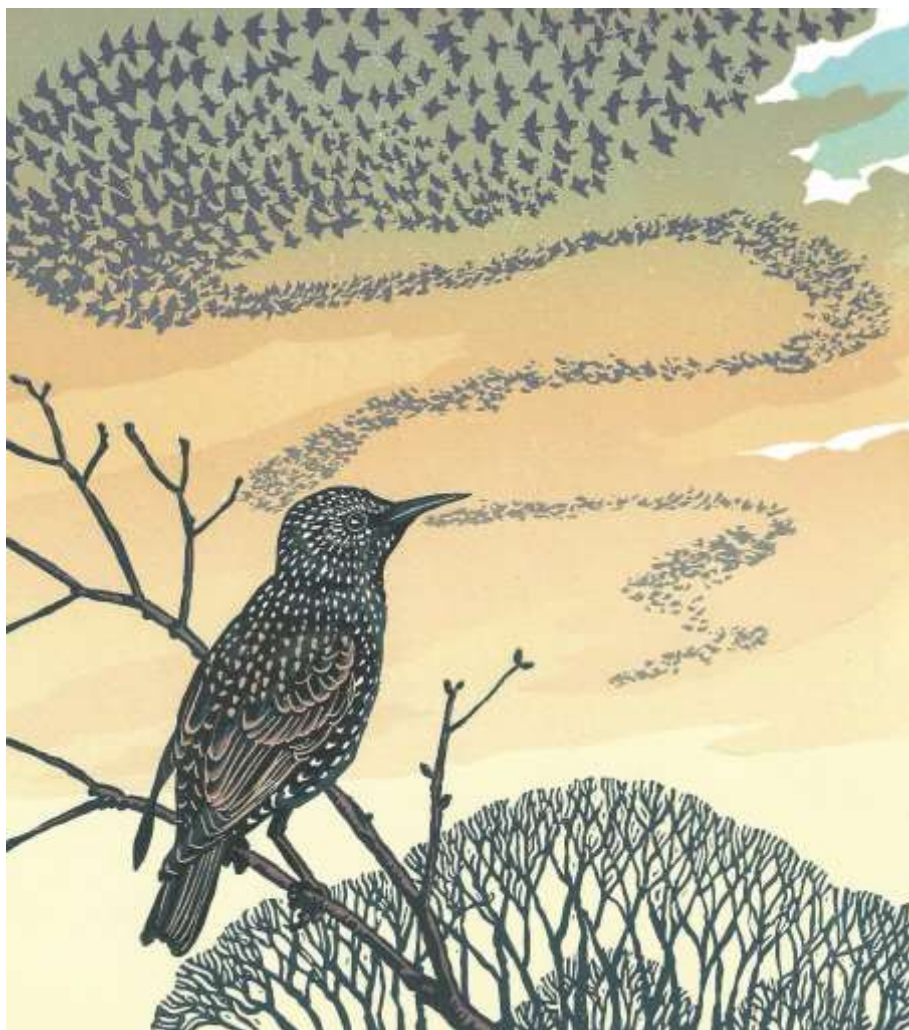




**Huddersfield Birdwatchers' Club**

# **Birds in Huddersfield**

## **2017**



***Birds in Huddersfield 2017*** is a publication of Huddersfield Birdwatchers' Club and the latest in an unbroken series of annual reports produced by the Club since our formation in 1966. It is based upon records of bird sightings submitted and surveys undertaken over the year by Club members and other volunteer birdwatchers.

Cover illustration: **Starling murmuration (Stuart Brocklehurst)**.

Stuart Brocklehurst is a wildlife artist and you can see more of his work on his web site:  
[www.wildlifewithpenandbrush.blogspot.com](http://www.wildlifewithpenandbrush.blogspot.com)

Rear cover photograph: **Stone-curlew (David Pennington)**

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# **Birds in Huddersfield**

## **2017**

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## FOREWORD BY THE CLUB PRESIDENT

The Club continued to prosper, not only because of the committee and report writing team who worked tirelessly behind the scenes, but also due to the continued support of you, the dedicated member. Club membership, due to this remaining relatively stable, has enabled us to function at our usual level. The number of members and invited friends attending the evening meetings, however, has averaged fewer than in recent years. There appears to be no obvious pattern to attendance figures, being as low as 16 and as high as 40 (approximately half the membership). If each member was to introduce a friend to the Club this would, in the long run, guarantee our continued prosperity.

It is with deep regret that I have to inform members of the deaths of two founder members, John Dale and Brian Cocking. John had contributed a great deal to the understanding of ornithology in Yorkshire whilst Brian had been instrumental in keeping the Club on an even keel from its inception. Obituaries appear on pages 121 and 122.

On a far more pleasurable note, I feel it only correct to mention the monumental amount of work bestowed on the Club over the years by Mike Wainman. I first met Mike at Blackmoorfoot some seventeen years ago. Little did I know that this fortuitous meeting (for the Club, perhaps not for Mike) would lead to him becoming the Honorary Treasurer (2001-2011), Committee Member (2001-2017), President (2012-2015), and Annual Report/book collator (2006-present). Mike was also instrumental in developing the Huddersfield List – this quick reference list is something we have all benefited from since 2003. That Mike is an unsung hero cannot be denied and, although he has retired from officialdom, he continues to collate publications and is a font of knowledge in many things which keep the Club ticking over. Thank you Mike.

For a good number of years the front cover of the Annual Report has been enlivened with an illustration by Stuart Brocklehurst. Over the years Stuart has presented the Club with a copy of the cover to be raffled at our meetings with the proceeds going to Club funds. For reasons unknown, this did not happen in 2016 but, in 2017, Stuart was kind enough to present the Club with copies of the 2015 (Curlew) and 2016 (Grey Heron) reports. These were raffled separately and raised a total of £102 for Club funds. For continuing to enhance the front cover of our reports with his excellent illustrations and also for supplying a copy for the raffle, Stuart is to be thanked wholeheartedly.

I would like to take this opportunity to reiterate the plea for records which I made last year. It is becoming increasingly obvious that certain species are being under recorded – why are the only Tufted Duck records from Ingbirchworth after mid-June all from Barnsley Bird Study Group? Additionally, why does every Mallard record from Bretton simply indicated the species to be ‘present’? Without members counting and reporting all species we cannot get a proper handle on the species’ population dynamics. Not only does this lack of records make interpretation very difficult for the report writers but it also breaks the continuity which the Club has maintained over the last 50+ years. I have often been asked “Why do we produce an annual report?” My usual answer is two-fold:

- 1). It is only by analysing and publishing records that we can appreciate what is happening in the natural world – memories fade very quickly.
- 2). Equally, if not more importantly, is the fact that in years to come these reports will be the only source of information available for people assessing historical distributional records. The only reason we are aware of each species’ past distribution/population is due to dedicated

people publishing their findings. Without your records we cannot achieve this. Please don't fall into the trap of thinking somebody else will be reporting them.

The Newsletter, edited by Hazel Sill, contained a number of articles which members will have found interesting. The Newsletter is the vehicle for all members to have their say, if you have anything to contribute which will be of interest to members please have a word with Hazel.

Mike Denton

# ABOUT HUDDERSFIELD BIRDWATCHERS' CLUB

Huddersfield Birdwatchers' Club was formed in 1966 and registered as a charity in July of 2003, with the aims of:

## 1. Studying and recording the wild birds of the area and publishing an annual report:

Members and other bird watching supporters are out and about throughout the year observing birds across the area and submitting records for analysis by our Recorder. We now have a wealth of data covering some 49 years, an invaluable source for studying the trends in local bird populations. The Club is the only organization in the area undertaking and publishing this kind of ornithological recording and *Birds in Huddersfield 2017* is the latest in an unbroken series of annual reports since the Club was formed.

From time to time we also publish more specific, one-off works, including in 2001 an *Atlas of the Breeding Birds of the Huddersfield Area*, in 2004 *Birds of Blackmoorfoot Reservoir 1985-2003* and in 2008 a major work *The Birds of the Huddersfield Area*, which reviewed the complete history of every species recorded in the area since records began, right up to modern times. In January 2017 we published another major work *A Natural History of Blackmoorfoot Reservoir, Huddersfield* by Mike Denton to commemorate our half-centenary in 2016/17. This year we have republished as an on-line digital 'e-book' *The Birds of the Huddersfield District* first issued by S. L. Mosley in 1915 – this was a landmark book in both local and national ornithology and we hope to bring it to a wider audience to appreciate its importance.

We also publish on-line and in our annual report the *Huddersfield List*, a checklist of all the species of wild birds and additional races that have officially been accepted as having been recorded in the area. This is now updated annually as a 'tick list' to enable birders to record their own yearly and lifetime sightings around Huddersfield.

Our publications are to be found in the Huddersfield Library and go to many regional and national ornithological and wildlife conservation bodies.

The whole of the Club archive, including all of our reports since 1966, is available in digital format on our web site for viewing by the public. This is an invaluable source for everyone interested in the history of the birds of the area.

## 2. Promoting education of the public about wild birds and their habitats:

Our lecture and meeting programme runs between September and May each year, at which visiting experts present on a wide range of birding topics, from local to overseas, with some stunning still and video photography. We also have a wealth of birding and photographic expertise within the Club and enjoy presentations from members equally as knowledgeable and fascinating as our visitors.

Each year, we hold a number of local 'patch outings' or bird watching walks on which members pass on their knowledge of local sites of particular birding interest.

Our web site [www.huddersfieldbirdwatchersclub.co.uk](http://www.huddersfieldbirdwatchersclub.co.uk) contains information about birding in the area, as well as about the Club and our activities. The forum is open to public view and shows the latest local bird sightings posted by members, often with photos, and is a great way of finding out what is around.



### **3. Supporting research into conservation of wild birds and their habitats:**

Readers will be only too well aware of the threat to many of our wild birds, but if conservation is to be effective, it needs to be based upon hard evidence and research. This is where the Club comes in. We have members with substantial experience in bird observation and surveying and there is also a role for less experienced volunteers.

The Club has played a major role in many bird life surveys of local, regional and national importance, including over 50 for the British Trust for Ornithology (BTO), RSPB, National Trust, Natural England, Peak District National Park, Kirklees Metropolitan Council and The Friends of Beaumont Park. We also advise Kirklees Council on bird life issues through our representation on its conservation committee and provide data in connection with proposed planning applications for such as wind turbines.

We aim to undertake a survey programme of some type every year, of a part of the Club area or of a particular species.

In 2014/15 we launched a nest box scheme, working with another local charity the Bridgewood Trust that provides support for adults with learning difficulties and which built the boxes at their centre in Edgerton, providing occupational work for people in their care. Boxes were provided free of charge to several local woodlands, targeting threatened species such as Pied and Spotted Flycatchers, as well as more common species.

Our work is undertaken entirely by un-paid volunteers and we rely entirely upon the generosity of members and upon voluntary donations to continue our work.

Members of the public are welcome to all of our meetings and patch outings, free of charge (voluntary donation), and we try to provide something for birdwatchers of all tastes and experience. It is a great way to learn about birds and to meet fellow birders.

So, whether old hand or beginner, why not come along and join us?

Simply contact any member of the Committee - see inside rear cover or visit our website for more information.

**[www.huddersfieldbirdwatchersclub.co.uk](http://www.huddersfieldbirdwatchersclub.co.uk)**



## 2017: THE BIRDING YEAR

This has been another good year with a total of 175 species recorded. These included, apart from a new one to our area, others which are scarce visitors to us. Again many of these had excellent photographs taken of them, well done to all.

The first week of **January** brought very mixed weather conditions, including temperatures below freezing and some rain on South-westerly winds. The 1<sup>st</sup> brought a Chiffchaff to Beaumont Park, a Green Sandpiper was seen regularly at Dewsbury SW, with 500 Golden Plover and 450 Lapwing at Maythorn and Blackmoorfoot respectively. The next day five Scaup were on Blackmoorfoot Res. and 50 Lesser Redpoll were counted at Langsett. The 4<sup>th</sup> saw 40 Wigeon at Castle Dam, a male Shoveler at Horbury Strands/Wyke, with the first Whooper Swans of the year, two at Blackmoorfoot, and a maximum of 82 Pied Wagtails at Dewsbury SW. Two White-fronted Geese were first seen on 5<sup>th</sup> at Ingbirchworth together with Greylags, where they remained for the following three weeks.

The first Pink-footed Geese of the year were seen on 7<sup>th</sup> when 460 flew over W, four Whooper Swans went SW over Ingbirchworth with four Shelduck both on Blackmoorfoot and Ringstone Edge. The Water Pipit seen the previous year at Deer hill was seen again on three occasions during the month so making a welcome early addition to years' lists.

Three days of heavy rain on strong SW winds then ensued, coinciding with the months' maximum of 820+ Fieldfare at Spicer House Lane on 9<sup>th</sup> with ten Snipe and a Jack Snipe at Wholestone Moor the following day and the Ingbirchworth flock of Brambling reaching 70.

This was a good year for Waxwing and they were seen in good numbers, even reaching 20 in the town centre and a maximum of 105 at Langsett on 10<sup>th</sup>. A Tundra Bean Goose was found amongst a flock of 19 Pink-footed Geese at Blackmoorfoot where it remained for a week. Colder conditions and the first snow arrived on 12<sup>th</sup> and a Blackcap that was to become a regular Meltham garden visitor appeared on 13<sup>th</sup>. The 14<sup>th</sup> was busier, a Red Kite went over Marsden, a nice Firecrest, together with five Chiffchaff appeared at Healey Mills/Kerry's NR and a maximum of 158 Teal were at Dewsbury SW.

A period of milder weather brought much activity on 17<sup>th</sup>, with a minimum of 2,000 Pink-footed Geese NW over the area, the majority of which were over Blackmoorfoot, where two Pintail were also present, and five males of the same species were on Ringstone Edge the following day. At Ingbirchworth 300 Greylag Geese were in the area and other wildfowl counts reached a maximum of 30 Tufted Duck at Bretton, up to 15 Goosander at Blackmoorfoot and with one or two Pochard and Gadwall about this made it, apart from the continued scarcity of Goldeneye, a good month overall. Added to this six Shelduck were on Ringstone Edge on 19<sup>th</sup>, where a Tundra Bean Goose was discovered the following day. Several White-fronted Geese were seen over the last week of the month, with the largest flock being of 35 at Blackmoorfoot on 26<sup>th</sup>.

Gulls were much in evidence as usual, Mediterranean were seen on five dates at Blackmoorfoot with two Yellow-legged Gull records to add to the one at Ingbirchworth on 23<sup>rd</sup>. Roosting Black-headed Gulls peaked at 5,600 at Blackmoorfoot and 4,800 at Langsett.

There were some good finch counts at the Game Crop at High Hoyland during the month with highs of 200 Chaffinch, an exceptional 370 + Linnet and ten Yellowhammer on 21<sup>st</sup>. The first Curlew appeared at Horbury Strands/Wyke on 26<sup>th</sup> and very unusual for the time of year, a Ruff

was feeding with Lapwings at Thurlstone on 29<sup>th</sup>. With that January drew to a cold foggy and rather uneventful close.

Again higher than average temperatures and rain opened **February**, with the first day seeing up to 140 Waxwing at Thongsbridge, 400 Lapwing at Blackmoorfoot, which also provided the first of four adult Mediterranean Gull records during the month. A Green Sandpiper continued to be seen on the Calder, 70 Brambling were still at Ingbirchworth and 30 Linnet at Gunthwaite Dam, where two Water Rail were seen, the same number as at Dewsbury SW.

The months highest count of Pied Wagtail, 120, was noted on 2<sup>nd</sup> then things went rather quite until 5<sup>th</sup> when up to 2,500 Pink-footed Geese were counted over, continuing the excellent year for this species and the highest count of Whooper Swans so far, 11, flew N over Blackmoorfoot. On this same day a Jack Snipe was behind Wards End Farm with probably the same bird on 7<sup>th</sup>, when a Chiffchaff was at Horbury SW. In between these dates 37 Waxwing visited the Town centre, a Common Scoter was on Ingbirchworth Res. and a small number of Curlews started to appear.

Then a few days of freezing temperatures with cold North-easterlies brought the first snow of the month. A flock of 16 Long-tailed Tit visited a Meltham garden on 10<sup>th</sup> and the first Oystercatcher of the year was on the Calder at Dewsbury the following day, the same day as a maximum of 300 Golden Plover were around Blackmoorfoot. A spell of milder, damp and misty conditions then ensued and again not much activity was noted. A maximum of 6,200 and 2,000 Black-headed and Common Gull respectively, roosted at Blackmoorfoot, a Peregrine chased a Merlin over Marsden Moor on 16<sup>th</sup> and the day after saw a maximum of just 70 Redwing at Blackmoorfoot.

A Red Kite accompanied by a Common Buzzard was observed over Millhouse Green on 18<sup>th</sup> and the following day Scout Dyke Res. held five Little Grebes and another Chiffchaff was at Horbury Strands/Wyke. Storm 'Doris' arrived on 23<sup>rd</sup> bringing heavy rain on gale force South-westerlies, the only bird of note being a Blackcap, which first appeared in a Slaithwaite garden on 25<sup>th</sup> where it remained into March. Then hail and a covering of snow on 27<sup>th</sup> brought an impressive 25 White-fronted Geese to Broadstone Res.

The same mixed generally mild conditions continued into **March**. A flock of 50 Curlew appeared at Maythorn with 52 at Broadstone Res. the day after, the same day as the only Kittiwake of the year was seen, this time at Baitings Dam. The 2<sup>nd</sup> also brought 15 Goldcrest to Langsett Bank and the Blackcaps in the Meltham and Slaithwaite gardens continued to show themselves. Three Chiffchaff at Horbury SW showed on 4<sup>th</sup>, a male Pintail was seen at Boshaw Whams, with two of the same species leaving W from Blackmoorfoot Res. the day after.

Some unseasonal higher temperatures were with us for the next two weeks. An adult Caspian Gull was present at Ingbirchworth on 6<sup>th</sup>, the same bird being viewed at Whitley Common two days later, where 38 Stock Dove were also present.

Of the many flocks of Starlings seen feeding during this period the 3,000 seen at Broadstone Res. on 7<sup>th</sup> was the maximum, the same day as an impressive count of 55 Wigeon at Meal Hill Lake with the following day bringing a Common Scoter to Ingbirchworth Res. There were another five records of Red Kite during the month. A flock of 20 Waxwing were in the Thongsbridge area on 9<sup>th</sup>, 400 Fieldfare were feeding at Dunford Bridge and nine Oystercatcher visited Broadstone Res. The first Twite of the year, four, showed at Marsden on 10<sup>th</sup> and a single White-fronted Goose was at Bretton the following day. A Hen Harrier flew low W into a strong wind over Marsden Moor on 13<sup>th</sup> and a nice early female Wheatear was at South Crosland the day after. The first Redshank

of the year, two singles, appeared on 15<sup>th</sup> at Ingbirchworth and Blackmoorfoot, where another was seen the following day.

A flock of 300 Golden Plover were present at Maythorn Slack as cold North-easterlies brought some snow. As well as the five Shoveler at Blackmoorfoot 22<sup>nd</sup>, a couple of days of returning Whooper Swan sightings began with a massive total of 118 individuals to Ingbirchworth Res. The first Sand Martin showed itself at the same location on 23<sup>rd</sup>, where even better an Avocet appeared.

What was to prove to be a bumper year for Ring Ouzel passage kicked off with just singles at Dove Stone and Little Don Valley on 24<sup>th</sup>, the second Hen Harrier, a 'ringtail', went over Harden Res. and three White Wagtail were at Meltham SW the following day.

As temperatures began to rise into double figures on South-westerlies which brought rain, a late skein of 240 Pink-footed Geese flew NW over Blackmoorfoot on 26<sup>th</sup> and what was considered to be the same Water Pipit, this time in fine summer plumage, reappeared at Deer Hill for two days. Three Shelduck were at Dewsbury SW and the month ended with the first Willow Warbler at Ingbirchworth on 30<sup>th</sup>.

The first two weeks of **April** arrived with the wind from the Westerly quarter and some fair, dry weather. The first Swallows of the year appeared at Ingbirchworth on the first day, which also coincided with the start of the main Ring Ouzel arrivals in what was going to prove a bumper year. The 2<sup>nd</sup> saw no less than 25 Chiffchaff singing around the Royd Moor area, 400 Golden Plover were still present at Broadstone Res. and a very welcome, perhaps overdue, first for our area, a Black Kite which moved very slowly NE over Wards End Farm. Two more raptors, namely Osprey, were the first of the year on 3<sup>rd</sup>, one N over Ingbirchworth and the other SE over Marsden with, on this same date, two Shoveler on Ringstone Edge and 13 Raven which passed NW over Marsden Moor.

The next new arrivals were three House Martins at Colne Bridge on 7<sup>th</sup> with the first of three 'ringtail' Hen Harrier records coming from Marsden Moor. The following day a Black Redstart visited Buckstones and the first Little Ringed Plover appeared. A very early Yellow Wagtail was at Blackmoorfoot on 9<sup>th</sup> as was the first Common Sandpiper and an Osprey flew N over Buckstones Moss. Royd Moor Res. saw a second-summer Yellow-legged Gull the following day. On 11<sup>th</sup> three more summer visitors arrived namely, Garden Warbler at Hepworth, Lesser Whitethroat at Healy Mills/Kerry's NR and an earlier than usual Reed Warbler at Dewsbury SW.

As the mainly typical April conditions prevailed, sunny periods with showers, another Osprey, this time at Langsett, went over whilst being mobbed by Oystercatchers. On 14<sup>th</sup> a high count of 38 Wheatears were at Whitley Edge and was the overall maximum of a good spring. On the same day a lingering Jack Snipe was at Marsden with another at Dewsbury SW two days later.

Whilst more summer visitors were awaited an adult Yellow-legged Gull visited Ingbirchworth on 18<sup>th</sup> which also saw the first Whitethroat with the following day Grasshopper Warbler and Whinchat and the first returning Dunlin at Blackmoorfoot. It was uneventful then until the first Tree Pipit appeared at Carlecotes Ponds and a Red Kite went W over Hartcliff hill. The 25<sup>th</sup>/26<sup>th</sup> brought two days of hail and a covering of snow on cold Northerlies. This however heralded very early Cuckoos at Winscar and Meltham Mills and conversely a very late singing Brambling with the first Swift, three, arriving at Dewsbury SW. There were yet more arrivals on 26<sup>th</sup> in the form of Sedge Warbler at Horbury SW followed by the first Redstarts on 28<sup>th</sup> and Pied Flycatcher at Netherthong the following day, which also saw a Ringed Plover at Ingbirchworth. As conditions turned milder again a large returning flock of 550 Fieldfare were at Snowden Hill, a Common Tern

was at Ingbirchworth, where also a Black Tern departed E. Then finally, on the final day of the month, two Common Tern at Elland GP and a departing Goldeneye brought this eventful month to a close.

As temperatures continued to rise with no rain or wind until mid-month, the first day of **May** brought another Black Tern, an adult, to Blackmoorfoot with a Hobby at Scout Dyke being the first of seven May records contributing towards another good year for the species. An unusually late Whooper Swan was at Elland GP where the following day two Common Tern visited with a Red Kite over Outlane the first of five records this month. On 5<sup>th</sup> a male Yellow Wagtail was at Wards End Farm where one or two Ring Ouzel were still moving through and 8<sup>th</sup> saw the first of five Whimbrel records. At Blackmoorfoot Swift numbers rose to 50 + on 9<sup>th</sup> the very same day that a Stone-curlew appeared and excellent views were to be had from a busy Potato Lane. More mundanely, on the following day the last late Fieldfare and Ring Ouzels departed the Wards End area where another Yellow Wagtail was seen. The first Spotted Flycatcher of the year was at Langsett Banks on 12<sup>th</sup> and one or two Little Ringed Plover were now in evidence. A Ringed Plover joined a Dunlin at Blackmoorfoot on 13<sup>th</sup> and as for Little Egret, this time around we had to wait until the 14<sup>th</sup> of the month for the first, a single at Elland GP.

The only Marsh Harrier of the month went over Norland Moor on 20<sup>th</sup> and at Ramsden Clough two days later of all things a Hooded Crow was found, no doubt by a very surprised observer.

South-westerlies continued along with mainly mild conditions and the occasional shower. A Tree Pipit was at Carlecotes Ponds on 25<sup>th</sup> and a much awaited singing Wood Warbler appeared at Langsett Banks on 27<sup>th</sup> and with most summer visitors now in an adult Little Gull flew W over Blackmoorfoot on the last day.

The first four days of **June** were warm with a gentle SW wind and on the first of these a Red Kite went over Winscar Res. and with three more seen over the month sightings of this now well established species continued to increase. How long will it be before we can add this species to our list of breeders?

Three Whinchat were around the Wards End Farm area at the beginning of the month and two Shelduck, ever present on the Calder at Saville Town since April, lingered until 15<sup>th</sup>.

Conditions quickly changed on 5<sup>th</sup> when very heavy rain and a SW gale persisted for a whole week. An Artic Tern arrived and departed N at Blackmoorfoot on 9<sup>th</sup>, an adult Yellow-legged Gull visited Winscar on 12<sup>th</sup> and it was nice to hear the first Quail at Broadstone Res. on 14<sup>th</sup> and as the weather calmed again birds were heard here and at two other locations until 21<sup>st</sup>.

The River Calder at Horbury hosted a Little Egret on 15<sup>th</sup>, three Common Tern were at Ingbirchworth on 19<sup>th</sup>, a sighting of a juvenile Goshawk on 22<sup>nd</sup> was very heartening and as heavy rain took over another Little Egret appeared on the Calder and on the last day two Common Tern visited Elland GP.

Turning once again to some of our breeding birds it is difficult on an annual basis to assess the exact situation as this can only be accurately measured over a longer period. Confirmation of successful breeding of Wood Warbler was a pleasant surprise, Willow Tit too, saw breeding confirmed at more than one location, and a good number of Nightjar territories were some of the highlights. Other increases in records were Lesser Whitethroat, Sedge Warbler, and three records of confirmed breeding of Pied Flycatcher. Little Owl also saw five pairs breeding, more than doubling last year's total. Little Ringed Plovers gave us four confirmed records, and even one of

Dunlin, a slight increase in Yellowhammers was also noted. On the downside Swift numbers continue to fall as did Spotted Flycatcher, even though there were four pairs confirmed as breeding. Garden Warbler too were down in numbers, and there were no confirmed cases of breeding Tree Pipit though four males held territories and finally no records at all of Lesser Spotted Woodpecker.

The mild weather continued into **July** and any wind came from the SW. The first couple of days brought little of note apart from c.30 Chiffchaff at Dewsbury SW on 4<sup>th</sup> when three Common Scoter were on Broadstone Res. and the first of three records during the month for the species also occurred at Blackmoorfoot. The following day, however, numbers were eclipsed when Ringstone Edge held a flock of no less than 34 of them.

Black Redstart sightings continued to slowly increase and this time saw one at Deanhead Res. on 6<sup>th</sup>, the same day as a Green Sandpiper showed itself at Dewsbury SW, this individual then remaining till the year end. A nice male Hen Harrier near the Flouch on 7<sup>th</sup> was the highlight and this month also brought another four sightings of Hobby. Wards End Farm hosted another Yellow Wagtail on 10<sup>th</sup> and a Little Gull visited Blackmoorfoot. The following day yet another Little Egret was at Ingbirchworth where it stayed until 15<sup>th</sup> when a Black-tailed Godwit was on the west bank at Blackmoorfoot. The 17<sup>th</sup> saw a Red Kite go SW over Red Lane, Meltham, and Ingbirchworth had the first of three Yellow-legged Gull sightings for the month, at the same location after a brief change in wind direction to the E a Common Tern departed in that direction.

The weather then reverted back to rain and strong South-westerlies as another Common Scoter was present on Royd Moor Res. and a Whimbrel went S over Blackmoorfoot, both on 21<sup>st</sup>. Then little of note until another Little Egret, this time on the Calder at Saville Town on 25<sup>th</sup>, a Lesser Whitethroat visited a New Mill garden and two Arctic Tern visited Blackmoorfoot briefly on 29<sup>th</sup>, when an immature Peregrine was busy hunting overhead. Ingbirchworth provided yet another Mediterranean Gull, this time an adult, and the following day our last Cuckoo was noted.

The last day of the month saw a flurry of activity, the pick of which was a Sanderling at Ringstone Edge, Red Kites over Royd Moor and Scout Dyke, Spotted Flycatcher at Blackmoorfoot and last but not least again at Royd Moor, Pied Flycatcher and a Wood Warbler.

**August** saw the Gulf Stream bring unseasonably cool conditions for the greater part of the month, being very variable throughout including some heavy rainfall. On 1<sup>st</sup> an Arctic Tern departed Blackmoorfoot in a Westerly direction, the day after a Common Tern did the same with no less than 17 of the same species following suit on 4<sup>th</sup>. This same date had a Greenshank and a Ringed Plover present here too, whilst a flock of 22 Mistle Thrushes were in the Wards End area. A Ringed Plover was again at Blackmoorfoot, this time with a Redshank and, to add to the excitement, a Hobby also put in an appearance.

A change of location, to Ingbirchworth, where a Mediterranean Gull was present on 6<sup>th</sup> and Yellow-legged Gulls roosted here and at Langsett, where a Caspian Gull was also seen. A Hobby was hunting over Panna Mill Dam on this same date when the following day one was at Wards End Farm and another was chasing Swallows high over Marsden Station.

Back to Blackmoorfoot where the first of two Black-tailed Godwits occurred, the second being on 13<sup>th</sup>, with 73 Swift flying S the next day and a Little Gull flew W on 18<sup>th</sup>. Wards End Farm had another Hobby on 19<sup>th</sup> and two Yellow Wagtail feeding the following day, with three Spotted Flycatcher doing likewise on 21<sup>st</sup>, the same day as Blackmoorfoot saw the last Pied Flycatcher of the year. A late Garden Warbler was at Wards End Farm on 22<sup>nd</sup>.

Back to Ingbirchworth, a juvenile Black Tern departed E on 23<sup>rd</sup> when a Little Egret was also showing and a Marsh Harrier went over Ringstone Edge. On this same date though, the bird of the month appeared at Blackmoorfoot when a Great White Egret approached from the S and continued W, topping a productive month for this venue. The last Grasshopper Warbler of the year was seen at Scammonden on this same day too. Then little else of note apart from a Merlin at Deer Hill on 27<sup>th</sup>, six Whinchat in the Wards End Farm area on 30<sup>th</sup> the day on which the last Redstart bid us farewell.

Due to a backlash from the series of hurricanes in the Caribbean the first two weeks of **September** were quite turbulent and wet. The 1<sup>st</sup> brought the last Whitethroat of the year to Deanhead Res., and seven Whinchat to the Wards End Farm area, and at the Isle of Skye Quarry the following day a Green Sandpiper appeared and remained until 16<sup>th</sup>. The last Spotted Flycatcher of the year was at Blackmoorfoot on 6<sup>th</sup> when two Yellow Wagtails, also the last of the year, were at Wards End Farm as were eight Stonechat on 9<sup>th</sup>. This same day, as well as deluges of rain, saw a nice flock of eight Ruff fly W over Blackmoorfoot. Again at Blackmoorfoot an Arctic Tern departed E on 10<sup>th</sup> and a juvenile Black Redstart appeared briefly on the barn roof at Wards End Farm. There were more departures on 12<sup>th</sup>, this time two Swift over Blackmoorfoot and as conditions were now a little calmer though still wet, 21 Twite moved through at Wards End Farm, and seven Pintail were at Ringstone Edge Res.

Storm 'Aileen' hit us on 13<sup>th</sup>, and the following day the first Pink-footed Geese went over, the 15<sup>th</sup> brought the last Osprey, as one flew low over Marsden Moor carrying a fish, 200 Swallows went S over Kirkheaton and 30+ Goldcrest were at Langsett Banks with the last Tree Pipit of the year at Wards End Farm.

At Scout Dyke Res. we said goodbye to the last Common Sandpiper of the year on 16<sup>th</sup>, a Marsh Harrier flew W over Close Moss and the only Red Kite of the month passed W over Gunthwaite Dam. Undoubtedly the bird of the month was the sighting of a Red-throated Diver departing high NE from Scout Dyke Res. A busy day was had at Thurlstone on 19<sup>th</sup> producing sixteen Common Buzzards and no less than 60 Skylark. Another Marsh Harrier was viewed going W near Wards End Farm, from where the year's last Whinchat was spotted. At the same site, another last, this time a Hobby which flew W on 21<sup>st</sup> and a Whimbrel flew in the same direction over the Isle of Sky Quarry.

A Merlin was reported at Pule Hill on 23<sup>rd</sup> as mild, misty weather was here for a short period. A few wildfowl visited on 24<sup>th</sup> namely a Shoveler at Ringstone Edge, 26 Wigeon and the only Garganey of the year at Blackmoorfoot with 20 Chiffchaff present at Scammonden too. A Ringed Plover flew NE over the Isle of Skye Quarry and a late Willow Warbler was at Armitage Bridge the day after. Then with heavy rain on South-westerlies setting in the main thing of note was the increasing number of Pink-footed Geese moving over on 28<sup>th</sup> giving us a taste of things to come.

**October** saw more of the same weather conditions throughout much of the month with even foggy starts hampering some visible migration watches. The first Whooper Swans appeared on 3<sup>rd</sup> at Blackmoorfoot and eight Shoveler were at Dewsbury SW on 5<sup>th</sup> as were 20 Teal the following day. First light on 6<sup>th</sup> saw a now rare to our area, Bewick's Swan on March Haigh Res. before departing E shortly afterwards. In the same area 25 Cormorant went over, as did eight Common Buzzard, 13 Jay and 370 Jackdaw. Again a Green Sandpiper was present on the Calder. The following day, 7<sup>th</sup>, saw the first Redwings flying SW over Wards End Farm and as activity began to increase an impressive skein of 34 Barnacle Geese went over the Isle of Sky Quarry, a Red Kite was seen at Broadstone Lodge and a Marsh Harrier and 24 Brambling over Wards End Farm, all these on 8<sup>th</sup>.

The first Fieldfare of the year flew over Blackmoorfoot and the last House Martin of the year was seen over Harden Quarries on 9<sup>th</sup> as the first of more than one Pintail arrived at Blackmoorfoot and a Merlin went over Whitley Edge. There was a lull then until 14<sup>th</sup> when a Mediterranean Gull showed at Blackmoorfoot and the final Wheatear of the year was at Farnley Tyas. On this same date, a Rock Pipit no less, was found at Deer Hill and stayed over till the following day allowing many observers good views. As we entered the busiest period of our year a 'ring-tail' Hen Harrier flew SW over Buckstones and 2,500 Starlings flew W over Wards End Farm on 16<sup>th</sup>. Over 1,500 Pink-footed Geese were seen over our area on 18<sup>th</sup> when a scarce Grey Plover flew W over Deanhead Res., Golden Plover numbers had risen to 250 at Ringstone Edge and 28 Greenfinch called in at Wards End Farm. At this same location a male Black Redstart was present on 19<sup>th</sup> and the last Swallows, three, flew S over Harden Quarries. The last Sand Martins, 16, were at Blackmoorfoot on 21<sup>st</sup> and the busiest day of the visible migration period came on 23<sup>rd</sup> when no less than 10,000 Redwing flew over the area (this without an input from Wards End Farm which was fogged off), 16 Mistle Thrushes and 845 Chaffinch went past Pule Hill too. Undoubtedly one of the highlights of our year was our part of the large influx of Hawfinch which occurred this autumn, no less than 15 were seen with Redwing moving over Harden Quarries, with others over Pule Hill and Wards End Farm. The 23<sup>rd</sup> also saw another Yellow-legged Gull at Blackmoorfoot.

In gale force South-westerlies on 25<sup>th</sup> two Shag struggled W over Wards End Farm and a 'ringtail' Hen Harrier went high in the opposite direction. A total of 220 Goldfinch went past Pule Hill on 26<sup>th</sup> and the following day saw the highest daily count of Woodpigeon, 23,500 viewed flying SW from Wards End Farm. Denby Delph hosted ten Bullfinch on 29<sup>th</sup>, whilst the 30<sup>th</sup> brought a Jack snipe to Wholestone Moor, a Firecrest at Ingbirchworth and a Ring Ouzel to a Meltham garden. The last day of a busy month saw a Little Egret at Bretton Park.

As we entered **November** things began to quieten down a bit, as is the norm, apart from a splendid Black-throated Diver which departed Ingbirchworth Res. on 1<sup>st</sup>, when a Merlin visited Salters Brook and 66 Stock Dove were seen at Bradshaw Moor. Weather conditions were mixed but mainly mild, three Red Kite went over Wholestone Moor on 2<sup>nd</sup> and 30+ Reed Bunting were at Deer Hill. The following day 400+ Pink-footed Geese were seen overhead, with the first Goldeneye arriving, in what would prove to be another sparse winter for them. Before another change in the weather 20 Whooper Swans flew SE over Wards End Farm and the last Ring Ouzel of the year was at the same location on 4<sup>th</sup>.

Temperatures then began to fall and more wintry conditions prevailed for much of the rest of the month bringing frost and the first snow of the winter. The 5<sup>th</sup> saw 17 Whooper Swan flying SE over Harden Quarries and a Peregrine was seen at Royd Moor Res. The following day a total of 700 Pink-footed Geese went over E, a Curlew visited Blackmoorfoot and 1,000 Woodpigeon went over Marsden Moor. A few more wildfowl had arrived in the form of seven Shelduck at Ingbirchworth, two Pintail at Blackmoorfoot and a Pochard at Scammonden, where two Redshank were also seen. By now a few wintering Woodcock were being noted too. Five Goldcrest visited an Almondsbury garden on 11<sup>th</sup>, the same day as an adult Caspian Gull, first seen at Blackmoorfoot, was then seen regularly feeding around the Honley/Meltham area until well into December.

Two Scaup visited Scammonden on 14<sup>th</sup> when a single Common Scoter was at Blackmoorfoot and ten Crossbill also headed N there. The occasional Stonechat was still being recorded on higher ground and 20 Siskin over Royd Moor Hill and 11 Yellowhammer at Emily were counted on 15<sup>th</sup>. The second half of the month produced little else of great note; another Jack Snipe was at Wholestone Moor on 17<sup>th</sup> as was another at Wards End Farm on 23<sup>rd</sup>, whilst Bretton Park hosted five Shoveler along with 24 Goosander on 26<sup>th</sup>. Then with a cold northerly front arriving a flock



of 1,000 Starling were at Whitley Common on 27<sup>th</sup> and the Blackmoorfoot gull roost had reached 3,700 Black-headed and 1,000 Common by the month end.

The below freezing temperatures continued into **December**. Broadstone Res. had 200 Golden Plover and 38 Wigeon on the first day whilst Ingbirchworth saw two Goldeneye present with 18 Teal also here the following day as was the bird of the month, an Iceland Gull at Blackmoorfoot.

Five days of milder weather ensued as 'Storm Caroline' hit. Over 200 Pink-footed Geese were seen over Marsden whilst eight Whooper Swans were at Blackmoorfoot. All changed again on 8<sup>th</sup> when the first snow of the month arrived and night-time temperatures were at minus once again. A Willow Tit was an unexpected visitor to a Hepworth garden and was seen throughout the rest of the month. On 9<sup>th</sup> seven Snipe were seen on Wholstone Moor and a Little Egret was seen as it flew N over Brighthouse. A Green Sandpiper was found at Bretton Park on 11<sup>th</sup> and Stonechats were still being recorded at Blackmoorfoot and Wards End Farm. A 'ring-tailed' Hen Harrier flew down the head of the Colne Valley in a snow storm on 16<sup>th</sup> and 40 Redwing, a good count of late, were at Ingbirchworth. The wintery feel continued when four Woodcock were found at New Mill Dike on 17<sup>th</sup> with 19<sup>th</sup> bringing 350 Lapwing over Colnebridge SP and 80 Fieldfare at Wards End Farm. Up to 62 Siskin were regularly seen in a Holmfirth garden during the second half of the month and six Brambling, the maximum for the latter end of the year, were in a Thongsbridge garden on 20<sup>th</sup>. The November Caspian Gull was again seen at Blackmoorfoot on three dates from 19<sup>th</sup>, and it was then regularly present feeding with Common Gulls in the fields around Honley and Wilshaw for the remainder of the month. The following day a flock of 16 Long-tailed Tit was along the canal at Turnbridge and a Blackcap was a surprise visitor to a Langsett garden. Another Blackcap, this time a male, visited a Meltham garden and 16 Reed Bunting did likewise at Marsden on 30<sup>th</sup>. By the final day things had calmed down in every sense and apart from a Marsh Harrier W over Marsden moor, 40 Goldfinch at Rastrick and Black-headed and Common Gulls reaching 5,500 and 1,200 respectively in the Blackmoorfoot roost a very productive year drew to a close.

Dave Sill

## NOTES ON THE CLASSIFIED LIST

The area covered by the Club comprises Ordnance Survey ten-kilometre squares SE 00, 01, 10, 11, 20 and 21, together with those parts of SE 02 and SE 12 south of the Rivers Ryburn and Calder, plus Elland Gravel Pits and Dewsbury Sewage Farm. See also the map inside the rear cover.

The systematic list follows the sequence and scientific nomenclature of the British Ornithologists' Union's (BOU) *The British List* (eighth edition, 2013), as described in detail in *Ibis* 155: 635-676.

The status of each species is indicated by the following classifications:

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

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

- |                           |                                |
|---------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 1. 1-20 pairs per year    | 4. 510-2500 pairs per year     |
| 2. 21-100 pairs per year  | 5. 2501 or more pairs per year |
| 3. 101-500 pairs per year |                                |

These figures were derived from data gathered during the Club's breeding atlas undertaken in the years 1987-92. Since this time a number of species have decreased alarmingly e.g. Whinchat but, due to a lack of detailed information, it would be an impossible task to judge the numbers now involved. In an effort to overcome this problem, although retaining the original estimate, any species which has shown a noticeable decline has now been indicated.

Species that are 'red listed' in the British Trust for Ornithology's (BTO) 2015 list of Birds of Conservation Concern, i.e. those of high concern, are marked accordingly. Precise locations for records of Schedule 1 species (Protection of Birds Act 1981) and for some other sensitive species have been kept confidential where it is felt that publication might lead to harmful disturbance.

**Abbreviations:** the following have been used in order to keep the text concise:

|     |                |      |                 |
|-----|----------------|------|-----------------|
| c.  | -approximately | GP   | -Gravel Pit     |
| N   | -North         | NR   | -Nature Reserve |
| S   | -South         | SW   | -Sewage Works   |
| E   | -East          | SP   | -Sludge Plant   |
| W   | -West          | Res. | -Reservoir      |
| CP  | -Country Park  | nc   | no count        |
| Viz | -Visible       |      |                 |
| mig | migration      |      |                 |

On page 123 is a complete list, 'The Huddersfield List', of the 274 species and 14 additional distinct races of wild birds that have been recorded in the Huddersfield Birdwatchers' Club area since records began, up to the end of 2017. The List incorporates guidance on when a description is required to support sightings.

All reports of rare and unusual species and races that require a description have been assessed by the Club Records Committee, Yorkshire Naturalists' Union (YNU) Adjudication Panel or the British Birds Rarities Committee (BBRC), as appropriate.

A comprehensive list of co-ordinates of sites within the Club area can be found on our web site:

[www.huddersfieldbirdwatchersclub.co.uk](http://www.huddersfieldbirdwatchersclub.co.uk)

## THE CLASSIFIED LIST 2017

### MUTE SWAN *Cygnus olor*

Resident, occasional breeder (1), 0-3 pairs.

As in 2016, no locality held birds throughout the year. Indeed, there were only five records in the second half of the year. Breeding was confirmed at the same location as last year.

Birds were recorded as follows:

**Ladywood Lakes** – six on 3<sup>rd</sup> January, five on 31<sup>st</sup> January and two on 12<sup>th</sup> November.

**Horbury Strands/Wyke** – two present on the River Calder during the first half of the year had four cygnets by mid-June. There were no further records.

**Bretton Park** – two were present throughout January, but the species was absent when the area was visited in mid-May. Later in the year six were seen on 15<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> October and the species was said to be ‘present’ on 12<sup>th</sup> November.

**Elland GP** – six on 24<sup>th</sup> February, three on 3<sup>rd</sup> May and two on 5<sup>th</sup> May.

**Langsett Res** – a single on 23<sup>rd</sup> March.

**Greenhead Park** – a juvenile on the park pond on 22<sup>nd</sup> October was unusual.

### BEWICK'S SWAN *Cygnus columbianus*

Scarce passage and winter visitor, becoming rarer.

A single on **March Haigh Res.** departed E at 07.50hrs. on 6<sup>th</sup> October (DWS).

That this species is now much rarer than formerly can be judged by appreciating that the two previous records were as long ago as 2013 (2 at Ingbirchworth Res. on 28<sup>th</sup> December) and 2005 (1 at Ringstone Edge Res. on 24<sup>th</sup> November).

### WHOOPE SWAN *Cygnus cygnus*

Scarce passage and winter visitor.

In sharp contrast to last year, which was rather disappointing, there were good numbers of birds during both winter periods. Blackmoorfoot Res., as is usual, commanded the lion's share. A herd of 118 at Ingbirchworth Res. is the largest herd ever recorded in the Club area and must have been an impressive sight.

Birds were seen during the first winter period as follows:

**Blackmoorfoot Res** – in January, two adults from the W U-turned at 09.20hrs. on 4<sup>th</sup> and two adults flew W at 09.35hrs. on 20<sup>th</sup>. In February, four adults departed N at 09.00hrs. on 5<sup>th</sup> and 11 adults flew N at 11.10hrs. on 14<sup>th</sup>. There were also two records in March: 18 (16 adults + 2 juveniles) were present during the afternoon on 22<sup>nd</sup> and a herd of 35 (33 adults + 2 juveniles) were present on 25<sup>th</sup>.

**Ingbirchworth Res** – four flew SW on 7<sup>th</sup> January, a remarkable total of 118 were seen on 22<sup>nd</sup> March; a herd of 78 were already present at 07.30hrs. and these were joined later by a further 40. A herd of 30 were present briefly on 23<sup>rd</sup> March (these birds then relocated to Broadstone Res., where they remained until departing NW at 09.45hrs.).

**Elland GP** – singles on 24<sup>th</sup> February and 3<sup>rd</sup> May (DF). (This is a rather late date for the species, and equals the latest ever in the Club area).

**Ringstone Edge Res** – up to 11 on 5<sup>th</sup>/6<sup>th</sup> March, eight on 22<sup>nd</sup> March and a single on 8<sup>th</sup> October.

**Baitings Res** – a herd of 18 on 10<sup>th</sup> March.

**Langsett Res** – an unaged bird on 22<sup>nd</sup> March.

Birds were seen during the second winter period as follows:

**Blackmoorfoot Res** – two adults arrived at 10.15hrs. and departed S at 11.15hrs. on 3<sup>rd</sup> October, three adults + a juvenile departed SW at 08.30hrs. on 12<sup>th</sup> November and eight (2 adults + 6 juveniles) from the W turned and flew S at 11.10hrs. on 5<sup>th</sup> December.

**March Haigh Res** – eight which flew up the valley into a strong wind on 7<sup>th</sup> October landed on the reservoir at 07.45hrs. and were joined by three more at 08.10hrs.

**Deer Hill** – an adult which flew W at 10.12hrs. on 18<sup>th</sup> October was presumably the same bird seen flying W a few minutes later at Pule Hill, Marsden.

**Langsett Res** – an unaged bird on 30<sup>th</sup> October.

**Bretton Park** – three adults were on the Lower Lake on 31<sup>st</sup> October.

**Digley Res** – an adult on 4<sup>th</sup> November.

**Wards End Farm, Marsden** – 20 flew SE at 09.50hrs. on 4<sup>th</sup> November and three flew SW on 28<sup>th</sup> November.

**Harden Quarries** – a herd of 17 which flew SE at 07.52hrs. on 5<sup>th</sup> November were tracked as they continued over Royd Moor, and what were presumably the same birds were seen flying SE over Rawmarsh near Rotherham at 08.40hrs.

**Broadstone Res** – three unaged birds on 12<sup>th</sup> November and an adult on 20<sup>th</sup> November.

**Linthwaite** – two adults and a juvenile flew W on 28<sup>th</sup> November.

### **BEAN GOOSE** *Anser fabalis*

Rare visitor.

There were two records, both of the race *A. f. rossicus* (Tundra Bean Goose).

A single was present at **Blackmoorfoot**, along with up to 19 Pink-footed Geese, between 11<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> January (MS *et al.*). The flock mainly frequented the fields to the east of the reservoir but they were seen to fly over the reservoir on two occasions. A single, with 14 Pink-footed Geese, was present at **Ringstone Edge** on 20<sup>th</sup> January (DF, AT).

The fact that the Blackmoorfoot bird was last seen on 18<sup>th</sup> January and the Ringstone Edge bird appeared two days later suggests that only one bird may have been involved in these sightings.

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

Common to numerous passage and winter visitor.

In excess of 8,000 birds (42 skeins) were counted passing over during the first winter period and, even though there was likely to be much duplication, the number involved is still impressive. As is usual at this time of year, the majority flew between W and N.

