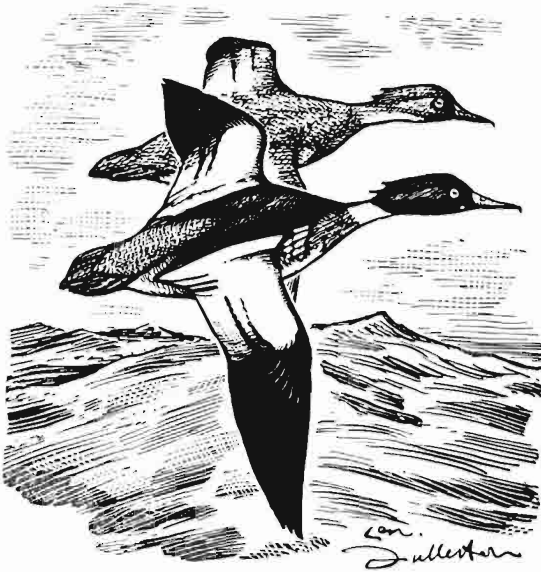


SCOTTISH BIRDS



The Journal of
The Scottish Ornithologists' Club

Vol. 2 No. 4

Winter 1962

FIVE SHILLINGS

THE SCOTTISH ORNITHOLOGISTS' CLUB

THE Scottish Ornithologists' Club was founded in 1936 and membership is open to all interested in Scottish ornithology. Meetings are held during the winter months in Aberdeen, Dumfries, Dundee, Edinburgh, Glasgow and St Andrews, at which lectures by prominent ornithologists are given and films exhibited. Excursions are organised in the summer to places of ornithological interest.

The aims and objects of the Club are to (a) encourage and direct the study of Scottish Ornithology in all its branches; (b) co-ordinate the efforts of Scottish Ornithologists and encourage co-operation between field and indoor worker; (c) encourage ornithological research in Scotland in co-operation with other organisations; (d) hold meetings at centres to be arranged at which Lectures are given, films exhibited, and discussions held; and (e) publish or arrange for the publication of statistics and information with regard to Scottish ornithology.

There are no entry fees for Membership. The Annual subscription is 25/-; or 7/6 in the case of Members under twenty-one years of age or in the case of University undergraduates who satisfy the Council of their status as such at the time at which their subscriptions fall due in any year. Joint membership is available to married couples at an annual subscription of 40/-. "Scottish Birds" is issued free to members but joint members will receive only one copy between them.

The affairs of the Club are controlled by a Council composed of the Hon. Presidents, the President, the Vice-President, the Hon. Treasurer, the Editor and Business Editor of "Scottish Birds", the Hon. Treasurer of the House Fabric Fund, one Representative of each Branch Committee appointed annually by the Branch, and ten other Members of the Club elected at an Annual General Meeting. Two of the last named retire annually by rotation and shall not be eligible for re-election for one year.

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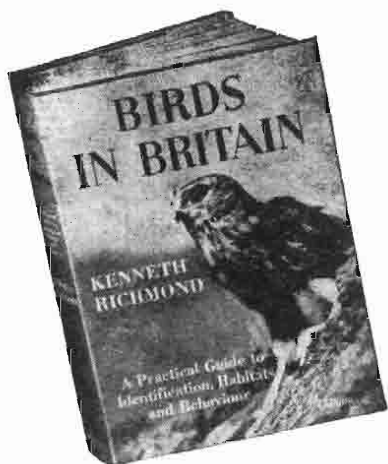
Forms of application for Membership, copy of the Club Constitution, and other literature is obtainable from the Club Secretary, Mrs George Waterston, Scottish Centre for Ornithology and Bird Protection, 21 Regent Terrace, Edinburgh 7. (Tel. Waverley 6042).

CLUB-ROOM AND LIBRARY

The Club-room and Library at 21 Regent Terrace, Edinburgh 7, will be available to Members during office hours, and on Wednesday evenings from 7 to 10 p.m. during the winter months. Members may use the Reference Library and borrow books from the Duplicate Section. Facilities for making tea or coffee are available at a nominal charge and Members may bring guests by arrangement. The Aldis 2" x 2" slide projector and screen can be used for the informal showing of slides at a charge of 2s 6d per night to cover the replacement of bulbs.

EDITORIAL ADDRESS

All contributions to A. T. Macmillan, 66 Spylaw Bank Road, Edinburgh 13. Advertisements to T. C. Smout, 93 Warrender Park Road, Edinburgh 9.



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*A Practical Guide to
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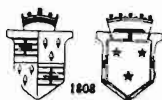
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SCOTTISH BIRDS

THE JOURNAL OF THE SCOTTISH ORNITHOLOGISTS' CLUB



Vol. 2 No. 4

Winter 1962

Edited by A. T. MACMILLAN with the assistance of D. G. ANDREW and T. C. SMOUT. Business Editor, T. C. SMOUT. Cover Design (Red-breasted Mergansers) by LEN FULLERTON.

Published quarterly.

Editorial

The Hastings Rarities. Bird-watching hit the headlines during August with the revelation of what was possibly the most blatant and extensive deception ever perpetrated on the science of ornithology. Over 100 pages of a greatly-enlarged issue of *British Birds* were devoted to a painstaking, fascinating and completely convincing proof of the falseness of very many rare and extremely rare birds recorded from the Hastings area between 1892 and 1916.

Forty-nine new birds were added to the British List between 1903 and 1916, and of these no fewer than 32 came from this small area. It is hardly surprising that grave doubts were widely expressed at the time, even in print (*e.g. Scot. Nat.* 1916: 27), but complete certainty has had to wait on the passage of time, during which the number of rare birds around Hastings has reverted to a level comparable with similar areas, and on the refined analysis of indirect evidence made possible as a result of the greatly increased number of bird-watchers in the country. The birds did of course exist, but the data with the specimens were of the scantiest, even the name of the shooter seldom being revealed. The birds were probably imported on ice: they were certainly not obtained by a legion of mysterious market gardeners and nameless hunters in Sussex and Kent.

Records of 541 rare or very rare birds obtained between 1892 and 1930, and of a further 53 sightings in the area, must now be rejected. Obviously some were genuine, and these will be reinstated if sufficient evidence can be produced, but it is inevitable that in this situation good records are condemned with the bad. Sixteen species and 13 sub-species are now struck off the British List, though ten of these species can be readmitted on the basis of later satisfactory records.

It is earnestly to be hoped that we cannot again be deceived on this grand scale. Mistakes in identification, although great efforts are made to eliminate them, may even now lead to the acceptance of a few erroneous records; but there is no systematic fraud involved in this. In the absence of suspicious

circumstances an editor must believe that his contributors are basically honest in reporting what they see. Without this trust many useful records would be lost. It does however point to the advantage of personal contact—either direct or through other bird-watchers—between those who see the birds and those who must judge the record.

The lone wolf is at a disadvantage, because there is no one to say from personal experience that he is a careful witness who can be relied upon to describe accurately what he sees. It is so easy, after a look at the *Field Guide*, to embellish one's written descriptions—intentionally or subconsciously—with points that were not actually confirmed at the time of observation. A sight record of a rare bird really cannot be accepted from one person alone until that person has established his *bona fides* and competence by contact with other bird-watchers and preferably also by contributing notes on more mundane birds first. This does pose problems where there are few bird-watchers, as in parts of Scotland, but every effort should be made to get reliable witnesses to corroborate sightings of rare birds. If the local bird-watchers are not told while the news is hot one inevitably wonders why. Was the observer really such a complete lone wolf as not to want to tell anyone, or was he just not quite so sure of his bird as he now makes out?

The British List. The long-expected exposure of the falseness of the Hastings Rarities has focussed attention on the concept of the British List. Letters in *The Ibis* and *British Birds* argue that too much importance has been attached to admission of birds to the glorified status of "British," often based on one or two freak occurrences. The full treatment given such birds in standard text books tends to encourage this emphasis, when the species would in fact be better relegated to a position at the end of the book—as has been done in the *Field Guide*. This can make for difficulties in identifying rare birds not adequately described, but it does give them a standing more in line with their relative importance in the British avifauna.

Ghost thou never wert. Much excitement followed reports recently of eerie nocturnal sighs at Kinneil House, Bo'ness—supposed to be the dying gasps of Alice, Lady Lilbourne, who leapt to her death from a top-storey window during Oliver Cromwell's occupation of the house in the 17th century. Large numbers of young people, with evidently a fair sprinkling of reporters, advanced on the haunted house by night, but nothing could be seen. Stories and photographs appeared in the newspapers. Finally some intrepid young men hid in the ruins in the dark, until the dreadful noises started again; torches were switched on, and there was the ghost—variously described in the press as "a small white-breasted owl" and as "a covey of snoring pigeons."

Business Editor. Because of greatly increased pressure of work in his own business Arthur Smith has resigned from the position of Business Editor of *Scottish Birds*. Since the journal was started he has carried out this important behind-the-scenes job; and, although it is perhaps not so widely known, his initial efforts with arrangements for the printing of *Scottish Birds* and the mechanics of production were of vital importance in ever getting it launched. We would echo Professor Meiklejohn's eloquent tribute at the recent Annual General Meeting of the S.O.C. in Dunblane, and we are very glad to know that Mr Smith will still act as the link between us and our printers in Selkirk. All advertising and similar business correspondence will now be handled by Dr T. C. Smout, 93 Warrender Park Road, Edinburgh 9, who will continue to act as an assistant editor at the same time. Having already worked with Dr Smout we know that these arrangements will ensure that the business side of the journal continues to function smoothly and unobtrusively.

THE BIRDS OF ST KILDA—WINTER 1961-62

W. E. WATERS

Published records of the status of birds at St Kilda during the winter months are scanty. Prior to the evacuation in 1930 there are only occasional references to winter species, usually obtained at second hand from the St Kildans. More reliable are the records of the Rev. Neil Mackenzie who was on the island from 1829 to 1843, and left notes on its birds. Since the armed forces occupied Hirta in 1957 records have been more frequent, and this paper gives my records from 1st December 1961 to 19th February 1962 and the observations of W.O.II Wilson, R.E.M.E., from then until 4th March 1962.

The St Kilda archipelago lies close to the Atlantic storm-track, and the steep and high cliffs give rise to great wind turbulence. The much-described storms of summer are but small blows in comparison with the devastating fury of the winter winds, and because of the importance of this to the bird life the meteorological data for the winter months, December 1961 to February 1962, are given in some detail.

	December	January	February
Maximum temperature	53°F	51°F	51°F
Minimum temperature	26°F	34°F	33°F
Rainfall—Village Glen	4.1"	7.1"	3.1"
Days of gale	4	12	9

It should be stressed that "days of gale" were only recorded when the general wind over a wide area was constantly

above an estimated 39 m.p.h. On many other days, not included in the table, winds of force 6 or 7 on the Beaufort scale gave gusts or even continuous wind speeds in certain exposed parts of the island in excess of 60 or 70 m.p.h. During several of the severe storms gusts of over 130 m.p.h. were recorded on an anemograph, and in a storm from the north-west even Village Glen received gusts of over 100 m.p.h. which lifted men off their feet. Although the winter was not exceptionally cold, snow covered the island down to sea-level from 2nd to 7th December, from 28th December to 1st January and again for a few days in March.

Thirty-three species of birds were seen during the three months covered by this paper, but individuals of only about 16 of these over-wintered on Hirta. For a bird to survive a winter on St Kilda it must have an adequate food supply and either the necessary shelter from gales or a complete mastery over such winds, as exhibited by the Greater Black-backed Gull. Man—both past and present inhabitants—has provided for several species one or other of both of these requirements.

At least 20 Turnstones over-wintered, and their food supply depended almost entirely on man and the Grey Seal. The majority of the Turnstones wintered in the immediate vicinity of the army camp, becoming very tame and spending much time among the swill bins just outside the cookhouse door, and eating large quantities of bread; one even ventured into the kitchens. The birds perched on top of the dry-stone walls and called loudly when bread was thrown out, thus attracting the rest of the flock which would fly down and start feeding almost at one's feet. Bread-eating by Turnstones has been discussed recently in *British Birds* (54:325), and tameness and association with man for food has been recorded from Sule Skerry lighthouse (*The Birds of Scotland*, p. 559). The only Turnstones seen with any regularity on the shore were among the Grey Seals, which in winter haul out to moult on the pavement of Dun and in the Glen Bay Tunnel. This association of seals and Turnstones has been recorded on North Rona by Darling.

Both the Raven and the Herring Gull depend on swill tipped on the beach. The Herring Gull rarely, and the Raven never, ventured near the cookhouse swill bins. Both species have increased since the services occupied the island. The Hooded Crow was a less frequent scavenger and does not seem to have responded to the present conditions, there being no evidence of any increase. Other species seen to take bread in the camp area have been Song Thrush, Redwing (occasionally), Blackbird (in severe weather only), and Starling.

Human habitations old and new provide essential shelter

for several species. Williamson and Boyd (1960) have shown the usefulness of cleits and dry-stone wallings to the Soay Sheep and various birds, and these old man-made structures play an important role during the winter gales. They provide the only shelter in Village Glen for the Wrens, and much of the shelter for thrushes, Rock Pipits and Starlings. The more ancient Amazon House type structures in Glen Mor were frequented by the few birds (Redwings, Rock Pipits, Starlings and a Blackbird) that wintered in this exposed glen.

Of all the wintering species perhaps the most interesting is the island's own Wren *Troglodytes troglodytes hirtensis*. It is a weak flier (Harrison and Buchan estimated its speed to be little more than 12 m.p.h.) yet it has survived down the centuries despite wind gusts of over ten times its flight speed. The Wren's survival under such conditions must be due very largely to its extremely close association with shelter among rocks. In winter it is never more than a few inches from sheltered rocky crevices into which it can disappear. During the rest of the year flights of up to 20 to 30 yards or more occur and Wrens often feed on the ground some distance from the nearest shelter, but in winter such daring is never seen even on the few calm days. Short flights between boulders do occur but often a Wren will disappear into a dry-stone wall or boulder area either not to reappear for as long as the observer cares to wait or to emerge some distance further on perhaps half an hour later. Rarely the Wrens use passages beneath thick heather on the hillsides but only near the solid shelter of stone walls or cleits.

Wrens are difficult to see during the winter months and there is little song; I heard none at all in January. Usually they call only when disturbed, so that an observer arriving on the isle in mid-winter might easily think that the Wrens had left, although patient watching, often extending for over half an hour even in such high density Wren areas as the Carn Mor (Williamson 1958b), may eventually disclose a bird moving between one piece of cover and another. In winter the Wrens of the Carn Mor live in the labyrinth between the boulders, seldom appearing in the full light of day. They find their food in the gaps and cracks underneath the boulders, and in stormy weather have nothing to gain by coming out into the open, and a good deal to lose.

The Birds of Scotland and the *Handbook* mention a general dispersal after breeding, but while the young may and do move out of the territory in which they were reared there is no dispersal in the sense of Wrens appearing in areas of the island where none breed. Wrens only occur where there is sufficient rocky cover and it would seem that wherever there is enough cover there are Wrens. The only change

which I noticed in their distribution in winter was that I failed to find the Wrens which nest in the gullies on the east side of Oiseval, where there is little loose rocky cover. Few Wrens were seen in winter and in the Ard Uachdarachd/Conachair region but they may well all have been on the lower scree-covered slopes.

