

# The Sussex Bird Report

No. 54 2001



Published by  
The Sussex Ornithological Society

# SUSSEX ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY

Vice Presidents: Dr JK Irons, BAE Marr, Mrs IM Simpson

## OFFICERS AND MEMBERS OF COUNCIL AT 30th JUNE 2002

<i>President:</i>	Dr AB Watson, 83 Buckingham Road, Shoreham by Sea, West Sussex BN43 5UD
<i>Chairman of Council:</i>	Mrs AJ Wende (see below)
<i>Secretary:</i>	Mrs VP Bentley, Chetsford, London Road, Henfield, West Sussex, BN5 9JJ
<i>Treasurer:</i>	G Wenden, 2 Foxwarren, Haywards Heath, West Sussex RH16 1EN
<i>Recorder:</i>	JA Hobson, 23 Hillside Road, Storrington, West Sussex, RH20 3LZ
<i>Assistant Recorder:</i>	TW Parmenter, 22 The Kiln, Burgess Hill, West Sussex, RH15 8HL
<i>Editor of Bird Report:</i>	P James, 12 Phoenix Way, Southwick, West Sussex, BN42 4HQ
<i>Press and Publicity Officer:</i>	Vacant
<i>Surveys and Projects Officer:</i>	MV Sennitt, Dove Cottage, Climping Street, Climping, West Sussex, BN17 5RQ
<i>Conservation Officer:</i>	JS Gowers, 10 Westpoint, Newick, East Sussex BN8 4NU A Perry, Edghill Barn, Byworth, Petworth, West Sussex GU28 0HR ( <i>West Sussex only</i> )
<i>Conservation Field Officer:</i>	Vacant.
<i>Membership Secretary:</i>	JE Trowell, Lorrimer, Main Road, Icklesham, Winchelsea, East Sussex, TN36 4BS
<i>Newsletter Editor:</i>	RA Ives, 90 Downlands Avenue, Worthing, West Sussex, BN14 9HF
<i>Programme Organiser:</i>	Mrs AJ Wende, Sunbeams, Green Road, Wivelsfield Green, Haywards Heath, West Sussex, RH17 7QD
<i>Conference Organiser:</i>	A Thomas, 40 Woodlands Close, Peacehaven, East Sussex BN10 7SF
<i>Members of Council:</i>	D Green, 10 Westmoreland Walk, Shoreham-by-Sea, West Sussex, BN43 5FX P Outhwaite, 14 Adur Avenue, Shoreham-by-Sea, West Sussex, BN43 5NN Miss J Simpson, Backsettown Farmstead, Furners Lane, Henfield BN5 9HB TJ Wilson, 6 Hangleton Manor Close, Hove, BN3 8AJ
<i>Archivist:</i>	L Manns, 5 Downsview Avenue, Storrington, Pulborough, West Sussex, RH20 4PS
<b><i>Committees:</i></b>	
<i>Scientific:</i>	C Corrigan, RDM Edgar, JS Gowers, JA Hobson, P James, L Manns, Dr JA Newnham (Chairman), GCM Roberts, MV Sennitt (Secretary), Dr AB Watson
<i>Records:</i>	AS Cook, D Cooper, J Curson, JA Hobson, O Mitchell, TW Parmenter, NJ Thomas, IJ Whitcomb
<i>Programme:</i>	BF Forbes, PJ Luffingham, Mrs A J Wende
<i>Membership/Publicity</i>	JS Gowers, RA Ives, CD Law, P Outhwaite, J E Trowell, Mrs AJ Wende

# THE SUSSEX BIRD REPORT

## NUMBER FIFTY-FOUR, 2001

*Recorder: JA Hobson*

*Editorial Team: P James, Dr JA Cocks, J Curson, RJ Fairbank,  
Dr JA Newnham, TW Parmenter, RT Pepper, & Dr BJ Yates.*

### CONTENTS

	<i>Page</i>
Editorial.....	3
Review of 2001.....	5
Classified Records - Introduction.....	13
Systematic List.....	14
Escapes & Feral Birds.....	164
First and Last Migrant Dates.....	169
Contributors, Acknowledgements and Surveys.....	171
The Sussex Ringing Report for 2001, Robert Edgar and Sarah McKenzie.....	175
A review of the current status of breeding seabirds in Sussex incorporating the results of the Seabird 2000 survey by John Newnham, Ewan Urquhart and Matthew Sennitt.....	179
Map of Sussex and mini gazetteer.....	196

**The publication of the 2001 Sussex Bird Report was supported by a generous legacy from the late E.G. Robus and contributions from both East and West Sussex County Councils.**

*Cover photograph by Dave Sadler  
Kingfisher, Lancing, 12<sup>th</sup> October 2001.  
Published in January 2003.*

by

**THE SUSSEX ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY**

**([www.susos.org.uk](http://www.susos.org.uk))**



Best Annual Bird Report

*3<sup>rd</sup> place in the 2000 competition.*

## Sussex Bird Report 2000 — Amendments & Corrections.

Very few errors in the 2000 *Report* were brought to the Editor's attention; details of the more significant of these and of any additional records for previous years can be found under the relevant species in the Systematic List.

\*\*\*\*\*

### Text Illustrations:

<i>John Davis</i>	Sparrowhawk, Peregrines, Grey Plover, Dunlin, Cuckoo, Great Spotted Woodpecker.
<i>John Reaney</i>	Kittiwake and Jackdaw, Song Thrush, Long-tailed Tit, Treecreeper, Raven and House Sparrow.

**Photographic acknowledgements:** The Photographic Editor would like to thank those photographers who submitted photographs of Sussex birds, taken in 2001, many of which appear in this *Report*. Once again, the quality of the transparencies received was outstanding.

**Views expressed by contributors to the Sussex Bird Report are not necessarily those of the Editor and the Council of the Sussex Ornithological Society.**

## EDITORIAL

Thanks must again go to the many contributors who submitted their records for inclusion in the *Sussex Bird Report*. As stated previously, without these records there would be no data to analyse and obviously no *Bird Report* to read.

As in previous years, the species accounts were written by a large team of authors, namely Mrs VP Bentley, PM Brayshaw, Dr C Brooks, JA Cocks, DEG Copeland, DE Crawley, J Curson, RJ Fairbank, D Green, A House, P James, Dr ME Kalaher, AR Kitson, R Knight, L Manns, MJ Mason, Dr JA Newnham, RT Pepper, A Perry, R Prior, Dr AB Watson, TJ Wilson and Dr BJ Yates. The initials at the end of the species accounts identify all the writers to whom sincere thanks are due. Thanks are again due to Tony Cocks for editing the scientific papers and to Tim Parmenter, the Photographic Editor. Richard Fairbank again wrote the *Review of the Year* and John Newnham typeset the *Report*. The Systematic List was read by Jon Curson, Richard Fairbank, John Hobson, John Newnham, Robin Pepper and Barry Yates who identified a number of errors and suggested various changes to the text. Once again, some of the species accounts have been altered and edited to allow comparison with previous years and also to ensure a reasonable degree of uniformity. I hope that this will not cause offence to the authors concerned.

It is sometimes difficult to believe that there is anything else to be discovered about the birds in Sussex, living as we do in the densely populated south-east. Well known localities such as Pagham Harbour and Pulborough Brooks attract ever increasing numbers of birdwatchers but there are also areas of the county which are still significantly under-watched, as reflected in the paucity of records of Marsh Tit and Nuthatch in much of East Sussex. Are species such as Lesser Spotted Woodpecker, Wood Warbler, Willow Tit and Hawfinch really as scarce as the records suggest or are there populations waiting to be discovered in the well-wooded interior of the county? What is happening to the dwindling populations of farmland birds like the Grey Partridge, Yellowhammer and Corn Bunting and what about the familiar garden birds such as the Song Thrush and House Sparrow? Seemingly insignificant records can help us build up a picture of what is happening to our ever changing bird populations. Although the declines make for depressing reading, these have been offset by spectacular increases in other species, for example Little Egret, Common Buzzard, Hobby, Wood Lark and Dartford Warbler. The New Year is a time for resolutions – can I encourage contributors to this *Report* to venture off the beaten track and explore under-watched areas of the county where there are undoubtedly interesting birds waiting to be discovered.

*Paul James, January 2003*

## REVIEW OF 2001

by Richard Fairbank

The review of 2001 is a chronological summary of the year's highest counts, first and last arrival dates and other interesting or unusual records. The 257 species recorded in the county in 2001 was fewer than in most recent years, the totals for 1996-2000 being 266, 266, 257, 259 and 270 respectively. 2001 was by no means a classic year for rarities either, the highlights being the county's third **Sociable Plover**, fourth **Collared Pratincole** and **Semipalmated Sandpiper**, sixth **Ring-necked Duck** and **Ring-billed Gull**, eighth **Green-winged Teal** and eighth and ninth **Great White Egrets**. **Ravens** bred in the county for the first time since 1945 or 1895 if one is snooty about the origin of half of that pair and a pair of **Goldeneye** was noted prospecting potential nest sites. The highest one day passage of **Shags** and **Eider**, autumn **Little Gulls** and spring **Sandwich Terns** were logged in 2001, as were record counts of **Gadwall**, **Pintail**, **Mediterranean** and **Great Black-backed Gulls** and **Water Pipits**. The county's earliest **Osprey**, **Long-tailed Skua** and **Pied Flycatcher** were recorded, while the best unusual form found was a **Taiga Bean Goose**, and the most impressive escape the presumed **White Pelican**. The ornithological event of the year was probably shared between the unprecedented numbers of **Balearic Shearwaters** offshore in August and **Razorbills** at the end of the year, but regrettably 2001 is likely to be best remembered for the impact of the Foot and Mouth Disease epidemic. Thankfully the disease did not enter the county but access to the countryside was prohibited by the draconian blanket closure of all footpaths in the county. These restrictions were in force from late February until late May/early June, frustrating many observers and causing widespread cancellation of survey work.

*It was the sunniest **January** since 1959 although temperatures and rainfall were average. It started mild and wet and continued mainly dry before becoming colder, wet and windy with some frost and fog at the month's end (see [www.bbc.co.uk/weather/features/review](http://www.bbc.co.uk/weather/features/review)). Unusual birds remaining from 2000 included **Spoonbill**, the first wintering record of **Curlew Sandpiper** since 1988, and **Glaucous Gull** at Pagham Hbr. All remained into February though the last two were only seen infrequently. A **Ring-necked Duck** lingered at Barcombe Res until late January, and was joined by a female mid month, while a **Ferruginous Duck** at Rye Hbr, stayed to the 3<sup>rd</sup>. An unseasonal **Sooty Shearwater** flew E off Selsey Bill on the 2<sup>nd</sup> while 800+ **Greylag Geese** were counted at Scotney Court GP on the 6<sup>th</sup> with 220 **Lesser Black-backed Gulls** at Cuckmere Haven and 800 **Fieldfares** at Crowborough on the 7<sup>th</sup>. A record count of 2300 **Great Black-backed Gulls** was made at Pagham Hbr on the 11<sup>th</sup> and 255 **Magpies** roosted at Moulsecomb Wild Park on the 12<sup>th</sup>. The January *WeBS*' count on the 14<sup>th</sup> included 2435 **Teal** and 248 **Snipe** at Pulborough Brooks, 429 **Pochard** at Chichester GP and 52 **Goldeneye**, 2941 **Golden Plover** and 3666 **Lapwings** in Chichester Hbr. On the 15<sup>th</sup> the wintering **Wood Lark** flock at Coates Common peaked at a disappointing 18 while 190 **Red-throated Divers** flew E at Selsey Bill on the 16<sup>th</sup> and 4000 **Common Gulls** roosted at Pilsey Sands on the 17<sup>th</sup>. At this time a mixed finch and bunting flock at Patching included 60 **Linnets**, 55 **Yellowhammers**, 60 **Reed Buntings** and 50 **Corn Buntings**, with 53 of latter at Chantry Hill on the 24<sup>th</sup>. On the 20<sup>th</sup> a **Cattle Egret**, rapidly losing its extreme rarity status, was found near Greatham and remained into March, while 40 **Bramblings** at Bewl Water was a good count in a poor winter for the species. January finished with the Rye **Ferruginous Duck** being relocated at Northpoint Pit on the 27<sup>th</sup>, only to immediately disappear again.*

*The first half of **February** was very wet and unsettled, before becoming dry with fog and frost at night. Overall it was the wettest February since 1995 and the coldest since*

1996. A quiet month started with 30 **Ruff** at Pulborough Brooks on the 3<sup>rd</sup> and four **Hen Harriers** roosting on Ashdown Forest during the 4-6<sup>th</sup>. Two or three **Manx Shearwaters** off Selsey Bill on the 10<sup>th</sup> were early and at least six **Hawfinches** were seen near Sedlescombe the same day. The February *WeBS*' counts on the 11<sup>th</sup> included a county record 1729 **Pintail** and 3809 **Wigeon** at Pulborough Brooks, 1605 **Oystercatchers** and 16,733 **Dunlin** in Chichester Hbr and 413 **Turnstone** in Pagham Hbr. The year's only inland **Red-breasted Merganser** and 200 **Dunlin**, the highest inland count of the year, were seen on the Lewes Brooks on the 13<sup>th</sup>. A **Great White Egret** flew over Sidlesham Ferry on the 17<sup>th</sup> while a **Green-winged Teal** in the lower Cuckmere Valley remained from the 18<sup>th</sup> to 1 April. 350 **Pied Wagtails** roosted at St Leonards on the 21<sup>st</sup> while the **White-fronted Goose** flock at Scotney Court GP reached a peak of 180 on the 24<sup>th</sup>, when an impressive 196 **Red-breasted Mergansers** were counted offshore at Worthing. A total of 1200 **Common Gulls** flew E at Brighton Marina on the 27<sup>th</sup> while, with no nocturnal counts received, five **Woodcock** at Combe Haven on the 28<sup>th</sup> was the highest total during the early part of the year. The month ended with a national Foot and Mouth Disease epidemic rampant and the closure of all the county's footpaths.

*March started off very wet and unsettled, becoming drier and colder mid-month with fog and frost and night. It was the wettest March since 1988.* The first **Garganey** of the year arrived at Arundel WWT on the 1<sup>st</sup> and remained for two weeks. On the 6<sup>th</sup> 210 **Pintail** moved E at Brighton Marina and a **Wood Lark** flew over Beachy Head, an unusual time for one to be away from its normal breeding area. An **Osprey** over Danehill on the 7<sup>th</sup> was the earliest county record by three days, while the first **Sandwich Tern**, at Brighton Marina, and **Wheatear**, at Beachy Head, were seen; the last a rather late first arrival. On the 8<sup>th</sup> a **Spoonbill** was present in Pagham Hbr while 30 **Jack Snipe** were counted at Thorney Deeps on the 9<sup>th</sup>. The first **Sand Martin** arrived at Pett Level on the 12<sup>th</sup>, with two at Rye Hbr, where much of the reserve remained open, on the 13<sup>th</sup>, and a record 30 **Water Pipits** at Combe Haven on the 14<sup>th</sup>. An **Iceland Gull** was at Rye Hbr on the 15<sup>th</sup> with the first **Little Ringed Plover** of the year there on the 16<sup>th</sup>. Also on the 16<sup>th</sup>, 14 **Garganey**, 253 **Shoveler** and 365 **Sanderling** flew up Channel at Brighton Marina, where 500 **Meadow Pipits** were recorded, with an early **Yellow Wagtail** at Goring Gap. A big fall occurred on the 17<sup>th</sup> when at least 50 **Goldcrests** were seen at Selsey Bill, ten at Goring Gap and 20 in off the sea at Brighton Marina. These however were eclipsed by a staggering total of some 975 **Wheatears** which included 120 at Brighton Marina. Approximately 650 **Wheatears** were seen the following day, with 250 at Climping Beach and 100 in the Selsey Bill area. Also on 18<sup>th</sup> the first **Willow Warbler** of the year was reported at Bexhill, with the first **Swallow** there on the 20<sup>th</sup>. Less usual were a **Wren** which flew in off the sea at Brighton Marina on the 23<sup>rd</sup> and a **Green Woodpecker** there on the 24<sup>th</sup>. Also on the 24<sup>th</sup> the first **House Martins** were recorded, at Weir Wood Res and Bexhill, as was the first **Ring Ouzel**, near Rottingdean, in what proved to be a poor spring for the species. The first **Common Tern** of the year was seen at Rye Hbr on the 25<sup>th</sup> while 2600 **Brent Geese** flew E at Brighton Marina and an **Alpine Swift** was picked up dead in Eastbourne on the 26<sup>th</sup>. Easterly passage continued with ten **Scaup** past Beachy Head and 1533 **Common Scoter** at Brighton Marina on the 27<sup>th</sup> while 232 **Eider** past Brighton Marina on the 28<sup>th</sup> was a single day passage record. The last **Redwing** of the winter was seen at Winchelsea on the 30<sup>th</sup>, an early date, when the first **Sedge Warblers** of the year were at Combe Haven and Pett Level, closely followed by the first **Redstart** of the year, at Sheepcote Valley on the 31<sup>st</sup>.

*April was changeable but very wet overall. Some thundery rain was followed by a short dry sunny spell. The third week was cold with northerly winds and wintry showers and the month ended with frequent outbreaks of rain. It was the coolest April since 1989.*



The start of the month was dominated by spring arrivals with the first **Cuckoo** at Pett Level, **Tree Pipits** at Combe Haven and on Lavington Common, **Whitethroat** at Combe Haven and **Garden Warbler** and **Pied Flycatcher** all recorded on the 1<sup>st</sup>. The last two were both seen in a Ferring garden, the former matching the previous earliest sighting of this species in the county while the latter was the earliest county record by two days. A flock of nine **Velvet Scoter** moved E along the coast on the 2<sup>nd</sup>, being recorded at Selsey Bill and Brighton Marina, and the first of three spring **Kentish Plovers** was found at Pilsey Sands on the 4<sup>th</sup>. The first **Nightingale** of the year was at Pulborough Brooks on the 5<sup>th</sup> while a **Hobby** at Bexhill on the 6<sup>th</sup> was the second earliest county record. Five **Great Northern Divers** were seen off Selsey Bill on the 7<sup>th</sup> when the first **Reed Warbler** at Combe Haven equalled the county's earliest record for this species. The first **Turtle Dove** followed on the 9<sup>th</sup>, at Pett Level, while the first **Little Tern** was seen at Pagham Hbr on the 10<sup>th</sup>. A **Spoonbill** took up residence at Greatham Bridge from the 11<sup>th</sup> to 16<sup>th</sup> while first arrivals at this time were an early **Swift** at Sompting, **Grasshopper Warbler** at Combe Haven and **Lesser Whitethroat** at Rye Hbr on the 12<sup>th</sup> and a **Whinchat** at Brighton Marina on the 13<sup>th</sup>. Also on the 13<sup>th</sup> an **Iceland Gull** was seen at Seaford and Beachy Head while the first **Hooded Crow** for two years was killed at Rye Hbr on the 15<sup>th</sup>. At Selsey Bill a **Serin** was seen on the 16<sup>th</sup>, with another three there later in the month, and three migrant **Sparrowhawks** were recorded on the 19<sup>th</sup>. A **Kentish Plover** was seen at Rye Hbr on the 22<sup>nd</sup>, although most attention was focussed on the sea. Easterly passage at this time included 32 **Black-throated Divers** and 1323 **Bar-tailed Godwits** past Brighton Marina on the 22<sup>nd</sup>, 558 **Sandwich Terns** there on the 23<sup>rd</sup> and 30 **Great Skuas**, 363 **Little Gulls** and seven **Black Terns** on the 24<sup>th</sup>, when two **Roseate Terns** at Selsey Bill were the first of 33 recorded during the year. The first **Wood Warbler** was at Arundel WWT on the 25<sup>th</sup> when the only spring **Hoopoe** arrived for a two day stay in East Preston. Also on the 25<sup>th</sup>, 33 **Arctic Skuas** E at Brighton Marina was the highest count of the year while a **Puffin** flew E there on the 26<sup>th</sup>. A **Temminck's Stint** at Sidlesham Ferry on the 28<sup>th</sup> was the only spring record while a **Long-tailed Skua** E at Seaford on the 29<sup>th</sup> was the earliest county record by nine days.

*After a chilly start it was the sunniest May since 1997, with a cool thundery wet spell mid-month. It was mostly dry, very warm and sunny thereafter, becoming more changeable towards end of month. Spectacular lightning broke out overnight on the 9-10<sup>th</sup> with temperatures approaching 27°C on 12<sup>th</sup>. A Leach's Petrel off Seaford on the 1<sup>st</sup> was the first to be recorded in spring for over 100 years while less unlikely records on this date were a Montagu's Harrier at Brighton Marina, the first of four seen in spring, and the first Spotted Flycatchers, at both Battle and Hurst Green. The last Fieldfare departed, from Hardham, on the 2<sup>nd</sup> while a Blue-headed Wagtail at Combe Haven on the 3<sup>rd</sup> was the only normal plumaged bird to be seen all year. Also on the 3<sup>rd</sup> a Serin was seen at Selsey Bill, the first of three there in early May, and a presumed White Pelican was found near Sidlesham Ferry. It spectacularly departed S over Selsey Bill on the 4<sup>th</sup>. The first returning Nightjar was on Ashdown Forest on the 5<sup>th</sup> and a pair of Goldeneye was displaying and apparently searching for suitable nest holes at Burton MP on the 7<sup>th</sup>. Another Kentish Plover was seen at Rye Hbr on the 7<sup>th</sup> while on the 8<sup>th</sup> six Dotterel were found on the Downs above Balsdean, remaining to the 10<sup>th</sup>, and 323 Whimbrel flew E at Brighton Marina. An Ortolan Bunting put in a brief appearance at Cuckmere Haven on the 10<sup>th</sup> while easterly passage in NE winds on the 11<sup>th</sup> included a Long-tailed Skua at Seaford and 4720 'Commic' Terns at Brighton Marina, of which 235 were considered to be Arctic Terns. The wind shifted slightly, to ENE, on Saturday the 12<sup>th</sup> bringing great anticipation but the main prizes - another Long-tailed Skua at Seaford and a Caspian Tern along Worthing Beach - eluded most observers. Another slight change in wind direction on the 13<sup>th</sup> to east, seemed to make the difference for the eagerly hoped for*



**Pomarine Skua** passage and up Channel totals on this date were the highest recorded on a single day in the county since 1997. These included 35 at Selsey Bill, 28 at Worthing, 92 at Brighton Marina, 84 at Seaford, 39 at Beachy Head and seven at Bexhill. Other peak passage witnessed on the 13<sup>th</sup> included 54 **Little Terns** at Seaford and 26 **Black Terns** there and at Brighton Marina. Two different **Serins** were recorded at Selsey Bill on the 13<sup>th</sup> although three **Ring-necked Parakeets** there the following day were more unusual. An **Iceland Gull** was seen at Brighton on the 20<sup>th</sup> and the last of the year's two **Puffins** flew E there on the 22<sup>nd</sup>. The county's fourth **Collared Pratincole**, and the first since 1987, was found at Pagham Hbr on the 26<sup>th</sup> and remained at Sidlesham Ferry until the month's end, although many observers had to be satisfied with rather distant views. Also at Pagham Hbr on the 26<sup>th</sup>, the reserve having finally reopened following Foot and Mouth Disease restrictions, was an exceptionally late **Ring Ouzel** while a late **Hen Harrier** was seen at Combe Haven on the 26-27<sup>th</sup>. May ended with a **Golden Oriole** briefly in Bognor on the 30<sup>th</sup> and 1000 **Swifts** in off the sea at Brighton Marina on the 31<sup>st</sup>.

Foot and Mouth Disease restrictions prevented most breeding survey work from taking place as access to the countryside was not possible until late spring. On the positive side **Honey Buzzards** bred for the fifth consecutive year, 12 pairs of **Peregrines** fledged 21 young, **Avocets** bred for the second year running, **Mediterranean Gulls** were successful as were two pairs of **Long-eared Owls** while 250 pairs of **Sand Martins** at Duncton Common represented a five-fold increase on 2000. **Cetti's Warblers** fledged an impressive 17-20 young at Thorney, over twice the productivity of the previous year, where **Bearded Tits** raised 35-40 young with a further 40 in the Filsham/Combe Haven area. A wild pair of **Ravens** bred in the county for the first time since 1895. Less positive was that the only confirmed breeding of **Pochard** was at Bewl Water, **Yellow Wagtails** continued to decline with just 11 pairs at Rye (cf. 66 there in 1990) and there was only one confirmed pair of **Wood Warblers**. The only confirmed breeding of **Tree Sparrows** was at Rye Hbr where ten pairs nested, two fewer than in 2000, and the breeding of **Siskins** was confirmed at only two sites. Other breeding records included 20 **Little Terns** fledged at Rye Hbr, 61 pairs of **Barn Owls**, a similar number to previous years, a pair of **Little Owls** nesting in a JCB digger and 'good success' from seven pairs of **Wheatears** at Rye Hbr.

*What was to be the driest June since 1996 started cool with some thunderstorms followed by a wet spell mid month. A heat wave during the last week ended with more scattered thunderstorms. A funnel cloud was seen near Shoreham-by-Sea on the 8<sup>th</sup> while just outside the county Redhill (in Surrey) recorded -1.8°C on the 9<sup>th</sup>, a near record low for the SE region at this time of year. June started well with a Rose-coloured Starling in East Preston on the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup>, two Bee-eaters over Selsey on the 3<sup>rd</sup> and another over Rye Hbr on the 4<sup>th</sup> and a Red-backed Shrike at Hove on the 5<sup>th</sup>. Things then quietened down considerably although the only Stone-Curlew of the year was at Rye Hbr during the 9-12<sup>th</sup> while a Spoonbill was seen at Thorney Deeps on the 10<sup>th</sup>. Two Bearded Tits near Bury on the 16<sup>th</sup> were unusual, as was a Short-eared Owl at Pulborough on the 18<sup>th</sup>, the first June record since 1993. Thirty Crossbills at Ambersham Common on the 22<sup>nd</sup> heralded an influx that didn't really happen while a Corncrake reported calling near Petley Wood on the evening of the 29<sup>th</sup> was quite exceptional.*

*The wettest July since 1993 started with a hot thundery first week which was followed by cool wet unsettled conditions during the middle fortnight. The last week was dry, sunny and hot for most of the time. On the 1<sup>st</sup> 1377 Swifts flew W at Bexhill while ten Grey Wagtails were seen at Barcombe Res. A county record of 43 Mediterranean Gulls was recorded in the entrance of Chichester Hbr on the 5<sup>th</sup>, 87 Manx Shearwaters past Brighton Marina on the 8<sup>th</sup> and a Semipalmated Sandpiper was seen intermittently at Rye Hbr*

during the 9-11<sup>th</sup>. The first **Balearic Shearwater** of what was to be a record year was seen off Selsey Bill on the 13<sup>th</sup> while **Common Scoter** were on the move up Channel on the 17<sup>th</sup> with 282 past Selsey Bill and 222 at Brighton Marina. A **Spoonbill** was in Pagham Hbr on the 18<sup>th</sup> while a **Temminck's Stint** was seen there during the 20<sup>th</sup>-22<sup>nd</sup>, with another at Pebsham on the 30<sup>th</sup>. The July *WeBS'* count on the 22<sup>nd</sup> included 292 **Great Crested Grebes** at Bewl Water and 1626 **Curlew** in Chichester Hbr while a **Golden Oriole** was at Guestling on the 23<sup>rd</sup> and yet another **Serin** at Selsey Bill on the 26<sup>th</sup>.

*During a generally wet August hot days alternated with cooler unsettled conditions when hail and thunderstorms affected many places.* A **Hoopoe** seen in Pett Village on the 2<sup>nd</sup> was the last of two seen during the year. Sea-watchers at Selsey Bill were rewarded with 17 **Balearic Shearwaters** W on both the 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup>, a very early autumn pair of **Scaup** offshore on the 8-9<sup>th</sup>, at least two **Storm Petrels** on the 8<sup>th</sup> and two **Merlins** on the 10<sup>th</sup>. Smaller numbers of **Balearic Shearwaters** were seen at Brighton Marina at this time and a **Sooty Shearwater** flew W off **Birling Gap** on the 8<sup>th</sup>. A ringed **Melodious Warbler** was found on Beachy Head on the 10<sup>th</sup> and was joined by 250 **Willow Warblers** there on the 11<sup>th</sup>, when 32 **Mistle Thrushes** at Coldwaltham Brooks was the largest reported gathering. **Balearic Shearwaters** continued to be recorded with ten off Selsey Bill and 11 past Brighton Marina on the 12<sup>th</sup>. An estimated 2000 **Sand Martins** flew W at Selsey Bill on the 15<sup>th</sup> when 290 **Reed Warblers** were trapped at Pett Level. A **Great White Egret** was seen at Arlington Res on the 16<sup>th</sup> and an **Aquatic Warbler** and two **Marsh Warblers** were trapped at Pett Level on the 17<sup>th</sup> where 304 **Sedge Warblers** on the 18<sup>th</sup> was a lower maximum than in recent years. **Melodious Warblers** were trapped at Beachy Head on the 18<sup>th</sup> and present at Sheepcote Valley from 18<sup>th</sup> to 20<sup>th</sup> with a **Sooty Shearwater** E off nearby Brighton Marina on the 19<sup>th</sup>. An impressive 725 **Mallard** were counted at Bewl Water on the 19<sup>th</sup> while on the 20<sup>th</sup> a **Dotterel** flew over Steyning Round Hill and the first of 12 **Wrynecks** to be recorded during the autumn was trapped at Pett Level. Another **Aquatic Warbler** was seen on the 22<sup>nd</sup>, at Thorney Island, while nine **Dotterel** were recorded on the Downs above Balsdean on the 23<sup>rd</sup>. The last **Wood Warbler** of the year was seen at Beachy Head on the 23<sup>rd</sup> while 20 **Tree Pipits** were recorded at Cissbury Ring and 300 **Yellow Wagtails** roosted at Rye Hbr on the 24<sup>th</sup>. On the 25<sup>th</sup> another **Spoonbill** was seen at Thorney Deeps, three **Dotterel** flew over Beachy Head, a **Tawny Pipit** flew over Hollingbury Camp, 22 **Grasshopper Warblers** were trapped at Pett Level and 15 **Garden Warblers** at Beachy Head was year's highest count. Another **Melodious Warbler** was trapped at Beachy Head on the 26<sup>th</sup> while on the 27<sup>th</sup> one fortunate observer found an **Aquatic Warbler** at Cuckmere Haven and later saw a **White Stork** drifting over the A27 near Lewes on his way home. Five **Pied Flycatchers** were seen at Church Norton on the 28<sup>th</sup> while nearby the same fortunate observer found a **Pectoral Sandpiper** which remained at Pagham Hbr from the 31<sup>st</sup> to 2 September.

*The coolest September since 1996 was generally unsettled with wet spells alternating with quieter, drier interludes. Winds were mainly from the W or NW.* A total of 140 **Greenshank** roosted at Thorney Deeps on the 1<sup>st</sup>, another **Spoonbill** was present in Pagham Hbr from the 2<sup>nd</sup> to 4<sup>th</sup> while on the 3<sup>rd</sup> 230 **Yellow-legged Gulls** were feeding at Selsey West Fields and 75 **Mandarin** were seen near Eridge, the second highest count ever. A flock of 100 **House Sparrows** at Fairlight on the 4<sup>th</sup> was the year's highest count, as was 33 **Curlew Sandpipers** at Sidlesham Ferry on the 5<sup>th</sup>. A **Spoonbill** flew over Seaford Head on the 6<sup>th</sup> while on the 7<sup>th</sup> a **Sooty Shearwater** flew E off Selsey Bill and the last **Montagu's Harrier** of the year was seen near Ditchling. A **Red-backed Shrike** at Beachy Head on the 9<sup>th</sup> remained until the 16<sup>th</sup>, with another there on the 22<sup>nd</sup>, and one at Filsham at the end of the month. The last record of **Little Terns** was of two at Rye Hbr on the 12<sup>th</sup>, when 2000 **Sand Martins** flew W at Bexhill, with the last **Nightingale** at

Footland Wood on the 13<sup>th</sup>. On the 15<sup>th</sup> a **Red-necked Phalarope** was found at Oving but remained just two days while an early **Great Grey Shrike** was seen at Darwell Res. The September *WeBS*' count on the 16<sup>th</sup> included 132 **Little Grebes** at Bewl Water with 450 **Blackcaps** at Beachy Head the same day. The last **Little Ringed Plover** of the year was a single at Rye Hbr on the 17<sup>th</sup> and 5000 **House Martins** flew S at Selsey Bill on the 19<sup>th</sup>. On the 20<sup>th</sup> a **Corn Crake** was picked up injured near Sidlesham, and was released nearby on the 28<sup>th</sup>, the last **Cuckoo** was seen at Birling Gap and the first **Redwings** of the winter were heard over Seaford. An estimated 75,000 **Swallows** flew over Brighton on the 21<sup>st</sup> while on the 23<sup>rd</sup> a **Spotted Crake** was trapped at Pett Level, with two more there later in the month, and a **Barred Warbler** skulked at Beachy Head to the 28<sup>th</sup>. A total of 300 **Siskins** flew E over Sheepcote Valley on the 24<sup>th</sup>, with 160 seen at Church Norton and 84 at Bexhill, while on the same day a **Serim** was found near Ninfield, remaining to the 29<sup>th</sup>. A **Marsh Warbler** was trapped at Pett Level on the 25<sup>th</sup> when another **Melodious Warbler** was seen at **Beachy Head**. September ended with the last **Nightjar**, at Pett Level, and **Pied Flycatchers**, at Beachy Head, on the 29<sup>th</sup> when a **Sociable Plover** was reported from Rye Hbr. It moved with **Lapwings** onto Pett Level where it remained from the 30<sup>th</sup>, when the first **Brambling** of the winter flew over Combe Haven, to at least 4 October much to the delight of many observers.

*The warmest October on record was unsettled with frequent spells of rain and showers.* A **Tawny Pipit** was seen in the Cuckmere Valley on the 1<sup>st</sup> with another **Spoonbill** at Pagham Hbr and a **Dotterel** at East Guldeford Level on the 2<sup>nd</sup>. A **Rose-coloured Starling** was found at Beachy Head on the 3<sup>rd</sup>, remaining until the 7<sup>th</sup>, with the last of nine **Honey Buzzards** seen in autumn there on the 6<sup>th</sup>. Also on the 6<sup>th</sup> three **Sooty Shearwaters** flew W off Brighton Marina, the first of just 19 winter records of **Hen Harrier** was seen at Cissbury, 46 **Little Stints** at Pilsey Island was the peak count in a good autumn for the species, a **Marsh Warbler** was trapped at Pett Level and 3000 **Linnets** were recorded at Selsey Bill. Another **Sooty Shearwater** flew W off Selsey Bill in strong winds on the 7<sup>th</sup> when a **Leach's Petrel** was seen off Brighton seafront. An estimated 4000 **Goldfinches** were seen at Beachy Head on the 9<sup>th</sup>, the second highest county day count, while the last **Willow Warbler**, at Pett Level, and **Spotted Flycatcher**, at Combe Haven, departed on the 11<sup>th</sup>. On the 13<sup>th</sup> seven **Marsh Harriers** flew S over at Beachy Head with three at Pett and one over Hastings, a **Pectoral Sandpiper** was found near Upper Beeding, two **Red-breasted Flycatchers** were recorded at Beachy Head and highest corvid counts for the year included 15 **Jays** at Church Norton and 520 **Jackdaws** W at Sheepcote Valley. The first returning **Fieldfare** was not seen until the 14<sup>th</sup>, when one was at Pett Level, crossing paths there with the last **Lesser Whitethroat** of the year, while the last **Whitethroat** and 45 **Stonechats** were at Beachy Head on this date. The last **Black Terns**, at Rye Hbr and Selsey Bill, and the last **Turtle Dove**, at Combe Haven, were seen on the 15<sup>th</sup> when a **Spoonbill** flew over Selsey before relocating at Pagham Hbr from the 16<sup>th</sup> into November. On the 16<sup>th</sup> the last **Sand Martin**, at Church Norton, and **Garden Warbler**, at Pett Level, were recorded as was a **Wood Sandpiper** at Rye Hbr which remained to the late date of the 27<sup>th</sup>. Also on the 16<sup>th</sup> a **Siberian Stonechat** appeared for a two day stay at Sheepcote Valley and 2500 **Redwings** moved E at Bexhill. The largest count of **Greenfinches** was 1000 E at Church Norton on the 17<sup>th</sup> and two **Serims** were seen at Birling Gap on the 19<sup>th</sup>, with one nearby on the 20<sup>th</sup>. Also on the 20<sup>th</sup> the last **Grasshopper Warbler** was noted at Beachy Head, the last **Sedge Warblers** of the year were seen at Pagham Hbr and the last **Arctic Terns** were recorded at Brighton Marina and Pilsey Island. On the same day 100 **Robins**, 20 **Black Redstarts** and 80 **Goldcrests** were counted at Beachy Head and a **Nuthatch** was present in a Lewes garden, the first there in 30 years. An impressive westerly passage of 210 **Little Gulls** witnessed at Selsey Bill on the 23<sup>rd</sup> was the highest recorded in autumn while a movement of **Stock Doves** and

**Woodpeacons** on the 27<sup>th</sup> was more widespread. It included 250 of the former at Selsey Bill, 500 at Beachy Head and 125 at Rye Hbr and 9000 of the latter at Selsey Bill, 1500 at Beachy Head, 2000 at Hastings CP and 1100 at Bewl Water. Also on the 27<sup>th</sup> the last **Tree Pipit** of the year was recorded at Sheepcote Valley, a late date, the last **Redstarts** were at Steyning and a **Penduline Tit** was trapped at Pett Level. **Fieldfares** were on the move on the 28<sup>th</sup>, with 735 SE at Beachy Head the highest count. On the 29<sup>th</sup>, eight **Firecrests** were seen at Pagham Hbr, a **Twite** at Bexhill was only record all year and 200 **Redpolls** were recorded at Beachy Head. Last records for the year of late departing migrants were two **Swifts** at Church Norton and a **Yellow Wagtail** at Barcombe Res on the 30<sup>th</sup>.

*November was mainly dry, the driest since 1989, mild and sunny. After a warm start, it became colder during the second week, was mostly dull and gloomy during the third week and then became mild, wet and unsettled.* A **Ferruginous Duck**, presumably that recorded at the start of the year, was seen at Rye Hbr on the 1<sup>st</sup> and twice more during the month. Also on the 1<sup>st</sup> a **Common Tern** recorded at West Wittering was the last of the year as was a **Reed Warbler** at Pagham Hbr. A very late **Hobby** was recorded near Ringmer on the 2<sup>nd</sup> while the last **Osprey** was at Pilsey on the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 40 **Grey Partridges** were seen near Steyning on the 4<sup>th</sup>, the highest count of year. The November *WeBS'* counts on the 4<sup>th</sup> included 1189 **Canada Geese** at Pulborough Brooks and 1785 **Grey Plover** and 552 **Black-tailed Godwits** in Chichester Hbr, while three **Red-necked Grebes** were present off Church Norton. A count of 17 **Bullfinches** near Hastings on the 5<sup>th</sup> was the highest of the year while a **Grey Phalarope** that flew W off Brighton Marina on the 9<sup>th</sup> was possibly the same seen off Selsey Bill on the 10<sup>th</sup>. Also on the 10<sup>th</sup> 35,000 **Woodpeacons** moved SW over Brighton, a **Snow Bunting** was seen at nearby Brighton Marina and 100 **Blackbirds** were noted at Pett Level. Fourteen **Little Auks** were seen on the 11<sup>th</sup>, including ten at Brighton Marina where another six were seen during next two days, as was the last **Whinchat**, near Lancing, and **Ring Ouzel**, at Combe Haven. A **Bearded Tit** flying over Moulsecomb Wild Park on the 12<sup>th</sup> was unusual while the last **Wheatear** of the year was at Selsey Bill on the 13<sup>th</sup>. Another **Snow Bunting** was seen on the 13-14<sup>th</sup>, near Itford, and the last **Quail** of the year was recorded at Lancing Clump on the 15<sup>th</sup>, the latest county record in recent years. Also on 15<sup>th</sup>, 76 **Goldcrests** and 105 **Blue Tits** were recorded at Vinehall Street and 259 **Chaffinches** at nearby Footland Wood was the year's highest count. A **Continental Coal Tit** on Brighton beach on the 17<sup>th</sup> was the first record since 1997 while the last **House Martin** of the year was seen at Selsey Bill on the 18<sup>th</sup>. Over 100 **Reed Buntings** were seen in Ashdown Forest on the 22<sup>nd</sup>, 117 **Mute Swans** roosted overnight at Rye Hbr and 1000 **Rooks** flew to roost over Lavington Common on the 24<sup>th</sup> and 350 **Carrion Crows** were present on the rubbish tip at Pebsham on the 30<sup>th</sup>.

*December was a very sunny month with well below average rainfall recorded. Early on 29<sup>th</sup> a weather band gave substantial snow over the county with 2-3 cm in places and the year finished with severe frosts. As well as being the sunniest December on record it was also the driest since 1991.* On the 2<sup>nd</sup> a passage of 29 **Shags** W past Brighton Marina was a county record while the year's largest flock of **Tree Sparrows**, near Vinehall Street, increased to 12. An estimated 20,000 **Black-headed Gulls** were in the roost at Pagham Hbr on the 5<sup>th</sup> and **Purple Sandpipers** peaked at 13 at Brighton Marina on the 8<sup>th</sup>. A late **Sandwich Tern** was seen at Selsey Bill on the 9<sup>th</sup> and a **Treecreeper** at Thorney Island on the 14<sup>th</sup> was the first seen there since 1995. The **Sociable Plover** was refound at Norman's Bay on the 15<sup>th</sup>, remaining to the 23<sup>rd</sup>, and two **Swallows** flew over nearby Cooden Beach, the last to be seen in the county by nearly three weeks. Seven **Barnacle Geese** arrived at Thorney Deeps, remaining until the year's end, and 968 **Bar-tailed Godwits** were counted at Pilsey Sands on the 16<sup>th</sup>. The December *WeBS'* count, also on the 16<sup>th</sup>, included 53 **Bewick's Swans** at Pulborough Brooks and a county record 444 **Gadwall**, 316 **Shoveler**,

574 **Tufted Duck**, 156 **Moorhens** and 1094 **Coot** at Chichester GP. Approximately 700 **Knot** roosted at Thorney Island on the 18<sup>th</sup>, 44 **Slavonian Grebes** were seen off Church Norton on the 20<sup>th</sup> and four **Whooper Swans** were in a mixed swan flock at Jury's Gap on the 23<sup>rd</sup>. A **Taiga Bean Goose** found on Henfield Levels on the 22<sup>nd</sup> was the first definite county record since 1979, it remained until at least 26<sup>th</sup>, while a less unusual, but still scarce, **Tundra Bean Goose** was seen on Lewes Brooks on the 24<sup>th</sup>. The first **Ring-billed Gull** recorded in the county since 1987 was found on Chichester GP on the 24<sup>th</sup> but did not linger. Impressive numbers of **Gannets** were moving W offshore at this time and included 990 at Brighton Marina on the 25<sup>th</sup> and 1000 at Worthing on the 28<sup>th</sup>. An estimated 2500 **Razorbills** off Shoreham on the 27<sup>th</sup> was a county record and 1200 **Kittiwakes** at Brighton Marina and 950 at Worthing flying W on the 28<sup>th</sup> were also impressive, as were 60 **Coal Tits** in Stansted Forest on this date. The largest nocturnal roost of **Starlings** was again at Brighton West Pier and built up to 40,000-50,000 by the end of the month. The year ended with 500 **Great Crested Grebes** and eight **Snow Buntings** off/at Pett, 230 **White-fronted Geese** at Scotney Court GP, 12 **Purple Sandpipers** at Sovereign Hbr Marina and 450 **Sky Larks** near Lancing, all on the 31<sup>st</sup>.

## CLASSIFIED RECORDS FOR 2001

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

Preceding each species account, there is a brief description of its status in the county. In most cases the term used is the same as in *Birds of Sussex* although some have been amended to take into account recent changes in status. The terms and their corresponding numerical ranges are as follows:

	Breeding pairs	Winter / Passage
<b>Very rare</b>		1-10 records in totals
<b>Rare</b>	less than annual	Less than annual
<b>Very scarce</b>	1-10 per year	1-20 per year
<b>Scarce</b>	11-100	21-200
<b>Fairly common</b>	101-1000	201-2000
<b>Common</b>	1001-5000	2001-10,000
<b>Very common</b>	5001-30,000	10,001-60,000
<b>Abundant</b>	30,000+	60,000+

Sea-watching records were received from several sites. The following table lists the hours watched in each month at the four locations for which this information was available:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
Selsey Bill	42	22	93	147	194	31	44	113	90	74	74	58
Worthing Beach	4	6	22	34	72	2	5	11	15	12	13	33
Splash Point, Seaford	25	27	61	75	101	1	2	4	3	2	3	34
Bexhill/Hastings	9	4	30	42	21	11	16	16	17	21	3	9

Many tables which are included in the accounts for wetland bird species refer to the monthly *WeBS*' counts – the *Wetland Bird Survey*. These counts are undertaken on a fixed date each month during the winter, and sometimes during the summer months, as well. During 2001 the recommended dates were 14 Jan, 11 Feb, 11 Mar, 8 Apr, 27 May, 24 June, 22 July, 19 Aug, 16 Sept, 7 Oct, 4 Nov and 16 Dec although these were severely curtailed by FMD restrictions. It is important to note that figures quoted in the tables may appear to contradict those in the text. This is because counts made on set dates may not reveal higher or lower figures which feature throughout the remainder of each month. In previous years, the sites displayed in these tables have been randomly selected, invariably choosing sites with the highest counts. The tables in this *Report*, however, show all sites where any of the monthly counts held 5% or more of the county total for that month.

The following abbreviations are used in the Systematic List as standard practice: N, S, E, W *etc.*, as cardinal compass points; BTO – British Trust for Ornithology; CBC – Common Birds Census; CP – Country Park; Fm – Farm; FMD – Foot and Mouth Disease; GP – gravel pits; GC – golf course; Hbr – Harbour; MP – Mill Pond; R. – River; SF – sewage farm or works; LNR – Local Nature Reserve; NR – Nature Reserve; NNR – National Nature Reserve; Res – Reservoir; RSPB – Royal Society for the Protection of Birds; SSSI – Site of Special Scientific Interest; WWT – Wildfowl and Wetlands Trust; ha – hectares; hrs – hours; km – kilometres; km<sup>2</sup> – square kilometre; m – metres; nc – no count.

## 0002. RED-THROATED DIVER

*Gavia stellata*

### Fairly common winter visitor and passage migrant.

For this species and the next, estimates of monthly totals have been made by combining records of birds inland with the totals from coastal sites, having made allowance for duplication. The larger of the counts of birds flying east and west at each site was added to the largest number of birds reported as 'on sea' or 'offshore'. It is probable that most of the birds recorded as 'Diver *spp.*' in the winter months are, in fact, Red-throated, and these accounts should be considered together; indeed, observers at some sites seem to make this assumption.

The approximate monthly totals were as follows:

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
966	663	591	177	30	-	-	2	1	4	251	1335

Records of birds moving offshore at the principal sea-watching sites are summarised below, with estimated monthly totals for *all* sites:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Selsey Bill	316	108	108	14	7	-	-	1	1	1	108	381
Worthing Beach	13	17	2	8	6	-	-	-	-	-	11	84
Brighton Marina	656	561	564	163	24	-	-	-	-	2	150	764
Splash Point, Seaford	40	39	69	12	5	-	-	-	-	-	-	45
Bexhill/Hastings	31	5	3	12	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	51
Total (*)	883	620	568	171	30	-	-	1	1	4	223	1157

(\*) adjusted to compensate for duplication.

High numbers were again recorded at both ends of the year, the variance between site counts reflecting the differences in time spent sea-watching at each site.

The largest movements noted in the early months were from Brighton Marina and included 101 E on 12 Jan, 116 E on 18 Jan, 118 E on 26 Feb and 126 E on 27 Mar – the last significant movement. Observers at Selsey Bill recorded 190 E on 16 Jan. The last spring migrants were singles flying east at Brighton Marina on 21 May and in Rye Bay on the 25<sup>th</sup>.

The maximum noted feeding offshore was 12 at Church Norton on 21 Feb.

Away from the open sea singles were noted in Emsworth Channel, Chichester Hbr on 25 Jan and at Scotney Court GP on 4 Feb.

The first returning birds were an immature at Widewater, Lancing on 14 Aug and an adult at Selsey Bill on 29 Aug, but there were only five other sightings until November when numbers increased, with a peak of 39 W at Brighton Marina on the 25<sup>th</sup>. There were many sightings of birds feeding and moving offshore in December. Notable records included 62 E at Brighton Marina on the 5<sup>th</sup>, 35 between Goring and East Preston on the 17<sup>th</sup>, 16 offshore at Church Norton on the 18<sup>th</sup>, 97 W at Brighton Marina on the 28<sup>th</sup>, and 200 in flight off Pett Level on the 31<sup>st</sup>.

A number of birds were noted away from the open sea during December, most showing signs of oiling. Numbers on the pits at Rye Hbr peaked at six on the 21<sup>st</sup>, up to three were seen at Scotney Court GP and Sovereign Marina (Eastbourne) and two were on Pagham Lagoon, all on the 23<sup>rd</sup>. The most unusual record concerned a bird observed swimming strongly north up the R. Ouse at Southease on the 15<sup>th</sup>. The bird was subsequently widely seen in the Ouse valley, with the last sighting at Lewes on the 26<sup>th</sup>. [PMB]



0003. **BLACK-THROATED DIVER**

*Gavia arctica*

**Scarce winter visitor and passage migrant.**

The approximate monthly totals were as follows:

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
13	10	25	73	57	-	-	-	-	-	15	36

The total of 228 was an improvement on recent years with a good spring passage and late year presence.

Records from the main sea-watching sites are summarised below:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Selsey Bill	6	5	7	16	5	-	-	-	-	-	11	16
Worthing Beach	-	-	-	14	2	-	-	-	-	-	1	5
Brighton Marina	-	-	19	62	41	-	-	-	-	-	1	3
Splash Point, Seaford	2	3	3	15	28	-	-	-	-	-	-	6
Bexhill/Hastings	4	1	3	8	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4
Total (*)	10	8	25	73	57	-	-	-	-	-	13	31

(\*) adjusted to compensate for duplication.

Birds were intermittently recorded off Church Norton at both ends of the year, with peaks of four on 1 Feb and three on 2 Nov.

Spring passage included peaks of 8 E at Brighton Marina on 27 Mar, 32 E at Brighton Marina and 26 E at Beachy Head on 22 Apr, 8 E at Brighton Marina on 9 May and 10 E at Seaford on 12 May. The last sighting was a single offshore at Worthing Beach on 20 May.

The December sightings comprised small numbers widely spread along the coast.

The only record away from the open sea comprised a single at Scotney Court GP on 23 Dec. [PMB]

0004. **GREAT NORTHERN DIVER**

*Gavia immer*

**Scarce winter visitor and spring passage migrant.**

**2000:** A large number of additional records have been accepted from Selsey Bill, where this species was regularly recorded lingering offshore in both winter periods. It is assumed that birds flying past were on local feeding movements due to the frequency of such sightings and because the movements were not reflected at other sea-watching sites.

The table below summarises both the additional records and those previously accepted for this site in 2000. It should be emphasised that significant duplication is likely, but the information available prevents a meaningful assessment of the actual numbers involved.

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Daily maximum	5	14	13	2	2	-	-	-	1	2	3	3
Date of maximum	19 <sup>th</sup>	22 <sup>nd</sup>	4 <sup>th</sup>	18 <sup>th</sup>	6 <sup>th</sup>	-	-	-	21 <sup>st</sup>	12 <sup>th</sup>	1 <sup>st</sup>	19 <sup>th</sup>
Number of days birds observed	10	11	10	10	9	-	-	-	2	4	7	7

Peak numbers were recorded during late February and March; the last spring record was a single flying west on 30 May.

Early returning birds were noted in September, with singles offshore on 21<sup>st</sup> and flying east on 28<sup>th</sup>. These constitute the first county records for the month.

**2001:** The approximate monthly totals below show that fewer were recorded than in 2000:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
<i>County total*</i>	2	5	7	10	3	-	-	-	1	1	3	6
Max off Selsey Bill	-	1	4	5	-	-	-	-	1	-	2	-

\* allowing for duplication

In January a single was noted off Pilsey Island on the 6<sup>th</sup>, and then daily in Emsworth Channel from the 14<sup>th</sup> to 28<sup>th</sup>, with another single off Brighton Marina on the 9<sup>th</sup>. One flew west at the latter site on 5 Feb, with a single offshore at Selsey Bill on the 11<sup>th</sup>.

Spring passage commenced in late February with 1E at Brighton Marina on the 24<sup>th</sup> and 2E on the 26<sup>th</sup>; further singles flew east there on 21 and 27 Mar. An adult in full summer plumage flew east at Beachy Head on 9 Mar. Birds were regularly recorded offshore at Selsey Bill from 8 Mar to 29 Apr, with peaks of four on 15 Mar, five on 7 Apr and four on 15-16 Apr. Other April sightings comprised birds passing east at Brighton Marina on the 18<sup>th</sup>, Southwick on the 20<sup>th</sup>, Seaford on the 24<sup>th</sup> (2) and west at Brighton Marina on the 26<sup>th</sup>. The last migrants were noted offshore at Brighton Marina on 4-5 May and passing east at Worthing Beach on 8 May.

The first returning bird, a single that flew west at Selsey Bill on 16 Sep, was the earliest autumn record for the county. The October record comprised a single offshore at Brighton Marina on the 8<sup>th</sup>. More typical records included up to two offshore at Selsey Bill during November (with four sightings between the 11<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup>) and a single offshore at Brighton Marina from 11<sup>th</sup> to 14<sup>th</sup>. The latter bird may have been the same as that seen off Saltdean on the 18<sup>th</sup>. All December sightings came from Brighton Marina, with 1E on the 11<sup>th</sup>, 1 offshore on the 21<sup>st</sup>, 1W on the 24<sup>th</sup> and 3W on the 25<sup>th</sup>. [PMB]

## DIVER Species

*Gavia spp.*

The specific identification of divers in flight is difficult, particularly when they are in winter plumage. Those recorded as ‘diver *spp*’ can form a significant proportion of those seen. The numbers of divers recorded at the main sea-watching locations in January-May and October-December are shown in the table below. The totals for each site have been calculated by adding the monthly totals of birds flying east to those going west and including the numbers of birds seen on the sea. Duplication is likely both between sites and with divers specifically identified.

	Diver spp.		R-t Diver		B-t Diver		Total*		Number per hr	
	J-M	O-D	J-M	O-D	J-M	O-D	J-M	O-D	J-M	O-D
Selsey Bill	62	22	553	490	36	20	661	538	1.33	2.61
Worthing Beach	84	53	46	95	16	2	147	150	1.07	2.59
Brighton Marina	779	180	1968	871	122	4	2880	1063	n/a	n/a
Splash Point, Seaford	883	193	165	45	51	3	1101	241	3.81	6.8
Bexhill/Hastings	38	2	51	51	14	4	103	57	0.97	1.73

(\*) includes Great Northern Divers

No attempt should be made to add the columns, since many birds will have been seen at more than one site,

The year was another good one for divers, with an increase in the rate of passage compared with 2000. Notable movements were recorded in most weather conditions, but, as expected, winds between east and south-west proved most productive. [PMB]

0007. **LITTLE GREBE***Tachybaptus ruficollis***Scarce resident, passage migrant and winter visitor**

The monthly *WeBS*' counts at the principal sites were as follows:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
<i>County total</i>	156	98	3	10	9	7	64	110	262	255	347	301
Chichester Hbr	63	33	nc	nc	nc	nc	-	17	42	47	73	88
Pagham Hbr	10	9	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	24	30	19	20
Chichester GP	10	6	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	10	17	9	19
Cuckmere Haven	17	11	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	11	14	32	31
Eastbourne Lakes	7	7	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	2	7
Bewl Water	26	23	nc	nc	nc	nc	55	86	132	82	128	89
Rye Hbr	12	2	3	10	9	7	9	7	29	56	63	32

There were no double figure counts away from these *WeBS*' sites.

Breeding behaviour was first noted at Bewl Water on 8 Apr. Approximately 62 breeding pairs were recorded at 17 sites, with 30 pairs at Bewl Water, 11 pairs at Rye Hbr and five pairs at Thorney Island. An estimated 50 juveniles were present at Bewl by early autumn with numbers remaining high at this site to the end of the year.

Post breeding dispersal was noted from late June. Notable counts in addition to those in the *WeBS*' table included 41 at Rye Hbr on 26 Sep, 35 at Westhampnett GP, Chichester on 13 Oct, 50 at Thorney Island on 8 Dec and 115 at Bewl Water on 31 Dec. [PMB]

0009. **GREAT CRESTED GREBE***Podiceps cristatus***Fairly common resident, passage migrant and winter visitor.**

The monthly *WeBS*' counts at the principal sites were as follows:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
<i>County total</i>	315	266	10	15	11	6	308	249	460	298	399	427
Chichester Hbr	23	8	nc	nc	nc	nc	4	1	-	8	56	26
Chichester GP	30	25	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	34	38	18	15
Goring Gap	-	-	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	-	-	10	56
Weir Wood Res	31	29	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	90	nc	49	55
Barcombe Res	5	1	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	7	7	23	8
Arlington Res	17	13	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	35	26	34	36
Bewl Water	150	122	nc	nc	nc	nc	292	231	220	160	105	107
Darwell Res	8	25	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	21	20	20	28
Pett Level	22	5	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	-	1	-	14	45
Rye Hbr	6	8	10	15	11	6	6	7	9	8	13	13

Counts in addition to the *WeBS*' totals included 53 at Arlington Res on 23 Sep, and at Weir Wood Res, 82 on 24 Jun and 74 on 14 Oct.

The first nest was noted at Bewl Water on 11 Feb, but subsequent observations at all sites were limited due to FMD restrictions. Breeding was confirmed at 15 sites including up to 70 pairs at Bewl Water, six pairs at Rye Hbr and the first successful attempt at Barcombe Res.

Large numbers were observed offshore at both ends of the year, with coastal birds more widespread than in recent years. In the early months the highest numbers were in Rye Bay, with a maximum of 165 offshore at Pett Level on 15 Feb. Monthly totals for January to May were 18, 20, 37, 22 and 30 at Worthing Beach, and 92, 90, 97, 15, 18 at

Brighton Marina. The peak movements occurred on 27 Feb, with 23 E at Brighton Marina and 11 E at Seaford, and on 10 May with 11 at Worthing.

Large numbers appeared off the Sussex coast in December, with peak counts off Pett Level and Worthing Beach. Numbers offshore at Pett increased from 160 on the 2<sup>nd</sup>, to 245 on the 17<sup>th</sup>, 370 on the 29<sup>th</sup> and up to 500 on the 31<sup>st</sup>, while at Worthing they rose from 43 on the 11<sup>th</sup> to a peak of 114 on the 29<sup>th</sup>. The only notable autumn movement was 10 W at Selsey Bill on 29 Nov. [PMB]

0010. **RED-NECKED GREBE**

*Podiceps grisegena*

**Scarce winter visitor and passage migrant.**

The approximate monthly totals were:

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
4	-	1	1	-	-	-	-	1	3	8	5

A very poor first half of the year saw only seven sightings of six birds from Thorney Island, Church Norton, Brighton Marina and Bexhill.

The first returning bird was at Selsey Bill on 12 Sep, with four further sightings of presumably the same individual in the next ten days. Further singles were noted at this site on 2 and 20 Oct, with a single offshore at Saltdean on the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup>. Birds were more widespread in November and December. There were 15 sightings at Church Norton/Selsey Bill, with a peak of three offshore at Church Norton on 4 Nov, one in Rye Bay on 6 Nov, six sightings of singles lingering offshore at Brighton Marina and five sightings of singles between Goring and Widewater. The only inland record was a single at Whyke Lakes, Chichester GP on 16 Dec. [PMB]

0011. **SLAVONIAN GREBE**

*Podiceps auritus*

**Scarce winter visitor and passage migrant.**

The approximate monthly totals and peak counts off Church Norton were:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
County total	22	39	24	4	1	-	-	-	-	5	18	53
Church Norton	19	31	18	1	-	-	-	-	-	5	18	44

As usual most winter records were from Pagham and Chichester Hbrs, with peak counts at Church Norton of 19 on 9 Jan and 31 on 20 Feb. Other sightings came from Bexhill-Hastings, Brighton Marina, a peak count of five at Worthing Beach on 3 Feb, and a single at Scotney Court GP on 18 Jan.

Spring passage was moderate, with eastbound totals of 18 and six during March at Selsey Bill and Brighton Marina respectively. The peak was 11 E at Selsey Bill on 21 Mar.

Birds returned to Church Norton from 30 Oct, when five were present. The November peak was 18 on the 27<sup>th</sup>. A notable influx occurred on 18 Dec. At Church Norton, 22 the previous day increased to 39 and then to 44 on the 20<sup>th</sup>. There were also 4 E at Selsey and singles at Worthing Beach and Rye Hbr, the latter staying until the 29<sup>th</sup>. [PMB]

0012. **BLACK-NECKED GREBE***Podiceps nigricollis***Very scarce winter visitor and passage migrant.**

The approximate monthly totals were:

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
3	2	1	1	-	1	-	-	3	3	3	3

A total of at least 16 was recorded. During the early winter period singles were recorded at Selsey Bill on 16 Jan, Scotney Court GP from 18 Jan to 5 Feb, and offshore at Galley Hill, Bexhill on 31 Jan and 3 Feb.

Spring passage was poor with just two records. Singles were at Long Pit, Rye Hbr on 19 Mar and offshore at Brighton Marina on 29 Apr.

The first returning bird was an early individual at Long Pit, Rye Hbr on 12-13 Jun. More typical were two at Scotney Court GP on 9 Sep, followed by singles at Arlington Res from 19 Sep to 20 Oct and in the Lower Chichester Channel close to Ella Nore on 27 Sep. The latter may have been the same bird subsequently seen at various sites in the Chichester GP complex intermittently from 6 Oct to 17 Nov. A single was noted at Bewl Water on 24 Oct.

Records during November and December included seven sightings of presumably the same bird offshore at Selsey Bill and Church Norton, one at Rye Hbr on 12 Nov, another at Long Pit, Rye Hbr from 17 Dec to 29 Dec at least, and a further single at Arlington Res on 27 Dec. [PMB]

0022. **FULMAR***Fulmaris glacialis***Fairly common breeding species and passage migrant, resident on coastal cliffs from November to September.**

A typical set of records for the year, the large numbers at Brighton Marina reflecting the number of hours spent sea-watching at that site. Movements at the main sea-watching localities were as follows:

	Jan – Feb		Mar - May		Jun - Jul		Aug - Oct		Nov – Dec	
	E	W	E	W	E	W	E	W	E	W
Selsey Bill	3	39	109	271	8	28	18	148	1	4
Worthing beach	2	2	165	82	-	-	3	10	1	1
Brighton Marina	1302	19	4961	346	90	66	431	136	193	26
Splash Point, Seaford	127	32	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	35	11
Bexhill/Hastings	7	5	407	28	3	1	-	2	-	-

In the first two months of the year, birds were predominantly recorded flying in an easterly direction and peak counts were 231 E at Brighton Marina on 11 Jan and 155 E there on the 12<sup>th</sup>. Counts from breeding locations in March included 20 at Newhaven Fort on the 3<sup>rd</sup>, 30 pairs at Pett Old Coastguard Station on the 30<sup>th</sup> and 40 at Rottingdean on the same day.

In the spring, counts of over 100 were made on 14 dates, all at Brighton Marina apart from 239 E at Bexhill on 22 Apr. At the Marina the peak count was also on that day with 442 passing east while other notable counts there included 300 E on 20 Mar and 315 E on 27 Mar. Elsewhere, the largest count was 76 E and 13 W at Worthing on 22 Apr.

A blue morph bird that was present from January to May at Saltdean was also seen passing east at Brighton Marina 14 times during the spring but was never seen flying west

(IJW). This may suggest that many suspected passage birds are in fact local breeders that travel to feeding grounds at night and return during the day.

There were no significant offshore movements during the summer months and in August the peak count was just 72 E and 10 W at Brighton Marina on the 19<sup>th</sup>. Numbers decreased rapidly in September and, in October, the only record was of a single in Rye Bay on the 1<sup>st</sup>.

A steady return of birds to the cliffs throughout November and December included the blue morph bird to Saltdean on 11 Dec. [TJW]

#### 0043. SOOTY SHEARWATER

*Puffinus griseus*

##### Very scarce autumn visitor

Records were of one east off Selsey Bill on 2 Jan (BFF, RAI), one west off Birling Gap on 8 Aug (JFC), one east off Brighton Marina on 19 Aug (IJW), one east off Selsey Bill on 7 Sep (OM, RU), three west off Brighton Marina on 6 Oct (IJW) and one west off Selsey Bill on 7 Oct (AH *et al*). Winter records are unusual, although not unprecedented, while that at Birling Gap is the earliest seen in autumn since 1980. September and October are perhaps the most likely months to encounter this species, especially following strong onshore gales. Eight in one year is above the average, although well down on the 25+ recorded in 2000. [RJF]

#### 0046. MANX SHEARWATER

*Puffinus puffinus*

##### A fairly common spring to autumn passage migrant.

The trend for increasing numbers of this species to be recorded continues with a minimum of 382 reported – a slight increase on last year. The pattern of records differed, however, with the majority of records in the summer rather than the spring. The following table shows the totals at the main sea-watching localities.

	Feb		Mar		Apr		May		Jun		Jul		Aug		Sep		Oct	
	E	W	E	W	E	W	E	W	E	W	E	W	E	W	E	W	E	W
Selsey Bill	2	1	-	-	13	40	-	9	-	5	1	30	-	-	1	-	-	2
Brighton	-	-	1	-	25	15	7	6	38	2	64	148	5	14	-	-	-	-
Seaford	-	-	-	-	10	4	3	4	-	-	4	-	2	4	-	-	-	-
Bexhill	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-
Total	2		1		74		21		45		216		20		1		2	

The monthly totals are minimum figures calculated by taking the largest site count for each day and the larger count (*either* east or west) when birds were recorded flying in both directions.

The first records were earlier than usual with 2 E and 1 W at Selsey Bill on 10 Feb but the species was not then recorded until the more typical date of 31 Mar when a single passed east at Brighton Marina. Spring passage was noted on 17 dates in April but only eight dates in May and all records came from the main sea-watching localities. The largest count was 17 W at Selsey Bill on 25 Apr but there were no other counts of over eight in a day.

In June birds were recorded on three dates at Selsey Bill and six dates at Brighton Marina with the best count being 19 E at Brighton Marina on the 28<sup>th</sup>. Larger numbers were recorded in July including counts from Brighton Marina of 87 W on the 8<sup>th</sup>, 21 W on

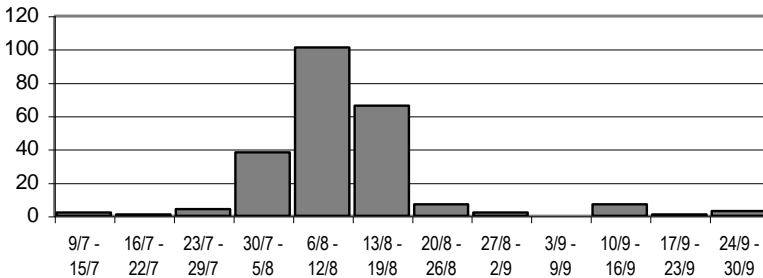
the 10<sup>th</sup> and 53 E and 9 W on the 13<sup>th</sup>. At Selsey Bill the peak count was 21 W on the 19<sup>th</sup> and elsewhere four were seen flying west at Rye Hbr on the 18<sup>th</sup>. Numbers decreased rapidly during the autumn with birds seen on seven dates in August and just one in September, being a single east at Selsey Bill on the 13<sup>th</sup>. The last record for the year was of 2 W at Selsey Bill on 7 Oct. [TJW]

0146.01 **BALEARIC SHEARWATER**

*Puffinus mauretanicus*

**Very scarce spring to autumn visitor.**

Unprecedented numbers were recorded as part of a significant influx into the English Channel. In total, between 228 and 260 were recorded although this assumes that birds seen on consecutive days were different and may therefore include some duplication when birds were lingering at certain sites. Birds were seen between 13 Jul and 30 Sep with a peak in the first two weeks of August as shown by the following graph of weekly occurrences:



The first record was of a single west past Selsey Bill on 13 Jul, followed by further singles west there on 15 Jul and at Brighton Marina on the 19<sup>th</sup>. On the 25<sup>th</sup> one flew west at Selsey Bill with another east there on the 26<sup>th</sup> and two more west at Brighton Marina on the 27<sup>th</sup>. The following table shows the totals, flying east, west or lingering offshore, at the main localities where birds were recorded:

	East	West	Offshore
Selsey Bill	28	84	17
Widewater, Lancing	11	4	1
Brighton Marina	16	52	-
Splash Point, Seaford	5	4	6
Beachy Head	7	2	3
Bexhill	5	2	-

The first double figure day was on 1 Aug when 11 were recorded including 6 E at Selsey Bill. A total of 15 on the 5<sup>th</sup> included 7 W at Brighton Marina although the best days were the 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> with 17 W recorded at Selsey Bill on both days and 7 W and 9 W at Brighton Marina respectively. On the 12<sup>th</sup> ten were lingering close inshore at Selsey Bill and 11 flew west at Brighton Marina. The last double figure count was 11 E at Selsey Bill on the 18<sup>th</sup>. After 19 Aug birds were only recorded at Selsey Bill with the last being 1 W on 19 Sep and 2 W on the 30<sup>th</sup>.

