



Huddersfield Birdwatchers' Club

Birds in Huddersfield

2018



Birds in Huddersfield 2018 is a publication of Huddersfield Birdwatchers' Club and the latest in an unbroken series of annual reports produced by the Club since our formation in 1966. It is based upon records of bird sightings submitted and surveys undertaken over the year by Club members and other volunteer birdwatchers.

Cover artwork: **Reed Bunting (Stuart Brocklehurst).**

Stuart Brocklehurst is a wildlife artist and printmaker and been providing the artwork for our covers for 30 years. You can see more of his work on his social media sites:

www.stuartbrocklehurstprints.blogspot.com

www.facebook.com/stuartbrocklehurstprints

Rear cover photograph: **Long-tailed Duck (Nick Mallinson)**

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Birds in Huddersfield

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CONTENTS

	Page
List of photographs	1
Foreword by the Club President	2
About Huddersfield Birdwatchers' Club	3
2018: The birding year	5
Notes on the Classified List	12
The Classified List 2018	14
Escaped/introduced species	117
Corrections & additions to previous reports	118
Earliest and latest dates of summer migrants	119
Latest and earliest dates of winter migrants	120
Contributors	121
Census of rookeries in the Huddersfield area 2018	122
A review of the birds seen in a New Mill garden between 1993 and 2018	126
A Woodlark at Pule Hill, Marsden	133
Thirty years of report covers	135
Thirty years – thirty covers	141
Book review	144
The Huddersfield List to December 2018	145
Reporting and recording sensitive bird species	156
Index to Classified List	158
Club Officers	161
Map of the Huddersfield recording area	163

PHOTOGRAPHS

		Page
Long-tailed Duck	Nick Mallinson	Rear cover
White-fronted Goose	Nick Mallinson	
Garganey	Nick Mallinson	
Smew	Dr. Tim Melling	
Great White Egret	Dr. Tim Melling	
Oystercatcher	David Pennington	
Ringed Plover	David Pennington	
Little Ringed Plover	Nick Mallinson	
Turnstone	David Pennington	
Green Sandpiper	David Pennington	
Mediterranean Gull	Nick Mallinson	
Cuckoo	Nick Mallinson	
Barn Owl	Reg Senior	
Great Spotted Woodpecker	Reg Senior	
Hooded Crow	Nick Mallinson	
Woodlark	??????????	
Treecreeper	Reg Senior	
RingOuzel	David Pennington	
Mistle Thrush	Reg Senior	
Redstart	David Pennington	
Hawfinch	David Pennington	
Woodlark	Denise Shields	

FOREWORD BY THE CLUB PRESIDENT

As all members are aware, the Club has an excellent track record when it comes to publications. The major contribution that the Club made to ornithology in 2018 was the publishing of *An Account of the Birds of the Huddersfield District* by Seth Lister Mosley in e-book form on the Club's website. SLM's publication first appeared as supplements which were privately published by the author in 1915.

The importance of such a publication cannot be overstated, as without it the modern-day birdwatcher would be completely in the dark regarding the numbers and distribution of the species involved at that time. An article by Mike Pinder (see page 127) outlines a number of species which have undertaken population changes in the interim. In this respect, by publishing the annual report, the Club is allowing the people who 'follow in our footsteps' to better appreciate and understand the distribution and status of species during the period.

For several years now I have 'chirped on', if a birdwatcher can use that fraise, about the usefulness of records and how they can be used, not only to supply members with information, but also as archival documents. The article by Chris Abell in this report is a case in point. Chris, along with his wife, moved to their current house in 1992 and records of the comings and goings of the bird-life over the years have been religiously documented in notebooks. The wealth of information gathered over these years has now been analysed, and the detailed article on page 129 is a testament to Chris's dedication to detail. A break-down of all the species encountered, along with this article, will appear on the Club website.

In the 2017 report I wrote "For a good number of years the front cover of the Annual Report has been enlivened with an illustration by Stuart Brocklehurst". Little did I realise at the time that this year's cover of a Reed Bunting would be the 30th consecutive year that Stuart has kindly supplied the Club with a linocut to enhance its appearance. Stuart's first cover, which obviously appeared in 1989, was of a Kestrel. This isn't a record, as Robert Gillmor has been illustrating the Berkshire Report covers since 1955, so he has a good few years head start on Stuart. Given that there can't be that many clubs with the longevity of ours, however, I don't think that there will be that many other artists who can claim the same. For a good number of years Stuart has not only supplied us with the report cover, but he has also made available a copy which the Club has raffled amongst the membership. The 2017 cover, Starling murmuration, raised £62 for Club funds. Stuart is to be thanked wholeheartedly for continuing to enhance the front cover of our reports with his excellent illustrations and also for supplying a copy for the raffle. Stuart has kindly produced an article outlining the painstaking procedure required to produce such a cover (see page 136).

The behind-the-scenes running of the Club tends to go unnoticed by members, simply because it is undertaken by a dedicated team who carry out their duties with little fuss. The continued efforts of officials, namely Chris Abell (Secretary), Alf King (Indoor Meetings Organiser & Web Site Manager), Nick Mallinson (Recorder), Trevor Doherty (Treasurer), Hazel Sill (Membership Secretary & Newsletter Editor), Roger Mitchell (Publicity Officer), and committee members David Sill, David Butterfield, Stephen Cook, and John Walker have guided the Club through another very productive year. I feel sure that members will thank them wholeheartedly for continuing to run the Club in a smooth and efficient manner.

Mike Denton

ABOUT HUDDERSFIELD BIRDWATCHERS' CLUB

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

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

Members and other bird watching supporters are out and about throughout the year observing birds across the area and submitting records for analysis by our Recorder. We now have a wealth of data covering some 49 years, an invaluable source for studying the trends in local bird populations. The Club is the only organization in the area undertaking and publishing this kind of ornithological recording and *Birds in Huddersfield 2018* is the latest in an unbroken series of annual reports since the Club was formed.

From time to time we also publish more specific, one-off works, including in 2001 an *Atlas of the Breeding Birds of the Huddersfield Area*, in 2004 *Birds of Blackmoorfoot Reservoir 1985-2003* and in 2008 a major work *The Birds of the Huddersfield Area*, which reviewed the complete history of every species recorded in the area since records began, right up to modern times. In January 2017 we published another major work *A Natural History of Blackmoorfoot Reservoir, Huddersfield* by Mike Denton to commemorate our half-centenary in 2016/17. In 2018 we republished as an on-line digital 'e-book' *The Birds of the Huddersfield District*, first issued by S. L. Mosley in 1915 – this was a landmark book in both local and national ornithology and we hope to bring it to a wider audience to appreciate its importance.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Simply contact any member of the Committee - see page 161 or visit our website for more information.

www.huddersfieldbirdwatchersclub.co.uk



2018: THE BIRDING YEAR

2018 was memorable for two climatic episodes. The first was the short but brutal period in March which apart from affecting spring passage also had longer more serious repercussions for some resident species. The second was a period of drought during the summer which caused water levels to fall dramatically and led to some great wader records. It gives us a clue as to what just passes straight through our area when conditions are not so favourable.

The first few days of **January** saw strong south-westerly gales, torrential rain and 'Storm Eleanora'. A flock of 20 House Sparrows was seen at Rastrick on 1st and a Green Sandpiper was at Dewsbury SW; now an almost year-round venue at this site. A Caspian Gull visited Blackmoorfoot on 2nd and as colder, calmer conditions took over 37 Wigeon were on Broadstone Res. on 5th, the day that 150 Herring Gulls, the month's maximum, roosted at Blackmoorfoot, with the following day the Caspian Gull again being seen, this time with a Yellow-legged Gull. Between 5th and 12th some 2,887 Pink-footed Geese passed over the area, Whooper Swan numbers were low with 12 at Ingbirchworth being the maximum. More notable wildfowl counts over this period were 142 Teal at Dewsbury SW; 17 Goldeneye at Horbury Strands/Wyke (a portent of advancing weather?); one or two Pochard and two Pintail at Ringstone Edge on 10th. The highest Redwing count (150) came on 6th, from close to the Tesco supermarket in Town, of all places. The 7th was a busy day all round, four Chiffchaff were at Horbury SW, along with 12 Pied and eight Grey Wagtails. In the stubble at Thurgory Lane a flock of 40 Skylark were feeding together with no less than 50 Yellowhammer, and a flock of 100 Lesser Redpoll containing four Mealies was present at the High Hoyland game crop. On this same date the first Little Egret of the year visited the River Calder at Dewsbury SW and the following day (8th) saw another at Bretton Park.

As milder weather returned on the usual SW winds there were some good counts of Lapwing around with the largest (c.600) around Broadstone Res. Cormorants were also much in evidence at a number of locations and a couple of Peregrines were seen over higher ground, as were two Stonechat. On 15th, along with very heavy rain, another month's maximum, this time 350 Fieldfare, were also at Broadstone Res. The following day brought the first snow of the year which lasted for a week. Just a single record of Woodcock for the month was had, one at Cawthorne on 18th. The final week then brought unseasonal much higher temperatures. The highest Reed Bunting count (19) came from a Marsden garden. At Whitley Edge a flock of 108 Golden Plover were feeding on 25th with this same date producing 1,000 Starlings at Ingbirchworth Moor and 120 Rooks in the same area. Two Barnacle Geese departed W from March Haigh Res., a Red Kite was seen flying up the Colne Valley on 26th and another was at Blackmoorfoot on 29th and these brought, along with a hailstorm on 31st, a generally uneventful month to a close.

Wintery conditions certainly saw us through the first week of **February** with some snow showers and sub-zero temperatures. On 1st a flock of 600 Lapwing, 300 Golden Plover and 60 Carrion Crow were in the Whitley Common area and a Caspian Gull visited Blackmoorfoot again. This same place hosted a Stonechat the following day when a maximum 500 Fieldfare were at Broadstone Res., 15 Long-tailed Tits made a nice count at Colne Bridge SP and three Snipe were flushed from a field at South Crosland. Redwing numbers were low this month and never reached more than 40. To Blackmoorfoot again on 3rd when two Shelduck were on the water and the day after Ingbirchworth Res. provided the first Oystercatcher of the year. A herd of 11 Whooper Swans flew over Crosland Moor and landed on Blackmoorfoot on 5th and a Peregrine flew high N over Skelmanthorpe. A Red Kite flew N over Carlecotes Ponds on 6th, occasional Merlin were being recorded over higher ground and Goldcrests were seen on garden feeders at both Almondbury and Meltham. Another good count of Wigeon, 78 this time, was present at Broadstone Res. Three Hawfinch appeared at Silkstone Common on 6th and at Cannon Hall an exceptional run of records

began on 7th. This same day at Blackmoorfoot some 30 Meadow Pipits and the roosting Black-headed Gull count reached a winter's maximum of 6,500 individuals. Back to the well populated Whitley Edge for another impressive count, this time 3,000 Starling on 8th.

Another change in the weather then ensued over the next ten days with a further spell of mainly south-westerlies occasionally nearing gale force along with much rain and wintery showers. In fact things remained pretty quiet until the first Curlew of the year went NW over Blackmoorfoot on 16th and 50 Siskin were at Riding Wood Res. A now familiar sight in our area, a Red Kite, was seen at Blackmoorfoot and a Grey Plover flew NE over Wards End, Marsden on 21st. Again, at Blackmoorfoot on the following day came the very satisfying discovery of a male Snow Bunting on the embankment and 20 Long-tailed Tit were seen feeding at Ingbirchworth Res. Yet another Red Kite was spotted as it flew NE over Scout Dike Res. on 23rd and no less than five Chiffchaff were present at Horbury SW. A few Skylark were now returning and up to 22 Reed Bunting fed in a Marsden garden. The weather conditions then took a turn for the worse and although a very welcome White-fronted Goose was at Ingbirchworth Res. on 24th and 25th, whether through a lack of birds or a lack of observers that was the only bird of note. With temperatures well below freezing, heavy snow and even blizzards on a gale force Easterly on the last day, the month drew to a close.

Weather wise, **March** opened worse than the previous month had ended. 'The Beast from the East' was truly here and hardly surprising that most of the early records were not of 'flyovers'. The 2nd produced 11 Shoveler at Bretton and the first Dunlin of the year was present at Dewsbury SW. A thaw was underway by 6th, three Pochard were on Ladywood Lakes and a surviving Stonechat was on Meltham Cop. The now rare sight of a Kittiwake was a pleasant surprise at Blackmoorfoot on 7th where 100 Redwing were in Orange Wood on 9th and again one or two Merlin were seen passing over the area as were Peregrines. A nice flock of returning Meadow Pipits (c.50) was at Hade Edge on 10th with 18 Skylark at Blackmoorfoot the day after when the first migrant Chiffchaffs were seen in the area. From the 'ins' to the 'outs' with 60 Wigeon on Meal Hill Lake, a Jack Snipe at Wards End Farm on 11th and the only Knot of the year at Ringstone Edge on 13th, the bird remaining until 27th. There were more arrivals on 14th with the first Sand Martin at Blackmoorfoot, an early Wheatear at Wards End Farm, 14 Oystercatcher at Broadstone Res. and a Red Kite over Shepley. As the fairly mild but wintery weather was now coming to an end a herd of 40 Whooper Swans were on Ingbirchworth Res. on 15th and 16th, a few returning Redshank were recorded and the Starling numbers at Whitley Common decreased to 2,000.

Then the 'Mini Beast' arrived on 17th and five days of sub-zero temperatures and heavy snow were experienced but, apart from 32 Reed Bunting sheltering in the garden at Wards End Farm all was quiet. Spring like conditions prevailed thereafter and 500 Golden Plover were observed at Potter's Gate and eight Jays visited an Almondsbury garden on 24th. The first Twite was present at Deer Hill on 25th and the first Little Ringed Plovers arrived at Royd Moor Res. on the same day with four Woodcock at Carlecotes Ponds and seven Buzzard over Ramsden Clough. Another Red Kite appeared on 26th, this time over Marsden where a male Black Redstart was also seen on 28th. The 29th provided a male and female Garganey at Scout Dike Res., a female Common Scoter at Elland GP, six Grey Wagtails at Aspley and eight Buzzard which flew N over Rastrick. As another turbulent month drew to a close amongst some good Curlew counts the pick was the 44 present at Ingbirchworth at the month end.

After the first two cold days of **April** the weather was more typical for the next week or so. The first day Scout Dike Res. held ten Great Crested Grebe. By 3rd we started to witness a flurry of summer arrivals with first Swallow, then on 4th, Willow Warbler, Blackcap and Ring Ouzel. There was a flock of 80 Meadow Pipits at the Huntsman, Holmfirth on 5th with, on the following day, a Red Kite over Marsden and an Osprey at Dove Stone Res. with the first House Martin arriving on

7th. However, we weren't finished with our winter visitors just yet as Golden Plovers peaked at Ringstone Edge on 7th and a herd of 21 late Whooper Swans were on Langsett Res. on 7th and 8th. Another Red Kite appeared on 8th over Wessenden and a female-type Black Redstart visited Buckstones the same day. A male Common Scoter was on Winscar Res. on 9th and some other late leavers were a skein of 76 Pink-footed Geese which flew NW over Dewsbury SW on 11th and the last Redwings (10) at Netherton on 13th when both a Whimbrel and Black-tailed Godwit were at Ingbirchworth. At this point temperatures began to rise for the rest of the month, even up to 25° C on one day and with these came some typical April showers. However, the last Goldeneye hung on until 14th at Ingbirchworth Res. when an Osprey went N over Blackmoorfoot and a Red Kite was at Shepley with a Yellow Wagtail flying N over Marsden the following day.

More arrivals, this time in the form of a Whitethroat at Ingbirchworth and Sand Martin at Blackmoorfoot on 16th with Pied Flycatcher at Cliff Wood and Redstart at Oldfield on 17th. The following day brought the first Garden Warbler at Healey Mills/Kerry's NR with two more Red Kite circling over Blackmoorfoot on 19th when the first Grasshopper Warblers were seen at Broadstone Res. Next came Lesser Whitethroat and Cuckoo on 20th, the day a late Brambling was frequenting feeders in a Meltham garden. Double figure counts of Wheatear at several locations were now the norm with yet again two more Red Kite on 21st and again on 24th and 29th. Colne Bridge SW provided the first Sedge Warbler on 22nd with Swift and Whinchat appearing the following day. Reed Warbler then put in an appearance at Dewsbury SW on 25th when more unusually, a male Common Scoter appeared at Blackmoorfoot and even more so, a Hooded Crow which visited the Silkstone area. Two Common Tern stayed at Elland GP from 27th until 2nd May, another female-type Black Redstart was seen at Binn Edge on 28th and two Cuckoo at Brow Grains started a great run of records by modern standards. Five Crossbills were then seen on 29th at Ramsden Res. and as a very busy month drew to a close Dewsbury SW held up to 220 Swallows.

After heavy rain on the first two days of **May** conditions became mainly warm, even hot, and very dry. The two Common Tern were still at Elland GP till the 2nd and a Redstart was seen at New Mill. The first Marsh Harrier of the year, a 'cream crown' flew SE over Blackmoorfoot on 3rd the same day as a late Ring Ouzel was seen in the Little Don Valley, whilst the following day the first of six Hobby records for the month appeared at Shepley and four Sedge Warbler were singing at Horbury Strands/Wyke. The day after, on 5th, another Yellow-legged Gull visited Blackmoorfoot, a Grasshopper Warbler was at Deer Hill and an Osprey went NE over Wards End on 6th. There were plenty of Cuckoo records from a number of localities, 13 Blackcap were singing at Marsden, Garden Warbler records came in from 15 locations and two Tree Pipits were singing at Carlecotes Ponds. This last mentioned locality produced a Whimbrel on 7th and another flew NE over Wards End Farm. At Annat Royd Lane a nice count of 55 Stock Dove was had on 9th and from 10th one or two Little Ringed Plover were seen at Ingbirchworth, Langsett and Blackmoorfoot with a small number of Dunlin also seen around various reservoirs as water levels dropped. Staying with waders a few Redshank were recorded, mainly at Redbrook Res. and two more Whimbrel flew NE over Marsden. No less than 17 Reed Warbler were holding territories at Dewsbury SW and the first Spotted Flycatchers were seen at two locations in Marsden. With still no rain up to this point a female Yellow Wagtail took full advantage of the low water at March Haigh on 21st and an Arctic Tern visited Blackmoorfoot on the same date. A very welcome and unusual visitor to Ringstone Edge on 24th was a Turnstone and the following day, and again on 27th, the same location hosted another Yellow Wagtail. Also on this date a Spotted Flycatcher, now not so common a sight, was seen at Brownhill Res.

Eight Red Kite records were received during the month; this species has shown a welcome marked increase in records over the last decade. Finally, despite some heavy showers in the last week, they weren't enough to stop water levels from falling further, thereby adding to the optimism of a good wader passage.

June opened to warm dry weather with another wader taking advantage of the low water levels, this time a lovely summer plumaged Sanderling at Redbrook Res. and also at Blackmoorfoot on the same day six Common Scoter were present. Ringed Plover were also seen on three dates at Redbrook and on 5th a male Marsh Harrier moved E over Saddleworth Moor. Again plenty of Red Kites with nine records this month. The first Quail was heard on 11th at Royd Moor Res. another Marsh Harrier, this time at Broadstone Hill, appeared on 18th and another Common Scoter visited Blackmoorfoot on 23rd. By this time we had had a week with some heavy rain on SW winds and the main things of note were another Quail at Shepley and as temperatures rose to the high twenties an adult Mediterranean Gull in summer plumage appeared at Broadstone Res.

Turning to some of our scarcer breeding species again there were mixed results. On the negative side, there were none at all of Lesser Spotted Woodpecker, only one of confirmed breeding Pied Flycatcher and only four of Spotted Flycatcher. There was no records either of Tree Pipit having bred and there was no improvement in Whinchat numbers. Kingfisher too are still struggling, even more so following the harsh weather in March. However, more positively there were several male Nightjars 'churring' at two locations, Little Owl were recorded as having bred at five locations and Redstart at probably six. Tree Sparrow numbers seem to be continuing upwards, but Little Ringed Plover are just about holding their own, as are Reed Warbler. Lesser Whitethroat sightings were up and the number of Heron nests at Bretton Park increased to 67.

Most of **July** was dry and hot with temperatures reaching the high twenties on more than one occasion. Water levels continued to fall and again plenty of wader sightings resulted, though not so helpful for would be breeding Great Crested Grebes. Another Yellow-legged Gull visited Ingbirchworth and an Osprey flew N over Langsett Res. and then on 5th a pleasing seven Black-tailed Godwit were feeding at Ingbirchworth. Another Quail was at Shepley on 7th and up until this date there had been another five Cuckoo records. Six Red Kites were seen, there were more than the usual number of Redshank sightings and there were three Green Sandpipers records away from Dewsbury SW. Six Blackcap were at Denby Delph on 11th and a Pochard visited Ingbirchworth Res. on 12th, the same day as 14 Common Scoter were on Blackmoorfoot Res. and a post breeding gatherings of Meadow Pipits at Penistone increased to 300. Plenty of Little Egret, which now seems to have become the norm, were again in evidence, good numbers of Swallows (400) and House Martins (200) gathered at Wards End on 13th when a Black Redstart was the first of a good run. Another five Hobbies were recorded through the month as were eight Yellow Wagtails and three reeling Grasshopper Warblers were heard. A Grey Plover was a good find at Blackmoorfoot Res. on 21st and eight Common Scoter were on Ringstone Edge Res. the following day, a few Whinchat were in evidence and Little Ringed Plover were breeding. A Marsh Harrier flew W at Marsden and five juvenile Shelduck visited Blackmoorfoot on 25th, where 50 Swift were also counted. Then with the last few days bringing some deluges along with the still warm conditions the month ended with nine Common Sandpiper and two Little Ringed Plover at Blackmoorfoot Res.

We went into **August** under the same conditions as had persisted for most of the previous month, at least for the first week. The last Cuckoo, a juvenile, was seen on 4th and another juvenile, this time a Mediterranean Gull was at Blackmoorfoot and also yet again another juvenile, this time another Sanderling was at Langsett Res. Another Turnstone appeared at Deer Hill the day after, as was a Ringed Plover, the first of three. The first returning Wheatear appeared and four male Common Scoter were on Blackmoorfoot Res. A good number of Willow Warblers (40) along with a Reed Warbler were found at Ingbirchworth Res. on 6th and a Whimbrel flew SE there on 8th. We then had a week of wetter weather and average temperatures. Little Egret were seen on numerous occasions but Red Kite were down to just three individuals. Other raptors were more frequent however, with eight records of both Merlin and Hobby and six Buzzard went over the Isle of Skye Quarry. There were 11 records of Green Sandpipers during the course month and a few more Whinchat were now around, whilst a rare sight involved two Garganey at Dewsbury SW on 14th.

Another rare sight was of six Snipe which flew W over Crosland Moor on 18th, and both Yellow-legged and Caspian Gulls were at Langsett Res. the same day. Another low pressure system from the SW, this time bearing the remnants of 'Storm Ernesto' saw a period of very mixed cooler weather for the rest of the month. This didn't prevent other notable records and 80 Linnets were seen at Netherthong on 23rd on which day no less than seven Tree Pipit passed over Harden Quarries. Lesser Whitethroats were found at two locations on 25th. Another Whimbrel flew S over Scammonden Water on 28th, eleven Dunlin departed SW from Blackmoorfoot and a flock of 45 Twite, a good count these days, landed briefly at Marsden.

September opened with a week of high pressure with still, mild conditions. All was quiet until the 4th but then the only Greenshank of the year appeared at Ingbirchworth, a Caspian Gull at Langsett, and two species of tern in the form of four Common at Blackmoorfoot and an Arctic at Ringstone Edge. The last Sedge Warbler left us and what must have been quite a surprise for the observer as five Pintail headed W over Brow Grains, Meltham. A flock of 270 Rooks were on Ingbirchworth Moor on 5th, with more summer visitors leaving, namely Garden Warbler, Lesser Whitethroat, Spotted Flycatcher and Redstart. Five Black Redstart records started at Marsden and there were also seven records of Yellow-legged Gulls. Blackmoorfoot held four Shelduck on 6th. It was back to livelier weather on 8th with south-westerlies again carrying showers. An Osprey went over S at Wards End on 9th and the last Yellow Wagtail was seen on 12th. An early skein of 29 Pink-footed Geese flying NE over Pule Hill on 14th was just a taster of what was to come over the rest of the year. There were four Hobby sightings, just three of Red Kite and the same number of Marsh Harrier. Little Egrets were once again in evidence and are increasingly taken more for granted now. Lapwing numbers began to build. There was a 'blast from the past' on 16th when nine Ringed Plover visited Blackmoorfoot and six Wheatear were at Marsden. Dewsbury SW had good counts of 240 Swallows and 360 House Martins on 18th. More departures, this time two Tree Pipit at Lower Cumberworth on 20th on which date eight Blackcap were counted at Scammonden. The following day brought some rare visitors to our area in the form of two Sandwich Tern which flew W over Ringstone Edge. Another 'early', by two weeks, this time a single Whooper Swan on 22nd. There was a widespread passage of Meadow Pipits on this date too and the two manned Marsden visible migration points amassed more than 3,000 individuals.

A couple of days which brought gale force winds and heavy rain ensued before the last week of cooler conditions along with the first frost before the month's end. This not before a few Ring Ouzel were watched moving over with also some Twite moving through. Seven Buzzard were observed moving S over Harden Quarries on 27th which was also the date of the final Whinchats. On 29th a record of two Dotterel flying W over the Isle of Skye Quarry was well and truly delivered when they were photographed and sound recorded, and 'ring-tailed' Hen Harriers were seen at Deer Hill and Marsden Moor. The month then ended with a good flock of 60 Siskin at Yateholme, three Shelduck on Ringstone Edge and six male Pochard at Blackmoorfoot Res., and just to round things off a Red-throated Diver flew W up the Colne Valley.

By and large **October** was a very mixed month weather wise, starting cooler with the odd shower and some early morning mist. On the first day three Barnacle Geese, which stayed until 10th, were found on Blackmoorfoot and the only Red Kite of the month was at High Hoyland. The first Goldeneye of a rather better winter for them than of late arrived on 3rd and the first Redwings (6) were at Langsett Banks the following day. A good run of 11 Whooper Swan sightings began on 5th and eight Buzzard flew W past Wards End Farm on 6th. There were three Hen Harrier records from here too, with another over Saddleworth Moor over the next few days whilst the first Bramblings flew W over Marsden Moor on 7th and a flock of 200 Golden Plover at Thurstonland was a good count. Wards End also had 26 Snipe over W on 8th and the first Fieldfares (24) the following day. A Yellowhammer was seen over Harden Quarries on a migration watch, and a maximum of eight

Ring-necked Parakeets were seen at Rectory Park, Thornhill, both on 10th. We then went through a spell of very stormy and wet weather as the last Swallows flew S over Harden Quarries on 11th and a Rock Pipit did likewise. The next busy day was 14th when not only were the last House Martins recorded from three locations but another Rock Pipit was found, this time at Ringstone Edge and Bretton Park hosted 23 Gadwall, 20 Tufted Duck and the only Little Egrets of the month. The last Common Sandpiper was present at Blackmoorfoot on 15th and another unusual fly-over on a migration watch, this time a Woodlark, our first record since 2013 year, at Pule Hill on 17th. On the same day 1,000 probable grounded migrant Fieldfare were at Scammonden whilst the following day the last Wheatear was at Deer Hill and a Black Redstart appeared at the Isle of Skye Quarry on 20th and two Common Terns were at Blackmoorfoot on 21st. The last Ring Ouzel of the year flew S over Wards End on 24th and a nice skein of 28 White-fronted Geese were tracked as they moved over two venues the following day. The largest number of Lesser Redpoll (30) was at Scammonden on 26th and 30 Crossbill were at Riding Wood Res. on 27th. We were now seeing some frost and much lower temperatures but a Great White Egret wasn't put off from visiting Bretton Park on 28th the same day as a Water Rail was at Royd Moor Res. and a Long-tailed Duck arrived at Deanhead Res. where it stayed to the month's end. Yet another scarce bird, this time in the form of a Hooded Crow, was seen at Bradshaw Moor on 29th, where it remained for almost a month. The last day was eventful too when a Hooded Crow flew E over Pule Hill (perhaps the same?) and yet another Rock Pipit which left high to the W at Deer Hill.

Once again we felt the backlash of yet another hurricane over the first fortnight of **November** with some very strong winds and heavy rain. The month opened in great fashion with the only Goshawk of the year at Millhouse Green and not quite so impressive, but pleasing to see, 46 Stock Dove at Bradshaw Moor and 75 Brambling at Ingbirchworth Res. A flock of 30 Wigeon were on Meal Hill Lake on 2nd and a very nice Great White Egret departed W at Blackmoorfoot on 4th. The day after that at Ringstone Edge, apart from 20 Snipe another of the years great waders, a Ruff, was present until the 11th. Another 'one off' for the year, a juvenile Rough-legged Buzzard, flew over Wards End Farm on 6th. We then need to move to the 10th and to Ringstone Edge again and yet another wader, a Sanderling, topped off by a Black-tailed Godwit. This day wasn't finished though as three Green Sandpiper were found at Bretton Park and a first-winter Mediterranean Gull was at Blackmoorfoot. No less than five Little Egrets visited Scout Dike on 13th, followed by two Hawfinch at Cannon Hall, rounding off a great year for them here. A Hen Harrier was at the Isle of Skye Quarry on 16th and as the weather finally shifted to a more seasonal cold, frosty and windless spell, a Jack Snipe put in an appearance at Broadstone Res. A female Common Scoter was on Deanhead Res. on 18th and a few Stonechats were still being recorded from a small number of upland sites. Crossbills were more in evidence with 22 feeding at Langsett Banks on 22nd and a further 20 were at Harden Quarry the following day, the same date that a late Curlew flew W up the Colne Valley. Then in a month of quality rather than quantity it was back to gales, but seven Goldeneye were on Blackmoorfoot Res. and 12 Tree Sparrows were in their usual Helme Garden.

The same heavy rain on south-westerlies persisted for more than the first week of **December**. The flock of 130 Golden Plover remained at Deer Hill and the largest Magpie roost recorded was composed of about 60 individuals at Thurstonland. On 4th a Mealy Redpoll was discovered at Carlecotes Ponds and a good number of Chiffchaff sightings were coming in, interestingly not all were of the Siberian race. The bird of the month, an immature White-tailed Eagle, was spotted, albeit briefly, from Wards End Farm as it made its way SW on 7th. A species of which sightings are now few and far between is Bewick's Swan, so seven on Langsett Res. on 9th was much appreciated. The day after a Water Rail was at Bretton Park as were five Pochard, whilst a Stonechat was at Broadstone Res. on 11th. Langsett hosted 22 Lesser Redpoll on 12th and a nice flock of 50 Crossbill were in residence, and a Blackcap was present at Dewsbury SW. Blackmoorfoot hosted four Shelduck on 13th and at nearby Deer Hill a Hen Harrier was found. Then once more to Bretton Park

where the Smew which had first been seen in October was last seen on 17th and the following day a nice count of 184 Teal was had at Dewsbury SW. Once more we entered another period of heavy showers and strong winds and with temperatures rising this did include some foggy starts. However, the 30 Collared Dove at Helme were present throughout and another Water Rail was recorded, this time at Ingbirchworth, and 36 Goosander were present at Bretton Park. A flock of 56 House Sparrows counted at Linthwaite was very welcome and an improvement in its status seems to be taking place. There were other Blackcap records from Linthwaite and Brockholes, more Stonechats, and 22 Great Black-backed Gulls flew W at Marsden. On 27th a flock of 200 Redwing were seen at Broadstone Res., 400 Fieldfare at Hazelhead and the Bretton Great White Egret put in its last appearance on this date. The only Waxwing for the year, a single at Langsett on 31st, brought a very productive month and year to a close.

Dave Sill

NOTES ON THE CLASSIFIED LIST

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

In 2017, following a detailed review by the British Ornithologists' Union Records Committee, the BOU announced that it would adopt, from 1st January 2018, the International Ornithological Union's (IOU) IOC World Bird List for all its taxonomic needs, including the British List. In line with that decision, the taxonomic order of Club reports follows that recommended by the British Ornithologists' Union – The British List: a Checklist of Birds of Britain (9th edition). *Ibis* 160: 190–240.

With the exceptions of a new systematic order and a few scientific name changes, the only difference as far as the Club is concerned has resulted from the splitting of Bean Goose *Anser fabalis* into two species: Taiga Bean Goose *A. fabalis* and Tundra Bean Goose *A. serrirostris*.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

On page 145 is a complete list, 'The Huddersfield List', of the 275 species and 14 additional distinct races of wild birds that have been recorded in the Huddersfield Birdwatchers' Club area since records began, up to the end of 2018. The List incorporates guidance on when a description is required to support sightings.

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

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

www.huddersfieldbirdwatchersclub.co.uk

THE CLASSIFIED LIST 2018

CANADA GOOSE *Branta canadensis*

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

The under-recording of this species continues, with no records being received from several favoured localities for extended periods – there were few records from Langsett or Royd Moor Reservoirs and birds at Scout Dike Res. were only reported on two dates. In addition, there were only five records from Bretton Park, and three of these simply recorded the bird as ‘present’.

Monthly maxima at regularly occupied sites were as follows:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Blackmoorfoot Res	3	4	7	10	9	16	13	38	38	15	4	0
Bretton Park	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	12	nc	105	nc
Ingbirchworth Res	408	265	104	23	nc	43	48	85	64	665	661	409

At **Blackmoorfoot Res.** birds were very sporadic in appearance, although occurrences between early June and mid-September were almost daily and, for the first time ever, birds (2) remained at the reservoir to moult.

In total birds were reported from 34 locations (23 in 2017) but only the following (as well as those in the above table) had counts in excess of 25+ on at least one occasion (maxima shown):

Horbury Strands/Wyke – 124 on 7th January and c.200 on 2nd February.

Elland GP – 29 on 28th January.

Scout Dike Res – c.250 on 1st March and c.300 on 14th March.

Ringstone Edge Res – up to 80 were present on three March dates, 180 were seen on 19th/20th September, 42 on 19th October, 120 from 25th – 28th October and 150 on 20th November.

Scammonden Water – c.70 on 14th March, 168 on 23rd August and 85 flew E on 19th November.

Deanhead Res – 31 on 16th March and 54 (including 15+ goslings) on 5th July.

Cowcliffe – 45 flew E at 21.05hrs. on 9th June.

Digley Res – 38 (including 8 goslings) on 27th June.

Broadstone Res – c.100 on 17th February, c.240 on 10th October and c.60 on 21st November.

Wards End Farm, Marsden – in October, 44 flew W on 14th, 29 were present on 19th, and 26 flew W on 25th.

Royd Moor Res – c.240 on 9th October.

Royd Moor – c.100 on 17th October.

Breeding was reported from 12 sites (4 in 2016 and 5 in 2017):

Elland GP – a pair with a nest in mid-April.

Dewsbury SW – a pair with a nest in early May.

Greenhead Park – a pair with six goslings in late May.

Colne Bridge – a pair with four gosling on the River Colne in late May.

Snailsden Res – a pair with seven goslings in late May.

Wessenden Res – broods of two and three goslings in late May.

Winscar – seven pairs bred.

Langsett Res – a pair hatched two goslings.

Shepley – a pair with four goslings on the pond along Carr Lane in mid-June.

Digley Res – eight goslings in late June.

Gunthwaite Dan – a pair with three goslings in early July.

Deanhead Res – 15+ goslings in early July.

BARNACLE GOOSE *Branta leucopsis*

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

Two on **March Haigh Res.** departed W at 09.30hrs. on 25th January (DWS) and three at **Blackmoorfoot Res.** remained along the W bank from 1st to 10th October (MLD, TW *et al.*).

It is always difficult to be certain of the origin of such birds but, as migrants were widely distributed in Yorkshire at the time, the possibility that they were wild birds remains high.

GREYLAG GOOSE *Anser anser*

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

Most records, as usual, stemmed from the Ingbirchworth area.

Monthly maxima at regularly occupied sites were as follows:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Ingbirchworth Res	135	23	5	19	nc	nc	39	244	203	176	219	268
Broadstone Res	130	100	84	nc	2	nc	nc	nc	300	130	nc	nc

There were records from a further 16 localities, but these never involved treble-figure assemblages and were generally short-lived occurrences, presumably as birds moved around the area. The only record from **Bretton Park** in the first winter period simply noted that the species was 'present' on 11th January, but five pairs bred and fledged goslings. The only other records, all in November, involved 21 on 9th, 30 on 11th, and six the following day.

Numbers at other localities never exceeded three, the following being the exceptions: 31 at **Horbury Strands/Wyke** on 7th January and 15 on 22nd April; 31 flew E over **Wards End Farm, Marsden** on 18th September, 92 flew SW on 31st October, 12 flew SE on 25th November, and 16 flew W on 3rd December; 165 at **Langsett Res.** on 29th August and 62 on 2nd September; ten flew E at **Harden Quarries** on 27th September; c.120 at **Royd Moor** and c.140 at **Royd Moor Res.** on 9th October; and c.40 were at **Gunthwaite Dam** on 12th December.

There was a similar showing at **Blackmoorfoot Res.** as last year, with birds only putting in appearances on 17 dates. The occurrences fell into two distinct periods: early January to late April (11 records) and late September to late November (6 records). All records were of one or two birds, with the exceptions of four on 25th March and three on 19th April, and no birds remained for more than the day.

A single Greylag Goose x Canada Goose hybrid was present at **Langsett Res.** on 5th June.

PINK-FOOTED GOOSE *Anser brachyrhynchus*

Common to numerous passage and winter visitor.

Although over 5,000 birds, in 62 skeins, were counted passing over the area in the first winter period, this is some 3,000 less than recorded last year. Most, as is usual, flew between W and N. As can be seen below, even allowing for duplication, there was an impressive movement on 5th January.

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

- 5th January** – 750 W in five skeins between 10.00hrs. and 12.30hrs. at **Holmfirth**, 523 W (68 at 10.15hrs. + 95 and 130 at 10.20hrs. + 130 at 10.50hrs. + 100 at 11.50hrs.) at **Blackmoorfoot**, 1,530 NW in 16 skeins between 10.25hrs. and 12.10hrs. over **Wards End Farm, Marsden**.
6th January – 130 NW at 09.35hrs. over **Blackmoorfoot**.
12th January – 139 (67 W at 10.20hrs. + 72 NW at 11.30hrs.) at **Blackmoorfoot**.
3rd February – 110 W at 11.45hrs. over **Blackmoorfoot**.

These regular movements over the area ended rather abruptly on 22nd February when 56 flew W at **Cannon Hall** at 08.55hrs. There were then no records until a rather late skein of 76 flew NW over **Dewsbury SW** on 11th April.

The second winter period was unprecedented with in excess of 12,000 birds in c.100 skien being reported. The first birds were reported on 14th September when a skein of 29 flew NE over **Pule Hill** at 09.36hrs. A flock of 30 grounded birds were present at **Ringstone Edge Res.** on 18th September, and four days later 190 flew W over **Pule Hill** at 11.11hrs., 12 flew W over **Wards End Farm, Marsden** at 17.50hrs. and a flock of 80 were on the shore at **Ringstone Edge Res.** The following day, again at **Wards End Farm**, skeins of 40 flew W at 08.15hrs. and 28 flew SW at 09.50hrs. Most skeins, as is usual at this time of year, were heading in a SE direction, and reached treble-figures on several occasions, the following being the maxima:

- 25th September** – 100 E at 17.30hrs. over **Honley**.
27th September – 379 (60 E at 08.30hrs. + skeins of 120, 110 and 70 E. at 08.50hrs. + 19 W at 10.30hrs.) over **Wards End Farm**, 220+ (118 E at 08.48hrs. + skein heard going E at 08.59hrs. + 49 and 53 E at 09.41hrs.) over **Pule Hill, Marsden**, 193 (90 E at 09.00hrs. + 50 E at 09.15hrs. + 27 W at 10.15hrs. + 26 W at 11.55hrs.) over **Blackmoorfoot**, c.340 E in four skeins between 09.37hrs. and 10.13hrs. at **Harden Quarries**.
28th September – c.720 (600 W + 120 E) before 09.30hrs. at **Harden Quarries**, 176 (46 NE at 09.40hrs. + 50 E at 09.45hrs. + 80 E at 09.52hrs.) over **Wards End Farm**, 1,200+ WNW in four skien at **Royd Moor**.
29th September – 355 E (100 at 08.10hrs. + 135 at 08.20hrs. + 120 at 17.45hrs) over **Wards End Farm**, 150 W at 09.15hrs. at **Blackmoorfoot**, 122 E at 08.44hrs. over **Scammonden Water**.
4th October – 123 W at 09.40hrs. over **Blackmoorfoot**.
5th October – 220 W (100 at 08.55hrs. + 120 at 09.35hrs.) at **Blackmoorfoot**.
9th October – 120 N at 11.00hrs. over **Netherton**.
17 October – 1,312 E in ten skeins at **Royd Moor Hill**, c.850 E (several skeins) over **Harden Quarries**, 295 E (180 at 09.20hrs. + 115 at 09.46hrs.) at **Scammonden Water**, 232 E (27 at 09.50hrs. + 110 at 10.30hrs. + 95 at 11.00hrs.) over **Blackmoorfoot**, 280 E in three skeins between 10.00hrs. and 11.00hrs. at **Meltham**.
18th October – 150 NE at 09.00hrs. over **Bradley Park Golf Course**, 150 W at 10.52hrs. at **Ringstone Edge Res.**, 160 W (2 skien of 80) at 11.00hrs. at **Blackmoorfoot**.
20th October – 1,640 (c.1,500 E + 140 W) between 09.22hrs. and 09.42hrs. over **Isle of Skye Quarry**. (The c.1,500 included a straggly skein of 1158 which were also seen and counted from Pule Hill).
21st October – 380 (60 W at 10.10hrs. + 200 SE at 11.10hrs. + 120 SE at 11.25hrs.) over **Blackmoorfoot**.
22nd October – 120 E at 08.56hrs. at **Scammonden Water**, 250 SE at 09.00hrs. over **Bradley Park Golf Course**.
27th October – 150 SE at 12.10hrs. over **Blackmoorfoot**.
28th October – 150 SE at 12.10hrs. at **Blackmoorfoot**.

30th November – 151 E at 09.33hrs. over **Pule Hill**.

9th December – 130 W at **Lepton**, 200 NW at 11.20hrs. over **Blackmoorfoot**.

10th December – 180 ENE at **Oldfield**, 200 NE 10.20hrs. over **Wards End Farm**, 180 E at 11.20hrs. at **Blackmoorfoot**.

11th December – 145 (45 SW at 10/20hrs. + 100 W at 12.20hrs.) over **Wards End Farm**.

18th December – 300 NW (two skeins at 15.30hrs. and 1535hrs.) over **Meltham**.

24th December – 140 NW at 12.45hrs. at **Wards End Farm**.

27th December – 320 W (skeins of 150 + 170) at 15.45hrs. over **Wards End Farm**.

Up to five grounded birds were present with the Greylag Goose flock in the **Ingbirchworth** area until at least 26th April. Later in the year, a group of seven at **March Haigh Res.** departed E on 22nd September, two were present with Canada and Greylag Geese at **Ingbirchworth Res.** between 3rd and 8th October, and 16 were in a field with Greylag Geese of **Spicer House Lane** on 31st December.

WHITE-FRONTED GOOSE *Anser albifrons*

Rare visitor.

An adult of the European race *A. a. albifrons* was present with the Greylag Goose flock at **Ingbirchworth Res.** on 24th/25th February (NWM, DHP).

A skein of 28, originally seen flying W at Winterset Res., Wakefield at 14.50hrs. on 25th October and identified as the Greenland Race *A. a. flavirostris* by Pete Smith, continued to fly in that direction over **Denby Delph** at 15.15hrs. (NWM) and, eight minutes later, over **Holmfirth** (DHP).

MUTE SWAN *Cygnus olor*

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

This species has never been common in the Club area, and the 16 present at Ladywood Lakes in late December was the largest gathering reported since the early 1960s. A pair bred at the same location as the previous two years.

Birds were recorded as follows:

Bretton Park – from the records received it is possible that up to four were present throughout the year.

Dewsbury SW – an immature on 6th May.

Elland GP – a single on 28th January, two adults on the canal on 12th March, four adults on 4th April, an adult on the canal on 12th April, and five immatures on 27th April.

Horbury Strands/Wyke – two adults and four immatures were present on 13th March with four adults and four immatures on 3rd April, but only the four immatures remained on 19th April. Of the three present in early May, two were adults and the other an immature. Although the adults were recorded as sitting on eggs, no further details were forthcoming.

Ingbirchworth Res – a single commuted between here and the reservoirs at Scout Dike and Royd Moor during the morning of 13th March.

Scout Dike Res – an immature on 18th April.

Horbury – two adults were on the River Calder on 22nd April and two adults with three immatures were there on 21st November.

Ladywood Lakes – recorded fairly regularly until mid-July, with a maximum of six between late January and mid-March and eight (5 adults + 3 immatures) on 26th January and 16th July. The only

record thereafter involved a herd of 16 on 28th December. This is the largest gathering recorded in the Club area since the winter of 1962/63.

Greenhead Park – two unaged birds were present on the park pond on 27th December.