Both *The Birds of Scotland* and the *Handbook* record the Robin as wintering on St Kilda, but the evidence for this is slender. The Robin was added to the St Kilda list by Dr Eagle Clarke (1912) on the strength of Neil Fergusson's remark that it was an annual autumn visitor, seen about the houses during the winter. There are no other published records prior to 1957, since when at least six have been recorded, occurring between March and May, and between September and November. The only winter record during this period is of one seen in early December 1960 by J. B. Galacher.

The great majority of the sea-birds were absent during the three months under review. No auks were seen, and details of the status of other species are given in the appended list. The complete absence of Fulmars until 31st January is interesting, and although the departure dates have been irregular in recent years it is obvious that a great change has taken place since the records of 50 years ago, which suggested an autumnal departure for six to eight weeks in September and October only.

In view of the paucity of observations in these waters in winter, notes made on crossings between the Sound of Harris and St Kilda may be of interest. On 1st December I saw very few sea-birds indeed—only the gulls following our vessel, a few score of Kittiwakes (mostly near the Hebrides) and about 30 Fulmars (all singly and well away from land). My return voyage on 20th February was only slightly more productive; Fulmars were more numerous (c. 300), 15 adult Gannets were seen, and c. 25 Kittiwakes (all but one adult). During both crossings a continuous watch was kept, and these numbers combined with the winter records from St Kilda indicate that very few sea birds remain in this sea area in winter.

LIST OF WINTERING SPECIES

Great Northern Diver. One in Village Bay on 28th Dec and 5th Jan. There are two previous winter records, both in Dec.

Fulmar. None seen from the island until 31st Jan; none ashore until an arrival in large numbers on 18th Feb.

Gannet. Recorded on only 11 days during the three months, with a maximum of five in late Feb. Occurred in both rough and calm conditions in Village Bay; all adults.

Shag. Scarce, seen in largest numbers in Village Bay in calm weather. Fif-

teen was the maximum number in Dec, decreasing to nine in Jan. The return started in early Feb and Wilson reported "hundreds" when he visited Dun on 24th.

Mallard. Two drakes in Glen Mor on 25th Feb were probably early spring migrants.

Long-tailed Duck. A female in Village Bay on 2nd, 3rd and 10th Dec, and one on 12th Feb after several days of westerly gales. The only other winter record is of two in early Dec 1960 by J. B. Gallacher.

Eider. One or two immature males over-wintered; a few adults were present in Village Bay in rough weather in Dec but then disappeared; the first adult males were not seen until 21st Mar and the ducks even later.

Peregrine. Single bird seen on 31st Jan and 12th and 17th Feb.

Water Rail. One or more in several areas in Village Glen in Dec and on 1st Jan.

Oystercatcher. The return was in Feb, as recorded by Mackenzie, who also mentions a few remaining all winter. One on 10th Feb arrived in a force 7 south-west wind and another on 18th, after which there was a gradual increase.

Lapwing. One or two in early Dec increased to five with the cold weather at the end of the month. One was found dying in the snow on 20th and the number fell until only a single bird remained in Feb.

Turnstone. At least 20 remained on the island all winter and there was some increase in mid-Feb. Four ringed on 9th Dec were seen until 2nd April.

Snipe. Mainly in Village Glen during the winter but odd birds flushed elsewhere including 1300 feet up Conachair. The 35 on Hirta decreased to about 12 after the snow at the end of Dec. There was a slight increase in Feb but a fall to only about six after the snow in Mar. During the snow Snipe tried to hide against the few tufts of grass poking through but occasionally perched on the dry stone walls from which the wind had blown the snow.

Woodcock. Single birds flushed from above An Lag and in Glen Mor in Dec and Jan. One on 25th Mar may indicate that this bird over-wintered.

Purple Sandpiper. Two or three seen throughout the winter on the rocks below the Manse or in the Tunnel in Glen Bay where, however, their association with the Grey Seals was less marked than that of the Turnstones.

Greater Black-backed Gull. About 20 wintered in Village Bay, feeding from the camp swill on the boulder beach or among the seals hauled out on Dun. The Glen Mor flock fell from 105 adults on 23rd Dec to 20 in mid-Jan, then increased to about 45 in Feb and about 60 by the end of Mar. Very few immatures were seen during the winter.

Herring Gull. After the snow of early Dec there were about 25 in Village Bay which increased to about 60 by mid-Dec and remained about this level. The main winter roost was on the pavement on Dun, but when the seals temporarily decreased here (18th-24th Jan) they returned (on 20th) to their summer roost at the foot of Oiseval, only to return gradually to the Dun roost after the seals increased on 25th. There were a few in Glen Bay in Dec but they were less hardy than the Greater Black-backed Gulls and none was seen there during the storms in Jan. About 25 had returned there by the end of Feb.

Glaucous Gull. An immature, probably third winter, first seen on 13th Jan, remained until at least 6th Mar. Fourth record for this species.

Black-headed Gull. Single birds on 2nd and 4th Dec and between 1st and

- 6th Jan. There are previous winter records for all months from Nov to Feb.
- Kittiwake.** Mackenzie says that the few that winter are generally young birds, but this was not so in the winter of 1961/62 although two or three tarrocks were seen in Dec. Adults were seen on eleven days during the three months, usually in rough conditions in Village Bay, where a maximum of 20 was recorded on 14th Dec.
- Skylark.** Single bird seen on 2nd, 3rd and 17th Dec in Village Glen and Ruaival. These are the first winter records.
- Raven.** Probably 10 or 12 birds wintered on Hirta. A flock of 16 seen on 6th Jan following a south-east wind was not seen again and is thought to have arrived from elsewhere. Has increased at St Kilda since 1957.
- Hooded Crow.** Though more numerous than the Raven in Mackenzie's time it is less so today, and only five or six wintered, probably the entire breeding population of Hirta.
- Jackdaw.** One in the camp area from 25th to 29th Dec, following several days of easterly weather. Second record for the islands.
- Wren.** Resident.
- Fieldfare.** One on Ruaival and in Village Glen on several dates between 20th and 27th Dec.
- Song Thrush.** Single birds on 10th and 28th Dec and on 4th Jan; two on 27th Dec. No other recent wintering records.
- Redwing.** Four or five wintered in the camp area and more arrived after the first week in Feb. Three wintered in Glen Mor, finding shelter in the Amazon's House and similar archaeological structures. All were very tame and probably of the Icelandic race "coburni." One trapped on 13th Feb had been ringed at Reykjavik in Sept 1961.
- Blackbird.** Four over-wintered in Village Glen; a male ringed on 7th Dec was seen or retrapped on several occasions until 24th Mar. One wintered in Glen Mor and one was seen on the Carn Mor on 4th Feb. All were very shy.
- Rock Pipit.** Very few winter; there were only about 20 birds on Hirta mainly in Village Glen but also on Ruaival and two or three in Glen Mor.
- Starling.** Probably many left the island. Except for the flock of about 50 in Village Glen, and a smaller number in Glen Mor, they were never seen around the cliffs in any numbers.
- Twite.** Wilson saw 8 on Dun on 24th Feb, a very unusual date as they are normally summer visitors only.
- Snow Bunting.** Up to five in the camp area in early Dec; two remaining until 15th. Single birds seen on 31st Dec and 1st and 2nd Jan; Wilson saw one on Mulloch Mor on 9th Feb.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I am grateful for much help from Dr W. J. Eggeling. The Nature Conservancy have given me access to their records and assistance in numerous ways. I am also grateful for the observations of D. W. Wilson, and the records for Dec 1960 from Dr J. B. Gallacher.

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FEEDING HABITS OF THE GREY LAG GOOSE *ANSER ANSER* ON THE ISLAND OF BUTE

JANET KEAR

At the request of the Nature Conservancy, the Wildfowl Trust carried out during the season 1961-62 a field investigation of crop damage by wild geese. In early February 1962, when the investigation was under way, a complaint was received from the Clyde Agricultural Executive Committee referring to the activities of Grey Lag Geese on grass and swede crops on the Island of Bute.

GREYLAG NUMBERS ON BUTE

The Greylag has been visiting Bute in the Firth of Clyde only recently. The Game Register of the Bute Estate includes one Greylag in 1920 and three in 1941—the next entry relating to this species. Berry (1939), discussing the distribution of wild geese in Scotland, does not mention Bute as amongst those localities used by Greylags although several fresh districts in Kintyre were being visited by flocks from 1920-1930. Stuart (1953) in an article covering the years 1938 to 1948 says "by 1938 several hundreds of these geese were wintering on the west side of the Island, ranging chiefly from Largizean to Scalpsie, although they also frequented Loch Fad and Quien and the west shore up to Ettrick Bay. Their numbers have now increased, and at times I believe there may be about 1000 on the Island." The opinion of farmers on whose land the geese feed is that the birds arrived in noticeable numbers between 1938 and 1940 but that the numbers remaining throughout the winter have risen slowly over the past ten years, with a sharp peak of 5000-7000 birds in 1961-62. The normal length of stay is from early October to April.

During the years since 1938 there has been a considerable extension of the population of Scottish Greylags across the mainland from the east coast and an increase in numbers visiting the west. At the same time, a drop occurred about 1945-46 in the numbers of geese wintering in Ireland, particularly in the region of the Wexford Slobs (Ruttledge and

Hall Watt 1958; Kennedy 1961). It is possible that the flocks which originally reached Ireland may now be seen as part of the increased population in Bute, Arran and Wigtownshire.

THE FOOD OF THE GREYLAG

The food of wintering Greylags consists in the main of grass and associated pasture plants and the young shoots of winter wheat. Grain of all kinds is eaten both on stubble and from the surface of newly sown fields. Potatoes, kale, beans and peas may be taken, although beans are grown infrequently now and peas sown rather too late in the year for the geese to attack. In eleven stomachs obtained in Scotland in winter the principal foods were grass, clover, and the roots of *Scirpus*; other items including *Equisetum*, fragments of green leaves and moss (Campbell 1947). These Greylag stomachs were however from Outer Hebridean birds and food conditions there are different from those found on the mainland. Dementiev (1952) says that Greylags dig up tubers and bulbs of steppe plants. Young rye, rice, maize, acorns, kitchen-garden plants and turnips are recorded as food of the continental Greylag by Alpheraky (1905) but none of these are known to be taken to any extent in the British Isles with the exception of the swede turnip on the Island of Bute.

FEEDING ON SWEDE TURNIPS

The geese roost on four lochs on the island and fly to the fields in the early morning or, rarely, where fields are cultivated to the water's edge, walk onto them. The diet of the geese during October and November is grass and the few potatoes left on the harvested fields, but the first snow or hard weather will send many to the swede fields. As with meadows, it is the centre of the field that is most likely to be utilised and those fields away from roads and buildings are particularly vulnerable, although geese are increasingly making use of loose swedes fed to stock. The tops may be taken at first but it is the roots which are the principal attraction. The farmers interviewed were quite certain that the geese took intact roots, not damaged or frosted ones, and indeed this seemed to be the case in the fields examined. The skin of the swede is not hard to break and with slight pressure can be scored by a finger nail; presumably the geese use the distal nails of mandible and maxilla. Their subsequent action can be described best as "gouging." The marks left on a large swede, as can be seen from the photograph (Plate 12), indicate clearly that the mandible is run in just beneath the surface and the sliver of flesh nipped off, probably with the combined action of tongue, lateral lamellae and nails. This may appear to be an unlikely technique for a grazing goose, but the Greylag is known to be versatile in its feeding

behaviour. Large potatoes which are frozen into the ground are eaten in this way, although small ones can be bitten into pieces and probably some swedes are also. The hard weather of 1947, which lasted into April, produced a number of unusual complaints, and most cases of swede attack outside Bute occurred during that winter, although it is assumed that the crop had already been frosted. Mainland birds seldom continue these activities when their normal feeding grounds are free of snow and frost, but it may be that it was the long snowy winter of 1947 that started the Bute geese concentrating on roots. The other reports of geese occasionally eating swedes in good weather have come from the Loch Inch estate in Wigtownshire (where the geese involved may have been part of the Bute population), from Aberdeenshire, and from a few other places in Scotland where Greylags have been seen feeding on roots put out for cattle (Berry 1932; Campbell, pers. comm.; Berry, pers. comm.).

The value of swede turnip as a food compared with that of pasture grass can be seen in Table 1. The figures are taken from *Rations for Livestock*, Bulletin No. 48 of the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries.

TABLE 1

Composition of swede turnip and grass

	Swede turnip	Pasture		
		winter*	spring value	pasture grass ^{††}
	%	%	%	%
Dry matter	11.5	20.0	20.0	
Crude protein	1.3	3.1	3.5	
Oil	0.2	0.6	0.8	
Carbohydrate	8.1	10.3	9.7	
Fibre	1.2	4.4	4.0	
Ash	0.7	1.6	2.0	2.0
Lime—CaO	0.08			0.28
Phosphoric acid—P ² O ⁵	0.08			0.16
Potash—K ² O	0.30			0.60
Chlorine Cl ²	0.04			0.19

*after close-grazing, allowing free growth from end of July to December
^{††}rotational close-grazing.

The dry matter content of grass is nearly twice that of swede turnip which is in turn higher than that of the soft-fleshed root known as a turnip in England. The swede variety

suffers the most damage (the turnip is, in any case, not much grown in Bute) and there is some evidence to suggest that, where two varieties of swede are grown in the same field, the geese eat those roots with the normally higher dry matter content. This point requires further investigation. Where no alternative is offered, damage may occur irrespective of dry matter content. It is, however, sensible to assume that in order to get the calories they need, without overloading the digestive system with water, the geese can appreciate the "solidity" of their food. Very little is known about the nutritional requirements of a wild goose; with other birds which have been studied more fully it appears that the number of calories is of the greatest importance in governing total intake from different food sources (Gibb 1957). In these terms swede has approximately 70% of the nutritive value of winter pasture.

Both grass and roots are eaten by the Bute geese throughout the winter and there is no evidence to suggest that individual birds confine themselves to one or the other. An examination of the piles of droppings at the edge of Loch Ascog showed that at least for short periods individuals tended to eat only one type of food, and that approximately half the geese roosting here were feeding on swedes and half on grass. Winter wheat, a favourite item of diet elsewhere, is not grown in Bute.

In flocking birds, such as the geese, social factors must be especially important in governing feeding behaviour patterns. The possible range of feeding techniques is obviously dependent on the birds' physical structure, in particular the structure of the beak. A few individuals may, however, occasionally reveal new sources of food which can be successfully exploited, their actions are observed and local enhancement occurs. In this way novel habits are built into the social repertoire, being lifted over the limits of acquired behaviour which disappears with the death of the individual.

There are enough records of Greylags eating swedes to indicate that the habit arises fairly readily. A long hard spell causes further exploration, and if roots are available they will almost certainly be taken. Low nutritive value must normally be the swede turnip's best protection at other times, but the situation existing on Bute indicates that this protection is not always adequate. A regular diet consisting of sound swedes in combination with other items such as grass is obviously sufficient for the geese there.

