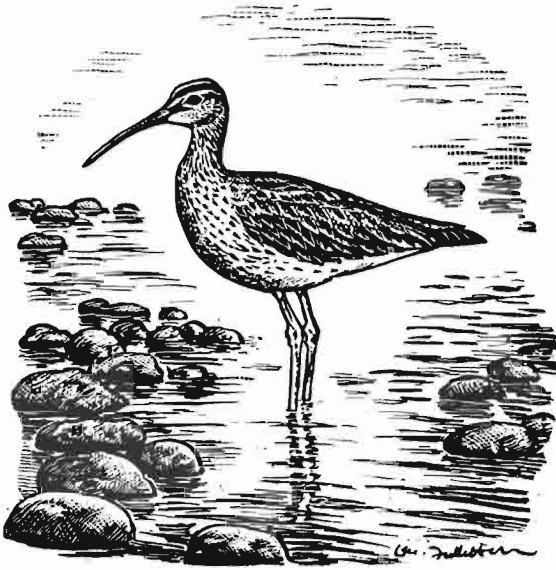


Scottish Birds



The Journal of The Scottish Ornithologists' Club

Vol. 3 No. 6

Summer 1965

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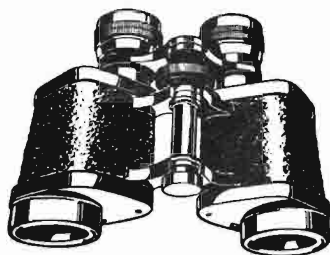
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THE JOURNAL OF THE SCOTTISH ORNITHOLOGISTS' CLUB

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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, Ayr, Dumfries, Dundee, Edinburgh, Glasgow, St Andrews and elsewhere 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.

A Scottish Bird Records' Committee, appointed by the Council, produce an annual Report on "Ornithological Changes in Scotland."

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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 Lending Library. 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.



Scottish Birds

THE JOURNAL OF THE SCOTTISH ORNITHOLOGISTS' CLUB

Vol. 3 No. 6

Summer 1965

Edited by A. T. MACMILLAN with the assistance of D. G. ANDREW, T. C. SMOUT and P. J. B. SLATER. Business Editor, T. C. SMOUT. Cover Design (Whimbrel) by LEN FULLERTON.

Editorial

The Ibis. At a two-day auction in London at Hodgson's on 25th and 26th March an extensive and valuable collection of books on ornithology was sold. It would have been very satisfying if the collection could have been kept intact in Scotland, for it contained numerous rare and important works, many of them in exceptionally fine condition and magnificent bindings.

One very important item was however secured for the S.O.C. Library by a most generous grant from the Russell Trust. The Club had been asked if there was one work which it would particularly like to have for the reference library, and it was at once decided that what would be of the greatest value to an important working ornithological library was a complete bound run of the *Ibis*—always the most important ornithological journal in the world—from the start in 1859 to 1964.

At the auction the club was able to buy this for £780, the cost being met by the grant so kindly made for this specific purpose by the Russell Trust.

The early volumes of the *Ibis* are very scarce indeed so that complete sets seldom come on the market. This is a most valuable addition to the club library and fills a gap that has been very obvious to those who make use of it. The value of such a library cannot of course be measured by the number of people using it, for its greatest merit lies in the help it gives to those doing original work. One measure of this is the ability to provide the important items which the student needs (and which are not readily available at one time and place through public libraries). The S.O.C. comes out well on such a test, and all the time it is getting better.

One may regard a set of Audubon's or Gould's sumptuous folio volumes as a luxury more suited to the collector of illustrated books than to a working library. A set of the *Ibis* is a basic necessity.

The Scottish Naturalist. When in 1957 the *Scottish Naturalist* ceased publication for the second time, Scottish ornithologists were left with nowhere to publish their records. This was the impetus which led the S.O.C. to start *Scottish Birds*. Ever since 1871 notes and papers on all aspects of Scottish natural history had appeared in the *Scottish Naturalist* (alias *Annals of Scottish Natural History* from 1892 to 1911), and its ending was a very great pity.

In 1961 however it reappeared in familiar guise, printed now in Rotterdam (though the latest issue is from Arbroath). Two volumes have since appeared, though not surprisingly there has generally been less ornithology than formerly.

We learn with real regret that the *Scottish Naturalist* has once more closed down. That there is a need for such a journal is clear from the standard and variety of recent contributions from followers of other branches of natural history than birds—mammals, fish, trees, molluscs, moths, spiders, ants, whales and turtles. Ornithologists will still be served; but what of the rest? Some of this material may find a place in more specialist national journals, but much will in future simply remain unpublished and lost.

Possibly a serious journal devoted to general natural history is an anachronism, for this is the age of the specialist. One can only regret it; the more so whenever one meets one of the old school of naturalists, so full of information and learning on a wide range of subjects. In a sense, the excessive popularity of ornithology is what killed the *Scot. Nat.*

Miss Phyllis Barclay-Smith. At the Annual Meeting of the British Section of the International Council for Bird Preservation on 10th March 1965 a painting of Secretary Birds by Ralph Thompson was presented to Miss Barclay-Smith by past and present members and friends in recognition of outstanding services to conservation during the 30 years since she started with I.C.B.P. The Scottish Ornithologists' Club recently accepted an invitation to become one of the eleven constituent societies of the British Section.

The case of the substitute Golden Eagle. The 1964 Annual Report of the Royal Zoological Society of Scotland (pp. 23, 26) makes it clear that the claim that William, the female Golden Eagle which died recently, was 52 years old (see 3: 268), cannot be upheld. There seems to have been some confusion of the records in the past with another eagle, but it is certain that William was at least 40, having lived 38 adult years in her enclosure. The report adds that the truth about her age, and the reason for her masculine name, are given because, now that she is gone, interests of accuracy outweigh those of chivalry.

Isle of May Bird Observatory and Field Station Report for 1964

Prepared for the Observatory Committee by
NANCY J. GORDON, *Hon. Secretary*

During 1964 the Observatory was manned for 125 days between 22nd March and 7th November. The number of observer nights was 496.

The spring migration period was reasonably covered except for two gaps in mid April and early May, but the number of migrants recorded both then and in autumn was unusually small. There were some quite heavy late-autumn falls, although these were not as spectacular as in 1962 and 1963. Some movement was missed because of gaps in observer cover in August and the first half of October.

One new bird was recorded—a Spoonbill *Platalea leucorodia* which flew over the North Ness on 16th September—and the island's second Tawny Pipit was present from 26th to 29th May. The first Collared Dove to be ringed on the island was trapped on 3rd May.

Spring migration

Observers were in residence 22nd-23rd March; 2nd-10th, 18th-30th April; 1st-4th, 11th-28th May; 6th-12th June.

March-April. In conditions of poor visibility and east winds from 22nd to 23rd March there was a small movement of up to 80 Blackbirds, 50 Song Thrushes, 20 Fieldfares, 9 Mistle Thrushes and 20 Robins, with a Woodlark, a very early Redstart and 3 Black Redstarts on the 22nd, and an early White Wagtail on the 23rd. April brought clear weather with moderate, variable winds and an arrival of Blackbirds, Song Thrushes, Redwings, Fieldfares, Dunnocks and Chaffinches on the 2nd and 3rd. There was a movement of Skylarks and Meadow Pipits on the 5th, when a Goldfinch, a Treecreeper and 4 Goldcrests were recorded also. The first Sandwich Tern passed on the 6th. Although a few Wheatears were being reported daily, the numbers of migrants dwindled towards the 11th, when, however, 8 Whooper Swans were seen. Despite fog and south-east winds between 18th and 25th April, no heavy movements occurred. Fieldfare numbers reached 60 on the 19th, but had dropped to 20 by the 25th; they were accompanied by a few Song Thrushes, Ring Ouzels and Blackbirds, and up to 40 Wheatears (on the 21st). The first two Whinchats were recorded on the 20th, and the season's second Redstart on the 22nd, exactly a month after the first. Very few Willow Warblers, Chiffchaffs and Blackcaps were seen during this period, and mainly only single Grasshopper and Sedge Warblers, and Whitethroats and Lesser Whitethroats. Light var-

iable winds increased to strong northerly by the end of the month. The first Swallows arrived on 26th, 3 Sand Martins on 28th and a Collared Dove on 29th. Up to 20 Wheatears were still being recorded each day.

May-June. The fresh winds continuing into early May brought a small passage of warblers, Swallows and Wheatears. A second Collared Dove appeared (and was caught) on the 3rd, and on the 4th three Cuckoos arrived with a Dutch-ringed Lesser Redpoll. Ten days of south-west winds from the 11th onwards were followed by almost continuous fog from 21st May to 1st June. Warbler numbers reached their maximum on the 12th, with 50 Willow Warblers, 20 White-throats and 4 Sedge Warblers. A Wood Warbler was recorded on 11th-12th. Spotted Flycatchers were seen daily from 12th May, reaching a maximum of 6 on the 26th.

A Sparrowhawk was recorded on the 15th, a Turtle Dove on 17th-18th, an Osprey on the 19th, and single Quail on 18th-20th and 24th-25th May. A Pied Flycatcher on the 19th was the only spring record. For the first time in spring a Tawny Pipit was recorded (26th-29th), and a late Black Redstart appeared on 27th. The period 6th-12th June, which started with two days of east wind and showers, brought a Red-backed Shrike on the 6th and a small influx of warblers. A late Fieldfare was seen on the 12th.

Autumn migration

The Observatory was manned on 2nd-3rd, 15th-24th, 29th-31st August; throughout September; 1st and 19th-31st October; 1st-7th November. Late-autumn movements were not as heavy as in the previous three years; one of the biggest occurred in mid October when there were no observers present.

August-September. Winds were strong throughout the latter half of August and were westerly during most of September. Two Little Gulls were seen on 9th August and two more on 6th September. On 16th August an early Mistle Thrush appeared and Wheatear movement began; high numbers were 20 on 19th-20th August and 30 on 9th-11th September. Warbler passage in very small numbers continued until mid September, with a maximum of 15 Willow Warblers daily; a Barred Warbler was recorded on 1st-2nd September. There was little Skylark passage until the end of September, but a steady flow of Meadow Pipits built up to 1000 on the 7th. Lesser Redpolls were present 30th-31st August and 5th, 8th and 9th September. Up to 18 Pied Flycatchers arrived in the first few days of September, and there was another small influx on the 24th. Fewer terns and waders than usual were recorded ("Comic" tern passage reached 700 on 10th September); from one to 8 Whimbrel were seen on 13 days in September, a Greenshank on 6th September, 6 Bar-tailed Godwits

on 9th, a Spotted Redshank on 18th, and up to 8 Dunlin between the 7th and 19th). The passage of hirundines in September included 500 Swallows and 50 Sand Martins on the 7th, and 40 House Martins on the 20th. Fifteen Goldcrests arrived on 6th September, numbers dwindling towards the end of the month; and other September occurrences were the Spoonbill (16th), a Long-tailed Skua (19th), a Sooty Shearwater (21st) and 4 Long-tailed Tits (26th-27th). A Red-breasted Flycatcher was trapped on 30th September, and another on 2nd October.

October-November. Unsettled weather in mid October was followed by a spell of anticyclonic conditions from the 19th until the 26th in which little migration was recorded apart from up to 50 Blackbirds and a few Redwings, Fieldfares and Wrens. There was a fresh influx of these species on the 25th, a prelude to a big movement of thousands of Turdidae (mainly Redwings and Fieldfares) on the morning of the 26th, accompanied by a few Bramblings, Redpolls and Greenfinches. On the next two days the main species moving were Starlings (400 on 27th, 2000-3000 on 28th). During the following week smaller numbers of Turdidae and Starlings, and occasional Snow Buntings and Bramblings, continued to pass, with increases on 3rd November to 400 Blackbirds and on 4th to 200 Fieldfares and 100 Redwings, when a change of wind from west to north-east caused a minor influx. Around this time there were single records of Tree Sparrow (21st), Merlin (27th), Water Rail (28th) and Sparrowhawk (1st November). A Sooty Shearwater was seen on 25th October, a flock of 17 Dunlins on 28th, a late Redstart on 27th-29th, a Barnacle Goose on 31st October-1st November and 3 Bar-tailed Godwits on 2nd November. Passerines included a Mealy Redpoll on 31st October, a Blackcap and Lesser Whitethroat (race not determined) on 3rd November, another Blackcap on 6th and a Chiffchaff on 7th. A small flock of Linnets was present also during this period.

Unusual occurrences

Spoonbill. One, 16th September. First record.

Whooper Swan. Eight, 11th April. Fifth record.

Osprey. One, 19th May. Fifth record.

Quail. One, 18th-20th May; one, 24th-25th May. Seventh and eighth occurrences.

Spotted Redshank. One, 18th September. Sixth year of occurrence, all since 1957.

Arctic Skua. Twenty-nine, 7th September. Unusually many.

Long-tailed Skua. One, 19th September. Third record; first since 1947.

Little Gull. Two, 9th August; two, 6th September. Seventh year of occurrence.

Collared Dove. One, 29th April; one, 3rd May. Second and third occurrences.

Woodlark. One, 22nd March. Fourth and earliest spring record.

Fieldfare. One, 12th June. Latest spring record.

Redstart. One, 22nd March. Easily the earliest spring record.

Black Redstart. One, 27th May. Latest spring record.

Lesser Whitethroat. One, 24th-30th April. Earliest spring record. One, 3rd November. Latest autumn record.

Tawny Pipit. One, 26th-29th May. Second record; first in spring.

White Wagtail. One, 23rd March. Earliest spring record.

Lesser Redpoll. Two, 18th April. Earliest spring record.

Tree Sparrow. One, 21st October. First autumn occurrence for over 25 years.

Breeding populations

There were no marked changes in the status of the breeding land birds; but there was a possible increase in the number of Fulmars breeding (at least 17 young reared), a further increase in Puffin numbers, and a probable increase in the numbers of nesting Shags and Herring Gulls. Fifteen hundred Puffins were estimated to be around the island on 24th April and over a thousand were present on 20th May, the main breeding area being around Colm's Hole. At least one egg was laid at the extreme north end of Rona. It was estimated in May that about 450 pairs of Lesser Black-backed Gulls were breeding amongst perhaps 8000 pairs of Herring Gulls (last estimate, 2700 pairs in 1957). A pair of Great Black-backed Gulls bred for the third successive year.

A single pair of Blackbirds bred for the third year running; two of their second 1963 brood were retrapped on the island in 1964, both in April and one again in September. At least one pair, and probably two pairs, of Swallows nested.

