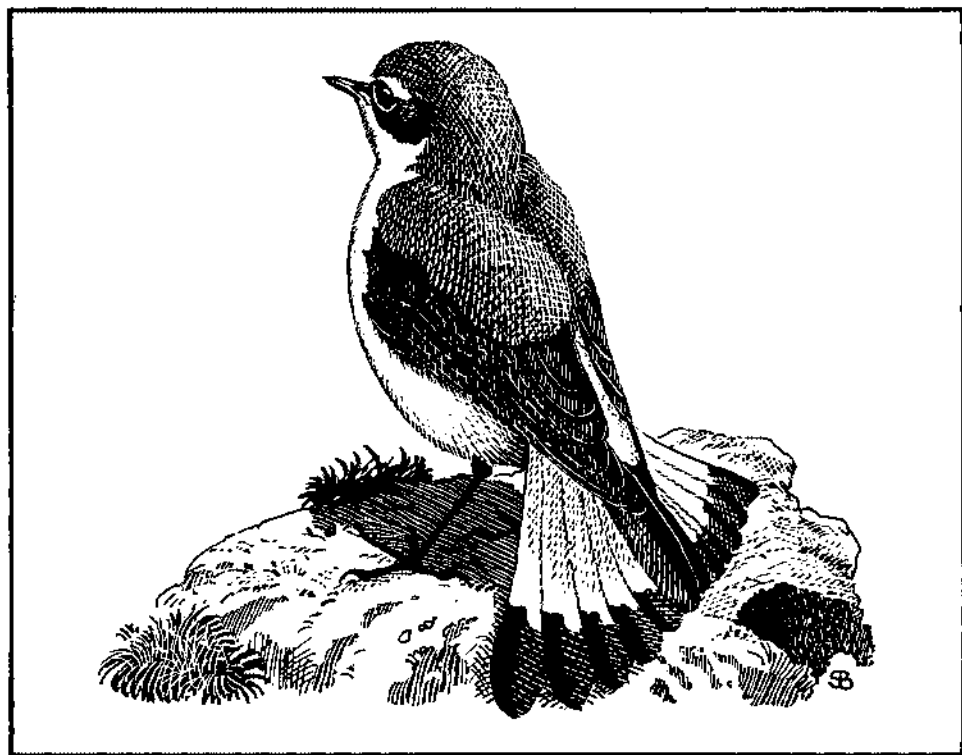
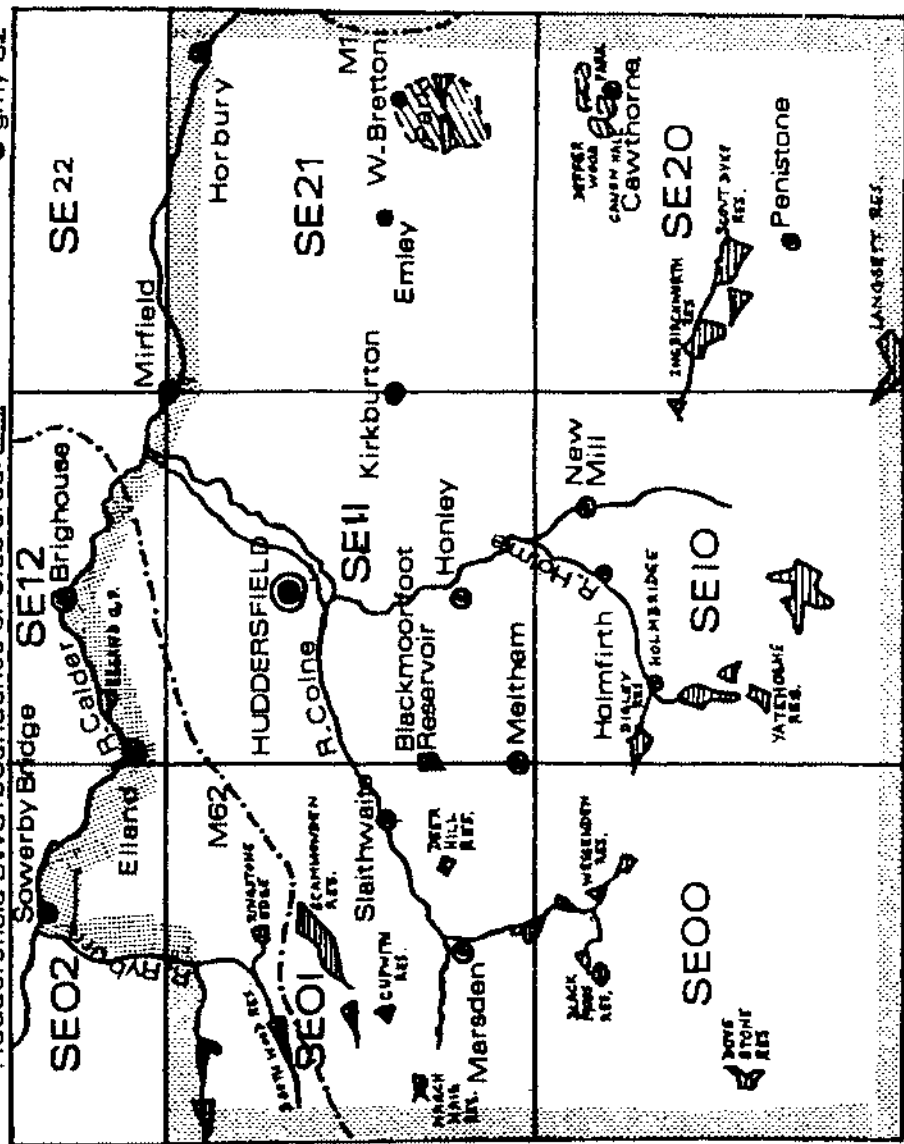


Huddersfield Birdwatchers' Club

Birds in Huddersfield 1992



ANNUAL REPORT



BIRDS IN HUDDERSFIELD 1992

Report of Huddersfield Birdwatchers' Club

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PRESIDENT'S REPORT

When I was invited to become President of Huddersfield Bird Watchers' Club I felt very honoured, especially being a Lancastrian. To take over this office from John Dale is no small task for he has served the club well over many years and has been of great help and assistance to me. For this I truly thank him.

I had only been in office for a short time when my feeling of elation was dampened, in the middle of summer David Small died after a period of illness. David had always been a keen and helpful supporter of the club and will be missed by many, both here and elsewhere. His great kindness will live on in the club for David left much of his birdwatching equipment to the club instructing us through his executors to sell it and raise money for club funds. It was decided to honour him by purchasing a new projection screen and placing upon it a small plaque in his name.

It was not long after that that I was to learn that John Reynolds was very poorly and his passing away some few months later must not go unmentioned until the next report. John had served the club as President for a period of three years and then continued on the committee afterwards being the organiser of our indoor meetings. John brought with him a style of his own and had great knowledge of all he concerned himself with. He was internationally acknowledged for his photographic work and his birding skills. John's choice of lecturers has set standards which the club can look up to and in our future selections it is not going to be easy to follow. His professionalism has not left us wanting for he has organised matters well into the future and for this we must all thank him and extend our feeling of sadness and sorrow to his family. He too will be greatly missed.

Our season of indoor meetings always seem to pass by quickly. It has been very pleasing to see the number of members and visitors increase which is helping to increase our overall membership for quite a few visitors join the club afterwards. I was especially pleased with the presentation to us by David Cottridge in the series of memorial lectures to honour my late father. This was I feel a really special tribute.

Our series of field meetings have been very well planned and thought out by David Butterfield. This is a very arduous task and I can only ask that as many of you as possible join him on these occasions. Club finances have been skillfully managed by our treasurer David Shore and I thank him for this work. It means that there is no increase in membership subscription, rather that the level set to be regarded as a minimum with people left to contribute more as they may wish and I hope many do.

The year has seen Lynn Stanley retire as our secretary and on behalf of us all I thank Lynn for her great work and the duties she has performed so well on our behalf. I hope the small gift made to her will give her much pleasure for many years to come. In recognition for their service to our club, Brian Woodcock, Mike Denton and John Dale have all been granted honorary club membership. This is truly deserved of them all. I thank all members of the committee for their help and continuous assistance which has led to the efficient running of the club.

My very good wishes to you all for it is a great pleasure to be president of a very friendly society of people.

INTRODUCTION TO THE CLASSIFIED LIST

Despite the lack of many passage wader species through reservoirs being full, an excellent 169 species were recorded during 1992. While no species new to the area were seen, the many highlights included Bittern wintering from 1991 at Elland, single Bean and White-fronted Geese, Garganey and Dotterels at Ingbirchworth, Long-tailed Duck in June at Ringstone Edge Reservoir, Montagu's Harrier near Langsett, many Glaucous and Iceland Gull records and the welcome increase in Peregrine sightings.

A January record of Willow Warbler at Holmfirth is the first ever winter record for the club, while in autumn low numbers of this species were noted on passage, despite ringing. Stonechats were in good numbers in the winter months but none stayed to breed. A large cold weather movement, the day after snow, occurred at Elland on 18th February and included 2400 Fieldfare, 550 Redwing and 100 Skylark. Astonishing numbers of Wheatears were held up in the area in late April and early May, a count of 102 in the Ingbirchworth area on 28th April easily the highest ever for the club. Woodpigeons also occurred in large numbers from November to the year end.

Coverage at Blackmoorfoot Reservoir was down to 304 days from an average of around 340 but on a positive note I have received more records this year from club members and local birdwatchers without which this report would not be possible, thank you for submitting these. Birds of prey continue to be reported by members of the public and often come to me "second hand". Some of these may be genuine records but there is a need to submit as detailed a description as possible of any unusual raptors. To highlight this need, an escaped Red-tailed Hawk was seen on several dates in the Bank Wood area this year.

Thanks must go to Mike Denton for summarising Blackmoorfoot Reservoir records; RSPB staff for Booth Dam Quarry information; Wakefield, Halifax and Barnsley recorders for exchange of records; Phil Jeffcock for the typing and layout of the report; Stuart Brocklehurst for the excellent illustrations and to John Dale and Mike Denton for help and constructive comments on descriptions received of less common species.

Stephen Hey June 1993

SUMMARY OF WEATHER 1992

After westerly winds and rain early in the month, January was generally settled with the latter part very cold and foggy. February continued settled on the whole but some snow and easterly winds on 17th brought a spectacular movement of birds (Thrushes, Finches and Skylarks) through Elland Gravel Pits the following day. March was unsettled with mainly mild conditions until northerly winds at the end of the month. With April also unsettled, migration was slow over the first few weeks till a south-west airflow. However, north-west winds at the month end were obviously a factor in holding up the large numbers of Wheatears in the area, which moved on when winds went to the south-west at the beginning of May.

May and June were dominated by settled anticyclonic conditions and warm east or south-east airflows. This weather produced exceptional numbers of unusual drift migrations on the east coast of Britain, for example sightings of Red-footed Falcon extended well inland and almost to our club area with records at nearby Pugneys. Temperatures soared to almost 30°C with Britain having the warmest June since 1956. July continued hot and often humid with mostly light and variable winds. August and September were very unsettled with an almost continuous stream of low pressure systems bringing rain which ensured reservoirs would stay full. Mid-October onwards saw a cold north-west airflow with a wintery feel and temperatures dipping below 0°C at night. November to mid-December was generally mild, wet and windy when, in complete contrast, it became bitterly cold with persistent hard frosts and some freezing fog.

Some data used in this summary was kindly supplied by Rachel Heywood at the University of Huddersfield weather watch.

NOTES ON THE CLASSIFIED LIST

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

High water levels produced a good breeding season for this species. Birds were seen throughout the year at Ingbirchworth where two or three pairs raised at least 6 young. The maximum count here was 16 on 23rd September. At nearby Scout Dike one pair probably bred, but numbers in autumn were high with 15 on 29th August and 27 on 7th September.

Single pairs successfully bred at Bretton Park (3 young), Gunthwaite Dam (3 young), Scammonden Dam (2 young), Deanhead Reservoir (1 young), and were present in the breeding season and probably bred at Elland Gravel Pits, Royd Moor Reservoir, Castle Dam, Boshaw Whams and Ryburn Reservoir.

Blackmoorfoot Reservoir had 5 singles between 29th March and 17th May and one to three birds on the majority of dates between 15th August and 2nd November.

Outside the breeding season, single records of one or two birds were received from Ringstone Edge Reservoir, Tunnel End Reservoir at Marsden, March Haigh Reservoir, the River Calder at Horbury Wyke and Cannon Hall.

GREAT CRESTED GREBE *Podiceps cristatus*

Resident breeder (1)

A good breeding season on the main waters:

Scout Dike Reservoir Present between 13th February and 8th November. Seven pairs bred, raising 11 young.

Bretton Park Seven pairs bred with five successfully rearing 10 young. Good numbers still present well into November, with 16 on the 25th.

Ingbirchworth Reservoir Present February to November with two pairs raising 3 young.

Blackmoorfoot Reservoir Recorded in all months, generally 1-4 birds till the end of February (with 7 on 17th February) and then 4-8 till the end of May with 10 on 14th April the spring maximum. Falling water levels continue to thwart any breeding attempts here with two nests high and dry by 25th May and a replacement nest high and dry by 20th June. Numbers built up from

the end of May to a high of 17 between 28th August and 5th September, falling sharply away from mid-October with one or two birds till 6th November. The only other records to the year end were 8 on 7th November and one on 12th December.

At Brookfoot Lake one to two birds present February to July with six during April and May. Seen on nest and nest building here but presumably failed. One pair bred at Boshaw Whams (1 young) and otherwise only recorded at three other waters:- Hill Top Reservoir, one on 14th March and two on 3rd May; Ringstone Edge Reservoir, one on 20th April, two on 16th August and one on 18th October and one at Langsett Reservoir on 21st September and 30th December.

CORMORANT *Phalacrocorax carbo*

Scarce passage and winter visitor

For the second year running, an excellent showing in our area. An immature was at Ryburn Reservoir from 12th January to 15th March which almost certainly accounted for records of an immature at Scammonden Dam on five dates between 19th January and 14th February. On the 22nd and 31st January the immature was joined by an adult at Scammonden, and a single adult flew over here on 23rd February.

Blackmoorfoot had one immature 20th January, one on 4th May, one on 6th August, two on 5th September, one south on 20th September and two on 5th October. Good numbers at Ingbirchworth Reservoir were four on 2nd April; nine on the Reservoir on 19th April on which date eight flew north (almost certainly part of the nine); two of the race *sinensis* on 27th April (BA, MCW); three on 17th August and two on 1st September.

Elland Gravel Pits saw four over on 19th April; three east plus one on the lake 26th April; two east on 18th August and one roosting from 28th to 30th September. Singles were at Bretton Park on 5th April; Ryburn Reservoir on 9th April; Ringstone Edge Reservoir on 18th August and 16th September and, finally, west at Scammonden on 12th November.

BITTERN *Botaurus stellaris*

Rare visitor

The over-wintering bird at Brookfoot Lake was last reliably reported on 11th March. It was seen by several observers with January the best month with eight sightings.

HERON *Ardea cinerea*

Resident breeder (2)

Bretton Park A total of 24 clutches of eggs were laid with at least 58 eggs. Twenty one pairs successfully reared a minimum of 55 young and of these, 23 were ringed and colour ringed. As

in past years, a few unpaired birds or immatures remained near the colony. A reasonable winter seems to have kept the population high. Eggs were evident in a nest as early as 23rd February and young still in the nest in mid-June. The young from one nest regurgitated some goldfish while being ringed.

This year's colour ring combination was light green above white on the right leg with a metal BTO ring on the left leg. It was interesting that from the whole colony there was only one bird, within a pair, which had been previously colour ringed. This was a yellow and white ringed bird (from 1990) which successfully reared 3 young to the flying stage (All information --- Bamsley Ringing Group).

At Blackmoorfoot Reservoir, singles on 26 dates between 4th January and 14th April and two on 9th March. Present again from mid-June when it occurred on 106 bird days until a single on 19th December. Normally numbers were one to four but up to 6 late June to early August and a maximum of seven on 10th and 11th July.

Birds were again present in fields at Berry Brow during January with nine on the 6th and five on the 16th. Elsewhere there were one to two birds at another 30 sites with two places having higher counts: Scout Dike Reservoir with a maximum of six on 23rd July and Scammonden Dam with seven on 20th July. A bird in the Lindley/Outlane area in January and February took goldfish from at least two garden ponds. Small numbers of birds were in trees in private woodland near Lepton Great Wood and thought to be possibly breeding, perhaps another colony would not be out of the question considering the healthy population in our area.

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

At Cannon Hall one was present, presumably, for most of the year. Elland Gravel Pits had one on 14th January, 1st and 2nd May and then 6th September to the year end. The only other records were two at Horbury Wyke on 7th June and one at Hill Top Reservoir on 16th September.

BEWICK'S SWAN *Cygnus columbianus*
Scarce winter visitor

A flock of 13 flew north over Langsett Reservoir on 8th October (BBSG). At Royd Moor Reservoir one left to the west with three Whooper Swans *Cygnus cygnus* on 29th October (BBSG). Elland Gravel Pits had the only other record with a single on 25th and 26th December (NC).

WHOOPEE SWAN *Cygnus cygnus*

Scarce winter visitor

The only early record was one flying over Elland Gravel Pits on 3rd April (PG). Autumn produced a minor passage of birds with six at Blackmoorfoot Reservoir on 7th October (PAC), four at Bretton Park on 10th October (WNS), three west with one Bewick's Swan *Cygnus columbianus* at Royd Moor Reservoir on 29th October (BBSG) and finally two at Broadstones Reservoir on 7th November (BP).

BEAN GOOSE *Anser fabalis*

Rare visitor

One at Boothwood Dam for 30 minutes on the early morning of 10th May (MSH). The possibility of an escape has to be considered because of the date. Accepted by YNU.

