three adults on 31st October (KW), at Ringstone Edge there were three on 17th November and six were noted flying W over Elland G.P. on 29th December (HBWC).

Pink-footed Goose *Anser brachyrhynchus*

Uncommon to common passage visitor

There were several reports from different localities during the first winter period. The main movements occurred between 14th and 25th January with the greatest numbers on 15th. Once again, the table illustrates the importance of stating time, numbers and direction. Those marked * were identified as "Grey geese" but the reasonable assumption is that they were of this species.

<u>Date</u>	<u>Time</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Direction</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Observer</u>
Jan 2nd		1	W	Blackmoorfoot	MLD
" 8th		40	W	Blackmoorfoot	MLD
" 12th		1	W	Blackmoorfoot	MLD
" 14th		c150	?	Slaithwaite	DWB*
" 15th	1855	Skein!	NW	Wooldale	RD&SH
" 15th	1420	150	N	Elland G.P.	HBWC
" 15th	1435	175	NW	Elland G.P.	HBWC
" 15th		175	?	Slaithwaite	DWB*
" 16th		c100	W	Town Centre	HQ
" 21st	0935	140	W	Blackmoorfoot	MLD
" 25th		160	NW	Blackmoorfoot	MLD

There was some movement noted on 14th and 24th February with c150 and 140 at Scout Dike and Scapegoat Hill respectively, in each case flying NW.

During the second winter period a single was noted at Ingbirchworth on 27th September (DMP); at Ringstone Edge 21 were present on 8th October. A single at Blackmoorfoot on 21st October remained until 27th November, with two being present on 2nd and 12th December. The only passage noted during this period was of 200+ flying W over Elland G.P. on 27th December.

Greylag Goose *Anser anser*
Uncommon passage visitor

Four were present on the Digley/Bilberry Reservoirs on 19th February (NC).

Canada Goose *Branta canadensis*
Introduced resident breeder (2)

Reports once again indicate that this species is continuing to spread throughout the area. The maximum numbers at regularly monitored sites were:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
<u>Scamonden</u>	-	-	4	5	8	34	58	6	-	-	39	39
<u>Blackmoorfoot</u>	-	2	4	2	-	7	48	28	-	-	-	-
<u>Castle Dam</u>	39	69	25	1	3	1	14	-	-	1	4	-

Breeding took place at a number of sites: at Ramsden Res. a pair was present with six very young (yellow) goslings in early May (ICP) and at Deer Hill a pair was present with four well-grown young in July (MLD).

At Dretton C.P. numbers showed a slight increase on 1994 with c180 on 30th November (SH). Unfortunately, whilst this is the stronghold for the species in the Club area, this was the only record received.

Other locations were: Denby Dale 11 flying SE on 27th January, Brownhill Res. 6 on 19th February, Riding Wood Res. 2 on 13th April and 12 on 13th August, Wessenden Head

Res. 8 on 23rd May, Digley Res. 16 on 29th May, Wingscar 60-70 on 16th July, 11 were observed flying E over Crosland Moor on 1st August, Royd Moor Res. 119 on 13th August and 54 on 10th September. The unusually high number of 147 were present at Ingbirchworth on 17th December (RD & SEH).

Barnacle Goose *Branta leucopsis*

Rare visitor. Feral birds occasionally breeding

The only records came from Bretton C.P. where, on 10th January, four birds were seen feeding with a flock of Canada Geese *Branta canadensis* (RD & SEH) Later in the year six were present on 4th November (SH) and later in the month, on the 30th, five were seen (JED).

Shelduck *Tadorna tadorna*

Uncommon passage visitor

With the exception of two at Blackmoorfoot on 6th August, records of this species were mainly during the first winter period and were all in single figures. Blackmoorfoot had three on 6th January and in February six on 1st, four on 11th, two on 13th, three on 19th and five on 25th, whilst a single was present on 2nd and 3rd April (MLD).

The only other records were of four at Ringstone Edge on 13th February (JED) and two at Horbury Wyke on 19th and 30th April (JHo)

Mandarin Duck *Aix galericulata*

Rare visitor from feral populations

A male was present at Elland G.P. on 26th November (SH).

Wigeon *Anas penelope*

Common passage and winter visitor

Few birds were evident during the first winter period. At Blackmoorfoot three were present on 4th January, six on 5th and four on 25th., during February there were two on 6th and three on 19th. The only other locations where this species was present during this period were Elland G.P. which had two on 3rd January and Gunthwaite which had a single on 25th January. A male at Elland G.P. that remained until June, was a hybrid Wigeon x American Wigeon *Anas americana* (JED).

The autumn records started in July with three at Blackmoorfoot on the 7th and two on the 31st. However, the main passage was not witnessed until September and continued through to December.

At Blackmoorfoot in September numbers rose steadily during the month and peaked on 17th with 27. Numbers fluctuated during the following month, usually in single figures, but peaked at 31 on 31st. During November and December there were similar fluctuations with a maximum of 17 on 12th November and 13 on 4th December (MLD).

Maxima at other locations were :- Deer Hill with 11 on 2nd September and Ingbirchworth with 10 on 30th October

Other reports were of a single at Broadstones on 12th September, three at Ringstone Edge on 17th September and singles at Denby Dale on 2nd October, Bretton C.P. on 4th November and Slaithwaite on 10th December.

Gadwall *Anas strepera*

Scarce passage and winter visitor

The earliest record was from Blackmoorfoot on 7th March when a male was present. Later, on the 22nd, a male and a female were seen and what may have been the same pair were also present on 10th April. The only other record during the first six months was of a single at Elland G.P. on 12th June. During the second half of the year Blackmoorfoot had a "female type" on 31st July and a male and female on 21st September (M.L.D). This species was also seen at Ingbirchworth on 24th September (RD & SEH) and five were present at Bretton C.P. on 30th November (JED, SH).

Teal *Anas crecca*

Resident breeder (1) Common passage and winter visitor

The maximum number recorded during the early part of the year was at Dewsbury S.F. with approximately 80 on each of 15th January, 5th February and 19th March. During this period single figures only were reported from Scammonden, Blackmoorfoot, Elland G.P. and Bretton C.P. During the second half of the year reports were more widespread with Blackmoorfoot having a single on 12th and 23rd July then almost daily until the end of the year with monthly maxima of 12 on 17th September, 15 on 30th October, 12 on 18th November and 24 on 4th December (M.L.D). At Ingbirchworth records were submitted for all months from August to December with a maximum of 32 from 12th to 22nd December. Similarly at Bretton C.P. with eight on 30th November, Ringstone Edge with 10 on 4th December and Elland G.P. with a maximum of 46 on 6th December.

Mallard *Anas platyrhynchos*

Resident breeder (3) Common winter visitor

Reports having come in from over twenty locations ranging from small farm ponds to large reservoirs and from minor streams to rivers gives some indication to the success of this species and its ability to adapt. There was a report of a bird sitting on six eggs in the school grounds at Greenhead, inevitably this nest was robbed. Successful breeding was reported from Ingbirchworth, Blackmoorfoot, Scout Dike, Scammonden, Deer Hill, Thornton Lodge, Gunthwaite, Hinchcliffe Mill and no doubt there were many others not recorded.

In spite of the extensive breeding reports, maximum numbers were down on previous years with Ingbirchworth (57), Bretton C.P. (80+), Cupwith Res. (32) and Ringstone Edge (11). Monthly counts :-

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
<u>Ingbirchworth</u>	13	10	6	10	26	10	19	12	34	52	29	57
<u>Blackmoorfoot</u>	11	13	16	11	16	16	9	26	32	47	19	20
<u>Digley/Bilberry</u>	20	17	8	3	4	7	-	3	20	27	3	2
<u>Castle Dam</u>	23	15	-	2	9	-	4	20	13	19	9	-

Pintail *Anas acuta*

Uncommon passage and winter visitor

The only records came from:

Blackmoorfoot which had one on 31st August, two on 11th September and a single on 30th. In October eight were present from 1st to 3rd with four on 15th. Finally, a single appeared on 4th December (M.L.D, J.E.D).

Ingbirchworth had a single on 20th September and two were present on 21st October. (BA, RDH, SEH, SH).

Shoveler *Anas clypeata*

Uncommon passage and winter visitor

Blackmoorfoot once again had the first record for the year with a single on 4th April and two on 9th. Other reports were of singles on each of 16th July, 8th and 30th August, 16th September then two on 1st and 2nd October, singles on 3rd October and 22nd November and two on 4th December (M.L.D).

Horbury Wyke - two birds were seen on 13th and 22nd April and a single male from 6th to 10th June (J.Ho).

Ringstone Edge - a single male on 15th April and a male and female were present on 25th July (HBWC).

Dewsbury S.F. - the only report from this site was of three males and eight females on 7th October (PRHS).

Bretton C.P. - a pair was present on 18th and 19th November and a single was seen on 30th (J.E.D, SH).

Elford G.P. - a single male was on the River Calder on 29th December (HBWC).

Pochard *Aythya ferina*

Common passage and winter visitor

Reports came from twelve different locations with Blackmoorfoot and Ingbirchworth being very well recorded as can be seen from the table below:

Maximum monthly figures only are given.

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
<u>Blackmoorfoot</u>	5	1	2	1	-	-	5	2	14	13	7	3
<u>Ingbirchworth</u>	16	11	3	2	-	-	-	-	-	57	28	5

Other reports were :- Cannon Hall two on 19th January, Gunthwaite nine on 25th January, Scout Dike nine on 8th February, Scammonden one on 18th February, five on 6th March and a pair on 6th November, Deer Hill two on 9th September, Dewsbury S.F. two on 5th November, Ringstone Edge two on 6th November, Bretton C.P. 14 on 19th November and four on 30th Elford G.P. four on 5th December and five on 16th and at Denby Dale one on each of 8th, 18th and 20th December.

Tufted Duck *Aythya fuligula*

Resident breeder (1) Common passage and winter visitor

A well-reported species occupying a variety of wet habitats, once again Inghirchworth, Scout Dike and Blackmoorfoot were the source of many of the records and a table of maxima at these sites is given below.

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
<u>Blackmoorfoot</u>	17	4	5	15	5	15	34	38	33	14	14	15
<u>Inghirchworth</u>	14	15	14	28	27	11	27	44	8	20+	4	6
<u>Scout Dike</u>	-	5	30	15	3	10	18	29	4	4	1	-

Other reports came from:-

Bilberry Res - 4 on 14th January,

Digley - 2 on 28th January,

Gunthwaite - 4 on 7 April and five on 12th September.

Hinchcliffe Mill - 2 on 18th April.

Horbury Wyke - 18 on 19th April. It is quite probable that three pairs bred here, ducklings were seen on 15th July.

March Haigh - a pair on 9th May.

Ringstone Edge - 4 on 22nd June, 1 on 30th July, 2 on each of 30th September and 16th and 20th October.

Scout Dike - in July a female was seen with 9 ducklings (DI).

Deanhead Res - one on 30th July and five on 2nd August.

Bretton C.P. - a female with 8 ducklings less than two weeks old on 6th August. eight birds were present on both 19th and 30th November.

Scaup *Aythya marila*

Scarce passage and winter visitor

Three locations played host to singles of this species. A female at Blackmoorfoot on 12th February (MLD, PB), a male at Inghirchworth on 18th March (PS) and, in the second winter period, a female at Elland G.P. on 9th and 19th November (HBWC).

Common Scoter *Melanitta nigra*

Scarce to uncommon passage visitor

The only reports of this species came from Blackmoorfoot. A first-summer male was present on 3rd May, a single female on 18th June, a female on 14th July remained until 23rd when it was joined by another female, both remaining until 31st, then a female stayed from 1st August until 5th (MLD). Three males were present on 2nd September (MLD) and a female was seen on 4th November (TM).

Velvet Scoter *Melanitta fusca*

Rare visitor

A single male was present at Dewsbury S.F. on 3rd December (JH)

Goldeneye *Bucephala clangula*
Regular but uncommon winter visitor

Sightings of this species followed the pattern of previous years with Blackmoorfoot and Ingbirchworth providing the majority of records. In January singles were present at Blackmoorfoot on 3rd, 15th and 28th, numbers rose towards the end of February with three between 23rd and 28th whilst throughout March two or three were seen daily. During April a minimum of three was present daily with five or six from 18th to 27th. The last sighting during this period was of two that remained until 6th May. At Ingbirchworth the January numbers included four on 3rd, five on 8th, two males on 16th then two or three, usually including a male, until 29th March when five birds were seen. The last record was of three on 22nd April.

During the second winter period singles were present at Blackmoorfoot from 2nd October and Ingbirchworth from 4th November with one or two being seen throughout November and December at both localities. Other reports of one or two birds came from Scout Dike, Langsett, Ringstone Edge, Royd Moor and Bretton C.P.