Ringings and recoveries

1321 birds of 56 species were ringed. This is the lowest total since 1948, and little more than half the 1963 figure; the reason was not so much the shortage of ringers as a shortage of migrants. The ringing numbers were again made up mainly of Blackbirds (381), Shags (138) and Willow Warblers (119), although the latter total was the lowest since 1947. The only record high total was for Dunnocks (50), and the numbers of Whinchats and Redstarts ringed (6 and 22 respectively) were the lowest for many years. There was a record number of recoveries (58 in all), including 13 from abroad: the most interesting recoveries were:

		Ringed	Recovered	
Lesser Black-backed Gull	Pull	30. 7.62	Alhandra, Portugal	20. 7.64
Lesser Black-backed Gull	Pull	23. 8.62	Wilmslow, Cheshire	14. 6.64
Guillemot	Pull	7. 7.63	Par, St Austell Bay, Cornwall	26. 3.64
Blackbird	Ad♂	5.10.61	Varde, Jutland, Denmark	6. 7.64
Blackbird	1st W♂	26.10.63	Brunskog, Edane, Sweden	2. 5.64
Blackbird	1st W♂	31.10.63	Varne L.V., 6 m. SW of Folkestone	27. 3.64

Blackbird	Ad♀	1.11.63	Spey Bay, Morayshire	30. 8.64
Blackbird	Ad♂	1.11.63	Dybing, Helleland,	
			Norway	13.11.64
Blackbird	1st W♂	1.11.63	Hetland, Bjerkreim,	
			Norway	27.10.64
Blackbird	1st W♂	4.11.63	Mydland, Solondal,	
			Norway	26.10.64
Redstart	FG♀	21. 5.63	Albitas, Navarra, Spain	2.11.64
Whitethroat	FG	16. 9.63	Tinerhir, Ouarzazate,	
			Morocco	6. 4.64
Whitethroat	Ad♂	22. 5.64	Estoi, Portugal	3.10.64
Willow Warbler	1st W	14. 8.63	Le Khroub, Constantine,	
			Algeria	17. 4.64
Starling	FG♂	15.10.62	Toftbyn, Falun, Sweden	6. 5. 64
Starling	FG♂	15.10.62	Stol, Karmoy Is., Norway	5. 6.64

An unusual recapture of a bird ringed abroad, providing a new species for the recoveries book, was a Lesser Redpoll ringed on 1.9.63 at Vlieland in the Frisian Islands which was "controlled" on the May on 4.5.64. A Blackbird ringed on the May on passage on 7.11.62 was recaptured there, again on passage, on 4.11.64.

Other observations

Until midsummer the rabbit population remained high, but in July myxomatosis again affected the island (presumably through the agency of gulls) and spread rapidly through the population. By November there appeared to be very few healthy rabbits on the island.

Seal numbers have remained constant; no pups were born.

A paper by Dr R. J. Berry, published in *Evolution* (Vol. 18, No. 3, 1964), records that in 1963 he found house mice distributed all over the May, living in rock cracks and among boulders. Measurements showed them to be larger than mainland mice but different also from the mice of other islands which he studied, such as Skokholm. It seems probable that the peculiar features of the various island forms stem from the chance characteristics of their founder members.

Malcolm Smith of the Nature Conservancy spent a fortnight on the island in July collecting insects (mainly Coleoptera and Hemiptera). His work is likely to produce a number of new records for the island. An interesting feature of the invertebrate population is still the ubiquity of ants.

Dr G. Russell has published further results of his study of the seaweeds of the May in the *Transactions of the Botanical Society of Edinburgh* (Vol. 39, Part 5, 1964). He has added 14 additional species to the island's list.

In February Mr Crawford replaced Mr Watt as Principal Keeper. The Observatory is very grateful to him for all the help that he and his staff so willingly gave during the season.

Recent changes in Scottish barley acreages and the possible effect on wild geese

JANET KEAR

Changes in the distribution of Scottish geese have occurred and been commented on in the past (see in particular Berry 1939), but details of many movements remain obscure, partly because of the unavoidably incomplete cover of counts that were made of bird numbers. Over the last eight years the Wildfowl Trust, with voluntary support, has been able to obtain simultaneous mid-November goose counts throughout Britain (Boyd 1963, and unpublished). Already trends in the populations are becoming apparent. Both Grey Lag and Pink-footed Geese have shown increases in the total number wintering in Britain, but despite this the population of England at the time of the counts has steadily declined. The Greylag has always been rare in England in November: the rise in the proportion of geese in Scotland is due very largely to changes in the distribution of Pinkfeet.

The Pinkfoot arrives in Scotland in late September, two or three weeks before the Greylag, and settles in some places such as the Tay Basin which until the 1930's were Greylag country. This replacement and the Greylag's continued extension of range have led to suggestions of competition between the species. However, observations of mixed flocks show generally amicable relations and in any disputes the Greylag is clearly dominant. Neither species appears to be short of habitat in the autumn and their preferences vary sufficiently for direct competition for food to be unlikely. Although both feed on agricultural land the Greylag is more adaptable and tends to flight shorter distances from roost to feeding ground, often to rougher, smaller and higher fields. In November it feeds on pasture and waste grain, from both oat and barley stubble; wheat is relatively unimportant since acreage is very low and the stubble is usually ploughed early. The Pinkfoot is more fastidious in its choice and almost always feeds in old barley fields, which are sometimes undersown with grass and sometimes nowadays burnt before being ploughed later. Barley grain, a rich carbohydrate source, is the Pinkfoot's preferred food in autumn and they will fly up to 30 miles from their roosts to suitable stubble fields, sometimes passing over apparently excellent farmland as they go.

The pattern of these stubble fields in Scotland has changed since the 1930's. At the present time about one third of the arable acreage is under cereal, one half under rotational grassland, and the remaining sixth used for root-crops, green vege-

tables, fruit, etc. The acreage of cereal showed a downward trend prior to 1939, but the second World War greatly increased the area of oats, barley and wheat. Since 1939, total cereal acreage has fluctuated; the trend is again downwards, although in 1964, at 1,044,000 acres, it was still 9 per cent higher than at the start of the war.

The area specifically devoted to barley, however, is nearly five times the 1939 level (table 1). A relatively slow increase has occurred in the traditional barley-growing areas of the Lothians and the Borders, while acreage has risen nearly three

Table 1. Changes in barley acreage in Scotland during the past century

Year	Acreage	Percentage rise
Average 1871/75	252,000	$\left. \begin{array}{l} +130 \\ (1939-59) \end{array} \right\} +380 \\ (1939-64)$
1939	99,000	
1943	213,619	
1953	194,562	
1959	228,465	
1964	481,982	

(From Beilby 1960, and Scottish Agricultural Statistics)

times faster in counties such as Aberdeen, Angus, Fife and Perth, all important Pinkfoot feeding grounds. There has also been a relatively steep rise in Dumfries and to a lesser extent in other south-western counties. Increases in barley (mainly used for stock feed) are at the expense of other cereals, especially oats, which barley out-crops by at least one-and-a-half times. The greater use of lime is one factor enabling barley to be grown on land formerly considered quite unsuitable. Further, there have been no successes by plant breeders with oats to compare to those with barley, certain varieties of which are yielding more than double the crops of 20 years ago. Table 1 gives some total acreage figures for barley stubble in Scotland since 1871 and shows that the sharpest increase has occurred very recently. It must be pointed out that in 1964 oats still accounted for 470,342 acres, and it is probably premature to consider a shortage of oat stubble as a factor affecting Greylag distribution, especially as the bird takes a number of other foods in autumn.

In order to relate the area of barley stubble more particularly to the number of Pinkfeet, the agricultural records of 17 counties were examined from 1957. These counties hold virtually all the feeding Pinkfoot flocks in November, and comprise Aberdeen, Kincardine, Moray, Nairn, Angus, Clackmannan, Fife, Kinross, Perth, Berwick, East Lothian, Midlothian, Peebles, Lanark, Dumfries, Kirkcudbright and Wigtown. The rise in barley acreage in these counties is shown in table 2, which also gives the number of Pinkfeet and the percentage that this is of the total in Britain (figures

Table 2. Annual changes in barley acreage and mid-November numbers of Pinkfeet in 17 Scottish counties from 1957 to 1964

Year	Acreage	Numbers of Pinkfeet	Percentage of total in Britain
1957	175,251	31,180	62.7
1958	170,869	(28,300)	(58.6)
1959	183,187	(39,500)	(76.0)
1960	202,888	32,540	69.2
1961	257,759	42,830	76.9
1962	284,251	44,760	77.3
1963	331,409	43,800	82.4
1964	385,367	56,230	86.2

1958 and 1959 include interpolations

(From Boyd 1963 and unpublished, and Scottish Agricultural Statistics)

for 1958 and 1959 are interpolations and are not as reliable as those for the other years). Thus, since the Pinkfoot's food in November is obtained mainly from barley stubble, the increase of geese in Scotland from 62.7 to 86.2 per cent of the total in eight years is very probably related to the steady increase in available food (see fig. 1). To a lesser extent the Greylag may also have been affected.

During this time, Scottish November goose numbers have risen from 31,180 Pinkfeet and 21,000 Greylag in 1957 to 56,230 and 42,790 respectively in 1964. This increase in total numbers is probably due to climate amelioration and improving food supply on the breeding grounds. The fact that an increasing proportion of this large population remains north of the border through the first half of November implies that all Pinkfeet from Iceland and Greenland come through Scotland and can be held there by plentiful food. Other information available indicates that geese still arrive in large numbers to feed on barley stubbles in Yorkshire, Lincolnshire and Lancashire and later on old potatoes in Norfolk, but after mid November.

Changes in barley growing are also taking place in England, although the increase in total area sown is not as marked as in Scotland. In any case, the amount of grain wasted at harvest, and therefore available for birds on the stubble, is certainly greater in the north. It has been calculated that in Britain, with an average loss of just over 5 per cent of the yield, a barley stubble provides a maximum of 800 goose-days per acre (Kear 1963). Many factors affect this figure: more barley is undersown in Scotland and is not ploughed up; whereas in Yorkshire and Lincolnshire much of the stubble is burnt, which initially makes the grain easier for the geese to find, but the field is then cultivated early, before all the waste barley has been taken. The harvest in Scotland is three

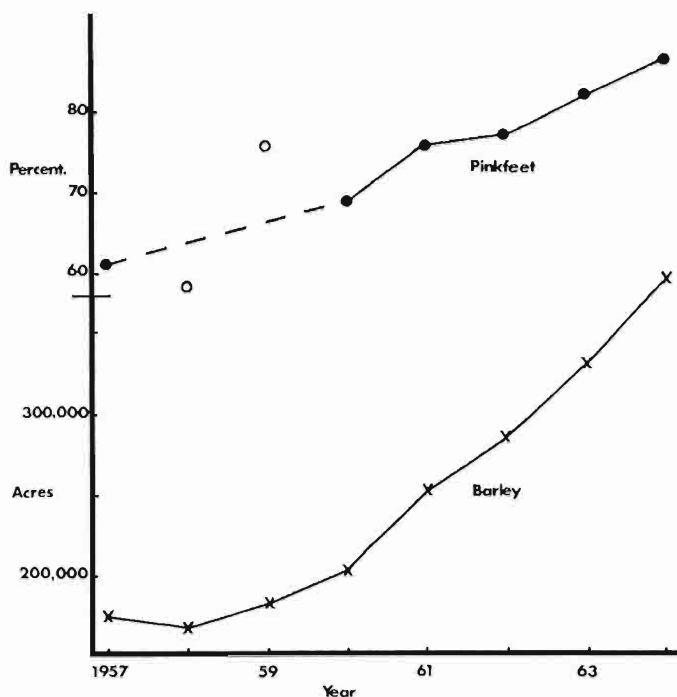


FIG. 1. Annual changes in barley acreage and mid-November numbers of Pinkfeet, expressed as a percentage of the total in Britain, in 17 Scottish counties from 1957 to 1964.

to six weeks later than in southern England and therefore tends to coincide with September gales when wind speeds can be very high. This obviously can cause stripping of the seeds and result in more lying on the ground. On 16th September 1961, for example, a severe gale resulted in an estimated 50 per cent loss in a barley trial run by Perth College of Agriculture, and on 26th October 1963 another caused a loss of 15 per cent (J. B. A. Rodger, personal communication). In theory it should be possible to study weather records each year and, depending on the severity and timing of the gales in relation to the timing of harvest, to predict the amount of food available for the geese. Unfortunately, at the moment there are not enough data to allow the application of such a sophisticated technique.

Because of improvements in harvesting methods, the increase in waste cereals available to geese has not risen directly with the increase in acreage. In both England and Scotland the more frequent use of corn-driers is allowing harvest to proceed with less dependence on the weather so that the risk

of shedding is greatly reduced, and the main dressing out and rejection of poor grain and weed seeds takes place in the yard rather than on the field. In the long run, harvesting is bound to become more efficient, and eventually it may become efficient enough to force geese, ducks and many other wild birds and mammals to choose other early-winter foods. In the foreseeable future, however, the cleaning up of waste grain will help to break the cycle of cereal mildew infection and keep down weeds in the succeeding crop, and agriculture and geese can integrate to mutual advantage.

Acknowledgments

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The Collared Dove in Scotland

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An excellent and detailed account of the spread of the Collared Dove in Britain and Ireland has just been published by Robert Hudson in *British Birds* (58: 105-139). He traces the spectacular increase from a single pair in Norfolk in 1955 to an estimated minimum population less than 10 years later of nearly 19,000 birds, and suggests that the Atlantic Ocean barrier will lead to a steady build-up of numbers in coming years. Already at the end of 1964 breeding has been recorded in 34 of the 40 English counties and in at least 20 of the 33 Scottish ones as well as many in Wales and Ireland. In the eight years since the species arrived in Scotland it has increased to over 1100 birds and has been recorded in every county except Selkirk, Peebles, Kinross and Bute.

A summary of Scottish records was published in 1961 (1: 480-489), and reports of Collared Doves have been a frequent feature of *Scottish Birds* since then. In recent months many new reports have been received, and although used by Hudson most of them have not been published in detail. They include

many first occurrences and first breeding records.

The present summary has therefore been prepared to collect together all known Scottish records, classified by faunal areas and divisions rather than counties, and to provide details of these unpublished records. With reports from over 500 places in Britain and Ireland it was impracticable to print full details in *British Birds*, and a number of English county reports in any event now ignore non-breeding records. In many parts of Scotland, however, there are still only very small numbers of Collared Doves, and the early records from these places ought not to be lost.

It is not proposed to repeat the year-by-year account of the spread of the species, for which reference should be made to Hudson's paper, where readers will find a series of maps which neatly illustrate the rapid colonisation of the country. The present summary should be regarded as a kind of appendix to that paper, setting forth the Scottish records in greater detail.

Below are listed all known records of Collared Doves in Scotland up to the end of 1964, with such information as has come in for 1965. Since the colonisation has been from the south-east, the records are arranged from south to north, the eastern faunal areas from Tweed to North Coast first, then the western ones from Solway to the North West Highlands, and finally the Hebrides and Northern Isles. For each faunal area and division the year in which the species was first recorded and the year in which it was first found breeding are given in brackets. The available information is sometimes rather vague, and it will be seen that in a few instances breeding has been inferred from the increase of a resident population and the appearance of juveniles though no nest has been seen.

References are given to published records (those without a title refer to *Scottish Birds*), but not to Hudson's paper. Initials of the observers (or reporters) are given where the record has not been published in detail, and there is a key at the end. I am very grateful to all who sent information, and particularly to Robert Hudson, who supplied many of the records and also checked and commented on the summary which follows.

Tweed (1961 : 1961)

Berwick (1961 : 1961)

Lennel. Said to be plentiful, winter 1962-63 (2: 318).

Duns. Six "still resident" Sept 1964 (WML-H).

Edrom. One 24th Apr-1st May 1962 (WML-H).

