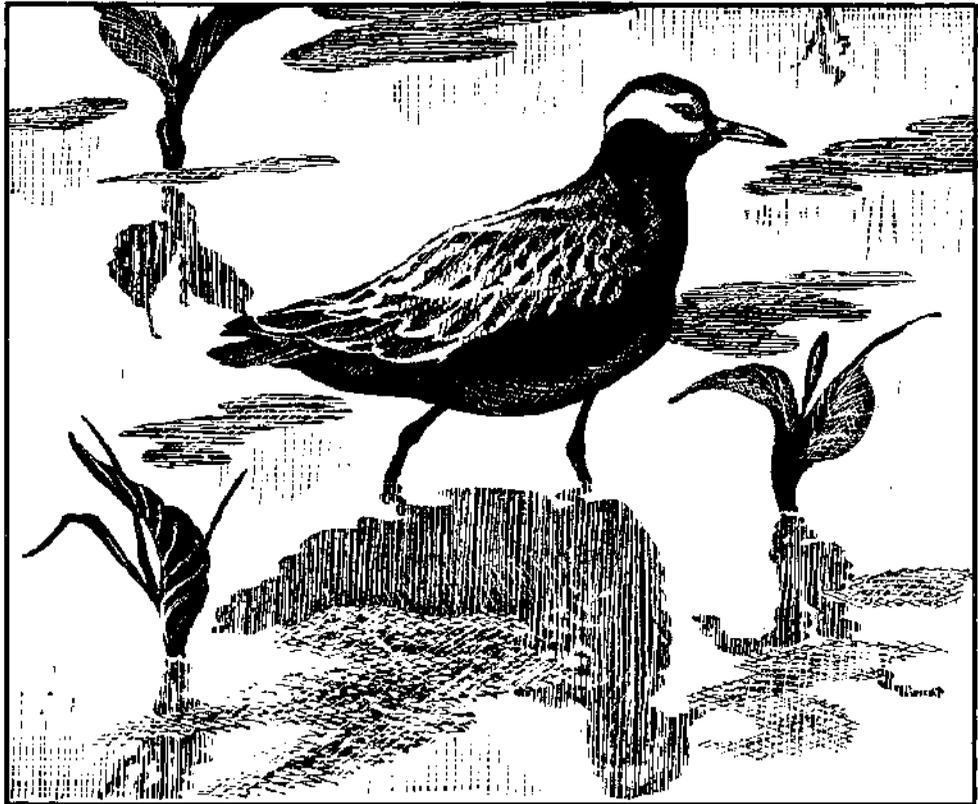


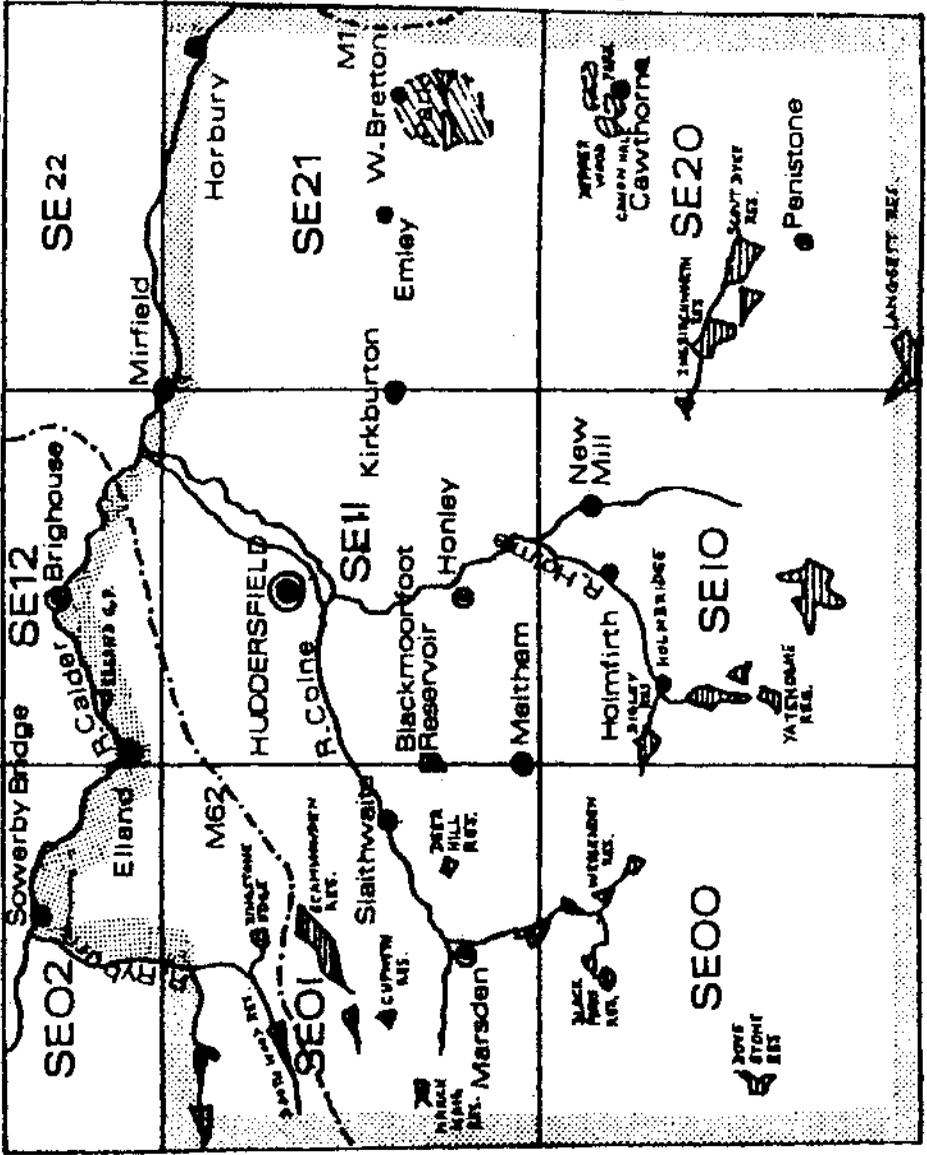
Huddersfield Birdwatchers' Club

# Birds in Huddersfield 2000



ANNUAL REPORT

Huddersfield BVC: boundaries of Club area:



# BIRDS IN HUDDERSFIELD 2000

## Report of the Huddersfield Birdwatchers' Club

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by Stuart Brocklehurst

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## PRESIDENT'S REPORT 2000

It was a great honour for me to be once more invested with the Presidency of the Huddersfield Bird Watchers' Club at the AGM last autumn. I wish to take this opportunity to thank President Mr. David Holloway for the manner in which he has brought the Club into the twenty-first century and the effectiveness of his office. On a personal note I thank him for graciously inviting my daughter Holly Z.L. Charnock to present me with the Presidential Chain of Office. This moment will long live in my memory.

In February we were awakened to news of the fact that Foot & Mouth Disease had broken out in parts of the country. Little did we realise just what an effect it would have upon the lives of people in both business world and private one. With the countryside all but closed down, access to many of our most important birdwatching sites was restricted to prevent the spread of this hideous disease. Where travel was possible there was a strange and pensive mood. Now as the footpaths are reopened there are some new and interesting sights. Flowers, plants and grasses that have not been seen in over a century are once more growing and meadows which have in recent years fallen victim to modern farming practices now stand tall and uncut as though they are speaking out from the heart of Mother Nature herself and pleading for a greater understanding of that which is really happening to our countryside. There will be both pluses and minuses following in the aftermath of this outbreak. My wish is for the many pluses and my prayer is that we as a nation finally learn just what a sacred and fragile world is this place called Earth.

This year has seen the publication of "An Atlas of the Breeding Birds of the Huddersfield Area". The enormity of such an undertaking can only be realised by those dedicated people involved. I wish to record here my total admiration for their achievement and do most sincerely thank them all. The task they undertook in its production has rewarded us all with a publication, the significance of which may not be realised for some years to come. With the decline in the numbers of many of our beloved common species of birds, let alone those rarer ones that have graced our Club area, the Atlas will be there as an irreplaceable portfolio of the avifauna we have been privileged to enjoy; not to own a copy may I believe be a most regrettable mistake.

The position of Honorary Treasurer has been held for over ten years by Mr. David Shore and as our season drew to a close he announced his wish to retire. I would like to take this opportunity to thank him for the fiduciary and judicious execution of his office; he has served us well. I extend the good wishes of the Club to him for the future. Stepping into this office is Mr. Mike Wainman who I thank for coming forward and filling this vacancy. I feel sure we are to continue in good and safe hands.

A very new and exciting programme of lectures has been planned and arranged for the 2001/2002 season and I would expect this to be more than enough of an incentive for you to come along and join with us all again. Bring a friend, neighbour or colleague along so they too may experience the sheer enjoyment of this Club.

We live in ever changing times and I hope that this will not distract you from being a part of the finest and friendliest bird club that there is. Birds seldom change, they may have to adapt to man's interference with their environment but otherwise they go on. Long may our Club do the same, let it be adaptable but let it be.

To all my associates who serve on the committee and do so much to promote the aims and objectives of the Club my warmest thanks on behalf of all the membership.

Be you a Twitcher, an Ornithologist, a Lister, a Birdwatcher or a person who just likes birds, there is always a place for you within the membership of the Huddersfield Birdwatchers' Club.

From me your President good birding and God Bless You All.

Malcolm Charnock July 2001.

## INTRODUCTION TO THE CLASSIFIED LIST

With 179 species reliably reported, the year was the second most productive on record, being surpassed only by the 183 species in 1998. One new species was added to the list in the form of a Shorelark which remained near Ingbirchworth for three weeks in March/April. Also included in this report is another first for the Club area, a belated record from 1998 of a Black-headed Bunting, a major rarity in Britain, totally unexpected but photographed in a garden at Ainley Top. What will the next addition to the list be? Perhaps we should run a sweepstake amongst Club members.

Raptors again figured prominently with all three species of harrier, Red Kite, Osprey, Hobby and good numbers of Common Buzzard (surely a coloniser in the not too distant future) but the highlight was the number of Honey Buzzards reported. Our share in the national influx of this magnificent raptor could have been as many as 22 individuals and totally eclipsed the previous cumulative total of six birds recorded up to 1999.

For those who enjoy the rarer species, the year produced twitchable Slavonian Grebe, Garganey, a female Grey Phalarope in full summer plumage (only the 8<sup>th</sup> British specimen), the Shorelark of course, the Shepley Little Bunting which remained for almost four months and enabled everyone to get it on their list, although it did require patience, and the very obliging Waxwings at Lockwood in January/February. Great Northern Diver, Common Crane, White Stork and several others were less obliging, showing themselves to only a handful of fortunate observers. What the reaction was of the observer who watched two Razorbills fly up the R. Calder at Dewsbury one can only surmise.

The very wet spring must have played havoc with the breeding attempts of ground nesting birds in particular and was reflected in the low numbers of species such as Golden Plover and Lapwing in the post-breeding season. One of the saddest events of the year however could not be put down to natural causes; this was the deliberate destruction by onsite working at Ravensthorpe of a substantial Sand Martin colony. Of the summer visitors Sedge Warbler and Whitethroat appeared to do well, but many others continued to decline and it seems that even the commonest of them, the Willow Warbler, has begun to suffer.

Later in the year there were unprecedented numbers of Stonechats in the area, including a record Yorkshire count at Scammonden. Visible migration watching continued, this year with the emphasis at Harden and interesting results were achieved, increasing our knowledge of bird movements in the area in relation to weather conditions.

I should again like to thank all those who have submitted records during the year, especially the dedicated patch workers, Mike Denton for his monthly summaries of sightings at Blackmoorfoot and Martin Wells and Nick Dawtrey for extracting records for our overlap areas with Bamsley and Halifax respectively. Stuart Brocklehurst must once more be thanked for providing the illustrations to make this report more attractive.

As you read through this report you will realise that very few reports are submitted for many of our commoner species, particularly with regard to numbers of birds. Without a baseline from which to work it will be very difficult to assess future trends and I would encourage the reporting of some of these species which may be at risk.

Brian Armitage      Recorder

## 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 those parts of SE 02 and SE 12 south of the Rivers Ryburn and Calder.

The status of each species occurring within the area has been indicated by one of the following classifications :-

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

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

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

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

Precise locations for records of Schedule 1 species (Protection of Birds Act 1981) and for some other sensitive species have been kept confidential where it is felt that publication might lead to harmful disturbance.

A complete list of all species recorded in the area up to the end of 1993 appeared in the report for that year, compiled by the then Recorder, Stephen Hey.

### Abbreviations

The following have been used in order to keep the text as short as possible:

f.	- female	2 <sup>nd</sup> S	- second summer	CP	- Country Park
m.	- male	3 <sup>rd</sup> W	- third winter	GP	- Gravel Pit
ad.	- adult	max.	- maximum/maxima	NR	- Nature Reserve
imm.	- immature	min.	-minimum	SF	- Sewage Farm
juv.	- juvenile	N	- North	Res.	-Reservoir
1 <sup>st</sup> W	- first winter	S	-South	r.h.	-redhead
1 <sup>st</sup> S	- first summer	E	-East	v.m.w.	-visible
2 <sup>nd</sup> W	-second winter	W	-West		migration watch/ing

## CLASSIFIED LIST

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

### **RED-THROATED DIVER** *Gavia stellata*

Rare visitor

**Harden** – on 8<sup>th</sup> October at 0950 hrs, three, with the lead bird well ahead of the other two, flew NNW, approaching from the direction of Dunford Bridge and proceeding along the moorland ridge at Tinker Hill/Flight Hill until lost behind Harden Edge (MC). The 12<sup>th</sup> record for the area and the first “multiple” sighting. Later that day three diver sp. flew over Stocks Reservoir, Lancs.

### **GREAT NORTHERN DIVER** *Gavia immer*

Rare visitor

**Dewsbury SF** – one flew east past the hide and over the R.Calder at 0915 hrs on 7<sup>th</sup> November at the time when the overflowing of the river had created a significant area of flooding on the bank opposite the sewage farm, attracting good numbers of waterfowl (JH). The bird appeared at Pugney's CP later the same day. The 15<sup>th</sup> record for the club area.

### **LITTLE GREBE** *Tachybaptus ruficollis*

Partial migrant breeder (1)

The species was very scarce in the early months, singles in January at **Elland GP** on 1<sup>st</sup> and at **Ingbirchworth Res.** on 8<sup>th</sup> and **Langsett Res.** on 8<sup>th</sup>/9<sup>th</sup> and three on 6<sup>th</sup> at **Dewsbury SF** being the only ones reported before March. Breeding was attempted at eight sites.

**Boshaw Whams** – a pair bred and raised five young; five birds still present on 30<sup>th</sup> December.

**Calder Valley** – a pair bred at Elland GPs, with an adult and two small young present on 25<sup>th</sup> June, single pairs were also on the river at Millbank, Horbury Wyke and Ravensthorpe GPs and probably bred. A nest with eggs was flooded out at Ravensthorpe GPs in early July.

**Langsett Res.** – one pair bred, hatching two and fledging one young, which was still being fed by an adult on 2<sup>nd</sup> September. One bird remained to 15<sup>th</sup> November.

**Ingbirchworth Res.** – at least three pairs bred, with five young present on 26<sup>th</sup> July in what appeared to be four broods and there were two broods of two young each on 30<sup>th</sup> August. No post-breeding gatherings were reported and the last bird noted was on 27<sup>th</sup> December.

**Scout Dike Res.** – three pairs held breeding territories from 18<sup>th</sup> March with two broods present on 26<sup>th</sup> July and at least three young on 30<sup>th</sup> August. One bird on 15<sup>th</sup> October.

**Royd Moor Res.** – a pair present throughout spring and summer.

**Bretton Lakes** – up to three birds reported, mainly from the upper lake, between 26<sup>th</sup> March and 22<sup>nd</sup> October.

**Horbury Wyke** – three on 11<sup>th</sup> March, with one on the R.Calder on 1<sup>st</sup> October.

**Horbury Strands** – a pair seen on several dates in April/May.

**Blackmoorfoot Res.** – singles on 19<sup>th</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup> July, one on 15<sup>th</sup>, three on 18<sup>th</sup> and one from 19<sup>th</sup> to 31<sup>st</sup> August, two on 1<sup>st</sup> one from 2<sup>nd</sup> September to 1<sup>st</sup> October and one on 18<sup>th</sup> October.

Single juveniles at **Harden Res.** on 16<sup>th</sup> July, **Winscar Res.** from 24<sup>th</sup> August to 3<sup>rd</sup> September and at **Holme Styes Res.** on 25<sup>th</sup> September could all refer to the same individual, possibly from the brood reared at **Boshaw Whams**.

Dewsbury SF. – three on 6<sup>th</sup> January and three on the R.Calder on 3<sup>rd</sup> September, two on 24<sup>th</sup> September, three on 24<sup>th</sup> October and one on 17<sup>th</sup> December.

### GREAT CRESTED GREBE *Podiceps cristatus*

Resident breeder (1)

Once again, counts in the early months were low, with at **Blackmoorfoot** eight on 21<sup>st</sup> February and seven from 12<sup>th</sup> March to 8<sup>th</sup> April increasing to 11 on 11<sup>th</sup>/15<sup>th</sup> April, five at **Ingbirchworth** on 13<sup>th</sup> March and a maximum of seven at **Scout Dike** on 18<sup>th</sup> March.

The very heavy rains of spring and early summer probably contributed to another very poor breeding season, with young birds being observed at only three sites.

**Blackmoorfoot Res.** – in June one pair hatched a single chick which reached the flying stage on 20<sup>th</sup> August. A second pair laid two eggs, but the nest was left high and dry by 18<sup>th</sup> July. Late season max. were in August 17 on 2<sup>nd</sup>, with 15 from 4<sup>th</sup> to 4<sup>th</sup> September and from 13<sup>th</sup> September to 3<sup>rd</sup> October, thereafter decreasing to a max. of five in November and December.

**Scout Dike Res.** – a pair had three small young on 9<sup>th</sup> May, but not all survived. Eventually two pairs fledged two young, one of which was present to 22<sup>nd</sup> September.

**Bretton Lakes** – up to four adults (two pairs) were present from 26<sup>th</sup> March and a pair had two juveniles on the lower lake on 3<sup>rd</sup> September, the only date on which they were reported. Post-breeding max. were 12 all on the lower lake on 22<sup>nd</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup> October, six on 9<sup>th</sup> November and ten on 24<sup>th</sup> December.

**Oak Scar Res., Longwood** – a pair bred, rearing two young. 1<sup>st</sup> site breeding record.

**Ingbirchworth Res.** – no breeding reported and no birds recorded after a singleton in August. Max. was six on 26<sup>th</sup> June.

**Royd Moor Res.** – one on 20<sup>th</sup> March.

**Broadstones Res.** – an adult on 5<sup>th</sup>/6<sup>th</sup> August.

**Ringstone Edge Res.** – two on 30<sup>th</sup> April, singles on 9<sup>th</sup> May and 22<sup>nd</sup> October.

**Scammonden Dam** – two on 18<sup>th</sup> August, one on 21<sup>st</sup> October.

**Winscar Res.** – one on 5<sup>th</sup> November was unusual at this site.

### SLAVONIAN GREBE *Podiceps auritus*

Rare visitor

**Blackmoorfoot Res.** – one remained from 25<sup>th</sup> December to the year end (TD,MLD,DHP et al) and into 2001. The eleventh for the Club area and the eighth for this site.

### CORMORANT *Phalacrocorax carbo*

Uncommon passage and winter visitor, becoming more frequent

Birds were reported in all months except January and from an increased number of sites. Most of the flyover birds were moving in a westerly direction.

**Blackmoorfoot Res.** – one S. on 21<sup>st</sup> February, two immatures on 6<sup>th</sup> May and 9<sup>th</sup> August, an adult on 30<sup>th</sup> August, one on 4<sup>th</sup> and a sub-adult on 12<sup>th</sup> September, an immature W. on 8<sup>th</sup> October, sub-adult W. on 11<sup>th</sup> October and one on 4<sup>th</sup> November.

**Horbury Wyke** – singles on 5<sup>th</sup> February, 19<sup>th</sup> March, 8<sup>th</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup> April, 1<sup>st</sup> May, 1<sup>st</sup> June, 6<sup>th</sup> July, 29<sup>th</sup> October and 4<sup>th</sup> November, with up to five on 9<sup>th</sup> December.

**Ingbirchworth Res.** – one on 22<sup>nd</sup> May, two roosting in trees on 30<sup>th</sup> July and an immature on 31<sup>st</sup> July, singles in August on 14<sup>th</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup>, with two on 13<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup>, followed by singles on 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup>, 9<sup>th</sup> to 11<sup>th</sup>, 15<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> September and on 19<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup> October.

**Scout Dike Res.** – singles on 16<sup>th</sup> July and 3<sup>rd</sup> December.

**Royd Moor Res.** – one NE on 9<sup>th</sup> April, three NW on 3<sup>rd</sup> September, two NW on 8<sup>th</sup> October, three on 15<sup>th</sup> October and singles on 27<sup>th</sup> October and SW on 16<sup>th</sup> December.

**Castle Dam, Penistone** – three on 25<sup>th</sup> and one on 29<sup>th</sup> October, with two on 4<sup>th</sup>, 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> November.

**Bretton Lakes** – singles on 22<sup>nd</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup> October, with seven together on 16<sup>th</sup> December.

**Harden** – in September, seven WSW on 2<sup>nd</sup> and one W. on 27<sup>th</sup>.

**Dewsbury SF.** – two on 9<sup>th</sup> July.

**Ringstone Edge Res.** – two on 20<sup>th</sup> July, singles on 6<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> September, four on 17<sup>th</sup> September, three on 20<sup>th</sup> September.

**Elland GPs** – in November, three on 16<sup>th</sup> and two on 28<sup>th</sup>/29<sup>th</sup> and in December singles on 7<sup>th</sup>, 14<sup>th</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup>, with two on 23<sup>rd</sup>.

**Cowcliffe** – one SE on 30<sup>th</sup> September.

**Holmbridge** – one W on 10<sup>th</sup> December.

**Ravensthorpe** – one W on 27<sup>th</sup> December.

## **GREY HERON**      *Ardea cinerea*

Resident breeder (2)

Birds were reported yet again in all months from over 30 localities in a wide range of habitats. Most reports were of one to three individuals, but larger numbers occurred at **Horbury Wyke**, which had ten on 16<sup>th</sup> July and 11 on 23<sup>rd</sup> August and at **Dewsbury SF**, where there were nine on 9<sup>th</sup> July.

The **Bretton Lakes** colony showed a small increase of four nests on the previous year. This year however there was a shift in the concentration of nests, with 37 on the lower lake island and 18 on the upper lake. On 31<sup>st</sup> March, 15 nests held young aged between two and four weeks. Overall breeding success is unknown.

The colony at **Scammonden** also increased, with 14 birds and eight nests visible on 11<sup>th</sup> March. It was confirmed that by 30<sup>th</sup> April at least six nests were occupied and possibly a seventh.

Breeding was again suspected, but could not be proven due to the inaccessibility of the location, at a private site near **Lepton Great Wood**.

An interesting observation in the **Shelley** area was of birds occasionally landing on house rooftops to inspect garden ponds for prey (SRG).

## **WHITE STORK**      *Ciconia ciconia*

Rare visitor

On 19<sup>th</sup> March one was seen briefly high over **Bridge Royd Wood**, **Bretton Lakes** (JED) and later what was presumably the same bird flew north over **Ossett** in the general direction of **Leeds** (JH). On 19<sup>th</sup> April a bird flew over **Emley** descending towards **Bretton Park** (JMD), where it flew in again two days later on 21<sup>st</sup> to land in a large beech tree and was seen to engage in a bout of bill-clapping before leaving shortly afterwards to the northwest (DMP et al, via BBSG).

At **Waterloo** on 19<sup>th</sup> July one got up from the vicinity of the **Fenay Beck** near the old rugby ground, rose straight up on a thermal with scarcely a wingbeat until out of sight to the east over **Lepton** (BA).

All reports probably refer to birds wandering from **Harewood**. The 19<sup>th</sup> of the month is obviously the date to look for this species!!

## MUTE SWAN *Cygnus olor*

Resident, occasional breeder

The two adult and four immature birds at **Boshaw Whams** remained from 1999 until at least 22<sup>nd</sup> February, with one adult and four immrs. on 11<sup>th</sup> March and 11<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> May, then an adult and two immrs. on 22<sup>nd</sup>, 25<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup> May.

What were presumably the same individuals were also at **Digley** on 1<sup>st</sup> January (2ads, 4 immrs) and at **Ingbirchworth** on 23<sup>rd</sup> May (1 ad, 1 imm) and 2<sup>nd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> June.

All the remaining records were from sites in the **Calder Valley** and included successful breeding. **Horbury** - one pair bred, rearing three young. At the **Wyke** a pair was present from 11<sup>th</sup> March, with one sitting on a nest from 8<sup>th</sup> April and throughout May, but was flooded out during the torrential rains of 4<sup>th</sup> June. Thereafter, three were present on 4<sup>th</sup> November and five (2 immrs.) on 9<sup>th</sup> December. At **Horbury Strands** two adults were present on 25<sup>th</sup> April and 1<sup>st</sup> May, three adults on 28<sup>th</sup> May, all in addition to the pair at the **Wyke**. It is likely that these birds included the pair which bred successfully.

**Millbank Flash, Thornhill** - a pair built a nest, but deserted probably due to predation by foxes.

**Elland GPs** - up to two adults on the canal on various dates between 5<sup>th</sup> February and 31<sup>st</sup> December.

**Cooper Bridge** - one on the river on 17<sup>th</sup> April, 10<sup>th</sup> May, 23<sup>rd</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup> August.

## WHOOOPER SWAN *Cygnus cygnus*

Scarce winter visitor

None were reported in the early months.

**Scout Dike Res** - one flew NW on 20<sup>th</sup> October (BBSG).

**Winscar Res.** - nine, including one juvenile, on 10<sup>th</sup> November (MC).

**Ringstone Edge Res.** - three on 15<sup>th</sup> November (HBC).

**Ingbirchworth Res.** - 21 which flew west at 1410 hrs. on 17<sup>th</sup> December had earlier been seen flying north at 1400 hrs. at **Wyming Brook, Rivelin, Sheffield** (BBSG).

## PINK-FOOTED GOOSE *Anser brachyrhynchus*

Uncommon to common passage visitor

Passage in the early months was noted on 16 dates, with particularly significant movements on 4<sup>th</sup> January and 6<sup>th</sup> February. The timing of the passage is interesting, with peaks at approx. 1130 to 1200 hrs. and between 1400 and 1600 hrs., with only one skein occurring before 1100 hrs. Unless otherwise stated the direction of movement was west or northwest. Unidentified grey geese (*Anser* spp.) are also included here.

1<sup>st</sup> January - c.150 over **Ingbirchworth**.

2<sup>nd</sup> January - 100 over **Shepley**.

4<sup>th</sup> January - at least 1400 over **Langsett** between 1130 and 1230 hrs. in groups of 50 to 240 birds; 50/60 over **Denby Dale** at 1120 hrs.; c.175 (grey geese) over **Middlestown** at 1130 hrs.; two skeins of c.30 each (grey geese) over **Honley** at 1145 and 1155 hrs.; a large movement of birds, some flying high, others much lower, over **Deer Hill/Blackmoorfoot** - at 1430 hrs. between 80 and 90 were on sheep pasture below **Deer Hill Res.** but had gone by 1545 hrs. and at least 70 appeared to land in the valley bottom in **Slaithwaite**; also 11 at **Blackmoorfoot Res.** at 1505 hrs. and c.70 west at **Slaithwaite** at 1425 hrs.

10<sup>th</sup> January - c.50 over **Cooper Bridge** and 75 (grey geese) over **Middlestown**.

16<sup>th</sup> January - a skein flew over **Slaithwaite** in darkness at 2230 hrs.

17<sup>th</sup> January - at **Blackmoorfoot Res.** 109 came in from the east at 1650 hrs., six roosted, the rest continuing on to the west.

20<sup>th</sup> January – 200 over New Mill.

21<sup>st</sup> January – one at Blackmoorfoot, 250 west at Elland GPs.

6<sup>th</sup> February – two over Slaithwaite at 1130 hrs., c.300 over Golcar in six skeins at c.1230 hrs., 60 over Skelmanthorpe at 1400 hrs., 250+ over Scout Dike, three skeins of 250, 150 and 50 over Shepley, c.700 over Tinker Hill (Winscar) in two skeins and 190 west at Elland GPs.

9<sup>th</sup> February – c.120 over Greengate Road between the Ford Inn and Digley at 1445 hrs., c.45 over Oldfield, Honley at 1505 hrs., 42 over Blackmoorfoot at 1515 hrs.

11<sup>th</sup> February – c.40 over Blackmoorfoot at 1410 hrs.

17<sup>th</sup> February – 138 west at Dewsbury SF.

18<sup>th</sup> February – 500 in two skeins over Denby Dale.

20<sup>th</sup> February – c.100 over Pike Low (Langsett) at 0955 hrs., c.240 over Spicer House Lane in three skeins and c.80 over Ingbirchworth.

21<sup>st</sup> March – a small skein over Highburton at 2330 hrs.

7<sup>th</sup> May – 126 flew west on this very late date over Dewsbury SF; a flock of the same number was observed leaving its Norfolk refuge, heading northeast, almost exactly 1.5 hours before this sighting (JH and BINE).

5<sup>th</sup> May and 25<sup>th</sup> May – one was at Ringstone Edge Res and was probably either a feral or an injured individual.

The first returning birds of the autumn appeared on 8<sup>th</sup> October and there were records on a further 11 dates. Smaller numbers were involved than in the early months and the direction of flight more variable. Birds also arrived earlier in the day than at the start of the year.

8<sup>th</sup> October – 11 left Royd Moor Res. in a NE direction; at Shelley c.100 east at 0900 hrs. and c.90 west at 1045 hrs.

17<sup>th</sup> October – c.500 ENE in five skeins at Scout Dike Res.

31<sup>st</sup> October – 21 west over Lindley.

4<sup>th</sup> November – 30 SE at Slaithwaite at 1700 hrs.

13<sup>th</sup> November – one at Elland GPs.

21<sup>st</sup> November – a small skein NW in fog at Bradley Park Golf Course at 1000 hrs, and a small skein, possibly the same, west at Blackmoorfoot also in fog at 1010 hrs.; 350+ over Harden flying between SE and WSW.

22<sup>nd</sup> November – one at Royd Moor Res.

2<sup>nd</sup> December – 100 over Shepley and 30 at Ringstone Edge.

14<sup>th</sup> December – c.230 west at Shelley at 1300 hrs., c.200 NNW over Pole Moor at 1310 hrs. and 24 west at Blackmoorfoot at 1430 hrs.

16<sup>th</sup> December – c.60 SW over Lepton at 1000 hrs. and SW over Oldfield at 1015 hrs. could relate to the same skein; at Marsden 110 NW at 1030 hrs; three skeins of c.80, 117 and 130 over Bretton.

17<sup>th</sup> December – c.65 west at Ingbirchworth.

22<sup>nd</sup> December – 50 over Denby Dale.

24<sup>th</sup> December – five SE over Harden.

#### GREYLAG GOOSE *Anser anser*

Uncommon passage and feral visitor

Records of this species were again mainly in the first half of the year and the same individuals were probably involved at several of the sites.

Cowcliffe – 25 flying west on 18<sup>th</sup> February (GBS) provided evidence of passage through the area.

Scout Dike Res. – one from 12<sup>th</sup> to 25<sup>th</sup> March.

**Blackmoorfoot Res.** – four arrived from the north at 0735 hrs. on 15<sup>th</sup> April and departed west at 0850 hrs., three on 4<sup>th</sup> August and 14<sup>th</sup> November.

**Horbury Wyke** – one on several dates from 15<sup>th</sup> April to 5<sup>th</sup> May.

**Castle Dam, Penistone** – in April three on 23<sup>rd</sup> and four on 27<sup>th</sup>, with two on 12<sup>th</sup> May.

**Broadstones Res.** – one on 30<sup>th</sup> May.

**Dewsbury SF** – seven on 9<sup>th</sup> June and 12 on 10<sup>th</sup> June.

**Ingbirchworth Res.** – two on 10<sup>th</sup> December.

#### **CANADA GOOSE** *Branta canadensis*

Resident breeder (2)

Few counts were received for the early months and were lower than in previous years. Maxima were :-

**Scammonden Dam** – 106 on 3<sup>rd</sup> January.

**Scout Dike Res.** – 130 on 15<sup>th</sup> January reducing to 10 on 18<sup>th</sup> March.

**Langsett Res.** – 120+ flying low to the north on 16<sup>th</sup> January.

**Blackmoorfoot Res.** – 36 on 21<sup>st</sup> January, 23 on 3<sup>rd</sup> February.

**West Slaithwaite** – 46 on the canal on 26<sup>th</sup> January.

**Horbury Wyke** – 161 on 20<sup>th</sup> February and 96 on 5<sup>th</sup> March.

Breeding was reported from fewer sites than usual and it appears that success was very low due to the very wet spring weather when many early broods were lost.

**Royd Moor Res.** – a pair reared four goslings.

**Horbury Wyke** – a pair with four goslings on 1<sup>st</sup> May, reduced to three on 5<sup>th</sup>.

**Healey Mills** – a pair reared four young at Matthew's Pond.

**Langsett Res.** – eight pairs from early March, but only two pairs bred.

**Winscar Res.** – 13 pairs present on 25<sup>th</sup> March, early broods lost, but 32+ young in at least five broods on 5<sup>th</sup> June.

**Deanhead Res.** – five pairs sitting on 6<sup>th</sup> May, but no young seen later.

**Harden Res.** – two pairs.

Birds were present in the breeding season also at **Dovestones, Yateholme, Wessenden Head and Butterley Reservoirs.**

Presumably as a result of the poor breeding season, post-breeding numbers and those in the later months of the year were also lower than normal, maxima being:-

**Winscar Res.** – c.100 on 15<sup>th</sup> July.

**Blackmoorfoot Res.** – 37 on 27<sup>th</sup> July, 31 from 28<sup>th</sup> July to 1<sup>st</sup> August, up to 16 in November/December.

**Digley Res.** – 40 on 1<sup>st</sup> August.

**Bretton Lakes** – 100+ on 3<sup>rd</sup> August, c.250 on 22<sup>nd</sup> October, 162 on 4<sup>th</sup> November.

**Langsett Res.** – 96 on 10<sup>th</sup> August, 105 on 16<sup>th</sup> September, 71 on 3<sup>rd</sup> October, 0 in December.

**Royd Moor Res.** – 138 on 19<sup>th</sup> August, 150 on 5<sup>th</sup> November.

**Castle Dam, Penistone** – 34 on 25<sup>th</sup> September.

**Ringstone Edge Res.** – 64 on 30<sup>th</sup> September, c.120 on 27<sup>th</sup> October.

**Scammonden Dam** – 48 on 22<sup>nd</sup> October, 35 on 17<sup>th</sup> December.

**Ingbirchworth Res.** – up to 48 in October.

**Boshaw Whams** – c.50 on 30<sup>th</sup> December.

#### **CANADA GOOSE x GREYLAG GOOSE hybrid**

**Scout Dike Res.** – two on 9<sup>th</sup> May.

**Bretton Lakes** – one on 6<sup>th</sup> July.

Royd Moor Res. - one on 5<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> October.  
**CANADA GOOSE x BARNACLE GOOSE hybrid**  
Horbury Wyke - one on 9<sup>th</sup>, 15<sup>th</sup>/16<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> April.  
Scout Dike Res. - one on 9<sup>th</sup> May.  
Langsett Res. - a juvenile on 21<sup>st</sup> June, 6<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> July.  
Bretton Lakes - an adult on 6<sup>th</sup> July and 7<sup>th</sup> November.

**BARNACLE GOOSE** *Branta leucopsis*

Rare visitor and occasional feral breeder

All records refer to presumed feral individuals.

Bretton Lakes - at least five on 21<sup>st</sup> January and up to three from 22<sup>nd</sup> October to the year end.  
Langsett Res. - one flew north with 120+ Canadas on 16<sup>th</sup> January. An adult present, along with Canada Geese, from 6<sup>th</sup> June to 10<sup>th</sup> July and 2<sup>nd</sup> to 16<sup>th</sup> September.  
Winscar Res. - one seen periodically all year with Canada Geese - same as Langsett bird?  
Dewsbury SF - one flew in on 23<sup>rd</sup> April.  
Royd Moor Res. - one present on ten dates at least between 6<sup>th</sup> August and 5<sup>th</sup> November.  
Ingbirchworth Res. - a single on 21<sup>st</sup> October and 22<sup>nd</sup> November, probably same as above.  
Cannnn Hall - one on 23<sup>rd</sup> October.

**SHELDUCK** *Tadorna tadorna*

Uncommon passage visitor

Birds were reported in all months except June and October, the majority at just two sites. There was a multiple arrival at four sites on 13<sup>th</sup> March.

