

The Sussex Bird Report

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**THE SUSSEX BIRD REPORT
NUMBER FORTY-SEVEN, 1994**

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Editor: Mrs SJ Patton

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Cover photograph of the Blackpoll Warbler, Bewl Water, 1994 by Alan Tate.

Text Illustrations:

Bob Greenhalf; Teal, Little Tern, Green Woodpecker & Red-backed Shrike
Richard Kemp; Red-necked Grebe, Hoopoe, Pallas's Warbler & Long-tailed Tit
John Reaney; Black-throated Diver, Woodcock, Barn Owl
& Great-spotted Woodpecker

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EDITORIAL

I am pleased to have been allowed to introduce the first major changes to the Sussex Bird Report and hope that the new presentation will help take Sussex Ornithological Society into the 21st century.

A new feature this year is the inclusion of a table of first and last migrant dates and the tabulated summary of breeding surveys has been re-introduced. The status summaries have been revised in line with the forthcoming avifauna - Birds of Sussex. The systematic list is now written by a large team resulting in inevitable variations in style. This may be seen as an asset, giving variety as opposed to a clinical listing. Individual writers may be identified by their initials in square brackets at the end of each account.

Grateful thanks are due to the following people who have spent many hours writing the species accounts: J Beesley, Mrs VP Bentley, Dr C Brooks, DJ Burges, CB Collins, JES Cooper, DEG Copeland, DE Crawley, Ms A de Potier, RJ Fairbank, JR Havers, J Herring, Dr JK Irons, Dr ME Kalaher, RJL Kemp, R Knight, SH Linington, L Manns, MJ Mason, Dr JA Newnham, JL Nobbs, K Noble, C Olliver, Mrs SJ Patton, RT Pepper, P Rolph, Ms C Taylor, NJ Thomas, Dr AB Watson and Dr BJ Yates.

I also wish to express my gratitude to the following people for their additional help and support in my first year as Editor: Mrs VP Bentley, DJ Golds, Dr JK Irons, Dr JA Newnham, PT Patton, A Perry and Dr AB Watson.

Some species accounts (eg Ortolan Bunting) include old records which have only recently been submitted. Records of national rarities have only been included if the Society has been notified of their acceptance by *British Birds* at the time of going to press. Observers are reminded that all records of unusual species (see list on inside of back cover) are considered by the Records Committee and only those fully authenticated will be published.

Sarah J Patton

REVIEW OF 1994

by NJ Thomas

The weather in January was dominated by cyclonic westerly systems, with heavy rain in the first few days of the month causing flooding in Chichester and giving a rainfall excess of 80% for Sussex. Temperatures were 2°C above average with an almost complete absence of winds from an easterly or northerly direction.

With a mild start to the year, some wintering species associated with hard weather were decidedly scarce with just 1 **Smew** and 5 **Goosander** reported although 2 **Bitterns** were seen. **White-fronted Geese** were widespread with 170 at Scotney Court Gravel Pits and **Scaup** totalled 98. On 1st, a **Black-throated Diver** and a **Red-necked Grebe** were found at Sovereign Marina Harbour and there were 14-15 **Slavonian Grebes** at Thorney Island and off Church Norton. Thorney also held 32 **Little Egrets** during the month and also the regular **Black Brant** (until 6th March). Two **Iceland Gulls** and a different **Glaucous Gull** to the regular Selsey adult were seen on 13th. A **Bean Goose** frequented West Wittering between 10-15th and on 11th a **Little Bunting** was found at Crawley. Other wintering species included 6 **Hen Harriers**, 3 **Little Stints**, 56 **Jack Snipe** and 5 **Black Redstarts**. There were numerous **Blackcaps** and **Chiffchaffs**, but distinctly unusual was the appearance of a **Garganey** at Icklesham on 24th which stayed until 24th April. The month closed with a low peak of 73 **Bewick's Swans** at Amberley and a **Great Northern Diver** off Church Norton.

The first ten days of February were mild and unsettled with winds mainly from the west to southerly sector but, from the 11th, a switch to south-easterly winds brought a cold spell with sub-zero temperatures and some snow until milder southerly winds reached southern counties on 22nd. The cold spell was perhaps not prolonged or severe enough to markedly affect bird distributions.

On 3rd, gales produced a **Great Skua** and 200 **Guillemots** off Seaford and **Slavonian Grebes** peaked at 20 off Church Norton. On 5th, a **Red-necked Grebe** was seen in Brighton Marina and 40 **Crossbills** at West Dean Woods formed the largest flock of several seen in the first half of the year. Presumably the same **Bean Goose** seen in January frequented Pagham Harbour from 8-16th. On 11th a **Red Kite**, one of an exceptional 11 seen in the county, flew over St. Leonards. Although **Shags** were scarce, an inland bird was seen at Arlington on 12th. Other birds noted were 70 **Brambling** at Stansted on 26th and 20 **Purple Sandpipers** at Glyne Gap.

Westerly to south-westerly winds characterised the first two weeks of March. This pattern was briefly broken with colder north-westerlies between 15th-21st before winds from the south and west resumed. The weather was generally unsettled throughout, but with temperatures above average in Southern England.

Early summer visitors were a **Sandwich Tern** at Rye on 1st, 2 **Wheatears** at Climping on 2nd and **Sand Martins** on 5th. On 4th, a **Great Northern Diver** flew past Beachy Head; one of 6 seen in the month. The **Black Brant** departed from Thorney Island on 7th, on which date the first **Swallow** was seen. An **Iceland Gull** frequented the Selsey area from 8-12th. On the latter date the first **Marsh Harrier** visited Pulborough; one of 40 seen in the county during the year. **Redstart** and **Yellow Wagtail** appeared mid-

month (17th and 19th respectively), at which time there were 10 **Water Pipits** at Combe Haven and the first of several **Serins** recorded in the spring were seen at Goring Gap. A **Great Grey Shrike** was at Ifield Mill Pond on 20th and on 26th, a **Kentish Plover** visited Pilsey Island and 3 **Little Ringed Plovers** were at Pulborough Brooks.

A switch to south-easterly winds on 27th resulted in some sea passage, with 72 **Red-throated Divers** and 7 **Arctic Skuas** past Worthing, the first **Great Skuas** (of a spring passage totalling 37) and 24 **Little Gulls** at Seaford. On the same day the first of 10 spring **Ospreys** arrived at Bewl Water. On 28th, a dark-morph **Fulmar** was seen off Beachy Head and a very early **Cuckoo** was at Wild Park, Brighton. During the last few days of the month, a **Tree Pipit** returned to St. Leonard's Forest and a **Red Kite** was at Bexhill on 29th. **Garganey** continued to appear, with 2 birds at both Pulborough and Seaford on 30th and, on 31st, there were 400 **Sand Martins** over Chichester Gravel Pits.

The first three weeks of April were cold and unsettled with frequent north-westerly and northerly winds bringing above-average rainfall, but from 19th the winds swung to the south or south-easterly sector, bringing raised temperatures and a sunny end to the month.

On 1st there were 23 **Slavonian Grebes** off Church Norton. More summer migrants trickled in with a **Garden Warbler** at Ifield Mill Pond and **Pied Flycatcher** in Ashdown Forest on 3rd, while **Sand Martins** at Ivy Lake had increased to 1500. **Ring Ouzel** and **Whitethroat** appeared on 6th and on 7th, one of only 3 **Hoopoes** seen during the year was at Climbing. The unfavourable winds inhibited migration until 19th, although **Little Tern** was seen on 11th, **Sedge Warbler** on 12th and **Whinchat** on 15th. A **Glaucous Gull** was at Pilsey Island, another **Red Kite** was seen and 2 **Manx Shearwaters** were at Seisey on 17th.

On 19th, a **Night Heron** appeared for just the evening at Thorney Deepes and the first **Hobby** was over Ashdown Forest. Over the next few days the switch to south-easterly winds unleashed some impressive seabird movements and larger-scale arrivals of summer visitors. On 20th, **Red-necked Grebe**, 8 **Manx Shearwaters**, 524 **Common Scoters** and 20 **Black Terns** flew east and one of the now-scarce **Grasshopper Warblers** was at Littlehampton. On 21st, a **Great Northern Diver** was off Beachy Head, while 16 **Velvet Scoter** and 3 **Black-necked Grebes** were off Brighton Marina and Worthing respectively. On 22nd, an **Iceland Gull** and 245 **Whimbrel** flew past Seaford. The largest tern movements were seen on 23rd, with 5100 'Commic' Terns past Seaford and 1069 **Sandwich Terns** at Worthing which were accompanied by 6 **Pomarine Skuas** and 56 **Arctic Skuas**. Arriving on this day were many **Nightingales**, the first **Swift** and **Turtle Dove** and a **Blue-headed Wagtail** at Rye. On 24th, a **Roseate Tern** was seen at Worthing. On 28th, a pair of **Avocet** at Rye raised hopes, not to be realised, by nest-building. On 29th, the only spring **Wryneck** was at Falmer, another **Blue-headed Wagtail** was at Bewl Water and a **Black-necked Grebe** was at Scotney Gravel Pits.

May continued where April left off and the first few days were warm and sunny until a short westerly spell commenced on 4th with some strong winds and rain. This persisted until 7th, when persistent anticyclones in the region brought predominantly easterly

winds until 27th; with them came an excellent selection of scarce species, which continued to arrive well into June.

Sea passage continued with, for Sussex, good numbers of **Manx Shearwaters** in south-westerly winds (24 at Seisey on 4th) and **Pomarine Skuas** and **Bar-tailed Godwits** in south or east winds. A trickle of **Roseate Terns** was noted on several days, while on 10th there were 36 **Black-throated Divers** past Seaford.

The 7th brought a **Whiskered Tern** to Rye Harbour and a **Short-toed Lark** to Beachy Head. Later-arriving summer visitors appeared, with a **Nighthjar** at Parham on 10th and the first **Quail** on 11th. On 15th, **Honey Buzzards** were seen arriving at Seaford and over Storrington. Two examples of another scarce raptor, the **Montagu's Harrier**, were at Seisey and Beachy Head. **Hobbies** were numerous with at least 60 records, as were **Garganey** with 18 birds at 9 sites. On 19th, a **Red-rumped Swallow** and a **Temminck's Stint** appeared simultaneously in the Cuckmere Valley. On 22nd, Beachy Head produced a **Melodious Warbler**, yet another **Serin** and the first of 4 **Golden Orioles** seen there in May. These were followed by a **Tawny Pipit** on 23rd. On 30th, a **Red-footed Falcon** arrived at Icklesham and remained until June 12th, whilst a **Subalpine Warbler** at Beachy Head on 31st stayed only briefly.

June was generally dry, warm and sunny in the south-east, with above average temperatures and below average rainfall. Although it was wet and windy between 2nd and 4th with occasional thunderstorms, a ridge of high pressure was maintained near southern England for much of the month. On 5th, Beachy Head was the place to be with a singing **Booted Warbler** and a supporting cast of 2 **Bee-eaters** and a **Red-backed Shrike**. With an influx of **Rose-coloured Starlings** into Europe, one at Beachy Head on 11th was not unexpected. On 12th, a **Honey Buzzard** was seen, a **Marsh Warbler** arrived but failed to attract a mate and the first of 2 **Common Rosefinches** was seen at Beachy Head. On 14th, a **Golden Oriole** sang at Church Norton and on 16th there were 2 **Serins** at Seisey. The flow of migrants dried up around this time and the remainder of the month was quiet.

Breeding birds with a tenuous hold in the county fared variably, with some once-common species reaching extinction point, whilst other scarce species, or new colonists, consolidated their position. **Buzzard** and **Goshawk** populations showed some signs of increase, whilst 3 pairs of **Peregrines** bred successfully. There were 10 pairs of **Little Ringed Plovers**, while **Lapwings**, like other species largely associated with wet meadowland, continued to decline. At Rye 3-4 pairs of **Mediterranean Gulls** attempted to breed and **Little** and **Sandwich Terns** fared rather poorly.

Woodlarks showed a welcome increase, while at least 40 pairs of another heathland species, the **Dartford Warbler** were located. This contrasts with no confirmed breeding of **Grasshopper Warbler**, which might now be outnumbered by the **Cetti's Warbler** which occurred at 2 sites. **Black Redstarts**, with 1 pair, have always been scarce in the county, but **Tree Sparrows** with just 11 pairs are now in a perilous position. **Bearded Tits** and **Crossbills** were both found at 2 sites.

July was the hottest since 1983 and winds from a southerly quarter were more frequent than usual. It was a strongly anticyclonic month and the British Isles were on the periphery of a record-breaking hot July on the Continent.

As usual this was a quiet month for migrants. A few scarcer seabirds were seen in the first half of the month with a **Storm Petrel** off Brighton on 6th and a **Pomarine Skua** there on 9th, on which date there were 180 **Gannets** off Selsey and a **Honey Buzzard** was seen. Two **Roseate Terns** appeared in the west of the county.

A flock of 20 **Velvet Scoters** off Hove on 20th was an unusual record; another out-of-place bird was a **Sanderling** at Bewl Water. A number of uncommon species were found at Icklesham; a **Marsh Warbler** on 19th, 15 **Crossbills** on 23rd, a **Spotted Crane** on 24th and the earliest ever **Aquatic Warbler** on 30th, which turned out to be the first of 9 trapped in August and September.

The very hot and humid weather which characterised July prevailed during the first few days of August, but the remainder of the month was changeable with a variety of short-lived weather patterns, the most prolonged being a cyclonic westerly-type from 23rd-28th. There were a number of thunderstorms and temperatures were within a degree or so of the long term average.

The month opened with an early returning **Osprey** at Weir Wood Reservoir, one of 19 seen during the autumn in the county. **Little Egret** numbers built up at Thorney Island with 41 on 5th increasing to 98 by 25th. The same site produced an **Aquatic Warbler** on 7th. A **Raven** was seen at Pagham on 9th and presumably the same bird was at Pilsey on 23rd. Wader passage is usually a feature of August and although no scarce species were recorded, 4 **Wood Sandpipers** at Icklesham and Pett on 12th and 10 **Spotted Redshank** at the same sites on 28th are perhaps worthy of note. **Garganey** were seen at a number of sites and **Sand Martin** numbers built up to 7000 at Icklesham. The first **Wryneck** was seen at Climping on 14th; one of 6 autumn birds and a **Barred Warbler** was at Icklesham on 23rd.

Towards the end of the month a **Montagu's Harrier** visited Combe Haven and the rarest bird of the month, a male **Sardinian Warbler** was found at Beachy Head. This bird remained until 29th September, although its disappearance between 11-27th September indicates how elusive it could be. On 30th, 3 **Ruddy Shelducks** arrived at Arlington Reservoir and there were falls of 31 **Redstarts** and 4 **Pied Flycatchers** at Beachy Head.

September was a cool month, dull and wet over much of England and Wales. A westerly/cyclonic type persisted until mid-month, thereafter frequent changes in weather occurred. It was an interesting month for birds with a number of scarce species seen.

The last **Wood Warbler** was seen on 2nd, on which date a **Glaucous Gull** was seen at Pagham (the Selsey adult returned on 11th). On 5th, a **Black-necked Grebe** was at Weir Wood. A **Tawny Pipit** at Selsey on 8th remained until 10th, at which time there was a **Hoopoe** at Hastings. Two **Grey Phalaropes** were seen on 12th. The 13th and 14th brought a number of arrivals with 3 **Melodious Warblers**, a **Barred Warbler**, an **Ortolan Bunting** and a **Common Rosefinch** being the highlights. On 17th a **Black Stork** flew over the west of the county and, although it was poor for wader passage, **Little Stints** totalled 5 at Pett and the first **Jack Snipe** arrived at Icklesham. Single **Sooty** and **Manx Shearwaters** were seen on 19th. A **Montagu's Harrier** at Baisdean on 20th remained until 4th October. The fourth **Melodious Warbler** of the month was

at Shoreham Airport on 21st. The 23rd brought an exceptionally large hirundine passage with, for example, 70,000 **House Martins** at Rye. On 24th, another **Hoopoe** was at Fairlight and an **Aquatic Warbler** frequented a ditch in the Cuckmere Valley. A **Red-backed Shrike** found at Sompington on 25th stayed until 2nd October and the following day a **Yellow-browed Warbler** was at Beachy Head. A **Bittern** was at Icklesham from 29-30th.

Weatherwise, October was a month of two halves; after a brief cold snap at the start of the month, it was dry, warm and settled until 17th, after which the anticyclone retreated to give a generally wet and cold end to the month.

October is often one of the most interesting months of the year and it started well in the Selsey/Pagham area with a **Wryneck**, **Richard's Pipit** and **Yellow-browed Warbler** on 1st and a **Tawny Pipit** and a 'Siberian' **Stonechat** on 8th. A **Corncrake** at Walberton on 10th was the first county record for 4 years. On 15th, 2 **Penduline Tits** were seen at Pagham and there was 1 at Icklesham on 18th, with a **Great Grey Shrike** at Pevensey Level on the former date. The first **White-fronted Geese** occurred at Rye on 20th, a day before the last **Hobby** was seen. On 22nd, a **Pallas's Warbler** was found at Sheepcote Valley, the first of a remarkable total of 6; the last bird being seen at Church Norton on 10th November. A **Great Grey Shrike** at Rye Harbour shared the county with a **Red-backed Shrike** on 24th and there was also a **Red-crested Pochard** on the same date. A **Radde's Warbler** in a Worthing garden on 26th and 27th was a highlight for a few fortunate observers. A **Black Tern** in Chichester Harbour on 27th was a very late record.

Characteristic October migrants included 19 **Merlins**, 30 **Woodlarks**, 41 **Dartford Warblers** and 14 **Firecrests** but no large arrivals of **Ring Ouzels** were noted, with a maximum of just 7 at Fairlight on 1st. Rare **Grebes** were something of a feature of the month, with **Black-necked** and **Red-necked** being seen in several localities.

The first few days of November were mild with light winds from the south and east. For the remainder of the month it was changeable, often wet and windy, but always mild with virtually no frosts recorded.

The weather in the first few days of November brought some impressive visible migration with, for example, 44,000 **Wood Pigeons** over Pagham on 2nd, large movements of **Redwings** on 3rd and 600 **Brent Geese** at Bewl Water on 4th. Migrant **Long-eared Owls** were seen as well as a few **Hawfinches**. A switch to cyclonic weather on 12th more-or-less caused migration to collapse, but a **Great Grey Shrike** was at Pulborough on 10th and a late **Reed Warbler** was at Beachy Head on 13th. Another exceptionally late stayer was a **Swift** on 22nd, 3 days after the peak count of 34 **Bewick's Swans** was made at Amberley. **Snow Buntings** were relatively scarce in East Anglia, so it was perhaps not surprising that just one was recorded, from 17-26th at Littlehampton. Two **Glaucous Gulls** were seen during the month and there was a **Pink-footed Goose** at the Adur Levels on 28th.

December continued where November left off with mild, often wet and windy conditions and it was not until 15th that a still, clear night brought the first appreciable frost. A brief settled spell after this brought some colder weather, but failed to establish itself

with any permanence and the year closed with unsettled weather and strong south-westerly winds.

Inland **Divers** are uncommon in Sussex, but Darwell held both **Black-throated** and **Great Northern** on 3rd. Reservoirs produced birds of interest during the month; an **Osprey** lingered at Arlington until 9th, there was a **Red-crested Pochard** at Weir Wood but more sensationally, a **Blackpoll Warbler** was found at Bewl Water on 10th and remained until 21st. With the concentrations of visitors at this site, **Red-necked Grebe**, **Great Grey Shrike** and **'Tristis' Chiffchaff** were found during the next few days. A **Night Heron** at Arlington was only present on 23rd. Another formally rare heron, the **Little Egret** still numbered 77 at Thorney. Some selected counts of other winter visitors were 13 **Purple Sandpipers** at Newhaven, 6 **Short-eared Owls** at Thorney, 6 **Water Pipits** at Combe Haven and 7 **Twite** at Pagham.

CLASSIFIED RECORDS FOR 1994

This list covers all species in Categories A and C of the British Ornithologists' Union check list.

The following abbreviations are used in the Systematic List as standard practice; N, S, E, W etc. as cardinal compass points, GP - gravel pit, GC - golf course, Hbr - Harbour, MP - Mill Pond, SF - seage farm or works, LNR - Local Nature Reserve, NR - Nature Reserve, NNR - National Nature Reserve, Res - Reservoir, SSSI - Site of Special Scientific Interest, WWT - Wildfowl and Wetlands Trust, nc - no count, ha - hectares, km - kilometres.

0002. RED-THROATED DIVER

Gavia stellata

Fairly common winter visitor and passage migrant.

Approximate monthly totals were as follows:

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
50	112	120	62	48	-	-	-	2	3	60	26

The only totals of any note in Jan came from Selsey Bill, with 9 E and 38 W. In Feb, Splash Point, Seaford reported 48 E with a maximum of 21 on 12th. In Mar, the exceptional figure belonged to Worthing beach which, having recorded monthly totals of 1 E and 4 W in Jan and 5 E in Feb, observed 72 E on 27th and a total of 98 E and 4 W during the month. Twenty birds were seen at Newhaven on 1 Apr and the spring records ended with a single bird flying E at Splash Point, Seaford on 25 May.

The first returning birds were noted off Glyne Gap with 2 on 6 Sept. Numbers were generally low with the exception of 4 E and 48 W at Selsey Bill on 29 Nov. 7 were at Brighton power station on 3 Dec and 8 W at Selsey Bill on 15 Dec. The last record of the year was of a single at Church Norton on 21 Dec.

Records of inland birds were received from Arlington Res, with a maximum of 2 (at least one of which was oiled) in Feb and Mar, Weir Wood Res which had a single on 26 Mar and Bewl Water with a single on 15 Dec. [JKI]

0003. BLACK-THROATED DIVER

Gavia arctica

Scarce winter visitor and passage migrant.

An interesting year, with good spring numbers and an exceptional May passage but with very disappointing winter records.

The approximate monthly totals were as follows:

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Nov	Dec
7	12	23	86	177	2	1

The year's records started on 1 Jan with a singleton at Sovereign Hbr Marina, Eastbourne, which stayed at least until the next day.

The majority of the spring records came from principal sea-watching stations and were mainly of birds passing up-channel. The Selsey Bill group had an eastward-bound total from Mar-May of 47 after 416 hrs of observation, while the Splash Point, Seaford group recorded 93 E in May, following 132 hrs of watching. Other records included 14 to the end of Apr from Newhaven and 16 E and 5 W from Worthing beach during Apr.

The year ended with the only inland record of a solitary bird at Darwell Res on 3 Dec. [JKI]

0004. GREAT NORTHERN DIVER

Gavia immer

Rare winter visitor and spring passage migrant.

Following a bird seen at Church Norton on 31 Jan, singles were reported during Mar at Beachy Head on 4th (JFC) and 27th (DC, JFC), at Newhaven Hbr on 26th (EDU), Worthing beach on 28th (PMB) and, finally, a winter-plumaged bird at Selsey Bill on 30th (TJE). There were 3 E off Beachy Head on 28 Mar (JFC). In Apr, 1 flew E off Beachy Head on 21st (JFC) and another was on the sea approximately 150 yds offshore at Selsey Bill on 24th (BJC). The only record in the latter part of the year was of 1 at Darwell Res on 3 Dec (RGH). [JKI]

DIVER SPECIES

Gavia sp.

Totals of birds passing up-channel from Jan-May at the main seawatching sites were as follows:

	Hrs. watched	<i>G. stellata</i>	<i>G. arctica</i>	<i>G. immer</i>	<i>G. sp.*</i>
Selsey Bill	463	116	49	2	333
Worthing	192	125	25	1	687
Seaford	349	119	137	-	1077

* - includes birds specifically identified.

Analysis of the above records shows the following monthly distribution:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Total
Selsey Bill	23	29	98	87	96	333
Worthing	-	14	518	71	84	687
Seaford	32	305	347	160	233	1077

The following table shows the average number of birds passing per hour of observation at the main seawatching sites for the last 4 years:

	1991	1992	1993	1994
Selsey Bill	0.59	0.61	0.45	0.72
Worthing	0.63	0.96	0.80	3.57
Seaford	1.43	2.88	1.82	3.08

The peak counts for identified species came from Worthing beach on 27 Mar when 72 Red-throated Divers flew E in 11 hrs of observation, whilst Seaford recorded 36 Black-throated Divers going up-channel in 10.5 hrs on 10 May.

Following the comment in *SxBR* 46, this is now the third consecutive year in which Seaford has passed the 1000+ mark.

The only record of note in the latter part of the year was of 10 birds moving W off Worthing Beach on 31 Dec in 2.2 hrs. [JKI]

0007. LITTLE GREBE

Tachybaptus ruficollis

Scarce resident, passage migrant and winter visitor.

The monthly counts at the principal sites were as follows:

	1994						1994 Dec	1995		
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Sept	Oct	Nov		Jan	Feb	Mar
<i>County totals</i>	74	56	53	87	103	169	1070	117	166	116
Chichester Hbr	30	25	17	8	17	35	30	15	50	13
Pagham Hbr	6	12	1	10	14	30	3	7	5	5
Chichester GP	6	7	5	29	19	16	7	17	8	13
Cuckmere	11	nc	12	2	10	20	13	16	30	12
Haven										
Rye Hbr	14	8	14	6	2	26	16	16	19	21
Bewl Water	nc	nc	nc	21	31	37	32	40	44	47

Monthly maxima at selected wintering sites included:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
Thorney Deepes	-	-	-	20	31	45	40
Lower Cuckmere	18	17	12	7	-	-	-
Northpoint GP	2	4	3	3	8	15	15

Breeding activity was reported from 14 sites. Those where young were recorded included Bewl Water where 6 broods produced at least 11 fledged young, Thorney Deepes where 2 of the reported 4 pairs had 4 young and Pett Level with reports of 2 juveniles in July and 6 young in Aug. Single pairs each produced 2 young at Holmgate Forest, Gravetye Lakes and Glynde Levels. A single pair was reported as breeding at Glynde Reach Clay Pit, but no details are available for this site or for Filsham Reed Beds, where another pair was observed. Rye Hbr had single pairs at Castle Water and the Narrow Pits, whilst on Ternery Pool a maximum of 4 pairs had 4 young at the end of May, with a later report of 2 very small young in July. At Chichester GPs, 5 juveniles were present at Drayton, 2 broods were reported from Portfield and 1 pair with 6 young were observed on the West Trout Lake.

Late year sightings away from principal sites included those from The Pells at Lewes, Crumbles GP, Pulborough Brooks, Brooklands (Worthing) and Darwell Res, with a report of half-grown birds at Aldingbourne Rife on 16 Dec. [JKI]

0009. GREAT CRESTED GREBE

*Podiceps cristatus***Fairly common resident, passage migrant and winter visitor.**

The monthly counts at the principal sites were as follows:

	1994			1995			
	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar
<i>County totals</i>	378	347	266	214	214	205	261
Chichester Hbr	-	6	27	7	22	33	15
Pagham Hbr	20	29	18	26	7	4	2
Chichester GP	47	37	50	28	37	28	41
Shillinglee Lake	6	9	9	11	2	3	8
Ardingly Res	28	19	14	12	8	7	12
Weir Wood Res	85	85	44	42	53	28	56
Barcombe Res	7	14	37	18	31	-	3
Arlington Res	40	44	15	15	12	19	21
Bewl Water	100	94	37	47	23	60	69
Pett Levels	2	2	1	2	1	2	2
Rye Hbr	6	6	14	4	18	15	21

The monthly maxima at the principal wintering sites were as follows:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
Weir Wood Res	32	42	80	92	100	70	53
Arlington Res	6	18	15	43	38	22	24
Bewl Water	30	35	76	100	-	-	1
Darwell Res	5	12	32	39	33	32	21

Although there are no records for the earlier part of the year, Barcombe Res maxima for the last 3 months are of interest, at 21, 34 and 46 respectively.

The earliest breeding report came from St. Leonard's Forest where 2 chicks were reported on 30 Apr. Darwell Res recorded 13 pairs on 15 May. Observations of successful breeding came from a number of places, including Burton MP where 2 pairs raised 2 and 3 young, Bewl Water with 27 broods and 60 young and Weir Wood Res with 10 broods and 21 surviving young. Nearer the coast, Rye Hbr reported 3 pairs raising 4 or 5 chicks, although 6 other pairs failed to breed successfully.

Post-breeding dispersal followed the normal pattern with the only large end-of-year counts away from the principal sites being 28 at Church Norton on 7 Oct, 22 at Pilsey Sands on 24 Nov and 14 at Barcombe Mills on 31 Dec. [JKI]

0010. RED-NECKED GREBE

*Podiceps grisegena***Scarce winter visitor and passage migrant.**

The first day of the year found a single at Sovereign Hbr. Marina, Eastbourne. Brighton Marina recorded the only Feb bird, on the 5th, while Selsey Bill and Splash Point, Seaford had singles at the end of Mar. Singles at Hove and Seaford on 20 and 28 Apr respectively completed the spring records.

A juvenile at Church Norton on 20 Sept heralded the autumn movement. 2 Oct saw a bird on the sea off Pett Level and a single immature stayed at Castle Pit, Rye Hbr from

9-12 Oct. Also in Oct, Scotney GP had a single on 5th. Northpoint Pit, Rye Hbr had a single from at least 6 Nov until the end of the year.

In the west of Sussex during this period, singles at Church Norton on 5 and 15 Oct were followed by singles recorded at Selsey Bill on 19 and 28 Oct, together with 3 sightings of a single bird in the Emsworth Channel between 20-31 Dec.

The only inland record was of a bird at Bewl Water on 18 Dec. [JKI]

0011. **SLAVONIAN GREBE**

Podiceps auritus

Scarce winter visitor and passage migrant.

The approximate monthly totals were as follows:

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
47	38	33	35	1	15	57	44

In Jan, the Selsey Bill group reported 17 W in 28.5 hrs. of watching. Elsewhere, Thorney Island recorded 15 on 7 Jan, while 14 were offshore at Church Norton on 19 Jan. In Feb there were 10 reports from 7 locations, with 20 at Pagham Hbr on 3rd. Mar records showed a total of 16 E and 3 W at Selsey and an inland record of a single at Ardingly Res on 18th. Apr started with 23 at Church Norton on 1st and later records included a summer plumaged bird at Mewsbrook Lake, Littlehampton from 10-19th, a single at Pett Level Pools on 7th, 2 at Brighton Marina on 21st and 2 at Widewater on 22nd.

The autumn began with a single reported at Church Norton on 4 dates in Sept. In Oct, 12 were reported from Church Norton on 25th and singles were sighted inland at Bewl Water on 23rd and Weir Wood Res on 30th. For the remaining 2 months of the year, apart from an Arlington Res single on 6 Nov and a Shoreham bird on 20 Nov, records came from Selsey, Pagham and Chichester, peaking at 50 birds reported at Church Norton on 5 Nov. The last record of the year was of 3 at Selsey Bill on 31 Dec. [JKI]

0012. **BLACK-NECKED GREBE**

Podiceps nigricollis

Rare winter visitor and passage migrant.

As last year, very few records were received. Adult birds reported in Apr were 3 at Worthing beach on 21st (DIS) and singles at the Midrips and Scotney Court GP on 29th (NAD). The last bird was present for several days, visiting the Kent and Sussex sides of the GP.

Later in the year, there was an immature at Weir Wood Res on 5 Sept (NAD) while at Rye, 2 birds were present on the Long Pit between 30 Sept-2 Oct, one of them being in partial summer plumage. A single winter plumaged bird was still present on Long Pit on 5 Oct while the same Pit had another winter plumaged bird from 5 Dec until the end of the year (BJY, DJF). [JKI]

0014. **BLACK-BROWED ALBATROSS***Diomedea melanophris***One record, no longer considered to be acceptable.**

1974: One seen flying N at Sandy Point, Chichester Hbr on 10 May (SxBR 27:9) is no longer considered acceptable and this species is now removed from the county list.

1993: One seen at sea c.54 km SE of Newhaven on 17 Oct (BMU), now the only acceptable record for SE England, is of passing interest although being approximately in mid Channel is hardly an adequate replacement for the 1974 record. [RJF]

0020. **FULMAR***Fulmarus glacialis***Fairly common breeding species and passage migrant, resident on coastal cliffs from November to September.**

The usual movements of uncertain significance were recorded at the main seawatching localities, away from the nesting areas, as follows:

Direction	Jan-Feb		Mar-May		June-July		Aug-Oct	
	E	W	E	W	E	W	E	W
Selsey Bill	2	6	106	448	4	15	7	114
Worthing	-	-	294	194	8	6	-	-

The peak movements at Worthing were 46 E and 12 W in 11 hours on 27 Mar and 112 E and 26 W in 7 hours on 21 May. The only report of confirmed breeding was of 6 young at Newhaven. A dark morph was seen off Beachy Head on 28 Mar. [KN]

0036. **CORY'S SHEARWATER***Calonectris diomedea***Rare vagrant.**

1977: One in Rye Bay on 4 Apr (KR, KT) was accepted by *British Birds* as a Kent/East Sussex record. It was the first to be recorded in the county since 1950.

1978: Singles in Rye Bay on 13 Apr and 5 May (KR) were accepted by *British Birds* as Kent/East Sussex records.

None of the above, the 4-6th county records, have previously been published in a *Sussex Bird Report*. There are now 13 records involving 16 individuals, with that on 4 Apr being the earliest to date. [RJF]

0043. **SOOTY SHEARWATER***Puffinus griseus***Rare autumn visitor.**

One bird was seen at Selsey Bill, flying W about 200m offshore on 19 Sept (TJE). An average showing. [SJP]

0046. **MANX SHEARWATER***Puffinus puffinus***Scarce spring and autumn passage migrant.**

The first record of the year was of 2 birds flying E one mile offshore at Selsey Bill on 17 Apr (OM). One flew E at 07:08 and 5 W at 09:20 hrs. past Selsey on 20 Apr (TJE) and, on the same date, 6 E past Birling Gap at 07:25 hrs., just 100 yards off shore (JFC). Five flew E past Splash Point, Seaford on 2 May (WRT). Then two spectacular days - 24 past Worthing beach (DIS) on 3 May (comprising parties of 5 E, 6 W, 6 W and 7 E, seen between 18:40-19:30 hrs.) 24 also flew past Selsey on 4 May, all W, between 08:05-12:00 hrs.(BJC, TJE, OM). Splash Point, Seaford recorded 2 birds E on 11 May (WRT), 1 E on 15 May (SL) and 1 W on 21 May (WRT). The only autumn record was of 1 W past Selsey on 19 Sept (TJE). [SJP]

0052. **STORM PETREL***Hydrobates pelagicus***Rare vagrant, mainly in autumn after severe gales.**

The only record supported by a description was of one seen from a fishing boat, 6 miles S of Brighton on 6 July (NJT). This is the first record for the County since the oiled individual was found on a boat in Littlehampton Marina in 1991. [SJP]

0071. **GANNET***Sula bassana***Fairly common passage migrant and non-breeding summer visitor; once scarce but now increasingly numerous in winter.**

Totals at the main seawatching localities were as follows:

Direction	Jan-Feb		Mar-May		June-July		Aug-Oct		Nov-Dec	
	E	W	E	W	E	W	E	W	E	W
Selsey Bill	5	1	40	43	3	3	14	44	3	2
Worthing	-	-	25	16	9	4	11	48	-	1
Seaford	240	-	80	-	-	-	-	-	9	3

Peak movements were in late Apr and early May and included 111 E in 10 hours on 21 Apr and 123 E in 10 hours on 10 May at Seaford. 180 were off Church Norton on 9 July.

In autumn, the larger movements in Aug were 153 E at Bexhill on 6th, 200 at Beachy Head on 7th and 115 W at Newhaven on 27th. On 4 Sept 83 flew W, 24 E off Bexhill. [KN]

0072. **CORMORANT***Phalacrocorax carbo***Very scarce breeding species and common winter visitor.**

The monthly counts at the principal sites were as follows :

	Sept	Oct	Nov	1994 Dec	1995 Jan	Feb	Mar
<i>County totals</i>	387	452	355	437	459	571	430
Chichester Hbr	55	62	50	37	20	45	27
Pagham Hbr	109	158	51	147	22	75	44
Chichester GP	25	24	41	50	129	167	112
Adur Levels	7	22	9	13	12	7	nc
Weir Wood Res	18	20	26	29	16	34	31
Barcombe Res	-	-	1	17	14	4	9
Bewl Water	28	30	40	40	30	34	18
Rye Hbr	87	87	37	20	16	9	22

Peak monthly counts from selected principal sites were as follows:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
Chichester Hbr	31	28	23	21	8	7	18	42	55	62	50	37
Pagham Hbr	30	50	70	73	140	-	-	30	109	158	51	147
Chichester GP	156	23	150	-	-	-	91	-	167	110	99	-
Upper Adur	69	132	19	44	29	13	-	100	164	188	158	152
Weir Wood Res	22	19	52	27	-	-	-	4	36	-	24	37
Darwell Res	6	11	16	23	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Arlington Res	10	24	6	5	-	-	-	-	-	21	4	4
Bewl Water	24	30	21	-	-	-	-	-	28	-	-	-
Rye Hbr	20	40	27	16	52	63	167	204	99	160	37	44

Other sites with significant counts were Knepp Lake (37 on 1 Jan), Brooklands, Worthing (39 on 20 Mar and 36 on 12 Apr), Littlehampton (31 on 26 Sept), South Stoke (59 on 29 Jan, 69 on 25 Feb and 59 on 19 Mar) and Ardingly Res (53 at evening roost on 30 Dec). Flights at dusk to the latter site were observed from Wakehurst Place, with 28 on 2 Mar and 40 on 31 Oct. An immature was also seen to land on the small pond in front of Wakehurst Place mansion on 20 Sept.

At Rye Hbr a pair nested and incubated but no young were seen. In addition, a number of colour-ringed individuals were present on the reserve during the year. No counts were received from the known breeding site near Fairlight. [SHL]

0080. **SHAG***Phalacrocorax aristotelis***Scarce winter visitor and passage migrant.**

A below average number of individuals were recorded during the year. Approximate monthly minima were as follows:

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
5	8	1	12	6	1	-	3	-	2	1	2

During Jan and Feb, individuals were reported along the coast from Selsey Bill, Shoreham Hbr and Southwick (2), Brighton Marina (3) Glyne Gap. Splash Point, Seaford and Sovereign Hbr Marina, Eastbourne. Inland, a single was seen at Arlington Res from 12-15 and 28 Feb.

Spring and summer records came from 7 locations along the coast between Selsey Bill and Beachy Head, the most being 5 E past Splash Point, Seaford on 24 Apr. The nearest breeding colony is on the Isle of Wight.

In the last 3 months of the year, coastal sightings were at Brighton Marina, Littlehampton and Shoreham. Inland, an immature was at Weir Wood Res on 16-17 Dec. [SHL]

0095. **BITTERN**

Botaurus stellaris

Rare winter visitor.

Although fewer birds were seen than in 1993, the number of records is an improvement compared with the period 1989-1992. In the first winter period, 1 was at Castle Water, Rye on 8 Jan and singles were seen at Elms Farm, Icklesham on 18 and 29 Jan. Elms Farm also hosted a bird on 29-30 Sept. Also in the second winter period, 1 was seen flying low into a reedy field at Combe Haven on 6 Nov and one was at Rye Narrow Pit on 22 Nov. [SJP]

0104. **NIGHT HERON**

Nycticorax nycticorax

Rare, mainly spring, vagrant.

An adult at Thorney Great Deeps on the evening of 19 Apr (CBC) and a juvenile at Chilver Bridge Farm, Arlington on 23 Dec (JKI, PL). Both have been accepted by *British Birds* and move the county total on to 25. [RJF]

0119. **LITTLE EGRET**

Egretta garzetta

Formally rare but now a scarce and increasing passage migrant and winter visitor.

1976: One in Chichester Hbr on 31 July (SxBR 29:11) was not published by *British Birds* and should be deleted.

1994: The approximate minimum monthly totals were as follows:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
<i>County totals</i>	36	40	37	34	20	14	28	118	113	97	89	85
Thorney	32	36	33	28	8	8	24	98	94	88	82	77
Deeps												
Pagham Hbr	4	4	4	4	2	2	2	11	12	7	6	7
Cuckmere	-	-	-	1	4	-	1	3	3	1	1	1
Rye Hbr	-	-	-	-	2	1	-	2	2	-	-	-

We were astonished in 1992 when 24 birds were recorded in the county and we were not to know what would follow. 1994 was yet another unprecedented year, with a minimum of 158 birds recorded in the county, compared to 77 in 1993. It must only be a

matter of time before they become established as a breeding species along the south coast.

During Jan-Mar, all the records came from Chichester and Pagham Hbrs. The first to be recorded away from these localities were singles at Glyne Gap on 3 Apr and Cuckmere on 28 Apr. At Thorney Deeps, numbers had gradually decreased to 12 on 27 Apr and the following morning, 9 were observed flying high twice, before returning and calling with great excitement, probably stimulating their desire to go to their breeding grounds. Thereafter, numbers fell to 3 on 12-19 May, with one remaining until 23rd.

Presumed returning birds were observed at both Pilsey Island and Pagham Hbr on 1 and 2 June respectively. Counts at the Thorney Deeps roost built up rapidly, with 8 there on 22 June and 24 on 30 July, increasing to 41 on 5 Aug, 60 on 15 Aug, 78 on 18th, 85 on 22nd and a staggering 98 at dawn on 25th. 94+ were present at dusk on 1 Sept, 88 on 1 Oct, 82 on 1 Nov and 77 on 11 Dec, thereafter falling to 59 on 31 Dec. Dawn counts have shown a considerable number of birds leaving the roost to feed in Hampshire, with a maximum of 42 on 28 Aug.

Counts at another roost near Sidlesham included 10 on 21 and 26 Aug, with a maximum of 12 on 6 Sept. Other notable records were 4 at Cuckmere Haven on 6 May, 3 W at Selsey Bill on 11 May, 3 at Combe Haven on 31 May, 11 at Pagham Hbr on 21 Aug, 17 at Pilsey Island on 18 Sept and 16 there on 1 Oct. [CBC]

0122. GREY HERON

Ardea cinerea

Fairly common resident.

	Sept	Oct	Nov	1994 Dec	1995 Jan	Feb	Mar
<i>County totals</i>	126	134	108	90	52	93	81
Chichester Hbr	26	29	26	17	9	20	4
Pagham Hbr	18	22	11	7	2	12	4
Chichester GP	6	7	4	3	6	2	3
Pulborough Brooks	7	-	7	7	3	25	9
Adur Estuary	6	8	4	1	-	-	-
Lower Ouse Valley	-	5	4	1	2	4	6
Weir Wood Res	3	2	1	2	1	2	2
Newhaven	2	-	-	-	3	-	-
Bewl Water	3	6	4	3	3	2	7
Cuckmere Haven	3	6	1	5	3	9	3
Pevensey Levels	14	10	11	10	10	2	15
Pett Level	10	10	4	8	3	-	1
Rye Hbr	13	13	18	19	2	1	4

With one site not counted but known to be occupied, nests certainly and probably occupied totalled 177. Allowing for the uncounted site, this represents only slightly fewer than the 1993 total of 188. The counts were as follows; Fishbourne 15 (JKC), Pagham 6 (ABW), Flansham 11 (RK), Parham 15 (PI), Henfield 24 (ABW), Firlie 14 (ABW), Knepp 10 (DB), Eridge 7 (MND), Glynleigh 8 (PJL), Westham 0 (PJL), Wartling (only one site of the two counted) 8 (PJL), Winchelsea 1 (CHD), Leasam 36 (JA), Iford 2 (DCL), Gillham's Moor 4 (JLN), Rye Hbr 0 (BJY), Warnham LNR 2 (GRS), Charleston 3 (PJL), Hadlow Down 3 (PBC), Westbourne 1 (GCMR) and Burpham 1 (FPP).

Heron were recorded in suitable habitat throughout the county all through the year. The majority of records were of single birds or of up to ten in any one area. The largest count, of 27, was for the WeBS count at Rye Hbr in Jan and up to 21 could be seen on

Castle Water at the end of the year. In Chichester Hbr, 25 were counted on 12 Aug and at Thorney Deeps, 11 on 21 Aug and 16 on 2 Oct. The maximum count at Weir Wood Res was 17 during July-Sept. [ABW]

0131. **BLACK STORK**

Ciconia nigra

Very rare vagrant

One arrived from the E at Littlehampton Marina on 17 Sept and drifted off W at 07:20 hrs (RJLK). It slowly circled W over Pagham Hbr between 09:30-10:00 hrs (TJE *et al.*) and was later seen over Langstone Hbr, Hampshire and Swyre Head in Dorset. It has been accepted by *British Birds* and is the 5th county record. [RJF]

0134. **WHITE STORK**

Ciconia ciconia

Vagrant, mainly in spring.

One bird was recorded in the Cuckmere Haven area on 9 May (ARK). It was seen in the air with two Little Egrets before flying off N. A record was also received of a bird in this area on 3 May, but with no description. Another record of a bird in the same area on 3 Sept was, sadly, also not supported with a description. Observers are reminded that a list of all species requiring such additional details is printed in every Sussex Bird Report. [SJP]

0144. **SPOONBILL**

Platalea leucorodia

Rare visitor, most frequent in spring and autumn.

1989: A juvenile bird was seen flying in from the sea heading N near Belle Tout, Beachy Head on 30 Sept (RHC), bringing the total for that year to five.

1994: One adult and one immature bird were at Pagham Hbr on the morning of 3 Nov. They flew off W (TJE). [SJP]

0152. **MUTE SWAN**

Cygnus olor

Fairly common resident.

Some sizeable herds were located at the start of the year during WeBS counts, notably 114 in Chichester Hbr and 53 at Amberley Wild Brooks in Jan, together with 103 at Rye Hbr in Feb. Eighty-five birds on Lewes Brooks on 2 Feb included 31 immatures. Records of birds were received from more than 30 sites.

In the breeding season records of nesting in Mar came from West Harting Pond, Ifield MP and Horse Eye Level, Pevensey. Confirmed breeding was reported from only 16 sites, with a minimum of 66 cygnets. Six out of 7 young hatched were reared at Swanbourne Lake, Arundel, while at Tilgate Park, Crawley 5 out of 6 survived. All breeding records should be submitted to enable success year on year to be monitored.

Significant herds reported from Spring onwards were 64 at Itford Farm, Southease on 10 Apr, 60 in Chichester Hbr during the May WeBS count, 39 adults on Castle Water, Rye on 10 June, 67 in the Fishbourne Channel on 15 July (*cf.* 63 on 15 June and 64 on 5 Aug), 35 on Pett Level Pools on 28 July, 38, including 5 juveniles, in the Lower Cuckmere Valley on 26 Sept, 33 feeding on wet fields near Steyning on 16 Nov and 66 in the R. Brede valley on 28 Nov. [MJM]

0153. **BEWICK'S SWAN**

Cygnus columbianus

Scarce winter visitor and passage migrant.

In the first winter period the highest counts were 73, including 9 juveniles, at Amberley Wild Brooks on 31 Jan (*cf.* a maximum of 42 recorded there on 26 Dec 1993), followed by 69 on 13 Feb at Pulborough North Brooks. Smaller numbers, with a maximum of 12 on 12 Jan, were recorded on the Upper Adur Levels; 9 on Henfield Levels on 19 Jan included 2 juveniles. In the east of the county a herd of c.24 birds flew NNW over Scotney Court GP on 1 Jan. Up to 19 birds were reported from Lewes Brooks in Jan; 16 on Glynde Level during the Feb WeBS count may have been part of this herd. The last spring record was of 25 on Amberley Wild Brooks on 5 Mar.

Two adults on Pulborough North Brooks on 2 Oct were the first returning birds and from then to the end of the year all records received came from the west of the county. The maximum count was 34 on Amberley Wild Brooks on 19 Nov including one family party with 3 juveniles. Four juveniles were in a herd of 12 on Henfield Levels on 31 Dec. Coastal records included 6, calling while flying E, at Pagham on 29 Nov and 2 adults roosting at Pilsey Sands on 14 Dec. [MJM]

0157. **BEAN GOOSE**

Anser fabalis

Rare winter visitor and passage migrant.

