

Bairds order

The
Sussex
Bird Report

1973



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THE SUSSEX BIRD REPORT

NUMBER TWENTY-SIX, 1973

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Cover Drawing of Stonechat by Ian Willis

Published September, 1974

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THE SUSSEX ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY

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The above list of Council Officers and Members shows all holding office at the 30th June, 1974.

HON. SECRETARY'S REPORT

Since its inception in February, 1962, the Society has consistently expanded and 1973 has certainly shown no reversal of this trend. As membership has increased, so we have tried to adapt the whole range of the Society's activities to meet the needs of the many kinds of birdwatcher represented.

The Honorary Officers and Council of the Society during 1973 were Guy Mountfort, o.b.e. (President), Dr. M. Hollings (Vice-President), Mr. D. G. Chelmick (Secretary), Mr. C. F. Helyer (Assistant Secretary), Mr. A. J. Cooke (Treasurer), Mr. C. M. James (Recorder), Mr. W. Merritt (Assistant Recorder), Mr. S. Bayliss Smith (Editor), Mr. R. J. B. Jackson (Conservation Officer), Mr. R. F. Pidgeon (Press and Public Relations Officer) and Messrs. J. F. Cooper, B. A. E. Marr, S. J. R. Rumsey, R. J. Sandison, A. Simpson and Dr. A. B. Watson.

Dr. Hollings has been our Vice-President for twelve years and is the longest serving Society Officer. He has also been Chairman of the Council for much of that time and feels that the time has now come for a break. The Council extends its sincere thanks to him for all his work and guidance over the past years. We are pleased to report that Mr. M. Shrubbs, previously our Hon. Recorder, has agreed to take on this post and we extend our thanks to him.

As always the Society has relied very much on other members for its day-to-day running. The Council would especially like to thank Mr. D. J. Taylor (Membership Secretary) and Mr. and Mrs. A. Simpson (Outings and Meetings Secretaries, respectively). We are once again indebted to Miss Jean Stacey for the routine handling of records, Mr. Tom Palmer for his invaluable help in sending out Society literature and also Mrs. Norma Petrie Hay and Mrs. Iris Simpson for typing assistance.

The Council is pleased to report that, in spite of considerably increased costs under various headings there was a surplus of income over expenditure of £248 compared with £255 in 1972. This surplus has been added to the General Fund, making it up to £1,864, out of which £1,000 has been transferred to the Conservation Fund to meet heavy expenditure likely to arise at a later date.

Conservation expenditure during the year amounted to £595, including £300 contributed to the Warden's salary at Rye and expenditure at Pagham and on the completion of the Chichester Harbour Survey. The small balance remaining in the Conservation Fund has been augmented by the transfer from the General Fund mentioned above.

After very careful consideration, the Council has decided that an increase is essential in membership subscriptions, which have remained unchanged since 1962. In view of constantly rising costs, it is estimated that if no such increase is made 1974 will show a much smaller surplus and 1975 a deficit. The Council considers that it would not be satisfactory to allow this position to arise in view of the heavy expenditure on Conservation we anticipate in the future. The Council, therefore, proposes that as from 1st January, 1975, the subscription should be increased for full members to £2.00, family membership being an additional 50p. Student members will pay £1.00, whilst Junior and Intermediate subscriptions will remain unchanged at 25p and 50p, respectively.

The Junior Section, as popular as ever during 1973, reached something of a dilemma when faced with the prospect of having no Secretary for the ensuing year. However, after a Newsletter appeal several people came forward and both Junior and Intermediate Sections will be run by a committee comprising of three outing leaders with Miss Angela Brooks as Secretary. The Council

extends its sincere thanks to all these helpers, but would especially like to express its gratitude to the retiring Hon. Secretary—Mr. W. Merritt—who has run the section so competently and efficiently.

During 1973 the indoor meetings have diversified considerably, not only in content but also in venue. In response to demand by our members we have tried to visit more areas in Sussex to give as many people as possible the chance to attend meetings. With regard to the lectures themselves, our President created an international atmosphere at the A.G.M. by giving a talk on the wildlife of the Indian sub-continent. Other talks have ranged from 'Nuclear Ornithology' to a new venture when three Society officers—Messrs. Chelmick, Merritt and Jackson together with Mr. R. D. M. Edgar, Conservation Officer of the Sussex Trust for Nature Conservation—talked about 'Conservation in Sussex'. A much appreciated innovation for 1973 was the provision of coffee after all meetings, which has encouraged a more friendly atmosphere so difficult to achieve in a Society as large as this. The Council extends its warmest thanks to the ladies who have helped with this and we sincerely hope that they will keep up the good work.

After the rather disappointing attendance at the joint film show with the R.S.P.B. in 1972, the Society decided to revert to the single performance for 1973. The three films were 'A Welcome in the Mud', 'Isles of the Simmer Dim' and 'Flying Birds'. The Council is pleased to report that the Dome was filled to capacity and the show was a great success. Mr. and Mrs. M. Cahill, who have organised the show so efficiently of late, have decided to take a well earned rest and the Council would like to thank them both for all their efforts in making the shows so successful. Fortunately a successor has been found in Miss Chris Salmon (late of the B.T.O.). We thank her for undertaking this task and wish her every success.

Mr. Alf Simpson has once again provided the Society with a full and varied range of outings as well as introducing a completely new ideal for the 1973/74 programme in the 'Beginners One Day Field Course'. Small parties of members have been taken by experienced ornithologists to selected localities and given almost individual tuition in bird identification. It must be remembered that to many of our members bird watching is a new hobby and we are constantly looking to find new ways of maintaining and encouraging their interest and enthusiasm.

The conservation outings, which were introduced in 1972, once again proved successful with work being carried out at Glynde and a small reedbed near Steyning. The Council extends its thanks to all those who have helped with this work; we hope that more members will attend future outings to help the band of stalwarts who attend so regularly.

The first overseas trip of the Society visited the islands to the north of Holland. This was a great success and is being repeated in 1974. Our appreciation is extended to Messrs. Stan Allwood and John Houghton for their efforts in organising this event.

We also offer our sincere thanks to those members who have given up their precious leisure time in leading outings and coping so admirably with the large number who now attend field meetings.

The style of the Newsletter changed completely in 1973; the new editor—Mr. R. F. Pidgeon—decided to increase its appeal by introducing competitions and more member participation. It is hoped that 1974 will see this diversity maintained, but Mr. Pidgeon points out that a Newsletter can only be as good as its contributions and appeals to members for their assistance in producing

the necessary material. As well as editing the Newsletter, Mr. Pidgeon has been maintaining our liaison with the Press.

The Society's surveys continued much as for 1972, but particular note must be made of the outstanding response to the survey of Sussex Rookeries. 1973 was the second year of this project and there was a three-fold increase in response over the first year. Heartened by this response, the Society has decided to go ahead with a survey of the Nightingale for 1974 and we sincerely hope that the success of the Rookeries survey will be repeated. As in previous years, the Society has carried out duck and wader counts for the relevant national surveys.

No new conservation projects were instigated during 1973, but all existing schemes were either consolidated or improved. The year saw the completion by Mrs. R. M. Tiftensor of the Ecological Survey of Chichester Harbour commissioned by the Society in 1972. This vital information will help us and other conservation bodies in our aim to prevent excessive exploitation of this most valuable area. Management work continued on the Charleston Reedbed in the Cuckmere Valley and our Glynde Flood Scheme was once again very successful. Mr. Chelmick and Mr. Merritt contributed an article to the Sussex Trust for Nature Conservation's Newsletter explaining the latter scheme.

Contributions to the warden's salaries for the Local Nature Reserves at Rye and Pagham Harbours were continued in 1973 and the Society has maintained its representation on both management committees. We would like to thank Dr. M. Hollings and Mr. J. P. McTear for representing us on Pagham and Rye Harbour Committees, respectively, and extend particular thanks to our President—Guy Mounifort—for agreeing to act as our second representative at Rye Harbour. We are sure that his wisdom and guidance will prove invaluable.

What of the prospects of 1974? Although the present economic outlook of the country is somewhat gloomy, the Society feels no such despondency. Membership is higher than ever and constantly rising as more and more people become aware of the problems faced by our wildlife and wish to do something about them. By its ever-expanding programme of surveys the Society hopes to fill the gaps in our knowledge of the avifauna of Sussex and, by maintaining a good financial basis, we can help materially when the need arises. The problems faced by the Society in such fields as administration and organisation do not, however, diminish, but are aggravated by this growth and we are constantly looking for new shoulders to take at least some of this burden from the small but dedicated band of helpers who make this Society possible.

D. G. CHELMICK, *Hon. Secretary*.

CONTRIBUTORS AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS, 1973

We are grateful to the following observers for records, and we also wish to thank those observers who helped with the Society's breeding surveys. The names of those who helped with the Rook Survey are marked with an asterisk.

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MIGRATION

Regular observations of migration were made at Beachy Head by a number of observers and D. E. Lester has provided a detailed summary of the records. K. Cawte has provided a similar summary of the birds at the Rye Harbour Local Nature Reserve. Both these summaries have been used extensively in preparing the Report and have proved most helpful. We are very grateful for this assistance.

BREEDING SURVEYS

Two Society breeding surveys were continued in 1973. The Gull Bunting survey was organised by P. J. Wilson, and the census of rookeries by W. Merritt.

B.T.O. NATIONAL CENSUS OF HERONRIES

All known Sussex heronries were visited. We are grateful to the following observers for their assistance:—

J. Ashbee (Leasham), D. R. Coda (Eridge), C. F. Helyer (Henfield), A. Isted (Parham), D. C. Lang (Fife), J. Pelling (Fishbourne), Maj. W. W. A. Phillips (Pagham), F. C. Simmons (Wartling), J. McTear (Priesthaves and Westham).

ESTUARY COUNTS

These counts were continued in Chichester, Pagham and Rye Harbours, and two counts in December and January were made along the whole county coastline. Counts were organised by M. Shrubbs and at Rye by J. P. McTear. All the records have been sent to the B.T.O. and a full account starts on page 43. We thank all the counters for their efforts. They were:—

R. Batchelor, J. Burfield, D. G. Chelminck, E. B. Cottam, Mrs. J. H. M. Edom, D. S. Flumm, B. F. Forbes, F. J. Forbes, M. F. H. Gray, Dr. M. Hollings, J. W. Houghton, S. W. M. Hughes, R. J. B. Jackson, B. A. E. Marr, W. Merritt, C. E. Messer, J. P. McTear, T. W. Parmenter, Mrs. N. Petrie-Hay, S. Richardson, S. Rumsey, M. Shrubbs, I. R. Willis, R. Williamson.

Finally we once again wish to thank Mrs. Edom for making additional counts from her boat, and for taking out observers to make other observations. This is a most valuable service.

WILDFOWL COUNTS

R. Batchelor again organised the National Wildfowl counts. We are grateful to him for making the records available to the Society. Counters were:—

Mrs. Bleak (Darwell Res.), D. R. Coda (Glynde Levels), A. J. Cooke (Cuckmere Valley), J. Fowler (Chichester G.P.), D. C. Lang (Barcombe Res.), J. P. McTear (Rye Harbour and Pett Level), Miss V. Maxse (Burton Ponds), C. E. Messer (Amberley/Pulborough Brooks), H. Mildenhall (Arlington Res.), R. Park (Swanbourne Lake, Patching Pond), Mr. and Mrs. A. Simpson (Warnham Mill Pond, Knepp Lake), C. F. Tebbutt and C. E. Hope (Weir Wood Res.).

CLASSIFIED RECORDS FOR 1973

1. **BLACK-THROATED DIVER (*Gavia arctica*)**.—Single birds were seen at Cuckmere Haven on Mar. 8th (MJE) and off Birling Gap on Apr. 18th (CEH). See also spring diver passage under diver species below.

2. **GREAT NORTHERN DIVER (*G. immer*)**.—One was seen off Worthing on Jan. 9th (CMV). Between Nov. 15th and 18th, at least one was observed in Chichester Harbour (JHME) and on Dec. 9th one was seen off Selsey Bill (MJWH, RJS). See also spring diver passage under diver species below.

3. **RED-THROATED DIVER (*G. stellata*)**.—In the first 3 months of the year, about 10 were recorded, including one at Arlington Res. on Jan. 1st and one at Chichester G.P. between Jan. 21st and 23rd.

On Oct. 19th, one was seen off Langney Point and on Oct. 21st, there was one in Chichester Harbour. About 20 were seen in November and December. See also spring diver passage under diver species overleaf.

DIVER SPECIES (*Gavia sp.*).—All records of diver passage for the first part of the year are shown under this heading. Some birds were specifically identified.

	Selsey Bill		Beachy Head	
	Mar. 1st—	May 31st	Mar. 1st—	May 31st
	E	W	E	W
<i>G. arctica</i>	2		150	3
<i>G. immer</i>			2	
<i>G. stellata</i>			25	17
<i>G. species</i>	7		301	39

In April, there was sea watching at Beachy Head for a total of 121 hours and in May for a total of 147 hours. At Selsey Bill, there was little systematic sea watching. The peak of the diver passage was between Apr. 23rd and May 4th.

5. GREAT CRESTED GREBE (*Podiceps cristatus*).—On Jan. 24th, 35 were seen off Roedean, on Feb. 17th, 17 were recorded off Pilsey Island and on Mar. 27th, there were 28 off Thorney Island. On Apr. 7th, a party of 33, which were in summer plumage, were seen off Thorney Island. In December, 25 were present off West Wittering on the 9th.

Inland wintering was observed at five localities with 17 at Weir Wood Res. on Jan. 27th and Feb. 18th as the maxima. There were 14 at Weir Wood Res. on Dec. 15th.

In the breeding season pairs were recorded as follows:—

BREEDING PAIRS, 1973

Locality	No. of pairs	Locality	No. of pairs
Batcombe Lake	1	Horsted Keynes	2
Birchen Bridge	1	Knepp Lake	2
Blackhouse Fm., Uckfield	1	Maresfield	1
Chichester G.P.	15	Parham Park	1
Furnace Wood	1	Pett Level	1
Hammer Pond	1	Petworth Park	3
		Weir Wood Reservoir	1
		Wey Wood	1

The 39 pairs in the table raised no more than 24 young. One factor, which may account for the decrease in the number of pairs breeding and the number of young raised, was the extremely low water level in some localities. On June 10th, 3 birds were seen in Pagham Harbour, on June 25th, 2 were present in Chichester Harbour and on June 30th, 2 were recorded off Pagham. On July 28th, 4 were observed off Church Norton. These records may indicate an early return to coastal waters.

6. RED-NECKED GREBE (*P. griseigena*).—One off Pilsey Island on Oct. 23rd (JA, RDME, DHH) and one off Worthing on Dec. 2nd and 3rd (CMV).

7. SLAVONIAN GREBE (*P. auritus*).—In January and February, not more than 2 were recorded in Chichester Harbour but up to 10 were seen off Church Norton by a number of observers. There were no other records for the coast for these months but one was seen at Weir Wood Res. between Jan. 27th and Apr. 29th.

In March, about 10 were seen off the coast in three localities including 5 off Birling Gap on the 22nd. In April, 3 were seen off Rottingdean on the 14th and there was one off Elmer on the 26th.

On Oct. 27th, one was seen at Weir Wood Res. and on the 28th there were 2 off Church Norton. In November, up to 17 were seen there and one was observed off Brighton on the 25th. In December, up to 13 were recorded at Church Norton and there were 2 off Brighton on the 21st, 2 off Selsey Bill on the 22nd but no more than 3 in Chichester Harbour.

8. BLACK-NECKED GREBE (*P. nigricollis*).—On May 12th, one was seen at Rye Harbour.

Single birds were recorded at Arlington Res. on Sept. 22nd and in Chichester Harbour on Oct. 23rd. In November, one was recorded at Chichester G.P. on the 19th, and in December there were reports of single birds from Barcombe Res. and from Selsey.

9. LITTLE GREBE (*P. ruficollis*).—The main winter concentrations were:—Chichester Harbour, 39 on Jan. 3rd and 26 on Dec. 27th; Bosham, 22 in February, 22 in October, 29 in November and 34 in December; Thorney Deeps, 30 on Nov. 2nd; Cuckmere Valley, 19 in January, 31 in February, 21 in October and 34 on Nov. 20th; Rye Harbour, 20 on Mar. 22nd. There were 19 on the Adur at Shoreham-by-Sea on Nov. 30th.

In the breeding season about 12 pairs were seen together with 19 young. In the Rye Harbour area 7 pairs raised at least 11 young.

16. MANX SHEARWATER (*Puffinus puffinus*).—On Apr. 22nd one was seen off Beachy Head (NAGL, MJR) and there was one off Birling Gap on May 13th (BFF).

26. FULMAR (*Fulmarus glacialis*).—First recorded on Feb. 20th with 2 off Seven Sisters. Subsequently 30 were seen at Beachy Head and others on and off the cliffs between there and Rottingdean. There were 3 at Fairlight on Mar. 31st and in April birds were seen off Selsey Bill on several days. Was last recorded on Sept. 1st, when 2 were seen off Beachy Head and one off Selsey.

27. GANNET (*Sula bassana*).—First recorded on Apr. 22nd, when 13 were seen off Selsey Bill and 4 off Langney Point. From this date until Nov. 28th, when one was seen off Worthing, was recorded in every month.

28. CORMORANT (*Phalacrocorax carbo*).—Recorded on the coast in every month and from inland in every month except June, July and October. Between the beginning of the year and Apr. 7th up to 60 were seen on Bognor Pier and up to 150 were recorded in the Rother Estuary/Rye Bay area in winter. On Nov. 22nd, 77 were seen near Arundel and 120 were recorded there on Dec. 17th. On Feb. 9th, 37 were seen in the Sussex part of Chichester Harbour. On Aug. 21st, 5 roosted on Chichester Cathedral and a report was received that some roosted there in September.

29. SHAG (*P. aristotelis*).—On Jan. 14th, there were 2 at Arlington Res. (PJW, VAW). On Aug. 5th, one flew W. off Selsey Bill. In October, there was one in Pagham Harbour on the 21st and one at Newhaven on the 29th. In November, 2 were recorded at Newhaven on the 7th and on Nov. 26th and Dec. 9th, one was seen in Shoreham Harbour.

30. HERON (*Ardea cinerea*).—All known heronries were visited. The number of occupied nests was:—Old Park Wood, Fishbourne, 27 plus 3 probably occupied; Pagham, 4 plus one probably occupied; Parham, 38 plus 4 probably occupied; Henfield, 4; Firle, 41; Eridge, 12; Priestthawes, 8; Westham, 1; Warling, 6; Leasam, 37.

31. PURPLE HERON (*A. purpurea*).—One was seen at Glynde Reach on May 28th (DCL, PJW, VAW). This record has been accepted by *Brit. B.*

38. **BITTERN** (*Botaurus stellaris*).—One was seen at Chichester G.P. on Dec. 9th (MH) and there was one at Sheffield Park on Dec. 24th (PBC).

DUCKS.—The table below sets out the peak winter counts of the regular and common species at 13 principal wintering areas in the county for the winter, 1973-74; figures for the winter, 1972-73, will be found in SxBR, 1972. Once more we stress that the totals are intended only to facilitate comparisons and to show trends, not to give a total population figure.

All the records available to the Society have been used in compiling the table and the following species accounts in the systematic list are confined to records outside its scope and to records for 1973 unless otherwise stated.

PEAK WINTER POPULATIONS OF DUCK AT SELECTED LOCALITIES 1973/74

Locality	Mallard	Teal	Wigeon	Pintail	Shoveler	Tufted	Pochard
Chichester Harbour	260	450	1065	170	5	130	75
Chichester G.P.	280	90		45	130	200	256
Pagham Harbour	400	200	180	60	25		2
Amberley/Pulborough	410	800	1400	130	200	8	21
Knepp	50	12	70	1		10	174
Weir Wood Res.	139	100	90	1		230	200
Barcombe Res.	154	28	57	1	2	60	58
Glynde Levels	500	800	2000		28		
Cuckmere	89	32	40	1		6	3
Arlington Res.	201	6	800		25	70	151
Darwell Res.	53		50			46	46
Perensey Levels	300	260	220	3	8	90	90
Rye Harbour	190	145	60		28	120	450
ANNUAL INDEX	3026	2923	6032	412	451	970	1526

45. **MALLARD** (*Anas platyrhynchos*).—See table for winter populations. In the Rye Harbour LNR, 7 broods totalling 58 young were seen.

