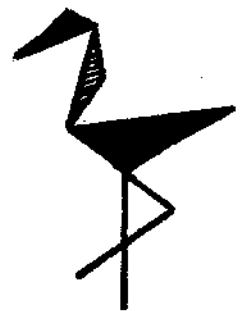




ANNUAL REPORT
1968

HUDDERSFIELD BIRDWATCHERS'
CLUB



The President's Report for 1968

Before making a resume of the club's activities during 1968, I must pay tribute to our first President, Mr. D. Bisiker who was largely responsible for its formation.

It was as a result of his untiring efforts that the club got off to such a good start, and I am sure that all members join me in wishing him and his wife a long and healthy retirement in Broadstone, Dorset.

The membership of the club is now 80+, a very satisfactory number after such a short period of existence. What is most gratifying is the continued interest in winter meetings and the field outings, and those members who cannot attend them are missing quite a lot.

The periodic summer meetings of the club were successful but the field meetings because of inclement weather and holidays were not so successful. The committee are prepared to continue with this experiment if given sufficient support.

The very high standard of our lecturers has been maintained and we are grateful to all who have contributed in any way in providing contacts for such speakers. Our normal attendance at meetings is approximately 45, though on one occasion over 80 turned up to hear Mr. G. V. Adkin of Keighley.

Our own members have also been extremely helpful in providing material for the club meetings and also taking over when a speaker was unable to attend. Some of the more fortunate of our members have visited the Kenya Reserves, The Black Sea Coast, Texel, The Camargue and indeed most European Countries and I doubt if many British Reserves have been neglected by members in pursuit of this rewarding pastime.

1968 will be referred to for some time as THE ROLLER year, this rarity was a most welcome visitor to the area. After the discovery of this bird in Bretton Park by one of our younger members, news spread on the 'grapevine' and hundreds of birdwatchers assembled in the hope of seeing it and very few were disappointed having regard to the length of its stay.

cont'd,...

I wish to take this opportunity of thanking Mr. W. H. Jollans the Waterworks Engineer and the Director of Bretton Hall Training College for their forbearance over the past 12 months when our members have visited the reservoirs and Bretton Park. Similarly, I would thank Mr. E. H. Aubrook and the staff at Ravensknowle for their help in connection with our meetings. A special word of thanks is due to our Secretary Mr. B. Cocking, who by his efforts has ensured a smooth running organisation, and lastly members of the committee and the Club for their continued support.

-O-O-O-O-O-O-

Although the number of reports received from Members was more numerous than last year, the number of species recorded is less, at 130, compared with 135 in 1957. This is mainly due to the fact that, because of the rainfall in the later part of the summer, the local reservoirs were too full to provide the stretches of mud to attract the waders during the Autumn migration.

The outstanding item of the year is, of course, the Roller which provided so much interest during the several weeks it was at Bretton Park.

The Iceland Gull reported at Blackmoorfoot reservoir on March 28th is the first record in the area of this specie, which is difficult to identify.

The Red-footed Falcon which was reported in the Yorkshire Naturalists Union ornithological report in the Y.N.U. news letter was, unfortunately, not seen by any of the members.

After several rumours during the past few years there is now an authentic record of Pied Flycatcher in the area, on August 15th at Outlane Golf Course. The last previous record was in 1951. It is also very encouraging to know that a Spotted Flycatcher has nested in an open fronted nesting box, erected in a suitable wooded habitat by one of our members.

The reporting last year of the Lesser Whitethroat has, unfortunately, not been repeated this year. Pintail has not been recorded; nor has Short-eared Owl. The Barn Owls have again been in the area during the breeding season.

The winter reports of Stonechat in the area are unusual, and it is to be hoped that authentic records of Nightjar will be obtained in 1969.

The recorder extends his thanks to all the members who sent in the reports.

C. Disbrey
Recorder.

List of Contributors of Reports for 1968, with
apologies for any omissions.

