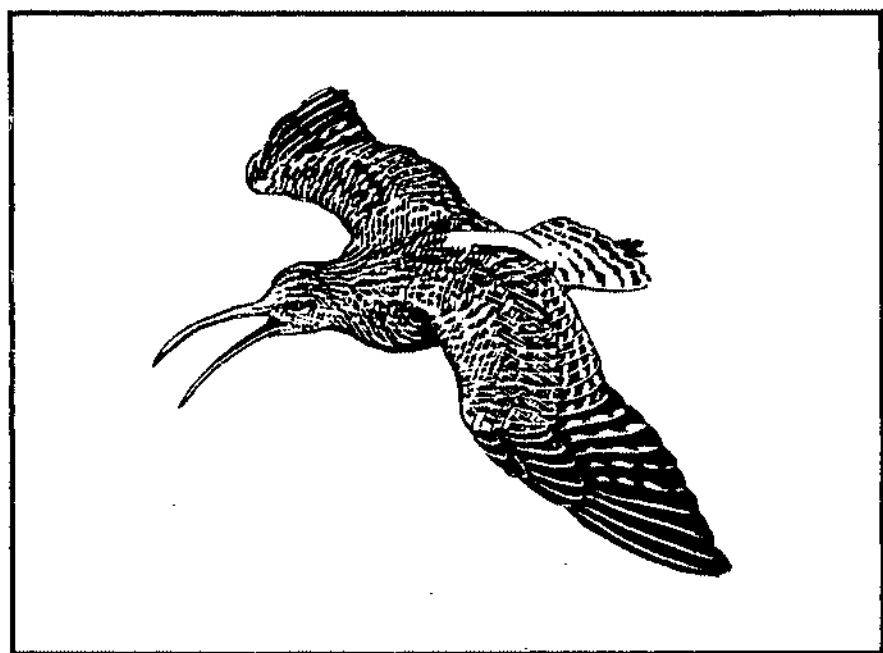


Huddersfield Birdwatchers' Club

Birds in Huddersfield 1996



ANNUAL REPORT

BIRDS IN HUDDERSFIELD

Report of the Huddersfield Birdwatchers' Club

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President's Report

Huddersfield Birdwatchers' Club once again had a very successful year and Donald Haigh, our immediate past-president, deserves all our thanks for the way in which he has carried out the duties of his office.

Thanks must also go to all members of the committee, David Shore for nursing along the financial affairs of the Club as honorary treasurer. David Butterfield for the unenviable task as Honorary Secretary and without whose help nothing would come together, David Barrans for his compilation and systematic report and David Woodhouse for the arduous task of arranging our field meetings

Special mention must be made of Dennis Manchester who has now retired from our committee and to whom we extend our warmest wishes for the future.

Due to changes within local government it has become clear that a new venue must be found, sooner rather than later, in which to hold our lecture meetings. The committee are very aware of this and any ideas or suggestions as to a safe and suitable location will be greatly appreciated.

To you all who support Huddersfield Birdwatchers' Club through your membership and attendance at indoor and field meetings my very best wishes

Good Birding to you all.

Malcolm Charnock: President

HUDDERSFIELD WEATHER 1996

January

Started mild but with fog and heavy rain on 6th, this continued until 13th and fog patches persisted until 16th. By 21st overnight temperatures had begun to drop below freezing and snow appeared, first of all light on 21st and then gradually intensifying with lying snow remaining until the end of the month. The lowest temperature recorded was -4°C on 27th and 28th. The wind during the month was mainly southerly until 19th when it swung round to E and NE.

February

Snow remained until 13th whilst overnight temperatures were below zero for the first ten days. Very heavy rain and strong westerly winds dominated the middle period of the month but by 19th this had swung round to NE and brought further snow and below zero overnight temperatures, remaining like this until the end of the month.

March

For the first seven days the wind was set N bringing only a little rain and temperatures just above freezing. By 9th the wind direction had changed to SE bringing with it a further covering of snow. Overnight temperatures fell below zero once again and remained so from 11th to 17th. Snow flurries and mist (sometimes thick) then dominated the days until 26th, temperatures once again dropping below zero and remaining so until 31st when the wind direction swung round to NW. Pressure had remained high for most of the month and rainfall had been almost immeasurable.

April

Started with light northerly winds swinging round to NW, overnight frosts and bright clear days. By 12th the wind had swung round to E bringing heavy sleety rain followed by snow and overnight temperatures falling to -1°C . This was followed by a mild spell with very little rain and winds in S to SW. From 23rd until the end of the month there were some light overnight showers.

May

Some welcome heavy rain during the first two days soon died out as the wind changed to NE and overnight sub-zero temperatures were again recorded until 6th and sporadically, with odd snow flurries until 16th. By 19th the wind was in NW bringing with it further rain and high winds, typically force 5 but force 6 on 28th.

June

Light rain for the first six days followed by thunderstorms on 7th and 8th. Pressure then rose and there was no further rain until 26th with heavy showers on 27th. From 14th to 27th daytime temperatures were high with the maximum of 25°C recorded on both 16th and 27th.

July

During the first five days a drop in temperature was accompanied by rain. The wind during this period was SW but a change to NW on 6th brought warmer, drier conditions which remained until 23rd. Overnight rain and thundery showers then persisted until the end of the month.

August

The thundery showers of the previous month continued and were followed by light showers until 12th, the wind during this period was light northerly. By 16th it had changed to S and this brought warmer, drier conditions, temperatures soaring to a maximum of 29°C by 18th and remaining so until

23rd. There were then three days of showers terminating with thunder on 28th. The month ended on a cooler, drier note

September

Wind was light NE at the beginning of the month but by 9th cloud had thickened and light rain fell from 10th to 12th. The wind strengthened as it swung round to E and from 18th to 20th was force 6. From 23rd until the end of the month the wind was southerly and had reduced to force 2.

October

Until 16th there was virtually no rain. Showers, heavy at times, then persisted until 21st, then mild southerly breezes, bringing drier conditions, took over until 25th. Gale force winds, force 8, with heavy rain on 27th remained until the following day and the month ended with strong SW winds.

November

SW winds at the beginning of the month had strengthened to moderate gale force (7) by 4th. By 11th the change in direction to N brought with it the first overnight frosts which then occurred regularly and were accompanied by persistent overnight rain on 18th leading to snow showers by 24th, some lying snow remained until the end of the month.

December

The month commenced with sleet which had turned to rain by 6th. Overnight frosts and thick mists then persisted until 10th. Wind during this period was light but by 14th had strengthened to force 6 from SW. By 19th there had been a change in direction to NE which, once again, brought snow and overnight frosts. These conditions remained until the end of the month.

Recorder's Comments

Once again the number of records received (4000+) of the 177 species far exceeded my expectations. Many thanks to all, both members and non-members of the Club and to other societies adjoining the Club area. Without your help of course there could not be a Report. I would, once again, ask you to try to submit your records in stages if possible and in any case by the end of February.

The brief resumé of the weather could perhaps explain some of the occurrences during the year, e.g. only the eleventh record of Gannet in the Club area since 1831, the large concentration of Teal at Dewsbury S.F., the number of Shelduck in November, the large influx of Little Stint since first noted in 1939, Black-tailed Godwit noted in more locations than any previous year and the very late sighting of White-throat on October 7th. There will no doubt be others which could have been selected but as you go through the report you will probably draw your own conclusions.

Following last year's article re-"Gulls with yellow legs", I thought it appropriate to continue the theme and, as figures have a particular fascination for me, I have included an analysis of roosting gulls at Blackmoorfoot.

Finally I would like to thank Mike Denton, not only for his very detailed Ringing Report, but also for his expert advice and for the many hours he has spent proof reading the Report.

David Barrans.

NOTES ON THE CLASSIFIED LIST

The area covered by the Club comprises Ordnance Survey ten-kilometre squares SE 00, 01, 10, 11, 20 and 21, along with the parts of SE 02 and 12 which lie south of the rivers Ryburn and Calder. The status of each species occurring within the area has been noted beneath the species name. For the breeding species an estimate of breeding abundance has been made as follows :-

Breeding abundance	1	1 - 20	pairs per year
"	2	21 - 100	" " "
"	3	101 - 500	" " "
"	4	501 - 2500	" " "
"	5	2501 or more	pairs per year

In attempting to establish breeding numbers and the number of passage and winter visitors, particularly in the case of the more common species, it must be realised that the figures are essentially estimates.

Precise locations for records of Schedule 1 species (Protection of Birds Act 1981) have been kept confidential where it is felt that publication may lead to harmful disturbance.

The Systematic List

This list mostly follows the sequence and scientific nomenclature of Prof. Dr. K.H. Voous (1977, List of Recent Holarctic Bird Species). Some previously considered races have been given species status in the light of recent findings.

Little Grebe *Tachybaptus ruficollis*

Widespread resident breeder (1)

Recorded during most months. The main strongholds were Bretton C.P., Scout Dike and Elland G.P. Bretton C.P. had two birds from 10th March to 6th October and an adult was present with two juveniles on 10th October. At Scout Dike a single was present from March to July with numbers building to six during August, seven in September and nine on 15th October (DM). Numbers were down to three by 16th November. Elland G.P. produced good numbers and breeding was indicated by the presence of two adults and two juveniles on 13th September, the maximum number observed was seven on 24th October (DM) but this had reduced to four by 7th December (SW). Other locations were Gunthwaite with two present during March and April, Ingbirchworth with one or two birds from March to September, Royd Moor Res., Horbury Wyke, Square Wood Dam (Denby Dale) and Broadstones Res. each held singles for short periods during the year.

Great Crested Grebe *Podiceps cristatus*

Resident breeder (1)

Very well reported with 257 records from seven locations. Due to the weather conditions however breeding records were low with early attempts being thwarted. Two nests at Ingbirchworth, constructed during late April - early May were waterlogged by 1st June. Later in the season water levels dropped rapidly leaving nests high and dry. At Blackmoorfoot the low water level precluded any breeding attempt. Bretton C.P. had some success however with at least six young from two broods noted on 21st July (DBU). Breeding was suspected at Boshaw Whams when a pair were seen with at least one juvenile on 11th July (DHP). The maximum numbers rarely exceeded single figures with, during the first winter period, seven at Bretton C.P. from 14th January until 10th March. Later in the year Scout Dike Res. held seven on 28th September and at Blackmoorfoot there were eight on 2nd July and again from 25th to

28th July, then eight from 3rd to 9th August and finally ten from 10th to 12th September. A pair at Hill Top raised two young, but, during July one of the adults was found with fishing line in its bill and eventually died (M.L.D.)

Black-necked Grebe *Podiceps nigricollis*

Rare visitor

A single in full summer plumage was at Blackmoorfoot on 21st May (M.L.D.)

Fulmar *Fulmarus glacialis*

Rare visitor

One was noted at Blackmoorfoot on 25th May, it eventually flew W at 1300 hrs (T.D.)

Gannet *Morus bassanus*

Rare visitor

An immature flew over Deer Hill End Road heading NW at 1245 hrs on 22nd October (T.D.) This is the fourth record since the formation of the Club and the eleventh record for the area since 1831!

Cormorant *Phalacrocorax carbo*

Uncommon and passage winter visitor

A total of 34 records of this species were received from ten different localities. Blackmoorfoot Res had five which flew E at 0630 hrs on 4th August, six flew NE at 1910hrs on 7th August and, on 31st, a 1st-summer and a juvenile were recorded, these remaining until 3rd September (M.L.D. J.K.P.) Other records from this location were : a 1st-summer on 5th and 6th September - an immature on, 3rd October, a single flew W at 0750 hrs on 8th November and an adult and an immature flew SW at 1545 hrs on 9th October.

Scammonden had four on 22nd August, Penistone had three immatures on 6th September and an adult and an immature on 14th September, Ravenshorpe C.P. had a single on 8th and 9th September, Square Wood Dam at Denby Dale had one on 1st September (T.M.), whilst at Elland C.P. one was present on each of 13th September (J.E.D.), 24th October (T.D.) and 10th November (D.H.P.) Ringstone Edge Res. held what could have been the same two birds on 24th and 26th September (B.A., J.E.D.). Brownhill Res. had one flying W on 28th September (H.Q.) and one was present at Longwood Res on 24th October (T.P.) and Ingbirchworth on 6th November (D.H.P.)

Shag *Phalacrocorax aristotelis*

Uncommon

The only record was of a single, probably a 1st- summer, at Blackmoorfoot on 8th August which flew W at 1855 hrs (P.B., M.L.D.).

Grey Heron *Ardea cinerea*

Resident breeder (2)

This was another very well reported species with 191 records from 27 different locations which varied from the usuals at Blackmoorfoot (mainly during the autumn), Elland C.P. and the breeding population at Bretton C.P. which had at least 20 occupied nests at the western end of the small lake. A new breeding population was noted at Storthes Hall Wood with a pair at the nest on 21st April, then, on 2nd

June three young were noted in the nest (DSI). It is also possible that the species also breed at Scammonden, but leaf growth on the trees prevented sufficiently detailed views. Many other reports of fly-over birds and those visiting garden ponds in some of the villages were received, plus a good number of sightings close to Huddersfield town centre, many streams and the rivers Holme, Calder, Deurne and Cofne as well as the Narrow Canal completed the pattern.

Mute Swan *Cygnus olor*

Resident, occasional breeder (1)

The Mute x Whooper Swan (*C. cygnus* hybrid) was still present on the R. Calder at Elland G.P. and was seen regularly from 19th March until 10th November (JED). Single birds were recorded from Mirfield at regular intervals between 17th May and 21st August (MLD). Similarly singles were at Ravensthorpe G.P. from 13th July until 13th November (MLD). A pair were nesting at Horbury Wyke on 12th May but the outcome of this attempt is however unknown.

Bewick's Swan *Cygnus columbianus*

Scarce winter visitor

Four adults were present at Blackmoorfoot on 5th November (MLD, PB)

Whooper Swan *Cygnus cygnus*

Scarce winter visitor

All records came from Blackmoorfoot during the second winter period. An adult was present on 30th October (JKP) and three adults and a juvenile on 5th November (PB, DMO, MLD). A juvenile remained from 8th November to 21st December, being present in the SW corner overflow field from 26th November (DMO, MLD *et al*).

Bean Goose *Anser fabalis*

Uncommon passage visitor

Two records, both in December. A single at Elland G.P. flew off with Pink-feet on 7th at 1230 hrs. The other record was of five which were grazing in a field between the two reservoirs at Scammonden on 30th. These were originally found by H.C.Laidlow and verified by JED and JB to be of the race *A. rossiensis*.

Pink-footed Goose *Anser brachyrhynchus*

Uncommon to common passage visitor

Most observations were during the first winter period, these are summarised in the table below :

Date	Time	Number	Direction	Location	Observer
Jan 14		6		Broadstones	NP
" 15		80	W	Gunthwaite	JED
" 16	1245	46	W	Blackmoorfoot	MLD
Feb 07		c100	W	Denby Dale	TM
	1000	c50	W	Bradley Park G.C.	DWB
23	1215	125	W	Bradley Park G.C.	DWB
24		c70		Broadstones	DBu
27	1500	c35	N	Shelley Park	M & PG
28	1030	240	NW	Holme Moss	JED

28	c80	W	Denby Dale	GC, JDP
Mar 21	0845	c150	Bradley Park G.C	DWB

An undetermined number flew over Bradley Park Golf Course in thick fog on 28th February. Singles were noted at Ingbirchworth on 28th January, 1st and 3rd March and Blackmoorfoot on 18th February. During the second winter period numbers were much lower with singles at Blackmoorfoot on 1st and 2nd November, two on 3rd and 4th and four on 5th and 6th. At Denby Dale 38 flew W on 5th December then on 7th 68 flew W over Elland G.P. at 1230 hrs (SW) and c50 flew W over Quarndon at 1608 hrs (SH). The final record of the year was of a single flying W over Shepley on 30th December (TM).