A party of four (adult + 3 juveniles) which arrived from the S at **Butterley Res.** on 12th November at c.08.50hrs. before departing W at 09.11hrs. They arrived at **Blackmoorfoot Res.** a few minutes later, and at 09.55hrs., they departed S. The party didn't travel far, however, as they relocated to **Windy Bank Res.**, where they remained until the year end.

BEWICK'S SWAN *Cygnus columbianus*

Scarce passage and winter visitor, becoming rarer.

Seven adults were present at **Langsett Res.** on 9th December (RT).

WHOOPE SWAN *Cygnus cygnus*

Scarce passage and winter visitor.

The number of sightings was on a par with last years' disappointing showing. Note that herds were reported from four locations on 22nd October.

Birds were seen during the first winter period as follows:

Winscar Res – four unaged birds departed N on 7th January.

Ingbirchworth Res – 12 (9 adults + 3 juveniles) on 28th January and a herd of 40 (36 adults + 4 juveniles) on 15th/16th March.

March Haigh – four unaged birds on 29th January.

Crosland Moor – a flock of 11 which flew W at 14.50hrs. on 5th February were presumably the same birds as those which appeared on Blackmoorfoot Res. later that day (see below).

Blackmoorfoot Res – in February, 11 unaged birds were present during the late afternoon on 5th, eight (5 adults + 3 juveniles) departed NE at 10.35hrs. on 18th, and five adults were present during the late afternoon on 25th. The only other record involved three juveniles on 15th/16th March.

Bretton Park – a single adult on 3rd March.

Ringstone Edge Res – an unaged bird on 9th March and five (3 adults + 2 juveniles) on 27th/28th March.

Broadstone Res – ten unaged birds on 22nd March.

Langsett Res – c.10 unaged birds on 22nd March and 21 unaged birds on 7th/8th April.

Royd Moor – 31 flew N on 1st April.

Birds were seen during the second winter period as follows:

Blackmoorfoot Res – an adult on 22nd September was the earliest ever at the site by 14 days. Ten adults from the SE turned W up the Colne Valley at 11.15hrs. on 16th October and two adults were present on 22nd October.

Ringstone Edge Res – an adult on 5th/6th October, three adults on 25th October, 18 unaged birds on 22nd October and three adults on 10th December.

Gunthwaite Dam – an adult flew NW on 10th October.

Wards End Farm – 22 unaged birds flew W at 08.35hrs. on 18th October, four unaged birds flew E at 10.40hrs. on 24th October and three unaged birds flew W on 30th November.

Harden Quarries – an adult flew E then N at 10.12hrs. on 19th October.

Fixby – an unknown number flew E calling at 04.16hrs. on 22nd October.

Thongsbridge – an unknown number were heard but not seen as they flew over at dusk on 22nd

October.

Isle of Skye Quarry – two adults flew WNW at 10.42hrs. on 21st November.

Boshaw Whams – three adults on 25th December.

SHELDUCK *Tadorna tadorna*

Uncommon passage visitor.

Records were received from locations, one more than last year. Blackmoorfoot Res., as is usual, commanded the lion's share.

Blackmoorfoot Res – during the first winter period two were present on 3rd February, a single on 20th February, three on 26th March, and two flew W on 23rd April. Although five juveniles were present on 25th July, there were no further records until September when four were present on 6th and two flew W on 15th. The only other records involved two on both 5th and 23rd October, three on 17th November, and four on 13th December.

The only other records were as follows. Note that with two exceptions they were all during the first five months of the year.

Horbury Strands/Wyke – two on 11th March.

Boshaw Whams – four on 20th April.

Ringstone Edge Res – a single on 21st April and three on 30th September.

Dewsbury SW – one on 6th May.

Dewsbury – a pair which bred on the River Calder near Dewsbury were outside the Club's recording area but, following hatching, the parents led their eight young to the Savile Town/Earlsheaton area, where they successfully fledged.

Langsett Res – two flew SE on 9th December.

MANDARIN DUCK *Aix galericulata*

Rare to scarce visitor. Has bred.

There were only four records, a marked decrease on the seven of last year, and for the third successive year there were no long-staying individuals.

A single unsexed bird was at **Ladywood Lakes** on 25th January (DT), a male and female remained at **Silkstone Wagon Road Marsh** between 31st March and 19th April (RJB) and a male was at **Gunthwaite Dam** on 8th February (BBSG) and 7th April (NWM, DMP, SP).

GARGANEY *Spatula querquedula*

Rare passage visitor.

There were two records: a male and female at **Scout Dike Res.** on 29th March (NWM *et al.*) and a male and female-type at **Dewsbury SW** on 14th August (JH).

SHOVELER *Spatula clypeata*

Scarce to uncommon passage and winter visitor.

There was a welcome increase in records, but not sufficient to warrant anything other than the

inclusion of all. Birds were reported from ten localities, an increase of two on last years' meagre showing.

Bretton Park – birds were said to be 'present' on 11th January, but ten were counted on 30th January, six on 7th February, 11 on 2nd March, and three on 4th April. Later in the year, 40 were present on 14th October, and, in November, 12 were present on 7th, five on 8th, 14 on 9th, but only a single remained the following day. In December, up to four were seen daily between 10th and 27th, with 13, of which six were males, on 12th.

Gunthwaite Dam – a female on 24th February was seen regularly until late March. Later in the year seven were present on 20th October, and, in December, three on 6th, two females on 12th and four (3 males) on 16th.

Horbury Strands/Wyke – in March, three were present on 6th, five on 11th and four on 21st, and in April, two on 3rd were followed by five on 6th.

Dewsbury SW – nine on 14th March, seven on 18th April and, in October, 24 on 9th and 11th, and 11 on 22nd.

Boshaw Whams – two on 20th April.

Scout Dike Res – in September, two were present on 7th, 9th and 17th, three on 22nd and four on 26th, and in October, three were present on 4th with five the following day.

Blackmoorfoot Res – there were no records until three were present on 11th September. The only records thereafter amounted to a male and female on 20th October and, in December, two males on 8th/9th, two males + two females on 15th, and a male on 24th.

Royd Moor Res – in October, four were present on 3rd, three on 9th, and a single on 27th, and a male + female were seen on 8th November.

Ingbirchworth Res – a male + two females on 12th December.

Ossett Spa SW – three on 28th December.

GADWALL *Mareca strepera*

Uncommon passage and winter visitor. Has bred.

There were reports from eight locations (9 in 2017 and 8 in 2016). A pair bred on the River Calder at **Savile Town**, a female with ten ducklings being seen in late June.

Other birds were recorded as follows:

Dewsbury SW – a male was on the River Calder on 7th January and a male was present at the SW on 6th May.

Scout Dike Res – a male and female were seen on 10th and 26th January and 6th, 13th and 21st March and four (2 males) were present on 3rd April.

Blackmoorfoot Res – in the first half of the year two males were present on 14th January, a male and female on 24th March, and single males on 30th March and 7th April. The only records later in the year involved single female-types on 8th August, 6th/7th September, and 16th and 28th October and a male from 6th to 8th December.

Horbury Strands/Wyke – up to seven were present on several dates between 23rd February and 6th April.

Ingbirchworth Res – two males on 2nd March and a single male on 19th March. Later in the year, five flew E on 1st November.

Bretton Park – 12 on 18th September, 23 on 14th October, birds were simply recorded as 'present' on 7th/8th November, but six were counted on 9th and 11th November and a single on 12th December.

Gunthwaite Dam – a female on 10th October.

WIGEON *Mareca penelope*

Common passage and winter visitor.

Records were received from 14 waters (the same as last year) with most records stemming from the second winter period.

Sightings in January/February were very sparse, with records from only three localities: **Meal Hill Lake** (now a favoured locality for this species due to minimal disturbance) held birds on a daily basis with a maximum of c.60 on both on 19th February and 11th March, **Blackmoorfoot Res.** had up to ten (usually 1-4) on six dates and a flock of 37 at **Broadstone Res.** on 5th January had increased to 40 by 27th January and 78 by 7th February. There was a slight improvement in March, with up to 20 at **Ossett Spa SW** on three dates, a male at **Blackmoorfoot Res.** from 7th to 10th, 67 at **Broadstone Res.** on 14th, and the flock at **Meal Hill Lake** persisted until 8th April.

There were then no records until three appeared at **Blackmoorfoot Res.** on 29th August and, in September, two were present at **Ingbirchworth Res.** on 4th and from 9th – 17th, three were seen on 25th, with seven there on 28th, and three were seen at **Ringstone Edge Res.** and a single at **Blackmoorfoot Res.** on 30th. There were far more occurrences between October and the year end and, although reported from 15 localities, with **Meal Hill Lake** holding birds on a daily basis from late October and **Blackmoorfoot Res.** having birds on 26 days, numbers rarely exceeded single figures. The only double figure assemblages were as follows: 12 at **Ringstone Edge Res.** on 12th October; 18 at **Blackmoorfoot Res.** on 19th October, with 22 on 28th October, 29 on 17th November, and 11 the following day; c.15 at **Meal Hill Lake** on 27th October, with c.12 on 29th October, c.30 on 2nd and 22nd November and 16th December, and c.35 on 27th and 31st December; 12 at **Royd Moor Res.** on 14th November; 20 at **Langsett Res.** on 21st December, and 30+ at **Ossett Spa SW** on 28th December.

MALLARD *Anas platyrhynchos*

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

There were far fewer records received than last year, with only 20 localities being represented (48 in 2017). Although the species is in decline nationally (BTO data), it appears that it is under-recorded locally. Indeed, the only records from Holmfirth amounted to c.123 on 2nd January and 52 on 12th June and there were a limited number of counts from Langsett Res. (see below).

Maximum numbers at regularly counted sites were as follows:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Blackmoorfoot Res	24	27	22	19	17	33	36	54	41	42	42	78
Ingbirchworth Res	48	36	20	19	12	63	58	75	64	35	38	40
Royd Moor Res	nc	nc	nc	nc	10	nc	nc	nc	123	35	38	40
Langsett Res	8	60	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	28	68	90	nc	91
Gunthwaite Dam	nc	14	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	38	nc	70	nc	45

Elsewhere notable counts (30+) were received from the following locations:

Windy Bank Res – c.50 on 28th January.

Cannon Hall – 52 on 14th February.

Dove Stone Res – 34 on 15th April.

Winscar Res – c.70 on 9th May.

Boshaw Whams – 79 on 12th September.

Bretton Park – c.30 on 18th September.

Breeding (ducklings present) was recorded from several locations: **Blackmoorfoot Res** – 110 with 12 reaching the flying stage; **Cupwith** – ‘numerous’ young; **Deanhead** – two broods; **Thongsbridge** – two broods; **Huddersfield** – a brood along the River Colne near the University; **Ingbirchworth Res** – four broods; **Royd Moor Res** – two broods; **Langsett Res** – one brood; **Cliff Wood** – one brood; **Aspley (Broad Canal)** – one brood; **Greenhead Park** – one brood; **Huddersfield Stadium** – one brood; **Turnbridge** – one brood; **Isle of Skye Quarry** – one brood; **March Haigh** – one brood; **Redbrook Res** – two broods; **Snailsden Res** – one brood.

PINTAIL *Anas acuta*

Scarce to uncommon passage and winter visitor.

As with Shoveler, there was a welcome increase in records, but not sufficient to warrant anything other than the inclusion of all. Birds were reported from eight localities, an increase of five on last years’ meagre showing.

Ringstone Edge Res – a male and female on 10th January, ten on 30th September and a single on 28th October.

Blackmoorfoot Res – the only record in the first half of the year involved a female on 10th January. There were only three occurrences thereafter: single female-types on 30th September and 17th November and a male on 12th December.

Scout Dike Res – a female was seen on several occasions between 18th January and 14th February and a female-type on 19th and 22nd October.

Ingbirchworth Res – a male and female departed high to the SW on 10th February, and a male and female were present on 13th March. Later in the year, an eclipse male and three female-types were present on 7th October (these were seen later at Royd Moor Res.).

Langsett Res – an eclipse male departed E on 2nd September and a female was present on 2nd December.

Brow Grains, Meltham – a party of five flew W at 08.45hrs. on 4th September.

Royd Moor Res – an eclipse male and three female-types on 7th October had been seen earlier at Ingbirchworth Res.

Bretton Park – three on 10th November.

TEAL *Anas crecca*

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

There were records from 20 localities (3 more than last year), with proof of breeding being obtained at one of these.

Once again **Dewsbury SW** played host to good numbers during the first winter period: the maximum of 142 in January had decreased to 84 by 14th March and 42 by 19th April. The only record from **Langsett Res.** concerned a flock of 36 on 8th January. The few records from **Bretton Park** during this period, a former stronghold, simply recorded the species as ‘present’. At **Horbury Strands/Wyke** up to 23 (generally less than 8) were present on several dates during this period, with the last (2) on 22nd April. There were very few records in February, but five were at **Cannon Hall** on 17th, four at **Blackmoorfoot Res.** on 20th, and 17 at **Gunthwaite Dam** on 25th. There was an increase in records during March/April as birds moved back to their breeding grounds but, with the exception of 22 at **Gunthwaite Dam** on 21st March, these never exceed the six at **Ossett Spa**

SW on 6th and 21st March.

A female with four ducklings on **Wessenden Res.** in mid-May was the only proof of breeding. A male and female in the **Isle of Skye Quarry** on a number of occasions at the beginning of the breeding season offered no evidence of breeding.

There were far more records in the second half of the year, with birds occurring at 18 localities and assemblages being far in excess of those recorded last year. At **Blackmoorfoot Res.** birds were recorded on 56 dates between 8th July and 17th December. Numbers generally remained low, but the following double figure flocks occurred: 16 on 31st August, 13 on 25th September, 17 on 11th October, 12 on 19th/20th October, and, in November, 33 on 17th, 17 on 19th, ten on 21st, and 13 on 30th.

Other double figure flocks were recorded as follows: 15 at **Scout Dike Res.** on 7th September, with 19 there on 9th and 26th September, 17 on 4th October and 19 the following day; ten at **Royd Moor Res.** on 9th October, with 20 there on 8th November, 24 on 14th November, and c.60 on 16th December; 14 at **Gunthwaite Dam** on 10th October, with 30 there on 20th October, c.70 on 6th December, and c.40 on 12th and 16th December; 28 at **Dewsbury SW** on 10th October, then a maxima of 34 on 28th October and 184 on 18th December; 53 at **Boshaw Whams** on 17th November, with ten there on 19th and 24 on 21st November; 17 at **Deanhead Res.** on 18th November; 11 at **Cannon Hall** on 18th November, with ten there on 19th December; 56 at **Langsett Res.** on 2nd December; and 20 at **Bretton Park** on 22nd December.

POCHARD *Aythya ferina*

Uncommon passage and winter visitor. Has bred.

As in 2017, there were records from seven waters. The largest group, however, only consisted of six, and occupancy was always short lived.

Ingbirchworth Res – a female during the first five days of January was followed by a single from 14th to 22nd January, two females on 19th March, a single on 12th July, and two on 26th November.

Bretton Park – in January, a single on 11th was followed by four on 20th and a single on 30th, and two were present on 7th February. There were then no records until December when five were present on 10th and two males on 12th and 21st.

Scout Dike Res – singles on 20th, 27th and 29th January.

Ladywood Lakes – three unsexed birds on 6th March.

Ringstone Edge Res – a male on 30th June and five unsexed birds on 24th December.

Blackmoorfoot Res – there were no occurrences until September, but overall the number of records increased slightly on previous years: two males were seen on 26th September and six males on 30th September. In October, six (5 males) were present on 8th/9th, a female on 13th, two males on 16th, four (2 males) on 17th, and a male remained from 22nd to 26th.

Windy Bank Res – an unsexed bird was present between 18th and 21st October, with two the following day and a single on 25th October.

TUFTED DUCK *Aythya fuligula*

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

With records from only 22 localities (28 last year), and very few from some of the core sites, the species remains under-recorded. The continued reduction in records from **Bretton Park**, a

previously well-watched location, is resulting in it becoming very difficult to assess the status, not only of this species, but several other waterbirds at this site.

Maximum numbers at regularly counted sites were as follows:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Blackmoorfoot Res	2	3	4	2	2	4	7	13	8	18	5	1
Ingbirchworth Res	9	6	4	7	nc	nc	nc	1	nc	11	5	21
Bretton Park	nc	11	nc	13	5	nc	nc	nc	nc	20	nc	20
Windy Bank Res	4	5	4	1	nc	nc	3	nc	1	6	nc	nc
Ringstone Edge Res	0	0	0	2	2	10	8	5	3	2	3	0

Once again, the numbers in the table above give a false impression of occupancy at **Blackmoorfoot Res**. During the first half of the year birds were only recorded on 35 days (32 in 2017 and 33 in 2016) but the second half produced larger numbers and birds were present for extended periods. Up to 18, but usually less than ten, were present on a daily basis between 6th July and 12th November, but the only records thereafter involved five females on 25th November and a male on 17th, 19th and 29th December.

All other records, with the exceptions of the following, involved less than a handful of birds for short periods only:

Ladywood Lakes – nine on 25th January, six on 13th and 21st March, and ten on 3rd and 6th April.

Bretton Park – 11 on 7th February, 13 on 4th April and 20 on 14th October and 10th December.

Gunthwaite Dam – seven on 21st March.

Horbury Strands/Wyke – ten on 6th April.

Digley Res – six on 22nd May.

Deanhead Res – nine on 1st September.

Meal Hill Lake – nine on 22nd November.

There was a single breeding record: a female and eight ducklings on **Wessenden Res**. in mid-June.

COMMON SCOTER *Melanitta nigra*

Scarce passage and winter visitor. Red listed.

Records were received from seven waters (8 in 2017) with Blackmoorfoot Res., as usual, having the lion's share. Note that birds occurred at three locations over a three day period in August.

Elland GP – a female on the ski lake on 29th March (AC, AT).

Winscar – a male on 9th April (NWM).

Blackmoorfoot Res – there were five records (7 in 2017). The only spring record involved a male on 25th April (MLD, GBS). In June, six males (5 adults + a first-summer) were present on 2nd (MLD, GBS *et al.*) and a female on 23rd (MLD, GBS). A flock of 14, of which 13 were males, was present on 12th July (MLD, GG, BW) and a male was seen on 22nd August (MLD *et al.*).

Ringstone Edge Res – eight unsexed birds on 22nd July (AT *et al.*) and a male on 22nd August (PJWS).

Ingbirchworth Res – a male on 8th August (RJB, NWM).

Booth Wood Res – a male on 20th August (AC).

Deanhead Res – a female on 18th November (DT).

LONG-TAILED DUCK *Clangula hyemalis*

Rare passage and winter visitor.

A female-type was present on **Deanhead Res.** between 28th and 31st October (DT *et al.*).

This is the first record in the Club area since a single was present at Ringstone Edge Res. in June 1992.

GOLDENEYE *Bucephala clangula*

Uncommon winter visitor.

With records from only six locations last year, the increase to 16 this year was most welcome. However, with the exception of Ringstone Edge Res., where a male and female remained for 12 consecutive days, all other occurrences were for a much shorter duration.

At **Blackmoorfoot Res.** the only records during the first winter period involved two males on both 6th January and 20th March. Although there were far more records in the second winter period, no birds remained for more than the day: an immature on 3rd October was followed by birds on a further 14 dates to 25th December. Most records involved singles, only occasionally two, but four (3 males) were present on 28th October, four (2 males) on 19th November, and seven (3 males) on 26th November.

Unlike in 2017, the Ingbirchworth group of reservoirs didn't live up to expectations, and the only records from **Ingbirchworth Res.** involved a male and female on 22nd February, a male on 1st March, a female on 26th March, and two unsexed birds on 14th April, **Royd Moor Res.** only held two unsexed birds on 25th March and four unsexed birds on 27th October, whilst **Scout Dike Res.** could only boast a male on 25th/26th November.

There were a number of records from the Horbury area, all on the River Calder: a flock of 17 (9 males) were at **Horbury Strands/Wyke** on 7th January (the same day that seven were seen on the River Calder at **Dewsbury SW**) and at least two were present on 23rd February; at least four (3 males) were present at **Horbury** on 2nd February; and **Horbury SW** held a single unsexed bird on 6th March and 12 (6 males) on 28th December.

Elsewhere, a male was present at **Deer Hill Res.** on 7th January; two females were at **Langsett Res.** on 3rd February, with a female there on 29th April; three unsexed birds were at **Elland GP** on 12th March, with four (2 males) there on 15th March and a male and female between 27th and 30th March; a male and female were on **Deanhead Res.** on 9th and 16th April; later in the year a female at **Ringstone Edge Res.** on 26th October was followed by up to four (usually 1 – 3) on a further 16 dates to 19th November; a juvenile was at **Bretton Park** on 9th November; a male was on **Scammonden Water** on 19th November; and a female was at **Cupwith Res.** on 31st December.

SMEW *Mergellus albellus*

Rare winter visitor.

A redhead remained at **Bretton Park** between 28th October and 17th December (MH, TM *et al.*).

This is the first record in the Club area since a single was present at Horbury on 2nd March 2014.

GOOSANDER *Mergus merganser*

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

There were records from 25 localities (29 in 2017 and 23 in 2016). There were no records during the summer months, other than the two pairs which bred: one pair at **Elland GP** the other along the **River Calder**.

As there were so few records from the species' usual strongholds, the table below only includes the monthly maxima from Blackmoorfoot.

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Blackmoorfoot Res	15	6	3	1	0	0	0	8	9	8	15	6

At **Blackmoorfoot Res.** up to 15 (but usually less than 7) were present on a near daily basis between 1st January and 4th April, although the number of birds and days present tapered off somewhat by early March (213 bird/days). There were then no records until August when seven redheads were present on 9th and eight redheads on 22nd. Thereafter, up to 15, but usually less than eight, were present on 52 dates between 13th September and the year end (167 bird/days). The annual number of bird/days totalled 395 (562 in 2017).

There were records from 18 localities during the first half of the year, some of which held up to six birds for extended periods. Assemblages in excess of half a dozen, other than the Blackmoorfoot birds mentioned above, consisted of the following: 12 (8 males) at **Bretton Park** on 11th January and eight on 7th February; seven on the River Calder at **Horbury Strands/Wyke** on 21st March and 22nd April; and eight (3 males) on **March Haigh Res.** on 26th March.

Other than the breeding birds, there were no other records during the summer months.

The first autumn sighting involved seven redheads at **Blackmoorfoot Res.** on 9th August (see above) and six juveniles at **Langsett Res.** on 16th, 24th and 29th August. The rest of the year only produced records from a further ten locations, most of which had held birds earlier in the year, but the numbers involved were somewhat higher. Assemblages in excess of six involved seven which flew W at **Wards End Farm, Marsden** on 24th October, with seven flying SW on 31st October; nine at **Bretton Park** on 14th October, with c.20 there on 7th November, 12 on 9th and 11th November and, in December, 11 (5 males) on 12th, 24 on 17th, and 36 on 21st/22nd.

RED GROUSE *Lagopus lagopus*

Resident breeder (3), 100-300 pairs.

The *Huddersfield Atlas 1987-92* indicates that this species is found at all open moorland locations within the recording area. There is no reason to believe that this has changed since this time but, as in 2017, records were only received from 12 sites. Breeding, however, was reported from five of these. There is little doubt that the species is being under-recorded.

Although the species is highly sedentary, there were no records during the months of July or August. The only double figure count involved 15 between **Winscar** and **Holme Moss** on 9th September.

RED-LEGGED PARTRIDGE *Alectoris rufa*

Resident breeder (1), 5-20 pairs.

It is obviously unknown how many shooting syndicates are releasing this species in the Club recording area, but due to the increase to 23 localities (from 17 in 2017 and 7 in 2016) it appears that it may be widespread. In addition, there were more double figure counts than last year. As in 2017, however, no reports of breeding were forthcoming.

Ingbirchworth – two on Spicer House Lane on 1st January and 7th May and three on 2nd November.
Wards End Farm, Marsden – there were far fewer occurrences of birds between here and Lower Green Owlers than in 2017. Two were present on 2nd January. There were then no records until two were seen on 8th, 16th and 18th May. This was followed by singles on 9th July and 29th September, six on 31st October and 19th November, ten on 21st November and, in December, nine on 3rd, ten on 7th, and three on 10th.

Lepton – six on 25th January, nine on 26th October, and six on 26th December.

Horbury Strands/Wyke – four on 13th March and two on 22nd April.

Whitley Airfield – two on 16th April.

Kirkheaton – one on 20th May and two on 22nd June.

Grange Moor – a single on 26th May.

Digley Res – one on 27th May.

Snape Res – a single on 31st May.

Broadstone Res – two on 31st July.

Dove Stone Res – a single on 12th September.

Deer Hill – eight on 30th September.

Isle of Skye Quarry – a single on 1st October.

Brow Grains, Meltham – seven on 3rd October.

Ringstone Edge Res – ten between 28th October and 16th November.

Haigh – 35 in a field off Jebb Lane on 8th November.

Meltham – 12 were feeding in a garden on 8th November with eight doing likewise on 1st December.

Whitley Common – six on 12th November.

High Hoyland – at least three on 18th November.

Blackmoorfoot – three on Meltham Cop on 7th December was only the fourth record for the reservoir.

Gunthwaite Dam – a single on 16th December.

Rastrick – a single between 17th December and the year end.

Cawthorne – a covey of 27 on 26th December.

GREY PARTRIDGE *Perdix perdix*

Resident breeder (2), 50-100 pairs. Red listed.

Records were received from 16 locations (19 in 2017), none of which held birds on a regular basis. Although there was no confirmation of breeding, birds were present at five sites during the breeding season.

The number of birds rarely exceeded more than two individuals, the following being the exceptions: four at **Thurgory Lane** on 10th January, five at **Lepton** on 23rd January, three at **Cheesegate Nab** on 29th March, ten at **Brow Grains, Meltham** on 28th September, eight at **Red Lane, Meltham** on 29th September, nine at **Broadstone Heath** on 27th October, three at **Ingbirchworth Res.** on 2nd April, and three at **Almondbury** on 9th November.

There were fewer sightings from **Blackmoorfoot** than usual – one or two were seen on Meltham Cop on eight dates between 30th April and 20th September, with six there on 8th December.

QUAIL *Coturnix coturnix*

Scarce to rare summer visitor and occasional breeder.

There were three records, which may have only involved two birds.

A singing male was present to the west of **Royd Moor Res.** on 11th June (NWM). A male sang from a crop field at **Jos Lane, Shepley** on 29th June (TM *et al.*) and what may have been the same bird was heard from the observer's garden in a field next to Shepley cricket ground on 7th/8th July (NWM).

PHEASANT *Phasianus colchicus*

Resident breeder (3), 200-500 pairs.

As records were only received from 28 localities (41 last year) the species is obviously grossly under-recorded, and at only five of these were birds recorded as present throughout the year. Breeding was only reported from five localities.

The only double figure counts involved at least ten at **Cawthorne** on 10th March; 11 at **Wards End Farm, Marsden** on 20th March, with 13 there three days later; 16 at **Gunthwaite Dam** on 10th October; and 17 at **Cannon Hall** on 27th October.

Birds were recorded throughout the year at the following locations: **Wards End Farm**, which held a maximum of 13 on 23rd March and one pair bred; in the Ozzings area of **Shepley** numbers never reached more than eight, but at least one pair bred; although up to four were present throughout the year at **Blackmoorfoot**, with nine on 24th December, there was no evidence of breeding; birds were also recorded throughout the year at **Kirkheaton** and **Butternab Wood**, but no other information was forthcoming.

RED-THROATED DIVER *Gavia stellata*

Rare visitor.

This species was recorded in the Club area for the second consecutive year.

A single flew W over **Wards End Farm, Marsden** at 08.35hrs. on 30th September (DWS).

LITTLE GREBE *Tachybaptus ruficollis*

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

There were records from 25 waters, three more than last year, but at only three of these was there any direct proof of breeding.

Gunthwaite Dam – up to four were present throughout the year but, although a pair held a breeding territory, no young were produced.

Ingbirchworth Res – up to four were present on several dates in the first five months of the year and up to five were present between mid-August and mid-December. Although a pair held a breeding territory no young were seen.

Horbury Strands/Wyke – a single on the River Calder on 7th January, with two there on 6th March and 6th April.

Horbury – two on the River Calder on 7th January, with a single there on 21st March, three on 21st November and five on 28th December.

Ladywood Lakes – two on 25th January.

Carlecotes Ponds – singles on 25th March and 22nd April.

March Haigh Res – singles on 30th March and 5th April with two on 16th April and 6th and 18th May.

Rectory Park, Thornhill – a pair bred but no further details were forthcoming.

Silkstone Common – a single on Silkstone Wagon Road Marsh on 8th April. This is an unusual locality for the species, as it is a seasonal, tiny sheet of water.

Elland GP – two on 12th April.

Langsett Res – a pair held a breeding territory but no young were produced.

Scout Dike Res – two pairs held breeding territories but no young were seen. Later in the year four were present on 11th September and five on 13th November.

Bretton Park – there were no records during the first winter period. A pair were feeding two well-grown young in late July and six were present on 18th September. The only other records involved six on 14th October, singles on 9th and 12th November and two on 7th and 10th December.

Dewsbury SW – two pairs fledged a total of four young.

Blackmoorfoot Res – once again there was an abysmal showing at this well watched locality. There were only five records, all for a single day: adults on 4th May and 24th June, an immature on 22nd August, two on 21st October, and one on 10th December.

Broadstone Res – two on 5th May and 5th – 8th September and a single on 10th October.

Redbrook Res – singles were present on 14th/15th May and 14th June with two on 21st June.

Wessenden Res – two on 24th May.

Royd Moor Res – four were present throughout the summer months but there was no evidence of breeding.

Windy Bank Res – one or two were present on several occasions between late June and mid-October.

Brun Clough Res – a single on 16th July.

Deanhead Res – a single from 5th August until 1st September, 2 on 19th September and a single on 30th October.

Boshaw Whams – two on 12th September and a single on 19th November.

Earlsheaton – five on the River Calder between 22nd October and the year end.

Cannon Hall – two on 16th December.

The bird at Blackmoorfoot on 4th May, first seen in flight at 500 yards range, showed a large amount of white in the secondaries and was initially thought to be a Black-necked Grebe. Closer observations, however, proved otherwise. Although Asian and African races have white secondaries, it is a rare phenomenon in British birds.

GREAT CRESTED GREBE *Podiceps cristatus*

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

Birds were reported from ten waters, with breeding only occurring at four of these.

At **Blackmoorfoot Res.** the first two months only produced single birds on nine dates. Birds became 'resident' between 7th March and 31st July but there were no breeding attempts due to a falling water level. In August a single was present on eight days, but birds became more in evidence thereafter, with birds on 27 dates in September, 25 in October, daily in November, and 21st/22nd December. As can be seen from the table below, the number of birds remained abysmally low throughout the year. A single which departed high to the NW at 09.40hrs. on 17th May was unusual.

The monthly maxima are shown below:

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
1	1	2	4	4	4	2	1	5	4	2	1

Bretton Park – apparently present throughout the year, with three pairs fledging at least seven young. Up to 14 were then present until at least mid-December.

Ingbirchworth Res – up to three were apparently present throughout the year, with an increase to seven or eight between mid-July and mid-October. Although a pair built a nest, the attempt failed.

Ladywood Lakes – two on 25th and 30th January, 13th March and 3rd April.

Scout Dike Res – two on 14th March had increased to ten by 1st April. Three pairs bred, each raising at least one young. Thereafter, up to ten were present until at least 28th October.

Ringstone Edge – a single on 16th March attracted a mate and the pair bred, raising three young. The last birds, an adult and two juveniles, remained until mid-September.

Horbury Strand/Wyke – two on 3rd April.

Royd Moor Res – two were present between early April and 6th July.

Boshaw Whams – two on 23rd April and a single on 1st May.

Broadstone Res – two on 12th June and a single on 23rd June and 8th September.

Langsett Res – a juvenile on 4th September.

GREY HERON *Ardea cinerea*

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

Records were received from 46 locations, a similar number to the previous two years. Birds were reported throughout the year and from every corner of our area, and included regular records from six different gardens, some of which documented fishing from the garden pond. The majority of sightings were of overflying singles and numbers rarely exceeded two, only very occasionally three. Away from **Blackmoorfoot Res.** (see below) the only records in excess involved four which flew W over **Wards End Farm, Marsden** on 23rd June, with four flying NW there on 26th June; four which flew NW over **Crosland Moor** on 25th June; and four at **Ingbirchworth Res.** on 3rd July, 2nd and 29th August, and 5th September.

Birds were in short supply at **Blackmoorfoot Res.**, especially in January/February and November/December. One to three, occasionally four to seven in summer/autumn, were seen on 207 dates (221 in 2017 and 259 in 2016) with records spanning the whole year

Breeding was confirmed from the same four localities as last year: five pairs bred at **Scammonden Water** (same as the previous 4 years), nine pairs bred at **Cromwell Bottom** (an increase of 3 on last year), 67 pairs bred at **Bretton Park** (a massive increase on the 16 of last year), and 13 pairs bred at **Healey House** (1 less than last year).

GREAT WHITE EGRET *Ardea alba*

Rare visitor.

This species is becoming increasingly frequent within the British Isles, but the records below are only the seventh and eighth for the Club area.

Blackmoorfoot Res – a single circling the reservoir departed W at 11.20hrs. on 4th November (MLD, TD, GK, DM, TW). This is the second record for the locality, the first being on 23rd August 2017.

Bretton Park – a single remained between 28th October and 27th December (MH, TM *et al.*)

LITTLE EGRET *Egretta garzetta*

Rare visitor.

Although records were received from only nine locations, the same as last year, the number of sightings far exceeded the 13 of that year. There was an unprecedented run of birds at **Ingbirchworth Res.** which accounted for the lion's share. For such a highly visible species, of course, there is bound to be some duplication, but not withstanding that it was a record year for this fast expanding species.

Dewsbury SW – a single on the River Calder on 7th January (DHP).

Bretton Park – singles were present on 8th January (SG), 27th July (SC), 16th August (BBSG), and 18th September (DJ). Two were present on 14th October (BBSG) then, in November, there were singles on 7th (AK), 8th (DHP) and 11th (S & H C). Two were present on 10th December (GMC) and again on 21st December (SG), with five the following day (BBSG).

Blackmoorfoot Res – there were two records, as last year: an immature along the W bank on 5th July (MLD, GBS *et al.*) and a single circling the reservoir departed E at 10.25hrs. on 5th August (TD).

Mirfield – two on the River Calder on 16th July (DHP).

Ingbirchworth Res – there was an unprecedented run of records between 29th July and 10th September: a single between 29th and 31st July (NWM, DHP) was joined by a second for the first three days in August, but only one remained from 4th – 8th August. The following day the 'long stayer' was joined by a further four, but these soon departed. There was then a single on 10th and 13th August, three on 20th August, a single on 29th August and 4th September and four on 10th September.

Wards End Farm, Marsden – one flew W accompanied by a Grey Heron at 18.10hrs. on 19th August (DWS).

Hollas Bridge – a single on 22nd September (HBC).

Ringstone Edge Res – a single on 22nd September (HBC).

Scout Dike Res – five on 13th November (SC).

CORMORANT *Phalacrocorax carbo*

Common passage and winter visitor, increasing.

This year records were received from only 25 sites, 12 down on 2017 and five down on 2016. The number of dated records was also down, to 117 as opposed to the 187 of last year. As the population of this species is increasing nationally it may just be that yearly fluctuations occur in our recording area. Unfortunately, however, many observers simply recorded birds as 'present', thereby making it impossible to evaluate numbers correctly. From some of the counts, however, it would appear

that the species is actually doing rather well in our area. Many records were of flyover singles and covered a range of places: **Armitage Bridge, Shepley, Linthwaite, Huddersfield** (3 times), **Langsett and Huddersfield Stadium. Bretton Park** is a difficult place to cover regularly due to the excessive parking tariffs but some good counts were provided this year nonetheless.

Scout Dike Res – a single on 1st January, then four on 29th March remained throughout April. One or two were then seen sporadically but five were present on 9th October and 17 on 7th November.

Blackmoorfoot Res – birds were present on a total of 130 dates (197 in 2017 and 102 in 2016) with records spanning all months. The months with the highest number of records were January (23 days) and October (21), with all other months holding birds on 13 or less days. Numbers involved were usually low (mainly 1-3, occasionally up to 5) but six flew SW on 19th August, seven flew W on 27th August, a total of 12 (an immature present + 11 flew W) on 27th September, six immatures were present on 28th September, and seven (3 immatures present + 4 flew S) on 17th October. As in 2017, overflying birds were only recorded on a few occasions, with approximately equal numbers moving west (the normal direction) or south. The only exceptions being four immatures which flew N on 5th July and a single E on 11th October. The total number of bird/days reached 245 (far lower than the all-time high of 396 last year).

Colne Bridge SP – frequently seen throughout the year. Usually singles on the river and canal or occasionally overflying.

Ingbirchworth Res – up to four were present on most dates in January, but there were then only one or two records of singles in each of the months between March and July. Up to three were seen on a number of August/September dates with five on 6th August and six on 15th August. The only other records involved singles on 12th November and 24th December.

Royd Moor Res – singles were seen on 11th January and 4th May. Later in the year, a flock of 24 were gathered at the water's edge on 14th November.

Ringstone Edge Res – single birds were seen on fifteen dates throughout the year with two on 22nd October and three on 27th September.

Dewsbury SW - 11 in flight on 7th January.

Horbury SW – four were on the River Calder on 7th January and in March, six were present on 3rd, 11 on 13th, and four on 21st. There were then no records until eight were present on 2nd November and three were on the River Calder on 28th December.

Bretton Park – the only records in the first half of the year involved 11 on 8th January, two on 11th January and a single on 23rd May. There were some impressive assemblages later in the year, however, with c.50 (42 of which were sitting in the same tree) on 30th October, 20 on 7th November and 16 on both 9th and 11th November.

Ladywood Lakes – singles on 25th January, seven on 30th January and one on 6th March.

Boshaw Whams – six were present on 6th February.

Elland GP – four on 7th March and a single on 12th April.

Horbury Strands/Wyke – six were on the River Calder on 3rd April with two there on 22nd April and 4th May.

Wards End Farm, Marsden – between April and late November birds overflowed the area on 19 occasions. Birds mainly moved in a westerly direction, with a maximum of eight W on 6th August, 14 W on 27th August, a flock of 26 W on 26th October and 26 NW on 25th November.

Scammonden Water – singles on 6th and 25th July and 9th August.

Broadstone Res – three on 3rd August.

Royd Moor Hill – seven flew W on 13th September and four NE on 17th October.

Harden Quarries – seven flew NW on 28th September and 27 (15 flew W + 12 E) on 10th October.

OSPREY *Pandion haliaetus*

Rare passage visitor, increasing.

There were five records, the same as last year.

Dove Stone Res – a single was present over Binn Green/Yeoman Hey during the afternoon on 6th April (DO).

Blackmoorfoot Res – a single flew N over the reservoir at 10.25hrs. on 14th April (MLD, GK). This is the 17th record for the location, the first being on 9th May 1971.

Wards End Farm – a single flew NE at 10.10hrs. on 6th May and one flew S on 9th September (DWS).

Langsett Res – one flew N on 4th July (SS).

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

2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
3	1	2	5	5	8	2	10	5	5

SPARROWHAWK *Accipiter nisus*

Resident breeder (2), 50-100 pairs.

Birds were reported from 53 sites, which was a little up on last year. The majority of records were of singles, very occasionally two, but four were present at **Whitley Edge** on 28th September and five at **Silkstone** on 30th December. With such a visible species it is impossible to ascertain a true number of the birds in our area as there is the obvious risk of duplication. However, there were 211 dated records submitted, a little up on last year. From these only three were of displaying birds and no actual proof that breeding took place was submitted, although there were autumn records of some juvenile birds.

As has now become the norm, birds regularly visited gardens to hunt prey, and this year was no exception: **Almondbury, Lockwood, Rastrick, Holmfirth, Marsden, Meltham, New Mill and Linthwaite** were the most popular locations.

With the exception of June, birds were seen during all months at **Blackmoorfoot**, with a marked increase in occurrences between mid-August and early November. Although there were more records of two birds than normal the total number of bird/days only amounted to 64 (86 in 2017 and 82 in 2016).

There were no noticeable signs of movement this year although it can be difficult to differentiate between passing birds and ones just feeding.

Once again a wide variety of prey species was noted: Starling, Meadow Pipit, Ring Ouzel, House Martin and Fieldfare were all observed being pursued with outcomes unknown. However, the ending was not so uncertain for Goldfinch, Blackbird and Reed Bunting.

Dated records were distributed throughout the year as follows:

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
16	14	29	18	120	8	14	22	27	29	26	15

GOSHAWK *Accipiter gentilis*

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

A juvenile female was seen at **High Bank, Millhouse Green** on 1st November (BBSG).

MARSH HARRIER *Circus aeruginosus*

Rare passage visitor.

There were only seven records, a decrease of two on last year and a marked reduction on the 16 of 2016.

Blackmoorfoot Res – a ‘cream-crown’ drifted SE over the reservoir at 11.35hrs. on 3rd May (MLD, GK). This is the 13th record for the reservoir, the first being on 16th May 1999.

Saddleworth Moor – a male flew E at 10.30hrs. on 5th June (MCha) and a single over Sykes Pillar was mobbed by two Curlew and a Short-eared Owl on 18th June (AC).

Wards End Farm, Marsden – a dark juvenile flew low over Garside Hey and W over March Flats at 16:50hrs. on 23rd July; a ‘cream-crown’ was seen flying across towards Wessenden then back towards Cupwith on 15th September; a male went low W at 07:50hrs. on 20th September and a ‘cream-crown’ was seen above Garside Hey on 23rd September (DWS). How many birds were involved in the September sightings is open to conjecture.

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

2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
3	4	4	10	10	7	2	16	9	7

HEN HARRIER *Circus cyaneus*

Rare to scarce passage and winter visitor. Red listed.

Another good showing, with at least one individual frequenting the same moorland for an extended period.

Wards End Farm, Marsden – there were four records (7 in 2017) from this daily watched locality: a ‘ringtail’ flew W on 29th September, one flew high S from Buckstones Edge on 7th October, a single flew NW on 9th October, and one flew SW towards Pule Hill on 17th October (DWS).

Saddleworth Moor – a single was quartering the moor on 9th October (AK).

Deer Hill – after a ‘ringtail’ on 29th September (HQ) there was an interesting sequence of records which began with a ‘ringtail’ which was watched hunting over the moorland for over 30 minutes on 8th November. Two ‘ringtails’ were seen interacting on 12th November. The next sighting was of a single which gave such superb views on 15th November that it was possible to age it as a juvenile. Although a ‘ringtail’ was present two days later, there were no further records until 13th December (DMP, SP *et al.*).

Isle of Skye Quarry – a ‘ringtail’ on 16th November (DHP).

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

2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
1	5	5	3	8	7	9	8	9	8

RED KITE *Milvus milvus*

Rare to scarce visitor. Increasing.

There were 51 records (28 in 2017) which involved a maximum of 56 birds. The long-stay individuals in the Scout Dike/Royd Moor and Silkstone Common areas are the first to have remained in the area for any length of time.

Blackmoorfoot Res – there were ten records, all in the first half of the year: one flew W up the Colne Valley at 09.10hrs. on 26th January (MLD); a single was over the N bank at 14.30hrs. on 29th January (general public); one was circling over the NW corner at 11.25hrs. on 18th February (MLD, GK); in April, two were circling over the E bank (1 drifted N, the other S at 11.45hrs.) on 19th (MLD, BW) and a single was over the fields to the W at 12.00hrs. on 29th (GK); in May, one drifted W over the reservoir at 13.40hrs. on 8th (MLD), a single drifted E down the Colne Valley at 10.40hrs. on 18th (MLD, GK, GBS), and two (1 flew S over the reservoir at 10.50hrs. (MLD, GK *et al.*) and a different bird flew N over the reservoir at 12.15hrs. (GK, PS) on 22nd; and a single was circling Meltham Cop at 13.00hrs. on 2nd June (TD). This is the largest annual total ever recorded at the locality.

Carlecotes Ponds – one drifted N on 6th February (DHP) and a single flew S on 1st July (RS).

Shepley – singles were present on 14th March (NWM), 14th and 24th April and 24th June (LR).

Wards End Farm, Marsden – a single flew high down the valley at 16.00hrs. on 26th March, one drifted E on 6th April and two flew W on 2nd June (DWS).

Wessenden – a single was present at 15.00hrs. on 8th April (GK).

Meltham – one on 20th April (HQ).

Scout Dike Res/Royd Moor Res – a single flew NE at Scout Dike Res. on 23rd February (NWM). Singles (at least 2 individuals) were seen on at least 12 dates between 21st April and 11th July (SBU, NWM *et al.*).

Winscar – one spent some time interacting with up to four Buzzards and two Ravens on 21st April (DMP, SP).

Deer Hill – a single on 21st April (DMP, SP).

Holme – a single on 8th May (HQ).

Buckstones – a single flew E on 14th May (ADee, SH) and one did likewise on 11th June (AC).

Ramsden Clough – a single on 23rd May (DJ).

Hoylandswaine – one flew SW on 12th June (BBSG).

Broadstone Res – one drifted W on 16th June (NWM).

Brockholes – a single on 21st June (DD).

Ingbirchworth Res – a single was present on 23rd June (DMW), one flew SE towards Scout Dike Res, on 11th July (SBU), and a single flew E on 4th August (DMW).