PINK-FOOTED GOOSE *Anser brachyrhynchus*

Uncommon to common passage visitor

Scammonden Dam had one to three birds on many dates from 6th January to 23rd April. A small movement probably took place on 13th January with 210 flying WNW at Lindley Moor and flocks of 114 and 54 west at Winscar Reservoir. Two flew SW at Blackmoorfoot Reservoir on 31st January and at Bretton Park there was one on 16th February and two on 15th March. At Lindley Moor, approximately 150 flew west on 27th March and three, probably earlier at Scammonden Dam, were seen at Ringstone Edge Reservoir on 25th April and Booth Wood Dam on 29th April. The final spring record was of a single with Canada Geese *Branta canadensis* on 10th May at Winscar Reservoir. Unidentified grey geese sp., probably of this species, were seen at Linthwaite with 34 west on 25th February and seven north-west on 15th March.

The first birds of the autumn were approximately 25 north-west over Copwith Hill on 8th October, not followed for nearly a month when 70 flew west at Lindley Moor on 7th November. Between Ringstone Edge and Scammonden, on 12th November, flocks of 9, 32, 33 and 46 flew west. The final skein of the year involved about 120 flying west at Scammonden on 12th December.

WHITE-FRONTED GOOSE *Anser albifrons*

Rare visitor

An adult flew west over Blackmoorfoot Reservoir on 25th December (MLD, MT). Only the fourth record for the area.

GREYLAG GOOSE *Anser anser*

Uncommon passage visitor

Elland Gravel Pits saw two on 23rd March, one on 27th March and one on 12th and 13th April. Two flew north over Booth Dam Quarry on 30th May and elsewhere at least four feral birds throughout the year at Cannon Hall and at Bretton Park singles on 24th May, 7th June and probably the only 'wild' birds of the year when eight were present on 13th September.

CANADA GOOSE *Branta canadensis*

Resident breeder (2)

Breeding success with numbers of pairs shown in brackets were: Bretton Park (approx. 4 despite population control), Canon Hall (4+), Wessenden Head Reservoir (1), Harden Reservoir (1), Ringstone Edge Reservoir (1), Winscar Reservoir (4), Lower Windleden Reservoir (2) and Upper Windleden Reservoir (1). Some known breeding sites, especially moorland reservoirs, were not reported from this year. Birds were also present during the breeding season at Digley Reservoir, Ramsden Reservoir, Langsett Reservoir, Horbny Wyke, Deanhead Reservoir, Booth-Wood Reservoir and Gunthwaite Dam. Low numbers were at a further six sites outside the breeding season.

In the early months, maximum numbers were 294 at Bretton Park on 12th January, 232 at Cannon Hall on 13th January and 67 at Scammonden Dam on 31st January with numbers at all other locations not exceeding 30 birds. Post breeding flocks were evident from mid-August with the best sites numbering 61 at Winscar Reservoir on 15th August; 67 at Scammonden Dam on 24th August; 69 at Ringstone Edge Reservoir on 23 August; 96 at Royd Muor Reservoir on 12th October; 296 at Bretton Park on 18th October; 280 at Cannon Hall on 17th November and 36 at Ingbirchworth Reservoir on 28th December. Blackmoorfoot Reservoir had one to twenty-four birds between February and December but the majority in February, March and August.

BARNACLE GOOSE *Branta leucopsis*

Rare visitor. Feral birds breeding

One pair bred at Cannon Hall, raising at least one young and a pair attempted to breed at Bretton Park, but failed. Present throughout the year at both these sites with the maximum counts being 10 at Bretton Park on 12th January and seven at Cannon Hall on 9th August.

SHELDUCK *Tadorna tadorna*

Uncommon passage visitor

Blackmoorfoot Reservoir was the best location for this species with singles in February on 9th, 15th and 17th; in March on 3rd and 29th and in April on 17th. Autumn and winter records

at the same site consisted of 3 juveniles on 18th July; one from 28th to 30th September; 3 on 30th November; 3 on 11th and 12th December and finally a single on 14th December. Langsett Reservoir had one on 1st January and three on 30th December. Ingbirchworth Reservoir had one on 15th March; two on 6th May; 4 on 20th and one on 27th September and two on 13th December. Two flew east over Booth Wood Dam on 13th April and 3 were at Elland Gravel Pits on 8th May.

Ringstone Edge Reservoir had more than usual with 5 on 8th September, 2 on 19th September and 2 on 15th November. The only other records were of singles in October, at Scout Dike Reservoir on 12th and Royd Moor Reservoir on 18th and 21st.

MANDARIN DUCK *Aix galericulata*

Rare feral visitor

No doubt the same bird as last year, a female, spent most of the year with Mallards *Anas platyrhynchos* on the River Holme near Holmfirth centre (HQ).

WIGEON *Anas penelope*

Common passage and winter visitor

Blackmoorfoot Reservoir In January, 4 on 12th and 20th and 12 on 28th. In March, seven on 4th, two from 23rd to 25th and four on 30th. Unusually, there were several June records of males with singles on 3rd and 6th and two on 22nd. Autumn numbers, and bird days, down on recent years starting with five on 18th September, three on 25th and 29th September and eight on 30th September. Occurred on 14 October dates with a maximum of 14 on 13th then three dates in November with a maximum of nine on 30th and just two December records of 12 on 10th and four on 29th.

Ingbirchworth Reservoir Five on 1st February and a pair on 4th May. In a poor year for this location the only autumn records were a single on 30th October and a pair on 1st December.

In the early months four were at Winscar Reservoir on 13th January; three were at Langsett Reservoir on 2nd February; a pair were at Elland Gravel Pits from 3rd to 26th February and six were at Horbury Wyke on 20th April. One to six birds turned up at seven other waters after mid September, Ringstone Edge Reservoir being the best area with birds on seven dates.

GADWALL *Anas strepera*

Scarce passage and winter visitor

One at Gunthwaite Dam on 9th February then, at Ingbirchworth Reservoir, one on 14th May, 27th August and 1st September. Blackmoorfoot Reservoir had one on 5th August and then, in December, two males on the 14th, 20th to 22nd and 27th but no dates in between. The only other

record is of two males at Royd Moor Reservoir on 28th December, probably the Blackmoorfoot birds.

TEAL *Anas crecca*

Resident breeder (1). Common passage and winter visitor

Royd Moor Reservoir had a very high count of 190 on 3rd February which must have been part of an influx, although counts near to the 3rd are lacking. The previous maximum at this site was 18 on 12th January. At Elland Gravel Pits birds were present January to March with a maximum of 35 on 4th February. The high count at Bretton Park was 22 on 2nd February with birds present well into April here. Scammonden Dam was the only other location of note with a high of 20 on 23rd February. Elsewhere, in the early months, up to 10 at another seven waters.

Bred at Winscar Reservoir where 11 newly hatched young were seen on 22nd April, exceptional in being 3 weeks earlier than normal. Also bred at Snailsden Reservoir, Scout Dike Reservoir and seen occasionally in the summer months at Cupwith.

Whilst not daily, birds were present at Blackmoorfoot from 7th August to the year end with monthly maximum of 13 on 22nd August; 21 on 6th September, four on 4th and 27th October; 18 on 14th November and four on 22nd December. Present from Autumn to the year end at the usual sites; namely Royd Moor Reservoir, Ingbirchworth Reservoir, Bretton Park and Elland Gravel Pits. Numbers were generally low with under 20 recorded, the only exception being 26 at Elland Gravel Pits on 29th October. Up to eight were recorded at a further 10 locations.

MALLARD *Anas platyrhynchos*

Resident breeder (3). Common winter visitor

Early maxima of 116 at Bretton Park on 12th January, 80 at Cannon Hall on 13th January, 57 at Elland Gravel Pits on 7th January, and 43 at Ringstone Edge Reservoir on 19th January.

At Bretton Park, monthly maxima were 67 on 13th September; 206 on 18th October; 140 on 1st November and 205 on 13th December. Other high counts were 64 at Ingbirchworth Reservoir in September; 84 at Scammonden Dam on 22nd August; 60 at Cannon Hall on 1st November; 49 at Elland Gravel Pits on 12th December; 76 at Blackmoorfoot Reservoir on 14th December; 130 at Royd Moor Reservoir on 21st December and 32 at Digley Reservoir on 24th December. Less than 30 were present on various dates at another 15 sites.

PINTAIL *Anas acuta*

Uncommon passage and winter visitor

An over-wintering male from 1991 was responsible for many records in the Ingbirchworth area, being generally present on Scout Dike Reservoir till 27th February and then on Ingbirchworth

Reservoir from 29th February to at least 19th March. On top of that five were on Ingbirchworth on 28th January. Blackmoorfoot Reservoir had a single on 28th February, a pair at Scammonden Dam on 3rd March and five at Hill Top Reservoir on 3rd April.

Singles were at Blackmoorfoot Reservoir on 30th July, 9th and 23rd to 25th September and 27th October with four present on 16th November. A flock of around 15 flew west over Skelmanthorpe on 3rd October; Bretton Park had three on 6th and one on 15th November and a male was at Ingbirchworth on 21st and Royd Moor Reservoir on 28th December.

GARGANEY *Anas querquedula*

Rare summer migrant

A male was present at Ingbirchworth Reservoir from 17th to 19th May (Birdline NE, JED, BA et al).

SHOVELER *Anas clypeata*

Uncommon passage and winter visitor

A good year for this species, with two preferred sites. The first was Bretton Park which had one on 12th January; a pair on 22nd and 25th April; two on 20th and three on 27th September; three on 25th November; one on 13th and two on 20th December. The second site was Blackmoorfoot Reservoir with two on 2nd June; seven on 16th July; eight on 16th August and, in September, singles on 6th, 13th, 15th, 19th and 20th with six on the 18th.

Ingbirchworth Reservoir had records of four on 24th March and nine on 8th and 9th November. The only other records were two at Ringstone Edge Reservoir and one at Horbury Wyke on 20th April; two at Scout Dike Reservoir on 2nd June and finally a single at Elland Gravel Pits on 5th September.

POCHARD *Aythya ferina*

Common passage and winter visitor

Ingbirchworth Reservoir Present January to March with healthy numbers, peaking in late January with high counts of 80 on 20th and 58 on 25th and between 16 and 55 usually present outside this period. Birds were absent till two in July, one in August, seven to nine from September to November and rising to 33 in December.

Scout Dike Reservoir After 17 on 7th January numbers built up to 63 on 27th January but could well involve birds from Ingbirchworth. No other spring numbers reported. After 29th August, one to seven were present to the year end.

Blackmoorfoot Reservoir Variable numbers on just 11 bird days from January to 9th March, with the maximum being 29 on 15th February and 41 on 23rd February. After two on 28th June generally low numbers were present on several dates till mid-November when there were 18 on 15th and 21 on 22nd. One to 11 present on and off to the year end.

Bretton Park had poor numbers, less than 10 birds, January to March and July to the year end. Brookfoot Lake had one to three January to April and three to four October to the year end except for 10 on 5th December. Up to six birds were recorded on up to five dates at Scammonden Dam, Cannon Hall, Gunthwaite Dam, Ryburn Reservoir, Ringstone Edge Reservoir, Royd Moor Reservoir, the canal at Linthwaite and three flew over Crossland Moor on 13th December.

TUFTED DUCK *Aythya fuligula*

Resident breeder (1). Common passage and winter visitor

Scout Dike Reservoir After low numbers in the early months, an excellent breeding season here with five pairs rearing 21 young. The maximum was 37 on 29th August dropping to between six and 17 to the year end.

Ingbirchworth Reservoir 22 on 11th January, but more usual numbers were between four and 10 up till May when numbers rose to 20. Bred here, with at least two young reared. As at Scout Dike, numbers peaked in August at 32 to around seven at the year end.

Blackmoorfoot Reservoir Virtually present all year except for a few dates in January and an absence from 20th May to 13th June. Maximum numbers were 28 on 15th February and 36 on 11th July. From 23 on 5th August, numbers fell back to between four and 12 in December.

No breeding evidence from Bretton Park, where high counts were 27 on 15th March and 24 on 1st November. A pair was successful at Digley Reservoir, with five young reared, and birds were present in the summer months and possibly bred at Gunthwaite Dam, Deanhead Reservoir, Horbry Wyke and Castle Dam. Recorded at 10 other locations, usually single figures but for 13 at Boshaw Whams on 28th March.

SCAUP *Aythya marila*

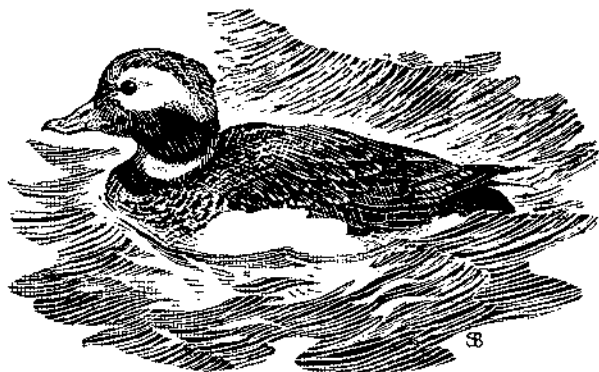
Scarce passage and winter visitor

A dismal year with the only record being a female at Blackmoorfoot Reservoir on 31st January (AJW).

LONG-TAILED DUCK *Clangula hyemalis*

Rare visitor

A female type was present at Ringstone Edge Reservoir from 20th to 24th June and found independently by four observers! (PG, SH, JB, MLD et al). Remarkably a first summer male was present in the Halifax area at Withens Clough from 13th June till 6th July (HBC).



COMMON SCOTER *Melanitta nigra*

Scarce to uncommon passage visitor

Several records at widely scattered sites, with Ringstone Edge Reservoir having one on 6th March and five on 30th September; Blackmoorfoot Reservoir with one on 13th March, four on 8th June, one on 12th August and one on 30th September; three at Booth Wood Dam on 8th April; seven at Langsett Reservoir on both 20th April and 4th May and finally a male at Ingbirchworth Reservoir on 20th and 30th July.

GOLDENEYE *Bucephala clangula*

Regular but uncommon winter visitor

Ingbirchworth Reservoir Normally one or two birds from January to March but an exceptional count of 14 on 28th March. Up to three during April with two immature males till 9th May. After the first returning bird on 21st October, one to four were present to the year end but mainly in December. Seven were present on 25th October.

Blackmoorfoot Reservoir After singles on 1st and 11th January there was an unusual absence till

one on 4th April after which one to two were present on most dates till 24th April. In autumn, a reasonable passage in October with the first on 13th and a maximum of six on 17th and 18th. Only one to three birds after that and present on just two December dates.

Ringsstone Edge Reservoir Present January to May, usually one to three but a maximum of five on 20th April and the last of the spring was an immature male from 4th to 19th May. Small numbers from 22nd October with a maximum of five on 9th November after large numbers on the east coast of Yorkshire the previous two days.

At Deanhead Reservoir, one to three were present in January and March and also one on 16th May. Booth Wood Dam held one to three on and off from 31st March to 30th April. Scout Dike Reservoir had an early returning bird with one on 21st September, also one or two in mid-November. Birds associated with the large coastal numbers in November were two at Bretton Park on 6th, two at Booth Wood Dam on 8th, two at Scammonden Dam on 8th and four at Winscar Reservoir on 8th. Otherwise single bird days at just two other sites.

RED-BREASTED MERGANSER *Mergus serrator*

Rare visitor

At Blackmoorfoot Reservoir, a pair was seen on 14th, 21st and 25th April (DMO, AJW et al) which was almost certainly the pair at Scammonden Dam on 23rd April when some display was noted (JED). Single redheads were present at Blackmoorfoot Reservoir on 17th October (AD) and Baitings Reservoir on 9th November (HBC).

GOOSANDER *Mergus merganser*

Scarce passage and winter visitor

Elland Gravel Pits Our only regular wintering area with birds mainly frequenting the River Calder from Brookfoot to Elland. Present from January to mid-April with up to five in January, 14 on 12th February, six in March and five in April. The first of the autumn were three on 6th September then up to four in October, seven in November and then a significant increase, in line with above average numbers present in Yorkshire to 23 on 27th December.

Blackmoorfoot Reservoir On 1st January, one flew north-west. In the latter part of the year, three on 10th November and, in December, two females on 16th, a pair on 19th and five on 22nd.

Bretton Park In November, one on 8th and three on 23rd and a good group of 11 on 12th December.

On 27th April, two flew over Booth Dam Quarry and a pair was on Brownhill Reservoir on 3rd May. Reflecting the late autumn influx other records were at Langsett Reservoir, four on 11th October and 14th November and two on 13th December; six at Baitings Reservoir on 8th November; Ingbirchworth Reservoir with five south-east on 9th November and one on 14th December and Scout Dike Reservoir with, in November, two on 14th and one on 30th.

RUDDY DUCK *Oxyura jamaicensis*
Uncommon visitor

Bretton Park Many records after a single on 30th March. Up to two pairs were seen in April but still no evidence of breeding. The maximum was six on 2nd August and the final record of the year was three on 18th October.

Ingbirchworth Reservoir had one on 23rd March, then in autumn, two on 17th August, two on 17th and one on 23rd and 24th September. At nearby Scout Dike Reservoir three to four birds were present on five dates between 7th and 21st September and possibly present throughout. The only other records came from Horbury Wyke in June with three males on 7th and one on 11th.

HEN HARRIER *Circus cyaneus*
Rare visitor

A ringtail was at Cupwith on 9th May (JB, BH).

MONTAGU'S HARRIER *Circus pygargus*
Rare visitor

A ringtail Harrier almost certainly this species was seen near the Little Don Valley on 15th May (NEP) confirmed by a sighting the following day in the same area (BBSG). Remarkably another record, of a female, drifting north over Langsett village towards Millhouse Green on 21st June (BBSG). Only the fourth and fifth records for the area.

GOSHAWK *Accipiter gentilis*
Sporadic breeder and rare visitor

Birds were occasionally reported from three possible breeding areas. At one site a pair failed and no outcome is known from the other locations. Away from these sites, singles were present at Deffer Wood on 9th April (JED), Bilberry Reservoir on 3rd May (HQ), near Bank Wood on 5th August (DS) and Grange Moor on 16th December (JB).

