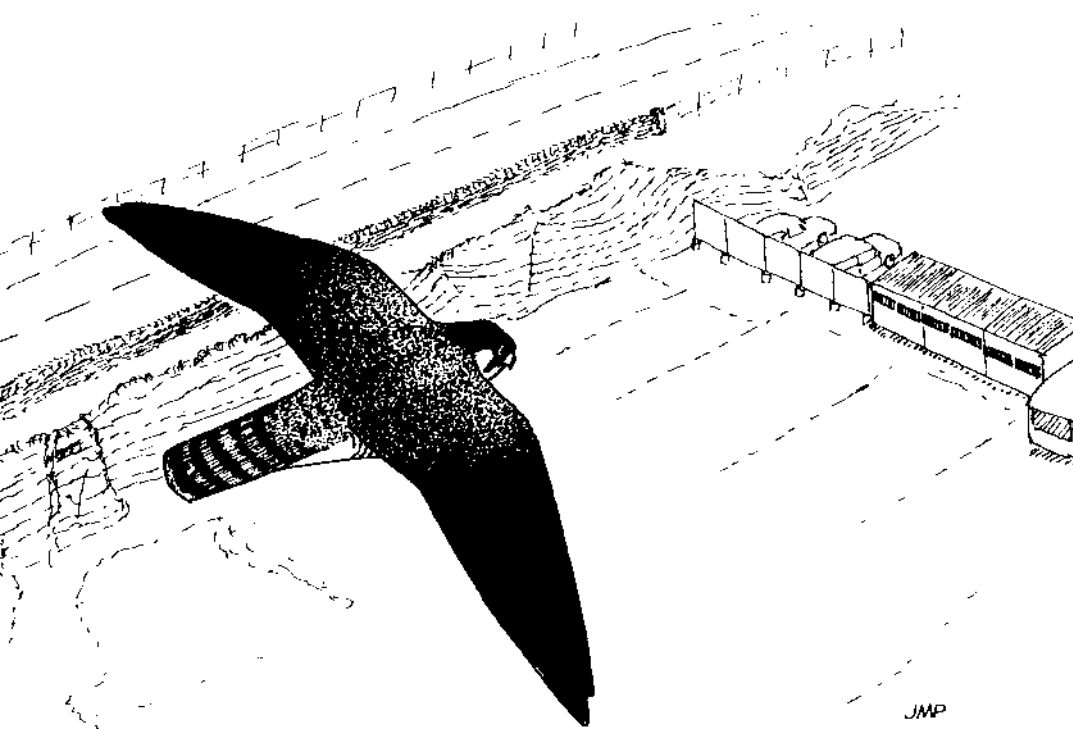


Huddersfield Birdwatchers' Club

Birds in Huddersfield 1986



ANNUAL REPORT

BIRDS IN HUDDERSFIELD 1986

Report of Huddersfield Birdwatchers' Club

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PRESIDENT'S REPORT

In 1986, apart from the AGM and three informal Club Evenings, H.B.C. members were able to enjoy 12 programmed lectures and 8 field meetings. The latter were to the following venues: Fairburn and Blacktoft Sands (February), several places on the East Coast (March), Fairburn Ings (April), Bampton Cliffs and Flamborough (May), Spurn Point (September), Donna Nook - Saltfleet Marsh - Saltfleetby and Theddlethorpe Dunes (October), Filey Brigg (November), and Blithfield Reservoir (December). About 40 members attend most Field Meetings and I am sure that they would wish me to thank David Butterfield on their behalf for his vital role in organising this part of our programme.

First of the 1986 Indoor Meetings was "Rare Birds in Britain" in which John Hewitt, on 7th January, gave an entertaining account of the thrills and tribulations of 'twitching'. He was followed on 21st January by Dr Michael Lloyd who reviewed various aspects of "European Bird Migration". Gordon Yates visited us again on 18th February when he showed his film "Birdlife Through A Pennine Year" which had many memorable sequences, including some of Merlin. On 4th March Roger Parrish introduced us to India's exciting avifauna in "Birding East". Pote Dunn's "Birds and Birdwatching at Filey" on 25th March was of particular interest as Filey Brigg is often visited by members. On 22nd April Dr Kato Lessells in "Lessor Snow Geese on Hudson Bay" described some of the exciting research that is being done on this species. Roy Rhodes' lecture on "A Moorland Parish" on 23rd September was notable not only for fine 'shots' of Pennine Birds but also for very evocative pictures of their habitats. George Yeates made a welcome return on 7th October when he thrilled members with his recollection of the Camargue of forty years ago in "Flamingo City". Trevor Maddison's "South America" on 21st October included many fine studies of the fascinating wild life of the Galapagos Islands. On 11th November Dr Tim Birkhead described some surprisingly randy behaviour in "The Guillemot Mating Game". Sea-birds were featured again on 25th November when Athol Wallis talked on "Birds of Bampton" and critically discussed population estimates based on the number of eggs supposed to have been 'harvested' from the cliffs in the past. Our final talk was on 9th December when Dr Kevin Carlson took us to "Wild Norway" and showed splendid slides of such exciting birds as the Crane, Otterel and Bluethroat.

Ornithologically, the most significant Club activity during the year under review was making a start on mapping the fine distribution of birds breeding in the Huddersfield area. This important project is described more fully elsewhere in the Report.

Every year bird watchers of every level of expertise can find something of interest and stimulation in the Club's annual programme: it must be stressed that this depends entirely on hard work done by members of the Committee, all of whom I should like to thank for all their efforts in making the Club so successful.

John Reynolds, November 1987

THE WEATHER IN 1986

January was frosty and wet, with many showers falling as sleet or snow and temperatures were 2°F below average. Until 10th, the month was dominated by a cold northerly airstream, followed by westerlies to 15th and icy conditions to 24th. Cold, cloudy, dull easterly weather prevailed at the end of the month with rising pressure over Scandinavia and continued into **February**, when an anticyclone to the north-east brought in very cold air from Siberia for the whole month. Waters were frozen, but there was not a lot of snow. Temperatures were 9°F below normal and freezing conditions were experienced for days at a time, making this the third coldest February of the century. In the first few days of **March** the anticyclone weakened, giving way to milder unsettled westerly weather in mid-month, but wintry showers returned again in the last few days on north-westerly winds and temperatures averaged 1°F below normal.

April 1986 was the second coldest of the century, with temperatures 5°F below average. The month was dull with snow showers on seven days. High pressure to the north created a flow of cold northerly air, while from 13th a stationary low pressure system led to very unsettled cold and rainy conditions. High pressure to the south on 18th brought a brief respite, but by 21st westerly air from the Atlantic was again bringing more cold, wet weather which persisted into **May**. Although temperatures were normal, the month was generally dull and wet, with rainfall fifty per cent above normal. Apart from a short period of warmer southerlies from 18th to 20th, a low pressure system brought cold unsettled weather.

In the first week of **June** the weather was cool and disturbed, then higher pressure and a change to westerly winds created slightly warmer weather. Hot southerly air at the month end brought about a mini-heat wave, continuing into **July**. From 5th however, Atlantic air from the north-west brought cooler, changeable westerly weather which persisted into **August**, a month of mostly unsettled weather, with Atlantic lows tracking eastwards across Britain. These resulted in cool Arctic air pushing southwards, creating tail winds for outgoing migrants to move south. The month was dull, with temperatures 6°F below average and more than twice the normal amount of rainfall.

In contrast, **September** was dry and sunny, with drought conditions and the highest total of sunshine hours (63 hours above average) since 1911, although temperatures were 2°F below normal. This calm and settled weather was the result of prevailing anticyclonic weather, with west to northerly winds. Two spells of easterlies on 12th to 14th and 24th to 26th brought migrants to the east coast. The early part of **October** was mild and changeable, with westerlies dominating, but the second half of the month became very wet, cold and windy with snow and sleet showers on 23rd as high pressure to the east declined.

November was a month of unsettled, cyclonic weather coming from the west. Temperatures were slightly above average as also was rainfall. This unsettled westerly weather continued into **December**, with temperatures well above freezing. A short period of anticyclonic weather from 20th to 23rd led to cold northerlies and frosty nights, but westerlies returned to bring milder weather to the year end.

Introduction to the Classified List

The area covered by the Club comprises Ordnance Survey ten-kilometre squares SE00, 01, 10, 11, 20 and 21 along with those parts of SE02 and SE12 south of the Rivers Ryburn and Calder.

As in our last nine annual reports, the status of each species occurring within the area has been indicated by one or more of the following classifications:

Resident Breeder
Partial Migrant
Passage Visitor

Migrant Breeder
Winter 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

The passage and winter visitors have each been allocated a category stating their degree of frequency and occurrence. For passage visitors, the category indicates the number seen during the year, while for winter visitors, an estimate has been made of the number present in the area on one day during the year as follows:-

Rare	1 or fewer birds
Scarce	2-10 birds
Uncommon	11-100 birds
Common	101-1000 birds
Numerous	1001 or more birds

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 essentially are estimates. Hopefully when the Tetrad Breeding Survey is completed in 1990 it will be possible to give a much more accurate and precise picture of the numbers of breeding species in the area.

Precise localities for records of Schedule 1 species (Protection of Birds Act 1954-67) have been kept confidential where it is felt 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 1980 Report, in which appeared a complete list of all species recorded in the area up to the end of 1980 together with notes on their status.

NOTES ON THE CLASSIFIED LIST

At 169, the number of species recorded during the year was the lowest since 1981. No new species appeared during the year, but unusual species reported were Black-necked Grebe, Garganey, Rough-legged Buzzard, Osprey and Hobby. At Blackmoorfoot Reservoir four different Mediterranean Gulls were recorded and both Iceland and Glaucous Gulls reappeared after a blank year in 1985; this year there was no heavy Kittiwake passage to compare with the previous two years.

Another cold, wet spring resulted in summer visitors arriving late and, in the case of several species, in lower numbers than in some recent years, although others such as Whitethroat and Wood Warbler had a better than average showing. Quail were calling in summer in two localities, Pied Flycatchers again remained to breed and a pair of Peregrines bred successfully, rearing two young. Hawfinch was seen at Bretton on five dates; how much longer before breeding is confirmed?

To balance the breeding successes, there were some apparent devastating failures, particularly of waders on the moorlands, frustrated no doubt by the very cold, wet weather of late spring and early summer. Post-breeding flocks of Golden Plover and Lapwing were almost non-existent, and for the second year running wader passage was poor on account of the very high water levels at local reservoirs. At the end of the year the drake Smew returned to the Ingbirchworth group of reservoirs for its seventh successive winter.

Mike Denton once again must be thanked for condensing the Blackmoorfoot logsheets into a comprehensible form, for compiling the Ringing Report and for the very interesting blow by blow account of the breeding of Great Crested Grebes at Blackmoorfoot. I should also like to thank Mike Pinder, Trevor Sutton and Martin Yates for the excellent illustrations which are featured in this report. Finally, to all who have submitted records, many thanks; without your contributions this report would not have been possible.

Brian Armitage Recorder

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). Uncommon passage and winter visitor.

There was a fifty percent reduction from the previous year in the number of successful breeding pairs in the area. Only four pairs were proved to breed as follows: at Bretton Lakes one pair raised at least two and possibly three broods, at Square Wood Reservoir, Denby Dale one pair - two young, at Coxley Dam one pair - no further details, at Ingbirchworth one pair - two young. A second pair failed at Ingbirchworth, and a pair at Boshaw Whams failed probably as a result of falling water levels, but pairs may have bred at Scout Dike and Royd Moor Reservoirs, although no proof was obtained.

Birds were present in the area in all months but, as in 1985, were scarce prior to the breeding season, with a maximum of five at Ingbirchworth Reservoir on 1st and 5th January.

After the breeding season, numbers were low compared with 1985 in the Ingbirchworth/Scout Dike area, with maxima of nine at Scout Dike on 9th October and at Ingbirchworth 14 on 24th August and eleven on 4th October, with double figures on only two other dates in October.

Blackmoorfoot Reservoir had an interesting series of records. Commencing with a single individual on 3rd April, birds occurred on 152 dates, being present daily from 26th July, apart from a gap from 9th to 14th September, with six on three dates in each of September and October and a maximum of seven on 19th/20th October.

Elsewhere birds occurred on the River Calder at Brighouse on 12th March, one at Broadstones Reservoir on 20th April, one or two at Elland Gravel Pit in January, February and October, one at Ringstone Edgo on 16th August, one at Longwood Reservoir on 20th October, up to three at Cannon Hall and Gunthwaite Dam from September onwards and two on the River Calder at Horbury Wyke on 14th December.

Great Crested Grebe *Podiceps cristatus*

Resident breeder (1). Uncommon passage visitor.

A minimum of 19 pairs attempted to breed at six waters, successfully rearing at least 16 young.

Birds were present in all months at Bretton Lakes, where eight pairs attempted to breed and reared at least nine young. The spring maxima were 36+ on 1st April and 33 on 13th April including two sitting birds. At Ingbirchworth Reservoir, where birds were present from March to November, two pairs attempted breeding, but with neither successful and the maximum was seven on 7th May. Scout Dike Res. had a maximum of ten adults in July and August, with eight young on 13th July, but reduced to four by 26th August.

Breeding was also reported to have occurred at Elland Gravel Pit, but no further details have been received.

The increase in records of this species at Blackmoorfoot Reservoir noted in 1984 and 1985 continued unabated. Birds were noted on four dates in January and 15 dates in March and daily

thoreafter to the year end, totalling 3923 bird/days. From April onwards, monthly maxima were April - 14, May - 11, June - 21, July - 34, August - 34, September - 34, October - 12, November - four and December - one. Five pairs attempted to nest, but only one was successful, rearing three young which flew in early September. A full account of the events at Blackmoorfoot appears in a paper by Mike Denton on pp. 59-62.

Away from breeding waters birds were noted as follows: one at Hill Top Reservoir from 7th to 25th June, two at Digley on 7th September and two at Ringstone Edge on 20th October.

Black-necked Grebe *Podiceps nigricollis*

Rare visitor.

One in winter plumage occurred at Deer Hill Reservoir on 9th and 10th October. (PDB, PAC, MLD, TD).

Cormorant *Phalacrocorax carbo*

Scarcely passage and winter visitor.

Singles occurred in January at Bretton Lakes on 4th and at Blackmoorfoot on 5th. The next was one at Elland Gravel Pit on 5th April which was seen to depart to the east. After further singles at Blackmoorfoot on 7th and 22nd May, all the remaining records were in autumn.

Blackmoorfoot had singles on 31st August, 18th September and 31st October, with further singles at Elland Gravel Pit on 31st August and 12th September, one west at Hill Top Reservoir, Slaithwaite also on 31st August, one at Ingbirchworth in August, one at Royd Moor Reservoir on 30th August which moved to Ingbirchworth on 2nd September and to Gunthwaite Dam on 3rd September, one at Yateholme on 27th September and one flying west at Marsden on 28th September.

Grey Heron *Ardea cinerea*

Resident breeder (1).

Once again there was no expansion in the heronry at Bretton Lakes. Five pairs nested, of which four succeeded in raising young. Birds were present throughout the year there.

Recorded from over thirty localities, mainly after the breeding season. The majority of records were of single birds, but six were at Scout Dike Reservoir on 12th October, six at Gunthwaite Dam, where birds were seen on 80 dates, on 26th October and five at Royd Moor Reservoir on 16th August.

There was a big increase in sightings at Blackmoorfoot, with birds recorded on approximately 130 dates (56 dates in 1984, 85 dates in 1985), in all months from April onwards, but mainly in summer and autumn. Three occurred on several June dates, and in July up to six were regular with a maximum of nine on 15th.

An immature bird fed regularly at a garden pond in Almondbury in January and February, and a partial albino was present at Horbury Wyke from 1st to 4th April. Doad birds were found at Denby Dale on 5th March, presumably a victim of the cold spell and at Bretton Park on 2nd November.

Mute Swan *Cygnus olor*

Resident breeder (1).

A pair bred successfully at Cannon Hall, rearing one cygnet. At Horbury Wyke, where successful breeding occurred in 1985, a pair attempted but the nest was flooded out. (Once again though a pair bred and raised seven young at the nearby Millfield Flash, just a kilometre outside the club area).

Birds were present elsewhere in the area as follows: one or two at Elland Gravel Pit in January/February, three at Boshaw Whams on 3rd January, one remaining to 31st March, two at Gunthwaite Dam from 20th January to 21st February, 5th to 15th April and on 5th/6th June, one at Ingbirchworth Reservoir from 16th March to 1st April, one on the River Ryburn at Ripponden on 23rd May, two at Ingbirchworth Reservoir from 21st June to 21st August, one at Broadstones Reservoir on 18th October, two at Sparth Reservoir 20th to 29th December and a bird which remained all year at Hinchliffe Mill.

Bewick's Swan *Cygnus columbianus*

Uncommon winter visitor.

There were more records than for the last two years.

At Blackmoorfoot on 10th January 20 arrived, of which only four were immatures; 18 departed west at 1520 hours, the two remaining adults staying to 12th (MLD, JMP).

The other records were all in the second winter period. On 23rd November, eleven arrived at 1105 hrs at Scout Dike Reservoir in the company of two Whoopers, moved to Broadstones Reservoir departing at 1155 hrs (JED, SMD), on 28th November four adults at Blackmoorfoot (MLD) and at Ossett Spa S.F. 16 passed north-west on 27th November and two moved south on 31st December (JRS).

Whooper Swan *Cygnus cygnus*

Uncommon winter visitor.

The only record in the early part of the year was of four birds at Ingbirchworth Reservoir on 22nd March (BA et al.)

The first of autumn was an adult at Blackmoorfoot Reservoir on 26th October (MLD, JMP), which was not seen after 0805 hrs and was presumably the individual which was present at Ingbirchworth at 1000 hrs (DMP).

Two spent an hour at Scout Dike and Broadstones Reservoirs with Bewick's on 23rd November (JED, SMD), two flew west over Marsdon Moor on 24th November (RH), 18 adults west at Blackmoorfoot on 24th December (MLD) and a family party of two adults and four juveniles at Langsett Reservoir from 26th to at least 29th December (JMD, HCL et al.)

Pink-footed Goose *Anser brachyrhynchus*

Uncommon to common passage visitor.

All records of unidentified grey geese are included under this species, since the passage of Pink-footed Geese to the west coast is a well known phenomenon, and unidentified birds are most likely to be of this species.

There were only two records in the early months, one at Blackmoorfoot on 12th January and six ('grey') north over Skelmanthorpe on 8th January.

Typically the majority of records were in November/December, although there was obvious westerly passage on 23rd October, with 30 ('grey') over Edgerton, 60 over Lindley Moor and 70 over Outlane. In November 16 south-east at Bretton on 16th, c. 300 ('grey') north-east over Huddersfield town centre on 17th, 88 east on 28th and 40 north-west on 29th at Blackmoorfoot, with 50 north at Ingbirchworth also on the latter date. Movement continued in December with 100 ('grey') north-west over Scapegoat Hill on 2nd, 170 south at Broadstones and 90 ('grey') at Whitley Common on 6th, at Osselt Spa S.F. 16 north-west on 9th and 90 west on 10th, 66 west at Blackmoorfoot on 24th and 60 ('grey') west-north-west over Lockwood on 25th.

Greylag Goose *Anser anser*

Uncommon passage visitor.

Three at Blackmoorfoot on 1st June, one there on 17th August and ten which flew south at Honley on 10th August probably all refer to feral birds.

Twenty geese which flew west over Qearmby on 9th June probably belong to this or the next species.

Canada Goose *Branta canadensis*

Resident breeder (2).

No counts were received for the early part of the year from Bretton Lakes. About two hundred adults were present during the breeding season and the maximum count for the latter part of the year was 375 on 10th October. Despite population control 33 goslings were reared. Birds are now absent on many dates, owing to movement to Pugneys, Wakefield.

A pair bred for the third year running at Winscar Reservoir, where juveniles accompanied two adults on 19th July. Breeding also took place at Blakeley Reservoir where there were four adults and a brood of four goslings on 15th June.

Additional breeding season pairs were noted at Scammonden Dam, Horbury Wyke, Booth Dam, Ringstone Edge Reservoir, March Haigh Reservoir, Digley Reservoir, Broadstones Reservoir, Ingbirchworth Reservoir and Gunthwaite Dam.

