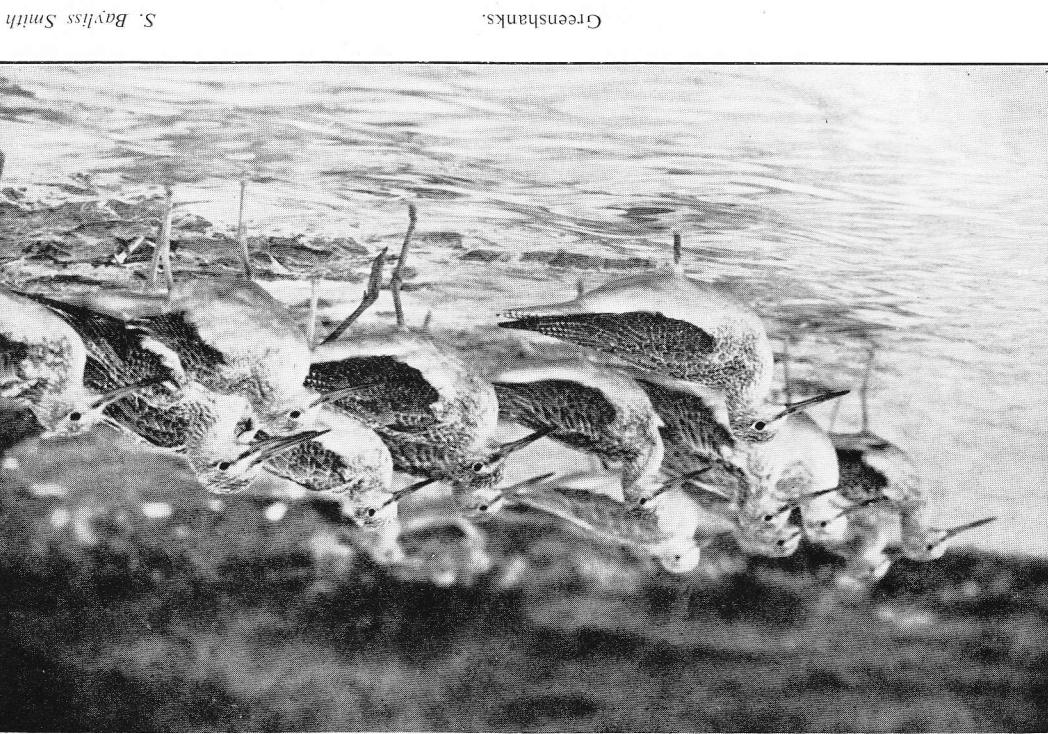


THE
SUSSEX BIRD
REPORT

1949

EDITED BY
G. DES FORGES
AND
D. D. HARBER

OBTAINABLE FROM G. DES FORGES,
THE VALE, OVINGDEAN, BRIGHTON



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INTRODUCTORY NOTE.

I am glad to be able to record that last year's Report has received sufficient support to justify a successor. A further rise in printing costs during the past year compels me to retain the price of the Report at five shillings, which I concede is expensive, until a larger number of subscribers has been obtained. In the meantime it will probably just about pay its way.

The number of notes received this year is no less than usual and their content is, I think, of equal interest. I should like to repeat what was said in the 1947 Report (published as part of the South-Eastern Bird Report) with regard to the rejection of records. Where any real doubt remains as to the correctness of the identification the record is omitted; this necessarily involves the rejection of a small number of records which, if the truth were known, are perfectly sound, but I prefer this to the alternative of including erroneous ones. A bad record, once put into circulation, takes an unconscionable amount of killing and, if it relates to a point of importance, may well confuse the position for years.

I am pleased that D. D. Harber has consented to undertake a joint share of the editorship of this and, I hope, future Reports. He has hitherto given me an immense amount of help and it is proper that his name should be more prominently associated with the Report. His indefatigable field work and his ability to put a finger on the weak points of sight records make him a most valuable partner.

I wish to thank S. Bayliss Smith for again supplying one of his water photographs to embellish the text; and also B. Metcalf for the same service as well as undertaking to consolidate records from Pagham Harbour. The benefit of a close local knowledge enables records to be put into their proper perspective and the Report will benefit accordingly. If contributors can find it convenient to send Pagham records to him direct it will be helpful; but I have no wish to discourage notes by making the process of compiling them too laborious or complicated and Pagham records can still, therefore, be sent to me direct with other notes. I should also thank W. Alexander and R. S. R. Fitter for putting at my disposal the records sent to them about the Heron Census and the Black Redstart Inquiry respectively and J. D. Wood for passing on information about records submitted to "British Birds,"

G. d. F.

GENERAL OBSERVATIONS ON 1949.

Weather. The first two months of the year were mild and open and February was remarkably sunny. There was a week's cold weather at the beginning of March with north and east winds and some little snow in Sussex as elsewhere. This cold weather was chiefly notable because it was experienced as far south as the Mediterranean and snow fell in, for example, Malta. We mention this because it was the probable cause of the apparent late arrival of the earlier migrants except for a few odd individuals which had probably already progressed too far north into Europe to turn back. By March 7th it was again warm. The spring and summer were dry and sunny, except for a break at the end of May and the beginning of June, and the summer will in this respect be long remembered. The rest of the year was unremarkable and there had been no cold weather to speak of by year's end.

STATUS OF WRYNECK.

The British Trust for Ornithology requests information about the breeding status of the Wryneck in the years 1950, 1951 and 1952. Full information is therefore particularly wanted from observers able to supply it.

NOTES ON MIGRATION.

I.

After cold rain and a near-gale throughout April 12th, 1949, the following day was very clear but still with a very strong wind. The only birds found to be arriving along the whole coast from Hastings to Dungeness were a single Yellow Wagtail, a single Swallow and a Tree Pipit.

April 14th started as a hot, still day, with thick mist at sea which began to reach the coast during the morning, borne on a very light South-Western breeze. Low bushes close to the sea at Fairlight were crowded with birds, mainly Chiffchaffs and Willow-Warblers. There were also considerable numbers of Whitethroats, Blackcaps, several Cuckoos, and at least 10 Nightingales—this was the number singing; there may have well been others.

In the smaller area of Ecclesbourne Glen, Cuckoos, Willow-Warblers and Whitethroats could be actually seen arriving from the sea, and in this area also was another singing Nightingale, the first I have heard there in 17 years' acquaintance with the district. It is noteworthy that not one hirundine of any species was seen.

F.M.F.

II.

During the autumn of 1949 the writer spent some time observing the migration of Skylarks, Swallows, Sand-Martins and Swifts at Langney Point. The data thus obtained must of necessity be very incomplete but nevertheless seem to be of some interest since they appear to indicate certain conclusions, of however tentative a character. It would seem that, in the cases of these species (the movements of which are often easily observable), birds moving along the coast sometimes cross it, in both directions, with the apparent object of shortening the distance to be covered.

On July 3rd, with an easterly wind, a single Swift arrived at the Point from the west, overland. It went out over the sea due east, being followed through a telescope set at 30 X till lost to sight. A few minutes later two more Swifts arrived from the same direction. They also flew out over the sea for a short distance but then turned north-east and disappeared flying along the coast in that direction. On August 5th, the wind was south, veering south-east and south-west, and numerous small parties of Sand-Martins were passing eastwards along the coast, some over the land, others over the sea fairly near in and parallel with the coast. Most of these birds turned north-east with the coast after passing Langney Point. But one party of c. 30 flew due east, out to sea, after it had reached the Point and continued on this course till lost to view. It is possible that the birds which flew out to sea on these occasions were in fact flying direct to the other side of the Channel. It would seem more probable, however, that these birds, like the others which were passing at the same time parallel with or along the coast, were in fact making for Dungeness and shortening their journey. In this connection it is suggestive that on July 13th a single Swift was seen to arrive at Dungeness Point, coming in from the south-west over the sea.

