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**THE SUSSEX BIRD REPORT
NUMBER FORTY-EIGHT, 1995**

Recorder: RT Pepper

Editor: Mrs SJ Patton

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*Cover photograph of the Red-necked Phalarope, Mewsbrook Park,
Littlehampton, 23rd September 1995 by Les Bird*

Text Illustrations:

John Davis, Blackcap, Nightingale and Nuthatch

Bob Greenhalf; Common Sandpipers, Lapwings and Yellow Wagtails

Richard Kemp; Pochard, Buzzard, Glaucous Gull and Serin

John Reaney; Spoonbill, Short-eared Owl, Blackcap and Sparrowhawk

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EDITORIAL

My second year as Editor is also my last, external pressures having taken their toll. I hope that, this year, I have fine tuned the new presentation of the Sussex Bird Report.

The publication of the much-acclaimed 'Birds of Sussex' by the SOS this year was a milestone in the history of the Society and it is intended that the content of this Report, and future editions, will make the task easier for the next team of Avifauna writers at some point in the future.

Grateful thanks are due to the following writers of the species accounts, who can be identified by their initials; J Beesley, Mrs VP Bentley, Dr C Brooks, CB Collins, JES Cooper, DEG Copeland, DE Crawley, RJ Fairbank, JR Havers, JL Herring, JE Hobson, Dr JK Irons, Dr ME Kalaher, RJJ Kemp, R Knight, SH Linington, L Manns, MJ Mason, Dr JA Newnham, JL Nobbs, K Noble, Mrs SJ Patton, RT Pepper, R Pulley, Ms CR Taylor, Dr AB Watson and Dr BJ Yates.

I would like to offer special thanks to the following people, without whom this Report would not have been completed; RJ Fairbank, Dr JK Irons, P James, Dr JA Newnham and PT Patton - my long-suffering husband!

Sarah J Patton.

Sussex Bird Report 1994: *Amendment to paper on Corn Bunting Survey 1993-94.*

In the notes on Distribution, reference is made to the map on which the breeding season records were plotted. The 1993-94 survey records were referred to as open circles, whereas they are, in fact, the filled circles on the map.

Photographic acknowledgements:

Les Bird - Red-throated Diver and Dotterel.

RDM Edgar / S.McKenzie.- Pallas's Warbler.

Dave Sadler - Little Auk.

Peter Wilson - Fulmar, Quail, Ringed Plover, Little Gull and Kittiwakes.

REVIEW OF 1995

by JA Hobson

INTRODUCTION

At the time of writing (late September), well over 300 records have been received by the Recorder of birds Unusual to either Britain or Sussex. Of these, 26 have not been accepted for various reasons but over 250 have been accepted for publication in 'British Birds' and/or this Report. The remainder are in various stages of consideration by either the British Birds Rarities Committee or our own Records Committee.

Unfortunately, a number of reports of Unusual birds, although included in the quarterly Newsletter, have not been substantiated by written descriptions submitted to the Recorder. These have, therefore, been regarded as unauthenticated claims denoted by an asterisk * in the following account. Other records still being considered by the various committees are denoted by a hash #. Any observers with unsubmitted descriptions of such birds are asked, please, to submit them to the Recorder as soon as possible, preferably on the standard form – it's still not too late!

It is hoped that the recent publication by the Society of the booklet '*Guidelines for the Submission of Records*' will both prompt and remind all finders of Unusual birds of the importance of submitting a full written description (with accurate O.S. map reference) so that the Society's and Britain's records may be as complete as possible – without spoiling the enjoyment of their hobby (small 'h' – no pun).

January started cold and icy but the month was dominated by south-westerly airstreams bringing heavy rain and generally mild conditions. The month turned out to be the wettest for 50 years with local floods in many areas. The same weather systems brought catastrophic floods to the Continent.

Those keen enough to venture out on the 1st could have been rewarded with a **Grey Phalarope** at Selsey Bill, a **Water Pipit** at Thorney, a **tristis Chiffchaff** at Church Norton, **Red-necked Grebes** at Emsworth and Rye, a **Marsh Harrier** on East Guldeford Level or a wing-tagged **Red Kite** at Selmeaton. Other wintering birds at this time included **White-fronted Geese** at Pulborough Brooks, a **Goosander** at Arlington, a **Long-tailed Duck** and a **Black-necked Grebe*** at Rye Hbr, 4 **Avocets** and a **Ruddy Shelduck*** from 1994 at Pagham Hbr, 2 **Whimbrel** at Thorney Island and 20 **Scaup** at Scotney Court GP. Six **Water Pipits** at Combe Haven on 2nd were joined later by 2 **Dartford Warblers** while another at Beachy Head and a **Firecrest** at Hollingbury Camp were also notable as were 8 **Chiffchaffs** at Thorney Island where there were 1 or 2 **Cetti's Warblers** through to April. Sea watching between 3rd and 9th produced a number of **Great** and **Arctic Skuas** while inland there was a second-winter **Iceland Gull** on 8th at Weir Wood Res. **Common Scoters** at Pett Level totalled 220. **Smew** were scarce with redheads only at Pett Level and Weir Wood Res. On 11th, 8 **Bewick's Swans** on Glynde Levels were the most seen in the month while a wintering

Common Sandpiper was nearby and a **Bittern** was flushed by a dog at Rye Hbr the following day. **Merlin**, **Firecrest** and **Black Redstart** were all seen at Beachy Head on 13th and up to 11 **Black-throated Divers** were at various locations including 6 off Splash Point, Seaford during the month.

South-easterly gales on 17th brought a **Grey Phalarope** to Shoreham while another, or the same, was at Pett Pools from 22nd. On 19th a **Red-crested Pochard** of unknown origin was on Bewl Water. More strong winds on 21st brought a variety of gulls to various parts. The regular wintering **Glaucous Gull** was at Selsey until March and **Mediterranean Gulls** and **Little Gulls** were at several places. A count at Thorney Island on 23rd produced 15 **Jack Snipe** but only 66 **Little Egrets** – down from 77 the previous month. On 29th a **Glaucous Gull** at Church Norton was thought to be different from the usual one at Selsey. More interestingly, 2 **Shorelarks** were at the Sovereign Harbour Marina, Eastbourne and stayed into April; the first multiple record since 2 at Bexhill on 19th January 1985. Seekers of these also found a **Red-necked Grebe**, a **Jack Snipe** and a **Red-crested Pochard** in nearby Princes Park. A **Great Grey Shrike** was present in Ashdown Forest through to late April. Finally, on 31st, 3 **Water Pipits** were found in the North Fields, Pagham Hbr.

February continued very wet and mild with rain being recorded on at least 20 days at Rye Hbr.

The month began with a count of 2000 **Golden Plovers** on Thorney Island, 2 **Firecrests** in Brighton and 2 **Great Northern Divers** in Chichester Hbr. On 3rd, 2 **Lapland Buntings**, a **Bearded Tit** and 12 **Bewick's Swans** were in the Adur Valley and an oiled **Red-throated Diver** was at Arlington Res. A **Great Skua** flew past Seaford on 5th and a **Glaucous Gull** was seen in Chichester Hbr. A **Great Grey Shrike** was at Pulborough Brooks from 7th to 8th when a single **Scaup** was at Chichester GPs. A **Great Grey Shrike** found at Shinewater Marsh, Willingdon on 8th stayed into April. On 9th a **Cetti's Warbler** was at Castle Pit, Rye and 3 **Water Pipits** were seen at Apuldram. One lucky observer on 15th saw, unusually, a summer plumaged **Black Guillemot*** fly past Brighton Marina. On 17th, a **Great Northern Diver** was off Pilsey Island but, more unusually, a **Swallow** was seen at Rye Hbr just 2 months after the last one had left the county on 14th December – was it early or had it remained behind? **Mediterranean Gulls** were seen at several places during the month, including 4 summer-plumaged adults; Shoreham's total was at least 12 during the winter. **Dartford Warblers** were present at Brighton racecourse and Hollingbury Camp while 6 **Avocets** and 2 **Long-tailed Ducks** were in Pagham Hbr. On 20th an early **Garganey** was seen at Woods Mill then, on 22nd, an immature **Iceland Gull** went to roost with other gulls at Pagham Hbr and 6 **Twite*** claimed would be an excellent find at No Mans Land near Cissbury Ring if authenticated. At the end of the month a **Hen Harrier** was at Pulborough Brooks on the 26th, a **Woodlark** at Newhaven Tide Mills on the 27th was unusual and an adult male **carolinensis Green-winged Teal** was in the North Wall area of near Pagham Hbr from 28th until late March.

March began cold with some sleet and snow but the rest of the month alternated between cold northerlies and warmer southerlies.

Despite the weather a **Firecrest** was singing in St. Leonard's Forest on 1st. Wintering visitors included 2 **Water Pipits** at Thorney Island from 3rd, a **Ruddy Shelduck**# at Pagham Hbr and 4 **White-fronted Geese** and a **Hen Harrier** at Rye Hbr. On 4th, 3 **Little Gulls** and a **Red-necked Grebe** were at Pagham Hbr. Early summer visitors were another early **Garganey** at Weir Wood Res on 3rd, the first **Chiffchaff** at Rye Hbr on the 4th and a **Wheatear** at Climping on the 5th with 2 there the next day. **Great Northern Divers** were still in evidence during the month along the coast. Sea watchers in south-easterly winds at Seaford and Beachy Head on 10th counted 112 **Avocets** in 6 flocks, including one of 33 birds, and over 2000 **Common Scoters**, 50 **Gadwall**, 200 **Pintail** and 26 **Black-tailed Godwits**. **Ospreys** appeared at Arlington Res on 10th & 12th. On 11th, a **Black-necked Grebe** was seen off Hove and again on 22nd from Seaford.

Early migrants included a **Whimbrel** at Shoreham and 2 **Wheatears** at Thorney Island on 10th and an unauthenticated **Serin*** over Selsey Bill on 11th, the first **Ring Ouzel** was at Hollingbury Camp while 2 **Scandinavian Rock Pipits*** were claimed at Shoreham and 5 **Firecrests** were at Church Norton. The 12th produced a **Sandwich Tern** at Pagham Hbr while **Wheatears** were reported widely and a **Sand Martin** was at Littlehampton. Mist and fog then delayed arrivals until the following week. A **Bittern** was seen at Rye Hbr on 15th. A **Red Kite** seen at Ringmer the next day and another – or possibly the same – seen there on 24th was thought to be the same as 1 at Arlington in August 1994. On 18th, migration picked up again with a small arrival of migrants along the coast. On the 19th no less than 16 **Water Pipits** were counted at Combe Haven, 3 **Garganey** appeared at Pulborough Brooks on 20th and a migrant **Short-eared Owl** appeared at Beachy Head on the 21st. A return of south-easterly winds on 22nd brought a movement of **Sandwich Terns**, small numbers of **Velvet Scoters** and **Little Gulls** and 17 **Scaup** past Selsey Bill and Seaford Head where there were also 5 **Black-necked Grebes**. At Pilsey 263 **Sanderlings** roosted and both **Long-** and **Short-eared Owls** were on nearby Thorney Island. On 23rd, single **Swallows** appeared at Arlington Res and Beachy Head followed, two days later, by many more at a number of sites accompanied by widespread reports of **Sand Martins**, with 23 at Pulborough Brooks. On 24th, an **Osprey** was at Weir Wood Res, 2 more **Garganey** arrived at Cuckmere Haven and **White Wagtails** were at a number of sites. On 25th, over 100 **Bramblings** in a large finch flock flew over Ambersham and a **Spotted Redshank** remained at Newhaven Tide Mills. The first **Willow Warbler** was reported from Thorney Island on the 29th. After some cold winds, warmer conditions on 30th produced 70 **Sandwich Terns** off Seaford, the first **Yellow Wagtail** of the year at Rye Hbr, the first **Cuckoo** of the spring at Barcombe Res and 2 **Little Ringed Plovers** at Pulborough Brooks, following singles there on various days through the month. **Buzzards** were reported from a number of sites suggesting an increase in numbers breeding in the county.

April was generally dry and was particularly warm in the first half. From mid-month conditions were cooler with winds mostly from the north.

The warm, dry start to the month encouraged an influx of migrants including a second **Cuckoo** and several firsts for the year – **House Martins** at Arlington Res, a **Redstart** at Pagham Hbr and a **Tree Pipit** at Sheepcote Valley on 3rd, which was a late date for a **Bittern** at Rye. Good numbers of **Willow Warblers** were seen at several locations over the next few days while **Common Terns** were at Chichester GP. At Thorney Island, 57 of March's 66 **Little Egrets** remained but numbers then fell off dramatically due to aggressive behaviour by a pair of Carrion Crows. On 3rd, 5 **Purple Sandpipers** at Brighton Marina and 250 **Golden Plovers** at Thorney were noteworthy. The 4th brought 2 **Serins**, 2 early **Pied Flycatchers**, a **Marsh Harrier** and a **Little Ringed Plover** to Pagham Hbr, 5 **Redstarts** and a **Brambling** to Beachy Head and another **Pied Flycatcher** to Goring. Counts of **Wheatears** were also impressive with 50 at Pagham Hbr, 64 at Selsey Bill and 70 at Sovereign Harbour Marina.

On 5th, the month's rarest bird was a **Little Bittern** which stayed at Shoreham Sanctuary for a few days. The 6th produced 2 **Sedge Warblers** at Thorney and 2 **Garganey** were at Pulborough on 7th. An **Iceland Gull*** showing characteristics of the North American 'Kumlien' race was also claimed at Pebsham tip. On 8th, a **Ring Ouzel** was found at Balsdean, a **Scaup** was at Chichester GP and **Redstarts** continued to turn up at various locations. The next three days brought more firsts for the year with a **Reed Warbler** at Shoreham and 3 **Whitethroats** at Arlington Res, a **Whinchat** at Sheepcote Valley and a very early **Spotted Flycatcher** at Climping and a **Grasshopper Warbler** to Hollingdean, Brighton. More **Serins** turned up with singles at several locations. A **Great Grey Shrike** was at Ashdown Forest and **Short-eared Owls** were seen at Beachy Head and Pevensey Levels on 12th. **Garganeys** continued to arrive with 3 at Pevensey Levels. On 13th, another **Dotterel** was found and the first of only 3 **Hoopoes** for the year appeared at East Wittering. Rye Hbr recorded no less than 115 **Sandwich Terns**. On 14th, 5 **Ring Ouzels** were at Balsdean. Two days later the first **Lesser Whitethroat** arrived before colder northerly winds inhibited migration, although the first 2 **Black Terns** made it past Seaford on 18th and a second **Hoopoe** was at Pagham. The 19th produced a **Blue-headed Wagtail**, the first **Turtle Dove** of the year at Beachy Head and another **Grasshopper Warbler** at Selsey Bill. **Ospreys** were at Arlington Res until 21st and at Beachy Head on 20th. Also on 20th, a **Blue-headed Wagtail** was found at Arlington Res and remained until 21 July. A summer plumaged **Red-necked Grebe** was seen at Seaford on 22nd and **Manx Shearwaters** continued to pass over the next few days. On 23rd, the first **Swift** appeared at Brighton Marina, the first **Roseate Tern** flew east past Selsey Bill and a **Red-throated Pipit#** showing signs of summer plumage was claimed (but not reported to the Recorder until September 1996) at Littlehampton GC. Sea watching was productive with 11 early **Pomarine**, 42 **Arctic** and 3 **Great Skuas** seen along

the coast. Inland a **Black Tern** was at Barcombe Res and a **Common Buzzard** flew over Steyning. A **Caspian Tern** flew west past Selsey Bill on 24th; **Ospreys** continued to feature. Another **Roseate Tern** was seen at Pilsey on 25th and a **Spoonbill** was at Pagham Hbr the next day before moving to Thorney Deeps where 2 **Little Stints** remained until 3rd. The 28th produced a notable passage of 97 **Little Terns** past Selsey Bill where the first **Wood Warbler** was seen coming in off the sea while a male **Kentish Plover** was found at Littlehampton. A **Wryneck** at Icklesham that day was the only authenticated spring record. The 29th provided 2 more **Roseate Terns** at Selsey Bill, a **Curlew Sandpiper** at Thorney, 2 **Grasshopper Warblers** in the Ouse Valley and a passage of 2000 '**Comic**' **Terns** and 139 **Little Gulls** past Seaford Head where, on 30th, a **Hobby** flew in. The 30th produced the most unusual record for the spring, an immature **Sabine's Gull** flying east at Worthing.

May was hot with generally calm conditions until the 9th when cooler and more unsettled conditions prevailed. The last week was warmer with occasional showers and south or south-east winds.

The month began with a latish **Red-necked Grebe** at Selsey and **Puffins** flying past Worthing on the 1st followed (between 2nd and 5th) by an excellent passage of **Pomarine Skuas**, with no less than 116 being counted past Newhaven on the first date and 33 more, rather late, passed Seaford on 22nd. Occasional **Manx Shearwaters** also passed by. A report has yet to be received for a briefly-seen male **Rustic Bunting*** claimed at Pagham on 2nd. May was also a good month for migrant raptors. These included a **Black Kite** over East Dean on 7th, a number of **Marsh Harriers**, a **Honey Buzzard** at Selsey on 3rd and another over Gardener's Hill on 21st, a male **Montagu's Harrier** at Ashcombe Bottom on 6th and an unauthenticated **Red-footed Falcon*** claimed at Rye Hbr on 8th. **Ospreys** were fairly widespread. One at Arlington on 8th was joined by another on 13th whence they called, raising hopes that they might breed somewhere in England. Others included one at Thorney Island and one in the Cuckmere. A **Woodchat Shrike** was a nice find on 9th near Hope Gap. From 13th, **Hobbies** were increasingly seen, heralding an excellent spring for this species. **Goshawks** were also seen at a few places and a male **Red-footed Falcon** was at Cuckmere Haven from 10th to 11th. A good passage of **Roseate Terns** continued with some lingering – a welcomed change from the usual brief spring fly-pasts. An unauthenticated **Lesser Crested Tern*** past Rye Hbr on 7th was claimed as different from the regular Farne Islands bird. On 9th, a **Temminck's Stint** began a week's stay at Sidlesham Ferry, another at Arlington Res was a good inland find. Also on 9th, 9 **Pied Flycatchers** graced Selsey Bill and 4 more were at Beachy Head where a **Red-rumped Swallow** may have been the same as one found later at Arlington Res. **Dotterels** on Gardener's Hill, Newhaven increased from 3 to 6 between 14th & 21st. At Thorney Island, a **Little Stint** was present from 12th to 13th and a male **Dotterel** appeared from 18th to 20th. A **Long-tailed Skua** lingered briefly at Bexhill on the 14th and on 16th a **Wood Sandpiper** visited Waltham Brooks. On 20th, Beachy Head had a good spring record in the shape of a **Woodlark** while 5 **Spoonbills** flew

past there. One of these, or another, was seen later in the Cuckmere and a **Wood Sandpiper** was at Sidlesham Ferry. On the 22nd, a female **Goosander** that flew past Beachy Head was totally out of season and a passage of 2500 **Common Scoters** past Seaford was very late. On 27th, a male **Kentish Plover** was at Newhaven for the weekend and a **Quail** called at Beachy Head. Two **Gull-billed Terns** which went to roost at Rye Hbr on the evening of 28th were not seen the next morning. A very late **Red-necked Grebe** was seen at Splash Point, Seaford and a summer plumaged **Black-throated Diver** was seen off Widewater, Lancing on 31st.

The first half of **June** was cool with northerly winds. After the 15th, warmer but unsettled conditions prevailed but temperatures increased and brought hot conditions by the month's end.

It was, not unexpectedly, a quiet month for migrants although some unusual birds did appear. On 4th, a young male **Common Rosefinch** was found singing in Charleston Reedbed. Raptors continued to turn up with a **Red-footed Falcon** seen at Rye Hbr on 10th, another **Marsh Harrier**, more **Ospreys** and a **Honey Buzzard***, which apparently flew into power cables at Arlington Res and was taken into care. On 6th, a **Great Spotted Cuckoo*** was claimed at Cuckmere Haven and another **Spoonbill** was found at Thorney. On 10th, a **Grey-headed Wagtail** was at Beachy Head and 22 **Manx Shearwaters** were seen 6 miles off Brighton by fishermen. A colourful find at Coldean, Brighton on 12th was a particularly pink **Rose-coloured Starling** which fed in gardens until 14th, the second year running for this species. The third **Kentish Plover** for the spring was present at Thorney on 14th followed by a **Curlew Sandpiper** there from 16th. An immature **Common Rosefinch*** was claimed for Beachy Head on 18th. The rest of the month was very quiet, the only significant interest being a **Squacco Heron** seen briefly in Paghams Hbr on 19th and a **Golden Oriole** at Pulborough Brooks on 21st, the year's only authenticated record. On 29th, **Garganeys** were present at 4 sites including 3 displaying at one. Up to 9 pairs of Buzzard bred in the county, along with 6-7 pairs of Peregrines which raised up to 8 young. Eight pairs of **Little Ringed Plover** produced at least 6 young but the 41 pairs of **Little Tern** at Rye Hbr only managed to raise 5 offspring. About 51 pairs of **Nightjar** bred and two pairs of **Cetti's Warblers** were successful at Thorney Island.

July continued hot and generally dry with a very occasional shower. Winds were mostly from the south.

The month began with a minor flurry of, unfortunately, unauthenticated claims of unusual birds with a **Red-backed Shrike#** at Paghams Hbr, **Honey Buzzards#** over Weir Wood Res and **Golden Orioles#** at Withdean, Brighton and at Sidlesham. A **Great Reed Warbler** was trapped at Icklesham on 1st. A juvenile **Red-backed Shrike** found in Whitbread Hollow, Beachy Head on 5th stayed until 8th when a **Montagu's Harrier** was seen at Balsdean while a **Black Redstart** at Hodcombe, Beachy Head might have been indicative of local breeding. One of the strangest records of the summer was of a **Bittern** found, in poor health, sitting in a tree in Worthing. It was

taken into care, it recovered and was released at Minsmere complete with radio transmitter.

Returning migrants appeared with some staying a week or more. A juvenile **Red-backed Shrike** paused in Whitbread Hollow, Beachy Head, a **Curlew Sandpiper** visited Sidlesham Ferry and a **Spotted Redshank** dropped in to Rye Hbr where a **Black-necked Grebe** appeared on 16th. The 19th produced the rarest bird of the period with the county's second record of **Least Sandpiper** at Sidlesham Ferry until 25th. Another nearctic vagrant followed when an adult **Pectoral Sandpiper** began a 15-day stay at Ternery Pool, Rye Hbr from the 23rd. Other records there in the next couple of weeks included 5 **Garganey** and a **Wood Sandpiper**. Three **Ospreys** were seen during the month. Meanwhile, small numbers of **Mediterranean Gulls** were seen at several locations and single **Roseate Terns** appeared at Selsey. **Little Egret** numbers increased dramatically to over 100 in the county including 56 at Thorney Island and 50 at Old Park Wood but there was no evidence of breeding. On 26th, a family of 5 **Cetti's Warblers** was found at Apuldram and, at Pilsey, a thunderstorm was followed by the year's 4th male **Kentish Plover**, 16 **Curlew Sandpipers** and 14 **Little Stints**. More rare waders appeared on the last day of the month when a **Marsh Sandpiper** was seen at Pett Level and a **Stone Curlew*** claimed at Pett Pools, staying into September. A summer plumaged **White-winged Black Tern**, the first for the year, which arrived at Thorney on 31st and stayed in Chichester GPs area until 6th August.

August continued very hot with temperatures often exceeding 30°C. Cooler conditions with northerly winds and showers prevailed from the 27th.

On 1st, a **Wood Sandpiper** appeared at Rye Hbr, with 2 there the following day and another **Common Rosefinch** was seen briefly in the Sidlesham area. Nearctic waders continued their good run when a **White-rumped Sandpiper#** was at Sidlesham Ferry from 5th to 8th. Also on 5th, 3 **Garganey** were at Drayton GP, Chichester and a **Wood Sandpiper** and an **Arctic Skua** were at Pett Level. On 7th, an inland **Kittiwake** at Arlington Res was unusual and an **Aquatic Warbler** trapped at Icklesham was the first of an incredible 16 caught there that autumn. On 8th, an obliging **Spotted Crake** arrived at Weir Wood Res, to be seen easily over the next 7* days and 160 **Greenshanks** roosted at Thorney. On 11th, an **Avocet** was another good inland record for Arlington Res while an out of season **Bittern** at Pett Level on 12th was at Icklesham later in the month. On 13th, a **Black Stork** drifted over Beachy Head and next day 2 **Wood Warblers** were found in Woodvale Cemetery, Brighton. A **Quail** was heard calling at Pulborough Brooks on 12th and the ringers at Icklesham scored yet again when they trapped a **Spotted Crake**, the first of 6 during the autumn, while at Arlington Res a **Little Gull** began a month's stay. On 19th, a **Thrush Nightingale*** was claimed for Whitbread Hollow, Beachy Head. A very early **Black-throated Diver** flew past Selsey Bill on 20th. A **White Stork** was at Pett Level on 23rd and 24th. On 24th, the first autumn **Wryneck** appeared at Rye Hbr. Arlington Res continued to be worth watching with a **Mediterranean Gull** there on 21st

and 7 **Black Terns** on 23rd. Also on the 21st an **Aquatic Warbler** was at Thorney. On 24th, the only autumn **Dotterel** found was at Pilsey Island and a **Quail**, grounded by a rare rain storm, was found at Horsham, taken into care and released the next day. Another **Quail** was seen at Thorney on the 25th when a **Garganey**, 2 **Wood Sandpipers** and 2 **Little Stints** were at Rye Hbr. On 27th, a juvenile **White-winged Black Tern** appeared at Westhampnett GP, Chichester, staying until the 30th and an elusive juvenile **Pectoral Sandpiper** was at Pett Pools from 28th to 3rd September. The next day an unauthenticated **Common Rosefinch*** was also claimed there and a **Corncrake** was found at Birling Gap. The following day the regular **Glaucous Gull** returned to the lifeboat station at Selsey for its 11th year. Raptor movements during the month were represented by **Honey Buzzards** over Weir Wood Res and Cradle Hill, Seaford, the occasional **Marsh Harrier**, including a dark juvenile over Seaford and Friston and a total of 8 widely spread **Ospreys**. During the month, numbers of **Little Egrets** at Thorney at last topped the 100 mark with 112 by 31st.

The drought broke on 2nd **September** with heavy rain and the rest of the month was generally unsettled with further heavy rain at times.

Migrants continued to pass through in good numbers and included some heralds of winter in the shape of **Merlins** and a good variety of raptors during the month. These included **Hen Harrier**, several **Marsh Harriers**, a number of **Ospreys** and **Hobbies** during the middle period. There was an unauthenticated report of a **Honey Buzzard*** over Climping and **Common Buzzards** totalled 14 of which 7 were seen at Pagham Hbr. Unusually there were 2 **Peregrine Falcons** over Mewsbrook Park. On 2nd, an **Avocet** was a good inland find at Arlington Res, an elusive **Wryneck** began a 16 days stay at Shooter's Bottom, Beachy Head, an unauthenticated **Black Stork*** flew over Sidlesham Ferry and a **Temminck's Stint** stayed awhile at Pett Pools. Inland, a **Black-necked Grebe** was at Arlington Res and a **Turnstone**, unusually, at Weir Wood Res. On 3rd, a different **Temminck's Stint** arrived at Icklesham and a **Wood Warbler** was found at Beachy Head. In the west, a **Red-backed Shrike** was in the Sompting area until the 4th and an unauthenticated **Purple Heron*** was claimed at Pagham Hbr and again (on 4th) at Thorney, where a **Ruddy Shelduck** of unknown origin also turned up. On 6th, an early **Red-breasted Flycatcher*** was claimed in Hastings and a **Cuckoo** was at Barnham. Strong SW winds on 7th brought single **Pomarine Skuas** past Eastbourne and Selsey Bill, a **Grey Phalarope** to Sidlesham Ferry Pool and movements of **Arctic Skuas** and **Manx Shearwaters**. However, reports of **Storm Petrels*** being seen off Shoreham at this time and during the early autumn have not yet reached the Recorder. At Rye Hbr on 7th there was an **Aquatic Warbler** and a **Wryneck** and another of these was at Fairlight on 18th. On 9th, the first **Redwing** of the winter appeared and possibly the year's last **Cuckoo** departed Whitbread Hollow. South-easterly winds on 10th were accompanied by a large fall at Beachy Head, which included the county's second **Greenish Warbler**, a **Stone Curlew** at

Cuckmere Haven and **Tawny Pipits**, including a 1st year at Rye Hbr and an adult at Littlehampton the next day. On 13th, 2 **Dotterels*** were claimed on the Downs at Balsdean and again on 19th while Pagham Hbr hosted a **Wood Sandpiper** around this time. On 14th, there were 2 **Black Terns** at Chichester GPs. On 16th, an immature **Ortolan Bunting** arrived at Rye Hbr and 9 **Swifts** were at Beachy Head. On 17th, a **Cetti's Warbler** was trapped and photographed at Church Norton. On 18th, 2 juvenile **White-winged Black Terns** were seen at Ivy Lake, Chichester, one staying until the 29th. A **Red-throated Pipit*** was claimed and a juvenile **Red-backed Shrike** was at Pagham Hbr from 20th-22nd. On 21st, an approachable **Red-necked Phalarope** was at Mewsbrook Park, Littlehampton until 23rd when a more elusive one* was claimed at the Severals, Church Norton, only to be picked up dead on the 27th. At Birling Gap that day a **Lapland Bunting** flew over, a latish **Swift** and a **Dartford Warbler** were seen with another 2 at Thorney. On 24th, the last **Wryneck** of the year was seen at Denton, Newhaven, a **Little Gull** flew inland at Seaford and a **Sooty Shearwater** was seen off Selsey Bill on 26th. A **Glaucous Gull** was in Chichester Hbr on 29th. The month closed with the **Little Egret** count at Thorney reaching a new height of 132 out of a county total of 171 – the year's maximum for the county.

October weather continued to break records being the warmest for 300 years in some parts with temperatures reaching 23°C. Winds were predominantly from the south and the end of the month was dry.

Strong winds at the start of the month brought an increase in the numbers of sea birds seen including an immature **Sabine's Gull** at Selsey Bill on 4th. On 3rd, 16 **Little Stints** were counted near West Wittering. On 5th, a dead **Corncrake** was picked up at Chailey and a **Red-backed Shrike** began a 4-day stay in Whitbread Hollow. At Rye Hbr, **Black Terns** were recorded and **Hobbies** were seen at a number of sites to the end of the month. The 8th was the hottest October day for 10 years and what could be – if authenticated – the county's second record of **Crag Martin*** was claimed on a brief sighting at Beachy Head. Other unauthenticated reports were of a **Melodious Warbler*** at Sidlesham Ferry and an **Ortolan Bunting*** at Rye Hbr. **Cetti's Warblers** were ringed at Charleston Reedbed and at Icklesham during the month. On 9th, counts of 199 **Greenshanks** and 40 **Bearded Tits** were made at Thorney. The next day the third **Hoopoe** of the year was in Selsey West Fields and a **Richard's Pipit*** was claimed at Chanctonbury Ring. Another unauthenticated report was of **Red-throated Pipit*** at Church Norton on 11th. South-easterly winds on 13th brought a **Yellow-browed Warbler** to Brighton Racecourse. Next day, a **Penduline Tit** trapped at Icklesham enhanced the ringing group's tally for the autumn to which they added a **Radde's Warbler** on the 15th, the first of 3 for the county this year, and a **Bluethroat** the following day. On 17th, a latish **Tree Pipit** was seen at Castle Hill and on 18th a **Red-backed Shrike** arrived at Thorney to stay the rest of the month. **Dartford Warblers** were widely recorded with about 20 seen on 19th including 6 at Thorney. Winds returned to the east on 21st; the first **Pallas's**

Warbler of the autumn was seen at Beachy Head and **Black Redstarts** started to appear. There was a late **Whimbrel** at Pagham and a later **Spotted Flycatcher** at Seaford. The last **Osprey** passed along the cliff edge at Beachy Head on 22nd where there was a fall of 20 **Firecrests** and a **Red-breasted Flycatcher** stayed for 2 days. Also on 23rd, another **Radde's Warbler** was seen briefly at Church Norton, a **Whooper Swan** was in Pagham Hbr and a **Barn Owl** was a good record for the Sheepcote Valley. The following day an unconfirmed **Glossy Ibis*** began a 3-day stay near Rye Hbr. Another **Pallas's Warbler** was at Beachy Head on 28th with 2 there on the 30th and 1 until 1st November. On 29th, a dead one* was on show there having flown into a window in Eastbourne a few days earlier. What a way to go after such a flight! **Lark** and **Wagtail** passage was notable around this time with 4 **Woodlarks** and 42 **Grey Wagtails** at Church Norton. On 29th, a **Richard's Pipit** flew over Climping, another was claimed* at Beachy Head and a **Barred Warbler** was at Church Norton. A **Great Grey Shrike** was found on 22nd and another on 29th and 31st in Ashdown Forest where singles were seen to the year's end. The month ended with 3 **Lapland Buntings** at Church Norton and a **Bittern** at Rye which stayed into December.

November fluctuated between cold and mild conditions although generally it was more unsettled with winds mostly between the south-east and south-west.

On 2nd, an obliging **Radde's Warbler** (the 3rd of the year) appeared at Beachy Head but stayed only one more day to the frustration of many. In the west, no less than 56 **Yellow-legged Herring Gulls** roosted at Pagham where a **Yellow-browed Warbler** was seen on 1st and it, or another, seen also from 6th to 9th. On 3rd, the ringers at Icklesham scored again with a first-year **Little Bunting** and the first signs of what were to be record numbers of **Little Auks** for the county began to appear as a result of cold northerly winds which had brought them down into the North Sea. At least 59 were seen including one inland at Weir Wood Res. On 4th, a **Whooper Swan** flew E past Seaford and 3 **Twite** were found at Cuckmere Haven. The first **Snow Bunting** appeared at Pett Level on 4th, followed by a few more in the area over the next few days. On 5th, a juvenile **Pomarine Skua** flew past Beachy Head and next day another **Lapland Bunting** turned up on Littlehampton GC. **Water Pipits** had moved in for the winter by 4th when one was trapped at Icklesham. Another was found at Thorney on 5th with 2 there on 13th. Another unauthenticated record was of one* at Shoreham on 9th. **Black-throated Divers** began to appear and Siberian warblers continued to arrive; a **Pallas's Warbler** at Littlehampton on 14th was joined by a **Yellow-browed Warbler** on 15th, both staying until the 16th. Late migrants on the 17th included 2 **House Martins** at Rye Hbr and a **Wheatear** at Thorney Island. Inland, a **Little Stint** visited Pulborough Brooks on 21st and an immature **Shag** turned up at Barcombe Res on 22nd followed by a 7 adults at Bewl Water on 28th and 3 **White-fronted Geese** over Ivy Lake on 30th. At least 7

Firecrests were wintering in one area in Brighton at the month's end. **Little Egrets** at Thorney reached 144, the highest total for the year there.

December was much colder with snow showers at the beginning and the end of the month with a brief mild spell in-between. Despite the conditions, 1995 turned out to be the mildest year since records began in 1659.

The month started with a **White-fronted Goose** at Hollingbury and, by the end of the month, 45 at Scotney GP. A **Cattle Egret**# was, unfortunately, picked up dead at Madehurst on 3rd. On 6th, a **Pink-footed Goose*** was claimed at Rye Hbr. **Divers** become more evident with 9 **Black-throated** past Seaford on 16th and 6 at Bexhill on 30th. **Swans** also reappeared with a **Bewick's** at Rye Hbr on the 3rd and 54 at Pulborough on the 22nd. Wintering ducks were fairly common. A good inland record was of 13 **Eiders** at Barcombe Res on the 16th while both **Common** and **Velvet Scoters** were to be seen offshore. A few **Smew** were seen during the month; 5 including 2 males at Chichester GP, 1 at Barcombe Res and another 5 at Scotney Court GP. Winter visitors included a few **Snow Buntings** at Newhaven Tide Mills and Brighton Marina, **Black Redstarts**, including 5 at Southwick and a **Lapland Bunting** at Rye Hbr on the 30th. On 10th, an unauthenticated **Common Crane*** was claimed flying over Chichester and on the 20th an out-of-season **Sandwich Tern** was at Selsey. On 23rd, a major county rarity appeared in the shape of a **Black Guillemot** at Brighton Marina which stayed into 1996. Other sightings during the month included **Bittern** on three dates at Rye Hbr, up to 12 **Avocets** at Pagham, some widely located **Hen Harriers** and 2 **Great Grey Shrikes** in Ashdown Forest. The year ended with a count of 150 **Little Egrets** in the county including 135 on Thorney Island.

CLASSIFIED RECORDS FOR 1995

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 - sewage 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.

Sea-watching records were received from several sites. The following table lists the hours watched in each month from 5 locations where logs were kept and details of times recorded.

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
Selsey Bill	31	17	77	231	199	16	21	10	47	51	35	10
Worthing	3	1	32	43	57	1	8	16	8	5	5	5
Newhaven	6	-	8	41	45	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Seaford	23	42	54	120	103	-	-	-	26	18	30	31

Tables included in accounts for wetland bird species refer to the monthly Wetland Bird Survey (WeBS) counts which are undertaken on a set date each month during the winter.

0002. RED-THROATED DIVER

Gavia stellata

Fairly common winter visitor and passage migrant.

Approximate monthly totals were:

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
139	41	41	40	23	1	4	92	155

During the first winter period, monthly totals at 3 seawatching sites indicate a quiet season:

	January		February		March		April		May		
	W	E	W	E	W	E	W	E	W	E	
Selsey Bill		65	18	4	1	1	10	2	30	2	16
Worthing Beach		-	-	-	-	-	5	-	12	-	3
Splash Point, Seaford		6	5	-	19	-	5	-	16	-	7

Elsewhere offshore, a flock of 14 flew W past Jury's Gap on 3 Jan, up to 20 were off Pett Level in Jan with 10 there on 5 Feb, 19 were off Newhaven on 8 Jan with 12 there on 11 Mar and 8 were recorded at Beachy Head on 10 Mar.

Away from the open sea, during Jan-Mar, individuals were reported from Rye Hbr on 11 dates, Scotney Court GP on 11 Jan, Darwell Res on 22 Jan, Arlington Res on 3 Feb (a heavily oiled bird), Pett Pools on 18 and 19 Feb, Pilsey Island on 28 Feb (moving to Thorney Deepes by 3 Mar), Sovereign Hbr Marina on 16 Mar and, finally, another badly oiled individual on 31 Mar in Emsworth Channel. A dead oiled bird was found at Pett Level on 13 Mar.

As with Black-throated Diver, easterly spring sea passage in Apr and May was unexceptional with 46 (and 4 W) at Selsey Bill, 15 at Worthing Beach

and 23 at Splash Point, Seaford. Away from these sites, records include 2 in Pagham Hbr on 1 Apr, 20 E at Beachy Head on 23 Apr and 1 (oiled) at Scotney Court GP on 8 May. The last of the spring were singles at Selsey Bill and Splash Point, Seaford on 22 May.

The first returning bird arrived offshore at Pett on 29 Sept. The next was off Church Norton on 23 Oct followed by singles W at Selsey Bill on 24 and 25 Oct. Numbers offshore were generally low through to the end of the year, the exceptions being 35 off Rye on 8 Nov and 18 E on 16 Dec and 24 E on 30 Dec at Splash Point, Seaford. During Nov-Dec, Selsey Bill totalled 12 E and 19 W while Splash Point, Seaford recorded 92 E and 2 W.

Away from the open sea, records for the latter part of the year were singles at Pilsey Island on 29 Oct, at Langley Point pit on 15 Nov (which was probably the individual seen in Sovereign Hbr Marina on 21 and 23 Nov), at Pagham Hbr on 20 and 21 Nov, at Pilsey Island again on 23 Nov and at Shoreham Hbr on 26 Nov. [SHL]

0003. BLACK-THROATED DIVER

Gavia arctica

Scarce winter visitor and passage migrant.

Monthly totals were approximately:

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
11	5	9	43	23	1	-	-	6	20

There were 6 E off Splash Point, Seaford and 3 off Selsey Bill during Jan. On 14 Jan, there was 1 in Newhaven Hbr and 1 at Scotney Court GP. In Feb, 4 more were recorded at Splash Point, Seaford and 1 was in Sovereign Hbr Marina on 17th. In Mar, there were 2 E off Beachy Head on 10th, 1 E off Splash Point, Seaford on 15th, 1 W off Selsey Bill on 18th, 1 E there on 23rd and finally 3 E off Worthing Beach on 22nd when 1 was also off Church Norton.

Eastbound coastal passage in Apr and May was relatively light with approximately 65 recorded including 17 (and 1 W) at Selsey Bill, 3 at Worthing Beach, 8 at Brighton Marina, 21 at Newhaven, 28 at Splash Point, Seaford and 34 at Beachy Head (30 of which were on 23 Apr).

A summer-plumaged bird was offshore at Widewater, Lancing on 31 May and the next was an exceptionally early individual W past Selsey Bill on 20 Aug, only the 2nd county record for the month. There were none then until 5 Nov when 1 was off Selsey Bill and Littlehampton. Singles were subsequently recorded in Nov at Lower Chichester Channel, Goring, Splash Point (Seaford), Langney Point/Sovereign Hbr Marina and Rye Bay and in Dec at Pilsey Island, Lower Chichester Channel, Selsey Bill, Worthing Beach and Langney Point. At Splash Point, Seaford a total of 9 were recorded during Dec and there were 6 E at Bexhill on 30 Dec. [SHL]

0004. GREAT NORTHERN DIVER

*Gavia immer***Very scarce winter visitor and spring passage migrant.**

At least 4 individuals were seen, fewer than in recent years. In the first winter period, two birds were feeding off East Head, Chichester Hbr on 2 Feb (TJE), single birds were seen off Pilsley Island on 17 Feb and 6 Mar (CBC), 2 adults were offshore from Birling Gap, Beachy Head on 10 Mar (JFC), 2 were at Pilsley Island on 18 Mar and one in Emsworth Channel the next day (CBC). In the second winter period, single birds were off Pilsley Island on 4-5 Nov and 18 Dec (CBC), one flew E past Selsey Bill on 21 Nov (TJE) and one first-year bird was off East Head, Chichester Hbr on 13 Dec (TJE). [SJP]

DIVER SPECIES*Gavia sp.*

Numbers of divers that could not be identified to species moving offshore during Jan-May were as follows:

	January		February		March		April		May	
	E	W	E	W	E	W	E	W	E	W
Selsey Bill	16	18	7	35	20	1	44	1	14	2
Worthing Beach	2	-	3	-	33	1	24	-	15	1
Splash Point, Seaford	254	56	282	15	191	14	120	-	47	-

The number of divers seen per hour watched increased from West Sussex to East Sussex with 0.28 at Selsey Bill, 0.58 at Worthing and 2.87 at Seaford. The largest numbers at Splash Point, Seaford were 74 E in 1.5 hrs on 6 Jan, 120 E in 2.5 hrs on 27 Feb, 53 E in 7.5 hrs on 10 Mar and 63 E in 11.25 hrs on 23 Apr. Overall, numbers were lower than usual and this is reflected in the species accounts for both Red-throated and Black-throated Diver.

At Selsey Bill, 52% of all divers were identified to species on seawatches during Jan-May compared to 23% at Worthing Beach and 10% at Splash Point, Seaford. A number of factors may account for these differences, including the distribution of sightings during Jan-May; if more birds are seen later in the period when they are often in summer plumage and therefore easier to identify, a higher proportion will be recorded to species. As usual, rather more Red-throated than Black-throated Divers were noted during these first 5 months of the year.

Small numbers (4 or less on each date) were seen offshore during the period 30 Sept-30 Nov. In Dec, at Selsey Bill 1 E and 22 W were recorded while at Splash Point, Seaford a total of 304 flew E. [SHL]

0007. LITTLE GREBE

*Tachybaptus ruficollis***Scarce resident, passage migrant and winter visitor.**

The monthly counts at the principal sites were as follows:

	1995						1996			
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar
County totals	117	166	116	151	202	202	246	150	122	136
Chichester Hbr	15	50	13	25	49	53	100	42	25	45

Pagham Hbr	7	5	5	16	15	13	20	11	6	9
Chichester GP	17	8	13	24	15	11	8	10	17	4
Cuckmere	16	30	12	10	16	15	9	22	15	21
Haven										
Bowl Water	40	44	47	26	57	42	32	16	17	24
Rye Hbr	16	19	21	43	38	46	39	28	29	26

Monthly maxima at selected wintering sites were as follows:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
Thorney Island	40	35	37	32	41	115	86
Lower Cuckmere	16	17	12	8	-	-	-
Northpoint GP	28	7	10	2	7	7	14

Breeding activity was reported from 21 sites. Those where young were recorded included Bowl Water where 3 broods produced at least 6 young, Thorney Deeps where 6 young were reported from 2 pairs, Pagham Hbr with 8 adults and 13 young on 18 Aug, Barns Copse, Binsted where a pair raised 4 young on an isolated pond and Holmbush Farm, Faygate with 3 juveniles from a second brood in Aug. From the 4 pairs at Ternery Pool, Rye Hbr, there was only 1 young bird seen early in the season and 1 or 2 seen later. At Pett Level, 3 pairs nested successfully, as did birds at other sites which included Chichester GP, Gravetye Lakes, Holmgate Forest, Isfield, South Heighton and Wiston Pond.

Late-year sightings away from the principal sites included Aldingbourne Rife, Arlington Res, Barcombe Res, Icklesham, Marsh farm near Yapton, The Pells at Lewes and Scotney Court GP. [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:

	1995						1996			
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar
County totals	214	205	261	228	321	249	160	203	162	286
Chichester Hbr	22	33	15	2	12	17	17	23	5	33
Pagham Hbr	7	4	2	12	34	32	5	10	11	7
Chichester GP	37	28	41	54	52	39	41	37	23	10
Shillinglee Lake	2	3	8	nc	7	15	-	13	4	13
Ardingly Res	8	7	12	7	11	10	nc	7	13	20
Weir Wood Res	53	28	56	5	29	12	nc	43	26	68
Barcombe Res	31	-	3	1	11	-	2	-	1	-
Arlington Res	12	19	21	44	41	25	23	5	5	9
Bowl Water	23	60	69	51	74	43	20	38	24	36
Darwell Res	18	23	24	35	25	34	nc	13	27	30
Pett Level	1	2	2	-	-	-	21	1	2	2
Rye Hbr	18	15	21	3	7	6	12	6	14	26

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

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
Weir Wood Res	65	40	61	17	29	49	93
Arlington Res	12	15	22	61	41	25	23
Bewl Water	23	60	69	51	74	43	20
Darwell Res	18	23	24	35	25	34	nc

The earliest reports of birds showing courtship behaviour were in Feb and Mar. With nest-building reported at Warnham LNR on 1 Apr, the first breeding success was not recorded until the end of the month, when 2 young were seen with 72 adults at Bewl Water. Similarly, although breeding occurred at a minimum of 12 other sites, including Pett Level, Tilgate Park (near Crawley) and Knepp Lake (where 1 young was associating with 4 pairs of adults) and Balcombe Lakes, numbers of young seen continued to be low, with Weir Wood Res reporting only 2 broods of 2 and 1 in Aug and Darwell Res only managing 7 immatures and 3 juveniles from a total of 48 adults reported earlier. There were 3 pairs on the Narrow Pits at Rye Hbr which produced only 1 young between them and no young were recorded from the 6 pairs seen elsewhere on the LNR. Breeding activities continued into Sept, a family with 4 young were at Warnham LNR on 13th and a pair still on the nest at Knepp Lake on 19th with a solitary juv in attendance.

In Dec there were 16 birds "all round Thorney" on 8th, 9 off Worthing Beach on 9th and 10 off Goring Gap on 10th. 30 Dec saw 3 at Brighton Marina and 7, including 5E, at Splash Point, Seaford. [JKI]

0010. **RED-NECKED GREBE**

Podiceps grisegena

Scarce winter visitor and passage migrant.

Singles were reported at both Emsworth Channel and Northpoint Pit, Rye on 1 Jan and there were reports from 10 sites during the month. Emsworth Channel continued to record 1 or 2 birds for the first 3 months of 1995, followed by a gap until 26 Dec. Reports from other traditional sites continued through Apr and there were 2 records for May; from Selsey Bill on the first day of the month and from Splash Point, Seaford on the last, the second-latest county record..

The first autumn bird was seen at Pagham Hbr on 8 Sept, swimming with a group of Great Crested Grebes. The Pagham area continued to provide the great majority of records, always of singles, for the rest of the year. At Brighton Marina there were 2 and 1 birds on 24 and 25 Dec respectively. The only inland records were from Arlington Res in Jan. [JKI]

0011. **SLAVONIAN GREBE**

Podiceps auritus

Scarce winter visitor and passage migrant.

The approximate monthly totals were as follows;

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	Oct	Nov	Dec
24	64	66	7	5	62	46

In Jan, the Selsey Bill group reported a total of 5 W, together with 2 and 1 offshore on 10 and 18 Jan respectively. The bulk of the other records for the

month came from the Pagham area, with a maximum of 11 on 25th. Thirteen birds were in the Lower Chichester Channel on 2 Feb and at Pagham Hbr on 14th, while at Selsey Bill there were 10 W on 25th and 5 W on 10th and 26th.

A single in summer plumage was seen with 4 others at Pagham on 26 Mar. Selsey reported 9 E and 8 W over 6 days of observation and Splash Point, Seaford recorded 4 E for the month. Apr records were very sparse with 2 E at Brighton Marina during 5.5 hrs of seawatching on 23rd and Newhaven West Pier ending the month with 2 on 30 Apr.

As with last year, the first autumn report on 13 Oct was from Church Norton. During the following month there were a number offshore at this site, with a maximum day count of 21 on 22 Nov: elsewhere, the highest record was of 5 at Goring Beach on 7 Nov. The pattern remained the same for the last month of the year, with 32 seen offshore at Church Norton on 12th and singles offshore at Selsey Bill and Cuckmere Haven on 30th. [JKI]

0012. **BLACK-NECKED GREBE** *Podiceps nigricollis*

Very scarce winter visitor and passage migrant.

A single bird was offshore at Hove on 11 Mar (TJW), a group of 5 birds (2 in summer plumage) was seen on the sea off Splash Point, Seaford on 22 Mar (WRT, SHL) and a summer-plumaged bird was on Scotney Court GP on 6 May (CFB, ASG, PC). A juvenile was found on Ternery Pool, Rye Hbr on 16 July (ADW) which stayed until 30th. There has only been one other July record for the period from 1962-94, coincidentally, of a single at Rye Hbr on 16 July 1988. A winter-plumaged bird was at Arlington Res on 2 Sept (DHo, WRT). [SJP]

0020. **FULMAR** *Fulmarus glacialis*

Fairly common breeding species and passage migrant, resident on coastal cliffs from November to September.

Movements at the main seawatching points were as follows:

Direction	Jan - Feb		Mar - May		June - July		Aug - Oct	
	E	W	E	W	E	W	E	W
Selsey Bill	1	28	152	344	11	20	15	30
Worthing	-	6	63	50	-	3	1	7

The largest reported movement was 30 E in 2.75 hours at Brighton Marina on 8 May. Breeding was under-reported with the only record from Newhaven Cliffs of 10 nests on 24 June. [KN]

0043. **SOOTY SHEARWATER** *Puffinus griseus*

Very scarce autumn visitor.

One flew E past Selsey Bill on 26 Sept (TJE). [SJP]

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

In Apr, 2 birds flew W past Selsey Bill on 22nd (TJE, BJC, OM), one passed Newhaven on 23rd (EDU), 5 flew E at Splash Point, Seaford on the same date between 06:28hrs and 08:00hrs (PJ, WRT *et al*) and 1 flew W past Selsey Bill on 28th (TJE). On 1 May, a bird which flew E past Selsey at 06:35hrs was presumably the same bird which was seen flying W at the same site at 07:25hrs (TJE), one also flew E past Worthing at 07:45hrs on the same day (JAN, DIS *et al*). Three birds flew E at Selsey on 17 May (TJE) and 2 flew E past Splash Point, Seaford on both 28 and 29 May (WRT, NG). Twenty-two birds passing a fishing boat 6 miles SW of Brighton Marina on 10 June posed a dilemma for the birdwatcher who was occupied trying to land a 60lb Tope! (NJT, RG). Several hundred birds seen in the same area the previous day were reported to be also of this species. One flew W past Eastbourne on 7 July (WRT) and another W past Selsey on 18th (TJE). Finally, one flew E past Selsey on 14 Sept (TJE). [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	46	25	305	416	216	132	557	412	30	61
Worthing	-	-	113	73	11	14	80	95	6	2
Seaford	172	35	719	79	-	-	507	344	492	160

As usual, the spring movements at Seaford and Beachy Head were strongly to the E while more passed W at Selsey Bill. The busiest passage period was in late Apr and early May, for example 29 E on 23 Apr at Brighton Marina, and 45 E on 1 May at Beachy Head.

In the autumn, 55 were off Church Norton on 8 Aug and 150 flew W past Eastbourne on 24 Sept. On 1 Oct, 67 flew E and 21 W in 2 hours at Worthing. There were 105 off Church Norton on 23 Oct and on 21 Nov, 159 passed E off Seaford, most within one hour.

Inland records were of an adult found dead under power lines near Barcombe on 13 Jan and an immature flying south over the Arun Valley near Pulborough on 27 Nov. [KN]

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

The monthly counts at the principal sites were as follows :

	1995						1996			
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar
County totals	285	337	268	319	552	455	483	417	394	401
Chichester Hbr	20	45	27	40	50	43	16	33	23	17
Pagham Hbr	22	75	44	33	160	158	129	102	83	204

Chichester GP	129	167	112	33	37	37	54	39	45	2
Adur Levels	12	7	nc	nc	nc	2	4	3	19	2
Weir Wood Res	16	34	31	32	34	32	5	25	36	45
Barcombe Res	14	4	9	-	1	1	30	10	12	0
Bewl Water	30	34	18	36	55	33	30	34	27	21
Rye Hbr	16	9	22	73	123	67	121	38	27	42

Counts of nocturnal roosts in the western half of the county showed that the WeBS survey results listed above recorded only a portion of the growing Cormorant population. Simultaneous counts of nocturnal roosts were carried out at Chichester GP and South Stoke on WeBS dates, whilst regular monthly counts were sent in for the Upper Adur. The figures were as follows:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
Chichester GP	129	167	112	nc	nc	71	nc	167	157	220	197	242
South Stoke	59	69	59	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	33	25	136	154
Upper Adur	103	78	46	48	nc	nc	63	97	124	137	130	118

Unfortunately there were no reports for nocturnal roosts in the east of the county apart from 24 roosting on electricity transmission lines in Lewes Brooks on 2 Jan. No figures were given for the known roost at Northpoint Pit, Rye or from the possible roost on Fairlight Cliffs. In June there were 14 nesting pairs at Fairlight but there were no follow up reports as to their breeding success. A surprisingly large number of non-breeding birds spent the summer in coastal areas as can be seen from the occasional counts in the table above. Furthermore, at Rye Hbr Ternery Pool the number of birds on the daytime lounging roost actually built up to a maximum during the summer months as follows:

Mar	Apr	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
1	23	56	59	124	174	125	119	97	52

Many inland sites, particularly the reservoirs, reported high monthly maxima. An example was Weir Wood Res as follows :

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
49	57	47	37	16	9	21	28	66	43	32	100

Some other interesting figures from the wealth of inland reports were 17 at Folly Pond near Liphook on 10 Mar, 50 at Barcombe Res on 19 Nov, 55 at Knepp Lake on 25 Nov, and 20 in nocturnal tree roosts at Ardingly Res on 27 Dec. This last was the only clear record of a nocturnal roost which was probably used solely by birds feeding at inland sites; other such inland roost sites almost certainly existed. Pagham Hbr intertidal sandbanks and Bognor Regis Pier continued to hold major daytime lounging roosts; the former held 122 birds on 24 Oct whilst there were 123 at the latter on 12 Dec. At Thorney Deep an exceptional 53 birds were recorded on 24 Nov. There was an isolated report of 172 Cormorants at Scotney Court GP on 15 Jan but it was not clear if these were at a lounging roost or a nocturnal roost. For the future it would greatly help in assessing total numbers, movement and distribution of the species if reports clearly differentiate between daytime lounging roosts and nocturnal roosts. [RK]

0080. **SHAG**

Phalacrocorax aristotelis

Scarce winter visitor and passage migrant.

