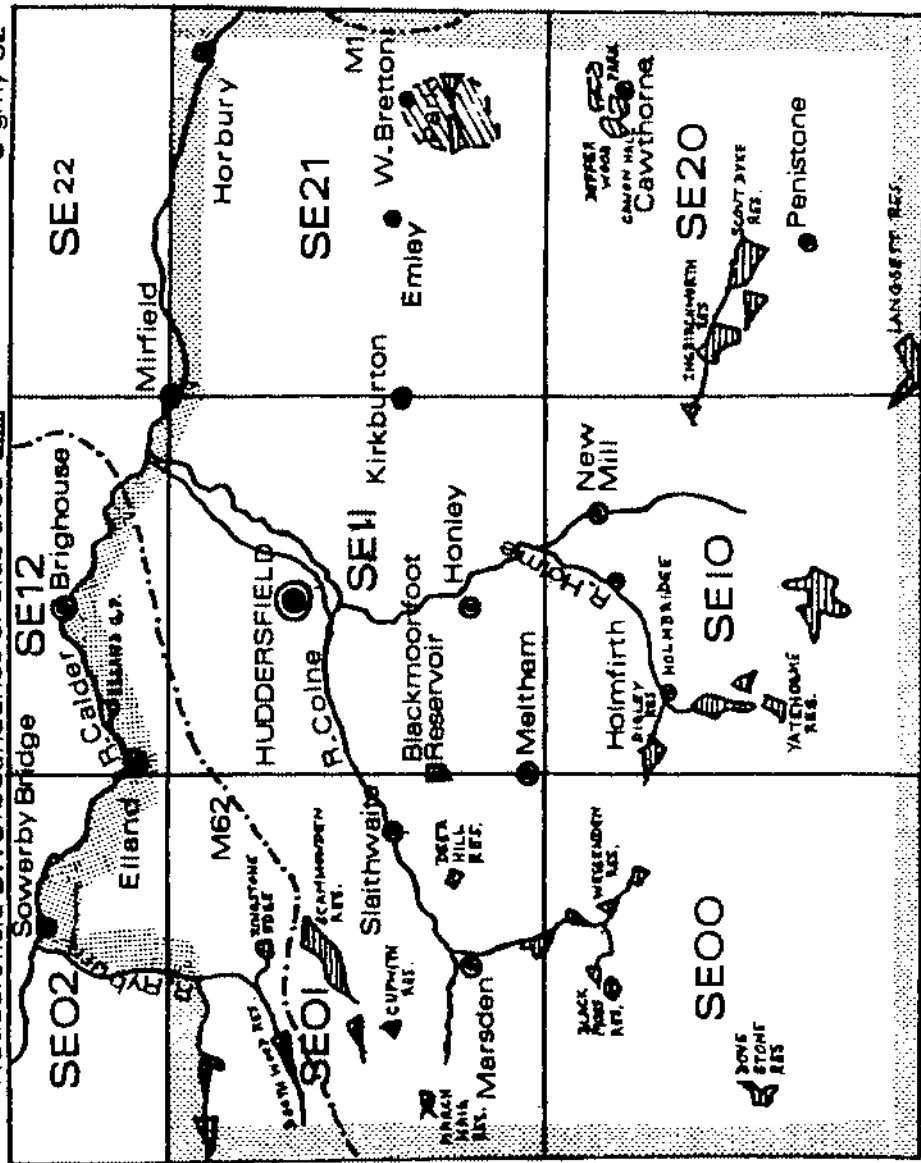


**Huddersfield Birdwatchers' Club**

# **Birds in Huddersfield 1993**



**ANNUAL REPORT**



# BIRDS IN HUDDERSFIELD

## Report of the Huddersfield Birdwatchers' Club

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## **PRESIDENT'S REPORT**

In this, my second report, I am delighted to be able to comment on the continued good health of our Club. Despite the very adverse economic climate of the past few years, club membership has not only been maintained but has shown a small increase, whereas most other clubs and societies have shown a significant decline in numbers. Our club's good fortunes are in no small way due to the attitudes of its members where true warmth and friendship are to be found. Help is always at hand, be it for the novice or the expert and I believe this is what makes Huddersfield Birdwatchers' rather special.

We have enjoyed a season of excellent indoor lectures and I once more pay tribute to the late John Reynolds for having left such a legacy for us to enjoy. It was therefore rather fitting that a memorial lecture was held in his honour and to have it presented by his great friend and companion Gordon Langsbury.

Our field trips have to be organised and handled with great care. To this end David Butterfield has once more served the club well. It is without doubt one of the most difficult jobs to do, balancing the economics with the enjoyment and this he has done very well. I thank him very much for his efforts

Club finance continues to be a source of concern to us all and David Shore has done a grand job in what, as I have already mentioned, has been a difficult time..

Another arduous task has to be that of secretary and Dave Williamson has shone through in this his first year, having made a superb job of collating and recording the minutes as well as preparing a written agenda for each committee meeting. My thanks go to all my other fellow committee members who together have tried to keep me in order. A great deal is owed to them.

I shall leave the whole of the bird news to Stephen Hey who throughout the year does a magnificent job gathering all the records and then preparing the report, which is, in the end, one of the main objects of the club. Much gratitude is due to Stephen for his work and I truly thank him. (Also many thanks for overseeing and ensuring my report is in a presentable form).

Donald Haigh has taken over the role of President and I ask you all to give him your fullest support.

My very good wishes to you all. It has been a privilege and a pleasure to serve as your President..  
Happy Birding!

Malcolm Charnock FLIA

## INTRODUCTION TO THE CLASSIFIED LIST

The year, apart from being wet, turned out to be a quality one for birds. A total of 179 species, a record for the club, was recorded during the year. Early highlights were provided by good numbers of rare geese in February. There were part of a larger movement into Yorkshire and Lincolnshire and included Brent Goose at Ingbirchworth, Bean Goose at Ringstone Edge and White-fronted Goose at four locations. A Scandinavian Rock Pipit at Ringstone Edge Reservoir in March was the first definite record of this race for the area. Raptors on passage were seen, as usual, by a few people lucky enough to be in the right place at the right time. They included Osprey (with the earliest over for the club at Winscar on 1st April), Hobby, Marsh Harrier and Red Kite. Peregrines continue to do well despite disturbance at some nests and the fluctuating short-eared owl had one of its better years on our moors.

The breeding season was notable for Nighthjars at the southern edge of the area near Langsett. Above average numbers of Blackcaps were holding territories and in some areas were said to be "as common as Willow Warbler", whereas the Willow Warbler, for reasons unknown, has been less common in recent years. Autumn brought several interesting observations such as Black-necked and Red-necked Grebes, a flock of 12 Black-tailed Godwits flew over Cawthorne and a Gannet over the same location. Iceland and Glaucous Gulls were particularly evident towards the year end and a Sedge Warbler at Elland Gravel Pits for several days in December is of national significance, though it is hard to find other documented Winter records. Late on Boxing Day, a Common Crane flew east over Skelmanthorpe. This bird arrived at Anglers C.P., just outside our area, about 10 minutes later and roosted in the area for a couple of days. It is only the second record for the area and an enviable bird on the 'garden list' of the lucky observers! Belated news reached me concerning a pair of Ravens nesting in the south-west of our area in 1992 - a first for the club area. Records of this species do seem to be increasing locally, particularly from the Peak district and the suitability of habitat in the south and west of the area may lead to future records.

Included in this report is a checklist of the Birds of Huddersfield, which has been extensively reviewed. It is hoped to include the basic checklist in future reports, and a brief history and bibliography are set out after the list. There are 'grey' areas with the classification of possible escapes and feral populations. Those interested should read the recent BOURC categories which attempts to sort out the confusion.

As usual I must thank Mike Denton for summarising Blackmoorfoot Reservoir records, Stuart Brocklehurst for his illustrations and also Terry Piggott and my wife Fiona, for help with the production of this report. Other local recorders kindly exchanged records:- Martin Wells of Barnsley Bird Study Group; Nick Dawtrey of Halifax Birdwatchers' Club; Mrs A Judith Smith of the Greater Manchester area and David Proctor of Wakefield Naturalists' Society. John Dale and Mike Denton helped with descriptions of less common species. Thanks of course, to all who submitted records.

David Barrans takes over as recorder for 1994 and will produce future reports. Please help him by sending in records or descriptions as soon as possible after the year end. Thank you for the support I received from everyone at the club and I hope David enjoys the task as much as I have.

Stephen Hey

June 1994

## NOTES ON THE CLASSIFIED LIST

The area covered by the Club comprises Ordnance Survey ten-kilometres squares SE 00, 01, 10, 11, 20 and 21, along with those parts of SE02 and SE12 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	

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 number of passage and Winter visitors, particularly in the case of the more common species, it must be realised that the figures are essentially estimates.

Precise locations for records of schedule 1 species (Protection of Birds Act 1954-67) have been kept confidential where it is felt that publication might lead to harmful disturbance.

Many of the more common breeding species have been listed without further comment than an indication of their status. For further details of these and their habitat preferences, readers are referred to the 1975 Report. A complete list of all species recorded in the area up to the end of 1980 and notes on their status, appeared in the report for that year.

## THE CLASSIFIED LIST

This list follows the sequence and scientific nomenclature of Professor Dr K H Voous (1977, List of Recent Holarctic Bird Species).

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

Resident breeder (1)

Breeding success this year at Ingbirchworth Reservoir (three pairs, two producing young); Scout dike Reservoir (two pairs); Gunthwaite Dam (one pair); Bretton Park (one pair); Deanhead Reservoir (one pair); Ryburn Reservoir (one pair); Castle Dam (one pair) and summering birds without proof of breeding at Elland Gravel Pits and Royd Moor Reservoir.

At some locations, certainly the first four, birds were present throughout the year. Maximum numbers were 15 at Ingbirchworth Reservoir on 1st September and 11 at Elland Gravel Pits on 21st November. Blackmoorfoot Reservoir had one or two birds on many dates between 12th July and 20th November with three on 7th and four on 9th October.

Other locations with passage birds, normally one or two on odd dates, were Broadstones Reservoir; Boshaw Whams; Bilberry Reservoir; Baitings Reservoir; Scammonden Dam; Cannon Hall and Meltham Mills Pond. A few early winter records came from the River Calder between Colnebridge and Ossett and one on the canal at Golcar on 27th December.

### **GREAT CRESTED GREBE** *Podiceps cristatus*

Resident breeder (1)

Bretton Park Four pairs bred raising five young. Good numbers were present at the start of the year with 12 on 31st January. One pair bred very early and produced two young which were first seen in March, about one month earlier than normal. Maximum for the year was 16 on 18th February and birds were present in all months.

Scout Dike Reservoir Three pairs bred, with records from January to September. High counts included 18 on 12th April; 34 on 4th July (a record for this location) and 25 on 14th July.

Ingbirchworth Reservoir Two pairs bred raising three young with birds present February to September. The highest count was nine on 8th August.

Blackmoorfoot Reservoir Recorded in all months, though only five bird days between 2nd January and 7th February. From mid-February to mid-May two to eight birds were present with 12 on 12th March. Although daily numbers did fluctuate, mid-May to mid-June was the peak with 13 at the end of May. Numbers built up during July and stayed reasonably high till into October. The maximum counts were 28 from 27th July to 5th August; 29 from 6th to 10th September and 19 from 2nd to 12th October. Birds dwindled by mid-November but one to four were present on 16 dates in December.

At Brookfoot Lake, one pair attempted breeding but presumably failed as last year. One to four here throughout the year except for August and September. The maximum was five on 15th and 27th March. Other records were singles at Castle Dam on 15th February (unusual for this site); Ringstone Edge Reservoir on 6th March and 12th September; Winscar Reservoir on 1st May; Royd Moor Reservoir on 3rd May; Baitings Reservoir on 2nd August and two on Scammonden Dam on 10th April.

**RED-NECKED GREBE** *Podiceps grisgena*

Rare passage and winter visitor

An immature was present on Scammonden Dam on 28th September (JB,BH). The next day an immature was at Blackmoorfoot Reservoir (SS, DMO, JED). What was presumably the same bird reappeared at Scammonden Dam from 6th to 8th October (JB et al).

**BLACK-NECKED GREBE** *Podiceps gricollis*

Rare visitor

An immature bird at Blackmoorfoot Reservoir on 29th August (MLD et al). Accepted by YNU.

**FULMAR** *Fulmarus glacialis*

Rare visitor

One flew West over Salendine Nook during the evening of 28th May (JB).

**GANNET** *Sula bassana*

Rare visitor

A juvenile flew West over Cawthorne on 22nd September and was lost out of sight towards Scout Dike (GMC per BBSG). 10th record for the area, of which at least five have been in September.

**CORMORANT** *Phalacrocorax carbo*

Uncommon passage and winter visitor

This species would seem to be increasing in our area, with high numbers of records for the third consecutive year:

Blackmoorfoot Reservoir On 1st January seven flew south-west and one north-east; two on 20th April; four north on 29th May; one from 7th to 9th July; two on 25th July; four west on 8th August; one on 15th August and one on 26th November.



Elland Gravel Pits One on 9th January; one immature on 31st May; one on 20th August and two on 12th September.

Ingbirchworth Reservoir Six immatures on 5th February; one on 15th and 19th May; one on 15th August and one on 1st September.

Elsewhere, three were at Bottoms Dam, nr Hinchliffe Mill on 20th March and had been present for some weeks. They were mentioned in the Huddersfield Examiner fishing column! Other locations were Scout Dike Reservoir, two on 18th April and one on 14th July; Bretton Park, singles on 31st May and 1st August; Scapegoat Hill, one east on 14th and 15th August; one over Golcar on 2nd September and finally one over Meltham on 10th October.

#### **SHAG** *Phalacrocorax aristotelis*

Rare visitor

An immature on Brookfoot Lake at Elland Gravel Pits on the morning of 4th February (MH). It was seen to fly west at mid-day (TM). An immature was also at Ingbirchworth Reservoir on 6th February (BP). These were part of a large influx inland in the first few days of the month which, for interest, included 56 at Sutton Lawn Dam in Nottinghamshire on the 3rd! A third bird this year was exceptional, and also the first summer record of this species for our area. It was seen on the River Colne near the Town centre on 17th June and lost to view feeding npriver, heading stowards Longroyd Bridge (DMP). Eighth and ninth records for the area.

#### **HERON** *Arden cinerea*

Resident breeder (2)

No breeding details are available from the colony at Bretton Park, but about 40 were present on 31st May suggesting the population to be similar to last year's 21 pairs. Small numbers were again resident and possibly bred on private land near Lepton Great Wood.

Blackmoorfoot Reservoir had one to four birds on 39 dates between 2nd January and 28th May with four on 10th April. Then, between 7th June and 17th November, birds on 121 days with the highest counts late June to late August. The maximum was 14 on 29th July but normally single figures.

One's and two's can be noted flying over the area at any time of the year, with a peak of records in Autumn. Many waters recorded up to four birds and above that, five at Ryburn Reservoir on 17th January; five at Elland Gravel Pits on 7th February; six at Scout Dike Reservoir on 1st July and five at Seammonden Dam on 25th September. Birds tempted by goldfish 'takeaways' in gardens at Krumlin, Bradley, Fixby, Castle Hill and Lindley Moor - with this behaviour usually occurring in the Winter months. While goldfish have been taken, frogs have also been noted as prey.

**MUTE SWAN** *Cygnus olor*  
Resident, occasional breeder (1)

Singles present at Cannon Hall and on a village pond in Scissett, presumably throughout the year. Elland Gravel Pits had one to three on 42 dates throughout the year with a maximum of four from 13th to 18th April. Several records in the Horbury/Ossett area on the River Calder with attempted breeding at Horbury Wyke. On 19th April, a pair were at a nest and three were on the River. The outcome of this attempt is not known.

An adult hybrid Swan, Whooper x Mute cross, was at Elland Gravel Pits in the company of Mute Swan on and off from 13th April to 20th June and again from 23rd December to the year end.

**BEWICK'S SWAN** *Cygnus columbianus*  
Scarce winter visitor

An adult at Blackmoorfoot Reservoir on 3rd January (MLD et al); 24 flew north over Silkstone Common on 26th October (NEP) and 11 were on Royd Moor Reservoir on 16th November (BA, JMD).

**WHOOPE SWAN** *Cygnus cygnus*  
Scarce winter visitor

A remarkable series of records occurred in late March with a large flock, or flocks, observed at several sites as they moved north on the 26th. It began with 83 flying high and north at Langsett Reservoir, 15 of which broke away and landed on the Reservoir (GMC per BBSG). In the afternoon 62 were present on Boshaw Whams (DH). At 1800 hours 69 swans, probably this species, circled Elland Gravel Pits and flew north 10 minutes later (JKP). On 27th March, seven were still present on Langsett Reservoir (SD per BBSG) and, no surprise, seven flew north-west over Blackmoorfoot Reservoir in the evening (MLD). Seven, possibly the same(?), flew over Ringstone Edge Reservoir on 29th March (TP). On 9th November, a family party of two adults and two immatures were at Ingbirchworth Reservoir (BP per BBSG). One of the best years on record.

Five swans, either this species or the previous, flew over Bradley Golf Club on 1st January (D.Sp).

**BEAN GOOSE** *Anser fabalis*  
Rare visitor

Five at Ringstone Edge Reservoir on 16th and 17th February, were present with 11 white-fronted Geese *Anser albifrons* (JB, BH et al). These were part of a large arrival of geese into Yorkshire and Lincolnshire. Only the fourth record for the area. Under consideration by YNU.

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

Uncommon to common passage visitor

Around 50 over Scapegoat Hill on the evening of 2nd January were very low and calling in fog. Early February saw a reasonable influx, a little earlier than the rarer geese species that followed. On the 1st, 44 were in fields at Hazlehead and 126 flew over Broadstones Reservoir; the 6th saw one at Elland Gravel Pits and 36 west at Blackmoorfoot and on the 7th, five at Ringstone Edge Reservoir and around 250 flew north into our area at Thurgoland. Also in February, three at Broadstones Reservoir on 11th and 66 flew west at Baitings Reservoir on 23rd. The only other early record concerned one with Canada Geese at Royd Moor Reservoir on 6th March.

Autumn passage started with 16 over Hade Edge on 16th September and approximately 50 over the same location on 4th October. On 3rd October, circa 200 flew south-east over Ingbirchworth. Other records were from Elland Gravel Pits with 12 west on 27th October and 60 west on 31st December; Scout Dike Reservoir, 21 west on 4th December and Penistone, 20 north on 28th December.

Unidentified Grey Geese, probably this species, were observed at Linthwaite, 102 north-west on 31st January; Bradley Golf Course. 110 north-west on 23rd February and 159 north-west on 10th March and at Golcar with 20 south-west on 14th November and at least 70 south-west on 11th December. Also, 75 over Skelmanthorpe on 6th December.

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

Rare visitor

Impressive numbers of this rare species, in our area, occurred from mid-February. It was part of a movement which saw over 2,000 between Cleveland and Suffolk and probably involved birds from the near continent heading for Slimbridge but grounded in foggy conditions. Birds then extended inland, with the race 'albifrons' accounting for most (and probably all) of the records.

In February, three were on Scout Dike Reservoir on 13th (JIM per BBSG); 11 were in the Ingbirchworth, Scout Dike and Royd Moor area from 15th February to 3rd March (DBa. et al); 11 were at Ringstone Edge Reservoir from 16th to 19th (JB, BH et al); three at Blackmoorfoot Reservoir on 17th (SH) and circa 80 flew north over Ingbirchworth Reservoir on 23rd (PAW per BBSG). Fifth to ninth records for the club area.

### **GREYLAG GOOSE**    *Anser anser*

Uncommon passage and feral visitor

Few noted this year, with one at Scout Dike Reservoir on 7th March and one at Bretton Park on 14th April and 7th July.