In the same way as birds were seen to make out to sea from Langney Point, others came in from the sea on a number of occasions. On July 10th, with an easterly wind, a small easterly movement of Sand-Martins was taking place. A few were passing overland along the coast but most were over the sea, some flying parallel with the coast but several, *coming in from the south-west*, crossed the coast at the Point and continued their journey overland. To all appearances these birds might have just arrived from the Continent had not the presence of others moving in the same general direction along the coast made it much more probable that they had merely cut off a corner by flying direct from Beachy Head to Langney Point. Again, on August 25th, with a southerly wind, veering south-west, a westerly movement of Swallows was

taking place. Most were flying over the sea some distance out but first two, and later three, flew in from the south-east, being first picked up far out at sea, and, crossing the coast near the Point, flew inland in a north-westerly direction. Yet again, on October 12th, with a south-west wind, a small westerly movement of Swallows was taking place when a party of c. 30 flew in from the east, being first seen a long way out over the sea. When it reached the Point the party broke up, some birds crossing the coast and flying westwards along it and the rest continuing parallel with it over the sea in the same westerly direction.

Unfortunately, it was only possible to witness the tail-end of the Skylark migration, but here again indications of movements similar to those described above were noticed. On October 28th, with a southerly wind, a party of 8 Skylarks left the Point and flew at first due south but soon turned south-west and were last seen at a considerable distance on a course which, if persisted in, would take them just south of Beachy Head. Later the same day a party of 5 Skylarks appeared from the east (i.e., from over the sea) and flew westwards along the coast. On October 29th, a party of 6 Skylarks came in from the east, being first picked up far out at sea, and crossed the coast to the west of the Point. Later the same day a party of 24 came in from the east in the same way but, as they were approaching the Point, they swerved south-west and continued over the sea on the same course as that followed by the party of 8 birds seen the previous day. Still on the same day a party of 4 Skylarks flew out to sea from the Point, coming from over the land. One soon turned back but the others continued south-west till lost to sight. On November 6th, two Skylarks were picked up far out at sea, flying from the east-north-east. As they approached the Point they turned north-west and crossed the coast in that direction. Later that day a single Swallow was seen to behave in the same way.

It would appear from these observations that the arrival of the species mentioned from the sea, during autumn migration, does not of necessity signify a direct passage from the Continent. Likewise birds seen to leave the Sussex coast in autumn may not be flying direct to the Continent. Birds of the above species which are seen to act in this way may merely be migrating, either eastwards or westwards, along the coast, sometimes over the land and sometimes over the sea from headland to headland.

D.D.H.

CORRECTIONS AND ADDITIONS TO 1948 REPORT.

123. **PIED FLYCATCHER.**—One at Sidlesham on April 29th and one there on August 29th (J.S.).
 182. **RING-OUZEL.**—L.A.C. records seeing a number between mid-October and the beginning of November on Pevensey Levels, at Alciston and at Beachy Head.

289. **COMMON HERON**—There were actually a few pairs (under 12) still breeding at Glyneigh (H.A.R.C., A.A.W.). It now seems likely that the figure of 12 for Eridge should have been 25 (J.C.F.). These two corrections wipe out the deficit of 20-25 pairs as against the 1947 figure. One pair near Beeding which reared 2 young (C.A.G.).

344. **SMEW.**—A drake and 2 brown-headed birds on the Adur near Beeding during the last week in February (G.R.B.).

373.—**SLAVONIAN GREBE.**—Reference to sex of bird, seen in summer plumage, should be deleted.

407.—**LITTLE STINT.**—On May 30th at Sidlesham Ferry N.H.J. records seeing a flock of c. 40 Dunlin and near by 16 Little Stints; when flushed they kept in separate flocks.
 428. **REDSHANK.**—Figure for breeding records in lower Arun valley should read 8 or 9 (N.M.).

CLASSIFIED RECORDS FOR 1949.

1. **RAVEN**—One at Beachy Head on March 20th and August 20th and one in the lower Cuckmere Valley on September 1st (D.D.H.). All three records probably relate to the same bird—the survivor of the Beachy Head pair.

2. **HOODED CROW.**—One at the beginning and end of

the year at Rye Harbour (J.A., L.P.A., J.C.W.) and one in the Cuckmere Valley on April 3rd (J.D.M.).

4. **ROOK.**—5 pairs nested on the Chichester gasometer (vide 1948 Report) and 3 pairs on an adjoining gasometer (L.P.A., C.M.J.). A further slight increase in the nesting population in the Rye area (J.A., J.C.W.).

5. **JACKDAW.**—L.P.A. records immigrant flocks flying over Hove on 5 days during the second half of October. Some 24 flocks were seen flying NW or W. One bird was seen to come in from the sea at Brighton on March 20th flying N (C.M.J.).

14. **STARLING.**—The West Pier at Brighton was used as a roosting place both at the beginning of the year and in July and August (C.M.J.). On November 20th a party of c. 50 flew in from the sea at Langney Point, coming from the SE and going NW,

inland, without stopping and flying low ; a few minutes later a party of c. 20 came in in the same way ; wind NW, some mist at sea (D.H.B., D.D.H.). On December 11th, at the same place, a party of c. 100 arrived in the same manner. Although it would seem late for normal immigration there was no evidence of a weather movement. The wind was N and there was slight mist (D.D.H.).

20. **GOLDFINCH.**—From Newhaven West Breakwater one was seen flying NE on October 30th, the wind being NE ; and 3 flying NW on November 13th, the wind being NW (L.P.A.).

30. **LINNET.**—A nest in Purslane was again recorded for Rye Harbour (G. d F., C.W.G.P.). J.A. and J.C.W. record a notable increase in the breeding population in the Rye district. From Newhaven West Breakwater a few were seen flying NE and one NW on October 30th, the wind being NE (L.P.A.).

36. **COMMON CROSSBILL.**—5, of which one was an adult male, seen near Handcross on March 22nd (J.A.S.) ; 6 in Ashdown Forest on March 25th (D.D.H.) ; and between March 29th and April 6th about 6, including an adult pair, in another part of the Handcross district (I.J.F.L.).

40/41. **CHAFFINCH.**—One singing near Herstmonceux on December 24th (D.H.B.).

42. **BRAMBLING.**—About 50 flying SE in parties with Chaffinches in Ashdown Forest on March 20th (G.d.F., C.W.G.P.). On November 20th a male flew in from the S.E. over the sea at Langney Point and continued inland without stopping (D.H.B., D.D.H.) ; soon after D.H.B. saw another Brambling cross the coast in the same way and another after it had (presumably) crossed the coast. On the same day 2 were seen at East Head, West Wittering (L.P.A., C.M.J., A.H.W.S.). Otherwise virtually no records.

44. **YELLOW BUNTING.**—Late flocking of between 12 and 30 birds, mostly males, seen on several days up to the third week of May near Crawley (I.J.F.L.).

49. **CIRL BUNTING.**—Numbers in mid- and west Sussex considered low by J. Walpole-Bond, R. Carlyon-Brittan, I.J.F.L. A nest with 2 young about 6 days old on May 15th indicates an early clutch (G.d.F.).

55. **REED-BUNTING.**—One flying NE from the sea seen from Newhaven West Breakwater on October 30th, wind NE (L.P.A.).

59. **SNOW-BUNTING.**—Two at Shoreham on January 9th (T.R.M.) and one there on January 16th (C.F.B., P.M., C.V.M.). Last year's flock of c. 20 in the vicinity of Langney Point was last seen on February 24th (D.D.H.), but a few stayed on until March 19th when D.H.B. saw 2 there. 2 arrived at Langney Point on October 29th and 5 were there by December, remaining till the end of the year (D.H.B., D.D.H.). One at the Midrups on November 26th (D.D.H., I.J.F.L.).

