

THE
SUSSEX BIRD
REPORT
1950

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

OBtainable from G. DES FORGES,
THE VALE, OVINGDEAN, BRIGHTON

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INTRODUCTORY NOTE

For the third year the Sussex Bird Report appears as a separate pamphlet, and we wish to offer our thanks to the many contributors who have supplied records, and to the still larger number who have bought previous issues and thereby made this venture possible. After two or three years an enterprise of this sort is apt to wane; the first enthusiasms evaporate and contributors, finding it not wholly to their liking, in one respect or another, drop out. Although this has happened in a few cases, the total number of contributors in 1950 is larger than for 1948, and this is a matter of satisfaction to us.

It would perhaps be appropriate in this issue to set out the objects of the Report, as they have formulated themselves in our minds during the past two or three years, and to indicate the reasons which govern the inclusion or rejection of records submitted. Sussex bird-watchers are fortunate in having as their reference book so recent and complete a work as J. Walpole-Bond's *A History of Sussex Birds*, which was published in 1938 and carried the history of Sussex ornithology down to the end of 1937. To attempt to re-cover this ground would be impossible and useless. The objects of the Report are thus twofold; first to record the unusual, and secondly (and this is far more difficult) to record divergencies from the picture painted in the *History* or, in cases where statistical information has been gathered, to confirm statements made therein.

The unusual consists largely of the appearance of those rarer visitors for which the county has always been noted; the occurrence of commoner birds at unusual times of the year and, in appropriate cases, in new localities. The second object accounts for the fairly large number of records of birds apparently migrating directly into or out of the county via the sea; the records of birds at what are now believed to be normal times or in normal numbers where factual evidence was lacking at the time the *History* was written; and some which really do little more than dot the i's and cross the t's of the *History*. A few merely reflect the current interest in the observation of waders.

It will be seen that no place can be found, for example, for records of migrants at usual times, nor for the somewhat vague estimates of abundance and scarcity which are unsupported by figures or comparison with previous years. We are, however, generally ready to publish counts of breeding species in a defined area and particularly welcome these if the census is maintained over a number of years. Another type of record which we usually exclude is that of an uncommon but regular breeding species being found nesting in a haunt in no way unusual to it. Such records are liable to suggest an extension of the bird's breeding range without any justification. Any records of relative abundance and scarcity or supposed extensions or contractions of range should be related to figures or to a very intimate experience of the district and the species, particulars of which should be fully given.

We do not in general admit notes which refer to habits and behaviour. In cases of doubt we usually apply this test; could the incident recorded equally well have happened in any other county? To give an example of this, we would reject variant or unusual types of song which are not, so far as we know, in any way related to geography, but we would include unusual song periods where climate, and hence geography, may be a consideration. We now reject unusual colours or markings of eggs, but not late or early clutches, nor, in appropriate cases, the occurrence of second broods.

In this respect, therefore, we take a much narrower view of the functions of county reporting than the author of the *History*.

In short the Report is not a guide to Sussex birds in any sense whatsoever, and it cannot be fully appreciated without either a very wide knowledge of the subject or frequent reference to the *History*.

CORRECTIONS AND ADDITIONS

To 1948 Report

The next matter which we wish to mention, particularly for the benefit of new contributors, is the form in which records can be most conveniently submitted. Briefly this is exactly in the form that the Report is written. The records should be classified under species and follow the order used in *The Handbook*. If contributors will add their own initials, this avoids the need for the Editors to do so later. The addition of initials against each species also avoids the errors, which sometimes arise, of attributing records to the wrong persons. If records are written on one side of the paper only they can be cut up and stuck directly on to the foolscap sheets on which all records relating to each species are first gathered before being edited.

Records of species which are unusual, critical or seen at unusual times require some supporting evidence of correct identification, although this will not necessarily appear in the Report. In passing it may be added that a record calling for square brackets seems best rejected along with "possibles" and "might-have-beens." Clearly the minimum amount of evidence of satisfactory identification offered will vary according to the Editors' opinion as to the competence and experience of the observer.

There has been of recent years a great increase in the number of new observers, particularly young people. We cordially welcome their interest and help. But a few tend to assume an air of infallibility quite out of keeping with their experience or capacity. Plausible records are submitted which on investigation prove utterly incorrect; other records are palpable nonsense. To those few who would run before they can walk we would suggest that even an old hand cannot name every bird at a glance, and that when they realise their limitations they are in sight of being reliable. Meanwhile they should note down details of the birds they see, thus increasing their knowledge as well as improving their records.

D. A. J. Bunce has drawn the new cover design which we think captures a typical facet of Sussex bird-watching, and we would like to thank him for his skill and trouble.

Finally we welcome records from whatever quarter they may come. Indeed we would suggest that those who take an interest in Sussex ornithology cannot fully inform themselves of the year's events without recourse to a report and that the Report depends upon the efforts of each individual to make it as complete as possible. For purposes of centralisation, records should be sent to G. des Forges. In the case of Pagham records, these may be sent directly to B. Metcalfe, who has kindly undertaken to collate all such records. Observers who have only a few records for this area may still include them with others, as we have no wish to make the submission of reports burdensome. Records should be received by us not later than the middle of February and preferably in January. Moreover if records are sent in quarterly or half-yearly the task of compilation is made easier.

G.d.F.
D.D.H.

LITTLE GREBE. 375.—Reference to early return after breeding to Chichester gravel pits should be deleted, it being established that the species breeds there.

To 1949 Report

WHEATEAR. 186.—For "until the end of the month" read "until the end of March,"

REDFINCH. 201.—For "immigrant" read "emigrant."

SWIFT. 225.—The bird from Pagham was seen on April 13th, not 18th.

BAR-TAILED GODWIT. 386.—C. 100 flying NE over Pagham Harbour on September 23rd. Wind E (J.R.).

COMMON SANDPIPER. 421.—The initials "J.R." should be deleted in connection with the November and December records for Pagham.

KENTISH PLOVER. 439.—An immature at East Head, West Wittering, on October 23rd and November 20th (L.P.A.).
SCANDINAVIAN LESSER BLACK-BACKED GULL. 484.—For "J.R." read "D.M.H."

NOTE ON WEATHER FOR 1950

There were no unduly cold spells at the beginning of the year, but such as there were occurred in the second half of January and over the first and last 4 or 5 days of February. At the beginning of February there were south-westerly gales of unusual severity.

The spring began by being rather cold and on April 24th it snowed, continuing fitfully until the 26th. The rest of the spring, the summer and autumn were wet and there were high autumn gales. Cold weather, with heavy frost and snow, lasted from December 3rd to the 6th, and snow, with bleak northerly winds, fell on the 15th and continued until the 17th, when a considerable depth lay even on the coast. It thawed somewhat on the 18th, but snow still lingered until the end of year, preserved by cold north and east winds.

CLASSIFIED RECORDS FOR 1950

RAVEN. 1.—One near Birling Gap on January 7th (D.D.H.).
HOODED CROW. 2.—Single birds at the beginning of the year in the lower Cuckmere Valley (D.D.H., R.O.) and at the Midrips (E.P.T.). One on October 29th at Pagham (B.M., B.P.) and 2 at the end of the year at the Midrips (W.G.B.).

ROOK. 4.—A few among Jackdaw flocks flying between NW and W over Hove on October 3rd, 12th and 14th (L.P.A.). A census in the Rye area showed the nesting population to be much the same as in 1949 (J.A., J.C.W.).

JACKDAW. 5.—L.P.A. and C.M.J. record flocks flying over Brighton and Hove on 9 days between October 3rd and November 2nd. Direction of flight was between W and NW and wind direction between SW and SE except once when the wind was NE.

MAGPIE. 7.—L.P.A. found a nest on a concrete electricity pylon near Thunderbarrow Hill. It was about 20 feet from the ground and owing to the clearing of the Downs there were few alternative sites.

STARLING. 14.—On March 13th, from a point about $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles from the sea, F.P. saw a flock a mile long and quite thick in patches flying down the course of the R. Arun; these may have been about to return to the Continent. On June 14th there were c. 1,500 roosting on Brighton West Pier, of which c. 40 were immature (L.P.A., C.M.J.). Immigrant parties were seen on November 5th coming in from the sea at the mouth of the Arun—c. 80 birds in all (L.P.A.); at Newhaven—c. 20 birds (C.M.J.); and at Langney Point—c. 50 birds (D.H.B., D.D.H.). The movement was N or NW, against the wind. On November 7th D.D.H. saw 18 fly in, SE to NW at Langney Point, wind N and on the 12th L.P.A. saw c. 60 in all come in at Newhaven, there being a very strong W wind.