Snew *Mergus albellus*
Rare visitor

Almost following the pattern of the previous year, a "red-head" was seen at Blackmoorfoot on 4th November, two "red-heads" were present on 5th, with a single "red-head" from 12th to 14th (PB, MLD, JKP, JMW)

Red-breasted Merganser *Mergus serrator*
Rare visitor

At Blackmoorfoot two birds were observed copulating on 13th April before flying S at 1920 hrs (MLD). Further records from this location were: a female on 28th May, a male on 4th and between 11th and 25 June then, later in the year, four "female types" on 1st October, one on 2nd, 6th and 7th, four again on 10th then two on 20th. In November a female was present until 16th (MLD, JMW *et al*)

Other reports came from Scammonden, with one flying off W at 1930 hrs on 28th April (JED, BA). Two birds were seen on the mill pond at Burnlee on 13th May (HQ) and a male was on Ramsden Res. on 31st May ((DMP)

Goosander *Mergus merganser*
Scarce to uncommon passage and winter visitor

During the first winter period there was a large gathering at Elland G.P. which peaked at 75 on the 8th January (HBWC, JED). Other reports at this time were all of single figures i.e. Blackmoorfoot on 12th January (2) and 5th March (3) (MLD). A male was seen at Warr Carr Res. on 24th February (TP) and three were seen flying SE over Huddersfield Railway Station on 3rd March (MLD). During the second winter period Elland G.P. provided the only records with two on 12th November and 21 on 10th December (WeBS via NC).

Ruddy Duck *Oxyura jamaicensis*

Infrequent visitor but expanding

There were not as many reports of this species as in previous years

Bretton C.P. Three males and a female on 6th April and two males on 12th. A pair were present on 13th June and, in November, a female was seen on 11th (BA, D&VI, SH).

Ingbirchworth Three birds were present on 13th April, a male on 12th September then two males from 18th until 20th September, three on 8th October and two males on 16th. A male on 23rd and 29th October and a female on 6th November (JED, DBa,SH, *et al*).

Horbury Wyke Two males and a female were present from 19th to 22nd April and three males were seen on each of 6th May and 10th June. (JHo).

Gunthwaite A pair present on 4th May and a male was seen on 8th (JED, RD & SEH).

Blackmoorfoot A "female type" on 7th August, two "female types" on 13th September and a male on 16th October (DMO, KW, MLD, PB).

Marsh Harrier *Circus aeruginosus*

Rare visitor

A single "cream-crowned" flew W over the moors above Holme on 13th May (HQ). This is the 8th record for the Club area.

Montagu's Harrier *Circus pygargus*

Rare visitor

A male flew over the "In Focus" Office in Denby Dale on 20th June. The bird was reported to be flying in the direction of Shepley (JB via P Gr). This is the 6th record for the Club area.

Goshawk *Accipiter gentilis*

Sporadic breeder and rare visitor

Several sightings of a single in the Brownhills area during March and April but on 14th April three were present (HQ). On 15th April a single was overhead at Skelmanthorpe (JED, JMD). At Crossley's Plantation one was present on 2nd May (BA) and in the Midhope area a single was seen on 4th and 19th May (SG). The final sighting of the year was of one flying S over Denby Dale on 18th September (TM).

Sparrowhawk *Accipiter nisus*
Resident breeder (2)

Very well recorded throughout every month of the year. The reports of this species exceed one hundred and fifty which gives some indication of its success throughout the area. Habitats varied from the industrial town centre to housing estates in the rural areas to farmland and the surrounding moors. Many reports contained details of breeding, of food being carried back to the nest sites and of the type of quarry being pursued.



Buzzard *Buteo buteo*
Rare visitor

On 7th July a single was mobbed by a Carrion Crow *Corvus corone* over Scammonden as it headed SE at 1950 hrs (JKP). There were three sightings of singles during September, on 10th flying SW over Farnley Tyas (AF), on 18th over Storches Hall Wood and on 26th over the Wessenden Valley heading towards Pule Hill (DMP). The final sighting of the year was of a bird being mobbed by a corvid whilst circling low over a field at Cooper Bridge on 5th October (MLD). This is the highest annual total since the Club started in 1966.

Kestrel *Falco tinnunculus*
Resident breeder (2)

Having received in excess of one hundred and thirty five reports of this species, many of which contained multiple dates, the success rate is fairly conclusive. A number of breeding reports was submitted for April from various widely scattered sites, many of these included observations of food being carried back to the nest.

Merlin *Falco columbarius*
Resident breeder (1) and scarce visitor

All reports were of singles. Oxygrains Beck had one on each of 10th and 28th April, the latter being a female. One flew NW over Lindley Moor on 8th May (JED). At Blackmoorfoot one was seen flying over the E bank (MLD) on 15th August and possibly the same bird was seen over Crosland Heath some thirty minutes later (MLD). On 26th September a bird was seen chasing Twite *Carduelis flavirostris* in the Wessenden Valley (DMP). Blackmoorfoot again had a single on 1st October (MLD), one was seen at Digley on 11th October (HQ) and one was present at Deer Hill on 13th November (TD).

Hobby *Falco subbuteo*
Rare visitor

Three records, each of single birds: Denby Dale on 13th July with one flying over the R.S.P.B. Office (TM, AF), Wooldale flying S with hirundines on 25th July (RD & SEH) and Holmfirth amongst hirundines between here and the Ford Inn on 23rd August (JED). This recent increase in local records mirrors the increase in County records.

Peregrine *Falco peregrinus*
Resident breeder (1)

There were over twenty sightings during the year, at least two of these gave positive proof of breeding with up to two birds fledged in each of the localities. Other sightings were:

At Elland G.P. the cooling towers were once again favoured with birds seen on 9th, 21st, 29th January, 6th June and, much later in the year, on 20th December (HIBWC). Blackmoorfoot had singles on 1st February (JKP, KW), 25th March (PB), 1st April, 17th September (MLD), 14th October (PB) and 26th October (KW).

Singles were seen at Beaumont Park on 1st March (DMO), Royd Edge on 13th March (KW), Digley on 25th March where a bird flew W (HQ), Lockwood on 6th April (DM), Deer Hill on 1st May (KW), Wessenden two on 2nd and one on 23rd May (KW), Denby Dale on 23rd June (TM), Wessenden Valley on 26th September with both male and female in pursuit of a Buzzard *Buteo buteo*, which finally flew towards Deer Hill (DMP) and at this latter site two birds were seen on 3rd November (TD).

Red Grouse *Lagopus lagopus*
Resident breeder (3)

Very few reports of this species. Is this due to a genuine decline? The only areas where this species was reported were Deer Hill, Digley, Snajlsden, the Wessenden Valley and Black Moss. I feel sure that there must be other areas on our extensive moorlands where this bird can be seen.

Red-legged Partridge *Alectoris rufa*
Resident breeder (1)

The only record received this year was of a single near Molly Carr Wood on 15th August (AF, HC).

Grey Partridge *Perdix perdix*
Resident breeder (2)

The species appears to be stable in the area. During the early part of the year sightings were in low single figures from a variety of widely scattered locations. After the breeding season numbers increased, with eight at Farnley Tyas on 8th August, two adults with ten young at Thurstonland on 23rd August (AF, HC) and 14 were in fields to the S of Castle Hill on 12th September.

Quail *Coturnix coturnix*
Scarce summer visitor. Occasional breeder

In sharp contrast to past years only four singles were reported this year: in May, near Horn Lane on 14th (RD & SEH), in July near Broadstones on 7th (D & VI), singing at South Crosland on 11th (DWS) and near Browns Edge Rd on 15th (JED).

Pheasant *Phasianus colchicus*
Resident breeder (2 - 3)

Well reported from the usual areas. One of the interesting reports was of an "all white" bird at Blackmoorfoot on 9th November (KW).

Lady Amherst's Pheasant *Chrysolophus amherstiae*
Scarce

A male seen at Helme on 6th July (TD) was the first record of this introduced species within the Club area. It is possible that this individual had escaped from a nearby private collection.

Water Rail *Rallus aquaticus*
Scarce winter visitor

During the first winter period singles were seen at Bretton C.P. on 24th January and Gunthwaite the following day (BA). During the second winter period Elland G.P. held one on 15th October and three birds were present during November, the last sighting being on 2nd December (HBWC). At Royd Moor a single was seen on 18th November (JED) and one was present at Bretton C.P. (top lake) on 30th November (JED, SH).

Moorhen *Gallinula chloropus*
Resident breeder (2 - 3)

Many breeding successes: Gunthwaite, Ingbirchworth, Horbury Wyke, Elland G.P., Bretton C.P. and Shepley Push Dam to name just a few of the numerous localities at which this species bred

Coot *Fulica atra*
Resident breeder (2)

The main breeding sites for this species together with the maxima at each location are:

Ingbirchworth - with at least two breeding pairs and twelve birds on 8th March (DBa).

Scout Dike - no breeding reported but a maximum of twenty present on 19th March (JED).

Blackmoorfoot - had no breeding attempt due to the low water level but seven were present on 18th May (MLD).

Other records coming from likely breeding areas were: Elland G.P. (JED, SH), Bretton C.P. (JED, SH), Gunthwaite (DBa), Castle Dam (WeBS) and Denby Dale (TM)

Oystercatcher *Haematopus ostralegus*

Uncommon passage visitor

Single birds were reported from Elland G.P. on 1st and 12th February (HBWC), Horbury Wyke on 30th April (JHo), Blackmoorfoot on 7th and 19th July (MLD, TP) and 9th August. The only report in excess of one was on 22nd July when there were 13 adults at Blackmoorfoot (MLD). One was seen calling in flight over Lindley Moor on 11th August (JED).

Little Ringed Plover *Charadrius dubius*

Occasional breeder and scarce summer visitor

The first returning bird was seen at Ingbirchworth on 22nd April (JED), this site also produced the last record with two on 10th September (DMP, SP). In May one was present at Elland G.P. on 9th, 12th, 19th, 25th and 28th with two on 22nd and 23rd (HBWC). Ringside Edge had a single on 1st July and 8th September (HBWC), whilst at Blackmoorfoot there were two adults on 8th July which flew W at 0625hrs (MLD), three adults on 13th (DMO) and single adults were present on 14th and 18th July, with an immature being seen on 19th August (MLD, KW).

Ringed Plover *Charadrius hiaticula*

Uncommon passage visitor

Blackmoorfoot produced most of the records for this species with singles on 6th May (heard calling), 18th July (adult), then in August a juvenile on 23rd and 24th and singles on 26th (heard calling) and 27th (flying W). During September four were present on 8th with a juvenile on each of 23rd and 24th (MLD). At Ingbirchworth two were seen on 8th September with singles on 12th and 26th (DMP, SP, JED *et al*). The last, a single, was at Deer Hill on 8th November (TD).

Dotterel *Charadrius morinellus*

Scarce vagrant

The Ingbirchworth area appears to be favoured by this species on the odd occasions when it turns up in the region. This year was no exception with twelve birds located in the model aircraft field adjacent to Brown's Edge Rd. at 1400hrs on 21st April (PRG). Having been disturbed at this site they were re-discovered in a ploughed field off Spicer House Lane, the final sighting being at c1630hrs on the same day (BA, DBa, BB).

The large field to the W of Blackmoorfoot contained two birds on 13th May and three were present from 14th to 16th of the month (MLD). This was the first record for the locality

Golden Plover *Pluvialis apricaria*

Migrant breeder (2)

Common passage and winter visitor

Ringstone Edge and Blackmoorfoot had maxima of:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
<u>Ringstone Edge</u>	75	125	52	312	-	-	-	-	220	448	442	127
<u>Blackmoorfoot</u>	2	1	23	86	32	23	45	21	30	165	157	73

Other records were from: Denby Dale two on 6th January (TM), Dewsbury S.F. with one overhead on 5th February (PRHS), Bradley Park G.C. six overhead on 9th February (DWB), Whitley Common with a maximum of 60 on 19th March and 40 on 1st April (BA, RD & SEH), 51 off Whitley Lane on 22nd April (JED), at least nine on breeding territory at Digby on 5th May (JED) and ten birds near Holme on 13th May (HQ). At Ingbirchworth the only records came during the second winter period with maxima of 20 on 28th November (PRG) and ten on 18th December (BA, JED).

Lapwing *Vanellus vanellus*

Resident breeder (3 - 4) Numerous passage and winter visitor

Maxima were:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
<u>Ringstone Edge</u>	100	60	30	-	-	-	14	190	300	382	700	348
<u>Blackmoorfoot</u>	70	150	30	-	-	114	350	267	205	455	500	477

The totals from Blackmoorfoot show a continued decrease on past years.