There were several records of three-figure skeins, the following being the maxima:

**7<sup>th</sup> January** – 200 W (100 at 0940hrs. + 100 at 10.10hrs.) at **Blackmoorfoot**, 120 W at 11.45hrs. over **Newsome** and 140 W at 11.55hrs. at **Marsh**.

**17<sup>th</sup> January** – there was a massive north-westerly movement on this date and, even allowing for duplication, at least 2,000 birds were involved. Some 1,684 passed over **Blackmoorfoot**: a single at 09.15hrs. + 13 at 10.05hrs. + 100 at 10.15hrs. + 520 (290 + 230) at 10.30hrs. + 100

at 10.40hrs. + 180 at 10.45hrs. + 580 at 10.50hrs. + 120 at 11.00hrs. + 120 at 11.20hrs. + 450 at 15.45hrs. Some of the 1,000 birds which flew NW in six skeins over **Langsett Res.** between 10.00 and 11.00hrs. may be included in the above. Other large skeins involved 120 WNW at 10.05hrs. over **Huddersfield** and 630 (in 4 skeins) between 10.30 and 10.45hrs. at **Oldfield**.  
**5<sup>th</sup> February** – 950 (in 5 skeins) W during the mid-morning at **Ramsden Clough**, 250 W at 11.30hrs. at **Ringstone Edge**, 250 NW at 12.15hrs. over **Blackmoorfoot**, 270 NE at 12.30hrs. at **Marsden**, 550 (in 5 skeins) W over **Deer Hill** and 280 W over **Holme Styes**.  
**18<sup>th</sup> February** – 200 W over **Lepton**.  
**21<sup>st</sup> February** – 250 W over **Colne Bridge**.  
**26<sup>th</sup> March** – 240 NW at 09.00hrs. at **Blackmoorfoot**. (This is the latest skein recorded at the reservoir by eight days).

A flock of 120 feeding in a field near **Ringstone Edge Res.** on 7<sup>th</sup> January must have been an impressive sight. **Blackmoorfoot**, especially the field to the east, attracted grounded birds in January as follows: up to seven were present on the first four days, then up to 19 were seen between 11<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> (see Bean Goose above). The only other grounded birds involved up to eight with the Greylag flock in the **Ingbirchworth** area between early January and early February, 17 at **Deer Hill** which departed W once the mist had lifted on 8<sup>th</sup> January and three at **Horbury Strands/Wyke** on 11<sup>th</sup> March.

The number of birds passing over the area during the second winter period was nearly as impressive as earlier in the year, with 7,800 being counted in 89 skeins. Records began on 14<sup>th</sup> September, when a small number, which were not visible due to the sun, flew SE over **Marsden**, 44 also flew W over **Deer Hill** and 32 flew E over **Brow Grains, Meltham**. The following day a total of 99 (3 skeins) flew SE over **Marsden**, 75 flew NE at 08.15hrs. over **Pule Hill, Marsden** on 19<sup>th</sup> September and 90 (skeins of 70 and 20) flew E over **Harden Quarries** on the same date. A good percentage of the skeins were heading in a SE direction, as is normal at this time of year, and numbers reached treble-figures on several occasions, the following being the maxima:

**28<sup>th</sup> September** – 105 E at 09.10hrs. over **Isle of Skye Quarry**, 150 NE over **Pule Hill** at 09.20hrs., 150 E at 09.25hrs. at **Blackmoorfoot** and 130 NE over **Marsden** at 10.25hrs.  
**30<sup>th</sup> September** – 130 E at 08.45hrs. at **Royd House Hill**.  
**3<sup>rd</sup> October** – 110 NW at 12.00hrs. over **Bradley Park Golf Course**.  
**10<sup>th</sup> October** – 345 E (115 at 11.45hrs. + 190 at 11.50hrs.) over **Isle of Skye Quarry** and 120 NW at 11.50hrs. over **Marsden**.  
**18<sup>th</sup> October** – at least 430 (325 E at 08.52hrs. + 31 W at 10.23hrs. + 74 W at 10.31hrs. with presumably the same 74 returning E at 10.53hrs.) at **Pule Hill**, 656 (120 E at 09.00hrs. + 82 W at 09.15hrs. + 220 W at 09.25hrs. + 64 W at 10.20hrs. + 170 W at 11.10hrs.) at **Blackmoorfoot**, 110 W at 09.05hrs. over **Isle of Skye Quarry**, 200 W at 09.30hrs. over **Marsden** and 230 W at 11.15hrs. at **Deer Hill**.  
**25<sup>th</sup> October** – 120 tried to fly W into the gale but returned at 08.40hrs. at **Marsden**.  
**3<sup>rd</sup> November** – 170 (50 E at 09.00hrs. + 120 W at 10.15hrs.) at **Blackmoorfoot** and 200 (80 NE at 08.10hrs. + 120 W at 09.50hrs.) over **Marsden**.  
**6<sup>th</sup> November** – 266 E at 08.45hrs. over **Deer Hill**, 180 E at 09.05hrs. at **Blackmoorfoot** and 250 E over **Marsden**.  
**3<sup>rd</sup> December** – 218 NE (200 at 12.25hrs. + 18 at 12.50hrs.) over **Marsden**.  
**16<sup>th</sup> December** – 115 W at 10.55hrs. over **Marsden**.

The only grounded bird was a single at **Scammonden Water** on 7<sup>th</sup> November.

(GREATER) **WHITE-FRONTED GOOSE** *Anser albifrons*

Rare visitor.

There were several records, mainly from the Ingbirchworth area, which made this one of the best years on record. All records, with the exception of the Bretton bird whose race was not determined, involved birds of the European race *A. a. albifrons*.

**Ingbirchworth area** – an adult and first winter were with Greylag Geese between 5<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup> January, a flock of 31 with Greylag Geese on 28<sup>th</sup>/29<sup>th</sup> January were joined by two others on 1<sup>st</sup> February. Thereafter, up to 35 (Broadstone Res. on 27<sup>th</sup> February) were present until the last (11) were noted on 14<sup>th</sup>/15<sup>th</sup> March (NWM, MCW *et al.*).

**Horbury Strands/Wyke** – seven on 26<sup>th</sup> January (DT), eight on 31<sup>st</sup> January (DT), five on 7<sup>th</sup> February and four on 5<sup>th</sup> March (DHP). It is possible that birds were present throughout this period but there were no reports.

**Blackmoorfoot** – a flock of 35 (31 adults + 4 juveniles) in a field to the east of the reservoir on 26<sup>th</sup> January departed to the E at 11.30hrs. (DMP *et al.*).

**Ringstone Edge Res** – two adults and two first-winters on 27<sup>th</sup>/28<sup>th</sup> January were still present on 30<sup>th</sup> January (DT) and 1<sup>st</sup> February (AT).

**Bretton Park** – a single adult with Greylag Geese on 11<sup>th</sup> March (DBu).

**GREYLAG GOOSE** *Anser anser*

Uncommon, decreased to rare/scarse passage visitor, increasing feral visitor.

Almost half of all records featured birds in the Ingbirchworth area, including eight three-figure counts, all but two of which referred to the first winter period. The largest gathering was of c.300 at **Ingbirchworth Res.** on 18<sup>th</sup> January, half of which were in nearby fields. Small groups (up to 26) continued to be recorded here during the summer months. The only three-figure counts for the second winter period came from **Broadstone Res.** where 230 were counted on 1<sup>st</sup> October, **Ingbirchworth** which held 150 on 4<sup>th</sup> October, and **Dewsbury SW** where 175 were present on 31<sup>st</sup> October.

Although recorded from 14 other locations, these were all short-lived occurrences and, with the exception of 30 at **Horbury Strands/Wyke** on 26<sup>th</sup> January, never attained double figures.

The downward turn in occurrences at **Blackmoorfoot Res.** continued, birds being present on only 14 days. All but one of the records fell between mid-January and early June and, with the exception of seven which flew W at 09.20hrs. on 18<sup>th</sup> February, the others were of no more than four individuals for a single day. The only other record involved a single which flew S at 09.30hrs. on 4<sup>th</sup> November.

Single Greylag Goose x Canada Goose hybrids were present at **Langsett Res.** on 4<sup>th</sup> August and **Ingbirchworth Res.** on 28<sup>th</sup> August and 11<sup>th</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup> September.

(GREATER) **CANADA GOOSE** *Branta canadensis*

Resident breeder, increased to (2-3), 50-150 pairs.

Not surprisingly, well over 100 records were received of this common species. Having said that, several localities suffered from under recording, with no records being received from some favoured localities for extended periods.

Monthly maxima at regularly occupied sites were as follows:

|                   | Jan | Feb | Mar | Apr | May | Jun | Jul | Aug | Sep | Oct | Nov | Dec |
|-------------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| Blackmoorfoot Res | 0   | 8   | 14  | 6   | 2   | 14  | 10  | 30  | 7   | 18  | 0   | 4   |
| Ingbirchworth Res | 350 | 311 | 305 | 13  | 12  | 19  | 69  | 109 | 160 | 303 | 308 | 300 |
| Langsett Res      | nc  | nc  | 43  | nc  | 17  | nc  | 110 | 41  | nc  | nc  | nc  | nc  |

At **Blackmoorfoot Res.** birds were very sporadic in appearance, with occurrences on a maximum of seven days per month with the exceptions of 15 in March, 19 in April and 13 in August, and no flocks remained for more than three days duration. Flock size rarely exceeded 15 (usually less than 10), but between 20 and 30 were present on eight days in August and 18 flew W on 3<sup>rd</sup> October.

In total birds were reported from 23 locations (26 in 2016) but only the following (as well as those in the above table) had counts in excess of 25+ on at least one occasion (maxima shown):

**Ringstone Edge Res** – up to 173 on three January dates, 62 on 1<sup>st</sup> February, 140 on 24<sup>th</sup> September and 240 on 26<sup>th</sup> September.

**Bretton Park** – 47 on 25<sup>th</sup> January.

**Horbury Strands/Wyke** – 80 on 26<sup>th</sup> January, 110 on 12<sup>th</sup> November and 136 on 19<sup>th</sup> November,

**Scout Dike Res** – 111 on 18<sup>th</sup> February and 30 on 26<sup>th</sup> February.

**Winscar Res** – c.38 on 15<sup>th</sup> May.

**Deanhead Res** – 46 on 1<sup>st</sup> July.

**Scammonden Water** – 135 on 10<sup>th</sup> August, 240 on 28<sup>th</sup> September and up to 247 on four November dates.

**March Haigh Res** – 28 on 2<sup>nd</sup> November.

Breeding was reported from five sites (4 in both 2015 and 2016):

**Elland GP** – a pair with seven goslings in early May.

**Langsett Res** – a pair with five goslings in mid-May.

**Wessenden Res** – six adults with 12 goslings in late May.

**Greenhead Park** – a pair with three goslings in late May.

**Winscar Res** – four broods totally 17+ gosling in late May.

A colour-ringed bird at **Ossett Spa SW** (red with white lettering – BAZZ) on 23<sup>rd</sup> April had been ringed as an adult at Bowness, Cumbria on 29<sup>th</sup> June 2014. The bird had travelled 118km in a SE direction.

### **BARNACLE GOOSE** *Branta leucopsis*

Rare visitor and occasional feral breeder (1), 0-1 pairs.

A skein of 34 flew high SE over the **Isle of Skye Quarry** at 10.39hrs. on 8<sup>th</sup> October (DHP).

Reports of a skein of 46 over sites in Lancashire and Greater Manchester on the same date, coupled with a large movement along the east coast, suggests that these birds were of a wild origin.

### (COMMON) **SHELDUCK** *Tadorna tadorna*

Uncommon passage visitor.

With records from only six locations, the drop in inland occurrences continues. Once again, Blackmoorfoot Res. hosted the lion's share.



**Blackmoorfoot Res** – in the first half of the year, four were present on 7<sup>th</sup> January, a single on 29<sup>th</sup> January and, in February, two on 13<sup>th</sup>, five on 17<sup>th</sup>, and singles on 21<sup>st</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup>. There were then no records until an adult and juvenile were present on 13<sup>th</sup> August and three on 29<sup>th</sup> August. In October a single on 9<sup>th</sup> was followed by four the following day and five on 30<sup>th</sup>. The only other record involved four on 7<sup>th</sup> November.

Four were at **Ringstone Edge Res.** on 7<sup>th</sup> January, with six there on 19<sup>th</sup> January, and four on 10<sup>th</sup> October. Three were present at **Dewsbury SW** on 28<sup>th</sup> March and a single remained between 4<sup>th</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup> April, two were also present on 14<sup>th</sup> June. Two were on the River Calder at **Savile Town** on several dates between 5<sup>th</sup> April and 15<sup>th</sup> June, and may have been present throughout this period. The only other records involved seven at **Ingbirchworth Res.** on 7<sup>th</sup> November with a single at nearby **Broadstone Res.** on the same day.

#### **MANDARIN DUCK** *Aix galericulata*

Rare to scarce visitor. Has bred.

With the exception of single January and March records, the other records featured sightings in the second half of the year. As in 2016, there were no long-staying individuals.

Three males and three females were present at **Ryburn Res.** on 18<sup>th</sup> January (PG) and a male was seen at **Ossett Spa SW** on 26<sup>th</sup> March (DHP). Later in the year, a juvenile (probably a male) was seen at **Gunthwaite Dam** on 17<sup>th</sup> July (DBu, AK) and 22<sup>nd</sup> July (DMP, SP); a male was associating with the Mallard at **Bretton Park** on 19<sup>th</sup> October (CDA); a solo male at **Windy Bank Res.** remained from 23<sup>rd</sup> October until 11<sup>th</sup> November, when the dam was drained (DMP, DHP, MW); and three males and two females were on the River Ryburn at **Ripponden** on 21<sup>st</sup> December (AT).

The Gunthwaite Dam bird, although a fully grown juvenile, was lacking primaries (absence clearly visible on a photograph) and, as it is known that no birds bred on site, it appears it was pinioned and therefore deliberately released.

#### (EURASIAN) **WIGEON** *Anas penelope*

Common passage and winter visitor.

Of the 110 records received (from 14 waters), 49 referred to the first four months of the year, with one unusual mid-May sighting of four birds at **Ossett Spa SW**. One notably high count for the first-winter period was of 40 at **Castle Dam** on 4<sup>th</sup> January, but this figure was eclipsed by counts of 55 at **Meal Hill Lake** on 7<sup>th</sup> March, as well as 58 and 55 at **Broadstone Res.** on 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> March respectively. The same favoured sites yielded high second winter counts with 34 at **Meal Hill Lake** on 15<sup>th</sup> November, and 65 at **Broadstone Res.** on 23<sup>rd</sup> November and 38 there on 1<sup>st</sup> December. It should be borne in mind that these two favoured venues are only a mile or so apart, and birds seen at Meal Hill Lake are often responding to frequent disturbance by dog walkers at the reservoir, and seek the relative peace of a strictly private site, where limited access makes accurate daily counts difficult.

Other double-figure January counts involved 40 at **Castle Dam** on 4<sup>th</sup>, 15 at **Dewsbury SW** on 14<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup>, 21 at **Royd Moor Res.** on 17<sup>th</sup>, and 16 at **Ossett Spa SW** on 31<sup>st</sup>. A flock of 18 were on the River Calder at **Savile Town** on 26<sup>th</sup> February. Another 18 were at **Ossett Spa SW** on 11<sup>th</sup> March, and 34 were there on 12<sup>th</sup> November. Counts at **Blackmoorfoot Res.**, although there were only seven in the first winter period, reached a high of 11 on 7<sup>th</sup> April, and then the high of 26 on

24<sup>th</sup> September was one of numerous second-winter counts which indicated the regular presence of small numbers of this species.

**GADWALL** *Anas strepera*

Uncommon passage and winter visitor. Has bred.

There were reports from nine sites (8 in 2016 and 11 in 2015), with the highest tally being of nine birds. As is usual in the Club area, most records were during the first half of the year.

Birds were recorded as follows:

**Bretton Park** – birds were said to be ‘present’ on 5<sup>th</sup> January, singles were seen on 20<sup>th</sup> March and 15<sup>th</sup> October, and birds were again said to be ‘present’ on 19<sup>th</sup> October and 12<sup>th</sup> November.

**Dewsbury SW** – in January, four were present on 5<sup>th</sup>, nine on 12<sup>th</sup>, and four (2 males + 2 females) on 16<sup>th</sup>.

**Blackmoorfoot Res** – a male was present on 8<sup>th</sup> January, a male and female on 19<sup>th</sup> January, and three, of which two were adult males, on 4<sup>th</sup> November.

**Gunthwaite Dam** – a male and female on 25<sup>th</sup> January.

**Horbury Strands/Wyke** – two on 26<sup>th</sup> January, a male on 14<sup>th</sup> February, four on 4<sup>th</sup> March and five on 10<sup>th</sup> March.

**Ingbirchworth Res** – two males and a female on 28<sup>th</sup> January and a male and female on 10<sup>th</sup> March.

**Scout Dike Res** – two were present on 18<sup>th</sup> February and, in December, up to six (3 males + 3 females) were present on four dates towards the month end.

**Ossett Spa SW** – four on 31<sup>st</sup> January, three on 11<sup>th</sup> March, five on 26<sup>th</sup> March, a male and female on 9<sup>th</sup> April, two males on 14<sup>th</sup> April, and four on 21<sup>st</sup> May.

**Royd Moor Res** – a male and female departed E on 5<sup>th</sup> May.

(COMMON) **TEAL** *Anas crecca*

Resident breeder (1), 1-20 pairs. Common passage and winter visitor.

Of the 117 records received for this species, 64 referred to sightings in the first half of the year, and birds were seen at 17 venues.

Although several sites held birds for much of the first winter period, **Dewsbury SW** was matchless, starting the year with 96 on 4<sup>th</sup> January, 158 on 14<sup>th</sup> January and 140 three days later. These were the only three-figure counts from any locality during the whole of the year. **Horbury Strands/Wyke** attracted more modest numbers, with 13 on 4<sup>th</sup> January, 12 on 2<sup>nd</sup> February, rising to 15 on 7<sup>th</sup> and c.30 on 19<sup>th</sup>.

Counts at **Bretton Park** twice reached double figures, with c.31 on 25<sup>th</sup> January and 11 on 26<sup>th</sup> November. Three other sites yielded double-figure counts; 13 were at **Langsett Res.** on 5<sup>th</sup> February, **Ossett Spa SW** held ten on 11<sup>th</sup> March, and 18 were at **Ingbirchworth Res.** on 2<sup>nd</sup> December. Although **Dewsbury SW** yielded the second winter’s highest count, this consisted of a rather more modest gathering of 20 birds on 6<sup>th</sup> October.

As for **Blackmoorfoot**, July was the only month when this species was absent, and small numbers were recorded on several days in most months, with a sustained presence in the first two months and throughout the autumn, but with markedly fewer records for December. All records, with the exceptions of 11 on 6<sup>th</sup> January, 14 on 24<sup>th</sup> September, and 15 on 9<sup>th</sup> November, referred to single

figure assemblages.

No specific evidence was offered of breeding, although a few records mentioned the presence of a male and female at the relevant time of year.

**MALLARD** *Anas platyrhynchos*

Resident breeder (3), 100-250 pairs. Common, but decreasing, winter visitor.

Over 200 records were received from 48 widely scattered locations, with maximum numbers at regularly counted sites as follows:

|                   | Jan | Feb | Mar | Apr | May | Jun | Jul | Aug | Sep | Oct | Nov | Dec |
|-------------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| Blackmoorfoot Res | 38  | 36  | 29  | 21  | 19  | 21  | 50  | 52  | 43  | 42  | 26  | 21  |
| Ingbirchworth Res | 64  | 55  | 48  | 42  | 48  | 53  | 56  | 70  | 72  | 35  | 76  | 73  |
| Langsett Res      | 40  | 37  | 10  | 8   | 27  | 16  | nc  | nc  | nc  | nc  | nc  | nc  |

Elsewhere notable counts (40+) were received from the following sites:

**Holmfirth** – 87 on the River Holme on 3<sup>rd</sup> January. Most, if not all, of these birds are feral and not pure bred.

**Greenhead Park** – c.50 on 14<sup>th</sup> January and 22<sup>nd</sup> October. These birds, like those in Holmfirth mentioned above, are unlikely to be of pure stock.

**Dove Stone Res** – 43 on 17<sup>th</sup> February.

**Winscar Res** – 42 on 12<sup>th</sup> June.

**Cupwith Res** – 70 on 21<sup>st</sup> June and 80 on 26<sup>th</sup> October.

**Ringstone Edge** – 46 on 28<sup>th</sup> September.

Breeding (ducklings present) was recorded from several locations: **Blackmoorfoot Res** – 148 with 17 reaching the flying stage; **Isle of Skye Quarry** – six; **Hey Green** – two broods; **Sandhill, Marsden** – two; **Armitage Bridge** – four; **Redbrook Res** – four; **Huddersfield Stadium** – nine; **Turnbridge (Broad Canal)** – three; **Winscar Res** – two brood of two; **Langsett Res** – three broods totaling 17 ducklings; **Cliff Wood** – four; **Whitley Common** – nine; **Ingbirchworth Res** – 14 broods totaling 105 ducklings.

Although reported as an unusual sighting, the two adults stood on a house roof in **Brockholes** on 13<sup>th</sup> March last year may not be all that unusual after all, as this year four were performing the same feat on 5<sup>th</sup> May.

A male Mallard x Shoveler hybrid was present at **Ingbirchworth Res.** on 9<sup>th</sup> December (MCW).

(NORTHERN) **PINTAIL** *Anas acuta*

Scarce to uncommon passage and winter visitor.

This species is becoming increasingly rare in the Club area, and was only recorded from three locations (4 in 2016 and 3 in 2015). Blackmoorfoot Res., as usual, commanded the lion's share.

**Blackmoorfoot Res** – a male and female on 17<sup>th</sup> January, a female-type on 22<sup>nd</sup> September and, in October, three female-types on 9<sup>th</sup>, three males on 15<sup>th</sup>, a female-type on 23<sup>rd</sup>, two female-types on 30<sup>th</sup>, and two males on 7<sup>th</sup>/8<sup>th</sup> November.

**Ringstone Edge Res** – had five males on 18<sup>th</sup> January, a male and female which departed W on

5<sup>th</sup> March, and seven were present on 12<sup>th</sup> September.

**Boshaw Whams** – a male on 4<sup>th</sup> March.

**GARGANEY** *Anas querquedula*

Rare passage visitor.

An eclipse male at **Blackmoorfoot Res.** on 24<sup>th</sup> September (MLD) was the only record.

(NORTHERN) **SHOVELER** *Anas clypeata*

Scarce to uncommon passage and winter visitor.

This was another disappointing year, with reports from just seven locations (5 in 2016 and 12 in 2015).

**Horbury Strands/Wyke** – a male on the River Calder on 4<sup>th</sup> January.

**Ossett Spa SW** – five males and two females on 31<sup>st</sup> January, 11 on 12<sup>th</sup> November, and 14 on 19<sup>th</sup> November.

**Savile Town** – five on the River Calder on 26<sup>th</sup> February.

**Dewsbury SW** – up to nine were present on six dates between 4<sup>th</sup> January and 5<sup>th</sup> April. Later in the year, eight were seen on 5<sup>th</sup> October and five the following day.

**Ringstone Edge Res** – a male and female on 4<sup>th</sup> March and 3<sup>rd</sup> April, and a single on 24<sup>th</sup> September.

**Blackmoorfoot Res** – the only record involved three males and two females on 22<sup>nd</sup> March.

**Bretton Park** – birds were said to be ‘present’ on 12<sup>th</sup> November and a flock of 15 was seen on 26<sup>th</sup> November.

(COMMON) **POCHARD** *Aythya ferina*

Uncommon passage and winter visitor. Has bred.

With records from seven locations, although a marked improvement on the five in 2016 and three in 2015, the fortunes of this decreasing species continues to raise concern.

**Bretton Park** – birds were said to be ‘present’ on 5<sup>th</sup> January, and a female was seen on 11<sup>th</sup> March.

**Blackmoorfoot Res** – two females on 20<sup>th</sup> January and a male the following day. Later in the year, in October, three (2 males) were present on 10<sup>th</sup>, a female-type on 16<sup>th</sup> and five (4 males) on 28<sup>th</sup>.

**Ingbirchworth Res** – a male on 6<sup>th</sup> February, a female from 5<sup>th</sup> to 8<sup>th</sup> March, then, in October, a female on 15<sup>th</sup> with a male and female the following day and two females on 17<sup>th</sup>, in November, a female was present on 1<sup>st</sup>, 6<sup>th</sup>, 13<sup>th</sup>, and from 23<sup>rd</sup> to 28<sup>th</sup> December.

**Scout Dike Res** – a female on 18<sup>th</sup> February.

**Ringstone Edge Res** – a male on 27<sup>th</sup> January and 1<sup>st</sup> February may have been present throughout this period.

**Windy Bank Res** – a single on 17<sup>th</sup> August.

**Scammonden Water** – a male on 9<sup>th</sup> November.

**TUFTED DUCK** *Aythya fuligula*

Resident breeder (1), 5-20 pairs. Common passage and winter visitor.

Maximum numbers at regularly counted sites were as follows:

|                   | Jan | Feb | Mar | Apr | May | Jun | Jul | Aug | Sep | Oct | Nov | Dec |
|-------------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| Blackmoorfoot Res | 0   | 2   | 2   | 4   | 2   | 4   | 5   | 3   | 5   | 7   | 3   | 2   |
| Ingbirchworth Res | 6   | 12  | 17  | 8   | 6   | 1   | 1   | 1   | 3   | 2   | 2   | 14  |
| Bretton Park      | 30  | nc  | 31  | nc  | nc  | nc  | nc  | nc  | nc  | nc  | nc  | nc  |
| Windy Bank Res    | 6   | 10  | 5   | 5   | 2   | 2   | 9   | 10  | 4   | 10  | 0   | 2   |

Once again, the numbers in the table above give a false impression of occupancy at **Blackmoorfoot Res.** During the first half of the year birds were only recorded on 32 days (33 in 2016 and 56 in 2015), birds were then present on a near daily basis between 1<sup>st</sup> July and 7<sup>th</sup> September (rather surprisingly these are the same dates as last year), but thereafter birds were only recorded on a further 24 dates to 21<sup>st</sup> December.

A further 182 records were received. Altogether, the total number of sites where this species was present amounted to at least 28, some holding small numbers throughout the year, but the only double figure counts, other than those mentioned above, involved up to 31 at **Bretton Park** throughout the first winter period, 17 at **Scout Dike Res.** on 4<sup>th</sup> March, 13 at **Meal Hill Lake** on 28<sup>th</sup> March, and 11 at **Dewsbury SW** on 13<sup>th</sup> April.

Breeding was confirmed at three locations: **Brun Clough Res.** (3 small ducklings in mid-July), **Windy Bank Res.** (5 ducklings in mid-July), and **Savile Town** (5 small ducklings on the River Calder in late July).

(GREATER) **SCAUP** *Aythya marila*

Rare to scarce passage and winter visitor.

There was a slight increase in records, but this only amounted to sightings from four localities.

The only record during the first half of the year involved three males and two females at **Blackmoorfoot Res.** on 2<sup>nd</sup> January (MLD, GK *et al.*).

There were then no further sightings until October, when two males and a female were seen at **Ingbirchworth Res.** on 17<sup>th</sup> (NWM, DHP) and four days later a male was present at the same site (DMP, SP). This bird then relocated to **Broadstone Res.**, where it was also seen the next day (DHP, SP *et al.*). Two females were present at **Scammonden Water** on 14<sup>th</sup> November (DT).

**COMMON SCOTER** *Melanitta nigra*

Scarce passage and winter visitor. Red listed.

Records were received from eight waters. Interestingly, birds occurred on four waters over a three day period in early July.

**Ingbirchworth Res** – a male on 6<sup>th</sup> February (MCW), a female on 8<sup>th</sup> March (MCW), a female-type on 3<sup>rd</sup> July (NWM), and three (2 males) on 20<sup>th</sup> July (NWM).

**Winscar Res** – a male on 26<sup>th</sup> May (II).

**Blackmoorfoot Res** – there were seven records (10 in 2016). In July, two males were present on 4<sup>th</sup> (MLD, GBS *et al.*), a single male on 11<sup>th</sup> (MLD, GBS) and three (2 males) on 20<sup>th</sup> (MLD, GK, GBS). A female-type was present on 17<sup>th</sup> September (MLD, GK, TW) and, in November, four female-types departed W at 09.10hrs. on 4<sup>th</sup> (MLD, GBS *et al.*) and two female-types were present on 29<sup>th</sup> (MLD, GBS *et al.*). The only other record involved an immature on 2<sup>nd</sup> December (MLD, GBS *et al.*).

**Broadstone Res** – eight (6 males) on 4<sup>th</sup> July (DHP).

**Ringstone Edge Res** – an impressive flock of 34 (27 males) on 5<sup>th</sup> July (DT).

**Royd Moor Res** – a female-type on 21<sup>st</sup> July (AK).

**Booth Wood Res** – five unsexed birds on 30<sup>th</sup> July (DF).

**Scammonden Water** – a female-type on 14<sup>th</sup> November (DT).

### (COMMON) **GOLDENEYE** *Bucephala clangula*

Uncommon winter visitor.

Records were received from just six sites (13 in 2016 and 16 in 2015), and away from Blackmoorfoot all but three reports referred to the first four months of the year.

At **Blackmoorfoot Res.** birds reverted to only sporadic occurrences, being present on only 19 days between 1<sup>st</sup> January and 9<sup>th</sup> March. Numbers never exceeded three, and no birds remained for more than three days. An immature here on 31<sup>st</sup> August (MLD, GBS *et al.*) was unusual. Returning birds were first encountered in late October: an immature on 27<sup>th</sup>/28<sup>th</sup> and eight (2 males) on 31<sup>st</sup>. Thereafter, up to four, but usually only one or two, were present on 13 dates between 3<sup>rd</sup> November and the year end.

Elsewhere, the vast majority of sightings occurred at **Ingbirchworth Res.**, where one or two were present on 19 dates between 20<sup>th</sup> February and 30<sup>th</sup> April. Records away from these two sites came from the River Calder at **Horbury Strands/Wyke**, where six were seen on 4<sup>th</sup> January, and by 20<sup>th</sup> of that month numbers had risen to nine, of which six were males; a male and female were also present here on 7<sup>th</sup> February and a male on 14<sup>th</sup> April. A male and female were on **March Haigh Res.** on 9<sup>th</sup> February and 3<sup>rd</sup> March, and three days later a male and female were seen on **Langsett Res.**

Records in the second winter period were very sparse and, with the exception of the few at Blackmoorfoot Res. (see above) only amounted to a female at **Scammonden Water** on 13<sup>th</sup> November with a male there the following day, and a male and female at **Ingbirchworth Res.** on 1<sup>st</sup> December.

### **GOOSANDER** *Mergus merganser*

Common passage and winter visitor. Has bred in small numbers since 2007.

Reports were received from 29 sites (21 in 2016 and 31 in 2015) with most referring to the first five months of the year. There were very few records during the summer months, but three pairs bred: two along the River Calder and one along the River Aire.

Blackmoorfoot Res. was the only locality with regular counts, and the figures in the table below indicate the monthly maxima from this site, and are followed by a summary of the year's records.

|                   | Jan | Feb | Mar | Apr | May | Jun | Jul | Aug | Sep | Oct | Nov | Dec |
|-------------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| Blackmoorfoot Res | 15  | 9   | 6   | 2   | 1   | 1   | 0   | 2   | 2   | 9   | 11  | 14  |

At **Blackmoorfoot Res.** up to 15 (but usually less than 10) were present on a near daily basis between 1<sup>st</sup> January and 29<sup>th</sup> March (280 bird/days) with one or two on eight April dates and singles on 3<sup>rd</sup> May and 1<sup>st</sup> June. There were then no records until two juveniles were present on 20<sup>th</sup> August, a single female-type on 25<sup>th</sup> September and two female-types on 30<sup>th</sup> September. Thereafter, up to 14, but usually less than nine, were present on a further 59 dates between 5<sup>th</sup> October and the year end (265 bird/days). The annual number of bird/days totalled 562 (539 in 2016).

With records in the first half of the year from 20 locations, the species was widely distributed, but numbers rarely achieved more than half a dozen (but see Blackmoorfoot above), the exceptions being as follows; 13 (9 males) were in **Bretton Park** on 5<sup>th</sup> January, 12 (8 males) were at **Sparth Res.** on 25<sup>th</sup> January, and ten (7 males) were on the River Aire at **Elland GP** on 4<sup>th</sup> May.

With the exception of breeding birds, the only summer record involved an impressive flock of 15 males which flew SE over **Digley Res.** on 4<sup>th</sup> June.

There were then no sightings, other than the two at Blackmoorfoot on 20<sup>th</sup> August (see above) until 22<sup>nd</sup> September, when five redheads flew S over **Harden Quarries**, and eight days later a single flew S at **Royd Moor Hill**. The species continued to be scarce during the following three months, which yielded records from a further 11 locations. As in the first half of the year, most records were of just two birds, often a male and a female, only occasionally up to four. Numbers in excess were limited to a party of six (3 males) on **Panna Mill Dam** on 3<sup>rd</sup> October (this species is rarely recorded at this site); 11 (2 S + 9 E) at **Harden Quarries** on 12<sup>th</sup> October; five on the River Calder at **Dewsbury** on 6<sup>th</sup> November; and what proved to be the biggest tally of the year, 24 at **Bretton Park** on 26<sup>th</sup> November.

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

Resident breeder (1), 5-20 pairs.

Birds were reported from 17 localities (7 in 2016 and 10 in 2015), but only at two of last years' sites were birds seen again this year. Despite this increase in localities, there were no records of breeding having taken place. Only one double figure count was forthcoming and birds were as follows:

**High Hoyland** – about ten were in the game crop on 21<sup>st</sup> January, two on 1<sup>st</sup> December, and five on 28<sup>th</sup> December.

**Gunthwaite Dam** – two on 20<sup>th</sup> and three on 22<sup>nd</sup> February.

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

**Bretton Park** – a single on 15<sup>th</sup> March.

**Dalton** – one in a garden on 30<sup>th</sup> March.

**Cheesegate Nab** – two on 2<sup>nd</sup> April.

**Wards End Farm, Marsden** – birds were seen between here and Lower Green Owlers on 28 dates following the first, two birds, on 7<sup>th</sup> April. Up to three were then seen regularly until seven were present on 4<sup>th</sup> and 29<sup>th</sup> November and eight the following day. Numbers then diminished and were down to two by 20<sup>th</sup> December. This run of records strongly suggests that these birds had been released.

**Hullock Bank** – a single on 29<sup>th</sup> April.

**Sally Wood, Shepley** – one on 30<sup>th</sup> April.  
**Horn Lane, Ingbirchworth** – a single on 6<sup>th</sup> May.  
**Ingbirchworth Res** – two on 11<sup>th</sup> May.  
**Dearne Dike Lane, Broadstone** – singles on 11<sup>th</sup> May and 22<sup>nd</sup> June.  
**Marsden** – two on 25<sup>th</sup> May.  
**Cliff Wood** – a single on 14<sup>th</sup> June.  
**Thurstonland Bank** – one on 18<sup>th</sup> October.  
**Meltham** – six in a field off Slaithwaite Road on 18<sup>th</sup> October.  
**Botany Bay, Lepton** – six on 5<sup>th</sup> December.

**RED GROUSE** *Lagopus lagopus*  
Resident breeder (3), 100-300 pairs.

Once again the number of localities from which records were received was down, 12 as opposed to the 16 in 2016 and breeding was only reported from **Wessenden Moor**, **Deer Hill** and **Langsett**.

Birds were reported in all months apart from August and September but counts rarely reached double figures with the exceptions of 11 on **Wessenden Moor** on 24<sup>th</sup> May, and 15 in the **Little Don Valley** on 19<sup>th</sup> June.

**GREY PARTRIDGE** *Perdix perdix*  
Resident breeder (2), 50-100 pairs. Red listed.

Records were received from 19 localities (3 more than last year) but breeding was only confirmed at **Gunthwaite Dam** though birds were present during the breeding season at another five locations. Although there were several records of up to six birds, no counts amounted to double figures and nine at **Gunthwaite Dam** on 19<sup>th</sup> July with the same number at **Lucy Lane, Lepton** on 17<sup>th</sup> November were the maxima.

Records from **Blackmoorfoot** were spread throughout the year and, although rather sporadic, they suggest that this secretive species may be resident in the Meltham Cop/fields to the west of the reservoir area. Numbers rarely exceeded two, but four were present on 7<sup>th</sup> April, seven on 18<sup>th</sup> October and six on 7<sup>th</sup> December. Unlike the previous two years, there was no evidence of breeding. The only record away from this area involved two in a field to the east of the reservoir on 2<sup>nd</sup> May.

**QUAIL** *Coturnix coturnix*  
Scarce to rare summer visitor and occasional breeder.

Following last year's absence, there was a good run of records, most of which were from the Ingbirchworth area.

**Broadstone Res** – a single singing between 14<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> June was joined by a second the following day, both of which remained until 26<sup>th</sup> (AAH, MCW *et al.*).  
**Boshaw Whams** – a single singing on 18<sup>th</sup> June (II).  
**Ingbirchworth Res** – a single singing on 26<sup>th</sup> June (MCW).



(COMMON) **PHEASANT** *Phasianus colchicus*  
Resident breeder (3), 200-500 pairs.

Although records were received from 41 localities rather than the 32 of last year, it must surely still be a case of under recording. Breeding too was only noted from eight areas.

Of the 80 records received, with the exception of double figures counts throughout the year at **Wards End Farm, Marsden** the only other double figure count involved 14 at **Hazelhead** on 23<sup>rd</sup> May.

Although up to four were present throughout the year at **Blackmoorfoot** there was no evidence of breeding

**RED-THROATED DIVER** *Gavia stellata*  
Rare visitor.

A single summer-plumaged adult on **Scout Dike Res.** departed high to the NE on 18<sup>th</sup> September (NWM, DHP *et al.*).

**BLACK-THROATED DIVER** *Gavia arctica*  
Rare visitor.

A first-winter at **Ingbirchworth Res.** on 1<sup>st</sup> November departed towards Broadstone Res. but could not be re-located (DG, MCW).

(GREAT) **CORMORANT** *Phalacrocorax carbo*  
Common passage and winter visitor, increasing.

Records were received from 37 localities, a sharp increase on the 29 of the previous year. The number of recorded sightings was massively up from the 94 of 2016 to 187, and this doesn't include those simply recorded as 'present'. Many sightings were of flyover singles and came from a variety of places, **Gunthwaite Dam, Brighthouse, Holme Styes, Rastrick, Broadstone Res., Brownhill Res., Crosland Moor, Netherton, Armitage Bridge** and **Deer Hill**. A single that flew NE over **Fixby** on 6<sup>th</sup> January was the first the observer had recorded in 25 years at that address.

**Scout Dike Res** – up to three were present throughout January/February and on several occasions in March/April. There were then no records until early August, after which birds were present on a daily basis until the year end. Numbers varied daily, but up to six were present in September, 14 on 22<sup>nd</sup> October, and 13 on 20<sup>th</sup> December.

**Boshaw Whams** – up to five were present throughout the year.

**Blackmoorfoot Res** – birds were present on a total of 197 dates (102 in 2016 and 123 in 2015) with records spanning all months. In the first half of the year the months with the highest number of records were February (15 days), March (21) and April (16). Later in the year birds were present on a near daily basis between early August and early December. Numbers involved were usually low (mainly 1-3, occasionally up to 5) but there were seven on 24<sup>th</sup> February, ten arrived from the NE on 1<sup>st</sup> August, six were present on 29<sup>th</sup> September, seven on 20<sup>th</sup> October and six on 13<sup>th</sup> November. Overflying/departing birds were only witnessed on a small number of occasions, with

approximately equal numbers moving west (the normal direction) and south. The total number of bird/days reached 396 (far higher than the previous high of 266 in 2015).

**Colne Bridge SP** – seen very regularly throughout the year sometimes overflying, sometimes on ponds, river or canal and usually singly.

**Ladywood Lakes** – singles were present on 3<sup>rd</sup> and 31<sup>st</sup> January, 2<sup>nd</sup> February and 12<sup>th</sup> November.

**Dewsbury** – varying numbers were seen regularly on the River Calder close to the town centre with a maximum of 12 on 4<sup>th</sup> January.

**Ingbirchworth Res** – birds were present throughout most of the year, with occurrences on a near daily basis between early April and early December. Up to three birds were the norm, but four were present on 23<sup>rd</sup> August and six on 12<sup>th</sup> September.

**Sparth** – a first-winter departed SW on 25<sup>th</sup> January.

**Horbury Strands/Wyke** – a single on 26<sup>th</sup> January and four on the canal on 21<sup>st</sup> September.

**Horbury SW** – recorded on nine dates on the River Calder between late January and mid-November. There were never less than three birds present with a maximum of ten on 19<sup>th</sup> November.

**Royd Moor Res** – there were nine records between early March and early October, all of singles apart from three on 10<sup>th</sup> April and two on 31<sup>st</sup> July.

**Windy Bank Res** – of the 20 records between 14<sup>th</sup> March and 19<sup>th</sup> September, 14 were of singles, but two were present on four dates in late August and also on 6<sup>th</sup> September, and three on 29<sup>th</sup> August.

**Bretton Park** – this site, mainly because of excessive parking tariffs, is underworked. Two were present on 15<sup>th</sup> March, three on 12<sup>th</sup> November and eight on 24<sup>th</sup> November.

**Ringstone Edge Res** – 23 records were received covering all months apart from February and December, the majority of which were of one or two birds. The exceptions involved three on 27<sup>th</sup> January and 25<sup>th</sup> August and five on 27<sup>th</sup> September.

**Elland GP** – despite there being only six records, counts were good. Three on 18<sup>th</sup> April was the only spring record. There were then no further records until a single was seen on 17<sup>th</sup> August, eight were present on 26<sup>th</sup> October, and 12 on both 27<sup>th</sup> and 31<sup>st</sup> October, four were seen on 8<sup>th</sup> November and the following week 18 were present.

**Wards End Farm, Marsden** – passing birds were recorded on 20 occasions, mostly heading in a westerly direction. The majority were singles, occasionally up to four, but seven flew W on 1<sup>st</sup> September and 25 flew over (13 W and 12 SW) on 6<sup>th</sup> October.

**Marsden** – a single was circling high over the village on 23<sup>rd</sup> July.

**Harden Quarries** – three flew W on 31<sup>st</sup> July, four W on 6<sup>th</sup> September, two SE on 15<sup>th</sup> October, two E the following day, and three NW on 30<sup>th</sup> October.

**Langsett Res** – two on 28<sup>th</sup> August and four on 3<sup>rd</sup> September.

**Royd Moor Hill** – five flew SW and seven SE on 22<sup>nd</sup> September, seven flew S on 30<sup>th</sup> September, and nine flew S on 6<sup>th</sup> October.

**Pule Hill, Marsden** – two flew E on 18<sup>th</sup> October, a single SW on 24<sup>th</sup> October and two did likewise on 3<sup>rd</sup> November.

**Huddersfield** – there were ten sightings, mainly of singles, on the River Colne between Aspley and Colne Bridge, but four were present on 23<sup>rd</sup> December.

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

Rare visitor.

**Wards End Farm, Marsden** – two were first seen moving W over March Haigh at 09.52hrs. on 25<sup>th</sup> October, they were then blown back over the observer in a gale force wind, before turning and continuing W (DWS).

### **LITTLE EGRET** *Egretta garzetta*

Rare visitor.

After the massive increase in sightings in 2016 things were back on a more normal footing this year with birds being seen on 16 dates as opposed to the 31 of last year. None were seen during the first winter period, the first bird not putting in an appearance until mid-May.

**Elland GP** – a single was present on the River Calder on 14<sup>th</sup> May (DT). Another bird was at the same place on 12<sup>th</sup> July (DF) and what was considered to be the same individual again four days later (DJS).

**Baitings Res** – a single flew W on 24<sup>th</sup> May (PG).

**Blackmoorfoot Res** – there were two records: a single from the S turned W up the Colne Valley at 11.25hrs. on 24<sup>th</sup> May (MLD, TD, GG) and one seen from Potato Lane at 08.35hrs. on 23<sup>rd</sup> July dropped onto the W bank but could not be relocated (MLD).

**Horbury Strands/Wyke** – one on the River Calder on 15<sup>th</sup> June (KW<sub>r</sub>).

**Horbury Bridge** – a single on the River Calder on 26<sup>th</sup> June (KW<sub>r</sub>).

**Ingbirchworth Res** – a juvenile was present from 11<sup>th</sup> – 15<sup>th</sup> July (NWM, SS, MCW) and an adult on 23<sup>rd</sup>/24<sup>th</sup> August (JMcL, NWM, DHP).

**Savile Town** – a single on the River Calder on 25<sup>th</sup> July (JH).

**Bretton Park** – a single on the Upper Lake on 31<sup>st</sup> October (SG) and one was photographed on 6<sup>th</sup> December (CS).

**Brighouse** – a single flew N over the town at 11.00hrs on 9<sup>th</sup> December (DM).

### **GREAT WHITE EGRET** *Ardea alba*

Rare visitor.

**Blackmoorfoot Res** – a single from the S turned W up the Colne Valley at 10.45hrs. on 23<sup>rd</sup> August (MLD, SP, GBS). This was the sixth record for the Club area and the 219<sup>th</sup> species to be recorded from the reservoir.

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

Resident breeder, increased to (2), 20-70 pairs.

Once again sightings remained about the same, with records from 44 sites as opposed to 45 the previous year. Sightings covered all months and came from all parts of our recording area. Breeding was confirmed from the same four sites as last year: five pairs bred at **Scammonden Water** (same as the previous 3 years), six pairs bred at **Cromwell Bottom** (same as the previous 2 years), 16 pairs bred at **Bretton Park** (down from 21 last year), and 14 pairs bred at **Healey House** (1 more than last year).

Most birds were overflying singles, and even at locations where birds were present throughout the year numbers rarely exceeded two apart from around the breeding areas. The only exceptions were six at **Horbury Strands/Wyke** on 18<sup>th</sup> May, three over **Wards End Farm, Marsden** on 24<sup>th</sup> September, the same number at **Elland GP** on 15<sup>th</sup> November and again three on the River Colne at the **Huddersfield Stadium** on 16<sup>th</sup> December.

**Blackmoorfoot Res.** experienced a similar year to 2016. One to three, occasionally four or five in autumn, were seen on 221 dates (259 in 2016 and 188 in 2015) with records spanning the whole year.

A single regularly visited a garden in **Thongsbridge** and fed on the abundant spawning Frogs, taking 11 individuals on 4<sup>th</sup> March and 15 the following day.

**LITTLE GREBE** *Tachybaptus ruficollis*

Partial migrant breeder (1), 5-15 pairs.

Records were received from 22 waters, two more than last year, with confirmation of breeding being obtained from at least five of these.

**Meal Hill Lake** – one or two were present throughout the year but there was no evidence of breeding.

**Gunthwaite Dam** – present throughout most of the year with two pairs breeding, each fledging a single young.

**Ingbirchworth Res** – up to six were present throughout the year and, although three pairs attempted to breed, these were all thwarted due to the falling water level.

**Bretton Park** – one or two were present during both winter periods, with four on 19<sup>th</sup> October, but there were no records between mid-March and mid-October. As with Great Crested Grebe (see below) this was most probably caused by a lack of observations rather than a lack of birds.

**Horbury Strands/Wyke** – three on the River Calder on 4<sup>th</sup> January.

**Windy Bank Res** – a single between 5<sup>th</sup> January and 1<sup>st</sup> April.

**Castle Dam** – a single on 22<sup>nd</sup> January.

**Scout Dike Res** – five on 19<sup>th</sup> February and two or three on three dates in April.

**Ossett Spa SW** – singles on 26<sup>th</sup> March and 9<sup>th</sup> April and two on 14<sup>th</sup> and 23<sup>rd</sup> April.

**March Haigh Res** – singles on 5<sup>th</sup>, 15<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> April.

**Redbrook Res** – a single on 7<sup>th</sup> May, two on 9<sup>th</sup> July, one on 18<sup>th</sup> August and two on 7<sup>th</sup> September.

**Langsett Res** – a single on 12<sup>th</sup> May.

**Dewsbury SW** – two pairs fledged a total of three young.

**Broadstone Res** – a pair fledged two young.

**Royd Moor Res** – two pairs held breeding territories.

**Blackmoorfoot Res** – once again there was an abysmal showing at this well watched locality. The only records involved singles on 5<sup>th</sup>/6<sup>th</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup> August, 2<sup>nd</sup> September and 10<sup>th</sup> October.

**Tunnel End Res** – a single on 27<sup>th</sup> September.

**Deanhead Res** – one on 16<sup>th</sup> October.

**Ringstone Edge** – two on 18<sup>th</sup> October and a single on 23<sup>rd</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup> October.

**Elland GP** – a single on 31<sup>st</sup> October.

**Horbury SW** – two on the River Calder on 12<sup>th</sup> November with 11 there on 19<sup>th</sup> November.

**GREAT CRESTED GREBE** *Podiceps cristatus*

Partial migrant breeder (1), 5-20 pairs.

Birds were recorded from a total of nine waters but breeding was only confirmed at one of these.