GREENFINCH. 19.—On November 23rd at Langney Point D.D.H. saw 2 fly in, SE to NW, being first picked up at long way out at sea. Wind WNW.

TWITE. 28/29.—3 at Piddington on January 8th (D.H.B.) and 11th (D.D.H.).

LINNET. 30.—During April an easterly movement along the coast was visible around Eastbourne. On April 23rd a party of 7 passed Langney Point a little way out to sea flying ENE (D.H.B., D.D.H.). On October 21st a party of 22 flew S out to sea at Langney Point (strong E wind) (D.D.H.).

COMMON CROSSBILL. 36.—2 adult males at East Grinstead on March 18th (H.C.J.). Between March 25th and 30th, 6, including 2 adult males, were seen in a garden near Petworth (E.G.M.), and there were 4 on April 7th at Hassocks (V.M.).

CHAFFINCH. 40/41.—On March 23rd there was a female, tired and unwilling to fly, at the end of Langney Point; weather misty, wind SW (D.D.H.). Chaffinch migration on the coast is remarkably seldom recorded in the county.

BRAWBLING. 42.—Practically no records; a dozen birds all told.

ORTOLAN BUNTING. 50.—One on the Crumbles on October 5th, the wind having changed from SW to SE the previous evening, and many other migrant passerines being about. The pinkish, bunting bill and yellow "spectacles" were clearly seen, but not the under-parts (D.D.H.).

SNOW-BUNTING. 59.—The 5 wintering at Langney Point (see 1949 Report) dwindled to one which was last seen on March 12th (D.H.B., D.D.H.). One on the Crumbles on November 3rd and 5 by the 15th. There were still 2 there on the 30th, after which none was seen (L.A.C., D.D.H.). On December 3rd there was one at Bulverhythe (D.D.H.) and 2 at Pett Level (L.P.A.), 2 at the Wicks on December 16th (D.D.H.).

TREE-SPARROW. 62.—Wintering flocks were seen at Alfriston, the largest number being c. 100 on March 13th. They were last seen on April 6th (L.A.C.); at Sidlesham (J.V.S.) and Shoreham (J.M.T.) where in both cases they arrived in October. There were 6 at Lindfield on December 17th (A.H.W.S.). With reference to the possibility of nesting in the SW of the county mentioned in the 1949 Report, J.V.S. reports 2 about a mile from that locality on May 12th.

WOOD-LARK. 69.—C.F.B. records an unusual nesting site on the Downs between Cissbury and Chanctonbury. The nest was some 9 yards out in a field of barley, then about 18 inches high, in a depression in the ground so that the rim of the nest was flush with the soil.

SHORE-LARK. 72.—One by the county boundary at the Wicks on December 16th (D.D.H.).
RICHARD'S PIPIT. 73.—One on the Crumbles on October 5th. "A very large pipit as big as a Sky-Lark—the two species being seen side by side; very upright; legs very long, appearing yellowish in ordinary light but almost orange in bright sunlight and distinctly reddish with the sun shining through them from behind; very long hind claws; upper-parts brown with broad darker stripes; noticeable pale stripe over eye which continued rather less distinctly round the ear-coverts; chin whitish with a brownish

shade ; rest of under-parts buffish, paler on belly ; some streaks on upper breast, otherwise unmarked below ; outer tail-feathers noticeably white ; central tail-feathers dark brown, almost blackish ; ran very fast and was generally vigorous in its movements ; call a double 'cheerp,' rather bunting-like, and not particularly loud ; quite tame and did not fly far when put up." (D.D.H.). This bird was present for at least four and a half hours and was also seen by D.H.B. and others. Wind had changed from SW to SE the previous evening.

TAWNY PIPIT. 74.—On September 30th one was making its way westwards in short flights with intervals of feeding at the Midrips. "Larger than Meadow-Pipit and more erect ; a conspicuously sandy-coloured bird—under-parts paler than upper ; no markings on under-parts and none visible on upper-parts except on the wings where there was dark brown with a little whitish ; no white noticed in tail ; legs yellowish ; call, loud, clear and rather metallic." (D.D.H.). Wind had changed from SW to SE during the night and there were many Meadow-Pipits along the coast.

TREE-PIPET. 75.—Between August 21st and September 23rd birds were seen flying SE over Brighton and Hove. But single birds were flying W on September 18th, 19th and 21st (L.P.A.).

MEADOW-PIPET. 76.—At Langney Point autumn migrants were observed on September 18th and 20th, numbers arriving from the SE over the sea (wind NW). This movement was almost over by 11.0 a.m. In the same locality on October 18th arrival took place in numerous small parties also from the SE (wind W) and on October 21st a party of c. 40 arrived from the S (strong E wind SW) (D.D.H.). During an hour's watch early in the morning of September 22nd on the NW face of Beddingham Hill W.R.P.B. saw c. a dozen come, in ones and twos, from the N, flying high, and pass round the curve of the hill to the SW. On the whole neither spring nor autumn migration was very conspicuous.

WATER-PIPET. 79.—One by the Cuckmere Old Channel was seen on several occasions between March 15th and 22nd. The description closely accords with those published for the spring birds of the previous year (see 1949 Report) except that in addition its breast was somewhat suffused with pink, especially at the sides (D.D.H.). On December 28th one was found in the same place ; size and shape of Rock Pipit ; blackish legs ; white outer tail-feathers as prominent as in Meadow-Pipit ; definite whitish eye-stripe ; upper-parts a warm brown ; under-parts whitish with brown streaks ; chin and throat unstreaked, forming a whitish bib ;

call a weaker version on the Rock's." (D.D.H. et al.). It remained to the end of the year.

BLUE-HEADED WAGTAIL. 84.—A male at Chichester gravel pits on May 7th (M.G., B.M.).

"SYKES'S WAGTAIL." 85.—On June 2nd D.D.H. found a male in the same locality at Rye Harbour as the male of 1949 with which it was precisely similar in appearance. It was mated with a female indistinguishable from a female Yellow Wagtail and the pair nested in the same cornfield as last year.

YELLOW WAGTAIL. 88.—Breeding population at Rye Harbour gravel pits about the same as in 1949—c. 2 dozen pairs ; the majority nested in corn-fields. A sample area on Pevensey Levels suggested the breeding population there to be 20 to 25 per cent. less than in 1949 (D.D.H.). Somewhat late to emigrate were the several birds seen on October 7th in the lower Cuckmere and on October 8th at Shoreham (C.M.J.).

GREY WAGTAIL. 89.—A pair nested close to Chichester Channel (L.P.A., J.S.).

PIED WAGTAIL. 90.—On October 17th 2 flew in from the E at Langney Point (D.D.H.). L.P.A. reports the species as unusually numerous over Brighton during early October, most moving N—NW—W. On December 15th, during a cold spell, D.D.H. saw c. 12 in ones and twos pass in an easterly direction along the coast at Langney Point.

WHITE WAGTAIL. 91.—One at Rye Harbour gravel pits on April 19th (D.D.H.) ; 2 at Thorney on April 23rd (G.d.F., C.W.G.P.) ; one in the lower Cuckmere Valley on April 26th and 27th (D.D.H.).

GREAT GREY SHRIKE. 114.—One identified in flight at Paddinghoe on February 4th (L.P.A., C.F.B.). One at Rye Harbour on May 14th, a late date (J.A., J.C.W.).

WOODCHAT SHRIKE. 116.—A pair at Pagham on May 19th.

"Male : white with cream tinge ; crown and nape chestnut ; tail black with white markings on underside ; wings black with white bar ; eye-stripe black. Female : lacking creaminess of breast and with brown head" (B.P.).

RED-BACKED SHRIKE. 119.—A rather late bird on the Crumbles on September 21st (D.D.H.).