46. **TEAL** (*A. crecca*).—See table for winter populations. In the breeding season, 8 pairs were reported in 5 localities.

47. **GARGANEY** (*A. querquedula*).—First recorded on Mar. 17th at Church Norton and in the Cuckmere Valley, where 11 were seen. Last seen on Sept. 16th, when a single bird was observed at Portfield.

At Beachy Head, there were 2 E. on Apr. 22nd, 5 E. on Apr. 23rd and 9 E. on Apr. 26th.

Breeding was confirmed in one locality, where a female together with 8 young, were seen on June 10th. The monthly totals were:—

Mar.	Apr.	May	June	July	Aug.	Sept.
20	7	5	9	4	7	5

49. **GADWALL** (*A. strepera*).—Records from 11 localities were spread over the year. The monthly totals were:—

Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	June	July	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
23	27	6	8	4	2	5	8	14	10	15	33

In the early months, up to 10 were recorded at Barcombe Res. and at Chichester G.P. but elsewhere the numbers were small.

In the Rye Harbour LNR, a pair was seen on May 1st, a male on May 21st and a pair on June 10th. Four were seen there on July 15th.

From the beginning of August, to the end of the year, the numbers reported were small, except for 9 at Arlington Res. and 14 at Chichester G.P. in December.

On Apr. 18th and again on Apr. 26th, there were 2 E. at Beachy Head. Between Apr. 28th and May 3rd, 2 pairs were seen on the sea off Birling Gap.

50. **WIGEON** (*A. penelope*).—See table for winter populations. In the Rye Harbour LNR, a single female was seen in July, on 3 occasions. On July 28th, 5 were recorded at Church Norton.

52. **PINTAIL** (*A. acuta*).—See table for winter populations. On July 31st and Aug. 3rd, a male was seen in the Rye Harbour LNR.

53. **SHOVELER** (*A. chrypeata*).—See table for winter populations. Between Apr. 15th and May 18th, there were 13 E. at Beachy Head.

A pair attempted to breed in one locality but were unsuccessful. In another locality, 5 birds were seen in June and July but there was no evidence of attempted breeding.

54. **RED-CRESTED POCHARD** (*Netta rufina*).—A male at Barcombe Res. on Dec. 18th and 19th (DCSD). It is not known if this bird was an escape. For a record for 1970, see page 48.

55. **SCAUP** (*Aythya marila*).—In January, one was seen near Rye and there were 2 at Arlington Res. In February, single birds were recorded at Darwell Res. and Pagham Lagoon. In March, there were 3 at Arlington Res. and on the 24th, a male and a female were seen at Chidmere Pond. The female remained there until Apr. 10th and the 3 previously recorded at Arlington Res. were last seen on Apr. 15th.

At Beachy Head, there were 7 E. on Apr. 15th and 5 E. on Apr. 24th. At Arlington Res., a male was seen between July 22nd and 28th. Between Sept. 18th and Dec. 10th, a few were seen there, with observers reporting up to 3 males and 3 females. On Oct. 14th, there was one at the Crumbles, Eastbourne and 5 in the Rye Harbour area.

56. TUFTED DUCK (*A. fuligula*).—See table for winter populations. In the breeding season, birds were recorded in 15 localities and breeding was proved in 8 of these. At Barcombe, 6 young were seen and at Chichester G.P., 15 pairs were recorded together with more than 80 young. One pair, with 7 young was seen at Harting; at Milland, there were 4 pairs with 5 young; at Petworth Park, 8 pairs with 12 young; and at Weir Wood Res. two broods totalling 17 young were observed. The totals of approximately 56 pairs and 235 young, compare not unfavourably with the 40 pairs and 221 young in 1972, taking into consideration, the extremely low water levels in some localities.

57. POCHARD (*A. ferina*).—See table for winter populations. In June, some were present throughout the month, in the Rye Harbour LNR, with a maximum of 16 on the 22nd. In July, there were records from Arlington Res., Chichester G.P., Rye Harbour LNR and Weir Wood Res. Evidence of breeding was not obtained.

60. GOLDENEYE (*Bucephala clangula*).—Between Apr. 1st and 8th, 7 were seen at Weir Wood Res. and on Apr. 15th, an adult male was recorded there. Between Apr. 7th and 15th, a female was seen at Arlington Res.

In the winter of 1973-74, the peak counts in Chichester Harbour were 234 on Jan. 1st and 110 on Feb. 9th. The January count was the highest ever recorded in the harbour and was made from a boat. There seems little doubt that shore-based counts tend to underestimate the numbers of this species, particularly in very windy conditions, which often prevailed in this winter, when the species is very difficult to see from the shore. See pages 46-48 for the detailed counts.

61. LONG-TAILED DUCK (*Clangula hyemalis*).—Was not recorded in January but between Feb. 11th and Apr. 17th, a female was seen at Barcombe Res. On Feb. 11th and 14th, 2 were recorded at Thorney Island.

Between Nov. 14th and the end of the year, 6 were recorded. Two of these were seen off Church Norton, 2 at Chichester G.P. and single birds at Barcombe Res. and Thorney Island.

62. VELVET SCOTER (*Melanitta fusca*).—Between Jan. 7th and Mar. 8th up to 4 were recorded.

At Beachy Head, 161 flew E. on 14 days between Apr. 15th and May 16th. The maxima were 39 E. on Apr. 15th and 29 E. on Apr. 27th. Passage birds were also seen off Brighton, where 8 flew E. on Apr. 22nd.

In the last 3 months of the year, small numbers were seen. There were 12 E. at Beachy Head on Oct. 13th and 7 E. off Selsey Bill on the same day.

64. COMMON SCOTER (*M. nigra*).—In February, up to 350 were seen in Rye Bay and up to 50 were recorded there on Mar. 8th. On Nov. 30th, there were 100 W. off Lancing. Wintering numbers in the last 3 months of the year were small.

At Beachy Head, where systematic sea watching took place, there were records for 50 dates between Feb. 25th and June 3rd. No less than 11,921 were seen with maxima of 2,270 E. on Apr. 23rd, 2,048 E. on Apr. 24th and 1,644 E. on Apr. 30th.

On Apr. 14th, there were 50 E. off Selsey Bill and on Apr. 26th, 200 E. off Worthing. On June 3rd, 130 flew E. off Selsey Bill and there were 10 E. off Selsey on June 10th.

67. EIDER (*Somateria mollissima*).—Was recorded in every month except February, July and October. The monthly totals were:—

Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	June	July	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
4	0	4	26	18	6	0	1	5	0	1	30

Between Mar. 25th and May 15th, 45 flew E. at Beachy Head including a party of 21 on Apr. 26th and another of 12 on May 1st.

On June 2nd, 5 were seen on the sea off Langney Point but from that date until December, the numbers recorded were unusually small. On Dec. 1st there were 7 off Rottingdean and on the 9th, 17 flew E. off Worthing. On Dec. 14th, 8 were seen off Church Norton and between Dec. 9th and the end of the year, up to 15 were observed in Chichester Harbour.

69. RED-BREADED MERGANSER (*Mergus serrator*).—In the early months, the numbers in Chichester Harbour were small but at least 40 were seen off Climping on Jan. 28th. At Worthing, unusual numbers were recorded with 10 on Jan. 5th, 33 on Jan. 25th and 26 on Feb. 23rd.

Spring passage was seen at Selsey Bill on Mar. 31st and Apr. 22nd when small numbers flew E. At Beachy Head, 263 were recorded between Mar. 22nd and May 27th. The maxima there were 38 E. on Apr. 23rd, 45 E. on Apr. 24th, 44 E. on Apr. 30th and 31 E. on May 3rd. On May 29th, 2 were recorded at Church Norton and an injured bird was present in Chichester Harbour as late as June 19th.

On Oct. 21st, one was seen in Chichester Harbour and 3 were recorded there on Oct. 27th. On Nov. 29th, 16 were seen in the Cuckmere Valley and up to 16 were recorded off Worthing in November. Up to 24 were present off Worthing in December.

In Chichester Harbour, the numbers during the winter of 1973-74 were small with a maximum count of 43, made from a boat, on Jan. 1st. Otherwise not more than 41 were found but as with the Goldeneye, the frequent rough weather, may have resulted in numbers being underestimated.

70. GOOSANDER (*M. merganser*).—In January, up to 2 were seen at Arlington Res. and up to 2 at Darwell Res. On Feb. 6th, at least one was reported at Thorney Island and on Feb. 9th, 2 were seen at West Wittering. There were no records for March but on Apr. 15th, one was seen on the Aduir at Steyning. On Apr. 17th, there was one at Barcombe Res.

Between Nov. 13th and the end of the year, there were reports from 2 coastal and 4 inland localities. Approximately 26 birds were seen with maxima of 7 at Barcombe Res. and 10 at Weir Wood Res.

71. SMEW (*M. albellus*).—On Jan. 6th one was seen at Charleston and between Jan. 18th and Mar. 17th, one was recorded at Chichester G.P. Two were seen there on Feb. 10th and 11th. There was one at Pett Level on Feb. 5th.

In December, 2 were recorded at Chichester G.P.

73. SHELDUCK (*Tadorna tadorna*).—In the early months, up to 56 were seen at Chichester G.P. but elsewhere inland the numbers seen were very small.

In the breeding season, pairs were seen inland in the Arun Valley, at Chichester G.P., at Lidgey and at Parham Park. 45 young were seen at Chichester G.P. 276 young were counted in 3 localities in Chichester Harbour, and 84 in Pagham Harbour. In the Rye Harbour LNR, 30 young were seen.

On Aug. 17th, there were 6 birds at Weir Wood Res. and 12 were seen there in December. There is some evidence that these birds originated from a wild-fowl collection in the area.

In the winter of 1973/74, the maximum count in Chichester Harbour was 3,115 on Jan. 12th and numbers remained around the 3,000 mark for at least a month. In Pagham Harbour, the maximum count was 600 on Dec. 9th and numbers remained at the 400-600 level until at least early April. See pages 46-48 for the detailed counts.

75. GREY LAG GOOSE (*Anser anser*).—On Apr. 23rd there was one E. at Beachy Head.

On Sept. 26th, 25 were seen over Willington and on Oct. 5th, a flock of 7 flew over Pagham Harbour (BWR).

76. WHITE-FRONTED GOOSE (*A. albifrons*).—Between Jan. 6th and Feb. 13th, a single bird was seen at Arlington Res., at Barcombe Res., in the Cuckmere Valley and at Glynde. In the Glynde locality, up to 24 were recorded between Jan. 14th and Feb. 9th and there were 5 in the Cuckmere Valley from Jan. 10th to 13th. On Feb. 22nd and 25th, flocks of unknown size were heard over West Chiltington.

80. BRENT GOOSE (*Branta bernicla*).—All records refer to the dark-bellied race *B. b. bernicla* unless otherwise stated.

Details of the numbers recorded in Chichester Harbour and Pagham Harbour in the winter of 1972/73 were shown in the Report for 1972.

Between Mar. 18th and May 21st, an easterly movement was noted off the coast. At Beachy Head, 337 flew E. during this period with maxima of 58 on Mar. 18th, 100 on Mar. 25th, 50 on Mar. 28th and 51 on Apr. 23rd.

On Mar. 12th, a N. or NE. movement was recorded at West Chiltington. On Apr. 15th, there were 94 E. off Worthing.

There were no records for September but on Oct. 2nd, 3 were seen in Pagham Harbour and on Oct. 7th, 8 near Thorney Island.

In the winter of 1973/74, unprecedented numbers wintered in the Solent. The maximum count in Chichester Harbour, was 7,500 on Jan. 26th but over 5,000 were present throughout the period Dec. 9th, when 6,070 were recorded, to Mar. 10th, when there were still 5,215. In Langstone Harbour, the maximum count was 6,075 on Dec. 9th but thereafter numbers declined, perhaps as a result of rough weather. In Pagham Harbour, the maximum count was 550 on Jan. 26th. Altogether in the Solent, counts in Sussex and Hampshire in January and February, indicate a total peak of about 14,000 birds wintering. There can be no doubt that there has been a dramatic increase in the world population of this goose. See pages 46-47 for the detailed counts.

On Dec. 24th, a single bird with the characters of the pale-bellied race *B. b. hrota* was seen at Thorney Island (BAEM).

82. CANADA GOOSE (*B. canadensis*).—Several established breeding sites were not visited but successful breeding was reported from Chichester G.P., South Pond, Midhurst, Wiston pond, Pond Leigh, Leigh Manor, Firl, East Hoathly and Rye Harbour. A total of 35 young were reared by 9 pairs at these sites and in addition 42 young were reared at Petworth Park and 20 at Plasnett Park.

Maxima counted during the autumnal flocking of the West and East Sussex sub-populations were 195 at Petworth Park on Oct. 5th and 225 at Arlington Res. on Oct. 3rd.

85. WHOOPER SWAN (*Cygnus cygnus*).—On Dec. 9th, 2 adults were seen at Pagham Lagoon and at Sidlesham (NPH, RJS, MJWH). On the same day, 2 adults together with 2 juveniles were recorded at Chidmere Pond (JHME).

86. BEWICK'S SWAN (*C. bewickii*).—In the Arun Valley, 43 were recorded in January, 45 including 14 juveniles in February and a party of 37 was seen in early March. Birds were last seen in this area on Mar. 8th.

At Darwell Res., there were at least 21 including 3 juveniles between Jan. 12th and 22nd. At Glynde, 5 including 2 juveniles were recorded from Jan. 7th to 26th and in the Adur levels, 4 including 2 juveniles were seen on Feb. 26th.

One was seen in the Cuckmere Valley between Oct. 27th and Nov. 11th. On Dec. 2nd, there were 2 adults and 2 juveniles at Chichester G.P. and a party of the same size was observed at Thorney Island on Dec. 14th. At Amberley, there were 28 including 6 juveniles from Dec. 23rd until the end of the year.

91. BUZZARD (*Buteo buteo*).—Pairs or single birds were seen throughout the year in 2 areas. In one of these, 4 birds were observed on Apr. 3rd and May 17th but there was no proof of breeding here or elsewhere in the County. In addition, there were records, spread over the year, of single birds in about 8 localities.

Single birds, which may have been on passage, were recorded at Beachy Head on Sept. 10th, Sept. 29th and Oct. 16th. Another was seen at Worthing on Sept. 23rd and one was observed over Pagham Harbour on Oct. 28th.

92. ROUGH-LEGGED BUZZARD (*B. lagopus*).—In the autumn, there was an exceptional influx with reports from many parts of England. In Sussex, the first acceptable record was one of a single bird, on the downs, on Oct. 12th. On Oct. 14th, 4 were seen at Beachy Head and between this date and the end of the year, there were reports from a number of localities on or near the downs. Some birds were still present in the early months in 1974 and it is known that one was seen as late as early June.

It has not been possible to establish how many birds were present in the county in the autumn and winter months but 3 were seen together in one locality on Oct. 21st. In another area, 2 were recorded on several occasions.

For a record for 1972, see page 40.

93. SPARROW HAWK (*Accipiter nisus*).—In the breeding season, there were reports from more than 20 localities but nearly all of these related to single birds. Breeding was established in 2 localities but this total cannot indicate the true position. There were numerous post breeding season records from widely scattered localities throughout the County.

95. RED KITE (*Milvus milvus*).—One at Beachy Head on Aug. 26th (JFC, DEL) and one at Friston Forest on Aug. 27th (LGC).

98. HONEY BUZZARD (*Pernis ptilorhynchus*).—One at Ansty on Aug. 27th (W/M).

99. MARSH HARRIER (*Circus aeruginosus*).—A male at Beachy Head on May 12th (MJR) and a female there on May 16th (PC, DSF, NAGL). A male at Sidlesham on Aug. 13th (JVS).

100. **HEN HARRIER** (*C. cyaneus*).—The records are summarised under localities and unless otherwise stated these refer to ring-tails.

Ashdown Forest, singles on Jan. 13th and Dec. 31st; Weir Wood Res., one on Dec. 30th; Downs between Beachy Head and Ouse, a male on Jan. 10th, Mar. 16th and 23rd and one from Oct. 14th to the end of the year. A male was seen on Dec. 21st. Downs from Ouse to Adur, one from Jan. 28th to Mar. 18th, 2 on Mar. 15th, one from Nov. 11th to 16th and 2 on Nov. 18th. A single bird was seen in December. Downs from Adur to Arun, a male on Jan. 27th and from Oct. 14th to the end of the year, a number were observed, with a maximum of 4 including one male on Nov. 4th and Dec. 28th. Amberley Wild Brooks, one on Nov. 25th and Dec. 28th. Downs west of Arun, one on Dec. 23rd and 29th. Pagham Harbour, one on Oct. 28th, at Earmley, one on Dec. 22nd and at Bracklesham one on Dec. 28th.

103. **OSPREY** (*Pandion haliaetus*).—There were no spring records. From July 12th to 15th, there was one at Pagham Harbour (NPH, CRJ, RJS). On Aug. 26th, there was one at Chichester Harbour (JH) and one was seen there from Sept. 12th to 28th (JHME, JHM, WWMcV). On Sept. 29th, 2 were recorded in the same area (CEM).

On Sept. 16th, there was one at Chichester G.P. (CMJ, PJ, JVS) and there was one at Darwell Res. from Sept. 15th to 23rd (JFC *et al.*).

104. **HOBBY** (*Falco subbuteo*).—On Apr. 21st and 29th, single birds were seen near Rye Harbour LNR. On Apr. 28th, another was observed in the Rye area and on the same day, a pair was present in a locality where breeding subsequently occurred.

On May 6th, one was seen at Beachy Head and the arrival of another was recorded at Eastbourne on May 10th when it flew in from the sea. On May 19th one was seen at Rye Harbour.

In the breeding season, was recorded in 6 localities, with evidence of successful breeding from 2 of these. There were casual breeding season records of single birds in a further 8 localities.

In September, there were reports of single birds from 4 coastal localities. Two were seen at Beachy Head on Sept. 24th and there was one there on Oct. 2nd.

105. **PEREGRINE** (*F. peregrinus*).—On Mar. 6th, one was seen at Littington (AJC) and on Mar. 18th, there was one at Amberley Wild Brooks (CEM). Single birds were recorded at Seaford on Oct. 20th (RB) and in the Cuckmere Valley on Nov. 21st (AJC) and Dec. 23rd (VAW).

107. **MERLIN** (*F. columbarius*).—In the early months, there was one at Beachy Head on Jan. 28th and another at Sidlesham on Feb. 6th and Mar. 5th.

In September, there was one in the Rye Harbour LNR on the 25th. In October, up to 3 were seen in the Beachy Head/Seven Sisters area. On Oct. 13th, there was one at Thorney Island. Single birds were observed at Alfriston on Nov. 3rd, at Lullington Heath on Dec. 1st and at Sidlesham on Dec. 28th.

108. **RED-FOOTED FALCON** (*F. vespertinus*).—One at Beachy Head on May 10th (JFC), one there on June 1st (PB) and one at Rye on June 13th (DLB). These records have been accepted by *Brit. B.*

109. **LESSER KESTREL** (*F. naumanni*).—One near Steyning on Nov. 4th (CEM). This record has been accepted by *Brit. B.* and is the first for the County.

110. **KESTREL** (*F. tinnunculus*).—In the breeding season, 38 pairs were located and of these 7 pairs are known to have raised 16 young. A further 5 pairs raised young but for these the brood size was not determined. In addition to the above, there were widespread reports of single birds in the breeding season.

Two observers commented on the 'poor' breeding season when submitting their records. A tentative suggestion was made that a lack of small rodents may have been the cause.

117. **QUAIL** (*Coturnix coturnix*).—On Mar. 21st, one was flushed from the shingle beach at Lancing (CMV). This is an exceptionally early date for spring passage.

Between May 15th and Aug. 8th, at least 10 were seen or heard on the downs between Findon and Beachy Head.

120. **WATER RAIL** (*Rallus aquaticus*).—In the early months, 20 were recorded in 13 localities. The majority were on or near the coast but there were records of single birds from Barcombe Res., Henfield and Burton Park.

In the breeding season, single birds were seen in 4 localities and breeding was proved in one of these.

There were post breeding season records of at least 39 birds in 22 localities. Included in the figures are single birds seen at Beachy Head at the end of October and on Dec. 9th.

121. **SPOTTED CRAKE** (*Porzana porzana*).—On Aug. 11th, a male was found dead at Aidingbourne (PE). On Oct. 9th, one was seen at Littington (PJW) and on Oct. 15th, one was recorded at Sidlesham Ferry (MS).