AGRICULTURAL PRACTICE

Bute is approximately fifteen miles long and four miles wide. The arable land and the main roosting areas

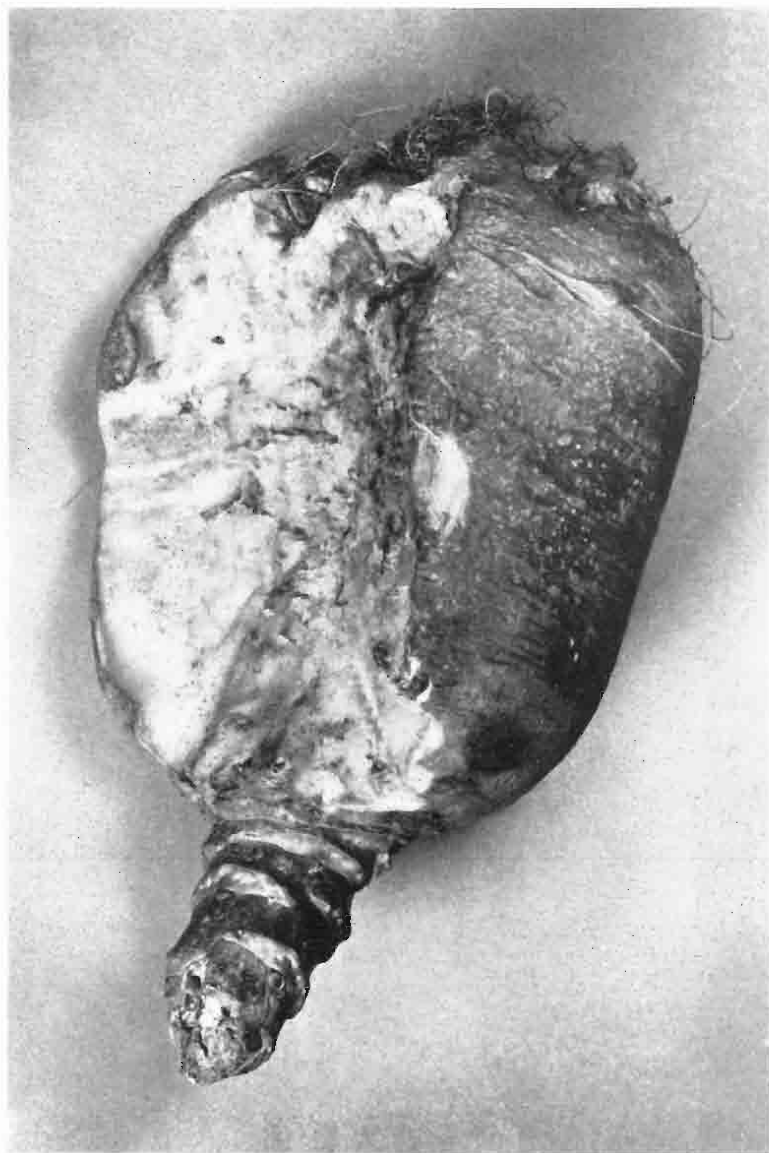


PLATE 12. Wilhelmburger green-top swede, attacked by Grey Lag Gosse. The semibovine cuts, made by the mandible can be seen around the edge, as well as the toothmarks left where the lamellae have ripped the flesh out.

are largely in the southern part of the island and the complaints of goose damage come from the parishes of Rothesay and Kingarth where 550-600 acres of swede turnips are grown. The swede is regarded as an essential winter feed, principally for dairy herds but also for store and fat cattle. Mangolds and fodder beet are more suited to the drier and warmer areas of England and are not grown on the island. It appears that the most popular swede for cultivation is the purple skin variety "Best of All." Four other purple types and "Wilhelmburger" green top are also grown. Two varieties, including "Best of All," are intended for early winter use, three for mid-winter, and the very hardy and disease resistant "Wilhelmburger" for the spring. The crop is left in the field much longer here than is normal in most of Scotland; in fact, until it is required. Bute (being a west coast island) does not suffer prolonged severe weather and root crops are less likely to be damaged by frost than they are elsewhere. It is felt locally that swedes keep much better in the field than they would if stored in bulk, and any surplus roots can be fed to sheep without extra labour. A portion of the crop may be intentionally left to "feed on" with sheep, a cheaper process than lifting, storing and carting out again, and better manuring for the land. This means that unusually large areas of swedes are available to the geese throughout the winter and spring. The same system is worked in Aberdeenshire (where geese and Whooper Swans have started to cause similar damage), partly because there is considerable growth in the crop in autumn and early winter, and partly because the climate enables the roots to remain sound and fresh. On the other hand, in Perthshire for instance, swedes do not keep well in the ground and must be lifted and stored in the autumn.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I am grateful to the following for information: Dr J. Berry, Dr J. W. Campbell, G. Catto, R. K. Cornwallis, D. Kennedy, R. A. Milligan and Lord David Stuart. Permission was obtained from Her Majesty's Stationery Office for the reproduction of Table 1.

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ROSEATE TERNS BREEDING ON THE MAINLAND OF FIFE IN 1956

C. K. MYLNE

In Jack Grierson's paper on the birds of Tentsmuir, the record of Roseate Terns breeding on Shelly Point in 1956 is declared to be "quite unacceptable." It is stated that no nests were found and that only four Roseate Terns were seen; and furthermore that "nests which were marked and reported as those of Roseate Terns were in fact Sandwich Tern nests, and this was confirmed by several competent observers" (*antea* 2: 124).

My own notes tell a different story, and as the breeding of this species on the mainland of Scotland is a rare event a full account may be of interest. A preliminary report appeared in *The Edinburgh Bird Bulletin* (6:58), but on the advice of George Waterston fuller publication was withheld in case the birds returned. This did not happen, and these notes are offered with apologies to Mr Grierson for leaving the record incomplete for so long.

As Grierson points out, Shelly Point became the chief nesting ground of terns in the Tentsmuir area in the early 1950's, but increasing disturbance from visitors and especially from the airfield at Leuchars steadily reduced their numbers from 1953 onwards. In 1956 however there was one important new factor which lasted for only that one season. From 15th June the airfield was virtually closed to aircraft while the runway was being extended and strengthened. I visited Shelly Point first on 6th June when the Common Terns and Arctic Terns were laying. There were hundreds of pairs, and nests were thick on the ground. In the middle of this colony a group of Sandwich Terns formed a compact colony of 27 nests on the sand amongst clumps of sea rocket. Only three pairs of Roseate Terns were seen on this occasion, but with ten pairs of Little Terns nesting on the landward end of the sand-spit we only needed to find the first Roseate's nest to establish a breeding colony containing all five species of British breeding terns. This we were able to do on 1st July when I led an excursion of the Scottish Ornithologists' Club to the area by

kind permission of Mrs Purvis. A number of Roseate Terns were seen sitting on the mud and a good many nests were found, several of them with eggs. The eggs are much smaller than those of the Sandwich Tern, and normally recognisable from those of Common and Arctic Terns by being longer and also more oval in shape. But there was plenty of other evidence that the Roseates were actually nesting. Whereas the Sandwich Terns were in a more compact colony with the scrapes mostly well out on the open sand, the Roseate Terns' nests were in a more scattered group nearby and much more under the cover of marram grass and sea rocket. I have a colour photograph of one such nest almost hidden in the cover. The behaviour of the owners was typical of terns over their breeding sites—noisy and attentive.

Once breeding had been established I revisited the colony several times during July, and identified 18 nests on the 6th—five with one egg, nine with two eggs, and four with three eggs. We did not attempt to make an exhaustive search as this would have involved too much risk to the birds. As it was, our presence caused bedlam overhead. Although individual Roseate Terns can quite easily be picked out in flight amongst a large number of other terns, estimating total numbers is much more difficult. After many attempts, the highest count of birds on the mud and in the air at any one time was 35, which suggested that our total of 18 nests was probably almost complete.

On 17th July seven of the nests still had the same contents as before, one had lost one egg, and the rest were empty. Although no young birds were found near the nests it is possible that the eggs had hatched successfully. Another three nests were found in new sites. The first young birds were found on this visit, one in a nest that had contained one egg earlier, and one in a nest with the other egg chipping. A photograph was taken of this nest as evidence, and this provides the best proof of breeding, since the chicks with their spiky down are quite unlike those of Common or Arctic Terns which might be hatched from eggs of comparable size.

As any chicks which hatched were clearly leaving the vicinity of the nests quickly it is not possible to estimate hatching success. To keep disturbance to a minimum checking the contents of the nests was done as speedily as possible and searching for young birds was out of the question. In five instances single young were found newly hatched and still in the nests. Two young from a clutch of two and one from a clutch of three were later found dead, apparently deserted by their parents. A clutch of deserted eggs found in August contained well-formed dead chicks.

To sum up—in 1956 all five species of British breeding terns

nested at Shelly Point, probably because of the suspension of flying from Leuchars aerodrome. At least 18 pairs of Roseate Terns nested on the sand-bank, and 21 nests were found. At least 45 eggs were laid, and a few young birds hatched successfully, so that it seems likely that some at least may have fledged.

(It should be noted that this report is based on the personal observations of Mr Mylne, although his earlier report in *The Edinburgh Bird Bulletin* evidently contains some second-hand information. We showed the report to Jack Grierson and he has agreed to its publication. He writes that he visited the ternery on 25th June that year, and on a few subsequent dates. On 25th June he searched Shelly Point thoroughly and found nests of the other four species of terns but not of Roseate. Four Roseates were seen in flight but this is not very unusual at that time of year. We have seen Mr Mylne's photograph of egg and chick, dated 17th July 1956, and discussed the matter in detail, and we are satisfied that his report is correct. It should be noted that the period during which the birds were nesting was fairly short and that if the first chicks hatched about 17th July, rather than on 6th July as the earlier report suggested but about which there is now some doubt, then there is no conflict with Mr Mylne's report in the fact that no nests were found on 25th June, as there were probably no eggs then. Nests had been marked by that date, not by Mr Mylne, but these were, as Mr Grierson writes, those of Common, Arctic and Sandwich Terns.—ED.).

WITHOUT COMMENT

"At first I strongly repudiated my husband's view that the harsh cry of our three-week-old daughter sounded like the cawing of a crow. Now I am not so sure. For the past four mornings her six o'clock call for food has brought a large crow hurrying to our bedroom window. There it sits, and together they squawk in what sounds like animated conversation."

—Letter to the *Sunday Express*, 1st July, 1962.

SHORT NOTES

SLAVONIAN GREBES BREEDING IN ABERDEENSHIRE

On 5th August 1962 a friend and I stopped to look at two artificially made lochans in Aberdeenshire. These have good areas of sedge growing in them. On open water by the road we observed a very small bird, and as we put up our glasses the parent bird surfaced from a dive. The chick was very small, with a striped head and neck, and except when actually being fed it continually made an extremely piercing noise. We immediately identified the birds as Slavonian Grebes—with which I am familiar at their breeding haunts elsewhere in Scotland. The adult bird was dark above, with a white wing patch, and its white underparts showed when it dived; neck, breast and flanks a rich pinky chestnut; face black with a wide upward-pointing band of bright gold—the colour of overripe corn—which ran upwards from the bill, through the bird's red eye. While we were watching, another chick arrived giving the hunger call the whole time, and later a second adult appeared and fed it. We saw all these birds again on the 7th, and watched another bird—a juvenile just starting to acquire the adult plumage—on the adjacent lochan on the 9th. I understand that this is the first time these grebes have been recorded breeding in Aberdeenshire.

MARGARET VEITCH.

SPOONBILLS IN DUMFRIESSHIRE

While watching waders at the mouth of the river Annan at about 1600 hrs on 26th May 1962, I noticed an unusual bird which I identified as a Spoonbill. The identification was confirmed by R. T. Smith the following day, by which time the bird had been joined by two others of the same species. All three birds stayed until 30th May and were seen by a number of members of the Dumfries Branch of the S.O.C.

The original bird was an immature, with a pinkish-orange bill and black wing-tips. The two later arrivals were both adults; they looked somewhat larger in size and had darker legs and noticeably black bills. Some observers were also able to make out short crests.

The birds fed standing in the water close to the shore, dipping their bills into the water and swishing them from side to side with a sort of filtering action. They appeared to be feeding on small crabs or other crustaceans trapped in the mud, and as they did so they were constantly harried by the larger species of gulls that normally feed at this point. Two

of the birds were in fact eventually driven off to the main tidal channel several hundred yards away, giving us a picturesque view of their slow, effortless flight. These are the first Spoonbills to have been recorded in Dumfriesshire and the Solway area.

D. MANSON.

AGGRESSIVE BEHAVIOUR OF GOLDENEYE

In April 1962 I had the opportunity of watching the courtship and rivalry displays of three Goldeneye on a lochan near Applecross in Wester Ross. The trio was made up of a duck and two drakes, one of which was dominant (the first drake) and the other a weaker bird (the second drake). The first drake divided his attention almost equally between displaying to the duck and attacking the second drake. In the chases that followed these attacks, the second drake would often find himself temporarily beside the duck. He would then display briefly before being driven away, and the first drake would also display briefly as he passed the duck in hot pursuit of his rival. The second drake usually swam at some distance from the other two, who for the most part swam together. If he approached too close—nearer than 20-30 yards—the first drake would launch an attack. Sometimes the first drake would make a quite unprovoked attack. The attack took three different forms:

(1) The first drake would lower head and neck until they were practically touching the water and swim menacingly towards the second drake. Sometimes this produced a retreat. If so, the first drake returned to the duck: if not, the attack developed into the second form:

(2) The first drake would fly either over or along the water and peck viciously at any part of his rival, the typical whirring of the Goldeneye's wings sounding louder than usual and acquiring a significantly menacing tone. Sometimes this form of attack was used without the preliminary threat display.

(3) The third method of attack was underwater. The first drake usually waited until the second drake was not looking and then dived quickly and attacked from below at the feet or soft parts of the body. This seemed to be extremely effective, causing the second drake to fly off immediately. In fact, sometimes the second drake would see the initial dive and take immediate evasive action without waiting for the attack, in which case the first drake never changed his underwater course but always surfaced exactly where his rival had been floating. It was noticeable that the second drake never took advantage of the first drake's temporary disappearance under water to make for the duck, but always made off in the op-

posite direction. The first drake, therefore, never needed to follow up these underwater attacks.

These attacks were usually launched following or during a courtship display. Indeed the attacks may even have formed part of the display to the duck, as the first drake would sometimes go from courtship display into the first or second form of attack and then straight back again to courtship display without a break. The show of strength was probably just as important in attracting the duck as the display of his other talents.

When I flushed the birds, all three flew off together, both drakes trying to fly as close as possible to the duck. Even in flight the first drake continued to attack the second, buffeting him from time to time with a great clapping of wings. They flew off to another lochan, and when I looked at them again there six or seven hours later the first drake seemed even more possessive and cocksure and the second drake was skulking for the most part at the opposite end of the lochan. Occasionally the first drake would make a short sally at his rival and then return to the side of the duck, who now seemed much more responsive to him and was displaying almost as much as he was.

T. D. H. MERRIE.

On 12th April 1960 I was watching a party of Goldeneye on Loch Morlich, in East Inverness-shire. The party was made up of six adults (apparently three pairs) and a number of immatures. Two of the drakes were engaged in a long fight. It soon became apparent that one of them was getting very much the worst of the fight and would fain have retired, but the stronger bird was not content with an acknowledgment of defeat and viciously pitched into the attack again and again every time the other bird tried to break off. All this time one of the ducks—which I took to be the mate of the weaker bird—circled anxiously round the two combatants as though longing to join in, though she never made any attempt to do so. The significant thing about this fight was that both birds appeared to be paired and that it seemed to be more in the nature of a territorial combat.