A single bird recorded on 10 and 15 Jan at West Wittering showed characteristics of the race *rossicus*. A birds, presumably the same, was at North Wall, Pagham Hbr from 8-16 Feb (ASC, TJE *et al*). [RJLK]

0158. **PINK-FOOTED GOOSE**

Anser brachyrhynchus

Scarce winter visitor and passage migrant.

A bird of dubious origins was present throughout the year at Bewl Water. Otherwise, only one other record received, involving a single bird on the Upper Adur Levels on 28 Nov. [RJLK]

0159. **WHITE-FRONTED GOOSE***Anser albifrons***Scarce winter visitor and passage migrant.**

In the first winter period birds were recorded in good numbers through both East and West Sussex, unlike 1993. 15 were at Pagham from 1-11 Jan after which there were 17 from 26 Jan-17 Feb. Two were present at Amberley Wild Brooks on 6 Jan. At Scotney Court GP there were 110 on 15 Jan. rising to 170 on 19th with a decline to 150 on 22 Jan, 87 on 5 Mar and 80 on 6th. Also in Jan there was one at Barcombe Res, with 29 at Castle Pit, Rye and 30 each at Arlington Res and Pilsey Sands. Nine were present at Coldwaltham Brooks on 30 Jan and 1 was on Beach Tern Pool, Rye Hbr on 29 Mar. Four flew E at Selsey Bill on 4 Feb, 31 E past Worthing on 31 Mar and 1 at Nook Meadows, Rye on 1 Apr.

Only 2 records were received for the second winter period, 5 S at Castle Water, Rye on 20 Oct and 14 SE at Marline Wood, Hastings on 9 Nov. [RJLK]

0161. **GREYLAG GOOSE***Anser anser***Moderately common introduced resident and winter visitor, scarce passage migrant.**

The monthly counts at the principal sites were as follows:

	1994						1995			
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar
<i>County totals</i>	74	59	41	96	77	92	61	98	74	42
Cuckmere Haven	1	nc	-	nc	nc	1	1	1	-	-
Pett Level	-	1	-	1	5	1	-	5	-	-
Rye Hbr	-	2	-	1	-	nc	nc	-	-	7
Amberley Wild Brooks	33	-	23	-	-	36	-	45	34	2
Pulborough Brooks	13	24	18	76	29	16	57	26	2	23
Ardingly Res	27	32	-	12	-	29	-	1	37	6
Weir Wood Res	1	-	-	4	45	8	-	18	-	-

Records of this species were well spread over the county, with maximum counts at various sites being; Amberley Wild Brooks - 65 on 2 Jan, Rackham Levels - 60 on 16 Jan, Ardingly Res - 27 on 16 Jan, Icklesham - 60 on 17 Jan and Scotney Court GP - 140 on 19 Jan.

In the latter part of the year, 48 were at Ardingly Res on 19 July with 24 there on 27 Aug. At Pulborough Brooks there were 50 on 16 Aug increasing to 93 on 17 Sept. At Weir Wood Res there were 43 on 22 Sept and 116 on 17 Oct. 42 were at Glynde Level on 1 Sept and 63 were present at Glyndebourne Farm, Ringmer on 13 Nov. [RJLK]

GREY GOOSE SPECIES*Anser sp.*

Often distant birds are difficult to identify positively as a specific species, although 15 at the University of Sussex on 1 Sept were thought to have been Pink-footed Geese (*A. brachyrhynchus*). [RJLK]

0166. CANADA GOOSE

*Branta canadensis***Fairly common introduced resident and partial migrant.**

The monthly counts at the principal sites were as follows:

	1994						1995			
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar
<i>County totals</i>	1887	419	346	936	1269	1746	1836	1874	662	613
Chichester Hbr	46	1	3	4	39	30	4	35	32	28
Chichester GP	43	-	9	18	67	68	56	54	4	27
Arundel WWT	206	80	84	77	106	84	111	235	82	50
Pulborough Brooks	231	45	31	220	371	238	463	133	92	47
Amberley Wild Brooks	537	-	4	-	-	315	64	263	38	68
Ardingly Res	55	36	26	28	32	26	63	59	41	7
Cuckmere Haven	520	nc	30	88	3	113	248	287	50	51
Weir Wood Res	11	12	9	20	-	-	-	5	4	9
Barcombe Mills Res	141	94	16	-	-	5	-	45	3	-
Pett Level	-	71	8	115	57	2	56	63	19	17
Rye Hbr	173	94	78	78	3	202	202	70	122	79
Bewl Water	377	150	50	120	457	516	510	250	90	108

Other large counts in Jan were of 200 at Rackham Levels, 106 at Barcombe Res and 200 at Burton MP. There were 132 at Barcombe Res on 23 Jan and 108 at Weir Wood Res on 6 Feb.

Breeding was confirmed at 13 sites, with 95-100 young involved.

In the latter part of the year, larger counts included 590 at Arlington Res on 8 Aug (including 3 seen diving and completely submerged), 833 at Bewl Water on 21 Aug, 537 at Cuckmere Haven on 26 Sept and 450 on Amberley Wild Brooks on 19 Nov.

Birds of the race *minima* were present on Pulborough Brooks from 22 Oct until at least 24 Dec. [RJLK]

0167. BARNACLE GOOSE

*Branta leucopsis***Scarce winter visitor, usually in severe weather and increasing feral resident.**

Well-spread records throughout the year add to the problem of recognising the true status of this species. Larger counts included 27 at Cuckmere Haven on 1 Jan, 15 at Pulborough Brooks on 4 Jan, 16 at Barcombe Res on 8 Mar and 9 at Bewl Water on 20 Feb.

In the second winter period there were lower numbers recorded with maxima of 7 at Scotney Court GP on 26 Dec and 46 at Barcombe Res on 31 Dec. [RJLK]

0168. BRENT GOOSE

*Branta bernicla***Very common winter visitor and passage migrant.**

The monthly counts at the principal sites were as follows:

	1994						1994	1995		
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar
<i>County totals</i>	14,594	14,715	3696	2	674	8378	11,585	9215	12,697	3,344
Chichester Hbr	12,647	12,077	3,485	1	548	7107	9193	6593	9567	3042
Pagham Hbr	1892	2638	nc	1	114	877	2368	2611	3130	299
Climping	-	-	-	-	12	247	21	-	-	-
Newhaven	nc	nc	nc	-	-	1	1	-	-	-
Cuckmere	-	nc	3	-	-	6	-	-	-	-
Haven										
Langley	nc	nc	nc	-	-	18	-	-	-	-
Pett Level	-	-	2	-	-	-	-	11	-	3
Rye Hbr	-	-	-	-	-	100	2	-	-	-

Birds away from the more usual coastal sites included one at Bewl Water on 12 Jan and 1 at Barcombe Res on 27 Feb.

Observations of easterly return passage were as follows:

	No. of hours watched	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Total
Selsey Bill	462.5	87	92	2789	249	120	3337
Worthing	192.5	40	99	1093	412	140	1784
Seaford	337.5	-	3319	4095	1121	167	8702

A single leucistic bird was amongst the 607 E past Splash Point, Seaford on 5 Mar which was presumably the bird recorded at Pagham Hbr. on 8 Jan, East Head on 11 Jan and Bosham on 21 Jan.

Nine summering birds were recorded in Chichester Hbr. on 12 June, with 21 present on 12 and 22 Aug.

Return passage commenced in Sept, observations of westerly passage were as follows:

	No. of hours watched	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Total
Selsey Bill	136	44	322	228	16	610
Worthing	26.8	24	79	111	14	228

Birds were more often recorded away from the regular coastal sites in the autumn, with high counts of 200 S over Bewl Water on 11 Oct, 100 S at Limekiln Wood, Crowborough on 3 Nov and 600 SW over Bewl Water on 4 Nov. Otherwise, the only large counts received for the latter part of the year were 2100 at Pagham village on 17 Nov, 2200 at North Wall, Pagham Hbr on 16 Dec and 1000 at Thorney Deeps on 21 Dec.

Birds showing characteristics of the pale-bellied race *hrota* were noted in both winter periods, with one at Glyne Gap, Bexhill and two at East Head on 11 Jan and one at the latter site on 16 Jan. This bird was seen flying E with 20 dark-bellied Brents past both Worthing beach and Beachy Head on 27 Mar. In the second winter period, singletons were at Pilsey on 25 Oct and North Wall, Pagham on 8 Nov and 13 Dec.

The regular adult Black Brant (*B. b. nigricans*) remained at Thorney Island, being seen intermittently until 6 Mar. [RJLK]

0170. **EGYPTIAN GOOSE**

Alopochen aegyptiacus

Vagrant from established feral populations.

A female at Pulborough Brooks from 27-30 Dec (RSPB) is the 20th county record. [RJF]

0171. **RUDDY SHELDUCK**

Tadorna ferruginea

Recent records assumed to refer to escapes, otherwise very rare vagrant.

The male at Pagham Hbr, usually in the North Wall area, from 15 Oct 1993 (SxBR 46:92) remained to 8 Mar (mo). 3 at Arlington Res on 30 Aug (MH) were part of a significant national influx, while a juvenile or female at the North Wall, Pagham Hbr from 13 Nov into 1995 (RJF *et al.*) may also have been. The first record, like most since 1940, was almost certainly an escape from captivity. Of all recent records, the 3 at Arlington are the most likely to have been of wild origin, being part of an apparent influx into western Europe. The provenance of that at the end of the year is less clear, one left over from the influx or a more usual escape? [RJF]

0173. **SHELDUCK**

Tadorna tadorna

Fairly common breeder and common winter visitor.

The monthly counts at the principal sites were as follows:

	1994						1995			
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar
<i>County totals</i>	1613	1914	1196	120	195	506	1014	1379	1486	1083
Chichester Hbr	1225	1404	960	77	91	360	747	1058	1275	703
Pagham Hbr	324	445	178	24	91	114	194	264	124	218
Chichester GP	-	-	-	4	-	-	12	2	11	18
Arundel WWT	nc	nc	nc	6	5	21	39	8	14	74
Newhaven	4	2	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	-
Cuckmere Haven	6	nc	15	1	-	2	2	2	20	4
Pett Level	-	3	6	-	-	30	8	31	2	6
Rye Hbr	54	60	35	8	8	4	17	24	26	23

In the first winter period there were concentrations of 500 at Pagham Hbr on 1 Jan and 63 at Arundel WWT on 12 Jan in addition to the WeBS counts shown above.

Breeding records were received of about 35 pairs from 10 sites; at least 1 pair at Coldwaltham Brooks, 3 birds at Icklesham, 1 pair with 8 young at Glynde, 7 large juveniles in Cuckmere Valley in July, 4 birds at Pulborough Brooks, 1 territory at Lidsey Rife, Barnham, 1 pair with 8 young at Pagham Hbr, at least 1 pair raised 5 young at Chichester GP, at Chichester Hbr 99 young were raised from 13-14 creches and at Rye Hbr 10 pairs produced at least 43 young, but only raised 13. In addition to these there were 266 at Chichester Hbr on 12 May declining to 76 on 12 June, 85 on 12 July and

29 on 12 Aug. For the rest of the year numbers remained small, with most adults moulting outside of the county.

Inland, there was 1 at Arlington Res on 1 Aug, 2 at Weir Wood Res on 29 Oct and 27 Nov, 11 at Amberley Wild Brooks on 19 Nov and up to 5 at Pulborough Brooks until the end of the year. [BJY]

0178. **MANDARIN**

Aix galericulata

Scarce but increasing introduced resident.

Small numbers were at several sites early in the year, the highest being 15 at Colgate, 11 at Swanbourne Lake in Feb and 7 at Pulborough Brooks in Mar and Apr.

In the breeding season, 10 localities were occupied, with young reported at Weir Wood Res, Bewl Water, Brantridge Park (Balcombe), Eridge Park Lake and Pulborough Brooks. The last site held 21 birds on 11 Aug. Up to 6 were at various places until the end of the year. [KN]

0179. **WIGEON**

Anas penelope

Common winter visitor and passage migrant.

The monthly counts at the principal sites were as follows:

	1994						1995			
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar
<i>County totals</i>	5727	5043	2451	80	1765	5194	5640	8655	6763	1008
Chichester Hbr	1511	1086	820	27	559	1215	1408	1134	1119	338
Pagham Hbr	383	1344	47	12	410	1045	847	1409	118	40
Amberley Wild Brooks	1095	280	-	-	-	670	-	1050	2050	-
Pulborough Brooks	1420	2255	867	11	211	1005	2250	3749	2230	275
Arlington Res	nc	nc	nc	25	4	240	90	92	7	-
Bewl Water	nc	nc	nc	4	117	362	234	476	400	144
Cuckmere Haven	1192	nc	595	-	171	537	587	632	773	163
Pevensey Levels	80	62	121	-	1	25	129	38	43	38

The highest counts early in the year were 1511 in Chichester Hbr on 18 Jan, 1400 at Cuckmere Haven on 31 Jan, 2255 at Pulborough Brooks and 1344 at Pagham Hbr on 13 Feb.

In June and July there were 1 or 2 at Rye Hbr, up to 6 at Thorney Deeps and 2 at Glynde Levels on 15 July.

Numbers increased in Sept with 25 at Arlington Res and 46 at Pulborough Brooks by mid-month. There were 100 at Pulborough Brooks and 296 at Pagham Hbr on 22nd and 300 at Thorney Deeps on 26th. The highest numbers (apart from the WeBS counts) at the end of the year were 800 at Thorney Deeps on 23 Nov, 285 at Knepp Lake on 3 Dec, 2050 at Pulborough Brooks on 5 Dec and 750 at Cuckmere Haven on 11 Dec. [KN]

0182. **GADWALL***Anas strepera*

Very scarce breeder and fairly common winter visitor which has increased significantly in recent years; passage migrant.

The monthly counts at the principal sites were as follows:

	1994						1994	1995		
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar
<i>County totals</i>	78	70	39	40	341	274	529	402	205	69
Chichester GP	7	5	-	-	14	29	142	53	4	-
Swanbourne Lake	6	6	18	10	17	8	28	13	14	6
Arundel WWT	21	16	20	12	11	19	18	30	9	20
Pulborough Brooks	5	36	-	2	-	14	11	1	48	3
Arlington Res	23	1	-	-	-	5	1	2	-	-
Bewl Water	nc	nc	nc	16	25	82	222	150	64	2

The counts at the principal sites early in the year were clearly lower than average. Other records in Jan included 55 at Rye Hbr and 60 at Bewl Water on 16th, 28 at Thorney Deeps on 17th and 60 at Icklesham on 28th.

Although a few other birds were present in the breeding season, breeding was confirmed only at Combe Haven, where a female and 4 young were seen on 4 July.

The highest counts, excluding the WeBS surveys, at the end of the year were of 35 at Rye Hbr on 6 Nov, 47 at Swanbourne Lake on 29 Nov and 45 at Icklesham on 24 Dec. [KN]

0184. **TEAL***Anas crecca*

Scarce resident and common winter visitor and passage migrant.

The monthly counts at the principal sites were as follows:

	1994						1994	1995		
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar
<i>County totals</i>	4916	5232	1469	669	1222	3583	3562	4781	4166	1207
Chichester Hbr	966	684	391	206	673	921	1377	757	848	212
Pagham Hbr	1326	1636	78	65	258	497	219	1311	128	98
Arundel WWT	9	35	31	59	158	20	263	6	4	12
Amberley Wild Brooks	330	905	135	1	7	620	-	300	1200	240
Pulborough Brooks	1108	1625	632	202	429	1125	1011	1535	1530	508
Bewl Water	nc	nc	nc	1	13	42	85	14	19	-
Pevensy Levels	nc	nc	nc	2	24	150	376	171	108	70
Rye Hbr	130	13	10	29	29	115	57	307	32	-

The Jan and Feb counts were high, with peaks of 966 in Chichester Hbr on 12 Jan, 1636 at Pagham Hbr, 1625 at Pulborough Brooks and 905 at Amberley Wild Brooks on 12 Feb. There were still 632 at Pulborough Brooks on 13 Mar.

In the breeding season there were 19 pairs at Pulborough Brooks and single pairs bred at Bewl Water and Glynde Levels.

There were 400 at Thorney Deeps on 29 Aug and 200 at Glynde on 25 Sept. The highest inland counts at the end of the year came from Pulborough Brooks, with a maximum of 1011 on 5 Dec. [KN]

0186. MALLARD

*Anas platyrhynchos***Common resident and winter visitor.**

The monthly counts at the principal sites were as follows:

	1994						1994				1995		
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar			
<i>County totals</i>	2840	1920	1436	2808	2607	2787	2930	2324	1502	1440			
Chichester Hbr	309	187	165	214	207	340	305	140	195	202			
Pagham Hbr	140	148	72	345	362	279	207	297	91	76			
Chichester GP	55	37	39	88	73	83	235	178	53	77			
Swanbourne Lake	125	65	60	68	191	211	95	98	111	72			
Arundel WWT	353	440	440	541	708	665	1076	445	227	317			
Pulborough Brooks	243	277	75	410	251	241	260	290	280	156			
Angmering Decoy	72	45	37	176	263	139	117	96	50	52			
Knepp Lake	136	2	2	nc	112	nc	83	20	3	5			
Ardingly Res	nc	nc	nc	63	80	202	163	86	47	32			
Arlington Res	176	85	64	102	138	209	148	156	104	29			
Bewl Water	nc	nc	nc	377	305	225	281	188	236	128			
Pevensy Levels	69	38	38	52	33	125	52	40	35	41			
Alexandra Park	247	178	145	269	234	255	262	nc	142	122			
Rye Hbr	230	87	79	321	321	256	144	280	216	38			

Numbers were comparatively low in the early months, the highest counts were at Arundel WWT with 353 on 12 Jan, 440 on 12 Feb and 12 Mar, and Bewl Water with 488 on 12 Jan.

Breeding records included 10 broods totalling 78 young at Thorney Deeps and 29 broods of 166 young at Bewl Water.

The highest counts later in the year were in mid-Sept, with 321 at Rye Hbr, 410 at Pulborough Brooks, 415 at Icklesham and 377 at Bewl Water. Arlington Res held 250 on 6 Nov and 231 on 22 Dec. [KN]

0189. PINTAIL

*Anas acuta***Fairly common winter visitor and passage migrant, occasionally summers and has bred.**

The monthly counts at the principal sites were as follows:

	1994						1994				1995		
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar			
<i>County totals</i>	1064	873	198	-	162	415	719	1133	501	19			
Chichester Hbr	18	84	146	-	45	60	91	82	28	2			
Pagham Hbr	596	507	nc	-	108	101	462	604	62	4			
Amberley	104	52	-	-	-	137	-	24	135	5			
Wildbrooks													
Pulborough Brooks	345	230	38	-	9	97	159	394	274	8			

Observations of easterly spring passage were as follows:

	No. of watched	hrs.	Feb	Mar	Apr	Total
Selsey Bill	292		9	2	7	18
Worthing	108		-	34	1	35
Seaford	28		-	20	3	23

The last bird was seen flying E past Splash Point, Seaford on 12 May. No birds summered. The first returning bird was at Rye Hbr on 14 Aug. Counts remained low until 86 at Pagham Hbr on 22 Sept, 30 at Pulborough Brooks on 25 Oct and 64 at Thorney Deeps on 21 Nov. The only count of note on passage was of 18 W past West Beach, Littlehampton on 21 Nov. [RJLK]

0191. **GARGANEY**

Anas querquedula

Scarce passage migrant and rare summer visitor.

A very early bird was present from 24 Jan-24 Apr at Icklesham. The next were 2 at Pulborough Brooks and 2 E off Splash Point, Seaford on 30 Mar. 10 birds were at 6 sites in Apr and at least 18 birds were at 9 sites in May. Just 1 bird was recorded in June, at North Wall, Pagham Hbr on 2nd and 5 birds were seen in July.

Widely recorded in Aug, with at least 34 birds at 7 sites, including 6 at Pett Level on 13th and 5 at Rye Hbr on 24th. Only 3 birds were seen in Sept, a single was present at Arlington Res on 8 Oct and the last of the year was at Bewl Water from 23 Oct-13 Dec. No records were received of breeding birds although a juvenile was present at one site on 17 Aug. [RJLK]

0194. **SHOVELER**

Anas clypeata

Very scarce resident and fairly common winter visitor and passage migrant.

The monthly counts at the principal sites were as follows:

	1994						1994			1995		
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar		
<i>County Totals</i>	374	341	245	125	170	465	429	473	348	218		
Chichester Hbr	-	10	-	3	-	5	9	-	-	-		
Pagham Hbr	74	25	nc	16	12	84	21	39	3	26		
Chichester GP	-	2	--	9	17	38	37	8	5	-		
Pulborough Brooks	118	215	140	5	27	133	225	283	312	150		
Arlington Res	96	56	-	26	55	60	42	51	2	-		
Pett Level	-	-	5	30	14	10	31	17	-	-		
Rye Hbr	55	10	9	10	141	103	31	27	4	19		

Away from these sites, the peak Feb count was of 28 at Icklesham.

Observations from the regular sea-watching sites were as follows:

	No. of watched	hrs.	Mar	Apr	May	Total
Selsey Bill	273		14 E 116 W	2 E	-	16 E 116 W
Worthing	108		26 E	-	-	26 E
Seaford	291.5		18 E	10 E	3 E	31 E

Breeding was confirmed at 4 sites, with 2 clutches definitely hatching and producing 4 and 8 young. Return passage was hard to ascertain but must have involved some of the 45 birds at Rye Hbr on 23 Aug. 130 were at Rye Hbr on 30 Sept and 150 at Arlington Res on 27 Nov. [RJLK]

0196. RED-CRESTED POCHARD

Netta rufina

Possibly rare winter visitor and passage migrant, although many records probably relate to escaped or feral birds.

All records were confined to the last quarter of the year. The first was a female/immature on the Tern Pool, Rye Hbr on 24 Oct (PFB *et al.*). An eclipse male stayed at Pulborough Brooks between 25-28 Oct and, lastly, a female was present at Weir Wood Res on 10 Dec. (NAD). [DJB]

0198. POCHARD

Aythya ferina

Rare breeder and fairly common winter visitor and passage migrant.

The monthly counts at the principal sites were as follows:

	1994							1995		
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar
<i>County totals</i>	721	670	340	101	338	685	970	863	573	149
Chichester GP	12	37	15	25	116	176	244	261	169	78
Swanbourne Lake	12	121	66	8	47	44	33	28	36	26
Arundel WWT	392	252	193	17	54	220	376	328	227	22
Weir Wood Res	69	60	3	-	-	24	-	17	13	-
Barcombe Mills Res	41	8	-	2	1	13	73	13	-	-
Bewl Water	nc	nc	nc	1	10	36	67	40	22	6
Rye Hbr	194	130	58	39	39	114	86	103	76	15

In the New Year, the largest flocks were 392 at Arundel WWT and 194 at Rye Hbr. Other notable records during the month included 189 at Scotney Court GP and 98 at Weir Wood Res. Numbers dropped at all sites in Feb, with 252 at Arundel WWT and 130 at Rye Hbr.

Pairs or singles were recorded in the breeding season at Rye Hbr and Chichester GP but no young were seen. Two pairs did however raise 10 young at Swanbourne Lake.

The autumn peak was 160 at Northpoint Pit, Rye on 21 Oct but numbers fell again in Nov and Dec, when the highest counts were of 86 at Knepp Lake on 6 Dec and 68 at Long Pit, Rye on 23 Dec. [DJB]

0202. FERRUGINOUS DUCK

Aythya nyroca

Rare vagrant

1976: A male at Chichester GP in Mar (RJ) was photographed (*British Birds* 70: plate 29) but has not previously been published in a *Sussex Bird Report*. It was the 10th to be recorded in the county and the first since 1947/48 although there have been 11-13 since. [RJF]

0203. TUFTED DUCK

*Aythya fuligula***Fairly common breeding species and winter visitor.**

The monthly counts at the principal sites were as follows:

	1994						1994	1995		
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar
<i>County totals</i>	961	854	742	459	500	989	1076	1033	891	749
Chichester GP	294	323	246	219	200	317	383	373	226	216
Swanbourne Lake	93	151	134	46	80	186	159	135	121	121
Arundel WWT	254	165	91	73	87	177	191	175	158	61
Ardingly Res	44	41	18	32	46	39	41	6	25	6
Rye Hbr	165	115	127	23	23	87	78	113	136	152

The highest New Year counts were 254 at Arundel WWT and 294 at Chichester GP. Other notable counts included 230 at Bewl Water on 16 Jan. Numbers remained rather stable in Feb and 246 birds were still present at Chichester GP on 12 Mar.

Successful breeding was recorded at Bewl Water, Rye Hbr, Glynde Reach Clay Pit and Swanbourne Lake. Numbers built slowly in the autumn, the highest count being 53 at Bewl Water on 12 Sept. At the end of the year, 60 birds were recorded at Barcombe Res on 11 Dec. [DJB]

0204. SCAUP

*Aythya marila***Scarce winter visitor and passage migrant; rare in summer.**

In Jan there were 18 birds seen at Rye Hbr with a county total for the month of 98. This was reduced to 45 during Feb. At Scotney Court GP, 27 on 5 Mar had dropped to 17 on 6th. Small numbers were seen around the coast until 5 June.

The first record for the autumn was a female at Weir Wood Res on 15 Sept. Small numbers were then again seen around the coast, with the last records of 8 on 11 Dec and 16 on 30 Dec, both at Scotney Court GP.[JH]

0206. EIDER

*Somateria mollissima***Scarce winter visitor and passage migrant; non-breeding birds summer annually.**

Peak counts in Jan included 17 birds in Emsworth Channel and 17 at Normans Bay.

The county total for the month was 41. Good numbers were seen in Feb, with a total of 120. This included 19 at Selsey Bill (1st), 20 at Jury's Gap (6th), 26 off Rye Bay and 13 at Splash Point, Seaford (month total). High numbers continued into Mar, with 48 at Selsey Bill on 1st, 26 off Worthing beach on 27th and 26 at Splash Point on 27th.

Exceptional numbers recorded at Selsey Bill were 128 on 1 May and 268 on 31st. Small numbers were recorded in every month until Oct, when a maximum of 150 were at Selsey Bill. The last records of the year were of 4 on Emsworth Channel, 3 at Pilsey Island and 4 in Chichester Hbr, all on 20 Dec. [JH]

0212. **LONG-TAILED DUCK***Clangula hyemalis***Scarce passage migrant and winter visitor.**

First recorded on 1 Jan with single birds at Barcombe Res, Emsworth Channel and Sovereign Hbr Marina. Small numbers were seen every month until the end of Apr. The autumn started with singles on Vinnetrow Lake, Chichester GP on 22 Sept and Church Norton on 28th. Singles were then seen until a record of 11 at Runcton on 14 Dec. [JH]

0213. **COMMON SCOTER***Melanitta nigra***Common spring passage migrant and winter visitor; scarcer in summer and autumn.**

Good numbers were present off Rye Hbr in Jan with 450 on 7th. Elsewhere, singles were present at Pilsey on 4th, in the Rother Estuary on 14th and Sovereign Hbr Marina on 16th. 1 W and 1 E were all that were seen during 28.5 hrs watching from Selsey during the month. Splash Point, Seaford recorded 47 in Jan and 169 in Feb. Only small numbers were seen elsewhere along the coast during Feb except for Rye Bay where 200 were present on 7th. A female was in the Emsworth Channel on 15th.

Easterly sea passage from the main sea watching sites during Mar-May is summarised below:

	Mar	Apr	May	Total	No. per hour
Selsey	348	1553	3691	5592	13.4
Worthing	561	671	1538	2770	14.9
Seaford	760	2632	3770	6762	23.2

A few were also seen to fly W at these sites during the spring. Compared with an average of 9890 at Seaford during the same months for the years 1987-1993, the total was low, mainly due to the absence of any large daily passages. However, compared with 1993, the hourly rate (which can be influenced by the degree of selective or blanket coverage which took place at a site) was remarkably similar at Seaford but higher at the other two more westerly sites. The largest passages took place on 20 Apr (524 at Seaford), 21 Apr (481 at Seaford) *cf.* Velvet Scoter, 3 May (651 at Seaford), 7 May (456 at Selsey), 13 May (693 at Seaford) and 15 May (440 at Selsey). During this period, 2 males were in Emsworth Channel on 6 Apr, 2 were inland at Bewl Water on 20 Apr and a male was at Pilsey Island on 27 May.

Small numbers were seen along the coast during the summer and autumn months and included a pair at Rye Hbr on 7 June, 1 at Pagham Hbr on 19 July and 2 Aug, 4 (3 males) at Bewl Water on 1 Sept, 1 male in the Upper Chichester Channel on 5 Sept and 1 in Shoreham Hbr on 19 Sept. The only return sea passage of any magnitude involved 109 W past Selsey Bill in 5 hrs on 19 Sept.

At the end of the year, there were 100-200 off Rye on 5 Nov and smaller flocks elsewhere on the sea. The only other records of note were females at Pilsey Island on 3 dates in Nov and 1 at Rye Hbr on 15 Dec. [SHL]

0215. **VELVET SCOTER***Melanitta fusca***Scarce passage migrant and winter visitor along the coast; rare inland.**

The approximate monthly minima were as follows:

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
1	9	19	45	20	-	20	-	1	-	3	1

Estimates of numbers during the Mar-May sea passage make the assumption that each individual clears the Sussex coast in one day; monthly totals are therefore the sum of the highest numbers recorded each day along the coast. A yearly total of 119 compares well with 1993 but is still low set against the annual average (1984-1993) of 226.

The first of the year was a single off Splash Point, Seaford on 16-17 Jan followed by up to 9 off the coast between Hove and Brighton Marina during Feb. Four were at Norman's Bay on 21 Mar. The first seen on passage E along the coast were 4 on 26 Mar observed from Brighton Marina. Thereafter, small numbers were seen from the usual seawatch points on 20 dates up to 21 May with peak passage on 21 Apr when 11 flew E past Worthing, 16 past Brighton Marina and 12 past both Splash Point, Seaford and Beachy Head with a further 6 present in Rye Bay. As usual after May, few sightings were reported. Twenty off Hove on 20 July was a notable record. A single flew past Selsey Bill on 19 and 23 Sept and 2 flew E there on 15 Dec. Three females were at Pagham Hbr on 27 Nov. [SHL]

0218. **GOLDENEYE***Bucephala clangula***Fairly common winter visitor; rare in summer.**

The monthly counts at the principal sites were as follows:

	1994						1994	1995		
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar
<i>County totals</i>	82	181	19	-	-	11	72	91	81	30
Chichester Hbr	71	109	14	-	-	3	61	51	61	20
Pagham Hbr	7	7	4	-	-	2	3	23	8	3
Chichester GP	nc	nc	nc	-	-	-	2	6	-	-
Weir Wood Res	3	-	-	-	-	-	1	3	3	1
Bewl Water	nc	nc	nc	-	-	3	4	6	7	6
Rye Hbr	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	1	-	-

During the first half of the year, largest numbers were reported as usual from estuaries in the W of the county. 45 were at Dell Quay on 11 Jan and a full count at Chichester Hbr the following day reached 71. Numbers at Dell Quay had climbed to 58 by 2 Feb and 109 were in Chichester Hbr on 12 Feb (a total not matched since 1986), while Pagham Hbr held 13 on 19 Feb. Inland, small numbers were recorded at Weir Wood Res (up to 3), Darwell Res (up to 2), Bewl Water (up to 5), Arlington Res (1), Chichester GP (up to 2), Arundel WWT (1) and Barcombe Res. (1). Offshore records included 1 E at Splash Point, Seaford on 6 Feb and 3 E at Worthing on 21 Mar.

In the latter part of the year, the first report came from Cuckmere Haven with a single on 1-2 Nov. Up to 3 were at Rye Hbr in early Nov. A female was recorded from

Pulborough Brooks from 15-25 Nov with 2 present on 20 Nov and on this date a male was also seen at Burton MP. Up to 3 were at Weir Wood Res from 22 Nov-1 Dec and numbers in Chichester Hbr had reached 40 by 21 Dec. An unusual record was of a female on the R. Ouse near Lewes Pells on 30 Nov. [SHL]

0220. **SMEW**

Mergus albellus

Very scarce winter visitor except in severe weather when larger numbers may occur.

Although a maximum of 3 birds were recorded in the Chichester Hbr area at the end of 1993, possibly only 1 bird was seen in 1994. Single redheads were seen, mostly around Fishbourne Channel, from 3-16 Jan and these records may relate to the same bird. [DEGC]

0221. **RED-BREASTED MERGANSER**

Mergus serrator

Fairly common winter visitor and passage migrant to the coast; a few summer annually.

The monthly counts at the principal sites were as follows:

	1994						1995			
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar
<i>County totals</i>	162	93	99	1	15	113	142	140	189	216
Chichester Hbr	129	83	63	1	12	98	79	89	149	176
Pagham Hbr	16	10	33	0	3	13	63	50	32	39

Figures for the main seawatching localities were as follows and show considerable increases on the previous year:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Total
Selsey Bill	66	46	365	456	27	960
Worthing	3	31	515	70	19	638
Seaford	82	11	125	186	42	446
Beachy Head					167	167
Newhaven	nc	nc	nc	77	nc	77

The only inland record was of a male and a redhead at Arlington Res on 14 Feb. 57 were recorded in Pagham Hbr on 29 Mar whilst on 30th, 107 flew E in 7 hrs at Worthing. At Brighton Marina 42 were counted on 21 Apr, 37 of them in 60 mins. Up to 3 were seen in both Pagham and Chichester Hbrs from May-Aug, rising to 6 redheads on 5 Sept at Pilsey Island. A minimum of 32 were seen from a Langstone Hbr boat trip on 12 Nov. Thorney and Emsworth Channels held the usual concentrations at the end of the year, with 48 on 19 Nov rising to 121 on 20 Dec. [DEGC]

0223. **GOOSANDER**

Mergus merganser

Scarce winter visitor and passage migrant.

A single redhead was seen at Northpoint Pit, Rye on 1 Jan, another at Thorney Island on 3rd and a male flew E at Selsey Bill on 6th. Weir Wood Res had a redhead on 16 Jan with others on 27 Jan and 17 Feb and a male on 18 Feb. A pair was present at Darwell Res on 13 Mar and 3 redheads flew E offshore at S. Lancing on 3 May. The first returning birds were 7 redheads at Weir Wood Res on 28 Oct and 11 flew in from the SE at Arlington Res on 15 Nov. Two redheads were seen at Church Norton on 16 Nov and 2 were at Weir Wood Res on 19th. The last of the year was a redhead at Pulborough Brooks on 14 Dec. [DEGC]

0225. *Cat. C* **RUDDY DUCK**

Oxyura jamaicensis

Very scarce resident and scarce winter visitor.

Recorded throughout the year. 15 birds were present at 5 sites in Jan, with a maximum of 8 at Rye Hbr on 1st. By Apr, birds were at 7 sites, including 7 at Rye Hbr. The peak count in May was of 7 at Swanbourne Lake, Arundel. Only recorded at 2 sites in June, with the first of 3 broods at Rye Hbr. Twelve birds were present at Swanbourne Lake, Arundel in Aug, including two broods and the numbers at Rye Hbr peaked at 14. Eighteen birds recorded in Sept dropped to 12 in Nov and just one record of 3 birds in Dec, at Westhampnet GP (Chichester) on 28th. [RJLK]

0231. **HONEY BUZZARD**

Pernis apivorus

A disappointing year, with only four records. Two of these reports, on 12 June and 9 July, relate to a possible breeding site which must remain confidential. The first migrant of the year was sighted at the end of a long sea-watch at Splash Point, Seaford with a viewing time of just two minutes (WRT). The second, on 15 May, was seen inland at Storrington (MEK). This bird was mobbed by the resident pair of Crows and consequently provided even less viewing time for the observer. [MEK]

0239. **RED KITE**

Milvus milvus

An excellent year for this species with 11 sightings in total. Since the release programme in England has clearly been a great success, we can only hope that not only will sightings become increasingly common-place, but within the next decade prospecting pairs will be scrutinising Sussex Downland, much of which should be suitable for this species.

Single birds were seen in 8 different months, beginning with a coastal sighting at St. Leonards on Sea on 10 Feb. Interestingly, the next report was from neighbouring

Bexhill on 29 Mar. Yet another coastal report, on this occasion from Beachy Head, on 10 Apr (RLI).

The next spring record was inland, at Storrington, on 27 Apr (MEK). This was followed shortly after by another record from the east of the county, at Heathfield, on 2 May. It is worth mentioning that a further two birds were recorded from the Storrington area (*pers comm*), but both observers chose not to report their observations.

There were two June records, at Billingshurst on 6th (JP) and at Balcombe on 16th (DJFC). Arlington Reservoir claimed the next two records, on 7 Aug and 4 Sept (WRT) and finally, there were 2 reports from West Firle on 13 Sept (MJM) and 26 Nov. [MEK]

0260. MARSH HARRIER

Circus aeruginosus

A total of 61 records were received and of these 41 related to the autumn. From the data available, it seems likely that a minimum of 40 individuals were involved.

As usual, a small number of traditional sites were favoured and the reports can be usefully summarised as follows:

Pagham and Chichester Hbrs. Just 4 reports in the spring, the first on 17 Apr followed by singles on 3, 14 and 19 May.

Many more records in the autumn with sightings on 16, 23, 24 and 31 Aug and a further 4 singles in Sept including 1 juvenile. On 7 Oct a female flew south and on 10 Oct a further two females were seen, an adult and an immature.

Rye area. A total of 23 reports representing more than a third of the county total but no records in the early winter months. First seen on 28 and 30 Apr, then 5 sightings in May then 1 on 10 June. All these records related to 1 or more females.

In the autumn seen on the early date of 1 Aug and 5 other dates in the month with a juvenile on 31st. A further 7 sightings in Oct included single immature males and females. Finally, an immature female was seen on 15 Dec.

Arun Valley. The first 3 sightings in the county for 1994 all came from Pulborough Brooks; a male on 12 Mar, a female on 13 Mar, with a further two birds seen on 18 Apr. A single was seen on 12 June. There was just 1 autumn report, a female on 7 Oct.

Beachy Head. An excellent year for this species, starting with a male and female flying west together on 11 June. An immature visited on 14 Aug and an immature female was seen flying west on 30 Aug. Two individuals were seen on 14 Sept with another on 16 Sept. Finally, a juvenile was sighted on 6 Nov.

Elsewhere, in the spring, a female was seen briefly at Arlington Res on 26 Apr, a single came off the sea at Splash Point, Seaford on 2 May., an immature female was seen at Normans Bay on 7 May and, finally, an adult female was sighted at Glynde Levels on 26 June.

In the autumn, in the west of the county immature females were sighted at Worthing beach on 7 Aug and 14 Sept. At Kingsley Green a female was seen on 10 Sept and at Arundel Park a male was reported on 27 Oct. In the east of the county there were a further 4 isolated records; an immature female at Combe Haven on 31 Aug, an immature at Barcombe Res on 13 Sept, a single at Firle on 23 Nov and an immature at Glynde Levels on 22 Dec, which was the last bird seen in the county.

The probable monthly minima were as follows:

Mar	Apr	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
2	3	6	5	-	9	12	6	2	2

[MEK]

0261. **HEN HARRIER**

Circus cyaneus

A better year compared to 1993 with 84 reports submitted, 45 for the first half of the year and 39 for the latter half. Allowing for the inevitable duplication, an approximate total of 35 birds were recorded. The monthly minima were as follows:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Oct	Nov	Dec
Adult males	2	2	5	2	-	2	1	-
Ringtails	6	4	1	1	1	2	5	5

A number of traditional wintering grounds were again frequented and the majority of records can be grouped and summarised as follows:

Rye area. Recorded on 40 days of the year, accounting for almost half of the total for the county. An over-wintering male was frequently sighted during the early months and was last seen on 21 Mar. Just 2 ringtails reported in the Jan-Mar period. A ringtail was seen flying out to sea on 25 May.

No reports in the second half of the year until a ringtail on 1 Nov. Then there were a further 16 sightings until the year end. No males were reported.

Arun Valley. Reported on a total of 13 days. Seen on 25 and 26 Jan in the early months then not until 30 Apr when a male was sighted.

First seen in the autumn on 3 Oct, with a male on 10 Oct followed by 2 ringtails on 14 Oct. A further 7 sightings for the rest of the year.

Ashdown Forest. A ringtail on 4 Jan and then a male sighted on 4 occasions between 12-21 Mar. Not seen again until 1 Nov, when a ringtail appeared and this was quickly followed by a male on 3 Nov. Further sightings of ringtails on 22 Nov and 18 Dec.

NW Sussex downs and commons. This general area is clearly favoured by wintering birds and had a good annual total of 11 records. West Dean Woods had a ringtail on 2 Feb, followed closely by a male on 5 Feb. At the end of the year a ringtail appeared on 18 Dec. Ambersham Common, as usual, had several records, with a ringtail on 3 Jan, 2 seen on 23 Jan, another 2 on 20 Feb a ringtail roosting on 3 Mar, a single on 21 Mar and a ringtail, again roosting, on 4 Apr. Later in the year a ringtail came in to roost on 18 Dec. Other sightings for the area include a ringtail at Lavington Common on 10 Jan and 15 Mar and an adult male at Duncton Down on 1 Apr. A bird was seen roosting at Cathanger Farm, Selham on 18 Dec.

Elsewhere inland there were just 2 reports, the first at No Man's Land, Findon on 25 Oct and the second at Bewl Water on 22 Dec. On the coast there was a ringtail at Thorney Deeps on 12-13 Nov which was presumably the same bird seen at Pagham on 5-6 Nov.

Other birds seen on or near the coast were as follows: a male at Balsdean near Rottingdean on 16 and 28 Mar, with yet another male at nearby Woodingdean on 12 Oct. A ringtail at Beachy Head on 18 Jan, with further singles at Littlehampton GC on 2 Apr, Pevensey Levels on 17 Apr and finally 2 birds at Friston on 1 May. [MEK]

0263. **MONTAGU'S HARRIER**

Circus pygargus

Just 4 records for the year. The first, at Selsey Bill on 18 May (TJE) was initially sighted whilst a mile out to sea. Beachy Head provided the next location, with good close views of a second-year male (JFC *et al*). An adult female at Combe Haven on 27 Aug (RBW) was mobbed by Crows and Kestrels. Finally, a ringtail was seen hunting in the Balsdean Valley on 20 and 23 Sept and flying north up the valley on 4 Oct whilst being mobbed by Crows (GAS). [MEK]

0267. **GOSHAWK**

Accipiter gentilis

There can be little doubt that this species is beginning to colonise the Sussex countryside. The breeding population mentioned last year continued to do well, with 2-3 pairs. On one occasion, 27 Apr, one of the displaying pairs was joined by another male, without apparent disharmony. Only one juvenile was seen, on 8 Oct.

Two other sites were discovered, both in the west of the county. One well-watched locality produced 2 males on 21 Feb and 6 Mar, with a pair on 19 Mar (mo).

A single, seen chasing a Woodpigeon, was sighted at Stanmer Down, Brighton on 22 Apr (JA). [MEK]

0269. **SPARROWHAWK**

Accipiter nisus

Widely reported in every month of the year with over 400 records submitted. Prey items included Blackbird, Collared Dove and Dunlin. As usual there was very little hard data on breeding success. A family party of 5 were seen dog-fighting over the woods at Pulborough Brooks. A pair at Littlehampton GC also raised 3 young and were frequently seen throughout Aug. The Cissbury Ring pair, by contrast, produced 4 eggs but only 1 fledged. One fearless adult male, with 3-4 recently fledged young, appeared to offer itself as a target when a male Goshawk passed through (*pers obs.*).

Selsey Bill had a spring migrant on 7 May and at Aldwick there were 2 migrants overhead on 8 May and a further single on 29 May. Beachy Head had the only autumn record for migrants when 5 birds appeared to be arrivals on 24 Oct. [MEK]

0287. **BUZZARD**

Buteo buteo

This species continues to pose problems when attempting to assess the annual records. There are quite obvious clusters of sightings, which would strongly suggest residency with presumably attempts at breeding. On the basis of these records there would appear to be 5-6 pairs in the west of the county and 3 pairs in the east. Of these, 3 pairs were known to be successful, one of them raising 3 young. Certainly grounds for cautious optimism.

In the first part of the year presumed migrants were recorded at 7 localities; the first at Knepp on 4 Feb followed by other singles at Wiston on 13 Feb, Lancing Clump on 19 Mar, Woodingdean on 28 Mar, Chanctonbury Ring on 28 May, Lower Adur Valley on 14 June and finally at Leonardslee on 19 June.

Autumn passage began on 31 July with a single over Billingshurst and continued with singles at the following localities; Beachy Head on 21 Aug, Brighton on 27 Aug, Beachy Head on 18 Sept, Lancing Clump on 25 Sept and finally, singles at both Sompting Downs and Steyning on 27 Sept.

At the end of year singles visited Stansted Brickkiln Ponds on 19 Dec and Hurst Green on 12 Dec. Both reports somewhat unusual. [MEK]

0301. **OSPREY**

Pandion haliaetus

A good year for this species, but not quite up to the exceptional one of 1993. A probable minimum of 10 individuals in the spring and a further 19 in the autumn.

The earliest migrant was recorded on 27 Mar at Bewl Water. The only other Mar bird was seen at Chelwood Vachery, Ashdown on 30th.

The records can be grouped and summarised as follows:

Weir Wood Res Not seen until 15 Apr, with another on 26 Apr. There were a further three sightings on 1, 2 and 6 May. The spacing of these reports would suggest two and probably three different individuals.

An early return in the autumn on 1 Aug, presumably a failed or non-breeder. Another followed on 20 Aug. Many sightings from 15 Sept onwards with 2 birds present on 22 and 25 Sept. A single stayed into Oct and was last seen on 9th.

Pagham and Chichester Hbrs Seen over Pilsey Island on 27 May and again on 3 June. These were the only spring sightings.

In the autumn, 1 first appeared on 30 Aug at Pagham Hbr. This was followed on 8 Sept by another at Pilsey, which was seen on a further 22 dates until 16 Nov. Two were seen at Pilsey on 17 Sept.

Bewl Res Two spring birds, on 27 Mar and 23 Apr. In the autumn an early return on 1 Aug, followed by another bird on 21 Aug and a third on 24 Sept.

Arlington Res The absence of spring records was more than compensated by numerous autumn sightings, beginning with yet another 1 Aug sighting and finishing with the very late date of 9 Dec. It is unclear from the data just how many birds were involved. On several occasions one was seen perched on the nesting platform.

Darwell Res Many sightings in late summer with a maximum of 2 on 1 Sept. Elsewhere, in the spring there were singles at Hove on 11 Apr, at Icklesham on 18 Apr and finally a single in from the sea at Beachy Head on 25 May. In the autumn, singles were seen at Hollingdean on 7 and 13 Aug, at Cuckmere Haven on 14 Sept and 6 and 11 Nov and finally at Castle Water, Rye on 16 and 20 Sept. [MEK]

0303. **LESSER KESTREL**

Falco naumanni

One record, no longer considered to be acceptable

1973: A male seen in flight and perched on a post on the Downs at No Man's Land, N of Cissbury Ring on 4 Nov (SxBR 26:17) is considered to be inadequately documented following a review of all British records of this species. Being the only record for Sussex, this species is now removed from the county list. [RJF]

0304. **KESTREL**

Falco tinnunculus

Many records throughout the year. Findon Valley had 2-3 pairs, Cissbury Ring 2 pairs, Thorney Island 3 pairs and Knepp Estate 4 pairs.

The only unusual nesting site mentioned was at Bognor Regis GC, where a pair nested successfully in pines.