SPARROWHAWK *Accipiter nisus*
Resident breeder (2)

Birds were reported from around 45 locations, which is down on recent years (e.g. 65 locations in 1988/89). However, breeding probably took place in at least 11 of these which is a similar total to the last two years. Numbers were low at Blackmoorfoot with birds putting in appearances on 25 dates.

BUZZARD *Buteo buteo*

Rare visitor

Firstly, in a correction to the 1991 report, the probable Buzzard reported from Dalton Bank on 9th November was in fact an escaped Buzzard which is kept near that area. This year, four birds were reported: one at Winscar Reservoir on 11th April (J.T.); one flew south-west over Booth Wood Reservoir on 5th May (M.S.H.); one over Scammonden, calling, on 4th October (per HBC) and finally one north-west near Langsett on 3rd December (B.B.S.G.). A Buzzard, possibly Honey Buzzard *Pernis apivorus* was at Dovestones Reservoir on 18th August (T.C.).

OSPREY *Pandion haliaetus*

Rare passage visitor

At Langsett, one flew north into our area on 4th May (DJS) and close to the nearby Dog and Partridge Pub another was present on 27th May (BBSG).

KESTREL *Falco tinnunculus*

Resident breeder (2)

Recorded from 49 locations, well down on some recent years, and bred at Elland Gravel Pits; Primrose Hill; near Oakes and two pairs at Blackmoorfoot but one deserted eggs in May. Also a high probability of breeding at Booth Wood, Scammonden, Bretton Park, Emley Moor, Winscar, Ingbirchworth, Bradley and Almondhury.

MERLIN *Falco columbarius*

Resident breeder (1). Scarce visitor

The only sightings up to spring was of one over an Ossett garden on 28th January. A pair nested in the south-west of the area but was robbed, highlighting the need to still keep breeding locations for certain species unpublished. At another site, a pair was seen on several dates between March and June but breeding was not proven. One other moorland location had a couple of summer records. Other locations were Royd Moor with two on 28th March, and singles at Ingbirchworth on 1st and 20th April and 14th December, Blackmoorfoot on 23rd April and 4th August, Elland Gravel Pits on 20th August, several records in the Scammonden/Cupwith area between 16th August and 28th October and finally at Gunthwaite Dam on 23rd November.

HOBBY *Falco subbuteo*

Rare visitor

One flew high to the west over Booth Wood Dam on 15th June, mobbed by himudines (M.S.H.). Accepted by YNU.

PEREGRINE *Falco peregrinus*

Resident breeder (1)

The pair at Booth Dam Quarry successfully raised two females. The RSPB were present from late March with the hide open to the public from 11th April. The young fledged on 13th June, leading to the hide being removed in early July. The increasingly healthy population in our area included two other pairs successfully rearing young and birds present in another two moorland locations, though not proved to have bred.

Away from the breeding areas single birds at Ryburn Reservoir on 12th January; Scout Dike on 8th February; Elland Gravel Pits on 24th March and 30th October; near Meltham on 3rd and 20th April; Blackmoorfoot Reservoir on 12th July (immature) and 30th December; Ringstone Edge Reservoir on 5th November and finally near Hinchliffe Mill on 28th November.



RED GROUSE *Lagopus lagopus*

Resident breeder (3)

Six breeding locations were reported from but several locations to the west of the area had no visits or reports. Up to 12 in the Winscar/Harden Clough area on 28th March, with young at this site from 22nd April. In the Little Don Valley, 10 were present 28th March but elsewhere

numbers were low with four (at three locations) at Wessenden Head on 8th March; one pair with three young near Bilberry Reservoir on 20th June and ones or twos at Upper Windleden Reservoir and Cupwith throughout the year.

RED-LEGGED PARTRIDGE *Alectoris rufa*

Resident breeder (1)

Probably bred near Almondbury and Digley Reservoir. At the first location there was a maximum of six on 6th January and a pair was seen in May. At the second, one to five were seen throughout the year with the maximum of five present on 21st January. At other locations one at Wellhouse on 3rd April; a pair in the Bretton/Hoyland Bank area on 12th April and 21st May; one near Hades Edge on 19th May; one at Dovestones Reservoir on 18th August and two near Cawthorne on 27th December.

GREY PARTRIDGE *Perdix perdix*

Resident breeder (2)

Bred or probably bred at Emley Moor, Scammonden, Broadstones, Highburton and Blackmoorfoot, where a chick approximately one week old was found dead on the path in the south-west corner. Also recorded from six other locations, all suitable for breeding. Maximum numbers were seven at Elland Gravel Pits on 2nd January and nine at Emley Moor on 17th October.

QUAIL *Coturnix coturnix*

Scarce summer visitor. Occasional breeder

One at Deer Hill Reservoir on 16th and 17th June was seen on the latter date (KW et al) and one at Scout Dike Reservoir on 22nd July (BBSG).

PHEASANT *Phasianus colchicus*

Resident breeder (2-3)

An albino bird at Digley Bottom during October and November was the only unusual record.

WATER RAIL *Rallus aquaticus*

Scarce winter visitor

Remaining scarce and as hard to see as ever, a single at Bretton Park on 28th November represents the only record (DMP, SP).

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

Bred at Brookfoot (two pairs), Gunthwaite Dam, Ingbirchworth Reservoir, Bretton Park (at least five pairs) and probably at another six sites. Maximum counts were 31 at Cannon Hall on 13th January and 23 at Horbury Wyke on 16th February.

COOT *Fulica atra*
Resident breeder (2)

Bretton Park Present throughout the year and at least four pairs bred. In the early months numbers peaked at 41 on 2nd February with the high count for the year being 81 on 13th September and 15th of November.

Ingbirchworth Reservoir Present all year with at least one pair breeding. Up to 16 present in the first half of the year rising to the maximum of 22 on 31st November.

Brookfoot/Elland Gravel Pits Good numbers early on with a maximum of 20 on 15th February. Two pairs bred raising five young. From September to the year end, nine birds were seen.

Other breeding pairs at Scout Dike Reservoir, Gunthwaite Dam, Cannon Hall (at least one pair and a maximum count of 40 in the winter months), Ryburn Reservoir (two pairs), Castle Dam and probably bred at Horbury Wyke and Boshaw Whams. There was also a failed breeding attempt at Blackmoorfoot Reservoir where a nest with five eggs collapsed due to falling water levels.

OYSTERCATCHER *Haematopus ostralegus*
Uncommon passage visitor

At Elland Gravel Pits, singles on 5th January, 14th May and 3rd June. Ringstone Edge Reservoir had four on 14th May. In autumn, Blackmoorfoot Reservoir saw two on 17th July, four on 28th July, one on 31st August, five on 5th September and one on 6th September. The only other record was of one flying over Meltham on 30th July.

LITTLE RINGED PLOVER *Charadrius dubius*
Migrant breeder (1). Scarce passage visitor

The first of the year were two at Blackmoorfoot Reservoir on 24th April followed by one at Elland Gravel Pits and one south-west at Hey House Clough near Scammonden on 26th April. Pairs nested near Ossett and Broadstones Reservoir, where four young were present on 1st August. A pair was incubating at Elland Gravel Pits on 12th June but the outcome is unknown and no young were seen. At Bretton Park from late April to mid-May, up to four birds were present and

displaying on the exposed lake bed of the lower lake. Water levels rose on completion of the civil engineering work and the birds were not seen subsequently.

Other records, all of singles, were at Ingbirchworth Reservoir on 13th May; Winscar Reservoir on 26th May; Blackmoorfoot Reservoir from 25th to 28th June and 28th July; Scout Dike Reservoir from 3rd to 6th August and at Ringstone Edge Reservoir on 7th August.

RINGED PLOVER *Charadrius hiaticula*

Uncommon passage visitor

High water levels were the cause of this year's poor showing. Singles, all in the first half of August, occurred at Blackmoorfoot Reservoir on 1st and 4th and Ringstone Edge Reservoir on 7th, 9th and 16th.

DOTTEREL *Charadrius morinellus*

Scarce passage visitor

In the Greenlay Carr area of Ingbirchworth two were present on 26th and 27th April (JED et al), three on 30th April (BBSG) and five on 9th May (BBSG).

GOLDEN PLOVER *Pluvialis apricaria*

Migrant breeder (2). Common passage and winter visitor

Quite a few birds around in January with 52 Royd Moor on 10th, 10 west at Lindley Moor on 11th, a maximum of 120 at Blackmoorfoot Reservoir on 12th and under 20 at another three sites. The only February records received were from Blackmoorfoot with birds on five dates, the maximum being 50 on 27th. The March/April build up was evident at Blackmoorfoot with 100 on 27 March and 120 on 11th April; Ringstone Edge Reservoir with around 160 on 27th March and disappointing numbers at the Flouch with 15 on 2nd March rising to 54 on 23rd March. At least 40 were at Issues Road on 2nd May and 20 the following day at Broadstones after which birds were dispersed on the breeding grounds.

Little in the way of breeding information was received but at least 11 territories on moorland to the west of Winscar was a reduction on number in previous years (BBSG). Autumn numbers, as last year, were low with Blackmoorfoot having a high of only 51 in July and Ringstone Edge Reservoir doing slightly better with a maximum of 275 on 22nd October. At Blackmoorfoot birds were surprisingly absent after two singles in September but Ringstone held birds to the year end with 25 on 27th December. Very few reported in the later months with 26 at Ingbirchworth on a December date and 83 from late December to the year end at Wholestone Moor, Scapegoat Hill which is a traditional wintering site. At 380 meters above sea level it must be quite high for this species.

GREY PLOVER *Pluvialis squatarola*

Rare passage visitor

In May, one at Broadstones Reservoir on 15th and one near Oxspring on 17th (BP).

LAPWING *Vanellus vanellus*

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

A generally poor year, with below normal numbers throughout. In January, Blackmoorfoot Reservoir was the best site with a maximum of 300 on 16th and 17th and the only other locations with over 100 birds were Ingbirchworth, with 180, and nearby Broadstones 120 on 11th. February produced a maximum of 250 at Ingbirchworth and 315 at Blackmoorfoot on 28th with birds moving back to the breeding sites from the end of the month. A few smaller flocks continued into March with 120 at Ffouch on 2nd, 165 at Blackmoorfoot on 8th and over 90 at Ringstone Edge Reservoir on 27th.

Autumn numbers began building from mid-June. At Blackmoorfoot, after 125 on 26th June, the monthly maximum to the year end were 310 on 11th July, 410 on 2nd August, less than five throughout September (!), 110 on 18th October, 195 on 4th November and 210 on 19th December. In late July, Scout Dike Reservoir held a post-breeding flock which reached about 500 on 22nd and 23rd. The normally productive (for this species) Ringstone Edge Reservoir peaked at only 169 on 22nd October. South Crossland had 90 on 31st October which was noted as far fewer than normal; Royd Moor had 110 on 8th November and the only other number of note was 130 wintering at Wholstone Moor from late December.

DUNLIN *Calidris alpina*

Migrant breeder (1-2). Uncommon passage visitor

Elland Gravel Pits had records in February, with one on 18th and nine on 26th. One on 12th May also at this site. The 15th March must have been a minor passage day for this species with three at Scout Dike Reservoir, two at Broadstones Reservoir and two at Ringstone Edge Reservoir. A single was at Ingbirchworth and Broadstones Reservoir on 10th May. No breeding information received but two birds at Ringstone Edge Reservoir in late June.

After no spring records, Blackmoorfoot had birds on 16 dates between 4th July and 8th November, mainly in July and August. Usually one or two birds were involved but five on 6th August, four on 12th September and 6 on 4th November were all flying west. Ringstone Edge Reservoir had singles on 7th and 16th August, 17th and 19th September and three on 9th November. The only other record was one north-west at Langsett on 6th December.

RUFF *Philomachus pugnax*

Scarce passage visitor

One at Scout Dike Reservoir from 3rd to 6th August (BBSG) and one at Ringstone Edge Reservoir on 28th September (JB) was in stark contrast to last year's record numbers.

JACK SNIFE *Limnocyptes minimus*

Scarce passage and winter visitor

Elland Gravel Pits and Deer Hill Reservoir are well documented as wintering locations, with any other records normally being on passage. At Elland, singles were present on 1st January, 14th March and then in late autumn on 15th November and 5th, 17th and 19th December (HBC,JB). At Deer Hill Reservoir singles, in January only, on 15th, 16th, 19th, 26th and 28th (DMP,SP,TD). The only other record was one at Ringstone Edge Reservoir on 15th October (JB).

SNIFE *Gallinago gallinago*

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

Few records in the early months. Elland Gravel Pits, in January, had one on 3rd; two on 23rd and one on 31st and one on 25th April. Singles at Clayton West on 5th February and Blackmoorfoot Reservoir on 8th March were the only other records. Birds in likely breeding areas were seen in summer months near Booth Wood Reservoir; Winscar Reservoir; Broadstones Reservoir; Scammonden and Issues Dyke near Holme.

Blackmoorfoot Reservoir had singles on 16th and 18th June and 1st July. Then on 20 bird days between 13th September and 20th November — usually one to four birds but nine on 17th October and eight from 18th to 20th October. Ringstone Edge Reservoir had a maximum of 29 in 12th October and elsewhere one drumming at Bretton Park on 2nd October, five in fields near Golcar on 20th December and one near Holme on 24th December.

WOODCOCK *Scolopax rusticola*

Resident breeder (2). Uncommon winter visitor

Poorly recorded, with roding birds at North America Plantation, Langsett (1); Yateholme (2+) and Deffer Wood (2+). The only other record was a single at Scammonden on 28th November.

BAR-TAILED GODWIT *Limosa lapponica*

Scarce passage visitor

Six flew west over Crossland Moor on 3rd August (M.L.D.).

WHIMBREL *Numenius phaseopus*

Scarce to uncommon passage visitor

In April, singles at Whitley Common on 22nd, Ingbirchworth on 28th and Winscar on 30th. Cupwith had one on 9th May. Blackmoorfoot Reservoir had several autumn records with, in July, two west on 20th, one east on 21st and one west on 29th and, in August, one on 1st and three west on 4th. Ingbirchworth was the only other location with four on 21st July and three on 11th August.

CURLEW *Numenius arquata*

Migrant breeder (2). Common passage visitor

A very early bird flew north at Penistone on 6th February followed by a single at Blackmoorfoot Reservoir on 28th February, also an early date. Five were at Digley on 6th March, then at many locations from mid-March. The maximum was 29 at Broadstones on 12th.

Probably bred in at least 11 areas with a count of nine at Scammonden on 26th June the highest in summer. At Blackmoorfoot Reservoir, one or two on several dates right through the summer months until the last single on 5th September. Away from Blackmoorfoot, the only other autumn record received was a single at Ringstone Edge Reservoir on 30th September.

REDSHANK *Tringa totanus*

Migrant breeder (1). Uncommon passage and winter visitor

The first spring birds at Blackmoorfoot Reservoir with singles on 11th and 13th March. Later in the month, three were at Winscar Reservoir on 28th. Birds were present in the breeding season at the latter site and also at Horbury Wyke, Broadstones Reservoir and Healey, near Ossett. Other spring records were two at Ingbirchworth Reservoir on 25th April, one at Whitley Common on 28th April (a possible breeding area) and one west at Lindley Moor on 9th May.

Blackmoorfoot Reservoir only had July records for this species in autumn with singles on 6th, 12th and 25th and two on 14th and 16th. The only other records came from Scout Dike Reservoir with singles on 22nd July and 14th November.

GREENSHANK *Tringa nebularia*

Uncommon passage visitor

High water levels resulted in this year's lack of records. Blackmoorfoot Reservoir had the only birds with one on 24th July and two west on 2nd September.

GREEN SANDPIPER *Tringa ochropus*

Uncommon passage and winter visitor

The over-wintering bird at Gunthwaite Dam was seen on 18th January and 9th February. Autumn birds started with one at Horbury Wyke on 29th July and one north over Lindley Moor on 31st July. At probably the best known location in our area for this species, Scout Dike Reservoir, a single was present from 31st July to 6th August and on most days from 23rd August to 4th November. The same bird was no doubt responsible for records at Ingbirchworth Reservoir on 27th September and 27th December.

WOOD SANDPIPER *Tringa glareola*

Rare passage visitor

One at Cupwith Reservoir on 14th May (JB,BH).

COMMON SANDPIPER *Actitis hypoleucos*

Migrant breeder (2)

The first, and early, was a single at Winscar Reservoir on 11th April with the next being at Booth Wood Dam on 20th April. Bred at Booth Wood Dam, Langsett Reservoir, Ingbirchworth Reservoir, Winscar Reservoir (four pairs) and possibly bred at Cnpwith, Deanhead Reservoir, Wessenden area and Holme Styles Reservoir. Apart from Winscar, no site had more than five birds. Blackmoorfoot Reservoir had birds on many dates from 26th April until a last single on 21st September but no evidence of breeding. At Scammonden Dam, four were present on 16th July and, in August, one on 7th and three on 9th and 15th. Two were at Royd Moor Reservoir on 22nd July and, finally, a late bird was at Scout Dike Reservoir on 30th September and 1st October.

GULLS

For many years, numbers of wintering gulls have been well observed and documented at Blackmoorfoot Reservoir. Other waters also occasionally hold roosting gulls, namely Langsett Reservoir, Ringstone Edge Reservoir and, to a much lesser extent, the Ingbirchworth group. Of these Langsett Reservoir holds, or can hold, by far the largest numbers, with weather being an important factor on numbers and whether the roost is used (as at other locations with occasional usage). Another large roost occurs, outside the club area, at nearby Broomhead Reservoir and when numbers are low at this site, Langsett invariably contains a roost. The Langsett roost is rarely, if ever, watched by Huddersfield birdwatchers but is covered by the Sheffield Bird Study Group and, more intermittently by the Bamsley Bird Study Group. I have used information from various Sheffield reports to provide some background detail on status or change in status which is covered under the relevant species. It should perhaps also be noted that while large numbers of Lesser

Black-Backed Gulls in the last couple of years are unusual for our area (although in keeping with the increasing trend), Middleton Moor to the south-west of Sheffield regularly holds 2-3000 birds in autumn, compared to around 1000 in 1983. Lack of observer coverage at all sites can obviously distort the figures, which are provided as a guide.