Blackmoorfoot Res. - two on 9<sup>th</sup>, one on 13<sup>th</sup> and four on 15<sup>th</sup> January, two on 2<sup>nd</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup> February, one on 13<sup>th</sup> March, two on 28<sup>th</sup> April, in September nine on 12<sup>th</sup> and one on 13<sup>th</sup> and one on 4<sup>th</sup> November.

Horbury Wyke - two flew east on 2<sup>nd</sup> February, two grounded on 19<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup> February, 4<sup>th</sup>/5<sup>th</sup> March, 16<sup>th</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup> April, with one on 21<sup>st</sup> and a juvenile on 23<sup>rd</sup> August; two flew east on 3<sup>rd</sup> September and two juvs. present on 5<sup>th</sup> - same as Dewsbury SF birds on 3<sup>rd</sup>?

Elland GPs - seven on 12<sup>th</sup> February.

Upper Windleden Res. - two on 13<sup>th</sup> March.

Royd Moor Res. - one on 13<sup>th</sup> March and one on 26<sup>th</sup>/27<sup>th</sup> February which had earlier been at Scout Dike Res.

Scout Dike Res. - one on 26<sup>th</sup>/27<sup>th</sup> February later moved to Royd Moor; two flew south on 13<sup>th</sup> August.

Ringstone Edge Res. - two on 29<sup>th</sup> May.

Dewsbury SF - a single juv. on 23<sup>rd</sup> August, with two juveniles on 3<sup>rd</sup> September and one juv. on 10<sup>th</sup> September.

Ingbirchworth Res. - two on 23<sup>rd</sup> December.

Millbank Flash, Thornhill - three on 26<sup>th</sup> December.

**MANDARIN DUCK** *Aix galericulata*

Rare feral visitor

The long-staying drake continued to be seen at Elland, with sightings on 5<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> March, 31<sup>st</sup> October, 7<sup>th</sup>, 26<sup>th</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup> December (HBC).

**WIGEON** *Anas penelope*

Common passage and winter visitor

Reports were received from ten sites between 3<sup>rd</sup> January and 19<sup>th</sup> May and between 27<sup>th</sup> August and 31<sup>st</sup> December. Numbers involved were again relatively low.

**Bretton Lakes** – a male on 3<sup>rd</sup> January.

**Blackmoorfoot Res.** – a very poor showing with in January two on 4<sup>th</sup>/5<sup>th</sup>, one on 26<sup>th</sup> February, two on 22<sup>nd</sup> March and a male on the late date of 19<sup>th</sup> May. In the second half of the year present in September almost daily from 12<sup>th</sup> to 28<sup>th</sup>, with max. of 13 on 12<sup>th</sup> otherwise no more than five. In October on 11 dates, max. four on 18<sup>th</sup>, on 10 dates in November max. five on 4<sup>th</sup> and on 8 December dates max. just three from 28<sup>th</sup>.

**Royd Moor Res.** – 31 on 3<sup>rd</sup> and 30 on 16<sup>th</sup> January, 14 on 19<sup>th</sup>/20<sup>th</sup> February, a male on 20<sup>th</sup> March; in August one on 27<sup>th</sup>, four on 28<sup>th</sup> and two on 30<sup>th</sup>, none then until 17 on 13<sup>th</sup> October, with 10 on 15<sup>th</sup> and 12 on 23<sup>rd</sup>; in November 11 on 6<sup>th</sup> and 10 on 13<sup>th</sup> and finally 13 on 27<sup>th</sup> December.

**Ingbirchworth Res.** – 18 on 15<sup>th</sup> January and 19 on 2<sup>nd</sup> February were the only records in the early months. The next was a male on 30<sup>th</sup> August, followed by 16 on 20<sup>th</sup> September, two on 15<sup>th</sup> October, 22<sup>nd</sup> November and 27<sup>th</sup> December.

**Scout Dike Res.** – the only record was of a male and a female on 15<sup>th</sup> October, probably the same as the Ingbirchworth birds.

**Horbury Wyke** – this site held the highest numbers in the area in the early months, with 44 on 5<sup>th</sup> February, 37 on 11<sup>th</sup> and 27 on 20<sup>th</sup> March with two still on 9<sup>th</sup>/10<sup>th</sup> April. Smaller numbers in the second winter period – three on 29<sup>th</sup> October, 10+ on 4<sup>th</sup> November and 18 on 9<sup>th</sup> December.

**Dewsbury SF** – in September six on 22<sup>nd</sup> and four on 23<sup>rd</sup>, followed by four on 26<sup>th</sup> October, 12 on 7<sup>th</sup> November and 46 on 11<sup>th</sup> November.

**Harden** – nine were observed flying north during a v.m.w. on 22<sup>nd</sup> September.

**Castle Dam, Penistone** – 12 on 25<sup>th</sup>/26<sup>th</sup> and 10 on 27<sup>th</sup> October, then four on 30<sup>th</sup> December.

**Langsett Res.** – 34 on 13<sup>th</sup> October was a high count for this site; a male on 24<sup>th</sup> December.

**GADWALL** *Anas strepera*

Scarce passage and winter visitor

A much better showing by this species, with records from nine sites, mainly in the later months.

**Royd Moor Res.** – male and female on 19<sup>th</sup> February, three males on 27<sup>th</sup> December (presumably same as Scout Dike birds) (BBSG).

**Elland GPs** – two on 13<sup>th</sup> March (HBC).

**Horbury Wyke** – a male on 25<sup>th</sup> April (BA).

**Ringsstone Edge Res.** – four on 27<sup>th</sup> August (HBC).

**Bretton Lakes** – a female on 22<sup>nd</sup> October (BA) and a male on 6<sup>th</sup> December (SRG).

**Ingbirchworth Res.** – a female on 14<sup>th</sup> October, male and female on 3<sup>rd</sup>/4<sup>th</sup> November (RD&SEH,DHP,BBSG).

**Blackmoorfoot Res.** – male on 29<sup>th</sup> October (DT).

**Boshaw Whams** – male and female in mid-November (MC).

**Scout Dike Res.** – four males on 25<sup>th</sup> December (BBSG).

**TEAL** *Anas crecca*

Resident breeder (1). Common passage and winter visitor

Good numbers were again reported from the important wintering areas in the Calder Valley and from **Royd Moor Res.**, but recorded from a total of only 13 sites.

**Horbury Wyke** – maxima were 100+ on 5<sup>th</sup> and 34 on 20<sup>th</sup> February, c.20 on 5<sup>th</sup>, 30 on 13<sup>th</sup> and 46

on 20<sup>th</sup> March reducing to 10 on 10<sup>th</sup> April. A pair was present on 16<sup>th</sup> April, with a male throughout May and June to 16<sup>th</sup> July. In the later part of the year six had returned by 27<sup>th</sup> August, increasing to c.25 on 7<sup>th</sup> September and c.75 on 29<sup>th</sup> October. At least 40 were present on 9<sup>th</sup> December. At nearby **Horbury Strands** a pair was present on 21<sup>st</sup> April. Breeding could easily go undetected at these sites. **Dewsbury SF** – early year max. were 180 on 2<sup>nd</sup> and 36 on 19<sup>th</sup> January, 48 on 9<sup>th</sup>, 78 on 13<sup>th</sup> and 60 on 22<sup>nd</sup> February, in March 63 on 4<sup>th</sup>, 28 on 15<sup>th</sup> and in April 28 on 5<sup>th</sup> and 26 on 19<sup>th</sup>. A gradual build-up in numbers in autumn from 23 on 28<sup>th</sup> August to 59 on 22<sup>nd</sup> September, 110 on 29<sup>th</sup> October and 7<sup>th</sup> November to 180 on 7<sup>th</sup> December.

**Millbank Flash, Thornhill** – 167 on 20<sup>th</sup> February reduced to 78 on 5<sup>th</sup> March, 26 on 9<sup>th</sup> and 10 on 10<sup>th</sup> April. In the later months 12 on 5<sup>th</sup> September and 70 on 26<sup>th</sup> December.

**Royd Moor Res.** – early year max. were 43 on 3<sup>rd</sup> January, 47 on 19<sup>th</sup> and 41 on 20<sup>th</sup> February, 33 on 10<sup>th</sup> and 25 on 20<sup>th</sup> March, reducing to 18 on 8<sup>th</sup> and 11 on 19<sup>th</sup> April. Returning birds appeared on 8<sup>th</sup> September (six) increasing to 19 on 14<sup>th</sup>, 23 on 6<sup>th</sup> November and 30 on 3<sup>rd</sup> December.

**Bretton Lakes** – few records received, but five on 1<sup>st</sup> and 10 on 13<sup>th</sup> January, 14 on 22<sup>nd</sup> February, with a pair on the upper lake on 26<sup>th</sup> March. None then until December with at least five on 3<sup>rd</sup> increasing to 10 on 15<sup>th</sup>/16<sup>th</sup>.

**Blackmoorfoot Res.** – recorded on only 23 dates and only two counts were in double figures. In January two on 11<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> with one on 17<sup>th</sup>; six on 19<sup>th</sup> March, four on 19<sup>th</sup> April and no more until late August when there were four on 22<sup>nd</sup>, eight on 24<sup>th</sup> and one on 28<sup>th</sup>/29<sup>th</sup>. In September three on 1<sup>st</sup>, 17 on 12<sup>th</sup>, one on 13<sup>th</sup>, five on 16<sup>th</sup>, four on 20<sup>th</sup> and one on 28<sup>th</sup>. In October one was present on 5<sup>th</sup>, six on 13<sup>th</sup> and two on 22<sup>nd</sup>, followed in November by 18 on 15<sup>th</sup> and finally three on 14<sup>th</sup> and one on 15<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> December.

Other sites from which birds were reported were **Broadstones Res.** – two on 1<sup>st</sup> January and 19<sup>th</sup> April, **Elland GPs** – six on 2<sup>nd</sup> January, two on 5<sup>th</sup> February, six on 13<sup>th</sup> March and five on 5<sup>th</sup> November, **Ingbirchworth Res.** – two in January, up to four in March, two in April and five on 22<sup>nd</sup> November, **Ravensthorpe GPs** – 16 on 20<sup>th</sup> February and 14 on 9<sup>th</sup> April, **Oak Scar Res.** – six on 4<sup>th</sup> April, **Ringstone Edge Res.** – two on 6<sup>th</sup> October and **Castle Dam** – one on 30<sup>th</sup> December.

## MALLARD *Anas platyrhynchos*

Resident breeder (3) and common winter visitor

Once again this common species was under-reported, with for example only two counts from **Bretton Lakes** in the whole year.

Breeding was reported from the following sites :- **Blackmoorfoot Res.** – out of 64 ducklings observed, only two reached the flying stage, **Ringstone Edge Res.** – one duckling on 9<sup>th</sup> May, **Ingbirchworth Res.** – three broods in June/July, **Scout Dike Res.** – two broods, **Castle Dam** – a brood of ten on 3<sup>rd</sup> May, **Bretton Lakes** – two broods, **Denby Dale** – two broods, **Langsett Res.** – five broods in May/June with an average of only 2.4 young per brood, **Dogley** – two broods on the Fenay Beck, **Dewsbury SF** – eight pairs bred with a party of 22 ducklings on 28<sup>th</sup> June, **Calder Valley between Ravensthorpe and Horbury Wyke** – at least 12 pairs, **Boshaw Whams** – two broods.

Monthly maxima at sites from which regular counts were received were :-

	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	
Blackmoorfoot	37	26	21	19	21	21	31	52	34	33	41	42
Ingbirchworth	40	6	2	4	5	3	9	7	119	56	10	76
Royd Moor	100	37	n/c	n/c	n/c	n/c	n/c	115	115	n/c	n/c	66

Maxima at other sites were **Scammonden** 32 on 3<sup>rd</sup> January and 13 on 17<sup>th</sup> December, the canal between **Slaithwaite and Marsden** 100 on 26<sup>th</sup> January, c.70 on the Fenay Beck at **Waterloo** on 25<sup>th</sup> January, 24 at **Lindley** on 1<sup>st</sup> January and 26<sup>th</sup> December, 20 all year at **Denby Dale**, 11 on 23<sup>rd</sup> January at **Cupwith Res.**, 36 at **Millbank Flash** on 5<sup>th</sup> February, 12 at **Ravensthorpe GPs** on 20<sup>th</sup> February, **Horbury Wyke** 20 on 20<sup>th</sup> March, 35 on 29<sup>th</sup> October and 39 on 15<sup>th</sup> November, 86 at **Dewsbury SF** on 23<sup>rd</sup> July, **Bretton Lakes** 50+ on 3<sup>rd</sup> August and c.60 on 3<sup>rd</sup> December, 56 at **Scout Dike Res.** on 20<sup>th</sup> August, **Langsett Res.** 38 on 21<sup>st</sup> August, 94 on 6<sup>th</sup> September, then an exceptional count of 262, obviously involving birds moving through the area, on 3<sup>rd</sup> October, down to 17 on 23<sup>rd</sup> December, **Castle Dam** 20 on 27<sup>th</sup> October and 20 at **Boshaw Whams** on 13<sup>th</sup> December. No other sites reported double figures.

#### **PINTAIL** *Anas acuta*

Uncommon passage and winter visitor

There was just one record in the early months, a male at **Horbury Wyke** on six dates from 26<sup>th</sup> February to 11<sup>th</sup> March (JHod, DHP,JRS,BA).

In the later months one was at **Blackmoorfoot Res.** on 17<sup>th</sup> September, with an eclipse male at **Ingbirchworth** on the same date (BBSG,RD&SEH); at the latter site there were two on 20<sup>th</sup> September and four on 10<sup>th</sup> October (DHP). An adult and an imm. male were at **Dewsbury SF** on 25<sup>th</sup> September (JH), at **Langsett Res.** a female on 31<sup>st</sup> October and five (3 males) on 17<sup>th</sup> December (BBSG). **Ringstone Edge Res.** held three birds on 5<sup>th</sup> November (HBC).

#### **GARGANEY** *Anas querquedula*

Rare summer migrant

Once again the species appeared in the **Horbury** area in early spring – a male flew upriver from the **Wyke** at 0745 hrs. on 1<sup>st</sup> April (JW) and was relocated on 7<sup>th</sup> at a small pool about a kilometre to the west, remaining there to 10<sup>th</sup> (BA,JRS,DHP).

In autumn singles were at **Dewsbury SF** on 28<sup>th</sup>/29<sup>th</sup> August (JH) and at **Blackmoorfoot Res.** on 12<sup>th</sup> September (DHP), with the same or a different bird on the canal at **Linthwaite** on 22<sup>nd</sup> (KW).

#### **SHOVELER** *Anas clypeata*

Uncommon passage and winter visitor

A further welcome increase in records with birds reported from nine sites.

**Horbury area** – two males and a female at the **Strands** on 5<sup>th</sup> March; at the **Wyke** male and female on 16<sup>th</sup>/17<sup>th</sup> April and two on 23<sup>rd</sup> August (JRS,BA, DHP).

**Blackmoorfoot Res.** – five (3 males) on 13<sup>th</sup> March, a male on 5<sup>th</sup> April, six (4 males) on 19<sup>th</sup> April, one on 3<sup>rd</sup>, three on 10<sup>th</sup> and one on 15<sup>th</sup> August, with one on 3<sup>rd</sup> November (MLD).

**Elland GPs** – a male on 10<sup>th</sup> April; in December 5 on 18<sup>th</sup> increasing to 7 on 24<sup>th</sup> (HBC).

**Ringstone Edge Res.** – two males on 21<sup>st</sup> May and 18<sup>th</sup> July, one bird on 27<sup>th</sup> August and a male on 22<sup>nd</sup> October (HBC).

**Dewsbury SF** – two on 8<sup>th</sup> June and four on 22<sup>nd</sup> October (JH).

**Scout Dike Res.** – a female/juv. on 24<sup>th</sup> August (BBSG).

**Royd Moor Res.** – a female on 8<sup>th</sup>/10<sup>th</sup> October (BBSG).

**Ingbirchworth Res.** – a female type on 17<sup>th</sup> October (DHP).

**Langsett Res.** – a female on 23<sup>rd</sup> October (BBSG).

## POCHARD

### *Aythya ferina*

Common passage and winter visitor

Birds were present in all months except May, but were very scarce from March through to September. Numbers were very low at both ends of the year. **Blackmoorfoot** and **Ingbirchworth Reservoirs** provided the great majority of the records.

**Blackmoorfoot Res.** – in January a max. of two on ten dates from 17<sup>th</sup> to 31<sup>st</sup>, one on 1<sup>st</sup>/3<sup>rd</sup> February and one on 12<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> March were the only records in the early months. After a single bird on the unusual date of 1<sup>st</sup> June and two on 19<sup>th</sup> July, one was present on two August dates, followed by four on 12<sup>th</sup> and 15 on 20<sup>th</sup> September. Birds were present on only three dates in October, but with a good flock of 30 (19 males) on 15<sup>th</sup>, followed by 28 on 4<sup>th</sup> November, 16 (14 males) on 6<sup>th</sup> and one on 22<sup>nd</sup> November. A single was present on 10 December days.

**Ingbirchworth Res.** – a party of 23 including 19 males was present on 2<sup>nd</sup> January, reducing to five on 20<sup>th</sup> February and a single male in March to 20<sup>th</sup>. There was just one record of a single bird in October, six on 5<sup>th</sup> and four on 22<sup>nd</sup> November and up to ten in December to the year end.

**Bretton Lakes** – five males were present regularly in January/February and a male and a female on 12<sup>th</sup> March. The only records in the later months were of two males on 15<sup>th</sup> October and a single male on 3<sup>rd</sup> December.

**Royd Moor Res.** – one on 1<sup>st</sup> and five on 3<sup>rd</sup> January, nine on 27<sup>th</sup> December.

**Elland GPs** – four on 2<sup>nd</sup> and three males on 3<sup>rd</sup> January and a male on 5<sup>th</sup> February.

**Scammonden Dam** – a male on 3<sup>rd</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> January, 9<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> February and 18<sup>th</sup> March.

The only other records were of single males at **Boshaw Whams** on 10<sup>th</sup> January, **Langsett Res.** on 5<sup>th</sup> February and **Horbury Wyke** on 19<sup>th</sup> February, five birds at **Scout Dike Res.** on 20<sup>th</sup> February and a female at **Gunthwaite Dam** on 25<sup>th</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup> March.

## TUFTED DUCK

### *Aythya fuligula*

Resident breeder (1). Common passage and winter visitor

Breeding was confirmed at three sites. At **Bretton Lakes** broods of three and seven ducklings were on the upper lake on 3<sup>rd</sup> August, two pairs bred at **Scout Dike Res.** raising one and four young respectively and at **Castle Dam, Penistone** three ducklings on 27<sup>th</sup> July represented a first breeding record for the site. Breeding may also have been attempted at **Ingbirchworth, Royd Moor** and **Winscar Reservoirs** and at **Horbury Wyke**, where pairs were present in the breeding season.

Birds were reported from a total of 18 waters, but only six of these achieved double figure counts, with a further slight reduction in numbers of moulting birds at the **Ingbirchworth** group of waters.

**Blackmoorfoot Res.** – had birds on most days, but with a max. of only nine in the first five months of the year, increasing to 10 in June, up to 14 in July/September, then no more than eight to the year end.

**Bretton Lakes** – max. were 19 on 18<sup>th</sup> January, 14 on 22<sup>nd</sup> February, c.25 on 20<sup>th</sup> April and 3<sup>rd</sup> August, with single figures thereafter.

**Scout Dike Res.** – nine on 15<sup>th</sup> January, 21 on 20<sup>th</sup> February, 14 on 5<sup>th</sup> March, 10 on 16<sup>th</sup> April, 13<sup>th</sup> May and 20<sup>th</sup> August, eight on 6<sup>th</sup> November and nine on 27<sup>th</sup> December.

**Ingbirchworth Res.** – in March max. of 15 on 20<sup>th</sup>, 20 on 15<sup>th</sup> April, c.35 on 26<sup>th</sup> and 25 on 30<sup>th</sup> July, an August max. of 24, up to 12 in September, 19 on 30<sup>th</sup> December, with single figures in other months.

**Horbury Wyke** – a max. of 28 on 4<sup>th</sup> March.

**Langsett Res.** – 10 on 8<sup>th</sup> July and 16 on 6<sup>th</sup> September were the only double figure counts

Maxima at other waters were nine at **Elland GPs** on 2<sup>nd</sup> January, eight at **Scammonden** on 3<sup>rd</sup> January and 18<sup>th</sup> August with nine on 17<sup>th</sup> September, up to five all year at **Boshaw Whams**, nine at **Deanhead Res.** on 8<sup>th</sup> October, two pairs on the R. Calder at **Dewsbury SF** on 2<sup>nd</sup> May, three at **Ringsstone Edge**

Res. on 22<sup>nd</sup> October, with up to two at **Gunthwaite Dam**, **Denby Dale**, **Royd Moor** and **Winscar Res's** and a single male on **Harden Res.** on 2<sup>nd</sup> April.

**SCAUP** *Aythya marila*

Scarce passage and winter visitor

Female types occurred at **Boshaw Whams** from 7<sup>th</sup> to 10<sup>th</sup> August (MC,BA,JED) and at **Blackmoorfoot Res.** on 17<sup>th</sup> September (MLD).

**COMMON SCOTER** *Melanitta nigra*

Scarce to uncommon passage visitor

**Blackmoorfoot Res.** hosted a 1<sup>st</sup> yr male on 12<sup>th</sup> April, three males on 21<sup>st</sup> April and a male on 21<sup>st</sup> August (MLD et al).

At **Winscar Res.** two males, an adult and an imm. present on 10<sup>th</sup> June (MC,NWA,RD&SEH).

On 23<sup>rd</sup> September a flock of 30-40 birds, mostly males, flew over **Harden** at approx. 1400 hrs attempting to battle into a strong SW wind. Failing to make progress over **Snailsden Moor**, they appeared to land, but despite a thorough search of all nearby waters could not be located. Some time later the flock was seen to rise and fall again (MC). Is it possible they could have landed on the open moor?

**GOLDENEYE** *Bucephala clangula*

Regular, but uncommon, winter visitor

This species was reported from 14 waters, but only in small numbers, with no double figure counts. Birds were very scarce in the second winter period with only three sites occupied in October/November. Extreme dates were 1<sup>st</sup> January to 13<sup>th</sup> May and 5<sup>th</sup> October to 31<sup>st</sup> December. Once again, **Blackmoorfoot** had the majority of the records.

**Blackmoorfoot Res.** – daily in January, max. six on 19<sup>th</sup> and in February, with max. of four on 21<sup>st</sup>. Daily again in March with four from 19<sup>th</sup> to 31<sup>st</sup>; in April daily to 21<sup>st</sup> with max. of eight on 13<sup>th</sup> and five from 14<sup>th</sup> to 19<sup>th</sup>. The first returning birds appeared on 24<sup>th</sup> October, with a max. of three on this and the following date. In November on 12 dates from 9<sup>th</sup>, max. seven on 17<sup>th</sup> but on only 10 days in December, max. five on 16<sup>th</sup>.

**Ingbirchworth Res.** – two in January, one in February, two in March and one on 1<sup>st</sup> April, then none until December, when there were up to nine.

**Elland GPs** – a male on 3<sup>rd</sup> January.

**Dewsbury SF/Millbank Flash** – on the adjacent R.Calder three on 2<sup>nd</sup> January, two females on 20<sup>th</sup> February, in October five on 5<sup>th</sup>, three on 7<sup>th</sup> and eight on 13<sup>th</sup>, four (3 males) on 26<sup>th</sup> December.

**Langsett Res.** – up to three (on 19<sup>th</sup>) in February, a male on 8<sup>th</sup> April; in December daily with max. of five on 17<sup>th</sup>.

**Winscar Res.** – in February a male and a female arrived on 19<sup>th</sup>, a male on 22<sup>nd</sup> February, single females on three dates in March and on 5<sup>th</sup> April and male and female on 14<sup>th</sup> April.

**Harden Res.** – an immature arrived with the two Winscar birds on 19<sup>th</sup> February and a male was displaying on 13<sup>th</sup> May.

**Scout Dike Res.** – two males on 20<sup>th</sup> February.

**Ringstone Edge Res.** – three on 1<sup>st</sup> March.

**Royd Moor Res.** – one on 5<sup>th</sup> March.

**Deanhead Res.** – three on 31<sup>st</sup> March and a female on 17<sup>th</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup> December.

**Horbury Wyke** – six (2 males) on the R.Calder on 26<sup>th</sup> December.

Boshaw Whams – seen on four dates in November, max. four on 13<sup>th</sup>.

Scammonden Dam – a male on 17<sup>th</sup> December.

### RED-BREASTED MERGANSER *Mergus serrator*

Scarce to uncommon passage and winter visitor

Birds were reported at three sites only, **Blackmoorfoot** again having the lion's share.

**Ringstone Edge Res.** – the redhead present at the end of 1999 was presumably that seen on eight dates to 14<sup>th</sup> February (HBC); it or another on 14<sup>th</sup> April (JED,DHP).

**Elland GPs** – the Ringstone Edge bird paid a visit here on 17<sup>th</sup>/18<sup>th</sup> January (HBC).

**Blackmoorfoot Res.** – all records refer to redheads unless otherwise stated. One on 3<sup>rd</sup> January (DHP), a female on 4<sup>th</sup> May (MLD), a male and a redhead on 20<sup>th</sup> September (DHP,KW), four on 25<sup>th</sup> September (MLD,DHP,KW,PDB), two on 5<sup>th</sup> October (MLD,PDB), one on 24<sup>th</sup>/25<sup>th</sup> October (DHP) and one on 1<sup>st</sup> November (DHP).

### GOOSANDER *Mergus merganser*

Regular passage and winter visitor

Birds were recorded at about 20 waters, mainly in January/February and October- December.

**Blackmoorfoot Res.** – birds were present on 27 dates between 1<sup>st</sup> January and 16<sup>th</sup> April, with max. of five on 1<sup>st</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> January, seven on 26<sup>th</sup> February and 11<sup>th</sup> March and four on 9<sup>th</sup> April. In the second winter period, the first birds (two) appeared on 6<sup>th</sup> October with four on 11<sup>th</sup>, then on only four more dates, with no more than two birds on any of them.

**Bretton Lakes** – max. were in January 35 on 4<sup>th</sup> and 18 (9 males) on 20<sup>th</sup>, in February 18 on 6<sup>th</sup>, 22 on 13<sup>th</sup>; none after nine on 22<sup>nd</sup> February until three on 6<sup>th</sup> December, then four on 16<sup>th</sup>.

**Ringstone Edge Res.** – up to four on five dates in January, two on 25<sup>th</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup> February and 1<sup>st</sup> March; in September two on 17<sup>th</sup>, three on 20<sup>th</sup> and two on 30<sup>th</sup>, one on 12<sup>th</sup> and two on 16<sup>th</sup> October and finally two on 29<sup>th</sup> November.

**Elland GPs** – little information received, consequently counts lower than in recent years, with monthly max. of nine on 2<sup>nd</sup> January, four on 13<sup>th</sup> March, one on 30<sup>th</sup> April, five in November and up to 10 in December.

**Castle Dam** – two on 25<sup>th</sup> January and 6<sup>th</sup> February, one on 27<sup>th</sup> September, five on 19<sup>th</sup> November.

**Scout Dike Res.** – two on 6<sup>th</sup> February, five flew south on 22<sup>nd</sup> September and three north on 25<sup>th</sup> December, with one on 27<sup>th</sup>.

**Ingbirchworth Res.** – eight flew west on 5<sup>th</sup> November; in December one on 17<sup>th</sup> and two on 25<sup>th</sup>.

**Lower Calder Valley** – birds are becoming increasingly frequent and occurring in greater numbers on the river from Ravensthorpe downstream. Ravensthorpe area – six (2 males) on 13<sup>th</sup> March and eight (1 male) on 30<sup>th</sup> March. **Dewsbury SF/Millbank Flash** area – two on 23<sup>rd</sup> January and 13<sup>th</sup> February, a male on 5<sup>th</sup>/9<sup>th</sup> March, 10 on 15<sup>th</sup> and nine on 23<sup>rd</sup> March, one on 5<sup>th</sup> and two on 16<sup>th</sup> April, three on 7<sup>th</sup> September and five on 7<sup>th</sup> November. **Healey Mills** – a female flushed from an island on 30<sup>th</sup> July. **Horbury Bridge** – four females on rocks in river on 10<sup>th</sup> April. **Horbury Wyke** – the presence of up to six birds on the river throughout April and into May gives rise to the possibility that birds may be prospecting potential breeding sites; one here also on 9<sup>th</sup> December.

**R.Colne** – a male and a female regularly in December near the McAlpine Stadium.

**Scammonden Dam** – two on 9<sup>th</sup> February and three on 21<sup>st</sup> October.

The remaining sites all had records on a single date. **Langsett Res.** – two on 16<sup>th</sup> January, **Cooper Bridge** – three males on 8<sup>th</sup> February, **Broadstones Res.** – a juv. on 19<sup>th</sup> August, **Winscar Res.** – two on 26<sup>th</sup> October, **Lockwood Brewery Dam** – three on 31<sup>st</sup> October, **Brownhill Res.** – a male on 11<sup>th</sup> November, **Magdale Dam** – four on 23<sup>rd</sup> November and **Royd Moor Res.** – three on 26<sup>th</sup> December.

## **RUDDY DUCK**      *Oxyura jamaicensis*

Irregular breeder (1) and infrequent visitor

Reported from five sites, at three of them regularly.

**Horbury Wyke** - first of the year was a male on 1<sup>st</sup> April, joined by a female from at least 15<sup>th</sup>. By 25<sup>th</sup> May two pairs were present and on 27<sup>th</sup> there were at least four males and one female. After the severe flooding of the area in early June which put paid to any breeding attempt none were recorded until a single female on 4<sup>th</sup> November.

**Scout Dike Res.** - singles on 16<sup>th</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup> April, two on 13<sup>th</sup> May, with one on 13<sup>th</sup>/15<sup>th</sup> August and 26<sup>th</sup> September.

**Ingbirchworth Res.** - after a single male in May and June, three birds were present in July, six in August, eight on 16<sup>th</sup> September, reducing to four in October and two in November. Despite males displaying in July, no further evidence of breeding was forthcoming.

Elsewhere, single males were at **Blackmoorfoot Res.** on 18<sup>th</sup> March and at **Gunthwaite Dam** on 18<sup>th</sup> May.

## **HONEY BUZZARD**      *Pernis apivorus*

Rare passage visitor

Up to this year, only six Honey Buzzards had been reliably recorded in the Club area in the twentieth century, the last in 1999. The year 2000 saw an unprecedented influx into the country and the Huddersfield area received its share of this welcome and impressive raptor. All reports were within the eighteen-day period from 21<sup>st</sup> September to 8<sup>th</sup> October.

Because of the possibility of confusion with other raptor species, particularly Common Buzzard, which were also involved in the influx, the YNU Rarities Committee has decided that only those reports accompanied by written descriptions or photographic evidence will be published. Descriptions have been submitted for the following occurrences in our area:-

**Blackmoorfoot Res.** - two flew SE at 1420 hrs. on 21<sup>st</sup> September

**Harden/Winscar** - on 22<sup>nd</sup> September at 1020 hrs. two birds,      (KW) trying in vain to head south into a fairly strong wind, came soaring up from the      Carlecotes area and a further bird at 1100 hrs. appeared over the NE horizon and soared until lost to view (MC).

**Holmbridge** - one, mobbed by Carrion Crows, was over fields above Digley Res. at 1150 hrs. on 23<sup>rd</sup> September (MC).

**Shepley** - a dark juvenile flew north at 1555 hrs. on 23<sup>rd</sup> September (TM).

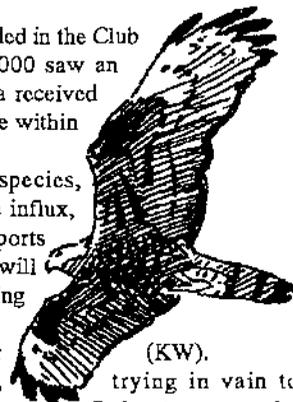
**Holme Village** - one on 25<sup>th</sup> September mobbed by a Merlin and a second, different bird on 27<sup>th</sup> flew south, before returning north (KH).

**Ringstone Edge Res.** - one flew south on 29<sup>th</sup> September (HBC).

**Dalton/Almondbury** - a dark juvenile flew south at 1330 hrs. on 29<sup>th</sup> September (BA).

Further reports, but without written supporting evidence, came from the following locations and are include for future reference:-

**Huddersfield** - one south at 1550 hrs. on 23<sup>rd</sup> September (via BLNE), **Almondhury** - two WSW over Kaye Lane on 26<sup>th</sup> September and one ENE on 3<sup>rd</sup> October (via PDB), **Silkstone** -one south on 27<sup>th</sup> and three south on 28<sup>th</sup> September (DJS), **Cinderhills, Holmfürth** - singles over on 28<sup>th</sup> September and 10<sup>th</sup> October (IC), plus two undated reports from **Colnebridge** and **Waterloo** (JER).



**RED KITE***Milvus milvus*

Rare visitor

Following the release of captive-bred birds in the Harewood area, records of this species can be expected to become more frequent.

Thornhill – one over at 0750 hrs. on 7<sup>th</sup> May drifted slowly towards Huddersfield (JH).

Winscar Res. – a wing-tagged bird, probably immature, flew NW at 1500 hrs. on 14<sup>th</sup> May (MC).

Silkstone – one over on 11<sup>th</sup> July (BBSG per JMT).

**MARSH HARRIER***Circus aeruginosus*

Rare visitor

A cream-crown over **Broadstones Res.** on 14<sup>th</sup> May left to the NE (RJB) and on 11<sup>th</sup> August one flew north towards **Holme** village before turning in the direction of **Brownhill Res.** (KH).

**HEN HARRIER***Circus cyaneus*

Rare visitor

A welcome increase in the number of records this year. All were ringtails.

Langsett Res. – one on 16<sup>th</sup> January had been seen earlier at Barnside Moor (BBSG).

Harden Edge/Sandridge Moss – a juv. quartered the moor on 11<sup>th</sup> September (MC).

Ringstone Edge – a probable 1<sup>st</sup> yr male quartered the north side of the res. for five minutes on 17<sup>th</sup> September before being pushed off by Carrion Crows (JED).

Buckstones – one flew SE over the road on 20<sup>th</sup> October (DHP).

**MONTAGU'S HARRIER***Circus pygargus*

Rare visitor

The first summer male which took up residence at Midhope for several weeks from 10<sup>th</sup> June to the pleasure of hundreds of observers was seen initially to approach from the direction of the **Flouch Inn** and **Langsett Res.**, thus overflying our Club area (RF).

**GOSHAWK***Accipiter gentilis*

Sporadic breeder and uncommon visitor

Birds were seen at two known breeding sites, but with no breeding evidence obtained. Near **Langsett** a pair was displaying on 16<sup>th</sup> March (SRG) and at a second site a male and a female were observed on several dates between 4<sup>th</sup> March and 8<sup>th</sup> April. At a third site two were displaying on 31<sup>st</sup> March and single birds were being mobbed by Carrion Crows on 4<sup>th</sup> May and 16<sup>th</sup> August.

Also seen in the **Winscar** area, an adult soaring over **Sandridge Moss** on 1<sup>st</sup> April, one flying along the moorland ridge on 22<sup>nd</sup> April and one on 16<sup>th</sup> September (MC). At **Shepley** a male flying over on 17<sup>th</sup> July (TM), singles over the **Dalton/Almondbury** area on 2<sup>nd</sup> (BA) and 10<sup>th</sup> September (KH) and over **Lindley Moor**, where a male flew SSW on 21<sup>st</sup> September (JED).

A female was over **Thornhill** briefly on 1<sup>st</sup> October, with one over **Dewsbury SF** on the same date mobbed by 35 Black-headed Gulls as it moved south (JH).

**SPARROWHAWK***Accipiter nisus*

Resident breeder (2)

Once again the species was reported from c.55 localities throughout the area from the moorlands to **Huddersfield town centre**, but with fewer garden reports (at **Almondbury**, **Taylor Hill**, **New Mill** and **Harden**) than usual.

The number of dated sightings each month was as follows:-

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	total
20	14	17	11	18	5	12	16	19	13	8	5	157

A juv. at **New Mill** on 10<sup>th</sup> June (self-caught in a henrun before escaping) was the only firm evidence of breeding, but displaying birds and/or suspected breeding were noted at **Dalton**, **Boothroyd Wood**, **Horbury Wyke**, **Penny Spring Wood**, **Longwood Valley**, **Lower Stones Wood** and **Yateholme**. Doubtless there were many other such sites. Most sightings were of single individuals, but four were in the **Horbury Wyke** area on 29<sup>th</sup> October and probable migrants were at **Harden** on 8<sup>th</sup> October and 5<sup>th</sup> November (two).