62. **TREE-SPARROW.**—Appears to have been much more frequently observed in winter than usual. Larger flocks include c. 50 near Pevensey on December 22nd (D.D.H.) and over 40 near Arlington on December 6th (L.A.C.). 3 near Greatham Farm, behind Bracklesham Bay, on June 3rd suggest nesting in a district where breeding is not known to occur (L.P.A.).

69. **WOOD-LARK.**—Still apparently increasing in at least some parts of the county. I.J.F.L. records 5 sites, thought to be new, in North Central Sussex.

72. **SHORE-LARK.**—One on ploughed land at Thorney on November 6th (I.J.F.L.).

75. **TREE-PIPIIT.**—One flying SE over Hove on July 18th (L.P.A.).

76. **MEADOW-PIPIIT.**—4 flew in from the sea at Cuckmere Haven on March 9th and continued on inland (D.D.H.). A big immigration on March 30th at Brighton (C.M.J.) and Crowlink (D.D.H.) ; at the Crumbles on March 31st and at Eastbourne on both days (D.D.H.). Autumn immigration first noticed on September 13th at Hove, birds moving NW with peak numbers on September 17th-20th and continuing until November 11th (L.P.A.). Movement of large numbers of immigrants travelling coastwise noted at the Wicks and Midrups on September 17th (D.H.B.). Birds apparently emigrating seen flying between SW, SE and E at Hove, and on one date from Newhaven West Breakwater, between September 14th and November 20th with peak numbers on September 28th and 29th (L.P.A.).

79. **WATER-PIPIIT.**—D.D.H. describes one seen with Meadow and Rock-Pipits at the mouth of the Cuckmere on March 9th and watched for an hour at very short range ; " size that of a Rock-Pipit ; could be picked out at once by predominantly greyish upper parts, especially head and nape ; broad whitish eye stripe ; neck, throat and upper breast unstreaked and few streaks on rest of under parts ; legs dark ; white outer tail-feathers repeatedly

seen in flight and once on the ground when tail was fanned ; call distinctly different from either Rock- or Meadow-Pipit." D.D.H. also describes another seen on April 13th at Langney Point for about 5 minutes at c. 20 yards ; " size and shape of Rock-Pipit ; legs black ; white outer tail-feathers very noticeable even when bird flicked its tail while feeding ; upper parts warm brown, except head which was greyish ; well defined whitish eye-stripe ; under parts whitish and streaked, except chin. Appeared to be moulting into summer plumage. A striking bird." On October 8th L.P.A. and C.M.J. saw 2 rather wild Pipits on the R. Ouse above Newhaven. L.P.A. describes the details of one ; " size as Rock-Pipit ; upper parts brown, tinged grey ; chin and throat whitish but lower throat and breast buff-white, streaked heavily ; upper throat unmarked but streaks an side of neck ; broad pale eye-stripe ; tail edged white ; legs dark."

84. BLUE-HEADED WAGTAIL.—A male at Thorney on August 14th (I.J.F.L.).

"**SYKES'S WAGTAIL**."—D.D.H. examined over 100 male yellow Wagtails at Rye Harbour and on Pevensey Levels during the breeding season and located 2 male mutants. One, first seen at Rye Harbour on May 19th, he describes as : " forehead, ear-coverts, crown and nape pale grey—not so light as in last year's bird (vide 1948 Report) but too pale for a Blue-headed Wagtail ; eye-stripe white, but not chin ; rest of plumage as male Yellow Wagtail but rather paler and dingier than in most such." P.A.D.H., who saw it on May 29th, describes the upper part of the head as : " pale blue-grey, as seen in a rather unfavourable light, half into the sun. It matched closely the colour of a clean galvanised iron shed in the middle distance ; yellowish below but not richly coloured ; details of eye-stripe and chin not seen." It was mated with a female indistinguishable from a Yellow Wagtail and the pair nested in a cornfield. It was not, therefore, possible to locate the nest, nor were the young examined (D.H.B., P.A.D.H., C.W.G.P.). The second bird, with a female not distinguished from a Yellow Wagtail, was seen, on May 25th only, on Pevensey Levels. It had " a paler forehead and crown than the bird at Rye Harbour but was exactly similar to the bird breeding in another part of the Levels in 1947" (vide Brit. B. XLI, p. 84).

88. YELLOW WAGTAIL.—Late immigrants are a male on May 11th and one of undetermined sex on May 13th seen coming from the sea at Telscombe Cliffs (L.P.A.). Many less breeding at Rye Harbour this year ; estimated c. 100 pairs in the

roughly 14 square miles of Pevensey Levels. A pair feeding young there on May 25th ; and on June 1st 2 young able to fly, perhaps from the same brood, indicate eggs laid early in May (D.D.H.). A roost in a small dry reed bed at Camber was observed to be used by upwards of 2,000 birds on September 1st. The birds mostly came from Walland Marsh. It was used at least up to September 7th, when observation was no longer possible, but after the 1st by apparently smaller numbers of birds (G.d.F., C.W.G.P.). On August 7th 3 left Langney Point and were watched flying into a S wind until lost to sight at sea (D.H.B., D.D.H.). A somewhat late emigrant was seen at Thorney on October 9th (C.M.J.) where, however, comparatively few were seen in the autumn (I.J.F.L.).

91. **WHITE WAGTAIL.**—3 April records (W.R.P.B., D.D.H.) and one for September (D.D.H.). I.J.F.L. saw a male at Thorney Island on June 26th and July 14th.

97/8. **GREAT TIT.**—One in isolated bushes on the cliff edge at Crowlink on March 30th. It had not been present a few minutes before and shortly flew off inland ; weather misty (D.D.H.).

99/100. BLUE TIT.—Unusual numbers seen in coastal districts in autumn. On September 17th numbers on Newhaven Levels and 2 on the East Jetty in the Harbour (L.P.A.). Between September 24th and 30th parties on both sides of Eastbourne during a period of E wind. Especially numerous on September 29th when it was misty (D.D.H.). Also seen in Brighton and Hove from September 24th onwards, on September 25th at Thorney and on October 15th : " large numbers " on the Crumbles on October 2nd. On October 30th 2, flying NE over Newhaven West Breakwater coming in from the sea (L.P.A.), and 4 at the end of Langney Point (D.D.H.).

112. **BEARDED TIT.**—The birds present on the Crumbles in 1948 were last seen on March 19th (D.H.B.). (Brit. B. XLI, p. 291).

114. **GREAT GREY SHRIKE.**—One at Wren's Warren, Ashdown Forest, on March 20th (G.d.F., C.W.G.P.) and still there on April 3rd (A. Mead-Briggs per D.D.H.).

119. **RED-BACKED SHRIKE.**—A slight increase noticed in several areas (I.J.F.L., J.A.S.).

123. **PIED FLYCATCHER.**—Only spring record, one near Falmer on April 17th (C.M.J.). In the autumn unusually numerous in the vicinity of the coast along the whole length of the county ; about 35 birds being involved but the only considerable number seen together was c. 12 near Birling Gap on August 22nd (W.R.P.B.). Last bird was seen at Hampden Park, on October 13th which is the latest date recorded for Sussex (D.D.H.).

126/7. **GOLDCREST**.—Generally recovering its former strength as a breeder. Autumn immigration observed at Langney Point on October 7th when 3 were seen; wind easterly, misty (D.D.H.); on October 14th one flying W along Eastbourne front; 12 on the Crumbles; 3 on Crowlink (D.D.H.); on October 15th one on Shoreham Beach (L.P.A., C.M.J.). At Pagham, where B.M. does not regard it as common, it became "almost abundant" from October 29th; 2 in a garden at Hove on October 31st (L.P.A.).