MEDITERRANEAN GULL *Larus melanocephalus*

Rare visitor

A first winter bird was feeding with Black-Headed Gulls on playing fields at Golcar on 31st January (MT) and an adult roosted at Langsett Reservoir on 30th December (SBSG).

LITTLE GULL *Larus minutus*

Scarce passage visitor

The only record of the year was a summer plumage adult at Blackmoorfoot Reservoir on 22nd July (DMO).

BLACK-HEADED GULL *Larus ridibundus*

Resident breeder (1). Numerous passage and winter visitor

Blackmoorfoot Reservoir Counts of this species and Common Gull *Larus canus* combined were made in February; 2600 on 1st; 2770 on 11th; 4700 on 16th; 4500 on 20th and 4850 on 23rd. In autumn to the end of the year combined counts were: 4450 on 31st October; 4950 on 7th November; 6200 on 28th November and 6550 on 19th December. Specific counts totaled 5218 on 12th January and 400 on 10th August.

Langsett Reservoir The only count in the early months was of 200 on 2nd February. From autumn, other maximum counts received were 120 on 10th August; 900 on 7th October; 755 on 15th November and in December, from 24th to 31st between 3 and 5000 roosted. For reference, the Broomhead Reservoir roost often holds several thousand birds and the peak count was of 13,600 on 18th December 1988. While the birds in late December of this year were roosting at Langsett, the Broomhead roost was only 500.

Many sites held several hundred birds. Ingbirchworth Reservoir had maximum counts of 400 in January and 420 in November. On 13th December around 200 probably roosted here. Other high counts were at Ringstone Edge Reservoir, 460 on 18th August; Royd Moor Reservoir, 600 on 29th August and Elland Gravel Pits with 500 on 25th December. Over 40 roosted at Farnley Tyas from 4th November to the year end.

RING-BILLED GULL *Larus delawarensis*

Rare visitor

A second winter bird was at Langsett Reservoir on 19th January from 1510 hours and stayed to roost (per SBHG). Under consideration by YNU.

COMMON GULL *Larus canus*

Common winter and passage visitor

Blackmoorfoot Reservoir Recorded in all months but few specific counts. The maximum was 938 on 12th January. Numbers were low, single figures from May to mid September.

Langsett Reservoir This species is notably less common in the Sheffield area, for example 55 at Broomhead Reservoir on 29th December 1987 and in recent years under 200 would be the maximum count. At Langsett 166 on 2nd February then a steady build up from mid-August to an autumn maximum of 110 on 25th October. Numbers fell off after this but 80-90 were roosting at the year end.

Elsewhere, maximum counts were at Elland Gravel Pits, 200 on 6th January and 250 on 25th December; Ringstone Edge Reservoir, 126 on 12th January and 103 on 8th November and feeding birds to the south of Scammonden, 80 on 7th December and up to 100 in late December on Wholstone Moor with Golden Plovers and Lapwings.

LESSER BLACK-BACKED GULL *Larus fuscus*

Common passage and winter visitor

Numbers were exceptionally high, with record counts for the area, particularly in the Langsett and Ingibirchworth area.

Blackmoorfoot Reservoir Typically low numbers to start the year, with 46 on 23rd February being the best. Under 40 birds were present till a build up from the end of June after which the monthly maximum counts were 244 on 22nd July; 767 on 19th August; 622 on 10th September; 376 on 31st October; 116 on 8th November and nine on 24th and 28th December.

Langsett Reservoir Information is incomplete but obviously low numbers in the first half of the year. Presumably, numbers steadily built up to 1200 which were present on 10th August. This increased to a record 3000 by 1st September, 1600 on 25th October and still 965 on 15th November. Numbers tailed off to 80 on 13th December and 10 at the year end.

Royd Moor Reservoir Good numbers also at this site. Spring maximum was 40 on 20th April, then 1100 on 6th August; 600 on 29th August and 307 on 8th November.

Broadstones Reservoir 450 on 29th August, 50 on 8th November, and then a flock of 1100 on the reservoir on 23rd November — a late date for such high numbers.

Ingbirchworth Reservoir 600 on 22nd July, 750 on 11th August, 160 in November.

All other counts involved less than 100 birds. Birds showing characteristics of the race *L. f. intermedius* were at Scout Dike Reservoir in March with five on 16th and three on 23rd, one at Ingbirchworth Reservoir on 27th July and three at Broadstones Reservoir on 23rd November. Birds of the race *L. f. fuscus* were at the Flouch on 2nd January (two) and one at Ingbirchworth Reservoir on 31st December.

HERRING GULL *Larus argentatus*

Common passage and winter visitor

Blackmoorfoot Reservoir Numbers peaked in January with 431 on 12th, with 144 on 23rd February and 30 on 22nd March being the best counts in the following months. Birds were absent from April to the first returning single on 23rd July. Singles were present on four dates in August, one in September and then the monthly maxima to the year end were eight on 31st October, 159 on 28th November and 307 on 19th December.

Langsett Reservoir Very substantial numbers roosted at this site in early January, numbers noted by regular watchers at 'exceptional'. Numbers of this species have been rising, especially in the late 1980's — a fact noted in the 1989 Sheffield report. Between 2 and 3000 now regularly roost at Broomhead Reservoir. The Langsett/Broomhead connection was highlighted last year when, on 29th December, 3139 roosted at Langsett while only 395 roosted at Broomhead. Coming back to 1992, 5500 were roosting on 1st and 6000 on 4th January and 2-3000 reported as roosting 'regularly' in the rest of January. Data is missing then till the winter build up with 62 on 15th November, and, in December, 1100 on 13th, 1200 on 19th, 1150 on 21st, 1200 on 24th, 800 on 25th, 1700 on 29th, 2600 on 30th and 1800 on 31st.

At Royd Moor Reservoir, around 100 present on 28th March and an adult sitting on meadowland at Broadstones Reservoir on 27th April and 3rd May had apparently hardly moved between visits, there being no other gulls in the area. In December, a westerly movement of at least 110 over Scammonden on 12th and at Elland Gravel Pits, 250 was the high count on 27th.

Birds showing characteristics of the race *L. a. michahellis* were at Blackmoorfoot Reservoir with an adult on 15th February and sub-adults on 21st July and 6th and 9th August. Ingbirchworth Reservoir also had one on 17th August.

ICELAND GULL *Larus glaucooides*

Scarce winter visitor

An excellent year, with many records including a long staying individual. In January, one at Langsett Reservoir on 11th, probably a second-winter (SBSG) followed by a first-winter at Blackmoorfoot Reservoir on 10th February (SK). Two together at Scout Dike Reservoir on 15th March, one second-winter the other probably a second-summer (NP) led to a series of records from fields near Royd Moor Reservoir and Scout Dike Reservoir with the second-summer bird reported at Scout Dike again on 17th March and all other records related to the second-winter bird which was present daily to the 28th March (BBSG, NP, GC, JIM et al). This, or another second-winter bird was also at Scout Dike Reservoir on 16th April (NP).

In the latter part of the year, an adult was at Broadstones Reservoir on 23rd November (MCW) and a first-winter was at Langsett Reservoir on 24th December (SBSG).

GLAUCOUS GULL *Larus hyperboreus*

Scarce winter visitor

Langsett Reservoir had a second-winter bird on 9th February (MCW), then several records at Ingbirchworth Reservoir with an adult flying west on 15th February (BBSG), and a second-winter with a missing primary on its left wing was seen on 23rd and 25th March (NP). At Broadstones Reservoir, a very unseasonal adult was in nearby fields on 16th May (GC per BBSG).

GREAT BLACK-BACKED GULL *Larus marinus*

Common winter visitor

Blackmoorfoot Reservoir Monthly maxima consisted of 152 on 4th January, five on 16th February, three on 3rd March and the last spring single on 21st April. No birds from May to August then two on 5th September, four on 31st October, 56 on 28th November and 93 on 28th December.

Langsett Reservoir Although variable, numbers seem to be about the same as Blackmoorfoot Reservoir, with anywhere up to 200 roosting. Only December figures are available for 1992 when there were between 20 and 125 roosting from 24th to 31st.

The only other sites with over 10 birds were Ingbirchworth Reservoir with a maximum of 19 in January and Elland Gravel Pits with 20 on 6th January and 20 on 26th December.

KITTIWAKE *Rissa tridactyla*

Scarce passage visitor

The quietest year for some time with the only record concerning an adult at Blackmoorfoot Reservoir on the typical date of 15th March.

SANDWICH TERN *Sterna sandvicensis*

Rare passage visitor

One spent the whole day at Elland Gravel Pits on 22nd April (MH, NCD).

COMMON TERN *Sterna hirundo*

Uncommon passage visitor

Spring records started with three at Inghirchworth Reservoir on 9th May, one at Elland Gravel Pits on 25th May and seven at the same location on 11th June. Two were seen regularly during June and July at Bretton Park and adults and young, almost certainly from Pugney's in Wakefield, were present in July with six adults and nine young on 21st and 23rd, seven on 26th, six on 30th and finally two on 6th August.

Blackmoorfoot Reservoir produced autumn records of nine on 1st July, one on 21st July, two on 6th and 9th August and one on 6th September. The only other autumn record was a single at Elland Gravel Pits on 6th August. Birds of either this or the next species were seen in July at Blackmoorfoot Reservoir with singles on 27th and calling on 30th.

ARCTIC TERN *Sterna paradisaea*

Uncommon passage visitor

Four flying west with Black-Headed Gulls at Deanhead Reservoir on a September date (exact date not known) was the only record.

BLACK TERN *Chlidonias niger*

Scarce passage visitor

At Blackmoorfoot Reservoir, two adults on 24th April (MLD, DMO, AJW); one on 11th August (AD) and three on 29th September (DMO). Approximately 30 were at Inghirchworth Reservoir at 0835 hrs on 11th September, these birds later moving to Scout Dike Reservoir (DB). Three adults at Deer Hill Reservoir on 22nd September (DMP, KW).

FERAL PIGEON *Columba livia*

Resident breeder (3)

No records of any significance.

STOCK DOVE *Columba oenas*

Resident breeder (2)

Flocks of note in the first half of the year included 25 at Langsett on 25th January, 35 north of Broadstones Reservoir on 19th March, 20 over the canal near Golcar on 28th March, 13 at Crossland Heath on 4th May and 15 in the Ingbirchworth area on 14th May. Recorded in the breeding season from 13 locations, Blackmoorfoot being one of these with one to three birds from March to September. No flocks noted later in the year.

WOODPIGEON *Columba palumbus*

Resident breeder (4). Numerous winter visitor

Certainly scarce in the early winter months with the highest count being only 120 roosting at Old Lindley on 20th January, then 40 near Meltham on 21st March. However, late autumn, and in particular early November and into December, was a totally different story with large numbers passing over the area. After 40 at Gunthwaite Dam on 30th October, the 6th and 7th November produced many records of up to 75 birds flying over. The 8th November was a heavy passage day with 470 south at Blackmoorfoot and 1310 south or south-west at Winscar Reservoir in only 75 minutes. Blackmoorfoot had many good passage days, the best being 340 south on 21st November and, in December, 370 north on 12th, 770 north on 20th and 320 north on 27th. Birds were distributed throughout the area from the end of November and other good locations were between Cawthorne and Silkstone with 500 on 27th November; 650 at Elland Gravel Pits on 6th December; 600 at Ryburn Reservoir on 20th December and over 400 at Langsett on 24th December.

COLLARED DOVE *Streptopelia decaocto*

Resident breeder (3)

Maximum counts of flocks were 22 at Elland Bridge on 4th January; 27 at Blackmoorfoot on 8th January and, at Cannon Hall, 35 on 7th January and 72 on 23rd November. A Peregrine chased one west through Booth Dam Quarry on 2nd June.

TURTLE DOVE *Streptopelia turtur*
Migrant breeder (1)

A pair was heard at Dunford Bridge on 25th May which remained to breed, raising two young. An unusual record (MCW per BBSG). The only record.

RING-NECKED PARAKEET *Psittacula krameri*
Rare feral visitor

The Almondbury Bank area had a male present up to 12th January. One in gardens at Ossett on 24th September was chased away by Carrion Crows and in the Lumb Lane area of Almondbury one appeared on 16th October and stayed for several weeks.

CUCKOO *Cuculus canorus*
Migrant breeder (2)

Digley and Meltham Mills Wood had the first arrivals, singles on 2nd May. These were followed soon after with males at Scammonden and Royd Edge, Meltham on 4th and Almondbury on 5th. The bulk of arrivals appeared to be between 10th and 23rd May. Probable breeding areas were Digley, Meltham Mills area, Scammonden, Meltham (to the south-east of Deer Hill), Deffer Wood, Booth Dean Clough, Langsett, Winscar, Horbury and Lindley Moor where a probable female visited a Meadow Pipit's nest on 21st May. Birds were recorded on single dates at a further seven localities, but nowhere noted birds after the end of June.

BARN OWL *Tyto alba*
Occasional breeder (1). Former resident

ADDITION TO 1990 REPORT A pair consisting of two free flying, but injured, adults bred in the area and were successful in raising three young. The young were ringed on 29th June. One of the young was unfortunately found dead on a road in Tadcaster, North Yorkshire on 31st October of the same year having covered a distance of 40km.

1992 A sighting at one location on 8th February led to pellets being found in a nearby barn. Despite searching, however, the bird was not relocated.

LITTLE OWL *Athene noctua*
Resident breeder (2)

Pairs successfully bred at Digley, Royd Moor Reservoir and Highburton and were suspected of doing so at Almondbury, Broadstones (two pairs), Booth Dam Quarry, the general area of Cnchley

(six pairs per BBSG), nr. Holmfirth, Scapegoat Hill, Gawthorpe, Scammdon Valley (two pairs) and records in the summer months came from a further six sites.

TAWNY OWL *Strix aluco*

Resident breeder (2)

Bred at Hinchliffe Mill, Bradley Gate Wood, Penny Spring Wood, Farnley Tyas and Harrow Clough. Also a high probability of breeding at Yatcholme (birds calling from three locations), Windy Bank Wood, Big Valley, Bretton Park and Ryburn. Six other potential breeding sites had birds reported infrequently in summer.

LONG-EARED OWL *Asio otus*

Resident breeder (1)

One pair bred at a traditional site but at the new location found last year, news was negative despite searching.

SHORT-EARED OWL *Asio flammeus*

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

At Meltham Cop a wintering bird was noted from 10th to 31st January and was joined by a second bird throughout February and March after which a single remained to 24th April. One at Ingbirchworth on 21st April flying over high, came down to Whitley Common but continued west. Breeding success included one pair to the south and two pairs to the south-west of our area. A couple of summer records also received from another possible breeding area. A single bird was seen in the Cupwith and Scammdon area on six dates between 28th August and 29th October.

SWIFT *Apus apus*

Migrant breeder (3)

Ingbirchworth produced the first of the year with one on 1st May followed by singles at Bretton Park on 3rd and Blackmoorfoot Reservoir on 4th. Numbers were very low until an influx on the 10th when many locations noted their first birds and over 100 were at Ingbirchworth. Though not a true reflection of status the breeding sites noted were in Milnshridge, Commercial Street, west of Meltham, Golcar, Slaithwaite and no doubt the Holme Valley.

Lindley Moor had 70 on 9th July which met fog to the east but generally numbers at any one site were low with 50 birds not exceeded. No strong passage was observed in the autumn with numbers thinning out by mid August. September records involved seven at Quarmby on 3rd, one at Crossland Moor on 6th, one at Ossett on 7th and two at Shelley on 9th.



KINGFISHER *Alcedo atthis*

Resident breeder (1)

More records received this year, notably pairs having bred at Elland Gravel Pits, near Scout Dike Reservoir, the River Don at Oxspring and Linthwaite. Pairs also present in the breeding season at Bretton Park, Cawthorne Dyke, Silkstone Beck and a juvenile was near Booth Wood Clough on 27th June. Records from various months, outside the breeding season were supplied for the Huddersfield Canal between Leeds Road and Mirfield, sites on the River Colne around the Town Centre, the brewery dam at Lockwood, the River Holme near Holmfirth and a single at Ingbirchworth Reservoir on 26th September.

GREEN WOODPECKER *Picus viridis*

Resident breeder (1-2)

At Bretton Park, one fed in the nest of a Grey Heron on 22nd January (GC). The only definite breeding success was near Hepworth where at least one young bird was present on 14th July. Other probable breeding areas are the Woodsome Valley, Digley, near Meltham, Deffer Wood, Bretton Park, Elland Gravel Pits, Scammonden, Crimble Clough/Heath House Wood, Longwood Valley, Booth Dean Clough, Horbury and one or two records received from suitable breeding areas at Farnley Tyas, Gunthwaite, Scout Dike/Royd Moor, Brockholes, Butternab Wood, Grimescar and Overton, near Middlestown.

GREAT SPOTTED WOODPECKER *Dendrocopos major*

Resident breeder (2)

Pairs bred at Mag Wood, Almondbury Bank, Almondbury, Brookfoot, Bradley Gate Wood/Lower Fell Greave Wood (three pairs), Longwood Valley, canal area at Golcar (two pairs), Fixby, Windy Bank Wood and seen in the summer months and probably breeding at a further 20 sites. Well reported this year, but not reflecting a change in status. One caught at Blackmoorfoot Reservoir on 20th September and 28th November was a retrap from 21st November 1987.