Little Don Valley – singles on 23rd April (GPD), 29th April (SG), a single flew E on 20th May (RJB), and one was chased by a Curlew on 27th June (SC).

Digley – one on 9th July (DMP, SP).

Harden Moss – singles on 14th and 17th July (DHP).

Riding Wood Res – one flew S on 11th August (DMP, SP).

Langsett Res – two on 20th August (DL).

Redbrook Res – a single flew NE at 11.40hrs. on 17th September (EDS).

Almondbury – a single at 13.30hrs. on 25th September (TW).

High Hoyland – a single on 30th September and 1st October (BBSG).

Silkstone Common – a single was seen on many dates between 27th October and the year end (BBSG).

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

2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
19	11	23	31	54

WHITE-TAILED EAGLE *Haliaeetus albicilla*

Rare visitor.

An immature was photographed from **Wards End Farm, Marsden** at 11.15hrs. on 7th December as it flew in a SW direction from over Buckstones Edge towards Redbrook Res. whilst being mobbed by a Carrion Crow (DWS). This is the second record in the Club area since an immature was seen flying over Langsett Res. on 27th February 2005.

ROUGH-LEGGED BUZZARD *Buteo lagopus*

Rare winter visitor.

A single photographed as it flew S over **Wards End Farm, Marsden** at 10.30hrs. on 6th November turned SW upon reaching Pule Hill (DWS).

This is the first record in the Club area since a long-dead bird was found at Butterley Res. in late May 2015.

BUZZARD *Buteo buteo*

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

Despite records coming in from 41 different locations, dated records actually fell from the 539 of last year to 503. There were, however, many undated records marked as ‘present’ or ‘regular’ so an accurate figure is impossible to achieve. Records of breeding too were down, and it was only proven at three locations, but they probably bred at a further four. At one of last year’s breeding sites the nest had been ‘shot out’.

As last year, due to the number of records received it is impractical to list them all and the following were the ones where four or more were seen.

Thongsbridge – up to four were regularly seen from a garden here.

Marsden – seen throughout the year in the **Marsden/Close Moss/Buckstones** triangle. The vast majority of dated records (233) were from **Wards End Farm** where most were of ones and twos occasionally three, but four on 9th May. There was some evidence of movement with birds moving W in September with singles on 11th and 16th, three on 29th and two on 30th. Eight did likewise on 6th October.

Whitley Edge – birds were recorded on 70 dates with a maximum in the first half of the year of seven on 27th August and then ten over Hall Wood in the second half.

Blackmoorfoot – recorded on 71 occasions (57 in 2017 and 65 in 2016), with birds putting in appearances between mid-January and late November. The majority of records involved one or two birds, occasionally three or four, but five were circling over Edge Moor on 9th April.

Shepley – up to five were recorded regularly.

Ramsden Clough – seven were circling together on 25th March.

Rastrick – seen regularly with a maximum of eight which flew N on 29th March and five the following day.

Little Don Valley – four on 1st and 23rd April and five on 29th April.

Bretton Park – a maximum of six on 5th April.

Linthwaite – seen over on a regular basis with four on 7th July.

Isle of Skye Quarry – six on 16th August.

Harden Quarries – seven flew S on 27th September and the six present on 10th October were probably indicative of autumn movement.

Royd Moor Res – six on 9th October.

Langsett – six on 16th December.

Dated records were distributed throughout the year as follows:

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
33	30	51	50	51	26	34	63	45	65	22	31

WATER RAIL *Rallus aquaticus*

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

There were records from four localities:

Dewsbury SW – two pairs fledged a total of four young.

Royd Moor Res – a single on 28th October was seen to swim 50m across open water (II). What was presumably the same bird had been reported a few days earlier by a dog walker.

Bretton Park – one on 10th December (GMC).

Ingbirchworth Res – a single on 21st December (MCW *et al.*).

MOORHEN *Gallinula chloropus*

Resident breeder (3), 200-400 pairs.

Records were only received from 22 locations, a sharp decrease on the 34 of last year. Although several sites held birds throughout the year, evidence of breeding was only forthcoming from nine of these (an increase on the five last year). As in 2017, numbers rarely reached more than a handful, but there were some notable exceptions: 19 at **Gunthwaite Dam** on 10th October, 12 on the River Calder at **Horbury** on 21st November, 20 at **Bretton Park** on 17th December, and 42 at **Dewsbury SW** in mid-December. Although this latter mentioned site yielded such a high figure in mid-December, numbers were said to be in decline due to the drainage of the sewage beds.

Breeding records were as follows:

Blackmoorfoot Res – there was an isolated single on 5th January. Thereafter, one took up residence from 17th February and by early May this had risen to four. Five birds were present throughout June and July and two pairs attempted to breed, but only managed to produce a single young. By late August the number present had dwindled to two, then one or two, occasionally three, remained until 8th December.

Dewsbury SW – eight pairs bred. Although a total of 22 young hatched, Fox and Mink predation reduced this to single figures by late June.

Ingbirchworth Res – two pairs held breeding territories but only one was successful, fledging a single young.

Royd Moor Res – at least three pairs held breeding territories.

Carlecotes Ponds – one pair bred.

Colne Bridge SP – two pairs raised five young.

Gunthwaite Dam – three pairs raised five young.
Ringstone Edge Res – a pair raised three young.
Bretton Park – one pair bred, fledging eight young.

COOT *Fulica atra*

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

The under-recording of this species appears to be continuing, as reports were only received from 12 locations, a drop of three on last year. Two on the pond in **Greenhead Park** between 26th May and 21st August must have been an interesting sight.

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

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
Ingbirchworth	4	10	12	11	8	8	8	7	4	nc	2	2

With the exceptions of those tabulated above, double figure counts were only received from **Bretton Park** (52 on 8th January, c.30 on 18th September, 88 on 14th October, 24 on 11th November, and 12 on 17th December) and **Gunthwaite Dam** (c.12 on 21st March).

Breeding was reported from the following locations:

Ingbirchworth Res – four pairs held breeding territories, but only three young, from the same brood, survived to fledging.

Scout Dike Res – two pairs had a total of six young.

Gunthwaite Dam – three pairs bred, of which two pairs managed fledged two young each.

Bretton Park – at least six pairs bred and fledged a total of 14 young.

Dewsbury SW – five pairs had 13 chicks in early May. Upon hatching, however, these birds moved onto the River Calder, but the success rate is unknown.

Records from **Blackmoorfoot Res.**, where the species has been in decline for over a decade, only involved two or three birds (usually only a single) on 27 dates between 13th March and 24th December. The only birds which remained for more than a day were during May: a single from 15th – 19th, two from 20th – 29th, and a single on 30th/31st.

OYSTERCATCHER *Haematopus ostralegus*

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

Records were received from 24 locations, a drop of seven on the previous two years, but single pairs bred at five of these.

The first returning birds were seen in February, as has now become the norm, and involved singles at **Ingbirchworth Res.** on 4th and 6th and **Scout Dike Res.** on 14th; two at **Dewsbury SW** on 14th; singles at **Riding Wood Res.** on 16th, **Ingbirchworth Res.** and **Broadstone Res.** on 18th, **Dove Stone Res.** on 20th/21st, **Digley Res.** and **Langsett Res.** on 22nd; **Blackmoorfoot Res.** on 22nd/23rd; three at **Scout Dike Res.** on 23rd; a single at **Ingbirchworth Res.** on 24th, and seven at **Winscar** on 25th.

The following two months, March and April, saw birds at a further eight sites. Even though most records involved no more than two individuals, there were a few more impressive assemblages: ten at **Boshaw Whams** on 3rd March, 14 at **Broadstone Res.** on 14th March and 12 on 7th April, 13 at **Digley Res.** on 24th March, and ten at **Cheesegate Nab** on 8th April.

Although there were numerous records of up to four (but usually only 2) from **Blackmoorfoot Res.** between late February and mid-August, and a similar number at **Ringstone Edge Res.** between mid-March and mid-July, there was no proof of breeding at either location.

Breeding evidence was obtained for the following locations:

Dewsbury SW – a pair fledged three young.

Riding Wood Res – a pair fledged at least two young.

Langsett Res – a pair hatched at least two chicks.

Langsett – a pair hatched three chicks at the water treatment works.

Isle of Skye Quarry – a pair had two eggs in a nest on their usual nesting site high on the rock face in early May, but the outcome is unknown.

Blakeley Res – a pair fledged three young.

Green Gate Road (near Digley) – a pair had two well-grown young in mid-June.

With the exceptions of **Blackmoorfoot** and **Ringstone Edge Reservoirs** (see above) the only other June/July records involved a single in the **Little Don Valley** on 10th June; two at **Ingbirchworth Res.** on 2nd July, with a single there on 26th July; nine at **Langsett Res.** on 14th July; at least four at **Harden** on 17th July; and two at **Whitley Common** on 18th.

LAPWING *Vanellus vanellus*

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

The only large gatherings in January involved c.80 in the fields off **Spicer House Lane** on 1st; 520+ at **Whitley Common** on 2nd; c.500 at **Ingbirchworth Moor** on 5th; c.600 at **Broadstone Res.** from 6th to 11th; c.50 at **Ingbirchworth Res.** on 10th; 120 at **Emley** on 20th; c.350 at **Whitley Common** on 25th; c.150 near **Ladywood Lakes** on 26th; and 100 to 150 daily at **Blackmoorfoot Res.** during the first half of the month. Although February produced some higher assemblages, they were limited to five sites: c.530 at **Broadstone Res.** on 2nd; 600+ were present at **Whitley Common** on 1st with c.300 there 2nd with c.200 there on 4th; 103 at **Blackmoorfoot Res.** from 4th to 9th; c.200 at **Maythorn** on 20th; and c.100 near **Digley** on 24th. Numbers in March began to fall as migrants vacated the area, but 120 were present at **Ringstone Edge Res.** on 7th, with 90 there on 14th; and 30 were at **Snappe Res.** on 25th. None of the other sites mustered more than a dozen birds, indeed, at well-watched **Blackmoorfoot Res.** numbers never exceeded eight all month.

There were fewer breeding records than last year, with confirmation only being received for the following locations: **Green Holes, Ripponden** (2 pairs bred), **Snappe Res.** (4 pairs bred), **Cartworth Moor** (1 pair bred), **Ringstone Edge Res.** (1 pair bred), **Ranah Stones Farm, Hazelhead** (41 pairs bred), **Broadstone Res.** (11 pairs held breeding territories), **Spicer House Lane** (16 pairs held breeding territories), **Dewsbury SW** (pair fledged 2 young), **Whitley Common** (at least 7 pairs hatched 17 chicks), **Isle of Skye Quarry** (2 possibly 3 pairs bred), **Snittlegate** (9 young in mid-May), **Digley** (1+ pairs bred), **Holme** (1 pair bred), and **Shepley** (1 pair bred).

At **Blackmoorfoot Res.** the post-breeding assemblage began to develop from early June and had reached 100 by the month end. Although numbers then fluctuated daily, the flock reached 200 by

mid-July. Other post-breeding flocks didn't start to materialise until early July, and only amounted to 20 at **Deanhead Res.** on 5th; c.100 in the **Scout Dike/Royd Moor** area on 7th; c.150 at **Harden** on 17th; and 110 at **Dewsbury SW** on 25th. In August the **Blackmoorfoot** flock fluctuated between 120 and 180 daily, but the only other count of significance involved 90 at **Scout Dike Res.** on 22nd. Numbers rallied in September/October, with birds being seen at several localities, but numbers rarely reached high double figures, the following being the exceptions: up to 220 on a daily basis at **Blackmoorfoot** with 263 on 16th September; 195 in the **Scout Dike/Royd Moor** area on 28th September, with 225 there on 5th October; c.200 at **Thurstonland** on 7th October; and 190 at **Cranberry** on 20th October. Although the **Blackmoorfoot** flock persisted until the year end, numbers in November never exceeded the 200 on 19th and during December the highest count involved 76 on 15th. Other November/December counts only involved 70 at **Bretton Park** on 8th November; 416 at **Ringstone Edge Res.** on 10th November; 200 at **Maythorn** on 12th November; five at **Ingbirchworth Res.** on 26th November; 60 at **Deer Hill** on 4th December; and 35 at **Harden Moss** on 21st December.

Overflying birds, presumably on passage, were recorded as follows:

Rastrick – 56 flew W on 8th February, 60 flew S on 24th December and 70+ did likewise on 26th December.

Wards End Farm, Marsden – 25 (7 flew W + 18 S) on 20th February. A total of 72 flew over, mainly in an E or W direction, with a maximum of 50 NE on 26th March. Later in the year, eight flew NE on 8th July, singles flew E on 9th and 12th July, and 60 flew N on 30th September.

Harden Quarries – 193 flew S on 27th September, with seven doing likewise on 16th October and ten the following day.

Scammonden Water – 11 flew SW on 16th October.

GOLDEN PLOVER *Pluvialis apricaria*

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

There were a good number of localities which held large assemblages during the latter part of the first winter period, but, by comparison, the second winter period was rather subdued.

In January, a flock of 30 flew SW over **Deer Hill** on 1st, 77 were at **Broadstone Lodge** on 8th, 108 at **Whitley Edge** on 25th; c.100 at **Broadstone Res.** on 30th; whilst c.50 were present throughout at **Maythorn**, and **Blackmoorfoot** hosted fluctuating numbers up to 70 strong. Assemblages in February were larger and more widely distributed. The **Maythorn** and **Blackmoorfoot** flocks persisted throughout February, with the former holding a similar number but the **Blackmoorfoot** flock peaked at 160 between 24th and 26th. Other large assemblages in February involved 45 at **Ringstone Edge Res.** and 300+ at **Whitley Edge** on 1st; c.80 at **Whitley Common** on 2nd with c.200 there on 4th; c.30 at **Whitley Heights** on 15th; c.70 which flew W at **Snape Res.** on 16th; and 35 at **Broadstone Res.** on 24th/25th. March saw a tremendous increase in numbers, presumably of passage birds on their way to breeding grounds further north. The assemblage at **Maythorn** continued to dominate and peaked at c.300 at the month end; numbers began to build at **Ringstone Edge Res.** from 11 early in the month to c.350 by the month end; a flock at **Snape Res.** reached a maximum of 67 on 20th; c.500 were at **Potter's Gate, Broadstone** on 24th (what was presumably the same flock was also seen at Broadstone and Royd Moor Reservoirs on the same date); and 140 flew N at **Wards End Farm, Marsden** on 28th. Although recorded from several other localities in March, these never exceeded the 12 at **Blackmoorfoot Res.** on 8th.

In April, the flock of c.300 at **Maythorn** persisted until at least 8th and the **Ringstone Edge Res.** assemblage, although fluctuating daily, reached an impressive peak of 600 on 7th. Although

numbers at other sites were much lower, there were 112 at **Whitley Edge** on 4th, 50+ at **Blackmoorfoot Res.** on 6th, 100+ at **Hartcliff Hill** on 8th, and 29 at **Snape Res.** on 30th.

Although birds were present in several potential breeding areas during the summer months, the only evidence of breeding involved two pairs in the **Deer Hill** area and two singing males throughout the summer months on **Bradshaw Moor**.

Following the breeding season, records were confined to nine locations and, with the exception of **Ringstone Edge Res.**, treble figure counts were few and far between. At **Ringstone Edge Res.**, although there had been no sightings since late April, a flock began to assemble from early July, peaking at 316 on 9th November. It appears that the flock dispersed after 20th November as there were no further records. At the other sites, most of which had held birds earlier in the year, relatively small numbers were involved. The highest counts related to 43 at **Hartcliff Hill** on 1st July with 56 there on 11th July; c.200 at **Thurstonland** on 7th October; c.150 at **Maythorn Slack** on 17th October; c.130 flew SE at **Harden Quarries** on 6th November; 100 at **Blackmoorfoot Res.** on 9th November with 76 there on 14th December; and c.130 were at **Deer Hill** in late November/early December.

More birds were recorded moving over the area than is usual:

Wholestone Moor – nine flew W on 22nd March.

Wards End Farm – 11 flew N on both 23rd and 24th March, 140 flew N on 28th March, 100 flew N on 19th April, and 22 flew NE on 20th April. Later in the year, 25 flew W on 6th October, a single flew W on 17th October, seven flew W on 2nd November, and 70 flew SW on 6th November.

Harden Quarries – 68 flew SW on 11th October and c.130 flew SE on 6th November.

Isle of Skye Quarry – four flew NE on 15th October.

Royd Moor Res – c.80 flew S on 17th October and 30 N on 10th November.

GREY PLOVER *Pluvialis squatarola*

Rare visitor.

There were two records.

A single flew high to the NE at **Wards End Farm, Marsden** on 21st February (DWS). A summer-plumaged adult along the W bank at **Blackmoorfoot Res.** on 21st July (GBS) was only seen fleetingly and could not be relocated in the large Lapwing flock. This is the first record for the reservoir since a single on 20th November 2008.

RINGED PLOVER *Charadrius hiaticula*

Uncommon passage visitor. Has bred.

There were records from five localities, an increase of two on last year.

Redbrook Res – two were present between 1st and 4th June and a single on 13th June (DHP, JMP). **Blackmoorfoot Res** – two adults were present on 31st July with an adult and juvenile on 28th August. There was then a welcome return to former years with birds being seen on nine September dates; an adult on 6th was followed by nine on 16th, two remained from 16th – 19th, three were present on 20th, and a single on 21st and 23rd (MLD, GBS *et al.*).

Deer Hill Res – in August three (adult + 2 juveniles) were present on 5th, two (adult + juvenile) on 10th and a single flew W on 22nd. One departed high to the W on 4th October (NWM, DHP, DMP).

Ringstone Edge Res – in September two were present on 1st (DT), a single on 12th (DHP) and a juvenile on 24th (DT).

Langsett Res – a juvenile on 11th September (BBSG).

LITTLE RINGED PLOVER *Charadrius dubius*

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

With reports from only six locations, this is a marked drop from the 11 localities of last year. The first record involved two at **Royd Moor Res.** on 25th March and the last, a juvenile at **Blackmoorfoot Res.** on 22nd August. Breeding was confirmed at three sites (4 in 2017), with three young fledging at each.

Other records were received from:

Royd Moor Res – two on 25th March and a single on, unaged bird, on 9th August.

Ingbirchworth Res – a single on 5th April was followed by one or two on five other April dates, then a single was seen on 10th and 13th/14th May and, in July, an adult from 2nd – 6th, two juveniles on 7th, a single juvenile on 10th, three juveniles on 13th, and a single juvenile on 29th.

Langsett Res – two on 22nd/23rd April, singles on 18th May and 3rd and 14th July, four (2 adults + 2 juveniles) on 29th July, four (adult + 3 juveniles) on 4th August, and two adults on 12th August.

Blackmoorfoot Res – the only spring record involved a single on 22nd May. There were no further records until July when an adult was present on 21st/22nd and an adult and juvenile remained from 25th – 28th. Two or three were then present on 16 dates in August (the last being a juvenile on 22nd) and four, an adult and three juveniles, were present on 17th/18th.

March Haigh Res – two on 27th May.

Deanhead Res – an unaged bird on 5th July.

DOTTEREL *Charadrius morinellus*

Rare passage visitor.

Two flew W over the **Isle of Skye Quarry** at 07.20hrs. on 29th September (DHP). The observer not only had the presence of mind to photograph them, but he also recorded the calls.

This is the first record in the Club area since a single at the same location on 9th September 2015 and only the fourth autumn occurrence on record.

WHIMBREL *Numenius phaeopus*

Scarce passage visitor. Red listed.

There were only six records from four localities, four in spring and two in autumn.

Ingbirchworth Res – one flew E on 13th April and a single flew SE on 8th August (BBSG).

Carlecotes Ponds – one was heard on three occasions at 09.07hrs. on 7th May (DHP).

Wards End Farm, Marsden – a single flew NE at 10.45hrs. on 8th May and two flew NE on 15th May (DWS).

Scammonden Water – one flew S at 08.52hrs. on 28th August (DT).

CURLEW *Numenius arquata*

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

The first returning birds concerned three which flew NW at **Blackmoorfoot Res.** on 16th February and singles at **Maythorn Slack**, **Broadstone Res.** and **Blackmoorfoot Res.** the following day. The only other February records were all from **Blackmoorfoot Res.** and involved two on 19th, one which flew NW on 20th, and a single which flew W on 23rd. The following four months, March-June, saw birds become far more widely distributed, with records from a further 31 sites, including some large gatherings. Although numbers were somewhat reduced on last year, there were some large assemblages, especially in March as birds passed through the area. A flock of 16 were on **Thick Hollins Moor** on 9th March, ten flew S at **Panna Mill Dam** on 11th March, 13 were near **Broadstone Res.** and c.30 were at **Scammonden Water** on 14th March, 27 were at **Red Lane**, **Meltham** on 17th March, c.35 were at **Deer Hill** on 20th March, 12 were at **Moorside Edge**, **Slaithwaite** the following day, a flock of 25 were at **Wilshaw** on 22nd/23rd March, 44 at **Ingbirchworth** on 29th March, 16 were in the fields to the west of **Blackmoorfoot Res.** on 5th April, 12 were at **Flight Hill** on 17th May, 16 were at **Blackmoorfoot Res.** on 20th June, and 25 were at **Langsett Res** on 23rd June.

Breeding, or possible breeding, was reported from the following locations: **Green Holes**, **Ripponden** (3 pairs bred), **Deanhead Res.** (young seen), **Little Don Valley** (3 pairs), **Maythorn Slack** (2 pairs), **Broadstone Res.** (1 pair), **Royd Moor** (1 pair), **Royd Moor Res.** (1 pair), **Wards End Farm**, **Marsden** (1 probably 2 pairs bred) and displaying birds were noted at **Digley**, **Ingbirchworth Res.**, **Harden**, **Snailsden Moor**, **Whitley Common**, **Scammonden Water**, **Holme Styes** and, in the **Marsden** area at **Butterley Hill**, **Warcock** and **Shooters Nab**.

As is normal following the breeding season, there was a large decrease in the number of sites holding the species. With the exception of **Wards End Farm**, which had one or two on eight July/August dates, and **Blackmoorfoot Res.**, which had one or two on seven dates during the same period, the only other records involved two at **Ingbirchworth Res.** on 4th July, five at **Whitley Airfield** on 29th July, and eight near **Harden Quarries** on 8th August.

Rather surprisingly there were no September records, not even from the well-watched reservoirs. The only records thereafter involved a single at **Redbrook Res.** on 3rd October, two which flew W at **Blackmoorfoot Res.** on 5th October, one at the **Isle of Skye Quarry** on 10th October, a single which flew S at **Scammonden Water** on 18th October, one at **Ingbirchworth Res.** on 27th October, and a very late individual which flew W at **Wards End Farm** on 23rd November.

BLACK-TAILED GODWIT *Limosa limosa*

Rare to scarce passage visitor, increasing.

There were only three records, but one of these involved a flock of seven which included a colour-ringed individual.

Ingbirchworth Res – at least one was heard calling on 13th April (MCW, MW) and a flock of seven were present on 5th July (NWM, DHP).

Ringstone Edge Res – a single was photographed on 10th November (AT, PD *et al.*).

One of the Ingbirchworth birds had been colour-ringed at Iken, Suffolk on 13th September 2012. The bird had been seen at various sites in SE England every year since then, including the first three months of 2018 on the Blackwater Estuary in Essex. It was then seen in Iceland, where the species

breeds, on 16th April 2014. The Icelandic breeding population *L. l. islandica* spends the winter months in Britain (including Ireland), and SW Europe.

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

2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
0	0	2	11	0	0	4	25	3	9

TURNSTONE *Arenaria interpres*

Rare passage visitor.

There were two records of singles.

Ringstone Edge Res – a summer-plumaged bird for at least an hour on 24th May (DT).

Deer Hill Res – a summer-plumaged adult on 5th August was in the company of three Ringed Plovers (SP *et al.*).

These are the first records in the Club area since a single at Deer Hill Res. on 3rd August 2011.

KNOT *Calidris canutus*

Rare passage visitor.

A single remained in a field at **Ringstone Edge Res.** between 13th and 27th March (DF *et al.*).

This is the first record in the Club area since at least one was seen at Hazelhead/Reddishaw Knoll on 6th November 2012.

RUFF *Calidris pugnax*

Rare to scarce visitor.

The only record involved a single at **Ringstone Edge Res.** between 5th and 11th November (AT *et al.*).

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

2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
0	2	2	0	2	0	3	2	9	1

SANDERLING *Calidris alba*

Rare to scarce passage visitor.

There were three records:

Redbrook Res – a summer-plumaged adult on 2nd June (DHP).

Langsett Res – a juvenile on 4th August (RJB).

Ringstone Edge Res – a single on 10th November (SB *et al.*).

DUNLIN *Calidris alpina*

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

There was no confirmation of breeding this year, but information from **RSPB Dove Stone** is still awaited. Breeding records for the previous two years from this traditional site can be found on page 118.

Bretton Park – a single was photographed on the slipway during severe weather on 2nd March.

Blackmoorfoot Res – the only record in the first half of the year involved a single on the ice on 8th March. There were then no records until four were present on the west bank mud on 19th July. Thereafter, the mud attracted up to four (usually 1 or 2) on a further five July dates, a flock of 11 departed SW on 28th August, two were present on 18th September and singles on 21st September and from 13th – 15th October.

Redbrook Res – birds were present on virtually every visit between 14th May and 18th June. Up to four (usually 2 or 3) were the norm, but as many as seven were seen on several dates with eight being present on 30th May. The only records thereafter involved singles on 2nd, 4th and 8th July and 24th October.

Chew Res – four on 19th May.

March Haigh Res – a single on 19th June.

Ringstone Edge Res – two on 23rd July, singles on 24th September and 5th and 9th November and four on 16th November.

Ramsden Clough – two on 5th August.

Deer Hill Res – a single on 10th August.

Ingbirchworth Res – one on 28th August.

WOODCOCK *Scolopax rusticola*

Resident breeder (2), 25-75 pairs. Uncommon winter visitor.

Finding this elusive species away from the known breeding areas is very ‘hit and miss’, as the following records suggest.

Records during the first winter period were restricted to singles at **Cawthorne** on 18th January, **Cliff Wood** on 26th February and 7th March; **Wards End Farm**, **Marsden** and **Scammonden Water** on 22nd March; four were present at **Carlecotes Ponds** on 25th March, with two there on 28th April; and one was at **Deanhead Res.** on 26th March. The only other record during this period involved a single at **Blackmoorfoot Res.** on 4th April.

Breeding season records were confined to **Storthes Hall**, where four roding males made a total of ten flypasts on the evening of 9th May, the **Little Don Valley**, where at least six males held territories, two chicks fledged from **Swinden Plantation**, and two males held breeding territories at **Hingcliff Common**.

All other records were confined to November/December. Singles were seen at the **Isle of Skye Quarry** on 8th November; **Crosland Hill** on 3rd December; **Blackmoorfoot Res.** on 13th – 16th December; and **Lower Cumberworth** on 15th December. The only locality with multiple sightings was **Carlecotes Ponds** which had a single on 17th November, four on 4th December, and singles on 14th, 25th and 26th December.

JACK SNIPE *Lymnocryptes minimus*

Scarce passage and winter visitor.

There were three records, presumably of the same individual, from **Wards End Farm, Marsden** on 11th, 16th and 22nd March (DWS). The only other record involved a single at **Broadstone Res.** on 17th November (DMW).

SNIPE *Gallinago gallinago*

Resident breeder, decreased to (2), 50-100 pairs. Common passage and winter visitor.

There were records from 13 widely distributed locations during the first winter period, but these mainly consisted of singletons for one day's duration, the only exceptions being three at **Whitehead Lane, South Crosland** on 2nd February, four near **Cupwith Res.** on 21st March, three at **Bradshaw Moor** on 24th March, and three which flew NW over **Wards End Farm, Marsden** also on 24th March. A single which was obviously affected by 'The Beast from the East' was feeding along the edge of a garden pond in **Crimble Clough** on 1st March (identified from a photograph supplied by David Ross).

Evidence of breeding, which took the form of drumming and chippering birds, came from 15 localities: there were singles at **Wards End Farm; Bord Hill, Langsett; Green Holes, Ripponden; Ringstone Edge Res.; Cupwith Res.; Whitley Airfield; Isle of Skye Quarry; Flight Hill; Issues Lane, Holme; Brow Grains, Meltham;** two birds at **Harden Moss; Redbrook Res.; Snittlegate; Digley Res.;** three at **Whitley Edge,** and five at **Snappe Res.**

Following the breeding season, birds became more widespread, but the usual late summer build-up of this species at **Dewsbury SW** failed to materialise due to the drainage of the sewage beds and other works. Numbers remained low at other sites, however, and the only records of more than three involved four in the **Isle of Skye Quarry** on 13th and 22nd June, five at **Ingbirchworth Res.** on 10th July, four at **Blackmoorfoot Res.** on 24th July, five at **Scout Dike Res.** on 7th September, and 20 at **Ringstone Edge Res.** on 5th November, with 13 there on 6th and 8th November.

Visible migration, which is not often witnessed in this species, was recorded from the following locations:

Crosland Moor – a flock of six flew W on 18th August.

Wards End Farm – three flew NW on 24th March. Later in the year, a total of 93 flew over, mainly in a westerly direction, on 14 dates between 16th and 7th November, with a maximum of 15 (8 + 7) W on 24th September and 26 W on 8th October.

Harden Quarries – a total of ten flew over, mainly in a southerly direction, on six dates between 27th September and 25th October. No more than two were seen on any one date.

Pule Hill, Marsden – three flew W on 29th September.

Scammonden Water – a single flew SW on 5th October.

Royd Moor Hill – ten flew SW on 17th October.

COMMON SANDPIPER *Actitis hypoleucos*

Migrant breeder (2), around 50 pairs.

Records were received from 23 localities (25 in 2017 and 21 in 2016) but breeding was only reported from two of these.

The earliest arrivals involved singles at both **Blackmoorfoot** and **Ingbirchworth Reservoirs** on 16th April, five at **Scout Dike Res.** on 18th April, and a single at **Boshaw Whams** and two at **Chew Res.** on 20th April. Both **Blackmoorfoot Res.** and **Ingbirchworth Res.** continued to hold one or two for the rest of the month, but the only other April record was of an impressive 12 at **Langsett Res.** on 22nd.

Although birds became more widely distributed during the following two months, numbers were unimpressive, with all sites holding less than three birds with the exceptions of **Redbrook Res.** which had four on several occasions (see breeding below), four at **Ringstone Edge Res.** on 24th/25th June and five at **Yateholme** on 27th June.

Despite being widely distributed during the breeding season, the only evidence of breeding came from **Langsett Res.** where two pairs held breeding territories, and **Redbrook Res.** where two pairs are thought to have bred, of which at least one pair raised young.

Although birds were present on a near daily basis at both **Blackmoorfoot** and **Ingbirchworth Reservoirs** in July and August, numbers usually remained below four, with the exceptions of nine at **Blackmoorfoot** on 28th July and seven there the following day. At other sites during these months, numbers generally remained below four, but five were at **Deanhead Res.** on 5th July. The only September records were from **Blackmoorfoot Res.** which had between one and three on 13 dates. The last birds of the year, again from **Blackmoorfoot Res.**, involved singles on 11th and 15th October.

An interesting record involved a single which was sound recorded as it flew over **Thongsbridge** at 23.10hrs. on 7th August (DHP).

GREEN SANDPIPER *Tringa ochropus*

Scarce to uncommon passage and winter visitor.

Birds were reported from nine locations (5 in 2017 and 9 in 2016). Dewsbury SW, as is usual, commanded the lion's share.

Dewsbury SW – this species is now present throughout most of the year, only being absent for about six weeks from mid-May. The maximum number involved four on 6th August (JH).

Ingbirchworth Res – a single on 17th July (BBSG).

Redbrook Res – a single on 28th and 30th July (DHP).

Deer Hill – one feeding in the catchment on 2nd August (DMP).

Isle of Skye Quarry – one was recorded remotely at 23.32hrs. on 2nd August and a single was present on 11th August (DHP).

Digley Res – a single on 9th August (II).

Gunthwaite Dam – in August there were two from 11th to 16th (NWM, DMP *et al.*), a single on 13th (NWM, DHP), two on 15th (DBu, AK, RM), and a single on 22nd (NWM).

Royd Moor Res – a single departed SE on 22nd August (RJB).

Bretton Park – three on 10th November (BBSG).

REDSHANK *Tringa totanus*

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

This declining species was recorded from eight localities (5 in 2017), but there was a slight increase in the number of records. For the third year in succession, however, there were no records from the River Calder catchment.

Blackmoorfoot Res – birds were recorded on nine dates, a slight increase on last year: in March singles were present on 10th/11th and 17th, and one departed SE on 24th and a single flew S on 25th April. There were then no records until a single was seen on 18th July, two were present on 9th August and singles on 22nd September and 19th November.

Whitley Common – one on 21st March.

Ringstone Edge Res – singles on 26th and 29th March, 21st April, 26th May, and 19th November.

Redbrook Res – in May, singles were present on 15th, 18th and 22nd, with two between 25th and 27th, and then singles were seen on 2nd and 25th June and 11th July.

Broadstone Res – one on 8th April.

Deanhead Res – a single flew NW on 19th May.

Langsett Res – a single from 4th to 10th August.

Deer Hill Res – a juvenile remained between 19th to 22nd August.

GREENSHANK *Tringa nebularia*

Scarce to uncommon passage visitor.

With no records in 2016 and only two in 2017, this species is becoming increasingly rare in the Club area.

The only record involved a single by the overflow at **Ingbirchworth Res.** on 4th September (GMC, II).

KITTIWAKE *Rissa tridactyla*

Rare to scarce passage visitor. Red listed.

There were five records, three in March and one in June and August.

Blackmoorfoot Res – an adult on 7th March (MLD, GBS *et al.*), 15 or 16 adults during the afternoon on 13th March (KW) and an adult which departed W at 10.30hrs. on 17th June (MLD, BW).

Ringstone Edge Res – an adult on 24th March (AT).

Healey Mills/Kerry's NR – a juvenile on the River Calder on 20th August (JH).

BLACK-HEADED GULL *Chroicocephalus ridibundus*

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

Blackmoorfoot roost counts produced the following monthly maxima:

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
nc	6500	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	2600	5100

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

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
250	150	120	30	8	7	30	40	85	80	350	4000

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

New Mill – c.100 were feeding in fields off Butterley Lane throughout January and again between early October and the year end.

Whitley Edge – 2,500+ on 25th January, c.1,500 on 1st February and c.1,200 on 14th April.

Cowcliffe – a flock of c.100 flew W on 2nd February and a similar number were hawking for flying ants on 15th July.

Linthwaite – c.1,100 were counted as they flew towards Blackmoorfoot Res. to roost on 8th October and c.500 were counted as they departed NW from the roost on 13th December.

Digley Res – c.100 on 21st October.

Langsett Res – birds were present in the roost as follows: c.2,600 on 25th February, 195 on 29th July, 176 on 4th August had increased to 911 by the month end, 627 on 2nd September had increased to 905 by the month end, and c.740 on 28th October had increased to c.2,700 by 2nd December but had decreased to c.2,400 by the year end.

Dewsbury SW – the 450 on 10th December had increased to 650 by 23rd December.

The recently established colony at **Winscar Res.** held up to 180 adults, of which 53 pairs built nests.

Visible migration was noted at three localities:

Wards End Farm, Marsden – movements during the first half of the year were limited to a total of 60 which flew W on 15 days, with a maximum of 17 on 1st January. There was a marked improvement during the second half of the year, especially during the months of July and October, when a total of 683 flew over, mainly in a westerly direction, on 58 days. The numbers involved were relatively low, and the maximum only amounted to 72 W on 20th July, 48 W on 22nd September and 65 on 17th October.

Harden Quarries – a total of 123 flew over, mainly in a southerly direction, on nine dates between 14th August and 15th November, with a maximum of 41 N on 10th October.

Pule Hill, Marsden – a total of 235 flew over, mainly in a westerly direction, on 14 dates between 28th August and 15th November, with a maximum of 34 W on 22nd September and 62 W on 17th October.

MEDITERRANEAN GULL *Ichthyæetus melanocephalus*

Rare to scarce visitor.

There were only four records, the poorest showing for several years.

Broadstone – a summer-plumaged adult following a plough in a field with Black-headed Gulls on 30th June (DMP, SP *et al.*).

Blackmoorfoot Res – a pristine juvenile on 4th August (MLD, GBS *et al.*) and a first-winter on 10th November (GK).

Ingbirchworth Res – a summer-plumaged adult on 17th July (BBSG).

COMMON GULL *Larus canus*

Common passage and winter visitor.

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

Blackmoorfoot roost counts produced the following monthly maxima:

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
nc	1600	nc	4	1	1	2	3	4	26	550	1200

With the exception of the Blackmoorfoot counts noted above, records during the first winter period were from a number of widely scattered localities, especially in the east of the area, but counts rarely exceeded 20, the following being the exceptions:

Broadstone Res – 103 on 11th January and c.70 on 24th March.

Ingbirchworth Res – 31 on 25th January, c.60 on 21st February, c.220 on 21st March and 145 on 25th March.

Castle Hill – 30 feeding in fields on 27th January.

Langsett Res – c.60 roosted on 25th February.

Apart from **Blackmoorfoot Res.**, which had up to four (but usually 1 or 2) on 42 dates between mid-April and late September, the only other records during these months were as follows:

Wards End Farm, Marsden – a total of 43 flew W on 13 dates with a maximum of seven on 18th April and 4th August and nine on 23rd September.

Linthwaite – a single on 3rd July.

Langsett Res – one roosted on eight August dates with two on 29th, and up to six roosted on four dates in September.

Ingbirchworth Moor – 73 on 5th September.

Ringstone Edge – one on 24th September.

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

Langsett Res – 45 on 28th October and, in December, 42 roosted on 2nd, 74 on 9th, 55+ on 22nd, and 35 on 24th.

Broadstone Res – 75 on 17th November, 85 on 11th December and 187 on 26th December.

Ingbirchworth Res – 42 on 19th November and 37 on 14th December.

Upper Oldfield – 47 on 16th December.

Lepton – 30 feeding in fields on 16th December.

Shepley – c.200 feeding in fields on 19th December.

Visible migration was noted at two localities:

Wards End Farm – a total of 146 flew over, mainly in a westerly direction, on 21 dates between early January and late March, with a maximum of 18 W on 24th January and 35 E on 25th February. Numbers during the second winter period were somewhat reduced on previous years, with only 96 flying over, mainly in a westerly direction, on 12 dates between mid-October and mid-December, with a maximum of 49 W on 9th December.

Pule Hill, Marsden – a total of 38 flew W on nine dates between 28th August and 15th November, with a maximum of 11 on 21st October and ten on 2nd November.

GREAT BLACK-BACKED GULL *Larus marinus*

Uncommon winter visitor.

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

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
3	2	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	11

This species is becoming less frequent in the Club area as the years progress, not only in the roost at **Blackmoorfoot Res.**, but also in the area generally. The Blackmoorfoot December counts, the only month with more than three, involved birds overflying the area in a westerly direction: five adults on 10th, 11 on 17th and seven adults on both 30th and 31st.

The only other records were as follows:

Ingbirchworth Res – an adult +first-winter on 22nd January.

Wards End Farm, Marsden – with the exception of December, records were abysmal. The first four months of the year only amounted to a total of 27 bird/days – 23 flew W on four January dates with a maximum of 11 on 15th, a single flew W on 15th February, two flew W on 3rd March and a single flew W on 22nd April. There were then no records until singles flew W on 23rd June and 5th July. Also in July, two flew E on 11th and two flew W on 15th. Between early August and late November birds were recorded flying W on 22 dates but the number of bird/days only amounted to 31. December rallied somewhat with a total of 83 flying W on 11 dates, with a maximum of 22 on 25th.

Mirfield (Biffa waste disposal centre) – four on 25th January and five on 30th January.

Ringstone Edge Res – two on 23rd July.

Langsett Res – a single on 2nd September, two on 22nd December, and three roosted on 24th.

Pule Hill, Marsden – an adult flew SW on 17th September and single adults flew W on three October dates and 8th November.

Isle of Skye Quarry – an adult flew W on 7th October.

HERRING GULL *Larus argentatus*

Common passage and winter visitor. Red listed.

As is now normal, the roost at **Blackmoorfoot Res.** rarely held more than single figures during either winter period with the exceptions of 150 on 3rd and 4th January, 42 on 30th January, 80 on 10th December, and 50 on 12th December. Birds were seen moving over the area on the following occasions: 86 flew E on 11th March, five W on 13th March, seven S on 15th April, 83 W on 10th December (the day that a further 80 roosted), and 17 W on 17th December.

There were records from a further 17 localities (16 in 2017 and 15 in 2016), showing that the species is nowhere near as common as formerly. A large proportion of the records related to passage birds over Wards End Farm, Marsden.

Whitley Common – three on 1st January.

Wards End Farm – a total of 264 flew over, mainly in a westerly direction, on 22 dates between early January and mid-March, with a maximum of 84 W on 15th January and 59 W on 22nd January. Records between late April and mid-September amounted to 43 birds which flew W on 16 dates. Movements between mid-October and late November only amounted to a further 149 birds which flew W on 14 dates, with a maximum of 33 on 21st October, 34 on 28th October and 27 on 4th

November. There was an upsurge in numbers during December, when some 506 flew W, with a maximum of 175 on 9th and 74 the following day.

Oldfield – five were present on 6th and 24th January. Later in the year 28 had gathered on 27th November but thereafter, although seen on a near daily basis, figures never exceeded the 10+ on 21st December.

Horbury Strands/Wyke – one flew W on 22nd January.

Ingbirchworth Res – three flew W on 22nd January, three were present on 8th February, two on 25th February and singles on 21st March, 16th April and 24th December.

Mirfield (Biffa waste disposal centre) – 25 were present on 25th January and 27 on 30th January. In March, 12 were seen on 6th, four on 13th and 11 on 21st. The only other records involved nine on 3rd April, three on 16th September and 60 which were present nearby on 28th December.

Elland GP – a single on 28th January and two on 27th April.

Clayton West – ten flew over on 17th February.

Langsett Res – in August, a single was present on 18th, two on 20th, and singles on 21st and 29th, there was a single on 4th September and six roosted on 22nd December, as did two on 24th December.

Gunthwaite Dam – a single on 28th August.

Deanhead Res – a single flew S on 28th August.

Pule Hill, Marsden – all birds flew SW: singles on 17th and 22nd September, two on 16th and 20th October, and six on 3rd November.

Harden Quarries – three flew S on 16th October.

Redbrook Res – six flew SW on 25th October.

Linthwaite – a single flew W on 3rd November.

Wilshaw – seven on 14th November and 18 on 21st November.

Isle of Skye Quarry – two flew N on 19th November.

CASPIAN GULL *Larus cachinnans*

Rare visitor.

This species was recorded in the Club area for the seventh year in succession, but only from two localities, and always in gull roosts.

Blackmoorfoot Res – the adult from 2017 roosted on the reservoir between 2nd and 6th January (NWM *et al.*) and what may have been the same individual roosted on 1st February (NWM). Later in the year an adult was present in the roost on 31st December (NWM).

Langsett Res – a juvenile, presumably the same, roosted on 18th and 21st August (DL) and 4th September (BBSG).

YELLOW-LEGGED GULL *Larus michahellis*

Scarce passage visitor.

Most records were, as has now become the norm, in the second half of the year. There was a good run of records from Langsett Res., which involved a minimum of three birds, and the Ingbirchworth area played host to at least one adult between early August and early September,

Blackmoorfoot Res – there were three records: an adult on 6th January (MLD, DMP, SP *et al.*), a first-summer on 5th May (MLD, DMP, GBS) with probably the same bird on 21st May (MLD, GBS) and an adult on 31st December (MLD).

Whitley Common – an adult on 21st March (BBSG).

Langsett Res – an adult on 14th July (NWM) was presumably the same bird which roosted there on several evenings between 29th July and 24th August (RJB *et al.*). Also in August, a juvenile roosted on 18th (DL), two adults on 23rd, three adults on 24th, two adults + a second-summer on 28th and three adults the following day (RJB *et al.*). Single adults roosted on 4th, 19th and 28th September (RJB).

Ingbirchworth Res – an adult on 3rd July (NWM), three adults the following day (BBSG), a juvenile on 16th September, and adults on 26th September and 21st December (BBSG).

Ingbirchworth group of reservoirs – an adult, presumably the same, frequented this area on several dates between 2nd and 22nd August (RJB, NWM *et al.*). It, or another adult, was present on 2nd and 17th September (RJB, II).

Broadstone Res – a juvenile on 11th September (DMW) and an adult on 5th October (MCW).

Shepley – an adult was in a field adjacent to the Cricket Club on 4th October (RJB).

LESSER BLACK-BACKED GULL, *Larus fuscus*

Common passage visitor, uncommon winter visitor.

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

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
19	5	5	6	13	13	7	18	9	6	4	24

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

Gunthwaite Dam – two on 1st January, four on 7th February and a single on 21st March.

Ingbirchworth Res – three on 1st January.

Wards End Farm, Marsden – a total of 286 flew over, mainly in a westerly direction, on 43 dates between early January and late April, with a maximum of 49 W on 16th February and 29 W on 19th April.

Ingbirchworth Res – a single on 11th January.