Coldingham/Silverwells. Two pairs bred unsuccessfully May and June 1961; up to 4/6 birds, but not after June (1: 482); 2 pairs Silverwells all summer 1964 but no nests; up to 7 for month to 6th Sept

1964, when they disappeared (WML-H). This is not far from Cockburnspath (see East Lothian).

Roxburgh (1963 : —)

Bonchester Bridge. Pair nearby for a few days Mar 1963 (3: 48).

Selkirk

No records.

Peebles

No records.

Forth (1959 : 1961 or earlier)

East Lothian (with part of Berwick) (1961 : 1963, probably 1962)

Cocksburnpath area. First noted May 1961, with up to 12 (perhaps from Silverwells—see Berwick) by Oct (1: 483); "masses" on both sides of Berwick border at Dunglass, autumn and winter 1962-63 (2: 318); at least 6/10 pairs in 1964 and nests on both sides of ravine (AMcD).

Innerwick. Fifteen together, winter 1963-64 (per MFMM); perhaps same as last.

Dunbar. Two or three regular for some time by mid Nov 1964 (per MFMM).

North Berwick. Pair Leuchie House 12th May 1964 were possibly resident (AMcD).

Dirleton. Pair June 1964 (per MFMM).

Gullane. Three Greywalls Hotel first noted summer 1963 (? present for some time before); 5 by late autumn; one or more shot, and none seen after Feb-Mar 1964 until 2 in late July 1964. At a garden a mile away, first one Mar 1963; up to 3 in Apr, 4 in June, 8 (4 juvs) by end of Aug, 12 (8 juvs) Oct and until Mar 1964, when 4 more arrived (? from Greywalls); 2 nests found 1964; 34 birds by end of July 1964 (WKB); at least 25 on 7th Feb 1965 (RWF).

Aberlady. First 4 Craighelaw Farm ($\frac{1}{2}$ ml to W) spring 1963; 12 (8 juvs) by late autumn and had obviously bred; 2 more ads made 14 by spring 1964; 3 nests found; 14 birds on farm and 6 in village by July 1964 (WKB; see also 3: 39).

Midlothian (1960 : 1961)

Edinburgh

(a) **Edmonstone.** Two in autumn 1960 may have been there earlier; bred 1961; 9 by autumn (1: 484); 12 by Nov 1962 (2: 318); up to 7 in Mar 1963 after winter gap (2: 380). Perhaps linked with next.

(b) **Grange/Newington/Liberton.** Up to 4 (2 probably juv) from Aug 1961 in Dick Place (1: 486), and one noted 19th Sept 1964 (ACL); 3 (2 probably juv) for some months from about July 1962 in Mayfield Terrace (2: 260), and 1/2 close by at Queen's Crescent Apr-June 1963 (2: 439); pair bred Dalrymple Crescent May 1963 (2: 439); pair noted Hope Terrace, spring 1963 (2: 439) and summer 1964 (WJE). In Liberton 2's and 3's for some time, then 24 on 20th Oct 1964 by Blackford Glen Road (GC) and 20 there 9th Jan 1965 (MM). Further west 2 were in Spylaw Road on 2nd May 1965 (DTG, EMNG).

(c) **Goldenacre/Granton/Trinity.** Two several times Royal Botanic Garden June-Aug 1961 (1: 484), and one Aug 1962 (2: 318). Pair York Road mid May 1964 (AMcD); up to 6 later, and one dead 26th March 1965 (SM); 8 in Granton 30th Aug 1964 (CPR).

(d) **Barnton.** One Cammo 10th Apr and 22nd June 1964 (RM).

Roslin. Two 8th May 1964 (ADKR).

West Calder. Three in July 1964 at Whitesykes Farm, but only 1 by 29th (HH).

West Lothian (1960 or earlier : c.1960)

Bo'ness. Date of arrival obscure. A 1954 record almost certainly refers

to escaped Barbary Doves; the same observer writes that "it took five years for them to become quite a colony" (i.e. c.1959/60), mainly in eastern part of town, and up to 40 subsequently counted (JS). Arrived Roman House about 1960 ("about 4 years ago" in Sept 1964); increased to about 5 pairs but some shot and only one pair in autumn 1964 (NBS). At a local farm there were 3 in May 1963 and 6 in May 1964 (RB).

Linlithgow. Two arrived 1963, bred 1964; 8 by 24th Nov 1964 (EM).

East Stirling

No records.

Isle of May (1963 : —)

One 7th-8th June 1963 (3: 18); one each 29th April and 3rd May 1964 (AMcD).

South Fife (1959 : 1964)

Crail. Arrived about a year before 25th Oct 1964, when 6 (4 juvs) established at east end of town; up to 9 earlier; also present 1 mile E at Wormiston Farm (AED, AMH).

Elie. One Elie Estate 15th Apr 1964; 2 by 19th; gone by 23rd; 2 came in from sea at Elie Ness 31st May 1964 (DWO).

Dunotter, Colinsburgh. One 15th Jan 1964 (3: 89).

Methil. One under bush 4th Oct 1959 (1: 190, 480).

Leslie. Two arrived late spring or summer 1961 and stayed (1: 487); pair 1963 but still no nests found; 1 bird for a time in spring 1964 (EVA).

Dunfermline. One 23rd and 25th Aug 1959 (1: 189, 480); and for several weeks thereafter (GDk); 2 from 28th Feb 1964 fledged 2 young that summer (3: 89 and GDk).

High Valleyfield. A "probable" 21st June 1962 (3: 90).

Kinross

No records.

Clackmannan (1964 : —)

Dollar. Two arrived 4th Aug 1964 and 5 by October (AGS).

South Perth

No records, though rumoured from L. Ard June 1962 (3: 90).

Tay (1960 : 1962)

North Fife (1961 : —)

St Andrews. Single birds May 1961 (1: 486), 12th May 1963, and 5th Mar 1964 (3: 89).

Dunbog. One May 1961 (1: 487).

North Perth (1960 : 1962)

Longforgan. Pair reared 2 young 1964 (per VMT).

Balmanno, Bridge of Earn. Up to 12 in 1964 but breeding not proved (per VMT).

Perth. Three near Perth Royal Infirmary May 1962 in Hamilton Place; bred and seen later that summer with 2 free-flying young; one juv seen 1963 and 2 in 1964; 19 birds in July 1964; up to 20 wintered 1962-63 and 1963-64, and up to 24 in 1964-65, when small numbers appeared regularly in Cherrybank and Craigie districts also (HJT, VMT; see also 3: 39).

Muthill. Small numbers but no breeding reported 1964 (per VMT).

Comrie. Small numbers but no breeding reported 1964 (per VMT).

Blairgowrie. Two at Rannagulzion 22nd-23rd May 1962 (2: 383); 1 there 1st-7th Apr 1965 (JWC). Two Rattray 14th Oct 1963 (3: 39).

Aberfeldy. One 5th Oct 1964 (DDG).

Pitlochry. One entered pigeon loft at Faskally 16th Feb 1960 (1: 237, 481).

Angus (1962 : 1962)

Broughty Ferry. One late July to, at least 2nd Aug 1964 (GMC, JD).

Arbroath. Pair bred (eggs taken) near Water Tower in spring 1962; hatched but deserted young of second 1963 clutch; rebuilt but did not lay 1964; several seen with feral pigeons here. At Arbirlot (2½ mls W) another 1964 nest was robbed (NKA). One seen on cliffs towards Auchmithie 23rd May 1964 (CVC, RJ).

Brechin. One late May or June 1962 (JD).

South Kincardine (1961: —)

Inverbervie. Two first seen 1961; 6 by Jan 1964 (JL).

Clatterin Brig (3-4 mls N of Fettercairn). Two June 1963 (DJ).

Dec (1960 : 1963)

North Kincardine (1963 : 1963)

Catterline (4 mls S of Stonehaven). Possibly in Tay Faunal Area. Numbers reported winter 1964-65 (per WB).

Stonehaven. Two Dunnottar Castle 23rd June 1963 (2: 438). Pair arrived Stonehaven Apr 1963 and reared 2 young; absent during winter; pair returned Apr 1964 and bred by County Offices; at least 8 (perhaps 13+) 6th Sept 1964; about 30 resident winter 1964-65 in town centre, about 30 more at Glenury distillery (other end of town), and 25/30 Dunnottar (WB). Four at farm 3 mls W of town 22nd May 1964 (DW).

Aberdeen (1960 : 1963)

Aberdeen. Heard Old Aberdeen 5th June 1960; pair intermittently 19th June-12th Sept 1961 (1: 487). One south Aberdeen 3rd-9th June 1962 (VAJ).

Newburgh. At Culterty 5/6 arrived spring 1963; nest found (3: 39); about 5 pairs (2 in village) 1963, and at least 6 in 1964 (bred both years); bred 1 ml N at Waterside 1964 (GMD); 15+ at Culterty mid Dec 1964 (AA); one ringed Nov 1963 recovered at Hopeman, Moray, Apr 1964 (GMD).

Ellon. Seen at Tarty 1964 (GMD); 25 Mains of Tarty 3rd Dec 1964 (WM). Only 3 mls from Newburgh.

Peterhead. One 4th June 1964 (WQB); pair bred 1964 and nest found in July (ES); 2 birds on steeple 10th-17th Aug 1964 (IHL, JBM).

Fraserburgh. Two at farm 2 mls away about Aug 1964, and perhaps as early as May 1964 (JWh).

Moray Basin (1957 : 1957)

Banff (1960/61 : probably 1960/61)

Banff. Not known to ornithologists until 1964 and no nests seen, so year of first breeding obscure. First 3 birds in town in 1960 or 1961; about 12 in 1962; 17/18 in 1963; up to 28 (6/8 juvs) Sept 1964; 45 birds in 1964-65 winter flock (RHw, JMr, AFWS). Two birds outside town towards Huntly in June 1963 (AFWS).

Moray (1957 : 1957)

Elgin. At least 1 near station in second half May 1964 (HB); pair with nest Reidhaven Street 1964 (ES); colony also reported Moss Street area (per RHw).

Newton House (3½ mls W of Elgin). Up to 5 seen 1962 but fewer by 1964, though evidently there since 1960, with up to 10 (JNP). A pair at Alves in 1964 may perhaps be the same (RR).

Lossiemouth. Noted from second half May 1964 (HB); pair bred 1964 (RR).

Covesea. First Scottish pair found breeding June 1957; one chick fledged (1: 480); 4 young brought total to 7 in Sept 1958 (1: 37, 480); in 1959 a pair first bred at village of Duffus (1½ mls away) (2: 43); in 1960 breeding was confirmed Gordonstoun (¾ ml from Covesea), and Duffus House (2: 42), and 17 birds at Covesea colony 1st Sept (1: 379 480); in autumn

1961 up to 35 Covesea (1: 480), and in Nov 24 at Gordonstoun and 23 at Duffus House (2: 43); by Aug 1963 (when county population estimated at over 200) at least 60 Covesea (WC). A bird ringed Nov 1963 at Newburgh, Aberdeen, recovered Apr 1964 at Hopeman (2 mls from Covesea) where a few were nesting (AS). In 1964 there were 15/17 pairs Covesea, 16/17 pairs Duffus, 10/12 pairs Gordonstoun, and 6/8 pairs Hopeman (RR).

Forres. Pair nesting Cluny Hill Hotel July 1964; pair at railway station Aug 1964, another at Park Hotel, and third further west (HGC).

Cluny (4 mls SE of Forres). Pair arrived autumn 1960; bred 1961; 27 by 24th Oct 1961 (1: 488); 35 autumn 1962 (2: 318); up to 67 came to be fed in hard weather in early 1963; about 40 June 1964; all over the place and in village (DBC).

Nairn (1963, probably 1961: probably 1961)

Nairn. Three in town 12th July 1963, but birds nearby losing nest Sept 1961 and calling again in 1962 almost certainly Collared Doves (2: 491). At least 2 Househill (1 ml from Nairn) 25th July 1964 (WC).

East Inverness (1961: 1964)

Rothiemurchus. One 2nd July 1961 (1: 488).

Wester Aberchaldar, Gorthleck (2½ mls E of Foyers on L. Ness). One 6th Sept 1964 (NU).

Inverness. One Hill district 1st Feb 1964; 2 on 12th and 24th Apr, and 1 till at least 22nd June 1964; pair bred Annfield Road 1964, another bird seen, and dead one brought in by cat (JMcG).

East Ross (1962: 1963, probably 1962)

North Kessock. At least 3/4 pairs Kilmuir Farm late 1964, and said to have nested since 1962 (DR; also PSL in Ross-shire Journal 18.12.64).

Ethie (4½ mls NE of Rosemarkie). Have nested within past 3 years (PSL in Ross-shire Journal 18.12.64).

Tarbat. Up to 6 Bindal Farm from July 1962 (2: 247), and breeding likely; 23 in a row (over 50 reported) 22nd Sept 1963, and empty nests found (DM, ATM); 20 seen 4th Jan 1964 and now spread to Portmahomack and nearby Brucefield Farm (DM); nearly 40 counted Bindal autumn 1964 (DR).

Invergordon. Two ads and juv from 3rd Aug 1962 (2: 247); resident 1963-64 (DM); 7 at distillery by June 1964 (DR).

Alness. Pair June 1964 and 2/3 pairs later that year (DR).

Conon Bridge. Pair first seen Balavil Farm summer 1963; 2 pairs bred spring 1964 (HS in Ross-shire Journal 18.12.64); certainly 2, perhaps up to 4, pairs and about 6 juvs late 1964 (per DR).

Glencalvie (8½ mls WSW of Bonar Bridge). Unconfirmed reports (PSL in Ross-shire Journal 18.12.64).

Southeast Sutherland (1964: —)

Dornoch. One 27th Apr 1964; 3/4 regular 6th May-27th June at least; 1 on 22nd and 25th July; 7 on 29th; 4 on 30th; 1 on 9th Aug and 5th Sept; then none (DM).

Golspie. One 9th June 1964 (IDP).

North Coast (1964: 1964)

Caithness (1964: 1964)

Berriedale. One May 1964 (DMS).

Lybster. One May 1964 (DMS).

Wick. Pair bred unsuccessfully May 1964; 3 at Noss Farm, Noss Head, summered 1964 (DMS).

Castle Mey. Pair bred 1964 (JC per DMS).

Thurso. One May 1964 (DMS).

North Sutherland (1964: —)

Aird Torrisdale (W of Bettyhill). One 10th June 1964 (BC, CEHS).

Durness. Three came early June 1964 and still there 4 months later (RJB).

Solway (1961 : 1962, probably 1961)

Dumfries (1961 : 1962, probably 1961)

Dumfries. One on outskirts at Carnsalloch 31st May 1961 (1: 482); pair summered and juv reported by farmer that year (per WA); breeding proved 1962, with suggestion of arrival 3 years before (2: 199); about 8 in town, and 8 three miles away at Carnsalloch (maximum count 14) by June 1964 (WA).

Elsewhere. Two **Sanquhar** late Apr 1963 (2: 439); singles late 1963 and first half 1964 at **Lockerbie, Moffat, Annan** and **Sanquhar** (WA).

Kirkcudbright (1963 : —)

Munches, Dalbeattie. One 27th May 1963 (KB).

Castle Douglas. Unconfirmed report of 2 pairs nearby late summer 1964 (per ADW).