Although a good deal has been written about the courtship display of the Goldeneye—notably by Henry Boase (*Brit. Birds* 18: 69; *Scot. Nat.* 1950: 16)—little appears to have been published on the aggressive behaviour described above. All three species of the genus *Bucephala* seem to have this aggressive behaviour much more strongly developed than in the other ducks. Dr Bannerman (*The birds of the British Isles* VII: 136) quotes an earlier writer to the effect that the Buffelhead drakes “fight viciously among themselves for the possession of the females,” and I have described elsewhere (*Brit. Birds*

53: 572) the vicious attacks made by a duck Barrow's Golden-eye on all other diving duck that trespassed on the pool where she had her brood.

D. G. ANDREW.

KING EIDER IN SHETLAND

On 8th June 1962, and again on the 10th, I saw a drake King Eider at Gutcher, off the east coast of Yell. It associated with a large party of common Eiders which fed in the channel between Yell and Linga Island, and often spent long inactive periods on a sandy beach on the island. They did not come closer than about 250 yards, but the following details were clearly seen on the King Eider:

Slightly smaller than the common Eiders; white foreparts; black belly; black upper parts with a white rather oblique line along the wings which showed as a white patch on the forewing in flight; white patch on the side of the body in front of the stern; head pale blue. Forehead steep; bill and frontal shield orange, but it was not possible at that range to see much more than the colour.

I gathered from residents that the bird had been there for several months, and had probably wintered in Shetland.

K. D. SMITH.

(Over the years the King Eider has been noted quite a few times in Shetland waters, and in view of the difficulty of separating immatures and ducks among flocks of common Eiders it probably occurs more regularly than the published records show.—Ed.)

MERLINS TAKING NEWLY HATCHED PASSERINES

On 28th June 1962, in the Stewartry of Kirkcudbright, I found a pair of adult Merlins with four fully fledged eyeasses out of the nest. Prey remains on several nearby plucking stations were examined, and among these were found the fresh bodies of several passerine nestlings. These, probably Meadow Pipits, were blind and naked and obviously not more than about two days old. There is no mention in either *The Handbook* or Bannerman and Lodge's *The birds of the British Isles* of these falcons preying upon nestlings.

E. L. ROBERTS.

CRANES IN ABERDEENSHIRE

On 14th August 1962 H. D. Smith of Hillfold, near Kemnay, reported two grey birds, about four feet high, with long necks and legs, feeding in a field of growing barley near the farm. The following evening Miss E. A. Garden and my wife and I found them still there, and identified them as common Cranes.

We had good views from the car as they stood in the barley, and we noted their blue-grey plumage and slightly darker, drooping tails; head and neck dark slate-grey with very conspicuous pale line down the side of the neck from behind the eye, and a hint of red on the crown. In flight the neck was outstretched, and the black primaries were seen, as well as dark grey patches on the back and upper surface of the wings. No call was heard. The birds remained in the neighbourhood at least until the 16th.

A. ANDERSON.

(These Cranes were seen by various ornithologists, including Dr and Mrs David Jenkins who reported that the birds had been at first approachable to within about 100 yards but gradually became wilder. When approached they rose with a loud clanging call, showing separated primaries in flight and the silhouette of the characteristic loosely feathered tail.

We have heard also of two Cranes in North Fife in the spring but have not received details. Two are reported from Mainland and Yell in the Shetlands towards the end of May, and P. E. Davis tells us that what may well have been the same birds arrived at Fair Isle on the morning of the 29th and left again at noon to the south-east. Later, a single Crane arrived at Fair Isle on 19th July and was still there on the 23rd. These birds, and the Shetland ones of which we have received no details, will be recorded in the *Fair Isle Bird Observatory Bulletin*.—Ed.).

KENTISH PLOVER IN ABERDEENSHIRE

A Kentish Plover was seen by W. E. Pool and myself on 3rd and 4th May 1962 on the Ythan Estuary at Newburgh. I have previously seen Kentish Plovers in Majorca and Benghazi. When first sighted at some distance this plover stood out from the Ringed Plover with it because of its smaller size and much whiter appearance. Thereafter it was watched in good light at ranges down to 20 yards and the following features noted:

Broken breast band; eye-stripe continued over eye; dark face and breast markings more finely marked than on Ringed Plover; white forehead more extensive than on Ringed Plover, and separated from sandy cap by black patch; dark legs noted; compared with Ringed Plover the dark bill was thinner and seemed relatively longer, and the colour of the back was sandier. Though the cap did show a slightly redder tint than the colour of the back this was less distinct than in certain illustrations. When standing with Dunlin it could be seen to be smaller, and it stood with tail cocked up in the air. In flight, which was most erratic, wing and tail markings seemed much as a Ringed Plover. No call heard.

A. G. GORDON.

(This record, which has been accepted by the Rarity

Records Committee of *British Birds*, is only the second of Kentish Plover in Scotland, the first having been seen at Fair Isle on 14th May 1949 (*Scot. Nat.* 1950: 24).—ED.).

UNUSUAL BEHAVIOUR OF BAR-TAILED GODWIT

On 21st May 1962 I flushed a Bar-tailed Godwit from salt-ings at Caerlaverock, Dumfriesshire, whereupon it at once began vigorously to mob my dog, diving repeatedly at his head for three to four minutes, and all the time uttering a loud, clear and sharp "yow-kow" note, no doubt corresponding to the barking calls mentioned in *The Handbook*. A passing Black-headed Gull then attracted the bird's attention, and it proceeded to mob this in similar fashion and repeating a similar call, until I lost sight of both.

E. L. ROBERTS.

COLLARED DOVES IN ORKNEY AND EASTER ROSS

On 23rd July 1962 a friend telephoned to say that there was a strange dove in his garden in St Margaret's Hope, South Ronaldsay. Mention of a narrow black half-collar sent me scurrying to investigate together with Miss D. Aitcheson. We had good views of the bird on the branch of a tree, on a roof-top, and in flight. Slightly smaller than nearby domestic doves it was mainly pale grey-brown—paler on head, neck and underparts, with a slightly pinkish or purplish flush on the breast—with blackish primaries and a narrow black half-collar round the back of the neck. The end half of the tail was white on the underside.

E. BALFOUR.

On 3rd August 1962 I had a telephone message from John Rhind in Invergordon to say that two strange pigeons had appeared in his garden and were feeding on newly sown grass seed. From his description I was able to confirm that these were collared Doves. Next morning an immature bird was seen in a tree nearby, and during August the adults were noted from time to time, with an immature bird again on the 28th.

I. D. PENNIE.

Following a report that up to about six Collared Doves had been seen feeding with poultry in the Tarbat district of Easter Ross during the previous two months, I visited the area on 29th September 1962 with two friends. No sooner had we halted the car beside the steading at Bindal Farm, two miles from Tarbat Ness Lighthouse, than we spotted a Collared Dove fly from a tree in an adjoining copse to the roof of one of the farm buildings. During the next half hour we watched

three, possibly four, doves as they flitted about the copse. Although none of us had seen the species before, the diagnostic features, including the black half-collar, the darkish primaries and the prominent black and white under-tail pattern in flight, were unmistakable. Cooing was heard several times. Although the birds were quite approachable they nevertheless showed a certain degree of wariness. Growing in the copse was an almost impenetrable clump of sapling spruce trees, about 20 feet high, which appeared to be an ideal breeding retreat for the birds.

D. MACDONALD.

(These are the first records for Orkney and Easter Ross, and indicate that the spread of the Collared Dove in Scotland continues. We have heard reports of birds which were clearly Collared Doves in other new localities this year, but sometimes it has not been possible to obtain sufficient proof of identity for the records to be published in *Scottish Birds*. Any information will, however, be very welcome, and will help to build up a valuable picture of the spread of this species.—ED.).

LITTLE OWL IN DUMFRIESSHIRE

On the morning of 26th April 1961 my wife and I were driving past Carrifran in the Moffat Water Valley, when we noticed an owl sitting on the dry-stone dyke of a sheep pen. We were immediately struck by its small size and generally spotted appearance. We stayed in the car and were able to get an excellent view of the bird. Its general colouring was greyish-brown; the face greyish-white; breast spotted and barred brownish; and belly whitish, showing up conspicuously in flight. The bird frequently turned its head, and when it did so it appeared to have a light collar. I estimated it to be about the same length as a Blackbird, although it was of course a much more thick-set bird.

After studying the bird for some time, I opened the car door to observe the flight. The bird flew with short, rapid wing-beats, keeping very low with a short glide after each flight, and it settled on a rock after flying only about 40 yards. When I flushed it again, it behaved in the same manner. I followed it for about 200 yards as it flew from rock to rock.

The bird's small size, appearance and behaviour left no doubt that it was a Little Owl. This is my first record for the district and appears to be only the second for the county. One was trapped at Caerlaverock in 1951 (*Scot. Nat.* 1951: 189).

E. DICERBO.

ALPINE SWIFT IN SHETLAND

On 13th June 1962 I saw an Alpine Swift hawking insects in the geos at Herma Ness, Unst. Close views down to twenty yards were obtained. No other bird comparable in size was near, but it was obviously a large swift, brownish on the upper parts, with a white belly and throat, and brown chest band. I am very familiar with the species in countries where it breeds. There does not appear to be a previous record for Shetland.

K. D. SMITH.

SOME BREEDING NOTES ON THE TREECREEPER

The following notes refer to observations made at a long-established nest site of the Treecreeper in a garden toolshed at Dornoch, Sutherland, during the period 1950 to 1962. The owner of the property has informed me that Treecreepers have used this nest site at irregular intervals for over 30 years. The nest is placed at a height of about 7 feet behind the wood frontage of the shed and is wedged into a space between an upright wooden post and the brick wall of an adjoining outhouse. The birds obtain access through a narrow crevice which has opened up between the two sheds. The foundation of the nest consists of a huge accumulation of tiny twigs and wood chips, the entire bulk extending to a depth of 12 inches and protruding 9½ inches inwards towards the interior of the shed.

During the 13 years that I have had this nest under observation Treecreepers have nested in it five times—in 1950, 1954, 1956, 1958 and 1962. In 1953 the birds repaired the structure but forsook it after having completed the lining of the nest cup.

Nest building mainly consisted of adding a fresh nest cup on top of the massive foundation pile. The beginning of operations varied from late March to early May, and generally took about 14 days to complete. On one occasion I watched a Treecreeper pull off decayed strips of wood with its bill from a rotten branch which lay on the ground about 15 yards away from the nest site. The wood strips which the bird was seen to carry to the nest were 1 to 2 inches in length, but amongst the nest material I found one particular strip measuring 5 inches, the same length as the bird itself. The nest cup was always lined first with tiny wood chips, occasionally intermingled with small lumps of wool, and finally covered over with feathers.

The clutch size and the dates of completion were as follows:

1950—6 eggs by 23rd April.

1954—6 eggs by 26th April.

1956—6 eggs by 16th April—early, according to *The Handbook*.

1958—5 eggs by 10th May.

1962—6 eggs by 29th April.

In four of the five years the incubation period agreed with the 14-15 days given in *The Handbook*. In 1956, however, a bird was still incubating at 08.30 hours G.M.T. on the 16th day after the completion of the clutch, but by 16.30 hours G.M.T. on that date incubation had ceased and the eggs were cold. By the following morning it was obvious that the clutch had been deserted and all 6 eggs were found to be infertile. It is interesting to note that incubation continued for only one day beyond the recognised period. Apart from this clutch and two addled eggs in the 1954 clutch, all the eggs hatched out.

In the four years in which broods were reared there were no cases of nestling mortality and 21 nestlings were fledged successfully. The fledging period, which *The Handbook* gives as 14-15 days, was ascertained on three occasions. In two of those years the young left the nest on the 16th day after hatching and in the other year on the 17th day. The secure position of the nest site might account for such prolonged fledging periods.

D. MACDONALD.

YELLOW-BROWED WARBLER AND TAWNY PIPIT IN LEWIS

On 6th October 1961 I watched a Yellow-browed Warbler in Western Lewis for nearly an hour while it flitted about in some conifers and at times hovered in front of the branches. It was quite tame, and not much bigger than a Goldcrest with which it occasionally associated. The general impression was of a small green-yellow leaf-warbler with prominent double wing-bar, dark eyestripe and yellow superciliary.

On 23rd October 1961 in Western Lewis I had brief views of a Tawny Pipit on the grass outside my window. At first glance I had mistaken it for a female Yellow Wagtail. It was much larger than a Meadow Pipit and stood very upright with its head held high. The nape and back were rather pale uniform buffish brown and unstreaked, and the underparts were pale buff and completely lacking any dark streaks. The crown was dark brown and there was a dark mark through the eye and a pale buff superciliary. By comparison with a Meadow Pipit the tail was longer, the yellowish legs were long and fairly sturdy, and the bill also looked rather larger. The bird flew up onto the edge of the roof and was lost round the far side of the house in the westerly gale which was blowing. I am familiar with Tawny Pipits abroad.

STEPHEN L. B. LEE.

(Sketches and full descriptions of both these birds have been submitted, and the records have been accepted by the Rarity Records Committee of *British Birds*. The Tawny Pipit does not seem to have been recorded previously in the Outer Hebrides. Readers will have seen reports in the press of the tragic death of Mr Lee on 21st April 1962—at the age of 22—at Gallan Head in Western Lewis.—Ed.).

ROSE-COLOURED STARLING IN FIFE

At Lundin Links on 6th September 1962, while having tea in my sun porch, I noticed an unusual bird with a flock of about 25 immature Starlings feeding on the golf practice ground on the other side of the road. I could see a black head above a pale breast appearing over the top of a knoll, and identified it as a Rose-coloured Starling. I contacted Miss P. G. Baxter who came at once and we watched the bird together.

It was the same size as a common Starling but looked stockier. The lower breast, belly, flanks, mantle, back and rump were pale rosy-pink; head, nape, throat and upper breast glossy black with a tinge of purple; feathers of the nape forming an inconspicuous crest; wings black with a suggestion of brown, and in flight appearing paler at the tips; tail seemed shorter and squarer than a Starling's, and was black, tinged brown like the wings, and buff tipped; the bill, rather shorter than a Starling's was pinkish brown, and the legs reddish-brown but paler than a Starling's.

The Rose-coloured Starling usually kept to the edge of the flock and tended to wander a little on its own, but followed the others when they flew, sometimes being a step behind. The flock was restive and kept flying from place to place so that it was impossible to get close to the bird. It was seen again next morning, but not after that.

R. S. WEIR.

ARCTIC REDPOLL IN LEWIS

A male Arctic Redpoll in spring plumage, picked up at Uigen in West Lewis on 8th April 1962, was sent to Glasgow Art Gallery and Museum by W. A. J. Cunningham of Stornoway. The bird was made into a cabinet skin by James Fraser.

Mr Cunningham considered it to be an Arctic Redpoll of the race known as Hornemann's Redpoll *Carduelis h. hornemanni*. With the Hon. Douglas Weir (who made two water-colour sketches) I examined it at the museum, and we concluded that Mr Cunningham was correct. The skin was sent to Kenneth Williamson, Migration Research Officer of the British Trust for Ornithology, who replied that "the bird is undoubt-

edly *hornemanni*, the high-arctic form... I make the wing (without stretching) a minimum of 79 mm which is outside *hornemanni* range, but just in *exilipes* range, as given in the *Handbook*. However, a larger series measured by Dr F. Salomonsen (*Birds of Greenland* p. 502) gives *hornemanni* as 77-83 mm." *C. h. exilipes* is the race of the Arctic Redpoll known as Coues's Redpoll. Mr Williamson calls attention to his recent paper (*Brit. Birds* 54: 238-241) in which he follows Salomonsen in regarding all redpolls as conspecific.