Minfield (Biffa waste disposal centre) – eight on 25th January and two on 21st March.

Winscar Res – three on 21st March.

Fixby – three flew W on 25th March and four flew NW on 21st April.

Cupwith Res – four flew W on 4th April.

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

Langsett Res – roosting birds were counted as follows: 22 on 29th July, the 46 on 10th August had increased to 356 the following week and 672 on 28th August. Numbers fluctuated thereafter, but remained in treble figures, with a maximum of 443 on 19th September, but only 14 remained by 28th October.

Ingbirchworth Res – 20+ on 30th July, 28 on 6th August, 75 on 18th and 20th August and, in September, 48 on 4th, 15 on 5th, and 65 on 16th, and 24 on 8th October.

Ingbirchworth Moor – 42 on 5th September.

Whitley Common – 37 on 17th September.

Broadstone Res – 57 on 11th September and c.40 on 17th October.

Royd Moor – c.50 on 17th October.

Shepley – occasionally as many as 50 would flew over at roost time.

With the exceptions of the Blackmoorfoot Res. records noted above and movements over Marsden (see below), the only other November/December records involved a single at **Ingbirchworth Res.** on 12th and 15th November.

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

Wards End Farm – a total of 439 flew over, mainly in a westerly direction, on 97 dates between early May and late December, with a maximum of 16 W on 3rd May, 33 W on 20th July and 27 W on 22nd September.

Blackmoorfoot Res – 13 flew W on 29th May.

Harden Quarries – a total of 34 flew over, mainly in a S or SW direction, on 11 dates between 8th August and 12th November, with a maximum of five S on 27th September.

Pule Hill, Marsden – two flew SW on 28th August and, in September, 22 (15 SW + 7 E) on 17th, three W on 22nd, and a single W on 29th.

SANDWICH TERN *Thalasseus sandvicensis*

Rare passage visitor.

Ringstone Edge Res – two flew W at c.11.30hrs. on 21st September (AC).

This is the first record in the Club area since singles were seen at Blackmoorfoot Res. on 15th April and 11th May 2013.

COMMON TERN *Sterna hirundo*

Scarce to uncommon passage visitor. Potential future colonist.

Recorded from two localities (3 in both 2017 and 2016) with birds occurring between 27th April and 21st October (these were the latest ever in the Club area by 5 days).

Elland GP – two were present between 27th April and 2nd May.

Blackmoorfoot Res – there were five records (only two in 2017). An adult departed E at 11.00hrs. on 1st July; an adult was seen briefly at 15.20hrs. on 3rd July; an adult departed W at 12.10hrs. on 16th July; four (2 adults + 2 juveniles) were present on 4th September; and two juveniles flew W at 10.35hrs. on 21st October.

ARCTIC TERN *Sterna paradisaea*

Rare to scarce passage visitor.

There were three records, a single in spring and two in autumn.

A single at **Blackmoorfoot Res.** departed E at 10.40hrs. on 22nd May (MLD, GK *et al.*) and at **Ringstone Edge Res.** three put in a brief appearance on 19th August (JB) and a juvenile was photographed on 4th September (DF *et al.*).

FERAL PIGEON *Columba livia*

Resident breeder (3), 300-500 pairs.

There were far more records this year of this generally under-recorded species, including several from Huddersfield town centre, which made an assessment of the species' status far easier. There were numerous garden records, with a garden in **Almondbury** holding up to five throughout the year, and with eight or nine in November/December. There was no evidence of breeding, but with birds being present at most sites throughout the year, and capable of breeding at any season, it presumably occurred.

The largest assemblages were as follows:

Brighouse – up to 70 were present throughout the year.

Marsden – between ten and 15 were present throughout the year.

Rastrick – 20+ all year round under the M62 bridge.

Red Doles – present throughout the year with a maximum of c.60 on 11th January, c.40 on 24th February and 30+ during March and August.

Elland – up to 60 were present throughout the year.

Huddersfield – present throughout the year with 70+ forever present around the Open Market and Tesco Supermarket. Other records involved 80+ in the town centre on 20th September with 120+ there on 12th December and c.230 lined up along the wall of Tesco's Supermarket car park on 26th October.

Lindley – up to 60 were present throughout the year.

Holmfirth – presumably present throughout the year with a maximum of 31 on 2nd January, c.30 on 6th April and c.20 on 12th June.

Turnbridge – c.40 on 8th January, up to 30 in May/June, and 40 on 8th September.

Aspley – Cooper Bridge – c.30 along the Broad Canal on 22nd April and c.20 at Aspley on 27th May.

Greenhead Park – c.20 on 26th May.

STOCK DOVE *Columba oenas*

Resident breeder (3), 200-300 pairs.

There were records from 29 localities (same as 2017) ranging through all habitat types, but at only four of these were birds recorded throughout the year: **Blackmoorfoot Res.**, **Fixby GC.**, and gardens in **New Mill** and **Holmfirth**. Confirmed breeding, however, was only recorded from **Whitley Common** (2 pairs), **Langsett** (2 pairs) and the Ozzings area of **Shepley** (1 pair).

Most records only involved a handful of birds, but there were some impressive assemblages, especially during the second winter period. All double figure counts are listed below:

Snape Res – 14 on 22nd February.

Ingbirchworth Moor – at least ten on 2nd May.

Annat Royd Lane – 55 on 9th May.

Spicer House Lane – 20 on 15th May.

Bradshaw Moor – present as usual in autumn with a maximum of 26 on 30th October and 46 on 1st November.

Blackmoorfoot Res – 11 on 1st November.

Thick Hollins Moor – 25 on 30th November.

Horbury Strands/Wyke – 18 on 28th December.

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

Pule Hill, Marsden – a total of 25 flew W or SW on 14 dates between 28th August and 15th November, with a maximum of five SW on 29th August.

Harden Quarries – five flew S on 10th October and 19 (17 NW + 2 S) on 22nd October.

Royd Moor Hill – 36 flew SW on 17th October and five S on 10th November.

Wards End Farm – two flew E on 10th November, a single flew E on 13th November and two flew W on 2nd December.

WOODPIGEON *Columba palumbus*

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

For the third consecutive year, flocks during both winter periods were virtually non-existent and rarely reached treble figures. The largest flock consisted of c.300 at **Armitage Bridge** on 9th November, but other flocks never exceeded the c.100 at **Annat Royd Lane** on 9th May, the 100+ occasionally seen at **Shepley** and the c.50 at **Bretton Park** on 8th December.

During the autumn, although birds at **Wards End Farm, Marsden** built to a maximum of 90 on 25th July, August records were limited to ten on 5th. The observer commented that birds seen here at this time of year are usually feeding on Bilberry on the moor but this year the crop was very poor both in terms of quality and quantity.

Visible migration was witnessed at ten sites, being particularly impressive at some of these:

Kirkheaton – there is an annual movement of birds passing E over this site between early July and late August. A rough estimate gives an approximation of c.160 per hour, although it is unknown how long the movements persist.

Wards End Farm, Marsden – a total of 181 flew over, but there was no directionality, on 15 dates between 5th January and 22nd March. Numbers were generally low, the maximum only amounting to 24 NE on 5th January. Later in the year, a total of 22,388 flew over, mainly in a westerly direction, on 46 dates between 17th September and 11th December. Some of the October/early November movements contained several in treble figures, but 9,800 flew W between 07.40hrs. and 09.30hrs. on 18th October and 5,500 flew SW between 07.45hrs. and 08.45hrs. on 22nd October.

Pule Hill, Marsden – a total of 19,309 flew S or SW on 24 dates between 28th August and 15th November, with a maxima, all in October, of 4,445 on 17th, 3,568 on 19th, and 3,496 on 20th.

Harden Quarries – a total of 21,902 flew over, mainly in a S or W direction, on ten dates between 16th October and 15th November, with a maximum of 4,371 on 25th October.

Scammonden Water – in October, c.2,000 flew S between 08.30hrs. and 09.30hrs. on 16th, 350 flew S on 17th, and c.2,000 flew S on 18th.

Royd Moor Hill – 1,042 flew SW on 17th October and 950 did likewise on 10th November.

Ramsden Res – c.1,000 flew S between 10.00hrs. and 11.00hrs. on 18th October.

Linthwaite – in October, 36 flew S on 19th, 60 S on 25th and 150 S on 28th. The only other record involved 35 which flew W on 3rd November.

Dewsbury SW – 670 flew S on 26th October.

Blackmoorfoot Res – 730 flew S on 22nd November and 450 did likewise on 26th November.

Ringstone Edge Res – 450 flew W on 27th October.

COLLARED DOVE *Streptopelia decaocto*

Resident breeder (3), 300-400 pairs.

Remains as widely distributed in the urban environment as previously, with numerous garden records. Several garden feeding stations attracted birds throughout the year, but these never exceeded the half dozen in an **Almondbury** garden on 15th September and a **Linthwaite** garden on 1st November. On a negative note, however, in a garden in **Lockwood** never more than two were seen and it has become 'very infrequent these days'.

All records, with the exceptions of c.30 which remained throughout December at **Helme** and 20, which included a very pale individual, at **Millmoor Riding Stables, Meltham** on 4th December, related to no more than half a dozen birds (but see migration below).

The only evidence of breeding came from **Crosland Moor** (2 pairs), **Ingbirchworth** (2 pairs), **Langsett** (2 pairs), **New Mill** (1 pair), and **Shepley** (1 pair).

Passage birds were noted as follows:

Harden Quarries – although single figures were usually present along the conifer edge during the autumn, the three which flew SW on 25th September were assumed to be migrating.

Wards End Farm, Marsden – a single flew N on 22nd April. Later in the year, a total of 21 flew over, mainly in a W or SW direction, on six dates between 17th October and 1st November, with a maximum of six W on 17th October.

Pule Hill, Marsden – a total of 41 flew over, mainly in a W or SW direction, on seven dates between 14th September and 16th October, with a maximum of 15 (9 flew SW + 6 U-turned from the NE) on 17th September.

CUCKOO *Cuculus canorus*

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

There was a welcome upsurge in records, with birds being reported from 47 localities, a tremendous increase on the 22 of last year. The earliest birds were recorded from the five following locations, all in April: singles at **Winscar Res.** (20th), **Little Don Valley** (21st), **Harden** (27th), two at **Brow Grains, Meltham** (28th), and singles at **Crossley's Plantation** (29th), and **Red Lane, Meltham** (30th). July records, all of singles, were received from five localities, and the latest was a juvenile at **Dove Stone Res.** on 4th August. As has been the tradition in the past, all records are listed.

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

Brow Grains – following the two birds on 28th April (see above) there was a remarkable series of records until 26th May. One or two were present on a near daily basis throughout this period, with four birds being present on 5th May. A hepatic (rufous morph) female was present on 26th May.

Deer Hill Res – 1st and 5th May.

Royd Edge Clough – heard calling on several dates in May.

Langsett – near the Flouch on 6th May.

Ossett – near the Calder and Hebble Navigation Canal on 6th May.

Meal Hill – 7th May then occasionally to 3rd June.

Hepworth – 7th May.

Winscar – following the first on 20th April (see above) singles were recorded on 8th, 17th and 22nd May.

Black Hill – 8th May.

Honley – 8th May.

Dove Stone Res – 11th and 18th May (3), 23rd June and 4th August.
Black Moss-Wessenden – two on 12th May.
Wards End Farm, Marsden – 12th May.
Wessenden Head – 12th May.
Little Don Valley – 12th and 16th May and 10th June.
Meltham Mills – 14th and 18th/19th May, two on 22nd/23rd May, then one regularly between 30th May and 18th June.
Green Holes, Ripponden – 14th May.
Haigh Woods – 15th May.
Digley Res – 16th and 21st/22nd May and 12th June.
Cawthorne – 17th May.
Hoylandswaine – 17th to 20th May.
Scammonden Water – 18th to 21st May.
Langsett Res – 18th/19th May.
Yateholme – 19th May.
Holme – 19th May.
Meal Hill – 20th May.
Dunford Bridge – 21st May.
Armitage Bridge – 22nd May.
Langsett Banks – 23rd May.
Snailsden Res – 24th May.
Deanhouse – 24th and 27th May.
Thurstonland Bank – 24th and 28th May.
Shepley – 26th/27th May with a different bird (judging by the call) the following day.
New Mill – 26th May. This is the first record despite the observer having lived there for 26 years.
Grange Moor – 26th May.
Ramsden Res – 27th May.
Brockholes – 27th May.
Blackmoorfoot Res – there was a marked drop in the number of occurrences from last year, with the only records involving males on 28th May and 9th June and a single on 28th June.
Ramsden Clough – 29th May.
Oldfield – two on 30th May.
Holmfirth – 2nd June.
Holme Styes Res – 3rd June.
Broadstone Res – 12th June and 5th July.
Isle of Skye Quarry – a hepatic (rufous morph) female on 13th June. Non-hepatic birds were then seen on 9th, 14th and 20th July.
Broadstone Heath – 5th July.
Scout Dike Res – 7th July.

BARN OWL *Tyto alba*

Rare visitor. Occasional breeder.

Following last years' increase in the breeding population (probably as many as 6 pairs), this year had a poor showing. Three pairs bred in the area, all in nest-boxes, and fledged 11 (4 + 4 + 3) young. A pair which raised three young at a site just out of the Club area were regularly seen hunting within the area.

It should be noted, however, that the Barn Owl breeding season was poor throughout much of Great Britain in 2018 (Colin Shawyer – BTO website).

TAWNY OWL *Strix aluco*

Resident breeder (2), near 100 pairs.

There were records from 26 localities, an increase of four on last year, but still a marked decrease from the 33 of 2016. Birds were recorded throughout the year at **Meal Hill**, **Fixby**, **Kirkheaton** and **Newsome**.

Confirmation of breeding was obtained from **Fixby** (3 young fledged), **Helme** (3 young fledged), **Thongsbridge** (juveniles heard at two sites), **Kirkheaton** (2 young fledged), **Netherthong** (young heard begging), and **Ingbirchworth Res.** (1 pair). In the Ozzings area of **Shepley** three birds held territories within hearing distance but, although they almost certainly bred, no young were seen.

At **Windy Bank Wood**, a favoured nesting locality in the past, birds were only reported in February and March. The only records from **Blackmoorfoot** involved a single in the S bank wood on 6th April and 12th December and one in the NE corner on 24th/25th December.

LITTLE OWL *Athene noctua*

Resident breeder (2), 50-80 pairs.

With records from only 18 localities (21 in 2017) it appears that the species is still in decline. The only area with sightings throughout the year was the Brow Grains-Red Lane area of **Meltham**, with up to four being seen regularly. An observer from **Meal Hill** commented that “they are becoming harder to find as they disappear from once reliable sites as derelict buildings are restored or demolished”.

Although birds were present during the breeding season at a number of locations, the only proof of breeding came from **Bella Vista Farm**, **Penistone** (2 young fledged), **Scout Dike Res.** (at least 1 juvenile fledged), the Brow Grains-Red Lane area of **Meltham** (at least 2 young fledged), the western end of **Meltham Cop** (at least 1 juvenile fledged), and the Ozzings area of **Shepley** (1 pair bred).

The decrease in records at **Blackmoorfoot** continued: a single on a wall to the west of the reservoir was seen on a few occasions between early April and late June but the only other record involved a single near the inflow on 23rd December.

LONG-EARED OWL *Asio otus*

Resident breeder (1), 5-10 pairs.

At one of last year's new sites in the SW of the area, although adults were present between mid-March and late June, there was no evidence of breeding. At the other locality in this area a total of three young fledged. At the site in the NW of the area two pairs raised seven young and at another traditional site young were heard calling in mid-July. A further four pairs bred in the SE of the area, fledging a total of eight (4 + 1 + 2 + 1) young.

The only records away from these areas involved a single at **Wards End Farm**, **Marsden** on 9th and 13th October.

SHORT-EARED OWL *Asio flammeus*

Partial migrant breeder (1), 0-13 pairs. Scarce passage and winter visitor.

Following last years' abysmal showing, this year was quite the opposite. Birds were present at three potential breeding sites during the summer months. with two of these having pairs in wing-clapping display. Although breeding, or attempted breeding, was strongly suspected at one site, it was not proven.

Following the breeding season, singles were seen at a further three localities, but none of these were for more than a couple of days duration.

NIGHTJAR *Caprimulgus europaeus*

Rare visitor. Former migrant breeder, which may occasionally do so. Red listed.

The location which has held birds for the previous four years held a maximum of three 'churring' males.

At the traditional site in the south of the area, the only count referred to a single 'churring' male, but 'several' were said to be present on 13th June.

SWIFT *Apus apus*

Migrant breeder (3), 100-300 pairs.

The first records involved singles at **Ingbirchworth Res.** on 23rd April and **Blackmoorfoot Res.** on 25th April. There were then no other records until May, when a single was at **Pule Hill, Marsden** on 3rd, and then, on 8th, four were present at **Armitage Bridge**, a single at **Netherton**, and two at both **Crosland Moor** and **Lindley**. The following week saw birds becoming more widely distributed but, as in the previous three years, numbers remained low with assemblages rarely reaching double figures.

Following the single at **Blackmoorfoot Res.** on 25th April birds continued to be seen on a near daily basis until the last, a single, on 30th August. As in the previous three years, numbers remained much lower than normal, with assemblages rarely reaching 30, the only numbers in excess involved 40+ on 30th May, 50+ on 4th June, 70+ the following day, 150+ (after a thunderstorm) on 16th June, 50+ on 18th June, 40+ on 23rd June, and 50+ on 29th July.

These low figures continued to be the norm throughout the Club area, and the only other double figure counts involved c.30 at **Bretton Park** on 23rd May; 12 at **Armitage Bridge** on 25th May with ten there on 12th July; c.30 over **Lindley** on 8th June and c.20 on 25th July and 1st and 7th August; c.100 at **Ingbirchworth Res.** on 23rd June; ten at **Netherton** on 28th June with 12 there on 9th July; ten at the **Isle of Skye Quarry** on 20th July; 18 over **Linthwaite** on 21st July; 55 at **Dewsbury SW** on 25th July; c.20 over **Holmfirth** on 29th July; and 24 at **Wards End Farm, Marsden** on 3rd August. At the two sites which attracted birds on a regular basis, **Lockwood** and **Crosland Moor**, never more than a dozen were present, and numbers only attained this level during June and July. The only count in excess of these figures, other than that noted from **Blackmoorfoot Res.** above, concerned c.100 which flew W in a two-hour period at **Broadstone Res.** on 16th June.

There were no breeding records, but 'tiny numbers' were seen in **Marsden** around potential breeding sites at Bank Bottom Mills, Cellars Clough Mills and New Mills.

With the exception of **Blackmoorfoot Res.**, which held low figures on most August dates, the only other records after mid-August, involved two at **Linthwaite** on 13th with eight there on 19th and a single on 25th, one at **Scammonden Water** on 29th, and the last of the year, a single at **Blackmoorfoot Res.** on 30th.

Visible migration was reported as follows:

Wards End Farm, Marsden – a total of 244 flew over on 46 dates between 10th May and 15th July. Those in May usually flew in a NE direction but the later birds tended to fly W, with a maximum of 40 W on 20th July.

Broadstone Res – c. 100 flew W in a two-hour period on 16th June.

KINGFISHER *Alcedo atthis*

Resident breeder (2), near 30 pairs.

With records from only 13 locations (27 in 2017) this species has decreased alarmingly or is being under-recorded. However, BTO Breeding Bird Survey data indicates a 38% decrease in the national breeding population between 2017 and 2018, most probably caused by ‘The Beast from the East’.

Most records were confined to the two winter periods and, with the exception of a single breeding record, at no other site were birds present throughout the year. All records were of no more than two together. At the only breeding site, young were thought to have fledged.

There was a sharp decrease in the number of bird/days at **Blackmoorfoot Res.** but, as the species doesn’t breed at the reservoir, this is simply due to the fact that no birds took up residency. The only records in the first half of the year involved a single on 7th January and between 1st and 4th February. Singles were then seen on 31 dates between 25th July and 23rd December, but the only long staying birds were between 21st and 30th November and 9th and 17th December.

GREAT SPOTTED WOODPECKER *Dendrocopos major*

Resident breeder (2), 70-100 pairs.

With records from 52 localities, this species remains as common and widely distributed as previously. Several gardens attracted birds throughout the year and, as is now usual, there was a sharp increase in visits between June and August as adults brought their young to feeding stations. In a **Meal Hill** garden, juveniles were first seen on 7th June, when they were clinging to tree bark whilst being fed by adults, but gradually they learned how to use the squirrel-proof nut-feeder.

Drumming was heard at several localities, but breeding was confirmed at far fewer sites than last year: **Longley Woods** (pair bred), **Windy Bank Wood** (pair bred), **Blackmoorfoot** (pair fledged young), **Armitage Bridge** (pair fledged young), and **Thick Hollins** (pair bred).

Movements over the area were reported as follows: two at **Harden Quarries** were circling high up on 14th August but their departure direction was not discernible; at **Pule Hill, Marsden** singles flew W on 17th September and SE on 27th September, two (1 S + 1 SW) on 7th October, and a single flew SW on 20th October; at **Wards End Farm, Marsden** singles flew W on 27th and 28th September, S on 29th September, and W on 1st October; and a single flew S over the **Isle of Skye Quarry** on 1st October.

A male in **Penny Spring Wood** on 6th March was circling the trunk of a young Sycamore about a metre from the ground creating a horizontal ring of holes in the bark (Mike Prior).

GREEN WOODPECKER *Picus viridis*

Resident breeder (2), 20-40 pairs.

With records from 25 localities, the distribution of this species remained at a similar level to last year. At only one locality, **Thurstonland Bank**, were birds present throughout the year. Despite being widely distributed in suitable nesting habitat during the summer months, the only evidence of breeding involved an adult and juvenile at **Kirkheaton** in late May and a pair which probably bred at **Hey Green**.

There was a further increase in records from **Blackmoorfoot**, where birds were seen on 18 dates (8 in 2017). A single was on the W bank on 18th January, but most records (13) fell between 20th March and 30th May and involved singles, mainly in Orange Wood, with the exception of two in Orange Wood on 29th May. The only other records involved singles near the inflow on 30th July (a juvenile of unknown provenance), 29th September, 15th October and one which flew S over the reservoir on 28th October.

KESTREL *Falco tinnunculus*

Resident breeder (2), 70-100 pairs.

There were records from 52 locations, exactly the same as last year. Dated records increased to 373 as opposed to the 350 of last year though again many 'block' sightings came in from some locations making an exact count difficult. Breeding, however, was only confirmed at two sites. How many were overlooked is difficult to say and some of the late summer groups would surely have contained juveniles. Most records involved single birds, occasionally two, but six were present at **Pole Moor**, **Slaitwaite** on 16th July, six at **Dove Stone Res.** on 29th August and nine at **Ramsden Res.** on 9th September.

At **Wards End Farm**, **Marsden** birds were seen on a total of 189 days with records covered every month apart from January. Although no breeding was noted at this daily watched site, some good counts were obtained, particularly in late summer/autumn. In July, there were maxima of eight on 23rd, nine on 24th, and six on 30th. August provided up to seven on 12 dates, and September saw six on five dates, the same number as were present on 7th October. It is difficult to assess what percentage of these birds were on the move. At **Blackmoorfoot** one or two were present throughout the year with three on 31st October. For the sixth consecutive year, however, no interest was shown in the nest-box secured to the tower by YW in 2012.

MERLIN *Falco columbarius*

Partial migrant breeder (1), 0-4 pairs. Scarce visitor.

Records were down by exactly 50% on the 78 of last year. These came from just 11 locations, again down from the 18 of last year. Birds were seen in every month apart from January and December and by far the busiest months were August to October with 50% of the annual total, which does suggest a certain amount of movement through the area to coincide with passerine migration. Records during the breeding season were very sparse, but a pair bred in the SE of the area, fledging four young.

Wards End Farm, Marsden – birds were recorded on 25 dates, all singles. One was seen chasing Ravens on 16th February, one flew low W on 6th March and another flew W on 9th March. An adult female flew W on 21st March and another was seen the following day. An adult female was again seen on 18th April with a single flying W on 25th April. May brought an adult male W on 5th and a single present on 12th. There were two records in July, a single on 9th and one ‘buzzing’ a Red Kite on 16th. A total of seven records came in August, first a male was chasing a Swallow on 4th and the following day the roles were reversed as a male was pursued by them; a single was present on 8th and one flew E the following day; one was scrapping with a Kestrel on 19th and a juvenile flew low W on 24th with a male low W on 28th. A single was seen on 13th September and one sat on a fence post on Shott Scar for 20 minutes on 16th, with another flying low to the W on 27th. There were a further four records in October: one flew S on 7th, a female was chasing a Chaffinch on 20th, one flew W on 28th and the final one of the year was mobbing a Buzzard on 31st.

Blackmoorfoot Res – one flew S over the reservoir on 2nd February, two were together over Meltham Cop on 16th February, a single was over Edge Moor on 8th September, and one flew SW over Orange Wood on 25th September.

Linthwaite – one was hunting over the observer’s house on 2nd March.

Little Don Valley – two on 1st April and singles on 8th and 29th April.

Deer Hill – a single was sat on a rock on 21st April and one was seen chasing Meadow Pipits on 24th November.

Black Moss – one on 12th May.

Upperwood House – an adult male flew E on 9th June.

Ramsden Res – a single on 5th August.

Broadstone Res – a male on 1st September.

Holme Styes Res – a single on 19th November.

Winscar Res – one was seen ‘spooking’ five Crossbills on 25th November.

HOBBY *Falco subbuteo*

Rare to scarce visitor, increasing. Has bred.

As the table below indicates, records were up on last year, with sightings from four more localities than last year too. Birds were first seen on 4th May, three days later than last year, with the last on 13th September, a full eight days before last years. A pair bred in the east of the area, fledging two young. All records involved single except for two together at Broadstone Res.

Shepley – single were seen flying through from a garden on 4th and 6th May, with the bird on 6th catching a Starling. Singles were also seen on 12th and 26th July (LR).

Wards End Farm, Marsden – There were eight records. The first was a single chasing Swallows through the yard before heading high N on 9th May. One was again chasing Swallows on 7th July. A single flew W on 2nd August and one approached from the E with two Kestrels before circling and turning back on 8th August. Singles flew E down the valley on 15th and 25th August. One was high over the house again chasing Swallows on 30th August and the last record involved a single on 6th September (DWS).

Riding Wood Res – one flew NW on 11th May (II).

Helme – a single on 19th May (TD).

Blackmoorfoot Res – there were three records (same as 2017): one flew W over the reservoir at 11.10hrs. on 1st May (MLD, GBS), an adult did likewise at 09.25hrs. on 28th July (MLD *et al.*) and a single was over the SW corner overflow field at 15.00hrs. on 4th August (TD).

Broadstone Res – two were chasing Swallows on 13th April (II).

Ingbirchworth Res – singles on 29th June and 3rd July (GMC).

Fullshaw – one flew E on 17th July and a single was seen on 3rd August (BBSG).

Panna Mill Dam – a single on 24th July (DMP).
Thongsbridge – one flew W on 9th August (II).
Broadstone Heath – a single flew W on 10th September (NWM).
Bretton Park – one on 3rd September (BBSG).
Penistone – a single near the Railway Station on 13th September (DH).

Records of Hobby in the Huddersfield area during the last 10 years:

2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
11	12	16	28	18	34	29	25	21	29

PEREGRINE *Falco peregrinus*

Resident breeder, increased to (1), 1-6 pairs.

There were records from 23 locations of this very mobile species, a similar number to last year. As in 2017, there was no evidence of breeding.

Huddersfield Town Centre – birds were seen on 15 occasions close to the Town centre in six different places. Usually only singles were involved but two were seen on four dates between January and March.

Wards End Farm, Marsden – birds were observed on 25 dates, eleven less than last year. They were all flyover singles and recorded in every month except June. A male was seen in close pursuit of a Mallard on 7th January and a juvenile was chasing Woodpigeons on 19th October.

Blackmoorfoot Res – there were six records (same as 2017): one flew S over the fields to the W on 6th January; a single flew E along the N bank on 29th April and one was circling over the reservoir the following day; a female was over Meltham Cop on 8th June; a male flew N over the reservoir on 4th August; and one flew N along the E bank and turned W up the Colne Valley on 29th December.

Skelmanthorpe – a single flew high N on 5th February.

Bradshaw Moor – two flew W on 5th March.

Whitley Edge – a female was present on 13th March, one flew E on 28th March, a second-summer was seen on 10th and 15th May, and two were present on 28th September.

Isle of Skye Quarry – one flew NE on 5th March, a single was present on 5th April, and one flew E on 15th April.

Royd Moor Hill – singles on 3rd April and 10th November.

Cheesegate Nab – a female which had just killed a Woodpigeon was seen on 14th April.

Royd Moor Res – a single on 21st April and one flew E on 22nd September.

Fixby GC – one flew SE on 1st May and another which did likewise on 4th August.

Langsett – one was mobbed by Lapwings on 6th May.

Meltham – a single on 17th May.

Winscar Res – a single on 6th June.

Dove Stone Res – a single on 6th June.

Ringstone Edge Res – a juvenile flew N along the shoreline on 23rd July and a single flew low W on 26th October.

Redbrook Res – a ringed juvenile which arrived low from the E landed on a large stone on the beach where it remained for 20 minutes on 20th August.

Penistone – one flew S over High Lee Lane on 31st August.

Cupwith Res – a single on 2nd September.

Scout Dike Res – an immature flew E on 22nd September.

Pule Hill, Marsden – an immature was present on 17th September and an adult on 10th November.

Harden Quarries – a single flew SW on 16th October.

Holmfirth – one flew over the Ford Inn on 20th November.

RING-NECKED PARAKEET *Psittacula krameri*

Introduced.

Following last year's blank, there were records from three locations, one of which held up to six for most of the year.

Two at **Rectory Park, Thornhill** on 18th April (AK) increased thereafter, with up to four, occasionally five or six, and a maximum of eight on 10th October, being seen regularly until the year end (Tim Dukes, Friends of Rectory Park). A single at **Brow Grains, Meltham** on 3rd September was undoubtedly the same bird seen at **Mill Moor Road, Meltham** later the same day. The bird then remained in the Mill Moor Road area from the following two weeks (DMP). A single was at **TP Woods, Gledholt** on 22nd November (MLD).

JAY *Garrulus glandarius*

Resident breeder (3), 200-350 pairs.

Widely distributed and common, with records from numerous localities throughout the year, and with a noticeable increase in numbers at some localities during the autumn months when they became more obvious as they commute between localities carrying acorns. Birds visiting gardens were widely observed, but numbers rarely amounted to more than four individuals, the only exceptions being five in a **Meltham** garden on 18th January with six there on 2nd April. Breeding evidence, as is to be expected from such a secretive species, was limited to the following sites: **New Mill** (2 juveniles in a garden), **Colne Bridge SP** (2 fledged young), and **Blackmoorfoot** (a pair fledged 6 young).

As is usually the case, anything up to four birds was the norm, but the number of sightings in excess was far higher than last year and involved the following:

Blackmoorfoot Res – present throughout the year. Although numbers rarely exceeded four, seven were present on 27th April and there was a marked upsurge between late September and early November, when up to nine were noted.

Colne Bridge SP – six on 13th March.

Almondbury – eight on 24th March and nine on 8th April. The observer commented that he had never seen such large groups here in 30+ years.

Huddersfield Stadium – five on 6th April.

Wards End Farm, Marsden – eight on 18th April with 15 the following day and at least five on 20th April. The observer commented that it appears that there may be some spring movement as this isn't the first year that birds have turned up at this time.

Windy Bank Wood – six on 2nd June.

Harden Quarries – up to seven were regularly seen throughout the autumn watches.

Scammonden Water – five on 20th September and eight the following week.

Millbank Thornhill – 35 on 3rd October were carrying rose hips from a crop.

Yateholme/Ramsden Wood – there was an impressive assemblage of 35 on 18th October.

Visible migration was noted as follows:

Wards End Farm – in September, five (3 flew W + 2 SW) on 20th, a flock of nine flew S on 28th, and three did likewise the following day.

Harden Quarries – two flew SE on 25th September.

MAGPIE *Pica pica*

Resident breeder (4), 1,500-2,000 pairs.

Despite being widely distributed and still common in the Club area, large congregations and roosts would appear to be a thing of the past. Although reports were received from several gardens, with birds being present throughout the year, these never amounted to more than a handful of birds.

The only double figure counts were as follows:

Red Doles – 11 along the canal on 11th January.

Crosland Moor – 11 on 25th January. The observer commented that this is a large number at this locality these days.

Rastrick – ten on 2nd February and 20 on 26th December.

Horbury – ten along the River Calder on 2nd February.

Blackmoorfoot Res – 14 on 17th October.

Thurstonland – c.60 roosted in a Hawthorn on 1st December. The observer commented that this is the highest ever count at this locality.

Three birds flying high to the W over **Pule Hill, Marsden** on 11th October were considered to be migrants.

JACKDAW *Coloeus monedula*

Resident breeder (4), 500-1,000 pairs.

This species remains as common and widely distributed as previously, with birds forming large flocks at numerous sites and breeding occurring throughout the area. Many gardens were visited, with the same **Holmfirth** garden mentioned last year continuing to attract large numbers: the detailed data supplied showed that, although present throughout the year, the largest aggregation occurred between mid-January and early April, numbers varied but up to 35 were not infrequent and 82 were present on 11th February. Numbers during the rest of the year only reached double figures on two occasions: 11 on 4th November and 12 on 25th November.

Flocks of anything up to 30 were widely distributed, those in excess are outlined below:

Deanhouse – c.30 to 40 were present throughout the year.

Cowcliffe – 140+ were seen moving N from a roost during the mornings of both winter periods.

Lockwood – a maximum of 100 flew over to a roosting area during both winter periods.

Rastrick – 50+ were present on 2nd February, 250 flew S on 21st November and 300 did likewise on 24th November.

Shepley – up to 50 were regularly seen in the horse paddocks at Ozzings and occasionally 100+ flew over to roost.

Gunthwaite Dam – c.40 on 7th February and 10th October.

Whitley Edge – 120+ on 8th February.

Bretton Park – c.80 on 2nd March and 103 on 11th November.

Brockholes – c.50 on 22nd March and 20th October.

Langsett – c.100 at Brown's Edge on 23rd June.

Blackmoorfoot – the highest counts were all in the second half of the year: 46 on 28th September, 70+ on 14th October, 40 on 1st November, and 38 on 8th December.

Shaley Wood, Holmfirth – well into four figures were seen apparently leaving a roost here at dawn

on 9th and 17th October.

Dewsbury SW – c.70 on 9th October.

Royd Moor – c.200 on 17th October.

Linthwaite – a flock of c.80 flew S on 25th October.

Isle of Skye Quarry – birds seen passing over on autumn mornings were considered to be leaving a roost rather than on migration. The maximum involved, all of which flew in a SE direction, was 55 on 11th November.

Ingbirchworth Res – 1,000+ flew E to roost on the evening of 12th December.

Wooldale – c.110 on 21st December.

Visible migration was noted as follows:

Wards End Farm – a single flew W on 5th February, four did likewise on 20th February, and seven flew NE on 29th April. Later in the year, a total of 551 flew W on 12 dates between 27th September and 6th November, with a maximum of 185 on 17th October. Although appearing impressive, these figures are only a fraction of the birds recorded last year (1,428 on 14 dates).

Harden Quarries – small flocks were regularly noted flying in various directions throughout the autumn watches. The maximum involved was 179 on 10th October and 118 on 17th October.

Pule Hill, Marsden – a total of 208 flew W on eight dates between 17th September and 12th November, with a maximum of 131 on 7th October.

ROOK *Corvus frugilegus*

Resident breeder (5), 3,000-4,500 pairs (2,450 during the Club survey in 2005).

Although a full Rookery survey was undertaken (see page 123) very few other records were received of this much under recorded species. The only flocks in excess of 40 involved c.120 at **Ingbirchworth Res.** on 25th January, 120+ at **Whitley Edge** on 1st and 8th February, 60+ at **Blackmoorfoot** on 17th May, 180+ at **Fullshaw** on 18th June, c.100 at **Brown's Edge, Langsett** on 23rd June, 270+ at **Ingbirchworth Moor** on 5th September, c.60 at **Royd Moor Res.** on 4th November and c.250 which flew E at dusk, presumably to roost, over **Thurstonland Bank** on 1st December.

The only record from the migration watch points concerned 11 which flew W at **Pule Hill, Marsden** on 22nd September.

CARRION CROW *Corvus corone*

Resident breeder (4), 800-1,600 pairs.

Although more records were received of this under recorded species, indications are that flock sizes, as suspected last year, are decreasing. Breeding birds were widely distributed in the area and several gardens attracted small numbers throughout the year.

Most records were of fewer than 12, the following being the exceptions:

Ingbirchworth Res – 15 on 22nd January, 15+ on 13th April, and 14 on 15th November.

Whitley Edge – c.60 on 1st February.

Lockwood – 20 + on 15th March.

Lepton – 18 on 29th March.

Haigh Woods – 30 on 15th May.

Blackmoorfoot Res – present in double figures throughout the second half of the year with a maximum of 38 on 23rd August, 30+ on 4th and 16th October, 29 on 1st November, and 27 on 10th

December.

Ingbirchworth Moor – 30+ on 5th September.

Wards End Farm, Marsden – up to 24 throughout September and October.

Birds moving over the area were recorded as follows:

Wards End Farm – in the first half of the year nine flew W on 16th February and eight did likewise on 26th March. Later in the year, a total of 62 flew W on six dates between 17th October and 15th November, with a maximum of 31 on 17th October.

Linthwaite – in October single flocks of 18 flew SW on 10th, 16 S on 17th, 17 S on 19th, and 32 E on 21st. The timing of these movements, first light, suggests a movement away from a roost rather than true migration.

HOODED CROW *Corvus cornix*

Rare visitor.

There were three records, one of which involved a long-staying individual.

A single was at **Eastfield** (between Silkstone Common and Thurgoland) on 25th April (RH *et al.*). Later in the year one took up residence in the **Bradshaw Moor** area, being present from 29th October to 23rd November (RS *et al.*). A single which flew NE over **Pule Hill, Marsden** and continued to fly down the Colne Valley on 31st October may have been the Bradshaw Moor bird (EDS).

This Bradshaw Moor bird was regularly seen around a sheep carcass, the presence of which was no doubt a contributory factor in it staying so long.

RAVEN *Corvus corax*

Former rare visitor, now resident breeder (1), 1-2 pairs.

There were records from 24 localities, an increase of four on last year, but nine below that of 2016. As in 2017, **Wards End Farm, Marsden** was the only site which held birds throughout the year, but the species was said to be increasingly frequent at **Cheesegate Nab**, with up to three being regularly encountered, occasionally as many as five.

Most records from **Wards End Farm**, as in the previous two years, related to no more than a handful of individuals, although 11 flew SE on 20th March and 13 flew over (5 NW and 8 S) on 22nd August. At nearby **Pule Hill**, one or two were seen on seven dates in September/October.

There were ten records from **Blackmoorfoot Res.** (19 in 2017), all between mid-February and late August. All sightings involved one or two birds, with the exception of three which flew SE over the reservoir on 5th May. Other records away from the potential breeding areas to the west and south involved singles which flew over **Shepley** on 26th March and 14th April, with two over on 22nd May; two which flew E over **Ingbirchworth Res.** on 14th July; two at **Broadstone Heath** on 5th September; four over **Thongsbridge** on 22nd October; two at **Hepworth** on 3rd November; one at **Scout Dike Res.** on 1st December and two flew W on 17th December; and a single was at **Carlecotes Ponds** on 4th and 24th December.

WAXWING *Bombycilla garrulus*

Rare to uncommon irruptive winter visitor.

A single at **Langsett** on 31st December (SS) was the only record.

COAL TIT *Periparus ater*

Resident breeder (3), 400-500 pairs.

No real change in status, with birds being recorded from 33 locations (30 in 2017). Records were received from several widely distributed gardens, most of which held birds throughout the year, but these never amount to more than the five in a **New Mill** garden on 2nd December. Breeding was only reported from **Higher Green Owlers** and **Scammonden Water**. With the exceptions of *c.* 25 at **Langsett Banks** on 6th October and six at **Bretton Park** on 7th November all other records related to fewer than four birds.

There were some interesting autumn movements from what is a predominantly sedentary species. At one site, **Harden Quarries**, although single figures were often present in the copse/conifer edge, on the day following the heavy movement on 10th October none were in evidence.

Visible migration was recorded as follows:

Pule Hill, Marsden – 11 (flocks of 5 and 6) flew SW on 7th October and five U-turned from the NE on 19th October.

Wards End Farm, Marsden – eight flew W on 14th October and two flew W on both 21st and 29th October.

Harden Quarries – the following birds moved S and SE in October, several of which were at quite a height: 19 on 5th, 71 (including a flock of 25) on 10th, seven on 16th, and 20 on 19th.

WILLOW TIT *Poecile montana*

Resident breeder (1), about 20 pairs (but greatly reduced since the 1987-92 Atlas). Red listed.

There were records from 11 localities (10 in 2017) and, like last year, most of these were from the species' stronghold in the Ingbirchworth area.

Hepworth – the single which visited a nut-feeder in a garden from 8th December 2017 until the year end, remained a daily visitor to the nut- and seed-feeders until 17th April.

Ingbirchworth Res – up to four were recorded regularly throughout the year. Two pairs bred, one of which fledged two young.

Scout Dike Res – up to four were regularly recorded throughout the year, and two pairs held breeding territories.

Langsett Banks – a single at Brookhouse Lane on 14th January.

Shepley – birds were seen in the Ozzings area as follows: a single on 21st February and two on 18th and 23rd August, 14th September, and 4th and 14th November.

Royd Moor Res – although a male held a breeding territory, there was no evidence that breeding occurred.

Broadstone Res – a pair held a breeding territory.

Holme Styas – a single in the plantation just off Barebones Road on 8th August.

Broadstone Heath – a single on 20th August was followed by two on 5th September and 11th December.

Dunford Bridge – a single at Wogden Foot on 5th September.

Carlecotes Ponds – at least one on 17th November then, in December, two on 4th and 11th, three on 17th, and then up to five until the month end. It is thought that these are the first records for the site.

BLUE TIT *Cyanistes caeruleus*

Resident breeder (5), 3,000-6,000 pairs. One of the commonest species.

Remained as widely distributed as usual, with records from all areas with the exception of open moorland. There were numerous breeding records, especially from garden nest-boxes. Despite this, however, there were few records of family parties following the breeding season. In a garden in **Thongsbridge** two pairs were 'evicted from their nests by Tree Bees *Bombus hypnorum*'.

Most records, even from gardens, rarely reached double figures, the following being the exceptions: **Hepworth** – up to ten feeding in the garden throughout the year.

Ingbirchworth Res – 23+ on 8th January, c.25 throughout August, c.50 on 5th September, and c.30 on 24th December.

Turnbridge – 16 on 8th January.

Red Doles – 17 on 11th January and 13 on 9th/10th March.

Dewsbury SW – 18 on 23rd January.

Elland GP – ten on 28th January.

Aspley – Cooper Bridge – 17 along the Broad Canal on 22nd April.

Cliff Wood – 14 pairs bred in nest-boxes.

Wards End Farm, Marsden – up to ten between mid-June and mid-September with 14 on 5th September.

Blackmoorfoot Res – 11 on 5th September and 3rd/4th October, 17 on 1st November, and 16 on 28th December.

Linthwaite – up to 11 in a garden throughout November/December.

Armitage Bridge – ten on 16th December.

Beaumont Park – 20 on 26th December.

A single in a **Thongsbridge** garden on 28th December was described as being grey/brown and white with no blue or green. Despite this colouration, its congeners offered no animosity towards it.

GREAT TIT *Parus major*

Resident breeder (4-5), 1,500-3,000 pairs.

Recorded from the same locations which held Blue Tits, but numbers were appreciably lower. Although birds were present through the year at a good number of garden feeding stations, never more than eight were seen. Despite this relative lack in numbers, breeding pairs were widely distributed, but success was obviously low as even after the breeding season family parties never attained double figures. Indeed, the only double figure counts for the whole year amounted to c.13 at **Ingbirchworth Res.** on 22nd January, with 30+ there on 6th August and 20+ on 5th September, and a flock of 11 at **Blackmoorfoot Res.** on 1st November.

At **Pule Hill, Marsden** seven birds U-turned from the NE on 19th October and at **Harden Quarries** three flew SE over the moor on 22nd October.



White-fronted Goose, Ingbirchworth Res., 24th February 2018



Garganey, Scout Dike, 29th May 2018



Smew, Bretton, 4th November 2018



Great White Egret, Bretton, 28th October 2018



Oystercatcher, Boshaw Whams, 3rd March 2018



Ringed Plover, Blackmoorfoot Res., 23rd September 2018



Little Ringed Plover, Ingbirchworth Res., 5th April 2018



Turnstone, Deer Hill, 5th August 2018



Green Sandpiper, Isle of Skye, 11th August 2018



Mediterranean Gull, Broadstones, 30th June 2018



Cuckoo, Meltham, 30th April 2018



Barn Owl, location withheld, 14th October 2018



Great Spotted Woodpecker, Honley, 29th May 2018



Hooded Crow, Eastfield Lane, 25th April 2018



Woodlark, Pule Hill, 17th October 2018



Treecreeper, Hepworth, 29th May 2018



Ring Ouzel, Holmfirth moors, 18th June 2018



Mistle Thrush, Honley, 1st May 2018



Redstart, Oldfield, 17th April 2018



Hawfinch, Cannon Hall, 7th February 2018

WOODLARK *Lullula arborea*

Rare visitor.