125. **CORNCRAKE** (*Crex crex*).—On Sept. 10th, one was seen at Ferring (SMD). On Oct. 9th, one was observed at Beachy Head (BJS) and on Dec. 9th, one was seen at Cissbury Ring (DCSD).

For an additional record for 1972 see page 40.

127. **COOT** (*Fulica atra*).—The monthly maxima are tabulated as in previous years but once again the figures are far from complete.

	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
Arlington Res.	30	30	30	270	216	198
Chichester G.P.	1100					1044
Chichester Harbour				80		680
Knapp Lake				20	110	95
Pagham Lagoon				200	260	40
Pett Level	250	200	170	30		320
Piddinghoe Pond	30	30	30			
Rye Harbour	600	500	300	350	400	560
Swanbourne Lake		17	14			
Weir Wood Res.	20	20				110

131. **OYSTERCATCHER** (*Haematopus ostralegus*).—In Chichester Harbour, one pair was recorded in the breeding season and at Pagham Harbour, 2 pairs attempted to breed. One juvenile was seen there. In the Rye Harbour area, 10 pairs raised 9 young.

Totals of 1,225 on Dec. 9th 1973, and 1,008 on Jan. 12th 1974, were recorded by counts along the whole county coastline. See pages 47-49 for the detailed estuary counts.

133. LAPWING (*Vanellus vanellus*).—In the breeding season, there were reports from about 11 localities, with the majority of the birds in the coastal areas in the south-east and south-west of the County. There were no reports from the Pevensy Levels but some pairs were located on the downs.

As usual, post breeding flocks were seen from mid June. At the end of this month there were flocks of 100 in the Cuckmere Valley and one of 350 at Weir Wood Res. From July to the end of the year, flocks were reported from a number of localities, most of which were on or near the coast. In late September, a flock of 2,000 was seen on the downs near Cissbury Ring and in November and December, there were flocks of over 1,000 in the Rye area.

The wader count along the whole coast on Jan. 12th 1974, which excluded such favoured areas as Amberley and Glynde, recorded 9,570 present, including 5,000 on Pevensy Levels.

134. RINGED PLOVER (*Charadrius hiaticula*).—A total of 65-68 breeding pairs was recorded in the course of the survey carried out for the British Trust for Ornithology. The distribution was as follows:—Chichester Harbour, 13; Pagham Harbour, 16; Chichester G.P., 8-10; Southwick, 4-5; Bishopstone, 2; Cuckmere Haven, 1; Camber, 1; Rye Harbour LNR, 16; Northpoint, Rye, 4. In April, May and June there were records of birds in 3 downland localities.

After the breeding season, the numbers at Northpoint, Rye (60-70) were much lower than in previous years but 170 were there on Aug. 19th and 95 on Sept. 5th. Elsewhere, there were 120 at Shoreham-by-Sea on Aug. 30th, 50 at Clipping between Aug. 20th and 27th and 50 at Cuckmere Haven on Sept. 30th.

Rather fewer wintered along the coast in 1973/74 than in the previous winter. Counts along the whole coastline recorded 239 on Dec. 9th and 287 on Jan. 12th. See pages 47-49 for the detailed estuary counts.

135. LITTLE RINGED PLOVER (*C. dubius*).—In one locality, 2 were recorded on Mar. 10th (MSA) but the pair which bred there was not seen until Apr. 14th. Information about breeding in the area is far from complete but on Aug. 4th and 11th, 2 well grown, free flying juveniles were seen.

In another area, 2 pairs attempted to breed without success. From the information received, it appears that newly hatched chicks of one pair, did not survive the very heavy rainstorm on June 19th.

In spring, 2 birds were seen at Bishopstone on Apr. 23rd. On the return passage, about 15 were seen between July 22nd and Aug. 29th.

136. KENTISH PLOVER (*C. alexandrinus*).—One juvenile was seen in Chichester Harbour on Sept. 12th (AC, JM).

139. GREY PLOVER (*Pluvialis squatarola*).—At Beachy Head, 156 passage birds were recorded between Apr. 17th and May 17th with a maximum of 119 E. on May 3rd.

On Sept. 8th and Oct. 30th, single birds were seen at Arlington Res.

A very high count was recorded on Oct. 13th in Chichester Harbour, where 2,840 were present; some of these may have come from Langstone Harbour but not more than c. 700 is likely. Totals of 1,241 on Dec. 9th 1973, and 763 on Jan. 12th 1974, were recorded by counts along the whole county coastline. See pages 47-49 for detailed estuary counts.

140. GOLDEN PLOVER (*P. apricaria*).—Details of the numbers seen in the early months appeared in the Report for 1972 and in addition there were records for April from 8 localities. The largest flock, in this month, was one of c. 300 near Winchelsea. A bird showing the characters of the race *altifrons* was seen at Bracklesham during this month and there were others at Horse Eye Level.

On the return passage, 3 were recorded at Pagham on Aug. 25th and between this date and the end of the year, there were records from 15 well distributed localities, mainly on or near the coast. On Dec. 23rd, a flock of 700 was seen at Bracklesham.

142. DOTTEREL (*Eudromias morinellus*).—Two were seen at Camber on Aug. 27th (IC, MJC). On Sept. 5th, 2 were seen at Beachy Head (JFC, DEL) and one was recorded there on Sept. 9th (RLKJ).

143. TURNSTONE (*Arenaria interpres*).—Between Apr. 25th and May 20th, 22 flew E. at Beachy Head.

On May 14th 4 were recorded at Arlington Res.

Totals of 204 were recorded by a count along the whole county coastline on Jan. 12th 1974.

145. SNIPE (*Gallinago gallinago*).—In the breeding season, 20 pairs were recorded in 10 localities but this figure does not obviously indicate the true position.

The wader count along the county coastline on Jan. 12th 1974, which excluded many favoured areas, such as Amberley and Glynde, recorded 596 present, including 400 on Pevensy Levels.

147. JACK SNIPE (*Lymnocyptes minima*).—About 24 birds were recorded during the year from 15 localities. In October, up to 3 were seen at Plumpton and 2 in the Rye Harbour LNR. In November, 2 were recorded at Thorney Island. The monthly totals were:—

Jan.	2	Feb.	1	Mar.	3	Apr.	2	Sept.	1	Oct.	6	Nov.	7	Dec.	2
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148. WOODCOCK (*Scalopax rusticola*).—On Jan. 20th, 11 were shot at Pesham but otherwise there were very few reports for the winter months, at both ends of the year.

A special request for information, for the breeding season, resulted in 158 robbing birds being reported from widely scattered localities. A detailed distribution map is in course of preparation.

150. CURLEW (*Numenius arquata*).—Recorded in the breeding season, in Ashdown Forest.

Totals of 694 on Dec. 9th 1973, and 1,738 on Jan. 12th 1974, were recorded by counts along the whole county coastline. See pages 47-49 for detailed estuary counts.

151. WHIMBREL (*N. phaeopus*).—Between Jan. 2nd and Apr. 24th, one was recorded in Pagham Harbour (WWAP, JGT).

In spring, was first recorded on Apr. 3rd at Bishopstone but not again until Apr. 14th when there were records from Beachy Head and Rottingdean.

At Beachy Head, 456 were recorded between Apr. 14th and June 10th. The maxima were:—31 E., Apr. 17th; 45 E., Apr. 24th; 91 E., Apr. 26th; 118 E., Apr. 27th; 52 E., Apr. 28th; 47 E., May 2nd.

In June, a single bird was seen on two occasions, in the Rye Harbour LNR and on July 12th, one was recorded at Saltdean.

Autumn passage commenced before the end of July for on the 26th, there was one at Pagham and by the 31st, there were records from 3 other localities. Twelve were seen in the Rye Harbour LNR on July 28th. There were three records for October, all from Pagham Harbour but there were none for November.

154. BLACK-TAILED GODWIT (*Limosa limosa*).—In spring, 2 were seen at Rackham on Apr. 14th and one was observed at Horse Eye Level on May 8th and 9th. On June 28th, 4 were recorded at Weir Wood Res. There were no inland records for the second half of the year.

In February, 200 were seen at Chidham and in March, birds in similar number, were seen at Bostham. On Sept. 28th, 450 were recorded at Thorney Island and 1,455 were observed at East Chidham on Oct. 11th. Fewer wintered in 1973/74 than in the previous winter, the counts along the whole county coastline recording totals of 620 on Dec. 9th and 730 on Jan. 12th, all in the western harbours. See pages 47-49 for the detailed estuary counts.

155. BAR-TAILED GODWIT (*L. lapponica*).—At Beachy Head, no less than 7,487 flew E. on 20 days between Mar. 25th and May 17th. The maxima were 540 E. on Apr. 22nd, 1,360 E. on Apr. 25th, 3,420 E. on Apr. 26th and 662 E. on May 2nd. The easterly movement was also observed off Worthing and Brighton between Apr. 22nd and 28th. In the Rye Harbour area, 101 flew E. on Apr. 22nd.

Totals of 947 on Dec. 9th, 1973, and 1,350 on Jan. 12th 1974, were recorded by counts along the whole county coastline, with the majority of the birds in Chichester Harbour. See pages 47-49 for the detailed estuary count.

156. GREEN SANDPIPER (*Tringa ochropus*).—Recorded in every month. Wintering birds were seen in 5 localities in January and February and in 6 localities in November and December.

As in other years, the commencement of spring passage, was not determined from the records, but the presence of single birds at Weir Wood Res. on June 20th, at Chichester G.P. on June 22nd and at Glynde Reach on June 23rd, may have indicated the start of the autumn passage. Not more than 7 birds were recorded in any one locality in the autumn.

On Aug. 19th, 3 flew W. along the Seven Sisters. The monthly totals were:—

Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	June	July	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
5	6	5	9	1	3	19	27	19	2	7	3

157. WOOD SANDPIPER (*T. glareola*).—Between May 17th and 19th, there were records of single birds at Glynde, Sidlesham and Weir Wood Res. On June 1st, one was seen in the Rye Harbour LNR.

Between July 21st and Sept. 24th, at least 22 were recorded. The majority were on or near the coast but single birds were seen at Arlington, Darwell and Weir Wood Reservoirs. No less than 7 were observed in the Rye Harbour LNR on Aug. 10th.

159. COMMON SANDPIPER (*T. hypoleucos*).—In January, one was seen at Littlehampton on the 9th and in February, one was recorded at Glynde Levels on the 9th and 11th. On Mar. 10th, one was seen at Portfield G.P.

In November, one was observed at Littleington on the 18th and another near Small Dole on the 25th. On Dec. 1st, one was seen at Arlington Res. and on Dec. 30th, there were 2 near Lewes.

Spring passage may have commenced as early as Apr. 6th, when a single bird was recorded at Weir Wood Res. but there were no further records until Apr. 22nd, when one was seen at Sidlesham. Passage continued until May 27th, when a single bird was recorded in Parham Park.

The return passage commenced on July 1st, when 3 were recorded in Pagham Harbour and one was seen at Weir Wood Res. For the rest of July and for August and September there were records for most days. On Aug. 8th, no less than 37 were seen over the long pits in the Rye Harbour LNR.

In October, 10 were seen in 5 localities. On Oct. 23rd, a single bird, which may have been on passage was recorded at Littleington and on Nov. 3rd, one was observed in the Cuckmere Valley.

The monthly totals were:—

Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	June	July	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
1	1	1	15	50	0	61	161	79	10	3	2

161. REDSHANK (*T. totanus*).—Breeding season counts in 1973 were as follows:—

Locality	No. of pairs	Locality	No. of pairs
Bracklesham	6	Rye Harbour	11
Chichester G.P.	2	Sidlesham	9
Chichester Harbour	9	Tillingham Valley	5
Cuckmere Valley	1	Watersfield	3
Glynde Levels	10	Winchelsea Marsh	2

In August, up to 1,500 were recorded at Thorney Island and in September, 1,200 were seen there.

Totals of 1,116 on Dec. 9th 1973, and 1,681 on Jan. 12th 1974, were recorded by counts along the whole county coastline. See pages 47-49 for the detailed estuary counts.

162. SPOTTED REDSHANK (*T. erythropus*).—Recorded in every month with the exception of May. In the first three months of the year, one was present in Pagham Harbour and one was seen at Dell Quay on Feb. 11th. In November and December, one was recorded in Pagham Harbour and up to 4 were seen at Thorney Island. On Dec. 1st, 2 flew W. at Rottingdean.

The return passage may have commenced as early as June 19th, for one was seen on that day at Sidlesham, as were 7 at Thorney Island. On July 4th, 33 were recorded at Thorney Island and 30 were seen there on Sept. 29th. The monthly totals were:—

Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	June	July	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
1	2	1	11	0	22	36	40	45	13	7	7

165. GREENSHANK (*T. nebularia*).—There were records for every month. Small numbers were recorded from the beginning of the year until the end of June but not more than 2 birds were seen in any one locality. In consequence, it was not possible to determine the start or duration of spring passage.

Autumn passage appears to have commenced as early as July 14th when 10 were recorded at Pagham Harbour. On July 28th, 14 were seen at Thorney Island. In August, September and October, large flocks were seen at or near Thorney Island. The maxima were:—Aug. 1st, 31; Sept. 28th, 43; and Oct. 13th, 102.

In November, there were reports from 5 localities with 8 at Thorney Island on the 2nd. Five were still there on Dec. 24th and 2 were seen on Dec. 28th. The approximate monthly totals were:—

Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	June	July	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
3	5	2	5	4	3	35	78	75	121	13	5

169. **KNOT** (*Calidris canutus*).—On spring passage, 170 were recorded at Beachy Head between Apr. 22nd and May 17th. The maxima were 70 E. on Apr. 28th and 54 E. on May 17th.

In the winter of 1973/74, the numbers in Chichester Harbour were again high, with a peak count of 1,221 on Jan. 12th. None was found wintering elsewhere along the county coastline.

170. **PURPLE SANDPIPER** (*C. maritima*).—There were records for the first four months of the year but none for May. In January and February, 22 were seen at Newhaven and on Jan. 9th, 13 were recorded at Climping.

On Aug. 5th, one was seen at Selsey Bill (BAEM, IRW). This is the earliest record relating to autumn passage for the County.

Totals of 94 on Dec. 9th 1973, and 37 on Jan. 12th 1974, were recorded by counts along the whole county coastline. The majority were at Newhaven. A count of 15 at Pagham on Feb. 9th 1974 was very high for this locality.

171. **LITTLE STINT** (*C. minuta*).—Between Apr. 27th and May 2nd, one was present at Sidlesham Ferry. One was recorded there on June 2nd.

On the return passage, 2 were seen at Sidlesham Ferry on July 26th. Between Aug. 7th and Nov. 3rd, at least 31 were recorded from 10 localities. Of these, 5 were inland and the rest on or adjacent to the coast. Included in the figures were up to 6 birds seen at Arlington Res., 2 at Darwell Res. and 2 at Plumpton.

On Dec. 28th, 5 were recorded at Thorney Island (MH).

173. **TEMMINCK'S STINT** (*C. temminckii*).—One at Arlington Res. on Aug. 18th and 19th (EH, PJW, VAW). One at Weir Wood Res. on Sept. 1st and 2nd (MPLeG, DW).

174. **BAIRD'S SANDPIPER** (*C. bairdii*).—One at Arlington Res. from Sept. 11th to 18th (PJW *et al.*). This record, which is the third for the county, has been accepted by *Brit. B.*

178. **DUNLIN** (*C. alpina*).—At Beachy Head, 107 flew E. on 12 days between Apr. 15th and May 18th. The maximum was 23 E. on May 3rd.

Totals of 30,455 on Dec. 9th 1973 and 29,265 on Jan. 12th 1974, were recorded by counts along the whole county coastline. During the winter of 1973/74, the peak count in Chichester Harbour was 29,775 on Jan. 26th, the highest count yet recorded. On this date a total of c. 70,000 was present in Pagham, Langstone and Portsmouth Harbours.

179. **CURLEW SANDPIPER** (*C. ferruginea*).—One at Sidlesham Ferry from May 19th to 25th was the only spring record.

On the return passage, at least 23 were recorded between July 12th and Nov. 10th but this figure is probably on the low side. Included in the total were single birds at Arlington Res. on July 12th, Aug. 31st and Sept. 1st. At Weir Wood Res., one was seen on Aug. 31st and Sept. 1st. Two were recorded there on Sept. 2nd.

181. **SANDERLING** (*C. alba*).—At Beachy Head, 59 were recorded between Apr. 23rd and May 18th with a maximum of 16 E. on May 3rd.

On May 14th, 3 were seen at Arlington Res. and single birds were observed there on Sept. 3rd, 5th and 22nd.

Few wintered in Chichester Harbour, not more than 20 being recorded by any count in 1973/74. Totals of 460 on Dec. 9th 1973, and 485 on Jan. 12th 1974, were recorded by counts along the whole county coastline. See page 47-49 for detailed estuary counts.

182. **BUFF-BREADED SANDPIPER** (*Tryngites subruficollis*).—One at Camber on Sept. 6th (IC, MJC). This record has been accepted by *Brit. B.* and is the fifth for Sussex.

184. **RUFF** (*Philomachus pugnax*).—Recorded in every month. The approximate monthly totals were:—

Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	June	July	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
12	36	54	45	13	2	15	15	40	63	48	144

The bulk of the records were from the Chichester Harbour and Pagham Harbour areas. The largest flocks were:—70 in the Thorney Channel on Dec. 15th; 110 at Chidham on Dec. 17th and 116 there on Dec. 19th; 50 at Thorney Island on Dec. 24th.

On Dec. 1st, one was seen at Beachy Head.

185. **AVOCET** (*Recurvirostra avosetta*).—From Jan. 5th to Mar. 1st, there were 2 at Pagham Harbour. On May 14th, there were 3 at Sidlesham Ferry and 2 were seen in the same locality on June 21st and 23rd.

On Mar. 17th, there was one at Rye Harbour and on Apr. 22nd, 3 were seen in the Cuckmere Valley. On June 18th, one was observed in the Rye Harbour area and 4 were there on July 15th.

On May 27th, 14 flew E. at Beachy Head.

On Dec. 11th, one was reported in Pagham Harbour and 2 were seen there from Dec. 12th to 28th.

187. **GREY PHALAROPE** (*Phalaropus fulicarius*).—On Apr. 23rd, one was seen in the Rye Harbour LNR and on Apr. 25th, one was observed at Camber Sands (GB). These records, which almost certainly relate to the same bird, are the first for the County for April.

189. **STONE CURLEW** (*Burhinus oedichenus*).—In the breeding season birds were seen or heard in 4 localities. In one of these, a single bird was seen on April 17th and in another, a party of at least 12, which were obviously on passage, were recorded on Apr. 27th.

On Aug. 7th, a single bird was seen over Westdene, Brighton and on Oct. 4th, one was recorded at Arlington Res.

193. **ARCTIC SKUA** (*Stercorarius parasiticus*).—In the spring, there was regular sea watching at Beachy Head and on 26 days between Apr. 15th, when the first was recorded, to May 28th, 163 flew E. The maxima were 13 E. on Apr. 26th, 25 E. on Apr. 30th and 26 E. on May 5th. Elsewhere in spring, small numbers were recorded between Selsey Bill and Langney Point. A single bird flew E. off Selsey Bill as late as May 19th.

On the return passage 2 were recorded off Rottingdean on July 26th. From that date until Nov. 21st when one was seen about 6 miles off Littlehampton, about 22 were reported. All were off the coast with the exception of 2 over the Rye Harbour LNR.

194. **GREAT SKUA** (*S. skua*).—At Selsey Bill, one and possibly 2 flew W. on Apr. 30th (MS). At Beachy Head, there were 19 E. and one W. between Apr. 7th and May 5th (many obs.).

On Aug. 27th, there was one off Birling Gap (RLKJ, IRW) and on Sept. 20th, one was seen about 12 miles off Littlehampton (BFF).

195. **POMARINE SKUA** (*S. pomarinus*).—At Beachy Head there was one E. on Apr. 24th, 3 E. on Apr. 25th and one E. on Apr. 29th. There was one W. on May 15th and one E. on May 18th (DSF, ARK, NAGL, *et al.*).
On Aug. 4th an adult was seen off Birling Gap (BAEM, IRW).

198. **GREAT BLACK - BACKED GULL** (*Larus marinus*).—In the Rye Harbour LNR the monthly maxima were:—Apr. 130, May 45, June 80, July 200, Aug. 60 and Sept. 180.