**CANADA GOOSE** *Branta canadensis*

Resident breeder (2)

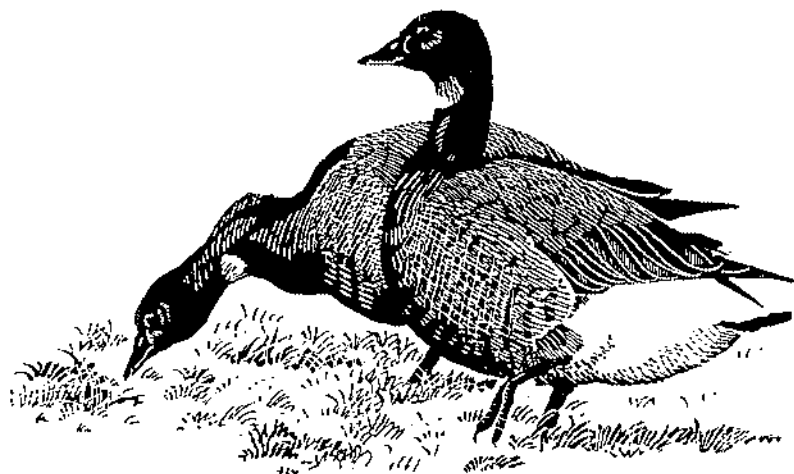
Breeding sites, with numbers of pairs shown in brackets, were:- Winscar Reservoir (5); Harden Reservoir (1); Ramsden Reservoir (1); Digley Reservoir (1); Langsett Reservoir (1); Lower Windleden Reservoir (2); Gunthwaite Dam (1); Wessenden Head Reservoir (1); and Bretton Park (2). Also present at a further seven locations during the breeding season, and 14 outside it.

Over the last four years, Royd Moor Reservoir has become a popular out of season gathering place for this species, with the maximum counts this year being 115 on 1st January; over 200 on 8th October and 168 on 14th November. Other popular sites and maximum numbers were Scammonden Dam, 36 on 14th January; Ingbirchworth Reservoir, 55 on 31st January; Dovestones Reservoir, 52 on 8th August; Bretton Park, around 200 on 28th August and Langsett Reservoir 40 on 19th September. A leucistic bird was at Ryburn Reservoir on 10th July and Ringstone Edge Reservoir on 14th August.

**BARNACLE GOOSE** *Branta leucopsis*

Rare visitor. Occasional feral breeder (1)

On 2nd January, two were at Blackmoorfoot Reservoir along with a Barnacle x Canada hybrid. One was found dead at Cannon Hall on 24th February, where several feral birds are kept; one on Scammonden Dam on 30th March and three throughout the year at Bretton Park, with apparently no breeding attempt this year.



**BRENT GOOSE** *Branta bernicla*

Rare visitor

Two of the dark-bellied race *bernicla*, at Ingbirchworth Reservoir and nearby fields from 16th to 22nd February (DMS per BBSG, et al). Part of an unusual influx of around 240 into eastern England at the same time and only the fifth record for the area.

**SHELDUCK** *Tadorna tadorna*

Uncommon passage visitor

Blackmoorfoot Reservoir In January, 13 on 3rd, one on 4th and 14th and seven on 31st; in April, six on 14th, three on 17th and four on 29th; in July, two on 17th and 30th; three on 30th August; one on 6th September and three on 24th September.

Elland Grave! Pits One on 10th February; five west on 16th May and a female present from 2nd to 23rd November, though not daily.

Other locations were Ringstone Edge Reservoir, three on 31st January; Langsett Reservoir, one on 31st January; Ingbirchworth Reservoir, one on 1st April and two on 24th July; Scout Dike Reservoir, one on 24th July; Royd Moor Reservoir, nine on 24th September and one at Broadstones Reservoir also on 24th September.

**MANDARIN DUCK** *Aix galericulata*

Rare feral visitor

A male at Bretton Park on 4th April (per DP) and the female of recent years again seen on the River Holme near the centre of Holmfirth on 13 November and 31st December (HQ).

**WIGEON** *Anar penelope*

Common passage and winter visitor

Blackmoorfoot Reservoir In January, four on 1st, 10 on 4th, 12 on 5th, 14 on 6th and two from 7th to 10th. In February, three on 3rd, and one from 15th to 17th; one on 6th and 9th March and two on 3rd April. Absent then till five on 18th August. September to the end of October was the busiest period with birds on 16 dates, normally under 20 but 50 on 29th September and 20 on 15th October. Low numbers on a further nine days to the year end with 12 the maximum on 28th and 29th December.

Ingbirchworth Reservoir Two on 6th and three on 15th February. Then one on 9th and four on 27th September; four on 9th and 10 on 29th October; two on 13th and three on 21st November.

Elland Gravel Pits In January; three on 4th.; one on 6th, three on 10th, eight on 17th, four on 19th and three on 30th and four on 6th February. Then one on 2nd September; one on 11th October; one on 27th November and seven on 26th December.

The above were the best locations, but also occurred in small numbers on several dates at another three locations in the early part of the year and seven in the latter part. A female was present throughout the year at Dovestones Reservoir.

**GADWALL** *Anas strepera*

Scarce passage and winter visitor

Few records this year. One at Scout Dike Reservoir on 17th January (DM); one at Elland Gravel Pits on 8th November (JB) and three at Ingbirchworth Reservoir on 23rd November (D.Ba).

**TEAL** *Anas crecca*

Resident breeder (1). Common passage and winter visitor

Numbers in the early part of the year were generally low with under 15 birds reported on many dates between January and April from Blackmoorfoot Reservoir, Ingbirchworth Reservoir, Gunthwaite Dam, Royd Moor Reservoir and Bretton Park. Elland Gravel Pits was the best location with 38 seen on both 10th and 15th January. Another four locations produced odd records in this period.

Bred at Winscar, where one pair produced young; Royd Moor Reservoir, where two pairs were probably unsuccessful and occasional breeding season records from Oxygrains Beck and just in our area near Woodhead Reservoir.

Autumn/winter records would appear to be well down on normal. Blackmoorfoot Reservoir was the best site with one on 24th June, six on 15th July and then generally under 10 birds from August to early December. The maximum counts were 15 on 4th and 16 on 20th September. Elland Gravel Pits had 15 on 29th August, then low numbers to the end of October when 18-30 were seen to the year end. The best was 30 on 13th December. Only recorded at another seven waters with barely a dozen bird days between them, Ringstone Edge Reservoir having the maximum of 11 on 4th September. The normally dependable Royd Moor Reservoir only managed four on 19th September and five on 17th October - strange.

**MALLARD** *Anas platyrhynchos*

Resident breeder (3). Common winter visitor

High counts up to spring included 58 at Royd Moor Reservoir on 1st January; 52 at Blackmoorfoot Reservoir on 3rd January; 30 at Elland Gravel Pits on 10th January and 50 at Bretton Park on 7th February.

Some good numbers, particularly in the Ingbirchworth area, in the latter part of the year maximum counts were 164 at Royd Moor Reservoir on 11th September; 75 at Ingbirchworth Reservoir on 23rd December and circa 80 at Scout Dike Reservoir on 26th December. Elsewhere 110 at Langsett Reservoir on 12th September; 46 at Blackmoorfoot Reservoir on 16th and 25th September; 75 at Elland Gravel Pits on 14th November and approximately 100 at Bretton Park on 12th December. Throughout the year, under 30 were recorded at a further 24 sites.

**PINTAIL** *Anas acuta*

Uncommon passage and winter visitor

Royd Moor Reservoir had two on 1st January; three on 8th March and two on 1st October. Blackmoorfoot Reservoir had singles on 2nd January, 24th September and 28th December. The only other records were two at Ingbirchworth Reservoir on 11th and 12th January; one at Elland Gravel Pits on 12th September and one at Ringstone Edge Reservoir on 28th September.

**GARGANEY** *Anas querquedula*

Rare summer migrant

A fine male was at Elland Gravel Pits on 11 May (JB et al).

**SHOVELER** *Anas dypeata*

Uncommon passage and winter visitor

Two over Elland Gravel Pits on 31st January were the first of the year. Ringstone Edge Reservoir had four on 28th March and a pair on 23rd May. Bretton Park had a pair from 4th to 14th April (on four dates but probably throughout), one on 4th July, three on 12th and two on 22nd December. Ingbirchworth Reservoir had three on 2nd May with a male staying on from 3rd to 5th and then two from 12th to 16th August. Blackmoorfoot had records in July, two on 20th; August, singles on 20th and 28th and six on 29th; September, one on 6th and, in October, two on 26th. The only other record was of one at Royd Moor Reservoir on 23rd October.

**POCHARD** *Aythya ferina*

Common passage and winter visitor

Ingbirchworth Reservoir Present January to 30th March daily with between one and 18, with the 18 on 29th January. Low numbers again from 18th September and a low maximum of 36 on 11th December.

Scout Dike Reservoir Small numbers, two to four, were reported in March and a male was present throughout the summer. A gradual build-up from mid-September led to the high of 38 on 6th December.

Blackmoorfoot Reservoir Present on just eight bird days up to 17th February with a maximum of 15 on 2nd January. In July, one on 18th and three on 31st, then variable low numbers August to December on 27 dates - the maximum being just 18 on 1st October.

Elland Gravel Pits had up to five from January to March and October to December; Bretton Park could only manage five as a maximum in the early months and 13 on 7th November. Other locations with occasional records were Royd Moor Reservoir; Scammonden Dam; Holme Styes Reservoir; Cannon Hall and Ringstone Edge Reservoir.

**TUFTED DUCK** *Aythya fuligula*

Resident breeder (1). Common passage and Winter visitor

Scout Dike Reservoir Very few in January and February but up to 13 on 14 March. Two pairs bred, and the late summer build-up led to the high of 56 on 18 July and 7th August. Numbers dropped off from mid-September with generally single figures to the year end.

Ingbirchworth Reservoir Present throughout the year and one pair bred. Maximum counts were 21 on 5th March and, mirroring the peaks at Scout Dike, 64 on 29th July; 40 on 1st September, then up to 20 to the year end.

Blackmoorfoot Reservoir Present throughout the year with the exception of a few days from 27th May to mid-June. Low numbers in the first half of the year, 12 the best on 13th February. The build-up went from 21 on 10th July to 39 on 2nd September, then back to single figures from October to the year end.

At Bretton Park, present most of the year, with 26 on 31st January the peak. Birds seen in the breeding season at Gunthwaite Dam; Horbury Wyke and Digley/Bilberry Reservoirs. Also occurred at another 11 waters, in single figures, on passage and in the winter months.

**SCAUP** *Aythya marila*

Scarce passage and winter visitor

At Ingbirchworth Reservoir, a first year female was present from 8th to 11th February (D Ba, JED). Also, on 11th and 12th February, a female hybrid (with a Ring-Necked Duck type bill pattern) was at the same site (JED, BA). An adult male at Winscar Reservoir on 7th July was unseasonal (JIM per BBSG). Scout Dike Reservoir had an adult female from 27th October to 6th November (BBSG) and at Elland Gravel Pits, a female from 26th to 30th November and possibly the same bird on 11th December (JB et al).



**COMMON SCOTER** *Melanitta nigra*

Scarce to uncommon passage visitor

Very few this year, but a nice flock of 38 males at Blackmoorfoot Reservoir on 16th July and a male at the same location on 6th and 7th August.

**GOLDENEYE** *Bucephala clangula*

Regular but uncommon winter visitor

Ingbirchworth Reservoir From January to March, one to four were seen throughout with five on 30th March. Present in April to the last bird on the 15th, with five on the 7th. After one on 28th October, two to three were present to the year end.

Blackmoorfoot Reservoir In January and February, one to three birds on 22 bird days. Then recorded daily from March to 4th April, generally one or two but three on 6th March. A slight passage from 14th October with a low peak of three on 23rd and 24th October. One or two occasionally in November and December with six on 13th December the best count.

Ringstone Edge Reservoir Good numbers from mid-February into March. Seven were recorded on 17th February and 5th and 22nd March. Between three and five present till 19th April with one on 24th April. In contrast, the only record from the latter part of the year was one on 14th December!

In the early part of the year fairly scarce at other locations with single birds at five sites. October passage produced one at Scammonden on 18th and 23rd; 11 at Langsen Reservoir on 22nd and one to three at Elland Gravel Pits on three dates from 22nd. Snut Dike Reservoir had an early bird from 3rd October onwards and then occasionally to the year end with three on 6th December. Occasional records from four other locations in November and December.

**RED-BREASTED MERGANSER** *Mergus serrator*

Rare visitor

The last three years have seen records up on normal, it would be nice to see it continue. The only site for records this year was Blackmoorfoot Reservoir but birds were present on a record 27 bird days. A male was seen on 25th April; 17th and 18th May; 21st to 24th May; a pair were present on 12th to 18th June and 21st to 27th June and then in July a female on 9th, 10th, 16th, 17th and 19th (MLD et al). To end an excellent year, eight males occurred on 25th October (AJW).

**GOOSANDER** *Mergus merganser*

Scarce to uncommon passage and winter visitor

Good numbers left over from the influx of late 1992.

Elland Gravel Pits Present in reasonable numbers from January to early April. The monthly high counts were 28 on 27th January; 22 on 21st February; 15 on 29th March and eight on 5th April. A redhead was found dead on 10th April and a late male on the River Calder on 18th May. Lower numbers from the first single on 9th October, with the best counts 10 on 22nd October; 19 on 21st November and 22 on 28th December.

Blackmoorfoot Reservoir The only early records were singles on 4th January and 7th February. Then singles on 14th and 16th October and 21st and 24th November with two on 16th November and four on 30th December.

Other sites were Ingbirchworth Reservoir, singles on 10th and 13th January; Scout Dike Reservoir, one on 1st February and four on 23rd November; Bretton Park, one on 19th February; Ringstone Edge Reservoir, two on 23rd February and singles on 18th October and 20th November; Langsett Reservoir, one on 29th November; Meltham Mills pond, one on 7th December; Colnebridge, three flying up the River Colne on 16th December and finally one on the River Calder at Bradley on 29th December.

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

Uncommon feral visitor

Bretton Park Present for long periods of the year between 7th February and 17th November. Generally one or two seen but five in May and August and the maximum count was six on the 17th November.

Records away from Bretton Park are still few in number. A pair were displaying at Gunthwaite Dam on 8th May (but not on subsequent visits) and a male at Winscar Reservoir on 14th July, both sites having their first records of this species.

#### **RED KITE** *Milvus milvus*

Rare visitor

A bird described as a kite sp flew east over Colnebridge on 3rd December (DJW). The following day, in the Halifax area, one was watched flying down the Ryburn Valley over Triangle at 1300 hours and was seen in our area at Krumlin, near Ringstone Edge Reservoir, 15 minutes later (per HBC). No doubt all records refer to the same individual. Under consideration by YNU.

#### **MARSH HARRIER** *Circus aeruginosus*

Rare visitor

Two records represents a good year for this species, both were of single 'cream crowns'. One was at Deer Hill on 19th May (DMP) and one flew over Scout Dike Reservoir on 18th August (MCW per BBSG).

**HEN HARRIER** *Circus cyaneus*

Rare visitor

**ADDITION TO 1992 REPORT** A female flew north-west at Winscar on 10th May (BBSG).

**1993** A male was seen near Deer Hill Reservoir on 26th March (JJ) and a 'ringtail' flew east over Whitley Common on 27th December (JMD).

**GOSHAWK** *Accipiter gentilis*

Sporadic breeder and rare visitor

Breeding season reports from three locations, usually in March and April with displaying birds at their most obvious. Few reports after this and no news of any breeding success/failure. Away from these areas, one at Lindley Moor on 21st March was the first record for that area (JED). At Royd Moor Reservoir a male was seen on 23rd August (MCW per BBSG) and on 23rd October, an immature took a Woodpigeon but dropped it in the water and couldn't retrieve it (NEP). Lastly, one at Broadstones Reservoir on 4th December (BP per BBSG)..

**SPARROWHAWK** *Accipiter nisus*

Resident breeder (2)

Reported from around 68 locations with nesting or suspected nesting of 25 of these. Most of the other areas were suitable for breeding, reflecting a healthy population in the club area. Prey items identified included Starlings, House Sparrow and a Redwing.

**BUZZARD** *Buteo buteo*

Rare visitor

One at Booth Wood Clough on 3rd March (JB, JED) and one flew north over Scammonden on 10th April (SH, TP). Just one other record, of one through Bretton Park on 19th September (KAN).

**OSPREY** *Pandion haliaetus*

Rare visitor

One at Winscar Reservoir on 1st April left to the north around mid-day. It represents the earliest ever record for the area (JIM per BBSG). Another circled Ingbirchworth Reservoir on the evening of 7th April but was forced away by mobbing crows (NEP).

**KESTREL** *Falco tinnunculus*

Resident breeder (2)

Better reported this year, more down to coverage than any increase in numbers. Recorded from 63 sites with confirmed breeding at 14 of these and suspected at another 22 with summer records.

**MERLIN** *Falco columbarius*

Resident breeder (1). Scarce visitor

Three pairs were present in the breeding season on suitable moorland, though the outcome of any breeding activity is unknown. The only early winter record was of a male at Scout Dike Reservoir on 17th February. In the spring, passage birds at Broadstones Reservoir on 30th April and Ingbirchworth Reservoir on 27th May, with one at the latter site on 3rd September also. An immature south-east at Blackmoorfoot on 2nd September was colour ringed and proved to be an escaped falconer's bird. Other records to the year end were: one hunting around gardens in Penistone on 27th September; one at Coxley Wood on 11th October and one at Spicer House Lane on 14th November.

**HOBBY** *Falco subbuteo*

Rare summer visitor

Five records in the year was the best total on record, but sightings were typically brief. One at Lepton Great Wood on the evening of 7th June (DJW); one north-east over Scout Dike Reservoir on 2nd August (MCW per BBSG); an adult at Salters Brook near Upper Windleden Reservoir on 7th August (GMC per BBSC) and one at Skelmanthorpe on 15th and 22nd August (JMD). All accepted by YNU.

**PEREGRINE** *Falco peregrinus*

Resident breeder (1)

A mixed year for this species, but birds present during the breeding season in at least five locations. Unfortunately, the birds at Booth Dam Quarry failed after the female deserted. The RSPB were present as usual and birds could still be seen, as an immature female joined up with the male. Of the other sites, one pair laid three eggs but they were stolen; one pair attempted breeding but failed and the outcome of the other two is not known.

Away from the area; singles at Royd Moor on 30th January; Ryburn on 5th February; Scammonden on 9th March; Broadstones on 12th April; Salters Brook on 7th August; Digley on 18th August and 29th September; Blackmoorfoot Reservoir on 11th September; Deer Hill on 30th September; Ringstone Edge Reservoir (chasing a dunlin) on 2nd November and Whitley Common on 27th December. Elland Gravel Pits had single males on 1st and 30th January, then singles on 13 dates

between 19th July and the year end, with two on 26th September; 18th October and 28th December and three together on 27th November. Singles often frequented the disused cooling towers.

**RED GROUSE** *Lagopus lagopus*

Resident breeder (3)

Not a complete picture due to lack of coverage but seemingly fairly common on moors to north of Crowden, with at least 12 on 22nd March. Also quite numerous in the Winscar, Harden Clough and Snailsden areas with 11 on 7th March and several pairs with young on 4th June. Otherwise, one to three on odd dates at Yateholme; Wessenden Head; Little Don Valley; Digley and Cupwith.

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

Resident breeder (1)

One pair bred at Royd Moor Reservoir with at least three young seen. Also present in spring/summer at the suspected breeding sites of Lumb Lane, near Castle Hill, Digley Reservoir and Dovestones Reservoir. Two on the old railway line near Dunford Bridge on 1st May and two at Gunthwaite on 9th May. The maximum count was three at Lumb Lane on 22nd October. One in a Crimble Clough garden on 26th and 27th June was approachable and obviously unwell. It was later taken into care on the 27th but died soon after.