Records additional to those shown in the table were as follows: two lingering off Southwick on 6 Aug with another there on the 8<sup>th</sup>, a single at Church Norton on the 10<sup>th</sup> with three there on the 14<sup>th</sup> and five on the 15<sup>th</sup>, 1 W at Cuckmere Haven on the 16<sup>th</sup> and 1 W at Worthing on the 19<sup>th</sup>. [TJW]



0052. **STORM PETREL***Hydrobates pelagicus***Rare vagrant, mainly in mid summer and after autumn gales**

At least two flew west off Selsey Bill on 8 Aug (CBC, TJE, OM *et al*). This species has been recorded in six of the last seven years, with Selsey Bill in mid summer presenting the best opportunities for seeing it, although this is actually the first county record for August. [RJF]

0055. **LEACH'S PETREL***Oceanodroma leucorhoa***Rare vagrant**

Two were recorded: one off Splash Point, Seaford on 1 May (EDU) and one off Brighton seafront on 7 Oct (IJW). The May record is exceptional, the only other county record in spring or summer being at Shoreham on 5 May 1885 (Walpole-Bond), while that for October is more expected – in (late) autumn following a period of strong onshore winds (SE force 7 on this occasion). Two is an average showing although there were no records at all during 1993-96 or in 1998. [RJF]

0071. **GANNET***Morus bassanus***Common passage migrant and non-breeding summer visitor; once scarce but now increasingly numerous in winter.**

Large numbers were again recorded throughout the year with a significant autumn passage and unusually large numbers in the Channel at the end of the year. Movements at the main sea-watching localities were as follows:

	Jan – Feb		Mar - May		Jun - Jul		Aug - Oct		Nov - Dec	
Direction of movement	E	W	E	W	E	W	E	W	E	W
Selsey Bill	49	92	509	2239	95	213	1602	6794	39	181
Worthing beach	11	34	342	238	4	32	89	947	256	1120
Brighton Marina	601	185	3431	1052	756	483	3366	2961	251	3324
Splash Point, Seaford	281	32	1497	409	179	15	235	10	215	116
Bexhill/Hastings	2	18	504	2	4	18	7	164	2	2

The only notable counts in the first two months of the year were 103 E and 8 W at Brighton Marina on 11 Jan and 200 feeding offshore between Goring and Ferring on 22 Jan.

In the spring there were 18 dates when counts of over 100 were made, the best of these being 225 E at Rye Hbr on 23 Mar, 170 E and 44 W at Brighton Marina on 21 Apr, 323 E at Brighton Marina and 350 E at Beachy Head, both on 22 Apr and 293 E at Brighton Marina on 24 Apr. However, by far the highest count was on 16 May when 20 E and 1290 W were recorded at Selsey Bill in six hours. This represented 58% of all birds flying west at Selsey Bill in the spring.

In the summer months there were three counts of over 300 at Brighton Marina with the best being 378 E on 17 Jul, although the majority of records were of birds flying west. At Selsey Bill up to 240 were noted lingering offshore on several dates in July.

There were a number of significant counts in the autumn months. In August, 1050 flew east at Selsey Bill on the 2<sup>nd</sup> when 875 were also seen passing east at Brighton Marina. On the 7<sup>th</sup>, 620 flew west at Selsey Bill while on the 19<sup>th</sup> observers at both sites noted 500 flying east. Selsey Bill recorded by far the largest numbers in September with notable counts of 700 W on the 13<sup>th</sup>, 800 W on the 15<sup>th</sup>, 450 W on the 23<sup>rd</sup> and 570 W on the 26<sup>th</sup>. Elsewhere in September the best counts were 400 off Cuckmere Haven on the 26<sup>th</sup> and 300 W off Worthing on the 30<sup>th</sup>. Numbers generally decreased in October although on the 7<sup>th</sup> there were 520 W at Selsey Bill and 485 E at Brighton Marina.

November and the first half of December were uneventful but at the end of the year unusual numbers were present in the Channel. On the 24<sup>th</sup> 875 flew W at Brighton Marina while 300 were feeding off Southwick, on the 25<sup>th</sup> there were 990 W at Brighton Marina, on the 27<sup>th</sup> 400 were feeding off Shoreham and on the 28<sup>th</sup> about 1000 flew W at Worthing and 800 W were recorded at Brighton Marina. The presence of these birds was thought to be associated with unusual numbers of sprats offshore (*cf.* Razorbill).

The rooftop bird was present for its fourth year commuting between a roof in Kemptown, Brighton and its more regular haunt in Cricketfield Road, Seaford.

There were two ringing recoveries: one found dead at Brighton Marina on 9 Mar had been ringed as a pulli on Garden Rock, Alderney on 29 Jun 1991 and another, picked up oiled at Church Norton on 29 Apr, had also been ringed on Alderney. This bird was released at Pagham Hbr on 3 May. [TJW]

## 0072. CORMORANT

*Phalacrocorax carbo*

### Scarce breeding species and common winter visitor

The monthly *WeBS* counts at the principal sites were as follows:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	
<i>County total</i>	615	468	97	91	145	258	283	295	521	542	540	749	
Chichester Hbr	20	10	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	23	50	74	65	105	30
Pagham Hbr	214	151	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	103	156	131	205	
Chichester GP	69	77	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	8	33	21	24	
Climping	1	-	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	3	-	19	144	
Arun (Offham to Houghton)	2	-	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	45	nc	1	nc	
Weir Wood Res	16	26	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	9	nc	4	14	
Barcombe Res	48	11	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	4	13	7	41	
Bewl Water	20	20	nc	nc	nc	nc	40	60	60	50	40	25	
Rye Hbr	81	45	97	91	145	258	218	184	76	47	47	39	
Scotney Court GP	12	-	nc	nc	nc	nc	2	-	-	nc	1	90	

The highest count in the winter months was 102 at Barcombe Res on 1 Jan.

Patchy reporting due to FMD restrictions made it impossible to compare distributions with previous years. However, breeding at Rye Hbr reached a new high with 107 occupied nests on 20 Apr. There was still one nest with young in early September. There were no other breeding reports from elsewhere in the county. While maximum numbers at Rye Hbr occurred, as usual, during the breeding season there were also substantial numbers present in late autumn as nocturnal roost counts of 89 on 26 Nov and 94 on 10 Dec show.

In the west there seem to have been fewer birds than usual for much of the year. They were harassed away from their favoured nocturnal roost in Chichester GP where rockets were seen being fired over the roost in September. This followed the illegal shooting of birds the previous year. Curiously there seemed to be no corresponding increase in

numbers at the nearby loafing roosts in Pagham Hbr or the nocturnal roost at South Stoke which has often served as an alternative when Chichester GPs are part frozen. Thus the total of the simultaneous counts of the two nocturnal roosts which serve the birds from Littlehampton westwards was some 40% less than last year as follows:

	Jan	Feb	Mar		Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Chichester GP	90	101	nc		0	0	0	0
South Stoke	73	83	nc		85	94	157	213
<i>Total</i>	<i>163</i>	<i>184</i>	<i>nc</i>		<i>85</i>	<i>94</i>	<i>157</i>	<i>213</i>

Sea-watching records were unremarkable until mid-December when large numbers were recorded feeding offshore in association with other seabirds and conflicting movements were noted between different sites. The following table shows all coastal movements involving more than 75 birds:

19 Dec	Selsey Bill	108 E in 3 hrs.
21 Dec	Brighton Marina	75 W
23 Dec	Worthing Beach	176 E in 2 hrs including a flock of 95
23 Dec	Brighton Marina	130 E
28 Dec	Worthing Beach	204 E and 75 W in 3.8 hrs; two flocks of 115 E and 89 E in early morning
28 Dec	Brighton Marina	185 W
29 Dec	Worthing Beach	219 E and 146 W in 2 hrs including one flock of 130 E
30 Dec	Worthing Beach	13 E and 80 W in 2.5 hrs

During this period there were correspondingly high counts at nocturnal and loafing roosts in the area, for example 82 at Wyckham Fm, Steyning at 11:00 GMT on 15 Dec, 213 at the South Stoke nocturnal roost on 16 Dec, 144 loafing at the mouth of the R. Arun on 15 Dec, 250 at Church Norton on 28 Dec and 164 in Pagham Hbr on 30 Dec. [RK]

## 0080. SHAG

*Phalacrocorax aristotelis*

### Scarce winter visitor and passage migrant.

Unusually large numbers were recorded at the end of the year. The approximate minimum monthly totals were as follows:

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
7	3	3	11	8	1	1	5	10	14	27	71

In the first three months of the year, only scattered singles were recorded along the coast, other than two at Newhaven Hbr in early January and three lingering at Brighton Marina throughout. Spring records were also all singles apart from 2 E at Selsey Bill on 7 Apr, 2 E at Brighton Marina on 22 Apr and another 2 E there on 10 May.

One at sea off Camber on 27 Jun was unusual while a juvenile at Brighton Marina on 29 Jul was more typical. Records in August and September were fairly uneventful although up to five were present off Selsey Bill. October gales brought more unusual records with five at Pevensey Bridge Level on the 6<sup>th</sup>, five sheltering in Brighton Marina on the 8<sup>th</sup> and a single at Bewl Water on the 17<sup>th</sup>, the latter the only record away from the coast for the year.

An influx occurred in November and continued throughout December. Birds were recorded frequently at Selsey Bill and Brighton Marina although to allow for possible duplication only the highest day counts and highest number of birds moving east or west have been used to calculate the monthly totals in the table. At Selsey Bill, the totals recorded were 54 E and two offshore in November and 109 E, 1 W and six offshore in December. At Brighton Marina the monthly totals were 21 E and 39 W in November and

14 E and 115 W in December while the highest day counts there were nine on several dates in November and a new county record of 29 W on 2 Dec (IJW). Elsewhere, numbers were smaller although up to nine were off Seaford and seven off Widewater, Lancing in December. [TJW]

0095. **BITTERN**

*Botaurus stellaris*

**Very scarce winter visitor.**

The approximate monthly totals were as follows:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Monthly total	4	4	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	1	4	3
Down Level	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
Pett Level	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	-
Rye Hbr	4	4	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	1	4	2

As the table shows, the bulk of the records were again for Castle Water, Rye Hbr where birds were present up to 13 Apr and from 24 Oct. Four were recorded on 14, 16 and 24 Jan, 19 Feb, and, 24, 26, and 27 Nov. Perhaps related to these were single birds at Pett Level on 27 Oct and 4 Nov. The only other sighting was a single at Down Level, Pevensy on 10 Dec. The records suggest a total of nine different birds, allowing for likely duplication in the far east of the county. [PJ]

0098. **LITTLE BITTERN**

*Ixobrychus minutus*

**Rare vagrant**

**2000:** A male at Filsham Reedbed on 29 May (KMJ, SCR) has been accepted by *British Birds*. It is the 31<sup>st</sup> county record but only the third since 1988. Most records have been in spring. [RJF]

0111. **CATTLE EGRET**

*Bulbulcus ibis*

**Rare vagrant**

One at Manor Fm, Greatham from 20 Jan to at least 11 Mar (ACo, JAH, ES *et al*) has been accepted by *British Birds*. It is the eleventh to be recorded in the county, but the fifth since 1998. All records have been during January to May. A record photograph was published in *Birding World* (14:50). [RJF]

0119. **LITTLE EGRET**

*Egretta garzetta*

**Formerly rare, but now a fairly common autumn and winter visitor.**

Records were submitted for every month of the year, the majority associated with the coast, tidal estuaries and rivers. In total, about 650 records were received and a summary of these for each month is tabulated below:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
No of records	60	41	37	36	54	38	74	76	64	60	61	51
No of sightings	365	343	201	189	193	154	705	514	709	727	895	394

Thorney Deepes	156	128	121	92	17	81	117	133	166	186	110	58
Chichester Hbr	-	-	-	-	-	-	105	117	157	192	138	29
Sidlesham	43	51	-	-	-	-	58	-	72	-	63	46
Pagham Hbr	10	14	-	-	6	12	23	38	24	24	33	55
Pulborough Brooks	1	1	4	3	3	3	2	3	0	1	1	1
Cuckmere Haven	10	8	-	2	6	1	25	26	21	15	12	17
Rye Hbr	10	13	13	10	4	2	29	44	34	32	33	29

The number of records was directly abstracted from the Society's database while the number of sightings was similarly taken but corrected for duplication. The numbers given for each site are the maximum counted on a single day during each month. As the table shows, the largest numbers of egrets were recorded in the vicinity of Chichester and Pagham Hbrs and at Cuckmere Haven and Rye Hbr. Inland records, involving generally single figure numbers, came from various brooks, levels and reservoirs. At the latter sites of Bewl Water, Weir Wood, Arlington, Barcombe and Darwell Res, one to three (total 51) egrets were seen between 9 Jul and 14 Nov on 29 separate days.

A few egrets (1-12) were seen flying east at coastal sites from early January to early May including 12 at Combe Haven on 6 May. Two flew in off the sea at Shoreham Hbr on 29 Oct.

Despite the presence of egret colonies in other south coast counties, there were no records indicative of breeding.

An interesting dietary record from Frog Firle, Alfriston on 29 Sep described an egret perched on a hawthorn hedge eating the berries (haws), a food item not listed in *BWP*. [JAC]

## 0021. GREAT WHITE EGRET

*Egretta alba*

### Very rare vagrant.

One flew east over Sidlesham Ferry on 17 Feb (SJP) and one was present at Arlington Res on 16 Aug (PRC). Both records have been accepted by *British Birds* and take the county total to nine. With three records in 2000 and two in 2001 the status of this species is changing dramatically. Records are spread widely throughout the year with a maximum of two being seen in February, March and August, but none in May, September or December. [RJF]

0122. **GREY HERON***Ardea cineria***Fairly common resident.**

The monthly *WeBS'* counts at the principal sites were as follows:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
<i>County total</i>	119	66	1	1	3	4	36	58	147	127	190	117
Chichester Hbr	26	23	nc	nc	nc	nc	14	33	30	39	34	16
Pagham Hbr	6	1	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	14	8	10	8
Chichester GP	6	5	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	4	5	3	3
Amberley Wild Brooks	4	-	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	3	8	6	3
Pulborough Brooks	5	5	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	9	6	9	5
Lower Adur Estuary	-	-	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	-	-	8	8
Weir Wood Res	6	3	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	3	nc	2	2
Newhaven	3	-	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	6	nc	4	8
Glynde Levels	3	7	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	5	4	nc	5
Cuckmere Haven	17	4	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	11	13	11	15
Eastbourne Lakes	6	-	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	5	3	nc	3
Bewl Water	5	2	nc	nc	nc	nc	12	6	12	5	66	8
Pett Level	-	-	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	5	1	-	1	-
Rye Hbr	9	2	1	1	3	4	10	13	18	15	3	13

Due to FMD restrictions it was not possible to count some heronries during the breeding season, and others could only be counted from a distance. There was a significant increase at Parham, from 17 in 2000 to 25 this year, but overall the county population seems to have been about the same as last year. At Weir Wood at least 18 young fledged from 11 or more nests, and at Pebsham two pairs raised seven young. Available counts for individual heronries, listed from west to east, were as follows:

Fishbourne 9; Pagham nc; Flansham 11; Warningcamp 6; Parham 25; Knepp 18; Warnham 7; Henfield 24; Ardingly 8; Weir Wood Res 11; Iford nc; Firle nc; Charleston 19; Hadlow Down nc; Eridge 4; Glynleigh nc; Wartling, Horsebridge Road 14; Burwash 3+; Pebsham 2; Winchelsea nc; Leasam nc.

During the rest of the year single birds and small groups of Herons were seen feeding or loafing in suitable habitat throughout the county. No concentrations of over 20 birds were reported. At Chichester GP in April a single bird was seen to fly off with an adult Little Grebe, and in December ten birds followed a dredger at Pett, feeding on swan mussels brought up by the machine. [ABW]

0134. **WHITE STORK***Ciconia ciconia***A rare vagrant, mainly in the spring**

A juvenile drifted slowly north over the A27 at Kingston, Lewes on 27 Aug (ARK). In addition a colour-ringed bird ("AX") traced back to Bristol Zoo was present in the Donnington/Pagham Hbr area during 13 Jan-17 Feb, it had earlier been seen in Surrey (*Birding World* 14:7). This species is not an infrequent escape from captivity as the Donnington individual demonstrates and the highest degree of suspicion is usually associated with unseasonal records. Excluding obvious escapes, 13 have been recorded since 1990. Five of these were in August or September and five in May. [RJF]

## 0144. SPOONBILL

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

The first-winter bird found at Pagham Hbr in Oct 2000 (*SxBR* 53:29) remained until 6 Feb (mo) and was presumably the individual seen at Thorny Deepes on 14-15 Jan (CBC, MAC). Adults were then seen at Pagham Hbr on 8 Mar (TJE) and Greatham Bridge from 11 to 16 Apr (ARK *et al*), a first-summer at Thorney Deepes on 10 Jun (CBC, MAC) and another adult at Pagham Hbr on 18-19 Jul (TJE *et al*). In autumn, a first-summer bird was seen at Thorney Deepes on 25 Aug (CBC), a juvenile at Pagham Hbr from 2 to 4 Sep (TJE, BJ *et al*), an adult that flew north over Seaford Head on 6 Sep (JCS, CWh), and an adult at Pagham Hbr on 2-3 Oct (TJE *et al*). A first-winter that flew south-west over Selsey West Fields on 15 Oct (OM) was presumably that seen at Pagham Hbr from 16 Oct to 4 Nov (TJE *et al*). Ten individuals is well above the recent annual average of about four per year, although 14 were recorded in 2000. This species can occur in the county at any time, although occurrences are most likely in autumn (August-October). [RJF]

## 0132. MUTE SWAN

*Cygnus olor***Fairly common resident**

The monthly *WeBS*' counts at the principal sites were as follows:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
<i>County total</i>	534	486	2	14	21	79	160	122	663	588	818	737
Chichester Hbr	33	47	nc	nc	nc	nc	36	71	150	70	95	128
Chichester GP	39	42	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	46	96	106	96
Climping	11	10	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	71	78	86	37
Wicks Farm Res	5	38	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	3	-	3	-
Arundel WWT	38	41	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	33
Arun (Offham to Houghton)	40	14	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	11	nc	8	nc
Amberley Wild Brooks	37	16	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	22	36	42	57
Pulborough Brooks	29	15	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	14	21	12	10
Widewater Lancing	27	20	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	8	8	11	13
Adur (Steyning-Henfield)	-	-	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	23	18	53	38
Henfield Brooks	77	74	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	6	41	36	40
Lower Ouse Valley	35	16	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	16	3	80	44
Cuckmere Haven	4	13	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	26	43	39	23
Eastbourne Lakes	65	32	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	58	13	40	35
Langney	11	11	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	38	nc	36	23
Bewl Water	-	-	nc	nc	nc	nc	10	11	12	2	-	-
Pett Level	3	27	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	-	5	3	3	3
Rye Hbr	7	nc	2	14	21	79	51	27	28	21	14	33
Scotney Court GP	-	-	nc	nc	nc	nc	63	13	15	nc	17	-

New Year's Day saw 95 birds on the upper Adur Levels between Bines Bridge and Bramber including a herd of 45 at Easton Fm, Henfield; by contrast only six birds were recorded between Bramber and Shoreham on that day. Other significant counts during the first winter period included 36 at Marsh Fm, Yapton on 7 Jan, 84 on the upper Adur Levels on 27 Jan, 42 at Sefter Fm, Pagham on 5 Feb and 66 in the Brede Valley on 11 Feb. In March the only counts of any size came from Ford in the Arun Valley where there was a herd of 69 on the 3<sup>rd</sup>, reducing to 66 on the 18<sup>th</sup>, and 66 on Burpham Levels on the 5<sup>th</sup>.



The first record of breeding having commenced came from near Bramber on 25 Feb. A further 35 pairs were reported during the spring and summer from 21 widely scattered localities. Information on breeding success was patchy; one juvenile survived fox predation from nesting attempts by three pairs at Combe Haven, a sample of six nests at Chichester GPs revealed that one failed at the egg stage whilst the other five hatched 31 young of which 28 fledged, and two nests at Brooklands, Worthing raised four and three cygnets respectively. Three pairs at Shinewater Lake, Eastbourne had seven juveniles with them on 11 June. Non-breeding herds included 53 at Fishbourne in Chichester Hbr on 27 May, 67 in the lower Cuckmere Valley on 17 June, 77 at Castle Water, Rye Hbr on 24 June, 48 in the lower Adur Valley on 12 July and 107 in Fishbourne Channel on 16 July. In August 37 birds were on the R. Adur between the railway and the old toll bridge at Shoreham on the 5<sup>th</sup>.

Herds gathering for the winter were noticeable by November; 70 were on Henfield Levels on the 3<sup>rd</sup>, 82 on Ivy Lake, Chichester GPs on the 19<sup>th</sup>, 117 roosted overnight on Castle Water, Rye Hbr on the 24<sup>th</sup> and flew off early next morning towards Brede Levels, whilst 52 were feeding on a green crop at Ford that day. Counts at Ford varied between 35 on 2 Dec and 70 on the 16<sup>th</sup>; 50 birds were on Henfield Levels on the 15<sup>th</sup>, 56 on Steyning Levels on Christmas Day and the year ended with 133 flying to roost at Castle Water, Rye Hbr on the 31<sup>st</sup>. [MJM]

0153. **BEWICK'S SWAN**

*Cygnus columbianus*

**Scarce winter visitor and passage migrant.**

The monthly *WeBS'* counts were as follows:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
<i>County total</i>	71	28	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	29	53
Arun (Offham to Houghton)	26	14	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	-	nc	-	nc
Bury Brooks	-	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	-	-	4	-
Amberley Wild Brooks	45	14	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	-	-	4	-
Pulborough Brooks	-	-	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	-	-	14	53
Rye Hbr	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	7	-

In the first winter period, the largest counts in the Arun Valley were of 32 at Greatham Bridge on 2 Jan and 28 that flew south over Arundel WWT at 07:40 GMT on 19<sup>th</sup>. The peak count in the Adur Valley was of nine on Steyning Levels on 2 Feb while elsewhere two were noted in Pagham Hbr on 13 Jan during an SOS field outing, two adults departed from Combe Haven on the morning of 14 Jan, and five were on Lewes Brooks on 4 Feb. Eighteen birds, including one immature, seen with 66 Mute Swans on Burpham Levels on 5 Mar was the last record of the 2000/2001 winter.

Five birds flying east over Harbour Fm, Rye Hbr, and the same number on Pulborough North Brooks, both on 1 Nov were the first returning birds noted; three birds were on Henfield Levels on 3 Nov and seven flew over Castle Water, Rye Hbr the next day. An unusual record was of an adult and an immature seen flying south over the Old Airstrip on Ashdown Forest at 16:15 GMT on 10 Nov.

Numbers in the Arun Valley built up to a maximum of 53 at Pulborough Brooks during December while 28, including seven immatures, left the Arundel WWT roost at 07:50 GMT on both 27 and 28 Dec, *ca.* 40 left at 08:05 GMT on the 30<sup>th</sup> and 41 the next morning. These may have been some of the 32 adults and 13 immatures recorded on Burpham Levels on the 30<sup>th</sup>. Records from the east of the county in the second half of

December were of four flying over Long Pit, Rye Hbr on the 17<sup>th</sup>, two adults on Lewes Brooks on the 22<sup>nd</sup>, two adults and an immature at Norman's Bay and one at Jury's Gap on the 23<sup>rd</sup>, and two along the shore at Pett Level on the 31<sup>st</sup>. [MJM]

0154. **WHOOPER SWAN**

*Cygnus cygnus*

**Very scarce winter visitor and passage migrant**

One at Glynde Levels on 18 Jan (IJW) and four, in a mixed herd of Mute Swans and a single Bewick's Swan, at Jury's Gap on 23 Dec (CAH, JCH *et al*) were the only records of wild birds. A feral bird, present in the Adur Valley since 1999, was again reported in January, November and December. [MJM]

0157.01 **TAIGA BEAN GOOSE**

*Anser fabalis*

**A very rare winter visitor.**

A single bird with a mixed flock of White-fronted and Greylag Geese near Streatham Manor, Henfield Levels from 22 to 26 Dec (ARK *et al*) was the first definite record of this form in the county since 1979. A recent review of the status of the Bean Goose in Sussex (SxBR 52: 176-180) identified just three definite records of this form in the county (1968, 1976, 1979) totalling 25 individuals. [AH/PJ]

0157.02 **TUNDRA BEAN GOOSE**

*Anser rossicus*

**A rare winter visitor.**

The only record was of two on Lewes Brooks on 24 Dec (MJH, ARK). There have now been 14 definite records of this form in the county totalling 66 individuals. [AH/PJ]

0158. **PINK-FOOTED GOOSE**

*Anser brachyrhynchus*

**Very scarce winter visitor and passage migrant. Also recorded as a feral bird.**

The only record was of a single bird of unknown origin at Arlington Res from 23 Sep to 20 Oct. The location and extended stay suggest that it was unlikely to have been a wild bird. [AH]

0159. **WHITE-FRONTED GOOSE**

*Anser albifrons*

**Scarce winter visitor and passage migrant.**

As in previous recent winters Scotney Court GP, on the border of East Sussex and Kent, was virtually the only place in the county to see this species during the first half of the year. The wintering flock rose from 45 on 5 Jan to 120 on the 26<sup>th</sup> and peaked at 180 on 24 Feb. The only evidence of migration was a flock of 30 E over Pagham Hbr on 11 Feb, the third year running that a small flock has been noted heading east at this time of year. A solitary bird seen at Brooklands, Worthing on 8 Apr was most likely a feral bird.

After a slow start with just two birds reported at Bewl Water on 14 Nov and three seen in flight over Rye Hbr and Pett Level on 9 Dec, the second winter period proved to be the best for quite a few years, with records received from many sites during December. At Scotney Court GP the wintering flock built up from 28 on the 12<sup>th</sup> to a high of 230 on the 31<sup>st</sup>. Elsewhere up to 18 were present on Pevensey Levels from the 10<sup>th</sup> onwards, 18 in the lower Cuckmere Valley and 12 on Henfield Levels, both from the 15<sup>th</sup>, and a flock of 13 (including three immatures) which was seen heading north-west over Emsworth Channel, Chichester Hbr on the 14<sup>th</sup> before settling in the Pagham Hbr area the following day.

There were also several reports of flocks on the move including 18 over Pulborough Brooks on the 10 Dec, 45 over Pilsley Island, Chichester Hbr on the 15<sup>th</sup>, 18 NW over Normans Bay on the 23<sup>rd</sup> and eight over Rye Hbr on the 31<sup>st</sup>. [AH]

## 0161. GREYLAG GOOSE

*Anser anser*

**Fairly common introduced resident and winter visitor, scarce passage migrant.**

The monthly *WeBS*' counts at the principal sites were as follows:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
<i>County total</i>	325	367	27	16	19	18	249	287	513	392	843	78
Pulborough Brooks	14	22	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	124	269	200	4
Henfield Brooks	-	15	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	-	-	1	31
Ardingly Res	90	-	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	4	94	91	nc
Weir Wood Res	140	1	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	300	nc	-	-
Glynde Levels	1	8	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	80	11	nc	4
Pevensey Levels	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	24
Rye Hbr	-	8	27	16	19	18	12	-	-	2	-	2
Scotney Court GP	66	284	nc	nc	nc	nc	234	282	1	nc	550	11

The biggest count of the year was 800+ at Scotney Court GP on 6 Jan, with 330 still present on 13 Feb. The only other notable counts were 90 at Ardingly Res and 140 at Weir Wood Res during the *WeBS*' count of 14 Jan, and 40 at Coldwaltham on 26 Jan. Elsewhere a wide scattering of single figure counts were noted across the county. The only sea-watching records came from Brighton Marina: 6 E on 27 Feb, 6 E on 29 Mar and 5 E on 27 Apr.

Few breeding records were received this year, one pair with two young at Pett Level, and three nesting pairs at Rye Hbr being the sum total.

The only large flocks recorded in June were 90 at Ardingly Res on the 19<sup>th</sup> and 103 on Broomhill Level on the 26<sup>th</sup> prior to the build up of post breeding flocks at traditional sites. At Weir Wood Res numbers rose from only 12 on 16 Jul to 147 on 25 Aug before reaching a peak of 376 on 23 Sep. At Scotney Court GP 282 birds were present on 19 Aug, but only one was recorded on the *WeBS*' count of 16 Sep, before rising again to an autumn peak of 550 on 4 Nov. At Pulborough Brooks numbers reached 100 on 15 Aug and peaked at 225 on 7 Oct. The only other notable flocks were 160 at Glynde Levels on 2 Sep and 94 at Ardingly Res on 7 Oct.

As usual, late autumn records were few and far between, the only double figure counts being 32 at Rye Hbr on 19 Nov, 24 on Pulborough Brooks on 16 Dec, ten at Weir Wood Res on 26 Dec, and a flock of up to 36 birds on Henfield Levels between 16 Dec and the end of the year. [AH]

**Common introduced resident and partial migrant.**

The *WeBS*' counts from principal sites were as follows:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
<i>County total</i>	1596	919	33	26	37	21	579	524	2424	2117	2694	2738
Chichester Hbr	78	52	nc	nc	nc	nc	12	120	189	180	88	83
Petworth Park	120	29	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	296	1	27
Swanbourne Lake	120	120	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	110	150	50	10
Amberley Wild Brooks	70	93	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	12	266	1	30
Waltham Brooks	1	-	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	-	3	434	295
Pulborough Brooks	90	16	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	72	526	995	1189
Barcombe Res	18	25	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	62	176	-	141
Glynde Levels	58	101	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	150	48	nc	-
Arlington Res	-	-	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	823	250	1	-
Cuckmere Haven	230	12	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	29	43	233	95
Eastbourne Lakes	72	76	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	137	nc	nc	nc
Pevensey Levels	nc	3	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	2	190	217
Bowl Water	375	125	nc	nc	nc	nc	494	100	500	70	346	315
Darwell Res	112	4	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	17	1	-	61
Pett Level	5	70	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	-	-	-	-	122
Rye Hbr	27	36	33	26	37	21	45	85	1	8	75	24
Scotney Court GP	68	46	nc	nc	nc	nc	28	219	167	nc	177	19

In January significant flocks not shown in the *WeBS*'s table were 317 at Barcombe Res on the 6<sup>th</sup> and up to 400 on the Upper Adur Levels, but thereafter few flocks in excess of 100 were noted, though small groups were seen throughout the county.

Between 24 Mar and 7 Jun a small number of birds were recorded from the main sea-watching sites as follows: Selsey Bill – 6 E and 2 W, Worthing Beach – 2 E, Brighton Marina – 11 E and 11 W, Splash Point, Seaford – 1 E and 4 W, and Bexhill – 2 W.

Breeding records were received from the usual eclectic range of sites across the county, including Selsey West Fields; Pendean Sandpit; Cowdray Park; Wicks Fm, Yapton; Sheffield Park; Shinewater Lake, Eastbourne; Troutbeck, near Eridge; Combe Haven; Darwell Res; and Rye Hbr.

The build up of post-breeding gatherings at traditional haunts was marked by 494 birds recorded at Bowl Water on 22 Jul. Peak counts at these sites included 366 at Weir Wood Res on 13 Aug, 271 in the lower Cuckmere Valley on 18 Aug, 470 at Rye Hbr on 29 Aug and 862 (the highest count of the year) at Arlington Res on 21 Sep.

The autumn *WeBS*' counts saw large numbers recorded at many sites, with over 1000 birds present in the Arun Valley in both November and December. [AH]

0167. **BARNACLE GOOSE**

*Branta leucopsis*

**Very scarce winter visitor, often in severe weather, and an increasingly common feral resident.**

It is very difficult to assess the true status of this species in Sussex. Certainly the resident flocks at Barcombe Res which peaked at 74 on 16 Sep, and Arundel WWT, peaking at 45 on 9 Jan, were feral birds, and likewise the regular flocks seen between January and August at Scotney Court GP and Rye Hbr (both of a maximum of 13 birds) and the various singletons seen during the summer were either feral or escapes.

More likely to be of wild origin were the small flocks that appeared at either end of the year, for example, a flock of 15 that flew east and then landed in Pagham Hbr on 25 Mar, and a shy group of seven (including two first-winter birds) seen on Thorney Island from 16 Dec to the year's end. [AH]

0168. **DARK-BELLIED BRENT GOOSE**

*Branta bernicla bernicla*

**Very common winter visitor and passage migrant; a few oversummer.**

The monthly *WeBS*' counts from the principal sites were as follows:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
County total	10008	8848	-	-	-	-	-	-	19	649	4654	9542
Chichester Hbr	7480	6628	nc	nc	nc	nc	-	-	11	636	4124	6342
Pagham Hbr	2520	2218	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	-	13	523	3180
Goring Gap	-	-	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	8	-	-	3

This species remains a scarce wintering bird away from its stronghold in the vicinity of Chichester and Pagham Hbrs, but there was a larger than usual scattering of records from elsewhere. Between one and four birds were recorded on numerous dates between January and March at Rye Hbr, one at Scotney Court GP similarly, while other records included singles at Arundel WWT on 9 Jan, Climping Beach and Pulborough Brooks on 11 Feb, and 16 at Shoreham Hbr on 12 Feb.

The monthly totals for the main sea-watching sites are shown below:

	Jan		Feb		Mar		Apr		Oct		Nov		Dec	
	E	W	E	W	E	W	E	W	E	W	E	W	E	W
Selsey Bill		8	149	3	138		316	13	35	480	10	161	32	3
Worthing Beach	9		11	15	344	19	305		103	56	96	39	239	
Brighton Marina	227	20	2153	17	8394	7	1176	1	16	14	366	16	7	
Splash Point, Seaford	33		1748	8	2391	66	531	1			4		28	
Bexhill and Hastings			2	2	1003	1	245		14	2		1	2	

Over 1000 birds were also recorded at Rye Hbr heading north-east during February and March, including 285 on 27 Feb and 270 on 23 Mar. Spring migration began in earnest on 11 Feb, when 434 birds passed Seaford Head. The first four-figure day counts occurred on 27 Feb, when 1241 birds passed this location and 1760 passed Brighton Marina. The biggest day count was at the latter site on 28 Mar, when 2600 birds passed east, though none of the other main sea-watching sites recorded anything like these numbers. Passage continued into May with small numbers recorded heading east almost daily until the 25<sup>th</sup>.

A solitary bird recorded in Pagham Hbr on 2 and 7 Jun, a group of 12 in Fishbourne Channel on the 8<sup>th</sup>, seven at Thorney Island on the 21<sup>st</sup> (rising to nine on 5 Jul) and a sick or injured bird on the R. Ouse at Southease were the only summer records.

Eleven birds in Chichester Hbr and eight at Goring Gap, both recorded during the *WeBS*' count of 16 Sep, were the first evidence of return migration. Strangely this date is the same as in the previous two years. September counts remained low, with a peak of 300 on Thorney Island on the 26<sup>th</sup>, though by the November *WeBS*' count over 4000 birds had returned.

Elsewhere in the county small numbers were recorded regularly through the autumn, with peaks of 33 at Scotney Court GP on 10 Nov and at Rye Hbr on 7 Dec, and 26 on Pett Level on 31 Dec. There were also four in the lower Cuckmere Valley and up to five at Climping on a number of dates. The only inland records were of three at Pulborough Brooks on 14 Oct and a flock of 60 over Bewl Water on 21 Dec. [AH]

#### 0168.01 PALE-BELLIED BRENT GOOSE

*Branta bernicla hrota*

##### Very scarce winter visitor and passage migrant.

2001 was a bumper year for this form, with as many as 30 individuals recorded. On 1 Jan a single bird was seen at Goring Gap, while a flock of 13 at Pagham Hbr was presumably that seen at Brighton Marina and Shoreham Hbr on 31 Dec 2000 (*SxBR* 53: 35), though numbering one less. This group was seen several times until the 6<sup>th</sup>, thereafter one or two birds were recorded on many dates until 15 Mar. A family of two adults and five young was recorded on Thorney Deepes on 9 Jan, and a single bird on many dates up until 19 Feb. In April another singleton was recorded on Pilsley Island on the 8<sup>th</sup> and a tight-knit group of five was seen almost daily between the 8<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> in Pagham Hbr, though never consorting with the remaining Dark-bellied Brent Geese during their stay. Presumably this group were the five reported flying east past both Goring and Worthing on the 22 Apr. Another bird was noted flying east past Brighton Marina on 9 May.

There was a further flurry of records in the latter half of the year, beginning with single birds recorded in fields behind the North Wall, Pagham Hbr on 11 Nov and flying east past Brighton Marina the following day. Another bird was recorded on several dates between 20 Nov and 19 Dec at West Wittering, and two birds were present in Pagham Hbr between 15 Dec and the year's end (with five present on the 23<sup>rd</sup>). [AH]

#### 0168.02 BLACK BRANT

*Branta bernicla nigricans*

##### Rare winter visitor.

**2000:** A single bird (presumably the same) was recorded at Pagham Hbr on 4 Nov (*IJJF et al*) and Sidlesham Ferry on 27 Dec (*SJP*).

**2001:** Sightings of single birds at Selsey West Fields on 13 Jan (*MJ, OM*), Thorney Deepes on 17 Jan (*CBC*) and Apuldram on 10-11 Feb and 3 Mar (*OM et al*) may perhaps relate to the same individual and to the bird seen at Pagham Hbr in late 2000. The adult first recorded at East Head, West Wittering in Jan-Feb 1999 was again present from 28 Jan to 10 Feb (*GPG, PMH, EDU et al*) and from 15 Dec into 2002 (*EDU et al*). In the latter part of the year it was accompanied four apparently hybrid (*B.b. bernicla x B.b. nigricans*) juveniles. An adult at the North Wall, Pagham Hbr from 29 Oct (mo) remained into 2002. All these records have been accepted by *British Birds*. [PJ]

0170. **EGYPTIAN GOOSE**

*Alopochon aegyptiacus*

**A rare visitor from introduced populations elsewhere in Britain, more commonly recorded as an escape. Bred for the first time in 2000.**

There was no repeat of last year's breeding success at Shipley, the only record from the site being of a single bird on 15 May. Elsewhere, there were singles at Scotney Court GP on 28 Mar, Ivy Lake, Chichester GPs from 25 Jun into 2002 and at Henfield Levels on 24 Nov, with two seen in flight over Rye Hbr on 2 Dec. [AH]

0173. **SHELDUCK**

*Tadorna tadorna*

**Very common winter visitor and passage migrant; a few oversummer**

The monthly *WeBS*' counts at the principal sites were as follows

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
County total	1429	1270	4	18	18	11	26	37	46	47	254	859
Chichester Hbr	990	779	nc	nc	nc	nc	25	34	21	24	162	616
Pagham Hbr	322	323	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	8	21	50	137
Arundel WWT	56	41	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	47
Rye Hbr	6	4	4	18	18	11	-	-	-	-	3	30
Scotney Court GP	2	30	nc	nc	nc	nc	1	3	15	nc	25	3

The early year *WeBS*' counts were on a par with last year and give a good guide to the distribution of this species in the county. As usual a wide scattering of other reports were received, mostly involving one or two birds, but no large counts were received.

Movements at the main sea-watching localities were as follows:

	Jan		Feb		Mar		Apr		May		Nov		Dec	
	E	W	E	W	E	W	E	W	E	W	E	W	E	W
Selsey Bill	-	2	-	2	7	-	15	2	18	4	6	57	15	14
Worthing Beach	-	-	-	8	3	-	8	13	26	10	19	22	-	41
Brighton Marina	15	6	3	14	32	6	53	34	68	31	32	19	23	25
Splash Point, Seaford	5	7	3	5	24	3	28	7	59	8	3	-	17	2
Bexhill and Hastings	14	-	-	-	7	6	11	4	4	-	-	-	5	-

Breeding was confirmed or suspected at most of the usual sites, though not in the Pulborough Brooks area. However at least 40 youngsters were recorded in Chichester Hbr, a similar number in Pagham Hbr (comprising at least four families), a pair was suspected of breeding at Selsey West Fields, and at least three broods were reared at both Cuckmere Haven and Rye Hbr.

Approximately 30, presumably young birds, were regularly recorded in both Pagham and Chichester Hbrs between August and October but very few were noted elsewhere; the only double figure count being 15 at Scotney Court GP on 16 Sep.

Numbers remained low throughout November and the only major count was of 162 in Chichester Hbr during the *WeBS*' survey of the 4<sup>th</sup>. The December count, however, was a slight improvement on last year, with 616 birds noted there and 137 in Pagham Hbr. [AH]

## 0178. MANDARIN

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

Birds were recorded at 29 sites, 18 of which were in West Sussex. Numbers were small in the early part of the year, the largest counts being six at Pulborough Brooks on 7 Jan and 20 at Arundel WWT on 11 Feb.

In the breeding season, there were reports from 17 sites but confirmed breeding at only three. At Weir Wood Res a pair raised seven young from a nest box, while four eggs in another box were deserted. At Troutbeck, near Eridge at least three pairs raised 20 young, which were seen with 24 drakes and four ducks on 7 Jun. A pair with five fledglings was seen on the R. Arun at South Stoke on 18 Jul.

At Darwell Res there were counts of 33 on 27 Aug, 43 on 15 Sep, 20 on 12 Oct and a record 53 on 19 Dec, which were seen feeding on acorns, part of their staple food in winter. A count of 75 at Troutbeck on 3 Sep on a lake that was only constructed three years ago was the second highest for the county, exceeded only by 84 at Shillinglee MP on 16 Dec 1987. A single male was at Sidlesham Ferry on 17 Oct and ten, including five young, were at Birdham Pool on 1 Nov. Counts at Weir Wood Res were of 14 on 15 Dec, 24 on 22 Dec and 15 on 29 Dec. There were 11 at Arundel WWT on 17 Dec. [DEGC]

## 0179. WIGEON

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

The monthly *WeBS*' counts at the principal sites were as follows:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
<i>County total</i>	9349	8798	81	-	-	-	-	-	899	3255	3692	10415
Chichester Hbr	1022	623	nc	nc	nc	nc	-	-	257	1357	513	1793
Pagham Hbr	1403	953	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	418	863	706	1493
Amberley Wild Brooks	94	1420	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	-	136	48	643
Pulborough Brooks	3431	3809	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	115	474	1154	2284
Cuckmere Haven	1180	920	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	6	210	546	870
Pevensey Levels	350	100	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	22	1	155	1260
Rye Hbr	545	372	81	-	-	-	-	-	45	15	201	243
Scotney Court GP	200	28	nc	nc	nc	nc	-	-	-	nc	174	1100

The counts for the first winter period were higher than those for the previous year but those for the latter part of the year were somewhat less. Notable counts during the early months, but not included in the table above, were 700 at Greatham Bridge on 1 Jan, 1700 at Scotney Court GP on the 6<sup>th</sup>, 325 at Henfield Levels on the 13<sup>th</sup>, 360 at Castle Water, Rye Hbr on the 19<sup>th</sup> and 393 at Bewl Water on the 21<sup>st</sup>.

Movements up-Channel in spring were again very light, following a slight increase the previous year, as shown by the monthly totals for the main sea-watching sites:

	Mar		Apr		May	
	E	W	E	W	E	W
Selsey Bill	12	-	8	-	2	-
Worthing Beach	-	-	11	1	-	-
Brighton Marina	52	-	19	-	-	-
Splash Point, Seaford	3	-	-	-	-	-
Bexhill and Hastings	4	-	-	-	-	-



Single males were recorded in May and June at Rye Hbr and Pulborough Brooks. At Pagham Hbr, a pair was recorded on 14 May and 3 and 6 Jul with singles on 21 Jun and 9 Jul.

The first returning birds were fairly early with six at Rye Hbr on 17 Jul and ten there on the 19<sup>th</sup>. There were no more records until 13 Aug with a single at Castle Water, Rye Hbr and another on the 16<sup>th</sup> at Sidlesham Ferry. Larger numbers did not appear until the end of the month with 87 at Rye Hbr on the 30<sup>th</sup>. Inland, there were nine at Pulborough Brooks on 30 Aug, rising to 59 by 4 Sep.

Additional to the *WeBS*' counts were 250 at Bewl Water on 16 Dec and 200 at Arlington Res on 18<sup>th</sup>. while at Pulborough North Brooks, there were 800 on 16 Nov and 2000 on 30 Dec but only 1300 the following day. Coastal movements were observed on 24 days between September and December. The peak counts at Selsey Bill included 65 W on 18 Sep, 77 W on 15 Nov and 73 W on 9 Nov while at Brighton Marina the largest movement was 199 E on 16 Dec. [DEGC]

## 0182. GADWALL

*Anas strepera*

**Very scarce breeder and fairly common winter visitor; passage migrant.**

**2000:** Breeding was also confirmed at Glynde Reach where two pairs and a brood of six small young were seen on 6 June.

**2001:** The *WeBS*' counts which include a record county total for December were as follows:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
<i>County total</i>	640	407	14	20	11	8	26	8	98	206	404	938
Chichester Hbr	39	22	nc	nc	nc	nc	-	-	3	6	3	25
Chichester GPs	307	68	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	32	89	126	444
Swanbourne Lake	18	16	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	6	20	56	30
Arundel WWT	26	83	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	21
Eastbourne Lakes	64	63	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	7	20	31	58
Bewl Water	20	3	nc	nc	nc	nc	-	2	3	25	74	106
Darwell Res	18	17	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	-	-	25	60
Pett Level	4	33	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	3	-	7	18	15
Rye Hbr	77	42	14	20	11	8	26	2	39	26	48	106
Scotney Court GPs	2	-	nc	nc	nc	nc	-	1	-	nc	-	11

Especially noteworthy were the very high counts at Chichester GPs in January and December, both exceeding the previous highest count at this site of 289 in February 2000. Other concentrations exceeding those in the table were 86 at Arundel WWT on 24 Jan and 130 at Bewl Water on 21 and 31 Dec.

Passage up-Channel in spring was typically very light; the largest movement was a modest 9 E at Splash Point, Seaford on 2 Apr.

There were records for ten widely scattered sites during the breeding season though the only confirmation of breeding was from Rye Hbr where three broods totalling 26 young were seen. [PJ]

**Scarce resident and common winter visitor and passage migrant.**

The *WeBS*' counts, which again show above average numbers at both ends of the year and also a record county total for February, were as follows:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
<i>County total</i>	5396	7842	91	22	-	4	17	119	1045	2702	3084	6571
Chichester Hbr	1359	1057	nc	nc	nc	nc	9	40	283	640	864	2153
Pagham Hbr	622	1849	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	389	713	687	1071
Chingford Pond	87	8	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	30	167	52
Arundel WWT	-	124	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	726
Amberley Wild Brooks	148	955	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	34	127	121	509
Waltham Brooks	-	156	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	34	100	165	167
Pulborough Brooks	2435	2221	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	115	465	508	784
Pevensey Levels	24	500	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	12	43	141	126
Bewl Water	14	10	nc	nc	nc	nc	6	5	50	57	22	35
Pett Level	9	253	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	41	11	173	248	209
Rye Hbr	87	204	91	22	-	4	-	27	69	122	38	142
Scotney Court GP	-	-	nc	nc	nc	nc	2	6	5	nc	1	2

The importance of the Arun Valley for this species is again apparent, with some 44% of the *WeBS*' total for February recorded between Amberley and Pulborough. Significant counts for the early part of the year not shown above included a total of 385 between Bramber and Partridge Green on 1 Jan and 410 at Arundel WWT on 19 and 21 Jan.

Spring passage was typically light as shown by the monthly totals for the main sea-watching sites:

Direction of movement	Mar		Apr		May	
	E	W	E	W	E	W
Selsey Bill	9	-	17	-	-	-
Worthing Beach	7	-	4	-	-	-
Brighton Marina	126	-	48	-	2	-
Splash Point, Seaford	102	-	50	-	-	-
Bexhill/Hastings	-	-	-	-	-	-

The only significant movements were 51 E at Brighton Marina on 16 Mar, 36 E at Seaford on 28 Mar and 31 E at Brighton Marina and 42 E at Seaford on 2 Apr.

Although there were a number of records for the summer months, there was no confirmation of breeding. These included single pairs at Sidlesham Ferry, Pulborough Brooks and Pett Level, three at Barcombe Res on 1 May, two males at Thorney Deeps on 14 May, a male at Tilgate Park Lake on 28 May, and three pairs at Waltham Brooks on 10 and 16 June.

The first returning birds were noted at a number of sites from mid-June onwards though numbers did not build up until mid-August with 41 at Pett Level on the 18<sup>th</sup> and 48 at Sidlesham Ferry the following day. Other counts for the latter part of the year not shown in the table included 350 at Arundel WWT on 8 Nov, 550 at Waltham Brooks on 11 Dec and 426 at Weir Wood Res on 26 Dec. [PJ]

0184.01. **GREEN-WINGED TEAL***Anas carolinensis***Very rare vagrant.**

An adult male was present in the lower Cuckmere Valley from 18 Feb to 1 Apr (PJWi *et al*). It is the eighth to be recorded in the county, half of which have been in the last two years. All records have fallen between 29 December and 2 May. [RJF]

0186. **MALLARD***Anas platyrhynchos***Common resident and winter visitor.**

The monthly *WeBS*' counts were as follows:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
<i>County total</i>	3447	2862	25	39	97	78	775	1497	3169	3365	2930	4123
Chichester Hbr	251	205	nc	nc	nc	nc	124	320	173	227	133	368
Pagham Hbr	242	208	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	364	204	225	279
Chichester GP	159	106	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	109	106	233	417
Arundel WWT	284	333	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	353
Pulborough Brooks	166	405	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	153	622	108	110
Angmering Decoy Ponds	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	300	200	130
Glynde Levels	130	75	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	81	200	nc	90
Eastbourne Lakes	193	106	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	101	13	126	113
Bewl Water	350	274	nc	nc	nc	nc	458	725	700	400	247	412
Alexandra Park	213	140	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	161	152	159	190
Pett Level	19	84	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	107	41	55	74	65
Rye Hbr	171	119	25	39	97	78	72	256	286	215	98	212
Scotney Court GP	12	59	nc	nc	nc	nc	121	89	59	nc	25	7

At Bewl Water, where an accurate census was not possible due to FMD restrictions, there were an estimated 106 pairs. A total of 26 broods totalling 116 young was seen. Elsewhere, there were 14 broods totalling 100 young at Thorney Deepes and five broods totalling 32 young at Shinewater Lake, Eastbourne. A reduction from seven broods totalling 29 young at Brooklands, East Worthing on 27 Apr to four broods totalling 14 young a week later was attributed to possible predation by gulls.

The usual post-breeding build up in numbers occurred at Bewl Water with counts of 458 on 22 July, 725 on 19 Aug and 700 on 16 Sept. [PJ]

0189. **PINTAIL***Anas acuta***Fairly common winter visitor and passage migrant, occasionally summers and has bred.**

The monthly *WeBS*' counts which include record county totals for January and February were as follows:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
<i>County total</i>	1033	1729	-	-	-	-	-	1	80	124	315	688
Chichester Hbr	43	35	nc	nc	nc	nc	-	-	5	22	97	190
Pagham Hbr	129	336	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	71	40	181	479
Amberley Wild Brooks	7	366	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	-	5	-	2
Waltham Brooks	-	-	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	-	9	14	14
Pulborough Brooks	794	788	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	1	46	15	1
Henfield Brooks	-	180	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	-	-	-	-
Scotney Court GP	-	-	nc	nc	nc	nc	-	1	-	nc	-	-

Particularly noteworthy were the nationally important concentrations in the Arun Valley and at Pagham Hbr at both ends of the year; the count at Pulborough Brooks in January was the highest ever recorded there.

A number of movements both up and down Channel were recorded in the early part of the year as shown by the monthly totals for the main sea-watching localities:

	Jan		Feb		Mar		Apr		May	
Direction of movement	E	W	E	W	E	W	E	W	E	W
Selsey Bill	11	-	-	17	75	-	-	-	-	-
Worthing Beach	15	-	-	18	2	-	-	-	3	-
Brighton Marina	14	-	17	30	345	-	7	-	-	-
Splash Point, Seaford	-	-	-	-	37	-	2	-	-	-
Bexhill/Hastings	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	-

The largest movements occurred on 6 and 16 Mar when there were 210 E and 133 E at Brighton Marina.

Single pairs were recorded in late April at Pett Level and Pulborough Brooks. The latter pair was still present on 6 May with a male there on the 13<sup>th</sup>. Other breeding season records were of three on the Breech Pool, Pagham Hbr on 22 May, a single there on 13 Jun and on three dates in July, another single at Waltham Brooks from 1 Jun to 26 Jul, and an injured female at Thorney Deeps from 28 May to 28 Jun.

The first returning birds were 7 E past Brighton Marina on 27 Jul. There were, however, no further records until 24 Aug when there were eight with Wigeon at Church Norton. The only significant coastal movements in the latter part of the year were at Selsey Bill where totals of 32 E and 71 W were recorded in September. [PJ]

## 0191. GARGANEY

*Anas querquedula*

### Scarce passage migrant and rare summer visitor.

A very good year with about 75 birds reported. The approximate monthly totals were as follows:

Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep
22	13	13	2	11	7	8

The first record for the year was of a male at Arundel WWT from 1 to 15 Mar followed by an exceptional total of 14 that flew E at Brighton Marina on 16<sup>th</sup>. On 23 Mar three males and two females were present at Thorney Deeps while subsequent records for the month were of 1 E at Beachy Head on the 27<sup>th</sup> and a drake present at Rye Hbr from the 31<sup>st</sup>. In April, there was 1 E at Beachy Head on the 1<sup>st</sup>; 4 E on the 2<sup>nd</sup> seen from numerous sites along the coast and, at Selsey Bill, 1 E on the 17<sup>th</sup>; 2 E on the 22<sup>nd</sup> and 1 W on the 26<sup>th</sup>. The drake at Rye Hbr from late March was joined by a second male from the 2<sup>nd</sup> and

a female from the 3<sup>rd</sup>. Thereafter a pair was reported from various sites in the area until the end of the month and a single male at Pulborough North Brooks on the 23<sup>rd</sup>. At Splash Point, Seaford there were 3 E on 5 May; 2 pairs east on the 10<sup>th</sup> and 1 E on the 13<sup>th</sup>; some of these birds were also seen at other sites along the coast. Additional May records were of a single in the lower Cuckmere Valley on the 3<sup>rd</sup>, with a pair there on the 21<sup>st</sup> and 22<sup>nd</sup>, and up to two males at Rye Hbr during the month. Another drake was present at Pett Level throughout May. During June, singles continued to be reported from Pett Level and Rye Hbr though breeding was not confirmed.

The first July record was of an adult female accompanied by a juvenile on Bremere Rife, Pagham on the 21<sup>st</sup>. Two were present at both Rye Hbr on the 22<sup>nd</sup> and at Barcombe Res on the 25<sup>th</sup>. Singles were then seen at Pebsham on the 30<sup>th</sup> and at Sidlesham Ferry from the 31<sup>st</sup> staying until 2 Sep. At Selsey Bill there were 2 W on 11 Aug and 1 E on the 21<sup>st</sup> while other records were of 2-3 at Rye Hbr throughout the month with at least one individual also resident in the Pagham Hbr area. Rye Hbr continued to host up to two individuals in September with the last record there being of a single on the 16<sup>th</sup>. Singles were also seen at Scotney Court GP on the 11<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup>; Chichester GP on the 13<sup>th</sup>; Selsey West Fields on the 16<sup>th</sup>; and in the lower Cuckmere Valley on the 21<sup>st</sup>. Of two present at Pagham Hbr on the 18<sup>th</sup>, one remained in the harbour until the 22<sup>nd</sup>. [DG]

0194. **SHOVELER**

*Anas clypeata*

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

The monthly *WeBS*' counts, which show record totals for January, February and December, were as follows:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
<i>County total</i>	701	691	6	7	-	2	1	64	102	217	453	798
Pagham Hbr	2	4	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	-	8	24	11
Chichester GP	160	77	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	3	11	22	316
Waltham Brooks	10	4	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	15	30	29	41
Pulborough Brooks	243	187	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	9	36	71	67
Glynde Levels	53	58	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	1	8	nc	44
Eastbourne Lakes	108	170	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	12
Bewl Water	-	-	nc	nc	nc	nc	-	-	11	7	7	5
Pett Level	-	36	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	4	-	-	11	41
Rye Hbr	107	122	6	7	-	2	1	60	63	115	271	172

Of particular note were the large counts at Pulborough Brooks in January, Eastbourne Lakes in February and Chichester GP in December, the latter the largest Sussex site count since 400 were recorded in the Arun Valley in the winter of 1974/75.

Spring passage was much heavier than in 2000 as shown by the monthly totals for the main sea-watching localities:

Direction of movement	Feb		Mar		Apr		May	
	E	W	E	W	E	W	E	W
Selsey Bill	-	-	12	4	39	-	9	-
Worthing	-	-	6	-	20	-	2	-
Brighton Marina	10	2	341	-	76	-	18	-
Splash Point, Seaford	-	-	148	-	32	-	21	-
Bexhill/Hastings	-	-	-	-	3	-	-	-

The largest movement was on 16 Mar when there were 253 E at Brighton Marina.

Although there were a number of records for the summer months, there was no confirmation of breeding. These included four pairs at Coldwaltham Brooks on 21 Apr (but not subsequently), four at Pulborough Brooks on 3 May, a pair at Castle Water, Rye Hbr from 4 to 25 May, a male at Combe Haven up to 9 May, a male at Waller's Haven, Pevensey Levels on 10 May and another male near Exceat Bridge, Cuckmere Valley from 22 to 29 May. Records of up to 17 at Pett Level and six males at Sidlesham Ferry during May probably relate to non-breeding birds.

Returning birds were noted from early July, with four at Pagham Hbr on the 5<sup>th</sup> and a female at Weir Wood Res on the 10<sup>th</sup>. Significant counts for the remainder of the year not shown in the table included 170 at Rye Hbr on 31 Oct and 23 at Bawl Water on 31 Dec.

Unusually, there were two at Widewater, Lancing on 21 Sept and two on a farm pond at Toot Rock, Pett on 2 Dec. [PJ]

#### 0196. RED-CRESTED POCHARD

*Netta rufina*

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

A male was recorded at Bawl Water on 21 Jan and 7 Oct and a female at Southwater CP on 5-6 Mar. A first-year male at East Beach, Selsey from 7 Oct to 4 Nov was reported to be very tame and was presumably the same bird as that seen at Sidlesham Ferry Long Pool on 17 Nov. [PJ]

#### 0198. POCHARD

*Aythya ferina*

**Very scarce breeder and fairly common winter visitor and passage migrant.**

The *WeBS*' counts, which again show higher than average numbers in both winter periods, were as follows:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
County total	1219	867	19	3	1	-	82	20	89	96	825	1198
Chichester GP	429	189	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	15	56	97	340
Forest Mere	2	-	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	3	11	34	8
Arundel VWT	145	173	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	185
Pulborough Brooks	26	74	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	-	-	-	-
Barcombe Res	33	9	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	-	1	61	84
Glynde Levels	-	13	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	10	-	nc	-
Bawl Water	23	27	nc	nc	nc	nc	2	1	6	19	26	58
Rye Hbr	84	94	19	3	1	-	9	1	38	-	111	159
Scotney Court GP	188	81	nc	nc	nc	nc	71	18	13	nc	361	169

Significant counts exceeding those in the table included 270 at Scotney Court GP on 6 Jan, an exceptional 300 on flood water at Pulborough Brooks on 7 Jan, 206 at Bewl Water on 3 Nov, and 252 at Scotney on 12 Dec.

Although birds were seen at Chichester GP, Weir Wood Res, Bewl Water and Rye Hbr during May-June, the only confirmation of breeding was at Bewl Water where ten pairs raised a total of five broods totalling 24 young (PCB).

A few records of coastal movements were received; a modest 8 W at Worthing on 5 Nov was the largest. [PJ]

**0200. RING-NECKED DUCK**

*Aythya collaris*

**Very rare vagrant.**

The adult male at Barcombe Res from Dec 2000 (*SxBR* 53:44) remained until at least 28 Jan (LRB *et al*). It was joined by a female from the 12<sup>th</sup> to the 20<sup>th</sup> (LRB, JC, RDME *et al*). This is the first county record to involve more than one individual and takes the total to six. All have been between December and June. [RJF]

**0202. FERRUGINOUS DUCK**

*Aythya nyroca*

**Rare vagrant.**

The first-winter male at Rye Hbr from Nov 2000 (*SxBR* 53:44) remained until 3 Jan and was then seen at Northpoint Pit on 27 Jan (BJY *et al*). Presumably the same individual, now having attained adult plumage, was seen on Long Pit, Rye Hbr on 1 Nov (PMT) and on Castle Water on 7 and 19 Nov (SS). These records have been accepted by *British Birds*. Only three have been recorded in the county since 1990. [RJF]

**0203. TUFTED DUCK**

*Aythya fuligula*

**Scarce breeding species and fairly common winter visitor.**

The monthly *WeBS*' counts, which again show above average monthly totals for both winter periods and a record total for January, were as follows:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
<i>County total</i>	1619	1079	93	129	49	33	189	397	411	417	915	1319
Chichester GP	525	254	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	93	201	243	574
Petworth Park	19	18	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	22	48	4
Arundel WWT	121	105	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	171
Glynde Levels	7	51	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	21	-	nc	2
Eastbourne Lakes	82	57	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	3	nc	10	16
Bewl Water	200	186	nc	nc	nc	nc	102	126	160	59	206	143
Rye Hbr	204	208	93	129	49	33	11	73	80	52	180	145
Scotney Court GP	37	9	nc	nc	nc	nc	68	172	-	nc	63	39

A number of other significant counts included 100 at Scotney Court GP on 6 Jan, 70 at Barcombe Res on 20 Jan and monthly maxima at Southwater CP of 54 in January, 58 in February, 35 in March, 38 in October and 45 in November.

The usual scattering of breeding records was received in line with the widespread distribution shown by the Atlas map in *Birds of Sussex*. Seven broods were noted at Rye

Hbr and single broods at Sidlesham Ferry, Chichester GP, Wiston Pond, Barcombe Res and Pett Level Pools.

Typically, there were no significant coastal movements during the year. [PJ]

0204. **SCAUP**

*Aythya marila*

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

The estimated monthly totals after allowing for duplication, and the counts at each site where birds were recorded, were as follows:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
<i>Monthly Totals</i>	8	3	13	2	3	-	1	12	6
Thorney Deepes	1	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-
Selsey Bill	-	-	1*	-	2*	-	-	3*	-
Pagham Hbr	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	1
Chichester GP	2	1	1	1	-	-	-	-	1
Coldwaltham Brooks	4	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Pulborough Brooks	4	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Worthing	-	-	-	1*	-	-	-	-	1*
Brighton Marina	-	-	6*	1*	-	-	-	-	-
Newhaven Tide Mills	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-
Beachy Head	-	-	10*	-	-	-	-	-	-
Bexhill/Hastings	1*	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Pett Level	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1
Rye Bay	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	7*	-
Rye Hbr	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2

Birds seen offshore are marked in the table by an asterisk.

Approximately 26 were seen during the first part of the year with the largest flock being 10 E at Beachy Head on 27 Mar. The last for the period was a single E past Worthing and Brighton Marina on 24 Apr.

A very early autumn pair was offshore at Selsey Bill on 8-9 Aug, with one present at Thorney Deepes on the 22<sup>nd</sup>. There were no September records and the only one in October was of an immature female at Sidlesham Ferry Long Pool on the 16<sup>th</sup>. The largest flock recorded in the second winter period was of 7 W, including four males, at Rye Bay on 29 Nov. Two individuals took up residence on Long Pit, Rye Hbr on 13 Dec and were recorded to 27 Dec. A single at Pagham Hbr on 30 Dec brought the total for the latter part of the year to approximately 22. [DG]



**Scarce winter visitor and passage migrant, non-breeding birds summer annually.**

The monthly *WeBS*' counts were as follows:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
County total	10	12	-	-	-	-	2	-	-	4	-	7
Chichester Hbr	8	10	nc	nc	nc	nc	2	-	-	4	-	-
Pagham Hbr	2	2	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	-	-	-	-
Goring Gap	-	-	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	-	-	-	1

Particularly low wintering numbers were recorded again this year, the largest count being just 20 past Selsey Bill on 8 Dec. Spring passage was notable for an exceptional movement at Brighton Marina on 28 Mar, when a total of 232 flew east. This is the largest spring movement recorded in the county. The monthly totals recorded at the main sea-watching localities were as follows:

Direction of movement	Mar		Apr		May	
	E	W	E	W	E	W
Selsey Bill	42	16	80	7	8	2
Worthing	6	4	3	-	10	-
Brighton Marina	338	-	49	17	-	-
Splash Point, Seaford	194	32	14	1	7	1
Bexhill/Hastings	32	-	3	-	3	-

The only summering birds were in the west of the county, three or four individuals in the vicinity of Pagham and Chichester Hbrs.

There were no inland records. [RP]

**Scarce passage migrant and winter visitor**

Just three individuals were reported in the first winter period: singles flying east at Selsey Bill on 10 Jan, west at Bexhill on 14 Jan and west at Splash Point, Seaford on 27 Feb. Despite dawn to dusk coverage at some sea-watching sites, only three were recorded on spring passage: 1 W at Selsey Bill on 24 Mar and singles east past Seaford on 23 Apr and 5 May.

Exactly six months elapsed until the next sighting, off Church Norton on 5 Nov and, in contrast to the beginning of the year, a respectable 18 records were received, involving a probable ten individuals. Two of these were on fresh water, at Chichester GP on 4 Nov and Scotney Court GP on 10 Nov, the Chichester bird being aged as a juvenile/first winter. [RP]

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

The monthly *WeBS*' counts were as follows:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
County total	10	-	-	-	-	-	-	70	-	6	-	105

Chichester Hbr	-	-	nc	nc	nc	nc	-	-	-	1	-	2
Pett Level	-	-	nc	nc	nc	nc	70	-	-	-	-	68
Rye Hbr	10	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	5	-	35

Small groups, usually of less than 50, were scattered all along the coast during the first winter period. The regular flock in Rye Bay peaked at 95 on 9 Jan.

The numbers recorded on spring passage were well down on 2000, the peak day being 27 Mar in south-east winds. The totals recorded at the main sea-watching localities were as follows:

	Mar	Apr	May	Totals	Peak Days
Selsey Bill	654	629	413	1696	271 on 27 Mar
Worthing Beach	347	344	194	885	155 on 24 Apr
Brighton Marina	3254	3174	2341	8769	1533 on 27 Mar
Splash Point, Seaford	2071	1103	602	3776	1137 on 27 Mar
Bexhill/Hastings	103	512	48	663	193 on 22 Mar

Up-Channel movement continued well into June and, on 17 Jul, there were 282 past Selsey Bill and 222 past Brighton Marina in a light south-easterly wind. At Selsey Bill the July total was over 600, a figure very similar to those recorded in the peak migration months of March and April.

Autumn movements were unremarkable, 95 W past Selsey Bill on 15 Nov being the largest day total. The Rye Bay wintering flock peaked at 215 on 23 Dec. There were no inland records. [RP]

## 0215. VELVET SCOTER

*Melanitta fusca*

### Scarce passage migrant and winter visitor along the coast; rare inland.

The approximate monthly totals were as follows:

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Nov	Dec
3	-	5	25	4	53	30

As can be seen from the above table, the species was very scarce at the start of the year, and sea-watching in spring was disappointing, as shown by the following low monthly totals:

	Mar		Apr	
	E	W	E	W
Selsey Bill	4	-	9	-
Worthing	2	-	-	-
Brighton Marina	2	-	12	7
Splash Point, Seaford	-	-	2	-
Bexhill/Hastings	-	-	5	-

The peak day was 2 Apr, with the same flock of nine passing Selsey Bill and then Brighton Marina.

The many records in November and December indicate that perhaps over 20 were wintering in the Channel, although 10 E at Selsey Bill on 11 Nov was the only double figure flock of the year. [RP]

0218. **GOLDENEYE***Bucephala clangula***Scarce winter visitor; rare in summer.**The monthly *WeBS*' counts were as follows:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
<i>County total</i>	72	67	-	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	9	43
Chichester Hbr	52	50	nc	nc	nc	nc	-	-	-	-	5	23
Pagham Hbr	6	5	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	-	-	-	6
Bewl Water	2	2	nc	nc	nc	nc	-	-	-	-	2	5
Darwell Res	-	-	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	-	-	-	3
Rye Hbr	8	5	-	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	2	3

The only concentrations of 50 or more early in the year were in Fishbourne Channel, Chichester Hbr. Sea-watching records were typically few; two in January past Bexhill and singles past Brighton Marina in January and February were the only records.

Spring passage was once again barely detectable, a single past Splash Point, Seaford and Beachy Head on 27 Mar and another past Selsey Bill on 15 Apr being the sole records.

A pair displaying and apparently searching for suitable nest holes at Burton MP on 7 May (ARK) was of particular note, as was an injured male lingering in Chichester Hbr until 17 Jun. A male remained at Long Pit, Rye Hbr from 12 May to 3 Jun.