White-fronted Goose *Anser albifrons*

Uncommon passage visitor

The only report was of four arriving at Royd Moor from the SE at 1140 hrs on 26th December. These were of the "Greenland" race and only a single adult was present (JED).

Greylag Goose *Anser anser*

Uncommon passage visitor

Apart from the five captive birds at Cawthorne, records were mostly in single figures with two at Scout Dike on 1st March, and a single at Ingbirchworth on 6th June. Blackmoorfoot however, had 12 on 14th June. During the second winter period singles were seen at Scout Dike on 16th November, Blackmoorfoot on 13th December and Royd Moor Res. on 27th December.

Canada Goose *Branta canadensis*

Introduced resident breeder (2)

A brief resumé of the 155 records from 27 locations hopefully conveys a reasonable estimate of the population density of this species.

Ingbirchworth with 160 on 28th January, Royd Moor Res. with 77 on 28th September, Bretton C.P. with 170 on 10th October and Scout Dike with 137 on 16th November.

On 29th February at Bretton C.P. two birds were noted each bearing a white ring, these had originated from Hay-a-Park, Knaresborough and had been ringed on 4th July 1995.

Out of a group of 12 birds at Blackmoorfoot on 30th March one had coffee-coloured mantle and wings, possibly the same bird was present again on 10th April. At Blackmoorfoot a group of 89 on 29th August contained two leucistic birds. On 11th, 17th and 29th November at Scammonden, two leucistic birds were seen with groups of 41, 41 and 53 respectively and again with a group of 52 on 4th December (JED). All these sightings presumably relate to the same individuals.

Breeding was confirmed at a number of sites, in the Digley/Bibberly area there were several broods of five and four (DSI) on 4th June. A nest containing young was located at Little Black Moss on 6th June (GMC) and at Wessenden Head four adults and seven nearly fledged young were present on 21st June (MLD).

Barnacle Goose *Branta leucopsis*

Rare visitor. Feral birds occasionally breeding.

At Bretton C.P. two were present on both 14th January and 10th March and during the second winter period seven were present on a number of occasions (BC, SH). Blackmoorfoot held four on 5th and 6th November (PB, DMG, DHP). A single which appeared to be a young hybrid (the other parent

unknown) was seen at Ingbirchworth on 2nd September (RD & SEH) and another single was in the company of Canada Geese at Broadstones on 27th December (DHP).

Shelduck *Tadorna tadorna*

Uncommon passage visitor

During the first winter period records were all in single figures: Blackmoorfoot had one on 14th February then two on each of 20th, 25th April and 26th May (MLD). During this period eight at Ringstone Edge on 30th March flew E at 1735 hrs (TP).

The second half of the year saw much more movement with two at Blackmoorfoot on 8th July, singles on 10th and 14th September, four on 24th, eight on 16th November rising sharply to 28 on 17th (MLD, DHP), this is the highest number in the Club area since 1985. 15 were noted at Deer Hill on 17th November (MLD). A single was seen almost daily at Ingbirchworth from 28th September to 16th October (SH, DBA, DMP *et al*) whilst at Ringstone Edge a single was present on 10th July and six on 6th September (JED). The only other record was of a single at Royd Moor on 30th September (JED).

Mandarin Duck *Aix galericulata*

Rare visitor from feral populations

During the early part of the year, but not during the summer months, a single was frequently seen on the R. Holme at Holmfirth as in previous years (IQ). Following the pattern of last year a male appeared at Elland G.P. on 7th December (SW)

Wigeon *Anas penelope*

Common passage and winter visitor

There were many reports from ten different locations mainly during the winter months. During the first winter period numbers were low with a maximum of four at Blackmoorfoot on 14th January, one at Gumthwaite on 18th January, five at Denby Dale on 2nd February, 17 at Royd Moor Res. on 1st March, three at Ingbirchworth on 28th & 29th March and twelve at Horbury Wyke on 31st March.

Reports during the second winter period were: 15 at Blackmoorfoot on 16th September, then single figures were present until the end of the year (MLD); numbers fluctuated at Ingbirchworth from 30 during mid-September to 34 on 4th October with similar numbers until December when 42 were present (RD & SEH). At Royd Moor Res. 14 were present during late October/early November rising to 28 by 16th November (JED)

Gadwall *Anas strepera*

Scarce passage and winter visitor

The only records for the year were of a male and female at Blackmoorfoot on 17th January (AJW, KW) and of two at Elland G.P. on 9th February (JED)

Teal *Anas crecca*

Resident breeder (1) Common passage and winter visitor

118 records from 11 different localities gives some indication of the status of the species. During the first winter period numbers were in single figures at many locations but 13 were present at Elland G.P. on 9th February (JED). Numbers were high at Ingbirchworth with 52 and 56 respectively on 28th and 29th March (DBA, BA). Two pairs were present at Bretton C.P. on 11th April (BA) and a breeding pair was noted at Little Black Moss on 18th July (SH). During the second winter period maxima noted were

20 at Royd Moor Res. on 16th November and, on the same day, 14 were at Scout Dike (SH), 63 were at Blackmoorfoot on 16th November and 30 were at Ingbirchworth on 26th November.

Peak monthly figures at Dewsbury S.F. were :

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
85	208	180	162	0	0	0	7	20	42	168	230

These large concentrations are the highest ever recorded in the Club area and coincided with extreme weather conditions, not only on the continent, but also in our own area, where many of our reservoirs were frozen over.

Mallard *Anas platyrhynchos*

Resident breeder (3) Common winter visitor.

There were many detailed reports of this species including maximum numbers and breeding successes. A female with five young in the Lumb Lane area on 5th May (DSI), a female with ten young at Bretton C.P. on 4th June (BA), an adult with ten young at Ingbirchworth on 9th June (RD & SEH), a female with nine ducklings at Deer Hill on 20th June (MLD), a female with six ducklings at Thornton Lodge on 29th June (MLD), a female with seven ducklings on the river at Mirfield on 7th July (MLD) and broods of four and six at Elland G.P. on 17th July (SH). Blackmoorfoot, being a well watched area, had very detailed information re-ducklings with 61 ducklings (broods of 12, 10, 10, 9, 7, 6, 5 and 2) of which only 16 survived to the flying stage (MLD).

The only waters with maximum monthly figures given were Blackmoorfoot and Ingbirchworth as detailed below:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Blackmoorfoot	18	11	10	13	17	14	14	23	24	37	102	29
Ingbirchworth	13	2	11	2	5	4	14	20	18	68	31	45

On 1st January 43 were at Warr Carr Res. (SH), there were 22 were at Guthwaite on 18th January (DBa) and on 14th February in excess of 25 were seen on a stream near Morrisons Supermarket at Waterloo (BA). 30 were at Dovestones Res on 1st March (SH) and on 31st March 50 were seen on the canal at Marsden (DMO). During the second winter period at Langsett 70 and 50 were present on 10th and 17th November respectively (SH). At Scammonden on 15th September 49 were present, 93 on 17th November and there were in excess of 70 on 4th December (JED). 40 birds were making use of the ice-free gaps on the canal at Golear on 28th December (JKP).

Pintail *Anas acuta*

Uncommon passage and winter visitor

The only record during the first winter period was of a male and female at Blackmoorfoot on 31st March (MLD).

The second winter period was more prolific with records from two locations: Blackmoorfoot with one on 20th September and two on 23rd. On 18th and 20th October there was a single, three appeared on 15th November, then singles on 16th, 17th and 22nd (MLD). Ingbirchworth had two on 16th September (BA) and three on 6th October (RD & SEH).

Shoveler *Anas chapeata*

Uncommon passage and winter visitor

A male was present at Ingbirchworth on 21st January (NP) and a pair was at Bretton C.P. on 5th April (DM, O & VI). Three flew N over Holnbridge on 7th May (HQ).

Single figures only were noted during the second winter period with one at Blackmoorfoot on 2nd September and five on 3rd, a further five on 15th November and singles on 8th and 13th December (M.L.D.). Ingbirchworth had two on 16th September (B.A.), and one on each of 30th November (R.D. & S.F.H) and 2nd December (D.B.a).

Pochard *Aythya ferina*

Common passage and winter visitor

Numbers appeared to be lower in the first winter period than in some previous years even though the number of locations was the same. On 11th and 16th January Blackmoorfoot had 12 and on 17th there were 13 present. Thereafter singles were seen on 14th February and 3rd March (M.L.D.). It was a similar story at Ingbirchworth with two males on 12th January (D.B.a), ten on 18th then back to two on 29th March (B.A.). The only record from Royd Moor was of 14 on 23rd March (J.E.D.). The highest number for this period was of 17 at Elland G.P. on 12th January (J.E.D.), seven were on the R. Calder at this location on 1st March. An unusual location was Square Wood Res. Toby Wood, Denby Dale where a male and female were present on 18th January (T.M.), a single male was also present here on 14th February. The latest record was of a single male at Cawthorne on 23rd June (S.H.).

During the second winter period mid-August saw the return with one at Scout Dike on 11th August but numbers did not rise appreciably until November when 73 were present at Blackmoorfoot on 17th (M.L.D.). Numbers also rose at Ingbirchworth from one on 14th October to a peak of 28 in December (R.D. & S.F.H).

Tufted Duck *Aythya fuligula*

Resident breeder (1). Common passage and winter visitor

Reports came in from 23 suitable habitats. One of particular interest was of a male at Blackmoorfoot on 4th May. This bird was showing characteristics of Lesser Scaup *A. affinis* but on closer inspection, the black on the bill-tip extended away from the nail and the base of the bill was clouded dark. This combination of plumage and bill colouration indicating hybridisation between a male Tufted and female Pochard (M.L.D.).

Bilberry Res. Bretton C.P. Deanhead, Denby Dale, Dewsbury S.F., Elland G.P. Gunthwaite, Horbury Wyke, Ingbirchworth, Little Black Moss, March Haigh Res. Ringstone Edge, Royd Moor Res., Scammonden and Scout Dike were all well reported. On 20th June two nests with eggs were found at Horbury Wyke then, later, young were present (J.H.).

Scaup *Aythya marila*

Scarce passage and winter visitor

A female was on the R. Calder at Brookfoot on 9th February (J.E.D.). At Ingbirchworth a male remained from 21st April until 2nd May and was seen regularly by a number of observers. In the second winter period all observations came from Blackmoorfoot starting with a male in eclipse on 12th August (P.D., J.K.P.) and a male on 16th and 17th November (P.B., M.L.D. *et al.*).

Common Scoter *Melanitta nigra*

Scarce to uncommon passage visitor

The only records were of three females at Blackmoorfoot on 12th May (M.L.D., T.M.), a male on the river at Dewsbury S.F. on 4th September and, at this same location a female was located on one of the lagoons three days later which then moved onto the river and remained until the 11th (P.H.H.).

Goldeneye *Bucephala clangula*
Regular but uncommon winter visitor

Blackmoorfoot, Ringstone Edge and Inghirchworth once again provided most of the records with regular sightings during the first winter period. Birds were seen from the beginning of January until well into April at each location. However, a male was present at Ringstone Edge on 7th, 8th and 12th June, then, on 16th a pair was seen (JED). Other sites which held birds during this period were: Cupwith had a female on 30th March (TP), Elland G.P. had a female on 9th February (JED) and a male on 23rd March (SH). At Scout Dike a male and female were present on 23rd March (JED) and two birds were seen on 14th April (BA, SH).

The first arrivals during the second winter period appeared at Blackmoorfoot on 23rd October (two), thereafter there were regular sightings until the year end, usually in single figures apart from 14th November when 14 were present. During November and December low single figures were noted at Ringstone Edge, Scammonden and Inghirchworth, the maximum being four at the latter named site.

Smew *Mergus albellus*
Rare visitor

All sightings were of "redheads". Seven were seen regularly at Bretton C.P. between 3rd and 14th January (GC, JCP, JMD, JED *et al*) and one was there on 4th February (DBu). The only other report came from Elland G.P. during the second winter period which held a single on 31st December (JED).

Goosander *Mergus merganser*
Scarce to uncommon passage and winter visitor

The first record of the year came from Blackmoorfoot which held a female on 7th January. A female was also present at this site on 18th February and a male and female on 29th. From 1st until 10th March a male and female were seen with single figures being present until 31st when three females were seen (MLD). It was a similar picture at Bretton C.P. with 5 present on 14th January and 15th February, 14 on 10th March and five on 18th, the final record was of three females on 5th April. (JED, BA, BC'o, *et al*). At Elland G.P. numbers during the first winter period were extremely high with 63 on 10th January (JKP), 56 on 12th (JED), 13 on 9th February then single figures until 8th April when a male and female were seen (SH). There was only one sighting at Inghirchworth, a single on 12 January (DBa). Two were at Scammonden on 10th February (JED), a male and female flew SE over Crosland Moor at 0650 hrs on 2 April (MLD) and a pair seen at Lockwood on 3rd April remained for four days (DM).

The first arrivals for the second winter period were five "redheads" at Elland G.P. on 13th September (TP) and at this site numbers remained in single figures until 7th December when three males and nine females were present (SW). Blackmoorfoot held low single figures on 12 days from 20th October, the maximum being nine which included a male on 15th December (MLD). Bretton C.P. had 29 including 8 males on 6th December (BC'o) and single figures were recorded at Digley (2), Inghirchworth (1), Linthwaite (3) and finally four on the R. Calder between Elland and Brighouse (GR).

Ruddy Duck *Oxyura jamaicensis*
Infrequent visitor but expanding

Horbury Wyke was the only site where breeding was reported, a nest containing ten eggs was found on 20th June (JH) and a female with three young were noted on 31st July. Other sightings were:

Blackmoorfoot with a female type between 30th August and 27th September (MLD *et al*)

Bretton C.P. 10th March (1m), 5th April (2m + 1f), 11th April (2), 14th April (2), 30th June (2m + 1f) and 3rd September (4m + 1f)

Ingbirchworth 20th April (1), 21st April (1), 7th August (1).
Scout Dike 2nd July (1), 20th September (3), 16th November (1).
Dewsbury S.F. an immature on 5th October (PRIHS).

Goshawk *Accipiter gentilis*
Spotadic breeder and rare visitor

Once again there were several sightings of single birds in our area. Denby Dale had a single on 1st January (JMD) and one was present at Royd Moor the following day (BA). A displaying pair was noted at a site on 9th April (HQ) with a female seen at the same location on 11th (DMO) and an unsexed bird on 24th October. A juvenile flew over Denby Dale on 13th May (TM). At Scammonden a bird was being mobbed by eight Carrion Crow, an immature Kestrel and a Sparrowhawk on 11th October (JMD) and probably the same bird was seen flying unmolested over the boathouse on the same day (JKP). At Dewsbury S.F. one flew over in the direction of Earlsheaton on 15th May and one was on the Hide Lagoon with a kill (Woodpigeon) on 22nd September. A male flew W at this location on 29th December (PRIHS).

Sparrowhawk *Accipiter nisus*
Resident breeder (2)

With 138 reports from 43 different locations, the success of this species hardly requires further comment. The number of bird-days at Blackmoorfoot has dropped however. Gardens were once again the subject of many reports with a variety of prey ranging from Blue Tits to a juvenile Blackbird. At Denby Dale a bird was seen attempting to take a Kingfisher but on this occasion missed (DBu).

Buzzard *Buteo buteo*
Rare visitor

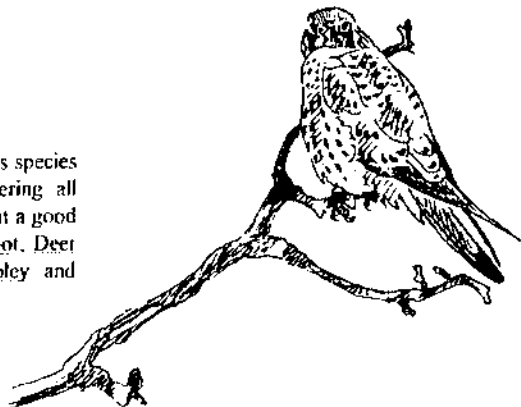
Singles were noted at Yateholme on 28th March (BA), Dovestones on 4th April (GMC) and Deer Hill on 13th October (KW).