Blackmoorfoot Reservoir had birds on thirteen dates, with maxima of 20 on 10th January, 27 on 11th August and 21 on 25th October; other maxima were eight at Butterley Reservoir on 13th July, ten at Scammonden Dam on 12th August and 12 at Ingbirchworth Reservoir on 19th August.

Birds were recorded flying over Royd Edge Clough, six east on 13th April and Lindley Moor, 30 west on 14th December. (See also Greylag Goose).

The Cannon Hall flock numbered 57 on 3rd September.

Barnacle Goose *Branta leucopsis*

Rare visitor.

The presumed feral pair at Bretton Lakes bred on one of the islands on the lower lake and reared five goslings (DP). The adults were present from late March and were joined by a third bird on 29th and 30th March.

Egyptian Goose *Alopochen aegyptiacus*

Rare visitor of doubtful origin.

One present at Ringstone Edge Reservoir on 9th and 15th August (PJWS).

Published with the escape proviso.

Shelduck *Tadorna tadorna*

Uncommon passage visitor.

Most records were from Blackmoorfoot Reservoir as follows: 23 on 18th and nine on 27th January, two on 16th and one on 22nd March, one on 4th and 23rd April, three on 16th May, singles on 16th and 30th August, one on 16th November and one on 14th December.

Elsewhere, six occurred at Broadstones Reservoir and eight at Langsett Reservoir on 18th January, one at Royd Moor Reservoir on 26th January, singles at Elland Gravel Pit on 5th April, Ingbirchworth Reservoir on 20th April, Horbury Wyke on 18th and 22nd May, Broadstones Reservoir on 30th September and three at Ingbirchworth Reservoir on 9th October.

Mandarin *Aix galericulata*

Rare visitor of dubious origin.

Six were released at Cannon Hall early in the year, where three were present on 1st April (BA). A rather tame pair at Gunthwaite Dam on 15th April (CB) probably originated from the above locality.

Wigeon *Anas penelope*

Common passage and winter visitor.

A rather better year than 1985, with birds recorded as follows:

Blackmoorfoot Res. Recorded on eight dates to 22nd May, with max. of ten on 1st January and 77 (of which 34 were males) on 19th March, otherwise not more than four birds. More frequent in autumn, with birds on 32 dates from 9th September to 21st December, mainly in September and October, but 12 on 13th October was the only double figure count.

Boshow Whams : One from 31st October to 9th November.

Bretton Lakes : Two males on 15th March.

Broadstones Res. One on 22nd February and on four dates from 15th November, with eleven on 16th December as maximum.

Deer Hill Res. One on 10th September.

Horbury Wyke, Two males from 6th to 12th April, seven on 20th November, nine on 6th and three on 14th December.

Ingbirchworth Res. Seen on c. 12 dates between 24th January and 19th April, with a maximum of seven on 19th March. A male flew north-west on 20th May. In autumn present on many dates from 19th September to 23rd November, with a maximum of 12 on 3rd November, otherwise only single figures.

Ringstone Edge Res. Four on 5th October.

Royd Moor Res. A male on 1st and 2nd June. Birds present on seven dates from 12th October to the year end, max. ten on 6th and 9th November and 16 on 16th November.

Gadwall *Anas strepera*

Scarce passage and winter visitor.

Singles occurred at Blackmoorfoot Reservoir on 13th August and 12th October (MLD, JMP), at Ingbrichworth Reservoir on 25th and 28th September (BBSG, JED) and 6th November (CB, DS & VAJ) and at Cannon Hall on 28th December (NL). All were males.

Teal *Anas crecca*

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

Brooding was confirmed only at Black Moss where a female and five newly hatched young were seen on 20th June, and at Winscar Reservoir where a single juvenile accompanied a female on 19th July. Additional birds were present in the breeding season at Blackmoorfoot Reservoir, Hill Top Reservoir, Horbury Wyke, Ingbrichworth Reservoir, Ringstone Edge Reservoir, Rishworth Moor, Scammondnn Dam and Sparth Reservoir, a far more widespread distribution than in 1985.

Early season maxima again were rather low. Blackmoorfoot had birds on eight dates to 25th April, with max. of 15 on 19th April. Other peak counts in the early months were nine at Ingbrichworth Reservoir on 19th April, 50 at Royd Moor Reservoir and 62 at Scout Dike Reservoir on 12th January, 96 at Horbury Wyke on 3rd January and 12 on the ice at Bretton Lakes on 5th January. Four other waters held up to six birds.

Again there were more records in the second half of the year, Blackmoorfoot having birds on 36 dates, but low maxima of 17 on 12th October and 16 on 25th December. Maxima at other sites were 97 on 13th September and 106 on 15th October at Horbury Wyke, 32 at Royd Moor Reservoir on 5th October, 38 at Scout Dike Reservoir on 12th October, 25 at Ringstone Edge Reservoir on 2nd September and eleven at Broadstones on 15th November. At four other sites where birds occurred numbers did not attain double figures.

Mallard *Anas platyrhynchos*

Resident breeder (2-3). Common winter visitor.

Brooding was confirmed in 22 tetrads and evidence for probable breeding obtained in three others from the 80 tetrads in SE00, SE01, SE10, SE11 and SE21 which were partially surveyed in the Club's pilot breeding study in 1986, giving an approximate total of 40 breeding pairs. Doubtless at least as many breeding pairs remain to be discovered in the remaining unworked tetrads. Localities at which confirmed breeding occurred included Bretton Lakes and Horbury Wyke (six pairs each), Blackmoorfoot Reservoir, Bilberry Reservoir, Boshaw Whams, the canal in Huddersfield, River Colne at Marsden and Slaithwaite, Dick Clough, Fenay Beck (at least three pairs), Hill Top Reservoir, Ingbrichworth Reservoir, Sparth Reservoir and Tunnel End, Marsden.

Numbers in the early part of the year were low. Blackmoorfoot Reservoir, which was frozen from 9th February to 5th March, had a maximum of only 28 on 3rd and 25th January. Other maxima were 14 at Sparth Reservoir on 5th January, 215 at Bretton Lakes on 5th January and 194 on 9th February 43 at Bailings Res. on 11th January, 35 at Scout Dike Res., 36 at Horbury Wyke and 53 at Royd Moor Res. all on 12th January, only 24 at Ingbrichworth Res. on 26th January, 13 at Broadstones Res. on 22nd February and 86 on the ice at Elland Gravel Pit on 2nd March.

In the second half of the year, especially in September, numbers were considerably higher at most

waters. Record counts were achieved at Ingbirchworth Res. in September and October, where numbers peaked at 166 in October. In the same area, high numbers were also recorded at Broadstones Res. with 105 on 19th September and at Royd Moor Res. with 112 on 30th November. The same birds might well have been involved at all three sites.

Blackmoorfoot had counts exceeding 30 birds in September, October and December, but the maximum was only 35 on 1st December. Elsewhere, up to 70 occurred in two flocks on the canal between Longroyd Bridge and Golcar during August and September, 120 were at Horbury Wyke on 19th September, 114 at Ringstone Edge Res. on 12th October and 127 at Bretton Lakes on 14th December.

Pintail *Anas acuta*

Uncommon passage and winter visitor.

In the early part of the year a female was at Horbury Wyke on 20th January and a male at Bretton Lakes on 15th March.

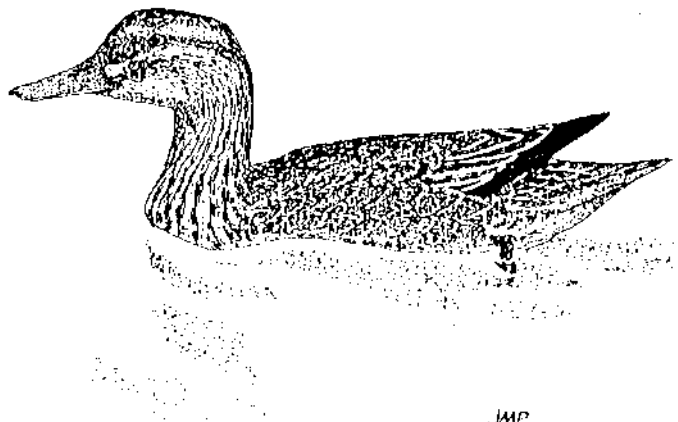
The remaining records were in autumn. At Blackmoorfoot Res. one flew south-east on 13th August, two present on 17th August, two on 10th and 18th September and three on 13th October, at least one was at Royd Moor Res. on 28th September, and at Ingbirchworth Res. a female on 1st September, five on 5th October and nine flew east on 23rd December.

Note: Six were released at Cannon Hall early in the year (BBSG).

Garganey *Anas querquedula*

Rare visitor.

Two males and two females appeared at Blackmoorfoot Res. on 12th August (MLD, JMP), a typical date for this summer visitor.



Shoveler *Anas clypeata*

Uncommon passage and winter visitor.

There were rather more spring records of this species than in the previous two years. At Blackmoorfoot Res. two on 10th March and four on 24th April. Ingbirchworth Res. had a male on 19th April, followed by two males on 13th/14th May, while two males occurred at Horbury Wyke on 3rd April and a pair on 5th and 22nd May. At this last site a pair remained from 15th June to 27th August, but there was no proof of breeding. Other midsummer birds occurred at Blackmoorfoot Res. on 16th June (one) and 2nd July (seven), and at Ingbirchworth Res. on 13th June (two).

In autumn, Ingbirchworth Res. had two on 8th August, Blackmoorfoot had two on 16th August, one on 3rd September, four on 10th September and one on 13th September; at Bretton Lakes two on 20th August, eight on 5th October and a male and female from 18th October to 12th December, at Horbury Wyke two on 15th October and six on 14th December, with four at Ringstone Edge Res. on 17th October.

Two flew west over Marsden on 18th December.

Pochard *Aythya ferina*

Common passage and winter visitor.

A female with several ducklings on the R. Calder at Horbury represents the first breeding record in the club area (JRS). Other occurrences are summarised below.

Blackmoorfoot Res. Although birds were present regularly from the beginning of January to mid-June, apart from during the freeze from 9th February to early March, the peak count of eleven on 19th March was very low. On most dates only a single bird was present. Birds occurred again on a regular basis from mid-July onwards, with monthly maxima of 15 on 19th July, one in August, 30 on 29th September, an exceptional count of 89 (29 males, 60 females) on 13th October, 17 on 4th November and four on 19th December.

Bretton Lakes. Very irregular in the early months with a maximum of only ten on 30th March. More frequent late in the year peaking at 33 on 14th December.

Ingbirchworth Res. Recorded on less than 20 dates during the year, with low peaks of 15 on 18th April and only four in autumn on 30th November.

Boyd Moor Res. None in the early part of the year. Recorded from 14th September onwards, peaking at 20 on 26th October.

Scout Dike Res. Recorded on only three dates, maximum eleven on 12th October.

Other waters where the species occurred were Bilberry Res., - one on 17th March, Broadstones Res. - three on 12th October, Cannon Hall - two on 1st March, Gunthwaite Dam - 13 dates, max. nine on 25th October, Horbury Wyke - max. three on 15th June, Ringstone Edge Res. - ten on 5th October and Scammonden Dam - four on 11th January.

Tufted Duck *Aythya fuligula*

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

In the early part of the year maxima were: Blackmoorfoot Res. 14 on 24th April, Bretton Lakes 20 on 14th April, Ingbirchworth Res. 15 on 26th January, Gunthwaite Dam 18 on 22nd January, Horbury Wyke 22 on 19th April.

Breeding occurred at Bretton Lakes, where five broods of young were seen, and at Moltham Mills. As in previous years birds, including apparent pairs, summered or spent part of the breeding season at many waters, but with no indication of breeding except for a pair in SE 10. Waters where birds were present at this time of the year included Blackmoorfoot Res., Blakeley Res., Bilbury and Digley Res. Brownhill, Ramsdon and Yateholme Reservoirs, Cupwith Res., Hartcliffe Mills and Square Wood Res., Donby Dale, Horbury Wyke, Ingbirchworth and Royd Moor Res., March Haigh Res., and Tunnel End Res.

Late maxima were higher with 26 at Blackmoorfoot Res. on 21st September, 19 at Bretton Lakes on 14th December, 62 at Ingbirchworth Res. on 28th and 30th July with 58 on 9th August, 17 at Scout Dike Res. on 12th October and 18 at Royd Moor Res. on 7th September. Smaller numbers, all single figures, occurred infrequently at seven other waters.

Scaup *Aythya marila*

Scarce passage and winter visitor.

An immature male was present at Ingbirchworth Res. on 28th January (NWA) and an adult male on the lower lake at Bretton on 30th March (DS & VAI, DM, DP, DJS).

In autumn at Blackmoorfoot Res. an eclipse male on 23rd/24th September and an adult female from 25th September to 3rd October (MLD, JMP). A male at Ingbirchworth Res. on 28th September (JED, JMD) could have been the individual present at Blackmoorfoot Res. on 23rd/24th.

Common Scoter *Melanitta nigra*

Scarce to uncommon passage visitor.

Another poor year for this species with only five individuals recorded.

A female at Broadstones Res. on 2nd/3rd May (JMP, RW) moved to Ingbirchworth Res. where it remained from 4th to 8th May (CB, DJS et al.). A male at Winscar Res. on 25th June (BBSG), male and female at Ingbirchworth Res. on 28th July (JMP) and a male at Blackmoorfoot Res. on 12th August (MLD, JMP).

Goldeneye *Bucephala clangula*

Regular but uncommon passage and winter visitor.

Numbers were very low at both ends of the year. Maxima in the early months were nine at Elland Gravel Pit on 11th February, six each at Blackmoorfoot Res. on 6th January, Ingbirchworth on 16th March and Ringstone Edge on 5th April and five at Digley Res. on 20th February, with no more than four elsewhere.

Birds were present in the area in all months thanks to a first-summer male which summered at Blackmoorfoot/Deor Hill Res., and being identifiable until at least 8th November, when the position became confused by the presence of other males in similar plumage. A second first-summer male remained at Ringstone Edge Res. until at least 11th June and a female was on the same water on 23rd and 28th August. Otherwise birds had left the area by the end of April.

The first returning bird in autumn occurred on 21st October at Blackmoorfoot Res., but no other sites reported birds until early November. With the exception of ten at Blackmoorfoot on 5th November, numbers in the second winter period were even lower than in the early months, maxima being four at Ingbirchworth Res. and three at Scout Dike Res. in November.

Other sites which held birds during the year were Bilberry Res., Bretton Lakes, Broadstones Res., Boshaw Whams, Cupwith Res., Gunthwaite Dam, Royd Moor Res., Tunnot End Res. and Yateholme Res. At several of these waters, the records involved only a single individual on one date.

Smew *Mergus albellus*

Rare visitor.

The adult male remained at Ingbirchworth Res. to the very late date of 3rd May. It spent most of its time at Ingbirchworth, but was reported from Scout Dike Res. on two dates in January, from Gunthwaite Dam and Cannon Hall when Ingbirchworth and Scout Dike were iced over in February and on one date each in March and April also at Gunthwaite Dam.

During its stay it was seen to display on 22nd March to a male Goldeneye (JMP).

It returned for a seventh winter, being first reported from Scout Dike Res. on 16th November.

Red-breasted Merganser *Mergus serrator*

Scarce visitor.

There was just one record of this species in 1986, two redheads at Blackmoorfoot Res. on 4th October (JMP).

Goosander *Mergus merganser*

Scarce passage and winter visitor.

In the early months, a redhead was at Ingbirchworth Res. on 12th January (RDH), at Blackmoorfoot Res. one male and three females on 25th January and one individual on 22nd March; two were present there on the unusual date of 25th June (JMP).

Late in the year Blackmoorfoot Res. saw a female fly north on 2nd November, with another bird present on 21st December (MLD); a redhead present at Bretton Lakes from 12th November to at least 10th December was joined by a second bird (or two new birds appeared) on 14th December and remained to at least 28th December (HCL, DM, DP et al.) One male and three redheads were at Elland Gravel Pit on 26th December (KF).

Ruddy Duck *Oxyura jamaicensis*

Scarce visitor.

More records than in any previous year.

A female/immature was at Bretton Lakes on 16th March (DP), at Ingbirchworth a male on 25th April (DJM) and a female on 8th May (RDH), a pair displaying at Scout Dike Res. on 13th July (CB, DM) and a male at Blackmoorfoot Res. on 7th/8th August (MLD, DMO, JMP).

Twelfth to sixteenth records for the area.

Hen Harrier *Circus cyaneus*

Scarce visitor.

Single ring-tails were seen at three localities all in January - at Winscar on 1st, near Snailsdon on 5th and in the Little Don Valley on 26th.

Goshawk *Accipiter gentilis*

Scarce visitor.

A male at Cawthorne Park on 5th January (BA, JMD), three in the Langsoll area on 31st March (HQ) and one over Oakes on 28th July (JMD). Also seen in two other areas during the summer.

A pullus ringed in North Derbyshire on 11th June 1982 was found shot (or killed by man) at Holmfirth on 27th April 1985.

Sparrowhawk *Accipiter nisus*

Resident breeder (1 - 2).

The number of localities in which birds were sighted was similar to last year, at just over sixty, with sightings in the breeding season at about forty of these. Despite all these sightings however, breeding was confirmed in only four tetrads. Seven nests produced 22 young.

Birds were observed in gardens at Almondbury, Dalton, Edgerton, Elland, Lindley Moor and Oakes. Prey items identified were Feral Pigeon, Meadow Pipit, Mistle Thrush, Starling and House Sparrow.

All sightings involved one or two birds, apart from four in the Horbury Wyke/Horbury Strands area.

Blackmoorfoot had fewer records than in recent years, with singles on only 38 dates, and two on 15th April.

Buzzard *Buteo buteo*

Rare visitor.

One flew east over Bretton towards Cawthorne on 9th December (GBS).

Rough-legged Buzzard *Buteo lagopus*

Rare visitor.

A first-winter bird flew north-west over the Wessenden Valley on 25th January (CH).

Seventh record for the area.

Osprey *Pandion haliaetus*

Rare passage visitor.

One seen at Upper Midhope on 15th April continued in a north-westerly direction into the club area (JSA). A second bird flew down the valley over Yateholme on 11th May (DS).

Twelfth and thirteenth records since 1952.

Kestrel *Falco tinnunculus*

Resident breeder (2).

Partly perhaps as a result of the comment in the 1985 report, many more observers submitted records of this species in 1986. Consequently a more realistic picture is beginning to emerge. Birds were reported from over 80 localities, at over 50 of these during the breeding season. However, breeding was proved for only seven pairs, at Brutton Park, Hall Dike, Milnsbridge, Oxspring, Meltham Mills area, Kirkheaton and near Wholestone Moor where a family party of five birds was seen.

It is interesting to compare records from Blackmoorfoot with those of Sparrowhawk. Single Kestrels were recorded on 75 dates, two on four dates with three birds on 27th July. This species is recorded twice as frequently as is Sparrowhawk; perhaps this more correctly reflects the relative status of the two species?

Merlin *Falco columbarius*

Former breeder, now scarce to uncommon passage/winter visitor.

After an encouraging increase in records in 1985, it is disappointing to report fewer sightings in 1986. All records received are listed and refer to single birds.

One is reported to have wintered 1985/86 near Colnebridge, a female at Donby Dale on 19th February was the first recorded in that area, an immature male near Gawthorpe Water Tower from June to the year end, one south at Ingbirchworth on 11th August, one at Snailsden on 21st August, one at Scammonden on 31st August, one at Blackmoorfoot on 29th September, one at Flight Hill on 4th October, a male at Broadstones on 29th November and 10th December, with a male at Yateholme on the latter date, a female/immature attending a mixed flock of Meadow Pipits and Pied Wagtails at Cooper Bridge on 25th December and one at Low Common, Broadstones on 28th December.

In addition, birds were seen in two possible breeding areas in May.

Hobby *Falco subbuteo*

Rare visitor.

An adult male spent 25 minutes at Ossett Spa S.F. before flying off to the north on 20th June (JRS).

Peregrine *Falco peregrinus*
Resident breeder (1).

A pair reared two young in Booth Dam Quarry (JED, JMD). Presumably the two birds seen at Cupwith Hill on 15th June (JMD) refer to this pair.

An immature bird took a Woodpigeon at Drop Clough on 17th October and was seen again on 26th (DM). One at Windy Hill on 20th December (JMD).

It now seems appropriate to reveal that a pair has bred successfully in several recent years at another site in the club area and that breeding has been attempted in at least one recent year at a third site.