**Blackmoorfoot Res.** had three on 25<sup>th</sup> January and 15<sup>th</sup> February, and singles on three further February dates and 2<sup>nd</sup> March. Birds became 'resident' between 5<sup>th</sup> March and 12<sup>th</sup> October but, as can be seen from the table below, only low single figures were involved, and the usual autumn build-up never materialised. A lower than usual water level precluded any breeding attempt. Following the exodus by birds on 12<sup>th</sup> October, the only other records involved one to three on a further three October dates, five dates in November and three in early December.

The monthly maxima are shown below:

| Jan | Feb | Mar | Apr | May | Jun | Jul | Aug | Sep | Oct | Nov | Dec |
|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| 3   | 3   | 3   | 4   | 3   | 3   | 4   | 5   | 3   | 3   | 3   | 3   |

**Bretton Park** – up to six were present throughout both winter periods with 12 on 26<sup>th</sup> November, but there were no records between mid-March and mid-October. As with Little Grebe (see above) this was most probably caused by a lack of observations rather than a lack of birds.

**Ingbirchworth Res** – present throughout the year with a maximum of seven on 31<sup>st</sup> May. A single nesting attempt was thwarted due to the falling water level.

**Ladywood Lakes** – two on 3<sup>rd</sup> and 31<sup>st</sup> January.

**Ringstone Edge** – singles were present on 24<sup>th</sup> January, four dates in April and 3<sup>rd</sup> May, two were seen on 17<sup>th</sup> May, three on 14<sup>th</sup> June, two between 1<sup>st</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> July, a single from 13<sup>th</sup> July to 22<sup>nd</sup> September, and two between 23<sup>rd</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup> September.

**Royd Moor Res** – a single on 10<sup>th</sup> March, two on 5<sup>th</sup> May and one on 11<sup>th</sup> June.

**Broadstone Res** – one or two were present on 10<sup>th</sup> March, four dates in April and 25<sup>th</sup> June.

**Boshaw Whams** – a single on 24<sup>th</sup> March.

**Scout Dike Res** – in April, one on 3<sup>rd</sup>, two on 15<sup>th</sup> and three on 24<sup>th</sup>.

### **BLACK KITE** *Milvus migrans*

Rare visitor.

Good views were had for over five minutes of one which moved slowly high to the NE over **Wards End Farm, Marsden** on 2<sup>nd</sup> April (DWS). What was presumably the same bird was seen circling over **Marsden** as it moved slowly SW towards Black Moss Res. on 23<sup>rd</sup> April (DWS). See page 80 for a record shot sufficient to show the salient features for the record to be accepted by the YNU.

This is the first record for the Huddersfield area and only the 24<sup>th</sup> for Yorkshire.

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

Rare to scarce visitor. Increasing.

Some 28 records were received this year, five more than in 2016. All records, unsurprisingly, were of fly-over individuals.

**Marsden** – a single over on 14<sup>th</sup> January (OW).

**Millhouse Green** – one over High Bank seen with a Common Buzzard on 18<sup>th</sup> February (AAH).

**Ingbirchworth Res** – a single drifted SW on 6<sup>th</sup> March (MCW) and one was present on 8<sup>th</sup> October (NWM).

**Bretton Park** – one on 9<sup>th</sup> March (II).

**Winscar** – two were present on 15<sup>th</sup> March (GK).

**Binn Green** – one on 23<sup>rd</sup> March (PB).

**Blackmoorfoot Res** – there were two records (7 in 2016). A single was seen over the reservoir at 14.00hrs on 23<sup>rd</sup> March (general public) and one which flew N along the E bank turned W up the Colne Valley at 11.10hrs. on 21<sup>st</sup> June (MLD, GBS).

**Royd Moor Res** – a single drifted NW on 25<sup>th</sup> March (DW) and one drifted W on 31<sup>st</sup> July (NWM).

**Hartcliff Hill** – one seen circling before leaving W on 22<sup>nd</sup> April (RJB).

**Outlane** – a single on 4<sup>th</sup> May (TW).

**Langsett Res** – one on 12<sup>th</sup> May (MW).  
**Cliff Wood** – a single on 14<sup>th</sup> May (SG).  
**Colne Bridge SP** – one flying towards Dalton Bank on 22<sup>nd</sup> May (DS).  
**Dunford Bridge** – a single on 27<sup>th</sup> May (GO).  
**Winscar Res** – one on 1<sup>st</sup> June (II).  
**Wards End Farm, Marsden** – a moulting individual moved slowly W on 18<sup>th</sup> June (DWS).  
**Cupwith Res** – a bird with damaged tail feathers on 21<sup>st</sup> June (DJ).  
**Broadstone Res** – a single flew N on 24<sup>th</sup> June (SG).  
**Red Lane, Meltham** – one drifted SW at 12.00hrs. on 17<sup>th</sup> July (CS).  
**Scout Dike Res** – a single on 31<sup>st</sup> July (NWM).  
**Gunthwaite** – a single drifted W on 16<sup>th</sup> September (DMP).  
**Broadstone Lodge** – one on 8<sup>th</sup> October (NWM).  
**Wholestone Moor** – three together on 2<sup>nd</sup> November (KWr).  
**Hepworth** – a single flew E on 13<sup>th</sup> November (HQ).

Number of Red Kite reported in the Huddersfield area during the last five years:

| 2013 | 2014 | 2015 | 2016 | 2017 |
|------|------|------|------|------|
| 12   | 19   | 11   | 23   | 31   |

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

Rare passage visitor.

There were only nine records, a sharp decrease on the 16 last year.

**Norland Moor** – a single on 20<sup>th</sup> May (SB).  
**Ringstone Edge** – a juvenile was present on 23<sup>rd</sup> August (NCD).  
**Blackmoorfoot Res** – a juvenile flew W across the reservoir at 09.45hrs. on 24<sup>th</sup> August (AB, MLD). This is the twentieth record for the reservoir, the first being in May 1999.  
**Scammonden Water** – two birds, one of which was a dark juvenile, flew NW at 09.44hrs. on 26<sup>th</sup> August (DT).  
**Wards End Farm, Marsden** – one W over Close Moss on 16<sup>th</sup> September and another did likewise on 19<sup>th</sup> September. A juvenile approached from E and continued SW under Pule Hill at 13.10hrs. on 8<sup>th</sup> October and an adult male flew high to the W on 31<sup>st</sup> December (all DWS).  
**Scout Dike Res** – an adult male flew over on 20<sup>th</sup> October (RJB, NWM).

Number of Marsh Harrier records in the Huddersfield area in the last ten years:

| 2008 | 2009 | 2010 | 2011 | 2012 | 2013 | 2014 | 2015 | 2016 | 2017 |
|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| 5    | 3    | 4    | 4    | 10   | 10   | 7    | 2    | 16   | 9    |

#### **HEN HARRIER** *Circus cyaneus*

Rare to scarce passage and winter visitor. Red listed.

Another good showing this year and not just from the Marsden area which is welcome.

**Wards End Farm, Marsden** – this daily watched site produced seven records. An adult female flew very low W into a strong headwind pausing briefly on a fence post on 13<sup>th</sup> March. Three ‘ringtails’ were seen in April: one flew low NE on 7<sup>th</sup> April, a single was present on 9<sup>th</sup>, and one

flew NE on 17<sup>th</sup>. There were then no further records until a ‘ringtail’ hunting on Buckstones Moss rose high and left SW on 16<sup>th</sup> October, a ‘ringtail’ above Buckstones car park was carried high down the valley on a gale force wind on 25<sup>th</sup> October, and a ‘ringtail’ flew high down the valley in heavy snow on 16<sup>th</sup> December (all DWS).

**Harden Res** – a ‘ringtail’ flew E on 25<sup>th</sup> March (HQ).

**Langsett** – an adult male was seen close to the Flouch roundabout on 7<sup>th</sup> July (TAD).

Number of Hen Harrier records in the Huddersfield area in the last ten years.

| 2008 | 2009 | 2010 | 2011 | 2012 | 2013 | 2014 | 2015 | 2016 | 2017 |
|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| 4    | 1    | 5    | 5    | 3    | 8    | 7    | 9    | 8    | 9    |

(NORTHERN) **GOSHAWK** *Accipiter gentilis*

Sporadic breeder (1), 0-1 pairs. Scarce visitor.

There was a single accepted record: a juvenile in the SE of the area on 22<sup>nd</sup> May (SC).

(EURASIAN) **SPARROWHAWK** *Accipiter nisus*

Resident breeder (2), 50-100 pairs.

Reports, as for the previous two years, were received from well over 40 sites. Records spanned all months fairly evenly, apart from June, which only produced nine and the majority involved single birds, only very occasionally two. It is difficult to ascertain the true number of birds in our area as with such a visible species there is always the risk of some duplication. Incredibly, although there were over 200 dated records, only two of these concerned displaying birds and breeding was only proven at two localities, recently fledged young being seen at both. Several autumn records involved juveniles, but their origins were unknown.

As has now become the norm, birds visited gardens on a regular basis: **Thongsbridge, Hepworth, Rastrick, Marsden, Meltham, Almondbury, Holmfirth** and **Lockwood** were the most favoured localities.

Birds were seen during all months at **Blackmoorfoot**, with a marked increase between August and November. Generally only a single was present but two were seen on several dates, especially during the second half of the year, with three on 5<sup>th</sup> October. The yearly total of bird/days amounted to 86 (82 in 2016 and 60 in 2015).

This year the only evidence of movement was from the **Marsden** area with singles W over **Pule Hill** on 20<sup>th</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup> September and at **Wards End Farm** which had a single W on 28<sup>th</sup> September and two which did likewise on 6<sup>th</sup> October.

A wide variety of prey species was noted: Blue Tit, Robin, Dunnock, Goldfinch, Woodpigeon and Collared Dove, with Pied Wagtail and even Waxwing were being hunted in the centre of **Huddersfield**.

Dated records were distributed throughout the year as follows:

| Jan | Feb | Mar | Apr | May | Jun | Jul | Aug | Sep | Oct | Nov | Dec |
|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| 32  | 15  | 21  | 23  | 13  | 9   | 16  | 38  | 23  | 29  | 26  | 16  |

(COMMON) **BUZZARD** *Buteo buteo*

The most widely distributed raptor of the area, resident breeder since 2004 (1 pair), now increasing.

The number of records grew dramatically although the number of sites was once again about the same. As these localities cover most of our area and are consistent it is easy to see how more common this species has become. Many records came from built up areas around Huddersfield.

Breeding activity was noted from at least 12 sites and confirmed at nine of these. Six of these were considered to have been successful, though at one site a juvenile drowned in a horse trough (for the second year running). It is more than likely that some breeding sites were overlooked.

Once more due to the number of records received it is impractical to list them all and the following are the ones where four or more together were noted.

**Thongsbridge** – up to four were regularly seen between New Mill and Brockholes.

**Cheesegate Nab** – again up to five birds were present on 1<sup>st</sup> January.

**Marsden** – birds were recorded on 236 dates throughout the year, mainly between **Wards End** and **Close Moss**. Most records involved just one or two, occasionally three, but four were present on 15<sup>th</sup> February and five on 1<sup>st</sup> March. The four which flew W on 20<sup>th</sup> September and eight which did likewise on 6<sup>th</sup> October were the main signs of any movement.

**Whitley Edge** – birds were recorded on 30 dates with a maximum of seven on 27<sup>th</sup> August.

**Blackmoorfoot** – recorded on 57 occasions (65 in 2016 and 38 in 2015), with birds putting in appearances between 20<sup>th</sup> January and 23<sup>rd</sup> November. Most records related to one or two individuals, only occasionally three or four, but six were seen on 4<sup>th</sup> March and 29<sup>th</sup> April and five on 8<sup>th</sup> November.

**Langsett** – four on 2<sup>nd</sup> February.

**Winscar Res** – a minimum of six were present on both 4<sup>th</sup> March and 23<sup>rd</sup> September.

**Bretton Park** – five were seen on both 11<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> March.

**Flouch** – four on 26<sup>th</sup> May.

**Wooldale** – five on 20<sup>th</sup> August.

**Thurlstone** – a kettle of 16 were circling over Bella Vista on 19<sup>th</sup> September (GMC).

**Fixby** – of the many sightings from here six on 2<sup>nd</sup> November was the maximum.

Dated records were distributed throughout the year as follows:

| Jan | Feb | Mar | Apr | May | Jun | Jul | Aug | Sep | Oct | Nov | Dec |
|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| 37  | 43  | 67  | 53  | 47  | 13  | 54  | 57  | 56  | 63  | 35  | 14  |

**OSPREY** *Pandion haliaetus*

Rare passage visitor, increasing.

Unfortunately sightings were somewhat reduced this year, to five from the ten of last year.

**Ingbirchworth Res** – one departed to the N on 3<sup>rd</sup> April (MCW).

**Wards End Farm, Marsden** – a single flew low across Close Moss in a SE direction on 3<sup>rd</sup> April. One which flew low under Buckstones Edge in a W direction lifted up and around model aeroplanes being flown from the car park and then turned NW on 9<sup>th</sup> April. A single which flew low to the W on 15<sup>th</sup> September was carrying a fish (all DWS).

**Langsett Res** – a single was mobbed by two Oystercatchers on 12<sup>th</sup> April (JL).



Number of Osprey records in the Huddersfield area in the last ten years:

| 2008 | 2009 | 2010 | 2011 | 2012 | 2013 | 2014 | 2015 | 2016 | 2017 |
|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| 8    | 3    | 1    | 2    | 5    | 5    | 8    | 2    | 10   | 5    |

### **WATER RAIL** *Rallus aquaticus*

Resident/migrant breeder (1). Mainly a scarce winter visitor.

Birds were reported from four locations (1 more than last year) and at two of these birds were present for extended periods. However, with birds only being encountered during the winter months it goes without saying that there were no breeding attempts.

**Healey Mills/Kerry's NR** – at least one was present throughout the first winter period (JH).

**Dewsbury SW** – up to two were present throughout the first winter period. Later in the year two were seen on 31<sup>st</sup> October (JH).

**Gunthwaite Dam** – up to two were regularly seen between 1<sup>st</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> February and a single was present on 13<sup>th</sup> March (NWM, DHP).

**Ramsden Mill Dam, Golcar** – a single on 16<sup>th</sup> November (KWrr).

### (COMMON) **MOORHEN** *Gallinula chloropus*

Resident breeder (3), 200-400 pairs.

There were records from 34 localities, a sharp increase in the 28 last year, but still below the 2015 total of 38. Some sites held birds throughout the year, but evidence of breeding was only forthcoming for five of them. As in 2015, no details were received from a few previously productive localities. Although numbers rarely reach more than a handful, there were some notable exceptions: a maximum of c.20 were present in **Bretton Park** throughout January, 14 were on the River Calder at **Horbury Strands/Wyke** on 4<sup>th</sup> January and 24 were present at **Dewsbury SW** on 14<sup>th</sup> January with 28 there the following day.

A garden in **Hepworth** was occasionally visited during the winter months, it being assumed that these birds had originated from nearby Meal Hill Lakes, as they only appeared in snowy conditions or when the lakes were frozen over.

Breeding records were as follows:

**Blackmoorfoot Res** – a single from 24<sup>th</sup> February was joined by another in late March, and by mid-April four birds were present, but these had dwindled to two by early May. Thereafter only a single pair remained but, although making two nesting attempts, both failed. Up to three were then present on most days between early July and mid-September, but records thereafter were sporadic and only involved up to three on 12 days to mid-November.

**Royd Moor Res** – four pairs held breeding territories.

**Langsett Res** – a pair held a breeding territory.

**Ingbirchworth Res** – two pairs held breeding territories but failed due to the falling water level.

**Hepshaw** – a pair fledged two young on a small roadside pond along Bedding Edge Road.

(EURASIAN) **COOT** *Fulica atra*

Resident breeder (2), 30-50 pairs. Uncommon to common winter visitor.

Records were only received from 15 localities, suggesting that the under-recording noted in 2016 continued.

Monthly maxima from the only site with regular, although somewhat sporadic, counts:

|               | Jan | Feb | Mar | Apr | May | Jun | Jul | Aug | Sept | Oct | Nov | Dec |
|---------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|------|-----|-----|-----|
| Ingbirchworth | 6   | 7   | 17  | 17  | 14  | 10  | 2   | 2   | 3    | 2   | 2   | 2   |

The only count from the usually well-watched **Castle Dam** involved 17 on 22<sup>nd</sup> January.

With the exception of those tabulated above, double figure counts were received from **Bretton Park** (c.35 on 25<sup>th</sup> January, 16 on 11<sup>th</sup> March, 92 on 26<sup>th</sup> November and c.140 on 11<sup>th</sup> December) and **Scout Dike Res.** (c.10 on 26<sup>th</sup> February and 11 on 4<sup>th</sup> March).

Evidence of breeding came from the following six locations:

**Meal Hill Lakes** – up to ten were present throughout the year and breeding was probable.

**Royd Moor Res** – a pair held a breeding territory.

**Windy Bank Res** – up to eight were present throughout the year and two pairs bred, raising one and two young respectively.

**Colne Bridge SP** – a single which returned on 5<sup>th</sup> February was joined by a second on 16<sup>th</sup> February. The pair were nest building on 27<sup>th</sup> March and one was sitting until 25<sup>th</sup> April, after which the nest was abandoned.

**Ossett Spa SW** – two were present from at least 11<sup>th</sup> March and had built a nest by the month end. Five adults were present on 23<sup>rd</sup> April and three small young were seen on 21<sup>st</sup> May.

**Ingbirchworth Res** – a pair attempted to breed but failed due to the falling water level.

In the first half of the year records from **Blackmoorfoot Res.**, where the species has been in decline for over a decade, only involved four and 9<sup>th</sup> January and singles on 28<sup>th</sup> March and from 9<sup>th</sup> to 17<sup>th</sup> April. Later in the year singles were present on 1<sup>st</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup> September, 4<sup>th</sup> to 9<sup>th</sup> October and 1<sup>st</sup> to 10<sup>th</sup> November.

**STONE-CURLEW** *Burhinus oedichnemus*

Rare visitor.

A single in the large field to the west of **Blackmoorfoot Res.** on 9<sup>th</sup> May (MLD, GBS *et al.*) was the first record for the Club area since a single in the same area on 19<sup>th</sup> April 1989.

This is the third record for the reservoir and the sixth for the Club recording area, the first being as long ago as 1865.

(PIED) **AVOCET** *Recurvirostra avosetta*

Rare passage migrant.

A single at **Ingbirchworth Res.** on 23<sup>rd</sup> March was located in misty condition at 07.35hrs. but was not seen after the mist had lifted at 08.00hrs. (NWM).

This is the fifth confirmed record for the Club area and the second for the locality. The previous records were in March 2005, September 2010, March 2014 and August 2015.

(EURASIAN) **OYSTERCATCHER** *Haematopus ostralegus*

Migrant breeder since 1999 (2 pairs) with a recent marked increase in breeding numbers. Uncommon passage visitor, increasing.

Reports were received from about the same number of localities as last year, with proof of breeding stemming from five of these and probable breeding from another.

As has now become the normal pattern, the first returning birds were seen in February, and commenced with a single on the River Calder at **Dewsbury** on 11<sup>th</sup>, three at **Blackmoorfoot Res.** and one at **Ringstone Edge Res.** on 15<sup>th</sup>, singles on the River Calder at **Dewsbury SW** on 18<sup>th</sup>, **Ingbirchworth Res.** on 20<sup>th</sup> and **Scout Dike Res.** on 26<sup>th</sup>, and three at **Ringstone Edge Res.** on 27<sup>th</sup>.

By late March only a further six sites had yielded records, most of which were of four or less individuals, but nine were present at **Broadstone Res.** on 9<sup>th</sup>. The main arrival into the area commenced from early April and, although numbers usually remained below four, there were some larger assemblages: up to 12 at **Broadstone Res.** throughout April, with eight remaining on 5<sup>th</sup> May and up to seven at **Blackmoorfoot Res.** from mid- late May.

Breeding evidence was obtained for the following locations:

**Dewsbury SW** – a pair attempted to breed but failed before the eggs hatched.

**Isle of Skye Quarry** – a pair fledged two young from their usual nesting site high on the rock face.

**Langsett Res** – a pair fledged two young.

**Winscar Res** – two pairs hatched at least five young.

**Hoarstone Edge** – at least two breeding pairs were found in the tetrad centred around Hoarstone Edge on a BTO survey.

**Blakeley Res** – a pair were suspected of breeding.

Birds remained widely distributed until late July but numbers only exceeded three at **Blackmoorfoot Res.** which had five on 10<sup>th</sup>/11<sup>th</sup> July and **Windleden Res.** which held 13 on 30<sup>th</sup> July. The only locality with August/September records was **Dewsbury SW** where the failed breeding pair remained until early September.

(EUROPEAN) **GOLDEN PLOVER** *Pluvialis apricaria*

Migrant breeder (2-3), 50-200 pairs. Common passage and winter visitor, decreasing.

Although 2016 closed with small numbers present at only a handful of locations, 2017 opened with large assemblages at two sites: **Maythorn** and **Blackmoorfoot Res.**

At **Maythorn** fluctuating numbers were present throughout January: the c.500 present on 1<sup>st</sup> had reduced to c.150 the following day but had increased to c.300 by 20<sup>th</sup>. It was a similar fluctuating picture at **Blackmoorfoot Res.** where between 120 and 355 were present on a daily basis; the largest gatherings being between 12<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> January. The only other January records involved birds at **Ringstone Edge Res.** where 13 flew SW on 21<sup>st</sup>, 15 were present on 24<sup>th</sup>, six the following day and c.50 on 26<sup>th</sup> and **Honley Moor** where 22 were seen on 27<sup>th</sup>. In February, with the exception of **Blackmoorfoot Res.**, which held up to 26 on a near daily basis and 300 on 11<sup>th</sup>, the only other

records involved a single on the moor near **Crossley's Plantation** on 18<sup>th</sup>, and, on 21<sup>st</sup>, two at **Snalsden Res.** and two on **Meltham Moor**.

Birds were more widely distributed in March and April, but the number of birds at **Blackmoorfoot Res.** reduced to two on 26<sup>th</sup> March, a single on 31<sup>st</sup> March and up to three (usually 1 or 2) on six dates in April. Birds were reported from a further 17 locations, some of which held birds for extended periods, and a number of these attracted assemblages of treble figures: c.300 were present at **Maythorn Slack** on 20<sup>th</sup>/21<sup>st</sup> March and c.150 were there on 2<sup>nd</sup> April, c.100 at **Deer Hill** on 26<sup>th</sup> March and 14<sup>th</sup> April, c.250 at **Cheesegate Nab** on 29<sup>th</sup> March, c.400 at **Broadstone Res.** on 2<sup>nd</sup> April, 143 flew N at **Wards End Farm, Marsden** on the same date (other birds flying N here, all in April, involved 33 on 5<sup>th</sup>, 60 on 7<sup>th</sup> and 30 on 15<sup>th</sup>), and 240 at **Ringstone Edge Res.** on 11<sup>th</sup> April.

During the breeding season birds were present on a number of moors, but the only evidence of breeding came from **Barmings** where a pair fledged at least two young.

Records after the breeding season were confined to 11 localities, most of which had held birds earlier in the year, and at some of these good numbers were occasionally reported. At **Blackmoorfoot Res.** up to ten were seen on three July dates, but there were then no records until two flew W on 12<sup>th</sup> September. Thereafter, no more than 16 were seen on a further three September dates and eight dates in October. Numbers then began to build and, from 4<sup>th</sup> October until the year end, up to 120 were seen on a near daily basis with 180 on 30<sup>th</sup> November. The number of birds in the **Broadstone** area increased from c.35 on 24<sup>th</sup> August to c.200 by 1<sup>st</sup> December, but there were no further records. **Ringstone Edge Res.** also maintained a healthy assemblage between mid-September and mid-November and, although generally less than 40 were present, there were 250 on 18<sup>th</sup> October. The only other three figure flock involved 100 at **Moorside Edge, Slaithwaite** on 17<sup>th</sup> November.

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

Rare visitor.

A single which flew W over **Deanhead Res.** at 09.30hrs. on 18<sup>th</sup> October (DT) was the first to be recorded in the Club area since January 2014.

#### (NORTHERN) **LAPWING** *Vanellus vanellus*

Partial migrant breeder, decreased to (3), 100-500 pairs. Numerous passage/winter visitor. Red listed.

In January, **Blackmoorfoot Res.** held between 400 and 450 on a daily basis, but flocks at other localities during this period were limited to c.110 at **Broadstone Res.** on 2<sup>nd</sup>, c.70 at **Ingbirchworth Res.** on 9<sup>th</sup>, 256 which flew W at **Deer Hill** on 18<sup>th</sup>, 167 at **Ringstone Edge Res.** on 25<sup>th</sup>, and 120 at **Lady Wood Lakes** on 31<sup>st</sup>. Although **Blackmoorfoot Res.** held 400 on 1<sup>st</sup> February, numbers thereafter quickly reduced, and no more than 20 were present by the month end. The only other February count involved 220 at **Lady Wood Lakes** on 2<sup>nd</sup>. Numbers in March were similarly low, and only amounted to a maximum of 37 at **Blackmoorfoot Res.** on 4<sup>th</sup>, c.35 at **Whitley Common** on 8<sup>th</sup>, c.35 at **Maythorn** on 24<sup>th</sup>, and 60 at **Ringstone Edge Res.** on 28<sup>th</sup>.

Confirmation of breeding was obtained at several localities: **Ingbirchworth Res.** (6 pairs of which 2 pairs hatched 6+ chicks), **Scout Dike Res.** (2 pairs), **Royd Moor Res.** (3 pairs), **Langsett** (3

pairs), **Hazelhead** (at least 40 pairs bred at Ranah Stones fledging 30+ young), **Maythorn** (at least 4 pairs fledged 9 young), **Wards End Farm Marsden** (2 or 3 pairs), **Whitley Common** (5 pairs hatched 16+ chicks), **Snape Res.** (an unknown number of pairs hatched at least 2 chicks), **Hoarstone Edge** (a minimum of 25 breeding pairs were found in the tetrad centred around Hoarstone Edge on a BTO survey), **Kirkheaton** (3 pairs), and there were at least single pairs at **Dewsbury SW**, **Carlecotes Ponds**, **Snittlegate**, **Emley Moor** and in the area of the **Ford Inn**. Probable breeding was also reported from the **Isle of Skye Quarry**, **Cheesegate Nab** and **Wessenden Lodge**.

At **Blackmoorfoot Res.** the post-breeding flock began to develop from mid-June and had reached 160 by the month end. Other post-breeding assemblages didn't materialise until mid-July, but the only treble figure counts related to 202 at **Ringstone Edge Res.** on 20<sup>th</sup>, 120 at **Crosland Edge** on 27<sup>th</sup>, and 120 at **Kirkburton** on the same date. In August, only two localities supported treble figure assemblages: **Blackmoorfoot Res.** held between 350 and 400 until mid-month, but thereafter no more than 30 were present and a flock at **Ringstone Edge Res.** increased from 100 on 24<sup>th</sup> to 400 by 31<sup>st</sup>. This theme then continued for the rest of the year. Large numbers (by today's standards) were recorded almost daily at **Blackmoorfoot Res.** Up to 350 were seen regularly but numbers reduced to no more than 200 from late November. At **Ringstone Edge Res.**, although up to 400 persisted throughout September, numbers had reduced to 300 by 19<sup>th</sup> October and 160 the following week. The largest gatherings at other sites only amounted to c.200 at **Broadstone Res.** on 3<sup>rd</sup> September and c.250 there on 3<sup>rd</sup> December, c.200 at **Hartcliff Hill** on 15<sup>th</sup> October, 120 which flew S at **Scammonden Water** on 23<sup>rd</sup> October and 150 there on 10<sup>th</sup> November, 142 at **Honley Moor** on 29<sup>th</sup> November, c.350 overflying **Colne Bridge SP** on 19<sup>th</sup> December, and 215 in fields near **Bretton** roundabout on 20<sup>th</sup> December.

The following birds reported flying over **Wards End Farm, Marsden** were, because of the lack of a 'resident' flock, presumably true migrants: in February five flew E on 4<sup>th</sup>, a single E on 7<sup>th</sup>, and one E and 47 W on 21<sup>st</sup>. A total of 292 flew W or SW on seven dates between 28<sup>th</sup> June and 29<sup>th</sup> December, with a maximum of c.90 W on 14<sup>th</sup> October and c.77 W the following day.

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

Migrant breeder (1), 0-8 pairs. Scarce passage visitor.

There were reports from 11 localities (12 in 2016) with proof of breeding obtained at four of these (only 1 in 2016). A single at **Ingbirchworth Res.** on 1<sup>st</sup> April was the earliest returning bird and the last, two juveniles, were at the same locality on 11<sup>th</sup> August. A total of eight chicks fledged from the three sites which produced young. At **Blackmoorfoot Res.** the two birds present between 17<sup>th</sup> May and 9<sup>th</sup> July were joined by a third from 23<sup>rd</sup> to 27<sup>th</sup> May. The falling water level, a rare phenomenon these days, allowed a pair to make two nesting attempts; both of which failed at the egg stage.

Other records were received from:

**Broadstone Res** – one or two were seen on seven dates between 8<sup>th</sup> and 22<sup>nd</sup> April.

**Wessenden Head Res** – singles on 17<sup>th</sup> April and 25<sup>th</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup> May.

**Isle of Skye Quarry** – a single on 19<sup>th</sup>, 28<sup>th</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup> April and 2<sup>nd</sup> May.

**Scout Dike Res** – two on 24<sup>th</sup> April and 2<sup>nd</sup> May.

**Redbrook Res** – a single on 7<sup>th</sup> May.

**Winscar Res** – a single on 11<sup>th</sup> May.

**Deanhead Res** – a single adult on 1<sup>st</sup> July.

(COMMON) **RINGED PLOVER** *Charadrius hiaticula*

Uncommon passage visitor. Has bred.

There were records from three localities, two less than last year.

**Ingbirchworth Res** – singles on 29<sup>th</sup>/30<sup>th</sup> April (RJB) and 23<sup>rd</sup> August (NWM). The April bird associated with a Dunlin.

**Blackmoorfoot Res** – there were four records, one in spring and three in autumn: a single was on the west bank with a Dunlin on 13<sup>th</sup> May, in August, again on the west bank, were a single on 4<sup>th</sup>, two on 5<sup>th</sup> and a single on 29<sup>th</sup>.

**Isle of Skye Quarry** – one flew NE on 25<sup>th</sup> September (DHP).

**WHIMBREL** *Numenius phaeopus*

Scarce passage visitor. Red listed.

There were eight records from five localities, five in spring and three in autumn.

**Ingbirchworth Res** – a single was present on 8<sup>th</sup> May (MCW).

**Blackmoorfoot Res** – singles were in a field to the west of the reservoir on 10<sup>th</sup>/11<sup>th</sup> May (RS *et al.*) and 18<sup>th</sup> May (MLD, TD). Later in the year singles flew S at 10.30hrs. on 21<sup>st</sup> July (MLD, GBS) and W at 11.20hrs. on 13<sup>th</sup> October (SP, GBS).

**Wards End Farm, Marsden** – a party of three which approached from the E eventually departed to the NE on 13<sup>th</sup> May (DWS).

**Flight Hill** – a single on 15<sup>th</sup> May (MCW).

**Isle of Skye Quarry** – one flew W on 21<sup>st</sup> September (DHP).

The Blackmoorfoot bird on 13<sup>th</sup> October was the latest ever in the Club area by 22 days.

(EURASIAN) **CURLEW** *Numenius arquata*

Migrant breeder (3), 100-250 pairs. Common passage visitor.

A single which flew W over **Horbury Strands/Wyke** on 26<sup>th</sup> January was the first returning bird. By February, although birds were more widely distributed, records only amounted to the following: a single flew W at **Ringstone Edge Res.** on 1<sup>st</sup>, two were present at **Blackmoorfoot Res.** on 21<sup>st</sup> with three there on 22<sup>nd</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup>, one was at **Ingbirchworth Res.** on 22<sup>nd</sup>, seven were at **Meltham** on 26<sup>th</sup>, and a single was at **Wards End Farm, Marsden** on 28<sup>th</sup> (the observer commented that this is his first ever February bird at the site).

During the following three months, March-May, birds were reported from a total of 26 localities, some of which would eventually hold breeding pairs (see below). There were several double figure counts, all during March. A flock of c.50 were at **Maythorn** on 1<sup>st</sup> with c.15 there on 20<sup>th</sup>, c.50 were present at **Broadstone Res.** the following day and 52 (which included a flock of 40) were present there on 4<sup>th</sup>, 11 were at **Snape Res.** on 3<sup>rd</sup>, 18 were at **Dunford Bridge** on 9<sup>th</sup>, a flock of 31 flew W at **Blackmoorfoot Res.** on 7<sup>th</sup> and 44 were in the fields to the west of the reservoir on 26<sup>th</sup>.

Breeding, although not always confirmed, was reported from the following localities: **Broadstone Res.** (pair fledged 3 young), **Royd Moor Res.** (1 pair), **Scout Dike Res.** (1 pair), **Maythorn Slack** (at least 2 pairs fledged 4+ young), **Marsden** (bubbling birds at 13 sites – but not a thorough

survey), **Hoarstone Edge** (a minimum of 12 breeding pairs were found in the tetrad centred around Hoarstone Edge on a BTO survey), **Broadstone** (displaying birds), **Cheesgate Nab** (displaying birds), **Wards End Farm** (3 pairs), **Ingbirchworth Res.** (5 pairs with at least 2 pairs hatching 6 (3 + 3) chicks).

From early July the number of locations holding the species plummeted to only a handful, and only one or two birds were present with the exception of nine at **Whitley Edge** on 31<sup>st</sup> July. In August, although up to four were present on a near basis at **Blackmoorfoot Res.** until 21<sup>st</sup>, the only other records involved four which flew NE at **Isle of Skye Quarry** on 13<sup>th</sup>, two at **Harden Moss** on 19<sup>th</sup> and 11 at **Whitley Airfield** on 19<sup>th</sup>.

Two unusual winter records involved singles which flew W at **Blackmoorfoot Res.** on 6<sup>th</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup> November.

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

Rare to scarce passage visitor, increasing.

Unlike last year, when there were records from four localities, birds this year were in short supply, with records from only a single site.

**Blackmoorfoot Res** – there were three records, all of single summer-plumaged adults on the west bank: 15<sup>th</sup> July (MLD, GBS *et al.*), 7<sup>th</sup> August (MLD, GK *et al.*) and 13<sup>th</sup> August (MLD, SP *et al.*).

Numbers of Black-tailed Godwits in the Huddersfield area in the last ten years:

| 2008 | 2009 | 2010 | 2011 | 2012 | 2013 | 2014 | 2015 | 2016 | 2017 |
|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| 3    | 0    | 0    | 2    | 11   | 0    | 0    | 4    | 25   | 3    |

### **RUFF** *Calidris pugnax*

Rare to scarce visitor.

An unusual winter record involved a single with Lapwings at **Bella Vista, Thurlstone** on 29<sup>th</sup> January (GMC). A party of eight which flew W at **Blackmoorfoot Res.** at 10.25hrs. on 9<sup>th</sup> September (MLD, GBS) was the first record there since two were present on 27<sup>th</sup> August 2011.

Numbers of Ruff in the Huddersfield area in the last ten years:

| 2008 | 2009 | 2010 | 2011 | 2012 | 2013 | 2014 | 2015 | 2016 | 2017 |
|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| 0    | 0    | 2    | 2    | 0    | 2    | 0    | 3    | 2    | 9    |

### **SANDERLING** *Calidris alba*

Rare to scarce passage visitor.

A single was present at **Ringstone Edge Res.** on 31<sup>st</sup> July (JB).

### DUNLIN *Calidris alpina*

Migrant breeder, decreased to (1-2), 10-40 pairs. Uncommon passage visitor. Red listed.

Confirmed breeding was confined to a single locality, although there were no records from some of the former breeding sites. Passage birds, as in the previous two years, were thin on the ground.

**Wessenden Moor** – a single in breeding habitat on 19<sup>th</sup> April.

**Ingbirchworth Res** – in spring singles were present on 22<sup>nd</sup> and 29<sup>th</sup>/30<sup>th</sup> April (the late April bird associated with a Ringed Plover) and 23<sup>rd</sup> May. The only other record involved a single on 3<sup>rd</sup> July.

**Blackmoorfoot Res** – there were six records. The only spring record involved a single on the west bank with a Ringed Plover on 13<sup>th</sup> May. Later in the year the west bank mud attracted a single on 4<sup>th</sup> August and two the following day. A flock of nine flew W on 24<sup>th</sup> October, seven did likewise on 7<sup>th</sup> November and a group of 15 flew W on 9<sup>th</sup> November.

**Shiny Brook Clough** – a pair bred but no other evidence was forthcoming.

**Ringstone Edge Res** – a single on 29<sup>th</sup> August and two flew W on 9<sup>th</sup> November.

**Pule Hill, Marsden** – a single flew W on 9<sup>th</sup> October.

### COMMON SANDPIPER *Actitis hypoleucos*

Migrant breeder (2), around 50 pairs.

There were records from 25 locations (21 in 2016 and 26 in 2015) with confirmation of breeding being obtained at five of these.

The first arrivals involved singles at **Blackmoorfoot Res.** on 9<sup>th</sup> April and **Broadstone and Ingbirchworth Reservoirs** on 13<sup>th</sup> April. With the exceptions of these three reservoirs, which had up to four throughout the rest of the month, the other April records involved two at **Wessenden Res.** on 19<sup>th</sup>, c.5 at **Langsett Res.** on 22<sup>nd</sup>, two at **Butterley Res.** on 23<sup>rd</sup>, singles on the River Calder at **Dewsbury SW** on 25<sup>th</sup> and near **Earlsheaton** on 26<sup>th</sup>, four at **Scout Dike Res.** on 29<sup>th</sup>/30<sup>th</sup> and, also on 30<sup>th</sup>, two at **Ringstone Edge** and **Chew Reservoirs** and a single at **Elland GP.**

Although passage birds became more widely distributed in May, even at the three favoured reservoirs mentioned above, numbers never exceeded the three at **Langsett Banks** on 10<sup>th</sup>, **Deanhead Res.** on 19<sup>th</sup> and **Ingbirchworth Res.** on 31<sup>st</sup>. Numbers in June remained at a similar level but confirmation of breeding was obtained from the following sites: **Flight Hill** (2 pairs), **Little Don River** (1 pair), **Langsett Res.** (2 pairs), **Winscar Res.** (a pair hatched 3+ chicks), and **Shiny Brook Clough** (1 pair).

In July/August, as birds began to disperse, **Blackmoorfoot** and **Ingbirchworth Reservoirs** maintained their monopolies but, despite being seen on a near daily basis at these locations, numbers never exceeded four. It was a similar situation at other localities, and only **Deanhead Res.**, which had birds on a near daily basis in July held more: five on 14<sup>th</sup> July and four on 17<sup>th</sup> and 23<sup>rd</sup> July being the maxima.

Interestingly, the only September records were from **Blackmoorfoot Res.** where up to three (usually only 1) were present on 16 dates to 28<sup>th</sup>. The only October records involved singles at **Blackmoorfoot Res.** on 6<sup>th</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> and **Scout Dike Res.** on 7<sup>th</sup>, 13<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup>.



**GREEN SANDPIPER** *Tringa ochropus*

Scarce to uncommon passage and winter visitor.

Birds were only reported from five locations (9 in 2016 and 6 in 2015). Dewsbury SW, as is usual, commanded the lion's share.

**Dewsbury SW** – a single, present almost daily from 1<sup>st</sup> January to 4<sup>th</sup> April, was regularly seen on the River Calder adjacent to the SW. Later in the year a single was seen on 20<sup>th</sup> May and one remained from 6<sup>th</sup> July until the year end (JH).

**Blackmoorfoot Res** – a single which flew W at 11.10hrs. on 30<sup>th</sup> March (MLD, SP) was the first spring record for the site.

**Isle of Skye Quarry** – a single on 2<sup>nd</sup>, 12<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> September may have been present throughout this period (TM, DHP).

**Millbank** – a single on the River Calder on 6<sup>th</sup> October (JH).

**Bretton Park** – a single on 11<sup>th</sup> December (SG).

(COMMON) **GREENSHANK** *Tringa nebularia*

Scarce to uncommon passage visitor.

Following last year's absence, there were two records:

**Blackmoorfoot Res** – a single was present on 4<sup>th</sup> August (GK) and three flew W at 09.00hrs. on 18<sup>th</sup> August (MLD, GBS).

(COMMON) **REDSHANK** *Tringa totanus*

Migrant breeder, decreased to (1), 0-5 pairs. Uncommon passage visitor.

The number of records of this declining species continues to set alarm bells ringing and, like last year, there were no records from the River Calder catchment.

**Ingbirchworth Res** – singles on 15<sup>th</sup> March and 21<sup>st</sup> June.

**Blackmoorfoot Res** – birds, all singles, were present on seven dates: 15<sup>th</sup>/16<sup>th</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup> March, 29<sup>th</sup> June, 30<sup>th</sup> July and 5<sup>th</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup> August.

**Little Black Moss** – two on 22<sup>nd</sup> May.

**Deanhead Res** – a single on 12<sup>th</sup> July.

**Scammonden Water** – two flew SE on 7<sup>th</sup> November.

**JACK SNIPE** *Lympocryptes minimus*

Scarce passage and winter visitor.

Records were received from three localities, three less than last year. All three sites held birds during the first winter period but only one during the second winter period.

**Wholestone Moor** – singles on 10<sup>th</sup> January, 30<sup>th</sup> October and 9<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> November.

**Wards End Farm, Marsden** – singles on 5<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> February and 14<sup>th</sup> April. Later in the year a single was present on 23<sup>rd</sup> November.

**Dewsbury SW** – one on 16<sup>th</sup> April.

(EURASIAN) **WOODCOCK** *Scolopax rusticola*  
Resident breeder (2), 25-75 pairs. Uncommon winter visitor.

The only records during the first winter period involved singles at **Dalton (Syngenta)** on 17<sup>th</sup> February and **Horbury SW** on 4<sup>th</sup> March.

Breeding season records were confined to a single at **Harden** on 25<sup>th</sup> May and 'several' roding at **Langsett** on 4<sup>th</sup> June.

There were more records during the second winter period, which is normal, with birds being reported from **Deffer Wood** (1 on 17<sup>th</sup> October), **Isle of Skye Quarry** (singles on 11<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> November, and two on 15<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> November), **Wards End Farm**, **Marsden** (singles on 16<sup>th</sup> November and 3<sup>rd</sup> December), **Kilner Bank** (1 on 3<sup>rd</sup> December), **Pighill Wood** (1 on 11<sup>th</sup> December), **New Mill Dike** (4 on 17<sup>th</sup> December), and **Carlecotes Ponds** (3 on 18<sup>th</sup> December).

(COMMON) **SNIPE** *Gallinago gallinago*  
Resident breeder, decreased to (2), 50-100 pairs. Common passage and winter visitor.

The first winter period only saw records from nine widely spread localities and, even at the well-watched **Dewsbury SW**, which normally holds good numbers, very few birds were recorded. All records involved singles with the exception of two at **Blackmoorfoot Res.** on 1<sup>st</sup> January, three at both **Whitley Edge** and **Broadstone** the following day, nine on **Wholestone Moor** on 10<sup>th</sup> January, and two at both **Snape Res** and **Isle of Skye Quarry** on 26<sup>th</sup> March.

Breeding evidence, which mainly involved drumming and chippering birds, came from 13 localities: there were single drumming males at **Holme Moss**, **Holme**, **Barmings**, **Cupwith Res.**, **Broadstone Res.**, two drumming males at **Swinden Track**, **Snape Res.**, **Yateholme**, **Isle of Skye Quarry**, **Whitley Common**, and **Wards End Farm**, **Marsden**, five drumming/chippering birds at **Snittlegate**, and 'several' at **Diggle**.

Birds lingered into July at a number of these breeding locations, but from early August until late October birds became more widespread. Numbers were generally low, however, and the usual build-up witnessed at **Dewsbury SW** never materialised. Up to four were regularly seen in the **Isle of Skye Quarry** until 24<sup>th</sup> September; five flew W at **Blackmoorfoot Res.** on 7<sup>th</sup> October and five flew W with three present there on 29<sup>th</sup> October; a 'wisp' of nine flew W at **Pule Hill**, **Marsden** on 9<sup>th</sup> October; the same date that five flew W at **Wards End Farm**; and ten were present at **Cupwith Res.** on 26<sup>th</sup> October.

November/December records were restricted to four localities: **Blackmoorfoot Res.** where three flew W on 14<sup>th</sup> November, a single flew N on 17<sup>th</sup> November, one flew W on 9<sup>th</sup> December and a single was present on 16<sup>th</sup> December; **Wards End Farm** which had a single on six dates until 23<sup>rd</sup> December and five which flew NE on 3<sup>rd</sup> December; in November, **Wholestone Moor** held four on 2<sup>nd</sup>, three on 6<sup>th</sup> and seven on 9<sup>th</sup>; and two were at **Deer Hill** on 24<sup>th</sup> November.

**BLACK TERN** *Chlidonias niger*  
Rare to scarce passage visitor.

There were three records, two in spring and one in autumn, from two localities.

**Ingbirchworth Res** – a single summer-plumaged adult departed high to the E at 16.00hrs. on 30<sup>th</sup> April (DHP). Later in the year, a juvenile departed E on 23<sup>rd</sup> August (NWM).

**Blackmoorfoot Res** – a summer-plumaged adult arrived at 10.10hrs. on 1<sup>st</sup> May (MLD, GBS *et al.*).

**COMMON TERN** *Sterna hirundo*

Scarce to uncommon passage visitor. Potential future colonist.

Recorded from three localities (3 in 2016 and 5 in 2015) with birds occurring between 30<sup>th</sup> April and 4<sup>th</sup> August.

**Ingbirchworth Res** – a single departed E at 07.15hrs. on 30<sup>th</sup> April, one did likewise at 14.25hrs. on 25<sup>th</sup> May, three departed E after a few hours visit on 19<sup>th</sup> June, a single departed E on 22<sup>nd</sup> June and one departed E at 10.15hrs. on 19<sup>th</sup> July.

**Elland GP** – two birds were present between 30<sup>th</sup> April and 4<sup>th</sup> May, and also on 12<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> May, a single was seen on 30<sup>th</sup> May and two on 30<sup>th</sup> June.

**Blackmoorfoot Res** – an adult departed W at 09.00hrs. on 2<sup>nd</sup> August and a party of 17 unaged birds flew W at 11.00hrs. on 4<sup>th</sup> August.

**ARCTIC TERN** *Sterna paradisaea*

Rare to scarce passage visitor.

The only records were from **Blackmoorfoot Res.**, where there were more records than has been the norm in recent decades: one arrived at 11.10hrs. and departed N at 11.20hrs. on 9<sup>th</sup> June (MLD, SP, GBS); two adults arrived at 12.05hrs. and departed W five minutes later on 29<sup>th</sup> July (MLD, GK, GBS); an adult departed W at 10.35hrs. on 1<sup>st</sup> August (MLD, GK *et al.*); and a juvenile departed E at 10.00hrs. on 10<sup>th</sup> September (MLD, GG, GBS).

(BLACK-LEGGED) **KITTIWAKE** *Rissa tridactyla*

Rare to scarce passage visitor. Red listed.

There was a single record: an adult at **Baitings Res.** on 2<sup>nd</sup> March (PG).

**BLACK-HEADED GULL** *Chroicocephalus ridibundus*

Resident breeder, decreased to (1), 0-5 pairs. Numerous passage and winter visitor.

**Blackmoorfoot** roost counts produced the following monthly maxima:

| Jan  | Feb  | Mar | Apr | May | Jun | Jul | Aug | Sept | Oct  | Nov  | Dec  |
|------|------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|------|------|------|------|
| 5600 | 6200 | n/c | n/c | 53  | n/c | n/c | n/c | 236  | 2500 | 3700 | 5500 |

Counts from the **Ingbirchworth/Scout Dike/Royd Moor/Broadstone** area produced the following monthly maxima:

| Jan | Feb | Mar  | Apr | May | Jun | Jul | Aug | Sept | Oct | Nov | Dec |
|-----|-----|------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|------|-----|-----|-----|
| 500 | 800 | 1000 | 350 | 80  | 20  | 30  | 140 | 40   | 300 | 220 | 300 |

As is usual, small parties were seen at a number of widely scattered localities throughout the year, but the only treble figure counts involved the following:

**Bretton Park** – c.100 on 11<sup>th</sup> January and c.225 on 11<sup>th</sup> March.

**Langsett Res** – the c.4,800 which roosted on 21<sup>st</sup> January had reduced to 3,400 by 29<sup>th</sup> January and 1,730 by 5<sup>th</sup> February. Later in the year the 176 which roosted on 4<sup>th</sup> August had increased to 742 by 22<sup>nd</sup> August and c.3,000 by 9<sup>th</sup> December, but only c.1,800 remained at the month end.

**Castle Dam** – c.300 on 22<sup>nd</sup> January.

**Dove Stone Res** – c.100 on 17<sup>th</sup> February.

**Whitley Common** – 400 on 22<sup>nd</sup> February, c.100 on 1<sup>st</sup> May and c.2,000 on 27<sup>th</sup> November.