On Feb. 19th, no less than 800 were recorded near Winchelsea (JPK) and other large counts along the coast were as follows:—150 at Newhaven on Jan. 3rd, 350 at Worthing on Jan. 19th, 160 at Ovingdean on Sept. 29th and 120 at Crowlink on Oct. 9th.

199. **LESSER BLACK-BACKED GULL** (*L. fuscus*).—In January and February, there were records from one coastal and 5 inland localities. The maxima were 12 over Slimfold on Jan. 27th and 32 at Warnham on Feb. 18th. On Mar. 10th 300 flew E. at Rye Harbour and there were reports of small numbers of passage birds from inland and coastal areas in March and April. In the Rye Harbour LNR, 105 were seen on Apr. 9th and 80 on Apr. 13th.

On May 15th, a single pair was seen on the cliffs at Fairlight but it is not known if nesting was attempted.

There was no reports of large numbers on the return passage except for one of 70 in the Rye Harbour LNR. on Sept. 25th.

200. **HERRING GULL** (*L. argentatus*).—Monthly maxima in the Rye Harbour LNR. were:—Apr. 1,500, May 340, June 340 (mostly immatures), July 400, Aug. 110 and Sept. 500.

In the breeding season about 45 pairs nested in the Rye Harbour area. About 42 young were raised but some pairs did not nest successfully. Several pairs nested on roof tops in St. Leonards-on-Sea and some birds were seen on buildings in Brighton and Hove in the breeding season.

A single bird with yellow legs was recorded at Newhaven on Jan. 16th and the same individual or another on Oct. 24th and Nov. 7th. Another was seen on a number of occasions between July 28th and Aug. 25th at Chichester G.P., Selsey Bill and Sidlesham Ferry. Yellow legs are characteristic of the Mediterranean and Scandinavian races.

201. **COMMON GULL** (*L. canus*).—In January, 150 were seen near Henfield on the 7th, 700 in the Cuckmere Valley on the 13th, 90 at Bishopstone on the 14th and 150 between Kingston Gorse and Goring on the 19th. On Feb. 18th, 60 were seen at Cuckmere Haven but the numbers for the rest of this month and for March were small.

In the Rye Harbour LNR, numbers increased from 50 on July 31st to 180 on Aug. 14th and 300 (mainly adults) on the 17th. The numbers then decreased and 130 were seen on Aug. 28th and 300 in September.

About 100 were recorded at Newhaven on Nov. 7th.

202. **GLAUCOUS GULL** (*L. hyperboreus*).—The adult seen at Hove and mentioned in the Report for 1972, was recorded from the beginning of the year until Mar. 17th. It was seen again from Oct. 18th to the end of the year (many obs.). Immature birds were seen at Pagham on Jan. 16th (NPH, JVS), at Rye Harbour on Mar. 17th and at Hove on Apr. 24th (GAS). An immature was present in Shoreham Harbour from Nov. 16th until Dec. 30th (many obs.).

205. **MEDITERRANEAN GULL** (*L. melanocephalus*).—Records are given under localities. Hove, one from Jan. 1st to Mar. 2nd and one from Nov. 19th to Dec. 2nd. Sidlesham, one from Jan. 6th to Feb. 3rd and one on Dec. 1st. Plisey Island, one on Jan. 13th. Church Norton, one on Feb. 17th. Rye Harbour, one on Apr. 25th. Birling Gap, one on May 5th. Beachy Head, one on May 15th. Pagham, one on June 30th. Worthing, one on July 8th and 26th. Selsey Bill, one on Nov. 10th.

The birds at Rye Harbour, Beachy Head and Pagham were immatures and the one at Birling Gap was a sub adult. The rest were recorded as adults.

207. **LITTLE GULL** (*L. minutus*).—Was recorded in every month with the exception of January and December.

On Feb. 4th, one was seen at Thorney Island. In March, one was recorded there on the 10th and another was seen in the Rye Harbour LNR on the 26th.

On Apr. 1st, one was seen at Church Norton but the subsequent influx in this month did not commence until the 12th, when 22 were recorded at Arlington Res. Between this date and June 25th there were records from 5 coastal localities, from Arlington Res. and from Chichester G.P. On Apr. 30th, there were 9 E. at Selsey Bill and at Beachy Head, there were about 70 E. between Apr. 21st and May 12th. Peak passage at Beachy Head was on Apr. 26th when 31 flew E. Except for 3 at Thorney Island on June 3rd and one at Chichester G.P. on June 7th, records for this month came from the Rye Harbour area. Birds were seen there on 13 days in the month with maxima of 6 on the 21st and 9 on the 25th.

In July, a single bird was seen at Chichester G.P. and in the Rye Harbour LNR there were records for 11 days in the month with maxima of 5 on the 8th and 15th.

The return passage commenced about Aug. 6th when a single bird was recorded at Arlington Res. Between this date and Nov. 4th, there were records from Arlington Res., Barcombe Res., Chichester G.P. and from 6 coastal localities. The numbers seen were relatively small when compared with those in the spring. The approximate monthly totals based on data, which is obviously far from complete, are as shown below:—

Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	June	July	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
0	1	2	70	50	10	6	8	30	8	2	0

208. **BLACK-HEADED GULL** (*L. ridibundus*).—In the Rye Harbour LNR, 1,150 were recorded on Apr. 6th but the numbers had decreased to 250 by Apr. 17th. In May, 300 were present from the 3rd to the end of the month and more than 100 pairs attempted to breed on or near the Reserve.

In Chichester Harbour, c. 33 occupied nests were counted on June 11th. In the Rye Harbour LNR 300 were recorded during the month of August and 1,500 were present on Sept. 4th. The numbers had decreased to 500 by Sept. 7th. Elsewhere, 570 were seen on the roofs of warehouses at Newhaven on Aug. 24th, 2,500 at Southwick on Oct. 5th, 2,000 at Selsey on Oct. 13th and 1,000 at Selsey on Nov. 10th.

211. **KITTIWAKE** (*Rissa tridactyla*).—There were records for every month with the exception of January and December but with few exceptions the numbers seen were small. On Aug. 27th, there were 150 off Birling Gap and on Sept. 11th 200 were seen there. All the records were from the coast except for reports of single birds at Arlington Res. on Mar. 10th and Aug. 6th. Some birds summered in the Rye Harbour area where up to 60 were seen in June and July.

212. **BLACK TERN** (*Chlidonias niger*).—In spring, passage was recorded between Apr. 24th and June 1st involving about 78 birds. Peak passage appears to have been on May 3rd when 6 were seen at Arlington Res., 12 at Chichester G.P. and 4 at Pond Leigh. There were 2 at Chingford Pond on May 16th. At Beachy Head, 29 flew E. between Apr. 24th and May 26th.

The return passage may have commenced as early as July 5th when one was seen at Rye Harbour. On July 29th, there were 2 at Rye Harbour and one at Weir Wood Res. Between this date and Oct. 15th when one was seen at Shoreham-by-Sea, about 90 were recorded, with the majority from the coast.

213. **WHITE-WINGED BLACK TERN** (*C. leucopterus*).—One at Chichester G.P. on May 26th and June 1st (ETWK, JVS, MS) and one at Thorney Island on Aug. 11th (BAEM, IRW). These records have been accepted by *Brit. B.*

217. **COMMON TERN** (*Sterna hirundo*).—More than 80 pairs attempted to breed at Rye Harbour but no more than 20 young were raised. Disturbance by humans was a factor in the relative lack of success. In the Chichester Harbour colony some pairs bred with success. A minimum of 2 pairs may have attempted to breed at Chichester G.P.

COMMON/ARCTIC TERN (*S. hirundo/paradisaea*).—First recorded on Apr. 14th at Beachy Head and on Apr. 15th at Rye Harbour.

At Beachy Head 9,316 flew E. between Apr. 14th and June 3rd. The maxima were:—1,013 E. on Apr. 24th, 1,623 E. on Apr. 26th and 2,094 E. on May 4th. At Selsey Bill a flock of 400 was observed on May 3rd.

On the return passage, there were 150 W. at Selsey on Sept. 1st but elsewhere the numbers recorded were small. Was last seen on Oct. 16th at Selsey Bill.

219. **ROSEATE TERN** (*S. dougallii*).—There was one E. at Beachy Head on Apr. 22nd (DSF, NAGL, MJR). On Apr. 30th and May 3rd one was seen in the Rye Harbour LNR and 2 were recorded there on July 2nd.

222. **LITTLE TERN** (*S. albigrons*).—First recorded on Apr. 7th at Pagham Harbour. At Beachy Head, 234 flew E. between Apr. 21st and May 18th. At Worthing, there were 40 E. on Apr. 26th.

Little information was received relating to the breeding season but it is known that nesting was attempted in at least 4 localities.

No autumn movement of any size was reported and the last bird recorded was one at Southwick on Oct. 18th and 19th.

223. **SANDWICH TERN** (*S. sandvicensis*).—First seen on Mar. 24th off Birling Gap and Beachy Head. At Beachy Head, an easterly movement involving at least 4,400 birds was observed. There were 520 E. on Apr. 24th, 465 E. on Apr. 26th and 432 E. on Apr. 28th. On May 3rd, about 100 were present off Selsey Bill.

The numbers recorded on autumn passage were small. At Beachy Head, no more than 116 were seen between Aug. 1st and Oct. 7th. On Aug. 11th, c. 50 were recorded in Pagham Harbour. Was last seen off Selsey Bill on Oct. 7th.

232. **STOCK DOVE** (*Columba oenas*).—There were breeding season records from 21 localities. In January and December, flocks of about 40 were seen in the Rye Harbour area and on Feb. 4th there was one of between 300 and 400 birds near Lullington Heath.

234. **WOOD PIGEON** (*C. palumbus*).—On Oct. 27th there were about 10,000 E. over Seven Sisters and on Oct. 28th there were 1,250 W. at Selsey Bill.

235. **TURTLE DOVE** (*Streptopelia turtur*).—First recorded on Apr. 14th at Beachy Head and at Cooksbridge on Apr. 19th. At Beachy Head, 46 were seen on May 14th. Last recorded on Nov. 4th at Beachy Head.

236. **COLLARED DOVE** (*S. decacoto*).—It appears that this species is still spreading for several observers reported breeding in new localities.

In October, 30 flew E. at Beachy Head on the 27th and 2 flocks totalling 112 birds were seen at Selsey Bill in the early morning on the 28th.

On Mar. 30th, more than 200 were seen near Shoreham-by-Sea feeding on grain spilled from a granary. On Oct. 10th, 150 fed on maize by Chidmere Pond. This flock remained in the area for several weeks.

237. **CUCKOO** (*Cuculus canorus*).—First recorded on Apr. 16th at Worthing and on Apr. 19th at Duncton and Slindon. On Apr. 23rd, one arrived from the sea at Worthing. Was last recorded on Sept. 4th at Nutley.

241. **BARN OWL** (*Tyto alba*).—Records were received for a total of some 58 localities throughout the County. Very few of the records related to breeding and 2 observers reported that 'pairs' did not breed. It was suggested that this was due to a shortage of rodents.

246. **LITTLE OWL** (*Athene noctua*).—Reports were received for a total of 55 well distributed localities in 10 of which breeding was established. A pair nested in the oak tree mentioned in the Report for 1972.

247. **TAWNY OWL** (*Strix aluco*).—Reports were received for a total of 60 localities with a wide distribution. In 13 cases breeding was established but in view of the nesting sites used by this species, this figure is obviously on the low side.

248. **LONG-EARED OWL** (*Asio otus*).—From the beginning of the year to the end of March, one and sometimes 2 birds were seen in one locality. A single bird was observed near Glynde in March and in April one was seen near Eastbourne. In December one was present near Worth for at least one week.

249. **SHORT-EARED OWL** (*A. flammeus*).—Between Jan. 2nd and Mar. 21st, about 9 were seen in 6 localities. From Oct. 6th, when one was recorded at Pagham Harbour, about 27 were seen in 10 localities. Nearly all of these were on or near the coast but there were a few reports from the downs and the levels. Monthly totals were:—

Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
2	7	7	9	8	13

252. **NIGHTJAR** (*Caprimulgus europaeus*).—Recorded from May 20th in Ashdown Forest to Sept. 5th at Beachy Head. Observers in Ashdown Forest and elsewhere suggested that 1973 was a good year for this species with birds being found in breeding areas from which they had been absent for several years. A special effort was made to find Nightjars in previously un-visited areas, particularly in E. Sussex, with the result that 89 singing males were recorded from 46 widely scattered localities. It should be noted that these results were achieved despite the absence of records for 25 sites where the species is known to have bred in recent years.

255. **SWIFT** (*Apus apus*).—First recorded on Apr. 27th at Lewes. On Apr. 28th, single birds were seen at Alfriston, Beachy Head and at Chichester G.P. On May 2nd, about 150 were recorded at Arlington Res. and at least 300 were there on the following day. At Beachy Head, there were 50 E. on May 11th and on May 14th 200 were seen there. At the Rye Harbour LNR, 450 and 300 were recorded on May 29th and 30th, respectively.

Departure on a large scale may have commenced before the end of July for at Beachy Head there were 1,000 E. on the 29th. In the same locality there were 1,000 E. on Aug. 11th.

There were a number of records for late September with reports of 2 at Rye Harbour on the 27th and one there on the 30th. One was seen at Beachy Head on Sept. 29th and Oct. 6th.

258. **KINGFISHER** (*Alcedo atthis*).—In the breeding season pairs or single birds were seen in about 36 localities; evidence of breeding being obtained in 4 of these.

Outside the breeding season there were numerous records for inland localities and for at least 12 localities on or near the coast.

261. **HOOPOE** (*Upupa epops*).—In April one was seen near Ringmer on the 3rd and another near Lindfield on the 24th. In May there were single birds at Seaford on the 5th, at Horsham and Patcham on the 9th, at Rye on the 19th, at Ringmer on the 25th and near Hellingly on the 29th. On May 10th, 2 were recorded in the Beachy Head area. A single bird was seen at Lindfield in early June and there was one at Selsey on June 10th.

262. **GREEN WOODPECKER** (*Picis viridis*).—Was widely reported and once again there were records from approximately 100 localities. Some few records were for Itchenor and Sidlesham.

263. **GREAT SPOTTED WOODPECKER** (*Dendrocopos major*).—In the breeding season was reported from about 57 well distributed localities.

264. **LESSER SPOTTED WOODPECKER** (*D. minor*).—Reports were received for 48 localities, a figure very like the one for the previous year.

At West Chiltington, 2 pairs were present in an area of 300 acres. An observer who saw a single bird at Sidlesham on Mar. 26th mentioned that this was the first observed in this locality for about 15 years.

265. **WRYNECK** (*Jynx torquilla*).—In the spring, a single bird was recorded at Beachy Head on Apr. 23rd.

Between Aug. 25th and Oct. 7th about 18 were seen, all with the exception of 4 being on the coast. About 12 of the coastal records relate to the Beachy Head area.

271. **WOODLARK** (*Lullula arborea*).—One was recorded in several localities between Cuckmere Haven and Beachy Head between Mar. 8th and 24th (many obs.).

273. **SHORELARK** (*Erenophila alpestris*).—One was seen at Sidlesham Ferry between Jan. 24th and Feb. 20th (NPH).

274. **SWALLOW** (*Hirundo rustica*).—There were no records for March. At Beachy Head was first seen on Apr. 7th and in the Rye Harbour LNR. on Apr. 8th. Elsewhere one was recorded at Chichester G.P. on Apr. 5th; 2 were seen there on Apr. 6th and there was one at Balcombe on Apr. 7th. The largest numbers seen in spring were 100 at Beachy Head on Apr. 29th, 150 at Arlington Res. on May 2nd and 200 there on May 5th.

Six nests at Plumpton produced 18 young.

Peak counts for selected localities in the autumn were as follows:—

West Chiltington	Sept. 5th	2,000
Beachy Head	Sept. 12th	2,000
West Chiltington	Sept. 19th	2,000
Beachy Head	Sept. 25th	2,000
Rye Harbour LNR	Sept. 25th	2,200
Litlington	Oct. 4th	10,000
Beachy Head	Oct. 6th	2,000

Once again there were a number of records for November and one was seen at West Wittering on the 25th.

276. **HOUSE MARTIN** (*Delichon urbica*).—The first records were of 2 birds in the Cuckmere Valley on Apr. 15th and singles at Seaynes Hill and Rye on Apr. 18th. At Beachy Head, passage was first noted on May 7th with a maximum of 150 on May 13th.

An unusual breeding season record was of 3 nests built on the cross channel ferry MV *Sentac* when berthed at Newhaven. The adult birds did not make the trip to Dieppe but left the vicinity of the ship when it reached the breakwater at Newhaven and then awaited its return nine hours later.

Return passage was recorded at Beachy Head between Aug. 1st and Nov. 11th with maxima of 10,000 on Sept. 24th and 5,000 daily on Sept. 23rd, 25th and Oct. 6th. At Brightling there were 2,000 S. in two hours on Sept. 26th. At Rye the passage numbers were low with a maximum of 1,050 on Sept. 25th.

The last record was of a single bird at Church Norton on Nov. 24th.

277. **SAND MARTIN** (*Riparia riparia*).—First recorded on Mar. 26th with one at Chichester G.P. and 7 there on Apr. 5th. The largest spring count was one of 40 at Rye Harbour on May 13th; the numbers elsewhere being very small. In the breeding colonies at Rye Harbour no more than 20 nesting holes were occupied. There were apparently no counts at other colonies in the County. In the Rye Harbour LNR, 180 were seen on July 29th and in August, there were peaks of 100 on the 24th and 115 on the 28th. The numbers increased slowly in September and 1,100 were present on the 26th. At Beachy Head, there were 350 E. on Sept. 12th and 200 E. on Sept. 11th and 13th.

278. **GOLDEN ORIOLE** (*Oriolus oriolus*).—In May, single birds were seen at Beachy Head on the 8th (JFC, DEL), at Lewes on the 18th (JH) and at Steyning on the 27th (CDF). On June 8th, one was recorded at Ifold (MES).

280. **CARRION CROW** (*Corvus corone corone*).—On Oct. 3rd, a flock of 61 was seen on Ham Manor golf course at dusk. These birds had gone by dawn on the following day (MH).

281. **HOODED CROW** (*Corvus corone cornix*).—One was seen in the Cuckmere Valley on Jan. 10th and on Mar. 31st there were 2 at Birling Gap.

282. **ROOK** (*C. frugilegus*).—In the second year of the Society's Survey 650 rookeries were reported in the county, bringing the total for the 2 years to 728. Counts were received for 628 rookeries with a total of 12,775 nests. Twelve rookeries of over 100 nests were reported.

Hambrook	SU792071	103	nests	Upper Cokeham	TQ163063	c.130	nests
Chilgrove	SU825145	120	"	Alestone	TQ495055	141	"
Aldwick	S2915986	135	"	Fliddinghoe	TQ432033	128	"
Bognor	SU933002	111	"	Beddingham	TQ459063	131	"
Greatham	TQ035134	118	"	Folkington	TQ561046	110	"
West Chiltington	TQ089164	105	"	Winchelsea	TQ904168	174	"

To assist members already engaged in the survey and to encourage others to participate next year, a summary of rookeries reported in 1972 and 1973 in the various 10K.m. National Grid squares for the County is given below.

SU79	—	2	TQ02	—	15	TQ33	—	3	TQ69	—	6
SU70	—	5	TQ03	—	5	TQ49	—	1	TQ60	—	9
SU71	—	7	TQ10	—	9	TQ40	—	37	TQ61	—	11
SU89	—	32	TQ11	—	22	TQ41	—	34	TQ62	—	4
SU80	—	73	TQ12	—	27	TQ42	—	12	TQ63	—	7
SU81	—	20	TQ13	—	6	TQ43	—	11	TQ70	—	2
SU82	—	8	TQ20	—	7	TQ44	—	0	TQ71	—	7
SZ99	—	3	TQ21	—	26	TV59	—	5	TQ72	—	5
SU90	—	63	TQ22	—	12	TQ50	—	33	TQ81	—	4
SU91	—	14	TQ23	—	14	TQ51	—	12	TQ82	—	6
SU92	—	1	TQ30	—	17	TQ52	—	12	TQ91	—	3
SU93	—	8	TQ31	—	25	TQ53	—	7	TQ92	—	11
TQ00	—	35	TQ32	—	23	TQ54	—	0	TR01	—	0
TQ01	—	12						0	TR02	—	0

288. **GREAT TIT** (*Parus major*).—In Nap Wood, Mark Cross, the average brood size in 12 nest boxes was 5.2 and in 25 nest boxes at Possingworth Park, 4.8.