**GREY PARTRIDGE** *Perdix perdix*

Resident breeder (2)

Bred or probably bred at Pike End Road, near Baitings Reservoir; Ingbirchworth area; Winscar Reservoir; Turley Coat Lane, near Lindley Moor; Highburton; Emley Moor (up to six pairs); Stone Wood, Shepley and quite probably at another 10 locations from which records were received. The highest counts involved seven at Elland Gravel Pits on 21st January; 10 at Deffer Wood on 22nd January and nine at Meltham Cop on 17th October.

**QUAIL** *Coturnix coturnix*

Scarce summer visitor. Occasional breeder

**ADDITION TO 1992 REPORT** One calling at High Hoyland on 30th June (per BBSG).

**1993** One flew over Skelmanthorpe at dusk on 28th June. The bird was calling in flight, behaviour which has not been described to my knowledge (JMD).

**PHEASANT** *Phasianus colchicus*

Resident breeder (2-3)

Fairly common throughout the area, up to and including moorland fringes. A female on Platform 8 of Huddersfield Railway Station on the morning of 6th April was a surprise commuter! Two males in a Holmbridge garden in November and December were seen on the bird-table.

**WATER RAIL** *Rallus aquaticus*

Scarce Winter visitor

A wintering bird at Gunthwaite Dam was seen on 1st and 17th January and 5th February (JC et al); one at Elland Gravel Pits on 14th March (JB) and one at Bretton Park on 20th November (SP, KW).

**MOORHEN** *Gallinula chloropus*

Resident breeder (2-3)

Bred at six sites and recorded from a further 14. No doubt unde-recorded in the many miles of streams, canals and rivers in the area. On 10th January, 18 were at Gunthwaite Dam but otherwise only single figures noted.

**COOT** *Fulcia atra*

Resident breeder (2)

Below are listed the main breeding sites, numbers of pairs breeding and high counts for the location:-

<u>Ingbirchworth Reservoir</u> ;	two + pairs;	Present throughout the year;	22 on 3rd January.
<u>Scout Dike Reservoir</u> ;	probably bred;	Present throughout the year;	28 on 15th March.
<u>Elland Gravel Pits</u> ;	three + pairs;	Present Feb-December;	17 on 12th March
<u>Bretton Park</u>	no details	Present throughout the year;	circa 70 on 22nd August
<u>Castle Dam</u>	four pairs		

In addition, two pairs bred at Ryburn Reservoir; one at Gunthwaite Dam; two at Meltham Mills pond and records in the summer months from another three sites. Many areas note an influx in the winter months with the highest being 33 at Cannon Hall on 22nd November.

## **COMMON CRANE** *Grus grus*

Rare visitor

One flew east over Skelmanthorpe, calling, at 1555 hrs on 26th December (JM and MD). This bird turned up at Anglers C.P. 10 minutes later, where it roosted and stayed for a couple of days. The second record for the area. Under consideration by YNU.

## **OYSTERCATCHER** *Haematopus ostralegus*

Uncommon passage visitor

Ringstone Edge Reservoir In May, two on 16th; nine on 23rd and one on 25th. One on 1st June and five on 18th July.

Blackmoorfoot Reservoir Two on 30th May; in July, six on 23rd; two on 25th and one on 31st and one on 10th August.

Other records, all singles, were at Elland Gravel Pits on 19th February; Penistone, over on 30th May and Broadstones Reservoir on 28th July.

## **LITTLE RINGED PLOVER** *Charadrius dubius*

Migrant breeder (1). Scarce passage visitor

The first of the year were on 10th April, with one at Elland Gravel Pits and two at Ringstone Edge Reservoir. These were followed by singles at Ingbyworth Reservoir on 13th April and 6th May; Deer Hill Reservoir on 24th April and Blackmoorfoot Reservoir on 9th May.

At Ringstone Edge Reservoir, one to two were seen on 12 dates up to 25th May and, although displaying on six dates, did not apparently breed. At Blackmoorfoot Reservoir, a similar story of one to two on 20 dates up to 7th June but no signs of breeding. Autumn passage at this location involved single adults on 4th and 17th July and three adults on 7th July. The only other Autumn record was of two juveniles at Dewsbury Sewage Farm on 20th July.

## **RINGED PLOVER** *Charadrius hiaticula*

Uncommon passage visitor

Ringstone Edge Reservoir had a good year for this species. In May, seven on 14th; one on 15th; six on 16th and one on 17th and then one on 1st June. Autumn brought singles on 29th and 30th August and two on both 4th and 7th September. Blackmoorfoot Reservoir was the only other site with records of one on 17th May and 30th August.

### **GOLDEN PLOVER** *Pluvialis apricaria*

Migrant breeder (2). Common passage and winter visitor

January saw low numbers in the area with 22 at Whitley Common on 12th and a maximum of 17 at Blackmoorfoot Reservoir on 27th. The remains of one was found at Elland Gravel Pits on 24th. Blackmoorfoot saw a build-up from early February, the best monthly highs were 67 on 27th February; 150 on 31st March; 85 on 9th April; 21 on 23rd May and 7 on 7th June. Ringstone Edge Reservoir, another traditional gathering area, had records from mid-February, the best being 224 on 21st February; 277 on 30th March; 92 on 13th April and a lone 'northern' race on 16th May. Other spring records included 105 at Cupwih on 15th March; 51 at Whitley Common on 25th March and 12th April and 73 at Broadstones on 29th March.

Breeding territories reported were 16 on moors to west of Winscar (an increase from 11 in 1992); 3 near Chew Reservoir; other summer records from Holme/Digley area and up to 12 throughout the breeding season at Whitley Common.

Autumn numbers were very low. Blackmoorfoot had birds between 12th July and 31st August with none after that to the year end. Monthly totals were 38 on 22nd July and 31 on 31st August. Ringstone Edge did slightly better with records September to November with 21 on 7th September; 94 on 23rd October and 177 on 1st November. The only others reported were 15 at Bilberry Reservoir on 24th July; singles calling in fog at Hade Edge on 6th October and Oldfield on 5th November and five west over Lindley Moor on 29th December.

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

Rare passage visitor

One heard calling several times as it flew over Golcar on 2nd October (DMP, SP).

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

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

Quite a few around in the early months. Locations and best counts were Blackmoorfoot Reservoir, 250 on 17th January; 250 on 13th February and 41 on 8th March; 200 at Ponker near Skelmanthorpe on 6th February and 120 at Ringstone Edge Reservoir on 23rd February. Some birds were on territories in early February but more generally from early March.

Some good numbers in Autumn, though they were down at Blackmoorfoot. At Broadstones on 17th July, up to 1,000 were present but soon dispersed to around 200 on 2nd August. On 20th July, 233 including many juveniles were at Dewsbury Sewage Farm. The maximum elsewhere were 339



at Blackmoorfoot Reservoir on 2nd August; 500 at Spicer House Lane on 30th October; 190 at Ringstone Edge Reservoir on 1st November and circa 150 in the Ingbirchworth/Spicer House Lane area in November and December. Under 50 were recorded from a handful of other sites at the back end of the year.

**SANDERLING** *Calidris alba*

Rare passage visitor

A good year with two main sties. At Ringstone Edge Reservoir, in May, one on 15th; two in summer plumage on 16th and two in winter plumage on 17th (JB, JED, NCD, AC) then at Blackmoorfoot Reservoir, summer plumage birds on 27th May (MLD) and 24th July (AD).

**LITTLE STINT** *Calidris minuta*

Rare passage visitor

One at Dewsbury Sewage Farm on 18th September (BH).

**DUNLIN** *Calidris alpina*

Migrant breeder (1-2). Uncommon passage visitor

Blackmoorfoot Reservoir In January, four on 3rd; one on 4th and two on 6th; two on 21st April and one to two on five dates in May. Then, in Autumn, on seven bird days between 13th July and 27th September, the maximum being three on 24th September.

Ringstone Edge Reservoir Singles on 24th April, 15th and 17th May; two on 14th May and four on 16th May. Two on 4th and 7th September then, in November, singles on 2nd (chased by a Peregrine) and 6th.

The only other Spring record concerned two west at Winscar Reservoir on 29th March. Six pairs bred at Black Moss. Autumn produced other records at Scout Dike Reservoir, in August, two on 3rd and one on 29th and, in September, one on 6th and three on 7th and also in September at Dewsbury Sewage Farm with one on 12th; three on 18th and five on 26th.

**RUFF** *Philomachus pugnax*

Scarce passage visitor

At Scout Dike Reservoir, one on 7th August (MCW) and one on 1st and 6th September (NEP, BBSG). Blackmoorfoot Reservoir had one on 7th August (MLD, AD) and three on 29th August (SH) and Dewsbury Sewage Farm had one on 22nd August (SH, BH).

**JACK SNIPE** *Lymnocyptes minimus*

Scarce passage and winter visitor

Elland Gravel Pits was again the best location. Singles on eight dates in January and February. The first of the Autumn was one on 26th October, the one or two on seven dates to the year end, with a maximum of three on 20th December (JB, HBC). Deer Hill Reservoir had records in February, with two on 10th and 21st and singles on 16th and 27th (TD). One was photographed by a non-birdwatcher at a small dam at Armitage Bridge on 11th December (per RSPB).

**SNIPE** *Gallinago gallinago*

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

Occasionally reported in the early part of the year. Blackmoorfoot Reservoir, in January, had singles on 2nd, 17th and 23rd; in February, two on 3rd and eight on 27th and 28th and two to four were then present almost daily from early March to 4th April. Elland Gravel Pits had one on 17th January and, in March, one on 1st and 2nd and two on 27th. Otherwise, one at Meltham Mills Pond on 4th January; three at Royd Moor Reservoir on 12th February and one to three at Ingbirchworth Reservoir from 12th to 31st March.

Breeding sites, with number of pairs in brackets, were Flight Hill (1); Tinker Hill (1); Flouch Inn (1); Townhead, near Winscar (1) and Broadstones Reservoir (1). Also present in Summer months and probably bred at Deanhead Reservoir; Windleden Edge; Dog and Partridge, near Langsett; Maythorn, near Broadstones and Whitley Common.

Blackmoorfoot Reservoir had relatively few Autumn records with one to three on only nine dates from 5th September to 14th December. Elland Gravel Pits was slightly better with birds also on nine dates from 2nd September to the year end, mainly one to five but, in November, 25 on 2nd; 24 on 8th and 15 on 10th. Ringstone Edge Reservoir had one on 29th August; six on 31st August; five on 1st September and circa 10 on 17th November. The maximum for the Autumn at Scout Dike Reservoir was six on 6th September and the only other record was one at Dewsbury Sewage Farm on 12th September.

**WOODCOCK** *Scolopax rusticola*

Resident breeder (2). Uncommon winter visitor

More records received than of late. In January, singles at Deer Hill and near Mellor Wood on 5th and at Elland Gravel Pits on 18th. Roding birds were seen at Yateholme (2); Winscar Reservoir (1); Langsett/Little Don Valley (7+); Stone Wood (1); Gunthwaite (2) and Hoylandswaine (1). Also seen at Booth Dam Clough on 6th March.

October saw several records, probably migrants. On 22nd, singles at Royd House Wood and a Fixby garden; one at Blackmoorfoot Reservoir on 27th and two at Elland Gravel Pits on 30th. Singles were also at the latter site on 25th November and 4th December. Also at Bradley Gate Wood on 13th November; Fixby garden on 16th November; south of Castle Hill on 27th and 29th November and at Healey House on 23rd and 30th December.

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

Rare passage visitor

A record count for the club area, of 12 birds flew east between Cawthorne and Barugh Green on 8th July (GMC per BBSG).

**WHIMBREL** *Numenius phaeopus*

Scarce to uncommon passage visitor

The only Spring birds were singles, in May, at Broadstones Reservoir on 15th and 16th and Blackmoorfoot Reservoir on 17th. Autumn records started with one west at Blackmoorfoot on 27th June (with 18 Curlew) and, in July, singles over Townhead, near Winscar on 17th; Lindley Moor on 19th and Cowcliffe on 27th. In August, one over Skelmanthorpe on 8th and 13 west there on 20th.

**CURLEW** *Numenius arquata*

Migrant breeder (2). Common passage visitor

An unseasonal bird flew west at Blackmoorfoot Reservoir on 2nd January. Early March saw the more usual arrivals with one at Digley on 4th; one at Blackmoorfoot and two at Ingbirchworth on 8th and one over Meltham on 11th. Many places had birds on territories from mid-March. No flocks noted in Spring, with only single figures, but birds were widely distributed.

Probable breeding at around 13 locations, the best being Winscar (four family parties on 28th June) and the Ingbirchworth area (four pairs summered with at least two breeding). At Blackmoorfoot Reservoir, a good movement of 36 west during the morning of 27th June was followed by occasional one's and two's to the end of August. After that, singles west on 16th October and 25th November. The only other Autumn passage birds were two at Scout Dike Reservoir on 28th July and two at Broadstones on 31st July.

**REDSHANK** *Tringa totanus*

Migrant breeder (1). Uncommon passage and winter visitor

Passage through the area started from mid-March with singles at Blackmoorfoot Reservoir on 14th and 27th; Ingbirchworth Reservoir, one or two on many dates from 20th March to 16th April; Ringstone Edge Reservoir, two on 22nd and one on 25th March and one on 3rd May; Dovestones Reservoir, two on 2nd and four on 3rd April; Elland Gravel Pits, one on 7th April and Horbury Wyke, one on 19th April. Blackmoorfoot Reservoir had one or two on many dates from 3rd April to 1st June.

Breeding success occurred at Black Moss (3); Tinker Hill (1+); Townhead (1) and pairs also present in the breeding season at Winscar and at the Dog and Partridge Inn, near Langsett.

Autumn birds included one or two on 11 dates from 19th June to 5th September at Blackmoorfoot Reservoir; Scout Dike Reservoir, singles on 14th and 30th July; Dewsbury Sewage Farm, one on 29th July and two on 1st August and one at Ringstone Edge Reservoir on 1st August. Just one record in the winter period of one at Elland Gravel Pits on 24th November.

**GREENSHANK** *Tringa nebularia*

Uncommon passage visitor

Not a bad year considering generally high water levels. In Spring, one at Blackmoorfoot Reservoir on 13th and 14th May and one west at Elland Gravel Pits on 16th May. Autumn records from Ringstone Edge Reservoir, one on 1st August and 1st September; Scout Dike Reservoir, one on 2nd August; Blackmoorfoot Reservoir, two on 7th and three on 8th August; Boshaw Wharves, one on 14th September and Dewsbury Sewage Farm, one on 15th September.

**GREEN SANDPIPER** *Tringa ochropus*

Uncommon passage and winter visitor

For the third consecutive winter, a single was at Gunthwaite Dam and seen on seven dates in January and February. In Spring, one at Ingbirchworth Reservoir from 30th March to 3rd April. Historically, sewage works along the River Calder have been very good for this species, though they are not always well watched or reported from. Dewsbury Sewage Farm was quite well watched this year and produced birds present on many days between 30th July and 26th September, normally two to four birds but seven on 22nd September. Scout Dike Reservoir held one from 31st July to 6th September with two present from 7th to 11th and 30th August.

**WOOD SANDPIPER** *Tringa glareola*

Rare passage visitor

One at Broadstones Reservoir on 11th September. (MCW per BBSC).

**COMMON SANDPIPER** *Actitis hypoleucos*

Migrant breeder (2)

The first, and well ahead of the main arrival, was a single at Ringstone Edge Reservoir on 10th April. The next were three at Digley Reservoir and two at Brownhill Reservoir on 24th April and one at Blackmoorfoot Reservoir the next day. Birds were well distributed by mid-May. Bred at Winscar Reservoir (2+); Langsett Reservoir (2); Dovestones Reservoir (1); Woodhead Reservoir, north of A628 and Lower Windleden Reservoir.

Blackmoorfoot Reservoir had one to three birds on many dates to 7th June and then reasonable numbers from 6th July to 10th August with a maximum of five on 10th July. After that just one record of a single on 4th September. The other best sites for Autumn migrants were Scout Dike Reservoir, one to three on many dates 4th July to 23rd August; Elland Gravel Pits, singles on four dates 17th July to 19th August and Dewsbury Sewage Farm with birds between 20th July and 28th August, normally one to three but at least six on 3rd August. Also recorded on odd dates in July and August at another four locations.

**TURNSTONE** *Arenaria interpres*

Scarce passage visitor

An excellent series of records in May. After one at Ingbirchworth Reservoir on 10th (NEP), Ringstone Edge Reservoir had two on 14th (NCD, AC, JB); and singles on 15th (AC); 16th (AC, TK, JB) and 18th (AC, TK).

**MEDITERRANEAN GULL** *Larus melanocephalus*

Rare visitor

A first summer bird at Elland Gravel Pits on 17th March (MH) and then in December at Blackmoorfoot Reservoir, single adults on 6th (PB, DMO) and 31st (D By, SH, PB) and a first winter on 18th (MLD). All accepted by YNU.

**LITTLE GULL** *Larus minutus*

Scarce passage visitor

An adult at Scout Dike Reservoir on 24th May (BBSG) and two adults at Blackmoorfoot Reservoir on 15th July (DMO).

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

Resident breeder (1). Numerous passage and winter visitor

Blackmoorfoot Reservoir Specific counts of this species were 5963 on 29th January and 5100 on 9th December. Counts of Black-Headed and Common Gulls combined were 6700 on 2nd January; 3950 on 3rd October; 4,000 on 4th December and 5,500 on 5th December. Birds were also noted on various flight paths to the Blackmoorfoot roost, with a maximum of 1,250 over Lindley Moor on 30th December (coming from the Elland area) and 3,650 flying west up the Cnlne Valley on 21st December (viewed from Golcar). Numbers over both these areas fluctuated with the weather, birds taking different routes according to the conditions.

Elland Gravel Pits had 3-400 birds in January and February, and in the latter part of the year, a maximum of 1,200 on 18th December. Other concentrations of note were 350 at Ingbirchworth Reservoir in January; Ringstone Edge Reservoir, 300 on 24th August and 200 on 17th November; Langsett Reservoir, circa 1,000 on 3rd October and Royd Moor Reservoir, 500 on 22nd October. Around 30 pairs nested this year at Black Moss.

**COMMON GULL** *Larus canus*

Common passage and winter visitor

Blackmoorfoot Reservoir Recorded in all months but May. The highest counts were 837 on 29th January and 600 on 9th December. Low numbers from June to mid-September before the gradual build-up to the winter maximum. Birds noted flying to the roost over Lindley Moor (from the Elland area) with a maximum of 107 on 30th December.

Otherwise, numbers reported appeared low, with the best being at Elland Gravel Pits, 60 on 5th February; Wholestone Moor, 30 on 14th November; Ringstone Edge Reservoir, circa 150 on 17th November and Scammonden Dam, 80 in fields to south on 5th December.

**LESSER BLACK-HEADED GULL** *Larus fuscus*

Common passage and winter visitor

Blackmoorfoot Reservoir After single figures in January, a slow spring build-up to the high of 144 on 27th March. This quickly tailed off, with under 25 present on any one day till

increased activity in mid-July. Monthly maximum counts to the year end were 233 on 20th July; 669 on 26th August; 1317 on 24th September; 1,007 on 8th October; no November counts and typically lower numbers in December with 20 on 4th and 5th.

Langsett Reservoir Roosting counts received were 1,000 on 30th July; 1,000 on 8th August; 304 on 17th October and circa 2,000 on 2nd November.

Other good counts included around 1,300 in fields near the Flouch Inn on 12th July and 308 at Broadstones Reservoir on 31st July. Up to 100 birds noted at a few other sites with small groups passing over, particularly from May to October.