**Dewsbury SW** – 336 on 2<sup>nd</sup> May and 180 on 2<sup>nd</sup> September.

**Whitley Res** – 100 on 19<sup>th</sup> November.

**Aspley to Cooper Bridge (Broad Canal)** – c.140 on 1<sup>st</sup> December and c.300 on 7<sup>th</sup> December.

**New Mill** – c.100 on 23<sup>rd</sup> December.

The recently established colony at **Winscar Res.** held up to 100 adults, of which 23 pairs built nests, but only five young hatched.

Visible migration was noted at two localities:

**Wards End Farm, Marsden** – a total of 1,483 passed over the area on 124 dates throughout the year. As is usual, most birds flew in a westerly direction with the majority occurring in the second half of the year. Numbers in the first half of the year never exceeded the 25 which flew W on 19<sup>th</sup> February. Later in the year, movements were generally restricted to less than 40 birds per day, and the only three figure counts involved 187 (184 W + 3 E) on 3<sup>rd</sup> July and 276 on 15<sup>th</sup> October.

**Pule Hill, Marsden** – a total of 1251 flew S or SW on 13 dates between 22<sup>nd</sup> September and 9<sup>th</sup> November. The maxima involved 140 SW on 9<sup>th</sup> October and 750 SW on 23<sup>rd</sup> October. On this latter mentioned date a flock of 670 came up from Butterley Res., where they were thought to have roosted in the foul conditions the previous night.

#### **LITTLE GULL** *Hydrocoloeus minutus*

Rare to scarce passage and winter visitor.

**Blackmoorfoot Res.** produced three records, each of summer-plumaged adults: one flew W at 10.30hrs. on 31<sup>st</sup> May (SP), a single which arrived at 10.20hrs. was not seen after 11.10hrs. on 10<sup>th</sup> July (MLD, SP, GBS) and one flew W at 10.00hrs. on 18<sup>th</sup> August (MLD, GK, GBS).

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

Rare to scarce visitor.

**Blackmoorfoot Res** – birds were recorded on ten days, but this probably only involved three individuals: in January, an adult was present on 19<sup>th</sup> (GK), 22<sup>nd</sup>/23<sup>rd</sup> (MC, NWM), a first-winter on 27<sup>th</sup> (MLD, GBS) and two adults roosted on 29<sup>th</sup> (MC, DHP); in February single adults were present on 1<sup>st</sup> (MLD, GK), 4<sup>th</sup> (MLD, GBS *et al.*), 6<sup>th</sup> (GK) and 15<sup>th</sup> (MLD *et al.*). The only other record involved a first-winter on 14<sup>th</sup> October (MLD, GK *et al.*).

**Ingbirchworth Res** – an adult was present on 29<sup>th</sup> and 31<sup>st</sup> July (JCW) and 1 juvenile/first-winter on 6<sup>th</sup> August (RJB).

## **COMMON GULL** *Larus canus*

Common passage and winter visitor.

Although numbers roosting at Blackmoorfoot Res. were above average, assemblages at other localities were abysmally low.

**Blackmoorfoot** roost counts produced the following monthly maxima:

| Jan  | Feb  | Mar | Apr | May | Jun | Jul | Aug | Sept | Oct | Nov  | Dec  |
|------|------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|------|-----|------|------|
| 1200 | 2000 | n/c | 2   | 2   | 1   | 3   | 2   | 4    | 400 | 1000 | 1200 |

With the exception of the Blackmoorfoot counts noted above, records during the first winter period were from a number of widely scattered localities, especially in the east of the area, but counts rarely exceeded 30, the following being the exceptions:

**Broadstone Res** – c.120 on 2<sup>nd</sup> January.

**Langsett Res** – 114 roosted on 21<sup>st</sup> January but this had dropped to 58 by 29<sup>th</sup> January and c.50 on 5<sup>th</sup> February.

**Ingbirchworth Res** – 57 on 22<sup>nd</sup> January, 62 on 6<sup>th</sup> February and 40+ on 6<sup>th</sup> March.

Apart from **Blackmoorfoot Res.**, which had up to four (but usually 1 or 2) on 24 dates between mid-April and late September, the only other records during these months were as follows:

**Ingbirchworth Res** – one or two were seen on 12 dates between early April and late July.

**Ainley Top** – two on 17<sup>th</sup> May.

**Wards End Farm, Marsden** – only 16 (15 W + 1 E) flew over on a total of nine dates between mid-July and late September.

**Langsett Res** – two roosted on 4<sup>th</sup> August.

**Deanhead Res** – singles on 15<sup>th</sup> July and 6<sup>th</sup> August.

**Scammonden Water** – a single on 16<sup>th</sup> August.

Numbers began to build from early October and, although widely distributed, numbers were uninspiring (but see Blackmoorfoot above), rarely exceeding single figures, the only exceptions being as follows:

**Greenhead Park** – c.10 on 22<sup>nd</sup> October.

**Shepley** – 60 in fields on 26<sup>th</sup> October.

**Wilshaw** – 70 in fields on 17<sup>th</sup> November.

**Digley Res** – 20 on 18<sup>th</sup> December.

Visible migration was noted at three localities:

**Wards End Farm** – only 22 flew over, mainly in a westerly direction, on 12 dates between 5<sup>th</sup> January and 24<sup>th</sup> February, with numbers never exceeding the four which flew W on 23<sup>rd</sup> January. Later in the year a total of 354 flew over, mainly in a westerly direction, on 43 dates between 2<sup>nd</sup> October and the year end, with a maximum of 32 W on 15<sup>th</sup> October, 69 (57 W + 12 E) on 19<sup>th</sup> November and 34 W on 8<sup>th</sup> December.

**Pule Hill, Marsden** – 42 flew SW on six dates between 23<sup>rd</sup> September and 31<sup>st</sup> October, with a maximum of 13 on 12<sup>th</sup> October and 16 on 23<sup>rd</sup> October.

**Blackmoorfoot Res** – at least 40 flew W on 17<sup>th</sup> October.

## **LESSER BLACK-BACKED GULL** *Larus fuscus*

Common passage visitor, uncommon winter visitor.

The only site with regular counts was **Blackmoorfoot Res.**, where the following monthly maxima occurred:

| Jan | Feb | Mar | Apr | May | Jun | Jul | Aug | Sep | Oct | Nov | Dec |
|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| 30+ | 14  | 7   | 6   | 8   | 10  | 13  | 11  | 8   | 17  | 4   | 8   |

With the exception of the Blackmoorfoot Res. records noted above, the only other records during the first winter period were as follows:

**Skelmanthorpe** – a single flew SW on 1<sup>st</sup> January.

**Wards End Farm, Marsden** – a total of 209 flew over, mainly in a westerly direction, on 41 dates between 3<sup>rd</sup> January and 24<sup>th</sup> April, with a maximum of 37 (2 W + 35 E) on 29<sup>th</sup> January, 16 W on 19<sup>th</sup> February and 17 W on 9<sup>th</sup> April.

**Broadstone Res** – a single on 17<sup>th</sup> January.

**Ingbirchworth Res** – one on 22<sup>nd</sup> January, c.14 on 8<sup>th</sup> February, then one to three on a further eight days to 20<sup>th</sup> April. A flock of c.20 were in a field to the south of the reservoir on 4<sup>th</sup> October.

**Mirfield (Biffa waste disposal centre)** – a single on 2<sup>nd</sup> February.

**Scout Dike Res** – one flew W on 26<sup>th</sup> February.

**Broadstone Res** – a single on 8<sup>th</sup> March.

**Fixby** – one on 6<sup>th</sup> April and two flew E on 9<sup>th</sup> April.

**Cheesegate Nab** – a single on 12<sup>th</sup> April.

**Whitley Common** – one flew W on 14<sup>th</sup> April.

**Ringstone Edge Res** – two on 30<sup>th</sup> April.

From early May until late October birds were reported from a number of widely scattered localities but numbers at most localities rarely reached double figures, the exceptions being as follows:

**Ingbirchworth Res** – 26 on 16<sup>th</sup> May, 11 on 31<sup>st</sup> May and 17 on three dates in the second half of July.

**Broadstone Res** – c.15 on 25<sup>th</sup> June and c.140 on 13<sup>th</sup> August.

**Langsett Res** – in August, 107 roosted on 4<sup>th</sup>, c.300 on 9<sup>th</sup>, c.200 on 12<sup>th</sup>, c.500 on 22<sup>nd</sup>, and 379 on 28<sup>th</sup>. The only September record involved c.250 which roosted on 23<sup>rd</sup>.

**Whitley Common** – c.150 on 19<sup>th</sup> August and 277 on 28<sup>th</sup> October.

**Shepley** – 30 in fields on 26<sup>th</sup> October.

With the exceptions of the Blackmoorfoot Res. records noted above and movements over Marsden (see below), the only other November/December records were as follows:

**Ingbirchworth Res** – 24 on 1<sup>st</sup> November.

**Elland GP** – a single on 15<sup>th</sup> November.

Movements over the area, other than the few mentioned above, were noted from four localities between early May and late December.

**Wards End Farm** – a total of 909 flew over, mainly in a westerly direction, on 99 dates between 6<sup>th</sup> May and 27<sup>th</sup> December, with a maximum of 27 W on 13<sup>th</sup> May, 40 (20 SW + 20 S) on 6<sup>th</sup> October, 25 W on 15<sup>th</sup> October and 26 W on 24<sup>th</sup> December.

**Blackmoorfoot Res** – 13 flew W on 30<sup>th</sup> July, eight S on 9<sup>th</sup> September, six W on 14<sup>th</sup> September, seven NW on 23<sup>rd</sup> September and 17 W on 18<sup>th</sup> October.

**Pule Hill, Marsden** – 24 flew SW on seven dates between 7<sup>th</sup> September and 31<sup>st</sup> October, with a maximum of nine on 27<sup>th</sup> October.

## **HERRING GULL** *Larus argentatus*

Common passage and winter visitor. Red listed.

As is now normal, the roost at **Blackmoorfoot Res.** rarely held more than single figures during either winter period with the exceptions of up to 19 in January/February and 22 on 22<sup>nd</sup> December. Far more birds were recorded moving over the site that utilising the roost: in January/February some 281 flew W on ten dates (maximum of 121 on 29<sup>th</sup> January) and 43 flew N on 19<sup>th</sup> January. Later in the year, 197 flew W on 13 dates between 19<sup>th</sup> November and 31<sup>st</sup> December, with a maximum of 44 on 19<sup>th</sup> November and 48 on 18<sup>th</sup> December.

There were records from a further 16 localities (15 in 2016 and 18 in 2015), showing that the species is nowhere near as common as formerly. A large proportion of the records relate to passage birds over Wards End Farm, Marsden, although small numbers were present at Oldfield during the last three months of the year.

**Wards End Farm, Marsden** – a total of 412 flew over, mainly in a westerly direction, between 2<sup>nd</sup> January and 31<sup>st</sup> March, with a maximum of 78 W on 3<sup>rd</sup> January and 52 W on 8<sup>th</sup> January. Records between early April and late September amounted to 63 birds which flew W on 14 dates, all involved low single figures with the exception of 28 which flew W on 16<sup>th</sup> April. Movements started in earnest in early October, and by the year end a total of 1641 had passed over on 49 dates. Most counts, which involved birds mainly moving in a westerly direction, concerned less than 50 individuals, the following being the exceptions: 82 (75 W + 5 SW + 2 E) on 30<sup>th</sup> October, 68 W on 19<sup>th</sup> November, 159 W on 28<sup>th</sup> November, and, in December, 148 NE on 3<sup>rd</sup>, 109 W on 4<sup>th</sup>, and 165 W on 24<sup>th</sup>.

**Ladywood Lakes** – 50 on 3<sup>rd</sup> January and ten on the River Calder on 21<sup>st</sup> January.

**Bretton Park** – four on 11<sup>th</sup> January.

**Langsett Res** – roosting birds were noted as follows: three on 21<sup>st</sup> January, eight on 29<sup>th</sup> January and two on 4<sup>th</sup> August and 31<sup>st</sup> December.

**Ingbirchworth Res** – six on 23<sup>rd</sup> January, 14 on 27<sup>th</sup> February, 15 on 6<sup>th</sup> March, then one or two on seven dates between 4<sup>th</sup> April and 31<sup>st</sup> May. Later in the year there was a single on 21<sup>st</sup> August, two on 23<sup>rd</sup> October, an adult on 23<sup>rd</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup> November, and seven on 4<sup>th</sup> December.

**Ringstone Edge Res** – a single on 23<sup>rd</sup> January, three on 18<sup>th</sup> October, one on 9<sup>th</sup> November and four on 11<sup>th</sup> November.

**Mirfield (Biffa waste disposal centre)** – 12 on 2<sup>nd</sup> February.

**Oldfield** – one on 1<sup>st</sup> February. Single figures (maximum 9+ on 27<sup>th</sup> November) were present on a regular basis between 2<sup>nd</sup> October and the year end. The age structure of these assemblages suggested a fairly rapid turnover of individuals.

**Deanhead Res** – three flew SW on 3<sup>rd</sup> April.

**Pule Hill, Marsden** – a total of 66 flew SW on eight dates between 9<sup>th</sup> October and 3<sup>rd</sup> November, with a maximum of 33 on 23<sup>rd</sup> October.

**Harden Quarries** – two flew SW on 25<sup>th</sup> and two S 30<sup>th</sup> October and four flew SW on 2<sup>nd</sup> November. Two flew S on 3<sup>rd</sup> November and six flew W two days later.

**Elland GP** – two on 15<sup>th</sup> November.

**Wilshaw** – four on 15<sup>th</sup> November and two on 17<sup>th</sup> November.

**Isle of Skye Quarry** – two flew N on 18<sup>th</sup> November.

**Whitley Edge** – an adult on 27<sup>th</sup> November and two on 4<sup>th</sup> December.

## **YELLOW-LEGGED GULL** *Larus michahellis*

Scarce passage visitor.

Most records reverted to the previous pattern of occurrences, with most being in the second half of the year. There was a good run of records from the Ingbirchworth area between late July and mid-October, but how many birds were involved is open to conjecture.

**Blackmoorfoot Res** – there were two records: an adult on 19<sup>th</sup> January (GK, identified from a photograph by MLD) and two adults departed E at 11.15hrs. on 19<sup>th</sup> July (MLD, GBS *et al.*).

**Ingbirchworth Res** – adults on 23<sup>rd</sup> January and 18<sup>th</sup> April (MCW), a moulting third-summer on 15<sup>th</sup> July (DMP, SP), an adult on 17<sup>th</sup>, 24<sup>th</sup> to 26<sup>th</sup> July, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> August, 25<sup>th</sup> September, and 4<sup>th</sup> October (NWM, DHP, MCW *et al.*), and a third-winter on 23<sup>rd</sup> October (MCW).

**Royd Moor Res** – a second-summer on 10<sup>th</sup> April (NWM), a third-summer on 19<sup>th</sup> June (NWM) and an adult on 21<sup>st</sup> July (AK).

**Winscar Res** – an adult on 12<sup>th</sup> June (MCW).

**Langsett Res** – in August roosting birds were recorded as follows: three (2 adults + a second-summer) on 4<sup>th</sup> (MCW), an adult and second-summer on 9<sup>th</sup> (ADei), two adults on 12<sup>th</sup> (NWM), an adult on 21<sup>st</sup> (MCW), a third-summer on 22<sup>nd</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup> (RJB), an adult on 27<sup>th</sup> (JMcL), three (2 adults + a third-summer) on 28<sup>th</sup> (MCW), and a third-summer on 29<sup>th</sup> (RJB). An adult roosted on 23<sup>rd</sup> September (RJB).

**Deanhead Res** – a juvenile departed W on 20<sup>th</sup> August (DT).

**Whitley Edge** – a moulting third-summer on 26<sup>th</sup>, 28<sup>th</sup> and 29<sup>th</sup> August (DMP *et al.*) was considered most probably the Ingbirchworth bird of 15<sup>th</sup> July. Later in the year an adult was present on 9<sup>th</sup> October (MCW).

**Scout Dike Res** – a third-summer on 2<sup>nd</sup> September (RJB) and a third-winter on 7<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> October (NWM).

**Elland GP** – a second-winter on 24<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup> October (DT).

**Upper Maythorn** – an adult and third-winter on 28<sup>th</sup> October (DMP, SP).

**Scout Dike Res** – a third-summer on 2<sup>nd</sup> September (RJB) and a third-winter on 7<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> October (NWM).

**Elland GP** – a second-winter on 24<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup> October (DT).

**Upper Maythorn** – an adult and third-winter on 28<sup>th</sup> October (DMP, SP).

## **CASPIAN GULL** *Larus cachinnans*

Rare visitor.

This species was recorded in the Club area for the sixth year in succession.

**Ingbirchworth Res** – an adult on 6<sup>th</sup> March, a first-winter on 20<sup>th</sup> March, and a first-summer on 20<sup>th</sup> September (all MCW).

**Whitley Common** – the adult at Ingbirchworth on 6<sup>th</sup> March was present on 8<sup>th</sup> March (MCW) and a first-winter on 20<sup>th</sup> March (MCW).

**Langsett Res** – in August, a third-summer roosted on 4<sup>th</sup> (MCW), 9<sup>th</sup> (ADei), 12<sup>th</sup> (NWM), and 22<sup>nd</sup> (RJB).

**Broadstone Res** – a first-summer on 26<sup>th</sup> August (NWM) was wearing a yellow colour-ring but the inscription could not be read. It is quite possible that this was the returning German ringed bird seen in 2016.

**Blackmoorfoot Res** – an adult in the roost on 11<sup>th</sup> November (NWM, DHP) was relocated in the roost on 19<sup>th</sup> and 22<sup>nd</sup> December (NWM, DHP) and departed W from the reservoir at 09.40hrs. the following morning (MLD).



The Blackmoorfoot adult, first seen on 11<sup>th</sup> November, was located in a field at **Wilshaw** on 15<sup>th</sup> November (DHP) where it remained until at least 18<sup>th</sup> November, but then went missing. It was not relocated again until being found in a field at **Oldfield** on 27<sup>th</sup> November (DHP) but it was back in the **Wilshaw** field on 2<sup>nd</sup>/3<sup>rd</sup> December and then in a field on **Honley Moor** on 4<sup>th</sup>/5<sup>th</sup> December (DHP *et al.*). On all occasions it was associating with a flock of mainly Common Gulls. On both the latter dates it was seen to fly off W on its' own during early to mid-morning. What was probably the same adult was present again at **Oldfield** on 20<sup>th</sup> December (DHP).

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

Rare to scarce winter visitor.

A second-winter which roosted at **Blackmoorfoot Res.** on 2<sup>nd</sup> December (NWM *et al.*) was the first record there since a first-winter on 31<sup>st</sup> March 2008.

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

Uncommon winter visitor.

This species is becoming less frequent in the Club area as the years progress, not only in the roost at **Blackmoorfoot Res.**, but also in the area generally.

The only site with regular counts was Blackmoorfoot Res., where the following monthly maxima occurred:

| Jan | Feb | Mar | Apr | May | Jun | Jul | Aug | Sep | Oct | Nov | Dec |
|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| 13  | 4   | 0   | 0   | 0   | 1   | 1   | 1   | 1   | 2   | 2   | 8   |

The only other records were as follows:

**Wards End Farm, Marsden** – 58 flew W on 11 dates between 1<sup>st</sup> and 29<sup>th</sup> January, with a maximum of 12 on 3<sup>rd</sup>. There were then no records until two flew W on 15<sup>th</sup> March. Thereafter, up to three flew W on a further three March dates, singles flew W on 13<sup>th</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup> April and two flew W on 23<sup>rd</sup> May. The next records involved one or two which flew W on nine dates in July, 11 in August and seven in September. Between 5<sup>th</sup> October and the year end a further 168 flew W on 35 dates, with a maximum of 18 on 26<sup>th</sup> December.

**Langsett** – seven flew W on 2<sup>nd</sup> January and an adult flew NW on 12<sup>th</sup> June.

**Ladywood Lakes** – 14 on 3<sup>rd</sup> January.

**Ringstone Edge Res** – a single on 23<sup>rd</sup> January.

**Mirfield (Biffa waste disposal centre)** – two on 31<sup>st</sup> January and 2<sup>nd</sup> February.

**Ingbirchworth** – a first-winter on 6<sup>th</sup> March and 25<sup>th</sup> September, two first-winters on 26<sup>th</sup> October, and an adult on 1<sup>st</sup> November.

**Broadstone Res** – one flew W on 24<sup>th</sup> April.

**Pule Hill, Marsden** – one flew SW on 15<sup>th</sup> October.

### **FERAL PIGEON** *Columba livia*

Resident breeder (3), 300-500 pairs.

Once again this species was under recorded, there being records from only 17 sites, including many gardens, but none from the main centre of populations in Huddersfield town centre. The only assemblages to attain double figures were as follows.

**Wooldale** – ten on 8<sup>th</sup> January.

**Greenhead Park** – c. 10 on 14<sup>th</sup> January.

**Holmfirth** – c. 10 on 5<sup>th</sup> February.

**Turnbridge/Cooper Bridge/Aspley (Broad Canal)** – present throughout the year with a maximum of 29 on 8<sup>th</sup> April and 37 the following day, 29 on 8<sup>th</sup> June, c.40 on 29<sup>th</sup> August, c.60 on 9<sup>th</sup> November, 37 on 24<sup>th</sup> November and c.40 on 19<sup>th</sup> December.

**Huddersfield Stadium** – 16 on 13<sup>th</sup> June and 11 on 26<sup>th</sup> June.

**Milnsbridge** – 30 on 1<sup>st</sup> September.

### **STOCK DOVE** *Columba oenas*

Resident breeder (3), 200-300 pairs.

Records were received from 29 widely scattered localities (30 in 2016 and 33 in 2015) but at only four of these: **Blackmoorfoot Res.**, **Wards End Farm**, **Marsden**, and gardens in **Fixby** and **Thongsbridge**, were birds present throughout most of the year. The only evidence of breeding involved a pair in a garden at **Thongsbridge** which nested in a box intended for Tawny Owls, two pairs which held breeding territories at **Whitley Common** and three territory holding pairs along the **Swinden Track**.

Birds continued to be recorded from gardens: **Fixby** (regularly throughout the year, but no numbers supplied), **Holmfirth** (up to four until late July but the only other record involved two in December) and **New Mill** (one or two almost daily until late August. There were then no records until late October when two or three were seen on a daily basis until the year end).

Numbers at most localities were unimpressive, rarely reaching high single figures, the only exceptions being as follows: 12 at **Blackmoorfoot Res.** on 9<sup>th</sup> January; 30 at **Broadstone Res.** on 29<sup>th</sup> January; 38 at **Whitley Common** on 6<sup>th</sup> March with 11 there on 26<sup>th</sup> April and 1<sup>st</sup> May; 47 at **Ingbirchworth Res.** on 9<sup>th</sup> May; and 66 on **Bradshaw Moor** on 1<sup>st</sup> November.

Birds considered to have been on migration were recorded as follows:

**Wards End Farm** – two flew E on 25<sup>th</sup> August, 35 flew W or SW on eight dates between 6<sup>th</sup> October and 27<sup>th</sup> November, with a maximum of seven W on 6<sup>th</sup> October.

**Harden Quarries** – one or two passed over on several dates between 7<sup>th</sup> September and 5<sup>th</sup> November with nine flying E on 25<sup>th</sup> October and ten E + three W on 5<sup>th</sup> November.

**Pule Hill, Marsden** – 15 flew SW on six dates between 20<sup>th</sup> September and 31<sup>st</sup> October, with a maximum of four on 23<sup>rd</sup> October.

### (COMMON) **WOODPIGEON** *Columba palumbus*

Resident breeder (4), 2,000-2,500 pairs. Numerous but irregular winter visitor.

The number of reports was greatly reduced on last year, from just over 300 in 2016 to just over 200 this year. For the second consecutive year winter flocks were virtually non-existent and never reached treble figures. Visible migration produced some impressive counts, however, the movement on 23<sup>rd</sup> October being particularly impressive.

The largest assemblages only amounted to about 40 which were present throughout the year in a **New Mill** garden, 34 at **Bird's Nest Lane** on 2<sup>nd</sup> January, 56 at **Ingbirchworth Res.** on 13<sup>th</sup> February with 50+ there on 9<sup>th</sup> August, c.40 in the **Grimescar Valley** on 3<sup>rd</sup> March with a similar

number at **Broadstone** on 8<sup>th</sup> March, c.50 at **Scout Dike Res.** on 15<sup>th</sup> April, 32 at **Blackley** on 29<sup>th</sup> April, and 40+ at **Langsett Res.** on 28<sup>th</sup> August.

Breeding birds were widely reported and at least ten pairs bred at **Ingbirchworth Res.**

Visible migration was witnessed at seven sites, being particularly heavy at some of these:

**Wards End Farm, Marsden** – in the first winter period a total of 396 flew over, mainly between NW and SW, on 24 dates between 5<sup>th</sup> January and 22<sup>nd</sup> April. Although numbers were generally low, 95 flew E on 5<sup>th</sup> January and 100 NW on 22<sup>nd</sup> January. Later in the year some 27,309 passed over, mainly in a SW direction, on 43 dates between 6<sup>th</sup> October and the year end. Movements usually involved less than 100 birds, but 23,500 flew SW on 27<sup>th</sup> October (c.17,000 between 06.00hrs. and 09.30hrs.), 1,000 SW on 30<sup>th</sup> October and 1,100 SW on 6<sup>th</sup> November.

**Pule Hill, Marsden** – a total of 10,130 flew S or SW on 16 dates between 9<sup>th</sup> September and 3<sup>rd</sup> November, with a maximum of 2,440 on 23<sup>rd</sup> October and 2,327 on 27<sup>th</sup> October.

**Royd Moor Hill** – 321 flew SW on 6<sup>th</sup> October, 2,111 flew S or SW on 15<sup>th</sup> October and 2,152 flew SW or NW on 5<sup>th</sup> November.

**Harden Quarries** – a total of 22,225 flew over, mainly in a westerly direction, on 12 dates between 9<sup>th</sup> October and 5<sup>th</sup> November, with a maximum of, in October, c.4,300 on 23<sup>rd</sup>, c.2,170 on 25<sup>th</sup>, c.8,020 on 27<sup>th</sup>, and 3,012 on 30<sup>th</sup>.

**Scammonden Water** – 2,000 S on 23<sup>rd</sup> October.

**Blackmoorfoot Res** – 400 flew S on 26<sup>th</sup> October and 600 did likewise the following day.

**Whitley Common** – c.2500 flew S on 27<sup>th</sup> October.

(EURASIAN) **COLLARED DOVE** *Streptopelia decaocto*

Resident breeder (3), 300-400 pairs.

Continues to be widely recorded from a number of gardens and urban areas. Most gardens held birds throughout the year, but numbers were unimpressive, never reaching more than a handful. The largest assemblages away from gardens involved ten in **Skelmanthorpe** on 1<sup>st</sup> January, ten in **Golcar** on 18<sup>th</sup> January, 25 in **Helme** on 15<sup>th</sup> October, and 26 in the centre of **High Hoyland** on 1<sup>st</sup> December.

The only breeding evidence came from **New Mill** and **Crosland Moor**, where single pairs each fledged two young.

This species has always profited from suburban/village/farmyard habitats, and rarely ventures out into the wider countryside. The record of three at **Harden Quarries** for a few days in early November is unusual. Although small numbers have been reported here in other years, they have not been published.

Passage birds were noted as follows:

**Pule Hill, Marsden** – 11 (7 SW + 4 U-turned from the NE) on 23<sup>rd</sup> September, in October, a single flew SW on 18<sup>th</sup>, three did likewise on 26<sup>th</sup> and two U-turned from the NE on 27<sup>th</sup>. The only other record involved two which flew SW on 3<sup>rd</sup> November.

**Wards End Farm, Marsden** – a single flew W on 5<sup>th</sup> January, 17 did likewise on 11<sup>th</sup> March, and a single flew S on 18<sup>th</sup> September.

(COMMON) **CUCKOO** *Cuculus canorus*

Migrant breeder, decreased to (1), 5-20 pairs. Red listed.

There were records from 22 localities, a slight increase from the 18 last year, but still an alarming drop from the 28 in 2015 and 30 in 2014. The majority of records, as has now become the norm, were from upland/moorland locations.

Singles were present at **Winscar** and **Meltham Mills** on 25<sup>th</sup> April, but there were no further occurrences that month. Birds became more widely distributed by early May.

Other birds, all singles unless otherwise stated, were reported as follows:

**Winscar** – the only other record to that mentioned above involved a single on 15<sup>th</sup> May.

**Meltham Mills** – following the first on 25<sup>th</sup> April (see above) others were seen/heard on five dates between 5<sup>th</sup> May and 1<sup>st</sup> June and two were seen on 25<sup>th</sup> May.

**Cheesegate Nab** – a single from early May until early June.

**Blackmoorfoot Res** – in May males were present on a total of 15 days (first on 6<sup>th</sup>) with two on 10<sup>th</sup>. The only record later in the year involved a male on 21<sup>st</sup> June.

**Langsett** – two males were present throughout the breeding season.

**Deer Hill** – two from mid-May to early June and four on 25<sup>th</sup> May.

**Hepworth** – 9<sup>th</sup> May.

**Harden** – 10<sup>th</sup> May.

**Meltham** – 11<sup>th</sup>, 14<sup>th</sup> and 23<sup>rd</sup> May and 30<sup>th</sup> July.

**Harden Quarries** – 12<sup>th</sup> May.

**Hullock Bank** – a single from mid-May until early June.

**Dove Stone Res** – 20<sup>th</sup> May and 2<sup>nd</sup> June.

**Horbury Strands/Wyke** – 21<sup>st</sup> May.

**Blackley** – 22<sup>nd</sup> May.

**Wessenden Valley** – two on 24<sup>th</sup> May with a single on 25<sup>th</sup> May and 1<sup>st</sup> June.

**Digley Res** – two on 26<sup>th</sup> May.

**Yateholme** – 28<sup>th</sup> May and 29<sup>th</sup> July. This latter mentioned bird was seen to depart high to the SW.

**Honley** – 30<sup>th</sup> May.

**Oldfield** – 30<sup>th</sup> May and 1<sup>st</sup> June.

**Wards End Farm, Marsden** – 31<sup>st</sup> May to 2<sup>nd</sup> June.

**Honley Wood** – 17<sup>th</sup> June.

**Isle of Skye Quarry** – 18<sup>th</sup> June.

The latest birds, a single at **Yateholme** on 29<sup>th</sup> July and a juvenile at **Meltham** the following day, were typical dates for this early departing migrant.

**BARN OWL** *Tyto alba*

Rare visitor. Occasional breeder.

There were more pairs reported breeding or suspected of doing so than last year. Pairs fledged young at three localities, raising a total of eight young (1, 3 and 4). At three other sites pairs were suspected of breeding, and two were present at a potential breeding site in August.

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

Resident breeder (2), 50-80 pairs.

This nationally declining species was recorded from 21 localities, the same as the previous two years, but only at **Broadstone** and **Millbank** were birds present throughout the year.

A single was seen regularly in the **Meltham** area during January/February and during December up to three were seen regularly at both **Panna Mill Dam** and **Red Lane**.

At **Blackmoorfoot** a single on a wall to the west was present on numerous occasions from early January and mid-April, but the only other records from this area involved a single on 18<sup>th</sup> June and one which was found dead nearby on Holt Head Road on 2<sup>nd</sup> July. A pair at the western end of Meltham Cop throughout the summer months fledged two young, but these were found dead shortly after fledging. There were no records after July.

The only other breeding evidence, even though birds were present throughout the breeding season at a number of sites, involved a juvenile at **Ingbirchworth** in late June, two juveniles at **Booth Wood Res.** in early July, a pair which fledged two young at **Roughbirchworth Common**, and a pair which fledged at least two young at **Bella Vista, Thurlstone**.

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

Resident breeder (2), near 100 pairs.

There were records from 22 locations, a drop of four from last year, and a marked drop from the 33 in 2016. Birds were present throughout the year at **Brockholes**, **Fixby**, **Meal Hill** and **Almondbury Bank Wood**.

Confirmation of breeding, which is not always easy to obtain, came from four localities: **Almondbury Bank Wood**, **Helme**, **Ingbirchworth Res.** and **Cliff Wood**. At each of the last three mentioned sites two young were raised by single pairs.

At **Windy Bank Wood**, a favoured nesting site in the past, the only records were during the winter periods. The only records from **Blackmoorfoot** involved a single which roosted in Orange Wood from 22<sup>nd</sup> to 24<sup>th</sup> September and between 29<sup>th</sup> November and 3<sup>rd</sup> December.

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

Resident breeder (1), 5-10 pairs.

This species had an extremely good breeding season in the Club area, with at least six pairs rearing in the region of 20 young.

Three pairs bred at three traditional locations in the south of the area and fledged in the region of ten young. A pair in the NW of the area fledged three young. In addition, two pairs bred at new localities in the SW of the area, fledging four and three young respectively.

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

Partial migrant breeder (1), 0-13 pairs. Scarce passage and winter visitor.

It was an abysmal showing for this species whose breeding population fluctuates annually. Birds were only recorded from three localities. At two of these, both potential breeding locations, singles were only seen on one day in spring. At the other site two were present on 22<sup>nd</sup> August and four on 2<sup>nd</sup> September.

(EUROPEAN) **NIGHTJAR** *Caprimulgus europaeus*

Rare visitor. Former migrant breeder, which may occasionally do so. Red listed.

At the same location which has held birds for the previous three years, about five were present in late July, of which two or three were males.

At a traditional site in the south of the area, at least six males held breeding territories.

(COMMON) **SWIFT** *Apus apus*

Migrant breeder (3), 100-300 pairs.

The first records involved three at **Dewsbury SW** on 25<sup>th</sup> April and singles at both **Marsden** and **Crosland Hill** on 29<sup>th</sup> April. By the end of the following week birds were more widely distributed but, as in the previous two years, numbers remained low with assemblages rarely reaching double figures.

Following a single at **Blackmoorfoot** on 30<sup>th</sup> April birds continued to be seen on a near daily basis until the last (2) on 12<sup>th</sup> September. As in the previous two years, birds were present in lower numbers than normal, with assemblages rarely reaching higher than 50, the maximum being 80+ on 9<sup>th</sup> May. Of the 50+ on 11<sup>th</sup> August most flew S and 73 (including a flock of 41) did likewise on 14<sup>th</sup> August.

These low figures were also reflected across the Club area and, even from well-watched localities, the only double figure counts involved 52 at **Dewsbury SW** on 10<sup>th</sup> May and 55 on 25<sup>th</sup> July, up to ten at **Crosland Moor** throughout the summer months with 20 on 23<sup>rd</sup> July; 20 at **Wards End Farm, Marsden** on 1<sup>st</sup> June and 16 on 13<sup>th</sup> June; 12 at **Ingbirchworth Res.** on 7<sup>th</sup> June and c.47, most of which flew W, on 12<sup>th</sup> June; ten which flew NW at **Fixby** on 30<sup>th</sup> July; and c.25 over **Lindley** on 7<sup>th</sup> August.

At least two pairs bred in **Helme**, with one pair still feeding young in the nest on 1<sup>st</sup> September. Breeding was suspected in **Marsden**, with single pairs in Bank Bottom Mills, Cellars Clough Mills and New Mills. There were no counts from **Slaithwaite** viaduct, where pairs presumably continued to breed in the nest boxes provided.

This drop in numbers was also reflected in the total recorded overflying **Wards End Farm**: from 717 in 2016 it reduced to 241 this year. These birds, which mainly flew in a westerly direction, passed over on 21 dates between 6<sup>th</sup> May and 23<sup>rd</sup> August, with the maxima only amounting to 55 W on 28<sup>th</sup> July and 44 W on 31<sup>st</sup> July. In addition, 70+ flew W over **Marsden** on 11<sup>th</sup> August.

By late July/early August birds were becoming less obvious, and by mid-August sightings were only forthcoming from five localities. These records, all in August, involved 39 which flew SW

over **Fixby** on 14<sup>th</sup> with six doing likewise the following day, 73 which flew S at **Blackmoorfoot** on 14<sup>th</sup> (see above), singles were present at **Wards End Farm** and **Crosland Moor** on 16<sup>th</sup>, two were over **Lindley** on 20<sup>th</sup>, and a single was over **Wards End Farm** on 23<sup>rd</sup>. The only September records, other than that mentioned above from **Helme**, related to up to four on six dates at **Blackmoorfoot Res.**, with the last (2) on 12<sup>th</sup>.

A single at **Blackmoorfoot** on 12<sup>th</sup> June had a white rump.

(COMMON) **KINGFISHER** *Alcedo atthis*

Resident breeder (2), near 30 pairs.

There were records from 27 localities, eight more than in the two previous years. Most records were confined to the two winter periods and the only suggestion of breeding came from **Tunnel End Res.** This was the only locations which held the species throughout the year, but up to two 'pairs' were seen at several widely distributed localities along the Rivers Calder and Colne during the course of the year. All records were of no more than two birds, with the exception of four at **Bretton Park** on 12<sup>th</sup> November.

The increase in records from **Blackmoorfoot** continued. A single was present throughout January and on several dates in February/March. There were no further records until a single appeared on 21<sup>st</sup> July and then one or two were present on a near daily basis until 15<sup>th</sup> November.

Up to two were present at **Gunthwaite Dam** and **Panna Mill Dam** during both winter periods and one or two were seen regularly at **Armitage Bridge** between May and the year end.

A bird taking newts from a garden pond in **Kirkheaton** on 10<sup>th</sup> August must have been an interesting sight.

(EUROPEAN) **GREEN WOODPECKER** *Picus viridis*

Resident breeder (2), 20-40 pairs.

The number of sites from which this species was recorded remained at a similar level to last year, being eight down from the 2015 figure of 30. Only two localities held birds throughout the year: **Hepworth** (1 or 2 present occasionally) and **Wards End Farm, Marsden** (a pair bred at nearby **Hey Green**). Although there were records during the breeding season, the only other breeding evidence was from **Armitage Bridge**, where birds were visiting a nest hole in mid-June.

There was an increase in records from **Blackmoorfoot**, where birds were seen on eight dates: 21<sup>st</sup> February (Edge Moor); 11<sup>th</sup> March (S. bank wood); 7<sup>th</sup>, 21<sup>st</sup> and 29<sup>th</sup> April (Orange Wood); 26<sup>th</sup> October (near the inflow); 24<sup>th</sup> November (Orange Wood); and 29<sup>th</sup> November (E. bank).

**GREAT SPOTTED WOODPECKER** *Dendrocopos major*

Resident breeder (2), 70-100 pairs.

There were records from 46 widely scattered localities (35 in 2016 and 54 in 2015). Birds were recorded throughout the year from several gardens, and there was the usual sharp increase in garden visits from June to August as adults accompanied their young to feeding stations.

Drumming birds were heard at a number of localities, including at least three at **Bretton Park** and three in the **Marsden** area, and breeding was confirmed at more sites than usual: **Dewsbury** (pair bred successfully near the town centre), **Langsett Res.** (pair bred), **Cliff Wood** (pair bred), **Gunthwaite Dam** (pair bred), **Fixby** (pair fledged young), **Honley Wood** (pair bred), **Blackmoorfoot Res.** (2 pairs fledging young), **Helme** (pair bred), **Helme Wood** (pair fledged young), **Windy Bank Wood** (pair bred), **Almondbury Bank Wood** (pair bred), **Longley Woods** (pair fledged young), **Armitage Bridge** (2 pairs fledged young), **Blackley** (pair bred), and **Grimescar Wood** (pair bred). The decline reported from a **New Mill** garden for the previous three years continued, a single on 4<sup>th</sup> July being the only sighting. Interestingly, a garden in **Thongsbridge** which normally holds two or three each autumn/winter was also completely devoid.

Movements over the area were reported as follows: at **Wards End Farm, Marsden** a single which flew high S on 6<sup>th</sup> April was probably the same bird which returned N later in the day and two flew W on 6<sup>th</sup> October; at **Harden Quarries** singles flew SE on 19<sup>th</sup> September and W on 20<sup>th</sup> October; and at **Pule Hill, Marsden** a single U-turned from the E on 22<sup>nd</sup> September.

(COMMON) **KESTREL** *Falco tinnunculus*  
Resident breeder (2), 70-100 pairs.

The number of sites providing records was well down on the previous year, 52 rather than 67. Dated records, however, were just the opposite and amounted to at least 350 as opposed to the 2016 figure of 242. Even better was the number confirmed breeding, nine pairs all successfully rearing young plus two more were suspected of doing so. As many locations provided records throughout the year it is likely that even these breeding records don't tell the whole story. Apart from areas where young were fledged almost all sightings were of a single birds, very occasionally two. The only exceptions involved four at **Barmings** on 27<sup>th</sup> March, seven at **Thurstonland Bank** on 10<sup>th</sup> September, four at **Scammonden Water** on 24<sup>th</sup> September, and three were seen from **Wards End Farm, Marsden** on ten occasions.

At **Blackmoorfoot** one or two, very occasionally three or four, were present throughout the year. For the fifth year, however, no interest was shown in the nest box secured to the tower by YW in 2012.

This species is much under recorded as quite a few records come in 'block' form so an exact total is difficult to ascertain.

**MERLIN** *Falco columbarius*  
Partial migrant breeder (1), 0-4 pairs. Scarce visitor.

Some 78 records were received, well up on the 60 of 2016 and the number of localities also increased from the 16 in 2016 to 18 this year. Birds were seen in every month apart from December with over 50% occurring during August, September and October, with some suggestion of movement through the area during this period. There was no evidence of breeding, in fact the months of May and June produced just two records.

Other records were as follows:

**Wards End Farm** – a total of 55 bird/days were recorded with records spanning all months bar December. Sightings mainly involved singles but two together were seen chasing Swallows on 19<sup>th</sup> September and three days later two were seen 'buzzing' a model aeroplane off Buckstones car



park (not for the first time). As well as Swallows birds were also seen chasing racing pigeons and a Woodpigeon. Conversely an adult female was closely pursued by a Peregrine on 16<sup>th</sup> February and escaped!

**Ringstone Edge** – a male on 24<sup>th</sup> January.

**Horbury Strands/Wyke** – a female was seen hunting close to the River Calder on 26<sup>th</sup> January.

**Sally Wood, Shepley** – a bird moved SSW escorted by at least three corvids on 16<sup>th</sup> March.

**Dunford Bridge** – one flew E on 21<sup>st</sup> March.

**Isle of Skye Quarry** – a female was present on 8<sup>th</sup> April.

**Wessenden Head** – a female on 30<sup>th</sup> April.

**Blackmoorfoot Res** – there were three records: singles flew W over the reservoir on 26<sup>th</sup> July and 5<sup>th</sup> August, and one was over Meltham Cop on 28<sup>th</sup> September.

**Marsden** – one flew low to the E near the station on 27<sup>th</sup> July.

**Deer Hill** – a female on 27<sup>th</sup> August.

**Harden Quarries** – two flew W on 6<sup>th</sup> September, two flew S on 19<sup>th</sup> September and a single flew low to the S on 9<sup>th</sup> October.

**Red Lane, Meltham** – a single was hunting over the fields in this area on 10<sup>th</sup> September.

**Royd Moor Hill** – a single on 22<sup>nd</sup> September and one flew NW on 30<sup>th</sup> September.

**Gunthwaite Dam** – a male was hunting over the fields near the dam on 23<sup>rd</sup> September.

**Winscar Res** – a male was observed during a prolonged chase of Meadow Pipits on 23<sup>rd</sup> September.

**Pule Hill, Marsden** – a female on 23<sup>rd</sup> September.

**Whitley Edge** – one on 9<sup>th</sup> October.

**Salter's Brook** – a single on 11<sup>th</sup> November.

(EURASIAN) **HOBBY** *Falco subbuteo*

Rare to scarce visitor, increasing. Has bred.

As the table below shows records were slightly down this year. Some 21 records were received from nine localities with no breeding being suspected. The first bird appeared on 1<sup>st</sup> May, a little later than the previous year and the last, also later, appeared on 21<sup>st</sup> September.

**Scout Dike Res** – a single flew N on 1<sup>st</sup> May and a bird seen later in the day may have been a second (NWM).

**Wards End Farm, Marsden** – a total of ten individuals were seen. There were four records in May: a single flew W on 13<sup>th</sup>, one flew SW on 24<sup>th</sup>, a single flew towards Higher Green Owlers chasing House Martins on 25<sup>th</sup>, and the following day a single flew SE. There were then no records until July, when singles flew SW on 7<sup>th</sup> and W on 28<sup>th</sup>. Singles were chasing Swallows around the farm buildings on 7<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> August, a juvenile flew W on 3<sup>rd</sup> September and an adult did likewise on 21<sup>st</sup> (all DWS).

**Langsett** – a single departed W on 22<sup>nd</sup> May (SS).

**Brockholes** – one on 27<sup>th</sup> May (DD).

**Blackmoorfoot Res** – there were three records (6 in 2016): a single was chasing hirundines over the NE corner at 14.30hrs. on 16<sup>th</sup> July (SP), an adult flew S along the west bank at 11.35hrs. on 5<sup>th</sup> August (MLD, GBS), and an adult flew S over the reservoir at 11.10hrs. on 7<sup>th</sup> September (MLD, SP, GBS).

**Broadstone Res** – an adult flew N on 24<sup>th</sup> July (GMC).

**Ingbirchworth Res** – singles flew E on 26<sup>th</sup> July (MCW) and a juvenile flew S on 12<sup>th</sup> September (NWM).

**Panna Mill Dam** – an adult low over the water caused havoc with the hirundines on 6<sup>th</sup> August (DMP).

**Marsden** – one was chasing Swallows high over the railway station on 7<sup>th</sup> August (DWS).

Records of Hobby in the Huddersfield area during the last 10 years:

| 2008 | 2009 | 2010 | 2011 | 2012 | 2013 | 2014 | 2015 | 2016 | 2017 |
|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| 8    | 11   | 12   | 16   | 28   | 18   | 34   | 29   | 25   | 21   |

**PEREGRINE FALCON** *Falco peregrinus*

Resident breeder, increased to (1), 1-6 pairs.

A much higher number of records were received this year, but the number of sites remained fairly constant at 22. Given that records from four of these sites more than likely refer to the same birds, the numbers could well be somewhat flattering and the position seems to have worsened since last year. Although there were no instances of breeding, a possible pair were present at a former nesting site on 9<sup>th</sup> April and three males were in the air there on 3<sup>rd</sup> October.

**Huddersfield Town Centre** – recorded on a total of 22 dates with birds ranging between Aspley, Huddersfield University, via Huddersfield Stadium to Bradley and Colnebridge. Most records involved singles but two were seen on eight dates between mid-May and mid-December.

**Dewsbury SW** – birds were regularly noted over the works, most of which departed towards Wakefield. It is quit conceivable that these birds belonged to the breeding pair on Wakefield Cathedral.

**Wards End Farm, Marsden** – at this daily watched site birds were observed on 36 dates. They were mainly flyover singles, and were seen in every month but July, although two were noted on 20<sup>th</sup> May and 30<sup>th</sup> October. Unusually, a large female was seen chasing a very vociferous Pink-footed Goose through the fog on 7<sup>th</sup> January and another unsuccessfully pursued a female Merlin on 16<sup>th</sup> February.

**Ingbirchworth Res** – a single on 29<sup>th</sup> January.

**Wessenden Moor** – a female on 5<sup>th</sup> February.

**Broadstone Res** – one on 8<sup>th</sup> March and a juvenile on 27<sup>th</sup> May.

**Bretton Park** – a single on 9<sup>th</sup> March.

**Isle of Skye Quarry** – a single was carrying a captured Snipe on 26<sup>th</sup> March and singles were seen on 15<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> November.

**Cheesegate Nab** – one flew W on 29<sup>th</sup> March.

**Chew Res** – a single on 30<sup>th</sup> April.

**Dove Stone Res** – two on 30<sup>th</sup> April.

**Langsett** – one was seen to take a ‘pigeon’ near the Flouch on 10<sup>th</sup> May and a single was present on 16<sup>th</sup> December.

**Crosland Moor** – a single flew SE on 14<sup>th</sup> May.

**Digley** – one on 4<sup>th</sup> June.

**Winscar Res** – a female was mobbed by a Kestrel on 10<sup>th</sup> June.

**Booth Wood Res** – a single on 14<sup>th</sup> June.

**Carlecotes Ponds** – one on 18<sup>th</sup> June.

**Blackmoorfoot Res** – there were six records (same as 2016): a single was over the E bank on 21<sup>st</sup> May; an immature female was chasing birds over the reservoir for 20 minutes on 29<sup>th</sup> July; an immature circled the reservoir on 7<sup>th</sup> September; two flew NW together on 23<sup>rd</sup> September; an adult female was chasing gulls over the reservoir on three occasions on 15<sup>th</sup> October; and a single flew W over Orange Wood on 29<sup>th</sup> December.

**Harden Quarries** – a single on 18<sup>th</sup> September and at least one (possibly 2) on both 19<sup>th</sup> October and 1<sup>st</sup> November.

**Royd Moor Hill** – singles on 30<sup>th</sup> September and 5<sup>th</sup> November.

**Horbury Strands/Wyke** – one flushed all the gulls and waterfowl on 6<sup>th</sup> October.

**Fixby** – three flew E on 2<sup>nd</sup> November.

(COMMON) **MAGPIE** *Pica pica*

Resident breeder (4), 1,500-2,000 pairs.