289. **BLUE TIT** (*P. caeruleus*).—In Nap Wood, Mark Cross, the average brood size in 12 nest boxes was 8.3 and in 36 boxes at Possingworth Park, 6.1. At Hoth Woods, Eridge, 6 pairs raised 45 young.

290. **COAL TIT** (*P. ater*).—At Possingworth Park, the average brood size in 7 nest boxes was 7.8.

293. **WILLOW TIT** (*P. montanus*).—Recorded in the breeding season from at least 26 well distributed localities.

294. **LONG-TAILED TIT** (*Aegithalos caudatus*).—As in 1971 and 1972, was widely reported and many post breeding and winter parties were seen. The records indicate a highly successful breeding season. No less than 56 were trapped at Litlington in October compared with an average of about 10 in other years.

295. **BEARDED TIT** (*Panurus biarmicus*).—In the first part of the year there were records of about 10 birds in 5 localities.

In one locality, 2 adults and a probable juvenile were seen on June 10th and in another area some were seen between July 7th and 30th with a maximum of 12 on July 14th. Two juveniles, which had not been raised in the immediate vicinity, were present on Aug. 8th.

Between the end of the breeding season and the end of the year there were records of more than 30 in 7 localities. In addition, there were 10 E. at Beachy Head on Oct. 6th and one was seen there on Oct. 14th. For additional records for 1972, see page 40.

299. **WREN** (*Troglodytes troglodytes*).—Appears to have been a good breeding season for this species for at Litlington no less than 128 were ringed, the majority in October.

At Plumpton, 17 young were produced from 4 nests, an average brood size of 4.2. Three nests were successful.

301. **MISTLE THRUSH** (*Turdus viscivorus*).—In the Rye Harbour LNR 3 pairs raised 9 young.

302. **FIELDFARE** (*T. pilaris*).—In the early months, parties of between 100 and 300 were seen in six localities. In April, there were reports from 10 localities, between the 8th and 28th, of from 5 to 200 birds. In May, one was present at Brighton on the 1st, 12 at Amberley Wild Brooks on the 2nd and one at Beachy Head on the 5th.

In the autumn, there were no records until Oct. 7th but between this date and the end of the month there were reports from 10 localities. On Oct. 11th, 100 flew W. over Brighton and on the 16th there were 450 E. at Beachy Head. On Oct. 26th, 250 were seen at Eridge Park.

There were only 2 records for November and one for December. On Nov. 6th, small parties were seen on Pevensey Levels and in December there were 200 near Wadhurst where some had been present since October.

303. **SONG THRUSH** (*T. philomelos*).—At Plumpton, 35 nests produced 38 young, an average brood size of 1.1; 10 nests were successful.

304. **REDWING** (*T. iliacus*).—On Jan. 7th, 10 were recorded at Rye Harbour but there were no other records for this month. In February, there were reports from 3 localities including one of 500 at West Chiltington on the 23rd. In March, some were seen in about 7 localities but except for 250 at Parham Park

on the 6th, 100 at Arlington Res. on the 23rd and 90 at Brighton on 26th, the numbers were small. On Apr. 1st, 6 were seen at Lower Barpham and at Beachy Head there were records until April 26th.

On Sept. 30th, one was seen at Beachy Head and 3 at West Chillington. On Oct. 1st, 200 flew W. at Brighton and smaller numbers were seen at Chichester G.P., Littleington and Nutley. From Oct. 3rd until Oct. 22nd, when the movement appears to have ended, large numbers were recorded with a maximum of 4,000 W. at Brighton on Oct. 11th. In November and December, the numbers seen were extremely small.

307. RING OUZEL (*T. torquatus*).—On spring passage, was first recorded at Beachy Head on Apr. 1st and last recorded on May 15th. No less than 18 were seen there on Apr. 21st.

On autumn passage, more than 70 were recorded with the majority at Beachy Head. There were 40 there on Oct. 14th. Single birds were seen at Beachy Head on Nov. 2nd and at Sidlesham on Nov. 3rd.

311. WHEATEAR (*Oenanthe oenanthe*).—First recorded on Mar. 18th at Beachy Head. At Selsey Bill, 30 were seen on Apr. 14th and at Beachy Head, 100 on Apr. 15th. Elsewhere, the numbers on spring passage were small.

In the breeding season, 3 pairs in the Rye Harbour LNR raised 12 young. On the Crumbles, Eastbourne, birds were present in the breeding season. On June 2nd, 3 males and a pair with a juvenile, also a female carrying food were seen.

In June, a single bird was seen on the downs near Storrington on the 10th and another was observed at Ditching Beacon on the 26th.

On autumn passage, 3 were seen at Pagham Harbour on July 31st and one was observed in Ashdown Forest on the same day. In August, parties of up to 30 were seen in several localities. In October, few were recorded and the last record was of one on the downs near Steyning on the 28th.

317. STONECHAT (*Saxicola torquata*).—In January and February, about 55 wintering birds were reported from 22 localities.

Breeding pairs, or singing males were recorded as follows:—Iping Common 3, Ambersham Common 1, West Wittering 1, Ashdown Forest 11 (incomplete count), Chailey Common 6, Hollingdean, Brighton 1, Newhaven Head 2, Seaford Head 1, Cuckmere Valley 1, Seven Sisters 2, Beachy Head 11 (incomplete count).

The autumn maximum at Beachy Head was 60 on Oct. 6th. In December, about 23 wintering birds were found in 16 localities.

318. WHINCHAT (*S. rubetra*).—On Apr. 20th and 21st, a single bird was seen near Pevensey and between Apr. 26th and 29th there were records from 6 localities with a maximum of 10 at Beachy Head on Apr. 27th. There were no records for May or June.

Autumn passage commenced on Aug. 1st when 2 were seen near Newhaven. There were numerous records for the rest of August and for September. On Oct. 14th, a single bird was trapped at Littleington.

320. REDSTART (*Phoenicurus phoenicurus*).—The first records were of singles at Chichester G.P. on Apr. 14th and Beachy Head on Apr. 18th. The spring maximum was 8 at Beachy Head on Apr. 27th.

Very few breeding season records were received. Pairs or singing males were recorded as follows:—St. Leonards Forest 1, Worth Forest 1, Hoth Woods, Eridge 1, Hornshurst Wood, Rotherfield 1, Ashdown Forest 2.

There were fewer autumn records than usual. Was recorded at Beachy Head from Aug. 26th to Oct. 15th with a maximum of 25 on Sept. 22nd. Was last seen at Lullington Heath on Oct. 24th.

321. BLACK REDSTART (*P. ochruros*).—In the early months, wintering birds were seen at Roedean, Shoreham-by-Sea and Southwick.

Spring passage was recorded between Mar. 11th and May 26th with a well marked influx on Mar. 24th, when 9 were recorded at Beachy Head. At Beachy Head, 12 were seen on Apr. 14th and in all about 44 passage birds were recorded, mainly on the coast.

In the breeding season, 2 pairs and a single male were seen in Brighton. One pair produced at least one young bird. In Eastbourne, one pair was seen and young were heard calling in the nest (MJE). In Bexhill, a single pair produced 4 young and in St. Leonards-on-Sea a pair nested in a disused cinema. This was later demolished and young were not seen (per AAW).

Between Sept. 4th and Nov. 18th, about 17 were recorded mainly from coastal localities. In December, 2 which may have been wintering were seen at Southwick and there were single birds at Shoreham-by-Sea on the 9th and Crawley on the 12th.

322. NIGHTINGALE (*Luscinia megarhynchos*).—Between May 1st and June 30th, selected counts of singing males were as follows:—Welches Common 3, West Chillington 4, Washington sand pit 2, Oreham Common 4, Shaves Wood, Woodmancoate 3, Park Wood, Poynings 4, Friston Forest 4, Lullington NNR 5, Abbotts Wood, Polegate 4, Brightling 8. In addition, single birds were reported from 19 localities. The total of 60 males is the lowest recorded since 1967. In East Sussex, there were no records for the following 10Km. National Grid squares:—TQ 30, TQ 32, TQ 40, TQ 43, TQ 44, TQ 45, TQ 53, TQ 61, TQ 63 and all squares east.

This species is now the subject of a Society survey. All records are required and it is essential that the appropriate map reference is quoted.

325. ROBIN (*Erithacus rubecula*).—Between Oct. 2nd and 6th about 100 were seen at Beachy Head.

327. GRASSHOPPER WARBLER (*Locustella naevia*).—Was first recorded on Apr. 16th at Beachy Head. The maxima there were 8 on Apr. 27th and 10 on Apr. 29th.

In the breeding season, about 39 singing males were noted in 29 localities. Was last recorded on Oct. 16th in the Cuckmere Valley.

333. REED WARBLER (*Acrocephalus scirpaceus*).—First recorded on Apr. 29th with one at Chichester G.P. and one at Church Norton. On Aug. 11th there were 25 at Beachy Head. Was last recorded there on Oct. 28th.

In the breeding season, about 90 singing males were recorded in 21 localities.

334. MARSH WARBLER (*A. palustris*).—One was seen and heard at Beachy Head on May 28th (PC, ARK, NAGL).

337. **SEDGE WARBLER** (*A. schoenobaenus*).—First recorded on Apr. 7th at Litlington and last recorded on Oct. 7th at Sidlesham. During the breeding season, about 49 singing males were recorded in 17 localities. The main concentrations appear to have been in the Chichester Harbour and Rye Harbour areas. On Aug. 9th, 30 were recorded at Beachy Head.
338. **AQUATIC WARBLER** (*A. paludicola*).—One at Pagham Harbour on Aug. 30th (PH, IBR). This record has been accepted by *Brit. B.*
339. **MELODIOUS WARBLER** (*Hippolais polyloitta*).—One at Beachy Head on Sept. 9th (RLKJ, BAEM, IRW).
340. **ICTERINE WARBLER** (*H. icterina*).—One at Beachy Head on Aug. 19th (BAEM, MJR, *et al.*).
343. **BLACKCAP** (*Sylvia atricapilla*).—On spring passage was first recorded on Apr. 3rd in the Rye Harbour LNR. On autumn passage, 300 were recorded at Beachy Head on Sept. 20th and 400 were there on Sept. 22nd. Was last recorded on Nov. 4th at Beachy Head and at Shoreham-by-Sea. There were a number of winter records. Single birds were seen at Worthing on Nov. 25th and at Slindon Park on Dec. 9th. Between Dec. 26th and 30th, one and sometimes 2 males were recorded at Eastbourne.
344. **BARRED WARBLER** (*S. nisoria*).—One at Beachy Head on Sept. 9th and 10th (PC, PJW, VAW).
346. **GARDEN WARBLER** (*S. borin*).—First recorded on Apr. 18th at Beachy Head and last seen on Oct. 9th at Litlington. Once again there were few records for the breeding season but on Aug. 11th, 80 were recorded at Beachy Head.
347. **WHITETHROAT** (*S. communis*).—First recorded on Apr. 15th at Beachy Head and last seen on Oct. 7th in the same locality. At Beachy Head, there were spring peaks of 20 on Apr. 27th, 30 on May 5th and 60 on May 14th. Autumn peaks there were 70 on Aug. 4th and 100 on Aug. 11th. Information for the breeding season was conflicting for although 23 singing males were recorded in the Lullington Heath NNR, breeding was not recorded on a farm of 200 acres at Sidlesham where 14-19 pairs were present in 1962 and 1964. Six pairs bred in an area of 75 acres at West Chiltington where 3 pairs were seen in 1972. For a record for 1972, see page 40.
348. **LESSER WHITETHROAT** (*S. curruca*).—First recorded on Apr. 7th at Beachy Head and last recorded in the Cuckmere Valley on Oct. 13th. In spring, 10 were seen at Beachy Head on May 13th and in autumn, 30 were recorded there between Aug. 20th and Sept. 7th. In the breeding season about 55 pairs were recorded in 26 localities.
352. **DARTFORD WARBLER** (*S. undata*).—Reports were received for 2 areas with a total breeding population of approximately 12 pairs. On Aug. 19th, Sept. 4th and Oct. 29th a single bird was seen at Pagham Harbour.

354. **WILLOW WARBLER** (*Phylloscopus trochilus*).—As in 1972, was first recorded on Mar. 23rd at Chichester G.P.

In the breeding season there were no less than 86 singing males at Chailey Common LNR (IHF) and 23 pairs were recorded in the Beachy Head area. See also under Willow Warbler/Chiffchaff.

356. **CHIFFCHAFF** (*P. collybita*).—Single birds which were apparently wintered were seen at Polegate and Ichenor in January and at Chichester G.P. and Lancing in February. There was one at Chichester G.P. on Mar. 6th and between this date and Mar. 22nd there was obviously an influx, for there were reports from 6 localities.

In November, there were reports from 5 localities and a single bird was seen at Brighton on Dec. 8th.

WILLOW WARBLER / CHIFFCHAFF.—General migration data for both species are shown under this head. In spring, at Beachy Head there were peak counts of 80 on Apr. 14th, 100 on Apr. 18th, 130 on Apr. 27th and 100 on Apr. 29th. Arrival on a large scale was not reported from other localities.

On the return passage, there were peak counts at Beachy Head of 700 on Aug. 9th and 10th, 900 on Aug. 11th, 200 on Sept. 18th and 150 on Sept. 25th.

357. **WOOD WARBLER** (*P. sibilatrix*).—First recorded on Apr. 30th in Ashdown Forest.

In the breeding season, there were reports of about 20 singing males from 12 well distributed localities.

In September, single birds were recorded at Beachy Head on the 6th, near Steyning on the 8th and at Brighton on the 10th.

358. **BONELLI'S WARBLER** (*P. bonelli*).—One at Alfriston on Aug. 7th (PJW, VAW). This record has been accepted by *Brit. B.*

364. **GOLDCREST** (*Regulus regulus*).—Was widely reported in the breeding season and in the winter months.

Few birds were recorded on spring passage. In autumn, at Beachy Head some were seen between Sept. 18th and Nov. 2nd. The maxima there were 100 on Sept. 26th and 80 on Oct. 22nd.

365. **FIRECREST** (*R. ignicapillus*).—In January one was recorded in Rackham Woods on the 14th and there was one in the Cuckmere Valley between Feb. 18th and 25th. Spring passage may have commenced as early as Mar. 8th. Between this date and May 10th, about 18 were reported with maxima of 5 at Beachy Head on Mar. 24th and 3 there on May 5th.

On July 19th, a single bird was observed when feeding young. Satisfactory evidence of identification was received but for security reasons, the names of the observers and the locality are not being published. This is the first breeding record for the County but as this species is now breeding in some numbers in spruce plantations in other counties, further records of breeding are likely.

On autumn passage, more than 20 were seen between Sept. 1st and Nov. 3rd. At Beachy Head, there were 5 on Oct. 15th and up to 7 on Oct. 27th and 28th. All the records were for localities on or near the coast. On Nov. 7th, one and almost certainly 2 birds were seen at Slinfold and on Nov. 25th one was recorded at Shoreham-by-Sea.

366. **SPOTTED FLYCATCHER** (*Muscicapa striata*).—Single birds were recorded at Bishopstone on Apr. 22nd and in the Rye Harbour LNR on Apr. 30th. On May 14th, about 20 were seen in the Cuckmere Valley. On May 19th, one arrived from the sea at Selsey Bill.

In the breeding season was reported from about 20 localities.

On autumn passage, was recorded between Aug. 21st and Oct. 15th. At Beachy Head, there were 15 on Aug. 21st and at Pagham Harbour, 12 on Sept. 16th.

368. **PIED FLYCATCHER** (*Ficedula hypoleuca*).—In spring, about 9 were recorded between Apr. 27th and May 5th. Most were in the Beachy Head area but single birds were seen in the Cuckmere Valley, at Hassocks and at Kingley Vale.

More than 70 were recorded on autumn passage between Aug. 9th and Oct. 16th. The majority were on or near the coast and at Beachy Head there were peaks of 15 on Aug. 21st and 25 on Aug. 29th.

370. **RED-BREASTED FLYCATCHER** (*F. parva*).—One was trapped at Beachy Head on Oct. 16th (BEC, JFC, MEN, BW).

371. **DUNNOCK** (*Prunella modularis*).—Ten nests at Plumpton produced 13 young, an average brood size of 1.3; 4 nests were successful.

373. **MEADOW PIPIT** (*Anthus pratensis*).—At Beachy Head, the arrival of 300 was recorded between Apr. 1st and May 2nd. There were 500 E. at Beachy Head on Oct. 5th and 6th and on Oct. 12th, 200 were recorded on the downs near Steyning.

In the breeding season, there were records from Ashdown Forest, Jarvis Brook, Punnett's Town and the Rye Harbour LNR.

375. **TAWNY PIPIT** (*A. campestris*).—One was seen at Arlington Res. on Aug. 6th (PJW). At Beachy Head there was one on Aug. 30th and 4 were seen from Oct. 7th to 10th. Another was recorded from Oct. 15th to 17th (RHC, JFC, AQ, *et al.*). In the same locality single birds were seen on Sept. 22nd (JAL) and Oct. 28th (RFP, IRW). These records have been accepted by *Brit. B.*

376. **TREE PIPIT** (*A. trivialis*).—First recorded on Apr. 14th at Beachy Head and Marley.

In the breeding season, there were records from 18 localities but this figure is obviously on the low side.

On the return passage, there were records from Beachy Head from Aug. 11th to Oct. 6th. The maxima there were 50 on Sept. 5th and 40 E. on Sept. 9th.

377. **RED-THROATED PIPIT** (*A. cervinus*).—One at Beachy Head on Oct. 6th (JFC). This record has been accepted by *Brit. B.*

379. **ROCK PIPIT** (*A. spinoletta*).—In the early months there were records from the coast between Pagham Harbour and Eastbourne.

In the breeding season, up to 4 birds were seen at Rottingdean and there were records from Seven Sisters and Beachy Head.

From the end of the breeding season to the end of the year there were a few records from the coast.

Single birds showing the characters of the race *spinoletta* were seen at Arlington Res. on Mar. 17th (MJR), at Sidlesham Ferry on Apr. 14th (CFH, MJWH) and Apr. 25th (RJS). Field notes were received in support of these records.

380. **PIED WAGTAIL** (*Motacilla alba*).—In January and from October to December, up to 500 roosted in glasshouses containing rose bushes, at Thakeham. The roosting in January ended when the rose bushes were pruned. Roosts were also located at Arundel, Littleington and Plumpton but these were in the open. Few breeding season records or records relating to passage were received although 25 were recorded at Beachy Head on Sept. 22nd and Oct. 6th.

381. **GREY WAGTAIL** (*M. cinerea*).—In the breeding season, pairs or single birds were recorded in 41 localities. Seven pairs are known to have bred successfully.

Outside the breeding season, there were records from, at least, 22 localities.

On Mar. 11th, 3 flew in from the sea at Selsey and at Beachy Head, movement was observed between Aug. 19th and Nov. 2nd. On Sept. 22nd, 25 were recorded there.

382. **YELLOW WAGTAIL** (*M. flava*).—On Jan. 7th and 13th, one was seen at Glynde. This record is the second for the county, for January.

In the spring, was first recorded on Mar. 26th, in the Rye Harbour LNR. Information for the breeding season is far from complete but 7 pairs are known to have bred at Glynde and 6 pairs in the Rye Harbour area.

In the autumn, 70 were seen at Church Norton on Sept. 17th and on Sept. 18th, more than 500 were recorded at Cadborough.

At Beachy Head, passage birds were seen between Aug. 11th and Sept. 25th with a maximum of 100 on Sept. 5th.

A bird showing the characters of the race *flava* was recorded at Rye Harbour on May 1st.

384. **GREAT GREY SHRIKE** (*Lanius excubitor*).—The records are given under localities. Ashdown Forest, one from Jan. 16th to Feb. 21st (CFT, DCS) and one on Dec. 1st (CFT). Amberley Wild Brooks, one from Feb. 11th to Mar. 3rd (RB, CMJ). Beachy Head, one up to Mar. 18th and one on Oct. 27th and 30th. Weir Wood Res., one from Mar. 24th to 28th (RJB, *et al.*). Glynde, one from Oct. 20th to Dec. 1st (JAB, WM). Filsham, one on Oct. 30th (WMI). Pevensey, one on Nov. 27th (MEB). Bishopstone, one on Dec. 9th (EH).