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S. M. Anscombe	H. Ellis
B. Armitage	Mrs. V. Hollis
F. Barrans	J. G. Ireland
T. D. Bisiker	J. M. Leece
C. Bower	N. Leece
A. Briggs	D. Manchester
T. Cantwell	M. Midwood
I. S. Clough	Miss Milnes
B. Cocking	D. Moran
E. Crabtree	J. Murphy
R. Crossley	K. A. Worcliffe
J. E. Dale	M. J. Palmer
H. Dale	A. Riley
H. Denton	W. Stoney
C. Disbrey	D. Sykes
L. Taylor	

THE ATLAS PROJECT

Early in 1968 the B.T.O. asked us for help in collecting information for an entirely new project - an atlas showing the incidence of breeding birds in Great Britain.

The same approach was made to all other interested parties, with the object that a comprehensive picture should emerge over a five year study period. Initially the object is to list the species breeding in a particular area, without considering whether or not a bird is common or rare: it is sufficient to establish the nesting of only one pair in order to include the species as "proved" in the record.

In approaching this formidable task, the B.T.O. split the whole area into 10 kilometre squares - our club took over three of these squares.

Some people may have had misgivings on the grounds that such a survey could lead to disturbance in the breeding season. There are, however, many headings under which a species can be accepted as breeding - for instance the bird carrying food for its young is clear proof. In actual fact, the percentage proved by inspection of the nest has been small.

The B.T.O. naturally prefer a "proof of breeding" record, but there are also "probable breeding" and "present in possible nesting habitat" categories, which in themselves will provide useful information.

Last years study was a useful exercise from our point of view, and the experience gained should lead to progressively more comprehensive results. Species recorded as nesting in the three squares were 38: 39: 47, giving an aggregate total of 61 different species.

This project is a joint effort in the truest and widest sense, and the end result should be well worth waiting for.

Ringing Report - 1968

1335 birds of 34 species were ringed in the area during 1968.

A male chaffinch ringed on September 12th 1967 at SAPPY LAVIA, TURKU and Pori, Finland 61.29N 21.21E was recovered on January 14th at Edgerton, Huddersfield. There was a marked difference between this bird and the British race. It was very much paler. A report was sent to the B.T.O.

An adult female Blackbird ringed on January 4th 1964 at Edgerton, Huddersfield was controlled on October 19th 1968 at AKEROYA, HVALER, OSTFOLD, NORWAY, 59.02N 10.53E and an adult male Blackbird ringed on November 12th 1964 at Edgerton, Huddersfield was recovered on October 21st 1968 at OJERPEK, SKLE H, TELEMARK, NORWAY, 59.14N 9.39E.

In November 1968 an adult female Blackbird ringed on November 24th 1963 was recovered near BORAS, ALVSBERG, SVADEF 57.39N 13.04E.

A female Greenfinch ringed on March 22nd 1966 at Edgerton, Huddersfield was recovered on November 10th 1966 at Leigh in Lancashire.

Analysis of Ringing - 1968

Moorhen	1	Blackcap	1
G. S. Woodpecker	1	Whitethroat	2
Swallow	47	Willow Warbler	14
House Martin	3	Goldcrest	4
Great Tit	33	Dunnock	69
Blue Tit	167	Meadow Pipit	5
Coal Tit	7	Pied Wagtail	18
Willow Tit	6	Grey Wagtail	2
Long tailed Tit	8	Starling	70
Treecreeper	2	Greenfinch	120
Wren	7	Linnet	3
Mistle Thrush	6	Bullfinch	13
Song Thrush	33	Chaffinch	55
Redwing	15	Brambling	2
Blackbird	325	Yellow Hammer	3
Robin	55	House Sparrow	217
Sedge Warbler	1	Tree Sparrow	20

Great Crested Grebe

Regularly reported from Bretton and Ingbirchworth reservoirs, with occasional birds at Blackmoorfoot reservoir.

Successful breeding at Ingbirchworth with 6 adults and 7 immatures at Bretton on August 31st in broods of 2, 2 and 3.

Little Grebe

Occasional reports from Bretton, but regularly reported throughout the year at Ingbirchworth reservoir. A single bird was on Diggle reservoir on January 13th in severe weather, with snow.