Three birds were present most nights predated Swallows at the roost near **Healey Mills** from 13<sup>th</sup> to 23<sup>rd</sup> September (JRS). The only other kill notified was a Great Spotted Woodpecker at **Ingbirchworth** on 2<sup>nd</sup> January (DBut), but on 17<sup>th</sup> April at **Horbury Wyke** a male was surprised by the observer as it flew towards him and dropped an item which it had just captured. A search of the undergrowth revealed a Kingfisher, apparently dead, but it revived slowly in the hand and after a short time flew off strongly down the R.Calder (BA). Other prey chased unsuccessfully were Redwings at **Denby Dale** on 17<sup>th</sup> January and a Pied Wagtail at **Harden** on 8<sup>th</sup> October.

Two birds mobbed a migrant Honey Buzzard over **Almondbury** on 29<sup>th</sup> September.

### COMMON BUZZARD *Buteo buteo*

Rare visitor, becoming more frequent

Fewer records than in 1999, but still another good year.

In January one which drifted south over **Royd Moor Res.** on 2<sup>nd</sup>, harassed by Carrion Crows, was not specifically identified but was probably this species (DBut) and was followed on 16<sup>th</sup> by one which flew NW from **Shelley** towards **Farnley Tyas** and was observed from the Little Bunting site at **Shepley** (DW,JMD,BA,PDB).

One was overhead at **Digley and Harden Moss** on 19<sup>th</sup> March (SP), one flew NE over **Gunthwaite** on 4<sup>th</sup> May (BBSG) and one was at **Langsett** on 10<sup>th</sup> June (SRG).

Three were over **Bretton Park** on 21<sup>st</sup> July (BBSG) and in August there were two sightings in **Upper Longdendale** on 25<sup>th</sup> (HQ) and two passed south over **Cawthorne** on 28<sup>th</sup> (BBSG). One soared over **Margery Wood**, **High Hoyland** on 28<sup>th</sup> September (BBSG), one was at rest in a sheep field in the **Thornhill/Whitley** area on 30<sup>th</sup> September (JRS) and finally a dark-phase bird flew west at **Scout Dike Res.** on 1<sup>st</sup> October. These last three birds all coincided with the Honey Buzzard movement.

### OSPREY *Pandion haliaetus*

Rare visitor

A below average year with only two records.

One flew south over **Shelley** at 0840 hrs. on 5<sup>th</sup> April (SRG) and at **Blackmoorfoot Res.** one circled several times before flying off west at 1540 hrs. on 28<sup>th</sup> July (KW).

### KESTREL *Falco tinnunculus*

Resident breeder (2-3)

Recorded from over fifty sites throughout the year, with the majority of reported sightings in the early months. Ignoring sightings of birds at known breeding sites, only 132 registrations were received compared with 157 sightings of Sparrowhawk.

Most of the records came from a very small number of observers and it would appear that many send in Sparrowhawk sightings, but not those relating to Kestrel.

Breeding occurred at **Blackmoorfoot** (3 young fledged), **Winscar** (3 young), **Yateholme** (at least 3

young), Little Don Valley, Denby Dale, Ingbirchworth, north of Lindley Moor, Thornhill, Horbury Bridge and Horbury SF and presumably at many other sites.

Apart from family parties, five were in the Winscar area on 23<sup>rd</sup> April and six were soaring together at Harden Edge on 1<sup>st</sup> October, on which date 17 were at a site in the Bradford area and probably involved migrants; four were seen at Horbury Wyke on 29<sup>th</sup> October.

At Harden on 4<sup>th</sup> November a juvenile caught and ate an earthworm (MC).

#### MERLIN *Falco columbarius*

Partial migrant breeder (1) and scarce visitor

In the early months a male was at Birdsedge on 2<sup>nd</sup> January, followed by one hunting Skylarks for an hour near Ingbirchworth on 18<sup>th</sup> January. One flew across the M62 in the direction of Salendine Nook on 14<sup>th</sup> February.

There was an increase in sightings in March, with males at Shepley on 11<sup>th</sup> and Digley on 18<sup>th</sup>, one at Annat Royd Lane (which flushed the Shorelark) on 27<sup>th</sup> and possibly the same bird at Ingbirchworth on 30<sup>th</sup>. April saw a female on 15<sup>th</sup> and a male on 28<sup>th</sup> in the Whitley Common area and one again at Shepley on 30<sup>th</sup>. In the same month birds were reported at former or potential breeding sites on 8<sup>th</sup>, 15<sup>th</sup>, 23<sup>rd</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup>. A female was at Dewsbury SF on 7<sup>th</sup> May.

Breeding was reported from one locality which was not occupied in 1999, but not from the two sites where breeding did occur last year. At one of these a single female was present in May/June and a male was seen at the second site on 15<sup>th</sup> May. In another area a pair was suspected of being on territory early in the season, but no further evidence was obtained although birds were seen regularly. Post-breeding season reports came from Spicer House Lane, a female on 13<sup>th</sup> July, Hade Edge on 23<sup>rd</sup> July, Blackmoorfoot on 8<sup>th</sup> August, Kirkheaton on 20<sup>th</sup> August, Ringstone Edge on 3<sup>rd</sup> September, an immature at Dewsbury SF on 7<sup>th</sup> September, Harden Edge a male on 22<sup>nd</sup> September and one there buzzing a Sparrowhawk on 4<sup>th</sup> November, Healey Mills one hunting at the Swallow roost on 23<sup>rd</sup> September and at Holme where a male mobbed a Honey Buzzard on 25<sup>th</sup> September.

Good views were obtained of a male calling from a tree and in flight near the football pitch at Bretton Park on 19<sup>th</sup> November, an unexpected location (NL).

The last of the year was one at Elland GPs on 27<sup>th</sup> December.

#### HOBBY *Falco subbuteo*

Rare summer and passage visitor

Another good year for the species with six records.

The first was one flying south at Shelley on 14<sup>th</sup> May (SRG), followed in June by one hunting Swifts over Thornhill Park at 1900 hrs. on 20<sup>th</sup> and presumably the same bird near Emroyd Wood, Thornhill on 21<sup>st</sup> (JRS), with an additional bird in Dearne Dike Lane on 25<sup>th</sup> (GBS).

One, possibly the Thornhill bird, was seen briefly at Horbury Wike on 6<sup>th</sup> July (BLNF) and one chased Swallows at Harden in the late afternoon of 15<sup>th</sup> July (MC).

#### PEREGRINE FALCON *Falco peregrinus*

Rare breeder (1), increasing

More information was received this year relating to breeding. At one site a pair raised two young to the flying stage, a second pair had two downy young still in the nest on 30<sup>th</sup> May but they had vanished by 4<sup>th</sup> June and were not seen subsequently; it was suspected they were taken during the intervening bad weather as there was no evidence of any corpses at the nest site. The Rishworth pair laid but the nest was robbed and two other pairs failed because the eggs failed to hatch. At two

other known sites pairs were seen in the breeding season but no further indications of breeding were obtained and at another recently successful site no birds were present.

Elsewhere and outside the breeding season, birds were reported as follows:-

**Denby Dale** – a male on 4<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> January; one on 4<sup>th</sup> December.

**Booth Dam Quarry** – a male on 21<sup>st</sup> January.

**Ringstone Edge** – one on 21<sup>st</sup> January.

**Shepley** – an imm. on 5<sup>th</sup> February.

**Greenfield Road** – one on 6<sup>th</sup> March.

**Digley** – one on 18<sup>th</sup> March.

**Bretton Country Park** – a male mobbed by 3 Carrion Crows on 29<sup>th</sup> April, a female over on 3<sup>rd</sup> September.

**Harden area** – one south on 7<sup>th</sup> May, a juv/1<sup>st</sup> yr. attacking a Kestrel before flying west on 30<sup>th</sup> July, in September two, at least one of which was adult, flew west on 22<sup>nd</sup>, a day of visible migration, and singles on 23<sup>rd</sup>, 27<sup>th</sup> and 29<sup>th</sup>.

**Blackmoorfoot Res.** – one on 11<sup>th</sup> August.

**Healey** – one circling on 20<sup>th</sup> August.

**Bulleliff Wood** – two over on 2<sup>nd</sup> September.

**Dewsbury SF** – one overhead on 20<sup>th</sup> September.

**Shelley** – a male which attacked a feral pigeon just to the south of the village on 18<sup>th</sup> October was later reported in a local garden.

**Little Don Valley** – two on 3<sup>rd</sup> November.

#### **RED GROUSE**      *Lagopus lagopus*

Resident breeder (3)

Reports of this species continue to decrease. There were regular sightings only from the moors above **Bilberry Res.** and in the **Winscar/Harden** area, where on 5<sup>th</sup> October one was perched on one leg on overhead wires.

The only breeding evidence received was of a female and at least one juvenile in **Harden Quarries** on 1<sup>st</sup> August.

A total of 47 birds in at least six parties of between three and 11 birds at **Grains Moss** on 20<sup>th</sup> August was the only record of more than three birds together.

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

Resident breeder (1)

A slight increase in the number of reports, but still very scarce.

At **Whitley Common** on 13<sup>th</sup> March one ran along along the road for c.100 metres before flying into a field (BA) and one was in the willow plantation at **Dearne Dike Lane** on 29<sup>th</sup> April (DHIP).

A pair was at **Healey Mills** on 8<sup>th</sup> May and 15<sup>th</sup> November (JRS), two at **Millmoor, Meltham** also on 8<sup>th</sup> May (KW), one near **Cliff Wood, Langsett** on 11<sup>th</sup> June (BA), one on the west bank at **Blackmoorfoot Res.** on 8<sup>th</sup> August (KW), two partridges, probably this species, at **Deer Hill Res.** on 8<sup>th</sup> September (KW) and five, a first record for the area and probably released birds, at **Denby Dale** on 10<sup>th</sup> November (TM).

#### **GREY PARTRIDGE**      *Perdix perdix*

Resident breeder (2)

After the encouraging increase in the number of localities (25) from which this species was reported in 1999, this year proved to be a disappointment, with records from only 16 sites and breeding

reported at only two of them.

**Shepley** – two birds seen regularly in the fields which hosted the Little Bunting at Jos Lane. Two pairs present in the general area.

**Royd Moor Farm** – one calling on 20<sup>th</sup> February.

**Hinchcliffe Mill** – one on 4<sup>th</sup> March.

**Broadstones** – a pair on 14<sup>th</sup> March and 5<sup>th</sup> June, accompanied by at least five small young on 17<sup>th</sup> June.

**Scout Dike Res.** – one calling on 18<sup>th</sup> March.

**Scammonden** – one pair present.

**Ravensthorpe Tip** – two on 9<sup>th</sup> April and five on 15<sup>th</sup> November.

**Royd Moor Res.** – in April four on 16<sup>th</sup> and two on 23<sup>rd</sup>/24<sup>th</sup>.

**Ingbirchworth Res.** – a pair on 24<sup>th</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup> April, 6<sup>th</sup>/7<sup>th</sup> May and 10<sup>th</sup> December.

**Annat Royd Lane** – a pair on 8<sup>th</sup> May and one calling on 21<sup>st</sup> June.

**Lepton Great Wood** – one nearby on 8<sup>th</sup> June.

**Windmill Lane** – one on 21<sup>st</sup> June.

**Bank Wood, Bentley Springs** – three on 16<sup>th</sup> July.

**Dewsbury SF** – one on 24<sup>th</sup> August, six on 18<sup>th</sup> October.

**Crossley's Plantation** – a female with two young on 9<sup>th</sup> September.

**Denby Dale** - five on 29<sup>th</sup> September.

#### QUAIL *Coturnix coturnix*

Scarce summer visitor and occasional breeder

At least two and possibly as many as three birds were calling from barley fields at **Annat Royd Lane** from 21<sup>st</sup> to 29<sup>th</sup> August (JMD,BA,RDH,JED,RJB et al). Elsewhere in the **Ingbirchworth** area a male was calling on 1<sup>st</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup> July and 12<sup>th</sup>/13<sup>th</sup> August (MC,RJB).

One was calling at **Royd Moor Res.** on 16<sup>th</sup> July (BBSG).

#### PHEASANT *Phasianus colchicus*

Resident breeder (2-3)

Reports were received from 17 localities, a considerable reduction on the previous year.

Breeding was reported from **Farnley Tyas, Woodsome** and near **Riding Wood Res.**, where a female had 10 small chicks on 23<sup>rd</sup> May, and probably occurred at several other of the sites.

Generally only single birds or pairs were involved in the sightings, but 4+ were at **Langsett Banks** on 3<sup>rd</sup> November, c.10 at **Bretton Lakes** on 16<sup>th</sup> April and up to six all year in the **Millbank** area of **Thornhill**.

#### GOLDEN PHEASANT *Chrysolophus pictus*

Feral introduction

Apparently the occupant of the North gatehouse at **Bretton Park** released eight birds early in the year. On 3<sup>rd</sup> December two males walked across the Kennel Block car park, one of which was seen later in the **Sculpture Park** (BA,DM).

This species is not included in the year's species count.

#### WATER RAIL *Rallus aquaticus*

Scarce visitor, mainly in winter

At **Bretton Lakes** one showed well on 18<sup>th</sup> January (per BA) and again on 12<sup>th</sup> March (DBut), 18<sup>th</sup> March (DMP,SP,KW,DHP) and 16<sup>th</sup> April (DBut). At the end of the year singles were present on

2<sup>nd</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> December (DMP,SP,KW,DHP) with two present on 3<sup>rd</sup> December (NL). All sightings were near the old boathouse at the western end of the upper lake.

Single birds were seen at **Horbury Wyke** on 26<sup>th</sup> February and 25<sup>th</sup> March and two were calling on 16<sup>th</sup> April, with one or more heard regularly to 30<sup>th</sup> April. On 12<sup>th</sup> August a swimming bird allowed prolonged views and one was feeding in the open on 14<sup>th</sup>, giving rise again to the suspicion that summering and breeding may have occurred (DHP,JRS).

**Elland GPs** had a single bird on 16<sup>th</sup> January, 19<sup>th</sup> March and 2<sup>nd</sup> April, with two on 19<sup>th</sup> February (HBC).

Two birds were calling from a reedbed during May near **Healey Mills**, another potential breeding site (JRS).

## **MOORHEN**

### *Gallinula chloropus*

Resident breeder (2-3)

Again under-reported, with records from only 20 sites, at 13 of which breeding was proved.

**Blackmoorfoot Res.** – present almost daily throughout the year but no records in December. Two breeding attempts were made, one pair being predated and a second attempt producing a single chick seen on 12<sup>th</sup> June but not thereafter.

**Bretton Lakes** – at least two pairs bred. c.20 on the lower lake on 22<sup>nd</sup> October.

**Lumb Lane, Almondbury** – two broods of four and five raised on a garden pond.

**Horbury area** – bred at both the Wyke and the Strands; a max. of 25 at the Wyke on 26<sup>th</sup> February and several other counts there of about 20 birds.

**Scammonden Dam** – a pair fledged two young.

**Boshaw Whams** – two broods, including both new and well grown young on 8<sup>th</sup> August.

**Waterloo** – a half grown juv. on the Fenay Beck near Morrison's Supermarket on 3<sup>rd</sup> August.

**Ingbirchworth Res.** – four broods totalling eight young on 26<sup>th</sup> July. Max. counts were seven in October and eight in December.

**Dewsbury SF** – nine pairs bred; this site held the area's max. count - 48 on 16<sup>th</sup> December.

**Scout Dike Res.** – at least four pairs bred, but a max. of only four young raised.

**Royd Moor Res.** – at least one pair bred.

**Langsett Res.** – one pair bred, raising at least one young.

**Denby Dale** – one pair bred.

Other sites which held birds were waters at **Lepton Great Wood, Shelley, Broadstones Res., Winscar Res., Law Road Farm pond, Castle Dam and Gunthwaite Dam**, where there were at least five birds on 27<sup>th</sup> March.

## **COOT**

### *Fulica atra*

Resident breeder (2)

At least 10 sites had breeding pairs, a slight increase on the previous year. Once again few counts outside the breeding season were made.

**Blackmoorfoot Res.** – one pair raised one chick. Max. of five birds on 17<sup>th</sup> September.

**Boshaw Whams** – up to six present all year; a pair raised at least one juv.

**Bretton Lakes** – three pairs present, one half-grown juv. seen on 3<sup>rd</sup> August. Max. 22 on 22<sup>nd</sup> February, 40+ on lower lake on 22<sup>nd</sup> October, c.20 on 3<sup>rd</sup> December.

**Elland GPs** – bred, young present on 25<sup>th</sup> June. Max. 18 on 13<sup>th</sup> March.

**Ingbirchworth Res.** – eight pairs held breeding territories and 10 broods totalling 29 young were counted on 26<sup>th</sup> July. Max., excluding young, were 11 on 20<sup>th</sup> February and 5<sup>th</sup> October and nine on 27<sup>th</sup> December.

**Horbury** – at least two pairs bred in the area, the first chick being seen on 1<sup>st</sup> May. Max. at the Wyke was 10 on 23<sup>rd</sup> March.

**R.Calder** – three pairs bred along the river between Dewsbury SF and Horbury Wyke. Six on the river at Millbank on 17<sup>th</sup> October.

**Dewsbury SF** – two pairs raised five young.

**Scout Dike Res.** – at least 11 pairs held breeding territories in the spring; a total of 14 young was counted in six broods on 26<sup>th</sup> July. Max. 22 on 18<sup>th</sup> March.

**Royd Moor Res.** – three pairs present on 9<sup>th</sup> May, one of which bred successfully, rearing two young.

**Castle Dam** – one pair bred.

Other sites with birds were **Denby Dale** – present throughout the summer from 5<sup>th</sup> April but no breeding evidence, **Dovestones Res.** where probably bred, **Scammonden** – one on 3<sup>rd</sup> January and **Gunthwaite Dam** – two on 1<sup>st</sup> January, singles on 27<sup>th</sup> March and 15<sup>th</sup> October.

## COMMON CRANE

*Grus grus*

Rare visitor

An adult flew northwest over **Annat Royd Lane** at c.1400 hrs. on 27<sup>th</sup> March, to the delight of a few fortunate observers who were watching the Shorelark! (DHP).

The third record for the area, following singles in 1987 and 1993.

## OYSTERCATCHER

*Haematopus ostralegus*

Rare breeder (1). Uncommon passage visitor

At **Winscar Res.**, which hosted the area's first successful breeding in 1999, an adult returned on 29<sup>th</sup> February and had been joined by a second on 14<sup>th</sup> March. By 29<sup>th</sup> May five birds were present, including one on a nest. The single young which was produced unfortunately died and the adults were last seen on 27<sup>th</sup> June.

Elsewhere birds were reported, mainly in spring, from a further 13 sites.

**Highburton** – one flew over the village pub at 2330 hrs. on 21<sup>st</sup> March (BAJMD). It did – honestly!!

**Ringstone Edge Res.** – two from 15<sup>th</sup> March to 21<sup>st</sup> April and on 30<sup>th</sup> April, with one on 12<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> May; four on 2<sup>nd</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> July, three adults on 14<sup>th</sup>/15<sup>th</sup> July, an adult on 23<sup>rd</sup> July and three on 6<sup>th</sup> September. This must be a potential breeding site.

**Nont Sarah's** – three adults were present on 14<sup>th</sup> July soon after the sighting at Ringstone Edge and perhaps were the same individuals.

**Blackmoorfoot Res.** – single birds on 7<sup>th</sup>, 10<sup>th</sup> (moving west) and 22<sup>nd</sup> April, two on 29<sup>th</sup> July and one on 1<sup>st</sup> September.

**Dewsbury SF** – two on 16<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup> March, three on 13<sup>th</sup> and two on 25<sup>th</sup> April, one from 7<sup>th</sup> to 13<sup>th</sup> May and on 29<sup>th</sup> May and 7<sup>th</sup> June.

**Broadstones Res.** – one on 22<sup>nd</sup> April, probably one of three birds at Winscar on the same date.

**Royd Moor Res.** – one on 24<sup>th</sup> April.

**Scout Dike Res.** – one on 28<sup>th</sup> April.

**Slaithwaite** – one flew east on 11<sup>th</sup> May.

**Horbury Wyke** – one flew over on 14<sup>th</sup> May.

**Langsett Res.** – one on 8<sup>th</sup> July.

**Millbank Flash, Thornhill** – one on 20<sup>th</sup> August.

## LITTLE RINGED PLOVER

*Charadrius dubius*

Scarce summer visitor and irregular breeder

A disappointing year after the successes of 1999. One pair bred and at a second site up to six birds were present and display observed.

**Site 1** – a single bird had arrived on 15<sup>th</sup> April, with a pair present by 30<sup>th</sup>, the male giving anxiety calls while the female incubated; three birds, including a juv., were present on 21<sup>st</sup> June, with the last reported sighting a single bird on 26<sup>th</sup> June. Also bred here in 1999.

**Site 2** – the first spring arrival was on 15<sup>th</sup> March, with two birds present on 17<sup>th</sup> and display was observed on 5<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> April. Three birds, one possibly a juv., seen on 27<sup>th</sup> May and six on 16<sup>th</sup> June, the last date notified. Two pairs bred successfully at this site in 1999.

Birds were present at seven other localities.

**Dewsbury SF** – the first were three on 23<sup>rd</sup> March, increasing to four on 30<sup>th</sup> and four were present and displaying on 22<sup>nd</sup>/23<sup>rd</sup> May. The only autumn record was of four on 12<sup>th</sup> July.

**Victoria (Hepworth)** – a pair in a ploughed field on 15<sup>th</sup> April had gone the next day.

**Horbury area** – two at the Strands on 8<sup>th</sup> April were the first. At the Wyke, a single bird on 13<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup>, 20<sup>th</sup>, 27<sup>th</sup> May and 1<sup>st</sup> June, with two on 25<sup>th</sup> May; three on 3<sup>rd</sup> August were the last.

**Castle Dam, Penistone** – one on 12<sup>th</sup> May.

**Millbank Flash, Thornhill** – a singleton on 29<sup>th</sup> May and 1<sup>st</sup> June, two adults and a juv. on 16<sup>th</sup> July, a juv. on 22<sup>nd</sup> and two juvs. on 25<sup>th</sup> July.

**Upper Windleden Res.** – two, including one adult, on 8<sup>th</sup> July.

**Royd Moor Res.** – single birds on 18<sup>th</sup> July and 13<sup>th</sup> August.

## RINGED PLOVER

*Charadrius hiaticula*

Uncommon passage visitor

Another good series of records from eight sites.

**Winscar Res.** – one on 12<sup>th</sup> March, associated with the arrival of Curlew and Redshank (MC).

**Dewsbury SF** – in March one on 23<sup>rd</sup> and two on 30<sup>th</sup>, one on 17<sup>th</sup> April and then a good presence in May and June, with in May two from 8<sup>th</sup> to 10<sup>th</sup>, one from 16<sup>th</sup> to 26<sup>th</sup>, two from 29<sup>th</sup> to 22<sup>nd</sup> June, then singles on 23<sup>rd</sup> and 29<sup>th</sup> (JH).

**Ringstone Edge Res.** – three on 17<sup>th</sup> May (DHP).

**Millbank Flash** – one on 20<sup>th</sup> and two on 29<sup>th</sup> May, one on 1<sup>st</sup> June (DHP).

**Blackmoorfoot Res.** – two adults on 10<sup>th</sup> August, one adult on 16<sup>th</sup> August.

**Broadstones Res.** – one on 12<sup>th</sup> August.

**Deer Hill Res.** – two immatures on 11<sup>th</sup> September (MLD, KW).

**Harden** – one flew north calling at 1640 hrs. on 25<sup>th</sup> September, a day of considerable passerine movement (MC).

## GOLDEN PLOVER

*Pluvialis apricaria*

Migrant breeder (2). Common passage and winter visitor

Birds were even scarcer in January and February than they were in 1999, two at **Blackmoorfoot** on 15<sup>th</sup> February and c.70 at **Ringstone Edge** on 25<sup>th</sup> February the only ones reported in this period. Numbers improved in March, but none appeared until 13<sup>th</sup>, when c.70 were in fields to the west of **Broadstones Res.**, with a build-up there to c.160 on 20<sup>th</sup> increasing to a max. of c.200 on 15<sup>th</sup> April. Birds did not arrive at **Blackmoorfoot** until 20<sup>th</sup> March when there were 38, followed by 33 on 24<sup>th</sup>, 22 on 26<sup>th</sup>, 66 on 29<sup>th</sup>, a high peak of 173 on 30<sup>th</sup>, but reduced to 33 on 31<sup>st</sup>. At **Nopper Road** nearby, c.40 were also present on 30<sup>th</sup>. The only other sites with flocks of birds in March were **Spicer House Lane** which had c.200 on 20<sup>th</sup>, **Brown's Edge** where c.35 passed over on 22<sup>nd</sup> and

Ringstone Edge with 250 on 28<sup>th</sup>.

Interestingly despite this general lack of birds, display was noted at **Tinker Hill, Harden** on 21<sup>st</sup> March.

In April sightings were more frequent but still in low numbers. **Blackmoorfoot** had birds on 12 dates, with max. of 137 on 5<sup>th</sup>, 114 on 9<sup>th</sup> and 63 on 10<sup>th</sup> otherwise less than 50 and only single figures on five of the dates. **Windmill Lane** near **Broadstones Lodge** had c.110 on 14<sup>th</sup> increasing to 130 on 24<sup>th</sup> down to seven by 29<sup>th</sup>; c.50 were at **Whitley Road** on 8<sup>th</sup> and 18 at **Castle Dam** on 10<sup>th</sup>, with breeding and/or feeding birds in fields at **Hade Edge** and **Flight Hill**.

Few flocks were apparent in May, with **Blackmoorfoot** having a max. of 32 on 6<sup>th</sup> and up to 19 on 20 dates mainly in the second half of the month. The **Broadstones** area held from 6 to 18 birds between 25<sup>th</sup> May and 13<sup>th</sup> June.

Little breeding information was received but at least five pairs were located in the **West Nab/Deer Hill** area and one nest with eggs was found, as was one at **Black Mnss**. Two pairs bred at **Tinker Hill** and at **Snailsden/Wetshaw Edge** with a further pair at **Little Lad**. Unfortunately no details were received from two strongholds of the species at **Dunford Bridge/Grain's Moss** and **Featherbed Moss/Birk's Moss**.

Away from breeding areas just three sites reported birds in June/July – **Blackmoorfoot** had six to nine daily in June to 10<sup>th</sup>, followed by two to four to 30<sup>th</sup> and up to 17 on 14 days in July, while **Broadstones** had just six on 7<sup>th</sup> June and five on 16<sup>th</sup> July; one at **Dewsbury SF** on 5<sup>th</sup> July.

Probably indicative of a very poor season, post-breeding reports were well below average, both as regards localities and numbers of birds. **Blackmoorfoot** had 4 to 15 daily in August, a max. of eight on only 11 days in September, then just one on 27<sup>th</sup> November. **Broadstones** had three on 18<sup>th</sup> August, in October three on 13<sup>th</sup> and c.100 on 26<sup>th</sup> and c.40 on 16<sup>th</sup> December. Single birds flew over **Spicer House Lane** on 3<sup>rd</sup> and over **Harden** on 24<sup>th</sup> September, with one at **Dewsbury SF** on 21<sup>st</sup> September, and over **Harden** again on 1<sup>st</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> October. The only grounded birds reported were c.35 at **Windmill Lane** on 24<sup>th</sup> October, 20 at **Ringstone Edge** on 27<sup>th</sup> October, 10 at **Castle Dam** on 3<sup>rd</sup> November, with 30 flying over **Shepley** on 30<sup>th</sup> November the last of the year.

#### **GREY PLOVER** *Pluvialis squatarola*

Rare passage visitor

One at **Dewsbury SF** on 12<sup>th</sup> April was the only record (JH).

#### **LAPWING** *Vanellus vanellus*

Resident breeder (3). Numerous passage and winter visitor

Numbers were again low in the early winter period with a max. of c.350 in February and no flocks over double figures in March, when many birds had already returned to breeding territories. Post-breeding/passage flocks were at a peak in August/October with few remaining into the last two months of the year.

A clearer picture has emerged of the breeding situation as a result of a partial survey, notably within those parts of the area inside the Peak District National Park, carried out by Club members and staff at the RSPB Regional Office, Denby Dale. A minimum of 235 pairs was located, with concentrations in the **Whitley Common/Ingirchworth** (35 pairs), **Hade Edge/Winscar** (50 pairs), **Flonch** (62 pairs) and **Digley** (23 pairs) areas mainly on the in-bye on the moorland fringes.

The most significant counts are listed below:-

**Blackmoorfoot** – Jan max. 120 on 8<sup>th</sup>, 180+ on 15<sup>th</sup>; February 150 on 3<sup>rd</sup>, 164 on 11<sup>th</sup>, 210 on 13<sup>th</sup>; July 117 on 20<sup>th</sup>, 137 on 25<sup>th</sup>, 178 on 30<sup>th</sup>; August 242 on 3<sup>rd</sup>, 215 on 8<sup>th</sup>, 283 on 18<sup>th</sup>; September 283 on 5<sup>th</sup>, 320 on 30<sup>th</sup>; October 200 on 8<sup>th</sup>, 270 on 26<sup>th</sup>; November 160 on 9<sup>th</sup>; December 110 on 6<sup>th</sup>/7<sup>th</sup>, 140 on 28<sup>th</sup>.

**Dewsbury SF** – 40 on 2<sup>nd</sup> January rising to 202 moving SE on 10<sup>th</sup> February, 130 on 13<sup>th</sup> February and 28 on 20<sup>th</sup> March; 49 on 29<sup>th</sup> June, 79 on 3<sup>rd</sup> and c.100 on 9<sup>th</sup> July increasing in August to 148 on 17<sup>th</sup> and 125 on 25<sup>th</sup>. September numbers peaked at 141 on 1<sup>st</sup> and 167 on 25<sup>th</sup>, then 116 on 26<sup>th</sup> October with 140 on 29<sup>th</sup>.

**Inghirchworth** – c.170 on 22<sup>nd</sup> January, c.350 on 19<sup>th</sup> February; July 50 on 22<sup>nd</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup>; August a steady increase to c.230 on 13<sup>th</sup> and c.350 on 19<sup>th</sup>; December c.30 on 27<sup>th</sup>.

**Scout Dike** – c.180 on 6<sup>th</sup> February, c.120 from 25<sup>th</sup> July to 6<sup>th</sup> August, c.150 on 20<sup>th</sup> October.

**Broadstones** – February 160 on 20<sup>th</sup>, c.50 on 26<sup>th</sup>; July c.70 on 9<sup>th</sup>; August c.280 on 13<sup>th</sup>; October 300+ on 20<sup>th</sup>, c.350 on 26<sup>th</sup>; December c.60 on 27<sup>th</sup>.

**Royd Moor** – three males on territory by 20<sup>th</sup> February; c.220 on 20<sup>th</sup> August.

**Windmill Lane** – 150 on 13<sup>th</sup> October, 235+ on 13<sup>th</sup> November.

**Ringstone Edge** – 85 on 15<sup>th</sup> January, c.25 on 10<sup>th</sup> September, c.40 on 27<sup>th</sup> October.

**Horbury Wyke** – c.60 on 5<sup>th</sup> March, c.20 on 16<sup>th</sup> July, 160 on 3<sup>rd</sup> August, 72+ on 3<sup>rd</sup> September, 70 on 1<sup>st</sup> October.

**Millbank Flash** – 80 on 16<sup>th</sup> July.

**Castle Dam** – c.50 on 5<sup>th</sup> March, c.100 on 27<sup>th</sup> October.

**Hartcliff Hill** – c.150 on 12<sup>th</sup> November.

**Outlane** – c.90 on 17<sup>th</sup> December.

Smaller numbers, up to 50 birds, were reported from another half dozen sites. The only reports of birds overflying the area came from Harden, where 23 moved SW on a v.m.w. on 1<sup>st</sup> October, followed by 50+ over **Middlestown** the following day.

An interesting observation was of a bird attempting to land on the water with roosting gulls at **Langsett Res.** on 24<sup>th</sup> December (KC,RH).

A white bird was at **Millbank Flash** on 16<sup>th</sup> July (JRS) and a very pale buff-coloured individual regularly frequented fields near to **Dewsbury SF** in August/September (JH,BA). One at **Kirkheaton** on 23<sup>rd</sup> October was completely pale, mottled red-brown and cream (the “red-grizzled” variety of the pigeon fancier) (PF, via MLD). These last two sites are c.5 kms. apart and the same bird could have been involved in the sightings.

## **DUNLIN** *Calidris alpina*

Migrant breeder (1-2). Uncommon passage visitor

Probably the worst year on record for this species, with spring passage noted at only two sites and no reports from breeding localities.

**Blackmoorfoot Res.** – one flew west on 14<sup>th</sup> February, three on 20<sup>th</sup> July and two on 10<sup>th</sup> August.

**Dewsbury SF** – singles on 13<sup>th</sup> April, 7<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> May with four on 10<sup>th</sup> May, then singles on 22<sup>nd</sup> June, 7<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> July.

**Wessenden Head** – heard on 16<sup>th</sup> May.

**Ravensthorpe GPs** – four on 4<sup>th</sup> June.

**Horbury Wyke** – a summer plumaged bird on 6<sup>th</sup> July.

**Broadstones Res.** – an adult flew in from the east on 16<sup>th</sup> July and one on 8<sup>th</sup> August.

**Ringstone Edge Res.** – one in summer plumage on 19<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> July, five on 17<sup>th</sup> September.

## **RUFF** *Philomachus pugnax*

Scarce passage visitor

**Dewsbury SF** – a male in partial breeding plumage remained with the Lapwing flock from 5<sup>th</sup> to 9<sup>th</sup> July; seven, including five males, on 3<sup>rd</sup> to 8<sup>th</sup> September with an eighth bird on 6<sup>th</sup>, three remaining to 10<sup>th</sup> (JH,BA,DM,JRS).

**Millbank Flash** – singles on 16<sup>th</sup> July and 10<sup>th</sup> September, probably associated with the above sightings (JRS).

**Blackmoorfoot Res.** – single juvs. on 10<sup>th</sup> August (KW), 4<sup>th</sup>, 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> September and one on 25<sup>th</sup> September (MLD,DHP,KW).

**Windmill Lane** – a juv. with Lapwings on 30<sup>th</sup> August (BA,DM).

**Ringstone Edge Res.** – singles on 24<sup>th</sup> August and 17<sup>th</sup>/18<sup>th</sup> September (HBC).

#### **JACK SNIPE** *Lymnocyptes minimus*

Scarce passage and winter visitor

There were records from just three sites.

**Elland GPs** – one on 2<sup>nd</sup>/3<sup>rd</sup> January (JB,JED) and 31<sup>st</sup> March (HBC).

**Healey Mills** – two flushed on 31<sup>st</sup> March (JRS).

**Deer Hill** – one in a nearby field on 19<sup>th</sup> November (DMP).

#### **COMMON SNIPE** *Gallinago gallinago*

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

The highest counts in the early months, when birds were scarce, were at **Horbury Wyke** where c.25 were flushed from one small area on 5<sup>th</sup> February – if birds had been evenly spread over the whole site this would have resulted in a count of at least 100 birds (DHP) and at **Ringstone Edge Res.** where there were 27 on 18<sup>th</sup> March. **Royd Moor Res.** held 16 on 13<sup>th</sup> February and 20 on 12<sup>th</sup> March. Elsewhere eight were at **Deanhead Res.** on 13<sup>th</sup> February, seven at **Healey** on 31<sup>st</sup> March, two at **Cubley** on 1<sup>st</sup> January, one at **Wholestone Moor** on 16<sup>th</sup> March and one at **Shepley** on 18<sup>th</sup> March, with five at **Millbank Flash** from 7<sup>th</sup> to 17<sup>th</sup> April.

Birds returned to breeding territories from 25<sup>th</sup> March and display/territorial behaviour was reported from the following sites:- **Blackmoorfoot** on 10<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> April, **Ringstone Edge Res.** on 30<sup>th</sup> April, **Broadstones** in May/June, **March Haigh** (2 “drummers”), **Digley**, **Flouch area** (3 “drummers”) and in the **Winscar/Harden area** at **Tinker Hill**, **Sandridge Moss**, **Carlecotes**, **Snailsden Moss**, **Wetshaw Edge**, **Hade Edge**, **Law** and **Swiner Top** and in the **Little Don Valley** near **Lower Hardron** (two pairs). The only confirmed breeding was at **Fox House Moss**.

Post-breeding season records came from **Blackmoorfoot Res.** on just five dates, max. two birds, **Dewsbury SF** two on 20<sup>th</sup> September, **Horbury Wyke** which had 17 on 29<sup>th</sup> October, **Royd Moor Res.** 15 on 13<sup>th</sup> November, **Ringstone Edge Res.** six on 20<sup>th</sup> September and from three sites, **Shepley** (3), **Bretton Lakes** and **Cubley** on 31<sup>st</sup> December.