Although still widely distributed and common in the Club area, large assemblages are becoming rarer. Reports were received from a good number of gardens but, although present throughout the year, these never consisted of more than a handful of birds.

The only double figure counts were as follows:

**Marsden** – 21 were in a roost along Waters Road on 31<sup>st</sup> January, 15+ in Head Clough on 18<sup>th</sup> September and 19 on the Golf Course on 18<sup>th</sup> October.

**Meltham** – up to 25 roosted throughout January and February with 29 on 27<sup>th</sup> January and 34 on 5<sup>th</sup> February.

**Huddersfield Stadium** – 11 on 29<sup>th</sup> January and ten on 2<sup>nd</sup> April.

**Turnbridge/Cooper Bridge/Aspley (Broad Canal)** – 14 on 31<sup>st</sup> March, 11 on 9<sup>th</sup> and 23<sup>rd</sup> April and 19 on 19<sup>th</sup> December.

**Almondbury** – a flock of ten on 23<sup>rd</sup> December.

Visible migration was reported from **Pule Hill, Marsden** where two flew SW on 18<sup>th</sup> October and seven did likewise the following day.

(EURASIAN) **JAY** *Garrulus glandarius*

Resident breeder (3), 200-350 pairs.

Remains as widespread as ever, but the usual increase in numbers during the late autumn months was only witnessed at **Blackmoorfoot** (see below). There were many garden records, some with birds present throughout the year, but these never amounted to more than three or four individuals. This is a very secretive species during the breeding season, and at only two sites was breeding evidence forthcoming: a pair fledged three young at **Langsett Banks** and two birds were carrying nesting material at **Blackmoorfoot**.

That this species is a great mimic cannot be denied and one mimicking the call of a Buzzard at **Brockholes** on 27<sup>th</sup> March must have quickened the heart of the observer who was expecting something better.

With the exception of **Blackmoorfoot** (see below) the only record of more than four involved five in a **Meltham** garden (where the species was a regular visitor) on 26<sup>th</sup> April and 10<sup>th</sup> July, five in **Windy Bank Wood** on 18<sup>th</sup> September and 26<sup>th</sup> October, eight at **Armitage Bridge** on 18<sup>th</sup> October and c.10 along the **Narrow Canal** in Huddersfield on 5<sup>th</sup> November.

**Blackmoorfoot Res** – present throughout the year with two birds carrying nesting material in the S. bank plantation in late April. Between two and four were generally present although in late September/October there was a noticeable increase with up to six being regularly seen, and eight were present on 26<sup>th</sup>/27<sup>th</sup> September.

Visible migration was noted as follows:

**Wards End Farm** – four flew S on 12<sup>th</sup> August. A total of 33 flew S or SW on 12 dates between 15<sup>th</sup> September and 9<sup>th</sup> October, with a maximum of 13 on 6<sup>th</sup> October.

**Harden Quarries** – six (2 groups of 3) flew S on 22<sup>nd</sup> September.

(WESTERN) **JACKDAW** *Corvus monedula*

Resident breeder (4), 500-1,000 pairs.

There was no real change in status, with birds forming large flocks at numerous locations and breeding occurring widely throughout the area. Once again there were many garden records, present at some throughout the year, but with the exception of the following these never attained double figures. The garden in **Holmfirth** which held good numbers last year continued to attract large aggregations, with a maximum of 46 during the last week of February and 80 in mid-December. A garden in **New Mill**, which held birds throughout the year, had a maximum of 14 on 29<sup>th</sup> December.

Flocks of anything up to 30 were widely distributed, those in excess are outlined below:

**Cheesegate Nab** – present throughout the year with occasional flocks of c.200.

**Marsden** – up to 120 were present throughout the year in the village. A flock of 40 were on Waters Road on 30<sup>th</sup> March.

**Brockholes** – c.50 on 3<sup>rd</sup> February.

**Whitley Edge** – 120+ on 27<sup>th</sup> February, c.120 on 6<sup>th</sup> March and c.80 on 6<sup>th</sup> April.

**Bretton Park** – a minimum of c.54 on 11<sup>th</sup> March.

**Ingbirchworth Res** – 60+ on 21<sup>st</sup> August.

**Gunthwaite** – 40 on 4<sup>th</sup> October.

**Royd Moor Hill** – c.90 on 15<sup>th</sup> October.

**Royd Moor Res** – 60+ on 16<sup>th</sup> October.

**Wards End Farm, Marsden** – 50 on 23<sup>rd</sup> October.

Visible migration was noted as follows:

**Pule Hill, Marsden** – a total of 762 flew W or SW on 11 dates between 19<sup>th</sup> September and 27<sup>th</sup> October, with a maximum of 351 on 18<sup>th</sup> October and 188 on 27<sup>th</sup> October.

**Wards End Farm** – 161 flew W on 15 dates between 2<sup>nd</sup> March and 13<sup>th</sup> April, with a maximum of 38 on 13<sup>th</sup> April. Later in the year a total of 1,428 flew W or SW on 14 dates between 22<sup>nd</sup> September and 30<sup>th</sup> October, with a maximum, all in October, of 370 SW on 6<sup>th</sup>, 400 W on 15<sup>th</sup> and 200 W on 18<sup>th</sup>.

**ROOK** *Corvus frugilegus*

Resident breeder (5), 3,000-4,500 pairs (2,450 during the Club survey in 2005).

With only 36 records received for the whole year it is becoming increasingly difficult to assess the status of this species. Presumably the species remains fairly common in rural parts of the Club area, but the largest flocks reported this year only consisted of c.80 birds. The concern about a dwindling population mentioned in last year's report continues to grow.

Nest counts were only received from two localities. The 2005 Club survey (see *Birds in Huddersfield 2005*) revealed a total of 106 rookeries in the Club area. The species is obviously under recorded and, as a consequence, it is worth repeating last year's plea. **In order to understand the fluctuating fortunes of this species it is essential that members continue to submit all records of rookeries including negative records from past breeding locations.**

The only flocks in excess of 40 were as follows:

**Farnley Tyas** – c.50 on 30<sup>th</sup> January and 19<sup>th</sup> August.

**Skelmanthorpe** – c.40 on 1<sup>st</sup> February.

**Ingbirchworth Res** – 35+ on 15<sup>th</sup> March and 40+ on 30<sup>th</sup> August.

**Royd Moor Hill** – c.80 on 31<sup>st</sup> May.

**Gunthwaite Dam** – c.80 on 19<sup>th</sup> July.

**Royd Moor Res** – 60+ on 16<sup>th</sup> October.

**Whitley Common** – c.60 on 27<sup>th</sup> November.

Nests were noted as follows:

**Crosland Moor** – one nest (3 in 2016 and 2015).

**Hepworth (Lark's House)** – five nests (7 in 2016 and 11 in 2015).

### **CARRION CROW** *Corvus corone*

Resident breeder (4), 800-1,600 pairs.

This under recorded species, although still widely distributed, appears, from the records supplied, to be decreasing in numbers. Breeding was only reported from a handful of localities, although breeding season records suggest it would have occurred at many more. Numerous gardens attracted small numbers throughout the year.

Most records were of fewer than 15, the following being the exceptions:

**Marsden** – 26 at Garside Hey on 29<sup>th</sup> January.

**Ingbirchworth Res** – 16 on 20<sup>th</sup> February, 18 on 3<sup>rd</sup> April, 15 on 11<sup>th</sup> May and 26<sup>th</sup> June, and 18 on 9<sup>th</sup> August.

**Blackmoorfoot Res** – the largest counts were from the fields to the west and involved 27 on 4<sup>th</sup> March and 35+ on 17<sup>th</sup> April.

**Wards End Farm, Marsden** – up to 20 throughout March and 19 on 26<sup>th</sup> June.

**Whitley Common** – 42 on 6<sup>th</sup> March and c.60 on 27<sup>th</sup> November.

**Blackley** – 19 on 7<sup>th</sup> March and 53 on 29<sup>th</sup> April.

**Aspley to Cooper Bridge (Broad Canal)** – 19 on 9<sup>th</sup> April and 18 on 16<sup>th</sup> April and, in December, 26 on 7<sup>th</sup>, 19 on 19<sup>th</sup> and 16 on 23<sup>rd</sup>.

**Horbury** – 23 along the canal on 21<sup>st</sup> September.

Visible migration was witnessed at **Wards End Farm**: a total of 91 flew over, mainly in a westerly direction, on six dates between 11<sup>th</sup> March and 8<sup>th</sup> April, with a maximum of 27 on 28<sup>th</sup> March. Later in the year, a total of 67 flew W (more often than not with Jackdaws) on five dates between 8<sup>th</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup> October. The maxima involved 20 on 15<sup>th</sup> and 21 on 30<sup>th</sup>.

Although this species is not renowned for undertaking migratory movements, the above mentioned birds were felt to be doing so as none were seen to return.

### **HOODED CROW** *Corvus cornix*

Rare visitor.

A single was present at **Ramsden Clough** on 22<sup>nd</sup> May (II). This is the first record in the Club area since a single at **Cawthorne** on the unusual date of 20<sup>th</sup> July 2013. This is another unusual date for the species to be in Yorkshire, although the circumstances outlined below by the observer, suggest that the bird may not have had a wild origin.

The bird did not behave like a typical healthy corvid which are always active, moving constantly and investigating their surroundings. It simply sat for about 30 minutes (at 50 metres range) before moving and I suspected that it was either exhausted or ill. Its flight too was weak and laboured - it struggled to gain height although there was no plumage damage.

Given its trusting nature, and the fact that the UK/Irish population is not mobile, and continental vagrants would not be expected in late May, I speculated that it may have had a captive origin.

### **RAVEN** *Corvus corax*

Former rare visitor, now resident breeder (1), 1-2 pairs.

Records were received from about 20 localities, a sharp drop from the 32 last year. Unlike last year, when birds were recorded regularly throughout the year at several locations, this year only **Wards End Farm, Marsden** had birds with any regularity. Most records, as last year, involved no more than two birds, only rarely three or four, but seven flew SW at **Blackmoorfoot Res.** on 5<sup>th</sup> February (see below), 13 (11 + 2) flew NW at **Wards End Farm** on 3<sup>rd</sup> April and about six were present there on 17<sup>th</sup> November, at least eight were in the **Little Don Valley** on 22<sup>nd</sup> April with seven there the following week and six on 5<sup>th</sup> July, 12 were at **Royd Moor Hill** on 22<sup>nd</sup> September with nine remaining at the month end, and five were at **Winscar** on 23<sup>rd</sup> September.

**Blackmoorfoot Res** – there were 19 records, the highest number ever recorded. All sightings involved one or two birds, with the exceptions of seven which flew SW on 5<sup>th</sup> February, three were over Meltham Cop on 9<sup>th</sup> April and three flew W over Orange Wood on 19<sup>th</sup> November. Occurrences spanned February (2 records), March (1), April (2), June (1), August (3), September (4), October (3), and November (3).

Two interesting records away from the hills involved a single which flew N over **Crosland Moor** on 2<sup>nd</sup> May and one which flew W there on 10<sup>th</sup> September.

As in 2016, with birds forever present at **Wards End Farm** it is difficult to be sure whether those overflying the area were actually true migrants. In addition, the birds which overflew **Harden Quarries** and **Isle of Sky Quarry** in autumn are perhaps unlikely to be on migration.

### **GOLDCREST** *Regulus regulus*

Resident breeder (3), 100-200 pairs. Common passage and winter visitor.

Records were received from 41 locations, a marked increase on the 23 during 2016. The only locality where birds were regularly seen throughout the year, however, was **Colne Bridge SP**, which held a maximum of four on 21<sup>st</sup> December.

A large proportion of records involved no more than three birds, the only exceptions being as follows: 15+ at **Langsett Banks** on 2<sup>nd</sup> March with eight there on 7<sup>th</sup> June, five three days later, 30+ on 15<sup>th</sup> September, and 12+ on 29<sup>th</sup> November; five at **Dunford Bridge** on 9<sup>th</sup> March with 13 there on 21<sup>st</sup> March; a flock of five which flew SW at **Pule Hill, Marsden** on 9<sup>th</sup> October; a group of six at **Harden Quarries** which flew low to the E before veering off northwards towards the plantation on 26<sup>th</sup> October; and five in a garden at **Almondbury** on 11<sup>th</sup> November.

The number of records from **Blackmoorfoot** showed a marked decrease on last year. In the first half of the year singles were present on 10<sup>th</sup> February and 23<sup>rd</sup> and 29<sup>th</sup> March. There were then no

records until a single was seen on 13<sup>th</sup> October. Up to three (usually only 1) were then seen on a further six dates until late November.

Evidence of breeding was obtained from **Kirkheaton** (pair nest building in a conifer in a garden), the **Little Don Valley** (pair nest building), **Langsett Banks** (pair bred), and **Winscar Res.** (5+ males held breeding territories).

### **FIRECREST** *Regulus ignicapilla*

Rare visitor.

There were two records.

A single amongst a party of Long-tailed Tits at **Healey Mills/Kerry's NR** on 14<sup>th</sup> January (JH) may well have been the same bird that appeared at Wintersett Res., Wakefield a few days later. Later in the year one was present at **Ingbirchworth Res.** on 30<sup>th</sup> October (MCW).

### **BLUE TIT** *Cyanistes caeruleus*

Resident breeder (5), 3,000-6,000 pairs. One of the commonest species.

Continues to be recorded from a wide diversity of habitats and locations, even at high altitude along the moorland edge. Breeding was reported from several sites, most of which appeared to have a good success rate. At **Cliff Wood** in excess of 105 young fledged from the 12 pairs which utilised nest boxes.

As is now usual, double figure counts were very limited. Interestingly, none of these larger assemblages included family parties during the autumn months.

**Hepworth** – up to ten in a garden throughout the year.

**Turnbridge/Cooper Bridge/Aspley (Broad Canal)** – good numbers were present throughout most of the year with a maximum of 32 on 9<sup>th</sup> April and 29 on 16<sup>th</sup> April.

**Ingbirchworth Moor** – c.12 on 18<sup>th</sup> January, 16 on 27<sup>th</sup> March and 30+ on 19<sup>th</sup> December.

**Ingbirchworth Res** – 12 on 10<sup>th</sup> February and 16 on 27<sup>th</sup> March.

**Grimescar Wood** – 16 on 3<sup>rd</sup> March and 7<sup>th</sup> April and 11 on 25<sup>th</sup> May.

**Blackley** – 16 on 29<sup>th</sup> April.

**Armitage Bridge** – 12 on 12<sup>th</sup> December.

**Wards End Farm, Marsden** – c.10 on 31<sup>st</sup> December.

At **Pule Hill, Marsden** a party of four flew SW low over the moor on 9<sup>th</sup> October.

### **GREAT TIT** *Parus major*

Resident breeder (4-5), 1,500-3,000 pairs.

Although this species was as widely distributed as Blue Tit, numbers were much lower. Birds were present throughout the year in numerous gardens, but numbers never exceeded a handful. Pairs were reported breeding at a good number of widely distributed localities and in excess of 42 young fledged from the six pairs which used nest boxes at **Cliff Wood**.

Even in the wider environment most records were in single figures, the only exceptions being as follows:

**Grimescar Wood** – 14 on 7<sup>th</sup> April.

**Turnbridge/Cooper Bridge/Aspley (Broad Canal)** – 11 throughout most of April.

**Ingbirchworth Res** – at least ten on 19<sup>th</sup> December.

At **Pule Hill, Marsden** parties of five flew SW low over the moor on 28<sup>th</sup> September and 9<sup>th</sup> October.

A leucistic individual was seen at **Wards End Farm, Marsden** on 25<sup>th</sup> September. The bird was light grey throughout apart from the cap which was dark grey.

### **COAL TIT** *Periparus ater*

Resident breeder (3), 400-500 pairs.

With records from 30 locations, including woodland along the moorland edge, the species continues to be as widely distributed as formerly. Although birds were present in a number of gardens throughout the year, these never amounted to more than four birds, and the only breeding evidence involved juveniles in a **New Mill** garden in June. Even away from the garden environment, breeding was only reported from **Scout Dike Res.** (2 pairs), **Winscar** (c.8 males on territory), **Blackmoorfoot** (see below), and **Ingbirchworth Res.** (2 pairs). Numbers generally never exceeded a handful, but in the **Little Don Valley** on 5<sup>th</sup> April birds were said to have “become too numerous to count meaningfully”.

Although one or two were present at **Blackmoorfoot** throughout the first half of the year and a pair fledged young, the second half of the year only produced a single on 10<sup>th</sup> August and two from 18<sup>th</sup> November until the year end.

A single in the **Isle of Skye Quarry** on 23<sup>rd</sup> September was “the long awaited first record of this species at the site”.

Visible migration was noted as follows:

**Harden Quarries** – a single flew fairly high S over the moor on 22<sup>nd</sup> September.

**Pule Hill, Marsden** – a party of eight flew SW low over the moor on 9<sup>th</sup> October and a single U-turned from the NE on 27<sup>th</sup> October.

### **WILLOW TIT** *Poecile montana*

Resident breeder (1), about 20 pairs (but greatly reduced since the 1987-92 Atlas). Red listed.

There were records from ten locations, four being from the species’ stronghold in the Ingbirchworth area. An interesting record involved a long-stay individual which regularly visited a garden feeding station in Hepworth.

**Broadstone Res** – a single on the heath on 17<sup>th</sup> January and two on 12<sup>th</sup> October.

**Ingbirchworth Res** – present throughout the year with two pairs fledging seven (3 + 4) young.

**Royd Moor Res** – present throughout the year with one pair breeding (no further evidence was forthcoming).

**Scout Dike Res** – present throughout the year with two pairs holding breeding territories.

**Dunford Bridge** – a pair held a breeding territory.

**Gunthwaite Dam** – a very vocal bird on 9<sup>th</sup> September and 2<sup>nd</sup> December.

**Cheesegate Nab** – a single on 24<sup>th</sup> October.



**Denby Delf** – one on 29<sup>th</sup> October.

**Meal Hill** – a single on 11<sup>th</sup> November.

**Hepworth** – a single which visited a nut-feeder in a garden on a daily basis between 8<sup>th</sup> December and the year end was the first record from the garden.

(COMMON) **SKYLARK** *Alauda arvensis*

Partial migrant breeder, decreased to (4), 500-2,500 pairs. Red listed.

The only January record concerned a single which flew S at **Blackmoorfoot Res.** on 20<sup>th</sup>. Records in February only involved birds at five localities: five flew W at **Wards End Farm, Marsden** on 16<sup>th</sup> and a single was present there on 21<sup>st</sup>, also on 16<sup>th</sup>, a single was seen at **Oldfield** and five flew W at **Blackmoorfoot** (where up to 6 were then present on a daily basis until late September), and four singing males were present at **Broadstone Res.** on 18<sup>th</sup>. Birds became more widely distributed between early March and late September, but numbers rarely exceeded half a dozen, the highest counts only involved: 12+ singing males during the breeding season at **Broadstone Res.**, eight males which held territories at **Spicer House Lane**, seven on **Wessenden Moor** on 19<sup>th</sup> April with nine there on 24<sup>th</sup> May, c.60 in a stubble field at **Bella Vista, Thurlstone** on 19<sup>th</sup> September, and ten at **Royd Moor Hill** on 30<sup>th</sup> September.

Visible migration was recorded as follows:

**Harden Quarries** – a total of 52 flew S or SW on 11 dates between 22<sup>nd</sup> September and 1<sup>st</sup> November, the highest count being of 13 on 23<sup>rd</sup> October.

**Royd Moor Hill** – five flew SW on 22<sup>nd</sup> September, 11 flew S on 15<sup>th</sup> October, 57 did likewise on 27<sup>th</sup> October, and six flew S on 5<sup>th</sup> November.

**Deanhead Res** – singles flew S on four dates between late September and mid-October.

**Pule Hill, Marsden** – 12 flew S or SW on six dates between 28<sup>th</sup> September and 1<sup>st</sup> November, with a maximum of five (4 S + 1 SW) on 28<sup>th</sup> September.

**Wards End Farm, Marsden** – a single flew W on 6<sup>th</sup> October.

**Isle of Skye Quarry** – in October, three flew SW on 6<sup>th</sup>, a single S on 8<sup>th</sup>, and six (5 S + 1 SE) on 18<sup>th</sup>.

**Oldfield** – a single NW on 18<sup>th</sup> October.

**Deer Hill** – two SW on 18<sup>th</sup> October and two W on 6<sup>th</sup> November.

**Marsden** – a single flew SW on 18<sup>th</sup> December.

With the exceptions of the October/November/December records mentioned under visible migration the only other records during these months involved a flock of c.30 which were present in the **Thurgory Lane** area from 10<sup>th</sup> October to the year end and a single at **Shepley** on 26<sup>th</sup> October.

**SAND MARTIN** *Riparia riparia*

Migrant breeder, increased to (2), 20-100 pairs. Uncommon passage visitor.

The first arrivals of the year were in late March and involved a single at **Ingbirchworth Res.** on 23<sup>rd</sup>, three at **Dewsbury SW** on 28<sup>th</sup>, two at **Blackmoorfoot Res.** on 30<sup>th</sup>, and an unrecorded number at **Crosland Hill Quarries** on 31<sup>st</sup>. Birds continued to arrive throughout April and, by the time of the last birds, 16 at **Blackmoorfoot Res.** on 21<sup>st</sup> September, they had been recorded from a further 24 sites.

Unlike last year, which could only muster a single double figure count away from the breeding colonies and Blackmoorfoot (see below), this year produced a number of double figure assemblages:

**Horbury SW** – 80 on 14<sup>th</sup> April.

**Dewsbury SW** – 50 on 16<sup>th</sup> April.

**Dalton (Syngenta)** – 16 on 23<sup>rd</sup> April.

**Horbury Strands/Wyke** – 20 on 18<sup>th</sup> May.

**Brighouse** – ten along the River Calder at Anchor Pit Lock.

**Huddersfield Stadium** – 11 on 16<sup>th</sup> June.

Breeding evidence came from the following sites:

**Aspley** – 20 nests in holes created by missing bricks in derelict mills along the Broad Canal.

**Dewsbury SW** – 22 nests were located in a new colony in early May.

**Mill Bank** – 20 nest were located in a new colony in early May.

**Crosland Hill Quarries** – there were 11 holes in late May, but it is possible that not all were in use.

**Mirfield** – ‘several pairs’ were said to be nesting at Ledgard Bridge (Newgate) in mid-April. No further information was forthcoming, however.

There was no information forthcoming from the long-established colony at **Healey Mills/Kerry’s NR**.

At **Blackmoorfoot Res.**, following two individuals on 30<sup>th</sup> March (see above), birds were seen on a further 125 days (105 in 2016 and 75 in 2015) until the last (16) on 21<sup>st</sup> September. Numbers reached double figures on numerous occasions, especially between mid-May and late July, with a maximum of 35+ on 27<sup>th</sup> April, 40+ on 15<sup>th</sup>/16<sup>th</sup> May and, in July, 50+ on 10<sup>th</sup>, 40+ on 15<sup>th</sup>, and 50+ on 20<sup>th</sup>. This remains the only non-breeding locality in the Club area where birds are encountered with any regularity.

(BARN) **SWALLOW** *Hirundo rustica*

Migrant breeder (4), 500-600 pairs. Numerous passage visitor.

The first records of the year were in early April: two were at **Ingbirchworth Res.** on 1<sup>st</sup> and singles at **Blackmoorfoot Res.** and **Skelmanthorpe** on 3<sup>rd</sup>. Birds were more widely distributed by mid-April, but numbers, as last year, were generally low, the few exceptions being as follows:

**Dewsbury SW** – in April, 55 on 12<sup>th</sup>, 40 on 16<sup>th</sup>, c.140 on 23<sup>rd</sup>, and 60 on 25<sup>th</sup>.

**Ingbirchworth Res** – c.60 on 13<sup>th</sup> April and c.40 on 1<sup>st</sup> May, 17<sup>th</sup> July, 17<sup>th</sup> August and 1<sup>st</sup> September.

**Meltham SW** – 50 on 14<sup>th</sup> April.

**Blackmoorfoot** – 35+ on 16<sup>th</sup>/17<sup>th</sup> April and 50+ on 27<sup>th</sup> April.

**Scout Dike Res** – 30 on 24<sup>th</sup> April.

**Wards End Farm, Marsden** – 30+ on 11<sup>th</sup> July and 45 on 19<sup>th</sup> July.

Despite these low numbers at the usual favoured sites, breeding pairs were widely distributed, and included four pairs at **Turnbridge**.

Normally, between late July and late September, larger assemblages have been apparent. This year, however, it was simply a continuation of the abysmal summer numbers, and the only gatherings of any size were as follows:

**Wards End Farm** – 20 were around the farm in early August, then between 30 and 60 were present on most dates from mid-August and 26<sup>th</sup> September.

**Langsett Res** – c.20 on 4<sup>th</sup> August and 60+ on 28<sup>th</sup> August.

**Emley** – 20 on 28<sup>th</sup> August.

**Blackmoorfoot** – 40+ on 2<sup>nd</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> September.

**Scammonden Water** – c.40 on 1<sup>st</sup> September.

**Broadstone area** – although not at a specific site, and despite birds being counted over a large area, the following record is of interest. At least 1,000 were present in the area of the Sovereign Junction/Broadstone Road/Spicer House Lane/Royd Moor viewpoint/Royd Moor Wind Farm/Whitley Common/Broadstone Res. on 3<sup>rd</sup> September (II). Given that the observer did not visit any of the other lower-level reservoirs, he thought that the true figure for the whole area could have been higher.

Visible migration was recorded as follows:

**Isle of Skye Quarry** – 104 flew S or W on ten dates between 6<sup>th</sup> August and 6<sup>th</sup> October, with a maximum of 48 on 15<sup>th</sup> September.

**Wards End Farm** – 550 flew over, mainly in a W or S direction, on five dates between 3<sup>rd</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup> September, with a maximum of 150 W on 15<sup>th</sup>.

**Harden Quarries** – 350 flew S on six dates between 6<sup>th</sup> September and 19<sup>th</sup> October, with a maximum of 152 on 20<sup>th</sup> September.

**Blackmoorfoot** – 80+ S on 9<sup>th</sup> September, six S on 30<sup>th</sup> September, two S on 10<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> October, and three S on 17<sup>th</sup> October.

**Kirkheaton** – c.200 flew S on 15<sup>th</sup> September.

**Royd Moor Hill** – 74 flew S on 22<sup>nd</sup> September and four flew S on 6<sup>th</sup> October.

With the exception of **Blackmoorfoot Res.**, which had up to nine (usually less than 6) on nine October dates (3 S on 17<sup>th</sup> being the last), the only other October records involved six at **Broadstone Lodge** on 4<sup>th</sup>, five at **Ingbirchworth Res.** on 5<sup>th</sup>, two which flew S at **Isle of Skye Quarry** on 6<sup>th</sup>, and three which flew S at **Harden Quarries** on 19<sup>th</sup>.

A leucistic individual was present at **Wards End Farm** on 20<sup>th</sup> August.

(COMMON) **HOUSE MARTIN** *Delichon urbicum*

Migrant breeder (3), 400-500 pairs (but greatly reduced since the 1987-92 Atlas). Common passage visitor.

The first records of the year involved three at **Colne Bridge SP** on 7<sup>th</sup> April with two at **Blackmoorfoot Res.** and a single at **Ingbirchworth Res.** on 12<sup>th</sup> April. The following week saw birds far more widely distributed but flock sizes remained generally low, the only exceptions being 180 at **Dewsbury SW** on 25<sup>th</sup> April, c.40 at **Ingbirchworth Res.** on 16<sup>th</sup> May and 50 at **Horbury SW** on 18<sup>th</sup> May.

Following the first record at **Blackmoorfoot Res.** (2 on 12<sup>th</sup> April) birds were seen on a near daily basis until the last (2) on 28<sup>th</sup> September. As has now become the norm at this locality, numbers rarely exceeded 25, only very occasionally reaching as high as 50, but numbers rallied from mid-August (see below).

Following previous years' requests for all breeding records, breeding was confirmed at 12 sites (16 in 2016 and 22 in 2015) although, rather worryingly, negative records were received from a few previously active colonies. **In order to understand the fluctuating fortunes of this species**

**it is essential that members continue to submit all records of breeding locations including negative records from past breeding locations.**

The breeding sites were as follows:

**Black Horse PH, Dalton** – no nests (as last year).  
**Crosland Moor (Blackmoorfoot Road)** – two nests (3 in 2016).  
**Marsden (Waters Road)** – at least four nests (same as 2016). These nests were removed by the householder in late July, presumably after the young had flown.  
**Marsden (Mount Road)** – no data available (at least one nest in 2016).  
**Marsden (Glenroyd)** – no data available (1 nest in 2016).  
**Marsden (Warrington Terrace)** – two nests (at least 2 in 2015 but no data available in 2016).  
**Marsden (Hard End)** – unknown – nests not visible.  
**Marsden (Plains Lane)** – no data available (as last year).  
**Marsden (Warehouse Hill)** – no data available (as last year).  
**Marsden (Binn Road)** – no data available (probably 2 in 2016).  
**Wessenden Lodge** – possibly two nests (at least six in 2016).  
**West Slaithwaite (Booth)** – no data available (as last year).  
**Marsden (Lower Green Howlers)** – no nests (1 in 2016).  
**Kirkburton (Thornclyff)** – with 36 nests in 2015, this is the largest colony in the area. Unfortunately, however, no data has been available for the previous two years.  
**Lindley (Holly Bank Road)** – no data available (1 nest in 2016).  
**Honley (Bradshaw Road)** – no data available (as last year).  
**Thongsbridge (Stoney Bank Road)** – three nests (at least 4 in 2016).  
**Linthwaite (Upper Clough)** – no data available (5 in 2016).  
**Linthwaite (Causeway Side)** – no data available (as last year).  
**Ingbirchworth (Ivy Bank Close)** – no data available (no nests in 2016).  
**Meltham Mills** – no data available (as last year).  
**Margaret Wood** – no data available (no nests in 2016).  
**Newsome Road** – two nests (3 nests in 2016).  
**Lowerhouses (Hall Cross Road)** – no data available (1 nest in 2016).  
**Berry Brow (Newsome Road South)** – no data available (1 nest in 2016).  
**Oldfield** – five nests (3 in 2016).  
**Rastrick (Slade Lane)** – no data available (4 nests in 2016).  
**Netherton (Infant School)** – four nests.  
**Netherton (Delph Lane)** – two nests.  
**Netherton (Moor Lane)** – one nest.  
**Cannon Hall CP** – one nest at the rear of the main hall.  
**High Hoyland (Cherry Tree public house)** – one nest.

Assemblages during the summer months never exceeded 50 with the exception of **Ingbirchworth Res.** which held 120+ on 12<sup>th</sup> June and 80+ on 3<sup>rd</sup> July.

There was a slight increase in numbers from late July with the following being the largest assemblages:

**Wards End Farm, Marsden** – 250 around the buildings departed SE on 1<sup>st</sup> August.  
**Oldfield** – c.150 on 16<sup>th</sup> August.  
**Blackmoorfoot Res** – 130+ on 17<sup>th</sup> August and, in September, 60+ on 4<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup>, and 80+ on 13<sup>th</sup>, 19<sup>th</sup> and 22<sup>nd</sup>.  
**Ingbirchworth Res** – c.300 on 4<sup>th</sup> September and 350+ on 12<sup>th</sup> September.  
**Isle of Skye Quarry** – c.120 which were feeding very high gradually drifted SW on 24<sup>th</sup> September.

Visible migration was recorded as follows:

**Blackmoorfoot** – 80+ flew S on 14<sup>th</sup> August and 180+ did likewise on 16<sup>th</sup> August.

**Wards End Farm** – in September, 40 flew S on 17<sup>th</sup>, 15 W on 19<sup>th</sup> and ten S on 22<sup>nd</sup>.

**Harden Quarries** – a total of 243 flew S on five dates between 6<sup>th</sup> September and 9<sup>th</sup> October, with a maximum of 115 on 22<sup>nd</sup> September.

By late September most birds had departed and the only October records involved three at **Gunthwaite** on 4<sup>th</sup> and two which flew S at **Harden Quarries** on 9<sup>th</sup>.

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

Resident breeder (3), 100-250 pairs.

Records were received from 34 locations, a slight increase on the previous two years, but proof of breeding was only confirmed at **Ingbirchworth** (a pair bred). In the **Horbury** area there was a marked local increase with sightings from just about everywhere (JH).

As usual most groups were in single figures, the exceptions being outlined below:

**Colne Bridge SP** – present throughout the year with flock sizes during the winter months “invariably in the high teens”.

**Thick Hollins** – good numbers were present at a feeding station during both winter periods, especially during the first. Up to ten were a regular feature but 16 were seen on 1<sup>st</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> January and 10<sup>th</sup> February.

**Turnbridge/Cooper Bridge/Aspley (Broad Canal)** – good numbers were present throughout the year, with low double-figures being seen regularly. There was a maximum of 16 on both 28<sup>th</sup> May and 23<sup>rd</sup> December.

**Greenhead Park** – c.10 on 14<sup>th</sup> January.

**Marsden** – at least 14 were near the railway station on 16<sup>th</sup> January.

**Bretton Park** – 17 on 25<sup>th</sup> January.

**Blackmoorfoot Res** – present throughout most of the year, although records were very sporadic during the summer months and there were no sightings after 19<sup>th</sup> November. Numbers were generally low, and only reached double figures on 5<sup>th</sup> July when 10+ were present.

**Wards End Farm, Marsden** – ten were present from 15<sup>th</sup> to 19<sup>th</sup> September.

**Ingbirchworth Res** – although present throughout the year and a single pair bred, the only double figure counts involved 11 on 30<sup>th</sup> August, 13 on 26<sup>th</sup> October, 12+ on 1<sup>st</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> November, and 11 on 19<sup>th</sup> December.

**Scout Dike Res** – 10+ on 14<sup>th</sup> November.

**Little Don Valley** – ten on 29<sup>th</sup> November.

This very sedentary species is not renowned for undertaking migratory movements, but 13 flew W over **Deanhead Res.** on 16<sup>th</sup> October and three days later at **Pule Hill, Marsden** a flock of 14 dropped in and departed some time later high to the SW over the open moor until lost from view – they were seen to return 20 minutes later. Interestingly a party of six did likewise on 27<sup>th</sup> October.

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

Rare to scarce passage visitor and irregular migrant breeder (1), 0-5 pairs.

There were records from two localities which, for the first time since 2001, included a breeding pair.

A male at **Langsett Banks**, first detected on 27<sup>th</sup> May, attracted a female and hatched a minimum of five young (NWM, JMcL, MCW *et al.*). A single was present at **Royd Moor Res.** on 31<sup>st</sup> July (MCW).

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

Migrant breeder, increased to (3), 100-200 pairs. Passage visitor and scarce winter visitor.

This widespread and increasingly common species was only recorded from about 50 localities, a substantial decrease on the 62 last year and 79 in 2015. Although it is becoming increasingly difficult to differentiate between wintering birds and migrants, the following, especially those in January/February, will have been winter visitors. A single in **Beaumont Park** on 1<sup>st</sup> January (DBa), five at **Healey Mills/Kerry's NR** on 14<sup>th</sup> January with three there on 17<sup>th</sup> January (JH), two at **Horbury SW** on 31<sup>st</sup> January (DHP, DT) and 7<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> February and three on 4<sup>th</sup> March (DHP).

By late March birds, mainly singles, had been recorded from a further 15 localities and by mid-April birds had become far more widespread. The majority of records involved less than five individuals, mainly singing males, the only exceptions being as follows:

**Bretton Park** – six on 15<sup>th</sup> March.

**Royd Moor area** – 25+ singing males on 2<sup>nd</sup> April and eight singing males on 24<sup>th</sup> September.

**Turnbridge to Cooper Bridge (Broad Canal)** – nine on 9<sup>th</sup> April.

**Ramsden Woods** – 30+ singing males on 9<sup>th</sup> April.

**Horbury Strands/Wyke** – six on 14<sup>th</sup> April.

**Langsett** – c.6 singing males on 14<sup>th</sup> June.

**Marsden** – at least 15 males held territories during the summer months.

**Dewsbury SW** – c.30 on 4<sup>th</sup> July.

**Scammonden Water** – c.10 on 19<sup>th</sup> September and c.20 on 24<sup>th</sup> September.

The first record at **Blackmoorfoot Res.** concerned a singing male on 26<sup>th</sup> March. Thereafter, two singing males took up territories, each attracting a mate and breeding. These birds remained until early August. Up to four (usually 1 or 2) were then present throughout the remainder of August through to early October with singles remaining until 15<sup>th</sup> October.

The only other October occurrences related to singles in a **Holmfirth** garden on 1<sup>st</sup>, **Gunthwaite** on 4<sup>th</sup>, **Wards End Farm, Marsden** on 6<sup>th</sup>, in a **Hepworth** garden and **Ingbirchworth Res.** on 9<sup>th</sup>, and **Marsden** on 19<sup>th</sup>. A single at **Healey Mills/Kerry's NR** on 6<sup>th</sup> November may well have been a winter visitor.

A singing male at **Ingbirchworth Res.** on 2<sup>nd</sup> May was considered to have been a Chiffchaff x Willow Warbler hybrid (?). The bird sang the song of both species, starting with Chiffchaff and ending with Willow Warbler (MCW).

### **WILLOW WARBLER** *Phylloscopus trochilus*

Migrant breeder (4), 1,000-2,500 pairs. The commonest warbler. Common passage visitor.

Records were received from 38 locations, a marked drop from the 52 last year. The earliest arrival was on 30<sup>th</sup> March and the last on 26<sup>th</sup> September.

The first arrival involved a single at **Ingbirchworth Res.** on 30<sup>th</sup> March. The next couple of weeks saw birds from a number of widely distributed localities but, with the exceptions of sites which held good breeding numbers (see below) these rarely reached double figures. Even during the autumn months, gatherings were subdued, and the only double figure counts involved c.10 at **Scammdon Water** on 25<sup>th</sup> July with c.20 there on 10<sup>th</sup> August.

The observer at **Colne Bridge SP** commented that it had been a strange year for the species. Following a single on 15<sup>th</sup> April, which sang until 25<sup>th</sup> May, there was neither sight nor sound until 12<sup>th</sup> July when a juvenile was noted, and this proved to be the last!

Breeding was widely reported with several localities holding up to high single figures, the exceptions being 21 males in the **Little Don Valley**, 22 males in the **Wessenden Valley**, 24 males at **Ingbirchworth Res.**, 31 males in the **Colne Valley** between Hey Green and Netherwood, and 43 males at **Royd Moor Res.**

The first arrivals at **Blackmoorfoot Res.** involved singing males on 3<sup>rd</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> April. Numbers then built up to a maximum of 12+ between 21<sup>st</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup> April, but only eight males took up territories and remained throughout the summer months. This figure remained fairly constant until early September and two on 21<sup>st</sup> of that month were the last.

The only other September records concerned a single at **Wards End Farm, Marsden** on 2<sup>nd</sup>, with two there on 3<sup>rd</sup> and a single on 4<sup>th</sup>/5<sup>th</sup>, and a single at **Armitage Bridge** on 26<sup>th</sup>.

#### **BLACKCAP** *Sylvia atricapilla*

Migrant breeder (3-4), 400-600 pairs, increasing. Scarce winter visitor.

There were records of two wintering males: one in a **Meltham** garden was seen on most dates between 13<sup>th</sup> January and 12<sup>th</sup> March and a single in a **Slaithwaite** garden was regularly seen between 25<sup>th</sup> February and 23<sup>rd</sup> March.

What were probably the first true migrant's concerned singing males at **Scout Dike Res.** on 3<sup>rd</sup> April and along the River Colne at **Huddersfield Stadium** on 5<sup>th</sup> April. Thereafter birds became far more widespread, with records from a further 37 locations, but numbers rarely exceeded five, the following being the only exceptions:

**Elland GP** – six singing males on 18<sup>th</sup> April.

**Ingbirchworth Res** – six on 9<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> May.

**Royd Moor Res** – 11 males held territories.

**Colne Valley** – 15 singing males between Hey Green and Netherwood in mid-May.

The first for the year at **Blackmoorfoot Res.** concerned a singing male on 10<sup>th</sup> April. Three singing males then took up territories, all of which attracted females and bred. Family parties soon dispersed, and the only records after mid-August involved singles on 1<sup>st</sup> September and 4<sup>th</sup> October.

By late July, a month earlier than normal, birds were becoming very thin on the ground and, with the exceptions of those at Blackmoorfoot (see above), the only records after this time related to singles at **Armitage Bridge** on 20<sup>th</sup> August and singles at **Scammdon Water** on 20<sup>th</sup> and 29<sup>th</sup> August and 24<sup>th</sup> September.

There were records from three gardens during the second winter period: a garden in **Meltham** held a female throughout October (a late migrant?), a garden at **Langsett** had a female on 23<sup>rd</sup> and 29<sup>th</sup> December, and another **Meltham** garden had a male on 30<sup>th</sup> December.

What constitutes a wintering bird, rather than a late migrant, is interesting. Perhaps the question to ask relates to their feeding habits; it is known that wintering birds (which originate from central Europe) will feed at garden feeding stations but, have British breeding birds inherited this habit or is there sufficient food in the wider countryside to fulfil their needs? If only it were that simple!

### **GARDEN WARBLER** *Sylvia borin*

Migrant breeder (2), near 100 pairs.

With records from 20 localities, this is a slight improvement on the 16 from last year, but nothing like the 26 in 2014. Although the majority of records related to no more than two singing males, breeding was confirmed at **Blackmoorfoot Res.**, **Scout Dike Res.**, **Royd Moor Res.**, **Ingbirchworth Res.** and the **Little Don Valley**. The first record was somewhat earlier than usual (11<sup>th</sup> April) and the last slightly later than normal (22<sup>nd</sup> August).

The continued low number of localities from which the species was recorded warrants the inclusion of all records:

**Hepworth** – a single in a garden on 11<sup>th</sup> April.

**Little Don Valley** – one male held a territory.

**Scout Dike Res** – two males held territories.

**Ingbirchworth Res** – following the first, a singing male on 27<sup>th</sup> April, two males then took up territories with at least one pair hatching young.

**Royd Moor Res** – seven males held territories.

**Blackmoorfoot** – a singing male took up territory in the NE corner from 1<sup>st</sup> May and another male held a territory at the south waterworks. The first mentioned male attracted a female, and succeeded in fledging young. As is normally the case, birds soon departed, there being no records after 17<sup>th</sup> June.

**Wood Nook** – a singing male on 1<sup>st</sup> May.

**Horbury SW** – a single on 3<sup>rd</sup> May.

**Elland GP** – two on 4<sup>th</sup> May and five, including four singing males, the following day.

**Royd Edge Clough** – two singing males on 6<sup>th</sup> May.

**Dewsbury SW** – a singing male on 10<sup>th</sup> May.

**Dunford Bridge** – ‘several’ along the Trans-Pennine Trail on 10<sup>th</sup> May.

**Wards End Farm, Marsden** – a singing male was present on four dates between 10<sup>th</sup> May and 1<sup>st</sup> June, and a single was seen on 22<sup>nd</sup> August.

**Marsden** – single males were located at five localities in mid-May.

**Thurstonland Bank** – a singing male on 20<sup>th</sup> May.

**Windy Bank Wood** – a singing male on 24<sup>th</sup> May.

**Meltham** – singles at Brow Grains on 27<sup>th</sup> May and Millmoor Road on 31<sup>st</sup> May.

**Armitage Bridge** – a single on 13<sup>th</sup> June.

**Horbury Bridge** – a single on 26<sup>th</sup> June.





**Whooper Swan, Digley Res. 4/11/2017**



**Tundra Bean Goose, Harrison Lane, 12/1/2017**



**Pintail, Blackmoorfoot Res., 17/11/2017**



**Pochard, Ringstone Edge, 27/1/2017**



**Scaup, Ingbirchworth, 17/10/2017**



**Avocet, Ingbirchworth, 23/3/2017**



**Red-throated Diver, Scout Dike, 18/9/2017**



**Black Kite, Marsden, 4/4/2017**



**Red Kite, Scout Dike, 31/7/2017**



**Whimbrel, Isle of Skye, 21/9/2107**





**Long-eared Owl chick, Huddersfield area, 9/6/2017**



**Nightjar, Huddersfield area, 25/5/2017**



**Wood Warbler, Langsett, 27/5/2017**



**Chiffchaff, Farnley Tyas, 22/5/2017**



**Garden Warbler, Ingbirchworth, 2/5/2107**



**Lesser Whitethroat, Ossett, 6/5/2017**





**Grasshopper Warbler, Scammonden, 27/7/2017**



**Whinchat, Deer Hill, 25/5/2017**



**Spotted Flycatcher, Holme, 10/8/2017**



**Water Pipit, Deer Hill, 15/11/2017**

**LESSER WHITETHROAT** *Sylvia curruca*

Migrant breeder (1), 5-20 pairs.

It had been hoped that the increase to 12 localities last year was the start of a resurgence for this locally scarce species. This was not to be, however, as birds were only reported from five locations, a drop to the level of 2015.

**Healey Mills/Kerry's NR** – singing males on 11<sup>th</sup> April and 2<sup>nd</sup> May.

**Royd Moor Res** – two males held territories, but no other information was forthcoming.

**Ingbirchworth Res** – singing males on 8<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> May.

**New Mill** – a single in a garden on 27<sup>th</sup> July.

**Blackmoorfoot Res** – singles were seen near the inflow on 1<sup>st</sup> August and 17<sup>th</sup> August.

(COMMON) **WHITETHROAT** *Sylvia communis*

Migrant breeder (2-3), 75-150 pairs.

Records were received from 28 widely scattered localities, an increase of four from last year, but still a massive drop from the 42 in 2015. Evidence of breeding was obtained at a number of sites and included at least three pairs at **Broadstone Res.**, at least four pairs at **Ingbirchworth Res.**, six pairs at **Royd Moor Res.**, two pairs at **Scout Dike Res.**, and five pairs at **Blackmoorfoot Res.** (see below).

The first records of the year involved a single at **Ingbirchworth Res.** on 18<sup>th</sup> April, two at **Healey Mills/Kerry's NR** on 23<sup>rd</sup> April and 'several' at **Horbury Strands/Wyke** on the same date. By mid-May birds had become more widely distributed, but numbers only exceeded four in areas where breeding would eventually occurred.

**Blackmoorfoot Res.** had a single male on 30<sup>th</sup> April then, by 5<sup>th</sup> May, a total of five males had taken up territories. These birds all attracted females and bred. Although the family parties remained until late July, the only August records involved five on 1<sup>st</sup>/2<sup>nd</sup> and three on 3<sup>rd</sup>/4<sup>th</sup>.

Birds were becoming less widespread by mid-August and the only records thereafter involved a single at **Scammonden Water** on 20<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup> August, two at both **Clayton West SW** and **Emley** on 28<sup>th</sup> August, and two at **Deanhead Res.** on 1<sup>st</sup> September.

(COMMON) **GRASSHOPPER WARBLER** *Locustella naevia*

Passage visitor and occasional migrant breeder (1), 0-3 pairs. Red listed.

Birds were recorded from six localities, two more than last year but, unlike that year, three sites held birds for extended periods and breeding was confirmed at two of these.

**Broadstone Res/Heath** – at least two reeling males, possibly three, were present in this area between 19<sup>th</sup> April and 11<sup>th</sup> May.

**Scout Dike Res** – a reeling male was present between 19<sup>th</sup> and 29<sup>th</sup> April, with two reeling males the following day.

**Deanhead Res** – two reeling males were present between 28<sup>th</sup> April and 20<sup>th</sup> August, with three reeling males on 3<sup>rd</sup> May. It appears that at least one of these long-staying individuals attracted a female as alarm calls heard in early August are indicative of probable breeding.

**Blackmoorfoot Res** – singing males were present near the inflow on 11<sup>th</sup>/12<sup>th</sup> May and in the SW corner overflow field on 15<sup>th</sup> July.

**Redbrook Clough** – a reeling male on 4<sup>th</sup> June.

**Scammonden Water** – a reeling male, first located on 17<sup>th</sup> July, attracted a female and bred. The adults were carrying a faecal sac/food by 20<sup>th</sup> August and the last record involved a single giving alarm calls on 24<sup>th</sup> August.

**SEDGE WARBLER** *Acrocephalus schoenobaenus*

Migrant breeder (1), 5-20 pairs.

Records were received from only seven locations, a marked drop from the ten last year. Evidence of breeding was only forthcoming from a single location. Birds were reported between 26<sup>th</sup> April and 27<sup>th</sup> July.

**Horbury SW** – a single on 26<sup>th</sup> April and two on 3<sup>rd</sup> May.

**Blackmoorfoot Res** – a singing male was near the inflow on 10<sup>th</sup> May.

**Elland GP** – a single on 11<sup>th</sup>/12<sup>th</sup> May.

**Horbury Strands/Wyke** – five were present on 18<sup>th</sup> May and a single was along the River Calder on 15<sup>th</sup> June.

**Dewsbury SW** – up to three singing males were present, two of which attracted females and bred.

**Horbury Bridge** – two along the River Calder on 26<sup>th</sup> June.

**Deanhead Res** – a single on 27<sup>th</sup> July.

(EURASIAN) **REED WARBLER** *Acrocephalus scirpaceus*

Rare to scarce passage visitor and rare migrant breeder (1), 0-2 pairs.