Still a scarce bird in the county with approximate monthly totals as follows:

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

More interesting records included 4 E off Brighton Marina on 8 May and a small influx at the end of Sept and early Oct when there were 3 off Selsey Bill, 2 at Brighton Marina and 3 at Langney Point. Inland, an immature was at Barcombe Res on 22 Nov and 7 adults were at Bewl Water on 28 Nov. [SHL]

0095. **BITTERN**

Botaurus stellaris

Very scarce winter visitor.

A good number of sightings and an interesting range of dates during the year. The first was flushed by a dog at Rye Hbr Ternery Pool on 12 Jan. Another was at Rye Hbr Narrow Pit on 15 Mar and presumably the same individual was still present on the late date of 3 Apr. The next sighting was of one on the early date of 12 Aug at Pett Level. It was reported to be present through to the end of the year. This may have been the individual seen at Icklesham on 16 dates between 18 Aug and 18 Nov and assuming it didn't wander that widely, another was at Rye Hbr on 30 Oct and then 4, 12 and 29 Dec. On this last date, one was also at Ford in the Arun Valley, bringing the annual total to at least five. [SHL]

0098. **LITTLE BITTERN**

Ixobrychus minutus

A rare vagrant.

An adult male at Shoreham Sanctuary and in adjoining ditches below Mill Hill from 5-9 Apr (JAN *et al*) has been accepted by *British Birds*. It is the 30th to be recorded in the county and the first since the individual picked up in Hove was released on Oreham Common in spring 1988 (SxBR 41:17 & 88-89). [RJF]

0108. **SQUACCO HERON**

Ardeola ralloides

Very rare vagrant.

A wary adult was seen briefly along ditches beside the western edge of Pagham Hbr during the morning of 19 June (LGH) and has been accepted by *British Birds*. It was not seen again, although most observers were unaware of its occurrence for several days and so were not immediately able to look for it. It is only the 5th county record and the first since 1982 which was also in mid-June, near Mannings Heath. [RJF]

0119. LITTLE EGRET

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

The approximate minimum monthly totals were as follows:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	July	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
<i>County Totals</i>	73	68	70	68	15	16	105	168	171	162	161	150
Thorney Deeps	66	64	66	57	7	7	56	112	132	140	144	135
Old Park Wood	-	-	-	-	-	11	50	18	35	-	-	-
Pagham Hbr	6	4	4	9	2	4	5	20	23	14	13	11
Cuckmere	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	5	5	5	3	2
Rye Hbr	-	-	-	-	1	1	5	8	3	3	-	1

The invasion continued to gain momentum, with a minimum of 236 birds recorded in the county, compared to 158 in 1994. During Jan-Mar, all the records came from Chichester and Pagham Hbrs, except for a single bird at Etchingham on 14 Jan. Counts at the Thorney Deeps roost were 66 on 23 Jan, 64 on 20 Feb, 66 on 15 Mar and 57 on 1 Apr. Thereafter, numbers dropped dramatically due to the aggressive behaviour of a pair of nesting Carrion Crows. Two Little Egrets were seen doing a dance display at this site on 6 Mar and at least 7 summered in Chichester Hbr.

Spring seawatches produced 5 records: 1 W at Selsey Bill on 10 Apr and, in May, 1 E at Selsey Bill and Worthing Beach on 1st, 1 E at the latter site on 4th, 1 W at Beachy Head on 7th and 1 W at West Beach, Littlehampton on 19 May.

On 2 occasions, birds were observed going into the roost at Thorney Deeps just before dawn, indicating that they are probably migrating at night as some of their genus do; they are not being observed much on seawatches, considering the large numbers involved. A new roost was established at Old Park Wood, Bosham during the autumn, with a maximum of 50 on 25 July, decreasing to 31 on 31 July, 18 on 31 Aug, increasing again to 35 on 13 Sept, thereafter declining rapidly to 2 on 20 Sept. Co-ordinated counts were carried out in Chichester Hbr, as follows: 87 on 31 July, 130 on 31 Aug and 139 on 13 Sept. Counts at the Thorney Deeps roost built up rapidly in July and, once again, this became the stronghold, with 19 on 24th, 56 on 31st, increasing to 69 on 5th, 97 on 16th, the 100 barrier being surpassed with 106 on 25th and 112 at dawn on 31 Aug. Thereafter, numbers continued to increase to 132 on 28 Sept, 140 on 7 Oct and an unprecedented 144 coming into roost at dusk on 1 Nov (109 of these came from Hampshire) falling to 135 on 4 Dec. There were 2 spells of cold weather in Dec; the first from 4-11th, reducing the roost to 96 on 11th, whilst the second from 24th-28th saw overnight temperatures down to -10° C, so reducing the roost still further to 77 on 26 Dec.

Autumn seawatches produced two records, of 5 W at Worthing Beach on 2 July and 1 W at Birling Gap on 4 Nov. Other notable records were of 8 at Rye Hbr from 4-8 Aug, 13 at Pilsey Island on 9 Aug and 4 Sept and 23 at Pagham Hbr on 9 Sept.

Inland records were of single birds, as follows: Etchingham on 14 Jan and 25 Apr; Hurst Green on 5 Apr; Weir Wood Res on 14 May and 30-31 Aug;

Arlington Res on 26-28 July and 1-3 Aug; Ardingly Res on 31 July; Iford on 11 Aug; Willingdon Level on 14 Sept and finally Steyning on 27 Dec. [CBC]

0122. **GREY HERON**

Ardea cinerea

Fairly common resident.

All known heronries were counted. In 2 or 3 the proportion of the nests which were definitely occupied was low but, with this proviso, the total of nests was 204 which is considerably more than the 177 counted in 1994. The counts were as follows; Fishbourne 10, Pagham 6, Flansham 21, Parham 15, Henfield 29, Firl 16, Knepp 16, Eridge 7, Glynleigh 9, Westham 0, Wartling 10, Horsebridge Wartling 13, Winchelsea 2, Leasam 32, Iford 1, Gillham's Moor 2, Warnham LNR 1, Charleston 9, Hadlow Down 4, Westbourne 1, Burpham 0. The single nest at Burpham in 1994 was not repeated and the Westham site is extinct. Nine heronries increased, 6 decreased and 4 remained the same. At Fishbourne the number of nests has declined to 10 from the 37 recorded in several years since 1962, whilst the Flansham, heronry 13km to the east, has grown from 1 or 2 nests first noted in 1987 to 21 this year.

There are records of Herons in suitable habitat throughout the county all through the year. Many are of single birds or of up to 4 and there are also larger counts of groups at regular loafing sites such as at Thorney (18 on 9 Oct) and New Salts Farm, S Lancing (17 on 21 Aug). Counts such as 10 at Darwell on 13 Aug, 18 at Weir Wood Res on 4 Aug and 15 at Bewl Water on 10 Sept include loafing groups and individual foraging birds. At Rye Hbr the WeBS counts for Jan, Feb and Mar were respectively 2, 1 and 4 Herons, whereas at the end of the year loafing birds at Castle Water alone were 14 on 10 Sept, 18 on 8 Oct, 16 on 12 Nov and 25 on 10 Dec. Lumping all WeBS counts from the Pett Level, Icklesham and Rye Hbr areas gives totals of 33 in Sept, 31 in Oct and Nov and 35 in Dec.

The monthly counts at the principal sites were as follows:

	1995							1996		
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar
<i>County totals</i>	52	93	81	161	190	153	147	112	72	66
Chichester Hbr	9	20	4	25	34	21	20	11	5	10
Pagham Hbr	2	12	4	18	27	15	26	17	6	5
Chichester GP	6	2	3	4	8	10	11	5	4	1
Pulborough	3	25	9	7	7	2	3	3	-	9
Brooks										
Lower Ouse Valley	2	4	6	4	2	6	5	3	2	1
Weir Wood Res	1	2	2	-	4	2	4	5	2	3
Bewl Water	3	2	7	15	12	13	5	3	2	2
Cuckmere Haven	3	9	3	1	11	10	11	4	5	4
Pevensy Levels	10	2	15	9	13	6	4	8	6	5
Pett Level	3	-	1	5	-	3	1	-	6	5
Rye Hbr	2	1	4	21	27	25	32	30	15	2

Occasional single Herons were seen flying both E and W over the sea at Selsey and at Worthing during sea-watching in Apr and May and single birds flew out to sea SW from Splash Point, Seaford on 16 Sept and 26 Oct.

Peak WeBS county totals were 93 in Feb and 190 in Oct, but the records do not allow an estimate of the additional birds throughout the county. [ABW]

0131. **BLACK STORK** *Ciconia nigra*

Very rare vagrant

One drifted E over Beachy Head at 10.20 hrs on 13 Aug (RKH, PN, RES *et al*) and has been accepted by *British Birds*. It is the 5th county record since 1989, but only the 6th in total. One was in May and the rest in Aug or Sept. [RJF]

0134. **WHITE STORK** *Ciconia ciconia*

Rare vagrant, mainly in spring.

1994: One at Iford Farm, Southease and in the adjacent Ouse Valley from 31 Aug-2 Sept (NJT *et al*) was thought to be the bird present at Ashford, Kent from 24-29 Aug which was described as 'quite tame' and 'rather confiding'. It departed SW on the latter date having previously been seen over Folkestone on 21 Aug (*Birding World* 7:300). Almost certainly the same bird was recorded at Chyngton Farm, Seaford from 1-5 Sept (BRG *et al*) and in the nearby lower Cuckmere Valley on the latter date (ARK), not 9 May as previously stated (*SxBR* 47:17). A photograph of this individual (taken in Kent and labelled as an adult) appeared in *Birding World* 7:302.

1995: A bird was on Pett Level on 23 and 24 Aug (MSm *et al*). About 39 White Storks (excluding known escapes) have been recorded in Sussex since 1962. [SJP]

0144. SPOONBILL

*Platalea leucorodia***Very scarce visitor, most frequent in spring and autumn.**

Singles were seen at Pagham Hbr on 26 Apr (TJE) and Thorney Deepes on 27 Apr and 6 June (CBC, MAC). Five birds flew W past Beachy Head on 20 May and one seen later that day at Cuckmere Haven was possibly a different bird (JFC, DCo, RDME). An immature bird was at Pett Level on 16 Sept (TH). [SJP]

0152. MUTE SWAN

*Cygnus olor***Fairly common resident.**

The monthly counts at the principal sites were as follows:

	1995						1996			
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar
<i>County totals</i>	452	494	388	396	486	458	608	601	484	383
Chichester Hbr	100	57	56	64	94	116	115	90	53	76
Pagham Hbr	13	3	3	12	25	5	10	17	1	6
Chichester GP	30	35	41	39	35	68	64	33	29	2
Arundel WWT	16	20	19	12	18	14	12	13	17	19
Amberley Brooks	36	43	47	2	31	-	88	9	5	nc
Pulborough Brooks	7	20	26	23	21	18	54	78	128	78
Adur Levels	25	44	nc	12	9	41	28	33	2	10
Lower Ouse Valley	60	62	43	7	7	10	105	136	100	21
Glynde Brooks	nc	nc	nc	23	19	16	2	2	8	4
Cuckmere Haven	8	15	6	25	28	10	10	7	6	8
Pevensy Levels	88	101	66	40	63	71	57	59	32	42
Pannel Valley	nc	nc	nc	17	14	13	14	6	-	nc
Rye Hbr	2	6	35	43	27	24	28	72	61	84

In Jan, counts of 108 on Scotney Court GP on 3rd and 100 in Chichester Hbr during the WeBS survey were the highest, whilst that count also found a combined total of 67 on the Down, Horse-eye and Whepley Levels at Pevensy and 60 in the Lower Ouse Valley. Feb's WeBS counts at the last two mentioned sites were 83 and 62 respectively, whilst in Mar, 56 in Chichester Hbr and 54 on Manxey Level were the largest records.

A bird was noted brooding on 24 Mar at Brooklands, Worthing; records of 2 adults and 4 juveniles here on 12 July and again on 24 Sept suggest that this early breeding may have been successful. Other records of breeding were from New Salts Farm at Lancing, Pett Level, Southwater CP, Beeding Brooks, New Road and Runcton GPs at Chichester, Thorney Deepes, Castle and Saunders Pits at Rye, Horse-eye Level, Knepp Lake, Weir Wood Res and Valebridge Pond, Burgess Hill. Perhaps the most interesting record was of the cob rearing 8 cygnets at Warnham LNR after the pen died.

Non-breeding gatherings included 44 near the West Pier at Littlehampton on 16 June whilst 101 were in the Fishbourne Channel and 74 on the Adur near Lower Beeding on 4 and 13 July respectively and 38 on Horse-eye Level on 7 Aug.

Significant records in the period Sept-Dec were 116 in Chichester Hbr on the Nov WeBS count, 115 there, 105 in the Lower Ouse Valley and 93 on

Broomhill Level in the Dec counts, together with 134 at Iford on 28 Dec and 142 at Jury's Gap on 31 Dec. [MJM]

0153. **BEWICK'S SWAN**

Cygnus columbianus

Scarce winter visitor and passage migrant.

The monthly counts at the principal sites were as follows:

	1995						1995	1996		
	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.
<i>County totals</i>	70	86	-	-	-	4	42	117	146	133
Arun Valley	68	61	-	-	-	4	42	102	131	133
Adur Levels	2	25	nc	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Ouse Valley	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	15	15	-

Most sightings in the first winter period were in the West Sussex. Two on Lewes Brooks, with a herd of Mute Swans on 20 Jan and 4 on Glynde Levels on 22 Jan being the only records from the east. The Adur and Arun Valleys supported most of the wintering birds; the largest numbers were 68 on Amberley Wild Brooks during the WeBS count in Jan and 58 on the Feb count, whilst 22 were still present on 2 Mar. Roost counts at Pulborough Brooks were 60 on 20 Jan and 59 on 20 Feb. A party of 22 birds, including 4 juveniles, was noted at Steyning on 2 Jan, 18, including 5 juveniles, were on the Upper Adur Levels on 4 Feb and 31 adults and 7 juveniles were on Henfield Levels on 26 Feb. The last spring record was of 14 birds on Henfield Levels on 5 Mar.

The first returning bird of autumn was an adult on Castle Pit at Rye on 29 Oct, followed by 2 at Pulborough Brooks on 30 Oct and 3 on Knepp Lake on 4 Nov. Counts of significant size were 18 adults and 2 juveniles on Amberley Wild Brooks on 26 Nov, 13 at Iford on 28 Dec (which may have included the 12 reported on Lewes Brooks 4 days earlier) and 21 on Scotney Court GP also on 28 Dec. The largest counts were 42 on Amberley Wild Brooks during the Dec WeBS survey and 83 roosting at Pulborough Brooks on 22 Dec. [MJM]

0154. **WHOOPEE SWAN**

Cygnus cygnus

Very scarce winter visitor and passage migrant.

A juvenile was seen in the Sidlesham Ferry area of Pagham Hbr on 23 Oct (TJE) and an adult flew E past Splash Point, Seaford on 4 Nov (WRT, TJW, BRG). [SJP]

0158. **PINK-FOOTED GOOSE***Anser brachyrhynchus***Scarce winter visitor and passage migrant.**

Birds of unknown origin were seen at Sidlesham Ferry on 25 and 27 Sept (BJ, CMJ) and with Canada Geese in the lower Cuckmere Valley on 25 Oct (PKWH, MH). [SJP]

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

A very poor year. At Pulborough Brooks there were 3 on 6 Jan and 2 on 9 Jan. For the rest of the first winter period only 4 birds were recorded at various East Sussex sites, mainly Rye Hbr with the last record on 27 Mar.

The first in the second winter period were 3 E over Ivy Lake, Chichester on 30 Nov. In Dec at least 81 birds were recorded at various sites including 12 over Ashdown Forest on 4th, 10 at Northpoint Pit, Rye on 6th, 4 at Pagham Hbr on 8th and 45 at Scotney Court GP at the end of the year. [RJLK]

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

The monthly counts at the principal sites were as follows:

	1995							1996		
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar
County totals	98	74	42	60	289	146	71	29	31	92
Amberley Wild Brooks	45	34	2	-	7	-	-	3	4	nc
Pulborough Brooks	26	2	23	59	99	76	54	14	2	54
Ardingly Res	1	37	6	-	-	-	nc	-	-	4
Weir Wood Res	18	-	-	-	180	68	-	-	-	-

Apart from the WeBS counts, shown above, 195 were recorded at 7 sites in Jan, with the highest counts being 98 at Weir Wood Res on 2nd and 65 at Icklesham on 26th. Only 9 were reported on 3 dates in Feb, with at least 94 birds present at 6 sites in Mar, including 36 at Amberley Wild Brooks on 5th and 25 past the Palace Pier, Brighton on 10th. During Apr, 25 were reported from 7 sites including 4 E at Littlehampton GC and Beachy Head on 13th.

The only confirmed breeding record received involved 7 young at Rye Hbr. Otherwise in May, 35 were reported at 6 sites and 33 reported at 4 sites in June. The only West Sussex record for the month was a single at Pagham Hbr on 20 June. In July only 15 were recorded at 2 sites but 133 were reported from 4 sites in Aug with a max of 110 at Warnham MP. This same site held a maximum of 104 in Sept, with the only other count received being 90 at Weir Wood Res. A marked increase was recorded in Oct with 431 birds present at 5 sites and maxima of 180 at Weir Wood Res and 200 at Scotney Court GP. In Nov there were only 98 reported from 3 sites, of which 95 were at Weir Wood Res and in Dec there were 267 at 7 sites, with a max of 210 at Scotney Court GP. [RJLK]

GREY GOOSE SPECIES*Anser sp.*

Twenty on 11 Mar over Brighton Marina and 40 on 14 Apr over Climping were thought to be White-fronted Geese.

In the latter part of the year 4 were seen at Glyne Gap on 23 Dec and 5 there on 28th, one at Normans Bay on 27 Dec and 5 flew W at Splash Point, Seaford on 30 Dec. [RJLK]

0166. CANADA GOOSE*Branta canadensis*

Fairly common introduced resident and partial migrant.

The monthly counts at the principal sites were as follows:

	1995						1995			1996		
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar		
<i>County totals</i>	1874	662	613	1708	2512	1788	2316	2454	1784	889		
Chichester Hbr	35	32	28	43	57	32	46	43	29	7		
Chichester GP	54	4	27	25	31	39	39	28	13			
Arundel WWT	235	82	50	152	150	207	186	130	106	47		
Pulborough	133	92	47	259	507	485	258	336	422	199		
Brooks												
Amberley Brooks	263	38	68	-	211	-	8	-	52	nc		
Ardingly Res	59	41	7	-	9	106	nc	42	32	47		
Cuckmere Haven	287	50	51	429	614	314	491	496	53	87		
Weir Wood Res	5	4	9	150	188	40	-	82	14	16		
Barcombe Res	45	3	-	-	-	-	340	23	36	-		
Arlington Res	40	4	2	154	2	13	-	-	12	4		
Bewl Water	250	90	108	100	550	210	632	719	494	113		
Pett Level	63	19	17	19	37	43	53	78	20	50		
Rye Hbr	70	122	79	110	2	116	161	120	148	94		

Other larger counts included 211 at Barcombe Res on 2 Jan, 190 at Arlington Res on 7th and 250 at Bewl Water on 22 Jan with 108 at this latter site on 19 Mar.

Breeding was confirmed at 9 sites, and involved at least 81 young.

In June, 300 were at Bewl Water on 22nd with 192 at Rye Hbr on 27 July and 135 at Arlington Res the next day. 107 were at Icklesham on 4 Aug, 161 at Rye Hbr on 7th, 169 at Charleston Reedbed on 10th, 596 at Arlington Res on 11th, 820 at Bewl Water on 13th and 310 at Weir Wood Res on 24 Aug. Sept produced 129 at Darwell Res on 9th, 154 at Arlington Res on 10th and 130 at Warnham MP on 15th. In Oct there were 200 at Pett Level on 1st, 165 at Cuckmere Haven on 5th (rising to 285 on 14th) and 550 at Bewl Water on 8th, dropping to 250 by 5 Nov. Also in Nov there were 300 at Icklesham on 26th. In Dec 130 were at Rye Hbr on 6th (and 145 on 13th), 340 Barcombe Res on 10th and 632 at Bewl Water on 17th. [RJLK]

0167. **BARNACLE GOOSE***Branta leucopsis***Scarce winter visitor, usually in severe weather and increasing feral resident.**

As with last year, records were well spread both across the county and throughout the year. Most, if not all, of the following are probably of feral origin. In Jan 14 birds were reported from 5 sites with a max of 7 at Scotney Court GP on 7 Jan. During Feb there were 7 at Barcombe Res on 12th and 5 at Rye Hbr on 27th whilst in Mar 3 singles were seen at Rye Hbr, East Grinstead and Pevensey Levels. Single birds were recorded in May at Sidlesham Ferry and Arlington Res with a further 6 seen in June.

A marked increase in numbers occurred in early autumn with 31 birds at 3 sites and 32 at 5 sites in Aug and Sept respectively. Most occurred at Arlington Res where there were 27 on 13 Aug and 26 on 2 Sept. In Oct there were 10 at 6 sites and 32 birds in Nov at 6 sites with the max count being 27 at Barcombe Res on 28th. In Dec 6 birds were at 5 sites. [RJLK]

0168. **BRENT GOOSE***Branta bernicla***Very common winter visitor and passage migrant.**

The monthly counts at the principal sites were as follows:

	1995					1996				
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar
<i>County totals</i>	9215	12,697	3344	11	379	7632	11,333	11,692	11,849	11,149
Chichester Hbr	6593	9567	3042	11	305	6504	8865	8664	10,760	8231
Pagham Hbr	2611	3130	299	-	74	831	2459	3016	1087	2866
Pett Level	11	-	3	-	-	7	2	2	2	24
Rye Hbr	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	8	-	1

A single leucistic bird was present at Apuldram Manor Farm from at least 23 Feb-10 Mar. Inland, at Pulborough Brooks, 14 were recorded on 14 Jan.

The main spring sea passage up-Channel was as follows:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Total	No. per hr watched	
Selsey Bill		13	159	867	728	121	1888	3.41
Worthing Beach		4	-	436	385	56	881	6.52
Newhaven		-	-	158	1263	42	1463	14.63
Splash Point, Seaford		55	904	2641	1839	254	5693	16.65

A total of 1185 was seen passing E at Beachy Head between 10 Mar and 25 May. The largest movement was 1100 E at Splash Point, Seaford in just 2 hours on 7 Mar.

In June, 16 birds were reported at 5 sites including 5 at Fishbourne on 5th, and 8 at Bosham Channel on 16th, some of which would have accounted for the 11 present during July-Aug at South Stakes Island. Presumably the bird flying E on 13 June at Selsey Bill was a very late migrant!

The first returning birds were 10 at Barcombe Res on 1 Sept. However, numbers remained low, except for 130 at Emsworth Channel on 18th, until an

obvious increase in Oct. Observations of westerly passage at coastal sites revealed only small numbers as shown in the following table:

	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Total
Splash Point, Seaford	-	20	43	82	145
Worthing Beach	-	48	451	-	499
Selsey Bill	1	189	136	2	328

Large numbers were seen moving at Bewl Water where 500 flew SW on 18 Oct and 208 SW (in 4 flocks) on 12 Nov, also on this date a single bird was at Arlington Res. Further singles were seen in Dec at Bewl Water, Barcombe Res and Pulborough Brooks and 60 flew SW at Scobells Farm, Barcombe on 4 Dec.

Several reports of birds showing characteristics of the pale-bellied race (*B.b. hrota*) were received for both winter periods. In the first period there were 2 at Apuldram Manor Farm on 10 Jan and singles at Pagham Hbr between 5 Feb-9 Mar, at East Head on 14 Feb and at Dell Quay on 23 Mar. Later in the year, singles flew past Splash Point, Seaford on 19 Nov and were seen at Pagham Hbr on 22 and 23 Nov, at Pilsey Island on 23 Nov and at Rye Hbr on 5 Dec.

For the first time since 1986 no reports were received of Black Brant (*B. b. nigricans*) in either winter period. (1986 produced the first records for the county at Pagham Hbr/Bosham and Thorney Island. They have been more regularly seen at the latter site, the last record there being on 6 Mar 1994) [RJLK]

0170. **EGYPTIAN GOOSE**

Alopochen aegyptiacus

Vagrant from established feral populations.

An adult at Weir Wood Res on 6 June (CFB, NAD, RTP *et al*) is the first to be recorded at this site since 1986. It is about the 28th to be recorded in the county (all since 1978) although there may be some duplication of records. [RJF]

0171. **RUDDY SHELDUCK**

Tadorna ferruginea

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

One at Pagham Hbr, usually in the North Wall area, from 13 Nov 1994 (SxBR 47:22) remained to 2 Mar. Two females were seen at West Beach, Littlehampton on 1 Jan while one was reported from Arundel WWT on 2 & 28 Jan and 23 May. One female was in Chichester Hbr between 4-30 Apr, being seen most frequently at Thorney Deepes where it, or another female, was recorded on 3 Sept. Three at Arlington Res on 20 Oct were of greater interest while one again took up residence in Pagham Hbr from 13 Dec into 1996. [RJF]

0173. SHELDUCK

*Tadorna tadorna***Fairly common breeder and common winter visitor.**

Common along the coast, especially at the eastern and western harbours, but also inland at some of the larger reservoirs and lakes. The monthly counts at the principal sites were as follows:

	1995						1996			
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar
<i>County totals</i>	1379	1486	1083	36	142	721	1393	1519	2482	2146
Chichester Hbr	1058	1275	703	9	35	598	1073	1135	1980	1645
Pagham Hbr	264	124	218	16	104	91	228	229	336	326
Chichester GP	2	11	18	-	-	-	-	3	4	-
Arundel WWT	8	14	74	6	3	24	38	55	58	82
Newhaven	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	8	15	5
Cuckmere Haven	2	20	4	-	-	-	4	7	4	36
Pett Level	31	2	6	-	-	-	3	2	4	-
Rye Hbr	24	26	23	5	-	3	42	51	22	36

Breeding records were received of 1 pair at Hooe Level, Pevensey, 1 pair with 12 young at Barcombe Res, 1 pair with 10 young at Glynde Level, 2 pairs at Icklesham and 10 pairs at Rye Hbr raising just 16 young. Several reports were received from both Chichester Hbr and Pagham Hbr during the breeding season but none indicated that breeding might have taken place.

During the early summer, monthly counts were made at some sites. These were mostly of non-breeding adults and show seasonal decline:

	Apr	May	Jun
Chichester Hbr	350	218	57
Chichester GP	11	43	25
Pagham Hbr	216	108	nc

During July only a few adults remained - those concerned with dependent young, the others having departed for their annual moult. Their return at the end of the year can be followed in the table showing the WeBS counts above.

Inland there were 3 at Warnham LNR on 5 Feb, 1 at Barcombe Res on 16 Feb, 1 at Weir Wood Res on 15 Mar, 1 at Barcombe Res on 19 Mar, 3 at Knepp Lake on 28 Apr, 1 at Darwell Res on 16 Jul, 6 at Weir Wood Res on 2 Sept, 1-2 at Arlington Res from 3 Sept, 1 at Warnham LNR on 21 Sept and 1-2 at Barcombe Res from 14 Dec. [BJY]

0178. MANDARIN

*Aix galericulata***Scarce but increasing introduced resident.**

There were 38 at Arundel WWT on 22 Jan. In Feb 15 were at Swanbourne Lake, 11 at Amberley and 6 at Parham. There were 19 at Arundel WWT in mid-Mar, another 14 elsewhere in the Arun Valley and 8 at Ebernoe Common. In East Sussex 3 pairs were at Eridge Park on 30 Mar.

About 18 pairs were reported in the breeding season, with 6 pairs and 2 broods seen at Pulborough Brooks, 3 broods at Weir Wood Res and one juvenile at Balcombe Lake. A large count of 51 was made at Arundel WWT on 12 Nov, there were 7 at Shillinglee in Dec and only a few recorded elsewhere. [KN]

0179. **WIGEON***Anas penelope***Common winter visitor and passage migrant.**

The monthly counts at the principal sites were as follows:

	1995							1996		
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar
<i>County totals</i>	8655	6763	1008	280	2018	3102	5587	9036	7421	9204
Chichester Hbr	1134	1119	338	150	1019	1161	1452	1308	1450	1680
Pagham Hbr	1409	118	40	22	264	518	1700	1060	400	273
Amberley Brooks	1050	2050	-	-	-	-	72	-	198	nc
Pulborough Brooks	3749	2230	275	47	477	546	844	4671	2562	5124
Arlington Res	92	7	-	2	-	11	10	10	1	31
Cuckmere Haven	632	773	163	27	171	503	623	1190	1183	1080
Pevensey Levels	38	43	38	-	-	130	325	175	353	388
Bewl Water	476	400	144	9	59	117	332	348	300	286

There were notable counts at Pulborough Brooks and Amberley Wild Brooks in Jan and Feb and Pagham and Chichester Harbours at both ends of the year. Peak numbers not in the table above included 1500 in the lower Cuckmere Valley on 2 Jan and 300 at Glynde Levels on 22nd.

During a large wildfowl movement on 10 Mar, 250 flew E past Beachy Head, 180 E at Splash Point, Seaford and smaller numbers were seen from other points. From May-July there were up to 9 at Thorney Deeps and 1-2 at Pulborough Brooks, Bewl Water and Glynde Levels.

As numbers built up from late Aug, there were 200 at Church Norton on 9 Sept and 400 at Thorney Deeps on 21st. A notable late gathering was of 850 at Scotney Court GP on 16 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:

	1995							1996		
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar
<i>County totals</i>	402	205	69	72	96	432	547	436	428	113
Chichester Hbr	15	5	-	-	14	12	15	8	20	10
Pagham Hbr	7	4	4	-	5	0	6	25	0	4
Chichester GP	53	4	-	2	-	158	161	116	109	-
Arundel WWT	30	9	20	46	24	13	25	25	30	20
Pulborough Brooks	1	48	3	-	-	8	-	15	23	-
Bewl Water	150	64	2	4	25	110	173	153	150	41
Pannel Valley				4	3	55	16	48	25	nc
Pett Level	2	25	3	-	-	-	8	2	25	3
Rye Hbr	27	8	14	12	20	64	135	27	8	14

In both winters, numbers were very high and the Dec total of 547 was the highest ever, surpassing the 529 in Dec 1994 and 459 in Jan 1987. Contributing to that total were notable counts at Rye Hbr, Chichester GP and Bewl Water.

On 10 Mar, 50 passed Beachy Head, 28 E at Splash Point, Seaford and 12 at Brighton Marina, considerably more than the usual very small numbers noted on seawatches.

In the breeding season there were 3 pairs at Pulborough Brooks and pairs at Rye Hbr, Sidlesham Ferry and Weir Wood Res, but no young were reported. [KN]

0184. **TEAL**

Anas crecca

Scarce resident and common winter visitor and passage migrant.

The monthly counts at the principal sites were as follows:

	1995						1995			1996	
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	
<i>County totals</i>	4781	4166	1207	916	1694	2240	4335	3074	2499	2479	
Chichester Hbr	757	848	212	271	586	726	1172	790	944	560	
Pagham Hbr	1311	128	98	77	258	226	1870	556	154	116	
Arundel WWT	6	4	12	92	188	329	183	73	63	55	
Amberley Brooks	300	1200	240	-	12	2	29	24	271	nc	
Pulborough Brooks	1535	1530	508	222	267	237	169	993	528	1222	
Glynde Brooks	nc	nc	nc	47	48	77	70	26	128	272	
Bewl Water	14	19	-	5	35	63	102	15	100	21	
Pevensey Levels	171	108	70	2	40	132	90	147	38	103	
Pannel Valley	-	-	-	38	30	120	50	110	130	nc	
Rye Hbr	307	32	-	92	121	125	420	74	12	8	

Numbers were high this year, particularly in the Arun valley in Jan and Feb and in Pagham and Chichester Hbrs at both ends of the year. At some sites peak numbers may be considerably more than are present for monthly counts; e.g. there were 255 at Glynde Levels on 22 Jan and 238 at Knepp Lake in Dec.

Exceptionally, 350 flew E past Beachy Head on 10 Mar and smaller numbers were noted from other seawatch points. During the breeding season, 25 males were present at Pulborough Brooks RSPB Reserve but only 2 broods were seen.

An adult male Green-winged Teal (*A.c. carolinensis*) was seen with Teal in the North Wall area of Pagham Hbr between 28 Feb-23 Mar (TJE *et al*). This is the 5th county record of the Nearctic race of this species. [KN]

0186. **MALLARD**

Anas platyrhynchos

Common resident and winter visitor.

The monthly counts at the principal sites were as follows:

	1995						1995		1996	
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar
<i>County totals</i>	2324	1502	1440	3929	3486	3935	3719	3362	2182	1734
Chichester Hbr	140	195	202	109	273	339	207	223	187	224
Pagham Hbr	297	91	76	285	374	217	487	317	73	124
Chichester GP	178	53	77	135	124	238	161	146	90	2
Arundel WWT	445	227	317	672	343	1116	485	703	394	402
Pulborough Brooks	290	280	156	878	281	63	86	263	104	198
Angmering Decoy	96	50	52	nc	86	50	27	23	39	30

Kneppmill Pond	20	3	5	78	11	58	232	59	4	4
Ardingly Res	86	47	32	10	83	156	nc	125	108	80
Weir Wood Res	58	31	22	28	99	43	5	94	55	35
Barcombe Res	95	18	0	30	90	67	207	86	24	14
Arlington Res	156	104	29	93	113	89	211	79	78	121
Glynde Brooks	nc	nc	nc	276	380	110	87	258	198	24
Pevensey Levels	40	35	41	13	19	57	34	26	31	49
Bewl Water	188	236	128	465	433	491	650	410	400	218
Darwell Res	88	25	8	49	78	56	nc	55	61	35
Alexandra Park	nc	142	122	206	135	203	237	nc	nc	nc
Pannel Valley	nc	nc	nc	53	40	56	47	-	60	nc
Rye Hbr	280	216	38	281	232	129	190	205	68	44

Compared with 1994, numbers were rather higher early in the year and much the same in the later months. Arundel WWT held exceptional numbers: 1116 in Nov 1995 and 703 in Jan 1996. [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:

	1995						1995 1996			
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar
<i>County totals</i>	1133	501	19	9	156	162	1167	542	558	605
Chichester Hbr	82	28	2	5	41	46	162	169	224	266
Pagham Hbr	604	62	4	-	108	66	990	273	174	109
Amberley Wild Brooks	24	135	5	-	-	-	-	-	15	nc
Pulborough Brooks	394	274	8	-	2	42	4	79	112	209

Birds were recorded throughout the year. Apart from the WeBS counts shown in the table above, other larger counts included 50 on Upper Adur Levels on 22 Jan, 83 at Thorney Deeps on 13 Feb and 150 on Amberley Wild Brooks on 4 Mar. On 10 Mar a large wildfowl movement was witnessed by sea-watchers; totals of Pintail recorded showed most in East Sussex with none at Selsey Bill, 82 E at Worthing, 155 E at Seaford and 200 E past Beachy Head. Later in the spring there were 5 at Glynde Levels on 13 Apr.

Several birds summered at both Rye Hbr and Fishbourne Channel, but no breeding reports were received

At Pagham Hbr, 7 on 19 Aug were new arrivals with 19 there on 31 Aug rising to 102 on 28 Sept and 290 on 19 Nov. On 10 Oct there were 46 at Thorney Deeps with 130 there on 10 Dec

Very little visual passage was noted in the latter part of the year, the only records received being a total of 30 W at Selsey Bill in Nov and on 30 Dec, 21 S at Glyne Gap, Bexhill. [RJLK]

0191. **GARGANEY***Anas querquedula***Scarce passage migrant and rare summer visitor.**

The first of the year was at Woods Mill, Henfield on 20 Feb - a very early arrival. There were 3 at Pulborough Brooks on 20 Mar, 12 E (in 3.25hrs) at Worthing on 23 Mar and another 8 were recorded at 5 sites during the month. At least 16 were seen during Apr at 8 sites (with a maximum of 3 at Pevensey Levels). In May a total of 8 birds at 5 sites and 7 in June at 4 sites including 3 displaying at one. The only reports for July were of 2 at Westhampnett GP, Chichester and a max of 5 at Rye Hbr. During Aug there were 12 at 7 sites including 3 at Drayton GP, Chichester whilst singles were recorded in Sept at Paghham Hbr and Rye Hbr, the latter bird remaining until 22 Oct. [RJJKL]

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:

	1995						1995			1996		
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar		
<i>County Totals</i>	473	348	218	142	225	401	550	481	288	298		
Chichester Hbr	-	-	-	3	14	18	12	6	3	8		
Paghham Hbr	39	3	26	1	12	49	87	22	9	30		
Chichester GP	37	8	5	16	3	65	66	53	57			
Arundel WWT	-	-	-	8	4	15	48	10	9	6		
Pulborough Brooks	283	312	150	18	45	69	46	242	107	177		
Arlington Res	51	2	-	17	25	24	36	35	3	4		
Pannel Valley	nc	nc	nc	-	7	42	40	18	30	nc		
Pett Level	17	-	-	-	-	1	5	3	6	2		
Rye Hbr	27	4	19	45	106	101	159	35	14	18		

Otherwise, peak counts away from these sites included 29 at Chichester GP on 3 Jan, 56 at Glynde Levels on 11 Feb, and 48 on Broadwater Lake, Eastbourne on 18 Feb.

Observations from the regular seawatching sites were as follows:

	Mar	Apr	May	Total
Selsey Bill	43E	8E	5E	56E
Worthing Beach	150E	-	2E	152E
Splash Point, Seaford	340E	2W & 17E	6E	2W & 363E

A large portion of the spring total was seen on 10 Mar when the day totals at Worthing and Seaford were 146 and 315 respectively.

Birds remained throughout the summer and breeding was confirmed at 3 sites (Pulborough Brooks, Glynde Levels and Icklesham) involving 4 pairs and at least 11 young.

With birds summering, true arrival dates of migrants is hard to ascertain; 20 at Rye Hbr on 5 Aug were presumably arrivals as 40 were present there the next day, rising to 107 on 27 Aug, and 150 by 28 Oct. Dec maxima were of 80 at Icklesham on 2 Dec, 80 at Arlington Res on 3 Dec and 63 at Ivy Lake, Chichester GP on 28 Dec. [RJLK]

0196. RED-CRESTED POCHARD

Netta rufina

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

An adult male was seen with Mallard at Princes Park, Eastbourne on 8 and 12 Feb. On 12 Apr a very tame female arrived at Icklesham, two females were at this site from 9-31 May with a single remaining until 1 June. One was seen at Pagham on 30 June and a male frequented Rye Hbr LNR from 8-29 Aug. [SJP]

0198. POCHARD

Aythya ferina

Rare breeder and fairly common winter visitor and passage migrant.

The monthly counts at the principal sites were as follows:

	1995						1995			1996	
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	
<i>County totals</i>	863	573	149	92	220	685	984	1088	1209	680	
Chichester GP	261	169	78	27	66	159	203	192	206	25	
Arundel WWT	328	227	22	15	55	226	219	407	331	249	
Kneppmill Pond	50	-	-	-	24	73	120	62	30	19	
Weir Wood Res	17	13	-	-	-	-	-	97	165	132	
Barcombe Res	13	-	-	-	6	-	103	65	45	50	
Arlington Res	11	2	-	-	-	17	56	9	25	2	
Bewl Water	40	22	6	-	6	18	40	16	42	38	
Rye Hbr	103	76	15	47	38	88	161	136	133	88	

In the early part of 1995 the largest groups were 328 at Arundel WWT and 261 at Chichester GP. Numbers had dropped significantly by March, the total was the lowest since detailed records began in 1982.

During the breeding season few records were received. At Chichester GP 3 pairs were holding territory on 10 May, another pair were reported from Long Pit, Rye Hbr on the 30 May and a pair were at Icklesham on 15 June. However, no young were reported in the county.

In the autumn the peak count was 66 at Chichester GP in Oct and numbers rapidly rose, as shown by the table of WeBS counts above, in Nov and Dec. [RP]

0203. **TUFTED DUCK**

Aythya fuligula

Fairly common breeding species and winter visitor.

The monthly counts at the principal sites were as follows:

	1995							1996		
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar
<i>County totals</i>	1033	891	749	350	469	640	824	731	798	562
Chichester GP	373	226	216	139	179	246	273	284	338	17
Arundel WWT	175	158	61	65	98	124	254	124	142	164
Burton Mill Pond	nc	nc	nc	7	27	16	11	13	20	25
Ardingly Res	6	25	6	3	-	2	nc	14	4	4
Barcombe Res	26	3	-	-	-	-	40	40	27	22
Rye Hbr	113	136	152	68	85	101	155	138	153	181

The highest Jan counts came from Chichester GP with 373. Feb and Mar saw a typical decrease in numbers, the highest count for this period once again coming from Chichester GP with 216 in Mar.

During the breeding season pairs were reported from the following sites: Arlington Res, Icklesham, Pagham Hbr, Pett Level, Seven Sisters Country Park and Widewater (Lancing). Successful breeding was confirmed from Icklesham where 9 young were reported and Pagham and Chichester GP where 6 were seen. Broods were also recorded at Glynde Levels and Weir Wood Res.

The autumn and winter saw Chichester GP hosting the largest numbers with 273 there in Dec. Counts in recent years seem to confirm that they have become the principal site for this species within the county. [RP]

0204. **SCAUP**

Aythya marila

Scarce winter visitor and passage migrant; rare in summer.

The records suggest about 45 individuals were recorded between Jan-Apr and 44 from July-Dec; the approximate monthly totals were:

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
17	27	23	7	1	1	2	-	2	44

On 2 Jan there were 6 at Scotney Court GP rising to 14 on 3rd and 16 by 7th. There were 15 present there on 5 Feb, 20 on 20 Feb and 19 (14 males) on 23 Feb, 5 of which remained until 2 Apr. At Thorney Deepes 1 was reported on 7 and 12 Jan. Seawatchers at both Selsey Bill and Worthing noted a single flock of 17 E on 22 Mar. During Apr a female was recorded at Thorney Deepes and a male remained at Chichester GP until 20 Apr.

Autumn's records started with a female which was seen at Rye Hbr on several dates between 1 July-17 Sept and possibly again during Nov and Dec. All the records for the end of the year were from the east of the county with a peak count of 7 at Rye Hbr on 11 Dec and records of 32 at Scotney Court GP and 12 at Glyne Gap, Bexhill both on 31 Dec. [JLH/JAN]

0206. EIDER

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

The pattern of occurrence is shown in the following table of approximate monthly totals.

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
53	53	121	103	35	9	19	16	20	27	66	101

The largest groups early in the year were 10 offshore at Pett Level on 8 Jan and at Church Norton on 24 Jan. The latter group increased to 18 by 7 Feb and there were still 17 there on 22 Mar and 9 on 11 Apr. Most were recorded passing offshore and the following table shows the monthly totals at the regularly watched sites.

	January		February		March		April		May		
	E	W	E	W	E	W	E	W	E	W	
Selsey Bill		24	3	13	12	52	17	52	-	21	-
Worthing Beach		-	-	-	-	23	-	-	-	-	-
Splash Point, Seaford		-	-2	5	-	66	-	29	-	4	-

The largest movement in the spring was on 10 Mar with 13 E at both Selsey Bill (1.8hrs) and Worthing (2.3hrs), 39 E at Splash Point, Seaford (7.5 hrs) and 60 E at Beachy Head. The only other notable movements were 39 E at Glyne Gap, Bexhill (3hrs) on 17 Apr and 18 E at Seaford (11.3hrs) on 23 Apr. Few summered and all the records from June-early Nov were from the west of the county. Numbers gradually built up in Nov with 15 offshore at Church Norton on 6 Nov being the largest flock. During Dec there was a marked influx into East Sussex with 26 at Jury's Gap on 7 Dec and 45 there on 10th. At Glyne Gap, Bexhill 25 were seen on 23 Dec and at Splash Point, Seaford 30 were recorded on 25th and 19 on 29 Dec. It is possible that these groups involved the same birds and have been counted as such in the table of monthly totals.

Most unusual were records of 13 and 6 at Barcombe Res on 16 and 17 Dec respectively. [JLH/JAN]

0212. LONG-TAILED DUCK

*Clangula hyemalis***Scarce passage migrant and winter visitor.**

The records suggest 7 individuals were recorded between Jan-May and 4 from Nov-Dec; the monthly totals were:

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Nov	Dec
4	1	2	4	2	3	2

Most records were from the east of the county many of which involved a single female which frequented various waters at Rye Hbr between 3 Jan-13 May. This bird may have been amongst the 3 seen offshore at Pett in mid-Jan. At Chichester GP singles (involving at least 3 individuals) were seen on 3 Jan, 8 Mar, 1-2 Apr, 8 Apr and 3 May. Singles E at Selsey Bill on 30 Apr and W at Rye Bay on 24 Apr were the only movements recorded in spring.

Autumn started with 2 E at Selsey Bill on 5 Nov and thereafter all the records were from Rye Hbr where a single female was seen after 12 Nov with 2 females at Ternery Pool, Rye Hbr on 23 and 25 Dec. [JLH/JAN]

0213. **COMMON SCOTER**

Melanitta nigra

Common spring passage migrant and fairly common winter visitor; scarcer in summer and autumn.

Offshore, there were 220 at Pett Level on 7 Jan with smaller numbers reported elsewhere along the coast until the end of Feb including movements at Selsey Bill and Splash Point, Seaford. The main spring sea passage up the channel was as follows:

	Mar	Apr	May	Total	No. per hr watched
Selsey Bill	284	2124	2115	4523	8.9
Worthing Beach	876	736	819	2426	18.4
Newhaven	284	1513	542	2339	24.9
Splash Point, Seaford	4501	4266	2945	11712	42.3

The main movements at Splash Point, Seaford were 2125 on 10 Mar, 648 on 22 Mar, 1129 on 23 Mar, 893 on 23 Apr, 693 on 29 Apr and 536 on the late date (for a sizeable passage) of 22 May. The spring total at this site was above average, mainly boosted by the good numbers seen in Mar. In addition, 4980 were logged during the spring period at the less well-watched Birling Gap and 437 were reported from Bexhill during 9.5 hrs seawatching in May. A few were also recorded from most sites flying W down-Channel.

During the summer, larger numbers were 86 E off Selsey Bill in 2 hrs on 7 June and 250 off Pett Level on 23 July increasing to 300 on 1 Aug. Later on, numbers were unexceptional until 250 on the sea off Pett Level on 6 Nov, 120 off Holywell, Eastbourne on 11 Nov and, finally, 1000 in Rye Bay on 20 Nov increasing to 1700 on 2 Dec, with 1300 still there on 6th.

Other than the sightings of offshore birds, Rye Hbr held up to 3 during Jan-Feb, a female on 13 Apr and up to 6 from 25 Nov-19 Dec. Pilsy Island hosted a male on 13 June and 17 July with 2 females on 15 June. Chichester Channel had further singles on 3 dates in Nov. In Dec, an oiled female was on the pits at Sovereign Hbr on 3rd, Hove Lagoon held 10 on 4th, 8 at Birdham Pool on 14th and Scotney Court GP had 15 on 16th and 1 on 31st. [SHL]

0215. VELVET SCOTER

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

The yearly total of 117 is remarkably similar to that for 1994 though rather less were seen in spring and more in autumn. The approximate monthly totals were:

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
-	1	19	20	38	-	-	-	-	-	19	20

One flew W past Selsey Bill in Feb, then spring passage E along coast was as follows:

	Mar	Apr	May	Total	No. per hr watched
Selsey Bill	2	15	1	18	0.04
Worthing Beach	7	6	1	14	0.11
Newhaven	-	2	18	20	0.21
Splash Point, Seaford	17	2	29	48	0.17

A few also passed W at these sites and a total of 55 was seen from Beachy Head during Mar-May. By comparison, about 200 Common Scoter were seen for every Velvet Scoter.

Many more than usual were seen in the latter part of the year, starting at the same time as the arrival of Little Auks from the North Sea in early Nov. There were 12 E at Langney Point and a female W off Shoreham on 3 Nov, 2 off Selsey Bill the next day, a female at Pilsley Island on 9 Nov, 1 off Pett Level on 10 Nov and 2 in Rye Bay on 20 Nov. During Dec there were 3 at Sovereign Hbr Marina on 3rd, 8 off Pett Level on 10th, up to 4 off Splash Point, Seaford on 15th and 16th, 1 at Glyne Gap, Bexhill on 23rd, 1 still off Pett Levels on 25th and finally 3 off Brighton Marina on 27th. [SHL]

0218. GOLDENEYE

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

The monthly counts at the principal sites were as follows:

	1995						1995			1996		
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar		
County totals	91	81	30	-	-	21	54	57	94	95		
Chichester Hbr	51	61	20	-	-	20	42	37	64	65		
Pagham Hbr	23	8	3	-	-	-	8	11	19	18		
Weir Wood Res	3	3	1	-	-	-	1	1	1	2		
Bewl Water	6	7	6	-	-	1	1	4	3	1		
Rye Hbr	1	-	-	-	-	-	1	4	4	5		

Monthly maxima were as follows:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	Nov	Dec
Chichester Hbr	58	73	52	-	20	56
Chichester GP	6	2	-	-	-	2
Pagham Hbr	23	11	12	2	4	8
Weir Wood Res	3	3	3	-	-	2
Bewl Water	6	7	6	1	1	5
Rye Hbr	1	-	-	-	2	1

The last of the first winter period was a female at Bewl Water on 30 Apr while the first of the second winter period were 4 at Pagham Hbr on 2 Nov. As with Velvet Scoter, a number were seen along the coast in Nov, with 1 W past

Selsey Bill on 4th, 1 E at Beachy Head on 5th, 2 W at Worthing Beach on 12th, 1 at Splash Point, Seaford on 19th and 2 E Worthing Beach on 26 Nov. [SHL]

0220. **SMEW**

Mergus albellus

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

A better year than 1994, with 5 records, 2 in the first winter period and 3 in the second. In Jan, redheads were at Pett Level on 7 Jan and at Weir Wood Res between 11-18 Jan. Five birds, including 2 males, were seen on Chichester GP on 11 Dec, a single at Barcombe Res on 17 Dec and 5 birds on Scotney Court GP on 28 Dec. [SJP]

0221. **RED-BREADED MERGANSER**

Mergus serrator

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

The monthly counts at the two principal sites were as follows:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Oct	Nov	Dec
County totals	140	189	216	1	67	87
Chichester Hbr	89	149	176	1	66	72
Pagham Hbr	50	32	39	-	1	14

Reported widely from along the coast west of Beachy Head during the first winter period; only 7 birds were reported from sites further east. The larger counts were in Chichester Hbr and included 158 (around Thorney Island) on 7 Jan, 149 on 12 Feb, 176 on 12 Mar and 61 on 2 Apr. There were also 50 at Pagham Hbr on 12 Jan and 27 in Southwick Canal on 11 Mar.

Coastal passage, Jan - May, along the Channel is summarised for 3 seawatching sites:

		Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Total	No. per hr watched (Mar - May)
Selsey Bill	E	104	22	296	418	25	865	1.5
	W	112	28	111	40	-	291	-
Worthing Beach	E	2	-	234	178	11	425	3.2
	W	6	-	18	13	-	37	-
Splash Pt, Seaford	E	3	11	46	252	52	364	1.3
	W	3	3	1	7	-	14	-

It is interesting to compare the rates of birds passing east up-channel, at the 3 sites, with those for Common Scoter.

Larger easterly passages (with hours watched, in brackets) were 63 (6.5) at Selsey Bill on 11 Mar; 40 (3.3) at Worthing on 19 Mar, with 90 (6.5) there on 22 Mar, 46 (3.3) next day and 64 (3.3) on 14 Apr; 87(11.3) at Splash Pt, Seaford on 23 Apr and finally 44 at Beachy Head on 30 Apr. As usual, numbers offshore in May were low with 21 E at Splash Point on 1st being the daily maximum.

During the summer, 1 was present in Fishbourne Channel intermittently between 22 June-26 July. The origin of a juvenile seen at the confluence of

the Ouse and Glynde on 1 Aug can only be guessed. A female was present at Pilsley Island on 8 Aug.

None were seen in Sept, but again, there were many coastal records during the second winter period. The main autumn arrival took place in early Oct with 2 W past Worthing Beach on 7th, 1 at Pilsley Island next day and 3 in Pagham Hbr on 10th.

The largest passage off Selsey Bill during Oct-Dec was 42 W in 2 hrs on 21 Nov. The monthly totals there were:

		Oct	Nov	Dec	Total	No. per hour watched
Selsey Bill	W	24	133	26	183	1.9
	E	-	35	51	86	0.9

Larger numbers on the sea or in the estuaries included those in Chichester Hbr with 96 on 29 Nov, 91 in Thorney Channel on 8 Dec and 75 around Pilsley Island on 18 Dec. There were also 30 off Worthing Beach on 17 Dec. Again, few were seen east of Beachy Head; only 4 were reported.

Inland birds are scarce. There were two records during the year, both females. One was at Bewl Water on 23 Mar and one at Weir Wood Res on 4 Dec. [DEGC/SHL]

0223. **GOOSANDER**

Mergus merganser

Scarce winter visitor and passage migrant.

Three birds were seen at Hampden Park, Eastbourne in early Jan, 2 redheads at Thorney Island on 2 Jan and a male at Arlington Res on the same date. Weir Wood Res held 1 male and 4 redheads on 6 Jan (at least 1 redhead was seen intermittently at that site until 15 Mar.) A redhead was recorded at Broadwater Lake, Eastbourne on 18 Feb whilst on the same date 7 redheads were present at Darwell Res. At Beachy Head a very late redhead was seen moving E close offshore on 22 May, the latest spring record (by 2 days) for the county.

The first birds in the second winter period were 3 redheads at Burton Mill Pond on 2 Nov followed by single birds at Barcome Res, Rye and Chichester towards the end of the month. In Dec single redheads appeared at Chichester, Selsey Bill, Pagham and in the Cuckmere Valley whilst at Arlington Res, 1 male and 2 redheads stayed for just 10 mins on 16th. The last of the year was another redhead at Newhaven on 30th. [DEGC]

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

Oxyura jamaicensis

Very scarce resident and scarce winter visitor.

Minimum county totals were as follows;

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
19	13	14	8	6	7	13	21	27	17	23	40

Recorded at 13 sites during the year. During Jan-Mar, up to 5 were at Chichester GP, up to 7 were at Arundel WWT and up to 4 were at Rye Hbr. Singles were reported from Knepp Lake (8 Jan), Weir Wood Res (19 Mar) and at Thorney Deepes (21 Mar).

Up to 3 pairs were present at Rye Hbr between Apr-July. In late Aug a family party including 8 young were reported there. This, or another party,

comprised a female and 4 young on 10 Sept. The only other confirmed breeding report was of a female and 2 young at Glynde Levels on 9 July. Other breeding season reports included a male at Westhampnett GP, Chichester on 2 Apr and 27 May; a female there on 4 June; 2 males at Icklesham on 4 dates between 20 June-23 July and up to 2 (1 female) at Pett Level between 25 June-12 July.

Dispersing birds appeared at various sites in Aug and Sept. Two were at Arlington Res on 2 Aug, 5 were at Chichester GP from 10 Aug and 14 were reported at Arundel WWT on 10 Sept. Then in Nov, the sedentary 5 at Chichester GP were joined by a further 4 on 11th with further increases in Dec, to 15 on 28th. Numbers at Arundel WWT reached 16 on 10 Dec. Further east, no more than 2 were reported from Rye Hbr after Sept; 1 was at Barcombe Res on 28 Nov to the end of the year, joined briefly by a second on 2 Dec; 1 was at Langney Point on 30 Nov and 5 were at Scotney Court GP on 9 Dec. [SHL/RTP]

0231. **HONEY BUZZARD**

Pernis apivorus

Very scarce spring and autumn passage migrant; has bred.