128. **FIRECREST**.—Recorders have all supplied substantiating details; 2 on the Downs near Portslade on January 2nd (W.R.P.B.); one on the Downs near East Dean (East Sussex) on March 24th (D.D.H.); 2 on the Downs near Cuckmere Haven on April 6th (D.D.H.); one in a garden at Southwick on November 3rd, 4th and 15th (T.M.T.); one at Pagham amongst gorse on December 11th (M.G., B.M.).

129/31. **CHIFFCHAFF**.—Between January 25th and 29th one was seen and heard in song several times in an Ilex avenue at Goring (A.H.M.). Apart from one record for March 6th, near Chichester (L.P.A.), none was seen until the 25th and 26th, when they turned up in strength. Of birds apparently wintering, D.D.H. saw one at Eastbourne on December 11th. On the following day L.P.A. saw one on the outskirts of Brighton. He describes the bird as: mantle grey-brown with slight olive tinge on the rump and wings and tail a little darker; under-parts were buff-white without a trace of sulphur; eye-stripe dirty creamy white. Entire absence of yellow is not typical of the British subspecies.

132. **WILLOW-WARBLER**—A somewhat early arrival was in song near Handcross on March 19th (I.J.F.L.).

135. **WOOD-WARBLER**.—This species is not often recorded on autumn migration but one was seen in the lower Cuckmere valley on August 31st (D.D.H., C.St.C.S.) and one at Pagham on September 23rd (W.K.M.).

153. **SEDGE-WARBLER**.—One singing daily from May 9th to 16th in brambles about 200 yards from cliff top at Telscombe (L.P.A.). Apparently a very late immigrant, one was singing in a garden at Selsey by the foreshore on June 5th (L.P.A.). Three on the Crumbles on October 1st and 2nd (D.H.B., D.D.H.) and one there on October 5th and 12th (D.D.H.).

154. **AQUATIC WARBLER**.—One on the Crumbles from October 1st to 7th (D.D.H.), during which time it was seen by a number of other observers (Brit. B. XLIII, p. 58).

162. **BLACKCAP**.—One at Handcross from March 28th (I.J.F.L.). Two individuals singing in Brighton and Hove on June 29th but not heard subsequently (L.P.A.).

163. **WHITE THROAT**.—A somewhat late emigrant at Eastbourne on October 6th (D.D.H.).

175/7. **SONG-THRUSH**.—Two came in together over the cliff at Crowlink on March 30th (D.D.H.). On October 7th one at the end of Langney Point; misty and wind E. It was tired and would not take wing on being chased (D.D.H.). One flying in from the sea from the SW crossed Newhaven West Breakwater on October 30th (L.P.A.).

178/9. **REDWING**.—Two near Crawley on September 18th (I.J.F.L., J.A.S.).

182. **RING-OUZEL**.—Autumn records relate to c. 12 birds, of which half were seen on the Downs above Alciston on October 13th (L.A.C.).

186. **WHEATEAR**.—The species appears to have arrived much later than usual, not being seen, it appears, until the end of the month except for an odd bird on the 12th. A late emigrant was seen at Black Rock, Brighton, on November 12th (C.M.J.).

187. **GREENLAND WHEATEAR**.—Two males on the Crumbles on April 13th (D.H.B.); 2 at East Head, West Wittering, on May 4th (L.P.A.) and present at Pagham throughout May (B.M.).

197. **WHINCHAT**.—I.J.F.L. and J. Walpole-Bond located 4 pairs on or near the Downs between Brighton and Eastbourne of which 3 at least were feeding young. Breeding has not been positively recorded in the county since 1943. Rather late emigrants were one at Newhaven on October 8th and 2 at Thorney on October 9th (C.M.J.).

198. **BRITISH STONECHAT**.—Observed much more commonly than latterly out of the breeding season and nesting recorded from one new area not noted last year, namely, at the Fire Hills (A.D.W.). But otherwise breeding remains at a low ebb.

201. **REDSTART**.—Two early spring records are of a pair on Malling Down near Lewes on March 26th (A.A.M.B.) and a female at Hove on March 31st (L.P.A.). I.J.F.L. and J.A.S. record it as commoner in the Handcross district than in 1948 and 6 nests and at least 22 pairs were found in an area of about a square mile. A somewhat late immigrant on the Crumbles on October 25th (D.D.H.).

202. **BLACK REDSTART.**—During the last 3 days of March and the first 2 days of April spring passage and arrival of breeding birds observed at Langney Point; Crowlink; Crumbles (D.D.H.); East Head, West Wittering (W. D. Melluish); St. Leonards (A. A. Wright); Castle Hill, Hastings (Miss H. Stevens). One breeding pair located at Castle Hill, Hastings (Miss H. Stevens); one at West St. Leonards (J. Bishop); and one at Pett Level (A.D.W.) and during breeding season other birds include another 3 or 4 singing males at Hastings; 2 singing males at St. Leonards; a second pair at Pett Level; a singing male at Ecclesborne Glen and a female at Langney Point on June 29th (Miss H. Stevens, A. A. Wright, R. N. Ticehurst, A.D.W., F.M.F., D.D.H.). About 30 birds were recorded from the end of September to the end of the year. 2 apparently wintering at Newhaven (C.M.J.) and one at Fairlight (A.D.W.); the rest chiefly passage birds concentrated in the last 3 weeks of October.

203. **NIGHTINGALE.**—Recorded from two areas as particularly numerous. An early record of song relates to one heard on April 10th at Chalvington (P.B.S.).

207/8. **ROBIN.**—Presumably migrants, one at the end of Langney Point and 12 on the Crumbles, where there were only 2 or 3 the previous day, on September 29th; E wind and mist. One at Langney Point on October 7th; E wind and mist (D.D.H.).

213. **WREN.**—Presumably migrants, one seen at the end of Langney Point on April 2nd which left a few minutes later; and one there on October 7th; on both occasions the wind was E and it was misty (D.D.H.). Several near East Head, West Wittering, including one in the sand-dunes on November 20th (L.P.A.).

220. **SWALLOW.**—One at Eastbourne between December 5th and 7th and possibly the same bird in another part of the town on the 10th (D.D.H.).

222. **HOUSE-MARTIN.**—2 at Eastbourne between December 3rd and 9th; one flying W along the Seven Sisters on December 10th (D.D.H.), and one flying W along Hastings front on same day (R.B.W.).

223. **SAND-MARTIN.**—On May 28th a party of 3 passed Langney Point out at sea flying W; strong SW wind (D.D.H.). On July 8th one flying E at Langney Point (D.H.B.); on the 9th c. 12 flying E across the lower Cuckmere against the wind (D.D.H.) and c. 12 flying E at Camber (D.H.B.); on the 10th 16 flying E passed Langney Point against an E wind (D.H.B., D.D.H.).

225. **SWIFT.**—First spring records are of 3 at Rye (D.H.B., D.D.H.) and one at Pagham (M.G.) on April 18th. On the 24th c. 50 at Chichester gravel pits (L.P.A., G.d.F., C.W.G.P.).

227. **NIGHTJAR.**—Numbers much less in the Handcross area than in 1948; one area holding 4 pairs as against 10 pairs in 1948 (I.J.F.L., J.A.S.).

231. **BEE-EATER.**—One at Selsey on April 30th (N.H.J., Brit. B. XLII, p. 390).

232. **HOOPOE.**—The following records are fully substantiated with supporting descriptions; one at Langney Point on March 29th and 30th (per D.D.H.); one at Pagham on April 3rd (B.M.); one feeding in a garden at Arundel on April 6th and 7th (F.P.); one on the Downs near East Dean (East Sussex) on April 16th (D.D.H.); one at Thorney on April 24th (G.d.F., C.W.G.P.). One flew in from the sea at Langney Point on August 20th (per D.D.H.).