PIED FLYCATCHER. 123.—More than usual were seen in spring, the localities being Sidlesham (J.V.S.), Pagham (B.M., B.P.), Bognor (J.H.R.d.J.), Wiston (C.A.G.), Southwick (J.M.T.), Piddlinghoe and Ashdown (A.H.W.S.). In autumn only about a dozen birds were seen, one of which was in Sussex Square, Brighton (R. L. Farnall per S.B.S.).

GOLDCREST. 126/7.—Of the birds observed along the coast in October, 3 or 4 on the Crumbles on the 20th after the wind had changed from W to E, the weather being misty, may well have arrived direct from the sea, as certainly did one which flew in from the E at Langney Point on the 22nd—an E wind, some mist (D.D.H.).

CHIFFCHAFF. 129/31.—There were 2 at Eastbourne on February 17th in the locality where one had been seen in the previous December (see 1949 Report) (D.D.H.), and 3 at Chichester gravel pits on February 19th, one of which sang (L.P.A., J.S.). It must remain uncertain whether these were wintering birds or early spring arrivals. The first unquestionable arrival of immigrants was on March 18th. A wintering bird seen at Pagham on January 28th by B.M. is described as having "very pale grey under-parts and medium-grey (mostly grey)-brown upper-parts; an inconspicuous eye stripe. Colour comparable to that of Lesser Whitethroat." What was very probably the same bird was seen there on February 12th and is described as a noticeably grey bird with very pale buff or dirty, off-white under-parts. It frequently uttered a feeble, high-pitched "sweep." On the arrival of March immigrants B.M. found their note to be stronger and lower pitched and their plumage altogether more dark, tinged with olive and the eye-stripe more conspicuous. On April 20th in the lower Cuckmere Valley D.D.H. saw a Chiffchaff which he describes as "almost pure white underneath except for a slight brownish suffusion on the belly and a little brownish at the sides of the breast and on the flanks; upper-parts almost as grey as those of Lesser Whitethroat, especially upper mantle and head; eye-stripe whitish; legs blackish; no call during c. 5 minutes it was under observation. General appearance was more like that of Lesser Whitethroat than Chiffchaff and it was mistaken for the former species at first glance." Both this and the Pagham bird(s) must have belonged to one of the Northern races.

REED-WARBLER. 149.—One was heard in song on June 17th in a privet hedge dividing 2 fields at Southwick. The situation was totally dry (L.P.A.).

BLACKCAP. 162.—One at Pagham on March 25th (B.M.).

WHITE THROAT. 163.—Arrived very late around Eastbourne—the first on April 16th; another on the 20th and several on the 23rd, but no big numbers till the 30th when many. A rather late emigrant on the Crumbles on October 13th (D.D.H.).

DARTFORD WARBLER. 169.—In April D.D.H. found a singing male. This bird was later seen by him together with G.d.F., but on May 27th, when the area was next visited, the gorse was found to be burnt out.

SONG-THRUSH. 175/77.—Many on the Downs round Eastbourne, with Redwings and Fieldfares, during the cold spell in January. During conditions of E wind and mist between October 20th and 22nd, numbers appeared on the Crumbles but left again when the mist cleared. 2 in weeds at the end of Langney Point on December 9th, with a NW wind and mist. On December 15th at Langney Point one flew E out to sea; another flying E along the coast turned NE at the Point, following the coast. On the 16th 2 flew over Camber Sands from the SE and made inland. On both days it was freezing and snow was on the ground (D.D.H.).

REDWING. 178/79.—On October 20th there was one on the Crumbles with the Song-Thrushes as mentioned above (D.D.H.).

RING-OUZEL. 182.—2 spring records, at Pagham (M.G., B.M.) and Sidlesham (J.V.S.) and 5 in autumn between October 22nd and 25th with a sixth at Pagham on November 10th (B.P.).

BLACKBIRD. 184.—Appeared on the Crumbles between October 20th and 22nd in numbers alongside the Song-Thrushes as already mentioned under that species (D.D.H.).

WHEATEAR. 186.—One at Pagham on March 3rd (P.R.M.) was the earliest recorded.

WHINCHAT. 197.—One at Pett Level on October 22nd (H.A.R.C.) was the latest recorded.

BRITISH STONECHAT. 198.—Continues to improve its status as a breeding species.

COMMON REDSTART. 201.—"Far more numerous than usual" on spring passage at Pagham, parties of up to 6 birds occurring frequently from April 8th until early May (B.P.).

BLACK REDSTART. 202.—The 2 birds wintering at Newhaven at the end of 1949 remained into 1950, the last date on which a bird was seen there being April 16th (C.M.J.). Other birds apparently wintering at the beginning of the year include one at Birling Gap (D.D.H.); one at Shoreham (C.A.G.) and one at Southwick (J.M.T.). These last 2 records may relate to the same bird. Spring passage was little in evidence outside the area where the species breeds, single birds being seen only in the lower Cuckmere Valley on March 18th and 19th (D.H.B., G.d.F. et al.), and at Langney Point on the same dates (D.H.B.).

Dr. N. F. Ticehurst has kindly supplied the following summary of records relating to the breeding season: Hastings; Castle Hill, 2 cocks arrived on April 6th; a pair seen April 21st; cock with 2 young, July 15th. Second cock not reported again. One and possibly 2 singing males at other previously occupied territories, but no report of hens. St. Leonards; 2, perhaps 3 singing males present in previously known territories. Ecclesbourne; A pair seen April 15th; no later reports. Pett Level; 2 pairs arrived

March 15th. One remained all the summer, the other left. No proof of nesting. **Winchelsea**; A pair nested in an old wall. Hen seen feeding 3 young in early June. Autumn passage was first observed on October 22nd when 2 were seen on the Crumbles in conditions of E wind and mist. Thereafter another 10 records for the county by the end of the year of which 2 relate to birds wintering at Newhaven (L.P.A., C.M.J.) and one wintering at Langney Point (D.D.H.).

WHITE-SPOTTED BLUETHROAT. 206.—The fifth Sussex record and the first since 1912, "a male in almost full summer plumage," was identified by W. D. Sweeney and A.H.W.S. at Thorney on September 4th. The following note has been supplied: "The bird was flushed from the ditch near the west bank and perched on a small bush, where we watched it through binoculars for about 10 minutes in good light at ranges from 5 to 20 yards. The following features were clearly seen: very distinct light eye-stripe and less distinct moustachial streak; bright blue throat with light chin and a clear white spot in the middle of the blue throat; white and chestnut bands across the breast, immediately below the blue throat; chestnut base to the tail seen clearly both in flight and perching; upper parts dark brown and lower parts light coloured. The bird was slimmer than a Robin which it resembled in its general behaviour."

ROBIN. 207/8.—A very shy bird was seen in low herbage on the sea wall at the Midrips on September 30th. The wind was then SE, having changed from SW and the bird was probably a migrant (D.D.H.).

WREN. 213.—One wintering at Langney Point at the end of the year (D.D.H.) and one or 2 seen in the dunes at East Head on dates in December (L.P.A.) and in late November in the same close proximity to the sea (V.M.). Thus it may not be inferred that even birds on the shore-line are necessarily migrants.

HOUSE-MARTIN. 222.—One at Fishbourne on March 26th (J.S.). One flying W at Pett Level on December 3rd (L.P.A.). **SAND-MARTIN.** 223.—One in the lower Cuckmere Valley on March 11th (D.D.H.) and one at Rye Harbour the following day (H.A.R.C.). On June 11th D.D.H. and I.J.F.L. saw one flying E along the coast at the Midrips. Early in July L.A.C. found a new colony of a few pairs in Mid-Sussex about a mile from the sea.

NIGHTJAR. 227.—One flying round a street lamp in Eastbourne on September 13th (D.H.B.).

HOOPOE. 232.—One in a garden at Alfriston on March 20th (per L.A.C.); one near Camp Hill, Ashdown Forest on April 10th (C.L.B.); one by Pagham Lagoon on April 30th (M.G., P.R.M., B.P.) and one at Rotherfield on May 21st (Dr. T. F. Fox).

KINGFISHER. 234.—Birds remaining somewhat late in coastal districts were: one in the lower Cuckmere Valley on March 29th (D.D.H.) and one at Fishbourne on March 31st (L.A.C., D.D.H.).

WRYNNECK. 239.—3 spring records only for Burgess Hill, Hassocks (V.M.) and Handcross (J.A.S.). On June 19th and September 19th one was heard at East Grinstead (H.C.J.).