The first autumn record of a single at Shoreham on 12 Sep was rather early, fully five weeks before the next sighting, at Rye Hbr on 18 Oct. There were a handful of offshore sightings in November and December, 5 W at Selsey Bill on 10 Nov and four past Worthing on New Year's Eve being the most noteworthy. The regular wintering haunts held lower numbers in this period, 32 in Chichester Hbr on 15 Dec being the highest count. [RP]

0220. **SMEW***Mergellus albellus***Very scarce winter visitor except in severe weather when large numbers may occur.**

A rational analysis of the 36 sightings to account for possible duplication and the movement of birds between sites in the Rye area gives the following likely monthly totals:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Dec
<i>Monthly total</i>	9	2	1	3
Darwell Res	2	-	-	-
Galley Hill, Bexhill	1	-	-	-
Rye area	6	2	1	3

In the first winter period there were two males at Darwell Res on 14 Jan, a redhead at Galley Hill on 29 Jan and maximum counts for the Rye area of six (a male and five redheads) at Scotney Court GP on 18 Jan and five at Northpoint Pit on 27 Jan. The last record was of a redhead at Northpoint Pit on 9 Mar while the first date for the second winter period was two on 15 Dec at Rye Hbr, both dates falling within the first and last dates prior to 2000 of 24 Apr and 3 Nov respectively. Between one and three redheads were subsequently recorded in the Rye area up until the end of the year. [JAC]

0221. **RED-BREASTED MERGANSER***Mergus serrator***Fairly common winter visitor and passage migrant to the coast; a few summer.**The monthly *WeBS*' counts were as follows:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
County total	176	194	-	-	-	-	6	-	-	2	71	312
Chichester Hbr	162	180	nc	nc	nc	nc	6	-	-	2	51	119
Pagham Hbr	10	12	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	-	-	-	5
Goring Gap	4	-	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	-	-	20	186

Other notable counts for the first winter period not in the table included 120 W at Selsey Bill on 23 Jan and 196 offshore at Worthing on 24 Feb. The first record east of Newhaven was from Rye Bay on 23 Mar. The monthly totals recorded at the main sea-watching sites were as follows:

	Jan		Feb		Mar		Apr		May		Jun		Sep		Oct		Nov		Dec	
	E	W	E	W	E	W	E	W	E	W	E	W	E	W	E	W	E	W	E	W
Selsey Bill	61	272	31	40	206	44	65	19	14	10	2	-	-	3	1	54	59	271	377	212
Worthing	-	80	-	374	60	-	69	13	2	5	-	-	-	-	-	6	10	19	121	19
Brighton Marina	34	52	21	8	59	12	156	3	14	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	12	7	25	31
Seaford	4	-	13	1	25	3	64	-	4	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	-
Bexhill/Hastings	3	2	-	-	5	-	8	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	-

There were no large movements, the best day total of apparently migrating birds being 60 E past Brighton on 22 Apr.

There were several summer records comprising singles on three dates in June in the Pagham Hbr/Selsey area, two in Chichester Hbr on 8 Jun, a female there on 3 and 4 Jul, and six together on 22 Jul (see *WeBS*' table).

The first returning birds were two at Selsey Bill on 7 Sep with singles there and at Beachy Head on 23 and 28 Sep respectively. No large gatherings occurred until December when 186 were off Goring Gap on the 16<sup>th</sup> and 115 off Church Norton on the 18<sup>th</sup>. Coastal movements of note in this period were 59 past Selsey Bill on 7 Nov and 125 W there on 27 Dec.

The only inland record was of one at Ranscombe Fm, Lewes Brooks on 13 Feb. [RP]

0223. **GOOSANDER***Mergus merganser***Scarce winter visitor and passage migrant.**

The approximate monthly totals adjusted for possible duplication were as follows:

	Feb	Mar	Nov	Dec
Monthly total	2	1	10	6
Selsey Bill			1	
Pagham Harbour			7	2
Saltdean			2	
Weir Wood Res	2			
Splash Point, Seaford				2
Arlington Res				1
Galley Hill, Bexhill		1		
Rye Harbour				1

The sole records for the first winter period were of two at Weir Wood Res on 18 Feb and a redhead that flew east at Galley Hill, Bexhill on 12 Mar making a total for the

2000/01 winter of eight birds. In the second winter period the first recorded was a single bird at Pagham Hbr on 4 Nov. Subsequent records for this site were of two redheads on 15 and 17 Nov, up to four between 23 and 27 Nov and up to two redheads between 16 and 29 Dec. The only other sightings were of 2 E at Saltdean on 18 Nov, 1 E at Selsey Bill on 29 Nov, a male at Rye Hbr on 24 Dec and a single bird at Arlington Res on 26 Dec. [JAC]

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

*Oxyura jamaicensis*

**Very scarce resident and scarce winter visitor.**

The monthly maxima at all the sites where the species was recorded were as follows:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Selsey West Fields	-	-	-	-	4	4	-	-
Chichester GP	-	-	-	2	-	4	1	2
Petworth Park	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-
Arundel WWT/Swanbourne Lake	-	10	-	16	-	-	2	8
Pulborough Brooks	1	5	2	2	-	-	-	-
Barcombe Res	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-
Hamshaw Wood, Eastbourne	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4
Bewl Water	-	-	-	-	1	6	2	1
Pett Level	-	2	-	12	6	-	-	3
Rye Hbr	3	2	5	5	11	1	-	2
Scotney Court GP	16	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

As in 2000, there were a number of records of birds on flood water at Pulborough Brooks including five there on 10 Feb and a pair up to 7 Apr.

Breeding records were received for Chichester GP; Shinewater Lake, Eastbourne; Pett Level; and Rye Hbr, a distribution that corresponds closely to that shown by the Atlas map in *Birds of Sussex*. These records were typically incomplete though breeding was confirmed at each of the latter three sites. [PJ]

0231. **HONEY BUZZARD**

*Pernis apivorus*

**A very scarce breeding summer visitor and spring and autumn passage migrant.**

This species bred successfully in the county for the fifth consecutive year but with the usual protection afforded to rare breeding species, no further details may be revealed. For the second consecutive year there were no spring migrants reported but in the summer months there were five fully documented summer records. Since all of these sightings were in areas of suitable breeding habitat it would seem prudent to withhold information on both the localities and the observers involved.

There were nine authenticated records in the autumn. Two adults were seen over Hollingdean, Brighton on 1 Sep, the observers alerted to their presence by the scolding of the local Herring Gulls (ADW, IJW). There were three other records for the Brighton area with single juveniles seen on 8 and 9 Sep (ADW, IJW) and 22 Sep (IJW). Elsewhere, there was a distant bird at Pagham Hbr on 5 Sep (BFF) and, at Ferring on 15 Sep, an adult male appeared from the east, 60 m offshore, gained height and headed inland back towards the east, with two Sparrowhawks in close attendance (RJSa). Later in the month, one was seen at Church Norton on 28 Sep heading towards Selsey Bill (AH). The final record of the year was of a dark phase juvenile at Beachy Head on 6 Oct, first seen at Birling Gap at 07:30 BST (RAI) and then at Cow Gap mid-morning (JFC). [MEK]

0238. **BLACK KITE***Milvus migrans***Rare vagrant**

**2000:** One flying north-east over Pebsham Tip on 8 May (KMJ) has been accepted by *British Birds*. It was the second record for 2000, the seventh since 1990 and the 20<sup>th</sup> in total. Just over half of all the country records have been in May. This site was a real hot-spot for raptors in early May with a Montagu's Harrier seen two days earlier and a Red-footed Falcon two days later (*SxBR* 53:55 & 57). [RJF]

0239. **RED KITE***Milvus milvus***Scarce visitor, recorded in all months.**

More than 30 records were received from all parts of the county. Sightings in late February and March are particularly helpful when trying to decide whether a resident raptor is attempting to breed. In these months pairs should be at their most obvious and aerial display most apparent. The paucity of records for these two months, together with absence of any records of pairing, suggests that most, if not all, the records were immature birds wandering through the county. If observers were able to comment on the age of any birds seen it would prove very useful. The approximate monthly totals were as follows:

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
1	-	1	2	4	4	5	2	1	1	1	5

Whilst the majority of sightings continue to be associated with downland, it is clear that this is a species which may be seen more-or-less anywhere in the county. There was a single bird at Plashett Park on 30 Mar, seen circling with seven Buzzards, and in April there were singles at South Harting on the 2<sup>nd</sup> and at Southwick Hill on the 17<sup>th</sup>. Further singles were seen on downland throughout the summer but elsewhere, to the north-east and north of the county, there were singles at Hurst Green on 23 May and Hartfield on 29 May. On the coast there were records from the lower Cuckmere Valley and Beachy Head on 5 Aug and again at the latter site on 8 Sep. Later in the year there was a single at Combe Haven on 15 Dec.

There were three records of wing-tagged birds, all of them in the Barcombe area, the first with an orange tag on the right wing on 14 July, the second with a yellow tag on the left wing on 1 Dec and the third with orange tags on both wings on 15 Dec. [MEK]

0260. **MARSH HARRIER***Circus aeruginosus***Scarce spring and autumn passage migrant and very scarce winter visitor.**

Seen in every month and, with approximately 37 different birds in the first part of the year and 71 in the second part, it was another very good year for this species. The numbers seen at the major localities and the approximate monthly totals are summarised below:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
<i>County total</i>	1	2	3	7	22	2	5	20	15	32	4	1
Western Hbrs	1	1	-	4	3	-	1	11	4	7	1	1
Beachy Head	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	10	-	-
Combe Haven	-	1	2	1	5	-	-	2	1	3	1	-
Rye Bay	-	-	1	-	6	1	2	4	3	8	2	-
Other sites	-	-	-	2	8	1	2	3	4	4	-	-

The main spring passage occurred between 26 Apr and 8 May with a total of 18 recorded. In May the eight birds seen away from the areas shown in the table were all recorded on sea-watches, except for one flying north-east at North Stoke in the Arun Valley on the 18<sup>th</sup>. On 3 May there were singles at Selsey Bill and Brighton Marina while on the 5<sup>th</sup> two flew in off the sea at Brighton Marina and one came in at Splash Point, Seaford. There were further singles at Selsey Bill on the 8<sup>th</sup> and at Newhaven Tide Mills on 19<sup>th</sup>.

Summer records are becoming regular and this year there was a female/immature present at Pett Level in the first half of June and also an adult female at Marline Wood, Hastings on 3 Jun. In July there were probably five different birds with 1-2 in the Rye area and other singles recorded in the last few days of the month at Pagham Hbr, Steyning and Cradle Hill, near Seaford.

In early August there was a single at Pett Level on the 3<sup>rd</sup> and three were seen together at Selsey Bill on the 10<sup>th</sup>. Inland, there were singles at Small Dole on 13 Aug and a downland bird at Harveys Cross, near Balsdean on the 15<sup>th</sup>. In the last week of August two singles visited Combe Haven.

Evidence of juvenile dispersal was provided by five different birds in August identified as such, with a single at Pagham Hbr on the 10<sup>th</sup> followed by others at Lancing Clump on 21st, flying west at Thorney Island on the 25<sup>th</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup>, and finally at Rye Hbr on 29<sup>th</sup>.

In the autumn, Beachy Head proved very productive with a total of 13 birds, with seven on just one day including five in one party heading out to sea at 07:15 BST on 13 Oct. On the same day there were also three birds at Pett Level, including an adult male, and another male high over Hastings, flying south. The number of sightings dwindled in November and the final record was of a single at Selsey Bill on 12 Dec. [MEK]

0261. **HEN HARRIER***Circus cyaneus***Scarce, but regular, winter visitor and passage migrant.**

Restricted access to much of the countryside as a result of FMD undoubtedly influenced reporting of this species in the early part of the year. However, there were still a good number of records from the Rye area and Ashdown Forest with a probable total of 22 different birds in the county. There were several adult males reported in January, with two seen regularly on Ashdown Forest, two at Ambersham Common and one at

Pulborough Brooks. The Ashdown Forest roost held a maximum of two males and two ringtails on 4 and 6 Feb.

By March there were just three birds in the county with a male reported at Pett Level on 18 Mar and a ringtail at the same site on 22 March. Two days later a female was seen flying east at Galley Hill, Bexhill. In April there were no records at all, but in May there was a ringtail at Woodingdean on 3 May, a male at Pulborough Brooks on 10 May and, finally, a very late record of a male at Combe Haven on 26-27 May. It is worth noting that these late records have become more common in recent years.

The approximate monthly totals were as follows:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
<i>County total</i>	11	10	3	-	3	-	-	-	-	3	13	9
Chichester & Pagham Hbrs	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	-
NW Sussex Commons	2	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Arun Valley	1	1	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	1	-
W. Sussex Downland	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	1
E. Sussex Downland	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	2	-
Ashdown Forest	3	4	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	3	3
Beachy Head	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-
Pevensey Levels	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
Rye Bay	4	2	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	3
Other Sites	1	-	1	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	1	1

In the second half of the year there were just 19 different birds with the first record of the autumn an adult male at Cissbury on 6 Oct. On Ashdown Forest a male first occupied the roost on 21 Oct and was then joined by a ringtail on the 27<sup>th</sup>. There was a small influx of birds in early November with single ringtails at Beachy Head on 2<sup>nd</sup>, Pilsey Island on 3<sup>rd</sup> and Pett Level on 4<sup>th</sup>. On the following day a male and a ringtail were seen at dusk at Pett Level. A little later in the month there was an adult male and a ringtail at Newmarket Hill on 11<sup>th</sup>. Elsewhere, there were single ringtails at Small Dole on 15 Nov, Pulborough Brooks on 24 Nov, Powdermill Res on 1 Dec and Bow Hill, near Stoughton on 15 Dec. The Ashdown Forest roost held a maximum of three birds with two males and a ringtail on 24 Nov and one male and two ringtails on 5 Dec. Finally, there were three ringtails seen at Scotney Court GP on the last day of the year. [MEK]

## 0263. MONTAGU'S HARRIER

*Circus pygargus*

### **Very scarce spring and autumn visitor; last bred successfully in 1962.**

A total of seven birds was recorded, four in May, one in August and two in September. The first of the year was a first-summer male at Brighton Marina on 1 May (KBG, IJW). The bird's progress was considerably slowed as it battled into a strong north-east wind and this allowed for prolonged views. Inland, there was a brief but stunning view of an adult male as it flew very low and directly over the observer's head at Duncton Common on 6 May (ARK). Sea-watching brought its rewards early on 7 May at Brighton Marina as an adult female was seen taking a similar line to the one recorded earlier month (ADW, IJW) and another female was watched as it came in off the sea at Splash Point, Seaford on 13 May (RJF, JPS).

No over summering was reported but on 8 Aug there was a ringtail at Selsey West Fields (OM), followed by a juvenile on downland at Lee Fm, Patching on 2 Sep (JAN) and another downland bird, at Ditchling Beacon on 7 Sep (IJW). [MEK]



0269. **SPARROWHAWK**

*Accipiter nisus*

**Common resident and passage migrant.**

Several hundred records were received but only 50-60 territories were identified and as usual there was little data on breeding success.

The prey items recorded were the usual expected species of Woodpigeon, Collared Dove, Starling and House Sparrow but also included Water Rail, the skulking habits of which would normally remove it from an obvious target list.

A total of 15 migrants was recorded with one at Selsey Bill on 2 Jan, three there on 19 Apr, and further singles on 30 Apr, 2 May, 1 Aug, 4 and 13 Sep, 18 Oct and 2 Nov and finally two on 13 Nov. At Brighton Marina there were four spring records, all of birds seen flying in off the sea, on 2 Apr and 5, 8 and 23 May; in the autumn one flew out to sea on 5 Oct. At Splash Point, Seaford singles flew east on 21 Feb and north on 5 May and at Worthing Beach there was 1 E on 30 Oct.

A first calendar year bird was found dead at Barcombe on 30 Apr having been ringed on 20 Aug 2000 near Steyning. [MEK]

0287. **COMMON BUZZARD**

*Buteo buteo*

**A scarce resident and passage migrant and possible winter visitor.**

The comments made last year and the conclusions reached remain largely the same. The core population is centred on downland in the west of the county and casual observation suggests that the numbers of breeding pairs is increasing very rapidly. In the east of the county there is a thriving population in the Lewes, with several multiple records from Barcombe Res and Plashett Park. The Ashdown Forest area continues as a major stronghold. Only a thorough search for breeding pairs in late winter and early spring would provide an accurate figure for the county population but an approximate estimate of 100 breeding pairs is credible.

Any comment on migrants is fraught with problems. There is clearly an abundance of wandering non-breeding birds as can easily be verified whenever one of these individuals passes through the core territory of a breeding pair. This will often trigger a reaction from one of the resident birds and the intruder is chased off. These territorial clashes are now commonplace, whilst just a few years ago they were decidedly rare. Only records from coastal localities provide some sort of information on movement through the county and even this may prove difficult to detect if there are breeding pairs in the vicinity. One observer (IJW) provided some interesting autumn records for the Brighton area, with 30 different birds flying over during September and October, including 7 E on 22 Sep. Elsewhere, the approximate monthly totals of obvious migrants were as follows:

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
1	-	2	6	-	-	2	9	27	18	2	1

[MEK]

0301. **OSPREY***Pandion haliaetus***Scarce passage migrant.**

Another very good year with approximately 24 different birds recorded in the first half of the year and 39 in the second. With over half of the records relating to Thorney Island and Pagham Hbr, it is clear that this general area is the premier location in the county for this species. The minimum monthly totals, together with the numbers seen at the principal sites were as follows:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
<i>County total</i>	-	-	1	7	13	4	3	13	18	7	1	-
Western Hbrs	-	-	-	3	5	2	2	3	6	2	-	-
Weir Wood Res	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	2	1	-	-	-
Arlington Res	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-
Beachy Head	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	1	-	-	-	-
Bowl Water	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	1	1	-	-
Other sites	-	-	1	4	8	2	-	5	9	4	-	-

The first spring record was a fly-over at Danehill on 7 Mar; this is the earliest county record and pre-dates one seen at Arlington Res on 10 Mar 1995. There were probably eight different birds in April with reports from Pilsey Island and Ivy Lake, Chichester GP on 1<sup>st</sup>, followed by other singles at Thorney Island on the 16<sup>th</sup>, 17<sup>th</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup>, and at Rye Hbr on the 7<sup>th</sup>, Barcombe Res on the 11<sup>th</sup> and in off the sea at Brighton Marina on the 30<sup>th</sup>.

Further singles flew in off the sea at Brighton Marina on 1 and 23 May. Numbers built up at Thorney Island, with a maximum of three on 5 May, while elsewhere there were singles at Beachy Head also on the 5<sup>th</sup>, Seaford Head on the 11<sup>th</sup>, Barcombe Res on the 16<sup>th</sup>, Ardingly Res on the 30<sup>th</sup> and in the lower Cuckmere Valley on the 31<sup>st</sup>.

The June records comprised singles at Pagham Hbr on the 4<sup>th</sup>, Pilsey Sands on the 10<sup>th</sup>, East Hoathly on the 12<sup>th</sup> and Ifold on the 21<sup>st</sup>. In July there were many records of two different birds at Thorney Island and a single at Weir Wood Res on the 26<sup>th</sup>.

In August there were many sightings at Thorney Island with a maximum of three different birds on the 24<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup>. The remaining ten individuals recorded during the month were widely scattered including singles at Horsebridge on the 4<sup>th</sup>, Brighton seafront on the 19<sup>th</sup>, Pett Level on the 23<sup>rd</sup>, Rye Hbr on the 26<sup>th</sup>, Beachy Head on the 26<sup>th</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup>, and at Pebsham on the 27<sup>th</sup>.

There were probably eighteen different individuals in September with most of the county reservoirs visited at least once. There was another coastal record, on this occasion a juvenile flying east at Worthing on the 30<sup>th</sup>. A few birds lingered into October with long-stayers at Powdermill Res and Pett Level; the final date for the year was 3 Nov when a juvenile was recorded flying east at Pilsey Island. [MEK]

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

There were records for approximately 50 pairs with most of the breeding data derived from occupied owl boxes, where five pairs fledged four young each and one pair raised six young. Easy access to these nests allowed for accurate determination of the dates eggs were laid. At one site the first egg was laid on 9 Apr and the fifth egg on 19 Apr.

There was a total of 23 coastal migrants recorded at Worthing Beach, Brighton Marina, Splash Point, Seaford and Bexhill. The monthly totals are summarised as follows:

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
-	-	5	1	6	-	4	2	2	2	1	-

[MEK]

0309. **MERLIN**

*Falco columbarius*

**Scarce but regular winter visitor and passage migrant.**

There were rather fewer records in the early part of the year as a result of limited access to the countryside due to FMD restrictions. As usual the western harbours were especially favoured with Thorney Island and Pagham Hbr proving once again the most reliable localities to see this species. The approximate monthly totals are summarised in the table below:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
<i>County total</i>	9	9	6	3	-	-	-	4	15	18	14	11
Chichester & Pagham Hbrs	3	3	1	1	-	-	-	2	3	5	4	3
Arun Valley	1	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	1
W. Sussex Downland	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	-	-	2
E. Sussex Downland	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	2
Beachy Head	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	2	4	-	-
Rye Bay	-	1	-	1	-	-	-	-	3	2	2	-
Other Sites	4	2	5	1	-	-	-	-	6	5	7	3

In the first part of the year, away from the main localities listed in the table, there were singles at Arlington Res on 9 Jan, Hassocks on 5 Feb, Lancing on 19 Feb, Bawl Water on 28 Mar, and Seaford on 14 Apr. The only multiple sighting was at Combe Haven where both a male and a female were regularly recorded throughout January and February. Passage birds were not much in evidence but there singles flew in off the sea at Brighton Marina on 14 and 24 Mar.

There were several records in August, which included two birds at Selsey on the 10<sup>th</sup> and singles at Blackpatch Hill on the 21<sup>st</sup> and Beachy Head on the 30<sup>th</sup>. A female flew east at Worthing Beach on 30 Sep.

Numbers peaked in October with many of the records from Thorney Island, Pagham Hbr, Beachy Head and the Rye Hbr area. In the latter part of the year there were rather more records involving two birds together, either perched or hunting as a team. Whilst clearly speculative, it is likely that this type of close co-operation is indicative of family members coming together. [MEK]

0310. **HOBBY**

*Falco subbuteo*

**Scarce breeding summer visitor and regular passage migrant.**

The first record for the year was a coastal migrant at Galley Hill, Bexhill on 6 Apr. This is the second earliest ever recorded in the county. There were no other reports until singles at Hunston on 22 Apr and Burgess Hill on 23<sup>rd</sup>. Whilst FMD restrictions may have distorted the usual pattern of records, there was some compensation in that there was a marked increase in the number of reports from coastal localities. In April there were four records from the various sea-watching sites and in May a further 35.

Inland, records were received from 64 different localities, evenly split between the two halves of the county, but as usual there was very minimal data on breeding success and at only three sites was there any confirmation of breeding. It was gratifying to receive several reports from some areas of East Sussex, where previously there have been none.

There were no especially large congregations reported, with a maximum of six at Pevensey Levels on 28 May and at Castle Water, Rye Hbr on 9 Jun.

In the autumn there were 24 coastal migrants in September and a further 24 in October. The final record for the year was an adult bird seen pursuing a flock of finches near Ringmer on 2 Nov.

The only unusual prey item was a Dunlin, taken on Thorney Island on 4 Aug. [MEK]

## 0320. PEREGRINE

*Falco peregrinus*

### Scarce breeding resident.

A very large number of records was received but with a few exceptions they were clearly related to the resident breeding population. The *Sussex Peregrine Study* monitored 11 sites and very kindly provided their data. Four pairs failed in their breeding attempt but the seven successful pairs fledged 18 young. Breaking the figures down, one of the pairs fledged four, two of the pairs fledged three, and the remaining four pairs fledged two young. There was one other pair in the west of the county which was not monitored as a result of FMD restrictions but an independent observer reported three fledged young at this site, raising the total for the county to 21 fledged young. The first known breeding attempt in the current era occurred in 1990 and since then, in East Sussex alone, 109 youngsters have fledged.

The nestbox on Sussex Heights, Brighton, once again provided interesting information. The first egg was laid on 24 Mar and the clutch of three eggs completed on 30 Mar. The first egg hatched on 4 May and the brood was complete on 6 May. One chick died on 9 May and was unceremoniously fed to its two siblings within 24 hours. The surviving two youngsters both fledged on 16 Jun.

Not much information was received regarding prey. In the early part of the year a Golden Plover was taken at West Wittering and an adult pair was observed chasing pigeons on Pilsey Island and were clearly hunting together as a pair. In the autumn a Black-tailed Godwit at Pulborough Brooks fell victim and on 13 Nov there was further teamwork when an Avocet at Pagham Hbr was split from its flock by a male, and then taken by a female.

With most, if not all, of the ancestral sites occupied, this species may be tempted to adopt other less traditional sites. Any large building with an appropriately placed nest box might suffice, but if this species exploits the hinterland fully, then it is likely that pylons will be used. This has happened already, elsewhere, and it is probably only a matter of time before it occurs in Sussex. All records of birds perched on pylons would be very welcome. [MEK]

0358. **RED-LEGGED PARTRIDGE**

*Alectoris rufa*

**Introduced resident. Population augmented annually by captive bred stock.**

Records were received from 25 widely separated sites, the only notable counts being 35 in January and 75 in December at Stapleash Fm, Chilgrove. Several double figure counts, up to 30, were noted in the Pagham Hbr area of probably released birds. There were no records of confirmed breeding but birds were noted during the breeding season at 12 sites. [RTP]

0367. **GREY PARTRIDGE**

*Perdix perdix*

**Fairly common but decreasing resident. Species of Conservation Concern in Sussex.**

Records were received from 44 sites, only six of them north of the downs. During the first winter period there were only two double figure counts, 12 at Earnley and 11 at West Wittering, both in January. A drastic decline in numbers at Goring Gap was noted when a survey of the area on 17 Jan found only six birds. A single at Marline Wood, Hastings was the most northerly record during this period.

Records during the breeding season came from a number of sites. There were very low numbers at Rye Hbr SSSI, probably only one or two pairs in the Harbour Fm area (at least nine in 2000) and only a single brood was seen. Two juveniles were reported from Bignor Hill in July. A single territory was identified at Sefton Fm, Pagham (two in 2000). A pair seen on six dates in April and May on Pilsey Island and three pairs at Selsey West Fields, seen between April and June almost certainly bred. On Thorney Island at least six pairs were noted in June. Breeding season records came from 12 other sites, only four – Milbrook, Ashdown Forest; Brays Hill, Ashburnham; Barcombe Cross and Rivers Wood, near Haywards Heath – being north of the downs. In August, a party of 15 was reported from Three Corner Copse, Hove on the 10<sup>th</sup>, which remained until at least mid-September, two adults and eight juveniles were at Climping on the 20<sup>th</sup> and a family party of 12 was seen in stubbles at Steyning Round Hill on the 23<sup>rd</sup>.

Double figure counts were submitted from 11 sites during the second winter period. In spite of the poor breeding success, 20 were seen on the Beach Reserve at Rye Hbr on 26 Oct. The highest count of the year was of 40 at Stump Bottom, near Steyning on 4 Nov. The extent to which released birds contributed to these counts is not known. [RTP]

0370. **QUAIL**

*Coturnix coturnix*

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

The first record of the year was on the late date of 12 Jun at Castle Hill, Falmer where up to three remained until 26 Jul. This date compares with the 10 yr average of 13 May but it should be remembered that access to the countryside was restricted by the FMD epidemic. Up to four birds were noted at Steep Down, Lancing on five separate dates between 18 Jun and 25 Jul, other records coming from Beeding Hill; Glyne Gap Marsh, near Bexhill; and Steyning Round Hill. The last record of the year was at Lancing Clump on 15 Nov. This is the latest county record in recent years although des Forges & Harber referred to about ten December records (*Birds of Sussex*). Wintering birds are rare in Sussex although one was reported at Southease on 8 Feb 1976. [RTP]

0394. **PHEASANT***Phasianus colchicus***Very common introduced resident. Population augmented annually by captive bred stock.**

A few scattered reports were received of birds during the first winter period, including one in central Brighton. There were breeding pairs at Moulsecomb Wild Park, Brighton; Marline Wood, Hastings and seven territories at Sefter Fm, Pagham. Records of probable breeding were received from 15 other sites. Four melanistic males were seen at Rivers Wood, Haywards Heath, an all black bird at Kirdford and a number of dark green ones at Beachy Head. The latter certainly originated from rearing pens. They are very dark and can appear almost black in some lights. [RTP]

0396. *Cat. C* **GOLDEN PHEASANT***Chrysolophus pictus***Very scarce introduced resident.**

Only four records were received from two sites. A male was seen on three occasions, twice in May and once in December, at Brede Barn Fm, Sedlescombe and a male was seen in September at Vinehall Street, Mountfield. There were no records from the regular West Sussex site at West Dean Woods possibly because of lack of access during the FMD epidemic. [RTP]

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

The approximate monthly totals from all sites were as follows:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Sites	20	14	5	11	7	4	3	8	8	20	21	29
Birds	108	120	37	68	38	9	4	22	42	92	106	157

Summing the maximum counts from each site between October 2000 and March 2001 to give a rough estimate of the winter population produces a figure of 269 compared with 306 for 1999/2000. During the first winter period the main concentrations were at Combe Haven, with maximum counts of 60, 54 and 30 in January, February and March respectively, and at Arundel WWT, with maximum counts of 12 in January and 43 in February. Other notable counts were five at Castle Water, Rye Hbr on 15-16 Jan, five at North Fields, Pagham Hbr on 18 Jan and eight at Thorney Deeps on 9 Feb.

A complete survey at Combe Haven and surrounding areas could not be completed because of FMD restrictions but there were at least the following territories identified: two at Combe Haven, where six birds predated by foxes were found during the year, two at Glyne Gap Marsh, ten at Filsham Reed Bed and one adjacent to Pebsham Refuse Tip. At Rye Hbr breeding was suspected when a juvenile was seen on 16 Jun and confirmed when an adult with chick was seen on 16 Jul. During the breeding season birds were seen on a number of occasions at the Pannel Sewer, Pett and once only at Cuckoos Corner, Coombes and at the Breech Pool, Pagham Hbr.

During the autumn and second winter period the maximum monthly counts at Combe Haven were as follows: August 15; September 20; October 40; November and December

50. Other notable counts during this period were ten at the Pannel Sewer, Pett on 17 Sept, ten at North Fields, Pagham Hbr on 1 Nov, 13 at Thorney Deepes on 14 December, 14 at Chichester Hbr on 15 Dec and 22 at the Arundel WWT on Christmas Day. Three birds were seen feeding in the open during the hard weather at the tail of the year, two at Ferring Rife and one in the lower Cuckmere Valley. [RTP]

0408. **SPOTTED CRAKE**

*Porzana porzana*

**Very scarce spring and autumn passage migrant and rare winter visitor**

Juveniles were trapped at Pett Level on 23, 27 and 28 Sep (RBRG). Typical records in almost every respect: 49 of the 53 recorded since 1990 have been during August-October; 45 were trapped at Pett Level and most records have been of juveniles. The first two birds were males. [RJF]

0421. **CORN CRAKE**

*Crex crex*

**Rare passage migrant, formerly bred**

One was heard calling near Petley Wood on the evening of 29 Jun (IS) while one picked up injured near Sidlesham on 20 Sep was taken to Brent Lodge and was released in the same area on the 28<sup>th</sup> (per OM). That in June is the first occurrence in the breeding season in the county since 1977, while the latter, which had a broken foot, would undoubtedly have attracted a crowd had its release been publicised. Eight have been recorded since 1990, half in September. [RJF]

0424. **MOORHEN**

*Gallinula chloropus*

**Very common resident and winter visitor.**

The monthly *WeBS*' counts at the principal sites were as follows:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
<i>County total</i>	627	687	30	20	2	11	188	274	663	522	692	837
Chichester Hbr	81	51	nc	nc	nc	nc	18	20	24	41	42	74
Pagham Hbr	8	22	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	37	26	48	24
Chichester GP	111	103	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	91	82	102	156
Swanbourne Lake	100	60	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	60	60	50	60
Arundel WWT	33	65	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	85
Pulborough Brooks	7	87	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	16	19	15	16
Bewl Water	43	75	nc	nc	nc	nc	158	187	200	120	91	120
Alexandra Park	32	29	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	19	15	16	30
Pett Level	7	25	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	56	5	25	72	50
Rye Hbr	27	7	30	20	2	11	12	11	27	20	35	52

During the first winter period there were very few counts in double figures, apart from the *WeBS*' counts above. At Combe Haven and Filsham Reed Bed there was a minimum of 45 on 28 Feb; at Arundel Mill Stream 41 were feeding on a waterlogged meadow on 8 Mar and ten were at Brooklands, Worthing on 11 Mar. Winter censuses at Rose Green, Bognor Regis on 3 Jan and 5 Feb found six on both occasions and at Marsh Fm, Yapton there were four on 7 Jan and three on 9 Feb.

There was an early start to the breeding season when two adults with five chicks were seen at The Pells, Lewes on 31 Mar and two fledged chicks were noted from separate broods on 1 Apr at Drove Marsh, Newhaven. *BWP* states that, in Northern Europe, egg laying begins at the end of March and that chicks are seen from the middle of April. Are these early dates a result of global warming? At Bewl Water 97 pairs were identified in April but, due to the FMD epidemic, full results were not obtained. However, at least 49 young from 21 broods were seen. At Thorney Deepes, ten pairs produced seven young from four broods and at Sefter Fm, Pagham a breeding census found 21 territories on 95 ha of mixed farmland. Records were received from a further 25 sites during the breeding season.

Apart from the *WeBS*' counts, the only double figure records at the end of the year were 13 at Darwell Res on 10 Nov, ten at Sefter Fm, Pagham on 21 Nov and ten at Vinnetrow GP, Chichester on 23 Nov. [RTP]

## 0429. COOT

*Fulica atra*

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

The monthly *WeBS*' counts for the principal sites were as follows:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
<i>County total</i>	3761	2767	215	90	66	191	1320	1386	2972	2302	2972	3324
Chichester Hbr	96	84	nc	nc	nc	nc	41	94	203	94	123	163
Pagham Hbr	59	70	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	173	150	157	73
Chichester GP	940	702	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	862	771	749	1094
Swanbourne Lake	160	150	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	100	100	110	120
Eastbourne Lakes	266	195	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	45	70	63	40
Bewl Water	622	491	nc	nc	nc	nc	624	766	550	370	312	400
Pett Level	192	198	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	59	21	51	133	145
Rye Hbr	575	264	215	90	66	191	185	246	544	490	656	486
Scotney Court GP	429	221	nc	nc	nc	nc	470	221	292	nc	438	490

The principal counts throughout the year are shown in the table above. The county totals from March to August are meaningless due to lack of access during the FMD epidemic. County totals from the remaining months were 19% lower than in 2000. A count of 203 at Pett Level Pools on 30 Jan was the only one of note during the early part of the year, apart from those in the *WeBS*' table.

The first signs of breeding activity were a sitting bird at Bewl Water on 30 Mar and a family party at Castle Water, Rye Hbr on 15 Apr. Breeding was confirmed at only 13 sites. At Bewl Water 23 nests produced 40 broods and at least 110 young were raised. At Rye Hbr SSSI about 34 pairs nested but productivity was not assessed. At Chichester GP there were 23 nests with eggs, the largest clutch being eight and the average five. Of these, eight failed at the egg stage and eight others probably failed to rear young. The remaining six fledged a total of only ten young. At Thorney Deepes 12 pairs produced nine broods, which fledged 29 young. At Brooklands, Worthing there were at least five nests. The number of young reared was not assessed but on 24 Jun a count of 67 plus 'many additional young' was made. At Wicks Fm, Yapton two pairs failed at the egg stage.

In the second winter period there were 220 counted at Drayton GP, Chichester before full *WeBS*' counting was resumed. On 15 Sep there were 152 at Thorney Deepes and approximately 1500 were estimated to be on the Chichester GP south of the A27. [RTP]



0450. **OYSTERCATCHER**

*Haematopus ostralegus*

**Scarce breeder, fairly common passage migrant and winter visitor.**

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

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
County total	1527	2341	347	190	133	112	697	772	603	1268	1804	1342
Chichester Hbr	857	1605	nc	nc	nc	nc	653	738	400	512	1361	618
Pagham Hbr	448	294	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	185	265	197	311
Rye Hbr	210	400	347	190	133	112	31	34	17	450	230	405

Once again there were large concentrations at Pilesey Island in Chichester Hbr where the following maxima were recorded:

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
383	427	250	186	186	170	500	1052	80	1200	1001	600

The pattern was similar to previous years, with lowest numbers in spring and early summer, building up to 1000+ in the autumn; note that the low count in September was atypical and caused by Osprey disturbance!

High counts elsewhere, not included in the *WeBS*' counts, included 511 at Rye Hbr on 16 Jan and 400 there on 10 Feb

Some 40 pairs bred or attempted to breed in the county; this is fairly typical and lower than last year's high total of 60 pairs. Breeding activity was again concentrated at Rye Hbr where about 27 pairs nested, most of them on the Beach Reserve. Although the majority of clutches hatched out, fledging success was again low. Elsewhere, two pairs were seen with two chicks at Selsey West Fields, two pairs at Cuckmere Haven raised at least one young, two pairs bred at Pett Level, and single pairs at both Sidlesham Ferry and the Midrips. In Chichester Hbr, there were three pairs at North Stakes Island, plus a pair each at South Stakes Island and Ella Nore but they apparently did not attempt to breed. A pair that hatched two chicks at Coldwaltham Brooks was noteworthy being the first instance of inland breeding by this species in West Sussex.

Inland, apart from the breeding pair at Coldwaltham Brooks, birds were recorded regularly at Pulborough Brooks. Two were noted at Arundel WWT on two dates in June and a single at Bewl Water on 2 Aug. [JC]

0456. **AVOCET**

*Recurvirostra avosetta*

**Scarce winter visitor and passage migrant. Rare breeder.**

Allowing for some duplication involving coastal spring migrants, the approximate minimum monthly totals were as follows:

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
48	44	83	41	72	10	6	4	23	11	37	43

Numbers were generally higher than last year with no blank months. As usual the majority of wintering birds were in Pagham Hbr, where there were up to 30 in the first winter period and 25 in the second. Higher numbers than last years were also recorded in Chichester Hbr, with 18 at Thorney Channel on 20 Jan and 24 there on 11 Dec being the highest counts.

The first spring migrants were 2 E at Brighton Marina on 2 Mar; the usual small coastal passage up-Channel occurred from March through to May, high counts being 30 at

Rye Hbr on 26 Mar, 13 E past Brighton Marina on 26 Mar and 11 in Rye Bay on 17 Apr. A total of 22 flew east past Brighton Marina during May but this was not replicated at the other sea-watching sites where single figures were recorded during the month.

Breeding was not recorded at the site used in 1997 and 2000, but two or three pairs bred at a new site, raising at least two young and continuing a most welcome trend. [JC]

0459. **STONE-CURLEW**

*Burhinus oedicanus*

**A rare passage migrant. Formerly a scarce breeding summer visitor.**

One was present at Castle Water, Rye Hbr from 9 to 12 Jun (PMT, BJY). Records are currently averaging just under one per year, although this is the first to be seen in June since 1991. [RJF]

0465. **COLLARED PRATINCOLE**

*Glareola pratincola*

**Very rare vagrant.**

One at Sidlesham Ferry from 26 to 31 May (JWPB *et al*) has been accepted by *British Birds*. It is the fourth county record and the first since 1987. As a result it proved to be one of the main attractions of the year, despite spending much of the time feeding on the ground in a rather distant cabbage field. Previous records have been in June, July and August. [RJF]

0469. **LITTLE RINGED PLOVER**

*Charadrius dubius*

**Scarce breeding summer visitor and passage migrant.**

The first of the year was one at Rye Hbr on 16 Mar, again beating last year's first by a day! The usual light spring passage occurred, mostly involving single birds.

Birds were reported from more localities during the breeding season than last year, with regular sightings in the Pagham Hbr area, at Pulborough Brooks and Pett Level in particular. Occasional sightings at other localities in May and June included Barcombe Res, Cuckmere Haven, Combe Haven and Rye Hbr. However, the only breeding activities reported were a pair which attempted to breed but failed at Coldwaltham Brooks and a pair which bred successfully at Pett Level.

The usual post-breeding influx occurred in July and August, with high counts of eight at the Breech Pool (Pagham Hbr) on 19 Jul, nine at Castle Water, Rye Hbr on 31 Jul and seven there on 21 Aug. Again, there were several September records, including four at Rye Hbr on the 1<sup>st</sup>, with the last of the year being a single at Rye Hbr on the 17<sup>th</sup>. [JC]

0470. **RINGED PLOVER**

*Charadrius hiaticula*

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

Recorded from most suitable coastal localities for much of the year. The monthly *WeBS*' counts at the principal sites were as follows:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
County total	347	387	37	18	21	18	45	643	341	473	293	251
Chichester Hbr	109	113	nc	nc	nc	nc	18	581	51	135	33	69
Pagham Hbr	-	125	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	16	25	47	2
Climping	80	30	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	13	14	-	17
Goring Gap	26	43	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	76	45	3	6
Lower Adur Estuary	91	14	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	93	160	81	60
Newhaven	7	3	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	41	nc	-	6
Langney	14	5	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	35	nc	4	30
Pett Level	-	7	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	-	-	2	41	46
Rye Hbr	5	38	37	18	21	18	25	62	5	82	76	-

As usual, there were large concentrations at Pilsey Island, Chichester Hbr, where the monthly maxima were:

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
45	36	56	88	143	34	34	600	38	186	292	230

As with last year, August provided the largest count on 22<sup>nd</sup>, though the September count seems inexplicably low, unless it was due to disturbance (as was the low September Oystercatcher count at this site). Elsewhere, high counts included 70 at Brighton Marina on 27 Jan, 200 at Pagham Hbr on 24 Aug, 90 on Worthing Beach on 27 Aug, 159 on the R. Adur at Shoreham on 11 Oct and 300 on Thorney Island on 17 Nov.

Some 67 pairs bred or attempted to breed this year, slightly more than last year. The main site was again Rye Hbr, where at least 50 pairs nested and several pairs were seen with young. As usual though, fledging success was low, with predation by Kestrels thought to account for most losses. In Chichester Hbr, eight pairs nested at Pilsey Island but all were predated by foxes and crows, two pairs nested at Thorney Island, raising a total of four young and a pair attempted to nest at Ella Nore. Elsewhere, a pair raised two young at Norman's Bay, two pairs probably bred at Newhaven Tide Mills and at Brighton Marina there was a slight improvement on last year, with one of the two pairs raising three young after many attempts.

Away from the coast there were reports from Pulborough Brooks on three dates in May (including six there on the 28<sup>th</sup>), Arlington Res on three dates in August/September and Weir Wood Res on two dates in September. [JC]

#### 0477. **KENTISH PLOVER**

*Charadrius alexandrinus*

##### **Very scarce spring and autumn passage migrant, formerly bred.**

An adult female was seen at Pilsey Sands on 4 Apr (CBC), a probable male at Rye Hbr wader pool on 22 Apr (CWh, PWh) and a male there from 7 to 9 May (ME, PMT *et al*). A slightly below average showing with April and May continuing to be the most productive months for this species in the county. The Pilsey record represents a return to form following the first blank year at that site since 1993. [RJF]

#### 0482. **DOTTEREL**

*Charadrius morinellus*

##### **Very scarce spring and autumn passage migrant, one winter record.**

Six were present on Downs above Balsdean from 8-10 May (GAS). In autumn an adult flew southeast over Steyning Round Hill on 20 Aug (ARK), nine flew off south from above Balsdean on 23<sup>rd</sup> (ADW), three flew west over Beachy Head on 25 Aug (DC) and

one was seen at East Guldeford Level on 2 Oct (PMT). An above average showing, but otherwise a fairly typical set of records. [RJJ]

**0485. GOLDEN PLOVER**

*Pluvialis apricaria*

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

The *WeBS*' counts were as follows:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
<i>County total</i>	3480	1726	-	-	-	-	-	245	47	1581	2694	334
Chichester Hbr	2941	1599	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	25	24	655	770	165
Pagham Hbr	510	113	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	21	151	306	126
Pevensey Levels	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	38
Pett Level	15	14	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	-	-	-	1118	-
Rye Hbr	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	775	-	-
Scotney Court GP	-	-	nc	nc	nc	nc	-	220	-	nc	500	-

Notable counts in addition to those in the table were 190 at Rye Hbr on 8 Jan and, at White's Creek, Pagham Hbr, 1050 on 9 Jan and 380 on 22 Feb. Four hundred at Selsey West Fields on 27 Feb was the last three-figure count during the first winter period. The largest inland counts were 31 on the Upper Adur Levels and 30 at Amberley Wild Brooks on 1 Jan, with 30 at Pulborough Brooks on 26 Jan.

Spring passage was poor, but included a high total of 49 E at Brighton Marina on 21 Mar. The only records in April and May were 9 E at Selsey Bill on 27 Apr and a single at Pagham Hbr on 26 May.

The first returning bird was noted at Pagham North Fields on 30 Jul, with 100 at Scotney Court GP on 11 Sep the only notable count until mid-October.

Peak counts in the second winter period included 1000 at Walland Marsh on 22 Oct, 1200 at Rye Hbr on 3 Nov, 1000 at Pagham Hbr on 4 Dec, when 800 were also noted at Thorney Island, 1000 at East Head on 8 Dec and 700 at Pett Level on 29 Dec.

The only significant inland record in addition to those above was of 30 at Ringmer on 23 Dec. [PMB]

**0486. GREY PLOVER**

*Pluvialis squatarola*

**Common winter visitor and passage migrant.**

The *WeBS*' counts were as follows:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
<i>County total</i>	2589	2143	35	-	2	-	10	157	1225	1625	2543	2307
Chichester Hbr	1504	1180	nc	nc	nc	nc	10	157	843	922	1785	1353
Pagham Hbr	979	659	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	344	683	564	713
Goring Gap	2	194	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	38	18	83	98
Rye Hbr	18	3	35	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	7	6

Notable counts not in the *WeBS*' table included 80 at Goring Gap on 5 Jan and 145 there on 16 Mar, 300 at Pilsey Sands on 10 Feb, 200 at Pagham Hbr on 19 Aug and 650 at Pilsey on 6 Oct. In addition, birds were intermittently present in the Rye area during June.

The monthly totals of eastbound birds at the main sea-watching localities were as follows:

	Mar	Apr	May	Total
Selsey Bill	-	4	23	27
Worthing Beach	14	5	270	289
Brighton Marina	40	150	314	504
Splash Point, Seaford	-	-	58	58
Bexhill/Hastings	-	4	22	26

Spring passage was moderate. The peak movements at Brighton Marina comprised 89 E on 1 Apr, 101 E on 9 May and 91 E on 10 May, while observers at Worthing Beach noted 68 E on the latter date and 95 E on 13 May.

The only notable autumn coastal movement was 180 W at Selsey Bill on 13 Sep.

Inland records were restricted to the Arun Valley between Coldwaltham and Pulborough Brooks, with sightings of two on both 28 Apr and 2 Dec and singles on 9 and 15 May. [PMB]

#### 0491. SOCIABLE PLOVER

*Chettusia gregaria*

**Very rare vagrant.**

A first-winter with Lapwings on Pett Level on 30 Sep remained to at least 4 Oct (KRB *et al*). Presumably the same individual was found on Pevensey Levels, by Norman's Bay railway station, from 15-23 Dec (ITB, ADW, IJW *et al*). These records have been accepted by *British Birds* and involved the third individual to be recorded in the county. While on Pevensey Levels the bird was most often seen on its own, forsaking the company of nearby Lapwings. It also had an injured right foot and some apparent damage to its breast feathers suggesting that since leaving Pett it might have collided with an overhead wire or had a narrow escape from a Peregrine. Photographs have been published of the bird at both locations (e.g. *Birding World* 14:402 & 488, *British Birds* 95 plate 38). Prior to being seen at Pett, the bird was reported from Castle Water, Rye Hbr on 29 Sep. Previous records were at Arlington in Oct 1978 and Steyning Downs and then Lower Adur Levels from late Oct 1985-early Jan 1986. [RJF]

#### 0493. LAPWING

*Vanellus vanellus*

**Scarce breeder and very common winter visitor.**

The *WeBS* counts at principle sites were as follows:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
<i>County total</i>	10353	11597	22	10	15	234	1204	1726	1538	4937	8149	5211
Chichester Hbr	3666	1958	nc	nc	nc	nc	419	665	366	891	1728	793
Pagham Hbr	1470	1735	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	195	159	1118	702
Amberley Wild Brooks	665	2260	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	43	154	234	449
Waltham Brooks	194	122	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	-	-	150	310
Pulborough Brooks	441	877	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	43	1517	418	268
Lower Adur Estuary	210	750	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	-	1	-	242
Henfield Brooks	730	1000	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	250	-	-	17
Weir Wood Res	-	-	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	77	nc	-	-
Cuckmere Haven	250	-	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	-	250	350	150
Pevensey Levels	49	300	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	405	811	650
Bewl Water	210	300	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	100	125	150	223	200
Pett Level	1310	643	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	319	98	500	645	150
Rye Hbr	139	1005	22	10	15	234	542	442	287	858	1440	1102
Scotney Court GP	70	140	nc	nc	nc	nc	33	200	50	nc	750	10

The totals for January and February remained high due to the mild weather. Notable counts in addition to those in the *WeBS*' table included 2000 at Coldwaltham Brooks on 6 Jan, 1000 at Scotney Court GP the same day and 1000 at Glynde Levels on 23 Jan.

Display was first noted on 9 Mar. Breeding or possible breeding was noted at 26 sites and involved approximately 73 pairs. The largest concentrations were 14 pairs at Rye Hbr and seven pairs at both the Midrips and Selsey West Fields. No count of breeding pairs was received from Pulborough Brooks. While breeding success appears to have been generally poor, the FMD restrictions mean that comparisons with previous years cannot be made.

Returning birds were noted from late May, when a flock of 32 returned to Thorney Deeps. Numbers were generally low until late August, when 500 were noted at Pulborough Brooks on the 22<sup>nd</sup> and 735 at Rye Hbr on the 26<sup>th</sup>. The only other significant counts not shown in the *WeBS*' table for the latter part of the year were 600 at Rye Hbr on 20 Sep, 1300 at Pagham Hbr on 28 Oct, 2000 at Northpoint Pit on 28 Nov, 3000 at Pagham Hbr on 4 Dec and 580 at Bewl Water on 31 Dec.

The leucistic bird first noted in 1990 was reported at Newhaven Tide Mills on 20 and 27 Jan. [PMB]

## 0496. KNOT

*Calidris canutus*

### Common winter visitor and fairly common passage migrant.

The monthly *WeBS*' counts were as follows:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
County total	537	735	-	-	-	1	3	9	10	12	214	450
Chichester Hbr	450	540	nc	nc	nc	nc	2	9	4	5	207	275
Pagham Hbr	87	195	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	3	7	3	175
Cuckmere Haven	-	-	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	3	-	-	-
Rye Hbr	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	-	-	-	4	-

Counts made between March and August inclusive were severely disrupted by FMD restrictions and cannot be compared to other years, though those for the peak months were unaffected - see the monthly *WeBS*' counts for the previous four years from 1997 to 2000 inclusive below:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Annual
1997	1214	1665	548	2	25	-	1	22	136	26	531	247	4417
1998	159	710	218	37	3	-	1	2	38	89	340	538	2135
1999	213	1208	72	68	10	-	1	19	100	115	1289	137	3232
2000	227	88	64	151	104	-	4	2	36	56	129	27	888

The peak months for Knot in the county according to this table are January/February and November/December and 60 to 90% of these birds flock in Chichester Hbr.

Records originating on or near the coast were submitted for every month of the year. A number of significant counts not in the *WeBS*' table included, at Pagham Hbr, 400 on 3 Jan, 46 on 29 Apr, 50 on 8 May and 21 on 21 Aug, while in Chichester Hbr there were 250 on 9 Mar, two on 21 Jun, 48 on 20 Sep, 40 on 11 Oct, 494 on 11 Nov and 700 on 18 Dec.

The monthly totals of eastbound birds at the main sea-watching localities were as follows:

	Mar	Apr	May	Total
Selsey Bill	-	-	43	43

Worthing Beach	-	-	141	141
Brighton Marina	31	-	169	200
Splash Point, Seaford	-	-	114	114
Bexhill/Hastings	-	5	35	40

The largest movements were in May including 24 at Selsey Bill, 112 at Worthing and 96 at Seaford on the 13<sup>th</sup> and 45 at Brighton Marina on the 17<sup>th</sup>.

In December there were 700 feeding at low tide in Chichester Hbr on the 8th and 300 were recorded in Pagham Hbr on both the 26th and 28th [JAC]

## 0497. SANDERLING

*Calidris alba*

### Fairly common winter visitor and passage migrant.

The monthly *WeBS* counts were as follows:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
<i>County total</i>	134	208	1	-	-	-	57	140	16	18	46	95
Chichester Hbr	24	42	nc	nc	nc	nc	57	140	8	8	-	57
Climping	110	87	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	5	-	-	9
Goring Gap	-	79	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	3	10	12	3
Rye Hbr	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	34	24

Notable counts, additional to those shown above, included 320 at East Head, Chichester Hbr on 4 Jan, 100 at Camber on 5 Jan and 130 at Goring Gap on 12 Jan. Counts at Pilsley Island increased from 109 on 6 Mar to a spring peak of 240 on 14 Mar, reduced to 100 by 22 Mar before increasing to a second peak of 220 on 1 Apr.

The eastbound spring passage totals from the main sea-watching sites were as follows:

	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Total
Selsey Bill	-	38	356	7	401
Worthing Beach	54	7	483	-	544
Brighton Marina	505	43	484	-	1032
Splash Point, Seaford	-	13	201	-	214
Bexhill/Hastings	-	3	47	-	50

Passage was heavy, with peak movements at Brighton Marina of 365E on 16 Mar and 130E on 21 Mar correlating well with counts at Pilsley Island. This is the second year running that the March departure has been noted by sea-watchers.

Movement in early May was concentrated in the period 8 to 13 May, with the highest site count of 104 E at Worthing Beach on the 10<sup>th</sup>. Unusually, site totals were remarkably consistent on the 8<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> as shown in the table below (hours watched in brackets):

	8 <sup>th</sup>	12 <sup>th</sup>
Selsey Bill	74E (9.5)	53E (15.5)
Worthing Beach	33E (5.2)	55E (8)
Brighton Marina	74E (?)	53E (?)
Splash Point, Seaford	32E (5.5)	56E (5)

Low numbers were again recorded in the latter part of the year, with the only three figure counts being from Pilsley Island in August, with 160 on the 9<sup>th</sup> and 140 on the 22<sup>nd</sup>. The only other notable counts were 87 at Goring Beach on 26 Oct and 75 at Rye Hbr on 1 Dec.

The only inland record comprised an adult at Arlington Reservoir on 20 Jul. [PMB].

## 0498. SEMIPALMATED SANDPIPER

*Calidris pusilla***Very rare vagrant.**

An adult at Ternery Pool, Rye Hbr from 9 to 11 Jul (SSm, PMT, DW) has been accepted by *British Birds*. It is considered to possibly be the same individual seen at the same site in August 2000 (*SxBR* 53:71). A photograph appears in *Birding World* (14:270). The previous records were also at Ternery Pool, Rye Hbr in August (1986) and at Chichester GP in September (1998). [RJF]

## 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	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
9	6	10	1	6	-	2	12	144	78	17	16

Numbers were generally slightly lower than last year in the first half of the year (with June being a blank month) but higher in the second half, with a notable influx in September/October. As usual the majority of the wintering birds were at East Head in Chichester Hbr where there were eight between 11 and 14 Jan, nine on 28 Jan and ten on 29 Mar.

Spring passage was significantly down on last year and involved only singles in early May, with the first being one at Galley Hill, Bexhill on the 6<sup>th</sup>, and the last singles in the lower Adur Valley and at Pulborough Brooks on the 12<sup>th</sup>. (One at Pilsey Island on 11 Apr may have been an early migrant but could have been one of the wintering birds from East Head).

The first autumn record was one at Pagham Hbr on 20 Jul. Only small numbers were reported in August, with the highest counts being three at Pagham Hbr on the 22<sup>nd</sup> and at Rye Hbr on the 31<sup>st</sup>. Numbers built up through September, with notable counts being ten at Pulborough Brooks on the 18<sup>th</sup>, 17 at Pilsey Sands on the 20<sup>th</sup>, 14 at Thorney Island on the 22<sup>nd</sup>, ten at Emsworth Channel (Chichester Hbr) on the 23<sup>rd</sup>, ten at Sidlesham Ferry also on the 23<sup>rd</sup> and 21 at that site on the 28<sup>th</sup>. Elsewhere, smaller numbers were seen at many coastal sites whilst inland there two at Westhampnett GP on the 30<sup>th</sup>, a maximum of four at Weir Wood Res on the 20<sup>th</sup> and two at Arlington Res on the 12<sup>th</sup>. Although there were fewer reported, from fewer sites, in October, there were even larger flocks at Pilsey Sands throughout much of the month, including 42 on the 1<sup>st</sup>, 46 on the 6<sup>th</sup> and 33 on the 9<sup>th</sup>, decreasing to 17 on the 17<sup>th</sup>. After this, most of the records involved the wintering flock at East Head where 15 were recorded on five dates between 31 Oct and 19 Dec. Elsewhere singles were seen at Sidlesham Ferry between 2 and 18 Nov and at Rye Hbr on 13 Nov, 23 and 30 Dec. [JC]

## 0502. TEMMINCK'S STINT

*Calidris temminckii***Very scarce spring and autumn passage migrant.**

There were three records, one in the spring and two in the autumn. The spring bird was at Sidlesham Ferry on 28 Apr (RWP *et al*) and the autumn records involved adults at the Breech Pool, Pagham Hbr on 20 and 22 Jul (BFF *et al*) and at Pebsham Marsh on 30 Jul (IS). These records bring the total recorded since 1962 to 114. [JC]



0507. **PECTORAL SANDPIPER***Calidris melanotos***Rare vagrant, mainly in autumn.**

Two juveniles were seen in autumn, one at the North Wall, Pagham Hbr from 31 Aug to 2 Sep (ARK *et al*) and another on a flooded field by the R. Adur at Upper Beeding opposite Dacre Gardens on 13 Oct (KN *et al*). Sixteen have been recorded since 1990, all between 23 July and 30 October. [RJF]

0509. **CURLEW SANDPIPER***Calidris ferruginea***Passage migrant, scarce in autumn and very scarce in spring; rare in winter.**

This was another good year for this species with a good number of spring records, a considerably lower August total than last year and a similar number of September records. Allowing for some duplication, the approximate monthly totals were as follows:

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
1	1	-	1	15	1	3	23	105	11	1	-

In the first winter period, a single bird (presumably the same one) was seen at various locations around Pagham Hbr on four dates in January and February. The first spring migrant was at Pilsey Sands on 30 Apr and a total of 15 was seen in May, significantly more than last year's May total of five. Most of these were at Pagham and Chichester Hbrs and Rye Hbr, but there were also singles in the lower Cuckmere Valley and at Galley Hill, Bexhill. The last bird of the spring was one at Pagham Hbr on 11 Jun.

Autumn passage began on 18 Jul with one at Sidlesham Ferry. Birds were then recorded from a variety of coastal sites throughout the autumn period. The August total of 23 was way down on last year's 91, with most of the records coming from Pagham Hbr/Sidlesham Ferry and Rye Hbr, with a few in Chichester Hbr and one each at Pett Level and the R. Adur at Shoreham. The highest count was four at Sidlesham Ferry on the 31<sup>st</sup>. Numbers picked up in September, with high counts of 33 in Pagham Hbr on the 5<sup>th</sup>, 20 there on the 15<sup>th</sup>, 25 at Thorney Deeps on the 21<sup>st</sup> and 21 at Pilsey Sands on the 28<sup>th</sup>. As usual, the vast majority of these were juveniles. Away from the main localities, singles were seen at Newhaven Tide Mills and Cuckmere Haven, five on the R. Adur at Shoreham on the 15<sup>th</sup> with some lingering there after this date, two at Ferring on the 15<sup>th</sup> and nine inland at Weir Wood Res on the 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup>, increasing to ten there on the 14<sup>th</sup>.

October numbers were, typically, much lower, with mostly singles recorded though there were eight at Thorney Deeps on the 1<sup>st</sup>. The last of the year was a single bird at Pagham Hbr on 15 Nov. [JC]

0510. **PURPLE SANDPIPER***Calidris maritima***Scarce winter visitor and passage migrant; very rare in summer.**

The species was present at the four regular wintering sites as shown by the monthly maxima for each site in the table below:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Shoreham/Southwick	9	6	7	9	4	-	-	-	-	-	4	5
Brighton Marina	11	11	9	7	5	-	2	2	2	4	10	13

Newhaven	9	7	7	10	8	-	-	-	2	-	7	7
Bexhill	3	-	3	7	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	1

Away from the regular areas, the only bird recorded in the first winter period was one at Pagham Hbr on 29 Mar. The last spring record was of three on Newhaven East Pier on 13 May. The first of the autumn was one at Cuckmere Haven on the very early date of 1 Jul (DC), eight days earlier than the previous earliest autumn record for the county. Other records away from the main sites during the second winter period included singles in the Pagham/Selsey area on several dates, one at Saltdean on 12 Aug, one at Rye Hbr on 7 Dec and, most notably, 12 at the Sovereign Marina, Eastbourne on 31 Dec. [JC]

## 0512. DUNLIN

*Calidris alpina*

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

The monthly *WeBS*' counts at the principle sites were as follows:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
<i>County total</i>	5050	19714	12	13	2	-	43	2063	1203	3293	7396	7531
Chichester Hbr	2810	16773	nc	nc	nc	nc	43	2015	554	2782	5565	5935
Pagham Hbr	1452	1673	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	484	433	1452	795
Lower Adur Estuary	241	340	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	80	55	15	270
Rye Hbr	200	4	12	13	2	-	-	47	7	23	212	113

The low September count from Chichester Hbr was presumably due to Osprey disturbance at the roost sites.

Other notable counts in the first winter period for Chichester Hbr included 8000 at Pilsley Island on 24 Jan and 15,000 at Ella Nore on 9 Mar

Easterly spring passage was moderate as shown by the monthly totals recorded at the main sea-watching localities:

	Mar	Apr	May	Total
Selsey Bill	-	39	112	151
Worthing Beach	62	17	214	293
Brighton Marina	77	73	470	620
Splash Point, Seaford	174	-	48	222
Bexhill/Hastings	-	16	18	34

The peak movements were 137 E at Seaford on 16 Mar, 75 E at Brighton Marina, 46 E at Worthing Beach and 32 E at Seaford on 21 Mar, and 80 E at Selsey Bill, 43 E at Worthing Beach and 120 E at Brighton Marina on 2 May.

Small numbers were noted on autumn sea-watches, with a typical movement noted in fresh northerly winds on 9 Nov comprising 362 W at Brighton Marina and 222 W at Worthing Beach. A movement of 107 E was noted at Brighton Marina on 8 Dec.

Notable counts in the second winter period included 2000 at Pilsley Island on 22 Aug, increasing to 8000 on 13 Dec, and 200 at Worthing Beach on 16 Dec.

Small numbers were recorded at eight inland sites, with birds recorded intermittently at Pulborough Brooks during the autumn and early winter, peaking at 20 on 18 Oct. The maximum counts were from Lewes Brooks, with 200 noted on 13 Feb and 23 on 24 Dec. The approximate monthly distribution of inland records is shown below:

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
3	200	-	6	5	-	3	7	23	20	5	35

[PMB]

**Scarce winter visitor and passage migrant.**

The monthly *WeBS*' counts were as follows:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
<i>County total</i>	6	26	-	-	-	-	1	-	1	4	1	5
Chichester Hbr	2	1	nc	nc	nc	nc	1	-	-	-	1	-
Pagham Hbr	-	-	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	1	-	-	-
Amberley Wild Brooks	2	14	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	-	-	-	-
Waltham Brooks	-	-	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	-	-	-	5
Pulborough Brooks	1	11	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	-	3	-	-
Pevensey Levels	1	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	-
Rye Hbr	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-

As usual, Pulborough Brooks and the associated wetlands held the bulk of the wintering population. The numbers there were greater than those reflected in the monthly *WeBS*' counts, with a high count of 30 on 3 Feb. There were also up to 12 at Coldwaltham Brooks throughout the first winter period. Elsewhere, numbers were much lower, mostly involving ones and twos, although there were four in the lower Cuckmere Valley on 18 Feb and also four at the North Fields, Pagham Hbr on 23 Feb. The last wintering bird recorded was one at Pagham Hbr on 27 Feb.

The first spring migrant was one at Rye Hbr on 14 Mar and, surprisingly, this was the only record for the month. Small numbers were recorded in April, mainly singles at Rye Hbr, Pett Level, and Coldwaltham Brooks, though there were three at the latter site on the 18<sup>th</sup>, three on Pett Level on the 27<sup>th</sup> and nine at Pulborough Brooks on the 2<sup>nd</sup>. There was only one May record, a single at Sidlesham Ferry on the 18<sup>th</sup>, and also only one June record, a single bird at Pulborough Brooks on the 11<sup>th</sup>. This is very early for a returning bird and it may have been a late spring migrant.

The next bird of the autumn was one at Rye Hbr on 2 Jul and small numbers were then recorded throughout the autumn, again mostly involving ones, twos and threes at the usual coastal and river valley sites, but with high counts of five at Sidlesham Ferry on 4 Sep and seven at Rye Hbr on 21 and 22 Sep. There were no inland records away from the Arun Valley.

Numbers were low at Pulborough Brooks until the end of October, when there were four on the 28<sup>th</sup>, building to six on 2 Nov and 12 on 28 Nov. [JC]

## 0518. JACK SNIPE

**Scarce winter visitor and passage migrant.**

The minimum monthly totals were as follows:

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
27	35	32	25	2	-	-	-	1	18	18	31

In the first winter period the majority were at Thorney Deeps, with 20 there on 15 Jan, 27 on 7 Feb and 30 on 9 Mar. Elsewhere there were three at Apuldram, Chichester Hbr on 15 Jan; three at Combe Haven on 28 Feb and singles at Pilsey Island; East Head; Ferring Rife; Steyning Levels; Holmbush Tip, Faygate; Millbrook, Ashdown Forest; and Glyne Gap, Bexhill. The last of the spring was one at Combe Haven on 19 May, equalling the latest departure date for the county.

None were recorded in the autumn until 15 Sep when there was one at Thorney Deeps, with presumably the same bird also being seen on the 24<sup>th</sup>. High counts in October were of eight at Thorney Deeps on the 21<sup>st</sup> and six at Rye Hbr on the 31<sup>st</sup>. Numbers at Thorney Deeps increased to 11 on 14 Dec but elsewhere, only ones and twos were recorded in November and December from a variety of sites in the Chichester Hbr area and also Pulborough Brooks, Ferring Rife, Ashdown Forest, the Cuckmere Valley, Pevensey Levels, Glyne Gap, and Rye Hbr. [JC]

## 0519. SNIPE

*Gallinago gallinago*

**Now a very scarce breeder and fairly common winter visitor.**

The monthly *WeBS*' counts at the principal sites were as follows:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
County total	672	446	2	-	-	-	1	4	31	62	353	276
Chichester Hbr	124	194	nc	nc	nc	nc	1	4	9	18	72	80
Pagham Hbr	-	44	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	-	-	1	1
Amberley Wild Brooks	65	52	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	2	8	23	62
Waltham Brooks	8	3	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	6	1	64	72
Pulborough Brooks	248	57	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	6	13	72	25
Lower Adur Estuary	144	10	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	1	-	24	-
Weir Wood Res	-	-	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	2	nc	-	-
Pevensey Levels	14	16	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	1	4	55	27
Bewl Water	-	15	nc	nc	nc	nc	-	-	4	6	-	1
Pett Level	-	30	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	-	-	2	16	2
Rye Hbr	-	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	7	20	2

The *WeBS*' counts were markedly higher than last year in January and February, but slightly lower in the second winter period. Note that these counts were badly affected by FMD restrictions between March and August. Other significant counts during the first winter period included 75 at Pagham Hbr on 9 Jan; 100 at East Head, Chichester Hbr on 28 Jan; 146 at Thorney Deeps on 7 Feb, with 140 there on 9 Mar, and 100 at Coldwaltham Brooks on 25 Feb.

There were no reports of probable or confirmed breeding from any sites this year, but this may have been partly due to FMD restrictions; nevertheless this is a worrying sign. Birds were seen during the breeding season at Sidlesham Ferry, Pett Level and Castle Water, Rye Hbr, but with no evidence of nesting.

Autumn birds started returning from early July, but numbers were low, with the only count of more than 30 birds being 35 at Rye Hbr on 30 Sep. Numbers were generally low during the latter winter period, with notable counts including 66 at Rye Hbr on 31 Oct, 80 at the North Fields, Pagham Hbr on 1 Nov, 70 at Arundel WWT on three dates in November, but just 58 at Thorney Deeps on 15 Dec, a much lower count than the first winter period ones. [JC]

## 0529. WOODCOCK

*Scolopax rusticola*

**Fairly common resident and winter visitor.**

Numbers in the first winter period were again generally low with mostly single birds at a variety of sites. The only records involving more than one were two at Pett Level on

several dates, two at Poundgate, near Crowborough on 4 Feb and five at Combe Haven on 28 Feb.

The first recorded roding was of one at Mountfield on 24 Apr. This is late but was probably due to FMD restrictions. There were records of roding birds from eight West Sussex and 14 East Sussex tetrads (including 12 on Ashdown Forest). This is a notable decrease compared with last year, especially for West Sussex, and is almost certainly related to under-recording due to FMD restrictions. Unlike last year, however, there were several reports of confirmed breeding, including two pairs at Lavington Common; single pairs at Hesworth Common and Blackdown, near Fernhurst, and an adult injury-feigning at Millbrook, Ashdown Forest.

Once again there were small numbers recorded in the latter winter period, with a total of 28 recorded from 19 sites, the highest count (as in the first winter period) being five at Combe Haven on 30 Nov. [JC]

## 0532. BLACK-TAILED GODWIT

*Limosa limosa*

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

The monthly *WeBS*' counts at the principal sites were as follows:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
County total	46	382	-	-	-	-	137	455	196	123	588	562
Chichester Hbr	45	132	nc	nc	nc	nc	137	444	173	96	552	507
Pagham Hbr	1	248	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	22	27	35	52

Other notable counts in the early winter period were 400 at Pagham Hbr North Wall on 24 Jan and 21 Mar, and up to four at Rye Hbr in late February.