233. **ROLLER.**—On the evening of August 15th as L.P.A. was standing on a ridge of the Downs near Clayton, one passed overhead at about 20 feet flying S. He saw the bird's approach and recognised its buoyant flight, being familiar with Rollers in India. He describes it as: "throat and under-parts pale brown with a greenish tinge having a streaked appearance; the dark, typical, wings greenish-blue underneath; but upper parts not seen."

234. **KINGFISHER.**—Many records for wintering birds on the coast. 236/7. **GREAT SPOTTED WOODPECKER.**—One flying over Crowlink on August 17th and 21st (C.St.C.S.) and one in the copse below Belle Tout on the 20th (D.D.H.); 2 at Pagham during November and December (M.G., B.M.).

238. **BRITISH LESSER SPOTTED WOODPECKER.**—One drumming in the Cuckmere valley on January 15th—an early date (D.D.H.).

239. **WRYNECK.**—One at Rye Harbour on August 25th (W.R.P.B.); one on Crowlink on the 26th (C.St.C.S.) and one in the lower Cuckmere valley on September 1st (D.D.H.).

240. **CUCKOO.**—One at Manhood End, Chichester Harbour, on October 16th was both seen and heard (E. Hitchman per C.M.J.).

251. **SHORT-EARED OWL.**—Three records for the beginning of the year and c. 10 for the end of it.

259. **PEREGRINE FALCON.**—Probably only 4 pairs attempted to breed; if so the species has sunk to an unprecedented low level and the taking of eggs, particularly second layings, and the shooting of birds during the breeding season may yet prove fatal to its status as a breeding bird in the county. A tiercel was seen at Pagham on June 11th (M.G., B.M.). One flying S over Horsham on September 26th (D.I.D.).

261. HOBBY.—I.J.F.L. suggests that it was scarcer than in 1947 and 1948. 4 pairs only are recorded as having been located (C.M.J., I.J.F.L., K.G.R.).

262. MERLIN.—All records comprise: an adult male in the lower Cuckmere valley on January 9th (D.H.B.); one at Southease on March 12th (L.P.A.); one in the lower Cuckmere valley on September 24th (D.H.B., D.D.H.); one or 2 on the Crumbles, in the lower Cuckmere and Ouse valleys during October and November (L.P.A., D.D.H., C.M.J.) but none in December; one at Pagham on November 6th (J.S.S.B., B.L., B.M.).

269. COMMON BUZZARD.—The mid-Sussex pair referred to in the 1948 Report were seen in June but no nest was found. An area in W. Sussex where breeding has taken place in the past was visited at the end of May but none found (I.J.F.L.). One was seen there, however, on July 3rd (L.P.A., C.M.J.). One seen at Handcross on August 13th (I.J.F.L.) and one at Pagham on September 25th (M.G., B.L.).

271. MARSH-HARRIER.—One recorded for Pagham on September 11th flying W (W.K.M.) and 3 flying fairly close together at Selsey on September 25th (N.H.J.).

272. MONTAGU'S HARRIER.—A male near Peacehaven on April 26th and another near Crowborough on May 6th (L.P.A.) A Harrier seen at Pagham on August 12th was no doubt of this species by reason of the date (M.G., B.L., P.R.M.).

273. HEN-HARRIER.—One in the lower Cuckmere valley on January 12th (C.S.C.S.); one near Falmer on February 20th (C.M.J.); one above Alciston on March 3rd (L.A.C.); a male in Ashdown Forest March 20th and April 3rd (G.d.F.). E.M.C. and E. H. Gillham record a female or immature on August 8th along the Kent Ditch. The latter describes the wings as very broad, rather a light mottled brown and large white patch on the rump. One at Pagham on November 6th (I.S.S.B.) and on November 26th (M.G., B.M., P.R.M.). One in Ashdown Forest on November 13th (C.L.B.).

284. OSPREY.—On July 30th one was seen from Langney Point flying NE into Pevensey Bay (D.D.H.). On August 27th one was seen in the lower Cuckmere valley (D.D.H., L.A.C.) and what was probably the same bird was seen an hour or so later flying up the Ouse valley (L.P.A.). One near Langney Point on October 2nd (C.W.G.P.) and on October 29th one was circling over Hove Town Hall which disappeared W (K.G.R.).

287. SPOONBILL.—One at Piddlinghoe Pond on April 1st (J.D.M.), one at Pagham on April 5th (J.R.) and 10th (J.S.S.B., M.G., B.L., B.M., P.R.M.) and one there again on December 16th (J.R.).

289. COMMON HERON.—The heronry census was, as far as is known, complete and showed: Fishbourne (Old Park Wood) 15 (R. Cook); Itchenor 13 (C.M.J.); Molecomb 2 (R. Cook); Parham 35 (N.M.); Glynde 21 (E.P.T.); Firle (Decoy Pond), not possible to visit island but probably 3 or 4 (E.P.T.); Firle (Park) 1 (E.P.T.); Eridge 29 (J.C.F.); Glynleigh 12, all in Scots Fir (H.A.R.C.); Leasam 62 (J.C.W.). This is an increase of 30-35 breeding pairs over the corrected figure for 1948 (see Corrections and Additions, p. 7).

300. WHOOPER SWAN.—Two immature birds at the Midrups on December 11th (J.S.S.B.).

304. WHITE-FRONTED GOOSE.—4 at Pagham on January 10th (M.G.) and 4 at Chichester Harbour on January 23rd (B.I., B.M.).

307. PINK-FOOTED GOOSE.—On November 22nd 2 came in from the sea at Langney Point, flying low, and, after circling around, made off inland towards Pevensey Levels (D.D.H.).

311. BARNACLE-GOOSE.—On October 30th F.P. saw one at Sidlesham. He described "the white side of the whole face", as very distinct. What was presumably the same bird was seen independently by B.I. on the same date at Pagham. This species is not known to have occurred previously in Sussex earlier than December. We are informed, however, that the Severn Wildfowl Trust had a bird of this species escape from captivity during October and may be connected with the above-mentioned record.

312/13. BRENT GOOSE.—Very few about until March-April when E passage was recorded along the coast. On June 2nd D.H.B. saw 6 Dark-breasted Brents flying E off Langney Point. Scarce at the end of the year.

315. SHELD-DUCK.—6 pairs reared 48 young in the Rye Harbour area (J.A., J.C.W.). N.M. reports that at least one pair attempted to breed at Climping.

317. MALLARD.—A pair nested almost on the fore-shore at Rye Harbour (D.H.B., D.D.H.).

328. GADWALL.—2 on Pevensey Levels on April 18th (A.H.W.S.). 2 at Thorney on September 25th and one there on November 6th (I.J.F.L.).

319. TEAL.—D.H.B. and D.D.H. state that in the lower Cuckmere valley this species, when present, behaves much like other ducks, often taking to the sea when disturbed and presumably coming in to feed at night.

322. GARGANEY.—Spring passage not so conspicuous as in 1948. Two pairs nested (one successfully) at Thorney (I.J.F.L.); a pair nested on Amberley Wild Brooks and a pair near Crawley (I.J.F.L.); 2 pairs nested (successfully) on Pevensy Levels (D.D.H.), and at least one pair at Rye Harbour (J.A., J.C.W.). Single birds were seen on dates suggestive of nesting on Glynde Levels (D.V.F.) and Chichester Channel (L.P.A., C.M.J., B.M.).

323. WIGEON.—Largest number recorded was c. 1,000 in Rye Bay on January 30th (J.A., J.C.W.). One at Fishbourne on May 13th (B.M.). One at Thorney on May 2nd and 2 at Rye Harbour gravel pits on May 7th (L.P.A.). One at Chichester gravel pits on August 28th (L.P.A.). One at Piddlinghoe on August 30th (C.M.J.). One at the Cuckmere on August 27th (L.P.A., B.M.). 6 at the Midrups on August 28th (W.R.P.B.). A few records for the first half of September.