A single flew W at 09.05hrs. at **Pule Hill, Marsden** on 17th October (JMP, EDS). The bird was calling all the time as it flew over with Redwings and was photographed by EDS. Interestingly, it was a day of heavy passage at the site, which included the maximum count of Redwings for the autumn (3,843 S or SW).

This is the first record in the Club area since two singing males were located at two localities in the summer of 2013. A full account can be found on page 133.

SKYLARK *Alauda arvensis*

Partial migrant breeder, decreased to (4), 500-2,500 pairs. Red listed.

January/February records were restricted to six localities: c.40 in a stubble field at **Thurgory Lane** on 8th January (although the flock remained in the area, it had reduced to c.10 by late March); a single at **Whitley Common** on 8th January; two at **South Crosland** on 17th January; two at **Scout Dike Res.** on 29th January; two flew NE at **Wards End Farm, Marsden** and two flew NW at **Blackmoorfoot Res.** on 20th February; a singing male was at **Snape Res.** on 21st February; and two flew E at **Wards End Farm** on 24th February.

Between early March and mid-September birds became more widely distributed, but numbers rarely exceeded half a dozen, although 18 were present at **Blackmoorfoot Res.** on 11th March, 15 were seen along **Netherton Moor Road** on 17th March and ten were at **Snape Res.** on 25th March

The species presumably bred at most, if not all, of the sites it was present at during the summer months, but evidence of breeding is not always easy to confirm for this species. Proof of breeding was, however, obtained at **Ringstone Edge Res.**, **Blackmoorfoot Res.**, **Wards End Farm** where the observers commented that “this is the first time birds have bred here during the 15 years we have lived here”, and **Snape Res.** where the observer commented that “it seems that this site remains a stronghold for the species”.

Visible migration was recorded as follows:

Wards End Farm – a total of 31 flew over, all between NE and NW, on eight dates between 20th February and 15th April, with a maximum of seven N on 21st March. Later in the year, singles flew S on 12th, 20th and 29th September.

Blackmoorfoot Res – two flew NW on 20th February, a single flew SW on 22nd September, two flew W on 17th October and two flew S on 6th November.

Pule Hill, Marsden – a single flew W on 17th September, three flew SW on 22nd September and three flew S on 31st October.

Ringstone Edge Res – six flew S on 20th September.

Scammonden Water – five flew S on 20th September.

Isle of Skye Quarry – a total of 14 flew over, mainly in a S or SW direction, on six dates between 15th September and 20th October, with a maximum of seven (5 SW + 2 E) on 18th October.

Wessenden Valley – two flew S on 15th October and a single did likewise on 20th October.

Harden Quarries – a total of 41 flew over, mainly in a southerly direction, on six dates between 10th and 19th October, with a maximum of 16 S on 10th.

Royd Moor Hill – four flew SW on 17th October.

The only records after mid-September, other than those mentioned under visible migration, involved 20 at **Lepton** on 27th September, 20 in a ploughed field at **Thurstonland** on 7th October, c.20 at **Thurgory Lane** on 16th November, and c.20 at **Royd Moor** on 17th November.

SAND MARTIN *Riparia riparia*

Migrant breeder, increased to (2), 20-100 pairs. Uncommon passage visitor.

A single at **Blackmoorfoot Res.** on 14th March was the earliest record. There were then no further records until early April, when a single was at **Blackmoorfoot Res.** on 3rd, ten were over the river along **King's Mill Lane** on 7th, and three flew N at **Wards End Farm, Marsden** on 9th. The following months only resulted in records from a further ten localities, an alarming drop on the 24 of last year. Double figure counts were at a premium and, with the exception of **Blackmoorfoot Res.** (see below), the highest counts away from the large breeding colony in the NE of the area amounted to ten at **Ingbirchworth Res.** on 17th April and 16 over the canal at **Turnbridge** on 10th June.

At **Blackmoorfoot Res.**, which for the last decade has been the only non-breeding locality in the Club area to encounter birds with any regularity, there was an abysmal showing. Single on 14th March and 3rd April were the first records. Thereafter birds were only seen on a further 56 days (125 in 2017 and 105 in 2016) until the last, a single, on 23rd September. Assemblages rarely reached double figures, the following being the exceptions: 12 on 26th April, 18 the following day, 10+ on 21st July, and 15+ on 27th August.

There were mixed fortunes at the breeding colonies:

Healey Mills/Kerry's NR – the colony at this site is no longer extant due to changes in the riverbank. The colony has moved some 500 yards nearer to Dewsbury, however, and 41 nest holes along with c100 birds were counted.

Crosland Hill Quarries – the colony at this site is no longer extant due to landscaping work. This is almost certainly the major causal factor behind the demise of the species at Blackmoorfoot (see above).

Ossett – four birds were visiting nests near the Calder and Hebble Navigation Canal in early May.

Mirfield – pointing work on Ledgard Bridge (Newgate) has caused the demise of this colony.

Most birds had departed the area by late July and, with the exception of **Blackmoorfoot Res.** which held birds until 23rd September (see above), the latest birds were all recorded in August, and only amounted to four at **Linthwaite** on 6th and singles at **Deer Hill Res.** and **Wards End Farm** on 21st.

SWALLOW *Hirundo rustica*

Migrant breeder (4), 500-600 pairs. Numerous passage visitor.

The first records of the year were in early April: two at **Blackmoorfoot Res.** on 3rd, and singles at **Crosland Hill** on 4th and **Shepley** on 6th. The following weeks saw birds arrive at numerous widely distributed localities but numbers, for the third year in succession, remained generally low, the few exceptions being as follows:

Meltham SW – 12 on 7th April and c.100 on 28th April.

Ingbirchworth Res – c.80 on 17th April and 30+ on 23rd April.

Blackmoorfoot Res – at least ten on 23rd/24th April, 25+ the following day, 40+ on 26th/27th April and 20+ on four dates in May.

Dewsbury SW – 130 on 18th April had risen to 160 the following week and 220 by the month end.

Ringstone Edge Res – 18 on 27th April.
Shepley – up to 20 throughout the summer.
Wilshaw – 20 on 8th May.

Confirmation of breeding, despite these generally low figures, came from **Rastrick** (1 pair), **Blackmoorfoot** (1 pair), **Shepley** (4 pairs), **Langsett** (6 pairs – with one pair fledging their third brood on 20th August), and **Wards End Farm, Marsden** (10 pairs – the most ever recorded).

The usual autumn build-up, which last year had been abysmal, also continued in a similar vein this year, but at one favoured locality exceptional numbers (by today's standards) assembled. This gathering, along with the few others, are documented below:

Wards End Farm – between 40 and 60 were present throughout July, but 400 were seen on 11th, 100 the following day, 400+ on 13th – 16th, and 250 on 18th. For the rest of the month numbers fluctuated between 100 and 250 and numbers reduced somewhat in August, but up to 70 were regularly present with 100 on 13th, 20th and 25th. Up to 45 were present during the first week in September, but thereafter number reduced to a more normal level.

Gunthwaite Dam – c.20 on 4th July.

Denby Delph – c.20 on 11th July.

Scammonden Water – c.20 on 11th August.

Blackmoorfoot Res – in August, 40+ on 16th and 20+ on 26th and 29th and, in September, 35+ on 1st, 60+ on 8th, 30+ on 15th, and 23 flew S on 28th.

Bretton Park – 80+ on 16th August.

Holme Styes Res – c.20 on 26th August.

Ringstone Edge Res – 100 on 26th August.

Dewsbury SW – 65 on 29th August and c.240 on 18th September.

Royd Moor Res – c.20 on 9th September.

Visible migration was recorded as follows:

Harden Quarries – a total of 274 flew S on ten dates between 8th August and 11th October, with a maximum of 63 on the first mentioned date. Due to no observer coverage in July, however, it can be assumed that a significant proportion of the autumn passage went unseen at this site.

Pule Hill, Marsden – 49 flew SW on 28th August, 11 flew SW or W on 22nd September and two flew S on 17th October.

Royd Moor Hill – c.50 flew W on 29th August and 76 SW on 13th September.

Wards End Farm – a total 114 flew W or SW on eight dates between 6th and 30th September, with a maximum of 50 SW on the first mentioned date.

Ingbirchworth Res – 50+ flew W on 6th September and at least 31 did likewise on 12th September.

Blackmoorfoot – seven flew S on 27th September, with 23 doing likewise the following day and four flew S on 5th October.

By late September birds were becoming difficult to find, and the only October records involved singles at **Hepworth** and the **Isle of Skye Quarry** on 1st; four which flew S at **Blackmoorfoot Res.** on 5th, with two there on 6th and a single on 7th; and two which flew SE at **Harden Quarries** on 5th, with eight S there on 11th.

HOUSE MARTIN *Delichon urbicum*

Migrant breeder (3), 400-500 pairs (but greatly reduced since the 1987-92 Atlas). Common passage visitor.

With records from only 29 localities, and breeding only reported from nine of these, it really was an abysmal year for this declining species. There were very few treble figure assemblages, even at the well-watched reservoirs.

The first records of the year involved two at **Ingbirchworth Res.** and a single at **Meltham SW** on 7th April. There were then no further records until singles appeared at **Blackmoorfoot Res.** on 17th April and **Ingbirchworth Res.** three days later. By the following week, although the species became more widely distributed, numbers remained very low, rarely reaching low double figures. This poor state of affairs continued throughout the summer months and the largest assemblages occurred at **Blackmoorfoot Res.** which had 20+ on 23rd/24th April, 40+ on 26th/27th April and 20+ the following day, **Ingbirchworth Res.** which had up to 30+ on several dates in May/June, and 20 which were circling over **Armitage Bridge** on 5th June.

Following previous years' requests for all breeding records, breeding, was confirmed at only eight sites (12 in 2017 and 16 in 2016) although. **In order to understand the fluctuating fortunes of this species it is essential that members continue to submit all records of breeding locations including negative records from past breeding locations.**

The following were the only breeding sites with data:

Crosland Moor (Blackmoorfoot Road) – one nest (2 in 2017).

Thongsbridge (Stoney Bank Road) – two nests (3 in 2017).

Oldfield – three nests (5 in 2017).

Langsett – three pairs fledged young at the water treatment works.

Rastrick (Slade Lane) – five nests (no data available in 2017).

Rastrick (Dewsbury Road) – two nests (a new site).

Netherton (Infant School) – three nests (4 in 2017).

Netherton (Moor Lane) – two nests (1 in 2017).

Blackmoorfoot – a pair nest building in the village aborted very early on.

The autumn build-up was more impressive, but numbers generally remained low, rarely exceeding 40, the following being the only exceptions: **Wards End Farm, Marsden** which had a maximum of, in July, 200+ on 16th, 200 on 23rd, 150 on 24th/25th and 27th and, in August, 80 on 5th and 100 on 20th. **Blackmoorfoot Res.** held, in August, 60+ on 6th and 10th, 110+ on 14th and 17th, 70+ on 19th, 100+ on 23rd and 60+ on 26th/27th, and, in September, 160+ on 1st, 60+ on 21st, and 80+ on 22nd. The only other sites with numbers in excess of 40 were **Ingbirchworth Res.** which had c.80 on 8th September, **Royd Moor Res.** which held c.100 the following day, and **Dewsbury SW** which had 360 on 18th September.

By late September most birds had departed, and the only October records were all on 14th: three at **Millmoor Road, Meltham** and six at both **Linthwaite** and **Blackmoorfoot Res.**

Visible migration was recorded as follows:

Harden Quarries – 12 flew S on 14th August and a single did likewise on 23rd August.

Royd Moor Hill – c.80 flew W on 29th August, 77 flew SW on 13th September and 185 did likewise on 20th September.

Wards End Farm – a total of 132 flew W on four dates between 4th and 24th September, with a maximum of 80 on 5th.

Dunford Bridge – c.50 flew SW on 5th September.

Blackmoorfoot – 18 flew S on 28th September.

LONG-TAILED TIT *Aegithalos caudatus*

Resident breeder (3), 100-250 pairs.

Records were received from a similar number of sites as last year, but breeding was only confirmed at four of these. Several garden feeding stations attracted small numbers of birds during both winter periods and gardens in **Meltham**, **Meal Hill** and **Holmfirith** held birds throughout the year. BTO Breeding Bird Survey data, however, indicates a 22% decrease in the national breeding population between 2017 and 2018, most probably caused by ‘The Beast from the East’.

As usual most groups were in single figures, the exceptions being outlined below:

Thick Hollins – present at a garden feeding station throughout the year with a maxima of c.12 on 8th January, 12 on 23rd February and 11 the following day.

Colne Bridge SP – present throughout the year a maxima of c.16 on 13th January and c.15 on 2nd February.

Holmfirith – present throughout the year at a garden feeding station with a maximum of ten on 9th December.

Blackmoorfoot Res – present throughout most of the year, although records were very sporadic during the summer months and there were no signs of breeding. Numbers were generally low, and only occasionally reached double figures, the maxima being 17 on 16th September and 13 or 14 on four dates in November/December.

Dewsbury SW – up to 12 at a feeding station throughout January. Later in the year there was a maximum of 26 on 21st October.

Elland GP – ten on 28th January.

Ingbirchworth Res – c.20 on 22nd February, c.25 on 22nd August, 20+ on 5th September and 1st November, and 15 on 26th November.

Armitage Bridge – present through the second half of the year with c.12 on 28th and 29th November.

Yateholme – c.20 on 27th June.

Lockwood – 15 on 24th July and ten on 27th July.

Holmfirith – c.10 at Sands Recreation Ground on 12th September.

Linthwaite – 21 on 21st October.

Cowcliffe – 12 on 25th October.

Bretton Park – 17 on 8th November.

Langsett Res – 15 on 21st December.

Breeding was only reported from the following locations: **Colne Bridge SP** (2 pairs bred), **Fixby** (pair fledged young), **Ingbirchworth Res.** (pair fledged young) and **Ozzings, Shepley** (at least 1 pair bred).

Migratory movements, which are not usually witnessed in this species, involved eight birds which U-tuned from the NE at **Pule Hill, Marsden** on 17th October and six which flew S across the moor into **Head Clough** on 22nd October.

WILLOW WARBLER *Phylloscopus trochilus*

Migrant breeder (4), 1,000-2,500 pairs. The commonest warbler. Common passage visitor.

Records were received from 44 localities, an increase of six on last year, but still a marked decline on the 53 of 2016. The earliest arrival was on 4th April and the last on 11th September.

The earliest arrivals involved a single at **Royd Moor** on 4th April, two singing males at **Shepley** on 7th April and, the following day, singing males at **Cheesegate Nab**; **Hepworth**; **Ingbirchworth Res.**; **Brow Grains**, **Meltham**; and three singing males at **Royd Moor Res.** The following few weeks only saw birds at a further 16 locations, and it wasn't until early May that the species became widely distributed (some 3 weeks later than last year).

Most records referred to fewer than half a dozen birds but there were a few double figure counts of territorial males at the well-known breeding locations. At **Dunford Bridge** 35 were singing along the Trans-Pennine Trail between Winscar and Hazelhead on 20th April; 20+ were singing in the **Yatcholme** area on 29th April; 15 singing males were at **Thurstonland Bank** on 12th May; c.12 were singing at **Bretton Park** on 23rd May; 12 males held breeding territories at **Ingbirchworth Res.**; 26 males held breeding territories at **Royd Moor Res.**; in the **Marsden** area 27 males were present between Hey Green and Netherwood in May, but the observer commented that this is way below the average of the 38 for the previous 15 years; and at least ten were singing in the **Langsett/Little Don Valley** area on 22nd June.

The first arrivals at **Blackmoorfoot Res.** involved two singing males on 15th April. Numbers then increased but never exceeded six singing males and only six males took up territories and remained throughout the summer months. This figure remained fairly constant until late August, but the only September records concerned two on 1st/2nd and a single on 3rd and 5th.

Autumn numbers at all sites were unimpressive and never exceeded more than a handful with the exception of c.40 which were present at **Ingbirchworth Res.** on 6th August.

Although birds were still widely distributed in late August, the only other September records involved two at **Wessenden Lodge** on 1st; at least two at **Ingbirchworth Res.** on 3rd, with three there on 4th and five on 5th; a single at **Wards End Farm, Marsden** and two at **Dunford Bridge** on 5th; two at **Broadstone Heath** on 8th; singles a **Turnbridge** on 8th and 11th and, also on 11th, a single along the **Broad Canal** at the Huddersfield Stadium.

CHIFFCHAFF *Phylloscopus collybita*

Migrant breeder, increased to (3), 100-200 pairs. Passage visitor and scarce winter visitor.

Although this common and widely distributed species was reported from a similar number of localities as last year (51), this is a marked decrease from the 62 in 2016 and 79 in 2015.

Winter visitors during the first winter period involved four at **Horbury SW** on 7th January (DT) with five, all of which appeared to be nominate *P. c. collybita*, there on 23rd February (DHP); a single in a **Lockwood** garden on 25th January (S & HC); and a single at **Dewsbury SW** on 28th February (JH). What were probably the first migrants appeared from 11th March, with two singing males at **Horbury SW** and a single at **Clough Lee, Marsden** on 11th; singles at **Scout Dike Res.** and two singing males at **Dewsbury SW** on 14th; a single at **New Mill** on 23rd; three males at **Carlecotes Ponds** on 25th; and a single at **Aspley** on 29th.

By mid-April birds, mainly fewer than four, had been recorded from a further 15 sites and by late April birds had become far more widely distributed (some 2 weeks later than last year). Most records related to less than four individuals, the only exceptions being as follows:

Horbury Strands/Wyke – five singing males on 3rd April and six on 22nd April.

Meal Hill – singing male on 7th April.

Royd Moor Res – five singing males on 8th April.

Thurstonland – five singing males on 10th April and 15 feeding on Elder berries on 7th October.

Hades Plantation – six singing males on 15th April.

Rectory Park, Thornhill – five on 18th April.

Ingbirchworth Res – five on 18th April.

Dunford Bridge – 15 singing males along the Trans-Pennine Trail between Winscar and Hazelhead on 20th April.

Ramsden Res – six singing males on 29th April.

Marsden – nine males held territories. The observer commented that this is exactly on the average for the previous 16 years, but well below recent trends.

Scout Dike Res – six on 4th July.

The first record at **Blackmoorfoot Res.** concerned a singing male on 4th April. Thereafter, four singing males took up territories, each attracting a mate and breeding. These birds remained until early August. Up to five (usually 2 or 3) were then present throughout the remainder of August through to early October with the last (2) being seen on 4th of that month.

Birds remained at a number of localities until the first week of October, but the only occurrences later in the month involved singles at **Shepley** until 13th, **Digley** on 18th, **High Hoyland** on 25th, and three, one of which was noticeably greyer than the others, at **Royd Moor Res.** on 28th.

There was a good run of records during November/December:

Blackmoorfoot Res – a single, which occasionally sang, was present between 4th and 12th November (MLD *et al.*).

Gunthwaite Dam – a single on 24th November (DHP).

Silkstone SW – one on 2nd December, two on 16th December, then a single until the year end with two on 27th (RJB *et al.*).

Broadstone Res – a single from 11th to 19th December. The calls of this bird were recorded on the 12th, and the resulting sonograms were typical for *P. c. collybita*, and quite unlike those of Siberian Chiffchaff *P. c. tristis* (DHP).

Elland – a single on the riverbank west of Elland Bridge from 19th to 21st December (JB).

Dewsbury SW – two on 26th December (JH).

Horbury SW – two on 28th December (DT).

A bird showing characteristics of the Siberian race *P. c. tristis* was present at **Broadstone Res.** on 11th December (DMW).

WOOD WARBLER *Phylloscopus sibilatrix*

Rare to scarce passage visitor and irregular migrant breeder (1), 0-5 pairs.

Two males held breeding territories at **Langsett Banks**, but no other details were forthcoming (BBSG).

SEDGE WARBLER *Acrocephalus schoenobaenus*

Migrant breeder (1), 5-20 pairs.

There were records from only five localities, a marked drop from the seven last year and the ten in 2016. A pair fledged young at one site, however. There were no birds reported, despite the usual coverage, from the former breeding site at **Colne Bridge SP**. Birds were reported between 22nd April and 4th September.

Horbury Strands/Wyke – a singing male on 22nd April and four singing males on 4th May.

Dewsbury SW – a singing male on 30th April. Thereafter, five pairs held territories, but no evidence of breeding was available.

Scout Dike Res – a singing male on 22nd May attracted a female and fledged young.

Shepley – a pair were seen carrying food, and therefore breeding, at the small reservoir along Jos Lane.

Brow Grains, Meltham – a single on 31st August.

Ingbirchworth Res – one on 4th September.

REED WARBLER *Acrocephalus scirpaceus*

Rare to scarce passage visitor and rare migrant breeder (1), 0-2 pairs.

There were records from six localities, one more than last year, but one fewer than 2016. Birds were present between 25th April and 6th August.

Dewsbury SW – the first to arrive was a singing male on 25th April. A total of 17 males then took up territories, but no evidence of breeding was available.

Elland GP – a singing male on 2nd May and two singing males on 22nd May.

Royd Moor Res – a single on 3rd May.

Slaitwaite – a singing male in canal-side willows at Booth on 8th May was unexpected.

Colne Bridge SP – the only record from this former breeding site involved a male which sang between 17th June and 12th July.

Ingbirchworth Res – a single on 6th August.

GRASSHOPPER WARBLER *Locustella naevia*

Passage visitor and occasional migrant breeder (1), 0-3 pairs. Red listed.

There were records from ten locations, a welcome increase on the six of last year. Unlike last year, however, there was no confirmation of breeding, although it may have occurred at two sites.

Broadstone Res/Heath – at least two reeling males were present in this area between 19th April and 18th June. There were then no records until a reeling male was heard on 30th July and 3rd/4th August.

Scammonden Water – two reeling males on 21st April. Is it too much to hope that a juvenile present on 30th August was of local provenance?

Langsett – two males were reeling from a clear fell/new plantation near the Flouch on 22nd April and at least one remained throughout the breeding season.

Deanhead Res – a reeling male on 25th April.

Deer Hill Res – a reeling male on 5th May.

Roaf Wood, Almondbury – a reeling male on 15th June.

Willykay Clough, Marsden – a reeling male on 12th July.

Lingards Moor, Deer Hill – a reeling male on 19th July.
Redbrook Res – a reeling male on 23rd/24th and 27th July.
Buckstones-March Haigh – a reeling male on 6th August.

BLACKCAP *Sylvia atricapilla*

Migrant breeder (3-4), 400-600 pairs, increasing. Scarce winter visitor.

There were no records during the first winter period.

The first returning birds, all in April, involved single singing males at **Bretton Park** on 4th, **Horbury Strands/Wyke** and **Horbury SW** on 6th, **Colne Bridge SP** and **Thick Hollins** on 7th, and **Almondbury** and **Royd Moor Res.** on 8th. Thereafter birds became far more widely distributed, with records from a further 41 locations, but numbers remained low, rarely exceeding three, the following being the only exceptions:

Marsden – 13 males were singing between Hey Green and Netherwood in May. The observer commented that “This is below the average of 16 for the previous 15 years”.

Thurstonland Bank – five singing males on 12th May.

Bretton Park – eight males held breeding territories.

Haigh Woods – 16 males held breeding territories.

Although the only breeding evidence was from **Blackmoorfoot Res.** (see below) it presumably occurred at most, if not all, of the other localities.

The first for the year at **Blackmoorfoot Res.** concerned a singing male on 17th April. Three singing males then took up territories, all of which attracted females and were thought to have fledged young. The family parties soon dispersed, however, and the only records after 21st August involved two on 1st September and a single on 21st September.

With the exception of **Blackmoorfoot Res.** (see above) the only records after late June involved four at **Gunthwaite Dam** on 4th July; six at **Denby Delph** on 11th July; and singles at **Golcar** on 11th July, **Longley Woods** on 19th July, **Wards End Farm, Marsden** on 21st July and 22nd September; two at **Bretton Park** on 24th July; a single at **Harden Quarries** on 14th August; singles at **Ingbirchworth Res.** on 4th/5th and 9th September; and eight at **Scammonden Water** on 20th September.

There were three records during the second winter period, all in December: a female at **Dewsbury SW** on 12th, a female in a **Linthwaite** garden on 24th, and a male in a **Brockholes** garden on 25th.

A bird found dead in a **Meltham** garden on 8th June had been ringed as a first-year female at Stanford Res., Northamptonshire on 4th September 2017 (I. Barber pers. comm.). The bird had travelled 139km in a NNW direction, although it had presumably wintered well to the south of the British Isles.

GARDEN WARBLER *Sylvia borin*

Migrant breeder (2), near 100 pairs.

With records from only 17 localities, a decrease of three from last year. Note the widespread arrival of birds in the first week of May. The only localities with long-staying individuals were Blackmoorfoot, Dunford Bridge, Haigh Woods, Ingbirchworth Res., and Royd Moor Res.

The continued low number of localities from which the species was recorded warrants the inclusion of all records:

Healey Mills/Kerry's NR – a single on 18th April.

Elland GP – two singing males on 2nd and 22nd May.

Ingbirchworth Res – a singing male which arrived on 2nd May remained and held a breeding territory. A single was present on 17th July.

Meltham – a singing male along Millmoor Road on 3rd May.

Horbury SW – a singing male on 4th May.

Royd Moor Res – following the first, a single on 4th May, five males then held breeding territories.

Royd Edge Clough – two singing males near the Blue Lagoon on 5th May.

Dewsbury SW – a single on 6th May.

Thurstonland Bank – one on 12th May.

Winscar Res – a singing male on 17th May.

Blackmoorfoot – two singing males took up territory in the NE corner between 19th May and 3rd June, with one remaining until 12th June. The short period that these birds were present suggests that neither attracted a female.

Dunford Bridge – two males held territories along the Trans-Pennine Trail and three males held territories at Wogden Foot.

Haigh Woods – four males held breeding territories.

Bullcliff Top Wood – a single on 11th June.

Sparth Res – a singing male on 15th June.

Gunthwaite Dam – two on 4th July.

Wards End Farm, Marsden – singles on 19th and 29th August and 5th September.

LESSER WHITETHROAT *Sylvia curruca*
Migrant breeder (1), 5-20 pairs.

With records from only five locations in 2017, it was pleasing to see an increase to 13 this year. With the exception of the long stayer at **Hassocks Lane, Meltham**, however, all the others were for one day only. Birds were recorded between 20th April and 5th September.

Ingbirchworth Res – a singing male on 20th April and singles on 6th and 22nd August.

Winscar – a single on 20th April.

Upper Denby – a singing male on 21st April.

Shepley – a male sang briefly at Ozzings on 4th May.

Broadstone Res – a single on 6th May.

Ossett – two by the canal on 6th May.

Woodhouse – two near the Cricket Club on 12th May.

Ringstone Edge Res – a male sang briefly before flying off N on 18th May.

Kirkheaton – a singing male on 20th May.

Dewsbury SW – one on 9th June.

Wards End Farm, Marsden – singles on 8th July and 5th September.

Hassocks Lane – one was seen on several occasions between 25th July and 25th August.

Blackmoorfoot Res – a single was seen near the inflow on 25th August.

WHITETHROAT *Sylvia communis*

Migrant breeder (2-3), 75-150 pairs.

There were records from 27 locations, one less than last year, but still a massive drop from the 42 of 2015. Birds were present between 16th April and 20th September.

The first returning birds, all in April, involved singles at **Ingbirchworth Res.** on 16th, **Dewsbury SW** on 18th, **Scout Dike Res.** on 20th, two at **Horbury Strands/Wyke** and **Broadstone Res.** on 22nd, and singles at **Crosland Hill** on 23rd and **Deanhead Res.** on 25th. By early May birds had become more widely distributed (slightly earlier than last year), but numbers rarely exceeded three, the following being the exceptions: five singing males by the canal at **Ossett** on 6th May, five at **Broadstone Res.** on 9th May, eight in the **Royd Moor/Scout Dike** area on 3rd June, and eight at **Denby Delph** on 11th July.

Breeding evidence was noted at ten locations and involved at least one pair at **Ozzings, Shepley**, one pair at **Brow Grains, Meltham**, four pairs at **Blackmoorfoot Res.** (see below), six males held breeding territories at **Royd Moor Res.**, five males held breeding territories at **Scout Dike Res.**, two family parties at **Broadstone Res.**, four males held territories at **Ingbirchworth Res.**, and a pair at **Stirley Community Farm**. On the debit side, an observer in the **Slaithwaite** area commented that the only bird he found this year was at **Booth** on 30th June.

Blackmoorfoot Res. had two singing males from 5th May, and the following week a total of four males had taken up territories. These birds all attracted females and bred. Although the family parties remained until early August, the only other August records involved singles on 12th and 21st.

By early August birds were becoming less widely distributed and the only records, other than those noted from **Blackmoorfoot** above, involved at least five at **Ingbirchworth Res.** on 3rd, six at **Scammonden Water** on 11th, with four there on 20th and 23rd, a single at **Deanhead Res.** on 12th; and a single at **Wards End Farm, Marsden** on 25th. There were more September records than usual, with a single at **Ingbirchworth Res.** on 3rd and three on 6th, a single at **Boshaw Whams** on 4th, two at **Wards End Farm** on 5th, two at **Broadstone Heath** on 8th, singles at **Deer Hill** and **Hassocks Lane, Meltham** on 11th, a single at **Wards End Farm** on 17th, and a single at **Royd Moor Res.** on 20th.

GOLDCREST *Regulus regulus*

Resident breeder (3), 100-200 pairs. Common passage and winter visitor.

There were records from only 27 localities, a marked drop from the 41 of last year. As in 2017, the only locality which held birds throughout the year was **Colne Bridge SP**, but this never involved more than the three on 23rd January.

There were no large gatherings reported, all records referring to no more than two birds. Birds were seen feeding from seed-feeders in a garden in **Meltham** on 2nd February and fat-balls in a garden at **Almondbury** between 4th and 10th February.

Although most records were concentrated into the two winter periods, evidence of breeding was forthcoming from **Holmfirth** (2 pairs fledged young in a garden), **Ingbirchworth Res.** (pair fledged young), and **Brockholes** (singing male in spring).

The number of records from **Blackmoorfoot** continued to decrease. In the first half of the year two were present on 1st and 8th January, 19th February and 30th March. There were then no records until two were seen on 16th September. The only records thereafter involved one or two on eight dates between 16th September and 6th December.

WREN *Troglodytes troglodytes*

Resident breeder (5), 6,000-12,000 pairs. One of the commonest species.

Remains widely distributed and common, with records from all habitat types ranging from the low river valleys to the high moorland cloughs. However, the observer from **Wards End Farm, Marsden** commented that there was not many about this year as they had fallen prey to ‘The Beast from the East’. In addition, BTO Breeding Bird Survey data indicates a 21% decrease in the national breeding population between 2017 and 2018, most probably caused by ‘The Beast from the East’.

Although the majority of sites, including many gardens, held birds throughout the year, numbers rarely exceeded more than three individuals. There were some good counts from along the Broad Canal/River Colne in the **Aspley to Cooper Bridge** area in the first winter period: seven were at **Red Doles** on 11th January with six there on 9th March, nine were along the River Colne between **Aspley** and **Huddersfield Stadium** on 29th March, and seven were along the Broad Canal between **Aspley** and **Cooper Bridge** on 22nd April. Later in the year c.12 were present at **Ingbirchworth Res.** on 9th July, with at least six there on 4th September

Breeding was widely reported, including eight territory holding males at both **Bretton Park** and **Haigh Woods**. Two pairs at **Colne Bridge SP** used nest-boxes for the first time since being provided more than a decade ago and there was a minimum of five pairs in the Ozzings area of **Shepley**.

NUTHATCH *Sitta europaea*

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

Records were received from 33 localities, a welcome increase on the 24 of last year. Several widely distributed gardens held birds throughout the year, and in two of these pairs bred in nest-boxes. In a garden at **Cowcliffe**, however, where it was once a regular visitor, there have been no occurrences for the last two years. The only other breeding evidence involved territory holding birds at **Bretton Park** (7), **Cliff Wood** (2), **Gunthwaite Dam** (2), **Haigh Woods** (2), and single pairs in **Windy Bank Wood** and **Blackmoorfoot** (see below).

This non-gregarious species is usually recorded in ones and twos, and seven together in the same bush at **Armitage Bridge** on 18th June were presumably a family party. Other records of more than two involved up to four throughout the year in a **Thongsbridge** garden, four in a **Meltham** garden on 3rd March, six at **Rastrick** on 24th March, seven at **Bretton Park** on 7th November and ten on 10th December, and six in **Beaumont Park** on 2nd December with eight there on 26th December.

At **Blackmoorfoot** one or two were present throughout the year and a pair fledged young from the same nest hole in Orange Wood from which they had raised young in 2017.

An interesting record, well away from any usual habitat, involved a single which alighted on rocks next to the observer at the trig point at **Sykes Pillar, Broadstone Hill** on 18th June.

TREECREEPER *Certhia familiaris*

Resident breeder (3), 100-200 pairs.

Although there were records from 20 sites (1 more than last year) proof of breeding was only forthcoming from three of these. Birds were reported from a number of gardens, but the only ones with a lengthy occupancy were at **Hepworth**, where a single was a fairly regular visitor during most weeks of the year, and in a **Meltham** garden where one or two were regularly recorded between early January and early July. At **Wards End Farm, Marsden**, a location which offers little in the form of habitat for this species, singles were seen on 23rd and 30th August. These were only the third and fourth records there in 15 years of watching. As is to be expected for this non-gregarious species, all the records received were of no more than two individuals.

As in the previous five years, records from **Blackmoorfoot** were very sporadic during the first winter period, but by early April a pair had taken up residence in Orange Wood and succeeded in fledging young. There were few records following fledging, these only amounting to sporadic appearances of a single between late October and late December. The only other evidence of breeding came from the **Little Don Valley** (1 pair nested) and a pair held a territory in the Ozzings area of **Shepley**.

STARLING *Sturnus vulgaris*

Resident breeder (4-5), 2,000-6,000 pairs. Winter visitor. Red listed.

There was a tremendous drop in the large assemblages of recent years, indeed, there were only five records which attained four-figures. Although this may be a true reflection of the species' fortunes, it may also reflect under-recording.

Although birds were attracted to several gardens, mostly throughout the year, a garden in **Holmfirth** only held a single for two weeks in late April/early May.

There were few records of actual breeding, but the number of juveniles reported in the autumn flocks suggests a relatively good breeding season.

The largest flocks were reported as follows:

Broadstone Res – c.150 on 15th January, c.500 on 2nd and 8th February, and c.300 on 21st March.

Ingbirchworth Res – c.200 on 22nd January and 300+ on 2nd November.

Whitley Edge – 800+ on 25th January and c.3,000 on 8th February.

Ingbirchworth Moor – c.1,000 on 25th January.

Whitley Common – c.200 on 8th February, c.2,000 on 16th March, and c.3,000 on 23rd March.

Mill House Green – c.700 roosted on 9th and 10th February.

Whitley Heights – c.140 on 15th February.

Lower Maythorn – c.1,000 on 24th March.

Wards End Farm, Marsden – a maximum of 320 in early May and c.220 in late June.

Blackmoorfoot – c.300 on 5th June and c.400 on 12th November.

Harden – c.200 on 17th July.

Dewsbury SW – the 136 on 29th August had increased to 340 by 16th September but was down to 110 by late October.

Pule Hill, Marsden – c.320 at Worlow on 17th September were presumed to be migrants feeding.

Meltham – c.400 near the Bowling Club on 2nd October.

Almondbury – c.250 on 26th October.

Boshaw Whams – c.800 on 3rd November.

At **Brockholes** a bird was imitating a Curlew on 28th February, and what may have been the same bird was imitating a Tawny Owl on 7th May.

Visible migration was reported as follows:

Wards End Farm – in the first winter period a total of 58 flew over, all between W and NE, on seven dates between 1st January and 21st March, with a maximum of ten W on 2nd January. A flock of 22 flew E on 17th April. Later in the year, a total of 5,943 flew over, mainly in a westerly direction, on 37 dates between 5th October and 18th November, with a maximum of 1,130 W on 28th October.

Pule Hill – a total of 4,390 flew W on 21 dates between 14th September and 15th November, with a maximum of 574 on 17th October and 861 on 8th November.

Harden Quarries – a total of 1,684 flew over, mainly in a W or NW direction, on 16 dates between 25th September and 15th November, with a maximum of 526 on 17th October.

Royd House Hill – 63 flew S or SW on 17th October.

Isle of Skye Quarry – a total of 333 flew over, mainly in a NW direction, on eight dates between 18th October and 23rd November, with a maximum of 95 on 8th November.

Blackmoorfoot – c.350 flew W on 20th October.

Linthwaite – a total of 449 flew over, mainly in a westerly direction, on seven dates between 28th October and 1st December, with a maximum of 190 W on 28th October and 120 S on 1st December.

Deanhead Res – c.200 flew W on 4th November.

RING OUZEL *Turdus torquatus*

Migrant breeder, decreased to (1), 5-20 pairs (but greatly reduced since the 1987-92 Atlas). Scarce passage visitor. Red listed.

There were records from 16 locations and, once again, **Wards End Farm, Marsden** offered a substantial contribution. The first records involved a female at **Wards End Farm** on 4th April, and the following day, three near **Digley**, two at the **Isle of Skye Quarry** and two at **Cheesegate Nab**.

Following the first at **Wards End Farm** on 4th April, birds continued to be seen there on a near daily basis until 30th April. There were several days with double figure counts: mainly between 11 and 16 birds were involved, but 41 were present on 8th, 25 the following day, and 24 on 23rd. The total number of bird/days amounted to a very impressive 243. This total eclipses last year's total, which at the time was said may never be repeated, by a staggering 102 bird/days.

Away from this area, other April records were as follows: after the first at the **Isle of Skye Quarry** on 4th April, up to five continued to be seen until the month end; **Cheesegate Nab** continued to supply, with a single on 6th and two on 9th and 14th; four were present at **Hartcliff Hill** on 7th, the same day that three were seen at **Ringstone Edge Res.**; a single was at **Thurstonland Bank** on 10th, singles were at **Whitley Edge** and **Ingbirchworth Res.** on 14th; two were present at **Red Lane, Meltham** between 18th and 21st; **Chew Valley** held two on 20th, a single was at **Binn Edge** on 28th, and two were at **Brow Grains, Meltham** on 29th and **Red Lane, Meltham** on 30th.

Most birds had passed through the area by late April, and the only May records involved two in the **Little Don Valley** on 3rd and a single on **Bradshaw Moor** on 12th. The bird on **Bradshaw Moor** may have attracted a mate as a family party consisting of a pair and at least three young were seen in the general area in mid-June.

Autumn, by comparison to spring, was a rather subdued affair and only amounted to the following: a single was present at **Wards End Farm** on 30th August and three flew E there on 20th September; singles were seen at **Scammonden Water** on 23rd September and **Harden Quarries** on 24th/25th September; two flew S at **Wards End Farm** on 29th September and, in October, a single flew W

with Fieldfares at **Wards End Farm** on 7th and one flew S there on 11th; **Scammonden Water** held two on 15th and a single on 17th; and at **Wards End Farm** six flew SW on 18th and a single flew S on 24th.

A male in the **Isle of Skye Quarry** on 7th April appeared from a distance to have a pure white head, the same brightness as the white breast crescent. On closer inspection it was seen that the bird had large white patches on either side of its 'face', a thin black median crown stripe which joined a white collar, and a thin black line which separated the white cheek patches from the white crescent (DMP, SP). Although there are no recorded instances of this phenomenon from the Club area, a paper in *British Birds* (Vol. 111 (2018) pages 250-263) indicates that 'progressive greying' is not uncommon in the species.

BLACKBIRD *Turdus merula*

Resident breeder (5), 3,000-6,000 pairs. One of the commonest species.

Remains as widely distributed as previously, with breeding records stemming from a wide variety of habitat types.

Birds were present throughout the year in many gardens, sometimes reaching double figures during the winter months: up to 15 were attracted to a **Holmfirth** garden and up to 14 were seen in a **Meltham** garden.

Away from the garden environment, 14 were at **Ingbirchworth Res.** on 1st January and 13th April, 11 at **Turnbridge** on 8th January, 14 at **Red Doles** on 11th January, 13 at **Cannon Hall** on 9th February, 11 along the Broad Canal near the **Huddersfield Stadium** on 25th March, ten along the River Colne between **Aspley** and the **Huddersfield Stadium** on 29th March, and 14 were between **Aspley** and **Cooper Bridge** on 22nd April.

There was an upsurge of high single figure records during October/November as Scandinavian migrants began to arrive. Numbers in excess involved 14 at **Blackmoorfoot Res.** on 5th October with 16 on 16th October and 13 on 30th November, and 22 were at **Almondbury** on 3rd November.

The autumn movement was rather subdued by comparison to last year, and only amounted to three flying S at **Harden Quarries** on 10th October, with a single flying SE there on 21st October and five doing likewise on 6th November; two flew W at **Wards End Farm, Marsden** on 14th November; and four flew S at **Butterley Res.** on 15th October.

FIELDFARE *Turdus pilaris*

Numerous passage and winter visitor. Has bred. Red listed.

Although flocks were widely distributed during the first three months of the year, flock size was greatly reduced on last year and, unlike that year, no locality held birds on a near daily basis. There were far more records during the second winter period, with several treble figure counts and some excellent movements witnessed at the migration watch points.

The first winter period saw numerous flocks of up to 60 strong at several widely distributed localities, but these were generally short-lived, with birds not remaining for more than a few days duration. At the two usually favoured localities, **Blackmoorfoot Res.** and **Wards End Farm, Marsden**, the first three months of the year only produced records on 30 and 34 days respectively.

The only large gatherings involved c.350 at **Broadstone Res.** on 15th January, with c.500 there on 2nd February and c.200 on 14th March; c.400 at **Ingbirchworth Res.** on 22nd January; 140 at **Wards End Farm** on 30th January; c.160 at **Whitley Common** on 2nd February; c.200 at **Cannon Hall** on 12th February; and a gathering of at least 1,000 at **Roughbirchworth** on 27th March. Although birds persisted into April, they were only reported from five sites: **Wards End Farm** held 30 on 1st, 17 on 4th, 13 on 7th and 9th, and a single on 13th; **Blackmoorfoot Res.** had flocks of 12 on 4th and 44 on 6th; a flock of 17 was at **Whitley Common** on 5th; c.80 were at **Hartcliff Hill** on 7th; and the single at **Shepley** on 15th was the last.

The first returning birds (34) were seen at **Wards End Farm** on 9th October. At **Wards End Farm** birds continued to be seen on a near daily basis until the year end. Numbers generally hovered around the 50 mark, but c.100 were present on 19th October, 180 on 12th November and c.100 on 21st November. In addition, there were also some impressive figures of birds migrating over the area (see below). The only other locality where birds were recorded regularly was **Blackmoorfoot Res.** The first record involved 135 which flew W on 16th October, birds were then present on a further 34 days to 26th December. As with Wards End Farm, there were a few impressive movements over the area (see below) but, with the exceptions of 70 grounded birds on 9th November and 110+ on 14th and 19th November, numbers generally remained below 45.

There were records from a further 26 locations, with several holding large, but short-lived assemblages. A scattered flock of c.300 were present at **Deer Hill** on 4th October; at **Scammonden Water** a flock of 500+ on 15th October had increased to an impressive 1,000+ two days later, but had decreased to 350 by the month end; 120 were present at **Digley Res.** on 27th October; c.300 graced **Royd Moor Res.** on 28th October; and c.200 were seen at **Hey Green** on 31st October and **Holt Head** the following day. The remainder of the year continued in a similar vein with 120 at **Hepworth** on 3rd November; c.150 between **Deanhouse** and **Oldfield** on 20th November; and c.1,350 which flew SW in several parties at **Ingbirchworth Res.** on 26th November, and, in December, c.150 at **Royd Moor Res.** on 16th; 100 which flew E over **Cowcliffe** on 20th; and c.400 at **Hazelhead** and c.100 at both **Broadstone Res.** and **Ingbirchworth Res.** on 27th.

Visible migration was noted at eight localities:

Wards End Farm – a total of 11,237 flew over, mainly in a westerly direction, on 47 dates between 7th October and 9th December. Treble figure counts were not unusual but, in October, 948 flew W on 17th, 1,520 flew mainly in a SW direction on 18th, 700 flew W on 20th, and 755 did likewise on 21st.

Isle of Skye Quarry – a total of 491 were noted flying in various directions on five dates between 7th October and 11th November, with a maximum of c.100 NW on 18th October and c.200 W on 21st October.

Pule Hill, Marsden – a total of 4,962 flew in a W or SW direction on 15 dates between 7th October and 15th November, with a maximum of 1,057 on 2nd November.

Harden Quarries – a total of 2,155 flew over, mainly in a S or W direction, on 14 dates between 8th October and 15th November, with a maximum of 300 E or SE on 10th November and 497 mostly S on 15th November.

Blackmoorfoot – a total of 920 flew S and 747 W on nine dates between 16th October and 12th November, with a maximum of 407 W on 19th October and 740 S on 8th November.

Scammonden Water – in October, five flew SW on 16th, 250 W on 18th, 40 W on 22nd, and 80 S on 26th.