At Splash Point, Seaford there were single migrants on 30 Mar and 3 May. [MEK]

0309. **MERLIN**

Falco columbarius

A total of 145 sightings were recorded during the year, seen in every month except for July. In this county, it would appear that Oct is the best month to see this delightful little falcon. In just this month alone there were a probable 19 different birds, at 12 different localities and sighted on 25 dates.

Allowing for the usual difficulty in assessing visiting raptors, the probable monthly minima were as follows:

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
5	4	7	4	2	1	-	4	8	19	8	6

Chichester and Pagham Hbrs claimed, as usual, a high proportion of the annual records. A female was frequently seen on Thorney Island during the early part of the year. Interesting sightings included harassment of a Short-eared Owl on 19 Feb and a successful strike of the wader roost at Pilsey Sands, when a Dunlin was caught and devoured. Last seen in the spring on 15 Mar, but with an early return on 18 Aug and numerous sightings for the rest of the year. For the period 9-16 Oct there were both a male and female present.

The **Rye area** numerically had the second highest total, with singles seen on 19 dates in the first half of the year, and an unusually late date of 3 June. In the second half, beginning on 20 Aug, singles were seen on 21 days.

Beachy Head had an excellent year for this species. Just one single on 19 Mar, but from 20 Aug onwards there were a total of 23 records including 3 days when 2 were present - 21 Aug, 24 and 29 Sept.

The **Arun Valley** had a total of eight records, with one spring record on 11 Apr and the rest in the latter part of the year, beginning with a single on 19 Sept.

Pevensey Levels reported singles on 7 dates. [MEK]

0307. **RED-FOOTED FALCON**

Falco vespertinus

Rare vagrant

1994: A female at Icklesham from 30 May-12 June (RBRG) has been accepted by *British Birds*. A long stayer, but unfortunately at a sensitive site, otherwise more might have had the opportunity of seeing it. It is the 17th to be recorded in the county since 1960, all but 3 being in May or June. [RJF]

0310. **HOBBY**

Falco subbuteo

First recorded on 19 Apr at Old Lodge Reserve, Ashdown followed by sightings on 25 Apr at Weir Wood Res and Arlington Res. An excellent spring passage with a probable minimum of 60 birds involved. Just 3 were seen to come off the sea, on 1 and 11 May at Splash Point, Seaford and 17 May at Worthing beach.

Several locations were favoured with multiple sightings in the spring and early summer. Icklesham had 6 on 13 May, 7 on 20 May, 5 on 22, 23 and 25 May, and 6 on 1 June. Pulborough Brooks had 4 on 30 Apr, followed by 3 on 2 May, 6 on 12 May, with 4 on 3 July. Finally, there were 3 birds at Pevensey Levels on 8 May.

Very late migrants were reported from Beachy Head and Worthing, on 5 and 10 June respectively.

During the breeding season, reports were received from 20 suitable localities. This clearly does not reflect accurately the breeding status of Hobby in the county.

The autumn passage was very substantial. Beachy Head alone produced sightings on 15 dates in Sept, another on 1 Oct and a very late record on 6 Nov. Late migration was very much a feature with as many as 15 birds present in Oct. These included singles on 11 Oct at Pulborough Brooks, and Icklesham, on 16 Oct at Selsey Bill and, finally, 1 was seen hawking dragonflies on 21 Oct at Middle Bridge, Pevensey. [MEK]

0320. **PEREGRINE**

Falco peregrinus

This species is consolidating its hold as a breeding resident. From the data available, 3 pairs were successful in raising a total of 7 young. Whilst it is not difficult to make a

guess at the locations of these breeding pairs, it would seem prudent not to put precise locality information into print, at least for now.

With several pairs breeding or attempting to breed, it is not surprising that the number of reports have escalated dramatically.

The great majority of reports came from coastal localities, with virtually all coastal towns represented. Certain localities merit a special mention.

Chichester and Pagham Hbrs. In the early part of the year both a male and a female were regularly seen attacking the wader roosts, especially at Pilsey Island. Two were seen together on 2 Mar. Throughout the summer there were isolated reports, but from early Sept there were numerous single records with two seen together on 6, 18 and 28 Sept and 5 Oct.

Chalk headlands. Two pairs produced a total of 3 young. A probable third pair, but no information on breeding.

Elsewhere, at an inland site, a pair produced 4 young which fledged on the early date of 5 June.

Away from the coast there were very few reports but the Arun Valley had a good number of sightings. At Pulborough Brooks a male was seen on 1, 6, 22 and 25 Jan, but not again, apparently, until 10 July - a most unusual date. A juvenile male visited several times in Sept and Oct and an adult female was sighted on 25 Oct, 10 Nov and 4 and 30 Dec. Finally, a juvenile was seen on 2 occasions at Steyning, roosting with Cormorants on electricity pylons, on 15 Nov and 1 Dec. [MEK]

0358. **RED-LEGGED PARTRIDGE**

Alectoris rufa

Very few winter records received, the most notable being 15 from Upwaltham Down in Jan. There was only 1 other downland record, from Barlavington Down, plus a few from near Chichester and Rye. One confirmed breeding record came from Hartfield with only 3 other pairs reported during the breeding season, from Little Horsted (near Uckfield), Rye Hbr and Sidlesham, with no records for the later half of the year. An albino was seen on Ashdown Forest. [RTP]

0367. **GREY PARTRIDGE**

Perdix perdix

During the first 3 months of the year there were 11 records but only 4 of these, from Drayton GP (Chichester), Nook Meadows (Rye), Haslett Copse (Stoughton) and East Brighton GC, made double figures. Confirmation of breeding success came from Rye Hbr, Pulborough Brooks and Sheepcote Valley, Brighton where young birds were seen. The greatest success must have been at Nook Meadows, Rye where maximum counts during Oct, Nov and Dec were 25, 52 and 31 respectively. Other notable counts were 36 at Pagham Hbr in Aug, 19 and 17 at Pulborough Brooks in Sept and Oct and 24 at Sheepcote Valley in Oct. [RTP]

0370. **QUAIL**

Coturnix coturnix

Most of the records related to calling birds apart from 1 seen at Denton and 3 at Icklesham. Records were received between 11 May-11 Sept from 13 different sites. All referred to single birds apart from 3 at Newhaven and 2 at Pyecombe. A juvenile was trapped at Icklesham but no other proof of breeding was found. [RTP]

0394. **PHEASANT**

Phasianus colchicus

Breeding was confirmed from 7 separate sites but the status of this species must be affected by the large number of birds reared and released annually for sporting purposes. [RTP]

0396. *Cat.C.* **GOLDEN PHEASANT.**

Chrysolophus pictus

1993: Only 1 of the 5 males at Kingley Vale had flavistic plumage.

1994: Records continue to be received from the area around West Dean where there were a minimum of 10 males but no females reported. Two flavistic males were seen at Kingley Vale. A hybrid with *P. colchicus* was seen at Glynde. [RTP]

0407. **WATER RAIL**

Rallus aquaticus

The approximate minimum monthly totals of non-breeding birds were as follows:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
No. of sites	8	9	8	7	5	2	4	8	12	18
No. of birds	16	17	32	34	5	3	13	30	32	67

The highest counts were 13 in Mar and 8 in Apr at Wishing Tree Res, also 8 in Mar and 21 in Apr at nearby Filsham Reed Bed. In Dec there were 18 at Combe Haven, 8 at Glyne Gap and 10 at Thorney Deeps.

Birds were noted at 4 sites in the breeding season, with single young at 2 sites in July. [KN]

0408. **SPOTTED CRAKE**

Porzana porzana

Three juveniles were trapped at Icklesham, on 24 July, 6 Sept and 6 Oct (RBRG). [SJP]

0421. **CORNCRAKE**

Crex crex

One was seen at Walberton on 10 Oct (TKR). The first record for the county since 2 were seen in 1990. [SJP]

0424. **MOORHEN***Gallinula chloropus*

The monthly counts at the principal sites were as follows:

	Sept	Oct	Nov	1994 Dec	1995 Jan	Feb	Mar
<i>County totals</i>	516	576	468	567	462	471	413
Chichester Hbr	11	19	51	18	37	10	53
Pagham Hbr	38	31	23	16	40	55	45
Chichester GP	107	66	67	114	99	86	70
Swanbourne Lake	18	25	19	22	18	6	20
Pulborough Brooks	41	39	21	51	11	38	28
Weir Wood Res	38	40	-	-	5	2	4
Bewl Water	105	200	150	80	100	90	100
Pett Level	1	10	15	12	40	6	-
Rye Hbr	17	39	21	28	69	48	32

Largest counts in Jan were of 87 at Chichester GP, 50 at Chichester Hbr, 43 at Alexandra Park, Hastings and 60 at Pulborough Brooks. By Feb, the Chichester GP count was down to 63. In Mar there were 46 at Brooklands, Worthing, 50 at Rye Hbr and Bewl Water and 57 at Chichester GP.

Breeding was reported from 15 sites, widespread throughout the area. At Thorney Deeps, 11 pairs were noted with 9 young from 4 broods. At Bewl Water, 55 young were raised from 35 broods and at Weir Wood Res 8 juveniles were seen on 21 Aug. Notable counts at the end of the year were of 105 at Bewl Water on 12 Sept, 74 at Knepp Lake on 14 Oct and 50 at Pulborough Brooks on 21 Dec. [DEGC]

0429. **COOT***Fulica atra*

The monthly counts at the principal sites were as follows:

	1994			1994			1995			
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar
<i>County totals</i>	1226	1279	810	1532	2185	2221	2674	2452	1922	1056
Chichester Hbr	54	97	34	26	42	58	62	75	59	34
Pagham Hbr	36	62	51	62	78	26	9	35	28	36
Chichester GP	533	402	241	452	561	545	1052	846	544	430
Swanbourne Lake	43	52	31	51	69	76	58	43	39	29
Arundel WWT	59	52	44	66	51	66	69	84	48	39
Ardingly Res	89	50	29	42	60	72	67	102	95	10
Bewl Water	nc	nc	nc	611	1086	982	916	758	571	252
Rye Hbr	323	377	211	211	211	362	362	400	284	103

Other counts in the earlier part of the year were of 60 at Brooklands, Worthing on 2 Jan, 44 at Barcombe Res on 6 Feb, 52 at Pett Level on 12 Feb and an early year maximum of 52 at Glynde Levels on 13 Feb.

Limited reports in the breeding season referred to 2 pairs at Arlington Res, 8 pairs at Darwell Res., 16 young from 6 out of 14 pairs at Thorney Deeps, at least 12 young from 7 pairs at Swanbourne Lake and 142 young from 59 pairs at Bewl Water.

Counts later in the year included 78 at Thorney Deeps on 21 Aug and 93 at Brooklands, Worthing on 18 Sept with 86 at this site on 12 Oct and 80 on 20 Nov. [DEGC]

0433. **CRANE***Grus grus*

One adult bird was recorded on the Adur Levels from 6 to at least 8 Nov (ARK,BFF,ABW). [SJP]

0450. **OYSTERCATCHER***Haematopus ostralegus*

Recorded along the whole coast throughout the year. The monthly counts at the principal sites were as follows:

	1994						1995			
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar
<i>County totals</i>	1734	2157	1258	2003	1867	1735	2063	1685	1672	1150
Chichester Hbr	1133	1265	585	1276	1242	1297	1281	907	944	678
Pagham Hbr	248	453	279	472	328	169	266	280	183	165
Climping	42	78	113	23	56	35	169	25	63	2
Goring Gap	nc	nc	nc	25	22	15	24	71	37	22
Adur Estuary	nc	nc	nc	2	7	9	3	1	4	3
Cuckmere Haven	nc	nc	nc	5	12	-	-	-	-	-
Pett Level	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
Rye Hbr	300	347	277	200	200	210	320	401	441	279

In the first half of the year the largest high tide roost was 1013 at Pilsey Island on 14 Jan.

The largest movements offshore were noted at Splash Point, Seaford:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May
Hours watched	12	46	67	93	132
Flying west	-	1	14	4	16
Flying east	22	43	77	162	278

Breeding was reported from just 4 sites; one pair at Cobnor Farm, 2 pairs at Cuckmere Haven, 20 pairs at Rye Hbr which raised 7 young (1 pair again nesting on a factory roof), 1 pair raised 3 young at Cuckmere, at least 1 pair at Pagham Hbr and 2 pairs each at North Stakes Island, Thorney Island and Pilsey Island.

In the second half of the year the largest high tide roost was 1349 at Pilsey Island on 22 Aug and there was a partial albino there on 1 Jan and from 19 Sept-31 Oct. Inland there was 1 at Bewl Water on 31 Aug and 2 at Weir Wood Res on 15 Sept. [BJY]

0456. **AVOCET***Recurvirostra avosetta*

After higher-than-average totals in 1993, numbers were rather lower in 1994. Approximate monthly totals were as follows:

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
3	9	3	8	10	2	2	1	8	1	18	8

On 1 Jan, one bird was present in Pagham Hbr and 2 on Pilsey Sands. These birds appeared to remain until the end of Feb, when a party of 6 were recorded in Pagham Hbr on 26th. Spring passage was very poor, with only singles recorded at most sites. The highlight, however, was a pair at Rye Hbr which were observed excavating a scrape on 19 and 21 Apr, accompanied by another adult. On 28 Apr, an adult was sitting on the nest but all 3 birds had disappeared by 30 Apr. Only singles were present at Rye after this date, until 20 May when a party of 4 were noted. Autumn numbers were again low, the largest party being 6 at Pilsey Sands on 23 Sept. In the winter months, up to 4 birds were present at Pilsey Sands and Pagham Hbr, but Northpoint Pit, Rye hosted 11 birds on 28 Nov. At the end of the year, 5 birds were present in Pagham Hbr on 19-20 Dec. [DJB]

0459. **STONE CURLEW**

Burhinus oedicnemus

Just one record, of a single bird on the south side of Pagham Hbr on 2 May (MD). An average year. [SJP]

PRATINCOLE sp.

Glareola sp.

Very rare vagrant

1993: One at Church Norton on 21 Sept (TJE) has been accepted by *British Birds* as an unidentified pratincole. It was thought to have been Black-winged (*G. nordmanni*) as were the other 3 unidentified pratincoles recorded in the county - Aug 1955, Sept 1975 and Oct 1981. There are also 3 acceptable records of Collared Pratincole (*G. pratincola*) - Aug 1840, June 1978 and July 1987 and one each of Black-winged Pratincole in Oct 1981 and Oriental Pratincole (*G. maldivarum*) in Aug 1993. [RJF]

0469. **LITTLE RINGED PLOVER**

Charadrius dubius

Migrants were mostly recorded at actual or potential breeding sites from 26 Mar when 3 birds were noted at Pulborough Brooks. The highest total was 5 at that site on 4 Apr. At least 10 pairs attempted to breed at about 5 sites. Only 2 fledged young were definitely raised at one site; late summer records could have involved individuals dispersing from elsewhere. The last record was of 1 bird at Weir Wood Res on 20 Sept. [DJB]

0470. RINGED PLOVER*Charadrius hiaticula*

Recorded along most of the coast for much of the year. The monthly counts at the principal sites were as follows:

	1994						1994	1995		
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar
<i>County totals</i>	595	595	253	1449	808	955	830	502	422	187
Chichester Hbr	326	252	50	812	286	542	392	110	72	36
Pagham Hbr	2	110	24	268	201	4	149	68	122	85
Climping	70	86	41	63	17	44	83	63	55	10
Goring Gap	nc	nc	nc	80	3	64	65	72	57	9
Adur Estuary	142	95	51	102	152	228	92	135	61	17
Newhaven	13	11	-	-	2	51	7	1	15	7
Cuckmere Haven	11	nc	-	18	21	-	17	23	-	-
Langley	nc	nc	nc	8	30	10	20	1	-	2
Glyne Gap	nc	nc	nc	9	7	8	5	nc	5	4
Pett Level	nc	nc	nc	-	-	-	-	25	-	-
Rye Hbr	10	27	75	89	89	4	-	4	35	17

The major roost at Pilsey Island recorded the following totals; Jan - 316 on 31st, Feb - 152 on 12th, Mar - 38 on 20th, Apr - 8 on 12th, 108 on 25th, May - 254 (including a leucistic bird) on 4th, 119 on 23rd, June - 18 on 30th, July - 86 on 27th, Aug - 168 on 2nd, 1200 on 13th, 1433 on 23rd, Sept - 683 on 10th, Oct - 363 on 15th, Nov - 533 on 1st and Dec - 352 on 2nd. Other concentrations exceeding 50 were 70 at Newhaven Tide Mills on 9 Jan, 70 at Brighton Marina on 30 Jan and 78 on 5 Nov, 56 at Climping on 5 Feb and 69 on 26 Nov.

Breeding records were received from just 10 sites (surely there must be others)!; 2 pairs attempted to breed at Brighton Marina, a pair failed on South Lancing beach, a pair raised a single chick at Widewater, Shoreham, a pair with chicks were at Littlehampton, a pair at Shoreham Beach, 5 pairs at Pilsey Island, 1 pair failed at North Stakes Island, a pair raised 1 young at Chichester GP as did a pair at Northpoint Pit and at least 48 pairs raised many young at Rye Hbr.

Inland there was 1 at Ashcombe Farm, Lewes on 23 Feb, one at Arlington Res on 24 July and 9-17 Sept with 2 on 11 Sept, one at Weir Wood Res on 8 and 21 Aug and one at Bewl Water on 21 Aug. [BJY]

0477. KENTISH PLOVER*Charadrius alexandrinus*

After 7 individuals in 1993, 1994 produced only 2 records - an adult male on 26 Mar and an adult female on 21 Apr, both on Pilsey Sands (CBC). [DJB]

0482. DOTTEREL*Eudromias morinellus*

The poorest year since 1989 with only 4 birds recorded, compared with 7 in 1993 and at least 23 in 1992. Three adults were at Pilsey on 11 May (CBC) and a juvenile was seen briefly at Newmarket Hill on 23 Aug (RJF). [SJP]

0485. **GOLDEN PLOVER**

Pluvialis apricaria

The monthly counts at the principal sites were as follows:

	1994						1995			
	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.
County totals	1997	1222	4	1	77	473	1187	1635	440	66
Chichester Hbr	1782	900	1	-	25	459	965	1085	302	66
Pagham Hbr	155	268	-	-	50	-	19	485	129	-
Rye Hbr	60	54	3	1	-	14	200	65	9	-

In the early part of the year, maximum counts were 2500 at Pagham Hbr on 4 Jan., 1000 at Thorney Airfield on 14 and 28 Jan. and 1000 in Emsworth Channel on 25 Jan. In Feb., numbers at Pagham Hbr. decreased from 2000 on 7 Feb. to 500 on 17 Feb. Elsewhere, 375 were reported at Pulborough Brooks on 12 Feb. and 207 at Pevensey Bridge Levels on 22 Feb. Notable flocks in Mar. included 500 at East Head on 1st, 200 at Pulborough Brooks on 3rd, 320 on mudflats in Pagham Hbr. on 8th and 250 at Church Norton on 27th, some of which were in breeding plumage. Numbers then decreased rapidly until the last single bird was seen at Rye Hbr. on 8 May.

In the autumn, the first was recorded at Rye Hbr. on 2 July, with 1 at Thorney Deeps on 10 July increasing to 5 on 31 July. Numbers remained low with maximum Sept. counts of 112 at Thorney Deeps on 17th and 214 at Pagham Hbr. on 29th. Counts then started to increase with 110 at Sidlesham on 16th Oct., 300 at Bosham Channel on 26th, 400 at Scotney Court GP on 5 Nov., 400 at Pagham Hbr. on 25th, 670 at Thorney Airfield on 3 Dec., 1000 at West Wittering on 12th, increasing to 1400 on 14th. The year ended with 1000 at Ovingdean on 18 Dec., 250 at Hooe Level, Pevensey on 23rd and 1000 at Thorney Deeps on 31st. [JLN]

0486. **GREY PLOVER**

Pluvialis squatarola

The monthly counts at the principal sites were as follows:

	1994						1995			
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar
County Totals	2321	3215	1985	1585	2741	2496	4418	2316	3468	3195
Chichester Hbr	1765	2106	1920	1164	2038	2013	3629	1140	1867	1370
Pagham Hbr	413	915	nc	403	661	297	546	747	1271	1624
Climping	135	92	32	18	39	45	108	181	105	68
Goring Gap	-	82	30	-	-	136	121	133	178	130
Adur Estuary	6	11	2	-	-	3	-	-	-	-
Pett Levels	-	-	-	-	-	-	8	111	45	-

Spring passage was not particularly notable; totals for the main seawatching sites were as follows:

	Mar	Apr	May	Total
Seaford	2	-	171	173
Selsey Bill	5	1	136	142
Worthing	45	-	172	217

Peak passage numbers were 68 E at Seaford in 15 hours and 59 E at Worthing in 5 hrs on 13 May. Numbers at Pilsey Sands were 1257 on 14 Jan, increasing to 1350 on 12 Feb and then decreasing to 574 on 12 Mar. At this site during late spring and summer, 104 were recorded on 27 Apr, 192 on 10 May, 146 on 12 June and 37 on 29 July. Numbers then increased with 581 on 10 Aug rising to 2500 on 5 Sept and then decreasing to 1234 on 8 Oct, 1300 on 5 Nov and 1229 on 2 Dec.

At Rye a maximum of 4 birds in summer plumage were reported on 14 May.

Inland records included a single at Weir Wood Res in summer plumage on 17 Aug and 1 at Pulborough Brooks on 23 Sept. At the end of the year, a movement of 8 W in 3.5 hrs was reported at Worthing in Nov and 2 W in 4.6 hrs in Dec. [JLN]

0493. **LAPWING.**

Vanellus vanellus

The monthly counts at the principal sites were as follows:

	1994				1994				1995		
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	
<i>County totals</i>	7649	6949	28	1724	1940	10,139	9481	17,912	7401	213	
Chichester Hbr	3264	4071	22	302	276	2101	3486	3085	1916	41	
Pagham Hbr	573	317	nc	57	471	423	302	2733	242	-	
Adur Estuary	870	860	-	213	184	408	450	2530	1010	-	
Newhaven	610	50	6	85	9	1115	150	700	2000	-	
Cuckmere Haven	200	nc	-	68	1	2000	2000	2500	3	-	
Glyne Gap	75	38	-	-	-	-	50	nc	-	-	
Pett Level	87	387	-	229	129	226	815	2850	600	85	
Rye Hbr	1970	1226	-	770	870	3866	2228	3514	1630	87	

Management at Pulborough Brooks seems to favour Lapwings, as the highest counts for the county were consistently recorded there during the early months - 11,000, 9150 and 3000 in Jan, Feb and Mar respectively. Elsewhere, major flocks were found on the coastal plain and the main river valleys. In Jan there were 4000 near Pagham, 2500 at Thorney Island, 3000 at Yapton and 2000 at Henfield Levels. 2000 were seen at Northpoint Pit, Rye in Feb. The only movements recorded were 40 flying S at Maynards Green and c.40 flying SE at Wych Cross, both on 24 Feb, probably reflecting the generally mild conditions.

Breeding was confirmed at 12 sites across the county. These were mostly on the coastal plain apart from Pulborough Brooks, Cocking Down, Cissbury Ring and Ifield. At Rye Hbr 10 pairs bred and at least 6 chicks were seen. Insufficient information is available to estimate the total breeding population but the decline of this species seems to be continuing.

First returning birds were reported on 11 June at Thorney Deeps where the numbers had increased to 200 by 26 June and 613 by 24 July. During July and Aug there were 750 at Pulborough Brooks, 640 at Chichester Hbr, 1000 at Rye Hbr and smaller flocks elsewhere. The winter build up continued in Sept with flocks of over 1000 at Pulborough, Glynde and Pagham Hbr. At Newhaven Tide Mills a flock of 300 contained a leucistic bird, seen for the 5th consecutive year. In the last quarter of the year 10,000 were counted at Pulborough in both Nov and Dec. Other notable counts were 2356 at

Northpoint Pit, Rye and 3000 at Thorney Deep. No cold weather movements were observed. [RTP]

0496. **KNOT**

Calidris canutus

The monthly counts at the principal sites were as follows:

	1994						1994			1995	
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	
<i>County totals</i>	1000	798	65	7	4	704	1170	760	582	50	
Chichester Hbr	1000	750	64	7	3	704	1108	760	336	17	
Pagham Hbr	-	48	nc	-	1	-	62	-	246	33	

Additional counts included 200 in Pagham Hbr on 4 Jan.

Numbers fell during Apr, but Selsey Bill saw 57 birds on 1 May and 80 were at Splash Point, Seaford on 2nd. Peak numbers in May were 73 at Splash Point on 13th and 40 at Pagham Hbr on 15th. Summer-plumage birds were seen at various locations during the month. 34 birds were at Pagham Hbr on 4 Aug and 16 at Pilsey Sands on 23rd. High numbers were recorded at this latter site at the end of the year, with 659 on 7 Nov and 1087 on 2 Dec. [JH]

0497. **SANDERLING**

Calidris alba

The monthly counts at the principal sites were as follows:

	1994						1994			1995	
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	
<i>County totals</i>	222	118	435	10	76	68	245	628	147	59	
Chichester Hbr	75	33	308	-	76	22	87	83	28	2	
Pagham Hbr	-	-	nc	7	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Climping	25	32	105	-	-	25	64	141	74	6	
Goring Gap	22	-	14	-	-	21	45	23	45	51	
Rye Hbr	100	53	8	2	-	-	49	381	-	-	

Totals for the easterly spring passage from the main seawatching sites were as follows:

	Mar	Apr	May	Total
Selsey Bill	4	67	463	534
Worthing	99	70	166	335
Seaford	-	7	237	244

Peak movements were 87 E on 2 May and 87 E on 15 May at Selsey Bill. A smaller westerly passage was also noted with 8 W in Apr and 52 W in May at Worthing, also 71 W in May at Selsey Bill. In Jan maximum counts were 120 at Rye Hbr on 10th and 97 at Pilsey Sands on 22nd. In Feb, there were 230 at Rye Hbr. on 2nd, 196 at Camber on 7th, 200 at Climping on 28th and 174 at Pilsey on the same date. Mar. counts included 40 at Worthing beach on 10th, 105 at Climping on 12th and 208 at Pilsey Sands on 27th. Totals at Pilsey Sands then increased to 231 on 12 Apr and 300 on 25th, then decreased to 278 on 15 May, 76 on 2 June, 11 on 22 June and only 1 on 30 June.

Numbers then increased again from 21 on 13 July to 107 on 29th and a maximum of 314 on 16 Aug. Later records from this site were 252 on 6 Sept, 200 on 24 Sept, 76 on 8 Oct 82 on 13 Nov and 47 on 3 Dec. At Camber there were 42 on 5 Nov and 80 on 19 Dec, with 40 at Rye Bay river mouth on 4 Dec. There was an inland record of 1 at Bewl Water on 30 July. [JLN]

0501.LITTLE STINT

Calidris minuta

The approximate minimum totals were as follows:

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
3	3	-	-	3	1	2	9	15	6	-	-

In Jan, 3 were at Pilsey Sands on 1st, with 1-2 until 27 Feb. There were 2 in Pagham Hbr on 12 Feb. Singles were at Pagham Hbr in May and Pilsey Island in June. Autumn passage, from 16 July-10 Oct, was very light, the highest count being 5 at Pett Pools on 17 Sept. [KN]

0502." TEMMINCK'S STINT

Calidris temminckii

One was on a pool by Exceat Bridge on 19 May (PJW, NJT). [KN]

0505. WHITE-RUMPED SANDPIPER

Calidris fuscicollis

Very rare vagrant

1974: The adult at Sidlesham Ferry from 24-26 Aug (SxBR 27:25) remained to 28th (*British Birds* 68:318).

1987: The juvenile at Sidlesham Ferry from 25-27 Oct (SxBR 40:33) remained to 28th (*British Birds* 81:557). These were the 5th and 8th county records and there have been 2 since. [RJF]

0509. CURLEW SANDPIPER

Calidris ferruginea

The approximate monthly minima were as follows:

June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct
1	2	5	16	1

A very poor year with no more than 3 individuals seen at a site on any 1 day and a yearly total of only 25. This compares with a yearly average of 118 during 1984-1993. A winter-plumaged individual present in Pagham Hbr on 16 June was followed by up to 2 in summer plumage at Rye Hbr between 13-23 July. Pett Level hosted a total of about 4 during Aug-Sept, Pilsey 2, Cuckmere 5, Newhaven 1 and Shoreham 2. About 7

visited Sidlesham Ferry during Aug-Oct (with the last on the 4th). An unusual site was Glynde Levels with 1 on 11 Sept. [SHL]

0510. PURPLE SANDPIPER

Calidris maritima

The peak monthly counts at all reported sites were as follows:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Oct	Nov	Dec
Climping	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	-
Shoreham Hbr	3	-	2	-	-	2	-	3
Brighton Marina	-	1	-	2	-	-	-	-
Newhaven	5	7	6	4	1	2	9	13
Glyne Gap	10	20	13	12	8	-	9	12

Glyne Gap and Newhaven remain the favoured wintering locations for this species. [SHL]

0512. DUNLIN

Calidris alpina

The monthly counts at the principal sites were as follows:

	1994							1995		
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar
<i>County totals</i>	20,552	22,736	1757	2088	3279	26,163	31,390	18,260	17,168	3619
Chichester Hbr	17,232	19,038	1476	908	1613	24,313	26,087	14,363	14,853	1915
Pagham Hbr	1804	2951	nc	1051	1563	1287	3834	2596	1299	1536
Climping	45	123	35	-	-	1	19	2	10	0
Goring Gap	-	255	166	-	-	230	162	260	742	92
Adur Estuary	1397	97	2	31	33	232	920	240	38	23
Newhaven	22	34	-	-	2	-	15	-	-	2
Cuckmere Haven	38	nc	-	31	1	11	28	17	1	-
Langley	3	77	6	-	-	-	-	160	75	16
Pett Level	4	150	29	8	8	35	156	550	150	22
Rye Hbr	4	11	43	599	59	54	169	72	-	13

Other high counts were of 100 at Rye Hbr and 200 on the R. Adur at Shoreham during Jan. Good numbers continued into Feb and included 87 at Newhaven Tide Mills on 1st, 450 on a dusk count at Rye Hbr on 7th and 15,000 at Pilsey Sands. Numbers dropped in Mar but Apr counts in Chichester Hbr were good with 1200 at Pilsey Sands on 29th, 500 at Ellanore on 30th and 110 on North Stakes Island. 70 birds of the northern race *alpina* were recorded at Church Norton on 3 May. Aug saw the return of large numbers with 2100 at Pilsey Sands on 9th and 2500 on 18th, increasing to 300 on 5 Sept, 8000 on 21 Oct, 14,000 on 7 Nov and 16,200 on 2 Dec. [JH]

0517. RUFF

Philomachus pugnax

Numbers recorded in Jan included 12 at East Head, 7 at Pulborough Brooks and 10 at Chichester Hbr. Similar numbers were seen in Feb but there was a slight increase in

Mar. 36 were seen at Pulborough Brooks on 29 Apr, Worthing beach recorded 23 on 2 May and on the next day there were 17 at Splash Point, Seaford, 12 at Hooe Level, Pevensey and 20 at Icklesham. Single birds were seen at various locations until 15 Oct when 11 were on Pulborough Brooks. On 7 Nov, 18 were on Camber shore and the year ended with 10 at East Head on 19 Dec. [JH]

0518. **JACK SNIPE**

Lymnocyptes minimus

The minimum monthly totals were as follows:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
No. of sites	10	9	7	5	1	1	7	10	5
No. of birds	27	22	34	18	3	1	18	32	16

During the first winter period, a minimum of 56 birds were recorded from 20 localities. Counts at Thorney Deeps included 13 on 17 Jan, 10 on 1 Feb, a record count for Sussex of 25 on 1 Mar and 22 there on 10 Mar. The previous highest count from this locality was of 21 on 1 Feb 1974. Numbers declined thereafter to 13 on 6 Apr, with 12 still there on 19 Apr decreasing to 3 on 3 May and 1 there the following morning, which was the last spring record. Other notable records were of 3 at Pagham Hbr on 11 Jan, 2 at Ferring Rife on 13 Jan and 3 at Amberley Wild Brooks on 25 Jan. Two were at Rye Hbr on 19 Feb, 3 at Cuckmere Haven on 22 Feb and 2 at Lavington Common on 27 Feb. Selsey West Fields and Ferring Rife recorded 2 and 3 respectively on 12 Mar, with 2 at the former site on 7 Apr. One was flushed from a damp patch outside a health centre at Durrington on 13 Apr (just what the doctor ordered!) Two other late records were of singles at both Pevensey Middle Bridge and Bewl Water on 17 Apr.

During the second winter period, a minimum of 41 birds were recorded from 13 localities. The first returning birds were singles at Icklesham on 17 Sept and Pulborough Brooks on 2 Oct, with 3 at the latter locality on 9 Oct. Other notable records for Oct were 2 at the Pagham Information Centre on 16th, 4 ringed at Icklesham between 17th-20th and 7 at Thorney Deeps on 21st. The peak occurred in Nov with 14 at Thorney Deeps on 7th and 2 at Pilsey Island on 8th, 8 at Rye Hbr on 10th and another 2 birds were ringed at Icklesham on 13th. Thereafter the number of birds declined to half the Nov total in Dec, with the majority of records coming from 2 sites. There were 4 at Rye Hbr on 12 Dec and 9 at Thorney Deeps on 19 Dec.

At least 97 different birds were recorded during the 2 winter periods, almost equalling last year's record of 98. [CBC]

0529. **WOODCOCK**

Scolopax rusticola

Records for the first winter period amounted to only 3 in Jan, 12 in Feb and 8 in Mar. In the breeding season, roding birds were reported from 19 localities, with 4 or more at Ambersham Common, Ashdown Forest and Parham Park.

Few were noted in the latter part of the year, with 2 in Oct, 9 in Nov and 8 in Dec. An individual at Pilsey Island on 3 Nov was apparently the first occurrence of this species at the site. Largely overlooked in winter. [JRH]

0532. BLACK-TAILED GODWIT

Limosa limosa

The monthly counts at the principal sites were as follows:

	1994						1995			
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar
<i>County totals</i>	830	824	314	505	213	390	336	440	437	2177
Chichester Hbr	664	358	239	456	172	390	296	180	249	2139
Pagham Hbr	166	466	75	49	41	-	40	260	188	38

Birds were recorded in the Rye area from Mar onwards, mainly as singles, increasing to groups of 3-4 in July and reaching 9 at Pett Level on 15 Aug and 9 at Watch Cottage, Rye Hbr on 30th. Birds at Sidlesham Ferry numbered only 13 on 6 July and 26 on 3 Aug. Inland records were of 2 at Weir Wood Res on 13 May and 4 there on 15 Sept. One was seen at Pulborough Brooks on 4 and 15 Dec. Autumn concentrations at Thorney Deeps increased from 385 on 8 Aug to 432 on 21st and 519 on 8 Sept. There were still 500 there on 23 Nov but numbers reduced to 358 on 14 Dec. [DEGC]

0534. BAR-TAILED GODWIT

Limosa lapponica

The monthly counts at the principal sites were as follows:

	1994						1995			
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar
<i>County totals</i>	833	698	52	529	520	1061	2001	873	657	92
Chichester Hbr	832	698	52	500	519	1060	1992	865	656	91
Pagham Hbr	1	-	-	26	-	-	9	7	-	1

Monthly sea-watching totals from the principal stations were as follows, (hours watched):

	Mar	Apr	May
Worthing	5 E (50.5)	91 E 1 W (57.7)	416 E 22 W (77.4)
Seaford	1 E (66.75)	429 E (93)	920 E (131.75)
Selsey Bill	-	260 E 11 W (133.5)	421 E (200.75)

A count of 158 was made at Seaford on 21 Apr but peak movement came on 2 May with 463 at that site, 175 at Beachy Head and 119 at Newhaven, where 235 were recorded on 8th. The usual concentration at Pilsey Sands reached 400 by 19 Sept, dropped to 260 on 5 Nov and increased to 492 on 2 Dec. The only inland records were of 2 at Pulborough Brooks on 27 July, 10 at Weir Wood Res on 15 Sept and 1 flying out of Pulborough North Brooks on 1 Dec. Unusual dates for birds in summer plumage were singles at Pilsey on 1 Jan and again on 5 Nov. [DEGC]

0538. **WHIMBREL***Numenius phaeops*

The single birds in and around Pagham and Chichester Hbrs in Jan and Feb apparently lingered into Mar and early Apr, making it difficult to discern the start of the spring passage. However, 3 birds at Chichester Hbr on 14 Apr were presumably genuine migrants. Spring easterly passage appeared to be lower than in 1993 and totals for the main seawatching sites were as follows:

	Apr	May	Total
Selsey Bill	175	143	318
Worthing	229	91	320
Seaford	425	282	707

The largest day passage was 245 at Seaford on 22 Apr, some or all of which clearly made up the 237 seen from Newhaven on the same date. Rye Hbr hosted roosting flocks of 222 and 294 on 30 Apr and 1 May respectively, rising to 362 on 3 May. Smaller numbers were recorded through July and Aug, although the count of 74 on North Stakes Island, Chichester Hbr on 25 July was much the highest. The last significant total was 45 at Pulborough Brooks on 15 Aug. At the end of the year, 3 birds were still present on Pilsey Island on 6 Nov and presumably the same 3 again in the Emsworth Channel on 14 Dec. Lastly, 1 bird was still present on Pilsey Island on 23 Dec. [DJB]

0541. **CURLEW***Numenius arquata*

The monthly counts at the principal sites were as follows:

	1994						1994			1995		
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar		
<i>County totals</i>	2022	2077	832	2659	2046	1823	1683	1270	2195	1353		
Chichester Hbr	1338	1121	573	2307	1481	1014	1276	711	1694	1081		
Pagham Hbr	660	648	259	234	508	407	241	96	413	211		
Newhaven	24	11	-	10	6	27	17	1	4	-		
Pett Levels	-	296	-	94	49	348	149	440	82	58		
Rye Hbr	-	1	-	14	2	27	-	22	-	3		

Spring totals at the main seawatching sites were as follows:

	Feb	Mar	Apr	May
Selsey Bill	-	2 E 4 W	93 E 3 W	5 E
Worthing	3 E	5 E	1 E	4 E 1 W
Seaford	12 E	13 E 5 W	27 E	1 E

The year started with 400 at Rye Hbr on 1 Jan, 700 at Pett Level on 9 Jan and 500 at Winchelsea Beach on 15 Jan. After 602 at Rye Hbr on 7 Feb and 296 at Pett Level on 12 Feb, numbers decreased rapidly until birds started to return. Counts at South Stakes Island showed 270 on 27 June increasing to 905 on 25 July then falling to 840 on 10 Aug and 496 on 7 Oct. Other counts included 453 at Thorney Deeps on 10 Sept

decreasing to 183 on 5 Oct. 500 were recorded at Pett Level at the beginning of Nov and 250 at Rye Hbr on 8 Nov increased to 300 on 29 Dec. Inland records included 3 at Hesworth Common on 28 May, 3 at Arlington Res on 25 June, 51 at Udimore on 25 Nov and 2 at Nyewood on 25 Dec. Again, there were no records of breeding. [JLN]

0544. **UPLAND SANDPIPER**

Bartramia longicauda

Extremely rare vagrant

1979: A first-winter in fields adjacent to a public footpath at Bracklesham from 21-23 Dec (SxBR 32:35) remained to 25th (*British Birds* 75:503). It remains the only county record. [RJF]

0545. **SPOTTED REDSHANK**

Tringa erythropus

The approximate monthly totals were as follows:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
<i>County totals</i>	5	4	7	7	2	1	4	21	12	8	5	7
Chichester Hbr	4	4	4	3	-	-	2	5	3	5	4	4
Pagham Hbr	1	-	1	1	1	1	1	2	3	1	1	1
Pett Level	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	10	1	-	-	-
Rye Hbr	-	-	1	1	-	-	-	4	1	-	-	-

During the first winter period, up to 4 were recorded at Thorney Deeps, with singles observed at Pagham Hbr and Sidlesham Ferry on 2 and 30 Jan respectively. Thereafter, single birds were observed at Langley Point on 12 Mar, Pagham Hbr on 13-24 Mar and Rye Hbr on 30 Mar. In Apr, 3 were at Thorney Deeps from 6-18th, with 1 remaining until 27th. Inland records were of singles at Arlington Res on 23 Apr and Pulborough Brooks on 15 May, the latter being the last spring record.

A single at Sidlesham Ferry on 15 June was the first returning bird. The next to arrive were observed at Thorney Deeps on 1 July and Pulborough Brooks on 16 July, with 2 at the former site on 18th. In Aug, 5 were at Thorney Deeps from 15-20th, 8 at Icklesham on 28th and 10 at Pett Level on 30th - the last two records probably relate to the same individuals. In Sept, records of note were 3 at Thorney Deeps on 5th, 3 at Icklesham on 6th and 3 at Sidlesham Ferry on 17th.

During the second winter period, all records were from the western harbours, except for 2 inland records of 2 at Weir Wood Res on 14 Oct and 2 at Arlington Res on 15 Dec. [CBC]

0546. REDSHANK

Tringa totanus

The monthly counts at the principal sites were as follows:

	1994						1995			
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar
<i>County totals</i>	1747	1955	1473	1793	2089	2336	2956	1491	1806	1627
Chichester Hbr	1102	1181	1008	1506	1495	1464	1987	821	1483	809
Pagham Hbr	286	533	245	126	347	497	716	199	65	580
Adur Estuary	136	132	105	38	103	63	133	151	149	56
Newhaven	nc	nc	nc	-	21	-	3	44	43	5
Cuckmere	nc	nc	nc	15	15	27	31	27	14	12
Haven										
Pett Level	nc	nc	nc	10	10	17	20	89	6	10
Rye Hbr	124	73	107	98	98	268	66	160	46	155

Additional large concentrations were: at Chichester Hbr, 76 on 12 Apr, 51 on 12 May, 44 on 12 June; at Thorney Deeps, 400 on 25 June, 876 on 10 July, 1301 on 24 July, 1257 on 21 Aug and at Rye Hbr, 41 on 4 July.

Breeding records were received from just 11 sites; 1 pair at Cobnor Cottage, 3 pairs at Icklesham, 8-12 pairs at Glynde Levels, 2 pairs at North Stakes Island, 4 pairs at Pilsey Island, several pairs at Pulborough Brooks, 1 pair at Henfield Levels, at least 12 pairs at Rye Hbr, 2 pairs at Selsey West Fields, 3 pairs at Bramber Farm, Pagham and 14 pairs at Thorney Island.

The leucistic bird at Shoreham returned (probably the same creamy individual noted annually since 1985) on 15 Oct. [BJY]

0548. GREENSHANK

Tringa nebularia

The approximate minimum monthly totals were as follows:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
<i>County totals</i>	7	5	4	28	23	8	145	243	206	116	10	8
Chichester Hbr	6	5	4	15	6	5	112	153	174	110	9	7
Pagham Hbr	1	-	-	1	1	3	19	22	2	3	-	-
Rye Hbr	-	-	-	2	1	-	6	36	4	2	-	-

Spring passage was exceptionally light. The main seawatching stations produced only 2 records, 1 E at Brighton Marina on 15 Apr and 1 E at Seaford on 3 May. The largest flocks observed were of 5 at Arlington Res on 13 Apr and 15 at Thorney Deeps on 22nd. In May, 6 were at Thorney Deeps on 7th, 4 at Pulborough Brooks on 12th and 3 at both Horse Eye Level, Pevensey and Cuckmere Haven on 2nd and 16th respectively. The last spring record was at Thorney Deeps on 6 June.

Autumn passage commenced with a single at Sidlesham Ferry on 15 June and 4 at Thorney Deeps on 29 June. Passage numbers built up rapidly in July and counts at Thorney Deeps included 34 on 7th and 112 on 22nd, increasing to 152 on 20 Aug and a record count for Sussex of 174 on 5 Sept. The previous highest was 146 on 26 Sept 1991 at the same locality. Numbers at this site fell to 132 on 21 Sept and in Oct there were 100 on 2nd decreasing to 29 on 18th and 15 on 26th. Other notable concentrations were 36 at Rye Hbr on 3 Aug, 22 at Pagham Hbr on 10 Aug, 8 at

Icklesham from 16-29 Aug and a notable inland record of 5 at Darwell Res on 10 Sept. Selsey Bill recorded 8 W during Sept in 54 hrs of watching. During Nov-Dec all the records were from Chichester Hbr, except for single birds at Littlehampton on 5 Nov and 8 Dec. [CBC]

0553. **GREEN SANDPIPER**

Tringa ochropus

The approximate monthly minimum numbers were as follows:

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
19	7	10	11	2	7	63	65	40	30	24	12

During Jan-Apr records, mainly of ones and twos, were received from across the county. Four birds at Barcombe Res on 1 Jan, 6 on the Upper Adur Levels on 23 Jan and 3 at the latter site on 6 Feb were the largest counts. Gatwick Airport hosted 2 birds on 6, 8 and 16 Apr.

The first returning birds were probably the singles at Pulborough Brooks on 20 June and at Carters Pits, Rye 2 days later; 2 winter plumage birds were at Sidlesham Ferry on 30 June. Numbers in July showed an increase over 1993 with records coming from 22 sites; reports were received of 8, possibly 14, birds on Glynde Levels on 16th and 10 at Icklesham on 30th. In contrast, Aug numbers were somewhat down on 1993. At Icklesham, 6, 8 and 10 were recorded on 7th, 10th and 12th respectively, 6 were at Pulborough Brooks on 3rd and 6 at Portfield GP, Chichester on 18th. These were the largest counts among records from 19 sites.

11 birds at Weir Wood Res on 15 Sept was the largest confirmed count in 1994. From then to the end of the year 5 at Darwell Res on 9 Oct and along the Royal Military Canal on Pett Level on 30 Nov were the maximum counts. 2 birds in the Emsworth Channel were present from 21 Oct-31 Dec. [MJM]

0554. **WOOD SANDPIPER**

Tringa glareola

The minimum monthly totals were as follows:

May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct
4	2	8	9	5	1

The first record was from Pulborough Brooks on 6 May, followed during the month by other singles at Thorney Deeps, Sidlesham Ferry and Icklesham. The only June record was of 2 birds in winter plumage at Sidlesham Ferry on 30th. During July, 4 birds at Pulborough Brooks was the largest count; singles were reported from Sidlesham Ferry, Brighton Marina and Icklesham, while one flew S over Whitbread Hollow, Beachy Head on 30th.

4 at Pett Level Pools and at Icklesham on 12 Aug, which may have been the same birds, was the largest count. Records of singles in Aug came from Pagham Hbr,

Sidlesham Ferry Pool, Coach Road GP Chichester, Pulborough Brooks and Glynde Levels. In Sept, singles were reported from Cuckmere Haven, Horse Eye Level (Pevensey), Pett Level Pools and Icklesham, while 1 was found dead at Church Norton. The final record was of 1 at Icklesham on 9 Oct. [MJM]

0556. **COMMON SANDPIPER**

Actitis hypoleucos

The approximate minimum monthly totals were as follows:

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
1	1	1	21	75	3	114	155	89	9	5	2

The only reported wintering bird was at Thorney Deeps, where it was seen most days from Jan-20 Mar. The only other bird seen during Mar was at Birdham Pool on 10th - possibly the earliest spring migrant. The next sighting was on 9 Apr with 2 at Barcombe Res, followed by widespread singles throughout the month but 4 at Arlington Res on 23rd. Numbers increased during May with 6 at Barcombe Res on 8th and 12 at Cuckmere Haven on 16th.