There were records from four sites, a drop of two on last year. There was no evidence of breeding, not even from the species' stronghold at **Dewsbury SW**, although of the 12 singing males some must surely have attracted females. The birds on 11<sup>th</sup> April were the earliest every in the Club area by nine days.

**Dewsbury SW** – a singing male was present on 11<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> April, two males were singing on 25<sup>th</sup> April, with seven males on 2<sup>nd</sup> May, 11 males by mid-May and 12 males by mid-June.

**Colne Bridge SP** – a singing male was present between 11<sup>th</sup> April and 6<sup>th</sup> July with two singing males on 19<sup>th</sup> May. These birds failed to attract females, however, as there were no signs of breeding. The 'resident' bird was 22 days earlier than the first in 2016 (when 3 pairs bred).

**Healey Mills/Kerry's NR** – two males were singing on 2<sup>nd</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> May and 16<sup>th</sup> June.

**Elland GP** – two singing males were present on 5<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> May with three singing males on 21<sup>st</sup> May.

(EURASIAN) **NUTHATCH** *Sitta europaea*

Resident breeder, increased to (2-3), 50-150 pairs.

The number of localities from which this species was recorded continued to fall. Records were only received from 24 locations, four fewer than last year and a marked drop from the 37 in 2015 and 44 in 2014. Is this nationally increasing species really declining in the Club area or is it simply been under-recorded?

As is now usual, a good number of gardens held birds throughout the year, although in a usually well frequented garden in **New Mill** birds were virtually absent during the first half of the year and only made sporadic visits thereafter. With the exception of a pair which bred at **Blackmoorfoot** (see below) the only other evidence of breeding came from **Cliff Wood** (3 males held territories and 2 pairs fledged young) and single pairs which fledged young at **Fixby** (in a nest box), **Helme** and **Helme Wood**. Breeding was also suspected in **Longley Woods**.

Most records involved no more than three birds but up to five were in **Bretton Park** during the first winter period, with nine there on 26<sup>th</sup> November, four were at feeders in a **Meltham** garden on 22<sup>nd</sup> March, and at least four were present at **Langsett Banks** on 29<sup>th</sup> November. A single in the former grounds of St. Luke's Hospital at **Crosland Moor** on 31<sup>st</sup> August was most likely a dispersing juvenile.

At **Blackmoorfoot** one or two were present throughout the year and a pair fledged young from the same nest hole in Orange Wood in which they had failed in 2016.

(BOHEMIAN) **WAXWING** *Bombycilla garrulus*  
Rare to uncommon irruptive winter visitor.

Although there were only two records last year, both in late December, the New Year saw a major influx into the country. Some 37 records were received from the Club area, all referring to the first nine weeks of the year, including regular sightings of birds at various sites in or near **Huddersfield** town centre, the largest gatherings being of 20 in New Street on 31<sup>st</sup> January (GK) and 37 in St. Peter's Gardens on 6<sup>th</sup> February (MB).

Other double-figure counts in January involved 30 at **Crosland Moor** on 4<sup>th</sup> (GK, DHP), 38 at **Oxspring**, **Penistone** on 8<sup>th</sup> (NS), an impressive 105 at **Langsett** on 10<sup>th</sup> (JH), c.40 at **Crosland Hill** on 22<sup>nd</sup> (GK), and c.50 at **Brockholes** on 29<sup>th</sup> (WDH, HQ). A party of six on Edge Moor at **Blackmoorfoot** on 28<sup>th</sup> January (DMP, SP) was the eleventh record for the reservoir.

There were far fewer records during February, but there were some good assemblages at **Thongsbridge**: c.140 (c.80 present + 2 flocks of c.30 which flew over) on 1<sup>st</sup> with c.60 there two days later, c.40 flying over on 20<sup>th</sup>, and c.20 in trees on 9<sup>th</sup> March (II). Other February sightings involved 15 at **Shepley** (NWM) and 46 at **Lockwood** on 2<sup>nd</sup> (S & HC), 17 at **Crosland Hill** on 3<sup>rd</sup> (GK), 11 in a **Meltham** garden on 6<sup>th</sup> with nine there on 13<sup>th</sup> (CS), and 34 at **Rastrick** on 12<sup>th</sup> (JKP). Other sites visited, all of which held less than four birds, were **Millhouse Green**, **Skelmanthorpe**, **Wooldale**, **Dunford Bridge** and **Gunthwaite Dam**.

(EURASIAN) **TREECREEPER** *Certhia familiaris*  
Resident breeder (3), 100-200 pairs.

There were records from the same number of locations as last year (19), but this is still a reduction of four on 2015. There were a number of garden records, but these never involved more than two birds, and birds tended to be present only during the winter periods. There was a welcome increase in the number of pairs reported breeding: **Cliff Wood** (3 males held territories and a pair fledged at least 3 young), **Helme Wood** (pair feeding young in the nest in early May), **Blackmoorfoot** (see below), **Hepworth** (1 carrying nesting material), and **Windy Bank Wood** (pair feeding young).

As is usual with this secretive species, all records related to less than three individuals with the

exception of four in **Bretton Park** on 15<sup>th</sup> Match.

As in the previous four years, records from **Blackmoorfoot** were very sporadic. There were only a handful of occurrences until a pair took up residence in Orange Wood in mid-March. Although a nesting attempt followed, the contents were predated in early May. These birds were not seen following the predation and records thereafter only amounted to singles on 24<sup>th</sup> August, 13<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup> September, 18<sup>th</sup> October, and 24<sup>th</sup> November.

(WINTER) **WREN** *Troglodytes troglodytes*

Resident breeder (5), 6,000-12,000 pairs. One of the commonest species.

It is hardly surprising that these very audible and adaptable birds were the focus of well over 200 records from a wide range of habitats. The presence of 22 territory holding males in the vicinity of **Ingbirchworth Res.** is just one indicator of the current status of these birds in our area. Detailed evidence from one garden in **New Mill**, where three pairs appear to have bred, is typical of many other well-watched sites. In March nine were counted in **Bretton Park**, and 11 were along the **Broad Canal** between the town centre and Syngenta. In April nine were present in **Grimescar Wood**, and two visitors to woodland in the **Little Don Valley** heard 'numerous' singing and scolding birds. Surveys in May at **Langsett** yielded 24 singing males and 15 were on **Hartcliff Hill**, whilst further surveys produced similar counts in June. Some 30 records for the last two months of the year offer one further measure of the high profile of this species, but these never exceeded the 11 along the **Broad Canal** between Aspley and Cooper Bridge on 19<sup>th</sup> December.

(COMMON) **STARLING** *Sturnus vulgaris*

Resident breeder (4-5), 2,000-6,000 pairs. Winter visitor. Red listed.

Remains as widely distributed as ever, with a few large assemblages during the winter months. There were a good number of breeding records, with at least 14 pair in the **Ingbirchworth** area. The breeding season appears to have been very productive as a high percentage of birds in the autumn flocks were juveniles. There were a good number of garden records, but numbers always remained low, although there was a marked autumn increase as adults took their offspring to feeding stations.

The largest flocks were reported as follows:

**Spicer House Lane** – c.200 on 9<sup>th</sup> January.

**Snowden Hill, Penistone** – c.200 on 12<sup>th</sup> January.

**Deer Hill** – 200 on 18<sup>th</sup> January and c.150 on 17<sup>th</sup> July.

**Fullshaw** – c.200 on 23<sup>rd</sup> January and a similar number between mid-February and 7<sup>th</sup> March.

**Broadstone Res** – c.1,000 on 29<sup>th</sup> January, c.3,000 on 7<sup>th</sup> March, and c.200 on 23<sup>rd</sup> October.

**Bella Vista, Thurlstone** – c.200 on 29<sup>th</sup> January and c.500 on 18<sup>th</sup> March.

**Ingbirchworth Res** – c.400 on 29<sup>th</sup> January, c.150 on 6<sup>th</sup> February and c.1,000 on 8<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> March. Later in the year c1,000 were present on 23<sup>rd</sup> October and c.250 on 4<sup>th</sup> December.

**Wards End Farm, Marsden** – numbers began to build from early February, reaching a maximum of c.600 by 18<sup>th</sup> but by early March only 160 remained and numbers thereafter were back to the usual 50 or less.

**Maythorn Slack** – c.200 on 18<sup>th</sup> February.

**Broadstone** – c.1,200 on 22<sup>nd</sup> February.

**Whitley Common** – c.500 on 6<sup>th</sup> March and c.400 on 24<sup>th</sup> March. Later in the year c.1,000 were present on 27<sup>th</sup> November and 800+ on 23<sup>rd</sup> December.

**Bird's Nest Lane** – c.3,000 on 7<sup>th</sup> March.

**Hade Edge** – c.1,000 on 11<sup>th</sup> March.

**Blackmoorfoot** – the maximum of 350 during September had increased to 500 by 23<sup>rd</sup> October and 2,000 by the month end.

Visible migration was reported as follows:

**Wards End Farm** – 62 flew N on four dates in January, with a maximum of 40 on 18<sup>th</sup> and a flock of 31 flew E on 23<sup>rd</sup> March. Later in the year a total of 9,215 flew W on 33 dates between 10<sup>th</sup> October and 28<sup>th</sup> November, with a maximum of 2,500 on 16<sup>th</sup> October, 950 on 30<sup>th</sup> October and 970 the following day. The only other record involved 78 which flew N on 3<sup>rd</sup> December.

**Pule Hill, Marsden** – a total of 822 flew W or SW on 13 dates between 9<sup>th</sup> September and 9<sup>th</sup> November, with a maximum of 283 on 31<sup>st</sup> October.

**Isle of Skye Quarry** – a total of 633 flew over, mainly in a W or NW direction, on ten dates between 8<sup>th</sup> October and 15<sup>th</sup> November, with a maximum of 210 on 6<sup>th</sup> November.

**Harden Quarries** – a total of 3,423 flew over, mostly W or NW, on 15 dates between 9<sup>th</sup> October and 5<sup>th</sup> November, with a maximum of 487 on 1<sup>st</sup> November.

**Royd Moor Hill** – 20 flew S or SW on 15<sup>th</sup> October and 300 flew W or SW on 5<sup>th</sup> November.

**Scammonden Water** – c.500 flew W on 25<sup>th</sup> October.

**Deer Hill** – 220 flew W on 6<sup>th</sup> November and 250 did likewise on 17<sup>th</sup> November.

A single at **Wards End Farm** on 4<sup>th</sup> November had a white tail.

(WHITE-THROATED) **DIPPER** *Cinclus cinclus*

Resident breeder (2), 40-60 pairs.

There were over 90 records from 28 widely distributed, mainly upland, locations (similar to last year). Confirmation of breeding was obtained at seven of these but, with birds being present throughout the year at most sites, breeding probably went unnoticed at some of these. Pairs bred on the River Colne near **Huddersfield Stadium** (adults fed their three young in the nest on 27 occasions during the course of an hour on 22<sup>nd</sup> April); **Holmfirth** (an adult was feeding young on the River Holme in the town centre in mid-May); **Armitage Bridge** (an adult was feeding young on the River Holme in late May); **Little Don Valley** (2 pairs bred); **Dunford Bridge** (a pair bred); **Hey Green** (a pair with fledged young in early June); and **Oxygrains Beck** (a pair fledged 2 young in early June). As is usual for this very territorial species, with the exceptions of fledged birds in the breeding areas, all other records involved no more than two birds.

There was a sharp decrease in occurrences at **Blackmoorfoot Res.**, with singles along the inflow on 26<sup>th</sup> January, 11<sup>th</sup> March, 15<sup>th</sup> September, and 1<sup>st</sup> November being the only records.

**RING OUZEL** *Turdus torquatus*

Migrant breeder, decreased to (1), 5-20 pairs (but greatly reduced since the 1987-92 Atlas). Scarce passage visitor. Red listed.

A total of 63 records represents somewhat of an improvement for this species, and certainly the records from the **Marsden** area could well be a reason for optimism. The year's first arrivals involved a single at **Dove Stone Res.** and four in the **Little Don Valley** on 24<sup>th</sup>. The only other March record concerned five at the last mentioned site on 27<sup>th</sup>.

The spring influx began in earnest on the first day of April, when eight were on a wall behind **Wards End Farm, Marsden**, seven were in the **Little Don Valley**, and a male appeared at **Bradshaw Moor**. The following day saw c.13 in the **Little Don Valley**. On 3<sup>rd</sup>, 'several', including at least two males, were seen in a field near **Holme** village, and three more were on a wall near **Buckstones**; a male was in the **Little Don Valley** on 5<sup>th</sup>; and on the next two days two males were in a field on **Cheesegate Nab** in what has become a regular site; two males were at **Head Clough** and two were at **Pots and Pans** on 7<sup>th</sup>; more appeared on 9<sup>th</sup>, with four flying NW at **Wards End Farm**, eight in the **Little Don Valley**, and six males and a female at the **Isle of Skye Quarry**, remaining here until 13<sup>th</sup>; two were seen in the **Wessenden Valley** on 10<sup>th</sup>; two were on the **Swinden Track** on 11<sup>th</sup> and two males were seen at **Whitley Edge** on 14<sup>th</sup>/15<sup>th</sup>; a single was at **Ingbirchworth** and three were at **Lower Green Owlers** on 15<sup>th</sup>; an impressive assemblage of 14 (10 males) were at **Garside Hey** on 17<sup>th</sup>; the following day saw a single at **Royd Moor Hill**; three were at **Higher Green Owlers** on 18<sup>th</sup>; five appeared in the **Isle of Skye Quarry**, at least six in the **Little Don Valley**, and seven (3 males) at **Wards End Farm** on 19<sup>th</sup>, where up to 16 (but usually less than 6) were then seen daily to the month end (see below); an impressive assemblage of 17 were in the **Little Don Valley** on 22<sup>nd</sup>; two were in the **Wessenden Valley** and six in the **Little Don Valley** on 23<sup>rd</sup>; the next day four were at **Pots and Pans**; and nine were in the **Little Don Valley** on 30<sup>th</sup>.

In May up to five continued to be seen around **Wards End Farm** on a daily basis until the last (a male and female) on 9<sup>th</sup>. The only other May records involved two at **Isle of Skye Quarry** on 2<sup>nd</sup>, with three there on 5<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup>; a single at **Bradley Park Golf Course** on 16<sup>th</sup>; and two at **Dove Stone Res** on 30<sup>th</sup>.

Although the spring passage was unprecedented, the only records during the summer months concerned four territory holding males in the **Little Don Valley**. The first autumn migrant involved a male which appeared in the **Chew Valley** on 3<sup>rd</sup> July. Thereafter, birds were seen at a number of visible migration watch points. At **Wards End Farm** a total of 20 birds flew over, mainly in a westerly direction, on eight dates between 20<sup>th</sup> September and 4<sup>th</sup> November, although most were singles, eight flew W on 9<sup>th</sup> October and six flew W on 4<sup>th</sup> November; a single flew SE at **Harden Quarries** on 19<sup>th</sup> October; three flew S at **Scammonden Water** on 23<sup>rd</sup> October; and a male flew SW at **Pule Hill, Marsden** on 26<sup>th</sup> October. Interestingly, most of these birds were associated with Redwings flocks. The only records of grounded birds involved four at **Ramsden Quarry** on 3<sup>rd</sup> October and a male feeding on Cotoneaster berries in a **Meltham** garden adjacent to the moor on 30<sup>th</sup> October.

The observer at **Wards End Farm** (DWS) produced some remarkable and highly encouraging statistics, which he confesses may well never be repeated. Between 1<sup>st</sup> April and 9<sup>th</sup> May a total of 141 bird/days were recorded. Birds were seen on 29 days and the highest tallies reached 16 on 26<sup>th</sup> April and 11 on the following two days, but the nature of the terrain is such that other birds may have been missed. He suggests that poor weather may explain the presence of such numbers, as Wheatears were also numerous during this period. Visual migration watches here between 20<sup>th</sup> September and 4<sup>th</sup> November yielded a further 20 birds on eight days.

(COMMON) **BLACKBIRD** *Turdus merula*

Resident breeder (5), 3,000-6,000 pairs. One of the commonest species.

The total of 385 records submitted reflects the widespread distribution of this conspicuous species, and we apologise for omitting a lot of the sometimes very detailed information supplied by local observers, which would otherwise fill several pages of this report! Some weekly garden records



and local patch counts such as those at **Hartcliff Hill**, in **Grimescar Woods**, along the canals at **Horbury** and at **Blackley** reached double figures, and there was ample garden and local area evidence of successful breeding.

Ten or more birds were recorded in various gardens, reaching a high of 14 at one in **Meltham** on 7<sup>th</sup> February and the same number in one in **Holmfirth** on 31<sup>st</sup> December. There were regular double-figure counts along various stretches of the **Huddersfield Canal** ranging from 32 on 16<sup>th</sup> April, 13 in late September, and into the mid-twenties during November and December.

Autumn movements yielded a total of 26 which flew S or SW at **Harden Quarries** on 12 dates between 19<sup>th</sup> September and 5<sup>th</sup> November, with a maximum of five SW on 23<sup>rd</sup> October; four which flew SW at **Pule Hill, Marsden** on 9<sup>th</sup> October, with a flock of 13 doing likewise on 31<sup>st</sup> October; c.20 which flew S at **Scammonden Water** on 23<sup>rd</sup> October; and seven which flew W at **Wards End Farm** on 4<sup>th</sup> November.

Perhaps the year's most remarkable statistic was the estimate of c.50 feeding on hawthorn berries in **Marsden** on 9<sup>th</sup> November. A fresh undamaged egg found on a garden lawn at **Bolster Moor** on 1<sup>st</sup> August was unusual – how it came to be there is open to conjecture.

### **FIELDFARE** *Turdus pilaris*

Numerous passage and winter visitor. Has bred. Red listed.

Birds were widely distributed during the first winter period, with flocks being present on a near daily basis at several sites, and with some larger assemblages than last year being reported. During the second winter period flock sizes remained generally low, but there were some good passage figures from a number of the visible migration sites.

The first three months of the year saw numerous flocks of anything up to 70 strong but there were also treble figure flocks at several locations. The largest flock reported was of 820+ in the fields along **Spicer House Lane** on 9<sup>th</sup> January. Other large assemblages involved c.200 at **Broadstone Res.** on 14<sup>th</sup> January; 225 at **Deer Hill** on 18<sup>th</sup> January; 100 at **Wards End Farm, Marsden** on 17<sup>th</sup>, 19<sup>th</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup> January and 4<sup>th</sup> March, with 120 there on 7<sup>th</sup> March and c.150 on 19<sup>th</sup> March; c.150 at **Ingbirchworth Res.** on 6<sup>th</sup> February with c.200 there on 5<sup>th</sup> March; c.400 at **Scout Dike Res.** and c.200 at **Castle Dam** on 18<sup>th</sup> February; c.300 at **Dunford Bridge** on 7<sup>th</sup> March and c.400 there two days later; c.200 at **Royd Moor** on 12<sup>th</sup> March; and 100 at **Blackmoorfoot Res.** on 13<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup> March.

Although there were fewer records in April, birds remained much later in the year than is normal, presumably because the inclement weather delayed migration. There were records of up to ten at five locations in the first half of the month, but c.150 were present at **Broadstone** on 9<sup>th</sup>; c.150 at **Hartcliff Hill** on 14<sup>th</sup> with c.80 there the following day; 60 at **Digley Res.** on 19<sup>th</sup>; c.100 at **Barmings** and c.550 at **Snowden Hill, Penistone** on 30<sup>th</sup>. Records in May were confined to **Wards End Farm** which hosting up to five (usually 1 or 2) on seven dates until the last, a single, on 10<sup>th</sup> and 11 at **Harden Moss** on 6<sup>th</sup>.

The first autumn birds arrived on 9<sup>th</sup> October when six flew W at **Blackmoorfoot Res.** and six were present at **Wards End Farm**. Numbers were slow to build and, with the exception of migrating birds (see below), the only other October records involved a single W at **Scammonden Water** on 16<sup>th</sup>; four S at **Fixby** on 18<sup>th</sup> with c.50 NW there on 27<sup>th</sup>; ten S at **Scammonden Water**

on 23<sup>rd</sup> with 35 W there two days later; c.150 NW at **Isle of Skye Quarry** on 27<sup>th</sup>; and 50 at **Langsett** on 29<sup>th</sup>.

Records in November/December were only from a further ten locations but, with the exceptions of migrating birds (see below), number were unimpressive. The only assemblages in excess of 30 involved, in November, 40 W at **Scammonden Water** on 2<sup>nd</sup> with 250 doing likewise on 7<sup>th</sup>; 45 NW at **Isle of Skye Quarry** on 7<sup>th</sup>; 82 at **Wards End Farm** on 23<sup>rd</sup>; c.100 at **Scout Dike Res.** on 14<sup>th</sup>; c80 W at **Whitley Common** on 23<sup>rd</sup>; and, in December, 80 at **Wards End Farm** on 19<sup>th</sup>; and 40+ at **Blackmoorfoot Res.** on 28<sup>th</sup>.

Visible migration was noted at four localities:

**Wards End Farm** – a total of 5,120 flew W on 29 dates between 9<sup>th</sup> October and 14<sup>th</sup> November, with maxima, all in October, of 780 on 27<sup>th</sup>, 944 on 29<sup>th</sup>, and 950 on 30<sup>th</sup>. An isolated flock of 130 flew W on 3<sup>rd</sup> December.

**Blackmoorfoot** – a total of 134 flew W on six dates between 9<sup>th</sup> and 31<sup>st</sup> October, with a maximum of 60 on 28<sup>th</sup> and, in December, 210 flew W on 6<sup>th</sup> and 28 S on 8<sup>th</sup>.

**Harden Quarries** – a rather low total of 891 flew over, mainly in a S or SW direction, on 14 dates between 15<sup>th</sup> October and 17<sup>th</sup> November, with a maximum of 422 (which flew in various compass directions) on 31<sup>st</sup> October.

**Pule Hill** – a total of 353 flew S or SW on eight dates between 18<sup>th</sup> October and 9<sup>th</sup> November, with a maximum of 165 on 31<sup>st</sup> October.

### **SONG THRUSH** *Turdus philomelos*

Partial migrant breeder (4), 800-1,600 pairs, but decreasing. Red listed.

Over 140 records were received, evenly spread across the year, which is a pleasing increase compared with last year's figure. The majority of records involved no more than two birds, in contrast with those for their less discreet Blackbird relatives, but at **Healey Mills/Kerry's NR** the species was described as 'doing well in my part of the valley'. Five birds were present at **Kerry's NR** throughout January/February with at least two anvils being used on a regular basis. Three were counted in **Bretton Park** on 25<sup>th</sup> January, and four were at **Horbury Strands/Wyke** on 31<sup>st</sup> January.

Observers confirmed breeding in gardens or local patches, including **Winscar Res.**, **Horbury Strands/Wyke**, **Scout Dike**, **Ingbirchworth**, **Langsett Res.**, **Little Don Valley**, and **Colne Valley SP**. Breeding surveys in mid-June revealed four pairs in **Cliff Wood** and **Nether House**, **Penistone**, and two pairs in **Swinden Plantation**. Also at this time, an estimated ten singing males were in the vicinity of Holmfirth's **Huntsman Inn** and three males were in full song at **Dewsbury SW**. Birds were also present throughout the year at **Blackmoorfoot Res.**, with three pairs breeding.

A garden at **Thick Hollins, Meltham**, having hosted a single for much of the year, and as an almost daily presence in December, strangely, on just one day (12<sup>th</sup> December) three put in an appearance. A **Hepworth** garden watcher commented on the discreet behaviour of his regular visitor, which was happy to forage in leaf litter under a beech hedge, venturing just once onto a feeding platform.

Twelve were counted by the assiduous observer at **Wards End Farm, Marsden** on the last day of August, and frequent migration watches here between 19<sup>th</sup> September and 4<sup>th</sup> November produced a total of 64 birds, mainly flying W, reaching a peak of 24 on 9<sup>th</sup> October. Other migration counts involved 18 which flew S at **Harden Quarries** on four dates between 19<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup> October, with

a maximum of 14 on 23<sup>rd</sup>, singles flying SW at **Pule Hill, Marsden** on 19<sup>th</sup> and 23<sup>rd</sup> October and 1<sup>st</sup> November, and two flying S at **Scammonden Water** on 23<sup>rd</sup> October. It is interesting that birds were counted on migration at four sites on 23<sup>rd</sup> October (see Redwing below).

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

Numerous passage and winter visitor. Red listed.

Birds during the first winter period were widely distributed, and flock sizes were greatly in excess of the situation last year. At two sites, **Blackmoorfoot Res.** and **Wards End Farm, Marsden**, birds were present throughout most of this period, but assemblages rarely exceeded 40. In January, however, **Wards End Farm** held 63 on 3<sup>rd</sup>, 50 on 9<sup>th</sup>, 50 flew W on 16<sup>th</sup>, and 50 were present on 19<sup>th</sup>; whilst 70 were present at **Blackmoorfoot** on 17<sup>th</sup> February, 80+ on 3<sup>rd</sup> – 5<sup>th</sup> March, and 70 on 10<sup>th</sup>/11<sup>th</sup> March. Other assemblages of more than 40 involved, in January, 70 which flew SW at **Rastrick** and c.150 near Tesco supermarket in the **Town Centre** on 6<sup>th</sup>, 80 which flew SW at **Fixby** on 8<sup>th</sup>, c.200 at **Snowden Hill, Penistone** on 12<sup>th</sup> and 22<sup>nd</sup>, 47 at **Healey Mills/Kerry's NR** on 14<sup>th</sup>, c.200 which flew N at **Ingbirchworth Res.** on 30<sup>th</sup>, and c.200 which flew E at **Ingbirchworth Moor** on the same date. The only other assemblages in excess of 40 were a flock of c.70 which flew SW at **Rastrick** on 5<sup>th</sup> February, c.50 at **Scout Dike Res.** on 19<sup>th</sup> February, and c.40 at **Whitley Common** on 23<sup>rd</sup> March.

Interestingly, unlike Fieldfare which was later than usual in departing, this species had all but vanished by late March and, with the exception of three at **Ingbirchworth Res.** on 20<sup>th</sup> March, the only other March records involved c.40 at **Whitley Common** on 23<sup>rd</sup> March and four at **Cheesegate Nab** on 29<sup>th</sup>.

The first returning birds concerned a flock of 27 which flew SW at **Wards End Farm** on 7<sup>th</sup> October, and 140 (110 flew NE and 30 S) at **Isle of Skye Quarry** and 110+ which flew W at **Blackmoorfoot Res.** the following day. Although birds became more widely distributed shortly afterwards, numbers remained low and, with the exception of good numbers of migrating birds (see below), flock size rarely exceeded 20. The only assemblages in excess of 20 involved c.40 at **Crosland Moor** and **Ainley Top** on 21<sup>st</sup> October; c.60 at **Ingbirchworth Res.** on 23<sup>rd</sup> October with 80+ there three days later and c.40 on 16<sup>th</sup> December; 79 at **Dewsbury SW** on 6<sup>th</sup> November; c.30 at **Scout Dike Res.** on 14<sup>th</sup> November; and 30 at **Wards End Farm** on 14<sup>th</sup> December with 31 there on 22<sup>nd</sup> December.

Visible migration, other than those noted above, was recorded from the following sites:

**Wards End Farm, Marsden** – 50 flew W on 16<sup>th</sup> January. Later in the year, following a flock of 27 which flew SW on 7<sup>th</sup> October, a total of 3,200 flew W on a further 35 dates until 14<sup>th</sup> November, with a maximum of 585 on 8<sup>th</sup> October, 386 the following day, and 485 on 25<sup>th</sup> October.

**Blackmoorfoot Res** – a total of 1,711 flew over, mainly in a westerly direction, on 16 dates between 8<sup>th</sup> October and 6<sup>th</sup> December, with a maximum of 530+ W on 20<sup>th</sup> October and 360+ SW on 23<sup>rd</sup> October.

**Isle of Skye Quarry** – 110 flew NE and 30 S on 8<sup>th</sup> October.

**Harden Quarries** – a total of 12,601 flew S or SW on 15 dates between 9<sup>th</sup> October and 5<sup>th</sup> November, with a maximum of 2,930 S on 20<sup>th</sup> October and c.4,850 S on 23<sup>rd</sup> October.

**Pule Hill, Marsden** – a total of 5,044 flew over, mainly in a SW direction, on nine dates between 9<sup>th</sup> October and 3<sup>rd</sup> November, with a maximum of 4,055 on 23<sup>rd</sup> October.

**Fixby** – c.700 were counted as they flew S or SW on 20<sup>th</sup> October and c.300 departed SW at first light after roosting in local woodland the following day.

**Rastrick** – 300+ flew SW on 20<sup>th</sup> October and 3,000+ flew SW in less than two hours the following day.

**Scammonden Water** – c.1,000 flew S on 23<sup>rd</sup> October and c.750 flew SW two days later.

Note the impressive numbers moving over Scammonden Water, Harden Quarries and Pule Hill on 23<sup>rd</sup> October (see Song Thrush above).

### **MISTLE THRUSH** *Turdus viscivorus*

Resident breeder (3), 300-400 pairs.

There were records from at least 40 sites across the Club area most of which were for the first half of the year. A dozen or so observers offered firm evidence of breeding, and these reports included a series of surveys based on sites around **Langsett**, with an estimated five pairs, and five singing males at **Nether House, Penistone**. Other evidence of breeding season presence involving up to three pairs at **Winscar, Broadstone, Ingbirchworth**, and the **Little Don Valley**, and single birds or pairs were observed as present or singing in a range of sites across the area, such as **Rastrick, Bretton Park, Cheeseigate Nab, Fixby, Brockholes, New Mill, Gunthwaite Dam, Isle of Skye Quarry, Wards End Farm, Marsden, Windy Bank Wood, Blackmoorfoot Res. and Elland GP**. A juvenile was seen with an adult in **Pighill Wood** and six juveniles, of unknown origin, were at **Harden Moss** on 19<sup>th</sup> August.

There was an impressive build-up of birds at **Wards End Farm** between early June and late September. Although birds were not seen every day and numbers fluctuated daily, there were several double figure counts: the 18 present on 14<sup>th</sup>/15<sup>th</sup> June had increased to 31 the following day but numbers for the rest of the month never rose above 15; numbers in July, although usually in single figures, reached highs of 18 on 3<sup>rd</sup>, 20+ on 27<sup>th</sup>, and 19 on 30<sup>th</sup>; it was a similar situation in August, although there were more double figure counts, peaking at 22 on 4<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup>, by September numbers were more subdued and only reached double figures on 25<sup>th</sup>, when 14 were recorded. The only other double figure counts in the second half of the year involved 14 at **Ingbirchworth Res.** on 9<sup>th</sup> August with 12 there on 19<sup>th</sup> September and 23<sup>rd</sup> October, and c.20 which were present on wires at **Brow Grains, Meltham** on 15<sup>th</sup> September.

Migration watches at **Harden Quarries** produced single figure counts of birds flying in various directions on 17 dates between 6<sup>th</sup> September and 5<sup>th</sup> November, with a maximum of eight on 25<sup>th</sup> October. At **Wards End Farm** a total of 49 flew W (with other thrushes) on 16 dates between 1<sup>st</sup> October and 11<sup>th</sup> November, with a maximum of 15 on 1<sup>st</sup> October. At **Pule Hill** a total of 53 flew W or SW on nine dates between 9<sup>th</sup> October and 3<sup>rd</sup> November, with maxima of 16 on 9<sup>th</sup> October and 12 on 23<sup>rd</sup> October.

### **SPOTTED FLYCATCHER** *Muscicapa striata*

Migrant breeder, decreased to (1-2), 10-30 pairs. Scarce passage visitor. Red listed.

There were a similar number of records to last year, about 40. Although only 13 sites were involved across the whole area, proof of breeding was forthcoming from four of these.

The first record involved a single at **Langsett Banks** on 12<sup>th</sup> May, where a pair eventually bred. As the other May records simply referred to evidence of successful breeding, it is not possible to say whether there were any earlier arrivals. A pair held a breeding territory in **Cliff Wood** in May, while a pair at **Langsett Barn** raised at least one young, and an adult carrying food/faecal sac at

**Hartcliff Hill** on 1<sup>st</sup> June offered proof of breeding. Singles were seen at **Dove Stone Res.** on 26<sup>th</sup> May and 2<sup>nd</sup> June, but there was no proof of breeding.

Away from these areas, the only other June sightings involved singles at **Broadstone Res.** on 21<sup>st</sup> and **Wards End Farm, Marsden** on 26<sup>th</sup>. There were then no records until a single was seen at **Blackmoorfoot Res.** on 31<sup>st</sup> July. Singles were then seen at this site on a further 15 dates until the last on 6<sup>th</sup> September, and two were present on 22<sup>nd</sup>/23<sup>rd</sup> August.

Other records involved a single at **Meltham** (Millmoor Road) on 10<sup>th</sup> August with one at **Scammonden Water** the same day, where two were seen on 15<sup>th</sup>, a single on 16<sup>th</sup>, and two on 20<sup>th</sup>. **Wards End Farm** was the source of a succession of August sightings, including three birds on 21<sup>st</sup>. One was at **Brow Grains, Meltham** on 27<sup>th</sup> August and a single was at **Deanhead Res.** the following day. The only September records involved singles at **Scammonden Water** and **Wards End Farm** on 1<sup>st</sup> and **Blackmoorfoot Res.** on 2<sup>nd</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> (see above).

(EUROPEAN) **ROBIN** *Erithacus rubecula*

Resident breeder (5), 5,000-6,000 pairs. One of the commonest species, as is reflected in the number of records submitted (about the same as last year) from all over the Club area.

About 400 records were received, a similar number to last year, from garden-watchers and local patch surveyors. The highly territorial nature of this prominent species was once again reflected in the rarity of double-figure counts, all of which came from area surveys, but included 15 at **Bretton Park** on 11<sup>th</sup> March, 23 along the **Broad Canal** between Aspley and Turnbridge in mid-April, 18 territory holding males at **Langsett Banks**, and 14 territory holding males in the **Little Don Valley**. Many observers produced evidence of successful breeding in a wide range of habitats.

(EURASIAN) **PIED FLYCATCHER** *Ficedula hypoleuca*

Migrant breeder, decreased to (1), 1-5 pairs. Scarce passage visitor.

The first returning birds, both singing males, were in **Cliff Wood** and **Holmroyd Wood, Netherthong** on 29<sup>th</sup> April. This latter mentioned bird remained until 22<sup>nd</sup> May, but was not seen on subsequent visits and presumably never attracted a female. Three pairs eventually bred in nest boxes at **Cliff Wood**, fledging 20 young which included a brood of eight. A male also held a territory at **Langsett Banks** but the outcome was unknown.

Later in the year, one was in a tit/warbler flock at **Royd Moor Res.** on 31<sup>st</sup> July and a single was near the inflow at **Blackmoorfoot Res.** on 21<sup>st</sup> August.

**BLACK REDSTART** *Phoenicurus ochruros*

Rare visitor.

There were five records, one in spring and four in autumn.

The spring record involved a single photographed at **Buckstones** on 8<sup>th</sup> April (PD). Later in the year a juvenile of unknown origin was present at **Deanhead Res.** on 6<sup>th</sup> July (DT), and the other three records all came from **Wards End Farm, Marsden**, with a juvenile briefly on a barn roof on 11<sup>th</sup> August, a female-type at nearby **Higher Green Owlers** on 22<sup>nd</sup> August and, almost two months later, a male on a barn roof for 15 minutes on 19<sup>th</sup> October (all DWS).

(COMMON) **REDSTART** *Phoenicurus phoenicurus*

Migrant breeder, decreased to (1-2), 10-40 pairs.

The species was recorded from several locations in the **Langsett** area, and these provided the only sources of proof of breeding. Although records ranged from 28<sup>th</sup> April to 29<sup>th</sup> August, away from Langsett they came from just nine other venues and were mainly confined to the autumn period.

The year's first sightings all featured single males at three locations on 28<sup>th</sup> April, these being **Langsett** (see below), **Royd Moor Hill**, and **Scammonden Water**. Two males were singing near the derelict farm on **Cheesegate Nab** on 14<sup>th</sup> May. A female was at **High Green Owers** on 14<sup>th</sup> June. The number of sightings from **Blackmoorfoot Res.** was greatly reduced compared with those from recent years, with singles on 9<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> July and 19<sup>th</sup> and 29<sup>th</sup> August being the only records. A juvenile of unknown origin was at **Royd Moor Res.** on 9<sup>th</sup> August, a male was at **Scammonden Water** on 24<sup>th</sup> August, and another at **Deanhead Res.** on 28<sup>th</sup> August, whilst singles near **Wards End Farm**, **Marsden** and **Ingbirchworth Res.** on 30<sup>th</sup> August proved to be the last visitors of the year to our area.

With regard to the Langsett area, the records referred to five main areas, **Cliff Wood**, **Langsett Banks**, the **Little Don Valley**, **Langsett Res.**, and **North America Wood** (on the border of the Club area). One observer (MCW) sent in records for the breeding season as follows; single males held territories near the reservoir, with another at Langsett Banks, seven males held territories in the Little Don Valley, and, most encouragingly, 16+ young fledged from four pairs in Cliff Wood, three of which used nest boxes, while the fourth raised their young in a natural hole in an oak tree.

(If this report-writer (HQ) can be forgiven for introducing a personal note, this has always been my favourite species, and the birds I saw up the hill near the ruined farm and near Langsett were the high point of the year!)

**WHINCHAT** *Saxicola rubetra*

Migrant breeder (2), about 50 pairs (but greatly reduced since the 1987-92 Atlas).

Of the 48 records received, 21 came from **Wards End Farm**, **Marsden**, and it was indeed here that the spring's first visitor, a female, was seen on 19<sup>th</sup> April. Four days later a male was seen at **Brow Grains**, **Meltham**, where two pairs eventually bred, producing four young. This site held three males and two females on 31<sup>st</sup> May. The same observer reported a singing male throughout May at Muddy Brook on the **Deer Hill/West Nab** border, and a pair at the nearby firing range on several dates in late May and early June. Meanwhile, the only other April record was of a male on **Whitley Edge** on 26<sup>th</sup>. The only May records away from the breeding areas, involved a male along the **Meltham** catchment on 11<sup>th</sup> and 31<sup>st</sup> and a 'pair' at **Ramsden Clough** on 22<sup>nd</sup>. Three singles at **Wards End Farm** in early June and a single along the **Meltham** catchment on 30<sup>th</sup> June were the only records that month.

Several July records from **Deanhead Clough** began with a male on 13<sup>th</sup>, and then five days later two adults were here with three juveniles. After five more days had elapsed a single adult and juvenile were at the nearby reservoir. August began with a single at **Old Mount Road**, **Marsden** on 13<sup>th</sup>, and two nearby at **Wards End Farm**, where a series of August counts yielded singles on 20<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup>, two on 27<sup>th</sup>, four on 29<sup>th</sup>, and six on 30<sup>th</sup>, when a juvenile was seen on **Whitley Common**. Also in late August, six were on wires alongside the track that climbs from the western end of **Broadstone Res.** on 30<sup>th</sup>. Counts at **Wards End Farm** continued into September, reaching a peak of seven on 1<sup>st</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup>, with the last, a single on 19<sup>th</sup>. Elsewhere this month, one was near

**Deanhead Res.** and three along the **Meltham** catchment on 1<sup>st</sup>, five were at **Broadstone Res.** on 2<sup>nd</sup>, three were on **Whitley airfield** on 3<sup>rd</sup>, three were at **Deer Hill** on 10<sup>th</sup>, and a single was at **Blakeley Res.** on 12<sup>th</sup>.

(COMMON) **STONECHAT** *Saxicola rubicola*

Resident breeder, increased to (1), 5-20 pairs. Scarce/uncommon passage and winter visitor.

Once again, just over 100 records were received, fairly evenly distributed across the year, and from a variety of well watched habitats. Breeding was reported from a number of locations.

Records were received from the following localities:

**Wards End Farm, Marsden** – a male and female were present for the first eight months, with evidence of breeding, and then frequent counts of higher numbers in September, reaching highs of eight on 9<sup>th</sup> and seven on 19<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup>, before a return to lower numbers in the last three months.

**Blackmoorfoot** – a male and female, but generally only the male, were present in the Meltham Cop/fields to the west area on numerous dates between 13<sup>th</sup> January and 7<sup>th</sup> March. There were then no records until three were present on Meltham Cop on 22<sup>nd</sup> September. Thereafter, up to three were seen on a further ten dates until 18<sup>th</sup> October, and an all-time high of five were present on 15<sup>th</sup> October. The only other record involved a female in the fields to the west between 12<sup>th</sup> December and the year end.

**Broadstone Res** – there were regular sightings of a pair which, by the end of May, had fledged two young.

**Langsett Res** – a single on 19<sup>th</sup> February, five on 11<sup>th</sup> June and four on 18<sup>th</sup> October.

**Scout Dike Res** – one on 19<sup>th</sup> February.

**Ingbirchworth Res** – singles on 19<sup>th</sup> February, 1<sup>st</sup> March, 8<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> April, 9<sup>th</sup> August, and 6<sup>th</sup> November.

**Windleden** – a female on 7<sup>th</sup> March.

**Bird's Nest Lane** – three on 7<sup>th</sup> March and two on 25<sup>th</sup> November.

**Dunford Bridge** – a male and female on 9<sup>th</sup> March.

**Ramsden Clough** – two on 25<sup>th</sup> March and 9<sup>th</sup> April, four on 22<sup>nd</sup> May, five on 17<sup>th</sup> September, two on 3<sup>rd</sup> October, and a single on 19<sup>th</sup> October.

**Wessenden Head** – singles on 26<sup>th</sup> March and 22<sup>nd</sup> April.

**Harden Res** – three on 25<sup>th</sup> March, one on 19<sup>th</sup> September and two on 9<sup>th</sup> October.

**Wessenden Res** – a singing male on 3<sup>rd</sup> April and 26<sup>th</sup> June.

**Whitley Edge** – a single on 24<sup>th</sup> April.

**Little Don Valley** – two pairs bred but no further details were received.

**Brow Grains to Deer Hill** – there were at least four breeding pairs in this area. At least one pair produced a second and, perhaps, a third brood. Spotted juveniles were still present in mid-August.

**Deanhead Clough/Res** – a male on 11<sup>th</sup> April attracted a female and six fledged young were being fed by mid-June. Up to six, but usually less than three, were then present until late September. The only other records involved two on 16<sup>th</sup> October and singles on 18<sup>th</sup> October and 19<sup>th</sup> November.

**Pule Hill, Marsden** – a single on 18<sup>th</sup> August, up to four, including three juveniles of unknown origin, on five September dates, three on 18<sup>th</sup> October, and two the following day.

**Winscar Res** – four on 25<sup>th</sup> August and two on 24<sup>th</sup> September.

**Harden Quarries** – two on 19<sup>th</sup> September and two arrived from the NE on 9<sup>th</sup> October.

**Hepworth** – a male on 20<sup>th</sup> September.

**Redbrook Res** – a single on 22<sup>nd</sup> September.

**Isle of Skye Quarry** – up to three were seen regularly between 24<sup>th</sup> September and 18<sup>th</sup> October, and were probably present throughout. A single was seen on 15<sup>th</sup> November.

**Whitley Common** – a single on 27<sup>th</sup> October.

(NORTHERN) **WHEATEAR** *Oenanthe oenanthe*

Migrant breeder, decreased to (1-2), 10-50 pairs. Uncommon to common passage visitor.

In contrast to last year's unusually late first arrivals, this year's early birds appeared in mid-March, with a solo female at **South Crosland** on 14<sup>th</sup>, a male in a field among Lapwing on **Cheesegate Nab** (two were here on 20<sup>th</sup>) and a female at **Wards End Farm, Marsden** on 15<sup>th</sup>. The next day saw four males at **Blackmoorfoot**, and eight more March records ensued from various sites.

Almost every day in April saw new arrivals across the area, with the highest **Blackmoorfoot** count consisting of 21 on 26<sup>th</sup>. Elsewhere, the most striking tally was of 38 on **Whitley Edge** on 14<sup>th</sup>, and this area hosted over 20 on several other April dates, while many other sites welcomed mostly single figure arrivals. The **Wards End Farm** observer commented that his spring arrivals (a total of 274 in 49 days) were by far the highest numbers he had recorded there. In the last week of April the number of bird/days exceeded 100. There were fewer arrivals in May, and just two records of singles in early June. Juveniles dominated the July records, all but two referring to observations at **Deanhead Res.** August records mainly referred to small numbers, with just one double-figure count of up to 15 on concrete blocks along the track near **Broadstone Res.** on 30<sup>th</sup>, with several Whinchats nearby, and up to 10 were seen here in early September. A single late bird was seen near **Farnley Tyas** church on 14<sup>th</sup> October.

**Greenland Wheatear** *Oenanthe oenanthe leucorhoa*

There were five records of birds showing characters of this race:

**Whitley Common** – 11 on 22<sup>nd</sup> April (JMc).

**Ingbirchworth Res** – two males and a female on 23<sup>rd</sup> April, two males on 26<sup>th</sup> April, and a single male on 28<sup>th</sup> April (all MCW).

**Roughbirchworth** – a male on 27<sup>th</sup> April (CB).

**DUNNOCK** *Prunella modularis*

Resident breeder (5), about 4,000 pairs. One of the commonest species.

A total of exactly 200 records reflects the widespread distribution of this species across the area, as well as their constant presence in gardens and parkland throughout the year. Many observers witnessed evidence of breeding, and their garden visitors show a distinct preference for ground feeding, avoiding the acrobatics required by hung bird-feeders. While many garden watchers reported the presence of one or two birds in all seasons, others had up to four, five and even six on a regular basis, with clear proof of successful breeding at a number of these. One **New Mill** garden-watcher referred to birds singing from mid-March to late June. Away from gardens, birds held breeding territories in the vicinity of reservoirs such as **Blackmoorfoot, Broadstone, Royd Moor,** and **Winscar**, alongside canal towpaths, as well as in a number of woodlands.

**HOUSE SPARROW** *Passer domesticus*

Resident breeder (5), 3,000-6,000 pairs (but greatly reduced since the 1987-92 Atlas). Red listed.

Reports were received from 28 sites but, although counts remained relatively low, there appears to be a stable population. Interestingly, over the years, reports have been received from many widely distributed locations, raising the question as to whether birds are moving around or are they more widespread than we appreciate.



Birds were regularly seen in the following gardens:

**Lockwood** – up to 20 were present throughout the year with 30 post breeding.

**Marsh** – there was a maximum of 14 in January and February.

**Almondbury** – present throughout the year, with 20 on 5<sup>th</sup> November and 18 on 10<sup>th</sup> December being the maxima.

**New Mill** – ten regularly throughout the year.

**Cowcliffe** – the resident population has increased to about 20 birds.

**Skelmanthorpe** – up to six were recorded during the first winter period.

**Meltham** – only seen on rare occasions, and never more than two.

Away from gardens double figure counts were varied: c.60 were present throughout the year around the hen runs at **Knotty Lane, Lepton**, 17 were in the **Lockwood** area on 2<sup>nd</sup> January, and ten were observed in **Greenhead Park** on 14<sup>th</sup> January. Later in the year, ten were counted at **Ecklands, Penistone** on 11<sup>th</sup> May with 18 there on 3<sup>rd</sup> June, 20 were at **Rodley Lane, Emley** on 28<sup>th</sup> August, and a flock of up to 17 was present along the **Broad Canal** between Aspley and Cooper Bridge in November/December.

Breeding was confirmed in several areas of **Crosland Moor**, at **Fixby** where three successful broods were noted, and at **Ingbirchworth Res.** where seven pairs bred. In **New Mill** two males were gathering nesting material on 13<sup>th</sup> April and young were observed in early May. Two pairs were seen feeding young at **Ecklands, Penistone** in early June, juveniles were being fed in a **Lockwood** garden in June and July, and five juveniles were noted at **Wards End Farm, Marsden** in mid-July.

At **Blackmoorfoot**, rather unusually, a male took up residence in the village between 8<sup>th</sup> April and 1<sup>st</sup> July. It was joined by a female the following day, with both then remaining until 1<sup>st</sup> August.

(EURASIAN) **TREE SPARROW** *Passer montanus*

Resident breeder, decreased to (1-2), 10-50 pairs. Red listed.

Reports were received from 18 sites (12 in 2016). Most encouraging is the fact that five breeding sites were confirmed, the now usual two with nest box provision and three new areas, a welcome addition indeed. Is this species becoming more widespread and moving into new locations?

Birds at the breeding site at **Wilshaw**, first discovered in 2014, had a good breeding season at Three half-penny House where six nest boxes were occupied, though breeding success was unknown. A **New Mill** garden continued to attract up to ten on a regular basis, and fifteen were noted on 14<sup>th</sup> January with 20 on 18<sup>th</sup> March. Birds were seen entering a nest box with nesting material in mid-April with up to four juveniles being noted between May and August. The adjacent house had two occupied nest boxes, with juveniles reported in June. A pair were feeding young in **Helme** in early May and two pairs bred at both **Bird's Nest Lane** and **Ecklands Lane, Penistone**.

Elsewhere birds were reported from the following locations:

**Holmfirth (Cooper-Binns Lane)** – small numbers were resident for most of the year with nine on 1<sup>st</sup> February and ten on 1<sup>st</sup> July being the maxima.