Other maxima of note came from Denby Dale with 63 in February, 68 in October, 200 in November and approximately 500 in December.

Sanderling *Cathartes alba*

Scarce passage visitor

Two were present at Ringstone Edge on 18th July (HBWC) and on the same day at Blackmoorfoot, three birds in full summer plumage flew W at 1230 hrs, whilst on the following day a bird in full summer plumage flew W at 0630 hrs (MLD)

Knot *Cathartes canutus*

Scarce passage visitor

The three records all come from Blackmoorfoot: two juveniles on 29th August (MLD), three on 5th September (KW, DM) and on 7th October five birds flew W at 1650 hrs (PB).

Little Stint *Calidris minuta*

Scarce passage visitor

Two juveniles were present at Blackmoorfoot on 8th September (KW, PB) and at Ringstone Edge on 23rd October a single was seen (HBWC)

Dunlin *Calidris alpina*

Migrant breeder (1 - 2) uncommon passage visitor

The majority of records came from Blackmoorfoot with two flying W on 6th January and two on 12th March, the latter provided the interesting spectacle of landing on the very calm water for between 10 to 15 seconds, flying off and then repeating the procedure (MLD). Singles were present on four dates in July with two present on 23rd August and September followed a similar pattern but, in October, whilst singles were seen on most days, nine were present on 1st and eight on 22nd. The maximum number appeared on 22nd November with fourteen being present. December records were mainly of four or fewer on each date.

Singles were also seen at Denby Dale as they flew over on 6th January, Ingbirchworth on 22nd August and two on 16th September, one on 20th November and two on 28th. At Ringstone Edge a single on 23rd and 25th October with two on 14th November and finally Deer Hill with two on 8th November. Two pairs probably bred at Black Moss (TD).

Ruff *Philomachus pugnax*

Scarce passage visitor

The only record was of a juvenile that appeared at Dewsbury S.F. on 10th September (PRHS).

Jack Snipe *Lymnocyptes minimus*

Scarce passage and winter visitor

The first two months of the year provided the only records with singles at Deer Hill on 1st January (TD) and at Elland G.P. on 13th (HBWC). Scout Dike provided the only other records with one on each of 8th (JED) and 14th February (BA)

Snipe *Gallinago gallinago*

Resident breeder (1 - 2) Common passage and winter visitor

Well recorded throughout the year with "drumming" reported from a number of sites Blackmoorfoot had singles during each month until June, then after a short lull, between two and seven birds were seen daily during September but numbers then dropped with only two or three birds being present until the end of the year (MLD). Maxima at other sites were: Dewsbury S.F. with 22 on 15th January (PRHS) and Horbury Wyke with 12+ from 13th April until 6th May (JHo). During the second half of the year Deanhead had nine birds on 17th September (JBe, JED), Ringstone Edge was well reported and had a maxima of 21 on both 21st November and 21st December (JED, HBWC). Other locations where low single figures were reported were Scout Dike, Winscar, Digley, Deer Hill, Ingbirchworth, Denby Dale, Shepley, Slaitwhaitte and Almondbury.

Woodcock *Scolopax rusticola*
Resident breeder (2) Uncommon winter visitor

Roding birds were noted at Stocks Moor Common on 10th March and Bank Wood on 13th (JHo). During May, birds could be seen displaying in similar fashion at Yateholme on 5th (JED) and in Deffer Wood on 14th (SGr). Singles were seen later in the year at Almondbury (AF,HC) and at Fixby G.C. (DSH) on 6th November then on 9th at Meltham Cop (TD) and Slaithwaite (DSH). In December a single was present at Helme on 15th and on 30th five were seen along the stream during very harsh weather (TD). Other sightings in December were of one at Blackmoorfoot on 15th, two at Farnley Tyas on 21st (AT), one at Digley on 26th and finally, four were shot at Holmbridge on the 28th (per TD).

Black-tailed Godwit *Limosa limosa*
Rare passage visitor

Two, both in summer plumage, were at Blackmoorfoot on 4th July (JKP, DMO).
** Addition to 1994 Report. A single in winter plumage was at Ringstone Edge on 3rd October (JED).

Bar-tailed Godwit *Limosa lapponica*
Rare passage visitor

At 1530 hrs on 2nd November one flew N over Lindley Monr (JED).

Whimbrel *Numenius phaeopus*
Scarce to uncommon passage visitor

At Blackmoorfoot six flew SE at 1850 hrs on 21st April, one flew W at 0800 hrs on 30th and, in the second winter period, nine flew W at 1930 hrs on 20th August (MLD). At Ringstone Edge two flew W on 20th July (JED) and one was present on 3rd August (HBWC).

Curlew *Numenius arquata*
Migrant breeder (2) Common passage visitor

A very early single flew W at Blackmoorfoot on 2nd January (MLD). The bulk of the reports received relate to returning birds in March with many singles on various days, but 18 were at Scamonden on 3rd (JED) and 16 at Bilberry on 20th (DM). Other locations, many relating to at least one breeding pair, were: Stocks Moor Common with three breeding pairs (JHo), Digley, Whitley Common, Bostaw Whams, Fmley Woodhouse, Midgley, Bretton, Bulcliffe, Langsett, Winscar, Lepton Common and Carlecotes. Departing birds were noted in August, with six at Blackmoorfoot on 16th (MLD) and nine at Ingbirchworth on the same day (BA). The final report for the year was from Blackmoorfoot with a very late single on 13th November (MLD).

Spotted Redshank *Tringa erythropus*

Scarce passage migrant

Blackmoorfoot played host to this species during September with a single that flew S at 1940 hrs. on 2nd (JKP), a juvenile W at 1800 hrs on 3rd (PB), two juveniles on 10th (MLD) and a juvenile on 18th (KW).

Redshank *Tringa totanus*

Migrant breeder (1)

Blackmoorfoot once again dominated the sightings of this species with a single on 6th January which was seen to land on the water and swim for several seconds on two occasions (JKP, DWS, JK). Singles were also present on 19th March, 8th April, two on 7th May and singles on 8th, 13th and 22 May. This pattern of ones or twos was repeated on six dates in July, two dates in August and two in September, the final sighting was of a single on 10th October. Other reports came from Ingbirchworth with two on 21st April and singles on 5th May, 16th, 27th July and 17th, 18th and 20th November. Frequent sightings and display behaviour at Horbury Wyke during the breeding season led to speculation of possible breeding. Displaying birds were also noted at Dewsbury S.F. on 29th April when there were six birds present (PRHS).

Greenshank *Tringa nebularia*

Uncommon passage visitor

August and September provided all sightings of this species. The first, a single flying W, was at Deer Hill on 16th August (TD) with another single on 20th (MLD). The majority of records came from Blackmoorfoot with a single flying S at 0620 hrs on 19th, three on 22nd and two on 31st August. In September singles were seen on 1st, 2nd and 15th with two on each of 10th and 17th (MLD). Dewsbury S.F. had one on 2nd and 26th September (PRHS), whilst at Ingbirchworth singles were seen almost daily from 10th to 23rd September (DMP, SP, JED, BA *et al*).

Green Sandpiper *Tringa ochropus*

Uncommon passage and winter visitor

Two were present at Ringstone Edge on 3rd August (HBWC) and a single was at Blackmoorfoot on 20th. Dewsbury S.F. proved a popular attraction during September with two on 9th, three on 11th and a single on 26th (PRHS). Dean Head provided the only other sighting with a single on 11th September (JED).

Wood Sandpiper *Tringa glareola*

Uncommon passage migrant

From 18th to 23rd September a single was present at Ingbirchworth (JED, BA, RD & SEH *et al*).

Common Sandpiper *Actitis hypoleucos*

Migrant breeder (2)

The first record was from Blackmoorfoot with one on 18th April, further singles were seen at this location on 28th April, 3rd May, 30th June then in July on 5th and 6th, two from 7th to 14th, then three or four until 2nd August. The final sighting here was of a single on 15th August (MLD). At Ingbirchworth singles were present on 21st and 22nd April but then none were seen until two on 10th September (D & VI). Other locations where one or two birds were seen and probably bred were:

Digley, Winscar, Bilberry Res, Riding Wood Res, Wessenden Head, Deer Hill Res, Langsett, Booth Wood Dam, Scammonden, Scout Dike, Royd Moor and Dewsbury S.F.

Mediterranean Gull *Larus melanocephalus*

Rare visitor

All records were from Blackmoorfoot where a first-winter bird appeared on 1st January. During February, single first-winter birds were seen on nine dates and then on most dates up to and including 19th March (MLD, PB, JKP). The February and March sightings probably relate to the same individual.

Little Gull *Larus minutus*

Scarce passage visitor

On 4th and 5th January three adults were present at Blackmoorfoot (DWS, KW). The only other record was of an adult in full summer plumage (moulting the inner primaries) which flew W at 0635 hrs on 23rd July (MLD).

Black-headed Gull *Larus ridibundus*

Resident breeder (1) Numerous passage and winter visitor

At Lindley Moor 184 were seen flying SSW between 1450 and 1600 hrs on 1st January (JED) and in February 60 were noted in fields at Hall Bower on 11th (AT). Approximately 200 were in fields near Holme on 13th May (HQ). During the second winter period 100 were noted at Ringstone Edge on 6th September (JED) and 100 were in fields near Castle Hill on 9th December (AT).

In the following tables n/c = no count and n/b = no birds

Maximum numbers at the roosting sites were:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
<u>Blackmoorfoot</u>	n/c	2100	1500	n/c	n/c	n/c	500	274	n/c	n/c	n/c	n/c
<u>Ingbirchworth</u>	23	270	53	280	4	2	11	195	52	86	200	300

Common Gull *Larus canus*

Common winter and passage visitor

During the first winter period at Lindley Moor 17 flew SSW between 1450 and 1600 hrs on 1st January. Scammonden held 20 on 6th February and on the 18th there were 11 at Ringstone Edge (JED). During the second half of the year a single flew W over Crosland

Moor on 1st July (MLD) and from 4th to 17th November three were regularly seen on a factory roof in St Thomas's Road (ICP). At Scammonden 42 were present on 29th December (SH).

Roosting site numbers were:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Blackmoorfoot	843	808	584	n/c	2	n/b	11	11	113	66	n/c	n/c
Ingbirchworth	2	9	2	n/c	n/c	n/c	n/c	7	2	n/c	n/c	10

Lesser Black-backed Gull *Larus fuscus*

Common passage and winter visitor

Some movement appeared to be taking place at Crosland Moor with 14 flying E on 10th June and 13 which flew W on 22nd July. Similarly, in Huddersfield Town Centre six were seen flying W on 16th June and eight S on 1st July (MLD). Over 200 were present at Broadstones on 2nd August (PRG). Numbers were observed feeding in fields, near Storches Hall there were sixty on 5th September (AF,HC), with other reports of this nature involving single figures but nevertheless quite widespread.

Peak monthly counts were:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
<u>Blackmoorfoot</u>	7	46	37	n/c	4	18	61	544	683	656	518	8
<u>Ingbirchworth</u>	4	0	1	2	2	1	1	50	1	82	63	11

Adults showing the characteristics of *L.a. intermedius* were seen at Blackmoorfoot on 22nd June (2) and 2nd July (1) (MLD, PB).

Herring Gull *Larus argentatus*

Common Passage and winter visitor

An interesting report came from Blackmoorfoot where, on 4th, 16th and 26th September, a sub-adult with yellow legs was noted. The bill and legs were not as bright as *L. cachimans* and the mantle was a shade paler than that of Common Gull *L. canus*. There were large white tips to the primaries and large white mirrors on the underside of the primaries, broad white tertial crescents and dark markings round the eyes with slight flecking on the rest of the head. This bird may have been of the nominate race, but was unusual in having yellow legs (MLD). An adult with bright yellow legs was also noted at this locality on 7th and 9 October (SH, JKP, PB). See "Gulls with yellow legs, Not Yellow-legged Gulls!" later in this report.

Peak monthly counts were:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Blackmoorfoot	478	31	34	n/b	n/b	n/b	n/b	2	4	5	207	463
Ingbirchworth	11	9	5	n/b	n/b	n/b	n/b	n/b	n/c	11	n/c	9

Yellow-legged Gull *Larus cachimans*

Scarce visitor

An adult was at Lowfields on 21st January (HBWC). Two adults at Blackmoorfoot on 18th February and one on 26th (PB, MLD). During the second winter period at this locatinn single adults were seen on 10th September, 30th October and on 4th and 5th November (MLD, PB). An adult was present at Elland G.P. on 24th December (JB)

Glaucous Gull *Larus hyperboreus*

Scarce winter visitor

A first-winter was in the roost at Blackmoorfoot on 28th January (PB, JKP) and at Elland G.P. a first-winter was present during the afternoon of 29th December (TP, HBWC).