The first returning bird was on 26 June at Pagham Hbr, with 8 there on 5 July and 11 on 9th. Elsewhere in July, usually 1-2 were recorded with a maximum of 10 in Pagham Hbr on 23rd. Aug counts were not high anywhere, with 10 at Chichester Hbr on 12th and 12 at Littlehampton Marina on 29th. By Nov, there were 2 at E. Guldeford Union Canal and singles at Rye, Bewl Water and Thorney Deeps, the last remaining into Dec. One was seen at Lewes Brooks on 24 Dec. [DEGC]

0557. **SPOTTED SANDPIPER**

Actitis macularia

Very rare vagrant

1977: A juvenile at Barcombe Res from 2-11 Nov (*SxBR* 31:54) was also present on 12th (*British Birds* 72:524). It was the 4th and most recent county record, although the first (in 1866) involved 2 or 3 individuals. [RJF]

0561. **TURNSTONE**

Arenaria interpres

The monthly counts at the principal sites were as follows:

	1994						1994			1995		
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar		
County totals	477	658	538	855	935	857	854	500	637	1028		
Chichester Hbr	92	72	289	169	319	235	110	75	156	241		
Pagham Hbr	156	489	nc	361	364	359	420	316	232	384		
Climping	24	14	30	6	12	8	49	12	23	13		
Goring Gap	-	-	4	-	-	14	4	1	7	12		
Adur Estuary	2	1	5	2	1	-	3	28	-	-		
Langley	-	1	7	2	11	35	-	28	8	12		
Glyne Gap	197	68	200	280	195	178	202	nc	185	296		
Pett Level	6	8	-	24	24	28	59	40	14	70		
Rye Hbr	-	5	3	11	9	-	7	-	12	-		

Other significant totals were 253 at Selsey Bill on 1 Mar and 83 at Pett Level on 2nd. High counts in Apr were 400 at North Stakes Island, Chichester Hbr 400 on 30 Apr and 110 in June. [JH]

0563. **WILSON'S PHALAROPE**

Phalaropus tricolor

Very rare vagrant

1971: The ill-fated adult female on the 'long pool' near Sidlesham Ferry from 29 Sept-6 Oct, when shot, (SxBR 24:27) had arrived on 28th (*British Birds* 63:335). It had earlier been seen at Arlington Res on 25 Sept and Cuckmere Haven on 26-27th.

1979: An adult at Sidlesham Ferry on 27 Aug (SxBR 32:37) had first been seen on 26th (*British Birds* 73:510). These were the 1st and 3rd county records and there have been 5 since. [RJF]

0565. **GREY PHALAROPE**

Phalaropus fulicarius

Two different individuals, at Selsey Bill (BJC) and Brighton Marina (PJ *et al.*), on 12 Sept were the only records submitted. [DJB]

566. **POMARINE SKUA**

Stercorarius pomarinus

First recorded on 23 Apr with a maximum of 6 E at Worthing and a further 5 E at Seaford the following day.

There were no further records until May, when there were daily reports in the periods 1st-4th and 7th-11th, and on 12 additional days during the month. The largest movements were again recorded at Seaford with 32 on 1st, 48 on 3rd and 94 on 13th, when the largest flock of 26 was recorded. The last recorded on spring passage was a single at Newhaven on 21 May.

During the summer months, there was a single record of an adult in non-breeding plumage 5 miles south of Shoreham on 9 July (NJT,RC).

In the latter part of the year there was a juvenile over Selsey West Fields on 6 Oct (BFF), a sub-adult W at Selsey Bill on 19 Nov (RP) and possibly the same individual W of Pagham Hbr the following day (RJF). [PR]

0567. **ARCTIC SKUA**

Stercorarius parasiticus

Another good easterly spring passage commenced on the 27 Mar when there were 7 at Worthing, 2 at Beachy Head and singles at Selsey Bill and Seaford. The totals at the main seawatching localities (number of hrs) were as follows:

	Mar	Apr	May	Total
Selsey Bill	2 (82)	104 (134)	53 (201)	159 (417)
Worthing	7 (51)	37 (58)	20 (77)	64 (187)
Seaford	4 (67)	172 (93)	86 (132)	262 (292)

A simple analysis of the available data indicates a minimum of 311, of which 17 were in Mar, 185 in Apr and 109 in May. Passage was noted on 37 days with, once again, a marked peak in late Apr including 38, 56 and 37 at Seaford in the period 22-24th. The day total of 56 is the second highest for the county in spring and is only exceeded by the 66 recorded at the same locality on 24 Apr the previous year.

The largest May movements were 10 at Selsey Bill on 1st and 29 at Seaford on the 3rd when a further 10 were recorded past Selsey Bill. A light phase individual was recorded at Weir Wood Res on 13 May. Singles were recorded on 4 dates in Chichester Hbr, one of which was roosting on Pilsey Sands.

In June, singles were recorded W at Worthing and Brighton Marina on 3rd and 25th respectively, while in July there were singles in Chichester Hbr on 3rd and 2 from a boat trip off Rye.

Autumn passage commenced on 3 Aug with a single past Newhaven West Pier followed by 4 at Selsey Bill on 7th. Thereafter, passage remained light except for 7 W and 3 E at Selsey Bill on 19 Sept. An unusual record was of a juvenile feeding in fields at Beachy Head from 11-22 Sept. During Oct there were 6 records, with no further records until 3 Dec when a single flew past Seaford. [PR]

0568. LONG-TAILED SKUA

Stercorarius longicaudus

Rare vagrant

1992: An adult E off Birling Gap on 14 May (DC, RKH) later passed Dungeness, Kent. It had earlier been ignored at Brighton Marina due to the immediate proximity of a pack of Pomarine Skuas, the only time the appearance of the latter species has ever been regretted! This is the 10th record since 1981, but only the 21st in total. Recent records are equally divided between May and Sept-Oct. [RJF]

0569. GREAT SKUA

Stercorarius skua

An average spring migration was followed by a very poor autumn passage. The approximate monthly totals again showed the main spring passage occurring in Apr:

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
1	1	7	24	6	2	1	-	3	1	1	2

The first record of the year was of a juvenile found recently dead at Brighton Marina on 14 Jan. The only other winter record was a single E at Seaford on 3rd Feb.

A total of 37 were recorded on easterly spring passage between 27 Mar-21 May. The largest movements were 4 at Newhaven West Pier on 16 Apr and 5 at Selsey Bill on 21 Apr.

In June there were 2 W at Worthing on 3rd and in July there was a single S at Beachy Head on 30th.

The poor autumn passage commenced with singles W at Selsey Bill and E at Seaford on 4 Sept. The only other records were of singles at Selsey Bill on 19th Sept, 16 Oct and 19 Nov, at Seaford on 1 Dec and the last at Pagham Hbr on 8 Dec. [PR]

0575. **MEDITERRANEAN GULL**

Larus melanocephalus

A scarce but regular visitor throughout the year. A few pairs have attempted to breed in recent years.

Another good year, with over 230 records on 153 different days reporting nearly 400 sightings. Many of these, however, were duplicates particularly from wintering sites like Shoreham and the spring records from Rye Hbr. A detailed appraisal of the records suggest about 100 birds may have been involved and the following table shows the approximate numbers of each age seen monthly; the total includes unaged, probably different, individuals. These figures are similar to the past few years and show a now familiar pattern of occurrence with a clear peak during the spring and demonstrate older birds returning earlier in the spring than immatures.

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
Adults	4	4	19	11	7	4	3	7	5	2	3	6
2nd year	3	1	1	5	2	1	2	-	1	1	-	3
1st year	1	-	2	4	9	1	-	4	1	3	8	4
TOTAL	9	6	23	21	17	6	7	12	7	6	11	17

Early in the year long-staying individuals could be found at Mewsbrook Park, Littlehampton until 1 Mar, in Pagham Hbr until 16 Mar and at Shoreham, where the second year wearing a white ring '24H' was seen until 8 Mar. Records show that this individual was hatched in Holland. Records of adults moving E along the coast started in late Feb; most however were seen in Mar with maxima of 3 adults E at Splash Point, Seaford on both 22 and 27 Mar. Possibly 19 different birds were seen passing coastal sites in Mar, but only 9 in Apr and 7 in May when the sea-watching sites were well covered.

During the spring, most records were from Rye Hbr where 3 or 4 pairs nested at the Ternery Pool but no young were seen. Although 2 adults were seen in Chichester Hbr in late May there was no evidence of breeding. Adults were recorded at Rye Hbr until 7 July; thereafter the only record was of 2 roosting in early Dec. Autumn records from a number of well spread, coastal sites invariably involved 1-2 birds but 3, one in each age plumage, were sitting on Worthing beach on 23 Sept and 4 first-year birds were at Birling Gap between 3-5 Nov. The individual wearing '24H' returned to Shoreham, then in adult plumage, on 18 Aug, remained until the end of the year and was joined by 5 others, 2 second-years and 3 first-years, during mid Dec. As usual, most records were from sites on or near the coast, exceptions being single first-years at Arlington Res on 16 Oct and 27 Nov and adults at Chichester GP on 6 Nov and at Sheepcote Valley, Brighton on 18 Dec. On 31 Dec an adult was recorded passing W at Splash Point, Worthing and Selsey Bill but regretablely the records give no indication whether the same bird was involved. [JAN]

0578. LITTLE GULL

Larus minutus

A passage migrant, most numerous in the spring; a scarce summer and winter visitor.

Although not reaching the high numbers of 1989 and 1990, this was another good year with the 368 individuals being the county's 11th best annual total for this species. The following table, however, shows that over 88% of these were recorded at coastal sites in the spring and although the winter numbers were unremarkable, the autumn total of just 31 seen between July-Dec was the poorest since the 20 recorded in the same period in 1979.

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
Total	6	6	34	196	94	1	-	5	12	5	5	4
Inland	2	-	3	3	6	-	-	2	7	1	-	-

In the winter, single birds at Pulborough Brooks on 1 Jan and at Bewl Water on 2 Jan were noteworthy. A single adult at Chichester GP on 22 Mar was the first of the spring passage which started in earnest on 27 Mar when 24 passed E at Splash Point, Seaford. The following table highlights the main days of passage at the coast and shows that on most days more were recorded from East Sussex sites than those in West Sussex. However, the largest number recorded during the spring was 60 in Chichester Hbr on 26 Apr, a day of thick coastal fog .

Totals of Little Gulls moving E at 6 coastal stations in 1994 (hours watched):

	27 Mar	22 Apr	23 Apr	24 Apr	3 May	Spring total (Mar-May)
Selsey Bill	0 (4.8)	7 (9.8)	22 (14)	3 (8.3)	9 (11)	57 (416)
Worthing	3 (11)	2 (4.7)	25 (9)	1 (5.6)	3 (6.3)	35 (186)
Hove	1 (?)	1 (?)	24 (2)	-	2 (?)	48 (?)
Newhaven	-	50 (?)	-	12 (?)	-	64 (?)
Seaford	24 (8.5)	43 (12.8)	46 (12)	14 (8)	42 (11.3)	212 (292)
Beachy Head	-	16 (?)	19 (?)	13 (?)	-	57 (?)

The only June records were of immatures at Rye Hbr on 7th and 9th. None were then seen until 1 passed W at Glyne Gap, Bexhill on 4 Aug. Two at Selsey Bill on 24 Aug, 1 on 9 Sept and 3 on 11 Sept, with another single bird at Church Norton on 7 Sept were the only other coastal records for those 2 months. In stark contrast to the spring, most records during this period were from inland sites with 1-2 birds recorded at Arlington Res, Weirwood Res, Barcombe Res and Bewl Water. The last 3 months produced a scattering of records of single birds from coastal sites and an adult inland at Arlington Res on 22 Oct. The paucity of records during the late autumn is all the more remarkable as observers at Hurst Castle, Hampshire recorded the largest movement ever observed in Hampshire on 12 Nov (P. Combridge *pers comm.*). [JAN]

0581. BONAPARTE'S GULL

Larus philadelphia

Extremely rare vagrant

1961: A first-summer recorded at Portobello, Brighton on 20 June (SxBR 14:11) is no longer considered to be acceptable. The most recent county record is now the first-

summer at Langney Point on 24 June 1951 (*British Birds* 45:333), both earlier occurrences being in Nov (1870 and 1948). [RJF]

0582. **BLACK-HEADED GULL**

Larus ridibundus

A common breeding species, winter visitor and passage migrant.

There was no co-ordinated gull roost count. The only winter counts of 1000 or more were all from coastal sites and included 2000 at Shoreham on 2 Jan, 1000 at Newhaven Tide Mills on 27 Jan and 3500 roosting in the Rye and Camber area on 7 Feb. The largest inland counts were from the Horsham area with 900 at Holm Farm, Faygate on 8 Jan and 950 at Warnham MP on 10 Jan.

Small numbers were recorded passing both Selsey Bill and Worthing during the spring; the month totals are shown in the following table and the largest movement was 300 W at Worthing on 6 Apr.

	Mar	Apr	May.
Selsey Bill		72 E (134hrs)	327 E 40 W (201hrs)
Worthing	1185 E & 8 W (51hrs)	832 E 584 W (58hrs)	189 E 13 W (77hrs)

The breeding colony on Stake's Island, Chichester Hbr had 1226 nests and 3086 eggs on 13 May; all but 20 were washed away by high spring tides. By late June there were 586 nests but most of the 1560 eggs were again destroyed by flooding and on 15 July only 7 juveniles had survived. Although the colony at Rye Hbr is smaller, the 300 pairs raised more than 150 young.

Autumn movements were small and were most methodically counted at Selsey Bill with 179 E (8 hrs) in July, 75 E (44 hrs) in Aug, 256 W (54 hrs) in Sept, 250 W (51 hrs) in Oct and 56 W (14 hrs) in Nov. All counts at the end of the year were under 1000 birds except 1000 at Knepp Lake on 2 Oct, 1400 at Rye Hbr at dusk on 4 Dec and 1000 at Arlington Res on both 3 and 27 Dec. The albino individual with black wing tips returned to winter in the Worthing area. [JAN]

0590. **COMMON GULL**

Larus canus

A common winter visitor and passage migrant; has bred

The largest winter counts were from coastal sites with 1500 at Pilsley Sands on 17 Jan and 2000 there on 17 Feb. Between Rye and Camber the roost count at dusk on 7 Feb was 5000. Elsewhere numbers were much smaller although a series of counts at Beachy Head between late Jan-early Mar ranged between 200-600, the peak on 3 Mar. There were no large spring flocks recorded and offshore passage was light as shown in the following table. The largest movements were at Worthing with 382 E on 21 Mar and 236 E on 30 Mar.

	Mar	Apr	May.
Selsey Bill	136 E (82hrs)	81 E (134hrs)	0 E (201hrs)
Worthing	820 E (51hrs)	81 E & 70 W (58hrs)	0 E (77hrs)

Few were recorded in the late spring and early summer. Regular counts at Pilsey Sands demonstrated the arrival in autumn with 6 on 24 June, 90 on 2 July, 150 on 16 July, 600 on 11 Oct and 2000 roosting at dusk on 25 Nov. The roost count between Rye and Camber was 3300 on 4 Dec and the only other large counts were 560 at Cock Marling, Udimore on 4 Nov, 500 at Lower Standean on 26 Nov, 770 at Arlington Res on 17 Dec and 1300 on Whepley Level, Pevensey during westerly gales on 29 Dec. An albino was seen at Icklesham on 6 Sept and at Chichester Hbr on 19 Nov and 6 Dec. [JAN]

0591. **LESSER BLACK-BACKED GULL**

Larus fuscus

A few breeding pairs and some non-breeding birds summer, most numerous as a coastal passage migrant and a winter visitor.

The only significant winter counts were 22 at Warnham MP on 19 Feb, 40 at Camber on 5 Mar and 14 at Rye Hbr on 6 Mar. Spring coastal movements were very poor with season totals of only 7 E and 29 E at Selsey Bill and Worthing respectively; the largest movement at Worthing was 15 E on 27 Mar. Elsewhere, 23 of the race *fuscus* were at Wishing Tree Res on 13 Apr and the maximum of 3 spring counts at Preston Park, Brighton was 34 on 27 Apr.

Pairs bred amongst roof-top breeding Herring Gulls in Newhaven, Brighton and Worthing and groups of up to 5 were recorded at a few coastal sites during June and July. The autumn produced the highest numbers in a rather poor year for this species with a total of 42 E at Selsey Bill in 44 hours watching in Aug, 20 at Greatham on 11 Sept, 15 at Weirwood Res on 15th. and at the Sovereign Hbr Marina, Eastbourne, counts of 70 on 29 Sept, 71 on 6 Oct and 47 on 13th. All the winter records involved less than 10 birds and, notably, there were no records of large numbers from the north of the county. [JAN]

0592. **HERRING GULL**

Larus argentatus

A common breeding resident, winter visitor and passage migrant.

There was no co-ordinated gull roost count this year, so the submitted records give no indication of the true number in the county. The largest counts, as expected, were recorded from the coast with 325 and 490 roosting between Rye and Camber on 7 Feb and 4 Dec respectively, 1200 at Pebsham on 8 Apr and 112 at Pilsey Sands on 6 June. Apart from 200 at Knepp Estate on 10 Oct numbers inland were fewer, with 80 near Warnham on 28 Feb and 50 at Darwell Res being the most notable.

At Rye, 3 pairs raised 4 young at the Ternery Pool, a pair nested at Castle Water and 10-15 pairs bred at the Long Pit. There were an increasing number of pairs nesting on buildings in Rye Hbr village and roof-top nesting was also recorded from Shoreham-by-Sea (3 pairs) and Bognor Regis.

An albino, with a completely black bill, was recorded at Pilsey Island on 31 Jan and 18 Aug and a leucistic individual was at Ivy Lake, Chichester on 23 Nov and at Dell Quay on 7 Dec.

The yellow-legged gulls, mainly of the race *L. a. michahellis*, now considered by many to be a separate species *L. cachinnans*, were again recorded in large numbers. Most were seen in Pagham Hbr where the autumn counts exceeded previous years. The following series of counts from Pagham Hbr demonstrate their arrival immediately after breeding.

June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
28th - 1	6th - 31	5th - 296	5th - 237	14th - 207	1st - 43	15th - 4
	13th - 112	11th - 296	29th - 205	25th - 84	23rd - 22	27th - 1
	22nd - 271				30th - 8	

Although there were regular records from Chichester GP, Selsey, Chichester Hbr and the Adur valley the numbers were much smaller, with the peak in the Adur valley of 40, 39 of which were adults, on 22 Aug. Records not conforming to the usual pattern were singles in Pagham Hbr on 18 Jan, at Selsey Bill on 22 Jan and 5 Apr and 3 in the Lower Cuckmere Valley on 3 Dec. The following table shows the monthly minimum totals.

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
Total	1	-	-	1	-	8	279	340	246	211	44	3

[JAN]

0598. ICELAND GULL

Larus glaucooides

A rare winter visitor and passage migrant

There were 5 records, probably involving 4 different birds. During the afternoon of 13 Jan a second-winter was seen at Pagham Hbr (TJE) and a first-winter at Shoreham Hbr (BFF). A bird in first-winter plumage at Selsey Bill on 8 Mar (OM) departed W and was possibly the individual seen in Chichester Hbr on 12 Mar (RJLK). Finally, a second-summer was watched on the sea at Splash Point, Seaford before flying E on 22 Apr (SL, WRT). [JAN]

0599. GLAUCOUS GULL

Larus hyperboreus

A very scarce but regular winter visitor and passage migrant.

All the records come from either Pagham Hbr, Chichester Hbr or Selsey Bill and involve 4, possibly 5 different birds. The adult, which has returned to winter at Selsey each year since 1984, was seen regularly at Selsey until 7 Feb and in Pagham Hbr until 8 Mar. Different birds were a first-winter seen at Pagham Hbr on 13 Jan and an adult which roosted at Pilsey Island on 11 Apr.

A first or second-year was at Pagham Hbr on 2 Sept and the regular adult first appeared at Selsey on 11 Sept and was subsequently seen there or in Pagham Hbr until the end of the year. An adult seen at Pilsey Sands from 23-26 Nov may have been a different individual and the only other record was a first-year at Sidlesham Ferry on 2 Nov. [JAN]

0600. GREAT BLACK-BACKED GULL

*Larus marinus***A common winter visitor and passage migrant; small numbers summer.**

The only notable count during the early months was 129 roosting at dusk between Rye and Camber on 7 Feb. A series of counts at Pilsey Sands demonstrated numbers increasing during the summer and autumn with 47 on 25 May, 116 on 23 June, 150 on 4 July, 218 on 14 Oct and 328 on 25 Nov. A small movement of 43 W was noted at Worthing on 14 Sept and thereafter autumn counts were larger with 250 at Beachy Head on 22 Sept and 120 at Sovereign Hbr Marina, Eastbourne on both 22 Sept and 17 Nov. During Nov, counts in Pagham Hbr rose from 220 on 8th to 510 on 25th, the total therefore in the West Sussex harbours on this last date being at least 848. In Dec the roost in the Rye area held 263 birds and 250 were counted at Glyne Gap, Bexhill on 25th. Inland records mainly involved small numbers, mostly in single figures, except for 62 at Arlington Res on 17 Dec and 107 there during SW gales on 27 Dec. [JAN]

0602. KITTIWAKE

*Rissa tridactyla***An increasingly successful breeding species, winter visitor and passage migrant.**

There were some notable movements recorded during the late winter and early spring with 900 E at Seaford on 3 Feb and 500 E at Beachy Head on 27 Mar being the largest. The following table shows the main days of Kittiwake movements and clearly shows that sites in East Sussex record more than those in West Sussex.

Totals of Kittiwakes moving E at 5 coastal stations in 1994 (hours watched):

	3 Feb	26 Mar	27 Mar	28 Mar	30 Mar	16 Apr	20 Apr
Selsey Bill	8W (3.5)	-(3)	16 (5)	1 (2.5)	74 (6.5)	-(8)	74 (6.5)
Worthing	-	-(2)	117 (11)	-(2)	12 (7)	-	23 (8)
Brighton / Hove	-	105 (?)	107 (?)	-	-	106 (2)	23 (?)
Seaford	900 (1.5)	-	-	-	-	-	-
Beachy Head	-	-	500 (?)	100 (?)	-	-	150 (?)

By contrast, there were no movements recorded in the late part of the year as the following table of monthly totals from Selsey Bill and Worthing, where sea-watching logs are kept throughout the year, clearly shows.

Totals of Kittiwakes recorded in each month at Selsey Bill and Worthing:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
Selsey - E	2	7	102	123	100	-	-	1	2	1	1	2
Selsey - W	38	11	16	71	35	2	-	4	5	1	1	2
Selsey - hours	29	18	82	134	201	5	8	44	54	51	14	17
Worthing - E	-	-	133	41	119	4	-	2	-	-	-	-
Worthing - W	24	-	9	14	21	8	-	1	2	2	-	-
Worthing - hrs	3	4	50	58	77	4	0	5	15	4	4	5

On 25 June a count of occupied nests on cliffs W of Newhaven was 785 and on 12 July 615 nests were noted to be in 2 groups and contained "many" young. At Seaford 300 nests were counted in July.

A small gathering of up to 30 at Brighton Marina in mid Sept was the only other record involving many birds; none were recorded inland. [JAN]

0604. **IVORY GULL**

Pagophila eburnea

Very rare vagrant

1961: An adult at Portobello, Brighton on 19 Nov (*SxBR* 14:10) is no longer considered to be acceptable. An adult seen at the mouth of the R. Rother at Rye Hbr on 6 Jan 1931 (*British Birds* 24:299) and an adult at the Lower Cuckmere on 19 Nov 1954 (*British Birds* 48:546 and *SxBR* 7:15) which flew N up the Cuckmere Valley are the only remaining records this century. The published accounts of both leave much to be desired and the very real possibility exists that they were albinos of another gull species. Earlier records all relate to individuals obtained during the 19th century, but as none of the specimens survive and none appear to have been aged, they too must be regarded as somewhat suspect. The species' continued place on the county list is therefore somewhat tenuous and it is perhaps best removed. As an aside, none of the pre-1960 records are recognised as valid by Evans (Evans LGR, 1994, *Rare Birds in Britain 1800-1990*. Privately Published.) [RJF]

0605. **GULL-BILLED TERN**

Gelochelidon nilotica

Rare vagrant

1960: One E past Selsey Bill on 4 May (*SxBR* 13:14) is no longer considered acceptable.

1965: Two were reported past Selsey Bill on 12 June (*British Birds* 59:90) not 1 (*SxBR* 18:31), another having been recorded there on 29 May and 1 on 13 June.

1981: An adult in summer plumage at the Ternery Pool, Rye Hbr on evening of 19 May (PFB, PH, RCK) was accepted by *British Birds* (75:510) but has not previously been published in the *Sussex Bird Report*.

There have only been 10 records since 1970 compared to 33 during the 1960s and 27 in the 1950s. Although the Baltic population declined during this period, many Sussex records are not consistent with those of birds assumed to be returning to it. In particular, flock sizes (or lack of them) and the wide spread of dates makes many flypast records questionable and all records along the English south coast in the early and mid-1960s are currently under review by the *British Birds* Rarities Committee, their initial view being that 'few if any would be acceptable by today's standards' (*British Birds* 88: 379). [RJF]

0606. **CASPIAN TERN***Sterna caspia***Very rare vagrant**

1960: One E past Selsey Bill on 6 May (SxBR 13:13) is no longer considered acceptable. The individual past Langney Point on 14 July 1961 (SxBR 15:22) becomes the first county record.

1969: One E past Worthing on 30 Apr (SxBR 22:31) is no longer considered acceptable.

1971: One E past Worthing on 16 May (SxBR 24:30) is no longer considered acceptable.

The county total is now 12, with all but 2 records falling between late June-mid Sept. [RJF]

0611. **SANDWICH TERN***Sterna sandvicensis*

First recorded on 1 Mar at Rye Hbr. Easterly spring passage totals at the main seawatching localities were as follows (number of hrs watched in brackets):

	Mar	Apr	May	Total
Selsey Bill	223 (81.75)	2074 (133.5)	1768 (200.75)	4065
Worthing	191 (50.5)	1570 (57.7)	559 (77.4)	2320
Seaford	329 (66.75)	2275 (93)	552 (131.75)	3156

There was a sizeable easterly movement on 23 Apr with 990 past Selsey, 567 past Littlehampton, 1069 past Worthing, 718 past Hove, 850 past Beachy Head and 971 past Seaford.

At Rye Hbr numbers continued to increase, reaching 400 on 2 May. Up to 150 pairs remained in June, with an estimated maximum of only 5 young raised. At Chichester Hbr nests containing 17 eggs were counted on 13 May. On 13 June, 5 small chicks were recorded but these did not fledge. At both sites, poor success was attributed to wet weather.

Recorded autumn passage was very low. The combined totals for Aug and Sept westerly movement past Worthing and Selsey Bill were 94 in 20.9 hrs and 322 in 148.5 hrs respectively. The 2 western harbours recorded their highest numbers for the year in Aug; 130 in Pagham Hbr on 24th and 60 in Chichester Hbr on 22nd. The last for the year were 2 E past Worthing on 19 Oct.

Inland, there were 2 at Bewl Water on 26 Aug, while at Weir Wood Res records were of 1 on 31 Aug and 15 Sept with 2 on 27 and 30 Sept. [AdeP]

0614. **ROSEATE TERN***Sterna dougallii*

An adult bird flew E past Worthing Beach at 08:57hrs on 24 Apr (JAN) and was then seen passing Brighton Marina at 11:10hrs (JA). On 6 May, one seen with Common Terns at Pilsey Island then flew into Chichester Hbr (CBC). At Selsey Bill, single adults

flew E on 7, 11 and 17 May (all TJE) and were seen feeding offshore on 13 and 15 May (CRJ). One flew E past Splash Point, Seaford at 14:35hrs on 14 May (NJT). Two adult birds flew E past Goring Beach at 13:05hrs (DIS) and Worthing beach five minutes later (JAN) on 21 May..

A single bird was at Ternery Pool, Rye Hbr on 3 June (ARK). Two adults were roosting at Pilsey Sands, before flying off, on 13 June with 1 there on 17 June (all CBC). One bird, probably a second-summer, was at Pagham Hbr on 28 June, with 2 adults there on 30th (all TJE). A single adult was at Pilsey Sands for nearly 4 hours on 8 July (CBC) and the last bird of the year was an adult at Selsey Bill on 13 July, initially seen perched on a shingle bar (TJE). [SJP]

0615. **COMMON TERN**

Sterna hirundo

The first arrival was at Rye Hbr with 1 on 12 Apr, then 1 at Arlington Res the next day. Larger numbers were noted from 21 Apr with 15 at Rye Hbr and 6 at Pilsey Sands, then on 22 Apr 3 at Chichester GP and 50 at Rye Hbr.

Breeding records were as follows: 75 pairs raised more than 130 young at Rye Hbr, with the first hatching on 8 June and first flying on 29th; at least 22 pairs nested on the rafts at New Lake, Chichester GP and 54 chicks were ringed there; none nested at Stakes Island.

The maximum counts were; 140 at Pilsey Sands on 8 Aug, 180 at Rye Hbr on 19 Aug, 100 at Pagham Hbr on 24 Aug, 56 at Weir Wood Res on 1 Sept, 60 at Pilsey Sands on 6 Sept and 37 at Shoreham Hbr on 28 Sept. In Oct, there were 2 at Hastings on 7th and 1 at Ovingdean on 15th. In Nov there were singles at Barcombe on 3rd and 6th and also at Thorney Channel on the 6th.

Up to 3 birds in first year, "*portlandica*", plumage were noted at Rye Hbr from 23 June-15 July. [BJY]

(See also Common / Arctic Tern.)

0616. **ARCTIC TERN**

Sterna paradisaea

There were 33 records of this difficult species. The only spring records were of 2 at Littlehampton on 23 Apr, 1 at Selsey Bill on 24 Apr and 1 at Arlington Res on 25 May. The remaining records were of 1-9 birds, mainly inland, during the first 3 weeks of Sept - at Weir Wood Res, Bewl Water, Arlington Res, Barcombe Res and Chichester GP. In Oct there were 25 at Shoreham Hbr on 2nd and 1 there on 4th. [BJY]

COMMON / ARCTIC TERN

Seawatching produced many records of uncertain identity with birds passing offshore at a distance. In spring the passage began on 27 Mar with 1-7 noted at Seaford, Selsey Bill, Worthing and Beachy Head. The eastward passage is summarised below (number of hours):

	Mar	Apr	May	Total	Birds/hour
Selsey Bill	3 (82)	2160 (134)	2506 (201)	4,669	11.2
Worthing	11 (51)	5504 (58)	556 (77)	6,071	32.6
Seaford	1 (67)	6798 (93)	2179 (132)	8,978	38.4

The largest movement was on 23 Apr with 1646 E at Selsey Bill, 5155 E at Worthing, 2666 at Hove, 3739 at Brighton, 5100 E at Seaford, 1608 at Newhaven and 4700 E at Birling Gap.

Autumn passage was typically light, starting on 10 Aug with 203 E at Selsey Bill. The maximum concentration was at Pilsey Sands with 500 on 22nd. The last large count was of 16 W at Worthing on 28 Sept. Thereafter, there were 6 records of 1-3 until 22 Oct and the last was at Rye Hbr on 7 Nov. [BJY]

0624. LITTLE TERN

Sterna albifrons

First recorded on 11 Apr at Pilsey Sands, then on 17th at Selsey Bill. Easterly spring passage totals at the main seawatching localities (number of hours) were as follows:

	Apr	May	Total
Selsey Bill	159 (134)	314 (201)	473
Worthing	87 (58)	66 (77)	153
Seaford	75 (93)	67 (132)	142

The largest recorded movement was on 23 Apr with 66 at Worthing, 57 at Selsey Bill, 47 at Seaford, 25 at Littlehampton and 21 at Brighton.

In the breeding season there were 18 pairs at North Stakes Island, but no young were raised. At Rye Hbr 35 pairs had very good hatching success, but, despite good growth rates, only 15 young fledged - losses were mainly due to Kestrels.

Autumn passage was typically light and there was the usual concentration at Pilsey Sands with 246 on 8 Aug and 74 on 24th. There were just 7 records in Sept, the last being at Pilsey Sands on 21st.

Inland there were 3 at Bewl Water on 10 Aug and 2 at Weir Wood Res on 16 Sept. [BJY]

0626. WHISKERED TERN

Chlidonias hybridus

Very rare vagrant

One in summer plumage at Rye Hbr on 7-8 May (DJF *et al.*) has been accepted by *British Birds*. It was seen at Dungeness, Kent on 5-6 May (and photographed, see *Birding World* 7:179) and was almost certainly that seen at Sidlesham Ferry on afternoon of 2 May which departed E over Pagham Hbr (BM *et al.*). The 9th to be seen in the county, its reappearance at Rye Hbr was greatly appreciated by many, in particular those who had missed its all too brief appearance at Sidlesham Ferry a few days earlier. [RJF]

0627. **BLACK TERN***Chlidonias niger*

The approximate monthly totals were as follows:

Apr	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct
115	81	2	1	132	109	1

Sea passage during Apr and May is summarised below:

	Apr	May	Total	No. per hr.
Selsey	58	43	101	0.30
Seaford	46	37	83	0.37

First recorded on 20 Apr when 20 flew past Seaford. Subsequent spring passage was light with the only counts in double figures being 13 at Seaford on 22 Apr, 60 at Worthing and 43 at both Selsey and Hove on 23 Apr, 18 at both Seaford and Selsey on 3 May and 10 at Selsey on 7 May.

Inland records consisted of 4 at Pulborough Brooks, 3 at Chichester GP and 6 at Arlington Res on 23 Apr., while singles were seen at Rye Hbr on various dates between 24 Apr-15 May and 4 at this locality on 3 May. During June, there was 1 at Barcombe Res from 2nd-3rd and at Pagham Hbr on 30th.

Autumn passage commenced with a single July record at Pagham Hbr on 28th. Small numbers were seen at several coastal and inland sites during Aug and Sept with the largest Aug numbers at Bewl Water, where there were 30 on 23 Aug, increasing to 38 on 24th and declining to 15 on 31st. In Sept the most significant counts were at Weir Wood Res, with 45 on 15th. and at Barcombe Res with 13 on 16th. A single bird was seen in Chichester Hbr on the late date of 27 Oct. [NJT]

0628. **WHITE-WINGED BLACK TERN***Chlidonias leucopterus***Vagrant**

1988: The 1st or 2nd-summer in Chichester Hbr from 15 July-1 Aug (*SxBR* 42:41) remained to 3 Aug (*British Birds* 83:461). There are 43 county records, the most recent in Sept 1989, May 1992 and Aug-Sept. 1992. [RJF]

0634. **GUILLEMOT***Uria aalge*

The approximate monthly totals, which include sea passage, were as follows:

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
17	248	13	8	9	1	2	4	3	3	1	2

200 birds were seen from Seaford on 3 Feb. The above figures include 4 dead and 7 oiled birds, of which 4 were caught and taken to rescue centres. [VPB]

0636. RAZORBILL

Alca torda

The approximate monthly totals, which include sea passage, were as follows:

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
1	3	15	11	33	-	-	-	-	6	4	2

Even allowing for some duplication of records, the May total is the highest figure in recent years. One individual was seen with a Guillemot in the Lower Chichester Channel on 2 Dec. [VPB]

AUK SPECIES

Totals at the main seawatching localities were as follows;

Direction of movement	Jan-Feb		Mar-May		Aug-Oct		Nov-Dec	
	E	W	E	W	E	W	E	W
Selsey Bill	2	5	21	34	-	8	-	-
Seaford	273	56	303	4	-	-	70	-
Worthing	4	5	63	121	-	-	-	-

There was also a single June record from Worthing beach. [VPB]

0665. FERAL ROCK DOVE

Columba livia

Reported from only 4 localities during the year despite widespread and numerous distribution. There were 288 at Hurstpierpoint on 9 Jan and at Littlehampton GC, a flock of 30 was present from Jan-Mar and then gradually dispersed. On 23 Sept, 50 were counted at Littlehampton Marina and this flock increased to 100 in Oct. 140 were seen in The Pells, Lewes on 15 Oct and a flock of 40 was at Combe Haven on 29 Dec. [RK]

0668. STOCK DOVE

Columba oenas

There were several reports of sizeable flocks in the Faygate area early in the year, including 45 at Carylls on 25 Jan, 400 at the Holmbush tip on 5 Mar and 85 on linseed at Kilnwood on 12 Apr. 40 were seen at Thorney Island on both 11 Jan and 4 Feb. 75 were counted in Marline Wood, Hastings on 26 Feb and 38 at Moulsecomb Wild Park the following day. There was a flock of 100 at Icklesham on 12 Mar which decreased to 20 by early May.

Four were seen in display flight along the cliff face at Fairlight CP on 1 May. Results of breeding surveys can be found on page ...Two pairs occupied nest boxes at Weir Wood Res but only 1 pair used those at Horsted Keynes railway station this season.

In the autumn, 35 were reported at Rye Hbr on 17 Sept, whilst on 16 Oct Thorney Island had 120 and Glynde Levels 90 birds. 40 were counted at Pulborough Brooks on 29 Oct. Many were seen in the Pagham and Selsey area in mid-Nov, with a maximum of 1210 flying W on 17th. 40 were counted at Arlington Res on 20 Nov and 57 at Holmbush Farm, Faygate on 27 Dec. [RK]

0670. WOODPIGEON.

Columba palumbus

The count of 3000 at Pagham Hbr West Side on 26 Jan was the greatest number recorded in the early part of the year. A roost at Ludlay, Arlington in Feb contained 1100 birds.

Results of breeding surveys can be found on page... Over 150 breeding pairs were reported.

Birds were on the move, in some cases in large numbers, in Oct and Nov. 1000 moved out to sea from Beachy Head on 24 Oct. At Pagham Hbr 1610 were counted moving west on 1 Nov, while on 2 Nov 44,650 moved west in a 3 hour period. Later in the month on 17 Nov 1410 were seen, also moving west. 10,000 passed Belle Tout, Beachy Head between 08:45-09:15hrs on 7 Nov. Making some adjustment for possible duplications between 70-80,000 birds were involved in the autumn/early winter movements. [DEC]

0684. COLLARED DOVE.

Streptopelia decaocto

Unusually, there were no early counts at Rye Hbr. The largest winter counts were 38 at Lewes Brooks, 54 at Brighton Wild Park and 120 at Knepp Estate in Jan and Feb. The earliest breeding record was of a bird sitting on eggs amid ice and snow at Hove on 2 Feb. Only 6 other records of confirmed breeding were received. Autumn and winter flocks did not exceed in size the 250 conveniently perched on telegraph wires at Yapton. At Heathfield, 2 eggs hatched on 22 Dec and birds were seen displaying at Hastings on 31 Dec. [DEC]

0687. TURTLE DOVE.

Streptopelia turtur

At a later date than in recent years, the first records were of a single at Scobell's Farm, Barcombe and 3 at Harbour Farm, Rye Hbr on 23 Apr with spring passage starting at about that date. Arrivals were noted at coastal sites from one end of the county to the other. Sidlesham recorded 7 on 8 May, Thorney Island 6 on 12 May while in the east 10 were at Icklesham from 14-23 May.

Confirmed breeding was reported at only 3 sites with song at 10 others. Results of breeding surveys can be found on page Pairs were observed at several other locations but there was no indication of confirmed and successful breeding.

Late summer saw some high counts with 39 at the North Wall, Pagham Hbr on 11 Aug, 14 leaving the Little Egret roost at Thorney Deepes on 18 Aug, while an additional 27 were noted at Pagham Hbr on 25 Aug.

A light autumn passage continued through Sept with observations of up to 6 birds on 18 days. The last recorded was a single at Selsey Bill on 10 Oct. [DEC]

0712. **Cat. C. RING-NECKED PARAKEET**

Psittacula krameri

Four birds were recorded in the Hollingbury area all year and records from nearby Preston Park, Brighton on 19 July, 20 Sept and 5 Dec may relate to these birds. A single was seen at Ifield MP on 23 Jan. Two birds were at Three Corner Copse, Hove from 20 Mar-30 May and again on 8 Sept. Singles were recorded flying E past Goring Gap on 2 Sept, at Marline Wood, Hastings on 17 Sept, at Ovingdean on 8 Oct, at Hove Fire Station on 19 Oct and on a garden peanut feeder at Brighton on 1 Dec. [SJP]

0724. **CUCKOO**

Cuculus canorus

The first was unusually early at Brighton Wild Park on 28 Mar. One reached Icklesham on 6 Apr, 4 more arrived on 12th, and sightings were regular from 20th. Hepatic females were at Pagham Hbr on 28 Apr and Weir Wood Res on 27 May. Breeding reports included 10 territories at Rye Hbr and 15 at Bewl Water in June. Juveniles were widely noted in Aug but only 3 in Sept and the last were singles at Icklesham on 1 Oct and very late record at Littlehampton West Beach on 12 Oct. [KN]

0735. **BARN OWL**

Tyto alba

A minimum of 173 bird sightings from 119 sites were received. One was recorded entering and leaving the Egret roost at Thorney Deepes in the early and late winter months. At least 5 territories were held. Two pairs were known to have bred as they were seen feeding young. A road casualty on 4 Dec at Merston was released on 7 Feb 1995. [CT]

0757. **LITTLE OWL**

Athene noctua

A minimum of 189 sightings from 92 sites. At least 11 territories were held and 2 pairs were seen with juveniles. [CT]

0761. **TAWNY OWL**

Strix aluco

A minimum of 150 sightings from 90 sites. At least 16 territories were held. Three pulli were ringed from 2 locations in nestboxes. One road death and 2 other deaths from unknown causes were recorded. [CT]

0767. **LONG-EARED OWL**

Asio otis

There were 28 sightings of this species at 14 sites. Two fledged but still downy juveniles were recorded in July. One adult was ringed in Dec. [CT]

0768. **SHORT-EARED OWL**

Asio flammeus

A minimum of 128 sightings from 63 sites were recorded. On 1 May, one was seen coming in off the sea at Brighton Marina and on the same day, a bird was seen at sea off Brighton. Two had just arrived in from the sea at Chat Vale, Beachy Head on 29 Sept and 3 in a group were seen at the same site on 30th. One coming in off the sea at West Wittering on 16 Oct was mobbed by 2 Herring Gulls and 1 was seen mobbed by a Merlin at Beachy Head on 6 Nov.

On 10, 17 and 22 Nov roosts were found at Thorney Island with 2, 3 and 5 birds respectively. At the same site on 12 Dec, 6 birds were found roosting. [CT]

0778. **NIGHTJAR**

Caprimulgus europaeus

The first record on 10 May and the last on 8 Aug were both from Parham. All other records appear to be from breeding areas. 23 breeding sites, with Ashdown Forest being classed as 1 site, provided 66 probable breeding records, compared with 89 in 1993. 35 were from West Sussex and 31 from East Sussex, of which 26 were from the Ashdown Forest. There were no reports of autumn passage birds. [JB]

0795. **SWIFT**

Apus apus

The first record was of a single on 23 Apr at Ivy Lake, Chichester, with many records then of 1-6 birds at numerous locations until the end of the month. Early May produced flocks of 100 at Ivy Lake on 1st and 200 at Rye Hbr on 7th. The largest spring flock was 1000 at The Crumbles on 27 May. Flocks of 1000 birds were recorded in the early autumn at Pagham Hbr on 5 Aug and Beachy Head on 16 Aug. Small numbers were recorded at coastal localities up to the end of Sept, but the last record was of a single at Church Norton on the extraordinary date of 22 Nov. [DJB]

0831. **KINGFISHER**

Alcedo atthis

Observations during the winter months were as follows:

	Jan	Feb	Nov	Dec
No. of birds	33	15	28	26
No. of inland sites	11	3	12	10
No. of coastal sites	12	8	8	8

These figures show an improvement in the Jan records for both birds and sites over recent years. From the few breeding reports, it would appear that successful breeding took place at 2 sites, apparent breeding at 2 others and possible breeding at a further 2 sites. [DEGC]

0840. **BEE-EATER**

Merops apiaster

Vagrant

1991: Five NE over Hodcombe, Beachy Head on 22 May (MEC, RHC).

1994: Two W over Shooters Bottom, opposite Hodcombe, Beachy Head on 5 June (RS). [RJF]

0841. **ROLLER**

Coracias garrulus

Very rare vagrant

1977: One at Upwaltham Down from 20-22 June (SxBR 30:32) had first been seen on 19th (*British Birds* 71:511).

1978: One reported from a fast moving car 1 mile north of Gatwick Airport on 29 May (SxBR 31:37) was, with all probability, in Surrey. The 1977 individual becomes the 16th, and most recent, county record. [RJF]

0846. **HOOPOE**

Upupa epops

Only 3 birds were recorded which, together with the same total in 1991, represents the poorest showing since 2 were seen in 1982. The first was an elusive individual around Kent Farm, Climping on 7-8 Apr (PTP, SJP, RJLK). In the autumn one was at Westfield Lane, Hastings on 10 Sept (HT) with another at Fairlight Country Park on 24-25 Sept (RGH, HT).[SJP]

0848. **WRYNECK**

Jynx torquilla

A poor year, with probably only 7 birds recorded. The only spring record was of 1 in a small wood at Falmer on 29 Apr (FP). Autumn records commenced with 1 at Climping on 14 Aug (RJLK) and 1 at Sheepcote Valley, Brighton on 31 Aug (NJL). In Sept,

singles were found at Rye Hbr on 17th, 21st and 22nd (PP), in a garden at Almodington, near Selsey, on 17th (SC), feeding on ants in a garden at West Dean on 19-20th (JKR) and at Icklesham on 25th (TS). The last record was of a bird at Church Norton on 1 Oct (PJF). [SJP]

0856. GREEN WOODPECKER

Picus viridis

Again, was widely recorded throughout the county. During the breeding season records of pairs were received from 19 sites. Results of breeding surveys can be found on page....Juveniles were observed at Cobnor, Runcton, Pulborough Brooks, Storrington, Cissbury Ring, Partridge Green, Henfield, East Grinstead, Lewes, Beachy Head, Pett Level and Rye Hbr. There were town records from Broadwater, Worthing and The Pells, Lewes. [LM]

0876. GREAT SPOTTED WOODPECKER

Dendrocopus major

The first records of drumming were in Feb from West Hoathly on 2nd, Burton MP on 13th and Slindon Park on 21st. Pairs were recorded during the breeding season at 12 sites and territorial males at 5 other sites. Results of breeding surveys can be found on page...Breeding success was reported from Fernhurst, South Stoke, Parham, Balcombe, East Grinstead, Ashdown Forest, Isfield, Heathfield, Cooden Beach GC and Fairlight. [LM]

0887. LESSER SPOTTED WOODPECKER

Dendrocopus minor

Records were received from 44 sites across the county. Pairs or territorial males in the breeding season were reported from Fernhurst, Burton MP, Climping, The Mens (2 pairs), Pulborough Brooks, Knepp Castle, Warnham MP, Henfield, Ifield MP, Gravetye, West Hoathly, Newick, Ashdown Forest, Maynards Green, Bewl Water (2 pairs) and Combe Haven. All records, especially of breeding, are required for this species. [LM]

0974. WOODLARK

Lullula arborea

Winter records were again few, but breeding records increased. In West Sussex a probable 7 pairs bred in 5 localities and at least 8 pairs occupied territories in other areas. There were autumn reports of 30 birds from 18, mainly coastal, areas - from Beachy Head to Selsey. The last record was on 6 Nov. [JB]

0968. **SHORT-TOED LARK**

Calandrella brachydactyla

Very rare vagrant

One at Birling Gap, Beachy Head on 7-8 May (PL, IT *et al.*) was the 11th individual to be seen in the county but only the second since a flock of 4 in Oct 1972. Records conform to no clear pattern with sightings in all months from Apr-Nov, apart from Aug. [RJF]

0976. **SKYLARK**

Alauda arvensis

Flocks were reported during Jan and Feb, notably 150 on Rodmell Brooks, 110 at Sheepcote Valley, Brighton, 116 in 4 flocks at Thorney Island and 100 at Wepham Down and Icklesham.