Red Grouse *Lagopus lagopus*
Resident breeder (2 - 3).

Once again, the species was reported very infrequently and in relatively low numbers.

Counts in the early months were: on 5th January about 25 in the Linscar area, on 16th January, 16 in the Swinden/Hingcliff Hill area, on 8th February 50 in the Wessenden area, on 9th February 42 on Thurlstone Moor, 8 at Dunford Bridge and 8 at Snailsden.

In the breeding season a male was reported from Cupwith Hill on 12th April and three at Holme Moss on 3rd May.

These were the only reports received.

Red-legged Partridge *Alectoris rufa*
Resident brooder (1).

Although breeding was proved in only one case, birds were seen in most of the areas where birds have bred in recent years.

In the Digley/Bilberry area two birds were present on 3rd January in very cold conditions, with snow lying, 29th March and 29th May. Twelve were near Norcroft on 9th March, a pair at Springwood, Bretton on 11th April, where two adults and six young were seen on 30th July (GBS), two at Broadstones Lodge on 4th May, 1 at Bretton Cross Roads on 8th May, one at Ronscliffe Wood, Cawthorne on 10th May, two at Clough Wood, Gunthwaite on 25th July, six on 26th and eight on 31st August at Gunthwaite Hall and eight at Burncote, Gunthwaite on 6th September.

Two by the H. Calder at Elland G.P. on 4th April (EMS, MJW) a pair at Stirley Hill on 10th May (DB), and 15 on 28th September, nine on 15th October and 12 on 6th November near Deffler Wood (CB, NL) were in new areas.

Grey Partridge *Perdix perdix*
Resident breeder (2).

There was a further slight increase in the number of records received.

Breeding was proved at Whitley Willows, Lepton (live young), Skelmanthorpe (six young), Hoylandswaine, Spicer House Lane, (seven young), Annat Royd Lane (twelve young) and Burncote, Gunthwaite (15 young). Other pairs were noted in the breeding season at Springwood (Bretton), Litherop Lane, Bretton Crosss Roads, Holt Head, Farnley Lane, Horbury (two pairs), Gunthwaite (five pairs), Cawthorne (four pairs), Kexborough and Oxspring, with further calling or single birds in the breeding season at Lindley Moor, Booth Dam, Scammonden and Digley, a situation very similar to that in 1985.

The only coveys with totals in double figures were 20+ near Castle Hill in October, eleven at Oldfield on 4th November, 15 - 20 at Royd Moor Res. on 9th November, 12 near Kirkheaton on 26th December. Fifteen at Carr Lane, Gunthwaite was the only one reported in the early months. Smaller numbers were reported from Norcroft, Houses Hill, Elland G.P., Farnley Tyas, Ponker (Skelmanthorpe), Ingbirchworth, Whitley Common and to the east of Bretton Park.

Quail *Coturnix coturnix*

Scarce summer visitor.

Birds were reported from three localities. All were singles as follows: a male calling from a cabbage field at Silkstone Common on 25th June (BBSG), a male calling in the Ingbirchworth/Broadstones area from 2nd July to 21st August (SMD, RD & SEH, JMP) and one calling near Holme in July (DJH).

Pheasant *Phasianus colchicus*

Resident breeder (2 - 3).

This species continues to be much under-recorded, with no increase in reports from last year.

Most records were outside the breeding season and consisted of only one or two birds. The localities involved were Houses Hill, Honley, Cawthorne Park, Elland G.P., Ainley Top, Ingbirchworth, Almondbury (one in a garden on 21st January) and Doffer Wood.

During the breeding season, reported only from the Longwood Valley, Elland G.P., Royd Moor and Bretton Park where six were together on 13th April; in addition, probable brooding was recorded for six tetrads in SE21 in the breeding survey.

Water Rail *Rallus aquaticus*

Scarce winter visitor.

Single birds were reported from three localities. One at Ingbirchworth Res. on 5th January (JE, MS), one on the canal at Linthwaite on six March dates (CH) and one at Gunthwaite Dam on 12th and 15th March and again on seven dates in autumn from 14th October to 24th November (CB).

Moorhen *Gallinula chloropus*

Resident breeder (2 - 3).

Of the 80 tetrads in which evidence was collected for the breeding survey, this species was proved to breed in only fifteen. Perhaps a review of its status is needed.

Breeding was reported from the canal at Slaithwaite (two pairs), Almondbury (a pair raised two young on a garden pond), Bretton Lakes, Sparth Res., Tunnel End Res., Merrydale Clough, Hall Dike, Mag Wood, Magdale, Armitage Bridge, New Mill, Brockholes, Cawthorne Park, Carr Wood,

Meltham Mills, Milnsbridge/Linthwaito, Fenay Beck and Whitley Willows.

Blackmoorfoot had records on only 35 dates, mainly September to November, all of single birds apart from two on 18th September.

With the exception of 12 at Silkstones S.F. on 5th January and 11 at Elland G.P. on 18th October, the only double-figure gatherings were at Horbury Wyke, with 17 on 12th January, 27 on 6th April, 30 on 5th June, 41 on 13th October and 46 on 14th November.

Coot *Fulica atra*

Resident breeder (2).

No high counts were made in the early months, maxima being eight on several January dates at Blackmoorfoot Res., 31 on 3rd January at Ingbirchworth Res., 21 on 5th January at Cannon Hall, 32 on 16th March at Bretton Lakes, 16 on 22nd March at Scout Dike Res., and 30 on 25th April at Elland G.P.

Breeding was reported from Blackmoorfoot Res. (2 pairs, 1 young), Boshaw Whams (1 pair, 1 young), Bretton Lakes (8 pairs, 31 young), Dewsbury S.F. (2 pairs), Gunthwaite Dam (1 pair), Horbury Wyke (c 6 pairs, 20 young), Ingbirchworth Res. (6 pairs), Meltham Mills (3 pairs) and Scout Dike Res. (3 pairs). No breeding season reports were received from Cannon Hall or Elland G.P.

Maximum count for the later months at Blackmoorfoot Res., where birds were present throughout the year, was 16 on 1st October. The only other waters from which late season counts were received were Bretton Lakes and Horbury Wyke which had respective maxima of 60 on 26th October and 23 on 14th December.

A single bird at Hartcliffe Mills on 23rd April and two at Square Wood Res., Denby Dale on 15th May (DB) were unusual. Even more unusual was the sight of a bird flying into a force seven westerly wind at roof-top height at Crosland Moor on 27th May (MLD).

Oystercatcher *Haematopus ostralegus*

Uncommon passage visitor.

One passed west over Dewsbury S.F. on 19th February (JRS). Spring birds occurred at Broadstones Res., two on 2nd May (RW), at Blackmoorfoot Res., which had one on 6th and two on 30th May, and at Boshaw Whams where three birds arrived at 1900 hrs and left to the west five minutes later on 9th June (BWW).

All other records were in autumn as follows. At Blackmoorfoot Res., five on 21st and one on 24th July, two on 4th and one flying west on 8th August. One flew west over Hade Edge on 28th July (DM), singles also passed west at Marsdon on 4th and 16th August (DM), five were over Meltham on 4th August (JMP) and the last were two at Digley Res. on 7th September (DB).

Little Ringed Plover *Charadrius dubius*

Occasional breeder and scarce summer visitor.

A slightly better year than 1985, but once again no proof of breeding was obtained.

Spring birds were reported at Ingbirchworth Res. on 2nd May (BBSG), Horbury Wyke on 12th May

(DP), Ringstone Edge Res. on 14th May (JED) and Blackmoorfoot Res. on 18th May (MLD). All were single birds.

Two birds were at Dewsbury S.F. from 6th to 8th June, with a pair displaying there on 15th June (JRS). A second displaying pair frequented Horbury Wyke from 6th to 11th July (JRS).

The only autumn record was of a juvenile at Royd Moor Res. on 12th August (NAP).

Ringed Plover *Charadrius hiaticula*
Uncommon passage visitor.

There were two records of birds in spring, three at Ossett Spa S.F. on 17th April (JRS) and one at Blackmoorfoot Res. on 26th May (MLD, JMP).

In autumn birds, all singles, unless stated otherwise, were reported from Blackmoorfoot Res. on 12th July and 16th/17th August, Broadstones Res. on 12th August (RW), Ringstone Edge Res. on 29th July (two), 15th (one) and 16th (two) August (CCT, PJWS), Deor Hill Res. on 17th (two - DP) and 21st (four - TD) August and Ingbirchworth Res., two on 21st August (CB).

Golden Plover *Pluvialis apricaria*
Migrant breeder (2). Common passage and winter visitor.

1986 must surely have been one of the worst, if not the worst on record for this species. A very poor breeding season in 1985 followed by another wet, cold spring produced very low breeding numbers yet again. Poor breeding success was reflected in unusually low post-breeding season flocks. The situation locally has also been aggravated by improvement and drainage of land for agricultural purposes in the Whitley Common area where large flocks have traditionally occurred in both spring and autumn. Similar 'improvement' is also being made in the Digley/Issues Road area and doubtless in other localities.

Birds were very scarce in the early months, 40 near Cawthorne on 5th January being the highest count up to mid-March. In the Ingbirchworth/Whitley Common/Broadstones area 97 on 21st, 160 on 29th and 120 on 30th March were the only flocks exceeding fifty. In the same area, maximum totals in April never exceeded 120 birds (on 23rd), with no more than 23 on any date in May. The picture was similarly gloomy at Blackmoorfoot Res. which had birds on only eight dates in March/April with 51 on 11th April the only total in double figures. In fact the only other areas in which flocks of more than ten birds occurred were Issues Road, Digley, with up to 30 on 24th May and 12 on 12th June, and near the Flouch Inn, with c.25 on 10th May.

In the breeding season, records were received for Slaithwaite Moor, Cupwith (a nest with 3 newly hatched chicks on 29th May providing the only confirmed breeding record for the club area this year), Snailson, Tinker Hill, Featherbed Moss, Black Hill, Pots and Pans, Bord Hill and Black Moss. This last site however was deserted by mid-June, birds having moved out perhaps as a result of the cold weather.

Post-breeding season numbers were even lower than in 1985. Blackmoorfoot Res. had birds on only five dates in July, 119 on 27th being the only count exceeding one hundred; in August birds were more frequent but maxima of 160 and 170 on 21st and 24th respectively were the only three-figure counts. Numbers decreased from September onwards apart from 180 on 19th October, with maxima of 57 on 4th September, 93 on 1st November and 60+ on 24th December.

A count of 22 at Broadstones on 4th October represented that area's highest post-breeding number. Only Ringstone Edge with 351 on 17th October and totals exceeding two hundred on two other October dates held any significant numbers, apart from 140 at Crosland Hill on 10th December.

Grey Plover *Pluvialis squatarola*

Rare/scarc passage visitor.

One fed around the sprinklers at Ossatt Spa S.F. from 19th to 21st February (JRS) and singles were heard at Blackmoorfoot Res. on 11th and 13th August (JMP).

Lapwing *Vanellus vanellus*

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

Only small numbers were reported in January, with 30 at Cawthorne Park on 5th, 42 on 17th and 32 on 24th at Ingbirchworth and 25 on 25th at Blackmoorfoot. None were recorded during the hard weather of February, but birds reappeared in small numbers from early March, generally moving in a westerly direction. Blackmoorfoot recorded westerly movement on five days to 14th, maxima 40 on 10th and 14th, with up to 120 thereafter to the end of March. 51 were at Broadstones on 8th March, on which date a pair had returned to their breeding site on Lindley Moor. Also in March 33 were at High Flatts on 9th and 40 at Ingbirchworth on 22nd.

Birds were well distributed by the end of April, but as usual little information was submitted for the breeding season. The tetrad survey revealed confirmed breeding in 16 tetrads, and probable breeding in a further eleven (out of 80) in SE00, SE01, SE10, SE11, and SE21. This is a lower figure than one would have expected and perhaps points to a decline over recent years which a number of experienced observers have suggested and which has been confirmed nationally by the B.T.O.

The post-breeding season build-up was slower than normal. Highest totals in June were 66 at Ingbirchworth on 7th, 40 at Blackmoorfoot on 14th and 214 at Broadstones on 21st. In July Blackmoorfoot had 270 on 1st and Ingbirchworth 135 on 13th. Numbers increased during August, especially at Blackmoorfoot where there was a gradual build-up throughout the month to a peak of 950 on 24th, with 276 at Broadstones on 3rd, 230 and 465 at Ringstone Edge on 9th and 23rd respectively and a movement of 187 to the west at Norland on 19th.

Ringstone Edge had the largest flocks in September with 450 on 12th and 620 on 30th. The September maximum at Blackmoorfoot was very low at 110 on 3rd, but Horbury Wyke had 628 on 18th, fields near Delfer Wood hold 110 on 14th, 80 were at Deer Hill on 27th and 250 were counted near Cop Hill, Slaithwaite.

In October, Ringstone Edge again had the lion's share, peaking at 750 on 10th, although numbers at Blackmoorfoot increased again to 363 on 17th, with 180 on 31st and Broadstones had its highest autumn count of 575 on 8th, when 180 were also at Royd Moor.

Numbers in November showed a considerable decrease, maxima being 250 at Ingbirchworth on 6th, 110 at Blackmoorfoot on 16th, 200 at Crosland Hill, 140 at Broadstones on 22nd and 210 at West Bretton on 28th. During December 70 were at Blackmoorfoot and 150 at Elland G.P. on 7th, 250 at Ingbirchworth and 400 at Crosland Hill on 10th and 300 at Bird's Edge on 13th.



Sanderling *Calidris alba*

Scarce passage visitor

Two birds at Blackmoorfoot Res. on 25th July were in almost full summer plumage (MLD).

Dunlin *Calidris alpina*

Migrant breeder (1-2). Uncommon passage and winter visitor.

One near the Flouch Inn and two flying west at Blackmoorfoot Res. on 11th January, three flying south-east on 15th January and 4 flying west on 8th March at the latter site were the only ones before the spring influx which began with one west over Netherton on 8th April, followed by another single bird with Golden Plovers at Whitley Common on 20th April. Also in April were one or two at Deer Hill Res., one at Blackmoorfoot Res. on 29th and two at Dewsbury S.F. on 30th.

There was no information for the breeding season, except for a complete lack of birds on 20th June at Black Moss. Probably they had moved out because of the cold wet weather, which may also have been influential in discouraging birdwatchers from visiting other known sites on the high moorlands.

Autumn passage commenced with three at Horbury Wyke on 5th July, followed by five on 17th and six on 18th, all adults, probably failed breeders, at Boshaw Whams. Blackmoorfoot Res. had singles on five July dates from 18th, mainly moving west and singles occurred at Ingbirchworth on about eight dates from 23rd July to 18th August.

In August, birds were recorded at Blackmoorfoot on 3rd and 5th (two), Ringstone Edge Res. on 15th (three) and 16th and at Deer Hill Res. on 23rd. One at Ringstone Edge on 18th and four at Dowsbury S.F. on 22nd were the only records in September. All remaining birds were at Blackmoorfoot, which had one on 19th October, one flying west on 28th November and two west on 13th December.

Ruff *Philomachus pugnax*

Scarce passage visitor.

All birds were recorded in autumn as follows:- at Blackmoorfoot Res., one flew west on 1st (MLD), two west on 11th (MLD) and one on 17th August (MS, WHS); one at Horbury Wyke on 27th August and one at Broadstones Res. on 14th September (NAP).

Jack Snipe *Lymnocyptes minimus*

Scarce passage and winter visitor.

Birds occurred at two sites; at Blackmoorfoot Res. one on 6th (MLD) and two on 10th October (MLD, JMP) and in the Hall Dike Valley in December with one on 19th and two on 20th and 31st (DM).

Snipe *Gallinago gallinago*

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

In the breeding season, displaying birds were noted at Blackmoorfoot, Ringstone Edge, Digloy, Issues Road, Scammonden, Holme Moss, Polo Moor, Ingbirchworth, Whitley Common, Broadstones, Snailsden, Tinker Hill and Boshaw Whams, but breeding was confirmed in only two tetrads in SE01.

Birds were reported from seven other localities outside the brooding season. The only double-figure count in the early months was 18 at Ingbirchworth on 23rd February. Numbers were higher in autumn, with respective maxima of 22 at Ingbirchworth on 4th October and 20 on 25th December, 21 at Blackmoorfoot Res. on 8th October, ten at Royd Moor Res. on 26th October, 22 at Horbury Wyke on 14th December and 23 at Hall Dike on 19th December.

Blackmoorfoot Res. had birds in all months except January, March and December but only on 27th September (ten), 8th (21) and 11th (twelve) October did numbers reach double figures, otherwise not more than six recorded on any one day.

Woodcock *Scolopax rusticola*

Resident breeder (2). Uncommon winter visitor.

Birds were observed roding at Stockmoor, Deffer Wood (two), Gunthwaite, Fulshaw (at least three), Swinden Plantation, Bank Wood, Yateholme; some of the localities which had roding birds in 1985 were not visited. Nowhere was breeding confirmed.

Outside the breeding season, birds, mainly singles, were also located at Square Wood Res., Denby Dale, Deffer Wood (two), Springwood, Bretton, Cowcliffe, Horbury, Dean Wood (two), Hall Dike, Drop Clough, Bradley and Sheepridge, where one was killed by flying into a house.

Black-tailed Godwit *Limosa limosa*

Rare passage visitor.

One in full summer plumage left Blackmoorfoot to the south on 23rd July (MLD, DP).

Bar-tailed Godwit *Limosa lapponica*

Scarce passage visitor.

There was just one record of a bird on spring passage at Horbury Wyke on 26th May (JRS).

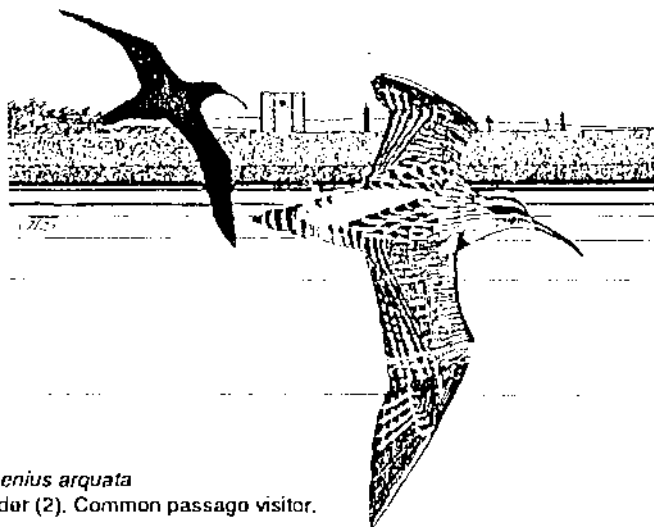
Whimbrel *Numenius phaeopus*

Scarce to uncommon passage visitor.

There were no spring records.

At Blackmoorfoot Res. birds were recorded on 10th (two), 27th (three) and 31st July (two), and in August on 4th (two), 6th (one), 13th (one), 14th (one) and 16th (one), all flying west (MLD, JMP).

Additional birds occurred at Broadstones Res., one south on 12th August (NAP) and at Horbury Wyke on 21st August when four flew west low along the R. Calder (JRS).



Curlew *Numenius arquata*

Migrant breeder (2). Common passage visitor.

In January singles flew over Bradley on 6th and west at Blackmoorfoot Res. on 24th. Spring arrival commenced with singles flying west at Marsden on 7th and 9th March, with two west at Drop Clough and six south at Blackmoorfoot on the latter date. Largest parties reported in March were 9 on 19th and 17 on 21st at Digley and seven at Whitely Common on 22nd and birds were generally distributed by the end of the month.

Breeding was confirmed in six tetrads, localities including Meltham Cop, Spicer House Lane (four young) and Slaithwaite Moor. Singing or displaying birds were noted at many sites and breeding would take place in many of them. The areas involved were Boddingsedge, Bilberry/Digley, Broadstones, Booth Dam, Cupwith, Dear Hill, Denby Dale, Ellentree Brow, Holmo, Houses Hill, Lepton, Rishworth Moor, Scammonden, Scout Dike, Snailsden, Snittlegate, Spicer Hill, Tinker Hill, Whitley Common and Yateholme.

After the breeding season westerly passage, mainly of single birds, at Blackmoorfoot was noted from 20th July, when 20 occurred in two parties of five and 15, to 31st August. The only gatherings of note were ten, comprising two family parties, at Broadstones on 3rd August and 17 adults in Spicer House Lane on 4th July.