Royd Moor Hill – 624 flew SW on 17th October and 24 SW on 10th November.

Linhwaite – a total of 759 flew over, mainly in a southerly direction, on six dates between 22nd October and 9th November, with a maximum of 390 S on 19th October and 166 (116 S + 50 W) on 9th November.

REDWING *Turdus iliacus*

Numerous passage and winter visitor. Red listed.

Although there were records from 20 widely distributed localities during the first winter period, flock size only reached treble figures on three occasions. The second winter period produced records from 33 locations and, as with Fieldfare, there were several treble figure counts and some excellent movements were witnessed at the migration watch points. Note the tremendous push of migrants from widely distributed migration watch points on 17th October (see below).

All occurrences during the first winter period were very short-lived, there being no locality which held birds for more than a few days. Even at well-watched **Blackmoorfoot Res.**, birds were never recorded from more than three consecutive dates. All records were of less than 25 birds, with the following exceptions: c.150 near the Tesco supermarket in **Huddersfield** on 6th January; 100 at **Ossett Spa SW** on 7th January; 30 at **Blackmoorfoot Res.** on 28th January; 40 at **Oldfield** on 29th January and **Whitley Common** on 2nd February; 100+ in **Orange Wood, Blackmoorfoot** on 9th March; 35 at **Skelmanthorpe** on 10th March; and 40 at **Broadstone** on 27th March. The only April records involved a single at **Wards End Farm, Marsden** on 4th and at least ten at **Netherton** on 13th.

The first birds to return concerned six at **Langsett Banks** on 4th October and, the following day, a single at **Wards End Farm**, 13 at **Blackmoorfoot Res.**, and two which flew SW over **Fixby**. Birds rapidly became more widespread, a situation which persisted to the year end. The only locality with persistent occupancy, however, was **Blackmoorfoot Res.** Birds were recorded on 55 dates between 5th October and 22nd December but, with the exception of migrating birds (see below) numbers never exceeded the 70 on 13th – 15th October and 40 on 18th, 20th and 29th October.

Flocks never remained for more than a few days at all the other localities, but there were some large gatherings, especially in November/December. The numbers involved generally remained at fewer than 70, and all three figure assemblages are given below: c.300 at **Royd Moor Res.** on 28th October with c.100 there on 16th December; up to c.100 at **Shepley** in November/December; ‘a large number (thousands)’ were said to have passed over **Rastrick** on 17th November; c.150 at **Silkstone SW** on 2nd December; and c.200 at **Broadstone Res.** on 27th December.

Visible migration was recorded from the following sites:

Wards End Farm, Marsden – a total of 3,790 flew over, mainly in a W or SW direction, on 31 dates between 5th October and 10th December, with a maximum of 984 W on 17th October, 201 SW the following day, and 511 W on 29th October.

Harden Quarries – a total of 4,465 flew over, mainly in a S or W direction, on ten dates between 5th October and 15th November, with a maximum of 3,264 on 17th October.

Blackmoorfoot Res – a total of 802 flew W and 78 S on ten dates between 6th October and 4th November, with a maximum of 380 W on 17th October.

Pule Hill, Marsden – a total of 4,503 flew over, mainly in a S or W direction, on ten dates between 11th October and 15th November, with a maximum of 3,843 S or SW on 17th October.

Linthwaite – a total of 654 flew over, mainly in a S or W direction, on ten dates between 12th October and 12th November, with a maximum of 129 SW on 17th October and 200 (140 SW + 60 NE) on 29th October.

Royd Moor Hill – 750 flew SW on 17th October.

Scammonden Water – ten flew W on 18th October and 70 did likewise on 22nd October.

The observers at **Harden Quarries** commented that ‘notwithstanding the big movement on 17th October, relatively few migrants were noted here this autumn’.

SONG THRUSH *Turdus philomelos*

Partial migrant breeder (4), 800-1,600 pairs, but decreasing. Red listed.

With records from 48 locations, some of which held birds throughout the year, this nationally declining species would appear to be in a more stable position locally. The majority of records, however, refer to no more than a couple of individuals, and the only records in excess (but see breeding below) involved five at **Bretton Park** on 2nd March, at least ten at **Scammonden Water** on 15th October and four at **Wards End Farm, Marsden** on 6th November. A single in the **Isle of Skye Quarry** on 15th April was the observer's first spring record at the site.

Several gardens held one or two individuals throughout the year, but one observer in **Hepworth** commented that his only garden record involved a single on 2nd January.

Singing males were recorded from most localities, but usually only one or two were involved, the following being the exceptions: five males held territories along the Trans-Pennine Trail at **Dunford Bridge**, nine singing males were in **Haigh Woods**, three males held territories at **Blackmoorfoot Res.**, up to ten were singing at **Horbury Strands/Wyke** in late March, there was a minimum of nine territories in the **Marsden** area (well below the 11 years average of 16), and three males were singing at the **Calder Hebble Navigation** in early May. The only positive proof of breeding came from **Colne Bridge SP** where adults were seen carrying food.

Visible migration was recorded from the following sites:

Pule Hill, Marsden – singles flew W on 11th and 17th October.

Wards End Farm, Marsden – three flew W with other thrushes on 14th October, four flew NW on 30th October and, in November, a single flew SW on 4th, four did likewise on 5th, a single flew E on 12th, and four flew NW on 18th.

Harden Quarries – four flew S with Redwings on 17th October.

MISTLE THRUSH *Turdus viscivorus*

Resident breeder (3), 300-400 pairs.

Records were received from 51 localities, a marked increase on the 40 of last year. Birds were present throughout the year at most locations, and up to two were reported from several gardens.

The only gatherings of more than two in the first half of the year involved six at **Stirley Community Farm** on 27th January, four at **Cannon Hall** on 14th February, six at **Rastrick** on 12th March, five at **Wards End Farm, Marsden** on 20th June with seven there the following day, and six at **Langsett** on 23rd June.

Singing birds were only reported from ten sites, but there was a minimum of five territories in the **Marsden** area (well below the 11 years average of 9), a pair were nest building at **Higher Green Owlers** in mid-April, a pair fledged young at **Blackmoorfoot Res.**, and adults were seen carrying food at **Colne Bridge SP**.

The usual autumn build-up was rather subdued by recent standards, and the impressive build-up witnessed at **Wards End Farm** last year never materialised, indeed, the only double figure counts involved 14 on 3rd/4th October and 18 on 6th October. At other locations, up to ten were present at **Shepley** during the late summer, 12 were at **Scammonden Water** on 20th September, 18 were visiting a berry-bearing tree at **Lepton** on 5th October, and 14 were at **Blackmoorfoot Res.** on 20th October.

Visible migration was noted at four localities:

Wards End Farm, Marsden – a total of 48 flew over, all between W and S, on 11 dates between 16th September and 26th October, with a maximum of 15 W on 8th October and ten W the following day.

Pule Hill, Marsden – a total of 16 flew over, all between W and S, on seven dates between 17th September and 15th November, with a maximum of six W on 7th October.

Harden Quarries – a total of 53 flew over, mainly in a southerly direction, on eight dates between 27th September and 15th November, with a maximum of 14 S on the first mentioned date.

Royd House Hill – 11 flew SW on 17th October.

SPOTTED FLYCATCHER *Muscicapa striata*

Migrant breeder, decreased to (1-2), 10-30 pairs. Scarce passage visitor. Red listed.

There was a slight increase to 16 locations this year (13 in 2017), but breeding was only obtained at three of these (4 in 2017). Birds were present between 18th May and 20th September.

The first records involved singles at **Netherwood** and **Wards End Farm, Marsden** on 18th May, with the bird at the latter mentioned site remaining for a further three days. The only other May record involved a single at **Brownhill Res.** on 27th. A pair fledged young at **Hartcliff Lodge**, a pair held a breeding territory at **Cliff Wood**, two pairs bred at **Langsett Banks** (1 pair fledging at least 2 young), and a single at **Dove Stone Res.** on 17th June attracted a mate as a family party of six were present by mid-August.

The only other July records were of singles at **Linthwaite** on 13th and **Hartcliff Hill** on 15th. There were then no records until August, when singles were present at **Chew Valley** on 4th; **Wards End Farm** on 6th and 17th; singles at **Gunthwaite Dam** on 11th and 13th, three at **Higher Green Owlers** on 21st, with singles there on 25th and 28th; and singles at **Hassocks Lane, Meltham** on 25th and **Brow Grains, Meltham** on 29th.

At **Scammonden Water** up to four were seen on a number of dates between 9th August and 20th September, and **Blackmoorfoot** had one or two on 18 dates between 11th August and 6th September, with three being seen on 5th September. The other September records, all on 5th, concerned six at **Dunford Bridge**, two at **Brow Grains** and a single at **Wards End Farm**.

ROBIN *Erithacus rubecula*

Resident breeder (5), 5,000-6,000 pairs.

One of the commonest species, as is reflected in the number of records submitted (about the same as the previous two years) from a large number of widely scattered localities. Although breeding was forthcoming from several sites, it obviously went undetected at most. As is usual for this very territorial species, most records, other than family parties, referred to no more than four individuals

Most of the records in excess of four referred to territorial birds counted along lengths of river/canal. Up to 14 were regularly seen at **Dewsbury SW** during both winter periods; five were at **Langsett** on 8th January; nine were along the **Broad Canal** at Red Doles on 11th January and 9th March; six were present at **Elland GP** on 28th January; nine were singing along the **Broad Canal** between Aspley and the Huddersfield Stadium on 29th March; nine were singing along the **Broad Canal** between Aspley and Cooper Bridge on 22nd April; at least ten were at **Ingbirchworth Res.** on 6th August; five were at **Turnbridge** on 11th September and 26th October; up to eight were regularly

seen at **Blackmoorfoot Res.** in the second winter period with a maximum of ten on 1st November; and five were at the side of the River Holme in **Holmfirth** on 4th November.

PIED FLYCATCHER *Ficedula hypoleuca*

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

There were records from only two sites: the species' stronghold at Cliff Wood and Dove Stone Res.

Cliff Wood – a female-type present on 17th April was the first, after which a pair bred in a nest-box and fledged seven young. The last record involved two on 5th June.

Dove Stone Res – a single on 10th and 13th May.

BLACK REDSTART *Phoenicurus ochruros*

Rare visitor.

There were far more records than last year, with birds being recorded from four localities.

Wards End Farm, Marsden – an adult male on 28th March. Later in the year there was a flurry of records between 13th July and 24th September: a female-type on 13th July was followed by two on 21st/22nd July, a juvenile on 21st August and single female-types 25th August and five dates between 6th and 24th September (DWS). The observer commented that “Over the autumn it is difficult to say how many individuals were involved but I have photographed at least four different birds”.

Buckstones – a female-type on 8th April (DT).

Binn Edge – a female-type on 28th April (OW).

Isle of Skye Quarry – a female-type on 20th – 22nd, 26th/27th October (II, NWM, DHP).

Interestingly, this last-mentioned bird was first detected because it was very vocal, constantly repeating a vaguely Meadow Pipit-like call. The *Helm Guide to Bird Identification* states: ‘Black Redstart is astonishingly silent on migration, but territorial birds in winter may give a loud, thin, whistled *weet*, often repeated.

REDSTART *Phoenicurus phoenicurus*

Migrant breeder, decreased to (1-2), 10-40 pairs.

There were records from seven localities, a drop of three on last year. As in 2017, the only evidence of breeding came from the Langsett area, but, unlike last year's five pairs, this year there were seven. Birds were recorded between 17th April and 5th September, but away from the breeding area, all but two of the other records were in autumn.

The only spring records, other than the breeding pairs, were both in gardens: a male at **Oldfield** on 17th April and a single at **New Mill** on 2nd May. Breeding occurred in the **Little Don Valley**, with four territory holding males (the adults of one pair were carrying food or a faecal sac in mid-June), two males held breeding territories at **Langsett Bank**, and a single pair were in **Cliff Wood**.

There were then no records until mid-July, when a juvenile was present at **Wards End Farm** on 19th/20th, with a female there the following day and a single on 21st August. The Hassocks Lane area at **Meltham** attracted up to five birds on a near daily basis between 23rd July and 28th August. Singles were present at **Ingbirchworth Res.** on 6th August and 5th September and at **Scammonden**

Water up to three, but usually only one, were seen on nine dates between 9th August and 1st September.

As last year, the number of sightings from **Blackmoorfoot Res.** was greatly reduced compared with those from recent years with, in August, a single on 10th, two the following day and a single on 12th and singles on 2nd and 5th September being the only records.

WHINCHAT *Saxicola rubetra*

Migrant breeder (2), about 50 pairs (but greatly reduced since the 1987-92 Atlas).

As in 2017, most records stemmed from the Wards End Farm area of Marsden. Indeed, there were records from only a further seven sites, but two pairs bred at one of these.

The first records of the year involved a male at **Whitley Common** on 23rd April and, in the **Meltham** area: a male and female at **Brow Grains** on 29th April, a male at **Red Lane** the following day and a male at **Brow Grains** on 1st May. Three singing males then took up territories in this area, with two attracting females and fledging young. The last birds here involved two at **Brow Grains** on both 31st August and 10th September. On a more negative note, the only record from nearby **Deer Hill**, despite frequent visits, involved a single female on 5th May.

At **Wards End Farm** the only spring record was of a female on 12th/13th May. There were then no records until a single appeared on 20th July, two on 23rd July, and singles on 24th and 27th July. There was an amazing run of records between 3rd August and 27th September, with birds being present on 40 days and amassing a total of 95 bird/days. Most of these records referred to fewer than four individuals, but eight were present on 11th August and seven on 29th August. The observer commented that this was his best year to date.

The only other records concerned one at **Deanhead Res.** on 9th August, with four there two days later; two at **Broadstone Res.** on 1st September, with three there on 22nd September; and singles at **Blackmoorfoot Res.** on 6th September and **Scout Dike Res.** on 22nd September.

STONECHAT *Saxicola rubicola*

Resident breeder, increased to (1), 5-20 pairs. Scarce/uncommon passage and winter visitor.

There were records from 24 widely scattered localities, the same number as last year. Birds were present at several sites during the breeding season, indicating that 'The Beast from the East' had little effect on the population, but there was little evidence of breeding.

Records were received from the following localities:

Blackmoorfoot – there were very few records: a female was in the fields to the west between 1st January and 2nd February and a male was on Meltham Cop on 6th March.

Hepworth – two on 10th January.

Scout Dike Res – a female on 10th January.

Wards End Farm, Marsden – a single on 17th January was followed by a male on two dates in February and three in March. A single was present on 1st April and a female on 12th May. There were then no records until three were seen on 23rd July. Thereafter, birds were seen on a further 56 dates to 26th December. Most records usually involved one or two individuals, rarely three or four, but five were present on 5th October.

Isle of Skye Quarry – males on 7th March, 11th July (singing distantly to the N), and 20th October.

Deer Hill – single males on 12th March and 5th May were followed by at least four on 3rd October and a male and female on 31st October.

Deanhead Clough/Res – the only spring record was of a singing male on 9th April. Later in the year two adults and two juveniles of unknown provenance were present on 5th July, two adults with three juveniles were present on 23rd September, and one or two were then seen on a further five dates until 5th November.

Chew Valley – three on 20th April and a male and three juveniles of unknown provenance on 23rd June.

Buckstones – a single on 28th and 30th April.

Hingcliff Common – a pair fledged three young.

Marsden – there were five breeding territories between Wessenden Head Res. and Butterley Res.

Digley – a male and female on Issues Road on 8th May.

West Nab – a male and female on 19th May.

Digley Res – a male and female on 22nd May.

Redbrook Res – a male present in early June attracted a female and a least one fledged juvenile was present throughout July. Later in the year a male and female were seen on 25th October.

Eastergate, Marsden – a male on 7th June.

Brow Grains, Meltham – a juvenile on 9th July.

Crowden – two on 18th July.

Dove Stone Res – a single on 29th August.

Broadstone Res – two on 22nd September, 31st October and 11th December.

Scammonden Water – a single on 26th September and two on 19th November.

Harden Quarries – a single on 28th September.

Ramsden Quarry – a male and female with three juveniles of unknown provenance on 30th September.

Broadstone Heath – a female on 26th October and a male and female on 17th November.

WHEATEAR *Oenanthe oenanthe*

Migrant breeder, decreased to (1-2), 10-50 pairs. Uncommon to common passage visitor.

The first bird was recorded on 14th March and the last on 18th October. With no records in June or July it is not surprising that there were no breeding records.

The earliest birds were a male at **Wards End Farm, Marsden** on 14th and 16th March, one at **Broadstone** on 21st March, and a male at **Deer Hill** on 30th March. The following two months saw records from a further 26 localities. At two sites, **Wards End Farm** and **Blackmoorfoot Res.** birds were seen on a near daily basis during this period. At **Wards End Farm** birds were recorded on 34 days between 4th April and 19th May, with a total of 166 bird/days being amassed. Low single figures were the norm, occasionally up to nine, but 15 were present on 27th April, 16 on 3rd May and 12 on 5th May. It was a similar situation at **Blackmoorfoot Res.** although birds, never more than four, were only recorded on 18 days between 1st April and 11th May.

Away from these areas, birds were usually recorded in low single figures and were only present for short periods, the following being the exceptions: c.15 at **Whitley Airfield** on 27th April, ten at **Scout Dike Res.** on 28th April, c.12 at **Brow Grains, Meltham** on 29th April with c.16 in the same general area the following day, 24 at **Spicer House Lane** on 4th May, 12 at **Deer Hill** on 5th May, and 17 at **Hartcliff Hill** on 15th May.

A singing/displaying male on **Bradshaw Moor** on 9th and 15th May was of interest as it appeared ghostly pale in comparison to other males seen recently at other sites.

There were then no records until three returning birds were seen at **Wards End Farm** on 4th August. Thereafter, birds were reported from a further 13 localities, but numbers never reached more than a handful, except at **Wards End Farm**. This was also the only site where birds were present over an extended period: between 4th August and 28th September birds were seen on 29 days with a total of 60 bird/days. Usually less than four were present, but there were seven on 25th August and six on 16th September.

By late September sightings were becoming scarce, with up to four being reported from four localities, and the only October record involved two at **Deer Hill Res.** on 15th and a single there on 18th.

Greenland Wheatear *Oenanthe oenanthe leucorhoa*

Birds showing characters of this race were reported as follows:

Whitley Common – a female on 23rd April, 13 on 28th April (DMW) and four on 2nd May (JMcL).

Spicer House Lane – ‘several’ of the 24 on 4th May appeared typical of this race (NWM, DHP).

Whitley Edge – at least eight on 10th May, a single on 14th May and two the following day (JMcL).

Wards End Farm – a male on 11th/12th May and a male and female on 14th and 17th May (DWS).

DIPPER *Cinclus cinclus*

Resident breeder (2), 40-60 pairs.

This very sedentary species was recorded from 26 localities (28 in 2017) but confirmation of breeding was only received from five of these (7 in 2017). A pair fledged two young from five eggs at **Oxygrains Beck**, a pair bred at **Swinden Plantation**, a pair raised two broods along the River Ryburn in **Ripponden**, and birds were seen nest building at **Stainland Dean** and along the River Holme at **Holmfirth**.

Most sites, due to the species' very sedentary nature, held birds throughout the year, but the following were more unusual: singles at **Windy Bank Res.** on 20th January, 1st February and 12th March; one at **Scout Dike Res.** on 4th October; a single at **Deer Hill Res.** from mid-October to the year end; and one on the beck at **Silkstone SW** between 26th November and the year end.

The decrease in records from **Blackmoorfoot Res.** noted last year continued: the only records involved singles along the inflow on 19th and 28th September, 3rd, 4th and 22nd October, and 13th December.

HOUSE SPARROW *Passer domesticus*

Resident breeder (5), 3,000-6,000 pairs (but greatly reduced since the 1987-92 Atlas). Red listed.

Records were received from a similar number of widely distributed localities as last year. The species appears to be holding its own, with a good number of breeding records and some higher than usual assemblages at several garden feeding stations. Although this is very pleasing, it is very doubtful that we will ever go back to the days when it was extremely common – in the winter of 1968/69 MLD ringed over a thousand in his parents' garden at Crosland Moor!

Birds were regularly seen in the following gardens:

Rastrick – present throughout the year with 20 on 1st January, but numbers thereafter were much reduced and only four were seen at the year end.

New Mill – present throughout the year with a maximum of c.20.

Lockwood – present throughout the year with a maximum of 30+ post breeding.

Almondbury – up to 16 were present throughout the year with 20 on 9th June and up to 28 in August.

Shepley – present throughout the year with a maximum of c.40.

Lindley – present throughout the year with up to 16 in June and 30 on 13th September.

Linthwaite – present throughout the second half of the year, with several double figure counts, and a maxima of 32 on 12th August and 56 on 23rd December.

The species' presence in the village at **Blackmoorfoot** continued. Although up to eight were present throughout most of the year, with 13 on 24th March, the species was totally absent between 8th August and 16th October. These birds were invariably feeding in the garden of 41 Blackmoorfoot Road, and two pairs bred in the adjacent property.

Numbers away from feeding stations remained generally low, and rarely attained double figures, the exceptions being c.60 which were present throughout the year in the village and around the hen runs at **Lepton**, 14 at **Wooldale** on 20th August, and c.10 at the B & Q carpark in **Huddersfield** on 10th November.

Four which flew S over **Harden Quarries** on 24th September constituted the first record for the site. Rather unusually, a juvenile flew W over **Pule Hill, Marsden** with Meadow Pipits in 29th September.

TREE SPARROW *Passer montanus*

Resident breeder, decreased to (1-2), 10-50 pairs. Red listed.

Records were only received from 16 locations (18 in 2017) and breeding was forthcoming from five of these (the same number as in 2017). Is this a true reflection of the species' fortunes, or is it going under-recorded?

At the recently discovered (2014) breeding site at **Wilshaw** at least four pairs nested, but the breeding success was unknown. A garden in **New Mill** held about ten on a daily basis and a least one pair bred in a neighbour's nest-box. Up to six were present through the year in the Ozzings area of **Shepley** and two or three pairs bred successfully. Two pairs bred at Bird's Nest Lane, **Broadstone Res.** A colony in a hedge along Dick Lane at **Hepworth** had at least two breeding pairs.

Elsewhere birds were reported from the following locations:

Broadstone – up to five were regularly seen at Bird's Nest Lane and 18 were present along Broadstone Road on 29th September.

Holmfirth (Cooper-Binns Lane) – seen regularly through the year with a maximum of 14 in late November.

Kirkheaton – present in every month of the year, but no numbers were forthcoming.

Shepley – four at a garden feeding station on 27th March.

Ingbirchworth Res – three on 16th May.

Denby Delph – three on 11th July.

Maythorn – seven on 18th July.

Wards End Farm, Marsden – four juveniles in the garden on 7th August were of unknown provenance. Later in the year two were present on both 5th September and 10th October. The species is but a very scarce visitor at this well-watched site.

Clayton West SW – c.15 on 18th September.

Helme – up to 12 were at a garden feeding station from late November to the year end.

Meal Hill – eight on 27th December.

DUNNOCK *Prunella modularis*

Resident breeder (5), about 4,000 pairs. One of the commonest species.

Remains widely distributed and common, with records from all habitat types ranging from the low river valleys to high moorland. Birds were reported throughout the year from many gardens, even at high elevations. Most garden records involved no more than two individuals, but up to four were occasionally seen in gardens at **Golcar** and **Linthwaite**, a garden in **Shepley** had frequent visits by up to six birds, whilst **Wards End Farm, Marsden** had up to six on a regular basis during the first six months of the year and up to eight regularly for the rest of the year.

Breeding was reported from a number of gardens, but reports from ‘wilder’ habitats were sparse.

YELLOW WAGTAIL *Motacilla flava*

Migrant breeder, decreased to (1), 0-1 pairs. Scarce to uncommon passage visitor.

There were 18 records (13 in 2017 and 19 in 2016), most of which fell into the late summer/autumn period.

Wards End Farm, Marsden – a single flew N on 15th April. Later in the year a juvenile was seen on 31st July, an adult male on 3rd August, and juveniles on 10th August and 12th September.

March Haigh Res – a female on 21st May.

Ringstone Edge Res – a male on 25th and 27th May and a juvenile on 15th and 18th July.

Deer Hill Res – a male on 10th July.

Redbrook Res – in July single juveniles were present on 10th, 19th and from 26th – 28th. From plumage differences, at least two birds were involved in these sightings.

Deanhead Res – a single on 15th July.

Red Lane, Meltham – a single flew N on 25th August and two were present on 2nd September.

Boshaw Whams – an adult and three juveniles on 4th September.

GREY WAGTAIL *Motacilla cinerea*

Resident breeder (2-3), about 100 pairs.

There were records from 43 localities and, although the number of records fell from the 200 of last year to only 120 this year, birds were still widely distributed. Birds were present throughout the year at a high proportion of sites, but, apart from the breeding localities, numbers rarely exceeded three, the only exceptions being eight at **Dewsbury SW** on 7th January, up to four along the River Holme at **Lockwood** in March, six along the River Colne between **Aspley** and **Huddersfield Stadium** on 29th March, four on the River Colne at **Colne Bridge** on 24th May, four on the River Colne by **Huddersfield Stadium** on 10th June, five on the River Holme at **Holmfirth** on 12th June, and six at **Langsett Res.** on 20th August. It is noteworthy that the second half of the year only produced a single record of more than two birds together.

Birds were present throughout most of the year at **Blackmoorfoot**, although occurrences were sporadic until early May. Most records involved one or two individuals, but two pairs bred, at least one of which fledged young.

Other breeding records were reported from **Redbrook Res.** (a pair fledged young), **Ripponden** (a pair fledged young along the River Ryburn), **Huddersfield** (a pair bred along the River Colne near the University), **Colne Bridge SP** (a pair fledged young), **Armitage Bridge** (a pair fledged young along the River Holme), and **Butterley Res.** (adults carrying food).

The only visible migration noted at the watch points was from **Pule Hill, Marsden** where two flew SW on 14th September and singles flew W on 22nd September and 19th October and a single which flew S at **Harden Quarries** on 28th September.

PIED WAGTAIL *Motacilla alba*

Partial migrant breeder (3), 300-500 pairs. Common passage and winter visitor.

There were only 75 records supplied, some 50% down on the 150 of last year. Birds were present throughout the year, including a handful which visited gardens. Numbers were invariably in low single figures, and the only higher counts involved 12 at **Horbury SW** on 7th January, 15 at **Boshaw Whams** on 4th September, and 100+ which roosted at the water treatment works at **Langsett** on 17th September.

Evidence of breeding was only received from five localities: three pairs bred at **Ingbirchworth Res.**, of which two pairs fledged young; a pair bred at **Whitley Common**; and single pairs fledged young at **Shepley**, **Blackmoorfoot Res.**, and **Bank Top, Marsden**.

Despite these abysmal numbers, bird passing over the visible migration locations remained at a normal level:

Harden Quarries – a total of 144 flew over, mainly in a southerly direction, on 15 dates between 8th August and 25th October, with a maximum of 35 S on 10th October.

Pule Hill, Marsden – a total of 59 flew over, mainly in a westerly direction, on 13 dates between 28th August and 4th November, with a maximum of 17 S or SW on 17th September and 14 W or SW on 22nd September.

Wards End Farm, Marsden – in September, six flew W on 24th, two SW on 25th, and three SW on 27th.

Royd Moor Hill – four flew SW on 17th October.

White Wagtail *Motacilla alba alba*

Rare to scarce passage visitor.

There were two records: a single at **Ingbirchworth Res.** on 13th April (BBSG) and a male in a field adjacent to the **Langsett Barn** car park on 22nd/23rd April (RJB, NWM, DHP).

MEADOW PIPIT *Anthus pratensis*

Partial migrant breeder (5), 2,500-4,000 pairs. The commonest bird of open country.

Birds were present throughout the year, but wintering birds were only recorded from a handful of localities and, during the first winter period, assemblages only reached double figures at **Blackmoorfoot Res.**, with c.30 being present on 7th and 26th February.

A single feeding in a **Taylor Hill** garden on 3rd March and two feeding in a **Rastrick** garden on 2nd April illustrates how the inclement weather at the time ('The Beast from the East') was affecting open-country species.

By mid-March birds were becoming far more widespread, but numbers rarely reached double figures, the following being the exceptions: c.50 at **Hade Edge** on 10th March, c.80 near Holmfirth's **Huntsman Inn** and c.45 at **Thurgory Lane** on 5th April. Breeding was reported from several widely distributed localities, but the numbers involved appeared to be low.

There were a number of large assemblages reported in autumn, with c.300 at **Bella Vista Farm, Penistone** on 12th July; 75 at **Wards End Farm, Marsden** on 8th August and 35 still remaining there at the month end; 55+ at **Blackmoorfoot Res.** on 10th/11th September; 85 at **Broadstone Res.** on 11th September; at least 100 at **Deer Hill Res.** on 15th September; 225 at **Royd Moor Res.** on 20th September; c.200 at **Whitley Edge** on 28th September; and c.50 at **Thurgory Lane** on 10th October.

In sharp contrast to the first winter period, the second winter period produced a number of double figure counts: ten at **Ringstone Edge Res.** on 4th November; 25 at **Wards End Farm** on 6th November with 20 there on 16th November and 31 on 21st December; 12 at **Ingbirchworth Res.** on 12th December; and 15 at **Harden Moss** on 21st December.

Visible migration was noted at four localities:

Wards End Farm, Marsden – a total of 427 flew over, all in a N or NW direction, on 13 dates between 11th March and 8th April, with a maximum of 117 NW on 20th March. Later in the year, a total of 3,575 flew over, mainly in a W or SW direction, on 34 dates between 7th September and 21st November, with a maximum of 320 SW on 20th September and 1,760 SE on 22nd September.

Blackmoorfoot – 30 + flew N on 25th March with 40+ doing likewise the following day.

Harden Quarries – a total of 1,643 flew over, mainly in a S or SW direction, on 23 dates between 8th August and 15th November, with a maximum of 339 on 17th September.

Pule Hill, Marsden – a total of 1,716 flew over, all in a S or SW direction, on 23 dates between 28th August and 30th November, with a maximum of 1,154 on 22nd September.

Royd Moor Hill – c.280 flew SW on 13th September and 44 did likewise on 17th October.

It will be noted that 22nd September was a day of heavy passage at both Marsden localities and, although these sites are relatively close to each other, discussions between the observers has revealed that, due to the direction of flight, there would be no duplication in numbers. At Harden Quarries no observers were present on this date, however, so it can be assumed that the totals from this site bear little relationship to the true extent of passage there this autumn.

TREE PIPIT *Anthus trivialis*

Migrant breeder, decreased to (1-2), 10-30 pairs (but greatly reduced since the 1987-92 Atlas). Scarce passage visitor. Red listed.

The only records from the stronghold of this species, **Carlecotes Ponds**, involved two singing males on 5th May and a single singing male on 14th May. A male held a territory at **Dunford Bridge** but whether it attracted a female is unknown.

Rather alarmingly, there were no other spring records. The next sightings, of which there were only 11, commenced with a single at **Wards End Farm, Marsden** on 16th July, with another single there on 5th September; one flew S at **Ingbirchworth Res.** on 7th August; a single was along the conifer

edge at **Harden Quarries** on 8th/9th August, with seven flying S or SW there on 23rd August; a single departed W from **Hassocks Lane, Meltham** on 13th August; one flew S at **Langsett Res.** on 20th August; a single was at **Scammonden Water** on 29th August, with two there on 31st August; a single was sound recorded at the **Isle of Skye Quarry** on 13th September; and two were present at **Lower Cumberworth** on 20th September.

ROCK PIPIT *Anthus petrosus*

Rare passage visitor.

There were three records: a single was sound recorded as it flew S at **Harden Quarries** at 07.54hrs. on 11th October (NWM, DHP); one was photographed at **Ringstone Edge Res.** on 14th October (DF); and a single in the run-off channel at **Deer Hill Res.** departed high to the W on 31st October (DMP).

CHAFFINCH *Fringilla coelebs*

Resident breeder (5), 5,000-10,000 pairs. One of the commonest species.

Although widely distributed and generally common, the numbers of birds recorded remained abysmally low, with very few double figure flocks and only one treble figure occurrence. Although birds utilised garden feeding stations throughout the year, several observers commented that they were less frequently encountered these days. Even the famous garden at Thick Hollins, Meltham couldn't muster more than two individuals. Migration over the area (see below) remained relatively impressive, however.

Birds were present throughout the year in several gardens, but the numbers present rarely exceeded a handful, the only exception being a **Hepworth** garden which held 11 on 6th/7th August and ten on 20th November. Numbers away from gardens were equally as abysmal, the largest gatherings being 10+ at **Wards End Farm, Marsden** on 14th July and on several August dates with 12 on 31st August and 5th September, c.100 at **Ramsden Clough** on 9th September, c.40 at **Ingbirchworth Res.** on 1st November with 30+ on 1st and 21st December, ten at **Bretton Park** on 11th November, and an unknown number in a 200+ flock of mixed finches at the **High Hoyland** game crop on 18th November.

Despite the low numbers of birds, breeding was confirmed at several widely distributed locations.

Visible migration was reported from four sites:

Wards End Farm – a total of 746 flew over, mainly in a SW direction, on 23 dates between 16th September and 5th November, with a maximum of 153 SW on 15th October and 136 which did likewise two days later.

Pule Hill, Marsden – a total of 2,951 flew S or SW on 21 dates between 17th September and 30th November, with a maximum of 312 on 22nd September and 329 SW on 17th October. The observers commented that it was quite a good year – just above average!

Harden Quarries – a total of 1,092 flew over, mainly in a SE direction, on 19 dates between 24th September and 15th November, with a maximum of 187 SE on 10th October.

Royd Moor Hill – 25 flew SW on 17th October.

A male at **Wards End Farm** on 22nd August had a white tip to its tail.

BRAMBLING *Fringilla montifringilla*

Uncommon to common passage and winter visitor.

The first four months of the year continued in the same vein as last years' second winter period, with birds being in very short supply. The second winter period was also disappointing, with very few records being received, although at both of the Marsden visible migration watch points unprecedented numbers were witnessed passing over. A total of eight gardens attracted the species, but at only one of these were birds present for any length of time, and then only in very small numbers.

Only a handful of sites held the species during the first winter period and, even including the garden records, numbers never exceeded the five at **High Hoyland** from 1st to 5th January and three in a **Thongsbridge** garden on 14th March. The last bird of the period, a single, was present in a **Meltham** garden on 20th April.

The first returning birds began to arrive in early October when a flock of 25 flew W at **Wards End Farm, Marsden** on 7th and three were at **High Hoyland** on 10th. Birds were then recorded at a further 17 locations, but numbers remained low, the highest counts being of up to ten at **Wards End Farm** in mid-October, 13 at **Scammonden Water** on 22nd October, 70+ at **High Hoyland** on 27th October, eight at **Hey Green** on 31st October, c.75 at **Ingbirchworth Res.** on 1st November with 60+ there on 3rd December, six which flew W at **Blackmoorfoot** on 6th December, and at least ten were at **Carlecotes Ponds** on 30th December.

Visible migration, as noted above, was exceptional, especially at the two Marsden sites:

Wards End Farm – a total of 627 flew W on 16 dates between 7th October and 2nd November, with a maximum of 80 on 16th October and 74 on 26th October.

Pule Hill, Marsden – a total of 318 flew S or SW on ten dates between 7th October and 15th November, with a maximum of 167 on 19th October. This is the largest passage ever recorded: the previous highest counts were of 117 in 2013 and 116 in 2017.

Harden Quarries – a total of 387 flew over, mainly in a SE direction, on 12 dates between 8th October and 15th November, with a maximum of 127 SE on 6th November.

Scammonden Water – a single flew SW on 15th October, two did likewise the following day, and 145 flew S on 26th October.

Isle of Skye Quarry – ten flew NW on 20th October and five did likewise on 2nd November.

Redbrook Res – c.100 flew SW on 26th October.

Dean Head Res – 25 flew S on 4th November.

HAWFINCH *Coccothraustes coccothraustes*

Rare to scarce visitor. Former breeder.

Birds, presumably from the massive irruption from Eastern Europe during the autumn of 2017, remained into 2018. That birds were located at the same site during November may indicate that this is becoming a regular location for the species.

Silkstone Common – three at Blackergreen Lane on 6th February (BBSG).

Cannon Hall – at least five were found in the Fairyland area on 7th February (NWM). Thereafter, birds were seen on a near daily basis until 22nd of that month. Numbers involved varied, but six or seven were occasionally present with peaks of eight on 16th, c.20 on 13th, c.10 on 14th, 23+ on 17th, and 10+ on 22nd (NWM *et al.*). In addition, at least one was present on 10th March. Later in the year two were present between 14th and 18th November (DHP, NWM, DT *et al.*).

Blackmoorfoot Res – a single flying W with a group of Redwings at 09.30hrs. on 27th October veered S along the inflow (MLD, DMP, SP, GBS). Despite extensive searching the bird could not be relocated. This is the second record for the reservoir, the other involved a single on 1st March 1987.

BULLFINCH *Pyrrhula pyrrhula*

Resident breeder (2-3), about 100 pairs.

Records were only received from 35 widely scattered localities, a sharp decrease in the 55 of last year, but on a par with 2016. Although birds were attracted to 13 feeding stations in 2017, this year it was limited to just five.

The only counts of more than three were as follows:

Almondbury – a garden in Fenay Crescent attracted up to four throughout the year, with five being present on 5th January.

Blackmoorfoot Res – one or two, occasionally three, were present throughout the year with four on 1st November and six on 7th December.

Holmfirth – a garden in Binns Lane held a maximum of five on several occasions.

Shepley – up to five were present throughout the year.

Colne Bridge SP – frequently seen throughout the year with a maximum of eight on 20th August.

Ingbirchworth Res – six on 22nd January, four on 24th March and 14th April, and five on 11th November.

Dewsbury SW – five on 23rd January.

Stirley Community Farm – four on 27th January.

Elland GP – six on 28th January.

Bretton Park – four on 30th January.

Harden Quarry – in autumn up to five were occasionally present along the conifer edge.

Scammonden Water – six on 23rd August.

Royd Moor Res – four on 8th November.

Deanhead Res – six on 20th November.

Dunford Bridge – four on 17th December.

Birds were present at several locations during the breeding season, but proof of breeding was only confirmed at **Blackmoorfoot** (1 pair fledged young), **Colne Bridge SP** (juveniles seen), and **Shepley** (a pair fledged at least 2 young) but birds held breeding territories at **Scout Dike Res.** (1 pair), **Ingbirchworth Res.** (2 pairs), and **Haigh Woods** (3 pairs).

Visible migration was reported as follows:

Pule Hill, Marsden – a single flew SW on 17th September, four flew S or SW on 20th October, and one flew S on 15th November.

Harden Quarries – a total of 38 flew S or SE on four dates between 10th October and 15th November, with a maximum of 17 on the latter date.

Wards End Farm, Marsden – five flew W on 1st October.

GREENFINCH *Chloris chloris*

Resident breeder (4), 1,000-1,600 pairs.

The alarming decrease in the national population, mainly attributed to the disease trichomonosis, is reflected in the numbers reported in the Club area. There were records from 26 locations, a sharp

decrease on the 36 in 2017, but similar to the number in 2016. Although there were records from a number of garden feeding stations, the only one which held birds throughout the year was in **Almondbury**.

Other than those recorded at the migration watch points (see below), the only double figure count throughout the whole year involved c.15 at **Langsett** on 30th September. The only other large gatherings amounted to eight in a **New Mill** garden on 8th January, eight at **Cannon Hall** on 15th November and eight in a **Linthwaite** garden on 30th December.

The comments of three members regarding the status of this species are worthy of documentation: **Hepworth** – ‘rarely seen and sporadic in the garden these days’, **Netherthong** – ‘nowadays rarely seen in the garden’, and two birds in the Ozzings area of **Shepley** on 19th December ‘were the only record’.

The only evidence of breeding involved two pairs which bred at **Blackmoorfoot Res.** and a juvenile in a **New Mill** garden in early August.

Visible migration was only reported from three locations:

Pule Hill, Marsden – a total of 136 flew over, mainly in a SW direction, on 16 dates between 17th September and 15th November, with a maximum of 39 SW on 17th October.

Wards End Farm, Marsden – a total of 61 flew over, mainly in a W or SW direction, on six dates between 20th September and 10th October, with a maximum of 25 SW on 20th September.

Harden Quarries – a total of 126 flew over, mainly in a SE direction, on ten dates between 24th September and 22nd October, with a maximum of 45 SE on 10th October.

TWITE *Linaria flavirostris*

Partial migrant breeder, decreased to (2), 20-100 pairs (but greatly reduced since the 1987-92 Atlas). Red listed.

The poor showing in 2017 at one of the species’ strongholds, Deer Hill, continued. As is now usual, Wards End Farm, Marsden, held birds for extended periods. Records away from these areas were very scarce, however.

Deer Hill – the first was a single on the rather late date of 25th March. Birds were then present until mid-April, but the number of birds never exceeded four (DMP). There were no further spring records, indeed, the only records later in the year involved a single on 7th August (DMP) and four on 30th September (DJ). DMP commented that ‘this is the poorest year I have ever known!’.

Wards End Farm – two flew N on 20th April and four were present on 5th May. Thereafter, birds were seen on a near daily basis until 27th May and, although numbers varied daily, double figures were present on several dates, with a maximum of 23 on 14th. It then went very quiet, with no more than three being present on four June dates and birds were then absent until 7th July, when two were seen. Thereafter, birds were present on a further 21 dates until 30th August and, although usually less than ten were present, 15 put in an appearance on 11th August, with 20 the following day, 45 landed briefly on 29th August and the following day a flock of 40 flew low SW. In September, 21 flew S on 20th, three flew S on 21st, 23 were present on 24th, seven the following day, 22 were seen on 28th, 16 flew S on 29th, and 26 flew N on 30th. The only October records involved 12 which flew N on 3rd, 15 were present on 5th, 12 flew N on 6th, and ten flew W on 8th (DWS).

Isle of Skye Quarry – a single on 15th April (DHP).

Digley – two in the Bilberry-Good Bent Lodge area on 26th July (DJ).

Deer Hill End Road – two along the conduit on 8th August (DJ).

LINNET *Linaria cannabina*

Partial migrant breeder (3-4), 400-600 pairs (but greatly reduced since the 1987-92 Atlas). Red listed.

Although records spanned the whole year, winter assemblages were restricted to a handful of localities, all in the east of the area. Assemblages rarely reached double figures, the following being the exceptions: c.20 at **Gunthwaite Dam** on 1st January, 15 at **Kirkheaton** on 26th January, c.300 at **High Hoyland** on 14th and 17th December, and 25 at **Whitley Common** on 27th December.

Birds became more widely distributed by early April, but numbers remained low, the only exceptions being 12 at **Deer Hill** on 15th April, ten at **Broadstone Res.** on 23rd April, and 34 at **Oldfield** on 30th April.

Breeding was reported from the following locations: a female was seen carrying nesting material at **Broadstone Res.**, recently fledged juveniles were seen at **Ringstone Edge Res.** and **Blackmoorfoot Res.**, juveniles present at **Wards End Farm, Marsden** were considered to have been fledged nearby, and breeding was suspected in the Ozzings area of **Shepley**.

Despite the poor autumn migration witnessed at **Wards End Farm** (see below), up to seven were present on an almost daily basis between early May and late August. During this period a male with an almost completely white head regularly put in an appearance. The observer commented that this year was unprecedented since he moved here 15 years ago, with Linnets being seen on more days than either Chaffinches or Goldfinches!

Post breeding flocks began to gather from late August, but the largest gatherings only included the following: c.80 at **Netherthong** on 23rd August, c.50 at **Boshaw Whams** on 12th September, c.30 at **Deer Hill** and c.50 at **Red Lane, Meltham** on 15th September, and c.30 in a stubble field at **Thurgory Lane** on 23rd September had increased to c.50 two days later, but had decreased to no more than 13 by the month end due to the field being ploughed.

Visible migration was witnessed as follows:

Harden Quarries – a total of 372 flew over, mainly in a SE direction, on 16 dates between 8th August and 25th October, with a maximum of 83 SW on 10th October and 84 SW on 16th October.

Wards End Farm – 16 flew W on 18th September and a single flew S on 29th September.

Pule Hill, Marsden – four flew SW on 22nd September, five flew SW on 27th September and two did likewise on 4th November.

MEALY REDPOLL *Acanthis flammea*

Rare to scarce winter visitor.

There were two records:

High Hoyland – up to four were in the game crop with four Lesser Redpolls and other finches between 1st and 7th January (LR, BBSG).

Carlecotes Ponds – at least one was present with Lesser Redpolls on 4th December (DHP).

These are the first records in the Club area since a single was seen in a Fixby garden on 4th February 2013.

LESSER REDPOLL *Acanthis cabaret*

Partial migrant breeder, decreased to (1-2), 10-50 pairs. Red listed.

Records were received from 19 locations (22 in 2017 and 24 in 2016). As in 2017, four gardens attracted birds, especially during the first winter period. There was no evidence of breeding but, unlike previous years, there were some impressive assemblages reported.

The majority of records related to small groups of no more than high single figures, the following being the exceptions:

High Hoyland – c.60 in the game crop on 1st January, 100+ on 7th January, and c.100 on 4th December.

Gunthwaite Dam – c.50 on 2nd January.