Birds showing characteristics of the race *L.f. intermedius* or *L.f. fuscus* were reported as follows: Broadstones Reservoir, one on 9th October; Langsett Reservoir, 'many' on 2nd November and five on 8th November and at Elland Gravel Pits, seven on 20th November and one to four on another seven dates to the year end. The only birds thought to be *L.f. fuscus* were two at Langsett Reservoir on 28th March with all the others probably being *L.f. intermedius*.

#### **HERRING GULL** *Larus argentatus* Common passage and winter visitor

Blackmoorfoot Reservoir After a high of 458 on 29th January, numbers tailed off to six by 27th March. A very rare gull in the Summer months in our area. No birds were seen in April and May then singles on 25th June; 27th July and 21st August. A few records from mid-September onwards but a slow build-up to 60 on 4th December. After this a typical influx of birds with 567 by 24th December. Up to 75% of these are of the race 'argentatus'. This percentage drops in early February to around 30%. Birds flying over Lindley Moor towards the roost at Blackmoorfoot (from the Elland area) peaked at just 51 on 30th December, though more birds were present than that in the Elland area.

Elland Gravel Pits Peaks roughly follow those of Blackmoorfoot. A maximum of 115 on 11th January and in February and March only up to six birds present. The winter build-up noted from mid-November with 37 on 20th up to a maximum of 390 on 18th December with normally from 100 to 230 to the year end. During January and December up to 90% of adults were of the race 'argentatus'.

Virtually no other records of significance received, not necessarily from lack of birds. An adult **Yellow-legged Gull**, of undetermined race, was at Broadstones Reservoir on 22nd August.

### ICELAND GULL *Larus glaucoides*

Scarce winter visitor

Another excellent year for this species, particularly in the latter months. An adult at Langsett Reservoir on 3rd January (BBSG) and a first summer at Elland Gravel Pits on 29th and 30th January (MH et al). Blackmoorfoot Reservoir had a second winter bird on 24th October - the earliest ever 'arrived' date for the area (MLD, DMO). Also at this site, first winter birds were present from 1st to 12th December (KW et al) and a different one on 24th and 25th December (MLD, DMO). Elland Gravel Pits also had several records with a first winter from 20th November to 5th December (MH et al). This was the same bird which roosted at Blackmoorfoot up to 12th December. Also, a third or fourth winter on 12th December (JB, JED) and a third winter, a different bird, on 29th December (MH, JB).

### GLAUCOUS GULL *Larus hyperboreus*

Scarce winter visitor

As with the previous species, an excellent series of records.

Blackmoorfoot Reservoir A first winter was seen, in January, on 5th and 6th (DMO); 17th (JKP) and 18th (AJW). A first winter on 26th November (DWS); third winter on 4th December (SH et al) and second winter 10th to 18th December (PB et al).

Elland Gravel Pits A second winter 9th to 17th January (JB et al) and a second winter 11th to 13th December (MH, JB).

Other records were of a first winter, in January, at Broadstones Reservoir on 27th (BBSG) and in the Langsett Reservoir roost on 30th and 31st (BBSG).

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

Common winter visitor

Blackmoorfoot Reservoir Monthly maximum counts, where noted, were 169 on 2nd January; two on 6th March, then birds were absent from 12th March to 15th September. Low numbers present till 14 on 24th October and a peak of 248 on 24th December.

Elland Gravel Pits January maximum of 18 on 11th then two on 5th February. Absent then till one on 18th September. The main numbers built up from late November with 19 on 26th, rising to 76 on 28th December.

Very few other records received for this species, although noted en route to Blackmoorfoot at Golcar with a maximum of 37 on 16th December.



**KITTIWAKE** *Rissa tridactyla*

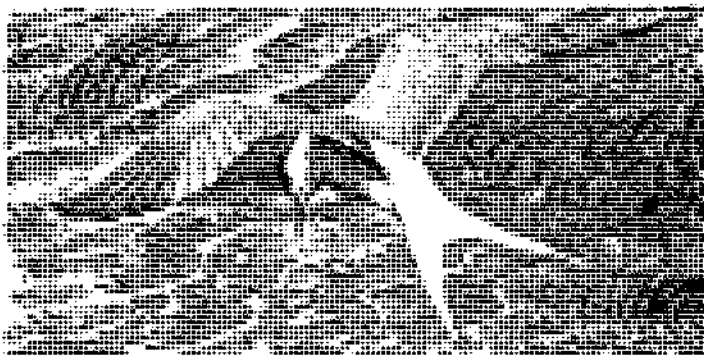
Scarce passage visitor

Singles, all adults, in the Langsett Reservoir roost on 20th February; Blackmoorfoot Reservoir on 10th April and Elland Gravel Pits on 14th and 18th May.

**SANDWICH TERN** *Sterna sandvicensis*

Rare passage visitor

Four spent the day at Elland Gravel Pits on 13th April (JR per HBC et al).



**COMMON TERN** *Sterna hirundo*

Uncommon passage visitor

A good spring passage started with one at Ingbirchworth (with two Arctic Terns) on 25th April. Elland Gravel Pits enjoyed many in May with two on 10th and 11th; three on 12th; one on 13th nine on 14th; five on 15th; two on 16th and one on 18th. Blackmoorfoot Reservoir had, in May, singles on 11th; 14th to 17th and 24th along with two on 22nd. At Scout Dike Reservoir, an adult in non-breeding plumage on 13th May and one on 24th May. Bretton Park had one on 31st May and three on 1st August. Autumn was generally much quieter than Spring with birds at Blackmoorfoot Reservoir, one on 27th June; in July, singles on 4th and 17th and two on 5th and 29th and then singles on 21st August and 5th September. Just one other record of three at Elland Gravel Pits on 26th July.

**ARCTIC TERN** *Sterna paradisaea*

Uncommon passage visitor

The first was at Elland Gravel Pits, a single on 13th April, followed by two at Ingbirchworth Reservoir on 25th April (with one Common Tern). No records till an adult and a juvenile at Elland Gravel Pits on 28th July, then Blackmoorfoot Reservoir had a total of 11 through on 1st August and a single on 6th August - all adults.

**LITTLE TERN** *Sterna albifrons*

Rare passage visitor

One at Elland Gravel Pits on 14th May rounded off a tremendous Spring for Terns at this location (NCD et al).

**BLACK TERN** *Chlidonias niger*

Scarce passage visitor

An immature arrived at Scout Dike Reservoir during heavy thunderstorms on 8th September (NEP) and could possibly have been the same bird as one at the same location on 11th September (per BBSG).

**FERAL PIGEON** *Columba livia*

Resident breeder (3)

No records of any significance.

**STOCK DOVE** *Columba oenas*

Resident breeder (2)

Reasonable flocks in the early months at Royd Moor Reservoir, 86 on 1st January and circa 40 on 18th February; Gunthwaite Dam, 56 on 17th January - possibly part of the Royd Moor flock and 29 at Deanhead Reservoir on 25th May. Recorded in the breeding season from 27 locations. The best flocks at the back end of the year were 50 at Scout Dike Reservoir on 19th October and 22 at Elland Gravel Pits on 26th December.

**WOODPIGEON** *Columba palumbus*  
Resident breeder (4). Numerous winter visitor

Some good sized flocks still around in January and February after the influx of late 1992. At Elland Gravel Pits, 650 on 1st January, then 400 to 600 till early February; Norecroft, 70 on 3rd January; Mellor Wood, 200 on 3rd January; Rushfield Dike, 100 on 25th January and Mollicar Wood, 80 on 3rd February. Numbers noted from Autumn were poor, probably indicating a genuine scarcity of the bird. Apart from 210 at Royd Moor Reservoir on 17th October, no flocks of over 40 reported to the year end.

**COLLARED DOVE** *Streptopelia decaocto*  
Resident breeder (3)

Maximum counts of any flocks were circa 40 at Cannon Hall on 9th February; 23 near Honley Centre on 15th November; 20 at Wooldale on 15th December and 32 during December at a Marsh garden. Otherwise up to 20, but usually single figures noted at many locations throughout the year.

**TURTLE DOVE** *Streptopelia turtur*  
Migrant breeder (1)

Remains scarce, though not all suitable habitat for this species is well watched. One at Elland Gravel Pits on 22nd May (HBC) and one singing at New Mill on 29th June (L L-E).

**RING-NECKED PARAKEET** *Psittacula krameri*  
Rare feral visitor

Just one record this year of a single on Thick Hollins Drive, Meltham on 13th January.

**CUCKOO** *Cuculus canorus*  
Migrant breeder (2)

The first was one at Scammonden Dam on 27th April followed by single males on 1st May at Digley and Dunford Bridge. More generally distributed and noted from mid-May to mid-June. Apart from the mentioned locations, other probable breeding sites were Deffer Wood; Crossley's Plantation; Almondbury; Norecroft; Grange Moor and quite possibly the other 13 sites where birds were reported on odd dates. As in the last two years, no records after the end of June.

**BARN OWL** *Tyto alba*

Occasional breeder (1). Former resident

One in car headlights, on the wall of the golf course at Crosland Hill, on 28th September (DM, DI).

**LITTLE OWL** *Athene noctua*

Resident breeder (2)

Pairs successfully bred at Lindley Moor; Royd Moor; Highburton; Lumb Lane, Almondbury; Whitley Willows; Skelmanthorpe; Broadstones (2); Penistone (at least 10 pairs, mainly in the Cubley area) and recorded in the summer months and probably bred at Lepton Great Wood; Kirkheaton; Dewsbury Sewage Farm; Denby Wood; Langsett; Crimble Clough; South Crosland; Gawthorpe; Nr Holmfirth; Hinchcliffe Mill; Digley; Nr Blad Edge; Nr Baitings Reservoir; Nr Slaithwaite; Derby Delph Quarry; Grimescar Valley; Blackley and near Yatcholme. Outside the breeding season also recorded from another eight sites.

**TAWNY OWL** *Strix aluco*

Resident breeder (2)

Bred at Jenkinson Wood; Cellars Clough; Denby Wood; near Sparth Reservoir; Lepton Great Wood; High Hoyland; West Bretton; Gunthwaite; Ingbirchworth Reservoir and Hoylandswaine. No doubt a strong probability of breeding from another 17 areas from which summer records were received.

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

Resident breeder (1)

Confirmed breeding at two locations and present at two others in the breeding season. One flew into a moving car near Oxygrains Beck on 21st August. It was taken home by the driver but died later (per TM).

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

Resident/migrant breeder (1). Scarce passage/winter visitor

No early winter records received, but a good presence during the breeding season with birds at three sites. At the main site, three pairs successfully bred with six young from two of the pairs being ringed. (per BBSG). The other two areas, both suitable for breeding, had two records each in the summer months. No records from the latter part of the year.

**NIGHTJAR** *Caprimulgus europaeus*

Rare migrant

A male was churring near Langsett Reservoir from 7th June to 7th July. Its favoured area was just to the south of our area but occasionally was on the 'border'. To the west of this site a bird was seen in our area on 29th July (per BBSG). The first record since 1985.

**SWIFT** *Apus apus*

Migrant breeder (3)

The first arrivals, a little later than usual, were two at Ingbirchworth on 4th May; singles at Royd Moor and Derby Delph Quarry on 8th May, then three at Colnebridge on 9th May. Many locations saw their first birds on 10th and 11th May. A high spring concentration of possibly up to 1,000 at Ingbirchworth on 13th May (GMC per BBSG). Around 200 were near the centre of Almondbury on 16th May and otherwise well under 50 at most locations.

Autumn passage noted from late July to mid-August. Blackmoorfoot Reservoir had 50 on 26th July and, in August, 96 on 3rd; 90 on 8th; 64 on 14th with the last two on 18th. At Skelmanthorpe, 285 flew west on 8th August and most locations had no records after mid-August. The one exception was a single over Bradley Park Golf Course on 8th September.

**KINGFISHER** *Alcedo atthis*

Resident breeder (1)

Continuing last year's trend, good numbers noted in the area. This could possibly be due to recent mild winters or perhaps an improvement in the water quality on some of the rivers. Bred at Elland Gravel Pits (one or two pairs) and strongly suspected of breeding at Scout Dike Reservoir; Cawthorne Dyke; Ossett; Black Brook near Barkisland; Bretton Park; River Don at Oxspring; River Colne near Colnebridge and also seen in the summer months at Deighton Sewage farm; River Calder north of Bradley; River Colne at Bradley; River Holme at Holmfirth and the brewery dam at Lockwood. Outside the breeding season recorded often in the Aspley/Kingsmill Lane/Folly Hall areas of the River Colne, though they could possibly breed here also. One was found dead near the canal at Bradley on 2nd January. Blackmoorfoot Reservoir had one on many dates from 21st August to 28th December and two on 30th and 31st December. Single records from Scammonden Dam on 12th September and near War Carr Reservoir on 20th December.

**GREEN WOODPECKER** *Picus viridis*

Resident breeder (1-2)

Successfully bred at Scout Dike Reservoir; Elland Gravel Pits; Longwood Valley; Scammonden and Summer records in suitable breeding areas from Cliffe Wood at Brockholes; Holmfirth;

Stocksmoor Common; Woodsome Valley; Marten Bank Wood; Bretton Park; Grimescar Valley; Mollicar Wood and possibly bred at another 11 locations. Sites which don't get records often included two at Ingbirchworth Reservoir on 16th March and one at Blackmoorfoot Reservoir on 1st April.

**GREAT SPOTTED WOODPECKER** *Dendrocopos major*

Resident breeder (2)

Well-recorded and particularly common in the east of the club area. The Almondbury area probably has a breeding pair in every piece of woodland. Bred or probably bred in 40 areas, several with two or three pairs. A nice visitor in the winter months to many garden bird tables.

**LESSER SPOTTED WOODPECKER** *Dendrocopos minor*

Resident breeder (1)

Often located in March and April when birds are calling or displaying. At other times can be hard to see but an occasional garden visitor in the Winter months. Probably bred at Penny Spring Wood; Lepton Great Wood; Bradley Gate Wood; Elland Gravel Pits and Bretton Park.

The last site had a maximum of three males and two females on 4th April. Odd records outside the breeding season, but in suitable locations, from Anchor Wood; Mollicar Wood; near Fixby; Guuthwaite; Beaumont Park; Greenhead Park and TP Wood. Garden sightings this year at Almondbury on 5th and 31st January and Fenay Bridge on 21st November.



**SKYLARK** *Alauda arvensis*

Resident breeder (3-4)

Noted at Royd Moor Reservoir in January, with at least 10 on the 1st. Otherwise returned to breeding grounds from mid-February. At Marsden Gate, 18 on 3rd March. Low numbers, below 10, seen flying over the area during October and, in December, two over Holywell Brook on 1st and two at Upper Cumberworth on 3rd. Generally under-recorded.

**SAND MARTIN** *Riparia riparia*

Migrant, rare breeder

Still few enough seen to list all records received. Blackmoorfoot in April had three on 10th and one on 12th; Bretton Park, in April, had one on 12th and three on 14th; Elland Gravel Pits, in April, had three on 13th, one on 17th and three on 20th and, in May, two on 10th, 11th and 31st, nine on 14th and one on 15th and Ingbirchworth Reservoir had the only other Spring record of eight on 8th May. In July, two at Ingbirchworth Reservoir and four at Scout Dike Reservoir on 12th; one at Ringstone Edge Reservoir on 18th and Elland Gravel Pits, one on 21st and three on 29th. In August, two on the river Calder east of Ossett (a previous nesting area) on 3rd and the last was one at Scout Dike Reservoir on 11th.

**SWALLOW** *Hirundo rustica*

Migrant breeder (4). Numerous passage visitor

Early birds were at Blackmoorfoot Reservoir, one on 31st March and two on 10th April; Bretton Park, two on 4th April and Scout Dike Reservoir, one on 9th April. A good influx then from 11th April. Maximum Spring counts were 60 at Elland Gravel Pits on 14th April; at least 200 at Bretton Park on 12th May and around 300 at Ingbirchworth Reservoir the following day.

Autumn passage at Blackmoorfont Reservoir saw high counts of 48 on 28th August; 100 south on 21st September and three October records, 11 on 1st; 10 south on 3rd and one on 17th. Other concentrations noted were 100 at Royd Moor Reservoir on 15th August; circa 80 at Ingbirchworth Reservoir on 6th September, then up to 40 at several sites in September to mid-month, dwindling to single figures by the month end. Other October records were two at Scholes on 7th and one at Helme on 14th.

**HOUSE MARTIN** *Delichon urbica*

Migrant breeder (3)

Arrived at three sites on 12th April, two at Blackmoorfoot and Bretton Park and one at Ingbirchworth Reservoir. One the following day at Elland Gravel Pits but the main arrival appeared to be from mid-late April. The highest Spring counts at the best sites were; Ingbirchworth

Reservoir, 100 on 9th May and circa 300 on 13th May and Elland Gravel Pits, 150 on 14th May. Otherwise less than 20 birds at any one site.

Autumn peaks at Blackmoorfoot Reservoir, 50 on 9th August and last record of two on 21st September; Scout Dike Reservoir, 75 on 11th August; Royd Moor Reservoir, 100 on 15th August; Dunford Bridge, 120 on 24th August; Elland Gravel Pits, 80 on 4th September and Ingbirchworth Reservoir, 60 on 6th September. Birds virtually absent after 21st September except for nine at Scholes on 7th October and the last one over Almondbury Bank on 9th October.

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

Migrant breeder (2-3)

Unusually, no April records, with the first at Heyden Bridge on 3rd May. Breeding season locations and number of singing males were Heyden Bridge (1); Rushfield Dike (1); Langsett Reservoir (1); Bretton (1); Silkstone Sewage Farm (1); Near Cannon Hall (1); Cliffe Wood at Langsett (1); Scammonden (1); and the last site was the Snailsden/Holme Styes area (c 12). Several Autumn records with one to three at Skelmanthorpe from 13th to 22nd August; one at Blackmoorfoot Reservoir on 6th August; two at Elland Gravel pits on 19th August; one over Crosland Moor on 30th August then, in September, singles at Winscar Reservoir on 4th; Booth Wood Clough on 11th and west at Scammonden on 12th, the last two records being reasonably late.

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

Resident breeder (4-5). Partial migrant

Only a handful of records in the early Winter months, usually single figures but 26 at Bradley Sewage Farm on 26th January. Just small Spring concentrations, the best being 25 at Underbank on 7th March, prior to being widespread on breeding grounds by mid-March.

Several Autumn flocks around but not exceptional in number. The maximum counts were Ringstone Edge, 40 on 4th and 60 on 29th September; Lindley Moor, 20 west on 22nd September; Scammonden, 50 on 25th September and at Elland Gravel Pits, passage noted following snow numbered 33 on 21st November and, in December, 80 on 12th and 50 on 13th with birds flying east. Up to 10 noted at several places in October, November and December with 20 at Hoylandswaine Sewage Farm on 21st November and 22 near War Carr Reservoir on 20th December. One on the moors at Windleden Edge on 6th December was unusual at that altitude.

#### **ROCK PIPIT** *Anthus petrosus*

Rare visitor

A bird of the Scandinavian race *A.p. littoralis* at Ringstone Edge Reservoir on 15th March (JB). The first definite record of this race for the club area, though suspected on one previous occasion.



### **YELLOW WAGTAIL** *Motacilla flava*

Migrant breeder (1)

An early male flew over Royd Moor Reservoir on 12th April, followed by singles at Deer Hill on 24th April and Blackmoorfoot Reservoir on 15th May. The only breeding season record was a male at Emley on 30th June, though the species probably does still breed undetected in small numbers within the area, due to its habitat in farmland being infrequently visited by birdwatchers.