Wigtown (1963 : 1964, probably 1963)

Carlleston. Small numbers summer 1963 probably bred; no nests found but 12 birds in Oct included juvs (3: 39); only 3/4 pairs in spring 1964 but 3 nests found; 16 birds by 1st Oct 1964 (WH, ADW).

Kidsdale (near Whithorn). One Apr 1964 (ADW).

Portpatrick. Two from May 1963; 8 by mid Nov, and probably bred 1963 (3: 39).

Clyde (1959, probably 1957 : 1959 or earlier)

Lanark (1963 : 1964)

Cambuslang. Two present Mar 1963 (probably some months earlier); 2 males calling 2nd May 1964; unfledged juv 12th Aug 1964 (per HB; see also 2: 491).

NW Glasgow. One Blackhill Farm 20th Aug 1964 (WMME).

Ayr (1959, probably 1957 : 1959 or earlier)

Girvan. Three found May 1959 said to have been in area in two previous years; bred 1959 (1: 125, 480); 9 by late Oct 1959 (1: 198) and at least 8/10 by June 1961 (1: 480); 20 by late 1961; all disappeared suddenly in winter 1961-62, except a female with bad feet and another captured in house; this caged pair produced one sickly young in 1962, but it thrived in 1963; birds sent away when owner died; no more wild ones (W1).

Maybole. One nearby 20th June 1961 (1: 482).

Kirkbride. Two throughout summer 1963 (GH-O).

Ayr. Two 22nd June 1963; up to 7 by 18th Oct (3: 39), and 9 later that month; wintered; 7 in one place 9th June 1964 and 4 elsewhere that month; pair reared 2 young 1964; 15 by autumn 1964 (GAR).

Irvine. Three between West Road and High Street 17th May 1964 (DJN).

Troon. One for at least 2 weeks from late June 1964 (VMW).

Trefrew (1963 : —)

Paisley. One Murray Street area 18th June 1963; 6 on 14th-16th Nov 1963 (3: 89); pair intermittently from 11th June 1964 but no proof of breeding; still there Feb 1965 (GTW). Five 1½ mls away Nov 1963 (3: 89).

Bridge of Weir. From mid June 1963, with still 3+ mid Sept (3:39); 3 fed through winter with tame doves; called in spring (4th bird possibly present) but no evidence of breeding; not seen after Sept 1964 (WHW).

Bishopton/Langbank. One between, 19th Apr 1963 (3: 89).

West Stirling (1963 : —)

Killearn. One from 23rd Apr 1963 (and 2 on 11th May) but not after mid May 1963 (AJBL; see also 3: 90).

Mugdock (1½ mls S of Strathblane). One 1st Apr 1965 (WMME).

Dunbarton (1964 : —)

Dumbarton. Three 22nd July and one 2nd Aug 1964 (AC, JMD).

Kilcreggan. One 14th May-20th June 1964 (MRR).

Arran

No records.

Bute

No records.

South Argyll (1964 : 1964)

Macharioch House (NE of Southend). One June 1964 and up to 4 on nearby farm that summer (JG).

Glenramskill House (SE of Campbeltown). Pair nested 1964 but chicks dead below nest; adults still there Sept 1964 (HCS).

Argyll (1963 : —)

North Argyll (1963 : —)

Iona. Two Aug-Sept 1963; absent until 2 about end Apr 1964; steady increase (no evidence of breeding) to 13 in mid Aug, but only 2 by 7th Sept 1964 (DAM).

Sanna Bay (tip of Ardnamurchan). One 24th May 1964 (PBW).

South Inverness (1963 : —)

Fort William. One 18th May 1963 (2: 494); two 24th June 1964 (AMo).

North West Highlands (1963 : —)

West Inverness

No records.

West Ross (1964 : —)

Shieldaig. One passed through about second week Mar 1964 (GJS).

Tournaig (near Poolewe). Three on farmhouse 16th July 1964 had been there some weeks (GDv); 2 still there 5th and 14th Sept 1964 (ROB).

West Sutherland (1963 : —)

Inveruplan, Lochinver. Pair summer 1963; one late May 1964 (CR per IDP).

Elphin (7 mls S of Inchnadamph). One on day early in June 1963 (FAJKM).

Skye (1963 : —)

Upper Duntuilim. Pair throughout summer 1963 and thought to have laid eggs, but no nest or young seen; only one bird in 1964 (SG).

Hebrides (1960 : 1962)

Inner Hebrides (1960 : 1963, probably earlier)

Islay. Collared Doves almost certainly present from 1961 but information inconclusive; weak bird caught May 1963 (2: 439); bred Gruinart 1963 and 8 by autumn (2: 491); unsuccessful breeding 1964 and only 6 in autumn. Two near Port Ellen several days from 16th May 1964 but did not stay (HK).

Eigg. One Cleadale 20th July 1964 (JWa).

Rhum. One Kinloch 5th and 7th May 1960 (1: 379, 481).

Outer Hebrides (1960 : 1962)

Barra. One 3rd June 1964 (RDH).

South Uist. Two L. Druidibeg 29th May 1964 (GET); one 20th Aug Iochdar (NW part of island), and one (same?) Grogarry Lodge L. Druidibeg, 24th Aug 1964 (HEMD).

Stornoway, Lewis. One 2nd June 1960 (1: 379, 481); one nearby at Steinish 28th May 1961 (1: 488); at least 2 Stornoway May 1962 (2: 93,

95); several that summer (2: 260); bred Oct 1962, and numbers increased (2: 309); absent winter 1962-63; 1/2 pairs back late March 1963 (2: 380); 6 summer 1963 (2: 491); second pair bred 1964; probably 5/6 pairs by June 1964, but very scattered (WAJC).

Uig, Lewis (23 mls W of Stornoway). Some reported 1964 (per DBC).

Bragar, Lewis (west coast). One 23rd May 1964 (NE).

Butt of Lewis. Injured one Ness June 1962 (2: 260).

St Kilda

No records.

Northern Isles (1960 : 1964)

Orkney (1962 : 1964)

South Ronaldsay. One St Margaret's Hope 23rd July 1962 (2:247).

Holm, Mainland. One 25th Apr 1963 (per EB).

Kirkwall. Reported autumn 1963 (per EB).

Finstown/Binscarth Wood, Mainland. Reported Finstown autumn 1963; pair next spring; schoolboy found eggs in nest May or June 1964, but gone a few days later; pair at nearby Binscarth Woods all winter 1963-64; 2 calling summer 1964, and up to 5 at hen run; at least 7 by about Sept (2 thought to be juvs) (per EB).

Shapinsay. Three Balfour Castle May and part June 1963; pair partly built nest but did not lay; also reported autumn 1963 (per EB).

Rousay. Reported autumn 1963 (per EB).

Fair Isle (1960 : —)

Singles 18th Apr, 18th June 1960 (1: 481), 12th and 24th May 1961 (1: 489), 13th May and 15th-16th June 1962; probably at least 5 different birds between 30th Apr and 20th June 1963 (Fair Isle Bird Observatory Bulletin 5: 77; see also 2: 438); singles in 1964 on 9th, 19th and 22nd May, and 1st, 11th and 16th June (F.I.B.O. records per RH).

Shetland (1961 : —)

Spiggie. One by loch 23rd June 1963 (2: 483); one 20th May 1964 (per RJT).

Hamnavoe, West Burra. One 31st May 1961 (1: 488).

Lerwick. One or two arrived end May or June 1964 (per RJT); 3 still 1st-8th Sept 1964; stayed all winter (GB, DC).

Veensgarth, Mainland. One 12th Sept 1964; one (perhaps same) **Asta** (2 mls S; and 1 ml N of Scalloway) flying S that day (BLSH).

Kergord, Weisdale. Two arrived end May or June 1964 (per RJT); 1 disappeared Aug 1964 (IW).

Bixter. Two end May or June 1964 stayed to mid July (RJT).

Burravoe, Yell. One or two late May or June 1964 (per RJT).

West Sandwick, Yell. One or two late May or June 1964 (per RJT).

Mid Yell. One 19th May 1964 was earliest of the May-June batch of Shetland records (RJT).

Fetlar. One or two late May or June 1964 (per RJT).

Unst. Noted late May or June 1964 (per RJT); 1/2 early Sept 1964 (MS).

Key to initials of observers

A. Anderson, E. V. Anderson, N. K. Atkinson, W. Austin, W. Bain, E. Balfour, R. Bernard, W. K. Birrell, H. Boase, G. Bowers, W. Q. Brown, K. Bruce, R. J. Buxton, J. Cameron, A. Campbell, Dr B. Campbell, Dr J. W. Campbell, Rev. G. Carse, C. V. Chilcott, D. Coutts, D. B. Cowie, the late W. Crawford, H. G. Cree, G. M. Crighton, W. A. J. Cunningham, G. Davies (GDv), G. Dick (GDk), H. E. M. Dott, J. Dunbar, Miss A. F. Duncan, I. M. Dunn, Dr G. M. Dunnet, W. M. M. Eddie, Dr W. J. Eggeling, N. Elkins, R. W. Forrester, D. D. Galloway, S. Gordon, J. Greenlees, H. Halliday, B. L. S. Hardy, R. Hewson (RHw), Dr R. D. Hill,

R. Hudson (RH), W. Hughes, Sir G. Hughes-Onslow, Miss A. M. Hutton, Dr D. Jenkins, R. Job, V. A. Joss, Miss H. Knight, A. C. Laing, P. S. Leask, J. Lees, Lt.-Col. W. M. Logan-Home, A. J. B. Loudon, I. H. Lyster, D. A. Maccormick, A. Macdonald (AMcD), D. Macdonald, M. Macdonald, J. MacGeoch (JMcG), A. T. Macmillan, Mrs E. MacPherson, J. Mair (JMr), Gp. Capt. S. Marshall, E. A. J. K. Maynard, Prof. M. F. M. Meiklejohn, A. Morris (AMo), J. B. Murray, R. Murray, W. Murray, D. J. Norden, D. W. Oliver, Dr I. D. Pennie, J. N. Petrie, W. Pryde, A. D. K. Ramsay, C. P. Rawcliffe, G. A. Richards, Dr R. Richter, D. Robertson, Miss M. R. Robertson, C. Ross, Dr H. C. Scott, Mrs A. F. W. Sharp, Mrs A. Shearer, A. G. Shivas, E. Simms, M. Sinclair, J. Snedden, Brig. C. E. H. Sparrow, N. B. Stanners, D. M. Stark, G. J. Strachan, H. Stuart, Dr H. J. Tattersall, Miss V. M. Thom, G. E. Thomason, R. J. Tulloch, N. Usher, A. D. Watson, J. Watson (JWa), Mrs V. M. Watson, G. T. White, J. Whyte (JWh), W. H. Wild, Mrs I. Winton, P. B. Wordsworth, Fl.-Lt. D. Wright.

Later information also from: R. O. Blyth, Dr D. T. Gibson, Mrs E. M. N. Gibson.

Movements of the Mute Swan in East Scotland

HENRY BOASE

Introduction

Observation by the writer of the movements of Mute Swans on both tidal and fresh water in the Tay Faunal Area, mainly in east Perth and Angus, has continued since 1933 until the present time. Much of the earlier work concerned numbers on the various lochs. During the second World War the behaviour of a winter gathering on a tidal pond at Dundee was watched. In 1950 a moulting group was found at Montrose Basin, and since then a continuous record of numbers and behaviour there has been kept. At a later date, in August 1953, counts were begun at Loch Leven, near Kinross.

In detailing the movements of Mute Swans during the year, the following aspects are dealt with—return to breeding sites; nesting; departure of adults and young from nesting place; duration of family group; constitution, build-up, and dispersal of wintering group; constitution, build-up, and dispersal of summering group. In this review the items cover, as it were, two years, as one follows the doings of a breeding pair and the brood: actually the various groupings occur together in each year.

Return to breeding sites

Four sites around Invergowrie on the Angus/Perthshire border are the source of the following records; these sites are referred to as A, B, C and D. The site at D was on the tidal margin of a stream, and though it was occupied for several consecutive years the nesting failed through flooding at spring tides. Arrival at a breeding place may be in autumn. The

earliest date noted was 23rd September at B. The pair remained until 27th September, returned once in October, twice in November—once in company with six juveniles of the year—once each in December and January, and finally settled in from 4th February. The other sites provided fewer but similar records and all four sites were occupied in February unless the weather was severe, as in 1963 when the return was delayed until late March. In two instances solo birds occupied a site; both had poor bill colour and were displaced by pairs.

Nesting

The building of a nest has been seen on 25th March, but most of the nests have been built in late April and early May. There are six records of broods in May—one from the 13th; the others in the last week. The remaining records are for June, mostly in the first half. Two instances of failure to hatch were noted; apparently the clutches were infertile. One of these belonged to a pair which drove away a solo bird that was sitting on a nest; the pair arrived in late April and was building on the 26th. The nest was abandoned in mid July.

Departure of adults and young from nesting place

Two of the nesting places—B and C—were near the tidal shore of the Tay estuary, and the length of stay at the site varied widely. A brood which hatched at B on 13th May left the nesting place for tidal water on 21st July. A brood seen on 25th May at this site had gone on 28th August but had returned on 31st August and remained until 8th September. Another year, a brood which hatched on 5th June was out on 13th June on the tidal shore, where it remained until 26th June at least; it may have been lost in a storm in the next day or two. At site C a brood which hatched about 27th June was still there on 30th September. One juvenile was there on 13th October and the pair, with two of the young, was there on 22nd October and remained up to 3rd December. The following year the brood was seen on 21st June and was at the site on 31st July. The family party was on tidal water on 4th August. On the lochs it is quite normal for the family group to remain intact near the nesting place until the end of the year or, as sometimes happens, until it is frozen off.

There are records of broods on tidal water at Montrose Basin in July and August which show that the nesting place may be left when the young are quite small. There is a record of a family party on 22nd June, and others were on the Basin by 25th June and by 9th July. Young about fourteen days old were seen on 17th July. There are several instances of these broods leaving Montrose Basin after a week or two, and as



PLATE 24. Willow Warbler at nest, Longside, Aberdeenshire, 1964. Three young successfully fledged on 4th August from this unusually open nest, sited two feet from the ground on an east-facing ivy-clad wall of a stone wash-house. The nest was in a very exposed position and subject to frequent disturbance.