CUCKOO. 240.—On May 30th S.B.S. found a deserted Chaffinch's nest with 4 eggs and a Cuckoo's egg.

SHORT-EARED OWL. 251.—Numbers much as in 1949. An early autumn bird was seen at Pagham by B.M. on September 9th.

MERLIN. 262.—Rather more common than in 1949 but all records confined to the Downs and coast. On October 21st one flew SSW out to sea at Langney Point. A strong E wind (D.D.H.).

KESTREL. 263.—On August 3rd (wind NW) and again on the 7th (wind SW, some mist) one flew in from the S at Langney Point, both being picked up with glasses some way out at sea. On September 23rd, October 1st and October 8th single birds were seen flying westwards there, out at sea. On October 8th a second bird came in on the S-N line, being first seen when very far out at sea (D.D.H.).

COMMON BUZZARD. 269.—Several records during the summer for central Sussex.

MARSH-HARRIER. 271.—On January 7th one flying E over the Downs near Birling Gap; a very dark bird except for the head which appeared white (D.D.H.); this record may be compared with that of the juvenile seen at Camber on December 31st, 1949 (HESN, VII, p. 187). On April 21st D.D.H. flushed one on the Crumbles and a different bird was seen by him there on May 3rd.

MONTAGU'S HARRIER. 272.—One near Seaford Head on April 20th (L.A.C.); a female at Camber on May 27th (H.A.R.C.) and one on Pevensey Levels on May 29th (D.D.H.).

HEN-HARRIER. 273.—All records: one at Thorney on February 18th (B.P.); one on the Downs above Alfriston on March 5th (L.A.C.); a male at Pagham on April 1st (B.P.); one at Thorney on October 18th (B.P.); one on the Downs above Southwick on October 22nd (C.F.B.); one at Ashdown Forest on November 12th (F.M.G.); a male at Earham on November 27th (B.P.).

OSPREY. 284.—J.C.F. describes seeing one in Eridge Park on August 30th. The bird was watched both perched in trees adjacent to one of the lakes and plunging into the water.

SPOONBILL. 287.—One at Pagham between January 12th and March 4th (D.L.D., B.M., J.S. et al.). An injured immature bird was seen by many observers in the Rye-Midrips area between April 7th and May 26th. On May 14th it was accompanied by a second bird (J.A., J.C.W.). 3 at Pagham on October 19th (E.

and M.F.) and 3 in Thorney Channel on October 26th (F.G.H.). One at Amberley Wild Brooks on December 31st (M.G., B.M.). **COMMON HERON.** 289.—The herony census was again as complete as knowledge of the heronies in Sussex allowed but on May 13th 4 or 5 Herons' nests were seen in a pine in front of the mansion in Beauport Park. A Rook shoot was then in progress and no Herons were to be seen, and the site was not visited again (H.A.R.C.). Fishbourne (Old Park Wood) 19 (D.C.) ; Itchenor 18 (C.M.J.) ; Molecomb one nest was built but deserted, though another was found later (per E.M.C.) ; Parham 46 (N.M.) ; Glynde 24 (E.P.T.) ; Firle (Decoy Pond) one (E.P.T.) ; Firle (Park) none (E.P.T.) ; Bridge 38 (F.M.G., C.W.G.P.) ; Glynleigh 11 (E.P.T.) ; Leasam 63 (J.A., J.C.W.). On August 5th one flew SW past Langney Point over the sea ; it was last seen over Beachy Head continuing in the same direction (D.D.H.).

BITTERN. 297.—One at the pools at Pett Level on December 26th (L.P.A.). **WHOOPER SWAN.** 300.—2 adults and 3 immatures on Warnham Mill Pond, Horsham, on January 8th (L.P.A., C.M.J.) and for several days thereafter (D.L.D.). One at Rye Harbour on January 29th and March 1st (J.A., J.C.W.). 2 adults in Chichester Channel between December 24th and 30th (C.F.B., C.M.J., J.S.). On December 26th 4, flying from inland, came down on the sea off Pett Level (D.D.H.).

BEWICK'S SWAN. 301.—An adult at Rye Harbour between March 5th and 27th (L.P.A., H.A.R.C., C.M.J.) and an adult there on December 30th and 31st (J.A., W.G.B., D.D.H.).

GREY LAG-GOOSE. 303.—5 at Rye Harbour gravel pits, March 25th-April 11th (L.P.A., J.A., J.S.S.B., W.R.P.B., D.D.H., C.M.J., J.C.W.).

WHITE-FRONTED GOOSE. 304.—11 near Chichester gravel pits on January 1st and 5 at Barnham, January 12th-13th (B.P.). At Pagham they were reported as follows : 30 on January 5th, 60 on the 6th and 9th (B.P.), 6 on the 14th, 3 on the 28th (P.R.M., B.P.), one on December 22nd (M.G.). There were 10 on Glynde Level on December 23rd and 8 at Pett Level on the 26th (L.P.A.).

PINK-FOOTED GOOSE. 307.—A party inland near Pagham on January 29th (B.P.). A party of 12 flying W, near in and fairly low, off Langney Point on November 16th. 4 at Pagham on December 21st. 5 on Pett Level on December 30th (D.D.H.). 3 near Littlehampton on December 31st (J.S.).

BRENT GOOSE. 312/3.—Few recorded until April 7th, when

Relatively few recorded for the rest of the year though more than in 1949. The records do not show birds wintering at either Chichester or Pagham Harbours.

MALLARD. 317.—During the January cold spell the numbers in Rye Bay rose from 500-600 to 1,200 on January 29th (J.A., J.C.W.) and there were c. 250 off the Seven Sisters on the 26th (D.D.H.). P.R.M. records parties of drakes at Pagham during summer as follows : May 30th, 51 ; June 3rd, 60-70 ; July 17th, 188. During early August there were 200-250, mostly drakes, there.

GADWALL. 318.—One at Piddlinghoe on February 5th (L.P.A.) and 2 at Pagham on November 9th (N.H.P.).

TEAL. 319.—40 on the sea off Nook Beach, Rye Harbour, on December 11th (J.A., J.C.W.).

GARGANEY. 322.—No positive evidence of nesting, but birds were seen at dates suggestive of this as follows : Thorney, a drake on May 7th (J.S.) ; Fishbourne, a drake on May 7th and 29th (L.P.A.) ; Pagham, a pair until the end of June (M.G., B.M. et al.) ; Piddlinghoe, a drake until May 27th (L.P.A., J.S.) ; Pevensey Levels, a pair during June in the locality where breeding took place in 1949 (D.D.H.) ; Rye Harbour gravel pits, 3 drakes on May 13th (C.M.J.).

WIGEON. 323.—Numbers during the January cold spell were : c. 600 at Pagham on the 28th (P.R.M.), c. 450 off the Seven Sisters on the 26th (D.D.H.) and c. 500 off Nook Beach, Rye Harbour, on the 29th (J.A., J.C.W.). A drake was present at Pagham on June 3rd (P.R.M., B.P.). Only 2 records for August—one at Chichester Channel on the 20th (J.S.) and one at Chichester gravel pits on the 29th (P.R.M.). During the December 23rd and, together with C.M.J. c. 500 flying down the Ouse Valley on December 30th. These birds also probably came from the Glynde area. On December 11th there were c. 500 off Nook Beach, Rye Harbour (J.A., J.C.W.).

SHOVELER. 326.—No evidence of breeding this year though J.S. saw 2 drakes on Chichester Channel on May 29th.

COMMON POCHARD. 328.—An immature drake which stayed on Pagham Lagoon from March to December was apparently injured as also may have been the drake which summered at Piddlinghoe but the one seen by D.D.H. at Rye Harbour gravel pits on July 5th had not been there earlier.

TUFTED DUCK. 330.—A pair nested at Burton (C.A.G.). No other records of significance.

SCAUP-DUCK. 331.—Rather more records this year, the largest number being 120 off the Rother Estuary during a gale on February

10th (J.A., J.C.W.). On February 12th L.P.A. saw 58 at Rye Harbour gravel pits. On October 5th a party of c. 20, flying westwards, came down for a few minutes on the sea off Langney Point (D.D.H.). This is an early date for arrival in Sussex. Few recorded for the end of the year.