The last birds recorded were singles flying north-west at Blackmoorfoot on 13th and at Digley on 31st October.

Redhsank *Tringa totanus*

Migrant breeder (1). Uncommon passage and winter visitor.

Returning birds occurred in March at Blackmoorfoot Res. on 15th and 31st, with another at Whitely Common on the latter date and one at Ingbirchworth Res. on 27th. In April one was at Blackmoorfoot on 5th, one flew north at Ringstone Edge Res. on 12th and two were at Black Moss on 18th.

The only other spring records were of a bird calling at Whitely Common on 17th May, a pair displaying at Horbury Wyke on 15th June and eight at Black Moss on 20th June, but no breeding evidence was obtained.

In autumn, apart from three to four birds present at Horbury Wyke on 15th/16th July and 26th August, all records were of single birds. Blackmoorfoot Res. had birds on eight dates in July and August, with a late individual on 28th November.

The only other reports were of singles at Boshaw Whams on 4th July, Ingbirchworth Res. on 17th July and Deer Hill Res. on 23rd August.

Greenshank *Tringa nebularia*

Uncommon passage visitor.

Apart from two flying west at Blackmoorfoot Res. on 13th July, all records were in August. Two flew south at Langsett on 10th, one at Blackmoorfoot on 12th/13th, three at Ingbirchworth Res. on 13th with up to two present there from 14th to 25th, one south-west over Oakes on 19th, one at Boshaw Whams on 21st and one at Horbury Wyke on 27th.

Green Sandpiper *Tringa ochropus*

Uncommon passage and winter visitor.

All records were in autumn, with none this year in winter.

At Horbury Wyke singles were present on 11th July, 7th and 21st August and 28th September (JRS), one at Boshaw Whams on 28th July (JMP), one flying south at Blackmoorfoot Res. on 9th August (MLD, DMO) and five at Dewsbury S.F. on 28th August (JRS).

Wood Sandpiper *Tringa glareola*

Rare passage visitor.

One was at Horbury Wyke on 6th July (JRS) and one stayed at Broadstones Res. from 8th to 17th September (RW).

Common Sandpiper *Actitis hypoleucos*

Migrant breeder (2).

The only April records were of a single bird at Blackmoorfoot Res. on four dates from 21st, one at Ingbirchworth Res. on 22nd, one at Bilberry Res. on 26th and 27th, with one also at Brownhill Res. on the latter date, and one at Dewsbury S.F. on 30th.

Brooding was proved only at Deer Hill Moss, Ringstone Edge Res. and Scammonden, but other pairs or individuals in the breeding season were located at Blakeley Res., Booth Dam, Bilberry/Digley, Holme Styes, Langsett, March Haigh Res., Rodbrook, Tunnel End Res., Wessenden Hoad and Yatcholme (two pairs).

In autumn, birds also occurred at Blackmoorfoot Res., Boshaw Whams, Dewsbury S.F., Horbury Wyke, Ingbirchworth Res., Royd Moor Res. and Winscar Res. Maxima were five at Blackmoorfoot on 7th July, up to five at Ingbirchworth from 8th July to 11th September, nine at Ringstone Edge on 27th July and four at Scammonden on 12th August.

The pattern of occurrences at Blackmoorfoot followed closely that of 1985, with just one record in June (none in 1985).

The last were three at Dewsbury S.F. on 28th September.

Turnstone *Arenaria interpres*

Scarce passage visitor.

At Blackmoorfoot Res. single adults flew west on 29th July (MLD, TD) and 1st August (MLD), and two immatures were present on 2nd September (MLD).

Three immatures were at Ringstone Edge Res. on 13th August (PJWS).

Mediterranean Gull *Larus melanocephalus*

Rare visitor.

Another good year for this species at Blackmoorfoot Res. In the early months a first-winter bird occurred on 23rd/24th March (MLD, JMP).

In autumn a juvenile moulting into first-winter plumage was present on 27th October (MLD); on 29th and 30th October, two birds were present, a second juvenile (a different bird from that on 27th) moulting to first-winter and a bird in first-winter plumage (MLD, JMP).

Sixteenth to nineteenth records.

Little Gull *Larus minutus*

Scarce passage visitor.

There were two records of birds at Blackmoorfoot Res., both involving two adults which left the reservoir and flew west, on 5th August (JMP, JTS) and on 19th November (MLD, JMP).

Black-headed Gull *Larus ridibundus*

Resident breeder (1). Numerous passage and winter visitor.

Few records were received for this species. Several visited a garden bird-table at Hinchliffe Mill during the hard weather of January/February.

No specific counts of the Blackmoorfoot roost were made prior to June, but on 11th March the combined total for Black-headed and Common Gulls was 5,550. Daytime flocks numbered 56 at Elland G.P. on 22nd March, 50 at Digley on 4th April, 160 on plough at Almondbury on 5th April and 200 on 10th April at Cooper Bridge S.F. A bird with its rump dyed yellow was present on 13th April at Dewsbury S.F., where two pairs which attempted to breed had their nests robbed (JRS). 70 were at this site on 6th July.

After two disastrous years in 1984 and 1985, the breeding site at Black Moss virtually has been deserted. On 20th June only four adults were present. Two nests were visible, one of them containing a single egg. No young were present (MLD).

This lack of breeding success may have been the reason for low numbers of birds in summer at the Blackmoorfoot roost, which had monthly maxima of 118 on 28th June, 820 on 23rd July and 1332 on 3rd August, after which no further counts were made, apart from 4,550 (in combination with Common Gulls) on 31st October. At Ringstone Edge Res., of over 1700 birds present on 13th August, fewer than one hundred were juveniles.

Other counts late in the year were 1500+ at dusk at Ringstone Edge on 30th September, 470 at Ossett Spa S.F. on 26th November and 450, probably roosting, at Ingbirchworth Res. on 31st December.

On 20th December, a total of 53 birds of this species (and two Goldeneye, *Bucephala clangula*) was found dead along the east bank at Blackmoorfoot Res. The cause of death remains unknown, but it is known not to have been botulism (MLD).

Common Gull *Larus canus*

Numerous winter and passage visitor.

Very few records received. Away from Blackmoorfoot Res., reported from only six sites, with the highest count 20 on school playing fields at Almondbury.

At Blackmoorfoot Res., joint counts with Black-headed Gulls yielded 5,550 on 11th March and 4,550 on 31st October. Other specific monthly maxima were six in April, one in May, four in June, 16 in July and 56 in August.

Lesser Black-backed Gull *Larus fuscus*

Common passage and winter visitor.

At the Blackmoorfoot roost numbers in January (five) and February (two) were very low, partly due to the frozen state of the reservoir. Numbers increased through March, with a maximum of 36 on 28th, to peak at 40 on 6th April, before decreasing in May, which had seven or less apart from twelve on 11th. In June, two birds appeared on five dates, before numbers increased gradually through the autumn to a peak of 183 on 16th October. The maxima for July, August and September respectively were 38, 36 and 87. After mid October, numbers decreased gradually to the year-end, with the November maximum of 146 on 12th and in December a maximum of 37 on 10th.

A bird of the race *L.f. fuscus* was present on 7th March, while singles of the race *L.f. intermedius* occurred on 28th March, 14th July, 16th, 22nd and 26th October.

The only other counts to reach double figures were 50 in fields at Ossett on 15th October, at Broadstones Res 64 on 25th October and 40 on 22nd November and 32 on Whitley Common on 9th November. Totals in low single figures were reported from Denby Dale, Skelmanthorpe, Cooper Bridge, Ringstone Edge Res. and Ingbirchworth Res.

Herring Gull *Larus argentatus*

Common passage and winter visitor.

Good numbers were again present in the Blackmoorfoot roost in the winter months at both ends of the year. After 451 on 1st, numbers in January peaked at 531 on 25th. Counts in the following months reduced to 119 on 7th February, 19 on 25th March, 12 on 9th April, with only single individuals in May and August and no records in June or July. After two birds on 30th September, numbers again increased with double figures reached by 31st October (13), a November peak on 21st of 177 and 242 by 25th December. Single birds, of the race *L.a. michahellis* (the yellow-legged race which may soon be accorded specific status) and all adults except where indicated occurred on 16th April (sub-adult) and in October on 4th, 5th (sub-adult), 10th, 11th and 15th.

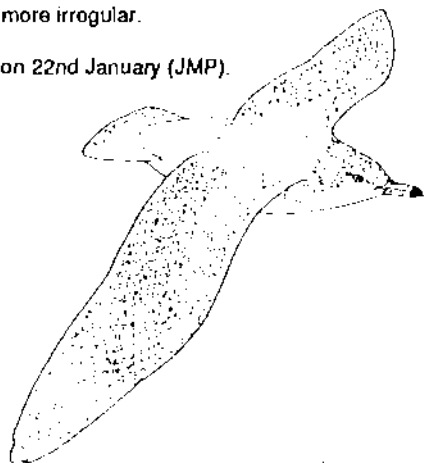
Elsewhere the only significant numbers were reported from Broadstones with in January 81 on 1st, 49 on 17th and 129 on 24th, 31 on 11th November, 48 on 13th December and c. 30 on 14th December which departed in the direction of Blackmoorfoot just before dusk. On 9th November 51 were counted on Whitley Common.

Other reports in single figures only came from Cawthorne Park, Elland G.P., Cooper Bridge and Ingbrichworth Res.

Iceland Gull *Larus glaucoides*

Scarce winter visitor, becoming more irregular.

An adult at Blackmoorfoot Res. on 22nd January (JMP).



Glaucous Gull *Larus hyperboreus*

Scarce winter visitor, becoming more irregular.

One at Blackmoorfoot Res. on 20th December (JMP) and a first-winter individual frequented Ravensthorpe Tip from 26th to 31st December (JRS).

Great Black-backed Gull *Larus marinus*

Common winter visitor.

The maxima at the Blackmoorfoot roost were 229 on 24th January, 34 on 7th February (prior to the freeze), only four in March, two in April, followed by a total absence until 23rd September when one individual occurred. By the end of October numbers had reached eleven, followed by a gradual increase through November, maximum 57 on 21st and into December which had 188 on 25th.

Maxima at Broadstones Res. were 161 on 24th January, and 14 on 1st February in the early months, followed by eight on 31st October, 13 on 22nd November and 57 on 20th December. On 14th December 56 departed towards Blackmoorfoot Res. at 1530 hours.

There were 21 on Whitley Common on 9th November. Smaller numbers, all in single figures, were reported from Brotton Lakes, Cawthorne Park and Skelmanthorpe in January.

Kittiwake *Rissa tridactyla*

Scarce passage visitor.

The exceptional numbers which passed through Blackmoorfoot Res. in 1984 and 1985 were not repeated in 1986.

All the records were from Blackmoorfoot as follows: - two adults on 11th January, six on 2nd February, single adults on 5th and 6th March, two adults on 7th March, three on 21st March; in October two adults on 24th and one adult on 26th, a total of 18 individuals.

Common Tern *Sterna hirundo*

Uncommon passage visitor.

There were only two records of birds specifically identified, namely two at Blackmoorfoot Res. on 20th May and an adult departing to the north at the same locality on 10th August.

Birds not specifically identified, which could have been either this or the next species, occurred at Blackmoorfoot on 11th May (one) and on 10th August (two adults and one immature); two were at Elland G.P. on 23rd May and seven flew west at Marsdon on 9th September.

Arctic Tern *Sterna paradisaea*

Uncommon passage visitor.

There were fewer records this year than in the last two years. In spring one at Ingbirchworth Res. on 6th and two on 20th May, one flying south-west at Blackmoorfoot Res. on 11th May and two at Elland G.P. on 24th May (possibly the two "Comms" of 23rd May).

In autumn at Blackmoorfoot an adult flew west on 26th July and an immature west on 12th August.

Little Tern *Sterna albitrons*

Scarce passage visitor.

One at Blackmoorfoot Res. on 27th May left to the west at 0730hrs. (MLD).

Black Tern *Chlidonias niger*

Scarce passage visitor.

Three led over Ingbirchworth Res. in late afternoon after a thunderstorm on 20th May (NAP) and an adult occurred at Blackmoorfoot Res. on 6th August (DMO, JMP).

Stock Dove *Columba oenas*

Resident breeder (2-3). Common winter visitor.

The species was not so widely reported as in most recent years, records being received from only 15 localities.

Breeding was confirmed in only three tetrads and evidence of probable breeding obtained from an additional eight tetrads. Confirmed breeding occurred near Blackmoorfoot Reservoir, and was considered probable at Bilberry Res. and Winscar Res., with up to five pairs at the latter site.

No flocks were reported at any time during the year; parties of nine near Broadstones Res. and six near Digley in March and of 12 near Royd Moor in June were the largest congregations observed.

Westward movement was noted at Blackmoorfoot in March and from mid-July, mainly July to early September, on 21 dates to 14th December. Single birds predominated, but there were five on 5th September, four on 8th August and three on three other dates.

Woodpigeon *Columba palumbus*

Resident breeder (4). Numerous winter visitor.

A very poor year for records of this species, with none of the large movements typical of 1984 and 1985.

The largest pre-season gatherings reported were 70 at Gunthwaite on 8th March and 40 at Carr Wood on 30th April. At Ossett Spa S.F. 260 passed to the north-east on 8th February and 60 to the north on 11th March. 53 were at Horbury on 3rd June.

Brooding was confirmed in twelve tetrads, considered probable in another twelve and possible in an additional thirteen tetrads.

Post-breeding flocks were few and low in number, maxima reported being 21 at Scammonden on 19th August, 43 at Drop Clough on 20th October and 100 at Gunthwaite on 22nd November.

Collared Dove *Streptopelia decaocto*

Resident breeder (3).

Brooding was confirmed in seven tetrads in the Blackmoorfoot, Fenay Bridge, Dalton, Almondbury and Netherton areas and evidence for probable breeding obtained in eleven additional tetrads. The species was again reported as being regular in the Hinchliff Mill area, where birds were recorded for the first time in 1985, but seen only irregularly at Outlane.

The only sizeable flocks reported were 34 roosting at Almondbury on 18th January and 13 at Upper Denby on 30th October.

Turtle Dove *Streptopelia turtur*

Migrant breeder (1-2).

The first occurred at Blackmoorfoot Res. on 6th May, with the next a singing male at Deffer Wood on 13th May.

In the breeding season birds occurred in five tetrads in SE21, including a singing male in June at Horbury Bridge, two singing males at Deffer Wood in June, and at Horbury Wyke two birds on 22nd May, 5th and 6th June and 21st August, with one at Hoalny, Ossalt on 26th June.

In autumn one flew south at Honley on 11th July, one was at Springwood, Bretton on 18th July and one at Skelmanthorpe on 19th August.

Ring-necked Parakeet *Psittacula krameri*

The bird seen in Almondbury throughout 1985 remained in the area in January and February (SMC, DM) but was not seen subsequently; it may have succumbed during the cold spell.

Cuckoo *Cuculus canorus*

Migrant breeder (2).

The only bird reported in April was at Hall Diko on 26th, with the next at Digley on 1st May; seven localities had birds by the end of the first week of May.

Reported from slightly fewer localities than in previous years and noted as scarce in the east of the area, with no records from Gunthwaite and only one record of a singing male on 28th May from the Coxley Valley.

Most birds were reported from the moorland fringe and the associated cloughs. Three or four birds were present on 15th June in the Little Don Valley, where courtship and mating were observed, the nearest indication to proved breeding which was received.

Barn Owl *Tyto alba*
Resident breeder (1).

After a slightly improved picture last year, 1986 proved to be discouraging.

The only records received were of single birds near Mirfield on 11th February (DMS,JNW), at Skelmanthorpe on 11th and 17th May (DB), the first seen there since 1975/76, near New Mill on 4th July and 23rd August (DM) and at Bentley Springs on 31st October (GBS).

Little Owl *Athene noctua*
Resident breeder (2).

Breeding was confirmed for single pairs in the Longwood Valley, at Lindley Moor, Skelmanthorpe, Crosland Hill and Houses Hill.

Other birds were located in the breeding season at Royd Moor (two areas), Lepton, Colnobridge, Upper Heaton, Drop Clough, Hoyland Bank, Horbury (two areas), near Bretton, Scammonden, Digley, Hindcliffe Mill, near Flockton, Almondbury and Cupwith; additional birds occurred outside the breeding season at Honley, Netherton, Blackmoorfoot, Flush House, Cawthorne Park, Norcroft and Gunthwaite.

Roadside casualties were found on 6th February in Emley village and on 1st June at Springwood, Bretton.

Tawny Owl *Strix aluco*
Resident breeder (2).

Breeding was proved at Bretton Park (four pairs, two successful), Almondbury, Hall Dike, Holme Styes, near Holmfirth and Gunthwaite. The breeding birds survey indicated probable breeding in nine additional tetrads, but observers who have contributed records for the annual report recorded some forty pairs in about thirty localities in the breeding season, with single birds in several other areas.

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

As a result of survey work for the breeding atlas, a breeding pair was found in a previously unsuspected locality in the east of the area.

Negative reports only were received from traditional breeding sites.

Short-eared Owl *Asio flammeus*

Resident /migrant breeder (1) and scarce winter visitor.

In the early part of the year up to four were present in the Snailsden area in January (JMD). One was at Horbury on 26th February (DP).

Birds were present in the breeding season in four moorland areas, at one of which a nest with seven addled eggs was found and at another an adult was seen hunting and carrying food to two young birds. In a third area one hunted over moorland early in June.

In September, single birds were at Holme Styes on 18th, Drop Clough on 28th and Cupwith on 29th.

Swift *Apus apus*

Migrant breeder (2).

The first birds of the year appeared on the rather late date of 5th May, when singles were at Blackmoorfoot Res. and Horbury and at least eight at Ingbirchworth Res. The next were at Almondbury, Crosland Moor and Honley on 8th and birds had arrived at many localities by mid-May. Blackmoorfoot had birds daily from 8th May with maxima of 80 on 20th, 93 on 22nd and 94 on 29th with good numbers continuing into June which had 96 on 3rd and 92 on 7th.

Ingbirchworth Res. regularly had over a hundred in May, with 200 on 13th, 17th and 25th and 300 on 21st, but numbers peaked at over 1000 on 12th June.

Reports during the breeding season were somewhat contradictory. In the Longwood Valley, birds were more frequent and in larger numbers (up to 80 birds) than in 1985, but numbers were considered to be down in Milnsbridge (only c. 20 birds in July), in Aspley and in the Almondbury area; good numbers were also reported from the Denby Dale area. Breeding was proved in twelve tetrads and considered probable in seven others; brood at Aspley, Hall Dike, Almondbury, Marsden and doubtless many other localities.

No sizeable flocks were reported after the breeding season. General departure had taken place by mid-August, but there were several early September records: - one at Marsden on 1st, up to five at Denby Dale and 25 south at Ingbirchworth on 2nd, one flying north-west at Honley on 6th with one at Horbury Wyke on 8th the last.

Kingfisher *Alceda atthis*

Resident breeder (1).

There was a welcome upsurge in sightings this year. Breeding was confirmed for five pairs, one on the R. Colne, one on the R. Don, one on the R. Doarne and two on the Fenay Beck. Three other tetrads recorded probable breeding and birds were also noted in the breeding season at Elland G.P., Aspley, Cawthorne and Gunthwaite.

Outside the breeding season birds were noted on the canal at Linthwaite, Brighouse, Denby Dale, Longwood Res., Folly Hall, Lockwood, Blackmoorfoot Res., Scout Dike Res., Tunnel End Res., Slaithwaite and Milnsbridge. There was a particularly interesting series of records from the Folly Hall/ Kings Mill Lane area near the town centre with sightings in January, June, August, September, October and December and is perhaps an indication of the improvement in the cleanliness of our local waterways.

Green Woodpecker *Picus viridis*

Resident breeder (1-2)

Evidence collected for the breeding survey showed confirmed breeding in only one tetrad (in SE11), probable breeding in four tetrads and possible breeding in five others - a total of only ten tetrads. However, records submitted for the annual report indicate proved breeding also at Springwood (Bretton), Hall Dike and Deffer Wood with other pairs or calling birds present during the breeding season in 17 additional localities. Outside the breeding season, birds were present in a further ten areas.

Much work is obviously needed to establish the true breeding status of this (and many other) species.