Heron

All except one of the 14 reports are for the latter part of the year, and are for single birds with the exception of a report of 5 at Bretton on August 15th.

Mallard

Regularly reported from the surrounding reservoirs with 180+ in November and December at Bretton and 56 at Blackmoorfoot on February 25th.

Teal

Regularly reported at Bretton in the winter months, with 31 on October 15th, also occasional reports from Diggle, Buckstones, Larch Haigh, Ringstone Edge, with 5 on Black Moss on May 4th.

Gadwall

A single record of a male on Blackmoorfoot reservoir on April 10th.

Wigeon

Male and female at Bretton on December 12th is the only record.

Shoveler

Occasional reports from Bretton, Ingbirchworth and Blackmoorfoot.

Scaup

A number of reports from Blackmoorfoot of a single male, with reports of a female on January 6th and February 24th.

Tufted Duck

Regularly at Bretton and Blackmoorfoot, with reports from Ingbirchworth, Deerhill and Diggle reservoirs. A male and two females at Black Moss on June 16th.

Pochard

At Bretton during the early and late months of the year, with 49 in December. Also small numbers at Ingbirchworth, Blackmoorfoot, Diggle and Ringstone Edge and Deerhill.

Golden Eye

Mainly reported from Blackmoorfoot and Deerhill reservoirs during the winter months with 7 at Blackmoorfoot as late as April 30th, and one as early as July 9th. Occasional birds at Ringstone and Ingbirchworth and Diggle with a single female at Bretton on January 7th and on December 15th.

Shelduck

3 Blackmoorfoot reservoir March 26th and 2 on April 7th.

Grey Geese

Several reports of skeins passing both E and W south of Huddersfield. A skein of 100 on December 14th probably contained Grey Lags from the calls.

Pink-footed Goose

One feeding in fields at Bretton with Canada geese on February 21st.

Canada Goose

153 including juveniles were counted on July 8th at Bretton and 132 on November 23rd. 8 broods, at least, were noted.

Mute Swan

Reports from Bretton, with breeding again at Middlemost's dam in Huddersfield.

Whooper Swan

4 on Blackmoorfoot Reservoir on December 16th.

Bewick's Swan

28 adults and 2 juveniles on Blackmoorfoot reservoir on October 20th is a very early date for the arrival of this species, and is the only record for the year.

Sparrow Hawk

3 reports only of flying birds from one area. No evidence of breeding.

Merlin

Pair observed on April 10th; single birds seen occasionally on the moors.

Red Footed Falcon

The Y.M.U. ornithological report March-October 1968 includes a record of this specie at Ingbirchworth on June 5th.

Kestrel

Abundant reports from all parts of the area, including the town centre. Three pairs known to have bred successfully but the young from one nest had been taken by boys. The R.S.P.C.A. confiscated the young birds which were taken to an aviary at Knaresborough and subsequently ringed and successfully released.

Red Grouse

Regularly recorded from suitable habitat on the surrounding moors.

Red-Legged Partridge

A single bird reported from an area close to the town on five dates in March and April.

Partridge

Reports from seven localities with apparent breeding success in two areas on the outskirts of the town. The species is apparently holding its status in the area.

Pheasant

Reported in and near the usual preserves.

Water Rail

Reported from Bretton in the early and late months of the year.

Moorhen

Very common in suitable habitat.

Coot

Plentiful at Bretton and successful breeding at Ingbirchworth.

Lapwing

The numbers in the winter flocks reported are fewer than in the flocks of 1967.

Ringed Plover

One at Deerhill on May 3rd and one at Ringstone Edge on August 16th are the only records for the year.

Golden Plover

Very few reports received compared to 1967, and the 1968 flocks are smaller in size.

Snipe

Reported throughout the area with two at the I.C.I. Leeds Road on March 14th.

Jack Snipe

An exhausted bird was picked up on Penistone Road on December 29th and taken to Ravensknowle Museum. It appeared undamaged but took no food, and although weak it was released the following day in suitable conditions.