**Kirkheaton** – frequently seen on feeders in a garden, but no numbers were forthcoming.

**Wards End Farm, Marsden** – a single on 18<sup>th</sup> July.

**Broadstone Res** – six on feeders at Dove Cottage on 15<sup>th</sup> April were the first ever to be recorded there. Four were at Broadstone Lodge on 4<sup>th</sup> October.

**Ingbirchworth Res** – a single on 11<sup>th</sup> May

**Ingbirchworth** – five gathered at Horn Lane on 24<sup>th</sup> July and at least five were in the Spicer House Lane area on 29<sup>th</sup> and 31<sup>st</sup> August.

**Stockmoor** – three in the Ing Head area on 27<sup>th</sup> July.

**Shepley** – three in the Horn Cote Lane area on 27<sup>th</sup> July.

**Linthwaite** – a single in a garden on two dates in September were the first the observer had seen in over 40 years.

A breeding female colour-ringed (orange with KD left leg, metal right leg) at Fairburn Ings, North Yorkshire on 16<sup>th</sup> August 2015 was photographed at Farnley Tyas on 2<sup>nd</sup> November 2017. The bird had travelled 33kms in a WSW direction.

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

Migrant breeder, decreased to (1), 0-1 pairs. Scarce to uncommon passage visitor.

There were only 13 records (19 in 2016) from six localities.

At **Blackmoorfoot** a single male of the British race *M. f. flavissima* was in a field to the west of the reservoir on 9<sup>th</sup> April. This is the earliest ever at this site by nine days, and was well ahead of our next visitor, a male on **Whitley Common** on 20<sup>th</sup> April. Eight of the remaining twelve records referred to sightings at **Wards End Farm, Marsden** starting with a single male on 5<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> May. There were then no records here until a male appeared on 10<sup>th</sup> July, two were present on 20<sup>th</sup> August, with a single on 1<sup>st</sup> September, two on 3<sup>rd</sup> September, a single the following day, and two on 6<sup>th</sup> September.

The only other records relate to two at **Deer Hill** on 25<sup>th</sup> July, at least three in a field near **Panna Mill Dam** on 3<sup>rd</sup> September, and a single which flew over **Maythorn** on the same date.

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

Resident breeder (2-3), about 100 pairs.

Well over 200 records were received for this attractive species, sightings of which always enhance any walk. Although May and June accounted for at least eighty records, birds were faithful to their chosen territories throughout the year, and several observers were able to confirm breeding at at least ten sites. A pair at **Ingbirchworth Res.** fledged young from two broods, a pair bred at **Broadstone Res.**, two pairs held breeding territories at both **Langsett Res.** and in the **Little Don Valley**, a pair bred at **Windy Bank Res.**, and two pairs bred at **Dewsbury SW**, producing five young. A pair bred on the **River Colne**, two adults were feeding young at **Armitage Bridge** in mid-June, and another pair at **Deanhead Res.** also bred successfully. Birds were present throughout the year at **Blackmoorfoot** with a maximum of four on 28<sup>th</sup> and 31<sup>st</sup> July: a pair were carrying food in mid-May but the siting of the nest was unknown.

Visible migration was noted at four localities:

**Harden Quarries** – three flew S on 20<sup>th</sup> August, five flew S on 7<sup>th</sup> September and singles flew S on 15<sup>th</sup> October and 2<sup>nd</sup> November.

**Pule Hill, Marsden** – singles flew SW on 7<sup>th</sup>, 22<sup>nd</sup> and 23<sup>rd</sup> September and 9<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> November, with two doing likewise on 3<sup>rd</sup> November.

**Royd Moor Hill** – five flew S or SW on 22<sup>nd</sup> September and four flew SW on 5<sup>th</sup> November.

**Wards End Farm, Marsden** – two flew N on 26<sup>th</sup> September.

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

Partial migrant breeder (3), 300-500 pairs. Common passage and winter visitor.

Of the 150 records received about a third referred to springtime, and almost all referred to individuals or single-figure sightings, the predictable exception being large gatherings at sewage works. Thus, 82 were at **Dewsbury SW** on 4<sup>th</sup> January, and 55 on 25<sup>th</sup> July, while 120 were at **Horbury SW** on 26<sup>th</sup> January and 2<sup>nd</sup> February. The only other counts from such sites were much lower, with 10 at **Horbury SW** on 10<sup>th</sup> November and 20 the following week being the maxima.

Elsewhere, two gatherings in fields near **Broadstone Res.**, reached double figures, the first consisting of 15 with Meadow Pipits on 20<sup>th</sup> March, and the second of c.60 on ploughed land on 9<sup>th</sup> September. On this last mentioned date a feeding group of 23 was also present on **Marsden Cricket Pitch**. A pre-roost winter gatherings at Mount Pleasant School, **Lockwood** amounted to c.60 during both winter periods. Daily counts at **Wards End Farm, Marsden** for much of the year indicated the virtually uninterrupted presence of a few individuals here.

Visible migration was noted at five localities:

**Pule Hill** – a total of 45 flew SW on 13 dates between 7<sup>th</sup> September and 31<sup>st</sup> October, with a maximum of nine on 12<sup>th</sup> October.

**Isle of Skye Quarry** – a total of 20 flew S on 12 dates between 14<sup>th</sup> September and 18<sup>th</sup> October.

**Harden Quarries** – a total of 122 flew over, mainly in a southerly direction, on 15 dates between 6<sup>th</sup> September and 2<sup>nd</sup> November, with a maximum of 31 on both 9<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> October.

**Royd Moor Hill** – 16 flew SW on 22<sup>nd</sup> September, 23 flew S or SW on 30<sup>th</sup> September, ten flew SW on 6<sup>th</sup> October, and six flew S on 15<sup>th</sup> October.

**Wards End Farm, Marsden** – a total of nine flew over, mainly in a westerly direction, on seven dates between 26<sup>th</sup> September and 26<sup>th</sup> October.

### **White Wagtail** *Motacilla alba alba*

Rare to scarce passage visitor.

Six records were received, of which five concerned single birds, all in spring. Three were at **Meltham SW** on 25<sup>th</sup> March (DMP, SP). One was in the outflow channel at **Deer Hill** on 2<sup>nd</sup> April, and its distinctive head markings enabled the observer to identify it as the same bird here a week later (DMP). Singles were reported from **Ingbirchworth Res.** on 16<sup>th</sup> April (DHP) and 29<sup>th</sup> April (MCW), and **Whitley Common** on 17<sup>th</sup> April (MCW).

Six birds at **Meltham SW** on 11<sup>th</sup> November were probably this race (DMP, SP). The birds in question were very pale mantled and contrasty, more so because of the presence of typical Pied Wagtails. Video footage obtained by SP appears to show pale rumps, a further indication that they belonged to this race. Interestingly, a couple of days later the birds were not present, having presumably moved on.

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

Migrant breeder, decreased to (1-2), 10-30 pairs (but greatly reduced since the 1987-92 Atlas). Scarce passage visitor. Red listed.

A single male at **Carlecotes Ponds** held a territory between 22<sup>nd</sup> April and 25<sup>th</sup> May, but no further details were forthcoming. Elsewhere, a male was singing and display flighting at **Ingbirchworth Res.** on 16<sup>th</sup> May and a single was at **Elysium** on 14<sup>th</sup> June. There were then no further records until late August when two flew S over **Harden Quarries** on 21<sup>st</sup>, one flew S over **Deanhead Res.**

on 31<sup>st</sup>, and the following day (1<sup>st</sup> September) two were at **Scammonden Water**. The only other records involved singles which flew S at **Harden Quarries** on 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> September and the last record of the year concerned a single feeding behind the house at **Wards End Farm, Marsden** on 15<sup>th</sup> September.

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

Partial migrant breeder (5), 2,500-4,000 pairs (but greatly reduced since the 1987-92 Atlas).

Although records spanned the whole year, winter assemblages rarely reached double figures and never exceeded the c.20 at **Royd Moor Res.** on 15<sup>th</sup> January, 24 at **Wholestone Moor** on 2<sup>nd</sup> November and 20 at **Deer Hill Res.** on the same date.

While several observers produced substantial migration counts (see below), the largest grounded gatherings were all in late August/September: c.60 were at **Blackmoorfoot** on 25<sup>th</sup> August and 2<sup>nd</sup>/3<sup>rd</sup> September, c.220 were at **Broadstone Res.** on 2<sup>nd</sup> September, c.200 were in a field at **Thurgory Lane** on 19<sup>th</sup> September, and c.100 were at **Bella Vista, Thurlstone** on the same date. Interestingly, the c.200 in a field at **Thurgory Lane** on 19<sup>th</sup> September had reduced to c.50 by 28<sup>th</sup> of that month but no birds remained by mid-October.

Breeding was widely reported, but counts never exceeded the 26 singing males which held territories at **Broadstone Res.**

Visible migration was noted at five localities:

**Wards End Farm, Marsden** – a total of 391 flew NW on 15 dates between 11<sup>th</sup> March and 11<sup>th</sup> April, most counts were in double figures, but never exceeded the 57 on 2<sup>nd</sup> April. Later in the year, a total of 2,210 flew over, mainly in a westerly direction, on 50 dates between 26<sup>th</sup> August and 11<sup>th</sup> November, with a maximum of 100 S on 26<sup>th</sup> August and, in October, 107 on W on 3<sup>rd</sup>, 250 W on 5<sup>th</sup>, and 130 W on 8<sup>th</sup>.

**Harden Quarries** – a total of 1,986 flew S or SW on 20 dates between 20<sup>th</sup> August and 3<sup>rd</sup> November, with a maximum of 792 on 22<sup>nd</sup> September. Counts thereafter were much subdued and never reached treble figures.

**Deer Hill** – c.100 flew W in the space of c.10 minutes during the afternoon on 28<sup>th</sup> August.

**Pule Hill, Marsden** – a total of 761 flew SW on 16 dates between 7<sup>th</sup> September and 1<sup>st</sup> November, with a maximum of 337 on 22<sup>nd</sup> September. The observers commented that this is a worryingly low annual total: previous counts show an average of 1,930 per annum, with the best year (2013) having 3,440 pass over.

**Royd Moor Hill** – 1,163 flew S or SW on 22<sup>nd</sup> September, 801 flew SW on 30<sup>th</sup> September, 90 flew SW on 3<sup>rd</sup> October, and 97 did likewise on 6<sup>th</sup> October.

### **WATER PIPIT** *Anthus spinoletta*

Rare passage and winter visitor.

The individual present at **Deer Hill Res.** in November/December 2016 was seen again in January this year and, although only recorded on three dates to 20<sup>th</sup> (DMP, DHP, DT), had presumably been present throughout. What may have been the same bird, now in summer plumage, was in the overflow channel on 26<sup>th</sup>/27<sup>th</sup> March (DMP, SP, HQ).

What was almost certainly last winter's bird was seen in the overflow channel on several dates between 2<sup>nd</sup> November and 3<sup>rd</sup> December (DMP *et al.*). Some superb video footage was filmed by SP, and excellent photos were taken by DHP.

**ROCK PIPIT** *Anthus petrosus*

Rare passage visitor.

A single, seen well in the overflow channel at **Deer Hill Res.** on 14<sup>th</sup>/15<sup>th</sup> October, was being harassed by three Meadow Pipits (DMP).

**BRAMBLING** *Fringilla montifringilla*

Uncommon to common passage and winter visitor.

This unpredictable winter visitor was recorded from 24 locations, six more than last year. The first four months produced excellent totals which were well up on previous years. In comparison, the last three months were disappointing, with very few records received. Some eight gardens were visited, with one attracting a sizeable gathering.

Double figure counts came from the following locations:

**Thongsbridge** – up to 15 were regularly present in a garden during January/February.

**Windy Bank Wood** – c.30 on 3<sup>rd</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> January.

**Ingbirchworth Res** – a flock of up to c.70 were present between 5<sup>th</sup> January and 1<sup>st</sup> February.

**Fixby** – c.30 on both 5<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> January.

**Annat Royd Lane** – c.20 on 6<sup>th</sup> January and c.40 on 14<sup>th</sup> January.

**Meltham** – up to 30 frequented garden feeders between 12<sup>th</sup> February and late April.

**Wards End Farm, Marsden** – 11 on 16<sup>th</sup> January, about ten on 24<sup>th</sup> January and 28 on 3<sup>rd</sup> March.

**Whitley Common** – ten on 29<sup>th</sup> March.

**Broadstone** – 15 with Chaffinches along Brown's Edge Road on 29<sup>th</sup> March.

A singing male was present at **Oldfield** on 25<sup>th</sup> April.

Birds were recorded at nine locations later in the year with most holding no more than three birds, the exceptions being at least seven at **Ingbirchworth Res.** on 23<sup>rd</sup> October with eight there three days later, nine which flew west at **Blackmoorfoot Res.** on 24<sup>th</sup> October and six in a **Thongsbridge** garden on 20<sup>th</sup> December. A rather poor end to the year

Visible migration was noted as follows:

**Wards End Farm** – ten flew W on 20<sup>th</sup> January and 28 flew E on 3<sup>rd</sup> March. Later in the year a total of 170 flew W or SW on 11 dates between 8<sup>th</sup> October and 6<sup>th</sup> November, with a maximum of, in October, 24 W on 8<sup>th</sup>, 45 SW on 23<sup>rd</sup> and 25 W on 25<sup>th</sup>.

**Pule Hill, Marsden** – a total of 116 flew S or SW on seven dates between 9<sup>th</sup> October and 3<sup>rd</sup> November, with a maximum of 63 on 23<sup>rd</sup> October and 35 on 26<sup>th</sup> October.

**Harden Quarries** – a total of 145 flew over, mainly in a S or SE direction, on nine dates between 15<sup>th</sup> and 31<sup>st</sup> October, with a maximum of 69 on 23<sup>rd</sup>.

**Royd Moor Hill** – two flew S on 15<sup>th</sup> October and 11 did likewise on 27<sup>th</sup> October.

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

Resident breeder (5), 5,000-10,000 pairs. One of the commonest species.

This common finch was recorded at 57 widespread sites (49 in 2016). Once again the numbers observed were low, mostly in single digits. As with Brambling (see above) some eight gardens were visited.

The only large assemblages, other than migrating birds (see below), were as follows:

The game crop at **High Hoyland** attracted c.200 on 21<sup>st</sup> January. A flock of at least 80 were present at **Whitley Common** on 13<sup>th</sup> February with c.50 there on 27<sup>th</sup> February and c.40 on 8<sup>th</sup> March. A gathering of c.100 was present at **Brown's Edge Road** on 8<sup>th</sup> March but only c.20 remained at the month end. Other assemblages never exceeded the mid-teens indeed, during the second winter period no double figure counts were reported.

Males were holding breeding territories at **Whitley Common** (3), **Royd Moor Res.** (11), **Scout Dike Res.** (9), **Broadstone Res.** (3), **Blackmoorfoot Res.** (5), **Langsett Banks** (22), **Winscar Res.** (12+), **Ingbirchworth Res.** (13), **Cliff Wood** (9), and the **Little Don Valley** (16). Birds were also heard singing at other localities and breeding was confirmed at **Crosland Hill** where a pair fledged young.

Visible migration was reported from four sites:

**Harden Quarries** – a total of 475 flew over, mainly in a SE direction, on 16 dates between 6<sup>th</sup> September and 1<sup>st</sup> November, with a maximum of 89 on 12<sup>th</sup> October.

**Wards End Farm, Marsden** – a total of 568 flew W on 28 dates between 15<sup>th</sup> September and 8<sup>th</sup> November, with a maximum of 72 on both 9<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup> October.

**Pule Hill, Marsden** – a total of 3,319 flew SW on 17 dates between 9<sup>th</sup> October and 3<sup>rd</sup> November, with a maximum of 599 on 9<sup>th</sup> October and 845 on 23<sup>rd</sup> October. The observers commented that this was the second best year since 2011 and a welcome return to normal after last year's very poor showing.

**Royd Moor Hill** – four flew SE on 15<sup>th</sup> October, 133 flew SE on 27<sup>th</sup> October, and four flew SE on 5<sup>th</sup> November.

### **HAWFINCH** *Coccothraustes coccothraustes*

Rare to scarce visitor. Former breeder.

A massive irruption from Eastern Europe during the autumn period resulted in at least 20 birds being recorded in the area. Interestingly, all records involved overflying birds at the migration watchpoints.

**Harden Quarries** – at least 15 birds, the majority of which flew in directions between S or E, were seen and/or heard (identified from a sonogram) on six dates from 20<sup>th</sup> October until 5<sup>th</sup> November: birds in October were represented by a single on 20<sup>th</sup>, three on 23<sup>rd</sup> and a minimum of five on 31<sup>st</sup>, whilst in November four passed over on 1<sup>st</sup> and singles on 2<sup>nd</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> (NWM, DHP).

**Pule Hill, Marsden** – three separate birds flew SW with Redwings on 23<sup>rd</sup> October (DS).

**Wards End Farm, Marsden** – a single flew W with Redwings on 25<sup>th</sup> October and at least one did likewise on 7<sup>th</sup> November (DWS).

(EURASIAN) **BULLFINCH** *Pyrrhula pyrrhula*  
Resident breeder (2-3), about 100 pairs.

This handsome finch was observed at 55 widely scattered sites (a sharp increase from the 32 last year) and was reported in every month of the year. Is this a result of birds spreading wider or more observer coverage of certain areas? Birds were attracted to 13 garden feeding stations.

The only counts of more than three were as follows:

**Blackmoorfoot** – up to four were present throughout the year with seven on 17<sup>th</sup> October and eight on 29<sup>th</sup> November.

**Holmfirth (Cooper-Binns Lane)** – four were present throughout January and November.

**Colne Bridge SP** – present throughout the year with 11 on 8<sup>th</sup> January.

**Scammonden Water** – five on 18<sup>th</sup> January, four on 28<sup>th</sup> September, 12 on 26<sup>th</sup> October and ten on 3<sup>rd</sup> November.

**Meal Hill** – four on 27<sup>th</sup> January.

**Meltham** – five were present in a garden on 5<sup>th</sup> February and four on 19<sup>th</sup> June.

**Almondbury** – up to four were present in a garden for extended periods between late February and early September. Five were seen between 20<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup> August and up again in November/December.

**Hullock Bank** – 15 on 15<sup>th</sup> November.

**Flouch** – five on 5<sup>th</sup> April.

**Denby Delf** – ten on 29<sup>th</sup> October.

**Deanhead Res** – four on 10<sup>th</sup> November.

**Flockton** – four on 15<sup>th</sup> November.

**Harden Res** – 11 on 3<sup>rd</sup> December.

**Armitage Bridge** – six on 14<sup>th</sup> December.

**Carlecotes Ponds** – eight on 18<sup>th</sup> December.

Breeding was confirmed at **Crosland Hill** and **Fixby** and single males held a territory at **Scout Dike Res.**, **Cliff Wood**, and **Swinden Plantation**, with two territories at **Dunford Bridge** and at seven sites in the **Marsden** area. Two juveniles in a **Meltham** garden, two juveniles at **Scammonden Water** and three juveniles in an **Almondbury** garden were suggestive of local breeding.

Visible migration was reported as follows:

**Pule Hill, Marsden** – a total of 22 flew W or SW on six dates between 12<sup>th</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup> October, with a maximum of eight SW on 26<sup>th</sup>. The observers commented that this was the best year since the species was first recorded there in 2012.

**Harden Quarries** – as low numbers tend to be present around the copse/conifer edge and, as birds moving out over the moor may simply be on feeding forays, it can be difficult to interpret true migration at this site. Birds flew S or SE on 14 dates between 9<sup>th</sup> October and 17<sup>th</sup> November, and it is considered that the following, all in October, refer to genuine migrants: 16 on 20<sup>th</sup>, 17 on 23<sup>rd</sup>, and 18 on 25<sup>th</sup>.

**Wards End Farm** – three flew W on 18<sup>th</sup> October and two did likewise on 26<sup>th</sup> October.

(EUROPEAN) **GREENFINCH** *Chloris chloris*

Resident breeder (4), 1,000-1,600 pairs (but greatly reduced since the 1987-92 Atlas).

There were records from 36 locations, a sharp increase from the 24 the previous year. Birds were attracted to 11 gardens, where they were present throughout the year at several, but only in very small numbers. Elsewhere, counts were predominantly low suggesting a further decline of this species in our area. The observer at **Hepworth** commented that the species is becoming increasingly rare in his garden and the observer at **Netherthong** expressed a similar concern. The roost near a farm in **Rastrick** never materialised.

The only counts of more than four birds were as follows: a garden in **Holmfirth** held up to eight in January, six in March and five in June/July; a **Meltham** garden had up to 12 birds attending in January; five were noted at **Brockholes** on 17<sup>th</sup> February; five were present at **Wards End Farm, Marsden** on 18<sup>th</sup> September and 28 feeding on beech mast there before departing W on 18<sup>th</sup> October were the largest flock reported in the area this year; six were at **Langsett Res.** on 18<sup>th</sup> October; and 12 gathered at **Shepley** on 29<sup>th</sup> November.

In the breeding season single singing males were heard at **New Mill** (where a juvenile was seen on 23<sup>rd</sup> June), **Broadstone Res.**, **Ingbirchworth Res.**, **Brockholes**, **Colne Bridge SP**, **Nether House**, **Penistone** and **Ecklands, Penistone**. Birds held territories at **Broadstone Res.** and the **Little Don Valley** and juveniles were seen at **Wards End Farm**, and in gardens at **Almondbury** and **Rastrick**.

In line with the abysmal numbers noted above, visible migration was similarly affected and was only reported from three locations:

**Harden Quarries** – a total of 51 flew over, mainly in a SE direction, on seven dates between 20<sup>th</sup> September and 26<sup>th</sup> October, with a maximum of 11 on 15<sup>th</sup> October.

**Pule Hill, Marsden** – a total of 138 flew S or SW on 11 dates between 22<sup>nd</sup> September and 9<sup>th</sup> November, with a maximum of 28 on 9<sup>th</sup> October.

**Royd Moor Hill** – 12 flew W on 22<sup>nd</sup> September, six flew S on 30<sup>th</sup> September, four flew SE on 16<sup>th</sup> October, and two did likewise on 5<sup>th</sup> November.

(COMMON) **LINNET** *Linaria cannabina*

Partial migrant breeder (3-4), 400-600 pairs (but greatly reduced since the 1987-92 Atlas). Red listed.

Although birds were recorded in most months, none occurred after 5<sup>th</sup> November. Records spanned 30 rural locations, a welcome increase on the 23 of last year.

The only January/February records involved c.370 in the game crop at **High Hoyland** on 21<sup>st</sup> January and c.30 at **Gunthwaite Dam** on 1<sup>st</sup> February. Birds became more widely distributed by early March, but flocks never attained double figures until between 12 and 20 were present on **Broadstone Heath** on 5<sup>th</sup> May.

Evidence of breeding was reported from several locations: **Broadstone Res.** (at least 10 males held territories), **Ingbirchworth Res.** (at least six males held territories), **Langsett** (pair bred), **Hartcliffe Hill** (adult carrying food/faecal sack), **Blackmoorfoot** (3 pairs bred), and juveniles, presumably of local provenance, were seen at two sites in **Marsden** and along the **Meltham** catchment.



Post breeding flocks began to assemble from late August, but the largest gatherings only involved the following: c.20 at **Skelmanthorpe** on 28<sup>th</sup> August with c.30 at **Emley** on the same date; c.40 at **Meltham** (New Bridge Road) on 10<sup>th</sup> September; c.80 at **Scout Dike Res** on 17<sup>th</sup> September; c.20 at **Armitage Bridge** on 19<sup>th</sup> and 22<sup>nd</sup> September; and c.60 at **Meltham** (Wessenden Head Road) on 23<sup>rd</sup> September.

Visible migration was witnessed as follows:

**Harden Quarries** – three flew S on 31<sup>st</sup> July. Thereafter, a total of 83 flew S or SE on eight dates between 20<sup>th</sup> September and 2<sup>nd</sup> November, with a maximum of 28 on 9<sup>th</sup> October.

**Isle of Skye Quarry** – 14 flew W on 19<sup>th</sup> September and 15 S on 6<sup>th</sup> October.

**Pule Hill, Marsden** – a total of 38 flew SW on seven dates between 20<sup>th</sup> September and 1<sup>st</sup> November, with a maximum of 15 on 28<sup>th</sup> September.

**Royd Moor Hill** – a total of 99 flew S or SE on five dates between 22<sup>nd</sup> September and 5<sup>th</sup> November, with a maximum of 50 S on 15<sup>th</sup> October.

**Wards End Farm** – eight flew W on 9<sup>th</sup> October and four did likewise on 26<sup>th</sup> October.

### **TWITE** *Linaria flavirostris*

Partial migrant breeder, decreased to (2), 20-100 pairs (but greatly reduced since the 1987-92 Atlas). Red listed.

It was rather an abysmal year at one of the species' strongholds at Deer Hill, but, although numbers were down slightly on last year, Wards End Farm, Marsden, delivered sightings for extended periods. As is usual, records away from these areas were very scarce.

**Wards End Farm, Marsden** – groups of four on 10<sup>th</sup> March and three on 20<sup>th</sup> March were the first returning birds. There were then no records until a single flew N on 5<sup>th</sup> April (see visible migration below). Up to four (usually 1 or 2) were then seen regularly until mid-June, but seven flew N on 25<sup>th</sup> April. Thereafter, numbers began to build, with birds being present on numerous occasions until 26<sup>th</sup> September. Up to 13 (including juveniles) were the norm, the following being the exceptions: 18 on 18<sup>th</sup> July, 16 on 9<sup>th</sup> August and, in September, 15 on 6<sup>th</sup>, and 21 on 12<sup>th</sup>. Three which flew SW on 5<sup>th</sup> October and 15 which did likewise on 15<sup>th</sup> October were the last of the year (DWS).

**Deer Hill** – four (including 3 previously colour ringed at this site) on 25<sup>th</sup> March were the first returning birds. Although numbers then increased to about ten, these were short lived, as no birds were seen after 4<sup>th</sup> April (DMP *et al.*).

Records from other sites were as follows:

**Isle of Skye Quarry** – a singing male on 1<sup>st</sup> April, but not seen or heard after that date (DHP).

**Cupwith Res** – two on 22<sup>nd</sup> May and a single on 25<sup>th</sup> May (DHP).

**Wessenden Res** – two were near the car park on 24<sup>th</sup> May (VK).

**Butterley Res** – two on 25<sup>th</sup> May (JMP).

**Deanhead Clough** – five on 6<sup>th</sup> July (DT).

Visible migration was only noted at **Wards End Farm**: a total of 18 flew N on eight dates between 20<sup>th</sup> March and 3<sup>rd</sup> May, with a maximum of seven on 25<sup>th</sup> April. Thereafter, three flew SE on 26<sup>th</sup> September, three flew SW on 5<sup>th</sup> October, and 15 did likewise on 15<sup>th</sup> October (DWS).

### LESSER REDPOLL *Acanthis cabaret*

Partial migrant breeder, decreased to (1-2), 10-50 pairs. Red listed.

Records were received from 22 locations (24 in 2016). Four gardens were visited with one of these regularly attracting birds. The only evidence of breeding came from two locations. The status of this species in our area seems to be following the national downward trend.

Most records, which were equally distributed throughout the year, usually involved no more than two individuals, but c.40 were present at **Langsett Res.** on 2<sup>nd</sup> January with c.50 there on 10<sup>th</sup> January and c.30 at the month end and ten on 18<sup>th</sup> October; c.50 were present at **Potter's Gate, Broadstone** on 29<sup>th</sup> January; between 15 and 23 were in **Wareham Wood, Broadstone** from 29<sup>th</sup> January until 18<sup>th</sup> February; eight were at **Ingbirchworth Res.** on 27<sup>th</sup> March; eight were feeding in alders at **Elland GP** on 27<sup>th</sup> October; c.15 were present at **Hepworth** on 30<sup>th</sup> October and 15<sup>th</sup> November; and about ten were feeding on alders at **Carlecotes Ponds** on 18<sup>th</sup> December.

A garden in **Meltham** regularly held up to five (usually 2 or 3) during the first three months of the year, but there were then no records until a single appeared on 1<sup>st</sup> December, up to four, with eight on 12<sup>th</sup>, then remained for the rest of the month. Five were in a garden at **Crosland Hill** on 21<sup>st</sup> March and one or two regularly visited feeders there during the summer months, but there was no evidence of breeding. The other garden records involved two at **Holmfirth** on 28<sup>th</sup> February with a single there on 31<sup>st</sup> March and one at **Netherthong** on 21<sup>st</sup> April.

The only evidence of breeding concerned three males which held territories at **Winscar Res.** and at least two males which held territories at **Langsett Banks.**

Visible migration was reported from six sites:

**Blackmoorfoot Res** – a flock of 11 flew S on 4<sup>th</sup> April.

**Pule Hill, Marsden** – a total of 53 flew S or SW on seven dates between 9<sup>th</sup> September and 26<sup>th</sup> October, with a maximum of 18 on 26<sup>th</sup> October.

**Harden Quarries** – a total of 183 flew over, mainly in a SE direction, on 17 dates between 20<sup>th</sup> September and 5<sup>th</sup> November, with a maximum of 41 on 23<sup>rd</sup> October.

**Isle of Skye Quarry** – a total of 15 flew over, mainly in a southerly direction, on seven dates between 28<sup>th</sup> September and 11<sup>th</sup> November, with a maximum of six on 5<sup>th</sup> October.

**Wards End Farm** – a total of 45 flew W on ten dates between 9<sup>th</sup> October and 11<sup>th</sup> November, with a maximum of ten on 5<sup>th</sup> November.

**Royd Moor Hill** – seven flew S on 15<sup>th</sup> October.

### COMMON CROSSBILL *Loxia curvirostra*

Irregular breeder (1), 0-5 pairs. Scarce to uncommon irruptive passage and winter visitor.

Recorded at 17 sites but, rather alarmingly, there was only a single record from the species' stronghold in the Yateholme area.

Reports came from the following sites:

**Langsett Res** – up to six were seen on six dates between 2<sup>nd</sup> January and 5<sup>th</sup> February.

**Holme Styes** – five on 4<sup>th</sup> January.

**Langsett** – a single on 5<sup>th</sup> January, c.10 on 7<sup>th</sup> January, and two on 4<sup>th</sup> February.

**Ramsden Res** – four on 5<sup>th</sup> February.

**Swinden Track** – c.10 in Crookland Wood on 13<sup>th</sup> March.

**Swinden Plantation** – a single on 26<sup>th</sup> April.  
**Langsett Banks** – nine on 11<sup>th</sup> May.  
**Little Don Valley** – a single on 11<sup>th</sup> June.  
**Scout Dike Res** – a single flew S on 30<sup>th</sup> September.  
**Dove Stone Res** – c.15 on 2<sup>nd</sup> June and seven on 6<sup>th</sup> November.  
**Pule Hill, Marsden** – a single flew high to the S on 12<sup>th</sup> October.  
**Harden Quarries** – a total of 40 flew over, mainly in a SE direction, on seven dates between 15<sup>th</sup> October and 2<sup>nd</sup> November, with a maximum of 17 SE on 26<sup>th</sup> October.  
**Scammonden Water** – two flew S on 25<sup>th</sup> October.  
**Wards End Farm, Marsden** – parties of six flew W on 27<sup>th</sup> and 29<sup>th</sup> October, a single was present on 20<sup>th</sup> August and a flock of eight were on the Leylandii in the garden on 15<sup>th</sup> September.  
**Ingbirchworth Res** – a party of 12 flew W on 28<sup>th</sup> October.  
**Isle of Skye Quarry** – a single flew S on 6<sup>th</sup> November.  
**Blackmoorfoot Res** – a flock of ten flew N on 14<sup>th</sup> November.

(EUROPEAN) **GOLDFINCH** *Carduelis carduelis*

Partial migrant breeder (3), 300-500 pairs.

This charming and ever abundant finch was reported from 60 well scattered sites, a large increase on the 48 in 2016 and slightly up from the 54 in 2015. Gardens were frequented throughout the year with most records stemming from this source.

The largest assemblages in the first winter period were reported from a **Meltham** garden which regularly attracted up to 20 during January and 40 were there on 7<sup>th</sup>, likewise, a **Holmfirth** garden held up to 12 throughout the same month. **Butternab Wood** was visited by a flock of 30 birds on 8<sup>th</sup> January, a flock of 20 were present at **New Mill** on 10<sup>th</sup> January, a garden in **Hepworth** held a maximum of 15 on 14<sup>th</sup> January, and at least 30 were coming to feeders in a **Dalton** garden on 15<sup>th</sup> January. **Wards End Farm, Marsden** attracted bird throughout January and held a maximum of 45 on 15<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup>, and 25 on 30<sup>th</sup>. The only other large gatherings during this period involved c.45 at **Ingbirchworth Res.** on 1<sup>st</sup> February and 15 at **Wards End Farm** on 4<sup>th</sup> February.

Territory holding males were recorded as follows: **Royd Moor Res.** (3), **Scout Dike Res.** (4), **Broadstone Res.** (6), **Ingbirchworth Res.** (10+), and **Cliff Wood** (2). Breeding was confirmed at **Nether House, Penistone** (where 17 were present on 3<sup>rd</sup> May) and at **Hartcliff Hill** (which held 19 on 1<sup>st</sup> June). A pair fledged young at **Crosland Hill** and at **Armitage Bridge** an adult was seen feeding recently fledged young. Juveniles were reported from a number of locations: **Wards End Farm** in June and September (suggesting 2 broods), **Almondbury**, **Storthes Hall**, **Armitage Bridge**, **Meltham**, and **Lindley**.

The largest assemblages post breeding season were as follows:

**Wards End Farm** – 20 on 27<sup>th</sup> June were followed by up to 50 on a near daily basis until late September.  
**Broadstone Res** – c.40 on 21<sup>st</sup> July.  
**Blackmoorfoot** – 20+ on 6<sup>th</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup> – 31<sup>st</sup> August and 30+ on 1<sup>st</sup> – 18<sup>th</sup> September.  
**Colne Bridge** – 19 on 25<sup>th</sup> August.  
**Whitley Common** – c.50 on 3<sup>rd</sup> September.  
**Holmfirth** – up to 20 throughout October.  
**Ingbirchworth** – 30+ on 4<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup> October.  
**Armitage Bridge** – 30 on 17<sup>th</sup> October.  
**Rastrick** – c.40 on 31<sup>st</sup> December.

Visible migration was recorded as follows:

**Harden Quarries** – a total of 653 flew over, mainly in a S or SE direction, on 20 dates between 7<sup>th</sup> September and 17<sup>th</sup> November, with a maximum of 93 on 22<sup>nd</sup> September.

**Pule Hill, Marsden** – a total of 595 flew S or SW on 16 dates between 9<sup>th</sup> September and 9<sup>th</sup> November, with a maximum of 202 on 26<sup>th</sup> October. The observers commented that this is the best yearly total and the best day-count since regular observations began in 2011.

**Wards End Farm** – a total of 54 flew W on eight dates between 1<sup>st</sup> October and 6<sup>th</sup> November, with a maximum of 15 on 9<sup>th</sup> October.

**Royd Moor Hill** – 11 flew SW on 6<sup>th</sup> October.

(EURASIAN) **SISKIN** *Spinus spinus*

Resident breeder (1), 5-20 pairs. Uncommon to common passage and winter visitor.

Sightings were equally spread throughout the year, but the number of locations was down slightly from the 31 of last year to 28. Birds frequented eight garden feeding stations, two of which held birds throughout most of the year. Following the trend of recent years' numbers remained very low, but numbers rallied during the latter months. Breeding was confirmed at one sites and males held territories at three others.

Birds which visited the eight gardens during the first winter period never exceed five with the exceptions of up to seven which were regularly seen in a **Holmfirth** garden during January and March and nine on garden feeders at **Langsett** on 14<sup>th</sup> April. Gardens in **Meltham** and **Holmfirth** continued to hold up to four birds throughout the summer months, but the other gardens only started to attract birds from October onwards, but only in very small numbers.

Away from gardens, the only double figure assemblage during the first winter period related to a flock of about 15 at **Swinden Track** on 13<sup>th</sup> March and up to 25 in the **Little Don Valley** throughout April.

Breeding was confirmed at **Swinden Plantation** with an estimated four pairs. In addition, five males held breeding territories at **Winscar Res.**, at least six males held territories at **Langsett Banks** and at least seven males held territories in the **Little Don Valley**.

The largest assemblages post breeding occurred at **Wards End Farm, Marsden** where up to ten were present throughout August with 20 on 6<sup>th</sup> and 50 on 20<sup>th</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup>. A flock of c.20 were in alders at **Colne Bridge SP** on 15<sup>th</sup> November, **Meal Hill** attracted c.20 on 12<sup>th</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup> December, but the largest gathering involved an impressive 62 in a **Holmfirth** garden during the second week of December.

Visible migration was witnessed at the following sites:

**Blackmoorfoot Res** – two flew W on 22<sup>nd</sup> June, three flew W on 15<sup>th</sup> July, and singles did likewise on 7<sup>th</sup> August and 20<sup>th</sup> September.

**Harden Quarries** – a total of 212 flew over, mainly in a SE direction, on 18 dates between 7<sup>th</sup> September and 5<sup>th</sup> November, with a maximum of 54 on 12<sup>th</sup> October.

**Wards End Farm, Marsden** – five flew S on 21<sup>st</sup> September, then, in October, six flew W on 16<sup>th</sup>, eight did likewise on 23<sup>rd</sup>, and 32 flew W on 25<sup>th</sup>.

**Pule Hill, Marsden** – a total of 38 flew S or SW on eight dates between 23<sup>rd</sup> September and 1<sup>st</sup> November, with a maximum of 18 on 12<sup>th</sup> October.

**Royd Moor Hill** – 12 flew S on 30<sup>th</sup> September, 11 flew S or SE on 27<sup>th</sup> October, and 20 flew ESE on 15<sup>th</sup> November.

**Oldfield** – eight flew SSW on 4<sup>th</sup> October.

**Isle of Skye Quarry** – singles flew S or SE on 6<sup>th</sup>, 10<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> October.

**YELLOWHAMMER** *Emberiza citrinella*

Resident breeder (3), 300-450 pairs (but greatly reduced since the 1987-92 Atlas). Red listed.

Records were received from 20 sites (17 in 2016 and 21 in 2015). All observations were of less than four birds, the only exceptions being at **Hullock Bank** and **Cheesegate Nab**, both of which held up to six on a regular basis throughout the year, ten in the game crop at **High Hoyland** on 21<sup>st</sup> January, nine at **Emley** on 28<sup>th</sup> August with 11 there on 15<sup>th</sup> November, and six were feeding in stubble at **Thurgory Lane** on 5<sup>th</sup> November.

As the distribution of this species is now very restricted the following lists all locations which held birds during the breeding season:

**Royd Moor Res.** (4 males held territories), **Scout Dike Res.** (3 males held territories), **Broadstone Res.** (3 males held territories), **Ingbirchworth Res.** (4 pairs held territories, with at least 2 fledging young), **Annat Royd Lane** (1 pair bred), **Emley** (1 male held a territory), **Thurgory Lane** (2 males held territories), **Shepley** (3 males held territories) and birds were recorded as ‘present’ at **Hullock Bank**, **Castle Hill**, **Stockmoor**, **Stirley Community Farm**, and **Gunthwaite Dam**.

A male which flew S at **Harden Quarries** on 23<sup>rd</sup> October was the first recorded there since 2014.

**REED BUNTING** *Emberiza schoeniclus*

Resident or partial migrant breeder (2-3), 60-120 pairs.

The stronghold for this species continues to be the Marsden area around **Wards End Farm** where birds were present throughout the year. The highest counts in the first winter period involved ten at Lower Green Owlers on 18<sup>th</sup> January and 12 at the same location on 24<sup>th</sup> January. Numbers then dwindled and by March only five remained, this number was never exceeded until December, when the eight present on 4<sup>th</sup> had increased to 16 by the month end. The observer commented that the number of birds seen compared to last year had dropped significantly.

Away from this area, with the exception of seven at **Ingbirchworth Res.** on 3<sup>rd</sup> April, all records up to the start of the breeding season had involved no more than four individuals.

In the breeding season males were on territory at **Royd Moor Res.** (6), **Scout Dike Res.** (2), **Broadstone Res.** (3), **Winscar Res.** (3), **Ingbirchworth Res.** (5), with 16 singing males in the **Marsden** area. A pair bred at **Colne Bridge SP** and singing males were heard at **Bretton Park**, **Broadstone Heath**, **Little Don Valley**, **Gunthwaite Dam**, and **Deanhead Res.**, where two juveniles were seen in mid-July.

Following the breeding season, with the exception of **Wards End Farm** (see above), the only double figure count involved a flock of at least 30 at **Deer Hill Res.** on 2<sup>nd</sup> November.

It was another poor showing at **Blackmoorfoot** – in March a male and female were present from 3<sup>rd</sup> to 6<sup>th</sup> and a male on 23<sup>rd</sup>, single males were then seen on 3<sup>rd</sup> – 5<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> April and between 28<sup>th</sup> June and 16<sup>th</sup> July.

Visible migration was witnessed at three sites:

**Harden Quarries** – a total of 54 flew over, mainly in a southerly direction, on 15 dates between 7<sup>th</sup> September and 5<sup>th</sup> November, with a maximum of eight SW on 15<sup>th</sup> October.

**Pule Hill, Marsden** – a total of 97 flew S or SW on 12 dates between 20<sup>th</sup> September and 3<sup>rd</sup> November, with maxima of 23 on 23<sup>rd</sup> October and 16 on 26<sup>th</sup> October. This is the highest total ever recorded at the site, which has witnessed a steady increase in numbers over the previous six years.

**Wards End Farm, Marsden** – a total of 28 flew W on six dates between 9<sup>th</sup> and 31<sup>st</sup> October, with a maximum of seven on 30<sup>th</sup> and eight the following day.

## ESCAPED/INTRODUCED SPECIES

### **BLACK SWAN** *Cygnus atratus*

Escape.

A single on **Ingbirchworth Res.** on 12<sup>th</sup> September (NWM, MCW *et al.*) remained in the area until the year end, being seen on the reservoirs at **Scout Dike**, **Broadstone** and **Royd Moor**.

### **BAR-HEADED GOOSE** *Anser indicus*

Escape.

A single present at **Ingbirchworth Res.** between 28<sup>th</sup> February (NWM) and 7<sup>th</sup> March (JMcL) also visited **Scout Dike Res.** on several occasions.

### **EMBDEN GOOSE** *Anser anser domesticus*

The Embden Goose is a white farmyard breed of domestic goose.

There were records from four locations. A single was resident throughout the year at **Ingbirchworth Res.** (this bird, along with another, were released onto the reservoir from a nearby farm a few years ago, one of which has since perished. per. DBu); two were present throughout the year at **Langsett Res.** where they were often seen grazing on land near the reservoir; between 13 and 15 were present throughout the year at **Winscar Res.**, with a pair hatching two goslings; and a single was present at **Blackmoorfoot Res.** from 29<sup>th</sup> November until the year end.

### **MUSCOVY DUCK X MALLARD HYBRID** *Cairina moschata* x *Anas platyrhynchos*

A hybrid of these two species, present at **Scout Dike Res.** since 2014, although sometimes absent for long periods, was last seen on 6<sup>th</sup> July (MCW).

### **WOOD DUCK** *Aix sponsa*

Escape.

A male was present on the Aspley and Cooper Bridge section of the **Broad Canal** between 9<sup>th</sup> November and 22<sup>nd</sup> December (DMa).

### **HELMETED GUINEAFOWL** *Numida melaneagris*

Escape.

A group of five in a field off Lee Lane, Small Shaw, **Penistone** on 3<sup>rd</sup> May could have originated from the nearby farm (AK).

**GOLDEN PHEASANT** *Chrysolophus pictus*

Introduced.

There were numerous records from a number of widely scattered localities but the source of these birds remains a mystery. All records involved males and a good proportion had yellow underparts (as opposed to the normal crimson scarlet colouration) and their crests were not as extensive. As the species is monotypic, however, this phenomenon was investigated. It was found that these “yellow” birds are aviculturists’ hybrids between Golden and Lady Amherst’s Pheasant *Chrysolophus amherstiae*. Their source, however, remains an intriguing mystery.

At the species’ usual stronghold, **Hagg Wood**, a single pure bred male was seen regularly throughout the year.

Other pure bred birds were seen as follows:

**Holmfirth** – a male in a garden on 18<sup>th</sup> July (per. MLD).

**Lower Holme/Cop Hill, Slaithwaite** – a male on 3<sup>rd</sup> August (DWB) and 18<sup>th</sup>/19<sup>th</sup> August (ADea, DF, A. Millea).

The following hybrids were reported:

**Beaumont Park** – a male on 24<sup>th</sup> May (per. MS).

**Edgerton** – a male in a garden on 27<sup>th</sup> May (R. Wainwright).

**Crosland Moor** – a male on Park Road West on 4<sup>th</sup> June (P. Perkins).

**Bradley** – a male in a garden which backs onto Bradley Park Golf Course on at least 19<sup>th</sup>/20<sup>th</sup> October (S. & A. Bushell).

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## CORRECTION TO THE 2015 REPORT

### WHOOPEE SWAN *Cygnus cygnus*

The record of three Whooper Swans reported as flying W at **Wards End Farm, Marsden** on 12<sup>th</sup> September 2015 was given in error. The birds concerned were actually Pink-footed Geese.

The record should therefore be deleted from the report. The table of Earliest and Latest Dates has been corrected accordingly.

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## ADDITION TO THE 2014 REPORT

### THAYER'S GULL *Larus glaucooides thayeri*

Accidental visitor.

A juvenile on the roof of Biffa waste disposal centre at Mirfield on 27<sup>th</sup>/28<sup>th</sup> December 2014 (J. Welford *et al.*) was the fourth accepted record for the British Isles and the first for Yorkshire. As there are other records in the pipe-line, however, this may change.

The taxonomic position of 'Thayer's Gull' has long been in contention, certain authors describe it as a full species *Larus thayeri*, while others prefer to lump it with Iceland Gull *Larus glaucooides thayeri*. At this moment in time the BOURC regard it as the latter.

# EARLIEST AND LATEST DATES OF SUMMER MIGRANTS

|                      | EARLIEST |      |      |                                       | LATEST |      |       |                         |
|----------------------|----------|------|------|---------------------------------------|--------|------|-------|-------------------------|
|                      | EVER     |      | 2017 |                                       | EVER   |      | 2017  |                         |
|                      | DATE     | YEAR | DATE | LOCALITY                              | DATE   | YEAR | DATE  | LOCALITY                |
| Little Ringed Plover | 15/3     | 2000 | 1/4  | Ingbirchworth                         | 29/9   | 1969 | 11/8  | Ingbirchworth           |
| Common Sandpiper     | 7/3      | 1964 | 9/4  | Blackmoorfoot                         | 21/11  | 1959 | 28/9  | Blackmoorfoot           |
| Common Tern          | 31/3     | 2010 | 30/4 | Ingbirchworth                         | 16/10  | 2001 | 28/9  | Blackmoorfoot           |
| Cuckoo               | 8/4      | 1976 | 25/4 | Winscar & Meltham Mills               | 27/10  | 1977 | 30/7  | Meltham                 |
| Swift                | 13/4     | 2013 | 25/4 | Dewsbury SW                           | 8/11   | 2001 | 12/9  | Blackmoorfoot           |
| Sand Martin          | 7/3      | 2005 | 23/3 | Ingbirchworth                         | 23/10  | 1971 | 21/9  | Blackmoorfoot           |
| Swallow              | 10/3     | 1959 | 1/4  | Ingbirchworth                         | 5/12   | 1995 | 17/10 | Blackmoorfoot           |
| House Martin         | 20/3     | 2005 | 7/4  | Colne Bridge                          | 27/11  | 1959 | 9/10  | Harden Quarries         |
| Tree Pipit           | 3/4      | 1988 | 22/4 | Carlecotes Ponds                      | 16/10  | 2016 | 15/9  | Marsden                 |
| Yellow Wagtail       | 7/4      | 1980 | 20/4 | Whitley Common                        | 24/10  | 1952 | 6/9   | Marsden                 |
| Redstart             | 21/3     | 1942 | 28/4 | Langsett, Royd Moor Hill & Scammonden | 24/10  | 1976 | 30/8  | Ingbirchworth & Marsden |
| Whinchat             | 11/4     | 1949 | 19/4 | Marsden                               | 9/11   | 1999 | 19/9  | Marsden                 |
| Wheatear             | 1/3      | 1997 | 14/3 | South Crosland                        | 4/12   | 1997 | 14/10 | Farnley Tyas            |
| Ring Ouzel           | 7/3      | 1956 | 24/3 | Dove Stone Res                        | 25/12  | 1855 | 4/11  | Marsden                 |
| Grasshopper Warbler  | 10/4     | 2005 | 19/4 | Scout Dike Res & Broadstone           | 29/8   | 2000 | 24/8  | Scammonden Water        |
| Sedge Warbler        | 1/4      | 1999 | 26/4 | Horbury SW                            | 26/9   | 1999 | 27/7  | Deanhead Res            |
| Reed Warbler         | 20/4     | 2011 | 11/4 | Colne Bridge SP & Dewsbury SW         | 29/9   | 2001 | 14/6  | Healey Mills            |
| Garden Warbler       | 5/4      | 1958 | 11/4 | Hepworth                              | 24/11  | 1984 | 22/8  | Marsden                 |
| Lesser Whitethroat   | 8/4      | 2000 | 11/4 | Healey Mills                          | 27/9   | 1973 | 17/8  | Blackmoorfoot           |
| Whitethroat          | 1/4      | 2011 | 18/4 | Ingbirchworth                         | 12/10  | 1999 | 1/9   | Deanhead Res            |
| Wood Warbler         | 21/4     | 1981 | 27/5 | Langsett Banks                        | 4/9    | 1956 | 31/7  | Royd Moor Res           |
| Willow Warbler       | 24/3     | 2003 | 30/3 | Ingbirchworth                         | 27/10  | 1987 | 26/9  | Armitage Bridge         |
| Spotted Flycatcher   | 8/4      | 1967 | 12/5 | Langsett Banks                        | 16/10  | 1985 | 6/9   | Blackmoorfoot           |
| Pied Flycatcher      | 10/4     | 2007 | 29/4 | Cliff Wood & Holmroyd Wood            | 19/9   | 1969 | 21/8  | Blackmoorfoot           |



Denotes a new earliest/latest ever record.