385. **LESSER GREY SHRIKE** (*L. minor*).—A juvenile at Sidlesham on Sept. 6th (MS, VAS). This record, which is the fourth for the County, has been accepted by *Brit. B.*

388. **RED-BACKED SHRIKE** (*L. collurio*).—On June 1st, a female was seen at Rye Harbour. On Aug. 11th, a female was recorded at Rottingdean and on Aug. 15th a male was seen at Littleington. On Sept. 9th, 2 were seen at Beachy Head and on Sept. 23rd, a female was observed at Sidlesham Ferry. Between Oct. 16th and 23rd, an immature bird was recorded at Seaford.

391. **HAWFINCH** (*Coccothraustes coccothraustes*).—In the breeding season, was recorded near Bignor, at Northiam, where 5 were seen on Apr. 15th, near Uckfield and at Weir Wood Res.

In March, a single bird was seen in a garden at Crawley and in September, 3 were recorded at Sullington Warren. In September and October, single birds were seen at Beachy Head and on several occasions at Litlington. On Nov. 29th, one was observed at Wych Cross.

392. **GREENFINCH** (*Carduelis chloris*).—The largest flocks were all on the coast in October with one of 200 near Bishopstone on the 14th, one of 220 at Southwick on the 23rd and one of 500 at Rye Harbour on the 29th.

393. **GOLDFINCH** (*C. carduelis*).—In the early months, the largest flock recorded was one of 15 at Kingley Vale on Mar. 3rd.

In April, passage birds were seen at Beachy Head from the 15th and in the Rye Harbour LNR 60 were present at the end of the month. At Beachy Head, there were 70 W. on May 9th.

At Plumpton, 3 pairs raised 12 young.

In September, 80 were recorded in the Rye Harbour LNR on the 3rd and a flock of 100 was present at Mundham on the 15th. At Beachy Head, there were 5,500 E. on Oct. 6th and 2,000 were recorded there on Oct. 16th.

394. **SISKIN** (*C. spinus*).—Not so many records as usual were received for the early part of the year and the numbers recorded were very small. There was a marked increase, however, in the numbers of birds feeding in gardens and a note on this subject appears on page 60.

Passage was recorded at Beachy Head on 6 days between Mar. 18th and May 1st. On Apr. 4th, there were more than 100 in Friston Forest and a male was recorded at Rye as late as June 1st.

In the autumn, was first seen at Litlington on Sept. 18th and small numbers were recorded at Beachy Head from Oct. 6th to 28th. Once again, there were few reports for the end of the year although there were 100 at Horsham on Dec. 16th and 50 at Sheffield Park on Dec. 24th.

395. **LINNET** (*Acanthis cannabina*).—There were no records for January and February but in early March a flock of more than 200 was seen at Lullington Heath and another of 200 on the downs at Southwick.

In the Rye Harbour LNR, was a common breeding species and at Plumpton, 14 nests produced 47 young.

Between Aug. 17th and Oct. 13th, large flocks were seen in a number of localities with one of at least 2,000 in a kale field at Beachy Head on Oct. 7th. Flocks of smaller size were present until the end of the year. On Oct. 16th there were 1,000 E. at Beachy Head.

396. **TWITE** (*A. flavirostris*).—With the exception of two seen on the downs at Portslade on Oct. 14th (GAS) all the records were from localities on or near the coast.

The monthly totals were:—

Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
161	81	10	22	175	216

397. **REDPOLL** (*A. flammea*).—In the early months, there were records from 11 localities. The numbers were mainly small but up to 40 were recorded at Rotherfield on Apr. 12th.

In the breeding season, there were records from the following but few birds were seen.

Albourne	Iping
Ashdown Forest	Netherfield
Chailey Common	Rotherfield
Icklesham	St. Leonards Forest

Autumn passage was recorded at Beachy Head from Sept. 23rd and on Oct. 17th, 250 were seen there. In the interior of the county, there were records from Oct. 18th to the end of the year. Up to 100 were seen at Copthorne in December but elsewhere the numbers were very small.

400. **SERIN** (*Serinus serinus*).—In one area single birds were seen on Apr. 20th and 24th. A pair was present on May 5th. For security reasons the locality is not being mentioned in this Report. These records have been accepted by Brit. B.

404. **CROSSBILL** (*Loxia curvirostra*).—As mentioned in the Report for 1972, there was a considerable influx in August in that year. Some birds were still present in at least 4 localities in March, 1973, and in two of these there were records up to the middle of April. Although breeding was suspected in one area, this was not proved. There were no records for May but on June 2nd, 8 were seen in one locality and one was observed on June 17th.

In the second half of the year, one was seen near East Grinstead on Sept. 6th but there were no other records.

408. **BRAMBLING** (*Fringilla montifringilla*).—On Jan. 11th, 50 were seen at Compton and on Nov. 30th, 80 were recorded at Shoreham-by-Sea. Elsewhere the numbers wintering, at both ends of the year, were very small.

410. **CORN BUNTING** (*Emberiza calandra*).—In the breeding season, there were records from at least 20 localities. Most of these were on or near the downs but as usual there were a few records from coastal areas in the south-east and south-west of the county. A record of 15 singing males in a restricted area at Hassocks was more unusual for this may indicate an extension of range. More information about breeding in the Hassocks area would be welcome.

Outside the breeding season, there were records from a number of areas, with 75 at Arlington Res. on Jan. 24th and 200 in the Cuckmere Valley on Mar. 28th as the maxima. There was one at West Chiltington on Sept. 19th.

415. **CIRL BUNTING** (*E. cirillus*).—See Cirl Bunting Survey on page 57.

421. **REED BUNTING** (*E. schoeniclus*).—In the breeding season, there were records from about 15 localities.

On Apr. 2nd, 2 flocks totalling 200 birds were seen at Sidlesham. These appeared to be fresh arrivals. On Apr. 21st and 22nd over 100, an exceptional number for the locality, were recorded at Horse Eye Level. The observers suggested that these birds were migrants, delayed by bad weather conditions.

There were a number of reports outside the breeding season, of some visiting gardens and feeding at bird tables in built up areas.

423. **SNOW BUNTING** (*Plectrophenax nivalis*).—In January and February, up to 7 were recorded in the Rye Harbour area. Except for 2 observed near the church at Greatham (RJS) on Mar. 4th there were no other reports for the early months.

On Oct. 12th, one was recorded at Rottingdean and in December, single birds were seen at Pagham Harbour and West Wittering.

424. **HOUSE SPARROW** (*Passer domesticus*).—On Jan. 30th, 900 were present at a roosting place in Dorset Gardens, Brighton (PB). On Aug. 14th a hybrid x Tree Sparrow was trapped at Litlington (PJW).

425. **TREE SPARROW** (*P. montanus*).—No large flocks were reported at the beginning of the year.

Breeding season records were received from 29 widely scattered localities. Autumn migration was first noted at Beachy Head on Sept. 22nd and maxima of 200 were recorded on Oct. 6th and 20th. The only other large flock was one of 200 in the Cissbury/Chanctonbury area on Oct. 12th.

ADDITIONS AND CORRECTIONS TO THE 1970 REPORT

54. **RED-CRESTED POCHARD**.—A first winter male was shot at Rye Harbour on Nov. 2nd (per JGH).

199. **LESSER BLACK-BACKED GULL**.—In St. Leonards-on-Sea, one nest was seen on the roof of a building (HARC).

200. **HERRING GULL**.—In Hastings and St. Leonards-on-Sea, 106 nests were counted on the roofs of buildings. A few of these were up to one mile from the sea (HARC).

ADDITIONS AND CORRECTIONS TO THE 1972 REPORT

16. **MANX SHEARWATER**.—For 81 E. and 3 W. substitute 81 W. and 3 E.

92. **ROUGH-LEGGED BUZZARD**.—One was seen near Chanctonbury Ring on Nov. 27th (PB).

125. **CORNCRAKE**.—One was seen at Cissbury Ring on Sept. 23rd (RDME).

295. **BEARDED TIT**.—At Woods Mill, Henfield, 8 were recorded on Oct. 12th and 2 on Oct. 30th (RDME, CERC).

317. **STONECHAT**.—For Chailey Common 1 substitute Chailey Common 4.

347. **WHITETHROAT**.—One was seen at Darwell Res. on Dec. 17th (JR).

SUMMARY OF BIRD RINGING IN SUSSEX, 1973

Compiled by P. J. WILSON

The total number of birds ringed in Sussex in 1973 reached 20,000 (20,922) for the first time, and the total number of species involved topped 100 (108) also for the first time. This increase (over 30% of previous years' averages) was largely accounted for by the Filsham Ringing Group who are now well established and indeed head the ringing totals for 1973.

This increased activity has, not unexpectedly, produced more recoveries and the following list is, of necessity, even more selective than those in previous Reports.

SELECTED LIST OF RECOVERIES REPORTED IN 1973

Key to symbols and terms
(Ring numbers are omitted)

- | | | | |
|---|-----|---|--------------------|
| 1. Pullus (nestling or chick not yet flying) | Age | v—caught or trapped and released with ring | Manner of Recovery |
| 2. Full grown but year of hatching quite unknown | | +—shot or killed by man | |
| 3. Definitely hatched during current calendar year | | x—found dead or dying | |
| 4. Hatched before current calendar year: | | 0—caught or trapped alive and not released, or released but with ring removed | |
| 5. Definitely hatched last calendar year | | [?]/—method of recovery unknown | |
| 6. Hatched before last calendar year: | | | |
| J. This suffix indicates a bird still in juvenile plumage | | | |
- (Note: Even numbers indicate unknown age. Uneven numbers indicate known age)

Sex
♂—male
♀—female

Distance
The distance is given in kilometres and directions are approximate

BIRDS RINGED IN SUSSEX

Mute Swan	2 birds were recovered in Sussex, one of which had reached an age of at least 14 years and the other was still alive at 12 years
Kestrel	1 27.06.73 Nutley, Ashdown Forest (DW)
	v 28.07.73 Cliff End, Hastings. 46km. ESE
Turtle Dove	x 11.10.73 Tilton, Lewes. 40km. WSW
	3 20.09.73 Hodcombe, Beachy Head (RHC)
Swallow	3 22.09.72 Filsham (FRG)
	[?]/ (25.01.73) Nr. Kasongo, Zaire
	3 09.08.73 Filsham (FRG)
House Martin	4 05.10.73 Rabat, Morocco
	x 15.09.73 Shoreham-by-Sea (JAN)
Wren	x 07.10.73 Dun-le-Palestel, France
	2 18.10.72 Hodcombe, Beachy Head (RHC)
	x 11.08.73 West Soley, Chilton Foliat (Wilts.). 145km. NW
Song Thrush	4 20.10.67 Beachy Head (BHRG)
Ring Ouzel	x 11.11.73 Kesgrave, Ipswich (Suffolk). 136km. NNE
	3 ♀ 09.10.73 Beachy Head (BHRG)
	+ 26.10.73 Coutières, Vertillac (Dordogne), France
	3 ♂ 17.10.73 Beachy Head (BHRG)
	+ 18.10.73 Pensei, Dournigat (Haute Vienne), France

(Note the speed of recovery)

BIRDS RINGED ELSEWHERE AND RECOVERED IN SUSSEX

Swallow	1	21.07.73	Chelvey, Bristol (Somerset)
	v	22.09.73	Chichester G.P. (CRG). 150km. ESE
	3	25.08.73	Frodsham (Cheshire)
	v	09.09.73	Chichester G.P. (CRG). 305km. SE
Sand Martin	4	20.07.73	Mallow (Co. Cork)
	v	10.09.73	Filsham (FRG). 645km. ESE
	3	21.08.73	Radipole, Weymouth (Dorset)
	v	22.09.73	Chichester G.P. (CRG). 120km. ENE
Reed Warbler	4	11.08.73	Wicken Fen (Cambs.)
	v	19.08.73	Filsham (FLG). 155km. S
	3	19.08.73	Swillington, Leeds (Yorks.)
Sedge Warbler	v	04.09.73	Filsham (FRG). 350km. SSE
	3	20.08.73	Walberswick (Suffolk)
	v	06.09.73	Filsham (FRG). 175km. SSW
Willow Warbler	3	24.07.69	Sprothborough, Doncaster (Yorks.)
	v	16.04.73	Hodcombe, Beachy Head (RHC). 320km. SSE
Chiffchaff	3	20.09.72	Willems (Nord), France
	v	17.09.73	Hodcombe, Beachy Head (RHC)

ESTUARY COUNTS OF WADERS AND WILDFOWL IN SUSSEX AND EAST HAMPSHIRE IN 1973/74

By M. SHRUBB

The Western Harbours

Wader and wildfowl counts were made in Chichester and Pagham Harbours during the period October, 1973, to April, 1974, the roosts covered and methods used being the same as in previous years (SxBR 1965, 53; 1968, 70; 1971, 50-51). Similar counts were made in Hampshire and I am allowed to publish the figures they gathered for Langstone and Portsmouth Harbours by B. W. Renyard, D. F. Billett and D. J. Steventon, who organise the counts in Hampshire.

As is now usual this report covers the complete winter of 1973/74, but to save space I have again limited the tables of results to the six months October to March inclusive, although a count was made in April, 1974, in both Sussex and Hampshire and earlier autumn counts were made in 1973 in Hampshire. These figures are retained. However all the counts shown in Tables 2 and 3 covered the entire estuary complex, except one in each of October and March. Additional counts of wildfowl were made in Chichester and Pagham Harbours on Jan. 26th and Feb. 23rd; wader figures from these harbours on Jan. 12th are given in Table 6.

Counting conditions during the winter were often abysmal, with gale force winds and rain. This undoubtedly affected the efficiency and accuracy of the counts and contributed to the fluctuations noted. Some duplication may also occur in the figures, mainly of Grey Plover and Dunlin, as one roost on Hayling Island draws birds from both Chichester and Langstone which may get counted twice. This error is difficult to eliminate and does not always arise; where possible the figures have been adjusted to allow for it.

Blackbird	3 ♂	17.10.70	Litlington (PJJW)
	x	07.07.73	Rang-du-Fliers, Berck (Pas-de-Calais), France
			(This bird was presumably breeding when recovered)
Whinchat	4 ♀	23.06.72	Bexhill-on-Sea (FRG)
	x	28.10.73	Charlestown, St. Austell, Cornwall. 370km. W
	3	31.08.70	Beachy Head (BHRG)
	x	24.06.73	Gonachan Glen, Fintay (Stirling). 660km. NW
Robin	4	15.09.70	Chichester G.P. (CRG)
	x	07.04.71	Amesbury (Wilts.). 80km. WNW
			(Not reported until 1973)
	3	02.09.72	Litlington (PJJW)
	+	04.01.73	Valmaseda (Vizcaya), Spain
	3	18.09.73	Hodcombe, Beachy Head (RHC)
	x	27.11.73	Nogent-le-Sec, Conches (Eval), France
Reed Warbler	4	26.05.68	Chichester G.P. (CRG)
	v	29.06.69	Ithen Abbas, Alrestford (Hants.). 43km. NW
	+	00.05.73	Boulaouane, Khouribga, Morocco
	3	19.09.71	Litlington (PJJW)
	v	15.07.73	Brandon Marsh, Coventry (Warwicks.). 210km. NW
Sedge Warbler	3	16.08.73	Filsham (FRG)
	v	16.09.73	Isle-du-Mignon (Loire Atlantique), France
	3	03.09.71	Chichester G.P. (CRG)
	v	00.08.73	Radipole, Weymouth (Dorset). 120km. WSW
	3	20.08.72	Filsham (FRG)
	x	04.06.73	Between Dingwall and Strathpeffer (Ross-shire). 820km. NNW
	3	26.08.72	Filsham (FRG)
	v	02.05.73	Hornsea Mere (Yorks.). 340km. N
	3	04.08.73	Chichester G.P. (CRG)
	v	17.08.73	Etang de Kergalan (Finistère), France
Blackcap	3 ♂	06.10.71	Beachy Head (BHRG)
		11.08.73	Marzy, Nevers (Nievre), France
			There were also controls from Berkshire, Yorkshire, Hampshire, Somerset and Cambs. (2)
Willow Warbler	2	06.08.72	Hodcombe, Beachy Head (RHC)
	v	03.05.73	Cap Gris Nez (Pas de Calais), France
	2	11.08.72	Chichester G.P. (CRG)
	x	09.08.73	Blithbury, Rugely (Staffs.). 220km. NNW
Chiffchaff	2	07.10.71	Beachy Head (BHRG)
	x	04.03.73	Noja (Santander), Spain
Goldcrest	2	14.10.73	Beachy Head (BHRG)
	x	02.12.73	Lamothe, La Reole, Landerron (Gironde), France
Starling	2 ♂	25.11.72	Bexhill-on-Sea (FRG)
	x	06.05.73	Enschede, Netherlands
Greenfinch	4	16.01.72	St. Leonards-on-Sea (FRG)
	v	21.01.73	Sheringham (Norfolk). 230km. N
Goldfinch	3 J	26.07.72	Hodcombe, Beachy Head (RHC)
	v	26.04.73	Santurce (Vizcaya), Spain
	3	20.09.72	Hodcombe, Beachy Head (RHC)
	x	03.01.73	Persac, Bordeaux, (Gironde), France
	3	24.09.73	Hodcombe, Beachy Head (RHC)
	x	(21.11.73)	Vilzmen (Noord Brabant), Netherlands
Siskin	6 ♂	28.01.73	Pebsham (FRG)
	v	11.03.73	Byfleet (Surrey). 85km. NW
Redpoll	2	25.04.72	Hodcombe, Beachy Head (RHC)
	x	(22.11.73)	Deesbach, Neuhaus (Suhl in Thuringen), E. Germany
	4 ♂	08.10.72	Litlington (PJJW)
	x	11.02.73	St. Jean-le-Centenier (Ardèche), France

In addition to the normal estuary counts from the shore one count of wildfowl, covering all Chichester Harbour, was made by boat on Jan. 1st. The results are given in Table 1 and make an interesting comparison with the conventional counts, particularly the much higher numbers of grebes, Wigeon, Pintail, Goldeneye and Mergansers. Without doubt this disparity results from the poor weather conditions. Grebes, Goldeneyes and Mergansers are all difficult to detect and count accurately in rough water and the very high rainfall in January, with the subsequent flooding of inland areas like the Amberley/Pulborough marshes, possibly attracted some surface-feeding ducks away from the estuaries.

The results of the main counts are given in Tables 2 and 3 and once again the totals in Chichester Harbour were rather higher than in previous years, in some cases markedly so. The highest count there was made on Jan. 26th when a total of 51,900 birds was recorded, 13,500 waterfowl and 38,400 waders. In Langstone Harbour on this date there were 8,345 waterfowl and 27,375 waders, in Portsmouth Harbour 58 waterfowl and 11,185 waders and in Pagham Harbour 1,340 waterfowl and 4,225 waders, making a grand total of 104,430 birds, 23,245 waterfowl and 81,185 waders, of which 80% were Dunlin. The highest wader count of all in Chichester Harbour was on Oct. 13th, with 39,900 waders and, in fact, over 30,000 waders were present there throughout the period, except in November and March (c. 28,000) and over 10,000 ducks, geese and swans during most of January and February.

The outstanding event of the winter was the enormous increase of Dark-breasted Brent Geese. Estimates of the world population of this goose have shown a rapid increase in the past five years and the counts of 1973/74 suggested a world total of over 60,000 birds. In Chichester and Langstone Harbours numbers rose from a total of 185 on Oct. 14th to one of 12,145 on Dec. 9th. As there had been only c. 1,900 in mid November there must have been an unprecedented arrival in late November. Numbers in the whole area remained at around 12,000 for two months but had declined to c. 7,600 by early March. Throughout the period November to March the area supported an average of 9,200 geese, 4,000 in Langstone and 5,200 in Chichester Harbour.

For the first time there was a marked divergence in pattern in the two harbours. The peak count in Langstone was 6,075 on Dec. 9th, very early, and numbers thereafter declined steadily. In Chichester Harbour 6,070 Brent were also counted on Dec. 9th and numbers then rose to a peak of 7,500 on Jan. 26th (not tabulated), before birds began to leave the area in late February and March, the normal pattern. Two factors probably contributed to this change. Firstly Chichester Harbour is simply larger than Langstone and thus may ultimately be able to support more geese. Secondly the very rough weather of January and February undoubtedly stripped much of the Brents' food plants off the mudflats of Langstone Harbour but affected the food supply far less in the more sheltered areas of Chichester. Some movement between the two harbours by the Brent is now known to occur in the Langstone Bridge area and the massive increase (much greater than in these harbours as a whole) in the area between Langstone Bridge and Emsworth (72/73 max. 265, 73/74 max. 1,600) suggests that considerable numbers of geese switched harbours there. Certainly I do not believe that the virtually static total count from early December to early February is just chance.