Woodcock

Two reports in the early part of the year from Gregory Spring Wood and one report of a single bird at Harrow Clough at the end of the year.

Curlew

Seen and heard regularly on the surrounding moors from March 11th to August 20th.

Common Sandpiper

Reported at Bretton on April 20th and a single bird at Ringstone Edge reservoir on September 6th, with 9 at Bretton on August 25th.

Redshank

Several records from Black Moss in May and June and records of the species at Blackmoorfoot Reservoir and Ringstone Edge reservoir in March and April.

Greenshank

2 flying W. at Longley on September 9th is the only record for the year.

Dunlin

Reported from the higher moors in April and June. Two alighted momentarily on the edge of Diggle reservoir in very bad snowy weather on January 13th.

Ruff

A single bird at Ringstone Edge on August 20th.

Great Black-Backed Gull

Two records only received. 6 at Blackmoorfoot on January 7th and 4 flying W. at Dean Wood on October 10th. Unless the species has not been reported this shows a big fall in numbers wintering in the area from last year.

Lesser Black-Backed Gull

120 at Blackmoorfoot reservoir on August 12th. Not well reported.

Herring Gull

Blackmoorfoot, Ingbirchworth and Bretton. Not well reported.

Common Gull

Blackmoorfoot. Not well reported.

Iceland Gull

March 28th Blackmoorfoot.

Seen at rest and in flight with Herring, Lesser Black-Backed and Common Gulls. The general colour was a uniform, creamy brown with no dark patches. It was the size of a Herring Gull except for a small head and bill. The bill was black at the tip, the rest being a dark pink. When the bird flew it was seen to have creamy brown wings with near white primaries. The wings were very long and broad and came well out from the tail when at rest. Seen in very good light down to about 250 yards. It was considered to be a first year bird coming through into second year plumage.

M. L. Denton, H. Cantwell.

Black-Headed Gull

Very common throughout the area.

Common/Arctic Tern

September 15th Sparth reservoir - probably Common Tern.

Stockdove

Regularly reported from Bretton and the Diggle area, also Blackmoorfoot, Farnley Lane, Deerhill and Hollicar Woods.

Wood Pigeon

Common in the area with several large winter flocks and 1,000 at Hollicar Woods on December 12th.

Turtle Dove

Reported on May 17th at Beaumont Park and at Bretton on June 30th.

Collared Dove

Reported from Kirkheaton, Almondbury, Edgerton.

Cuckoo

First reported calling on April 18th from the vicinity of Holme. This is a very early record, and the species appeared to be more numerous this year, reports being received from ten locations. A cuckoo's egg was found in the nest of a Meadow Pipit.

Barn Owl

Again reported from the same area as last year. On August 22nd one was reported to have spent the day in a warehouse on Leeds Road.

Little Owl

Well reported from 10 localities. Regularly seen in one area during August and September with two sightings of a juvenile. On May 21st a nest was observed for an hour with at least two young being fed at six minute intervals.

Tawny Owl

Reports of calling and sightings from six localities.

(Hytjar)

A report from Houses Hill appears to be reliable, and a further report from a locality not too far distant from Beaumont Park is very probable - but must be left in square brackets.

Swift

As early as April 23rd at Blackmoorfoot with a tardy single flying SB over Lindley Moor on August 29th.

Kingfisher

Reported regularly from Bretton with an isolated record on January 11th from Armitage Bridge.

Roller

Seen and reported at Bretton Park on August 31st by Mr. L. Denton. This is the highlight of the year. The bird stayed several weeks and was seen by most members of the Club as well as numerous people from very far afield.

Green Woodpecker

Fewer reports than last year, but from seven localities, which is a wider distribution than last year.

Great Spotted Woodpecker

Would appear to be less numerous and less widely distributed than last year. Reports received only from five or six localities.

Lesser Spotted Woodpecker

A single bird on May 5th and a pair on May 20th at Bretton Park are the records for the year. This is the first time during the last ten years that the specie has been recorded in consecutive years.