Great Black-backed Gull *Larus marinus*

Common winter visitor

At Ingbirchworth the only record was of eight birds during January (RD & SEH).

The maxima at Blackmoorfoot was:

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
253	10	n/b	2	n/b	n/b	n/b	n/b	1	2	34	124

Kittiwake *Rissa tridactyla*

Scarce passage visitor

The only records were from Blackmoorfoot with, in the first winter period, four adults on 5th March (PB) and an adult on 16th (JKP). In the second winter period a single adult was present on 13th September (MLD).

Common Tern *Sterna hirundo*

Uncommon passage visitor

The five spring records were all of singles, at Brookfoot Lake and Baitings on 24th April (JED, HBWC), at Blackmoorfoot on 28th April (departed S at 0900 hrs) and 21st May (MLD) and near Cotton's Dam (plunge diving into the canal) on 1st May (KW). The autumn passage was much livelier with, at Elland G.P., singles on 2nd and 26th June, four from 18th to 29th June, one on 1st August and three on 3rd (HBWC). At Blackmoorfoot six were present on 30th June, an adult on 7th July, three adults on 8th and a further adult on 15th (MLD).

Arctic Tern *Sterna paradisaea*

Uncommon passage visitor

A single was at Blackmoorfoot on 13th June and a juvenile appeared there on 29th September (MLD, PB). At Elland G.P. three were present on 24th, 25th July and on 2nd August (HBWC)

*Common/Arctic Tern: at Blackmoorfoot a single was heard calling on 29th July (MLD).

Little Tern *Sterna albifrons*

Rare passage visitor

An adult appeared at Blackmoorfoot on 17th July but was not seen after 0625 hrs (MLD).

Feral Pigeon *Columba livia*

Resident breeder (3)

The extended breeding season of this species is well illustrated by a ten day old squab found dead under the viaduct at Thornton Lodge on 12th January, the egg must have been laid about mid-December 1994 (MLD). Also at this location an egg shell was noted and calling young heard in mid-November (JKP). In Huddersfield Town Centre there were in excess of 250 on 13th November (MLD).

Stock Dove *Columba oenas*

Resident breeder (2)

During the early months some reasonable sized flocks were noted at Denby Dale with 26 on 3rd and 52 on 30th January, 62 on 13th and 120 on 20th February, 121 on 31st March and 25 on 15th May (TM). Single figures were recorded throughout the year at Blackmoorfoot, with daily sightings of up to eight birds during May (MLD). Double figure records came from Ingbirchworth with 18 on 14th February (BA), Cartworth Moor with 30+ on 4th June (HQ), Black Brook Valley with 14 on 23rd October (JED), Denby Dale with 34 on 24th November (TM) and Elland G.P. with 37 on 12th December (HBWC). Low single figures were regularly recorded from a number of other locations.

Woodpigeon *Columba palumbus*

Resident breeder (4)

Some of the larger flocks noted were: Midgley with ca500 on 8th February (JED) then, later in the year, at Hoyland Bank 50 on 4th November (SH) and 40 at Bretton C.P. on 19th (JED). During December flocks were recorded at Elland G.P. with 37 on 12th, Scammonden with 70 on 17th and 50 on 24th, Farnley Tyas with 150 on 17th, Lindley Moor with 140 on 23rd, Golcar with ca180 and the Colne Valley with ca160 both on 30th. The latter two reports could possibly relate to the same flock.

Collared Dove *Streptopelia decaocto*

Resident breeder (3)

Single figures were noted at many locations throughout the year. The only double figure reports were in January with 15 on 1st at Holmbridge (HQ), 11 in Laund Road on 10th (JED) and 12 in Cliffe Road, Shepley on 15th (DBA).

Turtle Dove *Streptopelia turtur*

Migrant breeder (1)

There was no evidence of breeding and the only report was of a single flying SF at Lindley Moor on 11th June (JED).

Cuckoo *Cuculus canorus*
Migrant breeder (2)

Almondbury had the first reported sighting of the year with one on 1st May (DSI), a male was heard calling in this area on 4th (JKP) and 6th (AF, HC), thereafter reports were from a much wider area throughout May and June. The last sighting was of a single at Deer Hill on 15th August (TD).

Little Owl *Athene noctua*
Resident breeder (2)

Successful breeding in many areas. Bullchiff Farm (three young), Shepley (three young), Lindley Moor (two young) and Almondbury (at least one young). At Digley one was observed harrying a stoat *Mustela erminea* on 19th April and one was being harried by a Ring Ouzel *Turdus torquatus* on 1st July (HQ). Scammonden, Holme, Meltham, Blackmoorfoot and Castle Hill were some of the many other sites where the species was recorded. Reports were received throughout every month of the year.

Tawny Owl *Strix aluco*
Resident breeder (2)

According to the number of reports of this species, it is maintaining its status in the Club area. Suitable woodland where breeding was successful included Cliffe House Woods (Shepley), Bentley Spring Woods, Mully Carr Wood and Bretton C.P. but records extend to many small wooded areas throughout the district and the species may have bred in a number of these

Long-eared Owl *Asio otus*
Resident breeder (1)

A single roosting at Elland G.P. between 30th April and 12th May is the only report for the year (HBWC)

Short-eared Owl *Asio flammeus*
Resident/migrant breeder (1)

The only reports involved singles, at Winscar Res. on 15th May (SG), Scammonden on 8th October (BSm) and Blackmoorfoot on 13th October (KW). It is sad to note that there were no breeding reports.

Swift *Apus apus*
Migrant breeder (3)

The first arrivals were three at Brookfoot Lake on 24th April (JED). The species was then recorded in low single figures from a number of widely scattered localities during the first week in May. Numbers had attained double figures by the second week and at Inghirchworth on 14th there were in excess of 100 (JED). Throughout June between 20 and 50 were present at both Blackmoorfoot and Inghirchworth. Single figures were then

seen at the usual nesting sites both in the town centre and the rural areas. Some late sightings in September were: Blackmoorfoot with one on 1st (MLD), Ossett had one on 8th (JG) and the final single was at Gunthwaite on 12th (JED)

Kingfisher *Alcedo atthis*

Resident breeder (1)

Well recorded during all months. Unusually a single was present at Blackmoorfoot throughout January and one appeared again on 2nd April (MLD). There were regular sightings at Elland G.P. where two or perhaps three pairs bred on the lagoons (HBWC). Two were seen taking food to a nest site at Armitage Bridge (DM) and a pair almost certainly nested at Hinchliffe Mill (HQ). Other regular sightings came from Horbury Wyke, Lockwood, Bretton C.P., Dogley, Thongsbridge, Chapel Hill (River Colne), Folly Hall and the final report was from Slaitwhaite (Hill Top Reservoir) on 5th December (AI).

Green Woodpecker *Picus viridis*

Resident breeder (1 - 2)

Successful breeding reported from Bullcliff Woods, Denby Dale, Big Valley (Netherton), Digley Bottom, Scammonden, Outlane, Gunthwaite, Bretton C.P., Stones Wood (Shepley), Lepton Great Wood. Pairs probably bred at other locations where birds were regularly seen but evidence of nesting remained undetected.

Great Spotted Woodpecker *Dendrocopos major*

Resident breeder (2)

A single was at Blackmoorfoot on 8th January and again on 2nd February. The species was frequently reported from gardens in Clayton West, Shepley, Almondbury, Holmbridge, Meltham, Honley, Healey House, Lindley Moor and Fixby, the birds not only taking advantage of the trees which they contained but also utilising the food put out to encourage other species. During the early spring however, natural woodland sightings came from many locations with breeding proved at a good number. Stones Wood (Shepley), Honley Wood and Deffer Wood each with at least one breeding pair, Mellor Wood (Almondbury), Royd House Wood (Farnley Tyas), many sightings at Bretton C.P., Golcar (near the canal), Longley, Lepton Great Wood, and Netherton.

Lesser Spotted Woodpecker *Dendrocopos minor*

Resident breeder (1)

A single was at Big Valley (Netherton) on 12th March then adults were feeding young at this site on 2nd June (DM). Singles at Bretton C.P. on 6th April ((BA), with further sightings here on 18th November (DMP, JMD, KW) and 14th December (BCo). A single was seen at Almondbury on 18th April (DSI) and again on 19th November (AF, HC). A pair was present at Elland G.P. during May and early June but there was no evidence of breeding (HBWC). There were no further reports until a single was seen in a garden at Meltham on 30th October (JTh).

Skylark *Alauda arvensis*

Resident breeder (3-4)

None of the records received exceeded single figures. The first record of the year was of three flying W at Blackmoorfoot on 29th January (MLD). Two were on the cricket pitch at Carworth Moor on 19th February (HQ). At Castle Hill there were two on 6th March, then reports were from the usual breeding areas, the final sighting was of 6+ at Scout Dike on 30th September (SH).

Sand Martin *Riparia riparia*

Migrant, rare breeder

The first records of the year were of singles at Blackmoorfoot on 4th April and Elland G.P. the following day. At this latter mentioned site numbers increased gradually to a maximum of six on 27th April and three were present on 23rd July (HBWC, DM). Other records from Blackmoorfoot were of three on 10th April, two on 3rd May, singles on 28th June and 13th July, three on 23rd July, two on 5th August and a single on 9th and 10th September (MLD). The largest concentration was of 15 at Bretton C.P. on 11th April (BA). Twos and threes were also seen at Lindley Moor on 17th April, then, at the end of the season, Ringstone Edge on 3rd August, Dewsbury S.F. on 11th September and the last reported bird was at Denby Dale on 12th September (TM).

Swallow *Hirundo rustica*

Migrant breeder (4)

The first arrival was a single at Blackmoorfoot on 8th April (MLD), at Shepley on 10th there were three (DBA) and the following day there were six at Bretton C.P. A single was seen mobbing the escaped Red-tailed Hawk *Buteo jamaicensis* at Emley Woodhouse on 11th April. On 19th April a few singles seen were battling against a hail/snow storm at Thurstonland. Towards the end of the month numbers increased to between 20 and 30 at Brookfoot Lake on 20th and over 100 at Ingbirchworth on 22nd. Breeding reports were widespread throughout the area. Flocks started gathering during the latter half of August with 40 at Shepley on 16th, 30 at Farnley Tyas on 22nd, 100 at Thurstonland on 22nd and 67 at Blackmoorfoot on 31st. This pattern continued until the second week in September, the last large flocks being 100 at Blackmoorfoot on 5th and 50 at Gunthwaite on 12th, then 20, mainly juveniles, at Farnley Hey on 18th. Birds continued to be seen, usually in single figures, but at Blackmoorfoot 42 were noted flying S on 8th October (MLD). The final report was of a very late single with short tail streamers indicating a bird of the year, which was seen at Elland G.P. before disappearing in a snow flurry on 5th December (JED). This is the latest record for this species in the Clob area.

House Martin *Delichon urbica*

Migrant breeder (3)

A group of six at Bretton C.P. on 11th April were the first arrivals (BA). Reports then came in on a daily basis but mostly of single figures until May when, at Blackmoorfoot, 20 were present on 10th, 13 on 13th and 34 on 22nd (MLD). At Ingbirchworth there was a

similar build-up to approximately 50 on 14th May (JED). Nesting sites were noted at Holme Bridge, Armitage Bridge, Crosland Moor, Honley, Lockwood, Shelley and Famley Tyas but no figures were submitted. Late summer gatherings became evident in August with 140 on wires in Jenkyn Lane, Shepley on 16th with almost all departing at 1140 hrs (DBa) and 86 at Blackmoorfoot on 10th September. Birds were still present at Honley and Lockwood during the third week in September. The last record of the year was of 17 which flew S at Blackmoorfoot on 8th October (M.L.D).

Tree Pipit *Anthus trivialis*

Migrant breeder (2-3)

Two birds were in song at Bullcliff Wood on 15th April (JHo). At Cliff Wood (Langsett) one was in song on 1st May whilst at Denby Dale numbers increased from two on 3rd May to five on 22nd (TM), two were seen on 6th June (PRG) and the last record from this location was of a single on 30th August and two on 1st September. Singing birds were present at both Midhope and Broadstones from 4th May (SG). Other sightings were of singles at: Blackmoorfoot on 3rd May and 14th, 15th and 23rd August, Gunthwaite on 4th May and Scammonden on 21st May and 10th August.