1994: The first record for the year, at Splash Point, Seaford, was on 12 May.

1995: An excellent year with 4 records relating to early summer and a further 5 records in the autumn. The first migrant was seen at Selsey on 3 May (TJE) which is the earliest county record. Another, located over downland behind Newhaven on 21 May (DIS), was half-heartedly mobbed by a Carrion Crow and a single bird was seen at Woolbeding Common on 4 June (JLN). A male on 25 June at Ambersham Common (PFLeB, NJT) was watched at close quarters for some 20 minutes, an unusually lengthy view for this species.

Autumn passage began with one at Weir Wood Res on 11 Aug (CEH) and another in Ashdown Forest on 27 Aug (MS-H). A probable juvenile was also seen on 27 Aug at Cradle Hill, Seaford (CAH). Another single was seen at Pagham Hbr on 14 Sept (TJE) whilst the final sighting of the year was at Climping on 20 Sept (RAI). [MEK]

0238. **BLACK KITE**

Milvus migrans

Rare, mainly spring, vagrant

One drifted N over East Dean during the afternoon of 7 May (NJL *et al*), being seen from the cricket pitch by the observer, who was fielding at the time, his attention drawn away from the game by mobbing Rooks. It has been accepted by *British Birds* and is the 14th individual to be recorded in the county and, perhaps surprisingly, the first acceptable record since 1990. This occurrence rather dents the widely held view that cricket is a boring and fundamentally pointless game and that it was not found by those ardently searching nearby Beachy Head for migrants earlier that day gives true meaning to the expression 'it's just not cricket'. Eight of the previous records were in the period 26 Apr-6 May and 5 have now been seen in the Beachy Head area. [RJF]

0239. **RED KITE**

Milvus milvus

Rare visitor recorded in all months except July. Formerly bred.

A disappointing year with just 3 authenticated sightings. The wing-tagged bird seen intermitently during the latter half of 1995 was again seen west of Selmeaton on 15 Jan (ASC). Possibly the same bird was sighted on 16 and 24 Mar near Ringmer (WRT, ADW). Finally, a visitor to the county (SPB) recorded a single at West Dean Woods on 17 and 20 Nov which remained into 1996. [MEK]

0260. **MARSH HARRIER**

Circus aeruginosus

Scarce spring and autumn passage migrant and rare winter visitor.

An excellent year for this species with a total of 103 records of which exactly 51 related to the first half of the year and 52 to the second. These records probably involved 49 individuals which exceeds the county record of 1992. The usual difficulty in accurately assessing numbers would be much easier if observers were able to attribute sex and maturity to their sightings. Clearly this is not always possible, but it would certainly be very helpful! The probable monthly minima were as follows:

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
2	1	1	10	14	2	2	7	8	6	2	-

The usual traditional sites were visited and the reports can be usefully summarised as follows:

Chichester and Pagham Hbrs An excellent spring passage with a female on 4 Apr followed by a male on 5 Apr. Another female flew E on 15 Apr at Church Norton with a male N at Selsey Bill on the same day. A hunting female at Thorney Deeps on 30 Apr found the attentions of a Crow unsettling and departed. Sea-watching at Selsey Bill produced singles on 3 successive days in May, with a bird coasting E on 3 May, and the other 2 heading N on 4 and 5 May. The final spring record was a female at Pagham on 6 May. The first bird of the autumn was a female at Pagham Hbr on 5 Sept followed by 2 birds on 16 Sept. There was an immature female at Thorney Island on 19 Sept with a single at Pagham Hbr on 20 Sept. An adult female appeared on 25 Oct.

Pulborough Brooks. Singles on 30 Apr, a male N on 15 May, a female/immature on 20 Sept and 25 Oct and a male on 13 Nov. This last sighting was the latest county record for the year.

Beachy Head. A female came in off the sea and flew N on 22 Apr; the only other spring record was another female on 6 May. An immature female appeared on 17 Sept and was seen again the following day. Finally, an adult female flying east was reported for 7 Nov.

Rye area. A very large number of records and seen in all months except for Feb, Nov and Dec. A single on New Year's Day was an auspicious start, with a male reported a few days later on 7 Jan. None in Feb, but a single female on 26 Mar and 8 Apr. A single female was seen on at least 5 dates in May but on 12 and 13 May there were 3 females in the locality. In June a female was reported on 8 dates until 27 June. A month later a single was

recorded on 29 July. In the autumn, single females were seen on 13th, 30th and 31 Aug but of considerable interest was a juvenile recorded on 30 Aug. There was an immature on 1 Sept and singles were recorded on a further 5 dates for this month. Singles were seen on 5 dates in Oct with 2 birds reported on 10 and 12 Oct. The final record for the year was 28 Oct.

Elsewhere from west to east in the county there were 3 sightings in the Climping-Littlehampton Gap: a male heading east on 16 Apr, a female also flying east on 7 May and an early autumn bird on 16 Aug. An immature was recorded on the Downs at Springhead Hill, Rackham on 15 May. Further inland at Knepp a female was recorded on 26 Apr. At Lancing an adult female flew E on 21 Aug with a probable juvenile on 29 Oct. At Balsdean, near Rottingdean, there was a female on 6 and 7 May, with an early returning female on 31 July and another female on 15 Sept. Splash Point, Seaford had a single flying east on 3 May and at Friston Forest one was seen on 26 Aug. There was excitement at Arlington Res when a female was mobbed by an Osprey on 12 May. It was joined by a second bird the following day.

The only Feb record for the county was an immature female at Pevensey Levels on 18th. In the north of the county, Weir Wood Res had an immature male on 30 Aug and at Bewl Water a single flew west on 21 Oct. [MEK]

0261. **HEN HARRIER**

Circus cyaneus

Scarce, but regular, winter visitor and passage migrant.

During the year, an approximate total of 44 birds was recorded for the county. The monthly minima were as follows:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
Adult males	2	2	-	-	-	-	1	1	1	1
Ringtails	5	5	3	3	-	2	5	6	6	9

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

NW Sussex downs and commons. Two ringtails roosted at Lavington Common on 15 Jan with further sightings at the same roost on 12 Feb and 19 Mar. At the end of the year, there were again 2 ringtails at the same location on 16 Dec. In addition, there was a single at Hooksway, North Marden on 24 Jan and, finally, a single ringtail at Heyshott on 10 Mar.

Arun Valley. In the early part of the year there was a ringtail at Arundel WWT, whilst at Pulborough Brooks there was an immature male on 18 Feb and a single ringtail on 27 Feb. In the second half of the year a male was at Pulborough Brooks on 20 Sept and a ringtail was seen in various localities within the valley on 21 Sept, 14 Nov, 23 Nov and 2nd, 6th, 7th and 13 Dec. Between 16 - 27 Dec a ringtail roosted at Pulborough Brooks.

Beachy Head. A total of 5 sightings, all ringtails and all autumn birds. Singles on 17 Sept, 21 and 24 Oct with 2 on 28 Oct and one on 29th.

Ashdown Forest. A long-staying male seen on 9 dates from 10 Jan-24 Mar. A ringtail was sighted on 17 and 21 Apr. In the autumn a male was reported on 14 Oct and 1 and 25 Nov.

Rye area. Recorded on 33 days of the year, this locality once again the premier site in the county for this species. In the first part of the year single

ringtails were seen on 10th, 13th, 15th, and 24 Jan, 4th, 5th, and 21 Feb, 4th, 12th and 22 Mar and 16 Apr. There were 2 June dates which is very unusual, an immature female on 9 June followed by an adult female on 10 June. The earliest autumn record was a single ringtail on 20 Sept. No further sightings for 5 weeks when a male appeared on 25-26 Oct, with a ringtail present on 29 Oct. Just 2 single ringtails on 9 and 11 Nov. To finish the year, Dec was an excellent month with birds seen on 14 dates; a male on 11 Dec and at least 2 ringtails.

The only other sightings were single ringtails at Pevensey Levels on 27 Feb, 17 Nov and 10 Dec and Filsham Reedbed on 21 Nov. [MEK]

0263. **MONTAGU'S HARRIER**

Circus pygargus

Very scarce spring and autumn visitor; formerly bred in small numbers.

1994: The dates for the last bird of the year should be amended to 20 and 21 Sept, not 20 and 23).

1995: Three records for the year. The first was an adult male over Ashcombe Bottom on the rather early date of 6 May (SHL). An adult female was sighted at Pickers Hill, near Balsdean on 8 and 9 July (GAS). This bird afforded prolonged views as it hunted over a wheat field. The final record for this species was of a juvenile on 28 Aug at Walberton (BJR, TKR). As is so often the case with migrant raptors, this bird was continually mobbed by a pair of crows. [MEK]

0267. **GOSHAWK**

Accipiter gentilis

Rare visitor, mainly in winter; has bred and now appears to be resident in the county.

In the west of the county there are probably 3 or 4 locations where birds are resident and presumably breeding is attempted. There were no records from the east of the county.

The only record outside of areas considered to hold pairs came from Michelgrove Farm, Patching on 31 Oct when an adult female was seen at close quarters (BFF). [MEK]

0269. **SPARROWHAWK**

Accipiter nisus

Fairly common resident; passage migrant.

A total of 443 records were submitted but as usual there were few confirmed reports of breeding. Prey species included a House Martin, Collared Dove and a small unidentified rodent. A Woodpigeon had a lucky escape when its captor was inadvertently disturbed shortly after making a successful strike. The pigeon left a total of 80 breast feathers behind and although the hawk gave further chase it was easily out-flown.

At Bexhill on 10 Apr, one chased a Woodpigeon into a mist net but both escaped capture. The only migrant reported was at Worthing Beach on 25 Apr. [MEK]

0287. **BUZZARD**

Buteo buteo

Rare resident, scarce passage migrant and possible winter visitor.

It is likely, based on the records received, that there are 5-6 pairs in the west of the county and 3 pairs in the east. This situation is unchanged from last year. Few observers appear able to comment on breeding success. The pair near Storrington that produced 3 young last year continued their success with a further 2 young. It seems probable, from the records submitted, that several other pairs were indeed successful but productivity reduced to just one young for each pair.

Probable migrants in the first part of the year were seen at Thorney Island on 26 Feb, Charleston Manor on 11 Mar, with 2 singles in the Rye area on 25 and 30 Apr.

In the autumn there was a total of 17 migrants; at Rye on 12 and 21 Aug, Worthing on 18 Aug with 2 on 23rd, Eastbourne on 19 Aug, Beachy Head on 27 Aug, Thorney Island on 28 Aug, Barcombe on 4 Sept, Weir Wood Res on 5 Sept, Rye on 13 Sept, 2 at Rustington on 21 Sept, one at Thorney Island on

22 Sept, Rottingdean on 23 Sept, Crowlink near East Dean on 10 Oct, Barcombe on 4 Nov and Rottingdean on 4 Dec.

Finally, as part of a study on the movements of young Buzzards, 7 radio-tagged juveniles were released in the north-west of the county in 1994, with a further 3 released in the same area in 1995. In the east of the county 5 birds were released in 1995. [MEK]

0301. **OSPREY**

Pandion haliaetus

Scarce passage migrant.

Another outstanding year with a total of 90 records on at least 54 different dates. Allowing for likely duplication there was a probable total of 45 different birds. Earliest and latest dates were 10 Mar and 22 Oct and the approximate minimum monthly totals were as follows:

Mar	Apr	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct
2	2	11	1	3	8	16	2

Records can be grouped and summarised as follows:

Chichester and Pagham Hbrs. First seen on 27 Apr with a further 7 sightings in May, with 2 seen together on 23-24 May. In the autumn there was a single on 10 Aug followed by a further 5 singles. In Sept, birds were seen on 11 dates with 4 together at Pilsey Island on 6 Sept and 2 together on 11 and 17 Sept. One bird was chased by a Peregrine on 4 Sept. The last sighting for the year was on 20 Sept.

Weir Wood Res. First seen 24 Mar, followed by other migrants on 14 May, 29 June, 7 and 23 July and 8 and 13 Aug. Between 4-11 Sept there were as many as 4 birds including a juvenile.

Arlington Res. First reported on 10 and 12 Mar, the earliest spring record for the county. Another migrant appeared on 19 Apr and stayed until 21 Apr. A first-summer bird on 8 May was joined by another on 13 May and was last seen on 14 May; nearby pylons were used as a roost. On 12 May one was seen mobbing a Marsh Harrier. Rather surprisingly there were no sightings in the autumn.

Beachy Head. A single flew inland from the sea on 20 Apr. An autumn migrant flew out to sea on 16 Sept and, finally, one flew east along the cliff edge on 22 Oct which proved to be the latest sighting in the county for the year.

Rye area. The only spring records were on 10 and 11 May. In the autumn there were singles on 24 Aug, 3rd, 14th and 16 Sept.

Elsewhere single birds were reported as follows; in off the sea at Newhaven on 4 May, fishing in the River Arun by Pulborough Brooks on 9 May, Cuckmere Haven on 20 May, Darwell Res on 13 May and 26 Aug, over Shoreham Sanctuary on 30 July, flying east over Sompting Brooks on 11 Aug, at Goring Gap on 1 Sept and at Donnington on 17 Oct.. [MEK]

0304. **KESTREL***Falco tinnunculus***Fairly common resident and passage migrant.**

Many were recorded throughout the year with a total of 7 single migrants; at Selsey Bill on 15th, 22nd and 28 Apr, 20 May and 4 Nov, and at Worthing Beach on 10 Mar and 3 May.

Knepp Estate held 6 territories, Rackham Woods 2 pairs, Thorney Island 3 pairs, Findon Valley 3 pairs and Bewl Water 4 pairs. Very little information was received regarding breeding success. A pair at Woods Mill, Henfield successfully raised 4 young and a nestbox at Chalder Farm, Sidlesham contained 5 chicks on 25 June.

Only 2 prey items were reported, a Linnet and a Slow-worm. [MEK]

0307 **RED-FOOTED FALCON***Falco vespertinus***Rare vagrant.**

An adult male was seen in the lower Cuckmere Valley from 15.00-15.20 hrs on 10 May (PJa) and again from 16.45-17.15 on 11 May (NJT, AW) but frustratingly not between. An adult female just N of Rye Hbr village on 10 June landed in the top of a willow tree by the road at 10.55 hrs and was watched for 10 minutes (CAT). Both have been accepted by *British Birds* moving the county total to 28, of which 12 have been since 1987. Most have been in May and June, although records in the first half of May are less usual and the only earlier occurrences are of one secured in Sussex in the first week of May 1900 and, more precisely, an adult male near Seaford on 4 May 1958. [RJF]

0309. **MERLIN***Falco columbarius***Scarce but regular winter visitor and passage migrant.**

A total of 154 reports were submitted for the year. Oct was once again the best month to see this species, with a probable minimum of 13 birds present. Allowing for the usual difficulties in assessing numbers, the probable monthly minima were as follows:

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
8	6	7	5	2	2	11	13	6	7

Chichester and Pagham Hbrs. A female regularly hunted on Thorney and Pilsey Islands and was seen on at least 18 dates between 6 Jan-3 May. On one occasion it was seen to take a Dunlin. A male was recorded on 4 dates at Pagham Hbr between 11 Jan-15 Mar. Selsey Bill had singles on 4 and 15 Apr. The first autumn bird returned on 3 Sept with a further 3 dates in Sept and at least 11 dates in Oct. At Selsey Bill there were 2 females and a male on 10 Oct. An immature female stayed in the Thorney/Pilsey area until the end of the year and once again a Dunlin was taken on 22 Nov.

Downland to the east of Brighton had 2 birds on 6 Jan, with a single female on 21 Feb. There was an immature female on 30 Sept, which was presumably the same bird seen on 13 and 31 Oct and finally 8 Dec.

Newhaven/Seaford area had an adult male on 20 Mar followed by an immature on 22nd. In the autumn there were singles on 22 Sept, 4 Oct and 21 Nov.

Beachy Head had an excellent year for this species with a male seen on 13 Jan and 4 Apr and a female reported on 31 Mar and 9 Apr. A female returning on 3 Sept was joined by a second bird on 16 Sept and from this date until 3 Nov there were at least 2 birds present on 12 dates. With 4 immature males present on 23 Sept, an adult male reported on 8 Oct and 2 females recorded on 17 Oct it would seem likely that a minimum of 7 different birds were involved.

Rye area. A single was reported on 14 dates from 10 Jan-18 Apr. In the autumn, one or more females were seen from 28 Aug until the end of the year on at least 25 dates. A male was present on 12 Nov.

Many other coastal sites were favoured with brief visits. Climping had singles on 20 Sept and from 22-29 Dec. Bognor GC a single on 1 and 14 Mar. Kingston, Ferring had a hunting female on 2 Feb. Lancing had a single on 20 Aug (the earliest autumn date for the county in 1995), followed by a female hunting Old Salts Farm on 14 Sept and finally a male flying north on 29 Sept. Nearby, Shoreham had a single on 6 Oct. Elsewhere on the coast a single was seen at the Crumbles on 8 Oct, a single at Normans' Bay jousting with Hobbies, an immature female at Pevensy on 27 Dec and, finally, a single moving E at Glyne Gap, Bexhill.

Inland, but still within 10 kilometres of the coast were singles at Cissbury on 22 Sept and 8 Oct. In the Lewes area there were singles on 3 Feb, 16 Mar and 10 Dec. There were only 10 records for birds seen in the hinterland: a single seen at Iping Common on 2 Nov with another single at Woolbeding Common on 4 Nov and a male flying south at Bewl Water on 22 Oct. The remainder of the records were from Pulborough Brooks where singles were recorded on 1 Jan, 10 Feb, 10-14 Nov and 4th, 8th, 18th and 27 Dec. [MEK]

0310. **HOBBY**

Falco subbuteo

Scarce breeding summer visitor and regular passage migrant.

Another excellent spring and early summer passage with probably 60 birds involved. First recorded on 15 Apr at Selsey Bill with the first inland record at Warnham MP on 20 Apr. A number were seen to fly in over the sea, at Selsey Bill on 15th, 16th, 21st and 22 Apr and Newhaven on 30 Apr. The first inland pair was reported from Handcross on 30 Apr. Several localities had multiple sightings with as many as 12 at Icklesham on 30 May. There were 8 at Normans' Bay on 14 May, 6 at Pulborough Brooks on 15 May with 3 at Hollingbury Camp on 7 June.

Late migrants were reported from Pagham Hbr and Beachy Head on 7 June. There was a total of 32 reports in July. Breeding pairs are generally very secretive and July records are not usually much in evidence. Only 5-6 pairs were reported as breeding successfully but in the absence of a comprehensive survey this statement is not very meaningful.

At Beachy Head autumn migration began on 16 Sept and ended on 14 Oct with birds seen on a total of 8 dates. Late departures were again much in

evidence with at least 18 birds staying into Oct, the last record coming from Arundel WWT on 31 Oct; equally the latest record for the county on 31 Oct 1965, at Selsey. [MEK]

0320. **PEREGRINE**

Falco peregrinus

Scarce breeding resident.

A grand total of 253 records submitted, all but a few relating to coastal localities. The available data suggests 6 or 7 breeding pairs with perhaps 8 young fledging but sadly at least 3 did not survive the summer. Certain localities produced large numbers of records:

Chichester and Pagham Hbrs. Seen in every month of the year and accounting for 102 of the records submitted. From 18 Jan onwards there were numerous reports of an immature male, adult male and adult female. Wader roosts were again a favourite target. A Dunlin was forced into the sea by an immature male, retrieved and devoured. On another occasion the same bird caught a Skylark. On 13 June there were 2 immatures present, with a juvenile on 4 Aug. An immature female harrassed an Osprey over Pilsey Sands on 4 Sept. Two days later it was seen to force a Greenshank into the sea.

Pulborough Brooks. All sightings were singles: a female on 11 and 15 Jan, unsexed individuals on 5 Apr and 30 June, an immature female on 30 Oct, an immature male on 5 Nov and sightings of a male on 15 dates between 6 Nov-28 Dec.

Rye area. A total of 33 records for the year and seen in all months except Mar and July. A single was first seen on 27 Jan and then a female on 12 Feb was observed chasing a Lapwing. Most of the sightings were not sexed. A male was identified on 29 Oct and 10 Dec.

Chalk Headlands. Either 3 or 4 breeding pairs but from the data available there is some uncertainty as regards breeding success. A minimum of 2-3 young were raised but the numbers may have been much higher.

Elsewhere there were numerous sightings in all the coastal towns. Inland, the same pair as last year produced 4 young to the flying stage but only 1 survived until the end of the summer. Two birds were roosting on Shoreham power station in Nov. [MEK]

0358. **RED-LEGGED PARTRIDGE**

Alectoris rufa

Introduced resident.

Records of singles or pairs were received from 7 sites during the breeding season but only at one of these was breeding confirmed - coveys of 17, 7 and 8 were reported from Compton. At Pagham Hbr, although there were no reports during the breeding season, 21 were seen on 9 Sep, 12 on 9 Oct and 25 on 17 Oct. The only other winter record was of 6 at Michelgrove, Patching on 31 Oct. Some records may relate to Chukars or 'ogridge' hybrids. [RTP]

0367. **GREY PARTRIDGE**

Perdix perdix

Fairly common but decreasing resident.

In the early part of the year records came from 11 sites, notably 13 at Beeding Hill on 3 Jan, 11 at Stanmer on 7 Jan, 28 at Rye Hbr on 28 Jan and 16 at Arundel on 14 Feb. Breeding was confirmed at Goring Gap, Rye Hbr and Yapton but numbers indicative of breeding were recorded at 14 other sites later in the year. The highest numbers were at Rye Hbr where there were 43 on 6 Dec. Other good counts were 31 at Sompting Abbots on 9 Aug, 28 at Goring Gap on 4 Nov, 29 at Ferring Rife on 6 Nov, 29 at Church Norton on 11 Nov and 23 at Thorney Island on 20 Nov. [RTP]

0370. **QUAIL**

Coturnix coturnix

Scarce summer visitor, recorded in variable numbers from year to year. Formerly occasional in winter.

More often heard calling than seen, Quail were reported from 9 sites between 5 May-10 Sep. Except for a calling bird at Pulborough Brooks on 12 Aug, all records came from the Downs or the coastal plain and were of single birds. There were no observations to suggest that breeding took place but, due to the secretive nature of this species, that cannot be ruled out. For those who are unable to walk the Downs but would like to see or hear this bird, there is still some hope. A lucky member from Seaford reported one in his front garden on 7 May. [RTP]

0394. **PHEASANT**

Phasianus colchicus

Very common resident.

Records of confirmed breeding were received from only 4 sites. At West Hoathly 12 pairs were found in a survey of 61.8 ha of farmland. Compare this with an estate in East Sussex where 6500 birds were reared and released on 600 ha for sporting purposes. [RTP]

0396. *Cat.C.* **GOLDEN PHEASANT***Chrysolophus pictus***Scarce introduced resident.**

There were but 4 reports for 1995, 3 males (including the regular flavescens individual) at Kingley Vale on 1 Jan and single males at Glynde on 25 Feb and at Kingley Vale on 24 Jun. Seven pairs were recorded at Kingley Vale during the breeding season. [RTP]

0407. **WATER RAIL***Rallus aquaticus***Scarce resident, winter visitor and passage migrant.**

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

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
No. of sites	19	8	11	7	4	11	14	12	26
No. of birds	48	23	24	16	7	19	48	39	85

More were reported than in recent years and the Dec total is notable.

The spring maximum was 15 at Combe Haven on 24 Mar. In autumn, Thorney Island held up to 16 between Oct-Dec and there were several at sites around Pagham Hbr, most notably 14 by the North Wall on 19 Dec.

Birds were noted at 6 sites in the breeding season. [KN]

0408. **SPOTTED CRAKE***Porzana porzana***Very scarce spring and autumn passage migrant and rare winter visitor.**

A single at Weir Wood Res on 8 Aug (JSG, BMM *et al*) was followed by birds trapped at Elms Farm, Icklesham on 12th, 22nd and 23 Aug, 6 and 19 Sept and 2 and 4 Oct. The bird trapped on 23 Aug was re-trapped on 7 Sept. (RBRG). [SJP]

0421. **CORNCRAKE***Crex crex***Rare passage migrant that formerly bred.**

Single birds were seen at Birling Gap on 28 Aug (RT) and found dead on the road between Plumpton and Chailey on 5 Oct (*per* AJW). Only 5 birds have been recorded in the county in the 1990s. [SJP]

0424. **MOORHEN***Gallinula chloropus***Very common resident and winter visitor.**

The monthly counts at the principal sites were as follows:

	1995						1996			
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar
<i>County totals</i>	462	471	413	695	641	769	555	649	491	347
Chichester Hbr	37	10	53	20	35	33	23	28	44	42
Pagham Hbr	40	55	45	12	49	26	42	47	23	41
Chichester GP	99	86	70	88	69	162	137	141	177	10
Arundel WWT	nc	nc	nc	106	110	151	nc	87	nc	nc
Pulborough Brooks	11	38	28	42	16	2	11	44	18	35

Weir Wood Res	5	2	4	34	nc	4	10	10	2	4
Bewl Water	100	90	100	168	130	131	68	66	50	50
Pannel Valley	nc	nc	nc	22	21	17	15	20	30	nc
Rye Hbr	69	48	32	42	28	57	79	49	46	39

Breeding was clearly under-reported as records were received from only 10 sites. Bewl Water is worthy of note with 91 territories, 25-30 broods and 40 young. [DEGC]

0429. COOT

Fulica atra

Common resident with numbers much increased by visitors outside the breeding season.

The monthly counts at the principal sites were as follows:

	1995						1996			
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar
<i>County totals</i>	2452	1922	1056	2022	1878	2240	2669	2534	2457	1249
Chichester Hbr	75	59	34	17	52	31	52	74	59	73
Pagham Hbr	35	28	36	25	85	30	61	82	32	55
Chichester GP	846	544	430	546	529	1041	1121	875	817	14
Arundel WWT	84	48	39	88	61	74	-	61	83	64
Burton MP	nc	nc	nc	7	43	31	22	25	15	20
Kneppmill Pond	17	-	1	11	18	37	14	4	-	4
Ardingly Res	102	95	10	5	-	2	nc	22	23	13
Barcombe Res	10	7	4	-	-	-	22	57	30	40
Bewl Water	758	571	252	928	680	481	748	663	595	339
Pannel Valley	nc	nc	nc	41	60	76	54	60	60	nc
Rye Hbr	400	284	103	277	311	406	511	451	562	419

In addition there were 200 at Scotney Court GP on 11 Jan, 78 at Brooklands, Worthing on 29 Jan and 250 at Broadwater Lake, Eastbourne on 18 Feb. Brooklands again held 70 in Sept, 102 in Oct, 107 in Nov and 99 in Dec. Elms Farm, Icklesham held 60 in Oct, 76 in Nov and 54 in Dec.

Only 8 breeding records were reported. At Thorney Deeps 24 young were raised from 7 broods and at Bewl Water there were 87 pairs, 23 broods and 50 young. An albino bird first seen at Ivy Lake, Chichester GP on 29 Aug was still present on 5 Dec. [DEGC]

0450. OYSTERCATCHER

Haematopus ostralegus

Scarce breeder, fairly common passage migrant and winter visitor.

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

	1995						1996			
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar
<i>County totals</i>	2063	1685	1672	1624	2095	1731	1894	1899	1675	1521
Chichester Hbr	1281	907	944	1259	1297	1321	1405	1286	1126	730
Pagham Hbr	266	280	183	95	382	216	224	349	268	413
Climping	169	25	63	108	97	63	5	2	2	13
Goring Gap	24	71	37	4	7	15	38	42	-	-
Adur Estuary	3	1	4	1	8	9	1	1	4	-
Cuckmere Haven	-	-	-	28	-	-	-	-	2	-

Glyne Gap	nc	4	-	2	3	7	1	9	3	13
Pett Level	-	-	-	1	1	-	-	-	6	25
Rye Hbr	320	401	441	126	300	100	220	210	264	327

The largest roost was at Pilsey Sands where the monthly maximum counts were;

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
842	874	678	496	265	227	506	1300	1248	1254	1132	1145

There was a leucistic bird at this roost (as in 1994) on 20 Jan, 18 Feb, 25 Oct and 23 Dec. Breeding was reported from the following sites: 2 pairs at Courtwick, Littlehampton, 1 pair at Pett Level, 1 pair at Icklesham, 16 pairs at Rye Hbr SSSI which raised 10 young and at Chichester Hbr there were 2 pairs each at Ellanore, North Stakes Island, Thorney Deeps and Pilsey Island and possibly 1 pair at Longmere.

Inland there was 1 at Weir Wood Res on 9 Jul, 1 at Arlington Res on 23 Jul, and 4 flying NE over Hurstpierpoint on 27 Aug. [BJY]

0456. **AVOCET**

Recurvirostra avosetta

Scarce winter visitor and passage migrant. Has bred.

Approximate monthly totals were as follows:

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
9	8	130	38	21	3	6	7	3	4	7	17

The March total includes 120 past Beachy Head on 10th, of which 112 were also noted at Seaford, more in one day than in the whole of any previous spring.

Among other sites, Pagham Hbr held birds in every month, with 6 or 7 between Jan and Mar, and 13 in Dec. For most of the year there were a very few birds at Rye Hbr although 10 were present on 29 Apr and 9 on 4 Dec. Just 2 were seen inland, at Arlington Res on 10 Aug and 2 Sept. [KN]

0459. **STONE CURLEW**

Burhinus oedichnemus

Rare passage migrant but formerly a scarce breeding summer visitor and rare winter visitor.

One bird was seen in fields on the W side of the lower Cuckmere Valley on 10 Sept (GK, AES *et al*). [SJP]

0466. **ORIENTAL PRATINCOLE**

Glareola maldivarum

Very rare vagrant

1993: The individual at Middle Bridge, Pevensey Levels on 29 and 30 Aug (SxBR 46:39) was considered to be different to that previously seen in Norfolk (*British Birds* 88:509) and becomes the 5th British record. [RJF]

0469. LITTLE RINGED PLOVER

*Charadrius dubius***Rare breeding summer visitor and scarce passage migrant.**

The first pair was seen at a breeding site on 26 Mar. In the breeding season 8 pairs were recorded and at least 6 young.

Passage in July and Aug consisted mainly of records of 1-2 birds, with up to 5 at Pett Level and Sidlesham Ferry and 6 at Icklesham. Larger numbers were at Westhampnett, which built up through June and July to peak at 26 on 3 Aug, the largest gathering recorded in the county. A few lingered into Sept and the last were 1 at Icklesham and 2 at Pett Level on 10th. [KN]

0470. RINGED PLOVER

*Charadrius hiaticula***Fairly common breeder, passage migrant and winter visitor.**

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

	1995						1995			1996		
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar		
<i>County totals</i>	502	422	187	978	672	621	370	802	541	660		
Chichester Hbr	110	72	36	633	401	435	197	269	136	143		
Pagham Hbr	68	122	85	24	185	21	-	173	81	216		
Climping	63	55	10	51	40	25	79	82	101	111		
Goring Gap	72	57	9	-	15	105	20	73	71	45		
Adur Estuary	135	61	17	-	-	-	-	168	103	38		
Newhaven	1	15	7	26	-	20	-	22	15	2		
Cuckmere Haven	23	-	-	23	-	1	3	-	2	3		
Langney Point	1	-	2	16	6	-	5	4	12	15		
Glyne Gap	nc	5	4	7	5	11	2	7	2	3		
Pett Level	25	-	-	5	8	-	-	1	2	7		
Rye Hbr	4	35	17	189	7	3	64	3	16	76		

The greatest concentrations outside the breeding season were at Pilsey Sands where counts revealed more than 300 in May, Sep, Oct, Nov and Dec, with the maximum of 1268 on 25 Aug. Other concentrations (not in table above and greater than 50) were 88 at Sovereign Hbr on 18 Feb, 95 at Pagham Hbr on 15 Apr, 100 at Goring Beach on 13 Aug, 53 in lower Cuckmere Valley on 15 Sep, 112 at Goring Beach on 23 Dec and 100 at Shoreham Hbr on 24th.

The first nest was noted at Brighton Marina with a completed clutch on 4 Mar. Breeding records were received from: Brighton Marina, South Lancing Beach, Widewater, Lancing (5 pairs), Newhaven Tide Mills (3 pairs), Sovereign Hbr Marina (5 pairs), Shoreham power station (2 pairs), Pilsey Island (5 pairs raised 3 young) and about 50 pairs at Rye Hbr. There were also pairs holding territory at Apuldram Fm, Chichester and at Wicks Fm, Yapton.

Inland there were 2 at Pulborough Brooks on 27 Mar, 3 there on 1 May and 5 on 16 May, 1-4 at Arlington Res from 31 Jul-8 Oct, 1 at Weir Wood Res on 16 and 21 Aug and 9 there on 1 Sep.[BJY]

0477. KENTISH PLOVER

*Charadrius alexandrinus***Very scarce spring and autumn passage migrant. Formerly bred.**

1964: It is somewhat unusual to include a record which is now 32 years old (and older than the Editor of this Report!). Following a review, the record of a probable female at Portfield GP, Chichester on 19 May (ARK, MJH) is now found to be acceptable.

1995: An improvement on 1994, with 4 birds recorded - all adult males. The first was with a mixed group of waders at West Beach, Littlehampton on 28 Apr (RJLK) and one was at Newhaven Tide Mills on 27 and 28 May (IJW, ADW *et al*). Birds were seen at Pilsey Island on 14 June and 26 July (CBC). About 95 have been recorded in the county since the beginning of 1962, including 34 at Pilsey Island. [SJP]

0482. DOTTEREL

*Eudromias morinellus***Very scarce spring and autumn passage migrant; one winter record.**

1994: The bird seen at Woodingdean should have the month changed from April to May. Two addition records which have been accepted since the publication of the 1994 SxBR are as follows; four birds were recorded at Woodingdean on 2 Sept with one at this site on 10 Sept (GAS).

1995: The first record was of one bird was at Balsdean on 13-14 Apr (GAS *et al*) followed by 2 at Iford on 6 May and 5 at this site on 8th (GAS). Three birds were present at Denton from 9-13 May (NJT *et al*) with up to 6 birds (4 males, 2 females) between 14-21 May (mo) and 2 remaining on 22nd. One was at Thorney Island from 18-20 May (CBC *et al*). The only autumn record was of a single at Pilsey Island on 24 Aug (CBC). About 216 have been recorded in the county since the beginning of 1962, including 97 in the Balsdean area. [SJP]

0485. GOLDEN PLOVER

*Pluvialis apricaria***Common winter visitor and passage migrant, rare in summer.**

The monthly counts at the principal sites were as follows:

	1995						1995			1996		
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar		
County totals	1635	440	66	13	438	1140	2038	2599	1558	2663		
Chichester Hbr	1085	302	66	0	381	709	382	1526	1271	1558		
Pagham Hbr	485	129	-	2	50	12	670	1014	196	275		
Pulborough	151	172	139	-	-	160	-	-	-	515		
Brooks												
Pevensey Levels	-	-	-	-	7	-	731	22	86	111		
Rye Hbr	65	9	-	11	-	258	56	5	-	15		

In the early part of the year, maximum counts were 970 at West Wittering car park on 3 Jan, 250 at Manxey Level, Pevensey on 7 Jan and 1005 at Thorney Airfield on 20 Jan. In Feb, numbers at Thorney Deepes decreased from 2000 on 2 Feb to 1200 on 12th, thereafter rapidly dwindling to 404 on 31 Mar, 251 on 3 Apr and only 4 by 20 Apr. Elsewhere, there were 450 at

Pagham North Wall on 6 Feb and 250 at East Wittering on 2 Apr. The last bird was seen on Worthing Beach on 20 May.

In the autumn, the first returning bird was recorded at Rye Hbr on 1 July, with 12 at Thorney Deeps by 31 July and 109 at this site on 13 Aug. After low counts in Sept with a maximum of 125 at East Chidham on 29th numbers increased in Oct with 190 at Sweare Deep Channel, Chichester Hbr on 5 Oct and 220 at Thorney Deeps on 14 Oct. A further increase in Nov found 509 at Thorney Island on 10 Nov and 150 at Barcombe Res and 224 at East Guldeford Level on 12 Nov. There were 550 at Pagham Hbr on 15 Nov, 900 at Rye Hbr on 16 Nov and 560 at East Head on 22 Nov. Notable Dec flocks included 710 at Pagham Hbr on 13th, 400 at Rye Hbr on the same date and 800 at Thorney Island on 24th.

Movements observed included 11 E at Worthing on 19 Mar, 250 E at Bolney on 19 Nov, 30 W at Normans' Bay on 24 Nov, 24 N at Lower Standean on 26 Dec and, finally, 70 W at Rye Hbr on 28 Dec. [JLN]

0486. GREY PLOVER

Pluvialis squatarola

Common winter visitor and passage migrant.

The monthly counts at the principal sites were as follows:

	1995						1995			1996		
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May
County Totals	2316	3468	3195	1167	3153	3055	2427	3155	2749	3433		
Chichester Hbr	1140	1867	1370	931	2327	1991	1057	1910	1938	2060		
Pagham Hbr	747	1271	1624	216	771	827	1120	844	410	917		
Climping	181	105	68	12	39	80	60	138	108	174		
Goring Gap	133	178	130	-	12	107	115	178	211	200		
Adur Estuary	-	-	-	-	-	13	21	18	23	8		
Pett Level	111	45	-	-	-	-	54	55	45	51		
Rye Hbr	-	-	3	1	2	37	-	8	13	18		

Eastward spring passage totals from seawatching sites were as follows:

	Mar	Apr	May	Total	No. per hr (Apr-May)	
Selsey Bill		2	688	180	870	2.0
Worthing Beach		1	6	83	90	0.9
Splash Point, Seaford		-	12	21	33	0.1

With the exception of Selsey Bill, numbers recorded were low. The largest movements at Selsey were 322 E in 7 hrs on 4 Apr, 101 E in 7.8 hrs on 12 Apr and 200 E in 7 hrs on 24 Apr; the peak passage at Worthing was only 31 E on 1 May. There was a single bird in summer plumage at Rye Hbr on 7 Jan. Totals at Pilsley Sands increased from 1000 on 20 Jan to 1400 on 17 Feb, then rapidly decreased to 588 on 18 Mar and 224 on 29 Apr, with only 7 remaining on 18 May.

First returning birds were 30 reported at North Stakes Island on 12 June. Pilsley Sands' totals increased from 34 on 15 June to 587 on 11 Aug, 1300 on 28 Aug and a maximum of 1562 on 2 Oct, but decreasing to 486 by 9 Nov. Wader roost counts at Kingston Gorse yielded 80 on 15 Oct and 100 on 29 Oct. One at Pulborough Brooks between 10 and 25 Apr was the only inland record of this species during the year. [JLN]

0493. LAPWING

*Vanellus vanellus***Fairly common but decreasing breeder and very common winter visitor.**

The monthly counts at the principal sites were as follows:

	1995						1996			
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar
<i>County totals</i>	44,643	19,968	431	6649	12,200	18,458	9079	10,508	14,399	15,032
Chichester Hbr	3085	1916	41	580	1625	2919	1195	2519	3559	1627
Pagham Hbr	2733	242	-	70	492	577	1401	850	1280	562
Pulborough Brooks	17,680	8530	106	1806	4371	3317	394	697	1868	9387
Adur Estuary	2530	1010	-	75	680	556	283	1460	970	30
Newhaven	700	2000	-	0	100	295	170	450	1200	5
Cuckmere Haven	2500	3	-	150	400	650	550	300	600	420
Glyne Gap	nc	-	-	0	0	16	280	150	120	7
Pevensey Levels	190	121	68	970	1504	1855	906	208	1446	1706
Pett Level	2850	600	85	630	261	110	700	665	299	640
Rye Hbr	3514	1630	87	1522	1776	4440	1011	1350	1030	361

Good numbers of Lapwing were recorded by the WeBS counters in Jan (see table), other notable flocks during the month being 1000 at Brede Bridge, Westfield and 1000 at Swain's Farm, Littleworth. A leucistic bird continues to return to Newhaven Tide Mills and was observed at both ends of the year, now for the sixth year running. The Feb counts were lower than in Jan, many birds were observed in the river valleys following the high Jan rainfall. Henfield Levels and Upper Beeding both held flocks of 3000 on 2 Feb, 1325 were counted on Glynde Levels on 11 Feb (this being the peak count at this site for 7 years) and 3000 were present on Amberley Wild Brooks on 12 Feb. Numbers, following the usual pattern, were much lower in Mar, 650 at Icklesham being the highest noted and after the 11th none were more than 85. During this month territorial display flights were observed at several sites.

Evidence of breeding was obtained from 9 sites and involved 57 pairs. All these sites, except for Cissbury and Knepp Estate, West Grinstead, were on the coastal plain. The 30 pairs where breeding success could be ascertained produced 83 chicks.

The first post-breeding movements were observed on 25 Jun when 18 flew NE over Wolstonbury Hill, but small flocks were already forming earlier in the month at Thorney Deeps and Rye Hbr where 280 and 200 were counted.

Many reports of flocks were received for the rest of the year, the larger congregations appearing in the winter months so 1200 at Thorney Deepes on 13 July was exceptional. By Nov the county becomes home for large numbers of migrants from continental Europe, the highest counts being 2000 in the Cuckmere Valley on 13th and 4500 at Rye Hbr on 16th. In Dec 3000 were observed at Littlehampton on 23rd, with 500 at Barcombe Res the same day and 2000 at Thorney Deepes on 24th. In the winter months, mixed flocks with Golden Plover were sometimes observed. [RTP]

0496. **KNOT**

Calidris canutus

Common winter visitor and fairly common passage migrant.

The monthly counts at the principal sites were as follows:

	1995						1995			1996		
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar		
<i>County totals</i>	760	582	50	129	154	1214	269	2848	326	1005		
Chichester Hbr	760	336	17	116	153	1214	206	2608	100	854		
Pagham Hbr	-	246	33	-	1	-	63	240	226	151		

Although there were 100 in Emsworth Channel on 8 Jan and 600 at Pilsey Sands on 20 Jan the highest count was the Jan WeBS count for Chichester Hbr. The same count at Pagham Hbr produced no Knot but 251 were counted there on 12 Jan. The table shows counts were less in Feb and there were still 219 and 102 at Pagham Hbr on 2 and 9 Mar respectively and 112 at Pilsey Sands on 14 Mar.

During the spring few were seen with 17 at Pilsey Island on 29 Apr and 31 in Pagham Hbr on 6 May being the best counts from each of the western harbours. Likewise, few were seen by sea-watchers as the following table shows;

	Mar	Apr	May	Total	No. per hr (Apr-May)
Selsey Bill	-	28	62	90	0.21
Worthing Beach	-	11	15	25	0.25
Splash Point, Seaford	-	-	60	60	0.27

Peak movements were 22 E at Selsey Bill on 28 Apr and 18 E and 28 E at Splash Point, Seaford on 1 and 2 May respectively.

Up to 5 were at Rye Hbr in late July with 11 at Pilsey Island on 27 July. Aug brought small numbers, some still in summer plumage, with 15 (juveniles) at Rye Hbr Ternery Pool on 17 Aug increasing to 22 on 24th and 50 on 21 Aug. Thereafter small numbers were recorded around the coast but most were seen in Chichester and Pagham Hbrs as shown in table above. Early autumn counts on Pilsey Island were 21 on 28 Aug, 66 on 7 Sept and 100 were feeding in Emsworth Channel on 13 Sept. The count of 1214 at Pilsey Island on 9 Nov was exceptionally high. At Pagham Hbr there were 11 on 21 Aug and 87 on 30 Nov rising to 175 on 26 Dec. [JLH/JAN]

0497. SANDERLING

*Calidris alba***Fairly common winter visitor and passage migrant.**

The monthly counts at the principal sites were as follows:

	1995						1995			1996	
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	
County totals	628	147	59	312	267	171	89	43	324	340	
Chichester Hbr	83	28	2	307	257	91	66	30	309	258	
Pagham Hbr	-	-	-	2	-	-	-	1	-	-	
Climping	141	74	6	1	-	17	12	4	1	6	
Goring Gap	23	45	51	-	10	63	-	7	14	74	
Rye Hbr	381	-	-	-	-	-	11	1	-	-	

Eastbound totals for the spring passage from the main seawatching sites were as follows:

	Mar	Apr	May	Total	No. per hr (Apr-May)
Selsey Bill	25	136	186	347	0.75
Worthing Beach	62	70	114	246	2.46
Splash Point, Seaford	-	21	84	95	0.43

Peak movements were 97 E at Selsey Bill on 28 Apr, 38 E on 22 Mar at Worthing and 34 E at the same site on 29 Apr. Other movements reported included 7 E and 5 W at Selsey Bill in Aug, 2 W at the same site in Nov and 2 W at Glyne Gap, Bexhill in Dec. Notable Jan counts were 200 at Rye Hbr on 1 Jan and 141 on flooded arable land at high tide at Atherington on 23 Jan. Feb saw 131 at Pilsey Sands on 10 Feb and 120 roosting at Rye Hbr on 12th. After 263 on 22 Mar at Pilsey Sands and 286 at the same site on 4 Apr, numbers decreased to 223 on 9 May and thereafter rapidly to 1 only on 10 July. The first returning migrant was seen at West Fields, Selsey on 27 June. During the autumn, totals at Pilsey Sands quickly increased to 230 on 28 July and reached 361 on 20 Aug, thereafter decreasing to 307 on 9 Sept and 248 on 7 Oct. Maximum counts at this site later in the year were 84 on 13 Nov and 64 on 9 Dec. Records from other sites included 100 at Kingston Gorse wader roost on 29 Oct and 34 at Goring Gap on 23 Dec.

There were inland reports of 1 at Arlington Res on 25 Apr and 1 at Weir Wood Res on 5 Oct. [JLN]

0501. LITTLE STINT

*Calidris minuta***Passage migrant, scarce in autumn and very scarce in spring; a few winter in most years.**

The approximate minimum monthly totals were as follows:

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
1	-	-	2	3	3	16	17	45	19	5	-

One was at Sidlesham Ferry on 29 Jan. After a thunderstorm on 26 July 14 adults were at Pilsey Sands. The Sept total included up to 13 at Pilsey Sands, 8 at Pett Level and 7 at Weir Wood Res. There were at least 16 near West Wittering on 3 Oct with 5 on 21st, and finally one at Pulborough Brooks RSPB Reserve on 21 Nov. [KN]

0502. **TEMMINCK'S STINT**

Calidris temminckii

Very scarce spring and autumn passage migrant.

Two spring records: singles at Arlington Res on 9 May (WRT) and at Sidlesham Ferry from 9-13 May (mo). In the autumn, one was at Pett Pools on 1-3 Sept (JABG, TJW *et al*) and 7 Sept (AJH) whilst one at Icklesham on 3 Sept (TJW) was thought to be a different bird. A total of 99 birds has been recorded in the county since the beginning of 1962, including 29 at Sidlesham Ferry. [SJP]

0504. **LEAST SANDPIPER**

Calidris minutilla

Very rare vagrant.

An adult at Sidlesham Ferry from 19-25 July (TJE *et al*) has been accepted by *British Birds* and was the 2nd county record. Its long stay was appreciated by many, the location allowing excellent views to be obtained (*Birding World* 8:245). The previous record was also in July (at Pett Pools in 1984). [RJF]

0505. **WHITE-RUMPED SANDPIPER**

Calidris fuscicollis

Very rare vagrant

An adult at Sidlesham Ferry from 5-8 Aug is awaiting acceptance by *British Birds*. An excellent photograph of the bird was published in *Birding World* (8:287). If accepted it would be the 11th county record and the 5th to be recorded at this site. Four previous records were in Aug including individuals at Sidlesham Ferry in 1974, 1981 and 1990. [RJF]

0507. **PECTORAL SANDPIPER**

Calidris melanotos

Rare vagrant, mainly in autumn.

Two were recorded in the east of the county; an adult at Ternery Pool, Rye Hbr from 23 July-6 Aug (ADW, IJW *et al*) and a juvenile at Pett Pools from 27 Aug-3 Sept (JA *et al*). These, the first records since 1992, move the county total on to 48. Pett Pools, with 9 individuals recorded, is the best site in the county for this species followed, in recent years, by Rye Hbr (4 since 1975). [RJF]

0509. **CURLEW SANDPIPER**

Calidris ferruginea

Passage migrant, scarce in autumn and very scarce in spring; rare in winter.

The year's total of about 104 was average and the approximate monthly totals were:

Apr	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct
2	8	1	17	31	42	6

The first were a winter-plumaged individual at Newhaven Tide Mills and one in summer plumage at Pilsey Island on 29 Apr, the latter remaining to 1

May. These were followed by singles at Pagham Hbr on 6 May, Cuckmere Haven on 7 May and Rye Hbr on 8 May with up to 2 in Chichester Hbr from 13-15 May and at Sidlesham Ferry from 16-18 May. During June, a summer-plumaged bird was at Pilsey Island on 16th.

The return passage started on 10 July with 1 at Pagham Hbr followed by another there from 23-25 July and 2 on 28 July. There were 12 adults in summer plumage at Pilsey Island after a thunderstorm on 26 July and a single at Pett Level on 31 July. As usual, the largest numbers were in Aug and Sept with approximate totals:

	2 - 19 Aug	20 Aug - 2 Sept	3 - 29 Sept
Chichester Hbr	8	6	-
Pagham Hbr	2	5	8
Shoreham	-	-	1
Cuckmere Haven	-	-	2
Pett Level	2	5	13
Rye Hbr	4	2	9
Union Canal, E. Guldeford	-	-	1
Weir Wood Res	1	-	-
Arlington Res	-	-	2
Total	17	18	36

In Oct, there were singles at Pagham Hbr on 4 dates between 10-16th and 3 in the lower Cuckmere Valley on 14th. [SHL]

0510. PURPLE SANDPIPER

Calidris maritima

Scarce winter visitor and passage migrant; very rare in summer.

The peak monthly counts at the main sites were as follows:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Oct	Nov	Dec
Climping / Littlehampton	-	4	1	-	-	-	-	1
Shoreham	5	4	4	-	-	1	5	4
Brighton Marina	2	-	1	4	5	2	7	6
Newhaven	11	7	6	3	1	-	2	3
Langney Point / Sovereign Hbr	2	-	-	-	-	-	1	-
Glyne Gap, Bexhill	12	11	12	12	-	-	-	11

The last of the first winter period were in May with 5 at Brighton Marina on 3rd and 1 at Newhaven West Pier on 5th. The next record was of 1 at Shoreham Hbr on 25 Oct closely followed by 2 at Brighton Marina on 28 Oct. The only other locality not listed above was Goring Beach with a single present on 28 Oct.

It is interesting to note that the maxima recorded at Glyne Gap, Bexhill were remarkably constant whereas it seems that Brighton Marina may sometimes host birds from the Newhaven roost. [SHL]

Abundant winter visitor and common passage migrant. Small numbers summer.

The monthly counts at the principal sites were as follows:

	1995							1995 1996		
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar
County totals	18,260	17,168	3619	1304	2824	25,978	11,852	27,586	13,125	15,933
Chichester Hbr	14,363	14,853	1915	751	1283	24,407	7793	22,590	9029	12,017
Pagham Hbr	2596	1299	1536	184	1392	949	2922	3056	2340	2463
Ciimping	2	10	-	1	-	-	2	-	6	1
Goring Gap	260	742	92	-	21	176	268	216	628	858
Adur Estuary	240	38	23	20	45	334	369	1095	924	218
Newhaven	-	-	2	10	-	6	103	200	-	24
Cuckmere Hvn	17	1	-	43	39	11	1	43	33	2
Langney	160	75	16	1	-	-	5	30	50	90
Pett Level	550	150	22	40	-	18	285	127	79	35
Rye Hbr	72	-	13	242	44	77	84	225	20	222

Both the early autumn counts were lower than usual whilst that in Nov was well above the average for the month. The importance of the western harbours is clearly shown in the table with the largest numbers recorded at Pilsey Sands where 10,000 were noted on both 20 Jan and 18 Feb. Other notable winter records were 800 at Pett Pools on 29 Jan and a similar number at Rye Harbour in early Feb. Coordinated counts in Pagham and Chichester Hbrs in Apr revealed 636 and 601 respectively whilst in May the same exercise counted 473 and 1623, 1500 of which were on Pilsey Sands. All other large spring counts were from Pilsey Sands with 550 on 29 Apr, 1000 on 4 May, 1400 on 10 May and 600 on 20 May.

In keeping with other waders the spring eastbound coastal movements were small; the largest being 32 and 34 E at Selsey Bill on 28 Apr and 9 May respectively and the monthly seawatching totals from the principal stations were as follows:

	Mar	Apr	May	Total	No. per hr (Apr-May)
Selsey Bill	-	284	98	382	0.89
Worthing Beach	33	75	67	175	1.42
Splash Point, Seaford	-	29	51	80	0.36

Few were recorded in June with the highest number being 69 at Pilsey Sands on 16 June. The following counts from this site during the autumn were, by a long way, the largest in the county and demonstrate the arrival of this species in the county.

3 Jul	11 Jul	16 Jul	26 Jul	28 Jul	4 Aug	25 Aug	9 Sep	12 Oct	20 Nov	9 Dec
33	79	450	1000	2000	1500	800	600	7000	20,000	2500

Throughout the year small numbers were recorded from inland sites with up to 3 together on several dates at both Weir Wood Res and Arlington Res, 2 at Darwell Res and Bewl Water and a single bird at Barcombe Res. The largest numbers were recorded in the Arun Valley with regular sightings at Pulborough Brooks (max 10 on 12 Mar) and 9 at Waltham Brooks on 12 Sept. [JLH/JAN]

0517. RUFF

Philomachus pugnax

Scarce winter visitor and passage migrant.

The approximate monthly totals were:

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June	July	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
30	32	68	25	12	6	13	27	23	21	20	33

The largest numbers in the early part of the year were at East Head, where up to 17 were seen near the car park on 3 Jan, and at Amberley Wild Brooks where 14 were recorded on the Jan WeBS count. Only 10 were found in the Arun Valley for the Feb count but there were 18 at Pulborough Brooks on 11 Feb and the Mar WeBS count recorded 19 at Amberley Wild Brooks and 15 at Pulborough Brooks. Additionally 8 were at Rye Hbr on 9 Mar and 22 at Glynde Level on 21 Mar making March the best month. There were still 14 present at Pulborough Brooks on 17 Apr, up to 9 remained until 28 Apr and 3 were recorded on 13 and 15 May. Elsewhere records involved 1 or 2 birds except for 3 at Pagham Hbr on 15 Apr and at Normans' Bay on 5 May. During June singles were recorded at 6 different sites.

The plethora of records during the autumn involved small numbers and were mainly from Sidlesham Ferry, where peak counts were 6 on 27 July and 8 on 23 Aug, and Rye Hbr where the maximum was 5 on 24 Aug. Four Ruff returned to Pulborough Brooks on 20 Sept and by 23 Sept there were 9 present. Throughout Oct up to 14 were counted, and the maxima in Nov and Dec were 13 and 15 respectively. Only in Chichester Hbr, where up to 11 were recorded in mid Dec, were these numbers matched. [JLH/JAN]

0518. JACK SNIPE

Lymnocyptes minimus

Scarce winter visitor and passage migrant

1994: Some very late records have come to light: 15 at Middle Bridge, Pevensey Levels on 8 Jan and 5 at Glynde Levels on 20 Mar, making it the best year on record for this species, with at least 116 birds recorded.