Wards End Farm, Marsden – 15 dropped in briefly on 24th September.

Dunford Bridge – 15 along the Trans-Pennine Trail on 18th October and an impressive flock of c.200 half a mile east of Dunford Bridge on 16th/17th December.

Scammonden Water – c.30 on 26th October.

Carlecotes Ponds – up to 30 were present on several dates between 17th November and the year end.

Langsett Res – 22 on 12th December.

A garden in **Meltham** regularly held up to eight (usually 1 to 4) on a regular basis until late April, but the only records later in the year involved one or two on four dates in December. The other garden records were of singles for short periods of time in January or February.

There were more records from **Blackmoorfoot** than has been usual, but these only amounted to a single which flew W on 24th March, one on 8th August, two on 25th September, a single on three October dates, and a flock of nine on 6th December.

Visible migration was reported from three sites:

Blackmoorfoot Res – a single flew W on 24th March.

Pule Hill, Marsden – a total of 16 flew S or SW on four dates between 22nd September and 20th October, with a maximum of seven SW on 17th October.

Harden Quarries – a total of 230 flew over, mainly in a SE direction, on 18 dates between 24th September and 15th November, with a maximum of 52 SE on 19th October.

CROSSBILL *Loxia curvirostra*

Irregular breeder (1), 0-5 pairs. Scarce to uncommon irruptive passage and winter visitor.

Recorded from 15 localities (17 in 2017) and, once again, there was a limited number of records from the species' stronghold in the Yateholme area. Passage over the two Marsden watch points was exceptional, however.

Ramsden Res – five on 29th April and 14 on 10th December.

Langsett Banks – a single flew W on 9th June, at least four were present on 6th July, six on 27th August, five on 4th October, ten on 6th October, 18 on 4th November, 22 on 22nd November, and at least 16 were between Langsett Barn and the Flouch on 26th December.

Riding Wood Res – c.12 on 7th July and 30 on 27th October.

Scammonden Water – a single flew S on 20th August, two were present on 25th October, 12 flew S the following day and 20 did likewise on 28th October.

Harden Quarries – up to 12 were regularly present along the conifer edge during autumn and *c.*20 were present on 23rd November and 4th December. In addition, a total of 216 flew S or SE on 12 dates between 25th September and 15th November, with a maximum of 46 on 19th October.

Scout Dike Res – three on 22nd September and a single on 4th October.

Wards End Farm, Marsden – six flew N on 28th September and, in October, ten flew W on both 17th and 19th and 14 did likewise on 28th. The only other record involved two W on 2nd November.

Yateholme – five on 30th September.

Pule Hill, Marsden – 18 flew SW on 19th October with 31 doing likewise the following day. Thereafter, a total of 20 flew over, all in a SW or westerly direction on a further eight days until 15th November, with a maximum of five SW on 2nd November.

Ingbirchworth Res – 14 flew W on 1st November.

Winscar – five on 25th November and two on 26th December.

Langsett Res – at least two were present on 3rd July, 12 on 20th August, six on 23rd November, then, in December, *c.*50 on 12th, 20+ on 22nd, and *c.*30 on 26th.

High Hoyland – two on 14th December.

Carlecotes Ponds – at least three on 19th December.

Hades Plantation – five birds were in display flight on 30th December.

GOLDFINCH *Carduelis carduelis*

Partial migrant breeder (3), 300-500 pairs.

Although very widely distributed and common, large assemblages were mainly restricted to the second half of the year. Garden visits were as widespread as ever, however, but some observers reported a total absence of birds between July and October.

The largest assemblages during the first winter period only amounted to a maximum of *c.*30 coming to feeders in a **Dalton** garden, 20+ in a **Holmfirth** garden, 21 at **Wooldale** on 18th January, and 25 at **Rastrick** on 27th January.

Breeding was widely reported, with birds in juvenile plumage being seen as late as early October, indicating that several broods had been forthcoming.

The largest assemblages post breeding season were as follows:

Wards End Farm, Marsden – the 20 present in mid-July had increased to *c.*60 by late August but had decreased to a maximum of *c.*40 by early September and only 20 remained by mid-November.

Blackmoorfoot – 20+ on 8th August, 42 on 19th/20th August, 60+ on 15th September, 40+ on 28th September, 20+ on 1st December, and 25+ on 26th December.

Deer Hill End Road – *c.*70 on 8th August.

Turnbridge – 20 on 11th September.

Deer Hill – 20 on 30th September.

Dalton – *c.*30 feeding in the same garden as mentioned above throughout the second winter period.

Holmfirth – *c.*20 feeding in the same garden as mentioned above throughout the second winter period.

Langsett – *c.*35 on 30th September and *c.*30 on 12th December.

Rastrick – 50+ on 8th October.

Linthwaite – a flock in October contained 40 on 11th, 20 on 21st and 25 on 29th and 23 still remained on 5th November.

Isle of Skye Quarry – 20 on 21st October.

Beaumont Park – *c.*50 on 2nd December.

Ingbirchworth Res – 20+ on 6th October, 50+ on 1st November, and *c.*30 on 12th December.

Visible migration was recorded as follows:

Harden Quarries – a total of 870 flew over, mainly in a SE direction, on 21 dates between 8th August and 15th November, with a maximum of 198 SE on 10th October.

Pule Hill, Marsden – a total of 278 flew over, mainly in a SW direction, on 18 dates between 17th September and 15th November, with a maximum of 70 S or SW on 22nd September.

Wards End Farm – a total of 126 flew S on eight October dates, with a maximum of 27 on 21st.

Royd Moor Hill – 41 flew S on 17th October.

SISKIN *Spinus spinus*

Resident breeder (1), 5-20 pairs. Uncommon to common passage and winter visitor.

Although sightings were reported throughout the year, records were only received from 24 localities (28 in 2017 and 31 in 2016). Birds were attracted to eight garden feeding stations (same as 2017), one of which held birds throughout the year. Although birds were present at five localities during the breeding season there was no direct proof of breeding.

The number of birds which visited gardens during the first winter period never exceeded five with the exception of a **Meltham** garden which held up to 12 throughout February and March. This same **Meltham** garden attracted up to seven throughout the summer months, but the other gardens only attracted birds from late September onwards, but only in small numbers. Interestingly, numbers in the **Meltham** garden were very subdued during this period with no more than three birds being encountered.

The number of birds seen away from gardens during the first winter period rarely exceeded double figures, the only exceptions being ten (along with c.50 Lesser Redpolls) at **Gunthwaite Dam** on 2nd January, 12 at **Colne Bridge SP** on 6th January, c.50 at **Riding Wood Res.** on 16th February, and 15+ at **Swinden Plantation** on 5th April.

Although there were no confirmed breeding records, summer records involved 'small numbers' throughout at **Ramsden Res.**, two pairs which held territories at **Holme Styes**, a single male displaying at **Digley Quarry**, and two territory holding pairs at **Swinden Plantation**, and four territory holding pairs at **Langsett Banks**.

There were far fewer records during the second half of the year and the only double figure counts concerned c.60 at **Yatcholme** on 30th September and 12 at **Bretton Park** on 12th December with c.30 there on 21st December.

Visible migration was witnessed at the following sites:

Pule Hill, Marsden – a total of 44 flew SW on seven dates between 17th September and 21st October, with a maximum of 20 on 16th October.

Scammonden Water – three flew S on 20th September.

Isle of Skye Quarry – ten flew S on 24th September with 'occasional singles S on other September dates'.

Harden Quarries – a total of 797 flew over, mainly in a SE direction, on 18 dates between 25th September and 15th November, with a maximum of 187 SE on 16th October.

Wards End Farm, Marsden – a total of 147 flew over, mainly in a westerly direction, on 11 dates between 29th September and 31st October, with a maximum of 66 W on 26th October.

Royd Moor Hill – two flew S on 17th October.

Blackmoorfoot Res – singles flew W on 20th October, 19th November and 14th December.

YELLOWHAMMER *Emberiza citrinella*

Resident breeder (3), 300-450 pairs (but greatly reduced since the 1987-92 Atlas). Red listed.

There were records from 21 locations (20 in 2017 and 17 in 2016) but birds were only present throughout the year at the **Ingbirchworth** group of reservoirs and the Ozzings area at **Shepley**. As has now become the norm, the majority of records related to less than four individuals, the only exceptions being up to six at **Shepley** during both winter periods; five at **Ingbirchworth Res.** on 2nd January with eight there on 4th February; an impressive flock of c.50 in stubble at **Thurgory Lane** on 7th January (although good numbers were present the following day, this had reduced to c.10 by 10th); six at **Scout Dike Res.** on 4th July; six along the Trans-Pennine Trail at **Dunford Bridge** on 16th July; and six at **Barncliffe Hill Farm** on 19th December. In the NE of the Club area, JH commented that the species is becoming very uncommon with only two records: two at **Millbank Thornhill** on 23rd January and a single at **Dewsbury SW** on 13th February.

Breeding season records, mainly of single birds, were limited to **Broadstone Res.**, **Ingbirchworth Res.** (at least 2 pairs bred), **Denby Dale**, **Grange Moor**, **Ossett**, **Shepley** and **Silkstone Common**.

The only visible migration involved a single which flew S over **Harden Quarries** on 10th October.

REED BUNTING *Emberiza schoeniclus*

Resident or partial migrant breeder (2-3), 60-120 pairs.

Wards End Farm, Marsden continues to be the stronghold for this species with birds being present on a near daily basis, although there were no records between early July and mid-September. Numbers during the first two months of the year remained in high single figures, but 19 were present on 21st January and up to 22 throughout February. There were unprecedented numbers in March, despite 'The Beast from the East', when double figures were seen daily, the maximum being 24 on 8th and 32 on 18th. Although numbers dwindled thereafter, with birds continuing to frequent the feeding station until late June, double figures remained the norm in April, with a maximum of 19 on 11th. The number of bird/days during this period was an amazing 1,574. Birds were then present on a near daily basis between mid-September and the year end, but numbers were rather subdued, and only reached double figures in late November/December, with a maximum of 11 on 22nd November and ten on 24th December.

Away from this haven birds were in very short supply, with only a handful of localities holding birds. Most of these sites were in the east of the area, but none of the records amounted to more than four individuals, and then only for short periods of time.

Territory holding males were reported from **Redbrook/Pule Hill, Marsden** (4), **Ingbirchworth Res.** (6), **Broadstone Res.** (4), **Brow Grains, Meltham** (2), **Dewsbury SW** (2), **Tunnel End Res.** (2), with singles at **Colne Bridge SP**, **Black Hill**, **Snittlegate**, **Holme**, **Bretton Park**, and **Digley Res.**

Localities with records after the breeding season, with the exception of Wards End Farm (see above), continued to be very sparse, and mainly from the **Ingbirchworth** group of reservoirs. Numbers were always very low and, apart from six at **Scout Dike Res.** on 4th July and 12 at **Ingbirchworth Res.** on 9th July, never exceeded four.

It was another poor showing at **Blackmoorfoot Res.**, with a single male in the SW corner overflow field on 14th March being the only record.

Visible migration was witnessed at four sites:

Pule Hill, Marsden – a total of 77 flew SW on 19 dates between 14th September and 30th November, with a maximum of 18 on 16th October.

Harden Quarries – a total of 45 flew S on 12 dates between 24th September and 25th October, with a maximum of 18 on 10th October.

Wards End Farm, Marsden – a total of 97 flew W on nine dates between 20th September and 2nd November, with a maximum of 12 on 15th and 17th October, 15 on 28th October, and 14 the following day.

Scammonden Water – five flew SW on 17th October.

SNOW BUNTING *Plectrophenax nivalis*

Rare passage and winter visitor.

A male on the south embankment of **Blackmoorfoot Res.** during the morning of 22nd February (PP described to MLD) was the third record for the reservoir.

ESCAPED/INTRODUCED SPECIES

EMBDEN GOOSE *Anser anser domesticus*

The Embden Goose is a white farmyard breed of domestic goose.

A single, present at **Blackmoorfoot Res.** since 29th November 2017, remained until 11th April.

GOLDEN PHEASANT *Chrysolophus pictus*

Introduced.

Despite the good number of records last year, which included several hybrids, this year drew a total blank, even at the species' stronghold at **Hagg Wood**.

ADDITION TO THE 2015 REPORT

DOTTEREL *Charadrius morinellus*

A single was sound recorded as it flew W over the **Isle of Skye Quarry** on 9th September (DHP).

ADDITIONS TO THE 2016 REPORT

GOLDEN PLOVER *Pluvialis apricaria*

A total of 50 pairs held territories at **RSPB Dove Stone**.

CURLEW *Numenius arquata*

A total of 42 pairs held territories at **RSPB Dove Stone**.

DUNLIN *Calidris alpina*

A total of 44 pairs held territories at **RSPB Dove Stone**.

ADDITION & CORRECTION TO THE 2017 REPORT

DUNLIN *Calidris alpina*

A total of 49 pairs held territories at **RSPB Dove Stone**.

ROBIN *Erithacus rubecula*

The record of 23 along the **Broad Canal** between Aspley and Turnbridge in mid-April was given in error. Although the number of birds was correct, they were actually present between **Aspley** and **Cooper Bridge** (a much great distance).

EARLIEST AND LATEST DATES OF SUMMER MIGRANTS

	EARLIEST				LATEST			
	EVER		2018		EVER		2018	
	DATE	YEAR	DATE	LOCALITY	DATE	YEAR	DATE	LOCALITY
Little Ringed Plover	15/3	2000	25/3	Royd Moor Res	29/9	1969	22/8	Blackmoorfoot
Common Sandpiper	7/3	1964	16/4	Ingbirchworth & Blackmoorfoot	21/11	1959	15/10	Blackmoorfoot
Common Tern	31/3	2010	27/4	Elland GP	16/10	2001	21/10	Blackmoorfoot
Cuckoo	8/4	1976	20/4	Winscar	27/10	1977	4/8	Dove Stone Res
Swift	13/4	2013	23/4	Ingbirchworth	8/11	2001	30/8	Blackmoorfoot
Sand Martin	7/3	2005	14/3	Blackmoorfoot	23/10	1971	23/9	Blackmoorfoot
Swallow	10/3	1959	3/4	Blackmoorfoot	5/12	1995	11/10	Harden Quarries
House Martin	20/3	2005	7/4	Ingbirchworth & Meltham SW	27/11	1959	14/10	Blackmoorfoot, Meltham & Linthwaite
Willow Warbler	24/3	2003	4/4	Royd Moor Res	27/10	1987	11/9	Turnbridge & Huddersfield Stadium
Wood Warbler	21/4	1981	?	Langsett Banks	4/9	1956	?	Langsett Banks
Sedge Warbler	1/4	1999	22/4	Horbury Strands	26/9	1999	4/9	Ingbirchworth
Reed Warbler	11/4	2017	25/4	Dewsbury SW	29/9	2001	4/8	Ingbirchworth
Grasshopper Warbler	10/4	2005	19/4	Broadstone	29/8	2000	30/8	Scammonden
Garden Warbler	5/4	1958	18/4	Healey Mills	24/11	1984	5/9	Marsden
Lesser Whitethroat	8/4	2000	20/4	Ingbirchworth	27/9	1973	5/9	Marsden
Whitethroat	1/4	2011	16/4	Ingbirchworth	12/10	1999	20/8	Ingbirchworth
Ring Ouzel	7/3	1956	4/4	Marsden	25/12	1855	24/10	Marsden
Spotted Flycatcher	8/4	1967	18/5	Marsden	16/10	1985	20/9	Scammonden
Pied Flycatcher	10/4	2007	17/4	Cliff Wood	19/9	1969	5/6	Cliff Wood
Redstart	21/3	1942	17/4	Oldfield	24/10	1976	5/9	Ingbirchworth & Blackmoorfoot
Whinchat	11/4	1949	29/4	Meltham	9/11	1999	22/9	Scout Dike Res & Broadstone Res
Wheatear	1/3	1997	14/3	Marsden	4/12	1997	18/10	Deer Hill
Yellow Wagtail	7/4	1980	15/4	Marsden	24/10	1952	12/9	Marsden
Tree Pipit	3/4	1988	7/5	Carlecotes Ponds	16/10	2016	20/9	Lower Cumberworth



Denotes a new earliest/latest ever record.

Note: Blackcap and Chiffchaff dates have been discontinued because of the difficulty in distinguishing between summer migrants and over-wintering birds.

LATEST AND EARLIEST DATES OF WINTER MIGRANTS

	LATEST				EARLIEST			
	EVER		2018		EVER		2018	
	DATE	YEAR	DATE	LOCALITY	DATE	YEAR	DATE	LOCALITY
Pink-footed Goose	12/4	2009	11/4	Dewsbury SW	11/9	2007	14/9	Marsden
Whooper Swan	3/5	2006	28/3	Ringstone Edge	12/9	2015	22/9	Blackmoorfoot
Redwing	7/5	1975	13/4	Netherton	27/8	1941	4/10	Langsett
Brambling	13/5	1976	20/4	Meltham	13/9	1983	7/10	Marsden

 Denotes a new latest/earliest ever record.

Note: in view of the fact that Fieldfare previously bred in the area and the possibility that they did so again in 2008, Fieldfare has been removed from the table.

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CENSUS OF ROOKERIES IN THE HUDDERSFIELD AREA 2018

It has been apparent for some time that the national breeding Rook *Corvus frugilegus* population has been in decline (BTO data) and the most recent survey of Rooks in the Club area in 2005 (Denton, 2005) reflects this decrease. The 2005 survey obtained baseline information on the number of nests and rookeries in the Club area and, in an effort to find out the current state of affairs, the survey was repeated during 2018.

METHODOLOGY

The aim of the survey was to obtain an accurate figure of the number of nests in each rookery. In an effort to obtain the maximum count, observers were asked to carry out the survey just before leaf-burst in mid- to late April. A single visit was all that was required. Observers were also asked to report negative results for rookeries that were no longer extant as well as any newly formed (previously unknown) ones.

WHAT CONSTITUTES A ROOKERY

A rookery is defined as any active Rook nest or group of nests separated by 100 metres or more from the next nearest nest or group (Sage & Vernon, 1978). This consistent definition allows the position and sizes of rookeries to be compared between years.

PREVIOUS SURVEYS

Complete surveys of rookeries in the Club area (the 10 Km squares SE00, SE01, SE10, SE11, SE20 and SE21) were undertaken in 1945, 1973, 1975, 1983 and 2005 but data from these surveys, with the exception of that from the British Trust for Ornithology (BTO) national census in 1975 and our own in 2005 are unfortunately no longer available. Even though the results from the 1983 survey were published (Laidlaw, 1984) the paper contained a number of inconsistencies and as it wasn't computerised it hasn't been possible to revisit it.

RESULTS

As pointed out above, the only data available for direct comparison with the present survey is that obtained during the BTO national census of 1975 and the survey carried out by Club members in 2005. Table 1 shows both the number of rookeries and nests in each 10 Km square counted during the three surveys.

10 Km sq.	Number of rookeries			Number of nests		
	1975	2005	2018	1975	2005	2018
SE00	0	0	0	0	0	0
SE01	21	27	20	975	504	244
SE10	9	18	10	340	221	150
SE11	14	18	12	1,257	527	257
SE20	17	22	21	837	734	458
SE21	14	21	16	734	464	345
	75	106	79	4,143	2,450	1,449

Table 1. The total number of rookeries and nests reported in each 10 Km square during 1975, 2005 and 2018.

From these figures it can be calculated that over the 30 year's period between 1975 and 2005 there had been a decrease of 40.9% in the number of nests, whilst the total number of rookeries has increased by 41.3%. Between 2005 and 2018, however, the total number of rookeries fell by a further 25.5% to a similar figure to the 1975 total. The total number of nests, however, saw a more dramatic reduction and has fallen by 40.8% since 2005. The fact that average rookery sizes were diminishing first became apparent in the late 1950s (Sage & Vernon, 1978) and in our area this has certainly continued, as can be seen in Table 2. This dramatic fragmentation can best be seen by comparing the number of rookeries within selected range sizes in Table 3.

Year	Number of rookeries	Number of nests	Average rookery size
1975	75	4,143	55.2
2005	106	2,450	23.1
2018	79	1,449	18.3

Table 2. The average rookery size during 1975, 2005 and 2018.

Rookery size (nests)	1975	2005	2018
1-25	34	73	62
26-50	13	23	12
51-75	11	8	4
76-100	4	2	1
101-200	10	0	0
201-257	3	0	0
	75	106	79

Table 3. The number of rookeries in selected ranges during 1975, 2005 and 2018.

The two largest rookeries in the Club area in 2005 were at Scissett (Church/Busker Lane) and Shepley. As can be seen from Table 4 below, however, both have suffered major decreases over time. The largest rookeries in 2018 were at Clayton West (Holmfield), Scissett (Church/Busker Lane) and Bagden Park, Denby Dale. Interestingly, the Holmfield rookery was one of the few to increase in size – from 32 nests in 2005 to 82 in 2018. Taking the total number of nests in our area as a whole during the 30-year period between 1975 and 2005 an average of 56.4 nests were lost, whilst over the 13-year period between 2005 and 2018 this had risen by an average of 77.

Fluctuations in nest numbers at the largest rookeries	1975	2005	2018
Shepley (SE199107)	257	94	0
Honley (Station Road)	222	64	49
Berry Brow Flats	211	62	0
Golcar Baptist Church	174	45	18
Scissett Baths	154	10	0
Honley (Gynn Lane)	144	25	41
Scissett (Church/Busker Lane)	141	100	62
Old Lindley/Jagger Green	129	41	10
Bagden Park	121	60	61
Meltham Millbank	110	58	0

Table 4. Progress of the largest rookeries in 1975, 2005 and 2018

From the 106 rookeries located in 2005, only 56% were still in use in 2018. The comparative figure for the period 1975-2005 was 64%.

During the 2005 survey a total number of 38 rookeries were reported for the first time whilst the 2018 survey revealed 19 previously unreported ones. Unfortunately, as there is a lack of complete records in the intervening years it is impossible to ascertain exactly when these rookeries first became established.

During the Atlas years of 1987-1992, although no attempt was made to census the numbers of breeding Rooks, it was found that rookeries were well distributed in the north and east of our area (SE01, SE11 and SE21) (Armitage *et. al.*, 2000). In 2014 it was noted that in South Yorkshire a decline was most notable on the moorland fringe/upland areas (YNU Bird Report 2014). This could well be the case in our area too. Table 5 shows the percentage of the totals per square for both rookeries and nests for the three surveys. Table 6 shows the average size of rookeries per square. Although the number of both rookeries and nests is much reduced it can be seen that this reduction is less pronounced in squares SE20 and particularly the south-east corner of SE21. In SE21 this is because the rookeries in the Bretton Park area have increased from five in 2005 to ten in 2018. In addition, the number of nests has increased from 58 in 2005 to 134 in 2018. Both these squares have seen a significant relative increase in their percentage of the total nests present, even when compared to the 1975 survey. This would suggest that there are more favourable conditions towards the east and south-east of our area away from the more urbanised parts.

10 Km square	% of total number of rookeries per square			% of total number of nests per square		
	1975	2005	2018	1975	2005	2018
SE01	28	25.47	24.05	23.53	20.57	16.7
SE10	12	16.98	12.66	8.21	9.02	10.35
SE11	18.67	16.98	16.46	30.34	21.51	17.87
SE20	22.67	20.75	26.58	20.2	29.96	31.61
SE21	18.67	19.81	20.25	17.7	18.94	23.81

Table 5. Percentage shift per square since 1975.

10 km. sq.	1975	2005	2018
SE00	0	0	0
SE01	46.4	18.6	12.2
SE10	37.8	12.3	15.0
SE11	89.8	29.3	21.4
SE20	49.2	33.4	21.8
SE21	52.4	22.0	21.5

Table 6. Average rookery sizes per 10Km square

DISCUSSION

It doesn't seem possible to look at any single causal factor to explain why numbers have falling so rapidly in our area, but perhaps it is a combination of a number of them. There are also variations between areas where different local issues presumably come to bear.

The shooting out of nests by farmers and persecution by gamekeepers is said to be widespread throughout the British Isles and Laidlaw (1984) makes reference of this occurring at one rookery in the area, but no record of the location exists on the Club records. Apart from an isolated incident of a farmer in Meltham taking pot-shots at some nests in what would have been a new rookery in 2017 (D. Pogson pers. comm.), no other incidents of persecution have been reported in the Club area.

A 33% decrease in Rooks in Greater Manchester (adjacent to that of the Club) was attributed to urbanization, with land taken for housing reducing the area available for feeding (Smith, 1997). It would be difficult to imagine that the amount of development that has taken place in the Club area could alone have affected numbers to such an extent. This is, however, known to have been the causal factor behind the demise of a rookery at Berry Brow. Although the rookery was extant prior to the construction of the flats in c. 1970 no numbers are available, but the 1975 survey revealed the presence of 211 nests, with only 62 remained in 2005. Perhaps the fragmentation of this once large rookery caused its eventual demise.

It is also possible that urbanization has caused the demise or fragmentation of other rookeries, with some rookeries becoming too distant from enough suitable foraging areas, thus making them less viable, or even completely unviable.

Apart from the apparent availability of a larger area to the East and South East for feeding, roadside foraging could also be a factor and perhaps is more available on the busier rural feeder roads around the M1 in SE20 and SE21.

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Surveys such as this can only be undertaken with the commitment of a good number of observers. The following Club members kindly gave of their time and expertise in supplying the above rookery records for which I wish to thank them wholeheartedly:

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It is due to the commitment of the above-mentioned people that the Club now has another comprehensive up to date record of the number of rookeries, nests and their locations in our area.

All information from this survey, along with that from 1975 and any interim counts is housed on computer with our Recorder N.W. Mallinson and President M.L. Denton.

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D.W. Sill

A REVIEW OF THE BIRDS SEEN IN A NEW MILL GARDEN BETWEEN 1993 AND 2018

Introduction

My wife and I moved into our house in May 1992 and since then we have kept records of birds seen in the garden, those flying over and a few observations of birds in the immediate vicinity. In this document I set out the results of the records between 1993 and 2018 with a focus on the changes observed and the lessons learned. Because we have spent lengthy periods of time away from the house it cannot be considered a complete scientific survey. However, as the records have been collected over a sufficient time period, they give a good illustration of the bird life of the area.

Location

The house lies in a small collection of houses in the Holme Valley, about half a mile south of New Mill village centre and some six miles south of Huddersfield (NGR:SE165082). The A616 Huddersfield to M1 road climbs steeply out of the village following New Mill Dyke, the house being some 200m east of the A616 at an elevation of c.200m AOD. Further to the east of the house the land again rises steeply to around 400m where two hills, Mount Scar and Cheese Gate Nab, overlook New Mill and the rest of the Holme Valley.

The house is in a yard which consists of ten cottages and a manor house, all built in the 1740's along with ten detached houses built in the 1980's. The arrangement of the modern houses is such that our garden abuts five others and overlooks three fields. Up until 2014 two of these fields were farmed in a typical Pennine manner, with grass being left to grow until being cut for silage in early summer. Thereafter it was left to regrow and either cut again or beef cattle introduced until November when the grass became unsuitable. Subsequently the fields were sold, and sheep are now grazed throughout the year.

The Garden

From the back of the house there is an almost 180° view to the west looking towards Scholes and Totties. The footprint of the house and original garden was 840 square metres and was triangular in shape. One side consisted of a 60m long Laurel hedge, another side was formed by a 48m long dry-stone wall while the southern boundary consisted of various fences and hedges (35m long) adjoining our neighbours' house and garden.

Over the years, this part of the garden has contained lawns, ornamental bushes and shrubs, and a flower garden, but importantly a mature Weeping Willow and Silver Birch have always been present. We have made changes over the years extending the patio area and creating a pond which we later removed because of overshadowing by an ever-enlarging Oak tree. In 2017 we removed a lot of the shrubs and bushes and constructed a new pond.

The front of the house is mainly drive but there is a small patch of grass with feeder which are visible from the kitchen window.

In 1996 we purchased a field 55m by 17m (935 square metres) to the west adjoining the dry-stone wall of the original garden. This is divided into three approximately equal parts. The most northerly portion contains a shed, compost heaps, and a vegetable and fruit garden. Almost everything is grown by organic methods, the only exception being the use of 'friendly' slug pellets to protect vulnerable young seedlings. The middle third of the field was for many years used as a free-range

chicken run but now it is just grass where wild flowers are being encouraged. The southerly portion suffers from run off from the yard drainage. We originally tried soft fruit there along with Apple and Pear trees but removed the soft fruit about ten years ago and planted around ten Oak saplings, the majority of which are now over two metres high. In 1996 we planted a hedge of native species on the western boundary, mainly Hawthorn, but also Blackthorn, Dogwood, Field Maple, Hazel, Holly and Wild Rose. This has been maintained to around 1.5 metres high by annual winter pruning and some laying of thicker branches. A Crab Apple and a Hornbeam which were planted in the hedge now form substantial trees as does a self-set Silver Birch. Mature Oak trees form the northern boundary of the field. There are a number of self-set Oak and Ash trees in the other boundaries, along with Alder and Crack Willow which have been planted in the wetter areas.

Any references to the Garden in the species report include both the original garden and new field.

Process

When I first started collecting data I was working full time and set up a template to record on a weekly basis, the main records being mostly at weekends, especially in winter, and I continued using the same template when I retired at the beginning of 1997.

When referring to birds in the garden I have included those using the garden for feeding or roosting. I have used the following criteria for evidence of breeding; regular singing, regular use of a nest box or other suitable nest sites, adults carrying food and recently fledged young. The term 'nearby gardens' refers to those adjacent or in direct view of the house or garden. Likewise, with fields, it is those adjoining the garden along with three others which are clearly visible to the north and west of the house.

This report is compiled from annual summaries which have been taken from the template referred to above. These annual summaries have been forwarded to Huddersfield Birdwatchers' Club and the pertinent details extracted for inclusion in their Annual Report. The records were not comprehensive in 2012, 2013, or 2014, due to extensive travel. Where a maximum number is referred to, this is the most birds seen together. The maximum number of birds using the garden will be much higher, however, and ringing has shown that the number of birds utilising most gardens is always higher than envisaged. The results presented below, however, are consistent.

Observations

Comments on several of the 70 species listed in this will be found below under the heading Species of Interest. The current state of their populations is set out in the table below.

POPULATION STATUS			
Increasing	Stable	Declining	Not Assessed
14 species	17 species	21 species	18 species
Pheasant Buzzard Black headed Gull Stock Dove Woodpigeon Jackdaw Coal Tit Chiffchaff Wren Blackbird House Sparrow Tree Sparrow Bullfinch Goldfinch	Sparrowhawk Collared Dove Kestrel Jay Magpie Rook Carrion Crow Blue Tit Great Tit Long-tailed Tit Trecreeper Redwing Robin Dunnock Chaffinch Greenfinch Siskin	Mallard Grey Heron Tawny Owl Little Owl Swift Great Spotted Woodpecker Green Woodpecker Swallow House Martin Willow Warbler Blackcap Nuthatch Starling Fieldfare Song Thrush Mistle Thrush Grey Wagtail Pied Wagtail Linnet Lesser Redpoll Yellowhammer	Canada Goose Pink-footed Goose Cormorant Curlew Common Gull Herring Gull Lesser Black-backed Gull Cuckoo Lesser Spotted Woodpecker Raven Garden Warbler Lesser Whitethroat Whitethroat Goldcrest Spotted Flycatcher Pied Flycatcher Redstart Brambling

The change in status of species in the ‘Not Assessed’ column was not possible because of insufficient sightings to make an informed judgement.

The following table indicates how the 55 recorded species utilise the garden.

GARDEN USE						
Feed on a daily basis. Have bred	Feed in the garden. Breed nearby	Feed regularly	Occasional visit at any time of year	Occasional spring/summer visitor	Occasional winter visitor	Rare visitor <5 records
10 species	14 species	2 species	9 species	5 species	7 species	8 species
Woodpigeon Collared Dove Blue Tit Great Tit Wren Blackbird Robin Tree Sparrow Dunnock Greenfinch	Stock Dove Great Spotted Woodpecker Jay Magpie Jackdaw Carrion Crow Coal Tit Starling Song Thrush Mistle Thrush House Sparrow Chaffinch Bullfinch Goldfinch	Pheasant Nuthatch	Grey Heron Sparrowhawk Tawny Owl Green Woodpecker Rook Long-tailed Tit Pied Wagtail Siskin Yellowhammer	Mallard Willow Warbler Chiffchaff Blackcap Linnet	Goldcrest Treecreeper Fieldfare Redwing Grey Wagtail Brambling Redpoll	Little Owl Lesser Spotted Woodpecker Garden Warbler Lesser Whitethroat Whitethroat Spotted Flycatcher Pied Flycatcher Redstart

An analysis of the 15 species only seen flying over is set out in the table below.

BIRDS FLYING OVER				
Regular	Occasional all year round	Occasional summer	Occasional winter	Rare <5 sightings
1 species	3 species	3 species	4 species	4 species
Black-headed Gull	Canada Goose Buzzard Kestrel	Swift Swallow House Martin	Pink-footed Goose Common Gull Herring Gull Lesser Black-backed Gull	Cormorant Curlew Cuckoo Raven

Mammals

The following species of mammal have been recorded in the garden;

Badger, Red Fox, Weasel, Grey Squirrel, Mole, Wood Mouse, Field Vole, Brown Rat, shrew spp., and pipistrelle bat spp.

Amphibians

Common Toad, Frog and newt spp.

Species of Interest

Buzzard – the records reflect the increase in the national long-term trend (+465%) and eastward expansion since the first confirmed sighting of a bird flying over in 2004. The next record was in April 2011 and since then this species has been seen on 18 occasions in every year except 2014, with five sightings in each of 2016 and 2017 being the most in any one year. They have been seen in every month except February (when we have invariably been absent), May and September. A total of 34 birds have been seen with five in August 2015 being the maximum seen together.

Stock Dove – first appeared in the garden in 2007 and now one or two are daily visitors with a peak of six in November 2018. Courtship display was witnessed in both 2017 and 2018. Breeding takes place nearby and up to three juveniles have been seen in the garden most years since the first sighting.

Up until 1996 **Rook** visited the garden annually, but has not recorded at all in 16 of the subsequent 22 years, with no sightings in the garden since December 2011. However, they continue to use the nearby fields for feeding on a regular basis and can also be seen regularly flying to a nearby roost. The cause in the lack of sightings is almost certainly due to a change in breeding location. There is a row of mature Ash trees in a nearby field and in 1996 these contained ten Rook nests. The number of nests declined over the following years and by 2000 the site was abandoned. There are two active rookeries further away in the village which are still in use and I can only surmise that the birds moved to nest there.

Up to 2005 **Swallow** was recorded as regular in good numbers flying over the garden, fields and hills. Fewer numbers were first noted in 2006, and since then there have also been fewer birds with less frequent sightings. Between 1993 and 2005 breeding was strongly suspected in two nearby farmhouses, but the entrances were then blocked off. At one of the sites birds were seen flying in and out of a modern steel barn and breeding was suspected in most years from 2005 to 2018. In August of the early years, before migrating, large gatherings were seen around the garden and the old cottages, with 50 being present in 1996 and 80 in 2000, but recently these numbers have declined to just a few birds perching on telegraph wires.

Up to 2000 **House Martin** was a regular sighting over the adjacent fields and birds flew over the garden frequently. Then sightings became more irregular with only occasional sightings, so that by 2006 there were only two records. Subsequently there have been generally less than ten sightings annually, which have always been over adjacent fields depending on the farming practice at the time. Their behaviour strongly suggested that there was no breeding anywhere in the locality. In the early years, particularly between 1998 and 2005, a pre-migration (late August/early September) gathering was seen with up to 100 birds flying round the west facing gable end of an adjacent old

cottage, then perching on telegraph wires outside our house. During this period they were often seen clinging to the gable wall. Since then numbers have declined, and the large gatherings have long disappeared.

The assessment of **Nuthatch** has been particularly difficult as this species was not seen at all until 2011, but a steady increase in garden sightings occurred up to 2015. A small decline was noted in 2016 and 2017 and there were only occasional visits in 2018. In the process of undertaking a Willow Tit survey in March 2019, however, seven territories were found along New Mill Dyke, all less than 2km from the house, two of which were within 250m.

Although a singing **Song Thrush** was heard annually some 200m away from the house, visits to the garden have fluctuated between none and regularly. Singing was heard in the garden in all years between 1997 and 2007, but garden visits have been significantly lower since 2011. This species is just hanging on in the area.

The population of **House Sparrow**, in contrast to the reported national long-term decrease (-66%), has remained stable, increasing to around 20 daily between 2003 and 2012, with around 35 being present in August 2010. Numbers have declined slightly since then, but daily counts of a minimum of ten suggest a healthy local population, and breeding occurs in nearby cottages.

Tree Sparrow, especially considering the long-term trend of -90%, has been a success story with a spectacular increase which started in 2011 and now around 20 birds are seen daily. Between 1993 and 1999 there were only rare sightings and then none until 2010. In 2011 birds were seen prospecting a nest box, and young have been seen every year since 2013 when breeding was first confirmed. In 2014 they bred in two nest boxes in the adjacent property and have continued to do so there and in our garden. Eight young were seen feeding in the garden in June 2014.

In the early years **Bullfinch** was only an occasional visitor to the garden, but 2004 saw an increase in occurrences, particularly by a male, leading up to 2011 when young were seen in two distinct periods. It would appear that this species had two broods nearby (either 2 pairs or 1 pair with 2 broods). The frequency of sightings varied in subsequent years with similar numbers being maintained in 2012, 2013 and 2014. There were fewer visits in 2015 and this decline continued in 2016 and 2017, however a juvenile was seen in July 2016, and visits increased in 2018. It is difficult to determine what is happening with this species. As the majority of sightings have been males in the breeding season, it would seem that this species breeds in nearby gardens and simply uses ours for feeding on seeds spilt from feeders.

The **Greenfinch** population is now assessed as stable, having increased initially so that peak numbers of 15 were reached during 2004, 2005 and 2006. The subsequent pattern of records of this species suggests that the decline recorded nationally (-46%) took place later here and was not as severe because resident numbers held up, with one to four birds being seen daily. Breeding has been maintained but winter peaks are now around eight, perhaps indicating lesser number elsewhere.

Other General Observations

Throughout this report the maximum numbers reported are those of birds seen together. With not all feeders visible from one position, obtaining an accurate count is difficult, particularly when birds dive into cover. This has been nigh impossible with House Sparrow and Tree Sparrow which flock together daily in numbers of 20 or more.

Changes made to buildings, feeding or agricultural practices do have an effect. For example, as two local barns have been upgraded and openings closed, Swallows no longer breed there and are not seen over the garden as often. The change to sheep grazing has meant that at certain times of the year Hirundines feed there in large numbers and Black-headed Gull have increased there, particularly in winter.

Maintaining a garden does mean cutting back hedges and bushes and tidying up from time to time which can adversely affect birds and other wildlife. We have always maintained the damp areas and wild corners, however. When we introduced hens, wild birds were attracted to the run by spilt food and straw for nesting materials – both Jackdaw and House Sparrow took advantage of these supplies. Over the years as well as adding native trees and shrubs we have removed ornamental shrubs and bushes and managed trees so that they do not cause a nuisance. We carry out hedge maintenance outside the breeding season and this does not seem to adversely affect bird numbers. Occasionally some detrimental effects have occurred. When we removed a row of Leylandii trees, Starlings no longer returned to roost. Our neighbours' cutting down a diseased Rowan Tree had the same effect on visits from wintering thrushes, particularly Fieldfare.

Feeding, of course, makes big difference, and, because other neighbour's also feed, our long absences do not seem to have a particularly detrimental effect, as birds come back in similar numbers within a few days of our return. It is noticeable that Great Spotted Woodpecker visits reduced when the feeders were changed to squirrel proof ones.

Whilst the benefit of having large windows means that watching birds is easy and a pleasurable activity it comes at a cost to some birds. There have been a number of occasions when they have flown into the glass and have been stunned. Fortunately, some birds do survive but sadly two juvenile Bullfinches perished in July 2009.

Together with regular feeding, nest boxes have been crucial, in building up the Tree Sparrow population. The presence nearby of the 1740's properties with old chimneys and small gaps in the roof materials has proved essential for breeding Jackdaw, Starling, and House Sparrow.

Until our dog died in 2003, I was out every day in early morning and late evening. This could account for the reduction in records of Tawny Owl and Little Owl. The benefit of the old cottages nearby as breeding sites has been noted above but, there is a downside, as many of the owners have cats and, having limited garden space, the cats use our garden as a hunting ground and also as a toilet. No suitable deterrent has been found and I ponder how many more birds would have successfully bred without these unwanted visitors.

There have been some obvious reflections of national long-term trends. For example, the decline in Greenfinch came later than reported nationally and was not as disastrous and numbers have recovered. Song Thrush, however, is just about hanging on nearby whilst Yellowhammer and Linnet visits have disappeared. On the plus side increases of Stock Dove and Buzzard have been reflected. Both House Sparrow and Tree Sparrow have bucked the national trend and have been spectacularly successful.

Chris Abell

A WOODLARK AT PULE HILL, MARSDEN

I first discovered Pule Hill's potential as a place from which to observe visible bird migration during the autumn of 1988, and I have been a "vis-migger" ever since. However, it was not until 2010 that I began to make regular visits. I was joined in 2011 by Denise Shields, since when we have made over 140 visits between us. We usually start in mid- to late August and continue until mid-November or occasionally a bit later, depending on how the season is going. Our watches last from as soon after dawn as we can manage until the birds stop passing over. Movements over Pule Hill are more weather-dependant than at many other watch-points; our ideal conditions are overcast skies with a force 2-5 wind anywhere between SSW and W. This is due to the topography of the site, which works as a kind of funnel, concentrating the birds towards the site. But migration does also happen under other sometimes surprising conditions.

Visible migration watching is very much an acquired taste since it involves standing in one exposed high altitude spot for hours on end, trying to identify and count every bird that flies past. Close or prolonged views of the birds are rarely possible, and many are only identifiable by their flight-calls. In spite of these difficulties, there can be real excitement on a good day, when large numbers of birds are responding to the powerful urge to migrate. The birds do not pass in a steady stream, but in waves, and they are frequently in mixed flocks, making counting even more difficult. They can come in thousands, especially when the Redwings and Fieldfares are arriving from Scandinavia in October and when the big Woodpigeon movements are happening. There are also of course, many quiet mornings and it is at these times when speculations are apt to arise as to which desired species might turn up in the future. Probably every "vis-migger" has some sort of wish-list, depending on their geographical location and their interests. We have been fortunate enough to find a few of ours over the years; Hawfinch, Snow Bunting (which for a few short years became almost expected) and Lapland Bunting. But high up on anybody's list, especially those of us in the North, must be Woodlark.

So it was that Denise and I were stationed at our usual spot on 17th October 2018. We were having a busy morning, with thousands of Woodpigeons and Redwings passing in urgent flocks, together with a good supporting cast of 20 or so other species. Our watch-point is at the top of Carr Clough and a short distance down the clough there is a small plantation where passerines will often pause before setting out across the open moor. We had been watching for about an hour and a quarter when I heard a single rather melodious liquid call coming from the plantation. I was very puzzled by it, but had that awful feeling that I should be recognising it. The penny did not drop, however, and there were plenty of birds on the move to concentrate on, so I filed it in the "unknown calls" section of my memory (there are lots of others in there) and almost forgot about it.

About five minutes later, a group of Redwings left the plantation and flew towards us and as they did so, I heard the bird once again. This time though, it was giving its distinctive and instantly recognisable flight-call. I shouted "Woodlark!" and miraculously, Denise got her lens straight onto it and fired off a string of very useful record shots. The bird disappeared westwards, calling all the way. With 20/20 hindsight, I realised that the first call I'd heard was very like the flight-call, but I was not really expecting to hear anything like that coming from a tree in Marsden! Fortunately, we had been in the amazing migration hotspot at Falsterbö in Sweden, exactly two years previously when Woodlark migration was under way, and I had been able to reacquaint myself with the flight call.

We couldn't stop smiling for some time after the bird had passed us, although there were another couple of hours of heavy migration still to be recorded.

This sort of occurrence is part of what keeps "vis-miggers" going back for more. Such things are rare of course, and there are many days when we only see our bread-and-butter birds which form the main purpose of the exercise. But no two seasons are alike, and no two days are alike either - so you just never know what will happen next time



The short tail and broad rounded wings are obvious and the distinctive white crescent on the primary covers can also just be seen on the upper-wing.

The photos were taken of the flying bird in poor light and because of this, they have been slightly enhanced to improve the clarity.