Birds moving through or out of the area were noted on v.m.w.s. at **Harden**, where six moved SW on 16<sup>th</sup> September and a total of 27 (3+13+10 in the morning plus 1 in the afternoon) circled up from the moor to the S/SE on 22<sup>nd</sup> September, a day of considerable movement (MC).

#### **WOODCOCK** *Scotopax rusticola*

Resident breeder (2) and uncommon winter visitor

Roding birds were reported only from **Crossley's Plantation** (2 birds), near **Kirkburton**, **Storthes Hall Woods** and **Yateholme** (2 birds), a decrease on most recent years. No information was received on the situation in the **Little Don Valley**.

In the first winter period, one was at **Denby Dale** on 14<sup>th</sup> February and one was flushed from a track at **Holme Styes** on 28<sup>th</sup> April.

In the later months singles were at **Denby Dale** in November on 10<sup>th</sup> (dead) and 16<sup>th</sup> (alive), at **Bretton Lakes** on 17<sup>th</sup> November and 16<sup>th</sup> December, in the **Grimscar Valley** and **Longwood Valley** on 30<sup>th</sup> December and at **Scout Dike Res.** on 31<sup>st</sup> December.

**BLACK-TAILED GODWIT** *Limosa limosa*

Rare passage visitor

At **Dewsbury SF** five birds came in high from the NW on 17<sup>th</sup> April and circled for c.20 minutes before continuing eastwards in heavy rainy conditions (JH).

The only other records were of a bird in full summer plumage which flew west at **Blackmoorfoot Res.** on 25<sup>th</sup> July (MLD) and one at **Horbury Wyke** on 15<sup>th</sup> August (PDB).

**BAR-TAILED GODWIT** *Limosa lapponica*

Rare passage visitor

One flew north calling over **Harden** at 0030 hrs. on 27<sup>th</sup> April (MC) and one in breeding plumage was at **Elysium** fields with two Golden Plovers on 7<sup>th</sup> May (BA,DM,MC).

**WIIMBREL** *Numerius phaeopus*

Scarce to uncommon passage visitor

Four which flew west at **Blackmoorfoot** on 22<sup>nd</sup> April (MLD) were the first for the year, followed in May by singles at **Broadstones** on 8<sup>th</sup> (DHP), **Scout Dike Res.** flying north on 13<sup>th</sup> (BBSG) and one also flying north calling at **Harden** on 21<sup>st</sup> (MC).

In autumn one was at **Ringstone Edge** on 23<sup>rd</sup> July (JED), two flew south at **Blackmoorfoot** on 13<sup>th</sup> August (DMO) and one SW at **Ingbirchworth** on 17<sup>th</sup> August (BBSG).

**CURLEW** *Numerius arquata*

Migrant breeder (2) and common passage visitor

Very early birds were at **Annat Royd Lane** on 25<sup>th</sup>, at **Ringstone Edge** (5) on 28<sup>th</sup> and over **Lepton** on 29<sup>th</sup> February. As is usual birds then began to appear with greater frequency from early March. In the first half of the month birds appeared at 11 sites as follows:- **Harden** one over on 4<sup>th</sup> and a flock of 10 on 12<sup>th</sup>, at **Horbury Wyke** and over **Millbank, Thornhill** on 5<sup>th</sup>, at **Ringstone Edge** five, **Ingbirchworth** two and **Scammonden** 11 all on 6<sup>th</sup>, with 27 at the last site on 11<sup>th</sup>, **Greenfield Road** 11 on 9<sup>th</sup>, **Digley** on 11<sup>th</sup>, **Broadstones** six on 10<sup>th</sup> and a flock of c.40 on 13<sup>th</sup>, **Blackmoorfoot** two on 14<sup>th</sup> and one over **Shepley** on 15<sup>th</sup>.

At the lowland site of **Dewsbury SF** two passed through on 21<sup>st</sup> and one on 26<sup>th</sup> March and movement through there was still continuing in April with singles on 9<sup>th</sup>, 16<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> as well as at **Harden** where six flew north on 7<sup>th</sup>, a day of Fieldfare and Meadow Pipit passage and on 10<sup>th</sup> and 22<sup>nd</sup> single birds passed over **Blackmoorfoot**.

Breeding occurred at **Annat Royd Lane**, **Deer Hill** (2 pairs), **Broadstones** (8 territories), **Harden/Winscar** (6 pairs), **Hazelhead**, **Snailsden** (9+ territories) and **Carlecotes** (2+ territories) and probably at **Scammonden**, **Digley/Bilberry**, **Wessenden** and at lower altitudes at **Emley Moor**, **Stocks Moor Common** and near **Clayton West**.

There were no significant post-breeding gatherings, max. being 9 at **Bosbaw Whams** on 8<sup>th</sup> August, and the only later records were singles at **Royd Moor** and **Blackmoorfoot** on 10<sup>th</sup> August with another NW at the latter site on 28<sup>th</sup> August, followed by late singles at **Dewsbury SF** on 1<sup>st</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> October.

**REDSHANK** *Tringa totanus*

Migrant breeder (1)

A less successful year for this species so far as breeding is concerned, with confirmation made at only one site, although no information was received from the **Black Moss** area where two pairs bred in 1999.

First of the year was one at **Horbury Wyke** on the early date of 5<sup>th</sup> February, with regular sightings there to 10<sup>th</sup> April usually singly, but two on 11<sup>th</sup> March and three on 25<sup>th</sup> March. Four birds were present at **Winscar** on 12<sup>th</sup> March and up to four present regularly to 1<sup>st</sup> May. Other birds occurred in March at **Royd Moor** on 20<sup>th</sup> and at **Blackmoorfoot** on 23<sup>rd</sup>.

In April singles were at **Royd Moor** and **Ingbirchworth** on 1<sup>st</sup> (same bird?), at **Ravensthorpe GPs** on 5<sup>th</sup> with two there on 9<sup>th</sup> to 11<sup>th</sup>, with one also on the 9<sup>th</sup> at **Millbank Flash** and at **Castle Dam** on 23<sup>rd</sup>. Away from probable breeding areas the only May report came from **Royd Moor** on 9<sup>th</sup> and there was one at **Horbury Wyke** on 6<sup>th</sup> June.

The breeding situation in the **Winscar/Harden** area was unclear. One pair certainly bred, two adults and two newly fledged young being seen near **Harden** on 10<sup>th</sup> June, but at least one other pair may have bred. A third pair held breeding territory at **Foxhouse Moss**.

In autumn birds were present at five sites – **Horbury Wyke** three on 6<sup>th</sup> and one on 16<sup>th</sup> July, **Blackmoorfoot** three on 14<sup>th</sup> July and one from 13<sup>th</sup> to 16<sup>th</sup> September, **Ringstone Edge** a singleton on 15<sup>th</sup> and three on 26<sup>th</sup> July, **Royd Moor** one on 1<sup>st</sup> and 22<sup>nd</sup> October and **Dewsbury SF** one on 20<sup>th</sup> September.

### **GREENSHANK** *Tringa nebularia*

Uncommon passage visitor

Reported from eight sites, with just a single spring record.

**Millhank Flash** – singles on 6<sup>th</sup> May and 28<sup>th</sup> August (JRS).

**Ringstone Edge Res.** – one on 22<sup>nd</sup> July (HBC).

**Broadstones Res.** – two on 13<sup>th</sup> and one flying SE on 27<sup>th</sup> August (MC,BBSG).

**Harden Res.** – four on 13<sup>th</sup> August had departed by first light on 14<sup>th</sup> (MC).

**Royd Moor Res.** – one on 15<sup>th</sup> August (BBSG).

**Ingbirchworth Res.** – one on 19<sup>th</sup> August remained to 20<sup>th</sup> when it left to the southwest (MC).

**Dewsbury SF** – two on 27<sup>th</sup>/28<sup>th</sup> August, one on 30<sup>th</sup> August (JH).

**Langsett Res.** – four on 21<sup>st</sup> September were later seen flying SE over **Barnside Moor** (BBSG).

### **GREEN SANDPIPER** *Tringa ochropus*

Uncommon passage and winter visitor

A very poor year for this species with reports from only four sites, all in the Calder Valley, and in contrast to 1999 mainly in spring. The same individual could well have been involved in all the spring sightings.

**Dewsbury SF** – one remained intermittently from 2<sup>nd</sup> March to 23<sup>rd</sup> April; three on 7<sup>th</sup> July, then one from 24<sup>th</sup> July to 1<sup>st</sup> September (JH).

**Ravensthorpe GPs** – one on 15<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> March, 5<sup>th</sup>, 9<sup>th</sup> 10<sup>th</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup> April (JRS,BA,DHP).

**Horbury Wyke** – one on 19<sup>th</sup> March and 16<sup>th</sup> April (BA).

**Millbank Flash, Thornhill** – one on 11<sup>th</sup> April; one on 16<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup> July could have been same as **Dewsbury SF** individual (JRS,DHP).

### **WOOD SANDPIPER** *Tringa glareola*

Rare passage visitor

A single bird was at **Dewsbury SF** on 26<sup>th</sup> August (JH).

### **COMMON SANDPIPER** *Actitis hypoleucos*

Migrant breeder (2)

Reports were received from 20 sites, at 11 of which breeding probably occurred. Birds were

present between 15<sup>th</sup> April and the late date of 21<sup>st</sup> October.

**Ingbirchworth Res.** – one on 15<sup>th</sup>, four on 19<sup>th</sup> and one on 24<sup>th</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup> April; one on 17<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup> July, 21<sup>st</sup> August and 21<sup>st</sup> October.

**Dewsbury SF** – the first were five on 16<sup>th</sup> April, followed by four on 18<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup> April; one on 23<sup>rd</sup> June, four from 4<sup>th</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup> and again on 19<sup>th</sup> July, then one on 12<sup>th</sup> August.

**Winscar Res.** – one on 18<sup>th</sup> April increasing to at least four by 28<sup>th</sup>. At least two pairs bred, with a recently fledged juv. present on 8<sup>th</sup> July. Up to two birds seen throughout July until the last on 22<sup>nd</sup> August.

**Broadstones Res.** – singles on 19<sup>th</sup> April and 25<sup>th</sup> July.

**Blackmoorfoot Res.** – singles on 19<sup>th</sup>/20<sup>th</sup> April, 8<sup>th</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup> May; in autumn one on 21<sup>st</sup>, two on 24<sup>th</sup> to 30<sup>th</sup> and one on 31<sup>st</sup> July, one from 1<sup>st</sup> to 17<sup>th</sup> August; in September one on 1<sup>st</sup> to 5<sup>th</sup>, two on 21<sup>st</sup>, one on 23<sup>rd</sup>, four on 24<sup>th</sup> and one from 25<sup>th</sup> to 27<sup>th</sup>.

**Ravensthorpe GPs** – two on 24<sup>th</sup> and 29<sup>th</sup> April. Four were present on 1<sup>st</sup> May, when display took place and two birds remained to 4<sup>th</sup> July but there was no further evidence of breeding.

**Deanhead/Scammonden** – a pair on territory from 30<sup>th</sup> April; one on 28<sup>th</sup> July.

**Harden Res.** – one on territory on 30<sup>th</sup> April, copulation observed on 14<sup>th</sup> May.

**Deer Hill** – a pair attempted to breed but the eggs were predated; one on 8<sup>th</sup> September.

**Wessenden** – a pair in the lower valley on 14<sup>th</sup> May.

**Langsett Res.** – two pairs bred; last sighting was one on 6<sup>th</sup> September.

**Snailsden Res.** – one pair bred.

**Lower Windleden Res.** – two pairs present, but only one pair bred.

**Upper Windleden Res.** – two adults with at least one young present on 8<sup>th</sup> July.

**Millbank Flash** – singles on 4<sup>th</sup> June, 23<sup>rd</sup> July and 19<sup>th</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup> August.

**Digley** – two on 7<sup>th</sup> June and 17<sup>th</sup> July.

**Yateholme Res.** – two birds near the overflow on 8<sup>th</sup> June.

**Dovestones Res.** – one or two pairs probably bred.

**Ringstone Edge Res.** – in July two on 21<sup>st</sup>, one on 26<sup>th</sup> and three on 28<sup>th</sup>.

**Royd Moor Res.** – singles on 25<sup>th</sup> July and 4<sup>th</sup> August.

An interesting observation in thick fog on 6<sup>th</sup> July was of one on the garden wall and in the driveway of the observer's home at **Harden**, where it attempted to feed from the ground beneath a parked car (MC).

#### **TURNSTONE** *Arenaria interpres*

Rare passage visitor

One was at **Ringstone Edge Res.** on 23<sup>rd</sup> July (HBC).

#### **GREY PHALAROPE** *Phalaropus fulicarius*

Rare passage visitor

One of the highlights of the year was an adult female in full summer plumage at **Horbury Wyke** on 6<sup>th</sup> July (BA,DM,JRS). Discovered at c.1100 hrs. it remained until dusk, delighting observers from far and wide, but had departed at first light the following day. Apparently it is only the eighth British record of a bird in this plumage.

The fourth record for the Club area and the first since 1983.

#### **MEDITERRANEAN GULL** *Larus melanocephalus*

Rare visitor

Up to six birds were reported during the year.

**Blackmoorfoot Res.** – an adult on 7<sup>th</sup>, 10<sup>th</sup>, 16<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> January and 11 dates in February. A 2<sup>nd</sup>W. on 18<sup>th</sup>/19<sup>th</sup> January and an adult and a 1<sup>st</sup>W. on 25<sup>th</sup> February (MLD, KW, JKP, JW, PDB). The same adult may have accounted for all the sightings.

**Blackley Tip** – an adult on 15<sup>th</sup> January moved to Ringstone Edge Res. on 22<sup>nd</sup>/23<sup>rd</sup>, then was back at Blackley on 12<sup>th</sup> February, having also been seen at Barkisland on 23<sup>rd</sup> January (HBC).

**Ringstone Edge Res.** – a 1<sup>st</sup>W. present from 1240 to 1330 hrs. on 15<sup>th</sup> January (JED); the Blackley adult present on 22<sup>nd</sup>/23<sup>rd</sup> January (HBC).

**Langsett Res.** – an adult in the roost on 22<sup>nd</sup> January (SA, via BBSG).

#### LITTLE GULL *Larus minutus*

Scarce passage visitor

For the third successive year the species appeared at **Dewsbury SF**, a flock of nine birds flying west up the R. Calder on 23<sup>rd</sup> January (JH).

**Royd Moor Res.** hosted three adults on 9<sup>th</sup> December, two remaining to 10<sup>th</sup> (RJB, MC).

#### BLACK-HEADED GULL *Larus ridibundus*

Numerous passage and winter visitor and former breeder (1)

This species is now mainly a winter visitor, with significant roosts at **Blackmoorfoot and Langsett Reservoirs**. Few counts were received and the only winter counts at the first site gave a combined total for this species and Common Gull.

**Blackmoorfoot Res.** – January 6150 on 9<sup>th</sup> and 6800 on 18<sup>th</sup>, both counts combined with Common Gull; 181 on 25<sup>th</sup> July, 357 on 16<sup>th</sup> August.

**Langsett Res.** – c.1350 on 2<sup>nd</sup> January, c.1200 on 16<sup>th</sup> January and c.1000 on 24<sup>th</sup> December.

**Dewsbury SF** – 955 on 2<sup>nd</sup> January, 2500 on 10<sup>th</sup> January, 1800 on 9<sup>th</sup> February and 2000 on 16<sup>th</sup> March, all counts in the morning shortly after the break-up of the roost at Pugney's CP.

**Horbury Strands** – c.500 feeding after the R. Calder had flooded the area.

**Ingbirchworth Res.** – c.200 on 1<sup>st</sup> January, c.450 roosting on 5<sup>th</sup> February and c.600 on 6<sup>th</sup>; max. of c.200 in March, c.160 on 17<sup>th</sup> October, c.200 on 12<sup>th</sup> November and c.300 on 2<sup>nd</sup> December.

**Royd Moor Res.** – c.320 on 15<sup>th</sup> January decreasing to 52 on 1<sup>st</sup> April; c.80 on 16<sup>th</sup> September.

**Scout Dike Res.** – max. c.550 on 6<sup>th</sup> February.

**Digley Res.** – c.100 on 15<sup>th</sup> January, c.50 on 5<sup>th</sup> November.

**Bretton Lakes** – c. 100 on 21<sup>st</sup> January and c.100, mainly immatures, on 3<sup>rd</sup> September; 200+ on 3<sup>rd</sup> December.

**Lindley Rec.** – up to 100 in January/February and up to 50 in December.

**Scammonden Dam** – 161 on 17<sup>th</sup> September.

**Broadstones Res.** – c.160 on 23<sup>rd</sup> September.

Smaller numbers, up to 50 birds, were reported from a further four sites.

#### COMMON GULL *Larus canus*

Common passage and winter visitor

Few records were received with reports from 13 sites.

**Blackmoorfoot Res.** – no specific counts were made in January to March or in the period November/December. See under Black-headed Gull for combined totals of the two species, in which the former is likely to be much the more numerous. Maxima in other months were three in April, nil in May, two in June and July, six in August, eight in September and 42 in October.

**Ingbirchworth Res.** – c.65 on 1<sup>st</sup> January, 116 on 5<sup>th</sup> February, a max. of 23 in March and four in June, a high count of 25 (in nearby Spicer House Lane) on 11<sup>th</sup> July, 12 on 20<sup>th</sup> October and up to 38 in December.

**Langsett Res.** – c.170 on 8<sup>th</sup> and c.225 on 16<sup>th</sup> January, in December c.30 on 17<sup>th</sup> rising to c.150 on 24<sup>th</sup>.

**Digley Res.** – c.40 on 15<sup>th</sup> January, 12 on 5<sup>th</sup> November.

**Broadstones Res.** – c.100 on 26<sup>th</sup> February; first autumn passage birds were two on 16<sup>th</sup> July and a total of 86 on 16<sup>th</sup> December.

**Royd Moor Res.** – 50+ on 13<sup>th</sup> March, 89 on 25<sup>th</sup> August and 14 on 20<sup>th</sup> October.

**Dewsbury SF** – 309 passed west on 23<sup>rd</sup> March.

**Scammonden Dam** – 84 on 18<sup>th</sup> August.

Smaller numbers, up to c.30, were reported from **Lindley, Scout Dike Res., Kirkheaton, Woodsome** and **Shelley** mainly at the beginning and end of the year.

## LESSER BLACK-BACKED GULL

*Larus fuscus*

Common passage visitor

Occurs most frequently between April and October with only small numbers, usually in single figures, in the winter months. There was little evidence this year of spring passage birds. Reported from 13 sites, mainly the reservoirs at **Blackmoorfoot**, **Langsett** and **Royd Moor**.

**Blackmoorfoot Res.** – in January present on 11 dates, max. four birds, in February on seven dates with a max. of six birds, no counts in March; present on nine days in April, max. 167 on 23<sup>rd</sup>, otherwise less than 90, no counts in May, 37 on 22<sup>nd</sup> June, July max. of 128 on 30<sup>th</sup>, in August 453 on 24<sup>th</sup>, 412 on 28<sup>th</sup> and 254 on 16<sup>th</sup>; September 584 on 11<sup>th</sup>, 266 on 20<sup>th</sup> and 627 on 25<sup>th</sup>; in October 314 on 5<sup>th</sup>, 258 on 12<sup>th</sup>, no counts in November, then 17 on 2<sup>nd</sup> December.

**Langsett Res.** – three in the roost on 2<sup>nd</sup> January, 23 on 21<sup>st</sup> June, four on 21<sup>st</sup> August, 35 on 6<sup>th</sup> September; 381 flew in from the east in two hours on 11<sup>th</sup> September. There were daytime roost figures of c.900 on 16<sup>th</sup> September and c.700 on 17<sup>th</sup>. Seven roosted on 17<sup>th</sup> December.

**Royd Moor Res.** – no reports until 18 on 28<sup>th</sup> July, gradually increasing to c.450 on 25<sup>th</sup> August. Variable numbers were then present in September, with max. of 585 on 8<sup>th</sup> and c.600 on 12<sup>th</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup>. In October numbers declined from c.550 on 1<sup>st</sup> to c.100 on 30<sup>th</sup>, followed by c.90 on 5<sup>th</sup> November reducing to single figures by midmonth. On 1<sup>st</sup> October at least 11 of the Scandinavian race “intermedius” were present (BBSG).

**Ingbirchworth Res.** – reported in January, March, September, October and November but with a maximum of only seven in October.

**Broadstones Res.** – c.215 on 17<sup>th</sup> August.

**Harden** – small numbers of passage birds moving mainly between south and WSW from early June, increasing in July to August and September.

Single figures were reported from an additional nine locations.

## HERRING GULL

*Larus argentatus*

Common passage and winter visitor

Mainly a winter visitor to the area, with two sites, **Blackmoorfoot** and **Langsett Reservoirs** holding considerable roosting numbers.

**Blackmoorfoot Res.** – max. of 407 on 9<sup>th</sup> and 437 on 18<sup>th</sup> January, 488 on 3<sup>rd</sup> and 407 on 11<sup>th</sup> February, no counts in March, only four birds in April, a single bird on one date in May, none in June/July, one on two August dates, a max. of two on five dates in September and two dates in October, increasing gradually then to 73 on 9<sup>th</sup>, 117 on 20<sup>th</sup> and 142 on 21<sup>st</sup> November but no counts in December. A leucistic 1stW. was present on nine dates between 17<sup>th</sup> January and 11<sup>th</sup> March and a sub-adult with yellow legs of the “not Yellow-legged Gull” variety on 10<sup>th</sup>/11<sup>th</sup> July.

**Langsett Res.** – c.800 on 16<sup>th</sup> January, one roosting on 17<sup>th</sup> September, 15 on 10<sup>th</sup> October, 135 on

17<sup>th</sup> and c.1300 on 30<sup>th</sup> December. An adult of the Scandinavian race "argentatus" was found dead on the dam wall on 4<sup>th</sup> December and a leucistic bird was present on 24<sup>th</sup> December (BBSG).

**Ingbirchworth Res.** – monthly max. of eight in January, four in March and one in June, with 125 moving NW and one west in eight hours on 23<sup>rd</sup> January.

**Denby Dale** – a flock of 40+ flew NW on 4<sup>th</sup> February.

Small numbers were also reported moving over **Shelley, New Mill and Harden.**

This is a very much under-reported species, with records from only eight locations.

### **YELLOW-LEGGED GULL**                      *Larus cachinnans*

Scarce to uncommon passage visitor

Birds were again reported from six localities, mainly in the late summer/early autumn period. How many different individuals were involved at each of the three main sites is difficult to ascertain.

**Blackley Tip** – two adults on 17<sup>th</sup> January, with one on 19<sup>th</sup> (JED).

**Blackmoorfoot Res.** – birds were present on 16 dates between 25<sup>th</sup> July and 23<sup>rd</sup> November. Single adults occurred on 25<sup>th</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup> July, 3<sup>rd</sup> August, 4<sup>th</sup>, 11<sup>th</sup>, 12<sup>th</sup>, 20<sup>th</sup>, 25<sup>th</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup> September, 5<sup>th</sup> October and 20<sup>th</sup> and 23<sup>rd</sup> November; a sub-adult on 28<sup>th</sup> August, an adult and a sub-adult on 1<sup>st</sup> September, two adults on 3<sup>rd</sup> October and an adult and a 1stW. on 20<sup>th</sup> October (MLD,KW,JKP).

**Ringstone Edge Res.** – an adult on 29<sup>th</sup>/31<sup>st</sup> July, 2<sup>nd</sup>/3<sup>rd</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup>/8<sup>th</sup> August with two adults on 6<sup>th</sup> August (DHP,HBC); probably only two birds involved.

**Royd Moor Res.** – reported on 13 dates between 7<sup>th</sup> August and 30<sup>th</sup> September, with a minimum of eight different birds in the period 7<sup>th</sup> August/3<sup>rd</sup> September, mostly 1<sup>st</sup>/2<sup>nd</sup> year birds but at least one 3<sup>rd</sup> year and a max. of two adults at any one time. Numbers increased from one adult in early August to two adults and 5 to 6 immatures in late August/early September. Details – in August one ad. on 7<sup>th</sup>, 2 ads. + 1 2ndS. on 13<sup>th</sup>, 2 ads. on 19<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup>, at least 1 ad. on 28<sup>th</sup>; in September 1 3rdW. on 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2 ads. on 5<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup>, a different ad. on 9<sup>th</sup>, 2 ads. on 17<sup>th</sup> and a single ad. on 24<sup>th</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup>. Three different adults were considered to be involved in the September records. Five or six different 1stW./2<sup>nd</sup> yr. birds were present on various dates from 19<sup>th</sup> August to 30<sup>th</sup> September (RUB,MC,DHP,MCW).

**Langsett Res.** – an adult was in the roost on 24<sup>th</sup> December (EAF,RT via BBSG).

### **ICELAND GULL**                                      *Larus glaucoides*

Scarce winter visitor

**Blackley Tip** – a 1stW. was present on 9<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> January (MC,HBC).

**Blackmoorfoot Res.** – a 1stW. on 15<sup>th</sup>/16<sup>th</sup> January was probably the Blackley Tip bird (MLD,JKP,PDB).

### **GLAUCOUS GULL**                                      *Larus hyperboreus*

Scarce winter visitor

After a blank year in 1999, a welcome return to form by this species.

**Blackmoorfoot Res.** – a single 1stW. on 9<sup>th</sup> to 17<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> February (MLD,KW,JW, et al).

**Inghirchworth Res.** – a 2ndW. individual on 12<sup>th</sup> February (PAS via BBSG).

**Langsett Res.** – a 2ndW. bird on the very early date of 4<sup>th</sup> November (MCW).

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

Common winter visitor

Once again the only site from which records were received on a regular basis was Blackmoorfoot where numbers were lower than usual at the year end.

**Blackmoorfoot Res.** – three counts in January produced totals of 213 on 9<sup>th</sup>, 231 on 13<sup>th</sup> and 223 on 18<sup>th</sup> and in February there were 116 on 1<sup>st</sup>, 43 on 11<sup>th</sup> and 34 on 14<sup>th</sup>. No counts were made in March, following which there were no birds until one on 4<sup>th</sup> September. In November there was a gradual increase to 23 birds on 20<sup>th</sup>, after which no more counts were made.

**Ingbirchworth Res.** – 10 flyovers on 9<sup>th</sup> January, 18 on 23<sup>rd</sup> and a single bird in November.

**Harden** – reported as very scarce, with only occasional birds passing over in the winter months. Single individuals were also reported from **Broadstones Res.**, **Scissett**, **Shelley** and **Bretton Lakes**.

**KITTIWAKE** *Rissa tridactyla*

Scarce passage visitor

The only report was of five birds at **Langsett Res.** on 31<sup>st</sup> October (JMT via BBSG).

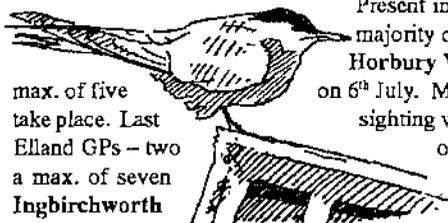
**SANDWICH TERN** *Sterna sandvicensis*

Scarce passage migrant

One at **Ringstone Edge Res.** on 24<sup>th</sup> May (HBC) was the sole record and the first since 1997.

**COMMON TERN** *Sterna hirundo*

Uncommon passage and summer visitor, increasing



max. of five  
take place. Last  
Elland GPs – two  
a max. of seven  
Ingbirchworth  
M i l l b a n k

Present in the area from 21<sup>st</sup> April to 1<sup>st</sup> September, with the majority of sightings as usual at waters in the Calder Valley.

**Horbury Wyke** – one to four regularly from 21<sup>st</sup> April, with a on 6<sup>th</sup> July. Mating was observed on 1<sup>st</sup> May but breeding did not sighting was on 1<sup>st</sup> September.

on 24<sup>th</sup> April, then regular sightings to 22<sup>nd</sup> July with birds on 20<sup>th</sup> July and the last on 19<sup>th</sup> August.

**Res.** – one on 26<sup>th</sup> April.

**Flash, Thornhill** – two on 27<sup>th</sup> April, with two

pairs displaying here from 16<sup>th</sup> to 22<sup>nd</sup> June although no breeding occurred. Seven birds present on 16<sup>th</sup> July included three juvs. being fed by adults and three juvs. and two to three adults were present on 22<sup>nd</sup> July.

**Bretton Lakes** – one on 24<sup>th</sup> June.

**Scammonden Dam** – two came in from the east at 0805 hrs. on 25<sup>th</sup> June, leaving at 0900 hrs.

**Dewsbury SE** – max. counts were eight on 21<sup>st</sup> July, five on 8<sup>th</sup> August and eight flying west on 31<sup>st</sup> August.

**Blackmoorfoot Res.** – an adult on 1<sup>st</sup> August.

Four birds which flew south at **Royd Moor Res.** on 19<sup>th</sup> August were not specifically identified but were either this or the next species (BBSG).

**ARCTIC TERN** *Sterna paradisaea*

Uncommon passage visitor

The only record was of one at **Elland GPs** on 13<sup>th</sup> April (HBC).

**BLACK TERN** *Chlidonias niger*

Uncommon passage visitor

At **Blackmoorfoot Res.** three full summer plumaged birds on 30<sup>th</sup> April, one on 6<sup>th</sup> and three on 12<sup>th</sup> May (DMO, DHP).

Two flew west through **Dewsbury SF** on 7<sup>th</sup> May (JH).

**RAZORBILL** *Alca torda*

Rare visitor

**Dewsbury SF** – probably the most amazing occurrence of the year was that of two birds which flew north up the R. Calder past the hide at 0820 hrs. on 23<sup>rd</sup> September, keeping low and flying directly towards Dewsbury town centre until lost from view (JH).

This is only the second record of this species being seen alive in inland Yorkshire, the first being two at Pugney's CP on 26<sup>th</sup> April 1999.

[There are previous records of dead birds in the Club area – near Marsden on 2<sup>nd</sup> May 1906 and again near Marsden on 2<sup>nd</sup> August 1907 (I suspect that these records may refer to the same bird - BA) and one at Wessenden in November 1911].

**FERAL PIGEON** *Columba livia*

Resident breeder (3)

The only count was 375 in the **town centre** on 16<sup>th</sup> December (DMO).

**STOCK DOVE** *Columba oenas*

Resident breeder (2-3)

Recorded at 28 sites, with breeding/probable breeding reported at nine of these. Most of the flocks reported were unusually in the late months of the year.

**Blackmoorfoot Res.** – recorded in only eight months and on only 15 dates, with none in June/July and September/October and a max. of only three birds. This represents a very serious decline at this site.

**Broadstones Res.** – 16 on 3<sup>rd</sup> January.

**Deer Hill** – seven on 18<sup>th</sup> January, 14 on 2<sup>nd</sup> May.

**Shepley** – 13 on 4<sup>th</sup> March.

**Annat Royd Lane** – 51 on 28<sup>th</sup> March.

**Ingbirchworth** – 33 on 14<sup>th</sup> April, 30 on 9<sup>th</sup> December.

**Bartin (above Digley)** – 11 on 30<sup>th</sup> April.

**Upper Cumberworth/Shelley** – c.50 on 17<sup>th</sup> November.

**Scout Dike Res.** – max. c.45 on 9<sup>th</sup> December.

**Royd Moor** – c.60 on 17<sup>th</sup> and c.300 feeding with corvids on 27<sup>th</sup> December.

Numbers elsewhere did not reach double figures.

Breeding occurred at **Penny Spring Wood, Lumb Lane, Emley Moor, Lower Stones Wood, Shepley, Holme Styes** and **Denby Dale** and probably at **Bretton Park** and **Lepton**.

**WOOD PIGEON** *Columba palumbus*

Resident breeder (4) and numerous winter visitor

There was a slight increase in the number of records received of this species, mainly at the end of the year, involving birds moving through the area or going to roost. In the breeding season present wherever there is suitable nesting habitat, including heavily built-up areas.

**Grimescar Valley** – 40+ feeding on 1<sup>st</sup> January.

**Lepton** – 50+ on 10<sup>th</sup> January.

**Storthes Hall Woods** – “hundreds” roosting in both winter periods.

**Harden** – a movement of c.340 birds on 4<sup>th</sup> November, with 160 north on 5<sup>th</sup>.

**Ingbirchworth** – c.380 flew E/SE on 5<sup>th</sup> November.

**Bretton Lakes** – c.3000 on 9<sup>th</sup> November and 1200 on 16<sup>th</sup> December.

**Scammonden** – three flocks totalling c.350 birds moved south and SW during the afternoon of 10<sup>th</sup> November.

**Lindley Moor** – three flocks of 1600, 700 and 35 passed south and SW between 1400 and 1545 hrs. on 24<sup>th</sup> November, 200 south on 28<sup>th</sup>, 70+ south on 29<sup>th</sup> and 50+ south on 30<sup>th</sup>, all during the afternoon – going to roost?

**Dalton** – c.1000 moved SSE in four flocks at 1445 hrs. on 3<sup>rd</sup> December, with c.1500 in the same direction at 1440 hrs. on 4<sup>th</sup>, presumably going to roost in the Storthes Hall area.

**Longwood Valley** – 600 flew NW on 13<sup>th</sup> December.

**Shelley** – a regular winter flock of c.100.

**Digley/Yatcholme** – at the end of December, c.30 were the only species in the area after the severe freeze.

### **COLLARED DOVE** *Streptopelia decaocto*

Resident breeder (3)

Only 10 records were received from eight localities, including only two referring to breeding.

**Ingbirchworth** – 78 on 15<sup>th</sup> January and 63 roosting at the treatment works on 10<sup>th</sup> December.

**Cubley** – max. count was a flock of 16 on 15<sup>th</sup> January.

**Hinchliffe Mill** – one on 22<sup>nd</sup> April was the only garden sighting of the year.

**Harden** – one on wires for c.20 minutes on 9<sup>th</sup> September was a migrant – birds are not normally recorded at this site.

**Royd Moor** – one on 20<sup>th</sup> October and a flock of 15+ on 13<sup>th</sup> November.

**Shelley** – up to 10 present throughout.

Bred at Dalton and strongly suspected at New Mill.

### **CUCKOO** *Cuculus canorus*

Migrant breeder (1-2)

There was a slight increase in the number of sites (20) from which birds were reported, between the very early date of 10<sup>th</sup> April and 5<sup>th</sup> August. No evidence of breeding was submitted.

Early calling birds were reported at **Denby Dale** on 10<sup>th</sup> and at **Bretton Lakes** on 16<sup>th</sup> April, followed on 22<sup>nd</sup> by singles at **Winscar** and on 24<sup>th</sup> at **Deer Hill** and a rufous-phase bird at **North America, Langsett**. The **Winscar** bird was also reported at **Dunford Bridge Cycle Track** on 29<sup>th</sup> April, at **Harden** on 25<sup>th</sup> May and 2<sup>nd</sup> June and at the **Winscar Dam** to 6<sup>th</sup> June.

In May birds were at **Margery Wood, Cawthorne** on 7<sup>th</sup>, at **Millmoor, Meltham** and **Millbank, Thnrhill** (rufous-phase) on 8<sup>th</sup>, **Marsden Eastergate** on 12<sup>th</sup> and in the **Wessenden Valley** from 15<sup>th</sup>, by which date three birds including a female were at **Deer Hill**. Up to two birds were in the **Little Don Valley** above **Brookhouse Bridge** in May/early June with singles at **Dvestones, Cliff Wood, Royd Edge** and above **Bilberry Res.** in June.

Single birds were at **Flockton** and in the **Middlestown/Horbury** area on 6<sup>th</sup> July. At **Dewsbury SF** singles on 30<sup>th</sup> June, one remaining from 3<sup>rd</sup> to 29<sup>th</sup> July and one on 5<sup>th</sup> August, the last of the year.

### **LITTLE OWL** *Athene noctua*

Resident breeder (2)

Reports were received from 45 localities, many involving pairs of birds, with relatively few records outside the breeding season.

Breeding was confirmed, single pairs unless otherwise stated, at **Broadstones** (2 pairs), near **Castle**

Hill, Royd Moor (2 young fledged), Wooddale, Hazlehead Hall (2+ young fledged), Fullshaw (1+ young fledged), Cranberry (probably 2 pairs) and Cubley/Roughbirchworth (at least 10 pairs, with a minimum of eight pairs breeding successfully).

Additional pairs were present and probably bred near Blackmoorfoot, Skelmanthorpe, Upper Denby, Annat Royd Lane, Lumb Lane, Digley, New Mill, Emley Moor, Farnley Tyas, near Penny Spring Wood, Highburton, Whitley Common, Tinker Hill, near Holme Styes, Whitegate Lane, Victoria, Shepley (2 pairs), Denby Dale and Edge Hill, with sightings of single birds also in the breeding season at Horbury SF, Lindley Moor, Bretton, Wholstone Moor, Kirkheaton, Colnebridge, Flinckton, Grange Moor and Hepworth.

A total of 50 breeding pairs in the area would probably not be an overestimate.