1995: The minimum monthly totals were as follows:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
No. of sites	10	6	5	6	2	6	10	9
No. of birds	29	15	17	14	2	14	26	24

During the first winter period, a minimum of 42 birds were recorded from 16 localities. Counts at Thorney Deeps included 15 on 23 Jan, 9 on 6 Feb, 6 on 20 Mar increasing to 8 on 3 Apr, with 2 remaining until 19 Apr. Pilsey Island had 4 on 7 Jan and 3 on 20 Mar. One was flushed there on 3 Apr, whilst the observer was clearing up the débris washed up during the winter storms. A just reward! Other notable records were 2 at Ferring Rife and 1 at Bewl Water on 1 and 2 Jan respectively. WeBS counts produced 2 at Pevensey and a single at Arundel WWT on 21 Jan. In Feb, a single was at Glynde Levels on 2nd and 2 were at Pagham Hbr on 8th. In Mar, 1 was at Littlehampton GC on 4th, 5 at The Pells, Lewes, on 15th and 2 were at Selsey West Fields on 19th. In Apr, records were of 2 birds at Middle Bridge, Pevensey on 9th and single birds at Coldwaltham Brooks and Icklesham on 15th and 18th respectively. The last spring record was one at Rye Hbr on 25 Apr.

During the second winter period, a minimum of 39 birds were recorded from 15 localities. The first returning birds were singles at Thorney Deeps on 4 Sept and at Glyne Gap, Bexhill on 17 Sept. Counts at Thorney Deeps included 7 on 26 Oct increasing to 9 on 29 Nov and peaking at 11 on 12 Dec. Other notable records were 2 at both Pulborough Brooks and Pilsley Island on 15 and 28 Sept respectively. In Nov, 4 were at Icklesham and 5 at Pett Levels on 3rd, 2 at Rye Hbr on 10th and single birds at Millbrook, Ashdown Forest on 17th and Todham, Midhurst on 25th. In Dec 4 were at Pagham Hbr on 10th, with 3 at Pilsley Island on 27th plus singles at 6 other sites. At least 81 birds were recorded during the two winter periods. [CBC]

0519. **SNIPE**

Gallinago gallinago

Fairly common breeder and common winter visitor.

The monthly counts at the principal sites were as follows:

	1995						1996			
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar
<i>County totals</i>	504	325	299	148	518	288	440	708	332	323
Chichester Hbr	67	120	112	3	39	41	81	137	124	118
Pagham Hbr	129	15	18	-	24	2	18	34	0	23
Arundel WWT	98	2	8	18	33	11	-	1	40	1
Pulborough Brooks	70	72	97	37	195	55	15	191	97	118
Adur Estuary	-	45	1	-	8	5	6	197	4	-
Weir Wood Res	-	-	-	7	6	43	2	1	-	1
Pevensey Levels	46	56	34	11	29	58	150	49	45	38
Pannel Valley	nc	nc	nc	8	50	25	4	-	-	nc
Pett Level	45	5	-	21	20	21	126	63	-	-
Rye Hbr	11	-	5	2	68	4	18	5	1	7

Generally, unexceptional numbers were recorded. During the early part of the year, 100 were on the Upper Adur Levels on 8 Jan, 129 were recorded on the Wetland Bird Survey count at Pagham Hbr on 12 Jan, 100 were at Shoreham on the River Adur and 120 were at Chichester Hbr on 12 Feb. 112 remained at Chichester Hbr on 12 Mar and 61 were still present at Thorney Deeps on 3 Apr.

Drumming was reported at Pevensey Bridge Level and Pagham Hbr North Wall in Mar, Arlington Res in Apr, Icklesham in May-June and Amberley in June.

During July, small numbers (up to 7) were present at Thorney Deeps, Weir Wood Res, Icklesham, Pett Level and Rye Hbr. There were widespread reports in Aug with 40 at Icklesham on 19th. As the autumn progressed, numbers increased and in Oct there were 60 at Pett Level on 1st, 80 at Icklesham on 10th and 65 at Rye Hbr on 14th. Thereafter, numbers were generally unspectacular until the end of the year. The more interesting counts included up to 57 at Weir Wood Res in Nov, 68 at Rye Hbr Beach Wader Pool on 3 Nov, 68 at Thorney Deeps on 29 Nov, 65 at Midhurst North Hill on 9 Dec and 105 at Pett Level the next day. [SHL]

0529. **WOODCOCK***Scolopax rusticola***Fairly common resident and winter visitor.**

There were no records for Jan, 3 in Feb and 6 reports in Mar recording 8 birds. These latter records included a minimum of 3 flushed by a hunt at at Cissbury and 1 over Palace Pier, Brighton. During the breeding season at least 20 birds were reported roding at various Ashdown Forest sites with another 20 recorded at other sites including 10 at Ambersham Common. A total of 40 possible breeding pairs almost certainly reflects poor coverage except at certain well watched sites. During the 1991 Nightjar census the number of roding Woodcock was the highest (c135) recorded for many years, probably due to more visits being paid to suitable sites. In a personal communication with an estate worker I did hear of 'at least a dozen' being flushed on a private estate in the east in early summer. While access to this site is not possible the report suggests that there are almost certainly many birds overlooked each year.

Sept and Oct produced only 2 records. Nov and Dec produced no more than sightings of single birds. The last record of the year was a bird flushed from the beach at Cuckmere Haven on 30 Dec. [DEC]

0532. **BLACK-TAILED GODWIT***Limosa limosa***Common winter visitor and passage migrant; small numbers summer.**

The monthly counts at the principal sites were as follows:

	1995						1995			1996	
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	
County totals	440	437	2177	479	678	364	606	253	228	348	
Chichester Hbr	180	249	2139	468	523	364	551	224	226	247	
Pagham Hbr	260	188	38	11	155	-	55	29	1	100	

In the first month of the year there were day maxima of 300 birds at Thorney Deeps and 310 at Pagham Hbr. Similarly, on 1 Feb there were 560 at Pagham Hbr, whilst seawatching at Splash Point, Seaford in Mar produced 46 E in 54 hrs.

Summering flocks included day maxima of 13 at Manor Farm, Apuldram and 57 at Thorney Deeps. Numbers at the latter site rose to maxima of 305 by 29 June, 491 by 27 Aug and 500 by 23 Sept.

Inland, 3 were at Bewl Water on 25 Apr and 2 at Arlington Res on 3 Aug. Icklesham reported 3 on 7 and 18 May and 13 on 19 May, while singles were recorded there June (2), July (6) and once in Aug (with 2 on 1 Aug). [JKI]

0534. **BAR-TAILED GODWIT***Limosa lapponica***Common winter visitor and passage migrant; a few summer.**

The monthly counts at the principal sites were as follows:

	1995						1995	1996		
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar
County totals	873	657	92	228	128	657	1177	1259	18	1066
Chichester	865	656	91	222	127	657	1173	1250	5	1009

Hbr
Pagham Hbr 7 - 1 1 2 0 3 9 7 55

No impressive movements were recorded in the spring and the monthly seawatching totals east from the principal stations were as follows:

	Mar	Apr	May	Total	No. per hr (Apr-May)
Selsey Bill	-	2242	756	2998	7.0
Worthing Beach	-	1830	598	2428	24.3
Newhaven	-	1358	713	2071	24.1
Splash Point, Seaford	-	1757	769	2526	11.3

Pilsey Sands recorded 750 (2 in summer plumage) on 20 Jan and 650 on 17 Feb. By July, numbers were building there again, with 349 on 23 July, 800 on 29 Aug, 800 on 17 Sept, 246 on 7 Oct, 507 on 9 Nov and 659 on 9 Dec. An interesting inland record came from Bury where 75 birds flew SE and then S on 1 May. [JKI]

0538. **WHIMBREL**

Numenius phaeopus

Common passage migrant; a very scarce summering and wintering species.

Single birds were reported throughout the first three months of the year in the Chichester Hbr and Pagham area. Larger groups began to be seen by the middle of Apr at well watched coastal sites, 13 birds flying E at Seaford on 13 Apr marked the start of spring passage. Totals from seawatching localities were as follows:

	Mar	Apr	May	Total	No. per hr (Apr-May)
Selsey Bill	-	206	99	305	0.8
Worthing Beach	-	224	58	282	2.8
Newhaven	-	58	111	169	2.0
Splash Point, Seaford	-	112	179	291	1.3

The largest day passage was 76 at Worthing on 28 Apr. Overall totals of passage birds were down on the previous 2 years. Rye saw the largest number of roosting birds with 270 on 30 Apr, rising to 362 on 2 May. Numbers declined to 200 on 4 May and 140 on the 9th. Smaller numbers of birds were recorded during June, July and Aug, with the largest count for these months coming again from Rye Hbr, with 68 birds roosting on 12 July. The last group of any size seen during the year was 12 on the 17 August at Pagham. At least 1 bird was in the Pagham area until the end of the year. [RP]

0541. **CURLEW**

Numenius arquata

Formerly a very scarce breeder; common passage migrant and winter visitor.

The monthly counts at the principal sites were as follows:

	1995						1996			
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar
County totals	1270	2195	1353	1978	1505	932	1199	2059	2134	1747
Chichester Hbr	711	1694	1081	1788	949	516	745	1156	1296	798
Pagham Hbr	96	413	211	97	291	246	335	519	534	526

Newhaven	1	4	-	-	-	31	46	28	14	14
Pett Levels	440	82	58	50	260	58	49	102	111	258
Rye Hbr	22	-	3	36	-	65	12	166	177	151

Spring monthly totals at the main seawatching sites were as follows:

	Feb	Mar	Apr	May
Selsey Bill	-	-	6E	4E 1W
Worthing Beach	-	27E	5E	1E
Spalsh Point, Seaford	3E	39E	-	2E

Other movements reported included 5 W and 1 E in Jan at Seaford, a maximum of 136 NE at Pilsey Island on 17 Apr and a total of 40 W at Selsey Bill in Dec.

The year started with 500 at Pett Level on 1 Jan, 210 roosting at Rye Hbr on 15 Jan, 240 on flooded meadows at North Wall, Pagham Hbr on 24 Jan and 620 at Pett Level Pools on 29 Jan. Feb yielded 250 roosting at Rye Hbr on 12 Feb and 271 at Pett Level Pools on 18 Feb, after which numbers decreased rapidly until birds started to return after the breeding season.

Counts at South Stakes Island showed 370 on 29 June, increasing to 1031 on 28 July and 1125 by 11 Aug, but falling to 220 by 7 Nov. Other counts included 65 at Pilsey Island on 16 June, increasing to 871 on 14 July and 875 on 9 Sept. After a maximum of 254 on 9 Oct, totals at Thorney Deeps decreased to 151 by 26 Oct. On 10 Nov 294 were roosting at Rye Hbr. Inland records included 20 at N Barnham on 14 Apr, 8 on 16 Sept, 12 on 10 Oct and 50 on 15 Dec. There were 10 at Arlington Res on 23 Aug. Single birds were reported from Weir Wood Res in July, Aug and Dec. Lone birds were also noted at Lancing Clump and Cissbury in Sept and at Barcombe Res in Nov. Again, there were no records of breeding in Sussex. [JLN]

0545. SPOTTED REDSHANK

Tringa erythropus

Scarce passage migrant and winter visitor.

The approximate monthly totals were as follows:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
County Totals	8	5	6	7	5	12	5	11	13	12	9	5
Chichester Hbr	4	3	3	3	2	8	4	1	4	4	4	4
Pagham Hbr	2	1	1	1	1	2	-	2	5	5	5	1
Pett Level	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	2	-	-	-
Rye Hbr	1	-	-	1	-	-	1	2	1	1	-	-

During the first winter period, 4 were at Thorney Deeps and 2 at Sidlesham Ferry on 1 Jan; thereafter numbers declined at these 2 sites to 3 and 1 respectively, with single birds observed at Newhaven Tide Mills from 14 Jan-25 Mar, at Rye Hbr from 5-7 Jan and inland at Coldwaltham Brooks on 22 Mar. In spring, 3 were at Thorney Deeps on 1 Apr, with 2 remaining until 2 May and single birds were recorded at Rye Hbr from 7-29 Apr and inland at Pulborough Brooks on 13 Apr, between 22-28 Apr and on 15 May. The last spring record was a single bird at Pagham Hbr on 20 May.

Autumn passage commenced with a single at Icklesham on 11 June followed by another at Sidlesham Ferry on 20 June, with 2 at the latter site on 22 June. A typical late June record of 8 adults at Thorney Deeps on 28th was the largest flock recorded.; these quickly moved on, with 4 different birds there on 30 July. The peak occurred in Sept, but with only 13 birds in the

county. Four were at Thorney Deeps on 1st, with 2 at Pett Level and 1 at Rye Hbr on 10th. On 15th, 5 were at Sidlesham Ferry. In Oct, 5 were still at Sidlesham Ferry on 15th and 4 at Thorney Deeps remained throughout the month. Singles were in the lower Cuckmere Valley on 24th and at Denton, Newhaven on 30th. Inland records were of single birds at 3 sites: at Iford on 6 Aug, at Weir Wood Res from 22-28 Aug and on 11 Sept and at Arlington Res on 27 Aug. In Nov-Dec all records were from western harbours. [CBC]

0546. **REDSHANK**

Tringa totanus

Fairly common resident, passage migrant and winter visitor.

The monthly counts at the principal sites were as follows:

	1995						1996			
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar
<i>County totals</i>	1491	1806	1627	1104	2007	1599	1597	1533	1777	1531
Chichester Hbr	821	1483	809	815	1401	1171	1287	848	1245	1009
Pagham Hbr	199	65	580	81	258	108	37	396	249	333
Adur Estuary	151	149	56	0	109	107	101	127	111	20
Newhaven	44	43	5	1	0	1	14	12	22	20
Cuckmere Hvn.	27	14	12	11	16	38	16	16	17	23
Pett Level	89	6	10	20	21	12	2	20	14	4
Rye Hbr	160	46	155	169	194	159	104	84	103	108

Additional large concentrations reported were: at Thorney Deeps with 195 on 3 Apr, 400 on 26 Jun, 1200 on 25 Jul, 843 on 21 Aug; at Chichester Hbr with 126 on 15 Apr, 82 on 15 May and at Pagham Hbr with 83 on 15 Apr. Breeding records were received from the following sites; 1 pair at Cobnor Cottage, 6 pairs at Icklesham, 2 pairs at North Stakes Island, 4 pairs at Pilsey Island, 1 pair at Normans Bay, 2 pairs at Pevensy Middle Bridge, at least 13 pairs at Rye Hbr, a pair at Selsey West Fields, 3 pairs at Bramber Farm, 2 pairs at Pagham Hbr North Wall and 18 pairs at Thorney Island.

The leucistic bird at Shoreham, seen annually since 1985, was noted on 7 Jan and returned again by 12 Nov. [BJY]

0547. **MARSH SANDPIPER**

Tringa stagnatilis

Very rare vagrant

A juvenile or first-winter was present at Pett Level intermittently on 31 July (DPB, JABG, KGBH). It is the 9th to be recorded in the county and has been accepted by *British Birds*. Three of the previous 4 records were seen in July, with 2 of the previous 3 in the Pett Levels area (in 1989 and 1992). [RJF]

0548. GREENSHANK

*Tringa nebularia***Fairly common passage migrant; a few winter.**

The approximate minimum monthly totals were as follows:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
<i>County Totals</i>	11	9	9	44	54	13	203	225	215	147	14	12
Chichester Hbr	10	9	8	26	26	5	158	160	159	122	12	10
Pagham Hbr	1	-	1	1	5	3	21	17	18	12	1	1
Rye Hbr	-	-	-	1	2	1	4	6	8	7	-	-

During the first winter period, all records were from the western harbours. Spring seawatches at various locations produced 17 E between 28 Apr-31 May, with peaks at Worthing Beach of 4 E on 28 Apr and 3 E on 4 May. Spring passage was particularly heavy at Thorney Deeps and numbers built up rapidly in Apr, with 11 on 15th increasing to 17 on 24th and a maximum of 26 from 30 Apr-1 May, decreasing to 12 on 7 May. The only inland spring records were from Pulborough Brooks, where one was seen on 11 Apr, up to 6 in late Apr and up to 4 between 15-22 May. Three were recorded at Climping and 5 at Pagham on 8 and 9 May respectively. The last were a single at Thorney Deeps and 3 at Sidlesham Ferry on 11 June.

Autumn passage commenced with 4 at Thorney Deeps and 2 at Pulborough Brooks on 25 June. Six colour-ringed birds were observed at Thorney Deeps during the autumn, they had all been ringed at Farlington Marshes between 1985-95, emphasising local movements and probably indicating a change in preferred roosting sites as numbers have been on a downward trend at Langstone Hbr in recent years. One of these had been ringed as a juvenile on 7 Sept 1985 and was observed on 5 Sept 1995, making it almost 10 years old.

Another interesting sighting was of a female or immature Peregrine forcing a Greenshank into the sea off Thorney Island on 6 Sept. It then continued to harass it for about 20 minutes, before finally picking it up with its talons and carrying it over to the shoreline where it devoured its prey.

Passage numbers built up rapidly in July and counts at Thorney Deeps included 80 on 16th, 158 on 30th increasing to 160 on 8 Aug and falling to 145 on 8 Sept. In Oct there were 119 on 9th, decreasing to 80 on 13th, 39 on 27th and 14 on 31st. Other notable records were 21 at Pagham Hbr on 24 July. In Aug there were 9 at Icklesham on 28th, 5 in off the sea at Shoreham on 31st and 8 at Rye Hbr and 18 at Pagham Hbr on 13th and 16th Sept respectively. Notable inland records included 8 at Weir Wood Res on 18 Aug, 3 at Arlington Res on 22 Aug and 3 at Darwell Res on 10 Sept.

As in the early part of the year, all records for Nov-Dec were from the western harbours, except for a single bird at Newhaven Tide Mills from 26 Nov into 1996. [CBC]

0553. GREEN SANDPIPER

Tringa ochropus

Scarce spring and fairly common autumn passage migrant. Small numbers winter.

The approximate monthly minimum numbers were as follows:

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
17	10	20	23	6	21	83	116	50	22	18	20

Overall numbers continue to show an increase. In the period Jan-Apr many records were received but the only significant counts were 5 on the Upper Adur Levels on 2 Jan with 3 present at Henfield Levels until 22 Mar, 5 at Icklesham on 5 Mar and 7 at Chichester GP on 1 and 11 Apr.

The first returning bird was probably the one seen at Thorney Deeps on 14 Jun, but there was a gap of only 33 days since the previous record. Summer records came from many parts of the county, both inland and coastal; favoured sites for larger groups of birds were Glynde Levels, where 14 on 9 and 15 Jul, 11 on 30 Jul and 15 on 7 Aug were recorded; Westhampnett which held 17 and 13 on 27 and 31 Jul respectively and 16 on 4 Aug and Castle Water, Rye Hbr where 10 birds were present on 30 Jul. Counts at Icklesham included 10, 12 and 17 on 28th, 29th and 30 Aug respectively.

During Sept-Dec most records were of no more than 3 birds but 9 flew over Watch Cottages, Rye Hbr on 13 Sept and 7 were present at Portfield GP on 22 Sept and 3 Dec. [MJM]

0554. WOOD SANDPIPER

Tringa glareola

Scarce spring and autumn passage migrant; recorded once in winter.

The minimum monthly totals were as follows:

April	May	June	July	Aug	Sept
1	2	2	5	31	3

There were fewer records than in 1994 except in Aug, with the majority coming from the western harbours and from the Icklesham and Rye areas. The earliest record, on 30 Apr, was of one at Pagham Hbr, followed by others at Pulborough Brooks on 13 May and Pevensey Levels on 19 May.

Singles at Pulborough Brooks on 17 and 30 June preceded 9 records in July which represented 5, or possibly 6, birds at Apuldram, Glynde Level, Pulborough Brooks, Rye and Sidlesham. Many of the Aug records were of singles but a notable flock of 9 was seen at Thorney Deeps on 9th; there were records of 2-3 at Icklesham between 2-17 Aug, 2 at Pagham Hbr on 2nd and 12th, whilst birds were at Rye Hbr throughout the month with a maximum of 4 on 18th. Inland sightings were at Bewl Water, Iford and Weir Wood Res.

Sept records were of singles at Sidlesham Ferry on 12th, at Pett Level on 15th and Pulborough Brooks on 24th. [MJM]

0556. COMMON SANDPIPER

Actitis hypoleucos

Fairly common passage migrant; a few regularly winter; has bred at least once.

The approximate minimum monthly totals were as follows;

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
5	2	1	20	130	4	115	226	57	10	5	6

In Jan single birds were seen at Littlehampton Marina, Cuckmere, Shoreham and Arlington Res. At Thorney Deepes a wintering bird was to be found from 1 Jan-3 Apr. The only other wintering bird was at E Guldeford on 19 Feb.

The earliest spring migrant would appear to be that at Pagham Lagoon on 4 Apr followed by singles at Pagham Hbr, Chichester Hbr and Barcombe Res on 15 Apr. Despite the overall number of birds in May, figures were not large at any site apart from 32 at Weir Wood Res on 15th.

The first returning birds were probably at Sidlesham Ferry on 15 June and Selsey Bill on 16th. Sidlesham recorded 2 on 27 June and there were 6 at Pett Level on 1 July. The usual widespread dispersal occurred in July, increasing dramatically in Aug to the highest total for that month certainly in recent years. A minimum of 226 from 103 observations begs the question as to whether this shows an increase in the number of birds or observers.

Notable counts of 15 were made both at Arlington Res on 3 Aug and E Guldeford Level on 12th. By Dec there was, as usual, a single bird at Thorney Deepes, also 1 at Lewes Brooks on 2nd, 2 in the Arun Valley at Ford on 24th and 2 at Bewl Water on 31st. [DEGC]

0561. TURNSTONE

*Arenaria interpres***Fairly common winter visitor and passage migrant; scarce in summer.**

The monthly counts at the principal sites were as follows:

	1995						1995			1996		
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar		
<i>County totals</i>	500	637	1028	494	876	601	632	724	716	813		
Chichester Hbr	75	156	241	114	187	68	170	128	126	143		
Pagham Hbr	316	232	384	44	364	257	315	375	391	231		
Climping	12	23	13	3	6	6	25	6	8	87		
Goring Gap	1	7	12	-	1	14	2	-	4	5		
Adur Estuary	28	-	-	1	3	27	0	3	13	0		
Langney	28	8	12	45	15	6	14	16	9	30		
Glyne Gap	nc	185	296	239	223	150	99	164	75	259		
Pett Level	40	14	70	35	68	73	6	27	80	53		
Rye Hbr	-	12	-	13	9	-	1	5	10	5		

Most of the monthly counts were near the average but the total of 1028 is the highest Mar count recorded. The table also highlights the importance of the the rocky shore at Glyne Gap, Bexhill as well as the two western harbours for this species. Although there was no formal WeBS count at Glyne Gap in Jan a flock of 107 was seen feeding there on 17th.

Turnstones were still present in large numbers in Apr as shown by counts of 200 at Stakes Island on 4 Apr and 215 at Glyne Gap on 18 Apr. Coordinated counts in Chichester and Pagham Hbrs produced 438 and 251 respectively in Apr and 55 and 76 in May. A large gathering of 150 on Stakes Island on 14 May was the highest count for the month.

Spring coastal movements were mostly seen from Selsey Bill where the peak movements were 60 W on 19 Mar, 90 E on 20 Mar, 60 E on 7 Apr and 61 E on 28 Apr. Elsewhere only small numbers were recorded as shown in the following table of eastbound monthly totals.

	Mar	Apr	May	Total	No. per hr (Apr-May)
Selsey Bill	120	329	191	640	1.21
Worthing Beach	1	41	48	90	0.89
Splash Point, Seaford	-	10	19	29	0.13

Only a few were recorded in mid-summer with 14 at Rye Hbr on 8 June, 11 there on the 21 June and 7 on Stakes Island on 12 June being the highest counts. Numbers increased slightly through July but more dramatically in Aug as shown by the following list of counts from Pilsey and Stakes Island in Chichester Hbr.

7 Jul	14 Jul	17 Jul	23 Jul	28 Jul	5 Aug	11 Aug
1	7	24	58	66	233	140

The WeBS counts, shown in the first table, embrace the highest counts during the late part of the year. A party of 16 at Thorney Deepes on 31 Mar was unusual for that site but inland records of singles at Landport Bottom near Lewes on 6 Aug and at Weir Wood Res on 2 Sept were more surprising. [JLH/JAN]

0564. **RED-NECKED PHALAROPE**

Phalaropus lobatus

Status:-A rare spring and autumn passage migrant.

A very obliging juvenile at Mewsbrook Park Lake, Littlehampton remained from 21-23 Sept (MCHJ, RJLK, SJP *et al*). The record of one at the Severals, Pagham at the same time has, unfortunately, not been submitted. A total of 21 birds has been seen in the county since 1962. [SJP]

0565. **GREY PHALAROPE**

Phalaropus fulicarius

Very scarce autumn and rare winter visitor, usually occurring after gales.

One was seen feeding on the sea at the tip of Selsey Bill on 1 Jan (PJW *et al*) and a first-winter bird found during storm-force southerly winds in Shoreham Hbr on 17 Jan remained until 21st (BFF, AFB *et al*). Very strong SW winds drove another bird briefly onto Sidlesham Ferry on 7 Sept (RLS). [SJP]

0566. **POMARINE SKUA**

Stercorarius pomarinus

Passage migrant, regular in varying numbers in spring but very scarce in autumn; a very scarce visitor in winter.

A good year for this charismatic species. All spring records were of birds flying E along the coast. Recorded on 4 dates in Apr, the first being 11, including an early flock of 7, off Splash Point, Seaford on 23 Apr followed by singles there on 28 and 29 Apr when 1 was also off Birling Gap. More widespread on 30 Apr with 4 at Worthing Beach, 2 at Newhaven, 5 at Splash Point, Seaford and 4 at Birling Gap. A single off Newhaven on 1 May heralded a 'big day' on 2 May when classic, settled conditions with light SE winds occurred which encourage this species to move along the south coast. Selsey Bill reported 67, Worthing Beach 24, Newhaven 116, Splash Point, Seaford 80 and Birling Gap 72. The Newhaven total was the second largest day total for Sussex and between 06:47 and 17:45 hrs included 1 flock of 12, 1 flock of 9, 7 flocks of 6 and 2 flocks of 5. In total, 30 passed there before 09:00 hrs. Then passage was steady between 11:00 and 17:45 hrs averaging 10.7 per hour, after which a further 14 were recorded. Plumage was noted on 76 birds; 69 were light phase, 1 intermediate and 6 dark, a not unexpected ratio. The following day, a maximum of 8 were seen between Selsey Bill and Beachy Head. On 4 May, 13 were logged at Selsey Bill and 15 flew E at Worthing Beach at 09:59 hrs which were presumably the same that passed Splash Point, Seaford 46 minutes later (a speed of about 27 mph or 43 kph). A further 9 were seen at Newhaven on 5 May, 1 was off Worthing Beach on 6 May, 2 off Birling Gap on 7 May, 2 off Brighton and Splash Point, Seaford on 8 May and 1 at Selsey Bill on 9 May. A lull then occurred followed by a late passage on 22 May with 5 recorded at Selsey Bill and 33 at Splash Point, Seaford. The last for the spring was 1 at Selsey Bill and Splash Point,

Seaford on 24 May, bringing the Apr-May totals to 95 for Selsey Bill, 44 for Worthing Beach and 157 for Splash Point, Seaford.

Comparison with Arctic and Great Skuas, of numbers and (in brackets) days seen on spring passage during Apr and May 1995 is as follows:

	1 - 15 Apr	16 - 30 Apr	1 - 15 May	16 - 31 May	Total
Pomarine Skua	- (-)	18 (4)	153 (9)	34 (2)	205 (15)
Arctic Skua	2 (1)	124 (10)	83 (11)	51 (13)	260 (35)
Great Skua	2 (1)	9 (6)	7 (5)	5 (5)	23 (17)

Comparative Apr and May totals for the years 1988 - 1993 are :

	1988	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	Average
Pomarine Skua	91	390	165	178	119	236	223	201
Arctic Skua	258	213	194	229	264	332	294	255
Great Skua	32	20	44	46	46	21	30	34

The 1995 totals were close to the 1988-1993 average for Pomarine and Arctic Skuas.

One flew W past Eastbourne on 7 Sept and a juvenile passed Beachy Head on 5 Nov. [SHL]

0567. ARCTIC SKUA

Stercorarius parasiticus

Fairly common to scarce spring and autumn passage migrant; very scarce in summer and rare in winter.

A total of about 342 for the year assumes that birds seen on consecutive days are different. It is based on daily minima along the coast taking the larger count (E or W) when birds were recorded flying both directions on a date. The monthly totals are as follows:

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
6	1	1	126	134	1	6	4	46	15	2	-

As with Great Skua, there were more than usual in Jan with a total of 2 E at Selsey Bill, 3 E at Worthing Beach and 3 E at Ovingdean. During the next 2 months, there was 1 E at Splash Point, Seaford on 10 Feb and 1 W at Selsey Bill on 12 Mar. The next were 2 E at Lancing on 13 Apr. The passage E along the coast during Apr and May was as follows:

	Apr	May	Total	Rate per hr watched
Selsey Bill	70	58	128	0.30
Worthing Beach	25	7	32	0.32
Newhaven	44	37	81	0.94
Splash Point, Seaford	111	69	180	0.81

A few were seen to fly W. The biggest passages were on 23 Apr when 43 passed E at Splash Point, Seaford during 11.25 hours of watching in moderate SE winds which veered SW and then on 30 Apr when 33 flew E at Splash Point, Seaford and 44 were recorded at Beachy Head. Seawatchers at the latter site recorded 26 E on 2 May and those at Seaford noted 18 E the next day.

There were several summer sightings: 1 was seen off Worthing Beach in June and 1 W and 5 E were recorded off Selsey Bill during 21.25 hrs watching in the second half of July. On 2 Aug, 1 was offshore from Belle Tout

and then none were reported for over three weeks. Thereafter, sightings were made along the coast on 32 dates up to 5 Nov when 1 was off Splash Point, Seaford. During this period, no more than 5 were seen on each date except 23 E and 13 W in 8.75 hrs at Selsey Bill and 7 off Eastbourne on 7 Sept and 5 E and 1 W off Selsey Bill on 4 Oct. [SHL]

0569. **GREAT SKUA**

Stercorarius skua

Scarce spring and autumn passage migrant; very scarce but increasing in winter.

The approximate annual total of 57 reflected the higher numbers during the winter and autumn periods:

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
8	2	2	11	12	-	1	-	7	9	5	-

A number were around in early Jan with an exceptional 8 (minimum) noted flying E along coast. On 4th, there were 2 at Selsey Bill, 1 at Worthing Beach and 4 at Splash Point, Seaford. At the latter site, there were 2 on 5th, 1 on 7th and 1 on 9th. In Feb, a further individual flew E past Splash Point, Seaford on 5th and 1 was off Selsey Bill during the month. On 1 Mar, a single was at Rye Hbr.

The easterly passage along the coast started on 20 Mar with an early individual E at Selsey Bill. The next was not recorded until the 14 Apr. The monthly totals for Apr and May were as follows (based on the sum of the daily minima along the coast):

	Apr	May
Selsey Bill	7	6 (and 1 W)
Worthing Beach	1	1
Brighton Marina	1	3
Newhaven	3	2
Splash Point, Seaford	7	3
Beachy Head	3	1
Bexhill	2	-

In addition, one was seen to upset gulls at Pilsey Island on 27 Apr. One flew E at Brighton Marina on the unusual date of 26 July. In autumn, watchers at Selsey Bill recorded 6 W and 1 E in Sept and 5 W and 3 E in Oct. There were also singles off Splash Point, Seaford on 1 Oct, Pett Level on 2 Oct, Beachy Head on 3 Nov and Selsey Bill on 9 Nov. Finally, there were 2 W past Selsey Bill on 19 Nov and 1 E at Splash Point, Seaford on 27 Nov. [SHL]

0575. MEDITERRANEAN GULL

Larus melanocephalus

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

Another good year for this species. The total of 365 records, from 196 days and reporting 567 sightings, is a marked increase on 1994 and probably represents a small increase in the number of individuals recorded to between 100 and 120. As usual the records involve considerable duplication and the following table, showing the approximate numbers of each age class seen in each month with those of unknown age included in the totals, reveals a clear peak in the spring:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
Adults	7	6	11	10	8	5	8	7	7	5	4	8
2nd year	1	1	3	6	10	-	2	2	2	2	4	5
1st year	8	6	13	16	23	12	5	-	-	1	1	2
TOTAL	17	13	30	40	49	17	18	10	10	9	9	18
Inland	2	2	3	1	-	-	-	4	2	-	-	7

Wintering individuals were regularly recorded at Pagham Hbr, Littlehampton, Newhaven Tide Mills and in the vicinity of Shoreham Hbr where 6 were seen together on 18 Feb. The regular wintering individual, Dutch ringed '24H', first seen in 1993, was amongst this group and had returned for the following winter by 6 Aug.

A large number were recorded from the coast during the spring. In contrast to 1994, the total number of sightings from the sea-watching sites increased as the spring progressed, with 15 sightings in Mar, 30 in Apr and 53 in May with peak counts of eastbound birds at Brighton Marina where 7 and 9 flew past on 23 Apr and 3 May respectively. The number of birds at Rye Hbr reached a peak of 9 on 15 Apr and a pair nested at Ternery Pool but no young were seen. At Chichester Hbr 2 adults were seen in Apr and May but no nesting activity was recorded and 4 first-years were present in June.

Most records in the autumn involved single birds but 3 were recorded in Shoreham Hbr in both Aug and Sept and the largest autumn gathering of 2 adults, 1 second year and 3 first years, was seen at Pilsey Island on 21 July.

The number of records from inland sites also increased and the monthly distribution is shown in the table above. Five were reported foraging on downland, 2 near Steyning and 14 at 5 different inland waters. Most were single birds but 2 were at Weir Wood Res on 14 Dec and 3 at Warnham LNR on 30 Dec. [JAN]

0578. LITTLE GULL

Larus minutus

Scarce visitor and passage migrant, most numerous on passage in spring.

Another good year with the total of 693 birds only bettered by the years 1989 and 1990. The following table of approximate monthly totals show that most, as usual, were recorded at coastal sites during the spring and once again there was a poor autumn passage.

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
Total	27	11	62	378	157	4	7	7	16	0	4	3
Inland	1	0	2	6	0	0	0	2	3	0	3	0

Although there were 2 first-winters at Sidlesham Ferry on 1 Jan and 1 at Selsey Bill on 4 Jan most of the records early in the year were in the second half of Jan with 7 adults at Pagham Hbr on 17 Jan and an adult at Bewl Water on 23 Jan being most noteworthy.

Up to 3 were noted on 12 dates during Feb and early Mar but the first sign of coastal passage occurred when 11 flew past Splash Point, Seaford on 11 Mar. The same site recorded another 11 on 22 Mar and 23 on 23 Mar but the main period of eastward coastal passage occurred between 23 Apr-4 May. The totals seen from each site between Mar-May were 270 at Selsey Bill, 160 at Worthing, 197 at Newhaven, 499 at Seaford and 176 at Beachy Head. Details of the principal days of passage are shown in the following table (number of hrs watched in brackets):

	23 Apr	24 Apr	29 Apr	30 Apr	1 May	2 May	3 May	4 May
Selsey Bill	31 (12.5)	24 (13.5)	133 (14)	11 (10.5)	5 (13)	15 (16)	16 (14)	17 (15)
Worthing	60 (5.7)	0 (1.8)	7 (7.3)	8 (5.9)	30 (6.5)	11 (11.1)	23 (4.3)	5 (6.8)
Newhaven	43 (11.5)	-	39 (11)	22 (12)	25 (9.0)	27 (12)	2 (7.8)	37 (14)
Seaford	49 (11.3)	90 (4.8)	142 (10.5)	46 (10.3)	45 (8.3)	33 (10.8)	2 (5.5)	12 (6.8)
Beachy Head	46 (?)	-	64 (?)	-	-	-	-	-

Very few were recorded after 5 May although up to 3 immatures lingered at Rye Hbr until 10 June. Single immatures at Pett on 1 June and at Pilsey Island on 27 June were the only other records for that month. Like 1994, the period from July-Dec produced very few Little Gulls. The 45 individuals seen were mainly singles and the best, but hardly notable, records were an immature which stayed at Arlington Res between 17 Aug-15 Sept, 3 and 4 at Selsey Bill on 6 and 7 Sept respectively, 3 at Pulborough Brooks on 11 Nov and 2 at Selsey Bill on 30 Dec. Remarkably, none were seen in Oct. [JAN]

0579. **SABINE'S GULL**

Larus sabini

Rare autumn vagrant

One, thought to be a first-year, was recorded flying E at some distance off Worthing Beach at 18:35 hrs on 30 Apr (DIS) and is the first county record for that month. More typically, and at closer range, a juvenile flew W past Selsey Bill at 09:23 hrs on 4 Oct. (TJE). These are the first records since 1992 and only the 4th and 5th individuals since the great storm of Oct 1987. [RJF]

0582. **BLACK-HEADED GULL**

Larus ridibundus

Common breeding species and abundant winter visitor and passage migrant.

With no co-ordinated winter counts the records only give an impression of the true picture for this species. The largest recorded winter roost counts were 4500 at Rye Hbr and 1800 at Camber on 12 Feb. There were still 1000 roosting at Camber on 11 Mar and at Rye Hbr on 31 Mar. The only other large

number in the early months was 1000 at Warnham LNR on both 7 and 15 Jan.

Eastward movements noted at coastal sites were small with month totals at Worthing of 364 in Mar, 894 in Apr and 646 in May with a spring peak of 423 in 6hrs on 30 Apr.

The 2 main breeding colonies reported contrasting success. At Rye Hbr 450-500 pairs nested at Ternery Pool, raising more than 200 young. However, at the larger colony on Stakes Island, Chichester Hbr at least 1600 individuals were counted on 14 May but high tides affected the colony the following day when 439 nests were counted; all except 12 nests, on high artificial structures, were washed out on 16 May. By mid-June the colony had reformed and on 12 June there were 609 nests with 1667 eggs and 4 large young which had survived. Sadly, all except 8 nests were washed away by 16 June and another 112 new nests were again flooded on 13 July. It is likely therefore that only 4 chicks fledged from South Stakes Island. A pair was seen feeding 2 juveniles on Glynde Level on 10 June.

The largest counts received during the last half of the year were 500 offshore at Selsey Bill on 30 July, 4500 near Cissbury on 17 Sept, 1200 at Warnham LNR on 8 and 15 Dec and 1500 at Weir Wood Res on 9 Dec. An albino individual was recorded at Southwick on 4 Sept and a leucistic individual with black primary tips was seen on several occasions between Worthing and Goring from 26 Sept until the end of the year. [JAN]

0590. COMMON GULL

Larus canus

Common winter visitor and passage migrant; small numbers summer; bred until 1963.

An exceptional count of 8000 arriving to roost at Bewl Water at dusk on 20 Jan reinforces the observation that numbers of Common Gulls roosting at inland sites are increasing. Large numbers too were seen at coastal roosts with 1750 at Pagham Hbr on 17 Jan, 4500 at Rye Hbr and 1300 at Camber on 12 Feb, 5500 at Camber on 11 Mar, 5500 at Rye Hbr on 31 Mar and 5000 there on 2 Apr.

Spring coastal movements were small; the most notable records were 255 flying E at Worthing on 19 Mar, 128 E and 141 W at Brighton Marina on 23 Mar and 13 Apr respectively and an Apr total of 362 E at Selsey Bill. An adult pair was present at Rye Hbr in late May and a pair was observed mating on South Stakes Island, Chichester Hbr on 31 May although there no other signs of nesting. Summer counts on Pilsey Island were 2 on 12 June, 21 on 29 June, 60 on 11 July, 100 on 21 July and 400 on 23 July and 19 Aug. At the end of the year the highest inland counts were 500 at Barcombe Res on 10 Dec and 320 at Weir Wood Res on 14 Dec whilst the largest coastal roosts were 1090 at Camber on 11 Dec and 700 at Pilsey on 13 Dec.

Albino individuals were seen at Southwick on 5 Mar and at Rye Hbr on 15 Apr. [JAN]

Amberley Wild Brooks	TQ0314	Camber Sands	TQ9618	Filsham	TQ7709
Ardingly Reservoir	TQ3229	Castle Hill	TQ3707	Firle	TQ4706
Arlington Reservoir	TQ5307	Chailey Common	TQ3821	Fishbourne Ch.	SU8303
Arundel WWT/Park	TQ0208	Chalvington	TQ5209	Flatopers Wd.	TQ8623
Ashcombe Bottom/Farm	TQ3711	Chanctonbury Ring	TQ1312	Fore Wood	TQ7513
Ashdown Forest	TQ42/43	Charleston Reedbed	TQ5100	Friars Gate	TQ4932
Balcombe	TQ3130	Chichester Gravel Pits	SU8703	Friston Forest	TV5499
Balmer Down	TQ3610	Chichester Harbour	SU7600	Glynde Levels	TQ4609
Balsdean	TQ3704	Chidham	SU7903	Glyne Gap	TQ7607
Barcombe Res./Mills	TQ4314	Church Norton	SZ8795	Goring Gap	TQ1001
Barnhorn Level, Hooe	TQ6908	Chyngton Farm	TV5098	Gravetye Manor	TQ3634
Beachy Head	TV5995	Cissbury Ring	TQ1408	Greatham Br.	TQ0316
Beckley Woods	TQ8622	Climping	TQ0000	Henfield Brooks	TQ2014
Belle Tout	TV5695	Cobnor Point/Farm	SU7901	Hodcombe	TV5795
Bewl Water	TQ6732	Cold Coombes, K'ston	TQ3707	Hollingbury GC.	TQ3207
Birling Gap	TV5596	Coldwaltham Brooks	TQ0215	Hooe Level	TQ6706
Bluebell Railway	TQ4023	Combe Haven	TQ77091	Horse Eye Lev.	TQ6109
Bosham Channel	SU7902	Cuckmere Haven	TV5197	Houghton Br.	TQ0211
Bostal Hill, nr Berwick	TQ4904	Darwell Reservoir	TQ7121	Hurstpierpoint	TQ2716
Bracklesham Bay	SZ8294	Dell Quay	SU8302	Icklesham	TQ8815
Brede Levels	TQ8417	Ditchling Beacon	TQ3313	Ifield Mill Pond	TQ2436
Broadwater	TQ1404	East Dean	TV5597	Iping Common	SU8421
Brooklands, Worthing	TQ1703	East Guldeford Level	TQ9421	Isle of Thorns	TQ4230
Broomhill Level	TQ9818	East Head	SZ7699	Ivy Lake	SU8703
Buchan Park	TQ2433	Ebernoe Common	SU9726	Jury's Gap	TQ9818
Bullock Hill	TQ3606	Exceat Bridge	TV5199	Kingley Vale	SU8210
Bulverhythe	TQ7708	Fairlight	TQ8611	Kingston Hill	TQ3807
Burton Pond	SU9717	Faygate	TQ2134	Knepp Lake	TQ1521

Langley Point	TQ6401	Piddinghoe	TQ4302	Thorney Deeps.	SU7503
Lavington Common	SU9418	Pilsey Island	SU7700	Thorney Island	SU7503
Lewes Brooks	TQ4207	Pippingford Park	TQ4431	Tilgate Forest	TQ2632
Lower Cuckmere	TV5198	Plumpton Plain	TQ3612	Tillingham Vallley	TQ8519
Lullington Heath	TQ5401	Powdermill Reservoir	TQ7919	Union Channel	TQ9322
Lurgashall	SU9327	Prinsted	SU7605	Upper Beeding	TQ2010
Malling Down	TQ4211	Pulborough Brooks	TQ0517	Wakehurst Place	TQ3331
Maynards Green	TQ5818	Rother Levels	TQ8527	Waltham Brooks	TQ0215
Midrips	TR0018	Rye Harbour	TQ9318	Warnham MP / LNR	TQ1732
Mill Hill, Shoreham	TQ2107	Scotney Court GP.	TR0119	Weir Wood Res.	TQ3934
Money Penny Gravel Pit	TQ9420	Seaford Head	TV4997	West Chiltington	TQ0717
Moulsecomb Wild Pk.	TQ3207	Selsey Bill	SZ8592	West Itchenor	SU7901
Mount Harry	TQ3812	Seven Sisters Ctry Pk.	TV5298	West Wittering	SZ7798
Nap Wood	TQ5832	Shillinglee Mill Pond	SU9632	Westdean	TV5299
Newhaven Tide Mills	TQ4500	Sidlesham Ferry	SZ8596	Westhampnett GP	SU8805
Newmarket Hill	TQ3607	Somping Brooks	TQ1604	Whitbread Hollow	TV5996
Normans Bay	TQ6805	Sovereign Hbr Marina	TQ6403	Widewater	TQ2004
Northpoint Gravel Pit	TQ9319	Splash Point, Seaford	TV4898	Wiggonholt Comn.	TQ0516
Nutbourne Marsh	SU7704	St Leonards on Sea	TQ7908	Winchelsea Beach	TQ9115
Old Lodge Reserve	TQ4530	St. Leonards Forest	TQ2230	Wishing Tree Res.	TQ7810
Pagham Harbour	SZ8796	Strivens Reedbed	TQ1811	Woodingdean	TQ3705
Pagham Lagoon	SZ8896	Swanbourne Lake	TQ0107	Woods Mill	TQ2113
Pebsham	TQ7609	The Mens	TQ0223	Woolbeding Comn.	SU8625
Pett Level	TQ9015	The Severals	SZ8794	Worth Forest	TQ3034
Pett Pools	TQ9014				
Petworth Park	SU9722				
Pevensey Bridge Level	TQ6607				
Pevensey Levels	TQ6408				

The grid references given are intended as a guide only to finding the sites and are not necessarily where a species was observed.

0591. **LESSER BLACK-BACKED GULL**

Larus fuscus

Fairly common passage migrant and winter visitor; small numbers (mainly immatures) summer and a few pairs breed.

The pattern of records for the year confirm this to be the least numerous of the regularly occurring gulls. During the early months the counts of 32 at Warnham LNR on 14 and 15 Jan, 12 at Weir Wood Res on 22 Jan and 22 flying north over Preston Park, Brighton were the highest. Spring passage was very light, only 1 was noted passing Worthing in Mar, none in Apr and just 6 in May. At Selsey Bill, too, only 19 were observed flying E in May. Counts of 40 at Icklesham on 13 Apr and 16 on 22 May were the largest spring counts. At least 2 pairs nested on roof tops in West Worthing, 2 pairs held territories in South Lancing and an adult pair was present at Rye Hbr throughout the summer but without attempting to nest.

Larger numbers were recorded in the autumn as demonstrated by 40 at Icklesham on 25 July, 40 at Arlington Res on 2 Sept and 231 roosting at Pagham Hbr. No autumn coastal passage was recorded but a small movement totalling 46 was seen flying S or SW over Bewl Water during late Oct and early Nov. Whilst coastal numbers were very small in winter, with a maximum of 12 roosting at Camber on 11 Dec, there were 200 at Warnham LNR on 8 and 15 Dec. [JAN]

0592. **HERRING GULL**

Larus argentatus

Common breeding resident, passage migrant and winter visitor.

There was no co-ordinated winter counts so the records do not truly reflect the numbers occurring in the winter. The only records involving 3 figure counts were on 12 Feb when 123 were counted at Climping, 600 roosted at Rye Hbr and another 200 roosted at Camber.

At Rye Hbr a total of 14 pairs nested at Ternery Pool, Long Pit and Castle Water but an increasing number nested on buildings in Rye Hbr village. Elsewhere 5 pairs nested on roof tops at Shoreham-by-Sea and roof top nesting was also noted at both St Leonards and Worthing where the colony continues to spread further north away from the shoreline. Successful roof-top breeding was reported inland at 2 sites in Crawley and from Haywards Heath.

Summer counts at Pilsley Island revealed 131 on 5 June and 200 on 21 June and at Pagham Hbr there were 233 on 22 Sept and 223 roosting on 17 Oct. The only large counts at the end of the year were at Camber where 600 and 1634 roosted on 10 Nov and 11 Dec respectively.

A leucistic individual was seen on several occasions in Chichester Hbr.

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 again exceeded previous years with counts of 29 on 28 June, 53 on 3 July, 143 on 11 July, 208 on 24 July, 301 on 28 July and 362 on 10 Aug. The following table shows the monthly minimum totals but the figures for both Sept and Oct are without counts from Pagham Hbr.

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
2	-	1	-	1	30	319	368	7	25	31	1

The numbers reported from the Adur Valley were low at the start of the autumn with a maximum of 6 at Shoreham Airport on 30 July. However, 21 on 7 Oct on the R Adur was a large count for that month. A single at Weir Wood Res on 23 Nov was the only record far inland. [JAN]

0598. **ICELAND GULL**

Larus glaucooides

Rare winter visitor and passage migrant

A second-winter bird was at Weir Wood Res on 8 Jan (NAD) and a first or second-year bird was seen flying in to roost with other gulls at Pagham Hbr on 22 Feb (TJE). [SJP]

0599. **GLAUCOUS GULL**

Larus hyperboreus

Very scarce but regular winter visitor and passage migrant.

The regular wintering adult seen at Selsey Bill and in Pagham Hbr was recorded regularly from Jan-14 Mar returning again on 31 Aug to remain in the area until the end of the year. Sightings of single adults at Chichester Hbr on 5 Feb, 29 Sept and 24 Dec and at Rustington on 21 Jan possibly involve the same bird.

Clearly different individuals were a first-year at Brighton Marina on 3 Jan a second-winter flying W at Selsey Bill on 22 Jan, a first-winter also at Selsey Bill on 23 Feb and a first-year on the River Adur, Shoreham on 2 Apr. Thus, possibly only 5 individuals were recorded and all, except one, recorded from West Sussex. [JAN]

0600. GREAT BLACK-BACKED GULL

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

The largest counts early in the year were 200 at Combe Haven on 2 Jan, 237 at Arlington Res during severe gales on 20 Jan and a total of 220 roosting between Rye and Camber on 12 Feb. Between mid-Feb and June very few were recorded but regular counts at Pilsley Island demonstrate the return to Sussex with 28 on 8 June, 68 on 21 June, 114 on 13 July, 148 on 23 Aug and 379 on 5 Nov. During the autumn and winter the peak counts from Pagham Hbr were 280 on 4 Sept, 665 on 17 Oct, 310 on 19 Nov and 1040 on 14 Dec. At Rye there were 165 on 10 Sept and 400 on 14 Oct whilst roost counts at Camber were 300 on 10 Nov and 986 on 11 Dec. Apart from 121 at Bulverhythe, St Leonards on 24 Dec the counts from other sites were all small. [JAN]

0602. KITTIWAKE

*Rissa tridactyla***Common but localised breeding species; common winter visitor and passage migrant.**

During Jan the largest numbers were seen passing offshore, usually during periods of fresh onshore winds. A good movement occurred on 4 Jan with 145 E at Selsey Bill (2.5 hrs), 44 E at Worthing (0.7 hrs), 49 E at Ovingdean and 125 E at Glyne Gap Bexhill (2 hrs). A further 136 flew E at Selsey in 3 hrs on 19 Jan and substantial easterly movements were seen from Splash Point, Seaford throughout Jan and Feb. The extent of this passage and the poor numbers recorded passing West Sussex during the spring is shown in the following table of monthly totals at the regularly watched sites.

	January		February		March		April		May	
	E	W	E	W	E	W	E	W	E	W
Selsey Bill	336	67	14	16	13	25	76	15	121	26
Worthing Beach	44	3	-	-	16	-	6	56	18	8
Splash Point, Seaford	c2200 E		c700 E		not counted from Mar -May					

The first count of the breeding colonies was on 3 June when 947 occupied nests were on the cliffs west of Newhaven and 576 at Seaford Head. Three weeks later the count at Newhaven held 594 occupied and 94 abandoned nests whilst at Seaford there were 493 occupied and 31 abandoned nests; the counts show continued growth of the Seaford colony whilst that at Newhaven has declined.

Apart from 57 W at Worthing in 0.8 hrs on 6 Sept and 79 W at Selsey Bill in 6 hrs on 30 Sept, the numbers recorded in the second half of the year were small. Only at Selsey Bill were Kittiwakes recorded regularly and the following table shows the small monthly totals for that site from July- Dec.

July		Aug		Sept		Oct		Nov		Dec	
E	W	E	W	E	W	E	W	E	W	E	W
3	-	1	1	5	104	4	19	9	15	1	-

There were inland records of an adult at Bewl Water on 29 Mar, 2 adults at Weir Wood Res on 31 Mar and a juvenile at Arlington Res between 7-9 Aug. [JAN]

0605. **GULL-BILLED TERN** *Gelochelidon nilotica*

Rare vagrant

Two roosted at Ternery Pool, Rye Hbr on evening of 28 May (BJY) but were not present the following morning. They have been accepted by *British Birds* and are the first for the county since 1988. This record corresponds with the pattern one might expect from this species and is in marked contrast to the single, somewhat suspect, flypast records in the early 1960's, particularly off Selsey Bill (see *Birds of Sussex*). [RJF]

0606. **CASPIAN TERN** *Sterna caspia*

Rare vagrant

An adult flew W past Selsey Bill at 12:35 hrs on 24 Apr (TJE, JF). It was later seen at Titchfield Haven, Hampshire. This record has been accepted by *British Birds* and, following the recent review of some earlier records (*SxBR* 47:61), is the first to be recorded in the county in April and the 13th in total. [RJF]

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

Scarce breeding summer visitor and common passage migrant; rarely recorded in winter.

First recorded on 19 Mar with 2 at Brighton Marina, then 1 at Selsey Bill on 21st and widespread along coast on 22nd. Easterly spring passage totals at the main seawatching localities were as follows:

	Mar	Apr	May	Total	No. per hr (Apr-May)
Selsey Bill	7	2785	1565	4357	10.1
Worthing Beach	13	738	531	1282	12.8
Newhaven	-	929	237	1166	13.6
Splash Point, Seaford	144	1847	638	2629	11.1

The largest easterly movement occurred on 23 Apr (same date as last year's peak) with 217 past Worthing, 250 at Brighton, 718 at Newhaven, 917 at Seaford and 440 at Beachy Head.

At Rye Hbr roosting numbers increased slowly with 60 present at dusk on 9 Apr, reaching a peak of 400 in early May and including 2 birds in first-year plumage on 8th. At Ternery Pool, Rye Hbr about 80-120 pairs nested. The first young were noted on 30 May, but only 3 young fledged, losses were probably due to predation by Brown Rats. No breeding took place at Stakes Island, Chichester Hbr.

Away from the breeding area most records during Jun and Jul were from Selsey Bill, but the only inland record of the year was of 2 at Weir Wood Res on 23 Jul. During Aug records were more widespread along the coast, but the concentration at Rye Hbr, with 200 on 5th, shifted to Selsey Bill later in the

month with 90 on 24th. During Sept the largest counts were all from the west of the county with 100 at Selsey Bill on 10th and 170 at Pagham Hbr on 12th. In Oct the counts were 10 or less except for 29 and 41 at Selsey Bill on 1st and 2nd respectively. Four late records of single birds in Chichester Hbr on 29 Nov and at Selsey Bill on 9 Nov and 20-21 Dec may have related to the same individual. [BJY]

0614. **ROSEATE TERN**

Sterna dougallii

Very scarce passage migrant and non-breeding summer visitor.

A minimum of 21 birds were recorded. Much of the spring passage was observed at Selsey Bill, with 1 E on 23 Apr, 2 E on 29th, 1 E on 30th, 2 E on 4th May, 2 E on 9th, 2 E on 16th and 2 W followed by 2 E on 17th (all BJC, TJE, OM). At Pilsey, 1 flew S on 25 Apr, 2 were seen feeding offshore on 16 May and probably the same 2 flew N there on 25th. On 26th, 2 fishing off Pilsey came in to roost on the sands and were joined by a third bird (all CBC). One flew E past Birling Gap on 21 May (NJT, RDME) and one was seen feeding at Pagham Hbr on 29 June and later that day at Selsey (TJE). Single birds flew E past Selsey on 13 and 27 July (TJE). An adult was seen at Rye Hbr on 23rd, 27th and 28 July (ADW, RJF). [SJP]

0615. **COMMON TERN**

Sterna hirundo

Scarce breeding summer visitor and common passage migrant.

The first arrival was at Chichester GP with 1 on 2 Apr, then 2 each at Rye Hbr and Pilsey Sands on 6th. Larger numbers were noted from 24 Apr with 90 at Rye Hbr and 21 at Littlehampton. The first inland record was of 2 at Weir Wood Res on 25th.