Great Spotted Woodpecker *Dendrocopos major*

Resident breeder (2).

Breeding was confirmed at Bretton Park, Coxley Valley, Deffer Wood, Oxspring, Windybank Wood, Booth Wood, Longwood Valley, Royd House Wood, Mollicar Wood, Hall Dike Valley (two pairs), Dean Wood, Spring Wood, Honley Wood, Mag Wood and Lepton Great Wood (two pairs). A newly excavated nest-hole at Hinchliffe Mill was usurped by Starlings.

Birds were present and probably bred at Morton Wood, Holme Styes, North Dean Wood, Cannon Hall, Cawthorne Park, Anchor Wood, Hey Wood, Moll Spring, Drop Clough, Denby Dale, Beaumont Park, Big Valley, Hagg Wood, Almondbury, Springwood (Bretton) and Grimescar.

Fifteen other localities had birds outside the breeding season.

Bird-tables at Almondbury and Edgerton were again visited regularly during the winter, with one also in a Sheepridge garden on 11th February.

Lesser Spotted Woodpecker *Dendrocopos minor*

Resident breeder (1).

Breeding was confirmed at Bretton Lakes (GB,G) and other birds were seen or heard drumming in late April/May in two areas near Almondbury (DS + VAT) and in two localities at Gunthwaite (CB).

Elsewhere there was a good spread of records indicating either a spread of the species, increased observer activity or a greater awareness of the species' calls which often draw attention to it. Singles were at Deffer Wood on 9th February (DB), Netherpton on 8th February (WDH), near Elland on 22nd February (SS), Denby Dale on 3rd March (DB), Springwood (Bretton) on 11th July (GBS), Longwood Valley on 19th July (CCT), Cannon Hall on 4th November (GC, KDR) and at Broad Oak, Gunthwaite on 11th October and 12th December (CB).

An interesting record in view of its proximity to the town centre and the date is of a female found dead outside the School of Music at Huddersfield Technical College, Highfields on 30th June (JW).

Skylark *Alauda arvensis*

Resident breeder (3-4)

On 4th January 26 flew south-south-east at Skelmanthorpe, where the next were three in song on 10th March. On 5th January at least 55 were counted on plough near Cawthorne.

Return to the higher breeding areas took place from early March with one flying west at Crosland Moor and two singing at Honley on 6th and the first of the year at Marsden, 28 on Whitley Common and four moving west at Blackmoorfoot all on 8th March. Later in March, westerly movement was noted on 15th at Blackmoorfoot (eight), on 25th at Almondbury (43) and on 27th at Dalton (16) and good numbers were present at Broadstones on 29th.

The breeding survey showed birds present in 37 tetrads, but breeding was confirmed in only eight of these.

Autumn movement (all of birds moving west) was noted at Blackmoorfoot on 11th October (11) and 2nd November (17), Royd Moor Res. on 28th September (20 in 15 minutes) and Drop Clough, which had 23 on 30th September and 23 again on 26th October. There were two late birds at Blackmoorfoot on 15th November.

Sand Martin *Riparia riparia* Migrant, former breeder.

The slight upturn in the fortunes of this species on a national level in 1986 was reflected locally with birds being recorded on almost twice as many dates as in 1985. All records are listed below.

Birds were late in spring, the earliest being six at Brompton Lakes on 18th April, followed by two at Blackmoorfoot Res. and one at Ossett Spa S.F. on 24th, five at Ingbirchworth Res. on 25th, singles at Bretton and Ingbirchworth on 27th and at Elland G.P. on 29th, with five moving west at Scammonden on 30th April. In May, Ingbirchworth Res. had two on 3rd and one on 5th, while Blackmoorfoot Res. had three on 12th and singles on 16th and 17th.

In autumn Blackmoorfoot had birds on the following dates (singles unless stated): - 12th, 18th, 27th (two) and 28th July (four), 1st (four), 7th (two), 16th (two), 19th and 23rd August (two) and 21st September (two). Six were at Horbury S.F. on 26th August, one at Ingbirchworth Res. on 31st August and one at Brompton Lakes on 3rd September.

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

Birds were very late in arriving, the first not being recorded until 23rd April at Whitley Common, Blackmoorfoot Res. and Ossett Spa S.F. (two). The next were three at Lockwood on 24th, one at Fenay Bridge, one at Denby Dale and three more at Blackmoorfoot on 25th, followed by three at Brompton Lakes and one at Midgley on 26th, 12 at Ingbirchworth Res., one at Cooper Bridge S.F. and two at Honley on 27th. Birds were described as being well established in the Denby Dale and Skelmanthorpe areas by the end of April.

Few large gatherings were reported in May except for 100 on 5th and 300 on 14th at Hope Bank S.F., 150 at Elland G.P. also on 5th and 50 or more on eight dates at Ingbirchworth Res. with maxima there of 180 on 14th and 200 on 21st followed by a rapid dispersal.

In the breeding survey, birds were recorded in 41 tetrads, with breeding proved in 26 of those and probable in ten others. A pair was still feeding young in the nest at Fenay Bridge on the very late date of 15th September.

The largest post-breeding gatherings were 35 at Blackmoorfoot on 6th and 50 at West Slaithwaite on 28th September. Birds had generally departed by the end of September, but there were October records from eight localities including Blackmoorfoot Res. where there were southerly movements of 19 on 2nd and 28 on 3rd, with the last two flying south at Horbury on 14th and one at Marsden on 20th.

House Martin *Delichon urbica*

Migrant breeder (3).

The first arrived at Marsden on 23rd April, followed by one at Lindloy on 24th, singles at Cawthorne and Hinchliffe Mill and two at Skelmanthorpe on 26th, three at Ingbirchworth Res. and three at Bretton Lakes on 27th, with birds reported from three other localities by the month end. The species was well established by 15th May at Donby Dale and Skelmanthorpe.

In Spring the largest gatherings were 30 at Hill Top Res. on 11th, 100 + at Hope Bank S.F. on 14th and 130 at Brockholes S.F. on 18th May, but the majority were reported from Ingbirchworth Res., where there was a gradual build-up through May with 80 on 8th, 120 on 14th, 100 on 15th and 17th and a peak of 500 on 21st then falling to 200 on 24th and 50 at the month-end.

Breeding was confirmed in 19 tetrads and probable in six others.

Blackmoorfoot Res. had monthly maxima of 50 on 31st July, 60 on 16th August and 50 on 7th September. Other high counts in autumn were 120 at Horbury Wyke on 26th August, 200 at Cannon Hall on 12th September and 50 over West Bretton on 17th September.

Birds were noted in October at Blackmoorfoot Res. (2nd and 11th), Almondbury (7th), Honley (9th), Newsome (13th) and Marsden (22nd), but the last were single birds seen at Almondbury and Donby Dale on 9th November.

Tree Pipit *Anthus trivialis*

Migrant breeder (3).

Birds were very late in arriving. The first was one at Drop Clough on 20th April, followed by one at Woodsome Lees on 22nd and at Skelmanthorpe Common, Deffer Wood, Gunthwaite Dam and in the Digley area on 26th.

Fifty singing males were located in May and June, less than half the 1985 total, although no count was received this year from the Langsett/Little Don Valley area which last year held 23 singing males. Twelve singing males were reported from Deffer Wood (where proof of breeding was obtained) and ten from the Hall Dike Valley. Breeding was confirmed only at Deffer Wood and Skelmanthorpe Common, where an adult was carrying food on 12th August.

Blackmoorfoot had single birds on 1st, 17th and 19th August. The last record was of a bird flying south at Ingbirchworth on 7th September.

Meadow Pipit *Anthus pratensis*

Resident brooder (4-5). Partial migrant.

Wintering birds were reported in January from Snittlegate, two on 1st, Skelmanthorpe two on 3rd, Silkstone S.F. at least two on 5th, Crosland Hill two on 17th with 20 at Ossett Spa S.F. on 8th February.

Westward movement and a return to upland areas were noted from mid-March, commencing with eight west at Blackmoorfoot on 15th, 23 at Digley on 21st, on 27th 33 flew west at Dalton and birds had returned to fields near Honley. 73 flew west in ten minutes at Crosland Hill on 28th, 52 were at Digley and 160 in the Ingbirchworth area on 30th and 30 were near Lowerhouses on 31st.

The now familiar spring build-up occurred in the Digley area in April with 110 on 11th, 150 on 19th and 200 on 30th. Also in April, 20+ were at Scammonden on 5th, 30+ at Blackmoorfoot on 1st and 30 at Ossett Spa S.F. on 11th.

Birds were widespread in the breeding season and confirmed breeding was reported from 20 tetrads.

Significant movements were noted at several localities in the autumn; at Blackmoorfoot 74 on 2nd and 27 on 3rd October all moving south, 32 south at Deer Hill on 5th October, at Wholestone Moor 60 west on 7th September, 50 west in three hours on 28th September, 300 west in two and a half hours on 11th October reducing to 25 west in two and a half hours by 20th October, a total of 253 over Almondbury between 19th and 29th September. The highest numbers were recorded at Marsdon with the following totals - 468 west on 30th September, and in October 182 west on 1st, 66 west on 2nd, 38 west on 3rd, 18 west on 5th and 12 west on 26th.

Two were at Royd Moor on 9th November.

Yellow Wagtail *Motacilla flava*

Migrant breeder (1).

There was a slight increase in records on 1985.

Spring birds occurred at Blackmoorfoot Res. on 4th and 13th May (two), with one at Emley Woodhouse on the latter date. Birds were present at Armitage Bridge and in the Hall Dike Valley (DM) in June, but with no proof of breeding, and one was at Boshaw Whams on 28th June.

Two pairs bred at Horbury S.F., rearing seven young (JRS).

In August one was at Broadstones Res. on 6th, two were at Ingbirchworth Res. on 23rd, with one present on 25th. The remaining autumn records all came from Blackmoorfoot as follows: - in August one south on 14th, three on 18th, one south and two grounded on 20th, one on 23rd, one on 30th and 31st followed by the last bird on 8th September.

Grey Wagtail *Motacilla cinerea*

Resident breeder (2).

Once again there was an increase in reported sightings, from 45 localities. The bird which was in an Edgerton garden up to the end of 1985 was seen again on 7th and 8th January.

Breeding was confirmed in nine tetrads, all in SE01 and SE11 and occurred at Thongsbridge, Mirfield, Woodbottom Mills, Tunnel End Res. (two pairs), Eastergate (Marsden), Hill Top Res., Melham Mills, Merrydale Clough, near Sparth Res., Ingbirchworth and Lockwood Brewery, with additional breeding season pairs at nine other sites, while single birds were seen in the breeding season at seven further localities.

In winter up to three birds occurred at Ossett Spa, Horbury and West Bretton Sowago Farms.

Blackmoorfoot Res. had a good series of records, with birds present on 31 dates between 8th July and 2nd November, mainly singles, but three on 31st August. At Wholestone Moor, Outlane, westerly movement was observed on 7th and 28th September (two birds each), with two moving west at Blackmoorfoot on 26th October.

Pied Wagtail *Motacilla alba*
Resident breeder (3).

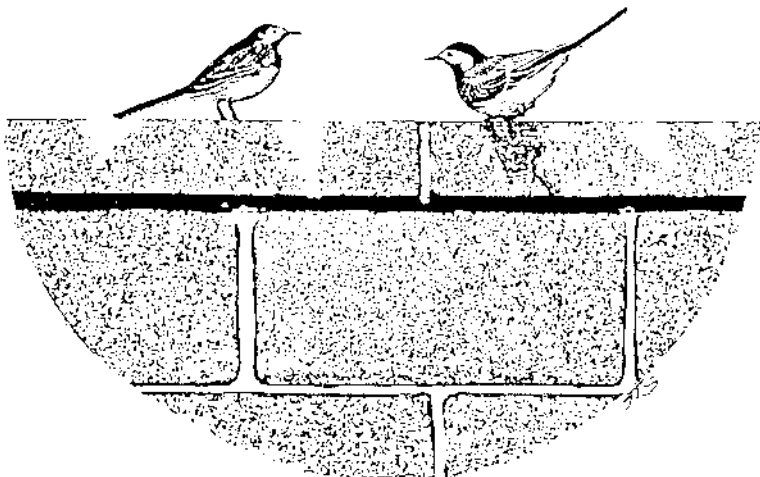
Few counts were made at the Civic Centre roost, the maximum being 150+ on 2nd January while on 13th February 50+ had gathered on the nearby car park prior to roosting.

Early in the year the largest flocks reported were of 12 at Ossett Spa S.F. on 8th February, 30 at Horbury S.F. on 20th February, 16 at Silkstone S.F. on 30th March and 32 at Brockholes S.F. on 12th April.

Presence was reported from 29 tetrads in the breeding season, at 16 of which breeding was confirmed and considered probable in six others. Pairs bred at High Hoyland, Fenay Bridge, Bretton Lakes, Tunnel End, Hall Dike, South Crosland, Armitage Bridge, Almondbury, Primrose Hill, Marsden, Ossett Spa and West Bretton S.F., with other pairs at Cooper Bridge S.F., Dowsbury S.F. and Digley.

The only visible passage noted was 14 birds moving west at Drop Clough on 26th October.

Birds showing characteristics of White Wagtail (*M.a. alba*) were reported from Ossett Spa S.F. on 22nd April and Cawthorne Beck, three on 17th April.



Dipper *Cinclus cinclus*
Resident breeder (2).

Breeding was confirmed from Fenay Beck, Merrydale Clough, Morton Wood, beneath Manchester Road at Slaithwaite, Little Don Valley, Denby Dale, West Vale, Tunnel End, Meltham, Marsden Clough, Blakeley Res., Ryburn Res. and Waterloo, with additional pairs at Hall Dike and Thunderbridge. Reports were not forthcoming from several other known breeding sites. Single birds in the breeding season occurred at Digley Wood Bottom, Hey Clough, Black Brook and the confluence of Holmfirth.

Outside the breeding season, birds were reported from a further eleven localities, including Blackmoorfoot Res., where a single individual was seen on 2nd and 15th November.

Wren *Troglodytes troglodytes*

Resident breeder (3).

As a result of the pilot survey carried out for the breeding atlas, birds were located in 36 tetrads, breeding being confirmed in eight (six of these in SE11), probable in 20 and possible in eight.

Five or six were in song in the Yateholme area on 13th April, and three were singing at Digloy on 3rd May.

Duncock *Prunella modularis*

Resident breeder (3).

Four present in an Oakes garden throughout January and February were regarded as unusual.

The breeding atlas revealed its presence in 40 tetrads, making it the eleventh most widespread breeding species, with confirmed breeding in 11, probable breeding in 21 and possible breeding in eight tetrads.

Robin *Erithacus rubecula*

Resident breeder (4-5).

In the cold spell in January/February four or five regularly fed together in a Hinchliffe Mill garden, with a peak of six/seven on 10th February.

Occurring in 43 tetrads, it was the fifth most widespread breeding species. Breeding was confirmed in 24 and probable in 16 tetrads.

Redstart *Phoenicurus phoenicurus*

Migrant breeder (2).

The first was on 26th April at Bilberry Dam, where the next arrivals, three on 3rd May, also occurred.

Breeding was confirmed at Windybank Wood, Digloy, Hall Dike (two pairs) and Mornton Wood, with additional singing males at Boothroyd Wood, Windybank Wood, Digloy area (three), Booth Wood, Swindon area (seven), Yateholme and Holme Styes. One also occurred at Gunthwaite on 5th May.

After the breeding season birds occurred at Hinchliffe Mill on 3rd August, at Denby Dale from 28th August to 2nd September and at Wholestone Moor on 7th September, the last record for the year. Three were caught and ringed at Blackmoorfoot Res.

Whinchat *Saxicola rubetra*

Migrant breeder (2).

The first was not recorded until 2nd May, when a male was at Snailsden, with the next at Gunthwaite on 4th and Ingbirchworth on 5th May.

There was a considerable decrease in the number of reports received and in the number of birds reported from occupied localities compared with 1985. Breeding was proved at Blakelley Res., Deer Hill Moss, Broadstones, Beddingsedge, Snailsden and the Little Don Valley, with additional pairs at Wessenden, Ellentree Brow and Scammonden (three), and singing males at Booth Dam,

Rishworth Moor and Ingbirchworth. Nono was located at Harden Clough, where two pairs bred in 1985.

The last birds were three on 8th and two on 22nd September at Dewsbury S.F.

Stonechat *Saxicola torquata*

Scarce passage visitor. Occasional breeder(1).

The only record was of a pair with recently fledged juveniles at Ramsden Clough in July (DJH). This is a remarkable reflection of the 1985 breeding record from Snailston.

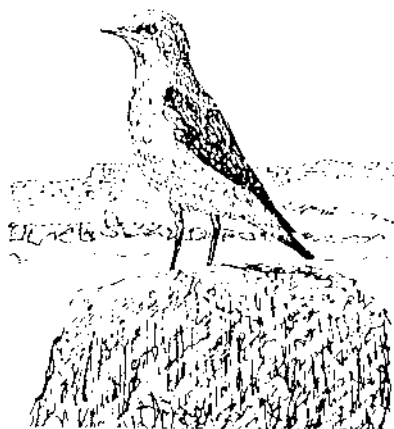
Wheatear *Oenanthe oenanthe*

Migrant breeder (2).

Two at Scammonden on 30th March were the first, followed by three males at Digley and ten males at Whitley Common on 1st April, the birds at the latter locality passing through very quickly. Four males and two females were at Digley on 2nd April and a pair on Rishworth Moor on 5th. No large spring concentrations were reported from the usual favoured areas, eight together near Broadstones Lodge on 18th May being the largest party. A male was on Castle Hill on 1st May.

Breeding was proved in the Doanhead/Scammonden area, Booth Dam Quarry, Rishworth Moor and Deer Hill. The only other localities from which pairs were reported in the breeding season were Lower Owers Green and Buckstones, much fewer than in previous years.

After the end of August the only birds recorded were a male at Drop Clough on 26th September and a female or immature at Cannon Hall on 30th September.



Ring Ousel *Turdus torquatus*

Migrant breeder (2).

The first was a male which flew into the Digley area at 1530 hours on 19th March, the next being a male in the Little Don Valley on 22nd. No further reports were received until 3rd April when three males and a female were at Digley, increasing to eight (five males) on 4th; on 9th there were eight males in the area with a further increase to eleven, again all males, on 11th.

A male feeding on the railway embankment at Horbury Wyke on 25th April (JRS) was unexpected.

Breeding was confirmed only at Blakeley Res. where a bird was carrying food on 15th June. Pairs were located in the Bilberry Res. area (two) and on Rishworth Moor, with additional males at Deer Hill, Harden Clough, Wessenden Head, Rishworth Moor, Booth Dam, Ramsden Clough and above Holmo (two).

A late bird, a male, was at Digley on 8th October although it could equally have been a newly arrived individual as it coincided with an influx of 14 Fieldfares, 41 Redwings, and 34 Bramblings in the same locality (JMP).

Blackbird *Turdus merula*

Resident breeder (5). Numerous winter visitor.

This was the third most widespread breeding species in the tetrad survey, occurring in 49 tetrads with breeding confirmed in 30 of these. Four young fledged from a nest at Almondbury built on the ground in nettles, but a pair which nested behind the White Lion Pub in Cross Church Street was less successful, the female sitting on eggs for nearly four weeks before abandoning them.

No large numbers were reported; in the early months up to twelve in an Oakes garden in January/February and eleven at Outlane on 25th January being the biggest parties. The same Oakes garden held at least 20 on 19th September and there was evidence of an influx on 17th October at Drop Clough, where 35 were present, compared with a more usual figure of about six.

Fieldfare *Turdus pilaris*

Numerous passage and winter visitor. Has bred.

Cold weather in the second half of December meant that very few Fieldfares were in the area at the end of 1985 and this situation became even more noticeable in the first two months of 1986. Birds were reported from fifteen localities in January, mainly in low single figures, with 60 at Ingbirchworth and 30 at Skelmanthorpe on 1st, 200 at Horbury on 4th, 42 at Drop Clough and 20 at Silkstone S.F. on 5th and 38 on 11 at Almondbury.

In February birds were even more difficult to come by, the only reports being two in a garden at Oakes on 8th, three at Gunthwaite on 12th and one feeding on cotoneaster berries in a Skelmanthorpe garden on 22nd.