Spring passage was barely observed with 100 at Apuldram, Chichester Hbr the largest count. Small numbers were noted from coastal sites including the R. Adur, Shoreham; Brighton Marina; Newhaven Tide Mills; and Combe Haven.

Summering birds were present at Pett Level through June to September, with peaks of 14 on 9 Jun and 20 on 14 Aug. Numbers at Sidlesham Ferry increased from 1 on 13 Jun, to 38 on 9 Jul, 80 on 14 Jul, and peaked at 95 on 31 Jul. Possibly the same birds were noted at Church Norton – 75 on 25 Jul and 50 on 20 Aug. At Thorney Island 170 on 5 Aug increased to 369 by the 21<sup>st</sup>. Monthly maxima at this site for the early winter period comprised 130 on 20 Oct, 400 on 13 Nov and 187 on 13 Dec.

Numerous inland sightings were received from seven sites, although only three sightings were away from the Arun Valley. The peak counts in the latter area comprised ten at Coldwaltham Brooks on 31 Mar, with presumably the same at Pulborough Brooks on 2 Apr, and six in the same area between 22 Aug and 1 Sep. A single was present at Pulborough Brooks from late November into 2002. The monthly distribution of inland records is shown below:

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
1	-	10	-	2	4	2	8	13	3	1	1

[PMB]

0534. **BAR-TAILED GODWIT***Limosa lapponica***Fairly common winter visitor and passage migrant.**

Counts made between March and August were severely disrupted by FMD restrictions; the only significant monthly *WeBS*' counts, those for Chichester Hbr, were as follows:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
<i>County total</i>	667	938	-	-	-	-	5	14	415	362	604	788
Chichester Hbr	662	925	nc	nc	nc	nc	5	14	406	359	603	786

The highest winter counts not shown in the table were of 250 at Pilsey Sands on 4 Mar and 968 on 16 Dec, the latter made during undisturbed conditions due to the absence of dog walkers.

Spring passage was first observed from Worthing Beach on 21 Mar with 25 E in 1.1 hrs with the next activity seen on 22 Apr with 242 E in 4.8 hrs. The monthly totals for the main sea-watching sites are summarised below:

	Mar	Apr	May	Total
Selsey Bill	-	77	231	308
Worthing Beach	25	507	993	1525
Brighton Marina	7	2512	2590	5109
Splash Point, Seaford	-	250	702	952
Bexhill/Hastings	-	38	144	182

The largest movements recorded were at Brighton Marina with 1323 E on 22 Apr, 863 E on 24 Apr and 613 E on 8 May and at Worthing Beach with 275 E in 5.2 hrs on 8 May.

Two at Pulborough Brooks on 9 May and one at Arlington Res on 22 Sep were the only inland records. [JAC]

0538. **WHIMBREL***Numenius phaeopus***Common passage migrant; a very scarce summering and wintering species.**

The monthly *WeBS*' counts were as follows:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
<i>County total</i>	2	2	-	-	-	1	55	37	18	1	1	3
Chichester Hbr	2	2	nc	nc	nc	nc	55	37	4	1	-	2
Pagham Hbr	-	-	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	14	-	1	1
Rye Hbr	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-

Wintering birds comprised two at Thorney Island and a single in Pagham Hbr. Two were noted at Cuckmere Haven on 28 Jan. -

Spring passage was heavy and commenced with a single noted passing east at Bexhill/Hastings on 19 Mar. The eastbound spring totals at the main sea-watching locations were as follows:

	Mar	Apr	May	Total
Selsey Bill	-	45	276	279
Worthing Beach	-	21	371	392
Brighton Marina	-	301	1371	1672
Splash Point, Seaford	-	59	467	526
Bexhill/Hastings	1	73	133	207

Peak passage occurred during late April and over the period 7 to 11 May, with observers at Brighton Marina recording 96 E on 23 Apr, 235 E on 7 May, 323 E on 8 May,

and 224 E on 10 May. An unusually late movement was noted at Beachy Head on 31 May, with 150 noted passing eastwards in less than 1.5 hours.

The nocturnal roost at Rye Hbr peaked at 300 on 1 May. However the total number roosting in the Rye area may have been significantly greater as 220 roosted at Pett Level on 2 May and 290 were noted at dawn the following day at Rye Hbr. The only significant estuarine count was of 86 at Pilsley Island on 8 May.

Inland passage was barely observed, with just eight records, seven of which were from the Arun Valley. The peak count was only five at Pulborough Brooks on 25 Apr. Ten were noted at Hurst Green on 2 May.

A light coastal passage was noted during the summer, with peaks of 10 E on 17 Jul and 14 W on 10 Aug at Brighton Marina. Estuarine counts peaked in late July, with 14 at Pilsley Island on the 21<sup>st</sup>, and on the 30<sup>th</sup> 20 at the North Fields, Pagham Hbr and 14 at Pett Level. The last double figure count was of 12 on 27 Aug at Pagham Hbr, with a single at Goring on 7 Oct the last migrant.

There were five inland records of birds on return passage. Birds were heard calling at night over Troutbeck, near Eridge on 24 Jun and 15 Jul, with further singles in July at Pulborough Brooks on the 5<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup>, and Arlington Reservoir on the 20<sup>th</sup>.

Up to five individuals remained to the year end, with two in Pagham Hbr and three in Chichester Hbr. [PMB]

0541. **CURLEW**

*Numenius arquata*

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

The monthly *WeBS*' counts were as follows:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
<i>County total</i>	2062	1769	68	2	1	1	1627	1461	1400	2071	1833	1543
Chichester Hbr	1501	991	nc	nc	nc	nc	1626	1370	839	1743	1511	1254
Pagham Hbr	343	706	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	341	253	219	213
Pett Level	171	41	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	88	130	34	42	23
Rye Hbr	-	-	68	2	1	1	-	2	81	29	35	20

Significant concentrations not shown in the table above included 35 at Newhaven Tide Mills on 28 Jan, 210 at South Stakes Island, Chichester Hbr on 8 Apr and at Rye Hbr, 416 on 16 Jan and 160 on 9 Mar.

Coastal movements are illustrated in the following table showing the predominant movements by month at the main sea-watching sites:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Selsey Bill	-	-	2E	13E	3E	-	-	-	1W	-	-	-
Worthing Beach	-	-	9E	-	10E	13W	2W	-	-	-	4W	-
Brighton Marina	-	20E	63E	7E	7E	9E	-	1W	-	-	-	-
Splash Pt, Seaford	-	12E	21E	2E	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	10W
Bexhill & Hastings	-	-	2E	18E	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

The peak movement was on 16 Mar, with 22 E at Brighton Marina and 11 E at Seaford. Return passage was poor with a maximum of 21 W at Newhaven on 14 Sep.

Counts of returning birds at Chichester Hbr were less regular than recent years, with birds often displaced due to Osprey disturbance. The peak counts were 400 at South Stakes Island on 22 Jun and 650 at Thorney Island on 20 Aug. The latter count included birds displaced from South Stakes due to high tides.

The only significant counts not included in the *WeBS*' table came from the evening roost at Rye Hbr, which may include birds feeding on Romney Marsh (Kent) during the day. Counts increased from 107 on 26 Jun to 237 on 22 Aug, 279 on 18 Sep, 556 on 28 Oct and a maximum of 618 on 2 Dec.

Inland sightings came from seven sites. All records were of singles except at least two calling at night over Troutbeck, near Eridge on 17 Jul and 15 SW over Chichester GP on 29 Aug. The monthly distribution of inland records is shown below:

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
-	-	1	2	-	-	5	15	1	-	-	1

[PMB]

#### 0545. SPOTTED REDSHANK

*Tringa erythropus*

##### Scarce passage migrant and winter visitor

The approximate minimum monthly totals were as follows:

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
8	7	6	8	5	2	8	16	10	7	7	9

During the first winter period most records came from Pagham Hbr with up to five seen on several dates. Elsewhere there were two at Rye Hbr in early January and again in March, and two at Thorney Deeps, Chichester Hbr throughout the period.

Two at Sidlesham Ferry on 28 Mar and 4 Apr could well have been wintering birds and so the one at Pulborough Brooks on 2 Apr was probably the first spring migrant. Singles were then recorded in the Chichester Hbr, Pagham Hbr and Rye Hbr areas on various dates in April and May and also at Pulborough Brooks on 23 and 30 May; the latter bird being the last of the spring.

The first autumn bird was at Sidlesham Ferry on 14 Jun. Small numbers were then recorded in the Chichester Hbr, Pagham Hbr and Rye Hbr areas throughout the autumn but the highest counts were of only three at Sidlesham Ferry on 21 Aug and 16 Sep. Away from the main sites, singles were seen at Brighton Marina on 10 Aug, Cuckmere Haven on 16 Aug, Hastings CP and Pett Level on 18 Aug, and Shoreham on 28 Aug. One at Shoreham Hbr on 2 and 6 Oct was probably a late migrant as it was not seen later into the winter.

Wintering birds at Pagham Hbr, present from 29 Sep, numbered four during the latter part of the year. There were also two at Thorney Deeps, up to two at Rye Hbr and one at Emsworth, Chichester Hbr. [JC]

#### 0546. REDSHANK

*Tringa tetanus*

##### Scarce resident and fairly common winter visitor and passage migrant.

The monthly *WeBS*' counts were as follows:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
County total	2544	1702	43	50	32	78	1140	1308	1699	2565	3018	2756
Chichester Hbr	1702	1251	nc	nc	nc	nc	1140	1308	1303	2141	2422	2303
Pagham Hbr		303	222	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	229	156	216	201
Lower Adur Estuary	128	136	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	96	86	152	77
Pett Level	321	40	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	-	14	-	-	7



Rye Hbr	-	5	43	50	32	78	-	-	50	170	142	80
---------	---	---	----	----	----	----	---	---	----	-----	-----	----

Unfortunately, counts made between March and August inclusive were severely disrupted by FMD restrictions and cannot be compared to other years. However, with the limited data available, the winter peak of 3018 in November is comparable to a similar peak of 2973 which occurred in October 2000. High counts at other sites not listed in the table above included 60 at Newhaven Tide Mills in January and 43 in February.

There was a light spring passage as shown by the eastbound monthly totals recorded at the main sea-watching localities:

	Mar	Apr	May
Selsey Bill	-	-	6
Worthing Beach	-	-	18
Brighton Marina	7	-	69
Splash Point, Seaford	2	-	-
Bexhill/Hastings	2	-	-

The largest movement was 63 E at Brighton Marina on 9 May.

Breeding records from nine sites indicated that approximately 44 pairs including 17 at Rye Hbr SSSI and 14 at Thorney Deepes were probably breeding. Associated with these was a possible total of 12-20 chicks of which only a small number matured to juveniles. Breeding failure was positively confirmed at Coldwaltham Brooks.

The build up of numbers in the autumn was shown by counts at Pilsley Island of 220 in Jun, 550 in Jul, 824 in Aug and 859 in Sep. [JAC]

#### 0548. GREENSHANK

*Tringa nebularia*

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

The monthly *WeBS*' counts were as follows:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
County total	13	11	-	-	-	-	120	161	144	138	45	18
Chichester Hbr	13	8	nc	nc	nc	nc	120	156	112	129	44	18
Pagham Hbr	-	3	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	18	3	-	-

During the first winter period most records were again from Chichester Hbr, where up to 11 were at Thorney Deepes and two at West Wittering on 11 Jan. Elsewhere, singles were seen fairly regularly at Pagham Hbr and Pulborough Brooks, and also one at Coldwaltham Brooks on 27 Jan.

The first definite migrant of the spring were singles east past Brighton Marina on 16 Apr and Splash Point, Seaford the following day. However, the spring passage past the main sea-watching sites was down on last year, with just 26 recorded and a day maximum of 5 E past Brighton Marina on 9 May. The highest spring numbers were recorded, as usual, from Thorney Deepes with double figure counts on several dates in April and May and a peak of 18 on 27 Apr. Away from Chichester Hbr, high spring counts included eight at Pulborough Brooks on 8 and 9 May, five at Rye Hbr on 12 May and four at Pett Level on 2 May.

There were numerous June records, spread throughout the month, which makes it difficult to determine when spring passage ended and return autumn passage began. However, the first returning autumn birds at Thorney Deepes were five on 30 Jun. Numbers at this site built during July to a total of 116 on the 21<sup>st</sup>, rising further to 137 on 20 Aug and 140 on 1 Sep, then falling to 88 on 15 Sep and rising again to 97, mostly

juveniles, on 21 Sep and 112 on 5 Oct. No other sites recorded anything like these numbers but there were high counts of 19 at Pagham Hbr on 30 July, 16 there on 23 Aug and, inland, 23 at Weir Wood Res on 27 Aug.

Most latter winter period records were again from the Chichester Hbr area, in particular Thorney Deeps, where the highest count was 40 on 3 Nov, dropping to 24 two days later and to 16 by December. Elsewhere, ones or twos were recorded at Pagham Hbr, Pulborough Brooks, the lower Adur Valley and Rye Hbr. [JC]

**0553. GREEN SANDPIPER**

*Tringa ochropus*

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

The monthly *WeBS*' counts were as follows:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
<i>County total</i>	4	1	-	-	-	5	11	34	4	3	3	1
Chichester Hbr	-	-	nc	nc	nc	nc	1	6	-	-	-	-
Chingford Pond	1	-	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	-	-	-
Bury Brooks	2	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	-	-	-	-
Pulborough Brooks	-	-	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	-	-	1	-
Henfield Brooks	-	1	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	-	nc	-	-
Weir Wood Res	-	-	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	1	nc	-	-
Glynde Brooks	1	-	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	-	-	nc	-
Pevensey Levels	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	2	1
Darwell Res	-	-	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	1	3	-	-
Pett Level	-	-	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	12	-	-	-	-
Rye Hbr	-	-	-	-	-	5	10	12	2	-	-	-
Scotney Court GP	-	-	nc	nc	nc	nc	-	4	-	nc	-	-

The approximate monthly minimum totals were as follows:

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
15	10	3	11	9	26	85	175	72	19	13	18

The pattern of records is similar to previous years, but numbers in the first half of the year were lower than last year, compensated for by higher numbers in the second half. Records were widely scattered in the first winter period with a high count of four at Portfield GP, Chichester on 11 Feb. Three at Barcombe Res on 28 Jan were also notable. Spring passage involved mostly ones and twos at the well-watched coastal localities, with inland records mainly from Pulborough Brooks. The last one of the spring was at this locality on 11 May.

The first autumn bird, typically early, was one at Castle Water, Rye Hbr on 9 Jun. Numbers then built to the typical August peak, with noteworthy counts including 13 at Rye Hbr on 25 Jul, 25 there on 5 Aug and 16 at Weir Wood Res on 27 Aug. Numbers dropped markedly in September, but 72 is a high total for this month and included 15 at Rye Hbr on the 4<sup>th</sup>. Numbers in the second winter period were about average and involved ones and twos at the usual scattered inland and coastal localities. [JC]

#### 0554. WOOD SANDPIPER

*Tringa glareola*

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

The monthly totals were as follows:

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
-	-	-	-	3	2	3	27	4	1	-	-

There was no repeat of last year's May influx this year with just three birds recorded, at Waterhall, Brighton on 6 May, and at Pulborough Brooks on 11 and 23 May.

Autumn numbers were about average and very similar to the number reported last year, with the usual peak in August. Mostly singles were involved and the main sites where the species was recorded were Sidlesham Ferry, the Breech Pool, Pagham Hbr and the Rye Hbr/Pett Level area. Elsewhere singles were at Sheepcote Valley, Brighton on 27 Aug and at Combe Haven on the following day. The highest counts of the autumn were three at Sidlesham Ferry on 22, 27 and 28 Aug. The last of the year was a single bird at Rye Hbr from 16-27 Oct, a very late date for this species. [JC]

0556. **COMMON SANDPIPER***Actitis hypoleucos***Fairly common passage migrant. A few regularly winter. Has bred at least once.**The monthly *WeBS*' counts at the principal sites were as follows:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
County total	-	-	-	-	-	-	36	54	32	12	2	-
Chichester Hbr	-	-	nc	nc	nc	nc	17	29	2	2	-	-
Lower Ouse Valley	-	-	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	2	2	1	-
Bewl Water	-	-	nc	nc	nc	nc	2	10	3	2	-	-
Rye Hbr	-	-	-	-	-	-	7	7	15	-	1	-
Scotney Court GP	-	-	nc	nc	nc	nc	10	6	-	nc	-	-

In the first winter period singles were seen near Shoreham on 1 Jan and 18 Feb, Lewes Brooks on 14 Jan and Pulborough Brooks on 10 Feb.

The first spring migrant was one at Bexhill on 31 Mar. The eastbound spring totals at the main sea-watching sites were Selsey Bill – 4, Worthing Beach – 2, Brighton Marina – 90, Splash Point, Seaford – 21 and Bexhill/Hastings – 4. The remarkably high total at Brighton Marina included high day totals of 17 E on 7 and 22 May. There were no other notable concentrations this spring, the highest counts being six at Burton MP on 2 May and at Barcombe Res on 12 May.

As last year, birds occurred throughout the summer making it difficult to distinguish between late spring and early autumn migrants; at Thorney Deeps the first returning autumn bird was noted on 3 Jul and at Barcombe Res four returning birds were seen on 15 Jul. Numbers built up steadily through July and August with notable counts of 25 at Thorney Deeps on 18 Aug, 14 at Sidlesham Ferry on 25 July, ten at Bewl Water on 19 Aug and ten at Newhaven Tide Mills on 23 Aug. Numbers tailed off markedly in September, although there were ten along the Union Channel at East Guldeford on the 16<sup>th</sup>, and by October most or all records probably involved wintering birds. There included three on the R. Adur at Upper Beeding on 15 and 16 Dec, two at Newhaven Tide Mills on 21 Dec and singles at Northpoint Pit, Rye on 19 Nov; Southease on 18 Dec and Sidlesham Ferry on 30 Dec. [JC]

0561. **TURNSTONE***Arenaria interpres***Fairly common winter visitor and passage migrant. Scarce in summer.**The monthly *WeBS*' counts at the principal sites were as follows:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
County total	404	876	10	-	3	-	27	109	232	334	486	337
Chichester Hbr	41	124	nc	nc	nc	nc	14	109	2	6	141	170
Pagham Hbr	178	413	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	24	81	90	57
Climping	45	192	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	33	22	1	8
Goring Gap	-	20	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	34	33	23	2
Lower Adur Estuary	-	-	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	3	6	3	27
Glyne Gap, Bexhill	123	83	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	125	157	106	60
Pett Level	14	36	nc	nc	nc	nc	nc	-	10	21	111	11
Rye Hbr	3	8	10	-	3	-	13	-	-	8	11	1

The low counts from Chichester Hbr in September and October are presumed to be due to Osprey disturbance at the roost sites.

Other notable counts included 35 at Worthing Beach on 8 Feb and, at Glyne Gap, 140 on 8 Feb, 74 on 18 Mar and 100 on 5 Apr.

The monthly totals of eastbound birds at the main sea-watching localities were as follows:

	Mar	Apr	May	Total
Selsey Bill	-	83	107	190
Worthing Beach	-	6	124	130
Brighton Marina	-	-	221	221
Splash Point, Seaford	-	4	39	43
Bexhill/Hastings	1	5	19	25

The peak movements occurred on 21 Apr, with 60 E at Selsey Bill, and 9 May, with 106 E at Brighton Marina. The only notable autumn movement comprised 150 E at Selsey Bill on 2 Oct.

Up to 20 birds were present in the Rye Bay area until 22 June, with an unusual record of two at Icklesham on 8 May.

Few notable counts were received in the latter part of the year, with 60 at Rye Hbr on 28 Jul, 250 at Paghham Hbr on 20 Aug and 75 at Climping on 21 Dec being the only significant counts not included in the *WeBS*' table. [PMB]

0564. **RED-NECKED PHALAROPE**

*Phalaropus lobatus*

**Rare spring and autumn passage migrant.**

A confiding juvenile at Drayton GP, Oving on 15-16 Sep (ARK *et al*) was the first county record since 1998. Nine have been recorded since 1990, two in August (from the 26<sup>th</sup>) and seven in September (up to the 24<sup>th</sup>). [RJF]

0565. **GREY PHALAROPE**

*Phalaropus fulicarius*

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

Two were seen, both in November: one flew west off Brighton Marina on the 9<sup>th</sup> (IJW) and it, or another, flew west, and later east, off Selsey Bill on the 10<sup>th</sup> (TJE, RWP). Records are currently averaging just under three a year, most having fallen between September and January. [RJF]

0566. **POMARINE SKUA**

*Stercorarius pomarinus*

**Passage migrant in varying numbers in spring but very scarce in autumn; a rare visitor in winter.**

In the first winter period there were two records at Brighton Marina with singles east on 12 Jan (KBG, IJW) and 25 Jan (IJW).

At least 194 were seen in the spring of which 16 were in April and 178 in May. This was above the 1988 – 2000 average of 182. The site totals were as follows:

	Apr	May	Total
Selsey Bill	7	57	64
Worthing	-	51	51
Brighton Marina	9	171	180
Splash Point, Seaford	3	105	108
Bexhill/Hastings	4	11	15

The first spring record was of a single east at Bexhill on 21 Apr, followed by 3 E at Brighton Marina and 1 E at Splash Point, Seaford the next day. The only larger count during April was 5 E at Selsey Bill on the 30<sup>th</sup>. Birds were recorded on 18 dates in May with the peak being on the 13<sup>th</sup>. Prior to the 13<sup>th</sup> the best counts were 18 E at Brighton Marina on the 3<sup>rd</sup>, 21 E at Brighton Marina and 17 E at Selsey Bill on the 9<sup>th</sup> and 12 E at Worthing on the 12<sup>th</sup>. On the 13<sup>th</sup> the site totals were 35 E at Selsey Bill, 28 E at Worthing, 92 E at Brighton Marina, 84 E at Splash Point and 7 E at Bexhill. Also that day, 39 were recorded flying east at Beachy Head. Most of the records received were not timed so it is not possible to analyse whether more than 92 birds were involved. Nevertheless, this was the largest daily movement since 1997 and typically birds were passing along the coast all day. A further 12 birds were seen after the 13<sup>th</sup> but with no more than three in a day.

In the summer an adult flew east at Brighton Marina on 10 Jul (IJW), one flew east at Selsey Bill on 5 Aug (TJE), one was seen from a ferry four miles south of Newhaven on 6 Aug (JC) and two passed west at Selsey Bill on 9 Aug (TJE).

There were three further records in the latter part of the year, all from Brighton Marina: juveniles east on 6 Oct and on 1 Dec and an adult, or near adult, west on 28 Dec (all IJW). [TJW]

## 0567. ARCTIC SKUA

*Stercorarius parasiticus*

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

The annual total of approximately 485 was fairly typical for recent years. The total is based on minimum daily figures and assumes that birds seen on consecutive days were different. The approximate monthly totals were as follows:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Birds	5	3	4	204	114	4	23	78	23	22	4	1
Dates	5	3	4	18	27	3	8	25	16	10	4	1

Other than one offshore at Lancing on 7 Jan, the remaining records for the first two months were all of singles flying east at various locations. Spring passage began on 27 Mar with 1 E at Selsey Bill followed by further singles flying east at three sites on the 28<sup>th</sup>. There was a definite peak in the last week of April and the highest counts, all at Brighton Marina, were 27 E on the 24<sup>th</sup>, 33 E on the 25<sup>th</sup>, 26 E on the 27<sup>th</sup> and 28 E on the 29<sup>th</sup>. Numbers decreased in May although on the 13<sup>th</sup> there were 15 E at Brighton Marina and 21 E at Splash Point, Seaford. Small numbers were then noted to the end of the month. Monthly totals at the main sea-watching localities were as follows:

	Apr	May	Total	No. per hr watched
Selsey Bill	56	56	112	0.33
Worthing	19	28	47	0.44
Brighton Marina	201	104	305	n/a
Splash Point, Seaford	70	44	114	0.65
Bexhill/Hastings	8	7	15	0.24

The number observed per hour at Selsey Bill, Worthing and Bexhill was nearly identical to last year. Four birds flew east in June including two at Brighton Marina on the 28<sup>th</sup> and, in July, numbers were higher than usual and included 4 E and two offshore at Selsey Bill on the 9<sup>th</sup> and 5 E at Brighton Marina on the 10<sup>th</sup>.

August was a mixed month with totals of 15 E and 24 W at Selsey Bill and 43 E and 6 W at Brighton Marina. The only double figure counts were 3 E and 10 W at Selsey Bill on the 9<sup>th</sup> and 10 E and 1 W at Brighton Marina on the 19<sup>th</sup>. Numbers decreased in September with five lingering off Church Norton at the end of the month being the most noteworthy. Again, there were no large movements in October with the peak being on the 6<sup>th</sup> when five flew west at Selsey Bill and six flew east at Brighton Marina.

In November there were singles on four dates and the December record concerned one chasing gulls off Widewater, Lancing on the 13<sup>th</sup>. [TJW]

#### 0568. LONG-TAILED SKUA

*Stercorarius longicaudus*

##### Rare vagrant.

Three single adults were seen flying east at Splash Point, Seaford in the best spring to date for this species. They were logged at 08.30 BST on 29 Apr (SHL *et al*), 06.20 BST on 11 May (SHL, JPS *et al*) and 05.20 BST on 12 May (JBU, TJW). The first record is the first for April, the previous earliest in the county being on 8 May, in 1985. Both May birds were subsequently seen at Dungeness, Kent, the first, which lingered off Seaford for 5-6 minutes, took 2 hrs 24 mins to get there. There are now eight May records since 1990 (and ten during August-October). [RJF]

#### 0569. GREAT SKUA

*Catharacta skua*

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

The dramatic increase in numbers of this species continues with an approximate total for the year of 227. This record count can be seen in context in the following table showing annual totals for the last ten years:

1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000
69	73	46	49	57	76	78	116	97	157

The records during the year are summarised in the following table that shows birds flying east, west or lingering offshore.

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
E	3	3	2	125	20	3		5	2	17	7	2
W					1	1		5	14	7		1
O/S								2	4	3		
Total	3	3	2	125	21	4	-	12	20	27	7	3

There were a number of records on 2 Jan that probably involved some duplication; one flew east at Selsey Bill, two flew east at Brighton Marina and perhaps one of these was seen on the beach at Seaford. Another, found ill on downland near Woodingdean, later died and was taken to the Booth Museum, Brighton. The only other record for the month was a single flying east at Brighton Marina on the 21<sup>st</sup> and similarly there were three singles east at different localities in the first half of February.

Spring passage began with a single east past Brighton Marina on 13 Mar, followed by 1 E at both Seaford and Beachy Head on the 28<sup>th</sup>. Birds were seen on 16 dates in April with the highest numbers in the last third of the month. On the 22<sup>nd</sup> there were 15 E at both Worthing and Brighton Marina with 11 E at Brighton Marina the following day. The largest one-day total in Sussex was on the 24<sup>th</sup> when 30 flew east at Brighton Marina, including ten in ten minutes and 17 flew east at Selsey Bill. This continued on the 25<sup>th</sup> with 24 E at Brighton Marina and 19 E at Splash Point and the final double figure count for the month was 11 E at Brighton Marina on the 29<sup>th</sup>. Numbers rapidly decreased in May and apart from 3 E at Brighton Marina on the 14<sup>th</sup>, the species was only seen in ones and twos on 14 dates up to the 19<sup>th</sup>. Monthly totals at the main sea-watching localities were as follows:

	Apr	May	Total
Selsey Bill	46	10	56
Worthing	22	2	24
Brighton Marina	118	10	128
Splash Point, Seaford	38	3	41
Bexhill/Hastings	3	-	3

In June, singles were recorded on four dates at Selsey Bill but there were no records for July.

There was a prolonged autumn passage between August and October with no particular peak. The highest counts were 8 W at Selsey Bill on 15 Sep and 5 W there on the 23<sup>rd</sup> and, in October, 11 E at Selsey Bill on the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3 E at Brighton Marina on the 7<sup>th</sup>. On 1 Oct, one was observed at Brighton Marina attacking a Great Crested Grebe which, despite being grabbed, managed to escape by diving under the water.

The November and December sightings were of all singles at various locations other than 3 E at Brighton Marina on 11 Nov. [TJW]

## 0575. MEDITERRANEAN GULL

*Larus melanocephalus*

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

This species continues to increase with approximately 500 records detailing 1400 birds on 271 different days. Reflecting this growth there were 18 dates when more than ten birds were recorded at a single site including a county record of 43 in the entrance channel of Chichester Hbr on 5 Jul (TJE). The abundance of records makes it impossible to evaluate the number of different individuals in the county and renders the following table of monthly totals to more approximation than in past years:



	Adult	2 <sup>nd</sup> Yr.	1 <sup>st</sup> Yr.	Juv.	Total**	Inland	Highest number recorded
Jan	15	2	2	-	29	1	13 at Pagham Hbr on the 23 <sup>rd</sup> .
Feb	17	2	2	-	39	-	10 at Saltdean on the 23 <sup>rd</sup> .
Mar	34	3	3	-	76	2	8 at Chichester Hbr on the 22 <sup>nd</sup> .
Apr	46	2	9	-	99	3	25 at Pett Level on the 2 <sup>nd</sup> .
May	12	2	25	-	72	1	12 at Pett Level on the 20 <sup>th</sup> .
Jun	28	8	15	4	59	-	36 at Pilsley Island on the 30 <sup>th</sup> .
Jul	43	4	14	5	76	1	43 at Chichester Hbr on the 5 <sup>th</sup> .
Aug	10	2	-	4	22	1	3 at Selsey on the 14 <sup>th</sup> and Pilsley Island on the 18 <sup>th</sup> .
Sep	10	3	3	-	25	1	14 at Selsey West Fields on the 14 <sup>th</sup> .
Oct	10	4	3	-	24	-	5 at Pagham Hbr on 12 <sup>th</sup> and Selsey Bill on the 23 <sup>rd</sup> .
Nov	10	2	4	-	30	-	10 at Pagham Hbr on the 4 <sup>th</sup> .
Dec	13	1	1	-	60	-	10 at Selsey Bill on the 8 <sup>th</sup> .

\*\* Total includes individuals with no precise age assigned.

The pattern of occurrence is similar to previous years with the highest number being recorded in spring, adults being the most frequently recorded age group and a notable increase in the number of first year birds seen in late spring.

Wintering individuals were recorded from several coastal sites with most records coming from the vicinity of Selsey and the western harbours. However, up to five roosted at Brighton Marina between January and March and the peak count of ten at Saltdean was on 23 Feb.

Adults returned to Rye Hbr and Pett Level in late March and by 2 Apr there were at least 25 different adults in the area. Two pairs bred at Ternery Pool, Rye Hbr producing four fledged juveniles whilst up to 12 were present at Pett Level during May.

Coastal movements were observed throughout the year but a small increase was noticed during March, April and May. The following table shows the monthly totals of birds passing the regular sea-watching sites and reveals most are seen from Selsey Bill and Brighton Marina. Eastward movements clearly dominate in all months except July and August. Peak spring movements were 7 E and 8 E at Brighton Marina on 4 Apr and 10 May respectively whilst 6 W at Worthing on 17 Jul and 7 E at Selsey Bill on 29 Sep were the largest movements in the autumn.

		Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Selsey Bill	E	10	8	33	10	5	1	3	3	12	10	15	53
	W	-	-	-	-	-	-	6	5	1	-	8	3
Worthing Beach	E	-	1	2	-	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	-
	W	-	-	-	3	-	-	6	-	-	1	-	-
Brighton Marina	E	6	7	17	40	19	-	5	3	-	-	3	7
	W	-	1	2	2	8	-	-	1	-	-	-	-
Splash Point	E	-	-	1	6	4	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	W	-	-	-	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Bexhill / Hastings	E	-	-	3	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-
	W	-	-	-	-	-	1	4	-	-	-	-	-

Like previous years the highest counts during the summer came from Chichester Hbr where 36 (18 adults, 6 second-summer and 12 first-summer) were counted on Pilsley Island on 30 Jun. The same observer (CBC) also recorded 11 different birds at the Hermitage SF on the same day. On 4 Jul a count of 32 was made from the entrance channel of Chichester Hbr and on the following day the total reached 43 (24 adults, 4 second-summer and 15 first-summer birds). The influx into Chichester Hbr coincided with the dispersal from the successful colony in Langstone Hbr (CBC *pers. comm*) and although 11 were

recorded in the entrance channel and ten roosted on Thorney Island on 16 Jul it appears this large group moved away fairly quickly.

The above table shows a notable eastward passage, evident mostly from Selsey Bill, during November and December where peak numbers were ten on 8 Dec and seven on both 2 and 13 Dec. By November, records came from the usual winter sites. However, apart from Selsey Bill, numbers were generally lower than during the same period in 2000, the most notable observations being eight at Pagham Hbr on 27 Nov, three roosting at Brighton Marina throughout December and four at Saltdean on 8 Dec.

Despite larger numbers of records, only ten were recorded away from coastal locations, and of these only one, in second-winter plumage, feeding with other gulls at Bewl Water on 14 Jan was more than 10 km from the coast. Perhaps the most exciting record was of two adults mobbing an Osprey which was roosting on a fence post on Pilsey Island on 30 Apr. An individual at Arlington Res on 9 Oct was considered to be a hybrid crossed with a Common Gull (IJW). [JAN]

## 0578. LITTLE GULL

*Larus minutus*

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

This was as remarkable year with approximately 1024 birds recorded; only during 1990, when a minimum of 1483 were seen, beats this annual total. The following table of approximate monthly totals shows the pattern of well observed spring and autumn passage with few occurring in other months.

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Total	23	-	29	586	82	2	8	4	10	265	11	4
Inland	-	-	-	2	1	-	-	-	1	-	-	-

The January observations, from eight different locations, fell between the 1<sup>st</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> with the largest counts of six at Brighton Marina on the 2<sup>nd</sup> and four offshore at Splash Point, Seaford on the 4<sup>th</sup>. None were recorded between 14 Jan and 9 Mar when two flew east at Brighton Marina and thereafter the species was recorded on 43 dates until late May.

The spring coastal movement was particularly heavy on 22, 24 and 25 Apr and respective day totals from Brighton Marina were 91 E, 363 E and 97 E. The county record movement on 24<sup>th</sup> occurred typically in weather conditions of SE winds with light rain and most of the birds passed in a three hour period during the mid afternoon. Numbers seen elsewhere were smaller with 109 at Selsey Bill and 43 at Worthing. The largest count at Splash Point, Seaford was 32 E on 25 Apr whilst watchers at Bexhill and Hastings recorded 22 E on 13 May. The monthly totals of birds at the main sea-watching localities were as follows:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Selsey Bill	3	-	2	127	24	-	1	2	6	226	-	1
Worthing Beach	1	-	-	56	5	-	-	-	1	1	-	1
Brighton Marina	7	-	17	558	43	-	1	-	-	17	7	1
Splash Point, Seaford	6	-	11	59	19	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Bexhill/Hastings	1	-	5	1	23	-	2	1	-	4	2	1

Single immature birds were seen at Rye Hbr on five days between 19 and 26 May and on 27 days between 19 Jun and 6 Aug. The tables show few were recorded elsewhere during the summer and autumn until October. The passage then was remarkably concentrated with a new county autumn record set on 23 Oct when sea-watchers at Selsey Bill logged 210 W during ten hours of watching. The only other records in excess of ten

birds were 14 W at Pagham Hbr, also on the 23<sup>rd</sup>, and 12 flying south-west at Rye Bay on 26 Oct. During December singles were recorded Selsey Bill on the 1<sup>st</sup>, Brighton Marina on the 20<sup>th</sup>, Worthing on the 28<sup>th</sup> and at Bexhill on the 28<sup>th</sup> and 29<sup>th</sup>.

The table clearly shows a paucity of inland records with only single birds at Chichester GP on 15 Apr, Arundel WWT on 18 Apr, Pulborough Brooks on 15 May and Arlington Res on 28 Sept. [JAN]

**0582. BLACK-HEADED GULL**

*Larus ridibundus*

**Common breeding species and abundant winter visitor and passage migrant.**

The counts during the early part of the year in excess of 1000 were 1280 at Pagham Hbr on 14 Jan, regular counts of 1000 at Combe Haven between January and March with 2000 there on 18 Feb, 1500 offshore at Rottingdean on 24 Feb and 1900 roosting in an arable field near Lidsey refuse tip on 27 Feb.

Coastal passage was recorded from mid-February but at most sites only small numbers were seen and the species was inconsistently recorded. The monthly eastbound totals and peak movements for the spring are shown below:

	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Peak movement
Selsey Bill	-	563	167	196	450 on 21 Mar (6.5 hrs)
Worthing Beach	-	198	114	1084	326 on 8 May (5.2 hrs)
Brighton Marina	1073	5110	-	-	1700 on 12 Mar
Bexhill/Hastings	-	134	150	61	63 on 23 Apr (4 hrs)

Most sites also recorded some westward movement during the spring but at Bexhill this direction comprised nearly 60% of the spring total. At Brighton Marina 350 flew west on 8 Apr.

The breeding season was successful with approximately 1555 pairs recorded. At Rye Hbr about 300 pairs bred with more than 200 pairs at Ternery Pool and between 80 and 100 pairs at Castle Water. Although Herring and Lesser Black-backed Gulls predated some chicks at Ternery Pool, the success was good at both sites and between 400-450 young fledged. At Pett Level there were 1090 incubating adults on 10 May whilst at Combe Haven a nesting pair, the first for the area, failed at the egg stage. In West Sussex there were no breeding attempts in Chichester Hbr but at Arundel WWT the floating rafts supported 164 pairs which raised about 350 young.

With the exception of 800, all first-years, at Fishbourne on 7 May the numbers away from the breeding colonies were small. The first post-breeding adult was noted at Bewl Water on 6 Jun and by mid-June there were a scattering of records from other sites whereas the first fledged young were seen at Fishbourne on 17 Jun and at Cuckmere Haven on the 21<sup>st</sup>. The largest autumn counts were 260 at Newhaven Tide Mills on 22 Jul; 350 at Cuckmere Haven on 2 Aug; 300 at Bewl Water on 19 Aug; 2000 following the plough at Itford Fm, Southease on 16 Sep and 310 at Marsh Fm, Yapton on 21 Oct.

The roost counts at the end of the year included 3000 at Bewl Water on 9 and 14 Nov, 20,000 at Pagham Hbr on 5 Dec and 6000 at Bewl Water on 30 Dec. Additional interesting records in this period were 930 at Seftor Fm, Pagham on 13 Nov; up to 800 at Combe Haven and Pebsham refuse tip during December and 1200 E at Selsey Bill on 8 Dec.

At Weir Wood Res observers regularly record this species and the monthly maxima of these counts, excluding evening roosts, tabulated below show a similar pattern of occurrence to previous years.

Year	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
2000	250	210	58	1	1	2	30	26	28	28	56	94
2001	197	60	64	-	-	3	20	11	33	15	88	300

An albino individual, with a black shaft along the outer primary was seen at the Hermitage, near Emsworth on 29 Dec. [JAN]

## 0589. RING-BILLED GULL

*Larus delawarensis*

### Very rare vagrant.

A second-winter on Chichester GP on 24 Dec (GB, ASC) did not linger. It was the first county record since 1987 and only the sixth in total. All previous records have fallen between November and February and, perhaps surprisingly, were during 1984-87. [RJF]

## 0590. COMMON GULL

*Larus canus*

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

Although there were 4000 at Pilsey Sands on 17 Jan, the counts during the first winter period were generally smaller than in 2000 with examples of 310 at Coolham on 5 Jan, 350 at Cuckmere Haven on 7 Jan and 10 Feb and 500 on flooded water meadows near Shoreham on 10 Feb. Likewise there were no records of substantial spring roosts; the largest flocks were 800 at Cuckmere Haven on 25 Mar and on 30 Mar there were 1000 on the sheep pastures in the Tillingham Valley, near Hundred House Bridge and 1500 on the R. Adur at Shoreham. Apart from coastal movements few were recorded after late March.

As usual coastal passage of this species was erratically recorded but large eastward movements were recorded from Brighton Marina from late January with the notable counts being 600 E on 25 Jan, 1200 E on 27 Feb, 600 E on 16 Mar and 1000 E on 25 Apr. Small numbers were recorded from the other sites as shown in the following table of the monthly eastbound totals and peak movements for the spring.

	Mar	Apr	May	Peak movement
Selsey Bill	185	-	-	175 on 21 Mar
Worthing Beach	-	2	53	30 on 8 May
Brighton Marina	1000	1000	-	1000 on 25 Apr
Bexhill/Hastings	4	14	-	11 on 2 Apr

The last spring record was at Pett Level on 2 Jun and thereafter none was observed until two were at Pilsey Island on 26 Jun. The autumn arrival can be seen from records at this site or Thorney Island where there were seven on 30 Jun, 19 on 6 Jul, 200 on 16 Jul, 500 on 29 Jul and 300 on 18 Aug. Additional high counts in the early autumn were 50 at Bignor on 28 Jul, 200 at Duncton Common on 29 Jul and 300 at Findon Valley, Worthing on 18 Aug.

After mid-October there were 13 records involving more than 200 birds. Roosts in Chichester Hbr held 600 on 20 Oct, 700 on 5 Nov and 800 on 20 Dec and 350 and 300 were roosting at Bewl Water on 9 Nov and 30 Dec respectively. There were 1600 at

Castle Fm and 400 at Castle Water, Rye Hbr on 20 Nov and 750 were on the R. Adur at Shoreham on 24 Dec. The only notable movement was 250 E at Selsey Bill on 8 Dec. [JAN]

0591. **LESSER BLACK-BACKED GULL**

*Larus fuscus graellsii*

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

The largest counts in the early part of the year were 220 at Cuckmere Haven on 7 Jan and 84 at the Hermitage, near Emsworth on 27 Feb. Overall there were more counts during the year and the following table shows the monthly maxima at locations where the species was recorded regularly:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Chichester Hbr	-	84	8	5	-	-	18	14	-	-	34	63
Pagham Hbr	4	62	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	17	1
Combe Haven	70	40	100	120	10	-	-	-	50	50	40	40
Rye Hbr	-	-	40	-	-	-	-	-	73	-	-	20

Once again there was no spring coastal passage recorded from Selsey Bill, Worthing, Brighton Marina or Splash Point, Seaford whilst at Bexhill the total was a mere 44 E. Four flew north over Bewl Water on 17 Apr but otherwise the few inland records only involved single birds.

This, the final year of the *Seabird 2000* survey, saw the completion of the counts of roof top breeding gulls. The full details of this survey are on page 179 but breeding in this year was confirmed in Bognor Regis, Rustington (2 pairs), Worthing (20+ pairs), Shoreham (2 pairs), Hove, Newhaven (5 pairs), Seaford (2-3 pairs) and Hastings (3 pairs). At Rye Hbr no breeding was confirmed but several summered in the industrial areas where roof top breeding was possible.

During July there were 24 offshore at Bexhill on the 2<sup>nd</sup>, 14 at Pett Level on the 16<sup>th</sup> and 18 at Pilsley Sands on the 18<sup>th</sup> whilst 18 roosting at Thorney Island on 25 Aug was the only double figures count for that month. The largest counts for the autumn and winter are shown in the above table and included 73 at Rye Hbr on 26 Sep and 63 at Pilsley Sands, Chichester Hbr on 16 Dec. Additionally there were 20 at Chichester GP on 10 Nov, 38 at Hermitage on 11 Dec, 25 at Camber on 21 Dec and 30 E at Selsey Bill on 8 Dec; this last record being the largest movement recorded during the year. Away from the coastal strip the only records during the last months of the year were from Bewl Water where 13 roosted on 9 Nov, up to six roosted in December and 13 NW on 31 Dec. [JAN]

0592. **HERRING GULL**

*Larus argentatus*

**Common breeding resident, passage migrant and winter visitor.**

There was no co-ordinated winter count of gulls in Sussex but more counts were made at several sites throughout the year and the monthly maxima are shown in the following table:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
Chichester Hbr	-	-	300	87	120	200	208	-	-	-	-	-
Brighton Marina	-	-	30	20	-	2000	3000	-	-	-	-	-

Bexhill	448	130	250	550	410	550	-	-	-	-	600
Combe Haven	3500	1500	2000	800	1000	500	500	1200	1000	2000	2000

Additionally counts in the first winter period included 800 immatures feeding offshore at Church Norton on 25 Jan and 1300 at Camber on 28 Jan.

During this, the final year of the *Seabird 2000* survey, the counts of urban rooftop breeding were completed. The following table gives the numbers of pairs reported in each 10 km square during 2001. However, these data are incomplete and need to be read with the full survey results on page 179.

SU80 (Chichester)	1	TQ30 (Brighton)	4
SU90 (Bognor)	1	TQ40 (Newhaven & Lewes)	34
SZ99 (Bognor)	1	TV49 (Seaford)	1
TQ00 (Littlehampton)	58	TV59 (Eastbourne)	6
TQ01 (Worthing)	35	TQ91 (Rye)	5
TQ20 (Shoreham/Hove)	251	<b>Total</b>	<b>397</b>

Included in the table are the few pairs not nesting on buildings; these were five pairs on the cliffs at Beachy Head and single pairs on the cliffs at Seven Sisters and at the Ternery Pool, Rye Hbr.

Increasingly this species is being reported on farmland; feeding on both arable and pasture and, like Black-headed and Common Gulls, following the plough. Although numbers are generally small they have been recorded “pestering” nesting Lapwings on downland sites.

Most of the largest counts in the autumn and second winter period are shown in the above table. Additionally 3000 were roosting at Pagham on 4 Dec and on 31 Dec an estimated 10,000 were feeding, in association with auks and other seabirds, on small fish offshore at Ferring and Worthing.

An albino was seen at Brighton Marina on 6 May and a leucistic individual was seen in the Hollingdean area of Brighton between 8 and 15 Jul and in the City centre on 31 Jul. [JAN]

## 0593. **YELLOW-LEGGED GULL** *Larus argentatus michahellis*

**Fairly common but localised visitor, mainly in late summer and autumn.**

**2000:** The 40 adults on 20 Oct were roosting in Pagham Hbr and not at Lullington Heath as stated.

**2001:** The following table, showing the minimum monthly totals and highest counts at each of the main sites, reveals the usual summer peak:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
<b>Total</b>	8	4	1	-	2	19	231	19	252	74	10	6
Pagham Hbr	2	1	-	-	-	15	220	6	30	55	8	3
Shoreham	2	-	-	-	-	1	1	1	22	18	-	-

The table shows the usual pattern of occurrence with a scattering of records from a small number of coastal sites until the mid summer influx to the Selsey Peninsula. Three were recorded at Pagham Hbr on 19 Jun, 15 on 21 Jun, 37 by 5 Jul and the peak roost count of 220 in the harbour occurred on 19 Jul. It is likely that the 230 counted on recent plough at Selsey West Fields on 3 Sep involved the same birds and there were still 45 at Selsey West Fields on 16 Sep. The peak count on the R. Adur at Shoreham was 22, 21 of which were adults, on 18 Sep. [JAN]

## 0598. ICELAND GULL

*Larus glaucoides***Very scarce winter visitor and passage migrant.**

Three immature individuals were recorded during the spring; at Rye Hbr on 15 Mar (PMT); at Splash Point, Seaford (SHL) and Birling Gap, Beachy Head (DC) on 13 Apr and on Brighton beach on 20 May (IK). The pattern and number of records is typical for this species in recent years (*Birds of Sussex*). [JAN]

## 0599. GLAUCOUS GULL

*Larus hyperboreus***Very scarce but regular winter visitor and passage migrant.**

The only substantiated records were for an adult which was recorded at Pagham Hbr on 1 Jan, 3 Jan and 15 Feb (AH *et al*). This was considered to be the bird which has returned to this location in several successive years and had been reported from late December 2000 remaining until at least 23 Feb 2001. [JAN]

## 0600. GREAT BLACK-BACKED GULL

*Larus marinus***Common winter visitor and passage migrant; small numbers summer; recent rare breeding species. Confirmed breeding for the first time in 2000.**

The following table shows the maximum count in each month from seven sites where this species was regularly recorded throughout year. The exceptional roost count of 2300 at Pagham Hbr on 11 Jan (TJE) is the highest number recorded at a single site in the county and nearly matches the total of 2414 recorded during the last coordinated count in January 1993 (*Birds of Sussex*).

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Chichester Hbr	60	10	3	26	18	40	16	20	50	32	52	140
Pagham Hbr	2300	-	-	-	-	250	-	520	120	160	300	1000
Shoreham	3	2	-	6	20	12	-	20	-	-	10	-
Cuckmere Haven	300	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	300	-	-
Bexhill	68	27	27	58	39	2	7	78	68	107	56	110
Combe Haven	100	80	-	-	-	-	-	35	-	150	75	80
Rye & Camber	100	210	-	-	-	-	88	180	752	-	-	-

Additional three figure counts were 100 at Beachy Head on 18 Sep and 110 at Brighton Marina on 27 Sep.

Four young were raised between three pairs which bred in Brighton whilst a pair returned to Bexhill, successfully fledging two young. Additionally a pair was found nesting on a warehouse roof at Rye Harbour in early June and was later observed with young.

Only small numbers were recorded away from the coast with 30 at Lidsey refuse tip on 27 Feb and 20 at Chichester GP on 12 Aug being the highest counts. The Jersey ringed bird carrying an 'Orange C' ring, first seen in 1997, was seen on the R. Adur at Shoreham on 16 Sep. A leucistic bird, in its third calendar year, was at Brighton Marina from 29 Apr until 15 May and then intermittently on the R. Adur until 15 Jul. [JAN]

0602. **KITTIWAKE***Rissa tridactyla***Common but localised breeding species; common winter visitor and passage migrant.**

Most records of this species were of coastal movements and, as in most recent years, the largest numbers have been seen from Brighton Marina. The close proximity of a breeding colony to Splash Point, Seaford makes recording movements at this site unreliable. The following table showing the monthly totals for the main sea-watching sites clearly shows the differences between the sites and reveals June, September and October to be the leanest months in 2001:

	Selsey Bill		Worthing Beach		Brighton Marina		Splash Point, Seaford		Bexhill/Hastings	
	E	W	E	W	E	W	E	W	E	W
Jan	134	8	31	11	2748	84	234	41	4	3
Feb	7	32	2	-	1210	159	nc	nc	-	2
Mar	39	16	9	-	2283	-	nc	nc	14	-
Apr	24	12	20	-	1336	2	nc	nc	119	1
May	28	25	32	1	2153	9	nc	nc	13	4
Jun	28	8	-	-	93	16	nc	nc	-	-
Jul	-	9	-	-	136	603	nc	nc	-	-
Aug	13	88	10	-	599	1179	nc	nc	-	21
Sep	-	7	2	-	144	40	nc	nc	-	-
Oct	-	97	-	-	104	88	-	-	-	-
Nov	82	749	26	20	948	675	-	-	1	-
Dec	85	205	40	1667	886	2711	16	33	3	-

There were 60 movements in excess of 100 birds in a day and on 20 occasions more than 300 birds were logged. The largest counts, as suggested in the table, occurred in the winter and spring months. These included 500 E on 20 Mar at Brighton Marina, 465 W at Selsey Bill and 427 W at Brighton Marina on 25 Nov, 515 W at Brighton Marina on 24 Dec, 700 W there on 25 Dec with 1200 W on 28 Dec. On 28 Dec there were 950 W at Worthing where 550 passed W on the 30<sup>th</sup>. *Birds of Sussex (Table 69)* shows the peak monthly movements and in this context the following additional records from Brighton Marina are of significance: 344 E on 10 Feb, 380 W on 8 Jul, 295 W on 11 Aug and 224 E on 19 Aug.

By 16 Mar ten had returned to the nesting cliffs at Newhaven with counts of 105 and 73 occupied nests on 3 Jun and 13 Jul respectively. There was no nest count at Splash Point, Seaford but there were 800 birds counted at and near the cliff colony on 10 Apr.

Away from the shoreline there were five records of single birds noted on the coastal plain but only two from inland, both from Bewl Water where the remains of an immature bird were found on 27 Apr and an adult flew west on 9 Nov. [JAN]

0606. **CASPIAN TERN***Sterna caspia***Rare vagrant.**

An adult flew east along Worthing Beach at 16.02 BST on 12 May (PMB) and has been accepted by *British Birds*. This is the first to be seen in the county since 1996 and only the 15<sup>th</sup> in total. Perhaps surprisingly this is only the third May record, half the number seen in July, the most regular month. [RJF]



## 0611. SANDWICH TERN

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

Spring passage was earlier than usual with birds seen daily from 7 Mar when the first flew east past Brighton Marina. Four were at Shoreham Hbr on the 8<sup>th</sup> with seven seen from Brighton Marina on the 9<sup>th</sup>. Numbers built up gradually and on the 27<sup>th</sup> there were 514 logged passing east at Brighton Marina and 290 roosting at Rye Hbr.

The easterly spring passage totals at the main sea-watching localities were as follows:

	Mar	Apr	May	Total	No. per hr watched
Selsey Bill	205	1588	2190	3983	9.2
Worthing	82	652	1113	1847	14.4
Brighton Marina	851	3955	2731	7537	n/a
Splash Point, Seaford	98	1185	1359	2642	11.1
Bexhill/Hastings	15	421	299	735	7.9

Passage totals were higher than in 2000 at all sites apart from Worthing. At Brighton Marina the total of 7537 was a new county record. As usual the peak passage occurred in April and the highest counts, all from Brighton Marina, were 411 E on the 22<sup>nd</sup>, 558 E on the 23<sup>rd</sup>, 503 E on the 24<sup>th</sup> and 390 E on the 25<sup>th</sup>. In May there were six dates when over 200 were recorded at Brighton Marina with the maximum being 267 E on the 11<sup>th</sup>, while at Selsey Bill the highest count in the month was 258 E on the 3<sup>rd</sup>. Unlike recent years there was little passage noted in June.

At the Ternery Pool, Rye Hbr 24 pairs bred with the first sitting bird on 7 Jun. Although most clutches survived to hatching stage, predation by Herring Gulls resulted in only about three young fledging.

In July up to 220, including 50 juveniles, lingered at Pagham Hbr and at Rye Hbr the roost peaked at 325 on 1 Aug. There was a strong westerly passage at Selsey Bill in August with the monthly totals being 12 E and 729 W. The only three-figure count in September was 100 at Church Norton on the 29<sup>th</sup> and there were 110 there on 6 Oct when 135 flew west at Worthing. The last passage bird was on 28 Oct at Pagham Hbr although there was also one winter record of a bird at Selsey Bill on 9 Dec (RAI, DIS).

There were a number of inland records; one flew over Hurst Green, towards Bewl Water on 31 Mar, one was at Weir Wood Res on 27 Aug and two were at Ivy Lake, Chichester GP on 3 Sep. [TJW]

## 0614. ROSEATE TERN

*Sterna dougallii***Very scarce passage migrant and non-breeding summer visitor.**

A very good year for this species with approximately 33 birds seen.

In April there were 2 E at Selsey Bill on the 24<sup>th</sup> (TJE, RWP) and 1 E there on the 26<sup>th</sup> (TJE, MJ, DIS). The first records in May were on the 10<sup>th</sup> with 4 E at Beachy Head (JFC, RHC) and 1 E at Bexhill (IS). On the 11<sup>th</sup> there was 1 E at Selsey Bill (OM *et al*) and 2 E at Brighton Marina (IJW) and, on the 12<sup>th</sup>, there were 4 E at Selsey Bill (AH, OM *et al*), 1 E at Worthing (JAN, DIS) and 3 E at Brighton Marina (ITB, ADW, IJW). One flew east at Brighton Marina on the 15<sup>th</sup> (ADW, IJW), a single was at Rye Hbr on the 22<sup>nd</sup> (SSm) and another flew east at Brighton Marina on the 23<sup>rd</sup> (IJW).

Up to three were recorded on seven dates in June at Rye Hbr (SSm, PMT) but the only other sighting during the month was of 1 E at Selsey Bill on the 13<sup>th</sup> (TJE). In July, singles were at Pilsley Island on the 4-5<sup>th</sup> (CBC) and at Rye Hbr on the 9<sup>th</sup>, with two there on the 10<sup>th</sup> (SSm, PMT). Two flew west at Selsey Bill on the 13<sup>th</sup>, there were singles east there on the 25<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup> (all TJE), and two at Rye Hbr on 28<sup>th</sup> (PMT). August records consisted of three at Rye Hbr on the 1<sup>st</sup>, with one still present the following day (both PMT), 1 W at Selsey Bill on the 13<sup>th</sup> and one offshore there on the 14<sup>th</sup> (both TJE) and, on the 21<sup>st</sup>, 1 W at Selsey Bill (TJE) and one at Rye Hbr (CAH *et al*). [TJW]

#### 0615. COMMON TERN

*Sterna hirundo*

##### **Scarce breeding summer visitor and common passage migrant.**

The first record was of a single at Rye Hbr on 25 Mar, a day later than last year, followed by 1 E at Brighton Marina on the 27<sup>th</sup>, 2 E there on the 28<sup>th</sup> and 1 E at Splash Point, Seaford the same day. Numbers were then small until the end of April when notably 360 had gathered at Pett Level on the 27<sup>th</sup>.

In the breeding season 44 pairs were noted at Pett Level on 10 May although breeding success was unknown. At Rye Hbr between 36 and 40 pairs nested with at least 26 pairs at Ternery Pool and ten at Castle Water – the first breeding record for the latter site. Success was high with about 50–60 chicks fledging although at least two were taken by Herring Gulls. At New Lake, Chichester GP, at least 70 chicks were counted on the raft on 30 Jun and at Arundel WWT three pairs raised three young. Negative reports came from North Stakes Island, Chichester Hbr and Weir Wood Res, where birds were seen displaying but they did not stay to breed. Other notable summer sightings were of 140 E at Brighton Marina on 17 Jul and 170 at Pilsley Sands on 25 Jul.

August began with 280 roosting at Ternery Pool, Rye Hbr on the 1<sup>st</sup> and birds were then widely reported. At Brighton Marina the monthly totals recorded were 580 E and 835 W including 299 E and 2 W on the 19<sup>th</sup>. There were no three figure counts in September and the maximum recorded was just 90 at Rye Hbr on the 7<sup>th</sup>. Similarly, only small numbers were noted in October up to the 15<sup>th</sup>. There was one late record of a juvenile at West Wittering on 31 Oct and 1 Nov. [TJW]

#### 0616. ARCTIC TERN

*Sterna paradisaea*

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

The first record was a single east at Worthing on 14 Apr. Small numbers were seen on many dates passing east at the main sea-watching localities and notable counts included 193 E at Splash Point, Seaford on 25 Apr and, at Brighton Marina, 82 E on 10 May and 235 E the following day. The only records away from the main sea-watching sites were singles at Rye Hbr on 30 Apr and Bewl Water on 9 May.

There were no records in June or July. In the autumn 76 birds were recorded on a total of 23 dates. The highest counts were all from sea-watching localities and included 9 W at Brighton Marina on 12 Aug, 12 W at Selsey Bill on 15 Sept and 12 W at Brighton Marina on 9 Oct. The only inland record was one at Bewl Water on 19 Aug. The last three birds were all on 20 Oct with two lingering at Brighton Marina and a juvenile at Pilsley Island. [TJW]

## COMMON/ARCTIC TERN

*Sterna hirundo/paradisaea*

Most birds passing sea-watching localities remain unidentified as 'commic' Terns.

There were larger numbers than usual in April with over 1000 being recorded at Brighton Marina on three dates including 1553 E on the 24<sup>th</sup> and 1466 E on the 25<sup>th</sup>. Passage was heaviest in the first half of May, especially between 11<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> when a total of 9816 E was recorded at Brighton Marina, including 4720 on the 11<sup>th</sup>. The spring total of 18,391 E at this site was a new county record. Numbers were lower elsewhere reflecting the fewer hours spent watching, although 3272 E were recorded at Splash Point on the 13<sup>th</sup>. The totals at the main sea-watching localities were as follows:

	Apr	May	Total	No. per hr watched
Selsey Bill	1658	5536	7194	21.1
Worthing	1020	3665	4685	44.2
Brighton Marina	4991	13400	18391	n/a
Splash Point, Seaford	1433	5872	7305	41.5
Bexhill/Hastings	476	16	492	7.8

In June, small numbers continued to pass east but by July equal numbers were passing west as demonstrated by monthly totals of 102 E and 93 W at Selsey Bill. There was a strong westerly passage in August including a movement of 800 W at Selsey Bill on the 18<sup>th</sup>. Numbers diminished in September and October with the last records being of 1 W at Selsey Bill and one at Bewl Water, thought probably to have been an Arctic, on the 18<sup>th</sup>. [TJW]

## 0624. LITTLE TERN

*Sterna albifrons*

**Scarce breeding summer visitor and fairly common passage migrant.**

The first record was one in Paghham Hbr on 10 Apr followed by a single at Rye Hbr on the 11<sup>th</sup>. Birds were seen daily from the 17<sup>th</sup> and the highest counts in the month were of 44 E at Brighton Marina on the 27<sup>th</sup> and 38 E at Selsey Bill on the 28<sup>th</sup>. As usual, peak numbers were in the first half of May and by coincidence the same maximum count of 43 was made at four locations: Rye Hbr on the 3<sup>rd</sup>, Pilsley Island on the 5<sup>th</sup>, east past Selsey Bill on the 7<sup>th</sup> and east past Brighton Marina on the 11<sup>th</sup>. However, the peak day was the 13<sup>th</sup> when 53 flew east at Worthing and 54 E at Splash Point, Seaford. The totals at the main sea-watching localities were as follows:

	Apr	May	Total	No. per hr watched
Selsey Bill	199	287	486	1.4
Worthing	31	122	153	1.4
Brighton Marina	95	187	282	n/a
Splash Point, Seaford	37	101	138	0.8
Bexhill/Hastings	19	26	45	0.7

At Rye Hbr 28 clutches were found with at least 33 chicks hatching from 9 Jun. Of these, 20 fledged with Kestrels having taken some of the chicks. The only other breeding season record received was two pairs prospecting at Ella Nore, Chichester Hbr from mid to late May although they did not stay to breed.

In July, 40 including 16 juveniles, were at Rye Hbr on the 16<sup>th</sup> and 70 had gathered at Pilsley Sands by the 25<sup>th</sup>. This gathering had increased to 200 by 9 Aug when small numbers were passing west offshore. Typically, the species made a rapid departure and only seven were seen in September of which the last two were at Rye Hbr on the 12<sup>th</sup>.

The only inland record was of one at Barcombe Res on 23 Apr. [TJW]

**Fairly common passage migrant.**

The approximate monthly totals were as follows:

Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct
19	79	3	7	34	27	27

The first records were on 24 Apr when four flew east at Selsey Bill and seven flew east at Brighton Marina. Typically, spring passage peaked in May although the species was only seen on 11 dates, passage being highly dependent on there being easterly winds. The best days were the 11<sup>th</sup> when there were 15 E at Brighton Marina; the 12<sup>th</sup> with 17 E at Selsey Bill and 16 E at Splash Point, Seaford, and the 13<sup>th</sup> when there were 26 E at both Brighton Marina and Seaford.

The three singles in June were at Chichester Hbr on the 14<sup>th</sup>, Pagham Hbr on the 18<sup>th</sup> and a bird in first-summer plumage at Rye Hbr on the 26<sup>th</sup>. The July records were mostly from Selsey Bill and Rye Hbr.

Birds were noted on 28 dates during August and September but were spread out over the period and there was no real peak. The only records of over three birds were 4 E at Worthing on 19 Aug, 4 W at Selsey Bill on 20 Sep and 6 W at the same site on the 26<sup>th</sup>. There was a slight increase in October with 6 W at Brighton Marina on the 8<sup>th</sup> and up to four at Ivy Lake, Chichester GP and eight at Arlington Res in the first ten days of the month. The last records were on the 15<sup>th</sup> when one flew east at Selsey Bill and another was at Rye Hbr. [TJW]

**AUK species***Auk spp.*

While last year was considered exceptional for auks in Sussex, 2001 was quite remarkable with a 57% increase compared with the previous year. Huge numbers off Worthing Beach appear to be due to large shoals of fish. A local fisherman reported both herring and mackerel coming inshore and shoaling near the surface to get sunlight and Cormorants were seen surfacing with small silver fish, presumably sprats. The glut of fish has been increased by recent legislation, which has enlarged the mesh size of fishermen's nets. Judging by the even larger numbers recorded from Brighton Marina around the same time, similar conditions probably applied.

The table below gives the approximate monthly totals (which include Guillemots and Razorbills) recorded at the main sea-watching localities.

Direction	Jan – Feb		Mar – May		Jun – Jul		Aug – Oct		Nov – Dec	
	E	W	E	W	E	W	E	W	E	W
Selsey Bill	43	1248	28	237	2	7	79	41	1257	705
Worthing Beach	137	2318	27	67	-	-	-	-	2451	5326
Brighton Marina	23901	10260	2585	486	23	-	40	-	11411	23118
Splash Point, Seaford	5523	1143	998	48	-	-	2	-	1186	1190
Bexhill/Hastings	46	394	7	12	-	-	-	-	51	6

Unfortunately, the Brighton Marina log did not include any details of hours watched, but the number of birds seen must have made this the most covered site in the county. In January the largest movements there commenced on the 11<sup>th</sup> with 55 W and 1017 E followed by 1490 E on the 12<sup>th</sup>, 1855 E on the 13<sup>th</sup>, 2240 E on the 14<sup>th</sup> and 2550 E on the 15<sup>th</sup>. A change of direction saw 4040 W and 458 E on the 28<sup>th</sup> coinciding with 2285 W

and 70 E in 1.5 hrs at Worthing Beach on the same day. At Brighton Marina there were 713 W and 1321 E on 3 Feb, 1830 E on the 9<sup>th</sup> and 55 W and 1030 E on the 10<sup>th</sup>. Elsewhere there were records at Selsey Bill of 960 W in 6 hrs on 30 Jan and at Splash Point, Seaford of 1090 E in 1 hr on 15 Jan.

At the end of the year at Selsey Bill there were 1000 E in 4 hrs on 27 Nov and at Splash Point, Seaford 597 W and 12 E in 1.75 hrs on 24 Dec. The massive build up of numbers at both Brighton and Worthing at the end of December is best illustrated as follows:

Date	Brighton Marina		Worthing Beach	
	W	E	W	E
20 Dec	80	2455		
21 Dec	1185			
23 Dec		2280		
24 Dec	4190			
25 Dec	5000			
27 Dec	3600		+1000 offshore	980 in 3 hrs
28 Dec	6900	230	3400	1022 in 3.8 hrs
29 Dec	725	180	600	100 in 2 hrs
30 Dec	400		866	42 in 2 hrs + 500 offshore

The absence of large numbers from either Selsey Bill or Bexhill coupled with the patterns of movements suggest these records probably involve the same birds moving in search of fish shoals. The movement recorded on 28 Dec, undoubtedly involved much duplication, but nevertheless forms a new county record for a single day. [DEGC]

#### 0634. GUILLEMOT

*Uria aalge*

**Fairly common winter visitor and passage migrant; formerly bred.**

**1999:** Two attempted to land on the chalk face at Seaford Head on 9 Jun.

**2001:** The approximate monthly totals which show an increase in January but a marked decrease in both February and December compared with 2000 were as follows:

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
472	653	32	17	55	14	8	9	3	18	153	177

The year's total was about 40% lower than the previous year's, but well above the recent average. The totals recorded at the main sea-watching localities are shown below:

	Jan-Feb			Mar-May			Jun-Jul			Aug-Oct			Nov-Dec		
	E	o/s	W	E	o/s	W	E	o/s	W	E	o/s	W	E	o/s	W
Selsey Bill	31	2	165	7	2	26	14	-	6	3	7	13	76	1	64
Worthing	3	3	293	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	62	5
Splash Point	142	26	12	5	40	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	14	55	20
Bexhill/ Hastings	15	29	204	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	3	2

Significant movements in the early part of the year were 56 E in 1.75 hrs at Splash Point, Seaford on 14 Jan, 133 W and six offshore in 1.75 hrs at Bexhill on the 26<sup>th</sup> and 51 W and eight offshore there in 1.5 hrs on 3 Feb. At Rye Bay, 30 W were counted in just 10 mins on 23 Jan, at Worthing Beach 291 W in 1.2 hrs on 3 Feb and at Selsey Bill 116 W in 2 hrs on 4 Feb.

At the end of the year there were 25 W and 53 E in 5.75 hrs at Selsey Bill on 11 Nov and 53 W in 2 hrs on 28 Dec.

A bird at Camber Sands on 1 Jan amused the locals when seen sitting on the grass in the caravan park, apparently not oiled. A downy juvenile appeared on the sea off Southwick Beach on 26 Jun. There were three oiled birds, one on the beach within Brighton Marina on 15 Mar, another at Rye Bay on 8 Apr that was subsequently taken into care, and one offshore at Splash Point, Seaford on 30 Apr and 2 May. [DEGC]

## 0636. RAZORBILL

*Alca torda*

### Fairly common winter visitor and passage migrant; formerly bred.

The approximate monthly totals, high in January but quite exceptional in December, were as follows:

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
796	31	5	7	53	2	-	4	4	30	81	4809

The year's total of 5822 is a record for the county and exceeds that for 2000, considered exceptional at the time, by an amazing 450%. The following are the totals recorded at the main sea-watching localities:

Direction	Jan-Feb		Mar-May		Jun-Jul		Aug-Oct		Nov-Dec	
	E	W	E	W	E	W	E	W	E	W
Selsey Bill	15	12	1	22	2	-	-	31	45	220
Worthing Beach	-	-	5	2	-	-	2	1	3	802
Splash Point, Seaford	61	4	17	1	-	-	-	-	6	16
Bexhill/Hastings	3	15	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	-

Counts in the early part of the year were not generally significant but approximately 700 on the sea at Brighton Marina on 29 Jan (IJW) was a new county record, just exceeding the 692 recorded there by the same observer on 24 Feb 1999.