325. PINTAIL.—Largest number recorded was 40-50 at Dell Quay on February 20th (B.M.). The only late spring records are of a pair at the Wicks on May 7th (L.P.A., C.M.J.) and 11th (D.D.H.).

326. SHOVELER.—Largest number recorded was 75 in Rye Bay on December 11th (J.A., J.C.W.). At least 3 pairs attempted to breed at Thorney. One of these is known to have been successful (I.J.F.L.). A pair bred successfully on Pevensy Levels (D.D.H.). There were 2 at Piddlinghoe on August 22nd and 30th (C.M.J.).

328. COMMON POCHARD.—Only small numbers recorded. Birds stayed unusually late at Rye Harbour gravel pits where C.M.J. saw one on May 7th, D.D.H. 8 on May 11th, L.P.A. and C.M.J. 10 on May 15th and D.D.H. 2 on May 19th. There was also one at Chichester gravel pits on May 31st (P.R.M.). A pair bred at Thorney (I.J.F.L.). 2 had returned to Piddlinghoe by August 20th (L.P.A.).

330. TUFTED DUCK.—No large numbers recorded. A male was at Rye Harbour gravel pits as late as May 19th (D.D.H.) and another was seen at Thorney in late May and early June (I.J.F.L.). A pair bred at Horsted Keynes (C.M.J.).

331. SCAUP-DUCK.—An almost complete absence of records.

332. GOLDENEYE.—Usual occurrences in Chichester Harbour, 20 being the largest number recorded, and odd birds elsewhere.

334. LONG-TAILED DUCK.—The immature drake recorded at Pagham Lagoon in the 1948 Report stayed there until January 14th (P.R.M.). One off Langney Point during a SW gale on November 5th (D.D.H.).

337. COMMON EIDER.—More records than usual. A pair off Langney Point on April 13th. Both eventually flew off westwards (D.D.H.). An adult drake off Telscombe cliffs on April 26th and 27th (L.P.A.). A first-winter bird was seen feeding near in off Langney Point on many dates between November 4th and December 23rd (D.D.H. et al.). Two females and an immature drake at the mouth of the Rother on November 20th and 2 birds there on November 27th (J.A., J.C.W.).

339. COMMON SCOTER.—E.M.C. reports that, despite prolonged daily watching, not more than 10 were seen off the Midrups from August 5th to 15th, which is very unusual. D.H.B. and D.D.H. report that not a single adult male could be found in the flocks, amounting to several hundred birds, which appeared off Langney Point in November and December.

340. VELVET SCOTER.—Very few records and none of more than 4 birds together.

343. RED-BREASTED MERGANSER.—Fewer recorded than in 1948, 24 at Pagham on December 8th (D.M.H.) being the largest number.

344. SMEW.—A brown-headed bird in Thorney Channel on January 9th (L.P.A.).

346/7. CORMORANT.—Birds with an unusual amount of white on the head were reported from East Head, West Wittering, on March 26th (I.J.F.L.); from Shoreham on April 13th (W.R.P.B.) and from Newhaven on April 16th (L.P.A.).

349. GANNET.—8 recorded for January; 2 for April; 5 for May; 2 for June; 6 for July; 6 for August, and many records from the end of September till the end of November. Not many in December. On November 6th L.P.A. saw at least 140 off Newhaven.

368. FULMARS PETREL.—One flying W off Langney Point on May 6th (D.D.H.).

370. **GREAT CRESTED GREBE**.—Unusually large numbers in Rye Bay early in the year, c. 100 on January 16th, c. 200 on January 30th and c. 500 on February 20th (J.A., J.C.W.). One on Balcombe Lake, January 22nd and 23rd (L.P.A., C.M.J.). Inland records are unusual in Sussex so early in the year. One at Rye Harbour gravel pits, August 5th to 12th (E.M.C.).

373. **SLAVONIAN GREBE**.—2 at Pagham on January 8th (B.M.). 2 in summer plumage off the Seven Sisters on April 15th (C.St.C.S.) and one in summer plumage off the mouth of the Cuckmere on April 16th (L.P.A.). One off East Head, West Wittering, on December 31st (J.R. et al.).

374. **BLACK-NECKED GREBE**.—About 14 birds recorded in all. One in summer plumage off Langney Point on July 24th and one in almost complete summer plumage off the mouth of the Cuckmere on August 19th (D.D.H.).

376. **GREAT NORTHERN DIVER**.—2 off East Head, West Wittering, on January 2nd (L.P.A.) and one there on February 5th (B.L., B.M.). 3 off Pagham on October 22nd and one there on November 13th (B.M.). One off Langney Point on November 20th (D.H.B., D.D.H.). One in Newhaven Harbour from November 6th to the end of the year (L.P.A. et al.). One off East Head on November 20th and December 4th and 2 there on December 26th (L.P.A.).

378. **BLACK-THROATED DIVER**.—One off East Head, West Wittering, on November 20th (L.P.A., A.H.W.S.) and December 31st (M.G., B.M., J.R.)

379. **RED-THROATED DIVER**.—Largest number recorded was c. 80 off Langney Point on January 16th (D.D.H.). On December 2nd L.A.C. saw one on the Cuckmere c. 5 miles from the sea. On December 13th this bird was found dead on the bank.

380. **WOOD-PIGEON**.—L.P.A. reports a large SE passage over Brighton, usually in the early morning, from October 31st to November 11th, the largest number passing on November 1st when c. 2,800 birds were counted. Wind was NE except on November 7th and 13th when it was NW. The same observer also saw a much smaller W and NW passage over Brighton, October 27th-29th and on November 14th when the wind was W.

381. **STOCK-DOVE**.—On June 25th D.D.H. saw a single bird flying from E to W near in off Langney Point. A few minutes later 8 birds of this species were picked up far out at sea coming in from the E. They passed the Point c. 200 yards out to sea and crossed the coast further to the W. On June 23rd D.D.H. had seen several small parties and single birds of this species flying inland from the direction of the sea at Dungeness (Kent) but none were seen to cross the coast.

386. **BAR-TAILED GODWIT**.—The largest number of wintering birds in Chichester Harbour was c. 200 on January 30th (L.P.A.). Appeared in rather larger numbers than usual on spring passage. A few, some in full summer plumage, summered at Pagham (B.M.). There was one at Rye Harbour on June 18th (D.H.B.) and one in summer plumage at Thorney on June 26th (I.J.F.L.). Few were seen on autumn passage.

387. **BLACK-TAILED GODWIT**.—In Chichester Harbour c. 50 were wintering at the beginning of the year (Thorney, January 30th, B.M.). No number as large as this was recorded during the period of spring migration. No June records but c. 100 were present at Thorney on July 17th (I.J.F.L.). There were c. 300 there by August 14th and the peak number of c. 500 was recorded on September 11th (I.J.F.L.). Only 8 were seen at Thorney on October 9th (C.M.J.) and only one on November 6th (I.J.F.L.). No subsequent records. A few were present at Chichester gravel pits in January and February and small numbers occurred on both passages along the coast.

388. **COMMON CURLEW**.—At least 2 pairs were back on their breeding ground on March 25th (D.D.H.). B.M. states that though a small number remained at Pagham throughout June numbers had increased to over 100 by June 25th to c. 200 by July 9th and to c. 300 by July 16th. A few summered at Thorney (I.J.F.L.).

389. **WHIMBREL**.—Largest number recorded was on May 4th when D.D.H. saw c. 110 in 3 parties flying E over Crowlink when it was misty. 2 or 3 summered at Thorney (I.J.F.L.). One or 2 probably summered at Pagham. There were 4 there on July 10th (B.M.). 2 at the Midrips on June 23rd and one in the lower Cuckmere valley on July 9th (D.D.H.).

398. **JACK SNipe**.—A rather early arrival at Thorney on September 25th (I.J.F.L.). Less about towards the end of the year than in 1948.