GOLDENEYE. 332.—Largest numbers occurred as usual in Chichester Harbour where J.S. saw 26-28 on January 22nd and 29th. Rather more than usual elsewhere, 6 in the lower Cuckmere Valley in late December (D.H.B. *et al.*) being the most recorded.
COMMON EIDER. 337.—Again a number of records : one (female or immature) off Langney Point on January 12th ; 3 (females or immatures) flying W near in there on the 18th (D.D.H.) ; an immature at Newhaven on January 7th, and 2, one an immature male, there, February 12th-25th (L.P.A. *et al.*) ; a drake moulting from eclipse off Langney Point, September 19th-21st (D.D.H.). This is the first county record for this month. There was an adult drake in full plumage (not impossibly the above bird) there on a number of occasions between October 22nd and November 8th (D.H.B., D.D.H.). On October 26th 5 (females or immatures) passed Langney Point, a short distance out, in the direction of Pevensey Bay (D.D.H.). A.H.W.S. saw one at Newhaven on December 4th.

VELVET SCOTER. 340.—Rather more records this year, mostly for November and December and for the eastern end of the county.

GOOSANDER. 342.—More records than usual. On January 22nd D.H.B. and D.D.H. saw 2, one an adult drake, in the lower Ouse Valley. There were 2 adult drakes at Pagham on January 28th (B.M.). On December 6th there was a brown-headed bird off the mouth of the Cuckmere (D.D.H.) and on the 26th 5, one an adult drake, were flying E along the coast between Pett Level and Rye Harbour (L.P.A., D.D.H.).

RED-BREASTED MERGANSER. 343.—A fair number of records, mostly from Langney Point and Pagham, 18 at the latter locality early in the year being the largest number recorded. On May 7th M.G. and B.M. saw 5, all brown-heads, at Pagham ; the latest spring record for the county.

SMEW. 344.—A brown-headed bird at Piddington on January 28th (L.P.A.) and one in the lower Cuckmere Valley on the 29th (D.H.B. *et al.*). Two birds, known to have been " winged," remained at a Rye Harbour gravel pit until at least June 11th (D.D.H. *et al.*). On December 31st L.P.A. saw one off Seaford Head and 13, one an adult male, in the Cuckmere Valley.

CORMORANT. 346/7.—3 at Knepp Lake on January 8th, 2 of them perching in the branches of trees (L.P.A., C.M.J.). Single birds with as much white on head and neck as those suggested to be Southern Cormorants in the 1947/9 Reports were seen at Newhaven on February 26th (C.M.J.) and at Pagham on the same day (I.S.).

SHAG. 348.—One at Shoreham on September 22nd seen in company with 4 or 5 cormorants. The shag is described as "noticeably smaller, the plumage an oily green, with no white to be seen, and the bill more slender." (J. Stafford).

GANNET. 349.—Records for all months of the year except February and March but numbers for September-December seem to have been rather less than usual.

STORM-PETREL. 350.—Single birds passed westwards off Langney Point a short distance out on November 8th and 23rd (D.D.H.).

LEACH'S FORK-TAILED PETREL. 351.—On September 27th W.R.P.B. had near views of one at Thorney. First seen flying over the land it later alighted on Ensworth Channel. The third county record for this month.

MANX SHEARWATER. 355.—On September 28th, during a strong SW wind, D.D.H. saw one off Langney Point.

CORY'S SHEARWATER. 361/2.—On November 19th, during a SW gale, D.D.H. saw one flying in an easterly direction, a few hundred yards off Langney Point. "A large shearwater, blackish brown above and white below, except for brownish wing-margins ; it was flying rather high, and as it swung from side to side, the belly was visible and appeared completely white ; no 'capped' appearance and no white visible above tail." Fifth or sixth record for the county.

SOOTY SHEARWATER. 363.—On October 6th, during a strong W wind, D.D.H. saw one 4 times during an hour gliding about some out off Langney Point. "A large, all-black shearwater with a rather heavy body." First county record since 1910.

FULMAR PETREL. 268.—One put off the cliff W of the mouth of the Cuckmere on April 26th. One flying W c. 3 miles off Bognor on May 28th (seen from coastal steamer). One flying W off Langney Point on June 25th (D.D.H.).

GREAT CRESTED GREBE. 370.—Rather late migrants were the birds (one in each case) seen at Newhaven on May 6th (L.P.A.) and off Winchelsea Beach on the 11th (C.M.J.). 2 pairs nested at Chichester gravel pits (J.R. *et al.*). On December 3rd H.A.R.C. saw c. 180 moving W in half an hour off Pett Level, c. 70 of these being in one flock.

RED-NECKED GREBE. 371.—One at Pagham on February 12th (J.S.S.B.). One off the mouth of the Cuckmere on April 26th. One, still mainly in summer plumage, off Langney Point on October 5th (D.D.H.).

SIAVONIAN GREBE. 373.—One at Pagham, February 11th-16th (B.M. *et al.*). 2 in summer plumage swimming E off the mouth of the Cuckmere on April 7th (D.D.H.). One at Pagham on October 28th (B.M.). One in the lower Cuckmere Valley at the end of December (L.A.C., D.D.H.).

BLACK-NECKED GREBE. 374.—Few records; one at Pagham, February 12th (J.S.S.B.) and 20th (M.G., P.R.M., B.P.); 4 at East Head, West Wittering, on February 26th (L.P.A.); some, at least, of a party of 10 grebes seen by L.P.A., C.M.J. and J.S. off Pagham on March 12th were of this species.

GREAT NORTHERN DIVER. 376.—The bird in Newhaven Harbour recorded in the 1949 Report was last seen on February 26th (C.M.J. *et al.*). One off East Head, West Wittering, on February 5th (J.S.) and 26th (L.P.A.). One at Pagham, February 12th-March 5th (J.S.S.B., M.G. *et al.*). One off Langney Point on November 19th (D.D.H.).

BLACK-THROATED DIVER. 378.—One in Newhaven Harbour March 2nd-11th (D.D.H., C.M.J. *et al.*). One still showing a good deal of summer plumage off Langney Point on November 2nd (D.D.H.).

RED-THROATED DIVER. 379.—One in partial summer plumage off Langney Point on May 17th (D.D.H.); the latest spring record for the county.

STOCK-DOVE. 381.—C. 110 in 2 parties flying NW over Hove early on December 13th (L.P.A.). On December 16th D.D.H. saw a party of 22 fly in from the SE over the beach at Rye Harbour and make off NW inland. That same day H.A.R.C. saw c. 200 in all come in over the sea from SSW-S between Pett Level and Winchelsea Beach. The wind was NE.

TURTLE-DOVE. 383.—A rather late bird was seen at East Head, West Wittering, on October 5th (W.M.L.H.).

BAR-TAILED GODWIT. 386.—Appeared in considerably smaller numbers than usual. Few wintering at either end of the year and few also at the migrations. 2 were present at Pagham during June (B.M.).

BLACK-TAILED GODWIT. 387.—In the Chichester Harbour area 20-30 were wintering early in the year (G.d.F. *et al.*). C. 50 was the maximum number recorded on spring migration (April 13th, Fishbourne, W.R.P.B.). One was present at Thorney on June 11th (G.d.F. *et al.*). During August the number at Thorney rose to over 300 and a maximum of c. 550 was reached by September

18th (G.d.F., C.W.G.P.). Only one or two remained there by the end of October and there are no later records. Elsewhere in the county only small numbers were reported.

COMMON CURLEW. 388.—At Langney Point D.D.H. witnessed an early westerly movement: June 14th, one; 18th, one; 25th, 11; 30th, 5; July 1st, 4; 7th, one; 8th, one; 12th, 3. In this connection it seems significant that J.R. and P.R.M. record "the usual substantial arrival" of this species in late June at Pagham, where numbers had risen to c. 200 by July 7th. 600-1,000 wintered at Pagham (B.M., B.P.) but elsewhere winter numbers apparently did not rise much above 200.

WHIMBREL. 389.—Largest number recorded was c. 150 Camber-Midrips on April 30th (L.P.A.). D.D.H. saw 2 flying W off Langney Point on June 18th and single birds flying W there on June 22nd and 25th. About 3 were present at Pagham in June (B.M., P.R.M.).