Unusually, due to large numbers feeding on shoals of fish closer to the shore than normal in December, the records for the latter part of the year exceed those above. At Shoreham there were 20 on 11 Dec and at Lancing 40 on the 13<sup>th</sup>, 50 on the 24<sup>th</sup> and 45 on the 29<sup>th</sup>. There was a huge influx on 27 Dec with 800 W in 35 mins at Worthing Beach, 1000 at Goring and 2500 at Shoreham (SRA), a new county record, with 500 there on the 29<sup>th</sup>. At Selsey Bill, there were 37 W in 1.25 hrs on 28 Dec and 66 W in 2.75 hrs plus six offshore on the 29<sup>th</sup> and, at Southwick, 70 offshore on the 30<sup>th</sup>.

Of the auks recorded at Worthing on 27 Dec (see Auk species), almost all were Razorbills with only one definite Guillemot amongst them (DIS). On the 28<sup>th</sup>, when it was estimated by the same observer that 92% of the birds recorded that day were Razorbills, there was a marked change in the direction of the movement from west to east in the last hour. This would suggest some duplication in numbers though the scale of this is difficult to estimate. If 95% of the birds on the 27<sup>th</sup> were Razorbills, the total would be 1881. Taking a figure of 92% Razorbills for the 28<sup>th</sup> gives a total of 4068 birds though if one ignores the 1022 that flew east as duplication, the figure becomes 3128. If one accepts these totals, the December figure in the above chart for Worthing Beach should be amended from 802 to 5811 and the year's total from 5822 to 10,831.

No oiled birds were reported during the year. [DECG]

0647. **LITTLE AUK***Alle alle***Very scarce but now annual autumn passage migrant and winter visitor.**

The best year since 1996 and the third best year on record with a total of 38 recorded as follows:

10 Nov	Three offshore 3 miles south west of Newhaven Hbr (RGe, JH) 1 W Ferring Beach at 09:40 GMT (RAI)
11 Nov	1 E and on the sea at Worthing Beach at 07:35 GMT (MGP) 1 E Selsey Bill at 10:20 GMT (RAI, DIS et al) 9 E and one in the marina at Brighton Marina (IJW, CJR et al) 2 E Selsey Bill at 10:20 and 11:20 GMT (AH)
12 Nov	2 E Brighton Marina (IJW) 1 W Worthing Beach at 08:12 GMT (JAN) 1 offshore at Rye Bay (PMT)
13 Nov	1 offshore at Rye Bay (SSm) 4 E Brighton Marina (IJW) 4 W Galley Hill, Bexhill at 09:25 GMT (IS)
14 Nov	1 offshore at Rye Bay (SSm) 1 W Selsey Bill at 11:50 GMT (OM et al)
15 Nov	1 E Selsey Bill (BFF)
23 Nov	1 R. Brede, Winchelsea at 09:00 GMT (MBS)
2 Dec	1 E Brighton Marina (IJW)
30 Dec	1 W Brighton Marina (IJW)

Unusually there were only five at Selsey Bill though 18 were recorded at Brighton Marina. The bird seen on 11 Nov within Brighton Marina appeared fit and healthy and stayed until the 13<sup>th</sup>. It was very confiding, yet active, diving constantly and seen swimming under water. Latterly it flew in large circles around the harbour. The one swimming in the R. Brede at Winchelsea on the 23<sup>rd</sup> was photographed by the observer from the bank at the bottom of her garden.

Remarkable numbers were reported off the east coast in November, the largest being 5015 off Flamborough Head and 8186 off the Farne Islands on the 9<sup>th</sup> (*British Birds* 95:1), one day before the first birds reached Sussex. [DEGC]

0654. **PUFFIN***Fratercula arctica***Very scarce visitor, most frequently recorded in spring.**

For the seventh consecutive year, there were just two records, both of singles flying east at Brighton Marina (IJW). The first was on 26 Apr and the second on 22 May, bringing the total since 1962 to 79. [DEGC]

0665. **FERAL ROCK DOVE***Columba livia***Common resident.**

Twenty-one records were submitted. Breeding was confirmed in the Brighton area where a juvenile was being fed by an adult at Brighton Station. Holes in the cliffs at Rottingdean provided more natural nesting habitat for this descendent of the Rock Dove. The largest flock reported was 200 at Sompington Refuse Tip in December. [DEC]

## 0668. STOCK DOVE

*Columba oenas*

### **Common resident and possible winter visitor.**

The largest flocks in the early part of the year were at Rye Hbr, with 45 in January, 120 in February and still 100 on 20 Mar.

Nearly 50 reports of confirmed breeding were received from across the county, involving perhaps 60 pairs. Pairs seemed well established by the end of April with birds on eggs by this time. The last record of sitting birds was at Wiston on 5 Sep. Of five pairs that used nest boxes at Troutbeck, near Eridge, one nested in a Barn Owl drum after the owls had used it and gone, another nested in a box put up for Mandarin, a third pair used a triangular ark put up for Barn Owls, and the remaining pairs used duck nesting boxes down to water level; one even had water in it!

Autumnal movement was first reported on 13 Oct with 60 flying over at Beachy Head with another 110 recorded there on 26 Oct. The largest movements were recorded on 27 Oct with 250 at Selsey Bill, 500 W at Beachy Head and 125 W at Rye Hbr. A further 200 flew west at Beachy Head on 1 Nov. [DEC]

## 0670. WOODPIGEON

*Columba palumbus*

### **Abundant resident and winter visitor.**

Unharvested maize at Sefton Fm near Bognor kept a flock sustained throughout the winter. The size of the flock rose from 600 in early January to over 1300 in February. Other sizeable winter flocks were 880 at Pagham Hbr North Fields on 14 Jan and 500 at Moulsecoomb Wild Park, Brighton on 12 Jan, Eartham Woods on 9 Feb and Selsey West Fields on 27 Feb. The largest winter flock in East Sussex was 400 at Combe Haven.

Breeding records for such an easily observed and widespread species were few with only 15 reports of confirmed breeding, a situation that obviously does not reflect the species true status in the county.

Movement began in earnest towards the end of October. On 27<sup>th</sup> 9000 were recorded at Selsey Bill, 1500 at Beachy Head, 2000 W at Hastings CP and 1100 W in 1 hr at Bewl Water. Counts well in excess of 1000 were noted at coastal sites from all points, east and west, during the last few days of October and into November. A total of 31,000 W at Pagham on 2 Nov was surpassed by 35,000 flying west and southwest over Brighton on 10 Nov. Between 27 Oct and 10 Nov the estimated total for Brighton was 76,330 birds.

Near Brighton, the Stanmer Park roost contained a minimum of 5000 in December. A trio of birds were recorded singing together in Crowborough on 30 Dec. [DEC]

## 0684. COLLARED DOVE

*Streptopelia decaocto*

### **Very common resident.**

Flocks of 150 at Harbour Fm, Rye and 100 at Marsh Fm, Sidlesham was the largest concentrations reported in the early part of the year.

Breeding records were, as usual, limited though there were 34 pairs in Moulsecoomb Wild Park, Brighton. A pair was recorded nesting at Partridge Green, Littleworth on 10 Feb though more unusual was a bird sitting on a nest at Southwick Station in late



December. The *New Atlas* states that the breeding season for this species in Britain is mid February to early October.

An unusual record was a movement of 84 E over Sheepcote Valley, Brighton on 19 Oct while counts at Rye Hbr reached 300 in October and 275 in November.

Fortitude was shown by an individual that had been partially plucked by a Sparrowhawk and which escaped to a garage where it roosted to be found still alive the following day. Its subsequent fate was not reported. [DEC]

0687. **TURTLE DOVE**

*Streptopelia turtur*

**Fairly common, but declining summer visitor and passage migrant. Species of Conservation Concern in Sussex.**

The first record of the year on 9 Apr at Pett Level was 11 days earlier than in 2000 but not significantly earlier than the 10-year average. Thereafter a further 11 birds were recorded until the end of April; all being singles except two at Rowland Wood, Beckley on the 30<sup>th</sup>. Clearly the main arrival occurred in May when small numbers were seen at 62 sites with nine at Cricketing Bottom, Southease on 15<sup>th</sup> being the largest number.

During the breeding season there were at least 22 pairs recorded on Ashdown Forest with other notable counts being six singing birds at Bawl Water, five pairs at both Rye Hbr and Thorney Island and four pairs at Bignor Hill.

After early August over 60% of the records were from coastal localities; most records involved small numbers but six were at Selsey West Fields on 10 Aug and four at Stonehill, Ashdown Forest on 12 Sep. Nine birds were recorded in October; apart from two at Ovingdean on the 13<sup>th</sup> these involved single birds with the last at Combe Haven on the 15<sup>th</sup>. [DEC]

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

*Psittacula krameri*

**Very scarce introduced breeding resident.**

Between ten and 15 individuals were recorded during the year from ten different sites though there was no evidence of breeding. On 9 Jan two birds were seen flying north-east over Rye Hbr while a bird first seen at The Pells, Lewes on 16 Jan was recorded regularly until the end of the year. Singles were seen at Galley Hill, Bexhill on 7 Feb and 12-13 Apr and at Hassocks on 2 Apr and 23 Jun. Two were at Troutbeck, Eridge on 14 Apr and two flew over Weir Wood Res on 26 Apr. Three flew W at Selsey Bill on 14 May and one landed briefly on wires before flying off north at Sidlesham Ferry on 29 May. During the second half of the year the only records were singles at Combe Haven on 28 Aug and at Pulborough Brooks on 11 Sep. [DEC]

0724. **CUCKOO**

*Cuculus canorus*

**Fairly common summer visitor.**

The first record of the year was from Pett Level on 1 Apr. Birds were present at this site on ten days during the month with a maximum of three on 22 Apr. At other sites throughout the county, birds were recorded on 16 dates in April involving about 60 individuals. Three spent most of April at Cooden Beach GC.

There were about 60 reports of birds singing or apparently holding territory across the county. The most concrete evidence of breeding was a young bird in a Song Thrush nest at Slindon. Breeding was also confirmed at Marline Wood, Hastings and juveniles were seen at Beachy Head on 21 Jul and at Valebridge, Burgess Hill on 14 Aug.

The last records of the year at coastal sites included singles at Pett Level on 22 Aug, Sidlesham Ferry on 5 Sep and Birling Gap on 20 Sep.

An analysis of all Cuckoo records for the period 1990 – 2000 shows that the number of records received annually increased steadily from *ca.* 180 to *ca.* 260, the average being 220, an annual increase of *ca.* 4%. However, the number of singing or territory holding birds has shown an annual downwards trend over this period of *ca.* 3% with a fairly wide fluctuation between a high of 69 in 1990 and a low of just 21 in 2000, the average being *ca.* 49. It may be that some of these results are due to more active reporting of this species, or perhaps the status of the Cuckoo in Sussex is not exactly conforming to the reported national decline of –15% as indicated by the *BTO Breeding Bird Survey*. [DEC/JAH]

### 0735. BARN OWL

*Tyto alba*

#### Scarce breeding resident.

The monthly totals were as follows:

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
30	14	9	9	12	30	85	17	7	7	11	15

During the year there were 246 sightings.

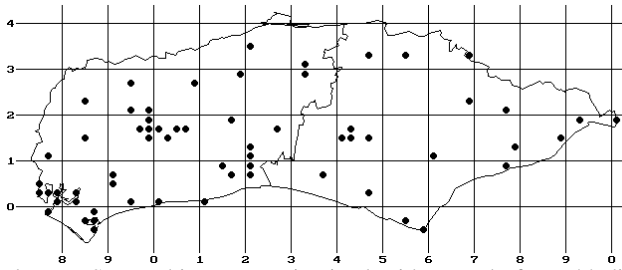
Breeding was confirmed at 61 sites (60 sites in 2000, 57 in 1999 and 62 in 1998) of which 42 were in West Sussex and 19 in East Sussex. As usual, nestboxes in barns provided many of the nest sites (45), the others being tree boxes (8), pole boxes (3), roof voids in barns (2), a castle (1), an old railway bridge (1) and a hole in an ash tree (1). Monitoring of a pole nestbox scheme in an East Sussex river valley found that the number of breeding pairs had declined from eight in 2000 to only two in 2001. Severe flooding during the intervening winter and the resultant decrease in small mammal populations is thought to be responsible. Interestingly such declines were not evident throughout Sussex though were reported from other flooded areas of the country. As usual, many nests were monitored under licence and 116 young were ringed from 38 nests.

Six road deaths were reported. [GCMR]

### 0757. LITTLE OWL

*Athene noctua*

#### Fairly common resident.



The usual West Sussex bias was maintained with records from 44 different tetrads compared to 19 in the east of the county. How much this was due to lack of access because of FMD restrictions is not clear. Breeding was confirmed at 11 sites but there must be a probability that it occurred at most of the rest. Fourteen pairs were involved at the 11 sites, two of them being only 400 m apart. Five pairs occupied nest boxes: one was found in a barn, one in a hedgerow but the prize must go to a pair that nested in a JCB. As this is a species that does not take so readily to nest boxes, the preponderance of records from these sites suggests that many more are being overlooked. There were few indications of breeding success. One box contained four eggs and, from a further five boxes, nine chicks were ringed. A dog brought in a bird near Gatehouse Fm, Lurgashall on 8 Jul. [RTP]

#### 0761. TAWNY OWL

*Strix aluco*

##### Fairly common resident.

Records were received from only 67 sites (88 in 2000), the decline being most likely attributable to lack of access during the outbreak of FMD. These were mostly calling birds but a pair at Scobells Fm, Barcombe had a day roost in a eucalyptus tree from 10 Dec 2000 to 28 Mar. A more typical roost site was a Holm Oak at Goring Gap on 4 Jun. There were no recorded casualties but one was rescued from pond netting at Littleworth, Partridge Green on 24 Jan. Breeding was confirmed at 14 sites. Breeding success at seven sites was low with five pairs raising singletons and two pairs with three apiece. [RTP]

#### 0767. LONG-EARED OWL

*Asio otis*

##### Rare resident and very scarce passage migrant and winter visitor.

Records were received from 18 sites, all but two being in the east of the county and from seven of them during the breeding season. Confirmation of breeding came from two sites where three birds were fledged at one and two at the other. Both of these sites were situated on downland. Records received outside the breeding season were predominantly from coastal areas and may refer to migrating birds or winter visitors. These included one in off the sea at Winchelsea Beach on 4 Jul, one flushed from bushes at Beachy Head on 6 Oct and one in flight at Rye Hbr on 12 Nov. A road casualty was found in the Brighton area at an unspecified site. Site details for this species are strictly confidential because of its sensitivity to disturbance. [RTP]

**Scarce winter visitor and passage migrant. Has bred.**

The following table gives approximate monthly totals taking account of possible duplication at well watched sites. Summing the monthly totals should not be attempted as there will be duplication between months.

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
2000	14	13	12	12	5	-	1	5	7	3	3
2001	2	2	2	4	6	1	2	2	15	13	14

The early part of the year continued the poor showing in autumn 2000 with single birds being seen from Thorney Island in the west to Rye Hbr in the east. Only at the former site were multiple sightings made to indicate a resident bird and all were on the coast apart from one at Swanborough Hill, Kingston on 11 May, about 4 km from the sea. Two came in off the sea and flew north at Splash Point, Seaford on 4 May and a single at Pulborough Brooks on 18 Jun was the first June sighting for the county since one was seen hunting over fields at Beachy Head on 22 Jun 1993 and only the fifth since 1980.

The first autumn birds were at Rye Hbr on 5 Aug and at Belle Tout, Beachy Head on 30 Aug. The latter probably remained in the Birling Gap/Belle Tout area and was seen by numerous observers until 25 Oct. The numbers wintering returned to normal in the second winter period. They were all to be found near the coast or on the river valley flood plains apart from a single bird disturbed from its roost on the Old Airstrip, Ashdown Forest on 31 Oct. Numbers at Thorney Island built up to five by the end of the year, there were up to three on several dates at Newhaven Tide Mills and Drove Marsh and two at Amberley Wild Brooks. All other observations in this period were of singles. [RTP]

**Fairly common summer visitor rarely seen on migration. Species of Conservation Concern in Sussex.**

There were no coastal records of arriving migrants this year; the earliest sighting was in a potential breeding area at Wrens Warren, Ashdown Forest on 5 May with birds widespread from mid-May onwards.

Monitoring on the breeding grounds is best just before dawn or immediately after dusk and because of this, despite its' distinctive call, the Nightjar is often under recorded. This year, many areas were either not surveyed or received limited coverage, due to access problems caused by FMD restrictions, although the later arrival period for this species did not pose as many problems as for earlier breeding species. Records were received from 19 tetrads in both East and West Sussex (26 and 29 respectively in 2000). Ashdown Forest, as usual, produced most of the county records although these were down 30% on last year due to restricted observer activity. The total count of territorial birds was estimated at 69 (also 69 in 2000), indicating that although there were fewer records, the actual coverage was sufficient to monitor the breeding population adequately. A further 15 birds were reported from eight sites in East Sussex. There remains a small but persistent population in the central Weald northwest of Battle and Hastings, as noted in *Birds of Sussex*. This population may warrant further investigation to assess accurately the numbers involved. The *Wealden Heaths Breeding Bird Survey* was cancelled but there were reports of 24 territorial birds from nine heaths (46 from 12 in 2000) and 17 identified at eight sites throughout the remainder of West Sussex. The available data indicate a breeding population of approximately 123 pairs in 2001.

Rarely seen away from the breeding areas and the coast, an unusual record was of a single bird flying purposefully over horse-grazing fields south of Petworth at 21:45 BST on 4 July. Records from breeding areas continued into August with counts of between five and six birds, including at least one juvenile, at East Dean (West Sussex) during the period 14<sup>th</sup> to 20<sup>th</sup>. The last inland record was from Ashdown Forest on 29 Aug.

Autumn produced five records at Pett Level between 31 Aug and 29 Sep, four of which were of birds ringed. [AP]

#### 0795. SWIFT

*Apus apus*

##### **Common summer visitor and passage migrant.**

The first was at Sompting Brooks on 12 Apr, an early date, with singles reported from coastal localities almost daily from the 17<sup>th</sup>. A small influx was noted on 26 Apr with 50 at Ivy Lake, Chichester GP, 24 at Shinewater Lake, Eastbourne and 25 at Saunders Pit, Rye Hbr. On 30 Apr 140 were present at Pulborough Brooks, 200 at Northpoint Pit, Rye and 110 at Castle Water, Rye Hbr. In May large movements observed at coastal locations included, at Selsey Bill, 90 N in 13 hrs on the 9<sup>th</sup>, 139 N in 13.5 hrs on the 10<sup>th</sup> and 66 N in 11.5 hrs on the 13<sup>th</sup>. There were 600 N at Sheepcote Valley, Brighton on the 17<sup>th</sup> and 1000 in off the sea in 2 hrs at Brighton Marina on the 31<sup>st</sup>. Eight hundred were recorded at Beachy Head on 3 Jun.

A large movement of 1377 W in 2 hrs at Bexhill on 1 Jul was the only notable movement in the first half of the month. Such movements in the middle of the breeding season are hard to explain but might comprise immatures, failed breeders or long distance feeding movements. Northerly movements were observed on 19 Jul with 100 at Selsey Bill and 80 at Brighton Marina. The only large concentrations reported in July were 600 at Pagham Hbr on the 19<sup>th</sup> and 1000 at Ditchling Beacon on the 20<sup>th</sup>.

Of the few breeding site records received, several churches were noted to support nesting Swifts.

Return passage is not always easy to identify. The largest southerly movements recorded were of 70 at Beachy Head on 31 Jul and 20 at Brighton on 25 Aug.

There were sightings of one to two birds on six dates in September. In October, singles were seen at Beachy Head on the 13<sup>th</sup>, Pagham Hbr on the 20<sup>th</sup>, and finally, two very late birds at Church Norton on the 30<sup>th</sup>. [GCMR]

#### 0798. ALPINE SWIFT

*Apus melba*

##### **Rare vagrant.**

One was picked up dead at Saffron's Hotel, Jevington Gardens in Eastbourne on 26 Mar (GR). It has been accepted by *British Birds* and is the 36<sup>th</sup> county record. Records are currently averaging one a year. This is third to be recorded in March, which now has records on the 25<sup>th</sup>, 26<sup>th</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup>. There are records for all months between March and October with most in May and August. [RJF]

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	27	24	76	41
Number of inland sites	8	8	23	11
Number of coastal sites	10	12	17	7

There were fewer birds at fewer sites in January compared to the previous year but there was a marked increase in November in both the number of birds and the number of inland sites where the species was recorded. Overall, records were 25% up on 2000. Surprisingly, the Pagham Hbr area did not produce a single record in January, whereas in January 2000 the area had more records than any other site. In November/December 2001 the area again had more records than any other site.

At least nine pairs bred at three sites with probable breeding at two others. The best sites were Bewl Water where at least five pairs bred and Loder Valley, Ardingly where three pairs fledged 12 young in an artificial bank.

After the breeding season, it was rare to see more than two birds together, but there were records of four at Filsham LNR on 15 Sep, Pagham Hbr on the 16<sup>th</sup> and Thorney Deepes on the 20<sup>th</sup>. A count of three in the lower Cuckmere Valley on 31 Dec was considered high for the time of year, as was one of two at Bewl Water in freezing conditions. [DEGC]

0840. **BEE-EATER***Merops apiaster***Rare vagrant, has bred.**

Two flew south-east over Selsey village on 3 Jun (BJ) while one flew east over Rye Hbr on 4 Jun (PMT). Since 1990 records of this species are averaging just over one a year, involving on average of just under two individuals. Most occurrences are in the last week of May or in early June. [RJF]

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

In spring one was seen in a garden in East Preston on 25-26 Apr (EMa, ABW) while in autumn one was in Pett Village on 2 Aug (CHD). Two is a poor showing, only bettering 1982 and 1997, years in which just one was seen. Forty-five have been recorded in the last ten years and of these 24 have been in April and four in August. [RJF]

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

Records of probably nine different birds were received, all for the autumn. In August, a single was ringed at Pett Level on the 20<sup>th</sup> (RBRG, TS) and a further single was present from the 24<sup>th</sup> for several days in Sheepcote Valley, Brighton (ADW, IJW). In September, there were records from Beachy Head of two different birds between the 18<sup>th</sup> and 29<sup>th</sup> (mo)

and of singles at Blackhill, Ashdown Forest on the 3<sup>rd</sup> (JM); near Horsham Refuse Tip on the 4<sup>th</sup> (PHa); and Sheepcote Valley, Brighton for several days from the 24<sup>th</sup> (ADW, IJW). One remained at the Severals, Church Norton from 20 Sep to 7 Oct with two there on 21 and 22 Sep (mo). [LM]

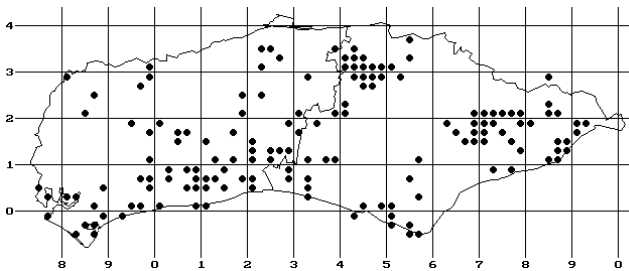
**0856. GREEN WOODPECKER**

*Picus viridis*

**Fairly common resident.**

A total of 442 records was received from 155 sites across the county. Reports relating to the breeding season came from 22 1-km squares on Ashdown Forest and 89 other sites. Breeding was confirmed or probable at 76 locations.

A single on 24 Mar at Brighton Marina was described as ‘very rare here’. One was seen on 24 Aug to fly out from the Newhaven Cliffs, low over rocks at low tide to the sea and then return to the cliff. On 19 Dec a bird was seen calling from a rooftop at Goring. [LM]

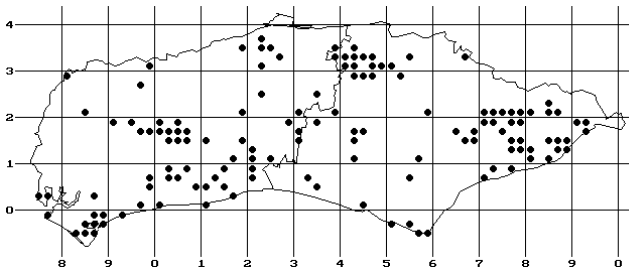


**0876. GREAT SPOTTED WOODPECKER**

*Dendrocopos major*

**Common resident.**

A total of 354 records was received from 142 sites across the county, with reports for 82 of the sites being in the breeding season. The earliest territorial activity reported was of drumming at Coates Common on 8 Jan, but there was a mid-winter record of two drumming at Bewl Water on 31 Dec. Breeding was confirmed or probable at 63 locations. The species was considered now to be resident at Selsey West Fields. A single was seen flying north from the direction of the sea at Sheepcote Valley, Brighton on 28 Sep. [LM]

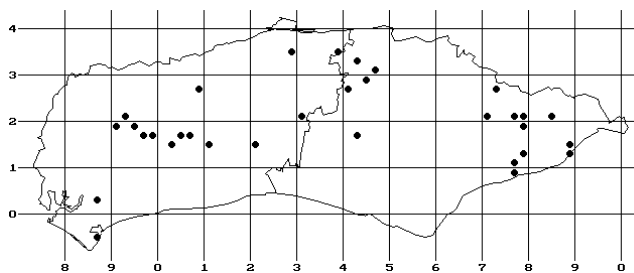


**Scarce resident.**

Records were received from 31 tetrads across the county, with reports during the breeding season from 14 locations and from a further 20 at other times. Most sightings were well inland, many of them being from gardens. Coastal records were of a young bird begging food from an adult at Chick Hill, Pett on 13 Jun and singles at Carters Fm, Pett on 1 Jul and at Pagham Hbr on 24 Nov.

The earliest territorial activity reported was of drumming at Sullington on 18 Feb. Confirmed or probable breeding was reported from Barcombe Cross; Hurst Green; Marline Wood, Hastings; Brede Barn Fm, Sedlescombe; Beckley Furnace; and Chick Hill, Pett. There were reports from nine other locations during the breeding season.

A total of 99 records was received, 44 of them being from Pulborough Brooks, a result of the extensive coverage that this reserve receives. Reports of all records, especially of territorial behaviour or confirmed breeding, would be appreciated. [LM]

0974. **WOOD LARK****Scarce resident and passage migrant. Species of Conservation Concern in Sussex.**

In the first winter period, including early spring, the bulk of the records were from the Wealden Heaths area, apart from three from Ashdown Forest that probably referred to the same bird. The first song on the breeding grounds was heard on 6 Jan at Lavington Common. The regular Coates Common flock, in a stubble field, built up from eight on 7 Jan to 18 on 15 Jan. There was a rare coastal report for this period with a single flying east at Beachy Head on 6 Mar (*Birds of Sussex* noted only five spring records since 1976, and these were in the period 15 Mar to 3 May).

Mid-February found the birds returning to their breeding grounds. The *Wealden Heaths Breeding Bird Survey* in West Sussex was affected by FMD restrictions and, thus, the total breeding population reported was less than half that of 2000 at 27-29 territories. However, recording was undertaken regularly on Ashdown Forest from 12 Apr, where also there was likely to have been under recording due to access problems, and these results indicated a breeding population of between five and seven pairs (six in 2000). The eastern expansion of the species' range in Sussex remains rather slow. Elsewhere in East Sussex, Broadwater and Worth Forests both held two pairs each. Of the 15-17 territories noted in West Sussex, the most interesting record was of a male in song on 18 May at West Marden on the South Downs at an approximate height of 130 m. In Hampshire, during the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, a sizable downland population existed and it will be interesting to monitor whether Sussex will follow the adjoining county; the most recent *Hampshire Bird Report* noted two pairs breeding on the chalk in the east of the county in 2000. The last note of



breeding activity was of two recently fledged juveniles on 4 Jul at the Old Airstrip, Ashdown Forest.

Birds on autumn passage were, as usual, well reported with records from Selsey Bill in the west to Rye Hbr in the east. In all 37 were recorded from 11 coastal sites including 13 SW at Selsey Bill on 27 Oct. Inland, birds were noted on the north-west heaths where they were regularly in song until the end of the year. The Coates Common flock re-gathered in the usual stubble field numbering 12 on 6 Dec. [AP]

## 0976. SKY LARK

*Alauda arvensis*

**Fairly common resident, passage migrant and winter visitor. Species of Conservation Concern in Sussex.**

The trend of small flocks in the first winter period continued, the earliest noted at Udimore on 6 Jan was of six birds. There were only five flocks of over 30 birds (11 in 2000) and all, except for 50 at Steep Down, Lancing, were in coastal areas mainly in the east of the county. The largest was of 100 in a stubble field at Newhaven Fort on 28 Jan. A *Winter Farmland Survey* recorded a flock of 40 at Seaford on 13 Jan. Census work on two mixed farms during this period found a flock of 23 at Sefter Fm, Pagham (95 ha) on 19 Jan but only one at Marsh Fm, Yapton (67 ha) on two visits.

The first record of aerial song flight was on 6 Jan at Newhaven Tide Mills. Access problems, due to FMD restrictions, are the likely reason that the county total of recorded breeding birds, relating to either confirmed or probable breeding or birds singing (holding territory), was down to an estimated 267 pairs from 58 sites (408 and 67 respectively in 2000). It is interesting to note that the *BTO Breeding Bird Survey* reported a national increase of 10.8% between the 1999 and 2000 seasons. In West Sussex a total of 79 pairs was reported, mainly from the South Downs and the coastal plain, the latter accounting for 39% of the West Sussex total. With few records for wealden farmland, and a few general comments made by observers, without counts, that the species was common on the downs at Chantry Hill and Steyning, there is no doubt that the breeding numbers indicated are an under-estimate of the true figure. There were specific counts of 12 pairs on Pilsley Island, Chichester Hbr, and a further 12 singing males at Steep Down, Lancing. In East Sussex a total of 188 pairs was reported, 51 of which were on Ashdown Forest (88 in 2000). The bulk of the records away from Ashdown Forest were from the South Downs and the levels. As with the west of the county, data from farmland in the interior of the county was sparse. Notable breeding counts were of 21 pairs at Rye Hbr (13 on the beach reserve), and a minimum of 15 at Newhaven Tide Mills. A breeding density of 9 pairs per km<sup>2</sup> was established on Ashdown Forest for TQ4429.

The number of records received for the autumn and second winter period was up almost 60% on 2000. The first autumn migrants were noted on 27 Sep with eight at Pett Level. Subsequent movements were in October and November, the largest of which were 35 W at Church Norton and 20 W at Beachy Head on 10 Oct. Other significant movements were 24 E at Church Norton on 20 Oct, 28 E there the following day, 48 S in 10 hrs at Selsey Bill on 23 Oct, and 70 W at Beachy Head 29 Oct.

There were 13 post-breeding flocks of over 50 individuals in this period commencing with 60 at Beachy Head on 6 Oct, 55 at Church Norton on 9 Oct, 100 at Amberley Mount on 3 Nov, 200 at Shoreham Cement Works on 2 Dec and, finally, two large flocks of 400 at Coombes, near Shoreham on 27 Dec and 450 at Steep Down, Lancing on 31 Dec. The latter site proved particularly popular with this species throughout the year. Monthly

census work found a maximum of only four birds at Sefter Fm, Pagham on 2 Dec, and two at Marsh Fm, Yapton on 8 Dec.

Feeding habitat was rarely noted, but where commented on comprised stubble, grazed by sheep and under sown stubble. [AP]

## 0981. SAND MARTIN

*Riparia riparia*

### **Fairly common summer visitor and very common passage migrant.**

The second week in March saw the first arrivals with one bird noted at Pett Level on the 12<sup>th</sup>, two at Castle Water, Rye Hbr on the 13<sup>th</sup> and a single on the 14<sup>th</sup>, on which day three were seen at Pulborough Brooks. A more substantial arrival was recorded on 17 Mar with at least 100 birds at Chichester GP, 40 at Castle Water and 35 at Combe Haven. Eleven were seen feeding, in falling snow, over Bewl Water on 20 Mar. Counts in three figures in the rest of March were of 150 at Castle Water on the 24<sup>th</sup>, 100 the next day at Ivy Lake, Chichester GP and 130 at Pulborough Brooks on the 26<sup>th</sup>. Twenty-nine roosted at Filsham LNR on 29 Mar.

A better breeding season compared with 2000 seems to have been generally noted. Nest building was in progress at Sandgate Park, Storrington on 21 Apr, when some 25 birds were present; a later count there, on 24 Jun, was of *ca.* 60 pairs compared with just two in the previous year. Other breeding sites, all in the west of the county, were at Eartham – 16 pairs in a new sand face created for them; Valdoe Wood, East Lavant – 43 holes, of which 25-35 were active; Coates Castle, Fittleworth – up to 30-40 active holes; Duncton Common – 250 pairs, compared with *ca.* 50 pairs in 2000; Rock Common, Washington – *ca.* 30 pairs; Stedham Sand Pit – *ca.* 30 pairs; West Heath Sand Pit – *ca.* 220 pairs; and Pendean Sand Pit – 80 pairs. At Heathend 50 birds were seen flying on 23 July, but the site had 140-150 new nest holes. No nesting was again recorded this year at Rye Hbr. Members are asked to report breeding records.

Post-breeding gatherings were noted from early July onwards: 250 were over Ivy Lake, Chichester GP on the 8<sup>th</sup> whilst other counts included 150 at Long Pit, Rye Hbr on the 17<sup>th</sup>, and similar numbers at Sidlesham Ferry on the 21<sup>st</sup> and at Pagham Hbr on the 30<sup>th</sup>. Two thousand birds passed west at Selsey Bill in 6.5 hrs on 15 Aug and a week later 1500 moved south in 4.5 hrs on 22<sup>nd</sup>. On 26 Aug 200 birds were noted at Selsey Bill being driven north by a violent thunderstorm from the south (cf. Swallow and House Martin), and on the same day 1500 were counted at Whitbread Hollow, Beachy Head. Records were received for many days in September of which the most significant were 2000 W in 3.5 hrs at Bexhill on the 12<sup>th</sup>, 1000 over the East Trout Lake, Chichester GP on the 19<sup>th</sup> and a maximum monthly roost at Pett Level of 1000 on the 21<sup>st</sup>. The final record of the year was of one at Church Norton on 16 Oct. [MJM]

## 0992. SWALLOW

*Hirundo rustica*

### **Common summer visitor and abundant passage migrant.**

The first record of the year was on 20 Mar when a bird flew east at Bexhill. Singles were seen arriving from the sea at Pett and Newhaven on the 22<sup>nd</sup> and five were recorded at four sites on the 23<sup>rd</sup>. There were no further records until 28 Mar after which there were daily records of small numbers until 35 were noted at Winchelsea Beach SF on 9 Apr, 30 at Barcombe Res on 13 Apr and 50 over Ivy Lake, Chichester GP on 17 Apr. At Selsey Bill a total of 300 flew north in 9.5hrs on 27 Apr. Birds continued to arrive well into May,

for example 400 in off the sea at Brighton Marina on the 10<sup>th</sup>, by when nesting had commenced.

Confirmed breeding records were received from Keymer, where ten fledged from three nests, Hassocks, where a Magpie was chased from the nest site in a barn, Pett Level and Arundel. At this last site *ca.* 15 pairs bred in a builders merchants store next to the station and when the doors were closed at night or at weekends the birds entered by walking through the gap under the door! (OL). At Byworth two of the three pairs nesting in a stable were double brooded. Records also came from Rose Green, Bognor Regis; Warren Hill, Washington; Mannings Fm, Small Dole, where three pairs were double brooded; and Climping. Members are asked to report breeding records.

Flocks started to assemble prior to migration as early as late July; 350 were seen over Pagham Hbr North Fields on the 30<sup>th</sup>; 240 moved west at Selsey Bill in 6.25 hrs on 15 Aug; 300 roosted in a reedbed on Thorney Deeps on the 25<sup>th</sup> and at Selsey Bill, on the 26<sup>th</sup>, 200 were driven north by a violent thunderstorm from the south (cf. Sand Martin and House Martin). Movements in September were of greater magnitude and highlights from among many reports were of probably in excess of 1000 at Church Norton on the 11<sup>th</sup>, 2300 at Newhaven Tide Mills on the 16<sup>th</sup>, 5000 E in 1 hr at Shoreham Airport on the 20<sup>th</sup> and 8000 at Church Norton on the 21<sup>st</sup>. An estimated 75,000 passed over Brighton on the 21<sup>st</sup>, the observer (IJW) commenting that it was not possible to look at all the sky all the time. Counts for the remainder of the month included 2500 at Beachy Head, 2000 S at Pett Level and 1000 at Arlington Res, all on the 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2000 W in 4.75 hrs at Selsey Bill on the 23<sup>rd</sup>, 1155 E in 2.25 hrs at Bexhill on the 24<sup>th</sup>, 2000 E in 0.5 hrs at Splash Point, Seaford on the 28<sup>th</sup>, and 2000 S in 2.25 hrs at Selsey Bill and 3000 roosting at Combe Haven on the 29<sup>th</sup>. Sizeable movements continued until mid-October with 800 S at Beachy Head on the 8<sup>th</sup> and 500 on the 10<sup>th</sup>, and 1000 at Combe Haven on 13<sup>th</sup>. There were still 70, with House Martins at Climping on 21 Oct. Small numbers were recorded in November with observations on most days until the 17<sup>th</sup>; double figure counts were of 15 W at Bosham on the 1<sup>st</sup>, 21 at Selsey Bill on the 4<sup>th</sup> and ten there on the 7<sup>th</sup>. Single birds were at Church Norton on 24 Nov and at Selsey Bill on the 25<sup>th</sup> but the final record, nearly three weeks later, was of 2 W over Cooden Beach GC on 15 Dec. [MJM]

## 1001. HOUSE MARTIN

*Delichon urbica*

### **Common summer visitor and abundant passage migrant.**

The first records were on 24 Mar when three birds were seen over Weir Wood Res and a single flew east along the shore at Bexhill; it was then not until 1 Apr that any more were seen with two at the latter site and one at Barcombe Res. The first counts in double figures all came from Barcombe Res with ten on 13 Apr, 50 on the 15<sup>th</sup> and 40 on the 18<sup>th</sup>. In the west of the county, it was not until 25 Apr that the double figure barrier was breached with 15 on that day at Arundel WWT.

Two pairs were reported occupying artificial nest sites at Steyning by 27 Apr, whilst other records of birds returning to nest sites in that month came from Ashdown GC and from Sheffield Park station. Records of breeding were received from sites throughout the county; in the east reports came from Chick Hill, Pett; Birling Gap, where up to five nests were on the cliff face; Sheffield Park station, where some of the 12 nests were on the platform side of the station buildings; and The Pells at Lewes, where the nest was under the eaves of a shop. In the west, evidence of breeding activity was noted at Climping; Durrington (3 prs); Angmering (4 pairs); West Chiltington; Coldwaltham and Kirdford (2 pairs). Members are asked to report breeding records.

By July, early signs of parties of birds assembling before migration began to be seen. Two hundred were over Ivy Lake, Chichester GP on the 11<sup>th</sup>, but it was into mid-August before numbers really grew; 400 were at Bewl Water on the 19<sup>th</sup>, whilst 1500 were driven north by a violent thunderstorm from the south at Selsey Bill on the 26<sup>th</sup> (cf. Sand Martin and Swallow). A flock of 2000 was noted at Fire Hills, Fairlight on 4 Sep, 2800 flew west in 1 hr along the Bexhill/Hastings shore on 8 Sep with 1900 W in 3.5 hrs on 12 Sep. At Selsey Bill 4000 W in 3.5 hrs were noted on 16 Sep, on which day a count of 2000 was reported from Beachy Head. On both the 17<sup>th</sup> and 22<sup>nd</sup> 2000 were counted at Moulsecoomb Wild Park, Brighton. Observers at Selsey Bill counted 5000 S in 2.75 hrs on 19 Sep and a similar number there, and at Church Norton, two days later. Counts of 2000 W at both Newhaven and Selsey Bill on 23 Sep and 1030 E in 2.25 hrs at Bexhill the following day were the last significant movements of the year. There were still 500 at Combe Haven on 13 Oct when a similar number was noted at Whitbread Hollow, Beachy Head where observers commented on the rather small numbers during the autumn. During early November up to four birds were recorded at Selsey Bill, seven were at Pett Level on the 2<sup>nd</sup> and four at Bexhill on the 8<sup>th</sup> with the last singles recorded at Ninfield and Combe Haven on the 11<sup>th</sup> and Selsey Bill on the 18<sup>th</sup>. [MJM]

1002. **RICHARD'S PIPIT**

*Anthus novaeseelandiae*

**Rare vagrant.**

**2000:** One flew, calling, over Combe Haven on 9 Oct (KMJ). This was the second record of the year, following another at this site in May. Seven have been recorded since 1990, with all but the May individual being seen in October or November. [RJF]

1005. **TAWNY PIPIT**

*Anthus campestris*

**Very scarce visitor, mostly in autumn.**

Two were recorded in autumn: one flew north over Hollingbury Camp on 25 Aug (PJWh) while another was seen in the Cuckmere Valley, south of Exceat Bridge on 1 Oct (PjWi). Records are currently averaging just under three a year, less than half that of the 1970s and 1980s. Most are seen between mid August and late September. [RJF]

1009. **TREE PIPIT**

*Anthus trivialis*

**Fairly common but local summer visitor and passage migrant.**

The first birds of the year were reported, as in 2000, on 1 Apr, from Combe Haven and Lavington Common. This was marginally later than the average arrival date for the 1990s. As is usually the case, the majority of birds arrived on the breeding grounds directly. Few were seen along the coast, just a further three in April and 15 in May (including four over Brighton Marina on the 10<sup>th</sup> and three in the Cuckmere Valley on the 26<sup>th</sup>).

Most breeding season records came from Ashdown Forest, where the first was found on 11 Apr, and around 25 pairs were reported. Four were singing in Broadwater Forest on 9 May, with seven there on 3 Jun and six on 7 Jul. Elsewhere in East Sussex, there were 1-2 territories at both Chailey Common and Mardens Hill and single territories at Brightling; Footland Wood, Vinehall Street; Darwell Woods; and Goldspur Wood, near Mountfield.

In West Sussex, counts on the western commons in early June were of eight pairs on Lavington Common and at Blackdown, three pairs at Hesworth Common and two pairs at Coates Common. In addition, Weavers Down, near Liss held three pairs on 5 Jun and Woolbeding Common four pairs on 16 Jun. The only reports from Ambersham Common this year were rather late in the breeding season with three single birds on 20 Jun and four on 2 Jul. The population on these western commons appears to have been considerably reduced in total this year though FMD may have restricted access to some sites. Elsewhere, there were birds or pairs at Bignor Hill (two); Bignor Park; Kingspark Wood, Plaistow; Burton MP; Pulborough Brooks; and Buchan Park, Crawley (two).

The first reports of return passage came, characteristically, in the last week of July. On 24 Jul birds were found at Selsey Bill, Bexhill and Pett Level. There was then, again typically, a gap before evidence of movement in the second half of August with four over Ashdown Forest on the 15<sup>th</sup>, and singles at Beachy Head and then Combe Haven on the succeeding days. Fifteen were in Sheepcote Valley on 18 Aug, that location's peak count in an autumn considered by the observer to be 'poor'. That was one of only three double figure counts in the autumn, the others were of 20 at Cissbury Ring on 24 Aug and 13 at Pett Level on 28 Aug. The maximum count at Beachy Head was of seven on 25 Aug. 'Small numbers' passed over Pett Level on fourteen dates in August and eight in September. None were reported from Selsey Bill in August and only 11 in September while at Bexhill the totals were 13 and nine respectively. There were seven records of 12 birds in October, with six at Combe Haven on the 15<sup>th</sup> and the last of the year at Sheepcote Valley on the 27<sup>th</sup>, a late date. The average last date for the 1990s was 18 Oct. [CB]

#### 1011. MEADOW PIPIT

*Anthus pratensis*

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

Early year records were typical for this species, with congregations at characteristic locations such as Amberley Wild Brooks; Holmbush Tip, Faygate; and the western commons such as Iping Common where 42 crammed onto one tree before roosting on 18 Feb. They were also seen at less frequently visited sites, for example, 24 at Gravetye Lakes on 14 Jan and 53 at Duckmoor, Billingshurst on 17 Jan. A roost on the Old Airstrip, Ashdown Forest, increased from 30 on 6 Jan to 50 on the 27<sup>th</sup>. Also on 6 Jan, 50 were at the Bewl Water Dam. At Etchingham, where, as at a number of inland sites, wintering birds are almost imperceptibly succeeded by passage migrants, the maximum count was 23 on 7 Mar.

Passage was obvious from 12 Mar, when 62 flew over Bexhill in 2.75 hrs. Typically, the first parachute display flight had been seen on the previous day at Widewater, Lancing. From then until the beginning of April, passage was strong, with over 3500 birds being logged. There were 13 three figure counts at sites along the coast from Selsey Bill to Bexhill. The maxima were at Brighton Marina with 400 on the 14<sup>th</sup>, 500 on the 16<sup>th</sup> and 375 on the 23<sup>rd</sup> and at Selsey Bill where there were 400+ on the 17<sup>th</sup>. The last spring count in double figures came on 2 Apr, when 47 flew over Bexhill.

Breeding season reports revealed some gains and some losses. There were only five territories at Rye Hbr, all at the eastern end of the Beach Reserve. No counts were received from Pulborough Brooks or the western commons and information from Ashdown Forest (where 25 pairs were noted in 2000) was sketchy. On Thorney and Pilsley Islands, the species was adjudged to be 'still fairly common' as a breeding bird. There were at least ten pairs at Selsey West fields and six pairs around Cissbury Ring. A pair at

Marline Wood, Hastings was the first there for many years, and there was a pair in Moulsecoomb Wild Park, Brighton.

At both Selsey Bill and Pett Level only one was recorded during August (on the 5<sup>th</sup>); indeed, there were only six reports for the whole month. There were 65 at Steyning Round Hill on 5 Sep, but no further records, apart from small daily counts at Pett Level from the 4<sup>th</sup>, until 40 at Selsey Bill on the 12<sup>th</sup>. Substantial passage began on the 20<sup>th</sup> and there were eleven three figure counts in the next ten days. There were eighteen three figure counts in October, led by 1200 flying west over Church Norton on the 10<sup>th</sup>. Most of the 2750 recorded at Combe Haven during October were in the first week of the month. The last count in excess of 100 was of 117 at Bexhill on the 29<sup>th</sup>, of which 39 were on the beach and 78 flying over to the west. At Beachy Head, where the maximum was 400 on 30 Sep, passage was considered 'very poor' and small counts of birds flying over Hassocks in late October prompted the comment 'formerly frequent, now rare here'. The overall total was, nonetheless, comparable to those of recent years. As usual, smaller parties were noted resting at inland sites including 150 on stubble and set aside at Steep Down, Lancing on 10 Oct, and by mid month, flocks were roosting on the western commons. In November and December, a number of parties of between 20 and 50 were recorded. These were exceeded by 60 at Danny, Hurstpierpoint on 8 Dec and by an exceptional count of 200 with Woodlarks on stubble at Broad Halfpenny, Coates on the 6<sup>th</sup>. At least 600 birds were reported in December, suggesting a healthy wintering population by recent standards. [CB]

#### 10140. **WATER PIPIT**

*Anthus spinoletta*

##### **Scarce winter visitor and passage migrant.**

The first three months brought exceptional counts from the north end of Combe Haven, near Actons Fm, where, during flooding in mid February, birds favoured a muddy, poached horse field, and, when flushed, gathered in a willow tree. The birds were wary, not allowing observers to approach closer than 150 yards and patience was needed to see all these 'brown birds against brown mud'. In mid January there were 19; a month later 22, perhaps the country's largest wintering flock; and a maximum of 30 was reached on 14 Mar (MJH, ARK). Corresponding totals in 2000 were five, nine and eight. These numbers dwarfed those at the other traditional and well watched site, Thorney Deeps, where there were typical counts of one on 3 Jan rising to three or four later in January through to 9 Mar, with two (presumably new) birds in summer plumage from 29 Mar to 3 Apr (CBC). The only other records in the first period were of singles at Nutbourne on 8 Jan (CBC) and in the Cuckmere Valley on 21 Feb (PJWi).

Numbers were low in the final months of the year. The only record at the end of the year from Combe Haven was of eleven birds in three distinct groups on 25 Nov (MJH, ARK). There were singles at Thorney Deeps between 1 Nov and 15 Dec (CBC) and at Apuldram on 10 Dec (AH), with two recorded there on 30 Dec (TJE). [CB]

#### 10142. **ROCK PIPIT**

*Anthus petrosus*

##### **Scarce resident and scarce winter visitor. Rare away from the coast.**

There were reports from 17 locations in January. Two at Shoreham Hbr was considered to be a low total, but eight were at Apuldram on the 10<sup>th</sup> (and on 14 Feb), five between Seaford and Cuckmere Haven on the 16<sup>th</sup>, and 9-10 in the Cuckmere Valley itself in the second half of the month. In mid February, there were eight at Saltdean, ten nearby at Rottingdean and seven at Beachy Head. One remained at Pilsey Island until 30 Mar. By then most of the Saltdean and Rottingdean birds had departed and there were slight signs of passage, with singles at Rye Hbr beach, Pett Level beach and Birling Gap.

Six pairs were reported along the length of the undercliff from Brighton to Peacehaven and ten pairs were found between Birling Gap and Cow Gap. A pair at Brighton Marina pair raised two broods.

The largest autumn count at Beachy Head was eight on 18 Aug. Birds returned to Rye Hbr on 20 Sep (with eight on a fence there on 3 Nov) and to Pilsey Island on 17 Oct. Passage was barely evident and reports for the second winter period were few, coming from only 12 locations. Six were at the west end of the Seven Sisters on the 12<sup>th</sup> and seven were at Apuldram on the 30<sup>th</sup>. On 2 Dec, there were two at Pett Level Pools, where the bird remains 'scarce' in winter.

Two about 1.5 miles from the sea at Combe Haven on 18 Feb, where they kept their distance from the wintering Water Pipits, was the only inland record. [CB]

#### 10143. **SCANDINAVIAN ROCK PIPIT**

*Anthus petrosus littoralis*

##### **Probably a very scarce winter visitor and passage migrant.**

Three of the nine Rock Pipits in the Cuckmere Valley on 13 Jan showed some characteristics of this race, but the only acceptable records came from the stretch of coast between Brighton Marina and Saltdean. One at Brighton Marina from 12 Feb was joined by another on 25 Feb, the two remaining until 14 Mar. One remained at Ovingdean from 22 Feb to 15 Mar. At Saltdean, one from 16 Feb was joined by two others from 22 Feb to 1 Mar (all IJW). [CB]

#### 1017. **YELLOW WAGTAIL**

*Motacilla flava*

##### **Scarce and localised summer visitor and passage migrant.**

The first was a very early bird flying over at Goring Gap on 16 Mar. Two others, at Brighton Marina and Selsey Bill, followed in its wake the next day. There was then a gap of a week before the next near Bexhill on the 24<sup>th</sup>; a further eight were reported by the end of the month. Six were seen at Rye Hbr on 7 Apr, with 20 there on the 9<sup>th</sup>, 17 on the 14<sup>th</sup> and 23 at Castle Water on the 28<sup>th</sup>. Such day totals were not matched elsewhere, there being only one other double figure count, of 12 N at Selsey Bill on 7 May. Observers at Combe Haven recorded a total of 30 in April and 48 in May.

Breeding records were sparse indeed. About 11 pairs were recorded at Rye Hbr (13+ pairs in 2000; 66 pairs in 1990). Otherwise, there were just single successful pairs at Combe Haven, Pulborough Brooks and Hardham (a new site, where the male sung from a celery field).

The first returning birds were in evidence from late July, when there were six near Bexhill on the 24<sup>th</sup> and the same number at Pett Level the next day. Passage got going from mid August, when birds were found at Thorney Island, Upper Beeding, Hassocks, Newmarket Hill, and the Old Airstrip, Ashdown Forest. Eleven were at Selsey Bill on the 21<sup>st</sup> and 35 two days later. Substantial numbers were seen in the last week of August including 300 roosting at Saunders Pit, Rye Hbr at dusk on the 24<sup>th</sup>; 210 over Bexhill in 2.25 hrs on the 25<sup>th</sup>; 50 at Beachy Head also on the 25<sup>th</sup> and at least 100 around Cornish Fm, Beachy Head on the 27<sup>th</sup>. Forty-four on the 28<sup>th</sup> was the August maximum for Combe Haven, while the maximum count for the month at Filsham Reedbed of 85 on the 29<sup>th</sup> was considered to be low. Numbers on, and north of, the Downs, were characteristically small including 12 at Cissbury Ring on the 24<sup>th</sup>; three on Harrow Hill, Patching; two at Tottington Manor, Small Dole; a handful on Ashdown Forest; and singles at Barcombe Res and at Holmbush Tip, Faygate. September proved an excellent month with 31 double figure counts, though the only one in excess of a hundred was of 120 roosting at Filsham on the 4<sup>th</sup>. Seven of these counts came from the crest, or north, of the Downs, with 60 at Pulborough Brooks on the 15<sup>th</sup>. The last inland birds, save for the final one of the year, were singles at Bewl Water on the 28<sup>th</sup> and six on Rodmell Brooks on 7 Oct. A total of approximately 106 birds was reported in October (cf. 88 in 2000; 38 in 1999). The last double figure counts came on the 6<sup>th</sup> when there were ten at Selsey Bill and 13 at Birling Gap. After a gap of six days with no records, singles were at Goring and Combe Haven on the 19<sup>th</sup>; there followed another gap of eight days before the final couple of records comprising three at Church Norton on the 27<sup>th</sup>, and the last at Barcombe Res on the 30<sup>th</sup>. This autumn continued the upward trend noted in 2000, so it is likely that the Yellow Wagtail is breeding in at least reasonable numbers elsewhere if not, alas, in this county. [CB]

#### 1017.01 **BLUE-HEADED WAGTAIL**

*Motacilla flava flava*

**Very scarce spring and autumn passage migrant. Both mixed and pure pairs have bred.**

There were two reports this year. A male was at Combe Haven on 3 May (KMJ) and a pale headed male was again present at Rye Hbr on 1 Jun (BJY), the latter most likely a 'Channel' Wagtail as described in *SxBR* 53: 119. [CB]

#### 1019. **GREY WAGTAIL**

*Motacilla cinerea*

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

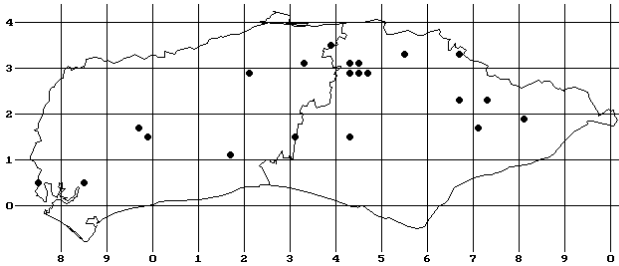
There were 38 records from 28 locations in January and 18 from 16 in February. Several of the February records were from sites with no January reports but this was probably a result of the mobility of observers rather than birds. Nevertheless, the spread of records was better than in the previous few years. Most birds were singles, but there were four among the many Pied Wagtails at Hermitage SF, Emsworth and three at Apuldram, Barcombe Res and Combe Haven.

Spring passage was most evident at Selsey Bill, where 22 were recorded during March, with a maximum of five on the 18<sup>th</sup>. One flew east over Rye Hbr Beach on the very late date of 24 May.

Breeding reports came from 21 different tetrads as shown in the following map. Apart from pairs at Hermitage SF, Emsworth and at Chichester the breeding sites were away



from the coastal plain. Most sites supported single pairs but at least five pairs were found on Ashdown Forest and two pairs were at Troutbeck, near Eridge.



Signs of post-breeding activity came very early this year. One flew SE over High Salvington on 25 Jun. By 1 Jul, ten had assembled at Barcombe Res and on that day singles turned up at Balls Green, Pendean Sand Pit, Pett Level and Withyham. There were no further July records from Pett Level, but birds were noted there on ten days in August, with a maximum of six on the 8<sup>th</sup>, and then almost daily through September. The first of the autumn at Selsey Bill, Pagham Hbr and Rye Hbr were all on 23 Aug while other coastal records included three at Beachy Head on the 26<sup>th</sup> and four resting at Selsey Bill on the 29<sup>th</sup>, with two there the next day. The August total for Combe Haven was 22; for September a respectable 51 (82 in 2000); and for October a further 26 (12 in 2000). Early September brought many birds to the coast including five at Selsey Bill on the 4<sup>th</sup> and six at Bexhill on the 5<sup>th</sup>. Numbers inland were smaller but seven flew over Footlands Wood, Vinehall Street on the 13<sup>th</sup>. A good proportion of these early autumn birds were flying NE. Ten over Sheepcote Valley on 15 Sep (the autumn maximum there) were moving E, as were seven in 2.25 hrs at Bexhill on the 24<sup>th</sup>.

There were fifty reports in October, eighteen in November, and twenty-eight in December. The winter distribution was striking with birds seen along the coast; at traditional (and often breeding) sites inland; and also in urban locations including Worthing, Brighton (where there were almost daily records from the town centre, with several from more suburban areas), Hastings and Crawley. [CB]

## 1020. **PIED WAGTAIL**

*Motacilla alba yarrelli*

### **Common resident, passage migrant and winter visitor.**

There were six substantial roosts in the first months of the year. Two hundred and fifty roosted at Brighton Marina on 9 Jan. Two hundred and ten were counted on the filter beds of Hermitage SF, Emsworth on 19 Jan, with 150 on 1 Feb and 120 still there on 2 Mar. Two hundred were at the Princess Royal Hospital, Haywards Heath, late in the afternoon of 19 Feb. Three hundred and fifty came in to roost at Ashdown House, Hollington on 21 Feb. Finally, the Filsham Reedbed roost peaked at 100 on 28 Feb. Opportunist feeders included 66 on floods at Exceat Bridge on 17 Feb.

Passage was noted at Selsey Bill from 9 Mar. Particular movement was noted from Bexhill with 15 flying east on 24 Mar and 11 E on 2 Apr. On the 14<sup>th</sup> there were 35 at Castle Water, Rye Hbr, but this group may not have been migrants as a similar number was noted there on 5 Apr. Pied Wagtails featured in a live video from Pulborough Brooks, where they chose to nest in an owl box above the Visitor Centre. At Arundel, a pair nested in a brick stack in the builder's yard at the station. At Mannings Fm, Small Dole, one pair

managed three broods. For the third successive year, none bred in the Rye Hbr SSSI, though several pairs nested in the industrial buildings along the Rye Hbr road.

Although few records were received for August and September there were post-breeding gatherings of 40 at Henfield on 15 Aug, 13 at Darwell Res on 27 Aug and 30 at Pulborough Brooks on the 31<sup>st</sup>. At Beachy Head, where the autumn passage was described as 'very poor with no significant movements', the peak count was of only 20 on 3 Oct. Characteristically, birds came together at such sites as the school playing field at North Mundham, where there were 69 on 1 Oct, and a freshly ploughed field at the (organic) Wicks Fm, Yapton which held 53 on 7 Oct. There were four substantial roosts at the end of the year, only one of which had, apparently, been occupied in the early months. That was Hermitage SF, where 150 were feeding on 31 Dec. Lyons Farm Shopping Centre, Worthing attracted 100 birds on 7 Nov. On 24 Nov, there were 300 at Pease Pottage, and on 2 Dec, 150 at Barcombe Res. It is not clear whether these roosts were occupied for any length of time. The winter censuses at Sefter Fm, Pagham and Marsh Fm, Yapton produced December counts of 37 and 13 respectively. [CB]

#### 1020.01 **WHITE WAGTAIL**

*Motacilla alba alba*

**Probably a scarce spring and autumn passage migrant. Both pure and mixed pairs have bred.**

The first of the year was at Goring Gap on 5 Mar. 'Many' arrived at Brighton Marina on the 12<sup>th</sup> and subsequently a total of ten was seen in March and about 32 in April. This strong passage continued into May, with a further four being noted to the 14<sup>th</sup>. One of two at the Breech Pool, Pagham Hbr on 29 May remained there until the beginning of July. One, with a damaged leg, was seen at Cuckmere Haven on the unusual date of 7 Jul. There were about fifteen autumn records, as in 2000, a high number. The last was a very late bird at East Head on 2 Dec. [CB]

#### 1066. **WREN**

*Troglodytes troglodytes*

**Abundant resident.**

Records for this widespread species, which was recorded from all but 21 of the county's 1014 tetrads in the *Sussex Tetrads Atlas* in 1988-92, were received from many parts of the county. Notable counts were 110 singing males at Combe Haven; 84 pairs at Moulsecoomb Wild Park, Brighton; 27 territories at Sefter Fm, Pagham; at least 20 pairs within the Rye Hbr SSSI; 20 pairs at Galley Hill, Bexhill; 15 singing in a part only of Darwell Res and ten territories at High Chimneys Estate, Battle. Evidence of an early start to the breeding season was seen in a garden at Foxhill Village, Haywards Heath where a fledgling hopped across a lawn on 9 Mar. Spring migration was witnessed at Brighton Marina when one flew in off the sea on 23 Mar.

In the second winter period some notable counts included 46 at Marline Wood, Hastings on 22 Oct, 27 at Barne's Wood, Vinehall Street on 25 Oct, 28 at Footland Wood, Vinehall Street on 2 Dec and a communal roost of 40-50 at Arundel WWT on 24 Dec. Winter censuses at Marsh Fm, Yapton on 24 Nov found 12 on 67 ha and at Sefter Fm, Pagham on 21 Nov found 10 on 97 ha. The total number of birds ringed at Whitbread Hollow, Beachy Head was about average though the maximum day count was only ten on 12 Oct. At Shoreham Sanctuary 27 different birds were trapped (20 in 2000) whilst at Cissbury Ring 20 new birds were ringed compared with 44 in 2000. [RTP]

## 1084. **DUNNOCK**

*Prunella modularis*

### **Abundant resident.**

Breeding records were received from surprisingly few locations. The most notable were a possible 60 pairs at scattered locations on Ashdown Forest; 43 pairs at Moulsecoomb Wild Park, Brighton; 14 territories at Sefter Fm, Pagham; 12 pairs at Rye Hbr SSSI and 12 pairs at Galley Hill, Bexhill. The first song was heard at Hassocks on 20 Jan and a fall of 50 or more at Combe Haven on 11 Mar was a reminder that this species is a partial migrant.

Maximum counts of ten on 28 Sep and 20 on 3 Nov were recorded at Whitbread Hollow, Beachy Head where the ringing totals were above average. There were 17 at Marline Wood, Hastings on 22 Oct. Winter censuses at Sefter Fm, Pagham on 21 Nov found 17 on 95 ha and at Marsh Fm, Yapton on 26 Nov found 15 on 67 ha. At Shoreham Sanctuary 44 birds were trapped, comprising 39 new birds and five ringed in previous years and, at Cissbury Ring, 25 new birds were ringed compared to 41 in 2000 and 50 in 1999. [RTP]

## 1099. **ROBIN**

*Erithacus rubecula*

### **Abundant resident, passage migrant and winter visitor.**

Few counts were received in the early part of the year. The maxima were 35 at Darwell Res on 11 Feb, which included 27 singing birds, and 25 at Marsh Fm, Yapton on 27 Jan and again on 9 Feb, both during winter censusing on a 95 ha mixed farm. On 23 Mar a tired migrant flopped into the sea 10 m short of the harbour arm at Brighton Marina but just made it to safety.

Breeding records were received from a number of sites, the earliest being a pair nesting in a garage at Littleworth, Partridge Green on 23 Mar. At Moulsecoomb Wild Park, Brighton there were 129 pairs and on the High Chimneys Estate, Battle there were 27 territories. On 95 ha of mixed farmland at Sefter Fm, Pagham there were 15 territories and six at Rye Hbr SSSI. Seven were fledged from a nest at Keymer on 15 May and at Three Corner Copse, Hove 14 fledged from four nests where three others failed.

Evidence of autumn migration was provided by a maximum count of 30 at Whitbread Hollow, Beachy Head on 13 Oct, falls of 50 and 60 at Combe Haven on 18 and 28 Oct, 100 counted between Birling Gap and the Beachy Head Hotel on 20 Oct and a count of 60 at Marline Wood, Hastings on 22 Oct. At Shoreham Sanctuary 42 new birds were ringed and 17 retrapped from previous years; at Cissbury Ring 37 new birds were ringed (55 in 2000) and at Whitbread Hollow, Beachy Head the total ringed was about average. [RTP]

1104. **NIGHTINGALE**

*Luscinia megarhynchos*

**Fairly common summer visitor and infrequently seen passage migrant.**

Like last year the first was recorded at Pulborough Brooks on 5 Apr followed by singles at Combe Haven on the 8<sup>th</sup> and one at another location at Pulborough Brooks on the 9<sup>th</sup>. Arrivals, however, were more widely reported from mid April although were few in number so by the end of the month only 25 individuals had been recorded (67 in 2001). The peak April counts were five at Combe Haven on the 30<sup>th</sup> and three at Pulborough Brooks on both the 17<sup>th</sup> and the 26<sup>th</sup> and near Billingshurst on the 29<sup>th</sup>.

Singing birds were reported until 8 Jun by which time approximately 81 singing males had been located in 42 different tetrads, of which just 18 were in West Sussex and 24 in East Sussex. This total is a marked decline on 2000 and falls below the average of 95 recorded during other non-survey springs (1967-1998). The highest numbers were six pairs at each of Ebernoe and Oreham Commons; Abbots Wood, near Arlington; and Ashes Wood, near Battle.

The first autumn migrant was trapped at Beachy Head on 22 Jul with a further nine or ten birds recorded there up until 5 Sep. At Sheepcote Valley, Brighton there were five recorded after 29 Jul and at Pett Level there were singles on 12 dates during August. Singles birds were recorded at six other sites during the month. Six were recorded in September with the last two being at Pulborough Brooks on the 8<sup>th</sup> and at Footland Wood, Vinehall Street on the 13<sup>th</sup>. [JAN]

1121. **BLACK REDSTART**

*Phoenicurus ochruros*

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

The approximate monthly totals were as follows:

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
27	14	40	8	4	1	-	3	2	35	11	4

2001 was an unspectacular year for this species. A number of the birds recorded in January including three at Newhaven Tide Mills and two at Rottingdean seem to have stayed for some time, indeed, into March. More unusual were singles at Shinewater Lake, Eastbourne on 9 Jan and Pulborough Brooks on 13 Jan.

Spring passage this year was light, the maximum count being six at Selsey Bill on 18 Mar. Interestingly, the January bird or another was seen at Pulborough Brooks on 14 Mar. Several observers found Black Redstarts among groups of Wheatears, as at Woodvale Cemetery, Brighton on 17 Mar. Arrival continued into April, with the first for the year at Combe Haven on the 2<sup>nd</sup> and one well inland at Barcombe on the 5<sup>th</sup>, and, indeed, into May, with singles at Selsey Bill on the 4<sup>th</sup>, flying north over Splash Point, Seaford on the 5<sup>th</sup>, at Combe Haven on the 18<sup>th</sup> and at Belle Tout, Beachy Head on the 19<sup>th</sup>.

There was no indication of breeding though a single bird was recorded at Newhaven Tide Mills on 24 Jun.

The first autumn record was of a female at Beachy Head on 3 Aug. There was then a substantial gap before singles were recorded at Rye Hbr on 23 Aug and Shoreham Fort on the 27<sup>th</sup>. Subsequently one, unusually, came in from the sea at Rye Hbr on 15 Sep. October was a good month, with more records than usual from the Rye area, and the year's maximum of 12 on the 22<sup>nd</sup> falling to five on the 23<sup>rd</sup>. A male and then a separate adult with a juvenile visited a Brighton garden in mid month. Reports were received from ten sites in November: these included Nep Town, Henfield on the 15<sup>th</sup>, Weir Wood Res on the

22<sup>nd</sup> and Upper Beeding Cement Works on the 24<sup>th</sup>. There were only four December records, compared with 60 reports of *ca.* 25 birds in 2000. These comprised two at Saltdean and single birds at Newhaven Tide Mills and at the Sovereign Hbr, Eastbourne. [CB]

1122. **REDSTART**

*Phoenicurus phoenicurus*

**Scarce summer visitor and fairly common passage migrant.**

Spring arrival commenced with a single on 31 Mar at Sheepcote Valley, Brighton, after which all of the sightings in this period were from coastal areas, except for one at Pulborough Brooks on 13 Apr. *Birds of Sussex* notes that the spring total of birds seen is usually less than 100, and this year's 42 (18 in East Sussex and 24 in West Sussex) was well below this mark, although ten more than the 2000 total. Most of the records were of one and rarely two birds, except at Selsey Bill and the surrounding area where at least ten were reported during 12-13 Apr. The last coastal bird for this period was at Pagham Hbr on 19 May.

The earliest record of a bird on territory was on 13 Apr at Tabell Ghyll, Ashdown Forest. FMD restrictions obviously affected recording, typified by Ashdown Forest where only 38 pairs were reported compared with 77 last year (19 of these were in Pippingford Park, surveyed on behalf of the Ministry of Defence). During 2000, 35% of the Forest's breeding population was found in this latter site. Further confirmed or possible breeding was reported mainly from West Sussex, with two territories on Blackdown, one on Ambersham Common and possibly one at Bexleyhill, near Lodsworth. Away from Ashdown Forest, the only potential report from East Sussex was at Charleston Reedbed where the presence of a very young juvenile on 4 Aug raised the possibility of nearby breeding. There were no records from the northeast of the county.