Meadow Pipit *Anthus pratensis*

Resident breeder (4-5)

The first report was of four at Scammonden on 13th February (JED). During March and April, records, numbers in brackets, came from: Broadstones (15), Holme (50), Ingbirchworth (10) and Digley (30+). Maximum numbers in August and September were well recorded with Browns Edge Rd (30), Stocksmoor (18), Denby Dale (20), Storches Hall (25), Blackmoorfoot (70), Almondbury (75+) and Dewsbury S.F (25). The final report of the year was of 16+ at Scammonden on 22nd November (JED).

Yellow Wagtail *Motacilla flava*

Migrant breeder (1)

Reports of this species are very sparse with the first, an early one, at Horbury Wyke on 13th April (JHo). Subsequent reports were all of singles: between Denby Dale and Lower Cumberworth on 4th May (AF, HC), with a juvenile seen there on 1st and 12th September (TM), Filand G.P. on 12th May (HBWC), Blackmoorfoot on 18th and 28th July, four dates in August and 9th September (M.L.D). Dewsbury S.F. proved to be the exception to the singles noted above, having seven present on 2nd September (PRHS).

Grey Wagtail *Motacilla cinerea*

Resident breeder (2)

With well over 100 reports, full listing of observations is impracticable. Breeding was confirmed at a good number of locations including: Golcar, Scout Dike, Bretton C.P., Thunderbridge, Shepley, Jackson Bridge, Meltham, Thornton Lodge, Holmfirth, Blackmoorfoot, Digley and probably many more. A well recorded species from a good number of widely scattered localities being reported during every month of the year.

Pied Wagtail *Motacilla alba*

Resident breeder (3)

The only large concentration was, as in previous years, at the Springwood car park when over 150 were present prior to going to roost on 12th March (JKP). One showing characteristics of *M.a.alba* was amongst a group of 15 at Silkstone S.F. on 7th April (JED). The maximum at Blackmoorfoot was 20 on 16th August (MLD). Breeding was confirmed at several widely scattered sites

Dipper *Cinclus cinclus*

Resident breeder (2)

Whilst records were submitted covering every month, the number of sites appears to have diminished. Breeding was confirmed at Thunderbridge, Holmfirth and Slaitwaite (Hill Top) where a pair successfully fledged five young in mid-May (MLD). A pair was suspected of breeding at Oxygrains Beck where they were regularly seen from late March to June. Other sightings were two upstream of the chemical factory at Burnlee on 29th January (HQ), a single circled Blackmoorfoot before flying N on 11th March, a single at Highburton (near Fenay Beck) on 18th May and on 30th December one flew upstream from the overflow on the River Colne at Golcar.

Wren *Troglodytes troglodytes*

Resident breeder (4)

Very common throughout the area. One interesting breeding record was of a pair which occupied a hanging basket in a garden at Fixby and successfully raised their brood (DSh).

Duncock *Prunella modularis*

Resident breeder (3)

Many breeding reports throughout the area.

Robin *Erithacus rubecula*

Resident breeder (4-5)

Very widespread with many breeding reports. A confident breeding estimate at Penny Spring Wood was of ten pairs (SG)

Black Redstart *Phoenicurus ochruros*

Rare visitor

Once again a male re-appeared at Dovestones and was in song on 25th May (JED, BA). This was the only sighting and there was no record of it attracting a female.

Redstart *Phoenicurus phoenicurus*

Migrant breeder (2)

As usual the first reports were of single males. The first, making a very early return, was seen at Whitley Common on 9th April (JMD). Crossley's Plantation held one on 2nd May and three were at Bilberry Reservoir on 3rd whilst close by, at Digley, a pair were seen on the same day (DM). Other reports were of three males at Ramsden Reservoir on 31st May (DMP), a female at Shepley on 16th June (DBa) and one with fledged young at Broadstones on 25th. Further singles, usually males were noted during July and August and finally two were recorded at Stocks Moor on 5th September (AF, HC).

Whinchat *Saxicola rubetra*

Migrant breeder (2)

The first record was of four at Melham on 1st May, eventually two pairs reared young successfully at this location (DMP). A male was at Snailsden Ridge on 2nd May and the Scammonden area held birds from 9th May through to 17th September with at least two pairs raising young and a maximum of nine birds seen (JED). Other locations were: Dovestones, Deer Hill, Royd Moor and Blackmoorfoot which had a male in song from 16th to 26th June (MLD). Winscar had an adult and fledglings on 24th July (ICP). Two were noted at Denby Dale on 4th September and the last record for the year came from Scammonden on 17th September when a single was present.

Stonechat *Saxicola torquata*

Occasional breeder (1) Scarce passage and winter visitor

The only report during the early part of the year was of a female at Deerne Dike Lane on 2nd January (JED). At Dovestones a pair were seen feeding young on 23rd May and in June presumably the same pair was seen with four fully fledged young. One or two birds were in the Scammonden Valley on nine dates between 30th July and 17th November (JB), whilst at Deer Hill two males and four females were present on 10th October, one or two remaining until the final sighting of a male and female on 29th December (TD).

Wheatear *Oenanthe oenanthe*

Migrant breeder (2)

March saw the return of this species with a male at Scammonden on 16th (JED), three at Broadstones on 19th (JED, BA), increasing to two males and four females on 29th. (DBa), three at Deer Hill on 23rd (KW) and a male and two females at Digley on 25th (HQ). Thereafter, during April and May, there were numerous sightings, many of which included breeding pairs and fledged young, from Blackmoorfoot, Castle Hill, Digley, Oxygrains Beck, Holme, Ringstone Edge, Winscar, Royd Edge and Melham. A very late record was of a single at Ingbirchworth on 16th October (JED, BA).

Ring Ouzel *Turdus torquatus*

Migrant breeder (2)

Once again Digley had the first record in the Club area with two birds present on 6th April (ICP) and a pair eventually bred at this site, an adult being seen carrying food on 1st July (HQ). A single female was at Scammonden on 8th April (JB) and a pair was seen there on 10th (NL). Singles were present at Holme on 12th, Wessenden on 13th and 23rd and at Goodbent Lodge there were two on 19th and four, including a juvenile, on 1st July (HQ), this being the final sighting of the year.

Blackbird *Turdus merula*

Resident breeder (5)

Most of the reports relate to birds breeding in gardens and indicate that numbers are quite stable. Unusual nest sites included a disused oil tank at Fixby where young successfully fledged on 29th May (DSH). Of the woodland sites, Stones Wood probably had eight pairs, Lepton Great Wood and Penny Spring Wood each having around ten pairs.

Fieldfare *Turdus pilaris*

Numerous passage and winter visitor

A flock of 30 was present in a field at Lindley Moor on 1st January (JED). Numbers thereafter increased with the maxima being: Ingbirchworth 60 on 3rd (DBa), Dewsbury S.E. 30 on 15th (PRHS), Digley 20 on 21st (HQ), Blackmoorfoot 42 flew S on 23rd (MLD). During the next two months there were many widely scattered reports of flocks in double figures, then, in April, at Whitley Common 300+ were present on 9th (JED, SMD) and a similar number were at Ingbirchworth on 16th (HQ). A very late individual was seen at Blackmoorfoot on 17th May (MLD, DMO). Returning birds during the second winter period were heralded by 20 at Denby Dale on 30th October (TM). At Langsett numbers built to a maximum of 250 on 12th November (RD & SEH), ca100 were at Shepley on 24th December (PC), 117 flew S over Blackmoorfoot on the same day (MLD) and on 28th 150+ flew WSW over Lindley Moor (JED). There was an unconfirmed report of a pair remaining during the breeding period in the Stocks Wood area near Shepley, but this could not be verified.

Song Thrush *Turdus philomelos*
Resident breeder (3)

Almost all reports were from garden habitats, with a mixture of breeding successes and failures depending upon the amount of predation and disturbance. Woodland records indicate that three pairs probably bred in Penny Spring Wood and two pairs in Lepton Great Wood.



Redwing *Turdus iliacus*
Numerous passage and winter visitor

The only double figure records during the first four months were from Blackmoorfoot with 12 on 7th January (MLD) and Penny Spring Wood with 20 on 6th (SG). The final record during this period was of a single at Denby Dale on 3rd April (TM). During the autumn the first record was of one at Scammonden on 16th October (JED) then two at Blackmoorfoot on 18th (MLD), 17 at Denby Dale on 20th (TM), 10 flying N over Shepley on 22nd (DBa) and 60+ at Golcar on 28th (JKP). Throughout November and until the end of the year Bretton C.P. had ca100 whilst there were ca200 in the Castle Hill / Lumb Lane area during the same period.

Mistle Thrush *Turdus viscivorus*
Resident breeder (3)

Whilst there were no flocks noted during the early months, breeding was verified at a number of locations, including Penny Spring Wood (possibly two pairs), Lepton Great Wood (two pairs), Blackmoorfoot (two pairs), Emley Moor T.V. Station and Somerset Road plus others, giving some indication of the variety of habitat. During autumn at Rushfield Bridge there were 25 on 24th August, Lindley Moor had 21 on 3rd September whilst in the Scammonden Valley there were 15 on 30th and, in October, there were in excess of 30. During November and December birds were heard in full song at Bretton C.P. and in Somerset Road.

Grasshopper Warbler *Locustella naevia*

Occasional migrant breeder (1)

A lean year for this species with only a single record of one at Horbury Wyke on 19th April (JHo)

Sedge Warbler *Acrocephalus schoenobaenus*

Migrant breeder (1)

The earliest report was from Elland G.P. on 27th April, by 8th May there were up to eight singing and by July birds were seen carrying food (JHo, DSI, HBWC). A single was seen at Denby Dale on 1st May (TM). Horbury Wyke held five pairs during the breeding season with at least two of these being successful (JHo) During the second half of the year at Blackmoorfoot a single was caught and ringed on 10th August and an unringed bird was seen on 12th (M.L.D).

Reed Warbler *Acrocephalus scirpaceus*

Rare passage migrant and breeder (1)

A single was at Elland G.P. on 11th May with two singing there through to the end of June, at least one pair raising a brood (HBWC). At Horbury Wyke two were in song until 8th July but no breeding took place due to the vegetation being flattened by cattle (JHo).

Lesser Whitethroat *Sylvia curruca*

Migrant breeder (1)

There was a strong possibility that breeding took place at Elland G.P. where one to two birds were in song from 1st May until the end of July (HBWC). There was proof of breeding at Blacker Beck but a pair at Bullcliff Wood were unsuccessful. Singles were noted at Newsome and Golcar Tip on 3rd May (TM, KW), Bunny Wood and Bradley Park G.C. on 4th (KW, DWB), Bank Wood, Melham on 18th (TD), Birchencliffe on 1st June (JED), Stockmoor Common on 10th (JHo), Royd Moor on 16th July (JED) and finally a late bird was at Denby Dale on 1st September (TM).

Whitethroat *Sylvia communis*

Migrant breeder (2)

The first report was of a male at Elland G.P. on 28th April and by 13th May ten were in song at this locality. A single was at Digley on 1st May and two were in song at Bretton C.P. on 4th, this number rising to six by 9th with a final sighting there on 13th June. A single was present at Golcar Tip on 7th and 8th May and three were at Denby Dale on 22nd. The remaining reports were all of singles: Quarby Clough and Castle Hill on 4th June, Gawthorpe on 29th June, Helme on 6th July, Blackmoorfoot on 13th July, Scammonden on 16th August and Gunthwaite on 12th September.

Garden Warbler *Sylvia borin*
Migrant breeder (2)

A male in song near Litherop Lane on 4th May was the first of the year. At Golcar a male was present from 8th May until the end of June but was not heard in July. Two were at Gunthwaite on 9th May and were seen feeding young by the third week in June. The remainder of the May sightings were: Healey House a male in song on 10th, Elland G.P. two near the river on 11th, Royd Moor four on 14th, two of which were in song, Bretton C.P. two on 19th, Almondbury one on 20th, Denby Dale, one on 22th and 25th, Dean Wood, Netherton, one on 26th. The remaining sightings were all singles: Bretton C.P. on 13th June, Dogley Reserve on 14th June, Royd Moor on 7th July and Blackmoorfoot on each of 10th and 20th August, both birds being caught and ringed.

Blackcap *Sylvia atricapilla*
Migrant breeder (2 - 3) Scarce winter visitor

Overwintering birds were reported from gardens at Lockwood, Almondbury, Ossett and Wooldale during January and early February when single males were seen feeding on nuts. The spring arrival started in April with at least two in song at Bretton C.P. on 9th. Other locations during the month were Thongsbridge, Golcar, Honley, Shelley, Elland G.P., Almondbury, Meltham, Penny Spring Wood, Gunthwaite and Shepley. Further reports came in during May and June adding to the list of localities. At Blackmoorfoot single males were recorded on 6th, 7th June and from 9th to 12th July and on 17th a female was caught and ringed. This latter mentioned bird was retrapped on 20th and a different female was caught and ringed on 14th August. In September two were seen at Denby Dale on 1st, a single was at Castle Hill on 10th and Bretton C.P. on 20th. Almondbury and Wooldale once again held single males from mid-December to the year end.