Several Autumn records at Scout Dike Reservoir, one on 24th July and two on 19th and 20th September; Hoylandswaine, two on 13th August; Skelmanthorpe, in August, one on 17th, seven on 22nd and two on 28th; Salendine Nook, two on 19th August; Blackmoorfoot Reservoir, one on 21st August; Hade Edge, two from 6th to 11th September; Scammonden, one on 12th September and finally a late bird at Gunthwaite Dam on 2nd October.

### **GREY WAGTAIL** *Motacilla cinerea*

Resident breeder (2)

Confirmed breeding at Dunford Bridge; Bullhouse; Hazlehead; Royd Moor Reservoir; Langsett Reservoir (3 pairs); Cliffe Wood at Langsett; Bretton Park and probably bred at another 20 locations which had birds or pairs within the breeding season. Several areas reported passage birds going over in September and October but the best site was Blackmoorfoot Reservoir which had one to two birds on 37 dates between 13th June and 3rd December, through mainly in July to September, with peaks of four south on 11th and three south on 12th September.

### **PIED WAGTAIL** *Motacilla alba*

Resident breeder (3)

The Civic Centre roost held between 70 and 130 birds from January to mid-March and pre-roost gatherings of over 100 at Springwood car park on 7th and 9th April. The only other concentrations of note were 28 at Bradley Sewage Farm on 15th February and 25 at dusk at Hade Edge on 1st October. No birds roosted in trees at the Civic Centre roost, in the latter months, prior to around 140 seen on 23rd December, though some calls had been heard from rooftops from October.

Birds showing the characteristics of **White Wagtail** *M.a.alba* at Ringstone Edge Reservoir, a male on 20th and 21st April; Millhouse Green, one on 30th April and near Ingbirchworth, one on 17th May.

**DIPPER** *Cinclus cinclus*

Resident breeder (2)

Only confirmed breeding at Oxygrains Beck, Holmfirth and Hill Top Reservoir but suspected of doing so at Meltham (to the west of); Little Don Valley; Crowden; Digley Bottom; Black Brook; Meltham Bar; Dovestones Reservoir and also a summer sighting on the River Colne at Linthwaite. The only records away from these areas were one at Ringstone Edge Reservoir on 17th November and one on Meltham Mills Pond on several dates from 17th November to the year end.

**WREN** *Troglodytes troglodytes*

Resident breeder (4)

Remains common in all areas up to the very fringes of open moorland. Examples of densities are around 10 pairs breeding in each of Penny Spring Wood and Lepton Great Wood.

**DUNNOCK** *Prunella modularis*

Resident breeder (3)

No records of any significance.

**ROBIN** *Erithacus rubecula*

Resident breeder (4-5).

No records of any significance.

**BLACK REDSTART** *Phoenicurus ochruros*

Rare visitor

**ADDITION TO 1992 REPORT** A singing male was reported from Dovestones Reservoir on 30th May and 14th June with undated sightings of a female also. (per GMBR).

**1993** A female was at Scammonden on 15th April (JB, JE and SMD) and at Dovestones Reservoir, a singing male was located on 30th May (per GMBR). News of the Dovestones records was only reported after the event, but the possibility of breeding cannot be ruled out.

**REDSTART** *Phoenicurus phoenicurus*

Migrant breeder (2)

The first birds were in April with singles at Digley on 14th and Cliffe Wood, Langsett on 16th. On 1st May, three were along the old railway line at Dunford Bridge. Bred at Scammonden and Gunthwaite and occasional Summer records from Digley; Skelmanthorpe; Honley Wood; Booth Wood; Bretton Park and the Little Don Valley which had four males on 23rd May. Several records of passage birds in Autumn started with immatures near Lindley Moor on 29th July and 13th August; one to two on seven dates at Scout Dike Reservoir between 7th August and 11th September with three on 29th August; one at Bradley Park Golf course on 31st August and, in September, singles near Holmfirth on 18th and Ringstone Edge Reservoir on 21st.

**WHINCHAT** *Saxicola rubetra*

Migrant breeder (2)

Arrived from late April with singles at Wessenden on 24th and Scammonden on 27th. Then, in May, one at Goodbent Lodge on 1st May and a passage bird at Broadstones on 18th. Bred at Scammonden (4 pairs); near Digley (1); Winscar Reservoir (4 of which at least 2 successful); between Meltham and Deer Hill (2) and probably at Wessenden and the Little Don Valley. A few noted in Autumn with one at Crosland Heath on 3rd August; one in the upper Grimescar Valley from 3rd August to 5th September; at Skelmanthorpe, in August, three on 20th, one on 22nd and two on 23rd; singles at Scout Dike Reservoir on 18th August and 8th September; a family party of four still near Digley on 12th September; three at Turley Cote Lane, Lindley Moor on 17th September and finally a late bird at Bradley on 26th September.

**STONECHAT** *Saxicola torquata*

Occasional breeder (1). Scarce passage and winter visitor

Another excellent year for this species but no records from the breeding season.

Deer Hill A pair present on three dates from 1st to 9th January and one at nearby Wills O Nats on 6th March. A big influx in October with seven on 14th (two males and five females) with a pair seen on several dates after this to 8th November. A male was at Wills O Nats on 24th November.

Dovestones Reservoir A pair on 1st January and a male on 24th November.

Broadstones (to east of Reservoir). In February, one on 5th and 11th and two on 14th and 17th.

Deanhead/Scammonden Present from 29th September (a pair) to 30th November (a pair) though two pairs were present on 14th October and 7th November and probably in between those dates.

Other locations had records of singles unless otherwise stated. Baitings Reservoir on 13th February; Royd Moor Reservoir on 13th March; Ingbirchworth area on 30th October and 17th November; West Nab, a pair on 31st October; Winscar Reservoir on 17th November; Dunford Bridge on 4th December and two at Wessenden Head Reservoir on 31st December.

**WHEATEAR** *Oenanthe oenanthe*

Migrant breeder (2)

March produced the first records with an early one at Digley on 14th, then one at Royd Moor Reservoir on 21st; three at Broadstones on 23rd and then an influx to the general area of Ingbirchworth and Broadstones with 21 on 25th March. On 26th March, one in the Little Don Valley and four at Scammonden. Another date which saw more arrivals was 2nd April with nine at Scammonden; one at Crosland Hill; and seven at Deer Hill. Bred at Broadstones; the Dovestones area; Upper Windleden Reservoir; and probably at Ringstone Edge Reservoir and Issues Road in addition to the places mentioned under early records. The only late records received were in September, with singles at Digley on 12th and Royd Moor Reservoir on 18th.

Birds showing characteristics of the Greenland race *O.o. leucorrhoa* at Deanhead Reservoir, two on 23rd April and one on 21st May; Whitley Lane, one on 3rd May and Spicer House Lane, on on 8th May.

**RING OUZEL** *Turdus torquatus*

Migrant breeder (2)

As so often in the past, Digley had the first with one on 30th March. In April, singles at Scammonden and Ingbirchworth Reservoir on 2nd; near Lindley Moor on 10th and four in the Little Don Valley on 10th. Bred at Little Don Valley (1 pair); in the Dovestones area (at least one pair, and a maximum of six birds on 9th May) and highly likely at Digley. One in suitable area at Buckstones Crag on 23rd May. Just one record of note after the breeding season, two at Scammonden on 19th September.

**BLACKBIRD** *Turdus merula*

Resident breeder (5). Numerous winter visitor

Several groups of up to 15 birds recorded in the winter months and 25 at Penny Spring Wood from late November to the year end. Otherwise no records of any significance.

**FIELDFARE** *Turdus pilaris*

Numerous passage and winter visitor. Occasional breeder

Good numbers in the area from January to the end of March. The best sites and maximum numbers were Gunthwaite, 200 on 1st January; Booth Wood, 130 on 7th February; Royd Moor, 200 on 27th February; Baitings Reservoir, 400 on 27th March and up to 50 at many other locations. The general area of Ingbirchworth was the best with around 200 throughout building up to 600 in mid-March. Small numbers around in early April with the last birds at Blackmoorfoot Reservoir, three on 16th and 40 west on 17th.

An early returning bird at Scammonden on 26th September but the main arrival, in October, started with 10 at Fiddlers Green on 9th; one at Lindley Moor on 10th and on 13th, 40 at Blackmoorfoot and 30 at Upper Cumberworth. No particularly heavy passage days but widely scattered reports in October and November. The only records of note were 90 at Scammonden on 14th October; 100 over Emley Moor on 20th October and, again the best site, Ingbirchworth Reservoir with 500 on 30th October and 300 on 19th November. Would appear to have been scarce from mid-November. Birds leaving east after snow noted at Elland Gravel Pits with 335 on 21st November; 220 on 12th December and 85 on 28th December. The few other December records received were of under 50 birds except for 100 over Linthwaite on 17th. A pure white birds was at Deer Hill on 6th December.

#### **SDNG THRUSH** *Turdus philomelos*

Resident breeder(4)

One in a Lindley Moor garden on 24th October with a dark back, dark prominent chest spots and very pale flesh grey legs was presumably of continental origin (JED). No other records of significance.

#### **REDWING** *Turdus iliacus*

Numerous passage and Winter visitor

Fairly widespread in January with up to 40 at several locations. The high counts were at Gunthwaite, 100 on 1st; Bretton Park, 70 on 23rd and Rushfield Dike, at least 95 on 25th. Less frequently reported in February, especially after mid-month and the only record of over 30 birds was 100 at Mollicar Wood on 7th. Few in early March but, typically, migrating birds appearing in the last week with 120 at the Little Don Valley on 26th and 100 at Blackmoorfoot on 30th. An interesting record in April of two behaving furtively in an area of rhododendrons at Digley on 14th.

The first back, in October, were 22 at Blackmoorfoot Reservoir and 56 at Crosland Moor on 3rd; 40 at Quarmby on 4th and low numbers at several places from the 7th. A good passage at Lindley Moor for around an hour and a half on the morning of the 10th with 989 flying west (along with circa 200 birds of eight other species). Plenty around in October with the best numbers at Elland Gravel Pits, 100 on 11th; Scammonden, 185 on 14th and 160 at Oldfield on 14th. Lower numbers in November, but still quite widespread. Bretton Park had around 300 coming to the roost on 7th and 60 at Cannon Hall on 22nd. Elland Gravel Pits, as with Fieldfare, saw birds moving east after snow with 45 on 21st November; 280 on 12th December and 45 on 28th December. In December, apart from Bretton which had around 100, under 15 were reported from just a handful of sites with the weather obviously moving birds on.

**MISTLE THRUSH** *Turdus viscivorus*

Resident breeder (3)

No flocks noted in the early months, with birds normally paired from January. A few Autumn groups, with 24 at Booth Wood Clough and 23 at Hade Edge on 11th September; 24 in the Upper Grimescar Valley on 14th October and 16 in trees near the Tesco Supermarket in the Town Centre on 16th December. Some birds were singing by mid-December.

**GRASSHOPPER WARBLER** *Locustella naevia*

Occasional migrant breeder

Few seen this year. A singing male at Scammonden Dam from 4th to 18th July (JB et al) and a juvenile at Scout Dike Reservoir on 2nd August (MCW per BBSG).

**SEDGE WARBLER** *Acrocephalus schoenobaenus*

Migrant breeder (1)

At Elland Gravel Pits, after the first one on 26th April, numbers built up to six on 6th May after which four males were in territory. Few other records received but one male in the breeding season at Horbury Strands and two at Thornhill. Breeding was not confirmed at any site. Passage birds in Autumn at Scout Dike Reservoir, in August, two on 6th and one on 29th and singles caught and ringed at Blackmoorfoot Reservoir on 8th August and 5th September. Elland Gravel Pits had an unprecedented Winter record with one seen on four dates between 11th and 23rd December (JB, MH, TM). Information is hard to find on previous occurrences in Winter but it would appear to be the first in Yorkshire and one of very few in Britain as a whole.

**REED WARBLER** *Acrocephalus scirpaceus*

Rare passage migrant

A singing male at Horbury Wyke during the breeding season for the third consecutive year. Though never proved to have bred, it is more than likely to do so in this area (SH). Another male at Elland Gravel Pits on several dates between 7th June and 19th August (TM et al).

**LESSER WHITETHROAT** *Sylvia curruca*

Migrant breeder (1)

Spring passage started at Elland Gravel Pits with one on 28th April; two on 7th May and one on 17th May. The next was at Royd Moor Reservoir on 8th May then noted during the breeding season, mainly on occasional dates, at Emley Park; Longley Hill; Dalton and Skelmanthorpe (with

season, mainly on occasional dates, at Emley Park; Longley Hill; Dalton and Skelmanthorpe (with two or three males for several days in May, but no evidence of breeding). Autumn birds at Elland Gravel Pits, with birds on several dates between 17th July and 20th August. Normally one or two but three on 4th August. Scout Dike Reservoir, one on 21st July; in August, two on 6th and singles on 7th and 29th and one on 2nd September. Also one caught at Blackmoorfoot Reservoir on 7th August and one at Dewsbury Sewage Farm on 10th August

**WHITETHROAT** *Sylvia communis*

Migrant breeder (2)

First at Elland Gravel Pits on 27th April then, in May, singles at Scout Dike Reservoir on 2nd; Litherop Lane at Bretton on 7th and Dovestones Reservoir and Skelmanthorpe on 9th. One at Holmebridge cemetery from 22nd May to 5th June was the first record for that site. Could be subjective but appears to be getting slightly commoner with more reported than in recent years. Confirmed breeding at Elland Gravel Pits (five males present, at least two family parties); Leeds Road near Deighton (two males); Dewsbury Sewage Farm (up to three pairs) and west of Clayton West. Also records in the breeding season from Litherop Lane at Bretton; Skelmanthorpe; Emley Moor; Horbury Bridge/Wyke area (three males); Norecroft; Silkstone Sewage Farm; between the confluence of the Rivers Calder and Colne and Bradley Wood (up to three males); Lower Fell Greave Wood; Lepton and the Thornhill area (three males). Autumn migrants at Scout Dike Reservoir, in August, two on 15th and singles on 18th and 29th; one near Wills O'Nats on 18th August and the last was one in the Upper Grimescar Valley on 5th September.

**GARDEN WARBLER** *Sylvia borin*

Migrant breeder (2)

One at Elland Gravel Pits on 30th April, with up to three males here in May. The next were singles, in May, at Deffer Wood on 3rd; Litherop Lane at Bretton on 7th; Hinchcliffe Mill on 8th and then Skelmanthorpe and Thunderbridge on 9th. Males in the breeding season at Elland Gravel Pits (2); Deffer Wood (4); Digley Bottom Wood (2); Dogley N R (2); Woodsome (1); Wilderness Plantation at Bretton (1); Bretton Park (1+); Stockmoor Common (3); Windy Bank Wood (1); Denby Wood (1) and Royd Moor Reservoir (4). Noted as 'regular' on passage at Scout Dike Reservoir in the Autumn; single birds caught at Blackmoorfoot Reservoir, in July on 18th and 30th and one in gardens adjoining TP Wood at Marsh on 26th August.

**BLACKCAP** *Sylvia atricapilla*

Migrant breeder (2-3). Scarce winter visitor

Several birds around in the early winter months, all singles and seen in gardens. An overwintering bird near TP Wood from 1st January to 22nd March; Almondbury Bank from 29th January to 17th February; at Bradley on several dates from 6th February to 19th March; Ossett on 7th February;

Lumb Lane, Almondbury on 18th February and near Fixby on 21st and 28th February. This excellent series of winter records was the start of a very good breeding season for this bird. It was noted by many observers to be more common than usual and in some areas "as common as Willow Warbler". The bulk of birds started arriving from mid-April and well distributed by mid-May. Probably in excess of 100 singing males in the breeding season with plenty of juveniles seen.

Seen on passage at several sites, the best being Scout Dike Reservoir where 41 were caught and ringed during the Autumn (MCW per BBSG). The later records were two at Penny Spring Wood on 22nd September and one at Scout Dike Reservoir on 17th October. Several records, again from gardens, in November and December. Singles at Almondbury Bank on 12th November (a male killed flying into a window) and another male on 16th November; Wooldale, a male on 17th November and a female on 27th November and 6th December and finally near Meltham on 20th December.

#### **WOOD WARBLER** *Phylloscopus sibilatrix*

Migrant breeder (1-2)

The first was at Windy Bank Wood on 27th April followed by one at Ryburn and three at Digley Bottom Wood on 1st May. Very few records received this year and probably under-recorded. One pair bred at Little Don Valley and at least two males during the breeding season at Digley Bottom Wood where the last was seen on 27th June. No birds present at Windy Bank Wood after mid-May and the only other records were singing males at Big Valley on 15th May and Booth Wood on 5th June. No Autumn records.

#### **CHIFFCHAFF** *Phylloscopus collybita*

Migrant breeder (2). Scarce winter visitor

A bird over-wintered at Elland Gravel Pits. It was seen on four dates between 10th January and 13th February and was singing on 31st January. Then a reasonably early arrival took place from mid-March with singles at Gunthwaite on 12th; Lower Fell Greave Wood and Elland Gravel Pits on 14th and Thunderbridge and Bretton Park on 15th. Poorly recorded this year with about 30 singing males in territory.

Autumn passage noted at several places:- Blackmoorfoot Reservoir, singles caught and ringed on 18th July and 29th August; Scout Dike Reservoir, one to two on five dates between 21st July and 29th August; Scout Dike Reservoir, one to two on five dates between 21st July and 5th September; Elland Gravel Pits, singles on four dates between 30th August and 3rd October; Seammonden, one on 12th and 26th September; Bretton Park, one on 26th September and then three October records of singles in gardens near Marsh on 4th; Ossett on 10th and Fixby on 23rd. The only Winter record was one at Elland Gravel Pits on 18th November.



**WILLOW WARBLER** *Phylloscopus trochilus*

Migrant breeder (3-4)

As with many of the warblers, the first was at Elland Gravel Pits on 3rd April and again there on 6th. Also in April, one at Royd Moor Reservoir on 7th and three near Slaithwaite and at Blackmoorfoot Reservoir on 10th. Many places saw arrivals between 11th and 15th April.

Although it is hard to say if breeding numbers are down, it is safe to say that the number of passage birds was very low for the second year running. Ringing at Blackmoorfoot Reservoir only produced a maximum of 11 on 6th August with the last birds here in September with one on 1st and 4th to 12th. In the Lindley Moor area noted as 'almost non-existent' in July and August where formerly regular. Several places had small numbers up to the end of August then, in September, one at Elland Gravel Pits on 2nd; three at Fixby on 3rd and 6th; a good fall at Scout Dike Reservoir during thunderstorms on 8th and finally three late birds at Royd Moor Reservoir on 22nd.

**GOLDCREST** *Regulus regulus*

Resident breeder (2-3). Common passage visitor

The only gathering in the early Winter months was 19 in three groups at Bradley Gate Wood on 27th January. This bird can be seen year round in its coniferous breeding areas. A good site is Langsett Reservoir where 40 were seen on a circular walk of the Reservoir on 30th August. Common on passage in September to November, usually not more than five birds but the exceptions were at least eight at Scammonden Dam on 12th September; six at Elland Gravel Pits in November and December and seven at Bradley Gate Wood on 18th December.



**FIRECREST** *Regulus ignicapillus*

Rare visitor

One at Booth Wood Clough on 27th February (NER) and one at Elland Gravel Pits from 21st November to the year end was seen by many observers, though very elusive at times (JB et al). Both accepted by YNU. Eleventh and twelfth records for the area.

**SPOTTED FLYCATCHER** *Muscicapa striata*

Migrant breeder (2)

The earliest was one at Blackmoorfoot Reservoir on 18th May followed by one at Marten Bank Wood on 24th May and a pair at Dogley NR on 25th May. Confirmed breeding at Bretton Park; Swinden Plantation; Thornhill and breeding season records from Marten Bank Wood; Dunford Bridge; Digley Bottom Wood (four on 29th May); Ingbirchworth; Owers Wood; War Carr Reservoir and Windy Bank Wood. What were presumably all passage birds occurred at nine sites in July and August with the later records being singles at Ossett on 22nd; Lindley on 29th and two at Scout Dike Reservoir (one caught and ringed) on 29th August.