Photograph by J. Edelsten

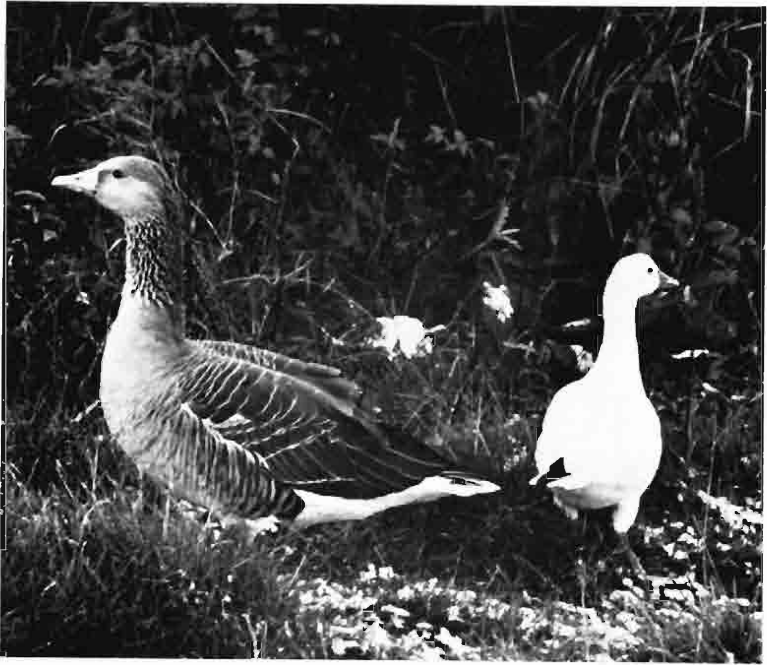


PLATE 25. Ross's Goose and Grey Lag Goose in captivity, Kincardineshire, 24th October 1964. Though the size of geese is noticeably variable this gives an idea of the relative sizes of the two species. The two photographs reproduced here are of topical interest in view of recent sightings of Ross's Geese (probably escapes) in various parts of Scotland (see 3: 158, 262), and the number of white geese (Ross's and Snow) now reported each year.

Photograph by David Jenkins

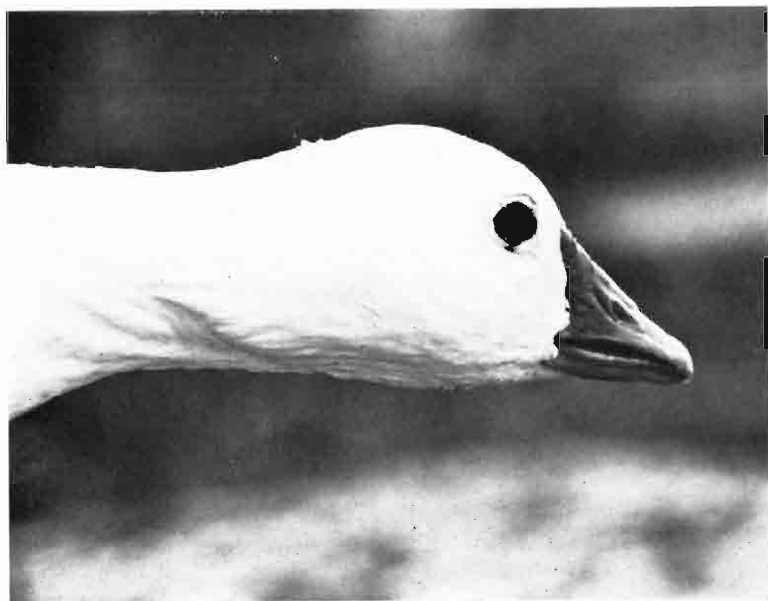


PLATE 26. Head of Ross's Goose, showing the relatively stubby-looking bill, the round high-crowned shape with peak well forward (see also plate 25) and the eye close to the bill.

Photograph by David Jenkins



PLATE 27. The late William Crawford (second from right) at Loch Morlich with Miss E. P. Leach (second from left) and members of the Inverness Bird Watching Group (left to right) Mrs Miller, H. J. Miller, Mrs F. G. Yalden Knowles and W. A. Fernie (see Obituary p. 324).

Photograph by J. MacGeoch

the young cannot fly it may be that they returned to the South Esk from whence they came.

Duration of family group

Most of the family parties seem to break up in January. This is what one would expect in view of the return of breeding pairs to the nesting places in February. Records of brown young at Montrose Basin during the years 1952-64 show increasing numbers from September; so that by November the number of young present is about double that in July-August. The largest count of juveniles was 23 in January 1956 in a total of 97 Mute Swans—about 25%. There were three counts of 16—in 1953, 1957 and 1961—in totals of 107, 133 and 123 birds—12%, to 15%. These figures are approximate, as some juveniles moult contours and lose much colour from the flights by January. In some instances family parties remain quite apart from the main body of wintering Mute Swans. According to the *Handbook* the juveniles are fully fledged in 14 weeks, so that flight from a distant breeding place is unlikely before mid September. The earliest record of juveniles in flight noted by the writer is 16th October; and of wing-flapping at the nesting place, 30th September—these young hatched in mid June. The early arrivals at Montrose Basin must therefore have come from nearby breeding places, presumably along the lower course of the South Esk.

Constitution, build-up, and dispersal of wintering group, and of summering group

The wintering group of Mute Swans must consist of some adult birds, some yearlings which have gone through their first full moult, and the young of the year.

The wintering group at Dundee watched in the years 1940-47 showed a steady build-up from mid September to a maximum count in January-February, with a marked and rapid reduction in numbers from early March, but presently slowing down, and the final dispersal in May. This gathering was seen to consist of mixed ages; in December 1944, of 129 birds, 25 appeared to be adults, ten were brown young, and the balance white immatures. Similar proportions were found in January-February 1945 and in January 1946. Unfortunately the time of departure of the seeming adults was not noted, but the later departures commonly consisted of groups of swans, up to fifteen in number, which indicated immatures.

The second series of records is for Montrose Basin, extending from 1952 to 1964. The records show a marked loss in numbers in September, extending into October, followed by an increase of rather varying degree in November-December. Owing to the exposure, storms affect the numbers, some birds taking refuge on the lochs to the west. The winter counts are

generally about a hundred, roughly two-thirds of the summering counts.

During the autumn, rather complex movements are in progress. First, there is the arrival of family parties from near nesting places, and later, from mid October, some parties may come from more distant places. At the same time there is the departure of newly mated pairs from the "third-summer" group, and possibly some solo birds of this group, and second-summer birds, to occupy possible breeding places. There may be passage of family parties, but the only evidence is the arrival and later absence of the brown-plumaged young.

The result of these movements is a net loss of around a third of the summer numbers. As the family parties generally include the two parent birds their presence masks in part the departure of other white summering birds of various ages.

In October-November, there is sometimes an increase on lochs, but not on the rivers. In some instances at least these are immatures in small groups.

In January and early February, numbers on tidal water of the Tay estuary at Broughty Ferry and Barnhill rise markedly and remain so into April. There are also more swans on the rivers (Tay, Isla) at this time, and in some years an increase at Montrose Basin has been noted. These increases may be weather movements of birds driven from lochs and ponds to tidal water and rivers where freezing does not occur. In spite of the usual return to breeding places in late February, there is little change in counts of the coastal groups. In March, counts at Montrose Basin may fall to the lowest for the year. In April, numbers begin to rise, and reach a maximum in July-August.

The records suggest that immatures and juveniles must make up the bulk of the groups on tidal water. Obviously these are not competitors for breeding places, and hence the lingering of the birds until April.

There are therefore two movements in progress in spring—the departure to breeding places, and the formation of the summering group. The numbers at Montrose show an average of 100 or so in November-February, and 145 in July-August, with six counts exceeding 170 since 1957. Under suitable conditions of tide it is possible to see the bill colour of these summering birds. In June, at least 80% are very pale, ranging from almost colourless (grey), through "blue-bill" to greyish-lemon. As the summer advances, there is increasing colour in some of the bills. One can only assume meantime (ringing may give some definite information) that these are the two-year-old birds, which at this time undergo their second full moult, and after it engage in display and pair up. Others are

probably yearlings which moult their slightly dusky plumage and appear in full whiteness.

The other birds present may be adults—it is only possible to say that they show good bill colour but no arrogance. Full copulation display has been seen on 28th May, a date which leaves in doubt effective breeding; it suggests, rather, imperfect maturity.

Some counts of breeding pairs were made during the last 15 years. In five years, 12 pairs were found; once there were 15; in others nine or less. The number of broods varied from 8 in three summers, twice 7, once 5, twice 4, and once only 2. The number of young reared was 31 in 1956, 27 in 1957, and 22 in 1961. There were other similar totals during earlier years. Unfortunately these records are not complete for every year.

There were other pairs known to be nesting on the River South Esk, on the River Earn, on ponds at Tayport and also in Angus which did not get regular survey. These additional pairs could amount to 8, and with 12 pairs under fairly regular observation the total breeding population could be 20 pairs.

Assuming that the number of juveniles reared in any year is 25 to 30, and that the second-summer survivors are 20 to 25, these with the adult group of about 40 make a wintering population of 80 to 100 possible, and this is not far from the actual counts.

The summer counts can only be explained by assuming that a considerable number of swans come from outside the area. In July, when the larger counts are attained, most breeding pairs and their broods are still at the breeding places. That implies that some forty adults of the wintering group are elsewhere and not at Montrose or on the Angus coast. It seems therefore that eighty or more Mute Swans, probably all immatures, come in late spring and depart in autumn.

The summer assembly of Mute Swans is sometimes even more marked at Loch Leven at Kinross. A wintering population of under 20, and a breeding population of under 12 pairs, has been followed by a summer count exceeding 400 birds, practically all of which departed in August-September after the moult without any impact on the numbers in Angus.

The highest winter total for stations in Angus and east Perth is 190 in 1955, a figure nearly double the average for Montrose. The highest summer total is 228 in 1958, more than 30% above the average for Montrose.

In 1955, when a census of Mute Swans was taken in Great Britain, a total of 1500 non-breeding birds was given for Scotland. In August that year the Angus and Loch Leven assemblies accounted for 440, nearly 30% of the non-breeding

population. In 1962 the August counts for Angus and Loch Leven accounted for 656 Mute Swans, yet there was no report of any marked increase elsewhere.

Feeding habits

The feeding habits of these large assemblies of Swans are of importance. At Montrose Basin the summering pack finds food mainly in the river channel; only a few birds feed on the flats. In winter there is only a small number in the river; most of the Mute Swans feed at sewer outfalls and on fish refuse at the harbour. On the Angus coast the summering group at Barnhill feeds in the vicinity of several sewer outfalls and the outrun of the Dichty Burn. The number feeding there in winter is very small. At Broughty Ferry there is no regular summering group, but in winter a moderate number feed near a small outfall, and in the harbour, where feeding by the public seems usual. Mute Swans seem to feed only rarely on land; sometimes on saltings but very rarely on fields, in contrast to the Whooper Swan.

Summary of dates

1. Occupation of breeding places from September; more marked return in February.
2. Nesting, mostly April-May; broods, last week of May.
3. Stay of brood at nesting place varies widely.
4. There is a definite increase of juveniles on tidal water from mid October.
5. Movement in autumn consists of two streams—departure of new pairs and a scattering of immatures; and a build-up of wintering groups.
6. Movement in early spring to breeding places; later, from April, a build-up of immatures at moulting places.

S h o r t N o t e s

Spoonbills in Perthshire and Moray

While driving along the A85 near Crieff on the way from Perth on 16th July 1964 we saw a Spoonbill. It landed briefly on the road 10 yards in front of the car with some gulls and we had time to note the white plumage, long strangely-shaped bill, large size, heronlike shape, wings and flight, and the long legs. No ring was seen on the legs. The yellow or bone-coloured bill indicated that it was a young bird. It seems possible that the birds had mistaken the road for water in the brilliant morning sunshine.

J. R. and P. M. PALMER.

On 19th October 1964 in the Culbin Sandhills near the mouth of the Findhorn I saw a Spoonbill about 120 yards away in excellent light flying SW along the shore of the Moray Firth. It flew close enough for me to see that the tips

of the primaries were black, the bill flesh-coloured and the legs greyish, confirming that it was an immature bird, but I did not see any ring on its leg. Although in the district before and after this date I did not see it on any other occasion.

L. P. ALDER.

At 11.40 a.m. on 28th October 1964 a juvenile Spoonbill appeared on a lagoon habitat constructed in JWC's garden at Rannagulzion, near Blairgowrie. It arrived from SSE and immediately started to feed in the pool, scything with its enormous flesh-pink bill in the watery ooze. Later it seemed tired and slept a lot.

It was a grand spectacle—as big as a Heron, not quite pure white, with brownish-black wingtips, blackish legs, and bill pinkish at the base, shading to purplish at the tip. It had a very deep—almost one inch we would guess—rather brassy ring on the right leg.

It was seen also by P. F. James and Major and Mrs A. M. Macfarlane, and again early on the 29th when it was flushed from the Drimmie Burn by E. Price.

JAMES W. CAMPBELL, V. M. THOM.

(A Spoonbill flew over the Isle of May on 16th September (3: 283), and there were rumours of one on the Fife coast in October. On 5th November a Spoonbill wearing just such a ring as described above was accidentally shot near Perth. It had been ringed as a nestling near Krapje (45°18'N, 16°50'E) in the Hrvatska province of Yugoslavia on 22nd June 1964. This was obviously the same bird that was seen near Blairgowrie, but it would not be safe to assume that it was involved in the earlier records. There are no previous records of the species from Moray Basin, Tay or the Isle of May.—ED.)

King Eider in Shetland

While scanning a large raft of Eiders some 300 yds offshore at Braewick, Lerwick, on 19th October 1964 GB noticed a strange one amongst the rest. As the flock moved closer he was able to identify this bird as a drake King Eider. He then fetched W. G. Porteous, who brought his 30x telescope and obtained good views of the bird; and then DC and C. S. Waller, who were able to examine it with an 80x telescope and make detailed notes. It was seen also by W. Kay, who had photographed one a few years ago. All these observers agreed that it was undoubtedly a King Eider.

The silhouette of the bird—especially its head—was unmistakable among the common Eiders, even in poor light when colour could not readily be seen. The King Eider was smaller than an Eider, shorter in the neck and body, and the

neck being thinner made the head, already bigger than an Eider's, seem very big. The head was very angular—like a rounded off rectangle, compared with the rather triangular shape of an Eider's. This was caused by the almost vertical shield and forehead, and another corner at the back of the head. The shield over the bill was not quite so large and richly coloured as in the *Field Guide*, although the bill was the colour of an Oystercatcher's. The crown and nape were bluish grey; the face a rather dirty pale grey—not the white of the books, as the bird was evidently not fully out of eclipse and darker feathers still showed. The neck was white, the breast off-white with a pinkish flush, and the rear part of the bird (on the water) black except for a horizontal white line on the forewing and a circular white patch on the thigh. The two black "sails" on the back could also be seen.

These notes are based on details supplied by all the observers mentioned. The bird unfortunately did not stay for more than a few days. King Eiders are rare visitors but there have been a number of previous Shetland records.

G. BOWERS, D. COUTTS.

Red-footed Falcon in Shetland

On 25th May 1964 I visited Baltasound, Unst, to look for a hawk with red legs and feet which had been frequenting the area since the 19th and which generally appeared in the late afternoon and seemed to be feeding on insects. I could not find it during the afternoon, but at about 8 p.m. the bird appeared in its usual place by a newly sown oat field.

In flight it was about the size of a Kestrel; perhaps a little smaller in the body and longer in the wing. It hovered very briefly before settling on a clod of earth, and gave me a good view of its back and spread tail. At rest, the most immediately noticeable feature was the pattern of the head. The following description is compiled from notes made at the time:

Black patch through eye with short "moustache," contrasting sharply with pale creamy throat, cheek and side of neck; back, mantle and scapulars slaty grey, closely barred darker, and shading to dark rufous on lower nape; this pattern extended to a point below creamy cheek, and also in very narrow strip up back of neck, widening on crown and merging into greyish forehead; light mark just above cere; small dark mark on side of neck between black eye-patch and dark strip up back of neck; tail grey, finely barred darker, with whitish narrow terminal and dark, broader sub-terminal bands; impression of lighter inner web to outer tail feathers when tail spread; primaries dark; secondaries tinged brown; underparts pale rufous on breast, shading to light fawn below, with some fine, dark streaking on flanks; under tail-coverts and "trousers" fawnish; legs and feet orange-red; bill dark towards tip, horn at base, with rather bright flesh-coloured cere; eye dark with flesh-coloured rim.