Wood Warbler *Phylloscopus sibilatrix*

Migrant breeder (1 - 2)

The first record was of a single at Golcar (near Appleyards), on 29th April (KW). The majority of records were in May with, on 4th, singing males in Cliffe Wood (SG), Bunny Wood (KW) and New Mill (DM), on 5th, a single was at Digley Bottom (JED), 6th and 25th a singing male was in Windy Bank Wood (DMP, DM) and on 10th a male was in Moll Springs (DM). The last record was of one in song at Spring Wood on 18th June (DM).

Chiffchaff *Phylloscopus collybita*

Migrant breeder (2) Scarce winter visitor

A single at Denby Dale on 14th February had probably over-wintered (TM). A single male at Bretton C.P. on 29th March was the first reported migrant and during the following month there were reports from a number of widely scattered localities: Thongsbridge, Honley, Slainthwaite, Waterloo, Thunderbridge, Beaumont Park, Farnley, Newmill, Golcar, Stocks Wood, Upper Park Wood, Bagden Wood, Huddersfield Town Centre, Moldgreen and Elland G.P. Three males were in song at Bretton C.P. on 11th April, as were three at Deffer Wood and four at Almondbury. More than usual were reported from Blackmoorfoot: a male on 2nd April, three singles during July, one on 20th August and three (caught and ringed) on 20th September (MLD). At Fixby three were feeding in rose bushes on the late date of 7th October (DSH) and what must have been an over-wintering bird was at Elland G.P. on 16th December (SH).

Willow Warbler *Phylloscopus trochilus*

Migrant breeder (3 - 4)

A singing male was at Hill Top on 9th April (MLD) and three were in song at Golcar Tip on the same date (KW). There were then daily reports throughout the rest of the month: Ingbirchworth (1), Magdale (1), Thornton Lodge (1), Hinchliffe Mill (3), Bretton C.P. (3), Digley (1), Blackmoorfoot (1). Numbers increased to three or four birds at the above and many additional locations by mid-month, but, in the Royd Moor Reservoir area, there was a large gathering of 40 on 13th April (JED). From all of the reports received the general impression was that numbers had increased, this theory is to some extent verified by the 159 birds caught and ringed at Blackmoorfoot, this being the highest total since 1990 (but still much reduced in total from the 1980's). Reports continued to come in throughout the breeding season until the end of August with in excess of 20 at Scammonden on 16th August. Final sightings were of three at Gunthwaite on 12th September (JED) and a single at Blackmoorfoot on 20th (MLD).

Goldcrest *Regulus regulus*

Resident breeder (2 - 3)

During the first winter period reports were received of low single figures from a number of widely scattered localities. A small number of reports indicated that birds had been present throughout the breeding season and birds presumably bred at a number of these. During the

second winter period the species was far more widespread but the only sites where numbers exceeded three to four were Bretton C.P. and Elland G.P.

Spotted Flycatcher *Muscicapa striata*

Migrant breeder (2)

The only breeding evidence was from Digley Bottom (DM) and Honley (CG) although two were at Denby Dale on 6th June (TM), Middlestown on 20th June and Gunthwaite the following day. The remaining sightings were all of singles: Almondbury, Bretton C.P., Scammonden, Blackmoorfoot and Lindley. Blackmoorfoot had the final records with a single on 13th and 14th September (MLD).

Pied Flycatcher *Ficedula hypoleuca*

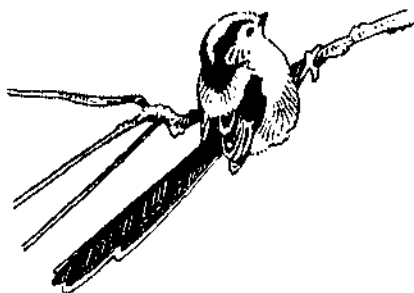
Migrant breeder (1)

Once again records were rather sparse with a female at Langsett on 12th April (GC), a male at Beaumont Park on 14th (RAH) and a male singing in a garden at Holmbridge on 13th May (a first for the area) (HQ) being the only ones received. There were no reports, despite extensive searching, from the usual breeding location at Windy Bank Wood.

Long-tailed Tit *Aegithalos caucatus*

Resident breeder (2)

During January flocks of eight to ten were regularly seen at a number of locations and a flock of 16 was at Lockwood Cemetery on 12th (DM). In February there were 11 in Beaumont Park on 7th and 15 at Bretton C.P. on 12th. At this latter location there was a sizeable group of ca35 on 12th April. There were widespread reports of birds visiting gardens and feeding from nut dispensers during the early months. Several parties of two, some of which proved to be pairs due to them gathering nesting material, were noted at Digley on 13th April. Flocks were once again noted during the second winter period with 16 at Fixby on 22nd September, 20 at Bretton C.P. on 26th November and many groups of up to ten in the intervening period.



Willow Tit *Parus montanus*

Resident breeder (2)

Successful breeding took place at Stockmoor Common and Blacker Beck whilst Stones Wood, Gunthwaite, Bretton C.P. and Yateholme were probable breeding areas. From September until the year end birds were regularly seen at Ingbirchworth, Denby Dale and Elland G.P. and a single was at Blackmoorfoot on 11th October.

Coal Tit *Parus ater*
Resident breeder (3)

Many reports from gardens and other suitable habitats throughout the year with frequent reports of successful breeding. The only noteworthy flock was ca20 at Yateholme on 13th August (DSI)

Blue Tit *Parus caeruleus*
Resident breeder (5)

Very common throughout the area. A pair successfully fledged its brood 100 ft above the road level in the wall of the Denby Dale Viaduct on 19th June (PRG), is this a height record? Twenty-nine were caught and ringed at Blackmoorfoot on 14th July but the only autumn flocks noted were of 15 at Almondbury on 24th August and 10+ at Royd House Wood on 19th November.

Great Tit *Parus major*
Resident breeder (4)

The majority of the reports were of garden visitors and nest box occupants but no large flocks were reported.

Nuthatch *Sitta europaea*
Resident breeder (1)

Recorded during all months at Bretton C.P. with at least one pair breeding. The first report from here was of three on 11th January and the final report was of 4+ on 26th November. Other locations with reported successful breeding were Beaumont Park, Netherton, Meltham, Armitage Bridge, Almondbury and Denby Dale. A single was calling at Thunderbridge on 29th December. This is an incredible increase in breeding activity and distribution compared with reports from only a decade ago.

Treecreeper *Certhia familiaris*
Resident breeder (2 - 3)

From January until March low single figures were noted at Meltham, Silkstone S.F., Beaumont Park, Digley, Yateholme, Blackmoorfoot and Golcar. None were reported thereafter until November and December when ones or twos were seen at Bretton C.P., Royd House Wood, Stones Wood, Elland G.P., Thunderbridge and a rare record up the valley at Scammonden on 16th December (SH). The lack of breeding season records is perhaps not indicative of a decline in breeding, being secretive they were presumably simply missed.

Jay *Garrulus glandarius*
Resident breeder (2)

Numbers appear to be down on previous years. The highest counts were of five in a garden at Fixby in March and, in the same garden, seven in August, six at Thornton Lodge in

April, this being a large number for the location. The remainder of the reports were of three or four birds throughout the year in appropriate habitats. Three birds were caught and ringed at Blackmoorfoot on 5th November (MLD).

Magpie *Pica pica*
Resident breeder (4)

Forty roosted at Blackmoorfoot on 12th January but, apart from 15 at Fixby on 10th March and 21 at Almondbury on 18th December, no further high counts were received.

Jackdaw *Corvus monedula*
Resident breeder (4)

Numbers going to roost between Shepley and Farnley Tyas were noted on three consecutive days in August, these were: 484 on 7th, 170 on 8th and 335 on 9th (AF, HC). Other high numbers were of ca200 at Holmfirth on 28th October (HQ) and ca400 which landed on tall buildings near the Police Station at first light in Huddersfield Town Centre on 15th November before flying off NNW (MLD). Records of this species coming to gardens to feed on scraps were quite common.

Rook *Corvus frugilegus*
Resident breeder (5)

Winter flocks were noted at Castle Hill with 260 in February reducing to 150 in March and during the second winter period between 300 and 500 were regularly seen during December (AT). As with the previous species, numbers were noted between Shepley and Farnley Tyas in August, the highest counts being of ca300 on 7th, 190 on 8th and 640 on 9th (AF, HC).

Carrion Crow *Corvus corone*
Resident breeder (3)

One seen in Huddersfield Town Centre (near the Railway Station) on 13th April had 50% white speckling on primaries and secondaries of both wings and base of outer tail feathers, this bird then appeared periodically and was last seen on 7th November (MLD). On 3rd April at Rashcliffe Hill Road (Lockwood), two birds were seen stealing twigs from an occupied Magpie *Pica pica* nest and using them for the construction of their own (ICP). The highest flock counts were noted between Shepley and Farnley Tyas in August with 45 on 7th, 43 on 8th and 61 on 9th (AF, HC).

Raven *Corvus corax*
Rare visitor

One or two were present in the Dovestones area on 22nd March, 15th April and 23rd May (JED, SMD, BA, SH). The only other report was of a single which was observed for 5 minutes to the west of Winscar Res. on 13th April (JED, SMD, BA). It is known that the species is now breeding to the south of the Club area and occurrences may therefore become more frequent.

Starling *Sturnus vulgaris*

Resident breeder (5)

Very common in all areas with peak autumn counts at Blackmoorfoot being of 600+ on 17th October, 1300 on 18th, 2800 on 23rd, 3000 on 25th and 4300 on 30th. During the first week of November there were in excess of 5000 which gathered at this site prior to going to roost (M.I.D, J.K.P).

House Sparrow *Passer domesticus*

Resident breeder (5)

Very common, a gathering of ca60 was noted in Huddersfield Town Centre (near the bus station) during August and ca40 were at Stockmoor at this time. During November ca30 were together in Lumb Lane and a report from Ossett noted that there were ca20 at a garden bird table, this being double the normal number.

Tree Sparrow *Passer montanus*

Resident breeder (2)

It was very pleasing to note that there are still some small areas containing this diminishing species. At Denby Dale 20 were seen on 30th January and a pair were at a nest site on 13th April. Six were recorded in a garden in Lumb Lane on 9th March and up to five were seen in this area until 4th May. The next report, also from this area, was of three, one being a recently fledged juvenile on 15th August. The last report was of 15, once again in the Lumb Lane area, on 26th September



Chaffinch *Fringilla coelebs*

Resident breeder (4)

During the first half of the year the majority of reports were of garden sightings, with breeding reported at a number of these. The species was present in the usual woodlands throughout the breeding season and presumably bred at most of these. Flocks were usually reported as "mixed finch" containing this species, however ca40 were seen at Lindley Moor on 3rd September with 20+ there on 26th October. Scammonden had 13 on 3rd October and over 25 on 16th December. A flock of 40+ was at Bretton C.P. on 19th November and there were 25 to 30 at Ingbirchworth on 18th December.

Brambling *Fringilla montifringilla*

Uncommon to common winter visitor

Maximum numbers in January were 20 at Denby Dale on 3rd and 80 on 5th. 20 were feeding in a field at Broadstones on 14th but only single figures were present thereafter. The final sighting during this period was of two which were developing summer plumage at Nethererton on 6th and 23rd April. Returning birds were first noted at Ingbirchworth on 30th October when single figures were present but ten were seen the following day. The largest flock was of ca300 at Hinchliffe Mill on 25th December (HQ).

Greenfinch *Carduelis chloris*

Resident breeder (4)

No particularly high counts were noted this year, with most of the reports being from gardens. Of note however, was a pair in a garden at Almondbury which raised three broods and were still feeding young late into September (SG)

Goldfinch *Carduelis carduelis*

Resident breeder (2 - 3)

Generally speaking most birds vacate the Cluh area during the winter months, but this year was exceptional and good sized flocks were present during both winter periods. In January Bretton C.P. had 72 on 8th and 64 on 19th then between 30 and 35 on 12th February. During the breeding season reports came in from Blackmoorfoot, where four young fledged by the end of May, Meltham Mills, Royd Moor, Shepley, Thninton Lodge, Crosland Moor, Penny Spring Wood, Dogley, Shelley and Stocks Moor. A build-up in numbers was noted at Scamonden with 22 on 30th July and a similar number in October. This build-up was even more evident at Blackmoorfoot with, in October, 30 on 5th, 47 on 7th, 60 present plus 107 flying S on 8th, 82 on 10th, 70+ on 15th, 140+ on 17th, 75+ on 23rd and 100 on 25th then, in November, 57 on 1st, 40+ up until 18th, then down to single figures by 22nd. A period of inclement weather forced birds to leave the area but there was another increase in December with 40 on 9th which reduced gradually to 24 by 26th (MLD).