**PIED FLYCATCHER** *Ficedula hypoleuca*

Migrant breeder (1)

A male at TP Wood on 14th and 15th April was the earliest ever for the area (GB). Other Spring passage birds at Oxspring on the old railway line on 18th and 19th May and one in the Little Don Valley on 23rd May. Two pairs at Cliffe Wood, Langsett on 9th May with one pair remaining to breed, fledging seven young. A pair seen at Windy Bank Wood on many dates in May and June though breeding not confirmed. A newly fledged juvenile at Scammonden Dam on 30th June was mysterious in that no adults had been seen or heard there prior to that. In Autumn, one at Bretton Park on 7th July and one caught and ringed at Blackmoorfoot Reservoir on 8th August.

**LONG-TAILED TIT** *Aegithalos caudatus*

Resident breeder (2)

Flocks in January of 17 at Elland Gravel Pits on 1st and Bretton Park on 30th. Usually smaller parties in February, though seven taking food from a bird table at Crimble Clough on 6th was slightly unusual and 18 in a Fixby garden on 9th. Bred at 12 sites and probably bred at another 17. A number of flocks containing up to 20 birds from mid-June would indicate a good breeding season. The best counts were 21 near Holmfirth on 8th June; 32 at Ingbirchworth on 23rd July and 21 at Colne Bridge on 26th December.

**WILLOW TIT** *Parus montanus*

Resident breeder (2)

Bred at Scout Dike Reservoir; near Skelmanthorpe and Denby Wood near Grange Moor. A strong probability of breeding at Gunthwaite; Deffer Wood; Lepton Great Wood; Jordan Wood near Dewsbury Golf Club and Bretton Park which probably had two pairs, and up to six birds present on occasions. Also seen at the suitable sites of Stocksmoor Common on 20th June and Clayton West, where two were present on 15th and 17th July. Away from the breeding areas (just), two were at Royd Moor Reservoir on 5th and 12th February and one in an Almondbury garden on 14th October.

**COAL TIT** *Parus ater*

Resident breeder (3)

Commonly recorded with many successfully breeding. The only flocks of note were at least 12 at Bradley Gate Wood on 23rd January and around 35 on a circular walk at Langsett Reservoir on 30th August.

**BLUE TIT** *Parus caeruleus*

Resident breeder (5)

At least 30 at Elland Gravel Pits on 21st November was the biggest count. The only other record of interest was one entering a bat box in a Fixby garden at dusk on 6th December.

**GREAT TIT** *Parus major*

Resident breeder (4)

No records of any significance.

**NUTHATCH** *Sitta europaea*

Resident breeder (1)

Bred at Beaumont Park and probably did so at Cannon Hall; Penny Spring Wood area; Bretton Park and Windy Bank Wood. The maximum at any site was three, at Bretton Park on 26th September and Cannon Hall on 30th November. Other records, all singles, came from Dovestones Reservoir on 22nd January and 2nd April; Jenkinson Wood on 16th March; Waterloo on 13th April; near Birks Wood, Woodsome Road on 25th May and the Holy Trinity Churchyard near Greenhead Park on 6th and 17th September.

**TREECREEPER** *Certhia familiaris*

Resident breeder (2-3)

Reported breeding at Bradley Gate Wood; Oakenbank Plantation; Denby Wood; Holmfirth; Windy Bank Wood; Owlers Wood; Blacker Wood and near Skelmanthorpe. Present in the breeding season at another 10 sites. The highest concentration noted was three pairs at Bradley Gate Wood on 30th March. In the Winter months occasionally seen in gardens, usually adjacent to woodland.

**JAY** *Garrulus glandarius*

Resident breeder (2)

Bred at Scammonden; Yateholme; Lepton Great Wood; Penny Spring Wood; Bradley Gate Wood, and probably bred at another 19 places. Early in the year the best counts were 13 at Langsett Reservoir on 26th January and up to 13 near Fixby in January and February. Many records were received in September and October, some in the breeding areas suggesting a good success this year, but also lots of birds flying around the area- no doubt local birds collecting acorns with perhaps a few immigrant birds. Flyovers were normally one's or two's but five flew west at Lindley Moor on 22nd September. Other high counts were 15 at Penny Spring Wood on 27th August; 10 flew south east over Bradley on 19th September, though these were probably local birds, and 21 near the River Calder at Bradley on 22nd September. One with a very grey mantle near Greenhead Park on 21st December, though not claimed, could have been of the race *g.g. glandarius* from the continent which is occasionally seen in Britain in Winter.

**MAGPIE** *Pica pica*

Resident breeder (4)

Certainly subject to control measures in rural areas. No particularly high counts received during the year, the best all being in March with 28 at Grimescar Wood on 5th; 48 near Holme Styes Reservoir on 7th (near to dusk, so must be roosting somewhere close); 21 at Elland Gravel Pits on 14th and 20 near Castle Hill on 19th.

**JACKDAW** *Carvus monedula*

Resident breeder (4)

Counts of 200 birds reported from Gunthwaite on 3rd August; Scholes on 7th October and at Upper Cumberworth on 2nd December, probably roosting somewhere near the last site. The best total of the year was seen at Royd Moor Reservoir on 29th November when approximately 700 were feeding with Rooks. An albino bird was seen during the year in the Skelmanthorpe/Clayton West/Bretton area.

**ROOK** *Corvus frugilegus*

Resident breeder (5)

Several Winter flocks noted but no high numbers. These included 300 at Lepton Great Wood; 300 near Holme Styes on 7th March; 210 at Shepley on 10th October; circa 500 at Upper Cumberworth on 2nd December (probably roosting nearby); 200 at Digley Reservoir on 25th December and circa 500 at Ingbirchworth on 26th December. This species can also be seen feeding in numbers where silage is being collected, as near the Flouch Inn on 29th May when over 500 were present.

**CARRION CROW** *Corvus corone*

Resident breeder (3)

The only flocks of note were of birds feeding on the tip at Elland Gravel Pits with 59 on 31st January and 55 on 2nd February.

A **Hooded Crow** *C.c. cornix* was at Gilbert Hill near Langsett on 16th January (per BBSG). This race remains a rare Winter visitor to our area and is the first record since 1985.

**RAVEN** *Corvus corax*

Rare visitor

**ADDITION TO 1992 REPORT** A pair at Dovestones Reservoir on 19th May were seen feeding free flying young (per GMBR). Almost certainly the pair which bred at another location in the south of our area.. Recent years have seen an increase in records from the Peak District National Park with several just to the south of our area. The first breeding record for the area, and the fifth record for the area.

**STARLING** *Sturnus vulgaris*

Resident breeder (5). Numerous Winter visitor

No records of significance with only flocks of 500 or less noted.

**HOUSE SPARROW** *Passer domesticus*

Resident breeder (5)

No records of any significance.

### **TREE SPARROW** *Passer montanus*

Resident breeder (2)

Bred at Stone Wood near Shepley and Dewsbury Sewage Farm and probably did so in the Royd Moor/Ingbirchworth area; Lumb Lane, Almondbury; Emley Moor and Farnley Tyas (with up to six pairs in this general area). Winter flocks noted of 22 at Royd Moor on 1st January and between 20 and 30 around the old pit area of Emley Moor. Also seen at Elland Gravel Pits, five on 18th October and, in November, two on 2nd and 25th and one on 22nd. Just one other record, of five in a farm garden at Bradley on 27th November.

### **CHAFFINCH** *Fringilla coelebs*

Resident breeder (4). Numerous winter visitor

Up to 50 noted at several sites in the Winter months such as Bretton Park, Gunthwaite and Elland Gravel Pits but these numbers are not exceptional and probably considered low. The best count concerned 151 flying west at Lindley Moor in just over 1½ hours on the morning of 10th October (a good passage day, see also Redwing).

### **BRAMBLING** *Fringilla montifringilla*

Uncommon to common Winter visitor

From January to April, many were in the club area following the high numbers present in late 1992. The best locations and maximum numbers were Mag Wood, 30 to 40 in January and February; Bretton Park, 50 in January; Meltham Golf Course, at least 50 on 12th January; near Fixby, around 100 from January to mid-March; 100 roosting at Digley Reservoir in March; 39 at Bradley Gate Wood on 25th March and 40 at Elland Gravel Pits on 13th April. Birds were also noted in many gardens, particularly in late March and early April with passage birds swelling numbers. The best gardens were Almondbury Bank, up to 100 on 25th March, dwindling by mid-April; Millmoor Road, Meltham, maximum of 40 on 31st March and then up to 12 at Lindley Moor, Blackmoorfoot, Marsh and Thick Hollins at Meltham. Often recorded up to mid-April and the lingerers were singles at Bretton Park on 24th April and Almondbury Bank on 3rd May, a fairly late date.

A total reverse in Autumn and late Winter with few records. October passage birds at Blackmoorfoot Reservoir, singles on 3rd and 10th with two on 23rd; Elland Gravel Pits, two on 14th, singles on 16th and 30th and 20 on 22nd and then singles at Meltham on 15th; Holywell Brook on 22nd and Crosland Moor on 31st. Bretton Park, traditionally one of the better areas, had just one or two in November and December; two at Penny Spring Wood on 4th November and at Elland Gravel Pits, up to seven from late November to the year end. At the Almondbury Bank garden which held good numbers in Spring, one on 19th November building up to around 30 by the year end. All records received for Autumn/late Winter are listed.

**GREENFINCH** *Carduelis chloris*

Resident breeder (4)

No large roosts, or none reported from, though particularly common at Cannon Hall in early Winter where feeding stations are used. The high counts were 150 on 9th February and 85 on 4th March. Up to 20 seen outside the breeding season at several locations with the only other flock higher than this being 80 at Bretton Park on 26th September.

**GOLDFINCH** *Carduelis carduelis*

Resident breeder (2-3)

Some quite reasonable flocks outside the breeding season, from scattered locations, with the majority reported in Autumn. At Elland Gravel Pits, 30 on 1st January and Bretton Park held a lot in January with at least 87 on 30th with 50 still present on 9th February. Then, in September, 26 at Blackmoorfoot on 4th; 30 at Royd Moor on 18th and possibly the same 30 at Ingbyworth on 29th and 29 at Bradley on 26th. The best flocks after September, to the year end, were 50 near Deer Hill on 22nd October; 30 at Grimescar on 19th November and 30 at the Emley Moor TV mast site on 1st December. Several other flocks of up to 20 reported.

**SISKIN** *Carduelis spinus*

Resident breeder (1). Uncommon Winter visitor

Seen at three traditional sites from January to March with the peak counts at the end of January / beginning of February. Maximum numbers were 30 at Bretton Park on 23rd January and, in February, 25 at Elland Gravel Pits on 6th and up to 100 at Gunthwaite on 13th. Up to 15 but normally less were recorded from another 12 areas up to April. On top of this, up to seven birds appeared in nine gardens during March and early April which is a regular occurrence at that time (usually to nut feeders).

One pair bred at Swinden Plantation and possibly bred at Yateholme where up to six were still present on 4th April with some song flight heard.

Quite a few going over the area in Autumn, with September and October the peak months. At Ringstone Edge Reservoir, 80 landed briefly and then flew east on 19th September; 28 at Holywell Brook and 60 at Bretton Park on 16th October and Elland Gravel Pits had birds to the year end, with monthly maxima of 60 on 23rd October; 37 on 30th November and 35 on 20th December. Other Autumn and late Winter records from a further eight areas, up to 15 birds, mainly flying over.

**LINNET** *Carduelis cannabina*

Resident breeder (3)

The first for the year was one feeding with Buntings at Lowfields near Elland on 6th March, followed by two at Elland Gravel Pits on 17th March. The more general arrival back onto breeding grounds was from early to mid-April. The only Spring flock noted was a low 17 at Ingbirchworth on 1st May. In Autumn, the best numbers reported were 52 at Ringstone Edge Reservoir on 31st August and 60 at Castle Hill on 22nd September. Up to 20 seen at a few other places including 20 west at Lindley Moor during heavy passage on the morning of 10th October. Birds are normally absent after October but seven still at Castle Hill on 26th November.

**TWITE** *Carduelis flavirostris*

Resident breeder (2-3). Partial migrant

As with the previous species, normally absent in the Winter months. One flew over Bradley Park Golf Club on 3rd February but the bulk of birds returned late March to April. At Scammonden, four on 20th March; Little Don Valley, six on 25th March and then another four locations in April with a maximum of 15 at Issues Road near Holme on 14th. No confirmed breeding but seen in suitable areas in the Summer months at Scammonden/Deanhead; Deer Hill and Dovestones Reservoir.

Only a few reported in Autumn, the highest counts at Digley, 15 on 18th August and 18 on 17th October; Hade Edge, a flock of 20 feeding on disturbed top soil in early October and near Meltham with 55 on 9th October. Under-recorded with some sites not visited or reported from.

**REDPOLL** *Carduelis flammea*

Resident breeder (2). Uncommon Winter visitor

The best sites in the early months were Elland Gravel Pits, 25 on 6th February and 15 on 27th April; the Bradley/Sheepridge area with 20-30 in January and February with a maximum of 35 on 28th January and 10 each at Beaumont Park on 14th April and a Fixby garden on 16th April. Up to five birds recorded infrequently from another nine sites up to May. Probable breeding at Elland Gravel Pits; Holme Styes, Deffer Wood and Winscar Reservoir. Very few noted after the breeding season, with one or two at six sites and only occasionally. Elland Gravel Pits had the 'best' count of just seven on 15th December.

**CROSSBILL** *Loxia curvirostra*

Irregular breeder (1). Uncommon passage visitor

The only record from a suitable breeding area was two at the Little Don Valley on 6th March (per



BBSG). Otherwise, two Autumn passage records with three over Skelmanthorpe on 9th July (JMD) and 28 north at Blackmoorfoot Reservoir on 21st August (MLD).

**BULLFINCH** *Pyrrhula pyrrhula*  
Resident breeder (2)

One or two small flocks in Autumn and Winter. The best were at Castle Hill, nine on 11th January; Elland Gravel Pits, eight on 24th January; Bradley Gate Wood, 11 on 15th February; Booth Dean Clough, eight on 30th October and up to eight regularly at Royd Moor Reservoir in the Winter months. Recorded from 26 sites during the Summer months with confirmed breeding at several of them.

**HAWFINCH** *Coccothraustes coccothraustes*  
Scarce to uncommon visitor

Bretton Park was the sole location for reports of this species with three on 19th March (BBSG) and, in November, singles on 3rd (BC) and 7th (SH), five on 27th (DMP, SP, KW) and four on 28th (BBSG).

**YELLOWHAMMER** *Emberiza citrinella*  
Resident breeder (3)

Flocks seen in early Winter on stubble at Ingbirchworth, with a maximum of 40 on 9th January. The only other concentration of over 10 was at least 15 at Royd Moor Reservoir on 12th February. Singing males commonly noted in the breeding season, with 25 in the Emley Park area probably one of the highest densities in the club area. No flocks noted after the breeding season.

**REED BUNTING** *Emberiza schoeniclus*  
Resident breeder (2). Partial migrant

A Winter flock was at Lowfields near Elland from January to March. Monthly maxima was 13 on 30th and 31st January; seven on 7th February and nine on 6th March. The only other January record was a pair at Ingbirchworth Reservoir on 22nd. After occasional February records at Ingbirchworth and Elland Gravel Pits were returning to lowland breeding areas in March and the higher ones in April. Seen in the breeding season (with number of pairs in brackets) at Elland Gravel Pits (3); Ingbirchworth Reservoir (2); Scout Dike Reservoir (up to 10); Scammonden/Deanhead (2); Cupwith (1); Ringstone Edge Reservoir (1); Horbury Wyke area (3); Dewsbury Sewage Farm (2); Winscar (1); Bradley (1); Royd Moor Reservoir (2) and Denby Wood, near Grange Moor where the nearest water was about ½ km away. Virtually none seen after the

breeding season with singles on passage at Blackmoorfoot Reservoir on 28th September and 23rd October.

**CORN BUNTING** *Miliaria calandra*

Resident breeder (1)

It is just possible that the species still breeds in the area, but the only records received this year were singles at Coxley Lane, Middlestown on 27th April (PS. JG); Spicer House Lane, Ingbirchworth on 4th October and Scout Dike Reservoir on 6th December (MCW per BBSG).

**ESCAPED SPECIES**

**WOOD DUCK** *Aix sponsa*

A male at Elland Gravel Pits from 27th April to 16th May (NCD et al).

# LIST OF CONTRIBUTORS 1993

With apologies for any omissions.

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BARNSELY BIRD STUDY GROUP  
GREATER MANCHESTER BIRD REPORT  
per MRS A. JUDITH SMITH  
HALIFAX BIRDWATCHERS' CLUB  
RSPB DENBY DALE OFFICE  
WAKEFIELD NATURALISTS' SOCIETY

# CHECKLIST OF BIRDS IN HUDDERSFIELD (1958-1993)

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> RED-THROATED DIVER     | <input type="checkbox"/> RED KITE                 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> BLACK-THROATED DIVER   | <input type="checkbox"/> MARSH HARRIER            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> GREAT NORTHERN DIVER   | <input type="checkbox"/> HEN HARRIER              |
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| <input type="checkbox"/> GREAT WHITE EGRET      | <input type="checkbox"/> RED GROUSE               |
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| <input type="checkbox"/> CANADA GOOSE           | <input type="checkbox"/> OYSTERCATCHER            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> BARNACLE GOOSE         | <input type="checkbox"/> STONE CURLEW             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> BRENT GOOSE            | <input type="checkbox"/> LITTLE RINGED PLOVER     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> EGYPTIAN GOOSE (C)     | <input type="checkbox"/> RINGED PLOVER            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> SHELDUCK               | <input type="checkbox"/> DOTTEREL                 |
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| <input type="checkbox"/> GADWALL                | <input type="checkbox"/> LAPWING                  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> TEAL                   | <input type="checkbox"/> KNOT                     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> MALLARD                | <input type="checkbox"/> SANDERLING               |
| <input type="checkbox"/> PINTAIL                | <input type="checkbox"/> LITTLE STINT             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> GARGANEY               | <input type="checkbox"/> WHITE-RUMPED SANDPIPER   |
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| <input type="checkbox"/> LONG-TAILED DUCK       | <input type="checkbox"/> WOODCOCK                 |
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| <input type="checkbox"/> RUDDY DUCK (C)         | <input type="checkbox"/> GREENSHANK               |
| <input type="checkbox"/> HONEY BUZZARD          | <input type="checkbox"/> GREEN SANDPIPER          |

- ☐ WOOD SANDPIPER
- ☐ TEREK SANDPIPER
- ☐ COMMON SANDPIPER
- ☐ SPOTTED SANDPIPER
- ☐ TURNSTONE
- ☐ WILSON'S PHALAROPE
- ☐ RED-NECKED PHALAROPE
- ☐ GREY PHALAROPE
- ☐ POMERINE SKUA
- ☐ ARCTIC SKUA
- ☐ LONG-TAILED SKUA
- ☐ GREAT SKUA
- ☐ MEDITERRANEAN GULL
- ☐ LITTLE GULL
- ☐ SABINE'S GULL
- ☐ BLACK-HEADED GULL
- ☐ RING-BILLED GULL
- ☐ COMMON GULL
- ☐ LESSER BLACK-BACKED GULL
- ☐ HERRING GULL
- ☐ ICELAND GULL
- ☐ GLAUCOUS GULL
- ☐ GREAT BLACK-BACKED GULL
- ☐ KITTIWAKE
- ☐ SANDWICH TERN
- ☐ COMMON TERN
- ☐ ARCTIC TERN
- ☐ LITTLE TERN
- ☐ BLACK TERN
- ☐ GUILLEMOT
- ☐ LITTLE AUK
- ☐ PUFFIN
- ☐ FERAL PIGEON (C)
- ☐ STOCK DOVE
- ☐ WOODPIGEON
- ☐ COLLARED DOVE
- ☐ TURTLE DOVE
- ☐ RING-NECKED PARAKEET (C)
- ☐ CUCKOO
- ☐ BARN OWL
- ☐ LITTLE OWL (C)
- ☐ TAWNY OWL
- ☐ LONG-EARED OWL
- ☐ SHORT-EARED OWL
- ☐ NIGHTJAR
- ☐ SWIFT
- ☐ KINGFISHER
- ☐ ROLLER
- ☐ HOOPOE
- ☐ WRYNECK
- ☐ GREEN WOODPECKER
- ☐ GREAT SPOTTED WOODPECKER
- ☐ LESSER SPOTTED WOODPECKER
- ☐ SKYLARK
- ☐ SANDMARTIN
- ☐ SWALLOW
- ☐ RED-RUMPED SWALLOW