Skylark

Not well reported this year, but with small flocks to the south of the town; c. 60 near Storthes Hall on February 25th the largest number recorded.

Swallow

Seen at Bretton Park on April 15th and at Holmfirth and Lindley Moor on April 17th: the last record being on October 14th at Holmbridge.

House Martin

The first record of the year at Meltham on April 21st and the last on October 13th at Grimescar.

Sand Martin

A report on March 27th at New Mill is a very early date for migration. Few records were received for the autumn movement, the last one being as early as August 11th.

Carrion Crow

Well distributed.

Rook

Status appears to be maintained. A large flock was again in the High Flatts area during the winter months.

Jackdaw

Widely distributed with numbers flocking with rooks in the High Flatts area during the winter months.

Magpie

Very numerous and common. Observed carrying large twigs for nesting material very early in January.

Jay

Well distributed in suitable woodland areas.

Great Tit

Common.

Blue Tit

Very common.

Coal Tit

Thinly distributed in suitable woodlands.

Marsh Tit

Again very few reports received. Two reported regularly visiting a bird table on the southern outskirts of the town.

Willow Tit

Much more frequently reported than Marsh Tit. Successful breeding.

Long-Tailed Tit

Regularly reported from Bretton with two adults and six juveniles there on June 4th, and a flock of twelve on August 25th. Only odd reports in winter and early spring from the rest of the area.

Buthatch

Nest building near Denby Dale on May 5th, with food being carried to the nest hole on May 26th.

Tree Creeper

Regularly seen during the breeding season at Bretton and Grimescar. Occasional reports from other suitable areas.

Wren

Common.

Dipper

Fewer reports than last year, but a nest with two young seen on April 24th. A pair seen carrying food as late as May 26th at another locality.

Mistle Thrush

Not so well recorded as last year, and the wintering flocks appear to be smaller.

Fieldfare

The latest date recorded during the early part of the year was April 18th. The earliest autumn date October 6th. After the first migrations the flocks were not so big as in 1967. Roosting reports from Bretton, Deerhill and Digley. The question arises whether the specie has a preference for roosting near large stretches of water, or whether the observers have a proclivity for visiting the reservoirs during the winter months and tend to overlook roosts away from water.

Song Thrush

Well distributed.

Redwing

Few seen in the first two months of the year with the last record on April 7th. October 6th was the first autumn record and numbers again small compared with 1967. The roost at Stanwell Avenue was estimated to exceed 500 on January 14th.

Ring Ouzel

A male reported at South Crosland on March 30th. The last report of the season was a male on Lindley Moor on September 13th. Reports received from the usual breeding areas.

Blackbird

Very common.

Wheatear

Reported on March 25th from Birds Edge and also Bradley, and from Lindley Moor on September 13th. A male at Lindley Moor on April 28th, seen down to 20 yards, appeared to be large and long legged, with pinkish breast and pale grey back and was probably of the Greenland race passing through on migration.

Stonechat

A male twice reported from Lindley Moor during October and a male and female reported from Will o' Mat's near to Doerhill on December 21st.

Whinchat

A male on Lindley Moor on April 20th was unusual for the area, and a female was seen in the same locality as late as October 26th. A pair was present during May in the Diggle area.

Redstart

Reported from Bretton, Farnley and Thunderbridge on April 20th. The last record coming from a garden in Dalton on September 6th.

Robin

Common.

Grasshopper Warbler

Several reports from Bretton Park and one from Lepton on July 28th.

Sedge Warbler

Two reports for the year. One on April 28th between Greetland and Holywell Green, and one was caught in a mist net at Kirkburton on August 2nd.

Blackcap

Fewer reports than in 1967. The first being on April 19th at Lindley Moor, and a first winter male was mist-netted at Longley Hall on October 26th.

Garden Warbler

Singing at Hagbridge on April 25th. Five in song at Bretton Park on May 5th - one carrying nesting material. One killed against a house window in Edgerton on October 5th.