#### **TAWNY OWL** *Strix aluco*

Resident breeder (2-3)

In a total of 30 localities from which this species was reported breeding was confirmed at only two sites, Royd Moor Res. and Spring Wood, Netherton.

Pairs were present and probably bred at Denby Dale, Shepley (2), Hinchliffe Mill, New Mill, Storthes Hall Woods, Shelley, Molly Carr Woods, Thornhill (2), Winscar, Langsett and Cliff Wood.

Roadside casualties were found at Kirkheaton in April and Upper Cumberworth in July.

This remains a much under-reported species.

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

Resident breeder (1)

After recent successes this was a disappointing year, with breeding occurring at just one of the sites occupied in 1999. Wing-clapping display and calling were witnessed on 20<sup>th</sup> March and one young bird was heard late in the season giving the food-begging call, but it is not known if it survived to fledging.

There were no other sightings away from this one locality.

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

Resident/migrant breeder (1) and scarce passage visitor

The first sighting of the year was on 3<sup>rd</sup> March in the Harden/Winscar/Snailsden area (MC). A single bird, rarely two, continued to be seen in this area up to mid-June and again from late September to the year end (MC). Two very wet birds were present together on fence posts on 7<sup>th</sup> October and were probably migrants; one had disappeared by 20<sup>th</sup> October, the second being seen occasionally to 25<sup>th</sup> December.

One pair bred and a second pair probably did so at sites in the south of the area.

There were no records away from these localities.

#### **SWIFT** *Apus apus*

Migrant breeder (2-3)

The first arrival was on the typical date of 4<sup>th</sup> May at Ingbirchworth, followed by birds at Shepley, Whitley Willows, Horbury Wyke (3+) and Dewshury SF (35) on 5<sup>th</sup>, at Dalton, Blackmoorfoot, Crosland Moor and Millbank Flash (75) on 6<sup>th</sup>, Harden and Dalton (2) on 7<sup>th</sup>, Hinchliffe Mill and New Mill on 8<sup>th</sup> and 50 at Dewsbury SF on 9<sup>th</sup>, with a more general arrival from 10<sup>th</sup>.

The largest numbers reported in the spring/early summer were c.100 at Ingbirchworth on 27<sup>th</sup> May, 20+ at Dalton on 12<sup>th</sup> May, 116 at Dewshury SF on 5<sup>th</sup> June, where there were 85 on 22<sup>nd</sup> and 70 at Tinker Hill on 7<sup>th</sup> June.

Counts at **Blackmoorfoot** were in May up to 26 daily with max. of 70 on 18<sup>th</sup>, 65 on 22<sup>nd</sup>, 80 on 23<sup>rd</sup> and 170 on 29<sup>th</sup>; in June 90 on 1<sup>st</sup>, 70 on 2<sup>nd</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup>, 78 on 11<sup>th</sup> and 60+ on 22<sup>nd</sup>.

Breeding occurred at **Denby Dale**, **Dalton** and five pairs in a housing estate at **Thornhill** and doubtless went unreported at many other sites, but numbers were lower than normal at **Lindley Moor**, **Lockwood** and **Hinchliffe Mill**.

Max. counts in the later months were at **Dewsbury SF** which had 83 on 5<sup>th</sup> July, 325 on 9<sup>th</sup> and 80 on 19<sup>th</sup>. Elsewhere the highest counts were 37 at **Blackmoorfoot** on 24<sup>th</sup> July and up to 50 regularly in the **Thornhill** area in July.

Most birds had left the area by mid-August, the latest being one at **Stainland** and seven at **Ringstone Edge** on 18<sup>th</sup> August, singles at **Ingbirchworth** on 27<sup>th</sup> August and 3<sup>rd</sup> September, two at **Blackmoorfoot** on 20<sup>th</sup> August, two over **Dalton** on 23<sup>rd</sup> August, one at **Horbury Wyke** on 1<sup>st</sup> September, then very late singles at **Dewsbury SF** on 8<sup>th</sup> and flying east on 29<sup>th</sup>.

### **KINGFISHER** *Alcedo atthis*

Resident breeder (1)

There was a decrease of almost 25% from the previous year in the number of sites from which this species was reported. Records were received from all the main rivers and streams in the area but the **R.Holme** was the source of only one sighting above **Lockwood**.

Breeding was confirmed at **Bretton Lakes** (at least one pair), on the **R.Calder** between **Ravensthorpe** and **Horbury SF** (four pairs), the **Fenay Beck** at **Dogley** and **Waterloo** and on the section of the **R.Don** within our area (four pairs). Other sightings in the breeding season, usually of single birds, came from the **R.Holme** at **Mytholm Bridge**, **Lockwood Brewery Dam**, on the **R.Coine** near **Aspley**, near the **McAlpine Stadium**, at **Deighton** and between **Sparth Res.** and **Marsden**, on the **R.Dearne** near **Clayton West**.

Winter records came from **Blackmoorfoot Res.** (61 dates to 13<sup>th</sup> March, 17 dates near the year end), **Lees Mill**, the canal at **Golcar** and **Linthwaite**, **Denby Dale** (two dates only), **Ingbirchworth Res.** and **Meltham Bar**. No reports were received from the **Elland** area.

Up to five birds were present at **Bretton Lakes** in November/December.

An interesting observation was made on 17<sup>th</sup> April at **Horbury Wyke** where one was taken by a Sparrowhawk, which dropped the bird when surprised in flight by the observer. The bird was picked up undamaged although apparently dead, but after a few seconds in the hand it recovered and flew off strongly down the **R.Calder** (BA).

### **GREEN WOODPECKER** *Picus viridis*

Resident breeder (1-2)

A slight increase to 35 in the number of sites reporting this species but still down on 1998. Several reports were of birds heard calling, but not seen.

Breeding was confirmed at **Bretton Lakes** (one pair), **Digley**, **New House Wood**, with fledged juveniles probably bred locally as this species is regarded as being sedentary, at **Horbury Wyke**, **Scammonden** and **Denby Dale**. Elsewhere in the breeding season birds were seen and/or heard at **Thornhill Park** (pair), **Hill Top Res.**, **Blackmoorfoot**, **Woodsume Valley**, **Wessenden Valley**, **Storches Hall Woods**, **Mully Carr Wood** (pair), **Dalton Bank**, **New Mill**, **Carr Wood**, **Marsden**, **Elland GPs**, **Scout Dike Res.** and **Gunthwaite Dam**.

At other times of the year birds were present at **Shelley** and **Emley Moor** (both first records for these localities), **Dovestones**, **Honley**, **Grimescar**, **Ingbirchworth Res.**, **Royd Moor Res.**, **Langsett Res.**, **Lindley** and **Shepley**.

One was in a treeless area near **Winscar Res.** on 15<sup>th</sup> February (DHP).

## GREAT SPOTTED WOODPECKER *Dendrocopos major*

Resident breeder (2-3)

Records were received from more than 50 locations with breeding confirmed, often in the form of recently fledged young in late spring/early summer, at **Lockwood**, **Digley**, **Bretton** (3 pairs), **Stonycliffe Wood**, **Gunthwaite**, **Round Wood** (Brockholes), **Healey House**, **Lumb Lane**, **Molly Carr Wood** and **New Mill**. Pairs probably breeding were also present at **Shepley** (3), **Denby Dale** (2), **Carr Wood** (2), **Langsett Banks** (3+) and **Penny Spring Wood**.

Additional sites where drumming was heard were **Woodsome Road**, **Mellor Wood**, **Royd House Wood**, **Smith Wood** and **Deffer Wood**. Other localities occupied during the breeding season were **West Wood** (Hunley), **Sharpe Lane**/St. Helen's Gate (Almondbury), **Silkstone SF**, **Cliff Wood**, **Hill Top Res.**, **Horbury Wyke**, **Thornhill Millbank**, **Yatcholme** (in dense conifers), **Little Don Valley**, **Beaumont Park**, **Longwood Valley**, **Storches Hall Woods**, **Thunderbridge** and **Marsden**, with a further 15 sites having records outside the breeding season.

Feeding stations were visited at gardens in **Hinchliffe Mill** (after being absent the previous year), **Lockwood** (2 sites), **Lumb Lane**, **Salendine Nook**, **New Mill**, **Taylor Hill**, **Dalton**, **Horbury** and **Shelley**.

## LESSER SPOTTED WOODPECKER *Dendrocopos minor*

Resident breeder (1)

There was a slight reduction in the number of sites reporting the species this year but breeding evidence was obtained at three sites after just one in 1999. Apart from breeding sites, there were no reports between 1<sup>st</sup> April and 25<sup>th</sup> August, illustrating yet again the elusiveness of this species.

**Bretton Lakes** – a pair together on 4<sup>th</sup> and a male on 9<sup>th</sup> January, singles on 12<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> March, three (a pair and a second male) on 26<sup>th</sup> March, one on 8<sup>th</sup> April, then no records until a single on 26<sup>th</sup> October, followed by further singles on 3<sup>rd</sup>, 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> December. One pair probably bred.

**Molly Carr Wood** – one pair bred and was photographed at the nest site (SK).

**Gunthwaite Dam** – present regularly from 25<sup>th</sup> March and one pair bred.

**Lumb Lane, Almondbury** – one drumming and calling on 3<sup>rd</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> January and 14<sup>th</sup> February, possibly same as Molly Carr Wood bird.

**Elland GPs** – one on 6<sup>th</sup> February.

**New Mill** – one on 31<sup>st</sup> March, then a juv. visited a garden on 12<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> July.

**Shepley** – a male on 1<sup>st</sup> April, singles on 25<sup>th</sup> August, 24<sup>th</sup> September and 11<sup>th</sup> November.

**Denby Dale** – one on 16<sup>th</sup> November.

**Hinchliffe Mill** – one in Stubbin Clough in a mixed flock was a first local record.

**Ingbirchworth Res.** – one in willows to the west of the res. on 4<sup>th</sup> November was a first record for the site; also present on 16<sup>th</sup> December.

**Windmill Lane** – one flew into the willow plantation on 13<sup>th</sup> November; presumed same as Ingbirchworth individual.

## SKYLARK *Alauda arvensis*

Partial migrant breeder (3)

At just over one hundred the number of singing males reported was very close to last year's total, although some of the areas which had the highest concentrations in 1999 received less coverage this year. The majority of birds were in the moorland fringe areas.

The first singing bird was recorded at **Blackmoorfoot** on the very early date of 21<sup>st</sup> January, with others in February at **Emley Moor** on 11<sup>th</sup> and **Shepley** on 20<sup>th</sup> before many reports in March.

As mentioned in last year's report, winter records are becoming increasingly uncommon, so a flock

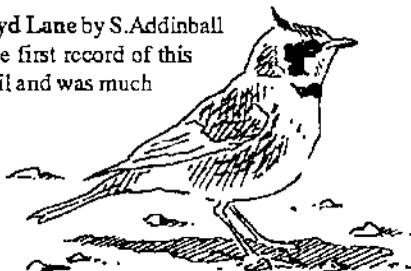
on stubble at **Lepton**, numbering at least 53 on 10<sup>th</sup> January and c.60 on 29<sup>th</sup> February was quite exceptional. At the end of the year up to 15 were in **Spicer House Lane** on 19<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup> October with a similar number, possibly the same birds, in **Annat Royd Lane** from 1<sup>st</sup> to 13<sup>th</sup> November at least. One was at **Digley** on 5<sup>th</sup> November, c.50 on plough near **Bretton Park** on 9<sup>th</sup> November, four at **Hartcliff Hill** on 12<sup>th</sup> November and eight at **Shepley** on 22<sup>nd</sup> December.

Visible migration watching at **Harden** between 28<sup>th</sup> August and 5<sup>th</sup> November produced the following totals – in September one south on 13<sup>th</sup>, two south on 16<sup>th</sup> and one south on 23<sup>rd</sup>; in October 47 S/SE on 1<sup>st</sup> (when birds were also passing over **Horbury Wyke** but no count made), nine SE on 5<sup>th</sup>, three on 8<sup>th</sup> and one east on 14<sup>th</sup>, with seven on 4<sup>th</sup> November. At **Thornhill Millbank** 17 moved west on 17<sup>th</sup> October.

## SHORELARK *Eremophila alpestris*

Vagrant

One discovered on ploughed/harrowed land at **Annat Royd Lane** by S.Addinball during a search for early **Wheatears** on 26<sup>th</sup> March is the first record of this species in the Club area. It was last reported on 15<sup>th</sup> April and was much admired by a great many observers.



## SAND MARTIN *Riparia riparia*

Partial migrant breeder (2)

The species was present in the area between 21<sup>st</sup> March and at least 3<sup>rd</sup> September. Most records are from lowland areas and it is distinctly scarce at higher altitudes. There were breeding colonies at three sites and the species is increasing in the area again.

**Dewsbury SF** – six on 21<sup>st</sup> March; a max. of 120 west on 14<sup>th</sup> July.

**Shepley** – one on 25<sup>th</sup> March.

**Elland GPs** – two on 25<sup>th</sup> March.

**Bretton Lakes** – one on 26<sup>th</sup> and 11 on 31<sup>st</sup> March, c.20 on 15<sup>th</sup> and at least two on 20<sup>th</sup> April.

**Ravenshorpe GPs** – the first breeding birds returned on 6<sup>th</sup> April and numbers increased to 60 on 24<sup>th</sup> and 120 on 29<sup>th</sup> April. By 2<sup>nd</sup> May there were at least 120 nest-holes, possibly as many as 140, increasing later to 168, although how many were occupied is open to conjecture. Unfortunately and inexcusably the contractors on site destroyed the nesting cliff and the birds disappeared and on 9<sup>th</sup> July there were about 25 nest-holes remaining but no birds. On 13<sup>th</sup> August c.40 birds were again using the holes and on 3<sup>rd</sup> September c.25 birds and c.15 holes, several still occupied with adults feeding young.

*Note: the contractors finished extracting sand/gravel early in 2001, machinery was removed and the site is now being used for landfill, which should ensure it remains suitable for Sand Martins in the near future.*

**Horbury Wyke/Strands** – c.5 on 8<sup>th</sup> April then up to 15 regularly, with the last on 23<sup>rd</sup> August (2) and 3<sup>rd</sup> September (2+).

**Millbank Flash** – up to 15 regularly in spring/summer.

**Ingbirchworth Res.** – c.10 on 8<sup>th</sup> and two on 18<sup>th</sup> April; six on 10<sup>th</sup> August.

**Blackmoorfoot Res.** – in April six on 19<sup>th</sup>, one on 20<sup>th</sup>/21<sup>st</sup>, four on 24<sup>th</sup>, one on 25<sup>th</sup> and six on 27<sup>th</sup> and one on 4<sup>th</sup> May; in autumn two on 14<sup>th</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup> July and 26<sup>th</sup> August.

**Harden** – three flew north on 22<sup>nd</sup> April.

**Castle Dam** – five on 23<sup>rd</sup> April.

**Healey Mills** – at least two nest-holes were occupied in the bank of the R.Calder on 9<sup>th</sup> July and

possibly as many as six.

**Cawthorne** – four pairs bred in the bank of the upper lake of the cascades at Cannon Hall, young being fed on 24<sup>th</sup> July.

**Broadstones Res.** – one on 16<sup>th</sup> July.

**Scout Dike Res.** – one on 30<sup>th</sup> August.

## SWALLOW

*Hirundo rustica*

Migrant breeder (4)

The first birds, all singles, arrived simultaneously on 7<sup>th</sup> April at four sites – **Bretton Lakes, New Mill, Horbury Wyke** and **Blackmoorfoot**, with birds at the last two sites and at **Horbury SF** (5) and **Ingbirchworth** on 8<sup>th</sup>. Numbers increased to nine on 9<sup>th</sup> at **Horbury SF** and additional birds were at **Cawthorne, Oldfield, Ravensthorpe, Horbury Wyke** (3), **Bretton** (c.35) and **Blackmoorfoot** (7) on 10<sup>th</sup> and at **Dewsbury SF** (13) on 13<sup>th</sup>, **Bradley** on 14<sup>th</sup>, with 16 at **Dewsbury SF** and c.40 at **Bretton** on 15<sup>th</sup>. Birds were reported from a further 11 sites by the end of the month. The only numbers of significance in May were 50 at **Horbury SF** on 5<sup>th</sup> and at **Blackmoorfoot** which had 57 on 3<sup>rd</sup>, 38 on 4<sup>th</sup> and 46 on 17<sup>th</sup>.

Few reports of breeding were submitted, but two pairs bred at **Harden**, three pairs on the old school at **Horbury Bridge**, at least five pairs in **Langsett** village despite ongoing building work and at **Pole Moor, New Mill, Lepton, Holme Styes, Shelley** and **Emley Moor** and doubtless at a great many other localities.

The largest post-breeding gatherings were at **Broadstones Res.** where 2000 were present at dusk on 18<sup>th</sup> August and at **Healey Mills**, where a roost was established in early September in a willow plantation grown for fuel for the **Ferrybridge Power Station**. Counts there produced 160 on 3<sup>rd</sup>, 250 on 7<sup>th</sup>, 1000 on 12<sup>th</sup>, 1500 on 13<sup>th</sup>, 2000 on 14<sup>th</sup>, 2200 on 16<sup>th</sup>, 1500 on 18<sup>th</sup>, 1000 on 23<sup>rd</sup>, then declining to c.150 on 25<sup>th</sup> with just 16 flying over but not coming in to roost on 27<sup>th</sup> September.

Aside from these the highest totals were c.50 at **Royd Moor** on 28<sup>th</sup> July, c.40 at **Langsett** and 60+ near **Skelmanthorpe** on 15<sup>th</sup> August and in September 130 on 1<sup>st</sup> at **Horbury SF**, c.50 at **Horbury Wyke** on 3<sup>rd</sup>, 40 at **Kingstone Edge** on 10<sup>th</sup>, 30+ at **Blackmoorfoot** on 16<sup>th</sup> and 50+ at **Yatcholme** on 24<sup>th</sup>. Several sites had small numbers until late September and birds were still present in October at **Blackmoorfoot** (4 on 1<sup>st</sup>/2<sup>nd</sup>, 1 on 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4 on 11<sup>th</sup>), **Oldfield** (6 on 11<sup>th</sup>) and finally at **Royd Moor Res.**, where seven flew SE on 14<sup>th</sup>.

Results of visible migration counts in autumn were:

**Harden** – 2 SW on 28<sup>th</sup> August; in September 4 SW on 2<sup>nd</sup>, 41 WSW on 3<sup>rd</sup>, 450 south or SW on 13<sup>th</sup>, 88 on 16<sup>th</sup>, 104 W/SW on 22<sup>nd</sup>, 34 E/SE up to 1400 hrs. on 23<sup>rd</sup>; in October 64 S/SW on 1<sup>st</sup>, 5 west on 5<sup>th</sup> and one WSW on 8<sup>th</sup>.

**Dewsbury SF** – 230 west on 30<sup>th</sup> August and in September 227 west on 10<sup>th</sup>, 52 west on 20<sup>th</sup> and 57 west on 22<sup>nd</sup>.

**Royd Moor** – 20 west on 3<sup>rd</sup> September.

## HOUSE MARTIN

*Delichon urbica*

Migrant breeder (3)

One reported over **Lindley** on 27<sup>th</sup> March (GBS) was the earliest ever recorded in the Club area and preceded by 10 days the next to arrive, at **New Mill** on 6<sup>th</sup> April, itself a very early date (CDA). After singles at **Ingbirchworth** on 8<sup>th</sup>, **Horbury** on 9<sup>th</sup> and **Thornhill Millbank** on 10<sup>th</sup> it was almost a week before new arrivals were found at **Blackmoorfoot** and **Bretton** (c.10) on 15<sup>th</sup> and then at **Dewsbury SF** on 17<sup>th</sup>, **Winscar** on 19<sup>th</sup>, **Thornhill** on 21<sup>st</sup>, **Blackmoorfoot** again on 24<sup>th</sup>, up to 20 at **Ingbirchworth** on 25<sup>th</sup> and at **Shelley** on 28<sup>th</sup>. It was not until mid-May that the majority of birds started to arrive.

The highest spring counts were 70 at **Blackmoorfoot** on 17<sup>th</sup>, c.50 at **Waterloo** on 19<sup>th</sup> and c.60 at **Ingbirchworth** on 27<sup>th</sup> May, with no counts exceeding 25 in June.

Breeding colonies were reported at **Marsden, Almondbury** (4 nests), **Skelmanthorpe** (14 nests), **Shelley Park, Waterloo, Thornhill** (10 nests), **Shelley village**, and two sites at **Lindley** (9+ nests) where young were still being fed in the nest on 29<sup>th</sup> August.

Following the breeding season, summer gatherings and movements were reported from the following sites:

**Ingbirchworth Res.** – c.45 on 9<sup>th</sup> July, c.80 on 18<sup>th</sup> August and 26<sup>th</sup> September.

**Royd Moor Res.** – in July c.80 on 25<sup>th</sup>, c.150 on 28<sup>th</sup> and 100+ on 30<sup>th</sup>.

**Blackmoorfoot Res.** – monthly max. in July 14, August 23, September 63.

**Scout Dike Res.** – c.130 on 13<sup>th</sup> August, c.200 on 10<sup>th</sup> September.

**Dewsbury SF** – 550 west on 31<sup>st</sup> August, 720 east on 7<sup>th</sup> September, 8 west on 8<sup>th</sup> October.

**Millbank, Thornhill** – 210 SE on 10<sup>th</sup> September.

**Harden** – 290 SW/WSW on 16<sup>th</sup> and 21 E/SE on 23<sup>rd</sup> September, 3 SSE/SE on 1<sup>st</sup> October.

**Yateholme** – 100+ on 24<sup>th</sup> September.

**Kirkheaton** – c.30 on 28<sup>th</sup> September.

The last records for the year were one at **Shelley** on 13<sup>th</sup> October and a very late bird which flew NW over **Cawthorne** on 4<sup>th</sup> November.

#### **TREE PIPIT** *Anthus trivialis*

Migrant breeder (1)

This species continues to decline and had a very dismal showing this year, being reported from only six sites in the breeding season. Present between 24<sup>th</sup> April and 5<sup>th</sup> October.

**Little Don Valley** – five males held breeding territories including one at **North America** and two at **Swinden Plantation** (where five males were located in 1999).

**Holme Styes** – singing males were located at **Fox Clough, Reynard Clough** (2) and **T.Kirk Forestry** (2) with the first bird heard on 28<sup>th</sup> April.

**Scammonden** – two birds on 1<sup>st</sup> and 22<sup>nd</sup> May.

**Farnley Tyas** – a singing male at the top of **Wood Lane** on 16<sup>th</sup> May, but not subsequently.

**Denby Dale** – a singing male from 30<sup>th</sup> May to 16<sup>th</sup> June only.

Presumed migrants flew over **Harden** north on 29<sup>th</sup> May, two SW on 28<sup>th</sup> August, singles on 4<sup>th</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup> September and finally one WSW on 5<sup>th</sup> October, the latest ever in the Club area (MC). In addition one flew ESE over **Holme Styes** in fog and drizzle on 25<sup>th</sup> September.

#### **MEADOW PIPIT** *Anthus pratensis*

Partial migrant breeder (4-5)

The recent tendency for birds to occur in midwinter gathered pace this year, with an increased number of sightings and greater numbers of birds present, particularly at the end of the year. The spring passage began in the first week of March and continued to mid-April at least, with birds still moving through when local birds had already established territories.

At the beginning of the year four were at **Grimes Lane, Maythorn** on 1<sup>st</sup> January and singles on 3<sup>rd</sup> at **Royd Moor, Broadstones** and **Skelmanthorpe**. One at **Blackmoorfoot** on 13<sup>th</sup> February could have been a wintering individual or an early passage bird as could one at **Ravensthorpe GPs** on 19<sup>th</sup>.

Obvious spring passage started with 62 at **Dewsbury SF** on 4<sup>th</sup> March with 80 on 21<sup>st</sup> March, 65 on 5<sup>th</sup> and 56 on 19<sup>th</sup> April at the same site. 17 were in fields at **Salendine Nook** on 5<sup>th</sup> March, five on 11<sup>th</sup> March at **Scammonden** where the number of singing birds increased from two on 18<sup>th</sup> to 10 on

22<sup>nd</sup> March. 20 were at **Brown's Edge** on 14<sup>th</sup> March and passage birds were noted at **Shelley** and **Yateholme** from 22<sup>nd</sup>. Two were near **Farnley Tyas** on 28<sup>th</sup> March and birds were well established at **Deer Hill** by 31<sup>st</sup> March. Up to 25 moved north at **Harden** on 7<sup>th</sup> April, while on 10<sup>th</sup> a flock of 40+ was at **Lepton**, numbers at **Castle Dam** peaked at 19 and several were at **Horbury Wyke**.

Apart from the singing birds at **Scammonden** no information was received for the breeding season. Autumn passage was reported from mid-July onwards, with good numbers observed on v.m.w.s. at **Harden**. The 1<sup>st</sup> October was a day of significant movements at three sites, involving 1000+ birds. **Harden** – from mid-July onwards low numbers moving south and west in “mizzly” weather, then 41 NE on 25<sup>th</sup> in drizzle and muck, nine NE in sunny weather on 29<sup>th</sup>. In August 200+ moved mainly SW in 2.5 hrs. on 28<sup>th</sup>, then regular passage in September, mostly W/SW at first, but then predominantly E/SE near the month end. Details:- 40 east on 2<sup>nd</sup>, 63 W/SW on 3<sup>rd</sup>, c.100 S/SW on 9<sup>th</sup>, 200+ SW/SSW on 13<sup>th</sup>, 173 on 16<sup>th</sup>, 235 W/SW on 22<sup>nd</sup>, 96+ E/SE on 23<sup>rd</sup>, 10 E/SE on 24<sup>th</sup>, 46 SSE on 27<sup>th</sup>, 75 on 28<sup>th</sup>, 40 north on 30<sup>th</sup>. The largest movement was 751 birds S/SE on 1<sup>st</sup> October, followed later in the month by 51 west on 5<sup>th</sup>, 32 WSW on 8<sup>th</sup>, 22 south on 9<sup>th</sup>, 26 west on 14<sup>th</sup> and 25 on 19<sup>th</sup>, with in November 18 on 4<sup>th</sup> and five south on 5<sup>th</sup>, when counts ceased.

**Winscar** – a migrant flock of 10-15 feeding on 22<sup>nd</sup> August.

**Royd Moor** – c.30 on 27<sup>th</sup> August, c.20 west on 3<sup>rd</sup> and c.30 on 17<sup>th</sup> September and 200+ S/SE on 1<sup>st</sup> October.

**Gilbert Hill, Langsett** – c.250 on 8<sup>th</sup> September.

**Dewsbury SF** – 28 on 20<sup>th</sup> September.

**Pule Hill, Marsden** – 72 flew west and 80 grounded birds on 1<sup>st</sup> October.

**Holme Styes** – 22 were held up in bad weather on the morning of 8<sup>th</sup> October.

**Scout Dike** – c.40 on 15<sup>th</sup> October.

Late birds were recorded at 12 sites in November/December. In November two at **Castle Dam** on 3<sup>rd</sup>, four at **Digley** on 5<sup>th</sup>, 20 at **Brown's Edge** on 13<sup>th</sup>, three at **Scammonden** on 15<sup>th</sup> and one on 19<sup>th</sup>, 13+ at **Kirkheaton** on 21<sup>st</sup>, with 10+ on 27<sup>th</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup>; in December one at **Wood Nook** until at least 8<sup>th</sup>, at **Kirkheaton** 13+ on 5<sup>th</sup> increasing to 25+ on 21<sup>st</sup>, **Meltham SF** one on 7<sup>th</sup> December, then two on 15<sup>th</sup> increasing to 10 on 29<sup>th</sup>, singles at **Crosland Moor** and **Crosland Hill** on 20<sup>th</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup> respectively, a very large flock for the time of year of c.80 at **Lower Maythorn** on 27<sup>th</sup>, one at **Blacknoorfoot** from 29<sup>th</sup> to 31<sup>st</sup> and c.15 to the year end on **Emley Moor**.

## ROCK PIPIT

*Anthus petrosus*

Rare passage visitor

Singles on 2<sup>nd</sup> March and 30<sup>th</sup> August at **Dewsbury SF (JH)**, where the species is of almost annual occurrence, particularly in autumn.

## YELLOW WAGTAIL

*Motacilla flava*

Migrant breeder (?) and passage migrant

The species continues to decrease and is probably now only a passage migrant, breeding not having been confirmed since 1989. Even as a passage bird it is only recorded with any regularity at one site.

**Dewsbury SF** – one flew west on 17<sup>th</sup> April, then reported almost daily with two on 23<sup>rd</sup> and three on 24<sup>th</sup> April. Singles present throughout May to July, then three on 5<sup>th</sup> August and the last singles on 9<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> September (JH).

**Scammonden** – one on 25<sup>th</sup> April (HBC).

**Millbank Flash** – a male on 1<sup>st</sup> May (JRS).

**Ringstone Edge** – in May one on 14<sup>th</sup> and two on 21<sup>st</sup> (HBC).

**Maythorn** – one in a boggy field near the Victoria Inn on 18<sup>th</sup> June (MC).

**Skelmanthorpe** – one in a wet meadow near Thorpe Dike on 25<sup>th</sup> June (DBut).

**Ingbirchworth Res.** – a juv. on 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> August (BBSG).

**Broadstones Res.** – a juv. on 22<sup>nd</sup> August (MC).

**Harden** – single passage birds SW on 28<sup>th</sup> August, WSW on 2<sup>nd</sup> September and SE on 23<sup>rd</sup> September (MC).

**Langsett** – one on the dam wall on 23<sup>rd</sup> September (BBSG) and one reported flying over on the very late date of 13<sup>th</sup> October (SRG).

**Holme Styes** – one flew ESE on 24<sup>th</sup> September (MC).

#### **GREY WAGTAIL** *Motacilla cinerea*

Resident breeder (2)

Remains common in the area wherever some form of water is found; reported from some 50 localities. Breeding occurred at **Denby Dale** (2 broods), **Bretton Lakes** (2 family parties present on 3<sup>rd</sup> September), along the catchment near **Blackmoorfoot Res.**, **Scout Dike Res.**, **Ingbirchworth Res.**, **King's Mill Lane**, **Ramsden Res.**, **Dogley NR**, **Lower Stones Wood**, **Millbank Thornhill** (three young), **Ravensthorpe** (three young) and **Lockwood**, with additional pairs seen and probably breeding at **Eastergate**, **Honley**, **Milnsbridge**, **Dunford Bridge**, **Armitage Bridge**, **Gunthwaite Dam**, **Elland GPs**, **Deighton**, **Hnrbury Wyke**, **Healey**, **Thunderbridge**, **Digley**, **Bilberry**, **Cliff Wood** and the **Little Don Valley**.

At a further 20 sites birds were seen outside the breeding season, mainly singly, but up to five were at **Meltham SF** throughout December. Ten birds at **Scout Dike Res.** on 29<sup>th</sup> August was the largest concentration reported. There were regular sightings in **Huddersfield town centre** and gardens were visited at **New Mill** on 4<sup>th</sup> January, **Lockwood** on 5<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> January and **Marsh** on 8<sup>th</sup> October.

Although not normally regarded as a migrant, passage birds were recorded regularly at **Harden** with one south on 28<sup>th</sup> August, in September one south and three north on 2<sup>nd</sup>, one SW on 16<sup>th</sup>, one SW on 22<sup>nd</sup>, six E/SE on 23<sup>rd</sup>, and in October three S/SE on 1<sup>st</sup> and one west on 14<sup>th</sup> (MC).

#### **PIED WAGTAIL** *Motacilla alba*

Resident breeder (3) and passage migrant/winter visitor

More records were received this year, relating both to breeding and passage birds, but unfortunately no reports were received relevant to the town centre roost.

Breeding occurred at **Denby Dale**, **Royd Moor**, **Hinchliffe Mill**, **Bilberry**, **New Mill**, **Emley Tx**, **Jagger Lane Emley Moor**, **Shelley/Emley**, **Harden** and **Broadstones** with additional pairs at **Oakes** (up to four) and **Horbury**.

The largest concentrations reported were at :-

**Kirkheaton CC** – 15+ on 16<sup>th</sup> January, 20+ on 12<sup>th</sup> September and 16 on the bowling green on 21<sup>st</sup> September.

**Annat Royd Lane** – c.15 between 26<sup>th</sup> March and 8<sup>th</sup> April and a max. of 19 on 16<sup>th</sup> April.

**Castle Dam** – 13 on 30<sup>th</sup> March.

**Ingbirchworth** – 15 migrants on 8<sup>th</sup> April, 10 on 1<sup>st</sup> August and 26<sup>th</sup> September, 24 on 3<sup>rd</sup> October.

**Millbank Thornhill** – c.28 feeding on cricket field on 3<sup>rd</sup> September.

**Langsett Res.** – nine on the dam wall on 17<sup>th</sup> September, with 18 on 23<sup>rd</sup>.

**Holme Styes** – 10 during heavy rain and fog on 25<sup>th</sup> September.

**Meltham SF** – increased in December from c. 15 on 7<sup>th</sup> to c.50 at the month end.

V.m.w. at **Harden** produced in September 20 north and 15 west on 2<sup>nd</sup>, four S/SW on 13<sup>th</sup>, three SW

on 16<sup>th</sup>, eight E/SE on 23<sup>rd</sup>, six on 24<sup>th</sup>, six SSE on 27<sup>th</sup> and one north on 28<sup>th</sup> and in October 55 moving SE on 1<sup>st</sup> (see also Meadow Pipit), when 14 moved west at **Pule Hill, Marsden**, 12 WSW on 5<sup>th</sup>, four (one of which was chased by a Sparrowhawk) south on 8<sup>th</sup>, 10 south on 9<sup>th</sup> with low single figures on 14<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> and on 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> November.

A small but regular passage of up to six a day was also noted over **Shelley** in September/early October.

### WHITE WAGTAIL

*Motacilla alba alba*

Uncommon passage migrant

Once again all confirmed records were unsurprisingly in spring.

**Annat Royd Lane** – reported from 29<sup>th</sup> March, and then in April with one on 14<sup>th</sup>, at least two possibly three on 15<sup>th</sup> and at least one probably two on 16<sup>th</sup> (MC,DBut,BBSG).

**Galcar** – one on the canal between here and Linthwaite on 31<sup>st</sup> March (KW).

**Ringstone Edge Res.** – one on 17<sup>th</sup> April (HBC).

**Harden** – birds suspected, but not confirmed, on autumn v.m.ws. (MC).

### WAXWING

*Bombycilla garrulus*

Eruptive winter visitor, rare to uncommon

Birds remained from the influx of late 1999 with reports from new localities also, whilst a report at the year end raised hopes of a fresh influx in 2001.

**Lockwood/Folly Hall** – 12 in North Street on 3<sup>rd</sup> January, followed by in Victoria Road, where there were 18 on 6<sup>th</sup>, nine on 21<sup>st</sup> and 18 again on 18 on Swan Lane on 28<sup>th</sup>. Further sightings in these same areas produced 38 on 6<sup>th</sup> February with the last report of up to 30 on 12<sup>th</sup> February (DButler,DM,JED,JKP,JMN et al).

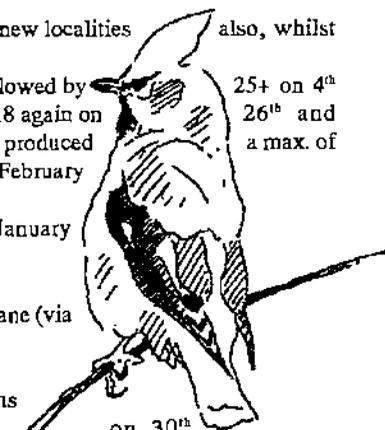
**Shore Head** – 22 flew over Sainsbury's car park on 22<sup>nd</sup> January (BLNE).

**Wooldale** – c.70 on 22<sup>nd</sup> February and 25 on 26<sup>th</sup> (RD&SEH).

**Holmfirth** – c.50 on 21<sup>st</sup> and one on 23<sup>rd</sup> February on Cooper Lane (via DHP), probably same as Wooldale birds.

**Elland** – three on 23<sup>rd</sup> February and six on 28<sup>th</sup> March (HBC).

At the end of the year a small party was seen from a passing bus at the back of the Merrie England coffee shop at **Salendine Nook** December, but no count was possible (JMN). This sighting to the large numbers which graced our area in 2001.



25+ on 4<sup>th</sup>  
26<sup>th</sup> and  
a max. of

on 30<sup>th</sup>  
proved to be the precursor

### DIPPER

*Cinclus cinclus*

Resident breeder (2)

After last year's below average showing this species was much better reported with at least 12 pairs confirmed breeding, although no records were forthcoming from the sites where nesting took place in 1999.