- ☐ HOUSE MARTIN
- ☐ TREE PIPIT
- ☐ MEADOW PIPIT
- ☐ ROCK PIPIT
- ☐ WATER PIPIT
- ☐ YELLOW WAGTAIL
- ☐ GREY WAGTAIL
- ☐ PIED WAGTAIL
- ☐ WAXWING
- ☐ DIPPER
- ☐ WREN
- ☐ DUNNOCK
- ☐ ROBIN
- ☐ BLACK REDSTART
- ☐ REDSTART
- ☐ WHINCHAT
- ☐ STONECHAT
- ☐ WHEATEAR
- ☐ RING OUZEL
- ☐ BLACKBIRD
- ☐ FIELDFARE
- ☐ SONG THRUSH
- ☐ REDWING
- ☐ MISTLE THRUSH
- ☐ GRASSHOPPER WARBLER
- ☐ SEDGE WARBLER
- ☐ REED WARBLER
- ☐ LESSER WHITETHROAT
- ☐ WHITETHROAT
- ☐ GARDEN WARBLER
- ☐ BLACKCAP
- ☐ PALLAS'S WARBLER
- ☐ YELLOW-BROWED WARBLER
- ☐ WOOD WARBLER
- ☐ CHIFFCHAFF
- ☐ WILLOW WARBLER
- ☐ GOLDCREST
- ☐ FIRECREST
- ☐ SPOTTED FLYCATCHER
- ☐ PIED FLYCATCHER
- ☐ LONG-TAILED TIT
- ☐ MARSH TIT
- ☐ WILLOW TIT
- ☐ COAL TIT
- ☐ BLUE TIT
- ☐ GREAT TIT
- ☐ NUTHATCH
- ☐ TREECREEPER
- ☐ RED-BACKED SHRIKE
- ☐ GREAT GREY SHRIKE
- ☐ JAY
- ☐ MAGPIE
- ☐ JACKDAW
- ☐ ROOK
- ☐ CARRION CROW
- ☐ RAVEN
- ☐ STARLING

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This checklist brings up to date the number of species recorded in the Huddersfield area. Historically, the first checklist of the area appeared in a publication "Huddersfield. It's History and natural History" by C.P. Hobkirk 1859. The next look at the status of Huddersfield's birds was the excellent 1915 book "Birds of Huddersfield" by the well known naturalist S.L. Mosley. Times have certainly changed since his day when the vast majority of records concerned birds shot. He questioned the validity of shooting several times in his book and in a note of protest regarding the catching of Skylarks said "Lark on toast is supposed to be aristocratic, but a man who can devour a Lark, whatever he may be by birth, has a larger stomach than brain"! Having said this, his collection of birds totalled over 100,000 - some of which are still on display at the Tolson Museum in Huddersfield.

A booklet entitled "Birds around Huddersfield" was published in 1958 by E.C.J. Swabey and E.W. Aubrook, though it covered a smaller area than we do today. The formation of the Huddersfield Birdwatchers' Club in 1966 has resulted in an annual report since that date and a detailed list and status of Huddersfield birds appeared in the 1975 report and was updated in 1977 and 1980, all were prepared by J.E. Dale.

In trying to classify species we come across several 'grey' areas, through the introduction of birds into an area or by birds having escaped from captivity and forming feral breeding stocks. Some of these have become common and taken for granted such as Ruddy Duck, Pheasant and Little Owl. The BOURC have attempted to categorise species as follows:

- A. Species which have been recorded in an apparently wild state in Britain or Ireland at least once since 1st January 1958 (hence the Huddersfield checklist starting from this date).
- B. Species which were recorded in an apparently wild state in Britain or Ireland at least once up to 31st December 1957 but have not been recorded subsequently.
- C. Species which, although originally introduced by man, have now established a regular feral breeding stock which apparently maintains itself without necessary recourse to further introduction.
- D. Species which would otherwise appear in categories A or B except that:-
  - (D1) there is reasonable doubt they have ever occurred in a wild state;
  - (D2) they have certainly arrived with the combination of ship and human assistance, including the provision of food and shelter;
  - (D3) they have only ever been found dead on the tideline;
  - (D4) they would otherwise appear in category C, except that their feral populations may or may not be self-supporting.

Species in category D do not form part of the main BOU British and Irish list. The object of category D records is to monitor potential additions to the list either in a wild state or to see if feral populations become self-supporting. For the Huddersfield checklist I have included any category C birds within the main list, as I would in the annual report, each denoted by (C) following the species name. On top of this, the following escapes have occurred in the area between 1958 and 1993.

Bar-headed Goose (D4)  
 Snow Goose (D4)  
 Ruddy Shelduck (D4)  
 Wood Duck (D4)

NB. Snow Goose (A) and Ruddy Shelduck (B) are included in the main BOU British and Irish list but have dual classification, in common with several other species.

For the fullness of records, several species have been claimed seen in the Huddersfield area but poor documentation, doubt over the identification or doubt over the origin of the birds have discounted them from the checklist. A lot of effort has been put in to try and unearth details of these records and, while all are intriguing possibilities, I feel they are best left out where any doubt exists. The majority relate to old or very old records and are briefly listed below, with reasons for their exclusion.

**GREAT SHEARWATER** One killed Rishworth Moor 1885. Published in 1907 in Nelsons Birds of Yorkshire. No supporting details of this record and Shearwater identification was not fully understood at that time. For example, Sooty Shearwater was thought to be the immature form of Great Shearwater.

**BLACK STORK** One at Bretton Park March 1836. Published in 1907 in Nelson's Birds of Yorkshire and repeated in 1986 by Mather's Birds of Yorkshire. Nelson stated it was mentioned by S. L. Mosley in his list of Huddersfield Birds. Mosley's major published work came after Nelson's book, in 1915, and contained no mention of this record.

**WHITE-TAILED EAGLE** One seen 13th May 1949 at Newsome and probably the same at Netherton on 14th and 26th May. This record appears in Birds Around Huddersfield, 1958, by Swahey and Aubrook but remains the only documentation of the record. No description or any observer details exists.

**BLACK GROUSE** A pair reported at Yatcholme on 24th September 1972. Could well be a genuine record but not well documented. The possibility of escape has to be considered in this well-known shooting area where large numbers of game birds (pheasants in particular) are reared for that purpose. In the late 19th century attempts were made to introduce this bird around Holmfirth and Penistone but these failed.

**EAGLE OWL** One at Greetland in 1845 was mentioned in Mather's Birds of Yorkshire as a known escape and one shot at Fixby on 1st January 1885. The latter bird was documented in The Naturalist of 1886 where caution was urged over its identity and doubt as to its wild status.

**BEE-EATER** This species has quite likely been seen in the area. One was heard calling several times at Bradley Park Golf Club on 18th May 1987 but never seen and remains unsatisfactory for a first for the area. One also claimed over Yatcholme on 3rd July 1989 but the record was never documented by the observer.

**WOODCHAT SHRIKE** A pair shot at Bumroyd in 1850. Doubt over the origin of these birds has been raised by several Authorities. Mosley described the record as "doubtful" and Mather, 1986, thought it "very dubious" which is also my opinion.

**NUTCRACKER** One killed in Dungeon Wood in 1870 was supposedly preserved by S. L. Mosley. Mosley denied that he ever had such a specimen in The Naturalist of 1909 so there must be serious doubt about this record.

NB: A nutcracker seen at Lower Fell Greave Wood on 9th November 1991 is still under consideration by BBRC and will be a new bird for the area if accepted.

**ROSE-COLOURED STARLING** One shot at Edgerton 1859. First appeared in Hobkirk's list of that year. It is recorded twice in Nelson but both refer to the same occurrence according to Mosley



in 1915. Could well be a genuine bird. It is supposed to be one of the two adults displayed at the Tolson Museum, though it does make you think about the origin of its 'mate'!

**BIBLIOGRAPHY** (Publications with an \* can be found in the local history section of the Central library in Huddersfield)

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### **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

Particular thanks must go to John Dale who read the draft of this article, and provided help and constructive criticism at all stages of it. Mike Denton also helped with finding articles published in The Naturalist, mainly concerning records from the late 19th century.

## **FIELD TRIPS REPORT 1993**

### **GRANTLEY HALL AND GUNTHWAITE RESERVOIR**

**24 January 1993**

It was encouraging that 29 brave souls decided that they would risk a really terrible weather forecast of gale force north-westerly winds, rain, hail, sleet and snow to participate in this the first trip of the New Year. As it turned out, we had all of these conditions, but not in any great quantity, nor continuously (save for the winds!), and more importantly, not at the same time, with the unexpected result of a better day than we could really have hoped for! The other side of the coin was that, birdwise, the day proved to be rather indifferent: we had some good sightings of several interesting species but on the whole things "might have been better".

Grantley Hall, or more precisely Spa Gill Wood and Skell Bank Wood, through which flows the River Skell (this is also the river that runs through the Grantley Hall College grounds), produced excellent views of a range of woodland birds including **Marsh Tit**, **Treecreeper** and **Nuthatch**, whilst at least one **Great Spotted Woodpecker** was heard calling, but the bird of the area was undoubtedly **Siskin** of which we had two flocks (?) of 300+ and c50-60 composed of birds of both sexes. Probably females made up the majority within the flocks but this is not meant to imply that males were in short supply and many showed up particularly brightly in the brief snatches of wintry sunshine. They were very vocal as the tight-knit flocks moved restlessly through the canopy, feeding chiefly in alders and larches growing alongside the riverbank. We looked for but failed to find any accompany **Redpolls**.

With all the recent rain, Gouthwaite Reservoir was filled to overflowing and the River Nid itself was in spate - far too much water to accommodate any of the looked-for **Dippers** (although I understand one was present on a tributary stream), but at least one **Kingfisher** was recorded.

The reservoir was home to the usual crop of wildfowl: **Mallard**, **Teal**, **Pochard**, **Goldeneye**, **Goosander** (2 pairs), **Mute Swan**, **Canada Goose** and **Grey Heron** (10). The adult male **Tufted Duck** X **Pochard** which does cause confusion with **Scaup** is still present but eye colour (yellow) and nail colour (black) are visible.

A sizeable party of gulls were on the water - the majority **Black-headed Gulls** but also some **Lesser Black-backed Gulls** and a few **Herring Gulls**. Numbers here were surprising - more than expected were put up by the passing of a **Peregrine Falcon**, which was also observed in the air over the nearby (Jordan Crags) and Sigsworth Moor.

In that area was seen a much larger raptor believed to have been (possibly correctly) a **Rough-legged Buzzard**, but views of the bird were distant and even using 'scopes it was impossible to make out any details. Later in the afternoon a **Common Buzzard** was observed coming out of the north-west over Ramsgill village and believed not to have been the same bird as noted above. On the edge of the reservoir several observers also noted **Sparrowhawk**.

High up on Fountain's Earth Moor, at over 1200' ASL, a single **Red Grouse** was observed and we had to work hard in the face of gale force winds up here to find this bird! The low-lying pasture west of the reservoir gave views of (two) **Grey Partridge**, whilst the banks of the reservoir played host to at least half a dozen **Pheasants**.

## LEIGHTON MOSS RSPB RESERVE AND WOODWELL

14 February 1993

Low numbers of participants on the day meant that the programmed trip to Blithfield Reservoir had to be cancelled. To put it quite bluntly I felt that the cost per head to run the trip to the advertised venue would be considered to be excessive. I had, at short notice, to find an alternative venue and John Wilson, at Leighton Moss, agreed to fit us in. Our thanks must also go to Twin Valley Den-Roy Luxury Coaches who substantially reduced their price to accommodate our low numbers.

Weatherwise, a much better day for our trip on this occasion: warm, dry and sunny, with little or no wind and good visibility. One could have been forgiven for believing that Spring had come. On more than one occasion I found myself looking out for, and listening for, early migrants which needless to say, were not there.

**Bitterns** were booming nicely with at least 3 males staking claims to territories. Some people actually saw them!

Eleven species of wildfowl were recorded, with c50-60 **Grey Lag Geese** dominant in the area. Also **Shoveler** (c20 pairs) and **Tufted Duck** (30 pairs) in good numbers. I always enjoy **Wigeon** (c 10 males) and **Pochard** (c 15 males). Good views were obtained from at least two pairs of displaying **Goldeneyes**.

The area's **March Harriers** had not yet returned but sightings were had of (female) **Hen Harriers** on 1-4 occasions, which was probably the same bird each time.

Waders were thin on the ground - five species only recorded all in single figures with the exception of **Lapwing** (c 50). There were excellent views in the Scrape/Grizedale hide vicinity of up to c7 **Common Snipe**.

### Woodwell

All the above were recorded on the Leighton Moss reserve and that area also had its fair share of the usual Winter passeriens. However, a wider selection of these appeared in the very well-developed, limestone-species loving mixed woodlands of Woodwell and the scrubby areas of Jenny Brown's Point.

Here the 'speciality' bird is **Hawfinch** and very good views were obtained of several parties of 4, 5-6 and 3 - the best views came from birds in a mixed finch flock of **Chaffinches**, **Brambling** (up to 10), **Bullfinch** (3 male, 2 females) and **Yellowhammers** (3 male 2 female)  
In these woods also were **Nuthatch** (1) and **Treecreeper** (3).

Individuals were recorded of all the common **Tits** but not in any great number (none were noted in flocks of any size) and perhaps the 'best' birds were the (1-2) **Marsh Tits**, a species that is recorded regularly from this site and also from the scrub and woodlands of Leighton Moss. **Willow Tit** was and is seen in similar numbers and regularity from these sites: fortunately both species were vocalising which greatly facilitated separation.

## **TEES-SIDE**

**21 March 1993**

The Teesmouth area is one of great contrasts. Virtually surrounded by industrial development, and ever-changing because of reclamation and industrialisation, at first glance the area presents a rather dim prospect for wildlife in general and birds in particular. And yet the birds ARE there ... and there in plenty. In recent years bird numbers have actually increased and the area is one of the most important for waders in the north-east. Wildfowl are numerous on Seal Sands and many can be found on the fleets and dykes of the adjacent marshes. Waders are to be found in good numbers on the same areas and a wide variety of species can be found in Winter and on passage.

The RSPB reserve of Cowpen Marsh has no general access but a hide overlooking Greatham Creek (and another overlooking Seal Sands) is available and open to members of birdwatching societies.

Salthome Pool is viewable from the A178 but access to Dorman's Pool and Reclamation Pond should be by prior arrangement with ICI Petrochemicals, who issue permits through Teesmouth Bird Club. (Once again my thanks go to Mrs Rita Dunnett of TBC for her kindness in procuring these permits for us. Thanks Rita.)

All other areas which we visited have general public access, although it is advisable not to linger too long and to keep an eye out for other kinds of flying objects when crossing the golf course at Seaton Carew en route to North Gare.

The complete list of areas visited, the habitat types offered, and the birds seen therein are tabulated below. This is a group-list collated on the coach on the way home and is reproduced here in full in an attempt to convince anyone who has not been with us to this area in the past that it really is worthwhile. Those who have been before already know its merit.

Sixty-three species were seen on the day - this is probably below average as previous visits have yielded figures in the high seventies!

## TEES-SIDE

Salthome pool - Dorman's Pool/Reclamation Pond - Long Drag - Seal Sands Estuarine River -  
Gatenby Creek - Cowpen Marsh - North Gare and Seaton Carew Hartlepool Bay and Fish Docks

Weather: Quite warm; dry with some sunshine: winds light to moderate SW  
Visibility good.

Time(s) 1030-1500 h

	Freshwater Pools	Freshwater Grazing Marsh	Estuarine Mud	Shingle Beach	Sandy Beach	Open Sea
Red-throated Diver						1
Little Grebe	2					
Gt Crested Grebe						20+
Cormorant			c 12			c50+
Shag						4
Grey Heron	2	2	1			
Mute Swan	3					
Greylag Goose	2-3					
Shelduck			✓			c200+
Wigeon	9	c40	✓			
Gadwall	(mf)3					
Teal	✓		✓			
Mallard	✓		✓			✓
Pintail	(mf)3					
Shoveler	(mf)20		(mf)3			
Pochard	9					
Tufted Duck	(mf)4-5					
Eider						1m
Goldeneye	1m					(mf)1-2
RB Merg						(mf)3-4
Sparrowhawk		1-2 f	1f			
Kestrel		1 m	1m			
Grey Partridge		1-2				
Moorhen	✓	✓				
Coot	✓					
Oystercatcher			c150	2-3	1-2	4
Ringed Plover	1-3		1-2		4	
Grey Plover			1-2			
Lapwing		c20	✓			
Knot						1
Sanderling					c16	
Purple Sandpiper				3		
Ruff		4				
Snipe	3-6		1-2			
Blk T Godwit			4-6			
Bar T Godwit			c150--			
Curlew	c80+					

	Freshwater Pools	Freshwater Grazing Marsh	Estuarine Mud	Shingle Beach	Sandy Beach	Open Sea
Redshank		c50	✓			
Dunlin		'	Many'			
Turnstone				c20		
Guillemot						1
Stock Dove		1				
Woodpigeon		c5				
Skylark		(m) 4-5				
Sandmartin	1					
Meadow Pipit		(m) 3-5				
Rock Pipit				2		
Pied Wagtail	1-3	2-4	3			
Wheatear		2				
Blackbird		3				
Song Thrush		2				
Magpie	2	2				
Jackdaw			2			
Carriion Crow	3	1-2	2	1		
Starling		c30				
House Sparrow		c10				
Linnet		2-4				
Reed Bunting		(m) 1-2				

Gulls were ubiquitous to all habitats - but save for one group of (200+) Common Gulls on Reclamation Pond, the largest gatherings were to be seen on the building on either side of the Hartlepool Fish Docks. Other large groups were to be seen following the fishing boats returning to the Dock but these usually followed the boats in, adding to those already inside the Dock yards.

Gull species observed comprised:

#### Black-headed Gulls

#### Common Gulls

Herring Gull most numerous species

Great Black-backed Gull c30

Kittiwake c50-60

some of these had already formed (or were forming) pairs and were occupying ledges on the sheer walls of the Fish Dock Buildings that were presumably destined to be nest sites

## LEIGHTON MOSS RSPB RESERVE AND WOODWELL

23 April 1993

Rain, quite heavy at times, throughout large parts of today's visit to these sites (in contrast to the Spring-like weather we had earlier in the year when we might have expected such conditions) did little to dampen our enthusiasm or our enjoyment of the 79 species recorded during the course of the day.

These included 12 species of wildfowl, 2 of Grebes, possibly 3 species of Heron, 6 species of raptor, 6 species of wader, 4 of gulls, all 3 (common) woodpeckers, 3 species of hirundine, 6 species of warbler, 4 crows and 6 finches.