400. **GREY PHALAROPE**.—One at Langney Point, October 28th-30th after a period of SW gales (D.D.H.). A "local" informed D.D.H. that he first saw this bird (or another) on October 21st. One at Pagham on November 4th (M.G., B.L.).

401. **RED-NECKED PHALAROPE**.—An adult in winter plumage at the Midrips September 14th-15th (Dr. N. F. Ticehurst).

403. **KNOT**.—Only unusual records: 3 at Pagham on June 25th (B.M.) and 28th and 15 there on July 14th (J.R.).

404/5. **DUNLIN.**—Rather early return migration at Pagham, where numbers increased from a very few on July 1st to c. 100 on July 6th (J.R.).

406. **CURLEW-SANDPIPER.**—Occurred on both migrations in small numbers (not more than 3 recorded together) along the coast. A rather late spring migrant was one at the Midrips on June 18th (D.H.B., J.C.W.).

407. **LITTLE STINT.**—Only spring record was one at the Midrips on June 18th (D.H.B.). A rather early return migrant was one at the Midrips on August 6th (E.M.C.). There were several other records for August and September from along the coast.

409. **TEMMINCK'S STINT.**—One at Thorney on May 14th (I.J.F.L.) and one there on July 17th (C.W.G.P.).

411. **AMERICAN PECTORAL SANDPIPER.**—One at Thorney on September 2nd—the third successive year that the species has been recorded there. Though the bird was only briefly seen on 3 occasions I.J.F.L. and J.A.S. were able to note the distinctive call as well as the characteristic breast and back patterns.

415. **PURPLE SANDPIPER.**—Single birds at Shoreham, Newhaven and Bulverhythe in the early months of the year. A few records for April—most, 3 at Newhaven (L.P.A.). The first on autumn passage was seen at Pagham on September 14th (W.K.M.) and a few turned up along the coast in October and November. An unusual number of records for December; one at Pagham on the 9th (D.H.M., J.R.); up to 3 at Black Rock, Brighton, 10th-25th (L.P.A. *et al.*); 6 at Bulverhythe on the 31st and 2 at Pett Level on the 30th (F.M.F.).

416. **SANDERLING.**—Largest number recorded was c. 250 at Pagham on April 17th (B.M.).

417. **RUFF.**—2 at Chichester gravel pits on January 29th and 3 there on February 19th (B.M.) and 27th (L.P.A.). The first on spring migration was seen by the Cuckmere Old Channel on March 27th (D.D.H.); there were 11 at Thorney on April 15th (L.P.A., C.M.J.) and 4 at Pagham on May 15th (J.S.S.B.). In autumn it turned up as usual in small numbers along the coast.

421. **COMMON SANDPIPER.**—One by the Arun on February 27th (N.M.). Small numbers only in spring; first record, April 10th (D.D.H.). A number of late June and early July records, some of which no doubt are of summering birds, include: one at Pagham on June 24th (B.M.) and 4 there on July 3rd (J.R.); 2 at Chichester gravel pits on June 29th (J.R.) and July 4th and 16th

(L.P.A.); one at Thorney on June 26th (G.d.F. *et al.*); one in the lower Cuckmere valley on July 2nd (L.P.A.); one at Langney Point on July 1st and 2 there on July 2nd (D.D.H.); 5 at Rye Harbour on July 10th (L.P.A.). An unusual number of November and December records; one in the lower Cuckmere valley on November 2nd (D.D.H.); at least one throughout November and December at Pagham and 2 there on November 6th, 3 on the 20th and 2 on December 3rd (B.M., J.R. *et al.*); one at Piddlinghoe on November 6th and 13th (C.M.J., A.H.W.S.); one at East Head, West Wittering, on December 4th (L.P.A.) and one at Fishbourne, December 12th to 31st (C.F.B., *et al.*).

423. **WOOD-SANDPIPER.**—Only spring record, one near Rye on May 11th (D.D.H.). The first recorded on return migration was one at Thorney on July 17th (G.d.F., C.W.G.P.). About 10 birds, in all, were seen at Rye, Piddlinghoe, Chichester gravel pits and Thorney in August and September.

424. **GREEN SANDPIPER.**—Two wintering at Chichester gravel pits in the early part of the year (B.M. *et al.*). One apparently summered there, being seen there from June 19th to July 16th and 5 were present there on July 24th (L.P.A. *et al.*). There were 5 at Thorney on July 17th (G.d.F., C.W.G.P.). One at Pagham on June 24th (B.M.). Autumn migration was rather less apparent than usual, no doubt owing to dry conditions. The largest number seen was 9 at Rye Harbour gravel pits on September 4th (L.P.A., C.M.J.). One at Chichester gravel pits on December 11th and 26th (L.P.A.).

428. **BRITISH REDSHANK.**—In continuation of the estimate of breeding populations in the 1948 Report, B.M. estimates 57 pairs at Pagham, including the area round the Ferry and Church Norton not counted in J.R.'s figure for 1948.

431. **SPOTTED REDSHANK.**—One in the lower Cuckmere valley, January 1st to 16th (D.D.H., *et al.*). One at Sidlesham Ferry, April 9th to 24th when 2 were present (B.M. *et al.*). One at the Midrips on May 7th (J.C.W.) and June 18th (D.H.B.). The first on return migration was seen at Thorney on July 17th (G.d.F., C.W.G.P.); there were 4 there on July 23rd (J.R. *et al.*); maximum, 7 on September 11th and 25th and one still present on November 6th (I.J.F.I.). A number of other autumn records from the coast, mostly of single birds.

432. **GREENSHANK.**—The first seen on spring migration was at Thorney on April 17th (G.d.F., C.W.G.P.) and there were

16 there on April 24th (L.P.A.). Early return migrants were : one at Chichester gravel pits on July 1st (J.R.) ; 3 at Rye Harbour on July 7th (J.A., J.C.W.); 2 at Pagham on July 8th (B.M.) and 3 there on the 9th (P.R.M.) ; one in the lower Cuckmere valley on July 9th (D.D.H.) and 2 at the Midrips on the same date (D.H.B.). There were 20 at Thorney on July 24th (L.P.A.) and a maximum of c. 50 there on August 31st (B.M., J.R.) and September 11th (I.J.F.L.). The only late record was of 8 at Thorney on November 6th (I.J.F.L.).

438. **LITTLE RINGED PLOVER.**—One at Sidlesham Ferry on April 2nd (N.H.I.). In the district where a pair were recorded as attempting to nest last year, 2 birds were seen on April 24th (L.P.A., G.d.F., C.W.G.P.). On May 10th 4 eggs found ; on the 14th, not far away, a second pair with an odd bird were seen and scrapes found. On May 20th the second pair had one egg. About this time the fifth bird disappeared. Both pairs hatched off and fledged 3 young each. On July 20th J.R. saw what must have been the pair that laid first with a young chick in down not more than a few days old. Last date on which a bird was seen was September 2nd (Brit. B. XLII, p. 252, L.P.A., C.M.J., I.J.F.L., P.R.M., B.M.). One in the lower Cuckmere valley on August 11th (D.D.H.). One at Rye Harbour on August 12th and 13th (E.M.C.). Three birds of the year at the Midrips on August 28th (G.d.F., C.W.G.P.).

439. **KENTISH PLOVER.**—A male in the lower Cuckmere valley on April 1st (W.R.P.B., D.D.H.) and 2nd (L.P.A.). One at Pagham on September 13th (B.I.).

440/1. **GOLDEN PLOVER.**—Largest number recorded at the beginning of the year was c. 400 at Chichester Channel on January 10th (J.R.). Late spring birds were : one at Thorney on May 2nd (L.P.A.), and one flying eastwards over Crowlink on May 4th (D.D.H.). The only August record was of 14 at Thorney on August 25th (J.R.). Largest number at the end of the year was c. 220 at Rye Harbour on December 18th (J.A., J.C.W.).