The onset of milder weather in March heralded a return, but it was not until 19th that any large numbers appeared. On that date 500 were located in Spicer House Lane. Subsequently in March, 450 were at Royd Moor on 22nd, 120 at Almondbury on 25th, 1000 in three flocks in the Ingbirchworth area on 29th and 60 at Sholley on 31st. Good numbers remained in April, with 400 at Ingbirchworth on 1st and 750 there on 4th, when there were also 200 in Digley Bottom, and at Gunthwaite 500 on 6th, 600 on 18th and 350 on 24th. Flocks of up to 50 were noted in five other localities.

Movements of up to 70 birds, mainly on a westerly or southerly track were recorded on ten dates and from half a dozen sites, mainly in the last week of March.

The last spring birds were two in a Hinchliffe Mill garden on 26th April.

The first returning bird in autumn did not appear until 1st October at Whitley Common. The next were 14 at Digley and five flying west at Almondbury on 8th, followed by three at Blackmoorfoot on 10th

October. Numbers remained low throughout October, with Blackmoorfoot recording birds on only five more days, maximum 12 on 20th, and the only large flocks were 130 in Spicer House Lane on 25th, with 45 grounded and 133 flying west at Drop Clough on 26th. Single figures were reported on three other dates.

Numbers increased considerably in November, Blackmoorfoot having birds on eight dates, mainly in the early part of the month, with maxima of 253 moving west and north-west on 2nd, 97 south-west on 15th and 47 north-west on 28th. Elsewhere 36 were at Horbury Wyke on 3rd, 50 at Royd Moor on 9th, at Honley 41 moved west on 6th and 100 south on 11th, when 116 were grounded at Bretton. Later in the month, 200+ were near Netherthong on 15th, 60 at Almondbury on 18th, at Bretton 180 on 24th and 100 on 28th, when 20 flew west over Lindley Moor and on 30th, 30 were at New Hall, Flockton and 30 in Carr Lane, Ingbirchworth.

Very few remained in December, the only reports of grounded birds being twelve at Oakes on 12th, 200 at Spicer House Lane on 26th and up to three on three dates at Blackmoorfoot. The only movements recorded were 64 flying west at Drop Clough on 18th and 12 north-west at Blackmoorfoot on 26th.

Song Thrush *Turdus philomelos* Resident breeder (4).

Recorded in 38 tetrads in the breeding survey, making it the twelfth most widespread species, although breeding was proved in only 18.

No records were received of any flocks, nor was any movement noted through the area.

Two at Blackmoorfoot Res. on 13th December provided an unusual winter record for that locality.

Redwing *Turdus iliacus* Numerous passage and winter visitor.

Birds were very hard to come by in the first two months, a result of the very hard weather. In January, birds were reported from only eight localities, two of these being in gardens; the only double figure totals were 20 at Skelmanthorpe on 1st, 10+ at Bretton Park on 3rd, 18 at Oakes on 18th, 13 at Blackmoorfoot on 25th and at Almondbury 60 on 24th, 10 on 26th and 28 on 28th. Birds were even scarcer in February, being reported from only four sites, three of these being gardens, with a maximum of six at Almondbury on 18th.

There was a slight increase in March, but numbers were still relatively low, most reports coming from the Gunthwaite area, which had 75 on 15th, 90 on 19th and 50 on 29th and 150 flying over on 31st. The only April records were twelve at Dewsbury S.F. on 4th and two at Blackmoorfoot on 18th.

In October, the first returning birds were recorded at Almondbury, where two on 6th and three on 7th all flew west, followed by 41 grounded at Digley on 8th. Blackmoorfoot had birds on nine dates, all single figures apart from a high score of 363 moving west on 18th. Birds were heard passing over Dalton on 13th and six flew over Bretton on 26th, when there was an excellent passage of 228 moving west at Drop Clough, which had 43 grounded birds on 17th.

Numbers in November were also very low. Blackmoorfoot had a total of 33 individuals on four dates, the only other records being nine at Horbury S.F. on 3rd, 80 at Donby Dale on 6th, one at Netherthong on 15th, 40 at Hoylandswaine on 22nd and two at New Hall, Flockton on 30th.

Birds virtually disappeared entirely in December, the only reports coming from Blackmoorfoot which had up to four birds on just three dates and Horbury S.F. where there were eleven on 14th.

Mistle Thrush *Turdus viscivorus*

Resident breeder (3).

The breeding survey showed birds to be present in 35 tetrads, in 20 of which breeding was proved. One of a pair nesting in a garden conifer at Hinchliffe Mill was found dead on 4th May, after which activity ceased.

No movements were observed and the only reports of post-breeding season parties were of 12 and 28 respectively on 25th and 30th September at Scammondon, with eight at Digley on 8th October.

Sedge Warbler *Acrocephalus schoenobaenus*

Migrant breeder (1).

One at Horbury S.F. on 26th April (JRS) was early. Males were singing at Horbury Wyke on 5th and 28th May and 6th July, at Elland G.P. on 24th, when five birds were present, and 29th May and 7th June and one was beside the R. Calder at Healey Mills on 20th June (DP).

In August single birds were caught and ringed on four dates to 31st at Blackmoorfoot and one was in reedbed on the canal below Golcar on 14th September (JP), the latest ever recorded in the area.

Lesser Whitethroat *Sylvia curruca*

Migrant breeder (1).

The first was a singing male at Gunthwaite Dam on 2nd May, followed by singles at Horbury Wyke on 3rd and at Ingbirchworth on 5th.

Breeding occurred at Gunthwaite, where fledged young were seen on 14th June and at Horbury Wyke, where three different males held territories and a family party was seen on 7th July. Adults were feeding at least two recently fledged young in a garden at Dalton on 28th July, two adults having first been seen on 13th June and again on 16th July, but not in between, an indication of how inconspicuous this species can be.

Singing males were also located in May in the Coxley Valley and at Stockmoor Common on 28th and a pair was near Silkstone S.F. on 8th June.

In August singles were at Royd Moor Res. on 17th, Blackmoorfoot Res. on 18th with the last at Dalton on 30th.

Whitethroat *Sylvia communis*

Migrant breeder (1-2).

The first were two at Horbury Wyke on 1st May, with the next a female feeding in rhododendrons at Digley on 3rd May, followed by a male at Silkstone S.F. on 5th, one at Elland G.P. on 13th and one at Clayton West on 18th.

Breeding was confirmed only at Horbury Wyke and near Bretton roundabout, but the number of singing males showed a welcome increase over recent years. Except for four in the area of Elland

G.P., all were in the eastern part of the club area. Nineteen singing males were located, but although breeding was considered probable in six tetrads, many birds sang only briefly and may have moved out of the area.

In autumn one appeared in a garden at Wooldale on 23rd August, one at Skulmanthorpe on 24th August, and one at Bretton Park on 31st August. Dewsbury S.F. had five on 28th August and the last of the year on 1st September.

Garden Warbler *Sylvia borin*
Migrant breeder (2).

The first was at Bretton Park on 6th May, followed by singles singing at Stockmoor Common and in the centre of Holmfirth on 10th, at Deffer Wood on 11th and several other sites having birds at the end of the month.

There was a reduction in the number of singing males compared with 1985. Birds were reported in the breeding season from only 13 localities and totalled 22 singing males including four each at Deffer Wood and in the Silkstone area and three at Bretton Park. Breeding was proved only at the second of these localities. With the exception of one singing regularly in May at Digloy Bottom and one in the Little Don Valley on 15th June all records were from the eastern part of the area in SE20 and SE21.

At Blackmoorfoot Res. five were caught and ringed between 20th July and 16th August, the last of which stayed until 24th August, the latest record for the year.

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

On 1st January, two males and a female frequented a Sheepridge garden, whilst other wintering birds were noted in gardens at Meltham on 2nd February (male), Ossett on 9th February (male) and Almondbury on 21st January (female), 22nd February (male) and regularly in March (male and female).

Spring birds were late in arriving, the first being two at Horbury Wyke on 26th April, with a further two at Deffer Wood and four or five at Bretton Lakes on 27th April. The next were not recorded until 3rd May at Cawthorne and 11th May at Beaumont Park and Lockwood Cemetery. Arrivals continued to be protracted, the first birds at many localities not being recorded until the last week of May or even into June.

Birds were reported from 31 localities, with a total of 56 singing males, including nine at Deffer Wood, six at Bretton Lakes and three at Windybank Wood, only half the total 1985 score. Breeding was confirmed at Longwood, Fenay Bridge, Almondbury and Horbury Wyke and considered probable in 16 other tetrads.

Birds occurred at Blackmoorfoot Res on four dates in July and August. The last were two in the Longwood Valley on 13th and a male at Golcar on 14th September; these were the only records after the end of August.

Wood Warbler *Phylloscopus sibilatrix*
Migrant breeder (1-2).

The first arrival on 3rd May at Honley Wood was a week earlier than the next individuals at

Windybank Wood and Doffler Wood (two) on 10th. These were followed by singing males at Beaumont Park and Gregory Spring Wood on 11th May, Horbury on 12th May, Denby Dale on 14th May and Hey Wood on 17th May.

Thirty-three singing males were located at 26 sites, a threefold increase on 1985. Many birds however sang on only one or two dates and did not stay.

Breeding was proved at Windybank Wood, Toby Wood (Denby Dale), Hagg Wood, North Doan Wood and Doffler Wood, where one pair was successful but a second nest containing seven young was predated (BBSG).

None was reported after the end of June.



Chiffchaff *Phylloscopus collybita*
Migrant breeder (2).

The first was a bird recorded in a Lindloy Moor garden on 31st March, but the next arrivals were widely separated in date and locality: - 4th April at Elland G.P., 13th April at Bretton Lakes (two) and 22nd April at Horbury Wyke.

Singing males were located in 13 areas and totalled 24, including five at Doffler Wood and Bretton Lakes, and three in the Hall Dike Valley, a situation very similar to last year. Breeding however was confirmed in only one locality in SE11, and probable in eleven other tetrads. Two birds were still singing at Doffler Wood on 14th September, when eight were present.

Blackmoorfoot Res. had records on five dates, of which two were in spring and three in autumn, including one on 8th October.

Late birds were recorded at Denby Dale on 10th November (DB) and at Golcar on 7th December (CH).

Willow Warbler *Phylloscopus trochilus*
Migrant breeder (3-4).

One at Linthwaite on 11th April was over a week earlier than the next arrivals at Beaumont Park on 20th and at Bradley and Gunthwaite Dam on 21st. General arrival occurred from 25th and especially

on 26th April, when the following counts of singing birds were made: - 17 at Skelmanthorpe, 12+ at Hall Diko, six at Bretton Lakes, 14 at Deffor Wood and six at Horbury. A total of about two hundred singing males was reported in the Club area, brooding was confirmed in 18 tetrads and evidence of probable breeding obtained in 21 others.

J.E. Dalo, who has made regular counts in his garden at Lindley Moor reported very few this year, with a maximum of only three on 13th August. This was in direct contrast to the situation at Blackmoorfoot Res. which had a spectacular year. The 41 birds caught on 31st July was an all-time record, but only briefly until 3rd August, when this total was exceeded by one. Other high ringing totals were 30 on 1st and 33 on 5th August (see also Ringing Report). One can probably assume from those figures that birds had a very successful breeding season either locally or further north.

Birds were present in September at six sites, with the last at Blackmoorfoot Res. on 1st October, only the second October record for that locality and a repeat of 1985.

Goldcrest *Regulus regulus*

Resident breeder (2). Common passage visitor.

There were very few reports this year, from only eight localities. Not a single bird was recorded at Blackmoorfoot, the first blank year there since 1968.

The largest parties reported anywhere were up to six at Deffor Wood in February/March, five at Bretton Lakes on 15th February and six at North Dean Wood on 11th October.

Nowhere was breeding confirmed, evidence of probable breeding was obtained in only six tetrads and included two singing males at Bretton Lakes in May/June.

Spotted Flycatcher *Muscicapa striata*

Migrant breeder (2-3).

The first was reported from Denby Dale on 12th May, followed by singles at Ingbirchworth on 13th, at Gunthwaite Dam and two other sites near Denby Dale on 15th and Windybank Wood on 19th May. No more were reported until 23rd May.

Breeding season reports were few, with only 13 pairs reported from eleven sites, a two-thirds reduction on the 1985 situation. Breeding was confirmed in five tetrads and probable breeding evidence obtained in five others.

Blackmoorfoot Res. had birds on five dates.

In a party of six birds at Penistone on 15th August, one was pure white, and a second was very pale with only a little colour on the breast. A pure white bird was present in the same locality in 1985.

The last birds reported were at Blackmoorfoot on 19th August and Cannon Hall on 21st September.

Pied Flycatcher *Ficedula hypoleuca*

Migrant breeder (1).

A male arrived at Whitley Willows on 6th May, but stayed for only a few days (MM, BA), whilst a singing male in Molly Carr Wood on 24th and 28th May could not be located on 1st June or subsequent visits (DS & VAI). A third singing male arrived at Penistone on 11th May and remained for live weeks, regularly visiting a nest box, but unfortunately no female appeared (Mrs M. Marsh).

At Windybank Wood where breeding occurred in 1984, but not in 1985, a male was first located on 10th May (D.Man). On 16th May this (apparently first-summer) bird was joined by a female with a second female present on 17th, showing interest in a new nest site. By 26th May a second male, an adult, had appeared and interest moved to the old nest site used in 1984. One of the females disappeared, but both males were present until at least 8th June. The adult male paired with the remaining female and were feeding young in the nest on 22nd June (JMP).

Long-tailed Tit *Aegithalos caudatus*

Resident breeder (2).

After low numbers at the end of 1985, only small parties were recorded from ten localities in the early part of the year, except for 40 in the Coxley Valley on 5th January. Bretton Lakes held parties of eight and 20 also on 5th January, with ten and 20 on 16th February; Dean Wood had nine on 11th January and ten on 16th March, otherwise no flocks exceeding seven birds were reported.

Breeding was confirmed at Bretton Lakes, Hall Dike (two pairs), Lockwood and Fenay Bridge with other pairs in the breeding season at Moreton Wood, Doan Wood, Lepton Great Wood, Coxley Valley, Deffer Wood, Carr Wood, Gunthwaite Dam, Horbury (two pairs), Hoyland Bank and Hooley Mills.

After the breeding season, birds were reported from only six localities, with maxima of 16 at Dogley S.F. on 12th October, ten to twelve at Bretton Lakes on 22nd December, otherwise less than seven.

Willow Tit *Parus montanus*

Resident breeder (2).

After a slight resurgence in 1985, the situation seems to have deteriorated again for this species. In the early months recorded from only seven localities, including gardens at Sheepridge and Bradley, with others at Bretton Lakes, Cawthorn Park, Elland G.P. and the Langsett area.

Breeding was proved only at Hall Dike, with other pairs present in the Coxley Valley and at Horbury Wyke.

Post-breeding records came from Almondbury (two gardens), Deffer Wood, Ingbirchworth, Yateholme, Bradley, Skelmanthorpe (five birds on 17th August), Blacker Wood, Scout Dike (two birds on three dates) and Bretton Lakes on three dates and including a party of eight birds on 12th November (DP).

One was caught and ringed at Blackmoorfoot on 28th July.

Coal Tit *Parus ater*

Resident breeder (3).

This remains a much under-recorded species, despite field work for the tetrad atlas. Breeding was confirmed at only six localities - Bretton Lakes, Cawthorn Park, Hoyland Bank, Digloy, Yateholme and the Longwood Valley, with other pairs reported from nine additional tetrads.

Eleven were counted in the Little Don Valley on 26th January, but the only parties reported were eight in North Dean Wood on 22nd November and at least 70 at Yateholme on 14th December (SMD).

Blue Tit *Parus caeruleus*

Resident breeder (5).

Up to 12 were in a Sheepridge garden in the early months and large numbers were on garden feeders in Almondbury in snow showers on 6th April.

Breeding was confirmed in 35 tetrads and probable in six others making it the fourth most widely distributed species in the area.

Evidence of a successful breeding season may be deduced from the record capture of 63 birds at Blackmoorfoot Res. on 19th July and a flock of 85 in North Dean Wood on 16th August. Few other reports were received.

Great Tit *Parus major*

Resident breeder (4).

At least 40 were present in several small flocks at Bretton Park on 5th January. Up to nine were present in a garden at Sheepridge in the early months, but there were no other reports in the early winter period.

Breeding was confirmed in 20 tetrads and probable in a further seven, making this the 19th most widespread species in the area. An ambitious pair, apparently suffering from delusions of grandeur, bred successfully in a nest box erected for Tawny Owls in Hugset Wood at the edge of the Club area (BBSG).

The only party reported in the later months was 56 in North Dean Wood on 11th October.

Nuthatch *Sitta europaea*

Resident breeder (1).

One was feeding on peanuts on 1st February in a garden at Sheepridge (JER), a new area for the species.

A pair bred again at Beaumont Park in the same site as in 1985 (D. Man). Only one bird was seen, on 31st March, at Big Valley, Netherton where a pair bred last year (D. Man).

Single birds were seen at Bretton Park in at least three sites on five dates from 26th January to 22nd December (DB, DS & VAI, GK, D. Man, HQ). The presence of three birds in a woodland at Denby Dale on 27th October (DB) may indicate an as yet undiscovered breeding site in the locality. Singles were seen at the same site on 29th October and 12th November.

Treecreeper *Corthyia familiaris*

Resident breeder (2-3).

Reports were similar in number to last year, coming from 23 localities. Breeding was proved at Woodsome Loos, Beaumont Park and Fenay Bridge (two sites), with pairs or singing males recorded at Farnley Tyas, Denby Dale, Bretton Park, Digley, Thongsbridge and Gunthwaite Dam. By the end of the current tetrad survey a more realistic picture of distribution will hopefully have emerged.

One on the canal near Marsden on 3rd August was the observer's first sighting of the species in that area (MS).

One was caught at Blackmoorfoot Res. on 10th August.

Jay *Garrulus glandarius*
Resident breeder (2).

Birds were reported from ten localities in the early months, with maxima of five plus at Bretton Park on 5th January, seven at Deighton and four at Denby Dale on 27th January. In February a bird visited a garden feeder at Hinchliffe Mill, swinging tit-like on the nut holder. One flew west over Crosland Moor on 16th March.

Breeding was confirmed in eight tetrads, including sites at Cumberworth, Coxley Valley, Longwood Valley, Almondbury, Skelmanthorpe and Edgerton; at the last locality a family party of five birds regularly visited the observer's garden from 19th July into August (NL).

Reports in the autumn were slightly more frequent with maxima of four at Digley on 8th October, eight at Cromwell Bottom on 18th October, eight at Cannon Hall on 4th November and five-plus in Daffer Wood on 18th and 20th November.

Three visited a garden oak in Almondbury from 9th to the end of October, with one on 17th November, by which date all the acorns had been stripped.

Magpie *Pica pica*
Resident breeder (4).

On 1st January 34 were observed feeding together at Scout Dike and on 26th January a pre-roost gathering of 70 was near the milk farm at Outlane. There was a loose flock of 23 birds at Elland G.P. on 22nd March, while the same date provided the monthly maximum of 41 at Blackmoorfoot, where the April maximum was 42 on 11th, both relatively low totals.

A dead Magpie at Winscar on 1st March was the only birds of any species, dead or alive, seen in the area.

The tetrad survey showed the species to be present in 51 tetrads, making it along with Starling the most widespread species in the area.

Jackdaw *Corvus monedula*
Resident breeder (4).

Breeding was confirmed in 14 tetrads and probable in two others. Apart from the records of breeding in connection with the tetrad survey, the only report received of this species was from Blackmoorfoot Res. where 169 counted passing over to the south-west to roost on 11th January constituted the highest ever total for the site.

Rook *Corvus frugilegus*
Resident breeder (5).

Despite the existence in 1983 of 90 rookeries, field work for the tetrad survey this year resulted in

the reporting of rookeries in only eight tetrads. The only count received was for the colony at Cooper Bridge, where there were at least 46 occupied nests.

At Hinchliffe Mill, this species was a garden visitor with the usual Jackdaws, but not during the spell of severe weather.

The only report of a flock was c.400 at Farnley on 5th October.

Corrion Crow *Corvus corone*
Resident breeder (3).

The apparent increase in the numbers of this species has received comment in previous annual reports and the results of the pilot breeding survey have confirmed this observation. Breeding was confirmed in 23 tetrads, probable in six and possible in 14 others, a total of 43 tetrads, making it the fifth (equal with House Sparrow and Chaffinch) most widespread breeding species in the area.