C. E. PALMAR.

(This is apparently the first record of the Arctic Redpoll in the Outer Hebrides—Ed.).

RED-HEADED BUNTING ON LITTLE CUMBRAE

On 11th June 1961 on the island of Little Cumbrae, Bute, I was crossing an area of bracken and low trees when a small brown and yellow bird flew from a tree across my path and into a bush nearby. It gave me the impression of a very brightly-coloured Yellowhammer. When I flushed it, it flew to the leafless branches of a small elder, and perched where I could watch it. It fluttered its wings and shook out its feathers and I was able to see that the underparts were bright yellow extending to the tail. The head was copper-red and it looked as if the bird was wearing a helmet. There was a dark yellow band at the nape of the neck, between the head and the brownish mantle. The wings were brown with darker stripes, and the general impression was of a red, yellow and brown bird. I consulted the *Handbook* when I returned home, and am satisfied that the bird was a cock Red-headed Bunting. In view, however, of the remarks in *British Birds* (54: 196 and elsewhere) I can only regard this bird as an escape, and accordingly it is reported as a matter of interest only.

N. F. STEWART.

(The Rarity Records Committee of *British Birds*, to whom we are indebted for the record, have accepted it subject to the proviso that the bird was almost certainly an escape—one of the great number of male Red-headed Buntings imported each year. It should therefore not be regarded as a new species for Clyde.—Ed.).

CURRENT NOTES

(**Key to initials of observers** : G. H. Acklam, A. F. Airey, D. G. Andrew, W. Austin, G. H. Ballantyne, J. Ballantyne, Miss P. G. Baxter, T. H. Bell, H. Boase, T. Boyd, R. G. Caldow, S. I. Clarke, Miss M. E. Cotton, Mrs A. Cunningham, W. A. J. Cunningham, R. Darroch, G. Dick, Sir R. Erskine-Hill, H. Ford, Miss E. A. Garden, H. Halliday, M. J. Henderson, Miss M. C. Hill, J. A. D. Hope, J. Hoy, Rev. G. T. Jamieson, R. A. Jeffrey, Dr D. Jenkins, Mrs M. Jenkins, N. Langham, D. G. Long, A. J. B. Loudon, A. Macdonald, D. Macdonald, M. K. Macduff-Duncan, K. S. Macgregor, A. T. Macmillan, T. D. H. Merrie, R. I. Milne, W. Murray, J. S. Oliver, G. L. A. Patrick, N. Picozzi, J. Potter, R. M. Ramage, G. A. Richards, W. K. Richmond, E. L. Roberts, I. B. Roy, G. L. Sandeman, J. Shanks, W. M. Skene, P. J. B. Slater, K. D. Smith, M. L. Smith, P. J. S. Smith, R. W. J. Smith, Dr T. C. Smout, D. Stalker, R. Stewart, M. Swales, C. Tait, D. G. Tweedie, A. D. Watson, Dr R. S. Weir, T. Weir, D. P. Willis, J. G. Young.

Unless otherwise stated, all dates refer to 1962.)

Distribution

This section deals with observations from 1st June 1962, and therefore includes very little on spring migration. Older records are given in another section, and only included here in amplification of current observations or with reference to the present status of a species.

Small numbers of **Great Northern Divers** are to be found every summer off the north-west coast of Scotland, but records of birds on fresh water are less common and it is of interest that a bird in full breeding plumage was watched at close range on a small loch in Sutherland on 25th June (JS, PJBS). At Loch Lomond on 2nd September two were diving close to the Dunbartonshire bank—one being still in summer plumage (DS, TW). On 12th July a **Black-throated Diver** was seen on a loch on Islay, and next day two on another loch. In spite of rumours, this species has not yet been proved to breed on the island, and these were evidently immature birds (CT).

There were nine **Great Crested Grebes** on the Tay at Port Allen, Perthshire, on 9th June—an unusual date (HB), and four were seen in the Achiltibuie district of Wester Ross—where it is a rare bird—on 4th September (MS). A juvenile **Red-necked Grebe** was at Gullane Point on 2nd September (TDHM), and an adult, moulting from summer plumage, off Cramond on the 8th. The observer comments that, from the published details, most of the early autumn birds recorded in the Forth seem to be adults (TCS). A **Black-necked Grebe** was at Hule Moss, Berwickshire, on 3rd July (DGL).

In the Forth in 1962 the **Fulmar** bred for the first time on Inchgarvie (*antea* 2: 201), and also on the Lamb, where an adult was brooding a small chick on 20th July (ATM). A "blue" Fulmar, of James Fisher's "D" colouring (see *The Ful-*

mar p. 268), was seen during July at the Brough of Birsay, Mainland of Orkney (GAR, MLS).

A count of 44 **Hérons** in Montrose Basin on 14th August was an advance of four on the total of 13th September 1960 (*antea* 1: 384) (HB).

A big influx of **Mallard** to the area is indicated by a count of 800 at Cramond, Mid/West Lothian, on 15th September, against 60 a week earlier at the same state of the tide (TCS). A duck **Gadwall** was at Gladhouse, Midlothian, from 29th April to 13th May, but no drake was seen and there was no breeding (DGA). A pair was near the Butt of Lewis on 23rd August, the species being rare in Lewis and not known to breed in the Outer Hebrides (NL). Parallel with the influx of **Mallard** at Cramond there was a big influx of **Wigeon** at Barnbogle, West Lothian, where 300 were counted on 15th September, against six a week before, and compared with a maximum of 30 during the previous winter (TCS). On the 21st there were 1,500 in Montrose Basin (HB).

A drake **Scaup** was on a loch on Islay on 16th and 21st July, but there was no evidence of breeding (ADW). At Hule Moss a drake was seen on 12th August (SJC, MJH, DGL), and there were up to 16 on the sea at Carsethorn, Kirkcudbrightshire, on 20th August (THB). The **Tufted Duck** is a rare breeding bird on Islay (*Scot. Nat.* 1954: 144), and it may therefore be of interest to note three drakes in eclipse plumage on Ardnave Loch on 16th and 21st July, and seven drakes in eclipse and a duck on Loch Gorm on the 21st (ADW). In West Fife, at Peppermill Dam, where breeding has not been previously recorded, a brood of four ducklings was seen on 5th September, and the birds could not have been hatched for more than a few days (GD, JP). **Goldeneye** are believed to summer regularly at Loch Leven, Kinross-shire, as an odd immature drake is usually seen by St Serf's Island on visits in May and June; this year two were seen on 2nd June, and one on 14th July (TB, RWJS). Fifty half-grown juvenile **Shelduck** were counted in the Almond estuary with 12 adults on 28th July. They were too small to have come far and must have been bred locally, possibly on Cramond Island, Midlothian, where they have nested before, but most of them probably along the West Lothian shores, where three pairs were noted near Barnbogle in May and June, and one pair at Hopetoun throughout May. There is no breeding record for West Lothian, and these observations cannot be regarded as formal proof of nesting there (TCS).

In the last issue we gave various records of geese in May and June (*antea* 2: 202). At Loch Leven, Kinross-shire, there are usually a few injured birds in summer—e.g. three **Grey Lag Geese** and two **Pink-footed Geese** on 2nd June. Two **Pinkfeet**, of which at least one was a pricked bird, spent the whole summer

at Gladhouse, though they could both fly (DGA, RWJS). There were five Grey Lags at the Loch o' the Lowes, Perthshire, on 26th June, and eight off Bowgavie on the 27th (HB), and three at Barr Loch, Renfrewshire, on 22nd July (GHA). A single Pinkfoot was at the mouth of the North Esk, Angus, on 17th June (HB); one was at Hule Moss on 11th August (SJC, MJH, WM), and one flew past Quothquhan, Lanarkshire, on the 18th (RE-H)—both more likely to have been birds left behind in the spring than early arrivals.

On 1st September there were six **Grey Lag Geese** at Kingoodie, Perthshire (HB), and on the 13th there were 28—the first of the autumn—feeding in pasture near Annan, Dumfriesshire (AFA). On Deeside they arrived on the 20th (DJ).

There was apparently a fairly widespread arrival of **Pink-footed Geese** on Monday 17th September, judging from the number of reports sent in, and this is early for these birds. The records below give a picture of this arrival. In some instances the identity of the birds can be presumed, although the observers only identified them as "geese."

12 Sept.—Keepers at Gladhouse saw first flock passing south—birds seen circling the reservoir on the next few days (per RWJS).

14 Sept.—34 in Fife (per Wildfowl Trust).

17 Sept.—Small skein over Contin, Easter Ross (JB); noted over Dundee (HB); 50 at Lindores, Fife (RSW); 40 and 25 flying over Skinflats, Stirlingshire, towards L. Leven (RWIS); 60 at Loch Leven (HB); first small parties at Libberton, Lanarkshire, and over Dalveen Pass, Dumfries/Lanarkshire (RE-H); 25 flying east over Buchtrig in the Cheviots, Roxburghshire (DGT per DGA).

18 Sept.—30 flew over Lindores Loch, Fife, and 350 at Loch Leven (PGB); 100 flying south over Colinton in the morning (per ATM).

The status of the **Canada Goose** in Scotland seems to be something of a mystery. Two pairs were noted on 13th June, with broods of three and five goslings respectively, at the Park Loch, Mellerstain House, near Kelso (AFA). A most unexpected flock of 72 birds was seen at Loch Leven on 5th September (DGA).

Counts of 448 **Mute Swans** on Loch Leven on 13th August, and 174 in Montrose Basin next day, are illustrative of the large numbers to be seen at these places at that time of year (HB). There are quite a few further notes on **Whooper Swans** seen in summer to add to those already published (*antea* 2: 204):

Loch Ken, Kirkcudbright—up to 4 remained during June and at least part of July—all had rather pale bills and were probably not fully adult (ADW), a comment which may well apply to others noted as adult birds.

White Loch, Renfrew—3 still there on 8th July, but not on the 11th or later (GHA).

Loch Leven, Kinross—1 on 2nd June and 14th July probably spent summer there (TB, RWJS).

Loch Lomond—4 adults may have summered, being noted by various

observers on 7th, 8th and 15th July and on 1st, 2nd and 6th September (GHA, AJBL, DS, TW).

Near Crinan, Argyll—1 adult on 11th August (GHA).

Dunalastair Reservoir, Perth—2 on 6th June (HB), and on 20th (WKR).

Ythan Estuary, Aberdeen—2 on 28th July (JB).

First autumn reports of Whoopers are of three which walked ashore at Crombie Point, Fife, from a very rough sea on 16th September (GD, JP), and of one at the Livingstone end of Loch Ken on the 22nd (AFA).

At Addiewell, Midlothian, a **Buzzard**—the first the observer has seen there—was being mobbed by three Carrion Crows on 23rd September (HH), on the 17th one was at Lindores, Fife (RSW), and during the second half of the month there was quite an influx at Gartocharn, Dunbartonshire, with up to five at once over Duncryne Hill (TW).

A female or immature **Marsh Harrier** was seen hunting over rough ground on Jura on 27th July, and again two or three days later (RD), and a very dark bird at the Loch of Strathbeg, Aberdeenshire, on 6th September quartering the reed beds and putting the ducks into hysterics (EAG). Single female or immature **Hen Harriers** were at Gladhouse on 26th August (DGA), and at Dumbarrie Links, Largo, Fife, on 2nd September (GHB). An **Osprey** was watched at Borve, Harris, on 23rd June as it stooped at a sea trout in the river (per WAJC).

Quail have been heard calling during recent summers near Gifford, East Lothian (see *antea* 1: 459), and this year they were again present, being last heard early in August. We have previously expressed some doubts about the status of birds heard near Dirleton because imported eggs were incubated at Archerfield in 1959 under bantams (*loc. cit.*), and a record of one calling during 1961 at Queenstonbank Farm has not been published for that reason. R. E. Moreau now writes that these birds "will certainly be wild ones because the imported eggs are of Japanese stock, and the birds make a totally different noise—a raucous 'baba-broaak' which one would never associate with a European Quail. I know these originally from having heard them at a Quail 'farm' in Wiltshire and then by checking with tape records of Japanese Quail, both wild and commercial, received from Japan" (per AM).

An inland record of **Turnstone** is of one at Gladhouse on 22nd July (DGA). A count of 20 **Whimbrel** at Barns Ness, East Lothian, on 29th July is high for the Forth (AM).

Black-tailed Godwits are reported from:

Invergowrie Bay, Tay—1 on 23rd Sept (HB).

Eden Estuary, Fife—1 on 28th Aug, and 40 on 29th/31st (RIM).

Skinflats, Stirling—1 on 8th/9th Sept (GHA, GD, GLAP, JP).

Carsethorn, Kirkeudbright—up to 5 on 28th Aug (THB).

One hundred **Bar-tailed Godwits** at Caerlaverock on 11th June were probably late passage birds, as fairly large parties do pass through the Solway in May or June in most years (ELR). Fifteen flying over Ardmore Bay, Dunbartonshire, on 1st September are described as an unusually large number for the area (TDHM).

The following **Green Sandpipers** are reported:

- R. Dee, Crathes Bridge, Kincardine—1 on 17th Aug (DJ).
- Kerloch Hill, Kincardine—1 on rain-water pool on heather moor on 7th Aug (DJ). This is the first record for North Kincardine.
- Kingoodie, Perth—1 on 21st/22nd July (HB).
- Moor Loch, Tullicallan, Fife—1 on 5th Sept (GD, JP).
- Tynninghame, East Lothian—1 on 5th Aug (TB, IBR, WMS, RWJS).
- Rosebery Pool, Midlothian—1 on 8th July (DGA).
- Gavinton, Duns, Berwick—1 on 7th Aug (DGL).
- Bell's Burn, Manderston, Duns—returned to this wintering area on 12th Aug and constantly present until time of writing (12th Sept), with 4 on 19th Aug, and 5 on the 25th (SJC). A photograph of one of these birds appears in this issue of "Scottish Birds."

The only **Wood Sandpipers** reported are three or four in a marsh near Troup Head, Banff, on 21st August, and about four near Fraserburgh, Aberdeenshire, the same day, and two or three there until the 25th (GLS). There is no previous record for Banff.

Counts of **Redshanks** in the Almond Estuary on 4th August (750), and in September on the 8th (1,000), 15th (900), and 29th (600), are worth contrasting with a peak of only 125-200 at Aberlady Bay further down the Forth, the two areas being similar in size (TCS).