Departure commenced with a single at Beachy Head on 27 July. Members of the Beachy Head Ringing Group reported that with only one bird ringed this year, and a similar result in 1999, these two years are now the worst on record. *Birds of Sussex* indicates that in a typical autumn 200-300 birds are recorded, so this year's total of 209 is at the lower end of the historic range. The main autumn movement commenced in mid-August, with almost daily reports, until activity began to fall off in mid-October with the last two birds of the year reported from a garden at Steyning on 27-28 Oct (average last date 2 Nov). The only record in double figures during this period was of ten at Church Norton on 27 Aug, the next highest counts being six there on 22 Sep and at Sheepcote Valley, Brighton on 25 Sep. With coastal or close-to-coastal sites producing the vast majority of records, the largest inland count was of four at the aptly christened 'Redstart Corner' at Pulborough Brooks on 28 Aug. The monthly totals for the autumn migration period were Aug 55, Sept 115 and Oct 39. [AP]

1137. **WHINCHAT**

*Saxicola rubetra*

**Rare summer visitor and fairly common passage migrant.**

The first of the year was at Brighton Marina on 13 Apr, with the same or another nearby in Sheepcote Valley on the same day. There followed a considerable gap until the next, at Rye Hbr on the 28<sup>th</sup> and Selsey Bill on the 30<sup>th</sup>. There were 25 May records, involving 38 birds. The maximum count was six at Beachy Head on the 3<sup>rd</sup>, the area's only spring record. The average first arrival date for Whinchats for the 1990s was 28 Mar:

2000 (when none were seen until 15 Apr) and 2001 represent a considerable change. 1999 and 2000, like 2001, witnessed a lengthy period between the first birds and the main spring passage beginning in late April.

Unusually, there were no early July records and the next to be seen was not until 30 Jul, at Glyn Gap marsh. The bulk of the autumn records came from three sites: Beachy Head, Combe Haven, and Pett Level but counts were low by the standards of the 1990s. The maximum at Beachy Head was 13 on 9 Aug and at Pett Level 11 on the 23<sup>rd</sup>. Observers at Combe Haven did slightly better: 25 were there on the 28<sup>th</sup> and 15 on the 30<sup>th</sup>. At Sheepcote Valley there was one high count of 25 on 26 Aug. Ten was a good count at Three Corner Copse, Hove on the 27<sup>th</sup>, and that had increased to 14 by the 28<sup>th</sup>, when that number were also at Newhaven Tide Mills.

Although birds were widely recorded in September, only two double figure counts were received for the whole month: 15 at Pett Level on the 28<sup>th</sup> and 12 at Beachy Head on the next day. Numbers picked up in October when there were 69 records, including 32 recorded at Combe Haven in the first half of the month and a remarkable 16 in the Beachy Head area on the 13<sup>th</sup>. Late birds were recorded at Pagham Hbr, Beachy Head, Bexhill and Pett Level during the last week of the month but the last bird was one on Steep Down, Lancing on 11 Nov (JCS). The last date in 2000 was 15 Nov and in 1999, other than a lingering bird present until 4 Dec, it was 12 Nov.

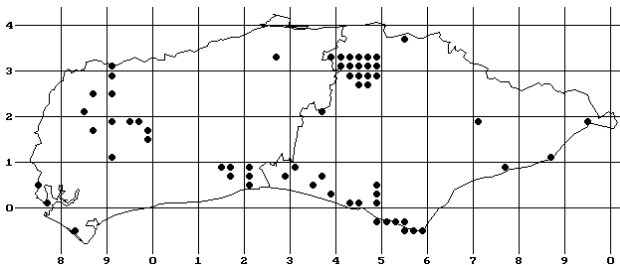
This was a good spring for Whinchats; but the main autumn passage numbers continued to fall. October totals vary considerably: 2001 and 2000 were good years; by contrast, there were only 13 reported in 1997. [CB]

### 1139. STONECHAT

*Saxicola torquata*

#### Fairly common resident and partial migrant.

January counts included ten 'along a small hedgerow' next to the Narrow Pit at Rye Hbr on the 7<sup>th</sup> and 11 on Thorney Island on the 9<sup>th</sup>. During the *Winter Farm Census* counts, four were found at Seftor Fm, Pagham in January, with two in February, while Marsh Fm, Yapton, held two in January and one in February. Mild weather helped ensure that the western commons held good numbers, including possibly ten around Iping Common and six on Ambersham Common, but only singles were reported from Ashdown Forest until the second half of February. Passage was suggested by the presence of single birds at Crawley on 7 Mar and at Burgess Hill on the 10<sup>th</sup>, followed by three at Selsey Bill on the 17-18<sup>th</sup>. Males were singing at Thorney Island and Rye Hbr Beach Reserve by 24 Mar.



The breeding season went well. A male was carrying food to a nest at Greenwood Gate, Ashdown Forest on 23 Apr while recently fledged young were seen on 14 Sep on

Iping Common. In addition to the strongholds shown on the map on Ashdown Forest and the western commons, good numbers were on territory along the coast and the Downs: five pairs bred in a young plantation at Stubbs Copse in West Dean Woods; a similar number on Steep Down, Lancing; two pairs were by Three Corner Copse, Hove; and a pair fledged three young on Highdole Hill, Telscombe. Three young were raised by a pair at Shoreham Airport; a pair at Sheepcote Valley, the first there for several years, raised two broods; three pairs at Newhaven Tide Mills brought off ten young; and up to ten pairs bred at Beachy Head.

The presence of breeding birds along the coast makes it difficult to detect the start of post-breeding movements. The first to be noted at a site apparently not used in the breeding season was near Bignor on 23 Jul; a week later birds were filtering through Alfriston. After an interval of three weeks, there was further evidence of movement, with birds at Holmbush Tip, Faygate on 25 Aug, Madehurst on 5 Sep, and under Cadborough Cliff, Rye on 10 Sep. The first autumn migrant at Pett Level turned up on 16 Sep and birds were seen daily thereafter. Nine were around Pagham Hbr on 20 Sep. Late September saw high counts including 15 in small groups at Belle Tout, Beachy Head on the 23<sup>rd</sup>, 13 on Thorney Island on the 25<sup>th</sup>, 18 at Pett Level and 22 at Sheepcote Valley on the 25<sup>th</sup>, and 18 on the west side of Pagham Hbr on the 29<sup>th</sup>. Many of these congregations stayed into October, some increasing in number, for example, 18 at Thorney Island and 20 on the west side of Pagham Hbr on 9 Oct. The highest count for the autumn came at Birling Gap, Beachy Head, where there were 45 on 14 Oct. Double figure counts continued through November and there were 11 on Thorney Island on 23 Dec.

Wintering birds concentrated on the western commons and along the coast (including one at Brighton Marina, where Stonechats are rarely seen, from 10 Nov into December), with smaller numbers on the Downs, a few on Ashdown Forest, and at regular sites like Henfield, Barcombe and Shinewater Marsh, Eastbourne. On the December *Winter Farm Census*, five were noted at Marsh Fm, Yapton and one at Sefton Fm, Pagham. The numbers reported in November and December suggested that the wintering population was at a similar level to that of 2000, which was well above that of the mid 1990s. [CB]

#### 1139.01 SIBERIAN STONECHAT

*Saxicola torquata maura/stejnegeri*

**Very rare vagrant.**

A 1st-winter male showing characteristics of one of the eastern races (*maura* or *stajnegeri*) at Sheepcote Valley, Brighton on 16-17 Oct (ADW, IJW *et al*) has been by *British Birds*. It is the 3rd county record. The previous two were at Selsey Bill in Oct 1994 and at Rye Hbr in Oct 1998. [PJ]

#### 1146. WHEATEAR

*Oenanthe oenanthe*

**Very scarce breeding summer visitor and common passage migrant.**

The first bird was at Beachy Head on 7 Mar, five days later than the average arrival date for the 1990s. There followed a remarkable and perhaps unprecedented spring passage. The second record was of 50 at Shoreham Hbr on 8 Mar. Singles were recorded on the 12<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup>, then six were at Climping on the 14<sup>th</sup>. None were seen on the 15<sup>th</sup>. On the 16<sup>th</sup>, there were three double figure counts, at Selsey Bill (23); Widewater, Lancing (12); and Combe Haven (16). On the 17<sup>th</sup>, a staggering total of some 975 birds was seen.

This fall was centred between Brighton and Seaford (Brighton Marina, 120; Sheepcote Valley, 100 – with perhaps some overlap between those two sites; Ovingdean, 60; and Saltdean, 70) but also included 60 at Selsey Bill and 71 at Goring Beach. Numbers in the east were, by these standards, low with 40 at Beachy Head, ten at Combe Haven and 11 at Rye Hbr. The next day, about 650 were seen with 250, mostly males, at Climping Beach and 100 in the Selsey Bill area. Thirty were seen at Beachy Head but, apart from ten at Bexhill, there were remarkably no records at all from the east of the county. A further 275 or so birds were counted on the 19<sup>th</sup>, with 75 at Sheepcote Valley. The 20<sup>th</sup>, a Tuesday, was a completely blank day and during the remainder of the month a further 172 were counted. During April, about 130 were recorded and migrants continued to trickle through during May.

Seven pairs nested at Rye Hbr Beach Reserve ‘with good success’. A number of first broods fledged by late May, and the adults produced a second brood. Elsewhere there was a pair at Newhaven Tide Mills which raised two young, a pair at the Midrips, a territorial female at Southwick Beach on 8 Apr and a female at Cissbury Ring on 5 Jun.

The first returning birds were two by the North Wall, Pagham Hbr on 13 Jul; a week later one was at Pulborough Brooks. Passage was noted almost daily from 28 Jul. The August total was in the region of 750, with 25 double figure counts, and maxima of 75 at Beachy Head and 73 at Thorney Island on the 27<sup>th</sup>. There was a fair spread of birds, in small groups, along the Downs, and a handful of singles to the north, at Bewl Water on the 4<sup>th</sup>, Holmbush Tip on the 10<sup>th</sup>, Hassocks on the 18<sup>th</sup> and Weir Wood Res on the 24<sup>th</sup>. September brought 11 double figure counts, with the maximum only 20 (at both Newhaven Tide Mills and Beeding Hill on the 16<sup>th</sup>). There was only one double figure count in October, of 17 at Ovingdean on the 12<sup>th</sup>, but 59 records, of about 115 birds, were submitted. In November one was at Pett Pools on the 4<sup>th</sup>, with the same or another on the 10<sup>th</sup>, one was at Cobnor Point on the 5<sup>th</sup>; and the last lingered at Selsey Bill from the 10<sup>th</sup> to the 13<sup>th</sup>. The average last date for the 1990s was 15 Nov. [CB]

## 1186. RING OUZEL

*Turdus torquatus*

**Passage migrant, scarce in spring, often fairly common but local in autumn.**

Birds were particularly few in spring but reached near normal numbers in the autumn as shown by the monthly totals below:

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
-	-	6	3	1	-	-	-	25	127	2	-

The first arrival in spring was near Rottingdean on 24 Mar which was very close to the long term average. In a poor spring there were only three more singles in March and after an interval of three weeks two more in late April. All were in the coastal strip from Brighton to Combe Haven. An exceptionally late bird turned up at Pagham Hbr on 26 May.

The first autumn bird was at Hollingdean, Brighton on 9 Sep. There was a steady trickle through late September and early October with peak counts at Beachy Head of six on 28 Sep and nine on 3 Oct. Late October brought an increase in numbers with 11 at Ovingdean and six at Beachy Head on the 20<sup>th</sup>, and 15 at both Beachy Head and Sheepcote Valley, Brighton on the 28<sup>th</sup>. Only two singles were seen in the west of the county, both at Pagham Hbr in mid-October.

The last birds of the year were singles at Beachy Head on 1-3 Nov and at Combe Haven on 11 Nov. [RK]



## 1187. BLACKBIRD

*Turdus merula*

### **Abundant resident and winter visitor: perhaps a passage migrant.**

Winter numbers at two farms and a town park in the Bognor Regis area were in line with those of recent years according to regular censuses.

Because few of the long term breeding surveys were carried out, no sensible conclusions on overall breeding success could be reached. However, there were some interesting reports. The first evidence of nesting came from Partridge Green on 8 Mar. There were 124 pairs in Moulsecoomb Wild Park, Brighton; 24 territories in 95 ha at Sefton Fm, near Bognor Regis; 15 territories within the SSSI at Rye Hbr; and seven territories in 6 ha at Cissbury Ring. In Three Corner Copse at Hove there were 32 nests of which 21 failed and the remaining 11 fledged 26 young. An all year round census at Hotham Park, Bognor Regis found the lowest average number of birds per visit in the 12 years of the survey.

Members of the Beachy Head Ringing Group commented that autumn falls have been low at Whitbread Hollow for ten years and only marginally increased in 2001. However, some other sites noted substantial autumn influxes, examples being 60 at Selsey on 18 Oct and 100 at Pett Level on 10 Nov. At Marline Wood, Hastings there were high numbers throughout autumn with a maximum of 55 on 5 Nov. [RK]

## 1198. FIELDFARE

*Turdus pilaris*

### **Common to abundant passage migrant and winter visitor.**

Adding the maximum monthly numbers in each 10-km square gives a rough picture of the winter distribution; the table below shows that the centre and west of the county were again more favoured than the east:

Eastings	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr
SU/SZ 70-99	630	725	50	10
TQ/TV 00-49	2540	825	175	140
TQ/TV 50-99	120	325	25	0

During early January nearly all the three figure reports came from inland central locations with 200 at Ashurst and 250 on Ashdown Forest on the 1<sup>st</sup>, and 160 at Barcombe, 300 at Ditchling, and 800 at Crowborough on the 7<sup>th</sup>. In the second half of the month there was some shift to the west with 250 at Chilgrove on the 18<sup>th</sup>, 150 at Sidlesham on the 24<sup>th</sup>, and 230 at Yapton on the 27<sup>th</sup>, but on the same day the largest flock was still in the centre of the county with 500 on Steyning Levels.

Medium sized flocks of 100-200 were reported across the county in February with just one high count of 400 at Chilgrove on the 24<sup>th</sup>. Numbers rapidly tailed away in March, the maximum being 90 at Weir Wood Res on the 20<sup>th</sup>. Six of only seven reports in April came from Barcombe Res where 100 were seen flying south on the 3<sup>rd</sup>. The last bird seen in spring was at Hardham on 2 May.

The first record of the autumn was at Pett Level on 14 Oct, with subsequent sightings on the 18<sup>th</sup>, 19<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> when 70 were present on Ashdown Forest. There was much movement on 28 Oct, possibly out of the country, both from the Brighton area and from Beachy Head where 735 flew SE in one hour. From then until the end of November the only flocks in excess of 100 were on Steyning Levels and Pulborough Brooks. There were

slightly larger numbers in December spread across the county with, for example, 150 at Icklesham on the 6<sup>th</sup>, 250 at Chilgrove on the 8<sup>th</sup>, 200 at Greatham Bridge on the 10<sup>th</sup> and a high of 360 at Wadhurst on the 18<sup>th</sup>. [RK]

## 1200. SONG THRUSH

*Turdus philomelos*

**Decreasing resident and partial migrant; common passage migrant and winter visitor. Species of Conservation Concern in Sussex.**

During the first quarter the highest concentrations were eight at both Pagham Hbr on 8 Jan and Darwell Reservoir on 11 Feb and 11 at Forest Mere, Liphook on 20 Feb. The first singing birds were noted from late January.

Breeding counts included 14 pairs at Moulsecomb Wild Park, Brighton, five pairs at Goring Gap and three pairs at Rye Hbr. Of 14 nests at Three Corner Copse, Hove, three fledged 12 young and the remaining 11 failed.

Autumn migration was noted from the beginning of October with a substantial influx in the middle of the month with 40 at Icklesham on the 10<sup>th</sup>, 32 at Moulsecomb Wild Park on the 13<sup>th</sup>, 40 at Arundel WWT on the 18<sup>th</sup> and 20 at Mill Hill, Shoreham on the 21<sup>st</sup>. A second, smaller influx, was noted at the beginning of November with 20 at Whitbread Hollow on the 2<sup>nd</sup>, 25 at Pagham Hbr on the 4<sup>th</sup> and at least 20 at Pett Level on the 10<sup>th</sup>. A number of the birds ringed at Whitbread Hollow during this second influx were judged to be continental migrants. Singing individuals were heard up until 6 Dec and individuals and loose flocks of up to 20 were noted to the end of the year. [DG]

## 1201. REDWING

*Turdus iliacus*

**Abundant passage migrant and very common winter visitor.**

Adding the maximum monthly numbers in each 10 km square gives a rough picture of the distribution across the county in the winter months with the east seen to be the least favoured this year.

Eastings	Jan	Feb	Mar
SU/SZ 70-99	1000	680	0
TQ/TV 00-49	1200	300	100
TQ/TV 50/99	50	280	180

Medium sized flocks were present in the centre and west of the county in early January with 200 at Ashurst on the 1<sup>st</sup>, 500 at West Wittering and 250 at North Cocking on the 3<sup>rd</sup>, 300 at Greatham Bridge on the 4<sup>th</sup>, and 350 at Pulborough Brooks on the 7<sup>th</sup>. Numbers fell away sharply from then until mid-February with a maximum of 120 at Chilgrove on 18 Jan. Late February saw a small surge with flocks numbering from 130 to 250 at Bewl Water, Chilgrove, Ambersham Common and Selham Bridge. On 2 Mar there were 100 at Ashdown Forest but few were seen thereafter. On 22 Mar a large overnight movement was heard at Brighton; the last bird of the winter was seen on 30 Mar at Winchelsea, a good two weeks earlier than average.

The first returns of autumn were within a few days of the long term average; some were heard over Seaford on 20 Sep while the first to be seen were at Combe Haven on 22 Sep. Large numbers were reported on passage in mid-October from both Combe Haven and Bexhill where a maximum of 2500 moved east in only 3 hrs on the 16<sup>th</sup>. Meanwhile there were only small concentrations at inland locations, 60 at Pulborough Brooks on 29 Oct and 125 at Ashdown Forest on 2 Nov were the largest of these. In December no count

exceeded 50 with the west of the county almost deserted as confirmed by regular censuses of farms near Bognor Regis and Yapton. [RK]

## 1202. MISTLE THRUSH

*Turdus viscivorus*

### **Common resident and partial migrant.**

Numbers were again very low but there was insufficient data to assess if the species is still in decline. The maximum reported numbers in the winter months was a mere three at each of Liphook, Pulborough Brooks and Chailey.

There were 11 confirmed breeding reports in spring with the greatest density in Moulsecomb Wild Park, Brighton where there were four pairs. At only two sites, Chichester GP and Ashdown Forest, was successful fledging noted.

Post breeding flocks were similar in size to last year's very low numbers, with 20 at Cissbury Ring as early as 5 Jun. There were 22 at Wakehurst Place on 14 Jun, 30 over Bewl Water on 9 Jul, 20 at Byworth on 17 Jul, and 32 at Coldwaltham Brooks on 11 Aug. A flock of 22 at Cissbury Ring on 24 Aug was the last of any significant size before the birds dispersed, as usual, for autumn. [RK]

## 1220. CETTI'S WARBLER

*Cettia cetti*

### **Very scarce resident, passage migrant and winter visitor.**

During January up to five were recorded at Arundel WWT and four at Thorney Deeps. Two were heard at the North Wall, Pagham Hbr on the 8<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> and singles were recorded in three different areas of Rye Hbr during the month. Other sites where this species was reported before the end of March were Filsham Reedbed, Glyne Gap and Pett Level.

A total of 12 males held territory at seven sites comprising Thorney Deeps (3), Arundel WWT (2), South Stoke, Combe Haven (2), Pett Level (2), Chichester GP and Pagham Lagoon, an almost identical figure to 2000 but with some at different sites. At Thorney Deeps the three males, with five females, produced between 17 and 20 fledged young (CBC), over twice the productivity of the previous year.

Autumn and winter records came mainly from the same sites; six males were at Thorney Deeps on 3 Nov and five were at Arundel WWT the following day. Singles were reported at Fishbourne on 6 Dec and near Burpham on the 7<sup>th</sup> and eight at Arundel WWT on Christmas Day. [VB]

## 1236. GRASSHOPPER WARBLER

*Locustella naevia*

### **Very scarce and declining summer visitor and fairly common passage migrant.**

The first arrival was at Combe Haven on 12 Apr. The next day a reeling male was heard at Sheepcote Valley. Other April birds were at Glyne Gap on the 17<sup>th</sup>, Beachy Head and Shoreham on the 25<sup>th</sup> and Rewell Wood on the 30<sup>th</sup>. Single birds were recorded at eight during May and June, five in East Sussex and three in West Sussex, but no breeding was confirmed.

Autumn passage through Pett Level commenced on 22 Jul; 22 were trapped for ringing on 25 Aug and 20 on the 28<sup>th</sup>. Two juveniles, probably different birds, were at the Old

Airstrip, Ashdown Forest on 15 Aug, and records from Beachy Head were of two on 28 and 29 Jul and 14 Aug, three on 26 Aug and four on 27 Aug. Other reports were of singles at Three Corner Copse, Hove on 28 Aug and 3 Sep, and at Hollingbury Camp on 13 Oct. Combe Haven enjoyed its best autumn for years, with four during August and five in September. The final record for the year was of a single bird at Beachy Head on 20 Oct. [VB]

1238. **SAVI'S WARBLER**

*Locustella luscinoides*

**Rare vagrant.**

**2000:** One was heard singing at an undisclosed locality on 29 Apr. For security reasons, the observers initials and site details are being withheld. [PJ]

1242. **AQUATIC WARBLER**

*Acrocephalus paludicola*

**Very scarce autumn visitor to selected sites, rare elsewhere.**

Three juveniles were recorded in August: one trapped at Pett Level on the 17<sup>th</sup> (RBRG) and singles seen at Thorney Island on the 22<sup>nd</sup> (CBC, GCMR) and Cuckmere Haven on the 27<sup>th</sup> (IJF, ARK *et al*). Records averaged just under ten a year during the 1990s, twice the number seen in the 2000 and 2001 combined. Most marked is the fall in the number trapped on Pett Level, where single individuals trapped in the last two years compares with an average of just under nine a year in the 1990s (including an unprecedented 30 in 1997). The most likely explanation for this decline, should it be born out in subsequent years, is perhaps the reduction in the area of netting used at Pett Level. Most records are in August and all fall between late July and early October. [RJF]

1243. **SEDGE WARBLER**

*Acrocephalus shoenoaenus*

**Fairly common summer visitor and passage migrant.**

The first birds of the year were singles at Combe Haven and Pett Level on 30 Mar, followed a day later by two males at both Arundel WWT and Rye Hbr. By 16 Apr there were 12 singing males at Pett Level.

During the breeding season there were eight pairs at Newhaven Tide Mills, 15 at Shinewater Lake, Eastbourne, 20 at Selsey West Fields, 50 in the reedbeds at Arundel WWT, 51 at Combe Haven (including Filsham Reedbed), and 62 at Thorney Deepes. Numbers were mostly similar to those in 2000, though at Rye Hbr 52 pairs were noted compared with 67 the previous year. A minimum of 345 pairs was recorded throughout the county from 35 different sites. On 2 Jun a male was singing from the same Holm Oak at Goring Gap where a Reed Warbler had been performing three days earlier, and on 19 Jun a pair was seen feeding four young at the Breech Pool, Pagham Hbr.

The Beachy Head Ringing Group recorded the first passage bird at Whitbread Hollow on 22 Jul and the last on 11 Sep, in what was reported to be 'a rather poor autumn'. The maximum daily catch in August at Pett Level by the Rye Bay Ringing Group was 304 on the 18<sup>th</sup>, less than the previous year. A tiny reedbed at Ferring Rife held six juveniles on 29 Aug and peaks of 60, 55 and 50 birds were recorded passing through Combe Haven on 19, 25 and 30 Aug respectively. Most birds had departed by the end of September; there

were nine sightings in October, with the last two individuals being at Pagham Hbr on the 20<sup>th</sup>. [VB]

1250. **MARSH WARBLER**

*Acrocephalus palustris*

**Very scarce summer visitor and passage migrant. Species of Conservation Concern in Sussex.**

Four juveniles were trapped at Pett Level: two together on 17 Aug and singles on 25 Sep and 6 Oct (RBRG). These records are typical with regard to location but generally rather later than usual in terms of timing. Most occurrences have been in June, July or early August and there are only two previous October records, in 1991 and 1997. [RJF]

1251. **REED WARBLER**

*Acrocephalus scirpaceus*

**Common summer visitor and very common passage migrant.**

The first individual, at Combe Haven on 7 Apr, was exactly a week earlier than in 2000 and equalled the county record for this species. Other early arrivals were singles at Pett Level Pools and Arundel WWT the following day.

Breeding season reports came from 42 sites, with good populations at Sefter Fm, Pagham (61 pairs), Thorney Deeps (84), Combe Haven (95), Arundel WWT (120) and Rye Hbr (150+). One new site was among some newly established reeds at Rock Common, Washington. As with many other species, FMD restrictions must have resulted in under-recording this year.

Autumn passage was good, with most moving through in August. At Pett Level 290 were trapped on 15 Aug, and a total of 585 was recorded during the month at Combe Haven. Final departures from East Sussex were at Combe Haven and Pett Level on 28 Oct, and the last bird of the year, one which may not have been fully fit, was seen feeding at Pagham Hbr on 1 Nov. [VB]

1260. **MELODIOUS WARBLER**

*Hippolais polyglotta*

**Very scarce visitor.**

Four juveniles were recorded in August: in the garden of the Beachy Head Hotel on the 10-11<sup>th</sup> (DC, DRC, JFC *et al*), at Sheepcote Valley from the 18<sup>th</sup> to the 20<sup>th</sup> (ADW, IJW *et al*) and at Whitbread Hollow, Beachy Head on the 18<sup>th</sup> (SM *et al*) and 26<sup>th</sup> (RDME *et al*). The two individuals at Whitbread Hollow were trapped while the first individual, the third to be seen in the Beachy Head Hotel garden in consecutive years, was seen to have a ring on its leg. An above average showing, 54 have been recorded in the county in total of which 19 have been since 1990. Of these ten have been seen at Beachy Head and 14 were in autumn, equally split between August and September. [RJF]

**Scarce resident and partial migrant.**

As monitoring was affected by FMD restrictions, and the *Wealden Heaths Breeding Bird Survey* was cancelled, the breeding population numbers and trends for this year will not be meaningful when looking at total numbers, other than those from Blackdown and Lavington Common, where full surveys were carried out. Ashdown Forest, although reasonably covered, was down on its full year records by 40% compared with 2000.

Where access was gained, birds were seen regularly on their breeding grounds during the first winter period up until mid March with maximum counts of 15 at both Ambersham Common on 3 Jan and Stedham Common on 28 Jan. Observers on Ashdown Forest located a total of 13 birds in this period with no single count higher than three. On the coast, there were singles at Thorney Island, Sidlesham Ferry, Rye Hbr and Marline Wood, Hastings, while Combe Haven held two birds.

Walpole Bond writes on the subject of Dartford Warblers and their breeding grounds; “(You) may wander through their lines on an unsuitable day, or in other words, on a wet and windy, sunless day, without hearing or seeing a single specimen, whereas the whole time it may be comparatively abundant there”. There is no doubt that with the current high density of birds in their favoured breeding areas, their propensity to become quieter through second into third broods means that the numbers recorded, even without access problems, are likely to be conservative, particularly while the species continues to expand, not just in the South but into the Midlands. Reasonable coverage of Ashdown Forest identified 80-90 pairs (77 in 2000). Coverage of the Wealden Heaths was very limited due to FMD restrictions, with only 18 pairs reported from six sites. Away from the main areas birds were seen in suitable breeding habitat at Chailey Common and Buchan Park, Crawley. The county total of between 100 and 110 pairs (122 in 2000) will be an underestimate of the actual population. In the adjoining county of Surrey, the population of 600+ pairs in 1999 was the highest ever recorded and, in Hampshire, there was an increase of 9% in 2000. We must presume that it is probably a lack of suitable habitat that holds back the Sussex population and so, logically, we may be close to the optimum breeding capacity of this species in the county.

Coastal post breeding dispersal was first noted in West Sussex with a single at Pagham Hbr on 28 Jul then a large gap until two birds stayed, from 28 Sep, through until the end of the year, as did two at Thorney Island. Further birds were noted at four other sites, totalling five individuals. The earliest individual for East Sussex was at Hastings CP on 28 Aug, and in all there were ten birds at nine sites including two at Marine Gate, Brighton. The monthly totals of birds at coastal sites were as follows:

Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
1	1	2	19	4	3

Reports continued to be received from inland sites with approximately 26 individuals on Ashdown Forest and single day counts of six at Lavington Common on 21 Oct, 20 at Ambersham Common and 15 at Iping Common both on 3 Nov. There were regular reports from the western heaths of up to nine birds, at any one time, throughout the remainder of the year. [AP]

1273. **BARRED WARBLER**

*Sylvia nisoria*

**Very scarce autumn visitor.**

A juvenile was seen in a private garden at Beachy Head during 23-28 Sep (JFC, RHC). Sixteen have been seen since 1990 and 48 in total. A typical occurrence: September is the best month, with 32 records, and Beachy Head the best location with 31 records. [RJF]

1274. **LESSER WHITETHROAT**

*Sylvia curruca*

**Fairly common summer visitor and passage migrant.**

The first bird of the year in East Sussex was at Beach Field, Rye Hbr on 12 Apr while a male singing at Thorney Island on the 16<sup>th</sup> was the earliest record in West Sussex.

Males were heard during the breeding season from suitable habitat in at least 42 different sites. There were three pairs, possibly five, at Pulborough Brooks; three at Marline Wood, Hastings; six at Bawl Water; 11 at Thorney Island and 20 at Combe Haven (including Filsham Reedbed). The ringing site at Cissbury held two pairs and at Shoreham Sanctuary nine different individuals were trapped, of which three were young birds and six adults. A pair was seen feeding three young at Pagham Hbr on 13 Jun.

The Beachy Head Ringing Group reported an extremely poor year, with a total of only 40 trapped, considerably lower than in 2000, though still better than the 30 from the previous year. Most birds had departed by the end of September; only six were reported in October, with the last individual seen at Pett Level on the 14<sup>th</sup>. [VB]

1275. **WHITETHROAT**

*Sylvia communis*

**Common summer visitor and passage migrant.**

The first East Sussex bird was at Combe Haven on 1 Apr and a day later a male was singing in the west of the county at Thorney Island. By the end of the month records had been received from 36 sites, including a male singing by a busy road in Three Bridges, Crawley on 7 Apr. There was a marked arrival on 28 Apr with 30 noted at Beachy Head and 20 at Three Corner Copse, Hove.

The FMD outbreak obviously restricted visits to suitable habitat during the main part of the breeding season, but where counts were possible numbers reported either equalled or surpassed those from 2000, with 12 at Lewes Race Course, 13 at Sefter Fm, Pagham, 29 at Thorney Deepes, 46 at Rye Hbr, and 49 at both Combe Haven (incomplete count) and Thorney Island.

The main autumn passage commenced in mid August with an estimated 100 at Beachy Head on the 11<sup>th</sup>, 23<sup>rd</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup>; the monthly maximum trapped by Rye Bay Ringing Group at Pett Level was 34 on the 21<sup>st</sup>. On the 24<sup>th</sup>, 27 were seen in Moulsecomb Wild Park, Brighton, 15 were at Three Corner Copse, Hove on the 25<sup>th</sup> and two days later there were 20 at The Severals, Church Norton and 32 at Moulsecomb Wild Park. Following a count of 50 at Beachy Head on 5 Sep, numbers dwindled, and only single birds were noted in October; the final sighting was at Beachy Head on the 14<sup>th</sup>. [VB]

1276. **GARDEN WARBLER**

*Sylvia borin*

**Fairly common summer visitor and passage migrant.**

An individual seen at Ferring on 1 Apr (MCU) equalled the county record for the earliest sighting of this species; no more were reported until one at Pulborough Brooks on 16 Apr and singles at Bewl Water and Weir Wood Res on the 17<sup>th</sup>. No further arrivals were reported until 28 Apr when there were five at Beachy Head.

Records during May and June came from 35 different sites, with a minimum of 11 pairs at Stubbs Copse, West Dean Woods; at least four males were singing at Worth Lodge Forest and individuals were heard in seven different localities on Ashdown Forest.

Autumn passage was again poor this year at Beachy Head, though there were ten on 23 Aug and 15 on 25<sup>th</sup>; 11 were seen at Church Norton on the 30<sup>th</sup>. September records came from only three sites, and the last individual was at Pett Level on 16 Oct. [VB]

1277. **BLACKCAP**

*Sylvia atricapilla*

**Very common summer visitor and passage migrant; small numbers winter.**

Records of wintering birds during January to March came from 24 sites, several of which were gardens and comprised a minimum of 30 individuals. One male was even heard singing at Cocking on 3 Jan. The first returning migrants were probably the two seen at Splash Point, Seaford on 17 Mar, though a male was at Fairlight Cove on the 9<sup>th</sup>; the main arrival occurred from 1 Apr.

During the breeding season there were four pairs at both Goring Gap and Sefton Fm, Pagham, nine at South Stoke in a wooded abandoned meander of the R. Arun, ten singing males around the perimeter of Burton Pond and 13 pairs at Thorney Island. Steyning Ringing Group trapped 100 new birds at Cissbury between May and October, compared with 341 the previous year, though fewer ringing sessions were undertaken. At Shoreham Sanctuary there were 44 different individuals caught of which ten were adult and 34 young birds, indicative of reasonable breeding success for the species.

Autumn passage at Beachy Head was average, with estimates of 250 on 5 and 7 Sep, 450 on the 16<sup>th</sup>, 200 on both the 23<sup>rd</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup> and 100 on the 28<sup>th</sup>. The final sighting at Beachy Head was on 10 Nov. There were records of wintering birds during November and December at nine sites including two males at Durrington on 29 Dec. Could the November male in a Barcombe garden have been the same individual seen there during January and February? [VB]

1308. **WOOD WARBLER**

*Phylloscopus sibilatrix*

**Very scarce summer resident and passage migrant.**

Twenty-two records were received, 12 of which referred to up to three birds at Mardens Hill, near Crowborough. FMD restrictions are the likely cause for there being no reports from the established county breeding areas. For instance, there were no reports from Ashdown Forest or Linchmere Common in the northwest.

The first individual was seen at Arundel WWT on 25 Apr, (average arrival date for the species is 22 Apr), with the first singing bird found at Three Corner Copse, Hove on 28 Apr, followed by singles at Galley Hill, Bexhill on 29 Apr, Arundel WWT on 2 May and



finally at Hesworth Common on 8 May. There were no follow-up reports for these birds and it must be assumed they were passing through.

The population is erratic away from the western and northern strongholds in the British Isles and it is noted in the *New Atlas*, that despite there being suitable habitat in the southeast, such areas remain largely unoccupied. Such population centres as they are tend to mirror Redstart, i.e. Ashdown Forest, the New Forest in Hampshire and the Surrey/Sussex borders in the northwest. The only confirmation of breeding was at Mardens Hill though there was a further report of a bird singing on three days in early June at Bexleyhill, near Lodsworth, an area that supported breeding birds in the 1980s.

Post breeding birds were reported from Beachy Head on 10 Aug, Weir Wood Res on 21 Aug and the last of the year from Shooters Bottom, Beachy Head on 23 Aug. [AP]

### 1311. **CHIFFCHAFF**

*Phylloscopus collybita*

**Very common summer visitor and passage migrant; small numbers winter.**

During January and February there were records from 29 different sites, mainly near the coast, though larger concentrations were, as usual, at sewage farms. A maximum of 24 individuals were at the Hermitage SF, Emsworth, on 1 Feb and 25 were at Coldwaltham SF on 14 Jan, a return to the excellent numbers of 1999 after a poor 2000.

Returning migrants boosted numbers from the second week in March; five males were singing at Arundel WWT on the 10<sup>th</sup>, compared with only singles earlier in the year. Seven arrived at Selsey Bill on 16 Mar, 40 the following day and 30 on the 18<sup>th</sup>. An estimated 50 were at Newhaven Tide Mills on 1 Apr and 25 at Brighton Marina on the same day, a good count for this site.

Estimates of breeding populations at various sites were of seven pairs at Marline Wood, Hastings; eight at both South Stoke, in a wooded abandoned river meander, and Footland Wood, Vinehall Street; ten at Red House Common, Chailey; 11 on Thorney Island; 18 at Moulsecoomb Wild Park, Brighton and a minimum of 27 on Ashdown Forest. However, for the first time in recent years, only passage birds were recorded at Goring Gap where none bred. An individual with a repertoire that included snatches of Willow Warbler song was singing on the top of a dead pine at Millbrook, Ashdown Forest on 27 Apr.

Autumn passage at Whitbread Hollow, Beachy Head was lower than in 2000, with 200 on 7 and 16 Sep being the monthly maxima. Numbers fell during October and the 75 at the site on the 13<sup>th</sup> was the last significant count there, with the final individual recorded on 3 Nov.

The number of obviously wintering birds during November and December was considerably lower than in 2000 and the first two months of 2001. Records comprising at least 23 birds came from only 14 sites, compared with 95 from 35 localities the previous year, with just two at Coldwaltham SF on 6 Dec and six at the Hermitage SF on the 10<sup>th</sup>. Clematis provided a food source for an individual at East Grinstead on 21 Dec. [VB]

#### 1311.01 **SIBERIAN CHIFFCHAFF**

*Phylloscopus collybita tristis*

**Probably a very scarce autumn passage migrant and winter visitor.**

A single bird showing characteristics of the eastern race *tristis* was recorded at Coldwaltham SF on 15 Jan (ASC). It was probably one of the three birds recorded there in

Dec 2000. Two at Thorney SF from 16 Jan to 1 Feb (CBC) and a single there on 1-2 March were accepted as 'showing most of the characteristics of *tristis*'. [PJ]

### 1312. WILLOW WARBLER

*Phylloscopus trochilus*

#### **Common summer visitor and passage migrant.**

There were reports from 13 sites in March, with the first bird of the year at Galley Hill, Bexhill on the 18<sup>th</sup>. Three arrived at Selsey Bill on 23 Mar, one flew in off the sea at Brighton Marina on the 31<sup>st</sup>, and on the same day ten were seen at Beachy Head. The following day 40 were recorded at the latter site, and on 13 Apr an individual showing paler, browner plumage, characteristic of the northern *acredula* race, was noted there (DC).

During the breeding season Moulsecomb Wild Park, Brighton held only two pairs, a low number for the site; there were four at Memorial Common, Chailey; six at Footland Wood, Vinehall Street and 22 on Red House Common, Chailey. However, the stronghold for this species is Ashdown Forest, where there were again over 100 singing males. On 21 Jun an individual at Upper Beeding Cement Works was perched on a conifer singing a mixture of Willow Warbler and Chiffchaff song; the plumage of this bird was noted by the observer as 'peculiar' (JCS).

Numbers on autumn passage at Beachy Head were similar to those in 2000, i.e. relatively low for the site, with 200 on 4 Aug and 250 on 11<sup>th</sup> being the maxima for the month. Four 'northern' type individuals were ringed on the latter date. On 18 Aug 47 were trapped for ringing at Charleston Reedbed, and 60 on the 25<sup>th</sup>. There were reports from 18 sites in September, but only three in October, singles at Pulborough Brooks on the 4<sup>th</sup>, Selsey Bill on the 9<sup>th</sup> and, finally, at Pett Level on the 11<sup>th</sup>. [VB]

### 1314. GOLDCREST

*Regulus regulus*

#### **Very common breeding resident, common passage migrant and winter visitor.**

A total of 226 records was received from 122 sites across the county (81 of the sites in the breeding season). In the first quarter, there were counts in January of 14 at Marline Wood, Hastings on the 1<sup>st</sup>, 14 at Footland Wood, Vinehall Street on the 14<sup>th</sup>, 11 at Rye Hbr on the 16<sup>th</sup> and eight at Hermitage SF, Emsworth on the 18<sup>th</sup>; on 1 Feb, there were 26 at Footland Wood and eight still at Hermitage SF. There was a considerable fall on 17 Mar, with records of at least 50 at Selsey Bill, ten at Goring Gap, 20 in off the sea at Brighton Marina and eight (their largest count for the spring) at Beachy Head.

Reports of confirmed or probable breeding from Ashdown Forest indicated a total of 48 territories at 46 locations. A pair built a nest 30 m up in a yew by Chichester Cathedral. Five pairs were located at Footland Wood, Vinehall Street on 1 Jul but breeding was confirmed or probable at only three other sites.

During the autumn, seven individuals were trapped and ringed at Shoreham Sanctuary and 14 at Weir Wood Res. At Combe Haven, the maximum autumn count was of 30 on 30 Sep. Significant falls in October yielded maxima of 35 at Pagham Hbr on the 17<sup>th</sup> and 80 at Beachy Head on the 20<sup>th</sup>. Ten were seen in a flock of Long-tailed Tits and Siskins on 28 Oct at the Old Airstrip, Ashdown Forest. The largest counts for the last two months of the year were of 76 on 15 Nov and 69 on 2 Dec at Footland Wood and 19 at Marline Wood, Hastings on 11 Dec. [LM]

1315. **FIRECREST***Regulus ignicapillus***Very scarce breeder and scarce passage migrant and winter visitor.**

The total reported in the late winter and spring (73) was above the previous 10-year average of 55 but the autumn and winter total (102) was close to the 10-year average of 107. The approximate monthly totals were as follows:

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
12	1	25	19	13	5	-	2	15	56	18	11

In January, there were two at Pagham Hbr, two at Woodvale Cemetery, Brighton and three at Rye Hbr. All other records were of single birds at Arundel WWT, Pulborough Brooks, Filsham Reedbed and Hastings (town and Marline Wood). The only record for February was of a single bird at Hermitage SF, Emsworth on the 1<sup>st</sup>. The total in March was made up of five at Selsey Bill, three at Combe Haven, two at each of Middleton-on-Sea; Sheepcote Valley, Brighton; Newhaven Tide Mills; Beachy Head and Rye Hbr, with singles at seven other sites – five of them coastal. The largest counts in April were three at Dukes Mound, Brighton and two at Rye Hbr on the 1<sup>st</sup> and two at Millbrook, Ashdown Forest on the 21<sup>st</sup>. The last migrant recorded was at Selsey Bill on 2 May.

Reports of singing/displaying males in suitable breeding habitat came from West Dean Woods (3); Holmbush Forest (3); Tilgate Forest; Worth Forest and Millbrook, Ashdown Forest.

One at Pagham Hbr on 20 Aug heralded the start of autumn passage, but was the only record for that month. The approximate totals recorded at the main sites during the remainder of the year were as follows:

	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Pagham Hbr	1	15	13	6
Beachy Head	5	13	1	-
Rye Hbr	1	2	2	2
Other sites	8	27	2	3

The Beachy Head count of five in September was on the 29<sup>th</sup>. The eight at other sites was made up of two at Filsham Reedbed and singles at Selsey Bill, Cissbury Ring, Roedean, Eastbourne, Vinehall Street and Pett Level. The highest single-site counts in October were of nine in the Climping area on the 21<sup>st</sup> and eight at Pagham Hbr on the 29<sup>th</sup>. Eight were ringed during the month at Pett Level. In November, away from the main sites, there were singles at the Midrips on the 2<sup>nd</sup> and Arundel WWT on the 8<sup>th</sup>. The records in December included singles at Dukes Mound, Brighton; Combe Haven; and Footland Wood, Vinehall Street. [LM]

1335. **SPOTTED FLYCATCHER***Muscicapa striata***Fairly common summer visitor and passage migrant. Species of conservation concern in Sussex.**

The first spring arrivals were on 1 May at both Battle and Hurst Green. The latter built a nest against the side of the observer's house and raised three young. These were followed by singles at Goring Gap on the 2<sup>nd</sup>, at Pulborough Brooks, Beachy Head and Brighton, all on the 3<sup>rd</sup>, and Bexhill and Combe Haven on the 10<sup>th</sup>. Ones and twos followed until, at Church Norton, five were seen on the 14<sup>th</sup> and four on the 19<sup>th</sup>. There were also five at Beachy Head on 19<sup>th</sup>.

There were breeding season records for 14 different 1-km squares on Ashdown Forest; other breeding counts included four pairs at Bignor Park and three pairs, all with young, at Combe Haven. Counts of juveniles were usually of two or three, but a pair at Rusper Court House fledged four.

Post breeding movements became evident at the end of August with ten at Rye Hbr on the 21<sup>st</sup>, 14 at Cissbury Ring on the 24<sup>th</sup>, 15 at Beachy Head on the 25<sup>th</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup> and ten at Cissbury Ring again on the 31<sup>st</sup>. Inland, at Pulborough Brooks, there were 12 on 27 Aug, 11 on the 30<sup>th</sup>, reducing to eight on 3 Sep. Throughout September, records were mostly of ones and twos at coastal sites, though there were seven at Beachy Head on the 21<sup>st</sup> and six at Patcham, Brighton on the 24<sup>th</sup>. Only single birds were noted during the first ten days of October at sites like Pagham Hbr, Beachy Head and Pett Level; the last was recorded at Combe Haven on the 11<sup>th</sup>.

All records of this species are welcome. [DEGC]

1343. **RED-BREASTED FLYCATCHER**

*Ficedula parva*

**Rare vagrant.**

Two were seen at Beachy Head on 13 Oct: one was found in scrub near Beachy Head (CJR, JPS *et al*) and the other was trapped in Whitbread Hollow (RDME *et al*). These are the first records since 1998 and just six have been seen since 1990. The county total now stands at 26, of which 14 have been in October and 17 at Beachy Head making these records typical. Even two being found on the same day is not unprecedented as there were two seen on different parts of Beachy Head on 20 Oct 1968. [RJF]

1349. **PIED FLYCATCHER**

*Ficedula hypoleuca*

**Scarce passage migrant, more numerous in autumn than spring. Has bred.**

The approximate monthly totals were:

Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct
7	3	-	-	36	9	-

Records were much the same as last year except for a marked increase in August and a corresponding decrease in September.

The first record of a male at Ferring on 1 Apr (MCU) precedes the previous earliest record for the county on 3 Apr 1994 at Kidds Hill, Ashdown Forest. The next sighting was that of a male at Beachy Head on the 13<sup>th</sup>, followed by a gap of ten days until the 23<sup>rd</sup> when there was a female at Galley Hill, Bexhill. At Beachy Head there was a male on the 25<sup>th</sup> and a further two or three females on the 28<sup>th</sup>. Finally in April, there was a single at Seaford on the 29<sup>th</sup>. The three May records were of a female at West Itchenor on the 10<sup>th</sup>, a single at Pulborough Brooks on the 20<sup>th</sup> and a male at Camp Hill, Ashdown Forest on the 26<sup>th</sup>.

The first autumn passage birds were two, possibly three, at Mount Harry, near Lewes seen in a bush with Spotted Flycatchers on 10 Aug. The next were at Beachy Head on the 11<sup>th</sup>, Small Dole on the 14<sup>th</sup> and three at Church Norton on the 15<sup>th</sup>. Records came from eight sites in the second half of August, mostly singles, but there were two at Cissbury Ring on the 24<sup>th</sup>, two at Beachy Head on both the 25<sup>th</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup>, while at Church Norton there were two on the 27<sup>th</sup> and at least five on the 28<sup>th</sup>. In September there were three at Church Norton on the 2<sup>nd</sup> and finally three at Beachy Head on the 29<sup>th</sup>. [DEGC]

364. **BEARDED TIT**

*Panurus biarmicus*

**Very scarce breeder, scarce passage migrant and winter visitor.**

In the west of the county at Thorney Deeps, birds were seen throughout the year: two in January, four in March, first brood juveniles in June and, by 20 Aug, four pairs had raised 35–40 young, on 21 Sep there were 40, some high flying activity was reported on 4 Oct and 2 Nov but only two were seen in December. At Pagham Hbr five were seen at The Severals on 2-3 Oct and at the Breech Pool, two on 22 and 24 Sep.

This species was well monitored at Filsham Reedbed and nearby Glyne Gap Marsh, Bexhill. At the former site seven or eight pairs bred, the first juveniles being seen in early May and second broods started at the end of that month. In June about 50 birds were seen, including 30 juveniles. About 35 remained at the end of the year. At the latter site breeding was recorded for the first time, five juveniles were there in late May and about ten in early June. The only record received for the Pannel Sewer was of 14 on 27 Oct while at nearby Pett Level Pools there were nine on 28 Oct and two on 2 Dec. At Rye Hbr two were seen in the SSSI on 4 Oct and one on 3 Nov and up to four at Castle Water in October and November.

There was an unusual record of one flying west at Moulsecomb Wild Park, Brighton on 12 Nov and an even more exceptional report of two in reeds beside the R. Arun between Bury and Houghton on 16 Jun. [ARK]

1437. **LONG-TAILED TIT**

*Aegithalos caudatus*

**Very common resident.**

Winter maxima at Sefter Fm, Pagham were seven on 3 Jan and 19 on 18 Dec and at Marsh Fm, Yapton, ten on 16 Jan and two on 21 Dec respectively. The largest winter counts included 18 at Hotham Park, Bognor on 9 Jan; 18 at Slindon Woods on 11 Jan; 18 at Binsted on 18 Jan; 27 at Marline Wood, Hastings on 28 Jan; 18 at Footland Wood, Vinehall Street on 1 Feb; 11 at Tinkers Marsh, Bewl Water on 21 Feb; and 14 at Robertsbridge from January to April.

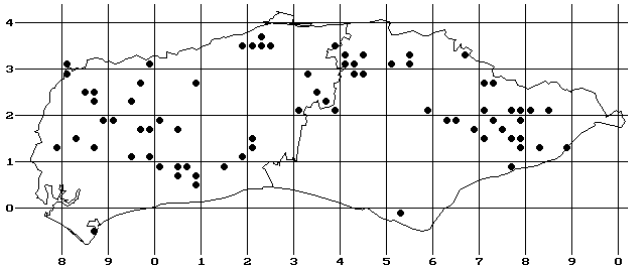
At least 13 pairs were recorded during the spring on Ashdown Forest. Other breeding counts were of six pairs in Moulsecomb Wild Park, Brighton; four pairs within the SSSI at Rye Hbr; three pairs in High Chimneys Estate, Battle and two pairs in St Annes Well Gardens, Hove and in 6.6 ha at Cissbury. A party of 20 in the car park at Friston Forest on the 4 May was the first of several large post-breeding counts; the highest numbers however, were later in the year with maxima of 40 at Combe Haven during September and October; 38 at Marline Wood, Hastings on 22 Oct; 44 at Barne's Wood, Vinehall Street on 15 Nov; and 40 at Footland Wood on 2 Dec. There were 24 at Selsey Bill on 11 Nov and on the same day 21 were seen flying high over Thorney Island.

During the summer and autumn 46 were trapped at Shoreham Sanctuary (17 in 2000) with a maximum of 28 on 22 Aug whilst at Cissbury 19 birds were ringed compared with only six in 2000. Birds were noted on peanut feeders at Thorney Island, West Worthing and Fairlight Cove. [ARK]

1440. MARSH TIT

*Parus palustris*

Fairly common resident.



The map illustrates the 75 tetrads in which the species was recorded and shows it to be well located along the wooded Downs in West Sussex from West Marden to Cissbury Ring. Records extended across the Weald to the Horsham and Crawley area. In East Sussex it was well reported on Ashdown Forest eastward to Marden Hill, Crowborough and Bewl Water and in an area east from Heathfield Park to the Brede, Battle and Sedlescombe area and south to Marline Wood, Hastings. However, it was unrecorded on the Downs in East Sussex apart from one at West Dean, Friston Forest on 21 Apr.

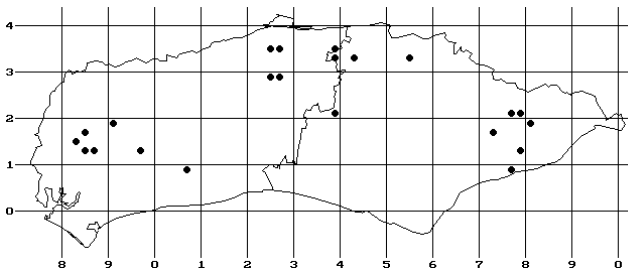
A high site count was that of seven pairs at Hollington Lodge, Hastings on 6 May. Six fledged from a box at Ardingly Res, one of three pairs fledged young at Bewl Water and fledglings were seen at Millbrook, Ashdown Forest on 9 Jul. Five or more birds were also recorded at West Dean, Patching Hill, Marline Wood, Hastings and both Footland and Barne's Woods near Vinehall Street.

On the coast, singles were at Fairlight Cove on 2 Nov and at Church Norton on four dates between 20 Sep and 24 Nov. Birds were often on feeders at Upperton Barn, Pulborough Brooks and one fed on haws at Darwell Res on 10 Nov. [ARK]

1442. WILLOW TIT

*Parus montanus*

Scarce resident.



In his book, *The State of the Nations' Bird*, Chris Mead stated that this species was "declining very seriously" and thus the ever smaller number of records in Sussex is in accord with the national trend. Although the field characters are very similar to Marsh Tit, identification is aided by the distinctive nasal call and it must be assumed that these records accurately reflect the declining status of this species in Sussex

This year it was reported from some 22 sites (see map): on the Downs at West Dean Woods, Bignor Hill and the Angmering Park Estate; in the Weald at Ambersham Common

and Pound and Memorial Commons, Chailey; in the north at Nymans, near Balcombe; Hyde Estate, Handcross; Tilgate Park; Crawley; Ashdown Forest; Weir Wood Res (two trapped) and Troutbeck near Eridge; in the east at Eatenden Wood, Mountfield; Footland Wood, Vinehall Street; Coneyburrow and High Woods, Brede; Powdermill Res; Marline Wood, Hastings; and Filsham Reedbed. At the last site, which is close to the coast, one on 10 May was the sole sighting. [ARK]

1461. **COAL TIT**

*Parus ater*

**Very common resident.**

The only breeding counts were of seven pairs at Footland Wood, Vinehall Street and two pairs on the High Chimneys Estate, Battle. A pair fledged seven young from a nestbox at Ardingly Res.

The largest counts outside the breeding season were at Footland and Barne's Woods, Vinehall Street (39 and 37 respectively in October) and at Stansted Forest (60 on 28 Dec). At Coates Common at least ten were in a mixed flock of Crossbills and Siskins on 15 Nov. Birds were recorded at Broadwater, Worthing eating sunflower seeds and at Byworth, near Petworth on peanuts. Single birds were noted in the autumn on or near the coast at Church Norton, Goring Gap, Birling Gap, Fairlight Cove, Pett Level and Rye Hbr.

One on Brighton beach beside the Volk's Railway on 17 Nov showed characteristics of the continental race *ater* (ADW, IJW). [ARK]

1462. **BLUE TIT**

*Parus caeruleus*

**Abundant resident.**

Monthly maxima at seven regularly counted sites were:

Site	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Sefter Fm, Pagham	10	10				22					7	10
Hotham Pk, Bognor	14	16	15	11		7	7	10	13	8	8	15
Marsh Fm, Yapton	23	18			14					8	6	6
Bedelands Fm, Burgess Hill	32			30	18	27	14	8	6	12	11	14
Weir Wood Res	2	17	12	4	1	48	7	7	22	13	16	10
Footland Wood, Vinehall Street	39	74								72	93	86
Marline Wood, Hastings	61	80								87	84	89

During the breeding season there were counts of 55 pairs at Moulsecoomb Wild Park, Brighton; 16 pairs at High Chimneys Estate, Battle; 11 territories at Sefter Fm, Pagham and four pairs in 6.6 ha at Cissbury. At Ardingly Res 123 fledged from 16 boxes (four other boxes failed), at Weir Wood Res 48 from ten boxes and at Thorney Island 12 from one box. Additional high counts, not noted in the table, were from Barne's Wood, Vinehall Street where there were 59 on 29 Oct, 105 on 15 Nov and 99 on 2 Dec.

At Shoreham Sanctuary, 41 new birds were ringed and six retrapped in 20 sessions, compared to 32 and five in 17 sessions in 2000. At Cissbury Ring, 43 new birds, including 27 *pulli*, were ringed, compared to 29 with no *pulli* in 2000. [ARK]

## 1464. GREAT TIT

*Parus major***Abundant resident.**

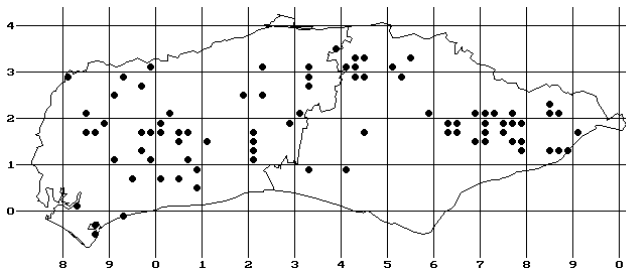
Monthly maxima at eight sites were:

Site	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Sefter Fm, Pagham	7	9				14					6	6
Hotham Park, Bognor		5		5				3				6
Marsh Fm, Yapton	15	9									4	6
Withdean Woods, Brighton	14			6	6	3				16		
Bedelands Fm, Burgess Hill				27	25	10	3	4	8	9	8	10
Weir Wood Res	1	8	5	6	1	10	13	8	28	14	8	10
Footland Wood, Vinehall Street	12	21								31	22	26
Marline Wood, Hastings	20	18								26	23	22

At the beginning of the year the highest count was 21 at Footland Wood, Vinehall Street. First song was recorded at Hassocks on 13 Jan and the earliest breeding record was from a box at Littleworth, Partridge Green on 2 Apr. Breeding records included 44 pairs at Moulsecoomb Wild Park, Brighton, nine territories at High Chimneys Estate, Battle and seven on 95 ha mixed farmland at Sefter Fm, Pagham. At Ardingly Res, 15 fledged from two boxes and two boxes failed, one at the egg stage and the other as *pulli* whilst at Weir Wood Res, 62 fledged from 12 boxes with very few deaths. At Thorney Deeps, a nestbox with ten eggs was found on 2 May and from another box a pair fledged 11 young on 27 May. In the second winter period, the highest count was of 33 at Barne's Wood, Vinehall Street on 25 Oct.

At Shoreham Sanctuary, 11 new birds were ringed and five retrapped in 20 sessions, compared to 22 and 13 in 17 sessions in 2000. At Cissbury Ring, 15 new birds, including two *pulli*, were ringed, compared to 32 including 12 *pulli* in 2000. [ARK]

## 1479. NUTHATCH

*Sitta europea***Very common resident.**

This hard-to-miss species was recorded from 84 tetrads (see map) and of those 10-km squares entirely within the county, just two were null. As the map shows, it was well recorded on the Downs in West Sussex but, on the Downs in East Sussex, it was only noted from two places – Stanmer Park, Falmer on 3 Jan and a Lewes garden, where it had not been seen in the previous 30 years, on 20 Oct.

During the breeding season there were five territories in the High Chimneys Estate, Battle, three at Footland Wood, Vinehall Street, and two at Marline Wood, Hastings. A total of 25 young fledged from four boxes at Ardingly Res and, at Borde Hill, Haywards Heath, a nest was located in a wall.

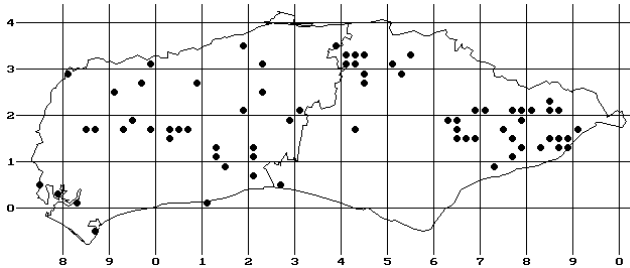


Near the coast outside the breeding season there were single birds at Church Norton on 5 Mar, 11 Sep and 16 Nov, Chick Hill, Pett on 26 Aug, Fairlight Cove on 26 Sep and Salterns Copse, Chichester Hbr on 20 Dec. [ARK]

1486. **TREECREEPER**

*Certhia familiaris*

**Very common resident.**



The map illustrates the 71 tetrads in which the species was seen and clearly shows clusters of records along the wooded areas north of the Downs in West Sussex, on Ashdown Forest and in the well watched woodlands north of Bexhill and Hastings. By contrast, the isolated record from Scobells Fm, Barcombe was in the centre of an area of over 300 km<sup>2</sup> lacking further records. Most records were of just one or two birds but ten were recorded at Marline Wood, Hastings on 5 Nov while eight were at both Footland Wood and Barne’s Wood, Vinehall Street on 15 Nov and 2 Dec respectively.

There were few breeding counts but two pairs were noted in Rye Bay Wood, two pairs at Marline Wood, Hastings and a single territory in the High Chimneys Estate, Battle. At Weir Wood Res three young fledged from a nest box. Coastal records are more unusual and in this context singles at Goring Gap on 11 Sep, at The Severals, Church Norton on 16 and 20 Oct and at Thorney Island on 14 Dec are noteworthy; the last being only the third record at this site and the first since 1995. At the Langhurst Estate, Warnham one was seen to “extract grubs from an apple tree” and at Guestling one was at a peanut feeder on two dates in December. [ARK]

1490. **PENDULINE TIT**

*Remiz pendulinus*

**Rare vagrant.**

A juvenile was trapped at Pett Level on 27 Oct (RBRG). It has been accepted by *British Birds* and takes the county total to 17. All records have been in October or early November and ten have been at Pett Level. [RJF]

1508. **GOLDEN ORIOLE**

*Oriolus oriolus*

**Very scarce passage migrant and summer visitor, may have bred.**

Only two were seen, one in Bognor Regis on 30 May (CMS) and another in a garden in Guestling on 23 Jul (RCR). Records are currently averaging just under three a year, although there were also single records in both 1991 & 1995 and none in 1999. Since

1990, when the last individual was seen in July, most have occurred in May and, to a lesser extent, June (with 24 and seven recorded respectively). [RJF]

1515. **RED-BACKED SHRIKE**

*Lanius collurio*

**Very scarce passage migrant: formerly a breeding summer visitor. Species of Conservation Concern in Sussex.**

There were no records in 2000, but in the current year four birds were seen, one more than in 1998 and 1999. The first was a female on 5 Jun at Toad's Hole Valley, Hove (CAH, JCH) but unfortunately it was not present the next day. The second was a juvenile, at Belle Tout, Beachy Head (CJR, TJW *et al*) from 9 to 16 Sep with presumably another juvenile there on 22 Sep (RHa, RAI, JPS). Finally, another juvenile was seen at Filsham Reedbed on 30 Sep (RJF, KMJ). [DEGC]

1520. **GREAT GREY SHRIKE**

*Lanius excubitor*

**Very scarce winter visitor and passage migrant.**

As in 2000, records were few, with certainly four and possibly seven birds. The first was on Ashdown Forest in the Hollies area on 25 Feb (JSG) with possibly the same one in the Garden of Eden area on 12 Apr (JBir, RHa).

Later in the year in the same region, one was seen at Old Lodge on 17 Oct (PBr) and probably again in the Crows Nest area on 30 Oct (JSG). Away from Ashdown Forest, singles were present at Darwell Res on 15 Sep and 19 Dec (both RGH) and at Birling Gap on 1 Nov (per RDME). [DEGC]

1539. **JAY**

*Garrulus glandarius*

**Very common resident.**

The records in the first quarter of the year were all in single figures, the highest counts being five at both Darwell Res on 11 Feb and Weir Wood Res on 29 Mar. In April, 12 were seen at Moulsecoomb Wild Park, Brighton on the 12<sup>th</sup>, an unusual number at this site.

One was seen at Hassocks on 29 Mar defending its nest against two Magpies.

One in a garden at West Worthing on 14 Oct appeared to be feeding on fallen apples. Maximum counts in autumn and winter were of 15 at Church Norton on 13 Oct, eight at Beachy Head on 28 Oct and 11 at Darwell Res on 10 Nov. [LM]

1549. **MAGPIE**

*Pica pica*

**Very common resident.**

The highest roost counts in the first quarter were at Moulsecoomb Wild Park, Brighton with 255 on 12 Jan and 155 on 13 Feb, and at Combe Haven with 83 on 15 Feb and 96 at on 15 Mar. Other counts were of 18 at Eames Fm, Thorney on 15 Jan, 34 at Whitbread Hollow, Beachy Head on 11 Feb and 15 at Hollington, St Leonards on 20 Feb. The white-headed bird seen on the east side of the R. Adur at Shoreham in 2000 was still present on 5 Jan.

There were reports of confirmed or probable breeding from only 13 sites, including a count of 46 pairs at Moulsecoomb Wild Park. A count of 42 at Whitbread Hollow on 23 Sep was probably a record for the site. Other counts were of 21 at Rye Hbr on 16 Oct, 16 at Seftor Fm, Pagham on 1 Nov, 21 at Upper Horsebridge on 21 Nov and 252 at roost in Moulsecoomb Wild Park on 9 Dec. [LM]

### 1560. JACKDAW

*Corvus monedula*

#### **Very common resident.**

The highest counts recorded in the first quarter were 100 at Coldwaltham on 3 Jan, 200 at Beeding Hill on 14 Jan, 120 at Marline Wood, Hastings on 4 Feb and 110 at Pett on 30 Mar.

In the second half of the year the highest counts were 130 at Steep Down, Lancing on 22 Jul, 250 at Bullock Down, Beachy Head on 12 Aug, 100 at Selsey Bill on 17 Aug, 150 flying south over Lavington Common on 24 Nov and a monthly maximum for December of 500 at Pebsham Tip. A count of 520 flying west at Sheepcote Valley, Brighton on 13 Oct was the only coastal movement reported. [LM]

### 1563. ROOK

*Corvus frugilegus*

#### **Very common resident.**

The highest counts in the first two months were 130 feeding on unharvested flooded maize at Seftor Fm, Pagham on 3 Jan and 400 there on 5 Feb; 700 at the North Wall, Pagham Hbr on 14 Jan; 220 at Marsh Fm, Yapton on 16 Jan; and 800 over Lavington Common flying south to roost on 16 Feb.

Reports of rookery nest counts included totals of 52 at Barnham (two sites); 40 at Amberley; 55 at Patching; 127 in Findon Valley; 43 at Woodingdean; 100 between Hooe and Middle Bridge; 108 at Beckley Furnace (not one of the Rookeries with over 100 nests in the 1996 survey); 48 at Rowland Wood, Beckley; and 91 at Burnt Wood, Pett.

The highest counts in the second half of the year were 100 at Cuckmere Haven on 26 Aug; 550 NE over North Mundham on 10 Oct; 140 flying east over Thorney Island to roost on 5 Nov; 1000 flying south over Lavington Common to roost on 24 Nov; 150 on the rubbish tip at Pebsham on 30 Nov; 150 at Marsh Fm, Yapton on 8 Dec; and 200 at Highdown, Worthing on 23 Dec. Birds were seen renovating nests at Hassocks on 15 and 27 Dec. [LM]

### 1567. CARRION CROW

*Corvus corone*

#### **Very common resident.**

The largest concentrations reported were 120, 190 and 116 at Goring on 16 Mar, 25 Mar and 30 Oct respectively; 52 on Hove beach on 8 Jul; 135 at Forest Mere, Liphook on 20 Aug; 300 high over Bewl Water on 9 Nov; 350 on the rubbish tip at Pebsham on 30 Nov; and 60 at Hotham Park, Bognor on 10 Dec.

One was seen sitting on a nest at Burgess Hill on 29 Jan. On 1 May, 18 pairs were counted in Moulsecoomb Wild Park, Brighton. Three adults were seen mobbing a fox, as it carried off a young Crow on Ashdown Forest on 18 May. [LM]

1567.01. **HOODED CROW***Corvus corone cornix***A very scarce winter visitor and passage migrant.**

The only record for the year was of one found dead in a Larson trap at Rye Hbr on 15 Apr (GSa). [LM]

1572. **RAVEN***Corvus corax***A very scarce breeding resident.**

For the first time since about 1895, breeding by an apparently wild pair of Ravens was confirmed at Beachy Head (DC, RHC). The first report was on 15 Mar and the birds were seen in the area a number of times during the year, with a maximum of five on 23 Oct. A pair bred between 1938 and 1945, at Seaford Head and then Beachy Head, but one of these birds had been in captivity until 1936. In the period 1946 to 1961 there were only six records for the county. A further five individuals were reported up to 1987, but there were no records in the years to 1993. Since then, there has been a gradual increase in numbers as shown by the annual totals for the period 1994-2001:

1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001
1	-	4	2	-	3	8	14

There were 54 records this year, from which it would appear that there was a minimum total of six pairs in the following areas: Selsey peninsula; Downs north of Chichester, where there was a report of nest-building on 25 Feb; Arun Valley; Adur Valley; Ouse Valley; and Seaford/Beachy Head, the breeding pair. The origin of two seen flying over Littleworth on 1 Jul is uncertain. [LM]

1582. **STARLING***Sturnus vulgaris***Abundant resident, passage migrant and winter visitor.**

Winter flocks were small with a January maximum of 450 near Pagham on the 16<sup>th</sup> and a February maximum of 1500 at Selsey on the 27<sup>th</sup>.

A total of 32 breeding pairs was present in Moulsecomb Wild Park, Brighton and the first fledglings were seen at Isfield on 13 May. By 19 May numbers were building up rapidly with 80 juveniles at East Grinstead. However, because records were lacking from most of the regular breeding surveys due to FMD restrictions it is not possible to assess breeding performance adequately. A flock of 500 juveniles was at Lancing on 26 Jun.

A nocturnal roost of 1000, including an albino, in a reedbed at Thorney Deep on 27 Jun increased to 2000 by 14 Aug. Other flocks of 2000 were at Selsey on 3 Sep and at Coldwaltham Brooks on 6 Sep. The largest autumn count at Beachy Head was 450 on 9 Oct. In the late morning of 10 Nov a flock of 2800 flew in from the sea at Brighton Marina; the only other sizeable flock reported during the month was 1000 at Lancing on the 26<sup>th</sup>.