Mike Pinder
Photos by Denise Shields

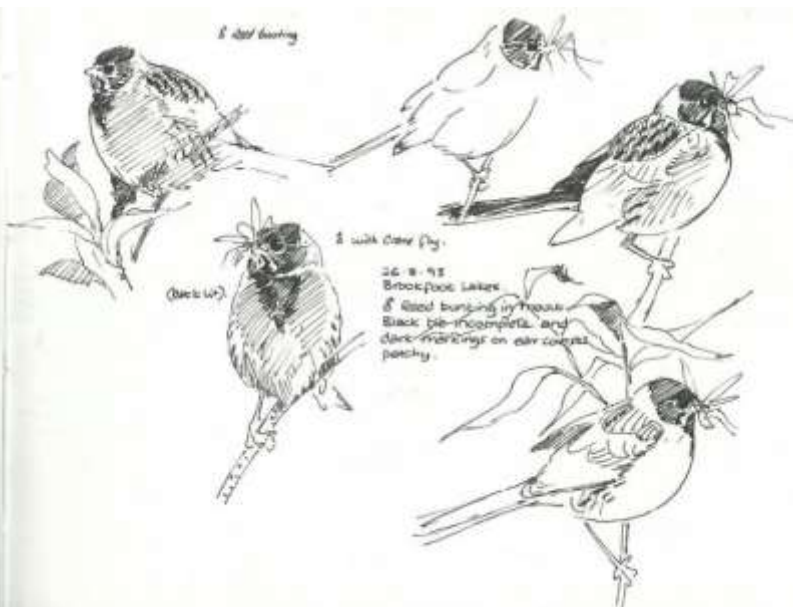
THIRTY YEARS OF REPORT COVERS

“I go for a walk with a sketchbook and make drawings of anything that interests me. Then back home in the studio I use these sketches to make the best print that I possibly can.”

As far as artists statements go this is not particularly florid, but it is an accurate assessment of how I approach my artwork. As a practicing artist I exhibit and sell my work through a number of galleries and directly at art fairs across the country. As well as being bought by private collectors my prints have been acquired for their public collections by the North Bristol NHS Trust, Doncaster Art Gallery and the Museum of Fine Arts in Ekaterinburg, Russia.

I have been illustrating the Club report covers since 1989, so this report is my 30th cover. Whilst this is not a record, Robert Gillmor has been illustrating the Berkshire Bird Reports since 1955 so has a bit of a head start on me. It is an achievement that I am obviously proud of. Initially the designs were all black and white Pen and Ink drawings on Scraperboard. A technique which produces a crisp drawing replicating the effect of a wood engraving, but which is much quicker to execute and a lot less taxing on the eyes. With the development of desktop publishing and improvements in the quality of digital printing it became possible to introduce colour and with the 2008 report I began to produce full colour linocuts for use on the cover. Changing the format slightly with the 2009 cover to allow for a larger illustration.

When choosing the subject matter my main concern is to pick a species that will make a decorative print, rather than a rarity or unusual species. I also try not to duplicate a species used on a previous cover, although so far we have had two Dippers and Ring Ouzel has appeared on both a report and the Breeding Atlas cover. I start by looking through my sketchbooks selecting a suitable sketch to work up into the finished design. In this case a male Reed Bunting drawn at Brookfoot Lakes (now called Cromwell Bottom NR) on 20th August 1993.



Field Sketches

Working from the sketch I began with a couple of thumbnail drawings to work out a composition. In my original drawing the bird had a crane fly in its beak. In my second drawing I omitted this and had the bird singing. The next step was to produce a cartoon at the size of the finished illustration. At this stage the composition and number of colour separations are finalised before tracing the drawing in reverse onto the lino block. Rather than cutting a separate block for each colour, I make reduction prints. Working from light to dark, cutting and printing each colour sequentially from the same block. By working this way it is easier to register each colour on top of the previous one but it does mean that any mistakes cannot be rectified as the block is gradually destroyed to cut the next colour after each printed.



Composition Studies and working drawing

Linocuts are relief prints, the ink is rolled onto the surface of the block, any areas cut away from the block do not pick up ink and so print as white, or as cutting progresses as the previous colours printed. Once the drawing is traced onto the block the first step is to cut away all the areas that are to remain white in the finished print. The block can then be inked with the first colour, a pale yellow brown and printed. I take 12 impressions of this first colour, enough for an edition of 10 prints plus a couple extra in case of mistakes. Printed on its own this colour looks very dark but as each colour is printed, being successively darker they shift the tonal balance and this colour will appear much lighter in the finished print.



Colour 1

After printing this first pale yellow-brown, all the areas that are to remain this colour in the finished print are cut away and the block is inked with a cool blue grey. Note how this affects the tone of the previous colour. This becomes more noticeable as the colours progressively darken.



Colour 2

Again the areas to remain this colour are cut away and a darker version of colour 1 is mixed, rolled onto the block and printed. It can be seen on this print that the grey colour was only used to give some shadowed areas on the underparts of the bird.



Colour 3

This brown puts in details in the reed stems and in the birds plumage. These areas are cut away and a blue printed for the background.



Colour 4

With the background completed I can start to fill in the reedmace heads and build up the plumage pattern on the bunting with a darker brown.



Colour 5

With the base colour for the reedmace and the patterning on the birds back completed, I add some black to darken the brown further for the shadowed areas on the reeds giving them some form and to darken the birds head, wings and tail.



Colour 6

The block is now cleared of all the remaining areas on the reeds leaving just some parts of the bird to give form to the head details in the primaries and tail feathers. The final colour is another darker brown rather than a pure black.



Colour 7 and the print is complete.

Stuart Brocklehurst

THIRTY YEARS – THIRTY COVERS

The cover of this our annual report for 2018 is graced by another of Stuart Brocklehurst's excellent illustrations and it will be the 30th consecutive year for which Stuart has contributed the cover art. Yes, I know, he doesn't look that old and perhaps he isn't, but the 30th it is, since his first ever cover for the 1989 report.

It is a remarkable record of contribution to the Club and has enabled us to have a distinctive house style, standing out from the near-universal trend to photographs on report covers. It only works of course because of Stuart's talent as an artist and his generosity in providing the art each year. He has developed an increasingly successful business as an artist and print maker, exhibiting his wares in exhibitions and galleries across the country and abroad.

In order to mark this anniversary, Stuart himself has written a fascinating article for this 2018 report, illustrating how he goes about the task, from inspiration to finished product. I felt however, that we should also celebrate it by showing a selection of his covers over the years.

The story begins with 1989 and this superb Kestrel.

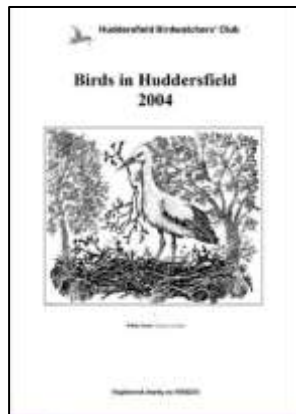


I joined the Club in the early 2000s and was immediately impressed with these magnificent covers from that era:

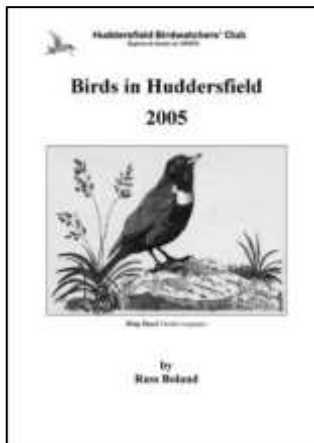
The **Dotterel** from 2003: the skill, time and effort that goes into these I can scarcely imagine.



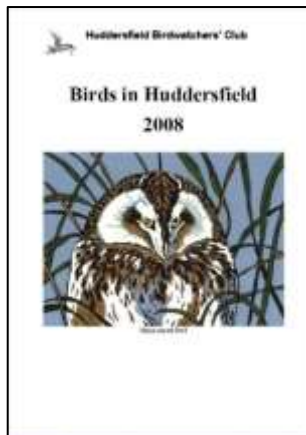
This **White Stork** from 2004, when a pair began nest building at Horbury Strands, marking what was so nearly only the first breeding record for Britain since 1416, had they not been evicted from the electricity pylon they had chosen for a nest.



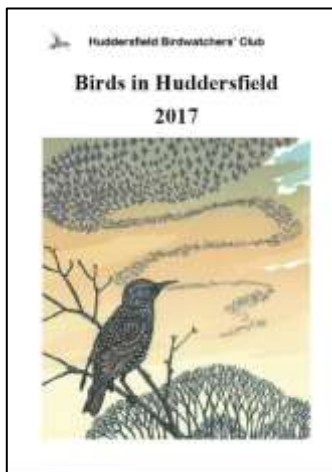
Remember when **Ring Ouzels** bred?
Stuart clearly did with this corking male
from 2005.



All changed in 2008 when we
introduced colour to the cover and
colour photos into the body of the
report. Stuart's response – this dramatic
stylised **Short-eared Owl**, whose eyes
clearly have the reader in its view as
prey.



For our last report for 2017 Stuart
produced this atmospheric **Starling**
against a murmuration in an evening
sky. Probably my personal favourite.



And now for 2018 and his 30th cover,
Stuart continues his excellent work with
this lovely male **Reed Bunting** in its
natural setting.



In addition to producing the covers, for some years Stuart has generously donated the original artwork for us to raffle. Not only has this raised funds for the Club, but also generated intense competition amongst members to win the full size artwork to adorn their own wall, with a number buying several tickets. Neither this tactic, nor skulduggery to persuade our esteemed President to draw my name have worked for me – hopefully better luck this time! We did wonder whether 30 consecutive years of covers was a record, but Stuart tells us that Robert Gilmour has illustrated the Berkshire report since 1955 when he was 19. It is nevertheless a massive and undoubtedly rare contribution which has greatly enriched the literature of the Club. Thank you Stuart.

You can see more of Stuart's work on his social media sites:

www.stuartbrocklehurstprints.blogspot.com
www.facebook.com/stuartbrocklehurstprints

Mike Wainman

Book Review

An Account of the Birds of the Huddersfield District. Mosley, S.L. (1915). Available as a free downloadable ebook from the Huddersfield Birdwatchers' Club website:
<http://www.huddersfieldbirdwatchersclub.co.uk/mosley-book/4594449079>

This book was originally published in 1915 by Seth Lister Mosley (1847-1929), the museum curator at Huddersfield Technical College, who clearly had a passion for birds. We are now so used to local and national avifaunas and atlases that have been compiled using data collected by many fieldworkers using top of the range optical equipment, it is worth remembering that in Mosley's time these data were primarily obtained by shooting specimens and collecting eggs. His "regret" that his book was "a record of murder and plunder from beginning to end" shows a way of thinking and compassion way ahead of his time.

The publication includes accounts for the 187 species recorded at the time (for comparison the area list is now at 269), broken down into seven Orders that will be unfamiliar to modern day taxonomists: Perchers, Birds of Prey, Waders, Climbers, Scratchers, Swimmers and Runners. For each species their status in the area is detailed, with Mosley's own observations giving the text a very personal feel. For some species there are scriptural notes, along with information for farmers, gardeners and teachers that are perhaps some of the earliest examples of positive conservation advice being disseminated to a wider audience. The distribution maps that are published for some species were an innovative idea, not seen before in similar publications. Mosley is very modest about his colour plates but, to my eye at least, some of these are more lifelike than some contemporary illustrations.

There are many examples of the changing fortunes of local species. Mosley concluded that Carrion Crow had not bred in the district for many years, that Goldfinch was a winter visitor which may have bred and he notes the start of the Yellow Wagtail decline. There were only two records of Nuthatch; Ring Ouzel were still widespread but Mosley noted that the "breaking up of moors" was beginning to restrict their range. Unfortunately, some attitudes of the time still persist as he noted that in areas managed for game any species that "had any likeness to a hawk or an owl has been most unmercifully persecuted", resulting in a number of species that were, and still are, very rarely seen. Lapwing bred in large numbers; there were only two records of Oystercatcher and surprisingly, there was no evidence of breeding Curlew. There was only one record of Canada Goose and the sole record of Greylag Goose was classed as doubtful.

The book was originally available in instalments by subscription but with only 40 complete sets published, and just 25 or so original copies remaining, these are highly sought-after by collectors or only available to read in reference libraries. I really enjoy these types of local historical accounts and the value of these publications being available to help aid conservation bodies assess population changes, and for the general interest of naturalists, should not be underestimated. The Huddersfield Birdwatchers Club should be congratulated for making this informative publication available to all free of charge.

Ian Court, YNU North Yorkshire Bird Recorder

THE HUDDERSFIELD LIST TO DECEMBER 2018

The following is a list of the 275 species of wild birds that have been officially accepted as recorded in the Huddersfield Birdwatchers' Club area since records began, up to the end of 2018. Fourteen additional distinct races or 'sub-species' have also been recorded. In such cases, the generic species name is shown, followed by unnumbered entries for, firstly, the more commonly encountered race of the relevant species and, secondly, the less common 'additional' race(s).

In 2017, following a detailed review by the British Ornithologists' Union Records Committee, the BOU announced that it would adopt, from 1st January 2018, the International Ornithological Union's (IOU) IOC World Bird List for all its taxonomic needs, including the British List. In line with that decision, the taxonomic order of Club reports follows that recommended by the British Ornithologists' Union – The British List: a Checklist of Birds of Britain (9th edition). *Ibis* 160: 190–240.

With the exceptions of a new systematic order and a few scientific name changes, the key difference as far as the Club is concerned has resulted from the splitting of Bean Goose *Anser fabalis* into two species: Taiga Bean Goose *A. fabalis* and Tundra Bean Goose *A. serrirostris*.

The number of species on the list therefore increases by one to 275 (a Club area 'arm chair tick' for some) and the number of listed 'additional races' reduces accordingly. However, the previous inadvertent omission of the nominate race of Black-tailed Godwit has now been corrected and so the total of 'additional races' remains at 14.

Common English Names for some species have been simplified by the dropping of terms such as 'Eurasian', 'Common' and 'Northern', e.g. Eurasian Wigeon *Mareca penelope* is now Wigeon, Common Buzzard *Buteo buteo* is now Buzzard and Northern Wheatear *Oenanthe oenanthe* becomes Wheatear.

The 'Description required' column indicates those species and races for which records of sightings must be accompanied by a description and, if possible, photographs, as required by the Club (HBC), the Yorkshire Naturalists' Union Records Committee (YNU) or British Birds Rarities Committee (BBRC). Consult the YNU and BBRC websites for lists of other species and races for which these organisations require descriptions. Descriptions for the YNU and BBRC should also be copied to the Club. Descriptions must also be submitted to the Club for all species and races not on the list. All such descriptions should be submitted as soon as possible after the observation.

Please send records of all your sightings, including both common and scarce species, to the Recorder (see page ??????).

Note that for some species distinguishing between races can be problematic at certain times of year and allocation to species only is advised – refer to a quality field guide.

THE HUDDERSFIELD LIST TO DECEMBER 2018

No	Common English name	Scientific name	Description
			species
1	Brent Goose	<i>Branta bernicla</i>	HBC
	Dark-bellied Brent Goose	<i>Branta bernicla bernicula</i>	HBC
	Pale-bellied Brent Goose	<i>Branta bernicla hrota</i>	HBC
2	Canada Goose	<i>Branta canadensis</i>	
3	Barnacle Goose	<i>Branta leucopsis</i>	
4	Greylag Goose	<i>Anser anser</i>	
5	Taiga Bean Goose	<i>Anser fabalis</i>	YNU
6	Pink-footed Goose	<i>Anser brachyrhynchus</i>	
7	Tundra Bean Goose	<i>Anser serrirostris</i>	HBC
8	White-fronted Goose	<i>Anser albifrons</i>	HBC
	European White-fronted Goose	<i>Anser albifrons albifrons</i>	HBC
	Greenland White-fronted Goose	<i>Anser albifrons flavirostris</i>	HBC
9	Mute Swan	<i>Cygnus olor</i>	
10	Bewick's Swan	<i>Cygnus columbianus</i>	
11	Whooper Swan	<i>Cygnus cygnus</i>	
12	Shelduck	<i>Tadorna tadorna</i>	
13	Mandarin Duck	<i>Aix galericulata</i>	
14	Garganey	<i>Spatula querquedula</i>	HBC
15	Shoveler	<i>Spatula clypeata</i>	
16	Gadwall	<i>Mareca strepera</i>	
17	Wigeon	<i>Mareca penelope</i>	
18	American Wigeon	<i>Mareca americana</i>	YNU
19	Mallard	<i>Anas platyrhynchos</i>	
20	Pintail	<i>Anas acuta</i>	
21	Teal	<i>Anas crecca</i>	
22	Green-winged Teal	<i>Anas carolinensis</i>	HBC
23	Pochard	<i>Aythya ferina</i>	
24	Ferruginous Duck	<i>Aythya nyroca</i>	BBRC
25	Ring-necked Duck	<i>Aythya collaris</i>	YNU
26	Tufted Duck	<i>Aythya fuligula</i>	
27	Greater Scaup	<i>Aythya marila</i>	

THE HUDDERSFIELD LIST TO DECEMBER 2018

No	Common English name	Scientific name	Description
			species
28	Lesser Scaup	<i>Aythya affinis</i>	YNU
29	Eider	<i>Somateria mollissima</i>	
30	Velvet Scoter	<i>Melanitta fusca</i>	HBC
31	Common Scoter	<i>Melanitta nigra</i>	
32	Long-tailed Duck	<i>Clangula hyemalis</i>	HBC
33	Goldeneye	<i>Bucephala clangula</i>	
34	Smew	<i>Mergellus albellus</i>	
35	Goosander	<i>Mergus merganser</i>	
36	Red-breasted Merganser	<i>Mergus serrator</i>	
37	Ruddy Duck	<i>Oxyura jamaicensis</i>	
38	Black Grouse	<i>Lyrurus tetrix</i>	
39	Red Grouse	<i>Lagopus lagopus</i>	
40	Red-legged Partridge	<i>Alectoris rufa</i>	
41	Grey Partridge	<i>Perdix perdix</i>	
42	Quail	<i>Coturnix coturnix</i>	
43	Pheasant	<i>Phasianus colchicus</i>	
44	Red-throated Diver	<i>Gavia stellata</i>	HBC
45	Black-throated Diver	<i>Gavia arctica</i>	HBC
46	Great Northern Diver	<i>Gavia immer</i>	HBC
47	Storm Petrel	<i>Hydrobates pelagicus</i>	HBC
48	Leach's Petrel	<i>Oceanodroma leucorhoa</i>	HBC
49	Fulmar	<i>Fulmarus glacialis</i>	HBC
50	Manx Shearwater	<i>Puffinus puffinus</i>	HBC
51	Little Grebe	<i>Tachybaptus ruficollis</i>	
52	Red-necked Grebe	<i>Podiceps grisegena</i>	HBC
53	Great Crested Grebe	<i>Podiceps cristatus</i>	
54	Slavonian Grebe	<i>Podiceps auritus</i>	HBC
55	Black-necked Grebe	<i>Podiceps nigricollis</i>	HBC
56	Black Stork	<i>Ciconia nigra</i>	HBC
57	White Stork	<i>Ciconia ciconia</i>	HBC
58	Glossy Ibis	<i>Plegadis falcinellus</i>	YNU

THE HUDDERSFIELD LIST TO DECEMBER 2018

No	Common English name	Scientific name	Description
			species
59	Spoonbill	<i>Platalea leucorodia</i>	HBC
60	Bittern	<i>Botaurus stellaris</i>	HBC
61	Night Heron	<i>Nycticorax nycticorax</i>	YNU
62	Grey Heron	<i>Ardea cinerea</i>	
63	Purple Heron	<i>Ardea purpurea</i>	YNU
64	Great White Egret	<i>Ardea alba</i>	HBC
65	Little Egret	<i>Egretta garzetta</i>	
66	Gannet	<i>Morus bassanus</i>	HBC
67	Shag	<i>Phalacrocorax aristotelis</i>	HBC
68	Cormorant	<i>Phalacrocorax carbo</i>	
69	Osprey	<i>Pandion haliaetus</i>	HBC
70	Honey-buzzard	<i>Pernis apivorus</i>	YNU
71	Golden Eagle	<i>Aquila chrysaetos</i>	YNU
72	Sparrowhawk	<i>Accipiter nisus</i>	
73	Goshawk	<i>Accipiter gentilis</i>	HBC
74	Marsh Harrier	<i>Circus aeruginosus</i>	HBC
75	Hen Harrier	<i>Circus cyaneus</i>	HBC
76	Montagu's Harrier	<i>Circus pygargus</i>	YNU
77	Black Kite	<i>Milvus migrana</i>	YNU
78	Red Kite	<i>Milvus milvus</i>	
79	White-tailed Eagle	<i>Haliaeetus albicilla</i>	YNU
80	Rough-legged Buzzard	<i>Buteo lagopus</i>	YNU
81	Buzzard	<i>Buteo buteo</i>	
82	Water Rail	<i>Rallus aquaticus</i>	
83	Corncrake	<i>Crex crex</i>	HBC
84	Baillon's Crake	<i>Porzana pusilla</i>	BBRC
85	Spotted Crake	<i>Porzana porzana</i>	HBC
86	Moorhen	<i>Gallinula chloropus</i>	
87	Coot	<i>Fulica atra</i>	
88	Crane	<i>Grus grus</i>	HBC
89	Stone-curlew	<i>Burhinus oediconemus</i>	HBC

THE HUDDERSFIELD LIST TO DECEMBER 2018

No	Common English name	Scientific name	Description
			species
90	Oystercatcher	<i>Haematopus ostralegus</i>	
91	Avocet	<i>Recurvirostra avosetta</i>	HBC
92	Lapwing	<i>Vanellus vanellus</i>	
93	Golden Plover	<i>Pluvialis apricaria</i>	
94	Grey Plover	<i>Pluvialis squatarola</i>	
95	Ringed Plover	<i>Charadrius hiaticula</i>	
96	Little Ringed Plover	<i>Charadrius dubius</i>	
97	Dotterel	<i>Charadrius morinellus</i>	HBC
98	Whimbrel	<i>Numenius phaeopus</i>	
99	Curlew	<i>Numenius arquata</i>	
100	Bar-tailed Godwit	<i>Limosa lapponica</i>	
101	Black-tailed Godwit	<i>Limosa limosa</i>	
	Black-tailed Godwit	<i>Limosa limosa islandica</i>	HBC
	Black-tailed Godwit	<i>Limosa limosa limosa</i>	HBC
102	Turnstone	<i>Arenaria interpres</i>	
103	Knot	<i>Calidris canutus</i>	
104	Ruff	<i>Calidris pugnax</i>	
105	Curlew Sandpiper	<i>Calidris ferruginea</i>	HBC
106	Temminck's Stint	<i>Calidris temminckii</i>	HBC
107	Sanderling	<i>Calidris alba</i>	
108	Dunlin	<i>Calidris alpina</i>	
109	Purple Sandpiper	<i>Calidris maritima</i>	HBC
110	Little Stint	<i>Calidris minuta</i>	HBC
111	White-rumped Sandpiper	<i>Calidris fuscicollis</i>	YNU
112	Buff-breasted Sandpiper	<i>Calidris subruficollis</i>	YNU
113	Pectoral Sandpiper	<i>Calidris melanotos</i>	YNU
114	Woodcock	<i>Scolopax rusticola</i>	
115	Jack Snipe	<i>Lymnocyptes minimus</i>	
116	Great Snipe	<i>Gallinago media</i>	BBRC
117	Snipe	<i>Gallinago gallinago</i>	
118	Terek Sandpiper	<i>Xenus cinereus</i>	YNU

THE HUDDERSFIELD LIST TO DECEMBER 2018

No	Common English name	Scientific name	Description
			species
119	Wilson's Phalarope	<i>Phalaropus tricolor</i>	BBRC
120	Red-necked Phalarope	<i>Phalaropus lobatus</i>	HBC
121	Grey Phalarope	<i>Phalaropus fulicarius</i>	HBC
122	Common Sandpiper	<i>Actitis hypoleucos</i>	
123	Spotted Sandpiper	<i>Actitis macularius</i>	BBRC
124	Green Sandpiper	<i>Tringa ochropus</i>	
125	Redshank	<i>Tringa totanus</i>	
126	Wood Sandpiper	<i>Tringa glareola</i>	HBC
127	Spotted Redshank	<i>Tringa erythropus</i>	
128	Greenshank	<i>Tringa nebularia</i>	
129	Kittiwake	<i>Rissa tridactyla</i>	
130	Sabine's Gull	<i>Xema sabini</i>	HBC
131	Black-headed Gull	<i>Chroicocephalus ridibundus</i>	
132	Little Gull	<i>Hydrocoloeus minutus</i>	
133	Mediterranean Gull	<i>Ichthyaeetus melanocephalus</i>	HBC
134	Common Gull	<i>Larus canus</i>	
135	Ring-billed Gull	<i>Larus delawarensis</i>	YNU
136	Great Black-backed Gull	<i>Larus marinus</i>	
137	Glaucous Gull	<i>Larus hyperboreus</i>	HBC
138	Iceland Gull	<i>Larus glaucoides</i>	HBC
	Iceland Gull	<i>Larus glaucoides glaucoides</i>	HBC
	Kumlien's Gull	<i>Larus glaucoides kumlieni</i>	YNU
	Thayer's Gull	<i>Larus glaucoides thayeri</i>	BBRC
139	Herring Gull	<i>Larus argentatus</i>	
	Herring Gull	<i>Larus argentatus argenteus</i>	
	Scandinavian Herring Gull	<i>Larus argentatus argentatus</i>	HBC
140	Caspian Gull	<i>Larus cachimans</i>	YNU
141	Yellow-legged Gull	<i>Larus michahellis</i>	HBC
142	Lesser Black-backed Gull	<i>Larus fuscus</i>	
	Lesser Black-backed Gull	<i>Larus fuscus graellsii</i>	
	Scandinavian L. B-b. Gull	<i>Larus fuscus intermedius</i>	HBC

THE HUDDERSFIELD LIST TO DECEMBER 2018

No	Common English name	Scientific name	Description
			species
143	Sandwich Tern	<i>Thalasseus sandvicensis</i>	HBC
144	Little Tern	<i>Sternula albifrons</i>	HBC
145	Common Tern	<i>Sterna hirundo</i>	
146	Arctic Tern	<i>Sterna paradisaea</i>	HBC
147	White-winged Black Tern	<i>Chlidonias leucopterus</i>	YNU
148	Black Tern	<i>Chlidonias niger</i>	HBC
149	Great Skua	<i>Stercorarius skua</i>	HBC
150	Pomarine Skua	<i>Stercorarius pomarinus</i>	HBC
151	Arctic Skua	<i>Stercorarius parasiticus</i>	HBC
152	Long-tailed Skua	<i>Stercorarius longicaudus</i>	HBC
153	Little Auk	<i>Alle alle</i>	HBC
154	Guillemot	<i>Uria aalge</i>	HBC
155	Razorbill	<i>Alca torda</i>	HBC
156	Puffin	<i>Fratercula arctica</i>	HBC
157	Pallas's Sandgrouse	<i>Syrrhaptes paradoxus</i>	BBRC
158	Feral Pigeon	<i>Columba livia</i> (feral)	
159	Stock Dove	<i>Columba oenas</i>	
160	Woodpigeon	<i>Columba palumbus</i>	
161	Turtle Dove	<i>Streptopelia turtur</i>	
162	Collared Dove	<i>Streptopelia decaocto</i>	
163	Cuckoo	<i>Cuculus canorus</i>	
164	Barn Owl	<i>Tyto alba</i>	HBC
165	Tawny Owl	<i>Strix aluco</i>	
166	Little Owl	<i>Athene noctua</i>	
167	Long-eared Owl	<i>Asio otus</i>	
168	Short-eared Owl	<i>Asio flammeus</i>	
169	Nightjar	<i>Caprimulgus europaeus</i>	
170	Alpine Swift	<i>Tachymarptis melba</i>	YNU
171	Swift	<i>Apus apus</i>	
172	Roller	<i>Coracias garrulus</i>	BBRC
173	Kingfisher	<i>Alcedo atthis</i>	

THE HUDDERSFIELD LIST TO DECEMBER 2018

No	Common English name	Scientific name	Description
			species
174	Hoopoe	<i>Upupa epops</i>	HBC
175	Wryneck	<i>Jynx torquilla</i>	HBC
176	Lesser Spotted Woodpecker	<i>Dryobates minor</i>	
177	Great Spotted Woodpecker	<i>Dendrocopos major</i>	
178	Green Woodpecker	<i>Picus viridis</i>	
179	Kestrel	<i>Falco tinnunculus</i>	
180	Red-footed Falcon	<i>Falco vespertinus</i>	YNU
181	Merlin	<i>Falco columbarius</i>	
182	Hobby	<i>Falco subbuteo</i>	
183	Peregrine	<i>Falco peregrinus</i>	
184	Ring-necked Parakeet	<i>Psittacula krameri</i>	
185	Red-backed Shrike	<i>Lanius collurio</i>	HBC
186	Great Grey Shrike	<i>Lanius excubitor</i>	HBC
187	Golden Oriole	<i>Oriolus oriolus</i>	HBC
188	Jay	<i>Garrulus glandarius</i>	
189	Magpie	<i>Pica pica</i>	
190	Jackdaw	<i>Coloeus monedula</i>	
191	Rook	<i>Corvus frugilegus</i>	
192	Carrion Crow	<i>Corvus corone</i>	
193	Hooded Crow	<i>Corvus cornix</i>	
194	Raven	<i>Corvus corax</i>	
195	Waxwing	<i>Bombycilla garrulus</i>	
196	Coal Tit	<i>Parus ater</i>	
197	Marsh Tit	<i>Poecile palustris</i>	HBC
198	Willow Tit	<i>Poecile montana</i>	
199	Blue Tit	<i>Cyanistes caeruleus</i>	
200	Great Tit	<i>Parus major</i>	
201	Woodlark	<i>Lullula arborea</i>	HBC
202	Skylark	<i>Alauda arvensis</i>	
203	Shore Lark	<i>Eremophila alpestris</i>	HBC
204	Sand Martin	<i>Riparia riparia</i>	

THE HUDDERSFIELD LIST TO DECEMBER 2018

No	Common English name	Scientific name	Description
			species
205	Swallow	<i>Hirundo rustica</i>	
206	House Martin	<i>Delichon urbicum</i>	
207	Red-rumped Swallow	<i>Cecropis daurica</i>	YNU
208	Long-tailed Tit	<i>Aegithalos caudatus</i>	
209	Willow Warbler	<i>Phylloscopus trochilus</i>	
210	Chiffchaff	<i>Phylloscopus collybita</i>	
	Chiffchaff	<i>Phylloscopus collybita collybita</i>	
	Siberian Chiffchaff	<i>Phylloscopus collybita tristis</i>	YNU
211	Wood Warbler	<i>Phylloscopus sibilatrix</i>	HBC
212	Pallas's Warbler	<i>Phylloscopus proregulus</i>	HBC
213	Yellow-browed Warbler	<i>Phylloscopus inornatus</i>	HBC
214	Sedge Warbler	<i>Acrocephalus schoenobaenus</i>	
215	Reed Warbler	<i>Acrocephalus scirpaceus</i>	
216	Grasshopper Warbler	<i>Locustella naevia</i>	
217	Blackcap	<i>Sylvia atricapilla</i>	
218	Garden Warbler	<i>Sylvia borin</i>	
219	Lesser Whitethroat	<i>Sylvia curruca</i>	
220	Whitethroat	<i>Sylvia communis</i>	
221	Firecrest	<i>Regulus ignicapilla</i>	HBC
222	Goldcrest	<i>Regulus regulus</i>	
223	Wren	<i>Troglodytes troglodytes</i>	
224	Nuthatch	<i>Sitta europaea</i>	
225	Treecreeper	<i>Certhia familiaris</i>	
226	Rose-coloured Starling	<i>Pastor roseus</i>	YNU
227	Starling	<i>Sturnus vulgaris</i>	
228	Ring Ouzel	<i>Turdus torquatus</i>	
229	Blackbird	<i>Turdus merula</i>	
230	Fieldfare	<i>Turdus pilaris</i>	
231	Redwing	<i>Turdus iliacus</i>	
232	Song Thrush	<i>Turdus philomelos</i>	
233	Mistle Thrush	<i>Turdus viscivorus</i>	

THE HUDDERSFIELD LIST TO DECEMBER 2018

No	Common English name	Scientific name	Description
			species
234	Spotted Flycatcher	<i>Muscicapa striata</i>	
235	Robin	<i>Erithacus rubecula</i>	
236	Nightingale	<i>Luscinia megarhynchos</i>	HBC
237	Pied Flycatcher	<i>Ficedula hypoleuca</i>	
238	Black Redstart	<i>Phoenicurus ochruros</i>	HBC
239	Redstart	<i>Phoenicurus phoenicurus</i>	
240	Whinchat	<i>Saxicola rubetra</i>	
241	Stonechat	<i>Saxicola rubicola</i>	
242	Wheatear	<i>Oenanthe oenanthe</i>	
	Wheatear	<i>Oenanthe oenanthe oenanthe</i>	
	Greenland Wheatear	<i>Oenanthe oenanthe leucorhoa</i>	HBC
243	Dipper	<i>Cinclus cinclus</i>	
244	House Sparrow	<i>Passer domesticus</i>	
245	Tree Sparrow	<i>Passer montanus</i>	
246	Dunnock	<i>Prunella modularis</i>	
247	Yellow Wagtail	<i>Motacilla flava</i>	
	Yellow Wagtail	<i>Motacilla flava flavissima</i>	
	Blue-headed Wagtail	<i>Motacilla flava flava</i>	HBC
	Grey-headed Wagtail	<i>Motacilla flava thunbergi</i>	HBC
248	Grey Wagtail	<i>Motacilla cinerea</i>	
249	Pied Wagtail	<i>Motacilla alba</i>	
	Pied Wagtail	<i>Motacilla alba yarellii</i>	
	White Wagtail	<i>Motacilla alba alba</i>	HBC
250	Meadow Pipit	<i>Anthus pratensis</i>	
251	Tree Pipit	<i>Anthus trivialis</i>	
252	Water Pipit	<i>Anthus spinoletta</i>	HBC
253	Rock Pipit	<i>Anthus petrosus</i>	HBC
	Eurasian Rock Pipit	<i>Anthus petrosus petrosus</i>	HBC
	Scandinavian Rock Pipit	<i>Anthus petrosus littoralis</i>	HBC
254	Chaffinch	<i>Fringilla coelebs</i>	
255	Brambling	<i>Fringilla montifringilla</i>	

THE HUDDERSFIELD LIST TO DECEMBER 2018

No	Common English name	Scientific name	Description
			species
256	Hawfinch	<i>Coccothraustes coccothraustes</i>	
257	Bullfinch	<i>Pyrrhula pyrrhula</i>	
258	Greenfinch	<i>Chloris chloris</i>	
259	Twite	<i>Linaria flavirostris</i>	
260	Linnet	<i>Linaria cannabina</i>	
261	Mealy Redpoll	<i>Acanthis flammea</i>	HBC
262	Lesser Redpoll	<i>Acanthis cabaret</i>	
263	Parrot Crossbill	<i>Loxia pytyopsittacus</i>	BBRC
264	Crossbill	<i>Loxia curvirostra</i>	
265	Two-barred Crossbill	<i>Loxia leucoptera</i>	BBRC
266	Goldfinch	<i>Carduelis carduelis</i>	
267	Siskin	<i>Spinus spinus</i>	
268	Corn Bunting	<i>Miliaria calandra</i>	
269	Yellowhammer	<i>Emberiza citrinella</i>	
270	Cirl Bunting	<i>Emberiza cirlus</i>	YNU
271	Little Bunting	<i>Emberiza pusilla</i>	YNU
272	Black-headed Bunting	<i>Emberiza melanocephala</i>	BBRC
273	Reed Bunting	<i>Emberiza schoeniclus</i>	
274	Lapland Bunting	<i>Calcarius lapponicus</i>	HBC
275	Snow Bunting	<i>Plectrophenax nivalis</i>	HBC

REPORTING AND RECORDING SENSITIVE BIRD SPECIES

It is imperative for all Club members and other birdwatchers to be fully committed to the understanding that the welfare of all birds is of paramount importance and must not be threatened or compromised by any of our activities. In particular this applies to all birds in the breeding season and especially to those birds whose populations are particularly vulnerable in Europe, the UK or just in the Club area. Schedule 1 of the 1981 Wildlife and Countryside Act itemises a number of rare breeding birds (see abbreviated list below) which require a special licence for any individual who may approach them whilst nesting. These licences, which are issued in order to keep disturbance to a minimum, are only issued to bona fide researchers, i.e. ringers, official nest recorders, photographers (occasionally) etc. Anyone disturbing any Schedule 1 species who is not in possession of a licence is breaking the law and liable to prosecution, as well as putting the breeding attempt at risk. If you accidentally find a nest, however, you are not breaking the law, as this was done without any foreknowledge. If however you return to that nest and this results in any form of disturbance, then that would be breaking the law.

It should be obvious that the purpose of the law is to protect these individual species from disturbance, thereby allowing them to breed without molestation and providing the greatest chance of success. It is important, therefore, to avoid circulating any information relating to the whereabouts of such breeding birds. The HBC committee therefore asks that no such information should be posted by anyone using the Club forum; to do so may encourage unlicensed individuals to visit these nest sites, for whatever reason, and could seriously compromise the well-being of the birds and their eggs or offspring. The information could also be used by those intent on persecuting species, stealing eggs or young.

Should you suspect that a Schedule 1 species is breeding within the Club area then do contact Mike Denton (01484 646990) who holds the necessary licence to monitor and document proceedings.

Where you see any Schedule 1 birds, and even though there may be no evidence of breeding at that time, it is advisable not to advertise the locality of such sightings on the forum, or even verbally to others. It is possible that the bird(s) may be prospecting in the area for potential breeding sites and such reports may compromise their opportunity for success. By not advertising the whereabouts of these species or their nests you can be content in the knowledge that you are positively contributing to their protection by not inviting disturbance by others.

Please do remember, however, to submit all of your detailed records to the Club Recorder for inclusion in the annual report, although the detail included in the report will be appropriately circumspect. Such information is vital for use by relevant bodies (e.g. the rare birds breeding panel, conservation bodies etc) your records are a key component of maintaining an accurate picture of population dynamics which aids plans to conserve and protect them.

In addition to the above, if you are aware of the presence of any Schedule 1 birds in an area and you suspect that illegal interference may have taken place, or be about to take place, then contact Mike Denton or the recorder urgently. We have the contact details of the appropriate authorities that would allow us to alert them to these threats.

These comments, whilst directed primarily at Schedule 1 species, are pertinent for any nesting species and if you are uncertain about their status it is advisable to seek clarification from Mike Denton. There are also a number of species (see additional list) that may not be threatened within UK but that are scarce breeding, or potential breeding birds within the Club area. It is by leaving

these birds undisturbed during a critical time in their life cycle that you can feel gratified that you have had no detrimental effect upon the outcome.

Abbreviated list of Schedule 1 Species

Black-necked Grebe
Bittern
Pintail
Garganey
Honey-buzzard
Red Kite
All harriers
Goshawk
Osprey
Merlin
Peregrine Falcon
Avocet
Stone-curlew
Little Ringed Plover
Dotterel
Red-necked Phalarope
Little Tern
Barn Owl
Kingfisher
Firecrest

Additional List of Sensitive Birds in the Huddersfield Area

Nightjar
Buzzard
Raven
Short-eared Owl
Long-eared Owl

ALPHABETIC INDEX TO CLASSIFIED LIST

Common English name		Page
Blackbird		
Blackcap		
Brambling		
Bullfinch		
Bunting	Reed	
	Snow	
Buzzard		
	Rough-legged	
Chaffinch		
Chiffchaff		
Coot		
Cormorant		
Crossbill		
Crow	Carrion	
	Hooded	
Cuckoo		
Curlew		
Dipper		
Diver	Red-throated	
Dotterel		
Dove	Collared	
	Stock	
Duck	Long-tailed	
	Mandarin	
	Tufted	
Dunlin		
Dunnock		
Eagle	White-tailed	
Egret	Little	
	Great White	
Fieldfare		
Flycatcher	Pied	
	Spotted	

Common English name		Page
Gadwall		
Garganey		
Godwit	Black-tailed	
Goldcrest		
Goldeneye		
Goldfinch		
Goosander		
Goose	Barnacle	
	Canada	
	Embden	
	Greylag	
	Pink-footed	
	White-fronted	
Goshawk		
Grebe	Great Crested	
	Little	
Greenfinch		
Greenshank		
Grouse	Red	
Gull	Black-headed	
	Caspian	
	Common	
	Great Black-backed	
	Herring	
	Lesser Black-backed	
	Mediterranean	
	Yellow-legged	
Harrier	Hen	
	Marsh	
Hawfinch		
Heron	Grey	
Hobby		
Jackdaw		

Common English name		Page
Jay		
Kestrel		
Kingfisher		
Kite	Red	
Kittiwake		
Knot		
Lapwing		
Linnet		
Magpie		
Mallard		
Martin	House	
	Sand	
Merlin		
Moorhen		
Nightjar		
Nuthatch		
Osprey		
Ouzel	Ring	
Owl	Barn	
	Little	
	Long-eared	
	Short-eared	
	Tawny	
Oystercatcher		
Parakeet	Ring-necked	
Partridge	Grey	
	Red-legged	
Peregrine		
Pheasant		
	Golden	
Pigeon	Feral	
Pintail		
Pipit	Meadow	
	Rock	
	Tree	

Common English name		Page
Pipit (cont.)	Water	
Plover	Golden	
	Grey	
	Little Ringed	
	Ringed	
Pochard		
Quail		
Rail	Water	
Raven		
Redpoll	Lesser	
	Mealy	
Redshank		
Redstart		
	Black	
Redwing		
Robin		
Rook		
Ruff		
Sanderling		
Sandpiper	Common	
	Green	
Scaup	Greater	
Scoter	Common	
Shag		
Shelduck		
Shoveler		
Siskin		
Skylark		
Smew		
Snipe		
	Jack	
Sparrow	House	
	Tree	
Sparrowhawk		
Starling		

Common English name		Page
Stonechat		
Swallow		
Swan	Bewick's	
	Mute	
	Whooper	
Swift		
Teal		
Tern	Arctic	
	Common	
	Sandwich	
Thrush	Mistle	
	Song	
Tit	Blue	
	Coal	
	Great	
	Long-tailed	
	Willow	
Treecreeper		
Turnstone		
Twite		
Wagtail	Grey	
	Pied	
	White	

Common English name		Page
Wagtail (cont.)	Yellow	
Warbler	Garden	
	Grasshopper	
	Reed	
	Sedge	
	Willow	
	Wood	
Waxwing		
Wheatear		
	Greenland	
Whimbrel		
Whinchat		
Whitethroat		
	Lesser	
Wigeon		
Woodcock		
Woodlark		
Woodpecker	Great Spotted	
	Green	
Woodpigeon		
Wren		
Yellowhammer		

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	David Sill	John Walker



in focus

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- Rutland Anglian Water Birdwatching Centre 01572 770656 ● Gloucestershire WWT Slimbridge 01453 890978
- Lancashire WWT Martin Mere 01704 897020 ● West London The London Wetland Centre 020 8409 4433

All the latest information at

www.infocustics.co.uk

The bird recording area covered by the Club comprises Ordnance Survey ten-kilometre squares SE 00, 01, 10, 11, 20 and 21, together with those parts of SE 02 and SE12 south of the Rivers Ryburn and Calder, plus Elland Gravel Pits and Dewsbury Sewage Works.

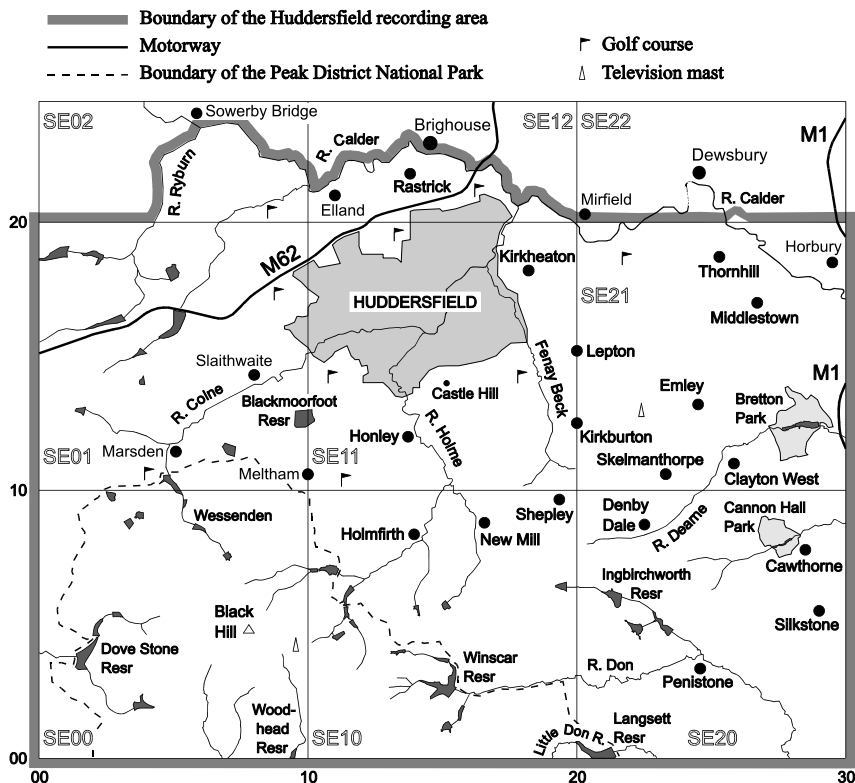


Fig. 1 Map of the Huddersfield area



Huddersfield Birdwatchers' Club

Registered charity no 1098296



This Long-tailed Duck, a female or juvenile, was seen at Deanhead Reservoir from the 28th to the 31st of October. A sea duck that breeds in the Arctic and winters off Atlantic and Baltic sea coasts, this vagrant was the first in the area since 1992.



www.huddersfieldbirdwatchersclub.co.uk

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