WOODCOCK. 393.—One on the Crumbles on October 24th; E wind and mist (D.D.H.).

GREAT SNIPE. 394.—On September 30th D.D.H. flushed one at close range at the Midrips and as it flew away noted the following particulars: "a large, heavily built, rather dark snipe; a good deal of white in the outer tail-feathers visible at close range; as compared with flying Dunlins had size and somewhat the build of a Knot; flew rather slowly and heavily, fairly low and directly; did not call." Not seen on the ground.

JACK SNIPE. 398.—As usual small numbers were recorded for both ends of the year.

RED-BREASTED SNIPE. 399.—On October 15th one was seen at Thorney by C.E.D. and other members of the Reading Ornithological Club. It was subsequently seen by R.H.R. on the 16th; D.D.H. on the 19th; D.H.B., G.d.F. and C.W.G.P. on the 21st; and P.A.D.H. on the 22nd. The following summarises the most significant features observed: size, about that of Redshank but legs (which were leaden coloured) shorter; a stocky bird, snipe-like in attitude; bill, long and snipe-like, with bulbous tip; upper-parts, dark brown with striations; a long, narrow patch of pure white down the centre of the back, very conspicuous in flight when rest of upper-parts appeared very dark, except for pale edging to hind border of secondaries; throat and breast dark-brown, finely striated, sharply divided from belly which was paler, almost white; a rather broad buffish-white eye-stripe; call, a sharp and clear "qui-ip" given doubly or singly in flight; fed habitually on open mud. The second record for the county.

GREY PHALAROPE. 400.—Many records, doubtless due to the September gales. One at Shoreham, September 9th-13th

(C.F.B., J.S. *et al.*). One, Cuckmere Old Channel, September 17th (D.H.B.) ; one, a bird of the year, close in shore at Langney Point on September 18th (D.D.H.). 2 birds of the year in the lower Cuckmere Valley, September 21st-24th, and at least 3 there on the 22nd (L.A.C., D.D.H. *et al.*). One at Newhaven on September 24th (C.F.B., D.H.B.). 2 at Thorney on September 24th (G.d.F., C.W.G.P.), one there on the 25th and 2 on the 27th (W.R.P.B.). One at Rye Harbour gravel pits, September 24th and 29th (L.P.A., J.S.) and October 5th (W.G.B.). 2 on the sea between Rye Harbour and the Midrips on September 24th (R.O.). 2 at Pett Level, September 26th and 30th (L.P.A., J.S.) 2 on Pagham Lagoon on October 5th (E. and M.F.).

RED-NECKED PHALAROPE. 401.—An adult in full winter plumage at Thorney on September 5th (C.H.). One at Pett Level on September 30th (L.P.A., J.S.) and October 14th (L.A.). Full descriptions have been supplied. The Pett Level bird was seen together with Grey Phalaropes.

TURNSTONE. 402.—Apart from 3 at Thorney on July 16th (C.W.G.P.), no records of interest.

KNOT. 403.—Only record of interest : 3 at Pagham on June 16th (C.M.V.).

DUNLIN. 404/5.—On November 30th during a W gale D.D.H. saw a continuous W movement near in along the coast at Langney Point, c. 150 passing in 2 hours.

CURLEW-SANDPIPER. 406.—Only spring record—one at Pagham, May 14th-17th (M.G., B.M.). An early return migrant was an adult in summer plumage at Rye Harbour on July 5th (D.D.H.). No other autumn records until September (first September 3rd) when numbers were larger than usual at suitable localities along the coast, though not more than c. 7 seem to have occurred together. There were a few for October and on December 24th C.F.B. had a good view of one at close range at East Head, West Wittering.

LITTLE STINT. 407.—In spring arrived very early at Thorney where J.S. saw 2 on April 7th, and, together with L.P.A., 3 on the 9th and 2 on the 16th. There was one at Rye Harbour on May 6th (C.M.J.) and one at Pagham on the 14th (P.R.M., B.P.). Early return migrants were : one in the lower Cuckmere Valley on July 29th (L.P.A.) and one at Rye Harbour gravel pits on the 30th (D.H.B.) and on August 2nd (D.D.H.). As in the case of the last species numbers in September were well above average, though not more than c. 9 seem to have turned up together. A rather late bird was seen by the lower Rother on November 18th (D.D.H.).

TEMMINCK'S STINT. 409.—One at Rye Harbour gravel pits on August 26th (L.A., D.D.H.). One at Midrips, September 14th (C.W.G.P.). One at Thorney, September 19th and 22nd (J.S.) and 25th (W.R.P.B.). Full descriptions have been supplied.

PURPLE SANDPIPER. 415.—C. 10 wintering at Newhaven early in the year (C.F.B. *et al.*) and 8 at Bulverhythe (D.D.H.). Lesser numbers were wintering at these localities at the end of the year and there are a few other records for October-December.

SANDERLING. 416.—Rather late migrants, if not summering, were c. 50 at Camber on June 13th (L.A.C.).

RUFF. 417.—3 at Thorney on March 5th (J.S.) and 6th (C.W.G.P.) and 2 there on March 26th (C.M.J., J.S.) but no other spring records. The usual numbers turned up in autumn along the coast, the most seen together being 11 at Pett Level on September 30th (L.P.A., J.S.).

COMMON SANDPIPER. 421.—Several were wintering in January and February ; one or 2 in the lower Ouse Valley (D.H.B. *et al.*) ; 2 near Shoreham (C.F.B.) ; one at Pagham (B.M. *et al.*) ; 2, Chichester Channel (L.P.A. *et al.*) ; one at East Head, West Wittering (L.P.A.) (Compare Brit. B. XLIV, p. 88). As usual return migration along the coast began during the first few days of July. Several wintering at the end of the year ; at least one in the Chichester Channel area during November and December (L.P.A. *et al.*) ; one near Littlehampton on December 31st (J.S.) ; one near Bramber on November 19th (C.F.B.) ; one in the lower Ouse Valley during December (L.P.A. *et al.*).

WOOD-SANDPIPER. 423.—Only spring record ; one at Pagham on May 10th (M.G.) and 15th (P.R.M.). No July records but from early August about 8 occurred along the coast.

GREEN SANDPIPER. 424.—A few wintering at the western end of the county early in the year. It is again possible that one or two may have summered at Chichester gravel pits. Occurred in normal numbers along the coast in autumn, maxima being 11 at Thorney on September 10th (G.d.F., *et al.*) and 11 on the (flooded) Crumbles on September 17th (D.D.H.).

BRITISH REDSHANK. 428.—J.A. and J.C.W. report that 10 pairs reared young at Rye Harbour. In this locality D.D.H. found a nest with eggs in a cornfield on June 2nd.

SPOTTED REDSHANK. 431.—One at Thorney on February 19th (L.P.A., J.S.) and during March 2 there on April 16th (L.P.A.). Only other spring record ; one at Pagham on May 10th (M.G.). On July 1st C.M.J. heard one calling over Brighton. There was one at Thorney on July 16th (G.d.F. *et al.*) and the species was present there from then onwards until October 22nd, with a maximum of 5 on September 5th (G.d.F., C.W.G.P.). Very few

autumn records from the rest of the coast. One in the lower Cuckmere Valley from December 26th (D.H.B., C.St.C.S.) to the end of the year (D.D.H.).

GREENSHANK. 432.—An early spring arrival was one at Pagham on April 13th (P.R.M., J.R.). Maximum on spring migration—13 at Thorney on May 7th (L.P.A.). A rather late spring bird was one at Rye Harbour gravel pits on June 2nd (D.D.H.). No early July records but there were 14 at Thorney by July 16th (G.d.F., C.W.G.P.). The maximum there was 26 on October 14th (D.D.H.). This was less than usual. No November records, but on December 2nd B.M. saw 2 at Pagham and there was one at Winchelsea Beach on December 30th (D.D.H.) and 31st (C.M.J.).

LITTLE RINGED PLOVER. 438.—On April 19th one flew in over the sea wall near Broomhill and thence inland, calling, (D.D.H.). One at Pagham on April 30th (M.G.). First seen on nesting ground (same general area as in 1948 and 1949) on April 16th, where 3 pairs hatched young which in 2 cases certainly reached the flying stage. A fourth pair at a new site about 4 miles distant also brought young to flying stage (L.P.A., C.M.J., J.S. *et al.*). One at Rye Harbour gravel pits on July 30th (D.H.B.) and August 2nd (D.D.H.). 2 in the lower Cuckmere Valley on August 4th (D.D.H.). A juvenile at Rye Harbour, August 27th (H.A.R.C.).