The largest nocturnal roost was again at Brighton West Pier which built up to 40,000-50,000 by the end of December. [RK]

1584. **ROSE-COLOURED STARLING**

*Sturnus roseus*

**Rare vagrant.**

Two were recorded, an adult in a garden on the Angmering-on-Sea Estate, East Preston on 1-2 Jun (JF, YBS) and a juvenile in Cow Gap, Beachy Head from 3 to 7 Oct (DRC, JFC *et al*). Both records have been accepted by *British Birds*, 2001 being the last year in which this species is assessed by them. Detailed descriptions will from now on be considered by *SOSRC*. These two take the county total to about 28, although only eight of these have been since 1980. The more recent records have been in June (3), July, August, September, October (2) and December. [RJF]

1591. **HOUSE SPARROW**

*Passer domesticus*

**Very common but declining resident.**

On 7 Jan, 13 were recorded during the census of 67 ha of mixed farmland at Marsh Fm, Yapton, the previous three years producing counts of 22, 28 and 10. The highest counts in the first winter period were of 50 roosting at Three Bridges Station and totals of 45 at Woodingdean and 41 at Hurstpierpoint.

As in 2000, breeding records were received from across the country. The largest concentration was of 13 breeding pairs in Moulsecoomb Wild Park, Brighton and there were also four pairs at both Galley Hill and St. Leonards.

The increase in post breeding records noted last year continues. Large flocks recorded from July to September included 90 at Byworth, near Petworth and totals of 60 at Selsey Bill, Burpham and Woodingdean. The largest flock recorded however was of 100 at Fire Hills, Fairlight on 4 Sep, although no records were received from Galley Hill, Bexhill, where 300 were recorded in 2000. The largest flocks recorded during the second winter period were 50 at Eames Fm, Thorney and 45 at Widewater, Lancing with counts of between 20 and 40 being received from seven other areas. The monthly maximum recorded at Marsh Fm was just three. [DG]

1598. **TREE SPARROW**

*Passer montanus*

**Scarce resident, passage migrant and winter visitor. Species of Conservation Concern in Sussex.**

Undoubtedly FMD restrictions had an effect on the number of records received for this species during the breeding season and there were no reports for four of the breeding sites listed last year. All breeding season records came from the east of the county where, in the spring, 24 'woodcrete' nest boxes were erected at several key sites in the Rye area in memory of Grahame de Forges, a former Vice President of the Society. Against a background of continuing decline of the species in Sussex, many Tree Sparrows have taken up residence in the new boxes.

At Float Fm in the Brede Valley, 4-5 pairs have bred in wooden boxes for many years. With the provision of seven new boxes at least six pairs bred, occupying all seven 'woodcrete' boxes over the season. Nearby another three boxes were put up in a small plantation. In July, one of these boxes contained an abandoned House Sparrow nest, and another a Starling nest. It is possible that Tree Sparrows were put off this area by the dense leaf cover of the plantation, so this winter these boxes will be repositioned in more

open habitat. A feeding station has also been created at this site in an effort to increase food resources, and it is hoped that similar stations can be set up at other sites close to breeding colonies.

At Rye Hbr there is now a surplus of 'woodcrete' boxes at Castle Water and Castle Fm, giving plenty of choice for the remaining Tree Sparrows. These boxes were inspected in September with 12 completed sparrow nests though at least two were probably those of House Sparrows. Of the remaining ten, one contained a dead Tree Sparrow, restrained around the leg by thin twine from the nest. Three more contained deserted clutches. Of the three apparently uncompleted sparrow nests, one contained another dead Tree Sparrow, apparently adult, along with a dead fully bloated tick - perhaps the cause of death?

The only other breeding season records were of a pair seen mating at Winchelsea Beach SF on 25 May and three at Combe Haven on 1 Jun.

Outside of the breeding season, the largest flock reported for the year was of eight at Barne's Wood, Vinehall Street in October increasing to 12 in November and December. The autumn also produced four at Hastings CP on 13 Oct and three at Pett Level on 11 Nov. Away from the east of the county, records were of three at Ashcombe Bottom, Lewes, two at Lee Fm, Patching and one at Upper Wellingham, Ringmer in January, one at Sidlesham Ferry Long Pool on 15 Sep and five at Stretham Manor, Henfield on 26 Dec.

Evidence of passage during the year was limited to individuals flying north at Selsey Bill on 4 and 5 May and in the autumn one at Beachy Head on 12 Oct with 6 E there the following day.

All records of this species, especially in the breeding season, would be appreciated. [DG/BJY]

## 1636. CHAFFINCH

*Fringilla coelebs*

### **Abundant resident, passage migrant and winter visitor.**

During the first winter period, flocks in three figures were recorded at four sites: at Pippingford Park, Ashdown Forest, a flock of *ca.* 100 on 5 Feb had increased to *ca.* 150 by 2 Mar; at Marsh Fm, Yapton, 139 were counted in a census on 67 ha of mixed farmland on 7 Jan; at Wrens Warren, Ashdown Forest, there were 100 on 8 Jan; and at Footland Wood, Vinehall Street, 129 were counted on 14 Jan.

Breeding records for this widespread breeding resident were relatively few in number, probably due at least in part to the effects of FMD restrictions. Records of confirmed or possible breeding or territorial activity came from only 26 sites across the county. These included 42 pairs in Moulsecomb Wild Park, Brighton, ten pairs at Goring Gap, eight territories at High Chimneys Estate, Battle and six at both Rye Hbr SSSI and in St. Leonards.

Following the first apparent autumn arrival of 150 at Beachy Head on 9 Oct, the only other movements noted during the month were of 23 W at Church Norton on the 19<sup>th</sup>, followed by 40 E there on both the 21<sup>st</sup> and 29<sup>th</sup> and 40 SW at Bewl Water on the 27<sup>th</sup>. The largest flock noted during the second winter period was at Footland Wood where there were 152 on 25 Oct, the year's largest count of 259 on 15 Nov and 160 on 2 Dec. Elsewhere, there were *ca.* 100 at Compton on 28 Nov and at Bewl Water on 3 Dec. [JAH]

1638. **BRAMBLING***Fringilla montifringilla***Fairly common winter visitor and passage migrant.**

The approximate monthly totals were:

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
49	3	-	2	-	-	-	-	1	257	162	97

During the first winter period birds were generally scarce, being reported in only ones, twos, or threes from only five sites during January and February. The only significant flock was of 40 at Bawl Water on 20 Jan during a cold spell. None was seen in March and the last for the period were singles at Beachy Head on 7 Apr and Chick Hill, Pett on the 12<sup>th</sup>.

The first autumn records were of one over Combe Haven on 30 Sep and one calling at Rye Hbr on 4 Oct. Thereafter, numbers built up rapidly from the 10<sup>th</sup>, being seen widely across the county at approximately 20 sites. By the month's end, a total of 35 had been recorded at Combe Haven including a peak of ten on the 13<sup>th</sup>, a monthly maximum of 27 was counted in Barne's Wood, Vinehall Street on the 25<sup>th</sup>, and at Church Norton 41 were recorded on the 28<sup>th</sup>. Overall numbers fell away during November although they were still widespread. In the Selsey Bill/Pagham Hbr area there was a maximum count of 13 on the 10<sup>th</sup>, a peak count of 15 E over Sheepcote Valley, Brighton on the 4<sup>th</sup> and 17 W over Hollingdean, Brighton on the 10<sup>th</sup>. Birds were present on Ashdown Forest throughout the month where peak counts were of 15 on both the 4<sup>th</sup> and 22<sup>nd</sup>. The largest count, however, was at Combe Haven where the monthly total was 39 with a peak of 31 on the 10<sup>th</sup>. During December there were records from five sites, only two of which were in more than single figures; 30 were recorded at Stapleash Fm, Chilgrove on the 7<sup>th</sup> and 35 were seen at Wrens Warren, Ashdown Forest on the 8<sup>th</sup>. Thereafter numbers fell away sharply. [JAH]

1640. **SERIN***Serinus serinus***Very scarce passage migrant, has bred**

There was a series of records from Selsey Bill in the spring: a male on 16 Apr (RWP *et al*), one on the 21<sup>st</sup> (JHR *et al*), one heard on the 25<sup>th</sup> (RWP), one on the 27<sup>th</sup> (TJE), one on 3 May (TJE), one heard on the 5<sup>th</sup> (RWP), one on the 7<sup>th</sup> (MJ, OM *et al*), two different individuals on the 13<sup>th</sup> (TJE) and one on the 24<sup>th</sup> (RWP). Another was seen at Selsey Bill on 26 Jul (TJE). This site's monopoly of sightings was finally broken by a female near Ninfield from 24 to 29 Sep (PW), two at Birling Gap on 19 Oct (BFF, DIS) and one at nearby Shooter's Bottom, Beachy Head on 20 Oct (TJW). Assuming all were different, the total of 15 is the best in the county to date. Ninety have been recorded since 1990 although the July and September records this year are the first in the county in those months since 1988 and 1984 respectively. Over two-thirds of recent records have been in April or May. [RJF]

1649 **GREENFINCH***Carduelis chloris***Very common resident, scarce passage migrant and winter visitor.**

During the first three months of the year, only nine of the 38 records were of counts larger than 20. A flock of 30 went to roost in Crawley on 1 Jan and 37 were counted on the beach at Pagham Hbr on the 2<sup>nd</sup>, while a flock of 70 was seen at High Salvington, Worthing on the 4<sup>th</sup>. A count of 23 at Climping on 18 Jan was eclipsed by 70 in the North

Fields, Pagham Hbr on the 24<sup>th</sup>. A flock of 35 was seen at Thorney Island on the 27<sup>th</sup>, 39 went to roost in Marline Wood, Hastings on 4 Feb and 30 were counted at Church Norton on the 21<sup>st</sup>. Finally, a count of 30 at Bexhill on 24 Mar included 13 E.

The table below shows the effect of FMD restrictions on the number of records submitted for February and March and the magnitude of the influx in October

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Number of records	25	8	5	27	27	23	19	13	15	45	25	18
Number of birds	347	109	104	165	130	98	134	165	186	3236	1282	538

No breeding records were received from some sites reported last year, but the most notable were of 34 pairs in Moulsecoomb Wild Park, Brighton, and eight pairs at Goring Gap. There were four pairs at Deneway LNR, Brighton, three pairs at Galley Hill, Bexhill, and two in both Marline Wood, Hastings and the High Chimneys Estate, Battle.

Birds began to congregate at suitable sites during August; 40 were noted at Saint Hill, East Grinstead on 18 Aug, an annual maximum for the site, and 53 went to roost in Marline Wood, Hastings on the 23<sup>rd</sup>. The next large counts were of 70 at Pulborough Brooks on 24 Sep and 50 at Newhaven Tide Mills on the 29<sup>th</sup>. But it was during October that Greenfinches began to appear at coastal sites and swell in numbers dramatically. A count of 40 at Beachy Head on the 4<sup>th</sup> was followed by 150 there on the 9-10<sup>th</sup> and 100 on the 13<sup>th</sup>. At Shoreham Fort 200 were counted on the 7<sup>th</sup>, another 200 roosted in the church yard on Thorney Island on the 12<sup>th</sup> and a flock of 150 was on the beach at Newhaven Tide Mills on the 14<sup>th</sup>. Inland, 268 were counted in a game cover crop at Upperton's Field, Pulborough Brooks on the 15<sup>th</sup> but it was in the Selsey Bill/Church Norton area that really large numbers were seen. The first 60 were seen at Selsey Bill on 6 Oct followed at Church Norton by flocks of 120 and 60 on the 10<sup>th</sup>, 200 on the 13<sup>th</sup>, 250 on the 16<sup>th</sup> and a movement of 1000 E on the 17<sup>th</sup>. The only other movements noted were of 80 S at Selsey Bill on 16 Oct and 80 W at Worthing Beach on the 29<sup>th</sup>. Numbers tailed off thereafter; 450 at Selsey Bill on the 27<sup>th</sup> gave a total for the month there of 650.

November was rather anticlimactic. While there were 180 at Newhaven Tide Mills on the 1<sup>st</sup>, 200 at Pagham Hbr Spit on the 4<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup>, and 240 at Shoreham Fort also on the 18<sup>th</sup>, the month's total was only just over 1200. December was even quieter. The only notable counts were of 300 in the North Fields, Pagham Hbr on the 5<sup>th</sup> and 117 in a roost in Marline Wood, Hastings. [JAH]

## 1653. **GOLDFINCH**

*Carduelis carduelis*

### **Common summer visitor and passage migrant and fairly common winter visitor.**

During the first quarter just over 600 birds were reported from 29 sites spread across the county. There were only three records of more than 30 comprising *ca.* 100 at Holmbush Tip, Faygate, on 11 Feb, 85 at Weir Wood Res on the 9<sup>th</sup> and 40 at Redgate Mill Fm, Crowborough on 7 Jan.

Spring coastal passage was either very poor, or poorly recorded. The only significant movements noted were at Bexhill where the totals for the period April to July were 160 E and 54 W with maxima of 48 E on 23 Apr and 27 E on 12 May.

Five pairs bred in Moulsecoomb Wild Park, Brighton and two pairs at both Footland Wood, Vinehall Street and Bulverhythe. Otherwise only single pairs or birds were noted. At least one pair probably nested in Rye Hbr village.



Goldfinches began to reappear in larger numbers during August. A flock of 60 was seen at Thorney Deepes on the 15<sup>th</sup>, at least 100 were counted at Exceat Bridge on the 18<sup>th</sup>, 85 were present at Pulborough Brooks on the 22<sup>nd</sup>, 50 at Selsey West Fields on the 24<sup>th</sup> and 110 at Pulborough Brooks on the 26<sup>th</sup>. The total for the month was at least 440 birds from 17 mainly inland sites. September continued in much the same vein. A minimum count of 70 at Plumpton on the 11<sup>th</sup> was followed by 80 at Bedelands Fm, Burgess Hill on the 14<sup>th</sup>, a maximum of 104 at Pett Level, and a flock of 200 at Belle Tout on the 23<sup>rd</sup>, 350 at Beachy Head on the 29<sup>th</sup> followed by 500 at Whitbread Hollow on the 30<sup>th</sup> which included a flock of 200 feeding in a field. The only recorded coastal movements were at Selsey Bill with 45 W on the 15<sup>th</sup> and Bexhill with 196 E on the 24<sup>th</sup>. The total for the month was at least 2200 birds from 33 mainly inland sites.

October, however, was a remarkable month for Goldfinches. The total for the month from the Beachy Head area, counted over 11 bird days by various observers, was *ca.* 8800. Counts there were of 300, 350, 400 twice, 500 three times, 700, 1000 and, on the 9<sup>th</sup>, no less than an estimated 4000 comprising numerous flocks of 200-300, both in the air, with no particular flight direction, and on the ground. Such a number has been exceeded only once, by a movement of 5500 at Beachy Head on 6 Oct 1973 (*Birds of Sussex*). Some of those recorded may, of course, have been the same birds. In the west at Church Norton, the total for the month of over 3700 included two large movements as shown in the table below. At nearby Selsey Bill the month's total was 1310, possibly involving some of the same birds. Significant numbers were recorded from several other coastal sites as shown in the table. Additionally, 400 were feeding on linseed at Hastings CP on the 13<sup>th</sup>. Inland there were 200 at Pulborough Brooks on the 1<sup>st</sup> and 100 on Newmarket Hill on the 13<sup>th</sup>. A conservative estimate of 16,000 birds was recorded during the month.

The following table summarises the movements actually noted during the autumn at coastal sites:

Coastal Site	September	October	November	Max movement
Selsey Bill	45W	180S 320W		250W on 9 Oct
Church Norton		3280E		1600E on 17 Oct 1300E on 21 Oct
Littlehampton W Beach		550E		400E on 21 Oct
Worthing Beach		126E	35E	96E on 28 Oct
Beachy Head		1000W 400E		1000W on 25 Oct
Bexhill & Hastings	196E	213W 14E		144W on 29 Oct
Rye Hbr		150NE		150NE on 17 Oct

Numbers declined considerably in November with around 300 recorded from 20 sites, all but two being inland. The only counts above 20 were from the coast. At Selsey Bill there were 70 on the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 60 on the 7<sup>th</sup> and at Worthing Beach 25 on the 9<sup>th</sup>. The largest flock in December was 200 at Agmond's Wood, Barcombe on the 31<sup>st</sup> in a month's total of 300 from 11 mainly inland sites. [JAH]

## 1654. **SISKIN**

*Carduelis spinus*

### **Common winter visitor and passage migrant. A very scarce breeder.**

The following table, which gives the approximate monthly totals, shows the pattern of recorded occurrence and can be used for comparison with previously published tables. Comparison with 2000 shows that, during the first winter period, there was a marked reduction in both the number of sites and also the numbers of birds in March and April particularly. In the autumn, however, there appears to have been an irruptive invasion with

the totals for September and October topping 2000 and 4000 respectively; the grand total for the year at over 8000 was twice that of the previous year.

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Number of birds	481	396	262	23	9	1	3	4	2190	4083	482	237
Number of sites	16	17	12	4	7	1	1	3	33	39	24	13

The largest flocks in the first winter period were of *ca.* 100 on Ashdown Forest on 16 Jan, 23 Feb and 6 Mar. Singing was heard on both the latter dates. Elsewhere there were 80 in larches at Coates Common on 4 Mar, 60 at Ambersham Common on 18 Jan, 55 at Paddockhurst Place, Worth on 15 Jan, 50 at Coldwaltham SF on 26 Jan and 40 W over Bewl Water on 11 Feb.

Breeding was confirmed at two sites. There was a pair at Lavington Common and, at Footland Wood, Vinehall Street, one pair raised one young. Breeding was also possible in Tilgate Forest, where two birds were seen in early May, and on Ashdown Forest where ones and twos were recorded on several occasions.

As the table above shows, Siskins had largely left the county by April and were very scarce during May to August. However, the scene changed dramatically in late September when they were recorded widely. On the 20<sup>th</sup> 40 were recorded at Church Norton with 120 there the following day when there were also 38 on Ashdown Forest, 34 at Bexhill and 20 E at Rye Bay. Smaller numbers were then seen at a number of sites until, on the 24<sup>th</sup>, 300 flew east over Sheepcote Valley, Brighton, 160 were seen at Church Norton and 84 at Bexhill. On the 26<sup>th</sup> 50 flew east at Rye Hbr. There were 45 in the Cuckmere Valley on the 26<sup>th</sup>; 50 at Church Norton on the 28<sup>th</sup>; 100 at Combe Haven also on the 28<sup>th</sup> and 75 there the next day, contributing to a monthly total there of 370, and 150 at Whitbread Hollow and 30 at Moulsecomb Wild Park, Brighton on the 30<sup>th</sup>.

The influx continued in October, the largest numbers being seen, in general, at or near the coast. At Combe Haven there were 80 on the 6<sup>th</sup>, 140 on the 16<sup>th</sup> and 100 on the 19<sup>th</sup> contributing to a monthly total of no less than 1300. At Selsey Bill 55 were seen on the 6<sup>th</sup> while nearby at Church Norton a moderate 30 on the 9<sup>th</sup> was followed by 90 on the 10<sup>th</sup>, 60 on the 12<sup>th</sup>, 200 on the 13<sup>th</sup>, 60 on the 14<sup>th</sup>, 210 on the 17<sup>th</sup> and 90 on the 21<sup>st</sup> to give a monthly total of not less than 955 for the Selsey Bill/Church Norton area. Elsewhere there were 28 in Moulsecomb Wild Park on the 13<sup>th</sup> and 190 NE at Rye Hbr on the 17<sup>th</sup>. In the Beachy Head area, counts of 35 on the 6<sup>th</sup>, 40 on the 13<sup>th</sup>, 35 on the 19<sup>th</sup>, 50 on the 20<sup>th</sup>, 60 on the 25<sup>th</sup> and 75 on the 28<sup>th</sup> contributed to a monthly total of not less than 330. The monthly total for the whole county was over 4000. Large flocks were also recorded at inland sites. At least 50 flew north at Arundel WWT on the 1<sup>st</sup> and there were 100 at Bewl Water on the 7<sup>th</sup>; 50 at Ambersham Common on the 14<sup>th</sup>; 50 on Ashdown Forest on the 21<sup>st</sup>; and 55 at Footland Wood on the 25<sup>th</sup>.

Coastal sites featured less in November and not at all in December, the only significant count being of 40 at Church Norton on 1 Nov while that month's total at nearby Selsey Bill was only 39. Inland, there were 40 at Ambersham Common on 3 Nov, 55 at Footland Wood on the 15<sup>th</sup> and 78 there on 2 Dec. The largest numbers elsewhere inland were of up to 30 only in both months, but they were widely distributed. [JAH]

## 1660. LINNET

*Carduelis cannabina*

### Decreasing resident and partial migrant. Species of Conservation concern in Sussex.

There were just 17 records for January and February with a total of 525 birds recorded from 13 inland sites; the largest flocks were of 60 at Lee Fm, Patching on 6 Jan with 80

there on the 17<sup>th</sup> in a mixed flock of finches and buntings in maize and millet game cover, 50 at Harbour Fm, Rye Hbr on 20 Jan and 140 in the Paddock Field, Pagham Hbr on 20 Feb.

Apart from 80 at Bewl Water on 6 Mar, most other records for March were from coastal sites where a generally light spring passage was noted from the 16<sup>th</sup> when 16 flew north at Goring Gap. The monthly totals for the sea-watching sites where Linnets were systematically logged were as follows:

	March	April	May	Max movement
Selsey Bill	20N	37W	-	20 on 24 Mar 29 on 8 Apr
Worthing Beach	-	28E 2W	16E	28 on 2 Apr
Splash Point, Seaford	22E	34E 201W	1E 23W	22 on 24 Mar 109 on 8 Apr
Bexhill/Hastings	146E 38W	556E 735W	180E 51W	102 on 24 Mar 235 on 16 Apr

The only sizeable concentrations noted in April were 150 at Newhaven Tide Mills on the 8<sup>th</sup> and flocks of 80 and 20 at different sites on Thorney Island on the 21<sup>st</sup>.

A total of 175 records was received for the breeding season, a reduction on last year's 220, probably due to FMD restrictions. Records suggest that at least 120 pairs bred or held territories at 100 sites, again a reduction in numbers compared with 2000. As usual it was reported to be nesting widely at Rye Hbr. Records for the Ashdown Forest area indicated a minimum of 61 pairs, similar to 2000. Additionally, *ca.* 20 pairs held territories on the cliffs at Peacehaven, eight pairs around Cissbury Ring and five pairs at both Pilsley Island and Steep Down, Lancing.

The first notable count of the autumn was of 50 at Selsey Bill on 21 Jul. In August 100 were counted at Ternery Pool, Rye Hbr on the 15<sup>th</sup>, a flock of 100 was seen at Selsey West Fields on the 24<sup>th</sup> and 80 were counted at Holmbush Tip, Faygate, on the 27<sup>th</sup>. The month's total was of just under 500 birds.

Numbers increased markedly during September and involved both coastal and inland sites. Eighty feeding in stubbles at Perry Hill, Burpham on the 5<sup>th</sup> was equalled at Church Norton but exceeded by 200 at Harbour Fm, Rye Hbr the same day. The next counts in three figures were from Selsey West Fields, with 150 on the 7<sup>th</sup>, and Newhaven Tide Mills with 120 on the 15<sup>th</sup>. Selsey Bill featured again on the 20<sup>th</sup> with another 150 (which could have been the same party as above) and 114 were counted at Rye Hbr on the 26<sup>th</sup>. However, it was in the Beachy Head area that the largest numbers occurred with a flock of 300 at Cornish Fm on the 26<sup>th</sup>, 350 at Birling Gap the same day, and a maximum of 400 on the 28<sup>th</sup>. The total for the month was a conservative 4300.

October was even better. Inland, the only large flocks reported were of 100 at both Lee Fm, Patching on the 3<sup>rd</sup> and Hastings CP on the 13<sup>th</sup> and 150 at both Springhead Hill, Rackham on the 17<sup>th</sup> and Nutbourne, Chichester Hbr on the 18<sup>th</sup>. The largest numbers were recorded at coastal sites. In the Beachy Head area over 6000 were logged over 22 days, with 600 on the 4<sup>th</sup>, 650 on the 6<sup>th</sup>, 1000 on the 13<sup>th</sup>, 400 on the 19<sup>th</sup> and 500 on the 23<sup>rd</sup>. In the west at Selsey Bill, over 4700 were counted with 300 on the 3<sup>rd</sup>, no less than 3000 on the 6<sup>th</sup>, 850 on the 16<sup>th</sup> and, finally, 300 on the 27<sup>th</sup>. The total for the month was approximately 12,000.

The following table shows the main coastal movements recorded:

	July	Aug	Sep	Oct	Max movement
Selsey Bill	50	-	86W	850S	50 on 21 Jul 150 on 20 Sep 3000 on 6 Oct
Church Norton	-	-	-	1430E 650W	700E on 17 Oct
Combe Haven	-	-	2000W	-	?
Bexhill/Hastings	-	27W	61E 25W	216W	15 on 15 Aug 77 on 24 Sep 161 on 29 Oct

Numbers tailed off considerably in November with a total of just under 300. The only sizeable count was of 150 at Henfield on the 12<sup>th</sup>. [JAH]

## 1662. TWITE

*Carduelis flavirostris*

### Very scarce and decreasing winter visitor and passage migrant

One at Galley Hill, Bexhill on 29 Oct (IS) was the only record. This is the worst showing to date, although only three were recorded in 2000 and five in both 1995 and 1999. It is now hard to imagine that as recently as 1990-94 records averaged nearly 70 a year. [RJF]

## 1663. LESSER REDPOLL

*Carduelis cabaret*

### Scarce breeder and fairly common passage migrant and winter visitor.

The following table, which shows the approximate monthly totals, illustrates both the effect on records of the FMD restrictions, particularly in February and March, but also the influx, presumably from the continent, that occurred in October.

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Number of birds	123	104	16	175	272	64	33	11	38	1809	697	225
Number of sites	11	9	5	25	31	18	9	5	5	41	25	13

The largest counts for the first winter period were of a flock of 70 high in ash trees at South Harting at dusk on 16 Feb, 30 with Siskins at Coldwaltham SF on 26 Jan, parties of 20 at both Redgate Mill Fm on 7 Jan and at Troutbeck on 30 Jan, 19 at Weir Wood Res on 11 Feb, 15 at Dodds Hill, Nutley on 20 Jan, and parties of ten at Ambersham Common on 3 Jan and Millbrook, Ashdown Forest on 16 Jan.

During the period April to September, 72% of sightings came from various locations on Ashdown Forest. These totalled over 590 birds in 29 different 1-km squares. Large flocks in this area included 25 at Misbourne on 10 Apr, 40 at Nutley Windmill on 15 Apr, 15 at the Old Airstrip on 23 Apr and two flocks there of 18 and 57 on 6 May. All other parties were of ten or less. The records suggest that the number of territories in the county was between 50 and 65, comparable with 2000, with 50 to 55 being on Ashdown Forest. Elsewhere pairs were recorded at Bexleyhill near Lodsworth; St Leonards, Tilgate and Broadwater Forests; Brightling; Darwell and Eatenden Wood, Mountfield.

There was a marked influx during October. The first autumn migrants, 17 on 4 Oct, were noted at Pett Level. Small parties of eight to 12 were seen in the next few days at two coastal sites but the next significant movements were of 90 E at Littlehampton West Beach and 35 E at Church Norton on 21 Oct and 25 W there on the 29<sup>th</sup>. The largest day

counts during the month were, however, 130 at Combe Haven on the 16<sup>th</sup>, 110 at Climping Gap on the 21<sup>st</sup>, and 200 at Whitbread Hollow on the 29<sup>th</sup>. The month's totals for some coastal sites were just under 200 in the Selsey Bill/Church Norton area, 390 at Combe Haven and about 600 in the Beachy Head area. Significant movements virtually ended on 1 Nov when 210 W were counted at Church Norton. The last migrants were noted at Pett Level, with five on 28 Nov. As the table above shows, numbers dropped off rapidly during November and into December when no such movements were recorded.

The only subsequent significant counts were of 62 at Footland Wood, Vinehall Street on 15 Nov and 80 at Cottesmore GC, Crawley on 2 Dec. [JAH]

1666. **COMMON CROSSBILL**

*Loxia curvirostra*

**Scarce visitor occurring in large numbers in irruption years. Breeds occasionally.**

The decrease in numbers during the second half of 2000 continued into this year. However, numbers increased from June, in typical fashion for this species, as the following table of approximate numbers shows:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Number of birds	6	2	-	-	8	52	35	64	15	21	58	28
Number of sites	2	1	-	-	1	6	12	11	4	3	8	5

Birds were recorded at 25 sites during the year, of which six were on Ashdown Forest. Breeding was neither proven nor deemed probable at any of these though birds were seen in suitable nesting habitat at eight sites

The largest flocks seen in the summer were 30 at Ambersham Common on 22 Jun and 12 E at Beachy Head on 27 Aug. It was not until November that the next flocks larger than nine were seen with 16 at Lords Piece, Coates on the 13<sup>th</sup> and 14 at Footland Wood, Vinehall Street on the 15<sup>th</sup>. Numbers between six and nine were recorded at ten other sites, only two of which were coastal, comprising eight flying north over Rye Hbr on 26 Aug and nine at Church Norton on 4 Nov. There were a number of other records for coastal sites in the autumn comprising 3 W at Whitbread Hollow on 11 Aug and 1 W on the 16<sup>th</sup>, up to five at Toot Rock, Pett between 21 and 23 Aug, three over Lancing on 25 Aug, one over Beachy Head on 5 Sep and three at Toot Rock, Pett again on 28 Oct. At other near coastal sites there were 3 E at Hollingdean, Brighton on 22 Sep and 5 SW at Barnham on 29 Oct. [JAH]

1710. **BULLFINCH**

*Pyrrhula pyrrhula*

**Fairly common resident. Species of Conservation Concern in Sussex.**

There were 255 records from 131 different 1-km squares, a small reduction on the previous year.

During the breeding season, birds were either breeding or holding territory at some 54 sites across the county. There were at least 11 pairs in the Ashdown Forest area; at least four pairs at Cissbury Ring in 6.6 ha; four pairs at Hollington Lodge, Hastings; three territories at Troutbeck, near Eridge; and, two pairs at each of Footland Wood, Vinehall Street; Moulsecomb Wild Park, Brighton and Marline Wood, Hastings.

The only double figures counts were of 17 in Marline Wood, Hastings on 5 Nov with 14 there on 11 Dec, 15 in Stansted Forest on 9 Sep involving four family groups, presumably as a result of breeding locally, and 15 in Footland Wood on 2 Dec.

A total of 28 new birds was ringed at Cissbury Ring compared with 35 in 2000, 39 in 1999 and 28 in 1998. At Shoreham Sanctuary eight new birds were ringed and one ringed previously was retrapped, of which three were young and six were adult birds. Four birds were trapped at Weir Wood Res.

It is to be hoped that this year's reduction in the number of records is merely a result of FMD restrictions and that the importance of submitting records, especially of breeding pairs, continues to be recognised for a species which is in decline nationally and is of High Conservation Concern. [JAH]

1717. **HAWFINCH**

*Coccothraustes coccothraustes*

**Scarce breeding resident and very scarce passage migrant.**

There was a further slight increase with 25 records from 11 sites involving at least 25 birds. The monthly totals were as follows:

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
6	10	5	1	3	1	2	1	-	5	1	6

Breeding was considered probable at only two sites, Marline Wood, Hastings and at Footland Wood, Vinehall Street where a maximum of five was seen on 2 Dec following smaller numbers earlier in the year. The only other site where a larger number was recorded was Killigan Wood, Sedlescombe where at least six were recorded on 10 Feb but only two in May. At other sites, numbers seen did not exceed two. As in 2000, the species was recorded at five sites more than once and apart from those already mentioned these included records from Stapleash Fm, Chilgrove in January and December and from Rowlands Wood, Beckley in March and April. Perhaps the most unusual records were of singles at Sheepcote Valley, Brighton on 13 Oct and at Church Norton on 21 Oct. [JAH]

1850. **SNOW BUNTING**

*Plectophenas nivalis*

**Scarce passage migrant and winter visitor.**

There were only two records in the first part of the year: a single at Pett Level on 9 Jan and one (perhaps the same) flying over Rye Hbr Beach Reserve on the 13<sup>th</sup>. At the end of the year, there was a cluster of November records with singles at Brighton Marina on the 10<sup>th</sup>; in stubble near Swanborough Manor, Itford, an unusual site, on the 13-14<sup>th</sup> and at Rye Hbr from the 15<sup>th</sup>. What was presumably the same bird remained in the Rye Hbr area until the end of the year. Three turned up at Pett Level on 15 Dec and they were joined by two and then, on New Year's Eve, three more, on the sea wall opposite the Pools. This was the second poor year running. [CB]

1857. **YELLOWHAMMER**

*Emberiza citrinella*

**Fairly common resident.**

Reports came from eighteen localities in January and from sixteen in February (*cf.* 19 and 16 in 2000). Eleven of the February reports were from localities not mentioned in January, but this was probably a result of the mobility of observers rather than birds. Yellowhammers played their part in the mixed flock at Lee Fm, Patching, with 55 in mid January. There were six other double figure counts in these months. On 18 Feb 17 gathering at dusk on Iping Common were mainly males. Unusually, one flew north over

Brighton Marina on 19 Feb. At both Marsh Fm, Yapton and Sefter Fm, Pagham only singles were recorded on the *Winter Farm Census*. One was singing on Ashdown Forest on 15 Jan and two males were disputing territory there on 5 Feb. Elsewhere the first song was noted at Bewl Water on 21 Feb and at Stansted Forest on 24 Feb. That only five records were received for March (including one of a group of twenty at Spithandle Lane, Ashurst) was understandable given the impact of FMD restrictions. April, by contrast, brought many reports of territorial activity, notably from Ashdown Forest and for the areas from Pett north to the Rother, and north and west from Battle, where linear counts along the lanes revealed Yellowhammers to be widely distributed.

Counts for the breeding season included *ca.* 15 pairs in the Bignor Hill/Burton Down area, 12 pairs near Ditchling Beacon, ten pairs in Moulsecomb Wild Park, eight singing males at Combe Haven and the same number around Cissbury Ring. A search of the western commons on 1 Jun found eight pairs in 3 km<sup>2</sup> at Lavington; six at Hesworth; and three in 2 km<sup>2</sup> at Coates Common. There were also five singing males on Red House Common, Chailey. The coastal strip in the west also held a spread of breeding pairs, with seven singing males around Selsey West Fields. It is worth noting that a number of records were received from localities which rarely feature including three pairs at Bexleyhill, near Lodsworth, two pairs at Friday Street, Rusper and a male that sung for just one day in late June at Marline Wood, Hastings. At the Old Airstrip on Ashdown Forest, a female was seen carrying food on the last day of August

The last four months of the year were uneventful. The first flock was noted at Rackham on 9 Sep. Ten were at Wrens Warren, Ashdown Forest on 20 Oct, with five early in November and only three in mid December. The gathering at Uppertons Field, Pulborough Brooks, grew from five on 11 Nov to 15 the next day and 20 on 26 Nov, but apparently dispersed thereafter. A regular site, Beeding Cement Works, held 15 on 2 Dec. Elsewhere, groups were opportunistic with, for example, 40 in game cover at Stapleash Fm, Chilgrove on 7 Dec, and 25 near Seaford on the 9<sup>th</sup>. In all there were 30 reports from 21 localities in November and 16 from 14 in December (*cf.* 14 and six sites in 2000). [CB]

## 1866. **ORTOLAN BUNTING**

*Emberiza hortulana*

### **Very scarce, mainly autumn, visitor**

A female was seen at Cuckmere Haven on 10 May (JBe). It is the latest spring record by four days, the 14 seen previously during this season were between 21 April and 6 May. It is the 15<sup>th</sup> to be recorded since 1990, of which 11 were in autumn. [RJF]

**Fairly common resident, passage migrant and winter visitor. Species of Conservation Concern in Sussex.**

There were reports from 27 localities in January, with four double figure counts: 60 in a large mixed flock of finches and buntings at Lee Fm, Patching on the 17<sup>th</sup>; 35 in the lower Adur Valley on the 5<sup>th</sup>; 17 in stubble near Newhaven Fort on the 28<sup>th</sup>; and 15 near Beeding Cement Works on the 3<sup>rd</sup>. This suggested a very similar status to that of January 2000 (25 sites, four double figure counts). February brought eighteen reports from seventeen localities, ten of which had not featured in January. The Patching flock had fallen to 40 on 14 Feb. There was a roost of 30 at the Crows Nest, Ashdown Forest on 9 Feb. The *Winter Farm Census* at Sefter Fm, Pagham revealed five on 3 Jan and two on 5 Feb. Individual birds and small groups were very widely distributed, along the coast and coastal plain, in the river valleys, on the Downs and the commons, and at a number of other sites north of the Downs, for example, Partridge Green; Holmbush Tip, Faygate; and Weir Wood Res. Only 13 reports were received for March but eight of these were from new localities. The maximum for the month was 15 at Drove Marsh, Newhaven on the 6<sup>th</sup>. Three were regular visitors to a feeder at Ford during the month.

Birds were apparently on the move into April and beyond. Ones and twos were seen at Barcombe Res until 13 Apr; singles were seen at Weir Wood Res on four dates between 5 and 31 May; one visited Hastings CP on 8 May; and one was at Stump Bottom, Steyning on 6 Jun.

In the breeding season, the largest counts were from the Chichester Hbr/Selsey Peninsula area in the west and Rye Hbr in the east. In the former area there were 13 pairs at Thorney Island, where numbers seem to have stabilized, 3-6 pairs at Selsey West Fields, three pairs at Fishbourne and several pairs on Chichester GC, Hunston. At Rye Hbr there was a total of 37 pairs within the SSSI, compared with at least 40 in 2000, 50 in 1999 and 37 in 1998. Perhaps ten pairs were reported on Ashdown Forest, where numbers appear to have declined over the past few years, returning to the level of the mid-1990s. Elsewhere, there were at least three pairs at Shinewater Marsh, Eastbourne and two pairs at Newhaven Tide Mills. Birds were also reported from the Arun, Adur and Ouse Valleys, though in small numbers, and from some outlying inland sites, for example, Troutbeck, near Eridge (March and early April only); Forest Mere, Liphook; and Robertsbridge

Post breeding movements were noted from the end of August. One was at Holmbush Tip on the 27<sup>th</sup> and ten at Old Salts Fm, Lancing on the 31<sup>st</sup>. There were only ten reports for August and eight for September other than from Pett Level where an increase was noted from 20 Sep rising to a maximum of 40 on 27 Oct. October brought more reports of flocks from both the western harbours and Ashdown Forest. In the former area there were maximum counts of 30 at Sidlesham Ferry Long Pool on the 16<sup>th</sup>; Thorney Deepes on the 22<sup>nd</sup>; and The Severals, Church Norton on the 28<sup>th</sup> while in the latter area there were 70 around Wrens Warren on the 20<sup>th</sup>. Numbers on Ashdown Forest remained high right through to the end of the year, with at least 100 in the Wrens Warren area on 22 Nov and 60 there on 30 Dec. These were significant early winter counts by recent county standards. Elsewhere, 20 were at Pulborough Brooks on 26 Nov, 24 at Sidlesham Ferry Long Pool on 23 Nov; and 30 at Beeding Cement Works on 2 Dec. The *Winter Farm Census* at Sefter Fm, Pagham recorded two on 18 Dec. A report of one at Holmbush Tip on 28 Oct was accompanied by the despairing comment 'dismally low numbers nowadays'. [CB]



**Fairly common but decreasing resident. Species of Conservation Concern in Sussex.**

January brought reports from 15 sites (*cf.* 17 in 2000, nine in 1999). These included *ca.* 50 (with many other finches and buntings) in maize and millet game cover at Lee Fm, Patching on the 17<sup>th</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup>, 25 at Newmarket Hill on the 13<sup>th</sup>, 20 at Beeding Cement Works on the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 12 at Selsey West Fields on the 13<sup>th</sup>. A flock of 13-14 spent January and February on Pilsey Island. There were, sadly, only four records in February and five in March though this was perhaps a reflection of FMD restrictions. A flock at Rye Hbr built up from eight in mid March to 15 in mid April. The only record from north of the Downs was of three at North Cocking on 3 Jan.

Breeding season records showed concentrations around Chichester Hbr, on the coastal plain around Chichester and Bognor and on the Downs behind Worthing (especially at Cissbury and Steep Down). Two further clusters were between Falmer and Beachy Head, and around Rye. At Sheepcote Valley, Brighton, there were five singing males in late May but there was no evidence of breeding. The hints that males are either not finding mates or that breeding attempts are failing were reinforced by the fact that only one family party was reported at Steyning Round Hill.

There may have been some movement in early August given that six at Alfriston on the 1<sup>st</sup> had increased to 12 two days later, and ten at Beachy Head on the 12<sup>th</sup> was the largest count of the year there. There were only three October records comprising 11 at Telscombe on the 15<sup>th</sup>; 19-20 at Mill Hill, Shoreham on the 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup>, and, one at Thorney Island on the 21<sup>st</sup>. The latter was the only record there from August to mid-December. Seven records in November included five at Pett Level on the 11<sup>th</sup> where the species is now rarely recorded. Reports came from only eight sites in December (six in 2000, nine in 1999), with a maximum of 30 on Newmarket Hill on the 2<sup>nd</sup>. Both Gardeners Hill, Newhaven, and Thorney Island held *ca.* 15 at the end of the year.

There was no sign of recovery in the Corn Bunting's fortunes this year. [CB]

## ESCAPES and FERAL BIRDS

All records of BOU Category C or D 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 2001 (unless stated otherwise). It should be noted that the identity of these birds has not been assessed by the Records Committee. Birds that can not be ascribed to species, or family are excluded. Nomenclature and taxonomy generally follows Howard & Moore (1991). Useful references are Madge & Burn (1988) (wildfowl), Juniper & Parr (1998) (parrots), Clement *et al* (1993) (finches) and Vriends (1988) (cage birds). List compiled by Richard Fairbank unless indicated otherwise.

- Clement P, Harris A & Davis J 1993. *Finches & Sparrows: an identification guide*. Helm.
- Howard, R & Moore, A 1991. *A Complete Checklist of the Birds of the World* (2nd Edition). Academic Press.
- Juniper, T & Parr, M 1998. *Parrots: A Guide to the Parrots of the World*. Pica Press.
- Madge S & Burn H 1988. *Wildfowl: an identification guide to the ducks, geese and swans of the world*. Helm.
- Ogilvie, M A *et al* 2001. Non-native birds breeding in the United Kingdom in 1999. *Brit. Birds* 94:518-522.
- Vriends, M M 1988. *The MacDonald Encyclopaedia of Cage and Aviary Birds*. MacDonald Orbis.

### WHITE PELICAN

*Pelecanus onocrotalus*

**Breeds in SE Europe but commoner in Africa and S Asia.** Escapes from captivity are infrequent, but often wander widely.

One at Sidlesham Ferry on 3 May was seen flying south over Selsey Bill on the 4<sup>th</sup>. Impressive as it obviously was, its specific identification has not been accepted by *British Birds* although it had a damaged wing and was probably the individual first seen in the county in November 2000 (*SxBR* 53:165) before moving on to Essex and Hertfordshire (where it was reported occasionally up to March 2001).

### WHITE STORK

*Ciconia ciconia*

**A rare vagrant from continental Europe, mainly in the spring.** In most years two or three escapes are at large in the UK, often wandering widely.

See the main report for details of an escape seen in the county during the early part of the year.

### BLACK SWAN

*Cygnus atratus*

**Common resident throughout much of Australia and New Zealand.** Commonly kept in wildfowl collections, full-winged birds are liable to wander. Escaped pairs bred at two locations in UK in 1999 (Ogilvie *et al* (2001)).

An increase in records and the first instance of breeding in the county. The individual seen at Arlington Res at the end of 2000 (*SxBR* 53:166) was present at this site or in the

Cuckmere Valley throughout the year, with two at Exceat Bridge on 15 Feb and a pair at Combe Haven on 18 Feb. One was in the Emsworth/Thorney area from 3 Jan to 2 May and again between 11 Aug and the end of the year, while two seen at Amberley on 29 Jan were presumably the pair present with 4-5 cygnets in late April. In May singles were seen on the R. Adur by Shoreham Airport on the 24<sup>th</sup> and at Southwater Quarry on the 30<sup>th</sup> while a pair was again seen at Benbow Pond, Cowdray on 16 Jun. One was seen near Wiston Pond on 27 Jul, three at Coldwaltham Brooks on 8 Aug and one on Henfield Levels in three dates in Nov. There is some inevitable duplication involved in these records.

### **BAR-HEADED GOOSE**

*Anser indicus*

**Breeds central Asia, migrates S to N India for winter.** A favourite bird at wildfowl collections, individuals or even small groups can wander on occasions. Up to eight escaped pairs bred in UK in 1999 (Ogilvie *et al* (2001)).

An unprecedented 22, including eight juveniles, were seen at Colner Creek, Chichester Hbr on 1 Sep and may have originated from a foreign feral population. Single individuals were then seen on Ivy Lake, Chichester GP on 24 Sep, around Pagham Hbr from 10 Oct to 10 Nov and at Greatham Bridge on 26 Dec. It is likely that at least the first two of these sightings related to the same individual.

### **SNOW GOOSE**

*Anser caerulescens*

**Breeds arctic N America, winters southern USA and Mexico.** Presumed vagrants in UK most winters but greatly outnumbered by escapes. Two escaped pairs bred in Hampshire in 1999, raising five young (Ogilvie *et al* (2001)).

Five white morph individuals continued to be seen at Scotney Court GP (*SxBR* 53:166), remaining until at least 13 Feb. Two were seen there on 9 Mar and four from at least 18 Aug to the year's end. A blue morph was seen on nearby Lydd Ranges on 26 Jun. Away from the far east of the county one was seen at Barcombe Res on 9 Feb, a white morph adult flew NE over Worthing on 8 May, one was seen at Thorney Deeps on 19 Aug and two at Arlington Res on 16 Sep, with one there on the 23<sup>rd</sup>. The May individual is perhaps the most interesting although all most likely relate to escapes from captivity.

### **EMPEROR GOOSE**

*Anser canagicus*

**Breeding mainly confined to Alaska, winters Aleutian Islands.** Present in many wildfowl collections.

The two birds recorded at either end of the county in 1999 and 2000 (*SxBR* 52:157 & 53:166) were seen in 2001, although, as in 2000, the individual at Thorney Deeps was not seen after 21 Jan. The other, at Scotney Court GP, was recorded in January, July, August and November.

## MUSCOVY DUCK

*Cairina moschata*

**Locally common resident in forest lakes of Central and South America.** Widespread in its domesticated form. Five pairs were present in Surrey in 1999 and one probably bred (Ogilvie *et al* (2001)).

Singles were seen in June at Rock Common, Washington on the 24<sup>th</sup> and at Bodiam on the 27<sup>th</sup>.

## RINGED TEAL

*Calometta leucophrys*

**Restricted to forested pools and marshes in central South America.** An attractive duck, often in wildfowl collections (e.g. Arundel WWT).

A female was seen at Coldwaltham Brooks during 7 to 14 Jan while a male was shot on Pevensey Levels on 21 Nov.

## MANED GOOSE (AUSTRALIAN WOOD DUCK)

*Chenonetta jubata*

**Widespread and common resident in Australia.** Present in many wildfowl collections (e.g. Arundel WWT).

One was present on Arundel water meadows on 17 Mar and two at Barcombe on 25 Aug.

## CHILOE WIGEON

*Anas sibilatrix*

**Common resident in southern South America.** Commonly kept in wildfowl collections.

Single males were seen at Rye Hbr on 25-27 May, Arlington Res on 8-10 Aug, Rye Hbr during 18 Aug to 16 Sep and at Pett Level Pools on 31 Dec. It seems likely that two individuals were involved.

## GREY TEAL

*Anas gibberifrons*

**Widespread in Indonesia and Australasia.** For a dull bird it is surprisingly commonly kept in captivity.

One was seen on Lewes Brooks on 11 Sep.

## BAHAMA (or WHITE-CHEEKED) PINTAIL

*Anas bahamensis*

**West Indies and South America, where mainly coastal.** Commonly kept in wildfowl collections, where the white variant (unknown in the wild) is regular.

One, presumably a male, was seen at Barcombe Res on 8 and 16 Apr.

## HARRIS'S HAWK

*Parabuteo unicinctus*

**Widespread but patchily distributed from the southern USA to Patagonia.** Popular with falconers.

One flew west at Beeding Cement Works on 2 Apr with presumably the same individual west at Brighton Marina on 5 May.

## **RED-TAILED HAWK**

*Buteo jamaicensis*

**Commonly breeds throughout much of N America and the Caribbean, some move S in winter as far as Central America.** Perhaps the most commonly kept Buteo in captivity.

One at Kitchen Wood, Guestling on 22 Apr was probably the bird seen in the same general area on three occasions in 2000 (SxBR 53:167).

## **SAKER**

*Falco cherrug*

**Mainly scarce resident from central Europe to N India, common on the Tibetan plateau.** Popular with falconers.

An adult seen at Pagham Hbr on 9 Sep and 10 Oct was presumably the individual seen irregularly in western harbours during 1999 and 2000 (SxBR 52:159 & 53:167).

## **LANNER**

*Falco biarmicus*

**Mainly resident in southeast Europe, Africa and west Asia.**

A bird with jesses seen in Burgess Hill on 22 Aug was considered to be an escaped Lanner or a hybrid. Hybrids are particularly popular with falconers and escaped birds present significant identification problems.

## **CHUKAR PARTRIDGE**

*Alectoris chukar*

**Common resident from SE Europe to the Himalayas.** Introduced in UK under license to early 1990s but banned from 1992/93.

Records of this species in the county in the late 1990s have been withdrawn by the observer.

## **COMMON PEA FOWL**

*Pavo cristatus*

**Wild birds are restricted to the Indian subcontinent.** A traditional (and spectacular) favourite in ornamental gardens.

One was seen walking along a road at Etchingham on 30 Dec.

## **COCKATIEL**

*Nymphicus hollandicus*

**Common Australian nomad.** One of the commonest aviary birds.

Single individuals were seen at Thorney Island (19 Feb, an identical date to 2000), Brooklands, Worthing (8 Apr), Stone Cross, Pevensey (24 Jun), Gossops Green (4 Jul), Pagham Hbr (6 Aug), Newmarket Hill and Sussex University (23-24 Aug), Hassocks (4 Oct), Hove (5 Oct) and Iping Common (28 Oct). A typical scatter of records with few in the colder months, most likely reflecting the birds' poor survival prospects in winter.

## **ROSELLA sp**

*Platycercus sp.*

**Six species of rosella occur in Australia** (with two having been introduced into New Zealand).

One flew south over Beachy Head on 3 May.

## **GREY PARROT**

*Psittacus erithacus*

**Common in West and Central Africa where large tracts of forest remain.** Birds in captivity are apparently talented mimics and usually very affectionate.

One was seen in lower Cuckmere Valley on 6 Oct.

## **BURROWING PARROT (PATAGONIAN CONURE)** *Cyanoliseus patagonus*

**Mainly resident in southern South America where locally common, but declining.** One of the most attractive of the smaller South American parrots, but expensive, very noisy and quite destructive. Free-flying birds are present at Gatwick Zoo.

One was seen at Three Bridges on 5 Aug.

## **GREAT HORNED OWL**

*Bubo virginianus*

**Widespread in semi-open areas across North America and south to Peru.**

One was seen at Thorney Island on three dates in Jan before being recaptured on 1 Feb and returned to its owner. It had been seen roosting in a yew tree in the church yard at Thorney Island on four dates between 31 Oct and 12 Nov 2000.

## **INDIAN SILVERBILL**

*Lonchura malabarica*

**Widespread and locally common across Indian subcontinent and eastern Arabia.** A small escaped population has bred in Israel since 1988. Considered suitable for community aviaries.

One at the North Wall, Pagham Hbr on 17 Sep 2000.

## **YELLOW-FRONTED CANARY**

*Serinus mozambicus*

**Common and widespread across much of sub-Saharan Africa.** A popular cage bird, it apparently has much to recommend it – longevity, hardiness and a pleasant song.

One was seen at Hastings CP on 18 Aug.

## **ORANGE (or NORTHERN RED) BISHOP**

*Euplectes franciscanus*

**Widespread and, in places, very common across Africa between the Sahara and the Equator.** Requires a large, well-planted aviary.

A male in breeding plumage was seen in a garden in Warninglid in early December.

## Arrival and departure dates of summer visitors, 2001

	First recorded date			Last recorded date		
	2001	Prior to 2001	10yr average ( $\pm$ SD in days)	2001	Prior to 2001	10yr average ( $\pm$ SD in days)
<b>Garganey</b>	01 Mar	02 Feb	27 Feb ( $\pm$ 15)	22 Sep	13 Dec	29 Sep ( $\pm$ 16)
<b>Osprey</b>	07 Mar <sup>1</sup>	10 Mar	25 Mar ( $\pm$ 10)	03 Nov	09 Dec	23 Oct ( $\pm$ 21)
<b>Hobby</b>	06 Apr	03 Apr	15 Apr ( $\pm$ 6)	02 Nov	06 Nov	23 Oct ( $\pm$ 10)
<b>Quail</b>	12 Jun	08 Feb	16 May ( $\pm$ 25)	15 Nov	31 Oct	24 Sep ( $\pm$ 27)
<b>Little Ringed Plover</b>	16 Mar	06 Mar	20 Mar ( $\pm$ 4)	17 Sep	08 Oct	20 Sep ( $\pm$ 8)
<b>Wood Sandpiper</b>	06 May	11 Feb	27 Apr ( $\pm$ 11)	27 Oct	16 Nov	03 Oct ( $\pm$ 21)
<b>Pomarine Skua<sup>3</sup></b>	21 Apr	10 Mar	19 Apr ( $\pm$ 7)	28 Dec	31 Dec	18 Oct ( $\pm$ 65)
<b>Roseate tern</b>	24 Apr	17 Apr	01 May ( $\pm$ 9)	21 Aug	30 Sep	30 Jul ( $\pm$ 28)
<b>Common Tern</b>	25 Mar	21 Mar	30 Mar ( $\pm$ 7)	01 Nov	26 Nov	30 Oct ( $\pm$ 14)
<b>Arctic Tern</b>	14 Apr	05 Apr	16 Apr ( $\pm$ 9)	20 Oct	23 Nov	24 Oct ( $\pm$ 22)
<b>Common/Arctic Tern</b>	27 Mar	10 Mar	28 Mar ( $\pm$ 6)	18 Oct	31 Dec	25 Oct ( $\pm$ 16)
<b>Little Tern</b>	10 Apr	02 Apr	09 Apr ( $\pm$ 5)	12 Sep	04 Nov	26 Sep ( $\pm$ 10)
<b>Black Tern</b>	24 Apr	04 Apr	16 Apr ( $\pm$ 6)	15 Oct	21 Nov	08 Oct ( $\pm$ 8)
<b>Turtle Dove</b>	09 Apr	22 Mar	14 Apr ( $\pm$ 10)	15 Oct	18 Dec	13 Oct ( $\pm$ 7)
<b>Cuckoo</b>	01 Apr	15 Mar	31 Mar ( $\pm$ 8)	20 Sep	11 Nov	29 Sep ( $\pm$ 14)
<b>Nightjar</b>	05 May	08 Apr	01 May ( $\pm$ 11)	29 Sep	05 Nov	18 Sep ( $\pm$ 24)
<b>Swift</b>	12 Apr	07 Apr	15 Apr ( $\pm$ 6)	30 Oct	25 Nov	17 Oct ( $\pm$ 18)
<b>Wryneck</b>	No rec	09 Mar	15 Apr ( $\pm$ 16)	07 Oct	02 Nov	05 Oct ( $\pm$ 10)
<b>Sand Martin</b>	12 Mar	04 Mar	10 Mar ( $\pm$ 6)	16 Oct	05 Dec	25 Oct ( $\pm$ 12)
<b>Swallow</b>	20 Mar	04 Feb	10 Mar ( $\pm$ 13)	15 Dec	26 Dec	29 Nov ( $\pm$ 11)
<b>House Martin</b>	24 Mar	01 Feb	19 Mar ( $\pm$ 11)	18 Nov	18 Dec	27 Nov ( $\pm$ 11)
<b>Tree pipit</b>	01 Apr	17 Mar	30 Mar ( $\pm$ 10)	27 Oct	09 Nov	21 Oct ( $\pm$ 9)
<b>Yellow Wagtail</b>	16 Mar	10 Mar	20 Mar ( $\pm$ 6)	30 Oct	23 Nov	03 Nov ( $\pm$ 15)
<b>Nightingale</b>	05 Apr	21 Mar	06 Apr ( $\pm$ 5)	13 Sep	19 Oct	13 Sep ( $\pm$ 7)
<b>Redstart</b>	31 Mar	13 Mar	24 Mar ( $\pm$ 8)	27 Oct	11 Dec	23 Oct ( $\pm$ 18)
<b>Whinchat</b>	13 Apr	18 Feb	30 Mar ( $\pm$ 21)	11 Nov	02 Dec	04 Nov ( $\pm$ 12)
<b>Wheatear</b>	07 Mar	13 Feb	02 Mar ( $\pm$ 7)	13 Nov	19 Dec	15 Nov ( $\pm$ 15)
<b>Ring Ouzel</b>	24 Mar	02 Feb	17 Mar ( $\pm$ 18)	11 Nov	26 Dec	22 Nov ( $\pm$ 15)
<b>Grasshopper Warbler</b>	12 Apr	04 Apr	13 Apr ( $\pm$ 5)	30 Oct	01 Nov	15 Oct ( $\pm$ 9)
<b>Sedge Warbler</b>	30 Mar	27 Mar	03 Apr ( $\pm$ 5)	20 Oct	29 Oct	14 Oct ( $\pm$ 5)
<b>Reed Warbler</b>	07 Apr	07 Apr	12 Apr ( $\pm$ 5)	01 Nov	13 Nov	02 Nov ( $\pm$ 10)
<b>Lesser Whitethroat</b>	12 Apr	04 Apr	14 Apr ( $\pm$ 7)	14 Oct	21 Nov	18 Oct ( $\pm$ 12)
<b>Whitethroat</b>	01 Apr	19 Mar	05 Apr ( $\pm$ 4)	14 Oct	17 Dec	22 Oct ( $\pm$ 16)
<b>Garden Warbler</b>	01 Apr	01 Apr	08 Apr ( $\pm$ 6)	16 Oct	16 Nov	23 Oct ( $\pm$ 12)
<b>Wood Warbler</b>	25 Apr	07 Apr	19 Apr ( $\pm$ 7)	23 Aug	01 Oct	07 Sep ( $\pm$ 13)
<b>Willow Warbler</b>	18 Mar	04 Mar	13 Mar ( $\pm$ 7)	11 Oct	26 Dec	24 Oct ( $\pm$ 12)
<b>Spotted Flycatcher</b>	01 May	08 Apr	23 Apr ( $\pm$ 10)	11 Oct	18 Nov	15 Oct ( $\pm$ 10)
<b>Pied Flycatcher</b>	01 Apr <sup>1</sup>	03 Apr	08 Apr ( $\pm$ 7)	29 Sep	01 Nov	03 Oct ( $\pm$ 5)

## Departure and arrival dates of winter visitors, 2001

	Last recorded date			First recorded date		
	2001	Prior to 2001	10 yr average ( $\pm$ SD) in days	2001	Prior to 2001	10 yr average ( $\pm$ SD) in days
Black-throated Diver	20 May	19 Jun	02 Jun ( $\pm$ 8)	01 Nov	03 Aug	03 Oct ( $\pm$ 24)
Great Northern Diver	08 May	21 Jun	01 May ( $\pm$ 22)	16 Sep	09 Oct	02 Nov ( $\pm$ 27)
Red-necked Grebe	23 Apr	19 Jun	02 May ( $\pm$ 17)	12 Sep	18 Aug	11 Sep ( $\pm$ 16)
Bewick's Swan	05 Mar	26 Apr	13 Mar ( $\pm$ 15)	01 Nov	15 Oct	30 Oct ( $\pm$ 9)
White-fronted Goose <sup>4</sup>	24 Feb	17 Apr	19 Mar ( $\pm$ 20)	14 Nov	12 Sep	12 Oct ( $\pm$ 48)
Long-tailed Duck	05 May	11 Jun	26 Apr ( $\pm$ 29)	05 Nov	23 Aug	27 Oct ( $\pm$ 30)
Velvet Scoter	08 May	15 Jun	16 May ( $\pm$ 13)	02 Nov	12 Aug	18 Oct ( $\pm$ 22)
Goldeneye <sup>5</sup>	12 May	23 May	22 Apr ( $\pm$ 18)	12 Sep	06 Aug	04 Oct ( $\pm$ 28)
Smew	09 Mar	24 Apr	04 Mar ( $\pm$ 29)	15 Dec	03 Nov	06 Dec ( $\pm$ 13)
Goosander	12 Mar	22 May	27 Mar ( $\pm$ 36)	10 Dec	12 Sep	25 Oct ( $\pm$ 26)
Hen Harrier	27 May	19 June	15 May ( $\pm$ 21)	06 Oct	04 Aug	01 Sep ( $\pm$ 21)
Purple Sandpiper	13 May	26 May	11 May ( $\pm$ 7)	01 Jul <sup>1</sup>	09 Jul	15 Aug ( $\pm$ 44)
Jack Snipe	19 May	19 May	01 May ( $\pm$ 15)	15 Sep	29 Aug	17 Sep ( $\pm$ 15)
Water Pipit	28 Apr	28 May	13 Apr ( $\pm$ 20)	01 Nov	01 Sep	22 Oct ( $\pm$ 14)
Fieldfare	02 May	05 Jun	24 Apr ( $\pm$ 13)	14 Oct	13 Aug	25 Sep ( $\pm$ 19)
Redwing	30 Mar	26 May	15 Apr ( $\pm$ 16)	20 Sep	06 Aug	15 Sep ( $\pm$ 16)
Great Grey Shrike	12 Apr	14 May	26 Mar ( $\pm$ 26)	17 Oct	26 Sep	17 Oct ( $\pm$ 8)
Brambling	12 Apr	12 May	23 Apr ( $\pm$ 9)	30 Sep	13 Sep	30 Sep ( $\pm$ 10)

### Arrival and Departure Dates

To make a clear cut-off between arrival and departure dates all January records have been omitted from the table of summer visitors and from the calculation of mean dates and all July dates from the table of winter visitors with the exception of Purple Sandpiper, which have returned to their winter grounds in July for the last four years. The January and July dates are to be found as footnotes. The large numbers of terns seen at sea-watches to which a specific identification could not be ascribed have been included as Common/Arctic Tern. The early dates are most likely to refer to Common Tern and the later ones could be either Common or Arctic.

The ten year average is included to indicate if the date for 2000 is unusual. The standard deviation gives an indication of the reliability of the average (64% of values fall within one standard deviation). For example, a standard deviation of  $\pm 7$  means that 64% of the dates fall within 7 days of that average.

1. Earliest county record.
2. Latest county record
3. Pomarine Skua seen on two dates in Jan.
4. White-fronted Goose on 8 Apr considered to be a feral bird.
5. Goldeneye: two records in Jun.



## CONTRIBUTORS AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS, 2001

We are grateful to the following observers for records for the 2001 *Sussex Bird Report*.

J Adams	CLG Brand	PR Cullen	D Geere
SR Allen	PM Brayshaw	J Curson	R Geere (RGe)
N Ansell	C Brooks	SPM Curson	S Gilbert
A Appleby	P Brown (PBr)		KB Gillam
AC Armitage	M Buckley	RE Dalby	J Glover
M Austin	J Bujok (JBU)	JM Daykin	DJ Golds
	KR Burch	CH Dean	B Goodchild
JWP Bacon	B Burns	M Denness	J Goodchild
M Baggs	AF Burtenshaw	D Dey	H Gordon
J Bagley	SJ Burtenshaw	B Dickeson	MK Gostling
G Bagnell		S Diserens	R Gould
D Baker	T Callaway	NA Driver	JS Gowers
M Baker	IK Callister	NI Dunsmore-Rouse	G Gowlett
A Baldey	A Cameron	G Durey	GP Green
PC Bance	G Carrington		N Greenaway
DG Barber	A Carter	AR Eales	RR Greenhalf
C Barfield	B Carter	B Easlea	G Gregory
GK Barker	R Carver	JR Easton	AJ Guest
IT Barnard	GL Champion	RDM Edgar	AC Gutteridge
M Barnard	B Chapman	B Edmonds	
MH Barnard	RH Charlwood	P Edwards	K Hackett
A Barrett	CL Charman	TJ Edwards	P Hadland (PHA)
R Batchelor	I Chatterjee	M Emberson	D Hall
R Beal	F Clarke	RD Evans	JA Hall
J Beale (JBe)	BR Clay	AN Everett	MP Hall
G Beck	GA Cockburn	P Everett	J Hargreaves
P Beckett	S Cocker		R Harman (RHa)
S Bedford	E Colgate	IJJ Faichnie	N Harris
JSS Beesley	CB Collins	RJ Fairbank	P Harris
C Bentley	MA Collins	JA Feest	PM Harris
V Bentley	M Constantine	B Fellows	RG Harris
K Benyon-Tinker	AS Cook	AR Fenton	JR Havers
RW Berry	A Cookney	BH Flack	K Hearne
G Binns	D Cooper	N Fletcher	MJ Helps
LR Bird	DR Cooper	BF Forbes	D Henderson
J Birdsey (JBir)	I Cooper	A Ford	S Henderson
J Birkett	JF Cooper	CJ Fox	R Henning
S Birnstingl	K Cooper	T Freed	PKW Herbert
J Boardman	A Cotton (ACo)	MG Freeman	JL Herring
R Bond	R Crane	R French	DC Heryett
C Booty	A Crawford	A Frith	A Hillman
JF Boulcott	DE Crawley	D Fry	SR Hilton
AL Bowley	S Cross	F Fuller	JA Hobson
PS Bowley	MR Crowe		AJ Holcombe

AM Holden	IT Lewis	S Parker	P Selby
LG Holloway	SH Linington	TW Parmenter	MV Sennitt
R Holmes	AH Lloyd	B Pask	M Shaft
CA Holt	D Loftus	PT Patton	JP Shaughnessey
JC Holt	R Lowe	SJ Patton	CR Shawyer
CE Hope	C Lowmass	PN Paul	D Shepherd
J Houlden	JC Luck	RT Pepper	MB Shepherd
A House (AH)	PJ Luffingham	A Perry	A Simpson
D Hughes	B Lynn Jenkins	A Phillips	IM Simpson
G Hughes		J Phillips	K Simpson
MA Hughes	D Madgin	MJ Phillips	RN Simpson
P Hughes	E Mallion (EMa)	S Phillips	D Smith
J Hunt	L Manns	CR Poole	DI Smith
	C Marrable	NJN Pope	GSJ Smith
RA Ives	L Marshall	A de Potier	PA Smith
	E Martin	WR Potter	R Smith
B James	MJ Mason	MG Prince	S Smith (SSm)
BD James	R Mason	RW Prior	YB Smith
P James	DW Mawford	D Pritty	JF Smitherman
R James	S Mayo	H Pugh	R Smithers
P Jeffries	J McCleary		M Spicer
PJ Johnson	S McKenzie (SM)	B Rackstraw	T Squire
RJ Johnson	E McLeod	TK Rackstraw	A Squires
KM Johnston	N Merchant	ND Rawlings	I Standivan
M Jones	B Metcalfe	CJ Raymond	JC Steedman
P Jones	V Miles	EM Raynor	NJ Steer
CB Joyce	O Mitchell	RC Reavell	MJ Stenning
D Julian	P Moon	N Redman	R Storkey
	CE Morris	JE Richardson	PJ Strangeman
A Kazantzis	BM Mortlock	SC Richardson	C Sutton
B Kelley	DC Mortlock	GCM Roberts	GA Sutton
I Kelly	B Murray	JH Ross	S Sutton
G Kennett		G Rumsey	
D King	M Neatherway	SJR Rumsey	CA Taylor
JW King	P Neatherway	Rye Bay Ringing Group	C Tazzyman
RM Kirk	JA Newnham		A Thomas
AR Kitson	J Nobbs	D Sadler	NJ Thomas
R Knight	K Noble	RF Sanderson	P Thompson
	R Norman	RJ Sandison (RJSa)	RJ Thorne
M Lambert	M Nowers	G Saunders (GSa)	R Ticehurst
M Lanaway		RA Saunders	PC Tinning
DC Lang	JF O Driscoll	RJ Saunders	R Tofts
O Laugharne	M O Shea	B Savage	PM Troake
CD Law	RA Owen	G Scholey	JE Trowell
P Lawrence	RC Owen	RE Scott	P Trubshawe
HJA Lee		M Scott-ham	WH Truckle
P Lees	J Parish	E Sears	M Turner
MP LeGrys	BJ Parker	CM Seaton	

R Unite	C Watkins	C White (CWh)	R Wilsdon
MC Upstone	P Watkins	GC White	PJ Wilson (PJWi)
ED Urquhart	AB Watson	P White (PWh)	TJ Wilson
	RF Watson	L Whitehead	R Wood
CA Walker	AJ Wende	AM Whitman	CW Woodburn
D Walker	DR West	JH Whitman	
P Walker	JD Weston	BE Williams	BJ Yates
C Wansbury	AD Whitcomb	R Williamson	
LA Ward	IJ Whitcomb	J Willsher	
M Wardle	PJ Whitcomb (PJWh)	HMV Wilsdon	

## 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 2001 were: M Baggs, D Buckingham, J Hargreaves, R Henning, R Knight, PJ Luffingham, Mrs BM Mortlock, Dr JA Newnham, I Standivan, M Scott-ham, S Sutton, Dr AB Watson.