Six pairs, including new ones at **Dunford Bridge** and **Carlecotes**, bred on the **R.Don** with a minimum of six juvs. noted there and three pairs on the **R.Little Don**. Pairs with young were also present at **Meltham**, **Lockwood** and **Dogley** with additional pairs in the breeding season at **Dovestones** and **Eastergate, Marsden**. Song was heard on the **R.Calder** near **Elland GPs** on 23<sup>rd</sup> December and winter reports were received from a further ten sites, at some of which breeding could be expected to occur.

Singles at **Scammonden** on 31<sup>st</sup> March and 19<sup>th</sup> November and at **Ringstone Edge Res.** on 3<sup>rd</sup> November were unexpected.

Unusual sightings were of one swimming "like a miniature duck" for c.15 minutes on 16<sup>th</sup> January and again on 17<sup>th</sup> December at **Bilberry Res. (HQ)** and one which flew the whole length of **Winscar Res.** towards Snailsden Edge on 19<sup>th</sup> February (BBSG).

**WREN** *Troglodytes troglodytes*

Resident breeder (4)

Few records submitted of this very common and widespread species but 13 singing males were counted at **Bretton Lakes** on 6<sup>th</sup> May. Birds were present in a **Hinchliffe Mill** garden but disappeared after the big freeze in late December.

At least two roosted in a banging basket in a **Shelley** garden in December.

**DUNNOCK** *Prunella modularis*

Resident breeder (4)

Little information was received for this common and widespread but unobtrusive species apart from breeding records from **Lindley, New Mill, Shelley, Emley Tx** and **Harden**.

**ROBIN** *Erithacus rubecula*

Resident breeder (4-5)

Very few reports received and no counts of singing birds were made. Adults were feeding fledged young on the early date of 15<sup>th</sup> April in the **Coxley Valley** and breeding evidence also came from **Emley Moor, Shelley, New Mill, Harden, Winscar** and **Ingbirchworth**.

**BLACK REDSTART** *Phoenicurus ochruros*

Rare visitor

For the second year running a male turned up in **Huddersfield town centre**. It was first seen and heard singing from the corner of the disused warehouse behind Huddersfield Railway Station on 25<sup>th</sup> May (MLD). It was not seen or heard again until 26<sup>th</sup> June when it gave four bursts of song between 1115 and 1130 hrs. (JED) followed by a further brief sighting of the singing bird on 28<sup>th</sup> June at 0915 hrs (BA,DM).

What was presumably the same individual sang from the roof of Hopkinson's Works at **Birkby** about one kilometre distant from the previous site at 0730 hrs. on 8<sup>th</sup> June, but not subsequently (DH).

The possibility of the bird's breeding cannot be ruled out as there is much suitable habitat.

**COMMON REDSTART** *Phoenicurus phoenicurus*

Migrant breeder (1-2)

A slightly improved year with 11 singing males located and breeding proved in one locality. Recorded between 23<sup>rd</sup> April and 10<sup>th</sup> September.

**Ingbirchworth Res.** – singles on 23<sup>rd</sup> April and 19<sup>th</sup> August.

**Holme Styes** – first reported on 28<sup>th</sup> April with at least three males on territory from 30<sup>th</sup>, but no breeding evidence obtained.

**Scammonden** – a male sang in the quarry behind the church on 30<sup>th</sup> April and 1<sup>st</sup> May.

**Little Don Valley** – three males held breeding territories between Brookhouse Bridge and Swinden Plantation, with at least one additional male at Brookhouse Farm.

**Cliff Wood, Langsett** – one pair bred, adults with newly fledged young observed on 18<sup>th</sup> June.

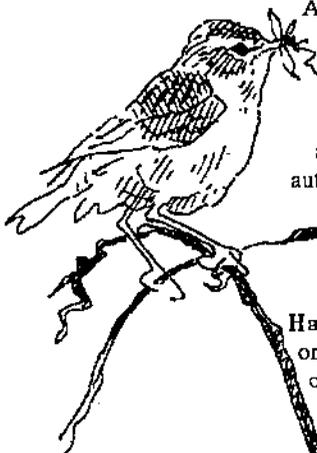
Fox Clough, Langsett – two males held breeding territories.  
 Horbury Strands – a female on 6<sup>th</sup> July.  
 Helme – a male on the Blackmoorfoot catchment on 21<sup>st</sup> July.  
 Royd Moor Res. – one, probably a 1stW., on 22<sup>nd</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup> July.  
 Denby Dale – a female on 16<sup>th</sup> August.  
 Shepley – a male on 1<sup>st</sup> September.  
 Scout Dike Res. – one on 10<sup>th</sup> September.

## WHINCHAT

*Saxicola rubetra*

Migrant breeder (2) and

passage visitor



Although birds were rather later in arriving than usual, it was another good year for the species with breeding confirmed or probable at eight localities and singing males at two other sites. Birds were present between 29<sup>th</sup> April and 5<sup>th</sup> October, the first being at Winscar on 29<sup>th</sup> April, with two there on 30<sup>th</sup> as well as singles at Meltham Moor and Scammonden. Evidence of movement in autumn came from several sites.

**Winscar** – at least one pair bred raising three young, nest-building having been noted on 7<sup>th</sup> May. Up to four were present to 29<sup>th</sup> August, then singles on 2<sup>nd</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> September.

**Harden** – a female was in the observer's garden in foggy conditions on 3<sup>rd</sup> June and four "spotty" young were present in Harden Clough on 18<sup>th</sup> August. Birds had not been seen earlier in this area and could either have been bred locally or were migrants.

**Meltham Moor** – three males had returned by 30<sup>th</sup> April, with a fourth singing male later, and at least one pair bred.

**Little Don Valley** – at least one pair bred above Brookhouse Bridge.

**Lower Windleden Res.** – two pairs bred.

**March Haigh Res.** – three pairs were present on 20<sup>th</sup> June.

**Eastergate, Marsden** – at least one pair was present on 12<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> May.

**Wessenden Valley** – two pairs and a further singing male present on 14<sup>th</sup> May.

**Scammonden** – after the first on 30<sup>th</sup> April, two males were present on 2<sup>nd</sup> May and one was in song on 9<sup>th</sup> May, a pair was feeding together on 25<sup>th</sup> June but there was no other breeding evidence, probably having attempted but failed. Two 1<sup>st</sup> years were with Stonechats on 5<sup>th</sup> October.

**Windleden Edge** – a singing male on 18<sup>th</sup> June.

**Broadstones Lodge** – a female present on 2<sup>nd</sup> May, one on 7<sup>th</sup> May, at least seven on 24<sup>th</sup> August and three on 3<sup>rd</sup> September.

**Millmoor, Meltham** – one on 8<sup>th</sup> May.

**Deer Hill Res.** – a female on 12<sup>th</sup> July.

**Scout Dike Res.** – four from 18<sup>th</sup> to 24<sup>th</sup> July, two on 24<sup>th</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup> August and one on 17<sup>th</sup> September.

**Royd Moor** – one at the res. on 27<sup>th</sup> August and one near the wind farm on 1<sup>st</sup> October.

**Dewsbury SF** – singles on 15<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> August and 13<sup>th</sup> September.

**Cranberry** – one on 22<sup>nd</sup> September.

**Ingbirchworth Res.** – one on 26<sup>th</sup> September.

**STONECHAT***Saxicola torquata*

Occasional breeder (1) and scarce passage and winter visitor

A quite outstanding year for this species with unprecedented numbers (at least eight) of breeding pairs and the largest autumnal influx ever with as many as 40 birds in the area in early October.

**Winscar** – one pair was present from 19<sup>th</sup> February with a second pair from 25<sup>th</sup>. At least one pair bred and two birds remained to 14<sup>th</sup> November.

**Ilarden Clough** – one pair bred, two “spotty” young being fed by the male on 23<sup>rd</sup> July.

**Harden** – singles on 25<sup>th</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup> September, a male on 1<sup>st</sup> October with a male and two females on 4<sup>th</sup> (a day of considerable passage) and a male on 4<sup>th</sup> December.

**Harden Edge** – a male and two females on 8<sup>th</sup> October, singles on 4<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> November, the last a male.

**Reynard Clough** – five migrants (3 males) on 4<sup>th</sup> October, a male on 11<sup>th</sup> October.

**Holme Styes** – a male on 9<sup>th</sup> October.

**Wessenden Valley** – two pairs present, at least one pair breeding with a nest and eggs found and a female with three young on 17<sup>th</sup> July. One was present at Wessenden Head in snow on 29<sup>th</sup> December.

**West Nab/Deer Hill** – one pair bred, newly fledged young being found; a pair near West Nab on 26<sup>th</sup> December.

**Deer Hill Res.** – a pair with young, different from the above; a male on 18<sup>th</sup> January.

**Meltham/Deer Hill** – at least eight birds present on 1<sup>st</sup> October, with a male still on 23<sup>rd</sup>.

**Blackmoorfoot** – one in the SW corner overflow field on 20<sup>th</sup> October.

**Scammonden** – a male on 11<sup>th</sup> March had been joined by a female by 22<sup>nd</sup> with display observed near Deanhead Res. on 22<sup>nd</sup> May but no further breeding evidence was forthcoming. In autumn an amazing count of 21 birds, equalling the previous highest count for an inland site in Yorkshire, was achieved on 5<sup>th</sup> October, comprising one party of 17 birds including at least six males and a smaller group of four (JED). On 6<sup>th</sup> only four (a pair and two juvs.) could be found, with eight on 12<sup>th</sup>, three on 15<sup>th</sup> and a pair on 22<sup>nd</sup> October, followed in November by a pair on 10<sup>th</sup>, 15<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup>, a male on 10<sup>th</sup> December and finally a pair on 17<sup>th</sup>.

**Little Don Valley** – one pair bred fledging at least one young.

**Long Moor** – one pair bred and was seen feeding fledged young.

**Broadstones Lodge** – three (one male) on 1<sup>st</sup> January, then two pairs present to 26<sup>th</sup> February. Late in the year one on 29<sup>th</sup> October with a pair from 10<sup>th</sup> December to the year end.

**Broadstones Res.** – a pair on 4<sup>th</sup> April.

**Eastergate, Marsden** – a male on 12<sup>th</sup> May.

**Greenfield Road** – one on 15<sup>th</sup> and a pair on 29<sup>th</sup> February and one on 10<sup>th</sup> March. A male on 8<sup>th</sup> November joined by a female on 24<sup>th</sup>.

**Penistone** – a female near the cemetery on 6<sup>th</sup> March.

**Inghirchworth Res.** – singles on 9<sup>th</sup> April and 10<sup>th</sup> December.

**Scout Dike Res.** – a female/imm. on 24<sup>th</sup> September.

**Royd Moor Res.** – a male on 19<sup>th</sup> October.

**Digley** – male and female on 5<sup>th</sup> November.

**NORTHERN WHEATEAR***Oenanthe oenanthe*

Migrant breeder (1-2) and passage visitor

Spring passage began with a male at **Greenfield Road** on 13<sup>th</sup> March, with the next five days later at **Digley** on 18<sup>th</sup>. Numbers on passage have declined dramatically and alarmingly over recent years, the highest day total at any site this year being only six birds. Once again no positive breeding proof anywhere in the area was obtained, although pairs on territory were discovered at four sites and juveniles in July may or may not have been bred locally.

After the Greenfield Road and Digley birds on 13<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup>, further March sightings (singles unless otherwise stated) were made at Digley again on 19<sup>th</sup>, **Bilberry** (m. + 2f.) and **Winscar** (2m.) on 20<sup>th</sup>, **Scammonden** (5, including 2m.) and **Broadstones** on 22<sup>nd</sup>, **Royd Moor Res.** on 25<sup>th</sup>, **Bretton CP** and **Annat Royd Lane** (to 30<sup>th</sup>) on 26<sup>th</sup>, **Broadstones** (2) on 27<sup>th</sup>, **Blackmoorfoot** and **New Mill** on 30<sup>th</sup> and **Oakes** (f.) and **Buckstones** (m. and f.) on 31<sup>st</sup>. One was at **Wessenden Head** on 1<sup>st</sup> April and the max. count of the spring, six birds, was made at **Broadstones** on 6<sup>th</sup> April.

That birds continued to pass through later in April was shown by singles at **Dewsbury SF** on 19<sup>th</sup> and 23<sup>rd</sup>, **Brown's Edge** five on 20<sup>th</sup>, **Blackmoorfoot** two from 22<sup>nd</sup> to 28<sup>th</sup>, **Scout Dike Res.** on 23<sup>rd</sup> and 29<sup>th</sup>, **Millhouse Green** and **Clock Face Quarry** five also on 23<sup>rd</sup>, **Castle Hill** on 27<sup>th</sup>, **Tinker Hill** four on 28<sup>th</sup>, **Crosland Road** two males on 29<sup>th</sup> and four, possibly of the Greenland race *O.o.leucorrhoea*, at **Scammonden** on 30<sup>th</sup>.

Pairs of birds were present at **Winscar** from 30<sup>th</sup> April, with a male singing at the entrance to a rabbit hole from 22<sup>nd</sup>, **Buckstones** and **Oxygrains Beck** on 23<sup>rd</sup> April and **Wessenden** on 2<sup>nd</sup>, 14<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> May. Two juvs. at **Deer Hill** on 4<sup>th</sup> July could have been raised locally.

After the breeding season birds were reported from four sites in August and in September at **Winscar** on 2<sup>nd</sup> (3), **Scammonden** and **Annat Royd Lane** on 10<sup>th</sup>, **Crosland Hill** (2) and **Deer Hill** (2) on 13<sup>th</sup>, **Scout Dike** on 17<sup>th</sup> and **Holme Styes** (1 Greenland race) on 25<sup>th</sup>, with the last two at **Annat Royd Lane** on 27<sup>th</sup>.

## RING OUZEL

### *Turdus torquatus*

Migrant breeder (1) and scarce passage migrant

This species has undergone one of the most alarming declines of any over recent years, both as a passage and as a breeding bird. For the first time in over 20 years one regular observer failed to record a single sighting in the Digley area where 20 years ago double figure numbers in spring were quite normal, with several pairs breeding. Nesting occurred at just one locality in the south of the area.

**Little Don Valley** – three pairs bred and reared a minimum of 16 young, three of them from second broods. Four (a male and 3 imms.) probable migrants were present with Fieldfares on 3<sup>rd</sup> November (GMC,BBSG).

**Wessenden Valley** – one on 10<sup>th</sup> April (KW).

**Greenfield Road** – three, probably males, were feeding on stubble and a muddy kale field on 19<sup>th</sup> April, but not subsequently. Heard distantly between here and Meltham on two occasions (DHP,HQ).

**Clock Face Quarry** – two, probably a pair, in the car park on 23<sup>rd</sup> April (JED).

**Winscar** – a male, probably a late migrant, on the dam embankment on 7<sup>th</sup> May (DM,BA).

**Deer Hill** – one feeding nearby on Rowans on 3<sup>rd</sup> September (DMP).

**Healey Mills** – a migrant flushed on 14<sup>th</sup> and feeding in a car park on 15<sup>th</sup> September (JRS).

**Scammonden** – a 1<sup>st</sup> year male on 26<sup>th</sup> October (JFD).

## BLACKBIRD

### *Turdus merula*

Resident breeder (5) and winter visitor

Few records were received but still a very common bird throughout the area wherever suitable habitat is present, although a count of only five singing males at **Bretton Lakes** on 6<sup>th</sup> May (BBSG) was much lower than expected. At least 20 were present at this site on 3<sup>rd</sup> December.

Breeding was reported from eight localities including a pair at **New Mill** which began nest-building on 18<sup>th</sup> March and was still feeding a third brood in the nest on 5<sup>th</sup> August.

Up to 20 were in the **Millbank** area of **Thornhill** all year and in November a similar number were in a Shelley garden and 18 in a single Rowan tree at **Hingscliff Common** on 10<sup>th</sup>.

Two breeding pairs at **Harden** had left the area by September but migrants were noted there in early October, with one flying SE on 1<sup>st</sup>, three grounded on 5<sup>th</sup> with one on 8<sup>th</sup>.

## FIELDFARE

### *Turdus pilaris*

Numerous passage and winter visitor. Has bred

At the end of 1999 the only high numbers were reported from the **Ingbirchworth/Whitley Common** area and this situation was reflected at the beginning of this year. Numbers decreased in February but rose again in March and April as birds began to return north. The last of the spring was on 7<sup>th</sup> May.

**January** – reported from 15 sites with the largest numbers in the **Ingbirchworth** area early in the month, with on 1<sup>st</sup> c.520, 150 in **Dearne Dike Lane** and c.150 at **Broadstones Lodge**. On 3<sup>rd</sup> c.50 were at **Scammonden**, 70 at **Royd Moor** and c.300 at **Banks Hall** near **Silkstone**. **Blackmoorfoot** recorded birds on nine dates, usually up to 50 and max. of 150 on 11<sup>th</sup>, 54 on 13<sup>th</sup> and 52 on 17<sup>th</sup>; nearby at **Deer Hill** there were 50 on 18<sup>th</sup>. **Langsett** had c.50 on 9<sup>th</sup> and c.170 on 16<sup>th</sup>, **Lepton** c.35 on 10<sup>th</sup> and **Scammonden** 46 on 15<sup>th</sup>. 43 on 19<sup>th</sup> and 17 on 31<sup>st</sup> at **Blackmoorfoot** and c.250 at **Ingbirchworth** also on 31<sup>st</sup> were the only birds reported after 15<sup>th</sup> January. Five other sites held up to 10 birds in the early part of the month.

**February** – none were reported until 9<sup>th</sup> when 120 were at **Dewsbury SF** and 33 at **Blackmoorfoot**, the latter site having birds on a further six dates with max. of 68 on 15<sup>th</sup> and 42 on 17<sup>th</sup>. The highest counts were c.300 at **Royd Moor** on 20<sup>th</sup> and c.100 near **Broadstones Lodge** on 26<sup>th</sup>, with smaller numbers at **Lower Cumberworth** (50+ on 11<sup>th</sup>), **Crosland Moor** (c.30 on 17<sup>th</sup>) and **Gawthorpe Green** (c.25 on 29<sup>th</sup>) as well as single figures at three other sites.

**March** – few reports in the first half of the month apart from 204 feeding at **Millbank** on 5<sup>th</sup> and at **Blackmoorfoot** which had birds on five dates, max. 52 on 6<sup>th</sup>, **Ingbirchworth** where there were c.250 on 13<sup>th</sup> with c.50 nearby at **Royd Moor**. Birds were more widespread from 16<sup>th</sup> onwards when 180 were at **Dewsbury SF** and c.40 over **Skelmanthorpe**, 30 at **Scout Dike** on 18<sup>th</sup>, c.100 flew east on 19<sup>th</sup> at **Bretton Park**, where there were c.250 on 31<sup>st</sup>; 25 were at **New Mill** on 23<sup>rd</sup>, when 27 flew south at **Crosland Moor**, c.130 at **Royd Moor** on 26<sup>th</sup>, 70 near **Dunford Bridge** on 27<sup>th</sup>, 100+ at **Farnley Tyas** on 29<sup>th</sup> and c.100 at **Deer Hill** on 31<sup>st</sup>. Counts at **Blackmoorfoot** produced 27 on 24<sup>th</sup>, 46 on 25<sup>th</sup> and 28 on 30<sup>th</sup>. Single figures occurred at three other sites.

**April** – the majority of reports were as expected in the first half of the month, with only one record after 19<sup>th</sup>. On 1<sup>st</sup> 300+ were at **Royd Moor** and c.180 at **Ingbirchworth**. About 500 flew NE over **Cawthorne** on 3<sup>rd</sup>, 22 were at **Blackmoorfoot** on 4<sup>th</sup> (the only April record at the site). On 7<sup>th</sup> 80+ flew north at **Harden**, where 40+, including a bird in song, were grounded on 8<sup>th</sup>, on which date there were also 100 at **Shepley** and 100+ at **Whitley Common**; the 9<sup>th</sup> saw nine at **Millbank**, c.230 at **Ingbirchworth** and c.200 at **Scout Dike**, with the same number (possibly the same birds) at **Castle Dam** on 10<sup>th</sup>. At **Bretton Park** there were c.45 on 15<sup>th</sup>, when c.400 flew north at **Royd Moor**, and 35 at **Crow Edge** and 195 at **Dewsbury SF** on 16<sup>th</sup>. All the remaining reports came from **Ingbirchworth** which had c.230 on 18<sup>th</sup>, 60 grounded and c.190 over on 19<sup>th</sup>, with just six on 26<sup>th</sup>.

**May** – a late bird was on the embankment of **Winscar Res.** on 7<sup>th</sup>.

Birds were late in arriving in autumn, the only October records three at **Deighton** on 30<sup>th</sup> and c.30 at **Winscar** on 31<sup>st</sup>.

**November** – good numbers returned in the early part of the month, but obviously did not remain in the area, with only three reports of single figures after 13<sup>th</sup>. c.20 were in **Annat Royd Lane** on 1<sup>st</sup>, c.300 in the **Little Don Valley** on 3<sup>rd</sup>, c.60 flew west at **Harden** on 4<sup>th</sup>, when a small number also arrived at **New Mill**. **Dewsbury SF** had a SW passage of 450 birds in two hours on 7<sup>th</sup> and a further

100 on 8<sup>th</sup> when high double figures were also between **Blackmoorfoot** and **Deer Hill**, near the **Ford Inn** and above **Oldfield**. On 10<sup>th</sup> 12 were at **Lindley**, 35 at **Scammonden** and three at **Blackmoorfoot**, which had 100+ the following day. The only remaining reports came on 13<sup>th</sup> when c.35 were at **Royd Moor** and 15 in **Dearne Dike Lane**, from **Scammonden** with five on 15<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> and **Crosland Hill** which also had five on 24<sup>th</sup>.

**December** – reports received from eight localities; **New Mill** held 20+ throughout, **Windle Edge** c.20 on 1<sup>st</sup>, **Cubley** c.100 on 2<sup>nd</sup>, **Scammonden** 25 on 9<sup>th</sup>, 35 on 10<sup>th</sup> to 16<sup>th</sup> and 19 on 31<sup>st</sup>, **Winscar** 15 on 20<sup>th</sup>, **Ingbirchworth** c.100 on 25<sup>th</sup> and c.600 on 27<sup>th</sup>, **Broadstones** 12 on 27<sup>th</sup> and **Blackmoorfoot** 11 on 29<sup>th</sup>.

## SONG THRUSH

### *Turdus philomelos*

Resident breeder (3)

Once again a good number of reports was received for this species, from over 60 localities. The great majority were relevant to the breeding season but proof of breeding was disappointingly low. Breeding was confirmed at **Bretton Park**, **Millbank Thornhill**, near **Dewsbury SF** and at **Langsett**, all by single pairs.

Song was heard between 9<sup>th</sup> January and 3<sup>rd</sup> July and at least 80 singing males and/or pairs were reported again from about 40 sites. These included a minimum of 15 at **Bretton Park** in February, nine in the **Almondbury** area and seven in the **Woodsome/Farnley Tyas** area. Although most of the sites were in lowland areas, several sites at higher altitudes, for example **Winscar**, **Holme Styes** (3 males), **Yateholme** and the **Little Don Valley/Langsett** area (11 males) reported birds.

At the end of the year males had begun to sing at **Bretton** on 6<sup>th</sup> December (4) and **New Mill**.

Evidence of immigration was obtained on 30<sup>th</sup> September when a fog-bound bird was in a garden at **Harden** and two on **Winscar** dam wall and on 8<sup>th</sup> October when five or six were at **Scammonden** with other thrush species.

## REDWING

### *Turdus iliacus*

Numerous passage and winter visitor

Birds were present between 1<sup>st</sup> January and 21<sup>st</sup> April and 8<sup>th</sup> October and 31<sup>st</sup> December, but were scarce at both the beginning and end of the year, particularly in January/February when apart from three in **Ravensknowle Park**, **Dalton** on 2<sup>nd</sup> February, none were reported in the three week period from 17<sup>th</sup> January to 6<sup>th</sup> February. The majority of sightings occurred in October and November as birds arrived for the winter.

**January** - on 1<sup>st</sup> five at **Lindley**, three at **Hoylandswaine**, 20 at **Dearne Dike Lane** and 35+ near **Almondbury**, followed by the only large flock of the month on 3<sup>rd</sup>, c.300 at **Banks Hall**, **Silkstone**, with eight on the same date at **Skelmanthorpe**. Apart from c.30 at **Royd Moor** on 10<sup>th</sup> and one at **Shepley** on 16<sup>th</sup>, the only other records came from **Blackmoorfoot** where there were 29 on 13<sup>th</sup>, 48 on 15<sup>th</sup> and up to 11 on a further six dates to 17<sup>th</sup>.

**February** – only three sites reported birds in the first week – **Ravensknowle Park** three on 2<sup>nd</sup>, **Almondbury** four on 6<sup>th</sup>, when one was also at **Blackmoorfoot**. The last site had birds on five further dates with max. 16 on 15<sup>th</sup>. Elsewhere c.200 were at **Emley Moor** on 11<sup>th</sup>, **New Mill** had a max. of c.50 on 12<sup>th</sup>, 50+ were near **Netherthong** on 12<sup>th</sup> and c.12 near **Dogley NR** on 29<sup>th</sup>.

**March** – birds reported from six sites as follows:- **Blackmoorfoot** had single figures on seven days and 24 on 1<sup>st</sup>, **Shelley** had “a small number” early in the month, **Millbank**, **Thornhill** 65 feeding with **Fieldfares** on 5<sup>th</sup>, **Ravensknowle Park** seven on 8<sup>th</sup> and three on 10<sup>th</sup>, **Cannon Hall** one on 14<sup>th</sup>, **Horbury Wyke** 40 on 20<sup>th</sup>, **Gunthwaite Dam** 11 on 27<sup>th</sup> and c.20 flew over **Woodsome** on 31<sup>st</sup>.

**April** – a few stragglers remained – **Penny Spring Wood** one on 1<sup>st</sup>, **Blackmoorfoot** one on 1<sup>st</sup> and four on 4<sup>th</sup>, singles at **Horbury Wyke** on 6<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> and at **Bretton Park** on 15<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup>.

**October** arrivals began with simultaneous sightings on 8<sup>th</sup> of 36 west at **Dewsbury SF**, c.20 at **Shelley** and three at **Scammonden**, where there were five on 12<sup>th</sup>. **Blackmoorfoot** had two on 9<sup>th</sup>, **Royd Moor** c.40 on 10<sup>th</sup> and **Langsett** seven on 13<sup>th</sup>. A further larger arrival then occurred on 14<sup>th</sup>, with eight at **Crosland Moor**, 25 at **Choppards (Holmfirth)**, five at **Bretton Park** and 53 west over **Harden**. There were no more then until five at **Harden** on 19<sup>th</sup>, followed by c.30 at **Bretton** on 22<sup>nd</sup> and 20 there on 26<sup>th</sup>, 100 over **Beaumont Park** on 24<sup>th</sup>, one at the **Civic Centre** on 26<sup>th</sup>. three (the first of the autumn) at **Cubley** and three at **Crosland Moor** on 27<sup>th</sup>, c.12 at **Horbury Wyke** on 29<sup>th</sup> and c.60 at **Royd Moor** on 31<sup>st</sup>.

**November** – birds did not return to the **New Mill** area until early in the month. On 3<sup>rd</sup> six flew over **Dalton**, 37 were at **Deighton** and 11 at **Blackmoorfoot**, **Cawthorne** had c.50 on 4<sup>th</sup>, when 21 flew mainly west at **Harden**. Easily the highest number of the year was reported from **Dewsbury SF** on 8<sup>th</sup> when 582 passed SW in two hours. Twelve were feeding at **Big Valley** on 9<sup>th</sup> when seven were also at **Blackmoorfoot**, with 10 at the latter site on 12<sup>th</sup>. About 10 were feeding in gardens at **Dalton** for two weeks to 19<sup>th</sup> and c.10 in a garden at **Hinchliffe Mill** on 13<sup>th</sup>, when six were also at **Royd Moor**. Last of the month were eight west over **Holly Bank** on 24<sup>th</sup> and 80+ at **Bretton Park** on 25<sup>th</sup>.

**December** – except for 50+ at **Bretton** on 3<sup>rd</sup>, six in **Salendine Nook** on the same date and eight at **Scammonden** on 16<sup>th</sup>, all dated records were in the last six days of the year. On 26<sup>th</sup> there were singles at **Dalton** and **Crosland Moor**, on 27<sup>th</sup> one at **Holly Bank**, on 28<sup>th</sup> two at **Dalton**, on 29<sup>th</sup> one at **Wooldale** and three at **Crosland Moor**, on 30<sup>th</sup> nine at **Blackmoorfoot**, three at **Dalton** and 28 at **Scammonden** with, on 31<sup>st</sup>, 17 at **Birkby**.

During the year birds were observed feeding in gardens at **Dalton**, **Wooldale**, **Hinchliffe Mill**, **Salendine Nook**, **Lindley** and **Shelley**.

## MISTLE THRUSH

*Turdus viscivorus*

Resident breeder (3)

Breeding evidence was submitted for 13 pairs or singing birds, which is a gross under-representation of this common species. However, many more counts were received of post-breeding/autumnal gatherings, which give a more accurate picture of the species' status in the area.

**Dewsbury SF** – 30 on 5<sup>th</sup> March and 72, the largest count in the Club area since 1967, on 5<sup>th</sup> September.

**Ingbirchworth Res.** – 23 on 9<sup>th</sup> July, 25 on 19<sup>th</sup> August.

**Scout Dike Res.** – 16 on 20<sup>th</sup> July, 20 on 15<sup>th</sup> August, 15 on 14<sup>th</sup> October.

**Horbury Wyke** – 30 on 22<sup>nd</sup> and 23 on 23<sup>rd</sup> August.

**Bretton Lakes** – 17 on 3<sup>rd</sup> September.

**Royd Moor Res.** – 21 on 8<sup>th</sup> September.

**Scammonden** – up to 30 on 8<sup>th</sup> October with c.15 on 12<sup>th</sup>.

V.m.w. at **Harden** produced two on 22<sup>nd</sup> September, six (S/SE) on 1<sup>st</sup> October, five south on 4<sup>th</sup> October, three WSW on 5<sup>th</sup> October, six on 8<sup>th</sup> and two on 19<sup>th</sup> October.

Song was heard from 14<sup>th</sup> November at **Lindley**.

## GRASSHOPPER WARBLER

*Locustella naevia*

Occasional migrant breeder (1)

After last year's better than average showing, the year 2000 was disappointing, although a pair did breed at **Scout Dike Res.** Reeling was first heard there on 16<sup>th</sup> May and again in July, suggesting the possibility of two broods. The last sighting was on 29<sup>th</sup> August.

**SEDGE WARBLER***Acrocephalus schoenobaenus*

Migrant breeder (1)

Birds were present from 25<sup>th</sup> April to 9<sup>th</sup> September, with singing males at nine sites, again mainly in the **Calder Valley**, with breeding proved at three of them, constituting a successful year.

**Horbury area** – at the **Wyke** the first singing male was heard on 25<sup>th</sup> April, increasing to three or four by 13<sup>th</sup> May. Two pairs bred. Two males were singing at the **Strands** on 1<sup>st</sup> May, with three in song on 6<sup>th</sup> July and an adult feeding recently fledged young. Two other singing birds were located between these two sites, giving a total of up to nine males in the area.

**Dewsbury SF** – four males were in song on 1<sup>st</sup> May and had increased to seven by 7<sup>th</sup> May with the same number still on 31<sup>st</sup>. Fledged young were visible in early August and the last sighting was on 9<sup>th</sup> September.

**Healey Mills** – a male was singing at **Matthew's Pond** on 3<sup>rd</sup> May and at least one pair bred. Two singing males on 9<sup>th</sup> July.

**Scout Dike Res.** – two singing males on 7<sup>th</sup> May, later reduced to one. An adult with a juv. was observed on 26<sup>th</sup> July and one bird was present to 3<sup>rd</sup> September.

**Broadstones Res.** – a singing male on 14<sup>th</sup> May was a first site record.

**Elland GPs** – two males were present on 15<sup>th</sup> May with one or two on several further dates to 16<sup>th</sup> July but no breeding evidence was obtained.

**Bretton Lakes** – one was in song on 21<sup>st</sup> May.

**Ravensthorpe GPs** – a singing male was nearby on 1<sup>st</sup> June.

Passage birds were at **Blackmoorfoot Res.** on 27<sup>th</sup> July and **Shepley** on 1<sup>st</sup> September.

**REED WARBLER***Acrocephalus scirpaceus*

Rare breeder (1) and passage migrant

Reported this year from only two sites with breeding occurring at both.

**Elland GPs** – two males were present, arriving on 1<sup>st</sup> May, and at least one pair nested successfully; the last sighting was on 17<sup>th</sup> September.

**Horbury Wyke** – song was heard on four dates only, 15<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> May and 7<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> July, but two birds were observed carrying food into the phragmites bed on 3<sup>rd</sup> August.

**LESSER WHITETHROAT***Sylvia curruca*

Migrant breeder (1)

Although there was a slight increase in the number of sites at which this species occurred, breeding was confirmed at only two compared with four in 1999. Birds were present between the early date of 8<sup>th</sup> April and 25<sup>th</sup> September.

**Thornhill Millbank** – a singing male on 8<sup>th</sup> April with two on 17<sup>th</sup>. Both remained to the end of July and breeding was probable (JH,JRS).

**Ravensthorpe GPs** – a singing male on 8<sup>th</sup> April, but not subsequently (JRS).

**Ingbirchworth** – a singing male was present near the reservoir from 25<sup>th</sup> April to 27<sup>th</sup> May at least and probably bred. An additional male sang in Ingbirchworth village on 28<sup>th</sup> April (BBSG).

**Shelley** – a male singing from 28<sup>th</sup> April and a pair bred successfully, two young being raised; last recorded on 25<sup>th</sup> September (SRG).

**Scout Dike Res.** – a male on 28<sup>th</sup> April and 9<sup>th</sup> May. At least one pair bred; last report on 10<sup>th</sup> September (BA,BBSG).

**Horbury area** – a singing male present at the bottom of Balk Lane on 28<sup>th</sup> April and 1<sup>st</sup> May. An immaculate juv. was present at this site on 23<sup>rd</sup> August, indicating probable breeding (DHP,BA). A second male was along the towpath near **Horbury Bridge** from 8<sup>th</sup> to 16<sup>th</sup> May (JRS).

Dalton – one singing at a previous breeding site for 30 minutes on 5<sup>th</sup> May (BA).  
Elland GPs – a singing male on 6<sup>th</sup> and 31<sup>st</sup> MaDM,HBC).  
Denby Dale – one present 9<sup>th</sup> May to 10<sup>th</sup> July (TM). A pair bred here in 1999.  
Shepley – one near Stretch Gate on 12<sup>th</sup> May (SRG).  
Milsbridge – one by the canal on 25<sup>th</sup> May (DWB).  
Royd Moor Res. – a presumed passage bird on 22<sup>nd</sup> July (MC).  
Dewsbury SF – a passage bird on 30<sup>th</sup> August (JH).

## COMMON WHITETHROAT *Sylvia communis*

Migrant breeder (2)

The first bird returned on 21<sup>st</sup> April after which a minimum of 40 singing males were present at 20 sites. There was a significant increase in the **Ingbirchworth** area and good numbers again in the **Calder Valley**.

After the first at **Ingbirchworth** on 21<sup>st</sup> April males appeared at **Dewsbury SF** on 22<sup>nd</sup>, **Horbury SF** on 25<sup>th</sup>, **Ravensthorpe GPs** on 27<sup>th</sup> and at **Elland GPs**, **Scout Dike**, **Broadstones** and **Dunford Bridge** over the weekend of 29<sup>th</sup>/30<sup>th</sup> April, the bird at the last site probably still on passage.

Single singing males occurred at **Lepton**, **Longwood Valley**, **New Mill**, **Flockton**, **Golcar**, **Farnley Tyas** and **Broadstones**, with nine at **Horbury SF** in mid-June, three at **Ravensthorpe GPs**, 2+ at **Healey Mills**, two at **Horbury Wyke**, five at **Royd Moor**, four at **Scout Dike**, six at **Bretton Lakes**, seven at **Elland GPs** (on 29<sup>th</sup> April) and eight at **Dewsbury SF** on 31<sup>st</sup> May.

Breeding was confirmed at **Dewsbury SF** (5 pairs reared young), **Royd Moor** (at least 3 pairs), **Scout Dike** (3 pairs), **Ingbirchworth** (2 pairs), **Elland GPs** (at least 2 pairs), **Dogley NR** and in the **Calder Valley** between **Millbank** and **Horbury Wyke** (c.12 pairs) and probably at several of the other sites where singing males had been located.

Passage birds were at **Blackmoorfoot** on 29<sup>th</sup> July, **Dalton** on 19<sup>th</sup> and 23<sup>rd</sup> August, **Denby Dale** on 22<sup>nd</sup> August and 1<sup>st</sup> September and **Shelley** on the latter date. **Dewsbury SF** still had four birds on 31<sup>st</sup> August and 8<sup>th</sup> September, whilst the last reports were singles at **Horbury SF** on 15<sup>th</sup> and **Scout Dike** on 16<sup>th</sup> September.