By early Mar birds had dispersed to breeding grounds after which singing males and pairs were reported from 14 localities. On Ashdown Forest over 70 singing males were observed at different localities which, allowing for duplication, suggests that there may have been about 50 pairs present. Results of breeding surveys can be found on page... Winter movements were noted in Oct when 12 flew in off the sea at Thorney Island on the 4th, 51 flew W at Church Norton on the 7th and the next day 60 moved E past Beachy Head in 3 hours. Easterly movements continued through Oct with 80 at Goring Gap on 11th, 107 at Selsey Bill on 16th and 74 at Church Norton on 20th. Westerly movements were seen at Church Norton on 27th Oct and 1st Nov with 118 and 220 birds respectively. The largest winter flocks were seen at Pagham Hbr with 270 on 15 Dec and at Roedean, Brighton with 220 past in 30 minutes on 31 Dec. [RTP]

0981. **SAND MARTIN**

Riparia riparia

Early Mar records were of 1 at Chichester GP on 5th, 8 at Pulborough Brooks on 9th and 12 at Ivy Lake, Chichester on 13th. At the end of the month some sizeable gatherings included 200 at Pulborough Brooks on 30th with 400 at Chichester GP and 120 at Weir Wood Res the next day. Birds continued to arrive in numbers in the first half of Apr with a count of 1500 over Ivy Lake, on 5th, 500 at nearby Runcton on 10th and a similar number at Arlington Res on 13th.

Breeding records came from Heath End, near Petworth, where there were 35 used holes (*cf.* 80-90 in 1993), Dunford GP, Midhurst with 110 birds reported in June/July (*cf.* 55 nest holes in 1993), 3 nests at Coates Castle, Fittleworth, where breeding resumed in 1994 and 2 sites at Rye Hbr each with 2 nests.

Autumn passage commenced in July with 400 over Harbour Farm, Rye on 14th and a minimum of 500 at Icklesham on 22nd. Mid-Aug saw large numbers at Icklesham with 2000, 5000, 7000, 1000, 5000, 5000 and 2500 on consecutive days from 12th-18th. 1400 flew SW at Church Norton on 23 Aug and 500 were present at Arlington Res on 29 and 31 Aug. At that site, 1000 were counted on 8 Sept, 500 were at Bewl Water on 11 and 29 Sept, while 1000 on 22nd was the maximum Sept count at Icklesham. A pure albino bird was reported among a flock of 50 at Pett Pools on 8 Sept. The final records

for 1994 were 2 each at Brighton Marina on 20 Oct and over Beachy Head on 23rd. [MJM]

0992. **SWALLOW**

Hirundo rustica

One at Littlehampton Marina on 6 Mar was a full fortnight ahead of the next record of 2 dropping in for an evening drink at Warnham MP. Apr brought many reports in single figures and it was not until 16th when somewhat larger numbers were recorded, eg 100 at Arlington Res and 50 at Pulborough Brooks. 69 flew E at Littlehampton West Beach on 30 Apr. The final large spring gathering was 100 at Bewl Water on 28 May.

Breeding records were received only from Thorney Island, Marsh Farm (Yapton), Avins Farm (Ardingly), Chelwood Vachery, Isfield, Bewl Water, Maynards Green and from Keymer where 52 pulli were ringed from 14 broods in 1 farm barn.

Pre-migration gatherings were recorded from mid-July, with 250 roosting in Thorney Deeps reedbed on 19th. 1500 birds were noted at Icklesham on 22nd-23rd July and on 10 Aug, 750 were over the North Wall at Pagham Hbr. A roost of 1000 in the Thorney Little Deeps reedbed was noted on 29 Aug.

The first of many records of significant passage movements came from Rye Hbr on 3 Sept, when 32,000 flew W between 07.00-10.00hrs. On the same day, 1000 passed Chat Vale, Beachy Head at the rate of approximately 80 per minute. Subsequent major Sept passage counts were 10,500 E at Pagham Hbr on 21st and 11,400 E there next day with 12,000 at Sompting Downs also on 22nd. 10,200 passed Hollingbury Camp on 23rd, 8000 were seen in one hour at Goring Gap and 10,000 flew E at Normans Bay. 6000 E at Pagham Hbr, 5000 E at Beachy Head and 20,000 at Icklesham were the principal counts for 24 Sept. Records for 25th included 1000 E at Bognor, 2500 at Sompting Downs, 2450 at Lancing Clump and 10,000 past Beachy Head. Numbers of passage birds declined subsequently with significant counts only of 4000 E in 1 hour at Littlehampton on 26 Sept, 1500 S at Pagham Hbr and 3967 at Lancing Clump on 27th, 1000 over Beachy Head on 28 Sept and 600 there on 8 Oct. 1000 E in 1.5 hours at Goring Gap on 11 Oct was the last big movement. 17 records were received for Nov and the final sighting of the year was of 1 at Rye Hbr on 5 Dec. [MJM]

0995. **RED-RUMPED SWALLOW**

Hirundo daurica

Rare vagrant

Two were recorded, 1 at Cow Gap, Beachy Head for 20 minutes on 3 May (JFC) and 1 at Cuckmere Haven during the evening of 19 May (NJT). Typical short stays. Both have been accepted by *British Birds* and take the county total to 13, all occurring between 18 Apr-29 May and all since 1967. [RJF]

1001. **HOUSE MARTIN**

Delichon urbica

First recorded on 27 Mar at Weir Wood Res. Other early arrivals were 4 at Arlington Res on 29 Mar, 2 each at Pulborough Brooks and Littlehampton on 1 Apr and 50 at Weir Wood Res on 3 Apr. Significant numbers did not appear until mid-May with maxima in excess of 1000 over Ivy Lake, Chichester and 200 at Bewl Water on 17th; 600 were over Rye Hbr on 18th.

Breeding records included 7 nests at Vinehall near Mountfield, 16 nests at Maynards Green (*cf.* 13 in 1993) with 7 having second broods, 5 nests at Sheffield Park Station (4 with second broods) and 12 nests at the University of Sussex, Falmer. 10 pairs bred around Bewl Water.

Early autumnal movements noted were 1540 flying S at Church Norton on 11 Aug and 250 per hour passing Beachy Head on 22 Aug. 400 were present over Bewl Water on 1 Sept while 317 were trapped for ringing at Cissbury Ring 2 days later. A large *hirundine* passage began about 17 Sept when 5000 passed Belle Tout, Beachy Head and a similar number flew E at Pagham Hbr on 21 Sept. These movements heralded records, on 23 Sept, of 2000 at Selsey Bill, 2485 at Lancing Clump, 4100 over Hollingbury Camp, 2000 E at Normans Bay and an all day passage at Rye Hbr estimated at 70,000. 24 Sept produced 1100 in 2 hrs along Worthing beach and 2000 at Beachy Head before numbers increased again the following day with 2320 at Lancing Clump, 1700 at Hollingbury Camp, 2000 at Weir Wood Res and 20,000 past Beachy Head. By contrast, 500 at Icklesham on 26th was the maximum daily count in Sept. 4000 flew S at Pagham Hbr and 1992 passed Lancing Clump on 27th; 5000 were counted at Normans Bay on 28th.

After a quiet week, 400 flew S at Church Norton on 7 Oct. 550, on 8th, was Selsey Bill's peak count of the month - on which day 2800 passed Beachy Head between 07.30-09.30hrs. Scattered records in later Oct and in Nov led to a final, late, record of 1 at Bexhill on 18 Dec. [MJM]

1002. **RICHARD'S PIPIT**

Anthus novaeseelandiae

Vagrant

1978: The individual published as being at Beachy Head on 7-8 Nov (*SxBR* 32:64) was actually at Cuckmere Haven (*British Birds* 73:517, RHC *pers. comm.*).

1994: One on the old Pontins site at Selsey Bill on 1 Oct (MJWH, KM, RP) is the only accepted record, although another seen at Beachy Head on 8 Oct has not been submitted. 65 have been recorded in the county, but only 9 have been since 1980. [RJF]

1005. **TAWNY PIPIT**

Anthus campestris

Rare visitor

1971: The individual at Beachy Head on 23 Sept (*SxBR* 24:42) was also reported on 28th (*British Birds* 65:345).

1973: Of the 4 at Beachy Head from 7-10 Oct (SxBR 26:36), 1 remained to 12th (*British Birds* 67:334).

1977: Four (1 and 3) were seen at Beachy Head on 27 Aug (*British Birds* 71:513), not 3 (SxBR 30:42).

1994: Three were recorded: an adult in a 'set aside' field at Birling Gap on 23 May (JFC *et al.*), an adult on the old Pontins site at Selsey Bill from 8-10 Sept (TJE *et al.*) and one at Church Norton on 8 Oct (TJE, DJN). That at Birling Gap is only the 7th spring record (all falling between 29 Apr-24 May). Of the 185 recorded since 1960, 122 were in Sept and 19 in Oct. [RJF]

1009. **TREE PIPIT**

Anthus trivialis

First recorded on 29 Mar in St. Leonard's Forest. There was, again, an increase in recorded breeding sites with 140 singing males/pairs this year, mostly in Ashdown Forest (57) but none from Pippingford Park.

Return passage started with 1 bird at Icklesham on 31 July. The 329 records reported up to 7 Nov were less than half of last year's total and included 76 at Hollingbury Camp on 20 Aug and 36 at Selsey Bill on 30 Sept. [JB]

1011. **MEADOW PIPIT**

Anthus pratensis

More reports were received this year. For the first 3 months of the year they revealed a decline in some areas but there were reports from new inland sites, with 30 at Ifieldwood and 33 at Rusper Court Farm in late Jan. Hard weather brought 20 to Crowborough Railway Station and 30 to Widewater on 15 Feb, but there were only 2 counts of 50 or above in this period; 60 at Pulborough Brooks on 10 Jan and 50 at Amberley Wild Brooks on 20 Jan.

Spring passage was less heavy than in 1993 and reported from mid-Mar. 410 flew N at Church Norton on the 15th and 150 were at Selsey Bill the next day. On 26th, 300 flew in off the sea at Splash Point, Seaford, while inland there were 143 at Lancing Clump, 247 at Wishing Tree Res, 77 at Sompting Brooks and 25 at Knepp Estate.

Passage continued on a smaller scale into Apr, with the last significant coastal counts being on the 16th with 107 at Selsey Bill and 42 in off the sea at Brighton Marina. Inland congregations were noted in expected places - 30 on Steyning Brooks on 1 Apr and 25 near the River Mole at Gatwick on the 6th.

Birds were on territory by late Mar, one male at Rye Hbr had been displaying on the 2nd. Breeding reports were scattered and little comparative data can be extracted, though pairs around Rye Hbr fell from 23 to 14.

There were few reports for Aug or early Sept, though early flocking is suggested by the presence of 35 at Roedean on 27 Aug. Reports of more than 50 came after mid-Sept, rather than late Aug as in 1993. On the 23rd, 251 flew E along Worthing beach in 30 minutes, 421 were on Sompting Brooks and a massive 700 over Hollingbury Camp. The 24th saw 400 at Beachy Head and 375 at Roedean, where 190 remained on 1 Oct, dwindling to 16 on 15th. Easterly movement predominated on 23-24 Sept with 251 in 30

minutes and 180 in two hours over Worthing beach. 400 flying east on 24 Sept represented Beachy Head's peak. As with spring passage, autumn passage this year saw fewer massive movements than in 1993.

Wintering birds were in evidence at Pulborough Brooks (50 in mid-Dec), Maynards Green (20 on 21 Nov) and at Combe Haven with up to 20: there had only been 5 in the first winter period. There were also 25 at Rusper Court Farm on 30 Nov and 30 at Ifield on the same date. These records give some indication of the well scattered distribution of the species in a mild winter. [CB]

1014. **ROCK PIPIT**

Anthus petrosus

1989: The record of a bird showing the characteristics of the Scandinavian race *A. p. littoralis* has now been withdrawn.

1994: Apparently a poor year, there were only 3 counts of 10 or more. These were in mid Feb, with 11 at Church Norton on the 5th., 10 at Shoreham Hbr on the 12th and 13 on Thorney Island on the 19th. Brighton Marina held a maximum of 4 on 27 Feb and a pair bred there successfully. Three near Saltdean in mid-July was the only other record between 26 Mar-18 Aug. At the end of the year, birds were reported from the length of the coast from Chichester Hbr to Northpoint Pit, Rye, but numbers were low. There were no reports from the old stronghold of Seaford Head-Cuckmere. and are there no birds between Hastings and Pett? There were no inland records in 1994. There was 1 record of a bird of the Scandinavian race *A. p. littoralis*, at Shoreham Fort on 27 Feb. (RJF). [CB]

1015. **WATER PIPIT**

Anthus spinoletta

An average year at best. Reported from 4 sites (Thorney Deeps, Chichester GP, North Wall, Pagham Hbr and Combe Haven) up to 16 Apr and from 4 after 5 Oct (ASC, TJE, PB). Thorney Deeps held up to 4 from the start of the year to 16 Mar, declining to the last on 16 Apr (CBC) The maximum count was of 10 at Combe Haven on 20 Mar (RBW) with a late-year maximum of 6 at the same site in the second half of Dec (RBW). [CB]

1017. **YELLOW WAGTAIL**

Motacilla flava

Recorded from 19 Mar (1 at Rye Beach) to 19 Oct (1 at Church Norton). It was a worryingly poor year for both passage and breeding: the only encouraging signs were in high autumn roost counts.

Spring passage was scattered and there were no double figure counts. The breeding season, too, appears to have been poor. Numbers fell again around Rye Hbr to ca.17 pairs (66 in 1990, 25 in 1993) and both pairs at Icklesham were predated. No other site was reported to have held more than 2 pairs; among these were Arlington Res, Selsey

West Fields and Pulborough Brooks, where there had been 19 pairs in 1992. On the brighter side, Fernhurst seems to be a new breeding site.

Autumn passage began with 2 at Selsey Bill on 7 Aug. Heavy movement got under way in the last 10 days of the month, with 3 counts in excess of 100: 101 flying W over Newhaven Tide Mills in 1 hour on the 20th. and on the 28th 113 on Thorney Island and 500 at Rye. Early Sept saw roosts build up: about 640 near Sidlesham Ferry on the 7th and 11th, declining to 74 on the 17th and 600 at Carters Pit, Rye on the 12th. Other than these roosts, the only counts of more than 100 in Sept were 300 at Rye, 112 along the north wall of Pagham Hbr on the 2nd. and 100 at Beachy Head on the 7th. Indeed there were only 14 records in excess of 20 birds in Aug and 16 in Sept (26 and 36 respectively in 1993). The usual groups were around cattle on the Downs and the Levels with 34 at Glynde on 11 Sept and 38 at Sompting Brooks on 27 Sept, but very few were seen further north, other than 9 at Weir Wood Res on 8 Sept. Only 23 birds were reported in Oct, compared with 88 in 1993.

Two Blue-headed Wagtails (*M. f. flavissima*) were recorded from the Rye area: a male arrived on 23 Apr, mating calls were heard in mid-May, and 2 were seen together until 30 June. (DJF, BJY). In addition, a male was found at Bewl Water on 29 Apr (PCB), the first record for the reservoir and 1 was on Hooe Level on 1 May (PJ). [CB]

1019. GREY WAGTAIL

Motacilla cinerea

In Jan and Feb, reported in ones and twos only from 7 coastal and 23 inland localities. The results of the Society's 1993-94 breeding bird survey are given on pages xx-xx. The first autumn record, and the only coastal record in July, was of 1 at Church Norton on 12th. The only Aug coastal records were of singles at Rye Hbr on 2nd and 21st, 2 at Selsey Bill on 18th, and 3 at Beachy Head and 2 at Glyne Gap on 28th. A low total of 49 was recorded in Sept from 8 coastal sites.

In Oct, numbers were again fairly low with a total of 33 at 7 coastal sites. In Nov and Dec mainly ones and twos were recorded, totalling 11 at 6 coastal sites and 54 at 24 inland sites. The largest number in Nov was 3 at Pulborough Brooks on 10th and 26th. In Dec, Pulborough Brooks had a maximum of 4 on 9th and there were 3 at Apuldram, Chichester on 21st. [LM]

1020. PIED WAGTAIL

Motacilla alba

Only 2 substantial late winter gatherings were reported: at least 110 at St. John's Park, Burgess Hill (used for several years) and 150 in Eastbourne. 30-39 roosted in garden shrubbery at Maynards Green and there were a dozen reports of double figure gatherings at sites both predictable (64 at Thorney Island SF on 4 Mar) and less predictable (12 in the playground of Coldean School, Brighton, on 11 Feb). Such reports, together with those of 24 on newly cut grass at Ivy Lake on 22 Sept, 75 on newly cultivated land at Church Norton on 23 Oct and 46 in Preston Park, Brighton, on 23 Oct, remind us how opportunistic a species this is.

Groups were still prominent in Apr, 28 by the R. Mole at Gatwick on the 8th parallels the 1993 record of 26 on 22 Apr.

Results of breeding surveys can be found on page...

Small congregations were reported from late Aug. 30 were at Brighton Marina on 13 Sept and 27 nearby at Roedean on 1 Oct. Evidence of a substantial eastward movement came from the west of the county in mid-Oct with 50 E at Goring Gap in 90 minutes on 11th, 303 E at Church Norton on 12th with 267 E there on the next day. The origin of the wintering population seems unknown; certainly birds in Brighton, where the roost location is not known, leave wintering sites like Preston Park regularly in the second half of Mar, returning in the second half of Sept. High counts at the end of the year included 128 by Fishbourne Channel on 21 Dec, 90 at Thorney Deeps SF on 31 Dec, 82 at the pre-roost in Burgess Hill and 35 at Combe Haven on 29 Dec.

28 White Wagtails, with no more than 3 together, were reported in spring from 3 Mar-22 May. There were 2 autumn records: from Arlington Res on 3 Sept and Belle Tout on 17 Sept. [CB]

1066. **WREN**

Troglodytes troglodytes

Results of breeding surveys can be found on page...

At Cissbury, 59 birds were ringed from Apr-Nov. Small arrivals were noted at Beachy Head on 11 and 13 Oct consisting of 10 and 15 birds respectively. [CO]

1084. **DUNNOCK**

Prunella modularis

Results of breeding surveys can be found on page... At Pulborough Brooks a pair were seen feeding a young Cuckoo. At Cissbury, 59 birds were ringed from Apr-Nov. [CO]

1099. **ROBIN**

Erithacus rubecula

Results of breeding surveys can be found on page.. At Cissbury, 83 birds were ringed from Apr-Nov. An early arrival of 20 birds was noted at Beachy Head on 21 Aug. Peak autumn counts included 52 in the Climping Gap on 18 Sept and 57 at Darwell Res on 9 Oct. [CO]

1104. **NIGHTINGALE**

Luscinia megarhynchos

A fairly common summer visitor and rarely seen passage migrant.

The first was recorded at Bewl Water on 10 Apr but there were no further arrivals until 22 Apr when singles were singing near Upper Beeding and at Ebernoe Common. On 23 Apr there was a more widespread arrival including 3 at Littlehampton GC and thereafter there were daily records from several different sites. During the spring there were records of 57 singing males from 31 sites; 31 birds from 16 sites in West Sussex and

26 birds from 15 sites in East Sussex. The largest numbers were 6 at Houghton and 4 singing males each at Ebernoe Common, Ashcombe Bottom near Lewes and around Bewl Water.

During the autumn the records came from 3 main sites. At Icklesham, singles were recorded on several autumn days from 8 July with a maximum of 3 on 5 Aug. A total of 8 were ringed at Cissbury on 5 dates between 1-21 Aug but most, as usual, were at Beachy Head where 3 were recorded on 18 and 29 Aug and 4 on 20 Aug. Away from these 3 sites there were singles at Poverty Bottom, Newhaven on 10 July and at Littlehampton Marina on 12 Aug. The last records were at Icklesham on 2 Sept and at Beachy Head on 14 Sept. [JAN]

1121. **BLACK REDSTART.**

Phoenicurus ochruros

The approximate monthly totals were:

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
5	7	11	10	-	3	2	1	2	40	64	10

The year started poorly with few sightings, a considerable drop in wintering birds compared to early 1993. Even Mar and Apr saw little improvement. The first singing male was at Hove on 23 Apr which was heard until 3 May. A bird was in song at Seaford on 25 Apr and another was singing behind the King's Hotel, Brighton on 30 Apr.

On 16 June an adult was feeding 2 young on Hastings Beach. This record was the only firm indication of breeding in the county. The only July record was of 2 in the Hastings area on the 31st.

By Oct birds were more numerous, principally along the coast. Evidence of the main migration occurred in early Nov with 7 at Beachy Head on the 5th. On 6 Nov, 6 were seen at Selsey Bill, 3 were at Cuckmere Haven and 2 at Wyckham Farm, Steyning. Sightings of single birds were made at a number of coastal sites during Dec and 4 were at Southwick Beach, Shoreham on 23 Dec. [DEC]

1122. **REDSTART**

Phoenicurus phoenicurus

The first record was of a bird at Beachy Head on 17 Mar. A total passage of 41 birds, mainly singletons, was noted along the coast until 25 Apr and the first singing bird was recorded on Ashdown Forest on 24 Apr. During the breeding season, 10 territories were held on the Ashdown Forest, compared with 20 in 1993 and 43 in 1991. 19 pairs were found in Pippingford Park and 7 pairs in other areas.

537 birds were recorded during autumn migration, including 31 at Beachy Head on 30 Aug and 24 at Thorney Island on 18 Sept. The last bird was at Pulborough Brooks on 20 Oct. [JB]

1137. **WHINCHAT***Saxicola rubetra*

Reported from 15 Apr when a male was seen on Sompting Brooks to 29 May and from 10 July to 26 Oct with birds on two further, very unusual, dates: a female at Goring Gap on 10 June and a bird in Sheepcote Valley, Brighton on 12 and 20 Nov.

The maximum spring count was, typically, of 7 at Hollingbury Camp on 30 Apr, on which date 23 of the seasonal total of 66 were found. None were seen on the crest or north of the Downs.

The first returning bird was at Pulborough Brooks on 10 July. Double figure counts began on 5 Aug with 14 at Combe Haven: there were 9 in Aug and 36 in Sept. Aug numbers were much reduced from last year's, and although the Sept total exceeded that for 1993, the monthly maximum was only 40 - at Beachy Head on 3 Sept, followed by 35 in Sheepcote Valley, Brighton, on 17 Sept. There were far fewer records after 1 Oct than in 1993, but 26 is the median total for the 13 years since 1982.

As in 1993, Holmbush Tip at Faygate provided the majority of the inland records, with 9 on 4 Sept and a late bird on 9 Oct, when there were also 2 on Laughton Level.

The maximum monthly autumn totals (i.e. reported bird days) were:

	July	Aug	Sept	Oct-Nov
1993	10	860	887	67
1994	7	278	1066	26

[CB]

1139. **STONECHAT***Saxicola torquata*

The county totals for the first winter period were 55 in Jan, 63 in Feb and, away from potential breeding areas, 23 in Mar. An individual at Pulborough Brooks on 13 Mar showed characteristics of the Siberian race (*S.t. maura*).

Breeding season data was similar to 1993 with a minimum of 70 territories reported, of which at least half were from the Ashdown Forest environs. A pair successfully bred on waste ground at Gatwick Airport and birds were noted on a number of downland sites in May.

One showing characteristics of *maura/stejnegeri* at Selsey Bill on 8-9 Oct (CRJ, OM *et al*) has been accepted by *British Birds*. This is the first county record of one of these distinct races, colloquially known as 'Siberian Stonechats'.

Late year figures amounted to c.120 in both Sept and Oct, 90 in Nov and 60 in Dec. The highest site counts in the early autumn were 15 at Belle Tout on 11 Sept, 12 in Sheepcote Valley, Brighton on 15 Oct and 16 at Thorney Island on 27 Oct, where 13 were still present on 1 Dec. Other Dec records included 7 at Hooe Levels on 14th and 9 at Combe Haven on 19th. [JRH]

1146. **WHEATEAR***Oenanthe oenanthe*

The first arrivals were in Mar with 2 at Climping on 2nd, 1 at Thorney Island on 3rd and 1 at Ifield on 6th. There was then a steady stream of single figure records until 10 at Selsey Bill on 25th.

Breeding was only confirmed at Rye Hbr where 5 pairs nested with good success. The only other June record came from nearby, at Winchelsea, on 30th. During July there were records from St. Leonards and Newhaven Tidemills of possible breeding and a recently fledged juvenile at Selsey West Fields on 23rd.

There were many, mainly coastal, records during Aug and Sept, but from early Oct all were in single figures, and coastal, except for singles at Pulborough on 25th and 28th. The last singles were noted at Beachy Head on 5 Nov and Shoreham Hbr on 30 Nov.

The only individual considered to be of the Greenland race *O. o. leucorrhoa* was reported from Pulborough on 28 Apr. [BJY]

1186. **RING OUZEL***Turdus torquatus*

1993: Note that the monthly totals were displaced in printing by one month and should relate to Mar to May and Sept to Nov.

1994: A below average year, with approximate monthly totals as follows:

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
-	-	-	13	7	-	-	-	41	48	19	-

First recorded in Apr with a single at Castle Hill, Falmer on 6th, followed by further singles at Rye Hbr on 10th, Pagham Hbr on 14th and at Beachy Head between 20th-25th. The 21st brought 2 to Newmarket Hill and singles at Littlehampton GC and Cissbury Ring. Castle Hill had 2 on 29th. In May, there were records from 4 sites only, with 2 at Castle Hill on 3rd and singles at Beachy Head between 1st-5th, at Hooe Level, Pevensey on 2nd and Balsdean, Rottingdean from 4th-6th.

First of the autumn was a single on 14th Sept at Beachy Head, where there were also 2 on 26th, 4 from 27th-29th and 2 on 30th. Hollingbury Camp had 2 on 22nd and 1-2 present until 30th. There were 6 at Fairlight on 24th and 2 at Lancing Clump between 26th-28th. Singles were reported on various dates from Pagham Hbr, Sidlesham, Pulborough Brooks, Sompting Brooks and Sheepcote Valley, Brighton. In Oct, Beachy Head had 3 on 1st with records of 1-5 up to 25th. There were 7 at Fairlight on 1st and at Pulborough Brooks, 1-2 between 5th-12th and a single on 26th. Hollingbury Camp had 1-3 from 17th-26th with singles up to 9th Nov. There were other single records in Oct from Selsey, Pagham Hbr, Climping, Easebourne, Steyning and Icklesham. Beachy Head had up to 4 on 4 days in Nov and singles were reported from Pagham Hbr, Sheepcote Valley, Castle Hill, Seaford Head and Ashdown Forest. A single at Whitehawk, Brighton on 18th was the last record for the year. [LM]

1187. **BLACKBIRD**

Turdus merula

On 2 Feb at Blackwell, East Grinstead a bird ringed at the site 8 years previously was retrapped and on 30 Mar, another retrap was of one which had been ringed as an adult 5 years earlier.

Regular breeding surveys in defined areas revealed dense and fairly stable populations. Results of breeding surveys can be found on page...

The very heavy density in suburban areas was demonstrated by the 39 record cards completed for nests in Three Corner Copse, Hove and a further 25 for Hove Park. In Bognor Regis, 7 ha supported 23 pairs in Hotham Park.

In the autumn there was a small arrival of 40 migrants at Beachy Head on 13 Oct and 80 birds were counted at Icklesham on 25 Oct. A leucistic bird was amongst the 60 at Thorney Deeps on 1 Dec. 50 were seen in a 2 km walk at Combe Haven on 29 Dec. [RK]

1198. **FIELDFARE**

Turdus pilaris

In the first part of the year, the largest flocks reported were 1000 on 7 Jan, and 500 on 9 Feb at Hurstpierpoint, 450 on 22 Jan at Ringmer and 450 on 6 Feb at Rye. Several sizeable flocks remained into Apr with 102 at Pease Pottage on 3rd reducing to 80 by 9th and 37 by 18th. There were also 100 at Newick on 17 Apr. The last individuals were on 21 Apr at Sidlesham and Steyning (3). Autumn arrivals first appeared at Lancing Clump on 26 Sept and above Sompting on 27th. There were no records then until 9 Oct after which a more general but small arrival took place. The largest numbers were 75 W over East Head on 17 Oct and 200 in the Lower Adur Valley on 28 Oct. Numbers were generally low during the final part of the year with 400 at Mount Caburn during frosty weather on 23 Dec being the highest number reported. [SHL]

1200. **SONG THRUSH**

Turdus philomelos

1993: A total of 40 birds were ringed during the autumn influx at Cissbury.

1994: In the early part of the year maximum counts were of 10 at Icklesham on 5 Jan and 20 at Combe Haven on 17 Feb. Results of breeding surveys can be found on page...In the latter part of the year, maximum counts were of 32 at Lancing Clump on 26 Sept, 15 at Knepp Estate on 3 Oct, 17 on 27 Nov and 30 on 29 Dec at Combe Haven. [JLN]

1201. **REDWING**

Turdus iliacus

There were widespread reports of flocks of up to 500 during Jan and Feb. A heavy nocturnal passage over East Grinstead on 8 Mar was estimated to involve perhaps

1000 birds. By Apr, few remained in the county and only 8 were reported, the last being 6 on 19th at Maynards Green.

A small arrival took place on 26 Sept with records from Crawley, Lancing Clump and Srompting Brooks. Small numbers were then widely reported through Oct, the most being 70 at Wakehurst Place on 8th. Diurnal passage was obvious on 3 Nov when flocks totalling several hundred flew W-SW over Landport Bottom, Lewes. There were flocks in many parts of the county during Nov and Dec, most numbering no more than 200 except for one of 300 at Maynards Green on 17 Dec. [SHL]

1202. MISTLE THRUSH

Turdus viscivorus

During the early part of the year, maxima were of 8 at Rye Hbr on 1 Jan and 10 at Combe Haven on 17 Feb. Results of breeding surveys are on page.... There was a maximum count of 15 at Icklesham on 6 June and 29 at Lewes Brooks on 19 June. Later in the year, 15 were reported in sycamore at Chichester Yacht Basin on 13 July and 15 at Pulborough Brooks on 28 July. At the same site there were 35 on 14 Aug, falling to 27 on 11 Sept. Nine were seen at Combe Haven on 27 Nov with 12 at the same site on 29 Dec. [JLN]

1220. CETTI'S WARBLER

Cettia cetti

At Icklesham, singles were seen on 4 dates from Jan-Mar and another from 8-11 Apr. At Thorney Deepes, up to 3 males were singing and others giving alarm calls on various dates from 1 Jan-2 May. One male held 2 territories through the breeding season and breeding was confirmed in June when 2 pairs with 1 and 3 juveniles were seen. Up to 3 males were again seen on various dates from Aug to the end of the year. Elsewhere, singles were seen at Castle Water, Rye on 25 Mar, Church Norton on 26 Mar, singing at Littlehampton GC from 16-25 Apr and at Pulborough Brooks on 1 May. A female was ringed at Charleston Reedbed on 16 Oct and one was heard at Arundel Mill Stream on 16 Oct.

Breeding has now been confirmed in every year since 1989, regularly at one site and, more recently, at a second. Small numbers appear to over-winter regularly. [JAH]

1236. GRASSHOPPER WARBLER

Locustella naevia

The first records were on 20 Apr with 1 at Littlehampton GC and 2 males at Thorney Island, followed by 3 more at Thorney on 21st, 24th and 26th, 1 at Beachy Head on 23rd, reeling birds at Shoreham Airport and Camp Hill, Ashdown on 25th and singles at Pulborough Brooks and R. Adur, Shoreham on 26th and Hollingbury Camp on 30th. One was at Shoreham Airport on 2 May and one at Pulborough Brooks on 16 May following which there were no confirmed breeding or other records until 1 at Combe Haven on 4 July. The county appears to be in danger of losing this species as a breeding bird. Following peak breeding counts of 71-73 at Thorney Deepes in 1988 and

76 at Rye Hbr in 1989, there has been a massive decline in both territories held and breeding numbers. With no positive records of confirmed breeding this year, none in 1992 and only 2 pairs in 1993 and no records of territories held (down from a peak count of 31 in 1989), any records of either confirmed or suspected breeding or territories held would be welcomed.

During the autumn, 16 birds, mainly singles, were reported on 13 dates from the Beachy Head area, with a maximum of 3 on 30 Aug and 12 birds, again mainly singles, from 11 other locations on various dates from 31 July-24 Sept. Passage was also recorded at Cissbury, where a total of 8 were trapped during Aug and notably at Icklesham, where numbers varied from 2 on 18 July, through 30 on 31 July to a maximum of 52 on 30 Aug, falling thereafter to a final record of 1 on 18 Oct. [JAH]

1242. **AQUATIC WARBLER**

Acrocephalus paludicola

Autumn vagrant

1975: In addition to records already published (SxBR 28:38, 33:61 and 46:77), further juveniles were trapped at Filsham Reedbed on 12 Aug and 21 Sept. A juvenile trapped at Filsham Reedbed on 4-5 Oct was published as Sept (SxBR 33:61). A record total of 14 were recorded in 1975, all were trapped and all but one was at Filsham.

1994: Twelve were recorded, all juveniles. Ten were trapped at Icklesham on the following dates; 30 July (earliest county record), 2 Aug, 13 Aug, 14 Aug, 18 and 20 Aug, 21 Aug, 21-22 Aug, 22-23 Aug and 2 Sept, 30 Aug, and finally 3 Sept (all RBRG) Particularly notable was the individual present for 12 days. The others were trapped at Thorney Little Deep on 7 Aug (CBC, GCMR) and seen in a ditch in the lower Cuckmere Valley, just south of Exceat Farm, on 24-25 Sept (DC, SD *et al.*). The Cuckmere individual was enjoyed by many, a photograph of it appearing in *Birding World* (7:346). [RJF]

1243. **SEDGE WARBLER**

Acrocephalus schoenobaenus

The first records for the year were of singles at Sompting Brooks and Icklesham on 12 Apr. The first singing males were recorded at Rye Hbr on 18th, where 200 pairs were recorded in the breeding season.. Numbers recorded at Icklesham included 40 on 24 Apr, 50 on 30th and 65 on 3 May. Small numbers were seen elsewhere, but 45 were singing at Thorney Deeps on 30 Apr. In Sept, 18 were recorded at Cissbury and the maximum count for the month was of 20 at Icklesham on 29th, with 28 at this site on 1 Oct. The last record was on 18 Oct, with 1 at Combe Haven. [JH]

1250. **MARSH WARBLER**

Acrocephalus palustris

1993: An adult was recorded at Denton on 6 June (NJT).

1994: One was heard singing on 12-13 and 19 June at Beddingham (MJH), unfortunately it did not attract a mate. Three birds were trapped at Icklesham, an adult female on 19 July and first-year birds on 1 Aug and 5-6 Aug (RBRG). A return to average numbers after an exceptional year in 1993. [SJP]

1251. **REED WARBLER**

Acrocephalus scirpaceus

The first record was a single at Sompting Brooks on 16 Apr. Icklesham recorded 15 on 25 Apr, increasing to 30 on 1 May and 40 on 3rd. Small numbers were recorded elsewhere. 84 males were holding territory at Thorney Deeps in May. Steyning Ringing group had a good autumn, ringing 52 birds at Cissbury and 96 at Steyning. Icklesham recorded 162 during Aug, 29 during Sept and 30 on 1 Oct. The last bird was at Beachy Head on 13 Nov. [JH]

1256. **BOOTED WARBLER**

Hippolais caligata

Extremely rare vagrant

One singing at Cow Gap, Beachy Head between 07:20 and 07:35 hrs on 5 June (DC, JFC) was not seen subsequently. It has been accepted by *British Birds* and is the first published record for the county although one trapped at Icklesham on 19 Sept 1993 is under consideration and its acceptance is expected. [RJF]

1260. **MELODIOUS WARBLER**

Hippolais polyglotta

Vagrant

1961: One at Selsey Bill on 3 Sept (SxBR 14:17) is no longer considered to be an acceptable record.

1977: A juvenile was trapped at Chick Hill, Pett on 10 Aug (per SJRR).

1994: A record 5 were recorded, one in spring, near Belle Tout Wood, Beachy Head on 22 May (DC, JFC, RII *et al.*) and 4 in autumn. These were near Pagham Hbr Information Centre at Sidlesham Ferry on 13 Sept (TJE); at Whitbread Hollow, Beachy Head on 14 Sept (RJF, GCG, RSK); behind Church Norton from 14-17 Sept (TJE *et al.*) and to the south of the railway line adjacent to Shoreham Airfield on 21 Sept (ARK). The Church Norton individual had a particularly long primary extension for a Melodious Warbler, suggesting Icterine *H. icterina* at times. [RJF]

1262. **DARTFORD WARBLER**

Sylvia undata

This bird is a good example of how a species can increase from virtually no records to almost 40 pairs within 5 or 6 years when climatic conditions become favourable. There were very few coastal records in Jan and Feb, but birds began to appear in breeding areas in Feb and song, pairing and carrying of nesting material were observed during

Mar. In West Sussex, breeding records were received from 2 sites and probable breeding was recorded at 2 others. There were 8 breeding records from Ashdown Forest and courtship and territorial behaviour were observed at more than 30 other sites there.

In autumn and early winter there were 32 reports of 41 birds from coastal areas (up to 8 birds at Beachy Head) and 18 reports of 28 birds inland, mainly from Ashdown Forest. These are considerable increases compared to last year. [JB]

1265. **SUBALPINE WARBLER**

Sylvia cantillans

Very rare vagrant

1992: A female visited Hodcombe, Beachy Head briefly on 21-22 May (RHC).

1994: A female at Hodcombe, Beachy Head briefly on 31 May (RHC) and a male at Hodcombe, Beachy Head almost as briefly on 13 June (RHC, MEC, JFC). If the male had been two weeks earlier and they'd met ... All three records have been accepted by *British Birds* and take the county total to 8. [RJF]

1267. **SARDINIAN WARBLER**

Sylvia melanocephala

Extremely rare vagrant

A very elusive male at Shooters Bottom, SE of Hodcombe, Beachy Head between 28 Aug-11 Sept and again on 27 and 29 Sept (RS *et al.*) has been accepted by *British Birds* and is the third county record. Seen by many throughout its stay, it gave excellent views on occasion, but was more likely to disappoint by its non appearance. Previous records were an equally elusive male near Birling Gap from Aug-Oct 1976 and a female trapped at Icklesham in July 1990. [RJF]

1273. **BARRED WARBLER**

Sylvia nisoria

Rare autumn vagrant

1990: One seen briefly in Whitbread Hollow, Beachy Head on 16 Sept (RDME).

1994: Two were recorded, a juvenile trapped at Icklesham on 23 Aug (RBRG), the earliest county record by a day and one seen briefly above Whitbread Hollow, Beachy Head on 13 Sept (RJF). These records take the county total to 36. [RJF]

1274. **LESSER WHITETHROAT**

Sylvia curruca

First recorded on 21 Apr - rather later than usual - with a singleton at Littlehampton GC and 2 at Icklesham, where there were 1-2 present until 28th. This compares with an average first arrival date of 15 Apr for the county over the previous decade. Mainly singles were recorded at many sites at or near the coast until the end of Apr and then more widely inland.

Results of breeding surveys can be found on page...At Icklesham, 4 on 1 May had increased to 12 by 13th which were then present until 20 Aug, with a maximum count of 17 on 21 Aug. The Steyning Ringing Group reported a poor season, having trapped only 12 birds at Cissbury from 20 Apr-25 Sept.

Autumn passage was evident from 22 July with 133 birds being counted from then until 27 Sept at Hollingbury Camp, with a maximum of 24 on 19 Aug. During Aug the only sizeable numbers seen were 25 at Beachy Head on 16th, 60 at Whitbread Hollow on 28th and a small fall of 20 at Combe Haven on 31st. During Sept, 25 at Beachy Head on 7th and 13 at Church Norton on 13th were the highest numbers recorded. Thereafter, numbers tailed off to a last record of 1 at Beachy Head on 24 Oct. [JAH]

1275. **WHITETHROAT**

Sylvia communis

The earliest 'first date' for three years found 3 birds at Four Counties, Ashdown on 6 Apr but it was 10 days before the next one at Hollingbury Camp on 16th - this compares with an average first arrival date of 7 Apr for the county over the previous decade and an earliest county record of 19 Mar 1966. Thereafter there was a steady trickle of mainly singles, with a maximum of 15 at Sheepcote Valley, Brighton on 23rd and 40 at Beachy Head on 30th.

During the breeding season there were many reports of singing or territorial males. Results of breeding surveys can be found on page...The largest count was of 20 pairs in the Climping Gap.

Return migration was noted from 5 July when 32 were seen at Sidlesham Ferry. Most reports, however, were for Aug with counts including 200 at Whitbread Hollow on 20th, 49 at Icklesham on 23rd and 80 in Sheepcote Valley, Brighton on the same day. A total of 213 birds were ringed at Beachy Head. During Sept, the highest count was of 100 at Whitbread Hollow on 3rd. The last bird was recorded at Belle Tout on 16 Nov - this date equalling the Eastbourne record of 1958. [JAH]

1276. **GARDEN WARBLER**

Sylvia borin

The first recorded bird was at Ifield MP on 3 Apr - the second earliest record for the county (the earliest was 1 Apr 1990). This compares with an average of 11 Apr over the last decade. The main arrival did not commence until 20th with singles recorded from 9 sites on most days to the end of the month. 1-3 birds were recorded at 15 sites during May.

Results of breeding surveys can be found on page...Return migration was noted from the end of July with 19 seen at Icklesham on 31st. The total of 84 ringed at Whitbread Hollow was described as 'poor' despite a count of 50 on 6 Aug. 57 were counted at Icklesham on 6 Aug and 19 at Church Norton on 25th. The last record was of 1 at Icklesham on 24 Oct. [JAH]

1277. **BLACKCAP**

Sylvia atricapilla

For wintering birds in the period 1 Jan-31 Mar, the response to the request in *SxBR* 45 for records of both sex and accurate grid reference provided 117 records of 147 birds, comprising 67 males, 35 females and 45 of no defined sex. Six figure grid references were given for only 39 of the 117 records. Several birds were seen regularly through the period at the same site and several were in song before the end of Mar.

Records during Apr were mainly of singles with maxima of 6 at Glyne Gap on 2nd and 7 at Ardingly Res on 3rd with a similar pattern observed during May. Results of breeding surveys can be found on page...A total of 327 birds were ringed at Cissbury from Apr-Nov.

Return migration started from about 11 July. From 26 July-14 Oct, 184 were noted passing through Hollingbury Camp. The main passage was during Sept; the highest counts were at Whitbread Hollow where 125 on 3 Sept was described as 'poor' because the weather was too good! 150 on 27th was presumably more acceptable. Other maxima included 123 at Icklesham on 27th. During Oct, the highest count was of 100 at Whitbread Hollow, while elsewhere numbers did not exceed 11. This compares with a bumper year in 1993, when more than 5000 were ringed in the county during the autumn and there were significantly higher numbers counted at most of the above sites. During the second winter period, from Nov-Dec, there were 38 records of 42 birds (excluding 4 counts of 5 or more). These comprised 15 males, 9 females and 18 of no defined sex. For both winter periods, combined records show that males outnumbered females by almost 2:1. Is this the result of a different migration strategy between the sexes or is there some other factor which predisposes males to overwinter in greater numbers? [JAH]

1298. **PALLAS'S LEAF WARBLER**

Phylloscopus proregulus

Rare vagrant

At least 6 were recorded in the best year ever for this species and at least two other reports are awaited. All were from 22 Oct-10 Nov, as follows: one at the southern end of Sheepcote Valley, Brighton on 22 Oct (TJW *et al.*); one at Hodcombe, Beachy Head on 23 Oct (RHC *et al.*), one along the northern edge of Littlehampton GC from 29-31 Oct (RJLK), another at Hodcombe, Beachy Head on 4 Nov (RHC *et al.*); one, considered to be a different individual, at nearby Birling Gap on 5 Nov (RJF, TJW *et al.*) and one at the Severals, Church Norton on 9-10 Nov (BJC, TJE, CFW *et al.*). All were seen by a number of observers, with those at Littlehampton GC and Sheepcote Valley attracting the largest crowds. A photograph of the latter appears in *Birding World* (7:438). These records take the county total to 33, of which 19 have been at Beachy Head (including 7 at Hodcombe), 5 at Church Norton/Severals and 4 at Atherington/Littlehampton GC. [RJF]

1300. **YELLOW-BROWED WARBLER**

Phylloscopus inornatus

Vagrant

1961: One at Selsey Bill on 17 Sept (SxBR 14:18) is no longer considered to be acceptable. The individual at Belle Tout Wood, Beachy Head on 24 Oct 1965 (SxBR 18:42) therefore becomes the first record for the county, while that at Birling Gap on 18 Sept 1988 (SxBR 41:63) becomes the earliest autumn occurrence.

1974: One at Hodcombe, Beachy Head on 14 Oct (RHC).

1994: Two were recorded, one at Hodcombe, Beachy Head on 26 Sept (RHC) and one in sycamores adjoining the old Pontins site at Selsey Bill on 1 Oct (MJWH, CRJ, OM *et al.*). This was the poorest showing since 1987 when none were seen. There are now 69 records of this delightful small warbler, 38 of them from Beachy Head. The species occurrence at Selsey Bill, having been lost due to the removal of the 1961 record, is immediately regained, although it is somewhat surprising that there were no others in the intervening years, especially considering that Thorney Churchyard has hosted 3. [RJF]

1301. **RADDE'S WARBLER**

Phylloscopus schwarzi

Very rare vagrant

One appeared erratically in a back garden at Reigate Road, Worthing on 26-27 Oct (KW *et al.*). It has been accepted by *British Birds* and is the 4th and latest county record, the others falling between 30 Sept-21 Oct. Being only visible intermittently from a lounge window, a large scale 'twitch' was unfortunately out of the question. Those that did see it were greatly appreciative of the hospitality of the finder and his wife as it was undoubtedly the highlight of the autumn/year. [RJF]

1308. **WOOD WARBLER**

Phylloscopus sibilatrix

The first record was from Ashdown Forest on 26 Apr which was followed by 17 singletons on passage in coastal areas. As last year, there were 10 records of birds in suitable breeding localities. Song was last heard on 2 June on Ashdown Forest.

The first returning migrant was at Icklesham on 24 July, followed by 8 singletons, mainly at coastal sites, in Aug and the last bird was recorded on 2 Sept. [JB]

1311. **CHIFFCHAFF**

Phylloscopus collybita

In Jan there were 31 birds present at 24 sites and 14 at 9 sites in Feb. Up to 18 Mar there were 53 at 36 sites. Maximum gatherings were of 6 at Rye Bay Wood on 1 Jan, 4 at Thorney Deeps on 1 Mar and 5 at Coldwaltham Brooks on 12 Mar. Notable spring records were of 18 at Lancing Clump on 26 Mar, 17 at Beachy Head on 30 Mar and 20 at Church Norton on 31st.

Results of breeding surveys are shown on page....

Numbers of autumn birds from various sites included 354 at Hollingbury Camp from 26 July-26 Oct, 380 at Icklesham from 24 July-8 Oct, 598 at Beachy Head from 19 July-8 Oct and 415 at White Vane Pond, Horsham on 20 Sept.

After mid-Oct numbers fell sharply, but records continued until the end of the year, mainly from the coast and inland wetlands.

A bird showing characteristics of one of the eastern races (*abietinus/tristis*) was seen at Littlehampton GC on 6 Nov (RJLK). A bird showing characteristics of the race *tristis* was seen with the Blackpoll Warbler at Bewl Water on 14 Dec (ASC). [JB]

1312. **WILLOW WARBLER**

Phylloscopus trochilus

The first record was of a bird at Littlehampton GC on 26 Mar. 41 more were noted during the rest of the month, including 22 at Pagham Hbr on 31st. In Apr 48 were found at Church Norton on 12th, 35 at Beachy Head on 19th, 150 at Church Norton on 20th and 200 at Sidlesham Ferry the same day, 256 at Cissbury Ring on 24th and 43 at Selsey Bill on 30th.

Results of breeding surveys are shown on page....