**Wetland Bird Survey (WeBS):** Monthly counts were carried out for this BTO/WWT/RSPB/JNCC survey and organised by CD Lowmass, 33 Barn Close, Seaford, East Sussex. Counts for Chichester Harbour were organised by Ms A de Potier, Harbour Office, Chichester Harbour Conservancy, Itchenor, Chichester, West Sussex. Thanks are due to the two survey organisers and to the following counters: J Badley, PC Bance, C Barfield, K Benyon-Tinker, G Binns, Dr C Brooks, M Buckley, T Callaway, D Carey, R Carver, Mrs E Catlett, Dr J Chapman, T Clements, GA Cockburn, Mrs S Cocker, CB Collins, C Cook, I Cooper, T Dalrymple, R Davison, Ms A de Potier, C Dewhurst, G Durey, AR Eales, J Easton, RDM Edgar, P Edwards, M Emery, S Evans, Mrs AN Everett, Dr B Fellows, M Freeman, R French, D Fry, S. Gilbert, J Glover, DJ Golds, J Gowen, NM Greenaway, RR Greenhalf, G Griffin, RG Harris, JL Herring, D Heryett, R Hill, DA & Mrs SR Hilton, M Holmes, J Houlden, A House, P Huges, Mrs B James, P Jones, D Julian, A Kirkwood, Ms J Knight, R Knight, DC Lang, I Lang, HJA Lee, P Lees, M Love, CD Lowmass, R Morris, Mrs BM Mortlock, Dr JA Newnham, Ms S Patton, RT Pepper, J Phillips, M Phillips, W Potter, B Puttock, T Quittenden, CJ Raymond, S Richardson, R Robinson, S Robinson, B Savage, P Selby, J Sharpe, A and Mrs IM Simpson, Ms C Skinner, DI Smith, M Smith, P Smith, S Smith, T Squire, R Storkey, Miss CA Taylor, P Troake, JE Trowell, ED Urquhart, Ms C Vince, M Welcome, J Weston, B Williams, RLC Williamson, J Willsher, PJ Wilson, R Wingfield, H Wingfield-Hayes, CW and Mrs KI Woodburn, K and Mrs J Wright, and Dr BJ Yates.

**Seabird 2000 Survey:-** This three year survey was organised by Ewan Urquhart. Those assisting were:- J Baker, C Barfield, D Boddington, Dr C Brooks, J Burgess, T Buttle, BR Clay, S Cross, RDM Edgar, R Edney, BF Forbes, P Forsdick, K Hearne, RA Ives, A Johnson, R Knight, C Law, C Lowmass, P Luffingham, O Mitchell, M & P Neatherway, Dr JA Newnham, J Nobbs, C Pennells, RT Pepper, R Pulley, J Reaney, R Sandison, K Simpson, DI Smith, D Standing, I Standivan, R Storkey, C Taylor, R Tofts, Dr AB Watson, D West, P Whitcomb, and A Whitehead.

**Breeding Bird Survey:** This BTO annual national breeding survey, based on selected one km squares, is organised in Sussex by Dr AB Watson.

**Thames Basin and Wealden Heaths Breeding Bird Survey:** This continuing survey of heaths and heath woodlands is undertaken in collaboration with the RSPB and the bird clubs of Berkshire, Hampshire and Surrey. The Sussex organiser is A Perry, Edgehill Barn, Byworth near Petworth West Sussex. The survey was cancelled in 2001 due to FMD.

**Co-ordination of Spring Sea-watching 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 to March 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 Chichester Harbour from Ms A de Potier; Thorney and Pilsey Islands from CB and Mrs MA Collins; Selsey Bill from BJ Carter and O Mitchell; Pagharn Harbour from B Williams and Mrs S Patton; Pulborough Brooks from T Callaway and P Hughes; Worthing from Dr JA Newnham; Weir Wood Reservoir from Mrs BM Mortlock; Brighton Marina from IJ Whitcomb; Ashdown Forest from R Harman and D King; Bewl Water from PC Bance; Beachy Head from RDM Edgar; Splash Point, Seaford, from BR Gilmore; Glyne Gap, Bexhill from I Standivan; Icklesham from J Willsher, Pett Level from JAB Gale; and at Rye Harbour from Dr BJ Yates.

Thanks are due to RDM Edgar for maintaining detailed records of ringing in the county and to all ringers who contributed data.

The Recorder is especially grateful to Dr JA Newnham and the following team of helpers for coding and inputting the records onto the computer: L Bird, R Bond, PM Brayshaw, Dr C Brooks, T Callaway, BR Clay, Mrs S Cocker, CB Collins, DE Crawley, J Curson, Ms A de Potier, C Dean, RDM Edgar, Mrs AN Everitt, RJ Fairbank, B Fellows, BR Gilmore, J Gowers, AC Gutteridge, K Hearne, AM Holden, CE Hope, A House, RA Ives, P James, D King, R Knight, C Law, S Linington, O Laugharne, O Mitchell, Mrs BM Mortlock, Mrs S Patton, RT Pepper, A Perry, MG Prince, C Raymond, GCM Roberts, M Scott-ham, MV Sennitt, Mrs IM Simpson, DI Smith, I Standivan, JC Steedman, Dr AB Watson, IJ Whitcomb, PJ Whitcomb, J Whitman, BE Williams, J Willsher, M Wilsdon, and Dr BJ Yates.

## THE SUSSEX RINGING REPORT FOR 2001.

*By Robert Edgar and Sarah McKenzie.*

### Introduction.

The total number of birds ringed (32,833) was a decrease of 7,524 (19%) on the 40,357 reported to the Society as ringed in Sussex in 2000. The total was, however, similar to the 33,776 ringed in 1999. Both 1999 and 2001 produced the lowest totals since 1987 when 28,592 were ringed. Reports were received from 20 individual active ringers or groups. As usual the Rye Bay Ringing Group (RBRG) ringed the majority of the birds (22,388) which was 68% of the Sussex total. One hundred and twenty-three species were ringed in the county this year. County rarities were three Spotted Crakes, one Wryneck, one Aquatic Warbler, one Penduline Tit and one Common Redpoll all at Icklesham, and, two Melodious Warblers and one Red-breasted Flycatcher at Whitbread Hollow, Beachy Head. New species ringed in the County were Shag (a rehabilitated bird), Buzzard (perhaps not surprisingly considering their increase) and Common Redpoll (recently 'split' from Lesser Redpoll and previously known as Mealy Redpoll). This brings the County Ringing list to 195 species since 1979.

### Ringling Totals.

Table 1 lists the 20 most regularly trapped species during 2001 in descending order of magnitude compared with similar data from 2000 and including the totals for RBRG to demonstrate the considerable contribution this group makes to Sussex ringing.

	2000		2001		% Change		2000		2001		% Change
	Total	RBRG	Total	RBRG			Total	RBRG	Total	RBRG	
Sedge Warbler	9276	5944	5739		-36	Robin	789	773	351		-2
Reed Warbler	5049	4218	3699		-17	Great Tit	439	685	90		56
Blackcap	4897	2908	1908		-41	Blackbird	453	552	211		22
Chiffchaff	3147	2169	1414		-31	Garden Warbler	637	532	411		17
Swallow *	1198	2086	2072		74	Dunnock *	416	419	91		1
Willow Warbler *	2284	2030	1264		-11	Wren	432	388	145		-10
Sand Martin *	1426	1096	1095		-23	Chaffinch	236	329	31		39
Blue Tit	804	1087	264		35	Grasshopper Warbler **	365	323	315		-12
Whitethroat	992	894	524		-10	Greenfinch	330	323	25		-2
Lesser Redpoll *	207	797	399		285	Goldcrest	749	313	195		-58

*Table 1. Sussex Ringing Totals for the 20 most ringed species in 2001.*

Birds of Conservation Concern (Gregory *et al.*), \*\* Red listed, \* Amber listed.

The 20 species listed in Table 1 account for 85% of all birds ringed in Sussex during 2001 comparable to a similar but not identical list which accounted for 91% of birds ringed in 2000. As in 2000, warbler species dominated the ringing activities with eight species accounting for 51% of the total number of birds ringed compared with nine species accounting for 68% in 2000. RBRG ringed 73% of the total in Table 1 and a high proportion of 11 of these species with the exception of Great Tit, Chaffinch and Greenfinch, and, over three quarters of the county's Swallow and Sedge, Reed, Garden and Grasshopper Warblers.

Chaffinch and Lesser Redpoll were additions to Table 1 this year (although Lesser Redpoll appeared in 1999) and House Martin and Reed Bunting were deleted. Interpretation of year on year changes has to be treated with caution as weather, opportunity and ringing effort may be as responsible for a change in numbers ringed as a genuine population change. Perhaps most striking is the apparent stability in numbers of

Robin and Dunnock which may be true reflections of population. The largest change is shown by Lesser Redpoll numbers and this reflects a particularly strong coastal movement in October and November. Purely based on personal experience (and anecdotal comment) the decline in Willow Warblers ringed is one of the more important facts to be gleaned from Table 1 and probably reflects a continued decline in southern British populations of this summer migrant. The fact that no Tree Sparrows were ringed in the County this year reflects their alarming decline, as recently as 1990 110 were ringed!

### Nestlings.

The number of nestlings ringed (1,465) was considerably less than the 2,104 ringed in 2000 and was less than 5% of the birds ringed in the year. Ringing of nestlings produces particularly valuable information (exact origin and almost precise aging of birds) so it is unfortunate that more effort is not directed at this aspect of ringing in the county.

	Total Ringed	Total nestlings	% nestlings		Total Ringed	Total nestlings	% nestlings
Peregrine *	2	2	100	Stock Dove	7	5	71
Little Ringed Plover	2	2	100	Pied Wagtail	16	11	69
Lapwing **	2	2	100	Linnet **	40	23	58
Common Tern	34	34	100	Tawny Owl	23	12	52
Cuckoo *	2	2	100	Turtle Dove **	4	2	50
Barn Owl *	136	124	91	Grey Wagtail *	2	1	50
Ruddy Duck	6	5	83	Nuthatch	59	28	47
Jackdaw	20	16	80	Bearded Tit *	46	21	45
Little Owl	28	21	75	Redstart *	14	6	43

Table 2 Nestlings ringed in Sussex during 2001.

Birds of Conservation Concern (Gregory *et al*), \*\* Red listed, \* Amber listed.

Eighteen species had over 40% of their total ringed as nestlings, the same number as in 2000 and 50% of these species were of Conservation Concern. Particularly impressive is the high number of nestling Barn Owls ringed (124) and the potential for vertigo in the ringing of Peregrines at the summit of the Sussex Heights building in Brighton!

### Recoveries.

The interpretation of the significance of individual recoveries should be greatly aided by the publication in late 2002 by the British Trust for Ornithology of the *Migration Atlas, Movements of the Birds of Britain and Ireland*. In next year's report it should be possible to make a more in depth analysis of the recoveries based on this compilation of all the recoveries of British and Irish ringed birds.

Some of the more interesting recoveries notified to us this year are given below. All dates are 2001 unless stated otherwise.

Not many wildfowl are ringed or recovered in Sussex so a **Wigeon** ringed in January at Dibden (a somewhat controversial site on Southampton Water proposed as a container terminal) and found dead or dying at Arundel in late December was unusual.

The value of colour ringing is demonstrated by sightings of a Cormorant, two waders and a gull. The **Cormorant** was one of a flock of 52 roosting at Chichester Gravel Pits on 3 December 1999. It had been ringed in Denmark on 14 June of that year. This is an unusual record of wintering as apparently Danish birds are normally migrants through the United Kingdom. An **Oystercatcher** colour ringed in January 2000 in Southampton Water was seen four times wintering in fields at West Wittering in December 2000 and January. A **Greenshank** ringed in its first autumn at Farlington Marshes, Hampshire in September 1997 was seen on Pevensey Levels on two dates in April. An adult female

nesting **Black-headed Gull** was marked with coloured wing tags in May on the north coast of the Netherlands and seen on Thorney Deeps on 19 December.

It has been regularly reported in previous Reports that **Barn Owls** have a very difficult time with modern traffic. Unfortunately this year was no different with reports of a nestling ringed at Singleton in August and killed by traffic at Chilgrove, 5 km away, one month later, and another nestling ringed in July at Offham near Arundel became a road casualty at Findon, near Worthing, also one month later. A nestling ringed at Thorney Island in June 2000 died by falling down a chimney at Compton in May 13 km away. Fortunately some Barn Owls survive longer. A female nestling ringed at Sompting in June 1992 was nesting in West Wittering in both 2000 and 2001, in the latter case when it was nine years old.

Many Sand Martins and Swallows are ringed on the south coast. A **Sand Martin** ringed at Icklesham on 31 August was controlled (caught by another ringer and released) at Farlington Marshes, Langstone Harbour, Hampshire on 14 September, 119 km east. On the other hand a **Swallow** ringed on 14 September at Farlington was controlled at Icklesham eight days later – exactly the opposite direction!

Not mentioned in last year's report was a **Jackdaw** ringed in May 1984 near Cocking as a nestling and found dying by a road in East Dean only 8 km away in April 2000 showing how site faithful this species can be. This bird established a new longevity record for this species of 15 years 10 months and seven days. How long it might have lived if it had avoided motor vehicles? An equally faithful **Blackbird** ringed at Charleston reed bed, Litlington (in the Cuckmere valley) on 1 November 1995 was caught in a garden shed at Charleston Manor, just along the road, and released on 2 August, five years and nine months later.

Migrants can also be very faithful to their breeding areas. A **Willow Warbler** newly fledged was ringed in July 1994 at Old Weston, Cambridgeshire. It was controlled on its second autumn migration, on 13 August 1995, at Litlington. It was then controlled, breeding at Stanford Reservoir, Northamptonshire in 1998, 1999 and 2000. Did it pass through Sussex each autumn?

If you think that the Robin you hear singing its winter song is just one of the locally bred birds you may be wrong. A **Robin** controlled at Beachy Head on 14 October had been ringed near Hamburg, Federal Republic of Germany 737 km away 22 days previously. Any **Siskin** in Sussex may have come from some distance away. A male ringed at Marley Common, near Haslemere on 16 February was controlled on 21 April in Strathclyde, Scotland possibly near its breeding site.

Finally, a **Duncock** ringed on 21 August 1999 at Litlington was recovered at Peacehaven on 30 May 2000. The report claims that the bird was found dead and "brought in by disabled cat". The pet owners excuse perhaps!

### **Acknowledgements.**

Our grateful thanks to the following for submitting individual and group information: A Beattie, BR Clay (Steyning Ringing Group), AM Davis, JAG Dunlop, RDM Edgar (Beachy Head Ringing Station), DM Gyngell, J Hillman, P Jones and J Willsher (Rye Bay Ringing Group), R Lanaway, Dr JA Newnham, TW Parmenter (Cuckmere Ringing Group), GCM Roberts (Farlington Ringing Group), RF Sanderson, C Shawyer, S Walls and Dr AB Watson.

## **Reference.**

Gregory, R.D., Wilkinson, N.I., Noble, D.G., Robinson, J.A., Brown, A.F., Hughes, J., Procter, D.A., Gibbons, D.W. and Galbraith, C.A. 2002. The population status of birds in the United Kingdom, Channel Islands and Isle of Man: an analysis of conservation concern 2002-2007. *British Birds* 95: 410-450.

*RDM Edgar and Sarah McKenzie, 32 Hartfield Road, Seaford, East Sussex BN25 4PW.*



# **A review of the current status of breeding seabirds in Sussex incorporating the results of the Seabird 2000 Survey.**

by J.A. Newnham, E.D. Urquhart and M.V. Sennitt.

## **Introduction.**

*Seabird 2000* was the third national census of breeding seabirds in Britain and Ireland following *Operation Seafarer* in 1969/70 and the *Seabird Colony Register (SCR)* census conducted between 1985 and 1987. This millennium survey, organised by the Joint Nature Conservation Committee (JNCC) in conjunction with the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB), was part of the ongoing programme of seabird monitoring coordinated by the JNCC. The aims of the survey, outlined by Mitchell (1999), were to provide a comprehensive and accurate status of the 25 species of British breeding seabirds, to identify any long term national trends and to determine whether regional population trends shown by local monitoring programmes are realised at a national level. In contrast to the SCR, another objective of *Seabird 2000* was to gain an accurate estimate of both numbers and distribution of urban and inland breeding gulls.

Sussex does not support a rich diversity of breeding seabirds, indeed during *Operation Seafarer* only four species, (Black-headed Gull, Herring Gull, Common Tern and Little Tern) were recorded in the county (Cramp *et al*, 1974). Subsequently more species have successfully bred in Sussex; Prater (1985) documented the breeding history of eight species and the *Sussex Tetrad Atlas* survey, conducted between 1988 and 1992, (James, 1996a) recorded ten breeding species of seabirds. Numbers however are small by comparison with other counties particularly those in Scotland and Ireland. Furthermore most of the colonial nesting gulls and terns are counted annually therefore the additional effort in Sussex for *Seabird 2000* was in the coordination of counts of the cliff nesting species and the urban nesting gulls.

## **Methods.**

The counting methods used in *Seabird 2000* were detailed by Walsh *et al* (1995). This manual offered advice to aid accurate counting and prescribed counting periods and units. For most of the Sussex breeding species the count unit was an 'Apparently Occupied Nest' (AON); Fulmar being the exception with the count unit being an 'Apparently Occupied Site' (AOS). For most species the prescribed timing was adhered to, but for roof nesting gulls the survey continued into early July. Previous pilot counts in Worthing showed that incubating adult Herring Gulls during late May and early June, the prescribed period, were considerably more difficult to find than nests with young in later June. The national organisers suggested targeting the largest colonies in the first year of the project but, due to other survey commitments and the knowledge that the major colonies are counted annually, in Sussex the cliff breeding birds were surveyed in 1999, the urban nesting species in 2000, and, 2001 was used to study areas previously missed.

## **Results and Discussion.**

Preliminary results and predictions were presented by Urquhart (2001) but the final figures for each of the eleven species found in Sussex are presented below. For most species the breeding history has been thoroughly documented in previous publications (Shrubbs, 1979; Prater, 1985; James, 1996a) but, where appropriate, this paper expands and updates these works. Three other species of seabird formerly bred in Sussex and are not included here: Common Gulls last bred at the Midrips in 1963 and neither Guillemots nor Razorbills have nested on the cliffs since 1904 and 1878 respectively. In this context and of interest were records of two Guillemots attempting to land on the chalk face at Seaford

Head on 9 June 1999, an adult seen swimming with a small chick two miles off Beachy Head on 8 July 1999 and a downy juvenile Guillemot seen on the sea off Southwick beach on 26 June 2001.

### Fulmar.

The cliff survey in 1999 revealed 121 Apparently Occupied Sites and the distribution of these is shown in Table 1.

Site Name		Grid Reference (West to East)		Number AOS*
Roedean		TQ350028	TQ360025	2
Ovingdean		TQ360025	TQ370021	2
Rottingdean		TQ370021	TQ380019	3
Saltdean		TQ380019	TQ385017	-
Telscombe Cliffs	1	TQ385017	TQ392014	-
Ditto	2	TQ392014	TQ402010	2
Peacehaven	1	TQ402010	TQ411007	2
Ditto	2	TQ411007	TQ421007	1
Peacehaven Heights to Newhaven	1	TQ425003	TQ435000	8
Ditto	2	TQ435000	TQ445000	11
Seaford to Cuckmere Haven		TV488981	TV515975	11
Cuckmere Haven to Birling Gap		TV521975	TV554960	2
Birling Gap to Eastbourne		TV554960	TV600965	nc
Hastings Cliffs	1	TQ826094	TQ837099	30
Ditto	2	TQ837099	TQ853105	27
Ditto	3	TQ853105	TQ870112	2
Ditto	4	TQ870112	TQ885125	-
Ditto	5	TQ885125	TQ889133	18

Table 1. The number and distribution of Apparently Occupied Sites\* for Fulmar in 1999.

This species has only been fully counted on three previous occasions when 30 occupied sites were found in 1969, 106 sites in 1984/85 and 116 sites between 1985 and 1987 (James, 1996b). The marked expansion demonstrated during the 1970s therefore appears to have ceased. The table shows the highest concentrations to be on the sandstone cliffs east of Hastings, with nearly 64% of the county population found on about six kilometres of cliff whilst seventeen kilometres of chalk cliff surveyed held 44 (36%) of Apparently Occupied Sites. There was no count for approximately five kilometres of chalk cliffs between Birling Gap and Holywell at Beachy Head, but it was considered unlikely that this section held many nesting seabirds although over 100 Fulmars were reported from the cliffs at Beachy Head on 29 Jan 2000 and ten pairs, with no chicks, were reported on 25 Jun 2000 (*Sussex Bird Report* 53:19). It is unclear why the breeding population has ceased to expand when reports in recent *Sussex Bird Reports* give high counts on the cliffs (see pages 19) during the late winter and early spring. The possibility of cliff erosion, the removal of ledges and potential nest sites with the addition of wire netting to improve safety for undercliff paths may, in part, be responsible.

Although Fulmars have been recorded nesting on man-made structures in Britain (Cramp *et al*, 1974), have been reported investigating ledges on high rise buildings in Worthing, Brighton and Bexhill, and have been recorded prospecting at inland chalk cliffs at Lewes and Upper Beeding, there are no recorded nesting attempts away from the Sussex coastal cliffs.

## Cormorant.

Figure 1 shows the dramatic increase in the colony of Cormorants nesting at Rye Harbour and compares the numbers at Rye Harbour (black bars) with the sporadic counts received from the cliffs at Fairlight (grey bars). Watson (1996) detailed the breeding history of this species in Sussex and showed the maximum of 28 recorded at Fairlight in 1992. During *Seabird 2000* only two nests were recorded on the cliffs. Although rudimentary nesting activity had been recorded at Rye Harbour since 1986, the first successful breeding occurred in 1994 and by 2001 the colony had grown to 107 nests. This increase has coincided with a decline at the nearby Dungeness colony in Kent (B.J. Yates, *pers. comm.*).

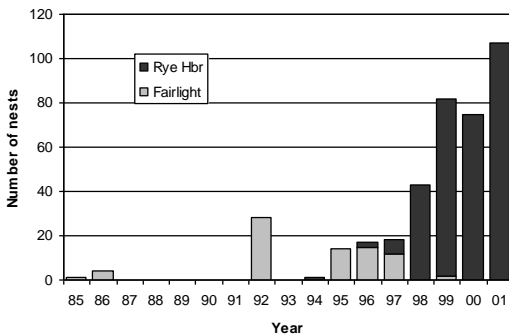


Figure 1. The number of Cormorants nests in Sussex from 1985 to 2001.

At first glance it would appear that Cormorants from the Fairlight cliffs have moved to Rye Harbour, however, a number of points strongly suggests those occurring at Rye Harbour belong to the rapidly expanding, continental race *sinensis*. Although several colour ringed Cormorants, originating from many areas, have been identified at Rye Harbour none have involved breeding birds. Indications that these are *sinensis* birds come from their earlier nesting habit with large young in nests by mid-April, whiter heads, and most important, the angle of soft parts at the base of the bill. The characteristic gular patch of *sinensis* is shown on a photograph (B.J. Yates, *pers. comm.*) of an individual nesting at Castle Water, Rye Harbour.

During June 2001 two, possibly three pairs, were found nesting on a pond island on the Lewes Brooks near Iford; one nest in a bush and one (possibly two) on the ground. At both Bewl Water and Weir Wood Reservoir, where large numbers of Cormorants are recorded throughout the year, display and twig carrying has been observed but no more definitive breeding activity recorded.

## Mediterranean Gull.

This, the rarest national breeding seabird, is continuing to increase gradually, although numbers remain in single figures in Sussex as shown in Figure 2. Additionally, this species has become more successful as during the first decade of colonisation no young fledged in Sussex (Newnham, 1996a) whereas in 1996 and in the three years 1999 to 2001 young had been recorded. Mediterranean Gulls continue to increase with between 60 to 79 pairs at 28 localities in Britain (Ogilvie *et al.*, 2001).

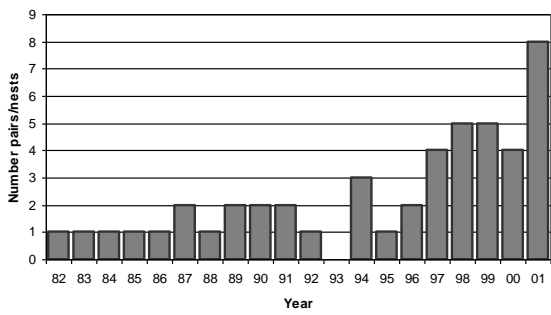


Figure 2. The numbers of pairs/nests of Mediterranean Gulls in Sussex from 1982 to 2001.

### Black-headed Gull.

Newnham (1996b) described the history of breeding Black-headed Gulls in the county and Figure 3 shows the numbers since 1962. Breeding reached a peak in Sussex during 1986 and 1987 when colonies at both Chichester and Rye Harbours were flourishing. The dark bars show the importance of the colony on Stakes Island but success here was often thwarted by high tides flooding the nesting colony and following a run of such events the colony abandoned this site after 1996, moving to a safer location in nearby Langstone Harbour. Only single pairs attempted to breed on South Stakes Island in both 1999 and 2000. The smaller, but older colony, at Rye Harbour reached a maximum of 1050 pairs in 1987 and during the past decade the number of nests has fluctuated between 33 and 450, with the counts during the three years of the *Seabird 2000* survey being 160, 33 and 280 successively.

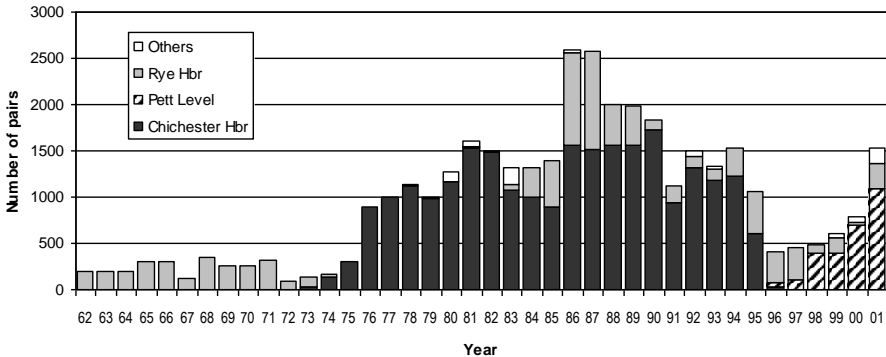


Figure 3. The number of breeding pairs of Black-headed Gulls in Sussex from 1962 to 2001.

Figure 3 shows 1996 to be the first year for two decades when less than 500 pairs of Black-headed Gulls nested in Sussex; numbers, however, have subsequently risen due to a new flourishing colony on Pett Level where the approximate nest counts during the last three years have been 400, 700 and 1090. A smaller colony of 40 pairs, nesting on islands and rafts in the Wildfowl and Wetlands Trust reserve at Arundel, was first reported in 1999 and has subsequently grown with 164 pairs counted in 2001.

None of the other historical nesting sites including Pagham Harbour, Camber; the Midrips and Scotney Court Gravel Pit have been active in recent years, but at the two sites of Glynde Level in 1995 and Combe Haven in 2001 single pairs have nested.

## Lesser Black-backed Gull.

During the breeding season of 1994 scientists at Durham University, with the endorsement of the BTO, organised a national survey of roof nesting gulls (Raven & Coulson, 1997) however, due to other survey commitments, this was not done in Sussex. Therefore no detailed breeding survey of this species, nor Herring Gull, had been undertaken since 1983/84 when Prater (1985) reported just five pairs of Lesser Black-backed Gulls. All the previous assessments considered this to be a regular but scarce breeding species with most of the records coming from the sandstone cliffs in East Sussex. There were signs of change by the period 1988 to 1992 when the *Sussex Tetrad Atlas* recorded roof nesting in five coastal towns but with a maximum of three pairs in Worthing (Newnham, 1996c). Table 2 clearly shows this pattern has increased with breeding now recorded in ten different 10 km squares involving ten different, mainly coastal, towns. More than half of the county total was found in Worthing where the species occurred in several areas with the highest density in the town centre. Here two 1 km squares (TQ1402 and TQ1503) each held seven breeding pairs which included five pairs on the roof of Worthing Hospital. Interestingly the densest population was in the same area as the pair first reported in the 1983/84 survey.

There were no records of breeding Lesser Black-backed Gulls from the cliffs during *Seabird 2000*.

SU80 (Chichester)	3	TQ50 (Eastbourne)	0
SU90 (Bognor)	1	TV59 (Eastbourne)	0
SZ99 (Bognor)	0	TQ60 (Eastbourne)	0
TQ00 (Littlehampton)	3	TV69 (Eastbourne)	2
TQ01 (Worthing)	29	TQ70 (Bexhill)	8
TQ20 (Shoreham/Hove)	3	TQ71 (Hastings)	0
TQ30 (Brighton)	2	TQ80 (Hastings)	0
TQ32 (Haywards Heath)	0	TQ81 (Hastings)	0
TQ40 (Newhaven)	3	TQ91 (Rye)	0
TV49 (Newhaven)	2	TQ92 (Rye)	0
		<b>Total</b>	<b>56</b>

Table 2. The number of breeding Lesser Black-backed Gulls located in each 10 km square from 1999 to 2001.

Figure 4 shows the tetrad distribution of the findings and can be compared with that of the *Sussex Tetrad Atlas* where a wide scattering of breeding season sightings were recorded but there were only five tetrads in which breeding was confirmed. In two of these tetrads, shown on the map as open circles, breeding was not found during *Seabird 2000*. However an increase from five to 22 tetrads in less than a decade is remarkable.

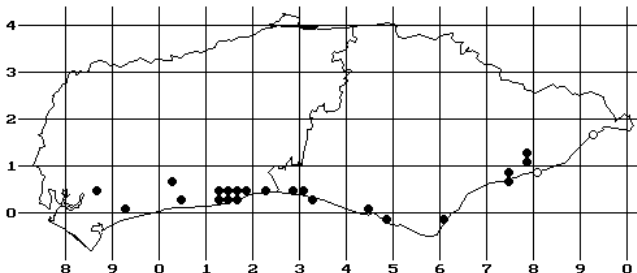


Figure 4. The tetrad distribution of nesting Lesser Black-backed Gulls in Sussex from 1988 to 1992 and from 1999 to 2001.

Nationally roof-top nesting of Lesser Black-backed Gull had increased by 17% per annum between 1976 and 1994 (Raven & Coulson, 1997), and growing at a faster rate than the 10% increase recorded for Herring Gulls over the same period. The same authors showed that in some areas, particularly in western Britain, this species was more numerous on roof-tops than the Herring Gull but for south eastern England they reported a figure of four nesting Lesser Black-backed Gulls for each 100 Herring Gulls; the ratio for Sussex during *Seabird 2000* was three. The 1994 national survey estimated 3200 pairs of urban nesting Lesser Black-backed Gulls which comprised 4% of the total breeding population. In Sussex the entire population is now dependant on urban developments.

In neighbouring counties, as expected, this species has increased also with the first confirmed breeding in Hampshire occurring at two sites in 2001 (J.M Clark, *pers. comm.*) and in Kent there were 40 confirmed, with a further 20 suspected or prospecting urban breeding pairs at six locations during 1994 (Worsfold, 1995).

In Worthing this species is absent during the winter, arriving in the town during late March or early April when Herring Gulls are already strongly defending territories. They appear to occupy similar niches but their expansion suggests there may be subtle differences or, as more likely, there are ample sites for both species. Both species seem to be able to nest in close proximity, indeed in St Leonards-on-Sea a house with two chimneys supported a pair of each species (C. Taylor, *pers. comm.*). With similar habits to the more numerous Herring Gull, the few comments regarding the choice of nest sites and the problems encountered made below under Herring Gull also refer to this species.

### Herring Gull.

Table 3 plainly shows the colonisation of the coastal towns. In several towns the survey work was very thorough and involved street by street counts, but, even with this approach, the observers felt several nests may have been missed with estimates of approximately 10% of nests missed in Worthing. It is unclear how exhaustive the searches for breeding gulls were in inland towns, as away from the coastal plain the species was only found at Lewes and Haywards Heath. Compared with Prater (1985) these results show notable increases in all towns surveyed, except in the area of Bexhill and Hastings. During 1983/84 a total of 498 roof nesting gulls were found in Bexhill, St Leonards-on Sea and Hastings compared with 316 (288 on roof-tops) during *Seabird 2000*.

SU80 (Chichester)	59	TQ50 (Eastbourne)	10
SU90 (Bognor)	3	TV59 (Eastbourne)	33
SZ99 (Bognor)	6	TQ60 (Eastbourne)	3
TQ00 (Littlehampton)	60	TV69 (Eastbourne)	60
TQ01 (Worthing)	578	TQ70 (Bexhill)	121
TQ20 (Shoreham/Hove)	261	TQ71 (Hastings)	65
TQ30 (Brighton)	235	TQ80 (Hastings)	22
TQ32 (Haywards Heath)	1	TQ81 (Hastings)	8
TQ40 (Newhaven)	152	TQ91 (Rye)	125
TV49 (Newhaven)	96	TQ92 (Rye)	20
		<b>Total</b>	<b>1918</b>

Table 3. The number of breeding Herring Gulls in all habitats located in each 10 km square from 1999 to 2001.

The 1 km squares with the highest breeding densities were in Worthing (TQ1402, 116 pairs; TQ1302, 65 pairs) and at Rye Harbour, where *ca* 100 pairs were nesting on roof tops in TQ9319. Herring Gulls were found in a total of 149 different 1 km squares with 31 of these holding just one pair and 21 with two pairs. The tetrad (2 km x 2 km) distribution of nesting is shown in Figure 5 and, like the similar Figure 4 for Lesser Black-backed Gull, the 17 tetrads where the species was found to be breeding in the *Sussex Tetrad Atlas*, but not in *Seabird 2000* are shown as open circles. Although not so dramatic as for the Lesser Black-backed Gull, Figure 5 shows an expansion of range from the 1988 to 1992 survey. The five year survey for the *Sussex Tetrad Atlas* revealed 55 tetrads where the species was confirmed or probably breeding (Newnham 1996d), compared with 86 tetrads during *Seabird 2000*.

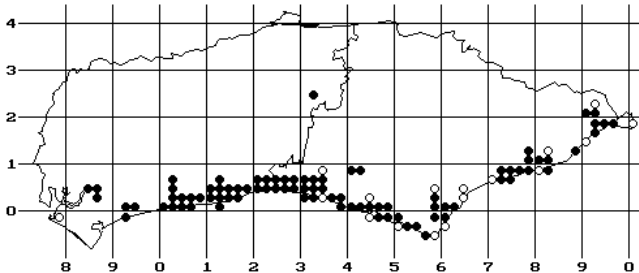


Figure 5. The tetrad distribution of Herring Gulls in Sussex from 1988 to 1992 and from 1999 to 2001.

The change in the choice of habitat of Herring Gulls already described changing from natural to man-made structures for nesting continues and is demonstrated in Table 4 which has been reproduced from Prater (1985) with the addition of the *Seabird 2000* findings.

	1965	1969	1976	1983/84	1999-01
Sandstone Cliffs	371	315	nc	75	28
Chalk Cliffs	394	401	nc	63	12
Urban roof-tops	23	106-131	244	675	1872
Low coastal sites	12	39	nc	38	6
<b>Total</b>	<b>800</b>	<b>861-886</b>	<b>244</b>	<b>851</b>	<b>1918</b>

Table 4. Numbers and habitat choice of Herring Gulls in Sussex.

The growth in urban nesting is obvious, but equally dramatic is the loss of this species to other habitats. Walpole-Bond noted approximately 2000 pairs nested on the chalk cliffs between Seaford and Beachy Head during the 1920s which has now reduced to just 12 pairs. This may be a low count as the cliff between Birling Gap and Holywell at Beachy Head was not surveyed, however the table includes a record of six pairs nesting just west of the lighthouse at Beachy Head during 2000. Apart from 28 pairs on the cliffs near Hastings, a few pairs nest on shingle islands at various sites in Rye Harbour and one pair occupied a raft site at Chichester Gravel Pits during 2000.

Raven & Coulson (1997) received records for over 11,000 pairs and estimated nearly 17,000 pairs of Herring Gulls were using roof-top nest sites in Britain and Ireland. They considered this to involve about 8% of the total and declining national breeding population. In Sussex nearly 98% of the breeding population are now utilising buildings for nesting and the county may hold about 12% of the national urban nesting Herring Gulls. Over the period 1976 to 1994 a national increase of 10% per annum in urban nesting was reported, whilst in Sussex, for the period 1976 to 2000, there was about an 8%

annual increase. The figures suggest there may be some slowing of growth compared to the expansion between 1976 and 1983/84 which was nearer 14% per annum.

Neighbouring coastal counties too have experienced an increase in urban nesting, although in Hampshire the numbers appear to be considerably smaller as the breeding population in 1991 of about 15 pairs (Clark & Eyre, 1993) had risen to at least 46 urban nesting pairs by 2000 (J.M Clark, *pers. comm.*). In Kent a minimum of 1605 pairs of Herring Gulls were nesting on residential property and industrial buildings in 1994 (Worsfold, 1995) which, like Sussex, had shown an 8% annual increase since the previous survey in 1976.

The choice of buildings and nesting sites is described by Raven & Coulson (1997) who showed little difference from one town to another. In Sussex nests occurred on a very wide range of buildings; the convoluted and varied roof scenery in town centres held the highest densities and here many gullies, flat and gravelled roof surfaces with walls and ventilation shafts offered an abundance of nesting sites. In the residential areas the older premises with large chimney stacks or angles between roof and chimney stacks were the favoured houses. Generally chimneys with a single row of pots were spared but chimneys with small or absent pots or chimneys with two or more rows of pots were used. In some towns modern housing estates and bungalows were completely spared but these too were being occupied in Worthing albeit in only a few instances. In both Worthing and Brighton properties nearest the shore were left unoccupied despite having suitable nest sites; presumably gulls being attracted to the abundance of more sheltered locations. Industrial estates, often on the outskirts of towns, offer large roof area on both warehouses and factories and these have been readily occupied throughout Sussex.

Inhabitants of coastal towns are familiar with the problems posed by the presence of nesting gulls. The nest material blocks chimneys, guttering and drains and the excrement not only disfigures the roof tiling and building structures, but causes corrosive damage to other property in particular the paintwork of cars. Accumulated deposits of excrement on flat, gravelled roof-tops in central Worthing have attracted a wide collection of flora which may be argued as beneficial, but their content of micro organisms especially *Salmonellae* however is not. The aggressive nature of the species, particularly just prior to the young fledging, certainly causes problems in residential areas and render many gardens as “no-go” areas during late June and early July. Observation and fieldwork experience suggest nesting adults will tolerate passing people, but soon become alert and agitated when people remain in close proximity to nesting sites. Such behaviour will readily prompt a progressive series of more agitated calls, followed by a vigorous attack, not only by the individual gull, but also others nearby. Not only are humans attacked as during the *Seabird 2000* fieldwork there were several accounts of domestic cats being chased and on one occasion a Worthing pair were watched energetically pursuing a squirrel. The noise and early morning disturbance is another factor making these unwelcome neighbours. During the 1980s the raucous pre-dawn territorial calls and disputes were confined to the spring months, but in Worthing and probably in other Sussex towns, in keeping with those in Kent (Worsfold, 1995), Herring Gulls are now holding their territories throughout the year and frequently roosting on or near their roof nesting site.

The concern about the increasing population of urban nesting gulls cannot be understated. Over the years considerable effort has been made to reduce the numbers of gulls nesting in some towns but, as yet, no successful management methods have been developed. The fieldwork for *Seabird 2000* brought to the attention of counters several instances where control measures were being introduced with caretakers systematically clearing roof tops of residential flats and factories; such activities may account for the fall in the population in the Hastings area. Several owners of smaller properties had protected



chimney stacks with chicken wire; old paint tins and a range of other objects to plug the potential site sites. In Worthing at least four model owls were seen, but these too had little effect. Although both species of nesting gulls are disturbed by local Carrion Crows, Peregrines or passing Buzzards, they show no concern with Sparrowhawks or Kestrels. It is indeed unlikely that any predator, other than man, will effect the spread of this species in the urban environment.

**Great Black-backed Gull.**

Although observations suggested this species may have bred in or near Brighton during 1998 and 1999, the first confirmation of breeding in Sussex was on a factory roof in Bexhill during 2000 (Standivan, 2002). The following year the same pair raised two young from the same location, four young were raised between three pairs in Brighton and a pair successfully raised young on a warehouse roof at Rye Harbour.

Taylor (1993) showed this species mainly bred on the western and northern coasts of the British Isles and he felt its absence from the English south and east coasts was due to its preference for rocky coasts away from human disturbance. The same author showed the nearest breeding sites to Sussex to be on the Isle of Wight and in eastern Hampshire. Prior to 1976 roof nesting had only been recorded from Cornwall and up to 1994 had been recorded at three other sites in northern Britain, however in 1994 Raven & Coulson (1997) found 11 pairs at ten sites throughout Britain including pairs at Poole in Dorset and on Fawley Refinery, Hampshire. The latter site was still used in both 1998 and 2000 and another site in Southampton was occupied in 1998 (J.M Clark, *pers. comm.*). Clearly this habit is spreading as three sites have now been described in Sussex.

**Kittiwake.**

The early growth of the Kittiwake colony on the chalk cliffs between Peacehaven and Newhaven was described by James (1981). Its growth continued until a peak of 1260 nests in 1990 but, as Figure 6 shows, has subsequently decreased. In 1989 there were 46 nests at Splash Point, Seaford peaking at 901 nests in 1997, coincident with a marked decline in the numbers at Newhaven. The graph shows that these colonies have not been counted in all years and in several seasons counts made in June are greater than those recorded in July as nests are abandoned or predated. During the three year period of *Seabird 2000* both colonies were only methodically counted in 1999 when there were 180 occupi

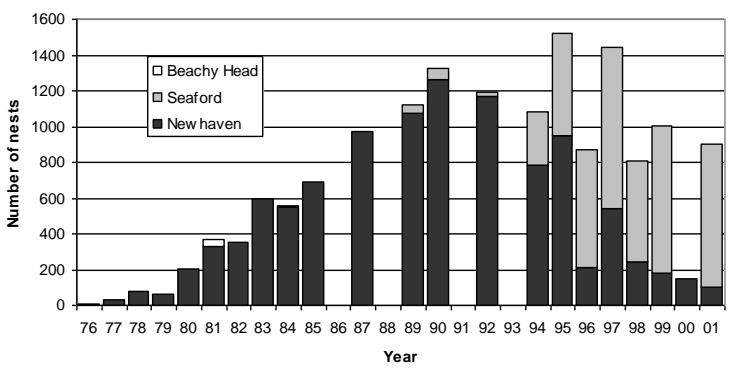


Figure 6. The number of Kittiwake nests at three cliff locations from 1976 to 2001.

Several possible reasons may contribute to the drastic decline at Newhaven. Fairly extensive cliff falls have taken place along this particular length of the cliffs in recent years

and the use of the cliff tops for paragliding and hang gliding may also be causal. The paragliders often glide along the face of the cliffs, below the cliff top disturbing incubating birds leaving eggs and young vulnerable to avian predators, especially *Corvidae* and possibly Peregrines. The effect of Peregrines was clearly noted by one author (EDU) in 1999 who observed a female Peregrine kill an adult Kittiwake. This disturbed all the other incubating Kittiwakes off their nests and Carrion Crows immediately commenced taking eggs from the exposed nests. The Kittiwakes were off their nests for at least 30 minutes, in which time many nests were predated.

The colony at Seaford shows a build up roughly in line with the decline in Newhaven and undoubtedly, for whatever reason, birds have transferred to Seaford from Newhaven. Two colour ring sightings suggest, however, that recruitment to these colonies may be quite diverse. An individual of a breeding pair in the Newhaven colony that had come from a colony in northern France, and the other, was one of a breeding pair in the Seaford colony which turned out to be a displaced adult from a colony that had been established on inland warehouses in Tyne and Wear. The colony was destroyed when the warehouses were converted into luxury offices and homes. With birds apparently being recruited to the Seaford/Newhaven colonies from far and wide other factors apart from or as well as local ones may be affecting the size of the Sussex colonies.

During the early 1980s there was a small colony at Beachy Head and the last record in 1984 was of seven pairs there. At their peak the Sussex colonies only held less than 1% of the British total of 493,400 pairs (Walsh & Tasker, 1993), but this represented a significant proportion (26%) of those nesting in south-eastern England. After a rapid expansion the population nesting in the county seems to be in decline; the regular monitoring of nesting pairs and, if possible, the success of these colonies therefore must remain a priority.

### Sandwich Tern.

Breeding was first noted in Chichester Harbour in 1975 and at Rye Harbour in 1984 and the subsequent numbers nesting at these two sites is shown in Figure 7. Yates (1996a) described the changing fortunes of this species breeding as a success story, but sadly since his writing the figure shows the species has been lost from Chichester Harbour and numbers at Rye Harbour have been low. Indeed in the three years of the *Seabird 2000* survey there were 26, none and 24 pairs in the successive years at Rye Harbour.

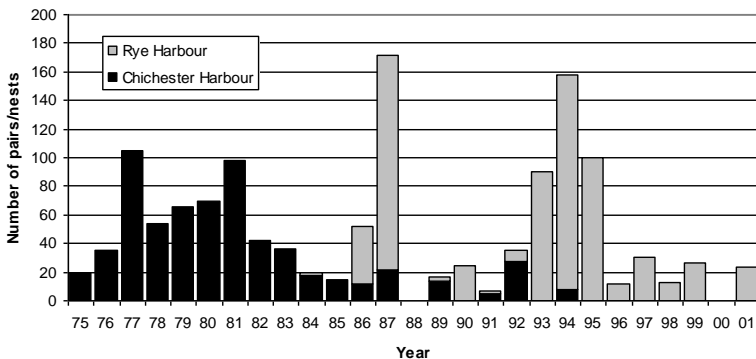


Figure 7. The number of Sandwich Terns nesting at Chichester and Rye Harbours from 1975 to 2001.

This species is notoriously fickle and very vulnerable to disturbance. In some years larger numbers are present than breed and at Rye Harbour in 2000 at least 30 birds were noted throughout the summer despite no nesting attempts. Numbers also fluctuate widely

with 150 pairs in 1987 and 1994, but none in 1988 or 2000. Yates (1996a) described the variable nesting success and noted better years to coincide with a healthy colony of Black-headed Gulls; these, as shown earlier, deserted Chichester Harbour in the mid-1990s and perhaps contributed to this species final departure from Stakes Island. Figure 7 suggests, however, that the numbers nesting at Chichester Harbour had been declining since 1981.

**Common Tern.**

Prater (1985) noted that 350+ pairs of Common Terns nested in Sussex in the 1950s, but recorded lower numbers thereafter ranging mostly between 130 and 160 pairs. Subsequently the overall picture has changed little with fluctuations between 73 pairs in 1992 and 257 pairs in 2000 with most years falling in the range quoted by Prater (1985). The detail however has altered as shown in Figure 8.

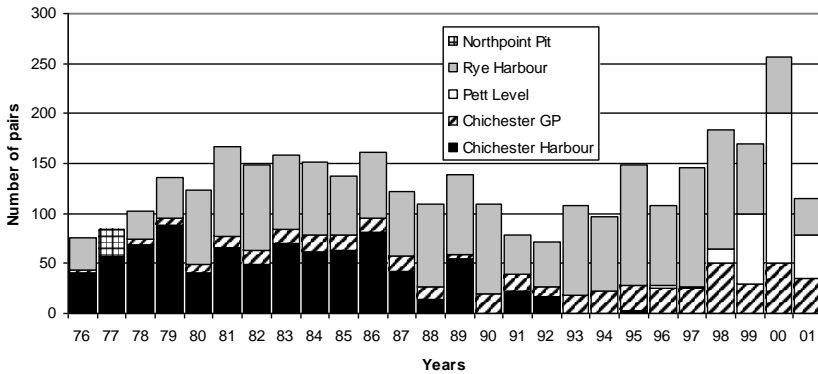


Figure 8. The number of breeding pairs of Common Terns at five sites in Sussex from 1976 to 2001.

For most of the past few decades the three main locations have been at Chichester Harbour, Chichester Gravel Pits and Rye Harbour. Figure 8 shows that, like other seabirds, Common Terns have deserted Chichester Harbour with the last three pairs nesting in 1995. The rafts maintained by the Sussex Ornithological Society on New Lake, Chichester Gravel Pits are, in most years, successful and since 1969, when they were first installed, there has been a gradual increase in the number of birds nesting. The colony at Rye Harbour has fluctuated in number from 26 (at Northpoint Pit only) in 1977 to 120 pairs in 1995, 1997 and 1998. A new colony at Pett Level has boosted the county total.

Small numbers have been recorded breeding or prospecting at other sites. Single pairs were seen at Pagham Harbour in 1986 and 1988, up to three pairs were seen in four of the years 1991 to 2001 at Arundel WWT, a pair at Waltham Brooks in 1991, one pair at Scotney Court Gravel Pit in 1981, and, pairs summering and displaying at both Weir Wood Reservoir and Bewl Water.

The detailed results for the *Seabird 2000* survey for four sites are given in Table 4.

	1999	2000	2001
Chichester Gravel Pits	59 chicks ringed	50 pairs	70 chicks
Arundel WWT	No record	No record	3 pairs
Pett Level	70 pairs	150 pairs	44 pairs
Rye Harbour	70 pairs	57 pairs	36 pairs

Table 4. Common Tern from *Seabird 2000* Survey for four sites from 1999 to 2001.

## Little Tern.

Figure 9 shows the numbers of nesting Little Terns at the three locations where the species has occurred during the past quarter of a century. The picture is rather a sorry one as it shows the species last nested at Pagham Harbour in 1991, is tenuously holding on with intermittent breeding in Chichester Harbour and even at Rye Harbour fewer pairs nest with none in 2000, the first blank year for three decades. During 2000 however 11 pairs nested without any success at the Midrips. The other counts for the three years of *Seabird 2000* from 1999 to 2001 successively were, 24, none and 28 at Rye Harbour, and, four, eight and none at Chichester Harbour.

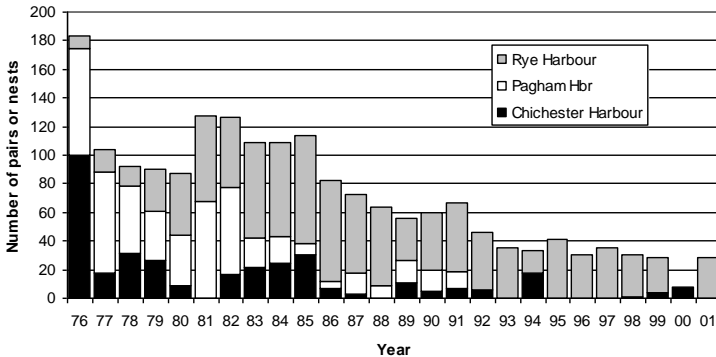


Figure 9. The number of breeding pairs of Little Terns at three sites in Sussex from 1976 to 2001.

Considerable effort has been expended to encourage and maintain the colonies in Sussex. The conservation measures and the variable breeding success and battle to deter predation is described by Yates (1996b). Sadly, many predators such as Foxes and Badgers can have a huge impact at the egg stage, while Kestrels and Little Owls are more difficult to deter and have, in some years, had devastating effects on the colonies that manage to produce chicks. In most years poor weather and / or food availability also act to reduce success. In only a very few years have the colonies raised the 1.5 chicks per pair necessary to maintain the population.. This is the second seabird species breeding in Sussex to be monitored by the Rare Breeding Birds Panel and Ogilvie (2001) reports declining numbers over the past three years for south east England against a rising national total.

## Summary.

The results of the Seabird 2000 survey are presented and placed into context with the recent breeding records for all the seabird species occurring in Sussex. More attention and detail has been given to those species (Fulmar, Lesser Black-backed Gull and Herring Gull) which are not counted regularly. Gains have been shown in Cormorants, Mediterranean Gulls, Lesser Black-backed Gulls, Herring Gulls and Great Black-backed Gulls. Both Sandwich and Little Terns have declined notably whilst the size of the county's Kittiwake colonies has fallen slightly. After a rapid fall in the number of Black-headed Gulls, this species appears to be recovering as a new colony in East Sussex develops. The number of Fulmars breeding has stabilised after a marked rise and those of Common Terns have stabilised at a population lower than the 1950s. Seabirds breeding at both Pagham and Chichester Harbours have declined markedly.

## Acknowledgments.

The authors express their thanks to the 10 km stewards who have organised counters and ensured coverage of appropriate areas, and, the reserve wardens for providing annual counts of breeding colonies of terns and gulls. Those who surveyed areas are listed in the Contributors and Acknowledgements in this Report on page 171 and to all we extend our gratitude and apologise to anyone inadvertently omitted. Additionally we thank J. Baker, J.M Clark, S.J. Patton, A. de Potier and Dr B.J. Yates for providing further information, advice and constructive comments on the text.

## References.

- Clark, J.M. and Eyre, J.A. 1993. *Birds of Hampshire*. Hampshire Ornithological Society.
- Cramp, S., Bourne, W.R.P., and Saunders, D. 1974. *The Seabirds of Britain and Ireland*. Collins. London.
- James, P. 1981. Nesting of the Kittiwake in Sussex. *Sussex Bird Report* 33: 78-80.
- James, P. 1996a. *Birds of Sussex*. Sussex Ornithological Society.
- James, P. 1996b. Fulmar. In: *Birds of Sussex*, pp 104–106. Ed P. James. Sussex Ornithological Society.
- Mitchell, I. 1999. Twenty-first Century Seabirds. *British Birds* 92: 36-39.
- Newnham, J.A. 1996a. Mediterranean Gull. In: *Birds of Sussex*, pp 303–305. Ed P. James. Sussex Ornithological Society.
- Newnham, J.A. 1996b. Black-headed Gull. In: *Birds of Sussex*, pp 310–314. Ed P. James. Sussex Ornithological Society.
- Newnham, J.A. 1996c. Lesser Black-backed Gull. In: *Birds of Sussex*, pp 317–320. Ed P. James. Sussex Ornithological Society.
- Newnham, J.A. 1996d. Herring Gull. In: *Birds of Sussex*, pp 320–324. Ed P. James. Sussex Ornithological Society.
- Ogilvie, M., and the Rare Breeding Birds Panel. Rare Breeding Birds in the United Kingdom in 1999. *British Birds* 94: 344-381.
- Prater, A.J. 1985. Breeding Seabirds in Sussex. *Sussex Bird Report* 37: 65-71.
- Raven, S.J. and Coulson, J.C. 1997. The distribution and abundance of *Larus* gulls nesting on buildings in Britain and Ireland. *Bird Study* 44: 13-34.
- Shrubbs, M. 1979. *The Birds of Sussex: their present status*. Phillimore: Chichester.
- Standivan, I. 2002. The first confirmed breeding of Great Black-backed Gulls in Sussex. *Sussex Ornithological Newsletter* 161:8.
- Taylor, K. 1993. Great Black-backed Gull. In: *The New Atlas of Breeding Birds in Britain and Ireland: 1988-91*. pp 210-211. Ed Gibbons, D.W., Reid, J.B. and Chapman, R.A.
- Urquhart, E.D. 2001. Seabird 2000. *Sussex Ornithological Newsletter* 156:4.
- Walsh, P.M., Halley, D.J., Harris, M.P., del Nevo, A., Sim, I.M.W., and Tasker M.L. 1995. *Seabird Monitoring Handbook for Britain and Ireland*. JNCC/RSPB/ITE/Seabird Group, Peterborough.
- Walsh, P.M and Tasker, M.L. 1993. Kittiwake. In: *The New Atlas of Breeding Birds in Britain and Ireland: 1988-91*. pp 212-213. Ed Gibbons, D.W., Reid, J.B. and Chapman, R.A.
- Watson, A.B. 1996. Cormorant. In: *Birds of Sussex*, pp 112–114. Ed P. James. Sussex Ornithological Society.
- Worsfold, D.C.H. 1995. Roof nesting Gulls in Kent 1994; a review. *Kent Bird Report* 43: 153-161.
- Yates, B.J. 1996a. Sandwich Tern. In: *Birds of Sussex*, pp 335–337. Ed P. James. Sussex Ornithological Society.
- Yates, B.J. 1996b. Little Tern. In: *Birds of Sussex*. pp 341–342. Ed P. James. Sussex Ornithological Society.

## **Post -Script.**

Although this paper only includes records until 2001 some results for 2002 have now been presented. The most interesting include at least 12 pairs of Mediterranean Gulls, an extension in the range of breeding Lesser Black-backed Gulls with the first breeding record for Rye Harbour and the continuation of both decline and growth at Newhaven and Seaford Kittiwake colonies respectively. At Chichester Harbour Black-headed Gulls, Sandwich and Common Terns returned to nest although none were very successful whilst at Rye Harbour between 150 and 200 pairs of Sandwich Terns raised 200 young.

*John Newnham, Walton House, 61 Grand Avenue, Worthing, West Sussex, BN11 5BA.*

*Ewan Urquhart, The Old House, Church Street, Kingham, Oxfordshire, OX7 6YA.*

*Matthew Sennitt, Dove Cottage, Climping Street, Climping, West Sussex, BN17 5RQ.*

## GUIDELINES FOR THE SUBMISSION OF PAPERS TO THE SUSSEX BIRD REPORT

Contributions in the form of original papers on all aspects of ornithology are invited. All papers are accepted on the understanding that they have not been published elsewhere, and they are subject to editorial revision. All material is the copyright of the Sussex Ornithological Society.

### The following procedure should be used:

1. Send only hard copy when first submitting your paper.
2. When your paper has been edited and returned to you, send a disc if possible containing the final version along with final hard copy. Make sure the disc and the hard copy match exactly and specify details of the software used.

**Papers:** The **title** should not be more than 15 words in length, and the text should be as concise as possible, averaging 4-5,000 words in length, equivalent to 5-7 pages of the Sussex Bird report. All **abbreviations** should be defined and written out in full the first time they are used in the text.

Papers should be set out in sections under the following headings: **Introduction, Materials and Methods, Results, Discussion, Conclusions, Acknowledgements, and References.** The **Results** and **Discussion** sections can be combined if appropriate. A **Summary** of not more than 200 words can be included before the **Introduction** instead of the **Conclusions** section at the end.

**Tables, Figures, Photographs and Illustrations:** These should be kept to a minimum and presented separately from the text. Legends should be self explanatory without referring to the text. **Tables** should not duplicate information presented in **Figures** and vice versa. Data presented in **Tables** and **Figures** should be referred to, but not described in full detail, in text. The size and shape of **Photographs** and **Illustrations** should allow for compatibility with the Bird Report format following linear reduction.

**References:** These are based on the style of ornithological journals and *Birds of Sussex* (1996) should be used as the model. Examples of the reference style required by the *Sussex Ornithological Society* for the annual *Sussex Bird Report* and other publications, for journals, books and edited books, are given below:

For a **Journal:** Manns, L. 1996. The Corn Bunting Survey 1993-94. *Sussex Bird Report* 47: 133-147.

For a **Book:** Newton, I. 1972. *Finches*. Collins: London.

For an **Edited Book:** Corrigan, C. 1996. The Coast. In: *Birds of Sussex*, pp 33-39. Ed P. James. Sussex Ornithological Society.

**GET YOUR NEXT BIRD REPORT FREE!**

As a member of the Sussex Ornithological Society you would receive the annual Sussex Bird Report free. You would also receive the quarterly newsletters and have the opportunity of taking part in a range of activities including the popular field outings. To join, please complete and return the form below. We look forward to welcoming you as a member - and you will look forward to receiving your next Bird Report free!

Ordinary Membership	£10
Joint Ordinary Membership	£12
Student Membership (age 18-20)	£3
Under 18 Membership (age 13-17)	£3
Life Membership	£120
Joint Life Membership	£150

SUBSCRIPTIONS fall due on 1st January each year. The subscriptions of those joining on or after 1st November in any year will run until 31st December the following year. Except as explained below, all members receive a free copy of the Sussex Bird Report. For JOINT ORDINARY and JOINT LIFE Membership both members must live at the same address but will only receive one copy of each of the Society's publications.

**THE SUSSEX ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY**

**Application for Membership**

To: The Hon. Membership Secretary, Lorrimer, Main Road, Icklesham, Winchelsea, East Sussex TN36 4BS

I wish to apply for:.....membership

Name: Mr./Mrs./Miss (BLOCK CAPITALS).....

Address.....

I enclose herewith Banker's Order/Cheque/Postal Order for £ :

Cheques and Postal Orders should be made payable to The Sussex Ornithological Society. Banker's Order is below.

Date of birth if under 21.....

Studentship (if applicable).....

**BANKER'S ORDER**

Please complete and return to the Hon. Membership Secretary (NOT TO THE BANK).

To.....Bank Limited, .....Branch

Branch Address.....

Date.....20.....

Please pay to the account of The Sussex Ornithological Society at Barclays Bank Limited, North Street, Brighton, Sussex, the sum of £ : now and on 1st January in each year until further notice from me in writing.

Signed.....

Name (block letters please).....

Address.....

Account title..... Account number.....

**Receiving Account Details**

Bank: Barclays Branch: North Street, Brighton

Code: 20-12-75

Account Title: Sussex Ornithological Society

Account No: 50660663



## UNUSUAL RECORDS

All 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, or in the same format as, special forms available from the Recorder. Reports of national rarities as defined by *British Birds Rarities Committee* should be submitted to the Recorder (not direct to BBRC) either in the same format as above, or should be submitted on forms available from the Secretary of the BBRC.

The following list is of those unusual species in Sussex for which descriptions are required:

Great Northern Diver	Temminck's Stint	Aquatic Warbler
All shearwaters (except Manx)	Pectoral Sandpiper	Marsh Warbler
All petrels (except Fulmar)	Buff-breasted Sandpiper	Icterine Warbler
Purple Heron	Grey Phalarope	Melodious Warbler
White Stork	Red-necked Phalarope	Barred Warbler
Spoonbill	Pomarine Skua (except in spring)	Pallas's Leaf Warbler
Whooper Swan	Long-tailed Skua	Yellow-browed Warbler
Bean Goose	Sabine's Gull	Red-breasted Flycatcher
Pink-footed Goose	Ring-billed Gull	Golden Oriole
Green-winged Teal	Iceland Gull	Red-backed Shrike
Ring-necked Duck	Glaucous Gull	Woodchat Shrike
Surf Scoter	Roseate Tern	Chough
Honey Buzzard	Black Guillemot	Hooded Crow
White-tailed Eagle	Little Auk	Serin
Montagu's Harrier	Puffin	Twite
Goshawk	Bee-eater	Common (ex-Mealy) Redpoll
Rough-legged Buzzard	Greater Short-toed Lark	Common Rosefinch
Spotted Crake	Shore Lark	Lapland Bunting
Com Crake	Richard's Pipit	Girl Bunting
Crane	Tawny Pipit	Ortolan Bunting
Stone-curlew	Water Pipit	Little Bunting
Kentish Plover	Dipper	
Dotterel	Bluethroat	

In addition, **all** races other than the normally occurring one, except for Pale-Bellied Brent Goose, *intermedius* Lesser Black-backed Gull, *michahellis* Yellow-legged (Herring) Gull, White Wagtail and Greenland Wheatear, and any species seen on an unusual date (outside the accepted range of first and last dates for migrants [See pages 169 - 170]).

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, Red-crested Pochard, Hoopoe, Wryneck, Waxwing, Cetti's Warbler and Great Grey Shrike.



## GAZETTEER:

Hastings	TQ8010	Charleston Reedbed	TQ5100	Henfield Levels	TQ1914	Northpoint Pit, Rye	TQ9319	Sidlesham Ferry & Field
Brooks	TQ0314	Chelwood Vachery	TQ4330	Hollies, Ashdown	TQ4528	Old Airstrip, Ashdown	TQ4231	Sompting Brooks
Common	SU9119	Chichester Gravel Pits	SU8703	Hollingbury Camp	TQ3207	Old Lodge Reserve	TQ4630	South Stoke
Estate	TQ0506	Chichester Harbour	SU7600	Horse Eye Level	TQ6208	Pagham Harbour	SZ8596	Sovereign Hbr Marina
Farm	SU8301	Church Norton	SZ8795	Horseshoe Plantation	TV5695	Pagham Lagoon	SZ8896	Splash Point, Seaford
Field	TQ3229	Cissbury Ring	TQ1408	Hotham Park, Bognor	SZ9399	Pannel Sewer	TQ8715	St Leonards Forest
Field	TQ5307	Climping	TQ0001	Hurstierpoint	TQ2716	Parham Estate	TQ0614	Stakes Island
Field	TQ0108	Cobnor Point & Farm	TQ7902	Ifield Mill Pond	TQ2436	Partridge Green	TQ1919	Stansted Forest
Field	TQ0208	Combe Haven	TQ7609	Iping Common	SU8421	Pett Level Pools	TQ9014	Stedham Common
Field	TQ4332	Crows Nest, Ashdown	TQ4728	Ivy Lake, Chichester	SU8703	Petworth Park	SU9721	Streele Farm Billingshurst
Field	TQ0000	Cuckmere Haven	TV5197	Kingley Vale NNR	SU8110	Pevensay Bay	TQ6503	Swanbourne Lake
Field	TQ3704	Darwell Reservoir	TQ7121	Kneppmill Pond	TQ1521	Pevensay Bridge Level	TQ6504	The Goat, Ashdown
Field	TQ4314	East Guldeford Level	TQ9421	Lancing Clump	TQ1806	Pevensay Levels	TQ6605	The Mens
Field	TV5895	East Head	SZ7698	Langney Point	TQ6401	Pilsey Island & Sands	SU7600	The Severals
Field	TV5695	Eborno Common	SU9726	Lavington Common	SU9418	Pippingford Park	TQ4430	Thorney Deepes
Field	TQ6733	Elms Farm, Icklesham	TQ8815	Lewes Brooks	TQ4207	Portfield Gravel Pit	SU8805	Thorney Island
Field	TQ0825	Eridge Park	TQ5635	Littlehampton G.C.	TQ0101	Powdermill Reservoir	TQ7919	Tilgate Park
Field	TV5596	Fairlight	TQ8611	Long/Narrow Pits, Rye	TQ9217	Pulborough Brooks	TQ0516	Union Canal, E. Guldeford
Field	TQ4023	Fishbourne Channel	SU8303	Lullington Heath	TQ5401	Rackham Woods	TQ0414	Upper Adur Levels
Field	TQ8417	Fore Wood, Crowhurst	TQ7513	Lurgashall Mill Pond	SU9325	Roman Road, Ashdown	TQ4729	Wakehurst Place
Field	SZ8798	Forest Mere	SU8129	Manxey Levels	TQ6306	Rye Bay Wood	TQ9217	Walland Marsh
Field	TQ3302	Four Counties, Ashdown	TQ4631	Marline Wood	TQ7812	Rye Harbour LNR	TQ9216	Waltham Brooks
Field	TQ3207	Friston Forest	TV 5499	Marsh Farm, Yapton	SU9804	Scotney Court Gravel Pits	TR0119	Warnham L.N.R. & M.P.
Field	TQ1404	Gills Lap, Ashdown	TQ4632	Maynards Green	TQ5818	Seaford Head	TV4997	Weir Wood Reservoir
Field	TQ1703	Glynde Levels	TQ4609	Mill Hill, Shoreham	TQ2107	Selsey Bill	SZ8592	West Beach Littlehampton
Field	TQ9818	Glyne Gap, Bexhill	TQ7607	Millbrook, Ashdown	TQ4428	Selsey West Fields	SZ8394	Westdean Woods
Field	TQ2434	Goring Gap	TQ1001	New Salts Farm	TQ2004	Seven Sisters Country Park	TV5197	Whitbread Hollow
Field	SU9617	Gossops Green	TQ2535	Newhaven Harbour	TV4499	Sheepcote Valley	TQ3404	Widewater, Lancing
Field	TQ4629	Gravetye Lakes	TQ3634	Newhaven Tide Mills	TQ4500	Shillinglee Lake	SU9631	Willington
Field	TQ9118	Greenwood Clump	TQ4731	Nook Meadows, Rye	TQ9217	Shooters Bottom	TV5795	Woods Mill
Field	TQ1020	Halsey's Farm	SZ8697	Normans Bay	TQ6805	Shoreham Airport	TQ2005	Woolbeding Common
Field	TQ3821	Harbour Farm, Rye	TQ9317	North Wall Pagham Hbr	SZ8797	Shoreham Harbour	TQ2304	Worth Forest

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



**THE SUSSEX BIRD REPORT  
NUMBER FIFTY-FOUR, 2001**

*Recorder: JA Hobson*

*Editorial Team: P James, Dr JA Cocks, J Curson, RJ Fairbank,  
Dr JA Newnham, TW Parmenter, RT Pepper, & Dr BJ Yates.*

**CONTENTS**

	<i>Page</i>
Editorial.....	3
Review of 2001.....	5
Classified Records - Introduction.....	13
Systematic List.....	14
Escapes & Feral Birds.....	164
First and Last Migrant Dates.....	169
Contributors, Acknowledgements and Surveys.....	171
The Sussex Ringing Report for 2001, Robert Edgar and Sarah McKenzie.....	175
A review of the current status of breeding seabirds in Sussex incorporating the results of the Seabird 2000 survey by John Newnham, Ewan Urquhart and Matthew Sennitt.....	179
Map of Sussex and mini gazetteer.....	196

**The publication of the 2001 Sussex Bird Report was supported by a generous  
legacy from the late E.G. Robus and grants from both East and West Sussex County  
Councils.**

*Cover photograph by Dave Sadler  
Kingfisher, Lancing, 12<sup>th</sup> October 2001.  
Published in January 2003.*

by

**THE SUSSEX ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY**

**([www.susos.org.uk](http://www.susos.org.uk))**