## GARDEN WARBLER *Sylvia borin*

Migrant breeder (2)

Continues to maintain its numbers in the area, with again approx. 45 singing males located at 20 sites, breeding being proved at three of these. Reported between 23<sup>rd</sup> April and early September.

**Bretton Lakes** – a male on 23<sup>rd</sup> April increasing to three on 6<sup>th</sup> May.

**Elland GPs** – two singing on 30<sup>th</sup> April building to a max. of six on 14<sup>th</sup> May.

**Royd Moor Res.** – a male on 30<sup>th</sup> April; nine males later held breeding territories.

**Shelley** – a pair arrived on 1<sup>st</sup> May and bred successfully; last bird seen early September.

**Dogley NR** – a male on 2<sup>nd</sup> May and later two pairs probably bred.

**Ravensthorpe GPs** – a singing male on 2<sup>nd</sup> May.

**Langsett Banks** – at least two pairs bred.

**Blackmoorfoot** – a pair bred in Orange Wood; a passage bird on 8<sup>th</sup> August.

**Denby Dale** – a male on 8<sup>th</sup> May.

**Scout Dike Res.** – two males on 9<sup>th</sup> May and later at least six males on territory.

**West Wood, Honley** – singing male on 10<sup>th</sup> May.

**Lower Stones Wood** – male on 12<sup>th</sup> May.

**Gunthwaite Dam** – one on 18<sup>th</sup> May.

**Blacker Wood, Skelmanthorpe** – a male on 18<sup>th</sup> May.

Shepley – a male on 31<sup>st</sup> May.

Longwood Valley – a male on 31<sup>st</sup> May.

Brownhill Res. – a male near the pump house on 8<sup>th</sup> June.

Cliff Wood, Langsett – one in song on 18<sup>th</sup> June.

Holme Styes – one on 18<sup>th</sup> June was unusual at this site.

Deffer Wood – singing male on 22<sup>nd</sup> June and two or three pairs probably bred.

Linthwaite – one near the canal on 27<sup>th</sup> June.

## BLACKCAP

### *Sylvia atricapilla*

Migrant breeder (3) and scarce winter visitor

This species remains much more common than the last, utilising large woodlands which generally are shunned by the Garden Warbler and can be found in suburban areas if there is suitable habitat.

The first two singing males were at **Horbury Wyke** on 1<sup>st</sup> and at **Bretton Lakes** on 7<sup>th</sup> April and both could have been birds which had overwintered as the next was not until 15<sup>th</sup>, when three birds were again at **Bretton**, and on 16<sup>th</sup> at **Carr Wood** and at **Horbury Wyke** again. The next arrivals were not until 19<sup>th</sup> when males were in song at **Stocks Moor Common**, **Silkstone SF**, **Litherop Lane** and **Royd Moor Res.** By 20<sup>th</sup> April two pairs and four other singing males were at **Bretton** and on 23<sup>rd</sup> birds had also arrived at **Skelmanthorpe**, **Dalton**, **Beaumont Park**, **Hagg Wood**, **Royd House Wood** and **Farnley Wood**.

A more general arrival took place in the last few days of April, continuing into May. A total of c.120 singing males was reported from about 50 sites but breeding was confirmed only at **Dogley NR**, **Royd Moor Res.** (2 pairs at least), **Scout Dike Res.**, **Shelley**, **Langsett Res.** (3 pairs at least) and **Deffer Wood**. Several sites held good numbers of birds, e.g. **Bretton Lakes** 15 singing males on 6<sup>th</sup> May, **Carr Wood** (12 males), **Royd Moor** (4 males on territory), **Langsett Banks** (7 breeding territories) and **Stocks Moor Common**.

There were few reports after the breeding season, the only September records coming from **Shelley** five in 17<sup>th</sup> and one on 22<sup>nd</sup>, **Royd Moor Res.** two on 19<sup>th</sup> and finally **Thornhill Millbank** a female on 25<sup>th</sup>.

In the early months one which spent most of March in an **Almondsbury** garden had presumably overwintered and there were just three records of wintering birds at the end of the year, one in a **Lockwood** garden on 9<sup>th</sup> December and at **Ravensthorpe** where a female was present in a garden from 27<sup>th</sup> November to 5<sup>th</sup> December with a male there on 27<sup>th</sup> December.

*Addition to 1999 Report* – a bird ringed at **Blackmoorfoot Res.** as a 1<sup>st</sup> year male on 25<sup>th</sup> July 1998 was found freshly dead at **Hull**, 101 kms. to the east, on 7<sup>th</sup> October 1999.

## WOOD WARBLER

### *Phylloscopus sibilatrix*

Migrant breeder (1)

The sad decline of this attractive species continues.

A pair probably bred at **Langsett Banks** (BBSG), otherwise singing males were heard on just two dates, 10<sup>th</sup> May at **Jenkinson Wood** (KW,RW) and 12<sup>th</sup> May at **Lower Stones Wood** (SRG). It is conceivable that just one bird was involved in these two sightings.

## CHIFFCHAFF

### *Phylloscopus collybita*

Migrant breeder (3) and passage visitor

Reported from just under 50 sites and at least 73 singing males located. Wintering birds were present at both ends of the year, with migrants between 18<sup>th</sup> March and 14<sup>th</sup> October.

The first report was at **Bretton Lakes** on 18<sup>th</sup> March with two present there the following day, when

birds had also reached **Deffer Wood** and **Horbury Wyke** (at least two). Further March birds were at **Elland GPs** on 21<sup>st</sup> (2+), **Denby Dale** on 24<sup>th</sup>, **Gunthwaite Dam** on 25<sup>th</sup>, **Shelley** on 26<sup>th</sup>, **Appleyards Golcar**, **Range Dike** and the **Coxley Valley** on 30<sup>th</sup> and **Golcar Tip** on 31<sup>st</sup>, by which date there were eight singing males at **Bretton**.

Although widespread, this species is much less common than the next, with few sites having more than three singing males. The exceptions were **Bretton Lakes** with up to 11 males in April and at least eight pairs breeding, **Langsett Banks** where eight males had territories and **Elland GPs** which held up to five males.

A feature of this species seems to be its propensity to sing in autumn and birds exhibiting this behaviour were at **Royd Moor Res.** on 30<sup>th</sup> August, **Blackmoorfoot Res.** from 11<sup>th</sup> to 20<sup>th</sup> September, **Waterloo** on 14<sup>th</sup> September, **Oldfield** on 18<sup>th</sup>/19<sup>th</sup> September and **Crosland Hill** on 2<sup>nd</sup> October. Most birds had left the area by late August with later records in addition to the singing individuals at **Harden** on 28<sup>th</sup> September, 8<sup>th</sup>/10<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> October, **Holme Styes** on 28<sup>th</sup> September, **Digley** on 11<sup>th</sup> October and **Dalton** on 12<sup>th</sup> October.

A presumed wintering individual was in an **Almondbury** garden in March and at the end of the year singles were in gardens at **Skelmanthorpe** on 13<sup>th</sup> November, **Hinchliffe Mill** on 5<sup>th</sup> December and **Cowcliffe** on 29<sup>th</sup> December.

In addition an individual of the subspecies *P.c.tristis* ("Siberian" Chiffchaff) was at **Elland GPs** on 8<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> January and again from 18<sup>th</sup> to 26<sup>th</sup> March at least (HBC et al) and proved very popular.

#### **WILLOW WARBLER**      *Phylloscopus trochilus*

Migrant breeder (4-5) and passage visitor

This species has suffered a decline nationally particularly in the southern half of the country in recent years. Although still very common in our area, counts of singing males at localities in the **Ingbirchworth** area seem to indicate that this is also happening in our area too.

Birds were late in arriving compared with the last few years, the first not reported until 7<sup>th</sup> April and only small numbers arrived up to 21<sup>st</sup> April, after which they appeared in greater abundance. There were few September records with the last on 22<sup>nd</sup>.

The earliest was at **Dewsbury SF** on 7<sup>th</sup> April, followed by birds at **Bretton Lakes** (4), **Gunthwaite Dam**, **Shelley**, **New Mill** and **Marsden** on 8<sup>th</sup>, **Thornhill** on 9<sup>th</sup>, **Blackmoorfoot** (2), **Horbury Wyke** (2) and **Bradley Park GC** on 10<sup>th</sup>, **Slaithwaite** (2) on 14<sup>th</sup>, **Dunford Bridge** on 16<sup>th</sup>, **Lockwood** on 17<sup>th</sup>, **Ingbirchworth** (4) on 18<sup>th</sup>, **Hinchliffe Mill**, **Litherop Lane** (3), **Royd Moor** (8+) and **Silkstone SF** (2) on 19<sup>th</sup>, **Cliff Wood** (3) and **Dalton** on 21<sup>st</sup>, **Skelmanthorpe** (7) and **Winscar** (6) on 23<sup>rd</sup>.

Several sites reported good numbers of singing males/birds on territory with max. at **Royd Moor** of 36+ (48 in 1999), **Scout Dike** 32 (53 in 1999), **Ingbirchworth** 31+ (25 in 1999), **Dunford Cycle Track** 25 (45 in 1999), **Stocks Moor Common** c.20, **Lepton Great Wood** c.15, **Bretton Lakes** 13 (19 in 1999), **Scammonden** 10+, **Cliff Wood** 10 and **Mt. Scar/Cheesegate Nab** 9.

Passage was evident from mid-July onwards, with juvs. at **Harden** on 16<sup>th</sup> (3) and 23<sup>rd</sup> (2) and one in August on 18<sup>th</sup>. Elsewhere, **Blackmoorfoot** had up to three birds daily with a max. of six on 12<sup>th</sup>, **Lindley Moor** two on 11<sup>th</sup>/12<sup>th</sup> and singles on 16<sup>th</sup> and 29<sup>th</sup> August, at least three at **Dalton** on 18<sup>th</sup> August, one singing at **Royd Moor** on 30<sup>th</sup> August; in September three were at **Winscar** on 2<sup>nd</sup>, one at **Horbury Wyke** on 3<sup>rd</sup>, one at **Blackmoorfoot** to 7<sup>th</sup> with two on 8<sup>th</sup> and finally one at **Shelley** on 22<sup>nd</sup>. (It is possible that the numbers at **Blackmoorfoot** are lower than normal as a result of lack of ringing activity – BA).

**GOLDCREST***Regulus regulus*

Resident breeder (2-3). Common passage and winter visitor

A widespread species throughout the year, small numbers can be found in almost any locality apart from the high treeless moorland. Reported from 42 sites, 24 in the first winter period, 14 in the breeding season and 24 in the late months. Except in areas of coniferous woodland numbers reported were generally in low single figures, the highest count in the early months being c.12 at Langsett on 5<sup>th</sup> February.

Breeding was confirmed at **Lepton Great Wood** (1 pair), **Lower Stones Wood** (1-2 pairs), in conifers behind the pumping station on the south side of **Ingbirchworth Res.** (2 pairs) and probably occurred near **Blackmoorfoot**, where birds were present in a garden throughout the summer, and at **Denby Dale** where a juv. flew into an office building on 29<sup>th</sup> June. Additional sites which held singing males, at most of which breeding probably took place, were **Crosland Heath GC**, **Holme Styes** (4+ in song on 2<sup>nd</sup> May), **Dalton**, **Thornton Lodge**, **Bretton Lakes**, **Langsett** (6 singing males on 2<sup>nd</sup> May), **Cliff Wood**, **Little Don Valley** (20+ on 12<sup>th</sup> May) and **Yateholme**.

Birds appeared in autumn from September onwards at many sites, the highest counts being 18 at **Holme Styes** in foggy conditions on 24<sup>th</sup> September, 6+ at **Horbury Wyke** on 19<sup>th</sup> October, c.30 in the **Little Don Valley** on 4<sup>th</sup> November, four at **Blackmoorfoot** on 10<sup>th</sup> November, 10+ at **Bretton** on 3<sup>rd</sup> December and up to 10 at **Elland GPs** on 30<sup>th</sup> December.

One was near the **George Hotel** in the **town centre** on 24<sup>th</sup> September and gardens were visited, mainly in the late months and usually by just one or two birds, in **Lockwood**, **Birkby**, **Blackmoorfoot**, **Lindley Moor**, **Crosland Moor**, **Thornton Lodge**, **Ravensthorpe**, **Shelley**, **Waterloo**, **Dalton** and **Harden**.

**FIRECREST***Regulus ignicapillus*

Rare visitor

*Addition to 1994 Report* – one very fortunate and experienced observer watched one for about 30 seconds in his garden at **Meltham** on 5<sup>th</sup> October (DMP).

**SPOTTED FLYCATCHER***Muscicapa striata*

Migrant breeder (1-2) and passage visitor

After last year's very poor showing by this species there were sightings this year from almost twice the number of localities, although many of them were in autumn and breeding was proved at only three sites. Present between the remarkably early date of 21<sup>st</sup> April and 24<sup>th</sup> September. The majority of the spring records were from mid-May onwards.

**Skelmanthorpe** – one reported flycatching from a fence at Ponker Lane on 21<sup>st</sup> could not be relocated despite searching (DBut). The earliest ever record in the Club area. One at **Thorpes** on 25<sup>th</sup> June.

**Denby Dale** – one in **Wither Wood** on 28<sup>th</sup> April could refer to the above bird. One on 1<sup>st</sup> September. (Three pairs bred in the **Denby Dale** area in 1999).

**Marsden** – one at **Eastergate** on 12<sup>th</sup> May.

**Coxley Bank** – two at a potential nest-site on 13<sup>th</sup> May.

**Bunny Wood**, **Golcar** – one on 14<sup>th</sup> May.

**Gunthwaite Dam** – one on 18<sup>th</sup> May; at least one pair bred.

**Cliff Wood**, **Langsett** – a single bird on 18<sup>th</sup> May, 11<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> June.

**Langsett** – one pair bred in the village car park. One in a conifer plantation on 18<sup>th</sup> June.

**Stonycliffe Wood** – at least two on 21<sup>st</sup> May.

**Carr Wood** – single birds in different areas on 26<sup>th</sup> May and 15<sup>th</sup> June.

**Hinchliffe Mill** – two in a garden on 27<sup>th</sup> May reappeared a few days later.

Digley Bottom – one on 30<sup>th</sup> May.

Ingbirchworth – one on 5<sup>th</sup> June.

Bretton Lakes – at least two pairs bred. A max. of six birds seen on 24<sup>th</sup> June.

Royd Moor Res. – singles on 10<sup>th</sup> August and 24<sup>th</sup> September.

Thornhill Millbank – one on 13<sup>th</sup> August.

Broadstones Res. – singles on 13<sup>th</sup>, 18<sup>th</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup> August.

Scout Dike Res. – singles on 20<sup>th</sup> August and 24<sup>th</sup> September.

Winscar Res. – one on 2<sup>nd</sup> September.

Shepley – one on 3<sup>rd</sup> September.

#### PIED FLYCATCHER *Ficedula hypoleucos*

Migrant breeder (1)

A disappointing year with reports from only three sites, at two of them on a single date only.

**Cliff Wood, Langsett** – the first male appeared on 21<sup>st</sup> April. Five pairs bred, all in nestboxes, laying a total of 30 eggs, but the outcome is unknown, the regular observer being away on holiday later in the season (MCW).

**Holme Styes** – a female in Fox Clough on 7<sup>th</sup> May (BA).

**Burn Wood/New House Wood** – a male singing near a nestbox on 11<sup>th</sup> May (DM). This was the only reported visit to this site but it is likely that breeding occurred (two pairs bred in 1999).

#### LONG-TAILED TIT *Aegithalos caedatus*

Resident breeder (2-3)

There was a considerable reduction in the number of records submitted of this species, from over 50 to just over 40 sites. More drastic however was confirmation of breeding at only five localities compared with 11 in 1999. Circumstantial breeding evidence came from a further five sites and probable breeding (presence of birds in suitable habitat in the nesting season) at several more.

Breeding was proved at **Orange Wood** near **Blackmoorfoot** (10 juvs. on 28<sup>th</sup> June), **Dogley**, **Horbury Wyke**, **Royd Moor Res.** and **Jenkinson Wood**. Parties of birds at **Dewsbury SF** (15 on 1<sup>st</sup> June), **Dalton** (18+ on 13<sup>th</sup> June), **Lumb Lane** (20+ on 24<sup>th</sup> June) and **Scout Dike Res.** on 16<sup>th</sup> July were presumably indicative of breeding having taken place at those localities too. Elsewhere pairs of birds were present at **Bretton Lakes** (at least 3), **Skelmanthorpe** (2), **Deffer Wood**, **Penny Spring Wood**, **Lower Stones Wood**, **Leptnn Great Wood**, **Stocks Moor Common**, **Gunthwaite Dam**, **Lockwood**, **Yateholme**, **Cannon Hall**, **Royd House Wood**, **Carr Wood**, **Silkstone SF**, **Elland GPs**, **Hinchliffe Mill**, **Slaithwaite** and **New Mill** and many of these probably were breeding sites.

At the beginning of the year the only reported party in double figures was 16 at **Ingbirchworth** on 3<sup>rd</sup> January, with seven at **New Mill** on 14<sup>th</sup> and eight at **Blackmoorfoot** on 16<sup>th</sup> January. As is to be expected more flocks were reported in the second half of the year and there were up to 40 near **Horbury Bridge** on 3<sup>rd</sup> September, at least 24 near **Ramsden Res.** on 24<sup>th</sup> September, 16 at **Blackmoorfoot** on 12<sup>th</sup> October, c.15 at **Bretton** on 22<sup>nd</sup> October and 20 there on 3<sup>rd</sup> December, 18 at **Ingbirchworth** on 21<sup>st</sup> October, 12 at **Dalton** on 27<sup>th</sup>/28<sup>th</sup> October and up to 12 at both **Ravensthorpe** and **Hinchliffe Mill** in December.

The species was a garden visitor, often on a regular basis, in **Almondbury**, **Dalton**, **New Mill**, **Taylor Hill**, **Shelley**, **Hinchliffe Mill**, **Wooddale** and **Ravensthorpe**.

#### WILLOW TIT *Parus montanus*

Resident breeder (1)

The situation of this species seems to be slightly improved on last year, with an increase in the number of sightings and breeding proved at two sites.

**Scout Dike Res.** – two on 21<sup>st</sup> March and at least one pair bred. On 26<sup>th</sup> July a family party was seen and birds were present in two other areas. One on 15<sup>th</sup> October.

**Royd Moor Res.** – at least one pair bred. One on 25<sup>th</sup> July and 28<sup>th</sup> August, with 3+ on 30<sup>th</sup> August and 2+ on 15<sup>th</sup> October.

**Bretton Lakes** – there were many more sightings at this site than in the previous year – singles on 13<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> January, two on 21<sup>st</sup> January, two pairs in the Bentley Springs area on 22<sup>nd</sup> February, one in Bath Wood on 12<sup>th</sup> March, two by the R. Dearne on 16<sup>th</sup> April, singles on 21<sup>st</sup>/22<sup>nd</sup> October and two on 3<sup>rd</sup> December. Two pairs probably bred.

**Horbury Wyke** – in March one on 7<sup>th</sup>, up to three on 18<sup>th</sup> and one on 19<sup>th</sup>, a pair on 17<sup>th</sup> April, singles on 12<sup>th</sup>, 23<sup>rd</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup> August and at least two on 1<sup>st</sup> October. Probably bred in the vicinity.

**Lepton Great Wood** – one pair probably bred.

**Dunford Cycle Track** – singles on 16<sup>th</sup> January and 12<sup>th</sup> March and at least one, probably two, on 16<sup>th</sup> April.

**Almondbury** – one in Lumb Lane on 19<sup>th</sup> February.

**Deffer Wood** – one on 24<sup>th</sup> February.

**Coxley Valley** – three on 13<sup>th</sup> May would indicate a possible breeding area.

**Shelley** – one on 12<sup>th</sup> August.

**Windmill Lane** – one on 13<sup>th</sup> November.

**Ingbirchworth Res.** – two on 16<sup>th</sup> December.

#### COAL TIT *Parus ater*

Resident breeder (3)

Once again very few records were received of this widespread species. Most reports came from gardens at **Hinchliffe Mill, Dalton, Almondbury, New Mill, Taylor Hill and Shelley.**

The only sizeable flock reported contained 23 birds at **Langsett Res.** on 8<sup>th</sup> January.

Fledged young were present in **Molly Carr Wood** on 13<sup>th</sup> June and a pair bred in an outbuilding at **Hartcliffe Mills, Denby Dale** in May.

Singles at **Ingbirchworth Res.** on 29<sup>th</sup> April and at **Blackmoorfoot Res.** on 7<sup>th</sup> December were unusual records at these sites.

#### BLUE TIT *Parus caeruleus*

Resident breeder (5)

Records of this very common and widespread species were received from just seven localities, four referring to breeding at **Hinchliffe Mill, Shelley, New Mill and Dalton.**

V.m.w. at **Harden** produced one SSE on 27<sup>th</sup> September, one SE on 1<sup>st</sup> October and one on 19<sup>th</sup> October.

The maximum count at **Bretton Lakes** was 30 on 31<sup>st</sup> December.

#### GREAT TIT *Parus major*

Resident breeder (4)

The only records of this common species were of young birds present in gardens at **New Mill and Hinchliffe Mill** between June and August.

#### NUTHATCH *Sitta europaea*

Resident breeder (2-3)

Although the species was reported from exactly the same number of sites as last year, several of them were new and breeding took place at two of these.

Favoured areas were again the valleys of the **Fenay Beck**, **R.Holme**, **Hall Dike** and **R.Dearne**.

At least three pairs bred at **Bretton Lakes**, where four pairs were present on 24<sup>th</sup> June, five pairs at **Denby Dale**, four pairs at **Shepley**, at least one pair at **Gunthwaite Dam**, two pairs at **Carr Wood**, a pair (in a nestbox) at **Magdale** and single pairs at **Windybank Wood**, **Penny Spring Wood**, **Squirrel Ditch** and **Meltham Hall Park**, the last three being new breeding sites.

Additional pairs or singing males were located in **Beaumont Park**, five sites in the **Almondbury area**, **Woodsome** (3 pairs), **Clough Wood Thurstonland**, **Thunderbridge**, **Deffer Wood**, **Hagg Wood**, **New House Wood**, **Cliff Wood Brockholes**, **West Wood Honley** and new sites in the **Coxley Valley** and **Healey Greave Wood**, **Kirkburton**.

Outside the breeding season there were also records from **Norwood**, **Silkstone**, **Lockwood** and the **Grimescar Valley** as well as first ever garden reports from **New Mill** in August and **Marsh** in December. Once again no information was received from the former stronghold of **Cannon Hall/Cawthorne** and there were no records from sites in the **Calder or Colne Valleys**.

High numbers were reported post-breeding season at **Bretton Lakes** with a maximum of 11 birds on 15<sup>th</sup> December.

### TREECREEPER

*Certhia familiaris*

Resident breeder (2-3)

Perhaps partly as a result of the mention in last year's report of under-reporting of this species, there was an increase of 50% this year in the number of localities from which sightings were received. Although birds were present in the breeding season at 20 sites, reference to breeding was only made at nine of them.

Breeding was confirmed at **Bretton Lakes** where at least five males held territories and one was carrying nest material on 26<sup>th</sup> March, **Butternab Wood** where two pairs were feeding young in nests on 8<sup>th</sup> May, and **Royd House Wood** where an adult was carrying food on 22<sup>nd</sup> April. Elsewhere in the breeding season birds were at **Thunderbridge**, **New House Wood**, **Carr Wood** (present in three areas), **Stones Wood**, **Horbury Wyke**, **Storches Hall Woods**, **Cliff Wood Langsett**, **Langsett Banks**, **Swinden Plantation**, **Woodsome Lees**, **Molly Carr Wood**, **Spring Wood Netherton**, **Silkstone SF**, **Cannon Hall**, **Penny Spring Wood**, **Longwood Valley**, **Dogley** and **Eastergate Marsden**.

Outside the breeding season records came from **Lockwood** (2 sites), **Blackmoorfoot**, **Taylor Hill**, **Beaumont Park**, **Royd Moor Res.**, **Digley Bottom**, **Big Valley**, **Ingbirchworth**, **New Mill**, **Hinchliffe Mill**, **Stubbin Clough** and the **Grimescar Valley**.

Max. numbers reported were five at **Langsett Res.** on 5<sup>th</sup> February and up to six at **Bretton** in December.

### JAY

*Garrulus glandarius*

Resident breeder (2)

This species is still going largely unreported, especially with regard to its breeding status. Confirmed breeding was recorded at just one site, **Langsett Banks**, where at least four pairs bred.

The majority of records were in the early months of the year, several sites having up to three birds, but seven were at **Berry Brow** on 16<sup>th</sup> March and up to seven in **Stones Wood**, **Stocks Moor** on 19<sup>th</sup> March. **Blackmoorfoot** had birds in every month, especially in August, with a max. of four on 11<sup>th</sup>. This year, unusually, there were few reports in the autumn period when birds are normally Ringstone

**JAY**            *Garrulus glandarius*

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This year, unusually, there were few reports in the autumn period when birds are normally conspicuous as they store food for the winter months, although one was watched burying an item at the roadside near **Kirkburton** on 23<sup>rd</sup> September.

Birds were reported visiting gardens at **Hinchliffe Mill, New Mill** and **Shelley** as well as the bird-table at **Dewsbury St** again.

**MAGPIE**        *Pica pica*

Resident breeder (4-5)

Few reports were received of this very common species, but up to 10 were observed at a "Magpie wedding" in early spring at **Shelley**, a loose flock of 43 was in a single field at **Carlecotes** on 26<sup>th</sup> February and 13 were together at **Lepton** on 29<sup>th</sup> February.

A sizeable roost was discovered at **Greenside** between Wakefield Road and Almondbury, but no counts were made.

**JACKDAW**        *Corvus monedula*

Resident breeder (4)

Again, little information was received.

Flight lines of hundreds of birds going to roost with Rooks were observed over **Shelley** and **Dalton** and c.500 flew over **Wooddale** at 1830 hrs. on 22<sup>nd</sup> March. At **Marsden** 120+ roosted through both winter periods and flocks of up to 50 were regular at **New Mill**.

At **Hinchliffe Mill** birds were present all year and nested in local chimneys, while a minimum of six pairs bred around **Langsett Res.**, where c.50 roosted from 12<sup>th</sup> to 23<sup>rd</sup> September at least.

Birds were noted moving over **Harden**, where the species is irregular, on 1<sup>st</sup> October (one north) and 5<sup>th</sup> October (three south and nine west).

**ROOK**            *Corvus frugilegus*

Resident breeder (5)

Very few records were submitted.

Nest counts at rookeries were nine at **Crosland Moor**, c.50 at **Lower Stones Wood** and c.25 at **Gynn Lane, Honley**. At **New Mill** one pair attempted to nest in isolation in an ash tree, but moved to the large rookery in the village. At least four occupied nests were sited on an electricity pylon at **Fullshaw**.

The only winter flocks reported were 100 in fields at **New Mill** and c.200 at **Brockholes** in January.

**CARRION CROW**        *Corvus corone*

Resident breeder (4)

Very common in all habitats throughout the area, but the only records received were of one on a nest at **Winscar** on 15<sup>th</sup> April and a bird at **Kirkheaton** on 3<sup>rd</sup> October which had much white in the wings, including the greater coverts.

**RAVEN**     *Corvus corax*

The amazing increase in sightings of this species continued, with reports in all months and from 20 locations, although none referred to breeding which nevertheless probably took place. Observations were most frequent in the **Harden/Winscar** and **Langsett** areas, with a significant increase in the **Ingbirchworth** area.

**Langsett** – two at Langsett Res. on 2<sup>nd</sup> September heralded unprecedented numbers later in the month. On 16<sup>th</sup> September 24 roosted with other corvids, mainly Jackdaws, at Midhope Cliff/Thickwoods after flying up the valley, then on 17<sup>th</sup> a record Yorkshire total of 32 birds was counted as they flew up the valley and over the dam wall to roost higher up the Little Don Valley. These numbers were not repeated, but 18 were present on 23<sup>rd</sup> September, nine on 31<sup>st</sup> October, eight on 3<sup>rd</sup> November, five on 13<sup>th</sup> December, then up to four regularly to the year end (MCW,SG,BBSG).

**Harden/Winscar** – regularly sighted at Harden in all months, usually one or two birds, but three in May and up to eight daily in September (MC). One flew NW at Windle Edge on 24<sup>th</sup> March (DHP). On 29<sup>th</sup>/30<sup>th</sup> April a pair was working Harden Edge, Sand Ridge Moss and Tinker Hill on foot, possibly searching for Curlew nests, and were divebombed throughout by Curlews. On 22<sup>nd</sup> September seven flew west – were they Langsett birds or possible migrants? On 14<sup>th</sup> October eight birds appeared to come from the Langsett roost in the morning, returning in the evening (MC). Nearby a juv. was on a fence post at **Townhead** on 20<sup>th</sup> August (BBSG).

**Ingbirchworth area** – two were at **Upper Denby** on 16<sup>th</sup> March (TM), at least two flew over **Windmill Lane** and were later near Broadstones Res. on 30<sup>th</sup> August (BA,DM), one flew SE over **Ingbirchworth Res.** on 13<sup>th</sup> October (RJB) and one over **Spicer House Lane** on 22<sup>nd</sup> October (BBSG).

**Wessenden/Deer Hill/Marsden area** – five at **Deer Hill** on 30<sup>th</sup> and two calling and displaying there on 31<sup>st</sup> March. Three were together at **Wessenden Head** on 1<sup>st</sup> April and one flew over, mobbed by Carrion Crows, on 16<sup>th</sup> May. One flew over **West Nab** towards Digley on 26<sup>th</sup> December, when a pair was also in the **Wessenden Valley** being mobbed by a Peregrine; probably this was the same pair seen at **Deer Hill** on 30<sup>th</sup> December. Two were at **Marsden GC** on 12<sup>th</sup> September and one at **Pule Hill** on 1<sup>st</sup> October (DMP,SP,KW,BA,DM,JMP,DWB).

**Yateholme area** – singles on 25<sup>th</sup> March and 30<sup>th</sup> April and regular from August onwards (HQ,GBS,MC). One was nearby at **Cartworth Moor** on 19<sup>th</sup> April (HQ).

**Buckstones** – one, a dull bird probably reared the previous year, on 31<sup>st</sup> March (JED).

**Dovestones** – one feeding on a dead sheep on 7<sup>th</sup> April, two on 27<sup>th</sup> October (SRG,JED,JMD).

**Black Hill** – one on 24<sup>th</sup> August (HQ).

**Ringstone Edge Res.** – two flew over on 27<sup>th</sup> August (HBC).

**Skelmanthorpe** – one flew over on 30<sup>th</sup> November (JMD).

Edge Res. – two flew over on 27<sup>th</sup> August (HBC).

Skelmanthorpe – one flew over on 30<sup>th</sup> November (JMD).

### STARLING

#### *Sturnus vulgaris*

Resident breeder (5) and numerous winter visitor

Few records were forthcoming and none to give any indication of the breeding status of the species, which is probably in decline. Several counts, mainly of winter gatherings, were received.

In January there were 300 in **Dearne Dike Lane** on 1<sup>st</sup> and at **Scammonden** 80 on 3<sup>rd</sup> and 100+ on 15<sup>th</sup>, followed in February by 150 at **Royd Moor** on 20<sup>th</sup>.

In June c.30, all juvs., were at **Harden Edge** on 5<sup>th</sup> and at least 850, including many juvs., at **Whitley Common** on 7<sup>th</sup>.

In autumn c.500, again mainly juvs., were at **Gilbert Hill, Langsett** on 25<sup>th</sup> September and increased to c.2000 from 25<sup>th</sup> October to mid-November. Flocks of c.2000 on 10<sup>th</sup> and c.3000 on 12<sup>th</sup> November at **Hartcliff Hill** were presumably the same as the Langsett birds. From late November to December a pre-roost gathering in the last hour of daylight in the **Lindley Moor** area usually numbered 300 to 500, but reached c.1000 on 15<sup>th</sup> November.

V.m.w. at **Harden** produced 23 south on 13<sup>th</sup> September and in October 16 SE on 1<sup>st</sup>, one north on 8<sup>th</sup>, 29 west on 14<sup>th</sup> and six WNW on 19<sup>th</sup>, with 110 WNW on 4<sup>th</sup> November.

### HOUSE SPARROW

#### *Passer domesticus*

Resident breeder (5)

More records were received than usual and some of the numbers involved give rise to optimism in view of the species' recent perceived decline.

The only breeding records were from **Langsett** village, where at least five pairs bred, and from **Townhead**, where the presence of a pair on 5<sup>th</sup> June was decidedly uncommon.

The species was described as plentiful in the **Denby Dale/Skelmanthorpe** area and flocks were reported from the following locations – **Almondbury** 15-25 all year in the Benomley area, **Dalton** 60+ coming to a garden feeding station in Kelvin Avenue and c.20 at a second site, near **Castle Hill** up to 20 regularly, **Lumb Lane** up to 30 present, **Shelley** up to 30 in the post-breeding period and an increase on previous years, **Lockwood** 12 in April, **New Mill** up to 20 daily in a garden with young in May/June, **Ossett** c.100 in Healey Road on stubble on 9<sup>th</sup> July and at **Hall Bower** 60 to 70 on 14<sup>th</sup> September.

### TREE SPARROW

#### *Passer montanus*

Resident breeder (1)

A rather more encouraging picture emerged this year. Although fewer records were received, breeding was confirmed at three sites and probably occurred at two others.

**Emley** – 11 birds were at a garden feeding station on 17<sup>th</sup> April. Two pairs bred in boxes erected in a hedgerow and between them raised five broods of six young; up to 30 birds were feeding in the same garden in the post-breeding season (S.Horrocks).

**Denby Dale** – one pair was nesting on 9<sup>th</sup> May (TM).

**Castle Dam, Penistone** – a pair bred and was feeding four fledged young on 24<sup>th</sup> June (BBSG).

**Horbury SF** – a small flock of six to 15 birds was present nearby throughout the year (JRS).

**Almondbury** – small numbers (up to c.12) were present at a garden feeding station in Lumb Lane in the early months and later in the year, but a report of 40 feeding in an adjacent uncut barley crop after the cold weather snap on 29<sup>th</sup> December was totally unexpected and most welcome (SRG,BA,DHP et al). The species is presumably breeding successfully somewhere in the vicinity.

**Scout Dike** – the highest counts were in the proximity of Belle Royd Farm, with max. of 15 on 9<sup>th</sup> September and 16 on 17<sup>th</sup> December (BBSG).

**Coxley Valley** – one on 15<sup>th</sup> April (DHP).

**Lepton** – one feeding at the roadside on 22<sup>nd</sup> May flew off towards Whitley Willows, where there is plenty of suitable breeding habitat (BA).

**Marsden** – at least two were at Bank Bottom Mills on 17<sup>th</sup> December (JMP).

On the downside, there were no sightings this year of the species at **Dewsbury SF**, where up to 14 birds were present on ten dates in 1999. A possible reason is disturbance due to ongoing construction work, but the true reason could be more ominous.

#### **CHAFFINCH**      *Fringilla coelebs*

Resident breeder (5) and winter visitor

Very common as a breeding species throughout the area wherever there is suitable habitat. Of the few records received, several related to birds visiting gardens and involved young birds.

Reports of autumn/winter flocks came from **Scammonden** with c.25 on 10<sup>th</sup> September, **Bretton Lakes** where in December 50+ feeding under beeches on 3<sup>rd</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> increased to 80+ from 23<sup>rd</sup> to 31<sup>st</sup> and **Silkstone** where c.300 were feeding on plough on 9<sup>th</sup> December.

Visible migration at **Harden** produced two on 24<sup>th</sup> September (when 30 were held up in foggy conditions nearby at **Holme Styes**), four SSE on 27<sup>th</sup> September, 11 on 28<sup>th</sup> September, one SW in very foggy conditions on 30<sup>th</sup> September; in October 26 S/SE on 1<sup>st</sup>, 15 W/WSW on 5<sup>th</sup>, 11 on 8<sup>th</sup>, five on 9<sup>th</sup>, five west on 14<sup>th</sup> and eight on 19<sup>th</sup>, with 22 on 4<sup>th</sup> and 95 on 5<sup>th</sup> November.