LESSER SPOTTED WOODPECKER *Dendrocopos minor*

Resident breeder (1)

A hard bird to prove breeding but pairs or calling birds were seen in spring and summer at Molly Carr Wood, Penny Spring Wood, Bretton Park, Cliffe Wood, Grimescar Wood and Elland Gravel Pits where they probably bred just outside our area in nearby Elland Park Wood. This species mixes freely with Tit flocks and can turn up anywhere in the winter months. Also reported this year were singles in Clongh Wood near Thurstonland on 11th February, Silkstone S.F. in the last week of March, a male in an Ossett garden on 15th March (the nearest woodland being 1½ miles to the south-west), two July dates in a garden at Oakes, a male flew north from Lake House at Blackmoorfoot on 19th August and at Greenhead Park (a possible breeding location?) one on 15th January and 14th April.

SKYLARK *Alauda arvensis*

Resident breeder (3-4)

At Crossland Heath, 15 flew north on 11th January and Elland Gravel Pits had around 100 flying east during 18th February following heavy snow the previous night. Several went over Royd Moor and Winscar on 8th November in association with a heavy Woodpigeon passage and noted as 'unusual' was a single at Blackmoorfoot Reservoir on 24th December and 23 at Broadstones on 28th December.

SAND MARTIN *Riparia riparia*

Migrant, rare breeder

Virtually a repeat of last years poor numbers. All records received are listed. An early bird at Elland Gravel Pits on 20th March with another here on 10th May. One south at Golcar on 2nd April, one at Bretton Park on 20th and 21st April then several records at Ingbirchworth Reservoir with one on 20th April, 25 minimum on 27th April, one on 28th April and two on 10th May. Blackmoorfoot Reservoir one on 23rd and two on 28th April and one on 4th May. One or two were at Gunthwaite Dam on 14th June. An exceptionally poor autumn with three at Blackmoorfoot Reservoir on 18th July and one at Elland Gravel Pits on 10th August.

SWALLOW *Hirundo rustica*
Migrant breeder (4). Numerous passage visitor

A very early bird flew over Marsh on 26th March, the next being two at Bretton Park on 1st April, also an early date. A long gap followed till several areas reported birds on 20th April and a good passage till the month end. A second passage period took place in early May with Ingbirchworth Reservoir having 500 on 9th and 100 the following day. No other spring concentrations of more than 30 birds.

Southerly passage noted at Blackmoorfoot Reservoir in September with 133 on 12th and 177 on 20th. Quite a few October records with a pair still feeding young at Ingbirchworth on 4th, three at Almondbury Bank on 7th, two at Shepley on 9th, three at Cannon Hall on 12th, and singles at Hinchliffe Mill on 15th and Bretton Park on 19th.

HOUSE MARTIN *Delichon urbica*
Migrant breeder (3)

Late to arrive with singles at Bretton Park and Lindley Moor and six at Blackmoorfoot Reservoir on 21st April, then several sites having their first birds between 24th and 27th April. The only notable spring concentration was approximately 500 at Ingbirchworth Reservoir on 9th May with numbers not exceeding 30 anywhere else.

Autumn peaks included, in August, 60 at Bretton Park on 9th, around 300 at Elland Gravel Pits on 17th, at least 300 at Ingbirchworth on 25th and 70 at Hill Top on 27th. Good numbers passing through in early September with 500 flying south-east at Linthwaite on 9th and 60 at Blackmoorfoot Reservoir on 13th. Only a few October records with seven present at Almondbury Bank till 7th and the same number at Cannon Hall on 12th.

TREE PIPIT *Anthus trivialis*
Migrant breeder (2-3)

Locations, in April, of the early arrivals were Scammonden on 21st, Cliffe Wood on 22nd and the canal area of Golcar on 27th, all involving singles. Likely breeding locations and number of singing males were High Wood (two), Scammonden (three), Cliffe Wood (one), Golcar (one), Bretton (two), Booth Dean Clough (two), Winscar Reservoir (two), Emley Moor (one), Joy Wood near Thunderbridge (one) and Hoyland Bank Wood (two). Also single dates at another five suitable breeding locations. The only records after the end of June were a juvenile at Deanhead Reservoir on 16th July and a late bird at Skelmanthorpe on 6th September.

MEADOW PIPIT *Anthus pratensis*

Resident breeder (4-5). Partial migrant

No flocks in the early months but one to three birds were reported in January from scattered sites including the fairly high Ingbirchworth and Scammonden. Although a few were back on the moors in February, birds were not widely distributed until the end of March. On 28th, the Little Don Valley had 41. Small flocks were seen in April with just 20 at Scammonden on 16th and 25 at Digley on 25th.

Autumn peaks were hardly better, Scammonden having the best with three parties totalling 103 on 13th September tailing off to 34 by 22nd. Other numbers of note were 70 at Ringstone Edge Reservoir on 7th October and then, after low numbers at a few sites in November and December, 30 were at Farnley Tyas on 4th December feeding with a large mixed finch flock.

YELLOW WAGTAIL *Motacilla flava*

Migrant breeder (1)

The first was at Ingbirchworth Reservoir on 28th April then, in May, a pair near Thick Hollins Park on 2nd, one at Broadstones on 3rd, two n Bretton Park on 9th and one near the canal at Golcar on 24th. None were reported breeding. Migrants in autumn at Blackmoorfoot Reservoir, one on 1st and 30th August, one at Ringstone Edge Reservoir on 29th August and one at Ingbirchworth Reservoir on 9th October was the latest ever date for this species in the club area.

A female Blue-headed wagtail *M. f. flava* was at Oxspring on 4th May (NP). The second record of this sub-species for the area.

GREY WAGTAIL *Motacilla cinerea*

Resident breeder (2)

Pairs successfully bred at Thornton Lodge, Longwood Valley, Waterloo, Bretton Park, Booth Wood Dam, Blackmoorfoot Reservoir, and a juvenile was in an Almondbury garden on 17th June and five on sewage beds near Ingbirchworth on 19th July included three juveniles. Breeding also suspected at a further 11 locations. Autumn passage noted at several waters, Blackmoorfoot being the best with one to three on 16 dates between 26th July and 18th October. Noted in the Town Centre on six dates in September and October.

PIED WAGTAIL *Motacilla alba*

Resident breeder (3)

As in the last months of 1991, only singles were heard in January and February at the Civic Centre roost site. However, birds were found roosting in March at nearby Elim Church in Springwood

car park with at least 150 on 22nd and 29th. In December, birds were back near the Civic Centre, though not every night. When there is no wind birds are presumably out of sight on roof tops. Maximum counts were 140 on 2nd and 3rd, 80 on 7th and 21st, 160 on 20th, over 200 on 25th and 110 from 29th to 31st. No other records of significance.

WAXWING *Bombycilla garrulus*

Uncommon winter visitor

Reasonable numbers were left over from December 1991, mainly in January. The birds were highly mobile between the Aspley/St. Andrews Road area and Old Leeds Road, Richmond Flats and the Sports Centre car park. Between 10 and 38 were seen at one or both of these locations almost daily from 1st to 11th January, the maximum being on the 1st at Old Leeds Road. Birds put in an appearance at the Fire Station, with 18 present on 4th January. Opposite the Barge and Barrel Pub in Elland Bridge, two to eleven were present most dates from 1st to 25th January, with seven the usual number. Back at the St. Andrews Road site, two turned up from 5th to 9th March and a single was seen on 13th and 27th March.

DIPPER *Cinclus cinclus*

Resident breeder (2)

Pairs were successful at Booth Dean Clough and High Top Reservoir where one pair raised broods of four and five. Breeding also suspected at Meltham Bar, Beestones Wood, Thunderbridge and somewhere on the River Colne between Linthwaite and Slaithwaite. Odd records in summer from another four suitable locations. Birds away from normal breeding areas involved singles on the catchment area near Wills O Nats on 14th January, four dates from 27th January to 11th February at Elland Gravel Pits on the River Calder, River Deame at Clayton West on 30th January and finally one dead, frozen into the canal at Slaithwaite, on 29th December had possibly been shot.

WREN *Troglodytes troglodytes*

Resident breeder (4)

No records of significance.

DUNNOCK *Prunella modularis*

Resident breeder (3)

No records of significance.

ROBIN *Erithacus rubecula*

Resident breeder (4-5)

Though very common, strongly defended territories do not usually lead to any great concentrations. Noted as being 'numerous and more obvious than normal' at Scammonden Dam on 22nd September, and 10 were at Brookfoot on 28th December.

BLACK REDSTART *Phoenicurus ochruros*

Rare visitor

ADDITION TO 1991 REPORT A long staying female or immature was present at Norland from 25th August to 7th October (per Bradford Bird Report).

REDSTART *Phoenicurus phoenicurus*

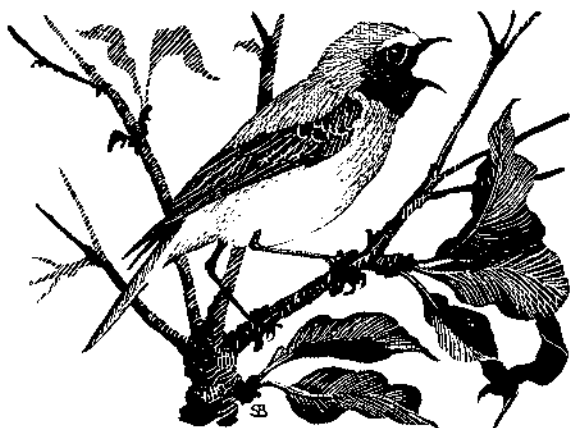
Migrant breeder (2)

Bilberry Reservoir had the first on 2nd May, followed by a male at Oakes in mature gardens from 3rd to 7th May and possibly the same on 10th and Scammonden Dam and Inghirchworth Reservoir on 4th May. Bred at Bilberry Reservoir and Windy Bank Wood with birds present in the breeding season at Scammonden Dam, Little Don Valley and Booth Dean Clough. Autumn migrants included immatures at Scout Dike Reservoir on 31st July and two on 6th August, one at Scammonden Dam on 9th and 15th August and the last at Skelmanthorpe on 6th September.

WHINCHAT *Saxicola rubetra*

Migrant breeder (2)

Two males at Meltham Moor on 28th April were the first, then singles, in May, near Broadstones on 3rd and Crossland Heath on 4th with five at Scammonden also on the 4th. Bred at Meltham Moor where the maximum was five on 24th May, Wessenden (up to four pairs), Scammonden with at least five singing males in spring and eight juveniles on 10th August and Winscar Reservoir/Harden Clough which saw at least two family parties on 14th July. Occasional summer dates from near Holme and Booth Dam Quarry. Five at Broadstones on 16th August, seven at Scammonden on 28th August with the majority having gone the next day. The last records were in September with a single at Scammonden on 13th and two at Ringstone Edge on 16th.



STONECHAT *Saxicola torquata*

Occasional breeder (1). Scarce passage and winter visitor

At Deerhill, in January, a male was present on 9th and a female the following day. Scammonden held a female on a few dates between 10th January and 27th February, possibly present throughout. An excellent autumn/winter set of records starting with a male at Deanhead Reservoir on 8th October, possibly part of the pair at September from 12th October to 24th November; one on wall tops near Bilberry Reservoir on 14th October; one near Meltham on 15th October; a pair at Deerhill Reservoir on 17th October increasing to five by 25th December; a pair at Winscar from 1st November to the year end; one near Baitings Reservoir on 14th November; one near Ingbirchworth from 21st November to the year end; one near Meltham Cop on 23rd November and, ending a good year, one on Rishworth Moor on 5th December.

WHEATEAR *Oenanthe oenanthe*

Migrant breeder (2)

Record numbers were in the area in late April and in early May probably held up by a cold northerly airstream as most moved on when winds went to the south-west. But the first arrivals, as usual, were in late March with four at Liodley Moor on 22nd, one at Broadstones on 25th, two at Winscar and one at Wessenden Head Reservoir on 28th and one at Digley on 29th.

The large numbers in late April were noted at Highburn were after one was present on 25th, eight were there on 28th and 29th falling back to one on 11th May. At a small area of sheep pasture near Meltham over 15 were present on 28th April, all moving on when winds turned. By far

the best area was Ingbirchworth with the counts listed containing birds at Broadstones, Windmill Lane, Grimes Lane, Greenlay Carr, Whitley Common and Ingbirchworth itself. The majority of the birds were in fields near Broadstones Reservoir. It would seem that a good percentage were of the Greenland race *O. o. leucorrhoa*. Detailed are the maximum counts. In April, 90 on 27th, 102 on 28th, 48 on 30th and, in May, 52 on 3rd, approximately 50 on 9th and 10th, nine on 13th and back to the normal one or two which could normally be expected on 14th.

Bred at Broadstones, Winscar, Oxygrains Beck, Booth Dam Quarry (two pairs), Deanhead Reservoir and Windleden Reservoir (at least two pairs). Possibly bred at another seven locations. Late records were one at Longwood Edge on 6th September, two at Ringstone Edge on 7th September and one between Nonts and Cupwith on 8th October.

RING OUZEL *Turdus torquatus*
Migrant breeder (2)

One at Digley on 29th March was the first with three here on 4th April on which date one was to the north of Booth Dam Quarry. Bred near Digley (two pairs), Wessenden and Buckstones but also seen in summer months in the Booth Dam/Oxygrains Beck area and a single was at Varley Road near Slaithwaite on 15th April. The inaccessible nesting areas of this species lead to poor recording on the whole. The only late record involved four at Scammonden Dam on 4th October associated with a fall of other migrant thrushes.

BLACKBIRD *Turdus merula*
Resident breeder (5). Numerous winter visitor

Several small concentrations noted from autumn with 11 in a garden at Lindley Moor on 13th September, 30 at Cannon Hall on 12th October, 15 at Scammonden on 12th November, 25 at Penny Spring Wood from 4th December to the year end and eight in a Fixby garden on 30th December.

FIELDFARE *Turdus pilaris*
Numerous passage and winter visitor. Occasional breeder

Present at several locations in January with numbers up to 55 with the exception of 80 over Marsden on 2nd, 115 at Outlane Moor on 10th and 77 at Ingbirchworth on 13th. Better numbers were around in early February with 200 at Meltham on 1st, 150 at Thurstonland on 11th and 130 at Gunthwaite on 16th. Heavy snow on the 17th February, and overnight, caused a large passage of birds leaving the area at Elland Gravel Pits on 18th. At least 2,400 flew east between 0930 and 1530 (RSPB). Not surprisingly, birds were virtually absent from the area till early March. Flocks were usually under 100 but 190 at Blackmoorfoot on 15th and, on 19th, 100 at Greenlay Carr and 153 at Birds Edge. As usual, plenty records of small flocks going east or north-east in April, the

best being 93 at Bretton on 9th, 100 east at Clayton West on 10th, 80 at Royd Moor and 130 at Broadstones on 20th and tapering off to four at Digley on 25th. One in an agitated state which seemed to be directed at Magpies in a belt of old oak trees was near Meltham on 13th May. The area was private, so no search for a nest was possible.

Returning birds, in October, were 17 at Crossland Moor and a single at Scammonden on 4th, then 11 at Blackmoorfoot on 10th and 11th, 30 at Yateholme on 18th and then a much more widespread arrival to the month end. High counts were 80 at Bretton Park and 90 at Ingbirchworth on 21st, 200 at Scammonden on 25th, 130 near Linthwaite on 26th and 150 at Ingbirchworth and 126 at Scammonden on 28th. Birds remained well distributed throughout November and December with the higher counts being 200 at Ingbirchworth on 18th November and 200 at Gunthwaite Dam on 24th December.

SONG THRUSH *Turdus philomelos*

Resident breeder (4)

Four at Scammonden on 4th October were associated with migrant Redwings and Ring Ouzels, otherwise no records of significance.

REDWING *Turdus iliacus*

Numerous passage and winter visitor

Particularly scarce in January with most numbers recorded being under 12 and only from a handful of sites. Blackmoorfoot had the highest count of just 22 on 8th. From early February a slight improvement was seen with 50 at Golcar on 15th and 60 near Hinchliffe Mill and 20 at Gunthwaite Dam on 16th. The large movement of thrushes over Elland Gravel Pits on 18th (see Fieldfare) included 550 Redwings flying east. Birds were then uncommon for the rest of February with 23 at Greenhead Park on 21st and 60 at Blackmoorfoot on 23rd the best counts. Very few March records received, the last of the spring were six at Birds Edge on 19th and two at Blackmoorfoot on 22nd.

A very early bird was at Penistone on 16th September, the next date after this was 4th October when a widespread arrival took place including 200 at Scammonden, six at Crossland Moor, one at Elland Gravel Pits, 40 west at Kingstone Edge Reservoir and 50 at Scapegoat Hill. Good numbers passed through the area up to the end of October. The best locations were Blackmoorfoot Reservoir with 102 on 10th and 608 north on 12th, 100 at Cannon Hall on 12th, and 50 near the canal at Linthwaite on 26th. Birds still passing over in small numbers in November, maximum numbers noted this month were 40 at Bretton Park and 80 roosting at Gunthwaite Dam on 6th and 30 at Elland Gravel Pits on 14th. A few more birds present in December with up to 100 at Penny Spring Wood and Bretton Park on several dates, 60 at Langsett on 13th and 50 at Golcar on 24th.

MISTLE THRUSH *Turdus viscivorus*
Resident breeder (3)

Very low flock numbers reported this year, especially in the early months with seven at Brookfoot on 1st February the best. In August, 10 at Lindley Moor on 13th and 22 at Blackmoorfoot on 16th. In September, 15 at Scammonden Dam on 16th and 16 in the Longwood Valley on 19th then, the only other group of note, 14 near Elland on 4th October. Although this bird regularly sings in late December, one in full song at Almondbury on 28th November was early.

GRASSHOPPER WARBLER *Locustella naevia*
Occasional migrant breeder

Records, all referring to singing males, started with one by the canal in the Golcar/Linthwaite area on 24th and 25th April (SL) and 28th and 29th June (KW, SP), one at the western end of Bretton Park by the bridge over the River Dearne on Litherup Lane on 3rd May (JMD, JED) with possibly two on 13th May (BA), one, possibly two near Elland Gravel Pits on 10th May (HBC), one during early summer at last year's site of Middlesbrough but not present till June as in 1991 (JG) and finally one at Scout Dike Reservoir on 17th June (BBSG).