KENTISH PLOVER. 439.—J.S. saw a pair on the West Sussex coast in June. They were not found on later visits.

GOLDEN PLOVER. 440/1.—There were 550 on Broomhill Level on January 7th (J.A., J.C.W.) but otherwise numbers at both ends of the year were less than usual. Several records of early autumn arrival; 2 flying W at Langney Point on August 19th (D.D.H.); c. 25 flying SSW near Newhaven on August 26th (G.d.F., C.W.G.P.); a party of 6 flying SE at the Midrips on August 27th (G.d.F., C.W.G.P.); 3 flying W off Fairlight (seen from coastal steamer) on August 30th (D.D.H.).

GREY PLOVER. 444.—Appears to have been present in lesser numbers than usual during winter. A few summered at Pagham (B.M.).

DOFTEREL. 446.—On August 20th one flew from the Kent side of the Wicks towards the Midrips (J.S.S.B.).

LAPWING. 449.—Weather movements, including departure from the coast, S or SW out to sea, recorded during the January and December cold spells (D.H.B., D.D.H. *et al.*). Rather early flocking was observed on Pevensey Levels where D.D.H. saw c. 150 on June 17th and at Pagham where J.S. saw 70-80 on June 18th. **AVOCET.** 451.—On April 19th D.D.H. saw one by the lower Rother and later that day there was one (possibly the same) at the

Midrips (D.D.H., J.D.M.) which was still there on the 20th (A.A.M.B.). On June 2nd D.D.H. saw a party of 10 by the lower Rother.

BRITISH OYSTER-CATCHER. 452.—On July 13th D.D.H. saw a pair in the Rye Harbour area accompanying a young bird, well grown but unable to fly. 2 or 3 pairs attempted to breed at Pagham.

STONE-CURLEW. 456.—A late migrant was one seen by C.M.J. at Rye Harbour on May 10th. On July 4th G.d.F. heard one calling at dusk from a root field at the foot of the Downs near Brighton.

BLACK TERN. 462.—Spring passage appears to have been much more marked than usual: 3 at Langney Point on May 14th (R.O.); 6 at Piddighoe on the same day and 14 there on the 15th (J.D.M.); 3 there on the 18th (L.A.C.); one at Rye Harbour gravel pits on the 15th, 4 on the 17th, 5 on the 18th (D.H. Withers personal D.D.H.); one there on the 25th and another (in incomplete summer plumage) on June 8th (D.D.H.); one at Pagham on May 17th (M.G.) and one found exhausted there on June 3rd but flying the next day (M.G. and B.M.); one at Thorney on May 21st (L.P.A.) and 22nd (J.S.). An early return migrant was one at Langney Point on July 21st (D.D.H.). Subsequent autumn records relate to some 20 birds at various coastal localities. A surprising number of these—12—were for October, the latest being one at Shoreham on the 23rd (C.F.B.).

GULL-BILLED TERN. 465.—On September 17th, during a S gale, C.F.B. and J.S. had good views of one in flight over fields and mudbanks at Shoreham. The following is condensed from their description; call much higher pitched and less grating than that of Sandwich Tern—"keerick" or "kee-vick"; size approximately that of Sandwich Tern but build more stocky and tail less forked; whole of head white except for some greyish markings on crown and a conspicuous dark patch behind eye; rest of upper-parts uniform pale grey except for primaries which greyish-brown, apparently edged darker beneath; under-parts white; bill noticeably short, stout and completely black with a slight curve to the upper mandible.

SANDWICH TERN. 467.—On April 7th, an early date, J. Stafford saw c. 20 flying E off Shoreham during 45 minutes. A.H.M. saw 2 at Pagham on April 6th. One at Langney Point on June 18th and 2 there on the 23rd and on July 1st; 3 there on July 8th and 9th (D.D.H.). Latest autumn record; 3 at Littlehampton on October 22nd (J.S.).

ROSEATE TERN. 468.—On July 21st, after sea mist in the night followed by a storm with heavy rain, D.D.H. saw one on the

beach at Langney Point and watched it for an hour, often at very close range. "A noticeably whiter bird than the Common Terns with which it was associating and could be picked out from among them by this feature at any reasonable distance; breast white; bill black with a little reddish at the base; legs red; long tail streamers (which were white) projected very noticeably behind the closed wings when the bird was at rest; both in shape and flight appeared more graceful than Common Tern; apart from absence of pink on the breast was in full summer plumage—black on head still intact; only call heard was a rather low, rapidly repeated guttural note uttered in disputes with Common Terns."

COMMON TERN. 469.—J.A. and J.C.W. report that 140 pairs nested in the Rye Harbour area but that "almost no young were reared." There were 3 at Thorney on July 16th (L.P.A., J.S.) and on July 20th, after sea mist during the night, D.D.H. found that c. 20 (apart from local birds) had arrived at Langney Point and were resting on the beach; by the next day after similar misty conditions and a severe storm, the number had risen to c. 50, most of which left during the day.

ARCTIC TERN. 470.—On July 20th (after weather conditions described under the last species) D.D.H. and A. R. Mead-Briggs found an adult on the beach at Langney Point. "This bird was seen on 3 occasions perching side by side with Common Terns on perfectly level surfaces—the tops of breakwaters—and its relatively short legs were very obvious. Bill uniform dark red." Apparently only the third July record for the county. Only other record—one at Shoreham on September 17th (C.F.B., J.S.).

LITTLE TERN. 471.—Arrived at Pagham on April 13th (P.R.M., J.R.). C. 30 pairs attempted to breed there but with little success. 2 at Pagham on October 15th (M.G., B.M.). Breeding information from the Rye area is incomplete.

LITTLE GULL. 477.—One at Newhaven, March 4th (C.M.J. and 11th (C.F.B.). An adult at Chichester gravel pits, March 26th (J.S.) and April 2nd (L.P.A., C.M.J., J.S.). An adult and an immature at Thorney, April 1st (J.S.) and an immature there, April 23rd-May 7th (G.d.F., C.W.G.P., J.S.). An immature at Rye, April 23rd (C.M.J.). Single first-winter birds at Langney Point on October 26th, November 11th, and November 16th (D.D.H.). A first-winter bird at Newhaven on November 18th (L.P.A., C.F.B.) and one at Pevensey Bay on November 22nd (L.A.C.).

BLACK-HEADED GULL. 478.—C. 50 pairs nested at Rye

Harbour but no young reared (J.A., J.C.W.). From May 14th to 27th D.D.H. noted a small but fairly constant E. movement of first-summer birds along the coast at Langney Point. This movement was most marked during easterly winds.

MEDITERRANEAN BLACK-HEADED GULL. 479.—On September 24th C.F.B. saw an adult at Shoreham. He describes it as "an adult gull of 'ridibundus' size whose primaries were wholly white, a complete absence of black markings on them being confirmed at a distance of 20 yards with glasses. At rest the wings were shorter than those of 'ridibundus' two of which were fortunately nearby for comparison; the bill and legs were a darker shade of red." On October 28th L.P.A. saw a first-winter bird at Newhaven flying W at c. 60 yards range and noted "the lack of white on any part of the leading edge of the wing, which was brown with the primaries much darker. There were two small, but noticeable, white patches on each wing. One was on the primaries near the tip and the other across the secondaries. In all other respects, as far as I could see, this bird resembled a first-winter L. ridibundus."

On November 11th D.D.H. saw a first-winter bird at Langney Point during 3 or 4 minutes at distances of down to c. 20 yards and noted "the brown edge to the forewing and the fact that the outer primaries were virtually completely blackish, the considerable area of white present in this part of the wing of first-winter Black-headed Gulls being absent. Otherwise much as these."

COMMON GULL. 481.—A pair nesting near the Midrups raised one young bird to the free-flying stage. (D.D.H.).

HERRING GULL. 482.—C. 300 pairs nested between Pett Level and Hastings (J.A., J.C.W.). A few continue to nest between Newhaven and Saltdean (C.M.J.).