Breeding records received were as follows: a record number of 120-140 pairs raising more than 300 young at Rye Hbr with the first hatching on 2 Jun and the first flying young on 29th; about 25 pairs nesting on the rafts at New Lake, Chichester GP with 58 chicks ringed there and 3 pairs at Stakes Island which failed because the nests were washed out.

In the autumn the maximum counts were 480 at Rye Hbr on 29 Jul and 380 on 7 Aug, 250 at Pilsey Sands on 20th and 94 at Rye Hbr on 1 Sept. At Bexhill there were counts of 130 and 245 offshore on 3 and 6 Sept. Single birds in first-summer plumage were at Rye Hbr from 15 June-29 July. [BJY]
(See also *Common / Arctic Tern*)

0616. **ARCTIC TERN**

Sterna paradisaea

Uncertain, but probably a fairly common spring and autumn passage migrant.

There were just 12 records of this difficult to identify species. In Apr there was 1 on 13th and 5 on 23rd at Brighton Marina and 10 past Birling Gap on 29th. The only May record was of 1 past Brighton on 8th. There was a first-year bird at Rye Hbr on 2 Jul and a juvenile there on 8 Aug. Two juveniles were at Southwick Canal on 31 Aug and one remained on 2 Sept. Two

immatures were at Bewl Water on 7 Sep and one remained until 14th. One was feeding offshore at Bexhill on 16th and the last of the year was at Holywell, Eastbourne on 24th. [BJY]

COMMON / ARCTIC TERN

Seawatching produced many records of uncertain identity with birds passing offshore at distance. In spring the passage began on 9 Apr with one at Seaford, then 9 on 13th and 10 on 17th. The eastward passage is summarised below:

	Mar	Apr	May	Total	No. per hr (Apr-May)
Selsey Bill	-	5107	2149	7256	16.9
Worthing Beach	-	2112	484	2596	26.0
Newhaven	-	3438	791	4229	49.2
Splash Point, Seaford	-	6277	2834	9111	40.9

The largest movement was on 29 Apr with 2505 at Selsey Bill (14 hrs), 1283 at Worthing (7.3 hrs), 2580 at Seaford (10.5 hrs), 2255 at Newhaven (13 hrs) and 778 at Beachy Head.

Autumn offshore movement was typically light and less directional than in Spring. It started in late July, but increased into Aug and Sept. The monthly totals are summarised below:

	July		Aug		Sept	
	E	W	E	W	E	W
Selsey Bill	71	9	78	342	240	121
Worthing	5	-	102	36	11	87

The last record was of 5 at Swear Deep Channel, Chichester Hbr on 7 Oct. [BJY]

0624. LITTLE TERN

Sterna albifrons

Scarce breeding summer visitor and fairly common passage migrant.

First recorded on 13 Apr with 2 at Pilesey Sands, then 1 at Littlehampton on 16th and 4 at Rye Hbr on 19th. Easterly spring passage totals at the main seawatching localities were as follows:

	Apr	May	Total	No. per hr (Apr-May)
Selsey Bill	439	319	758	1.76
Worthing Beach	97	289	386	3.86
Newhaven	24	88	112	1.30
Splash Point, Seaford	68	145	213	0.96

The largest recorded movement was on 2 May with 115 at Worthing, 62 at Selsey Bill, 59 at Seaford, 22 at Littlehampton and 30 at Rye Hbr. On 15 May there was one pair on North Stakes Island, Chichester Hbr but no breeding took place. At Rye Hbr 41 pairs nested raising just 5 young. There was good hatching success and plenty of food, but several male Kestrels took most of the chicks. Most success came from birds nesting outside the electric fences close to the high tide mark.

Autumn passage was typically light and there was the usual concentration at Pilesey Sands with 108 noted on 4 Aug. There were just 10 records in Sept,

the last being at Pilsey Sands on 20th. There were no inland records this year. [BJY]

0626. **WHISKERED TERN**

Chlidonias hybridus

Very rare vagrant

1994: The individuals at Sidlesham Ferry on 2 May and Rye Hbr on 7-8 May (SxBR 47:63) were considered to be different (*British Birds* 88:522), so the county total becomes 10. [RJF]

0627. **BLACK TERN**

Chlidonias niger

Fairly common passage migrant.

The first returning birds were seen in Apr at Selsey Bill with 1 flying E on 14th. There followed 2 at Splash Point, Seaford on 17th, 1 at Chichester GP on 22nd and 2 at Splash Point, 1 at Newhaven and 1 at Beachy Head on 23rd. There was then a small, but steady passage until 24 May (see table below) and then 1 at Chichester GP on 27th.

Sea passage during Apr and May is summarised below:

	Apr	May	Total	No. per hr (Apr-May)
Selsey Bill	9	41	50	0.12
Worthing Beach	1	2	3	0.05
Newhaven	5	11	16	0.19
Splash Point, Seaford	11	46	57	0.26

The only June records were of 1 at Pilsey Sands on 14th and 1 at Ternery Pool, Rye Hbr on 28th. There were no Jul records. In Aug there was 1 at Pagham on 1st and the first juvenile was noted at Rye Hbr the same day. There followed a steady stream of records all month of 1-11 individuals, mainly from the coast, but also from the larger reservoirs. During Sept, 1-4 were regular until 19th, then there was just 1 at Selsey Bill on 29-30th. The Oct records were of 6 at Selsey Bill on 1st and 1 at Castle Water, Rye Hbr on 5th. [BJY]

0628. **WHITE-WINGED BLACK TERN**

Chlidonias leucopterus

Rare vagrant

An excellent year with 4 individuals recorded, equalling the previous best year of 1977. All were in autumn and all found their way to Chichester GP. An adult at Thorney Great Deep on 31 July (RJS) was relocated at Drayton and the Trout Lake from 3-6 Aug (TJE *et al*), while a juvenile was at Westhampnett from 27-30 Aug (CRJ, OM *et al*) and 2 juveniles at Ivy Lake from 18-21 Sept with 1 remaining to 29th (TJE *et al*). All have been accepted by *British Birds* and the county total moves to 45, although this includes 2 Apr records from Selsey Bill (in 1959 and 1960), the earliest occurrences in Britain, which are currently under review. Seven of the previous records are from Chichester GPs, the most recent of these in 1984. A superb photograph of the first individual appears in *Birding World* (8:287), labelled as from Sidlesham Ferry! [RJF]

0634. **GUILLEMOT***Uria aalge***Fairly common winter visitor and passage migrant; formerly bred.**

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

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
43	5	38	22	-	1	-	2	-	3	215	7

The figure for Nov includes 100 flying E at Beachy Head on 5th. Totals also include 7 dead birds (6 of which were oiled) and 2 live birds, also oiled. [DEGC]

See also *Auk sp.*

0636. **RAZORBILL***Alca torda***Scarce winter visitor and passage migrant; formerly bred.**

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

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
6	-	1	14	19	1	-	-	-	14	23	2

The only oiled bird reported was at Bognor Regis on 11 Mar. [DEGC] See also *Auk sp.*

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	34	25	37	52	2	4	55	20
Worthing	23	-	2	7	15	4	3	5
Seaford	1054	84	284	4	-	-	514*	

* Direction not specified.

The movement E off Seaford was particularly large, certainly the largest in recent years. There were 970 E there in Jan of which no less than 597 were recorded in 1.75 hrs on 4th. [DEGC]

0638. **BLACK GUILLEMOT**

Cepphus grylle

Rare vagrant.

One, thought to be a first-winter, was present at Brighton Marina, usually off the West Arm, from 23 Dec to at least 1 Mar 1996 (ADW, IJW, PJW *et al*), although it became harder to find towards the end of its stay. It was greatly appreciated and one of the highlights of the year, allowing most observers the chance to study the species in the county for the first time. It was the first to be recorded in the county since 1985, only the 3rd since 1970 and the 13th in total. [RJF]

0647. **LITTLE AUK**

Alle alle

Very scarce but increasingly regular autumn passage migrant and winter visitor.

An absolute minimum of 59 birds were seen, equalling the previous record year of 1990. A large auk movement was noted from 3 Nov which included a number of this species. At Seaford, 5 (3 W and 2 E) were seen on 3 Nov (BRG) with the observer giving them the novel description of "tiny rugby balls"! Five more were seen moving E at this site on 19 Nov (SHL) and 2 further birds were reportedly seen later that morning. Unfortunately, no description has, as yet, been received.

One flew W past Widewater, Lancing at 06:55 hrs on 3 Nov (RJF) and at Shoreham Hbr, 2 flew into the harbour at 09:45 hrs before flying out to sea again and one flew E a few minutes later (RAI). One was present on Southwick Canal, Shoreham from 22-25 Nov and on 29 Nov (BFF, DJG).

One was watched on the sea off Newhaven West Pier on 3 and 4 Nov and was picked up dead on 5 Nov (JSG, NJT).

The largest movements were noted at Selsey Bill, as follows:

3 Nov 1 E @ 07:00 hrs, 1 W @ 07:34 hrs, 2 W @ 07:45 hrs, 1 W and 1 offshore @ 07:50 hrs, 1 W and 1 offshore @ 07:58 hrs, 2 E and 1 offshore @ 09:45 hrs, 1 E and 1 offshore @ 09:50 hrs, 3 W @ 09:55 hrs, 1 W @ 10:20 hrs and 7 E @ 10:50 hrs.
4 Nov 1 W @ 07:20 hrs, 1 W @ 07:50 hrs, 1 W @ 08:51 hrs, 1 W @ 09:03 hrs, 1 E @ 09:30 hrs, 1 E @ 09:40 hrs, 1 W @ 10:20 hrs, 1 E @ 11:05 hrs, 1 E @ 11:07 hrs, 1 E @ 11:58 hrs, 2 E @ 12:07 hrs and 2 E @ 12:19 hrs.
5 Nov 1 E @ 07:45 hrs, 1 E @ 08:10 hrs and 1 offshore @ 09:30 hrs.
15 Nov 1 W @ 07:35 hrs.
21 Nov 1 W @ 07:47 hrs, 2 E @ 08:08 hrs and 1 E @ 08:17 hrs.
28 Nov 1 E @ 07:55 hrs. All Selsey records (TJE, BJC).

At Weir Wood Res one was seen on 4 Nov (NAD).

Two flew W along the promenade at Worthing Beach on 4 Nov and one flew E at this site on 5 Nov (JAN). One was seen on the sea off West Worthing on 22 Nov (SBN, PHN).

One was seen on Pagham Lagoon on 5 Nov (RFW, CRT) and another was handed in dead at the Pagham Hbr Information Centre the same day. One was seen flying E at Pagham Hbr on 21 Nov and, the following day, one was on the sea off Church Norton and another was in Pagham Hbr itself (TJE).

At West Beach, Littlehampton on 5 Nov one flew W at 07:00 hrs, one was watched on the sea from 08:02-08:09 hrs when it was taken by a Great Black-backed Gull and another flew W at 09:21 hrs. One flew W and one was on the sea the following day (all RJLK). [SJP]

0654. **PUFFIN**

Fratercula arctica

Very scarce visitor, most frequently recorded in spring.

One flew E, with a Razorbill, past Worthing Beach on 1 May (BFF, DIS) and one flew E past Selsey Bill on 25 May (TJE, LGH). A total of 60 has now been recorded in the county since the beginning of 1962. [SJP]

0665. **FERAL ROCK DOVE**

Columba livia

Common resident.

Although a common bird, reports were received from only 6 locations, 5 of which were urban. A regular flock at Preston Park, Brighton reached a maximum of 135 in October. A group at Littlehampton Marina reached a maximum of 37 in the first half of the year whilst 80 were reported there on 3 Nov. The only regular reports of a farmland flock came from Yapton with a maximum of 51 at Wicks Farm on 12 Dec. There were no breeding reports. [RK]

0668. **STOCK DOVE**

Columba oenas

Common resident and possible winter visitor.

A flock of 100 was seen feeding on stubble at Beachy Head on 1 Jan. Other sizeable flocks seen early in the year were 80 at Church Norton on 8 Jan, 60 at Shoreham on 3 Feb, 106 at Icklesham on 5 Mar, 130 at Castle Farm, Rye Hbr on 19 Mar, 35 at Knepp Estate on 29 Mar, 50 at Thorney Island on 7 Apr, 50 at Treyford on 14 Apr, and 40 at Selsey Bill on 21 Apr. Four pairs raised families in nestboxes in Standen Wood, whilst 2 pairs also used nestboxes at Horsted Keynes railway station. The results of breeding surveys can be found on page 141.

In the autumn there were 250 at Thorney Deeps on 23 Oct and 120 at Beachy Head on 29 Oct. Flocks of about 30 were seen at Selsey Bill on 4 Nov, Barcombe Reservoir on 12 Nov, Weir Wood Reservoir on 27 Nov and Pagham Harbour on 6 Dec. [RK]

0670. **WOODPIGEON**

Columba palumbus

Abundant resident and winter visitor.

On 1 Jan 406 flew past Clayton Windmills in 2.5 hrs and on 7 Jan 1050 flew past Falmer in a similar period. About 3000 left a roost at Bosham on 12 Jan and 2000 were at Sidlesham on 2 Feb. These were the largest counts in the early part of the year. Breeding records were limited to those supplied by regular correspondents. They did not show any significant change in breeding numbers. The results of breeding surveys can be found on page 141.

Flocks on the move in last quarter of the year contained significantly fewer numbers than in 1994. The highest count at Beachy Head was 2600 flying E on 29 Oct, while at Bolney 5000 moved E on 19 Nov. At Maynard's Green, where regular counts are recorded, 2700 birds on 20 Nov was 2400 more than the expected average. [DEC]

0684. **COLLARED DOVE**

Streptopelia decaocto

Very common resident.

Highest counts in Jan were 45 at Ovingdean and 85 at Knepp Estate on 2nd, while the highest number recorded in the first quarter was 92 at Stakers Farm, Yapton on 7 Feb. The results of breeding surveys can be found on page 141.

143 were gathered at North Wall, Pagham Hbr on 21 Aug with regular counts at this site of more than 100 birds through until the end of the year. The winter census at Marsh Farm, Yapton recorded 77 on a 67 ha CBC plot. The largest winter flock was 260 at Harbour Farm, Rye Hbr. [DEC]

0687. **TURTLE DOVE**

Streptopelia turtur

Common, but probably declining, summer visitor and passage migrant. Very rare in winter.

A record of 2 flying north at Selsey Bill and a single at Beachy Head on 20 Apr were the first of the year. Reports received gave no indication of a clear start to the main migration with 2 at Rye Hbr on 29 Apr being the only record of more than one bird.

Singing and mating calls were heard on 30 Apr at Rye Hbr. There were 8 birds recorded at Hoyle, near Heyshott, on 1 May during an RSPB study on 650 ha. Breeding was probable or confirmed at about 30 sites, with 4 pairs at Thorney Deeps on 6 May, a monthly maximum of 6 at Icklesham on 16 May and 9 at Glynde Levels on 20 May with some singing noted. A monthly total of 9 birds at Selsey Bill was poor return for 7 days of observation. In June the monthly maximum rose to 12 at Icklesham. A report of only 2 birds for the year at Shoreham Sanctuary indicates a decline in numbers at this site and at Greatham Bridge the observer noted only one bird for the year. The last singing male was recorded at The Hollies, Ashdown Forest on 6 Aug.

Numbers improved as autumn passage got underway in mid-August with 4 on 13 Aug at Arlington Res and 2 more on 25 Aug, there were 6 at Lancing Clump on the same day while 6 left the Little Egret roost at Thorney Deeps on 21 Aug. Beachy Head saw at least 10 on 10 Sept with 6 in one flock on 23 Sept. The last record was at Rye Hbr on 18 Oct. [DEC]

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

Psittacula krameri

Very scarce introduced breeding resident.

Twelve seen at Gatwick Airport on 11 Jan was the largest group recorded this year. Up to 4 birds were at Hollingbury Camp from Feb-May, including 1 male, and 1 fledged young was seen. A pair was seen at the University of Sussex on 5 May, a pale individual circled over Aldingbourne Rife on 8 May and a male was in the Pagham Hbr area on 15 Aug. Singles were seen at Lancing Clump on 27-28 Aug and at Patcham, Brighton on 28 Sept. [SJP]

0724. **CUCKOO**

Cuculus canorus

Fairly common summer visitor.

Early birds reached Barcombe on 30 Mar, Rye on 1 Apr and Hollingbury on 5th. Six more arrived between 13th-16th and daily observations totalled about 75 from 18 Apr-10 May. Most summer reports were of single birds but up to 6 were at Icklesham and 14 at Thorney Island. Between 2 Aug and the last record at Beachy Head on 9 Sept, 22 singles were recorded. [KN]

0735. **BARN OWL**

Tyto alba

Scarce breeding resident.

The total of 191 reported sightings was marginally greater than in 1994 but the records were from only 80 sites compared to 119 in 1994. Barn Owls were more widespread in West Sussex where records came from 47 different tetrads compared with only 26 in East Sussex. Over 40% of the observations were in the first quarter of the year; presumably a period the species is more obvious. There were only 8 sites where breeding attempts were confirmed and from 4 of these 12 young fledged. Several observers noted Barn Owls to be hunting in areas of set-a-side. At Thorney Island one was seen leaving the Little Egret roost site at dusk on 2 Jan. As usual roadside casualties were reported in Mar (2), Apr and Nov. [CT/JAN]

0757. **LITTLE OWL**

Athene noctua

Fairly common resident.

Over 270 sightings were reported but records were from only 71 sites, 20 fewer than in 1994. This species continues to be encountered more frequently in West Sussex with records from 39 different tetrads compared with only 19 in East Sussex. Little Owls were most often recorded between July and Sept (39%) and most regularly seen at Icklesham and in the Pagham area. However, observers at Beachy Head consider this species to be extinct in that area.

During the spring 3 territories were located in the Knepp Estate and 16 territories were identified during an RSPB survey of 650 ha near Heyshott. Otherwise, and in keeping with all the owls, records of confirmed breeding were few and of the 4 reported 2 pairs each raised 3 young and from another pair a single young fledged. [CT/JAN]

0761. **TAWNY OWL**

Strix aluco

Fairly common resident.

The 107 records received reported 158 birds from 57 different sites. A high proportion of the records, 58%, were for calling or hooting owls. Unlike the other resident owls the distribution was evenly spread with records from 31 tetrads in both West and East Sussex. This species remains considerably under recorded, an observation emphasised by a small study conducted in Dec when 24 listeners located 29 owls in 32 sq km near Horam.

As a resident species it is likely that breeding occurred at or near most recorded sites but only 2 records confirmed breeding; a pair raised 2 young in a nest box at Horsted Keynes and on 26 June a newly fledged young was seen near a nest in Stansted Forest. [CT/JAN]

0767. **LONG-EARED OWL**

Asio otis

Rare resident and very scarce passage migrant and winter visitor.

Approximate monthly totals were as follows;

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Aug	Sept	Oct
1	3	9	1	2	1	1	2

Just one record in Jan, a bird in the east of the County on 1st. A bird roosted at another site in the east from mid Feb-early Apr. Two other birds were reported from eastern sites in Feb; one, unfortunately, dead alongside a railway line. During Mar, single birds were at 4 different sites (3 in the east, one in the west) and up to 4 were at Rye Hbr on several dates during the month. Two singles were seen in May, again in the east and at different sites.

In the latter part of the year, one was present at an eastern site from mid Aug-early Oct and the last report was of one roosting in East Sussex on 14 and 15 Oct. [CT/SJP]

0768. **SHORT-EARED OWL**

Asio flammeus

Scarce winter visitor and passage migrant. Has bred.

Approximate monthly totals were as follows;

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
14	16	12	8	3	7	9	5

Approximately 22 birds were present in the county during the first winter period and 13 in the second.

Regular wintering sites included Pagham Hbr, with one bird from 2 Jan-19 Apr and 2 on 18 Jan and 4 Feb. In the second winter period a bird was present from 21 Oct-24 Dec, with 2 on the latter date. Thorney Island started the year with one bird on 3 Jan preceeding a maximum of 8 on 2 Mar, declining to 2 on 1 Apr and a final spring record of one on 30 Apr. Up to 3 roost sites were occupied. In the autumn, a single bird returned on 22 Sept and numbers increased to 3 in Nov and Dec.

At Willingdon, birds were only present in the first winter period, with a maximum of 3 in Feb and a final record of one on 19 Apr.

Birds were recorded at 14 other sites, all records were of singles apart from 2 at Eastbourne on 2 Feb. Undoubtedly, some birds were migrants, e.g. singles at Cooden Beach on 9 Apr, Beachy Head on 10 Apr and Sheepcote Valley, Brighton on 18 Sept. [CT/SJP]

0778. **NIGHTJAR**

Caprimulgus europaeus

Fairly common summer visitor rarely seen on migration.

First recorded on 4 May at Tortington Common, Arundel. At least 3 pairs attempted to breed at this site but a major fire probably destroyed all the nests. Breeding season records of single pairs came from 20 sites on Ashdown Forest; 17 other sites elsewhere in Sussex probably held 34 pairs giving a total of about 57 pairs in the County. This continues an apparent decline over the last 3 years. Most of these areas supported 1-2 pairs, the exceptions being Parham (4), Todham, Midhurst (6) and Ambersham Common (5).

Two autumn migrants were recorded: 1 at Weir Wood Res on 14 Sept and a very late record of a bird at Wild Park, Brighton on 25 Oct. [JB/SJP]

0795. **SWIFT**

Apus apus

Common summer visitor and passage migrant.

First recorded on 20 Apr at Combe Haven and also Hollingdean. Small numbers continued to be seen during late Apr and into May. The largest spring groups were 500 at Weir Wood Res on 11 May and 1000 at Chichester GP on 27th. A partial albino bird was present at Selsey Bill from 7 May-5 Aug. During early summer some very large numbers were reported with 3000 at Pagham Hbr on 10 June and 2000 on the same date at Rye Hbr. Another 1000 were also seen on 10th at Southbourne. June produced a total of some 15,835 birds, by far the best month for this species. Very few breeding records were received, 2 young were noted at Pagham on 6 June.

A total of 4000 seen at Hill Barn, Worthing on 30 July constituted the biggest group recorded during the year. By Aug, numbers had declined significantly with the only large count being of 2000 at Chanctonbury Ring on 26th. About 100 birds were seen during Sept, mainly singles. The maximum counts were 15 at Goring Gap on 1st, with the last being on 24th at Arlington Res. [RP]

0831. **KINGFISHER***Alcedo atthis***Fairly common resident and probable winter visitor.**

Observations during the winter months were as follows:

	Jan	Feb	Nov	Dec
Number of birds	28	26	43	38
Number of inland sites	13	9	13	9
Number of coastal sites	13	3	13	14

The number of birds recorded in Feb showed an increase over last year and a considerable increase in both Nov and Dec. Most sightings were of single birds with occasional reports of 2. There were 7 birds at Bewl Water in Sept with 5 still there in Nov-Dec. A bird was stunned when hit by a car on the A27 at Pevensey Levels on 17 Dec but soon recovered.

Limited breeding reports indicate 11 territories where 3 pairs bred (1 pair with 2 broods) and 4 pairs probably bred. [DEGC]

0846. **HOOPOE***Upupa epops***Very scarce spring and autumn passage migrant; has bred.**

Only 3 records, the same as 1994. Singles were recorded at East Wittering on 13 Apr, Pagham on 18 Apr and Selsey West Fields on 10 Oct. [SJP]

0848. **WRYNECK***Jynx torquilla***Very scarce passage migrant; has bred.**

A slight improvement on 1994, with a minimum of 11 birds recorded. The only spring bird was at Icklesham on 28 Apr. Autumn records started with 1 at Rye Hbr on 24 Aug. At least 1 bird was in the Beachy Head area on 2 and 3 Sept and 1 was recorded at Rye Hbr from 7-11 Sept. One was seen in a garden at Rustington on 14 Sept and, on the same date, a single at Shooter's Bottom, Beachy Head, which was still present in the area on 16th and 17th. Also on 16th, a bird was at the Seven Sisters CP and Cuckmere Valley. The last records were of singles at Fairlight CP on 19 Sept, Heyshott Common on 23rd and Denton, Newhaven on 24th. [SJP]

0856. **GREEN WOODPECKER***Picus viridis***Fairly common resident.**

Widely recorded throughout the county. During the breeding season records of pairs were received from 19 sites. CBCs and other counts recorded 1 pair at Hotham Park, Bognor; 1 at Hollingbury Camp; 2 at Pulborough Brooks RSPB Reserve; 4 at Pippingford Park; 1 at Grantley Farm, Maynard's Green; and 3 at Darwell Res.

Other counts made were of 6 (including 3 immatures) at Findon Valley on 4 Feb, 5 at Standean Bottom on 18 Mar and 9 in the same area on 22 July, 9 at Pulborough Brooks on 19 July and 6 at Darwell Reservoir on 8 Oct. Juveniles were observed at Furnace Meadow, Ebernoe on 12 July, and Aldwick, Bognor on 1 Sept. [LM]

0876. **GREAT SPOTTED WOODPECKER**

Dendrocopus major

Common resident.

The earliest territorial activity reported was in Mar at Townsend, Ashdown Forest on 4th, Bignor Hill on 12th, Powdermill Res and Gravetye Lakes on 20th and Hindleap Warren, Ashdown on 30th. Pairs were recorded during the breeding season at 10 sites, with territorial males at 7 other sites. Results of breeding surveys can be found on page 141. Breeding success was reported from Littleworth, Partridge Green; Varndean, Brighton (2 pairs); Standen Wood, Weir Wood; Blackwell, East Grinstead; Kidbrooke Wood, Ashdown Forest and Isfield.

There was some indication of migratory movement with one flying SW at Selsey Bill on 22 July and 6 recorded on 3 Sept and 4 other dates in autumn at Beachy Head. [LM]

0887. **LESSER SPOTTED WOODPECKER**

Dendrocopus minor

Fairly common resident.

Records were received from 41 sites across the county (22 of them in the breeding season). Pairs or territorial males in the breeding season were reported from Hoyle, Heyshott (5 pairs); Burton MP; Barns Copse, Binsted; Broadfield, Crawley; Belmont, Hurstpierpoint; Blackwell, East Grinstead, Chelwood Beacon and Millbrook, Ashdown Forest, and Alexander Park, Hastings. Eighteen (including 11 juveniles) were ringed at Weir Wood Res in July and Aug.

All records, especially of breeding, are required for this species. [LM]

0974. **WOODLARK**

Lullula arborea

Very scarce resident and passage migrant.

1994: Six were recorded together in Stansted Forest on 9 Feb and 2 at the same location on 16 Feb.

1995: There were 10 inland records in Jan, all in West Sussex and by Feb males/pairs began to occupy territories. During the breeding season, 34 territories were noted, all in West Sussex. This was a considerable increase over 1994, possibly due in part to the time spent searching by a few dedicated observers. At least 10 pairs produced fledglings, including 2 with second broods.

In Oct and Nov there were 43 inland records including 11 on Woolbeding Common on 25 Nov and 19 from the coast. Of the latter, 8 were in East Sussex. No Dec records were received. [JB]

0976. **SKYLARK**

Alauda arvensis

Common resident, passage migrant and winter visitor.

During the early part of the year only 2 flocks of over 100 were recorded, both at Ovingdean and both in Jan - 200 on 4th and 135 on 14th. Smaller flocks were noted at Shoreham with 50 on 1 Jan, 50 at Rye on 3 Jan, 80 at Ifield on 7 Jan, 55 at Newhaven on 8 Jan, 40 at Clapham on 14 Jan and 55 at Chichester on 3 Feb.

The year's first singing males were recorded from several sites on Ashdown Forest on 20 Feb. During the breeding season more than 86 singing males or breeding pairs were reported from the same locality. A further 20 pairs were recorded on similar heathland at Chapel Common, Liphook and 1 at Iping Common. The rest of the county could only muster another 50 recorded pairs or singing males, reflecting the dramatic decline of this species as a farmland bird, but at least it gives hope that they will survive in spite of the changes in modern agriculture.

Movements were noted during autumn, in Oct: 155 W at Church Norton on 5th, 100 E at Pett Level on 8th, 110 N at Church Norton on 10th, 65 NW at Thorney Deeps on 18th, 50 E at Castle Water, Rye Hbr on 19th and westward moving flocks of 20 and 17 at Bewl Water on 21st and 22nd. The largest feeding flocks during this period were approximately 100 at Thorney Island on 9 and 19 Oct and 200 at Pagham (West Side) on 25 Oct. In Dec 210 at Ovingdean on 3rd, 500 at North Wall, Pagham Hbr on 6th and 300 at Rye Hbr on 7th could have been continental birds 'en route' to France and Iberia. [RTP]

0978. **SHORE LARK**

Eremophila alpestris

Rare winter visitor.

Two birds, an adult male and a probable female, were present at Sovereign Hbr Marina, Eastbourne from 29 Jan-21 Apr (WRT *et al*). Just 3 have been seen in the county since the winter of 1985/86, the last at Atherington from Dec 1991-Mar 1992. [SJP]

0981. **SAND MARTIN**

Riparia riparia

Fairly common summer visitor and very common passage migrant.

The first was flying over the River Arun at Littlehampton on 12 Mar followed by sightings along the coast from Emsworth in the west to Rye in the east and inland at Bewl Water between 14th-26th. On this last date the first party of any size in the main migration flow was one of 50 at Castle Water, Rye Hbr. 120 over Chichester GP on 2 Apr was the first big count in the west; 200 were there on 16 Apr and 100 on both 22 and 29 Apr at Westhampnett.

Breeding records came from Duncton Common where 30 birds were present on 13 Apr and from Sandgate Park, Storrington where 100 birds were counted on 15 May but there were only approximately 20 occupied holes. However, the first sightings at this site had been as early as 25 March and successful clutches could have been brought off by mid-May. No records of

breeding in 1995 were received from Coates Castle, Dunford GP, Heath End or Rye Hbr in contrast to 1994.

Pre-dispersal gatherings became more obvious from the second week of July onwards with 250 at Icklesham on 8th, 300 at North Wall, Pagham Hbr on 12th and at Rye Hbr on 16th. Inland, 120 on 17th and 150 on 19th were over Arlington Res but the major action was in the Pagham Hbr area with 2200 at Church Norton on 19 July, 500 at the North Wall on 24th and 1000 on 27th, whilst 650 flew S over the Hbr on 26th. This latter number was eclipsed on 2 Aug when 2300 flew S over the Hbr and 1500 were estimated there on 3 Aug; Chichester GP were a magnet for birds a few days later with 1500 at Drayton on 7th and 9th and 2000 over Ivy Lake on the latter date. A roost estimated at 600 birds was at Thorney Deeps on 21 Aug on which day a minimum of 2000 passed over Icklesham, while a similar number were counted over Long Pit, Rye on the next day. Records were received of between 1000-2500 at Ivy Lake on 8 dates between 28 Aug-14 Sept.

Maximum counts at inland sites in Sept included 800 at Bewl Water on 7th, 500 at Weir Wood Res and 300 at Barcombe Res on 8th and 222 passing Lancing Clump on 12th. The end of the month brought more birds to sites in the east: 250 flew E at Glyne Gap on 17 Sept, with at least 25,000 at Icklesham on 20th followed the next day by another 2000. Passage tended to peter out after the end of Sept, except for 100 at Icklesham on 8 Oct, with a final record of 6 at Weir Wood Res on 24 Oct. [MJM]

0992. SWALLOW

Hirundo rustica

Common summer visitor and abundant passage migrant.

A very early record was of one sitting on wires at Castle Farm, Rye on 17 Feb, the 3rd county record for the month. Birds were reported regularly from 23 Mar onwards though mostly in small numbers until the second half of Apr when 100 were seen at Arlington Res on 17th and a similar number at Westhampnett on 21st and 29th. 346 were noted during 21 days sea-watching at Selsey Bill in Apr.

Few breeding records were received: 5 pairs were recorded on Pilsey Island and the only other reports came from Whatlington, Maynard's Green, Goring and Yapton.

Pre-dispersal gathering records in Aug were from Icklesham, where 250 birds were present on 1st and 350 on 2nd, 800 were counted in a roost at Thorney Deeps on 11th and 60 were in a reedbed roost at Fishbourne MP on 20th. 284 birds were seen at Sompting Downs on 23 Aug. Numbers increased during Sept and records received included 1250 (12th), 6500 (14th), 5400 (16th), 2000 (17th) and 1300 (20th) all at Pagham Hbr, 2558 at Lancing Clump on 12th, 2226 E off the Climping-Littlehampton Gap on 17th, whilst Icklesham recorded 2500 (13th) 50,000 (20th), 3000 (21st), 1500 (22nd) and 10,000 on 23 Sept. There were no records received from Beachy Head in Sept but on 8 Oct 2500 passed E at Belle Tout and 1500 were counted at the Head on 9th. 2000 were at Icklesham on 8 Oct and 1000 the following day when a similar total was reported from Selsey Bill. The Thorney Deeps roost still held 400 birds on 8 Oct. Records dwindled sharply during Nov with the final bird at Icklesham on 2 Dec. [MJM]

0995. **RED-RUMPED SWALLOW**

Hirundo daurica

Rare vagrant

One was watched at Cow Gap, Beachy Head between 08:30-09:20 hrs on 9 May (JFC *et al*) before departing N. What was widely regarded as having been the same individual was present at Arlington Res from 12-15 May (CFB, NAD *et al*). Both records have been accepted by *British Birds* which, assuming they relate to the same individual, is the 14th for the county and the 9th in May. All other records have been in the second half of Apr. It's stay at Arlington was most welcome, enabling many observers the opportunity of seeing the species in the county for the first time, while this is the 3rd year running the species has been found at Cow Gap in early May, all by the same observer! [RJF]

1001. **HOUSE MARTIN**

Delichon urbica

Common summer visitor and abundant passage migrant.

The first record for 1995 was of 2 birds at Coleman's Hatch on Ashdown Forest on 3 Mar, the second-earliest county record. This was followed by a single at Shooters' Bottom, Beachy Head on 14 Mar. Other early arrivals were one at Ivy Lake, Chichester and 2 at Bewl Water on 29 Mar and one at Eridge Park next day. It was mid-Apr before birds started to appear in any sizeable numbers; 50 at Barcombe Res and 200 at Chichester GP on 16 Apr heralding the main arrival in May which saw 350 at Westhampnett on 11th, minimum counts of 630 in the lower Cuckmere Valley and of 800 at Arlington Res on 12th, 700 at Westhampnett and 900 over Bewl Water on 13th and 600 at Westhampnett on 17th.

Following the request in the 1994 SxBR, more reports of breeding were received this year, with records from: Ardingly College; close by Barcombe Res; Broad Oak; Burgess Hill; Denne Park, Horsham; Hill Barn, Worthing; Knepp Castle; Parham House; Ringmer and Sheffield Park Station. Records of nesting are sought each year. During the breeding season, parties of 120 and 100 were recorded over Horsham Park on 12 Jun and 29 July respectively.

Return migration, seemingly with lower numbers of birds than in 1994, commenced in earnest in mid-Sept but there were early gatherings of 200 at Barcombe Res on 28 Aug and 300 over Paghham Hbr the next day with c400 at Lancing Downs on 13 Sept. 2886 flew E past the Climping-Littlehampton Gap on 16 Sept, followed by 2225 on 17th; these numbers were overshadowed by a massive 14,400 E over Paghham Hbr on 16th and 10,000 past Selsey Bill next day. Other major counts in Sept included 2000 at Church Norton and 1200 at Glyne Gap on 17th, 2000 at Nook Meadows, Rye and 1000 at Bewl Water on 22nd, 6600 over Hollingbury Camp, 1000 at Icklesham and 500 flying NW in 30 mins over East Brighton GC (all on 23rd). 171 birds were ringed at Cissbury Ring between 9 Sept-8 Oct with a peak of 105 on 23 Sept. Oct numbers were generally lower, with records in excess of

100 coming only from Icklesham (500 on 8th), Bewl Water (400 S also on 8th) and Beachy Head with an autumn peak count of 10,000 on 9th.

Small parties continued to pass through to the end of Oct, 20 at Weir Wood Res on 24th being the last count in double figures. The final records were of one at Selsey Bill on 1 Nov and 2 past Watch Cottages, Rye Hbr on 17th. [MJM]

1002. **RICHARD'S PIPIT**

Anthus novaeseelandiae

Rare vagrant

1994: One at Shooter Bottom, Beachy Head at 08.45 hrs on 8 Oct flew off W after 5 minutes and was later seen flying W over Crowlink (RD, RKH, JPS). Note: this record was submitted too late for inclusion in the *Birds of Sussex*.

1995: One flew W, calling, over Atherington at 13:45 hrs on 29 Oct (TJW) but could not be relocated. There have been 11 records since 1980, all between mid Sept-early Nov. [RJF]

1005. **TAWNY PIPIT**

Anthus campestris

Very scarce visitor

Two were recorded, a first-year between Ternery Pool and Narrow Pit, Rye Hbr on 10 Sept (PMT) and an adult that flew W over the River Arun N of the Littlehampton by-pass (A259) at 06:35 hrs on 11 Sept and was relocated briefly at Church Farm, to the W of the river (RJLK). A typical showing, mid-Sept being the favoured time. There were also two records in 1990, 1991, and 1993, with 3 in 1994 and 9 in 1992. [RJF]

1009. **TREE PIPIT**

Anthus trivialis

Fairly common but local summer visitor and passage migrant.

1994: The total of singing males for Pippingford Park was 17 and not zero.

1995: The first migrant was seen on 4 Apr and the second was heard singing on 5th, both on Ashdown Forest. The last immigrants of the few reported from the coast were at Selsey Bill on 1 May.

Once again, there was a considerable increase in singing males/territories, with 182 being recorded, mostly by a concentration of effort on Ashdown Forest which provided 103. At Pippingford Park, 25 were reported on 200 ha and 54 from other areas in Sussex, mainly in the west.

Return passage began in early Aug and finished at Icklesham on 18 Oct. The 465 records were well up on last year and were spread fairly evenly throughout the period. The highest day-totals were 22 at Lancing Clump on 24 Aug, 12 at Icklesham on 10 Sept, 20 at Shooters Bottom, Beachy Head also on 10 Sept, 19 at Sompting Brooks on 12 Sept and 12 at Brighton Racecourse on 13 Sept. [JB]

1011. **MEADOW PIPIT**

Anthus pratensis

Locally common resident, very common passage migrant, winter visitor.

A year with few early records, an uncharacteristically prolonged spring passage, a handful of breeding records and a substantial autumn passage. It would be good to have more reports on this species from the Downs and no data was returned from several breeding areas this year.

Until the last 10 days of Mar, maximum counts were of 20 at Gravetye Lakes on 16 Feb and at Cathanger Farm, Selham on 14 Mar. Seventy-two moved E at Selsey Bill on 18 Mar; 250 followed them on 21 Mar and a further 447 were noted in the remaining days of the month. 800 went north over Pagham Hbr on 23 Mar. These movements were not confined to the west of the county: 88 were at Glyne Gap on 20 Mar and 50 at Hollingbury on 23rd. Passage did not end then: 40 flew N at Worthing on 15 Apr and 332 were counted at Selsey Bill during the month. But the most intriguing record was of 110 coming to roost at Todham (Midhurst) on 4 Apr: were these passage birds? Unusually substantial numbers were still arriving in the first half of May (Selsey Bill saw 93 on the 10th and 100 on the 15th, passing W on both occasions). This late movement appears to be without recent parallel.

Breeding season records came mainly from Ashdown Forest, where c15 singing males were noted. Icklesham had singles on 4 days during June, and return passage began there on 5 Aug. The first double figure count (15) was at Coldwaltham Brooks on 3 Sept. Passage was heavy from 13 Sept to 18 Oct. At first, movement was largely to the E: 460 at Pagham Hbr on 16 Sept and 294 the next day (when 260, mainly flying E, were noted at Glyne Gap at the other end of the county) with 193 on 18 Sept and 209 on 20th. Around 20 Sept, several other sites reported numbers in excess of 50. Sixty-six at Bewl Water on 22nd included 22 flying W, and these were the precursors of the next and westerly wave of movement. This was heaviest at Pagham Hbr: 1016 on 28 Sept and 728 the next day, 410 on 2 Oct and 202 on 5 Oct were all noted as moving W. Nothing remotely comparable was reported from Beachy Head, where 5 Oct was the peak day, but the total only 250. The last daily total in excess of 100 from Pagham and Selsey was on 18 Oct.

Wintering birds were reported from Scobell's Farm, Barcombe, as early as 1 Oct (50). There were characteristic reports from the interior of the county: 40 at Weavers Down, Liss, on 31 Oct, 34 at Darwell Res. on 12 Nov, 40 at Greatham on 10 Nov, 35 at Maynard's Green on 21 Nov (though a maximum of only 10 in Dec) and 25 at Small Dole on 21 Dec. [CB]

1014. **ROCK PIPIT**

Anthus petrosus

**Very scarce resident, fairly common passage migrant and winter visitor.
Rare away from the coast.**

1994 There were 10 Scandinavian birds (*A.p. littoralis*) around the Fort area, Shoreham Hbr, on 28 Feb (RJF).

1995 There were records from 13 sites in Jan and Feb. The maximum was a high tide roost of 16 at Apuldram on 2 Feb. Other double figure counts came from Northpoint Pit, Rye, on 3 Jan and Newhaven West Pier on 14 Jan. After 5 at Thorney Island on 3 Mar, the month produced only singles, from Cobnor Point to Rye.

The few summer records came from Splash Point, Seaford, where a bird was displaying on 4 May, from Shoreham Hbr on 17 July and from Southwick Beach on 8 Sept. There were no reports of breeding success or of absence from usual breeding areas.

Birds were again well, but thinly, distributed at the end of the year, with only one count in excess of 10. That was at Thorney Island on 22 Nov, when the presence of 21 was "probably related to fog that morning", a tantalizing suggestion of coastal movement. [CB]

1015. **WATER PIPIT**

Anthus spinoletta

Scarce winter visitor and passage migrant.

1994: One bird was seen on the Steyning Levels on 7 Jan and again on 17 Feb when it was moulting into summer plumage (ARK).

1995: Thorney Island hosted one bird during Jan, 2 from 3-10 Mar and a single again on 17 Mar. At the end of the year, there was 1 on 5 Nov, 2 on 13th and 1 on 12 Dec (all CBC). One was seen at Apuldram on 16 Jan with 3 present on 9 and 23 Feb (TJE). A single bird was at North Wall, Pagham Hbr from 6 Jan-14 Mar, with 3 seen on 31 Jan and 1 Feb (TJE). Six birds were at Combe Haven on 2 Jan and up to 17 birds were present towards the end of Mar (RBW) with a single left on 6 Apr (JHM). A bird was trapped at Icklesham on 4 Nov (RBRG). [SJP]

1017. **YELLOW WAGTAIL**

Motacilla flava

Fairly common but localised summer visitor and common passage migrant.

First recorded at Nook Meadows, Rye Hbr on 26 Mar and last noted, unusually, at Ardingly Res on 10 Nov. There were probably around 200 birds in the county in Oct, a substantial increase on the last few years.

Spring passage was lengthy but never heavy: only 4, for example, were noted at Worthing and the species was said to be "scarce: singles only" at Pett Level. Twenty in 2 groups flew E over Rye Hbr on 9 Apr and there were 12 at Combe Haven on 12 Apr. The largest number for one day was on 30 Apr, when 27 flew W at Selsey Bill (which reported 50 on 14 days previously that month and 12 on 8 days in May).

Few breeding season records were received for this species, which appears to be in serious decline in the county. Return passage started early in Aug, with trios reported from a wide range of locations in the south of the county (Church Norton on 1st, Barcombe Res on 8th, Lancing Clump and Sompting Brooks on 11th). An immature at Bewl Water on 13th was the first autumn bird there. The west of the county witnessed most of the Aug passage: there were up to 200 roosting around Pagham Hbr on 17th and

20th. In the east, counts at Icklesham were generally in double figures from 15 Aug, 43 were around cattle at Normans' Bay on 26th and 200 at Rye Hbr the next day. The peak over Beachy Head (where the species was rarely noted) was 120 on 10 Sept: Icklesham, too, recorded its maximum - 75 - on that day. Pagham counts were below 100 after 3 Sept, but numbers at Thorney Island rose from 40 on 31 Aug to compensate. 120 were roosting there on 8 Sept and 250 were around cattle on 13th.

An interesting feature was the range of inland reports. Birds were regularly found in small but cumulatively significant numbers at Worthing's Hill Barn GC, Lancing Clump and on Sompting Brooks (where the maximum was as many as 79 on 10 Sept); there were also 12 by the R. Arun at Billingshurst on 6th, 12 at Birchgrove on 10th, and 25 at Grantley Farm, Maynard's Green on 14th.

An adult male 'Blue-headed Wagtail' (*M.f. flava*) was present at Arlington Res from 20 Apr-21 July (WRT, PJW) and a bird showing characteristics of a 'Grey-headed Wagtail' (*M.f. thunbergi*) was seen at Shooters' Bottom, Beachy Head on 10 June (PJW, RW). [CB, SJP]

1019. GREY WAGTAIL

Motacilla cinerea

Fairly common resident, passage migrant and winter visitor.

Numbers, or rather, records appear slightly down from the level of 1994, the last year of the Society's recent survey.

There were reports from 18 locations in Jan, 13 in Feb, and 17 in Mar. Hints of spring passage came only from Selsey, which recorded occasional birds through to 8 May. By this time breeding was well advanced across the county in expected places, e.g. R. Arun below Newbridge, Warnham MP, Pippingford Park and the weir on the River Uck at Isfield. Hurstpierpoint was an unusual location (27 May). One (a failed breeder?) found Preston Park, Brighton, to its liking from 13 June-26 Nov.

There were many and widely distributed autumn reports, all of small numbers. Seven at Barcombe Res on 5 Aug was the highest until 8 there on 17 Sept and 15 at Glyne Gap on the same day. At Beachy Head, the highest day total was only 3 (26 Aug). The maximum for the autumn was 42 at Pagham on 28 Oct and ten roosted at Ifield MP on 14th. Oct brought observations from 29 locations, Nov from 23 and Dec from only 13. [CB]

Common resident, passage migrant and winter visitor.

Roost counts were few and (with one exception) low at both ends of the year. Passage numbers appear to have been lower than for 1994. Few breeding season records were received.

The largest early-year roost was at Thorney Island, which held 80-90. Seven other sites reported 20-50. Thirty fed in Hove Park from 22-28 Feb.

An undramatic passage began in mid-Mar. The first White Wagtail (*M.a. alba*) was at Chichester GP on 15th and movement was noted at Selsey Bill and at Glyne Gap on 21st. Few breeding season records were received, results of breeding surveys can be found on page 141. Lest too bucolic a picture be painted, a pair bred on a regular territory near the Asda supermarket in Carden, Brighton.

Thirty at Arlington Res on 14 July heralded the beginning of autumn; on 1 Aug 50 were there. But Aug brought few other records of substantial numbers: at Icklesham, the maximum was 7 on 3rd. Isolated high counts were of 30 at Darwell Res on 13 Aug and 47 at Ivy Lake on 7 Sept. There were signs of passage in mid-Oct: over 100 around Pagham on 13th and 40 at Arlington Res that day, with 63 at Selsey Bill on 14th and 50 at Goring Gap on 4 Nov. In mid-Nov there were 50-60 at Icklesham. Nov and Dec produced a number of counts in the 20s, but the only considerable roost was at Fishbourne, where around 350 were roosting in the last 3 weeks of the year.

It was a better than average year for White Wagtails (*M. a. alba*). There were 32 spring records from 12 Mar (Rye Hbr) to 14 May (Pilsley Island), with 4 together at Exceat Bridge on 6 Apr. Several birds appear to have spent some time in the county: one was recorded at Arlington Res from 15 Apr-12 May; a male summered at Apuldram Manor Farm and another might have lingered at Weir Wood Res from 27 July-end of Sept. In the autumn, 12 were reported, from 2 Sept (Arlington Res) to 6 Nov (Icklesham), with 6 together at Cuckmere Haven on 10 Oct. [CB]

1066. **WREN**

Troglodytes troglodytes

Abundant resident.

Breeding was confirmed at a number of sites. In addition to the CBC results, 16 were counted at Warnham LNR on 19 April, 20 on 13 May and 23 on 25 June. Results of breeding surveys can be found on page 141.

Regular monthly counts at Warnham LNR produced maxima of 12 in Jan, 17 in Feb, 18 in Mar, 16 in Apr, 20 in May, 23 in June, 14 in July, only 3 in Aug but 12 in Sep and Oct, 8 in Nov and 11 in Dec. A CBC at Marsh Farm, Yapton counted 19 birds on 27 Jan, 14 on 7 Feb, but only 13 in Oct. The maximum count at Hotham Park, Bognor was of 10 birds in the second quarter.

Single birds were seen actually or apparently coming in off the sea at Newhaven West Pier on 29 Apr and at Rye Bay on 23 Sep. At Cissbury Ring, 63 birds were ringed during the season. [JAH]

1084. **DUNNOCK**

Prunella modularis

Abundant resident.

A CBC at Marsh Farm, Yapton recorded 19 birds in an area of 67 ha of mixed farm on 27 Jan, only 11 on 23 Feb, 25 territories there on 30 June (compared with 27 in 1994) but only 14 birds on 28 Oct. Quarterly counts at Hotham Park, Bognor produced maxima of 13 on 2 Feb, 16 on 4 Apr when breeding was confirmed but with no comments on productivity, 13 on 8 July, but only 6 on 10 Oct. Regular monthly counts at Warnham LNR produced a winter/spring maximum of 5 in Mar, confirmation only of breeding in Apr, maximum counts of 6 in June and Sep with numbers falling then to 1 in Oct and 2 in both Nov & Dec.

Results of breeding surveys can be found on page 141. A late breeding record was of 1 juvenile just out of the nest at Paghham Hbr on 11 Sep.

During the season, 53 birds were ringed at Cissbury Ring. [JAH]

1099. **ROBIN**

Erithacus rubecula

Abundant resident, passage migrant and winter visitor.

During the first winter/spring period counts of singing birds were of 20 at Bewl Water on 2 Jan, 31 at Eartham Woods on 5 Feb, 11 at Powdermill Res. on 20 Mar, 14 at Friars Gate, Ashdown in 2.5 miles on 31 Mar and maximum monthly counts of 13 at Warnham LNR in Jan and Mar.

Breeding was confirmed at a number of sites. There were 45 singing birds at Darwell Res in a count of 51 on 19 Mar, 11 at Hotham Park, Bognor in 7 ha of urban park on 4 Apr and 8 at Warnham LNR on 15th & 30th. Results of breeding surveys can be found on page 141

During the autumn period, an early count of 20 at Whitbread Hollow, Beachy Head on 13 Aug rose to 25 on 25 Aug, 30 on 2 Sep, a maximum count of 35 on 14 Oct and finally 30 on 22 Oct. At Lancing Clump 65 were counted on 2 Sep, a maximum monthly count of 14 at Warnham LNR in Sept and 45 at Darwell Res on 8 Oct.

At Cissbury Ring 52 birds were ringed during the season from Apr to Nov. [JAH]

1104. **NIGHTINGALE**

Luscinia megarhynchos

Fairly common summer visitor and infrequently seen passage migrant.

The first was singing at the Hanger, Pulborough Brooks RSPB Reserve on 8 Apr followed by 2 at Vert Wood near Laughton on 11 Apr and singles at Burgess Hill on 12 Apr and at Woods Mill on 14 Apr. There were 11 recorded from 7 different sites on 23 Apr and by the end of the month a total of 35 had been recorded with a further 55 by the end of May. During the spring singing males were equally divided between West and East Sussex, being noted from 22 and 20 different tetrads respectively. The largest numbers were 10 singing along a 2 mile stretch of road near Streat on 13 May, 7 at Pulborough Brooks on 15 May, 6 near Houghton on 15 May and 5 at both Coldwaltham and Mountfield in early May.

There were just 5 recorded in July and only 16 bird-days in Aug. Observers at Beachy Head, traditionally the best site for his elusive species in autumn, considered 1995 to be probably the worst passage ever with perhaps only 2-3 birds all autumn. The latest, and only Sept records, were singles at Lancing Clump on 12th, Shepcote Valley, Brighton on 14th and at Crowlink on 15th. [JAN].

1106. **BLUETHROAT**

Luscinia svecica

Very scarce spring and autumn visitor (113 individuals recorded).

Two were trapped at Icklesham; a first-year male on 3 Sept and a first-year female on 16 Oct (RBRG). Eight of the 10 recorded since 1986 have been trapped at Icklesham. [RJF]

1121. **BLACK REDSTART**

Phoenicurus ochruros

Rare resident, fairly common passage migrant and scarce winter visitor.

Approximate monthly totals were:

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
9	8	29	13	5	3	-	2	3	45	14	14

There were more Mar records and fewer Nov records than last year. Records, or the lack of them, during the breeding season compare with 1994. The only evidence of breeding was a singing male in Brighton town centre on 21 Apr and song heard at Brighton Marina on 10 June. The autumn records included 12 at Selsey Bill on 11 Oct with 13 there the next day. There were 5 at Church Norton on 11 Oct. In the east, singles were at Icklesham on 22 Oct and Rye Hbr on 28 Oct. Shoreham Hbr had 3 males and 4 females on 14 Nov. Singles were seen at regular coastal sites until the end of the year. [DEC]

1122. **REDSTART**

Phoenicurus phoenicurus

Scarce summer visitor and fairly common passage migrant.

The first record for the year was of one at West Chidham on 27 Mar. More arrivals, mainly of singletons, were noted along the coast until 3 May, including 5 at Beachy Head on 4 Apr, 8 at Selsey Bill on 20th and 7 there on 30th. The first inland appearance was at Pulborough Brooks on 10 Apr with a singing male on Ashdown Forest on 20 Apr followed by 5 singing at Pippingford Park on 23rd. Singing in the breeding areas continued until at least 10 June.

During the breeding season, 44 territories were reported from Ashdown Forest and Pippingford Park, a great increase over 1994 and equalling that of 1991. A further 3 pairs were found in Eridge Park but very few elsewhere in the county.

The autumn departure appeared to begin early with a male at Pulborough Brooks on 8 July, other singles there on 15th, 19th and 22 July, at Arlington Res on 19 July and a ringed bird, in juvenile plumage, at Cissbury Ring on 28th. In total, c. 550 migrants were recorded, spread evenly through Aug and Sept until tailing off in Oct when the last bird was found at Icklesham on 10th. The largest fall noted was of 20 birds at Beachy Head on 11 Sept. [JB]

1137. **WHINCHAT**

Saxicola rubetra

Rare summer visitor and fairly common passage migrant.

The record of a male at Hollingbury Camp from 18-25 Feb is the first county record for the month. Birds were then from 10 Apr (Sheepcote Valley) to 21 May (Normans Bay), and from 19 July (Icklesham) to 12 Nov (Northpoint Pit, Rye).

Spring passage was a trickle, with only one double figure count: 14 at Selsey on 1 May. There were 67 spring records from west of the Adur but only 20 from the east. One at Knepp Lake on 8-9 May was the only inland record.

There were, typically, 5 records of 7 birds in July. Small groups remained the order of the day through Aug: there were 20 reports of over 10 birds, with a maximum of 50 between Shooter's Bottom and Birling Gap on 30 Aug. Twenty-six on Sompting Brooks on 24 Aug and 36 at Sheepcote Valley, Brighton, on the 30th were high counts for those sites. Sept saw no major gatherings, but in the first half of the month only one day was without a double figure count. The maximum was 50 at Icklesham on 9th. In the second half of the month, by contrast, there were only 2 double figure counts, with a maximum of 15 at Icklesham on 19th. There were about 40 birds in Oct and the last was at Northpoint Pit, Rye on 12 Nov. Despite the absence of any major concentration, the maximum total recorded for the autumn was around 1800, higher than in 1994 but about the same as 1993. Regular reports from Lancing Clump and from Sompting Brooks contributed significantly. The balance between Aug and Sept records is very variable. It was roughly 1:1 in 1993; 1:4 in 1994 and 1:1.5 in 1995. [CB]

1139. **STONECHAT***Saxicola torquata***Scarce resident and partial migrant.**

Rather fewer birds were reported early in the year than in 1994. Seventeen locations were involved in Jan, 12 in Feb, and 40 in Mar (by which time birds were reported from around 20 sites on Ashdown Forest). Characteristically for this species, the majority of records were of 2 birds or of small groups. The maximum was 9 at Thorney Island on 7 Jan. Eight remained there until at least 10 Mar and a pair raised 4 young. Another favoured area was around Poverty Bottom between South Heighton and Seaford, which held 11 on 4 Mar. One pair bred at Poverty Bottom and a further 2 nearby at Five Lords' Burgh. How many of these breeders near to the coast are resident birds?