Many more **Spotted Redshanks** than usual were seen this autumn, being recorded at many places between 4th August and 22nd September:

- Skibo, Dornoch Firth, Sutherland—1 on 20th Aug (DM).
- Near Fraserburgh—1 on 21st Aug (GLS).
- Pennan Head, Aberdeen boundary—7 at roadside pool on 21st Aug (GLS).
- Near Troup Head, Banff—3 on 21st Aug (GLS).
- Mouth of R. Spey, Moray—1 on 18th Aug (GLS).
- Eden Estuary—1 on 28th and 31st Aug (RIM).
- Fife Ness—1 on 4th Sept (PGB).
- Cult Ness, Rosyth, Fife—1 on 28th/29th Aug and 5th September (GD, JP, PJSS).
- Crombie, Fife—1 on 15th Sept (GD, JP).
- Barns Ness, East Lothian—1 on 12th and 18th Aug (AM).
- Tynninghame—1 on 19th Aug (IBR, WMS, RWJS).
- Barnboulge, West Lothian—1 on 4th Aug, and 1 on 15th Sept (TCS).
- Skinflats, Stirling—1 on 25th Aug, and 8th, 17th and 22nd Sept (GD, JP, RWJS).
- Hule Moss, Berwick—1 on 4th/5th Aug (SJC, MJH, DGL).
- Cummiertrees, Dumfries—1 on 11th Sept at Priestfield Flow (AFA).

The first **Greenshanks** of the autumn were reported at Port Allen, Perthshire, on 6th July (HB). This is not a rare bird on autumn passage, but the localities of some inland reports may be of interest:

Tulliallan, Fife—3 at Peppermill Dam on 14th Aug, and 1 on 5th Sept, when there were also 4 at Moor Loch (GD, JP).

Gladhouse—2 on 26th Aug (DGA).

Rosebery Reservoir, Midlothian—3 on 29th July (RWJS), and 1 on 2nd Sept (DGA).

Portmore, Peebles—3 on 12th Aug (RWJS).

Clyde at Hamilton, Lanark—1 on 18th Aug, 2 on 8th Sept, and 1 on the 15th (GHA).

Glenburn Reservoir, Paisley, Renfrew—1 on 7th Aug (RGC).

Lochgoin Reservoir, Renfrew—1 on 14th Aug (RGC).

Craigendunton Reservoir, Ayr (a mile from above)—3 on 14th Aug (RGC).

Watch Reservoir, Berwick—2 on 8th Aug (DGL).

Hule Moss—1 on 31st Aug (DGL).

A **Knot** was seen inland at Gladhouse on 4th August (RWJS), and there was one at Loch Lomond on the Dunbarton bank of the Endrick on 15th July, and no fewer than 20 on the 22nd—a large number inland (DS).

There are only a few reports of **Little Stints**:

Bay of Birsay, Orkney—1 on 6th Sept (PJSB).

Dornoch Point Saltmarsh, Sutherland—1 on 3rd Oct (DM).

Cairnbulg Point, near Fraserburgh—4 on 21st and 23rd Aug, and 6 on the 24th (GLS).

Aberlady Bay—1 on 27th Sept (JADH).

Gladhouse—1 on 19th Aug (DGA).

Curlew Sandpipers have also been scarce:

Near Fraserburgh—1 on 23rd and 25th Aug (GLS).

North shore of Tentsmuir, Fife—3 on 22nd Aug (RMR).

Aberlady Bay—1 on 13th Sept (AM, GLS), 1 on the 16th (GHA, GLAP), and at least 3 on the 27th (JADH).

Port Seton, East Lothian—1 on 7th Sept (MCH).

Two **Sanderlings** were inland at Gladhouse on 4th August (RWJS). Records from areas where they are described as uncommon are of one near Aultbea and three at Gairloch Bay, both Wester Ross, on 21st September—remarkable also because not a single Dunlin was seen that day in the area (JB); one in the upper Forth Estuary at Longannet on 15th September (GD, JP); and in the Solway, at least six near Southernness on 20th August, one at the Sands of Luce on the 29th (THB), and 30 at Dornock, Dumfriesshire, on 14th September (AFA).

Ruff are reported in many places from 13th August onwards:

Sumburgh, Shetland—2 with Lapwings on 4th Oct (PJSB).

Twatt, Orkney—9 in grassy field on 8th Sept (PJSB).

Dornoch Point Saltmarsh—1 on 26th Aug (DM).

Near Fraserburgh—50 or more, 20th/28th Aug (GLS).

Kinnordy, Angus—3, probably 5, on 22nd Aug (HB).

Longforgan Station, Perth—1 on 7th Sept (HB).

Eden Estuary—1 from 30th Aug to 1st Sept (GI, RIM, JP).

Cult Ness, Fife—6 on 28th Aug, and 1 on 5th Sept (GD, JP).

Tynninghame—1 on 19th Aug (TB), and 1 on 16th Sept (IBR, WMS).

Aberlady—counts on Aug 13th (1), 16th (2), 18th (10), 19th (5), 27th (2), 28th (1), and Sept 13th (2) (TB, HF, DGL, AM, RWJS).

Skinflats—counts on Aug 13th (4), 25th (4), Sept 17th (3), and 22nd (3) (GD, JP, RWJS).

Low Parks, Hamilton, Lanark—2 on 18th Aug, 10 on 8th Sept, and 4 on the 15th (GHA).

Cummertrees, Dumfries—3 on 11th Sept (AFA).

Caerlaverock, Dumfries—4 on 23rd Aug (WA, THB).

Loch Ryan, Wigtown—1 on 12th Sept (PGB).

Four **Arctic Skuas** at Longanet, Fife, on 14th July are the earliest the observer has seen there (JH), and Arctic Skuas were seen at Aberlady about the same time (KSM). There were several near Inchmickery on the 17th and this is probably the normal time of arrival in this part of the Forth (ATM). Numbers at Aberlady were unusually high during the autumn, with 12 on 19th August (JB) and at least 20 on 2nd September flying past Gullane Point (TDHM). Further up the Forth at Cramond the peak count was about 10 on 15th September (TCS).

Herring Gulls were nesting in 1962 on the cliffs at the mouth of the North Esk, Angus/Kincardine border; they had not been there in 1952 (HB). On 27th August 100 **Common Gulls** passed SW in 1's and 2's at Easthaven, Angus (HB). A **Glaucous Gull**—in its 4th summer to judge from its plumage—was seen intermittently in Ayr harbour from 27th May to 13th July (JGY). Further immature **Iceland Gulls** are reported (see *antea* 2: 207)—a 1st winter bird at Sheigra, West Sutherland, on 14th May, a 2nd winter bird in Aberdeen harbour on 21st May (KDS), and an immature in the fish market at Peterhead, Aberdeenshire, on 13th July (DPW). There is no previous record for West Sutherland.

A juvenile **Little Gull** was at Cult Ness on 25th September (GD), and small numbers of this species were seen at their usual haunts near Elie and Lundin Links during the autumn, with up to eight frequenting Kilconquhar Loch at the end of August and during September (PGB, RSW). The **Kittiwake** is a very scarce bird away from the sea, and 20 flying east down the R. Feugh at Strachan, Kincardineshire, during the morning of 30th September may have been blown right across the country by the tremendous SW winds at that time (DJ).

Unusually many **Black Terns** occurred, mainly in southern Scotland, in the middle of August, and during September. All the birds noted below were specifically identified, except that the birds in West Lothian and Kirkcudbrightshire, and those at Tynninghame on 30th September, were not seen clearly enough to eliminate the slender chance that they could have been White-winged Black Terns. The records cover no fewer than nine different sightings:

16 Aug—1 at mouth of R. Spey, Tugnet, Morayshire (GLS).

—1 at Aberlady, East Lothian (DGL).

18 Aug—1 at L. Morlich (RHD(ennis) in "The Scotsman" 1st September 1962). Details of identification are given. There is no previous record for East Inverness.

—1 over the Clyde at Hamilton, Lanark (GHA).

6 Sept—1 at Kilconquhar Loch, Fife (PGB).

15 Sept—1, probably 2, at Barnbougle, West Lothian (TCS).

16 Sept—1 flying NE up coast at Tynningham, East Lothian, with Common/Arctic Terns (TB, JBR, RWJS).

30 Sept—2 in distance at Tynningham (RWJS).

—1 at Carsethorn, Kirkcudbright (PGB).

A **Common Tern** on the Tweed between Walkerburn and Innerleithen on 21st June was the first the observer had seen in Peeblesshire (JB). **Common/Arctic Terns** are not often seen in the Glenkens district of Kirkcudbrightshire in autumn, but on the night of 3rd/4th October their calls were distinctly heard over Dalry (ADW). A **Sandwich Tern** flew south quite low over Warrender Park Road, in the centre of Edinburgh, at 1030 hours B.S.T. on 30th September (TCS).

Surprisingly *The Birds of Aberlady Bay Nature Reserve* notes only four occurrences of **Puffins**—all in winter. On 8th July a total of 97 birds, in 29 parties, flew east past Aberlady Point, a few landing and diving there. A fair number of Guillemots, as well as Gannets, Kittiwakes and a few Fulmars, also passed. A moderate SE wind with sea fog was probably mainly responsible for the birds coming up the Forth, but these figures also reflect the much greater numbers of Puffins at Craighleith this year (see *antea* 2: 208) (RWJS).

Details of the first occurrences of **Collared Doves** in Orkney and Easter Ross appear elsewhere in this issue of *Scottish Birds*. There were several in and around Stornoway during the summer, and an injured bird was found at Ness, near the Butt of Lewis, in June (WAJC). A well marked adult, and two duller birds which came separately, had been visiting a garden in Mayfield Terrace, Edinburgh, for two to three months at the time of writing (9th October) (MEC). This is not far from where Collared Doves were recorded last year (*antea* 1: 284, 286).

Two **Little Owls** were seen about rocks at St Abbs Head, Berwickshire, on 5th September, and single birds again on the 6th and 8th (HF).

The recent B.T.O. report on the enquiry into the distribution of the **Nightjar** (*Bird Study* 9: 104) unfortunately gives the misleading impression that the bird is absent or very rare in S.W. Scotland, some notes sent to the organiser having gone astray. The bird is in fact still a regular summer visitor to Kirkcudbrightshire, numbers being irregular and probably never large, and in June and July 1962 there were several in song in a much favoured stretch of immature spruce and pine forest, where comparatively open patches of ground alternate with older and denser forest (ADW).

On Islay, where the species does not breed, there were two **Swifts** at Bowmore on 9th July, and four at Gruinart on the 10th, but these were no doubt migrants (CT). On 17th August there was a large passage of hundreds west up Deeside, then a gap when none was seen, followed by prolonged passage

with SE winds on the 24th when many birds were involved. The observer suggests that the first lot were perhaps local Scottish birds leaving for the south, and the second lot more northern populations passing south (DJ). At Haddington, East Lothian, the main body of about 150 left at about the usual season, on 21st August, but 20-30 stayed on late, until 4th September, and a straggler until the 15th (AM). There was one at Dalkeith on the 15th, and two were at Penicuik on the 17th (HF), and two at Dunbar on the 30th (AM). Odd birds can of course be expected up to the end of September.

A **Kingfisher** was at Hamilton Low Parks on 22nd September—the observer commenting that it is the first he has seen in four years, and that it is something to know that the bird is not yet extinct in Lanarkshire (DS).

A **Green Woodpecker** was heard at White Loch, Colvend, on 31st August (THB). There does not seem to be any previously published record for Kirkcudbrightshire, but we understand that the species has nested in the county, several nests having been reported since at least 1959. There is a strong likelihood that nesting started as long ago as 1956 or 1957. Fledged young were seen in 1961, and there was a nest near Loch Ken in 1962 (ADW). Also on 31st August a Green Woodpecker was seen and heard at Gartocharn, Dunbartonshire, a further advance north and west, and the first record for the county (TW). A **Great Spotted Woodpecker** was seen, almost as far north as it could be on the mainland of Scotland, in the village of Tongue, Sutherland, on 16th July (JS, PJBS).

On 8th September **Swallows** were moving SW on a broad front, being noted during most of the day over Cramond, and later in the Humber/Gifford area (TCS). On Islay, where it is a scarce bird, a **House Martin** was seen near Ballygrant on 20th July, and also a pair with a nest at Persibus (ADW). At Bonnyrigg, Midlothian, well-grown young were still being fed in a nest on 28th September (JB).

On 12th August a scattered party of 14 **Ravens**, mostly in pairs, were rising on a thermal over the bar at the mouth of the Endrick; the birds moved away NW over Loch Lomond (TDHM). At Tore, in the Black Isle district of Easter Ross, an occasional **Magpie** has been seen in recent years—always in the same corner of a forestry plantation. In 1955 there were two on 23rd March and one on 15th May; in 1956, two on 26th January; in 1959, one on 20th January; in 1960, one on 29th January; in 1961, one on 24th March and two on 6th April; and in 1962, two on 2nd May. No nests have been found (MKM-D). One was seen at Cockburnspath, Berwickshire, on 18th August—the Magpie being very scarce there also (DGL).

A **Blue Tit** in the Castle Woods, Stornoway, on 20th August is the first recorded there at that time of year, and suggests

that the species may possibly establish itself (see *antea* 2: 91) (NL).

At Culnacraig, near Achiltibuie, Wester Ross, there were no fewer than 25 **Ring Ouzels** on 2nd September, evidently the only thrushes on the move there (MS).

In South Harris a pair of **Sedge Warblers** almost certainly had a nest, as the birds were carrying food and indulging in song and other territorial behaviour on 5th August (NL). There was a **Wood Warbler** at Kyles Hill, Berwickshire, on 3rd June. It is not a common bird in the county (DGL).

A nest of young **Spotted Flycatchers** was found in Kirkwall on 8th July. This species breeds only sporadically in Orkney (GAR, MLS). A **Pied Flycatcher** at Kingoodie on 23rd August is the first to be recorded from that part of Tay (HB).

Autumn records of **Tree Pipits** on the Lothian coasts are few, and it is worth noting one at Gullane rubbish dump on 13th September (TCS). Movement of **Meadow Pipits** on a broad front to the SW was noted on 8th September from Barnbogle, West Lothian, to Gifford, between 9.30 a.m. and 5.30 p.m.—more than the usual September daily trickle of birds, and probably the result of the birds being held up by bad weather (TCS).

In the Outer Hebrides, where the **Pied Wagtail** is a scarce breeding bird, a pair was feeding two young at Tarbert harbour, Harris, on 7th August, and another pair was feeding one young bird at Ardhasig, Harris, on 28th/30th August (NL). Some 250 or 300 *alba* Wagtails were flying about and settling on the ground near Durris, Kincardine, at 7.30 p.m. on 9th September. These birds were evidently migrants, grounded by drizzle and low mist, and all that were identified proved to be **White Wagtails**, though many were of course juveniles which could not be identified with certainty. The calls seemed higher pitched and softer than those of the Pied Wagtail (DJ, MJ, NP). "**Yellow**" Wagtails are reported from Skinflats—one on 8th July (GHA); Gladhouse—two on 22nd July (DGA); Quothquhan, Lanarkshire—a cock *flavissima* on 12th August (RE-H); and Carsethorn—a cock on 20th August, and two on the 28th (THB).

A roost of over 500 **Starlings** was found in a cave a few feet above the sea at St Abbs Head, Berwickshire, early in September (HF).

A **Goldfinch** near Stornoway on 20th August is the first to be seen there at that time of year (NL). In Edinburgh, five **Siskins** were feeding in the Royal Botanic Garden on 3rd October (AM). Four or five **Twite** were seen one day during the second half of August on the Merse south of Glencaple, Dumfriesshire (THB).

This is another **Crossbill** year, with the first birds appearing

at the end of June. A summary is being prepared by George Waterston, and therefore none of these records is included here.