Osprey *Pandion haliaetus*
Rare passage visitor

On 30th March a single flew NW over Blackmoorfoot at 1825 hrs (PB). This is the earliest record for the Club area.

Kestrel *Falco tinnunculus*
Resident breeder (2)

Once again a large number of reports of this species from a wide range of habitats and covering all months. Successful breeding was observed at a good number of locations including Blackmoorfoot, Deer Hill, Gunthwaite, Denby Dale and Shepley and probably many more not reported.



Merlin *Falco columbarius*

Resident breeder (1) and scarce visitor

A very early record was of a single at Deer Hill on 14th January (DMO). Apart from a pair at Dovestones on 1st May (GMC) and two at Black Moss on 18th July (JMD, SH), of which one was probably an immature, all other sightings were of singles. In May at Crossley's Plantation, Langsett Moor, Meltham and Wessenden Moor, in June at Shepley and Wessenden Moor, July over Black Moss, August at Drumclough Res., September at Broadstones and Liland C.P. and finally a male was seen flying SE over Shepley on 10th December (TM).

Hobby *Falco subbuteo*

Rare visitor

At Skelmanthorpe a single was seen flying low over gardens on 15th June (JMD). Two observers had excellent views of a bird attacking Swallows at Meltham on 3rd August (DMP, JJ). At 0745 hrs. on 20th August a single was being mobbed by hirundines at Shepley (Fox Royd) and a single flew over this location on 18th September (TM). The R.S.P.B. Office in Denby Dale was fortunate to have one flying over at 1200 hrs on 13th September (TM *et al*).

Peregrine *Falco peregrinus*

Resident breeder (1)

Once again there were over twenty sightings during the year. At one site mating was observed on 4th April, then on 28th May there were four fledged young (GMBC). The outcome at another site was not known. Quarry observed were Starlings at Blackmoorfoot on 6th May, an unsuccessful pursuit of Mallard at Winscar on 22nd May and waders at Ringstone Edge on 26th September before flying off E. Other sightings were: Snailsden on 18th May, Wessenden Head Res. on 21st June, Deer Hill on 15th September and adult males at Upper Cumberworth and Denby Dale on 18th September and 23rd October respectively. An immature was sitting in a ploughed field in Shepley on 12th October and, also on this date, a female was noted at Black Tor (just within the Club area).

Red Grouse *Lagopus lagopus*

Resident breeder (3)

It was good to see an increase in the number of reports of this species. Black Moss, Chew Res., Deer Hill, Digley, Dovestones, Holmbridge, Snailsden and Winscar all featured as breeding areas. Good numbers were seen at some of these moorlands. Snailsden in particular had up to 100 birds during December, the birds being easier to locate as the moor was snow covered during much of this period.

Red-legged Partridge *Alectoris rufa*

Resident breeder (1)

At Dovestones on 4th April two Red-legged X Chukar hybrids were seen and at Yeoman Hey Res. a pure bred Red-legged was noted (GMC). On 26th July two were in scrubland at the back of a car park at Millhouse Green (PC) and on 23rd October five were flushed from the track at Biberry Res. (HQ).

Grey Partridge *Perdix perdix*

Resident breeder (2)

The reports received from thirteen different locations seem to indicate that there is a stable population. On 7th January there were eight at Scout Dike (JED) and at Scammonden numbers rose from two on 29th March to two pairs on 7th June with two adults and two immatures on 8th October (JED). At Shepley on a Common Bird Census site there were two on 29th June and two adults with 12 half-grown young on 28th August (DBa, TM). Numbers at this location reduced to eight by 28th October and remained at this level until 28th November (SG). Other areas were: Bilberry Res., Deanhead, Denby Dale, Elland G.P., Meltham Cop, Penny Spring Wood, Royd Moor, Silkstone and Spicer House Lane.

Pheasant *Phasianus colchicus*

Resident breeder (2 - 3)

Well distributed throughout the Club area. The only breeding report was of a pair at Blackmoorfoot which nested in the SE corner, from 13 eggs only eight hatched, the others being deserted (MLD).

Water Rail *Rallus aquaticus*

Scarce winter visitor

During the first winter period the species was only reported from two areas: Bretton C.P. field singles on 6th and 20th March and 11th and 17th April (BCo, BC), but two were present on 5th April (JED, TM). At Meltham Pleasure Park on 27th February a bird was seen by Mr and Mrs Walker and was verified as this species by DM.

During the second winter period singles were seen at Bretton C.P. on 7th, 14th and 28th December (DMP, SP, KW), Elland G.P. on 7th December (SW) and at Golcar one was feeding in a stream near the frozen over canal on 28th December (JKP).

Moorhen *Gallinula chloropus*

Resident breeder (2-3)

Sixteen locations with successful breeding at most gives some indication of the status of this species. On a pond off Lumb Lane persistence prevailed, for when the first brood was killed a second attempt succeeded in raising the five young (DSI).

Coot *Fulica atra*

Resident breeder (2)

In spite of the fluctuation in water levels this species successfully bred at the usual sites and six pairs fledged c15 young at Bretton C.P. Other productive sites were Broadstones Res., Cawthorne, Ingbirchworth and Scout Dike. The low water level at Blackmoorfoot however precluded any breeding attempt. Scout Dike once again held the maximum number of birds during September when 32 were present on 28th (SH). A new site was Square Wood Res. at Denby Dale where a pair bred (TM). Numbers throughout the Club area dropped during the frosts in November when many waters were frozen over on 27th.

Oystercatcher *Haematopus ostralegus*

Uncommon passage visitor

At Blackmoorfoot two were present on 24th February with two again on 20th March, singles were then seen on 12th, 22nd and 28th May. On 5th June three were present with singles once again on 14th June and 26th and 27th July but 13 (all adults) were seen on 2nd August.

Other records came from:

Ingbirchworth - one on 24th February, two on 23rd March and one on 27th April.

Ringstone Edge - singles on each of 6th and 14th May.

Scammonden - two on 20th May and 23rd June then one on 14th July.

Deer Hill - one on 2nd August.

Little Ringed Plover *Charadrius dubius*

Occasional breeder and scarce summer visitor

A single at Blackmoorfoot on 3rd April (MLD) was a record early return date for the Club area. Subsequently, during the same month a single was seen on 18th, three on 21st and another single on 28th. A pair was displaying and mating at Royd Moor Res on 21st April and again on 2nd June (JED, NP) but there was no proof of breeding. Ringstone Edge had a pair during June (JED) and an adult with young was seen on 3rd August (AC). Throughout June a pair was displaying at Deer Hill but there was no proof of breeding (DMP, TD). Other records were:

Ingbirchworth - 4th May (2), 16th September (2 adult plus 1 juvenile), 19th (1 juvenile),

Dewsbury S F - 12th May (2), 18th August (1 juvenile),

Horbury Wyke - 16th May (1),

Elland G.P. - 18th June (1),

Broadstones Res - 11th August (1 juvenile)

Ringed Plover *Charadrius hiaticula*

Uncommon passage visitor

The reports were mainly of singles with occasional two's. Blackmoorfoot featured prominently again with singles on 17th, 19th April and 13th May (MLD). A single was seen at Farnley Tyas on 20th May (M & PG) and at Ingbirchworth two were present on 5th May (RD & SE11).

During the autumn period a single was present at Ingbirchworth on 23rd July and 4th September, two on 7th September and a single on each of 30th September and 15th October (DM, JED, DIIP). Blackmoorfoot had a single on 22nd August and two adults on 27th. In September juveniles were seen at this location on 22nd (1) and 29th (2) and a single was present on 20th October. The only other record was of two at Ringstone Edge on 30th September (JED).

Golden Plover *Pluvialis apricaria*

Migrant breeder (2)

With 106 records in total a brief summary is all that is possible.

Maximum numbers were:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
<u>Blackmoorfoot</u>	18	94	87	23	28	22	46	1	5	147	96	-
<u>Ringstone Edge</u>		54	170	170	-	-	-	-	11	110	-	-

Other sizable flocks were: 100+ at Pole Moor on 31st Mar (TP), also on this date 80+ flew over Scapegoat Hill (TP). In April c130 were at Whitley Common on 25th (GC, JDP) but had reduced to 73

two days later, c 60 were seen flying N at Broadstones Res on 28th (DBu), Wholestone Moor held 100+ on 6th (TP) and at Ingbirchworth 66 were seen on 24th (TM).

Breeding was reported from Deer Hill and Wessenden Head

Lapwing *Vanellus vanellus*

Resident breeder (3 - 4)

Maxima noted at three of the well watched sites were:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Blackmoorfoot	206	107	270+	-	-	150	318	315	444	375	150+	130+
Ingbirchworth	-	57	-	-	2	1	13	3	60	250	100	8
Dewsbury S.F.	40	30	16	37	20	38	240	300	101	143	130	285

Other maxima of significance are

Ringstone Edge - 4th July (190), 15th September (150);

Royd Moor - 12th August (120+), 16th September (c150);

Crosland Hill - 13th December (c70)

Looking back at records it is obvious that flock sizes continue to decrease. Breeding successes were noted at Blackmoorfoot, Deer Hill, Stocks Moor Common, Midgley Moor, Hartley Bank Wood and Bullecliffe Wood

Knot *Calidris canutus*

Scarce passage visitor

A single in summer plumage was present at Dewsbury S.F. on 20th May (JRS) and two birds in summer plumage were feeding in the Hide Lagoon at 0745 hrs on 15th September later in the day they were seen to fly off in a westerly direction.

A bird in full summer plumage was at Blackmoorfoot on 7th August (PB, AJW).

Sanderling *Calidris alba*

Scarce passage visitor

Two records this year were each of singles; at Blackmoorfoot on 13th May (DMO) and at Ringstone Edge on 31st July (JED)

Little Stint *Calidris minuta*

Scarce passage visitor

At Dewsbury S.F. the first bird, an adult in breeding plumage, was seen on 17th September, there was then a steady build up with two on 18th, four on 20th, six on 21st, nine on 22nd and ten on 23rd, six were seen on 1st October and, finally, a single on 12th (PS).

All other records were during September; Blackmoorfoot had juveniles on 18th (1), 19th (2), 20th (8), 21st (10) and 23rd (1) (DHP, PB, MLD). Ringstone Edge had three on 20th, six on 24th & 25th, eight on 26th, four on 27th and three on 30th (JED, BA) and Ingbirchworth had a single on 20th (D & VI). These records represent the largest influx since the first was noted in the area in 1939.

Curlew Sandpiper *Calidris ferruginea*

Uncommon passage visitor

The only records were of a single at Ringstone Edge on 20th September (JED) and two juveniles at Dewsbury S.F. on 16th September. Superb views of these birds were had as they fed in front of the hide having flown in at 0913 hrs. The final sighting was on the following day when they departed NE at 1630 hrs (JH, PRHS, JRS).

Dunlin *Calidris alpina*

Migrant breeder (1 - 2) Uncommon passage visitor

With the exception of a single at Ingbirchworth on 15th March (BA), all other sightings during the first winter period were from Blackmoorfoot. Singles were seen on 2nd and 3rd March, with two on 24th, a further two appeared on 17th April, singles were present on 19th and 20th, two on 21st and finally two on 6th May.

During the autumn period there were more sightings with:

Blackmoorfoot; singles on 15th August and 18th September, three on 22nd and 23rd, two on October 6th and singles again on 15th and 22nd and 15th and 16th November.

Ingbirchworth; three were seen on 20th September with four the following day, two were then present on 2nd October and 8th November.

Ringstone Edge; numbers fluctuated with five present on 24th September then six on 26th, two on 29th and five on 30th. In October two were present on 2nd and four on 5th.

Dewsbury S.F.; an early record was of a single seen on 27th July. Other sightings were again singles on 2nd, 13th, 20th and 21st September. Two were present from 3rd to 7th October with another two on 27th and 29th December.

An unusual record was of one heard calling as it flew over Dalton at 2330 hrs on 14th November (BA).

Ruff *Philomachus pugnax*

Scarce passage visitor

A single was at Royd Moor Res on 12th August. During September one was present at Ringstone Edge on 25th and three were seen on both 27th and 28th. The only other report was of a single at the same location on 2nd October (JED).

Jack Snipe *Lymnecryptes minimus*

Scarce passage and winter visitor

A single at Deer Hill on 7th January was the only record during the first winter period (TD). During the second winter period one was seen close to the footpath to Deanhead at Scammonden on 14th October (JED), one was flushed from the track at Royd Moor Res on 16th November (SH), a single was at Elland G.P. on 30th November (DHP) and at Deer Hill in December one was present on 7th and four were seen there on 25th (TD).

Snipe *Gallinago gallinago*

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

This species was once again well recorded with over 60 reports received. Numbers were in low single figures during the first winter period and occurred at Blackmoorfoot, Deer Hill, Denby Dale, Elland G.P., Greenfield Rd., Horbury Wyke, Ringstone Edge, Scammonden, Dewsbury S.F. and Scout Dike.

During the second winter period numbers rose giving a monthly maxima at Blackmoorfoot of five in August, four in September, 16 in October and 19 occurred daily in November until the 24th when the rising water level pushed them out (MLD). The maxima at Elland G.P. was 14 on 14th November (DHP) and at Ringstone Edge numbers steadily increased from four in August to a maximum of 23 on 25th September (JED, BA). During this period two were seen on the Common Bird Census farmland plot in Shepley on 12th October (DBa).

Woodcock *Scolopax rusticola*

Resident breeder (2) Uncommon winter visitor

In all cases but one records were of single birds. At Blackmoorfoot one was in the S bank wood on 2nd January (TD). During May roding birds were seen over Bullcliffe Wood (JH) and Mollicar Wood (SG) but a pair were present in Storches Hall Wood on 4th and 11th July (SG). Singles were noted at Denby Dale on 2nd September (TM), Scammonden on 30th September (JED), Dewsbury S.F. on 1st December flying N at 1050 hrs (JH), Elland G.P. on 7th December (SW), Windy Bank Wood on 27th December (TD) and Helme the following day (TD).

Black-tailed Godwit *Limosa limosa*

Rare passage visitor

Recorded in more locations than in any previous year with a single in almost full summer plumage at Blackmoorfoot on 19th April (MLD, DMIO), one at Herbury Wyke on 23rd April (JH) and also on this date, the spectacular sight of 14 which flew in from the E and circled the lagoons at Dewsbury S.F. at 1520 hrs before departing E (JH). The other records were of singles at Broadstones on 21st July (NP) and Ringstone Edge on 8th August (JED).

Bar-tailed Godwit *Limosa lapponica*

Rare passage visitor

At Blackmoorfoot four were seen to arrive at 1705 hrs on 30th September staying only a short while before departing W at 1725 hrs (JKP).

Whimbrel *Numenius phaeopus*

Scarce to uncommon passage visitor

Reports were all of singles. During April, one flew W at Blackmoorfoot at 1915 hrs on 16th (MLD), one was in the field in the N of Broadstones Reservoir on 21st and a single flew W over Ingbirchworth on 27th (JED). Later in the year, on 23rd August, one arrived at Blackmoorfoot at 1645 hrs and departed W at 1710 hrs (MLD, PB).

Curlew *Numenius arquata*

Migrant breeder (2) Common passage visitor

March saw the return with singles noted at Blackmoorfoot on 8th (MLD), Holmbridge on 9th (HQ), Ingbirchworth on 15th, Scammonden on 18th (JED) and Dalton on 19th. By this last mentioned date numbers started to increase and 18 were present at Broadstones (BA). Courtship display was noted at the latter site on 14 April (PC) and in the Deaine Dike Lane area close by, a pair with young were seen on 23 June (DBa). Over 50 reports came in from suitable locations during the breeding season. The final sightings were of five which departed N from Blackmoorfoot at 0630 hrs on 5 September and a single there on 16 September (MLD).