The bird's usual mode of feeding was to sit on an elevated clod or stone watching for an insect to move, when it would either run or fly, depending on the distance, and pounce on its victim. It was seen to hover also, about 10 to 15 ft above the field, for short periods before pouncing. Usually it fed well into the dusk. It was seen to perch on telephone and power cables and on a chimney pot, and was thought once to have roosted on a telephone pole.

I concluded that the bird was a female Red-footed Falcon, the first recorded in Shetland other than at Fair Isle. The weather immediately before it was first seen on 19th May had been unsettled, with some strong south-easterly winds and a lot of rain. It was last seen on the 29th.

R. J. TULLOCH.

Great Skua breeding in North West Highlands

On 26th May 1964 a Great Skuas' nest with two eggs was found on Handa, West Sutherland, by Miss Sheila Y. Ricketts. One of the eggs disappeared between 10th and 16th June, but the other hatched by 10th July. The chick thrived, but unfortunately, when it had almost reached the flying stage, my wife and I found it lying dead on 6th August. It had been decapitated and was quite fresh. Apart from its missing head there were no other signs of violence. Some Great Black-backed Gulls nest nearby, and it is possible that the young Bonxie strayed into gull territory and was attacked.

From 1959 onwards Great Skuas have been recorded off Handa Bird Reserve on several occasions during the summer, but it was not until 13th June 1962 that a pair was recorded as actually alighting beside a pool in the centre of the island. They were not nesting. On 29th May 1963 W. J. Eggeling saw a pair courting near Sithean Mor—the highest point on the island. They were frequently seen throughout the summer but did not nest. On 4th July 1963 four adults were noted at one time; and during the summer of 1964 up to four adults were seen on the island.

This is the first breeding record of the Great Skua in the North West Highlands. It represents a further extension of the breeding range of this species in Scotland to which attention has already been drawn (see *antea* 2: 427).

GEORGE WATERSTON.

Arctic Terns breeding in South Fife

In July 1949 I was at Ruddons Point at the east end of Largo Bay having a look at a small scattered breeding colony of Common Terns. Amongst them were either two or three pairs of Arctic Terns, of which two nests were found. There

were also two Roseate Terns in the air but I could not trace a nest.

I reported all this to Miss E. V. Baxter at the time and have just come across her acknowledgment, in which she comments on it being the first breeding record of the Arctic Tern in South Fife. I remember Miss Baxter telling me that she and Miss L. J. Rintoul later visited the colony and saw both Common and Arctic Terns but no Roseates. They do not, however, mention the record in *The Birds of Scotland*. As these are the only Arctic Terns found breeding on the mainland of Forth, except for small numbers in East Lothian, it seems worth putting them on record.

W. J. EGGELING.

Little Owls in Dumfriesshire

On the afternoon of 1st April 1965 my wife and I were driving past Carrifran in the Moffat Water Valley when we saw a Little Owl sitting on the exact same dry-stone dyke where we saw one about three years ago (2: 248).

When the bird flew a short distance it was immediately mobbed by small birds, and when it settled on a large stone on the hillside three Wheatears and a pair of Pied Wagtails mobbed it from about one to two yards away.

The date of the previous report mentioned above was published as 26th April 1961, but was in fact 26th April 1962.

E. DICERBO.

Great Tit killing and carrying Wren

Our house is situated some 30 ft above Little Loch Shieldaig—an arm of Gairloch in Wester Ross. The garden stretches along the shore for about 100 yds and is some two acres in extent. There are old oaks, as well as birch and willow scrub, and during the past few years my wife and I have planted a variety of trees and shrubs in and around the garden—both for pleasure and shelter, and to attract wild birds. Food is put out at various points in the garden, and birds feed right up to the large double-glazed windows. Heathers grow a few feet away, and through these Wrens have been seen working from time to time.

During a spell of open weather, at 1300 hrs on 8th January 1965, at a distance of four feet from the window, I saw a Great Tit kill and carry away a Wren. When first I saw the incident the Great Tit was on top of the Wren and hammering at its head. The Wren's legs and the one wing that I could see were still moving. I rapped on the window, hoping to distract the Great Tit, but it picked up the Wren—now apparently dead—in its beak, and flew off. Though I ran outside at once I was unable to locate either of the birds.

The Handbook refers to Great Tits killing young birds, attacking the brain, but not to flying off with them. My attention has however been drawn to a somewhat similar record of a Great Tit killing and carrying a Goldcrest (*Brit. Birds* 51: 355), though in that instance a remarkable point was that the tit apparently used its feet, in the manner of a raptor, to carry its victim.

ERIC N. HUNTER.

Redwings breeding in North West Highlands

About 1700 hrs BST on the wet afternoon of 13th June 1964 we heard a Redwing singing in the policies of a lodge in West Sutherland. Soon the bird flew up from a clipped rhododendron hedge to perch in a small rowan, where it continued to sing, giving us excellent views through binoculars at about 30 yds. After it flew away we heard it singing once or twice while we were searching the shrubbery, which was mainly of rhododendrons. We found occupied nests of Song Thrush and Blackbird, as well as several used nests of thrush type which could have been built by Redwings; but it was not until 1815 hrs, when we were working a hillside outside the policies, with scattered shrub trees and thick bracken, that we flushed first two short-tailed juveniles about three to four weeks old and then an adult Redwing. Although BC had only a brief view of the juveniles, it allowed him to see both the pale superciliary stripe and the chestnut underwing.

As it was now raining hard we did not continue our search for more than a few minutes, and we had no chance to re-visit the area another day. Although breeding Redwings have been reported recently in the north of Ross-shire (*antea* 1: 454; 2: 441), and earlier in North Sutherland (*The Birds of Scotland* 1: 189), there is no published record for the North West Highlands.

BRUCE CAMPBELL, C. E. H. SPARROW.

Great Reed Warbler in East Inverness

On 8th June 1964 an unusual song was heard coming from a reedbed bordering a marshy pool in the East Inverness division of the Moray Faunal Area. The song was quite unlike that of any bird normally found in the area, though suggestive of Reed or Sedge Warbler, but far louder; at times it sounded more like some strange species of frog than a bird. Together with a group of visiting birdwatchers I made detailed notes of the song and the bird, and identified it as a Great Reed Warbler—a species which I know by sight and sound in Holland.

The bird was watched repeatedly in the same place daily

until 20th June by myself and several observers to whom I am indebted for their co-operation and help—in particular Miss Helen L. Glenn; and Miss M. Jennings and Miss E. Gooding, who originally located the bird. On the 12th I visited the area with Douglas N. Weir and he made full independent field notes and sketches of the bird. Much material from HLG's and DNW's notes has been incorporated in the comments and descriptions which follow.

The song was very loud, strident, and divided into phrases of about three notes, with four or five different types of phrase, in a wide range of harsh, clear and fluty, and low, gruff frog-like notes. The bird sometimes sang in flight, including a thrush-like chortle. It sang strongly and constantly, especially in the late evening, from 8th to 14th June whenever the area was visited, but progressively less frequently from 15th to 20th. It was virtually invisible when it remained silently in the reeds. A low sallow bush, close to the water and some 2 ft taller than the reeds, was its favourite song perch to which it continually returned, and the droppings there suggested that the perch had been in use for a few days when the bird was discovered. It also sang occasionally from reeds at the edge of the water about 15 yds away. The song was a miscellany of sound, with the favourite passage—*keekerrri-keek* (harsh), *tootoo* (fluty), *gurkgurk* (low)—sometimes babbled without a break for up to 1½ minutes. A portion of this song recorded on tape was instantly identified by two Dutch ornithologists.

The bird had a very bold appearance, standing up prominently on the bush, singing with head back; it frequently chased off Reed Buntings which came near, and looked larger and stouter than these, both when perched and in flight—very large for a warbler and clearly much bigger than any of the British breeding species.

From a distance the impression was of a very large heavily-built "hunchbacked" warbler, with a rather drooping tail; mid-brown above and whitish below, with darker wings and tail. The rather grey-brown head, darker than the back, contrasted sharply with the white throat ostentatiously puffed out while it sang. When the bird flew, the wing area seemed large for a warbler and the tail long and heavy. The following plumage description has been assembled from our various notes:

Curiously high-pointed crown with occasional suggestion of crest; crown medium brown, with sides of head rather darker ash brown extending over ear coverts; indistinct whitish eyestripe; mantle and back unstreaked rather reddish medium brown ("dead reed colour"); rump paler brown; rather long tail, dark or blackish brown with centre feathers lighter; wings brown with dark grey-brown or blackish flight feathers; conspicuous satin white throat; rest of underparts pale,

shading through dirty white on breast to light yellowish-buff on flanks, with belly and under tail-coverts white; bill apparently dark, straight, rather long, and perhaps heavy for a warbler; legs evidently pale, but not seen well; eye dark; gape orange-red.

The only previous Scottish Great Reed Warbler was identified in Shetland on 4th and 5th June 1958 (*Scot. Birds* 1: 254).

COLIN C. I. MURDOCH.

Yellow-breasted Bunting in Orkney

On 22nd October 1964 we identified a Yellow-breasted Bunting on Aukerry. We watched it for some hours in the late afternoon and evening, in sunlight at first, and at times from only a few yards range. It was gone next day.

The general impression was of a small round-headed bunting about the same size as a Reed Bunting, or possibly a little smaller, somewhat dumpy, with rather prominent head markings, largely unstreaked underparts and dark brown upperparts. It was rather active, and difficult to approach nearer than 25 yds. When feeding it usually hopped, but occasionally ran a few steps. It often flicked its tail, and had a bounding flight like most other buntings. Its call was a Yellowhammer-like *chuk* or *tick*, often repeated. Its plumage was as follows:

Head generally dark brown, with well marked paler crown stripe, grey-brown or buff-brown, from near top of crown to nape; very prominent pale buff or pale yellow eyestripe from just in front of and above eye to rather abrupt end on ear coverts; very dark chocolate mark from eye to ear coverts, accentuating eyestripe; rest of ear coverts and lores brown, with darker brown mark in malar region forming very indistinct moustache; the combination of dark markings around the eye formed a rather square-ended hood on the back of the head; nape, mantle and back dark brown with prominent buff streaks, giving appearance of two pale lines down back; rump evidently as dark as rest of upperparts and apparently unstreaked, but not seen well; tail quite deeply notched, dark brown with noticeable white on outer feathers (EB did not get a good view and he was unable to see any white); narrow chestnut band on breast; rest of throat, breast and belly unstreaked pale lemon yellow, fading to buffish on belly; slight streaking on flanks; under tail-coverts not specifically noted but probably pale buff; wing generally dark brownish, with broad buff tips to secondary and median coverts forming two distinct bars on closed wing; light buff edging to secondary coverts; primaries dark; legs pale, possibly flesh or light brown; bill similar in shape to a Chaffinch's, relatively larger than a Reed Bunting's, pale brown, with upper mandible slightly darker (EB) than lower; eye dark with no eye-ring.

This is the first record of a Yellow-breasted Bunting in Orkney.

E. J. WILLIAMS, E. BALFOUR.

Current Notes

Compiled by P. J. B. SLATER

(**Key to initials of observers:** A. Anderson, D. R. Anderson, D. G. Andrew, J. M. S. Arnott, W. Austin, R. S. Baillie, E. Balfour, J. Ballantyne, Miss P. G. Baxter, I. H. Bowhill, W. Brotherston, R. G. Caldow, Dr B. Campbell, R. N. Campbell, A. H. Chapman, Gen. Sir P. Christison Bt. (PCh), J. L. S. Cobb, F. Colman, Mrs N. Cox, R. C. Crawford, G. M. Crighton, P. Crook (PCr), R. H. Dennis, D. Dewar, G. Dick (GDk), G. Dickson (GDn), J. M. Donnan, J. Dunbar, N. Dymond, W. M. M. Eddie, J. Edelsten, N. Elkins, T. H. Evanson, M. J. Everett, R. W. Forrester, J. Forsyth, Mrs D. Gladstone, Miss M. E. Grace (MEGc), Mrs J. A. R. Grant, M. E. Greenhalgh (MEGh), Dr G. Hope, R. B. Hughes, P. F. James, R. Job, P. Johnson, A. F. Leitch, A. Macdonald, A. M. Macfarlane, J. MacGeoch (JMcG), I. M. MacLean, A. T. Macmillan, R. McWilliam, W. Matheson, Prof. M. F. M. Meiklejohn, J. Morgan (JMn), C. Murray, J. B. Murray, Miss M. H. Murray, D. J. Norden, D. W. Oliver, T. Paterson, G. L. A. Patrick, J. Potter, R. M. Ramage, A. D. K. Ramsay, G. A. Richards, P. W. Sandeman, Dr T. C. Smout, Brig. C. E. H. Sparrow, T. Spence, D. M. Stark, J. H. Swan, C. Tait, I. Taylor, A. Temple, Miss V. M. Thom, R. B. Tozer, R. J. Tulloch, L. A. Urquhart, Dr W. E. Waters, G. Waterston, Mrs M. I. Waterston, A. D. Watson, W. H. Wild, E. J. Wiseman, Prof. V. C. Wynne-Edwards, W. Wyper, B. Zonfrillo.

January to April dates refer to 1965 and all others to 1964).

Distribution

Observations included in this section were all made after 1st December 1964 except such older records as are relevant to more recent topics.

Unusual on fresh water outside the breeding season, a **Black-throated Diver** in changing plumage was at Kilconquhar Loch, Fife, on 20th February (DWO). Also inland was an oiled **Red-throated Diver** which was picked up dead at Gadloch, Lanarkshire, on 23rd January (FC, WW, BZ).

Reports of **Red-necked Grebes** are of one found dying near Fife Ness on 3rd January (JARG); one at Barassie, Ayrshire, on 24th January (LAU); and two off Southernness, Kirkcudbrightshire, on 13th March (DJN, DWO). Two **Black-necked Grebes** were seen at Aberlady Bay, East Lothian, on 17th January (RSB, JMn, AT); and single birds are reported from Fife at Tentsmuir on 3rd January (THE), and at Dalgety Bay on 1st February (RSB).

A **Gannet** inland was an adult seen flying along the east side of Loch Lomond, in Stirlingshire, on 28th March (PGB).

A **Bittern** was flushed from a ditch at Dirleton, East Lothian, on 12th February (IHB).

A quite exceptional number of **Mallard** was recorded at the

Eden Estuary, Fife, on 20th January, when it was estimated that at least 14,000 were present (JLSC). Reports of **Gadwall** include a pair at the mouth of the Endrick, Stirling/Dunbartonshire, on 14th and 29th March (RSB, DJN, DWO); a pair at Barr Loch, Renfrewshire, on 13th February and again on 14th March when an additional female was also seen (LAU); and three at Camphill Reservoir, Ayrshire, on 12th December (RWF). Single males have been seen at Glenbuck Reservoir, Ayrshire, on 24th February (GAR) and at the south end of Loch Ken, Kirkcudbrightshire, on 13th December: this being the first the observer has seen for two winters at this usually regular haunt (ADW).