Siskin *Carduelis spinus*

Resident breeder (1) uncommon winter visitor

During the first four months reports came from Holmbridge, Dalton, Wooldale, Meltham, Almondbury, Lindley Moor and Birchcliffe. Many of these were garden records and quoted instances of birds feeding from nut dispensers, typical numbers were of two or three. The largest reported concentration was ca20 at Bentley Springs on 7th April which was also the final record during this period (JED). Blackmoorfoot had the first record for the autumn period when 23 flew S on 8th October and 19 were present the following day (MLD). The only garden report during this period was at Fixby on 27th November (DSh) and the only other report of note was of 15 at Bretton C.P. on 29th November (BCo).

Linnet *Carduelis cannabina*

Resident breeder (3)

Denby Dale held good numbers throughout the year with 25 on 31st March, 50 on 7th April, 40 on 3rd July, 30 on 31st August and 50 on 15th September (TM). The first two weeks of April saw birds returning to their breeding areas at Scammonden, Broadstones, Lindley Moor, Royd Edge, Blackmoorfoot, Golcar and Lepton Common. Numbers during autumn started to build up in July with 20+ (including juveniles) at Browys Edge Road on 16th (JED). The increase continued into August with over 120 at Blackmoorfoot on 13th (MLD), 30 at Stocksinoor on 18th (AF, HC), then, in September, 60 at Castle Hill on 12th (AT). Final reports came from Blackmoorfoot during November with 34 on 14th, 40+ on 15th and 21 on 29th (MLD). The species has normally vacated this last mentioned site by November and these reports are exceptional.

Twite *Carduelis flavirostris*

Resident breeder (2 - 3) Partial migrant

The spring records commenced in March with 11 at Deer Hill on 12th (DMP). Digley proved to be the source of the majority of records with ca50 on 18th and 25th March, then in April ca100 on 19th and 26th (HQ). Reports during the summer were of single figures and came from Scammonden, Buckstones and the Wessenden Valley as well as the aforementioned sites. One was being pursued by a Merlin *Falco columbarius* through the Wessenden Valley on 26th September (DMP), the outcome of this chase was not known. Once again Deer Hill featured prominently during the late summer/autumn period with 11 on 14th July (MLD), ca50 on 20th August (DMP) and the final report was of 16 on 13th October (DM). There were, however, few other reports during this period.

Redpoll *Carduelis flammea*

Resident breeder (2) Uncommon winter visitor

During the early months singles were seen at Fixby on 20th January (DSH), Bretton C.P. on 24th (BA) and Thornton Lodge on 15th February with two being present at this site on 22nd March (MLD). There was a report of small numbers passing through Denby Dale on 5th April, four were at Scammonden on 8th, nine at Healey House on 10th and two males and a female were at Digley on 12th. In May 12 were present in Crossley's Plantation on 2nd, three (including a singing male) were at Buckstones on 9th and singles were at Winscar on 2nd, Golcar Tip on 4th and Blackmoorfoot on 10th and 19th. The only autumn records were of 1+ at Ingbirchworth on 30th October (BA) and 20+ at Elland G.P. on 26th November, at least 6 of which were considered to belong to the race *C.f. flammea* (Mealy Redpoll) (SH). From December 8th to 16th there were between 40 and 100 present in the Scammonden Valley of which over 50% were 'Mealies' (JED, SH).

Bullfinch *Pyrrhula pyrrhula*

Resident breeder (2)

Reported from a variety of localities throughout the year. Breeding was evident at a number of these including Lepton Great Wood, Dogley, Penny Spring Wood,

Blackmoorfoot, Linthwaite, Golcar and Denby Dale. The largest winter flock reported was of ten at Scammonden on 16th December.

Hawfinch *Coccothraustes coccothraustes*

Scarce to uncommon visitor

November was the month and once again Bretton C.P. was the location, with singles on 8th and 15th (BCo) and again on 18th (DMP, KW), three or four on 26th (SH) and at least 19 were feeding on Hornbeam on 26th but only four were in evidence on 30th (JED, JMD, BA)

Yellowhammer *Emberiza citrinella*

Resident breeder (3)

The only winter flocks reported were 40 at Dearne Dike Lane on 2nd January and 60 near Castle Hill on 14th February. During the breeding season there were reports from agricultural areas and many juveniles were in evidence during June. Eight territories were noted on a Common Bird Census plot in Shepley.

Reed Bunting *Emberiza schoeniclus*

Resident breeder (2)

During the early part of the year singles were reported from Elland G.P. on 25th January, then in February at Denby Dale on 23rd and Blackmoorfoot on 26th. Three males were seen at Ingbirchworth on 19th March. During the breeding season reports came from Digley, Scout Dike, Royd Moor, Gunthwaite, Meltham and Dewsbury S.F. There was positive proof of at least three successful nests at Horbury Wyke and adults were seen with young at Scammonden, Browns Edge Road and Dewsbury S.F. during July and August. The only report during the second winter period was of two males and two females at Blackmoorfoot on 31st December.

Escapes

Red-tailed Hawk *Buteo jamaicensis*

As reported last year, several records of what is assumed to be the same bird, came in from Emley and Emley Moor. The bird was seen at these locations on 29th and 30th January and 2nd, 6th, 11th and 12th April. There was no further report until 3rd September when it was observed in the Lindley Moor area for between 5 and 10 minutes circling overhead before being driven off by corvids. (JED, SED, BA)

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Acknowledgements

I wish to thank all of the above contributors for their efforts and for supplying me with well over 3000 records of the 173 species which have been summarised in this report.

In particular, John Dale deserves my thanks for his valuable expertise and advice on some of the species mentioned, also for providing me with the information relating to the location of some areas with which I was totally unfamiliar.

Stuart Brocklehurst has once again come up with some fine illustrations, I am sure that the readers of the report appreciate having a person with such talent within our ranks.

Finally, my wholehearted thanks to Mike Denton for reading through the numerous proofs of this report and for his very sound comments which have without doubt enhanced its quality. Also of course for his contribution relating to the ringing activities at Blackmoorfoot.

David Barrans August 1996

FIELD TRIPS REPORT 1995

Denaby Ings and Clumber Park

22 January

The usual quarry on this trip, **Long-eared owl**, was known not to be in the Rother Valley so we first called in at Denaby Ings, where this bird was believed to be present. We did manage to see two birds here but only after negotiating a track that was about eight inches under water! We had exceptional views of one that was within fifteen feet of us. Also presents were **Siskin**, **Goldfinch**, **Bullfinch** and various water birds.

During our visit to Clumber Park, where we spent most of the day, we saw **Hawfinch** near the Chapel, all three species of woodpecker plus **Marsh Tit**, **Long-tailed Tit**, **Nuthatch**, and **Treecreeper**. Water birds seen included **Great Crested** and **Little Grebe**, **Cormorant** and **Ruddy Duck**. The day had been worthwhile with around fifty species seen.

Flamborough and Filey

25 February

This was rather a quiet day, but nonetheless produced around fifty species. Sea watching gave us a few **Red-throated** and one close-up **Black-throated Diver**. Those who called in at Filey Dams saw a few species of duck and **Pink-footed Goose**.

Filey Brigg had plenty of waders that included **Turnstone**, **Knot** and **Purple Sandpiper** and, right on the end of the Brigg, a large group of about thirty **Sanderling**. Other species noted were **Gannet**, **Common Scoter**, **Razorbill**, **Guillemot**, **Great-spotted Woodpecker**, **Tree Sparrow** and five species of gull.

Teeside - Saltholme Pools - Seal Sands - Seaton Carew - Hartlepool

19 March

This was my debut as Field Trip Organiser - a worrying start as the coach was fifteen minutes late.

At Saltholme Pools we had a number of duck, including **Gadwall**, **Pintail**, **Shoveler** and **Red-breasted Merganser**. After the "long drag" we went to Seaton Carew where we saw waders that included **Grey Plover**, **Turnstone**, **Bar-tailed Godwit** and **Knot**. The highlight on the visit however, was the sighting of three stunning **Shore Larks** that, once picked out against the shingle, gave excellent views within thirty feet.

At Hartlepool we looked for white-winged gulls around the dock hut had no joy. We did, however, see **Eider** on the sea to round off a day on which we saw around fifty species.

Bempton Cliffs and Tophill Low

21 May

An excellent day with a high count of around seventy species. At Bempton we had the usual superb views of all the seabirds on the magnificent white cliffs. Also seen here were **Corn Bunting** (not a common bird these days) and **Lesser Whitethroat**. Tophill Low was excellent with good numbers of ducks, waders and passerines. The birds of the day were a

stunning summer plumaged **Black-necked Grebe** that was right in front of the hide and a **Ring-necked Duck** amongst the **Tufted Duck** - a good day.

Spurn Point

September 24th

A rather quiet day with no real rarities which one hopes for at this reserve. On arrival we heard of a **Subalpine Warbler** at Sammy's Point and a **Red-backed Shrike** at the Point itself. We looked hard for the warbler but nobody had a conclusive sighting, a fly-past **Mediterranean Gull** was some compensation. Those who searched for the shrike fared no better. Some interesting birds were seen however which included **Red-throated Diver**, **Peregrine**, **Merlin**, **Black-tailed Godwit**, **Little Stint**, **Sanderling**, **Arctic Skua**, **Redwing**, **Whinchat**, **Redstart**, **Yellow Wagtail**, and **Tree Sparrow**. Not bad for a quiet day, in all around fifty species were noted.

Flamborough and Filey

October 22nd

A clear, breezy day that produced a fair species count of around fifty. Sea watching gave us **Velvet Scoter**, **Goldeneye**, 'divers' and **Little Auk** which had been passing in numbers here. Just inland we had good views of a **Short-eared Owl** hunting over the fields and a covey of around thirty **Grey Partridge**.

At Filey some of us looked for a reported **Richards Pipit** in the 'Totem Pole' field but had no luck. (A **Merlin** was seen at Filey Dams).

The Brigg itself had **Purple Sandpiper**, various other waders, and **Rock Pipit**. At the end of the day **Brambling** were seen mixed in with a group of **Chaffinch** at the Church Ravine.

Hornsea Mere and Blacktoft Sands

November 19th

A fine, clear day though rather cool when breezy. The species count of around fifty-five. At Hornsea Mere we saw **Great Spotted Woodpecker**. Duck included **Gadwall**, **Shoveler**, **Goldeneye**, **Pochard** and **Pintail**. Geese were abundant with **Greylag**, **Canada** and a flock of over a hundred **Barnacles** that flew low over our heads as we crossed the field.

En route to Blacktoft a **Kestrel** flew into the front of the coach - it appeared to fly off though. At the Sands we saw **Spotted Redshank**, **Stonechat** and **Bearded Tit**. We settled in for the raptor roost and were rewarded with views of a **Marsh Harrier** and a **Hen Harrier** that was involved in an aerial duel with a **Short-eared Owl**.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all of the birdwatchers who came on the trips and a special word for David Butterfield and Donald Haigh for their help and assistance.

David Woodhouse

RINGING REPORT

As with 1994, wet and windy weather dominated the first winter period of the year and the mist-netting of birds was almost an impossibility.

Although little time was available for nest finding during the summer months, it is pleasing to report the ringing of 70 pulli, this consisted of the following Mallard (2 Blackmoorfoot), Dipper (5 Hill Top), Blackbird (12 Blackmoorfoot), Mistle Thrush (4 Blackmoorfoot), Willow Warbler (6 Blackmoorfoot), Chaffinch (13 Blackmoorfoot), Greenfinch (20 Blackmoorfoot), Goldfinch (4 Blackmoorfoot) and Bullfinch (4 Blackmoorfoot).

The lack of an extended holiday period at the height of the autumn migration period, coupled with an easterly air stream (winds from this quarter blow through the netting area and makes netting impossible), precluded any extensive ringing activity. When mist-netting was undertaken, however, good numbers of birds were present.

The winds during the second winter period, being predominantly from the eastern quarter, precluded any netting attempts.

During the course of the year a total of 497 birds were ringed.