Elsewhere many more Brent also wintered in Pagham Harbour with a peak count of 550 on Jan. 26th and an average of 245 from November to March.

Other smaller flocks were noted in the Solent, where a grand total of c. 14,000 was probably present in January and February.

Other wildfowl records of interest in Chichester Harbour were the record numbers of Goldeneye, with 234 counted from a boat on Jan. 1st, and the low counts of Mergansers. These have already been commented on, as have the counts of surface-feeding ducks which were also rather low. Shelduck numbers showed little change, with a peak count of just over 3,000, about average.

Among the waders several noteworthy points arise from the counts. Dunlin were again very numerous, with peak counts of around 30,000 in Chichester and Langstone Harbours. Some duplication is likely in the figures but the combined figures for January and February show a peak of c. 55,000 birds, with a further c. 10,000 in Portsmouth Harbour. Altogether this harbour complex held an average of c. 53,000 Dunlin throughout the period November to March, nearly half (25,470) in Chichester Harbour. Some high counts of Grey Plover were also made, particularly a record of 3,180 in the whole complex in October. Numbers remained high for much of the winter, with several counts of over 1,000 birds in both Chichester and Langstone Harbours; the winter average from November to March for the whole complex was c. 1,400 birds.

The peak count of Bar-tailed Godwits in Chichester Harbour reached c. 1,400 birds for the third successive winter. None of the other harbours supports so large a flock, although up to 300 were recorded in Langstone. This species is generally scarce in Southern England, where the Chichester flock is probably by far the largest wintering group. Black-tailed Godwits were more widespread, with sizeable flocks in Chichester, Langstone and Pagham, and in Portsmouth Harbour until November; the winter average for the whole area was 890 birds. Most were present in January and March, when there were over 1,000, and the highest single count was of 840 in Chichester Harbour in March.

Knot continue to occur in comparatively large flocks, with a peak count of 1,800 in the whole complex on Jan. 26th, small beer compared to many areas but still large numbers for this coast. By contrast Sanderling were virtually absent from all these harbours, with only one three figure count from Chichester, although there were also 100 in Pagham Harbour on Jan. 12th.

Rye Harbour

Regular counts of wildfowl and waders were again made in this locality from October to March and the results are given in Table 4. Good numbers of Pochard were found once more, with a peak count of 450 in November and January. This is by far the largest flock in Sussex and one of the larger flocks recorded by the National Estuary Counts. Numbers of Scoter offshore were very low. Few outstanding wader records were gathered, numbers being about average. However there was, as usual, a good variety of species, including 2 rather late Wood Sandpipers and a February Little Stint.

Coast-line Counts

Two counts of waders along the whole county coast-line were made in 1973/74, on Dec. 9th and Jan. 12th. The weather was good on the first date but very poor on the second, which must have affected the figures. Even so a total of 50,085 waders was found, and 49,255 on Dec. 9th. Once again the most numerous species were Dunlin, accounting for 60% of the totals, and Lapwing which accounted for 19%. The number of Sanderling found was very low, with only c. 300-360 in the Climping/Worthing area and few elsewhere. Otherwise the counts recorded no unusual numbers and the results are given in Tables 5 and 6.

At Pevensey and Pett counts were, in fact, made throughout the winter. At Pevensey the main wader species were Lapwing, with a peak of 7,000 in December, Golden Plover, with a peak of 750 in January, and Snipe, with a peak of 400 in December and February. Up to 120 Turnstones were also noted in December, the largest flock noted in Sussex during this winter. At Pett there was also a sizeable Lapwing flock, reaching 500 birds in January, and up to 300 Golden Plover. Snipe were scarce but there were also up to 250 Curlew. The wildfowl counts from these areas are summarised in the table on page 48.

TABLE 1. WILDFOWL COUNT IN CHICHESTER HARBOUR FROM BOAT JAN. 1st, 1974

Species	Total present
Great Crested Grebe	21
Slavonian Grebe	4
Little Grebe	53
Cormorant	18
Mallard	17
Teal	340
Wigeon	1065
Pintail	170
Goldeneye	235
Merganser	43
Shelduck	2575
Brent Goose	6200
TOTAL	10740

TABLE 2. WILDFOWL TOTALS IN PAGHAM, CHICHESTER, LANGSTONE AND PORTSMOUTH HARBOURS 1973/74

Species	13/14 Oct.		10/11 Nov.		9 Dec.					
	Chi.	Lang. Port.	Pag.	Chi. Lang. Port.	Pag.	Chi. Lang. Port.				
Great Crested Grebe	1	10	4	2	15	6	1	?	35	8
Slavonian Grebe							7	1	30	
Black-necked Grebe							6	43	3	
Little Grebe	24	15	4	32	28	5				
Cormorant										
Mallard	260	69	170	105	50		25	160	45	
Teal	300	704	20	40+	650	6	190	450	590	
Wigeon	90	1400		85	600		1	530	473	
Pintail				34			16	48	43	
Shoveler	7	12	27				25		14	
Tufted Duck										
Goldeneye	5		4	17	12			54	134	18
Merganser	7		2					35	20	
Shelduck				695	137	1	600	1770	923	7
Brent Goose	355	108	40	425	1500		300	6070	6073	200
Mute Swan										
Whooper Swan	22		2	9		2	2	48		15
Coot				?			2	4	680	

NOTE: A ? indicates that the species was present but not counted, a blank space that none was recorded.

TABLE 2 (continued)

Species	12 Jan.		9 Feb.		9/10 Mar.			
	Pag.	Chi. Lang. Port.	Pag.	Chi. Lang. Port.	Chi.	Lang. Port.		
Great Crested Grebe		4	60	1	15	21	18	4
Slavonian Grebe		16	1		2		16	1
Black-necked Grebe		1	6+		1		1	1+
Little Grebe		23	5	73	36	?	21	39
Cormorant					9		19	
Mallard		40	145	45	15	50	135	35
Teal		40	135	500	40	165	200	215
Wigeon		50	530	500	?	265	200	55
Pintail		60	35	100	?	75	60	155
Shoveler		1		58		24		10
Scamp								5
Tufted Duck		43			1			25
Fochard		2	10		130			5
Goldeneye		2	55	70	75			65
Long-tailed Duck			2		110	40	1	25
Eider					2			3
Merganser		1	30	26	3	11		12
Shelduck		400	3115	1405	5	30	20	16
Brent Goose		500	6850	5500	545	3080	850	2
Mute Swan		2	90		?	7390	4515	2130
Coot			2050		4	50		720
								2405
								180
								800

TABLE 3. WADER TOTALS IN PAGHAM, CHICHESTER, LANGSTONE AND PORTSMOUTH HARBOURS 1973/74

Species	13/14 Oct.		10/11 Nov.		9 Dec.						
	Chi.	Lang. Port.	Pag.	Chi. Lang. Port.	Pag.	Chi. Lang. Port.					
Oystercatcher	960	650	400	105	650	?	450	165	675	650	440
Lapwing	1025	60	60	60	625	180	235	905	220		
Ring-necked Plover	105	150	110	11	135	200	160	30	65	30	50
Grey Plover	2850	300	40	25	675	285	60	140	1025	335	140
Golden Plover	315				460						
Turnstone	85	125	3	8	40	75	85	16	5	70	80
Snipe	105	150			11+	?		5	?	100	
Jack Snipe											
Curlew	860	290	405	15	520	405	270	85	280	200	260
Black-tailed Godwit	355	35	425	1	390	285	205	60	560	225	
Bar-tailed Godwit	1290	45		3	605	120					
Redshank	3035	550	230	100	1035	170	490	205	755	300	175
Spotted Redshank	12	1						1	6		
Greenshank	100	27	1								
Knot	310				50	200	180				
Curlew Sandpiper	3										
Dunlin	28500	10800	4190	3150	23430	11890	8275	1625	26850	13400	8300
Sanderling											
Ruff	2										
											4

NOTE: A ? indicates that the species was present but not counted, a blank space that none was recorded.

TABLE 3 (continued)

Species	26 Jan.		9 Feb.		23 Feb.		9/10 Mar.	
	Pag.	Chi. Lang. Port.	Pag.	Chi. Lang.	Pag.	Chi. Lang.	Pag.	Chi. Lang. Port.
Oystercatcher	40	600 700 400	120	650	435	450	355	420
Lapwing	300	795 1000	195	1100	?	625	500	?
Ringed Plover	20	80 55	8	80	40	105	30	7
Golden Plover	95	880 475 160	?	455	18	645	60	19
	1	510		340		430		
Turnstone	30	20 22 100	30	22	4	25	65	3
Jack Snipe	?	190		110		145	130	
Curlew	155	1505 500 485	95	930	175	635	265	350
Black-tailed Godwit	150	400 500	50	310	250	840	70	
Black-tailed Godwit	1400	150 8	1230	40		460	18	1
Redshank	275	1420 300 310	75	890	300	685	405	330
Spot Redshank	1		1		1	2	1	
Greenshank	3		1	3	1	385	14	10
Knot	1020	470 300	550	600	80			
Dunlin	3155	29775 23000 9240	2500	25000	30100	23285	10050	12680
Purp. S'piper	1		15					
Sanderling	not recorded							
Ruff	4	3	2	3				
Avocet	1							

TABLE 4. WADER AND WILDFOWL COUNT TOTALS AT RYE HARBOUR, OCTOBER, 1973, TO MARCH, 1974

Species	14 Oct.	18 Nov.	9 Dec.	12 Jan.	17 Feb.	17 Mar.
	Mallard	50	190	100	160	80
Teal	30	145	50	30	25	4
Gadwall	8	7	8	12	18	6
Wigeon	8	20	60	28	6	
Shoveler	2	6				
Scaup	60	60	100	120	80	40
Tufted Duck	380	450	400	450	180	
Goldeneye		2	2	2	2	
Long-tailed Duck	40	10	60	80	30	35
Common Scoter	6	4	4	3	3	4
Eider	6	6	9	8	8	9
Shelduck	15	10	18	15	20	10
Canada Goose	350	400	560	520	480	160
Mute Swan						
Coot	240	300	210	180	230	160
Oyster Catcher	120	180	150	380	80	40
Lapwing	18	15	24	32	14	12
Ringed Plover	8	10	21	20	18	8
Grey Plover	22	18	40	35	12	8
Golden Plover	8	10	16	21	4	6
Turnstone	10	45	80	120	20	8
Jack Snipe	3	1				
Curlew	3	1				
Black-tailed Godwit	2	2				
Green Sandpiper	4	2				
Wood Sandpiper	16	1				
Common Sandpiper			18	24	16	12
Redshank						
Spotted Redshank			13		1	
Little Stint	40	70	140	180	30	
Knot	20	2	80	65	20	25
Dunlin						
Sanderling						
Ruff						

NOTE: The wildfowl count in December was, in fact, made on the 16th, not the 9th.

Species	Chichester Harbour	Pagharn Harbour	Climping	Goring/Worthing	Shorham	Newhaven/Cuckmere	Pevsey Bay	Pett Level	Rye Harbour	Total
Oystercatcher	675	165	142	15			4	15	210	1226
Lapwing	905	235					2000	480	150	9570
Ringed Plover	65	30	1	70	30	800	18	6	24	239
Grey Plover	1025	140	40	40		25	14		21	1241
Golden Plover	740					4	600	150	25	1519
Turnstone	5	16	2			42	120	11	40	194
Snipe	100	5				42	400	12	16	596
Jack Snipe	1					18	4	2	80	694
Curlew	280	85				11	220			620
Black-tailed Godwit	560	60		2						947
Bar-tailed Godwit	945									2
Green Sandpiper			3	20	50	44	15	6	18	1116
Redshank	755	205	1							7
Spotted Redshank	6									1
Greenshank	1		7			25	2			34
Purple Sandpiper	325								13	338
Knot	26850	1625	300	1150	500	130	30	30	140	30455
Dunlin										80
Sanderling	20			60						460
Ruff	4					4				8

TABLE 6. SUSSEX COASTLINE WADER COUNT, JANUARY 12th, 1974

Species	Chichester Harbour	Pagharn Harbour	Climping	Goring/Worthing	Shorham	Newhaven/Cuckmere	Pevsey Bay	Pett Level	Rye Harbour	Total
Oystercatcher	505	130	160	4			8	21	180	1008
Lapwing	2635	400			6	600	5000	500	380	9515
Ringed Plover	100	45		40		20	36	18	32	287
Grey Plover	450	85					0	9		763
Golden Plover	205						750	300	40	1295
Turnstone	35	60	1			3	60	13	35	204
Snipe	100						350	22	21	475
Jack Snipe										6
Curlew	1150	225				12	31	200	120	1738
Black-tailed Godwit	615	113								730
Bar-tailed Godwit	1350									1350
Green Sandpiper	1395	155	2	4	40	27	23	11	24	1681
Wood Sandpiper										5
Redshank										1
Spotted Redshank	1									1
Little Stint	1210									1210
Knot										1
Purple Sandpiper										14
Dunlin	25000	3400	5	200	300	25	11	20	180	29265
Sanderling	20	100	300			80	85			65
Ruff	18									18

AN ADDITIONAL NOTE ON THE CANADA GOOSE IN SUSSEX

Following the publication of the paper on the introduction, history and status of the Canada Goose in Sussex (*Sussex Bird Report*, 1972) records have been received, which add substantially to the accuracy and completeness of the account.

The detailed information now available for Heath Lake, Petersfield (Hants.) suggests that the post-war population there is quite independent of the West Sussex population based at Petworth Park. It is now known that Heath Lake was used regularly by visiting parties during the years 1941-1945 and a pair bred there in 1946. Thereafter there were few records until 1953 when there were again records of visiting birds which are thought to have come from waters in north-east Hampshire. A pair was introduced at Heath Lake by the Council in 1955. They failed to breed successfully in 1955 and 1956 but young were reared in 1957, and by 1959 the resident flock numbered nine. Breeding has been regular since and a few pairs have nested at nearby waters in Sussex, e.g. West Harting pond.

In East Sussex it has been confirmed that breeding has occurred on at least one occasion in the Cuckmere valley. A pair nested south of Exceat Bridge in 1969; two young were subsequently found on the main road, where one was killed before it could be caught. The second was hand reared and released at Dungeness. In 1970 there was a nest north of Exceat but no young were seen. Successful breeding has also been reported from East Hoathly, where a pair raised six young in 1972 thereby contributing to the recent dramatic increase in the East Sussex population.

I am indebted to Miss W. P. White and P. J. Wilson for researching their personal notes and P. B. Clarke for sending me details of the breeding site at East Hoathly.

S. W. M. HUGHES

THE BREEDING, DISTRIBUTION AND STATUS OF THE STONECHAT IN SUSSEX, 1962-1973

By S. W. M. HUGHES and M. SHRUBB

In 1962 the Sussex Ornithological Society initiated an enquiry into the breeding status of the Stonechat (*Saxicola torquata*) in Sussex. This was continued in 1963 and 1964, when it was apparent that the severe winter of 1962-63 had so depleted the breeding population that it would take a number of years to recover its pre-1962 level. It therefore seemed appropriate to undertake a more prolonged study than originally envisaged and this paper summarises the data collected over a 10-year study period (1962-1971) and also includes available records for 1972 and 1973.

Methods

The Stonechat was included in the Society's programme of breeding surveys for 1962, 1963, 1964, 1969 and 1971, and in these years efforts were made to obtain coverage of all the previously documented breeding sites, as well as other areas where the species might occur. In the years 1967, 1968 and 1970 a few

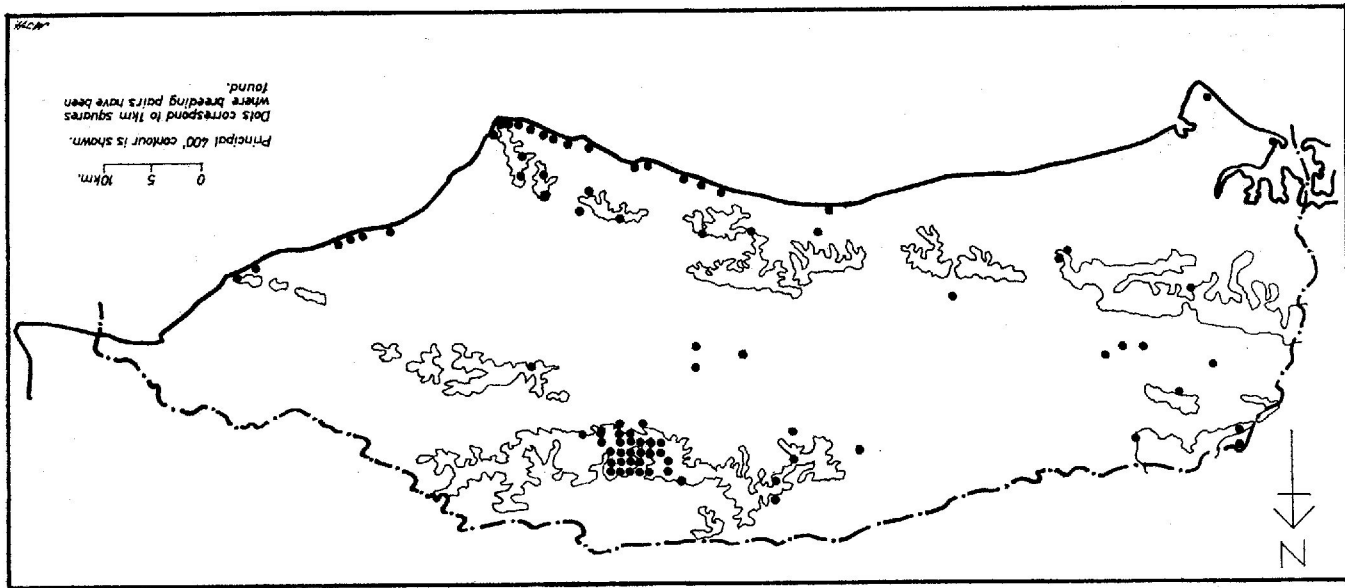


Fig. 1.—The Breeding Distribution of the Stonechat in Sussex, 1962-1973

observers were asked to report on selected breeding areas only. No special coverage was organised in 1965 and 1966.

Members participating in survey work were asked to record the number of pairs, or alternatively territorial males, found at each locality during the months of May-August inclusive.

The results presented in Table 1 have been expressed in terms of occupied territories, rather than breeding pairs, as breeding or the presence of a definite pair was not always established. Records of unaccompanied juveniles have been disregarded as dispersal of young from first broods occurs very soon after fledging.

Coverage

Coverage during the official breeding surveys and also in 1967, 1968 and 1970 was particularly good except in the extreme north-west of the county and in the Bexhill and Hastings areas. As might be expected, coverage was less good in 1965 and 1966 when no special arrangements were made. However, even in these years the most important breeding localities were visited.

The areas involved are listed in Table 1. In addition the following areas, searched during the survey work, held no Stonechats: the Downs at Harting, between the rivers Arun and Adur, between the A23 and Ditchling Beacon, and around Mount Harry, Buckland Bank and Ashcombe Bottom; and elsewhere at Lavington, Duncton, Woolbeeding, Stanley, Marley, Linchmere, Iron Hill and Wiggonholt Commons; and the coastal areas at Winchelsea, Rye and Camber.

Stonechats were discovered breeding in young coniferous plantations in the north-west of the county in the years 1962-1966 and therefore members were asked to look out for this species when visiting plantations during the 1967-1970 Tree Pit survey. Coverage of this particular habitat was thus quite good.

Results

The distribution of Stonechats during the 1962-1973 breeding seasons is shown in figure 1. The bulk of the population was concentrated in two areas, Ashdown Forest and the Downs between Brighton and Eastbourne, particularly the Beachy Head area. Elsewhere the distribution was very disjoint, with scattered pairs on the commons in the west and north-west of the county, in one or two sites on the forest ridges of north central Sussex, on the few remaining commons of East Sussex and along the coast between Bexhill and Hastings. There were also a few isolated pairs on the Downs west of Brighton. This distribution coincides closely with that of substantial areas of gorse in the county although there are some apparently suitable gorse brakes on the Downs which do not now attract breeding pairs.