Major highlights comprised views of **Bittern** (5 'booming' males), of **Marsh Harrier** (one pair, plus a second male, excellent views frequent here), of **Peregrines** (1-2), of **Water Rail** (1-2 ... some of us!), of summer-dressed **Black-tailed Godwit** (1 at Allen Hide) and of all three common **Woodpeckers**, although **Great Spotted** and **Lesser Spotted** were at Woodwell, as was **Hawfinch** (2).

One of the most sought-after birds, but least seen, was **Bearded Tit**. A few observers who persisted with it were lucky.

One particular bird present in the area on the day, again probably seen by only a handful (did any of our party see it, I don't know?), and the subject of a 'twitch' was a **Little Bittern**. The bird was reported to be favouring the area around Lilian's Hide and was being seen most frequently early morning and at dusk, remaining well hidden for much of the remainder of the day.

During our stay, myself, Donald Haigh and Roger Shepherd **heard** a bird calling out of deep cover in phragmites reed beds, at very close quarters but remained totally hidden in the area between Lilian's and Grizedale, which we had not heard before and could not recognise. Subsequent enquiries led us to believe that it was at least possible that this bird might have been the Little Bittern. We suspected as much at the time but that suspicion only served to heighten our frustration at not being able to find it.

## ATTENBOROUGH GRAVEL PIT

23 May 1993

A dry day, but quite on the cool side and with a brisk wind which had the effect of keeping many birds hidden and discouraged song despite the breeding season being in full swing with the result that the area was, unfortunately, not as productive as we might have hoped for or expected.

A total of 67 species were recorded by the group. With only a few exceptions the area produced all that we might have hoped to see - but numbers were well down, especially in regard to summer visitors in general and warblers in particular. **Sedge Warblers** here on previous occasions have been prolific - today numbers were much down on previous years - only a few birds today. And where were the **Willow Warblers**? Similarly **Swallow** numbers are very much lower: conversely

**House Martin** numbers were up and this trend was reflected in the frequency of occurrence of sighting for both these species over the course of the day. Again, only small numbers were noted of **Swift** - chiefly in flight over the River Trent.

The area is well known for its (inland) **Terns** and birds were seen easily over the larger areas of water. Breeding occurs here on several of the nesting platforms purposely put there on the (man-made) islands. Another 'speciality' breeding bird of the area is **Little Ringed Plover** - we were hard-pressed to find the single individual that we did late in the afternoon though this is another reported to be currently breeding on site. Other wader species recorded in the area include **Oystercatchers**, **Lapwing**, **Ruff** and **Redshank**. All of these were represented by only very low figures.

A bird that we hoped to see and successfully searched for, was **Turtle Dove**. Pairs were seen in three areas - with again, breeding said to be occurring on site.

Another 'searched for' species was **Kingfisher** - here excellent views were had of a number of individuals at a number of sites, where birds were usually seen in flight.

### **SPURN POINT BIRD OBSERVATORY**

**24 September 1993**

A day of quite bright, somewhat cool weather - but one in which very strong winds made us work hard for all the 71 species which were identified in the area during the course of our visit.

There were no real rarities to gladden the hearts of those among us who seek after such species (and be honest, who doesn't have a yen for them wherever and whenever they turn up?) but sightings were had of **Jack Snipe** in the vicinity of Beacon Ponds and I was informed at the end of the day of a probable **Yellow-browed Warbler** in the area between the (now sadly extinct) Bluebell Cafe and Clubley's Field.

Other highlights were small numbers of **Sooty Shearwater** close inshore, a female **Merlin** observed at rest from the hide overlooking the new scrape in the 'canal zone', where both **Stonechat** (1-2 pairs) and **Redstart** (2-3) were seen on the grassy marshland behind the saltings.

For me and I believe many others, the bird of the day was a wonderfully marked male **Ring Ousel** which occupied an area of ploughed land edged by thick hedgerow off Beacon Lane. The bird was seen well on many occasions and with a little searching, could be found in the area at most times. In addition both **Spotted Flycatcher** and **Pied Flycatcher** could be seen in the hedgerow systems and buckthorn scrub in the vicinity of the Warren Cottages - an area where both **Siskin** and **Goldcrest** were also to be found.

Final word goes to a species that is far from rare but which, these days is not encountered with anything like the regularity with which it was in the past. Possibly overlooked and therefore under-recorded the **Tree Sparrow** can still usually be found at Spurn in sometimes sizeable flocks. It was nice to see a flock of around 50+ birds in the hawthorn hedgerows of Clubley's Field.



## FLAMBOROUGH HEAD AND FILEY (BAY AND BRIGG)

24 October 1993

Another day of, for the most part, fine weather though with some (quite heavy) showers, but which was severely affected by strong winds which, for us on the east coast, were quite from the wrong direction, hoping as we were for some good sea-watching. They had been from the wrong quarter for several days, bringing little into the area from the sea and having the unwelcome effect of keeping land birds in cover.

One particular land-bird caused some dissent and brought criticism of my behaviour as trip organiser. Information concerning the presence of a **Blackpoll Warbler** at Dane's Dyke came over one of the several paging systems in existence. Let me say at the outset that more precise information as to the bird's location was not forthcoming. Naturally, understandably, several (perhaps more), wanted to rush off and search for it. For reasons stated at the time, I elected not to do so. Those people who took the trouble to enquire were made aware of those reasons. Those who did not can still do so if they so choose. Some (few) took needless offence and later attributed to me words that I did not say and attitudes which I do not hold. I am sorry myself that we could not have pursued the bird ... other than that I make no apologies for my actions on the day.

Other land birds were in the Flamborough area. An **Olive-backed Pipit** was unsuccessfully searched for in an area of grassland, stubble and young corn alongside the Big Hedge - an area from where it had been reliably reported some 20 minutes earlier. A bird that may well have been that bird was prematurely flushed before it could be closely studied by someone who was eager to be off and on his way to Dane's Dyke.

In the same general area but closer to the clifftops were large numbers of **Lapland Buntings**. Eventually numbers here would be assessed as being in excess of 400 birds but the flock that I and my companions observed numbered 96.

Flamborough also produced sightings of Woodcock in flight but I heard no more of this bird than mentioned above.

Those who went for it were rewarded with 'excellent' views of a **Red-breasted Flycatcher** in scrub in the ravine at South Landing, an area where **Brambling** was also recorded.

Whilst sea-watching from Flamborough Head did not provide as much entertainment as was envisaged, better things certainly came our way from the more sheltered environment of Filey Bay and off the Brigg. A diver which was eventually diagnosed as **Red-throated Diver** was in the Bay some little distance off the Brigg as were both (singles of) **Red-necked Grebe** and **Slavonian Grebe**. **Manx Shearwater** were noted moving northwards. Seven species of duck were recorded with 1-3 **Eiders** but with up to c20 each of **Common Scoter** and **Wigeon**, and just one male **Goldeneye**.

Small numbers of waders only (9 species) but this section of the Yorkshire coast is not noted for its wader populations, with the exception perhaps of **Purple Sandpipers**. This species still occurs as

today, on the rocky Brigg but not, in my experience in anything like the numbers that it used to do so 20 years ago.

We looked for, but again did not locate a **Long-eared Owl** that was reported to be roosting on the ground on the cliff-face, hidden amongst grasses "somewhere between the beach and the Brigg" but in doing so we did manage to turn up a small party of c 6-8 **Twite**.

A total of 68 species was recorded on the day.

## **THE WIRRAL COAST**

**21 November 1993**

Our first port of call was the sea-front of New Brighton, where we spent upwards of three-quarters of an hour of sea-watching time in a fruitless attempt to find **Petrels**. Prior to our visit the winds had been from the right quarter but hardly strong enough to bring these birds inshore ...but it was worth the attempt.

Several other species were seen from this location, though mostly gulls, and nothing out of the ordinary.

Our next destination was a little further around the Wirral peninsula, at Red Rocks Point, at West Kirby, at the mouth of the Dee estuary, overlooking Hilbre Island. Here we found an almost endless expanse of open sand and mudflats. We had arrived at almost midpoint between tides and it was immediately apparent that here birds would be very thinly distributed over the available area. With only a few exceptions (again mostly gulls) the only birds to be seen here were (63) **Ringed Plovers**.

The Marine Lake, at West Kirby and the shore beyond it offered much the best prospects for birdwatching in this area, with good numbers of duck and some (both near and distant) sizeable wader flocks.

Excellent views were had of up to 3 pairs of **Goldeneye** and 4 pairs of **Red-breasted Mergansers** on the Marine Lake, where they remained throughout the day. On the sea in this area could be seen **Common Scoter** (c 20), **Shelducks** (50+), **Wigeon**, **Teal** and **Mallard**. Waders observed included **Oystercatchers** (many), **Lapwings**, **Knot** (1-4), **Sanderling** (15), **Dunlin**, **Bar-tailed Godwit** (1), **Curlew** (many), **Spotted Redshank** (1) and **Redshank**.

**Skylark** and **Reed Bunting** were numerous on the small amount of saltmarsh exposed at Red Rocks, along with smaller numbers of **Meadow Pipits**: here also were seen **Wren**, **Blackbird**, **Mistle Thrush** and **Magpie**.

We finished the day on the Inner Dee Marshes at Parkgate, where we hoped to be able to watch **Harriers** as the dusk approached. By this time in contrast to the very pleasant midday weather, it was rapidly becoming very cold again.

These grassy marshes bristled with Teal, which was easily the most populace duck species in the area. **Carriion Crow** was probably next in relative abundance.

Following the footpath which runs alongside the old quayside we had views of **Kestrel**, **Sparrowhawk**, at least one **Merlin** and **Little Owl**, along with a debatable **Hen Harrier** seen briefly in flight before coming down to settle in the deep grasses.

Farmland, quite well-endowed with enclosing hedgerow systems and overlooked from this same footpath, gave us excellent views of **Grey Partridge** (5-6), **Pheasant**, **Moorhen** and a good list of passerine species, not least of which was a mixed finch flock holding **Chaffinch**, **Goldfinch**, **Linnet** and one or two **Redpolls**. Additionally, one or two **Tree Sparrows** were associating with this flock. **Long-tailed Tits** and **Goldcrest** occupied the same area - probably independently.

## **FAIRBURN INGS AND TOPHILL LOW**

12 December 1993

When we arrived at Fairburn Ings, at around 9 am, it was raining heavily: we left there at midday in sleet. When we arrived at Tophill Low the sleet had turned into a steady fall of snow: by the time we left at 4 pm there was a covering of about 1"-1½". During the course of the day we all got pretty wet (some more than others - ask Mavis about it!) but fortunately it wasn't too cold and our biggest problem came from condensation within our optics).

Despite the awful weather, we enjoyed the day and the 16 of us participating managed to accrue 61 species over the two sites, which I do not consider to be too bad a total for this time of year.

The best bird of the day was undoubtedly the **Firecrest** that was associating with a sizeable mixed tit flock in scrub birch-conifer woodland clothing the embankment between the River Aire and Village Bay, in that area between the foot of Cut Lane and the Village Bay Hide. Some of those who saw the bird managed some very good views, seeing it well - others were not quite so lucky! Here the situation was further confused by the presence in these areas of good numbers of **Goldcrests**, which all had to be looked at carefully before laying claim to sightings of **Firecrest**.

Fairburn held good numbers of **Gadwall**, where from one hide alone 63 birds were counted. **Goldeneye** numbered c 3-4 pairs, with at least 15 pairs of **Goosander**, largely at Lin Dyke. On this site, some 14 species of wildfowl were recorded.

Tophill Low, on the other hand, whilst producing nothing new generally held higher wildfowl populations with the exception of **Gadwall** and the 'sawbill' species and there was no geese. In my admittedly small experience of Tophill Low to date, the best area appears to be the 'D' reservoir, which is overlooked by a viewing platform and an elevated hide. This is in essence, a deep-water, concrete, collecting tank but its sheer size makes it a very safe wildfowl and gull roost and the numbers of birds it attracts as dusk approaches is remarkable!

# SYSTEMATIC LIST OF SPECIES OBSERVED ON FIELD TRIPS THROUGH 1993

Red-throated Diver	Knot	Robin
Little Grebe	Sanderling	Redstart
Great Crested Grebe	Purple Sandpiper	Whinchill
Red-necked Grebe	Dunlin	Stonechat
Slavonian Grebe	Ruff	Wheatear
Fulmar	Jack Snipe	Ring Ousel
Sooty Shearwater	Snipe	Blackbird
Manx Shearwater	Woodcock	Fieldfare
Gannet	Black-tailed Godwit	Song Thrush
Cormorant	Bar-tailed Godwit	Redwing
Shag	Curlew	Mistle Thrush
Bittern	Spotted Redshank	Sedge Warbler
Grey Heron	Redshank	Reed Warbler
Mute Swan	Greenshank	Whitethroat
Whooper Swan	Common Sandpiper	Blackcap
Pink-footed Goose	Turnstone	Chiffchaff
Greylag Goose	Arctic Skua	Willow Warbler
Canada Goose	Great Skua	Goldcrest
Barnacle Goose	Black-headed Gull	Firecrest
Brent Goose	Common Gull	Spotted Flycatcher
Shelduck	Lesser Black-backed Gull	Red-breasted Flycatcher
Wigeon	Herring Gull	Pied Flycatcher
Gadwall	Greater BB Gull	Bearded Tit
Teal	Kittiwake	Long-tailed Tit
Mallard	Sandwich Tern	Marsh Tit
Pintail	Common Tern	Willow Tit
Garganey	Arctic Tern	Coat Tit
Shoveler	Guillemot	Blue Tit
Pochard	Razorbill	Great Tit
Tufted Duck	Rock Dove	Nuthatch
Eider	Stock Dove	Treecreeper
Common Scoter	Woodpigeon	Jay
Goldeneye	Collared Dove	Magpie
Smew	Turtle Dove	Jackdaw
Red-breasted Merganser	Cuckoo	Rook
Goosander	Barn Owl	Carion Crow
Ruddy Duck	Little Owl	Starling
Marsh Harrier	Short-eared Owl	House Sparrow
Hen Harrier	Swift	Tree Sparrow
Sparrowhawk	Kingfisher	Chaffinch
Buzzard	Green Woodpecker	Brambling
Rough-legged Buzzard	Great Spotted Woodpecker	Greenfinch
Kestrel	Lesser Spotted Woodpecker	Siskin
Merlin	Skylark	Goldfinch
Peregrine	Shorelark	Linnet
Red Grouse	Swallow	Twite
Grey Partridge	Sand Martin	Redpoll
Pheasant	House Martin	Scarlet Rosefinch
Water Rail	Tree Pipit	Bullfinch
Moorhen	Meadow Pipit	Hawfinch
Coot	Rock Pipit	Lapland Bunting
Oystercatcher	Yellow Wagtail	Yellowhammer
Little Ringed Plover	Grey Wagtail	Reed Bunting
Ringed Plover	Pied Wagtail	Corn Bunting
Golden Plover	Wren	
Grey Plover	Dunnack	
Lapwing		

Total for the year: 167 species

## RINGING REPORT

The weather during the first winter period was somewhat inclement and, therefore, not conducive to the catching of birds. The 17 Brambling were an added bonus, however, and were all caught as they frequented the peanut basket at Blackmoorfoot at the end of this period.

Little effort was expended on the finding of nests and, as a consequence, only 43 pulli were ringed. This consisted of the following: Dipper (4 Hill Top, 5 Rishworth Moor), Blackbird (11 Blackmoorfoot), Willow Warbler (6 Blackmoorfoot), Chaffinch (12 Blackmoorfoot) and Greenfinch (5 Blackmoorfoot).

Despite the relatively settled weather during the summer and autumn months, birds were in short supply and the number ringed was extremely low. The numbers of Willow Warblers caught (only 88, including re-traps from previous years) was very disappointing. This decrease in numbers, however, was also reflected in all the BTO's national surveys carried out during the course of the year. Since the start of the Common Bird Census in 1961, populations of common breeding birds have been monitored on an annual basis. The index for Willow Warbler has always been very stable, 1993 being the first year in which a marked decrease in breeding numbers had been apparent. The reasons for this decrease are, as yet, unclear.

The second winter period, like the first, was governed by inclement weather and very few birds were handled. The efforts of David Barrans in replenishing the peanut basket at Blackmoorfoot did, however, mean that ringing was possible when weather conditions did allow. The total number of birds ringed in 1993 was only 342, making this an even worse year than 1992 when only 472 birds were ringed.

## RINGING RECOVERIES

Key to symbols and terms used:

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

Sex: M = Male F = Female

## Manner of Recovery

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

All recoveries of five kilometres or more are publicised.

## RECOVERIES OF HUDDERSFIELD RINGED BIRDS

### Heron

Colour rings	1	April/May 1990	Bretton, nr Wakefield. 53 37'N 1 34'W
	W	3.4.93-20.4.93 (6 sightings)	Blackmoorfoot, nr Hudds 53 37'N 1 52'W 18 Kms W
Colour rings	1	April/May 1990	Bretton
	W	24.6.93-3.7.93 (8 sightings)	Blackmoorfoot 18 Kms W

### Black-headed Gull

EH69339	1	21.6.83	Black Moss, nr Marsden 53 36'N 1 56'W
	X	11.5.93	Mottram in Longendale, Greater Manchester 53 27'N 2 0'W 17 Kms SSW

Note the age of the above bird.

### Willow Warbler

ST0199	3	5.9.93	Blackmoorfoot
	V	18.9.93	Dungeness, Kent 50 55'N 0 57'E 356 Kms SSE

M L Denton

## LOCAL RE-TRAPS AND RECOVERIES

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

A number of re-traps are also handled, some many years after ringing. These are tabulated below. The top lines show the approxiamte period between ringing and either re-trap (Table 1) or death. (Table 2). The figures show the number of individuals re-trapped or found dead near their place of ringing.

TABLE 1 - RE-TRAPS

	1 yr	2 yrs	3 yrs	4 yrs	5 yrs	6 yrs	Total
Great Spotted Woodpecker					1		1
Robin	3						3
Blackbird					1	1	2
Willow Warbler	2			1			3
Blue Tit	3	1	3	2			9
Great Tit	1						<u>1</u>
							19

TABLE 2 - RECOVERIES

	1 yr	2 yrs	3 yrs	4 yrs	Total
Magpie	1				1

RING TOTALS LIST 1993

Sparrowhawk	1	Chiffchaff	2
Great Spotted Woodpecker	1	Willow Warbler	85
Dipper	9	Goldcrest	3
Wren	7	Pied Flycatcher	1
Dunnoek	3	Blue Tit	76
Robin	13	Great Tit	12
Blackbird	24	Magpie	1
Song Thrush	2	Chaffinch	22
Sedge Warbler	2	Brambling	17
Lesser Whitethroat	1	Greenfinch	53
Garden Warbler	2	Reed Bunting	2

**GRAND TOTAL                      342**

M L Denton

## CLUB OFFICIALS FOR 1994

<i>President</i>	Donald Haigh 35 Birchington Avenue Birchenclyffe Huddersfield Tel: 0422 374670
<i>Hon Treasurer</i>	David Shore 4 Fixby Park Drive Huddersfield HD2 2NN Tel: 514237
<i>Hon Secretary</i>	Dave Williamson 62 Moor Lane Highburton Huddersfield HD8 0QS Tel: 608624
<i>Recorder</i>	David Barrans 36a Marsh Lane Shepley Huddersfield HD8 8AQ Tel: 603348
<i>Field Meetings Organiser</i>	David Butterfield 15 Dane Road Skelmanthorpe Huddersfield HD8 9BU Tel: 862006
<i>Conservation Liaison Officer and Librarian</i>	Michael Denton 77 Hawthorn Terrace Crosland Moor Huddersfield HD4 5RP Tel: 646990
<i>Auditor</i>	Mavis Riley
<i>Committee Members</i>	John Avison Stuart Brocklehurst Malcolm Charnock Dave Holloway Dennis Manchester