In very cold weather on 18th January, the roost in the Longwood Valley held a record total of 415 birds; on 25th January 92 individuals were feeding in fields at the Outlane milk farm.

Starling *Sturnus vulgaris*
Resident breeder (5).

The Town Centre roost held more than ten thousand birds on 2nd January (SMC). In the Ingbirchworth area several flocks of up to 500 birds were present on 22nd March and about two thousand were at Whitley Common on 1st April.

Results of the breeding survey showed this to be the most widespread species, being confirmed in 41 and present in a total of 51 tetrads.

Blackmoorfoot Res. had 800 birds roosting in willows in mid June, increasing to 2000 on 21st June.

House Sparrow *Passer domesticus*
Resident breeder (5).

The only records received were those in connection with the tetrad survey. The species was recorded in 43 tetrads, making it fifth equal with Chaffinch and Corrion Crow. Breeding was confirmed in 32 tetrads, placing the species the third most widely distributed when confirmation of breeding is considered.

Tree Sparrow *Passer montanus*
Resident breeder (2-3).

Compared with last year, the number of localities from which reports of this species were received increased slightly, but not significantly, from twelve to fifteen; in the main, counts were only of low single figures. Twenty near Ingbirchworth on 1st April was by far the highest total reported in the early months, no other locality having more than three birds.

Breeding occurred at Blackmoorfoot, Almondbury, Hill Top (Slaitwhaite), Hall Dike and Honley Wood, with a pair at a regular breeding site at North Dean Wood on 26th January.

As a result of high water levels, conditions were unsuitable for flocking at Blackmoorfoot Res. where the maximum count was a mere four in August, although two on 10th December provided an unusual winter record there.

There were reports from only five localities after the breeding season, of five or fewer birds, except for ten on Flockton Moor on 10th December.

It would appear that the status of this species is ready for review and that it needs to be carefully monitored.

Chaffinch *Fringilla coelebs*

Resident breeder (4). Numerous winter visitor.

Numbers in the early months were very low, maxima being 40 at Silkstone S.F. on 5th January and 63 flying south at Almondbury on 11th February. No other flocks were reported, but during the spell of severe weather up to 15 frequented a garden at Oakes, with smaller numbers in other areas.

For the breeding atlas, birds were reported from 43 tetrads, making this the fifth (equal with House Sparrow and Carrion Crow) most widespread, but it is surprising perhaps that with such a conspicuous species breeding was confirmed in only ten tetrads, making it only equal twentieth in the confirmed breeding list.

In autumn at Drop Clough a very large movement of birds was noted from 18th to the end of October, peaking at 1,138, 1,762, and 1,262 birds all moving west on respectively 26th, 27th and 28th. The total number of birds involved throughout the autumn was 4,331 (DM). Those movements were reflected on fewer dates and on a much smaller scale numerically at Blackmoorfoot Res., where 407 passed west on 18th and 75 south on 26th October.

Grounded birds in the autumn and winter were few. At Digley 25 on 8th October were probable new arrivals, being in the company of Redwings, Fieldfares and Bramblings amongst others. Largest numbers reported were in November, 50 at Bretton on 9th, 50 at Ingbirchworth on 22nd and 20 at Scout Dike on 30th, with 25 at Royd Moor on 14th December.

Brambling *Fringilla montifringilla*

Uncommon to common winter visitor.

In the early months birds were extremely scarce; in January birds were located only at Blackmoorfoot (a singleton on 25th) and at Flush House, Digley, where birds also occurred in February as well as in gardens at Almondbury and Penistone. The only March record was one in a Hinchliffe Mill garden on 24th and the last of the spring were four at Deighton and three at Royd Moor Res. respectively on 9th and 27th April.

The first returning bird was logged at Blackmoorfoot Res. on 27th September, followed by nine passing west at Drop Clough on 30th. In October one had reached Ingbirchworth by 4th and 34 were at Digley on 8th.

Several flocks were in the Ingbirchworth/Royd Moor/Broadstones area from the last week of November and it seems likely that there was some interchange of birds between different sites. At Ingbirchworth numbers increased from 300 on 23rd to 500 on 27th November, decreasing to c.50 by the year end. Royd Moor held up to 300 in late November reducing to 60 on 14th December whilst the Broadstones maximum of 200 was reached on 14th December. Numbers elsewhere were very much lower, with 40 at Wholestone Moor on 20th October and up to 30 at Yateholme on 8th November the largest number reported.

Blackmoorfoot had birds on twelve dates, with movements of 22 west on 18th and 26 south on 26th October, otherwise never more than two birds.

Greenfinch *Carduelis chloris*
Resident breeder (4).

Few reports were received in the first winter period. Blackmoorfoot Res. had a January maximum of 37 on 31st and 19 were caught and ringed on 15th March. Apart from 40 at Gunthwaite on 4th March, the largest numbers reported were up to 16 in a garden at Shoopridge and up to 12 in an Oakes garden during the cold spell.

Atlas reports showed birds to be present in 21 tetrads only, with confirmed brooding in only six of these. Based on records for this one year therefore, Greenfinch is less widespread as a breeding species than Blackcap, Linnet and Kestrel.

Rather more reports were received after the breeding season, the largest numbers being 200 respectively at Scout Dike and Broadstones on 30th November and 13th December; elsewhere 50 were at Royd Moor on 5th October, 45 at Ingbirchworth on 14th December, 50 in Annat Royd Lane on 20th December. At Blackmoorfoot the maximum ringing total was 34 on 14th December.

Goldfinch *Carduelis carduelis*
Resident breeder (2-3).

Birds were reported in small numbers from a dozen areas in the early months, with maxima of 12 at Elland G.P. on 8th February and six at Lower Cumberworth on 19th March.

Confirmed breeding was reported from only three tetrads with probable breeding in six others, including a male singing near the Huddersfield Civic Centre in June and July.

D. Butterfield reports an increase in the Denby Dale, Skelmanthorpe and Cumberworth Common areas with several parties of between twenty and forty being encountered regularly. Elsewhere however, although birds were quite widespread, numbers were low with maxima of five at Ringstone Edge on 7th September, eight at Crosland Moor on 8th October and 16 at Lindley Moor on 3rd November.

Blackmoorfoot Res. had birds on only seven dates from 1st October to 21st November, with no significant movements noted, but 45 flew west at Wholstone Moor on 11th October.

Siskin *Carduelis spinus*
Resident breeder (1). Uncommon winter visitor.

Early in the year reports were received from 15 localities. Bretton Park had up to 70 in January and February and Gunthwaite Dam had up to 30 from 1st January to 31st March. Elsewhere 30 were at Langsett and seven at Silkstone S.F. on 1st January, 30 in the Coxley Valley on 4th and 20 on 26th when 20 were also in alders beside the canal at Golcar. Also in January ten were at Elland G.P. on 21st, with single figures at Kirkheaton, Linthwaite and Bradley, where birds remained to 10th April and peaked at eight or nine on 14th March.

At Cawthorne, 30 were found on 7th February and up to eight were present in a Sheepridge garden on many dates in February building up to a remarkable peak of 32 on 16th March (JER). Single figures also occurred in February/March at Meltham, Penistone, Almondbury and remained into April at Almondbury, Outlane, Hindcliffe Mill and Thunderbridge, the majority in gardens.

Breeding was not confirmed anywhere, but considered probable in one tetrad in SE10, with single birds noted in just two other localities in June/July.

Birds began to reappear from late September, with 15 at Ingbirchworth and one at Blackmoorfoot on 27th and six at Bretton Lakes on 30th. In October birds were reported from six localities, with maxima of 19 at Digley on 8th and 12 passing west over Wholestone Moor on 11th, when 11 also flew south at Blackmoorfoot; this last site recorded birds on ten dates in the month, mainly in single figures with further southerly movement also noted on 1st (three), 2nd (17) and 3rd (six).

As the year progressed birds became very scarce, with reports from only four localities in November/December with ten at Deffer Wood on 15th November the only double figure total.

Linnet *Carduelis cannabís*

Resident brooder (4). Partial migrant.

Midwinter records are quite unusual, making ten at Kirkheaton on 25th January noteworthy (RDW). The next was a party of six at Bradloy on 7th March, with three on 10th and seven on 11th, followed by one at Honley on 19th and four at Castle Hill on 30th. It would appear that birds were late in returning to breeding areas, with just one at Ingbirchworth on 13th April and a flock of 200 at Farnley Tyas on 22nd. Most observers did not report birds in territory until May.

Breeding was confirmed in ten tetrads and evidence of probable breeding obtained in 13 others.

The largest post-breeding flock reported was 110 at Honley on 9th September, with smaller numbers during the month at Gunthwaite, 40 on 14th, Spicer House Lane 35 and Hinchliffe Mill 50 both on 27th and 55 at Ingbirchworth on 28th. In October numbers in the Ingbirchworth area had decreased to 20 by 26th, 50 flew west over Wholestone Moor on 11th and a peak of 47 was reached at Drop Clough on 12th. In addition three flew south on 26th at Blackmoorfoot, which provided the only record after the end of October, a single bird on 20th December, a very unusual winter record.

Twite *Carduelis flavirostris*

Resident and partial migrant breeder (2-3).

The first returning birds were three flying west at Blackmoorfoot Res. on 16th March, followed by four west at Digley on 21st. A flock of 60/70 in the Broadstones area had decreased to 20 by 1st April. There was a further movement of four birds moving west at Blackmoorfoot on 30th March. The usual increase in records in April did not materialise this year, with additional reports only from Snailsden on 4th and 14 at Deer Hill on 21st.

Atlas work confirmed breeding in only two tetrads, but in the brooding season, pairs were reported from Digley, Deer Hill Moss, Rishworth Moor, Booth Dam Quarry, Broadstones, Whitby Common, Tinker Hill, White Gate, Snailsden and Buckstones, with further sightings at Deer Hill, Royd Edge, Blakely Res., Redbrook Clough, Tunnel End and Slaithwaite Moor.

High water levels at Blackmoorfoot Res. precluded the build up there of a feeding flock, but southerly or westerly movement was noted on three dates in October, with maxima of 57 south on 5th (when 38 were also counted moving south at Deer Hill) and 23 west on 18th.

Post-breeding parties/flocks were recorded at nine localities, with maxima of 80 at Broadstones on 21st August (with 50 on 15th October), 15 at Scammonden on 31st August, in September 25 on 4th at Pleasant Pastures, 20 at Digley on 19th, 110 at Slaithwaite Moor on 27th and 23 at Cop Hill, Slaithwaite on 30th. At Flight Hill, six remained on the late date of 9th November.

Redpoll *Carduelis flammea*

Resident breeder (2). Uncommon winter visitor.

In the early months birds were reported singly from only two sites.

Breeding was proved in only three tetrads and probable evidence collected in a further eight.

No post breeding flocks of any size were reported, the maximum being a mere nine at Blackmoorfoot Res. on 8th October with eight at Digley on the same date, followed by five at Horbury Wyke on 14th December. Blackmoorfoot recorded birds on 17 dates in the second half of the year, which included southerly movement of up to four birds on three dates in October, two of these coinciding with heavy Chaffinch passage. Four flew west at Wholesome Moor on 11th October.

This must represent the worst situation for the species for many years.

Crossbill *Loxia curvirostra*

Resident breeder (1). Uncommon passage visitor.

Birds were very scarce this year, no flocks being reported.

At Digley a male and female were present on 3rd (SC), two males and a female on 9th April (JMP) and at least two pairs on 13th May (SW). A party (?family) were in Deffer Wood on 27th April (BA, GBS) and four were present on 13th July (JED). At least three birds were calling at Holme Styes on 29th June (JMP).

The only other record was of a bird passing west at Blackmoorfoot Res. on 18th October (MLD).

Bullfinch *Pyrrhula pyrrhula*

Resident breeder (2).

The general situation appears to be very similar to last year, with birds being reported from approximately 30 localities, from about half of these during the breeding season.

Breeding was proved at Hall Dike, Drop Clough, Dean Wood, Morton Wood, Almondbury, Skelmanthorpe, Blackmoorfoot and Scammonden. Additional pairs were reported from Bretton Park, Digley, Horbury Wyke and Elland (two each), Gawthorpe Green and Deffer (up to five).

The largest parties reported were all in October; at Drop Clough eight on 15th and 12 on 17th, with at least eight at Deffer Wood on 11th.

Hawfinch *Coccothraustes coccothraustes*

Rare visitor

Birds were yet again reported from the usual site at Cannon Hall late in the year, with four on 4th November and two on 14th December (GC, KOR).

The remaining records all came from Bretton Lakes where birds were observed on 5th January (JMD et al), 6th May (two - GBS), 28th September (DB), 5th October (DB) and 20th November, two in a sweet chestnut (NL).

Snow Bunting *Plectrophenax nivalis*

Rare winter visitor.

In January two females fed on the ground in the Wessenden Valley on 2nd (WSMcC) and one, probably a male, was at Hingcliff Scar, near the Little Don Valley on 26th (JED).

A male was at Whitley Common on 8th and the morning of 9th November (JDC, NAP).

Yellowhammer *Emberiza citrinella*

Resident breeder (3)

All the winter flocks of birds reported related to January, with at least 15 at Cawthorne and 20 at Silkstone S.F. on 5th and 21 in the Coxley Valley on 26th.

A bird which flew south on 29th March was the first recorded since 1980 at Blackmoorfoot Res., which also had an autumn bird flying west on 18th October.

Breeding was proved at Lepton Great Wood, Hall Dike, Honley Wood, Spring Wood, Farnley Lane, Longwood Valley and at Falhouse Beck near Grango Moor. Probable breeding was reported from eleven additional tetrads; several sites, for example, Royd Moor with five, held several singing males, and many others doubtless went unreported.

After the breeding season, six at Deller Wood on 31st December was the largest party reported.

Reed Bunting *Emberiza schoeniclus*

Resident breeder (2).

Singles at Scout Dike Res. on 1st January, in a Honley garden on 7th February and at Deighton on 20th and 28th February were the only birds reported apart from a remarkable series of records from a garden on the Moltham road at Marsden. On 12th January, two males were present, increasing on 8th March to five males which were then present on several dates, being joined occasionally by two females, giving a total of at least seven individuals.

Breeding was confirmed in five tetrads, with singing males heard from as early as 12th March at Royd Moor (two), Boshaw Whams, Scammondon (two), Broadstones, Broadstones Lodge, Holme, Ingbirchworth (two), Beddingsedge, Brow Grains Hill, Elland G.P. (two), Elland Power Station (two), Blackmoorfoot, Tunnel End, Gunthwaite Dam and Hall Dike (two). Not all were adjacent to water e.g. one in gorse scrub at Broadstones Lodge.

Blackmoorfoot Res. had birds on four dates in March, two in April, regularly during May, June and July, on three dates in August, fifteen in September, 24 in October and five in November, mainly singles, with a maximum of three on 8th October.

Few were reported following the end of the breeding season, and apart from the Blackmoorfoot records, none after early October except for two males in the Marsden garden regularly from 8th to 31st December.

Corn Bunting *Miliaria calandra*

Resident breeder (1).

Eight were reported from a former breeding site near South Crosland on 11th March (CH).

Singing males were located near Kirkheaton on 19th May (WDH) and at Emley on 17th July with the remainder in the Ingbrichworth area as follows: one near Ingbrichworth Res. on 17th July and 5th August (RD & SEH), two in Annat Royd Lane on 19th July (BA) and one on 21st July near Royd Moor Res. (RD & SEH), where one was calling on 12th August (NAP). Some of these records could refer to the same birds.

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Brian Armitage

THE TETRAD BREEDING SURVEY

In 1986 the Club made a start on its most ambitious project ever, to map the distribution of all species of birds breeding in the Huddersfield area. The six 10-kilometre squares to be covered were divided into tetrads (2km x 2km squares) and initially about twenty members undertook to work specific tetrads and record all species present in the breeding season. Records were to be divided into possible, probable or confirmed breeding based on the criteria laid down by the B.T.O. in its national breeding survey of 1968-72.

The task is a mammoth one and in order to make the finished result as complete as possible a period of five years has been deemed necessary for completion of the field work. It is hoped that the results will be published in book form. It was decided that 1986 would be used for a pilot survey which would determine the feasibility of the project.

Results were very encouraging. Of the 150 tetrads in the six 10-kilometre squares SE00, SE01, SE10, SE11, SE20 and SE21, records were received from 94 or 63% of the total.

Some of the results have been mentioned briefly in the comments in the classified list, but some clarification is necessary of the figures quoted there. Although records were received from 94 tetrads, many tetrads were covered only very perfunctorily and only casual records obtained, and at the time of writing the classified list no data were available for SE20, which has been omitted from this brief summary.

Table A shows the number of tetrads in each 10-kilometre square (excluding SE20) having more than ten, more than five and at least one species recorded in the breeding season.

TABLE A

10km square no.	SE00	SE01	SE10	SE11	SE21	All
tetrads with 1 or more species rec.	9	23	16	24	10	82
more than 5	5	16	14	14	10	59
more than 10	2	10	11	12	10	45

The table shows that 37 of the 82 tetrads had ten or fewer species recorded and 23 out of 82 tetrads had five or fewer species. This will help to explain why the most widely distributed species in the area, Starling and Magpie, were recorded in only 51 tetrads out of 82; doubtless they are present in many of the poorly covered 31 remaining tetrads but the amount of fieldwork carried out in these tetrads was insufficient to find even the apparently most common species.

The total number of species which were recorded in the three categories was 101, of which 82 were confirmed as breeding. Four tetrads had more than fifty species, SE10 D with 63, SE21 W with 62, SE21 Y with 52 and SE11 A with 51.

The most widespread species are listed overleaf in rank order in Table B. The second column shows species in the confirmed breeding category, the first column in all categories combined (possible, probable and confirmed), with number of tetrads in which recorded.

TABLE B

Order	All Categories	Confirmed Breeding only
1.	Starling (51)	Starling (41)
2.	Magpie (51)	Blue Tit (35)
3.	Blackbird (49)	House Sparrow (32)
4.	Blue Tit (45)	Magpie (30)
5.	Chaffinch (43)	Blackbird (30)
6.	House Sparrow (43)	Swallow (26)
7.	Robin (43)	Robin (24)
8.	Carion Crow (43)	Carion Crow (23)
9.	Willow Warbler (41)	Mallard (22)
10.	Swallow (41)	Meadow Pipit (20)
11.	Duncock (40)	Great Tit (20)
12.	Song Thrush (38)	Mistle Thrush (20)

For many reasons, certain species are more difficult than others to prove breeding, but it was both surprising and disappointing that no proof was obtained anywhere in the area for Pheasant, Redshank, Dunlin, Black headed Gull, Lesser Spotted Woodpecker, Whitethroat, Garden Warbler or Goldcrest. There were bonuses however in the form of confirmed breeding for Barnacle Goose, Peregrine, Long eared and Short eared Owls, Kingfisher, Stonechat, Lesser Whitethroat, Pied Flycatcher and Nuthatch.

I hope this brief summary will provide some satisfaction to those who participated in the fieldwork during 1986, to whom the organisers are most grateful; hopefully too it will encourage others in the 1988 season to join those already committed. Whether you are prepared to take on a whole tetrad, part of a tetrad or merely be willing to send in casual records all offers of help will be most welcome. We have really only begun to scratch the surface. If we are to produce a record which is to be of benefit to generations of birdwatchers we have a great deal more to do and much to discover.

Brian Armitage

THE GREAT CRESTED GREBE SAGA

The Great Crested Grebe *Podiceps cristatus* was described as an annual visitor, principally in spring and autumn but with occasional sightings in other months when the 1959-1973 summary for Blackmoorfoot Reservoir was compiled (Bray 1974). During the following eleven years a marked increase in both sightings and flock size occurred, this being particularly noticeable since 1980 (Denton 1985) and in 1985 the first breeding attempt was witnessed. From a clutch of four eggs which was complete by 20th June a single chick was hatched on 14th July, the three remaining eggs being deserted. This phenomenon is not unknown, as fertile eggs (chicks could be heard from within) are occasionally abandoned (Cramp and Simmons 1977). This first ever breeding attempt culminated in the single chick being reared to maturity.

In 1986 larger numbers than usual were present in spring, this event raising hopes that more birds than last year would stay and breed. Eventually five pairs formed, and as this was the first year in which there had been a multiple breeding attempt it was decided to document the happening. The following paper gives a blow by blow account of the fortunes and misfortunes of the pairs concerned.