The species is faring well on Ashdown Forest and there were a number of records of up to 4 pairs from the western commons and from Tilgate and St Leonard's Forests. Along the coastal strip, further pairs were reported from the Fire Hills (Fairlight), Normans Bay, Beachy Head, Newhaven Cliffs and Sheepcote Valley (Brighton). In addition there were inland pairs at Parham, Amberley Wild Brooks and by the River Mole at Gatwick. The county total probably remained around 70 pairs, matching the (high) level of 1994, with half on Ashdown Forest, a quarter on the western commons and a quarter on the coast and Downs.

Juveniles appeared at Selsey West Fields on 27 June and at Rye Hbr ("very young and unsure") on 27 July. Small groups appeared throughout the south of the county from late July. Twelve at Crowlink on 6 Aug grew to 16 on 15 Sept. There were 11 at Thorney Island on 20 Sept, 21 there on 29 Oct and on 7 Nov, with as many as 18 still on 8 Dec (did they include the breeding birds?). Fifteen were at Littlehampton GC on the 30 Sept. There were hints of passage in mid-Oct, when perhaps 65 were at Selsey Bill and the nearby West Fields and, less dramatically, Icklesham and the Sidlesham Ferry area recorded a run of counts of 10.

Small migrant groups congregate along the coast in Dec, perhaps around knowledgeable resident birds and perhaps ready to move south if hard weather sets in. Six were at St.Dunstan's, Ovingdean on 13 Dec and 8 at Combe Haven on 26 Dec. But some remain inland and there were Nov-Dec records from Arlington Res, Ashdown Forest, Bewl Water, Warnham MP and Weir Wood Res. [CB]

1146. **WHEATEAR***Oenanthe oenanthe***Very scarce summer visitor and common passage migrant.**

The first arrivals were in Mar with 1 at Climping on 5th and 2 there on 6th, 2 at Thorney Island on 10th and singles widespread along the coast from 11th. The first inland record was of 1 on Ashdown Forest on 20th. The first double figure count was of 18 at Selsey Bill on 24th. Large spring counts were 31 at Sheepcote Valley, Brighton on 24th, 35 at Langney Point on 3 Apr and 66 at Church Norton, 45 at Selsey Bill, 70 at Sovereign Hbr Marina and 38 at Beachy Head on 4th.

Breeding was only confirmed at Rye Hbr where 8 pairs nested with good success. However, at the end of May there was a singing male in suitable habitat at Newhaven Tide Mills. There were no June records away from Rye Hbr and the next county record was of 1 at Thorney Island on 27 July and 1 at Cuckmere Haven on 29th.

There were many, mainly coastal, records during Aug, with the largest groups of 40 near the Seven Sisters on 10th, 30 at Sompting Brooks and 50 at Belle Tout, Beachy Head on 24th and 40 at Rye Hbr on 27th. During Sept numbers declined rapidly after 3rd (when there were 60 at Beachy Head) and by the end of the month only single figure counts were made and this continued throughout Oct. During Nov the only records were of singles at Southbourne, near Emsworth on 2nd, Icklesham on 8th, Rye Hbr from 10th - 13th and Thorney Airfield on 17th. [BJY]

1186. **RING OUZEL**

Turdus torquatus

Passage migrant, scarce in spring, often fairly common in autumn.

The numbers in spring were about average, but the autumn passage was a dramatic reduction on that in recent years. Indeed, one Beachy Head report referred to it as "the worst year ever". The approximate monthly totals were as follows:

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
-	-	2	26	1	-	-	-	2	21	5	2

The Mar records were at Hollingbury Camp on 11th and 18th. In Apr, there were records from Balsdean of 5 on 8th and 15 up to 30th. The other Apr reports were of singles at Selsey Bill on 1st and 12th; Littlehampton on 1st and 28th; Beachy Head on 10th, 12th and 28th; Pagham Hbr on 11th, 12th and 28th; Sidlesham Ferry on 12th; Graffham on 13th and Millbrook, Ashdown Forest on 28th. The May record came from Pett Level on 1st.

The autumn passage started with singles in Sept at Beachy Head on 14th and Cissbury Ring on 21st. The results for Oct were very poor when compared with the average for the previous nine years of 159. At Goring Gap there was a single on 7th; at Beachy Head one on 8th, 4 on 15th and 7 on 21st, with 2 of the latter probably being the birds seen on 22nd; at Hollingbury 2 on each of 11th and 21st; and 3 at Sheepcote Valley on 21st. The Nov records were of singles at Pagham Hbr on 1st, 7th and 23rd; at Beachy Head on 7th and at Icklesham on 20th. The year ended with singles at Pett Level on 24th and Cissbury Ring on 27 Dec, the latter being the latest county record for the month by 1 day. [LM]

1187. **BLACKBIRD**

Turdus merula

Abundant resident and winter visitor; perhaps a passage migrant.

A female was seen carrying nest material at Sharpthorne on 22 Jan. Most of the regular breeding bird surveys listed on page 141 show a slight fall on the previous year. Nevertheless, 128 singing males or breeding pairs were recorded at Hollingbury Camp in May.

A leucistic bird seen near the Little Egret roost at Thorney Island on 3 dates in May and also on 9 Aug was presumably the same one that was reported there on 1 Dec 1994. [RK]

1198. **FIELDFARE**

Turdus pilaris

Common to abundant passage migrant and winter visitor.

Few large flocks were reported during the first part of the year. The largest numbers were 400 at Isfield on 15 Jan, 400 at Pulborough Brooks on 21 Jan, 750 at the Knepp Estate on 9 Feb and 1000 at Wartling on 11 Feb. Many more than usual remained well into Apr with 500 still at Barcombe Res on 16th, 85 at Gravetye Woods on 22nd and 16 at both Wakehurst Place on 27th and Mount Pleasant Farm, Tilgate on 30th, when 1 was also seen at Sheepcote Valley, Brighton.

Returning birds were later than usual, the first appearing on 21 Oct and then a total of only 34 was reported to the end of the month. These included 2 heard over Hailsham at 21:00 hrs on 21st. Subsequently, numbers were low with more notable counts being 140 on Ashdown Forest on 12 Nov, 100 at Trotton Common the following day and then 1000 on Steyning Levels on 27 Dec during cold conditions. [SHL]

1200. **SONG THRUSH**

Turdus philomelos

Abundant resident and partial migrant; abundant passage migrant and very common winter visitor.

Maximum counts at the beginning of the year were 30 at Bewl Water on 2 Jan, 15 at Beeding Brooks on 6 Jan and 17 at Preston Park, Brighton. Totals decreased in Feb, with 13 at Preston Park, Brighton and 7 at Darwell Res. During the breeding season, 10 were recorded in 7 ha at Hotham Park, Bognor Regis and 12 at Preston Park, Brighton, whilst an RSPB survey at Hoyle, near Heyshott, yielded 160 territories in 650 ha. In May, 15 singing males were reported at Hollingbury Camp and 16 pairs were found on 200 ha of heath and woodland at Pippingford Park, Ashdown Forest. Results of breeding surveys can be found on page 141. At Cissbury Ring, 32 birds were ringed between Apr-Nov. Later in the year, there were 15 at Preston Park, Brighton in July, 74 at Hollingbury Camp on 21 Oct, 30 at Whitbread Hollow, Beachy Head on 28 Oct and 27 at Preston Park, Brighton in Dec. The year ended with a bird in full song on Christmas Day at Blackwell, East Grinstead. [JLN]

1201. **REDWING***Turdus iliacus***Abundant passage migrant and very common winter visitor**

As with Fieldfare, the species was relatively scarce during both winter periods. During Jan and Feb the only sizeable flocks were 600 at Pulborough Brooks on 1 Jan, 500 at Wartling on 11 Feb (*cf* Fieldfare) and 1200 at Graffham 2 days later. There was a heavy nocturnal passage over East Grinstead on 14 Mar, numbering perhaps some 1000 birds. The last winter individuals were at Weir Wood Res on 15 Apr and at Pulborough Brooks, where singles were recorded on 22 and 23 Apr and the extraordinarily late date of 26 May, the latest county record by 2 days..

As in 1994, the first of the autumn was seen at Lancing Clump, though this year the sighting was a fortnight earlier, on 12 Sept. Thereafter, none were reported until 10 Oct when a single was noted at Beachy Head. A large arrival commenced on 21 Oct with 620 at Hollingbury Camp, 800 NW over Charleston Reedbed, 190 S-SW over Maynard's Green and 3000 W in one hour at Bewl Water. This generally westerly movement continued next day with 440 W over Gravetye Wood, 230 NW over Maynard's Green and 820 SW in an hour at Bewl Water. Widespread reports involving small numbers continued to the end of the year, the maximum being 400 at the Upper Adur Levels on 28 Dec. [SHL]

1202. **MISTLE THRUSH***Turdus viscivorus***Very common resident and partial migrant.**

At the beginning of the year there was a maximum of 18 at Horsham on 3 Jan and 10 at the same site on 6 Feb. Four at Icklesham on 11 Mar and 4 at Warnham MP on 15 Mar were also reported. Breeding season records included 5 singing males at Hollingbury Camp on 1 May and a maximum of 6 at Warnham MP on 15 May. Results of breeding surveys can be found on page 141. Later in the year, maximum counts were 14 at Eastshaw Farm, Woolbeding on 26 July, 9 at Scobells Farm, Barcombe on 26 Aug, 14 at Cathanger Farm, Selham on 17 Sept and 36 at Old Lodge Reserve, Ashdown on the same date. Autumn records continued with 17 at Scobell's Farm, Barcombe and 11 at Icklesham both on 27 Sept. Five were noted at Whitbread Hollow, Beachy Head on 18 Oct. A winter census of 67 ha at Marsh Farm, Yapton, yielded 4 on 22 Nov and 25 were seen feeding on yew berries at Horsham on 29 Nov. [JLN]

1220. **CETTI'S WARBLER***Cettia cetti***Very scarce resident, passage migrant and winter visitor.**

One or 2 individuals were present at Thorney from 4 Jan-2 Apr, and an adult was seen at Castle Pit, Rye Hbr on 9 Feb. Males were reported at Fishbourne on 13 Apr, Apuldram from 20 Apr, Birdham on 6 May and at Arundel on 7 and 11 May. Breeding was successful at Thorney, where 2 different broods were seen with adults on 16 June and a family of 5 was reported at Apuldram on 26 July.

A female was ringed at Charleston Reedbed on 8 Oct and at least one individual was present at Icklesham from 21 Oct-1 Dec. Records from Thorney continued until the end of the year. [VPB]

1236. **GRASSHOPPER WARBLER** *Locustella naevia*

Very scarce and declining summer visitor and fairly common passage migrant.

1994: The breeding counts given for Thorney Deeps in 1988 and for Rye in 1989 are wrong and this passage should be deleted.

1995: The first were singles at Littlehampton on 11 and 12 Apr followed by singles at both Selsey Bill and Combe Haven on 20 Apr. There were records from 16 sites from Apr-July but, as in 1994, there was no confirmed breeding.

As return migration commenced, the July maximum at Icklesham was 18 on 30th and, at the same site, 20 were present on 11 and 16 Aug and 27 on 2 Sept. Fifteen were recorded at Whitbread Hollow on 10 Sept. In the last week of Sept there were just 2 records, both from Icklesham. Oct saw 10 birds at 3 different sites with the last, again at Icklesham, on 10 Oct. [VPB]

1242. **AQUATIC WARBLER** *Acrocephalus paludicola*

Very scarce autumn visitor.

1994: The 10 juveniles trapped at Icklesham (*SxBR* 47:83) were as follows: 30 July, 2 Aug, 13 Aug, 14 Aug, 18 & 20 Aug, 21 Aug, 21 & 22 Aug, 22 & 23 Aug & 2 Sept, 30 Aug and 3 Sept.

1995: A record 15 juveniles were trapped at Icklesham although, to date, no adequate documentation has been received. Records were 7-8 Aug, 12 Aug (6 with 1 retrapped on 15th), 14 Aug, 16 Aug (3), 18 Aug, 23 Aug (2) and 22 Sept. An adult was trapped (and fully documented) at Thorney Little Deep on 21 Aug (GCMR) and one was seen at the Beach Tern Pool, Rye Hbr on 7 Sept (DJF). [RJF]

1243. **SEDGE WARBLER** *Acrocephalus schoenobaenus*

Fairly common summer visitor and abundant passage migrant.

The first recorded for the year were 2 on 6 Apr at Thorney Deeps with singles at Church Farm, Climping and Icklesham on 8th. Singing males were at several Rye Hbr sites on 10 Apr. Numbers increased with 6 at Combe Haven on 12 Apr, 4 at Pevensy Bridge Level and 20 at Icklesham on 25 Apr. May saw 20 at Thorney Deeps on 2nd where 47 pairs were recorded during the breeding season.

The largest numbers in the autumn were recorded at Icklesham where the highest counts occurred in mid-Aug; 29 on 8 July, 500 on 4 Aug, 650 on 12 Aug, 500 on 14 Aug and 350 on 15 and 16 Aug. Fewer were seen there later in Aug with later autumn counts of 76 on 22 Sept and 10 on 8 Oct. At Whitbread Hollow, Beachy Head there were 15 on 24 Aug. The last was recorded at Icklesham on 16 Oct. [JLH]

1251. REED WARBLER

Acrocephalus scirpaceus

Common summer visitor and very common passage migrant.

The first record was at New Salts Farm, Lancing on 9 Apr. There were 2 at Icklesham and a single at Thorney Deeps on 11 Apr and on the following day there was 1 at Pagham Hbr and 2 at Rye Hbr. Observers at Icklesham recorded 15 on the 25 Apr but small numbers were recorded elsewhere during the month. Notable records during May include 6 at Woods Mill on 1 May, 25 at Thorney Deeps on 9 May, 6 at Warnham LNR on 15 May and 37 at Lidsey Rife, Barnham on 30 May.

Breeding season counts include 86 pairs at Thorney Deeps and 16 at Marsh Farm, Yapton. Once again, and like Sedge Warbler, the bulk of the autumn records were from Icklesham where notable Aug counts were 138 on 5th, 129 on 9th, 171 on 12th, 176 on 14th, 102 on 23rd and 82 on 27th. There were 50 in scrub at Whitbread Hollow on 15 Aug. Small numbers were recorded at numerous sites during Sept with counts at Icklesham of 68 on 2rd, 110 on 4th, 96 on 6th, 167 on 10th, 35 on 12th and dropping to 16 on 29th. The last birds recorded were at Beachy Head on 8 Oct, Charleston Reedbed on 4 Nov and at Icklesham on 7 Nov. [JLH]

1253. GREAT REED WARBLER

Acrocephalus arundinaceus

Rare vagrant

An adult was trapped at Icklesham on 1 July (RBRG) where it was found in a mist net and was not seen in the field. It has been accepted by *British Birds* and is the first county record since 1989 and 15th in total. The previous records were in May (8) and June (5, one remaining to July) and Aug. [RJF]

1256. BOOTED WARBLER

Hippolais caligata

Very rare vagrant.

1993: A juvenile, trapped at Icklesham on 19 Sept (RBRG), has been accepted by *British Birds*. It was the first county record although there has been one since, at Beachy Head on 5 June 1994 (*SxBR* 47:83). [RJF]

1262. DARTFORD WARBLER

Sylvia undata

Scarce resident.

In Jan there were 6 coastal records and 4 inland, including pairs on 11th and 13th. From early Feb onwards, birds were recorded in breeding areas with singing heard on 8th and again later in the month.

In the Beachy Head area, single males were found on 5 occasions between 11 Mar-14 May. On Ashdown Forest, there were records of 13 pairs with young and at least 20 more of courtship/breeding behaviour. In West Sussex, there was a minimum of 10 pairs, 8 of which were seen with young. During Oct-Dec, only 19 records were from breeding areas but over 70 reports came from the coast between Thorney Island and Icklesham. Perhaps

if the mild winters continue, any maquis/garigue type of vegetation on the Downs may be recolonised for breeding. [JB]

1273. **BARRED WARBLER** *Sylvia nisoria*

Rare autumn vagrant.

A first-year in Greenlease Lane, near Pigeonhouse Farm, Church Norton from 29-31 Oct (CRJ, IS, MS *et al*) is the latest county record by 2 weeks and only the 2nd (out of a total of 37) to be recorded W of Littlehampton West Beach (the other being at Selsey Bill in 1962)! [RJF]

1274. **LESSER WHITETHROAT** *Sylvia curruca*

Common summer visitor and passage migrant.

First recorded at Littlehampton GC on 11 Apr, 10 days earlier than in 1994, though arrivals were later than usual that year.

Breeding season records were received for sites throughout the county, with 5 pairs noted at Thorney Deeps. Results of breeding surveys can be found on page.141.

During Aug the maximum counts were 17 at Pagham Hbr on 16th, 21 at Lancing Clump on 25th and 30 at Whitbread Hollow on 22nd - only half the 1994 maximum at that site - the lowest ever autumn ringing total recorded. However, the May-Sept totals from Cissbury showed an increase to 29 individuals ringed, from a 1994 low of only 12. During Sept the highest figure was 20, again at Whitbread Hollow. The last bird was at Elms Farm, Icklesham, on 16 Oct. [VPB]

1275. **WHITETHROAT** *Sylvia communis*

Very common summer visitor and passage migrant.

The first sightings were singles on 3 and 8 Apr at Pulborough Brooks and then, on 9 Apr, birds were at Coldwaltham Brooks, Hollingbury Camp (2) and Icklesham. By 21 Apr there were records from many different locations and on 29 Apr, 26 were at Hollingbury Camp.

Breeding season counts revealed 46 pairs at Thorney and 15 territories at Pulborough Brooks. Results of other breeding surveys, which were similar to 1994, can be found on page 141.

During autumn migration, Whitbread Hollow recorded the highest numbers with 150 on 10 Sept and 125 on 13th. The last individual seen at that site was on 9 Oct but, as in 1994, there was a single very late record, from Church Norton on 14 Nov. [VPB]

1276. **GARDEN WARBLER**

Sylvia borin

Very common summer visitor and passage migrant.

The first reports were singles at Pulborough Brooks on 14 Apr and Warnham MP on 15 Apr. The main arrival followed over the next week. During the breeding season there were 8 singing at Darwell Res and Pulborough Brooks, a maximum of 6 at Weir Wood Res and 4 at Warnham MP. Results of breeding surveys can be found on page .141.

Autumn migration was under way by the first week of Aug and reports from Icklesham were of 14, 19, 18 and 20 on 1st, 5th, 12th and 15 Aug respectively. Whitbread Hollow saw good numbers passing through: 50 on 2 Sept and 100 on 10 Sept being the highest counts, the latter an improvement on the 1994 maximum of 50. The last individual trapped at this site carried a Belgian ring. The final record for the year was from Icklesham on 6 Nov, nearly 2 weeks later than the previous year and only 1 day short of equalling the latest county record. [VPB]

1277. **BLACKCAP**

Sylvia atricapilla

Very common summer visitor and passage migrant; small numbers winter.

As in 1994 there were numerous winter records; between 1 Jan-31 Mar with 45 reported at 37 sites. Several individual birds were seen regularly at some sites. Three were at Woodvale Cemetery, Brighton during Jan and Feb.

The first spring migrants at Beachy Head were 2 males on 3 Apr, although a male was heard singing on 1 Apr at Herstmonceux Castle. Birds were recorded at Pulborough Brooks on 6 Apr, Weir Wood Res on 8 Apr and Shoreham Sanctuary on 9th. Widespread records were received for the breeding season, with numbers at regular sites broadly similar to 1994. Results of breeding surveys can be found on page 141.

At Cissbury, 314 were ringed between May-Oct with a peak of 70 on 16 Sept. Counts at Whitbread Hollow on 11 days in Sept totalled 2750 and 900 individuals were ringed at the site. Numbers were lower in Oct with 65 at Icklesham being the maximum.

During Nov and Dec there were reports of 60 wintering individuals from 32 locations, including 4 males at Brighton Cemetery on 27 Dec. [VPB]

1293. **GREENISH WARBLER**

Phylloscopus trochiloides

Very rare vagrant

One in the hedge behind and to the W of the Beachy Head Hotel on 10 Sept (MEN, AQ *et al*) was present for most of the day and has been accepted by *British Birds*. It is the second county record, the earlier one also being at Beachy Head, in Belle Tout Wood on 19 May 1981 (SxBR 34:45). [RJF]

1298. **PALLAS'S LEAF WARBLER**

Phylloscopus proregulus

Very scarce visitor.

Five were seen in another excellent autumn for the species. Four were found in the Beachy Head area: 2 being in the copse at the top of the lane at Birling Gap on 21 Oct (TJW *et al*) and 30-31 Oct (JFC *et al*), one, probably a female, was trapped at Whitbread Hollow on 28 Oct (RDME) and the fourth was seen at nearby Hodcombe on 30 Oct (RHC, JFC *et al*). One was found in First Wood, adjoining Littlehampton GC, from 14-16 Nov (BA, SJP *et al*). Those at Beachy Head were often very obliging while the later individual, covering a much larger area, could be very elusive. The date of the first Birling individual was a day earlier than the same observer found one in East Brighton in 1994 (SxBR 47:86). There are now 38 records for the county, all since 1968, 26 in the last 10 years and 17 since 1990. These records are typical both in timing and location with 22 now recorded at Beachy Head and 5 at Littlehampton/Atherington. [RJF]

1300. **YELLOW-BROWED WARBLER**

Phylloscopus inornatus

Very scarce visitor.

Four were seen in autumn, an average showing. Single individuals were found at Brighton Racecourse, near Whitehawk Camp, on morning of 13 Oct (JC), at the first Several, Church Norton on 1 Nov (TJE), in the 'poplar copse' at Church Norton on 6 and 9 Nov (TJE) and in First Wood, adjoining Littlehampton GC, on 15-16 Nov (SJP *et al*). The last individual was found whilst in the same Sycamore as the Pallas's Leaf Warbler, although the former proved possibly even harder to locate! Those in Nov are rather later than most, the species more usually occurring before Pallas's Leaf Warbler. Observers are reminded of the need to check for Hume's Yellow-browed Warbler *P.i. humei* for which records in Britain appear to be increasing in late autumn. The individuals above satisfactorily eliminated this rather washed-out (sub) species. Fifty-two of the 73 recorded in the county to date have been in Oct and 12 in Nov. [RJF]

1301. **RADDE'S WARBLER**

Phylloscopus schwarzi

Very rare vagrant.

Three were seen in the best autumn ever for the species. A juvenile was trapped at Icklesham on 15 & 20 Oct (RBRG). Another was seen at Church Norton on 23 Oct (TJE, CRJ *et al*), being found by the track down to Pagham Harbour. It gave good views before moving into a private area, but although access was arranged by the first named observer, it was only glimpsed subsequently. Finally, one in long grass and scrub between Birling Gap and Belle Tout Wood, Beachy Head on 2-3 Nov (ASC *et al*) was much more obliging, although would have been even more so had it remained another day for weekenders. All 3 records have been accepted by *British Birds*. There are 4 previous county records, all between 30 Sept-27 Oct, in 1974, 1991, 1992 and 1994; underlining a significant increase in records throughout Britain in recent years. [RJF]

1308. **WOOD WARBLER**

Phylloscopus sibilatrix

Very scarce summer visitor and passage migrant.

The first record came from Coates Common on 16 Apr. Four singletons were noted at coastal sites by the end of the month, with 5 more at Hollingbury Camp on 29 Apr. In early May, there were only 2 coastal records.

At least 19 reports were received of birds singing in suitable breeding localities, twice as many as in 1994. These were mainly on Ashdown Forest and possibly involved some passage birds. However, at 4 sites at least, the birds stayed long enough to breed. Song was last heard on 14 June.

Return passage was first noted at Apuldram Manor Farm on 26 July, followed by 17 sightings, mainly coastal, up to 29 Sep when the last was reported from Warnham MP. [JB]

1311. **CHIFFCHAFF**

Phylloscopus collybita

Very common summer visitor and passage migrant; small numbers winter.

Wintering birds were recorded almost entirely from coastal areas, there being 24 reported from 14 sites in Jan and 41 from 16 sites in Feb, one of which was heard singing on 11th.

Immigration probably began in early Mar, with the main arrival on 11th including 6 at Sidlesham Ferry, 7 at Poverty Bottom, Newhaven and 16 at Littlehampton GC. A fall of 45 birds was recorded at Beachy Head on 3 Apr. Results of breeding surveys can be found on page 141. Other breeding season counts included 10 singing males/pairs at Hollingbury Camp, 6 in a 1 km transect at Crowborough and 6 territories held at Pulborough Brooks.

The first autumn movements of note were 25 seen at Woods Mill on 27 Aug, followed by 15 at Bewl Water on 1 Sept and 30 at Whitbread Hollow on 2nd.

In Nov there were 94 records, including 16 at Ivy Lake, Chichester on 30th and 72 in Dec with 14 at Ivy Lake on 6th.

Single birds showing the characteristics of the race *tristis* were seen in Jan at Church Norton on 1st (EFG) and 15th (CRJ) and at Bewl Water on 2nd (PCB). A bird showing characteristics of either *tristis* or *abietinus* was at Pagham Lagoon on 16 Nov (TJE). [JB]

1312. **WILLOW WARBLER**

Phylloscopus trochilus

Abundant summer visitor and passage migrant.

The first record was one at Apuldram Manor on the early date of 10 Mar, with only 3 more noted in the rest of the month. In Apr, 89 were reported from Pagham/Selsey area on 4th, 42 on 19th, 204 on 20th and 100 on 21st. At Beachy Head, falls of 50 occurred on 4 Apr and 70 on 6th, with 300 seen at Climping on 10th.

Results of breeding surveys can be found on page 141. Other breeding season counts included 3 singing males/pairs in 30 ha of woodland at Chelwood Vachery, 28 in 200 ha of heath/woodland at Pippingford Park, 11 on Thorney Island and only 5 territories at Pulborough Brooks (*cf* 13 in 1990).

Return migration at the coast was first observed at Rye Hbr on 24 July and at Icklesham on 29-30th when 24 were recorded. The numbers of migrants were much reduced compared with 1994, the largest fall being 250 at Whitbread Hollow on 6 Aug. At Icklesham, 450 were recorded between 28 July-9 Oct, less than half that of the previous year and at Beachy Head only 627 occurred between 6 Aug-23 Sep compared to 1770 in 1994.

Numbers fell sharply after 15 Sep, with the last record occurring on 9 Oct at Icklesham. [JB]

1314. **GOLDCREST**

Regulus regulus

Very common breeding resident, common passage migrant and winter visitor.

Records were received from 67 sites across the county (21 of them in the breeding season). The reports for Jan-Mar were mainly in single figures, the largest counts being 10 at Pulborough Brooks on 3 Jan, 8 at Darwell Res on 22 Jan, 6 (singing males) at Burton Pond on 9 Mar and 8 at Three Corner Copse, Hove on 31 Mar.

CBCs and other surveys recorded single pairs at Thorney Island; Hotham Park, Bognor; Lavington Common; Marsh Farm, Yapton; and Barns Copse, Binsted; 2 pairs at Pulborough Brooks and Grantley Farm, Maynards Green; 3 at Chiddingly Farm, W Hoathly and 5 at Stedham Common. Results of breeding surveys can be found on page 141.

Six singing males were noted at Bignor Park on 1 Apr a family party of 6 at Church Norton, Pagham Hbr on 1 June a juvenile at Storrington on 5 June and at Scobell's Farm, Barcombe a juvenile on 18 June and singing males on 19/20 June and 21 July.

In the autumn, 64 were ringed at Cissbury Ring between 16 Sept-5 Oct (with a peak of 15 on 30 Sept) and there was a count of 60 in that area on 21 Sept. The peak counts in Oct were 30 at Belle Tout, Beachy Head on 1st; 50 at Whitbread Hollow, Beachy Head on 8th and 15th; 85 at Church Norton, on

12th; 35 at Hollingbury Camp on 15th and 35 at Icklesham on 18th and 20th. Selsey Bill had a total of 103 for the month.

The Nov peaks were of 41 at Church Norton on 1st, 30 at Goring Gap on 4th and 40 at Bewl Water on 12th (the maximum for the year and the most ever recorded there). Of the 12 records in Dec, the only one in double figures was of 12 at Sullington Warren on 26th. [LM]

1315. **FIRECREST**

Regulus ignicapillus

Rare breeder and scarce passage migrant and winter visitor.

The numbers present in the late winter and spring were below the average for the previous 10 years, but in the autumn were considerably above, with what appear to be the highest Oct and Nov totals ever recorded. The approximate monthly totals were:

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
4	3	43	5	4	-	-	-	6	95	44	9

In Jan singles were at Hollingbury on 6th and 7th, at Beachy Head on 13th and at Church Norton on 30th and 31st. At Woodvale Cemetery, Brighton 2 were seen on 22nd, singles throughout the month and a singing male on several dates in Feb. Also in Feb, singles were noted at Shooter's Bottom, Beachy Head on 4th and the Severals, Pagham Hbr on 22nd.

There were records from 16 localities in Mar, mostly of singles, but with totals of 18 at Pagham Hbr and 8 at Beachy Head and records of 2 at Poverty Bottom, Newhaven on 18th and 3 at Cuckmere Haven on 19th. The Apr records were of singles at Hollingbury Camp and Rye Bay Wood on 1st, Littlehampton GC on 8th, Glyne Gap Marsh, Bexhill on 12th and a singing male was heard on 30th at Oldhouse Warren, Worth Forest.

Single singing males were also noted in May at Holmbush Farm, Faygate on 2nd and 27th and there were 2 at Hollingbury Camp on 8th, although neither was seen again. A single was seen at Belle Tout, Beachy Head on 21st.

Autumn passage began in Sept with 3 at Beachy Head on 10th and singles at Twyford Lodge, Birchgrove on 24th and at Cissbury Ring and Birling Gap on 30th. The peak counts in Oct were 8 at Sheepcote Valley, Brighton on 12th, 15 at Beachy Head on 22nd, 3 at the Severals, Pagham Hbr on 24th and 9 at Fairlight CP on 31st. The Oct total was made up of 48 at Beachy Head, 10 at Fairlight CP, 8 at Pagham Hbr and 8 at Sheepcote Valley, Brighton, with 14 at other locations. In Nov, the highest counts were of 4 at each of Birling Gap and Whitbread Hollow, Beachy Head on 4th and at Church Norton. Pagham Hbr contributed 11 to the month's total and Beachy Head 12; the remaining 21 were of groups of 1-4 at 12 other localities. There were records from only 6 locations in Dec: singles at Preston Park, Brighton on 4th and 31st, Pulborough Brooks on 5th, Ivy Lake, Chichester on 7th and Rye Bay Wood on 12th, 2 at Church Norton, Pagham Hbr on 6th and 2 at West Wittering on 13th. [LM]

1335. **SPOTTED FLYCATCHER***Muscicapa striata***Fairly common summer visitor and passage migrant.**

The first record of the year was of 2 at Climping on the early date of 10 Apr, the second earliest county record. The next record was not until 30 Apr with a single moving W at Selsey Bill. Individuals were recorded on most early May days. Signs of the main migration came with 9 at Sidlesham on 20 May and 12 at Beachy Head on the same date. Peak counts of 4 at Hollingbury Camp and Lancing Clump for the month were noted on 21st.

There were 6 records of confirmed breeding with 6 records of probable breeding. A bird was seen on a nest at Gravetye Lakes on 22 June, an adult was feeding young at Goodwood on 25 July and another was found nesting at Holteye on 10 Aug. A family party of 5 was at Scobell's Farm, Barcombe on 23 July. Results of breeding surveys can be found on page 141.

Autumn passage started towards the end of Aug. There were 14 noted at Findon Valley, Worthing on 27 Aug with 9 at Church Norton and 7 at Sompting Downson 30 Aug. At Whitbread Hollow, Beachy Head 35 were recorded on 3 Sept with 13 at Church Norton on 5th rising to 15 on 6th. During autumn passage 8 birds were ringed at Cissbury Ring and 11 at Icklesham. Twenty-five birds at Lancing Clump on 11 Sept had risen to 43 the next day and had dropped to 24 on 13th. Compared to recent years, 1995 recorded more of the species overall, though some regular sites showed no increase. The last record was at Seaford on 21 Oct. [DEC]

1343. **RED-BREASTED FLYCATCHER***Ficedula parva***Rare autumn vagrant**

One at Hodcombe, Beachy Head on 22-23 Oct (RHC *et al*), a fairly typical occurrence. The hospitality of the finder, who allowed unlimited access to his garden, is widely acknowledged. Surprisingly there are just 23 records in the county of which 15 have been at Beachy Head, including 5 of the 6 recorded since 1989. Seven have been in late Sept and 12 in Oct. [RJF]

1349. **PIED FLYCATCHER***Ficedula hypoleuca***Scarce passage migrant, more numerous in autumn than spring. Has bred.**

Approximate monthly totals were:

Apr	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct
12	24	-	1	85	21	1

First recorded on 4 Apr with 2 at Church Norton, the second earliest county record. There were sightings of single birds at various coastal sites, apart from 1 at Pulborough Brooks on 12 Apr, until 9 May when 9 were seen at Selsey Bill (the highest count in spring for a single site) and 4 at Beachy Head. On 10 May, 7 more were at Selsey Bill, all or most of them new arrivals. There was only one more record in May. There was no evidence of breeding, no singing males were recorded. Autumn passage was first noted on 30 July with a female at Iping Common. There were 3 at Church Norton on

9 Aug, then 12 at Woodvale Cemetery, Brighton 15 at Hollingbury Camp and 7 at Sheepcote Valley on 15 Aug. The Aug total was highest for some years. Birds were seen on most days through to 22 Sept, mostly to the west of Eastbourne. The last record was of a single bird at Eastbourne on 7 Oct. [DEC]

1364. **BEARDED TIT**

Panurus biarmicus

Very scarce breeder, scarce passage migrant and winter visitor.

The approximate maximum monthly totals outside the breeding season were:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
No. of sites	0	1	3	3	3	6	5	2
No. of birds	0	7	11	13	40	81	44	14

Four sites were involved in the first winter period and 11 in the second, with 12 different sites in total.

Breeding occurred at 3 sites. At site 'A' 2 pairs were seen carrying food on 24 Apr and the first 5 juveniles were seen on 2 May. A second nest had produced 6 (3 males, 3 females) by 22 May and a third nest with 8 juveniles (4 of each sex) by 31st. One pair produced a second brood of 6 by 16 June. The highest summer count at this site was of 23 birds comprising 3 adults and 20 juveniles on 5 July but the largest number of adults seen was 8 (4 males, 4 females) on 11 Apr, but 5 males were seen on 30 May. The highest count at this site was of 40 birds on 8 Oct with numbers seen falling gradually to only 10 by 26 Dec. At site 'B' 3 pairs were reported as having bred but without any indication as to productivity. At site 'C' at least 6 birds were seen on both 5 and 21 Mar and between 8-10 pairs were present. However, only 7 nests were found of which 4 were successful. Some of the 8-10 pairs produced second broods. Nine birds were seen on 8 July and again on 2 Aug and the maximum count was of 35 on 18 Oct with 25 on 1 Nov. [JAH]

1437. **LONG-TAILED TIT**

Aegithalos caudatus

Very common resident.

Most of the numerous winter flocks were smaller than of late. Subsequently, most of the breeding bird surveys listed on page 141 reported fewer pairs than in 1994. On 30 Jun there was a party of 30 birds on Ambersham Common. During the autumn there were widespread reports of medium sized flocks and one of a large straggling party of 42 at Quell Farm, Greatham on 1 Nov.

The incidence of Long-tailed Tits feeding on peanuts increased with reports from as far afield as Storrington, Sharpthorne and Fernhurst. [RK]

1440. **MARSH TIT**

Parus palustris

Common resident.

Reported in the breeding season from only 10 widely scattered sites but from a further 20 at either end of the year. Maximum for the year was 8 at Wepham Woods on 29 Oct, with 4 each at Burton MP on 11 Mar, Weir Wood Res on 24 Dec and Lee Farm, Patching on 25th. There were no records this year of birds using nest-boxes.

Results of breeding surveys can be found on page 141.. All counts of pairs in the breeding season from defined areas are welcomed. [JESC]

1442. **WILLOW TIT**

Parus montanus

Common resident.

Reported from just 13 localities throughout the year, mostly as singles or pairs. As in 1994, 5 pairs were counted breeding around the 24 km perimeter of Bewl Water. One bird present at Hollingbury Camp from 23 Aug-20 Sep, and another at Beachy Head on 24 Aug were both considered unusual occurrences for each site.

All counts of pairs in the breeding season from defined areas are welcomed. [JESC]

1461. **COAL TIT**

Parus ater

Very common resident.

Surprisingly, no gatherings exceeding 3 birds were reported at either end of the year. Four pairs were counted during a transect at Warnham MP on 18 Jun. Other breeding season counts included 1 pair in 7.5 ha of urban park at Bognor.

Results of breeding surveys can be found on page 141

At Beachy Head, the only reported autumn sighting was of one bird on 2 Nov. [JESC]

1462. **BLUE TIT**

Parus caeruleus

Abundant resident.

No reports of any sizable gatherings were received, with monthly maxima of 29 at Warnham LNR in Mar and 30 in Sept. A winter census at Marsh Farm, Yapton revealed 18 birds on 67 ha on 27 Jan. A similar count on 7 ha of urban land at Hotham Park, Bognor on 2 Feb recorded 14 birds. At Horsted Keynes, 49 pairs nested in boxes of which 35 were successful and from 22 of these 163 pulli fledged. At Gravetye Lakes and Sharpthorne a total of 10 nestbox pairs raised 50 pulli. Other breeding season counts included 59 pairs at Hollingbury Camp.

Results of breeding surveys can be found on page 141. [JESC]

1464. **GREAT TIT**

Parus major

Abundant resident.

As with the previous species, no large gatherings were reported. Winter counts revealed 5 birds on 7 ha at Hotham Park, Bognor on 2 Feb and 14 birds on 67 ha at Marsh Farm, Yapton on 7th. Better outcomes were reported from nestbox schemes than in 1994, with 27 young fledging from 6 pairs near Sharpthorne and 79 from 13 pairs near Horsted Keynes railway station. Other breeding season counts included 42 pairs at Hollingbury Camp. Results of breeding surveys can be found on page 141. [JESC]

1479. **NUTHATCH**

Sitta europaea

Very common resident.

Widely reported, mainly from inland locations. The maxima noted outside the breeding season were 4 each at Darwell Res on 12 Nov and Rackham Woods on 24 Dec. In nest-box schemes, 3 pairs at Horsted Keynes raised 18 pulli with a further 15 from another 3 pairs at Pippingford Park. Other breeding season counts included 3 pairs in 30 ha of mixed woodland at Chelwood Vachery.

Results of breeding surveys can be found on page 141.

All counts of pairs in the breeding season from defined areas are welcomed. [JESC]

1486. **TREECREEPER**

Certhia familiaris

Very common resident.

The maximum reported in the early months was 3 at Church Norton on 10 Mar. Many other widely scattered records of singletons or pairs were submitted throughout the year, including several from coastal localities. Probable breeding was suspected at Shoreham Sanctuary, with the capture of a very young juvenile on 16 July. One bird seen near the churchyard at Thorney Island on 31 July was the first recorded there since 1988 and another at Goring Gap on 19 Dec was considered unusual for that site.

Results of breeding surveys can be found on page 141. [JESC]

1490. **PENDULINE TIT**

Remiz pendulinus

Rare vagrant.

A juvenile male was trapped at Icklesham on 14 Oct (RBRG) and has been accepted by *British Birds*. It is the 14th to be recorded in the county, the first being seen as recently as 1987. A typical occurrence in every respect; half the records of this species in the county have now been trapped at Icklesham between 7-24 Oct. [RJF]

1508. **GOLDEN ORIOLE**

Oriolus oriolus

Very scarce passage migrant and summer visitor. May have bred.

A poor year with only one bird recorded; a male at Pulborough Brooks on 21 June (CRM, JEM). A total of 81 has been recorded in the county since 1962. [SJP]

1515. **RED-BACKED SHRIKE**

Lanius collurio

Very scarce passage migrant; formerly a breeding summer visitor.

1994: The total for the year should be changed to four.

1995: Four birds were recorded. A female or juvenile was at Halewick Lane, Sompting on 3 Sept (DL, BFF, RAI, DIS). A juvenile present at Church Norton from 20-22 Sept (TJE) had a lucky escape; it was caught by a male Sparrowhawk and was only dropped when its captor was mobbed by Magpies! Two more juveniles were recorded in Oct: at Whitbread Hollow, Beachy Head from 5-8th (mo) and at Thorney Island from 18-30th (CBC). [SJP]

1520. **GREAT GREY SHRIKE**

Lanius excubitor

Very scarce winter visitor and passage migrant.

Fewer birds were seen than in 1994, with probably only 4 individuals recorded. At the beginning of the year, a bird was in the Ashdown Forest from 30 Jan-20 Apr. Another was at Shinewater Marsh, Willingdon from 8 Feb-12 Apr. A wintering bird returned to the Old Lodge Reserve, Ashdown Forest on 22 Oct and a different individual was recorded at Townsend car park, also within the Forest, on 29 and 31 Oct. Single birds were seen on Ashdown Forest until the end of the year. [SJP]

1523. **WOODCHAT SHRIKE**

Lanius senator

Rare vagrant

An adult male between Hope Gap and Cuckmere Haven on 9 May (RMB). This is the 17th record since 1980 and 40th in total. Sixteen have been in May. [RJF]

1539. **JAY**

Garrulus glandarius

Very common resident; passage migrant and winter visitor.

All the records (from 17 locations) were of 1-3 birds, apart from 8 at Darwell Res on 22 Jan; 5 at Aldwick, Bognor on 4 Apr; 6 at Pulborough Brooks on 27 Apr, 8 at Sompting on 25 Aug and 4 at Icklesham on 4 Nov.

Results of breeding surveys can be found on page 141. [LM]

1549. **MAGPIE**

Pica pica

Very common resident.

Maximum counts in the first quarter were 57 on 7 Feb and 43 on 21 Mar at North Wall, Pagham Hbr; 18 on 4 Mar at Rye Bay Wood and 52 on 19 Mar at Hollingbury Camp.

A count of 41 was made at Hollingbury Camp on 1 May. Results of breeding surveys can be found on page 141. A single pair was recorded during a survey at Lavington Common.

Prerost counts in winter were: 32 on 8 Nov at Storrington; 25 on 11 Dec at Lidsey Rife, Barnham and 53 on 19 Dec at North Wall, Pagham Hbr. Partial albino/leucistic individuals were seen at New Salts Farm, Lancing on 19 Mar and from 1 Aug into Sept (probably the same bird as in 1994) and at Shoreham on 22 May. [LM]

1560. **JACKDAW**

Corvus monedula

Very common resident.

The highest counts were: 120 at Icklesham on 11 Jan; 80 at Knepp Estate on 1 June; 100 at Offham, Lewes on 31 Oct and of pre-roost flocks of 120 at Maynard's Green on 20 Nov and 500 at South Stoke, Arundel on 10 Dec. An unusually high count for Beachy Head was of 40 at Whitbread Hollow on 17 Sept.

Eight pairs used nest boxes at the Bluebell Railway, Horsted Keynes. [LM]

1563. **ROOK**

Corvus frugilegus

Very common resident.

There were late winter counts of 220 at South Harting on 14 Jan and 210 at Marsh Farm, Yapton on 7 Feb.

Counts of nests were reported from Thorney Island (78), Marsh Farm, Yapton (172), Lickfold (18), Chiddingly Farm, W Hoathly (20), Cuckmere Valley (11), Arlington Res (40) and Combe Haven (23).

The largest counts in the second half of the year were: 120 on 5 Aug at Hollingbury Camp; a SE movement of 1000 at 15:00 hrs on 8 Oct over Cuthanger Farm, Selham; 234 on 8 Oct at Marsh Farm, Yapton and 100 on 31 Oct at Mount Harry, Lewes. [LM]

1567. **CARRION CROW**

Corvus corone

Very common resident.

The largest concentrations reported were: 130 at Combe Haven on 14 Apr; 80 at Bewl Water on 30 Apr and 100 at Hollingbury on 24 May with 92 there on 21 Oct. [LM]

1582. **STARLING**

Sturnus vulgaris

Abundant resident, passage migrant and winter visitor.

There was a small but welcome increase in the number of reports most of which came from coastal areas.

The largest reported nocturnal roost was at Brighton's West Pier where 50,000 were present on 9 Jan and 45,000-60,000 nearly 12 months later on 29 Dec. A pre-roost gathering of 3000 birds at New Salts Farm, Lancing on 28 Dec headed E, maybe for the West Pier roost. 2000 roosted at Castle Water, Rye on 5 Jun. Low trees and bushes were favoured as nocturnal roosts in Bognor Regis with 2500 birds at Butlins on 24 Aug and 1200 at a nearby site on 18 Sep. Shooter's Bottom, Beachy Head had 2500 birds on 8 Oct. The Thorney Deeps roost numbered 15,000 on 22 Oct whilst the reedbed roost at Ivy Lake, Chichester GP built up to 5000 on 5 Nov. During the breeding season, 43 territories were counted at Hollingbury Camp in May, whilst breeding surveys on pastoral and mixed farms averaged one pair to every 8 hectares.

The largest feeding concentration of the year was 800 on flooded meadows near near Pagham on 24 Jan. [RK]

1584. **ROSE-COLOURED STARLING**

Sturnus roseus

Rare vagrant.

An adult was seen in the Rushlake Road area of Coldean, Brighton from at least 12-16 June (RJF, HKH, ADW, IJW *et al*), although it was usually very elusive (in back gardens) with many observers failing to find it. It is only the 6th to be recorded in the county since 1962 and its stay coincides almost identically with the considerably more obliging Birling Gap individual of 1994 (SxBR 47:94). [RJF]

1591. **HOUSE SPARROW**

Passer domesticus

Abundant resident.

Regular counts in 7.5 ha at Hotham Park, Bognor, gave a maximum of 24 in the first quarter, although only 11 from the last. At Marsh Farm, Yapton 9 pairs held territory in the breeding season, compared with 6 in 1994. Results of breeding surveys can be found on page 141. A flock of 225 was noted on 15 Aug in a regular pre-roost gathering at Gossops Green, Crawley and on 19 Sept, 150 were feeding on the shingle at Pagham Lagoon. [VPB]

1598. **TREE SPARROW**

Passer montanus

Scarce and declining resident, passage migrant and winter visitor.

The decline in numbers continued, with the Upper Adur Levels providing the only flock to reach double figures in the early part of the year, when a maximum of 24 was seen on 22 Jan. There were sightings in 20 different localities during the year, from Selsey in the west to Rye Hbr in the east, with breeding confirmed from at least 2 sites; Stretham, nr Henfield and

Sidlesham. There were also 3 other reports of birds in suitable habitat during the breeding season. During the autumn and winter, records were scarce although 20 were reported at Icklesham on 17 Dec. [VPB]

1636. **CHAFFINCH**

Fringilla coelebs

Abundant resident, passage migrant and winter visitor.

During the first 3 months of the year there were flocks of 170 at Bewl Water on 2 Jan, 200 at Midhurst New Pond on 6 Jan and 400 at Hoyle, nr Heyshott on 30 Jan and 3 Feb, rising to 450 on 9th.

At Pulborough Brooks c. 40 pairs bred (*cf c.* 10 pairs in 1990) but elsewhere the breeding season counts from regular sites were similar to 1993 and 1994. The results of breeding surveys can be found on page 141.

In late autumn, up to 500 were noted in Friston Forest on 7 Nov and New Pond, Midhurst again saw good numbers, with 250 recorded there on 7 Dec. [VPB]

1638. **BRAMBLING**

Fringilla montifringilla

Fairly common winter visitor and passage migrant.

1994: In Stansted Forest there were 70 on 15 Jan, 80 on 16 Feb and 130 came out of a roost at dawn on 4 Mar.

1995: The approximate monthly totals were as follows:

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
42	137	179	17	-	-	-	-	-	68	60	30

At the beginning of the year, a flock was regularly present on a field of barley stubble near Heyshott, with counts of 100 on 3 Feb, 75 on 27 Feb and 50 on 10 Mar. Other concentrations included 21 at New Pond, Midhurst on 26 Feb, 13 at Hollybush Wood, East Grinstead on 9 Mar and a movement of up to 100 at Ambersham Common on 25 Mar. Very few were seen after mid-Apr; singles at Ashdown Forest on 23rd and at Beachy Head on 28th and 29th being the last for the spring.

Return passage commenced on 15 Oct when 2 appeared at both Selsey Bill and at Beachy Head. Small numbers were recorded thereafter, with a maximum of 9 at Hollingbury Camp, Brighton on 21st and 17 at Whitbread Hollow on 29th. In Nov and Dec there were many sightings from Ashdown Forest, e.g. 20 at Isle of Thorns on 12 Nov, 10 at Millbrook on 29 Nov with 12 there on 8 Dec; these coinciding with an excellent beechmast crop. However, there were few reported from elsewhere in the county at this time. [JRH]

1640. **SERIN**

Serinus serinus

Very scarce passage migrant. Has bred.

Fewer than last year with 10 birds recorded, all in spring. Two birds, thought to be a female and an immature male, were seen at Church Norton on 4 Apr and again on 19-20 Apr (TJE). On 10 Apr, a single bird was at Shooters Bottom, Beachy Head (NJT, RB, RHC) and a male was at Selsey Bill the following day (RAI). Adult males were in the Pagham Hbr area (TJE, BJ, CMJ) and at Littlehampton GC (RJLK) on 12th. One flew N over Belle Tout on 25 Apr (PJ, BDJ) and another was seen at Birling Gap, feeding with Goldfinches, on 30th (JFC, DC). Two birds were seen in May, one circled observers seawatching at Selsey Bill on 3rd before flying off W (TJE, BFF, OM) and the last bird was seen at Shooter's Bottom, Beachy Head on 11th (NJT *et al*). About 135 Serins have been recorded in the county since 1962. [SJP]

1649. **GREENFINCH**

Carduelis chloris

Very common resident, passage migrant and winter visitor.

Notable records during the period included the following: 49 roosting at Preston Park, Brighton on 28 Jan, 150 at Lancing Clump on 12 Sept, 200 at Rye Hbr on 26 Sept, 100 at Selsey Bill on 8 Oct and 3 Nov, 80 at West Beach, Littlehampton on 12 Nov, 71 at Thorney Deeps on 13 Nov and 55 at Knepp on 18 Dec.

The results of breeding surveys can be found on page 141. [JRH]

1653. **GOLDFINCH**

Carduelis carduelis

Common summer visitor and passage migrant and fairly common winter visitor.

The counts for the early months were; Jan 240, Feb 66, Mar 107 and Apr 25 from 6, 5, 2 and 4 localities respectively. Flocks of 60 were seen at Beachy Head on 13 Jan and Pagham Hbr on 25 Jan, with 80 present at Bewl

Water on 22nd. Visible spring passage was poorly documented - 60 E at Worthing Beach on 2 May being the only record submitted.

Results of breeding surveys can be found on page 141.

Post-breeding gatherings during late summer included 92 at Pagham Hbr on 17 Aug and 75 at Hollingbury Camp on 20 Aug. Large autumn numbers included 500 W at Selsey Bill on 8 Oct, with a month total of 1336 from this site and 470 feeding on linseed at Marsh Farm, Yapton on 14 Oct. [JRH]

1654. **SISKIN**

Carduelis spinus

Common winter visitor and passage migrant. Probably now a very scarce breeder.

1994: Large flocks were recorded in Stansted Forest early in the year with 400 on 15 Jan, 160 on 16 Feb and 200 on 4 Mar.

1995: Approximate totals for the first winter period were: 190 in Jan, 180 in Feb and 135 in Mar. These figures represent a decline when compared to the data for the same months in 1992-94. Large flocks at this time included 50 at Burton MP on 7 Jan, 40 at Rackham Woods on 11 Jan, 70 at Graffham on 14 Feb and 70 at Ambersham Common on 11 Mar. Few birds remained after early Apr, although one was still feeding on peanuts at Sharpthorne on the late date of 15 May.

Colonisation as a breeding species still continues and it is quite likely that many go unrecorded at this time of the year. On 26 June a pair and 3 juveniles were seen in Ashdown Forest and on 11 July a juvenile was noted at a site near Heyshott.

Rather low numbers were reported in the later months, the minimum totals being 22 in Sept, 130 in Oct, 180 in Nov and 130 in Dec. Coastal passage was noted from 1 Sept when 15 moved E at Pett Level. The highest Oct counts were only 20 at Selsey Bill on 27 Oct and 18 E at Pagham Hbr on 29th. In the interior of the county, a large flock was roaming the Worth Forest environs during Nov/Dec, an estimated 100 being recorded on 8 Nov. There were also up to 66 feeding on alders at Ifield MP in Dec, but few other concentrations were noted. [JRH]

1660. **LINNET**

Carduelis cannabina

Very common resident and partial migrant.

Few concentrations of this species were reported in the early months, the highest counts being 116 at Clayton Windmills on 1 Jan, 170 on linseed stubble at Heyshott on 14 Feb and 200 at Rye Hbr on 3 Apr. Visible spring passage at Selsey Bill included 70 W on 4 Apr, 200 W on 19 Apr and 150 W on 20 Apr, with 266 E at Glyne Gap on 12th.

Results of breeding surveys can be found on page 141.

Late summer and early autumn gatherings were widely recorded, e.g. 400 at Rye Hbr on 27 Aug, 118 at Heyshott on 11 Sept, 100 at Sovereign Hbr Marina on 21 Sept and 139 at Sheepcote Valley, Brighton on 23rd. A movement of 330 flew W at Selsey Bill on 28 Sept and a month total of 2710

were recorded at this site in Oct. At the year's end, the only sizeable flock noted was 150 at Weir Wood Res on 4 Dec. [JRH]

1662. **TWITE** *Carduelis flavirostris*

Scarce winter visitor and passage migrant.

The poorest showing for over 30 years with only one group of 3 birds reported: at Cuckmere Haven on 3 Nov (JSG). [SJP]

1663. **REDPOLL** *Carduelis flammea*

Fairly common breeder, passage migrant and winter visitor.

During the first winter period, very few were present in the county: 50 at Bewl Water on 15 Jan, 30 at Pulborough Brooks on 2 Feb, 36 at Burton MP on 18 Feb and 25 at Barcombe on 17 Mar being the only notable counts reported. A record of 1 W over Worthing Beach on 23 May was rather unseasonal.

In the breeding season, an estimated 7 displaying males were noted in Ashdown Forest and 1 at Tilgate Forest. These observations certainly do not reflect the species' true breeding status in the county.

Apart from 1 at West Beach, Littlehampton on 26 Aug, autumn coastal movements were not recorded until 29 Sept when 2 appeared at Icklesham. Passage was much poorer at this locality than in 1994, with a peak count of only 90 on 5 Nov, declining to 60 on 9th. The overall county totals for Oct, Nov and Dec period were 90, 150 and 39 from 7, 7 and 6 sites respectively. [JRH]

1666. **COMMON CROSSBILL** *Loxia curvirostra*

Scarce visitor occurring in large numbers in irruption years. Breeds occasionally.

1994: On both 15 Jan and 16 Feb there were 25 in Stansted Forest with 3 there still on 3 Mar.