Spotted Redshank *Tringa erythropus*

Scarce passage migrant

At Dewsbury S.F. a single juvenile was present on the deep lagoon on 11 September where it remained until the 19th (JH).

Redshank *Tringa totanus*

Migrant breeder (1)

Two birds were present at Dewsbury S.F. and were seen on most visits from January to April. Display was noted on 30 May and a pair were holding territory during June (PRHS). One or two birds regularly put in an appearance at Blackmoorfoot from 23 March to late August and the last (2) were seen there on 2 October. Breeding was reported at Dovestones and other sightings were reported from Ingbirchworth, Ringstone Edge, Horbury Wyke and Deer Hill.

Greenshank *Tringa nebularia*

Uncommon passage visitor

The only spring record came from Dewsbury S.F. with a single on 11th and 12 May (PRHS). During summer and autumn, passage was evident, once again at Dewsbury S.F. with a single on 27 June, two on 15 July, one remaining from 17th to 21st July, five on 22nd July and six the following day. There was just one record from this location in August, a single on 24th, then, in September there were three on 22nd and two on 26th.

Blackmoorfoot had singles on 5th and 9th August, two on 14th and one on 27th, then two on 13 September and a single on 21st which departed W at 1850 hrs (MLD, DHP).

At Ingbirchworth one flew W on 12 August (JED), and a single remained from 29 September until 26 October (DBa, DMP, JKP *et al*).

Green Sandpiper *Tringa ochropus*

Uncommon passage and winter visitor

There were no spring records, although there was an early start to the autumn passage with two at Dewsbury S.F. from 12th to 18th July and a single remained until the end of the month. The number increased to three on 3rd August and by the 8th there were five, all of which remained until the month end. Numbers reduced to ones and twos seen on nine days in September with the last on 23rd (PRHS).

Three other areas recorded this species. Blackmoorfoot with two on 6th August then one on 29th (KW, MLD, PB). One was at Square Wood Res. Denby Dale on 9th August (TM) and a bird fitting the species description adequately was seen by a Mr. Blackmoor on 30th September at Black Brook (per JED).

Wood Sandpiper *Tringa glareola*

Uncommon passage migrant

September was the only month with any sightings of this species. On 7th a single spent almost all day feeding on the Hide Lagoon at Dewsbury S.F. (JH), on 18th and 19th a bird was at Ingbirchworth (DHP, BA, BBSG) and on 25th a single was present at Ringstone Edge (JED).

Common Sandpiper *Actitis hypoleucos*

Migrant breeder (2)

This was another well recorded species with over 80 records from 15 locations. The first was a single at Blackmoorfoot on 20th April which remained until 27th, singles were then seen on 11 dates in May. July had a single throughout but two were present on 11th, three on 12th and two again from 14th to 22nd. Numbers built up in August to a maximum of six on 9th and the final sighting was a single on 25th September (MLD, DHP)

Similar figures were obtained from Dewsbury S.F. with the spring passage starting on 23rd April, by 2nd May there were six present, then between one and four until the end of the month. The maximum monthly totals were June (4), July (4), August (12), September (6) with the final, a single, seen on 18th (JH, PRIHS JRS, BH)

Other locations with one or two were: Biberry Res., Dovestones, Elland G.P., Greenfield Res., Ingbirchworth (all months from April to September), Langsett, Oxygrains Beck, Ringstone Edge, Royd Moor Res., Scammonden, Scout Dike, Wessenden Head and Winscar Res.

Mediterranean Gull *Larus melanocephalus*

Rare visitor

During the first winter period a 1st-winter bird was at Blackmoorfoot from 1st to 3rd March (MLD). A 2nd-summer bird was seen at Ingbirchworth on 14th and 15th April (BA, JED). A 1st-winter bird flew W at 07.35 hrs on 14th October at Blackmoorfoot (MLD) and 1st-winter birds were also seen there on 16th and 29th October (MLD). At Dewsbury S.F. a first-winter bird was present at 0910 hrs on 3rd November (JH)

Little Gull *Larus minutus*

Scarce passage visitor

An adult in summer plumage was seen at Ingbirchworth on 3rd April (BA). A single seen at Blackmoorfoot on 9th April flew E at 1930 hrs (MLD) and a juvenile was seen at this location on 24th October (MLD). The only other report came from Dewsbury S.F. when a 1st-summer bird was flushed from the Hide lagoon on 30th May (JH).

Black-headed Gull *Larus ridibundus*

Resident breeder (1) Numerous passage and winter visitor

A good number of records of this species but only one giving positive evidence of breeding at Dovestones (GMC). There were three interesting observations however, each from Blackmoorfoot:- on 20th March a leucistic bird was present which was pale buff and possessed a hood which was paler than normal, the second was an adult with a pure white mantle which was observed on 4th April and the third which appeared on 17th April and remained until the following day, was a 1st-winter bird with bright orange legs and bill (MLD)

During the first-winter period in Huddersfield town centre birds were regularly to be seen on factory rooftops in St Thomas's Rd the last noted on 16th March (ICP)

In the following tables n/c = no count and n/b = no birds

Maximum numbers at roosting sites were -

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
<u>Blackmoorfoot</u>	n/c	1350	n/c	n/c	n/c	n/c	287	306	n/c	3350	n/c	n/c
<u>Ingbirchworth</u>	170	320	700	28	34	6	9	4	58	240	550	105
<u>Dewsbury S.F.</u>	32	95	500	77	9	18	220	5	22	384	1300	2000
Common Gull	<i>Larus canus</i>											
Common passage and winter visitor												

Apart from five which regularly associated with Black-headed Gulls on the factory rooftops in St Thomas's Rd until 16th March and 28 at Dewsbury S.F. on 7th April there were no reports during the first winter period excepting the well watched roosts listed below:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
<u>Blackmoorfoot</u>	n/c	450	n/c	860	1	n/b	8	19	n/c	113	n/c	n/c
<u>Ingbirchworth</u>	6	34	60	120	n/c	n/c	n/c	n/c	n/c	2	n/c	1

During the second winter period 140 were at Ringstone Edge on 17th November (JED) and 201 were at Elland G.P. on 7th December (SW). Small numbers were seen at Dewsbury S.F. from September with a maximum of 19 on 27th December (PRIIS).

Lesser Black-backed Gull *Larus fuscus*
Common passage and winter visitor

At Dewsbury S.F. a small number were seen regularly on passage through the Calder Valley during the summer months. The maximum seen was 75 on 17th July.

During August numbers at Ringstone Edge increased from 126 on the 3rd to in excess of 400 by the 23rd (JED), also during August four or five birds were using the factory roofs in Fluddersfield town centre on a regular basis (ICP)

An adult *gracilis* seen at Blackmoorfoot on 4th September had four outer primaries of the left wing white whilst the right wing was normal (MLD)

The peak count at Ingbirchworth was in October when 43 birds were present, however at Blackmoorfoot there was the usual interesting build up with monthly maxima of:

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
1	4	39	63	23	63	176	704	1117	868	503	17

Herring Gull *Larus argentatus*
Common passage and winter visitor

Passage was noted at Dewsbury S.F. during the winter with a maximum count of 140 in one hour on 21st December.

As usual, detailed records submitted were from Ingbirchworth and Blackmoorfoot, maximum monthly figures are shown in the table below:-

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
<u>Blackmoorfoot</u>	n/c	94	187	7	1	n/b	n/b	4	6	3	274	603
<u>Ingbirchworth</u>	14	37	100	n/b	1	n/b	n/b	n/b	n/b	n/b	3	16

Yellow-legged Gull *Larus cachinnans*
Scarce visitor

With the exception of one to three at Ringstone Edge between 24th and 27th August (JED), all other records were from Blackmoorfoot. A single adult was present on 23rd, 24th and 31st March (MLD,

PB) A sub-adult (most probably in its 3rd-summer) was present on 9th July, the bird was then subsequently seen on a further five dates up to 24th (MLD, PB, et al). In August an adult was present on 9th, 15th, 16th and 29th (MLD, PB, SP, KW). Unprecedented numbers were seen in September, up to three birds were present on most days throughout the month with at least six individuals being noted (identifiable by differing plumage characteristics) (MLD, PB, SH, JED). A sub-adult was seen on 15th October (PB) and during November an adult was present on 1st (MLD), a 3rd- winter on 3rd (PB,MLD) and a sub-adult on 14th (MLD).

Iceland Gull *Larus glaucoideus*

Scarce winter visitor

During the first winter period there were a good number of sightings. At Blackmoorfoot in February there were at least four individuals, birds were seen between 11th, and 27th, hut, although there was an adult, a 1st-winter, a 2nd-winter, a third-winter and a 1st/2nd-winter which was slightly oiled, only a single was present on any given date. March produced an adult and a 2nd-winter on 9th (PB, JKP) the same second-winter bird was present on 20th and 24th (MLD) and a 1st-winter on 31st (PB). At Bromley Farm Tip a 1st-winter was seen regularly from 27th February until 15th March whilst at Ingbirchworth a 2nd-winter was present from 12th to 15th March and again on 28th (BA, JED). A 2nd-winter between Huddersfield Town centre and Deighton at 0725 hrs on 28th March could have been one of the birds which had been roosting at Blackmoorfoot (MLD).

The only records during the second winter period came from Blackmoorfoot where there was a 1st-winter on 17th and 18th December (MLD).

Glaucous Gull *Larus hyperboreus*

Scarce winter visitor

The first winter period was quite productive with a 1st-winter being present at Bromley Farm Tip from 27th February until 1st March (TM), this was joined by a 3rd-winter on 28th March (GC, JDP). At Ingbirchworth a 1st-winter bird was seen on 9th and 29th March (RD & SEH, BA) and an adult was observed for at least 15 minutes on 14th April (HQ). The sightings at Blackmoorfoot were of a 1st winter bird on each of 30th, 31st March, 2nd and 3rd April (PB, MLD).

The only records during the second winter period were from Blackmoorfoot which held a 2nd-winter on 30th October (JKP) and a 1st-winter on 27th and 28th December (MLD) and Dewsbury S.F. when a 1st-winter bird provided good views by alighting in front of the hide at 1400 hrs on 29th December (JRS).

Great Black-backed Gull *Larus marinus*

Common winter visitor

The maximum monthly figures at Blackmoorfoot were

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
99	64	13	4	n/b	n/b	n/b	1	2	2	82	277

Ingbirchworth only had small numbers with five in January, ten in February, single figures in March (RD & SEH, BA) and 14 in December (DBa).

Other reports were of two adults at Oldfield on 13th May in a recently sown field (DHP) and a single at Elland G.P. on 7th December (SW)

Killiwake *Rissa tridactyla*

Scarce passage visitor

There were only two records, each from Blackmoorfoot. Single adults on 10th March (JKP) and 23rd April (DMO)

Common Tern *Sterna hirundo*

Uncommon passage visitor

The earliest record was of two at Horbury Wyke on 13th May (JH). Singles were seen on 28th May and 2nd June at Dewsbury S.F. and on 27th and 29th June two were present. A pair attempted to breed at Ravensthorpe G.P. but the outcome was unknown even though they were seen on several occasions up and down the R. Calder (PRHS). During June three appeared at Blackmoorfoot at 0710 hrs. on 7th and on the 21st a single arrived from the S at 1525 hrs and departed W at 1530 hrs (MLD).

Arctic Tern *Sterna paradiasaea*

Uncommon passage visitor

On 2nd May two birds were present at Ingbirchworth (BA), later in the day however, numbers increased to nine (BBWC). At Blackmoorfoot there was one on 2nd and 3rd May and further singles were seen at 0740 hrs on 19th July and one flew S at 0910hrs on 26th July (MLD). At about 1200 hrs on 4th July two were seen at Brookfoot Lake (JED).

Feral Pigeon *Columba livia*

Resident breeder (3)

Some indication of the rather erratic breeding season of this species is given by the finding of eggshells below the known nesting site under the viaduct at Thornton Lodge during the wintry conditions on both 29th February and 27th March (JKP). The number of birds in the Town Centre was on a par with previous years with 170+ on 17th May, 220+ on 24th July and peaking at 270+ on 6th August. At first light on 1st October there were 130+ under the railway viaduct at Thornton Lodge (MLD).

Stock Dove *Columba oenas*

Resident breeder (2)

Recorded in single figures throughout the year at Blackmoorfoot. Between two and four were seen regularly on visits to a CBC site in Shepley from April to July (DBa) and five were on this farmland on 9th August (TM). Bronley Farm Tip had c30 on 3rd March (JED) and 11 and 20 were recorded at Square Wood Res., Denby Dale on 23rd and 25th April respectively (TM). The only other flock seen was 20 at Royd Moor on 30th September (JED). Other areas reported upon were Ravensthorpe with three on 10th April then singles on 19th and 25th June and 10th August. Dear Hill had two on 21st April (MLD), Scout Dike had six on 16th November (SH).

Woodpigeon *Columba palumbus*

Resident breeder (4) Numerous winter visitor

Large flocks were reported during the first winter period only with, in January, c100 at High Heyland on the 7th and 300 at Mellor Wood on 12th. A large movement was observed at Golcar on 8th with 54 moving S at 1000 hrs, 400+ moving S at 1115 hrs. and a further 50 moving S at 1545 hrs, then on 14th

112 moved SE and finally 50+ on 27th. During February numbers at Longroyd Bridge rose from 30+ on 13th to 2000+ moving NE on 20th, 3000+ on 22nd then declined to 1000+ moving W on 23rd and 500+ on 26th, the observations on each of these dates were between 0730 hrs and 0745 hrs and it is possible they were leaving a roost (JKP). The only flock noted during March was of 500+ on 1st at Elland Park Wood (JED).

Collared Dove *Streptopelia decaocto*

Resident breeder (3)

Very widespread throughout the area. At Ossett a flock of 60 was seen in a field SE of the town on 6th September (GC). Numbers noted going to roost at Lockwood during November rose from 28 on 11th to 75 on 27th (DM).

Ring-necked Parakeet *Psittacula krameri*

Rare feral visitor

Only two sightings this year of a bird in the Castle Hill / Lumb Lane area, the first being on 29th January (SG) and the second on 7th October (DS).

Turtle Dove *Streptopelia turtur*

Rare summer visitor

A single was seen at Dewsbury S.F. on 30th May (JH).

Cuckoo *Cuculus canorus*

Migrant breeder (2)

The first bird of the year was heard at Doxstones on 15th April. Calling birds were then heard and seen regularly at 15 different locations up to 15th June. The last report of the year was of a juvenile being fed by a Dunnock at a bird table in Clayton West on 4th and 5th July (ASH, DBa).

Little Owl *Athene noctua*

Resident breeder (2)

The 30 locations this species was reported from during every month of the year gives some indication of its status in the area. Breeding success was reported from Almondbury with young calling on 29th May, Bilberry Res., Bulcliff Farm, Deer Hill, Longwood Valley, Meltham (near the Traveller's Rest), Penny Spring Wood, Shepley (the CBC site) and Turley Cote Lane. Doubtless there were many other successes which remained undetected.

Tawny Owl *Strix aluco*

Resident breeder (2)

Heard more often than seen at over 20 locations. Various active nest sites were recorded with two at Shepley each raising young, then successes at Blacker Beck, Brockholes, Farnley Tyas, Lockwood and Mollicar Wood. A number of sightings were from gardens and of birds being mobbed by other species.