SEDGE WARBLER *Acrocephalus schoenobaenus*
Migrant breeder (1)

Elland Gravel Pits had the first one on 24th April. The only other spring migrants, away from the breeding areas, were one at Royd Moor Reservoir on 3rd May and one at Ingbirchworth Reservoir on 19th May. The maximum count was five at Elland Gravel Pits on 15th May with between two and four pairs thought to have bred here. Three juveniles were seen on 11th July. In the breeding season, two males were at Thornhill and five were in the general area of Horbury Wyke. After recent breeding success, no birds were present at Scout Dike Reservoir. The only autumn record was a single at Scammonden Dam on 10th August.

REED WARBLER *Acrocephalus scirpaceus*
Rare passage migrant

A singing male was, as last year, present through the breeding season at Horbury Wyke and possibly bred (DP).

LESSER WHITETHROAT *Sylvia curruca*

Migrant breeder (1)

A good year started with singles at Elland Gravel Pits and near the River Colne at Golcar on 26th April. Records, also of singles, followed in May at Coxley on 3rd, Bretton Park on 5th, Emroyd Common on 8th and Gunthwaite on 10th. Breeding not proved but present in the breeding season at Blackbrook near West Vale, Horbury Wyke area and Spring Wood. A singing male was at Dalton on 19th and 20th May and the Elland Gravel Pits bird, first seen in April, was last heard on 9th June.

A juvenile was at Scout Dike Reservoir on 22nd July, one at Scammonden on 15th August and, finally, one caught and ringed at Blackmoorfoot Reservoir on 22nd August.

WHITETHROAT *Sylvia communis*

Migrant breeder (2)

One at Elland Gravel Pits on 28th April then, on 3rd May, males at Litherop Lane, Bretton; Blackmoorfoot and Bunny Wood. An "out of place" migrant was singing in the hushes at the Civic Centre on 7th and 8th May! Singing males in the breeding season at Elland Gravel Pits (four); Litherop Lane, Bretton; Bretton Park; Horbury Wyke area (three); Healey New Mills; Ossett; High Wood; Spring Wood; Thornhill (four) and Booth Dean Clough (but only on 21st June). The last records were singles at Scammonden on 16th August and a late bird at Bretton Park on 13th September.

GARDEN WARBLER *Sylvia borin*

Migrant breeder (2)

Two at Coxley on 3rd May were the first, then Bretton and Anchor Wood on 4th, Elland Gravel Pits on 5th and Golcar, Stocksmoor Common and Almondbury on 7th May after which the species was widespread. Males in breeding season at Bretton Park (at least five); Anchor Wood, Farnley (two); Elland Gravel Pits (three); Golcar, canal area; Stocksmoor Common; Wilderness Plantation, Bretton; Deffer Wood (four); Gunthwaite; Booth Dean Clough (two); Magdale Dam, Honley; Cliffe Wood, Brockholes; Digley Bottom Wood; Longwood Valley; Dunford Bridge (two — a new site); Dogley N.R. (two); Spring Wood, Bretton and High Wood (four). The only record after June concerned one caught and ringed at Blackmoorfoot Reservoir on 7th August.

BLACKCAP *Sylvia atricapilla*

Migrant breeder (2-3). Scarce winter visitor

No records in the early winter months, with the first migrant on 9th April at Deffer Wood and the majority following between mid and late April. Reasonably good coverage of breeding areas led

to a minimum of 85 singing males located.

Several birds wintering in the area with singles, in November, in an Almondbury garden on 12th, at Wellhouse on 15th and Penistone on 17th and in December at Elland Gravel Pits on 7th, a Skelmanthorpe garden on 24th and 30th and 'late in the month' at T.P. Woods.

WOOD WARBLER *Phylloscopus sibilatrix*

Migrant breeder (1-2)

Single males were at Digley Bottom Wood on 3rd May, Windy Bank Wood and Blackmoorfoot Reservoir on 4th May, briefly in a tiny beechwood in the middle of Meltham on 7th May and at Bretton Park on 9th May. Bred at Digley Bottom Wood, possibly two pairs. A pair were seen feeding fledged young here on 20th June. Singing males in the breeding season at Windy Bank Wood (two), Cliffe Wood at Langsett (two) and Hoyland Bank Wood. Typically elusive when not singing with no records after June.

CHIFFCHAFF *Phylloscopus collybita*

Migrant breeder (2). Scarce winter visitor

No birds in the early winter months and also fairly late in arriving back in spring, the first being one on 28th March in Longwood Valley. In April, two were at Elland Gravel Pits on 4th, three at Deffer Wood on 5th then at several locations from 10th to 12th. Unusually, one was singing at Booth Dam Quarry on 25th May. Around 46 singing males reported in the breeding season, up on last year through better observer coverage.

Blackmoorfoot Reservoir had passage birds on 23rd August and, caught and ringed in September, two on 5th and one on 12th. Also in September, three in Longwood Valley on 7th, one at Shepley on 16th, two at Ryburn Reservoir on 18th, one at Lumb Lane, Almondbury on 19th, and two at Bretton Park on 20th. A wintering individual was seen at Elland Gravel Pits on 27th and 30th December.

WILLOW WARBLER *Phylloscopus trochilus*

Migrant breeder (3-4)

One in full song in the centre of Holmfirth on 12th January was the first ever winter record for the club area (SG). Otherwise, normal arrival dates in April with two at Deffer Wood and one at Blackmoorfoot on 9th, one at Battyeford on 11th and two at Elland Gravel Pits on 16th. Many arrived between 19th and 24th April.

Noted as "scarce" at Blackmoorfoot Reservoir on autumn passage with trapping in July producing eight on 25th, six on 28th and 29th and 13 on 30th. Maximum trapped in August were 13 on 1st, six on 3rd, 6th and 16th and in September, one on 1st, three on 5th and one on 14th and 15th.

Seen at several locations up to the end of August, with another report of 'low' numbers from Lindley Moor where birds were scarce as in 1991. The only other September record was one at Scammonden Dam on 5th.

GOLDCREST *Regulus regulus*
Resident breeder (2-3). Common passage visitor

The only early flock of note was circa 10 in woods near the Flouch on 19th January. Breeding in all suitable conifer plantations in the area. In September, singles at Blackmoorfoot on 19th, 20th, 27th and 28th, Fixby on 24th and 26th (two), Thornton Lodge on 29th and 30th and the centre of Golcar on 30th. These birds were the forerunners of good numbers widely distributed throughout the area in October and November. The best counts, in October, were five at Fixby on 1st, six "new in" at Scammonden Dam on 4th, over 30 at Ryburn Reservoir on 11th and, in November, seven at Bradley Gate Wood on 16th. By the end of November, birds had obviously moved on with only two records in December away from resident breeding areas.

SPOTTED FLYCATCHER *Muscicapa striata*
Migrant breeder (2)

An early bird at Windy Bank on 4th May and subsequently. Others in May were not noted till one at Booth Dean Clough on 20th and one at Digley Bottom Wood and Netherton Fold on 23rd. Bred at Emley Moor T.V. mast site, Windy Bank Wood and Blackmoorfoot and birds in the breeding season at Booth Dean Clough, Digley Bottom Wood, Bretton Park (two males), canal area of Golcar and North American Plantation at Langsett. Few autumn records but, singles in August at Scammonden on 2nd and 16th (two) and Blackmoorfoot Reservoir had birds on eight dates, the latest being the 29th.

PIED FLYCATCHER *Ficedula hypoleuca*
Migrant breeder (1)

A relatively poor year after recent breeding successes. The first was at Langsett on 5th May, then a male singing in a large garden near Brockholes Railway Station on 10th May and one at Windy Bank Wood from 14th May. Pairs bred at Digley Bottom Wood (at least one), Windy Bank Wood and a male was near a nest box near Armitage Bridge on 23rd May. Three were seen in a Middletown garden, not far from Coxley Woods on 30th June. No records then till August singles at Bretton Park on 2nd and Scammonden Dam on 9th.

LONG-TAILED TIT *Aegithalos caudatus*
Resident breeder (2)

Flocks of 10 present at Holmfirth on 4th and Flouch on 19th January and 14 at Golcar on 10th April. Bred at 14 locations and seen in the breeding season and probably breeding at another nine. Several groups or family parties seen from mid-June, usually under 10 birds but 18 at Booth Dean Clough on 12th June. The best numbers were in December with 20 at Mollicar Woods on 4th and at Elland Gravel Pits, 33 on 7th and 21 on 30th.

WILLOW TIT *Parus montanus*
Resident breeder (2)

Breeding, though not proved, was highly probable at Scout Dike Reservoir, Bretton Park, Lepton Great Wood, Emroyd Common, Thornhill (two pairs) and Gunthwaite Dam. Also occasional records from the canal area of Golcar, Deffer Wood and one at Dovestones on 1st November.

COAL TIT *Parus ater*
Resident breeder (3)

In woods near the Flouch on 19th January, circa 50 were in a large mixed flock of birds, but otherwise the only other record of over five was six juveniles caught and ringed at Blackmoorfoot Reservoir on 27th June. As usual, birds were frequent in gardens, especially from August.

BLUE TIT *Parus caeruleus*
Resident breeder (5)

One on a nut basket at Lumb Lane, Almondbury on 8th February had a long, curved bill the size and shape of Treecreeper *Certhia familiaris*. It was seen several times in the following weeks (DSI). In the Colne Valley, between Golcar and Linthwaite, 28 were seen on 10th April.

GREAT TIT *Parus major*
Resident breeder (4)

The only record of note was at least 35 in Honley Wood on 29th August.

NUTHATCH *Sitta europaea*

Resident breeder (1)

Pairs bred at Bretton Park and Windy Bank Wood and almost certainly at Beaumont Park. The only other records came from Cannon Hall, with singles on 5th February and 10th May, this site is also a possible breeding area.

TREECREEPER *Certhia familiaris*

Resident breeder (2-3)

Reported breeding at Lepton Great Wood, Penny Spring Wood, Upper Park Wood, Bradley Gate Wood, Bradley Wood and Blackmoorfoot and present in the breeding season at another nine sites. The only concentration was five around the canal at Golcar on 13th October.

JAY *Garrulus glandarius*

Resident breeder (2)

Bred at Blackmoorfoot Reservoir, Bradley Wood, Bradley Gate Wood (minimum three pairs) and probably bred at another 14 locations. No good flocks or numbers reported, the best were six at Elland Gravel Pits on 21st June, six at Bradley Gate Wood on 16th November and seven near Scapegoat Hill on 30th December.

MAGPIE *Pica pica*

Resident breeder (4)

Birds roosting at Blackmoorfoot Reservoir were noted up to March. The maximum counts were 35 on 25th January, 66 on 23rd February and 60 on 1st March. A pair breeding in an Almondbury Bank garden ate two Blackbird chicks in one day. No other records received of roosting birds.

JACKDAW *Corvus monedula*

Resident breeder (4)

Just two counts of note, during February up to 300 at the Civic Centre arrived from the south and flew off north at dawn and around 600 were at Royd Moor Reservoir on 7th September.

ROOK *Corvus faugilegus*

Resident breeder (5)

Low numbers were reported, the best being 120 at Elland Gravel Pits on 1st February, 250 at Ringstone Edge Reservoir on 25th May and 200 south of Castle Hill on 20th October.

CARRION CROW *Corvus corone*

Resident breeder (3)

At Elland Gravel Pits, one with largely white primaries on 11th January, and birds feeding on the tip with 40 on 1st February and 80 on 9th April. Marsden had 47 birds on 14th March and 40 were on Wholestone Moor in late December.

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)

Gatherings of up to 30 birds located at various sites outside the breeding season.

TREE SPARROW *Passer montanus*

Resident breeder (2)

Probably bred at Lumb Lane, Almondbury with up to five on 23rd March and one food carrying on 13th August and at Penny Spring Wood where an adult and an immature were seen on 20th October. Up to three at Elland Gravel Pits in March and April with other records coming from Ossett on 22nd March (two), Golcar on 13th April and 23rd May and Scapegoat Hill on 13th April (four). A few birds were probably resident at Farnley Tyas where at least 10 were in a large Finch flock on 4th November. Royd Moor had one on 21st October and then good numbers in December with 22 on 3rd and 16 on 28th.

CHAFFINCH *Fringilla coelebs*
Resident breeder (4). Numerous winter visitor

Numbers not exceptional throughout the year, the best were 34 at Lindley Moor on 17th January, circa 70 south of Penistone on 11th October, 60 at Ingbirchworth on 28th November, 100 at Bretton Park on 27th December and up to 200 roosting at Langsett Reservoir in late December.

BRAMBLING *Fringilla montifringilla*
Uncommon to common winter visitor

ADDITION TO 1991 REPORT To the west of Meltham, over 60 were present on 6th February and 21 were feeding on sunflower seeds in a garden on 11th February.

1992 Very low numbers in the club area from January to April, with around half the records coming from gardens. All records are listed, A pair at Almondbury Bank from 26th January to 5th March, two at Digley on 26th February, two at Oakes late February to early April, two at Blackmoorfoot 19th to 22nd March, one at Thick Hollins, Meltham 29th March to 9th April, two at Silkstone 9th April, one at Battisford 11th April and a male almost in summer plumage at Bnttemab Wood on 22nd April.

A totally changed picture in the autumn with record numbers being seen in Yorkshire, resulting in good numbers in our area. The first were three at Scammonden Dam on 4th October then, in the same month, on 12th were one at Scammonden and Blackmoorfoot and 100 at Bretton Park. Many places saw up to 12 up to the end of October. Numbers seemed slightly lower in November but Ingbirchworth had birds to the 18th with the best counts being 50 on 14th and circa 140 on 17th. A marked increase at favoured locations during December with Bretton Park having 30 on 5th and 150 on 27th, 30 to 40 at Mag Wood from 29th December to the year end but Langsett Reservoir was easily the best site. Roosting birds numbered 120 on 3rd, 225 on 6th, 300 on 29th, 500 on 30th and a high 1200 on 31st.

GREENFINCH *Carduelis chloris*
Resident breeder (4)

No roosting numbers received but numbers of note include 80 east during the day at Elland Gravel Pits on 18th February (associated with Thrushes and Larks after heavy snow) and over 80 feeding on rosehips at Bradley Junior School on 16th November.

GOLDFINCH *Carduelis carduelis*

Resident breeder (2-3)

Before the autumn build up, the only flock of over 10 concerned 30 at Broadstones on 26th January. Up to 15 in garden alders at Scapegoat Hill from September to year end, 45 at Scammonden on 16th September, 24 at Whitley on 24th September, 30 near Bradley Sewage Works on 11th October, reasonable numbers to the year end after 30 at Bretton Park on 12th October and good numbers at Elland Gravel Pits in November and December, the maximum counts being 30 on 14th November and 40 on 30th December.

SISKIN *Carduelis spinus*

Resident breeder (1). Uncommon winter visitor

Elland Gravel Pits had good numbers in January and February, the respective maxima of 60 on 14th January and 40 on 20th February. The only other flock was 23 at Gunthwaite Dam on 16th February. Seen in March and April in gardens at Highburton Wooldale, Fixby, Almondbury Bank, Scapegoat Hill, Golcar, Hinchliffe Mill and Netherton, usually one to three birds but six recorded at Almondbury Bank. Spring and early summer sightings in possible breeding areas were at Little Don Valley, Yatcholme and Deffer Wood. Two flying over Oakes on 16th May was a little unusual.

October brought the usual influx in numbers. Up to 50 on alders in the canal area of Golcar from 4th to 7th, 16 south at Royd Moor on 11th, six at Blackmoorfoot on 12th and up to 20 at Lepton Great Wood from 20th to the year end. Low numbers at a few sites from the end of October to the end of November when things picked up. Nine at Helme on 22nd of November and then, in December up to 20 at Bretton Park, up to 30 roosting at Langsett Reservoir (maximum on 29th) and Elland Gravel Pits again the best site with 30 on 7th, 40 on 17th and 46 on 19th.

LINNET *Carduelis cannabina*

Resident breeder (3). Partial migrant

Very few records received. One north at Langsett on 28th March was the first bird of the year with birds fairly well distributed on breeding areas by 20th April. Approximately 40 were at Swift Wood, Upper Denby on 4th May. Remarkably no post breeding flocks reported.

TWITE *Carduelis flavirostris*

Resident and partial migrant breeder (2-3)

The first, five birds, turned up at Broadstones on 15th March. Booth Dam Quarry had excellent numbers from the end of March to the end of April. Usually up to 50 involved but circa 90 on 22nd April. In May, numbers tailed off to single figures. Other spring maxima were 18 near Scammonden on 16th April and 16 at Cupwith on 20th April. No confirmed breeding but

probably did so at Scammonden/Deanhead, Booth Dam Quarry, Oxygrains Beck, Issues Road and Wessenden.

Hay Lane near Scammonden Dam had a post breeding flock numbering 45 on 25th July, 80 on 9th August and still 20 on 1st October. In August, low numbers were at Broadstones, Deanhead and 18 at Digley Reservoir on 13th. The last records were in October with 23 at Blackmoorfoot Reservoir on 12th and 12 near Ingbirchworth on 31st.

REDPOLI *Carduelis flammea*

Resident breeder (2). Uncommon winter visitor

Elland Gravel Pits had 16 on 2nd January, then lower numbers to the month end. Over 12 at Langsett Reservoir on 2nd February then three at Digley on 8th March. Seen at another three sites in April and then some good flocks in mid-May (this species nesting, slightly later than others, in late May and June). At Elland Gravel Pits, 20 on 10th May and at Deffer Wood on the same date over 40 were in one flock. Slightly unusual was one at the Civic Centre on 15th May. Possible breeding locations were Elland Gravel Pits and Winscar Reservoir as well as other places mentioned above.