RINGING RECOVERIES

Key to Symbols and Terms used

Age:	1	Pullus (nestling or chick)
	2	Full-grown. Year of hatching quite unknown
	3	Hatched during the calendar year of ringing
	3J	As 3, but still in juvenile plumage.
	4	Hatched before calendar year of ringing, exact year unknown.
	5	Hatched during previous calendar year
	6	Hatched before previous calendar year
	8	Hatched three or more calendar years before year of ringing.
	10	Hatched more than four calendar years before year of ringing

Sex: M = Male F = Female

Manner of recovery:

V	Caught or trapped and released with ring.
VV	Ring number read in field or sight record of identifiable colour marks.
X	Found dead or dying
XL	Found dead (not recent)
+	Shot or killed by man.

All recoveries of five kilometres or more are published.

RECOVERIES OF HUDDERSFIELD RINGED BIRDS

For the first time since birds have been ringed in Huddersfield not a single publishable recovery was reported during the year.

BIRDS RECOVERED IN HUDDERSFIELD

Colour marked gulls.

The very low water at Blackmoorfoot Reservoir during the autumn period allowed observations for colour ringed gulls to be undertaken. In total 8 Lesser Black-backed and a single Herring Gull were noted. With the exception of the two detailed below, the recovery details of these birds are still outstanding, but it is hoped that they will be available (should the birds be traceable) for the next report.

Lesser Black-backed Gull

GG30006	10	24/06/84	Plank Lane Tip, Leigh, Gt. Manchester 53° 30' N 2° 34' W
VV	16/09/95	Blackmoorfoot 53° 37' N 1° 52' W 48 Km ENE	
VV	09/10/95	Blackmoorfoot	
VV	18/10/95	Blackmoorfoot	
GG30014	10	24/06/84	Plank Lane Tip, Leigh
VV	14/11/88	Throckmorton Tip, Hereford 52° 9' N 2° 2' W 169 Km SSE	
VV	22/09/95	Blackmoorfoot 172 Km N	

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LOCAL RETRAPS AND RECOVERIES

In Huddersfield the majority of birds are ringed in places that are accessible to the public, so it is not surprising that a number of local birds are found e.g. dead on road, killed by cat etc.

A number of retraps are also handled, some many years after ringing. These are tabulated below. The top line shows the approximate period between ringing and either retrap (Table 1) or death (Table 2). The figures show the number of individuals retrapped or found dead near their place of ringing.

TABLE 1. RETRAPS

	1yr	2yrs	3yrs	Total
Sparrowhawk		1		1
Robin			1	1
Blue Tit	1			1
Greenfinch	1			1
				4

TABLE 2 RECOVERIES

No publishable recoveries were reported during the year.

RING TOTALS LIST - 1995

Mallard	2
Sparrowhawk	1
Dipper	5
Wren	14
Dunnock	13
Robin	33
Redstart	1
Blackbird	17
Mistle Thrush	7
Sedge Warbler	1
Garden Warbler	2
Blackcap	2
Chiffchaff	7
Willow Warbler	159
Blue Tit	109
Great Tit	43
Jay	3
Chaffinch	31
Greenfinch	27
Goldfinch	16
Bullfinch	4

GRAND TOTAL 497

M.I. Denton

GULLS WITH YELLOW LEGS, NOT YELLOW-LEGGED GULLS !

The taxonomy of the Herring Gull group is still in a state of confusion. It is generally accepted, however, that the old Herring Gull should be split to form three species: Herring Gull *Larus argentatus*, Yellow-legged Gull *L. cachinnans* and Armenian Gull *L. armenicus*. Within this grouping the birds which exhibit yellow legs (and feet) are *L. cachinnans*, *L. armenicus* and *L. argentatus omissus*. Given good views of adults or sub-adults, *L. armenicus* (which is, however, unlikely to occur in the British Isles) should present no major identification problems. If confronted with a Herring-type gull with yellow legs it is more than likely *L. cachinnans*. Not all Herring-type gulls which exhibit yellow legs belong to this species however, nor can they be attributed to *L. a. omissus*. Since this splitting observers have been paying more attention to any Herring-type gull with yellow legs and, in some cases, have based identification of *L. cachinnans* on this single character. Life is, unfortunately, not that simple. Four individuals at Blackmoorfoot Reservoir, near Huddersfield, W. Yorkshire (adults in 1988 & 1995, a probable adult in 1990 and a sub-adult in 1995) did not fit the norm for this species or *L. a. omissus* and are discussed below. The problematical birds in question were observed as follows:

Adult: 18th November 1988

Probable adult: 6th and 20th October 1990

Sub-adult: 4th, 16th and 26th September 1995

Adult: 7th and 9th October 1995

Description of salient features

The 1988 and 1990 birds had a mantle colour a shade darker than Common Gull *L. canis*, whilst the two birds in 1995 both had a mantle colour a shade paler than that species. The 1990 individual had dense grey-brown streaking over the whole of the head (denser and darker around the eyes) which created a distinct hood. In each of the other cases the birds had dark flecking around the eyes and extensive (but light) flecking over the rest of the head. The birds in 1988, 1990 and the 1995 adult (all of which had completed their wing moult), had large white primary tips and mirrors present on the upper- and under-side of the wing. The 1995 sub-adult had similar primary tips and mirrors but the primaries were still in growth and the mirrors were only evident on the underwing. Very broad, white tertial crescents were present on all four birds.

The 1990 bird had the legs a rich orange-yellow colour (indistinguishable from the Lesser Black-backed Gull *L. fuscus* alongside) and a rich yellow, almost orange, bill. Although the legs were noticeably yellow in the other individuals they were not as bright as *L. cachinnans* and the bills also lacked the brightness of that species. Unfortunately it was not possible to be certain about the eye ring colour of any of the birds. Each bird showed the characteristic 'jizz' of *L. argentatus*, having fairly heavy bills, angular heads and the rear end proportions of that species.

Discussion

With the exception of the yellow legs and mantle colour, nothing in the above descriptions suggests *L. cachinnans*. In that species the head is not flecked to the extent of any of the

individuals concerned and the white on the primary tips, mirrors and tertials is not as extensive.

From the mantle colour and primary patterning it is conceivable that the birds were *L. argentatus* of the nominate race and, had these birds been seen on water (rather than standing on the bank), they would almost certainly have been ascribed to that race (although the 1990 bird did exhibit very strong head markings for that race) *L. a. omissus* is said to have a larger, more angled head, larger bill, less extensive black on the wing tips and larger mirrors than *L. a. argentatus*. All of which would add up to a totally different 'jizz'. The head shape, bill shape and general 'jizz' of the birds was indicative of *L. argentatus* and not *L. cachinnans*.

The timing of moult is somewhat earlier in *L. cachinnans* than the others under discussion and the species shows a very attenuated rear end thereafter. In *L. a. omissus* the moult is later, and had the birds in 1988, 1990 and the 1995 adult been of that race, it is expected that they would be showing growth of their outer primaries. Even though the outer primaries of the 1995 sub-adult were in moult, other factors (described above) eliminate that race.

The identification of any Herring-type gull with yellow legs may not be as straight forward as it would first appear, and a thorough knowledge of the commoner species' features are imperative for a correct assessment. It is obvious from the above that observers have to be aware that gulls with the characteristics of *L. argentatus* can have yellow legs and Barth (1968) reported that some Norwegian birds (of the nominate race *argentatus*) can exhibit such a character.

There also remains the possibility that the birds were *L. argentatus* x *L. fuscus* hybrids. Of the three definite hybrids and about 12 possible hybrids described by Harris *et al* (1978), all had a leg colour intermediate between the parents concerned (pale yellow). On this point alone, the brightness of leg colour would appear to rule out hybridization.

Although the true taxonomic position of these birds may never be known, it does place on record the problems which can ensue and the importance of looking critically at all salient features before claiming the presence of *L. cachinnans*. All past records of true *L. cachinnans* at Blackmoorfoot were based on several identification features and can be found under *L. argentatus michahellis* in earlier Huddersfield Birdwatchers' Club Reports. The last word on Herring Gull classification has not been written, and the author would welcome any discussion on the above paper.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I am greatly indebted to Mike Pinder, not only for supplying information regarding the 1990 individual, but also for making available letters and discussion from the late P.J. Grant concerning *L. cachinnans* at Blackmoorfoot in the years leading up to 1984.

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M I. Denton

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LOCATIONS AND GRID REFERENCES

As stated in the introduction, the area covered by the Club comprises Ordnance Survey ten-kilometre squares SE 00, 01, 10, 11, 20 and 21, along with the parts of SE 02 and 12 which lie south of the rivers Ryburn and Calder.

The following list gives central Grid References for all sites mentioned in the Report, as well as other well watched areas that do not feature this year

Name	Reference	Name	Reference
Almondbury	170155	Cotton's Dam	094146
Bridge	130135	Crosland Heath	110140
Bagden Wood	250093	Crosland Hill	115145
Baitings	007188	Crosland Moor	120150
Bank Wood (Emley)	263138	Crossley's Plantation	125050
Bank Wood (Wilshaw)	123102	Cupwith Res.	038141
Beaumont Park	127143	Dalton	165170
Bentley Spring Wood	271136	Dean Head Res	038152
Big Valley	127135	Dean Wood	120133
Bilberry Res	102070	Dearne Dike Lane	195078
Birchencliffe	117188	Deer Hill	070115
Black Brook Valley	080205	Deffer Wood	261087
Black Moss	040087	Denby Dale	232090
Blacker Beck	286157	Dewsbury S.F.	262198
Blackmoorfoot	098127	Digley Bottom	115069
Booth Wood Dam	025162	Digley Res.	107070
Boshaw Whams	151057	Dogley Reserve	187140
Bradley Park G.C.	160210	Elland G.P.	125222
Bretton C.P.	280127	Emley Moor	225130
Broadstones	194064	Emley Wondhouse	262131
Brookfoot Lake	130225	Farnley Hey	155130
Brownhill Res.	115050	Farnley Tyas	165128
Browns Edge Road	195060	Fixby	140202
Buckstone	010140	Fixby G.C.	135192
Bulcliff Wood	292152	Gawthorpe	195165
Dunny Wood(Pighill Wood)	092173	Golcar	105160
Durnlee	128076	Golcar Tip	105158
Cannon Hall	275085	Goodbent Lodge	086073
Carlecotes	178034	Greenhead	135168
Cartworth Moor	138060	Gunthwaite	245061
Castle Dam	255022	Hall Bower	145140
Castle Hill	152141	Healey House	115124
Chapel Hill	143161	Helme	101118
Clayton West	260110	Highburton	193133
Cliffe House Woods	192094	Hill Top (Slaithwaite)	073141
Colne Valley	070140	Hinchliffe Mill	127072
Cooper Bridge	125205	Holnbridge	116068

Holme	108059	Ringstone Edge	050182
Holmfirth	142083	Royd Edge	095097
Honley Wood	115115	Royd House Wood	162133
Horbury Wyke	298175	Royd Moor Res.	222048
Horn Lane	172086	Rushfield Bridge	173146
Hoyland Bank	270105	Ryburn	020188
Ingbirchworth	213060	Scammonden	050160
Jackson Bridge	165075	Scapegoat Hill	090165
Langsett	210000	Scout Dike	232050
Laund Road	103183	Shelley	205113
Lepton Common	212148	Shepley	195098
Lepton Great Wood	195145	Shepley Push Dam	191093
Lindley Moor	095185	Silkstone S.F.	293065
Litherop Lane	270124	Skelmanthorpe	233105
Lockwood	135152	Slaithwaite	080140
Lockwood Cemetery	128142	Snailsden	133040
Longley	145062	Snailsden Ridge	133033
Longroyd Bridge	132160	Somerset Road	157162
Lower Cumberworth	223095	South Crosland	112130
Lowfields	117220	Spicer House Lane	210050
Lumb Lane	115138	Spring Wood (Netherton)	130125
Mag Dale	135124	Springwood (Huddersfield)	138163
March Haigh	015130	St Thomas's Road	142160
Mellor Wood	158143	Stocksmoor	182108
Meltham	097105	Stocksmoor Common	275152
Meltham Cop	093120	Stocks Wood	182103
Meltham Mills	115105	Stones Wood	185105
Middlestown	260170	Storthes Hall	180125
Midgley	272148	Storthes Hall Wood	175124
Mirfield	210200	Thornton Lodge	135160
Moldgreen	155165	Thurstonland	168195
Moll Spring	129121	Upper Park Wood	146130
Molly Carr Wood	160137	Victoria	178053
Netherton	125133	Warr Carr Res	100174
New Mill	165088	Waterloo	170165
Newsome	146147	Wessenden	060086
Ossett	290198	Wessenden Head Res.	070075
Outlane	085180	Whitley Common	190055
Oxygrains Beck	001159	Windy Bank Wood	112105
Penny Spring Wood	160155	Winscar Res	150025
Pule Hill	033103	Wooldale	155090
Quarby Clough	115172	Yatcholme	112045
Ramsden Res	114055		
Riding Wood Res	117050		

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