Long-eared Owl *Asio otus*

Resident breeder (1)

A pair bred at a site in the Dovestones area and succeeded in fledging young (GMC) and at a site near Denby Dale a bird was seen in suitable habitat on 18th July (TM)

Short-eared Owl *Asio flammeus*

Resident/migrant breeder (1)

During the past four years reported sightings of this species have dropped at an alarming rate. The only record this year was of a single flying over the N bank at Blackmoorfoot on 8th November (MLD)

Swift *Apus apus*

Migrant breeder (2)

The first arrivals were noted on 23rd April with one at Dewsbury and two at Meltham. Numbers built up at the former site to 120 which were feeding over the sprinkler beds on 27th May (PRIIS). Other maxima noted were c50 at Ingbirchworth on 5th May (JED), c100 over Denby Dale on 17th May (TM), 38 flying NW into a strong headwind at Shepley on 9th July (DBa) and c60 over Huddersfield Town centre on 12th August (MLD). Monthly maxima at Blackmoorfoot were 103 on 21st June, 72 on 28th July and 46 on 3rd August (MLD). A total of 1268 flew E during a three hour period at Dewsbury S.F. on 9th August and on 12th, during a 75 minute period, 450 were observed (PRIIS). Several pairs bred in the vicinity of St. Luke's Hospital. The final record came from Blackmoorfoot which had a single on 23rd August (MLD).

Kingfisher *Alcedo atthis*

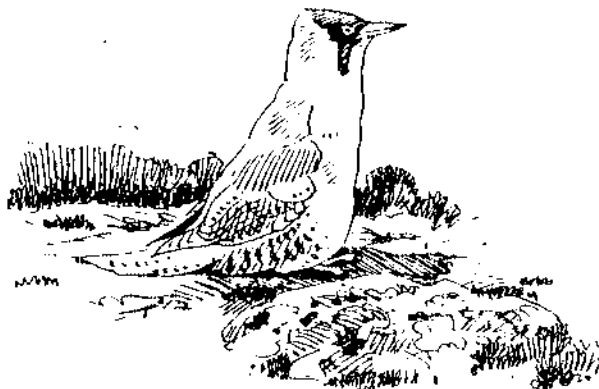
Resident breeder (1)

A good number of reports from 16 different locations. These were mainly of singles but two were at Elland G.P. on 27th March and a pair bred along the R. Calder (JED). There were then no other sightings at this location until two were seen over the canal on 8th and 24th October. Two were also seen on the R. Colne on 4th October at Milnsbridge and on 21st November near Folly Hall. Bretton C.P. had four present throughout the year: two on the lower lake and two on the river below the park. At least one pair were proved to breed. On the R. Holme at Lockwood a single was seen for at least eight months of the year (DM). A single was present at Blackmoorfoot on 5th and 6th December (MLD).

Green Woodpecker *Picus viridis*

Resident breeder (1 - 2)

With almost 80 records from 41 different locations it is evident that the species is holding its own. Birds were present during every month of the year and at a number of locations juveniles were seen. Probable breeding sites where juveniles were seen with adults were: Stones Wood (Shepley), Scammonden, Denby Dale, T.P. Wood (Gledholt) and Bretton C.P. A number



of other sites were noted where breeding could have taken place but information on these was inconclusive

Great Spotted Woodpecker *Dendrocopos major*

Resident breeder (2)

Once again another tremendously successful year for this species. Over 100 records were received from 43 locations, a number of these being private gardens particularly in winter, (when they were taking advantage of bird feeders, particularly during the winter), but also during the breeding season. Breeding was proved in the more usual habitats such as Beaumont Park, Bretton C.P., Birk's Wood (Lockwood), Thongsbridge, Stones Wood, (Shepley) etc

Lesser Spotted Woodpecker *Dendrocopos minor*

Resident breeder (1)

A male was seen at Bretton C.P. on 10th January (BCo) and both sexes were regularly reported from early March to the beginning of June although it is unknown if breeding took place. A similar sequence of records came from Mollicar Wood with both sexes being noted during this period. The final record from here was of one calling on 2nd October (BA). A male appeared briefly in a garden in Honley on 19th January (CG) and a male and female were seen together in Honley on 19th July (M.D). A pair bred at Armitage Bridge but the actual outcome was unknown (per M.D). Other sightings, usually of singles, were from Sharp Lane at Amundbury on 21st and 27th April (DSI), Netherton Fold on 2nd May (DM), Healey House on 6th May (TD), Brockholes on 14th May (DM), Hagg Wood on 25th May (DSI) and Dewsbury S.F. on 20th September (PRHS).

Skylark *Alauda arvensis*

Resident breeder (3 - 4)

The first record of the year came from Denby Dale on 4th January when 11 flew over, then on 26th, 30 were noted flying S. A reasonable sized flock of c50 flew over this location on 15th March, then, on 10th October 18 were seen (TM & RSPB). The only other reports of double figures were from Blackmoorfoot which had 12 on 26th February (M.D) and much later in the year 10 were seen at Scape on 1st October (TP). Singing males were recorded from 11 other suitable locations during the breeding season. The final sighting was of a single flying over Bretton on 27th November (SH).

Sand Martin *Riparia riparia*

Migrant, rare breeder

A very early single was noted at Dewsbury S.F. on 24th March (PRHS). Numbers then increased during April with 50+ at both Scout Dike and Inghirchworth on 24th (M & PG). A huge gathering of c300 were seen at Healey New Mill on the S side of the R. Calder on 12th May (SH). At least 11 occupied nests were noted at Ravensthorpe G.P. on 8th July (M.D). At Bretton C.P. 15 were present on both 17th and 25th April (DM, DI, BCo). Low single figures were noted at Blackmoorfoot on several dates between 11th April and 6th September with a maximum of six on 26th July (M.D). The final record of the year was of 20 at Dewsbury S.F. on 18th September (PRHS).

Swallow *Hirundo rustica*

Migrant breeder (4)

The first arrivals were recorded on 9th April with two at Bretton C.P. (JKP), two at Denby Dale (TM) and one at Riding Wood Res. (HQ). There was then a steady influx observed from 23 other locations, maxima being between 200 and 250 at Ingbirchworth during May and the first half of June. A notable passage was observed at Dewsbury S.F. during August when 780 birds flew E in the space of an hour. There was also a significant easterly passage seen at this location during September: 250 on 12th, 113 on 13th, 175 on 18th and 200 on 22nd (PRHS). A late breeding record came from Middlestown where young fledged on 23rd September (JG). The last sightings were during October, Blackmoorfoot had a single on 1st (MLD), Scammonden had nine flying W on 2nd (JED) and finally, Dewsbury S.F. had a single on the evening of 8th (PRHS).

House Martin *Delichon urbica*

Migrant breeder (3)

The earliest report was of two at Bretton C.P. on 14th April (SH), then on 17th there were several sightings with a single at the above location (BCo), three at Dewsbury S.F. (PRHS) and three at Five Lane Ends (PC & AC). We then had to wait until May before there was an appreciable build-up in numbers and a return to nest sites. There was a large movement on 16th May with 120 at Blackmoorfoot (MLD) and 100+ at Ingbirchworth (JED, BA). Once again information regarding nest sites was somewhat sparse, five active nests were in Lumb Lane, Almondbury, seven in Marsh Lane, Shepley, several in Blackmoorfoot Road, Crosland Moor and two pairs nested in the shopping area in Lindley which was a new site for this year.

The build up in numbers leading to the

autumn migration started in August with a

flock of 88 flying S at Blackmoorfoot

(MLD) on 23rd and c50 flying S over Stones Wood, Shepley (DBa) on the same date. During September 250 passed through Dewsbury S.F. in a four hour period on 12th and, also in a four hour period a further 600 on 22nd (PRHS). The final sighting was of seven at Bretton C.P. on 10th October (SH).



Tree Pipit *Anthus trivialis*

Migrant breeder (2 - 3)

The first report was of two in song at Bretton C.P. on 21st April (JH), what were presumably the same birds were again noted on 25th and 27th (JED, DM). Other singing birds located were: one at Thunderbridge on 28th April (DSI), then, in May, two at Scammonden on 6th (SH), one at Broadstones and three at Langsett on 7th (SG), one at Denby Dale on 14th (TM), one at Thorstonland Bank on 15th (DM), one in Storries Hall Lane on 27th (DSI) and three at Royd Edge Clough on 28th (DMP). Carr Wood at Woodsome had two on 6th June (BA) and one was located in a new deciduous plantation at

Yatcholme on 19th (DM) Once again it was disappointing to note that there was no indication of the species in Deer Hill Wood

Meadow Pipit *Anthus pratensis*

Resident breeder (4 - 5) Partial migrant

A wintering flock remained at Dewsbury S.F. until 28th January when 75 were present (PRIIS). Two birds were observed feeding in the car park at Longroyd Bridge on 30th January (JKP). There was then a quiet period until March when on 20th there were eight at Blackmoorfoot (M.L.D) and c 50 at Honley (BA). On 23rd there were 25 at Deer Hill (AD) and 35 were seen heading NE over Scape Common on 24th (TP). Over 200 were seen at Crossley's Plantation on 3rd April (JED) and there were a number of breeding reports from the usual localities. Numbers built up during August and September with in excess of 50 birds being noted at Scammonden and Denby Dale, then on 28th September c 100 were present at Yatcholme (HQ). 230 birds flew SE during a two hour period at Dewsbury S.F. on 29th (PRIIS) and on 30th over 70 were seen flying SW over Royd Moor in a five minute period (JED). Unusual winter records concerned c30 feeding in a marshy field near Scout Dike during November (SII) and, during the same month, numbers at Blackmoorfoot varied from two to eleven as the birds fed on seeds as the water level rose in the severe weather (M.L.D)

Rock Pipit *Anthus petrosus*

Rare passage migrant

There were three records, each of singles at Dewsbury S.F., 25th August, 28th September and 20th December (PRIIS *et al*).

Water pipit *Anthus spinoletta*

Rare winter and passage visitor

The only records came from Dewsbury S.F. which had three birds on 2nd November. Two were then seen on 4th and a single remained until the year end feeding on the filter beds (PRIIS *et al*)

Yellow Wagtail *Motacilla flava*

Migrant breeder (1)

The first record was of a single at Deer Hill on 21st April (M.L.D). Singles were also seen at Blackmoorfoot on 28th April and 14th May (M.L.D) whilst a pair were present at Scout Dike on 16th May (DHIP). At Denby Dale, which is a rare location for this species, singles were seen on 9th July and 5th September (TM). Over the last four years the stronghold of the species has been Dewsbury S.F. but there were not as many sightings this year; three were noted on 23rd April then occasional singles were present during the summer months but a party of six appeared on 4th August, the last bird was noted on 13th October (PRIIS). This is the latest date on record for the Club area.

Grey Wagtail *Motacilla cinerea*

Resident breeder (2)

Quite surprisingly this species was recorded in 34 different locations and in every month of the year. Breeding was evident by either observing food being taken to the nest or adults seen with young birds at Digley, Dovestones Res., Dunford Bridge, Jackson Bridge and Lockwood. Between one and three birds were regularly seen at Blackmoorfoot on 17 occasions from July to November. At Dewsbury S.F. at least two were seen on 43 visits during the course of the year.

Pied Wagtail *Motacilla alba*

Resident breeder (3)

Data collected mainly concerned roost sizes. On 27th January in Huddersfield Town Centre c 40 were roosting in an evergreen by the Civic Centre in Huddersfield Town Centre as the normal roost on the roof was covered in deep snow. During February at this roost there were 150 on 10th, 75+ on 18th and 20th and 100+ on 25th, during March 200+ were present on 9th (MLD, JKP). Three to four pairs could regularly be seen down Deane Dike Road during June (PC). Interesting behaviour was witnessed on 13th May at Netherton Fold when a bird vigorously attacked its own reflection in a car wing mirror (DM). During the second winter period six juveniles were noted at Aspley roundabout on 22nd August (MN). At Dewsbury S.E. 22 birds were present on 22nd July, 32 on 5th August, 80 on 23rd August and 42 on 1st September. Numbers then fell to a wintering population of 22 which remained constant until the end of the year (PRHS). On 5th September there were 30+ birds on Crosland Heath G.C. and, prior to roosting, 110+ had gathered near the Civic Centre on 10th October (MLD).

Waxwing *Bombycilla garrulus*

Rare to uncommon winter visitor

The first sighting was of two on 11th Jan near Tankyard Rd, Qakes (JB). From 22nd January two or three were present at the Huddersfield Sports Centre car park with numbers increasing to 40 by 14th February and down to 20 by 21st (DBa). Single figure reports came in from Birkby, Wooldale, Kirkburton, Shepley and Lintinwaite until 28th February. There were no further reports until 19th March when 91 were seen feeding on berries in Vernon Avenue (TM). On 28th there were 29 at Horbury Bridge and on 30th c50 were seen at Lindley (BA). The final report was of 13 near the Sports Centre at Dewsbury on 22nd April (MB). There were no reports during the second winter period.

Dipper *Cinclus cinclus*

Resident breeder (2)

The only confirmed breeding success was at Hill Top where a pair fledged five young on 27th May (MLD). Nesting pairs were noted at both Holmfirth and Jackson Bridge, but the outcome of these attempts was unknown. Other reports were all of singles, Denby Dale was a new location with a bird seen on 15th January (TM). Elland Bridge, Meltham Bar, Milnsbridge, Oxygrains Beck and a stream near Clay House Park at West Vale.

Wren *Troglodytes troglodytes*

Resident breeder (4)

Very widespread throughout the area

Dunnock *Prunella modularis*

Resident breeder (3)

Very few records received but very common throughout the Club area

Robin *Erithacus rubecula*

Resident breeder (4 - 5)

Very common throughout the area.

Black Redstart *Phoenicurus ochruros*

Rare visitor

Somewhat later than the usual records, a single was noted feeding from the ground and on the dry stone wall at Turley Cote Lane, Lindley Moor on 29th September (JED)

Redstart *Phoenicurus phoenicurus*

Migrant breeder (2)

The first report came from Bilberry Res with a male and a female on 4th May (HQ) and on the same day a male was in song at Healey House (DM). During June others in song were noted at Ingbirchworth, Langsett and Digley, with two young seen at the latter location on 2nd August (HQ). Birds caught and ringed at Blackmoorfoot were both females, one on 26th July and the second on 15th September (MLD). An adult female and a juvenile were at Dunford Bridge on 17th August and a different female was located about a quarter of a mile away on the same day (SH). At Lindley Moo, a male appeared briefly in a garden at 1240 hrs on 8th July and in the same area, in Turley Cote Lane, one was seen on 11th September (JED). The final sighting was of one at Scammonden on 15th September (JED).

Whinchat *Saxicola rubetra*

Migrant breeder (2)

A single male seen at Broadstones on 21st April was the first record of the year (JED). A male was at Deer Hill Moss on 26th (TD) and three were seen at Meltham Moor on the same day (DMP). Three males were seen between Scammonden and Deanhead on 6th May (SH) then there was a scattering of records of one or two birds during June and July from each of the aforementioned locations. The maximum number noted was 12 at Deer Hill on 14th August with adult birds being somewhat aggressive towards Stonechat *S. torquata* (DMP). A pair with young was recorded at Scammonden on 3rd July and it was from here that the final sighting of the year, four birds on 15th September, was noted (JED).

Stonechat *Saxicola torquata*

Occasional breeder (1) Scarce passage and winter visitor

The two sightings in January were of a male and female at Broadstones on 15th (JED) and a female at Deer Hill on 27th (TD). There were no further reports until July when a pair were seen carrying food at Langsett (DHP). There were seven or eight birds with Whinchat *S. rubetra* at Deer Hill on 14th August which was repeated on 25th (DMP). During October single males were seen at Castle Hill on 17th (SG) and Bilberry Res on 23rd (HQ). The final report was of a female at Deer Hill on 25th December (TD).

Wheatear *Oenanthe oenanthe*

Migrant breeder (2)

The earliest record was of two at Broadstones on 28th March (BA, JED). There then followed a series of over 40 records during April from at least 20 of the usual locations and one unusual one from the Leeds Road Playing Field on 20th May (DWB). Seven birds, which may have been of the 'Greenland' race *O. o. oenanthe*, were seen off Turley Cote Lane on 6th June (JED). The final record of the year was of two at Goodbent Lodge on 13th September (HQ).