1995: After a period of relative abundance in 1993-94, there were records from only 3 sites during the year: at Selham, 1 flew over on 20 Feb, several were heard on 5 May and a male was present on 29 Oct. The other sightings involved 9 at Paddockhurst Park on 20 Feb and 3 at the Old Airstrip, Ashdown Forest on 13 May. [JRH]

1679. **COMMON ROSEFINCH** *Carpodacus erythrinus*

Rare, but increasing vagrant.

A first-summer male was in song at Charleston Reedbed on 4-5 June (JFC, RDME *et al*). One, probably a female, was seen briefly in the hedge between Pagham Hbr Information Centre and Sidlesham Quay on 1 Aug (TJE). There are now 23 records of this species in the county, 14 since 1990. Thirteen have been during late May-mid June, but this is the first record for

Aug, the previous earliest autumn occurrence being in mid-Sept, although there is also a record from Icklesham on 2 July 1989. [RJF]

1710. **BULLFINCH** *Pyrrhula pyrrhula*

Very common resident

A total of 15 was ringed at Cissbury between Apr-Nov, less than half the 1994 total, but other regular counts were broadly similar to the previous year. Results of breeding surveys can be found on page 141.

On 9 Dec, 15 were reported from the Upper Adur Levels, a high count for the area. [VPB]

1717. **HAWFINCH** *Coccothraustes coccothraustes*

Scarce breeding resident and very scarce passage migrant.

1994: One at Stansted Forest on 9 Feb.

1995: Mainly reported during the first half of the year: there was a party of 6 at Graffham on 13 Feb, 1 at Hollingbury GC on 12 Apr, 2-3 at Crowlink on 13 May and 1 at Woodvale Cemetery, Brighton on 29 May. The only subsequent record was of a single bird in the road at Weir Wood Res on 23 Nov. [JRH]

1842. **DARK-EYED JUNCO** *Junco hyemalis*

Very rare vagrant

1972: An approachable male in an area of coastal scrub and shingle to the E of Winchelsea Beach on 12 Feb (RKH, RES) has been accepted by *British Birds* as the 6th to be recorded in the British Isles, all the previous 5 being in May. The record was not submitted at the time partly because it fell outside the (then) established pattern of occurrences and partly because of the likelihood, in keeping with most other American sparrows in Britain, that it had crossed the Atlantic with some degree of ship assistance. Including this one, there were 16 records in the British Isles during 1962-94 (falling between Dec and June) and including occurrences in Dorset (3), Hampshire and the Isle of Wight, while one of the 2 earlier records was in Kent. [RJF]

1847. **LAPLAND BUNTING** *Calcarius lapponicus*

Very scarce winter visitor and passage migrant.

Up to 6 birds were recorded. One flew over Birling Gap on 23 Sept (TJW), 2 or 3 birds flew E over Church Norton on 31 Oct (TJE, CMe), one flew over Littlehampton GC on 6 Nov (RJLK) and one at Rye Hbr on 30 Dec remained for New Year's Day 1996 (ADW). [SJP]

1850. **SNOW BUNTING**

Plectrophenax nivalis

Scarce passage migrant and winter visitor.

After 2 poor years when only 3 and 2 individuals were recorded (in 1993 & 1994 respectively), 1995 produced a more respectable 13 records. These all occurred in the second winter period and involved at least 10 individuals. At Pett Level and nearby Pett Level Pools, 8 records involved at least 6 individuals. An immature was first seen on 4 Nov and an immature or female on 5th, 6th and 8 Nov. A female was also seen there on 5 and 8 Nov, a possible immature male on 5 Nov and possibly other singles on 6 and 8 Nov. Further west at Newhaven Tide Mills there was a female on 2 Dec, an immature female on 3 Dec and another flew E on 8 Dec while at Brighton Marina an adult male and an immature female were present from 23 Dec into 1996. [JAH]

1857. **YELLOWHAMMER**

Emberiza citrinella

Very common resident.

There are signs, possibly as a result of improved feeding conditions in certain areas, that this species is increasing. At least 15 flocks containing 20 or more birds were reported during Jan-Mar, the most notable being 50 in the vicinity of Clayton Windmills on 1 Jan, 55 at Ifield on 7 Jan, 35 at Poverty Bottom, nr Newhaven on 12 Jan, 34 at Greenlease Farm, Church Norton on 14 Feb and 68 at Heyshott on 27 Feb. A flock of 30 was present at Stansted Forest on 13 Mar, with 65 seen at the Ifield locality on 26th, after which most groups began to disperse.

At Pulborough Brooks 5 pairs bred. Results of breeding surveys can be found on page 141.

Autumn flocking commenced early, with 40 at Selsey on 21 Aug and 24 at Lancing Clump on 22nd. There were no other notable counts until late Oct when 30 were recorded at Icklesham on 27th and 85 were at Heyshott on 30th. In Nov and Dec few large gatherings were reported, the exceptions being 70 at Offham on 26 Nov, 25 at Marsh Farm, Yapton on 30 Nov and up to 36 near Pagham Hbr throughout Dec. [JRH]

1866. **ORTOLAN BUNTING**

Emberiza hortulana

Very scarce, mainly autumn, visitor.

An immature bird was at Rye Hbr on 16 and 17 Sept (CFB *et al*). Forty-six have been seen in the county since the beginning of 1962. [SJP]

1874. **LITTLE BUNTING**

Emberiza pusilla

Very rare vagrant.

1994: The record was the fifth county (not country) record.

1995: A first-year was trapped at Icklesham on 3 Nov (RBRG). Only the 6th to be accepted for the county, the record bears a remarkable similarity to that of a bird trapped at Icklesham on 8 Nov 1992 which was, perhaps surprisingly,

considered insufficiently documented by *British Birds*. Coincidentally, the first British record was of one caught near the old naphtha works at Brighton, close to where Roedean School now stands, on 2 Nov 1864. [RJF]

1877. **REED BUNTING**

Emberiza schoeniclus

Common resident, passage migrant and winter visitor.

Several large concentrations were again reported in the early part of the year: These included 40 at Combe Haven on 2 Jan, 77 on wheat stubble at Ifield on 7 Jan and 60 near Ellisons Pond, Ashdown Forest on 23 Feb, with an impressive 150 there on 5 Mar. A roost at Mill Pond Marsh, Sidlesham held 73 birds on 11 Jan, 63 on 21 Feb and 41 on 9 Mar, while c. 50 were still at Ifield on 19 Mar.

At Pulborough Brooks there were 25 territories during the breeding season. Results of breeding surveys can be found on page 141.

A small coastal passage was observed at Selsey Bill in early autumn, e.g. 12 W on 28 Sept and 16 E on 14 Oct. At Icklesham, 20 birds on 6 Nov had increased to 40 by 9th. Regular monitoring of the Mill Pond Marsh, Sidlesham roost continued during this period, with 37 recorded on 5 Nov, 45 on 13 Dec and 79 on 27 Dec. Other roosts included up to 24 at Fishbourne and 50 at Woods Mill. A flock of 48 was in blackthorns alongside a field of stubble at Ifield on 26 Dec, remaining into 1996. [JRH]

1882. **CORN BUNTING**

Miliaria calandra

Fairly common but decreasing resident.

Records were received from 73 sites in the county from Thorney Island in the west to Camber in the east. Of these 45 were within 3 km of the coast, only 2 were further than 10 km north and none further than 18 km. All sites, therefore, were within the narrow strip between the coast and the summit ridge of the Downs.

During the first winter period counts of 20 or over were as follows: 20 at Pilsey Island on 2 and 15 Jan, 20 at Thorney Deepes on 6 Jan, 80 at Poverty Bottom, Newhaven in 4 separate flocks on 12 Jan, 40 there on 16 Mar, and 69 on 24 Mar, 29 at Drove Lane Farm, Yapton on 12 Jan, 70 at Icklesham on 27 Jan with 60 there on 25 Feb and at least 45 on 7 Mar, 40 at Landport Bottom nr Lewes on 28 Jan, a roost of 44 at Pagham Hbr on 2 Feb and the highest count of 113 there at roost on 11 Mar, 50 at Mill Hill, Shoreham on 3 Feb, 25 at Standean Bottom on 18 Mar and 43 at East Brighton Golf Course on 19 Mar.

The only record of confirmed breeding was from 2 territories at Marsh Farm, Yapton in 67 ha of mixed farmland on 30 June. Probable breeding was reported from: Bilsham near Yapton; Ditchling Beacon; Honer Farm, Pagham Hbr; Long Furlong and Muntham Court at Findon; New Salts Farm, Lancing; Rye Hbr, Shoreham Sanctuary; Shripney near Bognor; Singleton; Thorney Island; Wicks Farm, Yapton and Wolstonbury Hill, Pyecombe.

A rare sighting for the area was of a single bird at Brighton Hollingbury GC on 10 May.

During the autumn and second winter periods counts in excess of 20 were as follows: 210 with Linnets at Rodmell Brooks on 8 Oct, 39 at Denton, Newhaven on 14 Oct and 23 on 30 Oct, 35 at Itford Hill/Bottom on 28 Oct, 71 roosting at Mill Pond Marsh, Pagham Hbr on 5 Nov increasing to 89 on 22 Nov but only 38 on 27 Dec and finally 27 at North Wall, Pagham Hbr on 6 Dec. [JAH]

ESCAPES AND FERAL BIRDS

All records of BOU Category C species, of apparently feral individuals of other species and of 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 1995. It should be noted that the identity of these birds has not been checked by the Records Committee. List compiled by Sarah Patton.

GREATER FLAMINGO

Phoenicopterus ruber

A single bird was seen at Pagham Hbr on 12 Aug (IJJF) This record has been accepted by *British Birds* where it joins others of this species in Category D of the British List..

BLACK SWAN

Cygnus atratus

An immature was seen at Darwell Res on 15 Apr with probably the same bird at Rye Hbr from 18 Apr-5 June. A single bird was recorded at this site on 2 and 6 Sept, with an adult present from 25 Nov-28 Dec.

BAR-HEADED GOOSE

Anser indicus

A bird was recorded at Warnham MP on 26 and 27 Mar and 1 flew E with 3 Brent Geese past Newhaven West Pier on 15 Apr. A single at Icklesham was seen occasionally from 3-25 May and again on 1 and 6 June, possibly the same bird was at Rye Hbr on 17 May. One was found at Thorney Deeps on 15 May and seen on 6 subsequent dates.

SNOW GOOSE

Anser caerulescens

A single bird was recorded at Rye Hbr from 20 May-10 Sept and again on 10 Dec. One flew SE over Broad Oak, Heathfield on 17 Sept. Blue phase birds were seen at Chichester GP on 30 Sept and at Arundel WWT on 12 Nov. Singles were also recorded at Pett Level Pools on 4 and 12 Nov, Icklesham on 8 and 11 Nov and at Barcombe Res on 28 Dec.

CKACKLING CANADA GOOSE

Branta canadensis minima

Singles were reported from Pulborough Brooks on 7 Jan and Bewl Water on 13 Apr.

- MUSCOVY DUCK** *Cairina moschata*
A single bird was recorded at Weir Wood Res from Jan-Mar.
- RINGED TEAL** *Callonetta leucophrys*
One was present at Barcombe Res from 11 Sept-13 Oct, with 2 recorded there on 1 and 8 Oct.
- WOOD DUCK** *Aix sponsa*
A male was recorded at Lindfield Pond on 6 Jan with a pair present on 9th. A single bird was on Swanbourne Lake, Arundel on 22 Jan. A pair was on Parham House Lake on 5 Apr. A single was seen at Isfield on 11 Dec.
- CHILOE WIGEON** *Anas sibilatrix*
Two birds were on Lindfield Pond on 6 and 9 Jan. A single was seen at Thorney Deepes on 3 May, 1 July and 3 Aug. Adult males were at Arlington Res on 21 June and 26 July and Weir Wood Res on 30 June. One bird was in the Pagham Hbr area from 4 Sept-9 Oct, with 2 drakes present on 6 and 8 Sept.
- BAHAMA PINTAIL** *Anas bahamensis*
One bird was on Sidlesham Ferry from 5-12 Nov, with 2 present on 6th and 7th.
- FERRUGINOUS DUCK/HYBRID** *(Aythya nyroca)*
A male bird, thought to be either an escape or hybrid of unknown origin, was seen briefly at Glynde Levels on 22 July.
- RED-TAILED HAWK** *Buteo jamaicensis*
A single bird was recorded at Icklesham on 8 Mar, where one had also been present in Mar 1994.
- COCKATIEL** *Nymphicus hollandicus*
At Thorney Deepes, a bird joined the Little Egret roost on 1 Apr and another was recorded at this site on 27 Aug. Singles were also seen at Sidlesham Ferry on 4 Apr, Pilsey Island on 9 May, Combe Haven on 3 and 5 Sept, Mewsbrook Park, Littlehampton on 28 Sept and Littlehampton Golf Course on 4 Nov.
- BUDGERIGAR** *Melopsittacus undulatus*
One bird was seen at Rye Bay Wood on 29 Aug.
- CANARY** *Serinus canaria*
One in the churchyard at Church Norton on 20 Feb and 1 feeding in the dunes at West Beach, Littlehampton on 24 Aug.
- YELLOW-FRONTED CANARY** *Serinus mozambicus*
One feeding on nuts at Langston Grange, Hurstpierpoint on 9 Sept.

ZEBRA FINCH

Poephila guttata

A bird was found dead at Cocking on 5 Sept.

BLACK-HEADED WEAVER

Ploceus melanocephalus

One seen at Littleworth, Partridge Green on 15 Nov.

COLLARED FINCHBILL

Spizixos semitorques

A single seen at Seaford on 15 and 27 Aug.

PERUVIAN MEADOWLARK

Sturnella bellicosa

One at Woodingdean on 6 Aug.

Summary of Breeding Bird Counts

SPECIES	AP	BC	CF	GF	KV	LC	MF	SC	SF	WP
Stock Dove	2		1	5						3
Woodpigeon	17	6	13	13	21		4			46
Collared Dove	13		2				5			26
Great Spot. Wpecker	3	1	2	2	1	1	1			1
Pied Wagtail	1		2	1			2		1	
Wren	43	25	42	37	16	12	44	18	17	108
Dunnock	13	4	14	9	9	1	25		4	75
Robin	26	23	35	46	37	11	29	22	8	153
Blackbird	49	7	32	26	33	9	27	3	13	128
Song Thrush	21	2	10	7	14	2	3	1	8	15
Mistle Thrush	3	1	2	2	1				1	5
Lesser Whitethroat	1			1	4				2	4
Whitethroat	6	1	2		14		7		6	18
Garden Warbler	1	1		1				1	1	1
Blackcap	18	3	3	6	10	1	2		3	18
Chiffchaff	13	2	6	7	6	5	1	1	3	10
Willow Warbler	3	1		1	2	2	1	9		15
Goldcrest	8	1	3	2	5	1	1	5		
Spotted Flycatcher	1					1				
Long-tailed Tit	8	2	2	3	1	2	1	3		13
Marsh Tit		3		2	3					
Coal Tit	4	1	2		4	6		2		
Blue Tit	28	17	35	19	1	7	12	8	5	59
Great Tit	19	7	17	20	8	3	8	6	10	42
Nuthatch	4	2	5	3	1	1				
Treecreeper	3	3	1	3		1		1		
Jay	1	1	2	2	2					2
Magpie	5	2	3	3	5	1	4			41
House Sparrow			5				9			17
Chaffinch	27	9	32	22	29	16	38	11	3	42
Greenfinch				3	1	1	11		2	32
Goldfinch			1	2			4			4
Linnet			2	1	2	3	1	2	3	8
Bullfinch	2		3	3	6		1		1	3
Yellowhammer		1		1	6	3	4	2	3	12
Reed Bunting							4	1		

Key to sites;

- AP - Alexander Park, Hastings. 26 ha.
 - BC - Barns Copse, Binsted. 16.1 ha woodland. Figures = territories.
 - CF - Chiddinglye Farm, W Hoathly. 61.8 ha dairy farm.
 - GF - Grantleys Farm, Maynards Green. 45.3 ha coppice woodland and pasture.
 - KV - Kingley Vale.
 - LC - Lavington Common. 28.8 ha lowland heath.
 - MF - Marsh farm, Binsted. 67.5 ha mixed farm.
 - SC - Stedham Common.
 - SF - Scobells Farm, Barcombe. 10.4 ha.
 - WP - Wild Park area. Downland scrub & farmland set-aside. Figures = pairs/males.
- Figures relate to pairs unless stated otherwise.

Arrival and departure dates of summer visitors, 1994/95

	First recorded date		Last recorded date	
	1994	1995	1994	1995
Garganey	6 Mar	20 Feb	23 Oct	22 Oct
Osprey	27 Mar	10 Mar	9 Dec	22 Oct
Hobby	19 Apr	15 Apr	6 Nov	31 Oct
Quail	11 May	5 May	11 Sept	10 Sept
Little Ringed Plover	26 Mar	26 Mar	20 Sept	10 Sept
Wood Sandpiper	6 May	30 Apr	9 Oct	24 Sept
Pomarine Skua	23 Apr*	23 Apr	20 Nov	5 Nov
Arctic Skua	27 Mar*	12 Mar [^]	3 Dec	5 Nov
Sandwich Tern	1 Mar	19 Mar	19 Oct	21 Dec
Roseate Tern	24 Apr	23 Apr	13 July	28 July
Common Tern	12 Apr	2 Apr	6 Nov	11 Oct
Arctic Tern	23 Apr	13 Apr	4 Oct	24 Sept
Little Tern	11 Apr*	13 Apr	21 Sept	20 Sept
Black Tern	20 Apr*	14 Apr	27 Oct	5 Oct
Turtle Dove	23 Apr	20 Apr	10 Oct	18 Oct
Cuckoo	28 Mar	30 Mar	12 Oct	9 Sept
Nightjar	10 May	4 May	8 Aug	25 Oct
Swift	23 Apr	20 Apr	22 Nov	24 Sept
Wryneck	29 Apr	28 Apr	1 Oct	24 Sept
Sand Martin	5 Mar	12 Mar	23 Oct	24 Oct
Swallow	6 Mar	17 Feb	5 Dec	2 Dec
House Martin	27 Mar	3 Mar	18 Dec	17 Nov
Tree Pipit	29 Mar	4 Apr	7 Nov	18 Oct
Yellow Wagtail	19 Mar	26 Mar	19 Oct*	10 Nov
Nightingale	10 Apr	8 Apr	14 Sept	15 Sept
Redstart	17 Mar	27 Mar	20 Oct	10 Oct
Whinchat	15 Apr	18 Feb	20 Nov	12 Nov
Wheatear	2 Mar	5 Mar	30 Nov	17 Nov
Ring Ouzel	6 Apr	11 Mar	18 Nov	27 Dec
Grasshopper Warbler	20 Apr	11 Apr	18 Oct	10 Oct
Sedge Warbler	12 Apr*	6 Apr	18 Oct	16 Oct
Reed Warbler	16 Apr*	9 Apr	13 Nov	7 Nov
Lesser Whitethroat	21 Apr	11 Apr	24 Oct	16 Oct
Whitethroat	6 Apr	3 Apr	16 Nov	14 Nov
Garden Warbler	3 Apr	14 Apr	24 Oct	6 Nov
Wood Warbler	26 Apr*	16 Apr	2 Sept	29 Sept
Willow Warbler	26 Mar	10 Mar	6 Nov	9 Oct
Spotted Flycatcher	30 Apr	10 Apr	31 Oct	21 Oct
Pied Flycatcher	3 Apr	4 Apr	1 Oct	7 Oct

[^] - excluding Jan and Feb records

* - corrected dates for 1994 records

Departure and arrival dates of winter visitors, 1994/95.

	Last recorded date		First recorded date	
	1994	1995	1994	1995
Black-throated Diver	31 May	31 May	3 Nov	20 Aug
Great Northern Diver	24 Apr	19 Mar	3 Dec	4 Nov
Red-necked Grebe	28 Apr	31 May	20 Sept	8 Sept
Bewick's Swan	5 Mar	5 Mar	2 Oct*	29 Oct
White-fronted Goose	1 Apr	27 Mar	20 Oct	30 Nov
Long-tailed Duck	24 Apr	13 May	22 Sept	5 Nov
Velvet Scoter	31 May	23 May	20 July	3 Nov
Goldeneye	18 Apr	30 Apr	1 Nov	2 Nov
Goosander	3 May	22 May	28 Oct*	2 Nov
Hen Harrier	25 May*	10 June	3 Oct	17 Sept
Merlin	3 June	3 May	18 Aug	20 Aug
Purple Sandpiper	8 May	5 May	24 Oct	25 Oct
Jack Snipe	4 May*	25 Apr	17 Sept	4 Sept
Short-eared Owl	19 May	30 Apr	23 Aug	22 Sept
Water Pipit	16 Apr	6 Apr	5 Oct	4 Nov
Fieldfare	21 Apr	26 May	26 Sept	21 Oct
Redwing	19 Apr	26 May	26 Sept	12 Sept
Great Grey Shrike	20 Mar	20 Apr	15 Oct	22 Oct
Brambling	30 Apr	29 Apr	1 Oct	15 Oct

* - corrected dates for 1994 records

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	BR Clay	
CF Ball	GA Cockburn	JAB Gale
E Ball	S Cocker	SM Gamble
TG Ball	DW Codd	EFJ Garcia
PC Bance	CB Collins	R Geere
C Barwood	Miss MA Collins	BR Gilmore
R Batchelor	AS Cook	AJ Golds
PR Belchamber	D Cooper (DCo)	DJ Golds
B Benatt	JES Cooper	H Gordon
Mrs VP Bentley	JF Cooper	JS Gowers
A Benton	TE Cooper	G Gowlett
PJ Biggs	DEG Copeland	AS Grace
RM Billings	R Crane	N Greenaway
G Binns	DE Crawley	RR Greenhalf
RF Bird	PR Cullen	EF Grivell
J Bodle	J Curson	AJ Guest
PF Bonham		
GF Boniface	PI Davison	RK Haggard
JF Boulcott	JM Daykin	CH Hamilton
DP Bowtell	CH Dean	Mrs HK Hammond
P Bradbeer	M Denness	R Harman
PF le Brocq	MJH Denny	RG Harris
PM Brayshaw	Miss B Dickeson	G Hart
C Brooks	NJ Donnithorne	SP Hartill
P Brown	NA Driver	JR Havers
MR Buchanan	R Dunning	S Heath
D Buckingham	NI Dunsmore-Rouse	KGB Heinzman
SP Bull		MJ Helps
KR Burch	RDM Edgar	M Herbert
D Burges	P Edmonds	PKW Herbert
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Mrs SJ Burtenshaw	MJ Emery	G Hersey
	RD Evans	DC Heryett
	AN Everett	DA Hilton
BJ Carter		SR Hilton
GL Champion	RJ Fairbank	T Hitchman
M Champion	J Faithfull	D Hodge (DHo)
NJ Champion	JA Feest	AJ Holcombe
RH Champion	B Fellows	Mrs BJ Holcombe
P Chapman	AR Fenton	PA Hollow
RH Charlwood (RHC)	BH Flack	LG Holloway
S Charlwood	DW Mawford	TK Rackstraw
CA Holt		

JC Holt	L Mayers	CJ Raymond
CE Hope	C Melgar (CMe)	G Rich
AL Hornstein	CR Messer	GCM Roberts
D Houghton	JE Messer	G Ruffles
	J Mills	SR Ruscoe
R Ingram	D Mitchell	M Russell
RA Ives	O Mitchell	Rye Bay Ringing Group
P Ivins	C Moore	
	CE Morris	J Sainsbury
A James	R Morris	RF Sanderson
Mrs B James	Mrs BM Mortlock	RJ Sandison
Mrs BD James	DC Mortlock	G Saunders
CM James	C Mulcock	RJ Saunders
Mrs MCH James	P Mulcock	G Scholey
Paul James (PJ)	A Mynheer	RE Scott
Peter James (PJa)		M Scott-Ham (MS-H)
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	P Neatherway	GR Serres
D Kelly	PH Newell	RJ Shanks
Mrs DJ Kelly	Mrs SB Newell	JP Shaughnessey
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JW King	ME Nolan	Mrs IM Simpson
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R Knight		DI Smith
Miss D Knight	LW Osborne	M Smith (MSm)
	RA Owen	Miss M Smith
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D Labdon	CF Page	JF Smitherman
F Lacey	R Pain	I Snelling
DC Lang	DJ Pankhurst	M Snelling
ED Langford	TW Parmenter	Miss BM Spencer
I Lawes	PT Patton	DM Spittle
NJ Lever	Mrs SJ Patton	T Squire
SHLinnington	M Pauley	I Standivan
JA Little	D Pennington	J Steedman (Mrs)
DR Livett	RT Pepper	J Steedman
AH Lloyd	A Pery	PJ Strangeman
P Lloyd	P Philpot	RL Suckling
C Lowmass	A de Potier	C Sutton
GH Luck	RA Powell	GA Sutton
PJ Luffingham	HDV Prendergast	
	R Prior	Ms CA Taylor
A Madgewick	RN Pulley	I Taylor
M Mallalieu	J Pullin	R Taylor
L Manns	B Puttock	CR Tazzyman
JH Marchant		NJ Thomas
C Marrable	A Quinn	RJ Thorne
R Martin		FB Townsend
MJ Mason	BJ Rackstraw	J Tranter
P Matthews	M Walford	AM Whitman
PM Troake	R Walker	JH Whitman
JE Trowell		

P Trubshawe	Dr AB Watson	P Williams
WH Truckle	RF Watson	J Willsher
PC Turner	Mrs AJ Wende	HMV Wilsdon
TR Turner	A Wheeler	PJ Wilson (PJWi)
WR Turner	AD Whitcomb	TJ Wilson
	IJ Whitcomb	RB Wynn
ED Urquhart	PJ Whitcomb (PJW)	
	GC White	Dr BJ Yates
LLJ Vick	CA Whiteman	

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, PB Clarke, JK Cross, CH Dean, P Isted, DC Lang, PJ Luffingham, JL Nobbs, FP Penfold, GCM Roberts, MJ Scott-Ham, GR Serres, S Sutton, AB Watson.

Wetland Bird Survey (WeBS): This BTO/WWT/RSPB/JNCC survey was carried out between September 1995 and March 1996. Coastal counts were organised by CD Lowmass, 33 Barn Close, Seaford, East Sussex. Inland counts were organised by Mrs S Allwood, 69 Farhalls Crescent, Horsham, West Sussex. Thanks are due to the two survey organisers and to the following counters: S Abrams, B Antonini, PC Bance, Mrs L Bingley, G Binns, GF Boniface, Dr C Brooks, DJ Burges, KF Burn, T Callaway, GA Cockburn, D Codd, CB Collins, A Cotton, A Dawnay, Ms A de Potier, P Edwards, M Emery, Mrs AE Everett, B Fellows, DJ Funnell, R Gilmore, J Glover, DJ Golds, Miss H Gordon, A Grace, WHF Green, RR Greenhalf, G Griffin, N Harris, RG Harris, S Hayes, JL Herring, D Heryett, R Hill, Mrs P Hollow, M Holmes, S Knapp, R Knight, L Lacey-Johnson, DC Lang, HJA Lee, CD Lowmass, P Mathews, R Morris, Mrs BM Mortlock, RJ Mycock, A Parfitt, Mrs SJ Patton, B Puttock, CJ Raymond, R Robinson, B Savage, A and Mrs IM Simpson, Ms C Skinner, DI Smith, D Sneller, Miss CA Taylor, JE Trowell, PC Turner, WR Turner, ED Urquhart, Mrs O Westwood, Mrs P Williams, 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 Survey: Coverage of selected tetrads in Sussex was organised by Dr AB Watson for the BTO/Hawk and Owl Trust's extended survey in 1995.

Pevensey Levels Wintering Bird Survey: Several members continued to give assistance in this three-year survey (completed in March 1995) organised by the RSPB (SE Region).

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 1995 to March 1996 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, Pett Level from JAB Gale, Pulborough Brooks from T Callaway and A Cotton, Rye Harbour from Dr BJ Yates, Selsey Bill from BJ Carter, Splash Point from GR Gilmore, 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; PM Brayshaw, BR Clay, JES Cooper, DE Crawley, Ms A de Potier, IJ Faichnie, JL Herring, JE Hobson, LG Holloway, R Holtham, D King, R Knight, L Manns, MJ Mason, Mrs BM Mortlock, Dr JA Newnham, RT Pepper, C Raymond, Mrs IM Simpson, I Standivan, Dr AB Watson, Mrs A.Wende, J Whitman and Dr BJ Yates.

RINGING IN SUSSEX 1995

by Derek Crawley

A total of 45,167 birds of 122 species were reported as having been ringed in the county in 1995. Some of the more unusual species ringed were; **Quail** (1), **Spotted Crake** (7), **Bluethroat** (2), **Cetti's Warbler** (2), **Aquatic Warbler** (16), **Great Reed Warbler** (1), **Pallas's Warbler** (1), **Radde's Warbler** (1), **Penduline Tit** (1) and **Little Bunting** (1). The number of Cetti's Warblers ringed by the Rye Bay Ringing Group has now reached 11, all of them females and yet there has been no breeding at the site! The number of successive years that Spotted Crake have been ringed now extends to 6 and the total to 17. The most recent record of Great Reed Warbler seems to have been the sighting at Thorney Deeps on 19 May 1989. (Parmenter, 1990). In Britain at least 77 Pallas's Warblers were sighted between 5 Oct and 26 Nov 1995, while at least 11 Radde's Warblers were seen between 12 Oct and 4 Nov 1995 including one trapped at Icklesham which was re-trapped about one week later at the same site. (Evans & Millington, 1996).

Table 1 shows the unusual birds ringed during the ten-year period 1986-95:

Table 1. Rare/Unusual Species Ringed in Sussex 1986-1995.

	86	87	88	89	90	91	92	93	94	95
Spotted Crake	-	-	-	-	1	2	4	1	3	7
Baillon's Crake	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-
Corncrake	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-
Woodlark	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	-	-
Water Pipit	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	-	1
Bluethroat	1	-	-	-	1	-	1	3	-	2
Savi's Warbler	-	-	1	-	1	-	-	1	-	2
Aquatic Warbler	-	-	-	1	5	5	9	3	11	16
Paddyfield Warbler	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-
Marsh Warbler	-	-	-	-	1	1	2	13	3	-
Great Reed Warbler	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
Booted Warbler	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-
Icterine Warbler	-	1	1	-	1	-	-	-	-	-
Melodious Warbler	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Sardinian Warbler	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-
Barred Warbler	2	-	-	2	-	-	-	-	1	-
Pallas's Warbler	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
Yellow-browed Warbler	2	-	-	-	-	2	1	-	-	-
Radde's Warbler	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	1
Bonelli's Warbler	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Red-breasted Flycatcher	-	-	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	-
Penduline Tit	-	-	1	2	-	-	-	-	1	1
Red-backed Shrike	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-
Lapland Bunting	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	-
Ortolan Bunting	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-
Little Bunting	-	1	-	-	1	-	1*	-	-	1
Pallas's Reed Bunting	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-

*Record not accepted by British Birds Rarities Committee.

For the first time for a number of years more than just 1 or 2 **Grey Herons** were ringed. Farlington Ringing Group ringed 20 and Chichester Ringing Group 16, all were pulli.

A young **Kestrel** ringed as a nestling at **Zuid-Holland, The Netherlands** on 12 July 1995 was found freshly dead on Worthing Golf Course on 8 Aug having rapidly covered the 359 km after leaving the nest. I am *unreliably* informed that the ring was removed with a 5 iron, a possible case for disciplinary action by the Royal and Ancient. This is another example of the rapid, random and far-flung dispersal of young Kestrels soon after leaving the nest.

An unprecedented 7 **Spotted Crakes** were trapped at Icklesham bringing the total since the first was trapped in 1990 to 17. This high total corresponded with a reported 84 sightings in Britain between August and November 1995. (See Table 1) and (Evans & Millington, 1995).

A total of 213 waders were ringed of 11 species. This figure included 4 **Oystercatcher** (all pulli), 22 **Ringed Plover** (all pulli), 111 **Lapwing** (102 pulli) and 14 **Redshank** (all pulli). For the first year since 1989, **Little Ringed Plover** (6) were trapped and unusually there was a single **Knot**. The numbers of waders ringed in Sussex remains small; the reasons are probably those that obtained when my predecessor, Roy Leverton, was writing in 1987. He indicated that the sites in the county where waders congregate are areas where ringing might be obtrusive and inappropriate. (Leverton, 1987).

An **Oystercatcher** was found dead on the beach at Shoreham on 31 December. It had been ringed at Friskney, Lincolnshire on 22 July 1974 having survived for 7832 days. At the time of ringing it was in its third year. A good age by any standards but currently an Oystercatcher holding 5th position in the longevity stakes of British ringed birds was found dead 1 year, 6 months and 12 days after ringing in 1991. The Shoreham bird was found by Mrs M. Sweatman of Shoreham. We are always grateful to members of the public who report the finding of ringed birds and it must be especially gratifying to have been the finder of this long-lived individual.

Only 4 gulls were ringed in the county in 1995. As mentioned in my last report difficulties have arisen that make gull ringing at West Sussex landfill sites impracticable. (Crawley, 1995).

Black-headed Gull EJ97958 ringed as an adult at Sompting on 21 Dec 1983 was sighted at **Copenhagen, Denmark** on 4 Apr and 1 July 1987. Subsequently sighted at **Malmö, Sweden** on 14 June 1991 and sighted again at Sompting on 7 Nov 1995. This bird seems to have moved regularly between 55.5 and 51 degrees north and 12 degrees of longitude for the 12 or more years of its life. Another of the species ringed at Sompting on the same

date was scraped off the road only 1km from the rubbish tip on the 7 Nov 1995.

Table 2 shows the locations for recovery of Sussex-ringed Black-headed Gulls;

Table 2. Black-headed Gulls Ringed in Sussex and Controlled/Recovered abroad in 1995.

Finland	12	Estonia	3	Denmark	12
Sweden	4	Lithuania	2	Germany	6
Norway	2	Poland	2	Netherlands	7

A **Mediterranean Gull** bearing a mark (24H) capable of being read in the field was hatched in **Zeeland, The Netherlands** in 1992 has been seen regularly at the mouth of the Adur since Aug 1995. A **Common Gull** ringed at Sompting on 7 Jan 1981 has been identified in the field at **Thyboron, Denmark** (about 56 00 N) in the early spring and late summer every year since 1992.

Two ringing sessions at a colony near Sunbury, Surrey on 25 June and 1 July 1995 produced a total of 9 **Sand Martins** previously ringed at Icklesham. The 9 birds were all first-years on passage when ringed on the following dates; 31 Aug 1989, 26 Aug, 31 Aug and 4 Sep 1991 and 6 Aug, 7 Aug, 8 Aug, 22 Aug and 28 Aug 1994. All the birds appeared to breeding at the Surrey site and the probability is that they were born there. The 1989 bird at 5.8 years is a good age but the current longevity record for the species is a couple of weeks short of 12 years.

A nestling **Swallow** ringed at Plumpton on 24 Jun 1994 was controlled on passage at **Ticino, Switzerland** (46 10N, 08 52E) on 29 Apr 1995.

A 1st year **Wren** ringed at Walcot near Wellington, Shropshire on 7 July 1994 was taken by a cat on 15 Jan 1995 near Brighton (268 km, 192 days). In 1982 a bird ringed at Read, Lancashire in 1980, was found dead in Bognor Regis, having moved 355 km. The most rapid movement reported in the county was the individual ringed at Walberswick, Suffolk in Sep 1988 and controlled in Shoreham 7 days later.

A total of 883 **Blackbirds** and 596 **Song Thrushes** were ringed. These figures represent an increase over 1994 of 219 and 275 respectively. There were no reports of birds controlled or recovered of note.

A first-year **Sedge Warbler** ringed at Icklesham on 12 Aug 1995 was found dead 34 days later at **Segou, Mali** (13 27N, 06 16W, 4437km), apparently drowned in a fishing net. During 1995, 10,723 Sedge Warblers were ringed. A first-year bird on passage ringed at Icklesham on 9 Sep 1990 was re-trapped at Mains of Auchenfranco, Dumfries and Galloway on 10 August 1995. It had previously been caught at the same site on 9 Aug 1994

and was identified as a breeding female by the brood patch. At 4.93 years this is the oldest Sedge Warbler to date in the Rye Bay Ringing Group records. I have noted in previous reports regularly recorded movements of passage Sedge Warblers along the south coast in both easterly and westerly directions. Two juvenile birds ringed at Icklesham on 30 July and 12 Aug were controlled on 2 Aug at Kenfig Pool, Glamorgan (315 km WNW, 3 days) and at Llangorse Lake, Powys (295 km WNW, 8 days) respectively. The fact that two birds were involved in this movement suggests that there is nothing errant in the behaviour. The birds weighed 10.1 and 9.4 grams which are not good weights. They may have found that finding sufficient food to build up a store for onward migration was a problem. (Crawley, 1992).

Aquatic Warbler K091350 was a first-year ringed at Icklesham on 12 Aug 1995 and controlled at Spitend Marsh, Isle of Sheppey, Kent 13 days later on 25th Aug. A total of 15 first-years were trapped at Icklesham in 1995 while the single bird trapped at Thorney Island was an adult. None of the birds ringed at Icklesham since 1989 have been adults and there have been only 2 adults out of a total of 30 ringed by the Farlington Marsh Ringing Group. Of course, their main effort is at their main Hampshire sites. (Roberts, 1996) & (See Table 1.)

A **Reed Warbler** ringed as a juvenile at Faversham, Kent on 28 July was controlled at Icklesham on 16 Aug. It returned to Faversham where it was re-trapped on 21 Aug, 24 days after being ringed; a round trip of 94 km. Another Reed Warbler originally ringed at Icklesham in it's first year on 31 Aug 1991 has been controlled at Chew Valley Lake, Avon on 21 July 1993, 15 May 1994 and 30 July 1995. (1429 days). A detailed illustration of site fidelity well known in the species.

Blackcap H208181 a first year female, was ringed at Icklesham on 19 Sept 1991 and was controlled at **Oberbayern, Germany** on 12 June 1994

(807 km ESE, 997 days). It was re-trapped at the same site in Germany on 23 July 1995 (1403 days). (Crawley 1995). There was an increase in the number of Blackcaps trapped in 1995; 3738 as opposed to 2284 in 1994.

Ringers commented on the reduced numbers of **Willow Warblers** trapped. The total for the county was 1280 which contrasts with 2385 in 1994 and is the lowest total since 1983 (967). This seems to be a significant drop even allowing for the fluctuations in ringing effort over the years.

An increase in the number of **Firecrests** (19) was evidenced. Each of the four previous years have seen fewer than 10. The trapping of the species was at two main sites; Beachy Head (8) and Cissbury (7).

Table 3 shows the numbers of **Bearded Tits** ringed in the county since 1986. Of the 66 ringed in 1995, 31 were nestlings. These figures show a considerable increase in the decade which is due to ringing effort at two sites and more importantly, the provision of suitable habitat at one of the sites. Ringed birds that have been re-trapped show a regular movement between breeding sites in Kent and dispersal sites on the Sussex coast, especially in the east of the county. A first-year male Bearded Tit probably wintering on Thorney Island was ringed on 25 Sept 1993 and controlled at Pitsea Marsh, Essex on 17 June 1995 (127 km NE, 630 days) whilst nesting. A male trapped at Icklesham on 30 Oct 1992 was controlled at the Pitsea Marsh site on 15 July 1995 where it had conceivably bred. (72 km N, 988 days).

Table 3. Bearded Tits Ringed in Sussex 1986-1995

1986	1987	1988	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	Total
0	0	6	12	0	18	38	57	59	66	256

A **Long-tailed Tit** trapped at Icklesham on 9 Oct 1994 was controlled at Beachy Head on 13 Aug (35 km WSW, 308 days). It was subsequently re-trapped 3 times at Beachy Head, the last date being the 18 Oct.

The number of **Nuthatches** has been averaging over 70 annually since 1979 yet the 1995 total was only 36. Generally speaking, few fully grown birds are ever ringed with the total being largely made up of nestlings. For example, in 1994 69 nestlings were ringed and 63 in 1994. Of the 36 birds ringed in 1995, 31 were pulli. These figures suggest a poor breeding season following a similar indication in 1994. (Patton, 1996).

Table 4 shows the most-ringed species in the period 1979-1995 and includes all species over 10,000. For the first time in the period the number of Sand Martins has fallen to second place. Reed Warbler has overtaken Blue Tit and Black-headed Gull is regularly being relegated as gull ringing activity falls off. House Martin, Garden Warbler and Wren take the first three places below 10,000.

Table 4. Most Ringed Species 1979-1995 in Sussex.

Sedge Warbler	71,028	Blackcap	37,577	Black-headed Gull	18,417
Sand Martin	70,534	Willow Warbler	35,713	Blackbird	12,290
Reed Warbler	48,399	Chiffchaff	24,440	Whitethroat	11,717
Blue Tit	44,478	Great Tit	19,944	Robin	11,194
Swallow	43,231	Greenfinch	18,796	Starling	10,333

My gratitude and special thanks to all the ringers and groups who provided me with the basic information that enabled me to compile this report.

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Thirty Years at Barcombe Mills Reservoir; One Man's View

by David C Lang

Barcombe Mills Reservoir lies adjacent to the River Ouse, 5km north-east of Lewes in East Sussex. The open water covers an area of 10.12 hectares enclosed on two sides by earth banks, water being abstracted from the Ouse and held in the storage reservoir prior to treatment.

Work commenced on the new reservoir early in 1966, on land previously farmed as Lower Clayhill Farm by Mr Stewart Andrews, from whom it was purchased by what was then the Mid-Sussex Water Board. It is now under the control of South East Water.

I first visited the reservoir on the evening of 4th September 1966 when the original earth banks - since reinforced by concrete - had been completed, enclosing an area of very wet marsh through which the course of the Iron River was still clearly visible. To my delight I watched 16 Garganey, 4 Green Sandpipers, 2 Common Sandpipers, 1 Greenshank, 2 Ruff and a solitary Carolina Duck. Flooding of the reservoir had already started and within a few days the wet marsh and its birds had disappeared, changing the attraction of Barcombe Mills to waterfowl.

Since that initial visit I have watched consistently at Barcombe Mills for nearly 30 years and in that period I have recorded 153 species of birds, with an additional 9 species of very obvious 'escapees'.

The embanked reservoir lies within cultivated farmland on two sides, with the tree-lined River Ouse running along its western boundary. To the south lie the waterworks buildings and sludge pits. The riverside trees include many mature alders which attract wintering redpolls and siskins, while on the eastern boundary the scrubby trees and blackberry bushes shelter migrant passerines. The reservoir is a nice, convenient size to walk round, nothing being too far away from the observer, while at the same time one can cover half the circuit under cover of the banks, so minimising disturbance of the resting wildfowl.

The river valley still floods extensively in the winter and this inevitably attracts ducks, geese and swans. The reservoir acts as a safe haven for wildfowl and there is good evidence that birds commute between Barcombe Mills, the Glynde Levels to the east and the Lewes Levels to the south, so that its value as a wildfowl site extends well beyond the immediate environs.

For some years now the reservoir has been stocked with trout, and fishing continues throughout the season, without apparently having any adverse effect upon the birds. The closed season conveniently fits in with the peak period for wintering wildfowl; the site being regularly recorded, since its

construction, for the winter Wildfowl Counts and subsequently as part of Wetland Birds Survey.

Barcombe Mills Reservoir also serves as a valuable station for migrant duck, waders and passerines and as a major feeding site for very large collections of hirundines. It is of limited value as a breeding site, although Mute Swans, Mallard and Tufted Duck all regularly appear with youngsters in tow. The banks of the reservoir also serve as a substantial gull roost, particularly in autumn and winter.

No shooting is permitted within the reservoir area and the only predation comes from the foxes, which are frequent visitors and the occasional Sparrowhawk.

Surface duck first started to use the reservoir as early as 29th October 1966, when Scaup, Pochard, Tufted Duck and Goldeneye were all present. The first Cormorant appeared on 2nd December 1966, by which time Mallard numbers had risen to 250.

In early January 1967 the reservoir was partly drained, leaving a substantial margin of mud and this situation continued into the spring and early summer. A Water Pipit was recorded on 26th March and, next day, the waders present included 4 Ringed Plover, 6 Green Sandpiper, 20 Redshank and 20 Snipe. On 30th March, Garganey were present and Snipe numbers had risen to 50. More exciting were the Ruff which appeared on 5th April, increasing in number to 12 on 18th. Reeds and other marsh plants had regrown in the bottom of the reservoir, where the course of the old river was still visible and singing Sedge Warblers were present. By 25th April only 8 Ruff remained, but they were displaying vigorously, encouraging the vain hope that they might breed. One pair of Mute Swans was nesting at the north end of the reservoir, where a Mallard duck appeared with four ducklings. By 5th May the Ruff had gone, but the adult Black Tern in summer plumage was some compensation.

On 9th September 1967 a vast concourse of Swallows, estimated at 20,000, was present in the evening for an hour. The reservoir was refilled by 19th November, when 2 Long-tailed Duck were seen. The winter was very cold, so that the surface was frozen over on 13th January 1968. Ten Goldeneye - 4 males and 6 females - were present on 4th February. Wintering duck were present in good numbers; the Wigeon flock remaining for five weeks with a maximum of more than 500 on 27th February.

In March the reservoir was emptied again so that the east wall could be reinforced, slumping having been caused by small springs breaking through the bank. Once again it attracted potential breeding waders, Little Ringed Plovers, Black-tailed Godwits, Ruff and Redshank. However, the only evidence of breeding came from a Lapwing with chicks on 16th May 1968,

plenty of young Mallard, and a single brood of Mute Swans. Six Ruff lingered on for some time, but did not breed. Refilling started in August, and a rather dull autumn was enlivened by 6 Black Terns from 1st-3rd October and the early winter by a male Snow Bunting reported by anglers on 6th December.

Two Jack Snipe were seen on 8th March 1969. The early spring passage included a possible female Citrine Wagtail on 20.4.69, which accompanied a party of Yellow Wagtails. Next day several Green Sandpipers were present, with one Black Tern and the first Common Tern to be recorded at the reservoir.

Early winter 1969 saw our first Slavonian Grebe on 21st December and 35 White-fronted Geese on 28th. Duck numbers in the winter were impressive; 1079 Wigeon were counted on 18th January, the flock increasing to 1222 on 1st February, with Pintail, Shoveler, Teal, Pochard and Tufted Duck. Three Common Scoter were an unexpected find on 6th April 1970.

1971 was undistinguished apart from a juvenile Mediterranean Gull on the frozen reservoir on 2nd January. At that time, Tree Sparrows were often seen, with flocks of 50-80 regularly recorded.

Autumn 1973 produced a Little Stint on 22nd September, with 2 Whooper Swans and a Peregrine on 30th. A single Bittern was recorded on 6th January 1974 by Mr Harrison-Smith.

The reservoir was drained again in early March 1977 and on 13th, 65 Snipe were busy feeding in the mud. Refilling proceeded promptly. Late in the year a Spotted Sandpiper was present from 7th-13th November. During the following winter the number of Canada Geese had risen to a flock of 105 on 28th January 1978 from 2 in 1966. They grazed the nearby fields and roosted on the reservoir when disturbed by dog walkers by the river. At the end of the year a very wild adult Pink-footed Goose stayed briefly on 3rd December and a Slavonian Grebe appeared on 23rd, remaining until 6th January 1979. Three Bewick's Swans enlivened New Years Day 1979 and the first Ruddy Duck was seen on 11th February. In the early winter a single male Black Redstart was seen on 18th November.

The highlight of 1984 was a White-winged Black Tern in nearly-full summer plumage on 19th May. At the end of the year, 14 Barnacle Geese were present on 29th December. This species is often seen among the flock of Canada Geese, usually in small numbers and most records are almost certainly those of feral birds. However, on this occasion the birds were very nervous and were possibly of wild origin.

1985 highlights included a female Smew on 25th January, a Grey Phalarope present on the sludge pit on 23rd November, where it stayed until the next day and a flock of 52 White-fronted Geese on 15th December.

A fall of migrants occurred on 17th August 1986 and included a Little Ringed Plover, a single Wood Warbler, numerous Chiffchaffs and Willow Warblers.

Twelve Bewick's Swans were present on 18th January 1987. By this time, the winter Canada Goose flock had increased to 733 and Ruddy Duck were regularly recorded in small numbers.

The New Years Day 1989 highlight was our first Red-throated Diver, albeit lightly oiled, which was accompanied by a Mandarin Duck, Ruddy Duck, Scaup and Goosander.

The spring migration on 30th May 1989 saw a vast concourse of many thousands of Swifts and House Martins, accompanied by a few dozen Swallows and Sand Martins, circling over the reservoir for several hours.

In the winter of 1989 we recorded our first Red-necked Grebe, an adult, on 26th December. The winter wildfowl numbers were now fairly stable. Typically one would record a handful of Great crested Grebe, 2-300 Mallard, 50 Pochard, 50 Tufted Duck, with a small number of Shoveler, Pintail, Teal, Wigeon and the odd Goldeneye, Shelduck, and Ruddy Duck. The numbers of Canada Geese continued to grow, accompanied by a few feral Barnacle and Greylag Geese. Meanwhile, the numbers of Tree Sparrows had dropped dramatically, only a few being recorded in any one year.

A south-west gale on 30th September 1992 blew in 78 Common Terns and 3 Black Terns, while on 6th November, the flock of Great-crested Grebes had risen to a maximum of 36.

On 11.9.94 the first Arctic Tern was recorded, a rather sick looking bird, which was joined two days later by 4 Common Terns and a Little Gull. Two weeks later I had fine views of a Hobby chasing a flock of Linnets. Winter 1994 was mild and the winter wildfowl numbers correspondingly low, although the Great-crested Grebe flock reached a maximum of 38 on 11th December.

Coming up to the date of writing, a small flock of Common Eider turned up on 16th December 1995 and were watched at close range squabbling over the corpse of a large perch, which kept sinking out of reach.

The accompanying species list indicates all the birds which have been seen at Barcombe Mills Reservoir since its construction nearly 30 years ago - a rich harvest for a small and relatively undistinguished stretch of water with an entirely concrete margin. The size of the list underlines its value to migrants and winter residents alike. The only regret I have is that I have never personally recorded an osprey at the reservoir. Many observers have seen them over the years, but I have always 'dipped out'.

Access to this reservoir is by permit only and in view of the relatively small size of the reservoir numbers are restricted. I am most grateful to the Water Authority for the many years of pleasure I have experienced birdwatching at Barcombe Mills. However, not every occasion has been without incident. I

have a vivid memory, during James Callaghan's time as Prime Minister, of being bounced by the security forces as I was happily birdwatching, armed with nothing more threatening than binoculars and a camera with telephoto lens. The Prime Ministerial residence abutted the reservoir and the telephoto was mounted on a modified sten-gun butt. I obviously appeared to be a most suspicious character!

The latest news is that the reservoir is shortly to be drained again for extensive work and dredging. It will be very interesting to see what turns up this time.

David C Lang, B.Vet.Med. M.R.C.V.S. 1 Oaktree, Barcombe, Lewes, East Sussex, BN8 5DP. (01273) 400446.

Species	Details
Red-throated Diver	One on 1.1.89
Little Grebe	Occasional in winter
Great Crested Grebe	Increasing. Maximum of 38 on 11.12.94
Red-necked Grebe	One on 26.12.89
Slavonian Grebe	One on 23.12.78
Black-necked Grebe	One on 10.3.96
Cormorant	Increasing. Maximum of 40
Shag	One on 17.3.91
Bittern	One on 6.11.74
Grey Heron	Regular in all seasons
Mute Swan	One pair breed. Winter flock of up to 50
Bewick's Swan	Rare winter visitor
Whooper Swan	Two on 30.9.73
Pink-footed Goose	One on 3.12.78
White-fronted Goose	Occasional. Maximum of 52 on 15.12.85
Greylag Goose	Small numbers, probably feral
Canada Goose	Increasing. Maximum 733 on 15.11.87
Barnacle Goose	Small feral flock. Occasional in winter
Brent Goose	Seen flying over. Seldom alight
Shelduck	Occasional. Maximum of 12 on 14.1.96
Mandarin	One on 1.1.89
Wigeon	Winter flocks smaller in recent years. Maximum of 1222 on 1.2.70
Gadwall	Regular in small numbers
Teal	Winter visitor in small numbers
Mallard	Common, breeding and increasing
Pintail	Scarce winter visitor
Garganey	Migrant, less frequent recently
Shoveler	Occasional winter visitor
Red-crested Pochard	One male on 16.11.80
Pochard	Regular winter visitor. Maximum of 180
Tufted Duck	Regular winter visitor. Maximum of 150. Fewer in recent years. Has bred
Scaup	Occasional winter visitor
Eider	Four on 16.12.95
Long-tailed Duck	Occasional winter visitor
Common Scoter	Three on 6.4.70. One male on 28.1.96
Goldeneye	Regular winter visitor. Maximum of 10 on 4.2.68

Smew	One on 25.1.85, 1 on 31.12.88, 1 female on 28.1.96
Goosander	Occasional winter visitor
Ruddy Duck	Usually in winter, increasing
Sparrowhawk	Occasional, hunting over reservoir
Osprey	Regular autumn passage migrant
Kestrel	Frequent visitor all seasons
Hobby	One on 25.9.94
Peregrine	One on 30.9.73
Red-legged Partridge	Regular on adjacent farmland
Grey Partridge	Regular on adjacent farmland
Pheasant	Frequent on adjacent farmland
Moorhen	Regular in small numbers. Breeds by river
Coot	Winter flock of up to 50. Breeds by river
Little Ringed Plover	Scarce passage migrant
Ringed Plover	Scarce visitor
Golden Plover	Winter flocks on adjacent farmland
Grey Plover	Scarce visitor
Lapwing	Regular visitor, winter flocks on farmland. Has bred
Knot	Scarce passage migrant
Little Stint	One on 22.9.73
Dunlin	Occasional visitor
Ruff	Recorded 1966-68 on drained reservoir
Jack Snipe	Scarce winter visitor
Snipe	Regular in winter. Large numbers when reservoir drained
Woodcock	Occasional winter visitor
Black-tailed Godwit	March 1968 when reservoir drained
Whimbrel	Occasional passage migrant
Curlew	Occasional in all seasons
Spotted Redshank	Scarce on passage, not seen recently
Redshank	Regular visitor in small numbers
Greenshank	Occasional passage migrant
Green Sandpiper	Regular passage migrant and winter visitor
Wood Sandpiper	Scarce passage migrant
Common Sandpiper	Regular on passage, maximum of 10
Spotted Sandpiper	One from 7.11.77 to 13.11.77
Turnstone	Scarce visitor
Grey Phalarope	One on 23.11.85
Mediterranean Gull	One juvenile on 2.1.71
Little Gull	Occasional passage migrant, usually in autumn
Black-headed Gull	Common. Large winter roost
Common Gull	Frequent all year. Roosts
Lesser Black-backed Gull	Infrequent visitor in small numbers
Herring gull	Frequent in small numbers
Great Black-backed Gull	Occasional in small numbers
Common Tern	Infrequent passage migrant
Arctic Tern	One on 11.9.94
Black Tern	Regular passage migrant
White-winged Black Tern	One on 19.5.84
Stock Dove	Resident
Woodpigeon	Resident and frequent
Collared Dove	Resident
Turtle Dove	Summer resident
Cuckoo	Summer visitor

Barn Owl	Infrequent visitor
Little Owl	Scarce visitor
Tawny Owl	Regular visitor, breeds locally
Swift	Passage migrant, often in large numbers
Kingfisher	Regular. Two pairs breed locally
Green Woodpecker	Occasional visitor
Great Spotted Woodpecker	Occasional visitor
Skylark	Regular on local farmland
Sand Martin	Passage migrant, summer feeding flocks
Swallow	Passage migrant, summer feeding flocks
House Martin	Passage migrant, summer feeding flocks
Meadow Pipit	Regular resident and migrant
Water Pipit	Occasional passage migrant
Yellow Wagtail	Regular passage migrant
Citrine Wagtail	Possible record of a female on 20.4.69
Grey Wagtail	Regular in small numbers
Pied Wagtail	Regular in small numbers
Wren	Regular in small numbers
Dunnock	Resident in small numbers
Robin	Resident, breeding
Black Redstart	Singles on 18.11.79 and 13.3.83
Whinchat	Occasional passage migrant
Stonechat	Occasional visitor
Wheatear	Regular passage migrant
Blackbird	Regular breeding resident
Fieldfare	Regular winter visitor
Song Thrush	Regular breeding resident
Redwing	Regular winter visitor
Mistle Thrush	Regular breeding resident
Sedge Warbler	Infrequent passage migrant
Lesser Whitethroat	Infrequent passage migrant
Whitethroat	Regular passage migrant
Blackcap	Regular passage migrant
Wood Warbler	One on 17.8.86
Chiffchaff	Frequent passage migrant
Willow Warbler	Frequent passage migrant
Firecrest	One on 1.11.95 (per John Gowers)
Spotted Flycatcher	Occasional passage migrant
Long-tailed Tit	Regular visitor
Marsh Tit	Regular visitor in small numbers
Coal Tit	Regular breeding resident
Blue Tit	Regular breeding resident
Great Tit	Regular breeding resident
Nuthatch	Regular, breeding in riverside trees
Treecreeper	Regular, breeding in riverside trees
Jay	Regular visitor
Magpie	Regular visitor
Jackdaw	Visitor in small numbers
Rook	Frequent on adjacent farmland
Carrion Crow	Regular visitor
Starling	Regular breeding resident
House Sparrow	Regular breeding resident
Tree Sparrow	Breeds by river, numbers reduced

Chaffinch	Regular breeding resident
Brambling	Occasional winter visitor
Greenfinch	Regular breeding resident
Goldfinch	Regular breeding resident
Siskin	Occasional winter visitor
Linnnet	Regular visitor
Redpoll	Occasional winter visitor
Bullfinch	Infrequent, may breed
Snow Bunting	One male on 6.12.68
Yellowhammer	Regular breeding resident
Reed Bunting	Regular breeding resident
Corn Bunting	Occasional on adjacent farmland

Escaped Species Recorded.