SCANDINAVIAN LESSER BLACK-BACKED GULL. 484.—One at Langney Point on February 10th, 2 at the mouth of the Cuckmere on February 26th and 6 at Newhaven on March 2nd (D.D.H.). A few later spring records but none for autumn.

BRITISH LESSER BLACK-BACKED GULL. 485.—As usual single birds were wintering at Shoreham at both ends of the year. One at Brighton on December 20th (C.M.J.). One at Rye Harbour on February 12th (L.P.A.). A pair nested on the cliffs near Eastbourne (A. R. Mead-Briggs per D.D.H.). Early return migrants were one at Sidlesham on July 21st and 2 there on the 31st (J.V.S.).

GLAUCOUS GULL. 487.—Single immature birds at Pagham on February 16th (A.H.W.S.) and at Seaford Head on April 16th (C.M.J., A.H.W.S.).

ICELAND GULL. 488.—An adult at Newhaven on March 25th (L.P.A., C.M.J.). An adult at Langney Point on April 2nd (D.D.H., R.O.). An immature in the lower Cuckmere Valley on April 20th (D.D.H.). One in almost complete adult plumage at Rye Harbour, May 8th-18th (A. H. Daukes, C.M.J., A.H.W.S.). (All recorded in Brit. B. XLIII, pp. 410 and 411).

KITTIWAKE. 489.—At Langney Point D.D.H. observed a small but constant westerly movement against the wind, January

4th-8th. As usual a number of records from May to the beginning of September; one in the Cuckmere Valley on May 13th (L.P.A.); 2 immatures c. a mile off Shoreham and an adult c. half a mile off Birling Gap on May 28th—seen from coastal steamer; an immature at the Midrips on June 11th (D.D.H., I.J.F.L.); an immature at Langney Point throughout July (D.D.H.); 4. at Newhaven on July 15th, c. 6 there on July 30th and c. 20 there on August 19th (C.M.J.); also other records for this locality for August. An early juvenile at Bulverhythe on August 23rd (D.D.H.). On November 18th, during a SW gale, L.P.A. saw over 200 flying in parties E at Newhaven and on the following day, at Langney Point, D.D.H. witnessed a continuous W movement, the gale still blowing.

GREAT SKUA. 491.—On September 28th L.P.A. saw one flying E off the Midrips and on the same day D.D.H. saw one flying W off Langney Point.

ARCTIC SKUA. 493.—On May 20th L.P.A. saw 2 immatures, probably of this species, flying E off the Seven Sisters. On June 9th C.M.V. saw an adult at Langney Point. An immature, apparently of this species, flying W off Langney Point on July 29th and an adult of the pale form and an immature off Fairlight on August 30th (the last 2 being seen from a coastal steamer) (D.D.H.).

BLACK GUILLEMOT. 501.—On November 8th, during a strong SW wind after a period of northerly winds, D.D.H. saw one flying W about 100 yards off shore at Langney Point. Later one (presumably the same) flew by ENE. “A small auk with black, pointed bill; broad white wing-band, very noticeable; white below; upper-parts mottled black and white.” The fifth record for the county and the first since 1898.

LITTLE AUK. 502.—There was a “wreck” of this species early in the year; one found in the spouting of a house on Brighton front on February 9th (K.M.B.); one at Easebourne on February 11th; one at West Dean (W. Sussex) on February 12th (K.O.M.); one at Sidlesham on the same day (J.V.S.). On December 7th one flying along the coast from an easterly direction came down close off shore at Langney Point and stayed a few minutes before continuing westwards (D.D.H.).

SOUTHERN PUFFIN. 503.—On January 18th D.D.H. identified one during a westerly movement of auks off Langney Point. **CORNCRAKE.** 504.—One at Sidlesham on September 4th (J.V.S.) and one near Camber Castle on October 1st (L.P.A., J.S.).

SPOTTED CRAKE. 505.—One on the Crumbles on October 24th and 29th, particularly good views being obtained on the latter occasion (D.D.H.).

WATER-RAIL. 509.—All records from coastal localities except

HIRUNDINE AND SWIFT MIGRATION AT LANGNEY POINT IN 1950

During the year some unexpected movements of the above-mentioned species were observed, many of these being apparently of the same pattern. All records given below relate to Langney Point unless otherwise stated. In most cases observation lasted for about two hours on each day. Nearly all the birds reported as coming in from the sea were first picked up with glasses some way out, most being first seen far out as tiny specks, sometimes only visible through a telescope. Likewise nearly all the birds reported as flying between N and NW were followed inland, through glasses, till lost to sight.

It must be made clear that, in addition to the movements of these species given below, others of a more easily explained character were also seen. These movements, which are not included for reasons of space, were generally along the coast, in one direction or the other. However, when such coastal movements were observed on the dates here given, which was generally not the case, mention is made of them.

Swallow

1. June 6th, wind E, misty. One flew in, S to N.
2. June 24th, wind W. One flew in S to N.
3. July 13th, wind E. Two flew in S to N at Rye Harbour.
4. September 20th, wind NW. A westerly passage along the coast but several small parties flew in SE to NW.
5. September 21st, wind NW. 6 and 7 flew in ESE to NNNW; 4, 2, 3, 2, 1, 1 and 3 flew in SW to NW. A very few moving westwards along the coast. A party of 4 went N to S out to sea.
6. October 1st, wind W, strong. 9 and 1 flew N to S out to sea while 3 flew in S to N.
7. October 8th, wind W, strong. 3 and 1 flew in SE to NW.

House-Martin

1. September 20th, wind NW. C. 20 flew in SE to NW.
2. September 21st, wind NW. C. 25 in 3 parties flew in SE to NW. Later a few moving along the coast in a westerly direction.

Sand-Martin

1. July 8th, wind SW. 2 flew in from the E and made off NW inland.
2. July 13th, wind E. 2 flew in S to N at Rye Harbour.
3. August 3rd, wind NW. 3 passed by out at sea, flying NE to SW.

4. August 5th, wind SW. 6 flew in S to N and 4 SE to NW.
5. August 11th, wind SW, rather strong. 3 flew in SE to NW.
6. August 23rd, wind E. An easterly movement, some passing overland but most over the sea along the coast, turning NE with the coast after passing the Point. A party of 4 flew ENE across Pevensie Bay and a party of 16, flying much higher than the rest, flew due E out to sea, while 7 and 5 flew in S to N.
7. August 25th, wind SW, strong. 2 flew in SE to NW.
8. September 20th, wind NW. 6 flew in S to N.
9. September 21st, wind NW. 1 flew in SE to NW.
10. October 1st, wind W, strong. 6 flew N to S out to sea.

Swift

1. May 28th, wind SW. One flying SE to NW about 3 miles off Bognor (seen from coastal steamer).
 2. June 14th, wind SW. 3 flew in together, SE to NW.
 3. June 21st, wind SW. A sudden fall in temperature had just taken place. 2, 1 and 2 flew S out to sea.
 4. June 22nd, wind W, strong. A party of 6 flew S out to sea.
 5. June 23rd, wind NW; temperature had risen again. One flew in SE to NW.
 6. June 25th, wind W. 4, 1 and 1 flew in SE to NW.
 7. June 28th, wind W. 1 flew S out to sea and 1 and 2 flew in SE to NW.
 8. June 30th, wind W. 2 flew S out to sea and 3 flew in SE to NW. This was the last day on which outward movement was observed.
 9. July 7th, wind NW later W. 2 flew in E to W, 7, 5 and 2 SE to NW and 8 and 3 SSE to NNW. When the last two parties crossed the coast other Swifts—c. 20 in all—were seen crossing the coast in much the same direction further to the NE.
 10. August 3rd, Wind NW. 33 in all (1, 8, 4, 12, 3, 1, 1 and 3) flew in SE to NW.
 11. August 11th, wind SW, rather strong. 2 flew in SSE to NNW.
 12. September 21st, wind NW. One flew in SE to NW.
- Tentatively, it seems that whilst the earliest inward movements recorded above were part of the normal spring immigration, this could not be so for the late records. It would appear that there is a definite autumn movement of these species across the Channel in the reverse direction to that which might be expected. Though why this should be the case and in particular why this inward movement should continue N or NW inland is puzzling. D.D.H.