Ring Ouzel *Turdus torquatus*

Migrant breeder (2)

A single male at Scammonden on 30th March was the first recorded for the year (JKP). Subsequently there were sightings from Bilberry Res., Digley, Goodbent Lodge and Dovestones with evidence of breeding from each of these. An adult and an immature were ground feeding and also taking berries from bushes at Scammonden on 25th October, this was the final record of the year (JED)

Blackbird *Turdus merula*

Resident breeder (5) Numerous winter visitor

Very common throughout the entire area with many breeding successes. There were no significant numbers reported until 7th December when 14 were present at Elland G.P. (SW)

Fieldfare *Turdus pilaris*

Numerous passage and winter visitor. Occasional breeder.

There were well over 100 reports during the year, the first being from Blackmoorfoot with 68 flying S on 3rd January then 250+ flying S on 10th (MJD). Other large concentrations during January were 300+ at Gunthwaite on 7th, 170 at Scammonden on 13th, c200 at Holmbridge on 14th, c200 at Bretton C.P. on 20th, c100 at Emley Moor on 20th, c300 at Bradley Park G.C. on 25th and 375 E over Dewsbury S.F. on 28th. Similar numbers were noted throughout February and into March with 500+ at Deer Hill on 2nd (DMP), 180 at Salendine Nook on 18th, 200+ at Dearne Dike Road on 27th and 100 at Broadstones on 30th. During April there were fewer reports, but c230 were at Shepley on 4th, c350 at Blackmoorfoot on 7th and 100+ at Lepton on 15th. A very late single was seen at High Floyland on 7th May (SG)

The main influx started, as expected, during October with small numbers from the beginning of the month then 26 at Woodsome on 26th followed by c200 which were seen moving W at 1500 hrs over Scammonden on 30th (JED). Maxima noted in November were 800 at Ingbirchworth on 2nd, 300 at Royd Moor on 3rd and c300 at Scout Dike on 16th. Large December flocks, far exceeding any previously recorded in the Club area, were seen at Dewsbury S.F. 2463 moved S during stormy weather on 15th then a record number of 2740 passed S on 22nd (PRHS)

Song Thrush *Turdus philomelos*

Resident breeder (3)

The records were mainly of birds in song, this year there was an increase in the number of localities to 16 in all. Four were in song at Woodsome Lees on 19th April (DSI). Other records during the breeding season came from Bretton C.P., Blackmoorfoot, Croxland Moor, Digley Bottom Wood, Elland G.P., Silkstone, Thunderbridge and Mellors Wood with further reports from private gardens.

Redwing *Turdus iliacus*

Numerous passage and winter visitor

During the harsh winter conditions in late January/early February there were a number of instances of birds feeding in gardens and on bird tables. Numbers in double figures were recorded in January at Gunthwaite with 30 on 7th, Bretton C.P. with 20+ on 14th and 30 on 20th, Digley with c50 on 14th and Almondbury with c70 on 23rd. Similar numbers were noted during February after which there was a gradual reduction to single figures apart from at Shepley where there was a flock of c80 in the CBC area.

on 4th April (DBA) and Penny Spring Wood where c50 were seen on 5th April (SG). The last sighting was of two flying NE at Lascelles Hall on 14th April (SH).

During the second winter period low single figures were reported from 1st October but ten were in a garden on this date in Almondbury (SG). Numbers then built up once again with many observations of double figures but had reached c200 at Bretton C.P. on 27th November (JED, BA, SH). During December there was a S to SE movement noted at Dewsbury S.F. with 150 on 14th, 295 on 15th and 274 on 22nd (PRHS).

Mistle Thrush *Turdus viscivorus*

Resident breeder (3)

Apart from a small flock of 27 at Dewsbury S.F. on 22nd June reports of this species were confined to the second half of the year with seven at Deer Hill on 14th July, 47 at Dewsbury S.F. on 25th August, 12 at Bretton C.P. on 6th October and 15 at Castle Hill on 9th October (SG) (According to the observer this number is apparently unusual at this site). The flock at Dewsbury S.F. in late August had dispersed by mid-October as only single figures were present.

Grasshopper Warbler *Locustella naevia*

Occasional migrant breeder (1)

An increase in the number of reports of this species. The first was heard reeling at Cawthorne on 25th April (NP). Similarly one was in full song at Scout Dike on 27th April (M & PG), and again on 15th May (DHP). A number of observers either heard or saw at least one pair at Bretton C.P. during April, unfortunately, whilst a nest containing six eggs was found on 27th May, this failed at the young stage (JH).

Sedge Warbler *Acrocephalus schoenobaenus*

Migrant breeder (1)

Two males were singing at Elland G.P. on 28th April and were then regularly heard until 4th July. On 12th May a male was present at Horbury Strands and three birds (two singing males) were seen at Horbury Wyke (SH). A pair was seen carrying food at Scout Dike on 29th June and a male was still holding territory during July (NP). A pair nested at Dewsbury S.F. where three birds had been heard singing on 22nd June and a small autumn passage was noted along the banks of the R. Calder. The last bird here was seen on 15th August (PRHS). The final record was of one caught and ringed at Blackmoorfoot on 16th August (MLD).

Reed Warbler *Acrocephalus scirpaceus*

Rare passage migrant and breeder (1)

A single was in song at Elland G.P. on 23rd May and again on 4th July (JED). Apart from this the only other record was of two singing males at Horbury Wyke on 9th June (SH).

Lesser Whitethroat *Sylvia curruca*

Migrant breeder (1)

An early arrival was in song on Stockmoor Common on 20th April (JH). On 5th May both Stoneycliffe Wood and Horbury Wyke had birds in song then on 12th a single was seen at Dewsbury S.F. with another there on 20th. At Bradley Park G.C. two or three were present on 14th May and thereafter singles were noted throughout the month (DWB). Dogley N.R. seems to be an underwatched area yet it

could be profitable as a pair was seen on 24th May and actually bred successfully (SG). Other sightings were: a singing male at Almondbury on 2nd June which remained for a week, one in song above the garden centre at Birchcliffe Hill on 5th June then singles were seen at Hoylandswaine on 4th August, at Shepley on 9th and at Scout Dike Res. on 11th. Denby Dale provided the final records for the year with a single on 9th and 12th September (TM).

Whitethroat *Sylvia communis*
Migrant breeder (2)

This was yet another well reported species with records being received from over 20 locations. The first was on 25th April at Dalton (DA). Up to six were in song during May in Bretton C.P. with seven at Dewsbury S.E. A good number of breeding records were received and juveniles swelled the numbers at the aforementioned site to twelve on 11th August (PRIIS). One was caught and ringed at Blackmoorfoot on 16th August (MLD). The last record was of a bird in the Springwood area which was recorded on most days from 24th September until 7th October (MLD). This is the latest recorded instance of this species in the Club area



Garden Warbler *Sylvia borin*
Migrant Breeder (2)

Bretton C.P. provided the first record with one in song on 25th April. There was then a succession of records, mostly of birds in song, during May and June from a further 16 locations. The strongholds for the species remain as expected: Mellors Wood with three on 28th May, Bretton C.P. with six on 7th June and Dewsbury S.E. with six on 12th June. A single at Scout Dike Res. on 11th August was the last record of the year.

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

Over-wintering birds featured in many of the reports. At Wooldale a male and female made regular visits to a garden from 1st January until 14th February (SMB). Others during the same period were recorded at Almondbury, Birkby, Lockwood, Newsome, Penistone, Sheiley and Skelmanthorpe. These were all garden reports during severe weather conditions (three to four inches of snow) with birds feeding from kitchen scraps, nut dispensers and fat balls. From April to June the reports were of singing males from over 30 suitable habitats with breeding suspected and proved at many. A singing male throughout June at Blackmoorfoot, coupled with the catching of a male and female along with two first years in July, strongly suggests that breeding took place at this site (MLD). By August the number of reports diminished, the last one being of a female caught and ringed at Blackmoorfoot on 30th. Information regarding birds in gardens at Holohbridge on 1st December and Meltham on 25th would indicate over-wintering.

Wood Warbler *Phylloscopus sibilatrix*

Migrant breeder (1 - 2)

Reported from five sites this year, the first being one in song at T.P. Wood on 30th April and later on 3rd May (DM). Other reports were all during May with a single at Meltham Park on 5th (DMP), two or three at Cliffe Wood on 7th (SG), one in song at Bretton C.P. on the same date (SG) and one in the woods at Digley on 23rd and 24th (DHIP, HQ). There was no proof of breeding.

Chiffchaff *Phylloscopus collybita*

Migrant breeder (2) Scarce winter visitor

The first reported migrant was heard singing at Dalton on 23rd March (BA) then, on 29th, a single was singing in Bretton C.P. (BCo). At this last mentioned site numbers increased to four, these birds remained throughout April and May and at least two were still singing on 30th June (SH *et al*). One or two singing males were heard at a number of other locations; Almondbury, Beaumont Park, Brockholes, Farnley, Golcar, Horbury Wyke, Magdale, Netherton, Silkstone, Thongesbridge and Woodsonia C.C. At Deffers Wood there were four in song on 9th April which remained until at least the end of June. Two birds were in song at Denby Dale on 9th April and there were still two singing on 12th September (TM). One was caught and ringed at Blackmoorfoot on 22nd July and there was a singing male present on 12th September (MLD). At Dewsbury S.F. the final bird of the autumn was seen on 13th September but two birds were found on 29th December, one near the clay-pigeon shoot site and the other near the machinery compound (PRHS).

Willow Warbler *Phylloscopus trochilus*

Migrant breeder (3 - 4)

The first arrivals were two at Holmfirth on 10th April (HQ). From 14th until the end of the month there were daily reports from many locations with reasonable numbers involved e.g. at Denby Dale on 19th there were 20 present (TM), on the same day at Ilkley G.P. there were 27 in song (JED). Some indication as to the success of the species, in spite of the drought conditions, can be gathered from the number ringed at Blackmoorfoot with, in July, 16 on 11th, 23 on 22nd, 17 on 25th and 22 on 26th, and in August, 15 on 11th and 14 on each of 15th and 18th (MLD). A single at Scammenden on 15th September was the last record of the year.

Goldcrest *Regulus regulus*

Resident breeder (2 - 3)

Numbers remained low throughout the year with, in January, three in the Longwood Valley on 1st, one at Blackmoorfoot on 7th and at least one at Golcar Tip on 11th. In February the only report was of a single in a garden at Fixby on 4th. Other singles were at Dyestones on 1st March, Scapegoat Hill on 3rd and Thornton Lodge on 16th. At Bretton C.P. two males were seen on 14th April then, much later in the year, on 6th October six were present (SH). The only nesting record came from a small conifer plantation at the side of the catchment near Deer Hill (DWS). At least four were noted at Scout Dike on 11th August and singles were seen at a number of other locations until the year end.

Firecrest *Regulus ignicapillus*

Rare visitor

Two very welcome reports of this species: one seen briefly very close to the hide at Blackmoorfoot on 21st April (M.L.D., D.B.a) and the second, which was located at Shaw Wood, Longwood Valley, was present on both 28th and 30th September (J.E.D., J.M.D.)

Spotted Flycatcher *Muscicapa striata*

Migrant breeder (2)

The earliest report was of a single near to the R. Calder at Elland G.P. on 29th April (J.E.D.). A single was seen at Digley Lane Woods on 16th May with at least two being present on 24th (H.Q.). The only other record for May was of a single at Denby Dale on 31st (T.M.). Breeding pairs were found during June at Meltham where they were feeding young at a nest in a Silver Birch (D.M.), in the Coxley Valley (P.S.) and Netherton at a nest in an Elm (D.M.). Two adults at North Wood Silkstone seen on 4th August could possibly have bred (S.H.). The remaining records were all of singles at Bretton C.P., Deller Wood, Gunthwaite, Royd Moor, Scapegoat Hill, Dunford Bridge, Blackmoorfoot, Fixby, Scammonden and finally, on 17th September, Ingbirchworth.

Pied Flycatcher *Ficedula hypoleuca*

Migrant breeder (1)

A male arrived at Toby Wood, Denby Dale on 22nd April and was joined later in the month by a female; both birds were observed taking food to a nest by mid-June (T.M., P.R.G.). Two pairs had taken up residence in Cliff Wood by 7th May, one pair making use of a nest box (S.G.). Other reports were of singles during May at Birkby Rd. on 5th (female), then males at Magdale on 8th, Thongsbridge on 14th, Deller Wood on 21st and Hagg Wood on most days between 17th and 5th June.

Long-tailed Tit *Aegithalos caedatus*

Resident breeder (2)

As far as this species is concerned the population appears to be quite stable. Reports came in from 26 different locations during the year. Nesting activity was noted at Netherton, Mollicar Wood, Gledholt, Elland G.P., Horbury Wyke, Hepworth and Hill Top. Flock sizes varied from high single figures to 33 at Honley on 19th July which presumably consisted of several family parties, 20+ at Golcar on 5th October and 20+ at Shepley with a mixed tit flock on 12th October.

Willow Tit *Parus montanus*

Resident breeder (1)

The only confirmed breeding record was at Bretton C.P. with one carrying food to the nest on 16th May (B.A.). However, with the report of two adults with three juveniles at Denby Dale on 11th July one may safely assume that breeding took place there (T.M.). Singles were reported at a number of locations i.e. Caythorne and Silkstone on 4th August, Golcar on 9th September, Shaw Wood on 1st October and Scammonden on 5th October. One or occasionally two birds were reported from Royd Moor, Scout Dike, Dunford Bridge and Ingbirchworth during September and October. The only figures in excess of these being six at Bretton C.P. on 6th December and five on 14th (D.M.P.).

Coal Tit *Parus ater*

Resident breeder (3)

A single in the Longwood Valley on 1st January, five at Yatcholme on 21st April and one at Blackmoorfoot on 12th June were the only reports in the first half of the year. From September onwards records were more plentiful but even then there were no noteworthy flocks, the largest being seven at Blackmoorfoot on 28th September and five at Almondbury on 18th October. Other reports consisted mainly of singles in gardens.

Blue Tit *Parus caeruleus*

Resident breeder (5)

Very common throughout the area and seen during every month. Autumn flocks in seven woods in the Silkestone area on 4th August totalled between 80 and 100 birds, mostly juveniles (SH)

Great Tit *Parus major*

Resident breeder (4)

Once again reports tended to consist of garden visitors as one would expect. No large autumn flocks were noted, the largest number on one day being the 13 caught and ringed at Blackmoorfoot on 16th August.

Nuthatch *Sitta europaea*

Resident breeder (1)

There appears to have been yet another very welcome increase in the distribution of this species. Records have come in from 19 different locations with Bretton C.P. proving to be the stronghold with sightings during every month of the year and with at least one pair fledging young. Other successful breeding sites were Big Valley, Cawthorne, Farnley, Meller Wood, Mollicar Wood and at Thongsbridge where there were two nests found, the young from one nest fledging on 5th June (DM). During the winter months visits to bird tables were reported from Almondbury and Penny Spring Wood.

Treecreeper *Certhia familiaris*

Resident breeder (2-3)

Most reports were of singles but there were two birds at Almondbury on 23rd January, at least three at Woodsome on 28th February and four at Bretton C.P. during November and December. Nesting activity is somewhat difficult to establish but from the records received (28 different locations) this species appears to have increased in the Club area. Displaying birds were active at Bulcliffe Wood on 7th April and at Bretton C.P. on 14th April. Birds were present in the following woods and may have bred: Cawthorne, Deffert Wood, Penny Spring Wood, Woodsome, Stones Wood and Elland G.P. An interesting observation came from Holmbridge where a bird visiting a garden was seen to climb the stonework on a house in its search for insects (HQ).