Carolina Duck	One on 4.9.66
Egyptian Goose	One on 28.11.71, 7 on 13.10.73
Cuban Flamingo	One on 13.10.73
Black-necked Swan	One on 15.9.74
Snow Goose	One on 10.1.76
Blue Snow Goose	One on 15.2.81
Chinese Spotbill	One on 16.11.86
Bar-headed Goose	One on 14.12.86
American Wigeon	One on 17.6.95
Ringed Teal	Two on 1.10.95

BIRD SURVEYS AT EBERNOE COMMON AND THE MENS, WEST SUSSEX

INTRODUCTION

Background to the surveys

In the Weald of West Sussex lie two major broad-leaved woodlands, both owned by the Sussex Wildlife Trust as nature reserves. Ebernoe Common and The Mens are magnificent examples of ancient woodland, classed as Grade 1 sites in the Nature Conservation Review (Ratcliffe 1977) and designated as statutory Sites of Special Scientific Interest. They are regarded as being amongst the finest of such woodlands in the south of England.

A bird survey was undertaken in The Mens in May 1973, as part of an ecological survey carried out by the Horsham Natural History Society, and the late S W M Hughes made breeding season counts on timed transects in four areas of that woodland in 1975 and 1976. A major ecological survey was conducted at Ebernoe Common in 1982 and 1983 under the direction of Dr Francis Rose and, at the same time, the reserve manager and a small team carried out a bird survey based on records relating to the grid squares which had been laid out over the whole of the reserve.

No later systematic surveys have been carried out in either woodland. This was unfortunate, as it meant that there was no good baseline of data for the period prior to the storm of 15/16 October 1987. The impetus for the surveys described in this paper came from Dr R J Fuller, Director of Habitats Research at the British Trust for Ornithology, who was anxious to obtain some comparative data from storm-damaged woodlands in Sussex. He devised and set up the three-year breeding-season survey to investigate the populations and distribution of bird species in both these Trust reserves, especially in relation to their use of undamaged and damaged ("treefall gap") areas.

There were two primary objectives in these surveys:

1. To provide data for the BTO, with the aim of assessing whether treefall gaps differed from closed-canopy areas in their bird communities.
2. To establish a baseline against which any longer-term changes in the bird communities could be measured.

A similar survey, on a smaller scale, was carried out in both woodlands during the breeding season of 1994.

Description of the woodlands

As no descriptive work appears in the Society's literature regarding these woodlands, a fuller description than is usual in a Sussex Bird Report paper is included here.

Ebernoe Common

This woodland lies in the parish of Kirdford, about 5km north of Petworth. The area came under threat of destruction by felling in 1980, but fortunately urgent action by the Sussex Wildlife Trust led to its purchase and establishment as one of their prime nature reserves. At 1.5km in length and

with a maximum width of about 800m, the original reserve (in which the bird surveys were carried out) is 72ha in extent. It has recently been extended by the addition of an adjoining area of grassland, woodland and degenerate coppice totalling about 6.6ha.

Almost the whole of the reserve is common land, but there are no registered commoners. The surrounding land-use consists of permanent or semi-permanent pasture, arable cultivation, mixed deciduous woodland and mixed deciduous/coniferous plantations.

The reserve lies at an altitude of between 25m and 35m above sea level and the land undulates gently, apart from the steep-sided valleys of two minor streams which flow north-eastwards out of the reserve to form a tributary of the River Arun.

Ebernoe Common is an outstanding example of ancient high-forest pasture woodland and contains a wide variety of habitats, with grassland areas, glades, hedgerows and the open waters of Furnace Pond and Fish Pond. The reserve consists of two large blocks joined by a relatively narrow neck and is aligned approximately north-south.

The Ebernoe Common we see today is the result of centuries of use by man, as a woodland pasture for his animals and as a source of fuel. It was also greatly affected by industrial activity in the 16th century when it was the site of an iron works, part of the famous Wealden iron industry. There was brick-making from the early 18th century, which continued until the 1930s, using the kiln and (restored) moulding shed which still stand.

Grazing continued from medieval times into the 1900s and even in the 1960s there were some pigs and cattle running free on the Common. Much felling of the trees has gone on during its history and it is likely that at times not many mature trees were left in the area. At present, there are few trees which are more than 200 years old. The cessation of grazing and cutting allowed a reversion to full woodland cover, but there was also an 'explosive' development of holly, particularly in the southern half.

Geologically, the reserve stands on the Weald Clay, but shows considerable variation in its soils. Most of the northern block is on a typical Weald Clay soil which is heavy and wet in winter. There are some small outcrops of a fossiliferous limestone, the Paludina limestone or 'Sussex Marble', which has some influence on the soils in the stream valleys. Much of the southern part consists of a reddish loam, which is thought to have originated in the Lower Greensand a few kilometres to the south. It produces an acid soil with a leached upper layer and a hard 'iron' pan below. The rather poor drainage of the reserve results in water-logging in the winter and there are a few boggy areas in the southern half of the woodland.

A dense oak or oak-beech woodland stands on the Weald Clay of the northern area, with oak-ash-maple woodland where the soils are richer. Although some of the denser woodland is open beneath the trees, there is much growth of a shrub layer of hazel, hawthorn, blackthorn, holly and bramble. There are some small areas of degenerate hazel coppice. In contrast, the southern half consists of either a high beech forest, in which the shrub layer is dense holly, or an open birch woodland with scattered beech trees.

The Mens

The nature reserve of The Mens lies in the parishes of Kirdford and Bedham, between Wisborough Green and Petworth alongside the A272. The Mens became available for sale in 1966 and was eventually purchased by the Sussex Wildlife Trust between 1970 and 1974. The Trust now owns 144.9ha and leases 10.1ha from West Sussex County Council.

The reserve is 3.5km in length and 1.2km at its widest point. It is made up of a series of more or less discrete woodlands known as Strood Green, Idehurst Hurst, Crimbourne Wood, Round Wood, The Cut, Hammonds Wood, Fence Piece and Bedham Copse. The reserve, together with some adjacent areas, forms the common-land of the Manor of Bedham, on which there are currently 23 commoners holding rights. The reserve is very irregular in shape, as a result of medieval encroachments both on the edges and within the woodland.

The northern half of the reserve lies at about 30m above sea level and gradually slopes upward in the south to 100m and then steeply to 160m at the Bedham escarpment. There are several small streams flowing eastwards through the woodland, which become tributaries of the River Arun.

The Mens is a prime example of ancient high forest and, although there has been much cutting of the timber over the centuries, it has probably never been completely cleared or intensively managed. Although by 1300 much of the western Weald was open and cultivated, it is likely that The Mens and probably also Ebernoe Common remained as 'island' woodlands because of their status as commons.

From the 15th to 17th centuries The Mens, and to a lesser extent Ebernoe Common, were centres for glass-making and iron-working, both industries taking advantage of the timber and water available, the latter being dammed to provide a source of power. At that time, although The Mens was still well-wooded, there were probably open, grazed areas with scattered trees. Some of these large old trees may still be seen today, in areas which have since reverted to woodland, through a long period of decline in the commoners' rights, two centuries of tree regeneration and 20th-century neglect. There was some selective felling in the 1950s and 1960s, which created gaps in the canopy.

Weald Clay underlies most of the woodland, although there are two small areas of sandstone and a band of Paludina limestone crossing the centre of the reserve. The soils are mostly of the lowland woodland Brown Earth type and are acid and very wet in winter, but become more sandy at the southern end of the reserve, which is on the Lower Greensand of the Bedham Escarpment.

The Mens is now a mixed-deciduous woodland dominated by oak and beech, with a good development of holly, hazel and other species in the shrub layer. Most of the reserve is a closed-canopy high forest, but there are some scrubby areas and clearings giving a good variety of habitats.

METHODS

The bird surveys

It was fortunate that one-hundred metre grids had been established in both woodlands for ecological (particularly vegetation) surveys. Each grid-square was identified by a number given to the point in the south-west corner

where the grid lines intersected. These grid-points formed the basis for the organisation of the bird surveys.

Four counts were made in 1988 and three in each of the years 1989 and 1990. The visits were made during the period from late March to early June in each year, timed to cover the range of territorial activity of resident and migrant species. Eight people were involved in the counts, working in two pairs per woodland, with half the grid points in each woodland being allocated to each pair. The visits within and between the woodlands were not co-ordinated.

Four counts were made in each woodland during the breeding season of 1994, with four people from the original survey involved, one pair to each woodland. The method used for making the counts was the same as in 1988-90.

Survey points used in 1988-90

Within each woodland, 40 grid points were selected for the survey, of which 10 in The Mens and 7 in Ebernoe Common were in treefall gaps. The remaining points were in areas which were undamaged or only lightly-damaged, that is with some loss of the canopy or of single trees.

Survey points used in 1994

Only 20 grid points were used in each woodland in the 1994 survey, those in the damaged areas being the same as in the 1988-90 survey, and the remainder being selected from nearby undamaged areas.

Counting and plotting

All individual birds seen or heard within a radius of 50 metres of each grid point (including those noted on entering the circle) were recorded during a five-minute period. A compass was used to determine the direction of these "contacts", which were plotted within a circle on a separate field sheet for each point. The distance of each contact from the grid point was estimated. For each point, the highest count from the series of visits was taken as the basis for estimating the total number of individuals "contacted" (ie seen or heard) in each survey year.

Habitat structure within survey plots

In 1990, R.J.Fuller collected data on the vegetational structure at each survey point. Within a circle of 30m radius, he counted the number of trees with a diameter of 25 cm or more at breast height. He also calculated an index of shrub density using a 30 x 50cm checkerboard of fifteen 10 x 10cm squares with alternating fluorescent red and white. This was held at a height of 1.5m above ground and four estimates made (on separate north, east, south and west bearings) of the distance (to the nearest 5m) at which the board became half obscured by foliage. For each point, the median of the four sighting distances was taken and an index of shrub density calculated as the reciprocal of this median multiplied by 100. Thus high values indicate high shrub density.

THE DATA

1988-90 Survey

The 1988-90 survey was based on 40 circles of 50m radius, which gave an area of 31.4ha in each woodland, out of total reserve sizes of 72ha at Ebernoe Common and 155ha at The Mens.

For each species, the number of points at which it was recorded and the total number of individual contacts were calculated. These results are referred to as "frequency" and "abundance" in the tables which follow. Table 1 shows a combined list from the most widely distributed and abundant species in the woodlands from the 1988-90 survey, with their frequency shown by the numbers of points (Pts.) at which recorded (maximum 40) and their abundance as the total contacts (Nos.). Their rankings (1 being the highest) in order of frequency, and also in order of abundance for those with the same frequency, are also shown.

	1988			1989			1990		
	Pts.	Nos.	Rank	Pts.	Nos.	Rank	Pts.	Nos.	Rank
EBERNOE COMMON									
Stock Dove	11	12	18	16	19	14	7	7	19
Wood Pigeon	31	47	7	29	49	6	25	34	7
Green Woodpecker	12	12	16	4	5	22	6	6	20
Gt Sp Woodpecker	16	18	13	8	8	21	15	18	13
Wren	39	60	3	39	79	3	39	57	3
Robin	35	69	5	40	76	1	39	65	2
Blackbird	36	59	4	33	43	4	23	27	10
Song Thrush	25	27	11	17	20	11	8	8	18
Mistle Thrush	3	3	23	4	4	23	2	2	23
Blackcap	14	17	14	9	10	19	6	6	21
Chiffchaff	25	31	10	23	27	9	23	29	8
Willow Warbler	10	16	19	13	18	17	5	6	22
Goldcrest	7	8	21	17	18	12	9	11	17
Long-tailed Tit	16	43	12	13	29	16	16	32	12
Marsh Tit	11	18	17	14	29	15	14	21	14
Coal Tit	9	11	20	21	29	10	23	29	9
Blue Tit	39	103	1	39	95	2	40	101	1
Great Tit	32	49	6	27	38	7	29	46	6
Nuthatch	29	37	9	16	20	13	23	25	11
Treecreeper	5	6	22	9	9	20	13	15	15
Jay	13	15	15	10	12	18	10	11	16
Jackdaw	30	89	8	26	69	8	31	75	5
Chaffinch	39	83	2	32	54	5	37	51	4
Other species		45			47			51	
Total no. of contacts		878			807			733	

Table 1a. Species frequency, abundance and rankings in 1988-90

	1988			1989			1990		
	Pts.	Nos.	Rank	Pts.	Nos.	Rank	Pts.	Nos.	Rank
THE MENS									
Stock Dove	19	20	14	22	29	11	11	14	16
Wood Pigeon	39	103	3	34	62	7	36	82	6
Green Woodpecker	4	4	19	8	8	18	5	5	21
Gt Sp Woodpecker	20	25	12	22	32	10	22	26	14
Wren	38	60	7	40	80	3	40	101	3
Robin	40	96	2	40	111	2	40	109	2
Blackbird	39	77	4	39	61	5	36	59	7
Song Thrush	18	23	15	20	22	14	15	16	15
Mistle Thrush	4	8	18	6	7	20	11	12	17
Blackcap	3	3	21	1	1	22	2	2	22
Chiffchaff	1	1	23	1	1	23	9	9	18
Willow Warbler	2	2	22	5	5	21	2	2	23
Goldcrest	19	24	13	22	28	12	27	45	11
Long-tailed Tit	4	4	20	7	11	19	7	11	20
Marsh Tit	6	6	17	8	11	17	8	11	19
Coal Tit	29	42	9	32	47	9	35	67	8
Blue Tit	40	105	1	40	137	1	40	133	1
Great Tit	38	71	6	35	63	6	39	66	4
Nuthatch	22	24	11	18	21	15	32	48	10
Treecreeper	14	18	16	20	25	13	26	45	12
Jay	28	40	10	17	26	16	25	46	13
Jackdaw	36	110	8	32	156	8	36	118	5
Chaffinch	38	85	5	39	70	4	33	62	9
Other species		95			35			66	
Total no. of contacts		1046			1049			1155	

Table 1b. Species frequency, abundance and rankings in 1988-90

In Table 2, the data for four groups of species is shown, using the definitions for points and numbers as in Table 1.

	1988		1989		1990	
	Pts.	Nos.	Pts.	Nos.	Pts.	Nos.
EBERNOE COMMON						
Woodpeckers	25	30	10	14	19	24
Thrushes	38	89	37	67	28	37
Warblers	30	69	31	61	28	46
Tits	40	228	39	220	40	236
THE MENS						
Woodpeckers	21	29	24	42	26	32
Thrushes	40	108	39	90	39	87
Warblers	9	10	6	8	11	15
Tits	40	228	40	269	40	288

Table 2. Frequency and abundance of selected species-groups in 1988-90

1994 survey

The 1994 survey was intended as an early check on what changes, if any, had occurred during the intervening four years. Only 20 grid points were used in this survey, their circles covering an area of 15.7ha. Four visits were made during the breeding season and the final figures were arrived at by taking the maximum count for each species at each of the 20 points used. This followed the method used in the surveys during the three years 1988-90.

Table 3 shows results for selected species and groups from the 1994 survey, with the data for the same 20 points from the 1988-90 survey, expressed as averages. The counts for the two surveys were therefore directly comparable.

	EBERNOE COMMON				THE MENS			
	Average 1988-90		1994		Average 1988-90		1994	
	Pts.	Nos.	Pts.	Nos.	Pts.	Nos.	Pts.	Nos.
Blackbird	14	19	18	24	19	32	20	43
Song Thrush	10	12	12	14	8	9	12	15
Blackcap	5	6	10	11	1	1	7	7
Chiffchaff	12	14	15	19	3	3	6	8
Willow Warbler	4	5	0	0	3	3	3	3
Long-tailed Tit	8	17	12	22	3	5	5	8
Marsh Tit	7	12	14	25	3	5	7	8
Coal Tit	8	10	15	20	15	25	12	16
Blue Tit	20	48	20	65	20	51	20	42
Great Tit	16	23	18	30	17	33	16	33
Woodpeckers	8	10	8	11	12	19	16	24
Thrushes	16	31	20	44	19	46	20	59
Warblers	15	27	17	33	6	9	9	20
Tits	20	111	20	162	20	126	20	107
All species		391		480		553		495

Table 3 Frequency and abundance of selected species and species-groups in 1988-90 and 1994

In order to facilitate comparison with other or future surveys, a full list of species is included in an Appendix, with the percentage frequency and relative abundance of each.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

Counts vs breeding pairs

It should be pointed out that the counts were not of the numbers of pairs or of territories as in the BTOs Common Bird Censuses, but were based on "contacts" with individual birds during the five-minute point count. In each woodland there were 40 of these points selected for the first survey and 20 for the 1994 survey; each of these points was an intersection on a 100m grid. The points were therefore at least 100m apart and could, for common species such as Wren and Robin, contain more than one pair in the 50m radius circle.

Point counts are a simple method of measuring relative abundance and are easily repeatable. Bibby et al (1992) considered that, although they

require a good level of observer skill, they have the great advantage of being efficient in producing a considerable volume of data from the expenditure of a limited amount of time and effort.

Comparisons between the woodlands

The woodlands have a complex vegetational structure, ranging from areas of beech trees with a closed canopy to those which are open, with few trees but with dense shrub and ground layers. Ebernoe Common also has extensive grassy glades within the woodland, some with scattered trees and shrubs. This complexity gives a wide range of habitats and consequently a high population of breeding birds with a rich variety of species.

Both reserves had many beeches which were of the order of 200 years old and were consequently coming to the end of their life-span. Indeed, over the years prior to the storm, individual trees of this and other species had been falling as part of the natural cycle. But it was the loss of so many trees overnight in October 1987 which caused such dramatic changes in the structure of these woodlands. Further losses resulted from the gales of January 1990.

Fuller et al (1995) described four types of damage which had occurred:

1. Tree damage - canopy damage: With relatively minor losses to crowns and boughs; recovery was likely, with only local and temporary effects.
2. Tree damage - broken trunks: With trunks snapped or twisted off; recovery was unlikely (breakages were often associated with damage to the roots), although some new growth occurred from trunk remains; potential feeding and hole-nesting sites were created.
3. Treefall - single: Usually in areas where some other damage (type 1 and, occasionally, type 2) present; equivalent to the normal age- or disease-related loss.
4. Treefall - multiple: The type having the greatest effect, with loss of trees, loss of canopy and damage to the shrub layer; very large quantities of fallen timber were produced, creating considerable areas of tangled masses, usually impenetrable, of trunks, branches and shrubs.

Both woodlands now have a wealth of rotting timber, both standing and fallen, which provides a valuable and abundant invertebrate population, and many potential sites for use by hole-nesting bird species.

The increase of light in many areas has led to a considerable growth in the herb and shrub layers (of birch, hazel, holly, bramble and other shrubs and ground cover), creating an impenetrable 'jungle' in many places. It is also encouraging, for the long-term future of the woodlands that there appears to be a good regeneration of tree species, especially beech.

There are significant differences in the structure of the two woodlands and this is borne out by the data collected by Fuller in 1990 (see under METHODS). This data was used to produce Figs. 1 to 3. Fig. 1 shows, in descending order, the number of trees within a circle of 30m radius (area 0.28ha) at each of the 40 survey points. The average number of trees at each survey point was 19.2 at Ebernoe Common and 33.7 at The Mens.

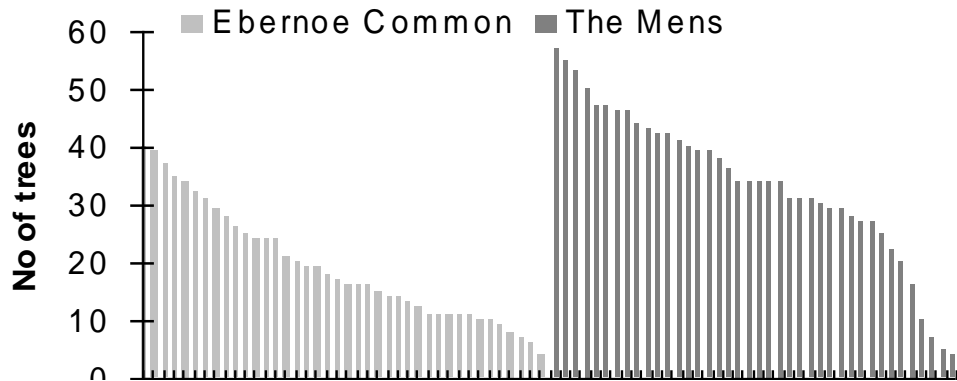


FIG. 1 Number of trees in a circle of 30m. radius at each of 40 survey points

When the tree counts were compared with measures of shrub density, it was found that the higher tree density at The Mens was associated with a lower shrub density (as in Fig. 2). The effect was much less clear at Ebernoe Common (see Fig. 3), where the shrub density was generally higher. The average shrub density index values were: Ebernoe 5.5; The Mens 4.3. This was an indication of the more open character of the woodland at Ebernoe Common and may account for the much larger numbers of warblers found there.

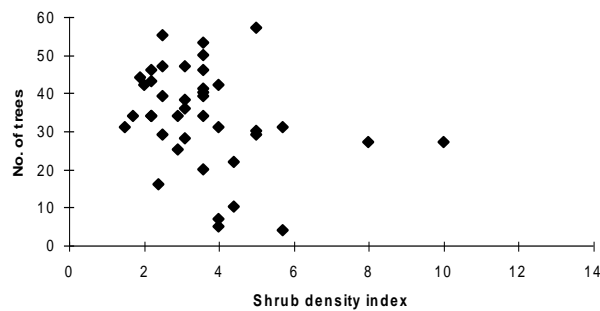


Fig. 2 Tree numbers and shrub density at 40 survey points at The Mens

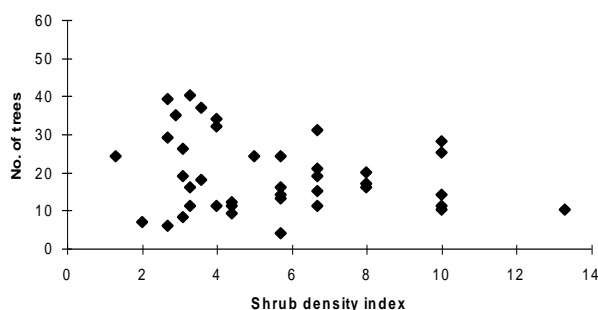


Fig. 3 Tree numbers and shrub density at 40 survey points at Ebernoe Common

Table 4 shows, for each woodland, the yearly average numbers of birds per hectare (in selected species groups) from the surveys, with the data for 1988-90 from the 20 points used in 1994.

	1988	1989	1990	1988-90 (Average)	1994
EBERNOE COMMON					
Woodpeckers	0.76	0.57	0.57	0.64	0.70
Thrushes	2.86	2.16	0.95	1.97	2.80
Warblers	2.04	1.78	1.27	1.72	2.10
Tits	7.58	6.30	7.32	7.07	10.31
All Species	28.01	24.51	22.22	24.89	30.56
THE MENS					
Woodpeckers	0.83	1.72	1.02	1.21	1.53
Thrushes	3.12	2.25	2.18	2.93	3.76
Warblers	0.51	0.51	0.64	0.57	1.27
Tits	7.00	7.64	9.49	8.02	6.81
All Species	34.19	34.12	37.37	35.20	31.51

Table 4 Average numbers of birds per hectare in selected species-groups

Even allowing for possible observer bias, it appeared that there were higher populations overall in The Mens and consistent differences in the numbers of some species' groups, the latter linked mainly with the differences in vegetation structure, especially the comparative tree and shrub density. From the average numbers in Table 4, the consistency over the three years of the first survey was striking, with the thrushes and hole-nesters more abundant in The Mens in each year. The only group which was more abundant at Ebernoe during this period was the warblers, possibly a consequence of the more open, shrubby areas found in that woodland. By 1994, there had been an apparent increase in the density of warblers in The Mens, presumably a response to the upsurge in growth of the ground cover and shrubby species in the treefall gaps - a surmise which was borne out by the results in Table 5. The reasons for the difference between the two woodlands in the total numbers of birds counted were unclear, but the larger areas of dense holly cover at Ebernoe Common may have been a significant

factor. This was not an ideal breeding habitat and has been referred to by Fuller (1995) as an exception to the general rule that woods with dense shrub layers carry more birds than those with sparsely developed shrub layers.

Table 5 gives, for a selection of species and species-groups, a comparison between the use of damaged and undamaged areas in the woodlands. The damaged areas were those where a high proportion of the trees had been blown down - the treefall gaps. Figures of relative abundance (the number of contacts of a species or group, expressed as a percentage of the total number of contacts in each of the two types of area) are used, to avoid quantitative differences due to the imbalance between the numbers of survey points in the damaged and undamaged areas (see under METHODS).

	1988		1989		1990		1994	
	D	U/D	D	U/D	D	U/D	D	U/D
EBERNOE COMMON								
Wren	7.7	6.7	10.4	9.6	8.7	7.5	6.5	7.1
Robin	8.9	7.8	10.4	9.2	10.3	8.5	8.6	11.5
Blackbird	7.7	6.1	4.4	5.5	2.4	4.1	6.5	5.4
Song Thrush	1.8	3.3	4.4	2.1	1.6	1.3	4.3	2.0
Garden Warbler	0.6	0.6	0.7	0.7	0.0	0.8	1.6	0.0
Blackcap	3.0	1.7	2.2	0.9	1.6	0.7	2.7	2.0
Chiffchaff	4.8	3.2	6.7	2.4	6.3	3.4	5.9	2.7
Willow Warbler	1.2	2.1	0.7	2.5	0.8	1.0	0.0	0.0
Long-tailed Tit	2.4	4.6	1.5	3.5	5.6	4.1	4.3	4.7
Marsh Tit	1.2	2.2	1.5	3.5	1.6	3.1	5.4	5.1
Coal Tit	0.0	1.5	3.0	3.3	3.2	4.2	2.2	5.4
Blue Tit	12.0	12.4	7.4	11.1	11.9	14.1	11.4	14.9
Great Tit	4.8	6.0	4.4	4.2	7.9	5.9	4.9	7.1
Woodpeckers	4.8	3.1	3.0	1.3	3.2	3.4	3.2	1.7
Thrushes	10.1	9.8	8.9	5.6	4.0	5.7	9.2	9.2
Warblers	9.5	7.5	10.4	4.3	8.7	5.9	10.3	4.7
Tits	20.2	27.5	17.8	22.05	30.2	32.4	28.1	37.3
	1988		1989		1990		1994	
	D	U/D	D	U/D	D	U/D	D	U/D
THE MENS								
Wren	7.3	5.3	9.5	7.0	8.6	8.8	8.0	7.7
Robin	8.1	9.5	9.9	10.8	9.0	9.6	8.7	14.1
Blackbird	7.7	7.3	6.9	5.5	5.0	5.2	8.4	9.1
Song Thrush	1.2	2.5	1.9	2.2	2.0	1.2	3.3	2.7
Garden Warbler	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.0	0.7	0.0	0.7	0.0
Blackcap	0.4	0.3	0.0	0.1	0.0	0.2	2.2	0.5
Chiffchaff	0.4	0.0	0.4	0.0	1.7	0.5	2.9	0.0
Willow Warbler	0.4	0.1	1.5	0.1	0.7	0.0	1.1	0.0
Long-tailed Tit	0.8	0.3	1.5	0.9	2.0	0.6	2.2	0.9
Marsh Tit	0.0	0.8	0.4	1.3	1.3	0.8	0.4	3.2
Coal Tit	3.2	4.3	3.4	4.8	5.0	6.1	2.9	3.6
Blue Tit	10.1	10.0	11.5	13.6	10.3	11.9	8.4	8.6
Great Tit	7.7	6.5	4.6	6.6	6.3	5.5	6.2	7.3
Woodpeckers	2.0	3.0	4.6	3.8	1.7	3.2	5.8	3.6
Thrushes	8.9	10.8	9.9	8.1	8.3	7.3	11.6	9.9
Warblers	1.6	0.8	2.3	0.3	3.0	0.7	6.9	0.5
Tits	21.8	21.8	21.4	27.2	24.9	24.9	20.0	18.9

Table 5 Comparison of relative abundance of birds in damaged (D) and undamaged (U/D) areas (see text for definition of 'relative abundance')

It was possible that birds used the treefall gaps for feeding, but nested in adjacent (undamaged) areas. However, very many of the contacts were singing males, which were assumed to be (in the gaps) within their breeding territories, although it was accepted that such territories may have taken in part of adjacent undamaged or only lightly-damaged woodland.

Using the data from 16 treefall gaps and an equivalent number of near-by closed-canopy sites in the two woods combined, Fuller et al (1995) analysed the bird counts and the habitat structure and tree species composition variables. They found that in 1988 and 1989 there were far fewer tits recorded in gaps than in closed-canopy areas; and Wrens were more abundant in gaps than in closed-canopy areas in 1989; there was a suggestion that warblers were more abundant in gaps in 1990. Robins showed no evidence of selection or avoidance of gaps.

At Ebernoe Common, Fuller et al (1995) found no significant relationships between the amount of storm damage and bird numbers. Warblers were more strongly associated with open areas with few trees, rather than with treefall areas. At The Mens, the abundance of warblers in each year was related to storm damage, with many more in treefall areas. These conclusions were largely borne out by the results in Table 5, which were from an analysis of the 17 treefall gaps and 23 undamaged areas used in the 1994 survey. Robins had maintained the differentiation in numbers between the two types in the 1988-90 period and by 1994 had increased in undamaged areas relative to treefall gaps. At The Mens, woodpecker numbers appeared to have remained stable in undamaged areas, but by 1994 had increased in the treefall gaps. But it was the warblers which showed the most striking differences, particularly at The Mens, where the numbers in treefall gaps had increased significantly by 1994, demonstrating a strong colonisation of this habitat.

The loss of the Willow Warbler as a breeding species at Ebernoe Common by 1990 was an oddity, as this had been very much a 'woodland edge' species and there had been no obvious changes to that habitat. It was of interest that small numbers returned in 1995 and 1996, but not to locations where previously recorded.

The Nightingale had always been erratic in its occurrence at Ebernoe Common, where 5, 1, 2 and 4 were recorded respectively in the four survey years, often in different locations.

The numbers of tits found were broadly similar in both woodlands, but more Long-tailed and Marsh Tits were found at Ebernoe Common and there were more Coal Tits at The Mens. Ebernoe Common had a small population of Willow Tits, but none were found at The Mens.

From the results of these surveys it appeared that there were few significant effects on the bird populations or differences between the use of treefall gaps and closed-canopy areas. No species were lost other than the Willow Warbler, which probably disappeared for different reasons. Most species had apparently been unaffected by the storm, but warblers did benefit by 1994 from the breaks in the tree canopy and resulting changes in the habitat structure. The future for the birds of both woodlands looks good, but further monitoring should be carried out. A repeat of the original survey in the years 1998-2000 would be valuable for comparisons and to assess what

changes, if any, have occurred. Such a pair of surveys, with a ten-year interval between them, would provide an excellent baseline for the future.

SUMMARY

Following the storm of 15/16 October 1987, breeding bird surveys were carried out for the British Trust for Ornithology at Ebernoe Common and The Mens, woodland nature reserves owned by the Sussex Wildlife Trust. The primary objectives were: (a) to provide data for the BTO, with the aim of assessing whether treefall gaps differed from closed-canopy areas in their bird communities; and (b) to establish a baseline against which any longer-term changes in the bird communities could be measured. Surveys in the three years 1988-90 were based on five-minute point counts of birds seen and heard within a 50m radius circle at each of 40 selected points in each woodland. A follow-up survey in 1994 was based on 20 selected points in each woodland. The types of damage caused by the storm were described and the bird distributions and populations in the damaged and undamaged areas were compared. The habitat structures were analysed and comparisons made between the bird populations of the two woodlands. It was concluded that the storm had had only short-term effects on the bird communities, although warblers had benefited from the treefall gaps by 1994.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I am indebted to Francis Rose and Ted Yates and to Ruth and Andy Tittensor for background material from their respective reports on Ebernoe Common and The Mens. Rob Fuller, as the initiator of the surveys, was a source of enthusiastic encouragement, support and expertise. I thank him most warmly for providing me with his habitat data and conclusions and for

his very helpful comments on this paper. I am also grateful to the people who gave their time so willingly: Margaret and the late Stuart Hughes, Madelaine and Frank Dougharty, and Molly and Dennis Pooley, without whom these surveys could not have been completed. Not least, I acknowledge the support of my wife, not only for her invaluable help in the field, but also for her forbearance during the long process of computerising and analysing the data and producing this paper.

The original field sheets and data are held by the British Trust for Ornithology. The data used for this paper is at present held by me, but will be deposited with the Sussex Wildlife Trust for their nature reserve records.

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APPENDIX

The following is a list of species from the two surveys, with frequency and abundance in each woodland. Totals of species recorded were 42 at Ebernoe Common and 45 at The Mens (a combined total of 47 species).

EBERNOE COMMON	1988		1989		1990		1994	
	P/F	R/A	P/F	R/A	P/F	R/A	P/F	R/A
Mandarin	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	5.0	0.2
Sparrowhawk	5.0	0.2	5.0	0.3	7.5	0.3	0.0	0.0
Kestrel	2.5	0.1	2.5	0.1	2.5	0.1	0.0	0.0
Pheasant	5.0	0.2	32.5	1.6	30.0	1.5	10.0	0.5
Woodcock	5.0	0.3	2.5	0.1	2.5	0.1	0.0	0.0
Stock Dove	27.5	1.4	40.0	2.2	17.5	0.8	17.5	0.9
Wood Pigeon	77.5	5.4	72.5	5.6	62.5	3.9	17.5	1.3
Collared Dove	20.0	1.0	5.0	0.2	2.5	0.1	0.0	0.0
Cuckoo	2.5	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Tawny Owl	0.0	0.0	5.0	0.2	2.5	0.1	5.0	0.2
Green Woodpecker	30.0	1.4	10.0	0.6	15.0	0.7	2.5	0.1
Great Spot Woodpecker	40.0	2.1	20.0	0.9	37.5	2.1	17.5	1.1
Lesser Spot Woodpecker	0.0	0.0	2.5	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Wren	97.5	6.8	97.5	9.0	97.5	6.5	50.0	3.8
Dunnock	5.0	0.2	0.0	0.0	2.5	0.1	7.5	0.3
Robin	87.5	7.9	100.0	8.7	97.5	7.4	50.0	5.7
Nightingale	7.5	0.6	2.5	0.1	5.0	0.2	7.5	0.5
Blackbird	90.0	6.7	82.5	4.9	57.5	3.1	45.0	2.7
Song Thrush	62.5	3.1	42.5	2.3	20.0	0.9	30.0	1.6
Mistle Thrush	7.5	0.3	10.0	0.5	5.0	0.2	15.0	0.7
Garden Warbler	12.5	0.6	15.0	0.7	10.0	0.6	7.5	0.3
Blackcap	35.0	1.9	22.5	1.1	15.0	0.7	25.0	1.3
Chiffchaff	62.5	3.5	57.5	3.1	57.5	3.3	37.5	2.2
Willow Warbler	25.0	1.8	32.5	2.1	12.5	0.7	0.0	0.0
Goldcrest	17.5	0.9	42.5	2.1	22.5	1.3	37.5	2.1
Long-tailed Tit	40.0	4.9	32.5	3.3	40.0	3.6	30.0	2.5
Marsh Tit	27.5	2.1	35.0	3.3	35.0	2.4	35.0	2.8
Willow Tit	12.5	0.5	0.0	0.0	17.5	0.8	0.0	0.0
Coal Tit	22.5	1.3	52.5	3.3	57.5	3.3	37.5	2.3
Blue Tit	97.5	11.7	97.5	10.8	100.0	11.5	50.0	7.4
Great Tit	80.0	5.6	67.5	4.3	72.5	5.2	45.0	3.4
Nuthatch	72.5	4.2	40.0	2.3	57.5	2.8	35.0	1.8
Treecreeper	12.5	0.7	22.5	1.0	32.5	1.7	10.0	0.5
Jay	32.5	1.7	25.0	1.4	25.0	1.3	7.5	0.3
Magpie	5.0	0.2	2.5	0.1	12.5	0.7	0.0	0.0
Jackdaw	75.0	10.1	65.0	7.9	77.5	8.5	30.0	4.0
Carrion Crow	7.5	0.5	17.5	1.0	5.0	0.2	2.5	0.1
Starling	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	5.0	0.2
Chaffinch	97.5	9.5	80.0	6.2	92.5	5.8	42.5	3.0
Greenfinch	0.0	0.0	5.0	0.3	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Bullfinch	5.0	0.3	7.5	0.3	17.5	0.8	15.0	0.9
Yellowhammer	2.5	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Total no. of contacts		878		807		733		480

THE MENS	1988		1989		1990		1994	
	P/F	R/A	P/F	R/A	P/F	R/A	P/F	R/A
Mallard	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	2.5	0.2	0.0	0.0

Sparrowhawk	7.5	0.3	7.5	0.3	7.5	0.3	7.5	0.3
Kestrel	5.0	0.2	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Pheasant	2.5	0.1	2.5	0.1	12.5	0.6	5.0	0.2
Woodcock	2.5	0.1	5.0	0.2	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Stock Dove	47.5	2.3	55.0	3.3	27.5	1.6	12.5	0.6
Wood Pigeon	97.5	11.7	85.0	7.1	90.0	9.3	50.0	4.1
Collared Dove	10.0	0.5	0.0	0.0	5.0	0.2	0.0	0.0
Turtle Dove	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	2.5	0.2	0.0	0.0
Cuckoo	10.0	0.5	0.0	0.0	7.5	0.3	2.5	0.1
Tawny Owl	27.5	1.4	5.0	0.2	17.5	1.0	5.0	0.2
Green Woodpecker	10.0	0.5	20.0	0.9	12.5	0.6	17.5	0.8
Great Spot Woodpecker	50.0	2.8	55.0	3.6	55.0	3.0	30.0	1.7
Lesser Spot Woodpecker	0.0	0.0	2.5	0.2	2.5	0.1	5.0	0.2
Wren	95.0	6.8	100.0	9.1	100.0	11.5	50.0	4.4
Dunnock	0.0	0.0	5.0	0.2	7.5	0.5	7.5	0.3
Robin	100.0	10.9	100.0	12.6	100.0	12.4	50.0	6.3
Nightingale	2.5	0.1	0.0	0.0	2.5	0.1	2.5	0.1
Blackbird	97.5	8.8	97.5	6.9	90.0	6.7	50.0	4.9
Song Thrush	45.0	2.6	50.0	2.5	37.5	1.8	30.0	1.7
Mistle Thrush	10.0	0.9	15.0	0.8	27.5	1.4	2.5	0.1
Garden Warbler	10.0	0.5	2.5	0.1	5.0	0.2	5.0	0.2
Blackcap	7.5	0.3	2.5	0.1	5.0	0.2	17.5	0.8
Chiffchaff	2.5	0.1	2.5	0.1	22.5	1.0	15.0	0.9
Willow Warbler	5.0	0.2	12.5	0.6	5.0	0.2	7.5	0.3
Goldcrest	47.5	2.7	55.0	3.2	67.5	5.1	22.5	1.4
Long-tailed Tit	10.0	0.5	17.5	1.3	17.5	1.3	12.5	0.9
Marsh Tit	15.0	0.7	20.0	1.3	20.0	1.3	17.5	0.9
Coal Tit	72.5	4.8	80.0	5.4	87.5	7.6	30.0	1.8
Blue Tit	100.0	12.0	100.0	15.6	100.0	15.1	50.0	4.8
Great Tit	95.0	8.1	87.5	7.2	97.5	7.5	40.0	3.8
Nuthatch	55.0	2.7	45.0	2.4	80.0	5.5	37.5	2.2
Treecreeper	35.0	2.1	50.0	2.8	65.0	5.1	27.5	1.7
Jay	70.0	4.6	42.5	3.0	62.5	5.2	27.5	1.4
Magpie	25.0	1.5	15.0	0.7	12.5	0.7	5.0	0.2
Jackdaw	90.0	12.5	80.0	17.8	90.0	13.4	32.5	3.1
Rook	7.5	2.7	7.5	0.5	5.0	0.2	0.0	0.0
Carrion Crow	35.0	1.7	12.5	0.6	15.0	0.7	20.0	0.9
Starling	15.0	0.7	10.0	0.5	15.0	1.0	2.5	0.2
Chaffinch	95.0	9.7	97.5	8.0	82.5	7.1	47.5	4.0
Greenfinch	0.0	0.0	5.0	0.2	7.5	0.3	0.0	0.0
Linnets	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	2.5	0.2
Redpoll	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	2.5	0.2	0.0	0.0
Bullfinch	10.0	0.6	2.5	0.1	5.0	0.3	7.5	0.5
Yellowhammer	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	2.5	0.1	0.0	0.0
Total no. of contacts		1046		1049		1155		495

- Notes:**
1. P/F = Percentage Frequency: the number of points (N) at which the species was recorded,
 2. R/A = Relative Abundance: the number of contacts (N), expressed as a percentage of the total number of contacts (T) in each survey ($N*100/T$)
 3. Forty survey points were used in 1988-90 and 20 in 1994.

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HAWK DISPLAY

A comparative study 1990-96.

by Martin E Kalaher

Sparrowhawks are now quite common in Sussex but, despite their relative abundance, most sightings tend to be fairly brief views of birds in hunting flight. Goshawks are rare and seldom seen. Spring display presents a 'window of opportunity' to observe both species of hawk for comparatively long periods. As observers, we can also gain a clearer insight into their extraordinary aerial skills since some forms of display are effectively in 'slow motion'.

Local Goshawks are most active from early March to the first week of May. Blue skies, white billowing clouds and a light breeze produce ideal weather conditions. Goshawks are heavily-built with fairly long, broad wings and therefore require good thermals before they can soar with ease. These conditions rarely prevail much before mid-morning and so the more dramatic display flights, perhaps lasting 20-30 minutes, usually occur between 10.00 am and 1.00 pm.

Sparrowhawks display from early February until mid-May. Pairs tend to display in February and March but by April it is the females that are most active and, in favoured localities, it is not unusual to have three or four females together, sometimes locked in fierce territorial disputes. It is probably the much lighter build of the Sparrowhawk which allows it to exploit the cooler weather of late winter. Display can take place at any time of the day but mid-to-late morning is most usual.

Fine weather is necessary for easy thermalling. There is no point in looking for displaying hawks on a drab, misty or wet day; choose a day when there is excellent visibility. Especially favoured is that bright fine sunny day ending a spell of poor weather. Watch the local corvidae, especially Jackdaws, to see if they are gaining height with minimum effort. Then step well back from the nesting wood, perhaps 300-400 yards and be patient! It is important that a large area of sky can be scanned easily and this will often coincide with the local high point.

With Goshawks the male invariably seems to start the proceedings. Emerging from the tree canopy it begins to spiral upwards and, if it is warm and the conditions perfect, it will soar effortlessly on out-stretched wings, utilising warm updraughts of air until it reaches the top of a thermal. With rather less favourable conditions it uses deep powerful wingbeats interspersed with glides as it climbs ever upwards, reaching heights of perhaps 4000-5500 feet. Soaring to these heights can pose a problem for the observer for, unless sighted early in its upward spiral, the hawk soon becomes invisible to the naked eye and the opportunity for viewing is easily missed. Sparrowhawks behave similarly and sometimes soar to comparable heights but personal observation suggests that a lower altitude of 1500-3000 feet is more usual.

Having reached the top of a thermal both species of hawk (especially the males) will often alternate gentle gliding with frenetic bursts of very rapid flight. The overall effect is one of great activity with no apparent purpose as

the hawk rushes around its territorial air-space. It would seem likely that this type of display is encouraged by the sighting of another displaying hawk.

Goshawks very typically glide for considerable periods, the wings very flat and completely motionless. During these prolonged, slow glides the white undertail coverts can be very conspicuous indeed and with good optics can be visible and distinctive at a distance of a mile or more (this is especially true of the female Goshawk). It is not a diagnostic feature however, for Sparrowhawks of both sexes have exactly the same feathers (but smaller) and fluff them out in exactly the same way during display. The main difference is the distance they can be seen, but in good light they will show well enough for 600-800 yards. Both species of hawk occasionally advertise their white undertail coverts in a way which is quite fascinating. Whilst in a gliding flight, the wings are flicked some 20-30 degrees below the horizontal and then back to a level position. This may be repeated several times. The white feathers flash in the sunlight in the same way as a lighthouse beacon.

The more spectacular Goshawk display flights are usually performed by the males and at lower heights of less than 3000 feet. Whilst in a gentle glide, the 'arms' are raised in the shape of a narrow 'V'. Keeping more-or-less stationary the bird flies with slow, deep buoyant wingbeats. These are sustained for relatively short periods of perhaps half a minute or so and are usually followed by a succession of spectacular stoops and switchbacks. A typical stoop measures 100-150 feet with a switchback a third as much. Often the displaying bird will resume the deep 'owl-like' wingbeats and the whole cycle will be repeated. The speed and control of this aerial extravaganza is quite breath-taking. It is interesting to note that, for several minutes at a time whilst performing this type of display, the Goshawk will often not glide on flat wings at all (a far cry from the gliding flight of the hunting hawk). On one occasion only, and on a windy day, I have seen a male Goshawk perform an upward swoop from a 'stationary' position. Facing into the wind with head up and tail down (similar to a Kestrel before it begins to hover), it powered its wings downwards and in a single movement shot up vertically perhaps 45-50 feet; an astonishing demonstration of the power available to this species.

In early spring the male Goshawk often displays alone. When this is the case, it will sometimes finish its display with a spectacular 2-3 hundred yard vertical dive. Plunging directly into woodland it is presumably aiming for the perched female, or perhaps it is simply staking a claim to a particular nest-site? Otherwise it gradually drifts down to the tree canopy, sometimes culminating in a very odd flight-pattern. The wings are held very stiffly in a 'V' shape, this position alternating with level flight. The wingbeats are deep and rhythmical with each cycle lasting 3-5 seconds. The appearance is very odd (a bit like a mechanical 'clockwork' toy) and is quite different from the deep 'elastic' wingbeats already mentioned.

Female Goshawks are generally less flamboyant than the males. Larger and heavier, they appear less mobile. They tend to glide for long periods, usually on flat wings but sometimes in a shallow 'V' especially if it is breezy. In the early part of spring the pair tend to keep their distance and there appears to be very little interaction. This caution on the part of the male may well be for self-protection (not wishing to end up as a meal for its partner before 'bonding' is fully established!). As spring unfolds there is more

interaction and now the male will sometimes dive at the female, clashing talons.

Goshawks can be surprisingly sociable in the spring with several birds temporarily coming together. In 1995 I was present on three occasions when two pairs came together. On 30th March, two pairs were actively displaying at a height of 2500-3000 feet. Not once was there any attempt at interaction. One of the males performed an unusual sky-dance; it tucked in its wings and went round in a long circle of perhaps 60-100 yards in diameter without any apparent loss of height. The action was repeated several times with short glides in between.

At a second location on 20th April, two pairs flew in close proximity, just 200-300 feet up. There was a very brief clash between the males which resulted in a fascinating, slow 'withdrawal and chase'. The second male followed the first, some 6-7 yards behind, both birds using the deep elastic wingbeats so favoured by displaying birds. Neither bird showed any inclination to extend or close the gap. Presumably this type of behaviour has evolved to prevent serious injury between well-matched adversaries.

Finally, on 4th May three female Goshawks were soaring together with a single male high above in the same thermal. There was no attempt at any interaction. Also of interest was the pronounced 'V' shape wings of the soaring females. With wing-spans of four feet or so and tails fanned they could quite easily be mistaken for buzzard if viewed from a distance.

Towards the end of April and into early May, this apparent social tolerance of Goshawks towards intruders seems to disappear and there can be quite serious clashes between males. Only once have I seen a mild skirmish between two females but it was clearly 'shadow-boxing' with no attempt at contact.

Goshawks do not seem to display much at the end of the breeding season. However, some of the most dramatic plummet dives that I have witnessed have occurred in September; spiralling within a thermal to 4000-5000 feet and then plummeting to the ground in a near-vertical stoop. The end-speed can only be guessed at, but must surely be well in excess of 100 mph. An extraordinary spectacle.

To add to the confusion between the two species, Sparrowhawks display in a very similar manner, also performing highly impressive stoops and switchbacks. This type of display is often preceded by a 'harrier-type' flight style. The wings are raised slightly above the horizontal into a more shallow 'V' shape and the bird flies with slow gentle wingbeats. However, speed of execution, dimension of stoops and height of display should, with experience, distinguish between the two species.

The male Sparrowhawk typically stoops no more than 20-30 feet but the female may perform impressive 100 feet stoops with the switchbacks one third to one half of the 'drop'. These are sometimes performed in a series of perhaps four or five in total, but generally there is a pause between each stoop and switchback. Some of the stoops are vertical, others are more like 45° dives, but invariably each is followed by an upward 'swoop'. The typical height of display whilst executing these stoops is 150-600 feet. Although Goshawks sometimes display at this height it is more usual for them to climb much higher before displaying.

Whilst performing this aerial sky-dance, the Sparrowhawk will often fly in yet another very distinctive manner. The 'arms' of the wings are tucked into the body and the hawk flies with curious little flicks of the 'hands'.

Sparrowhawk display may be less dramatic than Goshawk but it is quite as fascinating and if anything, more complex. The following accounts from my diary illustrate the scope of the Sparrowhawk 'sky-dance':

22nd March. My presence disturbed a male Sparrowhawk. Moving from its perch in a Scots pine it drifted away and began to soar, perhaps to 1000 feet and then gradually returning to its original location. Whilst still some way off, and approximately 200 feet up, it tucked in its wings and descended very slowly in a 45% tuck-dive (similar to a hunting dive but incredibly slowly, almost stalling). A female suddenly appeared, diving at the male, which immediately flipped onto its back, the pair locking talons for several seconds. More gentle gliding followed with short skirmishes in-between. Then the male performed a 12-15 feet stoop, with a 10-12 feet upward swoop. At the end of this switchback it hovered for several seconds fluttering its partially-extended wings (very much as a Kestrel in a strong wind). More gliding with short talon clashes and then finally the male soared gently to a height of some 500-600 feet only to drop like a stone in a very fast vertical stoop. Duration of display some 5-6 minutes.

5th April. Displaying male, up 120 feet; mainly gentle gliding. Whilst in a level glide it folded its wings tightly by its side and went into an undulating flight with perhaps 7-8 peaks and troughs; a real roller-coaster!

3rd May. Female gliding slowly, up 90 feet. Three short stoops and switchbacks in quick succession.

19th October. Fabulous warm sunny day for the time of year. Watching a pair of Sparrowhawks, up 120-150 feet. The female began to display. It partially folded its wings, assuming a 'bullet-shape'. It then flew with just its 'hands', fairly slow rhythmical beats (all very odd, reminded me of a long-winged Mistle Thrush). After a dozen or so beats, it tucked in its wings completely and performed a 60 foot stoop followed by a 25-30 foot switchback. This was repeated three times. All very impressive and very similar indeed to Goshawk, although dimensions and speed of execution, subtly different.

The more spectacular Sparrowhawk 'pair display' is not all that common, although, as already mentioned, females can be very active indeed during April. Often a pair will simply rise gently from their nesting wood and circle together just above the tree canopy. This gentle gliding flight is often performed very slowly. If there is a breeze they may hang in the wind with wings arched in a 'V' shape. In this position they can appear much larger and longer-winged than usual, almost Buzzard-like, and a far cry from the usual view of this hawk.

I find raptor display totally absorbing. There is an opportunity to observe, for extended periods, a full repertoire of flying skills. Given that the Goshawk is not only rare but usually highly secretive, spring display offers us a wonderful opportunity to watch this enigmatic species. As for the Sparrowhawk, it is relatively common and therefore readily accessible.

Dr M E Kalaher, Cherry House, Kithurst Lane, Storrington.

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UNUSUAL RECORDS

All the records of the unusual species in the list below are considered by the Records Committee and it may be assumed that those published have been fully authenticated. Such reports should be submitted on special forms available from the Recorder. Reports of rarities as defined by *British Birds* should be submitted on, or in the same format as, the forms available from the Secretary of the Rarities Committee.

The following list is of those unusual species in Sussex for which descriptions are normally required:

Great Northern Diver	Stone Curlew	Dipper
Black-necked Grebe	Kentish Plover	Bluethroat
All shearwaters	Dotterel	Savi's Warbler
All petrels (except Fulmar)	Temminck's Stint	Aquatic Warbler
Purple Heron	Pectoral Sandpiper	Marsh Warbler
White Stork	Buff-breasted Sandpiper	Icterine Warbler
Spoonbill	Grey Phalarope	Melodious Warbler
Whooper Swan	Red-necked Phalarope	Barred Warbler
Bean Goose	Pomarine Skua (except in spring)	Pallas's Warbler
Pink-footed Goose	Long-tailed Skua	Yellow-browed Warbler
Green-winged Teal (A.c. carolinensis)	Sabine's Gull	Red-breasted Flycatcher
Ferruginous Duck	Ring-billed Gull	Golden Oriole
Surf Scoter	Iceland Gull	Red-backed Shrike
Honey Buzzard	Roseate Tern	Woodchat Shrike
Red Kite	Black Guillemot	Raven
Montagu's Harrier	Little Auk	Serin
Goshawk	Puffin	Twite
Rough-legged Buzzard	Bee-eater	Scarlet Rosefinch
Spotted Crake	Shore Lark	Lapland Bunting
Corncrake	Richard's Pipit	Cirl Bunting
Crane	Tawny Pipit	Ortolan Bunting.
	Water Pipit	

In addition, all unusual races of Herring Gull (except *L..a. michahellis*), Yellow Wagtail (see also below) and Rock Pipit.

It should be noted however that the following species, or any other species seen in unusual circumstances or on an unusual date, **may**, at the discretion of the Recorder, require a description:

Inland divers, Red-necked Grebe, Manx Shearwater, Shag (inland records), Bittern, Little Egret, Red-crested Pochard, Marsh Harrier, Osprey, Glaucous Gull, Hoopoe, Wryneck, Woodlark, Blue-headed Wagtail, Waxwing, Cetti's Warbler and Great Grey Shrike.

**THE SUSSEX BIRD REPORT
NUMBER FORTY-EIGHT, 1995**

Recorder: RT Pepper

Editor: Mrs SJ Patton

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