Several passing over the area in October and November, Blackmoorfoot Reservoir having one to two on eight dates and Scammonden Dam having October records of two on 4th, five on 28th and 12 on 31st. As with some of the other finches, good numbers in late December with Elland Gravel Pits having 40 on 27th, 30 at Bretton Park on 20th and 30 at Mag Wood near Netherton on 30th.

CROSSBILL *Loxia curvirostra*

Irregular breeder (1). Uncommon passage visitor

After good numbers in the previous two years, 14 at Yatcholme on 28th May was the only record for the year (DMP;TD).

BULLFINCH *Pyrrhula pyrrhula*

Resident breeder (2)

No more than six birds reported at any one site, but better reported this year with birds at 22 locations in the breeding season, several with more than one pair.

HAWFINCH *Coccothraustes coccothraustes*

Scarce to uncommon visitor

Bretton Park provides the best location to try and see this species in the club area. In January, one on 12th, 12 on 13th and four on 25th, and two on 12th and 13th February. One on 22nd October and then, in December one on 5th, three on 9th and three on 27th. (WNS, BBSG, SG, DMP, SP, KW). Just one other record, that of four in Cliffe Wood, Langsett on 8th March (BBSG).

YELLOWHAMMER *Emberiza citrinella*

Resident breeder (3)

Continues to be noted as common in the south and east of the area. A male near Ringstone Edge Reservoir on 21st June is about the furthest west one could be encountered. Up to 10 often noted around Royd Moor Reservoir and near Oxspring with the only records above that figure coming from Ingbirchworth with 15 on 28th November and 12 on 28th December.

REED BUNTING *Emberiza schoeniclus*

Resident breeder (2)

Early birds were one at Elland Gravel Pits on 21st January and 25th February and three near the canal at Golcar on 20th February. Breeding pairs or singing males at Elland Gravel Pits (three males on 10th July), Scout Dike Reservoir, Scammonden Dam (two) Ingbirchworth Reservoir, Ringstone Edge Reservoir, Cupwith and Royd Moor Reservoir.

In November, one at Broadstones on 6th, one at Winscar Reservoir and Blackmoorfoot Reservoir on 8th, four at Scout Dike Reservoir on 15th and finally, at Ingbirchworth, one on 18th November and two on 28th December.

CORN BUNTING *Miliaria calandra*

Resident breeder (1)

Barely holding on to a presence in the area, one at Royd Moor Reservoir on 21st September was the only record (BBSG).

ESCAPED SPECIES

RED-TAILED HAWK *Buteo jamaicensis*

(Breeds in North America)

One seen near Denby Dale in late February and early March (per DB) was later seen displaying over Bank Wood near Emley on 5th and 20th April. It was seen again at Bank Wood on 29th October (JMD, DJW, RH + MAW).

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FIELD TRIPS REPORT 1992

26 January 1992 TEESIDE, Cleveland

Dry and sunny for the most part, with only light winds, but very cold. Visibility was good.

As on previous occasions our first port of call in the area was Dorman's Pool and Reclamation Pond but we were to find both sites particularly unproductive due to their being largely iced over.

The surrounding (marshy) grassland produced **Grey Partridge** (2), **Common Snipe** (5-6), with a suspicion that one of these just might have been **Jack Snipe** (From conversations held later in the day with local birdwatchers we were to learn that several Jack Snipes had recently been frequenting this area), several pairs of **Reed Buntings** and (1) **Fieldfare**. On the water, Dorman's Pool itself held nothing at all! Reclamation Pond had larger areas of free water, but still held little more than **Mourhen**, **Coot**, only a few **Mallard**, and perhaps 3-4 **Redshank**.

Salthome Pool, alongside the A178, was an entirely different proposition holding much more. A wide variety of wildfowl were in evidence. A group of 7 **Mute Swans** were accompanied by one lone **Bewick's Swan** which, with its head and neck down close across its body, sat on the ice, almost escaped notice. **Shelduck**, **Wigeon**, **Tufted Duck**, **Mallard**, **Teal**, **Pochard** and **Shoveler** were all represented (in varying numbers) on this water.

All the above, plus **Goldeneye**, were noted at Seal Sands, where a somewhat incongruous note was struck by the glaring presence of two **Chilean Flamingos** — these were, not unsurprisingly, escaped birds, but I understand they have been living freely at this site since last August (!).

Other wildfowl species discovered in the area include **Red-breasted Merganser** (2 females at North Gare), **Velvet Scoter** (2 males at North Gare) and **Eider** (1 male in Hartlepool Bay).

North Gare additionally gave us views of a **Black-throated Diver** — down on the water — and up to 4 **Great Crested Grebes**. —

Thirteen species of wader were identified. The vast majority of these were seen on the exposed sand and mud of Seal Sand/Creatham Creek and Greenabella/Cowpen Marshes. None of them were present in really large numbers and none of the species observed were particularly unusual — but at the time light conditions were excellent and many species could be seen really well!

The Greenabella Marsh area also gave us very good, sustained views of a **Short-eared Owl**. This species had earlier been seen in the vicinity of Salthome Pools. All in all the area provided us with views of at least six individuals.

Stonechat was another species to be seen (by some) alongside the muddy Creatham Creek. I am led to believe that the bird observed was a male.

We finished the day with an hours gull-watching in the Hartlepool Fish Dock. Our aim was to

find the **Glaucous Gull** which (habitually) frequents this locality, but we were not successful. However, both **Mediterranean Gull** and **Little Gull** (singles of each) were identified amongst the gulls in Hartlepool Bay, and six other species of (commoner) gull were identified within the Fish Dock complex.

23 February 1992 RIBBLE ESTUARY, Lancashire

The weather, despite all expectations, proved to be very kind to us today, with almost spring-like conditions in the more sheltered areas, despite the chilly wind, which had been blowing hard from the south-west for the previous few days, but had now moderated slightly.

Several sites on the estuary were visited — both on the northern and southern shores. We started the day with an hour at Squires Gate, just south of Blackpool, before moving a few miles further south to Fairhaven Lake and the foreshore behind this point, where we stayed for a further hour and a half. From here we transferred to the southern shore of the estuary and visited the more usual venues of Crossens Marsh and Marshside Marsh, where we spent the first 2 hours of the afternoon. Our last port of call was outside the estuary area: we travelled down to Seaforth Dock, at Liverpool, where, "Bird-line" had informed us, we should find several species of rare gull and some noteworthy ducks. In this we were successful — but more of that later.

Squires Gate — an area of wide, sandy foreshore backed by an extensive and well developed sand dune system — was interesting, but rather quiet, giving views of **Gannet** (2), **Oystercatcher**, **Sanderling**, **Redshank**, **Curlew** and **Bar-tailed Godwit**.

Fairhaven Lake is a quite large, ornamental pool situated behind the sea wall, at Lytham. It carried an assortment of waterbirds such as one might expect from a town park lake, with the interesting addition of one male **Eider**.

From the sea wall behind the lake one had quite extensive views of the exposed sand and mud flats, with the river (Ribble) running quite strongly perhaps half a mile away. The tide was about two hours from high. The rate of flow of the river could be judged quite readily by the **Mergansers**, **Wigeon**, **Common Scoter** (c40) and other wildfowl which rode the river. On the exposed mussel beds, on the sand and mudflats, many, many waders could be seen, and with the sun behind us, could be seen quite well. Species observed here included **Oystercatcher**, **Ringed Plover**, **Grey Plover**, **Knot** (very large flocks), **Sanderling**, **Dunlin**, both **Black** and **Bar-tailed Godwit**, large numbers of **Curlew** and **Redshank**.

After lunch, having parked the coach in the car park close by the sand-winning plant (north of Southport) we spent the next two hours birdwatching the Crossens and Marshside Marshes. These are arguably the best birding areas on the estuary, and can be viewed quite satisfactorily from the road (Marine Drive). Wildfowl and waders dominate the wetlands but, additionally, we had views of **Hen Harrier** (1 ring-tail), **Sparrowhawk**, **Kestrel**, (2-3 female) **Merlins**, and (1) **Peregrine Falcon**. Here also were (3) **Grey Partridge**, and it was good, after the winter's absence, to hear **Skylark** singing again.

Wildfowl can be seen well at this site, with favourable light conditions. Usually, in the afternoon, if the sun is shining, it is shining on our backs, and illuminates the birds. Species observed

included **Mute Swan** (3), **Pink-footed Goose** (3), **Grey Lag Goose** (5), **Shelduck** and **Wigeon** (1000's) **Gadwall** (4-5 pairs), **Teal** (1000's), **Mallard**, **Pintail** (4-5 pairs), **Shoveler** (c20 pairs), **Pochard** (5-6 pairs), **Tufted Duck**, a few pairs of **Common Scoter** in flight.

The last hour was spent at Seaforth Dock. "Bird-line" had spoken of **Scaup** (we found six) and **Long-tailed Duck** we found one female) along with an assortment of rarer gulls. We found **Mediterranean Gull** in adult winter dress and a **Glaucous Gull** was seen by some ---- I have no details of age of this bird. In addition, also reputedly on site, although I doubt whether any member of our party found them (I know of no-one!) were both **Yellow-legged Herring Gull** and **Iceland Gull**.

Goldeneye was a further duck species that was observed at this site.

22 March 1992 CORS CARON, Dyfed

Once again the weather proved to be better than expected: after a rather wet journey down during the morning it fined up for the afternoon, giving brighter intervals as the heavy cloud cover broke up, and it was quite warm in sheltered places. Most importantly, it remained dry and the strong winds, which had reached over 50 mph during the previous night, became much less severe.

Birds of prey were the main objectives behind our journey, which took 4 hours to accomplish, but was far from being tedious. Seven species were observed ---- **Red Kite**, **Hen Harrier**, **Sparrowhawk**, **Buzzard**, **Kestrel**, **Merlin** and **Peregrine Falcon**.

Red Kite is my personal favourite ---- I don't know how others might feel, but I would make the journey solely for this bird. We had excellent views of them, nearly always in flight, where the bird ably demonstrates its skill in the air. Estimates of numbers were difficult to make. Birds were seen easily and often, but many sightings must have been repeat sightings of earlier birds, making the birds seem to be more abundant than they actually were. The maximum in the air at any given time (that I saw) was three. However, a minimum figure of birds in the area of, say, 12 seems to me to be about right. Others have placed the figure as high as 25-30 birds, but my own view is that this is too high.

Buzzard was equally difficult to assess regarding numbers ---- probably more so because it was certainly the most numerous raptor on site. Again, birds were always present and readily observable. I think that the best I can say here is that we had upwards of 60+ sightings of between 1-4 birds, with a minimum figure of c20 birds over the bog and surrounding hill-side woodland.

There were numerous occasions of Buzzards flying with Kites, and Buzzards with Ravens ---- occasions which gave opportunities for some very fine birdwatching.

Hen Harrier was easier. We had sightings of up to 3 grey males ---- two flying together at one point ---- and at least one, probably two, females/'ring-tails'. There was one instance of a male and female in flight together, when the female disappeared, reappearing later some little distance away ---- it may possibly have been on another, who knows? ---- either option is just as likely.

Peregrines were seen from at least two sites. A bird was seen on at least two occasions in

the vicinity of and from the 'Observation Tower'. It was felt likely that these represented two individuals. Later in the day, some three hours later, a bird was seen overflying the reserve, coming in from off the adjacent woodland clad, very steep, rock-strewn hillside, flying at considerable height. This may have been one of the original couple, or again, it might just as easily have been a third individual.

Sparrowhawks were seen on up to 3 instances, involving females on each occasion — they never seemed to 'hang about', and were gone almost as quickly as they had appeared.

Kestrels involved birds of both sexes, but the most frequently observed bird was a male, which was seen regularly throughout the five hours spent in the area, hovering over the open areas of grassy bog.

A **Merlin** was seen on just one occasion, when a female was noted at rest on a fence post out on the grassy marsh.

Raptors were not the only predatory birds. At least two **Short-eared Owls** were here, and seen closely in flight and on the ground on several occasions. One individual on the ground gave very good, sustained views over quite a lengthy period of time. Another, probably a different individual as it showed lighter-coloured plumage, was seen in flight carrying a quite large (rat-sized) prey item, but we could not definitely say what it was!

Of all the other birds seen here, perhaps the most interesting would be **Raven**. At least 4 were seen almost on arrival, associating with other 'corvids', in flight. There were several other sightings of these birds but certainly the most interesting involved two Ravens harassing two Buzzards which had perhaps encroached too close to the Ravens nest-site. One of these Ravens actually succeeded in forcing one of the Buzzards to take refuge on the ground, before it broke off the assault and joined its mate back in the air. All in all the Raven population here today may well have been as high as 10 birds, but again, numbers were a little difficult to judge. Neither waders nor wildfowl were numerous, with only five species of the former — **Oystercatcher**, **Lapwing**, **Sniipe** (7), **Curlew** (7-10) and **Redshank** — and just four species of the latter — **Mute Swan** (2), **Teal**, **Mallard**, and up to two pairs of **Goosander**.

It was disappointing not to find **Stonechat** here today, — in the past the old railway track could and has produced up to 4 birds — but sightings of **Great Spotted Woodpecker** (2), **Nuthatches** (up to 4) and **Treecreepers** (from 3-4 sites) went some way to alleviate that disappointment.

Signs of the coming spring came from the very frequent observations of **Meadow Pipits** in song flight — they were all over the grassy marshes in some number — and it was considered noteworthy to encounter at least eight pairs of **Pied Wagtail** on site.

25 April 1992 LEIGHTON MOSS NATURE RESERVE CENTRE, Lancashire

The day started with a brief visit to woodwell — in a vain attempt to see the **Hawfinches** that have on a number of occasions in the past been located in cherry trees at this locality. Several birds have, according to local residents, occupied this site this year, but not regularly, and not for some time.

On the other hand, we were successful in finding **Marsh Tit**, and **Great Spotted Woodpecker**, some of our party also finding **Lesser Spotted Woodpecker** (whilst many more could at least say that they had heard one calling) and so the time spent here was far from wasted. (Going from the sublime to the ridiculous, a **Hawfinch** was seen later in the day feeding on a bag of peanuts, hanging in the feeding station at the rear of Myer's Farm, on the Leighton Moss Reserve itself) On the way into Leighton Moss we paid a visit to the Eric Morecambe and Allen Hides on the RSPB's Morecambe Bay Reserve. We had been informed before- hand of the presence in this area of a **Spoonbill** and sure enough, the bird was there to be seen. Everyone who made the effort to visit the area had excellent views of a very fine bird. Some also had views, in this area, of two **Pergrine's** overtlying at height.

On the Leighton Moss reserve other raptors that were seen comprised **Marsh Harrier** (3 females, 1 male), a **Hen Harrier** (1), **Sparrowhawk** (1 female), **Buzzard** (1) and **Kestrel** (1x4).

Fourteen species of wildfowl were recorded on the various scrapes, lagoons, and larger areas of open water overlooked by the five hides on the reserve. These include **Gadwall** (2m 1f), and **Red-breasted Merganser** (mf), along with **Ruddy Duck**, but probably the highlight of this family were the **Gargeneys** (mf) that were observed with differing degrees of success from the Lower Hide. These birds were seemed to sleep a lot — which did nothing to enhance the views that observers had of them!

Waders were not well represented here (not unusual!) the only species being reported comprising **Oystercatchers** (3), **Lapwings** (many), **Curlews** (1-2) and the odd **Redshank**.

Swifts were early (which is, again, not unusual) with up to eight birds being recorded. **Sand Martin** and **Swallow** were present in good numbers, but less so **House Martin**, with only a handful of those birds being seen.

Two species of woodpecker have already been mentioned — the third, **Green Woodpecker**, was heard 'yaffling' at two sites on and outside the reserve, but I am not aware of anyone who actually saw an individual.

In scrub, below the Lower Hide, a single singing male **Tree Pipit** was seen advertising the fact that he is holding territory (display flight).

Warbler species were back in the area in some measure, though not all species reputed to be present were observed by the group. The most notable exceptions were **Reed Warbler** and **Lesser Whitethroat**.

Species that were recorded included **Sedge Warbler**, of which there were many, many singing males, **Whitethroats** (1-2), **Garden Warblers** (1-2), **Blackcaps** (3 min), **Chiffchaff** (3 min) and **Willow Warbler**, of which, again, there were very many.

I almost forgot to mention the two 'speciality' birds of the Reserve! **Bitterns** were actually seen today, with a bird (or birds) in flight on a number of occasions, and seen by quite a good few of the group. At least four 'booming' males were establishing themselves in the Phragmites reed-beds beyond the Main Drain. **Bearded Tits**, I was assured, were established in several areas of reed-

bed, though principally around the Grizedale/Scrape Hides area, but I know of no-one who, on the day, either heard or saw any of them.

31 May 1992 DELAMERE FOREST, Cheshire

Spring had arrived early this year, and, paradoxically, on our arrival we looked with a little dismay at the masses of luxuriant leaf growth that clothed the canopy of the Forest. It was on the cards from the outset that we might not find a great deal within the woodland, and despite a wealth of bird-song, this unfortunately proved to be the case.

With the disappointing exception of **Wood Warbler**, of which (incredibly for this area) we had neither sight nor sound, all the expected Warbler species were noted as being present. Individuals of each were located, but with many other individuals we had to content ourselves with voice-identifications. So it was also with both **Spotted** and **Pied Flycatchers**, although the later was seen and seen well by many members.

Both **Green Woodpecker** and **Lesser Spotted Woodpecker** were heard calling but were not located. **Great Spotted Woodpeckers** were seen everywhere and several nest sites containing young birds were found.

The pattern was set for the day. The woodlands held a wealth of bird-life which proved very difficult, not to identify, but to locate. As in all things, however, there are exceptions — and today's exceptions proved to be **Nuthatches**. With the spring being so well advanced many pairs (and I do mean many) had fledged young already out of the nests, and family parties were being fed up in the tree tops. The very vocal youngsters proved very easy to locate, and parent birds were frequently seen visiting them with food. Four or five youngsters side-by-side on an oak bough makes for quite an enchanting picture!