Jay *Garrulus glandarius*

Resident breeder (2)

The highest count this year was of 11 in Butternab Wood on 16th April (DM). Normal numbers were reported from Elland G.P. where three were present throughout the year. What could have been a family

party of five visited Blackmoorfoot on 22nd July. There were also regular visits of one or two birds at this locality, particularly during the second winter period. The species appears to be widely scattered throughout the area and is not averse to visiting gardens as one observer at Fixby noticed when one was seen feeding from a peanut feeder. Visible movement was noted at Dewsbury S.F. on 6th October with seven flying high in a southerly direction.

Magpie *Pica pica*
Resident breeder (4)

A very common species throughout the area. The peak number in the Rashcliffe Hill Rd. area was 14 (ICP). At Dewsbury S.F. flocks of over 30 were noted on 14th February, 7th April, 26th and 29th September, 5th October and 14th December (PRIIS). A pattern of behaviour which I have noted is that they will demolish a milk bottle top in order to get at the cream (don't always blame the Blue Tit). They have also learned how to get into the egg boxes left on doorsteps and, of course, consume the contents (DBA).

Jackdaw *Corvus monedula*
Resident breeder (4)

Whilst this species is abundant throughout the area the only three figure flocks noted were of c150 on farmland at Wooldale on 3rd January and 131 feeding with other corvids at Royd Moor on 3rd November.

Rook *Corvus frugilegus*
Resident breeder (5)

A count of nests in rookeries would be useful in the future. This year taking a sample of five revealed 52 nests at Cooper Bridge, 14 at Crosland Moor, 43 at Armitage Bridge, 76 at Berry Brow (MLD) and 6 at Silkstone (SH).

Carrion Crow *Corvus corone*
Resident breeder (3)

The 1995 Report contained information regarding an individual in Huddersfield Town Centre which had a considerable amount of white in its plumage. Once again on 31st March this year a similar looking bird was seen in the same area (MLD), could this be the same bird or are its genes being passed on to one of its offspring? There was a high flock count of 75+ on Wholestone Moor on 30th March (TP) then, in the second winter period at Scanmorden there were 23 on 10th October and 27 on 26th (JED).

Raven *Corvus corax*
Rare visitor

Two were seen in the Drystones area being mobbed by two Peregrines on 1st March (SH). Seven birds on 1st July were presumed to have been a family party, further sightings in this area were of a single on 12th July and two on 3rd August (GMC).

A single flew SE over Wincar Res. on 27th August (MN) and three were at this locality on 10th November, one of which flew towards Harden Res. and the other two towards Dunford Bridge (SH).

Starling *Sturnus vulgaris*

Resident breeder (5)

Very common and seen all year round with significant flocks in winter. Maximum numbers at Dewsbury S.F. were 200 on 22nd September, 560 in a field beside the floodbank on 18th December and 265 which flew W on 27th (PRIIS)

House Sparrow *Passer domesticus*

Resident breeder (5)

Whilst small numbers may be regularly seen in most areas there was some concern expressed by one observer that they seemed to have disappeared from the Holmbridge and Hinchcliffe Mill areas. There was no shortage at Lockwood, however, where between 20 and 40 birds were regularly seen during July. Reports commenting on behaviour have noted the adaptation to feeding from peanut baskets

Tree Sparrow *Passer montanus*

Resident breeder (2)

It was very pleasing to receive records of this threatened species from eleven different locations. There were six at Almondbury on 9th January with low single figures present in February, April and May. A flock of c12 was seen at Fulstone on 4th February. Two birds were seen at a nest hole in Denby Dale in April and two adults and two juveniles were present in June. At this same location ten were present on 10th October and two on 28th November (TM). At Royd House Farm a pair was seen carrying food on 1st June and three birds were seen there subsequently. Four were seen with a flock of House Sparrows in Shepley on 12th October and twelve were feeding near a poultry farm at Middlestown on 28th November (PS). The small resident population at Dewsbury S.F. produced a maximum count of 20 on 14th April, numbers then reduced to between four and six until August when ten were present on 10th and in November 16 on 26th (PRIIS)

Chaffinch *Fringilla coelebs*

Resident breeder (4)

During the first winter period some reasonable sized flocks were noted. Scammonden had c20 on 4th January and there were 10+ at Ingbirchworth on 7th (JED), in March there were 40 present in Slay Wood along with Brambling on 3rd (TP). Bretton C.P. held two flocks of c30 on 10th and c50 were seen at Denby Dale on 22nd (TM). The second winter period produced flocks of 20+ at Royd Moor on 4th October (JED), c50 in Shepley on 6th (TM) then, in November, c70 at Langsett on 10th, c30 at Scout Dike on 16th and c35 at Bretton C.P. on 27th (SH)

Brambling *Fringilla montifringilla*

Uncommon to common winter visitor

There were a good number of sightings during the first winter period with 12 at Digley from 3rd to 14th January and c30 there on 9th March (HQ). c30 were present at Scammonden on 4th January (JED), between 20 and 30 were present at Stubbin Clough from 14th January until 4th February (HQ) and at Windy Bank Wood the thirty seen on 14th January had increased to over fifty by 24th (TD). Of the 100 seen at Millmoor on 4th February 25 were still present on 16th April (DMP). During this period there were scattered reports of birds visiting gardens in ones and twos. The first autumn report was on 6th October when a male was seen with a flock of Chaffinch in Shepley (TM), numbers remained low

however, with nine at Blackmoorfoot on 7th November (MLD), 12 at Bretton C.P. on 27th (SH) and in excess of 20 at Whitley Common on 16th December (DHP) being the only records.

Greenfinch *Carduelis chloris*

Resident breeder (4)

Small numbers, mainly in gardens, formed the bulk of the reports during the first part of the year. In September 42 were feeding on the riverbank at Dewsbury S.F. on the 15th, numbers then fluctuated until late November when 30 were feeding in the same place on 30th. To the south of Rugby Wood there was a large flock of c150 on 30th September (JED) and between 50 and 60 were at Farnley Tyas on 7th October (DS).

Goldfinch *Carduelis carduelis*

Resident breeder (2 - 3)

There were between 17 and 31 at Blackmoorfoot from 7th January until 25th when they were forced out by bad weather. By 11th February 20 had returned and there were then between 9 and 18 daily until 13th May. Two or three were seen regularly from 1st July until 30th September when numbers started to fluctuate again, reaching a maximum of 23 on 27th and 28th October. A pair bred near Lake House (MLD).

Similar numbers to the above were also noted at Bretton C.P. During January Huddersfield Town Centre proved attractive and held six on 24th, 15 on 29th, 20 on 30th and 12 on 31st. Flocks tended to appear in autumn and c40 were feeding with Yellowhammer and House Sparrow at Broadstones on 15th October (DM). Numbers at Scammonden varied greatly from ten on 3rd August, to 32 on 25th September and 29 on 11th October (JED, SH). Eight in Shepley on 12th September remained and were seen daily until the end of the year (DBa).

Siskin *Carduelis spinus*

Resident breeder (1) Uncommon winter visitor

During the first winter period all records were in single figures. In January seven were at Gunthwaite on 7th and a single was in Huddersfield Town Centre on 28th. The only February record was of one in song in Almondbury on 25th. In March, five were seen at Golcar on 9th and two at Crimble Clough on 17th. At Yateholme the five seen on 3rd April (JED) had increased to c30 by 5th (DWB). Some records which would perhaps be questionable regarding breeding were two in a garden at Holmbridge on 30th June (HQ) and six at Dovestones on 1st May which were also seen much later in the month (GMC). Singles were seen at Blackmoorfoot on 5th, 11th and 19th July (MLD). During the second winter period incoming birds began to arrive on 10th November with four at Langsett, then on 24th there were 37+ at Elland G.P. (SH) and on 27th c 70 were by the R. Dearne below Bretton C.P. with another five at the western end of the park. Numbers at this last mentioned site reduced to around 30 by 7th December (KW et al)

Linnet *Carduelis cannabina*

Resident breeder (3)

A single in the Broadstones area on 24th February (DBu) was the forerunner to what turned out to be an excellent breeding season in an area that is emerging as a stronghold for the species. About seven pairs bred and the area held 30+ adults/immatures during July, after which numbers dropped to 14 on 3rd August. Once again Denby Dale held good numbers. 30 on 14th March had increased to c100 by 22nd, these birds remaining until 26th April (TM). Blackmoorfoot, as usual did not feature until August

when there was a maximum of 30 on 30th, during September there were 45+ on two dates and in October 60+ were seen on 18th, 35 on 20th, 42 on 22nd and 20+ on 23rd. These were exceptions however and on most dates numbers were down to single figures, the last being six on 18th November (MLD). To the south of Rusby Wood there was a large gathering of c250 on 30th September (JED). Post-breeding numbers at Dewsbury S.F. rose to 120 by late July and remained high during August attaining a maximum of 158 on 3rd September, flocks of 20 to 30 were regularly seen during November increasing to around 40 in December (PRIIS).

Twite *Carduelis fluvirestris*

Resident breeder (2 - 3) Partial migrant

The first report was of a single at Digley on 8th April (TM) and by 10th there was a flock of 10 (HQ). Numbers appeared to be considerably down on previous years and the only reports received were of two at Dovestones on 20th April (GMC), three at Oxygrains Beck on 3rd May (JED), eight at Deer Hill on 20th June and two at Wessenden Head on 21st (MLD). There was a little improvement in the second half of the year, and 35+, including young begging for food were seen at Deer Hill on 28th August and 32 were present on 15th September (MLD).

Redpoll *Carduelis flammea*

Resident breeder (2) Uncommon winter visitor

During the first winter period most reports were of small numbers and included two at Royd Moor on 7th January (JED), eight at Golear Tip on 11th (KW), five (mealies) at Denby Dale on 18th and ten (mealies) on 31st (TM), eight at Blackmoorfoot on 24th and 30 in Beaumont Park on 29th (DMO). Several single figure reports then came in from Butternut Wood: Fifty and Scapegoat Hill but Bretton C.P. managed 20+ on 10th March, all of which were mealies (SH). The largest flock seen was on 3rd April with c40 at Yatcholine (JED), and the final sighting was of two at Thornton Lodge on 21st May (MLD). There were no further reports during the breeding season. During the second winter period numbers never attained double figures, there were two at Bretton C.P. on 6th October (JED, BA), eight at Blackmoorfoot on 18th November, then in December there were two at this location on 22nd (MLD) and two feeding on Birch in Shepley on 27th (TM).

Crossbill *Loxia curvirostris*

Irregular breeder (1) Uncommon passage visitor.

Two records only of this species, the first from Dovestones on 4th April with two males and four females (GS, GMC) and the second of a male near the The Fench on 21st August (PC).

Bullfinch *Pyrrhula pyrrhula*

Resident breeder (2)

Very well reported from 27 different locations during every month of the year. The largest gathering was of 15 at Denby Dale on 4th January (TM). Many reports came from gardens where very often both males and females were present and later a good number of juveniles were noted in the company of adults.

Hawfinch *Coccothraustes coccothraustes*

Scarce to uncommon visitor

As is usual with this species the records came from the east of the Club area: Bretton C.P. and Clayton West. At the former site a single was seen on 23rd October and three were present on 30th October and 10th November, three days later a single was seen frequenting Hornbeam and Ash near the Lower Lake (BCo, SG et al). The Clayton West sighting was of a bird feeding on sunflower seeds on a bird table (SK)

Snow Bunting *Plectrophenax nivalis*

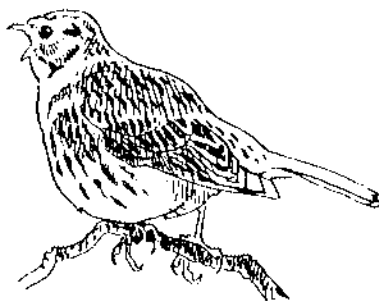
Scarce winter visitor

On 1st November a male and a female flew W along the south bank at Blackmoorfoot at 0810 hrs (MJD). This is the third record for the site.

Yellowhammer *Emberiza citrinella*

Resident breeder (3)

The only reports of winter flocks came from Denby Dale with 30 on 31st January and a peak of 120 on 14th March (TM) (this flock size equals the previous record at Clayton West in December 1981). The CBC plot in Shepley had ten territories between April and June (DBa). There were at least another twelve locations with one or two singing males from March through to late June.



Reed Bunting *Emberiza schoeniclus*

Resident breeder (2)

January records included three from gardens, Shepley on 16th and a different garden a quarter of a mile away on 29th, and Shelley on 27th. Also in January a single was present at Blackmoorfoot on 16th, 18th and 21st. This latter site produced the only February sighting with a single on 26th. Birds in song were noted from late March onwards at Deer Hill, Denby Dale (two) and Elland G.P. (two increasing to three). Bilberry Res, Dewsbury S.F., Dovestones and Scout Dike all had at least one pair in residence during the breeding season.

ADDITION TO 1995 List

Corn Bunting *Mihario calandra*

A male was singing to the south of the reservoir at Broadstones on 25th June 1995. (SH). This was the only report of a bird which is now almost extinct in the Club area.

List of Contributors (With apologies for any omissions)

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The following have also passed on records: Shepley Bird and Wildlife Group, R.S.P.B. Office (Denby Dale), In Focus Office (Denby Dale) and, where there was an overlap in recording areas Halifax Birdwatchers Club, Greater Manchester Bird Club, Barnsley Bird Study Group

FIELD TRIPS REPORT 1996

Grantley Hall and Gouthwaite Reservoir

21 January

The woods at Grantley were alive with roving tit flocks, **Siskin** and **Redpoll**. Also seen were **Great Spotted Woodpecker**, **Dipper**, **Woodcock** and **Brambling** as well as a Roe Deer. At Gouthwaite we saw a **Little Owl**, a male **Green-winged Teal**, **White-fronted Goose**, **Goldeneye**, **Goosander** and a flock of **Twite**. The day was rounded off with an aerial dual involving crows, a **Buzzard** and a **Sparrowhawk**.

Around 50 species in all were seen during the course of the day.

Tregaron Bog

25 February

Quality rather than quantity regarding species today (35). Several **Buzzards** were seen and a stunning male **Hen Harrier** before we set eyes on our first **Red Kite**. Later in the day we saw a pair of **Hen Harrier** and more **Red Kite** including the skydancing display. We also saw **Raven**, **Bullfinch**, **Snipe**, **Willow** and **Long-tailed Tit** and **Reed Bunting**. We then went to visit a kite feeding station and on arrival were met by the sight of around 15 kites within a few metres of us as well as more **Buzzards** - a brilliant end to the day.

Lytham-St Annes, Ribble Marshes and Seaforth Dock

24 March

At the north shore we saw several **Black-tailed Godwit** and a **Common Scoter**. At the Ribble were an excellent selection of waders, ducks and geese including **Pintail**, **Whimbrel** and **Ruff**. An early summer visitor was seen in the form of a **Wheatear**. A real surprise was a **Lanner Falcon** which gave excellent views - an escape obviously.

At Seaforth we saw '**red-headed**' **Smew**, **Red-breasted Merganser**, **Scaup** and a **Merlin**.

A good day with around 50 species in total.

Leighton Moss
21 April

Steady rain all day did not stop us enjoying the visit. The sea-hides had **Pintail** and **Common Sandpiper** and those who walked to Jenny Brown's Point were treated to a **Spoonbill**. On the reserve were plenty of warblers, **Marsh Harrier**, **Little Gull**, **Bearded Tit**, **Treecreeper** and a perched **Sparrowhawk**. 57 species were seen during the course of the day.

Swinefleet, Blacktoft Sands and Spurn Point
19 May

Reduced numbers participating in this trip - the last before the summer recess - meant that cars were used rather than the usual coach. Despite the weather, which was generally dry but dull and overcast with only occasional sunshine and unseasonally cold, a total of 73 species were clocked up on the day. 'Birdline NE' informed us that **Dotterel** were to be found on the Swinefleet pea fields and so we started our day's activities at that site where a flock of upwards of 25 birds were duly located. This site also produced several good views of **Corn Bunting**.