After many preliminaries, which included head shaking and weed dancing displays the first nest was complete by 27th April with the first egg being laid the next day. This egg remained in the nest until a second was added six days later, a further egg was expected to follow but by 8th May only one egg remained. The reasons for this loss were unclear although it is feasible that it was accidentally knocked into the water by one of the adults; a further egg was laid on 9th. These eggs were short lived, however, for strong winds on 13th created a vigorous wave action which flooded out the nest.

Two further nests with single eggs on 15th and 16th May suffered the same fate as the aforementioned when strong winds created a wave action sufficient to swamp them, the eggs being lost on 19th and 17th respectively. A single egg in another nest on 18th May was considered to have been taken by corvids the following day as it was in a sufficiently sheltered site not to be affected by wave action.

A most remarkable sequence of events started on 6th May when an egg was laid in a nest situated close by the hide. Egg number two followed four days later, and by 16th the bird was sitting a full clutch of six. The bird sat there until 21st when yet again strong winds, this time with heavy rains flooded the nest. Not to be put off, the birds constructed another nest and by 27th May a single egg was present. By 5th June the bird was sitting five eggs with a sixth following on 6th and a seventh on 8th. All was not well, however, for on 10th the nest was empty, corvids again being the main suspect.

As if the laying of 13 eggs had not been enough for this female the pair built yet another nest and had laid a single egg by 18th June, two by 19th and a third by 20th. Was this going to be third time lucky for these unfortunate birds? Alas no, for by 0630hrs the following morning the nest was empty. The culprit may well have been a Fox *Vulpes vulpes* for fresh scats were found nearby.

Undaunted the birds constructed a fourth nest which contained a single egg on 24th June and although this dutiful bird was sitting next day disaster was to strike on 26th as the nest was empty. The reasons for this loss were uncertain for although there was a strong wave action on this date the nest remained intact, perhaps corvids were to blame yet again.

All was not lost, however, for despite this set-back the birds continued to build up the nest and that very evening were seen copulating on it. The resulting egg was deposited the next day with additional eggs following at 48 hours periods until a full clutch of five was reached. All was well and nothing untoward was recorded until 1630hrs on 8th July when for some unknown reason only four eggs remained in the nest, with the other, cracked, lying in the water nearby. By 1900hrs that evening

the nest was empty. The reasons for this were unclear although no evidence of anything other than avian predators was found and the local Magpies *Pica pica* probably had egg on their faces yet again.

The end to these frustrated birds' breeding season had arrived abruptly for although these dejected looking birds continued to frequent the breeding area they had obviously called it a day for no further nests transpired. These two birds deserve applause for sheer dedication to duty.

Although one of the original pairs called it a day after the initial breeding failure the remaining pairs were not to be put off by losing their first clutches, and replacement nests transpired. It is unfortunate that with the exception of the pair documented above it was not possible to correlate any of the original nests with replacements that followed. One such nest contained an egg on 23rd May, thereafter eggs were laid at 48 hour intervals until a full clutch of four was reached. This nest managed to withstand the rigours of heavy rain and strong winds for by 1700hrs on 23rd June one of the eggs was seen to be chipping and by 1800hrs the following day the resulting chick was happily ensconced atop one of its parents. By the following evening two chicks were on the water with one of their parents whilst the other sat the remaining eggs.

Whatever hopes these birds had of hatching the other eggs were dashed the next day as the nest was empty by 1630hrs and a guilley-looking Magpie was seen nearby. However, unbeknown to the observers one of the remaining eggs had hatched, but it was not until the evening of the 30th that this became apparent, and the adults were seen to have three young in their company. These three chicks were reared to maturity and flew sometime in September.

A further replacement nest which held an egg on 24th May remained in this condition until 27th, the egg being present at 0700hrs but by 1600hrs on that date the now badly stained egg had disappeared. However, a fresh unstained egg had been laid by 0800hrs the next morning, with another following two days later. By the 6th June the clutch consisted of five eggs and by 8th a sixth had been added with a seventh following on 11th. All was in vain, however, for although the birds sat the eggs until 15th the nest was empty the following evening. Corvids were again the main suspect. The fate of the original egg remained a mystery until, when inspecting the nest on 16th, a single egg which may well have been this missing one was found in the water.

As much aggression was shown towards one of the pairs when they tried to re-enter the main breeding area in the willows *Salix* sp, the third replacement nest was situated atop Amphibious Bistort *Polygonum amphibium*. The nest contained an egg on 1st June, a second and a third appeared at 48 hour intervals with a fourth on 6th and a fifth being added on 8th, whilst on 9th the bird was sitting and the contents went unrecorded. However, a further catastrophe occurred for by the next day the nest was empty and although the cause was not known, corvids were yet again suspected. The birds did not give in easily and made several abortive attempts at building other nests floating on Amphibious Bistort, but were always foiled by a vibrant wave action caused by strong winds which always seemed to spring up at inopportune moments.

Yet another nest was completed by 17th June, but by this time up to 21 birds had been in residence and the picture had become so obscure that it was not known whether this nest constituted a replacement or was a completely new one built by one of the incoming pairs. After completion however, the Grebes paid little attention to the nest and it was more often used by loafing Coots *Fulica atra* than the Grebes themselves. The nest never held eggs and strong winds on 24th June were responsible for its demise.

By late June the presence of yet another nest was suspected, as six birds were frequenting the breeding area when it was thought that only two pairs actually had nests. Despite several attempts to find this nest it was not until the evening of 2nd July that it was located, the thick vegetation which

surrounded it and the near proximity of an old Coot's nest making it almost invisible. At this stage the nest already held three eggs, two of which were stained, the other being unstained and obviously quite fresh. By the following evening a fourth egg had been added. No change had occurred the next day but it was obvious that all was not well for by early morning the following day, plundered egg shells were strewn about and on inspection the nest was found to be empty. From marks on the eggs it was obvious that a member of the crow family was to blame.

By 3rd July the water level had receded sufficiently to allow access to a Coot's nest and it was whilst inspecting this nest that yet another Grobe's nest was located. The nest held five stained eggs and remained in this condition until 6th when it was found that they had been damaged. Although corvids were again suspected this may well be a false assumption, as the eggs had been eaten on site and not removed. This could well have been the work of the Grey Squirrel *Sciurus carolinensis* which was seen nearby, as this species is known to take eggs and can swim freely (Lever 1977, Van Den Brink 1976).

For several weeks after the final laying attempts the appearance of predated eggs was commonplace. These eggs were presumably those plundered by corvids, the birds having hidden their spoil in nearby vegetation and then retrieved them at their will.

DISCUSSION

The amphibious vegetation was particularly rich in the area where the Grobes decided to nest and this fact allowed the birds a super-abundance of nesting material. Hence, some of the replacement nests were constructed extremely quickly; for example, the pair which lost eggs on 21st June had built another nest and laid an egg in it by 24th.

The two nests which lost their first eggs were of interest as it was expected that they would be deserted. As replacement eggs followed, however, it is suggested that in both these instances the birds had accidentally knocked them into the water. Had predators been involved the birds would almost certainly have been inclined to desert them.

It will be noted that two females had clutches of seven eggs, and one of the clutches would have contained eight eggs but for the original egg being lost. Clutches of this size are somewhat unusual and Dr K.E.L. Simmons (in litt.) has related that clutches of seven are certainly rare, and five eggs seems to be the normal maximum in this country. The 1931 Great Crested Grebe Enquiry (Harrison and Hollom 1932) found that clutches of four were the most usual number, then clutches of three; they noted several clutches of five and two of six but said that seven was very rare and could only quote two instances.

The remarkable female from the pair first discussed laid at least 22 eggs in four nests and it is quite feasible that, on 25th June when a bird was sitting, a further egg may have been deposited. Although no literature can be found which documents this type of occurrence the laying of this number of eggs by a single female must be very unusual.

For further reading on the breeding adaptations in Great Crested Grebes I can do no better than suggest 'Adaptations in the reproductive biology of the Great Crested Grebe' by Dr K.E.L. Simmons; British Birds 67 : 413-437.

It does not need a statistician to calculate that from a total of 13 nests which held at least 54 eggs only three young were reared. This abysmal state of affairs was brought about by extreme weather conditions and predators (Table 1). Even so, it must be borne in mind that these are natural phenomena and in no way can the influence of Man be blamed.

There will be other years in which Great Crested Grebes breed at Blackmoorfoot; let us hope that they fare better than they did in 1986.

Acknowledgement

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TABLE 1

First Egg Date	Date Lost	No. of Eggs	Reason for Loss	No. of Young
28th April	13th May	3	weather (strong winds)	0
6th May (+)	21st May	6	weather (strong winds & heavy rain)	0
15th May	19th May	1	weather (strong winds)	0
16th May	17th May	1	weather (strong winds)	0
18th May	19th May	1	Corvids	0
18th May (+)	21st June	3	Fox?	0
23rd May	-	4	One fell to Magpie?	3
24th May	16th June	8	Corvids (one knocked into water)	0
27th May (+)	10th June	7	Corvids	0
1st June	10th June	5	Corvids	0
24th June (+)	8th July	6	probably Magpie (one knocked into water)	0
?	5th July	4	Corvids	0
?	6th July	5	Grey Squirrel?	0
		54		3

(+) same female

EARLY AND LATE DATES OF SUMMER MIGRANTS

SPECIES	First 1986	Earliest ever	Locality	Last 1986	Latest ever	Locality
Little Ringed Plover	2nd May	29th March 83	Dewsbury S.F.	12th August	14th Sept. 83	Blackmoorfoot
Common Sandpiper	21st April	7th March 84	Horbury Bridge	28th Sept.	31st Dec. 75	Eiland G.P.
Turtle Dove	6th May	27th April 80	Bretton Park	19th Aug.	12th Oct. 71	Ossett S.F.
Cuckoo	26th April	8th April 76	Denby Dale	-	27th Oct. 77	Royd Moor
Swift	5th May	22nd April 62	Thunderbridge	8th Sept.	28th Oct. 61	Brockholes
Sand Martin	18th April	22nd March 83	Bretton Park	3rd Sept.	23rd Oct. 71	Blackmoorfoot
Swallow	23rd April	10th March 59	Eiland	20th Oct.	13th Nov. 77	Hall Dike
House Martin	23rd April	8th April 80	Kirkburton	9th Nov.	27th Nov. 59	Gawthorne
Tree Pipit	20th April	5th April 85	Bretton Park	7th Sept.	17th Sept. 78	Blackmoorfoot
Yellow Wagtail	4th May	7th April 80	Bretton Park	8th Sept.	6th Oct. 80	Ossett Spa S.F.
Black Redstart	-	14th April 76	Eiland G.P.	-	20th Nov. 78	Ossett
Redstart	26th April	5th April 65+85	Bretton Park	7th Sept.	24th Oct. 76	Deer Hill
Whinchat	2nd May	15th April 72	Wessenden Head	22nd Sept.	28th Oct. 68	Lindley Moor
Wheatear	30th March	11th March 78	Digley	30th Sept.	10th Nov. 79	Royd Moor
Ring Ousel	19th March	16th March 77+78	Digley	8th Oct.	15th Nov. 65	Ossett
Grasshopper Warbler	-	22nd April 67+81	Bretton/Horbury	-	14th Aug. 70	Gawthorne
Sedge Warbler	26th April	13th April 81	Healey S.F.	14th Sept.	14th Sept. 86	Golear Canal
Lesser Whitethroat	2nd May	22nd April 84	Horbury	30th Aug.	27th Sept. 73	Deighton
Whitethroat	1st May	19th April 68	Grimescar/Lindley Moor	1st Sept.	26th Sept. 84	Horbury Wyke
Garden Warbler	6th May	5th April 85	Bretton Park	24th Aug.	24th Nov. 84	Silksstone S.F.
Blackcap	26th April	16th March 77	Denby Dale	14th Sept.	31st Dec. 82	Blackmoorfoot
Wood Warbler	3rd May	22nd April 81	Coxley Wood	June	27th Aug. 65	Fixby
Chiffchaff	31st March	12th March 77	Bretton Park	7th Dec.	31st Dec. 82	Blackmoorfoot
Willow Warbler	11th April	29th March 81	Brockholes	1st Oct.	13th Oct. 82	Almondsbury
Scotted Flycatcher	12th May	29th April 73	Bretton Park	21st Sept.	16th Oct. 85	Coxley Valley
Pied Flycatcher	6th May	18th April 85	Deanhead	-	12th Sept. 76	Bretton Park

RINGING REPORT

The weather experienced during the first winter period of the year was simply a continuation of that which dominated the last winter period of 1985 - wet and windy conditions predominated. These abysmal conditions allowed for few ringing attempts, hence fewer birds than normal were handled during this period.

Perhaps because of the cold spring rather fewer nests of passerines than usual were found and due to this fact fewer than normal numbers of pulli were ringed. This poor state of affairs was also reflected at the Black-headed Gull colony at Black Moss which had its worst year ever; only two pairs built nests and no young were reared. The finding of nests is a time-consuming and skilled operation however, and in this respect Tim Duckworth and Dave Pogson must be thanked for locating the nests of certain species. Their labours were justly rewarded when they located the nests of Wood Warbler, Whinchat (2) and Linnet, after which they kindly watched them through until the young were of a correct age to mark. Unfortunately, but as is often the case, several nests that were located (including two Twite's) succumbed to predators before the young reached a ringable age. Even so, the following pulli were ringed during the year: Collared Dove (2 Blackmoorfoot), Swallow (5 Blackmoorfoot), Dipper (3 Hill Top, 3 West Vale), Robin (4 Blackmoorfoot, 6 Crosland Moor), Whinchat (5 Deer Hill, 3 Deer Hill Moss), Blackbird (4 Blackmoorfoot), Wood Warbler (5 Meltham Mills, 6 North Dean Wood), Blue Tit (16 Crosland Moor, 5 Moldgreen), Great Tit (7 Crosland Moor), Chaffinch (8 Blackmoorfoot, 9 Crosland Moor, Linnet (4 Deer Hill Moss) and Bullfinch (5 Blackmoorfoot).

Despite the unsettled weather conditions which prevailed in late July and most of August, the number of Willow Warblers handled as they passed through Blackmoorfoot reached an all time high. A staggering 377 (including three entraps from 1985) were handled as they passed through the netting site, an area of willows only 20 yards wide by 150 yards long. It was these same weather conditions which allowed for the catching of larger numbers of hirundines than normal. The birds, predominantly House Martins, used the leeward side of the willows for feeding during the periods of strong westerly winds, thereby making themselves susceptible to the nets.

One feature which could have greatly increased the ringing total would have been an autumn Tree Sparrow flock. This generally annual event never materialised. The absence of birds was undoubtedly linked with the paucity of feeding areas brought about by high water level. The birds normally feed on the seed heads of grasses when the water level has receded sufficiently to allow them to grow.

The second winter period of the year was also dominated by unsettled weather conditions, consequently fewer than normal Greenfinches were handled. It was during this period that the Yorkshire Water Authority gave permission for a Duck Trap to be constructed at Blackmoorfoot and a floating device was put into action in late November. Although the trap was in use on several dates thereafter no birds were ensnared. This was thought to be due to the relatively mild weather conditions for, although birds were seen to use the trap for loafing, the bait within did not distract from the natural food supply available.

Despite the generally unfavourable weather conditions which had prevailed throughout most of the year a total of 1469 birds were ringed, a marked increase on the 960 handled in 1985 and a welcome return to normal.

A total of 41 species was handled and for the eighth consecutive year no new ringing species were encountered.

For the first time in several years 1986 saw three ringers residing within the area. Both Dave Hodson (Almondbury) and Trevor Sutton (Meltham) are to be thanked for ringing birds in their respective gardens. The number of birds ringed by Dave was 115 whilst Trevor added a further 107. These additions have been placed in brackets in the Ring Totals List. Collectively a grand total of 1691 birds were ringed by Club members.

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 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

Date of recovery:

Where this is unknown the date of the reporting letter is given in brackets.
 All recoveries of five kilometres or more are published. The recoveries of Goshawk (HW96061) and Wood Warbler (C304469) were received too late for inclusion in earlier reports.

Recoveries of Huddersfield Ringed Birds

SWALLOW

B176391	4M	12.5.85	Ingbirchworth, Penistone. 53°33'N 1°40'W
	V	8.7.86	Blackmoorfoot, near Huddersfield. 53°37'N 1°52'W 15km NW
C353470	3J	20.7.86	Blackmoorfoot
	V	29.8.86	Lopham Fen, South Lopham, near Diss, Norfolk. 52°23'N 1°0'E 236km SE

GREENFINCH

NK66511	5M	13.3.83	Blackmoorfoot
	X	15.1.86	Honley, Huddersfield. 53°36'N 1°48'W 5km ESE
NK66656	3F	3.12.83	Blackmoorfoot
	X	(14.8.86)	Hemsworth, Pontefract, West Yorkshire. 53°38'N 1°21'W 34km E
NN65035	3M	11.12.83	Blackmoorfoot
	X	1.9.86	Halifax, West Yorkshire 53°44'N 1°52'W 13km N
VA44232	4M	28.12.85	Blackmoorfoot
	X	17.3.86	Rotherham, South Yorkshire. 53°26'N 1°20'W 41km ESE

Birds recovered in Huddersfield

BLACK-HEADED GULL

627104	I	29.6.84	Fruensholm, Alborg, Jylland, Denmark. 57°4'N 9°48'E
	X	25.12.86	Blackmoorfoot. 830km WSW

In addition a bird colour marked as a 3 at Alborg, Denmark during the autumn of 1985 was seen at Blackmoorfoot on 15 and 16.3.86.

GOSHAWK

HW96061	IF	11.6.82	North Dorbyshire.
	+	27.4.85	Holmfirth. 53°34'N 1°47'W

The ringing sites of this species remain highly confidential, so distance and direction of movement have been omitted from the above recovery.

WOOD WARBLER

C304469	I	23.6.84	Strone, Katrine, Central. 56°16'N 4°33'W
	X	23.5.85	Clayton West, near Donby Dale. 53°36'N 1°37'W 350km SSE

COAL TIT

C653849	2	25.10.85	Fairfield, Stockton, Cleveland 54°34'N 1°21'W
	X	30.4.86	Almondbury, near Huddersfield 53°38'N 1°46'W 107km SSW

STARLING

T068359	3F	14.7.85	Ventes Ragas, Silute, Lithuanian USSR 55°21'N 21°13'E Almondbury 1495km W.
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RINGING TOTALS LIST - 1986

The figures in brackets are an accumulation of the numbers ringed by Dave Hodson and Trevor Sutton.

Snipe	1	Garden Warbler	5
Black-headed Gull	1	Blackcap	5
Collared Dove	2	Wood Warbler	11
Woodpigeon	2	Chiffchaff	2
Sand Martin	1	Willow Warbler	374
Swallow	67	Spotted Flycatcher	2
House Martin	226	Willow Tit	1
Tree Pipit	1	Coal Tit	2 (2)
Meadow Pipit	1	Blue Tit	203 (132)
Grey Wagtail	1	Great Tit	38 (61)
Pied Wagtail	29	Treecreeper	1
Dipper	6	Maggie	2
Wren	11	Starling	2 (18)
Duncock	37	Tree Sparrow	1
Robin	76 (4)	Chaffinch	43 (1)
Redstart	3	Greenfinch	207 (1)
Whinchat	8	Goldfinch	2
Blackbird	53 (3)	Linnet	5
Song Thrush	11	Bullfinch	17
Mistle Thrush	1	Reed Bunting	4
Sedge Warbler	4		
		TOTAL	1469 (222)
		GRAND TOTAL	1691

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LOCAL RETRAPS AND RECOVERIES

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

Large numbers 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

	1yr	2yrs	3yrs	4yrs	5yrs	6yrs	7yrs	8yrs	9yrs	Total
SPARROWHAWK					1					1
SWALLOW		1								1
HOUSE MARTIN	1									1
DUNNOCK				1						1
ROBIN	1	3	1			1				6
BLACKBIRD		1							1	2
WILLOW WARBLER	3									3
BLUE TIT	3									3
GREENFINCH	2	1								3
										<hr/> 21

This is the first time that Sparrowhawk and House Martin have featured in the above table.

Table 2 - Recoveries

BLACKBIRD		1			1	2
BLUE TIT	2					2
GREENFINCH	1					1
						<hr/> 5

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