There are a number of reports of single male **Pintail** in Edinburgh; at Lochend Loch on 13th January (PWS) and again on 13th February when one was also present at Figgate Pond (DRA); one was standing on the ice at St Margaret's Loch on 7th March (PJ, AFL). Also in Midlothian, a male wintered on the Moorfoot reservoirs (DGA); and a pair was seen at Cramond on 16th January and 6th and 14th March (TCS, EJW).

An immature male **Long-tailed Duck** was inland at Hamilton Low Parks, Lanarkshire, on 24th January (WMME).

High counts of waterfowl in the Inverness area include 300 **Goldeneye** off Inverness on 30th January and 300 off Invergordon, E. Ross, on 26th February. On 28th February there were about 170 **Velvet Scoters** at Findhorn Bay, Morayshire (RHD).

Reports of **Goosanders** in places where this species is rare are of a pair at Loch of Brockan, Orkney, during February (EB); three pairs at Barvas, Lewis, on 6th March, and a male at the same place on 13th March (NE). A male and two females were on Loch Skerrols, Islay, on 18th February (NE); and there was a male at Elie Ness, Fife, on 7th March (DWO). The usual wintering flock on the Beaully Firth reached a peak of 800 on 3rd February (RHD).

Once more there are numerous reports of **Smew**:

Near Lerwick, Shetland—male for fortnight from 14th Mar (per RJT).

Strathbeg, Aberdeen—red-head on 18th Feb (JE).

River Tay, in Perth—red-head on 3rd and 4th Jan (PFJ)

Peppermill, Fife—male on 20th Feb (Gdk, JP, IT).

Gartmorn Dam, Clackmannan—male on 14th Mar (RSB, GDn, JMn, AT).

Endrick Mouth—red-head on 29th Mar (RSB).

Edgelaw, Midlothian—red-head 13th Dec and 14th March (DGA).

Barr and Castle Semple Lochs, Renfrew—red-head from 24th Jan to 6th Mar, with 2 on 13th and 14th Feb (RGC, ND, GAR, LAU, WHW).

Rowbank Reservoir, Renfrew—red-head on 21st Mar (RGC).

Glenbuck, Ayr/Lanark—red-head on 24th Feb (GAR).

Newton on Ayr—red-head on salt water during hard weather on 20th Jan (GAR).

The number of **Greenland White-fronted Geese** wintering in Kirkcudbrightshire was lower than usual with about 300-350 birds present (ADW). A stray immature Whitefront was with Greylags near Coupar Angus on 14th February (VMT). A maximum of 50-60 **Bean Geese** is reported from Kirkcudbrightshire—a welcome return after their absence last year (see 3: 86) (ADW). Elsewhere there were six at Endrick Mouth on 12th and 14th March (JMSA, DJN, DWO), and one which had been shot near Newburgh, Fife, was found in a Perth poulterer's shop (per VMT).

Single **Snow Geese** are reported from near Bridge of Earn, Perthshire, in early January (TS); near Blairgowrie, Perthshire, on 14th February (PGB) and in the Coupar Angus area on 22nd and 28th February (GH, PFJ, AMM). All these doubtless refer to the same bird—some of the observers state that it was not a Ross's Goose. Although south of the border, an interesting report is of five Snow Geese feeding with 67 Whooper Swans in a field near Coldstream. They were last seen on 2nd April (AA, GW, MIW). **Bar-headed Geese**, doubtless escapes, are reported from Coupar Angus where two were seen amongst Greylags on 17th January (VMT), and there was another near Biggar, Lanarkshire, on 19th February (ADW).

The following **Barnacle Geese** have been reported away from their more regular haunts:

Near Aberuthven, Perth—1 on 24th Jan (RSB, GDn, AT).

Methven Moss, Perth—1 on 24th Jan (VMT).

Near Gartmore, Perth—2 on 14th Feb (RSB, GDn, JMn, AT).

Bowhouse, Alloa—2 out of 3 shot on 4th Jan; one had been ringed in Spitsbergen in July 1963. First definite record for Clackmannan (per TP).

Kilconquhar Loch, Fife—1 on 24th Jan (RBH per DWO).

Tynninghame, East Lothian—1 on 21st Mar (CT).

Near Biggar, Lanark—1 on 19th Feb (ADW).

Libberton, Lanark—1 on 20th Feb (MJE, GLAP).

Maybole, Ayr—1 on 15th Mar (GAR).

Near Castle Douglas, Kirkcudbright—2 on 2nd Jan (ADW).

There are a number of recent reports of **Bewick's Swans**:

Pitfour, Aberdeen—1 still present early in the new year (see 3: 263) (JE).

Pittenheath, Aberdeen—3 on 7th Feb (JE).

Strathbeg, Aberdeen—4 on 17th Jan (JE).

Balmore, Stirling—1 on 21st Feb (JMSA).

Woodhall Loch, Kirkcudbright—2 on 27th Feb (WB, ADW).

River Tweed, near Coldstream, Berwick—2 with 1 Whooper and 16 Mutes on 2nd Jan (JB).

Our reference to the paucity of **Buzzard** records for Fife (3: 199) has been followed by a number of reports from that county including one of three seen flying over the West Lomond on 7th February (PGB). Of other occurrences, that of one wintering in the woods at Binscarth, Orkney, is the most unusual. A **Rough-legged Buzzard** was seen at Holm in the

same county in early March (EB), and others are reported from Brechin, Angus, on 26th December (JD), and on Blackhope Scar in the Moorfoots, Midlothian, on 2nd January (DD).

A bird later identified as an **Indian Gallinule** was found dead near Ellon Castle, Aberdeenshire, on 15th February (per VCW-E). This species is imported into this country as the Indian Lily Trotter and, when it escapes, it can easily be confused with the Purple Gallinule.

Single **Black-tailed Godwits** are reported from the Eden Estuary on 19th January (JLSC); Skinflats, Stirlingshire, on 6th and 14th March (RSB, GdK); Portobello, Midlothian, on 27th February (per MFMM); and Aberlady on 20th March (CT). A recently dead bird was found at Loch Erisort, Lewis, on 21st February (IMM, WM). A **Green Sandpiper** was feeding beside a pond at Bilston, Midlothian, on 19th March (ADKR). Single **Spotted Redshanks** were seen during February at the Dee Estuary, Kirkcudbrightshire, on 18th (ADW) and at Fairlie, Ayrshire, on 28th (ND). There were two wintering **Greenshanks** on the Beaully Firth at Lentrán, Inverness-shire, during December, and one was present in February (RHD).

Peak counts of **Knot** are of 6-8000 at Montrose Basin, Angus, on 17th January (GMC, JD); and 4000 at Inverness on 29th January (RHD). A **Dunlin** was seen at Gladhouse, Midlothian, on the unusual date of 1st January (DGA).

The following are reports of wintering **Ruff**:

Skinflats, Stirling—1 between 12th Dec and 6th Mar (GdK, JP, IT);
3 on 14th Mar (RSB, GdN, JMn, AT).

Gosford, East Lothian—2 on 30th Jan (MFMM).

Aberlady—3 on 6th Feb (CT).

Bridge of Dee, Kirkcudbright—1 on 21st Mar (RBT).

Single wintering **Lesser Black-backed Gulls** away from the Solway area have been noted at Clyde Street, Glasgow, on 21st January (RWF), and off Ayr on 4th February (GAR). There were two at Kilconquhar Loch on 6th February (DWO). Apart from the Ayr region, where both adults and immatures have been noted frequently during the last quarter (ND, GAR), **Glaucous Gulls** have been seen at Rattray Head, Aberdeenshire, on 21st February (JE), and at the Eden Estuary on 21st March (PCr, RJ). Immature **Iceland Gulls** are reported from Clachnaharry, Inverness-shire, between 22nd and 28th February (RHD, NE), and from Ayr harbour, where one was seen on various dates between 16th January and 14th March (ND, RMR, GAR).

Outside Shetland the only **Little Auks** seen were three which flew up the Forth past Elie Ness on 16th January (DWO).

There were three **Barn Owls** in Glencarse, Perthshire, during November (AMM), and single birds on several occasions

during January and February in the Brechin area of Angus (GMC, JD, VMT).

Northern records of **Green Woodpeckers** are of singles at Bongskeid, Pitlochry, Perthshire, on 30th December (RNC); at Balthayock and Glencarse, Perthshire, during February (AHC); and at Cadder wilderness, Glasgow, on 6th March (WMME). There was one at Walkerburn, Peebles-shire, on 30th March (JB). An unusual locality for a **Great Spotted Woodpecker** is the Royal Botanic Garden, Edinburgh, where one was present on 12th January (JHS).

A large number of **Hooded Crows** was observed on Flander's Moss, Stirlingshire, on 25th December when about 90 were counted in mixed flocks with rather smaller numbers of Carrion Crows (RSB). A **Jay** was seen at Bush estate, Midlothian, on 14th March (ADKR).

The **Great Tit** previously recorded at Castle woods, Stornoway (3: 266), was still present on 11th January (IMM). Also out of its usual range, a **Treecreeper** has wintered in a garden in Kirkwall, Orkney (EB). Another in town was seen in Princes Street Gardens, Edinburgh, on 10th February (DGA).

A **Ring Ouzel** at Drumlanrig, Dumfriesshire, on 26th December was presumably one of those birds that occasionally winter in this country (RCC). Two **Black Redstarts** are reported: a fine adult male at Portowarren, Kirkcudbrightshire, between 20th February and 6th March (WA, RM); and a female or first-winter male at the Eden estuary on 28th January (JLSC).

Wintering **Blackcaps** are reported from:

- Turriff, Aberdeen—(see 3: 266) male last seen on 19th Dec (MHM).
- Perth—male on 4th Jan (JF).
- Longforgan, Perth—male on 18th Jan (NC).
- Haddington, East Lothian—female between 23rd Jan and 5th Feb (AM).
- Ayr—male between 12th Jan and 3rd Mar (GAR).
- Dumfries—male from 3rd to 10th Mar (JMD).

In Orkney, a **Chiffchaff** wintered in Kirkwall and at least two **Goldcrests** wintered at Binscarth (EB).

A **White Wagtail** was observed at Elie Ness on 6th March—an early date for this species (DWO). Following a cold spell, a **Grey Wagtail** was seen in Leith on 4th February working over a low mossy roof in an area completely surrounded by buildings (ATM).

It has been a poor winter for **Waxwings** and one seen in Stenhouse Road, Edinburgh, on 9th February is the only further report (see 3: 267) (MEGc).

Great Grey Shrikes have been seen in the following localities:

- Endrick mouth—1 between 14th and 21st Mar (JMSA, RWF, DJN, DWO).

Carron Reservoir, Stirling—1 on 27th Dec (JBM).
New Galloway, Kirkcudbright—1 on 8th Nov (ADW).
Mains of Duchrae, Kirkcudbright—1 on 13th Dec (ADW).
Moss of Cree, Wigtown—1 on 7th Feb (DG per ADW).

Hawfinches are often rumoured to be present in the Royal Botanic Garden, Edinburgh, but seldom seen. A male was, however, present there between 8th and 18th January (JHS).

Earlier observations—before 1st December 1964

An immature **Arctic Skua** was found dead well inland at Loch Rannoch, Perthshire, in October (CM).

Three immature **Little Gulls** observed at Loch Leven on 23rd August constitute the first record of this species in Kinrossshire (MEGh).

An unusual date to find **Guillemots** on land is 22nd November, when there were a few on the cliffs and about 50 close to the shore at Bullers of Buchan, Aberdeenshire (WEW).

A late **Swift** is reported from Springburn, Glasgow, between 3rd and 6th November (FC). A single **Kingfisher** was on the Leet water at Coldstream, Berwickshire, during the autumn (PCh). A **Hoopoe** seen at Rosemarkie, Easter Ross, on 26th October (JMcG), may well have been the same as was in that area over a month previously (3: 204).

A **Grasshopper Warbler** was heard at Slattadale, Loch Maree, Wester Ross, on 18th and 19th June. A **Garden Warbler** was singing at Lochinver, Sutherland, on 11th and 13th June, when there were also two **Chiffchaffs** in the same area. Another bird of this last species was singing at Dunrobin Castle on 8th June (BC, CEHS).

The first **Hawfinch** to be seen in Kirkcudbrightshire for many years was one in a garden in Dalry between 22nd and 25th August (ADW).

General observations—behaviour, etc.

A pair of **Whooper Swans** was seen going through a fairly full display at Castle Semple Loch on 27th January—a very early date (LAU).

The prey remains found at a **Kestrel's** nest in Kirkcudbrightshire on 1st July 1964 were particularly varied and included small mammals, Greenfinch, Chaffinch, Blackbird and such large species as Lapwing and Partridge (ADW).

A **Black-headed Gull** in full breeding plumage was seen at Thurso, Caithness, on 27th December (DMS).

A **Goldcrest** was observed repeatedly visiting a bird table in Dalry, Kirkcudbrightshire, on 7th January. It was undoubtedly feeding on some "softbill" food which had been scattered on the table. The observer does not recall noting

this behaviour previously and it would certainly seem to be unusual, especially in the mild weather prevalent at the time (ADW).

Correction

In the list of **Spotted Redshank** records in the last number (3: 264), those for the Eden Estuary and Aberlady were included in error, the birds being **Ruff** (CT).

O b i t u a r y

BILL CRAWFORD

(Plate 27)

It was with deep regret that many of us learned at Christmas 1964 of the sudden death of a dear friend and fellow ornithologist—Bill Crawford—causing a sad note at an otherwise joyous time.

Bill, a native of Beith, was in his 67th year and saw service with the Royal Scots Fusiliers during the First World War. From then until his retiral three years ago he was with Customs and Excise, mainly at distilleries in the North East, Orkneys and Inverness, including a long spell at Paisley. After World War Two he settled down in Rothes, still with Excise, and latterly built a fine bungalow "Mavisbank" at Llanbryde on the fringe of a wood, the better to study birds.

Every interest he had was pursued to the utmost, and his collection of gramophone records of classical music was extensive. A skilful golfer and angler he was won over to ornithology after watching a pair of Blue Tits rearing their young on a wall opposite his office window in Rothes. Thereafter with burning passion he scoured the North East seeking out and adding new species to the lengthy list of birds seen, and his skill in recognising birds by their flight or call note was the envy of all who knew him. He gave me most of my "firsts" and I well recall how in thirty minutes on a half-mile stretch of river, wood and road at Rothes he identified thirty-two different species. Others were to share his outings, and from these beginnings grew much of the strength of the Inverness Bird Watching Group, later to become a fully fledged Branch of the S.O.C.

Friendly, cheerful and always brimful of enthusiasm, his stocky figure in loud check tweeds and black beret was a familiar sight at the Annual Conferences, and it is typical of his generous nature that he left £250 to Fair Isle Bird Observatory, where he spent so many happy fruitful holidays. His

duck count was at Loch Spynie, and in his day he gave much of his spare time to wardening at Operation Osprey. Bill's example inspired us to greater effort and we mourn his passing.