The numbers of occupied territories reported from each locality are given in Table 1. Despite obvious gaps in coverage the figures are sufficiently comprehensive for certain conclusions to be drawn. It is clear that irrespective of the total population level in any year Ashdown Forest and the coast between the river Cuckmere and Beachy Head together hold more than half of the total county population. The effect of the severe winter of 1962-1963 can be detected in the figures, but is not as marked as might have been expected. In part, lack of coverage in 1962, particularly on the Downs in East Sussex away from the coast, produced an artificially low figure but the population was also relatively low following the moderately severe winter of 1961-1962.

Careful observations at Beachy Head have shown that the local breeding population re-attained its 1962 level in 1966 (Quinn and Clement 1972) and the total figures for the county support this. The continued growth of the population in 1967 and 1968 suggest that the peak in 1969, as shown in Table 1, is genuine and not an artifact produced by variations in coverage. It is known that the 1961-62 winter reduced the numbers of Stonechats nesting in the county, so that this peak may reflect a full recovery to the pre-1962 status and indicate a not uncommon population of 50-60 pairs; note that some territories were not checked in 1969 and allowance for these gives a total of 61 pairs. The population clearly varies as a decline not associated with severe winter weather was recorded in 1970 and 1971 although the latter figure may be too low owing to poor coverage of the coastal areas.

Discussion

Reviewing the national changes in status of British species over the century prior to the 1939-1945 war Alexander and Lack (1938) concluded that the Stonechat had decreased locally due to a decrease of 'wasteland'. More recently Parslow (1967) has confirmed the decline in the eastern half of the country, and locally elsewhere, particularly since the 1930s.

Walpole-Bond (1938) described the pre-war distribution of the species in Sussex as being confined to the South Downs and rough ground, along or near the coast, including railway embankments, margins of marshes, the hills between Hastings and Pett and the shingle beaches with gorse cover. Very few pairs were said to breed in the interior and these were confined to the heaths and commons. Even in the most favoured areas, the species was unevenly distributed and the greater part of the population was based in East Sussex.

Comparison of Walpole-Bond's account with to-day's breeding distribution (figure 1) suggests that there has been very little overall change during the last 40 years. The species has however been lost from several sites, particularly along the coast and on the Downs and, in the last decade, it has ceased to breed at the Midrips, at Camber and at Truleigh Hill where it was formerly regular. The only gain in recent years has been a slight extension of range on the forest ridges in north central Sussex where isolated pairs have bred successfully in young coniferous plantations. This development is considered later in more detail.

A comparison of pre-war and present-day status is more difficult, particularly as numbers of this species may vary considerably from year to year. Nevertheless some decline has certainly occurred. Walpole-Bond described Stonechats as locally abundant in the late 1930s but this term has not applied to any Sussex locality in more recent years. Some breeding sites are also known to have been lost or deserted and, at others, numbers have declined or nesting has become irregular. The lack of figures, however, makes it impossible to quantify the decrease.

The causes of the national decline of the Stonechat were investigated by Magee (1965) who concluded that it was partly due to the effects of the severe winters of 1946-1947, 1955-1956, 1962-1963 but, more important, to the destruction of habitat through changes in land use and human disturbance. Although losses after hard winters are rapidly made good on optimum habitats small isolated populations may be wiped out completely. The more isolated and smaller these populations become through further destruction and fragmentation of suitable breeding habitat, the longer it is before recolonisation takes place.

There can be no doubt that each of these factors has played its part in Sussex. The destruction of habitat, especially the loss, often from careless fires, of gorse from the Downs and of scrub from railway embankments, changes in land use, in particular the ploughing up of downland and ploughing or afforestation of many commons, and the increasing usage of all open spaces by the growing population of south-east England are all too obvious. Fortunately both Ashdown Forest and Beachy Head, the species' last strongholds, are afforded some degree of protection from development, but nevertheless vigilance is still required to stop habitat erosion. Careful management of the recently established Cuckmere Country Park, which includes the Seven Sisters, could provide an opportunity for the Beachy Head population to expand and also provide some continuity with the isolated pairs on partially protected sites to the west of the River Cuckmere. Elsewhere there seems little chance for the species to improve its status unless suitable habitat is created.

It has already been mentioned that the Stonechat has shown some ability to adapt to young coniferous plantations. The favoured habitat of this kind is where the trees are under 10 years of age and the undergrowth of heather and bracken moderately luxuriant, the tops of the young trees being used as song and look-out posts. After 8-10 years the canopy begins to close and the habitat is then unsuitable, but some pairs may continue to use the edges of the plantations where trees are 10 to 20 feet high (Moore 1962).

The planting of conifers has been responsible for the disappearance of many acres of ideal Stonechat habitat in many parts of the country (Magee 1965) but has not been so important in Sussex. Indeed it is of interest to note that most of the areas in Sussex in which Stonechats have been found using this habitat have not been traditional ones for the species and no young plantations have held more than one or two pairs which have deserted areas much sooner than might have been expected. It is therefore very unlikely that this adaptation will have any significant effect on the future status of the species in the county.

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We also wish to thank M. J. Helps for drawing the figure and Mrs. A. Simpson for secretarial assistance.

Summary

This paper gives details of the location and numbers of breeding Stonechats found in Sussex during the 1962-1971 breeding seasons and in addition some data for the years 1972 and 1973. It has been concluded that although the general distribution of the species remains much the same as it was prior to the 1939-1945 war, it is now more local, having been totally lost or having declined as a breeding species in several areas due to habitat destruction and human disturbance. In consequence it can be assumed that the size of the breeding population has dropped from pre-war levels but the exact extent of this decline remains unknown. A few pairs have recently bred in young coniferous plantations but it is considered unlikely that this adaptation will significantly affect the future status of the species in Sussex.

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A SURVEY OF THE GIRL BUNTING IN SUSSEX

By P. J. WILSON

Introduction

According to Parslow (1968) the Cirl Bunting (*Emberiza cirlus*) has shown evidence of a decrease in Southern England during this century. It no longer breeds in Wales and records of sporadic breeding in central and Northern England have become less frequent since about 1950. He states further that although there is no evidence of any change in numbers within the main range of the species, there is some indication that on the periphery of its present range, that is Sussex, Kent and Oxfordshire, numbers have declined in recent years.

Although Walpole-Bond (1938) was rather vague regarding the status of the Cirl Bunting in Sussex, stating only that while the species was not rare it could not be described as really common, it is apparent that the species was more common and widespread before the 1939-1945 war than now.

In the Sussex Bird Reports for 1963 to 1970 inclusive, which contained all the known records for the period, the species was reported in the breeding season only from the localities shown in Table 1.

Thus in 1971 the Sussex Ornithological Society decided to attempt a detailed survey of the distribution and status of the Cirl Bunting in Sussex. Members were invited to report all breeding season records of Cirl Buntings within the county. In addition a number of members who were especially familiar with the species and who had submitted records regularly in the past were asked to survey specific areas. The survey was repeated in the 1972 and 1973 breeding seasons.

Coverage and Results

The records showed that the most favoured habitats, today as in pre-war years, lay between the Downs and the sea, particularly in the lower river valleys. Some were found on or near the North escarpment of the Downs but very few further inland.

Coverage of the Downs, the river valleys and the area between the Downs and the sea was fairly complete but no specific searches were made in the interior of the county. Areas in which birds were found during the breeding season are shown in Table 1.

Four localities were recorded as holding Cirl Buntings for the first time during the survey. These were Haring, Herstmonceux, Telscombe and Worth. An interesting record was that of a pair at Winchelsea, the first record there since 1956. On the debit side however, localities where Cirl Buntings had previously been recorded and where none could now be found were much more numerous. These included the Downs around Chanttonbury, Cissbury and Storrington; Brighton and Woodingdean; Sompington and the Findon valley, also the Arun valley and the outskirts of Seaford. There have been no records for Playden or Rye since 1948. Altogether during the survey the species was found in 20 localities (as per Table 1) with a maximum total of 28 pairs.

The only areas where the species appears to persevere are shown in Table 2. Even in these apparent strongholds the population appears to be still declining. Thus from an approximate total of 45 to 50 known pairs during the mid 1960s the population appears to have fallen to about 20 known pairs in 1973, approximately two thirds of which are in the area between Eastbourne and the Cuckmere valley. Although the figures quoted possibly underestimate the numbers present, nevertheless they still reflect an alarming decline in the population of the Cirl Bunting in Sussex.

TABLE 1. NUMBERS OF OCCUPIED STONECHAT TERRITORIES IN SUSSEX 1962-1973

Locality	1962	1963	1964	1965	1966	1967	1968	1969	1970	1971	1972	1973
	S	S	S	S	GC	GC	GC	S	GC	S	GC	GC
Chapel Common	0	0	0					0	1	0	3	3
Weavers Down	2	3	3	3	3	3		0	1	1	1	1
Iping Common	1	1	2					1	1	0	1	1
Pound Common	1	1	2					2	1	0	1	1
Ambersham Common	1	0						1	1	0	1	1
Grafham Common	0	0	4	1	2	2		3		0		
Blackdown	-	-	-					0		0		
Tillington	-	-	-					0		0		
Sullington Warren	-	-	-					0		0		
Selsey	1	0	0					0	1	0		1
West Wittering	0	0	0					0	0	0		
Hat Hill	-	-	-					0	0	0		
Bury Hill	-	-	-					0	0	0		
Rewell Wood	-	-	-					0	0	0		
St. Leonards Forest *	-	-	-	1	1	2		1	1	0		0
Worth Lodge Forest *	-	-	-					0	1	0		
Old Lodge Forest *	-	-	-	1	1			0	0	0		
Brantridge Forest *	-	-	-	2				0	0	0		
Worth Forest *	-	-	-	10	10†	9†		14	10†	17	18	11†
Ashdown Forest	1†	1	0	1	1	2		1	1	1	4	6
Chalvey Common	0	0	0					0	0	0	1	
South Common	0	0	0					0	0	0	1	
Ditchling Common	0	0	0					0	0	0	1	
Cross in Hand	1	1	1					0	2	1	1	
Mile Oak	0	0	0					0	1	0	1	
Brighton Power St'n	0	0	0					0	1	0	1	
Porto Bello	1	0	0					0	1	0	1	
Telscombe Cliffs	1	0	0					0	1	0	1	
Hollingdean	-	-	-					0	1	0	1	
Rottingdean	-	-	-					0	1	0	1	
Newmarket Hill	0	0	0					1	1	0	2	2
Friars Bay	0	0	0	2	3			1	1	0	1	
Newhaven Head	1	1	1	1	1	1		1	1	0	1	
Newhaven Tidemills	0	0	0					0	1	0	1	
Bishopstone	0	0	0					0	1	0	1	
Seaford Head G/C	-	-	-	2				0	2	1	1	1
Hope Gap	-	-	-					0	2	1	1	1
Cuckmere Valley/	-	-	-					0	2	1	1	1
South Hill	-	-	-					1	1	0	1	1
Seven Sisters	1	0	0					1	1	0	1	1
Beachy Head§	10	4	6	9	10	12	17	19	14	14	4†	11†
Five Lords Burgh	-	-	-					0	14	14	4†	11†
Berwick	-	-	-					0	2	2	1	1
Lullington Heath	0	0	1	0				2	2	0	1	1
West Fittle	-	-	-					0	2	0	1	1
Windover Hill	-	-	-					0	2	1	1	1
Jevington	-	-	-					0	2	1	1	1
Cooden G.C.	-	-	-					1	1	2	1	1
Bexhill	-	-	-					0	1	0	1	1
Galley Hill	-	-	-	1				3	1	1	1	1
Glynde Gap	-	-	-					0	1	1	1	1
Fairlight	-	-	-					1	1	1	1	1
Firehills	31	34	36	35	30	40	49	54	45	42	46	41

S = Survey year
GC = Good coverage
0 = visited but none found
- = no information available
† = incomplete coverage
* = nesting in young coniferous plantation
§ = Crowlink to Holywell

Discussion

In a few localities, for example Pagham, Selsey and Clapham brickyard, breeding sites were known to have been built over or otherwise disturbed but in the majority of localities no definite reason has been recorded for the bird's disappearance. The change in distribution, however is marked. Most of the pre-war breeding pairs seem to have been between Brighton and the Hampshire border but the survey has shown that the main centre of population is now located at the eastern end of the Downs.

One possible factor is that the Cirl Bunting, like some other species which are on the north-western edge of their European range in Britain, is susceptible to very minor climatic fluctuations which could bring about contraction at the limits of its range. During the 1970/1971 winter for instance, a short but severe cold spell drastically reduced the resident flock in the Cuckmere valley. The fact that this flock suffered some mortality rather than moving away from the area was apparent during the following spring when only about half of the local singing males could be found. Indeed following the subsequent mild winters and warm, dry summers, the spring of 1974 has seen the return of several singing males to old sites which had remained empty for several years.

Another factor which has probably contributed to the decline is the large-scale development of modern housing estates in recent years around the original outskirts of coastal towns like Selsey, Bognor, Aldwick, Seaford and possibly Worthing and Brighton. Towns and villages further inland too, Alfriston and Steyning for example, have had new houses built even in the extensive gardens of older properties. These large gardens, now often a thing of the past, were favoured by Cirl Buntings during the breeding season, especially when they backed on to the Downs.

Lastly, during the past decade or more the large-scale removal of hedges, which provided many nest sites, has probably contributed to the decline. Perhaps the reason why Beachy Head and the Cuckmere valley still hold moderate numbers of Cirl Buntings is the fact that this part of the coast has seen virtually no changes in building or farming when compared with most of the Sussex coast.

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Summary

This paper reports the findings of a breeding survey of Cirl Buntings (*Emberiza cirius*) in Sussex during the years 1971 to 1973. Details are given of the localities in which the species was found and these data are compared with information available for the years 1963 to 1970. Estimates are given for the current Sussex population (c. 20 pairs) and that of the mid 1960s (c. 45 to 50 pairs) which suggests that the species has suffered a decline of the order of 50% to 60% in the last ten years. More than two thirds of the present-day population is in the Eastbourne, Beachy Head and Cuckmere valley area. Factors which are possibly responsible for this decline are discussed.

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TABLE 1. BREEDING SEASON LOCALITIES OF CIRL BUNTINGS IN SUSSEX, 1963 TO 1973

	PRE-SURVEY YEARS										SURVEY YEARS			
	1963	1964	1965	1966	1967	1968	1969	1970	1971	1972	1973			
Aldwick Bay ..	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Alfriston ..	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Beachy Head ..	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Brighton ..	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Chichester ..	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Cissbury ..	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Clapham ..	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Coombes ..	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Cuckmere Haven ..	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Duncton ..	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Eastbourne ..	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
East Dean ..	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Ensworth ..	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Exceat ..	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Findon Valley ..	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Friston ..	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Haring ..	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
High and Over ..	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Herstmonceux ..	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Jevington ..	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Kingley Vale ..	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Lancing ..	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Litlington ..	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Milton Street ..	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Pagham ..	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Petworth ..	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Seaford ..	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Selsey ..	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Shoreham-by-Sea ..	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Southwick ..	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Steyning ..	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Telscombe ..	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Thorney Island ..	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Vert Wood ..	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
West Chiltington ..	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
West Dean ..	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
West Dene ..	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Winchelsea ..	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Worthing ..	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■

TABLE 2. REGULAR POPULATIONS OF GIRL BUNTINGS IN EAST AND WEST SUSSEX

Locality	EAST SUSSEX		WEST SUSSEX		Totals
	1963-1970	1971-1973	1963-1970	1971-1973	
Beachy Head	3	5	1	1	13
Cuckmere Valley	12-15	6	3	1-2	
Steyning	4-5	2	1	1	
Eastbourne area			1-2	1	
Totals	21-25	13	6-7	4-5	

SISKINS FEEDING ON PEANUTS

In 1970 and 1971 there were reports from Cambridgeshire, Suffolk and Oxfordshire of Siskins feeding from suspended bags of peanuts (*Brit. Birds* 63: 344; 64: 35-36). It seemed strange that similar observations had not been reported in Sussex, where the species is a regular winter visitor, thus a brief note drawing attention to this new habit was included in the Newsletter of the Horsham Natural History Society (April, 1971). This action was prompted by the knowledge that a sizeable flock of Siskins winters annually on the alders and birches along the River Arun to the south of Horsham.

The publicity in the Horsham area produced an immediate response, and in consequence requests for information were published in the Sussex Ornithological Society Newsletters Nos. 41 (Spring 1972) and 44 (Spring 1973). Additional requests for information on Siskins feeding on unnatural food, of any kind, were also published in *British Birds* (64: 133) and *B.T.O. News* (No. 45 June, 1971).

All information received for Sussex was forwarded to the organisers of the national enquiry and a detailed analysis of the national data, up to and including the 1970/71 winter, was published in March, 1973 (*Brit. Birds* 66: 91). The analysis of records from 91 gardens in 19 counties, nearly all of which were in south-east England, showed an uninterrupted history of garden feeding on unnatural food since the winter of 1961/62. Many foods were specified but half of the records analysed related to shelled peanuts. The analysis also showed that there were few records in any winter prior to January, but there was a tendency for the species to reappear in gardens progressively earlier each year. The peak of the behaviour occurred in March when natural food sources could be expected to be at their lowest and many Siskins continued to visit gardens until April and May. The lateness of these dates has been taken as evidence that the birds concerned belong to a population with a late breeding season, possibly from northern Europe. No correlation could be established between garden feeding sites and the size of the gardens concerned, the presence of food-bearing trees or the proximity of traditional wintering sites.

Up to 1971 the only counties in which there was evidence of an annual spread of this new habit were Surrey, where it was first recorded, Devon and Sussex. Additional information collected in Sussex for the early months of 1972 and 1973 has confirmed that the habit is still spreading and at an increasing rate (Table 1). Analysis of the total Sussex records from 81 gardens has failed to demonstrate any new feature that was not apparent from the national data, except possibly that in Sussex there appears to be some correlation between the localities where the habit was originally recorded and traditional wintering areas. In 1972 and more so in 1973, the habit spread outside these areas and records have now been received from 7 coastal localities. There are still only three Sussex records for December. April records are now increasingly common, the latest so far being for April 13 at Haywards Heath, where Mr. R. Taylor ringed 87 birds in one garden during the early months of 1973.

All but one of the Sussex records are of feeding on suspended shelled peanuts; the exception being minced peanuts offered on a shelf attached to a window sill. One observer, in an attempt to prevent Greenfinches monopolising a hanging basket of peanuts surrounded it with wire, the mesh size of which still permitted entry by tits. On arrival, Siskins soon found their way through the wire and fed amicably with the tits inside the tube in very cramped but comparatively protected conditions. Many observers have commented on the Siskin's complete lack of fear of humans, and reactions to other bird species have varied greatly from timidity to marked aggressiveness with spectacular threat postures and hissing.

Observations in the West Midlands (B.T.O. News No. 61 October 1973) have suggested that Siskins are more attracted to peanuts suspended in red plastic net bags than metal nut baskets and it has been suggested that this is because they find the plastic netting easier to cling to. Analysis of information available from 50 gardens in Sussex has shown that Siskins have been recorded feeding from red plastic bags in 28 (56%) gardens and from metal baskets in 19 (38%). In two other gardens both types of container were used; in one there was a definite preference for the plastic net bag. Hanging metal baskets have been available but ignored in several gardens where plastic net bags were being used regularly, thus confirming the preference. A metal coil feeder has also been used in one garden.

In conclusion it should be noted that there is one 1969 record for Sussex. This is omitted from the table as the exact location is not available. Although the number of reports from the Horsham area may be relatively inflated due to local publicity, it should be stressed that the localities in the table do not merely reflect observer coverage. In many parts of the county observers have been deliberately providing peanuts, in the hope of attracting Siskins, without success. It will therefore be interesting to see just how widespread this habit becomes and if it eventually results in a more generalised winter distribution of this attractive species in Sussex.

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TABLE 1. NUMBER OF NEW GARDEN FEEDING SITES REPORTED IN EACH AREA 1970-1973

Locality	1970	1971	1972	1973	Total No. of gardens
Worthing				2	3
Storrington			0	1	4
Crawley	1	1	1	10	14
Horsham	1	0	3	5	17
Cuckfield/Haywards Heath/Linfield		2	3	6	12
Heathfield/Cross-in-Hand/Broad Oak			2	4	7
Rotherfield/Mayfield			2	1	3
Midhurst			2	2	4
Ashurstwood/Forest Row			1	2	3
Bognor			1	0	2
Rustington				1	2
Petworth				2	2
Brighton/Portslade				2	2
Nutley				2	2
Lewes				1	2
Hexhill				1	2
Rye				1	2
Pett				1	1
Totals	3	6	27	45	81