Numbers of autumn birds from various sites included 410 at Wild Park, Brighton from 26 July-29 Sept, 941 at Icklesham from 31 July-6 Nov and 1770 at Beachy Head from 5 Aug-24 Sept. In the second week of Sept, numbers dwindled rapidly and the last record was of one bird at Icklesham on 6 Nov. [JB]

1314. **GOLDCREST**

Regulus regulus

Records were received from 61 sites across the county, covering all months of the year. Records for Jan-May were again generally of small numbers. 22 were noted in the Washington to Sullington area on 18 Jan. In Feb, there were 5 at Duncton on 9th, 5 at Combe Haven on 17th and 8 at Slindon Park on 21st. Beachy Head had 5 on 11 Mar and Lancing Clump 11 on 26th. In Apr there were only 3 records, of 2 at Ardingly Res on 3rd and singles at Storrington on 1st and East Dean, West Sussex, on 20th. May also only produced 3 records, of singles at Partridge Green on 2nd and at Ebernoe Common and Bexhill on 23rd. Results of breeding surveys can be found on page...A juvenile was seen at Harting Down on 7 July. Abbots Wood, Hailsham produced a count of 20 on 24 July.

In autumn, 55 were ringed at Cissbury between 3 Sept-13 Nov. At Brighton Wild Park, 432 were counted between 6 Sept-26 Nov. Peak counts for Sept were 18 at Sompting and 53 at Lancing Clump on 28th and 32 at Church Norton on 29th. Numbers increased in Oct, but there were no counts in more than double figures, the largest being 57 at Church Norton on 7th, 26 at Selsey Bill, 30 at Goring Gap and 24 at Littlehampton GC on 8th, and 35 at Beachy Head on 23rd.

Winter records were fewer, with counts in Nov of 12 at Withdean Park, Brighton and 57 at Beachy Head on 5th, 10 at Goring Gap, 14 ringed at Cissbury and 15 at Icklesham on 6th, 13 at Littlehampton GC on 8th and 79 at Church Norton on 9th. There were only 7 records in Dec, all in single figures except one of 12 at Hellingly on 14th. [LM]

1315. FIRECREST*Regulus ignicapillus*

The numbers present in the late winter and spring were about average, but were poor in autumn. The approximate monthly totals were:

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
7	2	17	11	15	-	1	-	10	14	10	6

In Jan singles were at Brighton Cemetery on 1st, Withdean Park on 2nd and Preston Park on 3rd, in the Church Norton area on 1st, 5th and 15th, and at Sidlesham Ferry on 22nd. The only Feb records were of singles at Long Pit, Rye Hbr on 4th and Church Norton on 26th. There were records from 11 localities in Mar, mainly of singles but with 2 at Pulborough Brooks on 6th, 2 at Church Norton on 7th and 3 at Beachy Head on 20th. Apr reports were of 2 at Worth Forest on 29th and singles at Aldwick on 1st, Beachy Head on 2nd, Climping on 3rd, 9th and 12th, at Hollingbury Camp and Wild Park, Brighton and Littlehampton on 7th, Pagham Hbr on 12th and 20th, at Hove on 24th and Tilgate Forest on 29th.

There were more May records than usual, with 3 at Holmbush on 10th, 2 at Faygate on 18th and 2 in Worth Forest on 23rd, with singles on 1st at Handcross, 2nd at Friston Forest, 6th and 7th at Beachy Head, and 10th at Holmbush Forest. An unusual report for July was of a singing male at Holmbush Forest on 3rd.

Autumn passage began in Sept with 1 at Icklesham and 3 at Beachy Head on 14th. There were singles at Weir Wood Res on 15th, Beachy Head on 16th and 25th, and Littlehampton GC on 25th. In Oct, apart from 2 at Beachy Head on 19th, there were singles at Icklesham on 3rd and 11th, Church Norton on 5th, 7th and 23rd, Sidlesham Ferry on 6th, Selsey on 8th, Beachy Head on 8th, 9th and 23rd, Birling Gap from 9th-11th, and Whitehawk, Brighton on 9th. Nov was similar. One was ringed at Cissbury on 6th. Beachy Head had a single on 6th and 2 on 7th, and there were singles at Birling Gap on 6th and 12th, Rye Bay on 6th, Church Norton on 9th, 10th, 17th and 29th, Thorney Island on 26th and 27th, Pulborough Brooks on 29th and Brighton Cemetery on 30th. There were records from only 4 locations in Dec: 2 at Church Norton on 6th, singles at Preston Park, Brighton on 6th and 9th, Bewl Water on 11th, Sidlesham on 14th and finally 2 at Bewl Water on 18th. [LM]

1335. SPOTTED FLYCATCHER*Muscicapa striata*

First recorded at Hollingbury Camp and Whitbread Hollow on 30 Apr with birds arriving throughout May. Selsey Bill recorded 4 on 9 May and 3 on the 17th. The monthly record at this site was 11. At Beachy Head on 28 May, 7 were observed.

Results of breeding surveys can be found on page...Dispersal was well under way by late Aug. At Church Norton on 30 Aug 23 were seen and there were 28 at Beachy Head on the same date. Numbers at Hollingbury Camp were below average with 12 on 6 Sept and 20 on the 14th. Autumn passage was poor with few counts in double figures. The last birds were seen at Selsey Bill on 31 Oct. [DEC]

1343. **RED-BREASTED FLYCATCHER**

Ficedula parva

Rare autumn vagrant

One at Belle Tout Wood, Beachy Head on 1 Oct (DC *et al.*) could be particularly elusive. The 22nd county record and 10th since 1980. 14 have been recorded at Beachy Head including 7 in Belle Tout Wood. [RJF]

1349. **PIED FLYCATCHER.**

Ficedula hypoleuca

Approximate monthly totals were:

Apr	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct
18	3	-	-	28	32	1

The first was seen at Kidds Hill, Ashdown Forest on 3 Apr. Another was at The Pells, Lewes on 5 Apr. All records up to 23 Apr involved males with the first female at Roselands, Eastbourne on 24 Apr. The last spring individual was reported at Hodcombe on 19 May.

Returning birds were at Icklesham on 7 Aug and Waterhall, Brighton on the 10th. Whitbread Hollow had 4 on 31 Aug, while 3 were at Church Norton on 6 Sept and 4 more on 14 Sept with 5 also at Beachy Head on the same date. The majority of autumn sightings were of single birds and most were at sites to the west of Beachy Head. To the east the only reports in Sept concerned a single first year bird trapped in a garden at Bexhill and one at Icklesham. The last was recorded at Church Norton shingle spit on 1 Oct. [DEC]

1364. **BEARDED TIT**

Panurus biarmicus

The approximate monthly totals outside the breeding season were:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
No. of sites	3	2	2	4	2	4	5	3
No. of birds	7	5	9	19	31	46	25	12

Breeding was proved at 2 sites and probably took place at a third. [KN]

1437. **LONG-TAILED TIT**

Aegithalos caudatus

Continuing the abundance from the previous year, numerous large flocks were reported in the early months, including one of 40 in the Adur Levels on 1 Jan. In Aldwick, up to 3 birds fed from nut bags from Jan-Apr.

The regular breeding surveys showed a marked increase in the number of territories in both woodland and farmland, for instance there were 4 territories in 16 ha at Barns Copse, Binsted, compared to the 5 year average of only 2. Results of breeding surveys can be found on page ...

Autumn records were again numerous, but flock sizes were generally much smaller than in 1993, suggesting that the cool wet spring had reduced breeding success. A party of 42 in Rackham Woods on 19 Aug and one of 22 in Binsted Woods on 28 Nov were the only reported flocks exceeding 20. [RK]

1440. **MARSH TIT**

Parus palustris

Reported in the breeding season from 22 widely scattered sites and from a further 15 at either end of the year. Winter maxima were 6 at Cripps Corner on 8 Jan and 5 at Weir Wood Res. on 20 Dec. At the latter site a pair nested in a box and 3 pairs reared 19 young in nestboxes at Ardingly Res. Results of breeding surveys can be found on page ...[JESC]

1442. **WILLOW TIT**

Parus montanus

Reported from 22 localities throughout the year, mostly as singles or pairs. In the breeding season, 5 pairs were counted along the 24 km perimeter of Bewl Water. The county ringing total of 10 was still far below the recent average (*cf SxBR 46:84*). All counts of pairs in the breeding season from defined areas are welcomed. [JESC]

1461. **COAL TIT**

Parus ater

The maximum number reported during the year was 12 at Icklesham on 22 Sept. These may have been part of a movement, as a possible migrant was recorded on the following day at Beachy Head. Results of breeding surveys can be found on page Other counts included 2 pairs in 7.5 ha of urban park at Bognor. In contrast to the low figure in 1993, the county ringing total of 107 was the highest for several years. [JESC]

1462. **BLUE TIT**

Parus caeruleus

No reports of any sizeable gatherings were received. Following a spell of cool weather in late May-early June, many nestbox schemes recorded high levels of failure for eggs and young. At Horsted Keynes, 50 pairs reared only 142 young, and a 36% mortality rate was recorded in boxes at Cissbury. Those at Ardingly fared somewhat better with 206 fledglings flying from 23 broods. Results of breeding surveys can be found on page ...In the 7.5 ha of Hotham Park, Bognor the maximum count was 13 on 10 Mar with 10 present on 9 Dec. [JESC]

1464. **GREAT TIT**

Parus major

As with the previous species, no large gatherings were reported and similar, possibly higher, failure rates occurred in the breeding season. Nestbox studies revealed the extent, with only 7 young fledging from 6 pairs near Sharpthorne, and 105 from 36 pairs at Horsted Keynes. Results of breeding surveys can be found on page... At Bexhill, the melanistic bird present since 1992 was last seen on 22 Dec. [JESC]

1479. **NUTHATCH**

Sitta europaea

Widely reported from inland locations, the maxima noted were 6 at Bewl Water on 13 Feb and 8 at Darwell Res. on 21 Aug. As with other nestbox users, Nuthatches also had poor breeding success this year. At Horsted Keynes, only 10 young were raised by 3 pairs. Three pairs each at Pippingford Park and Chelwood Vachery fledged just 7 young from each site. Despite this, county ringing totals at 84 were close to the recent average. Results of breeding surveys can be found on page One bird was heard at Whitbread Hollow on 28 Aug, an unusual occurrence at this site. [JESC]

1486. **TREECREEPER**

Certhia familiaris

Early in the year, the maximum noted was 5 at Darwell Res on 16 Jan. Many widely scattered records of singletons were submitted in summer/autumn, including several coastal localities, with 5 seen at Rye Bay Wood in Oct. Birds occurring in the autumn/winter in a Findon Valley garden, Shoreham Sanctuary and Three Corner Copse, Hove were considered unusual for each site. A total of 6 birds ringed at Cissbury was the highest ever for that site.

Results of breeding surveys can be found on page... [JESC]

1490. **PENDULINE TIT**

Remiz pendulinus

Rare vagrant

1993: A juvenile trapped at Icklesham on 25 Oct (RBRG) has been accepted by *British Birds*.

1994: Two adults at the 'long pool' near the NW corner of Pagham Hbr on the morning of 15 Oct (BJ, CMJ) and a juvenile male trapped at Icklesham on 18 Oct (RBRG) have been accepted by *British Birds*. The county total moves to 12, all since 1987 and all occurring between 4 Oct-1 Nov. [RJF]

1508. **GOLDEN ORIOLE**

Oriolus oriolus

Up to 5 birds were seen, including 4 at Whitbread Hollow, Beachy Head; a female on 22 May, a singing male on 27 May and 2 males on 31 May (all DC,JFC). A first-year male was at Paghham Hbr on 14 June (TJE). [SJP]

1515. **RED-BACKED SHRIKE**

Lanius collurio

Three birds were recorded, the first being a male at Chat Vale, Beachy Head on 5 June which was heard singing (RB *et al*). An immature bird frequented a building site in Sompting from 25 Sept-2 Oct (PMB *et al*). A juvenile was seen at Windover Hill (near Wilmington) on 26 Sept (CJR) and an immature was at East Brighton Park on 24 Oct (CH). [SJP]

1519. **LESSER GREY SHRIKE**

Lanius minor

Very rare vagrant

1977: An adult at Rye on 3 June (PFB, BG, RCK *et al.*) was accepted by *British Birds* (BB 72:540) but has not previously been published in a *Sussex Bird Report*. It was the 5th county record, the only more recent one being at Birling Gap in July 1982. [RJF]

1520. **GREAT GREY SHRIKE**

Lanius excubitor

An above-average year, with at least 6 birds reported. In the early part of the year, there was just one record of a bird at Ifield MP on 20 Mar. A first-year was seen at Middle Bridge, Pevensey on 15 Oct and a bird was reported from Rye Hbr on 24 Oct. Records came from the Ashdown area over a period from 2 Nov-17 Dec probably relating to a single bird. Two others were seen, one at Pulborough Brooks on 10 Nov and one at Bewl Water on 13 Dec. [SJP]

1539. **JAY**

Garrulus glandarius

Again recorded throughout the year at Darwell Res with a maximum count of 13 on 9 Oct. At Beachy Head, 13 were present on 29 Apr and 11 on 30th. The results of breeding surveys can be found on page...

All the autumn and winter records, from 12 locations, were in single figures, except for 10 at Pulborough Brooks on 9 Oct. Other maxima were 6 at Icklesham on 12 Aug, 8 at Brighton Cemetery on 15th, 5 at Combe Haven on 18 Oct and 6 at Goring Gap on 1 Nov. [LM]

1549. **MAGPIE**

Pica pica

Counts in double figures in Jan were of 28 at Tilgate Park on 8th, 23 at a Pagham Hbr roost on 10th and 40 roosting in a single tree at Crowborough on 20th. In Feb there were counts of 20 at Ovingdean on 12th and 38 at Mill Hill, Shoreham on 23rd. The Brighton Wild Park roost totalled 152 on 15 Mar. Results of breeding surveys can be found on page...

The largest numbers reported in autumn and winter were 16 at Rye Hbr on 21 Sept, 16 at Whitbread Hollow on 1 Oct and 12 at Pebsham on 28 Oct. A partially albino/leucistic individual was seen at Salts Farm, Shoreham from 10 Aug to the end of the year. [LM]

1560. **JACKDAW**

Corvus monedula

The only count reported in Jan was of 200 at Icklesham on 8th. In Feb 420 were counted flying to roost at South Stoke on 12th and 100 at Amberley Wildbrooks on 26th. At Ambersham Common 1000 were seen flying south at dusk on 13 Mar. Results of breeding surveys can be found on page In Oct, 300 were counted at West Fields, Selsey on 6th, 120 at Pulborough Brooks on 9th and 93 at the old Pontins Site, Selsey on 12th. The only large counts at the end of the year were the maxima at Icklesham of 150 on 26 Nov and 300 on 23 Dec. [LM]

1563. **ROOK**

Corvus frugilegus

The only large flock reported in the first quarter of the year was of 100 at Icklesham on 8 Jan. Counts of nests in defined areas were as follows: Yapton 162, Knepp Estate 36 (3 sites), Henfield 30, Faygate 24, Rusper 20, Gatwick Airport 45 (2 sites), Burgess Hill 14, Ardingly 12 and Pebsham 22. From Sept onwards flocks counted were 100 at Pulborough Brooks on 24 Sept and 95 on 9 Oct, and 250 at Icklesham on 23 Dec. [LM]

1567. **CARRION CROW**

Corvus corone

The largest concentrations reported were of 325 at Pebsham on 8 Apr, 70 at Warnham on 20 Mar and 16 Apr, 55 at Crawley on 22 Apr and 200 at Arlington Res on 12 June. Results of breeding surveys can be found on page...[LM]

1572. **RAVEN**

Corvus corax

Very rare vagrant, formerly bred

One at the North Wall, Pagham Hbr on 9 Aug (DJN) departed north and one, presumably the same, roosting on Pilsey Sands on 23 Aug (CBC) departing east. There have only been 4 records since 1960: one in 1987, two in mid 1970's and one in 1963. [RJF]

1582. **STARLING**

Sternus vulgaris

There were surprisingly few records of this common but apparently sharply declining species. 1500 were at Rodmell on 9 Jan and 400 were seen with Fieldfares near Bewl Water on 14 Jan. These were the only groups exceeding 100 reported in the first half of the year, apart from 150 at Combe Haven on 31 May.

Regular survey results all showed reduction in the number of breeding territories. Results of breeding surveys can be found on page...

In the autumn, over 5000 were seen over the reedbed nocturnal roost in Ivy Lake, Chichester on 11 Sept. The nocturnal roost in Butlin's holiday camp at Bognor Regis had 2500 on 14 Sept. On 24 Sept 3000 were reported at Pulborough Brooks and a further 2000 roosted in reedbeds at Thorney Deeps. 1200 were seen at Hooe Level, Pevensey on 14 Dec. There is a large but uncounted and unreported roost in central Brighton. [RK]

1584. **ROSE-COLOURED STARLING**

Sternus roseus

Rare vagrant

Adults at Birling Gap from 11-15 June (DC, JFC *et al.*) and briefly at Sidlesham Ferry on 18 Sept (ADW *et al.*) have been accepted by *British Birds*. That at Birling was in immaculate condition and was usually to be found in a 'set aside' field immediately to the N of Birling Gap or on the adjoining pumping station wall where it was admired by many and also superbly photographed (*Birding World* 7:222 & 493). Although 23 have now been recorded in the county, these are the first since 1984 (which was also at Birling Gap) and only the 4th and 5th since 1960. [RJF]

1591. **HOUSE SPARROW**

Passer domesticus

Regular counts in 7.5 ha at Hotham Park, Bognor gave a maximum number of 26 on 9 Dec and at Pulborough Brooks a maximum of 40 was recorded on 11 Sept.

Results of breeding surveys can be found on page...A flock of 300 was seen at Bewl Water in Sept. Flocks of 100 were recorded at Newhaven Tide Mills on 13 Aug and at Rusper Court Farm on 20 Nov.

A leucistic individual, 75% white, was noted at Glyne Gap on 7 Aug. [VPB]

1598. **TREE SPARROW**

Passer montanus

In the first 3 months of the year, maximum numbers were 30 at Castle Farm, Rye on 13 and 20 Feb, 50 at Sidlesham Ferry Field on 22 Feb and 18 near Lower Edburton Farm on 26 Mar.

Breeding season records were of 5-6 pairs at two locations near Henfield, one nest at Bramber Farm, Pagham, 3 pairs at Bewl Water and 9 individuals at Beachy Head on 15 May.

Later in the year, 15 were recorded at Horse Eye Level, Pevensey on 9 Oct, 10 at Icklesham on 19 Oct, 19 at Barcombe Mills on 23 Nov. and a peak Dec count of 24 at Combe Haven on 20 Dec.

For the first time in recent years there were no records from Climping. [VPB]

1636. **CHAFFINCH**

Fringilla coelebs

In the early part of the year, the largest flocks recorded were 150 at Faygate on 4 Feb, 165 at Stumbleholm Farm, near Rusper, on 10 Feb and 300 at Plumpton Plain on 28 Feb.

Breeding season counts from regular sites were similar to 1993, results of breeding surveys can be found on page

During migration, 110 flew E at Beachy Head in 2 hrs on 8 Oct and 71 were counted heading E at Selsey between 16-21 Oct. Notable autumn and winter flocks were 110 at Lower Standean on 15 Nov, 125 at Holm Farm, Faygate on 29 Nov and 500 in orchards at Bewl Water on 29 Dec. [VPB]

1638. **BRAMBLING**

Fringilla montifringilla

The approximate monthly totals, allowing for likely duplication, were as follows:

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
50*	110	100	90	-	75	120	3

* This allows for the Faygate flock which was not specifically recorded in Jan.

During the early part of the year the largest flocks noted were of 20 at Treyford Down on 30 Jan, 70 at Stansted Forest on 26 Feb and 15 on development land at Maidenbower, Crawley on 18 Apr. Good numbers were roaming linseed fields between Ifield and Faygate at this time, e.g. 37 at Stumbleholm Farm on 4 Feb and 85 at Kilnwood End on 15 and 26 Mar with 55 still present at the latter site on 17 Apr. The last sightings were of singles at Ambersham Common on 27th and Beachy Head on 30th Mar.

In the autumn, birds were recorded from 1 Oct when 2 appeared at Church Norton. Coastal passage was subsequently unexceptional with a maximum of 35 at Beachy Head on 23 Oct and 15 there on 11 Nov. No large flocks were reported from inland localities at the end of the year, indeed the only sightings in Dec were of singles at Pease Pottage on 1st, Bewl Water on 16th and in a Crawley garden on 27th. [JRH]

1640. **SERIN**

Serinus serinus

An unprecedented year, with at least 14 birds recorded. A first-year male was found in the Goring Gap on 19 Mar which was joined by an adult male and a female on 20 Mar and they remained until 26th (DIS *et al*). Male birds were found at Birling Gap on 19 Mar (JFC, DC) and at Rustington on 27 Mar (RJLK). The latter bird was observed chasing a Greenfinch! At least one female was at Beachy Head on 30 Apr (JFC, DC, RJF). On 6 May, a first-year male flew into the Bill House garden with Goldfinches at Selsey Bill (OM, TJE, BJC) and an adult male was at Birling Gap on 7 May (JFC, DC). At least another 3 birds were seen at Selsey; a male on 9 May (JDW), 2 males on 10th (TJE, OM) which were seen with Linnets and Greenfinches and 3 were at Pontins on 14th (RJF). Another male was seen at Cow Gap, Beachy Head on 22 May (JFC, DC, DRC). Finally, 2 birds, an adult male and a probable female, were seen at Pilsey on 16 June (CBC). [SJP]

1649. **GREENFINCH**

Carduelis chloris

In the early months few large flocks were reported, the highest counts being 80 at Rodmell on 9 Jan, 130 on set-aside ground at Binsted on 14 Feb and a pre-roost gathering of 100 near Colgate on 19 Feb. An abundant breeding bird in the county, the results of breeding surveys can be found on page....

Sizeable concentrations were recorded in the Pagham/Selsey area during Aug-Dec including 325 alongside Pagham Wall on 18 Aug, 386 E at Church Norton on 13 Oct, 350 at Selsey Bill on 20 Oct and 200 at Pagham Beach on 8 Dec. The only other flocks noted were of 200 at Shoreham Beach on 13 Nov and 60 at Thorney Deeps on 26 Dec. No submissions were received from inland localities during the autumn period. [JRH]

1653. **GOLDFINCH**

Carduelis carduelis

Several flocks were reported during the early part of the year, the most notable concentrations being on fields of uncut linseed at Faygate where 450-500 were present in Jan-Feb declining to 300 in Mar and 40 by 4 Apr. A partial albino was observed in this flock between 25 Jan-4 Mar. Elsewhere, there were 60 on linseed at Hellingly on 8 Jan, 130 on derelict pasture at Nuthurst on 19 Feb and 100 at Combe Haven on 23 Mar. Evidence of spring passage inland was noted on 18 Apr when 60 were at New Buildings Farm, Pease Pottage and 100 were on building land at Maidenbower, Crawley. Coastal migration was, as usual, fairly light with a maximum of 80 N at Selsey Bill on 16 Apr.

Results of breeding surveys can be found on page.... Post-breeding gatherings included 40 at Icklesham on 23 July, 50 at Weirwood Res on 14 Aug and 200 at Pulborough on 6 Sept.

Approximate totals for the latter part of the year were; 1500 in Sept, 400 in Oct, 554 in Nov and 71 in Dec, from 12, 13, 9 and 4 localities respectively. In Oct, coastal passage included 316 E at Littlehampton on 1st, 730 E in 2 hours at Beachy Head on 8th, 416 E in 1.5 hours at Goring Gap on 11th, 338 E at Fairlight on 16th and a minimum of 506 moved E through Selsey between 16th-21st. The largest flock seen in Dec was only 35, at Bewl Water on 4th. [JRH]

1654. **SISKIN**

Carduelis spinus

During the first quarter the approximate monthly totals were 470 in Jan, 140 in Feb and 450 in Mar, the only notable concentration being 106 at Ambersham Common on 20 Mar. 50+ were seen feeding in larches at Ambersham on 6 Apr. Few remained in the county after mid-Apr. Breeding season records were as follows; one at Holmbush Forest on 18 May, 2 juveniles being fed by an adult at Fernhurst on 20 May, singles at Wakehurst Place on 14 and 20 June, 6 at Wartling on 1 July, 2 at Worthing on 2 July and 1 at Millbrook, Ashdown on 21 July. There was a further sighting at Fernhurst on 23 Aug.

Monthly minima in the latter part of the year were 1100 in Sept, 900 in Oct, 385 in Nov and 360 in Dec. Coastal passage commenced on 4 Sept when 3 appeared at Beachy Head followed by 51 at Littlehampton GC on 8th. Numbers were generally much lower than in 1993, with peak counts of 100 at Beachy Head on 16 Sept, 126 at Church Norton on 22 Sept and 300 at Icklesham on 28 Sept. In Oct no flocks exceeded 66 apart from 112 E at Littlehampton on 1st. Late-year sightings from inland localities included 50 at North Hill, Midhurst on 20 Nov, 60 at Maynards Green on 26 Nov, up to 105 at Bewbush in Dec and 50 at Bewl Water on 29 Dec. [JRH]

1660. **LINNET**

Carduelis cannabina

A number of large flocks were noted in Jan and Feb with up to 230 on linseed at Faygate, 200 at Rodmell, 400 in a cabbage field at Goring Gap and 150 on Glynde Levels. Passage at the end of Mar included 150 at Beachy Head on 27th, 120 at Glyne Gap on 29th and 120 at Thorney Island on 30th. In Apr a total of 1300 were reported, the most notable counts being 250 at Wishing Tree Res and 300 at Goring Gap on 2nd, 200 at Pagham Hbr on 12th and 100 at Pease Pottage on 18th.

The results of breeding surveys can be found on page...

Flocks during late summer included 400 at Beachy Head on 12 Aug, 250 at Rye Hbr on 15 Aug and 130 at Thorney Island on 23 Aug. In Sept an aberrant individual was noted in a group of 150 at Beachy Head on 11th. There was a build-up in numbers later in the month with 350 at Rye Hbr on 21st, 350 at Crowlink on 25th and 400 at Sidlesham on 27th. Approximately 6000 were recorded in Oct, including 700 at Church Norton on 4th, 800 at Beachy Head on 8th, 235 at Pulborough on 9th and 2614 E at Selsey Bill between 16th-21st.

The only sizeable gatherings observed at the end of the year were 100 at Udimore on 4 Nov and 200 at Rye Hbr on 4 Dec. [JRH]

1662. **TWITE***Carduelis flavirostris*

A below average year with a minimum of 37 birds recorded. The past 5 years have seen vastly fluctuating numbers as follows; 1989 - 90, 1990 - 48, 1991 - 118, 1992 - 24, 1993 - 79 (all numbers are minima).

Just one record in the first winter period, of 2 birds at Rye Hbr on 5 Jan. In the latter part of the year, 8 birds were at Pulborough Brooks on 9 Oct, with 1 remaining on 18-19th. A flock of 9 flew into bushes at East Head, West Wittering on 17 Oct and 2 were seen at Combe Haven on 18th (JSG) and Beachy Head on 25th. In Nov and early Dec a flock was regularly seen in Pagham Hbr (TJE, BFF *et al*), especially at the North Wall, with a maximum count of 7 on 21 Nov. 6 birds were present at the R. Adur, Shoreham on 24 Nov. One was seen at Rye Hbr on 20 Dec. [SJP]

1663. **REDPOLL***Carduelis flammea*

As in 1993, there were few notable concentrations in the county during the early months, with maximum counts of 30 at Hesworth Common, Fittleworth on 22 Feb, 30 at Midhurst Common on 3 Mar and up to 70 at Buchan Park in late Feb.-Mar. Parties of 25-30 were recorded at St. Leonard's Forest, Tilgate Forest and Wych Cross in the first part of Apr, with 35 at Oldhouse Warren, Worth on 18 Apr and 10 at Ambersham Common on 19 May.

The only breeding season data received was of 16 pairs at Bewl Water, c.8 pairs on Ashdown Forest and 1-2 pairs in the Buchan Park environs. Breeding also undoubtedly occurred at Ambersham and Tilgate. No records were submitted for Aug.

Autumn passage was generally poor with daily coastal movements barely reaching double figures at the main watch-points. The exception was Elms Farm, Icklesham where numbers peaked at 300 on 16 Oct and 200 on 7 Nov. A total of 105 passed through Hollingbury Camp between 6 Oct-12 Nov. One showing characteristics of the race *flammea* was trapped at Icklesham on 13 Nov (RBRG). This is only the second record of this distinctive race, colloquially known as Mealy Redpoll, since 1972. The previous one was in Ashdown Forest in Jan 1991.

Very few were present inland at the end of the year, with no gatherings of more than 10 reported in Dec, a reflection of the exceptionally mild autumn conditions? [JRH]

1666. **COMMON CROSSBILL***Loxia curvirostra*

Following an invasion of this species in the autumn of 1993, good numbers were present in the county at the beginning of the year. Approximate monthly counts based upon site maxima were as follows:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
Totals	92	164	178	102	54	46	18	15	3	-	13	13
No. of sites	12	9	11	7	6	5	2	5	2	-	1	1

The highest concentrations reported in the first quarter were 22 at Mountfield on 8 Jan, 25 at Dover Woods, Angmering on 19 Jan, 40 at West Dean Woods on 5 Feb, 22 at St. Leonard's Forest on 13 Feb, 37 at Ambersham Common also on 13 Feb, 25 at Lavington Common on 5 Mar and 90 at Coates Common on 10 Mar. A pair was noted nest-building at Stedham Common on 19 Mar. In Apr, there were 26 at Old Lodge NR on 12th, 40 at Lavington Common on 16th and 25 at Worth Forest on 18th.

Successful breeding seems likely to have occurred at Ashdown Forest and Ambersham Common, where juveniles were observed in May and June.

Few remained during the second half of the year, the more notable records being 15 at Icklesham on 23 July, 6 E at Beachy Head on 7 Aug, 5 over Cissbury Ring on 28 Aug and up to 13 at Lavington Common during Nov-Dec. [JRH]

1679. **COMMON ROSEFINCH**

Carpodacus erythrinus

Rare, but increasing vagrant

1991: An adult male in song at Hodcombe, Beachy Head on 28 May (RHC) and a first-summer male in song there on 19 June (RHC).

1994: Three were recorded, all at Beachy Head with 2 in June and 1 in Sept. They were a first-summer male singing at Belle Tout, Beachy Head for much of the day on 12 June which had earlier been seen at Shooters Bottom (DC, JFC, GCG *et al.*), a female or first-summer male at Birling Gap briefly on 19 June (PJ) and a juvenile or female seen at Beachy Head on 14 Sept (RHC, GCG). These records take the county total to 21, 12 during 1990's. [RJF]

1710. **BULLFINCH**

Pyrrhula pyrrhula

Results of breeding surveys can be found on page.... A total of 34 individuals were ringed between Apr and Nov at a scrubland site on the Downs near Cissbury. [VPB]

1717. **HAWFINCH**

Coccothraustes coccothraustes

Approximately 19 individuals were recorded during the year. Sightings in the early months included one regularly feeding on haws at Sharpthorne from 4 Jan-17 Feb, one at Ifieldwood on 23 Jan, one at Faygate on 7 Feb with 6 E there on 24 Feb, one at Hyde Hill, Ifield on 10 Mar and 4-5 calling in tree tops at Kilnwood End (near Faygate) on 16 Mar. The sole breeding season observation was of a bird at Halsey's Farm, Pagham on 23 May.

Late year records all involved single birds; at Selsey on 9 Oct, Belle Tout on 6 Nov, Weirwood Res. on 25 Nov and finally at Wakehurst Place on 10 Dec. This species is undoubtedly much more widespread than these records would suggest. [JRH]

1753. **BLACKPOLL WARBLER**

Dendroica striata

Extremely rare vagrant

One at Bewl Water from 10-21 Dec (MSH, MND *et al.*) has been accepted by *British Birds*. It was the first record for SE England and the first to be seen in Britain in Dec. It favoured the strip of woodland near the hide, to the east of Chesson's Farm and in particular the thick sallows at the edge of the reservoir. A photograph of the bird appears in *Birding World* (7:465). Over 1000 visitors were attracted to Bewl Water during its stay with over £700 raised for the reserve. [RJF]

1847. **LAPLAND BUNTING**

Calcarius lapponicus

1989: A single bird at Hodcombe, Beachy Head on 24 Sept followed by 2 on 4 Oct and 2 on 13 Oct (all RHC) brings the total for that year to 12.

1991: One at Hodcombe on 1 Jan (RHC) brings the total for that year to 9.

1993: One at Hodcombe on 11 Oct (RHC) brings the total for that year to 8.

1994: Not recorded.

[JRH]

1850. **SNOW BUNTING**

Plectrophenax nivalis

There were records of single birds at Pett Level on 1 Jan and West Beach, Littlehampton from 17-26 Nov. [JRH]

1857. **YELLOWHAMMER**

Emberiza citrinella

An encouraging year for this attractive bunting. Wintering flocks during the first quarter included 40 at Warbleton on 1 Jan, 50 at Icklesham on 5 Jan and 57 at Ifield on 8 Jan, rising to 65 on 15 Feb but declining to 30 by 30 Mar. There were 25 at Venters Farm, Rusper on 14 Feb and 30 at The Trundle, Goodwood on 19 Mar.

The results of breeding surveys can be found on page

Late-year concentrations were generally small. However there were 60 at Didling, near Midhurst, on 10 Oct, 30 at Shelley Farm, Pease Pottage on 1 Dec and up to 85 on a large field of wheat stubble at Ifield throughout Nov and Dec. [JRH]

1866. **ORTOLAN BUNTING**

Emberiza hortulana

Vagrant

1973: Two at Hodcombe, Beachy Head on 4 Sept and 1 on 5th (RHC).

1991: One at Hodcombe, Beachy Head on 9 Sept (RHC).

1992: One at Hodcombe, Beachy Head on 23 Aug (RHC).

1993: A juvenile at Hodcombe, Beachy Head on 22 Aug (RHC).

1994: One was recorded, a juvenile at Pagham Hbr on 14 Sept (TJE). The county total moves to 63, 51 since 1960 and most from late Aug-mid Sept. [RJF]

1874. LITTLE BUNTING

Emberiza pusilla

Very rare vagrant

One in fields and adjoining hedgerows to the southwest of Ifield Church from 11 Jan to at least 24 Mar (JRH *et al.*) was only the 5th country record, all others being in autumn (in 1864, 1906, 1964 and 1987). It was widely seen during the latter part of its stay. One trapped at Icklesham on 8 Nov 1992 was surprisingly not accepted by *British Birds*. This species was removed from the list of national rarities considered by *British Birds* Rarities Committee from the beginning of 1994. [RJF]

1877. REED BUNTING

Emberiza schoeniclus

Several high concentrations were noted in the first winter period, i.e.; 70 on farmland at Ifield on 8 Jan reducing to 30 by 15 Feb, up to 50 at Elms Farm, Icklesham in Jan, 50 on the Upper Adur Levels on 23 Jan and 30 at Newhaven Tide Mills on 13 Feb. No other flocks exceeded 16 birds.

Results of breeding surveys can be found on page ...

In autumn, movements were recorded on several dates at Church Norton; 25 N on 8 Oct, 20 E on 12 Oct and 27 E on 1 Nov. A roost at Sidlesham held 53 on 22 Nov and 69 on 14 Dec. Towards the end of the year, a large gathering again appeared at Ifield with 40 present on 30 Nov increasing to 70-80 by 31 Dec. This is the third consecutive winter that sizeable numbers of this species have occurred at this locality. The only other flock noted was 37 at Combe Haven on 16 Dec. [JRH]

1882. CORN BUNTING

Miliaria calandra

The largest flocks reported in Jan were 32 at Denton, Newhaven on 16th, 45 at Rye Hbr on 17th and 100 at Woodingdean on 31st, with counts in Feb of 42 at Thorney Deeps on 2nd, 40 at Harbour Farm, Rye Hbr on 4th and 24th, 201 at Sidlesham on 10th, 150 in one flock feeding in snow at Mill Hill, Shoreham on 15th and 38 at roost at Rye Hbr on 17th.

The results of the Society's 1993-94 breeding survey are given on pages xx-xx.

Counts in Sept included 55 in one flock at Sheepcote Valley, Brighton on 17th and 54 at Lancing Clump on 23rd. In Oct, 85 were noted at East Brighton GC on 9th and at least 45 at Sheepcote Valley on 22nd. Winter records included roosts at Sidlesham of 174 on 22 Nov and 143 on 20 Dec, 21 feeding along the shore at Pilsey Island on 24 Nov and 35 there on 20 Dec. Also in Dec there were 20 in a mixed flock with Yellowhammers at Poverty Bottom, Newhaven on 3rd, 25 at Lewes Race Course on 18th and 83 at Rye Hbr on 31st. [LM]

ESCAPES AND FERAL BIRDS

All records of BOU Category C species, of apparently feral individuals of other species and of other probable or certain escapes from captivity will be welcomed by the Hon. Recorder for this annual feature. Notes on age/sex, plumage, behaviour and, where known, status will be of particular interest. Such records should be submitted in the normal way but on separate recording forms from the main records.

The following escaped or feral birds, other than those Category C species in the main list, were recorded in the county in 1994. List compiled by Sarah Patton.

BLACK SWAN

Cygnus atratus

One present on Amberley Wildbrooks on 1 and 2 Jan had remained from 1993. In the autumn, singles were reported at Pulborough on 17 Aug and at Scotney Court GP on 21 Sept.

BAR-HEADED GOOSE

Anser indicus

Three present at Bosham on 14 Sept.

SNOW GOOSE

Anser caerulescens

Two reported, a blue-phase adult at Rye on 12 June and 1 bird at Scotney Court GP on 21 Sept.

CHILOE WIGEON

Anas sibilatrix

One on Sidlesham Ferry Pool on 18 Sept.

AMERICAN WIGEON

Anas americana

One at Rye Hbr on 13 Oct.

EUROPEAN/CHILOE WIGEON HYBRID

Anas penelope/sibilatrix

A male hybrid European/Chiloe Wigeon was present at Pagham Hbr between 8-16 Feb.

POCHARD/TUFTED DUCK HYBRID

Aythya ferina/fuligula

A male hybrid of these two species was on Chichester GP on 8 Mar.

CINNAMON TEAL

Anas cyanoptera

A male of this species commonly kept in captivity was seen on Sidlesham Ferry Pool on 10 Mar and 20 May.

HARRIS' HAWK

Parabuteo unicinctus

One drifted E over Alexandra Park, Hastings on 22 Mar.

RED-TAILED HAWK

Buteo jamaicensis

A single bird was seen at Icklesham on 3 and 16 Mar.

SAKER FALCON

Falco cherrug

A ringed individual was at West Wittering on 16 Oct.

LAUGHING DOVE

Streptopelia senegalensis

A single bird was seen at Bewbush, Crawley on 26 Jan and 9 Feb and possibly the same bird was at Ifield MP on 31 Jan.

COCKATIEL

Nymphicus hollandicus

Two were seen at Battle on 3 Apr and a single was at Broadwater, Worthing on 3 May. One bird was at New Erringham Farm, Shoreham on 16 July, 1 was present at Littlehampton Marina for a week from 18 July and another flew over Paradise Drive, Eastbourne on 26 July. On 22 Aug, 1 was at Thorney Deeps and a white individual was at Hastings. Thorney Island also hosted a bird on 12 and 26 Nov.

BUDGERIGAR

Melopsittacus undulatus

A single bird was at Wick, Littlehampton on 1 May and 1 flew S over the Ashdown Forest on 16 June. A green bird was at Pontins, Selsey on 7 Aug and blue birds were seen at Bexhill on 19 July and Grantley Farm, Maynards Green on 28 Oct.

YELLOW-FRONTED SERIN*Serinus mozambicus*

Records, which probably relate to the same bird, came from Chat Vale, Beachy Head on 5 Aug, when the bird was heard singing and from the nearby localities of Birling Gap on 2 Sept, when the bird was seen in gardens, Cow Gap on 3 Sept and Birling Gap again on 4 Sept. This species was also recorded in the County in 1993.

PARAKEET*Psittacula sp.*

A green Parakeet flew W past Goring Beach on 2 Apr.

HELMETED GUINEAFOWL*Numidia meleagris*

A bird was seen at Darwell Hole on 3 Apr.

EASTERN ROSELLA*Platycercus eximius*

A bird of this species was seen at Selsey Bill on 1 and 14 May.

RED-BILLED QUELEA*Quelea quelea*

One present at Birling Gap, Beachy Head on 18 June. This species was also recorded in 1993.

FISCHERS' LOVEBIRD*Agapornis fischeri*

One at Seaford on 11 Aug.

Arrival and departure dates of summer visitors, 1994

	First recorded date	Last recorded date
Garganey	6.3.94 (24.1)	23.10.94 (13.12)
Osprey	27.3.94	9.12.94
Hobby	19.4.94	6.11.94
Quail	11.5.94	11.9.94
Little Ringed Plover	26.3.94	20.9.94
Wood Sandpiper	6.5.94	9.10.94
Pomarine Skua	1.4.94	20.11.94
Arctic Skua	1.3.94	3.12.94
Sandwich Tern	1.3.94	19.10.94
Roseate Tern	24.4.94	13.7.94
Common Tern	12.4.94	6.11.94
Arctic Tern	23.4.94	4.10.94
Little Tern	1.4.94	21.9.94
Black Tern	1.4.94	27.10.94
Turtle Dove	23.4.94	10.10.94
Cuckoo	28.3.94	12.10.94
Nighthjar	10.5.94	8.8.94
Swift	23.4.94	22.11.94
Wryneck	29.4.94	1.10.94
Sand Martin	5.3.94	23.10.94
Swallow	6.3.94	5.12.94
House Martin	27.3.94	18.12.94
Tree Pipit	29.3.94	7.11.94
Yellow Wagtail	19.3.94	31.10.94
Nightingale	10.4.94	14.9.94
Redstart	17.3.94	20.10.94
Whinchat	15.4.94	20.11.94
Wheatear	2.3.94	30.11.94
Ring Ouzel	6.4.94	18.11.94
Grasshopper Warbler	20.4.94	18.10.94
Sedge Warbler	11.4.94	18.10.94
Reed Warbler	11.4.94	13.11.94
Lesser Whitethroat	21.4.94	24.10.94
Whitethroat	6.4.94	16.11.94
Garden Warbler	3.4.94	24.10.94
Wood Warbler	1.4.94	2.9.94
Willow Warbler	26.3.94	6.11.94
Spotted Flycatcher	30.4.94	31.10.94
Pied Flycatcher	3.4.94	1.10.94

Departure and arrival dates of winter visitors, 1994

	Last recorded date	First recorded date
Black-throated Diver	31.5.94	3.11.94
Great Northern Diver	24.4.94	3.12.94
Red-necked Grebe	28.4.94	20.9.94
Bewick's Swan	5.3.94	22.10.94
White-fronted Goose	1.4.94	20.10.94
Long-tailed Duck	24.4.94	22.9.94
Velvet Scoter	31.5.94	20.7.94
Goldeneye	18.4.94	1.11.94
Goosander	3.5.94	24.10.94
Hen Harrier	22.5.94	3.10.94
Merlin	3.6.94	18.8.94
Purple Sandpiper	8.5.94	24.10.94
Jack Snipe	3.5.94	17.9.94
Short-eared Owl	19.5.94	23.8.94
Water Pipit	16.4.94	5.10.94
Fieldfare	21.4.94	26.9.94
Redwing	19.4.94	26.9.94
Great Grey Shrike	20.3.94	15.10.94
Brambling	30.4.94	1.10.94

Summary of Breeding Bird Counts (figures relate to number of pairs)

	GF	BW	BR	MF	CF	WD	BC	EC	TM
Stock Dove	6	5	-	-	-	-	-	8	5
Turtle Dove	-	10	-	-	2	-	-	-	-
Skylark	1	21	-	6	1	-	-	-	-
Pied Wagtail	1	27	-	1	-	-	-	-	-
Wren	42	160	40	33	41	5	16	33	39
Duncock	10	88	-	27	14	4	3	3	3
Robin	43	153	34	21	37	22	19	42	44
Blackbird	24	162	11	27	40	7	5	22	24
Song Thrush	7	64	7	1	7	4	4	14	15
Mistle Thrush	3	19	-	-	3	2	1	6	1
Lesser Whitethroat	1	6	-	2	-	1	-	-	-
Whitethroat	1	13	6	7	-	-	1	-	-
Garden Warbler	2	28	3	-	-	2	-	3	2
Blackcap	6	45	3	4	3	7	2	11	7
Chiffchaff	9	57	5	1	2	4	3	16	8
Willow Warbler	1	71	-	-	-	12	1	-	3
Goldcrest	2	14	-	1	2	1	4	18	12
Spotted Flycatcher	1	5	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Long-tailed Tit	4	20	-	2	1	1	4	12	5
Marsh Tit	2	8	-	-	1	2	4	14	7
Coal Tit	3	5	-	-	2	1	2	15	12
Blue Tit	17	93	6	12	28	5	13	33	21
Great Tit	19	49	10	9	11	4	11	20	19
Nuthatch	3	26	3	-	4	3	2	16	19
Treecreeper	5	13	-	-	-	-	4	4	11
Jay	1	8	-	1	1	1	1	3	12
Maggie	3	22	-	4	1	-	1	-	2
House Sparrow	-	29	-	6	4	-	-	-	-
Chaffinch	24	126	29	37	33	13	9	18	23
Greenfinch	3	32	-	8	6	2	-	-	-
Goldfinch	1	17	-	2	1	-	-	-	-
Linnet	1	28	-	6	-	-	1	-	2
Bullfinch	4	23	2	2	2	3	-	6	3
Yellowhammer	2	28	-	6	-	-	1	-	-
Reed Bunting	-	27	-	3	-	-	-	-	-

Key: GF = Grantley Farm, Maynards Green, 45.3 ha coppice woodland and pasture

BW = Bewl Water, 24km shoreline and 182 ha mixed habitats

BR = Bluebell Railway, 8km railway scrub

MF = Marsh Farm, Yapton, 67 ha mixed farm

CF = Chiddingfold Farm, W Hoathley, 62 ha grass

WD = West Dean, 12.1ha Hazel coppice

BC = Barns Copse, Binsted, 16.1ha woodland

EC = Ebernoe Common, 16 ha

TH = The Mens, 16 ha

NB. The surveys at Ebernoe Common and The Mens were BTO/SWT surveys estimating the number of pairs based on counts of individuals during a five-minute period within a 50m radius of a fixed point. In each woodland there were 20 points selected, each of which was an intersection on a 100m grid. Four visits were made during the breeding season and the final figures taken from the maximum count for each species at each point.

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TG Ball	KGB Heinzman
PC Bance	M J Helps
MH Barnard	PKW Herbert
C Barwood	DA Hillton
R Batchelor	T Hitchman
BH Beck	RN Hobbs
N Bentley	JA Hobson
Mrs VP Bentley	AJ Holcombe
PJ Biggs	Mrs BJ Holcombe
RF Bird	PA Hollow
J Bodle	LG Holloway
PF Bontham	CA Holt
JF Boulicott	JC Holt
MJ Bowers	CE Hope
DP Bowtell	M Hopkins (MHo)
P Bradbeer (PB)	J Houghton
B Bradley	AC Howard
PM Brayshaw	I Hunter
T Brenton	AM Hutson
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Dr C Brooks	M Ingram
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D Buckingham	RL Izard
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Mrs SJ Burtenshaw	Mrs BD James
T Callaway	CM James
BJ Carter	P James
NJ Champion	CR Janman
S Chapman	R Jones
Mrs ME Charlwood	Dr ME Kalaheer
RH Charlwood	RS Kelly
HA Clapham	D Kelly
F Clarke	Mrs DJ Kelly
BR Clay	RJL Kemp
PJ Clay	SR Kemp
GA Cockburn	D King
CB Collins	JW King
AS Cook	AR Kitson
D Cooper	SJ Knapp
JES Cooper	R Knight (RKn)
JF Cooper	R Knight (Richard) (RK)
DEG Copeland	Miss D Knight
DFJ Cornall	PD Lanaway
C Corrigan	Mrs T Lawrie
H Corrigan	PF Le Brocq
A Cotton	DA Lee
DJR Counsell	SG Hamilton
DE Crawley	R Harman
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S Curson	R Linford

Surveys: Society members again gave a great deal of their time during the year to a wide range of national, county and local surveys. Their invaluable support and contributions are acknowledged with grateful thanks. Details of the surveys and the Sussex organisers follow.