JAMES MACGEOCH

Reviews

The Birds of Natal and Zululand. By P. A. Clancey. Edinburgh, Oliver & Boyd, 1964. Pp. xxxiv + 511; 41 colour plates, 17 photographs, 40 text figures, and fold-out map. 84/-.

The happy British birdwatcher, whose main occupation seems to be to identify or attempt to identify unusual species, does not usually realise how much he owes to museum workers for the very existence of the identification books which are his tools. In Britain, where ornithology has reached a very advanced level, he indeed scorns the collectors of past generations as careless slaughterers, without understanding the value of their work. In Africa, on the other hand, there is still much collecting and museum work to be done before the field identification of "difficult" species becomes at all reliable. Field workers there would still, for example, have no idea how to distinguish members of the genus *Cisticola* if the late Admiral Lynes had not worked them out, and Philip Clancey, of Glasgow and the Durban Museum, is not only a museum worker, but also a field worker and a helper of other field workers. His book dealing with Natal and Zululand will, on account of its detailed plumage descriptions and notes on habits and habitats, be useful over a much wider area, since both South African and East African species are involved. The highly valuable introduction, accompanied by fine photographs by Dennis Cleaver, deals principally with climate and vegetation in relation to avian distribution. The plates are by the author himself and give a wonderful impression of the glamour not only of the birds, but also of the landscape in which they live; the plates of the Blue Korhaan (the original of which Mr Clancey has generously presented to the S.O.C.) and of Burchell's Courser are throbbing with light and heat. The whole book gives us a feeling of ornithological richness, especially in large birds, which we in Europe have lost. Those who once knew the country and will probably never see it again will think with nostalgia of Durban itself, where flamingoes and fish eagles may be seen in the bay, of the heights of the Drakensberg, and of the lagoons and forests of St Lucia.

M. F. M. MEIKLEJOHN.

But Hibou was special. By Andrew McNeillie. Illustrated by Donald Watson. London, Country Life, 1964. Pp. 101; 26 line drawings. 18/-.

This little book is a well written account by a schoolboy, of a year in the life of a captive Little Owl. It is a fascinating story which unfortunately may not appeal to the half-ornithologist who must have statistics or scientific object in his reading.

The author is less successful when relating hearsay facts, but when he keeps to his own experiences he tells a very good story.

Donald Watson's black-and-white illustrations give the book a more lasting value.

M. K. HAMILTON.

The B.T.O. Guide to Ageing and Sexing. A Field Guide for Ringers and Bird Observatory Workers. With slip "Great and Blue Tits—additional note." B.T.O. Field Guide No. 10. Originally published 1960 as Part IV of "The Bird in the Hand" by R. K. Cornwallis and A. E. Smith. Revised 1963 by K. Williamson. Now revised by P. E. Davis. Tring (Herts), British Trust for Ornithology, 1964. Pp. 46 + 38 blank interleaved; one small line drawing. Limp cover 4/6.

Many footnotes in the revised text testify to the fallibility of previously accepted criteria. An interesting section discusses ageing of birds by examination of skull ossification. As with street directories and catalogues, last year's edition is poor economy and one must have the latest version.

ANDREW T. MACMILLAN.

Request for Information

Identification of Common and Arctic Tern chicks. It may be possible to separate Common and Arctic Tern chicks in mixed colonies by tarsus length. More data are needed, and anyone likely to be visiting unmixed colonies of these species this summer, either in Britain or abroad, is asked to get in touch with A. D. Brewer, 40 Sherbrooke Avenue, Pollokshields, Glasgow S.1.

Official Section

THE SCOTTISH ORNITHOLOGISTS' CLUB

ANNUAL CONFERENCE

The Eighteenth Annual Conference and Twenty-eighth Annual General Meeting of the Club will be held in the Hotel Dunblane (Hydro), Dunblane, Perthshire, from 22nd to 24th October 1965.

A detailed list of accommodation is given below. Terms at hotels other than the Conference hotel are given as a guide only, and prices should be confirmed.

The Conference registration fee will be 10s. The cost of the Annual Dinner to members not staying in the Conference hotel will be 25s inclusive. Both these items should be paid at the Conference registration office on arrival.

The full Conference programme will be printed in the next issue of "Scottish Birds", and this intimation is given in order that members may make their hotel reservations in good time. These must be made direct with the hotels and not with the Secretary.

Hotel Accommodation in Dunblane

HOTEL DUNBLANE (HYDRO) (Tel. 2551) Special Conference charge: £7 (or £3, 10s per day) inclusive of service charge. Details as follows: accommodation and all meals (except afternoon tea on Saturday) from Friday dinner to Sunday luncheon, after-meal coffees, and the Annual Dinner (inclusive of wines or soft drinks).

- Residents for less than one full day will be charged as follows:
 bed and breakfast 40s per person, luncheon 13s 6d, dinner 17s 6d.
 STIRLING ARMS HOTEL (Tel. 2156) Bed and breakfast 22s 6d to 25s.
 *THE NEUK PRIVATE HOTEL, Doune Road (Tel. 2150) Bed and
 breakfast from 21s.
 *SCHIEHALLION HOTEL, Doune Road (Tel. 3141) Bed and breakfast
 18s 6d to 21s.
 JARDLEIGHTON HOTEL (Tel. 2273) Bed and breakfast 17s 6d to 21s.

* These hotels are some distance from the Conference Hotel.

‡ Situated near the Conference Hotel gates.

Hotel Accommodation in Bridge of Allan

- ALLAN WATER HOTEL (Tel. Bridge of Allan 2293) Bed and breakfast
 from 40s.
 ROYAL HOTEL (Tel. Bridge of Allan 2284) Bed and breakfast from 36s.

Members with cars who have difficulty in obtaining single rooms in
 Dunblane should find the above two hotels in Bridge of Allan have
 ample single accommodation. The distance from Dunblane is about 3
 miles.

XIV INTERNATIONAL ORNITHOLOGICAL CONGRESS, GREAT BRITAIN, 1966

The XIV International Ornithological Congress will be held in Oxford
 from 24th to 30th July 1966 and is open to all ornithologists over the
 age of 18 years. Accommodation will be arranged in Colleges and
 Hotels. After a formal opening on Sunday evening 24th July, the rest
 of the week will be devoted to scientific meetings, consisting of Plenary
 Sessions in the mornings and Sectional Sessions in the afternoons. In
 addition there will be exhibits, a whole-day excursion, film shows, and a
 Social Centre for informal contacts. College accommodation will cost
 about 50s per day.

Congress fees are as follows: Full Members £10 (entitling them to
 attend all functions and to receive copies of the Proceedings); Associate
 Members £7 (wives or husbands who wish to attend all functions but do
 not wish copies of the Proceedings).

Application Forms, with full details, can be obtained from: The
 Secretary-General, International Ornithological Congress, c/o Dept. of
 Zoology, Parks Road, Oxford.

SCOTTISH BIRD-ISLANDS STUDY CRUISE, JULY 1966

The Scottish Ornithologists' Club has accepted an invitation from
 the International Ornithological Congress and the International Council
 for Bird Preservation to organise a special Excursion Cruise round Scot-
 land in conjunction with the two important international ornithological
 conferences to be held in Great Britain in 1966.

In order to finance the undertaking, the Council has formed a limited
 liability company. The Club will therefore have no financial responsibil-
 ities.

The British India Steam Navigation Company's 12,800 ton school-
 cruise ship M.S. DEVONIA, with accommodation for 194 cabin and
 700 dormitory passengers, has been chartered for a seven-day expedition.
 It will leave Greenock at noon on Saturday 16th July and will sail
 right round Scotland from Clyde to Forth, arriving at Leith on Friday

evening 22nd July 1966. Among the islands to be visited will be Ailsa Craig, Rhum (a day ashore), St Kilda, Flannans, North Rona, Sula Sgeir, Foula, Muckle Flugga, Lerwick (a day ashore), Fair Isle, Orkney (a day ashore), Isle of May, and Bass Rock.

In company with eminent ornithologists from all over the world, and led by Dr W. J. Eggeling (Conservation Officer for Scotland, the Nature Conservancy), those taking part will have experts like James Fisher and Roger Tory Peterson as lecturers and commentators.

Write **now** for an Application Form to the Cruise Secretary, S.O.C., 21 Regent Terrace, Edinburgh 7.

OFFICE STAFF

During the last few years the Club has expanded greatly, not only in its membership and extra Branches, but also in its activities. This has resulted in a great increase in office work and it has become obvious that this can no longer be carried out solely by Mrs Waterston and Mrs Smillie, each working part-time.

The Council's decision to be responsible for organising the Bird-Islands Study Cruise in conjunction with the two international ornithological conferences in 1966 has added greatly to the work load. The Council have therefore appointed Mrs D. A. Harley as Assistant Secretary with particular responsibility for Cruise administration. In addition it has offered Mrs Waterston a full-time appointment as Secretary of the Club and Cruise Secretary. Mrs R. Smillie, who has looked after the membership of the Club most efficiently for the last two years, will remain on a part-time basis, but will in future be known as Membership Secretary.

LIBRARY

Reference has been made in the Editorial columns of this issue to the important acquisition of a complete set of the "Ibis" (1859 to date) comprising in all 117 bound volumes. The early volumes of the "Ibis" are extremely scarce (the 1859 volume was out of print by 1860), so complete runs of this valuable and important journal rarely come on the market.

To J. B. Laws of Cornwall we are particularly indebted for the presentation of the scarce work by Sir Frederick Jackson (1938), "Birds of Kenya Colony and the Uganda Protectorate".

Once again, we thank Dr David Bannerman for presenting further collections of books, journals, and reprints.

In order to assist with advice on the administration of the Library, Mr Ritchie Seath has accepted the invitation of the Council to act as Honorary Librarian. His extensive knowledge and experience of books on natural history and allied subjects will be of great value to the Library Committee.

NOTICE TO CONTRIBUTORS

All contributions should be sent to Andrew T. Macmillan, 66 Spylaw Bank Road, Edinburgh 13. Attention to the following points greatly simplifies production of the journal and is much appreciated.

1. Papers should if possible be typed with double spacing. All contributions should be on one side of the paper only.

2. Topical material for Current Notes should reach the Editors **before the end of March, June, September and December**, at which time they begin to compile this section. All other notes should be sent promptly but important items can be fitted in until a month or so after these dates.

3. Proofs will normally be sent to authors of papers, but not of shorter items. Such proofs should be returned without delay. If alterations are made at this stage it may be necessary to ask the author to bear the cost.

4. Authors of full-length papers who want copies for their own use **MUST ASK FOR THESE** when returning the proofs. If requested we will supply 25 free copies of the issue in which the paper is published. Reprints can be obtained but a charge will be made for these.

5. Particular care should be taken to avoid mistakes in lists of references and to lay them out in the following way, italics being indicated where appropriate by underlining.

DICK, G. & POTTER, J. 1960. Goshawk in East Stirling. *Scot. Birds* 1:329.
EGGELING, W. J. 1960. *The Isle of May*. Edinburgh and London.

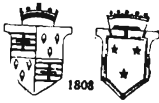
6. English names should follow *The Handbook of British Birds* with the alterations detailed in *British Birds* in January 1953 (46:2-3) and January 1956 (49:5). Initial capitals are used for names of species (e.g. Blue Tit, Long-tailed Tit) but not for group names (e.g. diving ducks, tits). Scientific names should be used sparingly (see editorial *Scottish Birds* 2:1-3) and follow the 1952 B.O.U. *Check-List of the Birds of Great Britain and Ireland* with the changes recommended in 1956 by the Taxonomic Sub-Committee (*Ibis* 98:158-68), and the 1957 decisions of the International Commission on Zoological Nomenclature (*Ibis* 99:369). When used with the English names they should follow them, underlined to indicate italics, and with no surrounding brackets.

7. Dates should normally be in the form "1st January 1962", with no commas round the year. Old fashioned conventions should be avoided—e.g. use Arabic numerals rather than Roman, and avoid unnecessary full stops after abbreviations such as "Dr" and "St".

8. Tables must be designed to fit into the page, preferably not sideways, and be self-explanatory.

9. Headings and sub-headings should not be underlined as this may lead the printer to use the wrong type.

10. Illustrations of any kind are welcomed. Drawings and figures should be up to twice the size they will finally appear, and on separate sheets from the text. They should be in Indian ink on good quality paper, with neat lettering by a skilled draughtsman. Photographs should either have a Scottish interest or illustrate contributions. They should be sharp and clear, with good contrast, and preferably large glossy prints.



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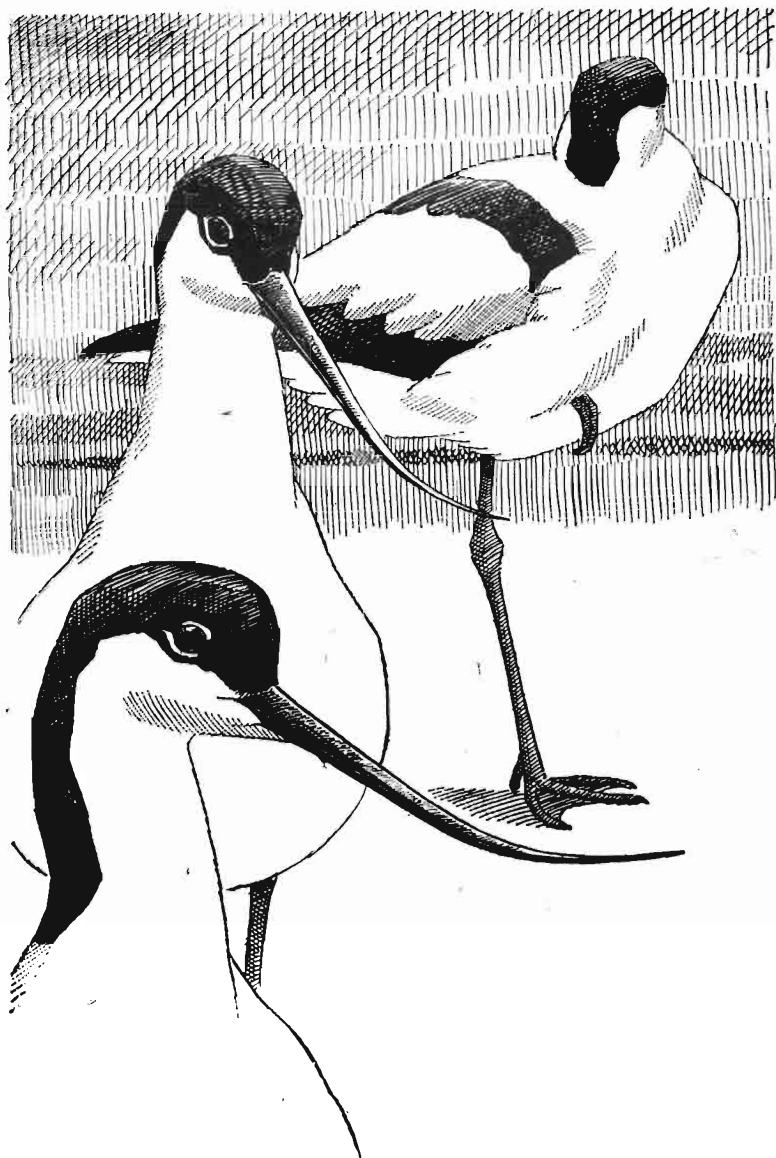


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