**Note:** Blackcap and Chiffchaff dates have been discontinued because of the difficulty in distinguishing between summer migrants and over-wintering birds.

## LATEST AND EARLIEST DATES OF WINTER MIGRANTS

|                   | LATEST |      |      |                | EARLIEST |      |      |               |
|-------------------|--------|------|------|----------------|----------|------|------|---------------|
|                   | EVER   |      | 2017 |                | EVER     |      | 2017 |               |
|                   | DATE   | YEAR | DATE | LOCALITY       | DATE     | YEAR | DATE | LOCALITY      |
| Whooper Swan      | 3/5    | 2006 | 3/5  | Elland GP      | 12/9     | 2015 | 3/10 | Blackmoorfoot |
| Pink-footed Goose | 12/4   | 2009 | 26/3 | Blackmoorfoot  | 11/9     | 2007 | 14/9 | Marsden       |
| Redwing           | 7/5    | 1975 | 29/3 | Cheesegate Nab | 27/8     | 1941 | 7/10 | Marsden       |
| Brambling         | 13/5   | 1976 | 26/4 | Wooldale       | 13/9     | 1983 | 7/10 | Marsden       |



Denotes a new latest/earliest ever record.

Note: in view of the fact that Fieldfare previously bred in the area and the possibility that they did so again in 2008, Fieldfare has been removed from the table.

# LIST OF CONTRIBUTORS

(with apologies for any omissions)

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## OBITUARY: JOHN E. DALE 1929-2017

The following obituary, although originally written for this report, first appeared in *The Naturalist* 143 (2018) and is reproduced here by kind permission of the YNU.

John Edward Dale, whose contribution to the understanding of Yorkshire's ornithology was immense, died on 23<sup>rd</sup> December 2017, at the age of 88. John had been interested in birds all his life and the formation of Huddersfield Birdwatchers' Club in 1966 was the springboard which jettisoned him into a lifetime of deep involvement in ornithology. It was not long after the formation of the Club that John became officially involved, for in 1969 he took on the role of recorder. John continued in the position of report writer/editor, with a well-earned respite in 1974, until 1988. It was during this time, 1976-78, that John also found time to become the Club's President, a role he also carried out from 1990-92.

When the Club decided to undertake a breeding bird atlas to run parallel with the BTO breeding atlas of 1988-91, John was quick to embrace the opportunity and became responsible for collecting and collating records for certain 10km squares and, later, co-editor. Although John's stint as President from 1990-92 was his last role in officialdom, he continued to attend Club meetings until 2010 and was always willing to offer advice. For his services to the Club, John was honoured with Life Membership in 1992.

John's contribution to the ornithology of the county went beyond the Huddersfield area, for he was also a leading light for a good number of years in the Ornithological Section of the Yorkshire Naturalists' Union. John's first major contribution to the YNU was compiling the Ornithological Report for 1967-69. This was a single volume report and John had the assistance of Derek Lees-Smith and Athol Wallis. The reports from 1980-84, however, were all single volumes and were all compiled by John. For the 1985 report, his last for the YNU, he was assisted by Bill Curtis.

John's dedication within the YNU wasn't confined only to report writing. For a total of fourteen years (1974-80 and 1989-92) he was the VC63 recorder, meticulously entering thousands of records on 8" x 5" cards (there were no computers in those days). Not wanting the grass to grow under his feet, he became the Chairman of the Ornithological Committee in 1989, a role he maintained until 1996. This dedication to the YNU resulted in him being honoured with the role of President for the year 1999.

Personally, I owe a great gratitude to John. When I, and other young members, were fledgling birdwatchers he took us under his wing and tutored us on identification and field craft. I well remember spending many hours being taught gull identification in the hide at Blackmoorfoot Reservoir. It is John's dedication to my ornithological education that has set me in good stead ever since and something of which I am greatly appreciative.

John's contribution to Yorkshire's ornithology cannot be denied, and the ornithological world has lost a great and respected player. Our deepest sympathies go to his son Michael, the only remaining relative.

Mike Denton

## OBITUARY: BRIAN COCKING 1931-2018

Regrettably, another founder member, Brian Cocking, died on 22<sup>nd</sup> July 2018, at the age of 87. At the first meeting of the Club to elect officials, Brian was one of the first to 'grasp the nettle' and put his name forward as Honorary Secretary. After his election, which went unopposed, Brian remained in the post until 1971, but relinquished the position to become President during the years 1972/73. Although Brian was not the Field Trip Organiser, his dedication to the Club becomes obvious when you consider the fact that he had his daughter, Hilary, count members onto the coach before each journey. His untiring commitment during these years was an integral part of the mechanism required to maintain the smooth running of the then infant organisation. It was during Brian's Presidency that the Club membership first passed the 100 mark.

Although Brian continued to attend Club meetings for many years after his officialdom ceased, he openly admitted to being rather laid back when it came to sending in bird records. So much so, that his name does not appear in the list of contributors for any of the years between 1976 and 1990. Thereafter, Brian obviously realised this shortfall and became a regular contributor until 2004, and also contributed several breeding records for the Club's *An Atlas of Breeding Birds of the Huddersfield Area*.

The Club owes Brian a great deal, and many of us will remember him, not only as a level-headed official, but as a dear friend. Our deepest sympathies go to his wife, Avril, and their two children, Jonathan and Hilary.

Mike Denton

## THE HUDDERSFIELD LIST TO DECEMBER 2017

The following is a list of the 274 species of wild birds that have been officially accepted as recorded in the Huddersfield Birdwatchers' Club area since records began, up to the end of 2017. Fourteen additional distinct races or 'sub-species' have also been recorded. In such cases, the generic species name is shown, followed by unnumbered entries for, firstly, the more commonly encountered race of the relevant species, then, highlighted, the less common 'additional' race(s).

The taxonomic order follows that recommended by the British Ornithologists' Union's The British List (eighth edition, 2013), as described in detail in Ibis 155: 635-676.

The 'Description required' column indicates those species and races for which records of sightings must be accompanied by a description and, if possible, photographs, as required by the Club (HBC), the Yorkshire Naturalists' Union Records Committee (YNU) or British Birds Rarities Committee (BBRC). Consult the YNU and BBRC websites for lists of other species and races for which these organisations require descriptions. Descriptions for the YNU and BBRC should also be copied to the Club. Descriptions must also be submitted to the Club for all species and races not on the list. All such descriptions should be submitted as soon as possible after the observation.

There are two additions to the list since the 2016 report:

**Black Kite** *Milvus migrans*: one over Wards End farm, Marsden on 2<sup>nd</sup> April 2017 and presumably the same bird over Marsden on 23<sup>rd</sup> April, following acceptance of the record by the YNU. See photograph on page 80, which not a great photo was sufficient a record shot to show the salient features.

**Thayer's Gull** *Larus glaucooides thayeri*, a race of Iceland Gull: one at Mirfield on 27<sup>th</sup> & 28<sup>th</sup> December 2014, following the acceptance of the record by the BBRC.

Please send records of your all of sightings, including both common and scarce species, to the Recorder (see page 142).

Note that for some species distinguishing between races can be problematic at certain times of year and allocation to species only is advised – refer to a quality field guide.

| THE HUDDERSFIELD LIST TO DECEMBER 2017 |                               |                                     |                     |
|--|-------------------------------|-------------------------------------|---------------------|
| No                                     | Common English name           | Scientific name                     | Description species |
| 1                                      | Mute Swan                     | <i>Cygnus olor</i>                  |                     |
| 2                                      | Bewick's Swan                 | <i>Cygnus columbianus</i>           |                     |
| 3                                      | Whooper Swan                  | <i>Cygnus cygnus</i>                |                     |
| 4                                      | Bean Goose                    | <i>Anser fabalis</i>                | YNU                 |
|  | Taiga Bean Goose              | <i>Anser fabalis fabalis</i>        | YNU                 |
|  | Tundra Bean Goose             | <i>Anser fabalis rossicus</i>       | HBC                 |
| 5                                      | Pink-footed Goose             | <i>Anser brachyrhynchus</i>         |                     |
| 6                                      | White-fronted Goose           | <i>Anser albifrons</i>              | HBC                 |
|  | European White-fronted Goose  | <i>Anser albifrons albifrons</i>    | HBC                 |
|  | Greenland White-fronted Goose | <i>Anser albifrons flavirostris</i> | HBC                 |
| 7                                      | Greylag Goose                 | <i>Anser anser</i>                  |                     |
| 8                                      | Canada Goose                  | <i>Branta canadensis</i>            |                     |
| 9                                      | Barnacle Goose                | <i>Branta leucopsis</i>             |                     |
| 10                                     | Brent Goose                   | <i>Branta bernicla</i>              | HBC                 |
|  | Dark-bellied Brent Goose      | <i>Branta bernicla bernicula</i>    | HBC                 |
|  | Pale-bellied Brent Goose      | <i>Branta bernicla hrota</i>        | HBC                 |
| 11                                     | Shelduck                      | <i>Tadorna tadorna</i>              |                     |
| 12                                     | Mandarin Duck                 | <i>Aix galericulata</i>             |                     |
| 13                                     | Wigeon                        | <i>Anas penelope</i>                |                     |
| 14                                     | American Wigeon               | <i>Anas americana</i>               | YNU                 |
| 15                                     | Gadwall                       | <i>Anas strepera</i>                |                     |
| 16                                     | Teal                          | <i>Anas crecca</i>                  |                     |
| 17                                     | Green-winged Teal             | <i>Anas carolinensis</i>            | HBC                 |
| 18                                     | Mallard                       | <i>Anas platyrhynchos</i>           |                     |
| 19                                     | Pintail                       | <i>Anas acuta</i>                   |                     |
| 20                                     | Garganey                      | <i>Anas querquedula</i>             | HBC                 |
| 21                                     | Shoveler                      | <i>Anas clypeata</i>                |                     |
| 22                                     | Pochard                       | <i>Aythya ferina</i>                |                     |
| 23                                     | Ring-necked Duck              | <i>Aythya collaris</i>              | YNU                 |
| 24                                     | Ferruginous Duck              | <i>Aythya nyroca</i>                | BBRC                |
| 25                                     | Tufted Duck                   | <i>Aythya fuligula</i>              |                     |
| 26                                     | Greater Scaup                 | <i>Aythya marila</i>                |                     |



## THE HUDDERSFIELD LIST TO DECEMBER 2017

| No | Common English name    | Scientific name                  | Description species |
|----|------------------------|----------------------------------|---------------------|
| 27 | Lesser Scaup           | <i>Aythya affinis</i>            | YNU                 |
| 28 | Eider                  | <i>Somateria mollissima</i>      |                     |
| 29 | Long-tailed Duck       | <i>Clangula hyemalis</i>         | HBC                 |
| 30 | Common Scoter          | <i>Melanitta nigra</i>           |                     |
| 31 | Velvet Scoter          | <i>Melanitta fusca</i>           | HBC                 |
| 32 | Goldeneye              | <i>Bucephala clangula</i>        |                     |
| 33 | Smew                   | <i>Mergellus albellus</i>        |                     |
| 34 | Red-breasted Merganser | <i>Mergus serrator</i>           |                     |
| 35 | Goosander              | <i>Mergus merganser</i>          |                     |
| 36 | Ruddy Duck             | <i>Oxyura jamaicensis</i>        |                     |
| 37 | Quail                  | <i>Coturnix coturnix</i>         |                     |
| 38 | Red-legged Partridge   | <i>Alectoris rufa</i>            |                     |
| 39 | Red Grouse             | <i>Lagopus lagopus</i>           |                     |
| 40 | Black Grouse           | <i>Tetrao tetrix</i>             |                     |
| 41 | Grey Partridge         | <i>Perdix perdix</i>             |                     |
| 42 | Pheasant               | <i>Phasianus colchicus</i>       |                     |
| 43 | Red-throated Diver     | <i>Gavia stellata</i>            | HBC                 |
| 44 | Black-throated Diver   | <i>Gavia arctica</i>             | HBC                 |
| 45 | Great Northern Diver   | <i>Gavia immer</i>               | HBC                 |
| 46 | Fulmar                 | <i>Fulmarus glacialis</i>        | HBC                 |
| 47 | Manx Shearwater        | <i>Puffinus puffinus</i>         | HBC                 |
| 48 | Storm Petrel           | <i>Hydrobates pelagicus</i>      | HBC                 |
| 49 | Leach's Petrel         | <i>Oceanodroma leucorhoa</i>     | HBC                 |
| 50 | Gannet                 | <i>Morus bassanus</i>            | HBC                 |
| 51 | Cormorant              | <i>Phalacrocorax carbo</i>       |                     |
| 52 | Shag                   | <i>Phalacrocorax aristotelis</i> | HBC                 |
| 53 | Bittern                | <i>Botaurus stellaris</i>        | HBC                 |
| 54 | Night Heron            | <i>Nycticorax nycticorax</i>     | YNU                 |
| 55 | Little Egret           | <i>Egretta garzetta</i>          |                     |
| 56 | Great White Egret      | <i>Ardea alba</i>                | HBC                 |
| 57 | Grey Heron             | <i>Ardea cinerea</i>             |                     |
| 58 | Purple Heron           | <i>Ardea purpurea</i>            | YNU                 |

| THE HUDDERSFIELD LIST TO DECEMBER 2017 |                      |                               |                     |
|--|----------------------|-------------------------------|---------------------|
| No                                     | Common English name  | Scientific name               | Description species |
| 59                                     | Black Stork          | <i>Ciconia nigra</i>          | HBC                 |
| 60                                     | White Stork          | <i>Ciconia ciconia</i>        | HBC                 |
| 61                                     | Glossy Ibis          | <i>Plegadis falcinellus</i>   | YNU                 |
| 62                                     | Spoonbill            | <i>Platalea leucorodia</i>    | HBC                 |
| 63                                     | Little Grebe         | <i>Tachybaptus ruficollis</i> |                     |
| 64                                     | Great Crested Grebe  | <i>Podiceps cristatus</i>     |                     |
| 65                                     | Red-necked Grebe     | <i>Podiceps grisegena</i>     | HBC                 |
| 66                                     | Slavonian Grebe      | <i>Podiceps auritus</i>       | HBC                 |
| 67                                     | Black-necked Grebe   | <i>Podiceps nigricollis</i>   | HBC                 |
| 68                                     | Honey-buzzard        | <i>Pernis apivorus</i>        | YNU                 |
| 69                                     | Black Kite           | <i>Milvus migrans</i>         | YNU                 |
| 70                                     | Red Kite             | <i>Milvus milvus</i>          |                     |
| 71                                     | White-tailed Eagle   | <i>Haliaeetus albicilla</i>   | YNU                 |
| 72                                     | Marsh Harrier        | <i>Circus aeruginosus</i>     | HBC                 |
| 73                                     | Hen Harrier          | <i>Circus cyaneus</i>         | HBC                 |
| 74                                     | Montagu's Harrier    | <i>Circus pygargus</i>        | YNU                 |
| 75                                     | Goshawk              | <i>Accipiter gentilis</i>     | HBC                 |
| 76                                     | Sparrowhawk          | <i>Accipiter nisus</i>        |                     |
| 77                                     | Buzzard              | <i>Buteo buteo</i>            |                     |
| 78                                     | Rough-legged Buzzard | <i>Buteo lagopus</i>          | YNU                 |
| 79                                     | Golden Eagle         | <i>Aquila chrysaetos</i>      | YNU                 |
| 80                                     | Osprey               | <i>Pandion haliaetus</i>      | HBC                 |
| 81                                     | Water Rail           | <i>Rallus aquaticus</i>       |                     |
| 82                                     | Spotted Crake        | <i>Porzana porzana</i>        | HBC                 |
| 83                                     | Baillon's Crake      | <i>Porzana pusilla</i>        | BBRC                |
| 84                                     | Corncrake            | <i>Crex crex</i>              | HBC                 |
| 85                                     | Moorhen              | <i>Gallinula chloropus</i>    |                     |
| 86                                     | Coot                 | <i>Fulica atra</i>            |                     |
| 87                                     | Crane                | <i>Grus grus</i>              | HBC                 |
| 88                                     | Stone-curlew         | <i>Burhinus oedinenus</i>     | HBC                 |
| 89                                     | Avocet               | <i>Recurvirostra avosetta</i> | HBC                 |
| 90                                     | Oystercatcher        | <i>Haematopus ostralegus</i>  |                     |

## THE HUDDERSFIELD LIST TO DECEMBER 2017

| No  | Common English name     | Scientific name                | Description species |
|-----|-------------------------|--------------------------------|---------------------|
| 91  | Golden Plover           | <i>Pluvialis apricaria</i>     |                     |
| 92  | Grey Plover             | <i>Pluvialis squatarola</i>    |                     |
| 93  | Lapwing                 | <i>Vanellus vanellus</i>       |                     |
| 94  | Little Ringed Plover    | <i>Charadrius dubius</i>       |                     |
| 95  | Ringed Plover           | <i>Charadrius hiaticula</i>    |                     |
| 96  | Dotterel                | <i>Charadrius morinellus</i>   | HBC                 |
| 97  | Whimbrel                | <i>Numenius phaeopus</i>       |                     |
| 98  | Curlew                  | <i>Numenius arquata</i>        |                     |
| 99  | Black-tailed Godwit     | <i>Limosa limosa</i>           |                     |
|     | Black-tailed Godwit     | <i>Limosa limosa islandica</i> | HBC                 |
| 100 | Bar-tailed Godwit       | <i>Limosa lapponica</i>        |                     |
| 101 | Turnstone               | <i>Arenaria interpres</i>      |                     |
| 102 | Knot                    | <i>Calidris canutus</i>        |                     |
| 103 | Ruff                    | <i>Calidris pugnax</i>         |                     |
| 104 | Curlew Sandpiper        | <i>Calidris ferruginea</i>     | HBC                 |
| 105 | Temminck's Stint        | <i>Calidris temminckii</i>     | HBC                 |
| 106 | Sanderling              | <i>Calidris alba</i>           |                     |
| 107 | Dunlin                  | <i>Calidris alpina</i>         |                     |
| 108 | Purple Sandpiper        | <i>Calidris maritima</i>       | HBC                 |
| 109 | Little Stint            | <i>Calidris minuta</i>         | HBC                 |
| 110 | White-rumped Sandpiper  | <i>Calidris fuscicollis</i>    | YNU                 |
| 111 | Buff-breasted Sandpiper | <i>Calidris subruficollis</i>  | YNU                 |
| 112 | Pectoral Sandpiper      | <i>Calidris melanotos</i>      | YNU                 |
| 113 | Wilson's Phalarope      | <i>Phalaropus tricolor</i>     | BBRC                |
| 114 | Red-necked Phalarope    | <i>Phalaropus lobatus</i>      | HBC                 |
| 115 | Grey Phalarope          | <i>Phalaropus fulicarius</i>   | HBC                 |
| 116 | Terek Sandpiper         | <i>Xenus cinereus</i>          | YNU                 |
| 117 | Common Sandpiper        | <i>Actitis hypoleucos</i>      |                     |
| 118 | Spotted Sandpiper       | <i>Actitis macularius</i>      | BBRC                |
| 119 | Green Sandpiper         | <i>Tringa ochropus</i>         |                     |
| 120 | Spotted Redshank        | <i>Tringa erythropus</i>       |                     |
| 121 | Greenshank              | <i>Tringa nebularia</i>        |                     |

| THE HUDDERSFIELD LIST TO DECEMBER 2017 |                           |                                   |                     |
|--|---------------------------|-----------------------------------|---------------------|
| No                                     | Common English name       | Scientific name                   | Description species |
| 122                                    | Wood Sandpiper            | <i>Tringa glareola</i>            | HBC                 |
| 123                                    | Redshank                  | <i>Tringa totanus</i>             |                     |
| 124                                    | Jack Snipe                | <i>Lymnocyrtes minimus</i>        |                     |
| 125                                    | Woodcock                  | <i>Scolopax rusticola</i>         |                     |
| 126                                    | Snipe                     | <i>Gallinago gallinago</i>        |                     |
| 127                                    | Great Snipe               | <i>Gallinago media</i>            | BBRC                |
| 128                                    | Pomarine Skua             | <i>Stercorarius pomarinus</i>     | HBC                 |
| 129                                    | Arctic Skua               | <i>Stercorarius parasiticus</i>   | HBC                 |
| 130                                    | Long-tailed Skua          | <i>Stercorarius longicaudus</i>   | HBC                 |
| 131                                    | Great Skua                | <i>Stercorarius skua</i>          | HBC                 |
| 132                                    | Puffin                    | <i>Fratercula arctica</i>         | HBC                 |
| 133                                    | Razorbill                 | <i>Alca torda</i>                 | HBC                 |
| 134                                    | Little Auk                | <i>Alle alle</i>                  | HBC                 |
| 135                                    | Guillemot                 | <i>Uria aalge</i>                 | HBC                 |
| 136                                    | Little Tern               | <i>Sternula albifrons</i>         | HBC                 |
| 137                                    | Black Tern                | <i>Chlidonias niger</i>           | HBC                 |
| 138                                    | White-winged Black Tern   | <i>Chlidonias leucopterus</i>     | YNU                 |
| 139                                    | Sandwich Tern             | <i>Sterna sandvicensis</i>        | HBC                 |
| 140                                    | Common Tern               | <i>Sterna hirundo</i>             |                     |
| 141                                    | Arctic Tern               | <i>Sterna paradisaea</i>          | HBC                 |
| 142                                    | Sabine's Gull             | <i>Xema sabini</i>                | HBC                 |
| 143                                    | Kittiwake                 | <i>Rissa tridactyla</i>           |                     |
| 144                                    | Black-headed Gull         | <i>Chroicocephalus ridibundus</i> |                     |
| 145                                    | Little Gull               | <i>Hydrocoloeus minutus</i>       |                     |
| 146                                    | Mediterranean Gull        | <i>Larus melanocephalus</i>       | HBC                 |
| 147                                    | Common Gull               | <i>Larus canus</i>                |                     |
| 148                                    | Ring-billed Gull          | <i>Larus delawarensis</i>         | YNU                 |
| 149                                    | Lesser Black-backed Gull  | <i>Larus fuscus</i>               |                     |
|  | Lesser Black-backed Gull  | <i>Larus fuscus graellsii</i>     |                     |
|  | Scandinavian L. B-b. Gull | <i>Larus fuscus intermedius</i>   | HBC                 |
| 150                                    | Herring Gull              | <i>Larus argentatus</i>           |                     |
|  | Herring Gull              | <i>Larus argentatus argenteus</i> |                     |

## THE HUDDERSFIELD LIST TO DECEMBER 2017

| No  | Common English name       | Scientific name                    | Description species |
|-----|---------------------------|------------------------------------|---------------------|
|     | Scandinavian Herring Gull | <i>Larus argentatus argentatus</i> | HBC                 |
| 151 | Yellow-legged Gull        | <i>Larus michahellis</i>           | HBC                 |
| 152 | Caspian Gull              | <i>Larus cachinnans</i>            | YNU                 |
| 153 | Iceland Gull              | <i>Larus glaucoides</i>            | HBC                 |
|     | Iceland Gull              | <i>Larus glaucoides glaucoides</i> | HBC                 |
|     | Kumlien's Gull            | <i>Larus glaucoides kumlieni</i>   | YNU                 |
|     | Thayer's Gull             | <i>Larus glaucoides thayeri</i>    | BBRC                |
| 154 | Glaucous Gull             | <i>Larus hyperboreus</i>           | HBC                 |
| 155 | Great Black-backed Gull   | <i>Larus marinus</i>               |                     |
| 156 | Pallas's Sandgrouse       | <i>Syrrhaptes paradoxus</i>        | BBRC                |
| 157 | Feral Pigeon              | <i>Columba livia</i> (feral)       |                     |
| 158 | Stock Dove                | <i>Columba oenas</i>               |                     |
| 159 | Woodpigeon                | <i>Columba palumbus</i>            |                     |
| 160 | Collared Dove             | <i>Streptopelia decaocto</i>       |                     |
| 161 | Turtle Dove               | <i>Streptopelia turtur</i>         |                     |
| 162 | Cuckoo                    | <i>Cuculus canorus</i>             |                     |
| 163 | Barn Owl                  | <i>Tyto alba</i>                   | HBC                 |
| 164 | Little Owl                | <i>Athene noctua</i>               |                     |
| 165 | Tawny Owl                 | <i>Strix aluco</i>                 |                     |
| 166 | Long-eared Owl            | <i>Asio otus</i>                   |                     |
| 167 | Short-eared Owl           | <i>Asio flammeus</i>               |                     |
| 168 | Nightjar                  | <i>Caprimulgus europaeus</i>       |                     |
| 169 | Swift                     | <i>Apus apus</i>                   |                     |
| 170 | Alpine Swift              | <i>Apus melba</i>                  | YNU                 |
| 171 | Hoopoe                    | <i>Upupa epops</i>                 | HBC                 |
| 172 | Roller                    | <i>Coracias garrulus</i>           | BBRC                |
| 173 | Kingfisher                | <i>Alcedo atthis</i>               |                     |
| 174 | Wryneck                   | <i>Jynx torquilla</i>              | HBC                 |
| 175 | Green Woodpecker          | <i>Picus viridis</i>               |                     |
| 176 | Great Spotted Woodpecker  | <i>Dendrocopos major</i>           |                     |
| 177 | Lesser Spotted Woodpecker | <i>Dendrocopos minor</i>           |                     |
| 178 | Kestrel                   | <i>Falco tinnunculus</i>           |                     |

| THE HUDDERSFIELD LIST TO DECEMBER 2017 |                       |                                |                     |
|--|-----------------------|--------------------------------|---------------------|
| No                                     | Common English name   | Scientific name                | Description species |
| 179                                    | Red-footed Falcon     | <i>Falco vespertinus</i>       | YNU                 |
| 180                                    | Merlin                | <i>Falco columbarius</i>       |                     |
| 181                                    | Hobby                 | <i>Falco subbuteo</i>          |                     |
| 182                                    | Peregrine Falcon      | <i>Falco peregrinus</i>        |                     |
| 183                                    | Ring-necked Parakeet  | <i>Psittacula krameri</i>      |                     |
| 184                                    | Golden Oriole         | <i>Oriolus oriolus</i>         | HBC                 |
| 185                                    | Red-backed Shrike     | <i>Lanius collurio</i>         | HBC                 |
| 186                                    | Great Grey Shrike     | <i>Lanius excubitor</i>        | HBC                 |
| 187                                    | Magpie                | <i>Pica pica</i>               |                     |
| 188                                    | Jay                   | <i>Garrulus glandarius</i>     |                     |
| 189                                    | Jackdaw               | <i>Corvus monedula</i>         |                     |
| 190                                    | Rook                  | <i>Corvus frugilegus</i>       |                     |
| 191                                    | Carrion Crow          | <i>Corvus corone</i>           |                     |
| 192                                    | Hooded Crow           | <i>Corvus cornix</i>           |                     |
| 193                                    | Raven                 | <i>Corvus corax</i>            |                     |
| 194                                    | Goldcrest             | <i>Regulus regulus</i>         |                     |
| 195                                    | Firecrest             | <i>Regulus ignicapilla</i>     | HBC                 |
| 196                                    | Blue Tit              | <i>Cyanistes caeruleus</i>     |                     |
| 197                                    | Great Tit             | <i>Parus major</i>             |                     |
| 198                                    | Coal Tit              | <i>Parus ater</i>              |                     |
| 199                                    | Willow Tit            | <i>Poecile montana</i>         |                     |
| 200                                    | Marsh Tit             | <i>Poecile palustris</i>       | HBC                 |
| 201                                    | Woodlark              | <i>Lullula arborea</i>         | HBC                 |
| 202                                    | Skylark               | <i>Alauda arvensis</i>         |                     |
| 203                                    | Shore Lark            | <i>Eremophila alpestris</i>    | HBC                 |
| 204                                    | Sand Martin           | <i>Riparia riparia</i>         |                     |
| 205                                    | Swallow               | <i>Hirundo rustica</i>         |                     |
| 206                                    | House Martin          | <i>Delichon urbicum</i>        |                     |
| 207                                    | Red-rumped Swallow    | <i>Cecropis daurica</i>        | YNU                 |
| 208                                    | Long-tailed Tit       | <i>Aegithalos caudatus</i>     |                     |
| 209                                    | Pallas's Warbler      | <i>Phylloscopus proregulus</i> | HBC                 |
| 210                                    | Yellow-browed Warbler | <i>Phylloscopus inornatus</i>  | HBC                 |

## THE HUDDERSFIELD LIST TO DECEMBER 2017

| No  | Common English name    | Scientific name                         | Description species |
|-----|------------------------|---|---------------------|
| 211 | Wood Warbler           | <i>Phylloscopus sibilatrix</i>          | HBC                 |
| 212 | Chiffchaff             | <i>Phylloscopus collybita</i>           |                     |
|     | Chiffchaff             | <i>Phylloscopus collybita collybita</i> |                     |
|     | Siberian Chiffchaff    | <i>Phylloscopus collybita tristis</i>   | YNU                 |
| 213 | Willow Warbler         | <i>Phylloscopus trochilus</i>           |                     |
| 214 | Blackcap               | <i>Sylvia atricapilla</i>               |                     |
| 215 | Garden Warbler         | <i>Sylvia borin</i>                     |                     |
| 216 | Lesser Whitethroat     | <i>Sylvia curruca</i>                   |                     |
| 217 | Whitethroat            | <i>Sylvia communis</i>                  |                     |
| 218 | Grasshopper Warbler    | <i>Locustella naevia</i>                |                     |
| 219 | Sedge Warbler          | <i>Acrocephalus schoenobaenus</i>       |                     |
| 220 | Reed Warbler           | <i>Acrocephalus scirpaceus</i>          |                     |
| 221 | Waxwing                | <i>Bombycilla garrulus</i>              |                     |
| 222 | Nuthatch               | <i>Sitta europaea</i>                   |                     |
| 223 | Treecreeper            | <i>Certhia familiaris</i>               |                     |
| 224 | Wren                   | <i>Troglodytes troglodytes</i>          |                     |
| 225 | Starling               | <i>Sturnus vulgaris</i>                 |                     |
| 226 | Rose-coloured Starling | <i>Pastor roseus</i>                    | YNU                 |
| 227 | Dipper                 | <i>Cinclus cinclus</i>                  |                     |
| 228 | Ring Ouzel             | <i>Turdus torquatus</i>                 |                     |
| 229 | Blackbird              | <i>Turdus merula</i>                    |                     |
| 230 | Fieldfare              | <i>Turdus pilaris</i>                   |                     |
| 231 | Song Thrush            | <i>Turdus philomelos</i>                |                     |
| 232 | Redwing                | <i>Turdus iliacus</i>                   |                     |
| 233 | Mistle Thrush          | <i>Turdus viscivorus</i>                |                     |
| 234 | Spotted Flycatcher     | <i>Muscicapa striata</i>                |                     |
| 235 | Robin                  | <i>Erithacus rubecula</i>               |                     |
| 236 | Nightingale            | <i>Luscinia megarhynchos</i>            | HBC                 |
| 237 | Pied Flycatcher        | <i>Ficedula hypoleuca</i>               |                     |
| 238 | Black Redstart         | <i>Phoenicurus ochruros</i>             | HBC                 |
| 239 | Redstart               | <i>Phoenicurus phoenicurus</i>          |                     |
| 240 | Whinchat               | <i>Saxicola rubetra</i>                 |                     |

| THE HUDDERSFIELD LIST TO DECEMBER 2017 |                         |                                      |                     |
|--|-------------------------|--------------------------------------|---------------------|
| No                                     | Common English name     | Scientific name                      | Description species |
| 241                                    | Stonechat               | <i>Saxicola rubicola</i>             |                     |
| 242                                    | Wheatear                | <i>Oenanthe oenanthe</i>             |                     |
|  | Northern Wheatear       | <i>Oenanthe oenanthe oenanthe</i>    |                     |
|  | Greenland Wheatear      | <i>Oenanthe oenanthe leucorhoa</i>   | HBC                 |
| 243                                    | Dunnock                 | <i>Prunella modularis</i>            |                     |
| 244                                    | House Sparrow           | <i>Passer domesticus</i>             |                     |
| 245                                    | Tree Sparrow            | <i>Passer montanus</i>               |                     |
| 246                                    | Yellow Wagtail          | <i>Motacilla flava</i>               |                     |
|  | Yellow Wagtail          | <i>Motacilla flava flavissima</i>    |                     |
|  | Blue-headed Wagtail     | <i>Motacilla flava flava</i>         | HBC                 |
|  | Grey-headed Wagtail     | <i>Motacilla flava thunbergi</i>     | HBC                 |
| 247                                    | Grey Wagtail            | <i>Motacilla cinerea</i>             |                     |
| 248                                    | Pied Wagtail            | <i>Motacilla alba</i>                |                     |
|  | Pied Wagtail            | <i>Motacilla alba yarellii</i>       |                     |
|  | White Wagtail           | <i>Motacilla alba alba</i>           | HBC                 |
| 249                                    | Tree Pipit              | <i>Anthus trivialis</i>              |                     |
| 250                                    | Meadow Pipit            | <i>Anthus pratensis</i>              |                     |
| 251                                    | Rock Pipit              | <i>Anthus petrosus</i>               | HBC                 |
|  | Eurasian Rock Pipit     | <i>Anthus petrosus petrosus</i>      | HBC                 |
|  | Scandinavian Rock Pipit | <i>Anthus petrosus littoralis</i>    | HBC                 |
| 252                                    | Water Pipit             | <i>Anthus spinoletta</i>             | HBC                 |
| 253                                    | Brambling               | <i>Fringilla montifringilla</i>      |                     |
| 254                                    | Chaffinch               | <i>Fringilla coelebs</i>             |                     |
| 255                                    | Hawfinch                | <i>Coccothraustes coccothraustes</i> |                     |
| 256                                    | Bullfinch               | <i>Pyrrhula pyrrhula</i>             |                     |
| 257                                    | Greenfinch              | <i>Chloris chloris</i>               |                     |
| 258                                    | Linnet                  | <i>Linaria cannabina</i>             |                     |
| 259                                    | Twite                   | <i>Linaria flavirostris</i>          |                     |
| 260                                    | Mealy Redpoll           | <i>Acanthis flammea</i>              | HBC                 |
| 261                                    | Lesser Redpoll          | <i>Acanthis cabaret</i>              |                     |
| 262                                    | Two-barred Crossbill    | <i>Loxia leucoptera</i>              | BBRC                |
| 263                                    | Common Crossbill        | <i>Loxia curvirostra</i>             |                     |



## THE HUDDERSFIELD LIST TO DECEMBER 2017

| No  | Common English name  | Scientific name               | Description species |
|-----|----------------------|-------------------------------|---------------------|
| 264 | Parrot Crossbill     | <i>Loxia pytyopsittacus</i>   | BBRC                |
| 265 | Goldfinch            | <i>Carduelis carduelis</i>    |                     |
| 266 | Siskin               | <i>Spinus spinus</i>          |                     |
| 267 | Snow Bunting         | <i>Plectrophenax nivalis</i>  | HBC                 |
| 268 | Lapland Bunting      | <i>Calcarius lapponicus</i>   | HBC                 |
| 269 | Yellowhammer         | <i>Emberiza citrinella</i>    |                     |
| 270 | Cirl Bunting         | <i>Emberiza cirrus</i>        | YNU                 |
| 271 | Little Bunting       | <i>Emberiza pusilla</i>       | YNU                 |
| 272 | Reed Bunting         | <i>Emberiza schoeniclus</i>   |                     |
| 273 | Black-headed Bunting | <i>Emberiza melanocephala</i> | BBRC                |
| 274 | Corn Bunting         | <i>Miliaria calandra</i>      |                     |

## REPORTING AND RECORDING SENSITIVE BIRD SPECIES

It is imperative for all Club members and other birdwatchers to be fully committed to the understanding that the welfare of all birds is of paramount importance and must not be threatened or compromised by any of our activities. In particular this applies to all birds in the breeding season and especially to those birds whose populations are particularly vulnerable in Europe, the UK or just in the Club area. Schedule 1 of the 1981 Wildlife and Countryside Act itemises a number of rare breeding birds (see abbreviated list below) which require a special licence for any individual who may approach them whilst nesting. These licences, which are issued in order to keep disturbance to a minimum, are only issued to bona fide researchers, i.e. ringers, official nest recorders, photographers (occasionally) etc. Anyone disturbing any Schedule 1 species who is not in possession of a licence is breaking the law and liable to prosecution, as well as putting the breeding attempt at risk. If you accidentally find a nest, however, you are not breaking the law, as this was done without any foreknowledge. If however you return to that nest and this results in any form of disturbance, then that would be breaking the law.

It should be obvious that the purpose of the law is to protect these individual species from disturbance, thereby allowing them to breed without molestation and providing the greatest chance of success. It is important, therefore, to avoid circulating any information relating to the whereabouts of such breeding birds. The HBC committee therefore asks that no such information should be posted by anyone using the Club forum; to do so may encourage unlicensed individuals to visit these nest sites, for whatever reason, and could seriously compromise the well-being of the birds and their eggs or offspring. The information could also be used by those intent on persecuting species, stealing eggs or young.

Should you suspect that a Schedule 1 species is breeding within the Club area then do contact Mike Denton (01484 646990) who holds the necessary licence to monitor and document proceedings.

Where you see any Schedule 1 birds, and even though there may be no evidence of breeding at that time, it is advisable not to advertise the locality of such sightings on the forum, or even verbally to others. It is possible that the bird(s) may be prospecting in the area for potential breeding sites and such reports may compromise their opportunity for success. By not advertising the whereabouts of these species or their nests you can be content in the knowledge that you are positively contributing to their protection by not inviting disturbance by others.

Please do remember, however, to submit all of your detailed records to the Club Recorder for inclusion in the annual report, although the detail included in the report will be appropriately circumspect. Such information is vital for use by relevant bodies (e.g. the rare birds breeding panel, conservation bodies etc) your records are a key component of maintaining an accurate picture of population dynamics which aids plans to conserve and protect them.

In addition to the above, if you are aware of the presence of any Schedule 1 birds in an area and you suspect that illegal interference may have taken place, or be about to take place, then contact Mike Denton or the recorder urgently. We have the contact details of the appropriate authorities that would allow us to alert them to these threats.

These comments, whilst directed primarily at Schedule 1 species, are pertinent for any nesting species and if you are uncertain about their status it is advisable to seek clarification from Mike Denton. There are also a number of species (see additional list) that may not be threatened within UK but that are scarce breeding, or potential breeding birds within the Club area. It is by leaving

these birds undisturbed during a critical time in their life cycle that you can feel gratified that you have had no detrimental effect upon the outcome.

**Abbreviated list of Schedule 1 Species**

Black-necked Grebe  
Bittern  
Pintail  
Garganey  
Honey-buzzard  
Red Kite  
All harriers  
Goshawk  
Osprey  
Merlin  
Peregrine Falcon  
Avocet  
Stone-curlew  
Little Ringed Plover  
Dotterel  
Red-necked Phalarope  
Little Tern  
Barn Owl  
Kingfisher  
Firecrest

**Additional List of Sensitive Birds in the Huddersfield Area**

Nightjar  
Buzzard  
Raven  
Short-eared Owl  
Long-eared Owl

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| Blackcap            |                | 75   |
| Brambling           |                | 105  |
| Bullfinch           |                | 107  |
| Bunting             | Reed           | 113  |
| Buzzard             | Common         | 36   |
| Chaffinch           |                | 106  |
| Chiffchaff          |                | 74   |
| Coot                |                | 38   |
| Cormorant           |                | 29   |
| Crossbill           | Common         | 110  |
| Crow                | Carriion       | 65   |
|                     | Hooded         | 65   |
| Cuckoo              |                | 56   |
| Curlew              |                | 42   |
| Dipper              |                | 91   |
| Diver               | Black-throated | 29   |
|                     | Red-throated   | 29   |
| Dove                | Collared       | 55   |
|                     | Stock          | 54   |
| Duck                | Mandarin       | 21   |
|                     | Tufted         | 25   |
| Dunlin              |                | 44   |
| Dunnock             |                | 100  |
| Egret               | Little         | 31   |
|                     | Great White    | 31   |
| Falcon              | Peregrine      | 62   |

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| Fieldfare           |                    | 93   |
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|                     | Spotted            | 96   |
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| Goshawk             |                    | 35   |
| Grebe               | Great Crested      | 32   |
|                     | Little             | 32   |
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| Grouse              | Red                | 28   |
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|                     | Caspian            | 52   |
|                     | Common             | 49   |
|                     | Great Black-backed | 53   |
|                     | Herring            | 51   |

| Common English name |                     | Page |
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| Gul (cont.)         | Iceland             | 53   |
|                     | Lesser Black-backed | 50   |
|                     | Little              | 48   |
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| Harrier             | Hen                 | 34   |
|                     | Marsh               | 34   |
| Hawfinch            |                     | 106  |
| Heron               | Grey                | 31   |
| Hobby               |                     | 61   |
| Jackdaw             |                     | 64   |
| Jay                 |                     | 63   |
| Kestrel             |                     | 60   |
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| Kite                | Black               | 33   |
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| Kittiwake           |                     | 47   |
| Lapwing             |                     | 40   |
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| Magpie              |                     | 63   |
| Mallard             |                     | 26   |
| Martin              | House               | 71   |
|                     | Sand                | 69   |
| Merlin              |                     | 60   |
| Moorhen             |                     | 37   |
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| Ouzel               | Ring          | 91   |
| Owl                 | Barn          | 56   |
|                     | Little        | 57   |
|                     | Long-eared    | 57   |
|                     | Short-eared   | 58   |
|                     | Tawny         | 57   |
| Oystercatcher       |               | 39   |
| Partridge           | Grey          | 28   |
|                     | Red-legged    | 27   |
| Pheasant            | Common        | 29   |
| Pigeon              | Feral         | 53   |
| Pintail             |               | 23   |
| Pipit               | Meadow        | 104  |
|                     | Rock          | 105  |
|                     | Tree          | 103  |
|                     | Water         | 104  |
| Plover              | Golden        | 39   |
|                     | Grey          | 40   |
|                     | Little Ringed | 41   |
|                     | Ringed        | 42   |
| Pochard             | Common        | 24   |
| Quail               |               | 28   |
| Rail                | Water         | 37   |
| Raven               |               | 66   |
| Redpoll             | Lesser        | 110  |
| Redshank            |               | 45   |
| Redstart            | Black         | 97   |
|                     | Common        | 98   |
| Redwing             |               | 95   |

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| Robin               |          | 97   |
| Rook                |          | 64   |
| Ruff                |          | 43   |
| Sanderling          |          | 43   |
| Sandpiper           | Common   | 44   |
|                     | Green    | 42   |
| Scaup               | Greater  | 25   |
| Scoter              | Common   | 25   |
| Shag                |          | 30   |
| Shelduck            | Common   | 20   |
| Shoveler            |          | 24   |
| Siskin              |          | 112  |
| Skylark             |          | 69   |
| Snipe               | Common   | 46   |
|                     | Jack     | 45   |
| Sparrow             | House    | 100  |
|                     | Tree     | 101  |
| Sparrowhawk         |          | 35   |
| Starling            | Common   | 90   |
| Stonechat           |          | 99   |
| Stone-curlew        |          | 38   |
| Swallow             | Barn     | 70   |
| Swan                | Bewick's | 16   |
|                     | Mute     | 16   |
|                     | Whooper  | 16   |
| Swift               | Common   | 58   |
| Teal                | Common   | 22   |
| Tern                | Arctic   | 47   |
|                     | Black    | 46   |

| Common English name |             | Page |
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| Tern (cont.)        | Common      | 47   |
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| Tit                 | Blue        | 67   |
|                     | Coal        | 68   |
|                     | Great       | 67   |
|                     | Long-tailed | 73   |
|                     | Willow      | 68   |
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| Twite               |             | 109  |
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|                     | Pied        | 103  |
|                     | White       | 103  |
|                     | Yellow      | 102  |
| Warbler             | Garden      | 76   |
|                     | Grasshopper | 87   |
|                     | Reed        | 88   |
|                     | Sedge       | 88   |
|                     | Willow      | 74   |
|                     | Wood        | 73   |
| Waxwing             |             | 89   |
| Wheatear            | Greenland   | 100  |
|                     | Northern    | 100  |
| Whimbrel            |             | 42   |
| Whinchat            |             | 98   |
| Whitethroat         | Common      | 87   |
|                     | Lesser      | 87   |
| Wigeon              | Eurasian    | 21   |
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| Woodpecker          | Great Spotted | 59   |
|                     | Green         | 59   |
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| Wren                |  | 90   |
| Yellowhammer        |  | 113  |

## NOTES



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|                           |                   |              |
|---------------------------|-------------------|--------------|
| <b>Committee Members:</b> | David Butterfield | Stephen Cook |
|                           | David Sill        | John Walker  |



# in focus

*The Binocular and Telescope Specialists*

Our Yorkshire branch is situated in the heart of Denby Dale - the famous 'pie village'.

The showroom is situated on the first floor of Westleigh House and boasts extensive views across the dale. We stock a wide range of optical equipment ranging from hand lenses and magnifying glasses to binoculars and telescopes, including a full range of both compact and full sized binoculars from a variety of the best known optical manufacturers. Denby Dale lies on the A636 between Wakefield and Huddersfield with convenient access from the M1 at junctions 38 and 39. There is plenty of free off-road parking. Trains run from Huddersfield and Sheffield (we're next door to the station) and there's an hourly bus link from Wakefield station.

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*All the latest information at*

**[www.infocustics.co.uk](http://www.infocustics.co.uk)**

# 

The bird recording area covered by the Club comprises Ordnance Survey ten-kilometre squares SE 00, 01, 10, 11, 20 and 21, together with those parts of SE 02 and SE12 south of the Rivers Ryburn and Calder, plus Elland Gravel Pits and Dewsbury Sewage Works.

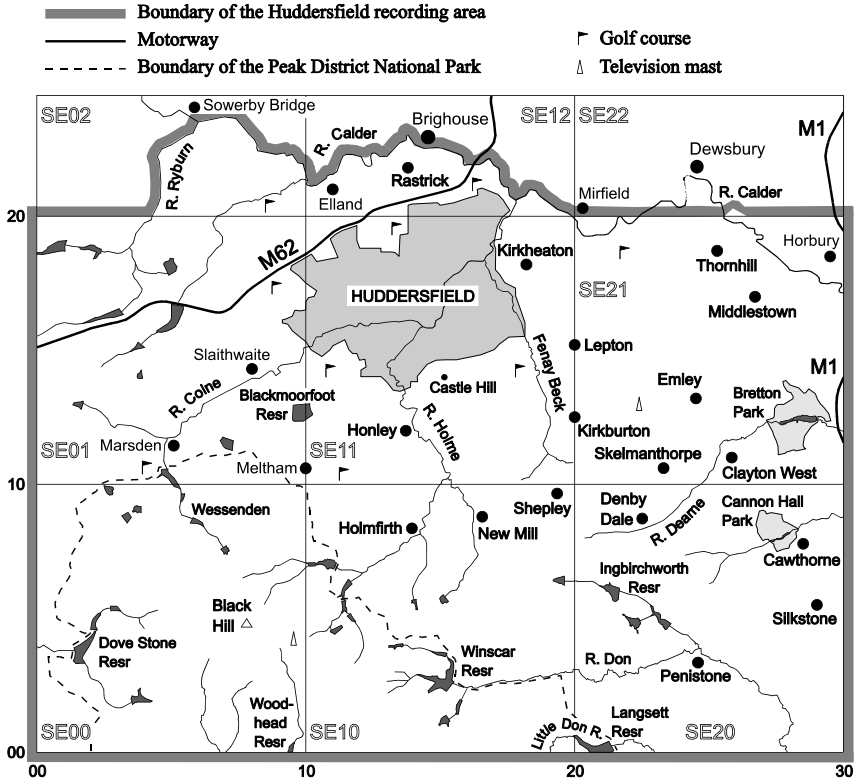


Fig. 1 Map of the Huddersfield area



# **Huddersfield Birdwatchers' Club**

Registered charity no 1098296



**This Stone-curlew, only the sixth ever recorded in the area,  
delighted observers at Blackmoorfoot on 9<sup>th</sup> May 2017.**



**[www.huddersfieldbirdwatchersclub.co.uk](http://www.huddersfieldbirdwatchersclub.co.uk)**

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