Spurn Point could have been better at this time of year but we managed to see **Little Tern**, **Whinchat** and **Redstart** among the newly arriving summer visitors.

Blacktoft Sands Reserve is repaying the work that is being put into it now and here we had sightings of a whole host of summer visitors including **Garganey**, **Green** and **Common Sandpipers**, **Greenshank** and **Avocet**. Warblers present included **Reed**, **Sedge** and **Garden** plus both **Whitethroat** and **Lesser Whitethroat** but, for those of the group that stayed until late in the evening the bird of the day was probably a reeling **Grasshopper Warbler**.

Warncliffe Crag
13 June

A good turn out of around 25 for the special trip to see **Nightjar**. As we waited for dusk we saw a few warblers, **Tree Pipit** and quite a few **Woodcock**. It was not until 2145 hrs that we heard the churring of **Nightjars** and eventually we all had quite good views of this strange bird of the night.

Spurn Point
22 September

At last we caught Spurn on a classic migrant day - lots of birds (and birdwatchers!). No one saw all of the rarities but they included **Wryneck**, two **Booted Warbler**, **Icterine Warbler** (within three feet), **Bluetthroat**, **Firecrest** and **Ortolan** and **Rustic Bunting**. Add to these 'common' birds such as **Little Stint**, **Redstart**, **Whinchat**, **Ring Ouzel**, a selection of warblers and **Spotted Flycatcher**, **Siskin** and **Tree Sparrow** and the day was indeed memorable.

Flamborough and Filey
20 October

At South Landing we saw **Blackcap** and **Ring Ouzel** and at North Landing we had good views of both **Short-eared** and **Little Owl** (perched). The highlight of the day was a lovely **Shorelark** which showed down to a few metres. At Filey Dams we saw **Green Sandpiper**, but at the Brigg the weather was turning against us so after a brief stop we set off to Thorne to see a purported rarity - a **Cattle Egret**. We had excellent views of the bird as it fed (amongst cattle) and also in flight. A great end to a good day.

Knott-end on Sea, Rossal Point and Pennington Flash
24 November

A day of appalling weather - but we still managed to see some good birds and 64 species. Sleet and snow greeted us at Knott-end along with the news that the **Kentish Plover** had flown off five minutes before our arrival. However, there were impressive wader flocks over which a **Peregrine** hunted. At Pennington we saw two **Long-eared Owls** roosting and as usual the feeding stations were entertaining with **Marsh Tit**, **Jay**, a **Brambling** and a **Sparrowhawk**.

Once again a big thank-you to all the birdwatchers who have attended the field meetings this year.

David Woodhouse.

RINGING REPORT

No ringing was undertaken during the first winter period, mainly as a consequence of the inclement weather, but also as I was on a ringing expedition in The Gambia during the whole of February.

As with last year, little time was available for nest finding during the summer months. It is pleasing to report, however, that a total of 89 pulli were ringed, this consisting of the following: Mallard (2 Blackmoorfoot), Dipper (5 Hill Top), Dunnock (4 Blackmoorfoot), Blackbird (12 Blackmoorfoot), Song Thrush (8 Blackmoorfoot), Mistle Thrush (4 Blackmoorfoot), Willow Warbler (6 Blackmoorfoot), Chaffinch (25 Blackmoorfoot), Greenfinch (19 Blackmoorfoot) and Goldfinch (4 Blackmoorfoot).

When looking back at recoveries of passerine pulli ringed in the Huddersfield area it is interesting to note that only a single Magpie and two Swallows have ever been recovered (several non-passerines, mainly Black-headed Gulls, have produced recoveries). Even more surprisingly, not a single bird has ever been retrapped following its fledging. This does not mean that the ringing of passerine pulli is a futile operation, far from it, it simply indicates that Huddersfield ringed pulli may still be out there awaiting recovery or retrapping.

Although no extended holiday was taken during the autumn period, favourable weather conditions did allow mist-netting on most available days. As a consequence a good number of birds were handled, including a welcome total of 209 Willow Warblers.

The generally inclement weather conditions during the second winter period were not conducive to the catching of birds and consequently no birds were handled at this time.

During the course of the year a total of 550 birds were ringed.

RINGING RECOVERIES

Key to Symbols and Terms used

Age:	1	Pullus (nestling or chick).
	2	Full-grown. Year of hatching quite unknown.
	3	Hatched during the calendar year of ringing.
	3J	As 3, but still in juvenile plumage.
	4	Hatched before calendar year of ringing, exact year unknown.
	5	Hatched during previous calendar year.
	6	Hatched before previous calendar year.
	8	Hatched three or more calendar years before year of ringing.
Sex:	M = Male	F = Female
Manner of recovery:		
	V	Caught or trapped and released with ring.
	VV	Ring number read in field or sight record of identifiable colour marks.
	X	Found dead or dying.
	XL	Found dead (not recent).
	†	Shot or killed by man.

All recoveries of five kilometers or more are published.

RECOVERIES OF HUDDERSFIELD RINGED BIRDS

Blue Tit

J336581	3J	17/07/95	Blackmoorfoot, near Huddersfield 53°37'N 1°52'W
	V	04/09/95	Blackmoorfoot
	X	26/04/96	Marsh, Huddersfield 53°39'N 1°48'W 6 Kms NNE

BIRDS RECOVERED IN HUDDERSFIELD

Canada Goose

Two colour ringed birds from Hay-a-Park, Knaresborough (54°01' N 1°27'W) on 04/07/95 were seen at Breiton C P, near Wakefield (53°37' N 1°34' W) on 29/02/96, having travelled 41 Km S.

Black-headed Gull

The colour ringed bird which commuted between Denmark (ringed on 13/04/86) and Blackmoorfoot (see *Birds in Huddersfield 1994*) was again present at Blackmoorfoot on 29/08/96. Full details are not given as any reported sightings between its last known visit to Blackmoorfoot (07/07/93) and 29/08/96 are not at hand. It is hoped that full details will be available for the next report.

Colour marked gulls

Details of the colour ringed Lesser Black-backed Gulls (6) and single Herring Gull mentioned in *Birds in Huddersfield 1995* have, unfortunately, not been forthcoming. During 1996 a further five colour ringed Lesser Black-backs were seen at Blackmoorfoot. As yet, details of these birds are still outstanding.

LOCAL RETRAPS AND RECOVERIES

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

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

TABLE 1 RETRAPS

	1yr	2yrs	3yrs	4yrs	5yrs	6yrs	Total
Blackbird	2					1	3
Willow Warbler		2					2
Blue Tit	4			1			5
Great Tit	2						2

TABLE 2 RECOVERIES

	1yr	2yrs	3yrs	Total
Maggie			1	1

RING TOTALS LIST - 1996

Mallard	2
Great Spotted Woodpecker	1
Swallow	2
Dipper	5
Wren	19
Duncock	20
Robin	30
Redstart	2
Blackbird	17
Song Thrush	9
Mistle Thrush	4
Sedge Warbler	1
Whitethroat	1
Blackcap	5
Chiffchaff	1
Willow Warbler	209
Goldcrest	1
Blue Tit	117
Great Tit	51
Treecreeper	1
Chaffinch	26
Greenfinch	22
Goldfinch	4
GRAND TOTAL	550

M L Denton

Two decades of roosting gulls at Blackmoorfoot

For a number of years I had been intrigued by the number of gulls which, during the winter months, flew over Shepley (SE 195100) at about one hour before sunset and always in a West to NorthWesterly direction. It was obvious that they were going to roost, but where? The answer became obvious when, on becoming Recorder for Huddersfield Birdwatchers' Club in 1994, I was privileged to take possession of all existing records. These included regular gull counts made at Blackmoorfoot since 1976. M.L. Denton had produced a book "Blackmoorfoot Reservoir 1974 - 84" whereby all species appearing in that period received some attention. For the purpose of this article I am concentrating on gulls roosting at this location. A paper by R.A.O. Hickling (Bird Study Vol 24), "Inland Wintering of Gulls in England and Wales 1973" included data from Blackmoorfoot which I found invaluable for this study.

The immediate problem was which species to include. Hickling had taken records of Black-headed *Larus ridibundus*, Common *L. canis*, Herring *L. argentatus*, Lesser Black-backed *L. fuscus* and Great Black-backed *L. marinus* and I was tempted to do the same. However, I found that during some years, out of necessity, the Black-headed and Common Gulls had been counted collectively. The analysis of data will therefore concentrate on the three larger species.

Having collected the data I wished to establish the peak month for each species, expecting these to occur at roughly the same time. There are obviously fluctuations annually, but, having twenty years of data, the mean for each month should give a reasonable estimate of the peak period.

Interestingly, both Herring and Great Black-backed have an almost parallel pattern peaking in January, generally being absent between April and September. Lesser Black-backed on the other hand are present throughout the year in small numbers and peak between the end of September to mid-October.

The enquiry into wintering gull roosts conducted by members of the British Trust for Ornithology has been carried out on a ten year basis since 1953. As a winter visitor the number of Lesser Black-backed Gulls has rapidly increased from 165 individuals in 1953 to an estimated 70000 in the mid-80's (Hickling, 1986). Lesser Black-backs are basically migratory, the main months for southerly migration being August - October, but some birds begin to return north by November or December (Cramp and Simmons, 1982).

The explosion of gulls since World War II has often been the subject of great concern, therefore one of the objectives of this paper is to try to establish if numbers have stabilised, or are they now declining. As the earliest complete figures for peak counts at Blackmoorfoot are for 1976 I decided to take this as the base year. Subsequent years will be taken as a percentage of that year.

Herring Gull *L. argentatus*

	76	77	78	79	80	81	82	83	84	85	86	87	88	89	90	91	92	93	94	95
Jan	1000	150	300	70	n.c.	400	236	164	176	609	531	183	244	71	386	n.c.	141	458	766	478
%	100	15	30	7		40	23.6	16.4	17.6	60.9	53.1	18.3	24.4	7.1	38.6		41	45.8	76.6	47.8
Rank	18	8	7	1		10	5	3	4	16	15	11	6	2	2		12	13	17	14
difference	17	6	1	0		5	1	4	2	5	0	6	11	5	3		3	3	1	1
cd	289	16	16	9		25	1	16	16	49	25	9	16	121	25		9	9	9	1

The peak month for this species is, on average, January. In the above table one can see the enormous variation in numbers from year to year and one could be led to believe that there had been a dramatic drop in numbers. By applying one of the accepted statistical tests it is possible to state with a great degree of confidence whether this apparent drop is significant or not. The years in this 20 year period are in sequence and thus correctly ranked, however there were two years when no count took place so

the rankings would be from 1 to 18. Similarly the numbers counted can be expressed as a percentage of the 1976 figures and ranked from 1 to 18 with the smallest percentage having a ranking of 1 and the largest 18. The test now involves finding the difference in the rankings in each column, squaring it and taking the sum of the squares and applying:

Spearman Rank Correlation Coefficient formula $r_s = 1 - \frac{6\sum d^2}{n(n^2 - 1)}$ to test the significance of the data

The difference between the rankings of the years and the rankings of the percentage figures is indicated by 'd'.

Sum of squares of differences $\sum d^2 = 692$,

As there were no counts in 1980 and 1991 the number of data 'n' = 18.

Substituting this data into the formula $r_s = 1 - \frac{4152}{5508}$, $r_s = 0.246$,

Using the table of Spearman Rank Correlation Coefficient values, for n = 18 this figure is less than 0.399 at P = 0.05 and less than 0.564 at P = 0.01 using a one-tailed test and whilst it is positive, suggesting a slightly upward trend, it is not significant i.e. there is no significant change in the roosting population of Herring Gulls

Great Black-backed Gull *L. marinus*

	76	77	78	79	80	81	82	83	84	85	86	87	88	89	90	91	92	93	94	95
January	575	n.c.	160	200	52	180	96	152	114	202	229	272	137	137	182	92	152	169	278	253
n	100		27.8	34.8	9.0	31.3	16.7	26.4	19.8	35.4	19.8	47.3	21.8	23.8	31.6	16.0	26.4	29.4	48.3	44.0
Rank	19		9	13	1	11	3	17	4	14	15	17	5	5	12	2	7	10	18	16
difference	18		7	10	3	6	3	14	4	5	5	6	6	7	2	13	8	7	0	3
d ²	324		49	100	9	36	9	196	16	25	25	36	42	49	4	169	64	49	0	9

Once again the peak month for this species is January and will be dealt with in a similar manner. Numbers appear to have dropped considerably since 1976 but is this drop serious?

No counts in 1977 gives the number of data in the 20 year period as 'n' = 19 and $\sum d^2 = 1031$

Substituting this data into the formula $r_s = 1 - \frac{6186}{6498}$, $r_s = 0.048$,

Using the table of Spearman Rank Correlation Coefficient values, for n = 19 this figure is less than 0.388 at P = 0.05 and less than 0.549 at P = 0.01 using a one-tailed test and whilst it is positive, suggesting a slightly upward trend, it is not significant i.e. there is no significant change in the roosting population of Great Black-backed Gulls.

Each of the above results is much as I would have expected and it can quite confidently be stated that over the past 20 years there has been no significant change in the roosting populations of either species.

Lesser Black-backed Gull *L. fuscus*

	76	77	78	79	80	81	82	83	84	85	86	87	88	89	90	91	92	93	94	95
October	325	550	250	253	174	134	176	163	202	181	181	147	171	252	116	940	176	1007	1656	656
n	100	169	78.2	76.9	53.5	41.2	54.2	49.2	62.2	55.9	56.3	42.2	114.2	77.5	134.2	286.2	115.7	109.8	509.5	201.8
Rank	12	16	11	9	4	3	5	3	8	6	7	2	13	10	15	18	14	19	20	17
difference	11	14	8	5	1	5	2	5	1	4	4	10	0	4	0	2	3	1	1	3
d ²	121	196	64	25	1	25	4	25	1	16	16	100	0	16	0	4	9	1	1	9

From the data obtained, even though large numbers start building up in September, the peak numbers at the Blackmoorfoot gull roost over the 20 year period from 1976 to 1995 was, on average, October. This month will therefore be taken as the base from which the statistical calculations are taken. As there were no omissions during the 20 year period there is a full data set. Using the above formula the following results have been obtained:

$$\sum d^2 = 634$$

$$r_s = 1 - \frac{3804}{7600}, \quad r_s = 0.499$$

Referring to the table of Spearman Rank Correlation Coefficient values, with $n = 20$, $r_s = 0.499$ is greater than 0.377 at $P = 0.05$ and less than 0.534 at $P = 0.01$ using a one-tailed test and is highly significant, i.e. there has certainly been a positive change in the roosting population of Lesser Black-backed Gulls.

Conclusion

It should be noted that in the five years prior to 1976 the numbers of both Herring and Great Black-backed Gulls at Blackmoorfoot were considerably higher than now, the decrease coincided with the closing down of a number of the local refuse tips (Denton, 1985).

Whilst the roosting populations of these two species have remained stable over the past 20 years, it would seem that the roosting population of Lesser Black-backed was still increasing up until 1994. Since then a large landfill site, Bromley Farm Tip at Denby Dale, has been in the process of winding down and may not prove as attractive to these larger gulls. It remains to be seen whether this will have any effect on the roosting gulls in the Club area.

In the course of my research and concentrating on Lesser Black-backed, it would appear that numbers at the Blackmoorfoot Reservoir roost start building up from August onwards, further research could reveal a change of pattern but the question to ask then is "what is the cause of this change?"

Inevitably a study of this nature raises far more questions than answers. Have the birds come in to roost from one particular area? where do they disperse to on leaving the roost? Are the numbers of Lesser Black-backed Gulls arriving in our area earlier than they were?

I hope that the Club will still be able to provide members who are sufficiently dedicated to count gulls in the future. This has not only provided me with some fascinating statistics to work on but could in the future prove to be of national importance.

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David Barrans July 1997

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