Heronry Census: This long-standing census is organised in Sussex by Dr AB Watson, 83 Buckingham Road, Shoreham-by-sea, West Sussex. Counts of known heronries are given in the systematic list, contributors in 1995 were: J Ashbee, D Buckingham, JK Cross, PB Clarke, CH Dean, MN Dennes, P Isted, R Knight, DC Lang, PJ Luffingham, JL Nobbs, FP Pentfold, GCM Roberts, GR Serres, AB Watson, BJ Yates.

Weiland Bird Survey (WeBS): This BTO/WWT/RSPB/JNCC survey was carried out between September 1994 and March 1995. Coastal counts were organised by CD Lowmass, 33 Barrn Close, Seaford, East Sussex. Inland counts were organised by DW Codd, 12 Broome Close, Horsham, West Sussex. Thanks are due to the two survey organisers and to the following counters: PC Bance, Mrs L Bingley, G Binns, GF Boniface, Dr C Brooks, DJ Burges, KF Burn, T Callaway, P Catlett, GA Cockburn, CB Collins, DEG Copeland, A Dawnay, Ms A de Potter, CH Dean, M Denny, RDM Edgar, M Emery, Mrs AE Everett, B Fellows, DJ Funnell, J Glover, Miss H Gordon, WHF Green, NM Greenaway, RR Greenhalf, G Griffin, N Harris, RG Harris, JL Herring, DC Heryett, R Hill, Mrs P Hollow, R Holman, M Holmes, Dr ME Kalaher, S Knapp, R Knight, L Lacey-Johnson, DC Lang, HJA Lee, CD Lowmass, R Morris, Mrs BM Mortlock, RJ Mycock, D Nisbet, P Outhwaite, DJ Pankhurst, D Parkhurst, B Puttock, CJ Raymond, B Savage, A and Mrs IM Simpson, Ms C Skinner, DI Smith, D Sneller, HMJ Taffs, Miss CA Taylor, PC Turner, W Turner, ED Urquhart, Mrs O Westwood, RLC Williamson, PJ Wilson, Mr and Mrs H Wingfield-Hayes, Mr and Mrs CW Woodburn, Dr BJ Yates, S Younger.

Common Birds Census: A number of members carry out annual breeding bird censuses for the BTO on a range of sites throughout the county.

Breeding Bird Survey: This BTO annual national breeding survey, based on selected one km squares, is organised in Sussex by Dr AB Watson.

Barn Owl Pilot Survey: Coverage of three selected 5km x 5km squares in Sussex was organised by Dr AB Watson for the BTO/Hawk and Owl Trust's 1994 pilot Barn Owl survey, prior to an extended survey in 1995.

Survey of breeding Corn Buntings: The fieldwork for this two-year county survey, organised by L Manns, was completed in 1994. A paper on the results of the survey appears in this Report.

Survey of breeding Grey Wagtails: This two-year county survey was initially organised by the late SWM Hughes, assisted by the late WD Hyde. Further help was given by L Manns in organising the fieldwork, which was completed in 1994. A paper on the results of the survey appears in this Report.

Reverse Levels Wintering Bird Survey: Several members continued to give assistance in this three-year survey (to be completed in March 1995) organised by the RSPB (SE Region).

HMJ Taffs
C Tazzyman
I Thomas
K Thomas
NJ Thomas
S Thomas
RJ Thorne
S Thurgood
R Tofts
N Tollworthy
FB Townsend
J Tranter
JE Trowell
P Trubshawe
WH Truckle
PC Turner
TR Turner
WR Turner
ED Urquhart
BM Utton

LLJ Vick
SC Wade
CA Walker
Dr AB Watson
Mrs AJ Wende
JD Weston
A Wheeler
M Whiffen
AD Whitcomb
IJ Whitcomb
PJ Whitcomb
GC White
RV White
B Whitewood
RB Wield
RLC Williamson
J Willsher
PJ Wilson
TJ Wilson
HC Wingfield-Hayes
CF Winyard
N Wood
W Woodford
Father K Woods
L Wright
RB Wynn

Dr BJ Yates

CR Poole
A de Potier
MG Prince
R Prior
J Pullin
B Puitock
Mrs J Puitock

TK Rackstraw
M Rafter
JK Ramsay
CJ Raymond
EM Raynor
PJ Raynor
J Reaney
K Redshaw
GCM Roberts
SJR Rumsey
Rye Bay Ringing Group

D Sadler
RF Sanderson
RJ Sandison
R Satchell
C Saunders
G Saunders
RJ Saunders
G Scholey
JE Scott
RE Scott
M Scott-Ham
RJ Senior
R Shaw
DL Sheldon
M Simmonds
A Simpson
Mrs IM Simpson
AE Skinner
AG Smith
DI Smith
Miss M Smith
M Smith
R Smith
JF Smitherman
Miss BM Spencer
T Squire
Ms JV Stacey
I Standivan
DH Stone- Lee
PJ Strangeman
C Sutton
GA Sutton
S Sutton

SH Lington
J Linton
AH Lloyd
P Lloyd
GH Luck
PJ Luffingham
V Lyon

GE Macquire
A Madgewick
L Manns
C Marrable
ME Mason
MJ Mason
DW Mawford
K Maycock
L Mayers
RP Meadows
D Mitchell
O Mitchell
C Moore
P Morgan
Mrs BM Mortlock
DC Mortlock
N Muir
R Musselle

M Neatherway
Dr JA Newnham
JL Nobbs
DJ Norgate
DB Nye
MA Nye

TD Orrell
LW Osborne
RA Owen

CF Page
DJ Pankhurst
Miss F Papazoglou
Mrs S. Parmentier
TW Parmentier
T Parris
JM Paton
PT Paton
Mrs SJ Patton
RT Pepper
R Perkins
A Perry
RH Petley
N Patrie-Hay
P Philpot

CF Page
DJ Pankhurst
Miss F Papazoglou
Mrs S. Parmentier
TW Parmentier
T Parris
JM Paton
PT Paton
Mrs SJ Patton
RT Pepper
R Perkins
A Perry
RH Petley
N Patrie-Hay
P Philpot

CF Page
DJ Pankhurst
Miss F Papazoglou
Mrs S. Parmentier
TW Parmentier
T Parris
JM Paton
PT Paton
Mrs SJ Patton
RT Pepper
R Perkins
A Perry
RH Petley
N Patrie-Hay
P Philpot

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RINGING IN SUSSEX 1994

by Derek Crawley

During 1994, 48,157 birds of 112 species were ringed in the County. I received records from 19 ringers and/or ringing groups. As in previous years the lion's share was taken by the Rye Bay Ringing Group. Some of our long-time ringers have reduced their activities or retired but I have received records from two additional ringers that have redressed the balance somewhat. As in previous reports that I have prepared all references to 'new' species ringed in the county or record numbers of birds ringed refer to the period since 1979 as before this date I have no detailed records. Only one 'new' species was ringed in 1994; two **Cormorants**.

There was a general absence of unusual species for the year. Three **Spotted Crakes** made 1994 the 5th year in succession that the species has been found lurking in the county and the total stands at 10 ringed. The number of **Aquatic Warblers** ringed was 11, strongly suggesting a general increase of the species in Britain. Of the 37 **Aquatic Warblers** ringed since 1979, 34 were marked in the period 1990-94. Other sites in southern England have also been trapping more in recent years (Squire, T, pers comm). A **Barred Warbler** was trapped at Icklesham on 23 August and a single **Penduline Tit** was at Icklesham on 18 October, ending a period of three years since the last was trapped. Other less common species trapped were **Wryneck** (1) and **Marsh Warbler** (3). As in 1993 no **Ring Ouzels** were caught. By comparison, our near neighbours at Dungeness Bird Observatory trapped **Thrush Nightingale** (2), **Icterine Warbler** (3), **Melodious Warbler** (3) and **Pallas's Warbler** (4). An enviable tally for any bird watcher's annual list. (Walker, 1995).

A total of 58 ducks were ringed of 5 species. They were as follows; **Teal** (3), **Mallard** (51), **Pintail** (2), **Garganey** (1) and **Shoveler** (1). A number of recoveries were received and all concerned birds that were shot, including a **Gadwall** and a **Pintail**. Table 1 shows the movements of a **Bewick's Swan**. This detailed history is made possible by the use of a neck collar that can be read easily in the field. The bird was not recorded in Sussex in 1994 so I have included the 1995 sighting to complete the story so far. The migratory habits of this species are well documented but the bird's faithfulness to its home base, its stopover and wintering areas are shown dramatically. My thanks to John Holt of Hove for this detailed information supplied to him by the Wildfowl and Wetlands Trust.

No V4109	07.08.92	Khabuicka, Russkii Zavorot, Pechora Delta, RUSSIA (68.30N 53.54E)
	25.11.92	Amberley, West Sussex
	20.12.92	Arundel, West Sussex
	04.01.93	Arundel, West Sussex
	13.03.93	Fischteiche, Die Lewitz, Kr. Ludwigslust, GERMANY (53.26N 11.37E)
	14.03.93	Lewitz, Kreis Ludwigslust, GERMANY (53.26N 11.37E)
	08.04.93	Lewitz, Kreis Ludwigslust, GERMANY
	29.05.93	Khabuicka, Russkii Zavorot Peninsula, RUSSIA (68.30N 53.54E)
	04.06.93	Khabuicka, Russkii Zavorot Peninsula, RUSSIA
	20.10.93	Arundel, West Sussex
	10.03.94	Wedelsdorf, Kreis Ludwigslust, GERMANY (53.45N 11.07E)
	20.07.94	Khabuicka, Russkii Zavorot Peninsula, RUSSIA
	25.01.95	Amberley, West Sussex.

Table 1. Movements of a **Bewick's Swan** V4109 since ringing in 1992.

Dartford Warbler Survey: The collection and collation of information from several members for this 1994 RSPB national survey was organised in Sussex by A Perry and covered a number of selected sites in the county.

Amberley Wild Brooks annual monitoring: This annual monitoring for the Society and RSPB is covered by Dr ME Kalaher, Cherry House, Kithurst Lane, Storrington, West Sussex.

Co-ordination of Spring Seawatching records: The annual co-ordination of these records for the Society is carried out by Dr JA Newnham, 61 Grand Avenue, Worthing, West Sussex.

Cormorant roost counts: Simultaneous counts were carried out monthly from September 1993 to March 1994 at Chichester Gravel Pits and South Stoke, West Sussex, by A Cox and R Knight for the Cormorant Research Group.

We are grateful for summaries of detailed observations at Ashdown Forest from R Harman and D King, Beachy Head from RDM Edgar, Bewl Water from PC Bance, Chichester Harbour from Ms A de Potier, Icklesham from DE Crawley, Pagham Harbour from SJ Knapp, Pett Level from JAB Gale, Pulborough Brooks from T Callaway and A Cotton, Rye Harbour from Dr BJ Yates, Selsey Bill from O Mitchell and BJ Carter, Splash Point from AM Wheeler, Thorney and Pilsey Islands from CB and Mrs MA Collins, Worthing from Dr JA Newnham and Weir Wood Reservoir from Mrs BM Mortlock.

Thanks are due to DE Crawley for continuing to maintain detailed records of ringing in the county and to all ringers who contributed.

The Recorder is especially grateful to Dr JA Newnham and the following team of helpers for coding and inputting a large proportion of records onto the computer; T Allen, BR Clay, JES Cooper, DE Crawley, Ms A de Potier, JJ Faichnie, DJ Funnell, JL Herring, JE Hobson, LG Holloway, R Holtham, Mrs CF King, D King, R Knight, Mrs T Lawrie, L Manns, MJ and Mrs ME Mason, Mrs BM Mortlock, RT Pepper, GCM Roberts, Mrs IM Simpson, I Standivan, Mrs AJ Wende, J Whitman and Dr BJ Yates.

A **Brent Goose** that had been ringed at Taimyr Delta West, Taymyr, (former) U.S.S.R. on 31 August 1990 found its way into a garden at Pevensy Bay on 7 April 1994 (5347 km WSW, 1315 days). After rest and recuperation the bird was released on 11 April and was apparently none the worse for its 'misadventure'.

The number of raptors ringed was down on recent years. Only two species were involved; **Sparrowhawk** (13) and **Kestrel** (18). A **Kestrel** ringed in a nest box at Plumpton on 7 July was found freshly dead at Waldringfield, Suffolk (198 km NE, 46 days), it had been hit by a car. At least 15 of the 46 days between ringing and recovery was spent in the nest box where this bird was born. The dispersal of young Kestrels usually occurs shortly after fledging and is considered to be random.

Fig. 1 shows the numbers of Sparrowhawk and Kestrel ringed in Sussex from 1979-94.

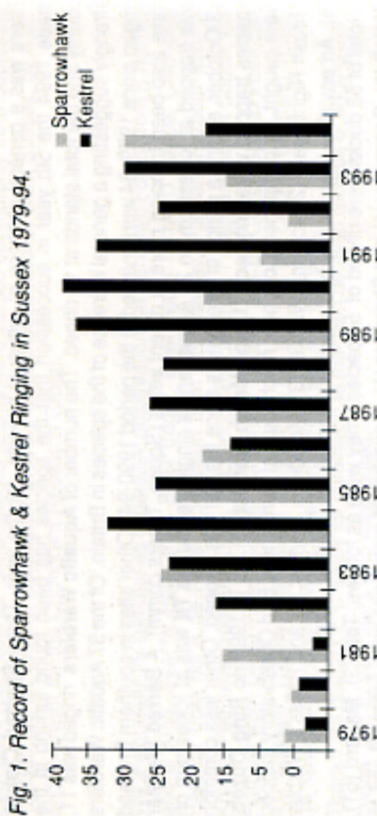


Fig. 1. Record of Sparrowhawk & Kestrel Ringing in Sussex 1979-94.

Gull ringing has been declining since the big catches in the 1980s, as I have reported previously. Due to health and safety regulations being strictly imposed at the landfill sites which are so favoured by gulls and gull-ringers, no ringing took place during the year in Sussex. Just 2 **Black-headed Gulls** are the lone representatives of the group.

Details of Black-headed Gulls previously ringed in Sussex which have been the subject of reports from continental Europe during 1994 are given in Table 2. A long-living Black-headed Gull ringed at West Worthing on 24 November 1982 was controlled by ringers at West Polder, Kwelder, Groningen, **Netherlands** on 26 May 1994. It had survived for 4201 days (11.5 years). However this age is well short of the current longevity record for this species which stands at 25.5 years. (Mead & Clark, 1991).

Table 2. Black-headed Gulls Ringed in Sussex & Controlled/Recovered Abroad in 1994.

Country	No. of records	Country	No. of records
Sweden	3	Russia	1
Denmark	4	Netherlands	7
Lithuania	1	Norway	1
Germany	5	Estonia	2
Finland	5	Poland	3
Latvia	1	Belgium	1

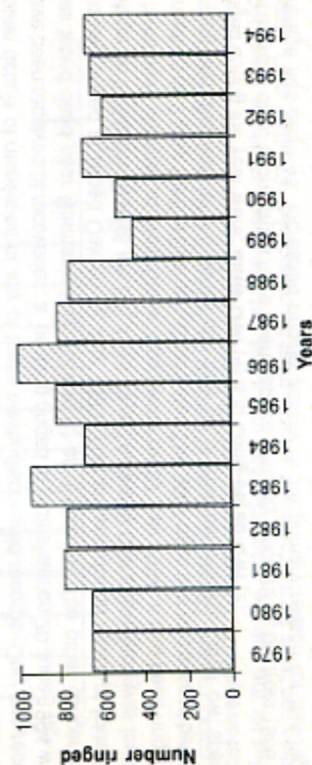
A very large number of **Grasshopper Warblers** were ringed in the county in 1994, (652). The total ringed since 1979 is 2,162 but 2,021 have been marked since 1990. This has been the result of a considerable increase in ringing effort in those latter years. It would be agreeable to think that the large increase in birds trapped in 1994, representing an

increase of 100 percent over the previous year, is an indication of improved fortunes for the species. The recovery rate for ringed **Grasshopper Warblers** is very low, in the region of 1 in 400. Readers of *BTO News* will remember that the ringing expedition in Senegal, to which I have often referred, started adding colour rings to the wintering birds. Remarkably, two of them were found about 40 km apart and within ten days of each other in the north-west of Britain. As it turned out the colour rings were superfluous as one of the birds was hit by a car and the other killed by a cat (Green, 1995). A juvenile trapped at Icklesham on 30 August travelled 35 km N to Maidstone, Kent where it was killed by a cat on 31 August.

The number of **Blackcaps** ringed suggests that 1994 saw a poor autumn passage. The numbers trapped each year does vary dramatically and as the ringing effort for this species tends to remain fairly constant, those figures are some indication of breeding success. The vast majority of those trapped are first-year birds. The figures for the last four years are: 1991 (2201), 1992 (4925), 1993 (5090) and 1994 (2278). Among the reports for **Blackcap** received in 1994, a juvenile male ringed at Icklesham on 31 August 1990 was retrapped in Bexhill on 26 April 1994, (1334 days). Over-wintering birds are believed to come from the northern and eastern European population and to arrive in Britain in late autumn (Lack, 1986). A first-year female trapped at Cissbury on 30 October 1993 and killed by a cat on 7 December 1993 at Romsey, Hampshire (78 km W, 38 days) did not quite make it into 1994 as an over-winterer. A **Blackcap** ringed at Icklesham on 19 September 1991 was controlled by ringers at Ingolstadt-Zuchering, Oberbayern, **Germany**, on 12 June 1994 (807 km ESE, 997 days). Despite the comparatively early date of ringing, this bird is likely to be one of an eastern European breeding population involved in the westerly migration to spend the winter in the British Isles.

A **Blackbird** ringed at Beachy Head on 27 October 1991 was found dead at Hohe Neuendorf, Potsdam, **Germany** (922 km ENE, 864 days) on 9 March 1994. Although it is possible that this bird bred in Great Britain it seems more likely that it was an early arrival from eastern Europe. There is no indication of how the bird died or how long it had been dead. The numbers of **Blackbirds** ringed in the county has remained steady during the 1990s but is somewhat lower than the numbers in the mid-1980s. Some of this fall is undoubtedly due to reduced activity by ringers. The fluctuations in **Blackbird** ringing in the county since 1979 is shown in Fig. 2. The lower average figures since the period high of nearly 1000 birds in 1986 suggests a decline in the species in the area even allowing for a change in ringing effort. The period since 1986 coincides with activities of the Rye Bay group where ringing is carried out on a daily basis from July well into October, with some more irregular ringing in the winter if birds are present.

Fig. 2. Blackbird Ringing in Sussex 1979-94



A somewhat delayed record concerned a **Song Thrush** ringed at Weirwood Reservoir on 13 October 1992 which had travelled the 867 kms south to St. Pee-sur-Nivelle, Pyrenees-Atlantique, **France** in the rapid time of 18 days. It was found dead on 31 October 1992. Few **Brambling** are ringed in Sussex. The total since 1979 is only 174, averaging less than ten a year and that average was distorted by an exceptional 56 trapped at Marley Common in 1993. On these grounds alone it is worth noting the bird ringed at Lewell near Dorchester, Dorset on 22 November 1993 and controlled at Marley Common on 3 April 1994 (120 km ENE, 132 days).

The number of waders ringed in Sussex remains low. A total of 121 covering 9 species for 1994 (see Table 3). A **Lapwing** ringed as a chick at Icklesham on 15 May 1988 was found freshly dead at Pett Level on 16 September 1994 (2 km E, 2315 days). In 1988 a total of 69 **Lapwings** were ringed of which 66 were nestlings. All of the birds were trapped by the Rye Bay Ringing Group at Icklesham. Previously, one other nestling of that 66 was shot in France in 1991 (Crawley, 1992). In 1991 an exceptional number of **Greenshanks** (15) were ringed at Icklesham. An adult ringed on 22 August was shot in the Pas-de-Calais département, **France** on 1 September 1994 (1106 days), while another adult trapped on 27 August was shot at Bate d'Authie, Somme, **France** on 5 August 1994 (1074 days). A third member of this group of fifteen had been shot at Rejet de Beaulieu, Nord, **France** on 1 August 1993, 704 days after being ringed on 28 August 1991. The sex of these birds could not be determined but as they were adults at the time of ringing the chances are that they were males as the females generally leave the breeding grounds well before the young and males, as early as late June or early July. This applies to both Scottish and Fenno-Scandian populations and because of the timing the odds are that they came from the latter group (BWP, 1983). A late report of a **Jack Snipe** ringed at Icklesham on 1 November 1993 shows a fairly rapid movement. It was shot at St-Front, Haute-Loire, **France** on 6 November 1993 (706 km SSE, 5 days).

Species	Number ringed	Species	Number ringed
Ringed Plover*	16	Green Sandpiper	1
Jack Snipe	12	Dunlin	5
Redshank*	3	Woodcock	1
Lapwing**	57	Wood Sandpiper	1
Snipe	25		

Table 3. Waders Ringed in Sussex 1994. (* = All pulli ** = 36 Pulli.)

The records for the number of **Barn Owls** ringed in the county has been dramatically altered due to the 'discovery' of a Surrey ringer who has been ringing nestlings in the county for some years. Adjustments to the totals since 1979 mean that 505 is the current grand total as opposed to the pre-adjustment figure of about 220. I have not been able to obtain details of recoveries of any of these newly discovered records. Only two records have been received of recoveries; a nestling ringed at Sidlesham on 20 June 1994 which was found dead near Norman's Bay (82 km, E) on 1 October. The other concerned a nestling ringed at Broad Oak on 12 July 1990. This too was found dead, at Icklesham village on 21 March 1994 (6 km SE, 1348 days). A **Tawny Owl's** skeleton was found in a farmhouse chimney at West Stoke, Chichester on 27 July 1994. It had been ringed as a nestling on 2 May 1986 at Bosham, Chichester. The 3007 days that had passed between ringing and discovery of the bones can only be of ethereal interest. Other owl species ringed during the year were; **Little Owl** (4) and **Long-eared Owl** (2). An average of 26 **Stonechats** have been trapped annually since 1979, but from 1986 that average has been 43. Increased ringing activity is the primary reason for this higher

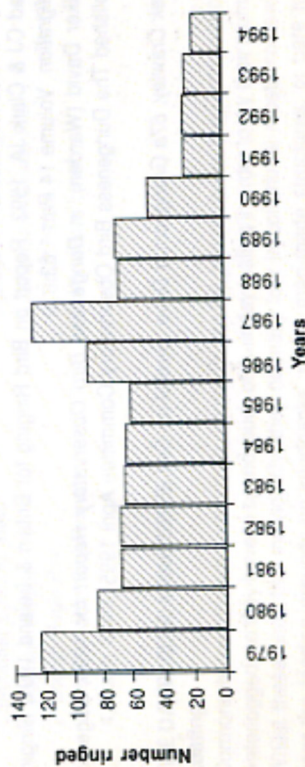
average but a succession of mild winters have ensured that survival is high. There are few recoveries; the only record that came to hand in 1994 was of a first year bird ringed at Icklesham on 3 October 1992 which was seen at Ramme Marsh Sewage Works, Enfield, Greater London on 8 January (98 km NNW, 462 days).

A very late report involves a **Lesser Whitethroat** from 2 July 1990 at Icklesham which was found at El Alamein, **Egypt** on 3 October 1990 (3236 km SE, 93 days). Up until 1991 there had been eleven recoveries of British-ringed Lesser Whitethroats in **Egypt**, with records from other Eastern Mediterranean countries as follows: Turkey (1), Syria (4), Lebanon (18) and Israel (4) (Mead & Clark, 1993).

A letter from ringer Peter Davis in BTO News reports a dearth of **Redpolls** at his ringing site in the north of the county during the autumn of 1994. He would normally expect to ring in excess of 300 each year but by the end of November he appeared to have netted only one. A possible explanation put forward by BTO staff was that there was a glut of seed on the trees in the north so that the birds did not have to travel south. There may be something in that, but over 800 were ringed at Icklesham and during October and November flocks of up to 300 were seen. This would seem to cast doubt on the northern glut theory (Green, 1995). Included among the Icklesham total was a bird of the nominate race *flammea*, a '**Mealy Redpoll**'.

Two House Martins ringed at Icklesham on 25 September 1993 were controlled at Marston Sewage Farm, Grantham, Lincolnshire (247 km NNW, 242 days) on 18 and 25 May 1994. A total of 253 were ringed at this site while in the county as a whole, 570 were trapped. Once again the annual tally of **Spotted Flycatchers** ringed in the county gives cause for concern. The annual totals for 1979-94 are shown in Fig.3. Checking past records the numbers of nestlings ringed has dropped dramatically. In the years with lowest totals, ie 1990-94, an estimated 11 nestlings were ringed. Between 1981-89 the annual average was about 20, with 40 chicks ringed in 1983 which was the highest total for any year in the period. Allowing for some change in ringing effort, it must be said that the species is in decline, especially in southern England it seems. It must also be remembered that the period of greatest decline corresponds with periods of greatest effort at the Rye Bay Ringing Group sites.

Fig.3. Record of Spotted Flycatchers Ringed in Sussex 1979-94.



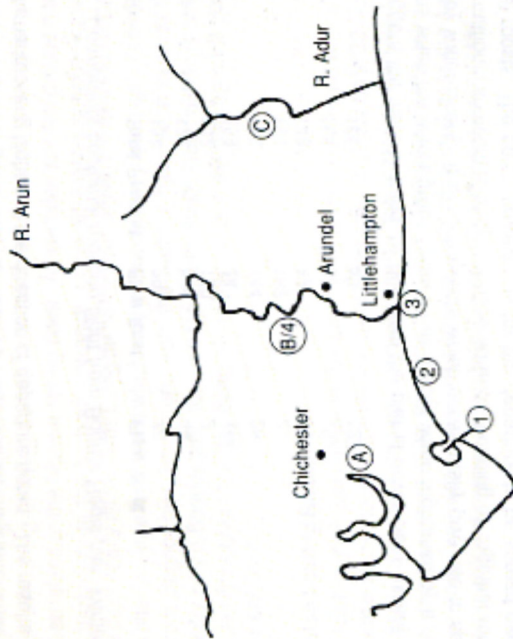
The colour marked **Marsh Tit** ringed at Fairlight on 24 March 1984 was seen for the third successive year at Fairlight on 20 May. This bird is confirmed as holding the longevity record for the species. I am informed that it has not been seen since the latest 1994 sighting and fears for its continued survival must be considered. (Crawley, 1993, 1994).

A BRIEF STUDY OF SOME WEST SUSSEX CORMORANT ROOSTS

by Rex Knight and Andrew Cox

INTRODUCTION

This is a record of some Cormorant observations made in a small part of West Sussex over the last four years. Firstly, in the winter of 1991/92 a study was made of two large nocturnal roost sites at South Stoke and Chichester Gravel Pits and their relationship to the main daytime loafing sites on the coast between Littlehampton and Pagham Harbour. Then, in the three following winters, simultaneous counts of birds at the same two nocturnal roosts were made monthly on the BoEE/WeBS survey dates.



Communal Loafing Sites

1. Pagham Harbour
2. Bognor Regis Pier
3. Littlehampton Breakwater
4. South Stoke

Communal Roosting Sites

- A. Chichester Gravel Pits
- B. South Stoke
- C. Wyckham Farm

THE DAYTIME LOAFING SITES

Loafing

Cormorants are efficient underwater swimmers but the penalty is that they tend to become waterlogged, so they have to spend much of their day loafing in order to dry their plumage. Whilst these birds fish individually, they normally loaf in communal roosts somewhere near the feeding grounds on sandbanks, rocks, man-made structures, or bare trees. There they will sit for long periods, upright like bottles or in heraldic posture with wings outspread.

Bognor Regis Pier Loafing Roost

Storm damage to Bognor Regis pier which rendered the seaward end a no-go area for people, has made it a desirable loafing site for Cormorants. Some perch on the railings,

A Reed Warbler trapped as a first-year at Icklesham on 2 October 1993 was one of 6774 ringed in 1993. It was controlled at Hovvig, Jylland, Denmark on 4 August 1994 (763 km NE, 306 days). It is very probable that this is the first Danish control of a British-ringed Reed Warbler. Certainly up until 1991 there had been no records. BWP gives no information on the Danish breeding population but further north in Sweden and Finland there has been a major increase in the summer populations (Brooks, 1992).

Further information on birds mentioned in SxBR No.46 (1993) has come to hand. A Reed Bunting (1EE03206) controlled at Icklesham on 7 November 1993 was the sixth Swedish-ringed Reed Bunting to have been found in Britain and another, (9K94735), also retrapped at Icklesham on 31 October 1993, was only the second from Denmark.

ERRATUM: In *Ringling in Sussex in 1993* in Sussex Bird Report No. 46 I made a serious error which I will now correct. On page 97, under **Garden Warbler** please delete all reference to H707817 ringed at Icklesham 18 August 1992. This ring belonged to a **Grasshopper Warbler** and is reported on page 96 of the same report. For those familiar with BTOs B-Ring codes for these two species, which are respectively GARWA and GRAWA, it will be seen how the error was initiated. No excuse, of course and I offer my apologies.

Finally, my thanks to all ringers and observers who have given me the records and information that has enabled me to compile this report.

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whilst others stand on the flat boards in between; however, during very low tides a string of low rocks called Bognor Rocks becomes exposed a couple of hundred metres further out and if conditions are calm this becomes the preferred roost for all the birds.

During the middle part of the day birds arrive from, or depart to, feeding grounds individually, most of these feeding grounds seem to be out to sea, although the occasional bird heads inland, presumably to the local brooks where single birds often fish. Even in late afternoon, most birds seem to come back to the loafing roost to dry out before starting their nocturnal roost flight. By comparing midday numbers on Bognor pier with those for late afternoon when maximum numbers are present, it would seem that about a fifth of the birds are usually out fishing at any one time throughout the day.

Although the pier is remote from disturbance, none of the Cormorants use it as a nocturnal roost, instead they always fly off coastwise in the hour before dusk, some to the east and some to the west. During the winter of 1991/92 they were counted quite often just prior to the nocturnal roosting flight and the direction of departure noted. The results are given in Table 1.

Table 1. Cormorants nocturnal roosting flight from Bognor Regis pier. Winter 1991/92

Date	Total Present	Flew East	Flew West
28.11.91	104	29	75
6.12.91	127	83	44
14.12.91	132	130	2
26.12.91	159	44	115
27.1.92	172	144	28
28.1.92	184	162	22
5.2.92	148	89	59
13.2.92	195	43	152
15.2.92	186	59	127

What triggers the main evening exodus from the pier is never clear except on the odd occasions when the whole group takes off as a flock when frightened by a noisy fishing boat or by water-skiers. It is such events which occasionally give rise to spectacularly large formations, sometimes of over a hundred birds, heading off together for one of the nocturnal roosts. The norm, however, is for the departure to be spread over 30 to 40 minutes, starting with a few individuals, then with the main body leaving in a series of strings. One bird will launch off the pier and when it has gone a few tens of metres, another will follow and, if the time seems propitious, more and more will stream away until anything from 5 to 30 birds are strung out low to the water over several hundred metres. The leading birds then pull up into a near vertical stall which they hold as a hover for some seconds before resuming normal flight. This procedure may be repeated several times and it enables the birds behind to catch up quite quickly, so that groups as large as thirty can be joined up in a loose 'V' formation within the first couple of kilometres of the journey. Sometimes the streams will leave in quick succession, at others there will be intervals of many minutes. Occasionally some of the birds which have set off towards one nocturnal roost change their minds after a short distance, turn through 180 degrees and head for the other. During the main exodus some single birds will still be arriving at the pier from seaward fishing grounds and these are probably the ones that, having dried out a little, straggle off last at late dusk leaving the pier to Gulls, Starlings, Rock Piptits and Grey Heron.

Whilst over the sea the Cormorants normally fly at low level, but on turning inland they usually climb to 100 metres or more. Those heading east turn inland after one to three kilometres, rarely at the same point, and angle across to the Arun valley which they

usually reach only just south of Arundel, then continue up-river to South Stoke. Those heading west also vary their track in their journey to the Chichester Gravel Pits, sometimes turning inland almost immediately, at others going coastwise to the mouth of Pagham Harbour before making the northerly turn towards the roost. Although a Cormorant's take-off often seems laboured and clumsy, once in transit and at height progress is swift and silent and it is easy to miss the passage of large formations.

Pagham Harbour Loafing Roost

During the 1991/92 winter, the second largest loafing roost, averaging 40-50 birds but sometimes exceeding 100, was in Pagham Harbour, usually on sandbanks on the Church Norton side. Most of the birds during that winter seemed to be fishing at sea.

The exact position of the roost varies from day to day since the most favoured site is covered by water during the highest tides. Sometimes, as the tide rises, all the Cormorants can be seen swimming or flying across from the favourite bank to a higher one which remains as an island at the highest spring tides. At low tides smaller groups may gather on shingle bars outside the harbour entrance, or on alternative sandbanks within the harbour. At dusk nearly all the birds using these harbour loafing roosts head for Chichester Gravel Pits often in large formations which may be boosted by joining up with birds already in transit from Bognor pier. No groups from the harbour have been seen to fly, either across country or via Bognor pier, towards the South Stoke roost, although single birds are often seen throughout the day flying along the coast to the pier from the direction of the harbour entrance.

Littlehampton Loafing Roost

The third major coastal loafing site in this small area is on the seaward end of the long high breakwater at the mouth of the River Arun at Littlehampton. Here up to 30 Cormorants were commonly to be seen in late afternoon during the winter of 1991/92. As dusk approaches, the birds stream off from this roost and always fly directly up-river to the South Stoke nocturnal roost; sometimes they do one large orbit over the sea before heading inland which allows all the birds to join up in formation more quickly.

South Stoke Loafing Roost

The biggest inland loafing roost is an isolated skeletal tree in the meadows by the River Arun 200 metres downstream from South Stoke. Here, there are frequently 10 or more birds which always leave for the nocturnal roost only one kilometre away at dusk.

THE NOCTURNAL ROOSTS

South Stoke Nocturnal Roost

The South Stoke nocturnal roost is in deciduous trees overhanging the River Arun about 600 metres upstream from the hamlet. Here, the river cuts into the chalk Downs in a long curve on the western side of the floodplain, creating a well wooded river cliff. The river is tidal in this section and the current runs swiftly in either direction, depending on the state of the tide. The birds favour only about half a dozen of the many trees in a 600 metre stretch.

The arrival of the Cormorants at the roost is typically spread over 40-60 minutes, usually starting with individuals, then the major formations and finally, when it is nearly dark, a trickle of small groups and individuals. During the winter of 1991/92, all but a handful of birds approached from the south, flying high in a direct line up the broad floodplain before finally cutting across South Stoke's low chalk spur and on to the roost. During that winter,

numbers tended to increase as the season progressed as Table 2 shows, with the highest numbers occurring at times of heavy frost.

Table 2. Numbers of Cormorants flying into the South Stoke and Chichester Gravel Pits nocturnal roosts. Winter 1991/92

Date	South Stoke	Chichester GP	Largest Formations
20.11.91	71	-	9
24.11.91	-	153	25 and 19
27.11.91	60	-	18
1.12.91	-	109	17
8.12.91	96	-	25 and 20
11.12.91	128	-	33 and 66
15.12.91	-	3	Lakes part frozen
20.12.91	108	-	24 and 26
6.1.92	121	-	21 and 35
12.1.92	-	222	82 and 26
23.1.92	216	-	22, 41 and 78
26.1.92	307	-	74, 101 and 24
23.2.92	-	92	16

The arrival of big formations is always spectacular. A few hundred metres short of the roost, the loose 'V' formations split up. Some birds fall out of the sky, side-slipping with partly closed wings, then pulling out and skimming low over the river or the water-meadows before pulling up to a guano covered perch. Others set up stately, wide, gliding circuits as they gradually descend into a chosen tree. Clearly it is not easy for these large, web-footed birds to execute a landing on small branches and some have to make a number of approaches in wide low orbits. Some birds get dislodged from their perches when others arrive and this adds to the wheeling traffic. When approaching birds first come into sight, those already at the roost set up a guttural croaking which may be of greeting or it might be a warning saying "no room on this branch".

In early autumn particularly, it is quite common for all the roosting birds to be frightened into the air. River launches and ramblers on the adjacent foopath are the normal causes. On disturbance the birds circle or fly off a short distance, but return as soon as the source of the disturbance has gone. More serious alarm is caused by organised shoots close at hand in Arundel Park. A fusillade of shots nearby will get the whole roost airborne in turmoil and they head off in various directions and may not return that evening. In such circumstances, large groups have been seen to form up and go back towards the coast and these probably divert to Chichester Gravel Pits. Other large groups have flown north up the floodplain towards Bury and Coldwaltham where there are some alternate tree roosts and on one occasion a group, having flown north through the river gap, turned east under the chalk escarpment, possibly heading for the Wykeham Farm nocturnal roost near Steyning on the Upper Adur.

The largest number of Cormorants arriving at the South Stoke roost during the winter of 1991/92 was 307 on 26th January 1992; this was in the middle of a cold spell when Chichester Gravel Pits were partly frozen.

Chichester Gravel Pits Nocturnal Roost

In early autumn at Chichester Gravel Pits, all the Cormorants use electricity transmission lines on either side of a pylon located on a tiny islet in New Lake as their nocturnal roost. By November, the whole roost transfers to three small islands in Ivy Lake. Here, the most popular site is a skeletal tree on the central island, with the remainder of the birds occupying

trees and bushes on all three islands right down to water level. The trigger for the change of roost to Ivy Lake is assumed to be leaf fall, which may also coincide with a reduction in disturbance by boats and skiers on the lake as winter sets in. During the 1991/92 winter, the largest numbers and biggest formations came in along tracks consistent with starting points from the Bognor Regis pier or Pagham Harbour loating roosts. Smaller numbers of mainly single birds tracked in from the west and these were assumed to originate from feeding areas in Chichester Harbour.

As at South Stoke, the arrival at this roost is spread over 40 minutes or more, although the timing is never clear because a few birds feeding in the pits use the roost for loafing at any time of the day. All except the local leaders fly in to the roost at high level. The approach of the large formations and break up to land is as spectacular as at South Stoke; however a major difference at Ivy Lake is that a proportion will land directly on the water. Others will fly down from their tree perches to join them, so that a loose raft of fifty or more birds may be seen paddling around for a while. Eventually though, the raft breaks up as birds fly off individually to perch.

On 15th December 1991, the lakes were almost frozen over. On that evening only a handful of birds in two small formations arrived over the roost. They broke formation to land in the usual way but after getting to low level the birds changed their mind and went through the forming up procedure described earlier before flying off west. It would seem that Cormorants like to perch over still or running water but not over ice.

The greatest number of Cormorants seen at the gravel pits roost in the winter of 1991/92 was 222 on the 12th January 1992; this included the arrival of one large 'V' formation of 82 birds, probably from Bognor Regis pier.

SIMULTANEOUS NOCTURNAL ROOST COUNTS

The large variation from day to day in the number of birds flying off to each of the nocturnal roosts from Bognor pier and the associated large variation in the number of birds recorded at the nocturnal roosts on different days during 1991/92, suggested the idea of simultaneous recording of totals at the two nocturnal roosts. So, during the last three winters, monthly simultaneous counts have been carried out, usually coinciding with the dates of WeBS counts. The results are in Table 3.

Table 3. Simultaneous counts of numbers of Cormorants at South Stoke and Chichester Gravel Pits nocturnal roosts.

	Winter 1992/1993		Winter 1993/1994		Winter 1994/1995	
	S.Stoke	Chi.GP Total	S.Stoke	Chi.GP Total	S.Stoke	Chi.GP Total
Sept	45	185	230	-	22	167
Oct	166	64	230	74	210	284
Nov	58	225	283	85	80	165
Dec	60	147	207	37	191	228
Jan	83	170	253	59	133	192
Feb	119	72	191	67	147	214
Mar	99	103	202	37	295	332
					59	112
					171	

The combined totals for the two roosts has been surprisingly stable; usually over 200, never less than 165 and only twice over 300. The Chichester roost has attracted most birds on all but three visits in this three year period, which contrasts with the earlier 1991/92 study, when South Stoke was more popular. Other differences compared with the earlier study are that recently there have been fewer large formations; it has been rare to

see groups of more than 20 flying in together. These changes coincide with much smaller numbers of Cormorants present at the daytime coastal loafing roosts. For instance, at Bognor Regis pier the loafing population has more than halved, with average numbers down to about 50. At Chichester nocturnal roost, many more birds have been seen to track in from the west than previously, probably coming from Chichester Harbour; whilst at South Stoke, many more have been coming in from the north, sometimes in groups of up to 10. What seems to have happened, in the last two winters particularly, is that many more birds have been feeding in the inland harbours, lakes and other waterways of the local hinterland. This may have been because of a shortage of sea fish, or possibly because the frequent stormy conditions have not been conducive to sea fishing, whereas the heavy rainfall has filled every inland watercourse brimful for long periods, providing fishing opportunities where they do not normally exist. It has been common to see single Cormorants working the small dykes and ditches all over the Sussex coastal plain and in consequence they now seem much bolder in contact with human activities. For instance, one bird was seen fishing a section of the Aidingbourne Rife near Bognor Regis for several weeks during late 1994 and it always loafed at the same spot on a busy recreation ground beside the river, rather than go off to the nearby communal roost at the coast. This may help explain why, of late, more birds have been arriving singly at the nocturnal roosts from a variety of directions.

If there is a return to cooler, drier, calmer winters, it will be interesting to see if the Cormorants go back to sea fishing and to their communal coastal loafing roosts in greater numbers and if this restores the popularity of the South Stoke nocturnal roost to some degree.

The choice of various nocturnal roosting sites has some strange aspects. A site over calm or running water seems to be preferred but ice is avoided. Electricity transmission lines are commonly used at Chichester, Steyning and Lewes but given the choice, birds seem to prefer bare-branched trees. Landing may be more difficult in trees, but possibly they offer more sheltered conditions in strong winds. It remains a puzzle why Cormorants bother to fly so far inland to nocturnal roosts. The South Stoke, Steyning and Lewes roosts are all about 10 kilometres from the sea. Birds fishing from Bognor pier are estimated to spend a total of 40-50 minutes in their morning and evening transit flights, which must cost a lot of energy and take up valuable fishing time in the short winter days. Cormorants are very mobile and clearly each bird knows a number of roosts, which they presumably learn as youngsters by the simple expedient of tagging along behind older birds. They do not seem to be faithful to a particular nocturnal roost, although there are signs that many of them fish the same region for long periods of the winter and distinctive juveniles are sometimes seen at nocturnal roosts on the same branch of a tree in a series of well spaced visits.

THE BROADER PICTURE

The expansion of Cormorants in Sussex

This local four year study of Cormorants in part of West Sussex shows only a small increase in population, but with a hint that more birds are fishing inland waters. However, looking at the county computer records, there is no doubt that there has been a considerable increase in population, both on the coast and in inland waters, in the last 20 years. Table 4 shows the maximum number of birds recorded in any one year at three major coastal estuaries and at Wykeham Farm nocturnal roost, which serves the Shoreham section of the coast. Table 5 shows similar data for some of the inland lakes and reservoirs, but in this case the records do not go back so far.

Table 4. Maximum number of Cormorants recorded each year at selected coastal sites.

Year	Chichester Harbour	Pagham Harbour	Rye LNR (Nocturnal Roost)	Shoreham (Wykeham Fm.)
1974	78	6	75	-
1975	58	20	35	-
1976	69	18	7	-
1977	63	22	61	-
1978	36	22	22	-
1979	39	11	33	-
1980	35	20	23	-
1981	55	18	46	-
1982	61	21	83	-
1983	66	33	51	-
1984	89	52	42	-
1985	73	33	64	-
1986	131	39	57	-
1987	133	21	50	-
1988	111	66	39	-
1989	113	90	58	106
1990	102	117	40	170
1991	91	135	151	133
1992	82	161	53	165
1993	83	199	146	174
1994	-	-	204	188

Table 5. Maximum number of Cormorants recorded each year at selected lakes and inland reservoirs.

	1985/86	89	90	91	92	93
Ardingly Res	31	41	38	45	37	49
Arlington Res	6	3	8	?	14	20
Barcombe Res	16	46	30	44	17	47
Bewl Water	14	?	49	48	50	60
Darwell Res	8	20	25	24	37	22
Knepp Lake	-	-	-	6	14	11
Warnham Mill Pond	-	1	9	10	14	12
Weir Wood Res	-	40	65	66	61	29

A county-wide survey of wintering Cormorants in Sussex 1985/86 by Jane Watson estimated that a total of between 400-600 wintered in the county then. The tables above suggest that a figure in excess of 1000 does not seem unrealistic today. This would represent some 7% of the national population, since the WeBS survey report 1992/93 recorded a Great Britain maximum of 13,931, the highest winter count for the species to date. Those observers who have regularly seen large numbers of Cormorants at both the loafing and nocturnal roosts may be surprised that no Sussex site appears in the WeBS list of 39 sites which average more than 130 birds over 5 years. Only Pagham gets a mention as occasionally reaching the qualifying number.

The increase in the species does not seem to be limited to the winter months. Rye LNR now report large numbers throughout the summer, including the odd breeding attempt. On 7th June 1992, 28 nests were counted at Fairlight, most with two chicks. Regrettably few other summer reports are submitted so no accurate assessment of numbers can be made.

IS THERE A 'BLACK PLAGUE'?

A full-grown Cormorant weighs 3 kg and eats about 15% of its body weight in fish each day, i.e. 450 grammes. In many parts of the country, this highly adaptable bird has appeared in increasing numbers in inland waters to take fish. It is not clear if they are deserting the coast because of over-fishing and pollution, or simply taking advantage of a bonanza of fish in inland habitats, kindly stocked by man. What is clear is that anglers are giving them a very bad press and are seeking much greater freedom to cull them.

Here in Sussex, Cormorants have increased both on the coast and inland but it is difficult to come up with exact figures under current random reporting. As the conflict between conservation and fishing interests looks set to develop, it seems desirable to monitor the status of these birds more closely throughout the year. Counting them at their nocturnal roosts is the simplest method and enjoyable to boot. Identification of all such roosts and regular reporting from them would yield valuable information.

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THE SOUTH DOWNS IN THE 1940s

by WRP Bourne

Our family came to live in Hove in 1936 and stayed for thirty years. During school holidays before World War II, my mother used to pack the four of us into her Austin 7 on fine afternoons and decant us on the Downs behind the town so that we should not disturb my father's patients. On Sundays he also took me on long rambles to inspect the archaeological sites which were then still so conspicuous. Whilst already interested, I did not yet know much about birds, but I was much closer to the ground than now and can testify that much of the Downs was still covered in short, soft turf showing prehistoric field-marks. Thin heather was present where the lime had been leached from the undisturbed topsoil over millennia and there were compact patches of scrub, all nicely trimmed by wandering flocks of sheep with bells around their necks. They were not in fact numerous enough to keep the flowers, insects and birds down and we knew slopes covered in season with violets, cowslips, orchids, scabious, thyme and rock-roses and sparkling with butterflies, while there were many rabbit-scrapes in which birds could nest.