At least four **Corn Buntings** were noted at Kilchiaran, Rhinns of Islay, on 31st July. This was noted as a very scarce bird on Islay in 1954 (*Scot. Nat.* 1954: 143) (ADW). Three **Lapland Buntings** were flushed from a moor on Kirbister Hill, Birsay, Orkney, on 11th September (PJBS). The arrival and build-up of **Snow Bunting** numbers is exemplified by a series of figures from Aberlady during September—one on the 13th, four on the 16th, two on the 17th, 14 on the 27th, and 55 on the 30th (GHA, JADH, JSO, GLAP, GLS).

In view of the scarcity of **Tree Sparrows** in the areas it is worth recording that over the past few years several pairs have been seen near Killearn, Stirlingshire, and a nest with young was found this year (AJBL), and that on 2nd August two pairs were found near Barrhead, Renfrewshire, with nests in oak and willow trees (RAJ).

Earlier observations—before 1st June 1962

A late **Smew** was at the mouth of the Endrick, Loch Lomond, on 27th May (DS). At Loch Leven, Kinross-shire, there were still 4,500 **Pink-footed Geese** on 28th April (TB, RWJS).

A **Corncrake** was heard on the Dunbartonshire side of the Endrick at Loch Lomond on 20th and 27th May (DS).

At Caerlaverock there were 12 **Black-tailed Godwits** on 12th April (ELR). The distinctive call of the **Spotted Redshank** was heard several times over Dalry, Kirkcudbrightshire, just before midnight on 26th May. The observer knows of no previous inland record for the county (ADW). Sixteen **Purple Sandpipers** at Southernness on 22nd April was a large count for the inner part of the Solway (ELR). Two **Dunlin** at the summit of Windlestraw Law in the Moorfoots on 2nd May were the first the observer had seen in the hills near Walkerburn, but the birds may have been migrants (JB).

Good views were had of a 1st summer **Little Gull** at Loch Moan, Kirkcudbrightshire and Ayrshire, on 26th May (RS, ADW).

A **Barn Owl** was found dead at the side of the road near St Andrews at the end of January (AC).

The **Black Redstart** at Lockerbie on 21st April (*antea* 2: 211) is not in fact the first for Dumfriesshire. One was found near Eliock in March 1947 and the specimen exhibited at a meeting of the Dumfries and Galloway Natural History and Antiquarian Society on 28th March 1947 (*Transactions* 25: 191). We are indebted for these details to ADW, who was at the meet-



PLATE 15. GREEN SANDPIPER at Bell's Burn, Manderston, Berwickshire—a regular wintering area for the species—on 25th August 1962 (see page 257).

Photograph by S. J. Clarke.

ing and remembers seeing the bird, which was a cock. It had, he thinks, been caught by a local bird-catcher, but how it came to be dead is not known.

General observations on behaviour, plumage, etc.

A **Fulmar** on Islay on 31st July was brooding in a large nest which was so deep that the bird was not visible from below. The nest may have been built originally by an eagle (ADW). On 25th August a **Gannet** was circling for some time over the south-west end of Loch Shiel at Acharacle. It appeared to be fishing, for it "heeled over" several times as though about to dive, but never actually did so, and finally flew towards the sea at Ardtoe, three miles away (GTJ).

A very pale fawn-coloured **Mallard**, apparently a female, was at Gladhouse on 2nd and 16th September (DGA).

A **Kestrel** at Fettercairn, Kincardineshire, on 19th September was seen clinging to a telegraph pole like a woodpecker, until disturbed by the car (TCS).

Near Pinmore, Ayrshire, on 30th July a **Red Grouse** was seen to fly up from the heather and mob a passing **Kestrel** (RMR).

After a visit to Galloway during the second half of August THB commented that he had seen more waders in summer plumage than he had recorded in any previous autumn at that time—**Bar-tailed Godwit**, **Knot**, **Dunlin**, **Golden Plover** and **Turnstone** were mentioned. In the Forth area AM agreed that he had never seen so many waders in partial or complete summer plumage as he saw this year in July and August, but apart from this we have not been able to find any great support for (or opposition to) the idea. There may be a connection with the late spring or with the poor summer in some areas, but we would welcome further observations and any comments on the subject.

On 3rd September, near Burnmouth, Berwickshire, the speed of a **Whimbrel** was estimated fairly exactly at 35 m.p.h. as it flew beside a car. The wind was negligible, and the bird's flight unhurried (HF). On 25th August a **Bar-tailed Godwit** was feeding with **Oystercatchers** on the fairways of Southernness Golf Course—a slightly unlikely habitat (THB).

On 28th July three, and later five, **Arctic Skuas** were watched harassing a **Swift** at Aberlady Bay. This went on for five minutes, and the **Swift** seemed unable to get away from the skuas, but did more or less what they wanted, until it was knocked to the ground, and dead. One skua was picking at it and two others looking on when the observer reached it. While this behaviour on the part of the skuas may not be so

very unusual it is rather strange that a bird with the powers of flight which the Swift possesses should be unable to escape in headlong flight (CT).

Two unusual **Herring Gulls'** nest sites are reported at Ness, near the Butt of Lewis; one pair, accustomed to feed with the domestic poultry, built on the ground beside the hen house and successfully reared young; the other pair built an elaborate structure on the roof of a house which was temporarily empty, using the angle between the roof and the chimney stack, but the eggs disappeared later (WAJC). A pair of **Common Gulls** built a nest 15 feet up a tree beside the River Carron, Easter Ross. The tree overhung the bed of stones at the side of the river, and the nest, a typical construction of grasses and similar material, was in a small fork some distance along one of the branches. Young were hatched and safely brought to the ground. There is said to be a small colony of Common Gulls on the other side of the river nearby (ATM). One of the orange-legged **Kittiwakes** at the Bass Rock on 15th July was seen to have three chicks, and at least one of these had legs of the normal colour. This is what one would expect (GHA, GLAP).

On 13th/15th August, when there was a marked movement of terns into the upper Forth, large numbers collected at Moor Loch, Tulliallan, Fife. **Common** or **Arctic Terns**—never more than two or three at a time—were several times seen to perch on the upper branches of a tree on one of the islands (GD, JP).

On 7th September a **Jackdaw** was seen at St Abbs with white spots on the body, and whitish wings—the one more so than the other (HF), and on 14th August there was one at Barns Ness with a deformed beak—the upper mandible being elongated and hooked down over the tip of the lower one (DGL).

REVIEWS

BIRDS OF NORTH AND EAST PERTHSHIRE. By Henry Boase. 1961. Typescript. Pp. i + 239; 3 maps and 5 graphs.

This modest account describes in detail a life's study of the birds of Perthshire, roughly north of Strathearn. The manuscript is typed, and three copies are available for reference, one in the library of the Edward Grey Institute of Field Ornithology at Oxford University, another in the Reference Department of the Dundee Central Library, and the third in the library at the Scottish Centre for Ornithology, 21 Regent Terrace, Edinburgh. The period covered is the 50 years prior to September 1961, and the documentation extends to 233 pages of quarto text plus a bibliography of over 60 books and papers, an introduction and a useful species index. The obser-

vations refer mostly to weekend excursions, chiefly over the lower ground, and there are few blank periods except for the early 1930's. The record is a personal account and not intended for publication, but is nonetheless valuable for reference.

The area under discussion is described in detail, first by lochs and drainage areas, and secondly by other ecological characteristics. This description runs to about five pages, followed by six pages giving an account of the general distribution of birds according to ecological features. The next 22 pages list the birds seen at the different lochs; and the greater part of the text, 167 pages, gives a detailed account of the occurrence of each of about 240 bird species. There are five pages giving an account of migration through the area, and eight illustrations. Two of these show the principal flight-lines of birds through the area, and there are five graphs of counts of Mallard, Tufted Duck and Shelduck, and a map of the rookeries in the drainage basin of the River Tay.

This is an ambitious document. It is a very considerable undertaking for one man to record the birds of the greater part of a Highland county where large areas are sparsely inhabited and visited comparatively seldom by ornithologists. To some extent the scope of the work must depend on the range of the author's movements, and the activity of his correspondents. Mr Boase states that the moorland areas were visited less thoroughly than the low ground; and hence the reader may conclude that he should not attach equal weight to all the observations. Perhaps some apparent scarcities of inland birds may be due as much to lack of observation as to lack of birds. For instance, in birch woodland in Glen Esk in Angus, Redpolls are common, flocking together in scores or hundreds in autumn, and it is interesting that they should be found rather scarce in Perthshire. Similarly Bullfinches are frequently encountered in Angus and Aberdeenshire, but Mr Boase has few records for N. and E. Perth. Reed Buntings are commonly seen in stubble at the moor edge in Angus and Lower Deeside, but are apparently casual in Perthshire. Likewise Snow Buntings are regular winter visitors to the Angus glens, and one wonders whether they may be more frequent in N. Perth than the author recorded. Ring Ouzels seem remarkably scarce in the hills in this area. Only seven records of Short-eared Owls over such a long period seems extraordinary, and the reviewer has seen this number in N. Perth in one morning. Similarly Hen Harriers are more widespread in the hills, especially in winter, than Mr Boase has recorded. The account is a personal one, and possibly single observations are given undue prominence; the casual reader should not conclude from occasional records that Ptarmigan, for example, are occasional in Perthshire when really they are widespread

in suitable habitats every year but rarely seen because of difficulties of access.

Such comments, however, illustrate the lack of published information on regional bird distribution in this (or any) part of Scotland; and Mr Boase has provided a pioneer study on which others can build. Here is an up-to-date account of all the relevant literature published, showing us the gaps where more observations are needed. In summary, 241 species of birds have been recorded in N. and E. Perthshire. Twenty-seven species have not been seen since 1900, but these are compensated for by 31 others seen for the first time since then. Eight species are apparently decreasing, but fifteen are increasing. Ten species have bred for the first time since 1900, and only four species, Red-throated Diver, Kite, Osprey, and Red-necked Phalarope have ceased to breed.

This is a very bald summary of a great deal of information. No student of waterfowl in Scotland should overlook Mr Boase's contribution. It is a mine of information for visitors to the area; and we now have a yardstick for documenting changes in the status of various species. Mr Boase is clearly a careful observer and a painstaking recorder of his observations; and the detail given in many cases, particularly with regard to water birds, stands as a model for reference. He writes precisely and in a pleasant style that makes easy reading, and it will be a pity if this account cannot find a wider circulation. There is a great need for studies of this sort to be deposited at centres where they are easily accessible; and it is to be hoped that this detailed account will be the forerunner of others. The Scottish Centre for Ornithology will fill a valuable function if used as a depot for faunal lists that may not be suitable for formal publication. All too little information is available about local distribution of birds in Scotland, and Mr Boase is to be congratulated on his enterprise and industry; and Scottish ornithology would greatly profit if we all copied his example.

DAVID JENKINS.

IDENTIFICATION FOR RINGERS No. 2: The genus *Phylloscopus*.

By Kenneth Williamson. Oxford, British Trust for Ornithology, 1962. Pp. 86; 5 plates (one in colour) and line drawing. Paper cover 7/-, boards 10/6 (post paid).

In the second of his identification-guides Kenneth Williamson has tackled the leaf-warblers, one of the most difficult of the passerine genera for both the field observer and the taxonomist. As a skilled practitioner in both departments of ornithology he has met all the problems with equal zest, and the result is a pocket masterpiece of concision and clarity. This is far more than just a condensation of Ticehurst's classic

monograph of *Phylloscopus*; it is in fact an important revision of the genus, as well as a ready aid to identification.

Only ten of the thirty species discussed are on the British list, but half of the remainder are potential candidates, and no ambitious bird-watcher can afford to be without this book. Even those seasoned characters who can hardly bring themselves to look at a Yellow-browed Warbler nowadays, may take a new lease of life when they learn that it could well be a Two-barred Greenish or even a Blyth's Crowned Leaf-warbler instead. And when you know that a Greenish Warbler does not always have a wing-bar, nor a Bonelli's a yellow rump, no humble "Willie" is unworthy of attention.

The layout of the work is essentially the same as that of the first guide in this series. For each species there are sections on general appearance and field-characters (including voice); age-characters; colour of soft parts (*i.e.* hard parts); measurements; weight; wing-formula; moult; and a detailed summary of the distribution (including recent changes where these are documented). At the end are the tables of measurements, with their means and theoretical ranges. As before, there are four excellent monochrome illustrations; and there is also a figure showing the distribution of white on the tail-feathers of some eastern species.

Several distinct advances on the first guide are to be commended, notably the succinct essays on taxonomics which precede the individual treatment of the more complex species and species-groups, and which go far to elucidate their relationships; and a new key to the bird in the hand, more complicated but probably less fallible than Ticehurst's. This time, the author has consulted specimens from museums overseas as well as in our national collections; and as a result the treatment is more complete and the systematic review has greater authority. The samples used in the tables are generally much larger, and the ranges consequently more reliable. (It is interesting to note that the ranges given for the two sexes of the Willow Warbler are almost exactly the same as those computed by the late Guy Brownlow from the Fair Isle data, which made nonsense of the figures quoted in the *Handbook*). Another welcome innovation is the splendid colour-plate of six species, by D. I. M. Wallace.

Robert Gillmor's design for the cover is uniform with that of Guide No. 1 except that the beard-coloured panels are now an appropriate spring green, and the pen-drawing features a rather portly Willow Warbler on a spray of cherry-blossom. The production has been excellently done, and I have noticed only one misprint (a date on p. 38). This is altogether good value for the money.

P. E. DAVIS.

OFFICIAL SECTION

THE SCOTTISH ORNITHOLOGISTS' CLUB

REPORT OF COUNCIL

The Council has the honour to submit the following Report for the past year:

Membership. At the end of the session the total paid-up membership of the Club had reached the figure of 1,103. During the session, 221 new members were enrolled while 154 resigned or failed to renew their subscriptions. Joint membership subscriptions rose from 30 to 60. Comparative figures are shown in the following tables:

	31/8/58	31/8/59	31/8/60	31/8/61	31/8/62
Ordinary	738	747	781	852	918
Junior	148	140	141	177	181
Honorary	11	7	5	6	4
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
	897	894	927	1035	1103
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>

Deeds of Covenant. Deeds of Covenant signed by members for their subscriptions increased from 74 to 130 during the session. The Council wishes to thank members who signed new Covenants and thereby enabled the general funds of the Club to benefit by a total of £112, and to commend this method of subscribing to all members who pay Income Tax at the full rate.

Council Meetings. Five meetings of Council were held during the session.

General Meetings. A full programme of lectures was carried out during the winter in six Branches. The Council wishes to thank all the lecturers who gave so freely of their services and also the Branch Officials for arrangements and hospitality.

Ayr Branch. A new Branch of the Club, under the Chairmanship of R. Macalpine Ramage, was formed in Ayr at a special meeting held in the Loudon Hall on 25th April at the request of local members. A number of new members have been enrolled as a result, and the Council expresses its good wishes for the future success of the Branch.

Dumfries Branch. The first session of the new Dumfries Branch was completed very successfully with an encouraging attendance at the winter meetings. During the year the Branch has more than doubled its original membership.

Excursions. In addition to the summer excursions arranged by the Branches, the Club also organised weekend excursions to Dumfries in February and to Aviemore in May, both of which were well attended.

Conference. The Annual Conference and Annual Dinner were held in Dunblane when over 200 members and guests attended.