#### **BRAMBLING**      *Fringilla montifringilla*

Uncommon to common winter visitor

Only two sizeable flocks were present in the area, both in the early months, and birds were very scarce in the second winter period, especially in December, with only one flock exceeding 10 birds. Present in the early months between 1<sup>st</sup> January and 24<sup>th</sup> April and at the year end from 6<sup>th</sup> October. In the first winter period the highest count was c.100 in fields to the east of **Bullcliff Wood** on 8<sup>th</sup> January (via MB). 60-70 birds fed on sunflower seeds in an **Almondbury** garden in January, gradually reducing to c.40 in March and to c.30 on 16<sup>th</sup> April (KH) and c.20 remained from 1999 to at least 10<sup>th</sup> April at **Ravensthorpe**. Birds were present in a Lougwood garden, again feeding on sunflower seeds, from 1<sup>st</sup> January to the last on 24<sup>th</sup> April and peaked at 21 (PDB). Apart from 12 at **Cubley** on 1<sup>st</sup> January, c.20 at **Bretton** on 4<sup>th</sup> January and 14 at **Royd Moor** on 20<sup>th</sup> February no other counts reached double figures. Other sightings were a male at **Denby Dale** on 1<sup>st</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> January, a male at **Shepley** from 9<sup>th</sup> to 19<sup>th</sup> and on 26<sup>th</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup> January, one at **Bradley Park GC** on 26<sup>th</sup> January, 4+ in a **Shelley** garden from 29<sup>th</sup> January to mid-April, in February three on 3<sup>rd</sup> and eight on 6<sup>th</sup> near **Penny Spring Wood**, a female at **Taylor Hill** on 10<sup>th</sup>, one at **Bretton Lakes** on 14<sup>th</sup>, four in **Holmfirth** on 22<sup>nd</sup> and one near **Broadstones** on 24<sup>th</sup>. There were just two sightings of single birds in March, at **Penistone** on 6<sup>th</sup> and a male in the **Coxley Valley** on 21<sup>st</sup>. In April three on 1<sup>st</sup> and eight on 9<sup>th</sup> at **Cubley**, a male at **Hinchliffe Mill** occasionally from 2<sup>nd</sup> to 18<sup>th</sup>, a male at **Inghirchworth** on 8<sup>th</sup> and one at **Wooldale** on 18<sup>th</sup>.

The first returning birds appeared at **Harden** on 5<sup>th</sup> October and **Castle Dam** (3) and **Blackmoorfoot** on 6<sup>th</sup>, followed by one over **Langsett** on 13<sup>th</sup> when three males were at **Bretton**; this last site also had c.5 on 14<sup>th</sup>, c.10 on 21<sup>st</sup> and at least six on 26<sup>th</sup>. One at **Marsden GC** on 22<sup>nd</sup> provided the only other October record. Later, 20+ were in the same **Longwood** garden in early November as the birds at the start of the year, one flew south at **Harden** on 5<sup>th</sup> November, two on 6<sup>th</sup> and one at

**Blackmoorfoot** on 30<sup>th</sup> November, six at **Castle Dam** on 10<sup>th</sup> November, five on 11<sup>th</sup> November and four on 27<sup>th</sup> December at **Bretton Lakes**, at least two in **Windmill Lane** on 13<sup>th</sup> November. Four were at **Bradley Park GC** on 1<sup>st</sup> December, up to three regularly in December at **Meltham**, a male at **Storthes Hall** on 29<sup>th</sup> December and one in the **Grimescar Valley** on 30<sup>th</sup> December.

During the year birds visited gardens where food had been provided at **Cubley**, **Shepley**, **Shelley**, **Almondbury**, **Taylor Hill**, **Wooldale**, **Meltham**, **Longwood**, **Hinchliffe Mill** and **Penistone**.

### **GREENFINCH**      *Carduelis chloris*

Resident breeder (4)

Common throughout the area, but little evidence was submitted relating to the breeding season, apart from at least three pairs nesting in **Langsett** village, at least three males holding territories at **Langsett Banks**, a pair raising up to three broods at **Shelley** and juvs. in a **New Mill** garden from 24<sup>th</sup> June.

Counts outside the breeding season were as follows – at **Blackmoorfoot** the roost on the west bank held max. of 100+ on 1<sup>st</sup> and 80 on 17<sup>th</sup> January and 75+ on 16<sup>th</sup> December, **Royd Moor Res.** max. 23 on 8<sup>th</sup> January and 19<sup>th</sup> October and a flock of c.50 on 27<sup>th</sup> December, **Shepley** 20+ in **Jos Lane** on 14<sup>th</sup> March, **Dewsbury SF** had very high numbers feeding on adjacent stubble in the post-breeding period, 120 on 12<sup>th</sup> July increasing to 250 on 24<sup>th</sup> July and 450 on 20<sup>th</sup> August, reducing to 150 on 23<sup>rd</sup> August, **Ingbirchworth** area 34 on 12<sup>th</sup> August and c.45 on 5<sup>th</sup> November at the reservoir with c.20 in **Spicer House Lane** on 19<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup> October and c.50 in **Annat Royd Lane** in mid-November, **Scammonden** 35-40 on 10<sup>th</sup> September, **Hartcliff Hill** a flock of c.250 on 12<sup>th</sup> November, **Shelley** up to 50 at a garden feeding station at the year end.

Small numbers were also reported from gardens at **Hinchliffe Mill** and **Ravensthorpe**.

V.m.w. at **Harden** produced the following – one SW on 22<sup>nd</sup> September, one SSE on 27<sup>th</sup> September; in October two south on 1<sup>st</sup>, one south on 14<sup>th</sup> and 10 on 19<sup>th</sup> then three on 4<sup>th</sup> and two south on 5<sup>th</sup> November.

### **GOLDFINCH**      *Carduelis carduelis*

Partial migrant breeder (2-3)

Remains widespread in the area with reports from almost 40 localities, but mainly in single figures, with fewer and smaller flocks than in some recent years. The largest flocks reported were all in September and probably indicated a successful breeding season, although actual breeding reports were very few.

Juvenile birds, probably raised nearby, were at **Horbury Wyke** on 6<sup>th</sup> July, in **Sharpe Lane**, **Almondbury** on 24<sup>th</sup> July, **Scout Dike** on 26<sup>th</sup> July and at **New Mill** in August. Pairs or singing males were also recorded at **Bretton Lakes**, (4+), **Denby Dale**, **Gunthwaite Dam**, **Broadstones**, **Scammonden** s (4-5 pairs), **Dalton**, **Ravensthorpe**, **Penny Spring Wood**, **Kirkheaton**, **Royd Moor**, **Gawthorpe Green**, **Jackson Bridge**, **Winscar**, **Aspley** and **Dewsbury SF** and doubtless bred at many of these sites as well as at others which went unreported.

Gardens in many areas were visited, usually in single figures, but c.30 in a **Cubley** garden on 1<sup>st</sup> January and up to 13 at **Shelley** in December were good counts.

The largest flocks reported were at **Bretton Lakes** – c.30 on 27<sup>th</sup> August and 3<sup>rd</sup> September, **Ingbirchworth** – c.50 on 10<sup>th</sup> and c.70 on 26<sup>th</sup> September, **Scout Dike** – c.60 on 10<sup>th</sup> September, **Cumberworth Lane** – 20+ on 18<sup>th</sup> September, **Winscar** – c.20 on 23<sup>rd</sup> and 44+ on 24<sup>th</sup> September, **Elland GPs** – c.20 on 28<sup>th</sup> November. **Blackmoorfoot** had birds in all months except February and December, but with no more than four on any day.

At **Harden** numbers on v.m.w. in September were 17 SW on 13<sup>th</sup>, 14 WSW on 16<sup>th</sup>, six north on

23<sup>rd</sup>, seven on 27<sup>th</sup>, 41 (possibly the Winscar birds) on 28<sup>th</sup>; in October 33 on 1<sup>st</sup>, four west on 5<sup>th</sup>, five north and eight SW on 8<sup>th</sup>, six on 9<sup>th</sup>, three north on 14<sup>th</sup> and three on 19<sup>th</sup>.

**SISKIN**                      *Carduelis spinus*

Resident breeder (1) and winter visitor

A sparse breeder in upland conifer plantations, this species is most often reported from garden feeding stations in small numbers in spring and in larger numbers from its favoured sites of **Bretton Lakes** and **Elland GPs** in winter.

**Bretton Lakes** – an excellent flock of c.100 on 4<sup>th</sup> January and “several” on 6<sup>th</sup> February were the only reports in the early months, but recorded much more frequently in the second half of the year. After one on 27<sup>th</sup> August, there were up to 60 from mid-October, c.100 on 9<sup>th</sup> and c.25 on 11<sup>th</sup> November, c.50 on 16<sup>th</sup> December, then two flocks totalling c.200 birds feeding under alders on 23<sup>rd</sup> December. **Shelley** – a female on 5<sup>th</sup> January, with numbers increasing to five on 4<sup>th</sup> April and the last departing in mid-month.

**Taylor Hill** – a male on 19<sup>th</sup> and a female on 26<sup>th</sup> January, male and female on 18<sup>th</sup> March and 29<sup>th</sup> April.

**Penny Spring Wood** – two feeding in an adjacent garden on 2<sup>nd</sup> February.

**Dewsbury SF** – one on 3<sup>rd</sup>/4<sup>th</sup> March.

**Penistone** – one on a garden feeder on 6<sup>th</sup> March.

**Lockwood** – a pair on feeders on 7<sup>th</sup> March.

**Hinchliffe Mill** – several on feeders from 5<sup>th</sup> March to late May and a male on 17<sup>th</sup> July.

**New Mill** – two males on 11<sup>th</sup> March, one the following week then male and female to 1<sup>st</sup> April.

**Shepley** – two on 22<sup>nd</sup> March.

**Langsett Banks** – two pairs bred.

**Langsett Res.** – at least six pairs bred. c.10 on 23<sup>rd</sup> December.

**Little Don Valley** – at least four pairs bred above Brookhouse Bridge, with 2+ pairs in Swinden Plantation. Six on 12<sup>th</sup> May.

**Yateholme area** – a pair and a small party on 25<sup>th</sup> March, several pairs near the car park, with 3+ singing males, on 7<sup>th</sup> April, at least four on 23<sup>rd</sup> May, calls heard on 1<sup>st</sup> August and c.20 present on 24<sup>th</sup> September.

**Holme Styes** – three birds including a singing male on 30<sup>th</sup> April and four flew E/SE on 24<sup>th</sup> September.

**Blackmoorfoot** – singles on 18<sup>th</sup> July and 10<sup>th</sup> November.

**Scammonden** – 12 moved slowly west, feeding in alders, on 17<sup>th</sup> September.

**Marsden** – three flew west on 23<sup>rd</sup> September.

**Harden** – two SSE on 27<sup>th</sup> September; in October four S/SE on 1<sup>st</sup>, two south on 5<sup>th</sup>, one west on 14<sup>th</sup> and in November six south on 5<sup>th</sup>.

**Holme Woods** – c.20 on 17<sup>th</sup> October.

**Silkstone SF** – c.50 on 9<sup>th</sup> December.

**Elland GPs** – up to 25 on 14<sup>th</sup> December.

**Gunthwaite Dam** – c.50 on 16<sup>th</sup> December.

**Millhouse Green** – c.50 on 20<sup>th</sup> December.

**LINNET**                      *Carduelis cannabina*

Partial migrant breeder (3)

Widespread through the area, but in decreasing numbers as suitable areas of breeding habitat disappear, particularly in suburban districts. Still reasonably common in rural and moorland fringe areas. A

scarce species before March and after October. Can be surprisingly late in returning to breeding sites.

The only site from which birds were reported in the early months was **Jos Lane, Shepley** where there were 45 on 9<sup>th</sup> and at least 30 on 16<sup>th</sup> January feeding on weeds in a field of fodder beet. Numbers had increased to 100 by 21<sup>st</sup> April, wintering birds having been joined presumably by returning local breeders. At least one pair later remained to nest.

The first returning birds elsewhere were at **Shelley** on 21<sup>st</sup> March, building up to 20 by mid-April, at **Broadstones Lodge** on 22<sup>nd</sup> March and then no more were reported until April when c.30 were at **Royd Moor** on 8<sup>th</sup>, c.15 at **Ravensthorpe** on 10<sup>th</sup>, a max. of 13 above **New Mill** on 26<sup>th</sup>, a small flock at **Holme Styes** on 28<sup>th</sup> and small numbers just returning to **Lindley Moor** on 29<sup>th</sup>/30<sup>th</sup>.

Breeding evidence in the form of adults feeding fledged young was obtained at **Lindley Moor** and **Harden** and additional pairs were located at **Farnley Tyas** (4), **Longwood Valley** (10), **New House Wood, Horbury** (2+), **Winscar, Kirkheaton** (2), **Lepton** (5), **Clayton West** (5), **Shepley** (1+), **New Mill** (5), **Shelley** (6), **Holme Styes** (1+), **Broadstones Lodge** (c.20 birds on 9<sup>th</sup> May), **Wessenden, Castle Hill, Scout Dike** and singing males at **Skelmanthorpe** and **Lower Cumberworth**. Other breeding season sightings were made at **Lindley, Golcar, Deer Hill** and **Ingbirchworth**. On 20<sup>th</sup> June 38 birds in the vicinity of **Longwood Common** would suggest local breeding and family parties joining together.

Post-breeding season numbers were highest near **Dewsbury SF** where 200 were on stubble on 28<sup>th</sup> July, increasing to 300 on 15<sup>th</sup> and 350 on 17<sup>th</sup> August then reducing to 200 on 24<sup>th</sup> August and 1<sup>st</sup> September and finally to 47 on 8<sup>th</sup> October. Other flocks notified were c.70 in September below **Castle Hill**, 129 at **Whitley Edge** on 1<sup>st</sup> September, 50 at **Nettleton Hill** on 11<sup>th</sup> September, c.100 at **Ingbirchworth** on 23<sup>rd</sup> September, up to 25 at **Kirkheaton** to 28<sup>th</sup> September and c.90 at **Royd Moor** on 8<sup>th</sup> October.

Migration was noted at **Harden** from 16<sup>th</sup> September when 38 moved S/SW with 58, including a flock of c.40 SW on 22<sup>nd</sup>, two SSE on 27<sup>th</sup> and in October 14 SE on 1<sup>st</sup>, four NNW on 5<sup>th</sup>, four on 8<sup>th</sup> and two on 19<sup>th</sup>, the last of the year there.

## **TWITE** *Carduelis flavirostris*

Partial migrant breeder (1-2)

The catastrophic decline of this species in England has been reflected in numbers locally, although we are fortunate to be one of the few areas where this species can still be found. Only about 250 pairs remain in the South Pennines; the problem is not loss of breeding habitat of which there is an abundance, but loss of hay meadows on which the adults forage for seeds to feed their young. The provision and protection of these feeding habitats is vital and probably the key to the survival of the species in the area.

No reports were received of successful breeding, but other evidence would suggest that nesting did occur and birds were present in the breeding season in several suitable sites. The species was present in the area between 18<sup>th</sup> March and 14<sup>th</sup> October at least.

**Digley** – two on 18<sup>th</sup> March, six on 3<sup>rd</sup> July (TM).

**Winscar/Harden** – two over **Harden** on 8<sup>th</sup> April and a pair feeding on the grassy **Winscar Res.** embankment on 7<sup>th</sup> May. Seven on a wall at **Harden** on 4<sup>th</sup> July included suspected juveniles and v.m.w. there produced three S/SE on 1<sup>st</sup> and single birds on 8<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> October (MC).

**Holme Styes/Hlade Edge** – one on 8<sup>th</sup> April, 2+ feeding in fields on 21<sup>st</sup> May, four at the roadside on 10<sup>th</sup> June and two on wires on 1<sup>st</sup> August (HQ,MC,BA,DM).

**Blackmoorfoot** – 27 in fields to the west on 10<sup>th</sup> April (MLD).

**Wessenden Valley** – two on 10<sup>th</sup> April and 2<sup>nd</sup> May, at least three on 14<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> May, present also

on 16<sup>th</sup> June and probably bred in the upper valley. A mixed finch flock feeding in hay meadows above Butterley Res. on 3<sup>rd</sup> July contained 45 of this species and at least four were still present there on 1<sup>st</sup> August (KW, TM, BA, DM).

**Buckstones** – a pair alongside the main A640 road on 26<sup>th</sup> April (JED).

**Snailsden** – two on 12<sup>th</sup> May (GBS).

**Ringstone Edge Res.** – one on the dam wall on 12<sup>th</sup> May (DHP).

**Deer Hill Res.** – two on 15<sup>th</sup> May, 11 nearby on 20<sup>th</sup> August and five on 13<sup>th</sup> September (KW, DMP).

**Rishworth Moor** – one singing male on 19<sup>th</sup> June and two nearby at Booth Dam Quarry on 15<sup>th</sup> July (SRG, DHP).

**March Haigh Res.** – six on 20<sup>th</sup> June (TM).

**Marsden** – one on 3<sup>rd</sup> July and at least six throughout October on Pule Hill (TM, JMP).

**Krumlin** – five feeding at the roadside on 30<sup>th</sup> September.

**It is vital that every sighting of this species is reported in future years.**

### LESSER REDPOLL *Carduelis cabaret*

Partial migrant breeder (2) and winter visitor

A rather better year for this species and although breeding was confirmed at one site, probably occurred in at least one other. only

None were present in the early months until 12<sup>th</sup> March but good numbers were at **Bretton** at the year end.

**Bretton Lakes** – the only spring report was of three birds at the western end on 12<sup>th</sup> March. At the end of the year birds were present from at least 9<sup>th</sup> November when c.30 were feeding under Birch and Alder, with 20 remaining to the year end.

**Winscar/Harden** – four flew over Winscar on 22<sup>nd</sup> March, one present on 8<sup>th</sup> then c.10 on 29<sup>th</sup> April accompanied by much song.

At least five males were singing on 7<sup>th</sup> May. A minimum of four bred and a flock of at least 25 birds on 5<sup>th</sup> June probably represented a successful season. Birds were present to 27<sup>th</sup> June at least. Additional birds flew over Sandridge Moss on 19<sup>th</sup> April and over Harden three SE on 30<sup>th</sup> September, a probable migrant grounded on 5<sup>th</sup> October and one on 8<sup>th</sup>, four on 9<sup>th</sup>, one on 14<sup>th</sup> October, one on 4<sup>th</sup> and two on 5<sup>th</sup> November all flying south. pairs  
a successful  
flew over  
September, a

**New Mill** – two in a garden on 18<sup>th</sup> March.

**Dunford Bridge Cycle Track** – three on 27<sup>th</sup> March and one on 29<sup>th</sup> April.

**Digley** – six birds on 8<sup>th</sup> April were probably on passage.

**Ingbirchworth Res.** – a max. of six on 22<sup>nd</sup> April.

**Blackmoorfoot Res.** – singles on 28<sup>th</sup> April, 13<sup>th</sup> October and 30<sup>th</sup> November.

**Holme Styes/Hade Edge** – a pair and a second male on 7<sup>th</sup> May, several calling on both 20<sup>th</sup> May and 15<sup>th</sup> July and up to 10 on 17<sup>th</sup> June and 23<sup>rd</sup> July. Probably bred.

**Denby Dale** – heard calling regularly.

**Dewsbury SF** – three flew over on 23<sup>rd</sup> August.

**Shepley** – singles present on 3<sup>rd</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> October, with one or two calling regularly on other dates.

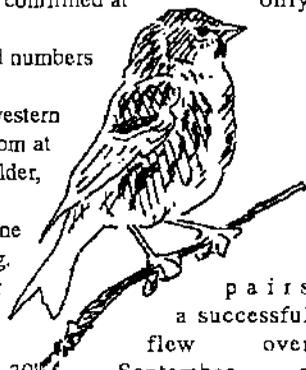
**Royd Moor Res.** – a max. of eight on 19<sup>th</sup> October.

**Shelley** – six on 28<sup>th</sup> November.

**Elland GPs** – at least one with Siskins on 14<sup>th</sup> December.

**Langsett Res.** – eight on 23<sup>rd</sup> December.

Birds were also heard at **Dovestones Res.** but no dates given.



**MEALY REDPOLL**      *Carduelis flammea*

Rare winter visitor

**Elland GPs** – at least eight in Willows on 20<sup>th</sup> and 12 in Alders near Cromwell Lake on 22<sup>nd</sup> March (JED,DM).

**Meltham SF** – a large, pale bird with a very conspicuous wingbar on 29<sup>th</sup> December was very probably this species (DHP)

**COMMON CROSSBILL**      *Loxia curvirostra*

Irregular breeder (1) and uncommon passage visitor

Breeding occurred on the southern boundary of our area and possibly at a second site.

**Langsett Res.** – one singing on 4<sup>th</sup> March in Thickwoods, where a family party was observed on 30<sup>th</sup> April. A male near Brookhouse Bridge on 27<sup>th</sup> March. Ten birds on 21<sup>st</sup> June and one flew in to roost at North America Wood on 20<sup>th</sup> December (BBSG).

**Scammonden** – loud calls were heard coming from conifers above the Sailing Club on 18<sup>th</sup> March but visual contact could not be made (JED).

**Yateholme** – at least three were seen on 1<sup>st</sup> and a female on 8<sup>th</sup> April and calls heard on 7<sup>th</sup> April (DMP,SP,KW,GBS); one seen and a second bird calling on 23<sup>rd</sup> May (BA).

**Thornton Lodge** – four flew west on 12<sup>th</sup> July (MLD).

**BULLFINCH**      *Pyrrhula pyrrhula*

Resident breeder (2-3)

From the number of records received, particularly in the summer months, it would appear that this species is in decline. Although reports again came from approximately 40 localities, only c.12 of these, compared with 28 in 1999, had breeding season records and confirmation of breeding was received from only one site, **Langsett Banks** where at least two pairs bred.

The vast majority of reports were of just one or two birds and mainly in the winter months. Exceptions to this were four at **Royd House Farm** on 1<sup>st</sup> May, seven at **Bretton Lakes** on 13<sup>th</sup> January and six there on 27<sup>th</sup> December, seven near **Penny Spring Wood** on 3<sup>rd</sup> February, five at **Blacker Wood** on 25<sup>th</sup> March, four at **Millbank Thornhill** on 20<sup>th</sup> October, six on the **Dunford Bridge Cycle Track** on 5<sup>th</sup> November, eight in **North America Wood** on 10<sup>th</sup> November and up to four at **Cowcliffe** in December and at **Shelley** in both winter periods.

Breeding season reports came from **Skelmanthorpe**, **Elland GPs**, **Deffer Wood**, **Almondbury**, **Scammonden**, **Hinchliffe Mill**, **Shelley**, **Waterlon**, **Emley**, **Denby Dale** and **Dalton**, with birds at other times of the year also at **Lockwood**, **Blackmoorfoot**, **New Mill**, **Windmill Lane**, **Krumlin**, **Scout Dike**, **Holme Styes**, **Liphill Brook**, **Thurstonland**, **Holmbridge**, **Digley**, **Boshaw Whams**, **Netherthong**, **Grimescar**, **Horbury Wyke**, **Golcar**, **Taylor Hill**, **Royd Moor Res.**, **Carr Wood** and **Gawthorpe Green**.

All records of this species would be appreciated for future reports.

**HAWFINCH**      *Coccothraustes coccothraustes*

Resident, probable breeder (1)

After a blank year in 1999, it is encouraging to report a good series of records from the species' favoured site, **Bretton Lakes**, where it is highly likely that breeding occurred.

A male was seen on 6<sup>th</sup> July (BBSG) with the next reported sighting not until 21<sup>st</sup> October when, of two birds on the south side of the lower lake, one was a juv. with spotty underparts and a plain head. They were feeding in Beech trees (DHP). One was present on 1<sup>st</sup> November, then at least two,

possibly three, on 2<sup>nd</sup> December, a male and a female/immature on 3<sup>rd</sup>, three on 6<sup>th</sup> and then up to three to the year end (DMP,SP,KW,BA et al).

**SNOW BUNTING** *Plectrophenax nivalis*

Rare winter visitor

At **Harden** one flew SSE on 27<sup>th</sup> September and one south on 4<sup>th</sup> October (MC).

A bird flying over **Kirkheaton** calling on 3<sup>rd</sup> October was almost certainly this species (BA).

**LAPLAND BUNTING** *Calcarius lapponicus*

Rare winter visitor

One flew over **Wessenden Head** calling on 10<sup>th</sup> January (JMP). The 9<sup>th</sup> record for the area.

**YELLOWHAMMER** *Emberiza citrinella*

Resident breeder (3) and partial migrant

Fairly widespread generally except in the western parts of the area, where the species is distinctly uncommon. Reported from only 23 sites compared with 35 in 1999, with the highest concentrations again in the **Broadstones/Ingbirchworth/Scout Dike/Royd Moor**, lower **Calder Valley** and **Castle Hill/Almondbury/Farnley/Thurstonland** areas as well as having a good population in the **Shepley/Skelmanthorpe/Shellay** district.

In the early months some good flocks were at **Ingbirchworth**, c.50 on 9<sup>th</sup> January, **Shepley** 30 on 15<sup>th</sup> January and **Lepton** c.70 on 29<sup>th</sup> February, the next highest count being eight at **Wheatroyd**, **Almondbury** on 9<sup>th</sup> February.

A minimum of 74 pairs/singing males was located but numbers were down at some key localities e.g. **Royd Moor** 5 breeding pairs (11 in 1999), **Scout Dike** 8 breeding territories (12 singing males in 1999), **Broadstones Lodge** 3 pairs, **Ingbirchworth** 2 singing males; at other sites **Castle Hill** had several males, **Royd House Farm** and **Ashes Lane** 1 pair each, **Farnley Tyas/Carr Wnood** 10+ pairs and 2 other singing males, **Horbury Bridge to Horbury Wyke** at least 12 singing males, **Ravensthorpe GPs** 1 pair, **Lepton** 2 pairs, **Skelmanthorpe** area 6 singing males, **Shepley** 8 pairs, **Denby Dale** 3 pairs, **Clayton West** 4 pairs, **Gunthwaite Dam** 1 pair, **New Mill** 3 pairs and **Elland Lowfields and Drop Clough** 1 singing male each. A male in song at **Elysium** above **Hade Edge** on 11<sup>th</sup>/12<sup>th</sup> June was unusual.

With the exception of 75 at **Shepley** on 31<sup>st</sup> December numbers were relatively low at the end of the year, with other max. of 14 at **Royd Moor** on 16<sup>th</sup> December, 12 at **Haigh** on 22<sup>nd</sup> December and 20+ in **Lumb Lane, Almondbury** on 29<sup>th</sup> December.

None were recorded on v.m.w. at **Harden**.

**LITTLE BUNTING** *Emberiza pusilla*

Rare visitor

The bird first seen in December 1999 was relocated and enabled positive identification on 15<sup>th</sup> January, after which it remained in the area off **Jos Lane, Shepley** until at least 10<sup>th</sup> April (TM). When not feeding on weeds between the rows of fodder beet it favoured roadside Hawthorns conveniently adjacent to a layby. During its stay it often proved very elusive, one observer not getting to grips with the bird until his fifth visit. It provided a source of enjoyment to many hundreds of birders during its stay. Thanks are due to the **Jos Lane** resident who regularly put out seed beneath the roadside bushes.

**REED BUNTING***Emberiza schoeniclus*

Resident breeder (2) and partial migrant

In what appears to have been a more encouraging year for the species a minimum of 63 pairs/singing males was located, with at least 24 pairs proved to have bred, mainly in the Ingbirchworth and Calder Valley areas.

No sizeable flocks were reported, maximum numbers being 10+ roosting in phragmites at Elland GPs on 3<sup>rd</sup> January, c.10 at Horbury Strands on 11<sup>th</sup> March and at Jos Lane, Shepley six on 20<sup>th</sup> January and 31<sup>st</sup> December.

In the Ingbirchworth area at least five pairs bred at Royd Moor Res., seven pairs at Scout Dike Res., two pairs at Broadstones and six pairs at Ingbirchworth Res., where there were 10 singing males on 9<sup>th</sup> April.

Two pairs bred at Dewsbury SF, producing five young which all fledged in late August, and at least one pair each at Horbury Wyke and Horbury Strands, probably considerably more as the Strands had eight males on territory on 6<sup>th</sup> July and the Wyke three males on territory on 16<sup>th</sup> July. Elsewhere in the Calder Valley there were four singing males at Henley, at least two at Ravenshorpe GPs and several birds at Elland GPs.

Single pairs were on territory at Digley Res., Harden Quarries and Harden Res., with two pairs and a third singing male at Scammonden. Additional singing males were at Winscar on 22<sup>nd</sup> April, later moving to Harden Edge and still in song on 10<sup>th</sup> June, Buckstones on 23<sup>rd</sup> April, Boshaw Whams on 10<sup>th</sup> June, Denby Dale on 16<sup>th</sup> June, Deer Hill on 16<sup>th</sup> June and 12<sup>th</sup> July, Upper Windleden Res. on 8<sup>th</sup> July and Wessenden on 17<sup>th</sup> July, with a male and a female at Blackmoorfoot on 6<sup>th</sup> May, a male on 16<sup>th</sup> May and 27<sup>th</sup> July but with no breeding activity observed. Birds were also present at Dunford Cycle Track on 27<sup>th</sup> March and 15<sup>th</sup> April (3) and at Ringstone Edge Res. on 19<sup>th</sup> July.

At Harden two flew north until out of sight on 7<sup>th</sup> April (?migrants) and in autumn v.m.w. produced two SW on 16<sup>th</sup>, four S/SW on 22<sup>nd</sup> and one on 27<sup>th</sup> September; in October 11 SE on 1<sup>st</sup>, one south on 5<sup>th</sup>, three south on 8<sup>th</sup>, three south on 9<sup>th</sup> and finally five on 19<sup>th</sup>.

**BLACK-HEADED BUNTING***Emberiza melanocephala*

Vagrant

*Addition to 1998 Report* -- one was present in a garden at Ainley Top on an unspecified date in May (Mrs. Morison). On the strength of a photograph submitted by the householder the record has been accepted by the BBRC. It was only the second Yorkshire record and a very welcome, if totally unexpected, addition to the Club's avifauna.

**CORN BUNTING***Miliaria calandra*

Rare visitor and former breeder

One spent 20 minutes from 0820 hrs. on 24<sup>th</sup> August in front of the hide at Dewsbury SF (JH). The first record since 1997 of this formerly common and widespread breeder.

**CO-ORDINATES OF LOCALITIES NAMED IN THE CLASSIFIED LIST**  
 (Use O.S.Landranger Series 110 – all Grid References prefixed by SE)

Almondbury	170155
Annat Royd Lane	211053
Appleyards,Golcar	101152
Armitage Bridge	130135
Aspley	151163
Bank Wood,Emley	263138
Banks Hall	282066
Bartin	091072
Beaumont Park	130147
Berry Brow	141138
Big Valley	130136
Bilberry Res.	102070
Bird's Edge	202077
Birkby	140183
Birks Moss	056078
Black Moss	040085
Blacker Wood	240111
Blackley Tip	102195
Blackmoorfoot Res.	098127
Booth Dam Quarry	018161
Boothroyd Wood	183118
Boshaw Whams	151057
Bradley	165205
Bradley Park GC	157207
Bretton Lakes	280127
Broadstones Lodge	200065
Broadstones Res.	195065
Brookhouse Bridge	198007
Brownhill Res.	114050
Brown's Edge	195058
Buckstones	010140
Bullcliff Wood	292152
Bunny Wood, Golcar	095173
Butterley Res.	050103
Cannon Hall	275085
Carlecotes	178034
Carr Wood	180133
Cartworth Moor	138060
Castle Dam,Penistone	255022
Castle Hill	152141
Cawthorne	285080

Cheesegate Nab	175065
Choppards	142064
Cinderhills	147075
Clayton West	260110
Cliff Wood,Langsett	215002
Clock Face Quarry	044173
Clough Wood	175114
Colne Valley	070140
Cooper Bridge	166206
Cowcliffe	139187
Coxley Bank	275168
Coxley Valley	271165
Cranberry	247008
Crosland Heath GC	110142
Crosland Hill	115145
Crosland Moor	120150
Crossley's Plantation	125050
Crow Edge	188046
Cubley	245023
Cupwith Res.	038141
Dalton	163162
Deanhead Res.	038152
Dearne Dike Lane	195075
Deer Hill Res.	070115
Deffer Wood	260090
Deighton	167191
Denby Dale	225084
Dewsbury SF	260198
Digley Bottom	115068
Digley Res.	107070
Dogley NR	187137
Dovestones Res.	018040
Drop Clough	048133
Dunford Bridge	158024
Eastergate,Marsden	029121
Edge Hill	235016
Elland GPs	125222
Elysium Fields	133055
Emley Moor	225135
Emley Tx	223130
Farnley Tyas	166128
Farnley Wood	164134

Featherbed Moss	044067
Fenay Beck	183152
Flight Hill	153042
Flockton	245151
Flouch Inn	198016
Folly Hall	142159
Ford Inn	114084
Fox Clough	136057
Fox Clough, Langsett	190066
Fox House Moss	165042
Fullshaw	210012
Gawthorpe Green	193168
Gilbert Hill	210007
Golcar	096160
Golcar Tip	104156
Grain's Moss	125025
Grange Moor	220160
Greenfield Road	103080
Green Gate Road	113080
Grimescar Valley	130190
Gunthwaite Dam	246062
Hade Edge	146053
Haigh	294120
Hall Bower	145140
Harden	153037
Harden Clough	144039
Harden Edge	158038
Harden Res.	150037
Hartcliff Hill	221017
Hazlehead	195028
Healey Greave Wood	198116
Healey House	115124
Healey Mills	268193
Helme	101118
Hepworth	164066
Highburton	193133
Hill Top Res.	074141
Hinchliffe Mill	127072
Hingcliff Common	194001
Holmbridge	120068
Holme	108060
Holme Styes	136054
Holme Styes Res.	141055

Holmfirth	143082
Honley	138118
Horbury Strands	288177
Horbury Wyke	297172
Hoylandswaine	265047
Huddersfield	145165
Ingbirchworth Res.	215060
Jackson Bridge	165075
Jenkinson Wood	184116
Kaye Lane	160147
King's Mill Lane	150161
Kirkburton	198128
Kirkheaton	185185
Krumlin	056183
Langsett	212005
Langsett Banks	205003
Langsett Res.	210031
Law	158047
Lepton	193157
Lepton Great Wood	195145
Lindley	120182
Lindley Moor	095185
Linthwaite	095145
Liphill Brook	129078
Litherop Lane	273123
Little Don Valley	195005
Lockwood	135152
Lockwood Brewery Dam	135150
Longwood	108167
Lower Cumberworth	223095
Lower Stones Wood	187106
Lower Windleden Res.	157017
Lowfields, Elland	117219
Lumb Lane	160140
Magdale Dam	135124
March Haigh Res.	015130
Margery Wood	275096
Marsden	045115
Marsh	125171
Maythorn	196057
McAlpine Stadium	155176
Mellor Wood	158144
Meltham Moor	080093

Meltham SF	112115
Middlestown	267172
Millbank, Thornhill	254195
Millhouse Green	218032
Millmoor, Meltham	088107
Milnsbridge	113158
Molly Carr Wood	160137
Mytholm Bridge	154102
Netherthong	139097
Netherton, Wkfld	283170
Nettleton Hill	094170
New House Wood	210082
New Mill	164088
Nont Sarah's	048152
Nopper Road	107135
Oakes	120174
Oldfield	136103
Orange Wood	102123
Ossett	280200
Outlane	085180
Oxygrains Beck	003159
Penistone	245033
Penny Spring Wood	160155
Pole Moor	067158
Pule Hill	033104
Ramsden Res.	115055
Ravensthorpe	222202
Ravensthorpe GPs	233202
Reynard Clough	136050
Riding Wood Res.	117050
Ringstone Edge Res.	050182
Roughbirchworth	264016
Round Wood	157101
Royd Edge	095097
Royd House Wood	162133
Royd Moor Res.	222048
Salendine Nook	105178
Sand Ridge Moss	158032
Scammonden	050160
Scout Dike Res.	233049
Shelley	204113
Shepley	193098

Shore Head	148166
Silkstone	290059
Silkstone SF	295065
Skelmanthorpe	233105
Slaithwaite	080140
Smith Wood	179115
Snailsden Moor	135035
Snailsden Res.	135040
South Crosland	135126
Sparth Res.	055125
Spicer House Lane	205055
Spring Wood	130124
Squirrel Ditch	152154
Stainland	077194
Stocksnoor Common	275152
Stoneycliffe Wood	270158
Storches Hall Woods	183118
Stubbin Clough	124072
Swinden Plantation	190002
Taylor Hill	135145
Thornton Lodge	135161
Thorpes	235095
Thunderbridge	188115
Thurstonland	165104
Tinker Hill	163048
Townhead	166028
Upper Cumberworth	210087
Upper Denby	238072
Upper Longdendale	095005
Upper Windleden Res.	152012
Victoria, Hepworth	178054
Waterloo	177166
Wessenden Head Res.	070075
Wessenden Valley	055088
West Nab	077088
West Slaithwaite	060132
West Wood, Honley	151123
Wetshaw Edge	147032
Whitegate Lane	128055
Whitley Common	192056
Whitley Willows	196166
Windle Edge	152017
Windleden Edge	142010
Windmill Lane	195072
Windybank Wood	112104
Winscar Res.	150025
Wood Nook	122106
Woodsome Lees	186134
Woodsome Road	185146
Wooldale	155090
Yateholme	115050

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