Whitethroat

First reported on April 19th from near to Lindley Moor and Grimescar. Numerous at Bretton Park. Last record at Edgerton on September 18th.

Willow Warbler

Common. First reported from Bretton on April 7th and the last reports coming from Holywell Green and Bretton on September 22nd. Six were singing at the I.C.I. plant, Leeds Road on April 17th, and two nests were located within twenty yards of each other in Dean Wood.

Chiff Chaff

Reported singing at Gunthwaite as early as March 28th. Last record September 30th.

Wood Warbler

Has now been recorded in the area for the last five years. Reported singing in Beaumont Park on May 15th and from Gregory Spring Wood on May 20th. These are new localities - no reports were received from the localities of the 1967 reports.

Goldcrest

Reported regularly from Gregory Spring Wood in addition to the usual localities. Both sexes were observed feeding five nearly fully fledged young at a nest at Minchcliffe Mill. A male was ringed at the I.C.G. Dalton on March 14th.

Spotted Flycatcher

The first report on May 5th from Bretton Park and the last from Edgerton on September 22nd. On July 6th a pair were nesting in an open fronted box erected by a member. The nest contained four eggs.

Pied Flycatcher

A female recorded from Outlane Golf Course on August 15th.

Dunmock

Very common.

Meadow Pipit

The winter roost on Lindley Moor mentioned in the 1967 report increase to 200 on March 30th 1968. Small numbers, six in 1967/8 and 2+ in 1968/9 reported wintering in a garden at Dalton. On June 8th a flock of 100+ was reported from the Diggle area.

Tree Pipit

First reported from Bretton on April 17th; no late records received, the last report being June 13th. Reported from suitable woodlands throughout the area.

Pied Wagtail

84 birds, including many juveniles, observed at the Waterloo roost on August 22nd, but on September 13th the roost had apparently broken up because of disturbance by children from a nearby housing estate.

White Wagtail

A bird at Grosland Hill on April 5th was very probably this sub-species.

Grey Wagtail

Reported from ten localities.

Yellow Wagtail

20-25 passed through the Lindley Moor area to the SW, after feeding for half an hour in a hayfield. One adult with a juvenile on August 10th at Grimescar. The majority of the reports are of single birds in April and May.

Waxwing

One was understood to be in the Birkby district in January, and a single bird was seen in Partown on January 9th. No autumn reports were received.

Starling

Very common.

Greenfinch

Very common. 200+ at Ingbirchworth on September 19th. Large numbers in a mixed flock of finches of 500-1,000 at Netherthong from January to mid-March.

Goldfinch

Mainly reported during the winter months with 17 at Gregory Spring Wood on February 18th: 15-20 on October 4th in the Lindley Moor area and approx. 20 on September 25th at Grosland Hill.

Siskin

12-15 in AlGers at Bretton on November 10th and 5 at Upperthong on February 3rd.

Linnnet

At least 8 pairs in the gorse on Castle Hill on April 18th. Reported in mixed flocks of finches.

Twite

Well reported from the surrounding moors and in mixed finch flocks.

Redpoll

Widely reported, but only in very small numbers. Breeding at Bretton indicated.

Bullfinch

Fairly widely reported. Seven males and 2 females at Gregory Spring Wood in November.

Chaffinch

Of approx. 200 feeding on stubble near to Gregory Spring Wood in November, most were females. Other reports during the winter months with flocks of mixed finches, but very thinly distributed through the area during the summer months.

Brambling

Scattered reports in the winter months with a large flock at Bretton during November and December with approx. 500 recorded there on December 31st.

Yellow Warbler

Regularly reported in small number. 0.50 at Wetherthong on February 25th being an unusually large gathering.

Corn Bunting

Well reported in small numbers from 10 localities.

Reed Bunting

Reported from twelve localities, mainly in the first three months of the year.

Snow Bunting

One at Cupwith in February and an unusual record of a male on April 2nd in the area of Thurstonland.

House Sparrow

Very common.

Tree Sparrow

Well distributed and occurring during the winter in mixed finch flocks. 200+ near Gregory Spring Wood on November 10th.

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