A final note goes to the dragonflies of Black Mere. These were of the species **Libellula quadrimaculata** — one of the **damselfly** dragonflies — and these were on the wing over the small mere in scores. I have never seen quite so many of this species and others on one day as were seen here and on other pools throughout the area today.

20 September 1992 SPURN POINT BIRD OBSERVATORY

At the end of the day, after the day's tally had been compiled on the 'bus, it came as something of a surprise to find that, as a group, we had recorded over 80 species in the area. It was surprising because there did not, in general, appear to be all that much (diversity of species) about. Certainly there was not that 'buzz' about the place that sends you rushing off from place to place in search of this, that or the other — but having said that, the peninsula still had its 'fair share' of 'good' birds.

High tide today was at 11:34, which meant that we had a good couple of hours in which to wader watch under optimum conditions. With the exception of **Curlew Sandpiper** there was nothing particularly rare or unusual amongst the 15 species of wader to be seen, but it afforded an excellent opportunity to get good views of such species as **Grey Plover** (c12), **Greenshank** (1-3) and **Dunlin**, in its very varied plumage types.

At this time we were fortunate in being given very good views of a **Spoonbill** as it flew past us, crossing the tide-filled expanse of the mouth of the Humber, before heading towards the opposite shore. This was the second sighting of a **Spoonbill** on the day for many of us, as this bird or another had been seen some 10-15 minutes earlier over the North Sea from the Warren Cottages.

Several sessions of sea-watching by groups or individuals produced its own special birds, with sightings for some of both **Red-throated** (4) and **Black-throated Divers** (2), **Little Gull** (2), and both **Arctic** (1-2) and **Great Skuas** (1). Add to these **Common** and **Arctic Tern** (c20+), and perhaps the same number of **Sandwich Terns**, plus five species of the commoner gulls, along with **Gannet**, and the odd unidentified **Shearwater** over the (North) sea at the limit of visibility, and it can be seen how these sessions can become quite interesting.

As anyone who has been to Spurn knows, the buckthorn scrub around the Warren Cottage, the hedgerow systems along the approach road and Clubley's Field, and the scrub along either side of Beacon Lane is very attractive to passage warblers and other migrant passerines and much of any time spent at Spurn is spent searching along these areas. Today's visit produced its expected quota of birds. Some of those observed included **Lesser Whitethroat** (2 min.), **Whitethroat** (1-2 min), **Garden Warbler** (2), **Blackcap** (1m), **Goldcrest** (1), and a possible **Barred Warbler**. Certainly one such bird was known to be in the area — it had been positively identified in the buckthorn scrub in the vicinity of the heligoland Trap at Warren Cottage shortly before our arrival. One or two in our group felt sure that they had seen this bird, but their views were not very satisfactory! This area did, however, produce views of **Redstart**, **Pied Flycatcher** and **Wheatear**. **Spotted Flycatcher** (2-3) was seen at another site in the vicinity of the now, sadly, closed down Bluebell Cafe.

A **Red-backed Shrike** was an uncharacteristically elusive bird observed in the willows and hawthorns of the hedgerows on either side of the approach road between the Bluebell Cafe and the Reserve's Gates.

In the Beacon Lane area **Whinchats** were very much in evidence with probably as many as c30 birds to be seen: perhaps the most unlikely bird to turn up here, though, was the 'yaffling' **Green Woodpecker** that was heard but was not seen.

25 October 1992 FLAMBOROUGH HEAD & BLACKTOFT SANDS

The least said about this trip, I think, the soonest mended! It turned out to be one of those unfortunate excursions that ought to be allowed to pass into oblivion with the least possible fuss.

Birdwatching in the area was made impossible by the weather! We travelled almost the width of Yorkshire through continuous rain, and arrived on site to find it falling arguably even harder still, made yet even more unpleasant by driving winds, carrying sharp, stinging shards of ice, blowing directly off the North Sea. A few people (some might say the wiser ones) declined to leave the coach. Nearly everyone who braved the weather was back on board inside an hour and a half — disillusioned and extremely wet — having abandoned any forlorn ideas they might have nurtured of accomplishing any useful birdwatching.

This is not to say that there were no birds to be seen, but, indeed, there were not that many!

Those seen included a few **Guillemots**, down on the water, fairly numerous **Fulmars**, the odd **Cormorant** fishing and in flight, and one or two adult **Gannets**. There were fewer still (**Great**) **Skuas**, along with the occasional **Redshank** or **Turnstone**. There was little else seen from the headland, discounting the in flight commoner gulls. A walk along the hedgerow systems alongside the B1259, and the Old Falls Hedge, produced only limited numbers of **Blue Tits** and a few male **Blackbirds**. There was a quite sizeable mixed flock (c200+) of **Greenfinches**, **Limets**, and **Meadow Pipits**, roaming the vast mud patch that was the ploughed field alongside the Old Fall Hedge, but the walk produced nothing else.

With the weather holding out little prospect of improving, no-one was particularly looking forward to moving onto the scheduled visit to the shelterless expanses of Hornsea Mere. The decision was taken to move on instead to Blacktoft Sands — at least there we were sure, if of nothing else, of finding shelter afforded by the half-dozen hides! (To anyone disappointed by our NOT visiting Hornsea Mere as per our programme I extend my apologies, but I am sure that the reasons for not doing so are fully understood.)

In view of the weather, Blacktoft, whilst not brilliant, was probably better for birds than people had expected. Thankfully, on our arrival the rain slackened and all but ceased eventually, but the strong winds persisted throughout. There were quite large numbers of **Teal** and of **Shoveler**, and at least one **Goldeneye**. Both **Sparrowhawk** and **Kestrel** put in an appearance on a number of occasions, and there was probably up to 3 **Water Rails**, although this latter species was not seen by everyone. Eight species of wader were recorded, the 'best' birds likely in most peoples eyes to have been **Curlew Sandpiper**, **Spotted Redshank** and **Greenshank**, of which there were singles of each.

An unexpected species, one of my own personal favourites, was a male **Stonechat**, which stayed on gorse on one of the small islands, in a lagoon overlooked by one of the hides, for most of the time that we were in the area.

An unlikely appearance, given the weather conditions, was also put in by a solitary **Bearded Tit**.

23 November 1992 EAST COAST TOUR

The planned areas of visit on the agenda for today were Filey (Bay and Brigg), on to Bridlington Harbour for a look at the gulls, and then down to Fraisthorpe and Barmston Beach to close the day.

Everything started well, but within an hour of leaving the coach at Filey, in the country park, the forecast 'showers' commenced, became much heavier than predicted, and persisted throughout the rest of the day. We philosophically endured the rain having earlier enjoyed views of up to two **Short-eared Owls** and **Sparrowhawk** in the same of scrub and rough grass-land whilst we searched for the (up to 4) **Lapland Buntings** on the cliff-top fields to the north-west of the Brigg. These eluded most of us, but I understand that some of our party managed to find them. **Fulmars** abounded on the ledges below the cliff-top path, giving wonderful views of themselves both at rest and in the air: they must be more numerous here now than at any time previously. We searched for, but did not find, the blue phase bird that had been reported from the area.

Before the rain started we had views of up to two **divers** on the sea, only one of which was identified with certainty as **red-throated**. With the onset of the rain visibility deteriorated badly and only those birds that ventured close inshore could be properly seen species such as the male **Eider**, which sought the shelter of the Brigg, the single **Red-breasted Merganser** and both **Common** and **Velvet Scoters** (3), which did likewise. Waders were few, but individuals included **Oystercatchers**, **Ringed Plover**, small numbers of **Purple Sandpiper**, **Dunlin**, **Redshank** and **Turnstone** — all species closely linked with Rocky shores.

The rain persisted throughout our hour-long stay in Bridlington Harbour. There were no surprises amongst the gulls, although it was encouraging to see the increased numbers (from previous visits, anyway) of **Great Black-backs**, in plumages depicting varying ages, on the roof tops of the buildings surrounding the harbour. A similar situation also applied to the harbour's **Herring Gulls**. A few **Common Gulls** were noted — admittedly, not many, but some — and one **Black-headed Gull** sported an almost full chocolate-brown head.

There was one **Purple Sandpiper** here — on a slip-way leading from the harbour down to the sea at the base of the sea-wall. This species has been noted there on a number of occasions in the past — it appears to be a favoured high-water roost for a few birds.

It was now 3 o'clock and the light was failing rapidly..... it was still raining; it would be dark in under an hour, Barnston was still 20 minutes away and most people had had enough. Reluctantly, we called it a day. For the second successive trip we had been let down by the weather. Let's hope for better things from our next trip December, when we hope to find Hawfinches at Clumber!

13 December 1992 CLUMBER PARK

We began the day with an unscheduled and very brief visit to the **Long-eared Owl** roost, located in hawthorns on the edge of the railway embankment which skirts the edge of the Rother Valley Country Park. Many of us — myself included — had not yet visited this quite well-known site and we have Bill Harris to thank for persuading me that the detour involved to get us here was both practical (time-wise) and worthwhile (bird-wise). Worthwhile, I am sure everyone will agree, it certainly was! We had excellent views at very close quarters of seven birds in the roost, all of which were completely unperturbed by our proximity.

Long-eared Owl was a good bird to start the day with and with it tucked firmly in our belts we arrived at Clumber keen and eager to see this area's 'speciality', namely Hawfinches. Disembarking the 'bus, we headed off towards the parkland around the Chapel and the Cafe. We almost immediately found up to eight **Hawfinches** in the trees of the Cafe 'gardens', plus another 2-4 in the specimen trees around the Chapel. We spent the next half-hour with these birds (and others) in that area. One of the 'others' proved to be a male **Blackcap** which was actually heard in song (out of yew) over a period of several minutes.

Immediately prior to finding the Hawfinches a skein of c150 **Pink-feet** had overflowed the lake. On the whole, however, the contents of the main lake, and the smaller areas of water elsewhere, were quite disappointing. I had hoped that it might have been better. Winter wildfowl comprised **Great Crested Grebes** (3), **Mute Swan** (2), **Grey Lag** and **Canada Geese**, **Gadwall** (2 pairs), **Teal**, **Mallard**, **Pochard** (10-20), **Tufted Duck** and **Ruddy Duck** (c40). In addition were **Cormorant**

(3-4) and **Grey Heron** (2), along with large numbers of both **Moorhen** and, especially, **Coot**.

Two **Common Snipe**, and several **Lapwing** were seen in the vicinity of the 'Ford'.

It is the woodland species, however, that are the main attraction of the area and the reason behind the visit. One 'speciality' has already been discussed — but there are others.

All three species of **woodpecker** can be, and were, seen in the area on the day. **Nuthatches** were everywhere, and the 30 or so individuals that we encountered were surely only a fraction of what the complex of woodlands here might hold. **Treecreepers** were palpably less numerous with only three individuals being recorded.

Voice identification of three birds from three sites confirmed the presence of **Marsh tit** in the area — all from broad-leaved woodland sites where the understorey and shrub-layers were well developed. **Willow Tit**, on the other hand, was seen and heard on two occasions from areas of tree/heath ecotone where cover was considerably lighter than for its cousin.

Blackcap was not the only 'summer visitor' recorded — an overwintering **Chiffchaff** was also seen on one occasion in an area of light birch scrub in an area of tree/heath ecotone woodland.

In one area of wet 'carr' woodland a considerable party of c80+ **Siskins** were seen feeding in alders. A single **Redpoll** was also recorded, but not with the above, rather on its own (?), in alders at the lakeside.

All in all a total of 60 species were seen on the day in the area, of which about two-thirds were either 'woodland' or 'woodland ecotone' species. I do not consider that to be bad going for winter-time.

SYSTEMATIC LIST OF SPECIES OBSERVED ON FIELD TRIPS THROUGHOUT 1992

Red-throated Diver	Pheasant	Tawny Owl
Black-throated Diver	Water Rail	Long-eared Owl
Little Grebe	Moorhen	Short-eared Owl
Great Crested Grebe	Coot	Swift
Fulmar	Oystercatcher	Kingfisher
Gannet	Ringed Plover	Green Woodpecker
Cormorant	Golden Plover	Great Spotted Woodpecker
Shag	Grey Plover	Lesser Spotted Woodpecker
Grey Heron	Lapwing	Skylark
Spoonbill	Knot	Sand Martin
Mute Swan	Sanderling	Swallow
Bewick's Swan	Curlew Sandpiper	House Martin
Whooper Swan	Purple Sandpiper	Tree Pipit
Pink-footed Goose	Dunlin	Meadow Pipit
Grey Lag Goose	Ruff	Rock Pipit
Canada Goose	Snipe	Yellow Wagtail
Brent Goose	Black-tailed Godwit	Grey Wagtail
Shelduck	Bar-tailed Godwit	Pied Wagtail
Wigeon	Curlew	Dipper
Gadwall	Spotted Redshank	Wren
Teal	Redshank	Duncock
Mallard	Greenshank	Robin
Pintail	Turnstone	Redstart
Shoveler	Arctic Skua	Whinchat
Pochard	Great Skua	Stonechat
Tufted Duck	Mediterranean Gull	Wheatear
Scaup	Little Gull	Blackbird
Eider	Black-headed Gull	Fieldfare
Loon-tailed Duck	Common Gull	Song Thrush
Common Scoter	Lesser Black-backed Gull	Redwing
Velvet Scoter	Great Black-backed Gull	Mistle Thrush
Goldeneye	Kittiwake	Sedge Warbler
Red-breasted Merganser	Sandwich Tern	Lesser Whitethroat
Goosander	Common Tern	Whitethroat
Ruddy Duck	Arctic Tern	Garden Warbler
Red Kite	Guillemot	Blackcap
Marsh Harrier	Razorbill	Chiffchaff
Hen Harrier	Puffin	Willow Warbler
Sparrowhawk	Stock Dove	Goldcrest
Buzzard	Woodpigeon	Spotted Flycatcher
Kestrel	Collared Dove	Pied Flycatcher
Merlin	Turtle Dove	Bearded Tit
Peregrine	Cuckoo	Long-tailed Tit
Grey Partridge	Little Owl	Marsh Tit

Willow Tit
Coal Tit
Blue Tit
Great Tit
Nuthatch
Treecreeper
Red-backed Shrike
Jay
Magpie
Jackdaw
Rook
Carion Crow
Raven
Starling
House Sparrow
Tree Sparrow
Chaffinch
Brambling
Greenfinch
Goldfinch
Siskin
Linnet
Redpoll
Bullfinch
Hawfinch
Yellowhammer
Lapland Bunting
Reed Bunting
Corn Bunting

161 SPECIES FOR THE YEAR

RINGING REPORT

With the exception of 1991, when ringing was curtailed by a motorcycle accident, 1992 was the worst year ever for ringing in the Huddersfield area. At Blackmoorfoot the utilization of a peanut basket for attracting birds during the first winter period was not employed. As a consequence no birds were ringed at this time.

The generally favourable weather conditions during the nesting season resulted in the finding of a good number of nests (with the assistance of Tim Duckworth) and the eventual ringing of 116 pulli. The following pulli were ringed: Dipper (8 Hill Top), Dunnock (18 Blackmoorfoot), Blackbird (20 Blackmoorfoot), Mistle Thrush (8 Blackmoorfoot), Willow Warbler (13 Blackmoorfoot), Chaffinch (16 Blackmoorfoot), Greenfinch (19 Blackmoorfoot), Linnet (10 Blackmoorfoot) and Yellowhammer (4 Helme).

Although many netting attempts were possible during the late summer birds were in very short supply. Even numbers of the commoner caught species such as Robin, Dunnock and Blue Tit were well below average. Willow Warblers, which normally peak in late July/early August, were also very thin on the ground and only 89 full-grown birds were ringed. The inclement weather conditions during most of August and September resulted in very few birds being handled; even when conditions did allow few birds were in evidence.

It was thanks to David Barrans, who replenished the peanut basket at Blackmoorfoot during the second winter period, that netting was possible. Birds, however, were in short supply and no large catches were experienced.

The miserly total of birds ringed in 1992 was 472 and the only recoveries notified are shown below.

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 kilometers or more are published.

RECOVERIES OF HUDDERSFIELD RINGED BIRDS

Barn Owl

GK94064	I	29.6.90	near Huddersfield 53°41'N 1°46'W
	X	31.10.90	Tadcaster, North Yorkshire 53°52'N 1°15'N 40 Kms ENE.

The parents of the above bird had been released after a short period of confinement and originally came from the Leeds area.

Robin

HE26394	3	1.8.92	Blackmoorfoot, near Huddersfield 53°37'N 1°52'W
	X	16.8.92	Dodworth, Barnsley, W. Yorks. 53°32'N 1°31'W 25 Kms ESE.

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 found; eg. dead on road, killed by cat etc.

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

TABLE 1 - Retraps

	1 yr	2 yrs	3 yrs	4 yrs	5 yrs	6 yrs	Total
Great Spotted Woodpecker					1		1
Robin				1			1
Blackbird				1		1	2
Willow Warbler			1				1
Blue Tit		1	4				5
Great Tit		2					2
Greenfinch			1				1

TABLE 2 - Recoveries

	1 yr	2 yrs	3 yrs	4 yrs	5 yrs	6 yrs	7 yrs	8 yrs	9 yrs	Total
Blackbird			1							1
Magpie									1	1

RING TOTALS LIST - 1992

Great Spotted Woodpecker	1
Swallow	10
Dipper	8
Wren	8
Dunnock	33
Robin	39
Blackbird	32
Mistle Thrush	8
Lesser Whitethroat	1
Garden Warbler	1
Blackcap	2
Chiffchaff	3
Willow Warbler	102
Goldcrest	1
Spotted Flycatcher	2
Coal Tit	9
Blue Tit	74
Great Tit	34
Treecreeper	1
Magpie	3
Chaffinch	35
Greenfinch	48
Goldfinch	2
Linnet	10
Bullfinch	1
Yellowhammer	4

GRAND TOTAL. 472

M.I.DENTON

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