441. **NORTHERN GOLDEN PLOVER.**—Out of 21 Golden Plovers seen by L.P.A. and C.M.J. near West Wittering on April 10th there were 2 males in summer plumage " with whole area below the eye, throat and under-parts black with broad white band from base of bill down to flanks dividing this from plumage of mantle. In addition, 3 birds as above except cheeks were strongly speckled black, obviously a less advanced stage of plumage or possible females. ,

444. **GREY PLOVER.**—Largest number recorded was c. 300 in Chichester Harbour on February 16th (S.B.S.). About 50 were

wintering at Pagham in the early months of the year. Numbers there had risen to c. 150 by March 12th, no doubt due to the beginning of the spring migration. There were 5 there on June 25th and 27th (B.M., J.R.).

446. **DOTTEREL.**—One at the Midrips on September 5th (W. Thönen per G.d.F.).

450. **BLACK-WINGED STILT.**—Three at Rye Harbour gravel pits on May 9th (J.A.).

451. **AVOCET.**—Four at Camber on June 7th (C. Tomlin per J.C.W.).

452. **OYSTERCATCHER.**—At least 4 pairs attempted to breed at Pagham. Though eggs were hatched by 2 pairs only one young is believed to have flown (B.M., J.R.). Three pairs attempted to breed in the Rye Harbour-Camber area and 4 young were hatched, though apparently only 2 successfully raised. At the Midrips a nest containing 7 eggs, laid by 2 females, was found on May 19th but was later robbed (J.C., C.J.W.).

462. **BLACK TERN.**—3 at Pagham on May 22nd (H. Medhurst). One at Piddingtonhoe on May 13th (J.D.M.) and 2 there on May 16th (C.M.J.). One at Rye Harbour on May 22nd (J.A., J.C.W.). A very early return migrant was one in summer plumage at Langney Point on July 6th (D.D.H.). In autumn a dozen or more records from the coast, Chichester gravel pits and Piddingtonhoe pond, the last being seen at Newhaven on October 16th (L.P.A.).

467. **SANDWICH TERN.**—Early spring arrivals were the 3 seen in Newhaven Harbour on April 7th by W.R.P.B. They eventually flew up-river. As usual, a number of June and July records: one near the Midrips on June 4th (I.J.F.L.); single birds flying E at Langney Point on June 18th and 24th (D.D.H.) and 2 flying W there on July 10th (D.H.B., D.D.H.). The latest record was of 3, likewise at Langney Point, during a S.W. gale on October 16th (D.D.H.).

469. **COMMON TERN.**—Very early arrivals were one near Chichester on April 3rd (L.P.A.) and one in the lower Cuckmere valley on April 4th (W.R.P.B.). L.P.A. also saw a large E movement at Newhaven on April 16th. 4 at Shoreham on June 26th (C.M.V.). On September 22nd D.D.H. saw a small E movement against the wind off the mouth of the Cuckmere and off Langney Point. At Rye Harbour 247 pairs nested and hatched c. 430 young (many as a result of second layings) c. 170 of which reached the free-flying stage (J.A., J.C.W.). 6 or 7 pairs bred at the Midrips (I.J.F.L.).

B. Metcalf

Part of a flock of Oystercatchers at Pagham.



470. ARCTIC TERN.—One was identified at Langney Point on August 21st and 3 on the 24th (D.D.H.) and one at Newhaven on September 24th (L.P.A., C.M.J.). Several late October records were probably of this species.

471. LITTLE TERN.—First spring record — several in Chichester Harbour on April 17th (G.d.F., C.W.G.P.). A decline in numbers breeding at Pagham—estimated at 30-40 pairs. Only 2 young known to have been raised. Breeding numbers about the same as in 1948 elsewhere in the county.

477. LITTLE GULL.—An immature at Piddlinghoe pond on May 14th and 15th (L.P.A., J.D.M.). An immature at Newhaven on October 22nd and 30th (L.P.A., C.M.J., A.H.W.S.). An adult at Langney Point on October 23rd during a SW gale; 3 immatures passing W there on November 6th after a SW gale the previous day; a second-winter bird there on December 3rd during a W gale (D.D.H.). An immature at Pagham on December 6th (D.M.H., J.R.).

478. BLACK-HEADED GULL.—At Rye Harbour 57 pairs attempted to nest. Hatching was good but rats destroyed most of the young, only 11 reaching the free-flying stage (J.A., J.C.W.). On June 24th a flock of c. 80 passed W near in off Langney Point. About half were first summer birds and half adults. One of the latter was in complete winter plumage (D.D.H.).

481. COMMON GULL.—6 pairs attempted to breed within the Sussex boundary in the Midrups-Wicks area (I.J.F.L.). An adult at Langney Point as early as July 7th and 2 there on July 9th (D.D.H.).

482. HERRING GULL.—One pair nested unsuccessfully at Rye Harbour; c. 200 nested between Pett Level and Hastings, mostly successfully (J.A., J.C.W.). A few pairs again nested between Newhaven and Saltdean, apart from the main breeding stations to the E (I.J.F.L.).

484. SCANDINAVIAN LESSER BLACK-BACKED GULL.—A few spring records and a number for autumn. There were 2 still at Langney Point on November 19th (D.D.H.) and one at Chichester gravel pits on December 12th (J.R.).

485.—BRITISH LESSER BLACK-BACKED GULL.—Single birds wintering at Shoreham at both ends of the year.

487. GLAUCOUS GULL.—An adult at Langney Point on January 9th (J.S.S.B.). An immature at Eastbourne, January 26th to April 8th (D.D.H., *et al.*).

489. KITTIWAKE.—Single birds at Norman's Bay on May 15th and at Langney Point on June 23rd, 26th and 29th (D.D.H., D.D.H.). There were extremely early records for the arrival of birds of the year: one flying W off Langney Point on July 24th (D.D.H.); one at Rye Harbour on August 10th (E.M.C.); one flying W off Langney Point on August 17th and another on August 24th (D.D.H.). Single adults were also flying W there on August 10th and 12th (D.D.H.) and there were 2 at Newhaven on August 6th (C.M.J.). On October 28th, after a period of SW gales, c. 100 passed W off Langney Point in an hour (D.D.H.).

493. ARCTIC SKUA.—An adult off East Head, West Wittering, on May 4th (L.P.A.). Immature skuas, presumably of this species, were: one in Rye Bay on May 7th and 15th (L.P.A., C.M.J.); one below Beachy Head on May 21st (D.H.B.); one flying W off Langney Point on August 25th (D.D.H.); one flying W off the Midrups on August 28th (W.R.P.B.); one blown across Newhaven Harbour during a SW gale on October 22nd (L.P.A.); one very near in off Langney Point on October 28th, after SW gales (D.D.H.).

502. LITTLE AUK.—On November 23rd D.D.H. picked up one freshly dead at Langney Point. It was not oiled but its skull was injured. It had probably succumbed to the gale on the night of November 20th.

504. CORNCRAKE.—A dead bird found at Steyning was seen by C.A.G. on May 4th. One was picked up injured at Arlington on September 9th by L.A.C. Both these had presumably collided with some obstruction. One at Leasam marsh, Rye, on September 8th (J.A., J.C.W.).

505. SPOTTED CRAKE.—C.M.J. had a brief view of one at Thorney on October 9th.

511. COOT.—Largest number recorded was over 700 at Thorney on November 6th (I.J.F.L.).

520. QUAIL.—Two birds calling near Steyning from June 14th to 23rd, in seeds where the empty nest was found after the crop had been cut. A party of 7 was seen in the same neighbourhood early in October (C.A.G.). Two single males calling between Seaford and Beachy Head during the first week of July (I.J.F.L.).