We were evacuated during the earlier years of the war and by the time we returned in 1944 I was mobile enough on my bicycle to cover the whole length of the Downs from Arundel to Eastbourne. Later, I was also taken on a flight along them by the Air Training Corps which revealed some very remote and interesting sites, notably around Harrow Hill. Great changes had taken place throughout the area. The Brighton piers had been cut off and had mines, and breeding gulls, on them. Brighton front was covered with a barbed wire entanglement said to be inhabited by foxes which would sit on the mines at intervals and then descend in pieces all over the town. It was also reported that several hundred were killed in a day when the Downs near Eastbourne were rehabilitated after the war and they must have had a considerable effect on other wildlife. The main blocks of downland had been cleared of people and stock, surrounded by notices saying "WD - KEEP OUT" and turned over to the soldiers in training for the invasion of Europe, who used to park their long rows of tanks in the quiet Hove streets where we lived. Sussex County Cricket Ground over the wall held a delousing plant.

Unfortunately I was a late developer and have never learnt to read warning notices. The short downland turf had already been replaced by long, coarse herbage with few flowers but many sprouting bushes and scarred by tank tracks, trenches and shell-holes. The existing scrub, much of which appeared about fifty years old and had presumably become established during the late Victorian agricultural depression, hedges, woods and ancient farms and their outbuildings built of flint and mortar, had often been shelled into shattered, leafless ruins, as in Flanders after World War I. There was still unexploded ammunition present, so the training areas were left deserted for years and only gradually rehabilitated, presumably at government expense, in the late 1940s. Teams of bulldozers would arrive, string chains between them to tear up Kipling's oaks, ashes and thorns, pile them up in heaps, burn them, plough the site and sprinkle it with chemicals, in the way that the Romans did with Carthage. The Rooks, which had left after the suspension of agriculture, returned in force and nearly everything else departed.

We therefore found ourselves engaged in a race to locate the scarcer birds before their habitat was destroyed under them. We found a number of Peregrines along the cliffs at an early stage, but in 1947 got down to a nest on the Second Sister containing pale eggs which broke in the hand - in retrospect presumably due to the arrival of DDT. We also found a pair of Buzzards at Glyndebourne and a pair of Short-eared Owls prospecting at

Belle Tout which left without breeding. Later, Hobbies and Red-backed Shrikes were in both East and West Sussex and Stone Curlew on Lullington Heath as well as at several sites in West Sussex. There were still breeding Wheatears on the open downs, Nighthjars in the heathy places, Woodlarks on nearly every bare patch and Cirl Buntings all along the southern margins of the Downs. Stonechats and Grasshopper Warblers were along the cliffs, although we failed to find the Dartford Warblers there after they were nearly wiped out by the hard weather early in 1947, or Tree Sparrows, which were rare birds then.

The destruction of the downland ecosystems was started in the 1940s by the Army (who now, of course, preserve the last remnants in surviving training areas elsewhere) and completed by myxomatosis in the 1950s. It would have been impossible to preserve hundreds of square miles of potential agricultural land as a nature reserve at a time when the world was short of food in any case. In addition to the authors quoted by Leverton (SxBR 46: 104-111) and Bowley (SxBR 46: 112-119) there are comments on the Downs by Gilbert White (*The Natural History of Selbourne*, 1789), Richard Jefferies (*Wild Life in a Southern County*, 1879) for Wiltshire and an interesting description of the old bird-catching industry in the autumn and winter by the Kearnons (*With Nature and a Camera*, 1879). I have subsequently been to a lot of good places for birds all round the world, but none have been better than the South Downs at dusk on a fine night in June before the bulldozers came, with butterflies giving way to moths over the flowers on the lynchets, Hobbies overhead, Nighthjars, Nighthjars and Woodlarks tuning up all round and Stone Curlew calling in the distance. It is sad that more was not done to save them, but nobody said a word about it at the time and their fate appears to have been forgotten.

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THE ORNITHOLOGICAL STATUS OF THE BREDE VALLEY, EAST SUSSEX - 1994

by MJ Denny

INTRODUCTION

The Brede Valley is situated approximately six miles to the north-east of Hastings in the east of the county. The River Brede begins its main flow just above Sedlescombe and runs more or less through the centre of the valley until it joins the Rother at Rye. The area which was surveyed in 1994 is shown in Fig 1. The Brede Valley and the survey area cover approximately 2,690 and 1,530 acres respectively.

Most of the area is low lying grazing marsh dissected by many ditches and dykes, scattered with trees, bushes and hedgerows. Nationally this type of habitat is uncommon and rapidly being degraded, as is its associated fauna and flora. The Brede Valley comprises a significant portion (c.5%) of one of the largest areas of what was traditionally lowland grazing marsh in Britain - Romney Marsh.

This paper summarises the results of the 1994 breeding bird census of the Brede Levels carried out on behalf of the Sussex Wildlife Trust as part of their campaign to protect Sites of Nature Conservation Importance (SNCI) within the county. This census followed a botanical survey in 1993 which showed that 'the floodplain of the River Brede is the most significant wildlife site surveyed by the SNCI team to date' (Anon, 1994). There is also a brief assessment of wintering and migrating birds in the Valley, using information drawn from personal observations over the past ten years.

The only previous ornithological survey of the Brede Valley was produced in 1979 (Pankhurst & Erendts), and covered the period 1976-79. Since then the valley has been modified through drainage, hedge removal and other such agricultural 'improvements', destroying much of the habitat required for breeding and wintering birds. Therefore, the 1979 survey is probably not representative of the present breeding bird status. Also the 1979 report concentrated on the western end of the valley, although the total area covered was similar to that of this survey. The present survey therefore constitutes an updated base-line, with a more comprehensive coverage of the eastern portion of the valley.

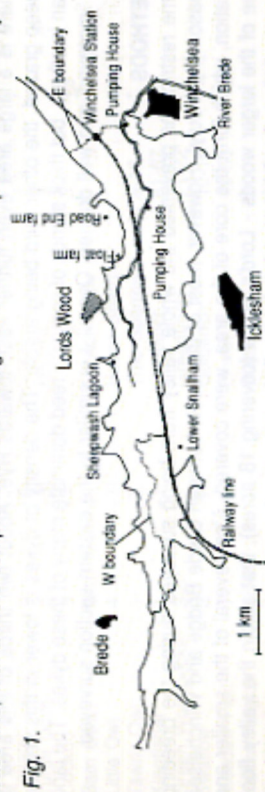


Fig. 1.

LAND USE AND HABITAT TYPES

Historical Background

The valley was an estuary until it began silting-up 400 years ago. It is thus rich in archaeological and historical features and folklore. Float Farmhouse, for example, was built around 1460 AD on a quayside, and the medieval meaning of 'float' is estuary.

The valley floor has been used for agriculture since the first attempts to reclaim the saltmarsh in Roman times. Areas of saltmarsh were walled-in, desalinated and dried out forming small areas of grazing marsh known as 'innings'. This form of reclamation continued until Tudor times when a change in coastal geomorphology precipitated the silting-up of the estuary. The valley floor then became the River Brede floodplain with

fresh/brackish water marshes. Reclamation of the whole valley floor then became possible through digging a network of drainage ditches, creating a habitat of seasonally flooded grazing marshes. Gradually more ditches were dug to dry out areas further, but water levels remained high and the agricultural regime continued to be dictated by winter flooding. Not until the inter- and post-war periods of this century did things change drastically. During this last period waterways have been canalized, ditches filled-in, water levels lowered through pump-drainage and some grazing land converted into arable crops. Despite all this, the area remains important for wildlife.

Present Situation

There are general trends in the habitats of the valley. The area adjacent to Brede Waterworks contains the largest reed-bed in the valley. However, it appears to have been neglected over the last fifteen years and with willow and bramble encroachment, seems to be drying out and rapidly deteriorating. This means that the interest and value it had in 1979 as a wetland nesting habitat has been lost.

From the Waterworks to Langford's Bridge, grazing marsh dominates. Generally, sheep graze north of the main river, while cattle graze to the south of it. There is a small amount of arable farming and, in the south-east corner, market gardening. This area has suffered less from drainage and other modifications than the eastern section of the valley; thus the water table is higher, pastures are rougher and hedges more common. Overall this section of the valley is the most aesthetically attractive and undisturbed. However, bird populations have probably recently declined primarily through the increasing control and lowering of the water levels.

The eastern end of the valley, from Langford's Bridge to Winchelsea Station, is predominantly sheep pasture, with the exception of the area north of the main river and east of Road End Farm, which is arable. This area has been intensively drained and 'improved', but where sheep have been prevented from grazing the dykes, there is good cover for breeding passerines.

The railway bisects the valley. Along its margins are thick stands of bushes, trees and common reed (*Phragmites australis*). This linear area holds a high density and diversity of passerines.

There is a large area even further east, towards Rye. About two thirds of this area is sheep grazed, the other third being arable. The density of dykes is lower in this section than in others, but thick stands of common reed dominate many of these dykes. The land is 'improved' and well drained. Overall it is similar to the eastern section surveyed.

METHODS

Time restrictions prevented the whole valley from being surveyed during the breeding season (April-July). However, most of the levels between Brede Bridge and Winchelsea Station, which form the core of the area, were covered. Also several of the smaller and one of the larger woods - Lord's Wood (covering 18 acres), that adjoin the valley floor were included. Some of the birds which rely on the levels as feeding sites nest in these woodlands.

Surveys were conducted during June and July 1994. They involved walking along all field boundaries, as marked on 1:10,000 O.S. maps and recording the birds seen and heard.

Proof of breeding was taken to be when: birds were seen with nest material or carrying food, nests were seen with eggs/young, or males were heard singing. Status as 'possible breeding' was given for a bird found in suitable breeding habitat but which was not proved to breed. All fieldwork took place between 04:00 and 10:30 hours, or 16:30 and 21:30 hours on relatively calm days when birds are most active. Only one visit could be made to most field boundaries due to lack of time. This means that some populations will be underestimated.

The sections on wintering and migrant birds are based on past records relating to the last 10 years. These records show great bias to particular time periods and areas watched and as a result cannot possibly be considered a comprehensive record for the past 10 years.

RESULTS

Breeding bird survey - general summary.

The following tabulated records refer specifically to the survey area as shown in Fig 1, excluding Lord's Wood, so as to give more accurate comparisons with the 1979 survey. Fifty-nine species were confirmed as breeding within the total survey area and several more possibly bred.

Table 1. Bird population sizes in 1994 within the survey area excluding Lord's Wood and population changes since 1979.

Species	No of breeding pairs 1979	Change since 1979	Species	No of breeding pairs 1979	Change since 1979
Mute Swan	5	=	Robin	26	+211
Canada Goose	1	=	Nightingale	5	=
Shelduck	0-2	=	Blackbird	38-42	+371
Mallard	3	-4	Song Thrush	15-16	+81
Tufted Duck	0	-2	Mistle Thrush	5-6	+4
Kestrel	1-3	+2	Sedge Warbler	44	+241
Hobby	0-2	+2	Reed Warbler	314	+2551
Grey Partridge	3	+2	Lesser Whitethroat	1	+1
Quail	01-	+1	Whitethroat	35	+281
Moorhen	26	-401	Blackcap	4	+2
Coot	1	+1	Chiffchaff	1	-2
Oystercatcher	0-1	+1	Willow Warbler	14	+6
Lapwing	4-5	-40	Spotted Flycatcher	2	=
Snipe	0	-3	Long-tailed Tit	0	-4
Redshank	0	-5	Marsh Tit	0-1	=
Stock Dove	1	+1	Coal Tit	2	=
Wood Pigeon	14	=	Blue Tit	21-28	=
Collared Dove	8	+8	Great Tit	3	=
Turtle Dove	4	+31	Magpie	3	=
Cuckoo	5	+3	Jackdaw	3	+3
Barn Owl	0-1	=	Carrion Crow	7	=
Little Owl	4	+31	House Sparrow	7	=
Tawny Owl	1	-2	Tree Sparrow	9-12	=
Kingfisher	1	+1	Chaffinch	61-67	=
Green Woodpecker	3-5	+3	Greenfinch	21-22	=
Swallow	3	-9	Goldfinch	10-11	=
Meadow Pipit	1	-9	Linnets	46-53	+38
Yellow Wagtail	18-23	-4	Bullfinch	2	=
Pied Wagtail	6	=	Yellowhammer	27-31	+211
Wren	58	=	Reed Bunting	68-82	+551
Duncock	23	+81			

Key: * no information, + increase, = no change, - decrease, with figures referring to actual numbers of pairs.

NB. It is important to bear in mind that it is difficult to make comparisons between the two surveys, as coverage differs between them. An 1 denotes where the population change figures are known, or are suspected to have been significantly affected by this factor.

In addition the following species and numbers of pairs were found breeding in Lord's Wood (18 acres): Woodpigeon 3, Cuckoo 1, Turtle Dove 1, Tawny Owl 1, Green

Woodpecker 1, Great Spotted Woodpecker 1, Wren 6, Dunnock 2, Robin 2, Blackbird 4, Song Thrush 2, Mistle Thrush 1, Blackcap 5, Chiffchaff 3, Willow Warbler 4, Goldcrest 1, Spotted Flycatcher 3, Blue Tit 4, Great Tit 4, Nuthatch 1, Treecreeper 2, Jay 1, Carrion Crow 2, Chaffinch 4.

For the wetland passerine species, population estimates were made for the whole 2,690 acres of the valley. These species are Yellow Wagtail, Sedge Warbler, Reed Warbler and Reed Bunting. Their total populations were calculated by extrapolation of the figures from the survey area, assuming mean densities for these species are the same in both the survey and non-survey area. This assumption was made as the habitat in both areas is very similar and casual observation confirmed that the densities appeared qualitatively similar. Table II summarizes the findings.

Table II. Breeding Populations of Wetland Passerines on Brede Levels

Species	Mean density in survey area	Min. no. pairs in survey area	Min. no. pairs in total area	% of Sussex population
Yellow Wagtail	1/85 acres	24	37	8.6% (20%)
Sedge Warbler	1/35 acres	44	77	9% (15%)
Reed Warbler	1/4.9 acres	314	550	17% (15%)
Reed Bunting	1/22 acres	68	120	?

NB. Percentages in brackets relate these species' populations on Pevensy Levels.

Wintering Birds: 1979-1994

Many of the birds which winter in terrain such as that found on the Brede Levels depend on periodically flooded pastures. Earlier this century when there was little control over the water levels, large areas of the valley must have been flooded during the winter. However, now with more efficient drainage only small areas are flooded occasionally. Thus the wintering populations of birds, particularly wildfowl, must have decreased dramatically. Now wildfowl are surprisingly uncommon on the levels.

The last major flood occurred in the western section of the valley in the winter of 1978/79 (cf. Pankhurst & Erends, 1979 for counts). Only with a return to winter flooding will the wintering bird populations reflect the valley's true potential. The following records relate to personal observations or those of Pankhurst and Erends (1979).

Migrating Birds

Being close to the south coast (one mile at its closest point) the Brede Valley is strategically positioned as a migratory 'stop-off' point both in spring and autumn. The scrub, woodland and arable crops hold migrating passerines, while areas of open water and the pastures attract waders, wildfowl and a few passerines such as Wheatear, Whinchat and *Hirundines*. Whilst it is difficult to monitor the numbers passing through such a large and underwatched area, the following records may indicate the relative frequency of occurrence and the importance of the site for that species. Many of the more common migrants have not been mentioned.

Duck

Teal are common and Pintail occasional during the autumn passage.

Raptors

Hobbies regularly use the valley on passage to feed on the abundant dragonflies and *Hirundines*. Hen Harriers are regular, particularly during the spring passage and Buzzard, Black Kite, Red Kite and Marsh Harrier have all passed through during migration time.

Table III. Summary of the Status of Wintering Birds in the Brede Valley

Species	Status	Peak count	Date	Location
Little Grebe	R	1	12/93-1/94	R Brede near FF
Comorant	R	3	Every year	R Brede
Grey Heron	C	-	-	All watercourses
Mute Swan	C	119**	12/92	Rye Marsh Farm
Bewick's Swan	U	7	2/79	Snailham
Wigeon	U	288	2/79	Snailham
Gadwall	U	4	1/93	Winchelsea Station
Teal	C	110	2/79	Snailham
Mallard	C	56	10/78	Snailham
Pintail	U	2	3/95	SWL
Red Kite	U	1	2/95	FF to Snailham
Hen Harrier	R	3	1984/85	Throughout
Moorhen	A	26	14/1/94	FF
Golden Plover	C	229	12/92	Rye Marsh Farm
Lapwing	A	2517*	10/92	Throughout
Ruff	U	2	25/1/86	Roadend Farm
Snipe	C	c150	11-12/94	SWL
Woodcock	R	3	1-3/86	FF
Black-tailed Godwit	U	3	2/95	SWL
Curtlew	C	40+	1992/93	FF
Redshank	R	55	12/92	Rye Marsh Farm
Green Sandpiper	R	5*	1/95	SWL
Common Gull	A	1000+	Every year	Throughout
Collared Dove	A	53	6/1/94	FF
Barn Owl	R	-	-	Throughout
Little Owl	R	-	-	Throughout
Short-eared Owl	U	6	2-3/79	Snailham
Meadow Pipit	C	-	-	Throughout
Fieldfare & Redwing	A	Hundreds	Every year	Throughout
Chiffchaff	R	2	12/93-1/94	FF
Linnets	C	80+	3/86	FF
Reed Bunting	R	41	3/86	FF

Key: FF - Float Farm, SWL - Sheep Wash Lagoon, ** - nationally important numbers, * - regionally important numbers.

Waders

Every autumn Whimbrel pass through in July and August. They tend to frequent the pasture on the north banks of the valley, particularly near Float Farm, where a peak count of 23 was recorded on 31 July 1984. Smaller concentrations are scattered across the levels.

It is very difficult to estimate the total valley population, but with such an observational bias towards the Float Farm area, it seems reasonable to assume individuals are scattered throughout, on similar pastures. Therefore it seems quite probable that at least 50 individuals use the valley during peak migration, making it one of the most important regular autumn migration sites for this species in Sussex.

Spotted Redshanks, Common and Green Sandpipers are also regular autumn migrants.

Passerines

Hirundines form huge feeding flocks over the valley in the autumn. Peak counts for Swallows, House Martins and Sand Martins have reached 500, 3200 and 250 respectively. A local increase in numbers of Yellow Wagtails during early spring and autumn suggests it is a common migrant. Wheatears and Whinchats are common autumn migrants, the

former often congregating into flocks of 5-10 individuals. Both species favour short, sheep-grazed turf. Winter thrushes and the more common warblers are all regular and common migrants.

DISCUSSION

It is interesting to compare this survey's results with those of a breeding wetland birds survey on Pevensey Levels, which is an area of lowland grazing marsh similar to, and c. 15 miles to the south-west of, the Brede Valley. This site is ornithologically well documented and is 10,000 acres in extent. It is designated as a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), is listed as an internationally important wetland following the 'Ramsar' convention and is a candidate 'Special Protection Area' according to European Community Legislation. Where comparisons have been made, population figures have been taken from Hitchings (1987).

Passerines and Near-passerines

The Brede Valley holds particularly large breeding populations of wetland passerines, as demonstrated in Table II. While the breeding density of Yellow Wagtails is the same in the Brede Valley as it is on Pevensey Levels, it is almost 4 times greater for the Reed Warbler, two times greater for the Reed Bunting and nearly twice as great for the Sedge Warbler (cf. Table II).

The reasons for this difference can only be explained by looking at the area of suitable breeding habitat available. The general state of the wetland habitat is, if anything, better on Pevensey Levels than in the Brede Valley, where water levels tend to be lower and pastures more improved. However, the density of dykes is perhaps greater in the Brede Valley and the growth of aquatic vegetation, such as common reed and great reedmace, is probably much more prolific due to less rigorous clearance, more protection from grazing animals and very few cattle being grazed which have a more detrimental effect on dyke vegetation than sheep (Prater, 1987). So, while the Yellow Wagtail which relies more on the state of the pasture, has a similar density at both sites, the other three wetland passerines are more common in the Brede Valley as they rely on dyke nesting cover and, in the case of the Reed Warbler, particularly on the amount of common reed.

Yellow Wagtails in the valley seem to have suffered a slight decline since 1979 - following a national trend - but the decline is minor, particularly when compared to other areas of Britain. It seems probable that the species is holding its own in its traditional stronghold of South-east England. The populations of the other three wetland passerines seem to have increased recently, particularly in the case of the Reed Warbler. This is most likely due to an increase in dyke vegetation, encouraged by a lack of sheep grazing, either through a shift to arable land or through electric fencing preventing the sheep from grazing the ditches.

These important populations could be encouraged by future sympathetic management. The dykes should have a reasonable water flow to prevent them from silting up and drying out. Ironically, clearance is vital for the maintenance of the plant and animal communities. However, dykes could be cleared of excess marginal emergent vegetation on a 7-10 year rotation (which would benefit all wildlife) rather than the present annual one and any healthy reed-bed with good water flow should be left until work on it is really needed. Lower stocking rates would limit the grazing of the dyke vegetation.

Amongst other passerines, the Brede Valley holds particularly healthy populations of Linnet, Yellowhammer, Tree Sparrow, Nightingale, Robin, Blackbird, and Song Thrush. Of the near-passerines, the Turtle Dove population and nesting Kingfishers are of particular note. These birds could be encouraged by shifting back from autumn-sown to spring-sown cereal crops, as well as by the installation of nest-boxes or creation of nest sites for birds such as Kingfishers, owls and raptors.

Duck

The breeding duck population in the Brede Valley is very impoverished compared to the Pevensey Levels and could be due to the lower water levels and the smaller size of the area. The same can be said for wintering wildfowl, where over 15 years ago the valley would flood more regularly in the winter and correspondingly the wildfowl were much more numerous with a greater diversity of species.

Waders

The breeding waders are a particular cause for concern. The Lapwing has declined to under 20% of its 1979 levels and the Snipe and Redshank have disappeared as breeding birds. The two major reasons for this are the lower and increasingly controlled water levels - conditions created particularly by pump drainage schemes - and the higher stocking rates. Also these species rely on pasture or newly ploughed fields to breed, so any land which changes to arable becomes redundant for breeding waders. Lapwings suffer more from higher livestock densities (Prater, 1987), which is perhaps why the few breeding pairs that were found were on newly ploughed fields or small areas of non-stocked pasture. Similar declines have been noted on Pevensey Levels. Although Lapwings are still relatively common breeders (57 pairs in 1987), Snipe had declined by 83% from 1937 to 3 pairs in 1987 and Redshank had declined by 88% from 1937 to 12 pairs in 1987. However, it is likely that breeding waders were never as common in the Brede Valley as on the Pevensey Levels as 'sheep are less good (than cows) in producing a sward suitable for breeding waders' (Prater, 1987).

Wintering waders fair a little better with densities probably being comparable to those on Pevensey Levels and Green Sandpipers reaching particularly significant numbers. Lapwing numbers are regionally important and seem to occur at a similar density to those on Pevensey Levels, which is notable as the latter site regularly supports nationally important numbers (11,000+) in the winter. Undoubtedly the wintering wader population could be increased greatly if the water levels were raised.

SUMMARY

In summary, appropriate habitat management to encourage bird and other wildlife populations could be implemented and should involve having a good flow of clean fresh water along the dykes and a long cycle of dyke clearance, using a 7-10 year rotation. Ideally the area should be farmed on a traditional, low intensity system: this could involve a mixture of hay meadows with low stock density and low input grazing on other fields. The major key however, is the water levels and if levels could be raised this would greatly benefit wildlife. Perhaps summer pastures could be flooded on a rotation through the winter and early spring. However, to encourage breeding waders it is imperative that some areas are kept wet through to at least the end of May.

Grant-aid for such management are available for landowners/occupiers from several different schemes. For the Brede Valley at present the most relevant scheme seems to be the Countryside Stewardship, operated by the Countryside Commission. This makes provision for:

- the creation of scrapes, ponds, reed-beds, etc;
- less intensive farming methods;
- a return to traditional land-use;
- the management of dykes, water-levels and other conservation features.

(Countryside Commission, 1993).

MAFF's (Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food) new initiative - the Water Level Management Plan (WLMP), could provide the framework on which a more environmentally sensitive water level regime for the Brede Valley could be implemented. The main aim of

the plan is to improve the wildlife interest as well as taking into account the needs and requirements of other interested parties.

The WLMP aims to:

- identify all those with an interest in the area;
- consult the interested parties for their views on the plan;
- determine the required water level management regime and compare with current practice;
- set the overall objectives for the area.

Sites with identified water level management needs have been given to the relevant operating authorities. However, as the Brede Valley presently has no statutory protection and is little known, it has been omitted from this list of sites.

The procedural guide for the WLMP clearly states that 'priority will be given to'...proposed schemes... 'in nationally and internationally important sites' and that environmental enhancement should be considered particularly 'in those sites where there is known to have been a decline in interest' (MAFF, 1994). The Brede Valley clearly qualifies as such a site and a WLMP should be produced for the area.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion it is important that the area is given national statutory protection as soon as possible, particularly in the light of future road construction plans, and continuing general environmental degradation (e.g. dyke in-fill). It would also be desirable for landowners/occupiers and interested parties to plan and implement an integrated land management scheme with the main aim of environmental enhancement.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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THE CORN BUNTING SURVEY 1993-94

by L Manns

INTRODUCTION

In common with other farmland species (among them Skylark, House Sparrow, Goldfinch, Linnet and Yellowhammer), the Corn Bunting population in the United Kingdom has declined significantly in the last twenty years.

Results obtained by the British Trust for Ornithology from the Common Birds Census indicated a population reduction of 62% in the period 1977 to 1991 (Marchant and Gregory, 1993). Concerns arising from this led to the organisation by the BTO of a Farmland Bunting Survey in 1993, based on a random sample of tetrads (squares of 2km x 2km). The Society decided to take this opportunity of extending the fieldwork required for that survey into a full breeding season survey of Corn Buntings. The aims of this were to supplement the tetrad data already collected, produce an estimate of the current population and distribution and provide a basis for comparison with future studies. A Society survey of breeding birds had been carried out during 1977-80, but unfortunately no report was produced. The fieldwork for the current survey was mainly undertaken in 1993, with some additional work in 1994.

METHODS

The Society survey was based primarily on the mapping of singing males, with the provision of additional information regarding adjacent habitats, song-posts and the total number of birds seen at each location.

As usual for surveys on this scale, the Society's network of 10km square stewards was used. A request was made to the steward of each 10km square for which Corn Bunting records had been submitted to the Society. Maps on a scale of 3.5 inches to 1 mile (1:18,103), record sheets, instructions and lists of previous records were supplied.

Observers were requested to visit the sites of earlier records and any other suitable locations during the period mid-April to the end of June. Each singing male was plotted on the map and details entered on the record sheet of location, full Grid Reference, date of visit, total number of individual birds at the location and codes for habitat (land-use) and song-post. The habitat and song-post types are listed in Tables 1 to 3.

RESULTS

The data

A total of 660 singing male Corn Buntings was recorded, with a further 90 non-singing birds noted. The latter were clearly greatly under-recorded, probably because observers were concentrating on singing males and non-singing individuals tend to be inconspicuous.

Population

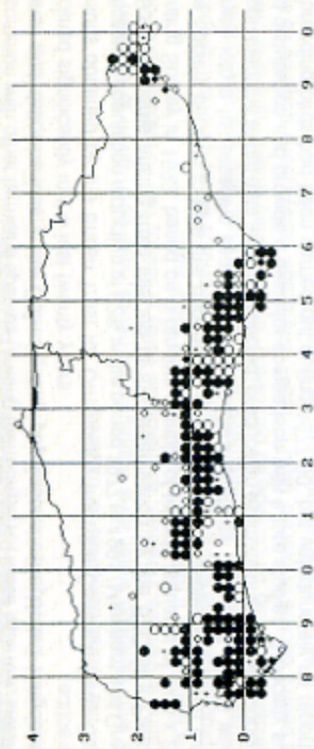
With the mating system being complex and the numbers of monogamous and polygynous males found to be variable within and between areas (Cramp, S and Perrins, CM (eds) 1994), estimates of population are notoriously difficult to produce. For the purpose of this paper and to produce baseline data for future comparisons, figures of singing males are used, rather than the customary pairs.

Distribution

Breeding season records were plotted on a map (see Fig. 1), which shows the 1993-94 survey records as open circles and the pre-1993 additional records and tetrad atlas records as 'open' circles. From this, it will be seen that the small and scattered breeding populations to the north of the Downs have been lost and the eastern population is now concentrated at Rye Harbour, East Guldeford Level and the eastern Rother Level. The

major strongholds of the species are now on the downland with the "lowland" holding a more scattered population at lower densities.

Fig. 1. Records of singing male Corn Buntings from the 1993-94 survey and of additional breeding season records from the period 1976-92



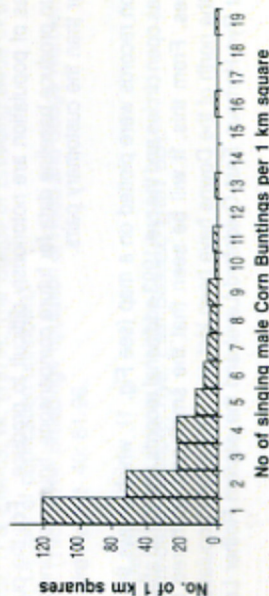
The 660 singing males were recorded in 239 one-km squares. Taking the downland figures separately gave a total of 479 territories in 151 one-km squares (an average of 3.2 per km²). The "lowland" figures were 181 territories in 88 km² (an average of 2.1), 34% less than the downland average.

The area of downland "available" to Corn Buntings (i.e. unwooded land) was calculated from the Ordnance Survey Landranger series of maps at a scale of 1:50,000, which produced an approximate total of 381 km². This gave an average density of 12.6 territories of singing males per 10 km², as compared with the average density of 30 to 40 territories per 10 km² on the Downs calculated by Shrubbs (1979). Even allowing for a difference of +/- 10% in arriving at the area of available downland and taking Shrubbs' minimum figure of 30 territories, there appears to have been a reduction in the downland population of between 53% and 62% since the mid-1970s.

As far as the coastal population was concerned, it was not possible to arrive at a reasonable calculation of the agricultural land available and therefore a valid comparison with Shrubbs' estimate could not be made. He found a density of 60 territories per 10 km², double that which was found on downland. Given that the 1993-94 survey, taking only the one-kilometre squares which had singing males, had produced an average density which was 34% less than on downland, it seemed likely that the reduction in the coastal populations had been very much greater (possibly even as high as 86%).

As shown by the graph in Fig. 2, population densities vary widely, ranging from one per km² up to a maximum of 19 per km² (at Sleep Down, Lancing). This variation is not new, having been noted by several observers, including Waipole Bond (1938) and Shrubbs.

Fig. 2. Number of singing males per 1 km square



Habitat types and usage

Tables 1 and 2 show the number and percentage of male Corn Buntings in individual and grouped habitat types. The preference for cereal crops is clear, with 51.1% of the records on downland and 49% on lowland. But provided the conditions are right, the species is prepared to use other crops and even grassland as can be seen by the 29.2% of downland Corn Buntings found on grassland and the 39.4% of those on lowland tilled sites which were from non-cereal crops. With 37.6% of the records associated with wheat and only 11.9% with barley it appears that, in Sussex, the species is not now the "fat bird of the barley". The disparity between the figures for autumn-sown (24.8%) and spring-sown (9.2%) cereals is an indication of the current preponderance of the former. A parallel study of land-use on a random sample of plots across the species' range would have been useful for comparison.

Table 1. Male Corn Buntings recorded in various habitat types

	Downs	% of Downs	Lowland	% of Lowland	All	% of total
GRASSLAND						
Chalk downland:						
Ungrazed	16	4.4	-	-	16	3.1
Grazed by cattle	4	1.1	-	-	4	0.8
Grazed by sheep	7	1.9	-	-	7	1.3
Total chalk downland:	27	7.4	-	-	27	5.2
Improved grassland:						
Ungrazed	13	3.6	-	-	13	2.5
Grazed by cattle	2	0.5	-	-	2	0.4
Other grazers	-	-	1	0.6	36	6.9
Cut for hay	10	2.7	2	1.3	12	2.3
Cut for silage	4	1.1	-	-	4	0.8
Total improved grassland:	64	17.5	4	2.6	68	13.1
Improved grassland:						
Ungrazed	10	2.7	2	1.3	12	2.3
Grazed by cattle	-	-	1	0.6	1	0.2
Grazed by sheep	4	1.1	-	-	4	0.8
Other grazers	-	-	2	1.3	2	0.4
Cut for hay	2	0.5	6	3.9	8	1.5
Total unimproved grassland:	16	4.4	11	7.1	27	5.2
TOTAL ALL GRASSLAND	107	29.2	15	9.7	122	23.4
TILLED LAND						
Bare earth	1	0.3	1	0.6	2	0.4
Root crops	3	0.6	1	0.6	4	0.8
Oil seed rape	21	5.7	12	7.7	33	6.3
Other green crops	29	7.9	23	14.8	52	10.0
Autumn-sown wheat	59	16.1	35	22.6	94	18.0
Spring-sown wheat	27	7.4	18	11.6	45	8.6
Autumn-sown barley	31	8.5	4	2.6	35	6.7
Spring-sown barley	3	0.8	-	-	3	0.6
(Not known) wheat	39	10.7	18	11.6	57	10.9
(Not known) barley	23	6.3	1	0.6	24	4.6
Oats	5	1.4	-	-	5	1.0
Other crops	11	3	25	16.1	36	6.9
Total all tilled land	252	68.9	138	89	390	74.9
OTHER FARMING	4	1.1	2	1.2	6	1.2
NON-FARMING	3	0.8	-	-	3	0.6
TOTAL ALL HABITATS	366		155		521	

Table 2. Male Corn Buntings recorded in various habitat type groups

	Downs	% of Downs	Lowland	% of Lowland	All	% of total
GRASSLAND						
Ungrazed	39	10.7	2	1.3	41	7.9
Grazed	52	14.2	5	3.2	57	10.9
Hay/silage	16	4.4	8	5.2	24	4.6
TILLED LAND						
Green crops	50	13.7	35	22.6	85	16.3
Autumn-sown: Wheat	59	16.1	35	22.6	94	18.0
Barley	31	8.5	4	2.6	35	6.7
Total autumn-sown	90	24.6	39	25.2	129	24.8
Spring-sown: Wheat	27	7.4	18	11.6	45	8.6
Barley	3	0.8	-	-	3	0.6
Total spring-sown	30	8.2	18	11.6	48	9.2
Total wheat	125	34.2	71	45.8	196	37.6
Total barley	57	15.6	5	3.2	62	11.9
All cereals	187	51.1	76	49.0	263	50.5

Song post types and usage

Table 3 shows the number and percentage of singing males using various song post types. The figures should be treated with some caution as they probably reflect song post availability, particularly on the Downs, rather than the males' preferences.

Table 3. Male Corn Buntings recorded using various song post types

	Downs	% of Downs	Lowland	% of Lowland	All	% of total
HEDGE:						
Grassland	6	1.6	-	-	6	1.1
Tilled land	7	1.8	20	13.0	27	5.1
No habitat data	1	0.3	-	-	1	0.2
Total	14	3.7	20	13.0	34	6.4
HEDGE WITH TREES:						
Grassland	4	1.1	2	1.3	6	1.1
Tilled land	4	1.1	11	7.1	15	2.8
Total	8	2.1	13	8.4	21	3.9
TREE LINE, NO HEDGE:						
Grassland	-	-	1	0.6	1	0.2
Tilled land	4	1.1	7	4.5	11	2.1
Total	4	1.1	8	5.2	12	2.3
ISOLATED BUSH:						
Grassland	22	5.8	9	5.8	31	5.8
Tilled land	62	16.4	31	20.1	93	17.4
Non-farming	3	0.8	-	-	3	0.6
No habitat data	4	1.1	-	-	4	0.8
Total	91	24	40	26	131	24.6
WIRE FENCE:						
Grassland	58	15.3	3	1.9	61	11.4
Tilled land	118	31.1	8	5.2	126	23.6
Other farming	4	1.1	-	-	4	0.8
No habitat data	8	2.1	-	-	8	1.5
Total	188	49.6	11	7.1	199	37.3
OVERHEAD WIRE:						
Grassland	14	3.7	-	-	14	2.6
Tilled land	9	2.4	28	18.2	37	6.9
No habitat data	1	0.3	-	-	1	0.2
Total	24	6.3	28	18.2	52	9.8

CONCLUSIONS

Results from the BTO Common Birds Census between 1973 and 1993 and the BTO Farmland Bunting Survey (Donald, 1994) indicated that there had been a 75% reduction in the British population to 20,000 territories and a contraction in its range. The decline has been linked to a reduction in winter food availability, mainly of weed seeds, but there are other factors involved, among them poor breeding performance because of a reduction in invertebrates for feeding young and the incidence of earlier harvesting.

Sussex Corn Bunting populations have clearly suffered as great a decline as those in other parts of the country, with the losses on the coastal plains being especially severe. This is a cause of considerable concern, in that the species is vulnerable to changes in agricultural practices which reduce food availability, particularly in winter. There are some current trends towards land-use which is not so damaging ecologically, for example the changes arising from the establishment of Environmentally Sensitive Areas and the Set-Aside schemes, but will the land area involved and its management be beneficial to our farmland birds?

The data from the present survey will be lodged with the Society's archives. It is suggested that the survey be repeated in 2003-04. Will we then see a further decline or can we hope for a turn-round in the fortunes of this archetypal farmland bird in Sussex, with perhaps a larger population and a return to the old Wealden breeding areas?

SUMMARY

A full breeding survey of the Corn Bunting was undertaken in 1993 in parallel with the British Trust for Ornithology's Farmland Bunting Survey. The basis of the Society's survey, which was completed in 1994, was the mapping of singing males to determine the range and population density of the species. A total of 660 singing males was recorded and was assumed to represent the number of territories. These ranged over 239 one-kilometre squares, of which 151 (with 479 territories) were on downland and 88 (with 181 territories) were on the "lowland" coastal areas. Information on the habitat (land-use) and song-post types was also recorded and the usage of these was analysed. It was concluded that the downland population had declined by 62% when compared with estimates made in 1979, and that the population on the coastal plains had declined to a much greater extent, possibly by as much as 88%. The reduction in the total Sussex population reflected the decline nationally and this was a cause for considerable concern. It was considered that only beneficial changes in agricultural land-use would ensure the future maintenance and improvement of populations of the species.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The author acknowledges the invaluable help given by the Society's 10km square stewards and their helpers, whose efforts in covering a major part of the county have resulted in the production of a sound baseline for future work. My grateful thanks also to John Newtham and Bob Edgar for their encouragement and useful comments on this paper.

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THE GREY WAGTAIL SURVEY 1993-94

by L. Manns

INTRODUCTION

At the end of 1991, the late SWM Hughes proposed that a full breeding survey should be undertaken on the Grey Wagtail. The last survey of the species was carried out between 1967 and 1969 (Merritt, Greenhalf and Bonham, 1969). The field work for the current survey was mainly undertaken in 1993, with some additional work in 1994.

METHODS

The late WD Hyde extracted from the Society's archives all the records from 1962 to 1992 relating to the breeding season, which was taken as the period April to July inclusive. From these were noted the site name, grid reference and the year of the latest record from the site. Field sheets, with this information and a set of instructions for the survey, were passed to the relevant 10km square stewards. They and their helpers were asked to visit the sites listed and any other potential breeding sites at least once during the months April to July. Observers were asked to enter the following information on the field sheets: site name and grid reference (if not already listed), date of visit, breeding status and a coded habitat description.

The breeding status was at three levels: confirmed breeding (collecting of nest material or food, young seen); probable breeding (pair seen); and single bird only seen. The habitats were coded under primary and secondary features and also river/stream features where appropriate (see Tables 2, 3 and 4).

RESULTS

Population

Breeding season records for the years 1993 and 1994 submitted to the Society on general record sheets have been incorporated into the survey data, to augment the breeding status information or to include otherwise unrecorded sites.

Grey Wagtails were recorded at a total of 215 sites. Breeding was confirmed at 103 of these and probable at a further 58 sites. Records of single birds only were obtained from the remaining 54 sites.

No birds were seen at 213 of the sites where Grey Wagtails had previously been recorded during the breeding season and a further 43 archived sites were not visited or were inaccessible. However, 76 sites were found where no previous breeding season records were known.

Fig. 1. Records of Grey Wagtails from the 1993-94 survey and of additional breeding-season records from the period 1976-92



Distribution

Breeding season records were plotted on a map (see Fig. 1), which shows the 1993-94 survey records as filled circles, with additional pre-1993 and tetrad atlas records as open circles.

Grey Wagtails are closely associated with water, especially streams and rivers which have water broken by falls, weirs, boulders, etc. The survey showed a well-marked distribution pattern relating to the county's river systems or other geographical areas. Table 1 shows the numbers of pairs and single birds recorded within each system or area, with the breeding numbers compared with those recorded by Merritt *et al* in 1967-69.

Table 1. The distribution of Grey Wagtails by river system

River system or Geographical area	Total 1993-94 Survey	Single birds 1993-94 Survey	Confirmed or probable breeding 1993-94	Confirmed or probable breeding 1967-69
Chichester	10	4	6	7
Wey	3	2	1	1
Rother (western)	34	4	30	40
Arun	27	4	23	24
Adur	7	4	3	13
Mole	13	5	8	5
Eden	1	-	1	1
Ouse	40	9	31	50
Medway	54	19	35	30
Cuckmere	10	1	9	3
Ashburnham	3	-	3	3
Astern	1	-	1	3
Rother (eastern)	12	2	10	13
TOTALS	215	54	161	193

Habitat types and usage

Observers recorded the habitat details at 177 of the sites where Grey Wagtails were seen (either pairs or single birds) and the results from these are shown in Tables 2, 3 and 4. As Merritt *et al* only analysed habitat details from sites where nests were found, no comparison with the data from the present survey can be made.

Table 2. Numbers of sites at which primary habitat features were recorded

Primary feature	No of sites
A. Pond or lake	80
B. Reservoir	5
E. River more than 2 metres wide	69
F. Stream or ditch up to 2 metres wide	62
H. Water mill	13
I. Industrial site	3
J. Water works	1
K. Sewage works	4
L. Garden	12
M. Park	1
N. Other	4

There were no records from gravel/sand pits (Code C), clay pits (Code D) or from canals (Code G).

Table 3. Numbers of sites at which secondary habitat features were recorded

Associated secondary feature	A	B	E	F	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	Totals
1. Natural waterfall	2	-	1	5	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	10
2. Outfall from pond or lake	48	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	50
3. Sluice gate	5	1	2	-	4	-	-	-	-	-	-	12
4. Weir	3	-	14	3	4	1	1	-	-	-	-	26
6. Bridge	-	46	20	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	68
7. Mill pool	4	-	-	-	5	-	-	-	-	-	-	9
8. Mill stream	4	-	12	5	5	-	-	-	-	-	-	26
9. Boat house	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	4
10. Adjacent buildings	11	1	9	-	-	2	-	2	2	-	1	28

The code letters for the primary features are those used in the headings of Table 2. There were no records from sites with lock gates (Code 5).

Table 4. Numbers of sites at which habitat features relating to rivers and streams were recorded

Habitat feature	River more than 2 metres wide	Stream or ditch up to 2 metres wide	Totals
Shallow (less than 1 metre)	40	55	95
Deep (more than 1 metre)	21	3	24
Muddy bottom	27	24	51
Gravel bottom	25	31	56
Water surface broken by boulders	15	13	28
Exposed muddy banks	13	8	21
Slope-sided banks (more than 1 m)	34	16	50
Ghyll or ravine more than 2 m deep	-	1	1
Tree-lined (open canopy)	35	28	63
Tree-lined (closed canopy)	8	16	24
Fallen trees in or across water	1	8	9

CONCLUSIONS

The Grey Wagtail increased its range in Britain during the twenty years to 1991 and estimates indicate that the national population in 1991 was not significantly different from that in 1972, although there had been fluctuations within that period (Gibbons, Reid and Chapman, 1993). This appears to imply that there has been a decrease in breeding density during that period, a view which has been borne out by indices prepared from the BTO's Waterways Bird Survey, which indicated an overall slow decline between 1974 and 1991 (Carter and Musty, 1992). Gibbons *et al.* found that there were only minor losses in the distribution of Grey Wagtails in Sussex.

There seems to be some shifting of breeding territories to nearby sites over a period of years or even between successive years. The total of 213 negative reports from sites with archived records appears to be high, but could be accounted for by long-term shifts of breeding localities. John Newnham (*pers comm*) has pointed out that as the archived data spans a period of 30 years, a shift of an average of 76 sites (the number of "new" sites located in the survey) in each ten-year period would give a theoretical "loss" of 228 sites in a span of 30 years.

The total of 161 pairs in the current survey is a 16.6% reduction on the 1967-69 survey total of 193 pairs. Some of the difference could be due to gaps in coverage in some areas during the current survey, but it does represent an apparent reduction in the Sussex population, despite the recent series of mild winters which should have helped the survival of Grey Wagtails. Results from the BTO's Nest Records Scheme show that the Grey Wagtail in Britain is one of a number of species which is increasingly successful in nesting, from egg-laying through to fledging (Crick, Dudley and Glue, 1995). It may be that a reduction in the Sussex population, on the scale noted above, could be the result of detrimental changes to habitats and breeding sites, perhaps exacerbated by increased disturbance from human activities.

The results from the present survey highlight the importance of the Arun/Western Rother and the Ouse/Meoway (Crawley to Crowborough) river systems, and also the influence of the surface geological strata noted by Merritt *et al.* The highest population densities were again found on the greensands in the north-west of the county and the sandstones in the north-east.

It appears that there is potential for an increase in the breeding population, provided that there is an adequate supply of food and available nest-sites. The National Rivers Authority is currently carrying out a pilot project on the River Arun involving the installation and monitoring of a small number of nest boxes (Ford, 1995). If breeding in these is successful and the project is extended, it could increase the breeding density in the areas covered. The data on habitat features to some extent reflects the survey instruction to select 1 or 2 each of primary and secondary features, and up to 4 river/stream features. But a few broad conclusions can be drawn from the 177 records with habitat data. There was a preference for sites with running water (131 records, standing water 85), especially where this was shallow (95, deep 24). Waterways with muddy beds (51) were used nearly as often as those with gravel (56), but this may have been a matter of availability rather than choice. Sites with a fall of water were more favoured (91 records), as were those which were tree-lined (87), even where the canopy was closed; these factors may have increased the potential invertebrate food supply.

The data from the present survey will be lodged with the Society archives. A repeat survey in future years would be valuable, but in the meantime more records, particularly of birds in the breeding season, would be welcomed by the Society.

SUMMARY

A full county breeding survey of the Grey Wagtail was undertaken in 1993 and 1994. The basis of the survey was a search of the sites for which there were records from the period 1962 to 1992 in the Society's archives and of other potential breeding sites. The species was recorded at a total of 215 sites, with breeding confirmed at 103 and probable at 58 sites; a single bird only was seen at each of the remaining 54 sites. The breeding records were grouped according to the county's main river systems and other geographical areas and compared with the results from a Society survey carried out in 1967-69. The total of 161 pairs in the current survey is a 16.6% reduction on the 193 pairs found in the 1967-69 survey. Some of the difference could be due to gaps in coverage in some areas, but it does represent an apparent reduction in the Sussex population and may be a reflection of the long-term decline identified by the BTO's national Waterways Bird Survey. There was concern about the large number (213) of negative results from sites with archived records, but this was partially offset by the location of 76 "new" sites and could be explained by long-term shifts in breeding localities. Information on associated habitats and river and stream features was also recorded in the survey and analysed. This confirmed the species' predilection for sites with running water which was broken by natural falls or man-made structures.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The author acknowledges his gratitude to the late SWM Hughes for his enthusiasm and support in the initial stages of the project and to the late WD Hyde for his research into the archives of the Society and for carrying out much of the administrative work. My grateful thanks also to the Society's network of 10km square stewards and their helpers; without the time and effort they expended on the extensive fieldwork, the survey could not have been completed. The very helpful comments on this paper from John Newnham and Bob Edgar were very much appreciated.

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