"Scottish Birds." During the session the Council accepted with great regret the resignation of Professor M. F. M. Meiklejohn as Editor of the journal, a position he has held for three years since the beginning of the first volume. The Council wishes to pay tribute to the great work he has done in establishing the journal and promoting its present high standard, and to thank him for giving so much of his time and energy to this.

With the beginning of a new volume, the Council appointed A. T. Macmillan as Editor, with the assistance of D. G. Andrew and Dr T. C. Smout, and wishes to congratulate him on keeping up the high standard set by his

predecessor. The volume of work entailed in producing a journal of the standard of "Scottish Birds" is very considerable and the Council expresses its deep gratitude to all the Editors for the service they have given to the Club on an entirely voluntary basis.

Four numbers of the journal and a special supplement, "A Check List of the Birds of Tentsmuir, Fife," were published during the year, together with an Index to Volume I.

Scottish Bird Records Committee. The Committee met once during the session under the Chairmanship of Dr J. W. Campbell; the Review for 1961 is published in "Scottish Birds." The Council regrets to announce the resignation of Dr Campbell as Convenor of the Committee and wishes to record its sincere thanks to him for his work on the Reviews. The Council has appointed D. G. Andrew to serve in his place.

Club Library. A number of books and journals have been presented to the Library during the year and the Council records its sincere thanks to all the donors. The Library Committee met during the year to prepare recommendations for future policy and development of the library. Profits from the sales of new books through the Book Agency, which are credited to the Library Fund, have enabled the purchase of both new and scarce reference books. Important purchases during the session include both the Old (1791) and the New (1845) Statistical Accounts of Scotland. The Council urges members to obtain their books through the Club Book Agency in order that the Library Fund may be built up and more essential reference books may be purchased for the Reference Library.

Scottish Centre for Ornithology and Bird Protection. During the session the Centre has been widely used by members, visitors from all parts of Britain, and also by visitors from Australia, America, Canada, Brazil, Belgium and Malta. A great deal of information has been given on bird-watching facilities in Scotland, both to visitors and by correspondence. On 27th July members of Council and of the Edinburgh Branch Committee again entertained a group of 16 American ornithologists who were visiting Scotland on the second "Birds of Europe" tour under the leadership of Orville Crowder. Informal meetings and discussions have been held in the Centre during the winter.

At its meeting in April 1962, the Council considered recommendations made by the Library Committee that additional office and library accommodation should be made available at the Centre, and that there was a need for further secretarial assistance to meet the increased work involved in running the Club and in developing the Library. As a first step the Council at that time agreed that the basement electricity should be rewired, and the House Fabric Fund Accounts for this year reflect this expenditure. In furtherance of this policy the Council has also decided to utilise part of the surplus for this year by making the provisions shown in the Revenue Account against these future costs. The Council feels that these provisions, together with the allocations from next year's budget, will enable the Club to continue its development in these two important spheres.

For the Council, M. F. M. MEIKLEJOHN, President.

TWENTY-SIXTH ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The twenty-sixth Annual General Meeting of the Club was held in the Dunblane Hotel Hydro, Perthshire, on Saturday 27th October 1962, at 6.15 p.m. Professor M. F. M. Meiklejohn, President of the Club, presided over an attendance of about one hundred members.

Apologies. Apologies for absence were received from A. G. S. Bryson,

Dr J. W. Campbell, R. M. Ramage, Rev. J. M. McWilliam, A. D. Watson and Professor V. C. Wynne-Edwards.

Minutes. The Minutes of the twenty-fifth Annual General Meeting held in Dunblane on 28th October 1961, were approved and signed.

Report of Council. In presenting the Report of Council for the past session (see preceding page) the Chairman announced with great regret the resignation of Arthur Smith as Business Editor of "Scottish Birds" and thanked him most warmly for the work he had done. He emphasised that without Mr Smith's assistance in establishing and maintaining relations with the printer the publication of the journal could not have been carried out.

The Chairman reported that he had recently presented to the Club the collection of birds' eggs made by his father, which he hoped would be a useful addition to the Scottish Centre for reference purposes. He also reported that the Council had made recommendations to the British Ornithologists' Union that the International Ornithological Congress, due to be held in Britain in 1966, should take place in Edinburgh and an invitation had been extended on behalf of the Club to the Congress Committee.

Accounts. The Accounts for the past session, which had been previously circulated, were considered and approved.

Election of Auditor. Arthur Walker, C.A., was re-elected Auditor for the ensuing session.

Amendments to Constitution. Four amendments to the Constitution of the Club, previously circulated in "Scottish Birds" (2: 221), were approved.

Election of new Members of Council. The meeting approved the election of G. H. Acklam and Dr G. M. Dunnet, recommended by the Council to replace K. S. Macgregor and Professor V. C. Wynne-Edwards who retired from the Council by rotation, and a sincere vote of thanks was given to the retiring members for their services to the Club.

Votes of thanks. The Chairman moved a warm vote of thanks to all the members who were contributing so much to the success of the Conference in the Registration Office, the projectionists, the leaders of excursions, and to Alasdair Anderson for lending his pictures and sketch books for exhibition. The meeting closed with a hearty vote of thanks to the Chairman on the motion of Lt. Col. J. P. Grant, Member of Council of the Club.

THE SCOTTISH ORNITHOLOGISTS' CLUB

Revenue Account for the year ended 31st August 1962

	Year to 31/8/62	Year to 31/8/61
INCOME—		
Subscriptions received for year	£1185 8 6	£1112
Income Tax recovered on covenanted subscriptions	111 17 3	62
Income from Endowments	91 2 6	77
Income from Accumulated Surplus	39 11 4	37
Sales of Club badges and field lists	11 16 8	8
Sales of Birds of Aberlady Bay Report	11 15 0	51
	<u>£1451 11 3</u>	<u>1347</u>

EXPENDITURE—

Hire of lecture halls and equipment	£83 7 9	74
Lecturers' expenses	51 12 2	68
Secretarial services	435 12 3	394
Postages, telephone, printing and stationery ...	204 4 0	168
Scottish Centre for Ornithology and Bird Protection:		
Furniture and equipment and repairs attributable		
to Club	17 14 0	89
Annual contribution to House Fabric Fund ...	50 0 0	50
Heating and lighting, insurance and cleaning		
attributable to Club	67 13 5	66
Allocation for production and distribution of Scottish		
Birds (see Account for details)	300 0 0	195
Subscriptions to Council for Nature, B.T.O., R.S.P.B. and		
I.C.P.B.	5 2 0	5
Net cost of Conference	9 9 10	36
Contribution to Library Fund (see Account for details)	25 0 0	10
Purchase of Club badges and field lists	43 0 4	—
Sundry administration expenses	21 10 2	37
	<u>£1314 5 11</u>	<u>1192</u>
Provisions made by Council towards:		
Additional secretarial assistance	£50 0 0	
Furnishing and equipping basement		
at Centre	50 0 0	
Expenses of "Check List of Birds		
of Scotland"	20 0 0	
	<u>120 0 0</u>	<u>—</u>
	<u>£1434 5 11</u>	<u>1192</u>
Balance carried to Balance Sheet	<u>17 5 4</u>	<u>155</u>
	<u>£1451 11 3</u>	<u>1347</u>

"Scottish Birds" Account for the year ended 31st August 1962

	Year to	Year to
	31/8/62	31/8/61
Printing and distribution of Vol. 1 Nos. 13 and 14;		
Index to Vol. 1, and Vol. 2 Nos. 1 and 2:		
Printing	£347 19 3	
Blocks	29 6 0	
Postages	77 2 2	
Sundry expenses	7 11 10	
	<u>461 19 3</u>	<u>398</u>
Less—Advertisement receipts	<u>£108 9 4</u>	
Sales to non-members	84 7 9	
	<u>192 17 1</u>	<u>203</u>
	<u>269 2 2</u>	<u>195</u>
Balance carried forward	<u>30 17 10</u>	<u>—</u>
Amount allotted by Council	<u>£300 0 0</u>	<u>195</u>

Note: The cost of the "Birds of Tentsmuir" supplement was met by a grant from the Baxter Trust (£91. 9. 5).

Library Fund Account for the year ended 31st August 1962

	Year to 31/8/62	Year to 31/8/61
Balance brought forward from previous year	£31 1 7	34
Add —Donations received	0 0 0	3
Sale of duplicate copies	12 18 3	4
Contribution from Revenue Account	25 0 0	10
Commission on Book Agency	56 9 10	20
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Less —Books and journals purchased	125 9 8	71
	111 7 3	40
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Balance carried forward	£14 2 5	31

Balance Sheet as at 31st August 1962

	As at 31/8/62	As at 31/8/61
Accumulated Surplus :		
At 31st August 1961	£1002 19 10	848
Add : Balance for year from Revenue Account	17 5 4	155
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Library Fund :	1020 5 2	1003
Balance per Account	14 2 5	31
Scottish Birds :		
Balance per Account	30 17 10	—
Provisions :		
As detailed in Revenue Account	120 0 0	—
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	1185 5 5	1034
Endowments —the free annual income of which is available for the advancement of ornithology:		
Miss L. J. Rintoul	1000 0 0	1000
Dr E. V. Baxter	1000 0 0	1000
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	£3185 5 5	3034
Cash :		
In hands of Secretary	£10 0 0	—
In Royal Bank of Scotland Current Account	101 14 10	55
In Edinburgh Savings Bank	127 17 1	480
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	239 11 11	535
5% Defence Bonds	500 0 0	500
Loan to Renfrew County Council	500 0 0	—
Debts due to Club	9 10 0	24
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	1249 11 11	1059
Less : Subscriptions paid in advance	63 16 6	25
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Endowment Investments :	1185 5 5	1034
£1151 3½% War Stock at cost	1000 0 0	1000
976 units The Equities Investment Fund for Charities at cost	1000 0 0	1000
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	£3185 5 5	3034

House Fabric Fund — Summary of Accounts for year to 31st August 1962

	Year to 31/8/62	Year to 31/8/61
RECEIPTS—		
Balance as at 31st August 1961	£71 19 7	£172 11 8
Rent from Royal Society for the Protection of Birds at £100 per annum for year to 11th November 1962	100 0 0	100 0 0
Rent from Mr and Mrs Waterston at £100 per annum for year to 11th November 1962	100 0 0	100 0 0
Annual Contribution from S.O.C. Revenue Account	50 0 0	50 0 0
Miscellaneous Interests	2 12 2	4 2 11
	<u>£324 11 9</u>	<u>£426 14 7</u>
EXPENDITURE—		
Repairs and maintenance (including cost of rewiring basement—£67)	£92 12 5	£252 7 0
Property Burdens	135 7 9	100 5 3
Insurance	10 4 11	2 2 9
	<u>£238 5 1</u>	<u>£354 15 0</u>
On deposit with Edinburgh Mutual & Dunedin Building Society	£81 15 1	
At credit of Account with Messrs Fraser, Stodart & Ballingall, W.S.	4 11 7	
	<u>86 6 8</u>	<u>71 19 7</u>
	<u>£324 11 9</u>	<u>£426 14 7</u>

EDINBURGH, 10th October, 1962.—I have audited the foregoing revenue accounts for the year to 31st August 1962 and the Balance Sheet as at that date. I have accepted as correct the subscriptions shown as received in the Books and certify that in my opinion the foregoing accounts are correctly stated and sufficiently vouched.

(Signed) ARTHUR WALKER,

Chartered Accountants.

**COUNCIL AND OFFICE-BEARERS OF THE CLUB
FOR SESSION 26**

Hon. Presidents : Dr D. A. Bannerman, O.B.E.; Sir Charles G. Connell;
Rev. J. M. McWilliam

President : Professor M. F. M. Meiklejohn.

Vice-President : Dr I. D. Pennie.

Hon. Treasurer : Robert Hillcoat, C.A.

Hon. Treasurer of House Fabric Fund : D. G. Andrew.

Secretary and Treasurer : Mrs George Waterston.

Editor of "Scottish Birds" : A. T. Macmillan.

Assistant Editors of "Scottish Birds" : D. G. Andrew, Dr T. C. Smout.

Business Editor of "Scottish Birds" : Dr T. C. Smout.

Council : G. H. Acklam; A. G. S. Bryson; Dr J. W. Campbell; Dr G. M. Dunnet; Dr W. J. Eggeling; Lt. Col. J. P. Grant; Alastair Macdonald; George Waterston; A. D. Watson.

Branch Representatives to Council : William Austin (Dumfries); Miss M. H. E. Cuninghame (St Andrews); Miss E. A. Garden (Aberdeen); C. E. Palmar (Glasgow); R. M. Ramage (Ayr); J. Hunter Sutherland (Dundee); Miss Olive Thompson (Edinburgh).

BRANCH OFFICE-BEARERS

Aberdeen : Chairman, Professor V. C. Wynne-Edwards; Vice-Chairman, Alex. Anderson; Secretary, Miss E. A. Garden; Committee, Dr G. M. Dunnet, Miss F. J. Greig.

Ayr : Chairman, R. M. Ramage; Vice-Chairman, G. A. Richards; Secretary, to be appointed; Committee, Dr M. E. Castle, Mrs A. E. S. Scorgie.

Dumfries : Chairman, Sir Arthur Duncan; Vice-Chairman, William Austin; Secretary, H. M. Russell; Committee, E. L. Roberts, R. T. Smith, A. D. Watson.

Dundee : Chairman, F. D. Graham; Vice-Chairman, J. Hunter Sutherland; Secretary, Jack Scobie; Committee, J. E. Forrest, A. H. Shepherd.

Edinburgh : Chairman, D. G. Andrew; Vice-Chairman, A. T. Macmillan; Secretary, Miss Olive Thompson; Committee, C. N. L. Cowper, Mrs E. F. Paterson, M. J. H. Robson, R. W. J. Smith.

Glasgow : Chairman, C. E. Palmar; Vice-Chairman, G. H. Acklam; Secretary, G. L. A. Patrick; Committee, J. M. S. Arnott, Miss K. Calver, J. Eunson, Miss W. U. Flower.

St Andrews : Chairman, Miss J. McFarlane; Vice-Chairman, Miss Doris Wilson; Secretary, Miss M. M. Spires; Committee, Miss M. H. E. Cuninghame, Miss J. V. Black, Julian Holdroyd, F. C. Stead.

SCOTTISH BIRD RECORDS COMMITTEE

Chairman : D. G. Andrew.

Committee : A. G. S. Bryson, Dr J. W. Campbell, Sir Arthur Duncan, Dr W. J. Eggeling, A. T. Macmillan, Professor M. F. M. Meiklejohn, Dr I. D. Pennie, Kenneth Williamson, George Waterston, Professor V. C. Wynne-Edwards.

WEEKEND EXCURSION TO DUMFRIES

Arrangements have again been made this year with the County Hotel, Dumfries, for a weekend excursion to the Solway to see the geese.

Accommodation has been arranged for the weekend 15th to 17th February 1963, at inclusive terms of £4, 5s per person as follows—bed on Friday night 15th; breakfast, packed lunch, dinner and bed on Saturday 16th; breakfast and packed lunch on Sunday 17th.

Members wishing to come on this excursion should book direct with the Manager, The County Hotel, Dumfries (Tel. 146), mentioning that they are members of the Club; they may also bring guests. Arrangements for transport by private cars to Dumfries should be made with Branch Secretaries. It is advisable to bring warm clothing and thermos flasks, and if possible, gum boots.

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LIBRARY. Large section of books and periodicals housed at Ealing Central Library.

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